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Below are two of many examples of syncopation in plantation music. Syncopation is not used as extensively as in the cakewalk or ragtime. The use of the Scotch Snap and the Cakewalk rhythm are found in the music of the minstrels.

![The Cakewalk Rhythm](image)

**Early Minstrel Syncopation In the Cakewalk**

Early minstrel music did not use syncopation as a rhythmic feature and we find no examples of it in the printed music beginning with the first minstrel shows of 1843. There are no quotes as to the interpretation of the music during performance, and no written records that state that 'improvised syncopation' was a practice of minstrel singers. While the lyrics of early minstrel songs used Negro dialect and Negro subjects, the melody is in a regular pulse which we will call 'straight' rhythm. There were solo performers (like ‘Daddy’ Rice) doing Negro type material but no syncopation appears in the printed music nor in quotes from early performers. Syncopation was not a part of their interpretation of the music they sang.

Examination beginning with the minstrels of 1843 show that syncopation was not a part of the rhythm. In 1874, in a minstrel song entitled “I’m A Gwine Down South”, by William Shakespeare (a contemporary and competitor of Stephen Foster) find the use of the
cakewalk rhythm (16\textsuperscript{th}, 8\textsuperscript{th}, 16th) which, of course, is a syncopated rhythmic figure. In the cakewalks we find the earliest use of syncopation within an entire musical composition. In the minstrel song “Deed I Has To Laugh,” written by John Philip Sousa in 1877, there are a few bars that use the cakewalk rhythm. In the early 1880's songs written by Negro composers such as James Bland and Sam Lucas, many of their songs, written and performed by these composers in minstrels, do not contain syncopation. Through 1898 and the late 1890s minstrel songs are still ‘straight’ rhythms. In 1901 the minstrel team of Williams and Walker performed the song entitled “The Phrenologist Coon” performed a song in which there are a few measures using the cakewalk rhythm.

In 1902 the song “You Can Search Me” contains the use of syncopation in the introduction. Syncopation is also used in the verse and the chorus. The popularity of the minstrel show was beginning to fad in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century and was evolving into the variety show. Negro themes were being replaced by other topics, although Negro entertainers such as Williams and Walker continued to use Negro themes in their acts with Williams joining the Ziegfred Follies doing the same type routines as he presented in his early minstrel show appearances.

The use of a syncopated figure was the main rhythmic feature of the cakewalk. “Happy Uncle Joe” written in 1867 does contain some measures in the cakewalk rhythm. The vaudeville team of Harrigan and Hart included the song “Walking For Dat Cake”), written in 1877 by Harrigan and Dave Braham. While the song contains some measures in cakewalk rhythm it basically is not what we will recognize as a traditional cakewalk. It was basically called a cakewalk in name only (the title). Other songs contain the name cakewalk in its title and some dancers may have performed cakewalk routines to the music - i.e. “Kullud Koons’ Kake Walk” and “The Cakewalk Patrol” by W. H. Krell. In section 3 of “The Cakewalk Patrol” we find a section that can be noted as a cakewalk. The piece does make use of some syncopation. Section 3 is notated as “Taking The Cake.” The song “I’ve Been A Good Old Wagon” by Ben Harney in 1896 mistakenly noted as the first rag, uses use some cakewalk rhythms in the melody, the accompaniment in the last 15 bars uses the cakewalk rhythm in the bass of the piano part, for 5 measures.
In 1896 we find the song “Remus Takes The Cake”. The last section is a true cakewalk. It was published first in instrumental form. In 1897 it is published with lyrics. In the 1897 arrangement the introduction uses the cakewalk rhythm, but then the remaining section presents only ‘straight’ rhythm.

In 1897 Kerry Mills publishes “At A Georgia Campmeeting” using a melody of “Our Boys Will Shine Tonight.” Mills writes what is considered one of the earliest true cakewalks. The example shows the multiple use of the cakewalk rhythm appearing as 16th, 8th, 16th and 8th, quarter, 8th. Even the cover is in the poster style art nouveau which became the mode for cakewalk art on the piano sheet music covers of the cakewalk era. Marked a Rag-Two Step, “Louisiana Rag” is a cakewalk. The title of songs during and after this era used the terms cakewalk and rag synonymously. This song makes extensive use of the syncopated rhythm of the cakewalk. Published in the year of the zenith of the cakewalk in 1899, Louisiana Rag was written for the piano (earlier cakewalks were mostly in the brass band genre). We now find the use of the cakewalk syncopated rhythm appearing in numerous popular songs of the late 1890s. By 1899 the cakewalk becomes the most popular style in the newly developed syncopation style. It was popular the world over.

We now find the use of the cakewalk syncopated rhythm appearing in numerous popular songs of the late 1890s. This adaptation of the cakewalk for piano was the opening for what was to become a keyboard genre - ragtime.

The popularity of the cakewalk is seen in the famous Broadway production of “Clorindy” or “The Origin of the Cakewalk”, written by the now famous Negro composer William Marion Cook with the libretto by Negro poet Lawrence Dunbar in 1898. One song in the show is “Dar’ll Be Wahm Coons A Prancin” It presents some measures in the cakewalk rhythm and features the great Ernest Hogan, the composer of the hit “All Coons Look Alike To Me” perhaps one of the first groups of songs to be called “Coon” songs. From 1898 to 1899 there were hundreds of cakewalks published, all using the syncopated cakewalk rhythm. This syncopated cakewalk figure gradually was developed into what is called “United” syncopation which evolved into which will be called Ragtime. One example would be “Eli Green’s Cakewalk” which became an enormous hit of the era. Many songs had in their title “cakewalk” but were evolving into ragtime. One of Scott Joplin’s
earliest compositions, written in 1899 was entitled “Original Rags.” This is in reality, a cakewalk, using the cakewalk rhythm throughout. It was the cakewalk rhythm with the last note of the cakewalk rhythm tied (o o o o) emphasizing not only the cakewalk rhythm but using united syncopation. It is a good example of the cakewalk style and rhythm evolving into ragtime. Even John Philip Sousa begins playing cakewalks, many of these being referred to as rags, of “Bunch O’ Blackberries”. The Sousa band, with arrangements by Arthur Pyror, play numerous cakewalks as part of their concerts, mostly as encores, including “Smoky Mokes” and “Creole Belles.” Perhaps the best example of the combining of the cakewalk genre and ragtime is the Arthur Pyror song “Southern Hospitality” written in 1899. It is marked “A Ragtime Cakewalk.”

What was entitled “Mississippi Rag” is in reality should have been called “Mississippi Cakewalk.” It is laced with the cakewalk rhythm. The cover describes it as the first ragtime two step. This title only emphasizes the evolving of the cakewalk into ragtime. Many songs were entitled ‘rags’ but were really cakewalks, i.e. “Bos’n Rag.” In reality it was a cakewalk.

Songs that became standard popular song hits that we still remember today were again, in reality-cakewalks. Case in mention “Hello Ma Baby” which uses the cakewalk rhythm in 9 of its 16 measures. Abe Holzmann, a famous ragtime composer wrote cakewalks - many of which are known as rags but really are cakewalks. His characteristic cakewalk “Hunky Dory” is a classic example of a cakewalk of the era published in 1900; it was a favorite of the Sousa Band. We might mention Joplin’s “Swipsey” written with Arthur Marshall in 1900. It is notated as a cakewalk and uses the cakewalk rhythm extensively.

H. W. Loomis, a pupil of Dvorak, wrote (following the encouragement and lead of Dvorak, who had remarked that American composers should look at Negro music as musical material for composition), in 1902, wrote a charming piano duet entitled “Cakewalk” Published by the Wan-Wan Press of Arthur Farwell, it was accompanied in the Press’s publications by Farwell’s “Plantation Melody” of 1902 which uses the cakewalk rhythm.

“Bunch O’ Blackberries” written by Abe Holzmann is called a rag when Sousa played it in Paris. Written in 1900 the composed called it “cakewalk-two step” and uses the cakewalk rhythm throughout.
Kerry Mills wrote “Kerry Mills Ragtime Dance” in 1909. By using united syncopation the rhythmic figure gives a ‘short-long-short’ rhythmic feeling which is the cakewalk rhythm but used as part of the figure that uses united syncopation. By this date the cakewalk and its characteristic ‘short-long-short’ rhythm has evolved into true ragtime. The piece used the cakewalk rhythm, especially in the 2nd and 4th sections - section 4 using the cakewalk rhythm in 12 of its 16 measures. The first section includes numerous uses of syncopation.

In 1911 Sousa published his “Dwellers of the Western World.” In the 3rd part entitled “The Black Man” Sousa uses the cakewalk rhythm.

As jazz begins to evolve from the cakewalk and ragtime, there was a revival in 1914-15 of the cakewalk. It was short lived but many fine cakewalks were written during this period. “Keep Moving” was written by William White in 1815.

With the popularity of the cakewalk the “Coon” song was beginning to be known. From the many mentions of the Negro characteristics minstrels and show business performers began using the popular genre of the “Coon” song genre to include more derogatory mentioning of the Negro race. This inclusion in popular music degrading the Negro race reached a high point with the publication, in 1896 of May Irwin’s “The Bully Song” the most successful early Coon Song. Coon lyrics had been added to cakewalks and soon became a genre of it’s own. Songs with the mention of Coons had been seen in songs as early as 1851 with the song “The Sensitive Coon.” It contained no syncopation. Minstrel material included the mention of the word Coon frequently. “Gentlemen Coons Parade” of 1878; “Mary’s Gone With A Coon” of 1880 “De Ole Plantation Coon of 1881; “De Coon Dinner” of 1882 and “The Coon’s Excursion” of 1886 all do not include syncopation.

These songs all used Negro dialect. The famous James Weldon Johnson favored the use of Negro dialect as part of the Afro-American heritage but avoided the rough text of the Coon songs. This can be seen in a song entitled “Under The Bamboo Tree: of 1902. Using a modified cakewalk rhythm but one find no other use of syncopation. The song became a big popular hit of its day.

“The Bully Song” of Irwin uses the cakewalk rhythm in its introduction and in both the verse and chorus. The chorus beginning each phrase using the cakewalk rhythm. It is the lyrics that make a Coon song and not the use of the cakewalk rhythm with its syncopated
figure. The accompaniment is in ‘straight’ rhythm. We will see in the accompaniment of this Coon song an early example of ragtime’s syncopated rhythm. Most Coon songs use ‘straight’ rhythm in its melody with Coon style lyrics. May Irwin brings the Coon song genre to the Broadway stage, perhaps not the first to do so, but surely the most successful in a long series of Broadway shows in which she starred.

In the song “Mister Johnson, Turn Me Loose” of 1895, Harney makes the song a ‘hit’ playing the accompaniment in a ‘ragtime’ style.

A big step came when the Coon song began to include what was to be a ragtime accompaniment. One of the earliest of this style was “Syncopated Sandy” of 1897. If one plays the accompaniment without the melody it appear and sounds like a charming rag. The piece uses the cakewalk rhythm and an extensive use of syncopation. The song appeared 2 years before “The Maple Leaf Rag” of Scott Joplin. The accompaniment gave the piece an exciting syncopated feeling. If the melody was de-emphasized the accompaniment which featured the feeling of ragtime was now on the popular music scene. The ragtime feeling is best heard in the piano accompaniment of the chorus of the song. Soon publishers began hiring arrangers to write ragtime accompaniments to popular songs. This process can be seen in “Bom-Ba-Shay” of 1897, arranged by Max Hoffman. The combination of the Coon song using the cakewalk style is seen in the 1898 Coon song “The Coon’s Breach of Promise”. The dance at the end is a short cakewalk.

Max Hoffman’s work as an arranger can also be seen in the Coon song “Ma Genuine African Blonde” of 1898. The chorus uses the cakewalk rhythm and untied syncopation and one gets a contrapuntal feeling when hearing the accompaniment part in the chorus of the song.

It only remained to drop the lyrics and listen to the accompaniment part and we have a true ragtime piano piece. An excellent example is found in “Mr. Johnson Don’t Get Gay” written in 1898. Most Coon songs of the era use the syncopated cakewalk rhythm and Coon songs that do not use a ragtime accompaniment are becoming rare. The Coon song, with its lyrics begin to fad and ragtime becomes the music of the land. Thus from the minstrel song, to the syncopation of the cakewalk, to the Coon song, to ragtime and finally jazz, which ends the ancestry of syncopation and jazz becomes its new champion. By 1918 the era of jazz matures into what will become the art music of America.
Magazine Articles on Syncopation

The Right Way and Wrong Way to Interpret Syncopation
By Edwin H. Pierce

The first beat of each measure has an accent. In compound time there is a secondary accent as well—sometimes more than one, in fact. These are rules to which we have long grown accustomed. But in syncopation there arises an important and striking modification to which we shall turn our attention.

For the sake of simplicity, let us deal here only with the syncopated note of longer duration than a single beat (the same principle holds good in smaller divisions of time, however). A syncopated note of this description is one beginning on a (normally) unaccented beat and continuing long enough to extend into or beyond the position of the next (normal) accent. But—and this is the gist of the matter—a syncopated note is never punctuated midway by an accent. On the contrary it begins with one. That is to say, the normal accents of the measure must be temporarily shifted to a new position. This is the whole basis and meaning of syncopation.

For the sake of indicating accurately the right and wrong position of accents, we shall first express this passage

Ex. 1
\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c} \hline \text{1st} & \text{2nd} & \text{3rd} & \text{4th} & \text{5th} & \text{6th} & \text{7th} \\ \hline \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} \\ \hline \end{array} \]

in quarter-notes, by the use of ties:

Ex. 2
\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c} \hline \text{1st} & \text{2nd} & \text{3rd} & \text{4th} & \text{5th} & \text{6th} & \text{7th} \\ \hline \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} \\ \hline \end{array} \]

Now the normal accent of a measure would cause the accents to fall as follows:

Ex. 3
\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c} \hline \text{1st} & \text{2nd} & \text{3rd} & \text{4th} & \text{5th} & \text{6th} & \text{7th} \\ \hline \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} \\ \hline \end{array} \]

but this would be a totally incorrect manner of performance, because it is the nature of syncopation to shift the accent from its normal position and place it upon the beginnings of the syncopated notes.

The correct manner of accentuation is, of course, as follows:

Ex. 4
\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c} \hline \text{1st} & \text{2nd} & \text{3rd} & \text{4th} & \text{5th} & \text{6th} & \text{7th} \\ \hline \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} \\ \hline \end{array} \]

Suppose a young violin-student, for instance, to be counting aloud in order to master the correct rhythm. It would be perfectly proper, and in some ways very helpful for him to express the unusual accents in his counting. Thus the first two measures of this example might be counted "one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four," while the other two measures would be counted "one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four," in the conventional manner.

Syncopation does not confine itself to "popular" music. It has been understood and used effectively by classical composers for the last two hundred years. Schumann in particular carried it almost to excess. In the last movement of Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony" there is one passage some thirty or forty measures long which contains every essential element of modern jazz except the use of the saxophone. However, it must be conceded that there are at least two particular forms of syncopation which belong particularly to modern popular dance-music—the peculiar rhythm of the Charleston and the following rhythm:

Ex. 5
\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c} \hline \text{1st} & \text{2nd} & \text{3rd} & \text{4th} & \text{5th} & \text{6th} & \text{7th} \\ \hline \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} \\ \hline \end{array} \]

which is found largely also in popular songs of a rather vulgar variety. In both these cases the principles herein stated hold true, but, in case of the one last named, there is another explanation which may be helpful to some—namely, that it is not real syncopation at all but the use of several measures of varying rhythm with the same time signature being used throughout. The above example might therefore very properly be written thus:

Ex. 6
\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c} \hline \text{1st} & \text{2nd} & \text{3rd} & \text{4th} & \text{5th} & \text{6th} & \text{7th} \\ \hline \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{D} \\ \hline \end{array} \]

though in such form it might be puzzling to the unlearned and would be of no really practical benefit. All rhythms, indeed, especially syncopation, must lend themselves to close scrutiny before they are ready to be intelligently executed.
"I would not do away with rag-time music," said Mr. Root. "If some one should ask me if I would blot out Mother Goose's rhymes I would say unhesitatingly I would not do it. Mother Goose is a good thing in its way. So is rag-time.

"To make the matter plain, rag-time is syncopation. All of the great masters have enjoyed syncopated notes. That is all right, or the masters would not have done it. But they did not write all of their works in syncopation. That shows that syncopation is good for a while, but we do not want too much of it. Now, Mother Goose's literature is a good thing, but suppose you had nothing else to read you would get tired of it after a while."

"What would you suggest to be done about it?" he was asked.
"Let it alone, The people who like it may learn after a while to like something else better."
"What objection lies against rag-time music?"
"It is a repetition of the same thing, that's all. There is nothing else in the world the matter with it. As I said, if it were not a good thing the masters would not have used it."

Among many oddities of rag-time an example of its effect may be seen in the setting of "Old Hundred" to that measure.

"There is no such thing as good music or bad music," said Prof. Emil Liebling. "You may set good music to bad or vicious wordings and the music becomes bad by implication. So with rag-time. It is now lending itself to low vaudeville, in the main, and because of that association the music is denounced.

"The song from "Carmen" "Love is a wild Bird," is one of the best examples of rag-time in modern music. In the overture to 'Don Juan,' by Mozart, and in some compositions of Bach we have good examples of syncopation.

"Rag-time is simply having its day. It will be forgotten as a craze in a few years"

1900 – MUSICIAN – MARCH “Ragtime”

1901 - MUSICIAN - NOV. - SYNCOPATED RHYTHM VS. "RAG-TIME." - The subject of "Rag-Time" has never interested me, and in company with other musicians I have, heretofore, ignored it. But now it is my desire to correct an impression which seems to prevail among certain people, to wit: That rag-time is a musical peculiarity invented by the recent makers of coon songs and other variety-hall concoctions.
This is not true. Rag-Time is merely a common form of syncopation in which the rhythm is distorted in order to produce a more or less ragged, hysterical effect.

In the Theory of Interpretation I have already demonstrated that syncopated rhythms are used by classic composers for some of the following purposes;

1. As a relief and contrast to the monotony of regular rhythms.
2. As a means of expression or of bringing forward two opposing principles-dual rhythms being suggestive of strife or contention.
3. As local color, by imitating the rhythm of certain national songs or dances in which some form of syncopation is a characteristic feature.

That old Spanish dance, the Zarabanda, illustrates the early use of syncopation. The accented second beat was suggested by the poses of the dancers and therefore the syncopation served a distinct purpose, as it does in the more modern polonaise and bolero.

In the compositions of Bach and Handel we find that syncopated rhythms are an inherent part of the music design; Haydn used them more for the sake of variety. In the works of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert syncopation serves both purposes, especially in their symphonies.

Every pianist will recall the leading motive in Beethoven's sonata in G, beginning like this:

The composition of Chopin and Schumann contain innumerable instances of unusual rhythmic arrangement and combination. An interesting example occurs in the second period of the Schumann Lied by Schumann, Op. 124, XVI, where the melody is divided thus:

This is much more individual and expressive than the common arrangement,
would have been. A similar effect occurs in the A flat waltz by Chopin, Op. 42. The melody is virtually in 2-4, while the accompaniment remains in triple measure.

Syncopated and dual rhythms occur prominently in many Spanish dances, especially in the bolero and the Cuban dance, Habanera. In the latter this rhythm is of frequent occurrence:

"Souvenir de la Havanna," "El Cocaye," and the famous "O jos criollos," by Gottschalk, illustrate this peculiarity very faithfully. But the rag-time "compositioners" have undoubtedly found their most direct source of supply in the Hungarian song-dances. In several works I have described and illustrated the Czardas, which is always syncopated. The slow movement (lassan) is especially so:

This dates back to the time of the Cythians and owes its origin to the unusual syllabic arrangement of the words sung to the dance. This peculiarity has been observed in the songs of Scotland and English writers call it the "Scotch snap."

Also the negro melodies contain this Iambic feature. Dvorak, in his so-called "New World symphony," uses these displaced accents frequently, as thus in the second theme:

This is similar to a once famous Southern plantation song and bears evidence of its Ethiopian origin.

Indeed, it is scarcely possible to mention a standard composer who has not employed some form of syncopation in certain of his compositions.

I have observed that the principal charm of Nevin's popular Serenade ("Good-night, good-night, beloved") is owing to the peculiar form of syncopation in the melody, thus:
But for this genial touch of inspiration the song would be quite commonplace, as the melodic features are not remarkable. This assumes somewhat the character of a free rubato effect. (When I told the late composer of my liking for this serenade, I remember his somewhat incredulous smile as he replied: "Why, I composed that when I was a boy.")

In conclusion, it is evident that none of the so-called rag-time songs or dances is, in any sense, new or original, but that they are adaptations and perversions of the czardas, the habanera and the southern plantation song. Also, that unusual rhythmic combinations and syncopations have been used so extensively by high-class composers that it is not possible for coon song composers to invent anything along these lines.

1902 - THE MUSICIAN - OCT. - ETHIOPIAN SYNCOPATION - THE DECLINE OF RAGTIME - by W. F. Gates -

The popular craze for "rag-time" music seems to be on the wane, and it is not probable that musicians generally will deplore its gradual departure. This craze was a unique example of an exaggerated use of a musical idiom that in itself is not only a lawful means of musical expression, but one that, used in reasonable moderation and in proper surroundings, is full of beauty and interest, namely, the feature of syncopation.

Every child with any pretensions of a smattering of musical knowledge knows that syncopation is a covering up or passing on of an accent to the next part of the measure. It is a feature of musical writing that is as old as the works of the classic masters, yet all of a sudden it is taken up over here in the New World, carried to an exaggerated degree, attached to words of supposed Ethiopian origin (often called poetry by the misguided authors), and goes the extreme of becoming a musical craze.

A hopper is fitted onto the press and into it are poured jerky note groups by the million, "coon poetry" by the ream, colored inks by the ton, and out of the other end of the press comes a flood of "ragtime" abominations that sweeps over the country, not leaving untouched even the isolated little hamlet on the slopes of the remote Sierras, a hundred miles from the nearest railway. On the grand piano surroundings in the New York drawing room, on the cheap little organ in the cottage on the
western plains, though all grades of society, culture and financial standing, the Ethiopian syncopations have swept in a tide that is only now beginning to pull on the taste of an over tickled public palate.

And with all this, not a word can be said against the idea of syncopation per se. It is legitimate and beautiful medium of expression. But it has fallen into bad company, been dragged in the mire of the commonplace and inartistic been loaded down with poetical abortions and hauled through degrading associations until it was in danger of losing, for the time being its true significance and artistic power.

Looking at the matter from an artistic standpoint, the fact that the works of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Wagner and others furnish numerous examples of syncopation does not excuse the extreme use and extreme perversions to inartistic ends that has marked this craze. True, some good times have been turned out; but they only emphasize the fact that certain of the more talented writers have been drawn into the muddy stream in hopes of bringing up some gold in the handful of mud.

Looking at the matter from the side of the largely unmusical public, I am inclined to think that this delight in the jerky lilt of "rag time" music comes from the fact that it furnishes a musical outlet for the extreme nervousness of American youth. Our prominent characteristic as a nation is that we can not sit down in our homes and our home towns and be content to follow our vocations in quiet and peace. No, we must be up and moving. We must try conditions in other places; we must dispose of our business here and see if we cannot make more money somewhere else. We must move on, even though there be no profit in it. At any rate, we will have the satisfaction of having "seen the country." And all this tends to destroy our steadiness and perseverance. No nation more deserves the name of a nation of roamers-a result largely of our national nervousness.

Another impetus to our rambling, though to speak of this may be slightly off my subject, is the continual urging we are subject to from the transportation companies. Excursions in all directions; home-seeking trips for people that already have comfortable homes and would be happy if allowed to enjoy them in undisturbed peace; tours and travel till the feeling of permanence is destroyed; old associations full of warm friendship and hallowed memories broken off trying something new; moving on from Massachusetts to Illinois, from Illinois to Kansas, from Kansas to California, and they what? Perhaps a little home on a sandy mesa, a rain once in three months, a slender income,
and finally, a despondent trip back to the old home to find the neighbors of former days prosperous and satisfied. This is one side, in many cases there is a brighter one. But I use this illustration, which is not at all a fancy picture, but one I have seen too often in painful colors, simply to exemplify this American spirit of nervousness that has its outlet in so many ways that are peculiar to our people.

This spirit of national unrest shows itself in all features of life, in the home, in the business, in the church, in society, in education, in recreation, and naturally in artistic matters as well, or rather, in those features of art that our too in artistic lives may touch upon. And, of course, our music has to suffer as well as the rest. Hence this plague of syncopations as penetrating in its sweep as the Egyptian one of flies, and as distasteful to the musical nature as was the buzzing plague to the worshipper of Isis.

But, as I said at first, this craze for "rag-time" seems to be on the wane. It is certainly to be hoped so. For it creates in the minds of the young a distaste for that which is more staid and solid, more dignified and useful. It is an appetite for spices rather than for nutritious foods. So its decline is a matter for congratulation to the teacher.

I saw an illustration of this change in tendency a few days ago that, while somewhat comical, pointed a little to the gradual change in popular taste. But it showed how prevalent the perverted taste was when a man had to advertise for a wife that was not steeped in "rag-time." It read as follows:

"A bachelor of forty, an expatriate from Manhattan by reason of incompatibility of climate, desires the acquaintance of a lady of cultivated musical taste (pianist) who is unencumbered and in the enjoyment of full autonomy. To prevent any misunderstanding of my conception of the term "musical," would say that Ethiopian syncopation is my aversion and So-So's marches are a weariness. Address, in confidence, R. Box 34, Times office."

1903 - THE METRONOME THE MUSICAL POSSIBILITIES OF RAG-TIME -

So much has been said and written against Rag-Time in general, that it may prove interesting to read a discussion in which the better musical possibilities of this much-abused form of music are held forth in both a natural and musically manner. The following article was written by Dr. Gustav Kuhl, New York City, and appeared in a number
of a German musical periodical "Die Musik", which commands the highest position amongst present-day publications of this sort, in the German Empire.

Touching as it does upon a most interesting and important question of our own musical prospects, the ideas expressed there-in will do much to dispel the erroneous idea with many people that, as our country is at present over-run with Rag-time trash of the worst description, everything that savours of the name must be despised and shunned.

That there is a musical possibility in Rag-time is apparent to every musician interested in the question and the writer will add the hope that the following may contribute towards a better general understanding of what it really is and what possibilities it might unfold if properly developed.

It was during a visit to the little island called Jekyl, on the coast of Georgia, somewhat of an American Riviera, that I first became acquainted with the famous or might I say the ill-famed Rag-time rhythm of American Folk Music. The servants of the club together with those of the neighboring villas had arranged a masquerade ball in one of the adjoining buildings of the club house and the owners and their families had been invited to witness the merry-making.

The festivity was at its height when I arrived. Even before entering and while pausing for a moment in the corridor, I became aware of the peculiarly jerky and clappering sounds of the dance music, which could be heard most conspicuously above the noise and hustle made by the hilarious dancers.

After reaching the room where the dancing was in progress, I was to turn to the right where the invited guests had been seated along the wall in a double row. But my senses were captivated against my will by the music, which seemed to be produced by a little army of devils to my left. It seemed incredible to me for quite a while, how any person could dance a single step to such an irregular and noisy conglomeration of sounds; and it was even more difficult for me to understand how such complicated and to me unmusical noise was brought about. Singularly enough, when looking over the musicians, I found that there were only two men, who managed to produce all this noise. Before a thoroughly dilapidated Grand Piano, the back of a muscular, short-haired negro, with snow-white collar, which reached well-nigh to his ears, presented itself; with his arms and elbows this fellow belabored the keys in
sixteenths with such ease, and dexterity as many a pianist could wish for his wrists. In reality he produced all the music, as his colleague, with a double Bass (minus one string) simple supported the bass notes, with vivacious and grunting strokes from his bow. This constituted the entire orchestra and I decided to proceed with my observations from a distance and looked up the seat which had been allotted to me.

It was all very pretty. There were Brother Jonathans from the North and South, Chinese, Indians, Spaniards; here was a ship-wrecked individual who had tied himself up with the Lord knows how many boards and ropes there a sister of mercy with a band in her arm, showing the cross; all clean and thoroughly characteristic costumes in every detail and I again became aware of the cleverness and ingenuity of our common populace.

After greeting my acquaintances as hurriedly as possible, I lost myself in the pleasure of following the masked pairs, the ever-changing positions of their feet, the graceful movements of their bodies, the embracing position of their arms—here a pair, which seems particularly attractive, it loses itself quickly in the mass of glistening dancers, the eyes attempt to follow but the sudden appearance of a gleaming white neck and the outline of a chin are discerned under a protecting mask and in a moment we follow this new picture, till this also looses itself in the encircling crowd—and in this manner the senses are turned topsey turvey, and only the lamps and garlands fastened between the beams of the ceiling seem to maintain their steady position in the general whirling mass.

Suddenly I discovered that my legs were in a condition of great excitement. They twitched as though charged with electricity and betrayed a considerable and rather dangerous desire to jerk me from my seat. The rhythm of the music, which had seemed so unnatural at first, was beginning to exert its influence over me. It wasn't that feeling of ease in the joints of the feet and toes, which might be caused by a Strauss waltz, no, much more energetic, material, independent as though one encountered a balking horse, which it is absolutely impossible to master.

Naturally the company I was in—a be-jeweled daughter of a millionaire to either side of me, who every now and then would renew the conversation in their peculiarly dragging southern dialect—together with my own determination finally aided me in gaining a victory over these anarchistic desires of my feet. But the effect remained.
The continuous re-appearance and succession of accentuations on the wrong parts of the bar and unnatural syncopations imparts somewhat of a rhythmic compulsion to the body which is nothing short of irresistible and which makes itself felt even before the ears have discerned the time or rhythmic value of the various parts of the bar. Sometimes it was really only the last bar of a period with its sharply accented:

which aided me in ascertaining the real rhythmic relationship.

There can be little doubt that "Rag-time" is a genuine creation of Negro blood. It perpetuates and embodies the rhythm of those crude instruments of noise and percussion, which, in their original African bottle awakens the fanatic enthusiasm of the natives for their religious and grotesque dances; the natural inclination for this rhythm is plainly shown among the present day American-born Negroes, who are so very fond of clapping their hands and swaying their bodies back and forth while practicing the many varieties of the clog dance. Two centuries of continued importation of slaves naturally checked the spread of civilization among them; 1619 the first Holandish Slave ship cast its anchor in the James River, Virginia; 1808 trading in slaves was prohibited but not stopped; and only in 1860 the last smuggler in slaves "the Wanderer" was captured, just as its human freight was being landed on this very "Jekyl Island."

Naturally the old rhythm has changed in the course of time, just as the melodies, the instruments and the entire life of the colored people has changed. One idea prevalent is, that Rag-time has been developed out of the Czardas of the Gypsy, the Spanish Sarabande, the Cuban Habanera, and that it was greatly influenced, in singing at least, by that peculiar grace note in the Scotch Folks tunes, known as the "Scotch Snap." But such comparisons can only be applied to the products of the "professional rag-time composers" and to their products known as "raggers."

The original rag-time of the South is something entirely different and proclaims its originality and passion through means of its fascinating effectiveness. Now it has spread over all North America.
The resident-negro of our cities, who is either a servant, waiter, driver or musician has carried his songs and original rhythm into every nook and corner. Usually he does not play the piano, but rather an instrument of the mandolin class, preferably the Banjo. This instrument is to the Negro what the zither is to the Tyrolean; it has somewhat of the tonal quality of the Mandolin, only deeper and more resonant, and like the Guitar serves principally for the accompaniment of songs. But such rag-time as we hear in the Variety theatres and Common Music halls has lost considerable of its peculiar originality and just as the Negro songs, has become more vulgar, machine-like and common-place. Small wonder that about a year ago the American Federation of Musicians declared war against Rag-time, owing to the degrading influence it commenced to exert on our public musical taste. If we only had some substitute to put in its place in this country, where we possess no higher class folks music of our own, and where we only boast of a few expressive and beautiful folks-songs! Compared to our local operatic attempts and Sousa marches, Rag-time certainly shows more character.

But on the other hand there is no magic connected with it. As its name implies, Rag-time is no special style of composition, but merely a rhythm. Every melody can be transformed into Rag-time, providing we tear its rhythm to tatters. It is primarily based upon the principle of syncopation. Similar to the Hungarian Gypsy music-of which we find the grandest example in the Allegro Eroico of Liszt's Fourteenth Rhapsody-the principle beat of the bar is frequently preceded by a grace note or followed by one. Where it would be but natural for us to form a melody for a two-quarter beat in this fashion:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ragtime transforms it thus} \\
\text{But the Negro is not content with this. A form of time as the following:}
\end{align*}
\]
be treated by him as shown below:

![Musical notation](image1)

But at the same time his left hand, or one of his colleagues may join him on his mandolin in this fashion:

![Musical notation](image2)

while a third may join them with still another variety of rhythm:

![Musical notation](image3)

Therefore, to the principle of syncopation must be added another one, which may be designated as that of willfulness. In this way it may be easily understood, what endless varieties and irregularities are brought about in tonal volume and character through the combination of the above mentioned rhythmic variations. A single player may also bring these about, by avoiding the natural beats of a bar as much as possible and accenting in between in an eccentric a manner as he can; somewhat like the small drum in our military marches, but of course not in such a monotonous style. It is more than perusable to me, that our nerves can hardly withstand such music. Involuntarily the body will strive to oppose and balance the weakly accented principal beats of the bar. This may also be observed in German, Hungarian and Norwegian marches as well as in many of the minuets, mazurkas and waltzes of the Viennese, especially Franz Schubert, who had a special liking for syncopated notes and who was nearly always in the habit of accenting the second quarter in three-quarter time. Therefore Schubert is really one of the great composers, in the works of whom we may find something similar to Rag-time. Let us quote the second movement of his sonata Op. 53 (Con moto.) the constant alternation of syncopated eighths and sixteenths, can, if played mechanically and in somewhat accelerated time, make a listener quite as nervous as the bona fide rendition of Rag-time.

Therefore, as already mentioned, there is no magic connected with it, although a European will never succeed to produce anything
near to genuine Rag-time. But the above quoted allusion to Schubert proves, that Rag-time is not to be condemned in every particular. Probably an unexpected prince will appear some day who like Liszt and Brahms, in the case of Hungarian music, will transplant this low class of Folk-music from the boards of the Variety stage to those of the Concert podium.

1906 - METRONOME - OCT. - NEGRO MELODIES OF SCOTCH ORIGIN

There are, however, many of the finest negro 'spirituals and shots' constructed upon other scales, the result no doubt of local influences. There is, however, another reason which lends force to the argument. It is in the sudden syncopations, in other words 'Scotch catch or snap,' found in both the Scotch and negro music. This may have suggested the so-called 'rag-time' attributed to the negro, which recently reached so much exaggeration in the 'coon-songs' seems to me a fallacy promulgated by Anton Dvorak and others to designate negro music, the national music of America. Because the music is not national at all, so long as it is restricted to a few less enlightened colored people and they chiefly local. (from the "Literary Digest.")

1911 - VARIETY - DEC 23 - RAGTIME vs. CLASSICAL

I do not concede that 'ragtime' is not high grade music - in fact, quite the contrary. So-called 'ragtime' is merely a syncopation of melody of almost any kind.

AUGUST - 1912 - ORCHESTRA MONTHLY

THE ETHICS OF RAGTIME - A new "Websterian" dictionary gives as a definition of ragtime, "syncopated music, characteristic of negro melodies," which is about as clearly concise as to define the horse as energized pub, characteristic of carts that are not pushed. Ragtime, to be sure, is a form of syncopation, and one of the most beautiful of syncopated passages occurs in the solo "With Verdure Clad" from Haydn's Creation, but the latter is never classified as "ragtime," although it may be a sublimated example of it.

1913 - MUSICAL OPINION & MUSICAL TRADE REVIEW - FEB.

"RAG-TIME" on PARNASSUS - "There is nothing new under the sun," said the wise man of old, and the present craze for eccentric
rhythm is but one more reminder of the fact. It is also a proof that there is something in a name, despite the Shakespearean dictum. Syncopation is of course one of the oldest of musical devices, yet under its proper name and used artistically it has so far left the public cold. Vulgarized however and called "rag-time," it has sent nine-tenths of English and American people agog. While all public crazes are of interest to the student of human nature, this particular one is specially so to the musician, since it is surely the first time that the public has gone mad over a mere musical artifice; though, as I shall show later, something of the kind happened in the eighteenth century, and them curiously enough the craze was caused by a kindred rhythm. Still, the vogue was not to be compared to the present rage for stuttering and hiccoughing measures.

One is never surprised at the public showing a strong preference for any particular musical forms, but to lose one's head over a mere matter of accent! It is on a par with some of the ridiculous catchwords that from time to time take the town by storm,-those apparently meaningless questions that make the boy in the street a terror and reduce the most ready witted of his victims to impotent rage. Just now, rag-time fills such a place in our corporate life. All, face such sober sides as you and I, are bitten. Why it has so suddenly captured us who shall say? It has been a familiar feature in the strains of the music hall for some years without attracting very much attention. Indeed, it has quite a respectable past history, as we shall see. There is no denying its appeal, though like other good things one may have too much of it. The present boom will have served a good purpose, however, if it drives home to our composers and performers-and especially our singers-the importance of rhythm.

To begin with, what is it? My Grove tells me that it is "a modern term of American origin signifying in the first instance broken rhythm in melody, especially a sort of continuous syncopation. 'Rag-time tunes' is the name given in the States to those airs which are usually associated with the so-called 'coon' songs or lyrics, which are supposed to depict negro life in modern America." It may be added that the peculiar rhythm is to be found not only in 'coon' songs but in practically all religious songs popular among Negroes in the southern states before the abolition of slavery. Oliver Ditson's publish several collections of these under the title of "Jubilee songs." One of the most interesting of the works of Coleridge-Taylor is a collection of "Twenty-four Negro
melodies." Of the twenty-four melodies, sixteen are religious plantation songs or "spirituals" as they were called. In almost every case, rag-time rhythm is a prominent feature. I have just been comparing them with an album claiming to contain "the latest rag-time successes," and a comparison supplies yet another proof—if such were needed—that the mob never lays an appreciative hand on art without leaving traces of its grimy paw.

There is the widest of distances between these pathetic songs of slavery (which were sung with swaying bodies and with religious fervor at camp revival meetings) and the vulgar tunes with their ugly titles that are just now a public obsession. As an instance of a melody with great emotional and harmonic possibilities and as a good example of sustained syncopation, take "Oh He Raise a Poor Lazarus:"

Here is a phrase from "Wade in the water," the first bar of which is by no means easy to sing:

while I have not so far discovered any piece of music hall rag-time with a lilt to beat the song commencing:
Further examples of such religious songs may be found in Grove's Dictionary: "Negro music of the United States."

How far these songs owe their origin to Africa is a debatable point. Probably the rhythmical peculiarities only hail from thence, as many of the melodies show decided traces of civilized influence. Some are curiously Scotch in idiom. The rhythms are often very difficult, but these dusky singers are credited with a very highly developed feeling for rhythm, due probably to their accompaniments consisting mainly of such primitive percussive effects as the clapping of hands, stamping of feet and the clacking of bones or pieces of wood. The banjo seems to have been very little used. (Sic. editors bold added)

As I said above, it is not easy to see why the public should go suddenly mad over a rhythmical peculiarity that was well known in England even before the day of the nigger minstrel. It must be nearly-if not quite-a half century ago that the Jubilee Singers were touring Europe, singing genuine plantation songs and hymns. What is still more odd is the apparently sudden discovery of the fascination of rag-time. The power and width of its appeal are shown by the fact of its existing in almost all folk music. The form most familiar to us Britishers is of course that known as the "Scotch Snap." It is not without interest at the present time to recall the fact that in the time of Burney the musical world was suffering from it in pretty much the same way as we are now from its American cousin. The historian, writing of the Italian opera in 1748, complains that there was too much of the "Scots catch or cutting short of the first of two notes in a melody," blaming especially Cocchi, Perez, and Jomelli for being lavish with the "snap." Later, popular song writers such as Hook made liberal use of the trick and probably not a few songs since called Scotch were produced in this way. For example, "Within a mile of Edinburgh Town," for all Caledonian flavor imparted to it by the "sea'," was born on the wrong side of the Tweed, having been composed by this same Hook and sung by Mrs. Wrigthen at Vauxhall Gardens in 1780. Even Handel could not escape the infection, as the most cursory examination of his instrumental music will show.
While there is considerable difference between rag-time and the "snap," they are both alike in being manifestations of the popular love of spicy rhythm. No folk music is without it. European examples are now so well known that quotation is unnecessary. Plenty of examples of real rag-time are to be found in the Hungarian Rhapsodies of Liszt, in the dances of Brahms and in Grieg's arrangements of Norwegian melodies. Here is a "Scotch snap" from a less familiar source:

![West African Folksong](image)

This liking for disturbed accent is by no means confined to the worldly-minded. There are plenty of examples to be found in church music of all periods. Even plainsong had some dalliance with it, as in such passages as:

![Commonplace of Plainchant](image)

which is a commonplace of plainchant. Here is one from the old German tune "Es ist ein' Ros' entspunger:

![Old German Tune](image)

while the ancient English carol tune, "This endris nyght," has for its last line:

![English Carol Tune](image)

A rhythm often found in the early versions of some old psalm tunes. Indeed, the original forms of many of our most popular early hymn tunes present us with some interesting rhythms. The wholesale simplification to which they have been subjected is a loss. They looked difficult, and for that reason they were ruthlessly made to fit the Victorian church musician's idea of what a hymn tune should be. But the difficulty is more apparent than real; and I have heard some rhythmical curiosities taken up quite quickly by congregations and
enjoyed on fuller acquaintance. After all, why should people who can pick up the latest catchy popular song find any difficulty with such a passage as this line from the Generan Psalter, 1551:

But you may be sure that the average hymnbook editor would feel it incumbent on him to turn the eighth and ninth notes into crotchets.

Nor should it be forgotten that to this feature in popular music we musicians owe much. This displaced accent, taken in hand by the great composers, has been the basis of some of their finest effects. One can scarcely imagine classical music without cross rhythm and syncopation, or curtailing, extension and overlapping of phrases, all being developments of this germ. Its charm lies almost entirely in its capacity for surprising; and it is this quality of the unexpected and even incongruous that makes it especially suitable for humorous purposes, though it can be sinister enough on occasion. It is not easy to explain the difference; but it may be said that, while rag-time is syncopation, syncopation is not always rag-time. Still, many pages of the great composers contain music that is as pure rag-time as any so labeled. For example, the opening of the main theme of the second and third "Leonora" Overture would surely answer to this description:

But would your music hall habitué, be excited when later on Beethoven uses the rhythm of the first bar for twenty-three bars in succession? Not a whit. He would know that he was listening to classical music and his frame of mind would be appropriately chastened. Call the same figure rag-time and let it be banged and screamed out by some American comedians and he will be duly roused. So, as I said before, there is something in a name after all.
Apropos the difference between rag-time and syncopation, I should say that this figure, also from "Leonora" No. 3: is better described by the latter than the former term, though I should be sorry to be suddenly asked why. I can only say that I feel in my bones that it is so; just as surely as I feel that this, from "Die Meistersinger" Overture:

![Rag-time Example]

is rag-time, albeit very expressive, thanks largely to the bebung in the first bar. Here, however, are two extraordinary rhythms of Wagner that are just as certainly not ragtime:

![Wagner Rhythms]

Here is a teaser from "Gotterdammerung:"

![Gotterdammerung Teaser]

One wonders how often at rehearsal the weary players have found themselves drawing on the title for a due expression of their feelings!

Perhaps no one composer's works give us the germ and the fully developed result more completely than those of Bach. In his numerous little dances are to be found examples of just the little catch in the rhythm that belongs to folk music, while his mastery of complexity needs no mention. I may be allowed however to call your attention to the Fifth Partita, the Sarabande and Minuetto of which are specially interesting examples of rhythm. Surely the scheme of the latter must have caused astonishment. I can recall nothing similar in Bach or in any other composer of that period:

![Bach Examples]
And so on for fifty bars.

The whole subject of rhythm is so interesting that volumes could be written on it. I must pull up, lest I find myself in the toils of a most fascinating theme. My object in these desultory remarks is to remind some of my brother musicians who may feel inclined to curse rag-time and all its works, that the thing itself is a pleasing device which has existed from the early days of music and is moreover one to which composers have been indebted for many fine effects. I will give you one last strain and ask you to guess the composers;

There! A piece of pure rag-time, if ever there was-naked and not ashamed. The composer? No, he is not American or English. French, did you say? You are getting warm now. It is so unlike the composer that you are hardly likely to guess,-Debussy! It is the opening of the last number in his "Children's Corner"-a piece called "Golliwog's Cake Walk"-wherein you will find plenty of piquant rhythm and abundant humor. Surely, after these examples, rag-time may be allowed to peg out a claim in some humble corner of the Parnassian slopes?

1913 - THE CAENZA - SEPT. - SOMETHING ABOUT RAGTIME

Today there are probably a hundred persons who know something about music-to the extent of singing, playing some instrument or operating a player-piano or phonograph, to every one of twenty years ago. And what has brought about this musical growth? What single factor is most responsible for this condition?

Beyond all doubt it is due to the extreme popularity of the "ragtime," light and "popular" melodies that have had such a vogue during the last decade. It is not the writer's purpose to champion all the light and trashy music that has been, and is being put upon the market every day, for much of it does not even deserve a first reading. But it is his wish to protest against the almost wholesale condemnation of everything not bearing the stamp of so-called legitimacy; for light music certainly serves a purpose when it gives pleasure to a multitude of people.
The writer, for one, is in favor of restricting the word *ragtime* to its original definition, as meaning that time or rhythm in which the dominating and characteristic feature is *syncopation*.

Syncopation is almost as old as musical composition, and was frequently used by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and many other great composers. It appears in their compositions, however, only to produce certain occasional effects, never as a feature. It was reserved for America and the enlightened twentieth century to give it predominant importance! In commenting on this subject some fifteen years ago, the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* said: "Ragtime is not new—it was written by southern musicians, and whistled, sung and danced by the Southern Negro fifty years ago. In what shape the jerky, peculiar rhythm called 'ragtime' first appeared in this country is not known, but from the testimony of musical experts it was a wildly savage affair until harmonized and made melodious by French and Spanish-Creole influences."

Probably the first published composition in which syncopation was the characteristic feature was, "The Pasquinade," by Louis Moreau Gottschalk, the famous American pianist who lived in New Orleans. This was written in the early fifties, and was such a novelty and of such high musical value, that it was extensively used by concert pianists, and is seen on programs even at the present day.

The term "ragtime" (probably a contraction of ragged time) was not coined until about twenty years ago, but it has had a very active existence since that time, and shows no immediate signs of being obliterated. "The Mobile Buck," a peculiar "stop time" Negro dance, popular about two generations ago, was one of the first numbers of this character to become the rage, and in its wake came "The Darkey's Dream" (still well liked) which contains considerable syncopation, though it is not strictly a ragtime composition. Soon after this Kerry Mills' "Rastus on Parade," "Georgia Camp Meeting" and "Whistling Rufus" swept the country (England as well) and American ragtime was thoroughly and irrevocably launched.

These compositions had no sooner been placed upon the market than other composers and publishers, realizing the demand for this sort of music, forthwith undertook to meet and nurture it. To attempt to chronicle the compositions that have made ragtime history would be an interminable and all but impossible task. They seem to have been hurled at the public at the rate of several a day ever since.
RAGTIME - A pernicious Evil and Enemy of True Art. - by Leo Oehmler - Ragtime music is chiefly a matter of rhythm and not much a matter of melody or fine harmony

It is based almost exclusively upon syncopated time. Elson's Music Dictionary defines Syncope as follows: "An unequal division of the time, or notes; irregular accent; binding the last note of one bar to the first note of the next; accented notes occurring on the unaccented part of a bar."

"Syncopation is an artificial accent, an interruption of the natural pulsation of the music."

"It can be produced by giving an accent where none is expected, by taking away the accent from a point where it is expected, or by both methods combined."

"The natural rhythm must be restored after the syncopation has been used for a short time, otherwise the ear will accept the artificial accent as a natural one and the effect of syncopation be lost. Syncopations in accompaniments must be strong to be effective."

Now, this manner of note contraction, by cutting off part of the value of one note and giving it to the following note, thereby creating a restless pulse beat is probably as old as the art of music itself and has been used by great composers in all ages. But their genius determined to a nicety just how and when to use it to produce certain desirable emotional or dramatic effects.

In the hands of a superior composer who is a master of all the devices of composition, melodic, harmonic, contrapuntal and architectural design in general, syncopated rhythm becomes an unlimited resource for surprising and delightful effects, especially in the domains of operatic and orchestral music.

But in the hands of the average ragtime composer it becomes merely a vehicle for the exploitation of the rhythm itself, often with frantic attempts to intensify its peculiarities by eccentric perversions of melody and harmony.
By these popular exploiters of the rhythm, a noble melody, beautiful harmony, interesting ideas and clever transformations of themes are usually absent factors.

The composer of ragtime music is only too frequently an illiterate musician, a devotee of the dance hall or cabaret and be it candidly stated, his inspiration does not come from above as a Heaven-sent message, but only too often is born of fire borrowed from a flask or the inspiration of a rendezvous in the underworld.

1914 - Musical Observer – Sept. – Ragtime

The word syncopation is derived from "Syncope," a medical term, meaning, "a heart beating unevenly through excessive agitation, or diseased in some way."

1915 - RAGTIME REVIEW - AUGUST - WHAT ABOUT RAGTIME?

In the following story by T. Fred Henry, the celebrated band master of Des Moines, La., much will be found of interest to the lover of ragtime. Mr. Henry's remarks are breezy, direct and to the point and coming from a man of his standing are a great boost for the "cause."

The article follows:

When you stop to consider that in America and, in fact, all the civilized countries of the world ragtime is the musical craze of the hour, it must be admitted that it has something very fascinating about it.

To begin with, American ragtime is syncopated time and in its original form is therefore not a new-born idea, for you find it embodied in the works of almost all the old masters.

Of course it is then called syncopation, for none of the worshipers of the great Richard Wagner will admit that he ever wrote a bar of ragtime.

Well, maybe he did not, but he certainly missed a great chance to make an awful big hit with a lot of good fellows that cannot see anything else. Still if we are indebted to those great pioneers in the field of music for our waltz movements, barcarolles and other ballet and dance music, we should also give them some credit for the syncopated movement which forms the very foundation of ragtime.

But to the American composer belongs the real glory of having developed modern ragtime and that is something after all, for it is the most popular style of music ever written.
When I say it is popular I do not insist that its popularity is entirely due to its merits.

1915 - THE NEW REPUBLIC - OCT. 16 - RAGTIME

I haven't a notion whether ragtime is going to form the basis of an "American school of composition." But I am sure that many a native composer could save his soul if he would open his ears to this folk-music of the American city.

But the schools have their reply. "Ragtime is not new," they say. "It is merely syncopation, which was used by Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, and is good, like any other musical material, when it is used well." But they are wrong. Ragtime is not "merely syncopation." It is a certain sort of syncopation-namely, a persistent syncopation in one part conflicting with exact rhythm in another. But of course this definition is not enough. Ragtime has its flavor that no definition can imprison. No one would take the syncopation of a Haydn symphony to be American ragtime. "Certainly not," replies the indignant musician. Nor the syncopation of any recognized composer. But if this is so, then ragtime is new. You can't tell an American composer's "art-song" from any mediocre art-song the world over. (Permit me to pass over the few notable exceptions.) You can distinguish American ragtime from the popular music of any nation and any age. In the first instance the love of ragtime is a purely human matter. You simply can't resist it. I remember hearing a Negro quartet singing "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee," in a cafe, and I felt my blood thumping in tune, my muscles twitching to the rhythm. I wanted to paraphrase Shakespeare-

"The man who hath no ragtime in his soul, Who is not moved by syncopated sounds" and so on. If any musician does not feel in his heart the rhythmic complexities of "The Robert E. Lee" I should not trust him to feel in his heart the rhythmic complexities of Brahms.


On this same subject Drury Underwood in the "Chicago Record Herald" states:

"The origin of ragtime is referred to periodically by musicians as something probably African, but beyond
analysis. Wherein they are partly right and wholly wrong. Ragtime is African-no probably about it—and the analysis is simple, leading facts considered.

"Real ragtime on the piano, played in such a manner that it cannot be put in notes, is the contribution of the graduated negro banjo player who cannot read music."

"On the banjo there is a short string which is not fretted and which, consequently, is played open with the thumb. It is frequently referred to as "the thumb string." The colored performer, strumming in his own cajoling way, like to throw in a note at random and his thumb ranges over for this effect. When he takes up the piano the desire for the same effect dominates him, being almost second nature, and he reached for the open banjo string note with his little finger.

"Meanwhile he is keeping mechanically perfect time with his left hand. The hurdle with the right hand little finer throws the tune off its stride, resulting in syncopation. He is playing two different times at once.

"This explanation, unsupported, is logical. Moreover, it was given to the writer by Ben Harney, who was the first to play negro ragtime on the piano before polite audiences. Harney was frankly an expositor of negro themes and acquired them from that part of the country whence came May Irwin's song about "The New Bully." He introduced "Mr. Johnson, Turn me Loose," along with his ragtime and a perfect illustration of flat-footed buck dancing through the medium of a negro named Strap Hill.

1917 – LITERARY DIGEST – AUGUST 25 - THE APPEAL OF THE PRIMITIVE JAZZ

Jazz music is the delirium tremens of syncopation. It is strict rhythm without melody. To-day the jazz bands take popular tunes and rag them to death to make jazz. Beats are added as often as the delicacy of the player's ear will permit. In one-two time a third beat is interpolated. There are many half notes or less and many long-drawn, wavering tones. It is an attempt to reproduce the marvelous syncopation of the African jungle.

With these elastic unitary pulses any haphazard series by means of syncopation can be readily, because instinctively, coordinated. The result is that a rhythmic tune compounded of time and stress and pitch relations is created, the chief characteristic of which is likely to be
complicated syncopation. An arabesque of which is likely to be complicated syncopation. An arabesque of accentual differences, group-forming in their nature, is superimposed upon the fundamental time divisions,'

There is jazz precisely defined as a result of months of laboratory experiment in drum-beating and syncopation. The laws that govern jazz rule in the rhythms of great original prose, verse that sings itself, and opera of ultra modernity. 'Imagine Walter Peter, Swinburne, and Borodin swaying to the same pulses that rule the moonlit music on the banks of African rivers,'"

1917 - CURRENT OPINION - NOV. - THE GREAT AMERICAN COMPOSER-WILL HE SPEAK IN THE ACCENT OF BROADWAY

Even our imitative musicians admit that the one distinctive element which America has contributed to music is the so-called "ragtime." Ragtime, therefore, should be the basis, or at least one of the chief ingredients, of our national music. Indeed, ragtime, its champions say, reflects the soul of the American people. The "soil" of America is the pavement of its bustling cities; its "folk" is not the sluggish peasant but the nervous "hustler" of New York, Chicago or San Francisco.

It will be objected by musicians that ragtime is only a rhythm-not music but only one element of music. Technically it is known as "syncopation." You cannot found a school of music on syncopation.

The matter is not so easily dismissed. Mr. Van Vechten points out that Beethoven's Seventh symphony is largely based on a syncopated rhythm, and Schumann wrote hardly a piece without syncopation. He might have added that syncopation is the most distinctive factor in Scotch folk-music, one of the oldest musical traditions in the world. But ragtime is a different syncopation. It is not easily explained. Louis Hirsch tried to describe its peculiarity by saying that its 'melody and harmony are syncopated differently.' There are other complications. A writer in the London Times calls attention to the fact that "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee," tho written out in a rhythm of 8, is really a rhythm of 3 followed by a rhythm of 5, proceeding without warning into the normal rhythm of 8.

The fact is that ragtime is more than a mere rhythm. The rhythm is the creation of the American Negro who brought it with him from Africa, but the "ragtime" of to-day is of recent growth and it is not peculiar to the blacks. This "apotheosis of syncopation," as Mr. Van Vechten calls
it, is only the crude basis of the thing. The spirit of it, the exuberance, the nervousness, the irresistible urge, are the reflection of a national character. It is irresistible because it is genuine.

1918 - THE NEW MUSIC REVIEW - MARCH CONCERNING RAGTIME - by Daniel Gregory Mason

If the important matter in American music is not its expression of the American temper, but the peculiar technical feature, the special kind of syncopation we call the "rag rhythm," then the important matter in Hungarian music is not its fire but its "sharp fourth step." Beethoven ceases to be Teutonic when he uses Irish cadences in his Seventh Symphony, and Chopin is Polish only in his mazurkas and polonaises. Of course this will not do; and Mr. Moderwell, to do him justice, after remarking that "ragtime is not merely syncopation—it is a certain sort of syncopation," adds "But of course this definition is not enough. Ragtime has its flavor that no definition can imprison."

As for the rag rhythm itself, the sole distinctive feature of this music, it has undoubtedly something of real piquancy. The trick, it will be noted, is a syncopation of half-beats, arranged so as to pull bodily forward certain comparatively strong accents, those at the middle of the measures—a scheme to which words as well as melody conform. The left hand meanwhile gives the regular metrical division of the measure, and a writer in the London Times, defining ragtime as "a strongly syncopated melody superimposed on a strictly regular accompaniment," points out that "it is the combination of these two rhythms that gives 'ragtime' its character." This is perhaps not strictly true, since in some of the most effective bits of ragtime the metrical pulsation may give way momentarily to the syncopation, and everyone remembers those delightful times of complete silence in which the pulse is kept going mentally, to be finally confirmed by a crashing cadence. But it is usually the case that both time schemes, metrical and rhythmical, are maintained together. For this very reason we must question the contention of the champions of ragtime that its type of syncopation is capable of great variety, and even makes possible effects elsewhere unknown, a contention in support of which some of them have even challenged comparison of it with the rhythmic vigors of Beethoven and Schumann."

The subtlety of syncopation as an artistic device results from its simultaneous maintenance of two time-patterns, the rhythmic and the
metrical, in such a relation that the second and subordinate one, though never lost sight of, is never obtruded. The quasi-mechanical pulse of the meter is the indispensable background against which only can the freer oscillations of the rhythm outline themselves. The moment the sense of it is lost, as it is sometimes lost in those over-bold passages of Schumann where a displacement is too emphatically made or too long continued, the charm disappears. In the following from his "Faschingsschwant," for instance, the interest of the rhythmic accent on beat "three" lasts only so long as we oppose to it mentally a regular metric accent on "one." In the continuation of the passage, for which the reader is referred to the original, our minds are apt to "slip a stitch," so to speak, letting "three" and "one" coalesce. The moment this happens the passage becomes commonplace. But suppose, on the other hand, in the effort to maintain our sense of the meter, we strike the bass notes on each "one." Now equally, or indeed more than before, the charm is fled, and the passage rendered stale and unprofitable, through the actual presentation to the ear of so mechanical a reiteration. In short, the metrical scheme, has to be mentally maintained but actually so far as possible, eliminated. Looking back, in the light of these considerations, at "The Memphis Blues," we shall realize that whatever the pleasing eccentricity of the rhythm, so relentless a meter as we here find thumped out by the left hand cannot but quickly grow tiresome, as indeed it will be felt to be after a few repetitions.

Reference to another well-known theme of Schumann will reveal a further weakness of ragtime. The second theme of the finale of his concerto for piano runs as follows;
Here the indescribably delightful effect is evidently due not only to the purely rhythmic syncopation, but also to the fact that on the silent strong beat of every second measure harmony and melody as well as rhythm are so to speak "tied up," or suspended, in such a way that the syncopation is at the very heart of the whole musical conception, and cannot be omitted without annihilating the music. Beside such essential syncopation as this the mere pulling forward of certain notes, as in "The Memphis Blues," is seen to be superficial, an arbitrary dislocation which may disguise but cannot correct the triteness of the real melodic line. In fact, we seem here to have tracked ragtime to its lair and discovered what it really is. It is no creative process, like the syncopation of the masters, by which are struck forth new, vigorous, and self-sufficing forms, It is a rule of thumb for putting a "kink" into a tune that without such specious rehabilitation would be unbearable. It is not a new flavor, but a kind of curry or catsup strong enough to make the stale old dishes palatable to unfastidious appetites. Significant is it that, as the writer in the Times remarks, "In American slang to 'rag' a melody is to syncopate a normally regular time." The "rag" idiom can thus be put on and off like a mask; and in recent years we have seen thus grotesquely disguised, as the Mendelssohn Wedding March, for instance, in "No Wedding Bells for Me," many familiar melodies. To these it can give no new musical lineaments, but only distorts the old ones as with St. Vitus's dance.

Thus the technical limitations of ragtime which we have tried to analyze are seen to be in the last analysis the results and indices of a more fundamental shortcoming—an emotional superficiality and triviality peculiar to it. Ragtime is the musical expression of an attitude toward life only too familiar to us all, an attitude shallow, restless, avid of excitement, incapable of sustained attention, skimming the surface of
everything, finding nowhere satisfaction, realization, or repose. It is a meaningless stir about, a commotion without purpose, an epilepsy simulating controlled muscular action. It is the musical counter-part of the sterile cleverness we find in so much of our contemporary conversation, as well as in our theater and our books. No candid observer could deny the prominence in our American life of this restlessness of which ragtime is one expression. It is undoubtedly what most strikes superficial observation. The question is whether it is really representative of the American temper as a whole, or is prominent only as the froth is prominent on a glass of beer. Mr. Moderwell thinks the former: "I like to think," he says, "that ragtime is the perfect expression of the American city, with its restless bustle and motion, its multitude of unrelated details, and its underlying rhythmic progress toward a vague somewhere. As you walk up and down the streets of an American city you feel in its jerk and rattle a personality different from that of any European capital. This is American. Ragtime, I believe, expresses it. It is to-day the one true American music."

To such an idolatry of precisely the most hideous, inhuman, and disheartening features in our national and musical life a lover of music and a lover of America can only reply that, first, it is possible that America lies less on the surface than we think, possible that it is no more adequately represented by Broadway than France is represented by the Parisian boulevards, or England by the London music halls; but that, second, if indeed the land of Lincoln and of Emerson has degenerated until nothing remains of it but "jerk and rattle," then we at least are free to repudiate the false patriotism of "My country, right or wrong," to insist that better than bad music is no music, and to let our beloved art subside finally under the clangor of subway gongs and automobile horns, dead but not dishonored.

1918 - NEW MUSIC REVIEW - APRIL - NEGRO SPIRITUALS

Syncopation, that offshoot of rhythm, is employed extensively; ignorant people claim that the Negro invented syncopation. He neither invented syncopation, nor was he the first to use it. It existed long before he was brought in shackles to this country-examples may be found in the old Greek and Hebrew melodies. Syncopation was probably discovered by the first aborigine who beat on a hollow gourd with a thigh bone, and has been used ever since by "all nations that do dwell upon the face of the earth."
In the "Children's Corner" we find the initial experiment. "Gollyiwog's Cakewalk" (all the titles are in English) is the last of this little set for piano. Debussy has taken a single syncopation which he uses as the basis for the entire composition; and here he is wrong, for true "rag" changes its meter continually. Debussy's effect however is not monotonous-his ear was too sensitive to allow him to commit any such mistake-and the middle section drops the rhythmic figure for a while. This middle section is noteworthy for its delicate burlesque of the opening cello phrase of "Tristan." The Teutonic super-lover becomes the grotesque Gollyiwog surprised by new, sacred emotions; but these are soon swept aside by the syncopated cakewalk. In the first volume of "Preludes," Debussy again tries American effects, and again he thinks his result sufficiently important to place it last in the volume. "Minstrels" he calls it, again using an English title; and it is really only this that betrays its meaning. He is giving his impression of a black-face show; we hear the drum, the sentimental song, and so on, with a little phrase like a guffaw punctuating the music, just as the puns of the endmen punctuate the performance. But Debussy has written this music with a characteristic bit of daring; he has left syncopation entirely out of it. And therefore no American is likely to realize what is going on, unless he appreciates the title.

Syncopation

The phenomenon of syncopation to which Patterson has drawn experimental attention, "in itself, involves a complex of mental processes. The most essential part of the phenomenon seems to be that we keep our impression of a series of subjective time-intervals, regular, accelerating or retarding, but find a pleasure in marking the beats objectively, either by different forms of motion, such as foot-taps alternating with hand-taps, or by what appears at first as omission of objective marking for certain beats. As a matter of fact, this is usually nothing but the interpolation of some concealed form of motor reaction such as eye, throat, tongue, or breath movement, which alternates with a more visible movement, such as nodding or tapping or dancing" (31,p.4).
Stetson has described it in much the same terms. "Along with this precision of all the movements comes a tendency to beat a new rhythm. This accompanying rhythm is simpler and broader in character; it is a kind of long swell on which the speech movements ripple. This second rhythm may express itself in a new movement of hand, head, foot or body; when it has become more conscious, as in patting time to a dance or chant, it develops complicated forms, and a third rhythm may appear beside it, to mark the main stresses of the two processes. The negro patting time for a dance beats the third fundamental rhythm with his foot, while his hands pat an elaborate second rhythm to the primary rhythm of the dancers. This regulation of the movement by the coincidence of several rhythms is the cause of the striking regularity of the temporal relations" (51, p.465-6).

In Patterson's definition (31, p.4), syncopation is apparently manifested by the performer of the rhythm. Syncopation is used by Patterson in three senses, (1) as any full motor response (p. xix), (2) motor response in the performer of the rhythm (p.4), (3) a correlation of the 'unitary pulses' and objective stimulation in the observer (p.91). This analysis has shown that while there is coexistence, there is not necessarily correlation and rarely coincidence of the objective stimulation and the reflex response. syncopation in the third sense exists, but it is limited to a comparatively small field of rhythm.

Full motor response is not so evident in modern rhythm. As Patterson says, "Modern sophistication has inhibited many native instincts, and the mere fact that our conventional dignity usually forbids us to sway our bodies or to tap our feet when we hear effective music, has deprived us of unsuspected pleasures" (pg. xix). Patterson concludes: "What is left, then, but to conclude that the sentence which has in its structure the possibility of a maximum of rhythm must be capable of evoking in us a maximum of motor response? To test it, therefore, we must tap to it, nod to it, walk to it, sway to it, chop wood to it, if necessary. If it is easy for us to nod or tap, or, for that matter, hoe potatoes to these salient 'drum-songs'. the first degree of rhythmic excellence is obtained" (p. 15).

The contortions of the polar bear which Patterson has called 'prose' merely present syncopation of the muscular responses of various organs due to the pendulum rates of the organs. they are not, however, 'harmoniously but intricately regulated by the incessant unitary "flap! flap! flap!" of those great white feet' (32 p.261). Each is an independent
in its own sphere as the walking movement is in its sphere. The large body of literature on rhythm, then, is not invalidated by the 'new standard.' On the contrary, it is enriched by the hitherto experimentally unrecognized field of syncopation.

DECEMBER - MELODY JAZZ MUSIC AND THE MODERN DANCE

The attitude representative of that class of musicians which is the "nerves and sinews" of the profession towards "jazz" question was firmly and broadly expressed by Benton T. Bott, president of the American National Association, Masters of Dancing, who was recently in New York to attend the thirty-seventh annual convention of that association, at the Hotel Astor.

We do not recognize the term "jazz," which is purely a coined word," Mr. Bott told the Tribune. "We do, however, recognize syncopation, and we have nothing against certain forms of syncopated music. It can be played brilliantly if played right, and then again it can be played in another form so sensuous and evil that it harks clear back to the wild and irresponsible barbarism of the dark ages. We have tried to teach and preach moderation. Civilization has begun to revolt against the wrong kind of syncopation, this so-called 'jazz,' which during the more a unrestrained period of the war swept the country with a crop of immodesty in both song and dance in its wake. It first appeared on the stage, and eventually it audaciously entered the public dance hall and private ballroom alike.

AUGUST - LADIES HOME JOURNAL - DOES JAZZ PUT THE SIN IN SYNCOPATION

Many people classify under the title of "jazz" all music in syncopated rhythm, whether it be the ragtime of the American Negro or the czardas of the Slavic people. Yet there is a vast difference between syncopation and jazz. To understand the seriousness of the jazz craze, which, emanating from America, has swept over the world, it is time that the American public should realize what the terms ragtime and jazz mean; for the words are not synonymous, as so many people suppose.

The Elements of Music Out of Tune
Jazz is not defined in the dictionary or encyclopedia. But Groves' Dictionary of Music says that "ragtime" is a modern term of American origin, signifying in the first instance broken rhythm and melody, especially a sort of continuous syncopation." The encyclopedia Britannica sums up syncopation as "the rhythmic method of tying two beats of the same note into one tone in such a way as to displace the accent." Syncopation, this curious rhythmic accent on the short beat, is found in its most highly developed forms in the music of the folk who have been held for years in political subjection. It is, therefore, an expression in music of the desire for that freedom which has been denied to its interpreter. It is found in its most intense forms among the folk of all the Slavic countries, especially in certain districts of Poland and Russia, and also among the Hungarian gypsies.

For the same reason it was the natural expression of the American Negroes and was used by them as the accompaniment for their bizarre dances and cakewalks. Negro ragtime, it must be frankly acknowledged, is one of the most important and distinctively characteristic American expressions to be found in our native music. Whether ragtime will be the cornerstone of the American School of Music may be a subject for discussion; but the fact remains that many of the greatest compositions by past and present American composers have been influenced by ragtime. Like all other phases of syncopation, ragtime quickens the pulse, it excites, it stimulates; but it does not destroy.

What of Jazz? It is hard to define jazz, because it is neither a definite form nor a type of rhythm; it is rather a method employed by the interpreter in playing the dance or song. Familiar hymn tunes can be jazzed until their original melodies are hardly recognizable. Jazz does for harmony what the accented syncopation of ragtime does for rhythm. In ragtime the rhythm is thrown out of joint, as it were, thus distorting the melody; in jazz exactly the same thing is done to the harmony. The melodic line is disjointed and disconnected by the accenting of the partial instead of the simple tone, and the same effect is produced on the melody and harmony which is noticed in syncopated rhythm. The combination of syncopation and the use of these enharmonic partial tones produces a strange, weird effect, which has been designated "jazz."

The jazz orchestra uses only those instruments which can produce partial, enharmonic tones more readily than simple tones-such
as the saxophone, the clarinet and the trombone, which share honors with the percussion instruments that accent syncopated rhythm. The combination of the syncopated rhythm, accentuated by the constant use of the partial tones sounding off-pitch, has put syncopation too off-key. Thus the three simple elements of music-rhythm, melody and harmony-have been put out of tune with each other.

APRIL – THAT JAZZ WAIL AGAIN (1922)

The PIANO TRADE MAGAZINE does not believe that the verily-orchestrated syncopated music roll is the best thing for the player piano industry. But at the same time it appreciates the fact that tastes differ, and that a large majority of roll buyers have been purchasing the heavily orchestrated music rolls. Men like Thomas M. Pletcher of the Q. R. S. Music Company and Arthur A. Friestedt of the United States Music Company, have testified to this, and as both are business men of sound judgment they would not tell us that these rolls were good sellers if it were not so. They believe in giving the public what it wants, and if the public did not want it calls the "jazz" roll, Mr. Pletcher and Mr. Friestedt would be the first ones to abandon it.

This publication is not putting up an alibi for either "jazz" music or the over-orchestral syncopations in music roll form. Its own attitude on this question was stated in the preceding paragraph. But it does believe that the professional reformers are trying to educate the public in the wrong way. To intimate, for instance, that most people who will listen to syncopated music are rotten to the core, is ridiculous. Syncopated music is not necessarily "jazz," and if rendered on a music roll it cannot be "jazz." If virtue in this country were to be gauged by the type of music preferred by the mass of people, and it were assumed that lovers of syncopated music represented the class lacking in virtue, only an infinitesimal percentage of the people would be found to be virtuous.

MAY - THE MUSICIAN - SYNCOPATED RHYTHM VS. "RAG-TIME" by A. J. Goodrich.

The subject of "Rag-Time" has never interested me, and in company with other musicians I have, heretofore, ignored it. But now it is my desire to correct an impression which seems to prevail among certain people, to wit: That rag-time is a musical peculiarity invented by the recent makers of coon songs and other variety-hall concoctions.
This is not true. Rag-Time is merely a common form of syncopation in which the rhythm is distorted in order to produce a more or less ragged, hysterical effect.

In the theory of Interpretation I have already demonstrated that syncopated rhythms are used by classic composers for some of the following purposes:

1. As a relief and contrast to the monotony of regular rhythms
2. As a means of expression or of bringing forward two opposing principles - dual rhythms
   being suggestive of strife or contention.
3. As local color, by imitating the rhythm of certain national songs or dances in which
   some form of syncopation is a characteristic feature.

That old Spanish dance, the Zarabanda, illustrates the early use of syncopation. The accented second beat was suggested by the poses of the dancers and therefore the syncopation served a distinct purpose, as it does in the more modern polonaise and bolero.

In the compositions of Bach and Handel we find that syncopated rhythms are an inherent part of the music design; Haydn used them more for the sake of variety. In the works of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert syncopation serves both purposes, especially in their symphonies.

Every pianist will recall the leading motive in Beethoven's Sonata in G, beginning like this:

![Beethoven Sonata in G motive](image1)

The composition of Chopin and Schumann contain innumerable instances of unusual rhythmic arrangement and combination. An interesting example occurs in the second period of the Schummerlied by Schumann, Op. 124, XVI, where the melody is divided thus:

![Schumann Schummerlied Op. 124 XVI](image2)

This is much more individual and expressive than the common arrangement,
would have been. A similar effect occurs in the A flat waltz by Chopin, Op. 42. The melody is virtually in 2-4, while the accompaniment remains in triple measure. Syncopated and dual rhythms occur prominently in many Spanish dances, especially in the bolero and the Cuban dance, Habanera. In the latter this rhythm is of frequent occurrence:

"Sourenir de la Havanne," "El Cocaye," and the famous "O jos criollos," by Gottschalk, illustrate this peculiarity very faithfully. But the rag-time "compositioners" have undoubtedly found their most direct source of supply in the Hungarian song-dances. In several works I have described and illustrated the Czardas, which is always syncopated. The slow movement (lassan) is especially so:

This dates back to the time of the Cythians and owes its origin to the unusual syllabic arrangement of the words sung to the dance. This peculiarity has been observed in the songs of Scotland and English writers call it the "Scotch snap."

Also the negro melodies contain this iambic feature. Dvorak, in his so-called "New World Symphony," uses these displaced accents frequently, as thus in the second theme:

This is similar to a once famous Southern plantation song and bear evidence of its Ethiopian origin.
Indeed, it scarcely possible to mention a standard composer who has not employed some form of syncopation in certain of his compositions.

I have observed that the principal charm of Nevin's popular Serenade ("Good-nigh, good-night, beloved:) is owing to the peculiar form of syncopation in the melody, thus:

![Musical Note](image)

But for this genial touch of inspiration the song would be quite commonplace, as the melodic features are not remarkable. This assumes somewhat the character of a free rubato effect. (When I told the late composer of my liking for this serenade, I remember his somewhat incredulous smile as he replied, "Why, I composed that when I was a boy.)

In conclusion, it is evident that none of the so-called rag-time songs or dances is, in any sense, new or original, but that they are adaptations and perversions of the czardas, the Habanera and the southern plantation song. Also, that unusual rhythmic combinations and syncopations have been used so extensively by high-class composers that it is not possible for coon song composers to invent anything along these lines.

MAY 6 - LITERARY DIGEST - "TO JAZZ" OR "TO RAG" -

Ragtime and syncopation are two words that have been grievously misused, says Mr. Paul Whiteman whose orchestral leadership in the playing of popular airs is recognized as among the foremost. "Syncopation sounds important," he tell us in the New York Tribune, "To gives a sense to the ignorant of participation in the world's scientific knowledge." But he pulls us up.

Every community has its own ragtime pets. These are the fellows that are killing American music and standing in the way of your development.

Syncopation no longer rules American music. Syncopation, of which ragtime is the most familiar form, as we use it in the United States, is an African inheritance. It has descended to us, on one hand, direct from Africa, and on the other, through Spain and Spanish-American civilization.
Syncopation still exists in American music; in fact, you can not hear more than a very few bars of any popular composition without its cropping up. But to-day it is no longer a necessary thing. It has been retained much as an ornament. It gives to all American music much of its peculiar character. But if you listen close and look sharp you will note that few dances of to-day depend wholly on syncopation. The fox trot is being danced (this is in 1922) to the rhythm 1 and 2, 3, and 4, which is not syncopation. It is the rhythm of the old Greek poetic dactyl, older than Christianity.

JUNE 1 - MUSICAL COURIER - JAZZ MUSIC AND ITS RELATION TO AFRICAN MUSIC by Nicholas G. Taylor of Sierra Leone, South Africa.

In New York, at least, this "jazz" music has been the subject of much controversy of late, both by the press and the pulpit - some denouncing, others commending.

But what is the matter with this, music that has evoked so much comment? Has syncopation never been used in music before with such frequency, or is it because the harmonies sometimes employed are rancid and sea-sick, as Wagner's music was described by some in the latter part of the last century? When the attention is directed to the study of Bach's well-tempered clavier more syncopation will be observed than has ever been used in the whole realm of "jazz" music; and as for the harmonies, "jazz" composers are well conservative when it is remembered that some composers of the present day use what I may term chords of the "twenty-second," and abandon as common place those of the seventh and ninth.

More Syncopation

"Jazz" music makes use of syncopation to a marked degree more than African music pretends to do. It is regular in its accents and the rhythmical contents of its bars; it is mostly of the four-and-eight bar period. All these things, together with the question of idiom, are so foreign to the native African that he scarcely recognizes any connection between "jazz" music and his own. On the other hand, African music is cross-rhythmic, its use of syncopation is decidedly moderate and the rhythmical contents of many a bar of African music is as irregular as it could be. Again, owing to the use of cross rhythms, the periods and
phrases are explained in a different method from that employed in "jazz" music.

The American Negroes brought over from Africa this music with its cross rhythms. Here they were surrounded with a different idiom; they had to face different conditions and the atmosphere in which they lived was a decided contrast to the environments that they had about them in their native land. The result is that they began to reduce African music to suit their new conditions and this is how they did it:

JAN. - MELODY -

FRANK WESTPHAL, CHICAGO EXPONENT OF JAZZ

Writer of Popular Music Maintains that Variety and Punch Essential to Successful Presentation of Syncopated Music by A. C. E. Schonemann - If jazz music has done nothing more than to be the fore-runner and impetus that has ushered in syncopated music, it has more than justified its existence if one is to accept the opinion of Frank Westphal, who draws his conclusions from fifteen years' experience in orchestra work, during which time he has been writing popular music, producing phonograph records and playing practically every form of engagement known to the profession.

"Jazz music has had its day. Today it is a nonentity in the popular field and the music that many people regard as jazz is in reality syncopation of the highest form," said Westphal in a recent interview. "Jazz was born in the Southland, and when it came North it was served up with piano and drums. Later came the saxophone and other instruments, including the cornet, trombone, banjo and big basses. With this growth came the special arrangements, and then the finest forms of syncopation. Today, the man who is skilled in the art of writing and bringing out most effectively the various instruments is usually the most successful in entertaining the public.

"Syncopation is typical of the American people. It represents their thoughts and sentiments, and it has the dash and pep that is expressive and so characteristic of our people. The average American loves variety, and whether he visits a vaudeville house or a cabaret he insists upon diversity of music, in dancing, in the numbers on the program and in fact in all entertainment. In so far as this applies to the popular dance orchestra it has necessitated the writing of original arrangements and the use of new and striking ideas in these arrangements."
Mr. Westphal contends that the secret of success in playing syncopation lies in the use of unusual scores, in the introduction of novel effects and the featuring of one or more instruments in such a manner as to produce eccentric harmonies, quick breaks and strange counter melodies. The most successful exponents of syncopation today, he says, are the men who can take the themes of popular numbers and reconstruct them, injecting unique ideas and making them palatable to suit public taste.

Men who are expert in arranging are in demand if they can supply the ideas," said Mr. Westphal. "Syncopation is not made up of freakish effects and trick playing, and the scores that are being used today call for men who can play entirely from manuscript and who are artists in every respect. The modern dance orchestra has drawn many men from the ranks of symphony orchestras because the opportunities are greater and the financial return is far in excess of that enjoyed by most symphony men. Another factor is that symphony men with their training are more competent to handle the manuscripts that are so often written out hurriedly and set upon the stands at the last minute.

The strange effects and uncanny tricks that have been used by some of the old jazz orchestras are for the most part a memory. They have been revamped until the supply has been exhausted, and many leaders are now striving for musical coloring and shadings rather than the use of extreme musical effects. The music that pleases today is popular because of its strange harmonies, and greater than this fact is the manner in which the orchestra presents the number.

JULY/DEC - DIAL - TOUJOURS JAZZ

Strictly speaking jazz music is a new development-something of the last two years, arriving long after jazz had begun to be played. I mean that ragtime is now so specifically written for the jazz band that it is acquiring new characteristics. Zez Confrey, Irving Berlin, Fred Fisher, and Walter Donaldson among others are creating their work as jazz; the accent in each bar, for example is marked in the text—the classic idea of the slight accent on the first note of each bar went out when ragtime came in; then ragtime created its own classic notion—the propulsion of the accent from the first (strong) note to the second (weak). In jazz-ragtime the accent can occur anywhere in the bar and is attractively unpredictable. Rhythmically-essentially-jazz is ragtime since it is based on syncopation and even without jazz orchestration we
should have had the full employment of precise and continuous syncopation which we find in jazz now, in *Pack Up Your Sins*, for example. It is syncopation, too, which has so liberated jazz from normal polyphony, from perfect chords, that M. Darius Milhaud is led to expect from jazz a full use of polytonic and atonic harmonies; he notes that in *Kitten on the Keys* there exists already a chord of the perfect major and the perfect minor. The reason why syncopation lies behind all this is that it is fundamentally an anticipation or a suspension in one instrument (or in the bass) of what is going to happen in another (the treble); and the moment in which a note occurs prematurely or in retard is, frequently, a moment of discord on the strong beat. A dissonance sets in which may or may not be resolved later. The regular use of syncopation therefore destroyed the fallacy (as I hold it) of the perfect ear; and this is one reason why Americans are often readier to listen to modern music than peoples who haven't got used to dissonance in their folk and popular music.

FEBRUARY - THE FLUTIST - JAZZ-ITS ORIGIN, EFFECT,

The bridge tunes between the strictly instrumental "rags" and the modern "dance-song" era, were *Alexander's Ragtime Band* and the *Oceana Roll*. Both of these songs were popular from 1910 to 1912. Many musicians consider the former was the real forerunner of jazz, but I feel more like laying that doubtful honor to the *Oceana Roll*, as this, I believe was the first popular song to introduce double syncopation.

JUNE - METRONOME - RHYTHMIC SYMPHONIC SYNCOPATION vs. MODERN JAZZ By Marian Gillespie.

(Editor's Note: Marian Gillespie, writer of the famous song hit, "When You Looked into the Heart of a Rose," magazine writer and playwright won the prize recently offered by Paul Specht over radio for the best one hundred word letter on Syncopated Classics vs. Popular Jazz.

Hundreds of manuscripts were submitted from all parts of the United States and Canada. They were written by people from all walks of life including celebrated writers and contained many interesting arguments concerning Jazz and Classics. Miss Gillespie's essay was
adjudged the best and a Columbia Portable Phonograph together with a set of Paul Specht's records was delivered to her as the prize.

Miss Gillespie is not only noted for song successes but enjoys a name as an older magazine writer, and playwright of wide repute. Her prize winning essay follows:

Until Rhythmic Symphonic Syncopation was given to a dance loving public, the classics of the Old Masters were little known, and never appreciated, except by a select few.

Modern Jazz, on the other hand, becomes very monotonous. There is no thread of melody running through the warp and woof of the orchestration to take away from the flatness of the pattern. No Melodic highlights, in other words. One modern jazz number would never be distinguished from the other, were it not for the title, and even then the title could be changed and the music be repeated without detection, except in rare instances. "Heart Broken Rose" being one of the exceptions.

While it seems a sacrilege to "rag the classics" Rhythmic Symphonic Syncopation is an entertainment of rare merit, and an excellent education acquainting the thousands with the musical classics of Bach, Brahms and other old masters, by presenting their works in a manner which delight the ear of the masses.

**JULY - METRONOME - FRANCE’S BAN ON JAZZ - Vincent Lopez**

Syncopation in Symphonies

In my endeavors to place a finer on the exact spot in music that we can 'jazz,' I have found a process of elimination very convenient. There are many movements in the greatest symphonies that are syncopated, yet by no stretch of the imagination can we call them 'jazz'; the weird music of the North American Indians, based on singsong vocal melodies with tom-tom accompaniment, is bizarre enough, but it is not 'jazz'; the Oriental whine of the musette as used for the dances of the whirling Dervishes cannot be called 'jazz'; the languid airs of Hawaiian origin are not in that category; a Strauss waltz, a Sousa march, the gayest tune of a Gilbert and Sullivan light opera, an Argentine tango, a minuet, polka, quadrille, bolero, none of these are 'jazz'; and yet any and all of them can be made into 'jazz' by the simple expedient of accentuating that beat which the natural laws of rhythm require to be unaccented.
"The whole universe is founded on order and rhythm, on regularity and steady tempo. The music of the spheres rushing through space is undoubtedly in strict time the seasons change on schedule, all astronomical calculations are possible because of the methodical regularity of recurrent events. It is entirely contrary to natural laws to syncopate and only man does it. The music, student has difficulty in acquiring this faculty for he feels that it is inherently wrong. No wild animal gives a long-drawn cry but that it is in time. When a baby does not cry rhythmically a doctor or a mother immediately realizes that something is seriously the matter with the child. When the wrong beat is accented there is an actual physical effect on the hearer, for a law is being broken.

"At the very beginning 'jazz' meant 'without music' or 'contrary to music,' but a great change has taken place in it. The 'jazz' of war times has very definitely departed, although leaving its indelible mark on music as a whole. It fitted a hysterical period when the times were out of joint and a frenzied world sought surcease from mental agony in a mad outbreak of physical gymnastics. There was a time not long ago when anything odd and fantastical in music was labeled 'jab.' The musicians became affected with the glamour of syncopation. The different instrumentalists began to imitate the antics of the drummer. It became a clamor, an uproar. The clarinet whined and whistled; the trombone guffawed grotesquely; the trumpets buzzed and fluttered; the pianist gyrated.


The other day an English school-boy described a fugue as "what you get in a room full of people when all the windows and doors are shut." Although this definition was aimed at another and shorter word, its appositeness has given much joy to musicians. As a professional journal says truly enough, there are quite a lot of fugues that might be spelt one way just as well as the other. Stuffiness, of course, is not confined to fugues; there are periods when it seems to pervade the whole of musical art. But let some hold composer open the windows to fresh musical thought and at once there is an outcry.

At the present time, however, the difficulty is not so much to restrain composers from opening windows as to keep them from taking
the proof off. And now come the exponents of ragtime, jazz and symphonized-syncopation, all determined to do their bit in freshening up the musical atmosphere of our staid and stodgy concert halls. The process has actually begun. On two occasions in January, the Savoy Orpheans, the Savoy-Havana Band and the Bos-Augmented Orchestra, assisted by The Savoy Havana Band and The Boston Orchestra marched into the very citadel of serious music in London Queen's Hall and gave a "public concert of syncopated music." Candor compels the admission that a very large public followed them. At the second concert the only empty seats were those of certain musical critics who had been at the first.

Improved Programs

Some people believe, not without justification, that the most attractive features of all modern art movements are those nice exciting manifestoes which invariably arouse one's highest hopes, even if later the literary mountain does only bring forth an absurd little mouse. Jazz, using that word in a comprehensive sense, also has its preachers. Here again, by the way, one has to admit that the gaily decorated program of the Savoy-Orpheans was in every respect a more entertaining document than those wretched "analytical notes" which one buys at ordinary concerts to find out the names of the pieces. The brisk, syncopated literary style of its "Quick History" of modern dance music was a determined effort in the direction of brighter concert halls.

Most of us already know by heart everything said for or against jazz by musical critics. What have these cynical syncopators to say for themselves? Apparently it all began with ragtime, which, we are told, "ripped to shreds the sentimentality of the song which preceded it." Next, in order of evolution, came jazz proper, - if that is the right adjective? "Jazz - sheer joy and its expression in music; music which can hardly be whistled and never sung, music which carries you up and gives voice to that love of life which is in everyone, but is so constantly unexpressed. Jazz lets no one stand still. Its melody and its rhythm are infallibly compelling."

Symphonized Syncopation
Perhaps this paragraph explains why the "solemn blokes" of music object to jazz. To them there is something undignified, almost, indeed, a savor of impropriety, in hearing their love of live expressed through banjos, saxophones, sousaphones, sarusophones and such barbaric whatnots. And while admitting that a lot may be said for music which abolishes singers, they prefer to stand still and whistle with the proud.

The latest and most alarming phase is called symphonized-syncopation. This, it seems, is "an entirely new musical development. Symphonized-syncopated music today is so specifically written for the orchestra that it has acquired new forms of expression, as related to and compared with ragtime or the old jazz." It, too, is the musical expression of "the gaiety, the liveliness and the rhythmic power of our lives. To say that it is enthusiastic disorganization of music is rubbish."

But perhaps the most interesting part of this jazz manifesto is that which carries the war into the enemies' camp. "Only a small percentage of the people who support the 'arty' arts really enjoy them. If there must be snobbery about the arts, let us be snobs about the lively and amusing arts. It will repay many times more than the exalted sense of superiority with which we strive to cloak ourselves as compensation for the deadly hours of boredom we spend with some of the 'arty' or fake arts. At many concerts, most opera, some classical dances and nearly all pageants, the spectators are suffering and burning incense before the altar of the 'arty' arts. Must dullness be the hall-mark of all things worthwhile?"

Dull Nevertheless

Unfortunately, the present writer read this before listening to various examples of symphonized-syncopation, some of which seemed to prove that dullness can be the hall-mark of things not at all worthwhile - such as "Fragments of the 'New World' Symphony; With an Orchestration of chromatic Lighting." But let us be duly grateful to these composers from the underworld of music who have rediscovered the appeal of two elements often strangely neglected by overeducated musicians -- rhythm and color. Again they have reminded us that the musical atmosphere of our concert halls and opera houses might be less close if only composers would encourage in themselves and their listeners a keener sense of musical humor. At present, their jokes are
too often of the unconscious variety. Mr. Clive Bell has pointed out that as Racine, Moliere and Boileau gave an easier and less professional gait to French literature by conforming to the tastes and prejudices of the polite society of their time, so the inventors of jazz went to "La Bonne Compagnie" they found in the lounges of great hotels, or transatlantic liners, in "wagons-lits," in music halls, and in expensive motorcars and restaurants. But even cultured composers have sharp ears. They will take symphonized-syncopation and exploit its possibilities - especially on the harmonic side, scarcely touched as yet - beyond the ken of those who stumbled on a good thing and now obviously do not know what to do with it.

The other day some original jazz, "written by a musician of high rank," and played in a London studio by a pianist whose reputation is world-wide, caused Mr. Robin H. Legge to write: "In my own mind I have no doubt that the pianist and composer of this music that I heard are at the opening of a new era. The compositions are a kind of twentieth-century Chopin. They have the rhythm, in all its endless variety, the charm, the melodic impulse of a latter-day Chopin, a post-war Chopin that is; they are superb piano music, and they are scored for what we call so stupidly a jazz band. After the Gershwin "Rhapsody in Blue," these pieces - I heard seven - are the first serious efforts to bring jazz into line.

Jazz will soon be out-jazzed. And what better compliment can the serious musician pay the joyous jazzer?

JULY - MUSIC - LETTERS - JAZZ

It is difficult to understand how "syncopation's past" merely anticipated the moment when the spirit not only of America, but of the whole world, would find in it perfect expression. It is plain to anyone with the slightest knowledge of jazz that the supposed "dislocation" of the beat, the "tossing to and fro" of the tempo and all the different kinds of "accent" implies nothing more than taking a puerile little tune written in common time and adopting the childish expedient of trying notes here, substituting quavers for crotchets there, adding accents and so on. The following extract from a Charleston-trot, a new "style" in which the rhythm is "tossed to and fro" more than in any other piece of jazz, will illustrate the meaning at once: -

Surely if jazz composers wanted to reach the zenith of their powers they would give us, say, something in five-four, a few bars of three-four,
some six-four and so forth, will all the various instruments playing in
different time and in different keys, and so difficult in contrapuntal
treatment that, although the result was satisfactory, only really live jazz
musicians could play it? It seems that this favourable state of affairs
will never come about; jazz is merely a question of experiment by
musicians whose knowledge of the art of music is very limited indeed.
The publicity expert does the rest. ...'Jazz .......sheer joy and
expression in music ......music which can hardly be whistled or ever
sung, music which carries you up and gives voice to that love of life
which is in every soul, but is so constantly unexpressed. Jazz lets no one
stand still. Its melody and its rhythm are infallibly compelling.'" The
composition of the modern jazz orchestra is worthy of comment. The
banjos and tin-whistles have given way to the more cultured 'cello, harp,
and other orchestral instruments. The best bands now employ
two French horns, and, of course, the saxophone family and the
Sousaphone. One or more pianos figure in every band and, together
with the banjo, keep a steady accompaniment practically throughout as
follows: -

AUGUST - PICTORIAL REVIEW - JAZZ AND THE DANCE

The outstanding characteristic of jazz and ragtime is syncopation,
which means an accent thrown out of focus, and instead of being on the
usual strong beat of the measure is thrown on the weak beat. Just as
there are good polkas and bad, good marches and poor, so there are
good jazz-tunes and bad ones.

The blues is, to our idea of thinking, a truly melancholy form of
jazz; it is a result of that scooping on trombone and wail of the
saxophone that drag out the comic tragedy of the unmelodious-
syncopated-tempoed delirium.

SEPTEMBER 19 - LITERARY DIGESTON WITH THE
"CHARLESTON!" "THE DANCE THAT DEMOLISHED a building,"

The orchestration for the new "hoofing" mania is distinctive. According to Emil Coleman, the time and rhythm are the same as in the
fox-trot, but the accent, being oddly placed "between beats," makes the
curious syncopation that has so violently taken the country by storm. In
the fox-trot the accent comes on the first and third beats; whereas in the
"Charleston" it occurs on the first beat and an eighth before the third
beat. It is that little eighth "off-beat" that fascinates the lovers of jazz so that they just can't resist this latest terpsichorean craze.

The experts whom I have timidly questioned assure me that the time of the pure Charleston is new. The ordinary syncopation of ragtime seems to have been aggravated and the accent falls in between the beats where you naturally expect it. This is what give the Charleston its breath-taking quality; it corresponds exactly to the sharp broken intake of breath when you run into some one coming round a corner, where you make a mistake walking down a flight of stairs in the dark. Accustomed to the off-beat of jazz, we are startled again by this division of time-intervals, startled and exhilarated. It is a variation which multiplies the intricacies of jazz. Until you are accustomed to it the Charleston tempo is a little unnerving; and trying to follow it, even so distantly as in beating time, is a little maddening. There seems to be no telling when the accent is going to arrive; you are bewildered and excited as you are by the shifting measures of the Sacre du Printemps when you first encounter them. Yet neither the one nor the other is actually irresponsible; it is only the phenomenon of a new pattern that is disconcerting.

Now, jazz can be defined as music written in the meter of the fox-trot. Its essence, in fact, contrary to the prevailing notion, is not the syncopation in the melody but the steady plunk-plunk-plunk-plunk of the four quarters of the accompaniment in rapid tempo (one reason for the precision of the orchestras and their ability to play without a conductor). It is not the effect of syncopation that is characteristic of jazz, since one finds syncopation in greater abundance and variety in serious music, but the effect of syncopation in the jazz meter and tempo; and actually one can strip away the syncopation and still have "Bambalina," proof that the syncopated melody, like the scoring or the exciting rapid figuration introduced by pianists to fill in the beats, is mere embellishment. On the other hand, take away the plunk-plunk-plunk-plunk and jazz is no longer jazz.

DECEMBER 9 - NATION - MUSIC - THE PEDANT LOOKS AT JAZZ

Syncopation in one voice when the regular beats in the other are unobtrusive; and above all the varying of the length and style of phrases and of the figuration.
Now, jazz can be defined as music written in the meter of the fox-trot. Its essence, in fact, contrary to the prevailing notion, is not the syncopation in the melody but the steady plunk-plunk-plunk-plunk of the four quarters of the accompaniment in rapid tempo (one reason for the precision of the orchestras and their ability to play without a conductor). It is not the effect of syncopation that is characteristic of jazz, since one finds syncopation in greater abundance and variety in serious music, but the effect of syncopation in the jazz meter and tempo; and actually one can strip away the syncopation and still have "Bambalina," proof that the syncopated melody, like the scoring or the exciting rapid figuration introduced by pianists to fill in the beats, is mere embellishment. On the other hand, take away the plunk-plunk-plunk-plunk and jazz is no longer jazz.

MARCH - HARPER'S THE ANATOMY OF JAZZ by Don Knowlton.

Syncopation in popular music first came into evidence in the old "coon" songs of minstrel-show days. Remember "But I Want Them Presents Back"? Next came such childishly simple attempts as "Under the Bamboo Tree" and "Rainbow," songs that could not attain popularity to-day, which succeeded because they were the first to stress syncopation in a form which could be reached by the masses. Then along came Irving Berlin and we were off. The ragtime piano player and then the jazz orchestra developed, until to-day we have "symphonic" jazz.

Old-timers such as "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "When the Midnight Choo Choo Leaves for Alabam," Omar Kyayyam," and "Maple Leaf Rag" began to establish a conventional form for jazz. Since that time there has been no essential change in its structure, the development having been confined almost entirely to internal elaboration.

The idea of exaggerated syncopation was first presented to America in a more or less respectable way. "Coon songs" and real Negro melodies were not considered damaging to one's social or business reputation. Syncopation itself had a well-developed and honorable lineage at the time. If the socially elect had adopted syncopation it might have been comme it faut from the outset, and we might have heard the Boston Symphony Orchestra rendering a legitimate jazz symphony years ago. But musicians of the radical type were developing scientific dissonance. Strauss discovered new uses for
the cymbals, and Bloch conducted a series of fashionable experiments in the receptivity of the human ear. So syncopation was picked up by the dance hall, cabaret, and vaudeville group, who of course turned it toward their particular purposes.

**APRIL 17 - THE NEW STATESMAN - WALTZ-KINGS AND JAZZ-KING**

One is that the clever attempt of the Jazz-Kings to get away from the designation of "Jazz" by calling their music "Symphonic Syncopation" and their Jazz-bands "Syncopated Symphony Orchestras" is an amusing example of snobbishness. Let them stick to that admirable and excellent word "Jazz." Jazz has merits, symphonic syncopation has none. Moreover, symphonic syncopation is quite meaningless as a description, since there is symphonic syncopation in all orchestral music from the time of Haydn to the present day.

**JULY 3, - COLLIER’S - WHERE HAVE I HEARD THAT TUNE BEFORE?**

Syncopation where ragtime left off and worked this primitive effect up into a system of rich and complex rhythm worthy of the great masters of classical music. Then it forged ahead on pioneer lines and struck out an original thing that might be called rhythmic counterpoint. Aaron Copland, the brilliant young American composer, feels that the essence of jazz is a steady, formal, basic rhythm, with another rhythm, strange and florid, gamboling fantastically above it, like a small monkey doing stunts on the back of a St. Bernard.

**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER - MODERN MUSIC**

**JAZZ STRUCTURE AND INFLUENCE**

syncopation, while a frequent characteristic of jazz, is by no means an essential factor." He concludes: "It is the spirit of the music, not the mechanics of its frame......that determines whether or not it is jazz."

**JULY/DECEMBER, VOL III, #2 - THE GOLD COAST REVIEW - MUSIC IN THE GOLD COAST**

On the whole I think there is surprisingly little syncopation in African melodies themselves. The reason probably is that there is so much in the gong and small drum parts that it is not necessary in the
voice part, and in fact would be wasted, if not actually worse than useless. In may be however that there is a good deal more syncopation than I have detected. The tune "Ya Amponsa", which I have given in a simplified form in Fig. 4, also exists in the following form:

Figure 18

Syncopation implies of course the existence of a regularly recurring accent, and such accent is far less common in African music than in European. To this extent then the term syncopation is inapplicable to African music. But where there is such a regularly recurring accent it coincides as a rule with the beat of the big drum and with the main notes of the melody. Figs. 19 and 20 show two exceptions; the first a Dagomba song, the second a Fanti.

JUNE - MUSIC TEACHER - THE JAZZ-MAD PUPIL - by Ronald Cunliffe - Syncopation in the Classics

To begin with, we might point out that syncopation is nothing new. No great composer has neglected to make first-rate use of it. All of us can remember scores of examples in Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, but we might begin our exploration of the standard composers with Schubert, and proceed along the well-worn track of the Romantics.

Schubert's immortal syncopation in the first Unfinished Symphony (Ex. 9) comes first. This particular passage, elementary as it seems to a musician, would be revolutionary to the conductor of a modern dance-band-who dare not for the life of him take the accompanying instruments off the plain beats.

Since this tempo reflected the life of the whole nation which was dynamic, happy and energetic, it became the American idiom. Syncopation was one of its devices, but used in an individual way. Syncopation is not new, but its treatment by our native sons is.

The granddaddy of this American music is, strangely enough, a white man from Detroit, named Kerry Mills, nom de plume for F. A. Mills, and he set its tempo in a piece called At A Georgia Camp Meetin’ in 1898. There had been plenty of music written before this in
syncopated tempo and even ragtime. But this is the first piece that
captured everybody’s ear, fancy and feet. It went over a million copies,
has sold through the years, and still sells a couple hundred copies a
year. Kerry Mills’ first cakewalk, Rastus on Parade, brought him to
New York and started him in business. His next was Happy Days in
Dixie, and his third, Georgia Camp Meeting, was a home run

1893 - NEW ENGLAND MAGAZINE - OLD PLANTATION HYMNS

One of the most effective uses of syncopation which I have ever
heard is in the song "Tell Bruddah 'Lijah!" or "No harm!" Brother
Elijah is probably the prophet, for there is no human character in the
Bible too great to be counted a "brother," and some of the allusions to
"Brer Jonah" and "Brer Simon Peter" are as unexpected as can well be
imagined.

In this hymn the explosive stress upon the word "Sinnah" is
startling; and the question, "Ain' you tired of sinnin'?" is wonderfully
direct.

"Tell Bruddah Lijah"
One very rare one, and one that I count among the best, is "Cold Icy Hand." The burden of the song is the response, "Death goner lay is cold icy hand on me." An indescribable effect is given to the "cold icy hand" by a syncopation. The word "cold" has the accent of the downward beat, and the first syllable of "icy" takes a half note in the middle of the measure. The surprise of the shock which this gives to the nerves, together with the weird tune which prepares one for any uncanny effect, is not unlike the touch of a cold hand. The effect is not less uncanny in the third line of the refrain, in an accidental flat or natural given to the word "cryin'." It is a wail like that of a lost soul.
1900 - MUSICIAN - MARCH - RAGTIME

To make the matter plain, rag-time is syncopation. All of the great masters have enjoyed syncopated notes. That is all right, or the masters would not have done it. But they did not write all of their works in syncopation. That shows that syncopation is good for a while, but we do not want too much of it. Now, Mother Goose's literature is a good thing, but suppose you had nothing else to read you would get tired of it after a while."

AUGUST - 1912 - ORCHESTRA MONTHLY - THE ETHICS OF RAGTIME

A new "Websterian" dictionary gives as a definition of ragtime, "syncopated music, characteristic of negro melodies," which is about as clearly concise as to define the horse as energized pub, characteristic of carts that are not pushed. Ragtime, to be sure, is a form of syncopation, and one of the most beautiful of syncopated passages occurs in the solo "With Verdure Clad" from Haydn's Creation, but the latter is never classified as "ragtime," although it may be a sublimated example of it.

1913 - MUSICAL OPINION & MUSICAL TRADE REVIEW - FEB. - RAG-TIME" on PARNASSUS -

There is nothing new under the sun," said the wise man of old, and the present craze for eccentric rhythm is but one more reminder of the fact. It is also a proof that there is something in a name, despite the Shakespearean dictum. Syncopation is of course one of the oldest of
musical devices, yet under its proper name and used artistically it has so far left the public cold. Vulgarized however and called "rag-time," it has sent nine-tenths of English and American people agog. While all public crazes are of interest to the student of human nature, this particular one is specially so to the musician, since it is surely the first time that the public has gone mad over a mere musical artifice; though, as I shall show later, something of the kind happened in the eighteenth century, and then curiously enough the craze was caused by a kindred rhythm. Still, the vogue was not to be compared to the present rage for stuttering and hiccoughing measures.

1913 - MUSICAL OPINION 7 MUSICAL TRADE REVIEW - FEB. RAGTIME ON PARNASSUS

Nor should it be forgotten that to this feature in popular music we musicians owe much. This displaced accent, taken in hand by the great composers, has been the basis of some of their finest effects. One can scarcely imagine classical music without cross rhythm and syncopation, or curtailing, extension and overlapping of phrases, all being developments of this germ. Its charm lies almost entirely in its capacity for surprising; and it is this quality of the unexpected and even incongruous that makes it especially suitable for humorous purposes, though it can be sinister enough on occasion. It is not easy to explain the difference; but it may be said that, while rag-time is syncopation, syncopation is not always rag-time. Still, many pages of the great composers contain music that is as pure rag-time as any so labeled. For example, the opening of the main theme of the second and third "Leonora" Overture would surely answer to this description:

Apropos the difference between rag-time and syncopation, I should say that this figure, also from "Leonora" No. 3 is better described by the latter than the former term, though I should be sorry to be suddenly asked why. I can only say that I feel in my bones that it is so; just as surely as I feel that this, from "Die Meistersinger" Overture;
Syncopation is almost as old as musical composition, and was frequently used by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and many other great composers. It appears in their compositions, however, only to produce certain occasional effects, never as a feature. It was reserved for America and the enlightened twentieth century to give it predominant importance! In commenting on this subject some fifteen years ago, the Chicago Inter-Ocean said: "Ragtime is not new—it was written by southern musicians, and whistled, sang and danced by the Southern Negro fifty years ago. In what shape the jerky, peculiar rhythm called 'ragtime' first appeared in this country is not known, but from the testimony of musical experts it was a wildly savage affair until harmonized and made melodious by French and Spanish-Creole influences."

Probably the first published composition in which syncopation was the characteristic feature was, "The Pasquinade," by Louis Moreau Gottschalk, the famous American pianist who lived in New Orleans. This was written in the early fifties, and was such a novelty and of such high musical value, that it was extensively used by concert pianists, and is seen on programs even at the present day.

The term "ragtime" (probably a contraction of ragged time) was not coined until about twenty years ago, but it has had a very active existence since that time, and shows no immediate signs of being obliterated. "The Mobile Buck," a peculiar "stop time" Negro dance, popular about two generations ago, was one of the first numbers of this character to become the rage, and in its wake came "The Darkey's Dream" (still well liked) which contains considerable syncopation, though it is not strictly a ragtime composition. Soon after this Kerry Mills' "Rastus on Parade," "Georgia Camp Meeting" and "Whistling Rufus" swept the country (England as well) and American ragtime was thoroughly and irrevocably launched.
So far as the writer is concerned, the study of aboriginal songs has brought with it the firm conviction that syncopation is a dominant and therefore dynamic concomitant in the development of a healthy national music. This does not in any way mean that in order to have an unmistakable American music it is necessary to insert literally Indian, Negro Creole or idealized ragtime tunes, nor is it necessary to have syncopated rhythms in every single composition turned out. Such a procedure would be absurd; it would make us a laughing stock. There are many ways, many forms of employing these dynamics and it remains for future composers to find them.

1914 - THE MUSICAL OBSERVER - SEPT. - Ragtime

A pernicious Evil and Enemy of True Art. - by Leo Oehmler - Ragtime music is chiefly a matter of rhythm and not much a matter of melody or fine harmony.

It is based almost exclusively upon syncopated time. Elson's Music Dictionary defines Syncope as follows: "An unequal division of the time, or notes; irregular accent; binding the last note of one bar to the first note of the next; accented notes occurring on the unaccented part of a bar."

"Syncopation is an artificial accent, an interruption of the natural pulsation of the music."

"It can be produced by giving an accent where none is expected, by taking away the accent from a point where it is expected, or by both methods combined."

"The natural rhythm must be restored after the syncopation has been used for a short time, otherwise the ear will accept the artificial accent as a natural one and the effect of syncopation be lost. Syncopations in accompaniments must be strong to be effective."

1914 - MUSICAL OBSERVER - SEPT. RAGTIME

The word syncopation is derived from "Syncope," a medical term, meaning, "a heart beating unevenly through excessive agitation, or diseased in some way."

1915 - RAGTIME REVIEW - AUGUST - WHAT ABOUT RAGTIME
To begin with, American ragtime is syncopated time and in its original form is therefore not a new-born idea, for you find it embodied in the works of almost all the old masters.

Of course it is then called syncopation, for none of the worshipers of the great Richard Wagner will admit that he ever wrote a bar of ragtime.

Well, maybe he did not, but he certainly missed a great chance to make an awful big hit with a lot of good fellows that cannot see anything else. Still if we are indebted to those great pioneers in the field of music for our waltz movements, barcarolles and other ballet and dance music, we should also give them some credit for the syncopated movement which forms the very foundation of ragtime.

1915 - THE NEW REPUBLIC - OCT. 16 - RAGTIME

But the schools have their reply. "Ragtime is not new," they say. "It is merely syncopation, which was used by Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, and is good, like any other musical material, when it is used well." But they are wrong. Ragtime is not "merely syncopation." It is a certain sort of syncopation—namely, a persistent syncopation in one part conflicting with exact rhythm in another. But of course this definition is not enough. Ragtime has its flavor that no definition can imprison. No one would take the syncopation of a Haydn symphony to be American ragtime. "Certainly not," replies the indignant musician. Nor the syncopation of any recognized composer. But if this is so, then ragtime is new. You can't tell an American composer's "art-song" from any mediocre art-song the world over. (Permit me to pass over the few notable exceptions.) You can distinguish American ragtime from the popular music of any nation and any age. In the first instance the love of ragtime is a purely human matter. You simply can't resist it. I remember hearing a Negro quartet singing "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee," in a cafe, and I felt my blood thumping in tune, my muscles twitching to the rhythm. I wanted to paraphrase Shakespeare—

"The man who hath no ragtime in his soul, Who is not moved by syncopated sounds"

and so on. If any musician does not feel in his heart the rhythmic complexities of "The Robert E. Lee" I should not trust him to feel in his heart the rhythmic complexities of Brahms. This ragtime appeals to the primitive love of the dance—a special sort of dance in which the rhythm
of the arms and shoulders conflicts with the rhythm of the feet, in which dozens of little needles of energy are deftly controlled in the weaving of the whole. And if musicians refuse to recognize it, as they once refused to recognize Russian folk-music, they criticize not ragtime, but themselves.

1915 - CURRENT OPINION - DEC. WILL RAGTIME SAVE THE SOUL OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN COMPOSER?

In reply to the charge that ragtime is merely syncopation, "which was used by Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms," and that it is good, like any other musical material, only when it is well used, this critic asserts that ragtime is not "mere syncopation. It is a certain sort of syncopation-namely, a persistent syncopation in one part conflicting with exact rhythm in another." But this definition, he confesses, is quite useless; for ragtime has a flavor that no definition can imprison. Its syncopation is unique and novel. You can't tell an American composer's 'art-song' from any mediocre art-song the world over. You can distinguish American ragtime from the popular music of any nation and any age."

"If any musician does not feel in his heart the rhythmic complexities of 'The Robert E. Lee' I should not trust him to feel in his heart the rhythmic complexities of Brahms. This ragtime appeals to the primitive love of the dance-a special sort of dance in which the rhythm of the arms and shoulders conflicts with the rhythm of the feet, in which dozens of little needles of energy are deftly controlled in the weaving of the whole. And if musicians refuse to recognize Russian folk-music, they criticize not ragtime but themselves.

1916 - RAGTIME REVIEW - AUGUST - ABOUT RAGTIME

Meanwhile he is keeping mechanically perfect time with his left hand. The hurdle with the right hand little finer throws the tune off its stride, resulting in syncopation. He is playing two different times at once.

1917 - LITERARY DIGEST - AUGUST 25 - THE APPEAL OF THE PRIMITIE JAZZ

Jazz music is the delirium tremens of syncopation. It is strict rhythm without melody. To-day the jazz bands take popular tunes and rag them to death to make jazz. Beats are added as often as the delicacy
of the player's ear will permit. In one-two time a third beat is interpolated. There are many half notes or less and many long-drawn, wavering tones. It is an attempt to reproduce the marvelous syncopation of the African jungle.

With these elastic unitary pulses any haphazard series by means of syncopation can be readily, because instinctively, coordinated. The result is that a rhythmic tune compounded of time and stress and pitch relations is created, the chief characteristic of which is likely to be complicated syncopation. An arabesque of which is likely to be complicated syncopation. An arabesque of accentual differences, group-forming in their nature, is superimposed upon the fundamental time divisions,

There is jazz precisely defined as a result of months of laboratory experiment in drum-beating and syncopation. The laws that govern jazz rule in the rhythms of great original prose, verse that sings itself, and opera of ultra modernity. 'Imagine Walter Peter, Swinburne, and Borodin swaying to the same pulses that rule the moonlit music on the banks of African rivers.

1917 - CURRENT OPINION - NOV. - THE GREAT AMERICAN COMPOSER. WILL HE SPEAK IN THE ACCENT OF BROADWAY?

It will be objected by musicians that ragtime is only a rhythm-not music but only one element of music. Technically it is known as "syncopation." You cannot found a school of music on syncopation.

The matter is not so easily dismissed. Mr. Van Vechten points out that Beethoven's Seventh symphony is largely based on a syncopated rhythm, and Schumann wrote hardly a piece without syncopation. He might have added that syncopation is the most distinctive factor in Scotch folk-music, one of the oldest musical traditions in the world. But ragtime is a different syncopation. It is not easily explained. Louis Hirsch tried to describe its peculiarity by saying that its 'melody and harmony are syncopated differently.' There are other complications. A writer in the London Times calls attention to the fact that "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee," tho written out in a rhythm of 8, is really a rhythm of 3 followed by a rhythm of 5, proceeding without warning into the normal rhythm of 8.

The fact is that ragtime is more than a mere rhythm. The rhythm is the creation of the American Negro who brought it with him from
Africa, but the "ragtime" of to-day is of recent growth and it is not peculiar to the blacks. This "apotheosis of syncopation," as Mr. Van Vechten calls it, is only the crude basis of the thing. The spirit of it, the exuberance, the nervousness, the irresistible urge, are the reflection of a national character. It is irresistible because it is genuine.

As for the rag rhythm itself, the sole distinctive feature of this music, it has undoubtedly something of real piquancy. The trick, it will be noted, is a syncopation of half-beats, arranged so as to pull bodily forward certain comparatively strong accents, those at the middle of the measures'-a scheme to which words as well as melody conform. The left hand meanwhile gives the regular metrical division of the measure, and a writer in the London Times, defining ragtime as "a strongly syncopated melody superimposed on a strictly regular accompaniment," points out that "it is the combination of these two rhythms that gives 'ragtime' its character." This is perhaps not strictly true, since in some of the most effective bits of ragtime the metrical pulsation may give way momentarily to the syncopation, and everyone remembers those delightful times of complete silence in which the pulse is kept going mentally, to be finally confirmed by a crashing cadence. But it is usually the case that both time schemes, metrical and rhythmical, are maintained together. For this very reason we must question the contention of the champions of ragtime that its type of syncopation is capable of great variety, and even makes possible effects elsewhere unknown, a contention in support of which some of them have even challenged comparison of it with the rhythmic vigors of Beethoven and Schumann."

The subtlety of syncopation as an artistic device results from its simultaneous maintenance of two time-patterns, the rhythmic and the metrical, in such a relation that the second and subordinate one, though never lost sight of, is never obtruded. The quasi-mechanical pulse of the meter is the indispensable background against which only can the freer oscillations of the rhythm outline themselves. The moment the sense of it is lost, as it is sometimes lost in those over-bold passages of Schumann where a displacement is too emphatically made or too long continued, the charm disappears. In the following from his "Faschingsschwant," for
Here the indescribably delightful effect is evidently due not only to the purely rhythmic syncopation, but also to the fact that on the silent strong beat of every second measure harmony and melody as well as rhythm are so to speak "tied up," or suspended, in such a way that the syncopation is at the very heart of the whole musical conception, and cannot be omitted without annihilating the music. Beside such essential syncopation as this the mere pulling forward of certain notes, as in "The Memphis Blues," is seen to be superficial, an arbitrary dislocation which may disguise but cannot correct the triteness of the real melodic line. In fact, we seem here to have tracked ragtime to its lair and discovered what it really is. It is no creative process, like the syncopation of the masters, by which are struck forth new, vigorous, and self-sufficing forms, It is a rule of thumb for putting a "kink" into a tune that without such specious rehabilitation would be unbearable. It is not a new flavor, but a kind of curry or catsup strong enough to make the stale old dishes palatable to unfastidious appetites. Significant is it that, as the writer in the Times remarks, "In American slang to 'rag' a melody is to syncopate a normally regular time." The "rag" idiom can thus be put on and off like a mask; and in recent years we have seen thus grotesquely disguised, as the Mendelssohn Wedding March, for instance, in "No Wedding Bells for Me," many familiar melodies. To these it can give no new musical lineaments, but only distorts the old ones as with St. Vitus's dance.

1918 - NEW MUSIC REVIEW - APIRL - NEGRO SPIRITUAL

Syncopation, that offshoot of rhythm, is employed extensively; ignorant people claim that the Negro invented syncopation. He neither invented syncopation, nor was he the first to use it. It existed long before he was brought in shackles to this country-examples may be found in the old Greek and Hebrew melodies. Syncopation was probably discovered by the first aborigine who beat on a hollow gourd
with a thigh bone, and has been used ever since by "all nations that do dwell upon the face of the earth.

1918 - THE DIAL - AUGUST 15 - AN INFLUENCE ON MODERN FRENCH MUSIC.

Debussy's effect however is not monotonous-his ear was too sensitive to allow him to commit any such mistake-and the middle section drops the rhythmic figure for a while. This middle section is noteworthy for its delicate burlesque of the opening cello phrase of "Tristan." The Teutonic super-lover becomes the grotesque Gollyiwog surprised by new, sacred emotions; but these are soon swept aside by the syncopated cakewalk. In the first volume of "Preludes," Debussy again tries American effects, and again he thinks his result sufficiently important to place it last in the volume. "Minstrels" he calls it, again using an English title; and it is really only this that betrays its meaning. He is giving his impression of a black-face show; we hear the drum, the sentimental song, and so on, with a little phrase like a guffaw punctuating the music, just as the puns of the endmen punctuate the performance. But Debussy has written this music with a characteristic bit of daring; he has left syncopation entirely out of it. And therefore no American is likely to realize what is going on, unless he appreciates the title.

JULY - PSYCHOLOGY REVIEW - THE NATURE OF THE RHYTHM EXPERIENCE

The phenomenon of syncopation to which Patterson has drawn experimental attention, "in itself, involves a complex of mental processes. The most essential part of the phenomenon seems to be that we keep our impression of a series of subjective time-intervals, regular, accelerating or retarding, but find a pleasure in marking the beats objectively, either by different forms of motion, such as foot-taps alternating with hand-taps, or by what appears at first as omission of objective marking for certain beats. As a matter of fact, this is usually nothing but the interpolation of some concealed form of motor reaction such as eye, throat, tongue, or breath movement, which alternates with a more visible movement, such as nodding or tapping or dancing" (31,p.4).

Stetson has described it in much the same terms. "Along with this precision of all the movements comes a tendency to beat a new rhythm.
This accompanying rhythm is simpler and broader in character; it is a kind of long swell on which the speech movements ripple. This second rhythm may express itself in a new movement of hand, head, foot or body; when it has become more conscious, as in patting time to a dance or chant, it develops complicated forms, and a third rhythm may appear beside it, to mark the main stresses of the two processes. The negro patting time for a dance beats the third fundamental rhythm with his foot, while his hands pat an elaborate second rhythm to the primary rhythm of the dancers. This regulation of the movement by the coincidence of several rhythms is the cause of the striking regularity of the temporal relations"

In Patterson's definition syncopation is apparently manifested by the performer of the rhythm. Syncopation is used by Patterson in three senses, (1) as any full motor response (2) motor response in the performer of the rhythm (p.4), (3) a correlation of the 'unitary pulses' and objective stimulation in the observer This analysis has shown that while there is coexistence, there is not necessarily correlation and rarely coincidence of the objective stimulation and the reflex response. syncopation in the third sense exists, but it is limited to a comparatively small field of rhythm.

Full motor response is not so evident in modern rhythm. As Patterson says, "Modern sophistication has inhibited many native instincts, and the mere fact that our conventional dignity usually forbids us to sway our bodies or to tap our feet when we hear effective music, has deprived us of unsuspected pleasures" Patterson concludes: "What is left, then, but to conclude that the sentence which has in its structure the possibility of a maximum of rhythm must be capable of evoking in us a maximum of motor response? To test it, therefore, we must tap to it, nod to it, walk to it, sway to it, chop wood to it, if necessary. If it is easy for us to nod or tap, or, for that matter, hoe potatoes to these salient 'drum-songs'. the first degree of rhythmic excellence is obtained"

The contortions of the polar bear which Patterson has called 'prose' merely present syncopation of the muscular responses of various organs due to the pendulum rates of the organs. they are not, however, 'harmoniously but intricately regulated by the incessant unitary "flap! flap! flap!" of those great white feet' Each is an independent in its own sphere as the walking movement is in its sphere. the large body of literature on rhythm, then, is not invalidated by the 'new standard.' On
The contrary, it is enriched by the hitherto experimentally unrecognized field of syncopation.

DECEMBER - MELODY - JAZZ MUSIC AND THE MODERN DANCE

The attitude representative of that class of musicians which is the "nerves and sinews" of the profession towards "jazz" question was firmly and broadly expressed by Benton T. Bott, president of the American National Association, Masters of Dancing, who was recently in New York to attend the thirty-seventh annual convention of that association, at the Hotel Astor.

"We do not recognize the term "jazz," which is purely a coined word," Mr. Bott told the Tribune. "We do, however, recognize syncopation, and we have nothing against certain forms of syncopated music. It can be played brilliantly if played right, and then again it can be played in another form so sensuous and evil that it harks clear back to the wild and irresponsible barbarism of the dark ages. We have tried to teach and preach moderation. Civilization has begun to revolt against the wrong kind of syncopation, this so-called 'jazz,' which during the more a unrestrained period of the war swept the country with a crop of immodesty in both song and dance in its wake. It first appeared on the stage, and eventually it audaciously entered the public dance hall and private ballroom alike.

APRIL - THAT JAZZ WAIL AGAIN

The PIANO TRADE MAGAZINE does not believe that the verily-orchestrated syncopated music roll is the best thing for the player piano industry. But at the same time it appreciates the fact that tastes differ, and that a large majority of roll buyers have been purchasing the heavily orchestrated music rolls. Men like Thomas M. Pletcher of the Q. R. S. Music Company and Arthur A. Friestedt of the United States Music Company, have testified to this, and as both are business men of sound judgment they would not tell us that these rolls were good sellers if it were not so. They believe in giving the public what it wants, and if the public did not want it calls the "jazz" roll, Mr. Pletcher and Mr. Friestedt would be the first ones to abandon it.

This publication is not putting up an alibi for either "jazz" music or the over-orchestral syncopations in music roll form. Its own attitude on this question was stated in the preceding paragraph. But it does
believe that the professional reformers are trying to educate the public in the wrong way. To intimate, for instance, that most people who will listen to syncopated music are rotten to the core, is ridiculous. Syncopated music is not necessarily "jazz," and if rendered on a music roll it cannot be "jazz." If virtue in this country were to be gauged by the type of music preferred by the mass of people, and it were assumed that lovers of syncopated music represented the class lacking in virtue, only an infinitesimal percentage of the people would be found to be virtuous.

**MAY 6 - LITERARY DIGEST - TO JAZZ OR TO RAG**

Syncopation still exists in American music; in fact, you cannot hear more than a very few bars of any popular composition without its cropping up. But to-day it is no longer a necessary thing. It has been retained much as an ornament. It gives to all American music much of its peculiar character. But if you listen close and look sharp you will note that few dances of to-day depend wholly on syncopation. The fox trot is being danced (this is in 1922) to the rhythm 1 and 2, 3, and 4, which is not syncopation. It is the rhythm of the old Greek poetic dactyl, older than Christianity."

**JUNE 1 - MUSICAL COURIER - JAZZ MUSIC AND ITS RELATION TO AFRICAN MUSIC by Nicholas G. Taylor of Sierra Leone, South Africa.**

The over-insistence of syncopation in both the primary as well as the secondary accents of a measure, the too tacit employment of transitional dominants and the frequent use of triplet appogiaturas in the bass before the principal accent of a measure (which, by the way, is more often than not given to the trombones in nearly all orchestral arrangements of "jazz" music by American Negro musicians, a serious abuse of that instrument), are the principal characteristics of a species of musical compositions which is called "Jazz Blues." "Mammy Blues," "Father Blues," and many other capricious names which the curious student fails to find in any musical encyclopedic dictionary.

In New York, at least, this "jazz" music has been the subject of much controversy of late, both by the press and the pulpit - some denouncing, others commending.

But what is the matter with this, music that has evoked so much comment? Has syncopation never been used in music before with such
frequency, or is it because the harmonies sometimes employed are rancid and sea-sick, as Wagner's music was described by some in the latter part of the last century? When the attention is directed to the study of Bach's well-tempered clavier more syncopation will be observed than has ever been used in the whole realm of "jazz" music; and as for the harmonies, "jazz" composers are well conservative when it is remembered that some composers of the present day use what I may term chords of the "twenty-second," and abandon as common place those of the seventh and ninth.

More Syncopation

"Jazz" music makes use of syncopation to a marked degree more than African music pretends to do. It is regular in its accents and the rhythmical contents of its bars; it is mostly of the four-and-eight bar period. All these things, together with the question of idiom, are so foreign to the native African that he scarcely recognizes any connection between "jazz" music and his own. On the other hand, African music is cross-rhythmic, its use of syncopation is decidedly moderate and the rhythmical contents of many a bar of African music is as irregular as it could be. Again, owing to the use of cross rhythms, the periods and phrases are explained in a different method from that employed in "jazz' music.

The American Negroes brought over from Africa this music with its cross rhythms. Here they were surrounded with a different idiom; they had to face different conditions and the atmosphere in which they lived was a decided contrast to the environments that they had about them in their native land. The result is that they began to reduce African music to suit their new conditions and this is how they did it:

DECEMBER 29 - NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW - PUTTING THE MUSIC INTO THE JAZZ.

Syncopation was still confined to its native haunts - to the demi-monde of New Orleans, to the tango of the Argentine, to the enticing music of old Spain, with its haunting Moorish strain, and - why not be frank? - to Brahms and to Wagner. Not yet had the American ragtime kings learned to let the accent fall on a beat other than the given place for that accent - which, by the way, is about as near as untechnical language can come to saying what syncopation is, just as untechnical
language must be content to describe "The Blues" as "slurred syncopation."

But the present writer is merely the dance public. Instead of the musical public - so she can only describe what syncopation does - instead of why it does it - what "those blues" do to your feet when they take them away from your own control and into the control of the music - even as the turkey trot rhythm did things with your shoulders. These "Blue Danube Blues" make you take a step - but before that step is quite finished begin to give an undertow. There are cross currents in the music as well as the up and down currents of the old turkey trot or the cakewalk.

But we are getting ahead of the story - the dramatic story of getting those Dangerous Blues into society. Remember that the Argentine tango had come and gone without leaving a trace of its peculiar quality of syncopated time on American dancing or upon American dance music. Most of the tangos of our tango period, eight years ago, had consisted of just "fancy steps" by partners who stood in the "tango position." Most of the music had consisted of just a fancy brand of slow rag time.

And so, after all, it remained for the African jungle to furnish the native birthplace to our modern dance music instead of the more respectable birthplaces we might have chosen for it. Syncopation can't laugh it off. Up the Mississippi to back saloons of Chicago - across the deserts and mountains to the Barbary Coast, Jazz had gone first, long years before there was more than a hint of syncopation in the negro dance orchestras that played for New Orleans gay social world. And again more years passed before the first real "jazz band" migrated from New Orleans and began creating its far-famed furor on Broadway. That was just five years ago - the date set by all our reformers as the year that marks the final disintegration of American morals - the fatal day when the jazz got in and began its rapid spread to the furthermost hick town of our Country, 'Tis of Thee.

JAN. - MELODY - FRANK WESTPHAL, CHICAGO EXPONENT OF JAZZ - Writer of Popular Music Maintains

Jazz music has had its day. Today it is a nonentity in the popular field and the music that many people regard as jazz is in reality syncopation of the highest form," said Westphal in a recent interview.
"Jazz was born in the Southland, and when it came North it was served up with piano and drums. Later came the saxophone and other instruments, including the cornet, trombone, banjo and big basses. With this growth came the special arrangements, and then the finest forms of syncopation. Today, the man who is skilled in the art of writing and bringing out most effectively the various instruments is usually the most successful in entertaining the public.

Syncopation is typical of the American people. It represents their thoughts and sentiments, and it has the dash and pep that is expressive and so characteristic of our people. The average American loves variety, and whether he visits a vaudeville house or a cabaret he insists upon diversity of music, in dancing, in the numbers on the program and in fact in all entertainment. In so far as this applies to the popular dance orchestra it has necessitated the writing of original arrangements and the use of new and striking ideas in these arrangements.

Mr. Westphal contends that the secret of success in playing syncopation lies in the use of unusual scores, in the introduction of novel effects and the featuring of one or more instruments in such a manner as to produce eccentric harmonies, quick breaks and strange counter melodies. The most successful exponents of syncopation today, he says, are the men who can take the themes of popular numbers and reconstruct them, injecting unique ideas and making them palatable to suit public taste.

Men who are expert in arranging are in demand if they can supply the ideas," said Mr. Westphal. "Syncopation is not made up of freakish effects and trick playing, and the scores that are being used today call for men who can play entirely from manuscript and who are artists in every respect. The modern dance orchestra has drawn many men from the ranks of symphony orchestras because the opportunities are greater and the financial return is far in excess of that enjoyed by most symphony men. Another factor is that symphony men with their training are more competent to handle the manuscripts that are so often written out hurriedly and set upon the stands at the last minute."

JULY/DEC. - DIAL - TOUJOURS JAZZ

In Krehbiel's book the whole question of rhythm is comparatively taken for granted, as it should be. Syncopation discovered in classic music, in the Scot's snap of the Strathspey reel, in Hungarian folk music, is characteristic of three-fifths of the negro songs which Krehbiel
analyzed (exactly the same proportion, by the way, as are in the interval of the ordinary major). But it is such a normal phenomenon that I have never found a composer to be interested in it. Krehbiel, to be sure, does refer to the "degenerate form" of syncopation which is the basis of our ragtime, and that is hopeful because it indicates that ragtime is a development-intensification, sophistication-of something normal in musical expression. The free use of syncopation has led our good composers of ragtime and jazz to discoveries in rhythm and to a mastery of complications which one finds only in the great masters of serious music. In describing the Dahoman war dances at the Chicago World's Fair, Krehbiel says:

"Berlioz in his supremost effort with his army of drummers produced nothing to compare in artistic interest with the harmonious drumming of these savages. The fundamental effect was a combination of double and triple time, the former kept by the singers, the latter by the drummers, but it is impossible to convey the idea of the wealth of detail achieved by the drummers by means of exchange of the rhythms, syncopation of both simultaneously, and dynamic devices."

SEPT. - METRONOME - MEYER DAVIS

Modern syncopation is the classical expression of dance music," says Mr. Davis, and stands ready to back up his assertion with examples and arguments based on the history of music. "The syncopated form has been used time and time again by the great masters," asserts Mr. Davis, "and in some of their best work. Wagner and Berlioz frequently used syncopation. A notable example of classical syncopation is found in Dvorak's 'New World Symphony.' The most intricate syncopation I can recall is found in the overture of Smetana's 'Bartered Bride,' although Glinka's 'A Life for the Tear' presents almost equal difficulties. "Nor should modern syncopation be confused with savage syncopation. The savages syncopate without melody, while melody is pre-eminent in modern dance music. Blaring discords have been banished from the best dance orchestras. there remain, of course, the daring vivacities and unexpected effects that 'knock you between the eyes,' but these are the very life of jazz.

Not one person in a thousand dreams that the premier jazz orchestras of the country are doing work quite as difficult as that of the symphony orchestras." But, according to Mr. Davis, "the new,
complicated, symphonic arrangements of jazz selections present difficulties equal to those of the classics.
"By the time the special arranger has finished working up a syncopated selection for orchestral use,

MARCH - HARPERS - ANATOM OF JAZZ

Syncopation in popular music first came into evidence in the old "coon" songs of minstrel-show days. Remember "But I Want Them Presents Back"? Next came such childishly simple attempts as "Under the Bamboo Tree" and "Rainbow," songs that could not attain popularity to-day, which succeeded because they were the first to stress syncopation in a form which could be reached by the masses. Then along came Irving Berlin and we were off. The ragtime piano player and then the jazz orchestra developed, until to-day we have "symphonic" jazz.

Old-timers such as "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "When the Midnight Choo Choo Leaves for Alabam," Omar Kyayyam," and "Maple Leaf Rag" began to establish a conventional form for jazz. Since that time there has been no essential change in its structure, the development having been confined almost entirely to internal elaboration.

The idea of exaggerated syncopation was first presented to America in a more or less respectable way. "Coon songs" and real Negro melodies were not considered damaging to one's social or business reputation. Syncopation itself had a well-developed and honorable lineage at the time. If the socially elect had adopted syncopation it might have been comme it faut from the outset, and we might have heard the Boston Symphony Orchestra rendering a legitimate jazz symphony years ago. But musicians of the radical type were developing scientific dissonance. Strauss discovered new uses for the cymbals, and Bloch conducted a series of fashionable experiments in the receptivity of the human ear. So syncopation was picked up by the dance hall, cabaret, and vaudeville group, who of course turned it toward their particular purposes.

Jazz has won and held universal popularity, I believe, not merely because of its exploitation by the lower musical order, but because of its own intrinsic qualities. These are: firstly, fundamental rhythm; secondly, simple harmonics; thirdly, standardized form.
Note that I have not included "melody" in my mention of the intrinsic qualities of jazz. This is not in the least because melody is not essential, but because it belongs to jazz no more and no less than it belongs to any other form of music. To write a story, one must have something to say: this is the tune. Shall it be said in ballad, symphony, anthem, or blues? Jazz is one form of expression; the tune is the thing expressed. The effect depends vastly more upon the method adopted than it does upon the tune itself. Take that good old Methodist hymn "Shall We Gather At The River." Play it on the organ, with its old-fashioned draggy sonorousness; snap it into a Boy Scout March; try it for a one-step; slow it up, syncopate it, throw in a few minors where majors used to be, and you will almost think you have a "Mammy" song. Everything in music has a tune, otherwise it could not move from beginning to end. Jazz tunes may be distinctive, but I doubt it. As Sigmund Spaeth has pointed out in *The Common Sense of Music*, many of the best jazz melodies have been appropriated from the old masters. Composers have always had for one of their mottoes "never throw away an old melody." But the tune does not make jazz. On the contrary, jazz breathes life into many a tune which alone could not carry itself for four measures without dying of stagnation.

It acquires no mental effort to enjoy jazz. A moronic musical intelligence can absorb without effort all that it has to offer. The text of the "lyrics" appears to be incidental. The musical form of the thing is what has captivated the masses, because they can understand it. Its simplicity is amazing. The marvel is that so many variations have been accomplished within the prescribed limitations.

For purposes of this discussion, we will omit the waltz, which is not jazz, and the so-called "ballad." Just how is the typical "rag" built?

**JULY/DECEMBER, VOL III, #2 - THE GOLD COAST REVIEW**

On the whole I think there is surprisingly little syncopation in African melodies themselves. The reason probably is that there is so much in the gong and small drum parts that it is not necessary in the voice part, and in fact would be wasted, if not actually worse than useless. In may be however that there is a good deal more syncopation than I have detected. The tune "Ya Amponsa", which I have given in a simplified form in Fig. 4, also exists in the following form:-
Syncopation implies of course the existence of a regularly recurring accent, and such accent is far less common in African music than in European. To this extent then the term syncopation is inapplicable to African music. But where there is such a regularly recurring accent it coincides as a rule with the beat of the big drum and with the main notes of the melody. Figs. 19 and 20 show two exceptions; the first a Dagomba song, the second a Fanti.

Figure 19

Part IV

Syncopation in the Classics

To begin with, we might point out that syncopation is nothing new. No great composer has neglected to make first-rate use of it. All of us can remember scores of examples in Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, but we might begin our exploration of the standard composers with Schubert, and proceed along the well-worn track of the Romantics.

Schubert's immortal syncopation in the first *Unfinished Symphony* (Ex. 9) comes first. This particular passage, elementary as it seems to a musician, would be revolutionary to the conductor of a modern dance-band—who dare not for the life of him take the accompanying instruments off the plain beats.
Having established a point of contact, it would be well to go through the main points in the previous section, finding examples of each technical requirement.

**Timing Difficulty**

The first point of mere accuracy of timing-can be illustrated freely from any page of standard music. Examples which closely approach in style the modern syncopated beat-interference can be found in the mock-rubato effects of Liszt and Chopin, as in Exs. 10 and 11, while stronger effects are shown in Exs. 12 and 13.
In the works of Brahms and Tchaikovsky (to mention only two composers) heaps of similar examples will be encountered-in Brahms the first three of the *Ballads*, and in Tchaikovsky the *Theme and Variations* in F (Op. 19, No. 6) and the very characteristic *Scherzo Humoristique* (given in one of the Novello Tchaikovsky Albums). Finger and Note-Patterns

Turning to the next characteristics, those of ginger-patterns and note-patterns, we can find our pupil hundreds of glorious passages in Chopin. Chopin's powers of invention in this direction were simply amazing. From the obvious patterning of the bulk of the Waltzes, through the more subtle patterns of the Mazurkas, arriving eventually at the boundless tracery of the *Ballades* and the *Scherzo* and the *Studies*, the path is strewn with material of the most fascinating kind. Most of the very finest examples are too long to quote here: I must content myself with one from the *Scherzo* in Bb minor. (Ex. 14).
A figure like this can, however, for the sake of greater brilliance (say in the final section of the piece) be split up between the two hands. (Ex. 15).

![Ex. 15]

This brings the passage within the scope of the "two-handed break" type-a classification which may act as a bait to the enthusiastic student of syncopated music.

A double finger-pattern of great fascination is the "cascade" figure in the *Scherzo* in C3 minor (Op. 39) (fifth bar and ff of the *meno mosso* section); this will test the enthusiasm of the most fervent.

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THE HISTORY OF IMPROVISATION
IN REGARD TO JAZZ HISTORY

The art of improvising (spontaneous creativity) is as old as music itself. Because of its nature, music is theorized as beginning as an improviser art. Language is said to have began as music and was established when certain sounds were concentrated into definite associated actions with their corresponding sounds. Music then developed into one direction and language the other.

Early man had both a need for communication and reaction and many times combined the two, much as the African combined his music with communications. This relationship led to the attachment of music to pagan rituals of a religious, supernatural nature. Music writing in a much later development in music history. The art of improvising is continuous throughout music history.

The earliest musicians were both composers and performers. These qualifications can also define today’s jazz musician. As early music became more refined and certain religious rites were repeated, a standardization of the music occurred. This music, not having the
capacity for written notation was passed on by rote to each generation of musicians. By this method, each generation's interpretation changed somewhat, much like a piece of folk music develops, the rendered music a copy of the original with personal embellishments. These personal musical expressions took on individual interpretations, attitudes, prejudices and preferences, many time without realizing it.

Through time the musical art grew with certain melodies and rhythms being repeated and at times, written down. Thus the cycle was developed from improvised music to traditional repetitions of written down melodies with each in its time, lying dormant in the background waiting for its turn to rise again. (The first serious attempt at notation was the Nuemes of the Middle Ages.) This musical alternation is best seen in the activity of the Romantic Period of music when the improvised style was pushed into the background. It did not stay surpressed long. Its birth again in the 20th century was championed by the performances of jazz. Improvising occurred also in both African and Oriental music but our concern will be its history and application in European/American music.

Even in the Romantic Period, with its emphasis on musical precision and exactness through notation, the urge to improvise manifested itself in varying degrees and intensities. This alternation of written vs. improvised music can be seen in the change from the Romantic Period to the Modern Period around 1900 with the development of a new school in music called the Impressionistic school that led to the modern school of atonality. Actually one may consider jazz a high development of the Romantic Period, it alone competing with the new atonality school.

From Opera (1600) to jazz (1900) no style of music escaped the influence of the improvised technique. Almost every development of a musical form had in its history, elements of improvised material. Improvising has been a strong influence in creating and developing new forms and styles. Many began as improvised forms such as the figured bass of the /baroque period, the Cadenza of the Concerto in the Classical Period, the Chorale preludes, the Fantasy-Rhapsodies, and especially in the technique of Theme and Variations, which could be called solidified improvisation by use of notation.

Early Christian Music and Improvising
In a report of Tertullian (155-222) the antiphonal singing of his day was open to improvising, a sort of imitative application. The melismatic portions of the Gregorian Chants are essentially improvisory in nature. Tracing the roots of the Gregorian Chant leads us back to its predecessor the Jewish Chant (Sic: a thought - was the Jewish Chant influenced by the African Chant during the enslavement of the Hebrews by the Egyptians, or by the ancient Persian music.) The Jewish Chant did not change through improvised technique as it was part of a religious ceremony. African Chant was also used in religious rites and also in the activities of everyday life. African Chant has been likened to Gregorian Chant rather than Jewish Chant when perhaps it should be more closely linked to the Jewish Chant. After all, Christianity was much later arriving than the Jewish influence that was exposed to the African Chant during the Hebrew captivity in Africa.

In the Christian Chants, the melodies of the Graduals, the Alleluias of the Tract, the offertories and the Communions were sung, with the technique of added ornamentation, by improvisory technique. In the offices of the church, Cassian (died before 435) tells of improvising additions of coloraturas to the psalms. There are many accounts of the use of improvising in the jubilus. The very character of the Nuemes dictated that embellishments and interpretation in performance were essential to their style. Improvising was almost mandatory to a final realization of their meaning and of their interpretation for performance. Being very ambiguous and lacking stability, the Nuemes lent themselves to improvisory interpretations and they were really a very definite and important step one in the history of notation.

The advent of what we call, in the beginning, harmony, was investigated by both singers and instrumentalist prior to its acceptance. Polyphony had begun by the improvisory technique of adding another part to an existing melody, passing through Organum to the definitive notational technique of writing using a Cantus Firmus. The history of Homophony and Polyphony parallels the history of improvising.

As this improvisory technique was developing new forms through experiments in tonal space, we find music heading toward its harmonic stage with the evolution of Faux Bourdon, a technique that is similar to the one used in African performance practices. Faux Bourdon used the third of the chord in the bass as opposed to Organum that used the 4th
and/or the 5th. Names we associate with the Faux Bourdon style are: Dunstable, Dufay and Binchois.

During the Renaissance we see the continued growth of improvisory technique in the Basse-Dance:

"The later stage of the discussion began with the realization that the Basse Dance of the 15th century was performed as a polyphonic composition in two or more voices. . . In a polyphonic rendition, the tenor serves as the Cantus Firmus of an improvised setting in which the lower part is played on the trombone, the extemporized counterpoint on shawns or cornetti." (1)

Also, in discussing the polyphonic Spagna of Gulielmus, Bukofzer states:

"In its lack of further organization, the setting of Gulielmus stands very close to improvisation, and it can safely be assumed that it represents the type of improvised dance music that we have been hoping to find for years and that the sources record so rarely, precisely because it was improvised." (2)

The Spaniard, Diego Ortiz (1553), in his second book of his Treatise gives a highly illuminating account of various manners of improvisation for the viola da gamba. He presents a whole group of variations on un-named Cantus Firmi (Spagna, Passamezzo, Antico, Moderno, Folia, Romanesca, and Ruggliero). Ortiz distinguishes three types of improvisations: on (1) tenors, (2) ground basses, and (3) complete compositions (Chansons and Madrigals). He illustrates the 'second manner' of improvisation with six Recercadas, which are all based on the same tenor. This Cantus Firmus, or as he calls it, Canto Llano, is none other than the Spagna. He writes it for harpsichord and viola da gamba, and in his instructions he prescribes that the harpsichordist play the Cantus Firmus with improvised chords and that the gambist improvise his counterpoint as solos. His Treatise indicates that the Spagna has obviously severed its relation with dance music and had become merely a scaffolding for improvisations. The development of this form parallels the growth and relationship of jazz, both beginning as dance music and using improvisory techniques. (3)
The extremely florid nature of the counterpoint of the Spagna characterizes it as a highly stylized show piece for an improvising virtuoso.

In his Treatise, Ortiz one can see the tradition of the Basse Dance, characterized by improvisations on extended Cantus Firmi, and improvisation on the more recent and shorter bass passages of the Passamezzo family that all have their point of contact. These bass patterns remind one of the Boogie Woogie patterns of 20th century jazz music.

In further mention of improvising Bukofzer says:

"A similar development in the Italian dance song has been shown by Gerson Kiwi. The final confluence of the different streams can be seen in the well-known improvisations on the even more concise and tonally more characteristic ostinato basses of the Baroque era. The Spagna of Guliemus gives us what are to date the earliest musical examples of the tradition and more nearly reflects the improvisatory performance of the Basse Dance than any other of the known arrangements." (44)

Thomas Morley, in his well know book, "A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music," tells his pupil many times about the technique of 'extemporizing.'

"Now I pray you set me a plainsong and I will try how I can sing upon it". (5)

"The rules of counterpoint in fact spring from, and are identical with, the rules for singing a satisfactory extempore countertune to a given theme." (6)

In the third part of the book Morley begins by setting his pupils to extemporize freely on a given 'Canto Furmo.'

"The name of descant is usurped of the musicians in divers significations; sometimes they take it for the whole harmony of many voices; others sometimes they take it for one of the voices or parts; and that is why the whole song is not passing three voices; last of all they take it for singing a part extempore upon a plainsong, in which sense we commonly use it; so that when a man talketh of a Descanter it must be
understood of one that can, extempore, sing a part upon a plain song."
(7)

The technique of singing over a Cantus Firmus or Ground-bass furthered the growth of music toward harmony. (One can compare a chorus of a Dixieland number to the performance of the Renaissance Basse Dance as both are improvised polyphony.) With parallel parts added in the same rhythm, we see the growth of harmony and of the important part that improvising played in furthering the development of harmony. Harmony, in the future, was to further the use of improvising.

This improvising counterpoint is reported by many writings from the 16th century. One example, Ippolito Chamatero di Negri (a choir master) writes about this technique and reports his choirboys and singers:

"Success achieved by his singers by improvising of choirboys from his Mass especially the Gloria Patri that was repeated improvised up to 20 times." (8)

Improvising was used extensively by the organist and lutist of the 15th and 16th century. The popular songs of Paul Hofhaimer, and, Francesco Landidi (a blind organist), proved the importance of improvising. This emphasis on improvising cannot only be seen in the many written records and musical notation but also in the test given to candidates seeking organ jobs. The applicant had to play a fantasy on a given theme from a Kyrie or a Motet in strict 4 part setting. This not only required the candidate to know the rules of counterpoint but he had to be highly creative in the art of improvising and spontaneous creation. Then, the candidate had to play a Cantus Firmus, Fugally, in four parts. Finally, he had to imitate and answer in modulation a verse from an unfamiliar composition intoned by the choir - all this without any preparation except his previous schooling and skill.

From the highly developed improvised background of the Renaissance, through the Baroque further extension of the skill of improvising, we come to the highest point of ornamentation and improvising, that of the Rococo, or Stile Gallant period (1725 - 1775). The growth of improvised ornaments now became fully traditionalized, and one can find perhaps the most complicated form of writing down
ornaments and embellishments, probably in the history of music, by a series of symbols. The spontaneous playing of ornaments and embellishments has always ended up in written tradition. (In jazz, small combos used 'head' arrangements; this techniques grew into the big band 'head' arrangements of the early jazz bands such as Count Basie and Duke Ellington, and Chick Webb and Fletcher Henderson, leading to the very complex arrangements of the present big bands of Ferguson and Tabakan.)

THE PRACTICE OF TRECENTO MUSIC
1300 - 1400

The musical life of the 14th century was very full and varied. Literary sources mention love songs, folk songs and dances that have been almost entirely lost. Paul Lang in his book Western Civilization mentions the Trecento practice of performing music:

"But even the manuscripts containing the music itself, do not constitute satisfactory documents for a complete picture of the music of the period, because this period was an era of improvisation in which the written composition represented only the frame upon which the musical piece was built. Parts were added, the 'hoquetus' applied, and all sorts of instruments joined the singers. Drone basses, supplied by the drone tubes of the bagpipe or the strings of the vielle, were exceedingly popular but, although their use changes the whole complexion of the composition, they were never noted down. A composition was executed according to its graphical aspect only if all the required factors happened to be on hand. But if a singer or an instrumentalist was missing, his part was simply omitted, or if there was a player too many, another part was composed or improvised and added to the existing parts." (9)

During the 16th century, improvising, both with the voice and with an instrument, was a very respected accomplishment. This practice was described in Boccaccio in the Decameron when an epic song is heard whose stanza alternates the viol and lute while extemporizing singing is done.

The string instruments were accompanied in the Baroque period by a harpsichord playing in the figured-bass style. This figured-bass style can be seen in the free fantasies, in ostinato variations and in other
freely composed and improvised compositions. The Baroque should be called the figured-bass period.

In the renaissance the most popular instrument for improvising was the viola bastarda. The style of a viol improvising over a four-voice polyphonic song, gave way to an accompaniment in the new monodic style and ushered in the harmonic style to go with the polyphonic one. The combination of both the harmonic and polyphonic style is seen best in the music of J. S. Bach. One can find the improvising style still alive in the Baroque in the music of Bach. His improvisation in his organ playing became legendary. Schweitzer writes on Bach's figured bass:

"Figured bass in the rules and principles of accompaniment that he gave his pupils, is the most perfect foundation of music. It is executed with both hands in such a manner that the left hand plays the notes that are written, while the right adds consonances and dissonances thereto, making an agreeable harmony of the glory of God and the justifiable gratification of the soul." (10)

Bach's mastery in improvisation was well known and was more famous for it than for his compositions. He was often asked by his friends to improvise and usually obliged. When he improvised, and sometimes it was as long as two hours, the theme remained the same from beginning to end. First he made a prelude and a fugue, then in a trio or a four-part movement showing his mastery of the organ registration; then finally came a chorale prelude, and concluding; a new fugue on the same theme. His son Emmanuel had said that the organ compositions we have in writing give no adequate idea of the magnificence of Bach's improvisations on organ.

It gave Bach particular pleasure, when improvising, to go into all possible keys, and to move about, even in the most distant keys in such a way that his listeners did not even observe it, but thought he had only modulated within the inner circle of a single key. The most famous instance of his glory improvising came when he was visiting Frederick the Great when he was asked to play for the great King, a flute player himself. This is related by Bach's son Freideman:

"But more interesting than all this is the fact that for this evening the King gave up his flute concerto performance/rehearsal and invited the so-called 'old Bach' to try his Silbermann 'forte-pianos,' of which he
had several, in different rooms of the castle. The musicians accompanied them from room to room, and Bach had to try all the pianos and improvise upon them. After he had done this for some time, he asked the King to give him a fugue subject for him to work out impromptu. The King was astonished at the crudite way in which his theme was developed extempore, and apparently in order to see how far such an art could be carried, expressed a wish to hear also a fugue in six parts. As, however, it is not every theme that is suited for this kind of polyphony, Bach chose one himself, and developed it immediately, to the great admiration of all present, in the same brilliant and learned was as he had formerly done the theme of the King. Then the King wanted to hear him on the organ. He accordingly took him, on the following days, to all the organs to be found in Potsdam, as he had taken him previously to all the Silbermann forte-pianos. After his return to Leipzig he worked out in three and six parts the theme the King had given him, adding various clever canonic manipulations of it, had it engraved on copper with the title 'Musical Offerings' and dedicated it to its inventor, King Frederick the Great of Prussia."

During the Baroque Period, almost every type of composition was subject to improvising. Only the Catholic mass seemingly escaped its influence, however one must consider the fact that many masses utilized themes from even popular sources, the composer thus creating a new composition from an already well known song, he is using a variation technique whose beginnings were from spontaneous improvising, then one can say even the Mass was subject to improvisory influences.

It was also the practice to write a number of different Agnus Dei, the performer selecting which one he would use. As it was used at the time, the Agnus Dei actually was a group of variations on the same theme. Baroque music was also subject to individual interpretation, not only melodic improvising but individual expression called reservata. The written composition was not capable of transmitting the reservata qualities; these had to be interpreted by each performer. Musica reservata then was not only a new style of composition but also a new style of performance, and the two factors were inseparable. One will find many great composers from Josquin to the Gabriels' and Monteverdi who were inspired by this double task, which grew to pervade every part of their music and which finally passed over in time from the calm atmosphere of the Renaissance into the unruly world of
the Baroque. Besides the musical form/style of the musica reservata, the characteristic emphasis was in musical interpretation, on expression, on the effects, and parts of the melody include the so-called coloratura and embellishment as an integral part of speech. Consequently their role was not that of mere embellishments. It led to the music drama.

In 1608 Banchieu composed pieces where the singers did not know what the other was going to sing - this gives us another early example of polyphonic improvising. The century old practice of this 'melismatic decoration' became traditionalized. After progressing to written symbols they were known by names such as tremolo, groppo, etc. In the music of the Renaissance and the baroque the emphasis became more of a performer's art than a composers' one. What we find as written compositions in manuscript, the music only presents a part of the actual performing technique and the final sound would be quite different. It might be added, that quite often, composers were one of the performers. To illustrate how important the performer was, and how the written composition was but a skeleton of what was to be played, one could think of a comparison using a piece played by the Charlie Parker Quartet, if they only played the first chorus and not any choruses improvised. We could never appreciate Parker's genius at improvisation.

Our modern style of improvising over a chord pattern began in the early Baroque with the development of Monody and the art of through-bass accompaniment, also known as basso Continuo or figured bass. So many think that the art of improvising was a development of jazz, but, jazz improvising began as an imitating of pieces heard and was the attempt by the early jazz musicians at interpreting the dance music of the era giving it their individual performance techniques.

The Baroque Period (1600-1750) stands as one of the most creative periods in music history. Its newly developing forms were built on the art of improvising as inherited from the wide use of the improvisatory technique practice of the Renaissance. A period of concrete development in musical forms is usually preceded by one of extensive use of improvising. (Example: early jazz progressed into big band arrangements.) So, the jazz of today is laying the foundation to a period of fruition in the future as the Baroque was preceded by the Renaissance.

In the Baroque, improvisation can be found in secular and sacred music, opera or small ensembles. Recalling J. S. Bach's experiences with
Frederick the Great, if we examine Bach's Art of Fugue (containing 14 fugues, all on the same subject) it is nothing but a series of fugal variations on one theme. It was Bach's last large work (the Chorale Prelude 'Vor Deinen thron Tret Ich', was his last works - a small Chorale Prelude for organ.) It is not unlikely that the theme of the Art of fugue had been one of the themes Bach used for improvisations prior to using it as the theme for Art of Fugue, as it lent itself to further development. Musicians of Bach's day were trained to improvise on given melodies.

In 17th century England, it was a sign of good breeding to be able to sing and play upon an instrument, to compose and to extemporize on a melody. To be able to improvise on the Bamba was the highest goal of virtuosity. Rousseau speaks of this skill of improvising as "more science, more spirit, and more technique than all other kinds of playing."

The music of the 17th century gives us only an approximate idea of how the music really sounded when performed by the virtuosi of the era. The composer indicated the outlines of the work, leaving it to the performing artist to embroider it with ornaments. Many scores contain only the solo part and the outline of the bass part (thorough-bass). The rest, including the instrumentation, was left to the singers, players and conductor, who was usually a player on the harpsichord.

This most typical feature of Baroque style, ornamentation, is found in abundance in all forms of the Baroque art. The collective technical term for the improvised ornamentation was "diminution" was, in the words of Praetorius, "One long note is resolved and broken into many other smaller and quicker ones." One could apply that to jazz improvising. Actually, all improvising is similar, the only difference is the way and the style of the times. The musicians of the Baroque, both singers and instrumentalists, considered a mastery of improvised ornamentation their biggest artistic asset. Both singers, who were taught the concepts of the physiological requirements of the human voice, and the instrumentalist, were expected to be able to invent, extemporaneously, free contrapuntal parts over the given figured bass.

The players of keyboard instruments, lute, harp and even wind players were experienced in inventing and improvising entirely new parts. In his manual on the techniques of orchestral playing and accompaniment, Agostino Agazzari says, "While the player-composer
should endeavor to embellish the part to the best of his knowledge, he
must beware with great industry and judiciousness not to offend
(meaning not to encroach the other player or to run with his part.) He
also warned the player to watch for a balance of sonority to avoid
confusion, and, everyone should listen to the other and wait for his turn
to apply his runs, trills, and accents.

Especially in the keyboard instruments a knowledge of
improvising was very necessary as even the music of Bach Arias
frequently only contained the vocal part, the instrumental solo, and the
figured bass: the whole harmonic accompaniment had to be improvised
from the figured bass.

During the 18th century, the art of embellishing, a form of
decorating the melody was favored over improvising new melodies, but,
the art of improvising was not lost and one can find its use in the quasi-
cadenzas that later developed into the giant cadenzas of the classical
Piano Concertos.

From 1700 the development of the Bel Canto style of singing
continued to reach unthought of heights. The cadenzas of the Arias
became a favorite art for vocal acrobatics on the opera stage by all of
the famous castrati of the day. A comparison of the famous "cutting or
bucking contest" of early New Orleans marching bands have their
counterpart in the vocal duels of the 18th century opera stage. Two
eminent vocal masters who sought to surpass one another - competed in
reciprocal question and answer play. Francesco Durante, in his 12
Chamber duets for soprano and Alto, alternates bars much like the jazz
technique of each musician improvising 4 bar passages of a total
chorus.

With the popularity of figured bass the Baroque orchestra was
separated into two groups having their purpose (concerto grosso). Much like our jazz combo has, the chordal-rhythm instruments in one
group, responsible for chord patterns and rhythm, the second group
given the task of adorning, decorating and carrying the melody. A
Baroque composition resembles a modern jazz chart. The bass note is
given along with the figured bass, thus giving the keyboard player the
material and information he needs for the chord structure. In today's
music we give a chord symbol. The figured bass style was taught until
the second half of the 18th century. An example of this style of playing
was given by Schultz:
"The organist must remember that so long as the falsobourdon lasts in one tone, he should repeatedly add, with his (right) hand on the organ or clavier, graceful and appropriate runs or passaggi, which will give this work, and all other falsobourdons its proper character. Also, in accompanying falsobourdons it is customary and effective for one of the viols to play passaggi." (12)

Lorenz Mizler (1738) writes:

"J. S. Bach accompanies a solo with such a through-bass, it sounds like a concerto and he plays the melody with his right hand as though it had previously been composed that way." (13)

The Italian Baroque form-style "toccatas" had their beginnings as improvised pieces. One can also find sonatas written with only the figured bass written out, the realization of the parts left to the skill of the two instrumentalists. (This is written about by Pasquini - (1637-1710)

With the gradual decline of the through-bass in the second half of the 18th century, the popularity of improvising in Western European ensemble music lay dormant until the rise of jazz improvising in the 20th century. The cadenzas of the classical/Romantic Concertos kept alive the improvising technique. Handel was much admired for his organ improvising during his concerti as was Mozart, Beethoven and Liszt. These cadenzas were not only found in the concertos but also in chamber music. In the 17th and 18th centuries, improvising became the art of independent performers.

Czerny, the famous pianist-teacher, even lists 6 kinds of individual improvising of fantasies: 1) the working out of a single theme in all the usual forms of composition, 2) the working out and re-working of several themes into a whole, 3) the potpourri, 4) the variations, 5) fantasy-improvisation in the strict and fugal style, and 6) the capriccio.

Handel's friend, Matteson writes about what is required for a candidate for an organ job:

"A candidate is required to be ready to write down, afterwards, his improvising on ostinato basses and on his own theme." (14)
This showed how important improvising was and how organ compositional technique was born in improvising. C. P. E. Bach writes:

"Variation upon repetition is indispensable today. (1760) It is expected of every performer. The public demands that practically every idea be repeatedly altered." (15)

In the Classical Period, auditors gave Mozart themes which he, in the slang of the day, 'took a walk.' Mozart heard Beethoven improvise once for a half-hour, Beethoven improvising a free fantasy (1792). Czerny called it 'spinning out,' Reminiscent of some of our jazz language like 'stretching out' or 'getting down.' Technical agility was, however, beginning to take the place of improvising. In the improvisations of Beethoven, Liszt, Chopin, Brahms and Paganini, we see not only the culmination of the art of improvising, but its final voice until the rise of jazz improvising.

In the first half of the 18th century, the responsibilities put on the performer were considerably more than in our 20th century. He was charged with, besides the execution of the composition, the final elaborations of the score. The composers left, to the performer the job of incorporating, between the bar lines, embellishments and orchestrations to suit the occasion, writing down only an outline of his musical ideas. The most difficult of the styles during this time was the operatic score. They gave little more than general directions to be used by the conductor. In many instances the bass was not figured, leaving even the choice of harmonies to the continuo player. Organists and musical directors were expected to master contrapuntal improvisations. Handel's organ concerti were admired for their elaborate polyphonic phrases, leaving the printed score as almost insignificant. It gave not the remotest idea of what Handel wanted played or played himself.

The improvisory techniques of Buxtehude, Reinken and Bach were legendary, this art of improvising remaining a highly treasured one until after Beethoven's time. Not being trained composers, the castrato or prima donnas would add improvised flourishes within the arias that many times did not agree with the accompaniment, this practice became so ridiculous that Handel, insisting on respect for his music, generally began sketching out the ornamentations himself, rehearsing them with the singers. This practice was generally picked up by other composers, eventually leading to the elaborate symbols for
ornamentations we find later in the century. Protestant church music (except Handel's Oratorios) remained relatively free from arbitrary distortions as they used smaller groups (four signers to a part and 20 in the orchestra). The church cantors usually had their students living with them and supervised both the training and performance of them, as with J. S. Bach at St. Thomas School.

After the middle of the 18th century, improvisation, as an integral part of musical practice, began to decline rapidly. Instrumentalists soon became accustomed to a more exact score. Opera still frequently contained cadenzas and embellishments as usual. Gluck insisted on "cleanliness in singing" and enforced his ideas most earnestly. Mozart excluded embellishments while writing and only an exceptional cadenza might appear in his works.

With the rise of the "virtuoso" in the Romantic Period, we see as would be expected, the emergence of a desire for individual improvising. This desire to create spontaneously, was a strong belief of the romantics. One example would be the admiration and awe that was shown for Paganini, which was not as much directed to his composed music but to the superhuman abilities of playing it on the violin. What one heard while in attendance at a Paganini recital was not even remotely approximated in the printed score, as Paganini improvised freely. His audience, who were romanticist, were unduly fascinated. This violin improvising style was emulated on the piano by Liszt, in the opera by Berlioz and Meyerbeer. Liszt's performances were similar to Paganini's improvisory style.

The great art of improvisation was beginning to disintegrate rapidly after Beethoven's time into harmless variations and figurations of given themes. Free improvisations were still very popular during concerts. Musicians like Liszt and Chopin made brilliant use of it. In America, William Mason liked to conclude his piano recitals with improvisations on a theme given to him by a member of the audience. The concertos still used improvised cadenzas but the style generally fell into destitution and even the improvised cadenzas began to disappear as, either the performers became accustomed to playing the cadenzas as were played by one of the great composers or; the performers used one that was accepted by the majority of performing artists. There was a practice by some performers to write their own in the style of the times, resulting in an incongruous sounding cadenza when compared to the apropos style of the piece being played.
As periods of art became stable, there follows a period of experimentation and revolution against the old style. Thus in the strict formal orchestrations and minute details insisted upon by the late romantic composers in their large orchestral works, there followed a period of indeterminable designs, with just an impression of the concrete object seen on the canvases and musical scores. This lack of defined structure would seem to lend itself to the art of improvising. This period, called my many the Impressionistic Period, coincided with the rise of improvisory arts of jazz.

We know that Debussy was somewhat influenced by jazz and/or negro music and because of that influence he wrote his famous Golliwogg's Cakewalk. Ravel spent endless hours, in his later years, in the jazz clubs of France. The mood and influence of the late 19th century and the early 20th century (the impressionistic school and the emergence of negro jazz music from America) was to affect and influence each other. Even near the last years of his life Brahms expressed an interest in ragtime rhythms. What then did the impressionists do with improvising? While Satie played the popular music of France in some of the cafes, and Ravel had a growing conviction that jazz would eventually supply a much-needed transfusion, there was little improvising in the impressionistic school, which are some respects was the last blooming of the Romantic Period of music. It is interesting that Debussy's works stand, "not as the negation of romanticism, but, as a part thereof, in its very acme and conclusion. (16)

The French novelist Cocteau said, "After the music with the silk brush, the music with the ax." (I don't think this was the origin of calling a musical instrument and "ax." The point is; the impressionistic school took traditional music to a dead end. What we call modern music emerged. At the same time jazz continued its romantic musical heritage along side of the dodecaphonic music of the modern school. Ravel might have been right in seeing jazz as a transfusion for music. Many modern composers, especially in the early 20th century, were influenced by jazz styles, forms and rhythms. Even today the "Avante Garde" have retreated, with jazz, on the other hand, becoming more "modern" (free jazz) and because the Avante Garde of musical progress, as only jazz seems to be progressing and changing; the sign of a healthy art form. Jazz must keep alive the improvising nature of its style and should never get traditionalized or it will play its own requiem. I believe that is
why jazz should be classified as a style and not a form, for once it becomes a form it is traditionalized and, it will cease to grow at its natural, normal pace. It must continue both as traditional (set arrangements) and as a living 'performer's art' - that of spontaneous creativity. Therefore, jazz must remain romantic in nature, not academic. Throughout the history of music we have alternated romantic and classical styles of music. We have alternated the traditional and improvised style of musical performance, each being the answer to the other. If jazz can remain romantic in nature it will continue to grow and progress. Improvising will, at times, be dormant, sometimes seemingly in the background of musical popularity but it will never die and should never die. Musical art's life blood is improvising. Improvisation played an important part in the development and composition of Western European music and its new champion is jazz.

In contemporary classical music the composers use improvising in much of their music. As in the past, improvisations are a problem to notate. Improvisation inherently exists to some extent in all music in which an exact notation is not possible. (That could be predominately notated music, except that actually heard on the sound reproduction machines-synthesizers that is still subject to interpretation.) All music, in the final analysis, relents not to the printed page but to the performer, the one who has the final decision of interpretation. The traditional interpretation is influenced, not by the actual notation, but the knowledge and technique of the performer. This is no more true than when the jazz artist gives a jazz interpretation to a piece of music. One only has to hear an opera singer try to sing a jazz piece.

A variation of the improvised 18th century cadenzas is seen in Donald Erb's "Concerto for percussion and Orchestra" (1966)

"In the first movement, where instead of having the soloist improvise a cadenza, I had the entire orchestra, other than the soloist, improvise it." (17)

In the 19th century, many composers refused to admit the existence of the improvisational aspects of music. The newly aroused interest in improvising is becoming more and more creative. According to Allan Bryant:
"Improvisation is similar to free jazz, oriental and African music, things that are impossible to write out." (18)

The contemporary composer thinks of improvisation as a form of composition, with its communications and exactness as important and explicit as those of traditional styles of performance. Two possible circumstances under which improvising was reborn and developed in the 20th century were: 1) the interest in 20th century jazz and the use of it by contemporary composers, and 2) the difficulties and complexities of modern music leading the performer to have much difficulty in interpretation and performance. The modern composer, being frustrated or because the result may have been better, chose to allow certain freedoms in performance of their works.

**Improvised vs. Aleatoric**

**Aleatory:** - Dependent on an accident or contingency. Alea-chance.

Is there a difference between improvised and aleatoric music? Both improvised music and aleatoric music are spontaneous. Free jazz borders on the aleatoric technique and collective aleatoric music borders on cacophony. This development is called progress, but it is not new as witnessed by the previous attempts at collective improvising by early performers. The only goals that are the end product of a performance of aleatoric music is that the total sound will be completely different each time, not even the rhythm or harmony remains the same. Aleatoric music is considered to be 'free' and the meaning it is searching for is just that - spontaneous. This subject is addressed by William Hellermann:

It seems to me that there is a fundamental difference between aleatoric and improvisational music. Improvisation is concerned with the realization in real time of defined artistic goals. Aleatory, by its very nature, does not recognize the existence of goals. Both differ from the traditional 'classic music' by leaving open to the performer the choice of the specific materials to be used in the piece. They are often lumped together for this reason and, also, because they are both thought to be "free." Actually, freedom is not really the issue. Improvisation, at its highest, seeks meaning through spontaneity. Aleatory declares meaning to be spontaneity. Both of these are very restrictive states. I find that in
my own works I am increasingly concerned with improvisation, and never with anything I would call aleatory. (19)

The 1960's saw a number of groups dedicated to performance of improvisational music. These groups worked many times from charts consisting of just the ideas needed to create a new work, i.e., musical motives, moods, rhythms, etc.

The frontiers of musical art still are not walled in. Its destiny still lies in its improvisational explorations and in its use of time, not in the sense of 'timing' but the use of time as spontaneous images.

Morton Feldman relates this idea of time to modern music and African music. In regard as to how objects exist as time he states:

"This was not how to make an object. . .but how this object exists as time. Time regained, as Proust referred to his work. Time as an image, as Aristotle suggested. This is the area that the visual arts later began to explore. This is the area which music, deluded that it was counting out the seconds, has neglected.

I once had a conversation with Karlheinz Stockhausen, where he began beating on the table and said: 'A sound exists either here - or here - or here.' He was convinced that he was demonstrating reality to me. That the beat, and the possible placement of sounds in relation to it, was the only thing the composer could realistically hold on to. The fact that he had reduced it to so much a square foot made him think, time was something he could handle and even parcel out, pretty much as he pleased. Frankly, this approach to time bores me. I am not a clock maker. I am interested in getting time in its unstructured existence. That is, I am interested in how this wild beast lives in the jungle-not in the zoo. I am interested in how time exists before we put our paws on it - our minds, our imagination into it.

One would think that music, more than any other art, would be exploratory about time. But is it? Timing - not time, has been passed off as the real thing in music." (20)

Felman's approach to time and music may be the new frontier jazz is looking for, to continue and progress the improvisory technique.
Early Radio

The earliest radio waves were received by the first crystal and one-tube sets (1910-1923). As this limited listening to 1 or 2 individuals a ‘horn’ speaker became increasingly popular. This was around 1921. By 1924 the high sensitivity of a horn was evolved to a more adaptable speaker and the audio output of many radios was almost a tenth of a watt and these early speakers possessed amazing reproduction.

Music by Telegraph

(1860)

One of the earliest experiments at transmitting music was through the Morse telegraph, by means of its rhythm. A Mr. Jones, who was an ear-witness of this experiment in New York, relates the following:

“We were in the Hanover Street office when there was a pause in business operations. Mr. Porter, of the Boston office, asked what tune we would have. We replied, “Yankee Doodle;’ and to our surprise he immediately complied with our request. The instrument commenced drumming the notes of the tune as perfectly and distinctly as a skillful drummer could have made them at the head of a regiment; and many will be astonished to hear that Yankee Doodle can travel by lightning. We then asked for ‘Hail Columbia!’ when the notes of that national air were distinctly beat off. We then asked for “Auld Lang Syne,’ which was given, and ‘Old Dan Tucker,’ When Mr. Porter also sent that tune, and, if possible, in a more perfect manner than the others. So perfectly and distinctly were the sounds of the tunes transmitted, that good instrumental performers could have had no difficulty in keeping time with the instruments at this end of the wires.” With this the limits of the practicability of having a pianist in Boston execute a fantasia and at the same moment the music would arrive in New York now would present no other difficulty than may arise from the expense of the performances. From what has just been stated, it is clear that the time of music has been already transmitted, and the production of the sounds does not offer any more difficulty than the printing of the letters of a dispatch.
Musical pitch and transmission

“It is well known that the pitch of any musical note is the consequence of the rate of vibration of the string by which it is produced, and that the more rapid the vibration the higher the note will be in the musical scale, and the slower the vibration the lower it will be. Thus the string of a piano-forte which produces the basic note C (2nd space in bass clef) vibrates 132 times in a second; that which produces the note C (2 lines below bass clef) vibrates 66 times in a second; and that which produces the note C (middle C) vibrates 264 times in a second. By the marvelously subtle action of an electric current, these vibrations can be adapted to the production of music upon telegraphic piano-fortes at any distance which may be desired and is capable of being successfully carried into practice by anyone who has the money and taste for the experiment.”

Thus begins the experiments of music on the radio waves and in a 1901 article by T. S. Denison we read about the transmission of news and music by Hungary radio: “From 5:00 to 6:00 there are concerts, varied by literary criticism, sporting events, and so on. Special items for Sunday are: 11 to 11:30 news, 4:30 to 6:00—a concert, and every Thursday evening at six there is a concert for children.

While music by telephone, whether vocal or instrumental, still leaves something to be desired and the telephone timbre must be got rid of before music can be transmitted satisfactorily.”

Other attempts at transmitting music were under way. In April of 1906 we find an invention of the Telharmonium, which claimed to bring more music than they ever had before. A Dr. Thaddeus Cahill has devised a mechanism which throws on to the circuits, manipulated by the performer at the central keyboard, the electrical current waves that, received by the telephone diaphragm at any one of ten thousand subscribers’ stations, produce musical sounds of unprecedented clearness, sweetness, and purity. Now, Paderewskis will not earn their living by occasional appearances in isolated halls, but as central-station operators…..charming a whole city full at the same instant.

The Cahill Telharmonium might be compared with a pipe organ with all its circuits ending up as sound waves traveling miles to numerous listeners. Different timbres are secured from its resources, for with current combinations yielding the needed harmonies, string,
bass, and wood effects, etc., can be obtained by mixing the harmonies – that is, the current, - in the required proportions.

Cahill’s invention is written about again in June of 1906 describing its capabilities but it really was a step in the direction of music being presented via radio/telephone lines that would evolve into modern radio. Dr. Cahill: “Is hopeful that in due time there may be fours sets of mains fed from the central station, each with a different kind of music, and by connecting the four sets of mains to a public place or a private home, rag-time ditties, classical compositions, operatic, or sacred music may be tuned on according to one’s mood.

Distributing Music Over Telephone Lines

Experiments continued to work on bringing music to the public through the airwaves. In Dec. of 1909 the first Tel-musici site, in Wilmington, Delaware, went into operation. We read in “Telephony” of Dec. 18, 1909:

“Wilmington, Delaware, is enjoying a novel service through the telephone exchange. Phonograph music is supplied over the wires to those subscribers who sign up for the service. Attached to the wall near the telephone is a box containing a special receiver, adapted to throw out a large volume of sound into the room. A megaphone may be attached whenever service is to be given. The box is attached to the line wires by a bridged tap from the line circuit. At the central office, the lines of musical subscribers are tapped to a manual board attended by an operator. A number of phonographs are available, and a representative assortment of records kept on hand.

When plugged up to a phonograph the subscriber’s line is automatically made busy on the automatic switches with which the Wilmington exchange is equipped. Several lines can be connected to the same machine at the same time, if more than one happens to call for the same selection.

Each musical subscriber is supplied with a special directory giving names and numbers of records, and the call number of the music department. When it is desire to entertain a party for friends, the user calls the music department and requests that a certain number be played. He releases and proceeds to fix the megaphone in position. At the same time the music operator plugs up a free phonograph to his line, slips on the record and starts the machine. At the conclusion of the
piece the connection is pulled down, unless more performances have been requested.

The rate of charge for this service is very reasonable. It is three cents, for each ordinary piece, and seven cents for grand opera. The subscriber must guarantee $18 per year...

At the central telephone office is kept a supply of phonographic records, embracing a complete line of all the latest productions. In addition to this, pay stations are installed in restaurants, cafes, hotels and other public places, where selections can be obtained by deposition a coin in a box.

It is reported that the Tel-music Company is preparing for thorough campaign to introduce its system among the telephone companies of the United States and that it will very soon establish a Chicago agency to co-operate with its Eastern offices in the placing of its musical and other apparatus properly before the public.”

By 1916 wireless music is now available when dining at restaurants:

There is a new ‘fad’ in southern California, the place where novelties grow over night like the proverbial mushroom. This time the ‘something new’ comes in the form of phonograph concerts by wireless. .... In a word this new ‘fad’ consists of phonograph music being transmitted by wireless from the home of the inventor to the dwellings of a number of friends and neighbors residing within a mile or so of the Hanson residence, and grew to be presented in local restaurants.”

In August of 1920 there was developed a portable radiophone that enabled one to possess a mechanism that one could carry with him and keep in touch with radio broadcast, but it was rather cumbersome and bulky.

Credo Fitch Harris, in his book “Microphone memories writes about jazz on radio

“In those days there were ten or twelve dance orchestras which freely offered us their services. (WHAS Louisville, Kentucky) It was a type of music I personally could have done without, but quite eighty per cent of our mail called enthusiastically for more of it. Jazz then must not be confused with the swinging, rhythmic simulations of today. No selections would have been considered beautifully finished without the introduction of a crowing rooster, a squealing pig, a cow bell – and some of the time all three at once. Upon the larger collection of barnyard denizens seemed to depend on the greater success of a
particular rendition. Then there were other interpretations when I thought the drummer was carrying the tune, and the ribald saxophones trying to head him off. Jazz was jazz in them days, brother, and it its origin is ever traced you will find that it was initiated by somebody stepping on a cat.”

Harris also mentions the radio broadcast of the Georgia Tech jazz and dance band in a 1920 broadcast:

“So jazz could be controversial. But when Sergeant Thomas Brass, a member of the Georgia School of Technology’s signal Unit of the Reserve Officers Training corps, enlisted the Georgia Tech Band put on a radio concert in 1920, it was dance and jazz music that they sent out over the airwaves:

“Dancing to music played by a band nearly two miles away was the novel experience of members of the Club De Vingt of Atlanta, Ga. The music played by the Georgia Tech band was transmitted to the roof of the Capital City Club by wireless telephone. Radiomen who witnessed the demonstration said the first wireless dance was a huge success and that the few slight difficulties encountered could easily be overcome. A loud sound amplifier was used at the receiving end.

of the band members, awkwardly clustered around the single microphone, reflects some of the technical problems faced during this pioneering era in placing the musicians. Mr. Harris again provides some insights on this topic:

“Musical balances were difficult to obtain – I mean, of course, for microphone reproduction. The more perfectly we could get each instrument to register with an identical intensity upon that small but
conscienceless mechanical ear, the better the broadcast. In other words, players should be so seated that their ensemble of notes produced a smooth curtain of sound at the point of pick-up. A flute, for instance, is more penetrating than a cello and an oboe less so than a clarinet, a trumpet out-blasts a French horn. All instruments vary in these respects.

As the broadcasting studio orchestras and microphones were necessarily quite near to each other — and not infrequently the musicians sat in a circle around it — preliminary drilling was important. The men learned that if I pointed to a certain player, holding up one finger, it meant for him to turn a third away from the microphone (which, is sound reproduction, was equivalent to moving him so many feet farther back); holding up two fingers meant to turn two-thirds away (thus moving him still farther back). Three fingers meant to turn all the way around. Outside the studio door hung a special set of earphones just for me and, after announcing the first orchestra selection I would exit quickly, put them on and listen, then slip back in and do the necessary pointing.

As I look back upon them, some of those setups must have been screamingly funny. An outsider stepping in might have supposed that most of the orchestra members were not on speaking terms — all being seated at different angles and blowing in various and sundry directions.

There used to be one trumpeter — when he dies I am sure that Gabriel, through sheer envy, will never let him inside the pearly gates — who had lungs of leather and a horn of flint. His earsplitting blasts immersed the entire premises. Any amount of turning him was futile. So I finally had to move his chair to a corner of the room and let him blow into the padded wall. They were a temperamental lot. That chap I put in the corner was more crushed by it than I could have guessed. Before the concert ended, I chanced to move around where I could see his face. I was simply staggered to find tears rolling copiously down his cheeks. But, although crushed and mortified, he had kept on playing — blowing out the agonized lament of a broken heart. I could almost see its pieces splattering from that terrible horn. Later we gave him a new instrument, and after that he sat right up in front, doing a fairly good job. At least he was happy again.”
“Two-Step To Jazz Sent By Wireless” – New York Times, Feb. 12, 1921

“City College Club also offers more serious strains to dancers who prefer it.

Dancing to “jazz” played miles away, made possible by the wireless telephone, is the latest innovation of the new City College Club at 46 East Fiftieth Street. This is probably the first college club in New York that has installed a radiophone for dancing and concerts.

The work of installation commenced several days ago, said Bernard Naumburg, Chairman of the Building Committee, yesterday. Receiving its musical message from both the Radio Corporation’s apparatus at Roselle Park and Westinghouse’s transmitter at Newark, the club is able to offer its members and their friends a varied program. If the consensus of those present is that “jazz” is wanted, the wireless transmitting “jazz” will be called upon. A classical audience, on the other hand, will be given concert music. If this kind can be coaxed from the air.

“We are dispensing with most restrictions that other college clubs impose on their members.” Said Mr. Naumburg. “It is rumored that some clubs have increased their membership because drinking is permitted, despite Mr. Volstead’s formal declaration forbidding it. Nothing harder than near-beer is drunk in the City College Club.

“We make our appeal for membership on the social advantages offered. The large and beautiful dining room is opened all day for members and their friends of either sex. We welcome ladies to our clubhouse and delight in pleasing them as well as their member hosts. After theatre, they can come and eat and dance, enjoying the true spirit of sociability.”

Mr. Naumburg announced that at a dinner attended by about twenty alumni and non-alumni, a week ago, Adolph Lewisohn, the philanthropist, pledged $3,000 to the club. Other contributions swelled the total to $8,500. The contributors included Judge Julius Mayer, Herman A. Metz, Joseph Buttenweiser, Robert F. Wagner, Dr. Joseph H. Klein, Louis M. Josephtral, Edward B. Ley and Albert Weiss.

Of the 6,600 letters sent out to graduate and non-graduate alumni, only 300 have declared their unwillingness to join the club. It therefore has a potential membership of 6,400. Mr. Haumberg said. He urged therefore that those who desire to become affiliated with it and
make use of everything that it offers, communicate at once with those in charge.

There are perhaps 15,000 former City College students who did not receive letters from the club. It is Mr. Naumberg’s wish that all write to the clubhouse for membership cards. He warned, however, that the membership list might soon be closed, because of the present limited facilities to accommodate all that planned to join. Dues are $15 a year.”

Regardless of what this dance music was called the radio gave these bands a place to play their music for an audience that was growing by the day and radio became a ‘fertile field for the building up of prestige,’ as seen in an article that appeared in a popular music magazine of the era:

1922

In 1922 we find an article from the “Radio Dealer” in Sept. of that year. It also contains a program listing of those offered on the radio station:

“Concerning “Canned Music Now Broadcasted” Don’t be too hasty in condemning broadcasting programs now in evidence. By G. H. Fischer, Jr.

Merchandizing of radio apparatus like any other mechanical or electrical device requires demonstrations. We could hardly expect to sell an electric washing machine or a vacuum cleaner without first demonstrating, nor a phonograph without playing a record or two.

An electrical appliance business could not be successfully operated where no current was available nor a phonograph sold where records could not be procured. What then is the likelihood of selling radio sets where nothing can be heard during the day? All the sales cannot be made at night when atmospheric conditions are favorable.

In the territory where broadcasting stations are found in great numbers the “canned music” may have little appeal but in the territories at a distance beyond the daylight range of the big stations it is almost a necessity.

Our dealers had been obliged to try to sell a radio set without being able to give the prospective “fan” any idea of what radio was like
other than to let him listen to an occasional ship out in the gulf or the ever present “static.” Realizing this, we installed a small broadcasting station, now WHAW, for the purpose of aiding these dealers. Of course, phonograph music was used. The thing took well and we established a schedule, playing from 12 to 1 p.m. and 4 to 5 p.m. This permitted demonstrations at times when the business people were on the street, at lunch hour and after office hours in the evening.

To our surprise we received many request from radio “fans” for evening programs which we now give from 8 to 10 p.m. on Mondays and Saturdays. Our modulation is good, about 80 per cent, and our program made up entirely of phonograph records. “Listening in” on some of the “live programs” of some broadcasting stations the writer has heard attempts of amateur entertainers which would have failed to get by at the local picture house. Aside from the value of the broadcasting of “canned music” to the radio retailer the phonograph concert can be made an entertaining one for most any type of listener.

Too many stations have persisted in filling the air with “jazz” and nothing else. Following is a sample program of ours made up of phonograph records:

Bed time stories: Cinderella and Little Red Riding Hood, Porter.  
Overture: Rifle Regiment, Marine Band.  
Tenor Solo: O-sole-Mio, Caruso.  
Piano solo: Prelude – F. Rachmaninoff.  
Popular number: The Sheik, Club Royal Orchestra.  
Violin solo: Souvenir, Kreisler  
Quartette: My Mammy, Peerless Quartette.  
Soprano solo: Barbiere, Galli-Curci  
Orchestral: Walkure, Philadelphia Orchestra.

This much gives a good idea of what a variety can be obtained and the class of entertainment furnished. On the other hand we have listened to “live” programs on which appeared choruses from a Sunday school and amateur “pick-up” jazz band and lectures by long-winded orators with no time limit and uninteresting subjects. Someday, in the near future we hope, the broadcast stations will be served through an entertainment circuit similar to our vaudeville or Chautauquas and that the material shot into the air will be acceptable to all.
Meanwhile, let us not be too hasty in “Canning the Canned Music,” for in many cases it is well worth listening to.

1923

“How’s business with the Dance Orchestra Boys,” – Metronome, December, 1923:

“...The radio has proved a fertile field for the building up of prestige. Leaders of lesser-known ability found that they played to a large audience and received numerous requests via this medium. On the other hand the big leaders, who were not able to get away from their engagements to assemble their orchestras at the broadcasting stations, found that the bigger companies were willing to run in a special wire. Lopez, at the Hotel Pennsylvania, is now doing this and Whiteman is on the verge of giving his services one night a month to one of the companies exclusively. A special wire is to be placed in the Congo Room of the new Hotel Almanac for broadcasting Specht’s music.

Not alone does the orchestra benefit by broadcasting but it has been found by actual investigation that the place where the orchestra plays is benefited, folks from out-of-town visiting the resort when in New York and invariably visiting the orchestra leader to tell him they had the pleasure of hearing his music over the radio.”

FEBRUARY 12 - NEW YORK TIMES - 1923

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1924

“Jazz” – Outlook – March 5, 1924

“.... And yet, probably while this is read, people who are both morally responsible and cultivated are sitting in the quiet of their homes, with earpieces on their heads, listening to jazz and enjoying it. No one can persuade us that these members of the radio audience are secretly indulging in vice or letting their taste become corrupted. On the contrary, these souls are finding in this jazz a refuge from the very pessimism and despondency that characterize its critics.”
Anther article mentions the importance of the radio and the phonograph on the popularity of jazz:

“Why You Like Jazz” - Sunset Magazine, March, 1924

“.....Dancing is a parasitic growth on music. In early America there was very little music and therefore very little dancing. But since 1900 the phonograph, the player piano and radio have given us music in abundance with a minimum amount of effort. Consequently we dance. Consequently, also, we shall go on dancing and insist upon having the kind of music we like to dance to which at the moment to be Jazz.

The main source of dance music has been the phonograph. This instrument is effective, inexpensive and portable, and has penetrated further than the player piano. It became musically tolerable about 1906. By 1907 dance-records were being issued in fair numbers; and by 1914-Oh boy! We were dancing fools, and we still are. And now comes the radio to make even more dance-music accessible.

Meyer Davis, an orchestral entrepreneur announces a contest to find a better word for ‘jazz.’ He does not think the word ‘jazz’ describes the popular dance music of his era. He sends a letter to all radio stations. We give this letter below:

Philadelphia, June 26, 1924
Broadcasting director of
Radio Station.
Dear Sir:

Meyer Davis Music, an organization of sixty-two orchestras and over seven hundred musicians, offers a cash prize of $100 for a suitable word to take the place of “Jazz.” The latter word is undignified. It is a misnomer. It casts discredit upon modern dance music. The new word must avoid these errors and must be at once both dignified and comprehensively descriptive.

Radio is today the one supreme medium for bringing this idea and this contest to the attention of the people.

We therefore ask that Radio Centers take up the matter seriously and announce this contest through their broadcasting stations, with the understanding that contestants may address their communication to the broadcasting station through which they receive the information, on or
before August 15, 1924; that said communications be forwarded to us at Washington and that the broadcasting station which receives the winning word will, for us, make the award. The award will be made September 1, 1924.

Radio listeners, by cooperating with us in this undertaking, will be contributing to a splendid cause, and we feel that the resultant benefits will be of musical character.”

The effect and influence is also noted in our next magazine article:

“American Popular Music and its Progress” – Melody, July, 1924

“…..Both the radio and phonograph have been proved broad factors in the development of – Jazz! America’s Music! In the smaller cities and towns the five or six-piece jazz bands which once were the popular craze are forming themselves into larger groups of from ten to fifteen pieces, and these are reaping rich benefits from the broadcast sowing of the big metropolitan orchestras by listening to the regular radio broadcastings of the big ensembles and imitating what they can of their style and effects; They also take a phonograph record and play it over again and again, absorbing all the color phrasing and peculiar details of arrangements used by some famous leader who either has paid big money for such or else lain awake nights thinking them out for himself, so that he can continually supply newer novelties and thereby retain his supremacy against a competition which rapidly is bring this unique native development to the fore and thus compelling the attention of the whole music world. ….”

Another article relates that the radio has proven a big factor in the development of musical style:

“Where is Jazz Leading America?” – Etude, September, 1924

“The radio and the phonograph have proven big factors in this development. In our smaller towns and cities where the small five or six-piece jazz band used to be the rage, today they are grouping into ten to fifteen-piece dance orchestras, imitating what they hear from the top-notch dance orchestras who broadcast over radio regularly…..” (By
Paul Specht) This same article (slightly rewritten) also appears in the Metronome Magazine in Sept. of 1924.

Paul Whiteman (the “King of Jazz”) in the Saturday Evening Post synopsis of his book on jazz recalls some of his experience in radio:

1925

How early did radio broadcasting begin? In an article in “Radio News” of June 1925 we read:

“Broadcasting in 1912, by G. C. B. Rowe. (Very little is known now of the first commercial broadcast venture in the United States. This article chronicles its history. It was over telephone lines.

In the age of science in which we are living people take the wonders that surround them as a matter of course and are wont to say: “How the world is progressing!” True enough, but it should be remembered that there is an old saying – “There is nothing new under the sun.” How about the music, bedtime stories, news items and all the other programs that can be listened to without leaving the home, may be asked. Nothing new, is answered, nothing new, someone tried that a quarter of a century ago in Europe and thirteen years ago in Newark, J.J.

“What?” we can almost hear gasped, “Could people hear the same sort of programs we hear today without stirring from their firesides?”

The answer is in the affirmative. If a person in Newark in the fall of 1912 wanted to learn how his pet stock was behaving or if he wished to hear the latest happenings reported by the newspapers, or some snappy cabaret music, he put on his headset (even as you and I) and there was the program he wanted. Hardly seems possible, does it? But here is the tale.

In the early part of 1912 there were several gentlemen of New York traveling in Austria-Hungary and while they were in Budapest they were surprised to learn that they could listen to concerts or lectures without leaving their rooms. Being progressive Americans, they
investigated this system of broadcasting programs and ascertained that it was not patented in the United States. They decided that such a system would be an excellent one to introduce at home, so they persuaded the Austrian engineers to tell them how it was accomplished.

These traveling gentlemen being of Wall Street, naturally attacked the new venture in the Street’s usual manner. They formed the New Jersey Telephone Herald Company. In the charter it was stated that the company was formed to provide subscribers with entertainment by using telephone lines. Among the gentlemen who were heading the venture was Percy R. Pyne, 2d. H. B. Hollins and Charles E. Danforth.

It was decided to install the system in Newark, N.J., with the idea that if it was successful in that city, it should be introduced in New York. Wires were leased from the Telephone Company and the work of installation was started early in the spring of 1912 and regular programs were being broadcast by July. These programs started at nine o’clock in the morning and continued without interruption until 11 a.m. As has been mentioned above the same sort of programs that are broadcast today were sent out over the wires in 1912. Every fifteen minutes during the sessions of the Stock Exchange, quotations were given, supplied by ticker service from the Stock Exchange in New York. News items were read as soon as they were reported to the papers. There were fashion talks, sport talks, and bedtime stories for the children. The musical portion of the programs were under the guidance of Frank Clegg, who had his own orchestra at the studio and several times a week, in the evening, dance music was broadcast from one of the cabarets. Then, as now, managers of the theatres had the problem confronting them of whether they should broadcast their productions, because several plays in the local theatres were put on ‘On the wire.”

However, the apparatus supplied by the Austrian engineers was not adaptable to American telephone engineering practice and the reception of the music and talks was not as clear as it should have been. The use of twisted pair in the distribution resulted in a capacity effect that had not been encountered in the installation in Budapest. The directors of the company then called in Mr. John P. Rainbault, a telephone engineer of New York and the present Eastern representative of the Fansteel Products Co, who revised the entire system according to American engineering principles. In a short time, due to his efforts, the people of Newark were able to enjoy the first broadcasting that had
ever been attempted in this country. Mr. Rainbault was retained by the company as their general manager, which position covered everything from arranging the programs and seeing that they were transmitted properly, to getting new subscribers.

The central offices, the studio, and the switch rooms were located in the Essex Building in Newark. Performers in that studio of 1912 would be surprised if they should walk into a present day studio of a broadcast station, because they were just the same in nearly every detail. The walls of the room were hung with heavy drapery to eliminate any echoes, there was a piano in its usual place, and then the most necessary of all, the “mike.” It was in the latter instrument that the old-timer would notice the only difference, as the microphone then used was of the Erickson type. The operation of the station was also the same. Announcers, who were called “stentors,” told the audience what the next number were to be, just as their contemporaries do today.

The layout of the apparatus and lines were in accordance with the best engineering principles of the day. The signals were picked up by the Erickson microphone and went to the switch room. Here they were connected through a switchboard to sub-distributing centers in the Branch Brook, Waverly and Market districts. The necessary apparatus of the Broadcast Company was placed in a building adjacent to the district exchanges, where the monitors of the system checked up on the different circuits to see that they were in proper operating condition. The lines that were leased from the Telephone Company were used only from the switch room to the three districts and from the district exchanges to the different sections. Each section was a city block and all the headsets in a section or block were in series with the line from the district exchange, these circuits being all carefully balanced. Inside the houses that were equipped with the service there was a small moulded insulation block with two hooks on which were hung the headphones. However, there was not switch to turn off the music and so whenever the phones were placed on the ears between the hours of nine and eleven something was heard.

The price of this service was $1.50 a month and the first two or three months the subscription department was swamped with orders for installations. Within the first three months about 5,000 subscribers were on the books of the New Jersey Telephone Herald Co. However, as with everything else, people soon tired of their new toy, mainly because loud speaker reception was not available, although the signals that were
received were very clear and of excellent head-phone volume. New Subscriptions continued to come in, yet there were a large number of subscriptions canceled. The management of the company realized where the difficulty lay and Mr. Rainbault and his chief engineer, Mr. J. L. Spence, worked on the perfection of a mechanical amplifier. However, they realized that the results obtained were far from satisfactory, so in December of the same year it was decided not to fight any longer against such odds.

It is an interesting fact to note that if there had been the vacuum tube as we have it today, this scheme would have worked satisfactorily in every way.

Problems

There were many problems then that are interesting to review. One of the large departments stores of Newark wanted the New Jersey Telephone Herald Co. to read a resume of their advertisements daily to the subscribers, but the directors of the company refused to comply with their requests as they feared that it would cheapen the broadcasting. The mechanical amplifiers used were nothing more than a mere diaphragm with a rod attached to its center, which energized another diaphragm. Naturally an amplifier of this type was far from being satisfactory, as the distortion present in the amplified signals was considerable. Mr. Rainbault and Mr. Spence, did considerable research work on these repeaters, but the company closed their business before any satisfactory results were obtained.

As has been mentioned above, if there had been some means of amplifying the signals that were sent out over the lines, the company would doubtless have been successful. However, there occurred the family argument that is recurring today in the homes where there are receivers using crystals for detectors – who gets the phones? Even though the reception of the signals was clear, yet the people in general could not be educated up to the idea. Advertising in Newark’s papers had increased the subscription list to over the five thousand mark, yet the public refused this initial trial of broadcast entertainment. There had been an outlay of over $200,000 and so the New Jersey Telephone Herald Co. was closed and the headsets removed from the homes of Newark.
This was a scheme that has proved to be one of the most popular types of entertainment that has ever been devised, but to be so popular it needed the vacuum tube of the present day to amplify the received music so that entire families could listen in at the same time. This Newark venture of 1912 was just another one of those things that are devised a few years ahead of their time, in this case not more than five or six.”

Donna Halper, an expert on early radio wrote me the following email after asking about the problems of playing jazz on early radio. She states:

“When talking about why jazz was or was not played on early radio stations, we must first consider the problem of who the owners of these first stations were. They seemed to mainly be of two types – corporations that in some way were involved with broadcasting (sellers of electronic equipment, like Westinghouse, for example) or interested individuals (sometimes from small businesses) who saw radio as a service to the community. Those who saw it as a service often felt it was their duty to uplift the audience and provide “good music.” Like Lee DeForest, they were usually educated, often from the upper-middle class, and they believed that radio should be mainly educational and instructive. Interestingly, early radio gave us a genuine example of what today we call ‘vulture war’ – the owners who insisted on opera and classical music came up against the mass audience, which really preferred dance music and popular hit songs. If you look at the programming schedules on early radio stations (and I have many examples), you will see how they started out with “serious” music more often than not. And it would be erroneous to say the public was opposed to it – while radio was a novelty, hearing famous singers (even via phonograph records) was quite a treat for the average person, who couldn’t afford to attend big city concerts. SO, even though many people would soon remind the stations that they wanted to hear the hits, and first the classical and operatic stuff was greeted appreciatively. There was another reason so many stations relied on classical and opera, besides the owner’s belief in the need to educate the audience – most of early radio was a volunteer exercise, since there were no ways to generate revenue yet (commercials were not permitted, although some stations did in fact get around this), music schools, especially
conservatories, often had violinists or classically trained vocalists eager to reach a new audience. SO, while early radio did have some dance (or jazz) bands on the air, as we shall soon see, the owners first tried to impress everyone with a diet of sopranos and tenors and classical violinists or pianists.

That having been said, we should also consider the fact that various educational organizations and women’s clubs also spoke out against popular music, which they associated with vulgarity. I have numerous articles from magazines and newspapers of the early 20’s about how popular music is crude and can lead young people away from the ‘finer things’ whereas classical music is spiritual (!) and beneficial to impressionable minds. But despite these rants against popular songs, and especially rants against jazz and dance music, the public knew what it wanted, and after tolerating the “good music” for a while, the novelty wore off and requests for the hits began to predominate.”

In another correspondence Donna Halper wrote:

“We will probably never know who played jazz first, since amateur radio stations could play records just like a commercial station until early February 1922, and few amateur stations kept play lists, nor had audiotape been invented. We do have anecdotal evidence that a number of hams played requests for their friends – there is evidence that the great blues legend W. C. Handy was heard on a Memphis amateur’s station in November of 1914, for example, and Prof. Marvin Bensman has a very thorough essay about it. A Boston amateur sent concerts out to the ships at sea in early 1916 and played whatever records he had in his collection – everything from classical to marches to pop, according to the Boston Globe. And while nobody specifically says they played jazz, there is a good chance that some amateur may very well have; it would have to be after 1917, however, since the first phonograph record considered “jazz” was recorded by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band in 1917.

Given that American society was still segregated at the time when commercial radio came along, it is logical that a number of the black jazz bands did not get on the radio in the early years. But some of their
records may have, as I said. Music, especially instrumental music, had no color.

Another thing that kept jazz off the air in radio’s early days was that it quickly became controversial, as preachers and teachers (and probably a few racists too) spoke vehemently against it, calling it a bad influence and accusing it of lowering the morals of the country.

The only way anything resembling jazz seemed to get on the air in radio’s earliest days was from the white musicians doing a mass appeal and dance-able version of the music. Dance orchestras were proliferating in the early 20s, and perhaps the first to get on the air was from band-leader Vincent Lopez (who wasn’t Hispanic but white), whose orchestra played over WJZ (Newark/New York) in late November of 1921. But there is evidence that several well-known black jazz musicians did get on the air, although not till 1922-23. I have a mention of Duke Ellington, for example, appearing on two New York stations, WDT and WHN, in mid-1923. Vaudeville star George Dewey Washington, whose repertoire included some songs that would certainly be considered jazz or dance music, sang over Seattle’s station KFC twice in March of 1922, and was very well received. But for the most part, it was white orchestras that began to be heard over the air playing dance music in the early 20s.

The early days were still about deciding whether the station was going to be educational or entertaining. But things began to change as more radio stations went on the air. By August of 1923, the Wireless Age wrote an article about how many stations had decided to play popular music – and it was a steadily growing number, as the early efforts to play only opera or only “good music” were being slowly abandoned. In a poll the magazine conducted, the results showed that “the radio audience wants...a little less classical and operatic music... and a little more jazz.” A 1924 survey done in Chicago and published in the February issue of Radio Record magazine showed that popular music and jazz were among the most preferred by those who responded, although there was still a group of listeners who wanted classical music. The survey shows that 24.7% of respondents wanted classical or "good music" while 18.4% wanted jazz and 295 wanted popular hits. And, as the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin had to admit, “Despite the pleas of several educators that classical concerts be given more prominence on radio programs, the preference of the majority of broadcast listeners is still for jazz, and the jazzier the better!” The article went on to note a
poll taken in New York wherein dance music and popular songs were clearly preferred. The fans in Philly were very active in their support of jazz, the article concluded, writing and thanking the station for playing it and being much more vocal about what they liked than the classical fans, who tended to be much more passive and seldom contacted the stations.”

April – 1925 – Radio Broadcast Magazine
Opinions About the Jazz Age in Radio
O F LATE some of the saxophone specialists and some of the leaders of jazz orchestras heard over the radio have risen up in wrath, and in letters couched in unmistakable terms, have accused the conductor of this department of trying to put all the jazz players in the country out of their jobs, and especially to condemn every saxophone player to eternal obscurity. It has been interesting to receive these letters. Adverse criticism as well as laudatory criticism can be a tonic. But to be a tonic it must strike with truth at the core of the subject criticized. In this, every letter so far received protesting against this department's attitude toward the broadcasting of jazz, has failed to make its point. For every letter has brought the accusation that we have unremittingly condemned, wholesale, all jazz and all jazz players.

Now, first let it be said that the conductor of this department does not especially enjoy jazz. If it is so-called "artistic jazz" about all you get out of it is to listen to distortions of the masterpieces of music, the great operatic arias, the immortal songs. If it is the sort of jazz that plays the latest popular hits it is pretty nearly un帳號able, in our opinion. Although not an admirer of any sort of jazz, it would be far from consistent or fair for us to make a sweeping condemnation of this form of music. By certain jazz specialists it has been raised to what it is, of its kind, an art. If it is the sort of art you enjoy, it is your full right to hear as much of it as you desire. If you don't enjoy it, yours is the privilege to say so.

Here is a list of the jazz orchestras that have received "Honorable Mention" in this department since it opened in April, 1924. In every instance a photograph of the organization mentioned was published.

- Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra.
- Harvey Marburger and his Keith Vaudeville Entertainers, Café L'Aigle, Philadelphia.
- Perry & Russell, "Two-Man Singing Orchestra."
- Paul Specht's Hotel Alamac Orchestra, New York.

Also was published a photograph of William Menzer and his "Musical Saw." We confess that the Musical Saw has a weird and haunting fascination for us. And as for the steel guitars, they stand high, in our regard, as radio entertainers. Have you noticed what good music you hear when they are programmed? They produce music played, generally, with fine taste. Indeed, there are precious few violinists heard over the radio who can come within sight of these guitar players in musical taste or technical achievement.

It is not against legitimate jazz or any of the musical features that cannot be ranked as "classical" and yet are good, that this department is fighting. What we are out to kill completely and forever is the sort of broadcasting described in masterly fashion by Dr. R. S. Minerd of Erie, Pennsylvania, who, writes, in a letter recently received from him, after uttering a hearty Amen to all that has been said in this department against radio programs:

Night after night, when I get home after a hard, long day, I don't feel like tuning in and tuning-out half a dozen stations, each of which inquires in squawksy, uncanny, "saxofool" wishe: "What's Become of Sally?". Who, of all the millions of music lovers in the world ever cares a hang where that fool Sally is or anything else about her except to regret that hers was not a still-birth? Or who's going to "Follow the Swallow" to find "Where's My Sweetie Hiding?" And "Red Hot Mama" is such a beautifully endearing term to screech into the ear of one whose tenderest memories are those of "Mother"!

I have tuned-in the same station several times each evening, only to hear that someone has just wired or phoned a request for another repetition of one of these soulless assemblages of noise which had already been "played" several times the same evening.

The radio audience certainly is not composed wholly of morons. There are, perhaps, as large a number of those who appreciate music as there are persons whose musical appreciation wallows in the depths of the muck and mire, and it is an outrage that stations which are trying to broadcast music must realize that their efforts come to naught because some near high-powered station persists in profaning the very air with their senseless confusion.

I am expressing the feelings of a host of radio enthusiasts among my friends when I say what I have said.

Dr. Minerd does not by a word exaggerate the condition that prevails, a few stations excepted, all over the country from about 10 P. M. to 2 A. M.

Are All Telegrams to Radio Stations Laudatory?

BOycASTING directors are not prone to read to their listeners-in during a program the derogatory comments that come to them by wire or telephone. Here is such a comment that a man writes us he sent to a well-known station that was tearing the air to tatters with jazz.

"Discharge your orchestra and install a small air compressor attached to several tin fish horns. It would be more economical, louder, and the musical effect would be the same."
“Jazz” – Saturday Evening Post”, March 6, 1925

“Finding a Place in the Air” – The radio, especially when it first came in, also added to my labors. I played The Star spangled Banner the first time the national anthem ever was sent through the air. To do it I had to race madly from the Palais Royal to the radio station and back again. It was Sunday, and at the station a man was making a speech……I had lots of interesting adventures in the air. Once I gave my mother a birthday party, I in New York, she in Denver listening in at a radio I had just sent her. Another time a station had my little son send birthday greetings to me, and one night at Station WOR in Newark we played the latest New York jazz hits at three o’clock in the morning for the Prince of Wales, who was listening in at Brook House in London.

The next article speaks of jazz on radio declining:

“Jazz Feels Surge of a Higher Order” – The Independent, March 7, 1925:

“Above the moan of the saxophone one can hear discordant notes that threaten the supremacy of Jazz. According to musical statisticians who analyze the letters of the radio audience and reduce them to graphs and figures, the demand for syncopated music is on the decline. Conversely, the demand for old and well-tried songs and for classical compositions is increasing.

In other words, the musical appetite of the radio listener is becoming more fastidious. He is, in truth, fed up on jazz and calls for a change of musical diet. He wants Gilbert and Sullivan, the charming melodies of Stephen Foster, the favorite selections of Victor Herbert, the ballads of Channcey, Olcott and Ernest R. Ball. He is tired of listening to “Red Hot Momma,” played seven times by seven different jazz bands on seven evenings of the week. He is willing to take his share of jazz, but, something more inspiring must go with it. He has revolted.

Back in the dim days of 1923, Olive Bell, in his “Since Cezanne,” exclaimed passionately “Plus de Jazz. No more Jazz. Jazz is dying.”

American Telephone and Telegraph Company and chief of WEAF, told 2,000 diners’ that the public demand for classical music has been unprecedented in the last two years, to the detriment of jazz
programs. Hr. Holman said that in January 1923, about 75 per cent of the radio fans demanded jazz; in January 1924, the jazz fans diminished to 35 per cent, and in January 1925, only 5 per cent of the people who wrote to the company demanded Jazz. Mr. Holman added that his company received 54,000 letters on the subject in January alone. Private statements by other broadcasting stations corroborate Mr. Homan. And there is Nicholas Orlando, musical director of the Plaza and Roosevelt Hotels, who told the New York Music League recently that jazz is waning and classical music taking its place.

.....Isidore Witmark, a member of the Witmark Music Company, asserts that the automobile, but taking people away from the parlor piano, and the radio, by furnishing them jazz music ready made, have killed the sales of song hit after song hit of a jazz character. Anyone can tune in any evening and hear a dozen orchestras plays “I Love You’ in twelve identical ways....”

But was jazz really dying? WE know now that it wasn’t. It was just changing into more classically influenced styles like that of Gershwin. Jazz was developing and was outgrowing its title. It was passing into the skillful hands of the more skilled musicians.

Another remark about the influence of radio on the popularity of jazz appears in another monthly magazine:

“Jazz and the Dance” – August, 1925

“....furthermore, use the radio as a benign sampler, and when you hear a good piece “come over,” get it for your instruments. In this way you will get a large interest on your investment in musical tools and your radio will help to make your other players and concerts of even greater utility and joy; for never has it been so simple to hear such artists as Boulanger, Gorgoza, D’Alvarez, J. Wolfe, Gershwin, Kochanski, etc.

Articles on the waning of jazz really are saying that they are witnessing the development of jazz into a new American style music that combines jazz elements with others:

Musical America, Nov. 14, 1925 “Has Jazz Hurt Concert-Giving. Managers say “No.”
“Radio Listeners’ Preferences – Radio listeners-in have tired of jazz, and an impromptu questionnaire of any one I have chanced to meet anywhere has shown me that the first thing a radio fan would like to hear over the other is a symphony orchestra. Among soloists they would like a contralto. The old day is passing when anybody could sell a soprano or a tenor. Male quartets would be enjoyed, if goodness could be found which were willing to sing under present radio conditions. Thus jazz, through the radio, has worked itself out of a place where it now arouses unusual enthusiasm.

The jazz concert has paved the way for a new American music. Certainly we are a different people from Europeans, and our music will be different. T will combine some jazz elements with others. An illuminating parallel is that of light opera, which started out very feebly, so far as art is concerned, but which shortly developed into something extremely beautiful.”

There is a lengthily article in: “Broadcasting Magazine” about the decline of jazz:


“When radio broadcasting was a novelty and one called in the neighbors to hear the voices coming in “right out of the air,” little or no attention was paid to what the voices were saying. “Radio is a marvelous instrument, a tremendously potential medium, but what difference does it make if it is being used to give currency to worse than second-rate stuff,” is about the gist of the very vocal objections made by these observers. George Jean Nathan, the rapier-worded dramatic critic of The American Mercury said in a recent issue of that green-jacketed organ of dissent:

Nights the front parlors of the proletariat resound to the strains of alley jazz pounded out by bad hotel orchestras, to lectures on Sweden-borgiamism by ex-veterinary surgeons, to songs about red hot mammamas, and Beale Street melancholias by hard-up vaudeville performers.”

Now all the criticism of radio programs made along these lines is true in that it is possible to hear the thing described from some radio station or other at one time or another. We should not judge broadcasting by that method any more than we should judge the thinking processes of the American citizenry by what we hear a chance
street orator mouth. Broadcasting is not nearly as badly off as its hostile critics would have you think, and the aerial offerings of the radio season now upon us are daily justifying that belief.

“If it weren’t for the constant stream of jazz following from nearly every broadcasting antenna,” remarked a listener to us the other day. “I would enjoy radio a lot more. These jazz orchestras from every station in the country, all practically banging away at the same piece at practically the same time are much more than annoying.” The trouble with a criticism such as this is that it groups all dance music as jazz, which is only true because we have no term which allows us to distinguish between the grades of jazz. We use the same term to describe the soft symphonic effects of Art Hickman, Ben Bernie, and Vincent Lopez as we use for the fifth rate Five Melody Kings of Four Corners, Oklahoma.

“I believe,” writes D. M. Craig, of Lamar, Missouri, “that the universal condemnation of jazz is contrary to the true feeling of a majority of radio listeners, if all music is classified as jazz. Would these objectors want to stop the broadcasting of such organizations as those of Paul Whiteman, Vincent Lopez, Jean Goldkette, and many others?” Decidedly not. While there are those who are utterly opposed to jazz whatever its origin, the more liberal among us recognize that jazz music has a very strong hold on a large percentage of the public of several continents, that it is not wholly as bad as it is pictured, and that, in moderation, jazz is excellent entertainment.

The trouble with broadcasting programs, and up to the past six months this has been true of almost every American station, is that they have been too heavily loaded with this orchestra and that, playing the currently popular tunes. Too much of the program has been devoted to dance orchestras, or to soloists who had nothing on their repertoire but whatever numbers were being sold in the music shops as “the latest thing” or, worse, to song “pluggers” in the employ or the music publishers. This practice of the broadcasters, we firmly believe, has shortened the life of many moderately good popular numbers, which otherwise might have retained popularity for a considerably longer time.

Mr. Frank McEniry, of Station KOA at Denver, in answering a recent inquiry of ours about this subject replied:
“On the whole, I believe listeners tire of jazz much more quickly than they do of the classical or semi-classical presentations. This belief is of course, wholly a personal one, but it is based on a daily study of mail from our listeners. Here is an excerpt from the letter of a Western listener which seems typical of a great mass of mail we are receiving on the subject: “One cannot be unmindful of the lovely entertainment last evening; especially beautiful was the Floradora Sextet by the Municipal Band. Likewise, the same selection with the lullaby on the saxophone. It was such a relief from the slap-stick stuff one gets from many stations.” That letter was from Charles G. Hickman of Forsyth, Montana.

And here is another from Mrs. Walter Burke of New Plymouth, Idaho: “Almost without exception, we like the better class of music. Jazz ceases to have any appeal after the first two or three selections- it is all alike.”

They are doing some good things at KOA, and by the time this magazine is in the hands of the reader, the competitive program of classical music as opposed to jazz music will have been given from that station. All the listeners will have a chance to express their opinion and a complete record will be made of the results. We hope to announce the findings in an early number. There should be some interesting letters after this contest.

Mr. Freeman H. Talbot, that able musician responsible for the programs of KOA set down some of his thoughts about the subject of jazz especially for this department. “For many years,” he says, “music critics have been periodically announcing the death of jazz. Probably the so-called music of jazz is largely responsible for the belief that it is moribund. To those who would shed no tears over its demise, jazz displays a most disheartening vitality. Phoenix like, it arises fresh after each reputed annihilation.” Mr. Talbot continues:

“Jazz has been called primitive, uncouth, banal. It has been charged with disrupting homes, weakening church ties, and undermining the morals of the nation. Personally, I feel that jazz is not all-bad – it is not clever enough for that. It may be banal, and at times it is discouragingly stupid, but it is not essentially bad. Lately, jazz has gathered to itself some notable defenders among the musically correct. Serious minded musicians have perceived under the battered and tattered appearance of jazz, evidence of a new vitality in music, a struggle after a new form of expression, crude as the hieroglyphic of cubism, but genuine art, nevertheless.
The moans, shrikes, cast calls and sobs of jazz will eventually disappear, but the vibrancy of its stimulating rhythms will remain to be caught some time by a master composer on a new work or series of works as revolutionary as the cacophonies of Wagner.”

How do all these remarks apply to present programs? Well, they are some of the signs – if indeed any are needed – which show that the old preponderance of jazz on programs is greatly lessening. For some time, one of the two outstanding stations in New York City has had a rule, somewhat flexible, it is true, that no dance music can be broadcast until after ten thirty in the evening. Mr. Carl Dreher discusses this matter more fully on another page of this number. The fact that the musical parts of programs are being more devoted to more serious efforts by stations in nearly every part of the country except Chicago, simply means that there is less time left for jazz.

To mention a specific type of program, which has brought improvement in its tone, consider some of the “indirect advertising” programs but on through the WEAF chain of stations. Here is what the director of broadcasting for that station, Mr. J. A. Holman, says about them” “Programs have been presented of a type that previously would have been considered impossible by radio —impossible in the sense that they assumed too high a degree of musical and general culture on the part of the radio audience. The public accepted them at their real value and enthusiastically availed itself of their educational activities……No music was too “highbrow.” For example, George Barrere’s Little symphony Orchestra presented a series of chamber music recitals, which while beautiful and perfect gems of instrumental music, are generally considered above the understanding and appreciation of the average music lover. The interesting fact is that the American public welcomed the innovation…..The radio audience is not required to listen altogether to the sad stuff outlined by Mr. Nathan. The signs are unmistakable that the taste of the radio public is changing, and for the letter……”(The rest of the article on radio broadcasting does not mention jazz anymore.)

An article next tells of how all of America can hear the same jazz pieces and bands by radio:
1926

“Is Jazz Coming or Going?” – Metronome, Feb. 1, 1926 – by Cesar Saerchinger

“In America, if at any time of day or put on radio-phones, - and who in America has no radio apparatus? You hear on all wave lengths, with very few exceptions, the same odd piece. At least, you fancy you hear the same piece all the time, if you are not well posted on the repertoire of the Jazz bands. To one who is uninitiated it does not seem to be music at all: From New York, Chicago, Indianapolis, And Waco, Texas, the same rhythmical noise is transmitted to him, so that he might easily imagine Americans to be a queer tribe of natives, who are everywhere, at the same time, performing a uniform and stirring rite....”

The use of radio to bring music to the general public was not without its problems as stated in the Whiteman book on Jazz:

“Jazz” – Saturday Evening Post, March 6, 1926, by Paul Whiteman

“While plugging (Sic: song plugging) is important, the publishers contend that there can be too much of any good thing. The “too much” in this case is radio. So the publishers and composers went to Congress to compel the broadcasting stations to pay a royalty every time a popular song is sung over the radio. Their argument was that if John smith tunes in every night on a red-hot mama song, he may soon begin to hope that he will never hear that particular song again. And this, say the publishers and composers, will undoubtedly hurt the sale of that piece of sheet music.”

There continues to be a debate about what kind of music should radio stations broadcast and how much of each style. We find radio stations getting letters from their listeners about which style of music they preferred. These letters show how radio had exposed people to different kinds of music and radio’s influence had made Jazz popular with radio listeners and how the programming of classical music has had its influence on people’s musical taste.

“Where Have I Heard That Tune Before.” - Collier’s, July 3, 1926
“I have just been turning over the files of one of the largest broadcasting stations in America. Hundreds of thousands of radio fans keep writing to tell this station of their musical likes and dislikes.

These letters have strengthened by conviction that, during the last five years, the world has been fast growing to like good music. And the chief cause of this astonishing change has been—jazz—on-the-radio.

Letters like this from a Minnesota doctor are typical:

“Radio has made me a highbrow in a musical way; jazz and just ordinary music fail to hold any interest for me. A few years ago grand opera went entirely over my head. I suppose this is also true of many other listeners.”

A Connecticut housewife wrote her thanks for the broadcasting of a Philharmonic concert, and told of its effect upon her sixteen-year-old brother, a typical jazz fiend:

“When they started he asked me whether it would be all like that, he thought it was pretty dry; but when John Powell began to play he sat like one spellbound, and so did it, and I thought how like the brother and sister in the picture called “Beethoven’s Sonata” we were.

“Well, I never saw such a change come over anyone as came over that boy; he just sat there, eyes closed, with his hand over his mouth for fear he would make some utterance and so miss one note of that music. Every once in a while he would look up as if to heaven and raise his hands and then drop them in perfect awe. Every move he made was a picture. And when it ended he kept say over and over, ‘Oh, I feel about seven inches nearer to heaven.’

And this is from a Washington flapper:

“My musical knowledge was rather limited to jazz…..I didn’t know the higher class of music. About a year ago I became interested in radio and built myself a cheap crystal set. Certainly was surprised how little good music I had heard before getting that set. I have kept a list of selections I have liked which I have heard over radio and it runs well over 400, and not one is jazz, so you can see how my musical taste has improved.”

Radio has ground jazz almost to death. The job had not taken long, because the grinding has kept on with such untiring vigor and because the music was made of such shoddy materials.

As late as last year, everywhere you tuned in you picked up a different piece of snappy syncopation. But they all sounded like the
same piece. Presently people began to sicken of the monotony. And then the astonishing change in popular taste began to be noticeable.

The fact is that jazz-plus-radio is rapidly adding an upper story to the frowns of your cook, your plumber, your newsboy and your garbage collector. The other day my friend Gooch’s iceman inquired, as he filled the refrigerator:

“Say, boss, what’s your job?”
“’I’m an announcer.”

One touch of radio makes the whole world kin. Mike grinningly confessed that he was nuts on this subject.

“I made me a fine set for $12 out o’ parts from the five and ten cent store.”


“Naw!” said Mike with disgust. I used ter. But now I like Tchaikovsky.”

In the same article we further read:

“Ten years ago the average man found it hard to tell the different instruments apart. Then jazz came along and now in picking up a symphony orchestra on the radio, his unconsciously trained ear can distinguish between the tone quality of flutes, oboes, trumpets, clarinets, and French horns, and can tell a xylophone from a set of chimes. Instrumentally speaking, he is now in a position to tell the birds from the wild flowers and a bee from a bull’s foot.

I was at a six-table bridge party the other night where they fell to discussing the composition of the jazz orchestra coming over the radio. Only two instruments, the viola and the double bass, were not correctly spotted. Such a thing could not have happened in the old ragtime days.

Here, for the first time, is a popular music which has become a persuasive advance agent of the highbrow. It educates its fans to understand, and stand for, the tunes, the harmony, counterpoint, rhythm and instrumentation of the classics. Jazz ragged the classics. Now the classics are turning around and reducing it to rags.

Two of our leading broadcasting stations find that the demand for jazz has sunk, in the last five years, from about 80 per cent to about 10 per cent. The demand for the classics has risen sharply, but not quite at a corresponding rate. The difference is accounted for by the
constantly diminishing body of lovers of what might be called jazzies-or jazzed classics and by the growing demand for talks by prominent persons.

These figures are a striking endorsement of jazz as a self-effacing uplifter of taste. I cannot agree with the well-known national woman’s club official who declared that it had ‘put the sin in syncopation.” That would be as reckless as to claim that Deems Taylor and Igor Stravinsky had put the phony in symphony.

.....Well, the phonograph, the cabaret and radio have all taken large bites out of jazz, until now the former jazz fan thinks he discovers the worm of familiarity at the core. But the worm has undergone a transformation, and on its new gorgeous wings he has flown from the harmonica to the Philharmonic.”

Radio and its listening audience were growing and as with any new invention or style of entertainment, radio was discovering just what its audience wanted to hear. There were sporting events, lectures, educational programs on medicine, etc. and musical programs. The popular music of the day was jazz and so radio had programmed jazz music. But, when the American public had the chance to hear other types of music, they liked it – classical music and hillbilly music. As they were exposed to different types of music jazz began to decline in popularity as Americans were exposed to classical music. The New York Times had an article expressing the various types of programming and the changing taste of the listener:


.....American jazz swept around the world; then along came radio and gave us all kinds of music. No one has been more amazed than have radio leaders to discover how much of the so-called “long-haired music” Americans will enjoy – and ask for more.

Our investigations show that less than 10 per cent of our listeners want “jazz” today. Consequently, in the ‘house of jazz’ this product hitherto considered typically American is being kept off our programs until 10 o’clock.”

Radio stations in various cities carried local programs which included time for jazz band performances. Jim Robinson, the
trombonist of New Orleans speaks of such an occasion in his interview housed at the Tulane Univ. Jazz Archives:

“We did a radio broadcast with the Sam Morgan Band from Meridian, Miss. in 1927. Worked on the radio One and a half years, sponsored by Regal Beer. Ed Hart and Tiger Flowers were the announcers. Charlie Hamilton played piano, Elmer Coo Coo’ Talbert played trumpet.”

An historic occurrence happens that unites the publishing of music and the radio as MCI is formed in 1929.

FEBRUARY 1 – METRONOME - 1926

IS JAZZ COMING OR GOING? By Cesar Saerchinger In America, if at any time of day you put on radio-phones, and who in America has no radio apparatus? - You hear on all wave lengths, with very few exceptions, the same odd piece. At least, you fancy you hear the same piece all the time, if you are not well posted on the repertoire of the Jazz bands. To one who is uninitiated it does not seem to be music at all: From New York, Chicago, Indianapolis, and Waco, Texas, the same rhythmical noise is transmitted to him, so that he might easily imagine Americans to be a queer tribe of natives, who are everywhere, at the same time, performing a uniform and stirring rite.

This is Jazz. America is under the spell of Jazz. Well, Europe is about to follow it in this respect, and Europe has a fairly good idea of what constitutes Jazz. But Europe always receives only the respective end products; it does not know how it developed and therefore can hardly form an idea as to the future that is open to this cultural attainment. In America it is taken seriously and perhaps this is justified; soon the German professors will take it seriously too and write lengthy historical treatises about it. In the meanwhile I wish to point out just a few entirely "obvious" facts.

Before Jazz there was ragtime, and ragtime originated with the Negroes. In the Negro song—the so-called "Spiritual," which was sung by the slaves on the plantations, we already find syncopation, the odd accent on the short beat, or even on a pause. Investigators have even discovered that the basic form of the Negro rhythm lives on in Africa, for the half-savage tribes beat it on their half-savage drums. Then, when in 1913, people began to cultivate the lovely new barbaric dances,
in the dives of San Francisco, the music was furnished by Negroes. Therefore it was truly popular music, for and by the people. Whence the dances and the original melodies came, must be left to the historians, but the lost tribes of Israel who wander about New York's Broadway, soon took care of their profitable exploitation.

In America, anything in the way of popular music that happened to take the popular fancy, - one after the other - the Coon Song, the sentimental Heart Song, the exotically humming Ukulele Song from Hawaii, even the New Vienna Kiss-Waltz, was adapted to the new dance literature. The song with words, gave place to the instrumental song (the processors will say that this happened once before in the history of music) and with the new instrumentation a new orchestra was born, which grew out of the haphazard combination of Negro musicians. "Alexander's Ragtime Band" by Irving Berlin was the first great hit of the new epoch and the ragtime bands, consisting mostly of Negroes, soon flooded the country.

The historians of Jazz date its birth from Irving Berlin's "Pack Up Your Sins," - a purely instrumental foxtrot, in which the composer already makes professional use of the concentrated, superabundant helter-skelter syncopation, as well as the contrapuntal extravaganzas of fully developed Jazz (both of which originated in the improvisation of the Negro musicians). Other composers (the title is really libel) have enlarged on the style; there came Vincent Rose with "Linger Awhile," then Brahms' "Limehouse Blues" and many other "Blues" with their melancholy strain, many "medleys" and countless foxtrots in major and minor. In the meanwhile there also arrived Jazz-operettas by Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern and others, and Berlin's famous Music Box Revue, with a permanent theatre in New York.

Beyond the above mentioned, the development of Jazz (it became Super-Jazz and "symphonic syncopation," but the fine appellations do not suit it) - is purely in the line of sound, hence a matter depending on the Jazz orchestra. The trick today is not in the hands of the composer but rests with the musical directors and orchestrators. These alone are fully familiar with the new idiom, the new refinements of tone color, and here lies the secret as well as the weakness of Jazz.

The Jazz Orchestra of today (In the following I am quoting some of the statements by Deems Taylor in the first - and only-number of "Music" - New York, 1924) is something fascinating, new and unheard of. It is new because its beginnings were entirely independent of the
classic orchestra, because these beginnings were in accordance with an absolutely crude taste. The exotic strain was there from the beginning and was not introduced subsequently by literature or reflection. It is the orchestra of the western East, not of the eastern West, of the Pacific and not the Atlantic world.

The first Negro jazz bands (I first heard one in a New York restaurant during the first year of the war) consisted of piano and violin, trombone, clarinet, piston cornet, banjo, and percussion instruments. These later instruments (called "traps") were the main thing and the Negro who worked with all these drums, cymbals, bells, wooden boxes, sandpaper, etc., was a demon with supernatural-unearthly ability. It was incredible what he improvised in the way of grotesque rhythmic "stunts" and still remained the backbone of the whole thing. The work on the wind instruments had the same improvisational character, but in the line of counterpoint. The clarinetist or cornetist suddenly interrupted his melody in order to disport himself in gay cadenzas or roguish extravagances, without, however, dropping out of the rhythmic construction. The brass never played openly, but always with dampers, so that it bleated and the clarinet, for the most part played in a high, seldom heard register. The glissando of the trombone, the "yowling" had become a regular practice. Only the violin kept to the melody and the piano furnished the harmonic and rhythmic foundation. The general color was usually disagreeable—but new, barbaric and yet charming.

That was the original form of the Jazz band. The new additions are the saxophones and its varieties, as well as horns, tubas, bassoons, balancing of the whole by doubling some, and then an incredible technic of the individual players, and a positively stunning refinement of the tone-color shading. Not only one, but six different dampers are used today on an instrument in order to bring out the most varied shades. The percussion instruments—once the mainstay, is today fully subdued and influences the tone color more than the accent. The perfect Jazz orchestra could easily dispense with its kettle drums—its rhythms would be no less piquant.

The Jazz orchestra at the present time is already subject to a certain uniform pattern. The classic example, Paul Whiteman's orchestra, consists of twenty-three men with thirty-six instruments. This fact alone shows the difference between it and the old regulation orchestra. Each member acts as a soloist and usually on more than one
instrument. Ross Gorman, Whiteman's first saxophonist, plays eleven, among them oboe, bass-oboe, heckelphone, E-flat, B-flat and bass clarinet, basset horn and octavion. Each of the three saxophonists uses three saxophones in various pitches. The Whiteman orchestra is made up as follows:

2 three violins (for special effects only-augmented to eight), (Ed: meaning 3-1st, & 3-2nd violins) 2 basses (also play tuba), 1 banjo, 2 trumpets (alternating with cornet), 2 trombones (one alternating with euphonium), 2 three-horns, 3 saxophones (with three keys each), from soprano to bass, also alternating with clarinet, etc.), 2 tubas (as above), sarusophone, sousaphone, 2 pianos (one alternating with celesta), cymbals and diverse traps (one player).

As will be seen it is a wind instrument orchestra, supplemented by strings, instead of the reverse. This queer combination of brass, played in chorus, gives it its characteristic, radiant sound. The banjo is of particular importance for coloring and as a means of bringing out the rhythm, and a very special quality is peculiar to the orchestra, owing to the unheard of virtuosity of the players, their powers of expression, often through imitation of the human voice or animal sounds, through portamentos which are rendered in perfection even on valve instruments, and finally also through the use of the higher registers of trumpets, etc.) and novel dampers. However, these qualities are not yet universal and an orchestra like Whiteman's has not come to my notice so far.

Paul Whiteman, who was originally violist in a symphony orchestra, gradually gathered his "boys" and developed their technic in daily rehearsals. Until recently they played nightly in the Palais Royal, a fashionable New York restaurant. On February 12, 1924-perhaps a milestone in the history of music-they gave their first concert in Aeolian Hall, and a week later-before a sold-out house, in the enormous Carnegie Hall. Since then they have been traveling on the continent, as Paul Whiteman's concert Orchestra (no longer as a Jazz band), and are the sensation of the day.

And what do they play? That is Whitman's dilemma. The old hits have only historical value now. As "specimens" they are still presented, sometimes in new and sometimes in the old make-up. Then came arrangements or "adaptations." Whiteman's adapter, Fredie Grofe, is a clever conjurer; he makes new things out of old material. He also takes "popular classic"-simple songs and piano pieces-dresses them up in
great style and-in despair-he even seizes upon well known Muscovite specialties, like the Volga song, Rachmaninoff's C-sharp minor Prelude, or the Hymn to the Sun from "Coq d'Or"-to transform them into Jazz. He calls that "flavoring a selection borrowed themes." Only he cannot compose. If he could, he would be the man we want-the Messiah of Jazz.

However, to the others, the "legitimate" American composers, the idiom is unknown. Three or four have tried their hand at it. Victor Herbert's "Suite of Serenades"-written for Jazz orchestra, and played in Whiteman's first concert, according to authoritative opinion, is still conceived in the old orchestra style. The three "American Music Numbers" by Eastwood Lane, which I heard Whiteman's band play in New York, are beginnings toward something characteristic. "Persimmon Pucker," the first, has a peculiar charm, and "Sea burial," the last, has musical quality; yet both are merely Hors d'oeuvres, as it also Mana-Zucca's picturesque "Zouaves' Drill."

The most successful experimenter thus far is doubtless George Gershwin, who has not come from the classical composers but straight from Broadway tradition. He has written a kind of piano concerto in one movement, "Rhapsody in Blue," in which he welds the melody and rhythm of Jazz with what we might call a symphonic form. The piece has genuine American qualities, grotesque humor, naive sentimentality and a piano technic which recalls the eccentricity of the famous "Kitten on the Keys." Although the orchestral part probably is not Gershwin's work but Grofe's, yet it sounds more like the language of the saxophones than of the violins, and it means a beginning at least.

But who will "carry on"? Leo Sowerby, whose violin sonata made such an honest appeal at Salzburg, has attempted a "syncopation" which unfortunately I have not yet heard. But Zez Confrey, the Chopin of Jazz, should learn Jazz instrumentation so that we might someday have a whole musical jungle instead of a dainty keyboard promenading kitten. If a Messiah of Jazz does not arise, it is doomed by reason of the deadly monotony of its literature and the future American who puts on his ear-phones every evening, is hopelessly headed for the lunatic asylum.

1927

Jan 18, 1927 – Column in New York Times
Some weeks of faithful listening to the radio in New York, the broadcasting capital of America, have resulted in the following observations:

1. While the quantity of jazz and popular sentiment stuff to be heard over the air is still as great as ever, there is also a large and increasing amount of good music which is now transmitted with great skill and effectiveness.

2. Literate announcers are badly needed. An hour listening to any but the two or three most important stations is fairly sure to result in hearing several grotesque errors of pronunciation.

3. The amount of open and blatant advertising is rapidly growing unendurable. Half the stations in the metropolitan area now devote so much time to plugging the Elite Bakery and Tony’s tonsorial parlors that no sensible person should bother with them. One-third the present number of broadcasters would be plenty.

4. The orthophonic Victrola, and similar devices, have been a godsend to the inferior stations. The new records may be played in a broadcasting studio and only a trained listener knows that the performers who made them are not present in the flesh. Many of these stations do nothing but praise the Busy Bee Kandee Kitchen, and play records, day and night. The Federal Radio Commission has ruled that, when a record is played, the announcer must say so; but this order is often violated.

5. As a medium for the dissemination of ideas, radio is no more important than it was three or four years ago, which is to say, not at all. Speeches, lectures, debates and interviews are few and bad. Radio is now dominated by advertising, and even the advertiser has learned he must not talk at any length. He provides music or vaudeville, monologues, and the announcer mentions his company.

Feb 3 – Finds New Fields Opened to Musicians – Prof. Dykema Says Radio and Film Inventions Have Changed the Profession.

The radio, the talking picture and synchronized musical effects in moving picture theatres are rapidly forcing professional musicians into new fields of work, according to Dr. Peter W. Dykema, professor of music education at Teachers College, who said yesterday the influx of this type of musician into the field of teaching is becoming more and more noticeable, through a marked increase in the enrollment in the music department.
Theatre musicians, symphony orchestra players, vaudeville performance and “would-be” concert artists are studying music at Teachers College this year in greater numbers than ever before, he finds, in addition to the regular group of students for whom teaching has been the sole aim.

“The reproduction of mechanical musical effects as accompaniment for moving pictures, such as the Vitaphone and Movietone, has narrowed the field for orchestra musicians to a large extent.” He asserted, “and has brought about a new trend in the musical world. The radio has brought about the same limitation for students of the concert stage, since it has given prominent artists a strong hold on their prominence through a vast number of listeners.

“As a result, the teaching of music in public schools has become increasingly popular. It not only offers steady employment and adequate wages but also permits musicians to make a thorough study of the type of music which interests them most. They can become their own critics and develop their own ideas.”

Feb. 18 – Jazz is Compared to Comic Cartoon –
Dr. Russell Calls It America’s Contribution – Good Music in Movies and Radio, He Says.

Written for the alumni weekly, Dr. Alexander Russell, director of music at Princeton University, compared jazz to the cartoon, and said that moving pictures and the radio work for the betterment of music.

Describing jazz as America’s contribution to music, Dr. Russell said: “A well organized crusade was launched, jazz composers and orchestras forsook the dance palaces and rushed into the concert halls, jazz bands toured the world, the critics burst into print, the public roared its delight and furor resulted. Jazz was to have its place in the sun, and now that the tumult has died down where is jazz? Exactly where it was before all this happened. And why not? The result could not have been otherwise, for jazz bears the same relation to the art of music that a comic cartoon does to the art of painting.”

Dr. Russell said that untold millions heard good music in the movies. With the advent of the radio, he said, millions were in daily intimate contact with good music. “Radio will weed out the unfit,” he declared, “and force a higher standard on the survivors.”

Dr. Russell said he saw the possibility, through the radio, that the orchestra, or at least the leader, would someday be hidden from view.
“I would further recommend this invisible procedure to singers who pose and strut and make faces,” he said, “to pianists who wiggle their elbows in the mistaken idea that they can thus impose on the eye a tone quality which is inaudible to the ear; to violinists who swing about like pendulums while playing; to organists who are jumping jacks; and to composers who come out to acknowledge imaginary applause.”

1928

JANUARY - THE CADENZA WHAT JAZZ HAS DONE TO THE FRETTED INSTRUMENTS by Myron V. Freese -

....One factor which is fairly sure as testing the living or dead status in popularity of certain forms of music, musical instruments or performances, one which our writer friend of the Herald seems either to have overlooked or forgotten, is the radio; and what makes it a good factor is that when the listeners-in hear something that is particularly liked they have the pleasant habit of immediately using the telephone or telegraph to notify the sending station of that liking and to ask for a repetition at an early future date—the only radio encore possible.

It is superfluous to say that these t. and t. encores (sometimes TNT is their spontaneous outburst) go a long way towards forming future programs, and even a cursory glance at the broadcasted programs of only a year back will prove the exceeding popularity of the fretted instruments (solo and ensemble) with radio fans everywhere by their "return of dates." We could cite names and dates of banjo radiophoning in singles (solo), doubles (duets) and quadruples (quartet), one of the most recent of the latter form being the Hillman String Quartet (three banjos and guitar) broadcasted from Station KFAF of the Denver Post, Denver, Colorado.

As a notable instance of solo banjo playing over the radio, Mr. Frederick J. Bacon (president of the Bacon Banjo Company, Inc. and a veteran banjo soloist with a name second to none) created a furore with his banjo broadcasting only as short a time ago as last October from Station WJZ at Aeolian Hall in New York City. Delighted fans, as well as other who probably never before had heard a banjo played, worked the telephone and telegraph over time during the recital, repressing
their appreciation and calling for more. This was followed during the next few days by an avalanche of congratulatory letters requesting a speedy repetition, which has been given. That surely is one banjo which has not been "silenced."

It was the same with Mr. Arthur P. Melchert of Seattle, Washington, who delighted an invisible audience of unknown numbers with an evening mandolin and Hawaiian guitar recital, broadcasted from Station KFJC of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Jazz? The mandolin program included such numbers as "Song to the Evening Star" from "Tannhauser" (Wagner); "Gloria," from Mozart's "Twelfth Mass"; "Nachstuke," "Nocturne No. 4" (Schumann), and "La Paloma" (Yradier). The Hawaiian numbers were typical and melodious.

Mandolin Ensembles the Most Popular Radio entertainment

It can be said without stretching the truth that the most popular radio instrumental ensembles are the mandolin orchestras. Space does not permit enumerating by name the many hundreds of these which are constantly broadcasting and repeating dates, but they range from the Great Northwest to the extreme South; from the Pacific Coast to the Atlantic seaboard, and include all the great cities of the Middle West, is not this still further conclusive and indubitable proof that the Herald has erred, and that “Jazz” has not “Killed” the mandolin, banjo and guitar, neither have they been “Silenced by the Sin of Syncopation?”

In the leading magazines of the early 1920’s we find numerous articles about jazz and its influence that also relate the popularity of the emerging radio influence.

DECEMBER - MUSICAL COURIER 1928

RADIO INTEREST TO SUPPRESS JAZZ - The daily papers have been making some remarks about radio and music becoming more closely allied through the music publishing combinations that have been brought into effect through the broadcasting companies. The latest startling announcement in this direction is to the effect that Carl Fisher, Inc., Leo Feist, Inc., and the National Broadcasting Company, the third incorporator, have formed an organization to be known as the Radio
Music Company, for which incorporation papers were recently filed in Albany.

It seems that efforts will be made to suppress jazz as music as possible through the broadcasting stations. F. C. Mills, former chairman of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, is president of the new company. In explaining this attitude toward jazz Mr. Mills gave out the following information which will be read with much interest by musicians generally:

"The operating policy of the organization will be almost revolutionary," said Mr. Mills. "While in the final analysis the Radio Music Company will be a commercial music publishing venture, nevertheless the scope of its activities will be so broad as to have the real objective not primarily in profits but in making an active and intelligent use of the tremendous facilities of the NBC system placed at its disposal for the purpose of enhancing and improving the whole trend of American music. The new firm will have its influence in putting jazz in the background of the American musical picture. We have had perhaps too much jazz, and as there is no denying the influence of music upon the trend of the people's inclinations, it seems about time for someone to assume leadership in a movement away from jazz. I think we should go back to melody and let it serve instead of noise to give us the inspiration which we expect from music."

To give some idea of what this whole movement means, M. H. Aylesworth, president of the National Broadcasting Company, said that the new company was aligned with the foremost American composers, including writers of popular tunes and classical compositions. Mr. Aylesworth is to be chairman of the board of the Radio Music Company. Others on the board include Paul D. Cravath, lawyer; John Goden, producer; David Sarnoff, executive vice-president, Radio Corporation of America; S. L. Rothafel (Roxy), managing director Roxy Theater; E. E. Shumkaer, president Radio Victor Corporation; Hiram S. Brown, president Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation; Leo Feist, president Leo Feist, Inc., E. C. Mills; H. P. Davis, vice-president, Westinghouse Electric and manufacturing Company; B.F. Bitner, vice-president and general manager, Leo Feist, Inc., and Walter S. Fischer, president, Carl Fischer, Inc.

There are a number of the great music publishing houses that have been absorbed in this movement on the part of the radio interests, but there is no reason for musicians to feel that their services will in any
way be lessened. It will probably be found that there will be a greater demand for music although these movements that are on foot, but like all commercial ventures, it depends upon what the public demands. It is gratifying to know, however, that the attitude of the company of which Mr. Mills is the head will make an endeavor to suppress jazz where it is possible, and give to the people the music that they really want. Jazz is a counterfeit demand. It eventually will be obliterated, and this through the lack of demand on the part of the people.

“Radio Interest To Suppress Jazz” – Musical Courier, December, 1929

“The daily papers have been making some remarks about radio and music becoming more closely allied through the music publishing combinations that have been brought into effect through the broadcasting companies. The latest startling announcement in this direction is to the effect that Carl Fisher, Inc., Leo Feist, Inc., and the National Broadcasting Company, the third incorporator, have formed an organization to be known as the Radio Music Company, for which incorporation papers were recently filed in Albany.

It seems that efforts will be made to suppress jazz as music as possible through the broadcasting stations, F. C. Mills, former chairman of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, is president of the new company. In explaining this attitude toward jazz Mr. Mills gave out the following information, which will be read with much interest by musicians generally:

“The operating policy of the organization will be almost revolutionary,” said Mr. Mills. “While in the final analysis the Radio Music company will be a commercial music publishing venture, nevertheless the scope of its activities will be so broad as to have the real objective not primarily in profits but in making an active and intelligent use of the tremendous facilities of the NBC system placed at its disposal for the purpose of enhancing and improving the whole trend of American music. The new firm will have its influence in putting jazz in the background of the American musical picture. We have had perhaps too much jazz, and as there is no denying the influence of music upon the trend of the people’s inclinations, it seems about time for someone to assume leadership in a movement away from jazz. I think we should go back to melody and let it serve instead of noise to give us the inspiration which we expect from music.”
To give some idea of what this whole movement means, M. H. Aylesworth, president of the National Broadcasting Company, said that the new company was aligned with the foremost American composers, including writers of popular tunes and classical compositions. Mr. Aylesworth is to be chairman of the board of the Radio Music Company. Others on the board include Paul D. Cravath, lawyer; John Goden, producer; David Sarnoff, executive vice-president, Radio Corporation of America; S. L. Rothafel (Roxy), managing director Roxy theater; E. E. Shumkaer, president Radio Victor Corporation; Hiram S. Brown, president Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation; Leo Feist, president Leo Feist, Inc., E. C. Mills; H. P. Davis, vice-president, Westinghouse electric and Manufacturing Company; B. F. Bitner, vice-president and general manager; Leo Feist, Inc., and Walter S. Fischer, president, Carl Fischer, Inc.

There are a number of the great music publishing houses that have been absorbed in this movement on the part of the radio interests, but there is no reason for musicians to feel that their services will in any way be lessened. It will probably be found that there will be a greater demand for music although these movements that are on foot, but like all commercial ventures, it depends upon what the public demands. It is gratifying to know, however, that the attitude of the company of which Mr. Mills is the head will make an endeavor to suppress jazz where it is possible, and give to the people the music that they really want jazz is a counterfeit demand. It eventually will be obliterated, and this through the lack of demand on the part of the people.

Milestones in Radio History
(Musical Development)

1907 – Dec. 16 – First singer to broadcast was Eugenia H. Farrar – from the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

1908 – Lee DeForest, set up a transmitter at foot of Eiffel Tower and gave a demonstration program of gramophone records.
1908 – A. Frederick Collins broadcast voice and music program using an arc transmitter in Newark.


1916 – Spring – DeForest maintains a phonograph concert service three times a week with Columbia Phonograph Company furnishing records in exchange for on air announcements at Hotel Astor.

1916 – W. C. Handy on Memphis station – experimented with voice radio station.

1916 – 2ZK in New Rochelle New York broadcast music regularly over the air.

1916 – David Sarnoff’s Radio Music Box memo. (date controversial - may be 1915)


1920 – First commercial radio station – first broadcast – KDKA, Pittsburgh, PA.

1920 – March – Beginning of weekly Sunday afternoon classical music concerts.

1920 – June – Georgia Tech Band on Georgia radio station. (jazz & dance music)
1920 – June 15 – Madame Nellie Nelba is presented live from Chelmsford, England in first ‘world’ concert.


1921 – Earl “Fatha” Hines on KDKA, Pittsburgh?

1921/22 – Waters-Henderson over WGV, New Orleans

1921 – Bert Williams (possibly in connection with his role in “Shuffle Along.”)

1922 – Eva Taylor began broadcasting.


1923 – Duke Ellington Broadcasting over WHN, New York City

1924 – Ellington began doing live remotes from the Kentucky Club.

1926 – Nov. 15 – NBC debut with 24 stations (regular schedule begins Jan. 1927)

1927 – Sept. 18 – Columbia Phonograph - goes on air with 16 stations – Howard Barlow’s Orchestra – Plays “Tales from Vienna Woods.”


1932 – Survey – radio - Music-62.9%, Educational-21.3%, Literature-2.5%, religion-2.5% and novelties-1.5%

1933 – 6 month contract with WLW – ‘Fats” Waller formed his first set band “Fats Waller & his Rhythm” – featured on the “Fats Waller
Rhythm Club program – Ran for allotted 6 months and came to end in Dec. of 1933. It resumed in the summer of 1934 on CBS.

“Fats” Waller and WLW in Cincinnati

“Fats” Waller’s tenure at WLW was actually a very brief interlude. Waller was a well-established artist long before his arrival in Cincinnati in 1933. There was talk about a stranded relationship with the station’s owner Powell Crosley. But, whatever Waller’s personal relationship with Crosley might have been – and it probably wasn’t cordial – it’s save to say Waller wasn’t fired for his behavior (Waller drank, smoked and his language was not considered civil by Crosley). It was thought that Waller was caught playing his tune “Ain’t Misbehavin’ on the organ without permission.

Waller was only in Cincinnati for a short time. He probably was there to bring his music to the attention of a wider audience that radio offered. Also, it probably was to keep working until the recording industry recovered from the effects of the Depression. Waller did get to play the famous WLW organ during his tenure at WLW. Waller had an established reputation as a jazz organist and given that fact it’s highly unlikely that Crosley would have had a problem with him performing on that instrument in the style for which he was known. You don’t hire an artist known as a specialist on a particular instrument and then fire him when he does precisely what you hired him to do.

As radio was gaining listeners (in 1921, one in 500 homes had radio receiver. By 1926 it was one in six.), there was controversy as to
whether radio should be entertainment or educational programming. Also, there were problems in which type of music should be presented on the air waves – many wanted more classical music, while many enjoyed jazz and dance music. Many articles were written taking up for playing more classical orientated music. Others, (mostly younger listeners) wanted the latest popular and jazz/dance music. There were even arguments about the term ‘jazz.’ As dancing was very popular many dance leaders did not like their music to be called jazz music. They even ran a contest to find another name for their music rather than jazz. There were discusses as the difference between jazz and dance music.

Jazz music began as dance music. Jazz evolved from the syncopated music of the Negro Cakewalk – the cakewalk evolving into ragtime, and ragtime evolving into jazz. Throughout this evolution the dance was closely united with the various styles of music. The problem lies in the fact that all dance music is not jazz, but all jazz was dance music. The waltz, galop, etc. were well-established dance styles with their appropriate standard steps. But when the dance was influenced by the new syncopated rhythms that jazz presented, the jazz dance craze was created. By the time that radio stabilized dances like the fox trot, Charleston, and other jazz oriented dances became popular. The Whiteman, Lopez, Sprecht and other orchestras were dance orchestras primarily. But as jazz became more sophisticated there became a jazz that was now called symphonic jazz-which was for listening, not dancing. But still the orchestras of the day played mostly dance music-a music that was jazz oriented. The reason that these ‘dance’ orchestras did not want to be known as jazz orchestras was that often jazz was not spoken of as socially acceptable as ‘moral’ music. It had a bad reputation in many cultural circles. It was the music of the young and restless generation. But, the music the orchestras played in early radio must be considered ‘jazz’ when they were playing the music that was considered the popular music of the era. We do call this era the “Jazz Age,” for a good reason-it was jazz influenced and contained many jazz elements, especially syncopation.

Radio stations, small and large began to establish local jurisdiction, using local talent for its broadcasts. As an example we cite station KPO in San Francisco. The station made its debut at 9 AM on April 17, 1922. It established high ideals and no programs were permitted unless they were high class. Remote broadcast equipment
was set up at the Fairmont Hotel and the Palace Hotel, where the music of Cy Trobbe’s Orchestra originated. Trobbe remembers a small trio was formed by Mrs. Jean Campbell:

“We were just brought up there as extras; to fill in the time between programs....we’d get ten dollars a show, and play about fifteen minutes. The policy of KPO was ‘no recordings’ – everything had to be live. So we were kept pretty busy after a while.”

KPO had Max Bradfield and his Versatile Band and Rudy Seiger’s Orchestra furnish music, both originating from the Fairmont Hotel.

During the late 20’s Cy Trobbe was a popular musical figure at KPO. Trobbe conducted the studio orchestra and the host of several popular music programs.

KPO was typical of local stations that were being established throughout the United States. Usually, what was happening in one local station was repeated and each had their own musical organizations and surveys that were made of the use of jazz/dance music was mostly typical of all these early stations. We use KPO as an example of the programs of early radio stations.

In 1924 the San Francisco station of KFRC established a policy of broadcasting.

“It will be used to broadcast orchestral music, primarily from the Whitecomb Hotel concert, symphony and dance orchestra. On Saturday night there was broadcast a dance program from 8-12:00pm; on Sunday from 6:30-7:30 a program of popular music was broadcast; from 8-10, a program of classical music; and from 1012pm it was again a program of dance music. The band of Stanslaus Bem was hired and these musicians opened the station and played thereafter on broadcasting nights.

In the San Francisco Bulletin of Sept. 24, 1924 we read:

“Stanislaus Bem, musical director (KFRC), is already known to radio fans though his appearance on KGO, the broadcasting station of the General electric Company in Oakland, where he won the reputation of presenting, ”The sweetest orchestra ever heard over the radio.” His offerings at Hotel Whitcomb are famous up and down the coast, and he will be an almost nightly attraction from now on, over the air.

With Bem will be various dance orchestras, one in particular – Elmer Ohlsen’s Hotel Whitcomb orchestra, which is among the leading musical aggregations of the coast.”
Also, in the Sept. 25, 1924 paper we read:

“AT 10 o’clock, with the introductory program finished, the dance orchestra of Elmer Ohlsen was “plugged in” and for another two hours or until midnight, the world of outdoors danced with guests in the roof garden to the same orchestra.”

In the early days of ‘radio’ there were attempts at bringing dance music to those who wished it. A ‘dance’ club was formed that attempted to bring dance music to the “City College Club in New York City:
Magazine Articles on Syncopation
Right & Wrong Way to Interpret Syncopation - 8
1900 – March – Musician – “Ragtime – 9
1901 – Nov. - Musician – “Syncopated Rhythm vs. Ragtime – 9
1912 – August – Orchestra Monthly – “The Ethics of Ragtime – 20
1913 – Feb. – Musical Opinion – Ragtime on Parnassus - 20
1915 – August – Ragtime Review – “What About Ragtime” – 30
1915 – Dec. – Current Opinion – “Will Ragtime Save the Soul Of the Native American Composer” – 31
1917 – Nov. – Current Opinion – “The Great American Composer Will He Speak in the Accent of Broadway” – 32
1918 – March – New Music Review – “Concerning Ragtime” – 33
1918 – April – New Music Review – “Negro Spirituals – 37
1918 – August 15 – Dial – “American Influence on French Music” – 38
1921 – August – Ladies Home Journal – “Does Jazz Put the Sin in Syncopation” – 40
1922 – April – “That Jazz Wail Again - 42
1922 – May – The Musician – “Syncopated Rhythm vs. Ragtime” – 42
1922 – May 6 – Literary Digest – “To Jazz or to Rag” – 45
1923 – Jan. – Melody – “Frank Westphal-Chicago Exponent of
“Jazz” – 47
1924 – Feb. – Flutist – “Jazz-It’s Origin, Effect” – 49
1924 – June – Metronome – “Rhythmic Symphonic Syncopation Vs. Modern Jazz” – 49
1924 – July – Metronome – “France’s Ban on Jazz” – 50
1925 – Feb. – Christian Science Monitor – “of Symphonized Syncopation” – 51
1925 – August – Pictorial Review – “Jazz & the Dance” – 55
1925 – Dec. 9 – Nation – “Music-The Pedant Looks at Jazz” – 56
1926 – April 17 – The New Statesman – “Waltz King and Jazz King” – 58
1926 – July 3 – Collier’s – “Where Have I Heard That Tune Before” – 58