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## BEBOP: MODERN NEW YORK JAZZ

*from NEW YORK MODERN: THE ARTS AND THE CITY*

ON November 26, 1945, six young African-Americans entered the recording studios of radio station WOR in New York. Teddy Reig, artists and repertoire man for Savoy records, had engaged Charlie Parker and his Beboppers for the session. Parker's group, the first that he directed, had played together for barely a month, performing at the Spotlight, one of Fifty-second Street's many jazz bars, in the evenings before moving to Minton's, a musicians' after-hours club in Harlem.<sup>1</sup>

Savoy paid two hundred dollars for the studio time and Parker earned three hundred dollars for the four compositions.<sup>2</sup> The second cut recorded that day, "Ko-Ko," whose jagged melody Parker constructed over the harmonic structure of another tune, "Cherokee," would become Parker's great contribution to the bebop revolution. Energetic, sometimes frantic, and bluesy, bebop's incendiary style, pulsing rhythm, and intensity contrasted with the melodic, linear, and commercial qualities of swing. Yet the innovators of bop schooled themselves in the jazz of the 1930s, and as they pushed swing to its limits they discovered a new music, one which they could begin to call their own.

Parker's group began the first take of "Ko-Ko" with a tight and fast chase between Parker's saxophone and Dizzy Gillespie's trumpet; the taut harmonic statement would become a hallmark of bebop expression. After the opening eight bars, even as the group maintained its breakneck speed, the musicians drifted back, as if by habit, to the original melody of "Cherokee" that Parker had been determined to leave behind. After less than forty seconds Parker lowered his mouthpiece, clapped his hands, whistled, and said, "Hey, hey. Hold it."<sup>3</sup>

When they resumed, they clearly conformed to Parker's vision. In place of the danceable and melodically straightforward "Cherokee," they played bebop. The harmonic complexity, rhythmic drive, and above all the improvisational

gestures of “Ko-Ko,” built on Parker’s mastery of the blues, distinguished it from its swing predecessor. In the space of a few moments Parker’s group grasped the difference between swing and bop, creating a new form of American jazz.

Miles Davis, then only nineteen, joined fellow trumpet player Dizzy Gillespie, bassist Curley Russell, drummer Max Roach, pianist Argonne Thornton, and Parker in the historic session. Davis, however, found the opening section of “Ko-Ko” so daunting that he let Gillespie, who had been playing trumpet professionally for almost a decade, play in unison with Parker’s alto saxophone.<sup>4</sup>

Gillespie’s and Parker’s opening section burst from their instruments with controlled tightness and precision. The staccato notes pushed forward, each one a sound in its own space, each separate from the next. Passing the theme back and forth the players resumed for a last measure, and then paused. The opening statement of “Ko-Ko” hid the innovative style of drummer Max Roach, who, along with Kenny Clarke, had begun to redefine the jazz percussion, preferring to keep time with the cymbal, leaving the bass drum free to accent irregularly. The Parker-Gillespie introduction only hinted at Parker’s reformulation of modern jazz.<sup>5</sup>

Davis explained, “Bird was a *fast* motherfucker.” Parker’s solo became legendary for its intensity and its facility, and remarkable for its combination of tempo and lyricism.<sup>6</sup> In two minutes Parker explored every aspect of his alto’s range. One moment screeching as Parker stretched to reach one note from inside the preceding one, another soaring melodically through the notes of a chord progression insinuated by the piano’s occasional remnants of the original tune, Parker played one of the “greatest solos in the history of jazz.”<sup>7</sup> Based on a combination of multiple key signatures coexisting in a single, unified, yet, improvised and finally linear melodic statement, Parker’s work in “Ko-Ko” pushed modern jazz toward atonality. As he careened through the song’s complex “labyrinth,” Parker created a “showpiece” and a masterpiece.<sup>8</sup>

As Parker worked his way through the recording, his playing became both more complex and more lyrical. He moved his alto up and down the pathways of each phrase, creating a fluidity that united harmonic and rhythmic experimentation. In contrast to the hard-edged opening and closing sections of “Ko-Ko,” Parker and Gillespie, with close and tightly controlled musical punches, first in unison, then in solo and once again in unison, played a swirl of almost pure abstraction. The atmospherics of “Ko-Ko,” its color and movement, its design and mood, became its content. Yet, despite Parker’s ferocious speed and virtuosity, the roots of “Ko-Ko” lay in the blues, reaching back to the “tragic accent” reminiscent of Bessie Smith.<sup>9</sup>

In contrast, in the midst of an inventive riff, as his alto moved in and out of an almost perceptively recognized melodic figure, Parker disclosed the tune of “Tea for Two” imbedded in the pattern of his musical ideas. That remnant served as pun and evidence, a display of a reality that Parker’s invention had displaced,

a reminder that a representational world lay just beyond his music's abstraction. In the fall of 1945, Charles Parker, age twenty-six, broke into a parallel realm of musical abstraction. Framed by the chordal harmonic structure of "Cherokee," Parker's composition "Ko-Ko" centered on new jazz ideas. The suggestion of "Tea for Two," however, attracted attention and demanded explanation. Jazz musicians, Parker included, had played this commercial snippet for a decade as they elaborated the harmonic structure of "Cherokee." Parker acknowledged the song's short, but important history, and revealed the extent to which the apparent sudden revolution of bebop was simultaneously a painstaking process of musical innovation. It also implied a social world beyond jazz.

Previously Parker and other African-American musicians played and composed jazz only to have white musicians claim credit and financial rewards through the process of "covering." With bebop, Parker and his group created a form of jazz they regarded as uncoverable. In "Ko-Ko," Parker used the pasted scrap of "Tea for Two" to taunt the white dominated music business. "Ko-Ko" had begun, here, with laughter, moved to derision, and culminated in anger. Parker sought to sabotage Tin Pan Alley with his virtuoso performance and inimical composition.

The short phrase from popular music's most easily recognized tune also served as an ironic allusion to a shift in the politics of the music business. From mid-1942 to 1944 a ban on recording had left jazz performers without a mass audience. Denied access to recording and radio, jazz musicians scratched out livings, playing in small clubs and for each other. The emergence of bebop was, in part, a consequence of the commercial exile of jazz during World War II. The curious quotation of "Ko-Ko" reminded audiences and promoters that things had changed. Parker left standing only a fragment of jazz's past. In revolutionizing the form of modern jazz, Parker and others threatened to revolutionize the business of jazz, liberating it from commercial entertainment and establishing it as art, controlled and defined neither by popular-taste commercial producers, but by its artists, most of whom were black.

Parker closed "Ko-Ko" with the structure it opened with, the pushing trumpet-alto restatement of the "Cherokee"-derived theme. He brought the tune back to its immediate historical roots, acknowledging its jazz heritage.

Long considered a "mystery" session, the Savoy recording of "Ko-Ko," which Gillespie regarded as "just perfect, man," revealed how innovatively challenging the musicians judged the piece. Davis, still in awe of Parker, knew that he couldn't handle the opening section, and he realized that Parker knew it as well. "I wasn't ready for the tempo," he said, "it's the damndest introduction I ever heard in my life."<sup>10</sup> Bebop's requirement of extraordinary virtuosity, both tempo and technique, represented yet another barrier against expropriation. That Gillespie slipped into the pianist's slot later, feeding Parker the harmonic outlines of his solo, testified to his musicianship. Parker's genius for improvisational spontaneity found in Gillespie a thoughtful jazz performer.

As Gillespie recalled, “Yard and I were like two peas. We played all our regular shit.”<sup>11</sup>

John Berks Gillespie, called Dizzy because, it was said, he was “dizzy as a fox,” understood the significance of the bebop revolution. “Our music,” he wrote, “emerged from the war years—the Second World War, and it reflected these times . . . fast and furious.” The sheer speed of bop, which intimidated the otherwise arrogant Davis, who had just declared that Juilliard had nothing more to teach him, was a breathless, even desperate attempt to create something unique, inimical. “Sometimes,” Gillespie continued, “when you know the laws you can break them.”<sup>12</sup>

The economic laws of the record business also challenged the young jazz revolutionaries. When Savoy producer Reig approached Parker to compose four original tunes, he thought “‘Ko-Ko’ wasn’t nothing but ‘Cherokee.’”<sup>13</sup> Reig pulled the new name out of the air. “I told them ‘Ko-Ko’ to make sure Charlie didn’t have to pay seventy-five dollars (in royalties). Otherwise Lubinsky, the owner, would have had a baby.”<sup>14</sup> In fact, Teddy Reig’s attribution of the song’s title was deceptive. “Ko-Ko,” a composition by Duke Ellington, had been performed by the Ellington orchestra five years earlier, in 1940. Ellington credited the title to Congo Square in New Orleans where, explained Ellington, nineteenth-century African-Americans convened to talk and dance, and that was where, some thought, “jazz was born.”<sup>15</sup> The change in the tune’s title did protect the new owners/producers/composers from paying royalties to the Tin Pan Alley music factory. But changing the song, restructuring a new melody on top of the original’s harmony, involved much more than changing the name.

The middle section, the bridge of “Ko-Ko,” animated the song’s new structure, demonstrated Parker’s musicianship, that he had “woodshedded his chords and scales,” and served as a testing ground for a generation of musicians to come.<sup>16</sup> Parker’s solo codified not just a new approach to playing jazz, but his extraordinary virtuosity institutionalized, unintentionally, an aspect of jazz culture that Parker had brought with him from his musical roots in Kansas City. There in the 1930s, as in Harlem in the 1940s, jamming musicians participated in a competitive ritual, the cutting contest, a proving ground for individual improvisational talent designed to demonstrate who blew best. Parker’s work on “Ko-Ko” said no contest. Because bebop placed such a high value on the improvisational, the gestural, on the process of discovery, many of the musicians, Parker notoriously, avoided rehearsal and took the jam session into the studio. Savoy’s recording of Parker’s solo on “Ko-Ko” froze a moment of unparalleled jazz improvisation.

Even Parker’s contracts were original. Parker created a publishing company in his own name to copyright the new jazz pieces which he had composed, many on the same harmonic-melodic basis as “Ko-Ko.” His company paid him two cents a side for his rights when other musicians recorded his work. Parker also agreed to allow his company, called Parker-Dial, to pay half of his royalties

to one Emery Bryd, a Los Angeles drug dealer whom Parker immortalized as “Moose the Mooche”.<sup>17</sup> Parker’s notorious drug habit killed him in 1955.

In the aftermath of World War II Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie revolutionized jazz. Abandoning commercialized music of the swing era with its conventional harmonic structure, they turned inward, discovering new harmonic relationships and creating a fast, dissonant, improvisational jazz that exceeded the ability and understanding of most conventional jazz musicians. Bebop emphasized virtuosity, individuality, and artistic innovation suitable to small groups playing to informed audiences in intimate settings. Modern jazz divorced itself, self-consciously, from commercial entertainment. Bebop’s liberation of jazz from show business, however, represented more than a musical revolution. By asserting its artistic identity and drawing on African-American blues, bebop enabled black jazz musicians to liberate themselves from white control as they revitalized a jazz that had become stagnant and formulaic.

On the eve of World War II the big bands of the “Swing Era” found themselves circumscribed by the tastes of their adoring fans and the demands of their agents, record companies, and theater owners. Swing became the familiar music of dancing at Savoy, its tunes a recast of the familiar. Parker and Gillespie restored the blues to jazz, reconnecting it with its African-American origins. Bebop enabled them to express their cultural as well as their artistic identities. They played jazz that expressed their feelings and ideas.

When Charlie Parker recorded “Ko-Ko” in 1945, he was a relatively unknown itinerant jazz musician with a certain insider’s reputation for improvisational genius born of the after-hours jam sessions that he irregularly frequented. Several years later, weighed down by the legend of his subsequent success—commercial, critical, mythical—Bird became the subject of intense scrutiny. When one interviewer learned that Parker had been born and schooled in Kansas City, he asked, “Did you ever listen to Lester Young?” Parker replied, “Every night.”<sup>18</sup>

### Before Bebop: Breaking the Rules with Hammond, Lady, and Prez

If swing was the midwife of bebop, the process of transformation whereby African-American musicians reclaimed their artistic heritage was a complex one. Bebop was more than an expression of racial politics. Nevertheless, race had a profound effect on jazz as it did on nearly everything else in American life, and its divisions offended sensitive whites as well as blacks. Indeed, John Hammond, one of jazz’s most important figures, was as motivated by his sense of racial justice as his love of jazz. Young and wealthy, Hammond played a key role in the careers of Billie Holiday, Benny Goodman, Lester Young, Count Basie, and Charlie Christian. Largely through his efforts New York in the 1930s became the focal point for the introduction of Southwestern, especially Kansas

City style, into the city's jazz tradition. Together with club owner Barney Josephson, Hammond broke down the barriers of racial segregation in jazz. Without Hammond's efforts in the 1930s bebop might never have evolved when and where it did, denying Parker and Gillespie the occasion of artistic collaboration and creativity.

Jazz had always been a "performer's art," intimately connected with its audience.<sup>19</sup> Yet, in the first three decades of the twentieth century jazz remained segregated. White musicians played, wrote, and arranged jazz, organized orchestras and tours, made recordings and performed on the radio, often borrowing the most innovative styles and songs of African-Americans for their own, achieving commercial success and popularity. During the heyday of American jazz, between the two world wars, the two racially divided aspects of American jazz culture existed side by side. In New York jazz musicians recorded on "race" records and in Harlem performed for black audiences at the one-thousand-seat Lincoln and the two-thousand-seat Lafayette theaters, at the square block large Savoy Ballroom as well as at dozens of small clubs.<sup>20</sup> A few black orchestras, like Duke Ellington's and Count Basie's, played at clubs for whites only in Times Square or Harlem. But they traveled on segregated trains, stayed in segregated hotels, ate in segregated restaurants, and played in segregated bands. With few exceptions white bands received higher pay, played at better clubs and concert halls, received more publicity, and sold more records.<sup>21</sup>

In the 1930s this pattern of racial segregation gave way in New York largely because of the efforts of John Hammond and then Barney Josephson. Hammond had been a regular visitor to Harlem since 1927 when, as a senior at Hotchkiss, he had decided to devote his life to jazz.<sup>22</sup> He dropped out of Yale two years later and began collecting jazz recordings. In 1931 he moved to an apartment on Sullivan Street in the Greenwich Village and had his name removed from the *Social Register*. With the onset of the depression, supported by his Vanderbilt family trust fund, Hammond worked as a disc jockey on WEVD, the radio station of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, where he played records from his collection and, out of his pocket, paid performers ten dollars for guest appearances.<sup>23</sup> Tall, awkward, and sporting a crew cut that gradually grew white with age, Hammond wrote for several small English music periodicals and then for the *Nation*, for which he covered the Scottsboro case.<sup>24</sup> When the NAACP invited him to join its board of directors in 1935, he readily agreed. Wealthy, committed to racial equality, and fascinated by jazz, Hammond used his social connections and money to promote black musicians and to end the racial segregation of jazz in New York.

Hammond adopted a two-front strategy. First, he actively searched for talented black jazz musicians such as Billie Holiday, Lester Young, and Charlie Christian. Second, he persuaded white producers, club owners, and band leaders like Benny Goodman to hire black musicians. Hammond's first musical discovery occurred in 1933 at Monette's in Harlem. The owner and featured

singer, Monette Moore, asked a young singer, Billie Holiday, to substitute for her on the evening Hammond came around. Holiday had been working in Harlem clubs for two years, including Convan's, the Alhambra Grill, and Pod and Jerry's, all clustered near Seventh Avenue and 134th Street. Hammond described the young Holiday as a "tall self-assured girl with rich golden-brown skin, exquisitely shown off by the pale blue of her... low cut evening frock. Billie was not the sort you could fail to notice... in the cramped low-ceiling quarters of a Harlem speak-easy... she came over to your table and sang to you personally. I found her quite irresistible."<sup>25</sup>

So too did much of the jazz world. At age eighteen Holiday seemed to have lived a lifetime, experiencing the drama and scars of Harlem where she had worked since her arrival from Baltimore six years earlier. When Holiday sang the blues, her audience believed she had lived them. Hammond marveled that she possessed the unteachable gift of making every song her own.<sup>26</sup> Holiday's distinct, husky singing lent itself well to the swing bands of the 1930s. Barnstorming, or at city gigs, male colleagues admired her abilities at music and cards. Holiday's delivery—dramatic and soulful—appeared "too artistic" for many of the music copyrighters who determined which bands and artists received exclusive rights to popular songs. Consequently, Holiday failed to achieve the commercial success that she desired and many believed she deserved.<sup>27</sup>

Two years after her discovery by Hammond, Billie made her debut at the Apollo. In April 1935, quivering fearfully in the wings, Billie was pushed onto the stage by comedian "Pigmeat" Markham. When she "broke up the house" with her encore rendition of "The Man I Love," the Apollo management booked her for a two-week run.<sup>28</sup> That same year Billie worked with Teddy Wilson, who with Lionel Hampton had just joined and integrated Goodman's orchestra. Hammond had been forcefully instrumental in that historic event, and together with Goodman provided the social environment in which many of the major African-American jazz performers of the 1930s could demonstrate the vitality of their music and the virtuosity of their musicianship to their white peers. Between 1935 and 1942 Holiday, working with Hammond and Wilson, recorded scores of records aimed at a black jukebox audience. She worked with Lester Young, with whom she had a special affinity, and then with the bands of Count Basie and Artie Shaw. In 1938 with Shaw she became one of the first black singers to star with a white swing band. Her classic jazz repertoire derived from her association with Hammond, moving from standard jazz ballads such as "Did I Remember" to the Bessie Smith-inspired blues of "Fine and Mellow."

By 1935, when Holiday first worked with Benny Goodman, Hammond and Goodman had been musical partners and friends for more than three years. Hammond had not restricted his New York jazz wanderings to uptown clubs, and in 1933 he heard Goodman leading a group at the Onyx, a speakeasy on Fifty-second Street. It was owned by Joe Helbock, a jazz fan who had placed a



piano at the back of his place for the pleasure of the musicians who stopped by and announced themselves with a password, "I'm from 802," the musicians' union which Helbock supported.<sup>29</sup> Once his customer-players began to jam regularly, Helbock, thanks to the repeal of prohibition, transformed the Onyx into Fifty-second Street's first jazz club.<sup>30</sup> Hammond believed in the talent of his friends, and under his guidance Goodman attracted the talents of many of the best jazz performers of his era, black and white. In 1934 Goodman organized his first big band, a twelve-piece ensemble, and at Hammond's urging engaged ex-Ellington collaborator, Fletcher Henderson, as his arranger.

For the big dance bands of the 1930s, a "driving unaccented 4/4 that maintained a steady pulse against varied melodic accents," provided the rhythmic essence of swing.<sup>31</sup> In Goodman's case, however, the music owed its special drive to the tension between the beat and the tendency of Goodman to play just before the beat.<sup>32</sup> Compared with the jazz bands of the 1920s, swing bands played more rhythmic figures, leaving short bursts of the melody to soloists whose phrases contrasted with the riffs of the reed and horn sections, which in turn passed the tune's motifs back and forth between them.<sup>33</sup> By and large, the swing bands emphasized the value and sound of the whole at the expense of the virtuosity and spontaneity of the soloist. For the young musicians of the 1930s, however, the rigid organization and structure of the swing bands became suffocating. Many found the freedom they sought by moving from band to band, serving as itinerant musicians as the mood or the city suited them. Others found emotional and artistic satisfaction by playing informally for each other in after-hours clubs, hotel rooms, or even on the roofs of tenements.

As the "King of Swing," Goodman had embraced swing in 1934 at Hammond's urging, and began a long recording career with Columbia. Thanks to Henderson's reworking of jazz standards and contemporary popular tunes, Goodman established a firm musical identity. In July 1935 he invited Teddy Wilson to form a trio with himself and drummer Gene Krupa. The Benny Goodman Trio, the first integrated jazz group of the century, played fine, chamber-inspired jazz, recording an especially well-received "After You've Gone" in a July 1935 session. Goodman expanded the trio to a quartet with the addition of a second black musician, Lionel Hampton, with whom the group recorded "Moonglow" in August 1936. At the same time his big band acquired national fame thanks to several film appearances and a series of radio broadcasts. By 1938 Goodman had achieved unparalleled status as a popular musical star and became the idol of legions of adoring teenage fans.

Goodman's popularity reached its apex with his famous concert at Carnegie Hall on January 16, 1938. Goodman, who played, so to speak, at his own coronation, "rocked the hall," while his exuberant fans danced as if the aisles they appropriated belonged to the Paramount. "Swing today," the *Times* proclaimed, "is the most widespread artistic medium of popular emotional expression."<sup>34</sup> Again, at Hammond's urging, Goodman invited Count Basie and five members of his band to join the concert toward the end of the session.

Together the two groups jammed an extended version of "Honeysuckle Rose," providing many in the Carnegie Hall audience with their first extended exposure to Basie and, perhaps, to his form of black jazz. The spontaneity of the jam session provided one of the emotional and musical, and for Hammond, social highlights of the evening when Goodman drummer, Gene Krupa, joined the Basie rhythm section for the rest of the historic occasion.

Late that evening members of Goodman's band went to the Savoy in Harlem where they watched Chick Webb's band engage Count Basie in a cutting contest that lasted through the night. News of the bands' contest spread throughout Harlem, forcing the Savoy to turn away an estimated twenty-five thousand fans. Late that morning Webb outdrummed Krupa, still playing with Basie, to the pleasure of those lucky enough to get inside, while the rest of Goodman's musicians jammed in their hotel room as the sun rose.<sup>35</sup>

A year later Hammond himself commandeered Carnegie Hall for a concert "From Spirituals to Swing" that demonstrated the role of African-Americans in the history of jazz.<sup>36</sup> Hammond unsuccessfully approached first the NAACP, which found his concept too daring, and then the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union to sponsor the concert. Finally, Hammond convinced Eric Bernay, a financial backer of the *New Masses*, to fund the program, booking Carnegie Hall for December 23, 1938. Hammond spent the summer lining up his performers, finding folk-blues singer Sonny Terry, fashioning a Benny Goodman sextet with a very young and innovative electric guitarist, Charlie Christian, and engaging the Kansas City Six, a segment of the Basie band that featured saxophonist Lester Young.<sup>37</sup>

Hammond had heard Basie as early as 1932 at Covan's when the young pianist played for the Kansas City band of Benny Moten. Covan's had been one of the first Harlem jazz spots that Hammond visited, an experience he owed to muralist/painter Charles Alston. By 1935 Basie assumed leadership of Moten's band, and Hammond, constantly on the lookout for new talent in the Midwest and Southwest, heard Basie, then playing at the Reno Club in Kansas City, over his car radio. Hammond called MCA's Willard Alexander in New York, arranged for the two of them to fly to Kansas City, where Alexander signed Basie on the spot. Hammond then set up a recording date in Chicago and a headliner engagement at the Roseland Ballroom in New York.<sup>38</sup> Under Hammond's guidance Basie reshaped his quintessentially Kansas City blues-based band into one of the three major black jazz bands of his time, gaining initial national recognition with the 1937 classic "One O'Clock Jump."<sup>39</sup>

The Basie band, which featured Lester Young on saxophone, rivaled Goodman's in commercial appeal. By the late 1930s, however, no one in jazz rivaled Young. By his twentieth birthday in 1929, the young tenor saxophonist, then with King Oliver's band, had already developed a highly individual, harmonically advanced style of playing. Yet, as the most influential artist between Armstrong and Parker, Lester Young remained an introspective and fundamentally private person.<sup>40</sup>

As a teenager Young played the drums and the alto sax before switching to the clarinet and then tenor sax, which he played in a range which embraced the sonority of the alto. Young spent his twenties moving, itinerantly, from town to town throughout the Midwest and Southwest. Electric guitarist Charlie Christian, who played with Young at the “Spirituals to Swing” concert in 1938, first heard Lester in Oklahoma City in 1929 and again in 1931 with Walter Page’s Blue Devils. Christian, still in his teens, found that Young’s narrative style of playing, in contrast to Coleman Hawkins’s technical flights of fancy, would have a lasting effect on his own development.<sup>41</sup>

On at least two occasions, once in 1933 and again in 1939, Young and Hawkins met in classic confrontation. The first preceded Hawkins’s five-year European sojourn, while the second occurred within weeks following his return, when he supposedly said after surveying the tenor scene, “I didn’t hear a thing that was new.”<sup>42</sup> The 1933 Kansas City jam lasted through the middle of the next day, a testament to the rivalry’s intensity. Hawkins’s play that night combined his “large” vibrato sound with the speed of pushed up eighth notes, creating his signature hot sound. The contrast with Young, whose smooth vibrato-less tone—he employed alternative fingerings to soften his timbre—could not have been more clear.<sup>43</sup>

For the next two years Young played for Basie in Kansas City, and arrived with the Count in New York in 1937. Young did not conform to the stereotype of a swaggering, aggressive, black jazz musician. Indeed, his very nature—shy, introverted, laconic—ran against the grain of that image, and his personality permeated his musical aesthetic. Lester Young loved subtle and shaded language in music and words. His gentle manner combined with a sly sense of humor and command of language, which he later grafted to a musician’s life.

Young, who called all women “Lady” out of gallantry and genuine gentility, conferred the proudly worn “Lady Day” on Billie Holiday. She reciprocated by calling him “Prez,” an affectionate contraction of “The President,” Young’s democratic handle awarded in recognition of his first confrontation with Hawkins. His private code extended beyond Holiday. “Where’s your poundcake?” he asked fellow musicians, inquiring about their wives. And if he peppered his everyday speech with the vernacular of barrooms and gin mills, he preferred to refer to sexual intercourse as “wearing a hat.”<sup>44</sup> He only exercised any semblance of control over the band, however, when he pitched for Basie in softball games held against players in the Goodman and Harry James bands.

One evening shortly after his arrival in New York, Young accompanied Hammond and Basie to Clark Monroe’s Uptown House in Harlem where Holiday had just begun a three-month “residency.” Although Basie already had a blues singer in Jimmy Rushing, he immediately signed Holiday. While Holiday never recorded with Basie, the experience led to an extraordinarily close artistic and personal friendship with Young. “Lady Day” and “Prez” shared the blues and a sense of narrative. For each of them the story to be told had artistic precedence, and the blues, in essence, told stories. Young often

referred to the necessity of musicians understanding the words of the songs they played so that they could improvise expressively on their meaning.<sup>45</sup> In the Southwest blues tradition Young embraced a linear form of playing—derivative of the folk vernacular and narrative expression.<sup>46</sup> Young's solos displayed an extraordinary smoothness, the consequence of his own tendency to compress his range, as he slid from note to note. Young's style led to his breaking the boundaries of swing-band jazz. The division of songs into segments of four bars cramped Young's need to express himself. His pursuit of blues-based narratives also led him to explore innovative harmonic and rhythmic ideas.<sup>47</sup> Like many of his Kansas City jazz colleagues, Young often hung back behind the beat ever so slightly, barely slowing the rhythm, creating a tension between soloist and ensemble, emphasizing the smoothness of his own exposition, whose "gentle cats-paw way of moving" he punctuated with open spaces of paused silence.<sup>48</sup> Young's innovations, concealed within a musical system of which he remained an integral part, obscured his role in the evolution of jazz from swing to bebop. Young's elegant aesthetic prepared the way for the more dramatic changes that lay ahead.

As long as the format and form of the swing orchestra held sway over the jazz world in the 1930s, the expressiveness of Young and Holiday remained submerged behind the identity of group and leader. Hammond's "Spirituals to Swing" concert of 1938 challenged these structural assumptions as well as those of racial segregation. The popularity of the small ensemble, the combos of quartets, sextets, and trios that emerged as jazz staples in the next decade, owed their size equally to the vision of Hammond—musically and socially—as well as to the proliferation of small dives modeled after the Onyx on Fifty-second Street. The Kansas City Six, featuring Lester Young, with its two electric guitars and absence of piano, made it a prototype of the emerging small jazz ensemble. Innovative promoters could fashion new jazz clubs whose intimate settings lent themselves to new forms of expression. The most influential was Café Society.

"Café Society," recalled Sir Charles Thompson (so dubbed by Young), "was the most high class club in the world."<sup>49</sup> Owned and managed by thirty-six-year-old Trenton, New Jersey, show manufacturer Barney Josephson, Café Society became the city's first integrated night club. "The wrong place for the right people," Josephson once said.<sup>50</sup> With Hammond serving as unofficial musical director, the club on Sheridan Square in the Village, presented "first rate but generally unknown Negro and white talent." Lester Young thought Café Society a perfect jazz environment. Nothing of the dive or joint characterized Café Society. Josephson meticulously oversaw the installation and working of light, sound, and stage equipment. Josephson and Hammond wanted a leftist, popular-front ambience at Café Society. When Hammond suggested Billie Holiday for the club's opening, Josephson readily agreed.

Holiday's unformed social and political attitudes, the result in part of a meager formal education which ended in the fifth grade, had not kept her from declaring, "I'm a race woman." Neither did it equip her to deal with the

full implications of her appearance at the club.<sup>51</sup> Her stint with Artie Shaw had convinced Billie that her future lay in solo performing. Mass audiences preferred the big band singer; Café Society seemed made for her. When poet-songwriter Lewis Allen presented Holiday with his evocative poem “Strange Fruit,” which he had set to music, she hesitated. Compared with several other musicians such as Frankie Newton, a trumpet player who often discoursed on the value of Garveyite economics or the viability of the Soviet Five-Year Plan, Billie Holiday knew music far better than she understood politics. Nevertheless, she soon agreed to record “Strange Fruit,” its lyric about lynching, its blues closer to a dirge than a shout. Holiday sang straightforwardly, a narrative understatement which underscored the song’s content:

Blood on leaves, and blood at the root,  
Black bodies swingin’ in the Southern breeze,  
Strange Fruit hanging from the poplar trees.

Café Society and “Strange Fruit” made Billie Holiday a star—of New York’s liberal, intellectual, New Deal left, and diverted her career from the path she had taken from the age of sixteen. Once a saloon singer of love songs, Holiday had become an artist whose deepening addiction to drugs accelerated her isolation. The song’s political appeal reinforced Holiday’s legend. Recorded on an obscure label, it received little radio play in America, and in England the BBC banned it entirely.<sup>52</sup> Hammond believed “Strange Fruit” the worst thing that ever happened to Billie Holiday—it brought her modest fame and little fortune.<sup>53</sup> Lena Horne followed Holiday into Café Society, remaining for two years as Josephson presided over the club’s L-shaped basement room with gracious directness. When patrons voiced discomfort over Café Society’s integrated seating, Josephson simply asked them to leave—immediately. Between 1939 and 1950 Café Society hosted, downtown, the great jazz voices of the era: Sarah Vaughan, Teddy Wilson, Art Tatum, and Fletcher Henderson in addition to Holiday and Horne.

In 1939 pianist Mary Lou Williams told Hammond about a guitar player she knew back in Oklahoma.<sup>54</sup> In bringing Charlie Christian to New York with Goodman later that year, Hammond unwittingly set in motion the sequence of events that led to the emergence of bebop. Ever adventurous, Hammond found Christian playing at the Cafe Ritz in Oklahoma City and brought the young electric guitar player with him to meet Goodman in Beverly Hills. Goodman looked at Christian, dressed in pointed yellow shoes, green suit, and purple shirt, and reluctantly agreed to humor Hammond.<sup>55</sup> He assembled some musicians and asked them to play “Rose Room,” a tune with which he assumed Christian had no experience—hardly an uncommon practice among musicians. For forty-five minutes Christian played chorus after improvised chorus, and Goodman signed him to play with the sextet on the spot.<sup>56</sup>

Under Hammond’s guidance Teddy Wilson and Lionel Hampton had integrated Goodman’s groups several years earlier. But Christian brought to

Goodman and New York the black, aesthetic, harmonic, and blues influence that characterized the music of Lester Young and provided the apprenticeship of yet another player from Kansas City and the Southwest, Charlie Parker. Christian, then Parker, and finally a small handful of other pioneering jazz musicians, turned jazz on its head, and from the after-hours clubs of Harlem transformed American music.

### The Birth of Bop

Charlie Christian provided the transition, as no other player of his generation, from the large, white, swing dance band orchestras of the 1930s to the small, chamber-club, largely black dominated jazz groups of the 1940s. For the first time in its seventy-five year history jazz no longer migrated to New York. Now the city, its musicians, patrons, clubs, unions and bars, and neighborhoods provided the setting for a new jazz form, bebop, to come to the fore. Like abstract expressionism, whose full development it anticipated by several years, bop's six-year progression toward a unified musical whole exemplified by Parker's "Ko-Ko" in 1945 occurred largely in seclusion, capturing the attention of its audience only at the end of the war. By that time one of its pioneers, Charlie Christian, had already been dead for three years.

Christian, born in either 1916 or 1919, died of tuberculosis in 1942. He spent the last year of his life largely in Harlem where he played and jammed at Minton's and Monroe's, where young musicians came to experiment, to break away from the music and the structures of their elders. Here, during World War II, Christian and the early beboppers institutionalized the informal jazz culture of the Southwest, of Kansas City, Oklahoma City, and the tank towns in-between. Christian and then Parker brought that culture, along with the influence of Lester Young, with them to New York and turned it into bebop.

Christian encountered Young in Oklahoma City in the 1920s as did Ralph Ellison, who wrote, "I first heard Lester Young at Halley Richardson's shoe-shine parlor in Oklahoma City jamming in the shine chair, his feet working the footrests."<sup>57</sup> There, Ellison recalled, "most of the respectable Negroes" considered jazz a low-class form of music, and they educated their children in the niceties of marching band music. Life in Oklahoma City, where Christian guided his blind father, who played guitar in the white sections of town, exposed Christian to the guitar and blues tradition of the region as well as to the light classics with which they serenaded their patrons.<sup>58</sup> Young's influence in the late twenties and early thirties extended Christian's education. He later translated Young's technique to the electric guitar, an instrument he began to play seriously in 1937, only two years before encountering Hammond.<sup>59</sup>

Oklahoma born, Kansas City educated, Christian came to New York playing an instrument that had barely existed a decade earlier. Along with French-Belgian guitarist Django Reinhardt, he transformed the electric guitar

from a rhythm to a solo voice. The “riff-tune” idea, derived largely from the Kansas City school of jazz that he adapted from Young, worked perfectly with Christian’s technical innovations. Abandoning the chorded rhythm style of playing, Christian strung together lines of singly picked notes, producing smoothly improvised riffs, whose shape rose and fell with almost classic symmetry.<sup>60</sup>

The riff style of Kansas City jazz, the short rhythmic phrases which bands like Basie’s used—and which they said “always carried a melody you could write a song from”—provided one of the features of Christian’s music. The other, an innovation where the rhythm section stressed all four beats rather than the accented second and fourth, gave the music its swing. Christian took this musical heritage and expanded it, continuing to play in a blues tradition but increasing the improvisational richness of his expression.<sup>61</sup>

Christian’s rich vein of improvisational materials constantly amazed the Harlem aficionados who crowded into Minton’s. He took great pleasure in dissecting popular songs whose chord progressions he found challenging and then building his improvisational line anew on the structure he had uncovered. At times he lifted other musicians’ favorite riffs and quoted them in the middle of his own line.<sup>62</sup> An artist talking to other artists, Christian assumed that his colleagues and audience knew the book. His innovations, playing the upper notes of a chord, the ninths and elevenths, substituting diminished for dominant sevenths, and temporarily abandoning syncopation, all anticipated the internal musical changes that bebop would expand. Christian also phrased in odd, ill-fitting lengths, three-and-a-half or five bars, stretching the structural assumptions which governed the standard thirty-two bar format that jazz retained from popular music.<sup>63</sup> Christian’s innovative musicianship enabled him to extract all the “juices out of his blues background.”<sup>64</sup>

Christian’s death in his mid-twenties deprived modern jazz of one of its foremost experimental musicians. But Charlie Christian shared his ideas with a handful of contemporary innovators: Parker, Gillespie, drummer Kenny Clarke, and pianist Thelonious Monk. Together, in the small after-hours clubs of Harlem and then Fifty-second Street, they created bebop. The clubs that nurtured the bebop generation all began as illegal speakeasies, owned by a variety of black and white gamblers and bookmakers, bootleggers, and gangsters, who gradually transformed their chili parlors and juke joints into legitimate businesses. Henry Minton, the owner of the restaurant bar on 118th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue, started his place as a supper club called Minton’s Playhouse, to serve both the local neighborhood and the Sugar Hill crowd.<sup>65</sup> Minton, the first black delegate to the American Federation of Musicians Local 802, charged two dollars as cover, and prided himself on the food he and his staff served up at night. Ellison recalled that Minton “created generous portions of Negro-American cuisine—the hash, grits, fried chicken, the ham-seasoned vegetables, the hot biscuits and rolls.” On Monday nights he provided “free whiskey” for the musicians who had performed at the Apollo.<sup>66</sup> The Monday night spreads served as a springboard for the legendary happenings at his club between 1940

and 1944. They also circumvented union regulations which prohibited jam sessions in New York. Minton's position as delegate exempted him from the ban.<sup>67</sup>

Minton's club invited company. He flanked his dining room in front by a bar, where during the day local patrons played the juke box and danced, and in back by the cabaret bandstand, so small that a dozen players made it feel like rush hour on the subway rumbling below. When he turned the club over to band leader Teddy Hill in 1940, Minton's became an ideal place for New York's experimental jazz musicians. Hill extended the Monday evening welcome jam sessions by forming a house band for the usual good food/no pay policy. Hill's personnel in the early 1940s included drummer Kenny Clarke and pianist Thelonious Monk. Dizzy Gillespie, who had first played with Hill in 1937, joined them whenever he appeared in New York, as did Parker.

When Minton's closed each morning, Kenny Clarke recalled, "We'd all head for Monroe's" to continue the night's playing and talking.<sup>68</sup> Located on West 134th Street, Clark Monroe's Uptown House lacked Minton's food and elegance but served as a nightly hangout for musicians looking for action. A true after-hours club, Monroe's presented a floor show and featured a house band that allowed guest musicians to sit in.<sup>69</sup> At the 6:00 A.M. closing time, the jazz players passed the hat. On a good night a share of the take might approach the seven dollars a week that the nearby Collins' rooming house charged for room and board.<sup>70</sup> Or it might buy the next day's heroin.

During the war Monroe's and Minton's became legendary Harlem after-hours places. But the neighborhood contained dozens of jazz bars where young musicians hung out and experimented with the new music. They served as stations, offering musicians a place to rest on their journey.<sup>71</sup> Minton's (or Monroe's or even Dan Wall's Chili House on Seventh and 140th), wrote Ellison, "as a nightclub in a Negro community . . . was part of a national pattern." Each re-created the atmosphere of a Kansas City jam session, "but with new blowing tunes."<sup>72</sup>

Charlie Parker, the central figure in the bebop revolution, had worked in and out of New York since 1938. Constantly at odds with the pressure to entertain, Parker washed dishes and played the alto saxophone at Wall's in December 1939. "I was working over 'Cherokee,' and, as I did, I found that by using the higher intervals of a chord as a melody line and backing them with appropriately related changes, I could play the thing I'd been hearing. I came alive."<sup>73</sup> Parker's musical epiphany, whose harmonic structure he expanded during the next two years, resulted in two fragmentary recordings of "Cherokee" in 1942. Parker, Gillespie, Clarke, and Monk, individually and collectively, built on that innovation and in 1945 took it downtown, finally complete, as "Ko-Ko."

In the mid-1930s, hanging around the bars and clubs that honeycombed Kansas City, Charlie Parker, born in 1920 of working-class parents, first met Lester Young. "I was crazy about Lester," he once said, "he played so clean and beautiful. But I wasn't influenced." Stylistically, the up-tempo, mature



sound of Parker's alto appeared far removed from Young's smoothly beautiful phrasing. But each had his roots in the wide-open politics and the blues-based music of Kansas City. Kansas City's reputation for hot music and times was an aspect of the machine politics of Boss Tom Pendergast, whose numbers runners and bookmakers made the city "Depression proof."<sup>74</sup> Kansas City's jazz joints became even more prosperous following the repeal of Prohibition, and they were known across the Southwest as places for musicians to meet, to jam, to experiment, to sit in and cut. Customers came less to dance than to listen.<sup>75</sup>

Parker left school at age fourteen when he traded his marching band tuba for an alto saxophone and mimicked the way Young, who held his tenor up and off to the side, played his. Married at age fifteen, fully grown physically, Parker burned with a desire to excel. On a memorable evening in the summer of 1936 Young encouraged Parker to sit in. The session resulted in Parker's public humiliation when drummer Jo Jones crashed his cymbal at Parker's because he could not keep pace with the band.<sup>76</sup> Parker licked his wounds and reportedly muttered to Jones, "I'll be back."<sup>77</sup> Within a year he had mastered the scales and blues runs of all twelve keys, experimenting with idiosyncratic fingering, cutting his own reeds, and moving from one set of chord patterns, or changes, to the next, in the middle of a solo.<sup>78</sup> Kansas City jazz, which relied more on improvised solos than on orchestrated arrangements, fostered experimentation which superimposed the harmonically compatible riffs of one tune on another.<sup>79</sup> This kind of harmonically inventive quotation depended on the musician's ability to retain and play hundreds of blues riffs. Parker possessed the uncanny ability to imagine the possibilities of a tune and then explore its variety, drawing on the rich blues tradition he had internalized.<sup>80</sup> Between 1936 and 1939 Parker spent an estimated fifteen thousand hours "woodshedding"—an apprenticeship honed in the dance halls, bars, grills, and chili houses of Kansas City. Parker lacked only a formal, theoretical system with which to consolidate his intuitive innovations.

In the fall of 1938, shortly after his arrival in New York, Parker first met Dizzy Gillespie, then with Cab Calloway's band. A year later Gillespie, who did not remember the earlier introduction, returned to Kansas City where Calloway performed at a theater which permitted blacks to sit only in a segregated balcony, a "buzzards' roost." Told by a fellow trumpet player that he had to meet a new alto player, Gillespie went to the musicians' local, sat down at the piano, and "Charlie Parker played. I never heard anything like that before."<sup>81</sup>

In 1940 Parker landed a job with Kansas City band leader Jay McShann. McShann's band, a local successor to Basie, kept the twenty-year-old Parker in the Southwest for most of the next year and a half, Parker's longest sustained stint with a single group. With McShann, Parker mastered the swing band book, playing by the rules. Then, in January 1942, weeks after Pearl Harbor forced Minton's to abandon its Monday evening spreads as excessive, McShann, with Parker in attendance, opened at the Savoy, sharing the bandstand with Lucky Millinder, whose band now featured Dizzy Gillespie.<sup>82</sup>

Three years older than Parker, John Berks Gillespie, born in Cheraw, South Carolina, learned to play the trumpet at a Negro industrial school, the Laurinberg Institute in North Carolina, where he learned music theory and harmony. In 1937 he joined Teddy Hill's band. At the age of twenty Gillespie traveled with Hill to England, where Gillespie, "trying my best to sound like Roy Eldridge," found himself relegated to third trumpet chair. On his return Gillespie, while waiting for his 802 union card, scrambled for work, playing gigs for Communist party dances in Brooklyn and the Bronx.<sup>83</sup> He met Apollo dancer Lorraine Willis, earned seventy dollars a week working with Hill, and settled into family life. Gillespie's hip expressiveness provided the new generation of jazz musicians with a model of comportment, just as the special glint in Gillespie's eyes captured his spirit of devilish rebellion.<sup>84</sup>

Gillespie's two closest musical collaborators, bassist Milt Hinton and drummer Kenny Clarke, found Dizzy irrepressible. Hinton, with whom Gillespie played in the Cab Calloway band for several years, remembered that Dizzy quickly picked up the band's particular brand of slang, derived from Ben Webster, whose linguistic inventions equaled those of Lester Young. Together, "The Judge"—Hinton's name derived from a joke he told regularly—and Diz spoke of "cows" (hundred dollars), "lines" (fifty), "softs" (chicks), and "pin" (dig), which enabled them to say elliptically, "pin that soft." To Hinton, the argot of the jazz musician simply extended the linguistic ingenuity "of all of black society."<sup>85</sup>

Dizzy's harmonic sophistication seemed years ahead of the rest of the musicians in Calloway's band, and Hinton encouraged Gillespie's experimentation. Often the two would drag Hinton's bass up the back staircase to the roof of the Apollo, the Cotton Club, or the apartment building where Dizzy lived to try out some of the changes, the chord progressions, that Gillespie wanted to insert into the music they played for Calloway. When Hinton could not follow the complex harmonic systems, Gillespie shouted the chords out to him.<sup>86</sup> Gillespie recalled, with evident excitement encountering a "weird" change, "an E flat chord built on an A, the flatted fifth . . . Ooooooman! I played the thing over and over again . . . I found that there were a lot of pretty voices in a chord."<sup>87</sup>

From time to time Hinton and Gillespie slipped their arrangements into the band's performance, and Calloway, thinking something had gone awry, would stop and say, "I don't want you playing that Chinese music in my band."<sup>88</sup> In September 1941, with Hinton and Gillespie doing their music, Hinton missed one of the changes they had practiced together—"Diz signaled 'you stink' with his hand and sent a spitball my way." Calloway thought the ever flamboyant Gillespie had intended the missile for him. Gillespie said, "Fes, I didn't do that." Calloway refused Gillespie's explanation and slapped him. When Gillespie drew a knife, Hinton stepped between the two, deflecting the blade. As Calloway grabbed at him, Gillespie, to his horror, saw the knife plunge into the band leader's leg, superficially wounding Calloway, staining

his trademark white tuxedo trousers bright red. Calloway, wounded in body and pride, fired Gillespie on the spot, and when Dizzy later tried to apologize "Cab just walked away."<sup>89</sup> Sometime later, reflecting on the fact that many musicians carried weapons, trumpeter Roy Eldridge said, "Baby, if you go down South, or even just here in New York after an extra-late gig . . . then you gotta have something."<sup>90</sup>

Throughout the early 1940s Gillespie's musical prowess grew. He played with Earl Hines, alongside Parker in 1942-43, and with Billy Eckstine in 1944. Yet, swing bands played commercially successful music that bore little resemblance to the jazz that Gillespie and other nascent beboppers played at Minton's and Monroe's. Kenny Clarke explained, "We had no name for the music. We called ourselves modern."<sup>91</sup> Like many of the other pioneers of modern jazz who congregated at Minton's and Monroe's, Clarke grew up in a musical family. His father played the trombone, and Clarke studied music in high school, mastering several instruments and learning theory. He first played for a local group before joining an East St. Louis band in 1934 that featured Charlie Christian.<sup>92</sup> Three years later Clarke, an extremely independent young player, moved to New York. He resented the humiliation of performing in a racially prejudiced society which forced him to accept inferior accommodations and working conditions. Living in Harlem only reinforced his feistiness, and for the next several years Clarke was hired and fired by Count Basie and Louis Armstrong. He traveled and played in Europe for eight months in 1938, and finally found a place with Teddy Hill's band, where he met and played with Gillespie. When Hill moved to Minton's, he installed Clarke as the house drummer.

Many Harlem nightclubs, like the Savoy, frequently required one fast dance number after the other, and Clarke found that the unrelenting double-time pace of these "flag wavers" wore him out. When swing drummers assumed the role of timekeeper, they did so primarily through the right-foot-driven bass drum. Clarke sought a rhythmic alternative to the repetitive, tiring, and boring pounding of eight beats to the measure.<sup>93</sup> Already experimenting with jumping in on the open beat, and dreaming of liberating the drummer to become an accompanist as well as a rhythmic anchor, Clarke shifted the responsibility of keeping time from the bass drum to the right-hand cymbal. Other rhythmic variations followed. Musicians complained that they no longer had a clear sense of the rhythm. "Depend on yourself," Clarke responded, "because if you're playing music, the tempo that you're playing is in your head."<sup>94</sup>

Clarke freed band musicians to follow their own rhythmic variations. But not until Clarke played with Gillespie, however, did he find a musician who appreciated the opportunity his rhythmic innovations had created. By transferring keeping time to the right hand, Clarke also liberated the bass drum to provide off-beat accents, or what he and his friends called "bombs" or "klook-mops." With this reversal Clarke released his left foot to play the high hat and his left hand, which many drummers ignored except as an afterthought,

to work on the snare. In diminishing the timekeeping role of the drummer, Clarke expanded the polyrhythmic and instrumental possibilities of the entire jazz ensemble.

Hill did not think Clarke's innovations worked for a swing dance band and fired him. Yet, as soon as Hill took over Minton's with plans to make it a musicians' hangout, he rehired Clarke saying, "You play all the re-bop and boom-bams you want."<sup>95</sup> Dizzy understood immediately. Clarke's work on the cymbal fit wonderfully with the trumpet as well as with Gillespie's rhythmic adventurousness. When he perfected his technique, Clarke remembered thinking, "Well, it worked."<sup>96</sup> Gillespie mastered Clarke's multirhythmic drum innovations sufficiently to teach other musicians after Clarke joined the armed forces in 1943. Similarly, Gillespie's passion for the new music led him to the elbow of Minton's resident pianist, Thelonious Monk, whose cryptic and oblique personality and far-out ideas about chromaticism, guided and reflected his skills as composer and performer. Gillespie credited Monk with showing him the oddly chorded configurations that inspired not just Gillespie's harmonic experimentation, but served as the foundation for Monk's bop anthem "Round Midnight."

Thelonious Sphere Monk lived for most of his life in a spare apartment on West Sixty-third Street in the San Juan Hill neighborhood. Monk, born in North Carolina, came to New York in 1922. He started playing the piano at the age of six, apparently learning his way around the instrument by himself sufficiently to give lessons to neighborhood kids for seventy-five cents an hour, to perform at local rent parties, and to win an amateur night contest at the Apollo in the mid-1930s.<sup>97</sup> Playing stride piano in the style of Willie "The Lion" Smith, Monk joined an itinerant faith-healer's band ("She prayed, we played," he once stated) and returned to New York at age seventeen, accomplished but hardly flush. Scuffling for any work, non-union jobs that paid twenty dollars a week, Monk specialized in gigs whose contracts could be broken in a minute's notice.

Monk spread his unusually small fingers flat, not arched, when he played. He cultivated a non-technique, one which later incorporated his elbow or forearm, to complement his theoretical explorations as part of his search for chromatic alternatives to traditional harmonic structure. Refusing to draw any distinction between life and art, Monk played the piano wherever and whenever he could, eating and sleeping irregularly, depending for financial stability on his wife Nellie, who called him "Melodious Thunk."<sup>98</sup>

Years later, performing with John Coltrane, Monk began a set with his own solo. When someone yelled from the back, "We wanna hear Coltrane," Monk responded, "Coltrane bust up his horn." Failing to satisfy the disgruntled customer, Monk extemporized, "Mr. Coltrane plays a wind instrument. The sound is produced by blowing into it and opening different holes to let air out. Over some of these holes is a felt air pad. One of Mr. Coltrane's felt pads has fallen off, and in order for him to get the sound he wants, so that we can make better music for you, he is in the back making a new one. You dig?"<sup>99</sup>

Monk could be equally direct, though usually less sarcastic with his colleagues. He and Clarke together composed an extraordinary bop tune, "Epistrophe," and Clarke recalled, "I was hung up on the last two bars. I couldn't figure it out, what chords would be best . . . I showed it to Monk." Monk looked at the sheet for a moment, sat down at the piano and played the two missing bars, and said, "There it is."<sup>100</sup>

During Monk's tenure at Minton's a young student at Columbia University, Jerry Newman, a jazz enthusiast and amateur recorder, occasionally performed at the informal floor shows that Hill organized. Newman apparently lip-synched the words of celebrities, from FDR to Bob Hope, which he had recorded from the radio. For compensation Hill allowed Newman to set up primitive equipment to record the jazz sessions. With the cabaret stage flanked on either side by the "Gents" and "Ladies" rest rooms, the historic Newman recordings from 1941 and 1942, released in the early 1950s, frequently registered the sounds of slamming doors. Newman told *Down Beat* writer George Hoeffler that Monk played brilliantly at Minton's, working his compositions seated at the piano, over and over again, developing a succession of new ideas, pushing the limits of his composition.<sup>101</sup> Newman, however, cared little for Parker's work, and only an unexplained quirk of fate accounts for his historic recording of Parker's "Cherokee" at Monroe's in the summer of 1942.

Parker had just left McShann's band and settled in New York, making the rounds each night, looking for gigs and drugs. One evening tenor sax player Ben Webster asked Monroe about "that cat" Parker "blowing weird stuff." Monroe promised to put Parker on the next night to play "Cherokee," which Newman then recorded on a paper disc.<sup>102</sup> The 1942 "Cherokee" at Monroe's, together with a second version that Parker recorded several weeks later with a pick-up band in Kansas City, revealed the extent to which Bird had blown past his fellow musicians.<sup>103</sup>

The band opened with a two-chorus statement of the tune's theme, a swing statement typical of those played in a hundred cocktail lounges, while the unknown pianist slipped in the "Tea for Two" theme that Parker would repeat ironically in "Ko-Ko." As Allen Tinney, one of the musicians who played regularly at Minton's and Monroe's recalled, the musicians had "already developed a 'Tea for Two' thing in the middle . . . and he dug this and right away started fitting in."<sup>104</sup> Parker's solo, sudden and strong, shattered the song's conventional thematic statement. Not yet the howling and emotionally intense alto player he would become, Parker took his audience's breath away with a display of up-tempo improvisation, a series of riffs that challenged his band to keep pace. Pulling the band in the slip stream of his performance, Parker negotiated the bridge, and returned the tune to the band for a final restatement.<sup>105</sup>

Parker played as smoothly as his mentor, Lester Young, and yet the virtual double-time quality of the piece delivered a completely different rhythmic effect. For if Young played ever so slightly behind the beat, holding a song

back as if to pull out every ounce of emotional meaning, Parker remained insistently in front, pulling the song with him, redefining it in his own terms, making it into his music.

“Cherokee” served as more than Parker’s signature song. It became the test for aspiring musicians in Harlem who wanted to play with Parker, Gillespie, Monk, and Clarke. Word of Parker’s performances spread, making the late-night sessions at Minton’s crowded affairs with as many as eighteen musicians packed onto the small stage, each vying for attention. The jam seemed to be getting out of hand. “Cherokee” became a way to catch the neophytes. “Because it was moving in half steps and [in] the different keys,” the song determined who went back to the woodshed.<sup>106</sup>

### Bebop Uptown

Minton’s and Monroe’s provided a critical junction in the history of modern jazz in New York. In the wake of the first successful effort to integrate jazz, a movement initiated and sustained by John Hammond, a younger generation of black musicians seized the day to reinvest jazz with the blues. Bebop owed its slow emergence to the circumstances of its birth. Parker, Gillespie, Clarke, and Monk each worked on both sides of musical street. Featured members of conventional swing bands on one side and fiercely proud insurgents on the other, they made bebop into a new form of African-American jazz. As Ralph Ellison wrote of the bebop musicians, “They were concerned . . . with art, not entertainment.”<sup>107</sup> In musical terms Parker, Gillespie, Monk, and Clarke transformed popular pieces into jazz through harmonic and melodic substitution. Together, between 1942 and 1945, Gillespie and Parker worked to complete the innovation. In 1942 after hearing the Nat King Cole trio’s version of “How High the Moon,” Gillespie played it for Monk, who substituted a more complex set of chord changes that freed the soloists to expand their improvisational range. The new piece—named “Ornithology,” punning on Parker’s shortened nickname, Bird—adhered to the harmonic structure of the original, but no longer resembled it.<sup>108</sup>

When Parker and Gillespie found band work, they signed on together, first with Earl Hines then with Billy Eckstine, learning each other’s books, passing musical ideas back and forth. Parker’s facility and intuition complemented Gillespie’s disciplined and theoretical approach. Each played with astonishing speed, displaying technical virtuosity that stunned even the most professionally accomplished colleagues. Parker and Gillespie acknowledged the other’s contribution to the formation of bebop. Gillespie later said of Parker, “He played fast. He played notes others didn’t hear. He attacked.”<sup>109</sup> When not playing for Hines or Eckstine or jamming uptown, the two worked meticulously on theoretical exercises, experimenting with new scales and modes, fitting different chordal relations onto old tunes, improvising, always exploring new lines of expression.

During one session Gillespie worked at the piano improvising on chord changes based on “a thirteenth resolving to a D minor,” and noticed an emergent melody which he thought had a Latin feel, a special syncopation in the bass line. The tune, a composition based on improvisational exercises, remained untitled until band leader Earl Hines thought to call it “Night in Tunisia,” in recognition of the North African landings in the fall of 1942.<sup>110</sup> Gillespie wrote, “My music emerged from the war years... fast and furious with the chord changes going this way and that.... Sometimes when you know the laws you can break them. But you’ve got to know it first.”<sup>111</sup>

Milt Hinton recounted a particularly vivid summer night at Minton’s when Parker dropped by to talk and “really blow.” The musicians jammed all night with the windows of the ground floor cabaret open to allow some breath of cool air. Neighbors came by to drink out of paper cups or to complain about the late night racket. “That was a great night. I remember the great feeling, the freedom of just blowing.”<sup>112</sup>

As this small core of innovative modern jazz musicians defined themselves, they created a distinct body of work so personal others found it difficult to copy. Mary Lou Williams suggested that the musicians stayed in Harlem because they feared “that the commercial world would steal what they had created.” Downtowners, she noticed, often came into the clubs to scribble notations on paper napkins.<sup>113</sup> Monk often complained, according to Nat Hentoff, “We’ll never get credit for what we’re doing here,” concluding that the musicians had to “create something that they can’t steal because they can’t play it.”<sup>114</sup>

“What we were doing at Minton’s,” said Gillespie proudly, “was playing... creating a new dialogue among ourselves, blending our ideas into a new style of music.” Yet, Gillespie intentionally made his music difficult, fooling newcomers into playing in B flat while actually playing in F sharp.<sup>115</sup> Similarly, Jerry Newman prided himself on being one of the few white persons present during the Minton’s-Monroe’s sessions. (Another, Jack Kerouac, then a football scholarship player at Columbia, often sat at the bar drinking beer.) Johnny Carisi, an Italian-American whose successful playing met with reluctant acceptance, believed that some at Minton’s and Monroe’s resented him, feeling “you oafys come up here and you pick up our stuff.”<sup>116</sup> Caught between their belief that the white commercial music establishment was an exploitative system that condoned segregated recording, publishing, and performing, and the “Tomming” attitudes of older jazz musicians, the modern jazz beboppers played and created for each other. They developed a complex and rich subculture in language, dress, attitude, a politics to complement their music.

Monk and Gillespie cultivated the bebop-hipster image of the mid-1940s. In contrast with swing band performers who wore scarlet or iridescent blue dinner jackets, beboppers adopted Gillespie’s adversarial style that included beret, dark glasses or horn rims, cigarette holders, and wide-lapeled, tailored suits. Parker remained the exception. Miles Davis, in 1945, wandered up and

down Fifty-second street looking for Parker when Coleman Hawkins told him to try the Heatwave up in Harlem. "I looked around and there was Bird, looking badder than a motherfucker. He was dressed in these baggy clothes that looked like he had been sleeping in them for days. His face was all puffed up and his eyes all swollen and red."<sup>117</sup>

About a year earlier Mary Lou Williams ran into Monk, who could look regal wearing sweat clothes, admiring a pair of sunglasses in a shop window next door to the musicians' union building on Sixth Avenue. He told her that he planned to have a pair made and appeared several days later with "his new glasses and, of course, a beret. He had been wearing a beret with a small piano clip on it for years. Now he started wearing the glasses and the beret, and the others copied him."<sup>118</sup>

The boppers' stylistic avant-gardism, which mimicked and satirized the middle class, had its slang counterpart. Jazz musicians had always used slang, partly for amusement, partly to identify outsiders. Gillespie's use of what he called "pig Latin" followed the historical pattern. In addition to the more common term "hip" (expressed uniquely by Howard McGhee, who said of Parker, "He hipped me to Stravinsky"), bebop musicians invented new slang terms. "Cool" and "wig" joined "mezz," their word for pot, which derived from Mezz Mezzrow, who always seemed to have the best supply, and "razor," a draft whose chill cut into one's back. As Gillespie put it, echoing Milt Hinton, "As black people we just naturally spoke that way. As we played with musical notes, bending them into new and difficult meanings that constantly changed, we played with words."<sup>119</sup>

Mose Allison, who later played with Miles Davis, described Parker as heir to the black musical experience, an embodiment of the blues and gospel tradition. Jay McShann said succinctly, "Bird could play anything, because primarily, Bird was the greatest blues player in the world."<sup>120</sup> When his friends attempted to shake Parker from the effects of drugs and alcohol, they appealed to his sense of racial and political pride. Max Roach, drumming protégé of Kenny Clarke, who played with Parker on "Ko-Ko" and then at the Three Deuces on Fifty-second Street where he often found Parker "shooting shit," told him "how much he meant to us, how much he meant to black people, how much he meant to black music."<sup>121</sup>

Parker's gifts extended well beyond the bandstand. Like Monk, he indulged in comic outbursts, putting on Oxonian accents, turning the old minstrel routine of travesty inside out, informing slightly bored patrons, "Ladies and gentlemen, the management has spared no expense this evening to bring you the Charlie Parker quintet."<sup>122</sup> His sense of humor and irony, however, barely concealed his political and racial consciousness.

Parker, along with Gillespie, Clarke, Max Roach, Milt Hinton, and Art Tatum formed a core of musicians whose political and intellectual awareness played an important role in their musical lives. Hinton and Clarke both recalled that Parker spoke as passionately as he played about social and political



issues. "He was always talking deep things about race or conditions in the country or about music. It was such a joy to talk."<sup>123</sup> Gillespie engaged Parker in discussions about Baudelaire and radical congressional representative Vito Marcantonio. Gillespie, who focused his anger on American racism, refused to serve in the military, fearful of barracks conditions in the South. Knowing that his work left him constantly on the move, Gillespie figured the draft would never catch up. He later wrote:

We were creators in an art form which grew from universal roots and which proved it had universal appeal. . . . We refused to accept racism, poverty, or economic exploitation. But there was nothing unpatriotic about it. If America wouldn't honor and respect us as men, we couldn't give a shit about America.<sup>124</sup>

Hinton and Parker were inspired by W.E.B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson. On the road the two often talked of Du Bois's message to black people. When they arrived at a new destination, "We'd get off the bus and be sure we got to this place to hear W.E.B. Du Bois and this would be the focal point of our conversation."<sup>125</sup> To Hinton and Gillespie, Paul Robeson symbolized the social aspirations of African-Americans at a time when his reputation had been tainted by his Communist party affiliation. Fearful of red-baiting, the politically minded jazz performers reacted cautiously, meeting Robeson on one occasion in Cleveland to talk about music and race relations, but keeping their distance. Hinton and Gillespie believed that federal persecution prevented the majority of African-Americans from listening to him.<sup>126</sup> The American Communist party proved no less troublesome. Trying to woo black artists and intellectuals into its ranks, the party played on racial-sexual stereotypes, using white women to recruit them to meetings, anxious to "get a Teddy Wilson or a Charlie Parker." In the end, however, the musicians knew that jazz itself best expressed their political values. "We played," said Hinton. "That was the kind of militancy that we exercised."<sup>127</sup>

The tension between art and politics found its resonance in a conversation between Gillespie and Clarke, each responding to the question, "Did the music have anything to say to black people?" Gillespie answered with his usual directness, "Yea, get the fuck outta the way." Clarke, who later moved to Europe after discovering a racially benign society when stationed in France and Germany in 1944-45, thought bebop spoke the same message as Jackie Robinson's presence on the ball field. Jazz, Clarke said, "was teaching them . . . there was a message in our music . . . . Whatever you go into, go into it intelligently." Several years later when Parker visited Clarke in Paris he found him at peace with himself. In Europe, Clarke explained, a black musician could live as an artist without the additional burden of solving the dilemma of racial prejudice. Warned Clarke, "You're committing suicide in the United States."<sup>128</sup>

Parker's "Now's the Time," recorded at the 1945 "Ko-Ko" session, clearly demonstrated Parker's political awareness. Written coincident with the double-V campaign—for victory abroad and against Jim Crow at home—in the wake

of the postponed civil rights March on Washington movement and against the residual anger from the Harlem riots of 1943, "Now's the Time" revealed Parker's political concerns: its title a call for action by and for African-Americans at a moment when society struggled to return to pre-war business as usual. The tune's rather lyric introduction became in Parker's hands a moderately paced blues, slow enough to allow Davis to accompany Parker. But its melody, syncopated and snappy, provided the energy for subsequent rock and roll covering. "Now's the Time" was greeted by a studio filled with admirers as an activist statement. The song complemented the musical ferocity of "Ko-Ko," each a counterpoint to the perspective of the other.<sup>129</sup> The implicit stridency of "Now's the Time" matched the claim of artistic independence of "Ko-Ko" from the control of the music industry. Together they spoke to the anger and pride of the musicians who played them.

In New York the original segregated system of recording, publishing, and performing had been loosely enforced as long as musicians, agents, and entrepreneurs respected the color line. In contrast, the city of New York, through the Police Department, adopted a policy which far more severely infringed on the livelihood and civil rights of the African-American jazz musicians. In 1931 the city had required the licensing of all cabarets, defined by the combination of alcohol and entertainment. In 1940, however, the NYPD took over the licensing procedure and extended it to performers, requiring that the musicians themselves be registered, fingerprinted, and given ID cards. The notorious "cabaret card" could be held back from anyone deemed of bad character, largely defined as possession of marijuana and heroin. Musicians found themselves hostage to a bureaucracy and an enforcement agency they knew to be fundamentally hostile, if not simply racist.

Equally oppressive was the behavior of the American Federation of Musicians Local 802, led by James C. Petrillo. The 802 leadership viewed the jazz musicians as "deviant and racially inferior."<sup>130</sup> In 1942 Petrillo ordered a recording ban, in effect a strike by union members against all studios, which had devastating effects on black jazz musicians. The union hoped to salvage the losses of hundreds of live radio jobs to recordings by pressuring the record companies to pay royalties to a musicians' trust fund for every side played on radio or over jukeboxes. To black jazz musicians, who depended on sales from the small labels that concentrated on jazz, the ban spelled financial disaster. Popular white swing bands, who enjoyed contracts with large record companies, had sufficient backlogs to release previously recorded music for the duration of the strike, which lasted until 1944. While Petrillo's ban had not sought to prevent the new jazz from being recorded, it had that effect. The union organized its delegates to circulate through the city to assure compliance and to prevent illegal jams. Only Henry Minton's office in the union enabled his club to remain exempt from the ban.<sup>131</sup>

The recording ban of 1942-44 had a dual effect. It seriously restricted the ability of the musicians to make a living playing a non-commercialized, esoteric

jazz. Yet, it drove the musicians underground, liberating them from commercial constraint. When the union lifted the ban in 1944, bebop had matured. What bebop's new listeners heard after two years of silence seemed startlingly new. The general public continued to dance to the big band swing of Benny Goodman and Glenn Miller, but bebop, "the underground was years ahead."<sup>132</sup>

Bebop, created by a small group of black musicians who migrated to the city during the Depression, anticipating the massive movement of the second great migration during the war, created an expressive and technically complex music that belonged to them. During the war they worked out a new set of conventions that shaped jazz in its many variations for the next generation. By restoring the role of blues-based improvisation, these modern jazz revolutionaries insisted on receiving cultural as well as financial credit for their music. When Parker, Gillespie, Davis, Roach, and Russell recorded "Ko-Ko" in the late fall of 1945, they stepped out of obscurity into the spotlight of public notice. With the end of the war the time had come to take their music downtown, to unfurl its banner on The Street.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Jack Chambers, *Milestones 1: The Music and Times of Miles Davis to 1960* (New York: U of Toronto P, 1983) 36.

<sup>2</sup>James Patrick, "Charlie Parker and Harmonic Sources of Bebop Composition: Thoughts on the Repertory of New Jazz in the 1940s," *Journal of Jazz Studies* 6.1 (1979): 12.

<sup>3</sup>"The Charlie Parker Story," Savoy, MG-12079, bands 14 and 15. Billed by Savoy as "The Greatest Recording Session in Modern Jazz in Its Entirety," the out-of-print record has been rereleased in CD format.

<sup>4</sup>James Patrick, "The Ko-Ko Session," *Journal of Jazz Studies* 8.2 (1981): 78–81.

<sup>5</sup>Lawrence Koch, *Yardbird Suite, A Compendium of the Music and Life of Charlie Parker* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green UP, 1988) 67.

<sup>6</sup>Dizzy Gillespie, with Al Frazer, *To Be or Not to...Bop: Memoirs* (New York: Doubleday, 1979) 233.

<sup>7</sup>Koch 68.

<sup>8</sup>Ira Gitler, *Jazz Masters of the Forties* (New York: Da Capo, 1966) 27.

<sup>9</sup>Max Harrison, "Jazz," *The New Grove Gospel, Blues, and Jazz* (New York: Norton, 1980) 294. Says Harrison, "the piece could almost be described as a *pesto lamentoso*."

<sup>10</sup>Miles Davis, with Quincy Troupe, *Miles, the Autobiography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989) 75.

<sup>11</sup>Gillespie 231.

<sup>12</sup>Gillespie 210.

<sup>13</sup>Gillespie 299.

<sup>14</sup>Gillespie 299.

<sup>15</sup>James Lincoln Collier, *Duke Ellington* (New York: Macmillan, 1987) 225.

<sup>16</sup>Koch 68.

<sup>17</sup>Patrick 16.

<sup>18</sup>Ross Russell, *Bird Lives! The High Life and Hard Times of Charlie Parker* (New York: Norton, 1973) 14.

<sup>19</sup>Lawrence Levine, "Jazz and American Culture," *Journal of American Folklore* 102 (1989): 7–8.

<sup>20</sup>Samuel B. Charters and Leonard Kunstadt, *Jazz: A History of the New York Scene* (New York: Doubleday, 1961) 102–61.

<sup>21</sup>Gillespie 109.

<sup>22</sup>James Lincoln Collier, *Benny Goodman and the Swing Era* (New York: Oxford, 1989) 97. See also John Hammond, *On Record, an Autobiography* with Irving Townsend (New York: Ayer, 1977) 64–66.

<sup>23</sup>Hammond 73.

<sup>24</sup>Collier 98.

<sup>25</sup>John Chilton, *Billie's Blues: The Billie Holiday Story, 1933–1959* (New York: Da Capo, 1975) 14.

<sup>26</sup>Gunther Schuller, *The Swing Era* (New York: Oxford, 1989) 529.

<sup>27</sup>Chilton 44.

<sup>28</sup>Chilton 11.

<sup>29</sup>Scott Deveraux, "The Emergence of the Jazz Concert, 1935–1945," *American Music* (Spring, 1989): 8.

<sup>30</sup>Collier 103.

<sup>31</sup>Charters 248.

<sup>32</sup>Collier 153–54.

<sup>33</sup>Charters 238–40.

<sup>34</sup>Collier 214–18.

<sup>35</sup>Charters 257.

<sup>36</sup>Hammond 200.

<sup>37</sup>Hammond 201.

<sup>38</sup>Schuller 229.

<sup>39</sup>Koch 22.

<sup>40</sup>Schuller 547.

<sup>41</sup>Schuller 564. See also Frank Büchmann-Møller, *Lester Young* (Washington, D.C.: Greenwood, 1988).

<sup>42</sup>Schuller 440. See also Büchmann-Møller 45, and Collier 221.

<sup>43</sup>Büchmann-Møller 45.

<sup>44</sup>Büchmann-Møller 104.

<sup>45</sup>Schuller 548.

<sup>46</sup>Schuller 548.

<sup>47</sup>Schuller 549.

<sup>48</sup>Büchmann-Møller 44. Quote from Schuller 549.

<sup>49</sup>Büchmann-Møller 107.

<sup>50</sup>Chilton 62.

<sup>51</sup>Chilton 68–69.

<sup>52</sup>Schuller 543; Chilton 69; Collier 306.

<sup>53</sup>In July 1957 ten years following her conviction and jail term for drug possession and three months after the death of Lester Young, Eleanora Fagan McKay, Lady Day, died, seventy cents left in her savings account. Schuller 546.

<sup>54</sup>Ira Gitler, *Swing to Bop* (New York: Oxford, 1985) 105.

<sup>55</sup>Charters 268. This “discovery” story has several variants, and it is not clear who inserted the sartorially outrageous Christian onto the bandstand that night, Hammond or several members of Goodman’s group who felt sorry for the newcomer. All versions, however, converge on the “he knocked their sox off” conclusion of Christian’s playing.

<sup>56</sup>Schuller 564.

<sup>57</sup>Ralph Ellison, *Shadow and Act* (New York: Random, 1972) 208. Ellison wrote these middle essays on jazz for *Saturday Review* in the 1950s.

- <sup>58</sup>Ellison 235; Schuller 563.
- <sup>59</sup>Collier 59, 263.
- <sup>60</sup>Schuller 572. See also Raymond Horricks, *Dizzy Gillespie* (New York: Hippocrene, 1984) 14.
- <sup>61</sup>Charters 314.
- <sup>62</sup>Leonard Feather, liner notes, "The Harlem Jazz Scene—1941," Essoteric Records, 1957.
- <sup>63</sup>Collier 265.
- <sup>64</sup>Horricks 14.
- <sup>65</sup>Davis 52. See also Horricks 13, and Feather.
- <sup>66</sup>Ellison 201.
- <sup>67</sup>Gillespie 140.
- <sup>68</sup>Kenny Clarke, interview, Paris, 30 Sept. 1977. Institute for Jazz Studies, Newark, New Jersey (hereafter referred to as IJS).
- <sup>69</sup>Dan Morgenstern, liner notes, "Charlie Parker: First Recordings," Onyx, 221.
- <sup>70</sup>Milt Hinton, interview, Washington, D.C., 1976. IJS.
- <sup>71</sup>Ellison 205.
- <sup>72</sup>Koch 35.
- <sup>73</sup>Quoted in many sources, including Koch 20 and Ellison 229.
- <sup>74</sup>Russell 30.
- <sup>75</sup>Harry Reed, "The Black Bar in the Making of a Jazz Musician: Bird, Mingus, and Stan Hope," *Journal of Jazz Studies* 9.1 (1982): 77.
- <sup>76</sup>Brian Priestly, *Charlie Parker* (New York: Hippocrene, 1984) 15. See also Russell 62.
- <sup>77</sup>Russell 85.
- <sup>78</sup>Russell 75.
- <sup>79</sup>James Patrick, "Charlie Parker," 4.
- <sup>80</sup>Russell 143. Patrick invokes the idea of a contrafact, drawn from classical musical analysis, wherein original melodies are discarded and new ones created on the basis of the original chord structure. This, he and many others argue, was the basis of the bebop revolution (1–5).
- <sup>81</sup>Gillespie 116.

- <sup>82</sup>Koch 29.
- <sup>83</sup>Gillespie 72–79; Horricks 25.
- <sup>84</sup>Horricks, photo, 55.
- <sup>85</sup>Hinton.
- <sup>86</sup>Hinton, interview 2, 1977. IJS.
- <sup>87</sup>Gillespie 92.
- <sup>88</sup>Nat Hentoff, *Hear Me Talking to You* (New York: Dover, 1957) 343.
- <sup>89</sup>Hinton, interview 1976.
- <sup>90</sup>Horricks 30.
- <sup>91</sup>Hentoff 350.
- <sup>92</sup>George Hoeffler, notes, “Hot Box.” Hoeffler, longtime columnist for *Downbeat*, deposited his notes and rough drafts at the IJS.
- <sup>93</sup>Hoeffler 2/1/62. Clarke, interview.
- <sup>94</sup>Clarke.
- <sup>95</sup>Hoeffler 2/1/62. Clarke, interview.
- <sup>96</sup>Clarke.
- <sup>97</sup>Monk’s biographical information derives from several sources, including Hoeffler 2/11/48; *Time* 28 Feb. 1964 (Monk amazingly appeared on the cover); Collier 383. He actually seems to have been born any time between 1917 (Grove) and 1920 (Hoeffler).
- <sup>98</sup>Joe Goldberg, *Jazz Masters of the 50’s* (New York, Da Capo, 1965) 28.
- <sup>99</sup>Goldberg 35.
- <sup>100</sup>Clarke.
- <sup>101</sup>Hoeffler 2/11/48.
- <sup>102</sup>Dan Morgenstern, “Charlie Parker’s First Recordings,” liner notes, Onyx, 221.
- <sup>103</sup>Garry Giddens, Robert Bergman, Will Freidwald, liner notes, “Charlie Parker: The Complete ‘Birth of Bebop,’” Stash.
- <sup>104</sup>Gitler, *Swing to Bop*, 71.
- <sup>105</sup>Koch 30.
- <sup>106</sup>Gitler 69.

- <sup>107</sup>Ellison 210.
- <sup>108</sup>Gillespie 202–08.
- <sup>109</sup>Gillespie 151.
- <sup>110</sup>Koch 36.
- <sup>111</sup>Gillespie 202.
- <sup>112</sup>Hinton 1977.
- <sup>113</sup>Gillespie 149.
- <sup>114</sup>Hentoff 340.
- <sup>115</sup>Gillespie 145.
- <sup>116</sup>Gillespie 143.
- <sup>117</sup>Davis 57.
- <sup>118</sup>Hentoff 350.
- <sup>119</sup>Gillespie 281.
- <sup>120</sup>Koch 63.
- <sup>121</sup>Gillespie 235.
- <sup>122</sup>Russell 167.
- <sup>123</sup>Hinton.
- <sup>124</sup>Gillespie 287.
- <sup>125</sup>Hinton.
- <sup>126</sup>Hinton.
- <sup>127</sup>Hinton.
- <sup>128</sup>Russell 274.
- <sup>129</sup>Russell 274. The main theme of “Now’s the Time” became, in time, the “Hucklebuck.”
- <sup>130</sup>Paul Chevigny, *Gigs, Jazz and the Cabaret Laws in New York* (New York: Routledge, 1991) 4–22.
- <sup>131</sup>Gillespie 140.
- <sup>132</sup>Koch 35.