

# FEATURES

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Above: Edie Adams, center, with Duke Ellington at the piano in 1962. Navigating jazz's rich history requires knowledge of the genre's lexicon. Right: Wynton Marsalis is pictured in *Dizzy's Club* at Lincoln Center in Manhattan. Twenty years into his role as artistic director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, Marsalis and the institution have become virtually indistinguishable.

PHOTOS: NY TIMES NEWS SERVICE



Become a connoisseur of jazz with this phrase guide and a little history

BY JOHN FORDHAM  
THE GUARDIAN, LONDON

If Tom Stoppard and Almost Free Theatre could play a 15-minute *Hamlet* to cut out the prevarications and welcome the masses in the 1970s, we can do the same for jazz in 2008. So here's how to translate jazzspeak; follow the plot, and nod in the right places.

First, you need a story line, which goes roughly like this:

In the early 20th century, in the post-slavery American south, "jass" or "jazz" coalesces out of street marches, work songs, hymns, mutated African and European classical music and blues. Louis Armstrong, a child of the New Orleans red-light district, shows the world how a trumpet can deliver the improvised equivalent of an operatic aria.

With the help of the phonograph and a dance craze, the 1920s are dubbed the jazz age. The 1930s swing era, with its big-band heroes Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Benny Goodman, has massive youth appeal. But its eventual commercialism triggers a complex and more ascetic 1940s reaction — bebop. Bop is a fast-moving small-group music of intricate melodies and subtle chords — and saxophonist Charlie Parker is its hipster JS Bach. Because bop is a cerebral music, jazz begins to be displaced as a pop music by rock in the 1950s. Trumpeter Miles Davis makes jazz cooler, John Coltrane's sax makes it densely passionate, Ornette Coleman's makes it more structurally freewheeling and loose. An expressionist 1960s movement (avant-garde or free jazz) explores full-on improvisation without reliance on hooks or themes — it loses the wider public, but has a devoted following.

Funky and electric jazz-rock or fusion, develops in the 1970s to slipstream rock's popularity, its stars including Miles Davis and Joe Zawinul's Weather Report. A 1980s revival of pre-fusion acoustic jazz follows, with young trumpeter Wynton Marsalis as its standard bearer. The different persuasions evolve and intertwine through the 1990s — and jazz becomes increasingly a world music, with creative independent scenes springing up all over the world, especially in Europe.

### Acid jazz

DJ-derived term for clubbers' enthusiasm in the late 1980s and early 1990s for 1960s soul-bop styles. Spawned a new generation of jazz dancers.

Check out The James Taylor Quartet: *Absolute*.



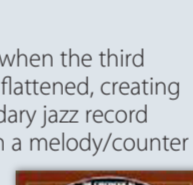
### Bebop/Bop

Mostly small-group reaction against big-band swing formulae, using more advanced harmonies and devious melodies. Named after the sound of its frequently fast, nervy phrasing. Check out Charlie Parker: *The Complete Dial Sessions*.



### Blue Note/Blues

Crucial African-rooted jazz ingredient, occurring when the third and seventh notes of a regular scale are roughly flattened, creating a slurred or bent note. Also the name of a legendary jazz record label. Blues and rock still use these sounds within a melody/counter melody/melody 12-bar structure.



### Boogie woogie

Blues piano style with a rocking, repeating left-hand bass line, begun around 1900 but later significant in the sound of rock 'n' roll. Check out Meade Lux Lewis: *1927-1939*.



### Changes

The chord sequence to a song. Being able to improvise over "the changes" — sometimes without rehearsal or familiarity with the other players — is a crucial jazz skill.

### Circular breathing

Mostly a saxophonist's technique, for simultaneously breathing in through the nose and blowing through the instrument, to create a sound without pauses. Frank Sinatra was reputed to have learned circular breathing while singing with Tommy Dorsey's band, which enabled him to hold notes for longer. In truth, that's unlikely.

### Cool School

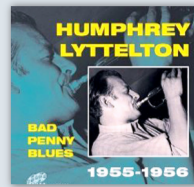
1950s reaction against bebop's often frenetic momentum, with pianist Lennie Tristano its guru. The melodies are as tricky as bop's, but the approach is quiet and low-key.

Check out Lennie Tristano: *Lennie Tristano*



### Dixieland/trad jazz

Traditional New Orleans and Chicago styles of the 1920s revived by enthusiasts from the 1940s on, as a rootsy reaction against the perceived cerebral style of bebop. Check out Humphrey Lyttelton: *Bad Penny Blues*.



### Free jazz/free-improv

An approach to improvisation begun in the 1950s in an attempt to let solos off the leash imposed by a repeated theme or chord pattern — and to let groups improvise collectively, with the players listening and reacting instantly to each other's ideas. Check out Ornette Coleman: *Free Jazz*.



### Funk

Funk — which originally meant dirty, earthy and bluesy — emerged in the 1950s as a reaction against the Europeanized, chamber-music sound of cool jazz.

### Harmolodics

Obscure concept coined by saxophonist Ornette Coleman, referring to a reflexive, total-improv approach in which a player can react melodically, harmonically and rhythmically at once.

### Head

The original theme of a song. When bandleaders point to their heads after a succession of solos, it's an instruction to go back to the theme.

### Hot licks

Derisive term in jazz, referring to the repetition of familiar or predictable phrases in a solo, usually to elicit a predictable audience reaction.

### Mainstream

Revivalist style of the 1950s onward, recovering lyrical small-group swing styles of the 1930s, with Count Basie's music a favorite source.

### Modal jazz

1950s reaction against the painting-by-numbers styles of only improvising over recycling chord-patterns. Modal jazz is based on sequences of scales more than chords, and seeks to make improvisers more melodically creative. Check out Miles Davis: *Kind of Blue*



### Multiphonics

Playing two or three notes simultaneously on a wind or reed instrument only designed to produce one at a time — now widely used as an effect.

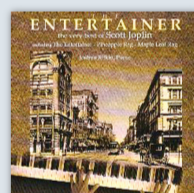
### Post-bop

Roughly describes post-1980s instrumental jazz, phrased with busy melodies and sharp rhythmic turns like bebop, but drawing on many recent developments including fusion and free-improvisation. Check out Michael Brecker: *Time Is of the Essence*.



### Ragtime

African-American proto-jazz form, in which the accompaniment is syncopated or — "ragged" — so that the underlying beat falls between rather than on the accents of the tune. Check out Joshua Rifkin: *The Entertainer — the Very Best of Scott Joplin*



### Riff or vamp

Repeated, rhythmically punchy short phrase, sometimes played by a brass or reed section behind an improviser.

### Scat

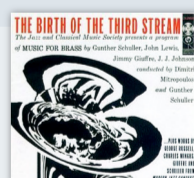
Improvisational singing style, mimicking an instrumental solo with nonsense syllables and percussive sounds.

### Swing

A regular beat, but with disguised and ongoing polyrhythmic tweaks. Central to the sensuous, ambiguous feel of a typical jazz pulse.

### Third Stream

Variant of 1950s Cool School music, often setting jazz improvisation within European classical frameworks. Check out *The Birth of the Third Stream*



## How to speak JAZZ



### The

murder trial of *Sopranos* actor Lillo Brancato Jr is scheduled to begin just days after his co-defendant is sentenced.

A Nov. 17 trial date was set Friday for Brancato. He is charged in the December 2005 slaying of off-duty New York City police Officer Daniel Enchautegui.

Co-defendant Steven Armento, who shot the officer, was convicted of first-degree murder on Oct. 30. He faces life in prison without parole at his sentencing on Friday.

Authorities say Enchautegui confronted Armento and Brancato when the two broke into an apartment to steal prescription drugs.

Brancato has said he didn't know Armento had a gun.

The 32-year-old actor played an aspiring mobster in HBO's

Madonna performs during her Sticky and Sweet tour at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles on Thursday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

### The Sopranos.

Britney and Justin still share one bond: Madonna.

In separate appearances, Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake performed Thursday night during Madonna's show at Dodger Stadium.

The former pop power couple did not take the stage together. Rumors of the guest appearances swirled Thursday, making it a can't-miss event for some of Hollywood's biggest stars: Elizabeth Banks, Drew Barrymore, Jennifer Lopez and Lucy Liu were among those in the first few rows.

Madonna took a moment from her turn onstage to lament the passage of a gay-marriage ban in California.

"I am the luckiest girl in the world," Madonna said, "but am sad because African-Americans are equal finally, but gay marriage is not."

Faked photographs of Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin cavorting naked on a sofa with US Senator Hillary Clinton, a giant Styrofoam throne and pins in rubber erasers are vying for Russia's top modern art award.

The display of heavily politicized art by finalists competing for the Kandinsky Prize is considered a knock against Western critics who say freedom of expression has been curtailed by the Kremlin, though Russia's deputy minister for culture, Pavel Khoroshilov, sits on the prize's council of trustees.

The BBC broadcast an apology Saturday for lewd phone messages left by two radio presenters on an actor's voicemail.

The publicly funded broadcaster said it apologized unreservedly for the "grossly offensive and unacceptable" prank.

The BBC was forced to defend its editorial standards after comedian Russell Brand and fellow presenter Jonathan Ross left sexually explicit messages on the phone of 78-year-old actor Andrew Sachs about his granddaughter.

The calls were played on Brand's radio show on Oct. 18, and initially drew few complaints. But media coverage and the posting of the calls on the Internet fueled a furor that saw more than 40,000 people complain. Even Prime Minister Gordon Brown

condemned the prank.

Obamamania met Beatlemania Thursday, as Liverpool hosted an MTV Europe Music Awards show energized by the city's musical heritage and the US presidential election.

Pink and Kanye West took home prizes — Spears won two — and stars on the stage included Beyonce, Kid Rock and former Beatle Paul McCartney.

But the absent president-elect was given star status, too.

Singer Katy Perry, who hosted the show and also was named best new act, appeared in a dress emblazoned with Obama's face and quipped that "maybe Europeans will love us again now."

Her co-host, 30 Seconds to Mars singer Jared Leto, wore an Obama T-shirt and urged the 10,000-strong crowd at Liverpool's Echo Arena to yell "Congrats, Barack."

Hometown pride was also on display in the Beatles' birthplace, with McCartney receiving an "ultimate legend" award from U2 singer Bono.

Beyonce, The Killers, Pink and Kanye West all performed, West alongside British singer Estelle on

their hit *American Boy*.

It was West's second onstage appearance at the European awards — but the first time by invitation. The rapper stormed the stage at the 2006 show in Copenhagen after he failed to win the Best Video prize, telling the crowd that "if I don't win, the awards show loses credibility."

The winners of the awards, which are presented in a different European country each year, are selected by fans across the continent. They are broadcast on 21 channels in 40 European countries.

The MTV Europe Music Awards were held on Thursday.

**The MTV Europe Music Awards winners:**  
**Album of the Year** — Britney Spears (*Blackout*)

**Headliner** — Tokio Hotel  
**Most Addictive Track** — Pink (*So What*)

**New Act** — Katy Perry  
**Act of 2008** — Britney Spears  
**Ultimate Urban** — Kanye West  
**Rock Out** — 30 Seconds to Mars  
**Best Act Ever** — Rick Astley  
**Europe's Favorite Act** — Emre Aydin  
**Video Star** — 30 Seconds to Mars

— AGENCIES