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# No Boundary Line to Art: “Bebop” as Afro-Modernist Discourse

*They teach you there's a boundary line to music. But, man, there's no boundary line to art.*

*Charlie Parker*

The epigraph above comes from a 1949 *Down Beat* interview with legendary saxophonist Charlie Parker. In this brief but laconic statement, Parker makes a discursive move that rivals his most-inspired recorded solos in terms of lasting historical influence. “They teach you there’s a boundary line to music,” he states. “They” in this context presumably refers to the institutional contexts that have circumscribed Afrological modes of musical creativity historically.<sup>1</sup> That this statement appeared in one such context—the often-conservative jazz magazine *Down Beat*—is an irony that must have amused Parker, as just three years earlier *Down Beat* published a review that panned Bird’s music as “the sort of bad taste and ill-advised fanaticism that has thrown innumerable impressionable young musicians out of stride.”<sup>2</sup>

“But, man,” Parker continues, “there’s no boundary line to art.” With

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this statement, Parker implicitly positions his own music not as entertainment, but rather as an elevated form of cultural expression on par with that of European concert or "art" music. The interviewers refer to Parker's knowledge of, and interest in, the work of European composers Paul Hindemith and Igor Stravinsky. They note, however, Parker's insistence that "bop is not moving in the same direction as modern classical. He feels that it will be more flexible, more emotional, more colorful."<sup>3</sup> The importance of this conceptual transformation cannot be overestimated for it reverberates to the present day in the discourses surrounding most post-bop styles of jazz and in many other Afrological forms.

Bernard Gendron has demonstrated the degree to which the discursive shifts surrounding bebop and the music's eventual reception as "art" were informed by earlier tensions within the jazz world of the 1940s, specifically the revivalist-modernist debate between supporters of New Orleans-style jazz and those of swing music.<sup>4</sup> Parker, however, goes beyond the group of binary oppositions (e.g., swing-jazz, authenticity-artificiality, European-native, modern-traditional, and so on) that Gendron identifies as constituting the "aesthetic discursive formation" to which bebop was heir. Parker suggests that as art his music has no boundaries.

The interview with Levin and Wilson also includes Parker's somewhat infamous remarks that bebop "is no love-child of jazz," that it is "something entirely separate and apart." These statements seemingly contradict the idea of bebop as an art form without boundaries. Scott DeVaux suggests that radical changes in the rhythmic aspects of bebop may have prompted Parker to make such a pronouncement.<sup>5</sup> In my view, it seems more likely that Parker wanted to distance his music from the discourses surrounding jazz, in particular those of the music industry and the predominantly white critical establishment of the time, given the ways in which those forces had, in many cases, worked to limit musicians' creative mobility.<sup>6</sup> He repeatedly frustrates Levin and Wilson's attempts to goad him into placing a narrow definition on his music: "Asked to define bop, after several evenings of arguing, Charlie still was not precise in his definition. 'It's just music,' he said. 'It's trying to play clean and looking for pretty notes.'"<sup>7</sup> Although this statement belies the extent to which Parker's music and that of his peers dropped a bomb on standard habits of musical orthodoxy in the 1940s, it challenges the conventional wisdom that situates bebop as an autonomous modernist art form. Examining the patterns of interaction between bebop and broader musical, cultural, and social trends in the 1940s suggests that the musical innovations of Charlie Parker and his contemporaries constituted a trenchant form of *Afro*-modernism in which abstraction and creative mobility were two of central tenets.

### *Bebop as Afro-modernist Discourse*

Of the after-hours jam sessions at Minton's Playhouse during which the music known as bebop is widely regarded to have developed, pioneering drummer Kenny Clarke remembers: "The music wasn't called bop at Minton's. In fact, we had no name for the music. *We called ourselves modern.* That bop label started during the war. I was in the Army then and I was surprised when I came out and found they'd given it a tag. That label did a lot of harm."<sup>8</sup> If the advent of bebop did indeed mark the beginning of jazz conceptualized as "art," Clarke's statement makes clear the kind of art it was thought to be, namely the "modern" variety.<sup>9</sup>

The beboppers were not the first to conceive of jazz as modern music. There is evidence to suggest that as early as 1924 pianist and bandleader Vincent Lopez advocated that the term *jazz* be replaced. "He insists," states the anonymous author of an article that appeared in *The Musical Courier*, "that, jazz being dead, the name ought also be dead, or, at least, ought not to be hung on to what he calls Modern Music or Modern Popular Music."<sup>10</sup> In 1930 James P. Johnson recorded a stride piano solo titled "You've Got to Be Modernistic." But the music of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, and their contemporaries sounded decidedly more modern than any prior form of jazz had. Until recently, relatively few scholars have considered the ways in which the politics of sounding and being modern were decidedly different for African American creative practitioners from their European and Euro-American counterparts.<sup>11</sup> Mark S. Harvey, for example, suggests that "Bebop was the first authentically modern phase in jazz. Experiment and a sense of risk—innovation for its own sake in the cause of advancing the music—marked this development."<sup>12</sup> Harvey's seemingly Eurocentric analysis of bebop-as-modernism raises questions because its emphasis on musical autonomy ("innovation for its own sake") undermines the social instrumentality and political trenchancy of the music.<sup>13</sup>

Similarly problematic, Alfred Appel Jr.'s *Jazz Modernism* "seeks to establish the place of classic jazz . . . in the great modernist tradition in the arts."<sup>14</sup> Appel posits a fundamental connection between the work of musicians such as Charlie Parker, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Fats Waller and the work of European modernists such as Pablo Picasso, Constantin Brancusi, and James Joyce. However, in so doing, Appel obscures many culturally specific aspects of jazz and its processes of signification.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, his welcoming of jazz into the modernist canon obfuscates the considerable tensions that exist between modernism/modernity and tradition/memory in African diasporic communities, tensions that animated the music of Charlie Parker and his contemporaries in fundamentally important ways.

What, then, did the term *modern* mean to the musicians who used it to

describe their music? Ingrid Monson suggests that there are two aspects to jazz musicians' use of the term: "The first uses the word to describe structural and artistic elements of the music. . . . The second aspect has to do with the meaning of 'modern' in relation to political and social opposition to racial segregation in the entertainment world."<sup>16</sup> I am interested in the relationships between the two aspects of the modern label that Monson identifies. In what ways did the modern "structural and artistic elements of the music" articulate "opposition to racial segregation" in the modern world, and how does bebop relate to the concepts of modernism and modernity more generally?

A number of scholars have adopted the concepts of "Afro-modernism" and "Afro-modernity" in order to differentiate between modern Afrological modes of cultural production and Eurocentric conceptions of modernism/modernity that reinforce social and aesthetic binaries associated with so-called high and low culture(s). Guthrie Ramsey Jr. explains that for African Americans, Afro-modernism

consisted of the creation and, certainly, the reception (the political and pleasurable uses) of musical expressions that articulated attitudes about their place in the modern world. Thus, Afro-modernism asks: What was modernity to African Americans at the historical moment under consideration? How were their attitudes about it worked out artistically and critically?<sup>17</sup>

Ramsey discusses migration, integration, social and economic progress, and urbanization as processes of modernization that contributed to the emergence (or at least the coming to fruition) of the Afro-modernist impulse at midcentury in the United States.<sup>18</sup> In addition to the factors discussed by Ramsey, the emphasis on abstraction and creative mobility in the work of Charlie Parker and his contemporaries played a vital role in articulating a sense of Afro-modernism.

### *Bebop and the Abstract Truth*

In *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Peter Bürger suggests that the growing emphasis on abstraction in the work of a number of European artists and writers around the turn of the twentieth century was crucial to the emergence of modernism. Form increasingly became the content of creative works. Music served as a model for many modernists who celebrated the fact that music does not represent the physical world in the same way that Western writing or painting traditionally had. Thus, a number of early modernists, including Wassily Kandinsky in painting, T. S. Eliot in literature, and others, embraced Walter Pater's famous maxim, "All art constantly aspires to the condition of music."<sup>19</sup>

Whether or not we accept the idea of music as an abstract art form, the

argument can be made that processes of abstraction take place within musical idioms. Music can be said to be representational in the sense that musicians generally draw upon certain stylistic conventions that invoke and, in effect, represent a particular musical style or tradition. Over time, musicians experiment with those conventions in response to changing musical and cultural contexts, and the relationship to prior musical codes becomes more abstract. This process is one of the things that leads to musical change. When viewed in relation to earlier jazz and popular music styles, the modern music of Charlie Parker et al. can be thought of as having engaged in processes of abstraction analogous (and, in my view, related) to the growing interest in abstraction that characterized modernism more broadly.

Many of the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic innovations of bebop can be seen as patterns of abstraction. Numerous bebop compositions based complicated melodies on pre-existing chord changes and harmonic forms drawn from the Tin Pan Alley tradition. Ray Noble's "Cherokee," for example, furnished the chord changes for Parker's "Ko Ko." Parker's "Scrapple from the Apple" combined the chord changes from Fats Waller's "Honeysuckle Rose" in the "A" section with the bridge from George Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm," the harmonic form of which (known simply as "rhythm changes" in jazz parlance) provided the framework for dozens, possibly hundreds, of compositions, including Parker's "Anthropology," Gillespie's "Shaw' Nuff" and "Salt Peanuts," Monk's "Rhythm-a-ning," and many others. Thelonious Monk's "Evidence," a piece based on the chord changes to the Klages and Greer standard "Just You, Just Me," presents another example of this practice. From "Just You, Just Me," Monk derived "Just Us." Phonetically, it is a short step from "Just Us" to "Justice" under which title Monk's composition has been recorded several times. For Monk, however, there could be no "Justice" without "Evidence"—hence the name of the tune.<sup>20</sup> The creative wordplay involved in this transformation is akin to the processes of abstraction involved in the music. The melodic and harmonic inventions of bebop offer sufficiently abstracted versions of the "original" compositions that in many cases only the most trained of listeners can recognize the original piece.

Abstraction is evident in bebop musicians' engagement with blues as well: the simple harmonic structure of I, IV, and V chords gave way to complex chord substitutions that presented a highly abstracted version of vernacular blues form. I must therefore disagree with Eric Porter's suggestion that bebop musicians rejected the blues "as a symbol of the limitations placed on them as musicians and as African Americans."<sup>21</sup> For one thing, virtually all of bebop's progenitors wrote and recorded pieces based on blues form. Even if the blues signified social and musical restrictions for some bebop musicians, they nonetheless treated blues form as a musical resource to be abstracted and signified upon.<sup>22</sup> Rhythmically too,

the music became more abstract as drumming innovator Kenny Clarke shifted the timekeeping function from the bass drum to the ride cymbal, creating a more fluid articulation of the music's pulse that freed the left hand and feet to provide syncopated cross-accent on the snare drum, bass drum, and hi-hat. In light of all of these changes, it is little wonder the music sounded "abstract" to many listeners at the time.

If abstraction does indeed represent a point of connection between the Afro-modernism of "bebop" and modernism more broadly, it is important to recognize the different historical and cultural contexts to which patterns of abstraction were a creative response. Bürger suggests that in Europe the rise of modernism and the concomitant rise of abstraction was facilitated, at least in part, by the ascendancy of the bourgeoisie to political power in the eighteenth century. As the ties between the arts and aristocratic patronage became increasingly tenuous, artists experienced an unprecedented degree of ideological and creative autonomy that enabled them to reflect critically upon bourgeois society. Bürger, however, suggests that bourgeois art of this sort continually ran the risk of merely compensating for society's shortcomings without actually effecting positive social change. The institutional separation of bourgeois art from social praxis led creative practitioners to recognize the ineffectuality of their creative work and thus to increasingly extreme declarations of art's autonomy through an ever-greater emphasis on form over content or, perhaps more correctly, on form *as* content. Bürger summarizes:

For reasons connected with the development of the bourgeoisie after its seizure of political power, the tension between the institutional frame and the content of individual works tends to disappear in the second half of the nineteenth century. The apartness from the praxis of life that had always constituted the institutional status of art in bourgeois society now becomes the content of works. . . . As institution and content coincide, social ineffectuality stands revealed as the essence of art in bourgeois society, and thus provokes the self-criticism of art.<sup>23</sup>

I take Bürger's reference to "the self-criticism of art" to mean the modernist emphasis on the form or medium of the work—painting about painting, writing about writing, and so on. In Europe (and later in several forms of American modernism, notably abstract expressionist painting), this self-critical tendency often took the form of a pronounced emphasis on, and exploration of, abstraction.

The social and cultural contexts that led Afro-modern musicians such as Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie to engage in processes of musical abstraction were quite different from their European and Euro-American counterparts. At Minton's Playhouse, abstraction served a practical purpose. Dizzy Gillespie explained:

No one man or group of men started modern jazz, but one of the ways it happened was this: Some of us began to jam at Minton's in Harlem in the early forties. But there were always some cats showing up there who couldn't blow at all but would take six or seven choruses to prove it. So on afternoons before a session, Theloni[o]us Monk and I began to work out some complex variations on chords and the like, and we used them at night to scare away the no-talent guys. After a while, we got more and more interested in what we were doing as music, and, as we began to explore more and more, our music evolved.<sup>24</sup>

Kenny Clarke similarly remembers: "We often talked in the afternoon. That's how we came to write different chord progressions and the like. We did that to discourage the sitters-in at night we didn't want. . . . When we started playing these different changes we'd made up, they'd become discouraged after the first chorus and they'd slowly walk away and leave the professional musicians on the stand."<sup>25</sup> Abstraction in this context was a strategy that ensured only the highest levels of musicianship, creating what Eric Lott describes as "a closed hermeneutic that had the undeniable effect of alienating the riff-raff and expressing a sense of felt isolation, all the while affirming a collective purpose—even at the expense of other musicians."<sup>26</sup>

But exceptional musicianship was not, contrary to the "innovation-for-its-own-sake" narrative of bebop and jazz, an end unto itself. In bebop, many musicians linked musical advancement with ideas of race advancement. As Kenny Clarke explains, "The idea was to wake up, look around you, there's something to do. . . . There was a message in our music. Whatever you go into, go into it *intelligently*. As simple as that."<sup>27</sup> There was another important political aspect to the Minton's jam-session participants' desire to create an abstract musical language and to develop the highest level of improvisatory musical virtuosity possible. Mary Lou Williams, an accomplished pianist who played an important role as mentor to the younger generation of modern musicians, summarized as follows:

Now, I want to tell you what I know about how and why bop got started. Theloni[o]us Monk and some of the cleverest of the young musicians used to complain, "We'll never get credit for what we're doing." They had reason to say it. In the music business, the going is tough for original talent. . . . Anyway, Monk said, "We are going to get a big band started. We're going to create something that they can't steal because they can't play it."<sup>28</sup>

In this light, it would seem that the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic abstraction of Thelonious Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and the

other progenitors of modern music was politically motivated as musicians tried to create an abstract form of music that could not be easily co-opted and controlled by the largely white-owned music industry.

Max Roach suggests that a similar rationale lay behind the processes of melodic abstraction inherent in modern musicians' use of popular Tin Pan Alley song structures. Describing the shift from uptown New York (i.e., the after-hours jam sessions at Minton's and Monroe's) to downtown (the clubs of Fifty-Second Street, which had a largely white clientele), Roach recalled,

[W]hen we got downtown, people wanted to hear something they were familiar with like "How High the Moon," "What Is This Thing Called Love?" Can you play that? So in playing these things, the black musicians recognized that the royalties were going back to these people, like ASCAP, the Jerome Kerns, the Gershwins. So one revolutionary thing that happened, they began to write parodies on the harmonic structures. Which was really revolutionary. If I have to play it, I will put my own particular melody on that progression, and people would ask, "Say, what is that?" And we would say, "Well, you asked for 'What Is This Thing Called Love?' and that's what it is." So you see there were a lot of things that were going on revolutionary during that time. If you made a record, you could say, "This is an original."<sup>29</sup>

Roach's comments suggest that in the new musical language being forged by Parker, Gillespie, Monk, Clarke, and Roach himself, musical abstraction was a powerful strategy of economic and political resistance. By signifyin(g) on Tin Pan Alley tunes in this manner, Afro-modern composer/improvisers found a successful way to circumvent the culturally biased copyright legislation of the day. At the time, only composed and notated elements of a piece of music, namely its lyrics, melody, and harmony, could be copyrighted. This put many Afrological forms that foreground musical improvisation at a serious economic disadvantage. In this light, the creation of highly abstracted versions of copyrighted Tin Pan Alley tunes, and then using those versions as vehicles for virtuosic forms of musical improvisation, was indeed revolutionary.

If I have dwelled on the idea of abstraction, it is because the concept goes some distance in explaining bebop musicians' use of the term *modern* to describe their music and its relationship to broader musical and historical trends. As a strategy of resistance, abstraction also represents an important facet of Afro-modernism that bebop improvisers bequeathed to subsequent generations of musicians working in Afrological musical forms. Many subsequent innovations within (and around) jazz including modal jazz, free jazz, the "New Thing," and creative improvised music can be thought of as extending the processes of harmonic, melodic, and

rhythmic abstraction begun by Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, Kenny Clarke, and their contemporaries.

*“Our Own Way of Getting From One Place to the Next”:  
Bebop, the African Diaspora, and Beyond*

In his preface to *Keeping Faith*, Cornel West states: “The fundamental theme of New World African modernity is neither integration nor separation but rather migration and emigration.” Farah Jasmine Griffin similarly stresses the centrality of “migration narratives” to African American cultural production in her groundbreaking book *“Who Set You Flowin’?”*<sup>30</sup> The idea of mobility—social, musical, and cultural—is central to the work of Charlie Parker and his contemporaries as well, and it represents another aspect of the emergent Afro-modernist impulse to have profoundly influenced subsequent modes of cultural production.

The lives and travels of many of bebop’s progenitors embodied the African American migration narrative: Charlie Parker was born in Kansas City, Kansas, and raised in Kansas City, Missouri; Dizzy Gillespie was born and raised in South Carolina; Thelonious Monk was born in North Carolina, Charlie Christian in Texas. One thing that these musicians had in common was the fact that at some point in their lives, they each migrated to New York City, met, and began playing music with one another at Minton’s Playhouse, Monroe’s Uptown House, and other after-hours jam sessions. Dizzy Gillespie remembered:

What we were doing at Minton’s was playing, seriously, *creating a new dialogue among ourselves*, blending our ideas into a new style of music. You only have so many notes, and what makes a style is how you get from one note to the other. We had some fundamental background training in European harmony and music theory superimposed on our own knowledge from Afro-American musical tradition. We invented our own way of getting from one place to the next.<sup>31</sup>

The “new dialogue” to which Gillespie refers was born of the musicians’ past musical, personal, and cultural histories, histories in which migration and mobility were common features. In creating their own way of “getting from one place to the next,” Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, *and the others* created a new form of modern music that celebrated creative mobility within and between Afrological and Eurological models and between the worlds of commerce and art.

For Gillespie, Parker, and Roach, being modern musicians entailed a movement beyond African American and European musical traditions to African diasporic modes of music making. Of course, jazz had, from its inception, drawn on multiple musical and cultural histories that were

fused together in a highly syncretic mix of styles and sensibilities. But beginning in the late 1940s, a number of modern musicians, Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker chief among them, began participating in explicitly intercultural collaborations with Afro-Cuban and African musicians. These encounters radically altered the musical and cultural landscape of the time and profoundly influenced subsequent Afrological modes of music making that similarly stress Pan-African intercultural collaboration. In the present context, I use the term *intercultural* to refer to face-to-face collaboration between performers representing two or more cultural traditions. In this regard, my use of the term draws on Jason Stanyek's excellent essay, "Transmissions of an Interculture: Pan-African Jazz and Intercultural Improvisation," and Mark Slobin's *Subcultural Sounds: Micromusics of the West*.<sup>32</sup> Of the three broad models of intercultural collaboration identified by Slobin—"industrial," "diasporic," and "affinity"—the collaborations discussed here fall primarily in the category of diasporic intercultural collaboration which, Slobin explains, "emerges from the linkages that subcultures set up across national boundaries."<sup>33</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that Afro-Cuban musicians were involved in the development of bebop from an early stage. Max Roach recalled: "You know Afro-Cuban musicians were playing with the small groups we had on Fifty-Second Street even before the big bands came back, and it was exciting to listen to the rhythm section."<sup>34</sup> Roach's reference to the period "before the big bands came back" suggests that collaborations between Afro-Cuban musicians and modern jazz players began prior to 1946 when Dizzy Gillespie unveiled his new big band at the Spotlight club in New York. Roach went on to describe another early musical encounter with African percussionists in a benefit concert for the African Academy of Arts and Research:

I can recall playing a concert with just Dizzy and Charlie Parker at the Hotel Diplomat, right across the street from Town Hall in New York City. We played with a group of African drummers that was visiting the United States. It was just Dizzy, Charlie Parker, and myself and about six or seven drummers. No piano, no bass or anything. We just played the things we were playing on Fifty-Second Street, "Woody 'n You," "[A Night in] Tunisia," things like that.<sup>35</sup>

That Roach remembers playing "the things [they] were playing on Fifty-Second Street" in this context is significant for it suggests that despite the very different cultural and musical backgrounds of the musicians involved, they were able to create an intercultural dialogic space for the negotiation of different musical and cultural identities, a space forged through musical improvisation.

Of the concert discussed by Roach, Dizzy Gillespie remembers that both African and Afro-Cuban drummers were present. "Just me, Bird,

and Max Roach, with African drummers and Cuban drummers," explains Gillespie. "We also played for a dancer they had, named Asadata Dafora. . . . Those concerts for the African Academy of Arts and Research turned out to be tremendous. Through that experience, Charlie Parker and I found the connections between Afro-Cuban and African music and discovered the identity of our music with theirs."<sup>36</sup> Gillespie in this statement carefully avoids making an essentialist pronouncement about the unity of Pan-African music. He does not claim that his music was the same as that of the African and Afro-Cuban musicians; rather, he states that through these encounters, they "found connections" between Afro-Cuban and African music and discovered the identity of their own music in conjunction with that of their African and Afro-Cuban collaborators.

Gillespie goes on to discuss the broader social and cultural implications of bebop, stating, "The music proclaimed our identity; it made every statement we truly wanted to make."<sup>37</sup> That this passage follows Gillespie's discussion of his early collaborations with Afro-Cuban and African musicians is significant, for it suggests that part of "the statement" that bebop's progenitors wanted to make was that the modern music they were creating was connected to other Afrological musical forms. If the music did indeed proclaim their identity, as Gillespie suggests, it would seem that their identity was constructed with an awareness of, and in relation to, the African diaspora.

Cuban music played an important intermediary role in this articulation of Pan-African musical and cultural identities. At the time, Afro-Cuban musicians more openly proclaimed the African roots of their music, as evidenced by the term "Afro-Cuban" which was in widespread use from at least the early 1940s in New York. For example, trumpeter Mario Bauzá recalled of the decision to call his group with Frank "Machito" Grillo "Machito and His Afro-Cubans" that "the people say, why the 'Afro'? I said [that we used this name] because the music we represent come[s] from Africa, and we come from Africa."<sup>38</sup> Collaborations between Afro-modern American musicians and Afro-(modern) Cuban musicians enabled the former to identify not only with Cuban music and culture, but also with Africa itself as a symbolic motherland. This identification was crucial to the emergence of Afro-modernist notions of Pan-African solidarity. Dizzy Gillespie participated in one of the most fruitful Afro-Cuban/jazz collaborations of the 1940s in his work with Cuban conga player Chano Pozo.<sup>39</sup> If, as Stanyek argues, the collaboration between Dizzy Gillespie and Chano Pozo was "one of the germinal moments in the history of intercultural music making of the second half of the twentieth century," Charlie Parker's collaborations with Machito's Afro-Cuban orchestra represent another.<sup>40</sup>

Born and raised in Cuba, singer Francisco "Machito" Grillo arrived in New York City in October 1937. Within a few years, he formed Machito

and His Afro-Cubans with his brother-in-law Mario Bauzá serving as musical director. Bauzá had performed with several stars of the swing era including Chick Webb's orchestra and the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra. As early as 1939, Bauzá had discussed with Dizzy Gillespie the idea of merging Afro-Cuban music and jazz when they both played trumpet in Cab Calloway's band.<sup>41</sup> When Bauzá joined forces with Machito, the Afro-Cubans quickly became one of the pre-eminent "Latin" and mambo groups in the United States during the 1940s and 1950s. The ensemble typically consisted of a trumpet and saxophone section, bass, piano, and a full complement of Cuban percussion: bongos, congas, and timbales. Machito fronted the group on vocals and maracas and his sister Graciela frequently sang with the group. With the addition of the piece "Tanga" to the band's repertoire in 1943, the Afro-Cubans began incorporating jazz influences into their music under Mario Bauzá's guidance.<sup>42</sup> Within a few years, Machito and His Afro-Cubans were performing regularly at jazz venues such as the Royal Roost and Bop City. It was most likely during this period that Machito's percussionists began participating in bebop jam sessions on Fifty-Second Street with the likes of Max Roach, Dizzy Gillespie, and Charlie Parker.

In December 1948 jazz impresario Norman Granz invited Machito and the Afro-Cubans to make several recordings with Charlie Parker and tenor saxophonist Flip Phillips as guest soloists. These sessions resulted in "No Noise Parts I and II," "Mango Mangüé," and "Okiedoke." Mario Bauzá remembered that:

I had no material, no special material for these people. . . . So Charlie [Parker] said to me, "Well Mario bring me something home, that stuff that you all play, regular Cuban music." I remember I say, "But all I have is vocalists." He said, "Never mind let me hear it." So, I played him, I gave him "[Mango] Mangue." He said, "I goin' play that. The only thing, when the vocal chorus come just give me the cue and I'll play through there myself."<sup>43</sup>

Like the Gillespie/Pozo collaboration, the collaboration between Parker and Machito's orchestra on "Mango Mangüé" is a watershed moment in the history of intradiasporic musical collaborations and it is indicative of emphasis on the musical mobility that characterizes the burgeoning Afro-modernist movement known (to some) as bebop.

One of the interesting things about this collaboration is the extent to which Parker and the Afro-Cuban musicians are able to enter into musical dialogue with one another while retaining their respective musical identities. The musicians appear to have made little or no attempt to elide their musical or cultural differences. Parker was keenly aware of these differences as evidenced by the fact that he had declined Norman Granz's suggestion to record the Cuban classic "El Manicero" at these sessions

on the grounds that he felt unable to successfully negotiate the piece's Cuban *cinquillo* rhythm.<sup>44</sup> John Storm Roberts hinted at the tensions between Parker's approach to the music and that of the Afro-Cubans when he wrote, "In solo Parker is, as always, Parker."<sup>45</sup> Roberts implies that the musical differences between Parker and Machito's orchestra detract from the success of the encounter, a view shared by numerous writers including Martin Williams, who characterized Parker's engagements with Afro-Cuban music as "Latin gimmickry . . . extrinsic effects, however well [Parker] adapts himself."<sup>46</sup>

To my ears, the rhythmic dissonance between Parker's soloing technique and the clavé-derived rhythms played by Machito's orchestra is one of the things that gives these recordings their creative vitality. The tensions between Parker's musical vocabulary and that of the Afro-Cuban ensemble suggest an underlying conception of Pan-African collaboration and identity that does not deny the musical, historical, and cultural particularities associated with different diasporic locations, but rather celebrates them. In this regard, Parker's solo over the *coro* section of "Mango Mangüé," the section in which a vocalist would normally improvise over a repeated vocal ostinato with percussion accompaniment, provides an exemplary model for Pan-African collaboration on a whole: against the repeated five-note vocal calls of the ensemble, Parker plays a series of fluid melodic lines that reference the melody, signifying on it, creating a space for dialogue and mobility between the two musical traditions. This sense of dialogue and Pan-African musical mobility became one of the central tenets of the burgeoning Afro-modernist movement.

Parker affirms the importance of musical mobility in a radio broadcast of a live performance at the Royal Roost on January 1, 1949. Between numbers, the announcer, "Symphony" Sid (Torin), commented on Parker's recent work with Machito, stating, "It more or less puts bop in a more or less commercial sort of groove. Don't you think?"<sup>47</sup> Torin's apparent equation of Afro-Cuban music and commercialism was likely motivated by the widespread popularity of certain Latin bands at the time such as those of Xavier Cugat and Desi Arnaz, who presented commercialized forms of Cuban music that frequently pandered to stereotypes associated with Cuban music and culture. In response to Torin, Parker states: "Well, if you want to take it that way. But I mean Bop is just a title. I mean it's all still music to me."<sup>48</sup> With this statement, Parker provided a concise description of the vision of musical mobility that he and his contemporaries were fashioning. It's all music; there were no boundaries, musically speaking, to the Afro-modern art they were creating. Kenny Clarke's comments about the word *bebop* doing "a lot of harm" seem pertinent in this context. One of the ways in which the label "bebop" harmed the music was to limit the creative mobility of its practitioners.

Afro-Cuban/jazz collaborations such as those between Charlie Parker and Machito's orchestra played an important role in constructing an explicitly Afro-modernist musical orientation. For Parker, however, creative mobility entailed an exploration not only of African diasporic modes of music making, but also of European musical traditions. Although Parker was adamant about the Afrological origins of his music, he frequently discussed his interest in European music (including the work of composers such as Bach, Brahms, and Beethoven, as well as modernist composers such as Béla Bartók, Paul Hindemith, and Igor Stravinsky). Parker's interest in modernist European music bears further consideration, for it expands on the idea of mobility that I see as one of the defining features of Afro-modernism.

Parker discussed his interest in working with strings in a 1953 *Down Beat* interview with Nat Hentoff: "Why, I asked for strings as far back as 1941," he remembers, "and then, years later, when I went with Norman [Granz], he okayed it."<sup>49</sup> Parker's first recording with strings was made in December of 1947. Norman Granz had arranged for two recording sessions to happen simultaneously at Carnegie Hall—one upstairs with Charlie Parker in a quartet setting and another in the concert hall itself with the twenty-five-piece Neal Hefti Orchestra, an ensemble that featured a full string section. After his quartet session had ended, Parker went into the concert hall to listen to the tail end of the orchestra recording. At Granz's suggestion, Hefti invited Parker to improvise over the last chorus when the ensemble reprised the melody.<sup>50</sup> This chance encounter led to Parker's first recording with a string section.<sup>51</sup>

Midway through Hefti's arrangement of "Repetition," the strings reference a passage from Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (the melody that first enters as a solo horn line in m. 25). When Parker enters "Repetition," roughly ten seconds after the Stravinsky quote, he begins his improvised solo by quoting the same passage, a gesture that asserts that his vision of musical mobility was large enough, and his level of musicianship high enough, to include—and signify on—the music of even the most revered modernist European composers (on the stage of Carnegie Hall—North America's pre-eminent venue for classical music—no less).<sup>52</sup> Parker follows the Stravinsky quote with a sinuous improvised run played with characteristic speed and virtuosity reinforcing the fact that his own variant of modern music exists on par with the modern music of contemporary European composers.

Perhaps it was the success of Parker's chance encounter with Neal Hefti's Orchestra that prompted Norman Granz to arrange for the first "Charlie Parker with Strings" recording session on November 30, 1949. With an ensemble consisting of oboe, three violins, viola, cello, harp, plus Parker on alto saxophone, and a jazz rhythm section (piano, bass,

and drums), Parker recorded six standards: "Just Friends," "Everything Happens to Me," "April in Paris," "Summertime," "I Didn't Know What Time it Was," and "If I Should Lose You." The version of "Just Friends" recorded at this session became Parker's biggest-selling recording during his lifetime.<sup>53</sup> It was also the only one of his own recordings that Parker publicly admitted to liking.<sup>54</sup> "Parker with Strings" was sufficiently popular that the project, which was initially conceived of as solely a studio creation, became a working band that performed at many venues including Birdland on 52nd Street, the Apollo Theatre in Harlem, and Carnegie Hall.<sup>55</sup> The wide variety of venues (and constituencies) in which Parker performed with this ensemble suggests that the project engendered not only musical mobility, but also social, cultural, and economic mobility at a time when African Americans faced many barriers to civil rights throughout the United States.

The popularity of Parker's work with strings led to widespread charges of commercialism. There is, however, much evidence to suggest that commercial salability had little to do with the motivation behind the recordings. Parker explained: "Some of my friends said, 'Oh, Bird is getting commercial.' That wasn't it at all. *I was looking for new ways of saying things musically. New sound combinations.*"<sup>56</sup> For Parker, the instrumentation and sound ideals associated with European classical music represented new sonic resources, musical found objects to be explored, manipulated, and signified upon within the Afrological system of improvisative musicality that he helped to create.

Parker explored another new sound combination that referenced European sources in a 1953 recording session. Inspired by Paul Hindemith's "*Kleine Kammermusik*," Parker recorded three Gil Evans arrangements that featured a woodwind quintet with mixed vocal chorus and jazz rhythm section. According to Max Roach, Norman Granz, who produced the session for release on his own Clef label, was unhappy with Parker's instrumental choices: "[Parker] mapped out things for woodwinds and voices, and Norman Granz would holler, 'What's this? You can't make money with this crazy combination. You can't sell this stuff!'"<sup>57</sup> On one hand, Granz's comments confirm that Parker's motivations for wanting to record with this combination had little to do with commercial appeal. They also remind us that even if Parker and his contemporaries conceived of their music as modern art, commercial interests were never far from the music. The relationship between bebop and the music industry further complicates the notion of bebop as an autonomous, avant-garde musical expression and nuances our understanding of bebop as Afro-modernist discourse. Far from limiting the political impact of the music, however, bebop's status as Afro-modern art within the marketplace enhanced the scope and trenchancy of the music. Its commodity character carried the

musical and political calls of bebop across time and space, influencing modes of music making throughout the world

A 1950 recording that found Parker in the studio once again with Machito's orchestra, along with additional guest soloists Flip Phillips on tenor saxophone, Harry "Sweets" Edison on trumpet, and Buddy Rich on drums, foregrounds the issue of musical mobility once again. Together, they recorded Chico O'Farrill's "Afro-Cuban Jazz Suite," an extended work consisting of five movements: "Canción," "Mambo," "6/8," "Jazz," and "Rhumba Abierta."<sup>58</sup> Parker was actually a last-minute addition to the group. Originally, Norman Granz hired Harry "Sweets" Edison for the session. Although he can be heard in the first section of the piece, Edison eventually backed out of the project because, in O'Farrill's words, "he could not feel the music right."<sup>59</sup> Hired as Edison's replacement, Parker plays in two sections of the work—"Mambo" and "Jazz." In the latter, Parker also trades four-bar phrases with Flip Phillips in a game of musical call and response.

The movements of the work, like the title of the piece as a whole, reflect its highly syncretic nature. "Afro-Cuban Jazz Suite" draws on Afro-Cuban musical forms such as the "Canción" and "Mambo," as well as Yoruban-derived rhythms in the section labeled "6/8." The work also incorporates jazz melodies, harmonies, and rhythms as the title of the fourth movement ("Jazz") suggests. It is significant that the piece brings these materials into dialogue with one another within a canonical European musical form, the suite. O'Farrill, who had studied European harmony extensively with Juilliard professor Bernard Wagenaar, composer Stefan Wolpe, and others, recalled of the piece: "I was never an expert on Cuban music. What I did, for example, in that suite was purely instinctive; . . . They asked me, 'write a suite, Chico,' [so] I just wrote according to my best understanding, letting my jazz sensibility to guide me most of the time."<sup>60</sup>

As in the earlier collaborations with Machito, Parker's playing is unmistakable; he appears to have made little or no attempt to erase the musical and cultural differences between himself and the rest of the ensemble. Instead, Parker brings his musical vocabulary into dialogue with that of the other musicians, creating an intercultural dialogic space in which African American, Afro-Cuban, and European musical resources come together with one another, affirming the creative mobility of the musicians involved.

### *Coda: An Unspoken Boundary Line*

Although the Afro-modernist mode of music making known as bebop challenged a variety of musical, social, racial, and cultural boundaries

in the 1940s, there is considerable evidence to suggest that it actively worked to maintain boundaries in at least one area, namely gender. The intersection of race and gender politics in Afrological musical performance has a lengthy history, one that predates the emergence of Afro-modern jazz by many decades. As Eric Porter notes, "From the beginning, . . . musicians' organizations and unions, and the jazz education system were generally organized along the lines of patriarchal authority and 'male fraternity.'" With bebop, the masculinist tendencies of jazz became enshrined within a gendered aesthetic of "hipness" that marked "the emergence of the figure of the modern black jazzman as a defiant, alternative, and often exotic symbol of male masculinity."<sup>61</sup> In a society that frequently denied African Americans humanity (let alone manhood), modern jazz provided an arena in which African American men could develop a masculinist ethos of Afrological creativity and genius.

Numerous accounts of misogyny among male bebop musicians (both on stage and off), as well as the general lack of female representation in the movement, support the notion that Parker et al. conceived of the musical culture they were creating as a largely male sphere of improvisative creativity.<sup>62</sup> There were notable exceptions to the otherwise male fraternity of bebop including vocalist Sarah Vaughan, pianist Mary Lou Williams, and trombonist Melba Liston. Yet even highly accomplished and respected female musicians such as these were frequently called upon to fulfill prescribed gender roles by their male counterparts, regardless of their musical abilities. Consider, for example, the treatment that trombonist, composer, and arranger Melba Liston received when she first joined Dizzy Gillespie's big band in 1949. She remembers:

The first thing, all the guys in the band said, "Goddamn, Birks, you sent all the way to California for a *bitch*?" Dizzy said, "That's right." He said, "Did you bring the music that I told you to write?" I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Pass it out to these muthafuckas and let me see what a bitch you are." He said, "Play the music, and I don't want to hear no fuckups." And of course they got about two measures and fell out and got all confused and stuff. And Dizzy said, "Now, who's the bitch!" Dizzy was really something. So after that I was everybody's sister, mama, auntie. I was sewin' buttons, cuttin' hair and all the rest. Then I was a woman again.<sup>63</sup>

As Eric Porter notes, "Although Gillespie's inclusion of Liston in his band may well have indicated that he was willing to rethink gender as well as racial categories, the response by his male band members and the roles that Liston adopted speak to the fact that, in general, gender roles changed little in a bebop community that venerated male creativity."<sup>64</sup>

Relatively few commentators have explored the underlying factors that have contributed to the history of masculinism so prevalent in jazz.

Mark Anthony Neal suggests that "black women were largely incidental" to bebop and offers the apology that "black men and women simply created alternative spheres of affirmation." These statements raise several questions. How incidental, I wonder, was pianist and composer Mary Lou Williams to bebop?<sup>65</sup> Described by Dizzy Gillespie as being "always in the vanguard of harmony," Williams also served as a mentor to a number of younger bebop musicians, including pianists Thelonious Monk and Bud Powell. She also remembers going to the after-hours jam sessions at Minton's Playhouse in which bebop developed every night.<sup>66</sup> Thus, her role in the development of bebop may not have been "incidental" at all, but rather has been rendered as such by dominant histories surrounding the music, even those of well-intentioned and otherwise astute scholars.

Even if African American men and women did develop alternative spheres of affirmation (Williams's example notwithstanding), it is imperative that we examine the factors that led to—and actively maintain(ed)—the separation of those spheres. The Afro-modernist tendencies of bebop may have contributed to its masculinist ideological underpinnings. In particular, the Afro-modernist emphasis on abstraction may well have worked to limit women's involvement in bebop given the effects of modernist abstraction on representations of African American women's bodies historically (in the visual arts in particular) and on the construction of African American women's subjectivities. Unfortunately, this aspect of Afro-modernist discourse has been highly influential within subsequent Afrological modes of music making. Redressing this situation is a significant challenge facing contemporary creative practitioners and scholars alike as we work toward a situation in which there really is no boundary line to art.

## NOTES

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1. I use the term "Afrological" in the sense outlined by musician and theorist George Lewis who compares "Afrological" models of musical improvisation with "Eurological" trends. See George Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives," *Black Music Research Journal* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 91–122.

2. Review of Charlie Parker's "Billie's Bounce" and "Now's the Time," *Down Beat* (April 1946): 15.

3. Michael Levin and John S. Wilson, "No Bop Roots in Jazz: Parker," *Down Beat*, Sept. 9, 1949, 24.

4. Bernard Gendron, "'Moldy Figs' and Modernists: Jazz at War (1942–1946)," in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, ed. Krin Gabbard (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 49–50.

5. Levin and Wilson, "No Bop Roots in Jazz," 24; Scott DeVeaux, "Constructing the Jazz Tradition: Jazz Historiography," in *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture*, ed. Robert G. O'Meally (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 508.

6. See, for example, John Hammond's 1935 article "The Tragedy of Duke Ellington,"

which attacks Ellington for daring to write "Reminiscing in Tempo," a piece that strays beyond the narrow confines of three-minute dance numbers that the public had come to expect from African American jazz musicians. Hammond describes Ellington's music as "vapid and without the slightest semblance of guts. His newer stuff bears superficial resemblance to Debussy and Delius without any of the peculiar vitality that used to pervade his work." He goes so far as to accuse Ellington of being a race traitor, declaring that "he has purposely kept himself from any contact with the troubles of his people." See John Hammond, "The Tragedy of Duke Ellington, the 'Black Prince of Jazz,'" reprinted in *The Duke Ellington Reader*, ed. Mark Tucker (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 120. For an in-depth discussion of the intersections of jazz, criticism, and race historically, see John Gennari, *Blowin' Hot and Cold: Jazz and Its Critics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

7. Levin and Wilson, "No Bop Roots in Jazz," 24.

8. Clarke, quoted in Nat Shapiro and Nat Hentoff, *Hear Me Talkin' to Ya: The Story of Jazz as Told by the Men Who Made It* (New York: Dover, 1966), 350, emphasis added.

9. My understanding of modernity and modernism is informed by a number of sources including Peter Bürger, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995). For discussions of modernity in relation to African American and African diasporic cultural production specifically, see Houston Baker Jr., *Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Samuel Floyd, ed., *Black Music in the Harlem Renaissance* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); Richard J. Powell, ed., *The Blues Aesthetic: Black Culture and Modernism* (Washington, DC: The Washington Project for the Arts, 1989).

10. Anonymous, "Jazz or—," *Musical Courier*, Feb. 7, 1924, 36.

11. Two notable exceptions are Eric Lott and Eric Porter. Lott describes bebop as "one of the great modernisms" in his brilliant analysis of the music's racial politics. See Eric Lott, "Double V, Double-Time: Bebop's Politics of Style," in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, ed. Gabbard, 249. Similarly, the first chapter of Eric Porter's *What Is This Thing Called Jazz* examines "Jazz and African American Modernity," focusing in particular on the work of Duke Ellington. See Eric Porter, *What Is This Thing Called Jazz?: African American Musicians as Artists, Critics, and Activists* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

12. Mark S. Harvey, "Jazz and Modernism: Changing Conceptions of Innovation and Tradition," in *Jazz in Mind: Essays on the History and Meanings of Jazz*, ed. Reginald T. Buckner and Steven Weiland (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 136.

13. For discussions of the political implications of bebop, see Amiri Baraka, *Blues People: Negro Music in White America* (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1963), 181–82, 188; Lott, "Double V, Double-Time," 243–55; and Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950."

14. Alfred Appel Jr., *Jazz Modernism: From Ellington and Armstrong to Matisse and Joyce* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 7.

15. For a thorough critique of Appel, see Eric Lewis, "Appel, Ellington and the Modernist Canon," *Critical Studies in Improvisation* 1, no. 2 (2005), <http://www.criticalimprov.com/index.php/csieci/article/viewArticle/21/55>, Sept. 17, 2010.

16. Ingrid Monson, "The Problem with White Hipness: Race, Gender, and Cultural Conceptions in Jazz Historical Discourse," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 407.

17. Guthrie P. Ramsey, *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip-Hop* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 97.

18. In addition to Ramsey's work, the concept of "Afro-modernism" is explored in Craig Hansen Werner, *Playing the Changes: From Afro-Modernism to the Jazz Impulse* (Urbana:

University of Illinois Press, 1994), and Alexander G. Weheliye, *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).

19. Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (1893; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 106.

20. Robin D. G. Kelley, *Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original* (New York: Free Press, 2009), 114.

21. Porter, *What Is This Thing Called Jazz*, 69.

22. I use the term "signifyin(g)" here and throughout this essay in the sense outlined by Henry Louis Gates Jr. in *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). For other discussions of signifyin(g) in relation to Afrological modes of music making, see Samuel A. Floyd Jr., "Ring Shout! Literary Studies, Historical Studies, and Black Music Inquiry," *Black Music Research Journal* 11, no. 2 (Autumn 1991): 265–87; Gary Tomlinson, "Cultural Dialogics and Jazz: A White Historian Signifies," *Black Music Research Journal* 11, no. 2 (Autumn 1991): 229–64; Robert Walser, "Out of Notes: Signification, Interpretation, and the Problem of Miles Davis," *Musical Quarterly* 77, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 343–65.

23. Peter Bürger, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 27.

24. Gillespie, quoted in Shapiro and Hentoff, *Hear Me Talkin' to Ya*, 337.

25. Clarke, quoted in *ibid.*, 337–38.

26. Lott, "Double V, Double-Time," 247.

27. Clarke, quoted in Dizzy Gillespie and Al Fraser, *To Be, or Not . . . to Bop: Memoirs* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday 1979), 142.

28. Williams, quoted in Shapiro and Hentoff, *Hear Me Talkin' to Ya*, 340–41.

29. Roach, quoted in Gillespie and Fraser, *To Be, or Not . . . to Bop*, 209.

30. Cornel West, *Keeping Faith: Philosophy and Race in America* (New York: Routledge, 1993), xiii; Farah Jasmine Griffin, "Who Set You Flowin'?: The African-American Migration Narrative" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

31. Gillespie and Fraser, *To Be, or Not . . . to Bop*, 140–41.

32. Mark Slobin, *Subcultural Sounds: Micromusics of the West* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1993); and Jason Stanyek, "Transmissions of an Interculture: Pan-African Jazz and Intercultural Improvisation," in *The Other Side of Nowhere: Jazz, Improvisation, and Communities in Dialogue*, ed. Daniel Fischlin and Ajay Heble (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 87–130.

33. Slobin, *Subcultural Sounds*, 64.

34. Roach, quoted in Gillespie and Fraser, *To Be, or Not . . . to Bop*, 233.

35. *Ibid.*, 233.

36. *Ibid.*, 290.

37. *Ibid.*, 291.

38. Bauzá, quoted in Paul Austerlitz, *Jazz Consciousness: Music, Race, and Humanity* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2005), 59.

39. For a thorough discussion of the Pozo/Gillespie collaboration and its impact on subsequent diasporic intercultural musical encounters, see Stanyek, "Transmissions."

40. *Ibid.*, 88.

41. Austerlitz, *Jazz Consciousness*, 56–57, 58.

42. Leonardo Acosta, *Cubano be Cubano Bop: One Hundred Years of Jazz in Cuba*, trans. Daniel S. Whitesell (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2003), 107.

43. Phil Schaap, liner notes to *Bird: The Complete Charlie Parker on Verve* (Verve, 1988), 23.

44. Austerlitz, *Jazz Consciousness*, 75.

45. John Storm Roberts, *Latin Jazz: The First of the Fusions, 1880s to Today* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1999), 79.

46. Martin Williams, "Charlie Parker: The Burden of Innovation," in *The Charlie Parker*

*Companion: Six Decades of Commentary*, ed. Carl Woideck (New York: Schirmer Books, 1998), 21.

47. Torin, quoted in Schaap, liner notes, 23.

48. Parker, quoted in *ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*, 33.

50. Schaap, liner notes, 20–21.

51. Charlie Parker with the Neal Hefti Orchestra, “Repetition” (1947), *Bird: The Complete Charlie Parker on Verve* (Poly Gram Records, 1988).

52. This was not the first time that Parker improvised on Stravinsky. Charles Mingus remembers: “Bird called me on the phone one day and said: ‘How does this sound?’ and he was playing—ad-libbing—to the Berceuse, or Lullaby, section of Stravinsky’s *Firebird Suite!*” Mingus, quoted in Brian Priestly, *Mingus: A Critical Biography* (London: Quartet Books, 1982), 48.

53. Charlie Parker with Strings, “Just Friends” (1949), *Bird: The Complete Charlie Parker on Verve* (Poly Gram Records, 1988).

54. Williams, “Charlie Parker,” 21.

55. Schaap, liner notes, 44.

56. Nat Hentoff, “Counterpoint,” in *Charlie Parker Companion*, ed. Woideck, 80.

57. Roach, quoted in *ibid.*, 246.

58. Charlie Parker with Machito and His Orchestra, “Afro-Cuban Jazz Suite” (1950), *Bird: The Complete Charlie Parker on Verve* (Poly Gram Records, 1988).

59. O’Farrill, quoted in Schaap, line notes, 51.

60. O’Farrill, quoted in Austerlitz, *Jazz Consciousness*, 79–80.

61. Porter, *What Is This Thing Called Jazz?*, 28, 79. On the subject of hipness, see Ingrid Monson, “The Problem with White Hipness: Race, Gender, and Cultural Conceptions in Jazz Historical Discourse,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 396–422; and Andrew Ross, *No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1989), especially chap. 3, “Hip, and the Long Front of Color.”

62. See, for example, Miles Davis with Quincy Troupe, *Miles: The Autobiography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), and Charles Mingus, *Beneath the Underdog* (New York: Knopf, 1971). For accounts of Charlie Parker’s problematic gender politics, see Ross Russell, *Bird Lives!: The High Life and Hard Times of Charlie “Yardbird” Parker* (London: Quartet Books, 1973), esp. 187, 245–26, as well as Davis, *Miles*, 65–66, 120.

63. Liston, quoted in Linda Dahl, *Stormy Weather: The Music and Lives of a Century of Jazzwomen* (London: Quartet Books, 1984), 256.

64. Porter, *What Is This Thing Called Jazz?*, 82–83. For further discussion of the same incident, see Ajay Heble and Gillian Siddall, “Nice Work if You Can Get It: Women in Jazz,” in Heble, *Landing on the Wrong Note: Jazz, Dissonance and Critical Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 153.

65. Mark Anthony Neal, *What the Music Said: Black Popular Music and Black Public Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 21. For a discussion of Mary Lou Williams’s music and career, see Linda Dahl, *Morning Glory: A Biography of Mary Lou Williams* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), and Nichole T. Rustin, “‘Mary Lou Williams Plays Like a Man!’: Gender, Genius, and Difference in Black Musical Discourse,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 104, no. 3 (2005): 445–62.

66. Gillespie and Fraser, *To Be, or Not . . . to Bop*, 149, 350.