

The Jazz Age – New York City in 1920s

New York City in 1920s

- Harlem Renaissance
 - o Black people in the Harlem area expressed through arts and intellectual properties
 - o Provide good atmosphere for black musicians who play jazz to make music
 - Rise of Tin Pan Alley
 - o A group of music publishers and songwriters
 - o Successfully wrote and published songs for Broadway shows and were popular
 - o A lot of these popular songs became a vehicle for jazz to play and solo on
 - Dance Craze
 - o Offer gig opportunities for jazz musicians to play and expand the band
 - Prohibition
 - o Many bars moved underground with passwords, often called “the speakeasy”
 - o People could not have alcohol at home and have to go to the speakeasies.
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- 1920 “Jazz Age”
 - 1920 Prohibition (lifted in 1933)
 - 1927 Charles Lindbergh flew across the Atlantic Ocean
 - 1928 Lindy Hop (dance) was invented by George Snowden
 - 1929 Stock Market Crash

Harlem Stride Piano

Features

- A more refined, more advanced, and more swing version of ragtime
- Virtuoso and showoff flashy techniques
- Cutting contest culture
 - o Everyone has their own version or arrangement of songs
 - o They compete each other musically
 - o Audience often discuss which one is better at the show

Figures

- James P. Johnson
 - o Participant for Harlem Renaissance
 - o Made many important versions/arrangements of songs
 - “Carolina Shout”
 - “You’ve got to be Modernistic”
- Fats Waller
 - o Businessman, pimp, entertainer, and musician
 - o Humor in his playing, singing, personality, and facial expression
 - o Important composer
 - “Honey Suckle Rose”
 - “Ain’t Misbehavin”
 - “Handful of Keys”

Pre-Swing: The Birth of Big Band

Paul Whiteman

- Well-known for symphonic jazz style
 - o Modeled after symphony orchestra instrumentation and orchestration
 - o Add jazz flavors to symphony orchestra style
- Austin High Gang and Chicagoans participated in his band
 - o Bix Beiderbecke
 - o Frankie Trumbauer
 - o Tommy Dorsey
 - o Jimmy Dorsey
- Commissioned George Gershwin to compose *Rhapsody in Blue*
- Believed that future of jazz should be large symphony orchestra
- Use of human voice in chorus or small choir
- Taught Jimmie Luncheon and Andy Kirk

Fletcher Henderson

- Chemistry and mathematics grad
- Start the band with New Orleans style until Don Redman came
- Don Redman, arranger
 - o Expanding the horns section, 3-horn frontline became 3 sections:
 - Trumpet section
 - Trombone section
 - Reeds section (clarinets and saxophones)
 - o Call and response between sections
 - o Use the horns section to play background behind the soloist
 - o Use the horns section to punch chords during stop time section
- Featured Louis Armstrong as a soloist
 - o Became a model for other band member to mimic the solo style
- Training ground for many swing era players
 - o Coleman Hawkins
 - o Benny Carter
 - o Lester Young
 - o Ben Webster
 - o Chu Berry
 - o Rex Stewart
 - o Henry “Red” Allen
 - o Roy Eldridge
 - o John Kirby
 - o Israel Crosby

3 Dance Clubs

- Roseland Ballroom (1917-2004)
 - o White only
 - o 1924 – Fletcher Henderson and His Orchestra
- Cotton Club (1923-40)
 - o White only
 - o Has radio broadcasting system
 - o 1926-31 – Duke Ellington and His Orchestra
 - Jungle Sound
 - Trumpet mutes
 - Drums groove
 - Clarinet
 - Figures
 - Johnny Hodges
 - Barney Bigard
 - Ben Webster
 - Harry Carney
 - Juan Tizol
 - Tricky Sam Nanton
 - Bubber Miley
 - Cootie Williams
 - Jimmy Blanton
 - Sonny Greer
 - o 1931-34 – Cab Calloway Orchestra
 - First to acclaim the celebrity status
 - o 1934-37 – Jimmie Luncheon Orchestra
 - Sy Oliver as arranger
 - o 1937 – Duke Ellington and His Orchestra (6 weeks)
- Savoy Ballroom (1926-58) – “Home of Happy Feet”
 - o First integrated club
 - o Famous for “the battle of the band” (Chick Webb vs the other band)
 - o Lindy Hop Dance
 - o 1931-42 Chick Webb Orchestra
 - 1935 – Ella Fitzgerald as featured singer
 - 1939 – Webb died; Fitzgerald took over the band