

JAZZ MUSIC

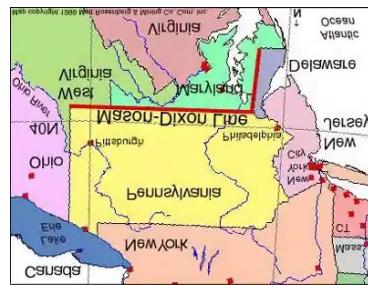
Jazz is a form of music that had its origins in the late 1800's in Louisiana, USA. It flows from the blues with other earlier influences being Ragtime (late 1800's and primarily designed for the piano - Scott Joplin was one of the more famous exponents) and Dixieland genres of music (again from the South).

The southern states in USA (also sometimes referred to as Dixie) include Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Texas, Arkansas, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee - defined in the American Civil War as states south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Southern states that remained aligned to the North included Kentucky and Missouri. The states that fought for the South were referred to as the Confederate States.

The Mason-Dixon Line was [surveyed](#) between 1763 and 1767 by [Charles Mason](#) and [Jeremiah Dixon](#) as part of the resolution of a border dispute involving Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Delaware in the [colonial United States](#). Obviously the terms Dixie and Dixieland are derived from the surname of Jeremiah Dixon)



Battle Flag of the Confederacy



Mason-Dixon Line

Jazz rose to fame in the 1920's.

One of the earliest exponents, and considered by some as the father of jazz, was American cornet player Buddy Bolden (1877 - 1931).



Standing: Jimmy Johnson(double bass), Buddy Bolden (cornet), Willie Cornish (trombone), Willie Warner (clarinet)
Seated: Brock Mumford (guitar), Frank Lewis (clarinet)

Jazz can be purely instrumental or feature a vocalist.

A lot of the instrumental jazz is very free form (improvised) and features complex chords (and could be classified by some as self indulgent) and often has a "swing" groove. Solos are also a feature of jazz.

Louis Armstrong (trumpet 1901-1971), **Duke Ellington** (piano 1899-1974), **Count Basie** (piano 1904-1984), **Benny Goodman** (clarinet/saxophone 1890-1986) were early exponents of jazz and had big bands.. From this sprung the Big Band Era of the 30's and 40's. Still featuring the swing style often more dance focused.

1930 - 1945 was considered the Swing Era or Big Band Era.



Count Basie



Count Basie and Orchestra



Duke Ellington



Louis Armstrong

Other jazz musicians / bandleaders included Earl Hines (piano 1903-1983), Dizzy Gillespie (trumpet 1917-1993), Charlie Mingus (upright bass 1922-1979) and Charlie "Bird" Parker (saxophone 1920-1955).



Charlie Parker



Earl Hines



Dizzy Gillespie



Charles Mingus

Thelonious Monk (piano 1917-1982) was also a major contributor to the growth of jazz being an innovative composer.

Other legendary Big Band leaders included Glenn Miller (trombone 1904-1944), Artie Shaw (clarinet/saxophone 1910-2004), Woody Herman (clarinet/saxophone 1913-1987), Tommy Dorsey (saxophone/trumpet/trombone 1905-1956) and Harry James (trumpet 1916-1983)



Glenn Miller



Benny Goodman



Harry James



Tommy Dorsey

The list of female jazz singers was extensive but the queen was most definitely Ella Fitzgerald. Other acclaimed and recognised vocalists included Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, Dinah Washington, Peggy Lee, Bessie Smith, Carmen McRae, Nina Simone, Betty Carter, Julie London, Chris O'Connor, Anita O'Day and Blossom Dearie.



Ella Fitzgerald



Billie Holiday



Peggy Lee



Sarah Vaughan

On the male side you had Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, Tony Bennett, Sammy Davis Jnr, Perry Como and Ray Charles.



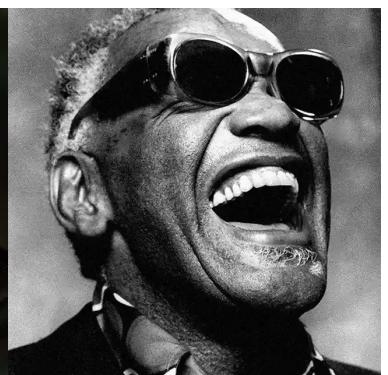
Frank Sinatra



Nat King Cole



Tony Bennett



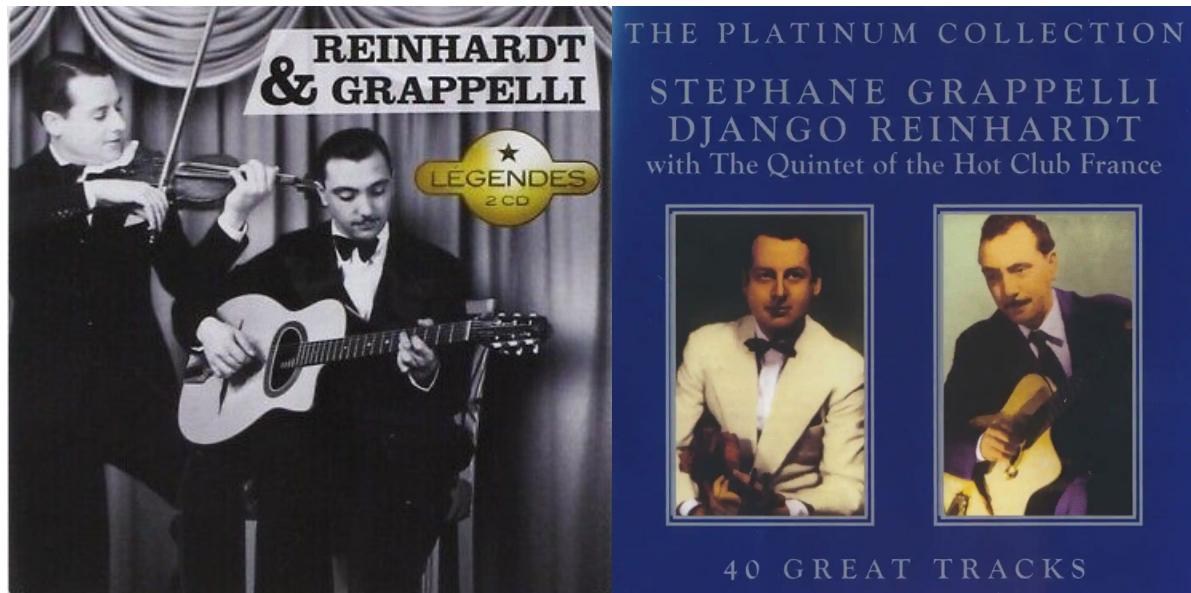
Ray Charles

Scat singing often featured in jazz bands- no actual words, more just vocal improvisations or vocal gymnastics and singing notes.

Another variation to jazz was **Bebop** which emerged in the 1940s. It moved away from the dance-oriented swing style of the big bands, emphasizing technical skill and harmonic innovation. **Charlie Parker(1920-1955)**, Dizzy Gillespie and **Thelonious Monk** and guitarist Charlie Christian were significant in its development.

Out of Europe came French violinist Stephan Grappelli (1908 - 1997) and Belgian guitarist Django Reinhardt (1910-1953). The two formed the Paris-based **Quintette du Hot Club de France** in 1934. It became the most accomplished and innovative European jazz group of the period.

Of interest, from this period two famed drummers with their own big bands were Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich.



Jazz fusion emerged in the 60's with **Miles Davis** (1926 - 1991, trumpet), originally a bebop exponent - in John Coltrane's band at one stage, and **John Coltrane** (1926 - 1967, trumpet).



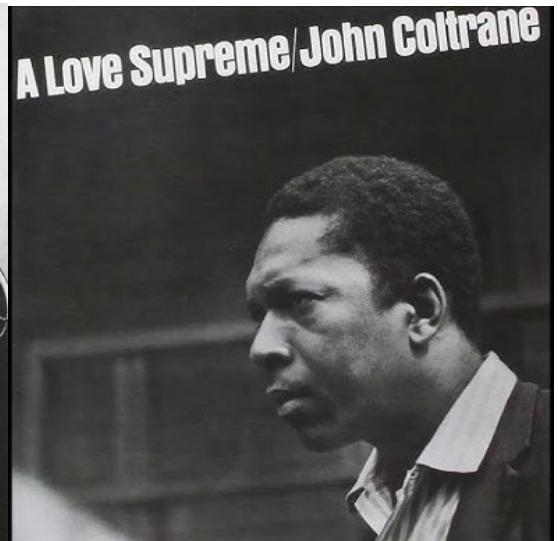


John Coltrane Statue

High Point North Carolina



John Coltrane



John Coltrane

PS If you watch the TV series Bosch or Bosch Legacy (2014 - 2024), then you will note that the lead character, Harry Bosch, is a massive John Coltrane fan.

Contemporary Jazz Influenced Bands

Two bands, "Mahavishnu Orchestra" and "Return To Forever" are more obviously jazz fusion.

Jazz Fusion / Jazz Rock emerged in the 70s with bands like Return To Forever and Mahavishnu Orchestra. Both featuring consummate musicians.

Mahavishnu Orchestra : **John McLaughlin** (guitar), Billy Cobham (drums), Jan Hammer (keyboards), Jerry Goodman (violin). Classic albums "Birds of Fire" and "The Inner Mounting Flame".



John McLaughlin



Birds of Fire



The Inner Mounting Flame

Another prominent jazz fusion band of the 70s was **Weather Report** featuring Joe Zawinul (keyboards) and Wayne Shorter (saxophone). Albums of note, "Heavy Weather" (1977), "Mysterious Traveller" (1974)

Return To Forever: Al Di Meola (guitar), Stanley Clarke (bass), Chick Corea (keyboards) and Lenny White (drums) and Flora Purim (vocals on 1st album before going solo). "Return To Forever" (1972), Light As A Feather" (1973), "Romantic Warrior" (1976)



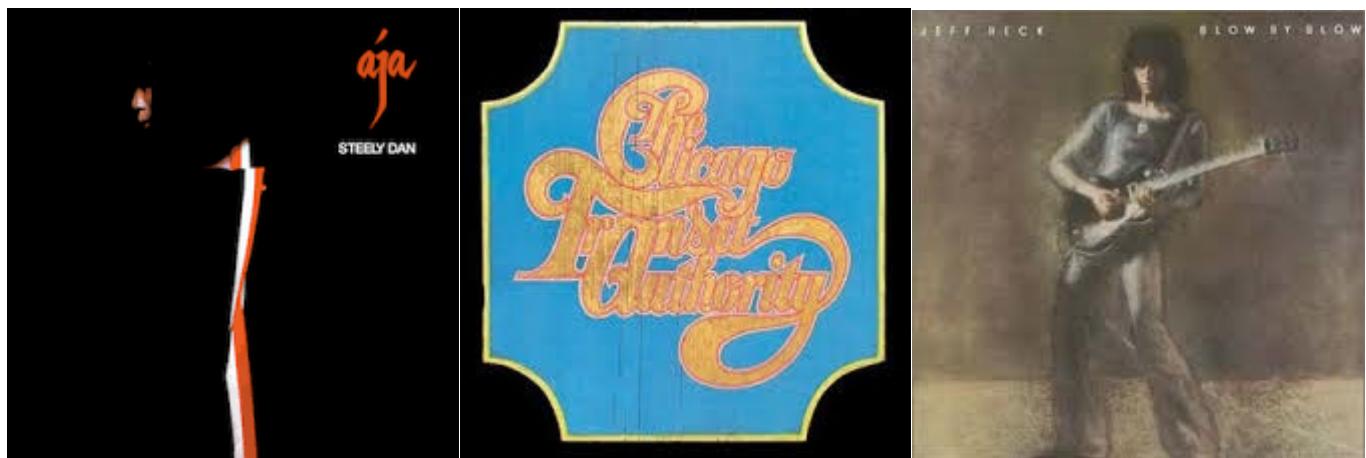
Stanley Clarke

Chick Corea

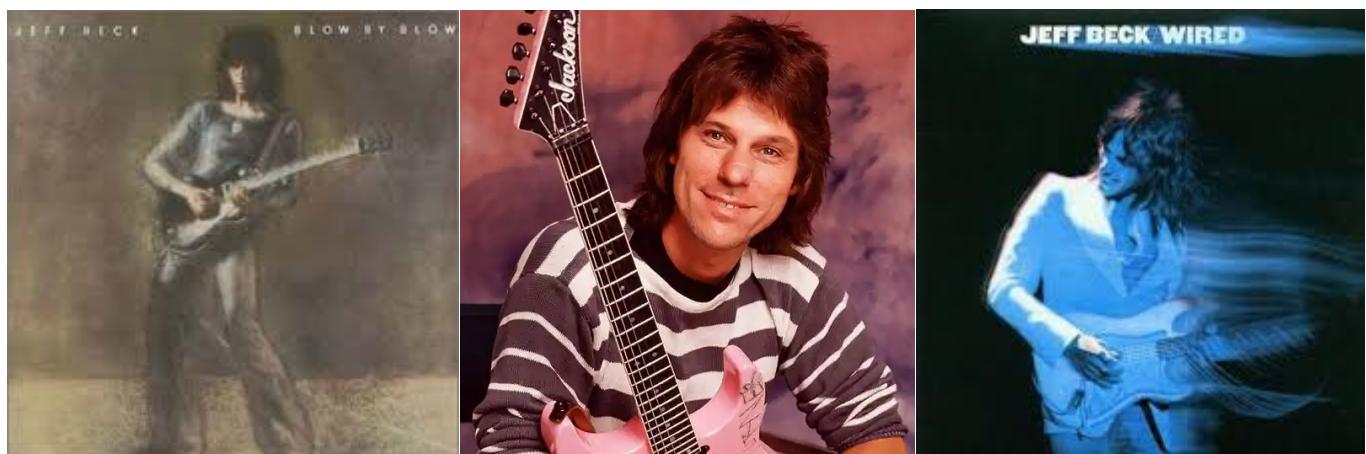
Al Di Meola

Billy Cobham

Even subsequent lineups of 60s band **Traffic**, had elements of jazz/rock, as did **Chicago & Steely Dan** (album "Aja"). But all three ventured more into the pop/rock with mainstream hit singles; Chicago with "If You Leave Me Now" and Steely Dan with "Ricki Don't Lose That Number".



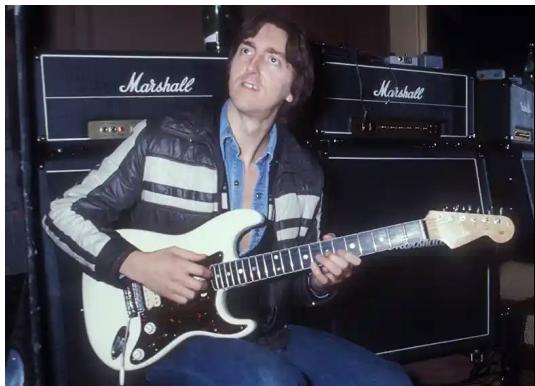
Jeff Beck (originally from 60s band the Yardbirds) became a successful jazz fusion solo artist with classic albums like "Blow By Blow"(1975) and "Wired"(1976).



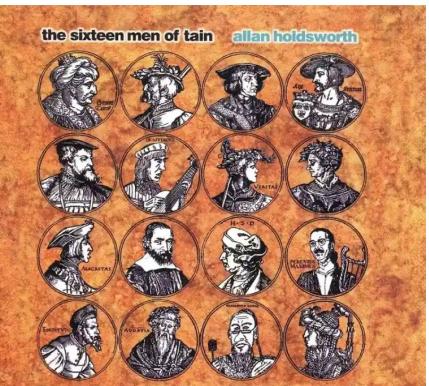
Stanley Clarke (bassist with Return To Forever) released some of the greatest jazz fusion albums including "School Days" (1976), "Journey To Love" (1975) and "Stanley Clarke"(1974).



Allan Holdsworth (guitar - formerly of "Soft Machine") is one of the most amazing jazz fusion artists going beyond the innovation of the likes of John Coltrane. Albums of note include "Metal Fatigue"(1985), "IOU"(1982), "Hard Hat Area"(1993) and "The Sixteen Men of Tain" (2000).



Allan Holdsworth, i.o.u.



Musicians featuring on some of Allan Holdsworth's albums include Jimmy Johnson (bass) and Chad Wackerman (drums).

In fact most musicians in the Jazz/Rock field were considered outstanding musicians.

Other jazz influenced artists of important note are **Herbie Hancock** (keyboards) and **George Benson** (guitar & vocals) along with 90's bands **Simply Red** (slow pop) and **Jamiroquai** (funk).

Modern day jazz / swing influenced artists include **Michael Buble** (Canada), **Harry Connick Jnr** (USA), **David Campbell** (Australia - also Jimmy Barnes' (Cold Chisel lead singer) son, **Norah Jones** (USA - Ravi Shankar's daughter) and **Diana Krall** (married to Elvis Costello).

To get more up to date with 21st century jazz you will have to do your own research.

OTHER GREAT JAZZ MUSICIANS

Roy Haynes (1925 - 2024) - drums; has played with John Coltrane, Charlie Parker, Chick Corea (Trio Music)

Steve Gadd (1944 -) - drums

Dave Weckl (1960 -) - drums

Louie Bellson (1924 - 2009) - drums



Oscar Peterson (1925 - 2007) - piano

Hiromi Uehara (1979 -) - piano

Herbie Hancock (1940 -) - piano. One of the greatest. Played with the Miles Davis Quintet from 1963 to 1968. Albums "Head Hunters" (1973), Empyrean Isles (1964), Maiden Voyage (1965)

Keith Jarrett (1945 -) - piano

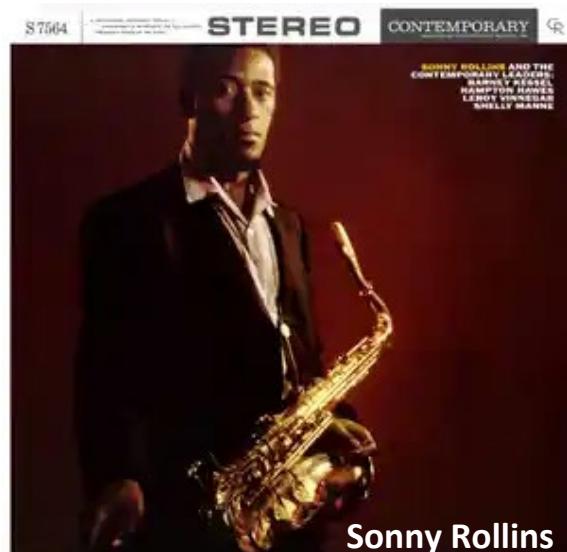
Fletcher Henderson (1897 - 1952) - piano. Both Louis Armstrong and Coleman Hawkins played in his band.

Steve Coleman (1956 -) - alto saxophone

Sonny Rollins (1930 -) - saxophone

Coleman Hawkins (1904 - 1969) - saxophone

Ornette Coleman (1930 - 2015) - saxophone



Winton Marsalis (1961 -) - trumpet

Pat Metheny (1954 -) - guitar

alive as of 18-5-2025

deceased

contemporary

exemplary



Herbie Hancock