

one take from multiple other takes of the same piece by one ensemble. Epperson comments briefly but approvingly (p. 130) on the inclusion of notated transcriptions from records in the 1976 Storyville Publications book, *Clarence Williams*, by Tom Lord (a different person from the previously-discussed meta-discographer). I would like to build on that point by describing thematic discography for jazz. This idea was introduced by jazz historian James S. Patrick, who showed how thematic catalog formats could be adapted for jazz in his article "Discography as a Tool for Musical Research and Vice Versa" (*Journal of Jazz Studies* 1, no. 1 [1973]: 65–81). A little while later, Laurie Wright embedded incipits in his descriptive entries for several recordings in his book *Mr. Jelly Lord* (Chigwell, Essex, Eng.: Storyville Publications, 1980). Since the 1990s, when copyright terms for recorded music changed and the rights began to be enforced more often by the holders, some publishers have been cautious about including four-measure incipits. A recent published effort is my thematic discography for Mississippi bluesman Charley Patton in the 2001 Revenant reissue of the recording *Screamin' and Hollerin' the Blues: The Worlds of Charley Patton* (Revenant 212). Until the prevailing copyright codes have shorter time lengths, or until publishers have a sharper definition of fair use for notated music, I foresee thematic discographies continuing to be rare and "close listening" birds.

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**Duke Ellington as Pianist: A Study of Styles.** By Matthew J. Cooper. (Monographs and Bibliographies in American Music, no. 24.) Missoula, MT: College Music Society, 2013. [xvi, 127p. ISBN 9781881913610 (paperback), \$45.] Music examples, appendices, bibliography, index.

**Why Jazz Happened.** By Marc Myers. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. [x, 267 p. ISBN 9780520268784 (hardcover); ISBN 9780520953987 (e-book), \$34.95.] Bibliographic references, index.

Duke Ellington (1899–1974) is known to many Americans as the leader of a swing-era dance band as well as a writer of pop tunes. Some musicians and jazz fans also know him as a major composer–arranger. In fact, there are musicologists and journalists who consider Ellington to be America's greatest composer, which puts him in a league with Charles Ives and Aaron Copland. Though many jazz fans think of Ellington as a pianist too, few scholars have examined how unique and original his approach to the keyboard really was. Dr. Matthew J. Cooper of Eastern Oregon University wrote that "Ellington surely stands as one of the great jazz pianists, and his work is worthy of greater recognition than it has been accorded in the past" (p. 102). Responding to this need, he wrote *Duke Ellington as Pianist: A Study of Styles*. It is a very welcome contribution because it not only touts the importance of Ellington the pianist, but it also explicates the unique techniques that made him original. This book may prove to be essential study for jazz pianists and jazz theory teachers, not just Ellington fans.

Cooper is wonderfully conversant with a wide variety of commentaries that prove pivotal to our understanding of Ellington's piano styles. The service that the author provides by doing this is commendable, particularly because he shares useful excerpts from writings that may be unknown to Ellington scholars and fans. For instance, observations by pianist Dick Katz, pianist–historian Mark Tucker, and composer–historian Gunther Schuller are particularly informative. Quotes from written remarks by Ellington himself are penetrating. Cooper is such a tenacious researcher that he even tracked down several strands of counter-evidence for an arcane discussion about whether Ellington ever made a piano roll.

To help us understand the meat of Ellington's piano style, the author has undertaken the huge task of transcribing and analyzing solos from sources that range all the way from 1928 to 1972. For instance, he selected the obscure 1929 recording "Lazy Duke" to extract the pianist's work in accompanying a clarinet solo; Ellington used parallel triads in  $\frac{3}{4}$  cross rhythm. To refute the contention of some critics that Ellington was not particularly good as a pianist,

Cooper provides transcriptions of the 1932 recording “Lots o’ Fingers” (at 288 beats per minute). Then, for chapter 5: “The Later Years and the Atypical Style,” Cooper takes quite seriously the odd matching of Ellington with avant-garde bassist Charles Mingus and bebop drummer Max Roach that led to the puzzling music on their *Money Jungle* album of 1962. (Coincidentally, the contemporary drummer-bandleader Terri Lyne Carrington is now using some of this strange music for her group’s repertory.)

Though we have long known that Ellington admired the work of James P. Johnson, the father of stride piano, we may not have known many specifics. We learn from Cooper that “Part of Johnson’s influence on the younger Ellington was his exciting use of rhythmic displacement. Johnson never confined himself to a monotonous pattern of ‘oom-pah’ bass notes and chords; instead, he found graceful and imaginative ways to vary the left-hand accompaniment. In doing so, he created a range of surprising accents and regulated the rise and fall of tension masterfully within each of his phrases” (p. 24).

Among the historically-significant contributions that Ellington made as a pianist, the author alerts us to the fact that Ellington “was among the first pianists to embrace the technique now known as ‘comping.’” He “began to pare down the left-hand stride pattern.” “Making way for his beloved band members to shine, his playing became more sparse, somewhat minimalistic” (p. 101). Cooper identifies instances in the “Shout ‘em Aunt Tillie” recording of 1930 “during which Duke actually comps in the modern sense of the word. In this chorus Duke sets simple yet effective triadic voicings in a repetitive rhythmic pattern that is neither an ‘oom-pah’ nor simple doubling of one of the instrumental sections of the band” (p. 42).

For listeners who have loved the marvelous sounds that Ellington extracted from the keyboard, yet attributed them merely to magic, Cooper has succeeded in cracking Ellington’s code. For instance, the author mentions that Ellington “showed an ear for harmonies that ‘rang’ and he found new ways to make the piano ring as well . . . through a combination of strong, sonorous manners of striking the keys with inventive,

daring harmonic voicings” (p. 101). Cooper also explains that, in order to evoke a unique sound from the piano, as on his 1959 recording of “Single Petal of a Rose,” Ellington used widely-spaced chords in the left hand and bell-like tenth chords ringing in the right (p. 55). Cooper isolated essential traits in Ellington’s unique sound by describing how the pianist ended his performance of that piece, wherein he: (a) took advantage of the entire range of the keyboard, (b) used widely-spaced unisons creating ringing sonorities, and (c) ended the piece on a  $D\flat M^{13\sharp 11}$  chord, widely spaced in fourths (p. 56). (I urge readers to get the recording, perhaps via YouTube, and notice that the closing sound is actually in another key and is strikingly dissonant with the selection’s ending chord.)

A sample of the seriousness in the book’s analyses can be found when Cooper discusses Ellington’s playing on the *Money Jungle* album’s rendition of “Caravan.” The author mentions that for one passage Ellington used “a diminished triad motive harmonized in parallel thirds, the left hand two octaves lower than the right. As the chord changes move up by fourths around the key cycle ( $F^7 - B\flat^7 - E\flat^7$ ), the motive is transposed up by whole steps—starting first on C, then D and E—thereby keeping the notes in either hand consistent with a dominant  $V^{7/9}$  chord on each chord root. This clever idea works because of the fact that the phrase is made up exclusively of notes of a diminished seventh chord ( $F\sharp - A - C - E\flat$ ), a chord that is compatible with a dominant seventh chord with a lowered ninth ( $F^{7/9}$ , in this case) and that can only be transposed three times before it repeats itself” (p. 90).

There is further evidence of Cooper’s astuteness when he pays attention to the order in which the *Money Jungle* session’s selections were recorded. He noticed that Ellington was not initially comfortable with Mingus and Roach, but “As the session heats up, however, Ellington begins to loosen up and to spar with Mingus and Roach with provocative results” (p. 87).

Through careful analyses and numerous transcriptions, the author supports his contention that Ellington’s “easily accessed toolbox of elements confirmed his openness to a panoply of practices and tireless

exploration of sonic possibility” (p. 104). The depth of Cooper’s appreciation for the pianist is revealed in his observations that “Duke’s playing evolved to the point where he could galvanize the band around him—infusing just the right rhythmic spirit to make the ensemble swing in a particular way or setting up the emotional tone-world of a ballad through a delicate introduction” (p. 101) and in these two questions: “Why is it that Ellington was able to evolve artistically, embracing everything from stride piano to percussive dissonance and tone clusters? How is it possible for him to have played with musicians from Louis Armstrong to Frank Sinatra, adapting his styles to accompany everyone from early to modern jazz, and yet remain so true to his own artistic identity?” (p. 103).

Though the book is primarily about piano music there is also a nice surprise awaiting readers of chapter 2: “Biographical Sketch: Edward Kennedy Ellington.” It is the best short summary of Ellington’s entire career that I have ever seen.

This book should become essential reading for all jazz history teachers as well as for Ellington buffs who possess technical knowledge of music. Advanced students of music theory and harmony may find it to be groundbreaking, and every music library needs a copy of it.

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Journalist–historian Marc Myers has been conducting oral history interviews with jazz legends by way of his JazzWax blog since 2007 ([www.jazzwax.com](http://www.jazzwax.com), accessed 9 January 2015). In this way, he has contributed significantly to the body of available research in jazz history. Myers now offers us a book with the provocative title *Why Jazz Happened*. In it, he adds to seventy of his own in-depth interviews with musicians, record producers, and publicists by drawing upon historical scholarship and numerous previously-published interviews by other journalists. The book is rich with summaries of literature about copyrights, radio broadcasting, recording technology, and the business side of music. Myers also incorporates his own take on jazz history.

The book’s introduction leads us through the event of the very first jazz recording session in 1917. Chapters 1 and 2 recount business and legal issues that led to

the first recordings and publicity for bebop in the 1940s. Chapter 3 addresses the influence of the free music education that became available with the G.I. Bill for further training of veterans who were musicians. Through interviews with musicians, including Dave Brubeck, Buddy Collette, and Bill Holman, Myers contends that such exposure to classical music may have influenced aspects of jazz that became known as “cool.”

The technology and business aspects of switches from 78 rpm discs to 33 1/3 rpm LP discs and 45 rpm discs are described in chapter 4. Trends in available work and living arrangements for musicians in Los Angeles during the 1950s are presented in chapter 5. In-depth interviews with Dave Pell, Lennie Niehaus, and Johnny Mandel reveal the lifestyle there and how it may have influenced the mood of music that became known as West Coast jazz. Relations between recording musicians and American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) and Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) and the beginnings of hard bop in the 1950s are presented in Chapter 6. Interviews with Lou Donaldson and Benny Golson flesh out the description of emerging changes in jazz sound on the East Coast at the time.

Chapter 7 investigates interest among African Americans in African heritage and the ways that several recordings reflected that interest, as well as the effects of political events and attitudes during the late 1950s and 1960s. Chapter 8 describes popular music in the 1960s and 1970s and the response of jazz musicians to being eased out of the market by this trend. Avant-garde jazz in Chicago in the 1960s and 1970s is the focus of chapter 9, which details the evolution and philosophy of Chicago’s Association for Advancement of Creative Musicians. Chapter 10 is concerned with adaptive responses by the jazz community to the music market being overwhelmed by rock music. Chapter 11 constitutes a brief summary and notes the effects of compact disc technology and Internet downloading.

Scholars and jazz fans may wish to piece together a history of jazz recording and performing business by combining the Myers coverage with Randy Sandke’s *Where the Dark and Light Folks Meet: Race and the Mythology, Politics, and Business of Jazz*

(Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2010) and John Gennari's book *Blowin' Hot and Cool: Jazz and Its Critics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). All three works consider the influence on jazz by the public, the media, and the business community. All three authors have a deep concern for how jazz has been treated.

Jazz fans and jazz historians will find the book to be fascinating and worthwhile reading. This may be in part due to the author's prodigious efforts in undertaking so many fresh, very revealing interviews with musicians and with important record producers such as George Avakian, Jack Tracy, and Creed Taylor. The book identifies factors that occasionally influenced the choice of material that musicians pursued, such as producer Creed Taylor's input on guitarist Wes Montgomery's recording of tunes by the Beatles. Standouts in this regard include interviews with Burt Bacharach and Sonny Rollins that tell a circuitous story regarding the role that Rollins played in the *Alfie* film score. Thanks to an interview that Myers conducted with Lou Donaldson, we finally get the backstory behind his historic recording made at the Birdland nightclub in New York on 9 June 1953 with Art Blakey, Horace Silver, Curley Russell, and Clifford Brown. We learn that it was not a regularly-working group; it was not the formally-organized Jazz Messengers, as many fans had long believed.

A few qualifications regarding the author's scope and purpose are not clear from the book's title. Myers explains more about *how* jazz styles *got recorded, broadcast, and publicized* than *why* they happened in the first place. In several instances, the book documents market influences and producer requests that affected what materials the musicians selected for performance, but most of the book is not really about the nitty-gritty of musical creativity and innovation in jazz history. For example, though the circumstances of the first jazz recording session are recounted in the book's introduction, the origins of the music played there are not explained. The author's accounts of the radio business and recording business of the 1940s in chapters 1 and 2 do not explain the musical thinking of musicians Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie when they invented bebop, though Myers does present a plausible case

for the musical origins of jazz-rock fusion via substantive interviews with musicians Larry Coryell, John McLaughlin, Gary Burton, Herbie Hancock, and Chick Corea in chapter 10. Moreover, the book is concerned mostly with modern jazz, 1942 to 1972, not the earliest jazz. Therefore, the book does not answer the question of why jazz happened in the first place. The ultimate beginnings of jazz are not addressed. For the most part, *Why Jazz Happened* touches major commercial and technological forces that *allowed* the music to be recorded and broadcast.

Through the emphasis placed on extramusical factors, Myers may accidentally imply to uncritical readers that such factors actually caused jazz, when in fact they contributed to the dissemination of the music rather than to the actual tones, chords, and rhythms used in its creation. Therefore, some readers might object to the author's and interviewees' tendencies to attribute essential characteristics of the jazz styles less to the musical preferences of their creators than to extramusical forces, such as the types of neighborhoods where musicians lived, social and political currents occurring in America at the time, or changes in recording technology. Readers might also question the author's position that jazz could influence American values. But despite such drawbacks, *Why Jazz Happened* contains a treasure trove of insider information, and it constitutes a valuable addition to readings in jazz history. Moreover, the author brings much love to his task, and his reverence for the music jumps off the pages.

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**100 Books Every Blues Fan Should Own.** By Edward Komara and Greg Johnson. (Best Music Books.) Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014. [xviii, 299 p. ISBN 9780810889217 (hardcover), \$35; ISBN 978081088-9224 (e-book), \$34.99.] Bibliography, discography, index.

The blues permeates a large portion of the popular music of African Americans in the United States. This bibliography is the work of the current and former blues