UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

A STUDY OF THE LIVES AND CAREERS OF SIX BLACK FEMALE JAZZ INSTRUMENTALISTS: VALAIDA SNOW, PAULINE BRADDY, MELBA LISTON, CLORA BRYANT, TERRY POLLARD, AND DOROTHY ASHBY

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A Study of the Lives and Careers of
Six Black Female Jazz Instrumentalists: Valaida Snow
Pauline Braddy, Melba Liston, Clora Bryant, Terry
Pollard, and Dorothy Ashby

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This research explores six black female jazz instrumentalists who were active between 1925 to 1960 with the objective of bringing more attention to these pioneers who broke gender barriers and contributed to the jazz idiom. To understand why these musicians are excluded in the main cannon of jazz history, I have attempted to connect commonalities in their careers. The six women artists are Valaida Snow (trumpet), Pauline Braddy (drums), Melba Liston (trombone), Clora Bryant (trumpet), Terry Pollard (piano/vibraphone), and Dorothy Ashby (harp). These women are all extremely underrepresented in literature despite their extraordinary work and talent. These six female musicians were also chosen to be discussed in this research as they all were pursuing careers during a strongly male-dominated era in jazz.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Women have been underrepresented in almost all areas of the music industry throughout history. When it comes to recording, audio engineering, artist relations, corporate positions, and performing, the lack of women has been staunchly apparent, especially in instrumental performance. However, one of the genres that most egregiously lacks the inclusion of women and specifically Black women, is America's own music: jazz. [1]

Jazz has a dense and complicated history of racism, social activism, and adaptation through political conflict and though women have barely appeared in jazz history textbooks or on the major record labels' artist representation lists, their presence was always there. In jazz history, sociological normalities and gender politics have defined the black woman's position as a vocalist with the occasional pianist. To create change, we must acknowledge the contributions black female instrumentalists have made in jazz history. [2]

My research explores the careers and contributions of six black female instrumentalists. These artists were chosen due to the lack of representation of female jazz instrumentalists between 1925-1960 in most jazz history books and scholarly research. The female presence in jazz has been impacted by a patriarchal-dominated narrative for as long as the artform has existed.[3] In fact, 97% of women feel they need

[1] Sherrie Tucker, *Women in Jazz,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

more visibility in the jazz community in order to be successful.[4] Furthermore, in 2019, 84% of jazz studies degrees were granted to males.[5] This research explores the careers of the following six black female instrumentalists with the objective of bringing more attention to these trailblazers who broke gender barriers and contributed to jazz.

Discussed are Valaida Snow (trumpet), Pauline Braddy (drums), Melba Liston (trombone), Clora Bryant (trumpet), Terry Pollard (piano/vibraphone), and Dorothy Ashby (harp). These musicians' careers and music interested me as they are underrepresented in academic study. Their craft, dedication to music, and unwavering musical excellence may not have propelled them to stardom, but they deserve to be remembered almost 100 years later. I also selected these six female musicians because of their courage to pursue a career in a male-dominated genre. Lastly, I chose these musicians to display a variety of instrumentation.

As a female vocalist who began my music studies as a trumpet player, I am eager to explore apparent historical stereotypes in jazz between women as singers and men as instrumentalists. Furthermore, with women, especially black women, largely missing from the historical record in recordings, articles, books and textbooks, the following research questions seem vital to ask:

1. What circumstances occurred to exclude these six women from the narrative of jazz history?
2. How has gender and race played into the trajectory of these women's careers and legacy?

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[4] "Jazz & Jazz Studies," Data USA, https://datausa.io/profile/cip/jazz-jazz-studies#demographics.
[5] Data USA, "Jazz & Jazz Studies."

3. How do we implement these women, their music, and their experiences into the cannon of jazz history?

While some women's stories have been highlighted briefly through jazz history, it is important to recognize that many women who contributed to this art form never received the proper recognition they deserved. And while there are many additional women who were active during the times highlighted in this study, I feel that these six women give a broad and diverse overview of experiences for black female artists during this time.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

For this essay, I am using a combination of sources that relate to feminism in jazz. These sources are organized into the following categories: books, articles, websites, book chapters, and audio.

Books

The books referenced in this essay are "*Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies"* by Nichole T. Rustin and Sherrie Tucker; *"Swing Shift: All-Girl Bands of the 1940s"* by Sherrie Tucker; and "*The International Sweethearts of Rhythm: The Ladies Jazz Band from Piney Woods Country Life School*" Antoinette D. Handy.

Swing Shift provides specific insight into all-women bands in the 1940s and the social politics surrounding them. This book highlights two of the selected instrumentalists, Pauline Braddy and Clora Bryant. It also provides context to the feminist movement in jazz as it shows women have been championing for equal rights since the 1940s, if not earlier.

The International Sweethearts of Rhythm is an important source as it touches on several of the selected artists written about in this essay and provides research into an integral ensemble in jazz history that is often ignored in mainstream jazz history texts. It also provides context for women's role in jazz in the early 20th century. This source explains the history of *The International Sweethearts of Rhythm* and the legacy it leaves to this day.

"*Big Ears"* is an imperative source as it provides a wider range of historical context for feminism in jazz while also examining the patriarchal social values and performance practices that exist in jazz culture. This book is divided into three larger

categories: Rooting Gender in Jazz History; Improvising Gender: Embodiment and Performance; and Reimagining Jazz Representations. Throughout this book Tucker and Rustin examine various gaps in female representation in education, history, and performance.

Articles

Articles make up the bulk of my research, including "The White Reception of Jazz in America" by Maureen Anderson; "When Women Band Together: Three Jazz Artists Share Their Stories" by Sarah Jane Cion and Carline Ray and Lenora Zenzalai Helm; "Street Queens: New Orleans Brass Bands and the Problem of Intersectionality" by Kyle DeCoste; "Black Women Working Together: Jazz, Gender, and the Politics of Validation" by Tammy L. Kernodle; "The Song Struggling to Be Heard: Reclaiming Gender and Jazz in Maya Angelou's "The Reunion"" by Patricia G. Lespinasse; "A Feminist Perspective on New Orleans Jazz Women" by Sherrie Tucker; "Feminist Aesthetics in Jazz: An Interview with Susanne Vincenza of Alive!" by Mary S. Pollock and Susanne Vincenza; "Two Strikes and the Double Negative: The Intersections of Gender and Race in the Cases of Female Jazz Saxophonists" by Yoko Suzuki; "Where the Blues and the Truth Lay Hiding: Rememory of Jazz in Black Women's Fiction" by Sherrie Tucker; "Nobody's Sweethearts: Gender, Race, Jazz, and the Darlings of Rhythm" by Sherrie Tucker; "Women in Jazz" by Sherrie Tucker; and "Differences between Male and Female Students' Confidence, Anxiety, and Attitude toward Learning Jazz Improvisation" by Erin Wehr-Flower.

While some of these articles focus on race and gender in jazz, they all touch on one primary focus: the adversity that minorities are subjected to within the genre. Several of these articles consist of interviews by women who are in the jazz idiom providing a direct source of their experience and how feminism, or lack thereof, impacted their career. Another portion of these articles consists of specific accounts of feminism in certain areas or times of jazz history, for example, female brass bands in New Orleans or all-women bands of the 1940s. The remainder of these articles illuminate the overarching issue of women as a minority group in jazz. They examine how women's lack of representation has affected education, playing, and understanding the history of jazz in education and on the bandstand.

Book Chapters

"*Spiritual Sister: The Black Aesthetic, Feminism, and Black Power*" from *Sistuhs in the Struggle: An Oral History of Black Arts Movement, Theater, and Performance* by La Donna L. Forsgren is one of the book chapters used in this essay. This book chapter explains the importance of representation for black women in a Black American Music. Forsgren explains how feminism and black empowerment aid in the support of black women's involvement in artforms where they are regularly underrepresented. Black women are one of the most marginalized populations in jazz studies so examining research that helps understand this phenomenon can be beneficial.

A second chapter used is from author Bill Reed's book, "*Hot from Harlem: Twelve African American Entertainers*" with specific regard to Valaida Snow as she is researched and mentioned at length in it. In chapter four, Reed explains the post-World-War I socio-political climate that led to the creation of Vaudeville. Snow, who was a black vaudevillian entertainer, maneuvered through heightened racial tensions and social

adversities to become one of the most successful musicians and entertainers in the late 1920s-1930s. This chapter examines her life in detail and explores the life she led as a worldwide entertainer.

Audio Recordings

One audio source referenced for this essay is "Forty Years of Women in Jazz" produced by Jass Recording in 1989. This album is a compilation of both instrumental and vocal pieces in the jazz idiom. It is important to not only research the ethnographic materials surrounding the selected instrumentalists, but also their musical output and to learn how to properly describe it. This album features Terry Pollard, Valaida Snow, Melba Liston, and Pauline Braddy. Another important audio source used in this research is Clora Bryant's solo album, "Gal with a Horn" released in 1957 by Mode Records. This album illustrates Bryant's advanced musicianship, innovative artistry, and agility on the trumpet.

Valaida Snow's "Patience and Fortitude" and "High Hat, Trumpet and Rhythm," are also referenced as they illustrate Snow's skills in singing and trumpet-playing. These recordings also highlight her influence from Louis Armstrong specifically rhythmic and harmonic similarity solos. Dorothy Ashby's albums "The Jazz Harpist" released in 1957 by Savoy Records, "Hip Harp" released in 1958 by Prestige Records, *"*Afro Harping" released in 1968, and "The Rubaiyat of Dorothy Ashby" released in 1970 are also valuable sources in this research. These albums illuminate Ashby's development as a musician and artist. Between her first and second album, Ashby develops a deeper sense of bebop vocabulary and more advanced improvisation. While her first two albums are influenced by sounds of 1950s jazz, the third album moves into a funk and Rhythm and

Blues idiom while retaining her jazz roots. Her fourth album is influenced by musical trends of the 1970s including world music instrumentation and modern recording techniques. These albums demonstrate Ashby's growth in musicianship and artistry over time.

Another source I found vital to this research was Melba Liston's 1959 album "Melba Liston and Her 'Bones" released by MetroJazz. This is Liston's only album as a leader and is one of the few sources that highlights Liston for her playing, band leading, and arranging. I also found her recordings with Randy Weston valuable in this research, specifically *Tanjah* (1973), *Little Niles* (1976), *Uhuru Afrika* (1977), *The Spirit of our Ancestors* (1992), and *Volcano Blues* (1993). The collaboration between Liston and Weston was an important artistic relationship in her career and listening to these songs helped further indicate Liston's arranging techniques and style. Lastly, Terry Pollard's 1955 album "Terry Pollard" released on Bethlehem records is a useful source as it highlights her jazz sensibility, composition style, and powerful playing. Since this is the only album Pollard released as a bandleader, it is a significant source for analyzing her music.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

My research was conducted based on the resources above in conjunction with an eight-part defining guideline I used to outline each musician's respective chapter. For chapters IV through IX, I referenced materials used above specifically articles, newspapers, or books. The subjects below answer important questions I wanted to include about each of these artists. While some of these musicians had more readily available material to help address these subjects, others did not have the same histography available thus resulting in some gaps in their respective chapters. The outline is as such:

1. INTRODUCTION
2. BIOGRPAHICAL INFORMATION
3. EARLY CAREER
4. RISE TO PROMINECE/LATER CAREER
5. IMPORTANT MUSICAL PERFORMANCES OR PIECES
6. LATER LIFE
7. RECORDING DISCOGRAPHY
8. CONCLUSION

While all six of the instrumentalists fulfilled the eight elements of the chapter outline, I had to adjust later sections of each chapter to fit their career and life. Each chapter has a unique section that outlines the musician's role in jazz history, experience as a woman in jazz, comparisons or relationships with famous male contemporaries, or legacy (and at times all of the above).

The eight topics above were used to outline the biographical material of the six artists. Extra sections outline imperative historical, political, and social issues that the selected instrumentalists encountered during their careers. Each chapter also includes an analysis of these women's experience as a black female instrumentalist with examples

from mediums like newspaper and magazine articles. The sections that go beyond the biographic and career details helps outline the lack of visibility in the jazz cannon as well as helps readers understand the experience of female identifying jazz instrumentalists of the 20th century.

CHAPTER FOUR: VALAIDA SNOW (1904-1956)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Valaida Snow was an American jazz trumpet player, singer, actress, and entertainer. Nicknamed "the Queen of the Trumpet," "The Colored Queen of Rhythm," and most notably by contemporary Louis Armstrong, "the second greatest trumpet player alive," Snow captured hearts through her musical prowess and captivating stage presence.[6] Born in Chattanooga, Tennessee in 1904, Snow had a career that spanned over four decades starting in her father's family band and ending with solo tours across Europe, Asia, and playing stages with jazz greats in New York. She was a popular performer in the 1920s on both the Vaudeville and Theater Owner Bookings Association (T.O.B.A) circuits. Unfortunately, her legacy has been overlooked in major jazz history texts. Snow's ability to shift jazz away from Dixieland to swing while embracing her early jazz roots made her one of the parties responsible for spreading jazz to Europe, especially after World War I.[7] While her fame and success took place mostly overseas, Valaida Snow's memory as a female pioneer in jazz is due to be recognized world-wide.

BIOGRPAHICAL INFORMATION and INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC

Valaida Snow (originally named Valada and also referred to as Valeda) was born June 2, 1904, in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The year of her birth has often been brought into question due to her and her five siblings being a product of a mixed-race

[6] R.K. Smith, "Snow, Valaida 1904(?)–1956," in *Contemporary Black Biography,* (Gale, 2017), 138-139.
[7] Giovanni Russonello, "Overlooked No More: Valaida Snow, Charismatic 'Queen of the Trumpet'," *The New York Times,* 2020.

relationship; her mother, Etta, being a black woman and her father John Snow, being a white man.[8]

Her early life was crafted by music and a show-business lifestyle as her family was always on the road for touring purposes as both parents were traveling entertainers. During this time, Valaida was absorbing an early music education from Etta, a Howard University educated music teacher. She provided her children with orchestral scores and instruments to get their music careers started early.[9] Though her first performance is often debated, two formative performance opportunities for Snow were the Snow's Gold Dust Twins, a vaudeville act with her brother in which she sang, danced, and played violin, and later was a member of the Pickaninny Troubadours. John Snow, a minister, was the leader of The Pickaninny Troubadours, an ensemble that consisted of mostly of child vaudevillian singers.[10] When Valaida turned five years old, she joined this ensemble alongside her sisters, Lavaida and Alvaida, whom received musical training from their mother as well.[11] By the age of fifteen, Snow had learned to play cello, bass, banjo, violin, mandolin, harp, accordion, clarinet, saxophone, and trumpet, her instrument of choice. Influenced by her parent's career in show business, Snow was set to pursue a career in trumpet by the age of 15.[12]

VAUDEVILLE AND T.O.B. A

Snow's career began with the Vaudeville and Theater Owners Booking

[8] Smith, "Snow," 138.
[9] Ibid, 138.
[10]Ibid, 139.
[11] Herb Boyd, "Valaida Snow, 'The Queen of the Trumpet'," *New York Amsterdam News,* 2015, http://amsterdamnews.com/news/2015/jun/18/valaida-snow-queen-trumpet/.
[12] Boyd, "Valaida."

Association (T.O.B.A) that focused strictly on the Midwest and Southern United States. T.O.B.A was the main circuit that provided entertainment opportunities for black American entertainers in the early 20th century. Since black entertainers were not allowed to perform in these parts of the country, T.O.B.A was founded in 1909 as the first primarily black Vaudeville circuit. When Snow began working on the Vaudeville circuit, there was strict segregation of black and white artists as well as who could be in the audience. This circuit consisted of over 45 venues in those areas of the United States and produced artists such as Mamie Smith, Bessie Smith, and Ma Rainey. Although the circuit provided many black performers with performance opportunities, T.O.B.A. also had a reputation for treating their talent poorly and cheating their talent out of their payments. [13]

Snow's career in the 1920s consisted of work on the T.O.B.A. circuits as well as in Vaudeville starring in major performances in Pennsylvania and Atlantic City. Pre-World War I, Atlantic City had become the main performance epicenter for the most talented black performers and musicians. She soon moved to New York performing at Barron's and in Will Masten's revue as well as making her Broadway debut in 1924 in *Chocolate Dandies* as Manda. Her talents on the stage received rave reviews including one critic stating she was a "thrilling young woman" and another stating she "carried the female honors for the show." Her New York career did not just consist of dancing, singing, and acting, however. In 1924 during her run of *Rhapsody in Black,* Snow acted

[13] Sally Placksin, "Valaida Snow," in *American Women in Jazz:1900 to the Present: Their Words, Lives, and Music*, (New York: Seaview Books January 1, 1985,) 93.

as leader of the band for the first act, played trumpet, and performed opposite Ethel Waters.[14]

Snow's gift of music and entertaining soon took her overseas. Her first international tour took her to Shanghai, London, and Paris for Lew Leslie's performance of *Blackbirds.*[15] She gained success during this performance and continued to tour around Asia and Europe playing jazz on her trumpet. It was during this time that Louis Armstrong called her "second only on the horn to [him]."[16] In 1928, while returning to Chicago for a performance, pianist Earl "Fatha" Hines recalls a performance of Snow's that he and Louis Armstrong attended: "In her act she had seven different pairs of shoes set out in front, and she'd do a dance in each of them—she'd do a chorus in each, and on the tap number she tapped just like Bojangles. Louis Armstrong had a fit when he saw her. 'Boy, I never saw anything like that' he told me. She broke the house every time—she was so talented."[17]

In 1933, Valaida Snow had gained the respect of jazz musicians in New York, so she was booked for two recording sessions, one with bandleader, Count Basie and the other with pianist, Earl Hines. Her playing and unique ability to replicate Louis Armstrong's sound helped propel her career forward as well help jazz spread to Europe.[18] Snow found herself frequently being billed at marquees world-wide. Her arrival in London timed closely after Louis Armstrong's first performance, making her a huge sensation. She was first coined "The Queen of The Trumpet" and "Little Louis" by

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[14] Placksin, "Valaida", 94.
[15] Boyd, "Valaida."
[16] John L. Clark Jr., "Snow, Valaida," *Oxford Music Online*, 2015.
[17] Placksin, "Valaida," 94.
[18] Russonello, "Overlooked."

British writer Brian Rust, which played well to audiences. Not only did she possess musical prowess, but for the time it was also a novelty to see a woman playing a horn.[19] Moving once again to America, she was cast in several Hollywood films, most of which she played trumpet, sang, and danced. Two of these films were "Take it From Me" (1937) and "Patience and Fortitude" (1946). In the later 1930s, Snow once again moved back to Europe, only to find herself in the middle of World War II.[20]

In 1940, Snow found herself living in Denmark. She had moved back to Europe to pursue her music career with the promise of making movies and recording records. It was the beginning of World War II, and while Snow with her music helped Americans and Europeans escape the horrid reality of war, she fell victim to the war herself. While in Denmark, Valaida Snow was incarcerated and placed in the Nazi concentration camp, Wester-Faenle. Every belonging she owned, including $7000 in travelers checks and a gold trumpet presented by Queen Whihelmina were taken from her.[21] It is noted by her then manager that Snow possibly saved her life in Wester-Faenle by being an entertainer. This imprisonment lasted eighteen months only to leave lasting scars on her emotional, psychological, and physical well-being. Upon her release, she returned to the United States severely damaged by her time in the camp weighing only 68 pounds.[22]

Upon her return to the United States, Snow eventually regained her physical and mental health and continued to perform world-wide after World War II. She gained great respect from her peers in the jazz community as she continued her passion for trumpet.

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[19] Placksin, "Valaida", 95.
[20] Russonello, "Overlooked."
[21] Mario A. Charles, "The Age of a Jazzwoman: Valada Snow, 1900-1956," *The Journal of Negro History* 80, no. 4 (1995,) 189.
[22] Charles, "Jazzwomen," 185.

Snow's last performance would take place at the Palace Theater in 1956. She passed away after the performance from a brain hemorrhage at the age of 51.[23]

RELATIONSHIP WITH LOUIS ARMSTRONG

Often in her career, Snow was compared to trumpet player, Louis Armstrong. Her early roots in jazz are reminiscent of Armstrong in many ways, including his articulations, embellishments, singing style, and rhythm. However, it should be noted that Armstrong and Snow never formally contracted a mentor/mentee relationship.[24] In fact it has been assumed that Armstrong only saw Snow perform a handful of times.[25] Her performance, technique and musical talent was on the same level as Armstrong's. Pianist Mary Lou Williams recalled her as "a master on the trumpet…hitting high C just like Louis."[26] One concept women instrumentalists of the early 20th century used to attract more audience members was to advertise as a female version of famous male musicians. While well intended, the nickname "Little Louis" suggests Snow's musical inferiority to Armstrong and loses the individual musicianship of Snow. It also indicates a sense of musical attachment to Armstrong. Author and scholar Sarah Provost stated, "while this portrayal may have had the effect of stripping her of creative power, she utilized a thorough incorporation of Armstrong's style as an effective way of gaining audience."[27]

A female playing a customarily male instrument was seen as more of a novelty. Instead of focusing on her music ability and individual artistry, Snow would be compared to her male counterpart, Louis Armstrong, and would be booked as an act, instead of a

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[23]"Valaida Snow" *Women in History Ohio,* https://www.womeninhistoryohio.com/valaida-snow.html.
[24] Charles, "Jazzwomen," 185.
[25] Sarah Caissie Provost, "Bringing Something New: Female Jazz Instrumentalists' Use of Imitation and Masculinity," *Jazz Perspectives* 10, no. 2-3: (2017): 150.
[26] Charles, "Jazzwomen," 186.
[27] Provost, "Bringing Something," 151.

musician like Armstrong might have been. In turn this takes credit away from her musicianship and gives credit to outside sources.

SNOW IN JAZZ HISTORY

Snow's lack of representation in jazz history is due to many factors. One major contributing factor could be the overshadowing career of Louis Armstrong. Armstrong's career started to peak around the 1920s at a similar time as Snow.[28] While women were discouraged to enter male-dominated spaces, like jazz, Armstrong was given more of the spotlight, recording opportunities, and press attention. In the 1920s when Snow was reaching her peak career, she was plagued with racism and misogyny on the road. The discouragement of women entering jazz spaces and the laws surrounding Jim Crow America create a narrative that makes Snow's legacy murky and forgotten.

In the early 20th century women performers were expected to be singers or dancers, not instrumentalists.[29] Women instrumentalists were also not always welcome in jazz touring circuits. This is made apparent as many of Snow's reviews make note of her body, appearance, or use vague adjectives that lack depth or understanding of her musical talent. One review states, "[theatergoers] were amazed to find this slender, shapely girl capable of that sort of jazz trumpet that had hitherto been the prerogative, in the minds at least, of such as Louis Armstrong and Nat Gonella."[30] Not only was Snow being overtly underestimated because she was a woman, but she was also sexualized and overshadowed by her much more famous counterpart. It should also be noted that Snow

[28] Richard Williams, "Saturday Review: First novels: Trumpet queen Richard Williams is moved by the story of Valaida Snow," review of *Valaida* by Candace Allen, 501.
[29] Williams, "Saturday," 501.
[30] Charles, "Jazzwomen," 186.

was rarely mentioned or written about in American press. Though Snow was a singer and dancer, she also fell into the category of an instrumentalist. Women were expected to sing, dance, and avoid any instrument "that the playing of which doesn't detract from their feminine appeal."[31] However, as a black American woman of the early 20th century, she was not able to receive the same musical opportunities as her white counterparts. Racism effectively removed black Americans from classical concert spaces and pushed them into jazz, which during this time was associated with red light districts or being "lazy, freeloaders, inclined to avoid genteel employment at all costs."[32] While Snow had genuine, borderline virtuosic musical talent, she was still brandished as a novelty because she was a female playing a societally male-gendered instrument.

Touring, which embodied much of Snow's career, was also a somewhat unforgiving space for women, and especially women of color. Many men questioned how appropriate it would be to have women present on the touring circuit. However, Snow "was a gutsy woman [who] withstood the chauvinism and unyielding racism of Jim Crow."[33] Snow might have been more equipped emotionally to handle such abuse on the road as she grew up in the Vaudeville circuit in a family of entertainers; however, the toll it took on her would be noted later by artists such as Melba Liston, claiming that "[Valaida] was so unhappy. She was like hurt all the time."[34] Jazz musician and pianist Olivia Charlot, stated that when she joined jazz band in the mid-20th century, her grandmother feared for her safety stating "those men are gonna disrespect you."[35] Snow's

[31] Charles, "Jazzwomen," 184.
[32] Ibid, 185.
[33] Ibid, 185.
[34] Ibid, 189.
[35] Charles, "Jazzwomen," 184.

performance and touring history brought her to other countries and with this she also was able to escape the blatant American racism (though racism still persisted in Europe). Her European travels also provided the ability to compete less with big name American jazz musicians.[36] Since much of her career was spent on tour internationally, her presence is missed in jazz history in America.[37]

While Snow's recording career is expansive, the majority of her discography was recorded and released on international labels throughout Europe. Her recorded music reached listeners in Europe, however American audiences did not get the same opportunity to hear her nearly as often.[38]

Dr. Tammy Kernodle, a historian and musicologist, explains that although Snow had a successful career, she never recorded a commercial project of her own. She was always a side musician on other musicians' projects and she was not recorded as much as her peers. Much of her recordings that did exist, existed overseas as well.[39]

Another reason that explains Snow's lack of recording notoriety is the 2008 Universal Fire at Universal Studios. In a recent article, the New York Times listed Valaida Snow as one of the artists whose work was destroyed in the fire. This made very little of her work accessible to the public, as well as musicologists and researchers of jazz studies, as very few recordings and videos of her exist to this day.[40] All of the reasons

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[36] Provost, "Bringing Something," 151.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Valaida Snow," Discogs. https://www.discogs.com/artist/307402-Valaida-Snow.
[39] Russonello, "Overlooked."
[40] The Stage Belonged to Her," National Museum of African American History and Culture, (2020) https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/stage-belonged-her.

listed above help explain why she was not awarded the same historical acclaim in America as many of her male contemporaries.

CONCLUSION

Valaida Snow was a multi-talented musician, entertainer, and performer whose legacy is often overlooked. However, it continues to shine brightly due to her career highlights and ability to overcome adversity. As a black woman in a male-dominated field in the 1930s, Snow balanced a career, touring, and multiple forms of entertainment in her lifetime. She starred on Broadway, mastered the trumpet as well as multiple other instruments, toured internationally, survived as a victim of a war-torn country, and even performed for royalty.[41] However, her career is not studied in classrooms and is often overlooked by many jazz artists. This can be due to a multitude of reasons, but one of them is not her lack of talent. Snow not only challenged female stereotypes of the time but also rose above them to set an example for female musicians who would succeed her. "She never succumbed to the caste society prescribed for her. She leaves a legacy of self-determination and courage that is a model for black entertainers of today." [42] She is among many black artists whose talents were not universally recognized in her lifetime. She was not only a star on-stage, but a true pioneer for women in jazz worldwide with her virtuosic trumpet playing and unique ability to thrive in a male-dominated art form.

[41] National Museum of African American History and Culture, "The Stage Belonged to Her."
[42] Charles, "Jazzwomen," 185.

CHAPTER FIVE: PAULINE BRADDY (1922-1996)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Known as the "Queen of the Drums," Pauline Braddy was a jazz musician and drummer who graced the national mainstage of jazz in the 1940s with the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. Her career which lasted only around two decades long was decorated with accomplishments, including being the International Sweethearts of Rhythm's first and original drummer and playing alongside jazz musicians of the 1950s and 60s. Her career as a musician is revered as one of perseverance and overcoming social stereotypes as well as creative and groundbreaking ingenuity in the realm of percussion. [43]

EARLY CAREER AND INTERNATIONAL SWEETHEARTS OF RHYTHM

Pauline Braddy was born in Mendenhall, Mississippi on February 14, 1922. While little is written about her parents, she did attend the same school her mother did, which was Piney Woods Country Life School. The school, which Braddy began attending in 1936, was a boarding school for African American students in Piney Woods, Mississippi that provided black students the opportunity to receive a formal education regardless of financial standing.[44] Braddy once stated, "my mother's people went to that school [Piney Woods], and it went all down…nobody ever mentions it when they talk about black history. It was Laurence Clifton Jones who started the school. Well, he was not a militant.

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[43] Sally Placksin, "Pauline Braddy," in *American Women in Jazz:1900 to the Present: Their Words, Lives, and Music*, (New York: Seaview Books January 1, 1985,*)* 135.
[44] Larry Copeland, "Black Private School Serves as Rural Refuge / Discipline and Calm Helps Students Flourish," *Knight-Ridder Tribune News at the Houston Chronicle*, last modified September 28, 1997, https://www.chron.com/archive/search_copy_11078_20210423001146/.

He did not get into civil rights and that kind of stuff, but it was a gorgeous place, and it did so much for so many poor blacks in the South. It usually ran on donations, people from up north, as they called it. A kid could go to school and did not have to pay anything. You worked your way, and they taught you something. It was a great thing."[45]

While attending the school Braddy was introduced to her musical passion. She joined the brass band which consisted of around forty females and very few men where she originally played the clarinet. This abnormal concentration of women intrigued one teacher, whom Braddy identifies as Mr. Jones, to see if students might be interested in playing in an all-female jazz band. The assigned teacher to this ensemble was Consuella Carter who was "a great musician...she taught every instrument there was and she was really the one who started the band out after Mr. Jones decided that he might want to try out the girls playing 'swing music.'"[46] In 1939, Consuella Carter and the female ensemble members of the Piney Woods brass band began the Sweethearts of Rhythm, an all-female jazz ensemble. Carter was the biggest starting force behind the Sweethearts of Rhythm, as she arranged the instrumentalists, rehearsed the ensemble, bought stock arrangements, and even led the band by playing cornet. The influence and guidance of Carter proved to be vital for these young instrumentalists to be exposed to and pursue careers in jazz. While Carter laid musical groundwork, Braddy claimed that much of the inspiration the women in the band experienced came from records. "We never heard live bands very much, you know. I think the first big band that we heard was when Professor Jones took a bunch of the girls to Memphis, Tennessee to see Louis Armstrong. We were

[45] Placksin, "Pauline Braddy," 135.
[46] Ibid.

little kids."[47] However, Braddy also claimed that students were allowed to listen to the records and would hide them due to the religious nature of the school. Some favorites of the students were Andy Kirk and Count Basie, however Braddy recalls that being involved in jazz ostracized ensemble members in the Sweethearts of Rhythm. "You weren't supposed to play it [swing music] and you weren't supposed to dance. When we started the band, we were kind of like outcasts from the rest of the girls."[48]

PROFESSIONAL CAREER

Braddy's career as a drummer started as one of pure luck of the draw. Of all the ensemble members, she was the one with the most natural talent, "they always said I had a good sense of rhythm…I got into the drums by accident."[49] Originally, Braddy also focused on pursuing the alto saxophone. When the original drummer left the band ensemble members looked to Braddy claiming, "Pauline's a natural." Braddy's rection wasn't one of flattery, however. She claimed to have cried stating "who wanted to play drums?"[50]

Braddy found representation an issue immediately. There were few female drummers for her to model herself after, and those who she did know were inaccessible. Her mindset however was one of determination and did not allow her gender to become a factor in her ability to pursue drums. She admired the playing of Philly Jo Jones, Ben Thigpen, and Gene Kruppa, later modeling her sound off the later.[51]

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[47] Placksin, "Pauline Braddy,*"* 135.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.

The Sweethearts of Rhythm played around the Southern United States through 1939 and relocated to Arlington in 1940 to become a professional touring band. The ensemble then became "The International Sweethearts of Rhythm" and also established itself as one of the most successful bands of the swing era.[52] The ensemble was one of the first all-black-female ensembles (later integrating with both black and white musicians) to pursue swing music and proved to be a success with audiences and box offices. In 1940, the Sweethearts entered a band competition as the only all-female band and finished third out of thirty. Their success broke attendance records in venues nationally and were invited to return often as they were adored by audiences and venues alike, "by January 1941, the band was rated as one of the nation's best draws." [53] By the mid-1940s the Sweethearts were at their peak one venue claiming "one of the hottest stage shows to ever hit the roof".[54] In 1945 ensemble toured Europe with the United Service Organization (USO) and Braddy was often considered to be a highlight. During this tour she picked up the name "Queen of the Drums" and was often given many compliments on her orchestration and playing. The ensemble was later signed to Associated Booking Corporation which also signed the likes of Billie Holiday and Lionel Hampton. [55] They starred in several short films as well as a feature film produced by Alexander

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[52] "Pauline Braddy Williams, Swing-Era Singer, Dies at 73." *The Washington Post,* Feb 02, 1996, http://access.library.miami.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/pauline-braddy-williams-swing-era-singer-dies-at/docview/307931479/se-2.
[53] "Tom Tom Throwback: Pauline Braddy, 'Queen of the Drums,'" Tom Tom Magazine, https://tomtommag.com/2019/05/tom-tom-throwback-pauline-braddy-/.
[54] The Washington Post, "Pauline Braddy Williams, Swing-Era Singer, Dies at 73."
[55] Ibid.

Productions, an-all-black production company, where they highlighted Braddy's drumming.[56]

LATER CAREER

In 1949, the International Sweethearts of Rhythm disbanded. Braddy claimed that "the best band broke up" stating that most of the ensemble members got married or their husbands "took them out."[57] Braddy continued her career as a drummer and musician and moved to New York to perform beside saxophone player Vi Burnside, Anna Mae Wilburn, pianist Edna Smith's Trio featuring bassist Carline Ray, George Bucher, Eileen Chance, and an ensemble called Two Plus One.[58] Braddy's recording discography is limited however one of her most artistic recording projects was "Drum Fantasy," a project where she painted her drum kit and sticks with florescent paint and turned on a black light. The solo project is considered one of Braddy's biggest accomplishments as it illustrates her creativity in both artistic and musical senses. She states, "It was a fabulous thing…you painted the sticks with that fluorescent stuff, and the cymbals and the rims, and then they put on the black light. I played with white gloves. It broke up the thing all the time. That was the first time I ever hear myself playing a solo."[59] Braddy was before her time as she painted the stage and entertained audiences with the stage tricks explored in the 1960s.

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[56] "All-Girl Orchestra to Play Emancipation Dance at Auditorium," *Newspapers.com*, last modified July 29, 1947, https://www.newspapers.com/clip/15900169/moberly_monitorindex/.
[57] Placksin, "Pauline Braddy," 136.
[58] The Washington Post, "Pauline Braddy Williams, Swing-Era Singer, Dies at 73."
[59] Placksin, "Pauline Braddy," 136.

Braddy retired from music in the late 1960s moving to Washington DC to take care of her ageing mother. In this time, she became a switchboard operator and receptionist before retiring in 1994 to Mississippi. Her last formal musical engagement was in 1980 at the International Sweethearts of Rhythm reunion in Kansas City. Pauline Braddy passed away at age 73 in 1996 from complications of influenza.[60]

ISSUES OF MISOGYNY AND FEMINISM

Like many of her bandmates in the Sweethearts, Braddy faced complicated circumstances around being a woman in a male-dominated field, especially playing an instrument that was considered traditionally played by men. Though the Sweethearts weren't one of the first all-girl bands (Lil Hardin's All Girl Band, the Ingenues, the Harlem Playgirls are a few examples from the 1920s), they did face certain expectations by men. According to author and musicologist, Sherrie Tucker in her book *Swing Shift: All Girl Bands of the 1940s,* all-female ensembles were considered a kind of spectacle or "sex show." Members were chosen based on "looks first, listen later" and were rarely valued for their performing skills. Often these women were high-caliber musicians, however due to their gender, they were rarely seen as serious musicians or studying in academia. In addition to being an all-female ensemble, the Sweethearts were also completely made up of black instrumentalists. In the swing era, jazz was often condemned, particularly by older white Americans, for its ties to the black community. It

[60] The Washington Post, "Pauline Braddy Williams, Swing-Era Singer, Dies at 73."

was considered vulgar and sensuous, often alluding to images of women dressed provocatively, debauchery and socially abhorrent behavior. [61]

Women drummers were few and far between in the 1930s and 1940s. In one review of female drummers in the 1920s, author George Lawrence Stone states, "it is rather hard for membership of the tender sex to play jazz music, but this should not discourage them by any means from the profession of drumming."[62] Women were not encouraged to play the drums as they were considered "the tender sex." Braddy once claimed that she often encountered "the "Oh, no, not a girl" attitude until they heard her play."[63] The expectation and reality for many of the ensemble members of the Sweethearts was that they become homemakers, wives, and stay at home mothers. Pursuing a career in music was expected of men, not women. Braddy recalls when she moved to New York in the 1950s she encountered prejudices from the local musician's union, claiming the weekly letter addressing the community read "Dear Sir and Brothers". "Kind of insulting, I thought. They never recognized you as being anything. And there were a lot of bands, you know, men that played and were considered great, and we were better than they were," Braddy states in an interview with author Sally Placksin. Braddy recalls a strict regimen expected of the women in the ensemble as to maintain an image of class. She states, "You could not go out with a guy if they did not have on a tie…when you hit New York and Washington and Chicago and LA you dressed up if you went downstairs to get a pack of cigarettes."[64] On tour the women were constantly

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[61] Angela Smith, "Chapter Three: Bee's Knees: The Roaring '20s," in *Women Drummers a History from Rock and Jazz to Blues and Country* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014).
[62] Smith, "Chapter Three."
[63] Placksin, "Pauline Braddy," 136.
[64] Ibid, 137.

objectified and being watched for any mistakes. On tour with The Sweethearts, Braddy was "unanimously selected" as "wallet gal," a woman that soldiers overseas put a picture of in their wallets for inspiration, by the 376 Port Battalion stationed in Hawaii in 1944. The article that celebrated this stated that "her dimples and smile has done wonders for [the troops] morale" objectifying her image and completely disregarding her musical performance that took place earlier in the trip.[65] Due to the watchful eye of onlookers on tour, Braddy claims that the women were always dressed professionally as everyone was watching them, "we had seven different gowns, seven different pairs of slippers that went with those gowns and you weren't seen on the stage unless you were just so. It was bad for girls in those days if you weren't just so and we had all those rules and things, and Mrs. Jones would chaperone us…Mrs. Jones would have died if she saw something in the paper that she did not know about. She would have had a fit."[66] The expectations of the women in these bands were extremely high as they were already standing out from the status quo.

While Braddy and her peers faced much oppression due to their gender and unfair expectations in the career, The International Sweethearts of Rhythm illustrate the importance of female representation in jazz. Consuella Carter, the director and one of the catalysts for the ensemble led by example by demonstrating musical literacy on multiple instruments and advocating for her students. She provided her ensemble with the necessary tools, instruments, and guidance for them to achieve musical proficiency in academic and professional performance. In her interview with Sally Placksin, Braddy mentions how young audience members were inspired by seeing all-women bands to

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[65] "Wallet Gal for Hawaii's Battalion," *The New York Age* (New York, New York, February 12, 1944), p. 4.
[66] Placksin, "Pauline Braddy," 136.

pursue jazz. “In our time, by seeing girl bands, I think that kind of motivated a lot of the kids. They would play hooky from school to come in the theater…every little girl wanted to play drums or piano or trumpet.”[67] She explains that when young women saw women playing jazz, it inspired them to do the same. Representation on the bandstand is a motivator for young female musicians to pursue the artform as it doesn’t make them feel so ostracized, “I think it helps to hear about the first girl this and the first women to play piano and the first one that they let do so-and-so because it’s always been hard.”[68]

A big reason why Braddy has been excluded from the historical cannon of jazz education is that she is grouped into the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. She is a piece of the ensemble; however, she was also a larger-than-life musician who was said to rival her influence, Gene Kruppa. She was never trying to compete with Kruppa, Big Sid Catlett, Papa Joe Jones, or any other drummers of the time. Braddy wasn’t competitive about music and her gender was not a factor in her ability or career. Her passion for music was what allowed her to become a success, not who or what she played, but how she played it. “I just wanted to play. I never thought that there wasn’t many girls that played.”[69] Another factor that contributes to Braddy’s lack of recognition was World War II occurring when Braddy was at her peak. Although doors were opening for women in the musical and professional workforce, those same spaces would be only open for a short time. Once the war was over, many male musicians returned home to take back the spaces female musicians held in their absence. Braddy stated that once the war was over many of her fellow female musicians got married or their husbands “took them out.”[70]

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[67] Placksin, “Pauline Braddy,” 137.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid, 136.

The expectation of women to adhere to gender roles post-World War II was another factor as to why Braddy's memory is forgotten in jazz history.

CONCLUSION

Pauline Braddy was not just a female drummer in the 1940s, she was the backbone of rhythm, swing, and musical time for one of the most iconic ensembles of the swing era. Her playing was considered fierce, always accurate, and energized. Historian Sherrie Tucker states, "Chorus after chorus, Braddy's drums draw shouts of applause at every new configuration of paradiddles."[71] Her playing was said to be a highlight of the International Sweethearts of Rhythms set, with one reviewer stating her playing was a spotlight of every performance[72] and later taking on the name "Queen of the Drums."[73] Braddy was more than a drummer—she was considered a brilliant musician by her peers who put her career and passion first. In a time where a woman's job was to be a mother, wife, and homemaker, Braddy stepped beyond the status quo and became an international touring artist and immaculate percussionist whose memory, while often not recognized, is imperative to the lineage of jazz drumming.

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[71] Sherrie Tucker, in *Swing Shift "All-Girl" Bands of the 1940s* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), p. 235.
[72] Copeland," 'Black Private."
[73] Placksin, "Pauline Braddy," 135.

CHAPTER SIX: MELBA LISTON (1926-1999)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

"The horn has always saved me from any sadness. Anytime I need a lift, the trombone takes care of me." Melba Liston is a female trombone player; however, her legacy is one that far outshines gender. She was an exquisite arranger who toured as Billie Holiday's musical director; was the in-house manager for Motown and Stax Records; and collaborated with many notable jazz artists, including Randy Weston and Dexter Gordon. She was a decorate composer, an international educator, and a musician who came out of retirement only to have a successful second career as a bandleader.[74] She was an advocate for women and black Americans and boldly created room for her music in a time when women were seen and not heard.

Liston pursued many avenues throughout her career including arranging, studio playing on trombone, and touring with bands led by Dizzy Gillespie and Quincy Jones. In a break from music, she pursued "ordinary things,"[75] including three marriages where she left the trombone behind, only to come back to it later. She states, "the trombone set me up for an arranger, and then when I'm writing, I forget the trombone. But then when things get dull, I go back to the trombone, and it saves me again."[76] Liston faced significant misogyny as a female instrumentalist and as an arranger. Her revolutionary career as a jazz artist paved the way for other female instrumentalists to pursue a career in the same realm.

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[74] Sally Placksin, "Melba Liston," in *American Women in Jazz:1900 to the Present: Their Words, Lives, and Music*, (New York: Seaview Books January 1, 1985,*)* 184.
[75] Placksin, "Melba Liston," 179.
[76] Ibid.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION AND EARLY CAREER

Melba Liston was born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1926 and lived there until she was 11 years old. Her earliest memories in music were not from the Kansas City jazz scene, but from church and at home where family would come to play and sing. However, Liston recalls the day she received her trombone and she and her grandfather played songs from church and other folk style music until later into the evening. She claims she received more musical training by singing in her high school glee club than on her instrument so when she moved to California in 1937 her interest in jazz was piqued. Here she was involved in extracurricular music practices with other students and a teacher through the division of Parks and Recreation. The teacher, Mrs. Alma Hightower, would end up making a huge impression on Liston's musicianship as she would bring in stock arrangements and put a group together to form a little big band. The ensemble played at places like churches and the YMCA, and Hightower would involve the students in various kinds of entertainment activity, including singing, dancing, clapping exercises, recite poetry, and minstrel style comedies. Liston states about her first music teacher, "She was a marvelous woman…she could just about make it over any instrument, but her main instrument was piano and drums."[77]

Liston recalls at the age of sixteen her excitement of joining the musician's union and her new-found ability to work as a professional musician. Her teachers claimed she was destined for greatness as an arranger. Liston would spend her days writing in the solitude of her room with full contentment at the idea of making music. She claims that throughout her schooling she could only focus on writing and reading music rather than

[77] Placksin, "Melba Liston," 180.

playing or soloing, which was further established when she received her first professional job after graduation in the pit band of the Lincoln Theater. This job was followed by a position with the arranger and composer Gerald Wilson in his band in November 1944 after the Lincoln closed.[78] Liston worked as a copyist and writer for Wilson and gained much knowledge from working under him. Wilson in turn introduced Liston to instrumentalists Dizzy Gillespie, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, and others. She stated, "I was welcome in their company, and that was kind of a blessing. I just floated around from one set to another… I was very fortunate to get in before the big-band era died out."[79] Wilson spoke highly of his collaborations with Liston, calling her a great person and musician; "she could do it all" Wilson recounted in a 1999 interview.[80] She continued to work for Wilson until the 1950s. Another major network Liston was introduced to is the International Sweethearts of Rhythm, an all-female ensemble that proved to be an important community as many women, including Liston, faced intense and degrading gender discrimination. While female vocalists proved to be successful and popular, female instrumentalists struggled to find any lucrative work.[81]

In the late 1940s Liston began working with saxophonist Dexter Gordon. One of the most notable moments with this band was when Liston was given several trombone solos, something rarely seen from a woman.[82] Gordon respected Liston as a person but also as a musician. In 1947 during a recording session at Dial Records, Gordon

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[78] Bill Kohlhaase, "All that Jazz; Fond Reveries of the Late, Great Arranger Melba Liston," *Los Angeles Times*, Apr 30, 1999, 20. http://access.library.miami.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/all-that-jazz-fond-reveries-late-great-arranger/docview/421368415/se-2.
[79] Placksin, "Melba Liston," 180.
[80] Kohlhaase, "All that Jazz," 20.
[81] R. Anthony Kugler, "Melba Liston," in *Contemporary Black Biography: Profiles for the International Black Community,* vol. 118 (Gale Cengage Learning, 2014), 89.
[82] Kugler, "Melba," 89.

specifically requested Liston be in attendance so that she would play and also debut a song he allegedly wrote for her entitled, "Mischievous Lady".[83] From 1948-49, Liston worked with Dizzy Gillespie's band which included John Coltrane.

In 1949, Liston was hired as an assistant director of the big band under musical director Gerald Wilson, for a southern tour with jazz vocalist, Billie Holiday. Liston recalls the harsh touring environments they endured during this tour through the Jim Crow south claiming it was "kinda mean there after a while."[84] Liston's singing was compared to that of Holiday and received attention. However, Liston once argued, "I think [Holiday] sounds like a horn player because she sings like Louis Armstrong…The phrasing is like an instrumentalist."[85]

Liston career varied quite a bit. She mentioned in the 1940s she did not like the culture around the jazz scene including the constant gender discrimination that she faced. "I think they were callin' me Mama already, back then because I used to fuss with them about smokin' their cigarettes or drinkin' their wine—they'd come get me when something was goin' on, and I would play little gigs with them. I was scared to go in the studio, though because I did not really hang out with them when they were jamming and stuff. I was home trying to write, so I did not have that spirit on my instrument as an improvisational person…I really did not wanna make the record session." Liston's drive was more geared towards arranging and less toward playing, something considered unusual for women at the time. While in jazz culture, women often lead big bands,

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[83] Maxine Gordon, "Dexter Gordon and Melba Liston: The 'Mischievous Lady' Session," *Black Music Research Journal* (University of Illinois Press) August 15, 2014, https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/34/article/552131.
[84] Placksin, "Melba Liston," 180.
[85] Kugler, "Melba," 89.

arrange, and compose, this concept was only attainable during Liston's time under the guidance of a male figure, in her case Gerald Wilson and Dizzy Gillespie. [86]

Liston explains that as the swing era orchestration of a big band slowly dwindled down to a septet or sextet, she found the long nights of jam sessions unfavorable, so she pursued a career in education by taking the Board of Education exam in a spur of the moment decision. In a drastic career move, she states, "my family was trying to get me out of the business anyway, and I wasn't anxious to get back on the road." She worked four years at an evening school finding it a good experience as she learned communication skills and confidence in being in front of students every day. However, during this time Liston she continued to write music although she was not playing her horn and had quit the union. She claimed she wanted to try "ordinary things" like getting married, but to no avail. Liston was married three times, each ending in divorce. Band mates knew when her marriage was over as she would begin playing and writing again. Liston claimed being a wife and a musician were never intertwined.[87]

Dizzy Gillespie hired Liston for a State Department tour in 1955 where she played trombone and was an arranger for the band. Some arrangements of hers were "Stella by Starlight," "Annie's Dance," and "My Reverie." In 1958, Liston released her album *Melba Liston and her 'Bones* which featured several of her own compositions and would be her only record as a leader. Some of these compositions were "You Don't Say" and "Blue Melba".[88] In 1959, Liston joined the Quincy Jones big band for a European

[86] Placksin, "Melba Liston," 181.
[87] Ibid, 182.
[88] Kugler, "Melba," 90.

Tour with the show *Free and Easy* and later performed arrangements from this tour on a Johnny Griffin album in the early 1960s.[89]

LATER CAREER

The late 1950s to early 1960s were a busy time for Liston in terms of arranging and composing. One of the most important musical collaborations and personal connections occurred in 1958 when Liston met pianist Randy Weston. The two met at Birdland when she was playing with Dizzy Gillespie and in 1958, they created their first work together which was a series of waltzes for children.[90] Some of her most cherished arrangements came when she started working with Weston who allowed her to have more artistic and compositional control. Of this collaboration Liston stated, "I really enjoyed his compositions the best. He leaves me free. He doesn't tell me what size orchestra, who, or what. He just gives me the composition, I tell him what I've done with it, and we just go ahead."[91]

One of the first major albums they created together was *Uhuru Afrika* (1960), which incorporated African rhythms and harmonies. This album is considered "a masterpiece and a landmark for the era for its innovation incorporation of motifs from Africa…rare at the time, its blend of African and American influences managed by Liston whose arrangements with a powerful base of brass and percussion and expressive solo performance" noted the National Endowment for the Arts.[92] During her continued collaboration with Weston, they released *High Life: Music from the New African Nations*

[89] Placksin, "Melba Liston," 182.
[90] Kohlhaase, "All that Jazz."
[91] Placksin, "Melba Liston," 182.
[92] Kugler, "Melba," 90.

(1963), and *Tanjah* (1973). This duo proved not only important for Liston's creativity as an artist but added to a growing pool of black American music of the 1960s and 1970s. Their later work together included *Spirits of our Ancestors* (1991), *Volcano Blues* (1993), *Earth Birth* (1997), and their last collaboration in 1998 *Kherpera.* In a 1999 interview after Liston's passing, Weston illustrates his upmost respect for her saying, "Melba was just incredible…we became musically inseparable. She was a great, great woman."[93]

In the early seventies, Liston focused mainly on arranging, but continued to play alongside notable jazz artists, including trumpet player Clark Terry, organist Jimmy Smith, and drummer Art Blakey. She also was introduced into the popular music realm, due to her connections with Quincy Jones. One of her appointments included commissions for the Supremes, which later landed her a job as the in-house manager at the record label, Motown.[94]

Her education career was not at a standstill, however. Liston found time to mentor youth orchestras in Los Angeles while also working in Jamaica where she ended up staying for five years. When the Jamaican government decided to create a pop and jazz program for the Jamaica School of Music, she knew it was her calling stating, "I had to start it," she stated.[95] Liston's influence in this institution proved to be long lasting. She recruited students of all economic classes (this school was traditionally aimed towards wealthier families) and incorporated lessons of jazz and contemporary music.[96] Liston recalled her first few days in Jamaica where students barely knew basic concepts of music such as scales. Eight months after she first began, the students gave their first

[93] Kohlhaase, "All that Jazz."
[94] Kugler, "Melba," 90.
[95] Placksin, "Melba Liston," 182.
[96] Ibid.

concert. “People cried because these poor black kids had never played written music before” Liston recalled.[97] Her profound impact as an educator was felt in the islands; while most of her students only knew reggae, she encouraged them to pursue her teachings. By the 1980s there was “hardly any musical institution in Jamaica that did not have some of her students.”[98] Liston’s ability to effectively educate is one of the many talents she held as a professional. While she could play, arrange, and compose, she could also educate future generations in an effective way to encourage them and build their skills.

A pivotal moment in Liston’s career came in 1979 when the Women’s Jazz Festival in Kansas City occurred. Founders of the festival were adamant about getting Liston to appear, much to her dismay. “I did not want to come,” Liston stated, “I can’t sing, I haven’t played in years.”[99] However this performance led to a string of performances that reestablished Liston as a compelling performer and musician. She created her own group and wrote all her own arrangements claiming she wanted to know what she was going to play and how it was going to sound.

Liston was described as a “selfless leader” allowing her ensemble members to explore their solo features in her arrangements. Critic and music reviewer, Eric Santosuosso, of the Boston Globe, described her as “seasoned with self-discipline” and showing “astuteness” in her choice of band members.[100] The caliber of musician Liston surrounded herself with was high, but she held herself to the same standards. While

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[97] John S. Wilson, “Melba Liston Returns, With Horn and Baton: Problems with Women,” *New York Times*, June 6, 1980.
[98] Placksin, “Melba Liston,” 183.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ernie Santosuosso, Globe Staff, "REVIEW / MUSIC; MELBA LISTON RETURNS; MELBA LISTON & COMPANY - AT EMMANUEL CHURCH, SUNDAY NIGHT," *Boston Globe*, May 05, 1981.

Liston was revered as a "forceful instrumentalist," her playing was said to be assertive in nature with a clear solid tone.[101]

Her arranging however was one of the things that made Liston so special. She insisted that each instrument have its own sound, so she wrote each part carefully with the specific person in mind. As a trombone player in a big band, Liston claimed that she "got real bored in the old days just playing straight down from the trumpet." She states, "in high school band I used to not play the trombone part…I played the baritone part or the cello because they had more moving lines that I loved."[102] Liston wrote with intention so that each player in her group had a beautiful line that could allow the player to put more emotional depth behind it. Each line was intended to be melodic and intricate as if it was being played solo. Longtime collaborator Weston stated on her arranging, "She was among the top, top arrangers, as good as anybody who ever wrote. She had a wonderful quality of digging the best out of an artist when she wrote for them and that was true of myself."[103]

Liston continued to tour and perform until the mid 1980s when she suffered her first stroke. She was able to join Weston for a recording of *Volcano Blues* in 1993 as well as *Khepera* in 1998.[104] Weston and Liston continued to tie in ideas of African influence through rhythmic ideas. *Volcano Blues* was described as "an intriguing twist on standard 12-bar blues" and "a superb example of the African/African American musical continuum."[105] Liston's health continued to decline over the next six years until her death

[101] Santosuosso, "REVIEW."
[102] Placksin, "Melba Liston", 183.
[103] Kohlhaase, "All that Jazz."
[104] Kugler, "Melba," 90.
[105] Ibid.

in 1999 at the age of 73. Her passing led to an increased interest in her work including a work written by saxophone player Geof Bradfield who wrote a six-movement suite entitled *Melba!* in 2012. By the end of her life, she would have over 450 credits in the recording academy to her name, including roughly 250 instrumental credits, 20 conducting and leading credits, and around 140 arranging credits.[106] For those who claim they have never heard Melba Liston's name, it is safe to say they have heard her playing, writing, or arranging.

LISTON AND MALE DOMINANCE IN JAZZ

Melba Liston was a strong advocate for both black American expression and women's rights within male-dominated spaces. She challenged all areas of the status quo and her memory "lay dormant for far too many years."[107] She was deeply in-tune with her environment, had a strong sense of resourcefulness, and was able to overcome many situations. In addition, "one would be hard pressed to find any diminishing comments on her character with remarks" from long time collaborators Gillespie and Jones claiming she was "essential to [their] work."[108] As the narrative of jazz history remembers women in scarcity, Liston is among those who goes underappreciated in comparison to her male colleague pool even though she was publicly recognized by her peers and mentors for her profound impact and influence.[109]

Liston experienced chauvinistic actions in the music industry at a young age.

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[106] "Melba Liston," Discogs, accessed January 17, 2023, https://www.discogs.com/artist/311952-Melba-Liston?type=Credits&subtype=Writing-Arrangement&filter_anv=0.
[107] Emmett G Price, "Melba Liston: 'Renaissance Woman,'" *Black Music Research Journal* 34, no. 1 (2014): 160.
[108] Price, "Melba Liston" 163.
[109] Ibid, 162.

Though she had female representation in the form of her first music teacher, Mrs. Hightower, who was known to play several instruments including drums which is a socially male-gendered instrument, she experienced the effects of toxic masculinity in jazz in her youth. When performing at venues as a child in her extracurricular band with Mrs. Hightower, Liston recalls the male dominance of the situation. "We'd play on street corners and pass the hat and all that kind of thing. The boys would steal all the money, cause the girls weren't allowed to pass the hat you know."[110] Her intelligence and musicality was undermined constantly. Ironically, schoolmate Dexter Gordon once pointed out that Liston was superior to many of her band mates when it came to theory and songwriting. Gordon once stated the "Liston knew much more about music than the guys in their group and it was common for them to go to her for explanation of chord changes, transposition, and songwriting."[111]

Liston's career in the 1940s was brandished with the nickname "mama." Liston held the men accountable, encouraged them to quit drinking and smoking, and was the point person whenever a bad situation occurred. She was the "mama" to the band and was treated as such.[112] While this situation is not unique to Liston, it is clear example of a "token" theory created to help identify why this happens and how these "roles" are created. This concept comes from a theory by Rosabeth Kanther in her work *Men and Women of the Corporation,* in which she identifies four characters women in a male-dominated space are categorized as by the men that surround them.[113] These four

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[110] Placksin, "Melba Liston", 180.
[111] Gordon, "Dexter."
[112] Placksin, "Melba Liston", 181.
[113] Erin Wehr-Flowers, "Understanding the Experiences of Women in Jazz: A Suggested Model," *International Society for Music Education* 34, no. 4, 476-478.

identities are: the mother figure (i.e., Melba Liston), the sister-figure, the iron-maiden, and the seductress. While these categories are unconsciously created by men, they succeed in identifying the token women in their social realm and isolating them as an "other".[114]

Black Americans of the time faced numerous life-threatening challenges, especially on tour. Touring was a space that was notoriously more hostile because of Liston's race and gender. While touring with Billie Holiday, Liston claimed that the band spent more time sequestered in the bus than on the stage as Holiday did not do well in southern states. In 1955 on her tour with Dizzy Gillespie with the State Department, Liston was respected and had the admiration of her colleagues, however there were still major issues with her being a woman arranger and instrumentalist among a group of men. Liston states, "you're on your own out there. If you're gonna be in the band, you must carry your own luggage and be self- sufficient and the only way I could survive is that I was young and strong then and I was self-sufficient. So, when I showed them, I was not going to be a burden to them, then you know, everything was cool."[115] While there was an expectation of holding your own, Liston was also expected to be "one of the guys" because being a woman on the tour was already burden enough. In rehearsals for the 1955 tour in New York, Liston claims to have been victim to vicious names and stereotypes as well. One instrumentalist in the band said, "why the hell did he send all the way to California for some bitch trombone player?"[116] Once Liston was in rehearsals and was able to prove herself through her playing and arranging, she states that she became

[114] Flowers, "Understanding*,"* 477.
[115] Placksin, "Melba Liston"*,* 182.
[116] Ibid.

"mama" again. This goes back to Kanter's token identities: Liston was at first considered the "iron maiden" character or someone who was actively rebelling against the system. Then once she "proved herself" she went back to being the "mother figure." Liston had to prove herself to turn her name from "bitch" to "mama" while other men in the band did not receive a nickname and did not have to prove their musical worth. Liston states, "well that erased all the little bullshit, you see. They say, "mama's all right." Then I was 'Mama,' I wasn't 'bitch' no more."[117] Liston also recalls her male friends on in the band making jokes whenever she would conduct the band. They would state, "you're not supposed to be up here conducting *me."*[118] She states in response, "these were fellows who were my dear friends. They did not mean it. They did not even think about it. It was a natural male thing—a chauvinist habit."[119] The deeply engrained chauvinism that occurred in the music industry impacted Liston greatly, however she remained aware of these issues.

Liston also recalled the horrific sexual abuse that she faced as a black woman on tour, "rapes and everything, I've been going through that stuff my whole life…when I started going with Gerald [Wilson] I was okay, because I had support. But when I left and went back to Dizzy's band, it was the same thing all over again. Yeah, well, you know, it's a broad, and she's by herself."[120]

One positive aspect of being the sole female musician on the bandstand was that she was revered as an inspiration for women who came to the performances. Liston claimed that when on tour in the Middle East, women who actively faced daily

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[117] Placksin, "Melba Liston"*,* 182.
[118] Wilson, "Melba."
[119] Ibid.
[120] Price, "Melba Liston" 162.

oppression from men were inspired to "demand a little more appreciation for their innate abilities" by watching Liston exist confidently and proudly in a male-dominated space.[121] Liston joined and became the vice-president of the African American Musicians Society soon after its inception as a response to the increased escalation of racism and violence towards African American people. She empowered women worldwide "exemplifying her sense of equality not only relative to gender but to race, ethnicity, and nationality." Her heightened sense of awareness allowed her to be an inspiration for women in areas of oppression and to be an advocate for equality in all facets. [122]

The empowerment of women in the 1960s and 1970s brought new opportunities for women in all career fields. There were new audiences for women in jazz and an interest in women's history. This second-wave of feminism brought a raised awareness to the importance of women's rights, documentation of lost history, cultural activities, and liberation from gender stereotypes.[123] Liston's participation at the 1979 Kansas City Women's Jazz Festival and the New York Salute to Women in Jazz illustrates her initiative to empower women in jazz to be treated as equals. She incorporated arrangements of Mary Lou Williams and Patti Brown, as well as Fats Waller and Duke Ellington into her sets. She even created her own publishing and copying company. While the idea of creating a women-only concert or festival may further the binary of gender in jazz, Liston embraced the most important part of the whole situation, which was the music itself. Her memory is one of a prolific composer, arranger, musician, and educator.

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[121] Price, "Melba Liston" 164.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Tucker, "Women".

Even in her later career, Liston had to continue to prove herself. She claimed, "every now and then I get some kind of funny remarks from the dudes – "Why can't you write like everyone else?", but then, after they get used to it they find out they like it very much."[124] Saxophone player, Geof Bradfield, who wrote the suite *Melba!* commented on Randy Weston and Liston's continued partnership, claiming that it altered the idea of what gender roles in jazz should look like. "When we look back to Randy and Melba, they were already involved in breaking down gender barriers and globalization."[125] Liston's musical collaborators were mostly men, who allowed her to write for them, and her artistic vision embodied African influence. She was quietly one of the most revolutionary jazz artists of the 1960s allowing herself to stand out amongst the crowd and be different.

CONCLUSION

Vocalist Leon Thomas recalls a pivotal moment in the 1950s when he met Melba Liston at an Art Blakey rehearsal. In his unease of the new situation, Liston provided him with the advice "if you take care of the music, the music takes care of you."[126] This single piece of advice embodied Liston's career as an arranger, performer, studio musician, and educator. She not only cared deeply for the music itself, but for the musicians who played it by writing unique, interesting, and melodic lines for all sections of her band. As musician and bandleader, she gave full, rich sound to her trombone allowing her

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[124] Placksin, "Melba Liston", 183.
[125] Kugler, "Melba," 90.
[126] Lisa Barg, "Taking Care of Music: Gender, Arranging, and Collaboration in the Weston-Liston Partnership," *Black Music Research Journal,* (University of Illinois Press, 2014.) https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/34/article/552136.

instrument to be a vehicle by which she was able to express and empower. She was also gracious and powerful, allowing her band the space to explore solos, time, and sound within her arrangements, often without giving herself that same soloistic opportunity. Her recording and arranging discography boast close to 500 credits, making her not only a well recorded artist, but one that was actively sought after in her community for collaboration. Her sound can be heard on the albums of the most notable big band leaders of the 20th century including Dexter Gordon, Dizzy Gillespie, and Quincy Jones. Though she faced constant discrimination based on her gender and race, she always made her focus about the music. She was a strong advocate for herself and was adamant on creating a space for her music without the permission of her male colleagues. Author Emmett G. Price III states, "her dynamic contributions should be equally visible and included within the historical narrative of the music that she loved, nurtured and nourished."[127] While her music and story are worth knowing, her undying willingness to make music from an unapologetically genuine space is what makes her a true pioneer of this artform.

[127] Price, "Melba Liston" 160.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CLORA BRYANT (1927-2019)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Clora Larea Bryant was an American trumpet player who was often considered one of the best jazz trumpet players and musicians on the West Coast. Known for her participation in various kinds of ensembles, including show bands, big bands, small combos, mixed combos, and all-female ensembles, her career was not only long but extraordinary and lined with accolades.[128] Her musicianship and artistry blossomed in the 1940s during the emerging swing era where she became the protégé of famed bebop trumpet player, Dizzy Gillespie.[129] Rooted strongly in swing and bebop styles, Bryant was fearless in her playing which consisted of a deep knowledge of bebop language and stylistic versatility. She was known to have "the feeling of the trumpet, not just the notes".[130] Her career took her from Los Angeles, New York, and internationally by leading jam sessions, mentoring young musicians, and touring with groups including the International Sweethearts of Rhythm, a group she would long be associated with and known for. While Bryant's career was often limited by gender stereotypes of the 20th century and the overshadowing of her contemporaries, she paved the way for many future generations of women in jazz. Bryant notes that she was often "passed over" for her male counterparts, stimming the success and stardom her career could have potentially had.

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[128] Lewis Porter, Tim Wilkins, Ted Gioia, and Jazzcom (Firm)," Clora Bryant," *The Encyclopedia of Jazz Musicians*, United States: Jazz.com, http://www.jazz.com/encyclopedia, 2007. 487.
[129] Giovanni Russonello, "Clora Bryant, Trumpeter Whose Gender Stymied Her Career, Dies at 92," *New York Times*, 2019, 18.
[130] Russonello, "Clora," 18.

However, she is remembered by those who she mentored and played with as one of the most bold and virtuosic trumpet players on the west coast. [131]

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION AND EARLY CAREER

Clora Larea Bryant was born May 30, 1927, in Denison, Texas to her parents Charles and Eulila Bryant. Charles was a day laborer and Eulila was a homemaker, though Bryant claimed her whole family to be musical. Her brother Mel was a singer and dancer, her brother Fred played trumpet, her mother was a singer, and her father whistled and performed birdcalls.[132] Tragedy struck in 1930 when Bryant's mother passed away, leaving Charles to raise their three kids alone. However, Bryant often mentions that one of her largest support systems was her father. In regard to pursuing music as a career and being a woman in a male-dominated field, she stated, "Nobody ever told me, 'You can't play the trumpet you're a girl…my father told me, 'it's going to be a challenge, but if you're going to do it, I'm behind you all the way' and he was."[133]

While Bryant originally started her career in music playing the piano, she switched to trumpet after her high school developed and orchestra and marching band program.[134] Her brother Fred, left for the army at the age of eighteen, and Bryant used his trumpet. She was described as having natural musical talent and often took lessons before the school day started.[135] She states, "…when my brother went to the army, he left his trumpet at home, and I just picked it up and started playin' on that, 'cause I was

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[131] Russonello, "Clora," 18.
[132] Porter, "Clora,", 487.
[133] Russonello, "Clora," 18.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.

determined to get into the marching band I taught myself scales and everything and then I had a teacher in school."[136] Though she mentions her dad tried to get her to play harp at one point, Bryant was smitten with trumpet stating, "I knew the trumpet was it."[137]

In 1943, Bryant deliberately chose to attend Prairie View A&M University, a historically black college near Houston, due to its all-black, all-female-jazz band called "The Prairie View Co-eds".[138] In the summer of 1944, Bryant had joined the band and they toured the United States, even headlining at the Apollo Theater in Harlem. January of 1945 however, Bryant moved with her family to Los Angeles where she began her career as a working musician.[139]

LOS ANGELES AND PROFESSIONAL CAREER

Upon her move to Los Angeles in 1945, Bryant played with an all-black instrumentalist combo in a white jazz club in Norwalk, California while also playing with an all-black, all-female jazz quintet called, "The Queens of Swing."[140] This band had some success touring through the west and northwest. In 1946 she once again became a member of all-female jazz band when she joined the Darlings of Rhythm.[141]

Her personal life grew when she married bass player, Joe Stone in 1948 whom she played with often around Los Angeles. Her career continued to flourish as she toured around the United States in the 1950s and 1960s often playing a tribute to Louis

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[136] Sally Placksin, "Clora Bryant," in *American Women in Jazz:1900 to the Present: Their Words, Lives, and Music*, (New York: Seaview Books January 1, 1985) 152.
[137] Placksin, "Clora Bryant," 152.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Porter, "Clora," 488.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.

Armstrong. Bryant tried a career in film, accompanying Sammy Davis Jr. in the 1960 film *Pepe* and toured her brother Mel Bryant from 1964-66. During her career, Bryant had four children, while working towards her bachelor's degree from University of California at Los Angeles in music with an emphasis in black American history.[142]

Often aligned with mentor, Dizzy Gillespie, she composed her suite, *To Dizzy with Love* in 1975, winning her two National Endowment of the Arts awards for composition and performance. Her career continued into the 1980s and 1990s where she performed in Bill Berry's big band and toured Europe with Johnny Otis as well as Russia in 1989 with Jeannie and Jimmy Cheatham. In 1993, Bryant directed and performed at the National Trumpet Summit with Clark Terry, Jon Faddis, and Freddie Hubbard in memory of her mentor, Dizzy Gillespie.[143]

BRYANT AND FEMINISM IN JAZZ

Bryant is considered a pioneering female jazz instrumentalist for many reasons. While the idea of "all female" bands might in turn, further the divide between male and female players, Bryant's active participation in these bands acted as a subtle activist approach to women's participation in the art form, even if it was unintentional.

She called the male stereotype of trumpet players, "like a bulldog on a bone."[144] They were considered physically strong, had stamina, and played with a grandiose energy. While Bryant curbed the stereotype, she still faced prejudices from her male counterparts. Her mentor, Dizzy Gillespie once stated, "If you close your eyes, you'd

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[142] Porter, "Clora," 487.
[143] Ibid, 488.
[144] "Clora Bryant One of the Few Female Jazz Trumpeters of Her Time, Who Played with Billie," *The Daily Telegraph*, London [England]: Daily Telegraph, 2019.

think it was a man!"[145] This furthers the idea that a man is the only gender capable of creating such virtuosic sounds. Further, Gillespie helped Bryant on her career, bolstering her to new heights professionally. Still, at the end of the day she helped him achieve a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, while Bryant is hardly mentioned in major texts. As his mentee, it is perplexing as to why she isn't a part of his biography.

Bryant was often a victim of chauvinist attitudes and toxic masculinity in the jazz scene. While she established herself as a strong musician, she is still remembered as one of the most underrated trumpet players in America by many of her contemporaries, including trombone player Jimmy Cheatham.[146] Cheatham states, "she never got her due, unfortunately because of the chauvinistic attitude of musicians and critics.[147]

Her only album is "Gal with a Horn" released in 1957 by Mode Records.[148] On this album, listeners hear the breadth of her swing and bebop capability, however she was required to sing on the album and was marketed as "a singing trumpetiste."[149] The image of a woman playing a male instrument had to be played down. For Bryant to play the horn, she would have to appeal to the feminine stereotype of women as effeminate and singers. She recalls moments in her career when she tried to talk music with her contemporaries. "I'd try to talk music with Duke Ellington, but he wanted to talk about the "little pretties," as he called women," Bryant stated in an interview in 1999. While

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[145] Daily Telegraph, "Clora Bryant."
[146] George Varga, "PIONEER WOMAN: Female jazz artist Clora Bryant blazed a trail for others to follow," *San Diego Union-Tribune, The* (CA), *NewsBank: Access World News – Historical and Current*, May 13, 1999, 34. https://infoweb-newsbank- com.access.library.miami.edu/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/116D2F770B927335.
[147] Varga,"PIONEER WOMAN."
[148] "Clora Bryant Albums and Discography." *AllMusic*. https://www.allmusic.com/artist/clora-bryant-mn0001179578/discography/all.
[149] Daily Telegraph, "Clora Bryant."

she claimed Ellington was not a chauvinist, she did leave the real antagonists nameless; part of her mission to remain classy on in professional and personal career.[150]

In her later years, Bryant mentored aspiring young female jazz musicians leading with the advice that her father told her when she was beginning her career. “I have a lot of proteges, and we talk a lot and the first thing I stress is what my dad stressed to me. He told me how to carry myself, so that I could be out there on stage with these guys but not lose my self-respect. He said, ‘You are a lady, and you must act like one.’ That’s what I tell these girls: how to act and react, sitting beside these guys. You have to know how to stop them from what they want to do, without being nasty. But you have to be definite and strong.” [151] She embodied this advice and presented herself as such on the bandstand. She was admired by her peers for not just her musicianship but her strong sense of self. Trumpet player Clark Terry once said, “To be a woman playing jazz trumpet you had to be tough, Clora was definitely tough and smart as a whip, or else she would not have made it."[152] However, while things have improved in the culture of jazz there are still many issues of gender needing to be addressed. Bryant says, “men seem to have a problem with really getting down to dealing with women.”[153]

CONCLUSION

Bryant was a strong advocate for jazz and jazz education. She stated, "Jazz to me is a lifelong quest because you never finish searching for that high you can reach when

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[150] Varga, “PIONEER WOMAN.”
[151] Ibid.
[152] "Clora Bryant; Jazz trumpeter admired by Louis Armstrong and Dizzy Gillespie but undermined by chauvinism." *Business Insights: Essentials*. Web. September 28, 2019, 82.
[153] Varga,"PIONEER WOMAN.”

everything's clickin', and the audience is right there with you. I get goose bumps thinking about it."[154] Bryant blazed a trail for women at a time when women in jazz were regularly seen as novelties. Regardless of her gender, race, or any other social identities, she is one of the most underrated musicians in American history.[155] Those who worked beside her remember her for being a "colorful character usually seen with a garland of bright flowers in her hair" and a pioneer of the jazz idiom.[156]

[154] Business Insights: Essentials, "Clora Bryant; Jazz Trumpeter."
[155] Varga,"PIONEER WOMAN."
[156] Business Insights: Essentials, "Clora Bryant; Jazz Trumpeter."

CHAPTER EIGHT: TERRY POLLARD (1931-2009)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Known as a one of the defining sounds of Detroit jazz in the 1950s, Terry Pollard was a female jazz pioneer, a tireless cheerleader for the artform, and a musical force decorated with accolades, awards, and a remarkable collaborative resume. Pollard was a pianist and vibraphone player in Detroit, Michigan whose career apex took place in the 1950s. She was recognized by fellow jazz musician, Terry Gibbs for her talent and toured alongside his quartet, gaining visibility on the national scale. Her career was cut short due to her choice to raise a family, but her musical talent, musicianship, and tireless advocacy for the Detroit jazz scene is recognized and celebrated.[157]

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION AND EARLY CAREER

Terry Jean Pollard was born August 15, 1931, in Detroit, Michigan. Pollard was raised in the Conant neighborhood and began playing piano at age three. According to her daughter, she was known to sneak out of the house at age fourteen to attend jazz clubs and at age sixteen she had begun a career as a musician. She had developed skills and enough of a reputation to be taken seriously as a musician in the Detroit scene. Pollard's first paid performance was for a commencement ceremony at her nursing school gradation in1948 after the keyboard player failed to arrive.[158] She began working at a department store to make ends meet but also played at night at jazz clubs.[159] Later in

[157] "Terry Pollard, Detroit-Born Jazz Pianist Succumbs to Long Illness." *Michigan Citizen*, January 1, 2010, http://access.library.miami.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/terry-pollard-detroit-born-jazz-pianist-succumbs/docview/368205486/se-2.
[158] Michigan Citizen, "Terry Pollard."
[159] Ibid.

1948 Pollard received her first jazz experience recording with saxophonist Billy Mitchell followed a short collaboration from 1948-1948 with Johnny Hill and a two-year collaboration with the Emmitt Slay Trio from 1950-1952. Her big break came in the early 1950s when Pollard was noticed by legendary Detroit vibraphone player, Terry Gibbs. While performing at Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit, Gibbs asked Pollard if she would join his North American Tour as a secondary vibraphone player and pianist.[160] This collaboration ignited Pollard's recording career as she recorded alongside Gibbs and jazz guitarist, Dick Garcia.[161]

Pollard's collaboration with the Terry Gibbs quartet provided her much visibility at the national scale. She was remembered by local Detroit jazz musicians as being "obscure, little-recorded, but extraordinarily talented" as well as someone who had an impeccable ability to match Gibbs strong sense of swing.[162] In an album review by Samuel Chell, it is written that "Pollard swings the hardest, practically matching Gibbs with the percussive nature of her attack, the relentless energy and drive of her phrasing, the climatic construction of her solos, and her facility for serendipitous musical quotes while in the heat of action."[163] Pollard's role as pianist would be succeeded by Pat Moran, and later Alice McCleod, also known as Alice Coltrane. Coltrane, who was once mentored by Pollard, received her first piano from her.[164]

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[160] Everett, "Jazz Pianist."
[161] Aubrey Everett, "Jazz Pianist Terry Pollard Dies at 78," *Jazz Times*, last modified May 2, 2019, https://jazztimes.com/features/tributes-and-obituaries/jazz-pianist- terry-pollard-dies-at-78/.
[162] Samuel Chell, "Terry Gibbs: Terry Gibbs Quartet Featuring Terry Pollard Album Review," *All About Jazz*, last modified October 20, 2007, https://www.allaboutjazz.com/terry-gibbs-quartet-featuring-terry-pollard-terry-gibbs-fresh-sound-records-review-by-samuel-chell.
[163] All About Jazz, "Terry Gibbs."
[164]Michigan Citizen, "Terry Pollard."

THE 1950S AND LATER CAREER

In 1955, Pollard recorded her only album, a self-titled release, under Bethlehem Records.[165] The album consists of various jazz styles and original compositions. Other tunes are Charlie Parker's "Scrapple from the Apple" which illustrates Pollard's intensity and agility, as well as "Where or When", "The More I See You," and "Almost Like Being in Love."[166] Her recording discography as a leader is short, however it illustrates her range as a performer and pianist. In a later re-release of her music, the album *Terry Pollard: A Detroit Jazz Legend* from Fresh Sounds Records highlights "the sobriety of her piano, the sensitive eloquence that flows from her solos" and highlights collaborations with some of Detroit's jazz legends.[167] The album review raves of Pollard's playing, stating that the album illustrates "memorable moments of her short-lived career, brilliant and wonderfully pulsating, full of consistent well-conceived solos. She plays with freshness and the extended logic conception of Bud Powell, but cuts Wynton Kelly and Horace Silver in the strength of her playing, the irresistible impact of her emotion, and the deep sureness of her beat."[168] Her recording career was accompanied by various collaborations with leading jazz personnel such as Thad Jones, Elvin Jones, and Herman Wright.[169]

As Pollard grew in popularity, she became more integrated into the mainstream jazz scene. She performed with artists like Nat King Cole, Charlie Parker, Chet Baker, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Dinah Washington, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, and

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[165] Michigan Citizen, "Terry Pollard."
[166] "Terry Pollard - Terry Pollard," *Discogs*, last modified January 1, 1970, https://www.discogs.com/release/8259277-Terry-Pollard-Terry-Pollard.
[167] "Terry Pollard - a Detroit Jazz Legend," *Blue Sounds*, https://www.freshsoundrecords.com/terry-pollard-albums/6661-a-detroit-jazz-legend.html.
[168] Blue Sounds, "Terry Pollard."
[169] Ibid.

played in the Jimmy Wilkins Orchestra. A year after her self-titled release, Pollard won the 1956 Downbeat Magazine Best New Artist award. This momentous occasion was made greater when she beat out fellow vibraphone player, Milt Jackson. She later went on to play the 1957 Birdland "Stars of '57" concert in New York City and in 1956 Pollard made history by being the first black female jazz artist to appear on The Tonight Show hosted by Steve Allen with Terry Gibbs Quartet. Pollard was at the height of her career in the late 1950s when she decided to take a step back from music to raise a family. She had two children, a son Dennis Michael Weeden and a daughter, Corby Marlene Swindle. She remained a fixture in the Detroit music scene collaborating with Yusef Lateef and Dorothy Ashby, both local artists, from 1958-1960 as well as many artists who traveled through the city like George Benson, Alma Smith, and Diana Ross and the Supremes.[170]

Pollard continued to play around the Detroit jazz scene into the late 1970s. In 1978 she had a simultaneous aneurism and stroke that left her entire left side paralyzed and preventing her performance career from continuing.[171] Pollard moved to into a nursing home in New York in 2000 to live closer to her son where she entertained her fellow residents by playing piano with her right hand most days. According to her son, she spent every day up until her last practicing with one hand and "was still better than most with two."[172] He stated that she "never cursed or got mad about her condition. She never pitied herself. I could always come to her with my problems, but she never let me

[170] Michigan Citizen, "Terry Pollard."
[171] John Akers, "Reviving a Detroit Jazz Legacy: Terry Jean Pollard Was Queen of the Vibes," *Detroit Metro Times,* Febryary19, 2023, https://www.metrotimes.com/music/reviving-a-detroit-jazz-legacy-terry-jean-pollard-was-queen-of-the-vibes-2458357.
[172] Akers, "Reviving."

pity myself."[173] Her family stated that she continued to play for them when they visited her. She passed away on December 16, 2009, at the age of 78.[174]

LACK OF REMEMBRANCE IN JAZZ HISTORY

Pollard was known as a "female jazz pioneer". She was an enthusiastic cheerleader and tireless jazz supporter; she stated that she was from the "home of the pros in Detroit."[175] Pollard was inducted into the Michigan Jazz Hall of Fame as a lifetime member and held a 60-year membership for the Detroit Federation of Musicians. She was recognized as a fierce player with intricate solos, an impeccable musical ear, and a strong advocate for musicians of local jazz scenes. For the wide variety of accomplishments and accolades she received, she is consistently left out of popular history texts. There are several potential reasons for this, starting with her short-lived career.[176]

Pollard was recognized as early as 1948, however her career lasted only around 10 years. While she played on the national scale, toured, and even released several recordings, her career was one that was short lived due to her choice to raise a family. Another reason Pollard might not be recognized as a national jazz pioneer is her dedication to the Detroit jazz scene specifically. While her fellow Detroit-born contemporaries Alice Coltrane and Dorothy Ashby pursued careers in larger music meccas, Pollard chose to stay in her hometown of Detroit and pursue a career there. This allowed her to pursue a career and raise a family, however, her "success" was limited.

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[173] Akers, "Reviving."
[174] Michigan Citizen, "Terry Pollard."
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid.

Success is in quotes as it is suggestive as to what success looks like from person to person.[177]

Pollard also performed at a time where there were many other pianists that might have overshadowed her in the national scale. Pianists like Bud Powell, Thelonious Monk, Oscar Peterson, and Dave Brubeck were rising at the time Pollard was at her peak. It is debatable that Pollard could have risen to national acclaim among the likes of these musicians if she had chosen to pursue a music career, however it should also be noted that gender roles and stereotypes of the 1950s and 1960s also made it challenging for women to pursue a career in something so male-dominated.[178] Another point to consider is Pollard was often compared to her contemporaries Milt Jackson, and fellow pianists. She was often analyzed side-by-side with other pianists of the time, all of whom were men, to assess her skill and illustrate her ability. While men might be compared to other male players, females were compared to male players as well. This quote, while seemingly benign, is a clear example of the damaging narrative female musicians face in jazz.

LEGACY

Terry Pollard was an active and important member of the Detroit jazz scene. After suffering a stroke and aneurysm in 1979, rendering her unable to perform, a tribute concert was held in her honor, hosted by Steve Allen. Pollard's two children and their close friend, Daniel Hosper, went on the begin a foundation in her name, "The Terry Jean Pollard Music Foundation," which seeks to benefit and develop young female students in

[177] Michigan Citizen, "Terry Pollard."
[178] Tucker, "Women in Jazz."

their pursuit of a music career and education. The foundation provides students with materials such an instruments and education. Her daughter states, "What if she hadn't [pursued a career as a mother]?" Weeden asks. "She would be what most artists are today, who are too hungry for success. They give up their kids and family. I realize how much she sacrificed for me, so I'm on a mission for her now because she gave so much for me. We're doing this foundation to show jazz isn't a joke; we really want to help these kids."[179] The program aims to teach kids about jazz and create opportunities for young women who have not been exposed to music or music business. Her name is recognized amongst civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandella, although her name hasn't carried the same weight. Her son states, "The goal of the foundation is to make sure Pollard gets the chapter she deserves in African-American history, and also to educate others in jazz musicianship."[180] Pollard's daughter continues to describe her mother as a "very strong and independent person; her playing shows that."[181] She is highly regarded by her community as a person of "unstoppable strength, courage, and faith" and the city of Detroit continues to use her legacy to improve the city. Pollard's son continues with the idea that the foundation and the personal work of her family aims to reestablish the important musical identity of jazz in young female musicians. "We want young girls to see that other women have been there for a long time, and they're building on that. There are more females in jazz now than ever, and since starting this foundation, the thing I hear the most from people who knew her or saw her play is that my mother played better than anyone else does today. They say she's still

[179] Akers, "Reviving."
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.

the best. I want people to walk away saying, 'Wow I did not know that that's interesting' and have new role models to inspire young artists."[182] The important work being accomplished by Terry Pollard's family not only continues to keep her legacy alive, but further inspires young female musicians to pursue jazz as a career.

CONCLUSION

Terry Jean Pollard was more than a musician and pianist, she was an advocate for women and for jazz in Detroit in the 1950s-1960s. While her career lasted shorter than some of her contemporaries, she made a lasting impact to those who had the opportunity to hear her perform. Pollard played with a confidence in her ability, an impeccable sense of time, and a driving, fierceness that captivated audiences.[183] In her time with both Terry Gibbs and Yusef Lateef, she had the opportunity to share her talents on the national scale by being one of the first female black jazz musicians on The Tonight Show and even releasing her own titular album under Bethlehem records.[184] Perhaps one of the most important parts of her legacy, however, is the one carried on by her children as they have created a foundation and program under her name and influence. With the impact of Pollard's career, the community of Detroit, and primarily young women interested in pursuing music as a career, have access to instruments, materials, funding, and education[185]. Pollard, who is considered "a major player and inexplicably overlooked" deserves to shine in the mainstream academic cannon of jazz history not just for her

[182]Akers, "Reviving."
[183] Blue Sounds, "Terry Pollard."
[184] Michigan Citizen, "Terry Pollard."
[185] Akers, "Reviving."

notable musical career, but also for her passion and dedication to the jazz artform.[186] She is without a doubt an innovator of jazz in the 20th century.[187]

[186] Chell, "Terry Gibbs."
[187] Michigan Citizen, "Terry Pollard."

CHAPTER NINE: DOROTHY ASHBY (1932-1986)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Dorothy Ashby is an American jazz musician and harpist. She is known as one of the "most unjustly under-loved jazz greats of the 1950s"[188] and the "most accomplished modern harpist"[189] for her ability to manipulate the sound of the harp to fit bebop and other jazz genres. She broke barriers in jazz culture by incorporating a typically classical instrument into a secular, contemporary musical style. Her career spanned over thirty years in various genres, including jazz, R&B, pop, and fusion. Her early exposure to jazz from her father, a jazz guitar player, enabled her to pursue jazz and contemporary music at a high level in Detroit. With perseverance and innovation, Ashby was able to not only create a space for herself in the Detroit jazz scene as a woman but also able to create a viable career as a jazz harpist on the bandstand. Later Ashby would pursue a career as a studio musician recording with artists like Stevie Wonder, Earth Wind and Fire, and Bill Withers in Los Angeles. Ashby's artistry developed with the social climate of the 1950s and 1960s, incorporating elements of bebop, soul, funk, Brazilian, African, and Middle Eastern musical styles.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION AND INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC

Dorothy Jeanne Ashby was born in Detroit, Michigan on August 8, 1932. She was raised in a musical family; her father was jazz guitar player Wiley Thompson who held playing sessions in the family living room where Ashby would play piano.

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[188] Tom Moon, "Dorothy Ashby and a Harp That Swings," *National Public Radio*, 2006.
[189] Sally Placksin, "Dorothy Ashby," in *American Women in Jazz:1900 to the Present: Their Words, Lives, and Music*, (New York: Seaview Books January 1, 1985,) 239.

These early "jam sessions" helped Ashby develop a sense of bebop vocabulary and jazz style.[190] "I played the things that I heard and played along with my father, who taught me more about harmony and melodic construction than I learned in all my years of high school, college, and sacrificed more time and money than the family could afford for my musical training and instruments."[191] Ashby states that when her father's friends came to their house, she had opportunities to play alongside them, instilling an immediate love for the genre of jazz. In high school Ashby attended Cass Technical High School in Detroit with fellow jazz musicians Donald Byrd and Kenny Burrell. While there she played bass, piano, and saxophone. Ashby's interest in harp started in high school. Her training in harp began in harp classes through her high school with fourteen other girls in her class. Each girl received an hour of practice time a day, but Ashby states she always wanted to play the harp "her way" instead of conforming to the way her classmates practiced and played.[192]

Upon graduation, Ashby attended Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan for music education and piano performance.[193] In 1952, Ashby began performing at nightclubs on piano with her trio longing to break into the competitive jazz scene, however she chose to focus her musical endeavors on harp. Due to the harp's use as a symphonic, ethereal instrument and the fact that it was practically non-existent in the typical jazz combo, Ashby struggled to find work in the jazz scene as a harpist. However, Ashby was persistent in her endeavors by organizing free performances. She played at

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[190] Curtis Davenport, "Unsung Women of Jazz – Dorothy Ashby," JazzArts Charlotte, 2019. https://www.thejazzarts.org/blog/unsung-women-of-jazz-dorothy-ashby/.
[191] Placksin, "Dorothy Ashby," 239.
[192] Ibid, 240.
[193] Davenport, "Unsung."

dances and weddings with her combo that was led by her on harp.[194] This exposure led to her eventual acceptance as a harpist in the jazz community, starting her career on both the bandstand and in the recording studio.

FIRST ALBUM AND SUCCESS

Dorothy Ashby was first given the opportunity to record upon meeting who would be her longtime collaborator, flutist Frank Wess. When Wess was traveling with the Count Basie orchestra, he had the opportunity to hear Ashby play and later encourage Savoy Records to sign her for her first record.[195] Dorothy Ashby's first LP was titled, "The Jazz Harpist*"*, which was recorded in 1957 with Frank Wess on flute, Eddie Jones and Wendell Marshall on bass, and Ed Thigpen on drums. This album consisted of originals by Ashby as well as jazz standards. Though this album was highly regarded by critics, it lacked sales from the record buying community.[196] This album was groundbreaking in numerous ways. First, she was one of the first black, female jazz instrumentalists to record bebop as the leader of an album. Second, her sound and instrument had historically been used as a classical instrument. Ashby played the harp as if it was a melodic instrument, like a horn, finding a way to solo over changes with bebop vocabulary that was being heard by artists like Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker.[197] Jazz harpist, Brandee Younger states, "Dorothy was playing what was current to her time…she was digging into Freddie Hubbard's "Little Sunflower." It was mind blowing

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[194] Davenport, "Unsung."
[195] W. A. Brower, "All that Jazz; Dorothy Ashby Concert," *Washington Informer (Pre-1990)* 19, no. 49 (Sep 28, 1983): 20.
[196] Brower, "All that Jazz," 20.
[197] Jordannah Elizabeth, "Dorothy Ashby: Pioneering Jazz Harpist from Detroit: UDiscover," *UDiscover Music*, 2020. https://www.udiscovermusic.com/stories/dorothy-ashby-feature/.

to hear her."[198] The innovation Ashby had pushed the boundaries of what jazz was for the time.

In 1958, Ashby released her second album, "Hip Harp*",* on Prestige. This record did significantly better in record buying communities. Though these albums are only a year apart, they show substantial range in Ashby's playing. For example, on "Stella by Starlight" off of "The Jazz Harpist" (1957), Ashby plays a chord melody, which consists of playing the melody and chord at the same time, instead of improvising. She includes some fills that consist of arpeggiations but there is little vocabulary being expressed in terms of improvisation. However, on "Dancing in the Dark" off of "Hip Harp" (1958), Ashby's improvisation exhibits more eighth-note phrasing, a faster tempo, quoting different standards, and a deeper sense of harmony. There is more focus in her second album on soloing and improvising. [199]

LATER CAREER

As social and political tensions grew in the United States, Ashby's artistry adapted and grew with it. In the 1960s, Dorothy and her husband, John, became increasingly active in their community through the theater. They started an acting troupe called "The Ashby Players" which performed plays with themes relevant to Detroit's black community. While John Ashby wrote the scripts, Dorothy wrote the music, played piano, and rehearsed the ensemble. The couple also started a radio show and wrote album reviews for the Detroit jazz scene. In 1962, Ashby was named in Downbeat Magazine's

[198] G. Himes, "Improvising heaven: The harp in jazz," *JazzTimes*, January 10, 2022.
[199] Davenport, "Unsung."

"Best Jazz Performers" poll.[200] She was also named as "Best Harpist." In 1965, Ashby released "The Fantastic Jazz Harp of Dorothy Ashby" and in 1968 Ashby released her third studio album, *"*Afro Harping". [201]

In 1970, Ashby released her fourth studio album, "The Rubaiyat of Dorothy Ashby," which was another groundbreaking record. On this album, Ashby played the 13-stringed Japanese instrument, the koto. She manipulated the sounds of the koto and harp to fit into her soundscape of funk, fusion, jazz, Middle eastern, and Asian musical styles. This album did not fall into one style per se, but instead embodied a range of musical genres that were played on instruments beyond their standard use. The ideas of "world-music", artistic expression, and spirituality were also popular during this time in jazz and are incorporated into this record as well. Ashby's *Rubiyat* parallels other jazz recordings of the time, including John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*, which incorporated modal centers, spoken word, and a sense of catharsis. Regardless of the trends in jazz, Dorothy Ashby managed to stay a part of the trends and styles. [202]

As Ashby's interests expanded on from jazz into more contemporary styles like funk and R&B, she began working in the studio as a session musician. From 1957-1970 she led more than ten studio sessions.[203] She and her husband later relocated to Los Angeles where she began working with Bill Withers, Rick James, Earth Wind and Fire, and The Emotions.[204] She was later asked to play on Stevie Wonder's *Songs in the Key of*

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[200] Davenport, "Unsung."
[201] Placksin, "Dorothy Ashby," 239.
[202] Elizabeth, "Dorothy."
[203] Ibid.
[204] Placksin, "Dorothy Ashby," 239.

Life on the song, "If It's Magic" which is a voice and harp duet. In 1986, Ashby died of cancer.

MISOGYNY AND INSTRUMENTAL ADVERSITY

Ashby created a space for instruments that were not normally seen on instrumental jazz stages. On review of Ashby's playing, one reviewer said "this isn't just novelty, though that is what you expect. The harp has a clean jazz voice with a resonance and syncopation that turn familiar jazz phrasing inside out."[205] Ashby received praise for her work but has yet to receive international acclaim as there are so few jazz harpists. Ashby once stated on the matter, "people don't know what you're doing. Nobody else knows enough to know that nobody else is doing it."[206]

In interviews, Ashby makes several comments about how her youth and professional career were affected by her being a woman on the bandstand. One of the earliest occurrences came from her father, who while supportive of her career, made it clear to Ashby that he did not want her to be a part of the club and bar scene associated with jazz. "My father had different aspirations for me. He did not want me to wind up in the clubs and suffer the hard times that so many encountered."[207] Upon graduation from college, Ashby, who was yet to have her own harp, played piano around Detroit. She states in one interview how challenging it was as a woman to receive any playing time and the competition was intense. She competed with two other female pianists, Terry Pollard, and Bess Bonnier, but claimed, "you could not sit in unless you could play. The

[205] Placksin, "Dorothy Ashby," 239.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid, 240.

guys won't allow it. They'd let you sit in, but you won't last long unless you turned out something that was worth hearing, so the standards were very high, and the lady players were very few."[208] One of the reasons Ashby was somewhat overlooked was the culture of the jazz scene in Detroit (and society as a whole) viewed women on the bandstand. Women were expected to prove themselves before they were included, men on the other hand were able to come and go as they pleased. Ashby faced other issues of financial and professional instability as the challenges she encountered as a female player were compounded by the fact that she chose an instrument abnormal to the art form.[209]

Ashby's stated that she was only interested in playing jazz on the harp and translated the jazz musical concepts onto the instrument. "I just tried to transfer the things that I had heard and the things that I wanted to do as a jazz player to the harp. Nobody had ever told me these things should not be done or were not usually done on the harp because I did not hear it any other way."[210]

In 1952, Ashby received her own harp and attempted a career on the instrument. However, she often faced discrimination based on the gendered nature of the harp and its lack of acceptance in jazz. Ashby once stated, "often the harpists who got the write-ups and the media coverage were very pretty and that seemed to be all they were interested in. Detroiters have never been much on looks; they've always been strong on talent…if you did not have the talent you won't get to play."[211] She struggled to receive performance slots or even opportunities to audition, as venues expected "harp" to be associated with chamber music. Ashby was forced to create her own opportunities; she

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[208] Placksin, "Dorothy Ashby," 241.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid, 240.
[211] Ibid, 241.

created spaces where she could be seen and heard, thus altering the ideas of what was possible.

While Ashby often defied many stereotypes and adversities thrown her way, she did mention later in life that she had a "triple burden" due to the intense challenges faced by black Americans during a time of immense racial tension, being a non-traditional instrument in jazz, and being female in a male-dominated space.[212] She was once recognized by a reviewer stating, "to achieve fame as a harpist is not an easy task. To achieve fame as a jazz harpist is infinitely more difficult."[213]

LEGACY

Dorothy Ashby's legacy has lived on through other young, black jazz harpists including Brandee Younger. Younger is currently serving as an educator at New York University and was awarded Downbeat Magazine's 2020 Rising Star Harpist award. Younger pays homage to Ashby and fellow jazz harpist, Alice Coltrane through curating their music into her live sets.[214] She states, "I do think that Dorothy Ashby's catalogue is really not appreciated the way it should be. It's massive and it's not one style, she really branches out—her early study on Cadet she was really stepping out. And then there are her solo records—why on earth aren't those being studied at university?"[215]

Ashby is often credited with being the first artist to use harp in jazz and bebop, even before Alice Coltrane.[216] Her music holds a lasting impact as she is known for

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[212] Jennifer J. Betzer, "The Innovation and Influence of Jazz Harpist Dorothy Ashby (1932-1986)," (PhD. Diss., University of North Texas, Denton, 2020), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
[213] Bob Rolontz, liner note to *The Fantastic Jazz Harp of Dorothy Ashby*, performed by Dorothy Ashby, 1447, 1965, LP.
[214] "Music straight from the harp", *Jazzwise Magazine*, 267, 1965, 18.
[215] "Music" *Jazzwise,* 18,
[216] Placksin, "Dorothy Ashby", 241.

manipulating the sound of the harp in various ways and her sense of experimentation made harp relevant in jazz, funk, and studio circles. Her music has been sampled by many rap and R&B artists such as Jay-Z, Kanye West, and Drake.[217] Author Jordannah Elizabeth states, "Ashby is a bridge and a marker of where one era of music ended and where music's exploratory, modern sound begins."[218] However, in her own words Ashby believes her musical instrument, race, and gender played a role in her inability to go further in her career. In a 1983 interview with Rob Strokes for the book, *"The Jazz Living Life"* Ashby states, "It's been maybe a triple burden in that not a lot of women are becoming known as jazz players. There is also the connection with black women. The audiences I was trying to reach were not interested in the harp, period—classical or otherwise—and they were certainly not interested in seeing a black woman playing the harp."[219]

CONCLUSION

Dorothy Ashby is one of the most unique figures in jazz history. She defied the barriers set upon women in the 1950s and created spaces for instruments not normally used in jazz spaces. She innovated the Detroit jazz scene by creating opportunities for herself to be heard as a jazz harpist and changed the narrative around who was allowed to play. The empowerment of women in the 1960s brought new opportunities for women in all facets of work. There were new audiences for women in jazz and an interest in women's history. This wave of feminism brought a raised awareness to the importance of

[217] Elizabeth, "Dorothy."
[218] Ibid.
[219] Stokes, W. Royal, *Living the Jazz Life: Conversations with Forty Musicians about Their Careers in Jazz,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 158.

women's rights.[220] Dorothy Ashby existed amongst this feminism upheaval by creating a space not only for her but for harpists everywhere. A pioneer in women's jazz and the modern harp, Ashby's career traveled through various genres and performance spaces. She was not only able to use the harp as a jazz instrument but also cement a place for herself in jazz history.

[220] Tucker, "Women in jazz."

CHAPTER TEN:

SUMMATION OF EXPERIENCES OF SIX WOMEN

There are common threads that extend into each of these women's careers, lives, and respective legacies. The experiences they had as women jazz instrumentalists in the 20th century are similar due to several factors including historical context and racial and gender stereotypes of the time. In the initial pursuit of this essay, I sought to answer the following questions through my research.

1. What circumstances occurred to exclude these six women from the narrative of jazz history?
2. How has gender and race played into the trajectory of these women's careers and legacy?
3. How do we implement these women, their music, and their experiences into the cannon of jazz history?

While some of these musicians have more visibility that preexisted this research, I have intended to answer these questions with the previous chapters provided.

There are many, while varying answers to these questions based on the exact timeline and social factors of each of these musicians. Some of these musicians were born into musical families, like Dorothy Ashby and Valaida Snow. For Snow, her exposure to the early Vaudeville and T.O.B.A. circuits allowed her to have earlier exposure to performance opportunities.[221] Ashby, whose father was a local musician, was also exposed to professional musicians at an early age and was allowed to perform amongst them.[222] Coincidentally, Ashby and Snow are two of the more thoroughly

[221] Placksin, "Valaida", 93.
[222] Placksin, "Dorothy Ashby," 239.

researched and recognized in the jazz history cannon and it could potentially be argued that the early childhood support of a musical career helped boost their later careers and thus visibility in jazz history. However, Clora Bryant, whose parents were not musicians, also had active and consistent support from her father to pursue a music career though he was not able to provide her the same benefits Ashby or Snow's parents did.

A commonality that reaches all six of these musicians is at some point in their career, all six women took care of their families in some capacity. Terry Pollard and Clora Bryant both pursued motherhood and took time away to raise their kids, Melba Liston, Valaida Snow, and Dorothy Ashby all married, and Pauline Braddy spent the last twenty to thirty years of her life caring for her mother. Liston notoriously would abandon her career as a musician upon marriage, thus creating a divide between her personal and professional life.

Pauline Braddy discontinued her career as a musician in order to be closer and to provide care for her ailing mother. She pursued a career as a telephone operator in order to create a more consistent income.[223] Bryant, who took several gaps in her career, raised four children in her life and took time away from the trumpet in order to do so.[224] While male musicians of the 20th century also pursued fatherhood, it was considered the female or wife's role to raise children and be homemakers. According to Pauline Braddy, women in the International Sweethearts of Rhythm got married or their husbands "took them out [of the music industry]" when the returned from war in order to begin domestic life.[225] The gaps in the careers of these women allowed for others, predominately men, to

[223] Davenport, "Unsung."
[224] Porter, "Clora," 487.
[225] Placksin, "Pauline Braddy," 137.

continue growing their career in both national visibility and jazz history. The expectation of women to adhere to gender roles post-World War II was a major factor as to why some of these women's memory is forgotten in jazz history. In an article published in Downbeat Magazine published in 1941, the author states, "the ability to succeed in traditionally male domains seem[s] incompatible with accepted ideas about "femininity."[226] The author goes on to ask questions like, "Why is it that outside of a few sepia females the woman musician was never born capable of sending anyone farther than the nearest exit?"[227] The articles author interviews male jazz musicians of the time and they reply with quotes stating, "the gal yippers have no place in our jazz bands" claiming that women musicians are not intelligent, talented, or even worthy enough to play on the same stage. This is an example of the damaging narrative many of these women faced in pursuit of their passions. If mainstream jazz media is publishing defamatory material about female jazz musicians, there will be little hope for women to be interviewed, written about, or even heard by sources that would document their legacy. The women that are mentioned in jazz history texts and narratives have notoriously been vocalists. Vocalists were seen as an "object" or something to admire visually. Female instrumentalists masculinized the idea of female musicians while vocalists maintained the feminine ideals of the early 20th century. If women were written about at all in mainstream jazz publication, it would usually be about their looks, not their talent. In an interview with bassist Suzanne Vincenza, the interviewer asks, "historically, there have been relatively few women in jazz, and it seems that there are even fewer of

[226] Marvin Freedman, "Here's the Lowdown on 'Two Kinds of Women,'" *Down Beat* (February 1, 1941): 111-113.
[227] Freedman, "Here's the Lowdown," 112.

those women in jazz commentary…" to which Vincenza replies, "Instrumentalists. It was accepted for a woman to sing. It was somewhat acceptable for a woman to play the piano. But beyond that, in jazz especially, it was not acceptable to play almost any other instrument, although women have always done it." Vincenza goes on to explain that the pressure on women to not pursue a career as a jazz instrumentalist is because it was not considered feminine stating, "you're listening to our drummer practicing out there right now. Does that drum roll sound feminine to you?"[228] While the social stereotypes and expectations of gender in the 20th century stymied these women's careers, their race also played a factor in many of their success. Ashby also stated that her gender, race, and instrumentation was a factor in which she was disadvantaged in jazz. She stated she had a "triple burden" due to the intense challenges faced by African American peoples in America during a time of immense racial tension, being a non-traditional instrument in jazz, and being female in a male-dominated space.[229]

I have deduced that there are several factors that lead to the exclusion of these women in jazz history. Parental influence, financial income and stability, gender stereotypes, and World War II created barriers in these musicians that often stifled their careers. Family matters, including becoming a primary caretaker of a child or aging parents, is a commonality in all of these musicians' lives. Often when they were at the peak of their career, they had to leave to care for others, allowing male counterparts to fill their spaces. Parental influence and family support is also a factor. Many of them had support from parents, school, or music teachers to encourage them to pursue music.

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[228] Mary S. Pollock and Susanne Vincenza, "Feminist Aesthetics in Jazz: An Interview with Susanne Vincenza of Alive!" *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 8, no. 1 (1984): 60.
[229] Betzer, "The Innovation."

Gender stereotypes and World War II coincide as women were expected to be stay-at-home parents, wives, and homemakers. While men were involved in combat overseas, young females were able to establish a career. Upon returning from war, young couples would marry, and men would reclaim the careers women had filled in their absence. Female musicians were not commonly included in major reviews, newspapers, or music related literature, unless they were vocalists. If instrumental women were written about, it often had little to do with their musicianship and more to do with their appearance, thus making it a challenge for history texts to include information about their artistry. Creating space for these women and recalling their careers into the mainstream cannon of jazz history is the main purpose of this research. Awareness of these women is only part of the journey; creating space for them and their music in jazz education is an imperative part of illustrating actuality in America's musical fabric.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: CONCLUSION

As a jazz educator, student, and scholar, I have noticed a significant lack of women in jazz history curriculum. There has been much research into the reasons and solutions for this, but I wanted to learn more about the women who were on the bandstand, in the classroom, and became a part of this artform. In the classroom, I heard about the same male instrumentalists. But where were the women? Although I'm not an instrumentalist, I found the lack of representation in specifically black women instrumentals minimal. At a performance last week, I walked in with a fellow musician who happens to be a female trombone player, and the venue manager said, "I didn't know you had two singers." Why are jazz women always singers? Who and what created that narrative.

I am vocalist, but also, I am white. Throughout this project, I have received the question, on what grounds do I have to speak on behalf of black instrumentalists; something I am not and an experience I will never understand. This is a great question and worth asking, however I do not wish to speak for these women, but to help elevate their stories, careers, and lives to audiences in academic jazz circles as their music deserves remembrance. As seen in my research, these women were active members of jazz history, however several factors led to their lack of histography.

My personal passion and life experience is very much behind this research. My childhood and early adult life were built on understanding the fundamentals of social politics involving racial identities, gender stereotypes, and other social identities that create space and/or diminish it in our culture. I was raised in a bi-racial family with two black uncles who played substantial roles in my childhood. They acted as parental figures

in our youth as my parents were active in their careers. One of them tragically passed away when I was 21 years old. I changed my name from Bailey Elizabeth Grogan to Bailey Hinkley Grogan as that was his last name and I was the sole beneficiary of his will as well as acting next of kin at 21 years old. I never saw myself as a white woman acting on behalf of a black man as any kind of issue, as he was my uncle. However much of his community, which consisted of queer black and Hispanic peoples, rushed with concern as they did not even know his family white. This was the first time I recognized the delicate nature of elevating someone's voice, without speaking for them.

The strong presence of my uncles in my life and my uncle's death led to my activism in social justice reform through research into black American music and history. I realized we as a family didn't acknowledge or even talk about my uncles' experiences as black men in rural America until *they* told us.

This research not only illustrates and brings to light the stories of forgotten pioneers in jazz history, but reinstates a narrative of listening, instead of speaking. It has taught me the importance of amplifying voices that have been muffled by gender and racial stereotypes throughout our American history and even before the birth of this nation. It has allowed me to set aside my identity as jazz musician and vocalist and open my mind to the stories of life-changing educators, international vaudevillians, instrumental innovators, and gender defying music makers. These six instrumentalists are much more than my subject matter, they are angels that sit on my shoulder and continue to guide me through my musical and scholarly journey. They have become my heroes and their music is my passion. I hope one day that this research helps to provide the recognition they deserve.

Valaida Snow, Pauline Braddy, Clora Bryant, Terry Pollard, Melba Liston, and Dorothy Ashby are six accomplished, yet inexplicably overlooked women in the jazz history idiom. These women have had major accomplishments in their career and contributed to jazz history in unique ways. Valaida Snow was an international touring artist who is often considered a main contributor of bringing jazz to Europe.[230] Clora Bryant was a dynamic trumpet player who created waves with her sound and mentored young women to pursue the same career.[231] Pauline Braddy was an astounding drummer and member of one of the biggest ensembles of the swing era that not only created a space for women in big band, but black women specifically.[232] Terry Pollard was a main stage staple in the Detroit jazz scene, appeared on TV as one of the first black female jazz instrumentalists, and even left a legacy that benefits young artists in the current day.[233] Melba Liston was one of the most sought-after arrangers of the 20th century with both Quincy Jones and Dizzy Gillespie claiming her arranging was vital to their work.[234] Lastly, Dorothy Ashby was a groundbreaking advocate for the non-traditional-jazz-instrumentalist by implementing harp into a jazz setting.[235] These women have created their own unique career in jazz but due to the complications of 20th century American culture, they have yet to receive the recognition they deserve. They are not uncommon and are part of a larger legacy of underrepresented jazz pioneers with long overdue recognition.

I want to illustrate the accomplishments, accolades, and careers of these

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[230] Russonello, "Overlooked."
[231] Russonello, "Clora," 18.
[232] Placksin, "Pauline Braddy," 135.
[233] Chell, "Terry Gibbs."
[234] Placksin, "Melba Liston," 179.
[235] Placksin, "Dorothy Ashby," 239.

musicians while also explaining the greater issue of their exclusion in mainstream jazz history. With the intense expectations of women in the 20th century, there were few publications that highlighted women for more than their looks. Mainstream publications like *Down Beat* even discouraged the involvement of women in jazz. With the exclusionary nature of women's musicianship in music publications, it is hard to glean any historical information other than how the appeared physically. The conclusion of World War II also contributed to the exclusion of many women in music as their husbands who returned from service expected them to adhere to gender norms of the early 20th century such as motherhood, childbearing, and homemaking. Instead of shying away from women in the artform, professors can be encouraged embrace the intricate history of women's involvement in jazz and implement more inclusive practices that keep gender neutrality in the classroom.

These six instrumentalists created space for themselves to pursue a male-dominated artform. In this, they paved the road for women of future generations to pursue a career they desired. While this research brings attention to these six musicians, I hope to continue to bring recognition to forgotten Black female pioneers of jazz. Without recognizing all the key players who created this artform, we lose a vital part of the cultural and musical history of the United States.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: RECORDING DISCOGRAPHY FOR VALIDA SNOW

Singles and EP's

(1935) "I Wish I Were Twins/I Won't Dance, I've Got Ants in My Pants" *Valaida (Queen of the Trumpet) with Billy Mason and His Orchestra* – Recorded in London (Parlophone) *

(1935) "Imagination/Sing, You Sinners" *Valaida (Queen of the Trumpet) with Billy Mason and His Orchestra* – Recorded in London (Parlophone) *

(1935) "It Had to Be You/You Bring Out the Savage in Me" *Valaida (Queen of the Trumpet) with Billy Mason and His Orchestra* – Recorded in London (Parlophone) *

(1935) "You Bring Out the Savage in Me/Singing in the Rain" *Valeida (Queen of the Trumpet) w/ Billy Mason and His Orchestra*—Recorded in London (Odeon) +

(1935) "Singin' in the Rain/Whisper Sweet" – *Valaida (Queen of the Trumpet)* – Recorded in London (Parlophone) +

(1936) "I Want a Lot of Love/I Must Have That Man" – *Valaida (Queen of the Trumpet)* – Recorded in London (Parlophone) +

(1936) "Take Care of You for Me/Loveable and Sweet" – *Valaida (Queen of the Trumpet)*—Recorded in London (Odeon) *

(1937) "I Can't Believe That You're in Love with Me/Tiger Rag" – (Parlophone) *

(1937) "Swing Is the Thing/I Wonder Who Made Rhythm" – (Parlophone)*

(1937) "The Mood That I'm in/Sweet Heartache" – Recorded in London (Parlophone) *

(1937) "Don't Know If I'm Comin' or Goin'/Where Is the Sun?" – Recorded in London (Parlophone) *

(1938) “Some of These Days/Nagasaki” –(Parlophone) *

(1938) “Chloe/I Got Rhythm” – (Parlophone) *

(1939) “Caravan/My Heart Belongs to Daddy” *Valaida (Queen of the Trumpet) and Lulle Ellboys Orkester* – Recorded in Sweden (Sonora) *

(1940) “You’re Driving Me Crazy/Take It Easy” *Valaida (Queen of the Trumpet) Med Winstrup Olesen’s Swingband* – Recorded in Norway (Tono) *

(1940) “Minnie the Mooch/Swing Low—Sweet Chariot” *Valaida (Queen of the Trumpet) and Lulle Ellboys Orkester* – Recorded in Sweden (Sonora) *

(1940) “Some of these Days/Carry Me Back to Old Virginny” *Miss Valaida*, (Tono) *

(1940) “I Can’t Give You Anything but Love/St. Louis Blues” *Med Winstrup Olesen’s Swingband* – Recorded in Denmark (Ekko) *

(1946) “The Lonesome Road/If I Only Had You” *Valaida Snow with Buzz Adlam’s Orchestra* – recorded in Chicago, USA (Gold Seal) *

(1946) “Fool That I Am/Lonesome Road” *Valaida Snow with Buzz Adlam’s Orchestra and the Day Dreamers* – Recorded in Hollywood, CA (USA) (Bel-Tone Records) *

(1946) “It’s the Talk of the Town/If I Only Had You” *Valaida Snow with Buzz Adlam’s Orchestra and the Day Dreamers* – Recorded in Hollywood, CA (USA) (Bel-Tone Records) *

(1950) “Tell Me How Long the train’s Been Gone/When a Woman Loves a Man” (Derby) *

(1950) “Chloe/Coconut Head” (Derby) *

(1953) “I Ain’t Gonna Tell/If You Don’t Mean It” Recorded in Chicago, IL (USA) (Chess Records) *

(Year Unknown) “Solitude/I Must Have That Man” *Valaida Snow with Raymon Joel Sanns Orchestra*. Recorded in Hollywood, CA (USA) (Bel-Tone Records) *

(Year Unknown) “Frustration/Caravan” *Valaida Snow with Raymon Joel Sanns Orchestra*. Recorded in Hollywood, CA (USA) (Bel-Tone Records) *

Compilations

(1939) *Americans in Europe* Willie Lewis presents Danny Polo and his Swing Stars, Valaida Snow – Swingfan (Germany) *

(1979) *Hit Hat Trumpet and Rhythm* World Records (UK) *

(1982) *Swing is the Thing* World Record Club (UK) *

(1982) *Hot Snow (Queen of the Trumpet Sings and Swings*) Rosetta Records (USA) *

(1984) *Swing is the Thing* Disques Swing (France) *

(1992) *Valaida Volume II 1935-1940* Harlequin (England) *

(1992) *Valaida Volume 1 1935-1937* Harlequin (England) *

(1999) *Queen of the Trumpet and Song* DRG Records (USA) *

(2000) *1937-1940* Classics (France) *

(2000) *1933-1936* Classics (France) *

(2004) *1940-1953* Classics (France) *

(2011) *Valaida Snow 1933-1950* BD Jazz (France) *

(Year Unknown) *Americans in Europe Vol. II* Coleman Hawkins, Valaida Snow, Danny Polo – Swingfan (Germany) *

(Year Unknown) *Until the Real Thing Comes Along* – Monk (Italy)*

∗[236] +[237]

[236] Discogs, “Valaida Snow.”
[237] “General Auction List,” Phonopassion. https://www.phonopassion.de/index.php?key=unterhaltung_en.

APPENDIX B: RECORDING DISCOGRAPHY FOR PAULINE BRADDY [238]

International Sweethearts of Rhythm – Singles or EPs

(1945) "Jump Children/Slightly Frantic" (Guild Records)

(1947) "Blow Top Blues/Green, Green" (Guild Records)

(1947) "Do You Wanna Jump Children/ Aint That Gravy Good" (Manor)

(1984) *International Sweethearts of Rhythm* (Rosetta Records)

APPENDIX C: RECORDING DISCOGRAPHY FOR MELBA LISTON[239]

Instrumental and Performance (Studio)

(1946) "Groovin' Boogie"/" The Key's in the Mailbox" – Jack McVea and His Door Knockers -- Black & White (Los Angeles, CA)

(1948) "Mischievous Lady"/ "Ghost of a Chance" – Dexter Gordon Quintet – Dial Records (New York, NY)

(1949) *Oh Well*! – James Moody Quintet/Dexter Gordon – Dial Records (New York, NY)

(1949) "Lullaby of Birdland"/ "Talk of the Town" – Dexter Gordon Quintet -- Dial Records (New York, NY)

(1950) *Dexter Gordon* Dexter Gordon – Dial Records (New York, NY)

(1955) *Dexterity* Dexter Gordon All Stars – Concert Hall Society

(1956) "The Chase"/ "The Duel" – Dexter Gordon All Stars – Jazztone (France), Grammoclub Ex Libris (Switzerland)

(1956) *World Statesmen* – Dizzy Gillespie – Norgran Records

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[238] "Pauline Braddy," Discogs, https://www.discogs.com/artist/5953602-Pauline-Braddy.
[239] Discogs, "Melba Liston."

(1956) *Jazz Creations of Dizzy Gillespie* – Dizzy Gillespie – American Recording Society

(1957) *Dizzy in Greece* – Dizzy Gillespie – Verve Records

(1957) "Everybody Loves My Baby"/" Blues Down Home" – Dinah Washington with Eddie Chamblee and His Orchestra – Mercury Records

(1957) *At Newport* – Dizzy Gillespie – Verve Records

(1957) *Katy* – Count Basie and His Orchestra – His Master's Voice

(1958) *The Count* – Count Basie and His Orchestra – RCA Camden

(1958) *Birk's Works* – Dizzy Gillespie Big Band – Karusell

(1958) *Last Chorus* – Ernie Henry – Riverside Records

(1958) *Oasis* – The Playboy Jazz All-Stars (Vol 2) – Playboy Records (Los Angeles, CA)

(1958) *At Newport* – Dinah Washington, Terry Gibbs, Max Roach, Don Elliot -- Mercury

(1959) *Music from Destry Rides Again* – Randy Weston Trio + Four Trombones – United Artists Records (Los Angeles, CA)

(1959) *Little Niles* – Randy Weston – United Artists Records (Los Angeles, CA)

(1959) *Dinah Washington Sings Fats Waller* – Dinah Washington – Mercury

(1959) *The Trombones Inc.* – Warner Bros. Records (Los Angeles, CA)

(1959) *Aint Life Grand* – Art Blakey's Big Band – Parlophone

(1959) *The Birth of a Band* – Quincy Jones – Mercury

(1959) *The Genius of Ray* – Ray Charles – Atlantic (New York, NY)

(1960) *Big Band Nr. 1* – Quincy Jones – Mercury

(1960) *The Uptown* – Cannonball Adderley – Riverside Records

(1961) *Let the Good Times Roll* – Ray Charles – Atlantic (New York, NY)

(1961) *The Chant* – Same Jones Plus 10 – Riverside Records

(1961) *Rah* – Mark Murphy – Riverside Records

(1961) *Trane Whistle* – Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis Big Band – Prestige (New York, NY)

(1961) *African Waltz* – Cannonball Adderley and His Orchestra – Riverside Records

(1961) *Impressions of Duke Ellington* – Billy Byers – Mercury

(1962) "Blue Bird" off *The Compositions of Charlie Parker* - Riverside Records

(1962) "Blues on Down" off *The Compositions of Benny Golson* – Riverside Records

(1962) *Rhythm is My Business* – Ella Fitzgerald – Verve Records

(1962) *Bursting Out with the All-Star Big Band* – Oscar Peterson Trio – Verve

(1962) *Afro/African Sketches* – Oliver Nelson Orchestra – Prestige

(1962) *Ray Brown with the All-Star Big Band Guest Soloist: Cannonball Adderley* - Verve Records

(1962) *The Quintessence* – Quincy Jones and His Orchestra – Impulse!

(1962) *Big Bags* – Milt Jackson Orchestra – Mercury

(1963) *At Newport* – Count Basie and Joe Williams/Dizzy Gillespie and Mary Lou Williams – Verve Records

(1963) *Plays Hip Hits* – Quincy Jones – Mercury

(1963) *The Body and The Soul* – Freddy Hubbard – Impulse!

(1963) *Any Number Can Win* – Jimmy Smith – Verve Records

(1964) *The Essential Dizzy Gillespie* – Dizzy Gillespie – Verve Records

(1964) *I/We Had a Ball* – Quincy Jones, Dizzy Gillespie, Art Blakey, Milt Jackson, Oscar Peterson, Chet Baker – Limelight

(1966) *Hoochie Cooche* – Jimmy Smith Arranged and Conducted by Oliver Nelson – Verve Records

(1966) *Jimmy & Wes (The Dynamic Duo)* – Jimmy Smith and Wes Montgomery – Verve Records

(1966) *Hold On, I'm Coming* – Art Blakey – Limelight

(1966) *Roll 'Em: Shirley Scott Plays the Big Bands* – Shirley Scott – Impulse!

(1968) *Listen Here* – Freddie McCoy – Prestige

(1969) *The Dial Sessions* – Dexter Gordon – Storyville (Denmark)

(1969) "Milestones" on *Further Adventures of Jimmy and Wes* – Jimmy Smith and Wes Montgomery – Verve Records

(1971) "School Days" off *12 Big Band Classics by 12 Classic Big Bands* – Dizzy Gillespie and His Big Orchestra – Metro Records

(1971) "Thermo" off *Modern Jazz Drums Deluxe* – ABC Impluse!

(1972) "Aries" off *Impulse Energy Essentials (A Developmental and Historical Introduction to the New Music)* – Impluse! ABC Records

(1973) *The Big Band Sound of Dizzy Gillespie* – Dizzy Gillespie and His Orchestra – Verve Records

(1973) *Big Band Bags* – Milt Jackson – Milestone

(1973) *Reevaluation: The Impulse Years* – Freddie Hubbard – Impulse! ABC Records

(1976) *The Chase* – Dexter Gordon – Spotlite Records

(1976) Several tracks off *Mode* – Quincy Jones – ABC Impulse!

(1976) *The Jazz Sides* – Dinah Washington – Mercury

(1976) "Dizzy's Business" off *Jazz Power – The Power of Music* – Verve Records

(1976) *Little Niles* – Randy Weston – Blue Note

(1977*) Quincy Jones* – Quincy Jones -- AMIGA

(1977) "My Reverie" off *Jazz Women (A Feminist Perspective)* -- Stash

(1977) "The Saint" off *Jazz in Revolution: The Big Bands in the 1940s* – New World

(1978) *Masters of Jazz Vol. 5* – Count Basie – RCA International

(1978) *Bebop Revisited Vol. 1* – Dexter Gordon, Fats Navarro, Chubby Jackson – Xanadu

(1978) *The Quintessential Charts* – Quincy Jones – Impulse! ABC Records

(1980) "Things to Come" off *I Giganti Del Jazz Vol. 2* – Sarah Vaughan, Miles Davis, Charles Mingus, Dizzy Gillespie – Curcio (Italy)

(1980) *Move!* – Dexter Gordon – Spotlite Records

(1981) *Babs* – Babs Gonzales – Chiaroscuro Records

(1981) *Dick Reed and Gary Keys Present Jazz in America Starring Dizzy Gillespie's Dream Band* – Jazz in America – Sony

(1982) "It Has to Be You" off *The Jazz Singers* – The Franklin Mint Society

(1982) *The Indispensable Count Basie* – Count Basie – RCA Records

(1983) "Oo-Wee-Walkie-Talkie" off *Dinah Washington a Slick Chick (On the Mellow Side) – The Rhythm and Blues Years* – Mercury

(1984) "Moanin'" off *The Birth of the Band* – Quincy Jones – Mercury

(1984) The Great Wide World of Quincy Jones: Live! – Quincy Jones – Mercury

(1984) "Marchin' the Blues" off *the Birth of a Band Vol. 2* – Mercury

(1984) *Easy Does It* – Oscar Peterson – Book-of-the-Month Records

(1984) "Groovin' Boogie" off *Open the Door Richard!* – Jack McVea and His All Stars – Jukebox Lil

(1985) “Night Train” off *Jazz Like You’ve Never Heard It Before* – PolyGram

(1986) “Live in Hi-Fi” From *Birdland Summer 1956* – Dizzy Gillespie – Fanfare Records

(1987) *Jazzville Vol. 2* – Frank Rehak Sextet – Dawn

(1987) “Manteca” off *Dizzy Gillespie* – Mercury

(1987) “Night Train” off *Jimmy Smith* – Jimmy Smith – Verve Records

(1987) *Theory of Art* – Art Blakey and The Jazz Messengers – Bluebird, RCA

(1988) “Round Midnight” of off *Wes Montgomery Plays the Blues* – Wes Montgomery – Verve Records

(1988) “Quintessence” of off *The Impulse! Collection Volume 1* – Impulse! MCA

(1988) “I’m Your Hoochie Coochie Man” off *Jimmy Smith Plays the Blues* – Jimmy Smith – Verve Records

(1988) “Right Down Front” off *The Riverside Collection* – Sam Jones – Original Jazz Classics, Riverside Records

(1989) Two tracks off *The Most Important Recordings of Dizzy Gillespie* – Dizzy Gillespie – Official

(1989) “My Reverie” off *Forty Years of Jazz Women* – Jass Records

(1990) *Groovin’ High* – Dizzy Gillespie Big Band – Bandstand

(1990) Rashaan: The Complete Mercury Recordings of Roland Kirk – Rashaan Roland Kirk -- Mercury

(1990) “In the Still of the Night” off *Night and Day—The Cole Porter Songbook* – Verve Records

(1991) “That’s All” off *Verve Jazz Box* – Verve Records

Vocals [240]

(1995) “You’ll Be Sorry” off *Birks Works* – Dizzy Gillespie – Verve Records (originally recorded 1956)

(2007) “Va-Vance” off *Gerald Wilson and His Orchestra – 1946-1954* – Classics

Writing and Arranging [241]

(1946) “One O’clock Jump”/” Warm Mood” – Gerald Wilson and His Orchestra – Black & White

(1956) “Stella by Starlight off *World Statesman* – Dizzy Gillespie – Norgran Records

(1957) “Insomnia” off *Jazzville Vol. 2* – Frank Rehak Sextet, Alex Smith Quintet – Dawn

(1957) “Annie’s Dance” off *Dizzy in Greece*—Verve Records

(1957) Sahib Shihab – jazz Sahib – Savoy Records

(1957) “Oasis” off *Dizzy Gillespie’s Big Band Jazz* – American Recording Society

(1958) Out There with Betty Carter – Betty Carter – Peacock’s Progressive Jazz

(1958) “Melba’s Tune” off *Last Chorus* – Ernie Henry – Riverside Records

(1958) Viola the Preacher – Babs Gonzales -- Esquire

(1958) “Late Date” off *Art Blakey’s Big Band* – Art Blakey’s Big Band – Bethlehem Records

(1958) “Green Street” off *Back on the Scene* – Bennie Green – Blue Note

(1958) “Oasis” off *The Playboy Jazz All-Stars Vol. 2* – Playboy Records

(1958) “Melba’s Mood” off *Just Friends* – Bennie Green – Blue Note

(1959) “Marchin’ the Blues” off *Choo Choo Ch’ Boogie/Marchin’ the Blues* – Quincy Jones -- Mercury

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[240] Discogs, “Melba Liston.”
[241] Ibid.

(1959) *Tales of Manhattan: The Cool Philosophy of Babs Gonzales* – Babs Gonzales -- Mercury

(1959) *Music from Destry Rides Again* – The Randy Weston Trio + Four Trombones – UA Records

(1959) *The Birth of a Band* – Quincy Jones -- Mercury

(1959) *Little Niles* – Randy Weston Sextet – UA Records

(1959) "Marchin' the Blues" off *Change of Pace* – Quincy Jones and His Orchestra

(1959) *Lonely and Sentimental* – Gloria Lynne – Everest

(1960) "Tone Poem" off *Big Band No.* 1 -- Quincy Jones and Band -- Mercury

(1960) "Little Girl Blue"/" Am I Blue" – Gloria Lynne – Everest

(1960) "For All We Know"/" 'Tis Autumn" – Gloria Lynne – Everest

(1961) *Uhuru Afrika* – Randy Weston – Roulette

(1961) *A Jazz Version of Kean* – The Riverside Jazz Stars – Riverside Records

(1962) *Something Big* – The Metronomes – Jazzland

(1962) *The Soul of Hollywood* – Junior Mance – Jazzland

(1962) "Melba's Blues" off *The Al Grey – Billy Mitchell Sextet* – The Al Grey and Billy Mitchell Sextet – Argo

(1963) "Melba's Blues" off *Recorded Live at Basin Street East* – Lambert, Hendricks, and Bavan – RCA Records

(1963) *Music from the New African Nations Featuring the Highlife* – Randy Weston – Colpix Records

(1963) "Just Waiting" off *This is Billy Mitchell* – Smash Records

(1964) Three tracks off *Warming Up!* – Dave Burns -- Vanguard

(1964) *Sing Ray Charles* – The Double Six of Paris -- Phillips

(1965) *The Night Has a Thousand Eyes* – Gloria Lynne -- Everest

(1965) *The Prime of My Life* – Billy Eckstine -- Motown

(1965) Three tracks off *And Then Again* – Elvin Jones – Atlantic

(1965) Two tracks off *Black Christ of the Andes* – SABA

(1966) *Hold On, Im Coming* – Art Blakey – Limelight

(1966) Three tracks off *For the First Time* – Kim Weston – MGM Records

(1966) *For Someone I Love* – Milt Jackson and Big Brass – Riverside Records

(1967) Four tracks off *Mood to Be Wooed* – Illinois Jacquet, Budd Johnson, James Moody, Sandy Mosse—Cadet

(1967) Two tracks off *A Mann and A Woman* – Herbie Mann/Tamiko Jones – Atlantic

(1968) "Len Sirrah" off *Heads Up!* – Blue Mitchell – Blue Note

(1969) "A Coat of Laughter" off *The Look of Love* – Vivian Dandridge -- Jubilee

(1970) *I've Been There* – Dakota Staton – Verve Records

(1970) *Big Brass Four Poster* – Kim Weston—People Records

(1971) *Kim Kim Kim* – Kim Weston – Volt

(1972) *I'm Not Blind… I Just Can't See* – Calvin Scott – Stax

(1973) *Big Soul* –Johnny Griffin – Milestone

(1973) "Just Waiting" off *Big Band Bags* – Milt Jackson – Milestone

(1973) *Tanjah* – Randy Weston – Polydor

(1973) "Extraordinary Blues" off *Milestone Twofers* – Milestone

(1973) *Big Soul* – Johnny Griffin – Milestone

(1974) *Funky Brown* – Funky Brown – Wildflower

(1976) "Smile Orange" Original Motion Picture Soundtrack – Knuts

(1976) *The Jazz Sides* – Dinah Washington – Mercury

(1976) Two tracks off *Basic Grey* – Al Grey – Chess

(1976) *Little Niles* – Randy Weston – Blue Note

(1977) *Uhuru Afrika* – Randy Weston – Roulette

(1983) "Economy Pack" off *Jazz Capers* – Bez Martin – South Africa Broadcasting.

(1984) "The Gypsy" off *The Birth of the Band* – Quincy Jones – Mercury

(1984) *Repetition* – Clifford Jordan Quintet – Soul Note

(1988) *White Gardenia* – Johnny Griffin – Riverside Records

(1992) *The Spirit of our Ancestors* – Randy Weston – Verve, Polygram

(1992) "Rainbow" off *Devil's Got Your Tongue* – Abbey Lincoln – Verve Records

(1993) *Volcano Blues* – Randy Weston – Verve Records

As a Leader[242]

(1959) *Melba Liston and Her 'Bones* – MetroJazz

APPENDIX D: RECORDING DISCOGRAPHY FOR CLORA BRYANT

(1957) *Gal with a Horn* (VSOP) [243]

APPENDIX E: RECORDING DISCOGRAPHY FOR TERRY POLLARD [244]

As a Leader: (1955) *Terry Pollard* (Bethlehem Records)

[242] Discogs, "Melba Liston."
[243] AllMusic. "Clora Bryant Albums and Discography."
[244] Discogs, "Terry Pollard."

Instrumental and Performance

(1953) *Terry Gibbs Quartet Vol 2*. – Terry Gibbs Quartet (Brunswick)

(1953) *Terry Gibbs Quartet Vol 1*. – Terry Gibbs Quartet (Brunswick)

(1954) *Cats vs. Chicks (A Jazz Battle of the Sexes)* – Clark Terry and His Septet, Terry Pollard, and her Septet (MGM Records)

(1954) *Terry* Terry Gibbs Quartet (Brunswick)

(1955) *Terry Gibbs* Terry Gibbs (EmArcy)

(1955) *Terry Gibbs Vol 4.* Terry Gibbs (EmArcy)

(1955) *Terry Gibbs Quartet* Terry Gibbs Quartet (Coral)

(1956) "Emaline" featured on *Bethlehem's Best* – Various artists (Bethlehem Records)

(1956) *Mallets-a-Plenty* Terry Gibbs (EmArcy)

(1956) *Vibes on Velvet* Terry Gibbs (EmArcy)

(1956) *Terry Gibbs and His Orchestra* Terry Gibbs and His Orchestra (EmArcy)

(1956) *A Message from Garcia* Dick Garcia (Dawn)

(1957) *Seven Comes Eleven/Imagination Vol 1.* Terry Gibbs (EmArcy)

(1958) "Lateef at Cranbrook" Yusef Lateef (Argo)

(1959) *The Fabric of Jazz* Yusef Lateef and His Quintet (Savoy)

(1959) *The Dreamer* Yusef Lateef and His Quintet (Savoy)

(1961) *Soft Winds* Dorothy Ashby (Jazzland)

(1979) *Angel Eyes* Yusef Lateef

APPENDIX F: RECORDING DISCOGRAPHY FOR DOROTHY ASHBY [245]

[245] "Dorothy Ashby," *Discogs*, https://www.discogs.com/artist/91960-Dorothy-Ashby.

Singles and EP's

(1960s) "Swan Lake/Round Midnight" – *Dorothy Ashby Trio* (Peridot)

(1961) "Secret Love/Lonely Melody" Recorded in Chicago, IL (Argo)

(1968) "Soul Vibrations/Lonely Girl" Recorded in Chicago, IL (Cadet)

(Year Unknown) "Und Bel Di (One Fine Day)" – *Dorothy Ashby Trio* (Topaz)

Albums

(1957) *The Jazz Harpist* (Regent)

(1958) *Dorothy Ashby with Frank Wess—Hip Harp* (Prestige)

(1958) *Dorothy Ashby and Frank Wess—In a Minor Groov*e (Prestige)

(1960s) *The Sounds of Christmas* Dorothy Ashby, Jimmy Clarke, Tom Montgomery—(Tab Records)

(1961) *Soft Winds: The Swinging Harp of Dorothy Ashby* (JAZZLAND)

(1962) *Dorothy Ashby* (Argo)

(1965) *The Fantastic Jazz Harp of Dorothy Ashb*y (Atlantic)

(1968) *Afro-Harping* (Cadet)

(1969) *Dorothy Plays for Beautiful People* (Prestige)

(1969) *Dorothy's Harp (*Cadet)

(1970) *The Rubáiyát of Dorothy Ashby* (Cadet)

(1983) *Concerto De Aranjuez* (Phillips)

(1984) *Django/Misty* (Phillips)

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