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The Churchill Report

on Jazz Education in America

by Graham Collier

Introduction

'In Europe jazz is still regarded as a noun, while Americans see jazz as an adjective.' That statement was offered in explanation as to why more Europeans than Americans take jazz courses at Berklee, still probably the world's best known jazz school despite the vast number of courses it offers in rock and other non-jazz areas. While a valid enough quote in context, it also serves to point up the fundamental differences in approach seen in jazz education today.

The basic difference however is not between America and Europe but whether the school is responding to an aesthetic argument - 'It is as worthy of study as Mozart' - or satisfying demand - 'because there is a market for it'. Many of the jazz schools in America cater to demand. This comes from two separate areas: what one can call the skilled amateur, those students who take some music courses for credit towards an entirely different degree and those students who wish to become professional musicians with some jazz skills (jazz as adjective). This demand has created a substantial jazz education industry marketing a wide range of products (including teachers, existing and potential) aimed at those schools and their students. Meeting the aesthetic argument by catering for the student who wishes to become a professional jazz performer or writer - jazz as noun - is addressed by far fewer schools. Ironically, it is these schools which often appear to be out of alignment with the norm of American jazz education.

Background

In February of 1992 I was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship to look at jazz education in the United States. After Churchill's death in 1965 funds were raised in his name for a continuing programme of travel fellowships in all aspects of society. My award, under the Music in the USA category, enabled me to visit a number of major jazz schools in America. I wanted to see what could be learnt from their experiences, with particular reference to the development of the new jazz course at The Royal Academy of Music in London, of which I am Artistic Director. I also wanted to use the knowledge gained to commence an ongoing dialogue about specific aspects of jazz education through the dissemination of this report and through follow up correspondence, articles and meetings.

Jazz education at University level in America started in 1947 at the University of North Texas, although Berklee had started two years earlier as a very small private school. The Jazz Department at the Musik Hochschule in Graz, Austria started in 1963, the first of many in continental Europe, although there was a jazz related course at the Hanns Eisler school in Berlin before the war. In Britain we have had a 'light music' course at Leeds College of Music since the sixties and the Academy's full-time four year course (still the only one available at conservatoire-level in Britain) started in 1989.

This lack of opportunity to study in one's own country was one reason why I and many other musicians from all over the world travelled to America to study jazz. Apart from a chance of formal education there was another reason: to get to the source of the music - New Orleans for the traditionalists, New York for anyone else. Although New York is still a magnet there is less reason now to go than there was before. The music has changed in such a way that, although American jazz can still of course be excellent, there is equally good jazz happening in many other places. There is also equally good teaching available other than in America, so many students no longer feel it is necessary to go to America for their jazz education.

But musicians of my generation had to go there if we wanted formal training. My first exposure to American education was in the early

1960s when I won a small scholarship from *Downbeat* magazine to study at Berklee, whose reputation as a jazz school was then very high. I was one of 250 students in what Herb Pomeroy, still one of Berklee's major teachers even in these very changed times, called 'a golden age'. Among my student-colleagues were major international jazz performers such as Gary Burton (now combining his playing career with being Berklee's Dean of Curriculum), Mike Gibbs, Dusko Goykovic and Sadao Watanabe. Also fellow-students were Larry Monroe, Paul Schmeling, Ted Pease and Mike Rendish (all now very high in Berklee's teaching hierarchy).

While at Berklee I learned by playing and listening and there is no doubt that it was a very formative experience. I also learned, more from Herb Pomeroy than anyone else, that it was important to be myself: that I had some creative talent and I should develop that come what may. This is the spirit that I believe should be at the heart of any serious jazz programme.

Such a serious jazz programme can be devised by an individual musician for him or herself. Musicians have always learned on the job - by getting out and playing the music, hopefully with players as good as or better than themselves. This is how many, probably the majority of those who are making it in the profession, are still learning. As Martin Mueller, administrator of the New School in New York, says: 'we offer nothing that a focused individual could not learn on his or her own.' But a good school can offer a playing environment and the chance to learn about the music more quickly by benefiting from others' experience as well as learning how to deal with the demands increasingly being made on even the purest jazz musician.

Duke Ellington summed up this dichotomy in his remark 'you need the conservatory, with an ear for what's happening on the street'. His earlier view had been 'Don't go to school, it will only mess you up.' His change of mind was in recognition of the fact that the music had changed. There was a lot more to learn and at the least a good teacher can provide a few shortcuts. There were also fewer opportunities to learn in the earlier 'schools' of after hours jam sessions or performing night after night on the bandstand.

Berklee developed my skills by helping me to learn and grow as a performing musician, and equally important to me, as a composer-arranger. However, Berklee has changed since then and is a very influential part of what I earlier called the jazz education industry. Thousands of students study jazz in schools like Berklee and in large Universities and small colleges, many in out of the way corners of the States. Many hundreds of 'stage-band' arrangements, 'how to do it' books and play-along records are now available worldwide. The growth of jazz education as a business has changed Berklee from a modest school of 250 students to a huge business of 2500 students which has jazz as only one area of the music education courses on offer.

This growth and the reported coarsening of Berklee's jazz interests had become apparent over the years of visits, reading prospectuses and magazines, and reports from colleagues passing through. I was therefore not inclined to be too starry-eyed over the American jazz education scene. In fact I had often made myself less than popular at conventions of the International Association of Jazz Educators by trying to point out that there were long-established jazz education programmes and experienced teachers in Europe. And that what schools like the Musik Hochschulen in Graz and Cologne were doing was different to the American experience and - arguably - better.

It was with these thoughts that I went to America in early 1993 for two separate periods of four weeks to look at some selected jazz schools. Some of the schools I saw had a long history of jazz education, some were relatively new; some had large numbers of students taking jazz degrees while others had only a few; some concentrated on a Masters programme and had no undergraduate degree at all. Each school is separately profiled in the body of the text.

Demand

That there are around 1,700 students involved in jazz courses in some way in the nine schools I visited gives some idea of the size of the American jazz education business. Although putting an overall figure

on the number of students taking jazz studies at college level (undergraduate and postgraduate) is difficult because of the different systems and the various definitions of 'jazz' I would estimate that there are tens of thousands involved.

These are of course not all studying jazz in order to become professional jazz soloists. As I said in the introduction the largest and most visible groups are the skilled amateur and the would-be session and show player who wish to have some jazz skills. The three University jazz departments I visited have these students in mind and there are well over a hundred more similar schools and colleges.

These numbers illustrate the scale of the jazz education market which is reflected annually at the huge conferences of the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE), an organisation of 7,000 members which has been in existence since 1968. As a grouping of mainly American jazz educators, mostly from the high-schools and colleges of middle America it undoubtedly serves its purpose. It provides them with a network of contacts and information about new materials and access at conventions to clinics and concerts given by name musicians.

In recent years the IAJE has been attempting to internationalise itself with a kind of bumbling cultural imperialism somewhat reminiscent of its government's efforts. There is an almost evangelical edge to their boosterism which grates. It does not seem to occur to Americans in general that people can do a thing well without some American input. And when the subject is jazz one often feels that because jazz was created there, Americans think they own the copyright. My retort, honed after years of practise, is 'Just because you are an American jazz musician does not mean you can play well and because you can play jazz at any level certainly does not mean that you can teach it well.'

Such dissent is starting to emerge into the open as the IAJE starts to change. There are many Americans - and non-Americans - on the fringes at IAJE conferences who are bemused by the attitudes on display but see sufficient signs of change - and, in many cases, desire for change - to gives them some hope that belonging is not just an

empty gesture. But, I was told, 'It will take them twenty years to change. No one wants to rock the boat. The people who are there now, all know each other from the old hard days and protect themselves in what they see as a hostile world.'

One reason for the IAJE's somewhat beleaguered position among serious jazz educators is that they, representing American jazz education, concentrate at their conferences on the middle period of the music. Bebop is the language of choice for teaching methods in improvisation and used as a yardstick of excellence. What one sees little of is anything other than token acknowledgement of the early styles of jazz. And there is little if any recognition of the newer things that are happening. These matters will be followed up in a later section of this report.

I should declare an interest here. I am a founder member of, and Secretary of the Board to, what could be seen as a rival organisation: The International Association of Schools of Jazz. The IASJ was formed by saxophonist David Liebman in 1989 - by coincidence around the time that IAJE was seriously starting to internationalise itself. It is a relatively small grouping of mainly European jazz schools which holds an annual Jazz Meeting in a different country each year in order that students and teachers can get together to exchange ideas and music. Inevitably there is some similarity of purpose between the organisations but both are worthwhile and there is sufficient to distinguish between them to make it beneficial for any school or individual belonging to both.

The annual IAJE conventions are built around an intensive programme of workshops and concerts which attract thousands of delegates and scores of exhibitors in the adjacent trade fair. With their accent on marketing and a specific area of the music they offer an interesting overview of the mainstream of American jazz education. At the first convention I attended - in San Diego in 1989 - the President's summing up included the statement (said, it must be admitted, with evident relief) 'at last we have started to talk about improvisation.'

The main bias of much American jazz education - and what the IAJE had I guess been talking about at the 15 or so previous conventions -

has been the big band in colleges and high schools. Most of these bands are the result of a much greater music provision at high school (secondary level) than we have in Britain or elsewhere in Europe. There are literally thousands of 'stage bands' (a euphemism for big band, first designed to get fledgling jazz programmes past the vigilant eyes of the certifying bodies and now in common parlance - and still serving to confuse the issue). Such bands do teach ensemble skills but their jazz content is often slight.

The view at Berklee is that high schools haven't adapted to the changes which have happened in the music. The marching band still dominates but the students are into guitars and drums. (The result of this is that Berklee entrants are now less literate musically. 'They are just as talented and intuitive but often self taught and this means remedial work, although it is not called that, is often necessary.')

Trombonist John Rapson's doctoral thesis is on the effects of high school music on the player's subsequent career and he has some interesting comments on high school music. 'Often the Jazz Band is used as a carrot to keep good students in the marching band. Some high schools never do a proper jazz concert. They do Pops concerts, even play for ballroom dancing. They're essentially playing for mums and dads.' Rapson makes the point that the repertoire of school ensembles (jazz band, wind band, concert band and marching band) may differ in many obvious ways but 'their one common thread is that they all use material from the American musical theatre. They act as a preservation of adolescence for the parents.' School bands are also into competitions. The same three or four pieces are rehearsed incessantly, in order that the band can win, for its school or college, some local, state or national acclaim, in what one observer has called 'an extension of the school's athletics programme'.

(I have the sneaking suspicion that many of the major jazz colleges feel the same way: competing - and winning - seems to be a major factor in the life of most Americans. While I was at William Paterson, Rufus Reid was preparing a group to play at the Notre Dame Collegiate Jazz Festival - 'competitive with a small c'. Their programme, chosen by the students - 'I help them organise but it's

their show' - was a set of seven mixed standards and only one original. The rehearsal had them all soloing on everything 'but that will be trimmed as they cut the programme down to 25 minutes.' They seemed surprised when I asked if they would wait around to hear the other groups...)

That same observer, Rex Cadwallader, assistant head of the jazz department of the University of Texas at Arlington (and an American, despite his gloriously British name) also commented that American high school students often get offered access to music too easily. In most areas ensemble music is inside the school system, instead of being, as in England, often held outside of school hours. 'This can mean that the kids don't have to make the effort which leads to real commitment.' But it does mean that the students get access to music and goes some way to preventing it being a middle-class ghetto as only the richer parents can afford instruments, tuition and, often, the car-ride necessary to take the players to rehearsals.

The only high school music programme I visited was a unique one at Penfield, a suburb of Rochester. Following my talk on 'The Improvising Big Band' to the IAJE convention in San Antonio I had been invited by Ned Corman to see what his students were doing and to expose them to my approach. Corman warms up each of his bands - jazz, wind and concert - with a five-minute improvisation controlled by his own small gestures. This was all done very quietly with no fuss and embarrassment. The results were very impressive, both in themselves and in the obvious ramifications this approach has for the students (aged between 12 and 16). It was further proof that young players can be taught to improvise without being dependent on, or frightened by, lots of chords. Corman also commissions writers, professionals or graduate students from nearby Eastman, to write for his ensembles and again the results can be amazing given the age of the players.

The amount of music at American high school level has its effect on the University music programmes, directly and indirectly. Students at American universities have to take many courses for credit that are not connected with their 'major' (their prime area of study). These can in some instances be up to a third of their required total. This is

accepted by American students as being the norm and regarded much more sanguinely than the much smaller non-musical demands made on students who do the Academy's degree course. However some required courses seem perverse. I am certain that the necessity of spending three hours a week for a full semester studying Texas Government to get the University of North Texas' jazz degree is not high on a non-Texan's priorities. Indeed Gary Burton told me that many non-Americans are attracted to Berklee because of the availability of a diploma course which has none of these added credits.

Texas government aside, the American credit system has its advantages. Students with musical skills who are studying another subject can elect to fill some of their non-major credit hours with music classes and they will often follow up on ensemble interests gained in high school. This has led to most American colleges having at least one Big Band and many of them mix jazz majors and non-jazz majors in classes and ensembles.

Because of the sheer size of most American universities many of these classes are huge. Jazz history is always a popular credit option and as Ellis Marsalis of the University of New Orleans says 'Administrators love these survey courses. They can bring in a hundred or more in some universities'. I saw a Jazz Fundamentals class at North Texas which had over 70 students attending. This has an obvious effect on how the subject is taught and goes some way to explaining the rigidity of such courses and the system that makes attending one course subject to the passing of another. These are all matters which can be treated more flexibly with small classes and, in my view, need to be treated flexibly in dealing with the truly creative student.

At Wesleyan University in Connecticut jazz is a 'concentration' (not major level). It is one of the world musics in their ethnomusicology programme. The programme is run by Anthony Braxton, one of many well known jazz names who run jazz programmes without a major being available. Others include Bill Dixon at Bennington, Bill Lowe at Northeastern and Archie Shepp at the University of Massachusetts. Rapson says 'It's the politically correct thing to do, reflecting multiculturalism.'

In some cases I was told that there is often antagonism towards the idea of a jazz major because of the perceived 'inferiority of jazz to classical music' and 'the low-life stereotype of the jazz musician'. Established ensemble directors may also feel that they could lose their power base. Once installed the job of the jazz faculty, sometimes only one person, is to react to or create demand from the classical music majors or majors from other disciplines. Ironically, when successful, this part-time jazz activity can be a very big part of the schools' public profile.

The mixing of major and non-major students and the fact that most schools and colleges in America are budget-driven adds some peculiarities to their system that we do not have to deal with. Because fees are provided by the Government in Britain one is usually sure that the students will continue throughout the full course. In America students usually have to pay their own way and the drop-out rate is high. Students leave because they think they have enough knowledge or need space to assess and put into practice what they have learnt or simply need time to make the money necessary for next semester's fees. Those who stay often tend to plot their own way through their course structure. The third and fourth years are often elastic as students drop out and come back - sometimes many years later - to get one or two extra credits to complete their degree.

This can mean that the instrumental make-up of the course is not known until the semester actually starts, a state of affairs exacerbated by students coming in from other departments to gain some extra credits. Some limits are put on class sizes and the necessity for some prerequisite courses but there is no doubt that this does cause some problems. (There always seem to be too many drummers, guitarists and piano players and a shortage of bass players and brass).

Some schools visited for the report

North Texas University

Jazz started at North Texas in the mid forties when they offered a major in 'Dance Band', later changed to Music Education (even

though it wasn't). The history of NTU is described in *Jazz Educated, Man*, the only book to survey American jazz education that I have come across. Written by Allen Scott and published in 1973 it reports that the founder of the programme, Dr Gene Hall, had to 'develop a curriculum that would allay the suspicions of the faculty establishment while still providing courses of value to the students'. (One could add that very little has changed!) There are over now 400 jazz majors (350 undergrad, 65 post grad) and a 100 or so crossovers from other departments out of a Music School population of 1,500 in a University of 27,000.

The philosophy of the course is to get the students to learn how to play and develop fine ensemble playing. 'It is meant to be a professional school, and should be preparing everyone for everything.' I found the students much more serious and committed than at many other places (but I was there at big band audition time). NTU's reputation is as 'the Big Band University' or, less kindly, 'the Big Band Factory'. There are nine big bands, the most famous of which is the One O'Clock Band, named after its daily rehearsal time. It is undoubtedly of a very high standard, not least because every chair in every band is auditioned for each semester. This is, Slater says, akin to real life. He cites examples of players returning after a season with the Count Basie ghost band who have failed to get back into the top band because 'their reading skills have atrophied while on the road'.

Reading skills and the production of a 'good sound' are very important in the NTU programme, and fit well with the stated credo of training musicians to take their place in the world of studios and sessions. And there is no doubt that this is what many students do want. But it is also true that only a few of the scores of students who graduate from NTU every year will make a successful living out of music. Bob Belden, a North Texas graduate, has said 'of the music majors in that school at that time very few are active today'.

University of Northern Colorado

UNC has long been known as one of the big jazz universities on the strength of its recordings, its big band appearances and lately its vocal jazz (a misnomer I will discuss further below). It was therefore surprising to find that although there are around 300 students taking

part in jazz activities they have no jazz major. It is even more surprising that those students who do take part receive no credit towards their degree. Gene Aitken, director of the jazz studies programme, is adamant that this means that only those who are really interested take part. He also says that the jazz activities are the main reason why many students go to UNC.

What UNC also does however is teach the next generation of teachers in its graduate teaching programme offered at Masters and Doctorate level. The programme is very successful not only in terms of what it produces from the UNC 'non-jazz' students but also in its placement record for its graduating teachers. There are very few college or high school jazz programmes which have not got, or recently had, a UNC graduate in their faculty. However, success record or not, there is now a danger that the jazz teaching market could become saturated and this issue is dealt with further below.

University of Michigan

The programme at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor is very new. Its director is Ed Sarath, who was, in the words of one of the search committee, 'hired as a hot shot to start a programme that was different from all the others'. There is a Bachelor of Music Arts degree, with a jazz concentration and a Masters of Music in Improvisation which offers, according to the brochure, 'an eclectic programme in improvisation integrating jazz, music technology and multi-media collaboration'. There are only a handful of jazz majors and over a hundred students come from other courses on the campus. One of the most innovative parts of the programme is the Creative Arts Orchestra, a large improvising ensemble, made up in the main of players from a non-jazz background often playing instruments unusual for jazz such as violins and woodwinds. Sarath has worked out ways of communication by gestures which on my one hearing led to fascinating results.

The overall idea behind the course is to give the student a solid training in conventional jazz skills as well as exploring new possibilities in improvised music. The goal is not so much to develop a large jazz majors programme but to get jazz into the core

curriculum. The Dean of the Music School Paul Boylan told me that he is keen to get improvisation as one of the basic music skills across the whole school. This is a welcome reversal of the usual trend which is to involve jazz musicians in classical methods.

Classical training

Gene Aitken's reason for not having a jazz major programme is an interesting one in view of the number of specialist jazz programmes there are. He believes that 'students should be taught to be good musicians first - by good solid classical training. We should also equip them to make a living from all possible areas of music. Then they can go to New York to hone their jazz skills. Or go to New York straight away if he or she is so passionate about the music.'

Neil Slater of NTU does have a very large jazz majors programme but he too believes in the importance of classical training. He equates such training with 'a great sound' and speaks of the excellent sound production needed to match sounds in the big bands. (He adds that they can show their individuality in the combos and improvisation areas.)

The views of Slater and Aitken are sincerely held and come from very well known jazz educationalists. But there are areas of contention - not least what it is you are training jazz musicians for - and the whole subject of classical training or not is a source of constant debate among jazz educationalists around the world.

Those in favour believe that a classical training is the grounding needed by any player to work as a musician in today's world. Certainly there are many examples of successful creative jazz musicians who have been through a classical course, where jazz has been non-existent. But speaking to some of them, one finds that they hated their time at college and feel it was not anywhere near as beneficial as it could have been. Examples abound - even today! - of students being forbidden to take part in jazz activities, inside or outside the college, because it will 'ruin your embouchure', 'harm your technique' and so on. That such prejudice and ignorance are still

prevalent today is an indictment of the teachers concerned, and of the students who accept it without complaint.

These attitudes used to exist in America but have largely died out. In fact the UNC Jazz Studies Handbook states that 'all departments in the UNC School of Music encourage their students to participate in the Jazz programme upon entering UNC'. Dr David Shrader, Dean of the Music School at North Texas, says that in his opinion the UK is twenty years behind America in the attitude of its music teachers to jazz. (On a subsequent visit one sympathetic classical teacher said we should add 'and America is twenty years behind where it should be' to that remark!)

The first point, then, is that the success of classical training for all depends on access to teachers who are familiar with jazz, or at least sympathetic to its peculiarities.

Pragmatically speaking it should also be pointed out that many American universities are based in small towns and a classical-lessons-for-all approach is a realistic solution to the problem of enticing good jazz teachers away from the main cities. (But being in a small town does mean that the students have nothing to do but work.)

Keith Johnson, trumpet teacher at North Texas, is very sympathetic to the jazz student but says that there is no difference in the training: you teach them to be good trumpet players and it's then up to them to decide what to do with it and, most importantly, a classical training allows them to keep their options open. However, Johnson admits that lead trumpet players are a special breed (and one could add that NTU seems to be intent on breeding them). 'I need to give them tips on how to pace themselves and develop the stamina they need for their 'killer role'.'

While acknowledging that a sympathetic teacher will equip students to be good instrumentalists, a good jazz teacher can do that as well as develop all their other skills. It is, for example, precisely the differences in sound between one jazz player and another that make the music so interesting. And, if lead trumpets are an exception and need to be treated differently, then what about saxes, guitars, bass and

drums, where there are fundamental differences in the way those instruments are used in jazz and classical music?

The argument of classical training or not can be seen as a further expression of the differences between the two jazz education approaches. Training the student to make a living from jazz as adjective in the session world demands different skills than training for jazz as noun in the club or concert hall.

Apart from classical lessons there are additional classical demands in some colleges. NTU students have to do 18 credit hours of music history, 12 classical and six jazz, and this is said to be because of the entrenched position of the University Music History Department. Some colleges, like Eastman and NTU, make students take a classical audition as well as a jazz one (although Bill Dobbins of Eastman says that a bad classical audition would not affect whether a student was taken or not).

Two years of undergraduate music theory is a requirement of degree validation in almost all American jazz courses and David Roitstein of Cal Arts admits that some students need this to become literate musicians. But 'it is taught here in as sympathetic and as practical a way possible to help the jazz musicians in their own music.' He also says that at Cal Arts the chorus is 'obligatory' but this is often waived unless it is needed because there are fundamental musical problems.

At William Paterson they do classical aural training for the first year and start with classical theory and harmony but these are done simultaneously with improvisation classes. A Theory professor there reported that the jazz students were among the best in his class - 'because they use their ears'. For the weaker students there are 'ear-training partners' from their fellows, which seems an excellent idea.

I believe that today's jazz language is so varied that the student needs to concentrate on trying to get to grips with its basic theories in jazz ear-training and harmony classes without confusing the issue by learning a set of rules often far removed from what they know and from what they should be learning. Like classical instrumental lessons this is, I believe, another instance where training musicians to be good

creative jazz players must develop its own methods rather than following those of the classical world. As the flautist and former CalArts teacher James Newton has said 'a Eurocentric approach is being given to music that is Afrocentric'.

The primacy of the big band

The jazz programmes at the Universities of North Texas and Northern Colorado represent the high points of the jazz-as-adjective approach. Colorado teaches what I have called the skilled amateur; those taking another discipline as a major area of study. As such they may continue jazz as a hobby after they graduate or in some cases may enter the music profession or go on to take an advanced jazz degree. It is certainly not my intention to denigrate this or to say that everyone must specialise in their undergraduate years. I am simply pointing out that there is a very large number of such people - few as accomplished as those in UNC's classes - in similar education programmes across the States.

The case at North Texas is slightly different. They deal primarily with those students looking for a role as all-round professional musicians with some jazz speciality. Again this is not meant to denigrate. Many players leave North Texas as fine musicians who can and do make a good living, but they never expected to become major jazz stars. A few - like Lyle Mays (and Pat Metheny, who attended the University of Miami) - have become famous in jazz but they are, I believe, exceptions that prove the rule. And, like Colorado in its different way, NTU represents a way of teaching which, usually at a lower level, is prevalent across America. The common link between Texas and Colorado and the others is the primacy of the big band as the chosen teaching method.

As an educational vehicle there is nothing wrong with the big band. It teaches necessary reading skills, ensemble disciplines and swing-feel. What is usually ignored however is improvisation, the heart of jazz. Also, as I have said above, the music normally comes from a very narrow period of jazz history.

The majority of arrangements which are written for this market

concentrate on a big band style based on that of the Count Basie band of the 1950s which was in turn founded on musical characteristics from the swing era. Ensemble passages alternate with sectional work and the instruments are very rarely mixed across the sections. Solos are short and given to accepted 'jazz chairs' and the rhythm section, once started, plays almost constantly. Added, depending on what is currently fashionable, may be a bossa nova feel or a jazz-funk rhythm. The basic tune is more often than not an 'original' composition which is but a poor relation to its often recognisable source. Or it is a jazzed up version of a current television theme.

Big band material fitting these parameters, most of it of doubtful worth, arrives on the market in a seemingly never-ending stream. As Rex Cadwallader observed: 'publishers look for something that will sell rather than anything new. And most band directors are incapable of adapting a score in any way, believing that what is on the page is sacred.' John Rapson said: 'I have actually had experience as a judge or clinician at jazz competitions where the directors showed incredulity at suggestions that something different than what was in the score (especially drum parts) ought to be played.' This is once again illustrative of the Euro-centric approach being wrong for jazz.

At an IAJE conference a few years ago it was disclosed that the best selling big band charts, selling hundreds a year, were all arrangements of themes from current television series. Way down the list - around 20 copies a year - were charts which I felt that every big band would automatically have, those minor classics of the genre from writers such as Bob Brookmeyer, Thad Jones and Bill Holman. There were no figures available for those very few arrangements available of the major classics - Duke Ellington's 'Koko' and 'Mainstem' for example. There was, however, talk that the new King Brand editions of major Ellington material such as 'The Nutcracker Suite' and 'Such Sweet Thunder' were only printed in editions of 50 copies (although low print-runs such as this are now much more economical because of changing technology).

Sadly then the market for classic material is very small. Also noticeable by its absence in big band libraries is any sign, apart from the aforementioned fashionable gloss, of contemporary thinking. It

would seem that the 40 years and more that have passed since bebop's heyday should have left more of a mark on the music than just a jazz-funk beat or a bossa nova bass line.

There is of course some really original material being written by students and teachers for big bands in schools and colleges, and a few good charts are published annually. Also some teachers are buying the Ellington material and transcribing other material from Ellington and other early jazz masters for themselves. All of this helps to keep the big band tradition alive instead of allowing it to wither away as many observers feel it is already doing.

As already stated North Texas thrives on its big bands, creating a very competitive atmosphere with each and every chair being auditioned for every semester. When I was there I heard several drummers auditioning - each on four varied arrangements with the full big band in place. Altogether they auditioned 32 drummers for the 9 chairs with a jury of three drum teachers present throughout. This is seen as a process akin to the real world, 'where musicians are under almost constant auditions'. It is said to be a way of the students themselves realising - maybe after a year at school - 'that they're not going to make it into the One O'Clock, and therefore they should go and do something else.' Slater likens the auditioning system to a miniature New York, 'survival of the fittest' but as argued elsewhere one is entitled to query what it is that they are being made fit for.

At Eastman the graduate students are divided between the top two bands, which are then filled by undergraduates. They are taken for a year each by Dobbins and Fred Sturm in what is felt to be 'better than a best and not so good approach as it leads to intermixing of abilities'. (A subsequent visit to Rochester allowed me an opportunity to work with Sturm's current band. I was very impressed with the openness of his students to new ideas, in contrast to some of my previous experiences at other colleges.)

Larry Monroe at Berklee says: 'We don't believe in the big band as a replica concert band which is how it is regarded in high schools.' There are many big bands, some concentrating on the repertoire of specific bands such as Buddy Rich and Woody Herman - 'we retain

what we want to retain of the tradition but 80 per cent is not worth retaining.' Berklee's flagship band is led by Herb Pomeroy, who chooses the students from the recommendations of those already in the band and by listening to the deputies that are sent. (He says he is pleased to have mostly non-Americans in the band: 'they are older and more focused'.)

Even with Berklee's student numbers and resources they sometimes find it difficult to find enough trombones or acoustic basses. Gary Burton says that even with sixty trombones they still feel deprived (!) and have done some special advertising. Burton thinks that the trombone may well become extinct in 30 or so years time as the big band slowly dies out and the players and teachers of the future have less and less opportunity to play and become educated.

Despite some reservations about how it is seen in many colleges, I have no doubt that, properly handled, the big band is a very necessary part of any jazz education programme. It was odd then to find that the three smaller colleges I visited did not seem to agree.

At each of the three, William Paterson, the New School and CalArts, it seemed almost a boast that they either didn't have a regular big band (CalArts) or made a half-hearted stab at it (William Paterson and the New School). This seemed a kind of negative discrimination: 'Look at us, we're different to all the others. They concentrate on the big band. We ignore it.' The New School made a deliberate policy decision not to have a big band but an outside survey suggested that they should have one. However only nine have enrolled (from a student body of 120!) and it has to be filled with outsiders. William Paterson too had a shortage of brass players and a kind of negative vibe about the whole thing. Ironically, all three schools admit that sight-reading is one of their major problems.

What music does, in Duke Ellington's words, is 'save time'. Where time is of the essence, in studio work for example, then excellent sight-reading is a necessity. In a pure jazz situation where time is possibly not that important and the first requirement is an individual voice, then reading is not essential.

There is no doubt of its importance, though, and each of the three schools is trying to address the issue. At the New School reading is now part of the audition process for the first time although, like the Academy, one doubts that a student with great jazz potential would be turned away because he or she could not read well. (Or even read music at all. A blind musician should be able to flourish in a creative jazz programme.)

My own view is that the big band should be used as a historical source and a contemporary resource, a view shared by Bill Dobbins at Eastman. The big band material used there tries for an even balance between repertoire, recent compositions and student compositions and arrangements. 'We also play a few contemporary off the shelf things to show students what is available.' At Berklee the Pomeroy band plays almost all student compositions but there is a vast library of charts from past students such as Quincy Jones, Gary McFarland, Mike Gibbs and myself for study and performance.

Eastman also has a Studio Orchestra, where a large string section, assorted woodwind and percussion are added to the big band. Like many other such ventures to widen the minds of entrenched classical students it has problems with attendance and apathy, not to mention the problem of making such a behemoth swing. (The concert I heard by them showed another problem: that of persuading composition students not to cram everything into every piece - that less is sometimes more.)

Many schools, particularly those dealing with non-jazz majors create a replica of the big band experience for vocalists with what are mistakenly called jazz choirs. Ensemble skills are taught but little improvisation. (Specialist jazz schools often admit to difficulty in dealing with singers and I will discuss this further below).

Improvisation

At neither Colorado or North Texas did I find as great an accent on learning improvisation as I would have expected, given their reputation as major jazz schools. It is only recently with the appointment of Skip Wilkins as the second staff member (and his

teaching load includes mostly classical theory courses), that UNC has offered classes in improvisation on a regular basis from an experienced teacher rather than one of their graduate teaching assistants.

That Wilkins' two classes are 'not enough to meet demand' is symptomatic of the problem. In each of the Big Bands there are specific jazz chairs in each section and the soloing aspects of big band playing seem to be neglected (although I did hear some good solos). There is some criticism of the way combos are put together at UNC and that their role (again as seen so often in America) is to produce music for concerts rather than fulfilling any real educational purpose. Certainly there was fine musicianship in evidence when I heard Combo One (made up almost entirely of Teaching Assistants) but no real original voice. I was also less than impressed with the way they ran the rehearsal and their choice of tunes.

Texas with its full time jazz programme has a different approach but one that I would liken to hoop-jumping. The students' progress is monitored very rigorously, with regular tests and juries, and they have to pass course x with an A or B mark before they can take course y. They can re-sit failed courses or 'test out' - take a test to show that they have reached the required standard.

There can be no real objection to such stringency - except to question whether it fits the jazz ethos. But when I discovered that a student has to pass a jazz basics course and keyboard proficiency before he can take improvisation and then pass that before he can join a combo I wondered what the jazz in the NTU jazz major consisted of. As I remarked at the time, our students arrive in week one and are told that two weeks to the day they will be expected to play ten or so minutes as bandleader in front of the full course. My argument is that if they are coming as jazz musicians intent on playing in public then they should be playing well before they get to us and be able to show their peers how well they play as quickly as possible.

But once again this points up a fundamentally different approach to jazz education in the specialist schools as opposed to most other colleges. The former are teaching those who can improvise to do it

better, the latter are, in many cases, teaching improvisation from scratch. There is help to do this in the bulk of jazz publications which flood the market. How-to-do-it books and play-along records are aimed very firmly at the beginning jazz player (which could of course be the creative jazz musician in his or her early days, long before they arrive at specialist school level). Some of this material is extremely useful to help teachers through the maze and to guide the self-motivated. So often, though, they are used as substitutes for real teaching. The student learns a series of licks to be repeated whenever that chord sequence turns up rather than responding in a creative fashion to each new situation.

'Under Freddie Keppard's handkerchief', an article in a booklet produced by Siena Jazz in Italy made the very clear case that jazz education was codified in the mid 50s by the work of Jerry Coker and others and was firmly based on the chord-scale methods which can be extracted from bebop. Solos can be analysed, chord scales, repetition of phrases and so on can be detected and a methodology can be written. When such a method exists the subject becomes relatively easy to teach. There is certainly nothing wrong with it as such and many good soloists started their training by using such methods.

What it can easily produce, though, are clones - players who are technically very proficient but lack an identifying spark to distinguish them from a hundred others. This is a fundamental issue in jazz education, even at a very high level. Many believe that the bebop language - our classicism? - must be thoroughly absorbed before the student can find his own individuality. (One RAM student commented: 'If I had to learn the bebop language for three years it would kill me - and my talent.')

To quote Lester Bowie: 'Wynton Marsalis's stress on tradition being so important is mistaken. The real tradition of jazz has always been its quest for individuality.' My own students are increasingly aware that it is precisely that individual voice that is important to them and it is this that we as a school are trying to develop. Amusingly, CalArts say: 'there is some strong interest in bebop, and the students aren't dissuaded, particularly in their last two years, from playing the music.'

But we do feel an obligation to try to get them away from this.'

Eastman's approach to improvisation is by analysing solos and dealing with it in three areas. First modal and blues, then standards and then material from the early 50s to the present day. Each student has to learn a solo on their instrument by a great player - first learn it by ear, then write it down, then play it from memory. 'In essence they are learning vocabulary. The student is allowed to choose his own area and learn from the people in it and thus develop his own personality. Students must realise that personality comes from somewhere, who they listen to etc etc - and a lot of hard work.'

However, I did see many improvisation classes, often called combos, where the methodology was much less thought out and where no real philosophy was in evidence. It seemed to be thought sufficient to have each soloist play in turn (which with up to 12 in a class in some places was a long process) with few comments from the person in charge.

This is the New School's approach where the groups (self-selected if they are continuing students) looked like performance preparation classes rather than improvisation classes with any analytical discussions of solos. Martin Mueller's answer is that this is true, that the student learns by playing and that these classes are a practical development of what's been learnt in theory classes. At William Paterson they have two improvisation sessions a week, one practical, one classroom, each 75 minutes long.

Our approach at the Academy is to deal with improvisation in classes on aural and written theory and the requirement to do many transcriptions but practically as well in our workshops. These are streamed by year and are referred to as Repertoire classes in Years One and Two (with no performance requirement at all) and Contemporary Workshops in Years Three and Four (with a performance possibility if the situation warrants it). Most of our performance groups are chosen and rehearsed by the students outside of the formal classes but these groups are programmed into our very regular concerts.

The question of repertoire - what tunes should be taught - is a matter of concern to all jazz educators. The New School report 'a raging debate' inside the faculty on this issue. 'There is a song list which is given out but lower levels don't deal with that much as they are dealing with lower level skills - rhythm etc. At their Senior Jury the student gives a list of ten which the jury choose three from.' In a recent article James Newton made the point that 'the music of Wayne Shorter, Monk... Mingus... should be used rather than Tin Pan Alley songs because they are of much greater significance compositionally and especially rhythmically'. At RAM our repertoire list - of 100, flexibly divided into the six terms the class lasts - is given to teachers across the board. The expectation is that they will be able to draw from it in almost all the strands in order that the student knows the tunes, and thus the basic language of jazz, from many different angles.

There has, however, been some degree of student resistance to learning repertoire. It can be argued that much though we may want them to learn this material, and that not learning it is something they may well regret later in life, there are many ways that a jazz musician can develop today without needing to know standards. (In this particular case the student is writing so many of his own tunes - which are often excellent - that he finds it difficult to relate to standard material. And difficult to programme any of it alongside his own as we have suggested).

Improvisation is also important to a jazz singer but many of the specialist jazz schools admit to finding it difficult to deal with them as individuals. (The way they are dealt with as a group, usually under that misnomer Vocal Jazz, has been dealt with above.) At CalArts singers are only accepted as an exception. David Roitstein mentions one who complained about the looseness of the school and then apologised after transferring to UNC, where Vocal Jazz abounds.

The problem is one of approach. A programme geared to producing individual jazz musicians does not find it easy to deal with a singer whose main interest is interpreting standard material with the occasional scat chorus. Another example of jazz as noun and jazz as adjective. True jazz singers are very few and far between and, rather

than being seen as an adjunct to the course, they must be thoroughly integrated from the start and be treated just like any other instrumentalist.

Composition

Many of the schools I went to divide the students into performers and composers. At NTU for example there are three tracks - instrumental performance, vocal performance and arranging. All performers take two semesters of arranging after their initial theory lessons. I sat in on an arranging class from Paris Rutherford. It was very thorough with a clear outline given so each student knows exactly what is being taught and when his assignments are due. There are three Teaching Assistants who attend the class and then hold labs regularly to guide the students through their set projects.

At Eastman there is the same basic division. Writing majors get to write on a professional level for small group, big band, studio orchestra and symphony orchestra. They also get film writing experience in a two semester class with Fred Sturm which includes some practical work with episodes from television series.

Like the few books on the subject, many jazz composing courses concentrate on arranging and little is said about the composing process itself and the integration of improvisation into a jazz piece. There are classic big band writing methods which are heavily promoted. Like many students in colleges today I was taught these methods almost by rote at Berklee in what we called 'the chord factory' and they were and are useful to me. But where I really found my writing voice was in Herb Pomeroy's Line Writing course and one I remember as being called 'Duke's Bag' (classes which he still teaches). Such courses are more difficult to teach but the ideas behind them are flexible enough to allow the writer to express individuality.

The Berklee approach was, for me, right at the time - the early 60s. However, like the problem of the student who doesn't want to learn standards, is it right to concentrate our energies on teaching stock arranging methods when we ought to be encouraging them to compose and arrange in the same fresh and exciting ways that they are

playing ? There is an eclecticism in the approach of many jazz musicians today - professionals and students - which we ignore at our peril. At RAM we are currently redesigning our composing and arranging classes to reflect this. Many of the students do write and some produce interesting original compositions anyway - and this is increasingly the fact in today's jazz scene - but those few who do not must be shown that it is not difficult and that they can develop their own voice in composing.

This is one of the reasons why at the Academy I have no separate composing track (another is that the small numbers on the programme would make such a division difficult). All students take composing for each of their four years, the first two concentrating on basic theory and writing methods as well as 'getting it out', writing their own compositions perhaps for the first time. In the last two years the students are exposed to a variety of different writers, from all areas of jazz as well as many ethnic music areas. Specific projects are required but within those projects there is scope for the student to reflect his own voice and possibly reflect the eclecticism mentioned above.

Staffing

'Musicians have realised - some reluctantly - that the music will not survive unless they pass on their ideas. And it is now a definite career move for musicians to teach.' Many name musicians head or are part of college jazz faculties but there are many different systems in operation as we have seen. Large universities may have a very small jazz faculty, helped by Teaching Assistants; specialist schools near large cities may have a core staff which is augmented by calling on the teaching skills of professionals in the area. This is the system at the New School and is similar to that which operates at the Academy. Our ability to hire many different people to teach the senior composing classes and indeed any course is one of the strengths of our system. We have no full time staff, only a teaching budget, which enables me to hire from the pool of regulars as well as being able to quickly respond to new ideas and initiatives.

At the New School, instrumental teachers, who may not be of the same instrument as their students, are also hired in and are, in theory,

anybody at all in New York City. Martin Mueller, responsible for the quote at the head of this section, also says that to get into teaching 'in order to survive musicians have to learn to deal with the paperwork involved'. To help cope with this array of teachers each student has an appointed Artistic Adviser from the three full time faculty. 'Their job is to help the student frame the lessons and what they are learning overall.'

CalArts operates something similar in what they call a Mentor system where senior faculty are expected to be on call to discuss a student's progress and future development. Roitstein says: 'the Mentor system is really important. We owe it to the students but it's been difficult to organise since the numbers got above 20 and is not running properly at this time.'

The proximity to a big city shared by CalArts and William Paterson helps both schools' flexibility in staffing matters. Many schools, however, do not have this advantage as we saw with UNC and NTU. The reliance then is often on Teaching Assistants (TAs), graduate students studying towards a higher degree who are paid to take some classes as part of their training and as a way of funding their college fees. This can work well - as it does in UNC - with TAs taking most of the classes which are made up of non-jazz major students. At North Texas there is a sizable staff and the TAs there are seen to be assistants to the main teachers, dealing with remedial problems and more mundane matters.

The majority of TAs however are after another degree to enable them to get a job teaching, and, perhaps, end up with their own group of TAs.

The degree business

It is interesting to note that students for the master's degree at UNC 'must select performance, music education or theory/composition as their major area ... most position openings at the university level require a primary area other than jazz as a major consideration for employment'. But despite that warning there is no doubt that in American jazz education the degree is big business. Schools advertise

and compete for the best students and there is parental pressure to get degrees and to start on the career path in teaching which a degree is supposed to guarantee.

However, there is now a very real danger that the jazz teaching market is becoming flooded. Graduate schools train chosen undergraduates as teachers with a jazz specialisation. They are then employed - often with no interim practical experience as players - by high schools and colleges to take jazz classes, within which there will be some students who will specialise in jazz and take undergraduate and graduate degrees in order that they can get a job teaching. UNC's Handbook has the very strong implication that all UNC Music School undergraduates will become teachers. 'We encourage all undergraduate students to be involved in the jazz studies programme during their entire four years at UNC. Almost every high school or college today has a jazz band or two, a vocal jazz choir and a small jazz ensemble of some type. The student's success as a future jazz teacher is dependent in part on the student's participation in School of Music jazz ensembles...'

The numbers cannot possibly add up and the degrees become increasingly worthless. I was told that a doctorate is now almost an essential prerequisite for any teaching post. I also heard that Benny Carter, the great jazz musician now in his 80s, was refused consideration for a largely honorific teaching post because he did not have a degree!

The fact that Benny Carter has never needed a degree to make a living is a sign of the problem. To produce a degree from the New School or CalArts at a session in New York might raise a laugh but it wouldn't mean a thing in terms of impressing the others on the bandstand. In fact there are students from the New School and William Paterson who have record contracts before they leave! (This is part of the current music industry profile which is said to be in process of changing.)

The percentage of jazz students graduating is relatively small, as many students are not really after the degree but the knowledge offered in the programme. In the early years at Berklee graduating

was something of an exception and the school had a huge first year and much smaller later years. As Ellis Marsalis observed: 'The business is full of people who have done only one year at Berklee'. Now I'm told that 75 per cent of Berklee's intake graduate. Larry Monroe says this is not an indication that an Arts degree means very much outside of teaching, but a reflection of consumerism and pragmatism from American fee-paying parents.

Fees at CalArts, Eastman and the New School range between 12 and 14 thousand dollars a year while at Berklee tuition is around \$10,000 (slightly less for the Diploma course). A similar sum is required to meet housing costs. Up to 70 per cent (1,500-1,600) of Berklee students get some kind of financial aid. Full tuition is offered to between ten and fifteen students a year but full tuition and housing is usually given to only two. 'We still look for kids with talent and reward them with full scholarships.'

Auditions and exams

Like many American colleges William Paterson accept - and reject - students on the basis of a taped submission. Rufus Reid is quite happy about this but will see people if they are local or if there is a good reason to ask them to come. (And it is easy to forget that America is a huge country and that, unlike the UK - and Europe? - the student will almost certainly have to pay his or her own way to an audition.) Reid says a few are 'shopping around' (as they might with the big colleges) but most want to go to the school because of its reputation as a small group school with New York teachers and New York itself accessible.

CalArts also audition by tape and take around 60 per cent of those who apply. David Roitstein says that he would prefer to meet applicants, though it is not essential, and he has rarely been disappointed with a student after acceptance on the basis of a tape. 'They usually send a representative tape and also have to fill in a CalArts personal statement.' Roitstein does meet with some and lets them play what they want to play, and also listens to any tapes they may bring. 'In many ways they are self-selected. They choose to apply to us because of what they've heard - and in most cases it's because of

the CDs.' (CalArts make an annual CD, with very high quality music and production values with help and studio time from Capitol Records in nearby Los Angeles. The project is democratic and competitive, open to everyone regardless of major level and instrument, and last year there were 82 submissions).

At the New School applicants are auditioned by director Reggie Workman on bass, plus a faculty pianist and student drummer and play four pieces in different styles. Martin Mueller says: 'We have to accept that we are auditioning to fit different value standards. We are looking for great creativity or the potential for great creativity. We do take some by tape if they live over 300 miles away but we've had some unhappy experiences with that.'

Once accepted one would expect that students, who have to pay for their tuition, often by taking out student loans, would be loath to miss any lessons. The New School reported that attendance was erratic: 'students make their own choices as to what is important to them and what they should attend'. William Paterson says attendance is generally very good 'but there are the same few problem students'. As Ellis Marsalis, in a typically wry comment, says: 'those who do do, and those who don't don't.'

David Roitstein admits that the loose approach at CalArts might be daunting to an 18-year-old. 'It's a criticism I often hear. We try to weed the unsuitable ones out at audition time. If I sense that they are not mature enough to take advantage of the way we do things I will suggest that they go somewhere else for a while. There are those we think who might find their own way and we do monitor them very closely to try to ensure that the gaps are filled. Fundamentals are not mandated, the student is expected to get it together himself - but with help.'

In keeping with this loose approach, CalArts has no jazz exams or juries. Students are graded in lessons in each class and do a recital on graduation only. 'There is lots of peer pressure to produce an impressive recital.' The recitals are not graded as Roitstein prefers self-motivation. Nor does he believe in restrictions on length or preliminary procedures such as approval of programme as exists in

many other schools. My feeling however is that structure can help the student. Certainly the mid-residence Graduate Recital that I saw at CalArts was ruined by lack of structure and personal discipline. The overall programme was badly put together with not enough variety in it and, at over two hours, overstayed its welcome by around 50 per cent. Each piece had solos - in themselves almost all too long - from all those involved. And, sadly, the drummer chosen was not strong enough to push the group into anything other than basic playing. All these criticisms were agreed by Roitstein who 'will now sit down and discuss these points with the student while we listen to the tape'. But it could be said that some constraints enforced before the event - a limit to the overall duration for example - could have avoided most of these particular problems. But Roitstein prefers 'to leave everything unmandated'.

Job prospects

The argument for teaching any subject at the highest level in universities can be seen to be justified if one is responding to a demand from students for the course and to a demand from business or the professions for graduates of that course. Funding from parents or through student loans to become a lawyer or doctor probably makes good economic sense. Funding a jazz student to become a teacher or a tradesman-musician can possibly also be justified. But even then it is the sheer scale of the programmes such as that at North Texas that worries me. Around a hundred graduate every year, but there are very few big bands now and the session field has been shrinking for many years. I am sure that many NTU graduates go into playing at first but then either give up or go back to school to get a master's degree in order that they can teach. And many of them in their teaching will continue to perpetuate a big band tradition that has no real future except in schools and colleges.

But the specialist schools rely on attracting students who want to be pure jazz musicians, with no identifiable career path or prospects. Setting up and funding such a course is, at least in state-run schools, built on an aesthetic argument, what any university should be doing, and this is dealt with in the next section.

A case can be made that the university should not be over-concerned with the job prospects of its graduates. Rufus Reid doesn't really care if the students at William Paterson turn out to be pros, 'as long as they leave knowing a lot more. They should also come to the realisation that they have to be serious about what they're doing and plan to do. It's better that the students discover that you have to be serious about being a musician now, and perhaps get out, than to be unhappy way down the line at 45, 55. Probably only ten per cent will make it as professionals - sometimes playing alongside their ex-teachers.'

Michael Rabiger, an English friend who teaches documentary film in Chicago says: 'entertainment and art find their own audience. And the demand is not finite as it is with the production of washing machines.'

Bill Dobbins says: 'Jazz schools create an audience for the future. We should not be concerned, nor should any art school or university, about the job prospects. There has been a detrimental trend to force universities into becoming trade schools. People should go to university to become educated, not just to get a job. The politicians have been redefining university, and the original meaning has become forgotten. Even music school people should realise that they are there to get a broader education, not just learn how to play louder, higher, faster. When I was at school we used to discuss music rarely, preferring to discuss art, books etc. Now music is all that is discussed.'

Rex Cadwallader's view is that there is no evidence to support the theory that all this jazz activity in schools and colleges has actually increased the record-buying or concert-going public to any degree. Or increased the numbers of those making a living at it. 'There's a lot more jazz being taught now than twenty or so years ago but the proportion of good and bad hasn't changed - which means that there is more bad now.'

Some students 'make it' from the word go and both the New School and William Paterson report instances of students getting a record contract while still at school, not always with beneficial results. As David Demsey says, these contracts are offered because of 'presence, good looks and technical ability, to students who have not yet got

their own sound. Exceptional technique alone is grounds for a record contract now.' This leads to over-exposure and also means the player has no experience as a sideman. 'There is often the impression that they won't work for anyone else or for union scale - so they don't get offered work. One student was signed by Blue Note at 23, dropped at 27 and then had no work offered for three years.'

As well as being sought by record companies out to exploit a handsome new face, the talented student can peak too early. There is not the amount of activity out there in the street - the real world - that there used to be to help the new young genius develop into a mature player, and the school must try to compensate for this in as many ways as possible.

My feeling is that the real problem is one of numbers and of the overall aim of the programme, and of its standards. The point was made at the New School and elsewhere that it is difficult to retain the original concept and looseness once larger numbers are taken, and Martin Mueller admits some compromises in terms of intake when the New School's numbers went up from 30 to 120 in three years. 'In the early days there were some very good students and some bad. The general level has got better but there are still some not so good and some very good.' Mueller thinks that 90 would be optimum for the New School but admits that this could be seen to be high and is related to issues of space and income generation. Many administrators speak of needing large numbers to survive.

Musicians, graduates or not, do manage to make a living in the jazz world, with all its scuffling and compromises, and it is my belief that this should be the aim of any specialist jazz programme. But to attempt to take on and turn out large numbers of tyro jazz musicians leads to an inevitable slackening of standards and an overcrowding of the profession (such as it is) that leads to what one can fairly call betrayal of students. I feel I can justify numbers such as the nine in and out we are aiming for at the Academy each year. I would find it difficult to make a case for producing the scores of specialist jazz musicians that are produced annually in many colleges both in America and in Europe. As David Demsey says: 'the reality is they teach and do weddings.'

Aesthetics

The argument for teaching jazz at a specialist level is an aesthetic one. As Bill Dobbins says: 'A jazz programme offers insights into how the music works, how it is put together. It saves time and unlocks doors.' Dobbins avers 'University is now the only way to learn jazz, and is now the only patron of jazz and serious music generally. It is worthy of study because jazz's artistic level is on a par with that of European music and has been since the time of Louis Armstrong. Jazz is the legitimate continuance of the improvising tradition which formed lots of earlier music. The fact that jazz survived its whorehouse birth and image is testimony to the spiritual strength of this music. It now survives on its ability to communicate on a gut level with people. But it suffers from the worst of both worlds, having to exist without the subvention of classical music or the subsidy of pop.'

The view at Berklee is that 'we subscribe to the acceptance of jazz as a valid art form. But jazz is elitist and in a flat out trade school the decision should be not to teach it.' That they still do, for reasons further described in their profile below, does not alter the charm of one teacher's description of Berklee as 'an elegant trade school'.

From a purely aesthetic viewpoint the force of Dobbins' argument is difficult to counter. Jazz is now a valid art form, 'as worthy of study as Mozart' as another observer said. But universities are having a hard enough time finding money for the things that they hold dear without starting a new programme in an area which is, in the eyes of many, not only 'not taken seriously' but is subversive of much that they hold dear.

It is at this point that a different kind of demand comes in. The fact that there are people wishing to study jazz seriously without regard for eventual career prospects means that serious jazz departments can be justified in universities or conservatories and private schools can make ends meet.

It is interesting to see where a lot of the demand comes from. At Berklee (and at the New School) a third of the students are from outside America (although this figure does include many Canadians -

'hidden foreigners'). Larry Monroe says that the Japanese and Korean students are more interested in fusion, while, as mentioned above, European students dominate the pure jazz programme 'because of their more clearly defined jazz perspective. Americans have a consumer mentality that makes them want to be one of many Dave Sanbourns, so they can get gigs with people like Paul Simon.' (Interestingly I found that wherever I lectured, my views on 'The Improvising Big Band' and jazz in general were almost always more warmly received by the few Europeans present in each class than they were by the many Americans.)

This high percentage of foreigners reflects a very strong recruiting drive outside of America, not only from Berklee but from many other American Universities and Colleges because of changing demographic trends and economic problems.

What is also noticeable is the lack of American minorities and women. The median figure for both areas seemed to be between 10 and 20 per cent. The lack of women in the music is a worldwide problem - and one that can only be exorcised by some positive discrimination in hiring women teachers as role models and accepting female students. But, it should go without saying, only if they are good enough.

At CalArts there are only four women (at 10 per cent around the average) but their 19 American minorities (11 black and 8 Hispanic) and 9 Foreign students (2 Venezuelan, 2 Brazilian, 3 Japanese and 2 German) make CalArts very cosmopolitan in relation to other colleges. Roitstein says that the comparatively large number of blacks in the programme is due to CalArts' policy of 'go out, identify, recruit', citing a Charles Mingus scholarship which allows them to do that in the black areas of Los Angeles. He also says 'CalArts is a friendly place with absolutely no problems for anybody and we have well-known black faculty members to act as an enticement.'

The problem in attracting black students of either gender is one that bothers many American jazz educators, as it has throughout its history. Allen Scott's book about American jazz education mentioned above carries many similar points from twenty years ago. Ellis

Marsalis, father of Marsalis brothers Wynton and Branford, says that when he returned to New Orleans to run the jazz course at the University there 'I thought I would be inundated with black people wanting to study here but there were and are very few. What we do get are whites thinking if they study in New Orleans it will all be easy for them.' Bill Dobbins has experience of black students, forced by parental pressure to do a classical course 'spending all their time with us'. John Rapson wonders whether there is a class issue, with students from the better off families being forbidden to go into jazz because of its bad reputation.

Rapson also made the point that some black students may not go to college because they have the expectation 'that jazz will be taught in the white man's way by concentrating on big bands'. Larry Monroe of Berklee says that he sometimes feels that jazz education is 'white people teaching the blues to white people who can afford to go to college'.

CalArts, like many of the specialist colleges, has a median age level older than the universities although 'we are now taking more and more at 18. This means that the level of playing is now more clouded because the talent is younger, not mature talent as it was in the earlier days.' Interestingly, Roitstein states that 'all those we are taking at 18 - those who we feel are mature enough to take advantage of our programme - have all come from one of the Magnet Schools (Advanced High School programmes) such as the local Los Angeles High School for the Arts. We don't take any from normal high schools, they are not mature or independent enough.' Many of the other jazz students at CalArts have transferred in after completing a year or two at other institutions such as Berklee or one of the major jazz Universities. One transfer student made the point that Berklee is too competitive: 'there's not enough space for music' while CalArts is 'too loose with not enough accent on basics especially reading'.

Berklee College of Music

The first private jazz school in America was the Berklee School (now College) of Music in Boston, Mass., which opened in 1945. At the beginning Berklee catered mainly to demand from home-coming

servicemen, turned on to jazz-playing in the forces, for the opportunity to study under the GI Bill and grew to what many people see as its peak in the 60s. Their degree was first offered in conjunction with the Boston Conservatory, whose former building they now occupy as part of their inner-city campus. In the 70s Berklee made the decision to change from being a pure jazz school and offer courses in all areas of commercial and popular music. There are now 11 areas in which a student can major including Songwriting, Film Scoring, Music Synthesis and Music Production and Engineering.

Not surprisingly, Berklee's facilities are enviable, although as always there were complaints about lack of space. Rehearsal rooms and studio facilities are open until the small hours and their library is immense, allowing copying of scores and audio material to facilitate the instruction process.

The diversification away from jazz has resulted in Berklee having the seemingly contradictory reputations of no longer being interested in jazz while at the same time wanting to dominate all areas of jazz and popular music education. However, as Larry Monroe asserts 'jazz is still at the centre of Berklee. It is the cultural anchor and pivot of the school. Without jazz Berklee would be rudderless.' This view was echoed by Gary Burton as well as by Herb Pomeroy and Ray Santisi, two of my teachers in the 60s who are still with the school. Monroe feels that Berklee is a better jazz school than before. 'There are better teachers now, but jazz seems diffused because of all the other activities. There is definitely no commitment to leave jazz behind.'

Undoubtedly the move to include these other areas of music was for marketing purposes - to accommodate, for example, the pure rock guitarist 'who now gets straight into learning that music instead of being told to play like Herb Ellis or Freddie Greene as used to happen'. Monroe continues: 'We could teach that way when the popular music of the time was much closer to jazz than it is now. We could play the same music on a jazz date as we would on a club date the next evening. But popular music is different now.'

Monroe also makes a good case for the retention of jazz at Berklee on

cultural grounds: 'There is no evidence of art culture in rock. It needs to attract sales and an audience and if it doesn't do that the music fails or is changed. Jazz provides that artistic civilisation, permeates Berklee and affects even the most materialistic person. It's also now very apparent that most of the name rock stars have a great respect for jazz.'

Gary Burton's estimate is that 20 per cent of the students are exclusively into jazz, 20 per cent into rock, and the others take courses from both areas. He feels that the proportions of good and bad students have not changed despite the bigger numbers involved. (I can certainly remember many bad students there when I was a student.)

Undoubtedly Berklee's growth does mean that jazz is less visible than it was. Herb Pomeroy's activities seem to be on the sidelines; Berklee's once remarkable jazz recordings no longer exist, (CDs with commercial content and production values have taken their place), and, as we have seen, the jazz classes are attended mainly by Europeans and other non-Americans. However to be fair Berklee's jazz side is still as visible as any jazz department would be in the midst of any other sizable non-jazz student community.

I felt that the organisational complexity of the school had its definite downside and had militated against my own visit. The individuals I met were extremely kind but there was a lack of communication between the various divisions and no programme had been arranged for me, despite several upper level people having known of my visit for almost a year. There was not even a message at my hotel to tell me that school had been cancelled on my arrival day because of snow. My presentation to the students was arranged at the last minute despite being 'welcomed' almost a year before and in the event was attended by one student only - a former summer school student I had met that morning - whose view it was that the class had not been promoted at all.

The sheer size of the school means that, as Gary Burton says, 'what we want we can go out and get', which sometimes gives the impression that they're looking to take over the world. Berklee now hold road shows all over the States as well as in Europe and the Far

East. There is no doubt that they are serious about being the leader and are seen by many other schools as an all-pervading force and a threat to their own programmes.

Undoubtedly Berklee is still a major force in jazz education. They still have an impressive number of good students and the roster of successful people who have attended the school is huge (although some of them are at times less than complimentary about their time there) However, as Herb Pomeroy said as we drove past the original building (now, ironically, a bar and restaurant) 'Larry (Berk, the school's founder) didn't realise what he was starting in 1945. All those brilliant people who have passed through here and who have learnt so much.'

Eastman

The Eastman School of Music is part of the University of Rochester, in upstate New York. It has a well-known Masters degree programme, started in 1975, with 18 students, most coming with a previous jazz degree. There is no undergraduate jazz degree though it is expected that one will be started in 95/6 with around 25-30 places. 60 to 70 of the other undergrads take jazz classes (band, arranging and improvisation) as electives.

The Head of department is Bill Dobbins, pianist and author who is assisted by Fred Sturm. Ramon Ricker, author of some fine books on jazz saxophone, is on the staff of the music school as their main saxophone teacher. Most of the graduate students are also TAs, teaching some of the undergrad programmes including functional piano, and beginning arranging.

Dobbins says that one of the objectives of the school is to be 'acoustic' but says he doesn't stand in the students way if they want to be different. The pace seems more leisurely than UNC, which Dobbins does not see as a rival, saying that they too place most of their students who want to go into teaching. He states that by the time students make up their mind to go to Eastman they know what they are looking for in a particular programme (and there is a two day visit while they are auditioning).

The New School

The New School of Jazz and Contemporary Music is currently housed with Parsons School of Art and design in mid-town New York, although plans are imminent to move into Greenwich Village. Their position in the heart of New York City has obvious advantages, not least access to high-level players as teachers, but there are equally obvious disadvantages. The school was formed in 1986 and now has around 120 students at undergraduate level with plans to offer a postgraduate degree eventually. 'Many of the faculty think it is post grad level now.' The director is bassist Reggie Workman while the administrator is Martin Mueller, a fellow member of the IASJ board.

Mueller defines the school as 'a free-wheeling place, with lots of holes in terms of how it should be done in conventional conservatoire terms'. He admits that 'it was too loose at the start'. There are no curricula now - it's left to the teacher to devise lessons within the guidelines contained in the few lines of description in each subject area in the school's brochure. This is all part of the philosophy which is to learn from the players in an informal way.

The New School seems a happy, vibey place with the same kinds of problems we have with attendance, promptness, teacher continuity and so on as well as occasional problems with the 'management' above. As Mueller says 'there is a constant struggle for respectability and money because of our lack of class connections and our low standing'.

William Paterson College

William Paterson college is a School of the Arts with 9000 students. The Music Department is 200, mostly education majors (very few if any of whom take advantage of the jazz courses) with 65 jazz majors. There are three full time staff - bassist Rufus Reid, head of the programme, David Demsey, administrator and saxophone and Vince Hill, piano. The school is located in Wayne, New Jersey, about 45 minutes drive from New York, which means that teachers can drive in from NYC to teach and the students can drive into the city to attend clubs or concerts without the hassle of living there.

The philosophy is that the course should be small and that the small

group is the way to teach jazz. There are 23 ensembles - 18 combos each with two to five people, the Big Band taken by Rufus Reid, a Repertoire band led by David Berger which concentrates on the work of a specific composer each semester, two vocal groups and a Latin Band. The choices are driven by the number of bassists who are enrolled - 'we have a lot at this time'. There are too many guitars and drums. Each student is in two groups, each meeting twice a week, once with a tutor and once unsupervised. Original writing is encouraged for these groups.

California Institute of the Arts

CalArts has had a jazz degree programme since 1983 with the first students - eight in all - being graduate students or upper level undergraduates. Since the undergraduate programme started in 1987 numbers have been around 45 (two-thirds undergrad, one-third grads). Rhythm section players have always predominated, with currently 10 each guitar, bass and drums plus three pianos ('unusually low'). Then there are five brass and ten saxes.

Like William Paterson and The New School, CalArts takes advantage of its closeness to a large city to allow students access to a number of name faculty and numerous guests who are playing at the City's clubs. The faculty includes Charlie Haden (bass) who started the programme and is now regarded more as a figurehead and 'an indication to the public of the direction of the programme'. Other teachers include Albert 'Tootie' Heath (drums), Roscoe Mitchell (saxophone and composition) and Paul Navros (jazz reeds). The programme is directed by David Roitstein, who also teaches piano.

There are many distinguishing factors about CalArts, in itself and in its jazz programme. The Institute was incorporated in 1961 with money from Walt Disney and his brother Roy. It occupies 60 acres of land in the Santa Clarita valley north of Los Angeles. There are 950 students divided among the five schools: Music, Theatre, Art, Dance and Film & Video. The Music school has 150 students - 40 performance majors, 50 composition, 45 jazz and 15 doing 'world music' (20 non-jazz music people do some jazz ensemble work). One of the aims of the Institute is interaction between the schools and this

does go on to a large degree especially in informal, out-of-curriculum events. All the schools are situated in one large building and there is constant physical interaction - movement classes work with a jazz class rehearsing in the background next to a display of avant-garde art. There is a good buzz about the place - if a bit sixties art school - and I was told that 'Graduation ceremonies start with the African Ensemble singing, dancing and beating drums and get wilder.'

Roitstein is clear about the goals of CalArts jazz: 'We set out to be an alternative to other jazz schools. We stress the small group - looking for rhythm section people to make up the bulk of our instrumental resources. And we don't have a big band programme at all, a reflection on that choice of instrumental resources but also as a deliberate expression of policy.' (Some large group work does go on with Roscoe Mitchell but only for special projects.) 'Our primary goal is not to turn out monster bebop players, or players who are broadly competent, capable of doing anything from sessions to jazz. What we want to do is to identify the strengths of the jazz student and encourage them to pursue those strengths. We want to help mould those who will contribute to the music, those who are involved on a deeper level than just developing technique. Part of that individuality is drawn out on a very immediate level by the exposure to all other kinds of art that Cal Arts offers. People at Universities often get too focused on the technical aspects to the detriment of their own voice.'

At CalArts there is a great deal of interaction with the components of the World Music programme. Indonesian Music (and Dance) is taught in the Gamelan room (the best equipped I have ever seen); African music and North and South Indian classical music have regular classes (each with an acknowledged master musician leading them). All Music School students must take at least one semester of a World Music Ensemble.

There is no doubt that this kind of exposure helps the student to develop his own voice and CalArts has a good reputation. Their showcase CDs and the groups I have heard at conventions from the school have always impressed and from what I heard on my visit the standard is uniformly high. This could quite easily be seen as a result of the friendly atmosphere at CalArts and the loose approach to the

teaching that is offered. As Roitstein says 'That's like real life in a way. That's never too structured and we all have to make decisions as to what to do and how well to do it.'

Summing up

It had always puzzled me how the numbers of people studying jazz at American colleges translated into the relatively small amount of jazz that one could hear in America. This extended trip allowed me to distinguish between the two approaches to jazz education, that of preparing the all-round musician and that of preparing the people who will contribute to jazz's development.

The two areas are not of course inseparable. But what needs to be clear is what the primary aim of the school is.

There was much to be learned from the large jazz departments at North Texas and North Colorado and from Berklee. But where I learned most was at those schools who want to develop tomorrow's jazz musicians. I also derived encouragement from them that the Academy course was on the right track.

All these specialist schools believe, as I do, that jazz should be taught, that good performers can enrich themselves and their surroundings by the development of their talent within a good jazz programme. Almost everyone I spoke to identified playing and listening as the main components of any jazz course and stressed that jazz needs are best served not by imitating methods which work in other areas, but by deliberately utilising the strengths and the resources of the music itself. And the greatest resource of all is the musicians themselves.

Whether a great musician like Benny Carter can teach in a formal way or not is not important. But experienced players such as Carter passing on their knowledge in a playing situation, have a better chance of being successful teachers - for jazz - than any other method. This is after all, the way that jazz musicians have always learnt - the mentor approach, the follower being taught and advised by the master.

Acknowledgements

My grateful thanks are due to the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and the Royal Academy of Music for giving me this opportunity. I would also like to thank the following schools and individuals who looked after me during my visit.

University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado; Gene Aitken, Skip Wilkins.

University of North Texas, Denton, Texas; Neil Slater, Dan Haerle.
University of New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana; Ellis Marsalis.
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Ed Sarath.

New School, New York; Martin Mueller.

California Institute of the Arts, Los Angeles; David Roitstein.

William Paterson College, Wayne, New Jersey; Rufus Reid, David Demsey.

Berklee College of Music, Boston, Massachusetts; Larry Monroe, Gary Burton, Herb Pomeroy.

Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York; Bill Dobbins, Fred Sturm.

Penfield High School, Rochester, New York; Ned Corman.

I also have to thank the following friends for their help and assistance; Paul Berliner, John Rapson, Rex Cadwallader, Michael Rabiger, Diane and Don Erjavic, Helen Purdum, Jack Miller and Henry West.

Graham Collier
London
July 1993

[Originally published in *Jazz Changes* magazine, Volume 1, Issue 1, 1994. ISSN 1024-1736. Registered with the British Library and the Library of Congress.]

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