

Jazz as Cool

Module 16 of *Music: Under the Hood*

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Outline

- What is cool jazz?
- Biography of Paul Desmond
- *Take Five*

Cool Jazz

- Contrast with **bebop**
 - Arose in 1940s
 - Followed swing style, which was popular for dancing
 - Jazz “for musicians”
 - Continued through 1950s



Charlie
Parker



Dizzy Gillespie

Cool Jazz

- Contrast with **bebop**
 - Fast and complex
 - Heavily improvised with complex chord changes
 - Melody referenced only at beginning and end.



Thelonious
Monk



Bud Powell

Cool Jazz

- A postwar development
 - Lighter tone
 - More carefully arranged
 - Elements of classical music
 - Built on swing-era jazz, such as Count Basie's music



Count Basie



Miles Davis

Cool Jazz

- A postwar development
 - “West Coast” jazz
 - More subtle
 - Accepts nonstandard rhythms
 - Learns from other forms of music



Chet Baker



Dave Brubeck

Biography

- Paul Desmond, 1924-1977
 - Born Paul Emil Breitenfeld
 - In San Francisco
 - Father was pianist & composer
 - Mother was emotionally unstable
 - Sent to New York City to live with relatives
 - Due to problems at home
 - Learned to play violin, clarinet, sax.



Paul Desmond

Biography

- Early career
 - Hired Dave Brubeck after WWII
 - Cut his pay in half and later fired him.
 - Brubeck held a grudge and wouldn't let Desmond in his house.

Biography

- **Early career**

- **Hired Dave Brubeck after WWII**

- Cut his pay in half and later fired him.
 - Brubeck held a grudge and wouldn't let Desmond in his house.

- **Later sought a job with Brubeck**

- Arrived while Brubeck was out back hanging baby clothes on line.
 - Dave's wife Lola let him in.
 - Brubeck finally relented after Desmond agreed to babysit his kids.



Biography

- Dave Brubeck Quartet
 - Desmond played sax in the quartet
 - Became most successful jazz combo of the day
 - Played worldwide
 - Brubeck & Desmond became close friends
 - Opposite personalities, but musically attuned.



Biography

- Personal life
 - Well-read, witty, sophisticated
 - Many girlfriends, no stable relationships
 - Heavy cigarette & alcohol addiction
 - Succumbed to lung cancer, age 53.



Take Five

- Famous for 5/4 meter
 - Brubeck asked members of his quartet to write pieces in various meters
 - Desmond was assigned 5/4.
- Jazz standard
 - Best-selling jazz single of all time
 - Quartet's most famous song.



Take Five

- Some characteristics
 - Melody in blues scale
 - C - E \flat - F - G \flat - G - B \flat - C
 - Two-chord piano vamp
 - Unusual drum part
 - It is definitely **cool**.

[Audio file \(resume 6:26\)](#)

