

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*

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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


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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

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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



Miles Davis




Count Basie


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Cool Jazz

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



Chet Baker



Dave Brubeck

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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.

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Biography

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 - 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.



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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.



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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.**



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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](#)



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