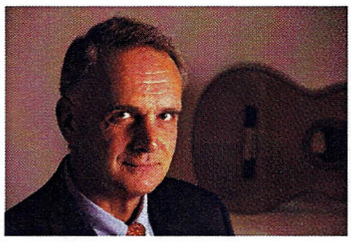

Jazz 3.0

Computers are everywhere. If you have a computer you are faced with updates being brought to your attention all the time: Windows 7, Adobe 9, and Apple OS X 10. In jazz we are entering Jazz 3.0. Now how does this work? All music before 1915 is Pre-Jazz and therefore belongs to Jazz 0.0. In Jazz 1.0 we find the historical styles that came into existence from about 1915 to about 1977. The Smithsonian Institute refers to this period as 'classic jazz'. 'Classic' in this sense means 'here to stay', or 'of eternal value'. Jazz 1.1 is the New Orleans Style, Jazz 1.2 the Swing Era, Jazz 1.3 Bebop and so on. It was the time in which there was an avant-garde, a mainstream, and an old school. In Jazz 1.0 new styles came into existence at a fast rate. They were recognized as the new thing in jazz but where quickly surpassed by the next style. The general idea was one of progress and growth, of renewal and invention, of climbing up the ladder. Things moved very quickly. It took classical music over seven centuries to grow from tonal to a-tonal. It took jazz less than seven decades to do the same. Instruments like the drums and the electric guitar were developed. Major developments took place in all fields and directions: in recording technology, in playing techniques, in composing, in ways of improvising. The playing venues were upgraded form the lowbrow brothels and bars in New Orleans to the highbrow dance halls and concert halls in capitals around the world.

Around 1977 a major change took place. "Jazz is not dead, it only smells funny" was the much-quoted joke of Frank Zappa at the height of his popularity in the mid seventies. However, jazz was neither dead nor did it smell funny: jazz entered a new phase in its existence: Jazz 2.0.
In Jazz 2.0 we find all kinds of neo styles with Neo Bop being Jazz 2.1. From 1977 on jazz performance became institutionalised in big jazz festivals in major cities all around the world. Jazz education became institutionalised at academies, conservatories and universities. Jazz exhibitions, jazz documentation centres and jazz museums followed.

Jazz 2.1 and onwards is the period of post-modernism. There was no more 'avant-garde next to mainstream next to old school'. A certain cultural fatigue was felt: there was nothing new under the sun. The styles from Jazz 2.1 and onwards initially deepened the styles of Jazz 1.0. Players were accused of being clones and having no originality. But later on in Jazz 2.0 styles were mixed with each other and with elements from outside jazz. Jazz became globalised and 'glocaclised', both being forms of institutionalisation. 'The future of jazz is in the past' was the main slogan. Jazz became historicised, a repertoire music like classical music, a grown up and respectable gentleman. Wynton Marsalis got both the blame and the praise for the institutionalisation of jazz, which is as undeserved as it is incorrect. He is the product of his times, not the sole instigator nor the originator nor the only creator of Jazz 2.0, whatever he and others may think or say on this subject. The names of the styles in this period are arbitrary. The Smithsonian Institute does not yet have convincing names for these styles. For me Jazz 2.1 is the Neo Bop of the eighties. Jazz 2.2 is the Neo Jazz of the nineties when all styles were reinvented. Jazz 2.3 is the Eclectic Jazz of the first decade of the 21st century when all styles were mixed.

We are now at Jazz 3.0. In this period form 2010 on jazz is completely reinvented. Jazz 1.0 and Jazz 2.0 are there and will never disappear because there has never been a style in jazz which has disappeared. Jazz 3.0 is growing on top of Jazz 1.0 and Jazz 2.0. In Jazz 3.0 the notion of jazz is stretched to the extreme. We live in a time of essential changes taking place in the world political situation, in the world economy, in culture in general and consequently in jazz. What we see is that improvisation and swing, the main characteristics of jazz, are often only a slight element in the end product of the music. At the end of Jazz 2.0 there was already an extreme mix of jazz with classical music, world music and pop. However, these were 'cold fusions': elements of one style or genre existing next to each other in creative mixes. In Jazz 3.0 coexistence or juxtaposition in the mix is no longer the case. Jazz itself is merging with classical, world and jazz

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