Pioneers of Jazz Guitar

Saint Xavier University Jazz Guitar Workshop Day
November 22, 2014
Dr. Shawn Salmon, Director of Jazz Studies
Early Guitar in Jazz

- Guitar was not used in jazz band as much as the banjo due to the low volume of the acoustic guitar
- Main function of the banjo or guitar was rhythmic support
- Johnny St. Cyr (1890-1966)
  - Combined the neck of the guitar with the body of a banjo
  - Played early 1920s with New Orleans jazz groups King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, and Jelly Roll Morton
  - Played chord-bass rhythmic style similar to ragtime piano
Early Guitar in Jazz

• Lonnie Johnson (1889-1920)
  o Brought the guitar as a solo instrument
  o Recorded with Louis Armstrong 1927
    • “Hotter Than That”
  o Recorded with Duke Ellington
    • “The Mooche”
  o Rooted in early blues improvisation

• Eddie Lang (1902-1933)
  o Influenced by Johnson
  o Background in classical guitar
  o Recorded with Johnson, Bing Crosby, Bessie Smith

• “Handful of Riffs”
Big Band Guitar

- **Fred Guy (1897-1971)**
  - Guitarist for Duke Ellington

- **Bernard Addison**
  - Guitarist for Fletcher Henderson and Coleman Hawkins

- **Freddie Green (1911-1987)**
  - Joined Count Basie Band 1937
  - Set standard for swing era guitarists
  - Solid quarter note rhythms with the bass (Walter Page)
  - Played acoustic archtop
  - Chords mainly 2 notes (3rds and 7ths)
  - Freed Basie to lightly comp chords as “fills” and not play in stride-style
  - “Lil’ Darlin’”
  - “Shiny Stockings”
Django Reinhardt

- Born Belgium (1910-1953), French gypsy, began playing banjo and violin, guitar age 12
- 1928 fire accident crippled left hand, loss the use of 2 fingers
- Developed amazing technique using 2 remaining fingers
- Joined Le Quintette Da Hot Club De France 1934 with violinist Stephane Grappelli
- Improvisations show gypsy influence in melodies and “swing” was slightly different
- Help bring the guitar to a single-note melodic instrument in jazz
- Recorded with Duke Ellington later in life
- Mostly still an acoustic player
Django Reinhardt

Tiger Rag - 1934
Gibson ES-150

- 1935 the Gibson Guitar Co. perfects the electro-magnetic pickup
  - String vibration within a magnetic field causes an electrical current at the same frequency to be reproduced out an electric amplifier
- Eddie Durham (1906-1987) a trombonist with the Count Basie band, but recorded one of the earliest electric guitar solos with the Jimmie Lunceford in 1935
- “Hittin’ the Bottle”
Charlie Christian

• Born in Texas (1916-1942) moved to Oklahoma City
• Heard by talent scout John Hammond in 1939
• Distinct solo lines, driving 8\textsuperscript{th}-note melodies, advanced harmonies
• First to give the guitar a distinct voice in jazz
  o Miles Davis called him the real inventor of Bebop
  o Worked with Dizzy Gillespie and others in afterhours jam session in N.Y.
• Hired by Benny Goodman
• Record with Goodman sextet and septet and big band
• Died of t.b. in 1942
• Changed the guitar’s roll in jazz in 18 months
Charlie Christian

Solo Flight (1941)
Benny’s Bugle

Must have albums: The Genius of the Electric Guitar Box Set Solo Flight
The Guitar in Bebop

• The Guitarists follow the path set by Christian and Charlie Parker

• Barney Kessel (1923-2004)
  o Took a lesson with Christian, recorded with Parker in 1947
  o Joined the Oscar Peterson Trio 1952 (piano, guitar, bass)
  o “On Green Dolphin Street” – The Poll Winners

• Herb Ellis (1921-2010)
  o Replaced Kessel in the Peterson Trio
  o Often taped on the strings to create a percussive, bongo sound

• Tal Farlow (1921-1998)
  o Strong adoption of bebop vocabulary for guitar
  o Joins vibraphonist Red Norvo Trio with Charles Mingus
  o Only recorded a few albums as leader
  o The Swinging Guitar of Tal Farlow and The Artistry of Tal Farlow (classic)
Chordal Stylists

• Johnny Smith (1922-2013)
  o Used closed-position chord voicings to harmonize the melody
  o In-demand for both studio, classical, and jazz work
  o *Moonlight in Vermont* (1952) with Stan Getz
  o Extremely legato chordal phrasing
  o “The Boy Next Door”

• Joe Pass (1929-1994)
  o Equally great as single-line improviser in the style of bebop
  o Recorded a series of albums in 1970s showcasing solo guitar technique
  o *Virtuoso (vol. 1-5), I Remember Charlie Parker* and duets with Ella Fitzgerald and other artists
  o Multi-line technique combined chords, melody, walking bassline, blend of single-note improvisation and harmonies
  o “Cherokee”
Hard Bop and Cool

• Jim Hall (1930-2013)
  o Influenced by Charlie Christian, Django, and saxophonists Lester Young and Coleman Hawkins
  o Early groups included West Coast bands, Chico Hamilton, Jimmy Giuffie trio
  o Developed own understated approach to improvisation, focus on deep harmonic approach
    • Each improvisation was a composition
  o 1962 Sonny Rollins’ The Bridge brought Hall greater attention
    • Guitarists were rarely used as the sole comping instrument
  o 1962 duets with pianist Bill Evans Intermodulation and Undercurrent (Blue Note)
  o 2000s recorded duets with Pat Metheny and Bill Frisell
  o “Stompin’ At the Savoy” – Jim Hall Trio
Wes Montgomery

• John L. “Wes” Montgomery (1925-1968) inspired to buy his first electric guitar after hearing “Solo Flight”
  o Began playing in his 20s, practice Christian solos late into the night after working 2 jobs
  o Played with his thumb so not to wake his family and neighbors
• First gigs were with his brothers, Buddy and Monk, who were established jazz musicians
• Discovered by Cannonball Adderley, who helped get him signed to Prestige Records 1959
• Developed unique style of improvisation – 3 tier approach
  o Single notes – octaves – chords
• Improvisations are some of the most influential since Charlie Christian
Wes Montgomery

Must Have Albums:

*The Incredible Jazz Guitar of Wes Montgomery*
*Full House*
*Introducing The Wes Montgomery Trio*
*Boss Guitar*
*Smokin’ At the Half Note*
*“Four On Six”*
Other Hard Bop Guitarists

• Grant Green (1931-1978) recorded almost exclusively with Blue Note Records 1960s
  o Solos perfectly blended bebop vocabulary with classic blues
  o Distinct 8\textsuperscript{th} note feel
  o Recordings during late 70s blended funk and soul – often sampled by today’s hip hop artists
  o *Grandstand, Solid, Live at the Lighthouse*

• Kenny Burrell (1931-) combined bebop with soul, blues, and gospel
  o Worked with Dizzy Gillespie while in college
  o Recorded with organist, Jimmy Smith – *Back In the Chicken Shack, Organ Grinder Swing, House Party*
  o *Kenny Burrell and John Coltrane* (1958) a classic of hard bop era
  o *Midnight Blue, Guitar Forms, All Night Long*
  o Teaches at UCLA
Fusion Guitarists

• 1969 Jazz begins to combine with the sound and rhythms of Rock and Roll
• The guitar becomes a corner stone in the fusion groups
• John McLaughlin (1942) records with drummer Tony Williams (Emergency) and Miles Davis (Bitches Brew)
  o British guitarist, tone and influence more rock than bebop or hard bop
  o Influence range from rock to free jazz and music of India
  o 1971 formed fusion group The Mahavishnue Orchestra
  o Acoustic trio with fusion guitarist Al DiMeola and flamenco guitarist Paco De Lucia
  o Continues to record today, The 4th Dimension and Five Peace Band
  o Bird of Fire
Fusion Guitarists

• Pat Metheny (1954) began playing guitar at age 13
  o One of the most original voices in jazz today
  o Recorded with own trio, free jazz with Ornette Coleman, classical music, folk and pop music with Bruce Hornsby and Joni Mitchell
  o At 17 was teaching at University of Miami
  o 1976 album *Bright Size Life* with bassist Jaco Pastorius and drummer Bob Moses
    • Perfect combination of Wes Montgomery’s fluidness and Jim Hall’s lyric and harmonic approach
    • Used the chorus effect for softer tone than other fusion guitarists
  o 1978 forms The Pat Metheny Group with keyboardist Lyle Mayes
    • Combine jazz with Brazilian, folk, rock, and country influences
  o Advanced guitar and technology – synclavier, midi-guitar, 42-string Pikasso guitar
  o 2009 *Orchestrion* album is just him and instruments that play by themselves
  o [Link](#)
Fusion Guitarists

- Pat Metheny recommended albums
  - *Bright Size Life*
  - *The Pat Metheny Group, Offramp, First Circle, The Road to You*
  - *Secret Story*
  - *Unity Band*
  - *Trio-Live*
  - *Metheny/Mehldau*
  - *I Can See Your House From Here*
  - *Question and Answers*
  - *Day Trip*
  - *Quartet Live with Chick Corea*
  - *Passengers (Gary Burton Quintet)*
Fusion Guitarists

• John Scofield (1951) recorded with late Miles Davis fusion groups 1980s
  o Sound has fusion influence, more bright and cutting tone
  o Improvisational lines angular and rhythmic
  o 1990s recorded on Blue Note, often compositions favored funky sound
  o 1998 *A Go Go* with groove trio Medeski, Martin, Wood was a huge hit
  o Continues to record both funky/hip hop influenced albums (*Bump, Uberjam, Up All Night*) and more traditional jazz (*EnRoute, Time on My Hands, A Quiet Place*)
  o *Bass Desires* - Marc Johnson album with Sco and Frisell

• Mike Stern (1954) also worked with Miles Davis (*Star People*)
  o Sound combines distortion and chorus effects
  o Fast melodies with roots in bebop with heavy rock influences
  o *Upside Downside, Standards and Other Songs, Play, Big Neighborhood*
Fusion Guitarists

• Bill Frisell (1951) studied with Jim Hall
  o Early recordings with ECM Records (Germany), was recommended by Pat Metheny
  o Sound is more open and free from traditional guitarists of the past and other fusion guitarists
  o Extensive use of technology – delay pedal, loops, chorusing
  o Combines jazz with American country and folk
  o Now recording covers of early rock and roll – Beatles and other bands from his youth
  o *Have A Little Faith, Nashville, Unspeakable* (loops), Big Sur, Rambler
  o Recordings with drummer Paul Motion and Joe Lavano – Paul Motian Trio
  o “*Days of Wine and Roses*”

• Sonny Sharrock (1940-1994)
  o Free jazz guitarist, atonal lines with gospel and funk feel
  o *Black Woman, Seize the Rainbow, Ask the Ages*
  o “*As We Used to Sing*”
Next Gen-Guitarists

• Kurt Rosenweinkel – *The Next Step, The Remedy, Star of Jupiter*
• Wayne Krantz – *Signals, Long to Be Loose, Two Drink Minimum*
  - Whippersnapper
• Ben Monder – *Dust, Flux, Oceana*, recordings with the Maria Schneider Jazz Orchestra
• Julian Lage – works with vibraphonist Gary Burton
• Oz Noy – Israeli guitarist, fusion/funk, heavy grooves
  - Live, Ha, Twisted Blues
  - Chillin’
To Many to Mention

• Charlie Byrd, Baden Powell, Toninho Horta – Bossa Nova and Brazilian guitar
• Les Paul, George Barns – swing
• Jimmy Raney, Sal Salvador – bebop
• George Benson, Hank Garland, Lenny Breau
• Larry Coryell, John Abercrombie, Allen Holdsworth, Frank Gambale – fusion
• Charlie Hunter – 8-string guitarist
  ○ Funky Niblets