ABOUT JAZZ

Jazz is an original American art form that began in the southern United States in the early 20th century.

Three basic elements set this art form apart from classical music:

1. Rhythm

2) Improvisation

3) Conversation

1) Rhythm

While most classical and jazz music looks the same, the rhythms are performed differently. Classical music typically places an emphasis on the first and third beats of each measure. Jazz music switches that emphasis to beats two and four, as well as placing an emphasis on the upbeats. The tension created by switching the emphasis to the second and fourth beats and the stressing of upbeats within the measure is called syncopation.

2) Improvisation

Another difference between jazz and classical music is that jazz musicians improvise. Musical improvisation is a creative process that requires the jazz artist to be spontaneous, composing music on their instrument or scat singing music that has never been played or written down before.

3) Conversation

Classical music is composed before the concert begins. Jazz musicians play a composed tune to start and follow with improvisation that is composed on the spot. Jazz is never the same. It changes because the musical "conversations" that occur between the jazz musicians are different every time. An improvised idea from a trumpet player might be responded to by the supporting piano player, and then responded to again by the trumpet player.

Using words to describe the improvised conversation between the two musicians might seem like this:

Trumpet player: That pizza was delicious.  
Piano player: Yeah man, delicious.  
Trumpet player: Delicious and hot!

JAZZ STYLES

SPIRITUALS

(Nobody Knows the Troulbe I’ve Seen)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVKKRzemX_w>

BLUES

GOSPEL

Composition vs improvisation

Straight rhythm vs swing

‘Call and response’ (preacher sings – congregation responds)

(Oh Happy Day)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olQrCfkvbGw>

RAGTIME

(The Entertainer)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fxk9qwCFf8s>

Maple Leaf Rag

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aQQPVB0zIs>

DIXIEBAND

Upbeat, improvisation instead of being for a solo instrument is done by all instruments collectively. Uses random street instruments.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZdMxFiUf9Q>

SWING

(Pennsylvania 6-5000)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQEo3z3ymfg>

BEBOP

(Dizzy Gillespie)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uLpjp7xkyI>

BIG BAND

(Glenn Miller – Chattanooga Choo Choo)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDgwsMqF-6k>

SCAT SINGING

(Ella Fitzgerald)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CbVy1NnB4g>

POP JAZZ

(Louis Armstrong story)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_XLII7aaDZw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CaCSuzR4DwM>

FACTS

Paul Whiteman - King of Jazz (first jazz band to go to Europe)

Glenn Miller – Took band to troops in Europe, plane went down going to France MIA

Ella Fitzgerald – First Lady of Song – FIRST WOMAN TO PERFORM AT A SUPERBOWL

Dizzy Gillespie – trumpet dropped at party and bent bell

Scott Joplin – The Entertainer

Benny Goodman – The King of Swing

JAZZ INSTRUMENTS

SAXOPHONE

TRUMPET

HARMONICA

CLARINET

PIANO

DRUM

TROMBONE

BASS

GUITAR

JAZZ TERMS

Jazz musicians have their own words they use to describe their music. Here are some of the terms they use. Many of these are common terms today, but were unique to jazz in the early years.  
  
Axe - A term for a musical instrument.  
  
Blow - The term for playing an instrument.  
  
Bread - money.  
  
Cat - A jazz musician.  
  
Chops - A way to describe someone who can play an instrument well.  
  
Crib - Where the musician lives or sleeps.  
  
Dig - To know or understand something.  
  
Finger Zinger - Someone who can play very fast.  
  
Gig - A paying music job.  
  
Hep - A term used to describe someone who is cool.  
  
Hot plate - A really good recording of a song.  
  
Jake - A term meaning "okay."  
  
Lid - A hat.  
  
Rusty gate - A jazz musician who isn't very good.  
  
Scatting - Improvising words to a song that are nonsense syllables.  
  
Sideman - A member of the band, but not the leader.  
  
Skins player - The drummer.  
  
Tag - The end part of a song.