

Milt Jackson on vibes; and Art Blakey, Shadow Wilson, and Max Roach on drums. As a performer and composer, Monk, even within the iconoclastic bebop idiom, is unique. On these recordings can be heard the off-center rhythms and "sour" notes and intervals for which he is known, particularly in "Evidence"; his exploitation of melodic and harmonic dissonance, as in "Mysteries"; his occasional and unique treatment of note runs, as in "Four in One"; his use of motivic, or riff-based, melodies, as in "Well You Needn't"; his departure from such constructions in favor of long, note-filled lines in "Evidence" and "Skippy"; and his use of the ostinato principle in "Thelonious." In Monk's playing, almost every event is unexpected, either in its placement or in its manifestation; as a composer, he delights in ironic constructions (as does Esu, trickster and god of irony).

The term "hard bop" is a catchall expression for an experimental return to the use of basic ring tropes and for music characterized by the clichés that resulted from that experimentation. Davis started the trend, but as others picked up the mantle, he began to move away from it with his experiments in the early 1960s, which would yield powerful results.

The 1950s came to a close with cool jazz and hard bop vying for prominence, with the end of gospel's golden age, with the New Criticism and neoclassicism continuing to influence the concert-hall activity of black composers, and with R&B and rock 'n' roll in decline in the wake of Little Richard's retirement to the ministry, Chuck Berry's two-and-a-half-year prison sentence on morals charges, and the rise of the rapid and diluted croonings of singers such as Pat Boone and others of his generation of rock 'n' roll stylists. It would take a revolution to reinvigorate the African-American musical tradition and bring the ring tropes again to ascendance. And that revolution was just around the corner.

CHAPTER 8

The Sixties and After

Hornblowers! Blow in unison!

Bagandan folk saying

There is something suspicious about music, gentlemen. I insist that she is, by her nature, equivocal. I shall not be going too far in saying at once that she is politically suspect.

Thomas Mann

The 1960s brought to full flowering the modern civil rights movement. It was a period of success and failure, of courage and fear, of discipline and disorder. It embraced the 1963 March on Washington and saw passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination in public accommodations and employment. It was a time that saw the assassinations of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr., the latter's death spurring riots in 125 American cities from April 4 to April 11, 1968—ironically coinciding with the signing, on April 11, of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which was meant to end discrimination in the sale and rental of private housing. It was a momentous decade in the fight for equal rights for all Americans (Bergman 1969, 610–611).

It was during the 1960s that the flight of whites to the suburbs accelerated and American cities de-

teriorated.¹ This deterioration was highlighted by the urban riots of the 1960s, which the Kerner Commission later studied and determined were the direct result of white racism (*Report* 1968). These upheavals, spurred by disillusionment, neglect, what some African Americans saw as the impotence of the nonviolence movement, and the belief that the melting-pot metaphor was never intended to embrace blacks, brought to the civil rights movement a strident militancy, and "black power" became the watchword.² Stokely Carmichael declared, "Let it be known that we don't need threats. This is 1966. It's time out for beautiful words. It's time out for euphemistic statements. And it's time out for singing 'We Shall Overcome.' It's time to get some Black Power" (quoted in Miller 1971, 691). And with the emergence of this quest for black power,

the old Movement dreams seemed to have exploded into nightmares. Tanks and troops of the U.S. Army and the National Guard were in the streets. Helicopters sent their powerful lights and intimations of death down into the fiery nights. The call for Black Power, the cry of "Burn, baby, burn!" and the image of young Black Panthers with guns in their hands could be heard and seen across the land. Now countless men and women saw blazing visions of a nationwide, armed black liberation struggle. Embracing and embroidering their memories of Malcolm, they fashioned new dreams out of the hard materials of black urban life, faced the cruel centers of white American fear. And the singers—if they sang at all anymore—now declared, "Before I'll be a slave, there'll be a Honky in his grave." (Harding 1981, xv)

African Americans donned new masks—dashikis and Afros—Signifyin(g) turned inward and sometimes ugly, and one of the musics of black protest was a new and angry jazz.

The apparently contradictory stances and actions of the period manifested themselves multifariously, with the philosophies of King and Malcolm X representing contrasting views of the struggle for freedom. These two perspectives, and the activities each spawned, expressed the prevailing philosophical struggles of the black community in a period characterized by an unusual juxtaposition of pessimism and optimism, idealism and pragmatism in a social, political, and cultural cauldron from which would spring, ironically, a new intellectual and artistic energy, a new cultural awakening.³

1. Middle-class blacks began to leave also, in the wake of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, but primarily in search of integration, to acquire the fruits of the American dream, which they felt were finally within reach.

2. In 1966, Stokely Carmichael became head of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and he and Floyd McKissick, head of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), began to promote black power. The NAACP's Roy Wilkins rejected the slogan (Bergman 1969, 596).

3. This new awakening has been described by some scholars as a "Second Renaissance" that had its onset somewhere between 1954 and 1963 (see, for example, Bigsby 1980; Marr 1972; Turner 1987).

This awakening was set into motion on May 1, 1963, when the play *Dutchman*, by LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka), opened at the Cherry Lane Theater in New York. The play, considered one of the season's best off-Broadway drama (Hewes 1964, 405), is about a black man and a white woman in a hypothetical subway incident. The woman propositions the man, Signifies on his color and then stabs him with a knife. In the process, black rage is, according to David Littlejohn, "channeled equally into [the] two antagonists," their dialogue conveying "the shrill, sharp, absolutely open insult-trading of cool modern neurotics, hiding nothing except everything" (quoted in Draper 1992, 125). This play, with its shocking treatment of the race problem in America inspired similar works by other black playwrights and led to the inclusion of ultranationalistic content in other black art forms as well.⁴ It spurred the creation of a literary and artistic cauldron that included works by visual artists such as the plastic artists of the Chicago group AfriCobra and the New York organization Weusi, by the painter David Driskell and the sculptor Richard Hunt, and by writers such as Nikki Giovanni, Stephen Henderson, Maya Angelou, Eugene Redmond, Leon Forrest, Larry Neal, Ishmael Reed, Don L. Lee, Addison Gayle, Jr., and the Last Poets.⁵

This activity was known collectively as the Black Arts Movement, a nationalistic, Pan-African cultural awakening that was "nurtured by a belief in the positive value of blackness" (Davis and Harris 1985, xii). It signaled a return to myth: it became acceptable, respectable, even expected, for African Americans to seek out, believe in, and display their mythological roots. By the end of the 1960s, "black is beautiful" and "black pride" had become rallying cries, and there prevailed the widespread conviction that ordinary black citizens could master the requirements of leadership, intellectual participation, and artistic creation. In this respect, unlike the Harlem Renaissance's reliance on the "talented tenth" idea, this new awakening was egalitarian.

Jazz was the music of the Black Arts Movement. The literary figures of the 1960s wrote poetry that celebrated it, others theorized about its value, and most became conversant with the prowess and particular skills of the genre's most notable practitioners. Amiri Baraka's *Blues People* (1963), *Black Music*

4. In 1964, LeRoi Jones and other black artists established the Black Arts Repertoire Theatre School. Among the plays produced in its first year were Jones's *Experimental Death Unit # One*, *Black Mass*, *Jello*, and *Dutchman* (a videotaped performance of which has been released).

5. Works by the Last Poets, whose street verse was central in New York's core culture from 1968 to the mid-1980s, can be read in El Hadi and Nuriddin's *The Last Poets: Vibes from the Scribes* (1985), and some of it can be heard on the record album *The Last Poets* (ca. 1970). Especially meaningful in this discussion are Jalal Nuriddin's poems "Jazz poetry" and "Bird Word."

(1967), and *The Music* (1987), A. B. Spellman's *Four Lives in the Bebop Business* (1970), and Albert Murray's *Stomping the Blues* (1976) are examples of writings about jazz and the blues by prominent literary figures; Addison Gayle's *The Black Aesthetic* (1971) includes ideological essays such as Jimmy Stewart's "Introduction to Black Aesthetics in Music," LeRoi Jones's "The Changing Same (R&B and New Black Music)," Ron Welburn's "Black Aesthetic Imperative," and Leslie Rounts' "Reflections on the Evolution of Post-War Jazz."

The leading jazz figures of the 1960s were Miles Davis and John Coltrane. Davis had begun by reshaping jazz standards in new and different ways, redefining the role of the rhythm section, and introducing abrupt changes of tempo, and even silences, in his performances. In his album *Miles Smiles* (1966), especially on "Circle" and "Footprints," he began floating over the rhythm section. Later, rather than floating on top of the section or playing on the beats, he and his sidemen began to cut into the rhythmic flow, becoming part of its texture and leaving spaces for the excursions of the drummer.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, as Carr (1982) assesses, the old theme-solos-theme structure of postwar jazz had been discarded, and Davis "had reworked the traditional New Orleans jazz idea of collective improvisation behind a leading solo/melody voice" (178). In this, Davis's approach to texture and structure came to have more in common with early jazz than with the bebop tradition, from which he had emerged. Furthermore, his more fully integrated, evolving style began to bring about a more primeval ensemble sound, which, in its emotional character, recalls African ensemble music, the shout, and, in less evident ways, New Orleans jazz. The drums no longer merely "play time," but complement, color, and texture the lines and the instrumental combinations. The causal, predetermined harmonic framework of traditional jazz was replaced by a more static harmonic environment in which pedal points establish key centers, and modal scales, together with this relative harmonic stasis, give improvisers more melodic and structural freedom. Hence, phrase lengths became more irregular, chord changes more unorthodox, and the range of expression greater and more appropriate to the new struggles and fulfillments of the 1960s. The whole musical environment was repetitive, hypnotic, funky, and exciting, insinuating the entire black musical tradition, including its African manifestations. During this period, rock elements first appeared in Davis's work. On *E.S.P.* (1965), for example, in a piece titled "Eighty One," one hears rock rhythms and an ostinato, a device that was common to R&B, that had been used frequently in hard bop, and that now had a growing currency in jazz. The ostinatos employed by jazz musicians of the 1960s and beyond contained a high level of rhythmic and

melodic interest that sometimes completely displaced conventional notions of melody.⁶

Both Davis and Coltrane experimented early on with group performance in which modal scales served as the basis for melodic invention and in which chord progressions no longer prevailed as the controlling factor. As Davis (1989) explains:

Modal music is seven notes off each scale, off each note. It's a scale off each note . . . The composer-arranger George Russell used to say that in modal music C where F should be. He says that the whole piano starts at F. What I had learned about the modal form is that when you play this way, go in this direction, you can go on forever. You don't have to worry about changes and shit like that. You can do more with the musical line. The challenge here, when you work in this modal way, is to see how inventive you can become melodically. It's not like when you base stuff on chords, and you know at the end of thirty-two bars that the chords have run out and there is nothing to do but repeat what you've done with variations. I was moving away from that and into more melodic ways of doing things. And in the modal way I saw all kinds of possibilities.⁷ (225)

In a statement remarkably like this one, but with significant additions, Davis explains his approach to modal improvisation and its advantages:

When you go this way . . . you can go on forever . . . It becomes a challenge to see how melodically inventive you are. . . . Movement in jazz is . . . away from the conventional string of chords, and a return to emphasis on melody rather than harmonic variation. There [are] fewer chords but infinite possibilities as to what to do with them. (quoted in Chambers 1983, 280)

So for Davis and his sidemen, the playing of "changes" became passé, and their "time-no changes" approach to improvisation was accompanied by an emphasis on melodic invention, paraphrase, and thematic development that represented, essentially, a return to the improvisational concerns of early jazz. This emphasis also recalls the music making of African drum ensembles in which the master drummer sets patterns that are repeated and elaborated in interrelated and interlocking patterns.

6. Coltrane's "Tunji" (1962) and "Naima" (1959) and McCoy Tyner's "You Stepped Out of a Dream" (1976) use the technique, as does Weather Report's "Gibraltar" (1976) and numerous other works of the period (Logan 1984, 206-209). An earlier example of Davis's use of an ostinato, together with a high degree of harmonic stasis, can be found in his 1959 recording of "Concierto de Aranjuez."

7. Davis had been influenced by the possibilities of Russell's (1959) theoretical work. But, inspired by the African legacy, Davis had seen these possibilities even before Russell explained them to him: "[I] went to this performance by the Ballet Africaine and it just fucked me up what they was doing, the steps and all them flying leaps and shit. And when I first heard them play the finger piano that night and sing this song with this other guy dancing, man, that was some powerful stuff" (Davis, 225).

In Davis's musical environment, the drummer, the bass player, and the piano player were allowed a great deal of freedom from their traditional time keeping and "comping" responsibilities, and they played more equal roles in performance.⁸ Pianists were at this time avid users of quartal harmony, and the ensemble roles of the drums and piano became more "melodic" in concept. Polyrythms abounded, and the music's textural density and dynamic range were increased and enriched through the increase in tonal colors and collective improvisation. Among Davis's albums on which these innovations can be heard are *Miles Smiles* (1966), *In a Silent Way* (1969), and *Bitches Brew* (ca. 1970). It was on this last album that Davis expanded his rhythm section into an ersatz African "drum" ensemble—ten musicians on drums, electric pianos, electric guitar, electric bass, acoustic bass, and various small percussion instruments—playing polyrythms, cross-rhythms, ostinatos, and jazz and funk figures that recall the elements and excitement of the ring shout. In all of this music, chord progressions became less important, harmonies became more or less static, and there was an increase in the use of ostinatos, polyrythms, and collective improvisation, and of stabs, smears, and other devices of distortion. It takes only a little reflection, then, to relate this trend to African performance practices in which repetitive patterns, harmonic stasis, little melodic development, a high degree of rhythmic interest, and collective improvisation define the style: the performances of the Miles Davis bands of the late 1960s and early 1970s recall West African ritual music making and evoke West African myth through the collectivity of their renderings. So what, on the one hand, is musical evolution—progress toward development and complexity—is, on the other, a return to primeval musical roots and a continuation of ancient practices.

John Coltrane, following his album *Giant Steps* (1959), produced *A Love Supreme* (1964), *Ascension* (1965), and at least twenty other albums, all of which utilized some of the innovations of the Davis band, in which Coltrane had been a sideman. In addition, however, Coltrane's music was filled with

8. Davis's liberation of the drummer appears to have been a natural extension of earlier experiments. For example, in the 1950s Max Roach and Art Blakey had traveled in Africa to study drumming and returned to make fresh and important infusions into jazz music. Blakey's recordings *Holiday for Skins* (1979)—the title of which perhaps signifies on David Roach's sappy *Holiday for Strings* (I'm grateful to Richard Crawford for this insight and reference)—and *The African Beat: Art Blakey and the Afro-drum Ensemble* (1962) are examples of the results of his interest. Roach, who had already raised jazz drumming to a new level of musical maturity with his playing of lines, phrases, and comping patterns, contributed *We Insist: Freedom Now Suite* (1960). In the 1960s, Nigerian drummer Olatunji began playing with jazz musicians such as John Coltrane, Clark Terry, and Randy Weston, whose album *Uhuru Africa* provided commentary on the African struggle for liberation. The innovations found in these recordings became important sources of information, ideas, inspiration, and technique for jazz drummers and surely led to some of the developments that were carried out later by Elvin Jones, Lenny White, Tony Williams, Billy Cobham, and avant-garde drummers Sonny Murray, Andrew Cyrille, Milford Graves, and Beaver Harris.

the imagery of Africa and of the African-American church, with ring imagery reflected, Weinstein (1992) believes, in *Ascension*:

The thirty-eight minute *Ascension* doesn't so much "progress" to a clear dramatic resolution as much as complete a circle. This sense of music completing a cycle speaks to the circle image in many traditional African religions. While the Christian symbol of the cross graphically illustrates the intersection of worldly time and eternity, the circle suggests that through experiencing the rhythmic cycles of worldly life consciously and repeatedly, we spin ourselves into a sense of the divinely eternal. (68)

But this cyclical form is also symbolic of the ring—the source of the tropings used to make the music. So *Ascension*, representing transcendence, the upward impulse, itself signified on the spirituality of the ring. Whether or not the performing musicians understood or even perceived these connections, they are there for us to imagine. Ultimately, I believe, such connections and meanings reside in the cultural memory—the "collective unconscious"—from which they can be retrieved with the slightest stimulation from ring tropes.

Coltrane's concern with the Africa theme is evident in his eighteen Africa-theme recordings listed by Weinstein (1992, 63), who recognized that Coltrane's output in the 1960s was essentially rooted in Africa and the East, as evidenced in titles such as "Liberia," "Dahomey Dance," "Africa," and "Funji"—the last for Nigerian musician Olatunji.

As I noted in chapters 2 and 3, the employment of pentatonic scales as a basis for melodic development was a feature of African and African-American folk music, and the practice was used extensively in R&B. Coltrane used it frequently, and Sonny Rollins made the device common in his improvisations.⁹ Related to this use of pentatonicism is a limited return to the African-American spiritual as a source of inspiration, celebration, and memorialization. Coltrane's album "Live" at the *Village Vanguard* (1961) contains "Spiritual" and his "Song of the Underground Railroad," which celebrates and memorializes the courage of escaping slaves and "conductors" in their flights to freedom.¹⁰ "Alabama" was composed by Coltrane in memory of the 1963 Birmingham, Alabama, church bombing in which white racists murdered four black children. Archie Shepp's album *Goin' Home* (1977) is a collection of spirituals that includes, among others, "Steal Away to Jesus" and "Go Down Moses." Albert Ayler's *Spiritual Unity* (1964) appropriately contains procedures that are reminiscent of the gospel sound, expressing African-American evangelistic fervor.

9. See, for example, "Poinciana" on *Graz 1963 Concert: Max Roach Quintet and Sonny Rollins Trio* (1966).

10. "Spiritual" and "Song of the Underground Railroad" can also be heard on *Afro Blue Impressions* (1977) and *African Brass* (1974), respectively.

In his last years, Coltrane added a new dimension to his emotional arsenal. Whether it was due to his own intentions or to the perceptions of others, he is remembered by some as one of the angry jazzmen. Miles Davis (1989) said that

Trane's music and what he was playing during the last two or three years of his life represented, for many blacks, the fire and passion and rage and anger and rebellion and love that they felt, especially among the young black intellectuals and revolutionaries of that time. He was expressing through music what H. Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panthers and Huey Newton were saying with their words, what the Last Poets and Amiri Baraka were saying in poetry. He was their torchbearer in jazz, now ahead of me. He played what they felt inside and were expressing through riots—"burn, baby, burn"—that were taking place everywhere in this country during the 1960s. It was all about revolution for a lot of young black people—Afro hairdos, dashikis, black power, fists raised in the air. Coltrane was their symbol, their pride—their beautiful, black revolutionary pride. I had been it a few years back, now he was it, and that was cool with me. (285–286)

Coltrane's art has been referred to by some of his followers as "mysterious"; by others, as "spiritual." It has a mysterious aura because it is not easily accessible—less so, in fact, than many of Coltrane's followers will admit. It has a spiritual aura because of its modal melodic structures. It is both mysterious and spiritual because of its contemplative tone and character. In short, it is both mythic and ritualistic, containing Tarasti's "channels," Esu's improvisational skills, and the Signifying Monkey's figurative adeptness. The "spiritual" aspect is a function of cultural memory—memory of the importance and function of myth and ritual in African-American community—the term "spiritual" being used here as a symbol for African mythology and religion. For those who view Coltrane's art as spiritual, he is a priest, a jazz priest whose spirituality and priestliness are emphasized and legitimized by his creative acumen.¹¹ Coltrane, says Amiri Baraka (1967, iii), is "the heaviest spirit."

Ascension is an "energy" piece that approaches free jazz, with the eleven players utilizing modal scales for their improvisations, which alternate or overlap in loosely organized, collectively improvised ensemble sections and individual solos. This emphasis on cooperation and community was reflected also in other social, musical, and political arenas.¹² For many young musicians, jazz cooperatives began to replace the disappearing jam sessions as vehicles

11. Armstrong, Parker, Davis, and Eric Dolphy also fit into this category of priest, for "great improvisors are like priests: they thinking only of their god" (Stephane Grappelli, quoted in Leonard 1987, 74); and, I believe, they thought of themselves as priests.

12. Although Coltrane was participating in jam sessions as late as 1960, for both him and Davis, gladiatorial exploits had become passé.

of initiation and apprenticeship, and jazz was becoming a concert-hall music to a degree that it had never been before.¹³

In 1962 in Chicago, Muhal Richard Abrams launched the Experimental Band in which musicians performed on the conventional jazz instruments as well as on a variety of "little instruments" that brought forth numerous and unusual timbres and textures to accompany the traditional horns, strings, and percussion or that sounded as sections and choirs important in themselves. Out of this band evolved the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), whose aesthetic and ideological agenda, according to Ronald M. Radano (1992), was to revitalize "the African-American musical sensibility through the oppositional language of modernism" and supply "the basis for a grand signifying riff on mainstream valuations" (80). The AACM was formed in the spirit of the new nationalism and Pan-African brotherhood that prevailed in the 1960s:

An Africa-inspired cultural nationalism became the official party line of the AACM. . . . Creative Music was a dialect of the mother tongue, a creation with African origins that had been spiritually preserved in the slave culture of the United States. Evoking images of the musician-seer of tribal Africa, many AACM musicians spoke in priestly terms of black music's spiritualism, which, they believed, revealed a kinship with the ancient mythmakers, the original cultural guardians of black people. (87)

For the AACMers, "spiritualism celebrated African notions of community and ritual" and was viewed as a metaphor "for a brand of collectively improvised music that exceeded the constraints of harmony" (90). In their thinking, the traditional harmony of European-derived music was a stifling "metaphor for white cultural dominance and oppression. . . . In rhythm and melody, on the other hand, the musicians identified formal attributes that stressed the communal, multilinear orientation of West African styles from antebellum spirituals to blues, jazz, and funk" (90). Thus the music of the AACM, built around the values of individuality within collectively, was "an improvised art that, through incessant rehearsal, could mimic the designs of complex orchestration" (83).

13. Although jazz had been presented in concert and quasi-concert formats as early as the first decade of the twentieth century and in the 1940s by bebop musicians (DeVeaux 1991), it was not until the 1950s that the "jazzman-as-entertainer" concept was challenged. It was Davis who refused to tell jokes, smile at his audiences, or announce the titles of the tunes to be played or the names of his sidemen, implying that (1) the music should speak for itself and (2) the jazz artist had no responsibility to his audience beyond that of communicating through his artistic medium. In this way, ironically, he sought and demanded respect for his art and his person. By the 1970s, Davis's behavior and demeanor had become an accepted part of his approach to music making.

From this collective musical and political association grew several performing organizations that played to audiences in little theaters, churches, coffee houses, colleges and universities, and other welcoming venues throughout Chicago. The most famous of the groups to grow out of the AACM was the Art Ensemble of Chicago (AECO), made up of Roscoe Mitchell on flute, clarinet, and saxophone; Lester Bowie on trumpet, piccolo trumpet, and fluegelhorn; Joseph Jarman on saxophones; Malachi Favors (Maghoushtus) on double bass and Fender bass; and Famoudou Don Moye on drums. The group can be heard and seen to good effect on *The Art Ensemble of Chicago: Live at the Jazz Showcase*, a video recording of a 1981 nonstop set in which the group is at its finest. With a backdrop sign announcing "Great Black Music: Ancient to the Future"; with a stage full of percussion instruments, African and otherwise, together with saxophones, clarinets, flutes, trumpets, and fluegelhorn, a string bass, and a Fender bass; and with three of the group's five members in real or imitation African garb and painted faces, the ensemble gives AECO treatment to genres such as bebop, New Orleans jazz, and North African melodies, as well as rhythms and impressions from and of R&B/rock and other forms and styles. The expressions run the gamut from soft and subtle to loud and frenzied, from abstract to teleological, from simple to complex, from easy to virtuosic, from loving to angry, from beeps to blasts, whistles to gunshots, whispers to horns.

This fifty-minute set begins with "We-Bop," a stylized Signification on bebop. But varied and discreetly spaced cymbal, bell, whistle, and gong sounds quickly move the stylization out of the realm of bebop (although the bass player and drummer remain rather true to the style). There is no repeat of the head, and a transition featuring hand percussion moves the performance into "Promenade: On the Côte Bamako," which is signaled by the trumpet and carried thereafter primarily by drums and other percussion instruments. "Bedouin Village" is signaled by a change in drumming patterns and style, followed by the entry of the soprano saxophone imitating a North African oboe. The saxophonist's florid melodic explorations—ornaments and all—float over the complex drumming of the other musicians. "New York Is Full of Lonely People" opens with the bass playing a pizzicato melody accompanied by the drummer's playing of the brushes on a variety of cymbals and drums in the style of the swing music of the 1930s and 1940s. Hand percussion and trumpet then emerge with a contrasting elaboration of the bass's opening theme, joined by the tenor sax in countermelodic and unison excursions that contrast sharply, in tempo and in mood, with what has been introduced before. Then the alto saxophone enters, playing over an immense and unusual variety of snapping, tinkling, popping, honking, tooting, and whistling sounds that Signify, in increasing complexity and profusion, on the confused and confusing real-life street sounds of New York. Mitchell's furious soprano saxophone runs add to the confusion, and as the intensity decreases and the section comes to its close

his piccolo and clarinet make low-keyed statements. Although I am not sure where this section of the performance ends, specifically, and the "New Orleans" segment begins, it seems that the trumpet and tenor saxophone signal the opening of the latter when they begin to improvise collectively on the spiritual- and hymn-like melodies that introduce the AECO's stylization of a New Orleans brass band on parade, complete with street noises and the bands' up-tempo return. "Funky AECO," a postmodern Signifyin(g) on R&B/rock, with the Fender bass playing a short ostinato under the pentatonic melodic figures of the tenor saxophone and against the straight-eight beat divisions and backbeat of the drums, leads to the group's sign-off, "Theme (Odwalla)," which, bebop-like, ends the set to appreciative and sustained applause. The range of timbres in the AECO's performance is immense, with its array of drums, horns, bells, rattles, and scrapers complementing the variety of winds, brass, and percussion. The group's expressive range is also wide, with whispers contrasting with bombast and legatos with staccatos in startling effectiveness.

The AACM introduced to jazz recording, for the first time, a series of unaccompanied extended solos on instruments other than the piano, recalling lone African soloists on fiddles, harps, lutes, lyres, zithers, and flutes and reestablishing solo performances in the African-American musical tradition.¹⁴ Such unaccompanied improvisations can be heard on albums by two AECO personnel, *Conglifications* (1968), by Malachi Favors (Maghoushtus), and *Solo Saxophone Concerts*, by Roscoe Mitchell, as well as on Anthony Braxton's *For Alto* (1969). The last is presented in Braxton's typical highly mannered saxophone style, with his abrupt shifts from powerful and loud to delicate and soft, from harsh to the lyricism, and back again; his signature rhythm ♩ ♩ ♩; his exploitation of the extreme upper register; his use of overtones, severe octave jumps, split tones, bent notes, and subtones; his abrupt phrasings; and his use of many notes played at extreme speeds. Even Braxton's ballads *move*, with much use of filigree and florid connecting material, as on "To Composer John Cage," which is also an excellent example of his control of all registers (and his movement between them) and his adroitness with trills. The bebop-like "To Artist Murray De Pillars" is an example of his affinity for and transformation of the blues.

The AACM members also explored polytonality, chromaticism, and serialism for what those might offer their mix. The title cut of Mitchell's album *Nonaah* (1977), with its arresting, wide-ranging, angular melody, is a study in building tension through insistent and almost exact repetition with an eventual, although gradual, increase in timbral, pitch, and rhythmic variety. "Erika" is a powerful and virtuosic solo improvisation in which Mitchell explores upward beyond the customary range of the alto saxophone. Then comes a brief and explosive solo version of "Nonaah." "Off Five Dark Six" is a duet by

14. The first jazz wind instrumentalist to be recorded unaccompanied was Coleman Hawkins. Listen to his "Picasso" (1948).

Mitchell and Braxton—the latter on soprano sax—a pointillistic piece that bows to the African-American tradition only in certain of its timbral qualities. The last side of the two-album set ends with a quartet of alto saxophones playing a version of the title cut, which begins with the same insistent repetition as did the solo version, this time in polyphony and creating a kind of “stabilized tension” that grips the listener. Saxophonists Joseph Jarman, Wallace McMillan, Henry Threadgill, and Mitchell are remarkably accurate and consistent as they repeat for four minutes the angular, polyphonic idea that opens the piece. Then there is a slight break—silence—preceding a slow and lyrical second section that builds tension again and resolves it beautifully on a conventional, and much needed, major chord. The third section is a brief “disjointed” episode that moves to a “quick” section that recalls the opening round, bringing the piece to a close with a collectively improvised flourish reminiscent of New Orleans jazz. This album demonstrates Mitchell’s rather pointillistic style, his penchant for using lots of space to isolate pitches or groups of pitches, his ability to be either economical or generous with notes, his unusual and effective ballad style (on “Ballad”), his ability to juxtapose conflicting rhythms, his proclivity for distorting the normal tone quality of the saxophone, and his inclination toward virtuosity.

Another AACM product, *Air*, was formed in Chicago in 1971 and included Henry Threadgill on woodwinds, Fred Hopkins on bass, and Steve McCall on drums. This was a sophisticated free-jazz trio with a highly sophisticated repertoire and style of playing that communicated effectively with a wide and varied audience. Their album *Air Time* (1978) contains five superb cuts on which the members of the trio interact as one, exploiting the colors of their instruments, with Threadgill adding even more variety as he switches to other saxophones, flutes, and—his own invention—the hubkaphone, a collection of varipitched hubcaps, gongs, and bells, suspended on a frame. On *Air Time*, the group’s exploitation of timbre and their simultaneous improvisations are their main ties to traditional African-American music, although their range extends to ragtime, jazz, and blues.¹⁵

The harmonies, melodies, conventions, and devices of centuries of African-American music inform and permeate the otherwise abstract music of these Midwesterners and of others not mentioned here. Litweller (1984) quotes Threadgill as saying,

I began thinking about the personalities in the group and how they played. I kind of got into writing for people rather than just writing music. So often, you hear this one instrument out front, and these other two instruments are some kind of accompaniment. Well, I’m really trying to get away from that. So I’m writing music from the concept as if I were a drummer. Sometimes I go

15. See also the album *Air Love* (1979).

from the bass, but right now I’m involved in writing for the drums. . . . It changes the whole frame of reference in terms of what accompaniment is all about, you know. It kind of kills accompaniment and puts everything on an equal footing, and that’s what I’m after. (1994)

Such thinking about music is essentially African, although screened through a postmodern filter, and it recalls Ellington, who wrote for the “tonal personalities” of his sidemen (chapter 7); it also recalls the membranophone, idiophone, chordophone, and aerophone ensembles of black Africa and the legendary New Orleans ensembles.

Much of the free-jazz activity of the 1970s took place in the loft studios of New York City—apartment venues that were set up as alternatives to commercial establishments. Studio Rivbea, Ali’s Alley, Soundscape, and others, which served as alternatives to the unproductive and inhospitable nightclub scene, were havens of free jazz. A number of the players who performed in them had moved to New York from the Midwest, the West Coast, and the East Coast and had banded together in cooperatives that spawned new voices and new music. The music of some of the members of these cooperatives can be heard on the five-disk set *Wildflowers: The New York Jazz Loft Sessions* (1982), which includes performances led by Maurice McIntyre (Kalaparusha), Ken McIntyre, Sunny Murray, Sam Rivers, and others, and groups such as Air. Among the cooperatives of the period in other cities were Union of God’s Musicians and Artists Ascension Orchestra (UGMAA) of Los Angeles, Creative Arts Collective of Detroit, and Creative Music Improvisors Forum of New Haven, Connecticut.

The efforts of Davis, Coltrane, and the AECO and other products of the AACM represent but individual examples of the contributions made by jazz figures and groups of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s to the continuation of Call-Response. These musicians and many others brought melodic drumming to jazz. They modified the roles of, and in some cases even replaced, functional harmony as a basis for improvisation. They introduced to jazz the use of quartal harmony, polytonality, atonality, and pantonality; the abandonment of the head and the employment of free group improvisation; the fusion of jazz with other musics; the advent of individual, free improvisation; an expanding sound vocabulary that included harmonics and false tones; and “plucking, stroking, and hammering the strings of a piano . . . singing, grunting, and screaming through wind instruments . . . the simultaneous playing and singing through wind instruments . . . rattling sticks inside the piano . . . and singing into the drumhead to make it vibrate” (Budds 1978, 26).

Sometimes when “new” sounds emerge in jazz they are perceived as foreign to the black-music tradition and, consequently, are unacceptable to many critics, mostly white, who reside on the margins of the culture. For example, John

Coltrane's sound was strongly criticized as being inferior, but was applauded and appreciated by listeners from within the culture (perhaps because they noted its ring value, something primevally relevant and aesthetically appropriate). Although Coltrane's sound was different from the sounds of jazzmen who had preceded him, Manu Dibango (quoted in Thomas 1975, 202) perceives that it was strongly reminiscent of the sounds of African oboists of North Cameroon. Ornette Coleman's sound, even more than Coltrane's, was criticized by some jazz critics. Coleman's sound is also mythic in character.¹⁶ But new sounds and devices revitalize and mythicize the music, contributing mightily to the continuation of ring values in jazz and in world music. The star improvisers and composers of jazz music have served as the divinities of jazz ritual, versions of Esu, god and trickster: King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton, Coleman Hawkins, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, and all the other great ones—each having inspired his own myths, legends, and tales (see, for example, Leonard 1987, 118–135). “Bird lives” is a slogan reminiscent of the living dead of African mythology. As put by Charles Mingus, “Bird is not dead; he’s hiding out somewhere, and he’ll be back with some new shit that will scare everybody to death” (quoted in Leonard, 128). African cultural memory lives on in the descendants of the ancestors and continues to inform the music and its continuity.

In the 1960s, gospel music became entertainment. Individuals and groups such as James Cleveland, Andraé Crouch and the Disciples, and the Edwin Hawkins Singers began to perform in theaters, auditoriums, and stadiums, bringing new sounds from the core culture into the cultural arenas of mainstream America.¹⁷ Gospel choirs were organized in colleges and universities across the land, and longtime gospel stars began to receive wider exposure. The musical styles of these artists, while reflecting the affirmations of the new age, were also continuous with the tradition.¹⁸ But both the sounds and the venues of 1960s gospel were wide-ranging. The instruments of R&B had become part of gospels’ accompanying ensembles; church and community gospel choirs and choruses

16. See, for example, Coleman’s *The Shape of Jazz to Come* (1959) and *Free Jazz* (1960).

17. Although these performers deserve credit for finishing the church as the exclusive domain of gospel music, the trend had begun as early as the 1950s, as evidenced by the increasing extra-religious popularity of Mahalia Jackson, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, and Clara Ward, and by the CBS radio network’s *Mahalia Jackson Show* (Schwerin 1992, 64–70, 84–85).

18. They could be traced back through Mahalia Jackson, Thomas A. Dorsey, and Charles A. Tindley, through the turn-of-the-century quartets and the early musical expressions of the Primitive Baptist and Pentecostal Holiness churches, through the spirituals and shouts of the slave community, to the music of village African peoples.

had begun to perform with symphony orchestras (although only on “special occasions”); performers had begun to feel comfortable on the concert stage and with the mass media; the material and stylistic borrowings from jazz and R&B were even more common in gospel than they had been before; and the down-home, gut-bucket fervor of earlier gospel had been overlaid and even replaced by the slick veneer of Motown-like productions. But the characteristic vocal sound of the gospel voice remained the same: the gospel delivered with its typical embellishments and subtle rhythmic treatments, was retained and even enhanced, as were its yea-saying and call-and-response patterns and phrasings. In other words, the more refined contemporary black gospel music retained the characteristics of its predecessors, and its performance still depended on a performer–audience call-and-response rapport unlike that of any other musical experience. In addition, the role of the gospel singer as a caller as a “leader” of a service, not the only participant” (Boyer 1979, 8), continued, even in the crossover forms of the genre—the “message” songs that bridge the gap between gospel and soul (Boyer, 10), such as “Oh Happy Day” (1969 by the Edwin Hawkins Singers and “Respect Yourself” (1972) by the Staple Singers. Such message songs were the nucleus of the repertoire of contemporary gospel in the 1960s.

The Reverend James Cleveland was the prime catalyst in the modernization of the gospel sound. A product of Thomas A. Dorsey’s chorus and Robert Martin’s pianistic style, with additional influences from jazz and blues, Cleveland had a compositional and performance style that was lilting, funky, and intensely driving. Combining his funky delivery with the disciplined approach of the emerging “young people’s choirs” in Baptist churches, Cleveland, by the late to mid-1960s, had become gospel’s leading figure. His choral sound and style are evident on the album *James Cleveland and the Southern California Community Choir* (1976),¹⁹ a collection of impressive ensemble and solo renditions of traditional and contemporary gospel songs, all done in Cleveland’s innovative style. The youthful tonal qualities and voicings, organ colorations, R&B rhythms and harmonies, unique call-and-response phrasings, and jazz inflections of this choir opened the way for the choirs, small groups, and singers that would follow.

Cleveland’s protégés and successors include Jessye Dixon, Edwin Hawkins, Shirley Caesar, Andraé Crouch, and gospel/soul singer Aretha Franklin, all of whom extended and elaborated Cleveland’s concepts and those of the tradition at large through the 1970s and into the 1980s. In 1983, the Word label released the compilation album *The Record Makers: The songs on this album, taken from a variety of other Word gospel albums:*

19. See also *James Cleveland: With Angelic Choir*.

clearly illustrate the direction being taken by several modern gospel artists in the 1970s and early 1980s. On "The Lord Will Make a Way," Al Green's effective and emotional falsetto, accompanied by a rhythm section and light strings, is restrained, with light-gospel hollers and yea-sayings sparingly employed. The Mighty Clouds of Joy sing "Everybody Ought to Praise His Name," making spare use of moans and guttural sounds within a true and effective gospel style. "I Don't Wanna Stay Here," by the Don Degrafe Delégation, with accompaniment provided by organ, piano, and drums, employs call-and-response phrasings, efficacious yea-sayings, authoritative interactions between soloists and group, jazz and blues figurations and harmonies, and effective tension-repose devices; it is rhythmically playful, musically expressive, and solidly grounded in Call-Response. Edwin Hawkins's responsorial "Oh Happy Day" has a tune built over a persistent R&B-derived figuration that is emphasized by a backbeat and a bass ostinato; the soloist sings with a hoarse, husky, breathy delivery, and the rendition is fraught with call-and-response phrasings that build to a climax and then gradually fade out. The performance is slick, subdued, controlled, and rhythmically fresh, apparently directed toward both the gospel and the crossover youth market. Falsetto, tension-building through control of loudness and textural variation, control of attacks and releases, and rhythmic improvisation mark it as a contemporary performance. The Reverend Milton Brunson's eclectic "It's Gonna Rain" makes use of polyphony, hand clapping, call-and-response phrasings, falsetto-scat vocals, and a jazz/R&B-based rhythmic accompaniment. Exploiting both ensemble precision and improvisation-like passages, it looks back to traditional gospel styles but is essentially contemporary. Bobby Jones and New Life perform "Martin," in tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., using parts of the live recording of King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Although presented in gospel-ballad style, "Martin" is not a gospel song per se, since its textual concerns go beyond the confines of the church or of liturgical, deity-oriented, salvational, textual considerations. "Come & Go with Me," sung by Shirley Caesar with Bernard Sterling, is jazz based and makes use of call-and-response phrasings, a walking bass line, tight group harmonies, and gospel timbres, and features a purely gospel delivery by Caesar; but the performance is faded out before it reaches the typical gospel climax. The New York Community Choir's "Get in a Hurry," a solo-based piece requiring ensemble precision, makes use of a fast shuffle beat, repetitions of phrases and rhythmic figures, a tambourine accompaniment, and the preacher-like talking-over-the-music technique commonly employed by gospel singers. The vocal delivery and harmonizing on the Williams Brothers' "Don't Doubt the Lord" are in the style of traditional gospel quartet music, but this performance is con-

temporary in its slick accompaniment, particularly in the musical figure played by the string section.²⁰

In the 1980s, a gospel version of Sophocles' drama *Oedipus Rex* was produced as *The Gospel at Colonus*, a powerful dramatic work that combines features of late Greek drama, such as protagonist and chorus, with gospel preaching and the singing of soloists, quartets, and other groups. This remarkable integration of acting, speaking, and singing in Call-Response delivery is a stunning reinterpretation that summarizes the gospel tradition while revealing an expressing the universality of human experience. In the 1985 version of the production (which is available on video), two gospel quartets are featured: the Five Blind Boys of Alabama and J. J. Farley and the Original Soul Stirrers. Their presence, their acting, and their renditions of "Stop! Do Not Go On 'A Voice Foretold,'" "Never Drive You Away," and "Eternal Sleep" suggest the symbolism of both the original Greek myth and African-American ritual.

The gospel song tradition is summed up in the publication *Songs of Zion* (1981) a collection prepared for use by the United Methodist Church. Besides containing traditional songs and original compositions by Clara Ward, James Hendrix Thomas A. Dorsey, Alex Bradford, Charles A. Tindley, Lucie Campbell, James Cleveland, Edwin Hawkins, Roland Carter, and others, the collection gives "key to musical interpretation, performance, [and] meaningful worship," ensuring the continuation of the tradition through a didactic treatise for use by church leaders and congregations. Irene Jackson's *Lift Every Voice and Sing: A Collection of Afro-American Spirituals and Other Songs* (1981) is also a compilation of spirituals, hymns, and gospel songs, in this case reflecting the tradition of black Episcopalians, although it is not didactic. *The New National Baptist Hymnal* (1982) is the Baptist version of the contemporary black hymnal. For Roman Catholics *Lead Me, Guide Me: The African-American Catholic Hymnal* (1987), contains more than four hundred songs and includes "some of the finest hymnody in the African American tradition, both Catholic and ecumenical."²¹ An earlier collection that served as a source of songs for black worship is *Gospel Pearls* (1921), also in

20. Among the other gospel soloists prominent in the 1960s were Albertina Walker, Inez Andrews, and Delores Washington, all of whom are featured on *The Best of The Caravans* (1977) Video performances by numerous soloists and groups can be seen and heard in the Harold Washington Library Center of the Chicago Public Library. The center's Jubilee Showcase Collection consists of thirty-four videocassettes that contain a hundred television shows, hosted by Sid Ortower, produced between 1963 and 1984 on WLS-TV, Chicago's ABC network station. Among the performers featured in these shows are Jessye Dixon, the Staple Singers, James Cleveland, the Reverend Milton Brunson and the Thompson Community Singers, Shirley Caesar, Dorothy Love Coates and the Original Gospel Harmonettes, Roberta Martin, Andraé Crouch, the Edwin Hawkins Singers, the Soul Stirrers, Robert Anderson, and the Mighty Clouds of Joy. Copies of fifty of these shows are also held by the Library and Archives of the Center for Black Music Research of Columbia College, in Chicago.

21. News release, Communications Department, Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, 1985.

tended for black congregations but containing mostly songs from outside the specifically black tradition.²² This publishing activity reveals how gospel figures continue to contribute to and influence African-American musical continuity within and without the genre and how they continue to contribute to the documentation of African-American cultural achievement and history.

It was the music of these songbooks, together with the congregational singing of their contents by notable and not so notable spiritual and gospel singers, that served as inspirational music for the civil rights activity of the 1960s, marking these efforts, in the words of two observers and participants, as "the greatest singing movement this country has experienced" (Carawan and Carawan 1990, 1). The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) entered the fray, and "in 1961 the Freedom Riders swept through the South" (3), organized and led by CORE volunteers and singing spirituals, hymns, and labor songs. Common-meter and long-meter hymns had been the staples of the movement of the 1950s, and in the 1960s they were joined by "gospel songs that protest boldly and celebrate eventual victory" (1). All of the music of the early civil rights movement was based in a congregational singing in which "the singers share a communal moan that enriches the depth of struggle and pain and rises in peaks of celebration—joy—and, sometimes, shouting" (Reagon 1990, 6).²³ In 1964, the SNCC Freedom Singers organized a "Sing for Freedom," sponsored by the Highlander Folk Schools, SNCC, and the SCLC. The music of this workshop, like that of the entire movement, consisted primarily of songs derived from the black religious community—revised tunes and texts repeated in the communal, Signifyin(g) manner of the black tradition (Carawan and Carawan, 3).

So in the 1960s, gospel music was involved in cross-fertilizations that embraced the music of the core-culture church, the entertainment arena, and the

22. Two additional hymnbooks used by African Americans in earlier years, are *Pentecostal Hymns*, No. 2: *A Winnowed Collection* (1895) and *Full Gospel Songs* (1923). For a history and analysis of black hymnody, see Spencer (1992).

23. The gospel community was linked directly, even inextricably, with the civil rights movement. The admirers and associates of Martin Luther King, Jr. included gospel singers Alex Bradford, Dorothy Love Coates, Marion Williams, and, especially, Mahalia Jackson. At the request of King, Jackson sang the spiritual "I Been 'Buked and I Been Scorned" at the Lincoln Memorial on the occasion of the 1963 March on Washington. Six years earlier, she had sung the same spiritual at the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom in the same location. In the late 1960s, she was a business partner of future NAACP leader Benjamin Hooks (Schwerin 1992, 168). At King's funeral, Jackson sang Dorsey's "Precious Lord, Take My Hand," reputed to be King's favorite song. According to Heilbut (1985, 70), it was Jackson, a "loyal friend and supporter," who brought King to Chicago in 1966, "when all the [local] preachers were too scared" (Jackson, quoted in Heilbut, 72). Lewis (1970, 314), says it was the Coordinated Council of Community Organizations (CCCCO), made up of six local civil rights groups, that invited King to Chicago. For another comment on the resistance of some of Chicago's ministers to King's presence in Chicago and Jackson's facilitation of his visit, see Schwerin (1992, 150–151).

fight for social and political equality, thereby beginning to insinuate itself into the larger society.

In chapter 7, I mentioned the indebtedness of rock 'n' roll to R&B.²⁴ In the transition, black and white rockers borrowed and absorbed some of the musical practices and performance traits that had been derived from the ring, including characteristic riffs, boogie-woogie ostinatos, vocal lines that are internally heterogeneous, adherence to the time-line principle, timbre-distortion practices, the improvisation and *materiality* of the music making (including performance practices such as Presley's pelvic gyrations), and the general dramatic tendency of the music. The degree of timbral distortion in the rock music that emerged in the 1960s, particularly the sonic innovations of heavy metal, is one of the primary elements that mark it as different from R&B. But even this was based in the sonic values of the ring. Jimi Hendrix, known as the rock movement's "Heavy Metallurgist par excellence" (Shaw 1982, 169), had a musical conception and sound rooted in the black core culture, most particularly in the Delta blues tradition and in the music making of Chuck Berry and Little Richard. The early bluesmen, laying bottle-necks and knives to the strings of their guitars, had laid the foundation for the brass-muting jazzmen, and both set the stage for Hendrix, who used fuzz faces and other commercial devices, as well as a number of custom-made implements (Menn 1978). Such distortions can be heard in, for example, "Are You Experienced?" and "Voodoo Chile," both available in the posthumous compilation *The Essential Jimi Hendrix* (1978–1979). Hendrix had been especially influenced by Little Richard, and their affinity can be heard as he plays with Richard on the albums *Little Richard Is Back* (1964) and *Friends from the Beginning—Little Richard and Jimi Hendrix* (1972). Another influence and teacher was Albert King, who,

like Hendrix, was a left-handed player who used a right-handed guitar upside down. He passed on to the eager young musician his own trademark—a sound that slurred up and then dropped down, like a saxophone sound. He taught him fingerings using the thumb and frettings on the guitar to bend the strings horizontally instead of vertically. (White 1984, 128)

Hendrix's apprenticeship in R&B bands such as those of Little Richard, Curtis Knight, and the Isley Brothers, and his exposure to Ike Turner, Albert King, and other R&B stylists, contributed to the development of his own style and

24. Following the transformation of R&B into rock 'n' roll—a metamorphosis effected, mainly, by Chuck Berry, Little Richard, and Elvis Presley—the Rolling Stones ("Carol," "Come On," "Around and Around," "Johnny B. Goode") and the Beatles ("Roll Over Beethoven," "Too Much Monkey Business") borrowed heavily from Berry (Reese 1982, 58–59).

to his use of ring tropes. But eventually, heavy metal became his overall conceptual framework, a sound that, in spite of its current association with white-oriented rock, goes back to Howlin' Wolf's recordings in the early 1950s:

Wolf first recorded for Phillips toward the end of 1950, and in January 1951 Chess released a single, "Moaning at Midnight," with "How Many More Years" on the flip. The music was astonishing, and Phillips never did a better job of capturing a mood. "Midnight" began with Wolf alone, moaning in his unearthly moan. Willie Johnson's overamplified guitar and Willie Steel's drums came crashing in together and then Wolf switched to harp, getting a massive, brutish sound and pushing the rhythm hard. "How Many More Years" featured Willie Johnson more prominently, and his thunderous power chords were surely the most electric guitar sound that had been heard on records. Wolf's rasping voice sounded strong enough to shear steel; this music was heavy metal, years before the term was coined. (Palmer 1981, 234)

Aspiring rockers of the 1960s and 1970s would identify Wolf as their inspiration and model. Although the music they created was based in cultural and social values different from those of R&B, its essential sound is certainly traceable to Wolf, both directly and through Hendrix, who had also been influenced by Chuck Berry, Muddy Waters, T-Bone Walker, Louis Jordan, Bo Diddley, Little Richard, and others. In fact, the fuzz, distortions, wah-wahs, and bent notes of rock guitarists entered rock not only through Hendrix, but also by way of white imitators of Wolf, Muddy Waters, and the other Chicago bluesmen.

On *Band of Gypsies* (1970), which is thoroughly rock, Hendrix's debt to Call-Response is clear. In it, B. B. King-style guitar lines and elements of Muddy Waters's style (signature riff figures) and Wes Montgomery's mannered approach (octaves and other double stops)²⁵ are fused with the rock idiom. Listen especially to "Machine Gun" and "Power of Soul." Echoes of Little Richard, albeit faint, can be heard on the "Changes" vocal. One of Hendrix's most gripping performances was also one of the most Signifyin(g) events in American-music history: his 1969 performance at Woodstock of "The Star Spangled Banner." The consecutive descending thirds that open the introduction, followed by Hendrix's unaccompanied "talking" guitar passage, immediately identify this performance as ring based. As the performance progresses, Hendrix inserts "calls" at "the rocket's red glare" and "comments" appropriately at "the bombs bursting in air" and other "telling" points. Here, Hendrix is a musical teller of the narrative, using his instrument in a manner similar to that of the African callers discussed in chapter 1 and the "tone painters" of

25. Listen, for example, to King's "Caldonia" and "I Got Some Outside Help" on B. B. King "Now Appearing" at Ole Miss (1980) and Wes Montgomery's "Polka Dots and Moonbeams" and "In Your Own Sweet Way" on *The Incredible Jazz Guitar of Wes Montgomery* (1960).

the European classical tradition. Hendrix's sound here comes out of the tradition of Howlin' Wolf's "Moanin' at Midnight" and "How Many More Years," and his distortions from the practices and proclivities of numerous ancient and modern African and African-American music makers.

As far as rhythm is concerned, Hendrix's music is primeval. David Henderson (1983) tells of an African conga drummer's reaction to Hendrix's performance style:

Rock's father was a voodoo priest and the chief drummer of a village in Ghana, West Africa. Rock's real name was Kwasi Dzidzornu. One of the first things Rocki asked Jimi was where he got that voodoo rhythm from. When Jimi murmured, Rocki went on to explain in his halting English that many of the signature rhythms Jimi played on guitar were very often the same rhythms that his father played in voodoo ceremonies. The way Jimi danced to the rhythms of his playing reminded Rocki of the ceremonial dances to the rhythms his father played to Oxun, the god of thunder, and lightning. The ceremony is called voodoo. (250-251)

As the basis of Hendrix's music is mythic and ritualistic, it is also related to soul music, which also relies on the primeval, mythic, ritualistic expressions of the black church, which in turn, of course, have some of their roots in the same tradition from which voodoo is derived.

The term "soul" was first used as a musical label in the mid-1950s, when jazz musicians of the hard-bop/funk persuasion employed it to explain and publicize their conscious and deliberate return to their sonic roots. The label was quickly appropriated by the record industry and became associated with black popular music of R&B derivation. But the term "soul" had been used in reference to gospel music for years before becoming current in R&B. In a 1958 interview, Mahalia Jackson related:

What some people call the "blues singing feeling" is expressed by the Church of God in Christ. Songs like "The Lord Followed Me" became so emotional . . . [they] almost led to panic. But the blues was here before they called it blues. This kind of song came after spirituals. The old folk prayed to God because they were in an oppressed condition. While in slavery they got a different kind of blues. Take these later songs like "Summertime" [!]; it's the same as "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child" . . . which had the blue note in it. The basic thing is soul feeling. The same in blues as in spirituals. And also with gospel music. It is soul music. (quoted in Ricks 1977, 139 [my emphasis])

The actual style that would come to be called soul had its beginnings in the 1950s, when Ray Charles exploited the gospel sound to create fusions of black

religious and R&B music.²⁶ By 1954, Charles had recorded the then controversial "I Gotta Woman" (based on the gospel song "My Jesus Is All the World to Me") and in 1959 he released the equally "blasphemous" "What'd I Say," using moans, screams, sexual innuendo, and churchy piano in both performances. "What'd I Say" alternates and combines gospel-style call-and-response fervor with the erotic expressionism of R&B. The introduction in "Hallelujah" (1956) is gospel/jazz, followed by a superb blend of gospel, blues, jazz, and R&B. "Drown in My Own Tears" (1959) is almost pure gospel in its sound, especially in the nature and use of its ornaments, bent notes, cries, and piano figurations, particularly the ♯ ♭ | ♯ ♭ | ♯ ♭ | ♯ ♭ figure; but the text is secular, which may have made the song seem, in its heyday, internally incongruous and even sacrilegious.

It was not until the 1960s that the sound of soul became a worldwide social and commercial phenomenon, set off in 1967 by Aretha Franklin's "I Never Loved a Man" and "A Natural Woman." But examples abounded before that auspicious year, including "I Found Love" (1962) by the Falcons, "Shout and Shimmy" (1962) by James Brown, and "Soul Dance Number Three" (1967) by Wilson Pickett. Sam Cooke, James Brown, and Otis Redding were the primary male soul singers of the early to mid-1960s. The late 1960s saw such soul hits as "Soul Man" (1967) and "Soul Limbo" (1968) by Sam and Dave, "Say It Loud: I'm Black and I'm Proud" (1968) by James Brown, and Isaac Hayes's *Hot Buttered Soul* (1969). Franklin had taken Clara Ward of gospel's Ward Singers as her primary influence,²⁷ although she had also taken cues from Mahalia Jackson, Marion Williams, James Cleveland, and other gospel singers. Some of these influences are revealed in "I Never Loved a Man," in which obviously secular lyrics are set gospel-style over a repetitive rhythmic pattern surrounded by occasional gospel-piano figures and sparse figures from the horns and guitar.

In the meantime, there had emerged in 1961 the Motown sound—pop-soul—featuring Diana Ross and the Supremes, Gladys Knight and the Pips, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, the Imperials, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, and others. Employing "tambourines, hand clapping, continuous loop melodies, and call-and-response voicing" (Shaw 1979, BM-10) as well as a "busy bass,"²⁸ Motown turned out an impressive and unprecedented array of R&B hits. The initial intent at Motown was to make music that was palatable to white audiences, to create, as Robinson attests, "music with a funky beat and great stories that would be crossover, that would not be blues. And that's

what we did" (quoted in Hirshey 1984, 133). A string of hits from 1964—the Supremes' "Where Did Our Love Go?" "I Hear a Symphony," and "Baby Love" and Mary Wells's "My Guy"—exemplify the Motown philosophy, which stressed the sublimation of ring tropes in favor of appeal to a broad audience. But they did not go too far astray: the subtle call-and-response phrasing rhythmic repetition, multimeteric patterns, and backbeat continued the tradition. Indeed, while seducing white listeners with elements that would appeal to them, Motown sought to educate its listeners to some of the attraction and values of ring music: the insistent repetition of the continuous loc melodies and their accompanying backbeat served not only as African-American expressive-seduction devices, but also as educational tools. As Isaac Hayes observed,

Now it was the standard joke with blacks, that whites could not, cannot do on a backbeat. You know—ain't got the rhythm? What Motown did was very smart. They beat the kids over the head with it. That wasn't soulful to us down at Stax, but baby it sold. (quoted in Hirshey, 184)

And nothing was left to chance. Motown producers controlled all aspects of production, with the restrictions on the blues and gospel elements growing more and more rigid year by year. Eventually, the only obvious nods to the tradition were the backbeat and the tambourine. In the 1970s, however, the Motown sound was invigorated by Stevie Wonder, before his departure from the label, with his "Living in the City" (1973) and other more black-infused releases; in the early 1980s, Michael Jackson extended that revitalization.

Meanwhile, other black-owned and black-oriented labels emerged as soul labels. First, Philadelphia International Records (PIR) joined Motown as a major black label, releasing a string of hits by Jerry Butler, the O'Jays, Marvin and the Blue Notes, Billy Paul, Teddy Pendergrass, and others who were adept at exploiting and adding to the synthesis of R&B, gospel, and blues that is soul. The slick productions of Motown and PIR contrasted sharply with the southern soul of Stax, a white-owned, black-oriented operation in Memphis, among whose artists were Rufus Thomas, Carla Thomas, Otis Redding, Booker T. and the MG's, Sam and Dave, Isaac Hayes, and a number of other down-home musicians. Influenced by the slowly evolving sound of soul that was maintaining and reaffirming ring traits, these Stax groups and individuals were performing black pop, pop-gospel, and pop-soul music.

The persistence of black musical traits and of the music itself proves the durability of Call-Response. It is the driving power of black music's mythical roots—its master trope of Call-Response and its specific cultural memory ("the

26. The word "soul" appeared in a few song titles in the 1950s, including Charles's "A Bit of Soul" (1955).

27. The art of Clara Ward can be heard on *Clara Ward Singers: Lord Touch Me*.

28. The creation of the busy-bass sound has been attributed to Jamie Jamerson, who "came out of Washboard Willie and the Super Studs of Rhythm" (Ritz 1985, 72).

memory is in the music," said Bechet—that makes all black music so productively and enduringly vital.

In the European and European-derived concert world, the musical expressionism that arose before 1920 with Arnold Schoenberg and was perpetuated by Alban Berg and Anton Webern had become more widespread following World War II³⁰ and the method and potentials of Schoenberg's twelve-tone serial technique more widely taught in colleges and universities. By the 1950s, elements of serial technique, and conceptions derived from it, were being used by an even wider variety of European composers, including Ernst Krenek, Rolf Liebermann, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Luigi Dallapiccola, Luigi Nono, Luciano Berio, and Pierre Boulez, and by United States-based composers such as Roger Sessions, Milton Babbitt, and Leon Kirchner, among others. Mid-century influences from Europe came from such composers as Stockhausen (*Klavierstücke XI* and *Zeitmasse*, both 1956, and *Zyklus*, 1957), Pierre Boulez (*Le Marteau sans maître*, 1955), and Luigi Nono (*Il canto sospeso*, 1956). In the meantime, aleatoric and indeterminate procedures had been developed in the United States by John Cage, whose use of chance methods such as the throwing of dice and the use of the Chinese *I Ching* were becoming influential. In addition, Earle Brown, Morton Feldman, and Christian Wolff had formed a New York school of aleatory music that would have wide influence (Salzman 1988, 161). Examples of the aleatoric works of the 1950s and early 1960s are Feldman's *Projections* (1951), Cage's *Music of Changes* and *Imaginary Landscape No. 5* (1952), Wolff's *For Piano I* (1952), and Brown's *Available Forms I* (1961) and *Available Forms II* (1962). The electronic-music experiments initiated in Europe at the Cologne Electronic Studio in the early 1950s spread immediately to the United States, where in 1952, Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky established the Columbia University electronic studio, using "live-recorded sound in conjunction with tape techniques" (149). In the same decade, minimalist ("System") composition emerged, with composers making use of subtly shifting tonal and rhythmic figures in a search for new means of varying and constructing repetitive musical configurations. Minimal, or systematic, music is based on repeated patterns achieved through the gradual, incremental growth of repeated material. It is music in which harmonic stasis, rhythmic and pitch repetition, and progressive, integer-based large-scale structures define the style. The origins of minimalism can be found in various Eastern musics, particularly that of black Africa (Steve Reich studied African drumming at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana), and in some of

the music of Eric Satie and John Cage. By the 1960s, several African-American composers were creating successful serial, aleatoric, and electronic works and by the 1980s, minimalist works began to appear in the black-music repertoire.

The diversity of style and media in the concert-hall music of African-American composers of the 1960s is wide-ranging and includes works for concert band, such as William Grant Still's *Folk Suite for Band* (1964), Hale Smith *Somersault* (1964) and *Expansions* (1967), and Ulysses Kay's *Forever Fre* (1962),³¹ electronic and electronically assisted works, such as Olly Wilson *Cetus* (1968) and *Sometimes* (1976); aleatoric works, such as Wendell Logan *Proportions for Nine Instruments and Conductor* (1968); serial pieces, such as Smith's *Contours, for Orchestra* (1962); freely atonal but closely notated works such as T. J. Anderson's *Squares: An Essay for Orchestra* (1965); chamber work laced with jazz and gospel elements, such as Anderson's *Variations on a Theme* by M. B. Tolson (1969) and David Baker's *Through This Vale of Tears* (1986); and other experimental pieces such as Talib Rasul Hakim's *Sound Gone* (1967).

Ulysses Kay continued in the style that had brought him success in the 1940s and 1950s. *Fantasy Variations* (1963), a highly contrapuntal, tonally free, chromatically oriented, motive-laden work of variable-length sections, is squarely and exclusively in the European-derived tradition. It is characterized by a frequently repeated four-note motive, subtly changing meters, and a brilliant, richly textured orchestration that exploits the expressive effects of antiphonal structures, whole-tone melodies, quartal harmonies, tone clusters and polychords. The perceptual focus of the work is on the opening motive and its subsequent pitch and rhythmic permutations in polyphony, inversion, retrograde, and other treatments that appear in florid solo and duet imitation and in various ensemble configurations. In presenting these permutations, all the instruments get to "say," or "say something about," the "subject" of the work. This composition is a true set of "fantasy variations," but, perceptually at least, it is "developmental," seeming to form itself from the inside out, rather than having been formed or forming itself in sections. The piece ends with a full thematic statement that seems to realize the implications and potentiality of the opening motive, including many of the musical meanings inherent in the "comments" made on it throughout its quarter-hour duration. The work is a mighty orchestral oration that ends in a grand, lyrical, summarizing conclusion.

In the concert works of other black composers of the 1960s, we see a confluence of styles, techniques, expressive devices, and traits borrowed from African-American genres as well as from European concert-hall music. Hale Smith's rhythmic and chordal conceptions and outright borrowings of ragtime

30. See, for example, Berg's *Lyric Suite* (1926) for string quartet and *Wozzeck* (1914–1923) and Webern's *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 10 (1912) and *Symphony*, Op. 21 (1928).

31. For a list of other works for band by black composers, see Everett (1978).

and jazz elements are almost an unconscious part of his thinking, since jazz, he says, has been "integrally a part of my maturation process."³² In Smith's work, influences from the Ellington and Basie bands show through in his syncretized, multimedial constructions and "delayed approach to the beat," and in some of his chord voicings. His *Contours, for Orchestra* is a serial work inspired in part by Afro-Cuban and Brazilian dance music. Although solidly in the European concert tradition, *Contours* communicates universally, its expressive potential especially enhanced by elements that have their basis in Call-Response. The changes in meter and the phrasings in the score reflect the additive rhythms typical of ring-derived music. The opening measures of the quick-moving first section are particularly rich in rhythmic constructions, in riff-like, punctuation-style trumpet figures, in jazz-voiced chords in some of the violin passages, in an ostinato-like quality in the solo piano and trombone lines, and in jazz-like phrasings for the brief flute and trumpet solos. These elements are effectively integrated into a conception that is clearly *not* jazz, since the work is developed along the lines of European practice. This first section is brought to a close with a return of fragments of the opening ideas.

The slow lyricism of the second section of *Contours* contrasts with the more vigorous first section, but the composer's jazz-derived rhythmic approach still prevails, particularly his practice of "tying short notes into longer ones" (Smith 1984). The writing for trombones and trumpets is obviously jazz-influenced, as are the final chordal constructions. *Contours* is a twelve-tone composition, but the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic constructions are always related to a clear beat structure. With *Contours*, Smith subtly and unobtrusively brings Call-Response into the realm of the concert hall, contributing to a cross-cultural continuity that is, and has been for decades, changing the character of American and world music.

T. J. Anderson's *Variations on a Theme* by M. B. Tolson consists of settings of six selected text fragments. A cantata for soprano and chamber ensemble, the work is scored for alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, violin, cello, and piano and is an exemplary fusion of European, twelve-tone-derived pointillistic techniques with African-American performance practices. The six text selections are taken from Tolson's *Harlem Gallery, Book 1: The Curator and Libretto for the Republic of Liberia*, three from each book, and are set in four musical sections in a kind of musical mosaic.³³ The first section of the piece is more European-oriented than the later ones, although it does make use of some at-

tacks, phrasings, and fall-offs in the African-American manner. The second section consists of three successive, unaccompanied recitative treatments of Tolson's poems. The third section is more lyrical than those before it and contains more ring-derived elements: instrumental and vocal smears, bent notes and lip trills, a suggestion of "ghosting" as the word "peace" is whispered, and other subtypes of the ring. The coda-like fourth section is introduced by a collectively improvised passage and a trumpet-sax unison passage that recall bebop heads. The texts are delivered as written, in vernacular pronunciation. Funky jazz smears, jazz-sax vibrato, jazz-chord voicings, blues and jazz phrasings, improvised or improvisation-like passages, jazz-like accompaniment figures, flutter tonguing, and fall-offs infuse the work. At the statement and repetition of the phrase "Come back, baby, come back" on pendular thirds, the jazz and blues character of the piece increases, with subtypes of the ring being exploited increasingly; one chordal figure Signifies on Arthur Cunningham's "Lullabye for a Jazz Baby"; and an ersatz blues progression brings the piece to a close.³⁴

Alvin Singleton's *Shadows* is minimalist, and we see here again an affinity between black music and the avant-garde—the kinship between the hypnotic repetitiveness of African-derived music and the hypnotic repetitiveness of minimalism. Using four to six pitches, the piece develops slowly. Louder and softer events alternate, some including pitches of long duration that oscillate in judiciously shifted, timbred, spaced, and placed configurations. Throughout the development of the piece, repetitive rhythms and timbres, and successive, simultaneous, and overlapping seconds and thirds abound. The result is excitingly hypnotic, gradually building until, at thirteen minutes and fifty seconds into the work, the musical ecology takes on the character of a jazz orchestra, replete with stylized off-beat trumpet riffs over a reverse hemiola ostinato that continues for four minutes over trombone "splaats" in a stylized, Call-Response dance section. Then the percussion enters and brings this work to a rousing dialogical climax. Singleton's minimalist, riffing repetitions here represent a sounding of African and African-American myth through a stylized mimetic of the ritual practice of the black jazz orchestra.

Olly Wilson's *Of Visions of Truth* (1990) is a song cycle for baritone, tenor, and soprano voices. Written in the composer's own heterogeneous sound language, the work is also a true amalgam—a wonderful and effective marriage of the languages of African-American music and European-derived expressionism. The work's four movements are separated by interludes that provide contrast with and emotional relief between the main statements. "I've Been 'Buked," the work's first movement, is a repetition and revision of the Negro

32. This and subsequent quotes are from a telephone conversation I had with Smith in 1984.

33. Tolson's books *Rendezvous with America* (1944), *Libretto for the Republic of Liberia* (1953), and *Harlem Gallery, Book 1: The Curator* (1965) identify him as a rather esoteric and difficult poet who, nonetheless, speaks ironically, intensely, sometimes agonizingly, and most effectively of race relations in America and the world.

34. For a list of works by Kay, Smith, and Anderson, compiled in the mid-1970s, see Baker, Belt, and Hudson (1978, 7–13).

spiritual "I've Been 'Buked and I've Been Scorned," a setting of text and tune in a Signifyin(g) revision that pays tribute to all the past singers of the song. The first section of the movement, featuring the baritone, treats tune and text in a halting, repetitive, motivic manner, the composer commenting on the old spiritual from the perspective of his own position in African-American history. The entry of the tenor, slow and languid, connects the first section to the second, a shorter, lyrical, smooth, sinuous trio that features all three singers. Slow developing, with repetitions, fragmentation, and elaborations of textual elements and units, the work tropes the black folk tradition through stylized calls, cries, and literal statements of short portions of text and tune. "Lullaby," a very slow and tender song, Signifies on the old songs that have lulled numerous black babies to sleep across the land. The text, written by the composer to celebrate "Mama's little brown baby," is set to a melody that makes use of ring-derived pendular and flatted thirds throughout. The bebop-like "IKEF" is set to a text by Henry Dumas and based on the melody of "Shortenin' Bread." "If We Must Die," with a text from Harlem Renaissance writer Claude McKay's poem of the same name, features tenor and baritone in a celebration of the slaves' call to arms against attacks by those who would keep them enslaved and oppressed. The movement ends with a rousing contrapuntal treatment of male voices singing,

If we must die
Like men,
We'll face the murderous cowardly pack;
Pressed to the wall
Dying, but fighting back.³⁵

In this contrapuntal exchange, pendular thirds are prominent in voices and in instruments, and the baritone simulates an African time line against which the tenor "plays styles." The main strength of this ring-trope concert work lies in its mythic character, exemplified in the calls and cries of the baritone; in the archaic and faraway quality of the second movement's lullaby; in its legendary and ritualistic qualities (for example, the play-party narrative of "Shortenin'," heightened by the use of the bebop idiom); in the metaphoric, evolutionary dope-smoking rituals of "IKEF"; and in the primal rhythms of the last section of the final movement.

The use of ring tropes by African-American composers may be either obvious or subtle, but the tropes are present in some form or fashion in the works of most African-American composers, albeit sometimes disguised by method and technique or even unintentionally employed. Recall Smith's statement

35. For the full text of the poem, see McKay (1953, 36).

about how his experience with jazz and ragtime music affects or contributes to his style: that his rhythmic and chordal conceptions and outright borrowings of ragtime and jazz elements are so much a part of his thinking that the have been "integrally a part of my maturation process," that his jazz-derive practice of "tying short notes into longer ones" is now essentially part of his being as a composer. Recall that Smith's *Contours* is based on serial procedure and Anderson's *Variations* on nonserial expressionist techniques, but that the both spring from the black aesthetic as well as from European-derived contrapositional practices.³⁶ Only Esu—Janus-faced god of irony, trickster and go of divination, interpreter of the culture—could guide such a balancing act and only his cousin, the Signifying Monkey, could ensure its success.

36. For lists of works for the concert hall by black composers, see Baker, Belt, and Hudson (1978), de Lerma (1984), Horne (1990, 1991, 1992), Tischler (1981), and Walker-Hill (1992b).