Subject: Starbucks
Posted by Manualblock on Fri, 07 Oct 2005 17:12:51 GMT
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I noticed they have a CD for sale and it just so happens it has some of the best little known singers and muscicians around; it also has two of my personal all time favorite female vocalists alive today..Ann Peebles and Irma Thomas. Truely great underappreciated performers. It's good to see them out there and I am supporting their efforts by purchasing the CD. Allan Toussaint plays keyboards.

Subject: Re: Starbucks
Posted by lon on Sat, 08 Oct 2005 02:42:33 GMT
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Whats' the track list? Is it just the 2 singers with the pianist? Is it music to drink coffee by? The kind they featureat Barnes and Noble? I recently landed a copy of Origianl Swingers:Hipsters Zoots and Wingtips Vol. 2 from the swing revival of 1998. But this collection is of the originals from which acts like Brian Setzer, Indigo Swing, and The Mighty Blue Kings (Chicago) got their material.Oh, and Diana Krall. This record also includes something that Diana Krall did on her Nat King Cole tribute called "Hit That Jive Jack." Recommended.
Hipsters, Zoots and Wingtips Vol.2

Subject: Re: Starbucks
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 08 Oct 2005 12:51:28 GMT
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Actually Lon I haven't even examined the CD yet but in answer to your question the two females have bands behind them.Ann Peebles is an older R&B singer who recorded on HI Records she was famous for a song. "I Can't Stand The Rain." Maybe you remmember it. Irma Thomas is a New Orleans Jazz singer who worked with all those cats.Proffessor Longhair and many others. She wrote some famous songs one called"Time Is On My Side", done by the Rolling Stones and "Pain in My Heart" that Otis Redding did later. Her Live album is some of the best big band New Orleans music you can hear.The Hipsters thing sounds good. Those guys had a feeling that has been hard to capture for the newer artists. I know it is the same for the delta blues material but the truth is the originals did do it right. I'll have to check out that CD you mention.

Subject: Re: Starbucks

Posted by lon on Sat, 08 Oct 2005 17:22:01 GMT
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I know everyone thinks blues is more "authentic" than swingor something.When the local blues show is on here I have fairlyregular chats with the person that does the show.One time I made mention of Calhoun Tubbs. Calhoun Tubbswas a character played by David Allen Greer on the oldIn Living Color show. Greer's character is in a performance setting doing his act. As he introduces the songs, they are all exactly the same tune.. with different introductions. The radio jock told me this is some times a running gagat blues shows and some of the audience can do the routine. This means I think, that there is a certain amount of nod and a wink about white people being takenin by anything seeming black and authentic.David Allen Greer pretty much nailed blues to the wallwith that routine. It's unforgettable.Rhythm and Blues, Jump Blues, early rock and roll and swinghave something in common: they are happy musics. And I think that people have a hard time relating to happy musics.That's why the retro swing fad died out so quickly. I boughtall of it I could at the time and I'm glad it's availableat the state-wide library system or I'd miss that much more ofit.

Subject: Re: Starbucks
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 09 Oct 2005 15:31:29 GMT
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To be honest I am not sure I have a handle on your essay. Are you saying that people worship a particular style of Blues without knowing if it is in fact well done or authentic because they are deluded into thinking they know more than they do? And that just because someone calls a music the Blues doesn't mean it is well done? Or that the Black Guys are amused at white entertainers thinking that just by playing a simple progression and repeating the chorus numerous times that that somehow makes them more authentic?So if I take your point correctly; that Jump is an original and authentic style of music that has as much validity as Blues or any other genre then I agree and can offer the example of South African developement of pop Jive as proof. The concept that one style of music is more authentic than another is; well to me irrellavent. I mean what does that mean? And why would it be important to assign a label of greater uniqeness?Earlier we talked about how hard it was for people other than those who grew up in certain areas of the country and experienced the same circumstances to reproduce the exact timing and feel of a style. So I would guess that the Jump style that came out of the Latino Ghettos of Los Angeles in the 40's would qualify as unique and difficult to copy well. Is that so? Just to see we are on the same page.But no; I would not have an opinion as to which musical style is more important. I don't see the point of musical snobbery. Some style may have a greater effect on the culture and some may be relagated to less of an impact but in musical terms they have effects that we can't determine over the long haul.I am more interested in how the music does what it does than why it might be better or worse. Why does a twelve bar 1/4/5 progression grab people the way it does.Ditto for the Jump styles.You know it's incredibly difficult to play the most simplest music right. Becuase there is no room for mistakes. because it is so simple every little nuance becomes magnified and assume's tremendous signifigance. So some can listen for years to Sleepy John Estes and still never get his timing and inflection and tone exactly right.Or Blind Willie; or Petey

Wheatstraw. And the cultural divide is real and hard to overcome when you are trying to replicate a music indigenous to a time and place and people.

Subject: Re: Starbucks
Posted by lon on Mon, 10 Oct 2005 23:14:38 GMT
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Weird, Something got unblocked here now where I can respond.You lost me at where you were talking about an earlier part of thediscussion. That's part of the fragmenting that occursin net chats. Lets focus on the notion of happy music. Blues is not happy music, in the main-- just the opposite.Country Western is another egregious example of music which is sad rather than happy. I believe there is a reason for this. Blues is club music.Country Western is club music. When Swing hit the bars, the bar owners saw that people dancing i.e. having _fun_ were not drinkingas much. Will come back to this... stay tuned

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Subject: Re: Starbucks
Posted by Manualblock on Tue, 11 Oct 2005 00:39:51 GMT
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Blues by virtue of it's composition and ethnography is more than music it is a testimony to a set of circumstances surrounding a group of people unique to the common sense of what music means. Happy or sad or just Blue has no bearing on the ultimate effect of the music on the hearers. I mean first of all it was not a music written to evoke any mood it was written originally as a form of communication. The call and response form had a use in describing what and how the work of the laborers was accomplished. Think of where this music originated; mostly from east African slaves predominately from the Yoruba tribes. They used a similar system of meter and tone to tell the news from village to village. That style is rooted in the same Blues you hear done to this day. Including the Pentatonic scale and the Tonic/Dominent /Sub-dominent construction.Then after the civil war the retreating armies left instruments by the roads picked up by locals to make music with. Mostly Fife and Drum with the occassional horn or crude stringed banjo. Most of the best of the Bluesmen started with cigar boxes and broomsticks tied with a cat gut string and fretted with a pocket knife.They would use this equipment to play after work in the fields and on Sundays. Since the preachers and overseers would allow only religous music to be played; they learned the european chord structures except they would flat the thirds and fifths when the preacher wasn't listening. They would sing to tell stories of local gossip that could not be said out loud. Soon Gospel music evolved from the mix of African rythyms and European harmony and that was allowed on Sunday's.My point is the music has a depth of experience that makes it a cultural iconagraphic art.

Subject: Re: Starbucks
Posted by lon on Tue, 11 Oct 2005 04:25:26 GMT
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Unfortunately internet chats do not lend to these longer forms.what I usually do is break up a message like this and write it asa conversation. They get complex very fast.I think every music can be 'cultural icongraphic art.'And Blues is the icon of what? If the reply as I would suspectis of the slave condition, then Jump and Swing would be the icon of freedom. Thinking ahead to what might happen in New Orleans I heard a funny remark which may belong in the context of reconstruction:the phrase I heard was, "Even the old stuff is new." Meaning thata recreation and gentrification of the area would only benefitthose who experience the icon rather than the reality.I remember a few years ago, one of the best programs on the public radio here was from the state capitol. It was called "Downhome Dairyland" by Rick March. It was about Polka music.it was about how one area had different styles than the other based on the ethnicity of the population. It was about how the Germans brought polka to Texas where it became Conjunto.And it was even about an ethnic presentation of polka whereHispanic and German bands took the same stage at a national eventin Washington DC.But when I mentioned this to anyone they thought it was silly and frivolous because it was, you know, polka: no class ethnic musicwith silly lyrics about the jilted lover telling his sweetheart to jump off a bridge. That is the "Jump off The Bridge Polka" BTW. I suppose there is an equivalent in the blues world for such a sentiment. But the iconography isall different.And I find it most odd that white people of a certain ageare the ones who have become guardians of the style. Guardians of the Style is a phrase specifically appliedto barbershop harmony. The Hi-los _sound_ likebarbershop to some people, but they are not guardiansof the style like groups such as The Sweet Adelines and Excaliber. In the case of these blues aficionados or cognoscenti the authenticity of the tragic rarely makesway for the joy and freedom in more upbeat expressions.Bedroom jazz falls into a similar category: people of my age admire the likes of Miles Davis and Dave Brubeck over Maynard Ferguson or Ted Heath becaue they fit their idea of whatjazz is: bedroom or seduction music. Something that'goes better with coke' to borrow the borrowed phrase from Gil Scott Heron. So in the icongraphic sense blues = tragic = serious.But OTOH Swing = joyous = silly. I just happen to be serious about my swing and jump blues. I'll venture, thoughI cannot give proof, that swing and big band music in it'scomplexity is, in that complexity, a higher art form.Stan Kenton always maintained this as a fact.Finally, I have been most puzzled by music educationfor young people. In their school bands they are taughtthe big band classics. Yet when they leave school, they have virtually no place to practice the skills learned except inthe few bands that tour and as studio musicians. To me, this is atragic loss. Something similar happens in Drum Corps: the joy and exultation in playing as a unit is lost nearly as soon as it has been experienced.If you think I'm getting off track, the common thread hereis joy in the music-- happy music-- to put it simply.That is the icon I want to portray.

Subject: Re: Starbucks
Posted by Manualblock on Tue, 11 Oct 2005 12:36:20 GMT
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Well; thats a hard concept for me in terms of wrapping my thoughts around whether music is

happy, or sad, or melancholic. This is not the first time I have heard this argument that the Blues music by definition is a sad music. I personally and the people I speak to about this can't see the line of debate here. Blues to me represents a means of communication developed around the human condition. Not whether it may be telling a sad story but is it telling any kind of story? That is where the value lies in offering the human component of day to day living.There is a type of music sung in Portugal called Fado. Those unfamiliar with this genre will hear it and call it a sad sound. The Portuguese say that is wrong; they say Fado is life and the music holds within it all of life; the pathos/longing/desire/love/regret on and on. If you say it is sad they say all of life is short and that is what gives the music it's beauty. That we can enjoy all of these beautifull things while knowing they will come to an end.That is more of how I see the music of the Bluesmen; it represents what is true about living. When you offer the Polka as a example; that is a dance music developed as a music to dance by. That I see as similar to the Tango; an ethnic music derived from several sources that allows people to express it in motion.So when you compare swing with blues in the sense of whether one is more legitimate than the other regarding what that music is saying I don't have a real response. To me they are different animals.