

## Jazz 101 Summer/Fall 2020

### Matthew FC Rivera

8/11/20 **Diaspora.** New Orleans. Rhythm. Individual Ensembles.

Where did jazz come from and what did the first jazz sound like?

#### Stories

- Exploration: “The First Jazz Musician was Marco Polo.” Water.
- Colonization: The quest to find the southern entrance to the Mississippi. More than just two groups of people. “The Social”, “Culture.”
- Urban growth: New York 1624; Baltimore 1796; St. Louis 1764; San Francisco 1776; Mobile 1702 (Mardi Gras); New Orleans 1718
- People: Choctaw, Chickasaw, French (1690s), African (1710s), Spanish (1760s), English
- Music: Working music, Praying music, Playing music. By 1904 Louis is alive, Bix is alive, Bechet playing. We have sheet music and know songs were composed.
- Black codes: The talking drum. British outlaw drums. Bienville and Lemoines don’t.
- Congo Square: Lemoine aka Bienville, Freedom of expression on the Sabbath in Congo Square. French, Spanish, English, American. Exists all the same. Erased 1885.
- 1877: Compromise 1877. Jim Crow. Third Exhibition of Impressionism. Ann Karenina. Birth of Buddy Bolden. Edison announces invention of the phonograph.
- Segregation: 1896 Plessy vs. Ferguson: separate but equal.
- Buddy Bolden: Buddy Bolden to King Oliver: Oliver decides he doesn’t have to remember anything.

## The Music

- Rhythm: AC power vs. DC power. Whipping back and forth vs. lifting and dropping. Fixed tempo.
- Instruments: The Mexican war. “That band from Mexico.” The cornet to the trumpet.
- No solos: 100% ensemble to 100% solos.
- Polyphony: at least 3 independent lines.
- Front Line and Rhythm Section: The American Invention.
- Improvisation: Oliver decides he doesn’t have to remember anything.

## **“Dippermouth Blues” by King Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band**

Joe Oliver, better known as “King Oliver,” was most famously Louis Armstrong’s mentor and greatest teacher, but Oliver’s name and music deserves to be known far beyond this important fact about Louis Armstrong. Indeed in his lifetime, Oliver was famous for his deep blues playing, his intense control of rhythm, and his inventive use of mutes for expressive effects. It was this fierce style and command of rhythm that gave Oliver the crown, no small triumph coming from New Orleans, the home of Buddy Bolden, jazz’s first official “king” of the cornet. King Oliver was born in Aben, Louisiana on December 19, 1881 and died tragically in Savannah, GA on April 10, 1938, impoverished and unable to find work as a musician.

Oliver’s great innovation as a jazz soloist came from his inspired choice not to play from memory, but to play immediately improvised passages from the heart. Deeply rooted in the blues cornet tradition of the generation prior to his, including players like the great Buddy Bolden, Oliver eventually led the Creole Jazz Band, taking the place of Freddy Keppard, and bringing Louis Armstrong to Chicago to play alongside him. The records by King Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band in 1923 are some of the strongest examples of New Orleans music on record, but the band has its own tightly knit sound beyond its New Orleans roots or Chicago placement. Each of the artists in this outfit has a unique tone and strong individuality, but also of a sense of loyalty the unit. These are musicians at work: together.

**Leader:** King Oliver **Personnel:** King Oliver, Louis Armstrong (cnt) Honore Dutrey (tb) Johnny Dodds (cl) Lil Armstrong (p) Bud Scott (bj) Baby Dodds (d)

**Location and Date:** Richmond, IN, April 6, 1923

**Matrix:** 11389 **Take:** B **Title:** Dippermouth Blues **Label and Catalogue:** Gennett 5132

**Song Form:** 12 bar blues in two strains

4 bar intro

First Strain:

12 bar blues melody

12 bar melody with Dodds weaving around the horns.

Second Strain:

24 bars. Two 12 bar blues choruses by Dodds with band hitting first three beats.

First Strain:

12 bar blues chorus all instruments. Armstrong leads.

32 bar. Three rip roaring 12 bar blues choruses by King Oliver.

2 bar break: “Oh Play That Thing!”

12 bar all in rid out chorus.

2 bar coda.

## **“Livery Stable Blues” by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band**

The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, known colloquially as the “ODJB,” is one of the most infamous ensembles of jazz. Most histories of jazz will tell you that the band made the first jazz record, “Livery Stable Blues”/“Dixie Jass Band One Step”, and they will also make a point of referencing the band’s unusual spelling of jazz as “jass.” While these statements are not necessarily false, they are misguided in overlooking the more obscure jazz recordings and jazz adjacent recordings made before the ODJB. The importance of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band is that they made the first hugely popular jazz record, and their rapid fire, hell for leather style set off a “novelty” craze in the late teens and early twenties, that included countless groups of “fives” from the Louisiana Five to the Original Memphis Five to the Indiana Five.

Their decline from huge popularity (indeed the band was popular enough to travel to England and record 12 inch 78s for Columbia in 1919) has been one of the more dramatized parts of their story, but their influence on the way jazz would be performed well outlasted their initial career. These were the first recordings heard by Bix Beiderbecke, whose fondness for the leader of the ODJB Nick LaRocca led Bix to start playing cornet along with their records and to eventually include their repertoire on his own sessions as a leader.

While some current listeners might find their records shockingly dated, don’t let the novelty effects or the harsh tones of the instruments fool you: the ODJB has all of the heat and soul of a great jazz band. Listening closely to Bix’s favorite, Nick LaRocca, is continually enjoyable. With his in the groove rhythm and drawn in tone, LaRocca is full of surprises and rarely calls attention to himself.

**Leader:** Nick LaRocca **Personnel:** Nick LaRocca (cnt,dir) Eddie Edwards (tb) Larry Shields (cl) Henry Ragas (p) Tony Sbarbaro (d)

**Location and Date:** New York, February 26, 1917

**Matrix:** 19331 **Take:** 1 **Title:** Livery Stable Blues **Label and Catalogue:** Victor 18255

**Song Form:** 12 bar blues

First Strain: 6 bar intro

Second Strain: 2 12 bar choruses: clarinet, cornet, trombone polyphony

Third Strain: 2 more 12 bar choruses beginning with bass drum thumping

First Strain: 2 12 bar choruses with three bar break for imitations in each

Second Strain: 2 12 bar choruses: clarinet, cornet, trombone polyphony

Third Strain: 12 bar chorus with bass drum motif

2 more 12 bar choruses with Three bar break in each

“Dog Leg” Cadence