

**MAKING THE SCENE: VANCOUVER'S CELLAR CLUB
and OTHER CO-OPERATIVE JAZZ CLUBS IN CANADA 1955–1964**

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ABSTRACT

Between 1955 and 1964, co-operative jazz clubs were formed in several Canadian cities. Operated by the artists themselves, these co-operative ventures —the Cellar in Vancouver, the Yardbird Suite in Edmonton, the Foggy Manor in Calgary, and 777 Barrington Street in Halifax —provided unique and necessary performance spaces for Canadian jazz musicians, and became pivotal sites for the development of jazz in Canada following World War Two. Using the methodological tools offered by the scenes perspective, this dissertation examines the socio-cultural factors which necessitated the pursuit of jazz through such co-operative means, the ways in which the scenes that developed around these clubs were structured, the operating processes of the clubs themselves, and the varying factors which led to their eventual decline. The bulk of this study deals with Vancouver and its Cellar co-operative, a weighting based upon several factors including the amount of available evidence, its intersection with Vancouver's arts community, and its unique relationship with jazz scenes on the American West Coast. The examinations of jazz co-operatives in Edmonton, Calgary, and Halifax, suffer from a comparative lack of surviving evidence, and are consequently less detailed.

The development of the domestic Canadian jazz industry can be seen to owe a significant debt to the early organizational efforts of these co-operative clubs. Though most of the musicians involved did not achieve lasting fame, they made significant and lasting contributions to jazz in Canada across a variety of platforms. These co-operative jazz clubs created strongholds for jazz in Canada beyond the major urban centres of Toronto and Montreal, providing widespread cultural traction for jazz in this country.

DEDICATION

the walk liberating, I was released from forms,
from the perpendiculars,
 straight lines, blocks, boxes, binds
of thought
into the hues, shadings, rises, flowing bends and blends
 of sight:

 I allow myself eddies of meaning:
yield to a direction of significance
running
like a stream through the geography of my work:
 you can find
in my sayings
 swerves of action
 like the inlet's cutting edge:
 there are dunes of motion,
organizations of grass, white sandy paths of remembrance
in the overall wandering of mirroring mind:

but Overall is beyond me: is the sum of these events
I cannot draw, the ledger I cannot keep, the accounting
beyond the account:¹

¹ I found this abridged version of A.R. Ammons' poem "Corson's Inlet" glued to the rear of the Cellar building in the summer of 2013. At the time, the building was derelict and slated for demolition in a few weeks. The poem was affixed down low, just to the right of the door. The paper was still clean, and it hadn't been there long. Perhaps it has nothing to do with the Cellar beyond my finding of it. Perhaps it does. Regardless, it seemed a unique enough coincidence to include here. The fragment in its found location bore no information as to title or author, which is why I have chosen to do the same here.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Rob Bowman, who never turned down a request to meet, was always prompt returning feedback, and was unfailingly supportive. Rob van der Blik who likewise was always available and happy to provide a good humoured reality check when required. And Robert Witmer, whose quiet support and feel for the subject was much appreciated.

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Most importantly, I would like to thank each and every musician who took the time to speak with me regarding this project. Every musician I have had the honour to meet was overwhelmingly generous with their time, their memories, and their keepsakes. I cannot possibly list them all here, but I would like to single out Lance Harrison for getting this all started; John Dawe for responding to my constant questions so quickly; Jim Kilburn for access to the surviving recordings, and for putting me up after a long bike ride; Tony Clitheroe and Paul Ruhland for the good company; James Carney and Walley Lightbody for providing the majority of the photographs found here; and Al Neil, for the hang.

I have not even attempted to compile a list of all the musicians involved with these co-operative clubs—far too many names would be omitted through my ignorance. This is as much their story as it those whose names have made these pages.

Anyone interested in providing contributions to what I hope will be further work in this vein can reach me at marian.jago@gmail.com.

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Introduction

As a young person developing an understanding of jazz, I initially found the music overwhelming.¹ Distant. The music of another place. Jazz was heavily mediated—it was heard in the movies and the iconic blue smoke of Herman Leonard photographs. Jazz was Miles Davis. It was Verve and Impulse and Blue Note records. Most of all, jazz was American—the soundtrack of New Orleans, New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Jazz happened elsewhere, and I did what I could to chase down its echo. But in addition to amassing a record collection, I read widely on the subject and before long stumbled onto the work of Canadian author, critic, and historian Mark Miller. His writing introduced me to Canadian jazz, and his work *Such Melodious Racket: The Lost History of Jazz in Canada 1914-1949* (Miller, 1999) had a profound affect on my development as a musician and as an academic.²

Miller's work acquainted me with the idea that jazz was not simply an American art, but that it was also alive and well in Canadian cities, and that Canadian musicians had made and continued to make vital musical statements. I suddenly wanted to know more, much more, about the history of jazz in my own city (at the time, Vancouver). Eager to pick up the trail where Miller's book had left off, during my undergraduate years I simply started speaking to musicians wherever I could, seeking out the older players as often as possible. These musicians were unanimously generous with their time and their recollections, and it quickly became clear that a fascinating and seminally important musical history was going unrecorded. My growing

¹ First in the Vancouver area, then in Halifax, New York, and Toronto.

² That I acquired this book by accident during a closing sale at the Robson and Georgia location of Vancouver's *Duthie Books*, now defunct, is perhaps not insignificant to this work as a whole.

knowledge of Canadian jazz and its musicians was also empowering for me as a young player. Though it did not diminish the influence of American jazz artists, I simultaneously felt a connection to a more tangible and accessible history.

Jazz scenes such as those represented by the Cellar and Black Spot / Flat Five (Vancouver), the Yardbird Suite (Edmonton), Foggy Manor (Calgary), and 777 Barrington Street (Halifax) are a musical inheritance; a domestic history based on localized space and place which have become the “the grooves” upon which Canadian jazz practices and affinities are fixed (Straw 2001, 54). In some ways, the current Canadian jazz scene of festivals, societies, clubs, college programs, media outlets, and granting organizations is a direct outgrowth of the efforts made by Canadian jazz musicians in the 1950s and 1960s to create spaces in which to enact jazz.

Scope

Between the years 1955 and 1964, significant co-operative jazz clubs were established in at least four Canadian cities: Vancouver (The Cellar and Black Spot / Flat Five), Edmonton (Yardbird Suite), Calgary (Foggy Manor), and Halifax (777 Barrington Street).³ Operated on a not-for-profit basis by the musicians themselves, these clubs eschewed commercial concerns and existed solely to create spaces in which young jazz musicians could practice their art. As such,

³ In July 1959, a jazz club called the Randomanor opened in Winnipeg. Though initial reports in the *Winnipeg Free Press* include the Randomanor with Vancouver’s Cellar, Edmonton’s Yardbird Suite, and Calgary’s Foggy Manor, it is unclear if the club operated as a co-operative space or not. Reports in the *Winnipeg Free Press* about the club’s organizers “losing all their money” on an unsuccessful early concert certainly suggest that the space was not operating on a co-operative, not-for-profit basis by the musicians who were performing, and indeed, the paper suggests that the driving force behind the club was not local musicians, but rather local jazz fans. It does appear that one of the Randomanor’s organizers, Don Levson, was the brother of Maurice Levson, apparently connected in some way to Calgary’s Foggy Manor (*Winnipeg Free Press*, September 26, 1959, pg. 21). At any rate, the Randomanor was short-lived, replaced in 1960 by the Stage Door club, which, while providing valuable early performing experience for the likes of Lenny Breau, was not a co-operative endeavour along the lines of the Cellar, Yardbird Suite, or 777 Barrington Street. (*Winnipeg Free Press*, September 10, 1960, pg. 32). The Stage Door was itself replaced in 1963 by the Cellar Club (not to be confused with Vancouver’s Cellar co-operative), which split its musical offerings between rock and roll and jazz (*Winnipeg Free Press*, August 3, 1963, pg. 3).

these clubs represent valuable socio-musical experiments which were unique for their time. This dissertation seeks to examine the socio-cultural conditions that prompted the establishment of such co-operative clubs, and examines in detail the ways in which these clubs enacted jazz “scenes” in their home cities. In the case of Vancouver it will further consider the structure of the scene, and the ways in which the jazz scene centred at the Cellar interacted with wider musical and artistic concerns in Vancouver at the time. Vancouver and its Cellar club forms the largest area of focus for this study and is discussed at length in chapters four through seven, with the remaining clubs condensed together in chapter eight.

For the purposes of this study I have defined “co-operative” to mean a club which is conceived, operated, and managed by the musicians themselves with only nominal outside help. This working definition requires that the rent and other operating expenses are borne as a shared risk by the members, and in actual fact in most cases the members who shouldered this financial burden often also doubled as the board of directors for the clubs in question. As co-operative ventures, issues pertaining to booking, advertising, and the like for these clubs are reached via consensus, a board of directors is carried, and the clubs are operated as not-for-profit organizations. Though some individuals may receive compensation for taking on particular roles in the operation of the club (manager, cleaner, etc), the emphasis is upon a volunteer-based, shared distribution of the workload.

This definition serves to exclude coffee houses, restaurants, and other performance venues which, though they may have provided a hospitable atmosphere for the performance of jazz, were operating at the same time as for-profit businesses. It also serves, through its emphasis upon the central, indeed seminal role of the musicians themselves in the venue’s establishment, to

exclude some important early Canadian jazz venues which one might otherwise consider to be comparable. Operated either as for-profit businesses that merely provided a welcome home for jazz or primarily by jazz enthusiasts rather than the jazz musicians themselves, such venues as Victoria's Scene club, Vancouver's Espresso Coffee House and Inquisition Coffee House, Winnipeg's Randomanor and Stage Door, and George's Spaghetti House in Toronto, would all fall into this category.

Vancouver

Though the Foggy Manor, Yardbird Suite, and 777 Barrington Street were significant spaces for the jazz communities in which they existed, a unique combination of factors resulted in Vancouver and its Cellar co-operative becoming my chief area of focus. First and foremost is the simple fact that of all the co-operative clubs discussed, the Cellar has simply left behind the most evidence. A majority of the founding members of the Cellar are still alive and were willing to be interviewed for this work,⁴ the club took out regular advertisements in local newspapers, and promotional material for the club was created including concert posters, some of which have survived. Several members of the Cellar were also enthusiastic photographers during the period in question, and as a result there is a considerable amount of archival material available, including several photographs of the club's interior taken by CBC photographer Franz Linder in 1961, and film footage of the interior of the club from a 1964 National Film Board documentary on the Vancouver arts scene.

⁴ The one major exception to this is saxophonist and longtime Cellar manager Dave Quarin who, despite repeated requests, declined to participate in this project.

While there were no contemporary commercial albums released which present Cellar-based musicians,⁵ there do exist privately held copies of three live CBC radio broadcasts from 1956 and 1957 which provide a rare opportunity to hear these musicians playing jazz (standards and original compositions) at the same time they were active at the Cellar. Additionally, two recordings featuring American musicians at the club have been released. One is a bootleg recording of saxophonist Harold Land's quartet released by the Spanish label Fresh Sound, *Harold Land: Jazz At the Cellar 1958* (Fresh Sound, 2007), and the other, *The Montgomery Brothers In Canada* (Fantasy 1958), was recorded after-hours at the Cellar in 1958 specifically for commercial release.

These recordings of notable American jazz musicians stem from that fact that the Cellar was successful in forging a unique position for itself relative to jazz touring activity along the West Coast, ultimately forming long lasting relationships with many American musicians. As a result of a self-conscious attempt by the Cellar's membership to connect to the jazz scene beyond the confines of Vancouver, the Cellar gained access to touring American artists with remarkable frequency. More than simply stopping by for a jam session or evening's performance, these American visitors to the Cellar were often booked for lengthy engagements, and their extended stays in Vancouver led to the formation of personal relationships with local musicians, and to an organic interaction with the Cellar which incorporated rehearsals, jam sessions, formal performances, pedagogy, and informal discussions or "hangs."

All of this activity, when combined with the active participation in this study by so many of the Cellar's original members, has allowed the history of the co-operative jazz scene in

⁵ In 1959 pianist Al Neil was recorded with a group of Cellar-based musicians backing American poet Kenneth Patchen. This album was released in 1959 on Folkways, and is discussed at length in Chapter 5.

Vancouver to emerge with greater detail, and, one would hope, greater accuracy, than has been possible with the other clubs and cities included in this study. In contrast, almost all of the founding members of the Yardbird Suite had passed by the time of this project, and no founding members of the Foggy Manor could be located. Most of the founding members of Halifax's 777 Barrington Street were available to be interviewed, and the discussion of Halifax is therefore the most detailed of the other co-operative clubs contained in chapter eight.

The Marketplace

Unlike the music scenes examined in the works of Sara Cohen (1991) Barry Shank (1994), and Aaron Fox (2004), the jazz scenes this work examines existed outside of the commercial recording industry, and were, by-and-large, unaffected by desires or ambitions toward the establishment of "professional" recording careers on the part of the musicians involved. In part this was due to the marginal nature of jazz within the Canadian record industry as a whole, a reality impressed upon these young musicians through their need to special order the albums of even 'big' jazz stars from their local record stores, but it was also due to a tacit understanding of the fact that no such domestic industry existed for jazz within Canada at the time.⁶

The professional ambition which did exist for some players was concerned instead with securing musical jobs within the studio scene centred around the CBC (television and radio). In

⁶ While it is true that the domestic recording industry in Canada as a whole was rather limited during this period, it had flourished during the 1920s, particularly in Montreal. Several companies were active in the classical, folk and popular music fields, their catalogues including the novelty rags of pianists Willie Eckstein, Vera Guilaroff and Harry Thomas, and the efforts of such jazz (or, more accurately, "hot dance") bands as the local Melody Kings and the Toronto band of pianist Gilbert Watson. The Apex subsidiary of Toronto's Compo records, for example, was recording Canadian artists as early as 1920, releasing some 300 Canadian recordings between 1921 and 1925. The extent to which these recordings were distributed outside of Toronto and Montreal however, remains unclear to me, and it is worth noting that none of my interview subjects recalled any Canadian recordings as having been significant to their early musical exposure and development.

Vancouver, the nature of the commercial studio scene resulted in the development of a well recognized split between those musicians who inhabited the world of studio employment offered by the CBC, and those who centred their musical energies around the jazz scene based out of the Cellar (initially) and the Black Spot and Flat Five clubs (later on). The CBC offered well-paying work, but the gigs were often casual, ad-hoc arrangements predicated upon filling the needs of the production in question. Such studio work did not represent a steady paycheck for all but a select few. The music presented on CBC television also rarely ventured into the realm of post-war small group jazz (bebop) as performed by the members of the Cellar, and when the CBC did host such programming it was generally with a well-known American star headlining. The local CBC radio station in Vancouver was a slightly different story, due in large part to the sheer amount of content required to fill the airwaves, and several of the Cellar-based groups did receive airplay as early as the late 1950s on programs such as *Jazz Workshop*,⁷ or as guests on other programs performing opposite American artists booked to play the Cellar.

As a result, performance practice at the Cellar, along with other Canadian jazz co-ops was, for the most part, free from pressure to conform to any overarching definition of jazz, or to seek a middle ground between jazz and more popular programming in the hopes of finding wider popular and commercial success. Rather, the construction and performance of musical identity was self-regulating, and dependent upon the internal consensus of the scene itself rather than economically driven external pressures. Indeed the one major organizational breakdown at the Cellar occurred over one faction's desire to actively broaden the appeal of the club and "go commercial" against the wishes of the majority of the membership. This is not to say that the

⁷ Not to be confused with an early program produced by CBC Montreal which bore the same name, this *Jazz Workshop* series was a longer running jazz radio program produced in Vancouver by George Robertson.

Cellar or these other jazz co-ops operated completely free of the jazz marketplace, but only that such market pressures were largely secondary concerns tied to the American recording industry and its influence on the shaping and making of taste and performance repertoire.⁸

Beyond Toronto and Montreal

This dissertation is not concerned with club activities in such major urban areas as Toronto and Montreal, partly as jazz in these cities has been fairly well documented (Miller 1987, 1988, 1989, 1997, and 2001; Gilmore 1988, 1989; Scott 2006), but largely because these cities provided enough commercial opportunities for jazz, and jazz-related music, not to have required the establishment of self-organizing, co-operative performance spaces. Toronto and Montreal presented entirely different musical realities from smaller urban centres as both enjoyed populations and urban density sufficient to support nightclubs, coffee houses, and other performance venues sufficient that jazz, to a large extent, was an economically viable pursuit. This is not to suggest that jazz performance in Montreal and Toronto was necessarily a lucrative venture, or even that numerous dedicated jazz clubs existed at all times in these cities, but simply that there were enough musical venues available to forestall the need for the inception of artist-run co-operative jazz spaces in these cities.

One exception to this may be Toronto's MINC club (1959), which existed largely to provide a performance venue for those musicians excluded from the local Toronto branch of the American

⁸ Though Oscar Peterson was recording commercially as of 1945 (largely from the USA), few domestically based Canadian jazz artists were commercially recorded before the mid-1960s—Phil Nimmons in 1963 (RCA LCP1066); Lance Harrison in 1965 (RCA PC 1043); Fraser MacPherson in 1973 (PNR 700), and in 1975 when he released *Live at the Planetarium*, notable for being carried by American label Concord (CJ-92). Such Vancouver-based CBC stalwarts as Chris Gage, Ray Norris, and Eleanor Collins, did not record commercially at all. As such, the idea of being a recording artist did not enter into the ambitions of the majority of the musicians active in these co-operative scenes.

Federation of Musicians Union, and thus from much paying work in the city. The majority of these musicians were American, others were newly arrived from other Canadian cities, and almost all were waiting to clear the Union's six month waiting period before they could join the Toronto local. It also appears that at least some of the American musicians were in Canada illegally, and were therefore hard pressed to find other paying work. Several of these musicians were eventually deported.⁹ For many of Toronto's black musicians at the time, the MINC also served as venue in which they could practice and perform jazz, rather than the R&B, blues, and dance-band music which formed much of their staple employment. Some, such as guitarist Sonny Greenwich, used the creative freedom offered by the MINC to evolve an interest in more *avant garde* forms of jazz, the sounds of which were often absent from Toronto's major jazz venues. For more on this see Scott (2006).

As such, the MINC served a decidedly different purpose from the co-operative clubs which are the focus of this study, and which often represented the only performance opportunities for jazz in the cities in which they operated. Though the MINC club is an important and fascinating part of Toronto's musical history, it is unclear whether the MINC operated as a musicians' co-operative in the same manner as the other clubs in this study, wherein the financial risk was assumed and shared by the same musicians who used and played at the club. The MINC, in its original form, was short lived, and its second incarnation in early 1960 seems, from the available evidence, to have operated on a much more conventional business model. The MINC has as well already been well documented by Andrew Scott in his 2006 dissertation on Sonny Greenwich

⁹ See Chapter 8.

(Scott 2006). A brief discussion of the circumstances in Montreal and Toronto occurs in Chapter Eight.

Methodology

The research methodology for this dissertation combines historical and ethnographic approaches, and relies in large part upon interviews conducted in the field with surviving members of the clubs in question, as well as with jazz fans who attended these clubs to listen. What little had previously been written on the musicians involved in the establishment of these clubs came from Mark Miller, in particular his *Jazz in Canada: Fourteen Lives* (1982), *Boogie, Pete, and the Senator: Canadian Musicians in Jazz, the Eighties* (1987), and *The Miller Companion to Jazz in Canada and Canadians in Jazz* (2001).

Following Miller's work I conducted numerous interviews in-person as well as over the phone, using Skype, email, and through letters. Interviews were conducted with Skip Beckwith, Chris (Hole) Birdseye, bill bissett, Lyvia Brooks, Adrienne Brown, David Caldwell, John Capon, James Carney, Warren Chiasson, Jim Chivers, Terry Clarke, Tony Clitheroe, Don Cumming, John Dawe, Bill Fawcett, Don Francks, Bob Hales, Lance Harrison, Terry Hill, Ken Hole, Jim Johnson, Cliff Jones, Claire Lawrence, Pat LaCroix, John Le Marquand, Walley Lightbody, Lynne MacNeil, Bob Mercer, Al Neil, Don Palmer, Stan Perry, Ricci Quarin, Jamie Reid, Jack Reynolds, Dal Richards, Neil Ritchie, Paul Ruhland, Gregg Simpson, Adrian Tanner, Mike Taylor, Don Thompson, Gavin Walker, Blaine Wikjord, Doreen Williams, and Don Vickery. To help corroborate the recollections of my interview subjects, I searched back issues of *Coda* magazine, the *Vancouver Sun*, *The Ubysey* (University of British Columbia student newspaper),

the *Edmonton Journal*, and the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*, and also conducted research at the CBC archives. Secondary source material on the social and cultural development of Vancouver, along with research at the City of Vancouver Archives, helped to fill in the gaps surrounding the musical life of that city.

In conducting the interviews which form the backbone of this study, I was acutely aware that memory can be as much an act of construction as it is of faithful recollection, and was sure to double check information gleaned in interviews against as many other sources as possible. When dealing with dates and other factual data, this could often be accomplished through recourse to local newspapers and magazines, or other written sources. Oftentimes however, the only way to cross-check information was to ask the same, or similar questions of a number of interview respondents, and to eliminate or highlight, as the case may be, anything that seemed outside the common consensus. When recollections of events were similar, I opted to use quotations from the most colourful, or most contextually appropriate source. Whenever doubt persisted as to exact performance dates, I excluded them altogether, and simply narrowed in as much as possible as to the season, month, or week that the engagement occurred (see in particular chapter four).

This ethnographic cross-checking is best seen in the discussion surrounding Charles Mingus' appearance at the Cellar in chapter six which includes varying interpretations of high profile and frequently related conflict between Mingus and some Vancouver Lions' football players, and in the discussion surrounding the playing style of Vancouver drummer Bill Boyle, one of the few Vancouver-based players to be reviewed with any detail by *Coda* magazine (also in chapter six). In this case, I identified a possible stylistic disconnect between the correspondent from *Coda* (a

magazine at the time primarily devoted to traditional, or dixieland jazz) and the modern jazz style featured at the Cellar, and without recourse to recordings, sought a variety of opinions on the matter.

Interviews were conducted in a casual, conversational style in a variety of settings ranging from performance venues, to coffee shops, to musicians' homes. I eschewed a formal list of interview questions in favour of a more conversational style of interviewing. This approach enabled me to quickly put my interview subjects at ease, and allowed me to tailor my approach to each interviewee's unique experiences and personality. The flexibility of this approach allowed the conversation to proceed naturally, and for interview subjects to take their recollections beyond the immediate scope of my questioning. That said, all interview subjects were posed similar questions with regard to racial and gender issues, influential or formative musical experiences, and knowledge of the Canadian jazz scene beyond their home communities.

As a methodological lens I adopted the scenes perspective, which is discussed at length in the following chapter. Briefly, the scenes perspective can be seen as a type of speculative viewing—a way of locating and describing musical activity which requires both hyper-specificity when examining the particular ways in which individual scenes are structured, yet at the same time allowing for exceptional broadness of scope in considering the ways in which local scenes interact with and are part of wider musical communities with shared values (translocal, transnational). The word scene is a particularly effective one for the examination of jazz practices as it has a rich history of colloquial use, and was immediately accepted and understood by interview subjects, if only in a general sense. The term scene also seems to me to be immediately inclusive of those members of a scene who participate through vital, but non-

musical, means. Other terms which might be used to describe the activities of a scene, such as jazz community, seem, on the other hand, to be immediately inclusive of those directly connected to the musical activity of the scene while remaining exclusive of non-musical participants of the scene. These non-musical participants in the scene form the complex milieu of the audience, fulfill necessary support roles, and are at times the producers of complimentary, yet non-musical, art. Communities are also often conceived of as being based upon notions of homogeneity, be it with regard to geographic location, style, or historical connection. Scenes, on the other hand, are inclusive sites marked rather by alliance building and the self-conscious construction of boundaries. Scenes, as they work within cities and / or within musical genres serve to deny a uniformity of sound or style within those areas. A scene then requires one to take both a macro and a micro view of its activities, locating it at an intersection between local realities, broader translocal trends, and historical processes.

I myself self-identify as a jazz musician, and though separated by a half-century and by the additional barrier of gender, I feel that I have much in common with the subjects of this study. I am also a jazz historian, and through the exploration of these co-operative jazz paces in Canada I am aware that I am engaged in the unearthing of my own origin story. Unlike the authors of other recent work on the concept of scene in popular music—Sara Cohen (1991) Barry Shank (1994), Aaron Fox (2004)—I was not a direct participant in any of the scenes I examine, and also have had no direct experience with the culture of the 1950s and 1960s which shaped them. I cannot look around, so to speak, but only backwards, relying on such historical documentation that exists and upon the recollections and experiences of my interview subjects, themselves also looking backward.

Aims

I wish to make it clear that this work in no way attempts to detail the history of music in any of the cities it encounters. It is, rather, an introductory attempt to unearth and describe the unique, perhaps extraordinary, formation of co-operative jazz spaces in a number of Canadian cities from coast-to-coast at roughly the same time in history. Much more needs to be said about this scenic activity, and no doubt detailed analysis can and should occur through a variety of theoretical frameworks in order for us to come to a more complete, more nuanced understanding of these scenes. This current work makes no claims to such completion but hopes to serve as the first necessary step toward the uncovering of a portion of Canadian jazz history whilst the enactors of that history are still able to tell their stories. The major theoretical framework employed in the assessment of my research data was that offered by the scenes perspective, an approach detailed at length in Chapter Two.

My aim with this work is in some small way to deepen the historical record of jazz in Canada and of Canadian jazz musicians. Little evidence of Canada's jazz history remains beyond the recollections and memorabilia of those musicians who lived it, and a great many of them are dying with their stories left untold. These stories constitute the oral history of the development of jazz in Canada and are thus worth preserving for future generations of musicians and scholars seeking local, regional, or national lineages for current musical life-ways, but they are also of objective value. Canadian jazz musicians during the 1950s and 1960s, most of whom remain largely unheard, lived fascinating musical lives; participating in forms of music making and social interaction that are, in many ways, no longer practiced nor possible.

These co-operative clubs and the scenes that they engendered were a powerful force in forging and shaping local musical communities as well as musical identities for those individuals which participated in them. There was a sharp and well understood line between the type of jazz to be performed at the Cellar and other, more commercial, forms of music which carried the jazz label. This at times self-conscious distinction represents a type of musical classification based upon shared patterns of musical signification among members of the Cellar. This shared signification—this communal holding of a sense of taste—was both created and reinforced through participation in the scene. The evolution of that taste, a gradual widening or shifting of the attitudes governing what musical practices were considered authentic and acceptable forms of jazz expression, was thereby also a shared process. In many ways the very act of musicking,¹⁰ and for some, the adoption of a music as a life-way, was enabled by the existence of and participation in these co-operative jazz clubs.

In large part, the history of jazz in Canada starts here, with these clubs. Though jazz had certainly visited Canada before (as ably detailed by Mark Miller), and though Canadian jazz musicians had certainly been performing jazz domestically prior to World War Two, it is here, in the self-conscious construction of performance spaces dedicated to those sounds that the majority of us would recognize as “modern jazz,” that the groundwork for domestic jazz culture in Canada took root. In these clubs young musicians worked on themselves and on their music free from the commercial constraints of the hotel dance-band, free of the of generic restrictions placed upon those participating in traditional (or dixieland) and big (dance) band jazz, and, for

¹⁰ The term musicking was popularized by musicologist Christopher Small, who used it to describe music as a process, rather than as an object or product. This musical process involved not just the musicians, but the audience, as well as the wider community. See Small, Christopher. 1998. *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.

the most part, free from the professional pressures and obligations of the studio orchestra musician. In such a manner, participants in the jazz scenes at these co-operative clubs were able to engage with jazz expression from any and all angles, and to engage with the post-war cultural upheaval which similarly affected literature, dance, theatre, film, and visual arts. Nowhere is this scenic¹¹ cross-pollination more evident than in Vancouver where the Cellar acted as a de-facto clubhouse for the liberal arts during the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The creative environments of the Cellar, Yardbird Suite, Foggy Manor, and 777 Barrington Street together produced a great wealth of Canadian jazz talent, players who would go on to have significant careers domestically and abroad, and who would play leading roles in the establishment of Canadian jazz pedagogy and domestic jazz performance through festivals, jazz organizations, and jazz-focused record labels.

Chapter Outline

Chapter One investigates the current state of Canadian jazz research, as well as the available sources on nightlife and entertainment in the cities in question, with an emphasis upon Vancouver. Chapter Two introduces the “scenes perspective” as a methodological tool and will briefly consider the ways in which activities at these co-operative jazz clubs intersect with the pre-existing musicological examinations of scenic structure and development. Chapter Three provides historical background for the socio-cultural environment which would lead to the establishment of these co-operative jazz spaces including the state of regional and trans-national transportation systems, as well as regional and national radio broadcasting. With an emphasis

¹¹ I am following from Alan Blum in my use of the term “scenic” in this way to refer to the actions or habits of a scene, or scenes (Blum 2001, 8).

largely on Vancouver, Chapter Three goes on to provide a brief early history of jazz in Vancouver, an overview of the cultural makeup of the city, and a brief introduction to the convoluted history of liquor regulation in British Columbia. Chapter Three concludes with the formation, in 1955, of the Wailhouse, an informal precursor to the Cellar in Vancouver.

Chapter Four charts the formation and evolution of the Cellar from its inception in 1956 through to its first change in management in 1958. The chapter provides an examination of the ways in which the Cellar created and enacted the jazz scene, as well as the means by which it expanded its activities to include regular appearances by well known American jazz artists.

Chapter Five continues to chart the Cellar's development including its nature as a multi-disciplinary arts space which combined jazz with poetry, visual art, and theatre. The chapter also considers the ways in which this egalitarian co-operative venture was still very much a male dominated space and examines the role of women at the Cellar.

Chapter Six examines the growth of the Cellar and its representation in contemporary newspaper accounts, along with the growing profile of jazz events outside of Toronto and Montreal in the national jazz publication *Coda*. This chapter also considers the place of black musicians within the Cellar as well as the Vancouver music scene at large, and the impact of visiting American musicians including a notable and lengthy stay by Charles Mingus.

Chapter Seven considers the ways in which the Vancouver music scene had changed by the early 1960s including the appearance of such clubs as the Inquisition Coffee House; Espresso; and the Black Spot / Flat Five, a co-operative jazz venture modelled after the Cellar. The Cellar's slow decline as the key jazz space in Vancouver is tied to both this increasing competition and to the natural entropy inherent to scenic spaces.

Chapter Eight looks at the parallel establishment of Edmonton's Yardbird Suite, Calgary's Foggy Manor Jazz Club, and the establishment of Halifax's Jazz Unlimited or 777 Barrington Street, and briefly considers the ways in which major Canadian cities such as Montreal and Toronto constituted a jazz landscape devoid of co-operative jazz spaces. Chapter Nine then concludes the historical narrative and seeks to assess the significance and lasting contributions of these co-operative clubs in the development of jazz in Canada.

The history of jazz, John Gilmore suggests, is as much the history of communities as it is of individuals (Gilmore 1988, 13), and as jazz becomes further entrenched as a topic of study (however haphazardly) at colleges and universities across Canada, it perhaps behooves those of us who are interested in such things to ensure that Canadian voices are included in that narrative.

Chapter One

As Canadian As Possible: A Look at the Sources

When compared to other areas of musicological study, jazz history and research is remarkably undefined and surprisingly underrepresented. Though most colleges and universities now include a jazz program, the emphasis is invariably upon performance rather than scholarly research.

Those concerned with the history, development, and socio-cultural meanings that surround jazz are frequently left to pursue their work from within the field of ethnomusicology or, as has often been the case, from non-musical disciplines such as english and cultural studies. This situation is not new, and where to locate jazz research has been the subject of some debate. To date, the only Master's Degree in jazz research as distinct from jazz performance is offered through Rutgers University (Newark) where, since 1997, the program has made use of the Institute of Jazz Studies, established in 1952 by Marshall Stearns, and housed at Rutgers in 1966.¹² It is, according to the Rutgers website, the only jazz history and research degree in the world. There is currently no similar program at the doctoral level.

Though ground breaking in many ways, the Institute of Jazz Studies may actually contribute to the current lack of diversity and engagement with jazz research, particularly when it comes to considerations of local or regional expression in jazz. The core courses required through the program can be seen to perpetuate the “great man” theory in jazz history, focusing as they do upon Charlie Parker, Duke Ellington, Lester Young, John Coltrane and Louis Armstrong—all

¹² The Birmingham Conservatoire in the UK expressly houses its jazz and popular music studies under Ethnomusicology; and the University of North Texas offers degrees in Jazz Performance, Composition, and in Pedagogy—all areas linked to performative concerns. David Ake, currently on faculty at the University of Nevada, Reno, offers an undergraduate course entitled Jazz Cultures, which is offered as part of a performance curriculum, though he is curiously (at the time of this writing) not listed as part of the faculty for the MA level degree in Music History / Musicology.

great and influential players, yet also all black, all male, and all American. The influential nature of this program and its director, Lewis Porter, must be taken into account when considering how little material has been published on jazz figures who fall outside this canon. If many major American jazz artists have received scant attention, it is perhaps unsurprising that there is little move to explore the jazz practices and experiences of those players active *outside* the U.S.A. Recent scholarship by the likes of E. Taylor Atkins (2003) seeks to re-contextualize jazz as a truly global and trans-national music, but much work remains to be done in order to successfully reframe the dominant jazz narrative. The common tendency in jazz scholarship largely remains one which locates the jazz narrative exclusively within the borders of the United States, rather than situating American jazz practices as but one (perhaps rightfully privileged) site of jazz expression. For surely jazz was being received, re-conceived, and meaningfully expressed in a myriad of local, trans-local, and trans-national settings from nearly its earliest beginnings.

It may also be observed that, in many cases, those who pursue jazz at the graduate level come from a performance, rather than research-oriented background. Many therefore may lack the experience and skills essential to conduct research at the graduate level, and there is perhaps a diminished interest in pursuing research topics at a distance from performance-related issues. As a result, there is an overwhelming emphasis upon musical analysis, transcription, and pedagogical concerns at the expense of original historical and ethnological research. This task then falls to non-academic historians, who, despite no lack of effort and skill, are rarely taken seriously by the academy. Developments in the study of popular music and its reliance upon non-traditional sources, methodologies and publishers, is beginning to alleviate the disdain previously felt for such efforts, yet the problem persists.

Those wishing to do research about jazz in Canada or Canadian musicians in jazz are faced with the additional burden of seeking information on local and regional scenes which are participating in a music that is, by-and-large, perceived to be an American art form. Jazz practices in Canada have usually been considered, when they have been considered at all, to be either derivative of American influence and therefore inauthentic or inferior, or simply not exciting enough to warrant attention given the proximity and overwhelming influence of American jazz musicians. Though several Canadian researchers have done great work in documenting the lives and practices of Canadian jazz musicians (Litchfield 1982; Miller 1982, 1987, and 2001; Gilmore 1988 and 1989; Scott 2006), their efforts have also served to highlight the problems facing Canadian jazz research.¹³

In 1990, Mark Miller remarked that “[...] in a list of theses and major papers prepared for the graduate program in music at York University, although a half-dozen since 1978 were jazz related [...] none of them had anything to do with Canada.” (Miller 1990, 197). Despite recent research on jazz in Quebec (Pean 1999), Canadian big bands (Cado, 2004), and the life of Sonny Greenwich (Scott 2006), this is still largely the case. Works have also recently been produced on Lenny Breau (Breau 2006 and Forbes-Robert 2006), Oliver Jones (Sansregret 2006), and Vic Vogel (Desjardins 2013), but these have been popular, rather than scholarly examinations of leading Canadian jazz figures, and as such, often lack the historical and musicological rigour required to add substantially to the available resources in Canadian jazz studies.

¹³ In contrast see research by the likes of Catherine Tackley (UK), Tony Whyton (UK), and Bruce Johnson (AU), along with such initiatives as *Rhythm Changes* (UK/EU), the annual Leeds International Jazz Conference (UK), the UK’s National Jazz Archive, and the Oral History of Jazz in Britain archive at the British Library.

Exacerbating the issue is the vastness of Canada and the number of functional yet disparate local scenes such geography has given rise to. While some work has been done on the jazz scenes of Montreal (Gilmore 1988 and 1989) there has been no comprehensive study on jazz in Toronto,¹⁴ and there has been no significant examination whatsoever of the jazz scenes in Vancouver, Edmonton, and Halifax, each of which supported co-operative performance spaces during the 1950s and 1960s¹⁵ and have produced several players of note.

Ambivalence with regard to Canadian jazz practitioners is not a recent development, and further hampering historical research into Canadian jazz practices is the relative dearth of information in historical media sources. As a result, there is often no way to substantiate or prove claims made by or about Canadian musicians. In discussing the lack of media coverage of the famous 1953 appearance of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Bud Powell and Charles Mingus at Toronto's Massey Hall, Mark Miller was moved to remark that,

[...] if Toronto newspapers showed little interest in the likes of Parker and Gillespie at Massey Hall, it seems unlikely that they would be interested at all in such Canadians as Herbie Spanier and Benny Winestone at the Horseshoe Tavern. In other words, there is little solid documentation of the music by Canadian musicians [...] (Miller 1990, 196)

Lack of documentary evidence in local newspapers and other media sources means that for those interested in discovering the history of jazz in Canada, frequently the only sources available are the recollections of the players themselves. Oftentimes such recollections and

¹⁴ Andrew Scott's 2006 PhD dissertation may be perhaps the best examination to date of the Toronto scene. Also worth mentioning is Jack Litchfield's survey of the dixieland jazz appearances and radio broadcasts he heard in Toronto 1948-1950 (Litchfield 1992).

¹⁵ The relationship between the Cellar in Vancouver and jazz musicians from the American west coast is in particular a fascinating untold story. In addition to interviews and photographs, there exists a considerable number of bootleg recordings from the late 1940s and 1950s which document players such as Art Pepper, Elmo Hope, Harold Land, Charles Mingus, Ornette Coleman and others, often playing with local Vancouver rhythm sections.

personal histories cannot be checked against evidence beyond that offered by other musicians active in the same place at the same time. Many musicians associated with the early days of the Cellar in Vancouver (1956-1964), the Yardbird Suite in Edmonton (1957) or 777 Barrington Street in Halifax (1957-1960s) are now in their 70s and 80s and have not yet had their stories recorded. Many of those active in earlier decades have already died, taking valuable connections to Canada's jazz past with them, and many musicians from smaller communities are perhaps as yet unknown, with the research emphasis, such as it is, focused upon major population centres.

Mark Miller

No work that attempts to discuss jazz in Canada can do so without referencing the efforts of Mark Miller. Jazz critic for the *Globe and Mail* from 1978-2005, Miller has contributed the most significant body of work on, as he has termed it, "jazz in Canada, and Canadians in Jazz" (2001). In numerous cases, Miller's work is the only existing documentation of the lives and careers of Canadian jazz musicians. *Jazz In Canada: 14 Lives* (1982), along with its follow up volumes *Boogie, Pete, and the Senator* (1987), and the encyclopedic *Miller Companion to Jazz In Canada* (2001) were the first, and indeed are still the only major attempts to profile the lives and careers of Canadian jazz musicians from across the country, and 1997's *Such Melodious Racket: The Lost History of Jazz in Canada 1914-1949* (1997) is the only work thus far to attempt a comprehensive look at the development of jazz across Canada from its earliest beginnings. However, despite the importance of Miller's work, it is not without its shortcomings. Miller's first two books - *Boogie, Pete, and the Senator* (1987) and *Jazz In Canada: 14 Lives* (1988) are

invaluable portraits of some of the country's foremost jazz artists, yet they are rather haphazard in their construction.

In determining which players to include, Miller was guided by familiarity and personal preference, more than by a comprehensive knowledge of jazz in Canada, or of the complicated, often unrecognized ways in which localized concepts of value intersect with musical discourse. Often, some of the most influential Canadian musicians are those who are not widely known. Nova Scotian saxophonist Don Palmer, for example, who has had a remarkable career, was only included in *Boogie, Pete and the Senator* as Miller, seeking a national scope for his work, realized he had no voices from Eastern Canada and asked the musicians he knew to suggest someone.¹⁶ Similarly, Vancouver musicians who were integral to the development of jazz and improvised music through the establishment of the Cellar and other venues do not make either of these volumes, though a few of them are included in the more encyclopedic *The Miller Companion to Jazz In Canada* (2001). This is not necessarily a fault of Miller's methodology, but rather serves to illustrate how poorly communicated Canada's jazz history is, even amongst those who work within what I hesitate to call the jazz "industry," and are motivated by a legitimate love of the art. It also serves to highlight how important the musicians themselves have been to the construction of the historical narrative, such as it is. Lacking other evidence, it is their opinions, recommendations, and recollections which are written into the record.

Miller's *Such Melodious Racket: The Lost History of Jazz in Canada 1914-1949* (1997), is an astounding work in many ways, combining interviews, census data, and archival research

¹⁶ Casual conversations with both Mike Murley and Don Palmer have suggested this version of events, though Miller recalls that Palmer was one of several names on an Eastern Canadian shortlist, and that he was chosen as his presence at the Montreal Jazz Festival was logistically fortuitous.

from the Library of Congress, *Chicago Defender*, and newspapers from across Canada. It presents the most comprehensive picture to date of the ways and means by which jazz entered the Canadian cultural discourse and the means by which it was promulgated. However, though this work is the first significant exploration of jazz outside Montreal and Toronto, even Miller pays scant attention to jazz practices in the Maritime provinces. There is as yet no volume that continues this research past 1949. As the first book of its kind, *Such Melodious Racket* can be forgiven much of what it omits in gratitude for what it includes. Indeed, I think this can be said for Mark Miller's efforts as a whole. In the introduction to *Such Melodious Racket*, Miller offers some explanation for the book's limitations. The work is, Miller tells us,

...music historiography as a form of archeology—that is, an effort first to discover and retrieve the surviving details and then to piece them together

An additional concern surrounding Miller's work, though I consider it to be a minor one, is that few of his contributions have been peer reviewed or published by academic presses.¹⁷ Rather, Miller has published in popular periodicals such as *Coda* and *DownBeat*, and through Toronto's independent Nightwood and Mercury Presses. Indeed, this can be said for the vast majority of writing on jazz in Canada. Though it does little to diminish the value of the works produced, one does wonder if the state of research and level of discourse within the academic community would be greater had these efforts resulted in more conference papers, articles, and perhaps even university courses on the subject.

¹⁷ The original 1982 printing of *Jazz in Canada: 14 Lives* was peer reviewed and published by the University of Toronto press. The more widely available 1988 reprint of this volume is by Toronto's Nightwood Editions.

John Gilmore

John Gilmore's 1988 *Swinging in Paradise: The Story of Jazz in Montreal* is the most comprehensive look at the development and evolution of jazz in a single Canadian city.¹⁸ It is also the only such study to date. Funded in part by a grant from the Canada Council, Gilmore's landmark study of jazz in Montreal is expressed in two volumes, the narrative *Swinging in Paradise* and the encyclopedic *Who's Who of Jazz in Montreal* (1989). Gilmore, as is the case with Miller, notes the dearth of informed writing on jazz in Canada and the need to rely, and perhaps over-rely, upon the recollections of musicians and the news reported in *Coda*, the one reliable and frequent source of information on Canadian jazz since 1958. Beyond interviews and archival work, *Swinging in Paradise* is heavily indebted to Jack Litchfield's *Canadian Jazz Discography 1916–1980*, the only comprehensive discography of its kind, and to Miller's *14 Lives*. These works demonstrate in some part how small and co-dependent the research community is in this area.

John Gilmore identifies Canadian jazz communities, even in a city as large as Montreal, as being “marginalized,” and cautions that the writing of such history can be as much an act of imagination as an act of scholarship (Gilmore 1988, 14). With *Swinging in Paradise*, Gilmore has managed to provide both; a book that is engagingly written as well as painstakingly researched, and which attempts to link changes in the urban environment that sustained jazz to socio-political events of the time, providing valuable insight into the ways in which jazz is tied to urban realities.

¹⁸ It is unfortunate that Gilmore's work did not extend beyond 1980, and that no follow up volume has been produced.

Gilmore also avoids making *Swinging in Paradise* the “Oscar Peterson” story, and while the early education and professional experience of Peterson is well noted, Gilmore is clearly more interested in the scene which nurtured Peterson than in the celebrity that Peterson became. Gilmore is also quick to point out that within a year of his 1949 debut at Jazz At The Philharmonic, Peterson was, for all intents and purposes, no longer a Montreal musician, spending long periods out of the country. By 1950, Peterson was no longer part of the “scene,” so to speak (Gilmore 1988, 110). Rather, Gilmore focuses upon those musicians who spent the majority of their careers in Montreal, and upon the bars, clubs and fan associations that kept them working. Organizations which placed jazz as an art form above jazz as a commercial interest, such as the Jazz Workshop, EAMNON jazz society, Montreal Jazz Society, and spaces such as the Black Bottom, receive particular attention. As well, Gilmore’s work gives some sense of how closely knit the activities of such organizations were. Importantly for future researchers, Gilmore’s materials are now held at Concordia University’s Library and Archives.

Jack Litchfield and Hank Fleischman, who have done perhaps the most work in Canadian jazz discography, were both members of the Montreal Vintage Jazz Society along with Trevor Trolley and Len Dobbin, both of whom would write for John Norris’ *Coda*, established in May 1958. John Norris in addition founded the Traditional Jazz Club of Montreal in 1956, was active with the Toronto Traditional Jazz Club after his move to that city, and would go on to form Sackville Records in 1968. Again however, such work is an focus of interest and activity in Canadian jazz that does not include the west or the maritime regions, despite both areas having active jazz scenes by the late 1950s.

Other Canadian Jazz Literature

Andrew Scott has provided some of the most valuable recent research into Canadian jazz history through his work on guitarist Sonny Greenwich. In the introduction to his PhD dissertation, Scott writes;

One of the outcomes of my research for this chapter is that that I have deduced a core group of musicians who were important on the Toronto jazz scene in terms of how they influenced and nurtured the talents of future generations of Canadian jazz players. By writing them into the history of Canadian jazz, I attempt to give many individuals a historical voice where no voice existed previously. (Scott 2006, 9)

If one were to remove “Toronto” from this statement, Scott’s aims are echoed by the hopes I have for my own dissertation. Scott’s work contains exceptional and long overdue research into the life of one of Canada’s most unique musical voices, and also serves to fill in many of the gaps in the story of jazz in Toronto. His exploration of the Toronto club and studio scenes, the complex racial politics which existed within the jazz community, the living places and playing spaces that supported the city’s growing jazz scene, the existence of organizations such as the MINC club (Musicians Incorporated Club), and Toronto’s role as a hub for musicians arriving and departing from across the country, are essential to understanding the nature and evolution of jazz in Canada.

Scott’s work also illustrates the ways in which the privileging of discographical output so common to the construction of jazz hierarchies can serve to diminish the importance of localized musical practice, involvement, and discourse. Being an important musician does not always equal being a well recorded one, particularly in Canada. A musician’s value to the local, regional and even national jazz scenes may be substantial even though recognition beyond these musical communities may be almost nonexistent. In focusing so frequently on those who have the most

significant discographies, we often overlook those musicians who may have profoundly influenced forms of localized expression, and yet have not been extensively recorded.

Thanks to Mark Miller, for this dissertation I was also able to utilize portions of Keith White's currently unpublished manuscript *Noting the Scene* (White 1988), in particular chapter eight, which deals with White's experiences as a young jazz pianist in Montreal during the 1950s, and his involvement with Paul Bley and the Jazz Workshop.

Discographies

There has been little discographical work that focuses upon Canadian jazz recordings. From Jack Litchfield we get *The Canadian Jazz Discography 1916–1980*, the only comprehensive attempt to catalogue jazz recordings in Canada (Litchfield 1982); and from Hank Fleischmann we get an accounting of COMPO records (Fleischman, unpub). Litchfield's work is one of the few on a Canadian jazz topic to appear from a university press (in this case the University of Toronto), and is an admirable attempt to cover a vast amount of material. *The Canadian Jazz Discography* seeks to list all jazz recordings made in Canada, as well as those recorded outside of Canada by Canadian residents who maintained significant Canadian ties. This allows the discography to include the likes of Paul Bley and Oscar Peterson (Canadians who worked mainly in the United States), as well as Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, and Louis Armstrong (American artists who recorded or appeared on radio in Canada). However, Litchfield declines to include Canadians who, like Kenny Wheeler and Gil Evans, made their careers wholly outside of Canada. Litchfield also clearly spells out that “jazz” in the case of this discography refers to music which Litchfield himself qualifies, in whole or in part, as being jazz, and he does a

reasonable job of justifying his position on the grounds of experience and common consensus (Litchfield 1982, 5). Wherever there seems to be room for significant argument about a recording's inclusion, particularly when it comes to blues, and rhythm and blues recordings, Litchfield chooses to err on the side of inclusion.

The discography covers not only commercial releases, but CBC recordings, piano rolls, and motion pictures, and is invaluable to anyone doing research on earlier periods of jazz in Canada. However it stops at 1980, just before the proliferation of recordings brought forth by increased government funding and the emergence of such record labels as Unity (1986), Justin Time (1989), and Cornerstone (1993). Though one assumes detailed discographies may be available since 1980 from the record companies in question, lack of a comprehensive discography following Litchfield's volume will no doubt see innumerable independent recordings, radio broadcasts, podcasts, and other new media avenues poorly catalogued.

Litchfield's exhaustive work also makes clear the dearth of commercial recording opportunities for Canadian jazz artists during the years covered by this dissertation. Rather, such recording as was afforded domestically to Canadian jazz artists was almost exclusively in the form of CBC broadcast recordings, the large majority of which were not available for sale to the general public.

Miscellaneous

Canadian jazz topics are reasonably well represented in such resources as *Oxford Online*, the *Garland Encyclopedia*, and the *Canadian Encyclopedia*, though one must have the knowledge to create appropriate keyword and item searches. That said, a broad search for Canada + Jazz

yields a wealth of relevant returns. However, in browsing the entries in these resources, one cannot help but be struck by the recurrence of the same few author names—Mark Miller chief among them. Again, this is not meant to diminish the importance of Miller’s work, but it does suggest that the research community on this topic is a rather limited and self-referencing one.

In addition to these more scholarly efforts at writing about jazz in Canada, there are those which may be best considered popular work aimed at the jazz enthusiast. In this category we find the writing of Canadian Gene Lees, who, from time to time, would mention such Canadian artists as Oscar Peterson, Don Thompson, or Terry Clarke in his private publication the *Jazz Letter*, excerpts from which were collected into a series of books containing chapter length character sketches of jazz musicians.¹⁹ The aforementioned profile on Don Thompson appeared both in the *Jazz Letter* and *Friends Along the Way: A Journey Through Jazz* (Lees 2003).²⁰ Lees’ works are engaging and characterized by a warmth and candor that only comes with being an insider, and they are valuable glimpses into jazz musicians and “the jazz life.” That said, they often present a rather romanticized picture, and more properly fit with the writing of such critics as Nat Hentoff, Ira Gitler, and Leonard Feather than with more musicologically oriented work.

Unsurprisingly, it is Oscar Peterson who warrants the most attention from authors on Canadian jazz subjects, and there are numerous books dedicated to him, including his own 2002 autobiography, *A Jazz Odyssey*, compiled with assistance from Richard Palmer. In addition to the numerous works on Peterson, there exists a biography of pianist Oliver Jones, two Lenny Breau biographies (Breau 2006, Forbes-Robert 2006), and at least two works on Paul Bley, one

¹⁹ Lees has also written about Canadian Kenny Wheeler, with whom he was friends during Wheeler’s youth in Toronto. Wheeler relocated to the UK in 1952 (age 22).

²⁰ Lees is also author of 1988’s *Will to Swing*, a biography of Oscar Peterson.

of which is a collection of interviews conducted by New Zealand scholar Norman Meehan, and the other a collaboration between Bley and Canadian author David Lee (Bley 1998). Several works on Gil Evans also exist, though one should consider that Evans, Bley, and to some extent Peterson, are, though Canadian by birth, no longer Canadian musicians *per se*, as so much of their professional development and fame came about once they had left Canada. This is not to say that one should not write about them, nor that we should not claim them as Canadian, but simply illustrates that research efforts directed at musicians such as these do little to address jazz and jazz practices by Canadian musicians *in* Canadian communities.

Luckily, Canada had its own domestic jazz periodical for some five decades (1958–2009) and it is *Coda* magazine which provides the longest running source for news and reviews about Canadian jazz artists. Established by John Norris in 1958, *Coda* is held in complete run at the national library of Canada (Library and Archives Canada), and is widely available in libraries on microfilm (public and university). Through its combination of articles, photographs, reviews, and the monthly contribution by its readership of jazz news items from across Canada, it is perhaps the most comprehensive chronicle of the evolution of jazz in this country. That said, its reliance upon its readership for contributions of jazz news outside of Toronto and Montreal meant that jazz activity across much of the country remained obscure. Developments in Vancouver, home to the Cellar co-operative, the Vancouver New Jazz Society, the UBC jazz society, and CBC's *Hot Air* radio broadcast were not mentioned in *Coda* until 1959, the rest of the Canadian west (Edmonton, Calgary) until 1960, and jazz developments on the East Coast (Halifax) were not reported upon at all prior to 1965. Given that the magazine was originally intended to cater to the

“traditional jazz enthusiast” (*Coda* May 1958, 1) this is perhaps unsurprisingly, but from a historical point of view it is regrettable.

Internet Sources

Perhaps unsurprisingly, much of the research on Canadian jazz topics has come from the jazz community itself through the work of fans and jazz societies. The most comprehensive community based jazz resource is undoubtedly the Jazz Street Vancouver project (<http://www.jazzstreetvancouver.ca>), a website dedicated to the preservation and dissemination of Vancouver’s jazz history through photographs, musician biographies, venue descriptions and, most importantly, oral history through interviews conducted for the project and hosted on the website in either audio or video format. Sadly, the project is in a state of limbo and numerous web links are broken.²¹

John Dawe, one of the founding members of the original Cellar in Vancouver is, with the assistance of drummer and visual artist Gregg Simpson, the force behind an online blog dedicated to the history of this co-operative space ([www. theoriginalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca](http://www.theoriginalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca)). Now in his 80s, Dawe is an invaluable source of information and ephemera on this important period in Canadian jazz history and is a vital link between the surviving members of the club. VancouverJazz.com, provides an online forum which includes a sub-forum on Vancouver jazz history. This forum is quite active, and musicians and fans often use the platform to answer questions concerning historical timelines, musician biographies, venue histories and other acts of

²¹ At the time of this writing, ownership of the project is unclear with Vancouver’s Coastal Jazz and Blues Society providing server space but no maintenance. The whereabouts of the unedited audio and video files is also unclear.

historical recreation.²² The activity on this sub-forum alone suggests that for community members there is a great deal of interest in the reconstruction and maintenance of regional jazz histories. The website for Edmonton's Yardbird Suite jazz club does not offer quite the depth or number of resources offered by either Jazz Street Vancouver or VancouverJazz.com, but does include a sub-page with a brief history of the club, some historical photographs, and links to media coverage of the club's 50th anniversary in 2007.

Lastly, Toronto radio station Jazz 91.1 has established what it refers to as the Canadian Jazz Archive (www.canadianjazzarchive.org) which contains thirty years worth of audio archives consisting of the radio station's live concert programming, as well as numerous audio documentaries on significant Canadian jazz musicians. However, the archive is hard to navigate as one can only search by bandleader, rather than by side personnel, and it only profiles those musicians who were recorded while performing in Toronto. As such it is still something of a centrist, rather than national, representation of Canadian jazz.

Films, etc.

Most pertinent to the topic at hand are the 1964 NFB documentary *In Search of Innocence* (Forest 1964) which includes footage from Vancouver's Cellar, and the 2011 production *The House That Bop Built* (Slevinsky 2011), which details the history of the Yardbird Suite in Edmonton, and was directed by longtime Yardbird Suite volunteer Collette Slevinsky. Relying largely on interviews with surviving and current members of the Yardbird Suite, *The House That Bop Built* chronicles the development of the club from underground co-operative venture to not-

²² There is also a Facebook group tied to this website (<https://www.facebook.com/vancouverjazz>).

for-profit cultural institution within the city of Edmonton. The film received a warm popular reception upon its initial release (Global Visions Film Festival, Edmonton, 2011), but is only 22 minutes long and has not been commercially released.

Leonard Forest's 1964 National Film Board sponsored work *In Search of Innocence* (Forest 1964) provides little substantive information about jazz development in Canada, but it does provide the only surviving footage of the interior of Vancouver's Cellar jazz club, along with a musical soundtrack provided by Cellar musicians Al Neil (piano), Glenn MacDonald (saxophone), and Don Thompson (bass).²³ Heavily influenced by the French New Wave cinema Forest had studied firsthand in France, the film documents Beat-era arts activity in Vancouver, including a poetry reading by Fred Douglas accompanied by the Al Neil Trio, as well as footage of such important Canadian painters as Roy Kiyooka, Jack Shadbolt, and Don Jarvis. This film, along with Claudia Cornwall's *At the World's Edge: Curt Lang's Vancouver 1937-1998* (Cornwall 2011), Al Neil's novel *Changes* (Neil 1975), Aaron Chapman's history of the Penthouse cabaret (Chapman 2012), and Becki Ross' study of Vancouver's evolving relationship with burlesque (Ross 2009), helped me to flesh out and contextualize the oral histories I received from interview subjects.

Robert Campbell's compelling study of the complex and often contradictory legislation of alcohol in Vancouver (Campbell 1991 and 2001), along with Daphne Marlatt and Carole Itter's groundbreaking oral history *Opening Doors In Vancouver's East End: Strathcona* (Marlatt and Itter 1979), enabled me to situate my narrative of the 1950s and 1960s within a wider socio-historical context. This was of particular importance when considering the complicated and

²³ Though released in 1964, this footage was shot in 1963.

multi-faceted nature of race relations within the city, a topic which was assisted by Wade Compton's "Seven Routes to Hogan's Alley and Vancouver's Black Community" (Compton 2010), as well as by earlier research I had conducted on jazz in Vancouver in the early part of the 20th century which made use of back-issues of the *Chicago Defender*, the memoirs of Ada "Bricktop" Smith (Bricktop 1984), Alan Lomax's 1938 Library of Congress recordings (with Jelly Roll Morton), and interviews conducted with a variety of Vancouver jazz musicians from that era.

Though no commercial recordings of the musicians involved in this study exist from the time in question, the CBC archives do provide an opportunity to view and hear many of these musicians, particularly those associated with the Flat Five club in Vancouver,²⁴ albeit performing in a commercial studio setting. The only contemporary recordings which relate directly to the topic at hand were provided by the musicians themselves, and consist of three CBC radio broadcasts from 1956 and 1957 featuring Cellar-based musicians performing jazz repertoire (including several original compositions), along with a copy of the CBC television program *The Mind of Mingus* (1961) which was produced by Cellar member James Carney, tied directly to the club's operational methodology, and featured interview footage filmed at the Cellar (see Chapter Six).

²⁴ Don Thompson, Terry Clarke, Robert Witmer, Chris Gage, Dave Robbins, Fraser MacPherson, etc.

Jazz Research Beyond North America

Despite a general lack of activity with regard to researching and publishing in the area of Canadian jazz studies, it should be mentioned that in other areas of the world significant research is being done on localized jazz practices. The work of such British scholars as Tony Whyton (2011) and Catherine Tackley (2005) has already been mentioned, to which one could add the work such of British scholars David Boulton (1958) and Eric Hobsbawm (1960) for their early efforts; John Wickes (1999) and George McKay (2005) for their work on innovations in British jazz practice following the 1960s and on the cultural politics of jazz in Britain, respectively; and Duncan Heining (2012) and Dave Gelly (2014) for their recent efforts to detail stylistic variation in British jazz post-1960, and the often complicated socio-political make-up of the British jazz audience. In addition to this scholarly work, one must also mention the important contributions of journalist and music critic Jim Godbolt to the historical narrative of jazz in the United Kingdom (1984 and 1989).

From Australia we receive the work of Andrew Bisset (1987) and John Shand (2008), along with the seminal contributions of Bruce Johnson (1987, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2010) which contributes significantly not only to domestic understanding of jazz and jazz practices within Australia, but to considerations of Australian jazz within the wider discourse of jazz as a transnational music. From E. Taylor Atkins (2001) and William Minor (2004) we find work on jazz in Japan that deals with not only with domestic jazz culture, but with wider considerations of authenticity and meaning. Numerous works also exist which explore jazz behind the Iron Curtain (Starr 1983, Feigin 1985, Minor 1995)²⁵ and the development of jazz across Europe from

²⁵ In addition to numerous sources in Russian.

a wide variety of perspectives. Taken together with considerable conference and publishing activity in jazz research located outside of North America, clearly there is considerable interest in the perspectives and expressions of jazz outside the dominant American narrative. Canada and Canadian jazz expression then seems strangely absent from the discourse on global jazz practices, given the rather considerable representation by other commonwealth nations.

Chapter Two

In or Out: The Nature of “The Scene”

The Scenes Perspective

The term ‘scene’ has long been part of everyday language used to label distinctive forms of cultural consumption, social activity, and lifestyle. One can quickly refer to a jazz scene or a poetry scene, to the hippie scene or the drug scene, and be readily understood. Such generalized use of the word combines some understanding of the art or activity in question along with its associated forms of dress and/or behaviour in a way that neatly, if crudely, differentiates its members from mainstream society and from other scenes which may exist within that society. Though now common in musicology, the scenes perspective as a research methodology owes its origins to sociology and cultural studies, in particular to Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of “fields” (Bourdieu 1983).

Bourdieu’s fields were conceived of as areas of social space within which people maneuvered for position, and one’s position within a particular cultural field or scene served to provide a sense of position within the larger social structure (Bourdieu 1985, 724). Prompted by his dissatisfaction with traditional Marxist approaches to the concept of social divisions, Bourdieu proposed that the means by which social groups arose and ordered themselves had little to do with financial concerns, but rather were predicated upon the exchange of cultural capital between members of the social field or scene. For Bourdieu, scenes and the forms of social capital they produced were complex arenas for social play in which boundaries within and between scenes were constantly in motion and at times overlapped. Since cultural capital (who and what one knows in a given context) is both highly specialized and highly variable from scene to scene, its

possession grants an agent entry to certain social situations or groups while simultaneously excluding them from others. Positions within scenes are volatile and fluctuate as agents acquire or lose cultural capital, the amount and kind of which affects how they are recognized and respected by the group—whether they are regarded as an insider or an outsider to the scene (Bourdieu 1985, 731).

Art, of whatever form, only exists as a symbolic object if it is “known and recognized,” that is, if it is “received by spectators capable of knowing and recognizing [the art] as [art]” (Bourdieu 1983, 318). Though individual artists produce art in its material form (Bourdieu was speaking of books and paintings rather than performative art), it is the other contributing members of a field (scene) that work to assign meaning and value to the art which is produced, and whose combined efforts serve to create “consumers capable of knowing and recognizing the work of art as such” (Bourdieu 1983, 319). Scene members then explore and enact the concept of “good” in relation to their own tastes, ordering those tastes against a multiplicity of available choices. It is well worth noting that while cultural capital is held within the scene in question by its members, it is at times simultaneously held *outside* the scene by critics, academics, and larger social institutions that also may attempt to impose value judgements on the artistic activities of the scene. The two sets of value judgements are often contradictory, and yet may co-exist as parallel narratives of value.²⁶

²⁶ One can see this at work whenever new forms of art are pioneered. Popular examples include the visual art of Jackson Pollack, Andy Warhol, Marcel Duchamp and others, as well as the musical experimentation of artists such as Ornette Coleman, and many other “free” jazz artists.

The ability to impose upon others a sense of what is “good”²⁷ “depends on the social authority acquired in previous struggles” (Bourdieu 1989, 23). For members of the scene, these past struggles take the shape of enacted common struggles—of “paying ones dues,” and of a shared opposition (conscious or unconscious) to some more widely held cultural value judgement (an allegiance to bebop as opposed to danceable big band music, for example). At the same time, forces are at work outside the scene as larger social structures or institutions are invested with the authority to nominate a common vision of the social world. At times these social institutions may be in keeping with the general consensus of the field itself, and may issue affirmations which run contrary to the social opinion at large. This is sometimes observed in the split between the critical and popular reception of certain forms of “high” or *avant garde* expression in all artistic forms. At other times, the social institutions may be more populist in nature and may serve, through such avenues as award shows, media rankings and other means, to affirm (and generate) popular taste. In the jazz world, this role has historically been filled by publications such as *DownBeat* and *Metronome* with their annual polls ranking various instrumentalists, and more recently by such institutions as Jazz at Lincoln Centre and the National Endowment for the Arts’ annual Jazz Masters Fellowship.

Bourdieu addresses this through a discussion of hierarchization within artistic fields which reveals two forms of self conscious artistic production. *Heteronomous*, or mass produced art aimed at a broad commercial reception and restricted, or *autonomous* art, which is produced for the producers of art or for its own sake, rather than for market reception (Bourdieu 1983, 322). It is to this second category of artistic production that most scenic activity initially belongs, and it

²⁷ I am here using the word “good” in the way that it is used in common speech to indicate matters of taste or preference. I am in no way seeking to reference philosophic conceptions of “the good.”

is the tension inherent in the relationship between the forces of artistic creation and the forces of the larger marketplace that drive scenes to emerge, evolve, and eventually degenerate. In the case of scenes which sprang up around co-operative jazz clubs in several Canadian cities, this adoption of the autonomous artistic aesthetic was conscious, and repeatedly remarked upon by my interview subjects.

The average Joe...Mr and Mrs Smith, they don't have a clue about jazz, and they can't get up and dance to it, and us guys, at least when I was young, and the other people like me, when they were young, they didn't give a sweet pippy about the general public, they just wanted to go out and play, and so we got these places so that we could go out and play. We could play whatever we damn well pleased, you know. And we didn't have to be beholden to anyone else (Stan Perry, Int Nov 14, 2012).

The oppositional quality of scenic activity is a powerful force in shaping community and in forging identity—the scene is as much defined by what it isn't, as by what it is.

The Scene in Musicology

In recent years, the word scene has been adopted by academics in their writing about musical practices as a means to discuss the ways in which groups of musicians, fans, and music industry professionals come together to perform, consume, and enact particular types of music in particular locales. Such research has served to undermine assumptions of uniformity within local music cultures (Straw 1991, 368) and has highlighted the ways in which scenes enable their participants to forge forms of individual and collective identity.

Though the use of scene as an investigative tool in musicology is now widespread, there is as yet a lack of clear consensus on what the term means, and on how it is to be applied. Andy Bennett (Bennett 2004), for example, is careful to differentiate scene from subculture on the

grounds that the word subculture misleadingly suggests the existence of an overarching and homogenous mainstream culture to which subgroups are deviant (Bennett 2004, 3); yet Barry Shank discusses at length the particular qualities of scene that enable it to function as a critique of dominant forms of cultural identification. For Will Straw (Straw 1991) and Sara Cohen (Cohen 1991), scenes and scenic participation are visualized as a series of circuits, or concentric rings of socio-musical activity; for Ruth Finnegan (2007) musical scenes form socio-cultural pathways that help to map and direct urban life; and for Howard Becker (1982), scenes are synonymous with art worlds which overlap and orbit one another.

What Bennett has termed the “scenes perspective” is perhaps best considered a speculative type of viewing—a means of acquiring perspective on a complex and interconnected web of socio-musical activity. Though the results gathered from fieldwork cannot ever hope to declare a unanimous or empirical explanation of scenic phenomena, the self-conscious employment of a “scenes perspective” shapes the ways in which certain types of fieldwork is conducted, and data considered. I, for example, began this research thinking only of these co-operative spaces as scenes in isolation—the jazz scene as unique and separate from the commercial work that characterized much of Canada’s music making. However I quickly became fascinated by the ways in which multiple scenes occurred not just within the cities that housed these clubs, but within the clubs themselves, and with how this multiplicity of scenes overlapped one another.

Types of Scene

Scenes are complex and fluid constructions which may express themselves in a myriad of forms as they overlap, compete, and cooperate with one another for the shared use of resources

(venues, media sources, musicians, audience members etc.), or when members of one scene participate in multiple scenes, or across multiple expressions of a single scene. To help navigate these modes of scenic expression Andy Bennett suggests a division into three major types: the local, the translocal, and the virtual (Bennett 2004). Local scenes are centred upon a specific geographic focus and involve the relationship between music making and the life-ways of specific communities. In this context, community exists both in the sense of the larger general community that makes up a city or town, as well as the particular scene which is being studied within the wider community. Works such as Sara Cohen's (1991) study on rock music in working class Liverpool, U.K, and Barry Shank's (1994) exploration of music scenes in Austin, Texas, are prime examples of local, geographically specific scene studies, as is my focus on the co-operative jazz scenes in certain Canadian cities from the mid 1950s through mid-1960, and in particular upon the jazz scene centred upon the Cellar in Vancouver.

Bennett's second category, the translocal, concerns scenes which may be widely dispersed geographically, but which are drawn together around a particular music and / or corresponding lifestyle. These translocal scenes then make contact with one another through such resources as internet sites, fanzines, fan clubs, recordings, and the passage of bands and fans through local scenes. In such a way, a sense of membership and identity may transcend local borders, enabling scene members to feel 'at home' in diverse geographical settings. The jazz scene, for example, is not necessarily bounded for its participants by one particular venue, city, or country, but by the

following of certain codes of social and musical behaviours which are generally consistent from scene to scene and place to place.²⁸

The case of the co-operative Cellar in Vancouver, and the ways in which jazz musicians toured northwards from California to Vancouver during the 1950s and 1960s, is a highly specific example of trans-local scenes in operation. Through this movement of music and musicians, repertoire was spread, news shared, employment acquired, instruments bought and sold, and a sense of a musically bounded community fostered despite distance and regional difference. In a larger context, the spread of news and critical assessment through *DownBeat*, *Metronome*, and *Coda* magazines represents another way in which scenic jazz activity was able to transcend its localized boundaries and participate in a network of complementary scenes.

Participants in Bennett's last main category, the "virtual scene," are likewise often separated from one another by vast geographical distance. However, unlike members of translocal scenes, participation in virtual scenes may be comprised of little, if any, in-person contact. Rather, conversations are held and information traded on the internet through chat-rooms, forums, blogs etc. Oftentimes these internet meeting spaces are established and run by members of the scene themselves, and as such are generally less mediated by market and industry concerns than are venues tied to commercial live performance (the club, the concert, the festival, the convention). Virtual scenes are therefore a unique reflection of the desires and interests of their members, desires which may fluctuate organically over time as the scene evolves.

²⁸ In general, one may consider the use of the jazz standard as a *lingu franca* and of generally accepted rules for jam session and performance etiquette, knowledge of which is spread trans-locally via recordings (repertoire), performance, storytelling, periodicals (*DownBeat*, etc.), and the mythologization of certain performers and events.

Virtual scenes are less pertinent to my historicized discussion of co-operative jazz clubs in Canada, yet it is relevant to consider the ways in which the translocal and the virtual relate. In *Coda* magazine during the 1950s readers regularly received news and announcements from jazz scenes in the UK, Argentina, Australia,²⁹ as well as from the United States and other parts of Canada. Information from scenes with little or no prospect of direct interaction with a Canadian reader seem more properly considered virtual, while the information from North America seems translocal due to the influence exerted on local performance practices by the ‘meta-scenes’ of New York, Chicago and Los Angeles through recordings, and by the prospect of in-person interaction with these scenes via touring and tourism.

In many ways it is perhaps better to ask “who is a scene” rather than “what is a scene,” as it becomes readily apparent that scenes rely heavily upon their non-musical members for support, vitality, and cohesion.³⁰ In any scene, a confluence of musicians, fans, family, friends, recordists, journalists, producers, managers, agents, graphic designers, music store employees, back-line providers, and venue owners combine in order for the scene to operate. This activity serves both to create place (a venue or venues for scenic activity) as well as space (the time and will to regularly enact it). Subsequently, to use Howard Becker’s term, members may be shared across art worlds, a situation which permits art worlds (scenes) to exist *within* other art worlds (scenes). One of the most compelling aspects of my examination of the Cellar in Vancouver, for example,

²⁹ This information was located in the News and Notes section of the magazine which shared news from jazz scenes around the globe. *Coda* did not use staff writers for this feature, but rather solicited its readership for news, and encouraged them to write in to the magazine about activities in their local area. As such, there is jazz news from Argentina and Australia, as well as a regular UK column before any news about the Yardbird Suite or Cellar was published. No news from Halifax is included in this section of *Coda* prior to 1964.

³⁰ Of course the line dividing musical from non-musical members will be different from scene to scene, and from occasion to occasion within a particular scene.

was the way in which it functioned as a nexus for the burgeoning post-war art scene; a space in which emerging musicians, poets, painters, architects, political activists, actors, and filmmakers communed.

This local culture of regular participants both creates and holds a shared understanding of how music means within the context of the scene—of what constitutes “good” within the parameters of scenic expression (Grazian 2004, 67). Scenes therefore both require and provide a means for shared discourse through which a sense of community is constructed (Hodkinson 2004, 221). Multiple scenes accommodate multiple interpretations of authenticity, and the scenes perspective enables minority forms of musical expression to be granted validity even in the face of an overarching or dominant set of performance expectations.³¹

For their members, scenes function not simply as a means through which to enjoy music but as a way in which to forge collective identity, and are self-conscious (to greater or lesser degrees) attempts to erect and explore boundaries—a means, in the words of Alan Blum, to be “simultaneously a part of, yet apart from the crowd” (Blum 2001, 23).

Identity Formation within Scenes

As meaning is produced by and imposed upon scenes of cultural production, an individual’s conception of the social world and their position within that world is similarly and concurrently constructed. Agents seek to maintain or expand their position within this social space according to the cultural capital they wield, yet at the same time, the extent to which their particular field

³¹ It is worth noting that the scenes perspective seems to have had the most influence amongst scholars from countries (UK: Finnegan, Cohen, Australia: Bennett, Canada: Straw, Blum) which may feel the need to privilege their perspectives against the weight of American cultural hegemony.

has traction in wider society, and thus, the extent of any one agent's cultural capital, is in constant flux. The construction of social reality is therefore not solely an individual, but a collective enterprise. This acceptance of social reality; the acquisition not only of a sense of one's place, but also a sense of the place of others, is what Bourdieu referred to as "habitus" (Bourdieu 1989, 19).

Habitus becomes the world of everyday events and occurrences, a world that seems self-evident, and in which one's position is clear. Though not strictly analogous with taste, habitus refers to those socially acquired dispositions and codes of conduct that inform taste—the skills that enable one to unlock the cultural codes that mark certain goods or behaviours as being one way or another. It is habitus that allows one to consider something as being cool, or punk, or jazz, or intellectual, or beat, or, for Bourdieu, as being bourgeois or not (Bourdieu 1989, 19).

Social space then functions as a symbolic space ruled by cultural capital, a space of "lifestyles and status groups" (Bourdieu 1989, 20) in which the agent operates. Agents then choose from,

...the space of available goods and services, goods that occupy a position in this space homologous to the position they themselves occupy in social space....Nothing classifies somebody more than the way he or she classifies (Bourdieu 1989, 19).

That is to say that in the very act of choosing such social accoutrements as clothes, food, music, and friends which are deemed to go well together and which agree with the position in which the agent *sees herself*, the agent has chosen to be classified as belonging to a particular social field, scene, or subgroup.

What one does while not on the "scene"—when not physically present in the scenic space—is still informed by the scene and one's level of identification with it. There is a marked difference

between those that attended the Cellar one or twice as part of an evening out, and those whose lifestyle choices which cooperated with and were commensurate with the scene. Scenic participation is then extended and expressed through the actions of one's daily life and the accoutrements; the records, books, clothes, friends, and jobs that one acquires or discards. This identification was remarked upon repeatedly by interview subjects as they recalled a self-conscious understanding that the scene wasn't just a matter of what they did, but a fundamental and foundational element of who they were.

Barry Shank's acclaimed work *Dissonant Identities: The Rock'n'Roll Scene in Austin, Texas* (1994) draws heavily upon psychiatrist Jacques Lacan's concept of the mirror stage in its examination of the role which scenes may play in identity formation for their participants. In brief, the mirror stage is that stage in identity development at which there is a conflict between an individual's perceived appearance, or sense of self, and one's emotional experiences in the world. This disconnect between perception of the self and emotional reality can create a sense of alienation and fragmentation. In childhood, these feelings of disconnect are initially assuaged as the child learns to identify with the image of the self which is reflected back to them through mirrors. However, as a person matures, they continue to seek relief from feelings of fragmentation and alienation, often using other social actors and societal spaces to stand-in for infancy's reflecting mirror.

As they mature, individuals continue to respond to those images which resonate with their perceived sense of self,³² and moments of identification are profound, often bringing with them

³² Though initially conceived of as a stage in child development, Lacan soon extended his use of the concept to include all stages of ego development. See for example Lacan, Jacques. 1949. "The Mirror-Stage as Formative of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" trans. Alan Sheridan in *Écrits: A Selection*, W.W. Norton and Co., New York, 1977.

a sense of stability and community—a temporary experience of unity between the self and the social space (Muller 1985, 235 and 238 - 239 and Muller 1982, 28 and 32-35). The social space constituted by the scene can be a powerful site for such moments of identification, as feelings of community and connectedness are reflected back in a multiplicity of ways (dress, deportment, taste) and are reinforced through regular enactment—by the very act of being “on the scene.” Though less overt than in musical scenes such as punk, metal, or goth, dress and deportment nonetheless played a role in the establishment and demarcation of various jazz scenes. Interestingly, in the jazz scenes examined, modes of dress were not associated with different style of jazz, but rather indicated generational difference. Vancouver’s Black Spot club, for example, which was modelled after the Cellar yet catered to a slightly younger demographic was;

... a beatnik club, that’s what it was. Everybody in black turtle neck sweaters and pretending to write poetry and getting up and reading poetry and drinking awful coffee and so on (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

Whereas at the Cellar,

... a thing that was interesting costume-wise, was that a lot of the guys wore grey flannel suits. And it was considered extremely hip, and I think it was somehow modelled after ... the guy that jumped from his hotel in Amsterdam ... Chet Baker. I think it had something to do with Chet Baker, I think. So I got myself a grey flannel suit. I think I didn’t wear a shirt and tie under it, I wore like a t-shirt under it. Majorly cool (bill bissett, January 9, 2013).

As subjects, members of particular scenes are empowered to act—to play, sing, speak, write, dance, dress, or otherwise engage in the practice of desiring. In doing so, they participate in the constant (re)establishing of an identity that is resonant within that social space. The resultant intensity of commitment present in most scenes—the palpable pressure to participate, to be seen,

to engage in the scene as it unfolds—is related to the initial euphoric experience of seeing one’s perceived self reflected back in the actions and deportment of others (Shank 1994, 131). Scenes thereby function as an intersection between the realities of public space / place and the imagined interiors of constructed identity.

Lifecycle of the Scene

Through repeated acts of cooperation and mutual support, scenes create complex networks which include both the interpersonal and the institutional, and which serve over time to develop common conventions. These conventions serve provide the scene with boundaries and expectations to which members will presumably conform, and also with a sense of stability through which the roles and co-operative acts necessary to the activities of the scene are able to continue despite turnover in the specific makeup of a scene’s members. It is through shared conflict with convention that scenes are formed, yet paradoxically, it is when the shared conventions of the scene begin to fade that scenes themselves begin to fade and lose their relevance (Becker 1982).

While multiple factors conspired to bring about the eventual closure of Vancouver’s Cellar club in 1964, this sense of a decline in shared conventions was commonly remarked upon by interview subjects. The scene began to hold less relevance for those that had had once participated in it, and to hold less allure for those on the outside. These conditions then combine into a type of scenic entropy leading, ultimately, to dissolution of the scene. In Vancouver in the mid 1960s newer forms of musical expression and scenic participation began to take on the role previously performed by clubs such as The Cellar and Black Spot.

Rock and roll. What's his name ... Elvis. The Beatles. There was no money and there was no up and coming jazz musicians, really. They were all going with the crowd, so ... (Ricci Quarin, August 29, 2013).

As result,

It was all over. The fun was over ... [W]e'd all grown up a bit, in some ways. Everybody was starting to mature a bit and get other ideas (John Dawe, November 28, 2012 and January 28, 2013).

Such localized expressions of scenic dissolution are echoed at a broader level. Jack Kerouac, whose writing in the 1950s perhaps exemplified the counter cultural movement which emerged following World War Two, and who was referred to frequently by interview participants, bemoaned in 1961 that;

Original members of Beat Gen. means it started out in 1948 a group of poets, beardless, with no political beefs, no idea of "non-conformity," just poets. Today's "beatnik" can't even recognize Stan Getz when he hears him, or even tell the tune he's playing...(Charters 1999, 324)

Scenes, then, operate under a kind of social gravity which pushes and pulls, rises, falls and overlaps until their eventual entropic decline.

The Scenes Perspective at Work

The use of scenes in musicology has been prevalent since the early 1990s with Will Straw's 1991 work "Systems of Articulation, Logics of Change: Communities and Scenes in Popular Music" generally cited as being the first article to use the word "scene" in this context. Straw's article suggested that scene study proposed a means to undermine "assumptions of uniformity within local music cultures," a tendency which he felt had been encroaching into popular music studies (Straw 1991, 368). Rather than one homogenous musical expression which arose from

and was marked off by space or place, there was instead an observable multiplicity of local musical tendencies—a myriad of local musical cultures even in those areas dominated by an overarching, often historically linked musical culture. Further, these local tendencies could be observed to overlap and interlock, a process through which the local became global (or trans-local) with astonishing speed. Indeed within a year of the Cellar’s opening in Vancouver the Yardbird Suite was established in Edmonton, followed shortly by the Foggy Manor in Calgary, a process which was a deliberate result of the translocal—of scenes interacting with and influencing other scenes. Further, the contemporaneous existence of 777 Barrington Street in Halifax, Nova Scotia, suggests that socio-cultural conditions common to a region or nation may lead to the emergence of scenes which are similar to one another though not in direct contact with one another.

Through the *construction* of identity rather than the *inheritance* of identity, cultural spaces are then configured as scenes of discourse and negotiation as “musical practices ‘work’ to produce a sense of community within the conditions of metropolitan music scenes” (Straw 1991, 373). Scenes are self-conscious attempts by their members to create a space for the performance of cultural activity which lacks an outlet elsewhere (the Cellar, the Yardbird Suite, 777 Barrington Street) or where there is seen to be inadequate room to accommodate those interested in the activities of the scene (Black Spot). Through the construction of the scene, a sense of belonging and community can then be forged from the conditions of the modern urban environment.

Scenes are initially volatile spaces seeking to establish and perpetuate boundaries of affect and influence, yet are guided by a sense of internal logic which, following Bourdieu (1983, 1985, 1989) and Michael de Certeau (1984), amounts to a micro-sociology of advance and retreat

resulting in a somewhat predictable lifecycle of birth, expansion, and contraction. As a scene stabilizes, it develops an infrastructure of venues, publications, and media which serve to integrate it into the wider marketplace. Through such means, scenes enable local practices to be reproduced on national and international scales, a pluralism of musical vernaculars enacted in multiple locales (Straw 1991, 378).

At the local level, the jazz scenes in this study relied upon local media (student and city newspapers, local radio, local record stores, etc) to promote their activities. Over time, some of these activities were then reported through nationally available sources such as *Coda* magazine, and infrequent CBC national broadcasts which may have included some of the musicians involved in these co-operative clubs (though usually not in the same musical context). At the same time, the widespread reach of the dominant American jazz culture ensured that a knowledge of both emerging bebop musical practices and the existence of major American clubs were common themes for desire and emulation.

The main concepts outlined by Straw (*pace* Bourdieu et al) have been expanded upon in subsequent work that seeks to examine musical practice from the perspective of scenes. The nature of identity formation, group dynamics, the role of insiders vs. outsiders, the importance of place, and the tension between art and the commercial marketplace are explored with varying degrees of focus in major work by musicologists Sara Cohen (1991), Barry Shank (1994), Andy Bennett (2004), Aaron Fox (2004), Ruth Finnegan (2007), and sociologist Alan Blum (2001),³³ who offers insight into the symbiotic relationship which exists between scenes and the modern city.

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Sara Cohen's landmark work *Rock Culture in Liverpool* (1991) is a key text in both the development of popular music studies and in the use of the scenes perspective in examining the musical practices of a particular subgroup. Cohen's work professes to be both "ethnographic and micro-sociological" (Cohen 1991, 6) and draws heavily upon Becker's notion of the art world to inform her exploration of the "musical worlds" of working class youth in Liverpool. Cohen follows closely the lives and musical progress of several Liverpool area rock musicians, examining the ways in which their experience with music making expresses notions of collective creativity, organization, scene formation, and the places at which commercial interests intersect and affect the way the scene comports itself.

Cohen envisions scenes as a series of concentric circles or rings, in which the activities most closely associated with the mainstream music industry are located in the middle (smallest rings) and the least commercially successful, least mediated forms for musical expression, are located on the outermost (widest) circles (Cohen 1991, 15). Such structuring suggests an inverse relationship between commercial success and community participation, in which the circles closest to the centre of commercial viability (smallest rings) are populated by the fewest participating members. However, Cohen's concentric circles model is constructed from the perspective of those within the scene itself rather than from the perspective of those who, while perhaps not active members of the scene, participate in the act of *musicking* (Small 1998) through their listening and musical consumption. When audience involvement is considered, it is possible that those scenes participating at the smallest, most commercial levels may well involve a substantially larger group of people than the scenes which are active in the wider, less commodified circles.

Cohen highlights the ways in which scenes are predicated upon an interdependence between musicians and audience, an audience whose members are, at least initially, often drawn from the ranks of family members and friends. Very often, these same people also fulfill the support roles of manager, agent, and technical crew for fledgling performers and bands. In return, the developing scene provides, for those actively participating in it at whatever level, a sense of stable community and locus around which to construct elements of identity. Cohen also examines how external market forces and dreams of “making it” shaped the actions and musical activities of those active in the rock scene in Liverpool. The tension between what is viewed as artistic honesty or personal expression, and the demands of the commercial marketplace are at times keenly felt by scene members, and the ways in which such tension is approached and resolved is the catalyst for much of the scene’s evolution. However, one can imagine that a scene predicated on a less commercially viable music would interact with the demands of commercial success in markedly different ways. The co-operative jazz spaces discussed in this work, for example, were essentially free from issues related to the desire for commercial success in the jazz industry due to the lack of a viable recording and touring industry for jazz in Canada at the time.

Of particular importance for what was at the time a groundbreaking work, is the extent to which Cohen examines the ways in which the musical practices of the scene come to hold and express meaning. Cohen discusses the ways in which scenes develop their own mythology and local history, and the way in which the social structure of scenes help scene members to establish a stable sense of identity and community. For many of its participants a scene functions as a lifestyle rather than a pastime—music making is then a socio-cultural experience predicated

upon the entwined practices of listening and performing, of seeing and being seen, and of a sociability imposed by the constraints of space and place. Scenes are not necessarily places of universal positivity or inclusion, and Cohen briefly outlines the ways in which the politics of economic class and gender expectations impact the musical activities of the scene and the behavioural codes which govern it. In Chapter Five, this work will examine how such issues were operative at Vancouver's Cellar club, in particular the ways in which the traditionally male dominated jazz space dealt with opposition to heteronormativity and to the inclusion of women in the scene.

Following upon his work as a graduate student, Barry Shank's *Dissonant Identities: The Rock'n'Roll Scene in Austin, Texas* (Shank 1994) examines not only elements of the country and punk scenes in Austin, but the ways in which scenes relate to the larger societies of which they are a part. For Shank, scenes represent a way in which,

Fans and musicians were able to perform together a pleasurable critique of modern society without the mediation produced by the traditional articulation of commodified musical practice... (Shank 1994, 53)

Shank considers the degree to which this "critique" was conscious or unconscious, and the ways in which membership of a musical scene intertwined with the construction of identity. Drawing upon the work of Jacques Lacan, Shank considers scenes as an essential element of identity formation for their participants.

Through scenes, individuals are able to situate themselves within the socio-cultural space, and then to navigate that space based upon an understanding of shared codes and behaviours. When temporarily divorced from scenic activity in the periods between gigs or other scenic events, an individual still carries a sense of identity and of position within larger society which is based

upon their involvement with the scene. This sense of belonging rests upon the ways in which scenes in general construct localized mythologies and histories, and the ways in which an individual scene adopts and evolves its own canon of idealized forms of musical expression and behaviour. Over time, these forms of expression and behaviour take on ideological and political overtones which, in some cases, are transmitted beyond the confines of the scene and are “read” by larger society (Shank 1994, 20-21). Shank is concerned with punk expression, yet in the post World War Two period bebop held similarly politicized associations with regard to morality, counter cultural attitudes, the beat aesthetic, and the changing socio-political landscape in America.

Interestingly, Shank examines the extent to which scenic identification and association is often divorced from musical expression, resting rather upon elements of dress and deportment. I was surprised to see similar attitudes reflected in the recollections of my interview subjects with regard to jazz. What people wore while attending these co-operative jazz clubs was remarked upon repeatedly, and was highly specific from club to club and scene to scene. In many cases, such as the scenes associated with the Cellar and Black Spot in Vancouver, dress and deportment was a marked indicator of generational, rather than musical difference.

Identification with a musical scene prompts in its members an at times overwhelming desire to actively participate in the scene; to engage in an “exchange of signs” which both satisfies the need to belong, and identifies one as belonging (Shank 1994, 128). For musicians, such participation is satisfied through musical performance (amongst other things), but for those scene members who do not engage directly with the musical production of the scene, other avenues must be found through which to connect and be connected with. As such, Shank finds that the

rock'n'roll scene is often not *musically* demarcated for its members (or at least is not exclusively so), but rests upon signs and symbols contained within fashion and behaviours which become deeply associated with, and at times 'stand-in,' for the music that the scene surrounds (Shank 1994, 120-128). This adoption and exchange of signs and symbols located within tangible goods—clothes, hairstyles, records, etc—are tied, Shank suggests, to what is,

...an already widespread American process of self-production through proper consumption. The notion that we are what we consume and that such habits of consumption align us with some groups and distinguish us from others ... (Shank 1994, 95).

Consequently, Shank considers the ways in which the commodification of musical practices intersect with the lifecycle of a music scene.

Scenes are for figuring things out—for the process of signification to coalesce around sounds, modes of dress, codes of behaviour, and the commodification of product (records, shirts, posters) to the point that the scene is readily identified by insiders and outsiders alike. Entry into the wider commercial marketplace is what comes after the initial burst of scene-creating energy. Often signalling the dissolution of a particular scene, such broader commercial interest is a key element of the life-cycles of scenes. In the initial stages of scene formation, there is a palpable pressure to engage with the scene; to attend events, to be involved in the secondary behaviours associated with the scene and, most importantly, to see and be seen as engaged with the creation and exchange of signifying information. To belong. (Shank 1994, 131) However,

once these meanings have reached a certain level of stability, once it becomes possible to identify the qualities that define the multiple overlapping relationships among the bands and fans that constitute any scene, then those definite meanings no longer function within musicalized signifying practice. The music, becoming simply music, collapses back into itself—an aesthetic form to be appreciated within its own set of generically generated expectations (Shank 1994, 192).

As scenic energy (both literal and symbolic) reaches its peak and begins to subside, the images constructed as part of scenic identity become commodities traded in the larger marketplace for commercial gain, and cease to function as gifts “exchanged in social communion” (Shank 1994, 188). Jazz, for example, has now so infiltrated the commercial marketplace that it is no longer synonymous with hipster disaffection, but is used to market airlines (Air Canada Jazz), crackers (General Mills), compact motorcycles (Honda) and urban sophistication (movie soundtracks, car and hotel commercials, etc).

This commercialization of scenic elements by the music industry enables elements (both musical and symbolic) of scenes to continue through acts of consumption long after the localized decline of the scene. Often times, this consumption is removed from the geographical site of the original scenic activity, and allows for the trans-local and global participation in scenes and modes of musical expression which no longer function in quite the same way, or with quite the same meaning, as they did in their place of geographic origin.³⁴ Jazz music was (and is) still a viable and vital form of expression in New Orleans, for example, despite such cities as Chicago and New York eventually replacing it as the main site(s) of scenic activity and development. Likewise, jazz expression has proliferated around the world, spreading exponentially beyond its American origins.

The scene proper is then (re)located somewhere else; in some different space or place, or in some newly emergent form of musical activity. The examination of music scenes and how they

³⁴ From 2000 - February 2014, there existed a jazz club called the Cellar in Vancouver, though it bore no connection to the original co-operative effort. The current Cellar Jazz Society, formed upon the club's closing, likewise holds no connection to the earlier Cellar Artists and Musicians Society. Similarly, the current Yardbird Suite in Edmonton is not a direct descendent of the original co-operative club but rather a venue for the laudable efforts of the Edmonton Jazz Society.

function within their urban environments is therefore something akin to musical archeology, as evidence of one scene is found atop the remains of previous scenes. In *Dissonant Identities*, Shank illuminates the ways in which the punk music scene in Austin, Texas was built upon the remains of the progressive country scene which predated it. Newly emerging scenes take over the venues, the means of distribution, and the attentions of an audience which had previously been directed toward earlier forms of musical expression. While older forms of music abide alongside the development of newly formed scenes, they lack the visceral excitement of scenic identification relying, as Shank states, upon an appreciation of their particular generic forms; upon music being taken as music, rather than as a signifying experience.

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the use of scenes as a means by which to study musical practices and musical meaning in certain socio-cultural groups became an increasingly popular musicological approach. The notion of scene itself was further explored, and a myriad of approaches to its identification and study were developed, particularly with regard to popular music and youth culture. As previously mentioned, one of the foremost scholars to make use of scenes is Andy Bennett, whose *Music Scenes: Local, Translocal and Virtual* (2004) seeks to consolidate the various approaches that have been brought to the subject. Drawing on work from a broad array of scholars, *Music Scenes* establishes three major types, or areas, of scene study: the local, the translocal, and the virtual. Though scenes may simultaneously occupy more than one of these areas, Bennett's divisions provide a useful means of thinking about the nature and structure of scenes.

In examining the deceptively straightforward area of local, or geographical specific scenes, Bennett presents ideas which highlight issues of authenticity in the face of musical forms which,

like the blues in Chicago or jazz in New Orleans, have become so commercialized as to have formed “zombie” scenes (Grazian 2004). In areas where music scenes have given way to intense musical tourism, how does the music continue to signify, and for whom? In which ways might authentic expressions of a scene co-exist geographically with the hyper-commercialized expression of the same shared form? The nature of local scenes is further complicated by the intricate network of social relationships and infrastructure required for the promotion of certain types of music (Spring 2004), by the intersection of music and the socio-cultural, highly sexualized world of teenagers (Lowe 2004), and by the cooperation of music and other forms of expression which are not explicitly musical, but which are integral, perhaps essential elements of the musical scenes of which they are a part (Urquia 2004).

In introducing the translocal, Bennett embraces the notion that in certain circumstances the requirements of membership in a scene may occur without the need for face-to-face, embodied interaction. At the same time, this notion accepts that localized musical practices may be mirrored in a multiplicity of places and communities across regional and national borders, a phenomena which is highlighted through my examination of co-operative jazz clubs in Canada during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Due to the influence of global forms of media and the ubiquitous nature of the internet, it may be argued that the translocal is currently the most common form of music scene.

Though not pertinent to my current topic of study, Bennet’s sub-category “virtual scenes” offers a serious consideration of the internet as home to a unique and valid form of shared musical discourse. The interwoven nature of online media in which writing, video clips, fan art, and music files are shared freely has led to the occurrence of many online communities

comprised almost entirely of strangers connected by shared interest, and though it may be difficult to imagine these communities functioning as lifestyles in the same way that local and translocal scenes often do, nonetheless these online communities serve a similar function for at least some of their members. *Music Scenes* concentrates on the discourse between fans of pre-existing musical forms who gather in online forums, however in recent years internet-specific scenes can be seen to have developed around musical practices which are unique to the digital arena. The early 2000s phenomenon of the musical mashup, of which Danger Mouse's 2004 *Grey Album*³⁵ is perhaps the most notorious example, is but one instance of a musical scene which exists because of, and within the internet. Media at times creates, as well as reports upon, the activities of scenes and subculture (Hodgkinson 2004, 222).

Whereas Sara Cohen and Barry Shank examine not only the inner workings of scene formation but also the ways in which scenes interact with the demands of the commercial marketplace, Aaron Fox's *Real Country: Music and Language in Working Class Culture* (2004) focuses its attention upon musical practice as a form of social interaction. Fox concentrates upon the country music scene he finds located in the honky-tonks and bars of rural Texas, the last vestiges of a commercially marginal scene forced out of Austin, the nearest large city. In examining musical practices which are self-conscious in their lack of commercial viability, Fox chooses to concentrate upon the ways in which musical practices come to *mean*, and the ways in which they may come to occupy the central place in the culture of a particular group (Fox 2004, 31). Additionally, in examining a form of music (country) that is simultaneously the means of expression for a commercially unviable yet vital local scene (the honky-tonk) as well as the

³⁵ *The Grey Album* was a mashup by Danger Mouse which combined The Beatles' *White Album* with Jay-Z's *The Black Album* to an overwhelming online response.

centre of a highly lucrative commercial enterprise with marketable stars (Nashville, etc), Fox examines the distinction,

... between genres of popular music as fields of production and consumption, mediated principally by the relationships of economic exchange they structure, and genres of popular music as fields of popular practice, mediated primarily by ritualized forms of intimate social interaction ... (Fox 2004, 30).

Such a situation is also true for jazz expression as local or marginal forms of jazz expression compete with the dominant jazz culture, a process that is perhaps even more defined when localized expression in Canada must compete with American jazz influence *within* the scene as well as without. Though jazz has perhaps never had the same broad popular profile as the music examined by Shank or Fox, nonetheless marginal sub-genres and sub-scenes within the larger jazz world have long had to fight for traction against both the popular perception of jazz (Miles Davis, Brubeck, etc) and dominant performative norms within the scene (the contentious reception of Ornette Coleman, for example).

For Fox, musical practices assume the role of discourse, and are a tangible means through which the culture that houses them comes to terms with itself. Mediation then is the process, or link between the actualities of socio-cultural practice (work, play, religion, sexuality, aesthetics) and the interior, or abstract concepts of memory, history, class, race, gender, and personhood. Mediation, the managing of the distance between the actual and the felt, is accomplished through community discourse and, for the communities in *Real Country*, musical practices which are central to that discourse (Fox 2004, 34).

Even more than for Sara Cohen's (1991) examination of rock and roll in economically marginalized Liverpool, the issue of class is an essential element of *Real Country*. In both verbal

and musical discourse, Fox observes what he terms “a class-specific cultural response to changes in the regional, national, and global economy” (Fox 2004, 21). For the blue-collar or working-class communities that Fox studies, musical practices become a means of pushing back or re-establishing a means of self-identification which had previously been available through the working class traditions of hard work, manual labour, and self-reliance. Participation in “real country” music practices therefore come to signify for the community and is often accompanied by self-conscious concerns regarding authenticity. For the individuals in Fox’s work, the local country music scene is no less than “an essential resource for the preservation of community and the expression of ... working class identity” (Fox 2004, 21). In examining the songs and artists considered part of the localized canon, the socio-cultural codes of behaviour which surround the musical space, and the ways in which scene participants come to express themselves, Fox attempts to locate the intersection between cultural experience and musical practice. Fox’s study of country music also serves to describe the ways in which lines of affiliation may be drawn and defended *within* musical genres with as much vehemence as without. The “hipness” or “squareness” described by sociologist Howard Becker to demarcate those within the jazz world and those without, may exist as well within a jazz genre largely seen as amorphous by those not participating, at some level, in the scene (Becker 1963).

The nature of the urban environment is such that multiple scenes exist simultaneously in any one given environment, and at times overlap in their use of venues, resources, and active participants. Ruth Finnegan’s *The Hidden Musicians* (2007) attempts to highlight the ways in which a multiplicity of scenes co-exist in one English town, and the means by which active participation in musical scene(s) intersects with wider socio-cultural practices. Finnegan centres

her examination around the musical practices of what she terms “hidden,” or amateur musicians, concentrating upon the ways in which participation in a musical scene must be balanced with work, family, and other social obligations which at times must take precedence over the scene. However, in privileging the activities of community band members, volunteer choirs, brass bands, and the like over the actions of “cultural institutions and great artists” (Finnegan 2007, 8) Finnegan fails to consider the middle ground which may exist between the internationally renowned artist on the one hand, and the wholly amateur ensemble on the other.

In locating her focus of study along a continuum defined by the economic rewards reaped by musicians (wholly professional on one end, and wholly volunteer on the other) she also fails to consider those who may pursue music as the primary focus of their lives, yet must pay the bills through other means. Such situations are regular occurrences for many participants of commercially marginalized music scenes, even at the highest levels. Many must take work at a distance from their musical interests (Ornette Coleman was an elevator operator in Los Angeles during the 1950s) and many others work within the music industry, though not within their preferred mode of expression, working studio and other commercial jobs to make a living. At the same time however, Finnegan also chooses to include those who make the majority of their living from teaching music in some form, an inclusion which is problematic. Such a decision would seem to include many who perform relatively little, while excluding some who, while working another profession for at least part of their income, perform publicly on a regular basis. In the case of the jazz scene in Vancouver, this would include the likes of influential drum teacher Jim Blackley who, despite his influence pedagogically, performed publicly quite rarely, while subsequently excluding the likes of guitarist Jim Kilburn, a founding member of the Cellar

who maintained a heavy performance schedule despite working full-time as an electrician for the city of Vancouver.

The Hidden Musicians is perhaps most effective when it concentrates upon the conditions of performance within the various scenes examined, highlighting the ways in which musical activities are not spontaneous occurrences, but are “made to happen” through the efforts of their respective scenic communities (Finnegan 2007, 236). Musical activities must be located in time, space, and place in order to have traction within a community. Such locations (the pub, the bar, the community centre, the music school, the town square) are necessarily shared by a wide variety of musical practices and scenes creating moments of intersection and connection between the various communities. Like Becker’s image of art worlds in orbit, the various musical scenes circle, push, and pull upon one another as they compete for and share resources.

The maintenance of scenes is only possible by the actions of audience and support personnel who continue to secure a time / space / place within which the musical practices may occur. Through these acts of collective *musicking*, the audience becomes the scene in as essential a way as the performances of the musicians. Local musicians are thereby connected not, “just by shared views or emotions but by social *practices*,” (Finnegan 2007, 305) which occur along “socially recognized pathways which systematically [link] into a wide variety of settings and institutions within the city” (Finnegan 2007, 298).

The Jazz Scene

The term scene has long appeared in jazz literature, but its efficacy is at times muddled by the frequency with which is used colloquially, rather than in a way which relates to a particular

methodological lens. Indeed, the term “jazz scene” is used somewhat interchangeably to refer to all jazz practices in a global sense, differentiating jazz from other forms of musical expression; at times to mean the the jazz community in a certain country (United States jazz scene vs the Japanese jazz scene) or region (the west coast scene or the east coast scene); or jazz practices within whichever city is being discussed (the New York scene). Very rarely is the term used in any sort of hyper-specific sense to refer to any of the various overlapping scenes which often co-exist in any one city or region at the same time, and which simultaneously cooperate and compete with one another. A significant advantage of this common and longstanding use of the term scene to refer to jazz activities is that it is immediately understood and accepted within the community, even when used in a more specific sense than is common.

Eric Hobsbawm’s (Francis Newtown) landmark work *The Jazz Scene* (1960) for example, is rightly interested in the widespread intersection of jazz practice with other elements of popular culture and modern life, and was one of the first works to turn the lens of scholarship from the stage toward the audience, and from the name stars of jazz to those toiling in relative obscurity for little obvious gain. However the work is rarely specific as to how the sites of jazz practice are organized, relate to each other, and come to mean for their participants. Its sections on “Popular Music,” and “The Jazz Business,” however, are more nuanced than the pictures painted by Becker (1963), and the sections on “Jazz Public” and “Jazz as Protest” were likely remarkable for their time. Though the word scene is used here colloquially and lacks the specificity or rigour with which it is more currently employed, it does suggest how easily, and for how long, the term “jazz scene” has had traction within both the academic community and the jazz world.

Indeed, the majority of works which invoke the term jazz scene are, rather than in-depth explorations of specific jazz spaces and the communities they engender, more wide ranging studies of jazz practices in individual cities or regions. Often the only works of their kind, these studies are invaluable repositories of jazz history, but often do little to increase our understanding of the self-organizing principles at work within specific sites of engagement for jazz (Pearson 1988, Briggs 2003, Owsley 2006, Osteen 2010). For example, *Jazz: A History of the New York Scene* (Charters 1962), makes use of oral history as well as archival and discographical evidence to provide a richly detailed history of jazz' early development in New York City. The term scene here is rather loosely applied to mean any and all jazz and jazz-like musics which were produced during the early decades of the music's arrival in New York. Likewise, Royal W. Stokes' *The Jazz Scene: An Informal History from New Orleans to 1990* (1991) locates New Orleans not simply as a geographical place, but as a site so important to jazz that it requires no further refining in terms of scope or time period, yet provides no definition of what he means when he uses the term scene. Rather it is used, variously, to indicate everything the reader might immediately associate with jazz, to demarcate all those playing jazz outside the United States, and to describe those playing forms of jazz not immediate reminiscent of the traditional, dixieland, or New Orleans style music with which the rest of the work is largely concerned.

Clora Bryant's *Central Avenue Sounds: Jazz in Los Angeles* (1998) begins to address the concept of scene more narrowly, examining the the spaces, musicians, and other resources particular to the city of Los Angeles. Additionally, the work highlights "The Watts Scene" and provides an in-depth discussion of an area, not yet officially part of Los Angeles (1920s), which was already becoming a major site of settlement for the black community. Free from many of

Los Angeles' restrictions on alcohol and nightclub activities and home of many black performers, Watts became an area of significant jazz activity and operated under unique, scene-specific, conditions. More recent scholarship has refined the use of scenes in jazz even further, intersecting with the sociological roots of scene theory as well as its application in other areas of musicology to produce such significant works as Alex Stewart's *Making the Scene:*

Contemporary New York City Big Band Jazz (2007) and Travis Jackson's *Blowin' the Blues Away: Performance and Meaning on the New York Jazz Scene* (2012).

Stewart's work, which combines oral history, ethnography, and self-ethnography examines the ways in which big bands in New York city during the 1990s continued to exist as meaningful entities to the musicians which played in them, and to the audiences which came to hear them. Attention is paid to the different scenes, or worlds centred on rehearsal bands, mainstream jazz orchestras (Vanguard Jazz Orchestra), latin bands, repertory bands (Ellington, Mingus, etc.), experimental ensembles (William Parker, etc.) and those orchestras, such as that of Maria Schneider, which perform contemporary compositions. In so doing, Stewart addresses the complex and intersecting nature of scenes, and the ways in which multiple scenes often co-exist, overlap one another, and share members. In describing the complex world of big band musicians in New York, Stewart intersects with notions of authenticity and legitimacy, the seemingly irreconcilable notions of individuality (a jazz hallmark) and the blend required to play in a section, as well as with issues tied to considerations of race and of gender particular to the big band scene. Nonetheless, while Stewart does admirable work of describing and exploring the scenes he encounters, he uses the term scenes without going into any discussion of where the term arose, what scenes mean when used in a specific sense rather than a colloquial one, or of

where the borders to the big band scenes he encounters are drawn (at the stage, at the club door, in popular perception).

Travis Jackson, however, in his careful consideration of performance and meaning on the New York scene of the 1990s takes care to locate the concept of scene within the pre-existing sociological and musicological literature, refining his own use of the term while describing its wider application and roots as a methodological tool. Jackson highlights the multiplicity of scenes available in the same urban location at the same time, and considers the ways in which the energy and importance of scenes alters over time. A scene may pass out of a position of ascendancy but not pass out of being, and may continue to have localized relevance and influence long after it has ceased to be a site of aspiration or imitation. Jackson as well turns attention to the ways in which jazz journalists provide perhaps the best and most insightful work on individual jazz scenes concerned as they are with the day-to-day and month-to-month activities of particular localized areas. Finally, Jackson reminds us, scenes are not simply spatial phenomena but historical ones. The human interactions which form the heart of scenic activity continue to resonate beyond the specific spatial limitations of the scene (the venue), extending across history both through the evolving structures and activities of the scene, and the shared mythologization of prior scenic activity.

The Scene As Urban Phenomena

Scenes, sociologist Alan Blum tells us, are an essential part of making the city itself into a place,³⁶ and the language of scenes is irrevocably tied to the language of urban geography. One cannot consider the question of cities without running across settings identified, with varying levels of specificity, as “scenes;” recurring social occurrences which collectively serve to organize descriptions of urban sociability. Repeated and often generic references to such socio-cultural groupings as the theatre scene, the literary scene, or the music scene in descriptions of urban life suggest that scenes, in the life-cycles of cities, function as cultural commodities and “circulate in ways that might bring them to some cities rather than others or to all cities in varying degrees” (Blum 2001, 8). Indeed the extent to which a city possesses such scenic elements does much to situate it relative to other cities in attracting residents, tourists, and certain forms of urban investment and development.

Scenes then are an integral element of urban sociality, and yet “the vernacular sense of scene” is heavily, even intimately weighted with the idea of the local, with concepts not simply of space, but of socio-culturally specific place (Blum 2001, 9). The places that scenes inhabit then become repositories for localized histories, for the relevant “socio-musical codes” which are lived as much as learned. For participating members of a scene, where they are situated is then a condition of the intersection between expressions of localized history and the realities of present

³⁶ If space is an often generic physical or geographical location, *place* for the purposes of this discussion is “humanized space” (Tuan 1977, 54), somewhere that is emotionally significant or resonant for an individual or group. Whereas *spaces* provide a structure through which processes and events flow, *places* are “particular moments in...intersecting social relations...which have over time been constructed, laid down, interacted with one another, decayed and renewed” (Massey 1994, 120). Where musicians perform affects what, and in which ways they perform, as the intersection of space and place is socially, as well as physically defined (Becker 2004, 20). While scenes are dependent upon economic viability as they pass through urban space in search of resources, the innovation and particular character of scenes follows from the *places* they inhabit, from the construction of community through which the constraints of economic viability are lifted, even if temporarily (Becker 2004, 18).

experience. Past performances of scene and some shared understanding of that history or mythology enables current practices of and within the scene to be locally situated—to *mean*—as they engage with other socio-historically located performances (Hollerbach 2004, 155 and 162).

In the case of local jazz scenes, this often takes the form of frequently shared stories about who played where and when, and this storytelling allows for the construction of myth, and of identity. Key events in the history of the scene (such as a particular Mingus engagement in Vancouver, see Ch. 6) are shared and retold by those that witnessed them, and over time pass in to the wider lore of the scene, possessed by all scene members, not just by those who witnessed the event. Possession of the story then equates, to some degree, with possession of place—with membership in the scene, and of identification with those who were there when the event occurred.

The location and study of any one particular scene is therefore a fraught endeavour, as one must consider to what extent the scene in question is comprised of the people involved, the spaces they move between, the act of scenic movement itself, or some combination of these. Are the venues and locations which are used by scenes,

... merely hosting places for pre-existing scenes, spaces productive of their own scenes, moments in the itinerary of a scene, local examples of scenic phenomena which is truly international in scale, or points within networks of social, cultural and economic inter-connection which themselves are real scenes? (Straw 2001, 49)

Scenes often become associated with certain venues, but as well as with particular record shops, book shops, and music stores. Participation in the scene therefore becomes staged across a multiplicity of spaces. Scenic coherence and the ability of a scene to provide a place of stability and resonance for its members becomes harder to achieve the more fragmented these associated

spaces become across the urban environment. While Blum suggests that such movement encourages the exploration of boundaries (Blum 2001, 26), Straw makes a convincing counter-argument that for scenes, fragmentation occurs when greater time and effort must be expended in the act of participating in a scene. Without the frequent experience of seeing and being seen, individuals cease to be recognized within the scene, and their sense of attachment and identification with the scene weakens. The scene loses its “visibility dispersed within multiple sites of encounter and consumption” (Straw 2001, 255).³⁷

What Do Scenes Provide For Those That Enact Them?

Scenes exist then as brief, ephemeral occurrences. Even though the sense of identity and community formed through participation may linger between scenic events, the scene itself only comes together in mutual semiotic expression at brief, though perhaps regular intervals. The scene itself is only fully realized at the gig, the concert, the festival, etc. As such, scenes are a product not just of space and place, but of temporality. The scene becomes marked by its occasional nature as a “site whose engagement is punctuated temporally as if it were a ceremony” (Blum 2001, 14). So demarcated, the scene is elevated to the status of special occasion and becomes a moment of social signification. Even once a scene has lost its power, becoming less significant or having dissolved entirely, the social connections formed through

³⁷ As I write this I am reminded of the recent state of affairs in the Toronto jazz scene which, following the closures of the Top of the Senator (2005) and Montreal Bistro (2006), fragmented around an unstable collection of coffee shops and alternate venues, none of which maintained a consistent jazz policy. With few regular performance venues beyond Queen Street’s venerable Rex Hotel, remaining “on the scene” began to require a great deal more effort. In 2013 it remains to be seen if the Toronto jazz scene will coalesce around the newly opened Jazz Bistro (January 2013), a venue which through a combination of its name and its location in the old Top of the Senator location, is perhaps attempting to appeal to memories of an older jazz landscape and those that participated in it. In addition to the splintering of the scene as performance venues become unavailable or unstable, success can also hinder the cohesion of the scene as members drift away from regular scenic participation into more lucrative musical work.

participation in scenes does much to enable the social interactions upon which urban living depends.

Scenes are, much of the time, lived as effervescence, but they also create the grooves to which practices and affinities become fixed. Chance encounters on a street or in bars often require to be smooth and successful, the resuscitation of connections or mutual interests now marginal to the rest of our lives. In such encounters, and in their repetition, knowledges are reinvigorated and the peripheries of our social networks renewed. Such occasions are like the sedimentation of artifacts or architectural forms within cities: through them the city becomes a repository of memory (Straw 2001, 54).

Some fifty years after the closure of these Canadian co-operative jazz clubs, there was no shortage of participants able and willing to recall their experiences, and my research was greatly aided by the fact that many of the members of these scenes had remained in some sort of contact over the intervening decades.

At their heart, scenes may best be considered a form of musical phenomenology; performance which does not merely give voice to memory, but which simultaneously creates and embodies it. Scenes exist at the intersection between global flows of media and localized cultural expression, where they wrestle with notions of authenticity, mythology, identity, place, and belonging. Scenes can only take root in environments which can provide a community large enough to support the regular enaction of the scene through performance and other means of discourse. In some cases, the qualities of the localized scene are compelling enough that it spills out of its localized setting to inform connected scenes in other locations, simultaneously transcending the need for face-to-face interaction while multiplying the opportunities for it to occur. The activities of a scene provide avenues for discourse through which scene members can engage in

the process of identity formation, upon which a sense of collective belonging or community is built.

Nonetheless, the term scene remains vague and problematic, as likely to be used to describe the local coffee shop as it is the ways in which musical practices and socio-cultural behaviours come to have meaning. Scenes are elastic, and their structure as rings, pathways, or worlds which interact and overlap with one another further obscures our ability to clearly describe their boundaries. Scenes are a unique condition of the urban environment, and perhaps make a case for “the desire for community within the realities of collective life” through which “the very private orientation toward quality and discrimination [becomes] something to be shared,” and upon which individual and collective identity is predicated (Blum 2001, 13). Musical scenes then are perhaps more than simply “a way to account for the relationship between different musical practices unfolding with a given geographical space” (Straw 1997, 494), but are rather “the site of a fundamental conflict in social life, not just between space and place, but between the excitement of engagement and the riveting seductions of community” (Blum 2001, 33).

Chapter Three

Laying the Groundwork: Early Infrastructure for Jazz in Canada

A vast and geographically diverse nation, Canada is still sparsely populated in comparison to its southern neighbour; its major urban centres spread across great distances along the more southerly portions of the country, roughly parallel to the U.S. border. Most Canadian regions in the 1950s could boast of only one major urban centre, a case which was particularly true in both the Canadian East, where Halifax's population was only 85, 589 in 1951, and in the Canadian West where in 1955, Edmonton's population stood at 209, 353 (edmonton.ca, 2013) and Vancouver's at 588, 000. In contrast, New York City was home to some 7 million residents during the 1950s, Boston some 800, 000, Chicago 3.6 million, and Los Angeles 1.9 million (en.wikipedia.org, 2013). Due in part both to the great distances between major population centres and the domination of American jazz programming on the airwaves and in other media (*DownBeat*, *Metronome*, etc), individual Canadian cities (and to a lesser extent regions) formed somewhat insular music scenes which were more attuned to musical activity in the nearby United States than to activity in other parts of Canada (Miller 1997, 19). Canadian jazz culture in the post-war period therefore faced huge logistical barriers in the dissemination of Canadian content.

Canada has had a long relationship with radio, receiving the first wireless transmission in 1901 at Signal Hill in Newfoundland³⁸ and launching one of the world's first radio stations—XWA in Montreal—in 1919 (McNeil and Wolfe, 11). National broadcasting was first attempted by the Canadian National Railway in 1923, a move that also marked the unofficial beginning of public radio broadcasting in Canada. Broadcast on the main CNR trains and at CNR hotels in its

³⁸ Newfoundland did not of course officially join confederation until 1949.

major destination cities, the broadcasting efforts of the CNR sought to provide regular, consistent, and engaging programming to its customers. Though programming was originally provided by harnessing and rebroadcasting high output Canadian and American stations on-board its trains, the CNR ultimately undertook ownership of a trans-national network of stations and began to supply these stations with programming which it deemed of suitable quality. On December 27, 1928, the CNR network broadcast the first coast-to-coast Canadian national network radio program (broadcasting-history.ca, 2013). Generally speaking, however, CNR broadcasts were national only in that they were available across the national railway network, and were not simultaneously broadcast across the country.

In 1932, the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC) was established, replaced in 1936 by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Though much popular perception of the CBC is that it has served to promote nationalism in its representation of Canadian interests, it has just as often served to promote an insular regionalism in the performing arts. Certainly this has been true for jazz in the decades before such popular national jazz programs as *Jazz Beat* (1983–2007) and *After Hours* (1993–2007), both of which strove to strike a regional balance in the presentation of Canadian recordings and live broadcasts.³⁹ However, in the early decades of Canadian radio this was not the case, and by 1936 Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia were receiving their own programming produced in the West, rather than the same programming as the rest of the nation. This situation was formalized in 1939 with the

³⁹ Vancouver's *Jazz Workshop* on CBC Radio for example, aired 1955-1957 but was not broadcast nationally. A CBC Montreal television program of the same name aired 1953-1957, but was also not broadcast nationally. Likewise, radio programs featuring Edmonton jazz artists broadcast on local CBC or CKUA from the University of Alberta, or from Halifax on regional CBC broadcasts were not heard nationally. George Robertson, the producer of Vancouver's *Jazz Workshop* program, recalled that he "... had no sensation of an audience outside of B.C." for the shows that they produced (George Robertson, March 18, 2014).

establishment of regional networks within each of the country's five time zones which sought to cater to regional interests (broadcasting-history.ca, 2013).

This is not to say of course, that there was no national programming of any sort, but rather that the programming of popular music was generally left to local taste, and that musicians on one side of the country rarely heard those from the other. Compounding the issue was the prevalence of American broadcasts on Canadian airwaves which featured American bands from American cities with far more frequency than their Canadian counterparts. In 1939, columnist Don McKim proclaimed in *DownBeat* that "Canadian bands are still in diapers," due in part to the CBC's policy of broadcasting American bands with some five times the frequency of Canadian ones (McKim 1939, 15).

Even orchestras at larger hotels with radio broadcast capabilities⁴⁰ received limited national airplay, and as a result, while certain groups and bandleaders enjoyed success at a regional level due to live performances, no Canadian orchestra emerged with the same national popularity of say, a Benny Goodman or a Glenn Miller in America. This characteristic regionalism did however enable local artists to acquire a popularity and profile they may not have had otherwise, and left room for the emergence of local and regional media personalities, some of whom would have a lasting impact on the development of jazz in their communities.

British Columbia radio broadcaster and columnist Bob Smith began his career while still in high school during the mid-1930s, hosting a program on local station CJOR which focused upon the popular American big bands of the era. During World War Two, Smith joined the RCAF, and was eventually posted to the South Pacific where he served with American forces, returning to

⁴⁰ Such as Vancouver's Panorama Roof at the Hotel Vancouver.

Canada with a large collection of contemporary American jazz recordings. In February of 1947 he broadcast the first instalment of *Hot Air* for CBC Vancouver, a program which has since become perhaps the longest running jazz radio show in the world (music.cbc.ca, 2013). Initially a half-hour broadcast, in May of 1948 *Hot Air* was extended to a full hour (bcradiohistory.com, 2014), and would become an important part of the jazz scene in Vancouver.

[Bob Smith] was just one of these delightful individuals who was very personable. He had an incredible memory. I guess originally the show was done live on Saturday nights from the Hotel Vancouver. I think it was at 11 or 12 on Saturday night. And the thing about the location was that a lot of the visiting musicians that were playing the Cave or Isy's would walk up to the studio. Bob would always have a bottle stashed somewhere, and they'd have a drink and chat a little bit and then go back to the gig. So it was very much a live show, and over the years the musicians ... it became part of their itinerary. When they were in Vancouver, they would see Bob. And of course Bob could remember every detail of every record they'd made and every city they'd visited since he'd last seen them. So the musicians really responded to him, and would go out of their way to come in for a chat. (Neil Ritchie, February 2, 2013).

Broadcast over Vancouver's powerful CBC station and passed through repeater stations in smaller communities, *Hot Air* was heard throughout the B.C. interior and enabled young musicians outside of the metro Vancouver area to develop an interest in modern jazz.⁴¹ Jim Carney, trumpet player and eventual charter member of the Cellar, recalls that *Hot Air* enabled him to keep up with developments in jazz even at a distance.

[Nelson, BC] is where we first heard Bob Smith's show *Hot Air*. At that time in our school we—those of us who were interested in music—we would listen to Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey and Harry James and all the big band guys, and then one night I was listening in my bedroom to this wonderful new kind of music, and it was actually Warne Marsh, and maybe Lee Konitz, I don't know, but it was then the theme for *Hot Air*, called "Wow."⁴² That was my introduction to

⁴¹ Bebop, as well as other jazz styles produced post-WW2.

⁴²Recorded by Lennie Tristano for Capitol Records in 1949, featuring Tristano (piano), Warne Marsh (tenor), Lee Konitz (alto), Arnold Fishkin (bass), and Harold Granowsky (drums).

[modern jazz]. It was an epiphany. It was not an acquired taste, it was something that just hit me between the eyes (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

Likewise saxophonist (and later Queen's Counsel) Walley Lightbody, who would help to co-found both the Cellar in Vancouver and Scene in Victoria, recalls that;

... Bob Smith was the big guy when he started his *Hot Air* [program], and he became a close friend. I remember working up in a survey crew in the middle of the province in Tweedsmuir Park with my radio, and I could set up an aerial, and I would listen to Bob Smith's *Hot Air* which I think came on on a Friday night at that time, though I could be wrong about that, and so strangely enough [deep in the woods] I could pick up that signal and listen to Bob Smith on CBC (Walley Lightbody, December 13, 2012).

However, despite the important role that *Hot Air* played in exposing young British Columbian musicians to more modern forms of jazz, the programming was overwhelmingly American in nature.

... in those days our local musicians didn't have records, so the show changed and it became more about BC artists [later on], but of course in those days jazz was American. And there were lots of BC musicians, but they didn't get very many jazz gigs. It was mostly television gigs and dance gigs, and lots of club gigs and things, but really the jazz gigs were rarer...[N]one of the local musicians, really, had recorded as jazz artists (Neil Ritchie, February 2, 2013).

The general lack of Canadian content on radio and the highly regionalized nature of the Canadian content which did exist, was compounded by the difficulty of regional and trans-national transportation imposed by Canada's sheer size and relative underpopulation. Until at least the period encompassing World War Two, travel from Toronto, Montreal, or Halifax to such American cities as Chicago, New York, and Boston was much easier than travel to western Canadian destinations. Daily rail service was available from Montreal to Chicago on the International Limited as early as 1900, and while trans-national service from Toronto and Montreal to Vancouver began in 1916, the proliferation of short, regular train service to such

American destinations as Washington DC, Boston, New York, and Chicago in the East and Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles in the West meant that it remained much easier for music and musicians to traverse the American landscape than the Canadian.

Though the last spike on the Canadian Pacific railway (the first trans-Canadian rail line) was not driven until 1885, travel across the northern United States had been possible since 1883 via service on the Northern Coast Limited which connected Chicago with Seattle, and which included branch line service into Winnipeg, Manitoba and Sumas, British Columbia (american-rails.com, 2013). Additional trans-national service was not added in Canada until the 1916 completion of the Canadian Northern Railway, though regular service between Edmonton and Vancouver (three times a week) on portions of Canadian Northern tracks started in 1915 (*Edmonton Bulletin*, November 26, 1915).

The state of the highways in Western Canada was even worse, and contributed to the movement of music and musicians *around* Canada, rather than across it. In the early decades of the 20th century, it was essentially impossible to cross the province of British Columbia east to west by road, and the only North-South motor route into the province's interior was by way of the Cariboo Road, a rough and unpaved route that was "very much in the same form in the 1920s as it had been in the 1800s" (th.gov.bc.ca, 2014). Even as late as the 1950s, road travel across British Columbia was so treacherous that resident Leah Shaw recalled that a relative traveling to Vancouver from the prairies became so horrified with the conditions that they attempted to hire a local driver and, when that proved impossible, shipped their car ahead and took the train rather than drive the rest of the way into Vancouver (cbc.ca, 2013).

In contrast, a patchwork system of highways led across the Northern United States from Chicago to Seattle, and by 1926, US Highway 99 stretched from the Canadian border down the U.S. West Coast almost to Mexico. While the Trans Canada highway did not begin construction until 1950 and did not open until 1962, by at least 1940 the completion of the King George Highway in B.C.'s lower mainland enabled one to easily connect from Vancouver to the US border and the American highway and interstate system.

Early Jazz in Vancouver

As Mark Miller details in *Such Melodious Racket: The Lost History of Jazz in Canada 1916–1949* (Miller 1997), it was simply quicker and more cost effective to cross from the Canadian East to the Canadian West via the United States than through Canada itself. Such routing also afforded traveling musicians more cities and towns as possible venues while on tour. The net result was that stronger, more important musical ties were often formed along a North-South axis, rather than an East-West one. Indeed Vancouver journalist Patrick Neagle recalled that in the years following World War Two, a veritable “show business railway” existed which moved American performers from Las Vegas, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle northwards up the Pacific coast to Vancouver (Ross 2005, 1).

Vancouver's relationship with American performers and with American jazz-oriented music began early on in its civic history. In 1914, less than twenty years after the city's founding, the Original Creole Orchestra, featuring trumpet legend Freddie Keppard, appeared at the Pantages Theatre on Hastings Street in Vancouver's bustling east end (Miller 1997, 24–25). In September

of 1916, the group returned, now billed as Johnson's Creole Band, and was described in the local press as;

...a headline attraction...[which is] where they belong, for a more novel and amusing turn has not been to the Pantages circuit for some time. [The band consisted of] six instrumentalists of ability and class...[and] the selections were well rendered, even though a trifle weird at times, the various pieces in the band though [account] for this as there is a trombone, a cornet, a clarinet [sic], a violin, a bass fiddle, and a guitar. The musical numbers are all of the latest syncopated class and keep one's feet busy on the floor (*Vancouver Sun*, September 7, 1916, 3).

These engagements took place at one of Vancouver's two outlets for the popular North American Pantages vaudeville circuit which, under the direct management of George Pantages himself, competed directly with the Imperial, Avenue, Crystal, Royal, and Orpheum theatres, all of which occupied a narrow corridor along Hastings and Pender streets in Vancouver's east end.⁴³ Taking full advantage of its position at the heart of Vancouver's thriving commercial centre, the area also cultivated innumerable pool halls, beer parlours, hotels, and cafes. It was surely no accident that Vancouver's first automatic traffic lights were established at the intersection of Main Street and Hastings (Morley 1969, 169).

In addition to the Original Creole Orchestra, these Vancouver theatres hosted many early jazz performers, including the "Largest Jazz Band in the World," a twenty-five piece orchestra comprised of recently demobilized American servicemen (*Vancouver Sun*, October 12, 1919, 26), and the Jazz Hounds, a duo comprised of pianist Shelton Brooks and "clarionettist syncopationist" [sic] Horace George, who opened at Vancouver's Orpheum (*Vancouver Sun*, March 21, 1920, 25). Brooks was a songwriter of considerable fame at the time, having

⁴³Along both Hastings and Pender streets between Georgia Street to the west and Main Street in the east.

composed such popular tunes as “Darktown Strutter’s Ball,” “Walkin’ the Dog,” and “Some of These Days”—the last made famous by Sophie Tucker, who had visited Vancouver in 1914.

Perhaps most famously, Vancouver’s east end would play host to Ferdinand “Jelly Roll” Morton, one of the early giants of jazz. Speaking to Alan Lomax in 1938, Morton recalled that,

...on the streets of Seattle I ran into...an old New Orleans sporting-life friend...now a big time gambler...[who] brought me into those circles and I started losing money. About the time [I] got down to my last dime Will Bowman asked me to bring a band into his cabaret in Vancouver, Canada (Lomax 1950, 170).

In operation since 1917 to service the booming commercial corridor along Hastings Street, the Patricia Hotel and Cabaret passed into the hands of William Bowman on August 12, 1919 (Vancouver Public Archives: Register 190–1947 #385), and by September of the same year, had installed a group which included both Morton and Oscar Holden.⁴⁴ According to Morton, although the band was capable, “...somehow that cabaret didn’t do so good,” suggesting that “...folks there [in Vancouver] didn’t understand American-style cabarets....” (Lomax 1950, 170) In any case, Morton soon took leave of Bowman and the Patricia.

Though it’s clear that he later led a trio at the nearby Regent Hotel, problems arise with regard to the strict chronology of Morton’s stay in Vancouver. Both Alan Lomax’s work *Mister Jelly Roll: The Fortunes of Jelly Roll Morton, New Orleans Creole and Inventor Of Jazz* (Lomax 1950) and the Library of Congress interview tapes upon which it was based seem to suggest a strict progression from the Patricia down the street to the Regent at 162 East Hastings. However, contradictory evidence does exist. Lawrence Gushee, in his article “A Preliminary Chronology

⁴⁴ It is unclear who the leader of the Patricia group was at this time, with credit alternately going to Morton and to Oscar Holden, a pianist and clarinet player who would settle in Seattle. Morton, as is to be expected, indicated that he was the leader, though evidence from contemporary sources suggest that Holden was the leader, albeit on clarinet, rather than his main instrument, piano (Miller 1997, 67).

of the Early Career of Jelly Roll Morton” (Gushee 1985), indicates that by June of 1920 Morton was in Seattle, and worked his way as far south as Portland, Oregon before returning to Vancouver in June of 1921. Such a series of events is corroborated by “Ragtime” Billy Tucker who, in a letter to the black newspaper *The Chicago Defender* dated July 31, 1920, reported that “...Kid Jelly Roll and Ralph Love, the Whirlwind Entertainers, are doing their stuff in Portland en route to the Entertainer’s Café in Seattle.” Regardless, by January of 1921, Morton was back in Vancouver and employed at the Regent Hotel on Hastings Street at the helm of a more economic trio (Gushee 1985, 405).

From 1920 through 1922, Will Bowman’s Patricia Cabaret boasted several entertainers in addition to Jelly Roll Morton, among them vocalist Ada “Bricktop” Smith, whose biography *Bricktop* (Bricktop 1984), lends some insight into the temper of the Patricia club. “Bowman’s biggest customers, and I do mean big,” relates Bricktop, “were Swedish lumberjacks who came into Vancouver on their time off...[and] pretty soon they’d be drunk and ready to fight” (Bricktop 1984, 72). Such fights were apparently not restricted to the patrons, as Bricktop herself suffered a broken leg in one such melee on New Year’s Eve of 1920. Rumours of such activity no doubt made their way outside the clubs and eventually found their way into the mainstream, which may explain how a music which had earlier been lauded in the press for its ability to “stir real enthusiasm in a world wearied by a long and ghastly war” (*Vancouver Sun*, September 28, 1919, 38), was now considered a dynamic nuisance which ought, as in Portland to the south, to be banned. Jazz, along with its popular dance companion the “shimmy,” were seen by many as the “twin sisters of corruption” (*Vancouver Sun*, September 28, 1919, 38).

The East End

The eastern portion of downtown Vancouver which has been alternately known as the East End and as Strathcona (after 1950), stretches roughly from Main street eastwards to Campbell Ave, and from Powell Street near the Ballantyne wharf in Coal Harbour southwards to Prior Street where its borders stood near the rail yards and False Creek (Compton 2010, 140, note 2) (see Figure 1). This area, which encompassed Chinatown, Japantown, and a largely black neighbourhood known as Hogan's Alley, was home to Vancouver's largest concentration of working class citizens. B.C. Electric had its headquarters on Hastings Street, and the bustling rail and dockyards lay only a few blocks away. Indeed, so great was the concentration of working class citizens in the East End that in 1923, Louis D. Taylor, soon to become one of the city's most colourful and beloved mayors, lost an election as a power failure prevented the bulk of his blue-collar electorate from reaching the polls due to the immobilization of the streetcar network (Morley 1969, 165).

Something of a rough and tumble area, the East End had as many as ten thousand on the relief rolls in 1920, and crime was both casual and common (Morley 1969, 152; Marlatt and Itter, 2011). Gambling, prostitution, and bootlegging were rampant, and the sighting of dead bodies in the alleyways was a common occurrence (Marlatt and Itter, 2011, 74–77). In 1920 alone there were an average of sixty-seventy auto thefts each month as well as the advent of motorized hold-up gangs; 108 bootleggers were raided, and \$9750 in liquor fines collected, a combination which prompted the implementation of armed street patrols in the winter of 1922 and, by 1925, regular police prowl-car service (Morley 1969, 152).

The cosmopolitan East End saw the bulk of Vancouver's labouring ethnic minorities living

within blocks of one another, often in cultural ghettos perhaps best illustrated by the district known as Chinatown and the stretch of Cordova Street known popularly as Japantown. Though Vancouver's largest ethnic concentration was Asiatic, there were as well considerable numbers of ethnic Europeans, East Indians, and a reasonably large Jewish population residing in and around the bustling Hastings Street corridor. Additionally, Vancouver's small black population was centred around a small, yet vital enclave known as Hogan's Alley (see Figure 1). Though little remains of early black history in Vancouver, it seems clear that a community of blacks was centred in the East End by at least 1923, at which time a group of black Christians purchased the Norwegian Lutheran Church at 823 Jackson Ave and established the Fountain Chapel, an African Methodist Episcopal Church, flanking onto Hogan's Alley. Nora Hendrix, maternal grandmother to guitarist Jimi Hendrix, was among those who helped to establish the church, and while it is clear that a strong community existed, the congregation still relied upon pastors imported from south of the border (Compton 2010, 88-90 and Marlatt and Itter 2011, 84-88).

Despite the strength and vitality of the black community in Vancouver, it has remained a relatively small sub-set of the population. Due to World War Two, no census numbers were recorded in the 1940s, but by 1951 the black population for all of British Columbia was listed as just 438, and by 1961, at 572 individuals (Winks 1971, 286). Despite the fact that more than half of the province's black population resided in Vancouver, in 1951 it accounted for less than 2% of the city's total population, and in 1961 for less than 3% of the total population.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ See 9th Census of Canada (1951) Population Vol 1, section 32-2 and 1961 Census of Canada Population Vol 1, Part 2, Section 5 (1.2-5), Ethnic Groups 38-17.

It should be noted that these figures perhaps underrepresent the black population as many black residents may not have self identified as black (or negro as the Census was worded at the time), but rather as British or French. Additionally, some 25 379 individuals for the province of British Columbia were listed as undeclared or "other" with regard to racial classification in 1951, and some 5 590 residents of Vancouver were so described in 1961.

Hogan's Alley was not at all an exclusively black neighbourhood: it was also home to Italians, Asians, First Nations people and others. It seems most correct to say that Hogan's Alley had a black community within it, and one that was conspicuous enough that some do refer to the neighbourhood itself as a racially black-identified space. (Compton 2010, 98)

While some *Chicago Defender* reports seem to suggest an atmosphere of relaxed toleration toward blacks in Vancouver, others indicate that racial barriers to black entertainers were indeed encountered North of the border. Some black American musicians would refer glowingly to Canada as “..like coming home to your mother's arms...[because] [t]he white musicians wouldn't let anyone call us those names” (Gilmore 1982, 78). Yet others made reference to the existence of racism, specifically with regard to the actions of Canadian branches of the American Federation of Musicians, many of which, like Local 406 in Montreal, ceased to accept black members during the depression (Miller 1997, 78 and 148; Scott 2006). Racism encountered by black musicians in Canada may have paled in direct comparison to the intolerance of the Jim Crow South and the politically hostile environment engendered by the Northern industrial cities which culminated in widespread race riots in the 1910's (Ogren 1989, 26), however the many positive statements issued by musicians regarding the state of racial tolerance in Canada sprang most often from experiences of *relative* toleration, rather than from freedom from prejudice.

Indeed a brief examination of the convoluted evolution of British Columbia's liquor laws reveals that throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s black patrons of the province's beer parlours were denied service for no reason other than their race. One can easily surmise that for each case brought before the courts and therefore written into the record, many more went unreported. Interestingly (though not surprisingly), the issue often had less to do with single men of colour than it did with social proscriptions on mixed race couples. Though there was no law banning

black patrons from beer parlours or outlawing mixed race couples, beer parlour owners were free to deny service to whomever they chose on a case by case basis, and mixed race couples were routinely barred from establishments, many of which cited widespread discomfort amongst their patrons over the issue as a rationale. The parlours tended to define a “mixed race couple” as a white woman with a man of colour, while women of colour with white men and mixed-race couples which included no white parties were of little or no concern (Campbell 2001, 84–86).

Such discrimination against persons of colour under the guise of freedom of commerce was widespread, and it was not until 1956 that the Hotel Georgia famously admitted Louis Armstrong, becoming the first of the major Vancouver hotels to accommodate blacks (Shore 1998, 36). Though this move by the Hotel Georgia is often cited as progressive, it is worth remembering that for decades prior to 1956 black patrons had been routinely denied admittance by the Hotel Georgia as much as by other major hotels (including the Hotel Vancouver).⁴⁶ Blacks needing overnight accommodation were forced to book at the smaller downtown hotels, the east end, and the motels out along the Kingsway strip (Ross 2009, 34 and 66–67).

Following the high profile beating death of a black longshoreman at the hands of white police officers in 1952, the Negro Citizens League was formed in an attempt to combat anti-black racism in Vancouver, a move that was followed in 1958 by the British Columbia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (Lambertson 2004). Though the black population in Vancouver has perhaps always been small (currently it sits at just over 20,000), it seems clear that it was also a vibrant and highly organized community which faced discrimination despite

⁴⁶ This issue is clearly not cut and dried as there was no official policy of segregation in Vancouver. The *Vancouver Province* reported on April 16, 1940 that Ellington was lodged at the Hotel Vancouver, and trumpeter James Carney recalled meeting both Ellington and Billy Strayhorn at the Hotel Georgia in the early 1950s (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

Canada's tolerance relative to contemporary conditions in America. However, it needs to be said that although the state of racial toleration toward blacks in Canada has been overstated at times, it was the case that in large part, the overt and officially sanctioned racism in British Columbia tended toward those of Asiatic descent rather than toward African Canadians.⁴⁷

Jazz in the 1930s and 1940s

The 1920s and 1930s saw the slow demise of vaudeville and a concurrent maturation of the entertainment industry through talking films, wider dissemination of phonograph records, the advent of stronger radio signals, and in music, the evolution of jazz from ragtime to early swing. New venues in the city sprang up to take advantage of these new developments including the Commodore Ballroom (1929–present), Alma Academy (c. 1930s), and the Alexandra Ballroom (c. 1930s - 1940s); the Hotel Georgia (1937–present), the Panorama Roof at the Hotel Vancouver (1939–present); and such nightclubs as the Cave (1937–1981), Palomar Supper Club (1937–1951), Penthouse Cabaret (1947–present) and Isy's Supper Club (1958–1976), all of which played host to lavish floorshows and big-name American singing talent on a regular basis. In the East end of the city smaller cabarets such as the Patricia Hotel (1917–present), the Smiling Buddha (1953–1989), and Mandarin Gardens (c. 1945) provided less formal opportunities for an evening's entertainment. Most of these venues hosted house orchestras of varying sizes, tasked with accompanying the floor show, providing music for dancing, and backing up whatever travelling talent may have been booked. It was, at least for a time, relatively easy for a capable

⁴⁷ For example see the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885 which imposed a head tax on all immigrants from China and the later Chinese Immigration Act (1923) which prohibited most Asian immigration to Canada, and was only rescinded in 1947 as recognition of Chinese Canadian contributions to World War Two. Prior to the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946, only British subjects were entitled to Canadian citizenship, a rule which served to bar most Asian-Canadians from citizenship.

musician to find work in Vancouver.⁴⁸

By the late 1930s the swing dance craze was so well entrenched in Vancouver that both the Palomar Ballroom and the Beacon Theatre hosted competitions with prizes as high as one hundred dollars, and images of tuxedoed and gowned youths stepping out in lindy-hop fashion graced the pages of the *Vancouver Daily Province*'s coverage of 1939's debutante balls (*Vancouver Daily Province*, December 9, 1939, pg. 9). Indeed, such was the apparent popularity of swing music at the time that the *Vancouver Daily Province* ran a front page interview with Viennese conductor Walter Herbert which sought to assuage fears about the perceived impropriety of the new entertainment. "Swing music ... may now be taken up by the more conservative set" declared the article's opening line, which continued;

Walter Herbert, world-famed as chief conductor of the Vienna Civic Opera gave [swing] his endorsement as he sat in the lobby of the Hotel Georgia today. "Swing—I like swing" he said. 'It also has an influence on classical music Its rhythms have a definite effect. Look at Stravinsky, he employs the tempo of modern jazz in some passages of his work. (*Vancouver Daily Province*, August 20, 1938, pg.1).

Bandleader, arranger, saxophonist, and recording studio operator Al Reush recalled the hectic schedule that the popularity of swing and other dance music afforded working musicians throughout the 1930s:

Wednesday, Friday and Saturday nights, this was when we played the average ballroom. When I came out here in 1934, the Alexander was big, which was later known as Danceland, at the corner of Robson and Hornby, and a fellow named Len Chamberlin had the band there. Then there was the Alma Academy, which was out at Broadway and Alma, on the northeast side of Alma...Stan Patton and his band played there. There was the Hollyburn Pavillion...there was also the White Rose, and a little nightclub, the El Morocco above the Capitol Theatre. There was the Commodore...a very popular place. The Cave of course, late 1930's. The Palomar...for burlesque, there were theatres downtown. The Beacon Theatre had a

⁴⁸ This was repeatedly brought up in interviews with musicians such as Lance Harrison, Dal Richards, and Bobby Hales (AFM local president at the time of the interview).

sort of burlesque, and there were two other theatres on Hastings Street. They had strip shows, and old drunks were sitting in the front rows. The Beacon was a really good spot, a lot of the musicians used to go there because a lot of the big bands used to play there...the Beacon was located at Carrall and Hastings, right near the old interurban station. Woodward's was on the corner, and it was across from the Army and Navy...We got to meet a lot of the musicians that come [sic] from out of town...but the burlesque places, they were actually in the sleazy part of town. (Al Reush, May 1st, 1999).

As the entertainment industry heated up in Vancouver's downtown core, musical entertainment in the less affluent east end kept pace. Austin Phillips, a black guitarist who had moved west from Alberta's Athabaska Landing, arrived in Vancouver sometime in 1935 and recalled the vibrant and bawdy nature of the East End during the period.

Oh the things that used to happen there!...There was nothing but parties in Hogan's Alley night time, anytime, and Sundays all day. You could go by at 6 or 7 o'clock in the morning, and you could hear jukeboxes going, you [could] hear somebody hammering [on] the piano, [or] playing the guitar, or hear some fighting, or see some fighting, screams, everybody carrying on (Austin Phillips in Marlatt and Itter 2011, 140–141).

In addition to the stable combos employed by the Scat Inn, Buddy's Beer Garden or one of the other hotels or cafes, musicians in the East End often plied their trade without benefit of contract or guaranteed wage:

...I used to go from one place to another playing guitar. They never paid you a salary. They had what you call a kitty, a little tin box with a horn like a phonograph on it. People wanted to tip you...a buck, 10 cents, whatever it was...they'd throw it in the kitty. That was your money. That's what you made....I was making money going from place to place....There used to be a bunch of chop suey houses on Pender Street, always has been, and I would go from restaurant to restaurant and play from booth to booth. I've seen myself make as high as \$25 a night in those days. And then go back down and go into the bootlegging places again (Austin Phillips in Marlatt and Itter, 2011. 180–184).

As he traveled from restaurant to restaurant, and from bootlegging joint to beer parlour working for tips, Phillips would play the popular songs of the day. An evening's repertoire may have

included such tunes as “East of the Sun, West of the Moon,” “Am I Blue,” and “Paper Moon,” in addition to jazz numbers such as “Don’t Get Around Much Anymore,” “Beale Street Blues,” and “St. Louis Blues.” Phillips recalled one Mrs. Pryor, a large black woman who would visit the alley every few months, bringing with her a leather sack full of fifty-cent pieces and silver dollars.

...she used to weigh 350 pounds...and she would set me on her knee, say “Play my song! You come on and you play “Maggie.” I didn’t know ‘Maggie,’ I’d just sing what I knew of it, and every time I’d sing [it] for her, she’d give me a silver dollar. And curse me out, curse me out all the time! “Oh, play me that song ‘Maggie’ again!” Probably have to play it for her about fifteen times a night, but if you got through, you got a dollar for every time you’d sing it (Austin Phillips in Marlatt and Itter, 2011. 183).

In such a manner, Phillips and those like him were able to eke out a sufficient, if not significant, living during the depths of the depression. The colourful Mrs. Pryor aside, the ability of musicians to make ends meet often rested upon the largesse of those members of Vancouver’s more affluent circles who visited the East End to indulge in liquor, gambling, and music of a less polished variety than that offered uptown at the Commodore, the Cave, or the Palomar. Even those establishments that declined to operate as gambling halls were more than willing to participate in the Alley’s number one industry, bootlegging.

Every place in Hogan’s Alley bootlegged. If you could afford a high-class place, you went to the Scat Inn, [or] you went to Buddy’s Beer Garden. He served beer and he’d serve hard stuff—rum, gin, whisky (Austin Phillips in Marlatt and Itter, 2011, 183).

Liquor and the Law

Vancouver and its regional districts have had a tumultuous relationship with the regulation of alcohol. Still very much a frontier town in the late 1800s, saloons in British Columbia, which

dispensed all forms of alcohol, had remained open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week until as late as 1900. In an attempt to break from this rough and tumble approach, by 1911 the B.C government had amended the legislation to require that saloons be housed in hotels, a move which served to curtail the number of such establishments. In 1916, when the move toward temperance was successfully linked with propaganda in support of the war effort, the prohibition of alcohol was successfully, if briefly, enacted (Campbell 2001, 16–18). Though the purchase and consumption of alcohol for recreational use was illegal, it was permitted for medicinal purposes, and could be obtained via medical prescription. It seems that this loophole was widely exploited, with one doctor known to have written some four thousand prescriptions for alcohol each month (Campbell 2001, 18). Saloons stayed open through the brewing of “near” or non-alcoholic beer and through the sale of whatever bootlegged product escaped the attention of the inspectors. As we have seen, the bootlegging of alcohol became something of a cottage industry in Vancouver’s East End (Marlatt and Itter, 2011) and it seems from all accounts that prohibition in Vancouver was honoured in the breach more than in the observance. Ada Bricktop Smith recalled of Prohibition in Vancouver that;

... it was the craziest law. You can’t stop people from doing what they want to do. If you try, you just make them want to do it more ... Prohibition made a lot of people *start* drinking, and it didn’t make anybody stop ... There was no Prohibition in British Columbia, but the liquor laws were so complicated that Vancouver was what we called a dry town. Outside of the private clubs and speakeasies, the only place you could buy a drink was at someone’s house. It was like those after-hours places in Chicago, only in Vancouver you could buy a drink night or day at someone’s house ... so [my roommate] and I started selling a shot of whiskey for fifteen cents, or two for a quarter (Bricktop 1984, 71).

That alcohol was easily accessible in Vancouver despite legislation to the contrary was evidently common knowledge, as reflected in a letter to the *Chicago Defender* wherein, referring

to Vancouver, the correspondent is moved to state that one is able to “...crook [their] elbow and never be molested” (*Chicago Defender*, July 21, 1920, pg. 4). Indeed, the ever widening gap between Vancouver’s ostensible lack of alcohol at nightclubs and the less than sobering reality would prompt several attempts at a police crackdown, eventual licensing and regulation in the late 1960's, and a wealth of urban legends.

The year 1920 saw the repeal of prohibition in favour of controlled alcohol sales through government outlets, though the cost of a yearly permit to purchase alcohol was roughly equivalent to an average day’s wages for a blue collar worker and did little to eliminate bootlegging and surreptitious drinking at ostensibly “dry” establishments (Campbell 2011, 19). Though drinking in public was still expressly illegal (including saloons, hotels, restaurants, cafes), private clubs were able to skirt these rules and there was a sudden boom in such establishments, memberships to which were often freely and easily obtained. These private members’ clubs were granted business licenses by the city and by 1923 a separate club license had been established (Campbell 2001, 20) which reflects their popularity. As the clubs were considered private, rather than public spaces, members were permitted to store and consume personal alcohol on the premises but the club itself could not sell alcohol, and all of the booze on the premises was presumed to have been dutifully and legally purchased from government outlets.

The establishment of the “beer parlour” in 1925 enabled British Columbians to drink in public again, but the rules governing such consumption were austere. Beer parlours were forbidden from serving anything other than beer (including soft drinks), there was no stand-up bar, and patrons, who had to be seated at tables, were limited to one drink at a time. No food was served,

and no entertainment was to be provided or encouraged. Though women were permitted to enter beer parlours, they had to do so by utilizing a separate entrance for women, which gave single women or women with male escorts access to an area of the parlour which was partitioned for their use. Ladies had to keep to this partitioned space, and single men were strongly discouraged from crossing to the ladies' side, an issue which was raised with more urgency if race entered the equation (Campbell 2001, 12-15 and 84–86).

In 1947 the government amended the legislation to allow licensed private clubs to sell liquor to members, thereby providing a legal alternative to the beer parlour for the purposes of social drinking. The passage of this legislation prompted a mammoth upswing in membership at a wide variety of private members' establishments. The Pacific Athletic Club on Howe Street, for example, could boast three thousand members by 1948 (Campbell 2001, 112). The sale of liquor at public venues however, remained illegal.

While nearby Washington State had allowed for the sale of beer and wine in restaurants since 1934 and for the establishment of cocktail lounges in 1948, such bastions of “middle class respectability” as the Commodore Ballroom, Palomar Supper Club, Cave, and Hotel Vancouver existed, as did their east end counterparts, as “bottle clubs.” In what was to be a Vancouver hallmark until the mid-1960s, citizens out for an evening at venues across the city were required to smuggle in their own alcohol, slipping it into overpriced set-ups of glasses, mixer, and ice provided by the establishment and stashing their bottles quickly in the event of a raid. Places to quickly hide one's illegal alcohol were common innovations—table cloths at the Commodore Ballroom on Granville street had pockets sewn into the the underside hem for the storage of patron's liquor bottles, and at least one well known bass player had a trap door on the back of his

instrument for the purpose (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013). At the Hotel Vancouver, the well-to-do patrons at the Panorama Roof were cued to an impending liquor raid by the band's sudden adoption of *Roll Out the Barrel*. When the police arrived, recalled bandleader Dal Richards, the bell captain would phone the Panorama Roof and the band would play *Roll Out the Barrel*, giving patrons enough time to hide their bottles before the liquor squad made it out of the elevator (Dal Richards, June 14, 1999). Likewise, the Penthouse Cabaret on Seymour employed a rooftop spotter whose job was to keep an eye out for police cars descending en masse, a backup system just in case another club hadn't phoned in to warn that the liquor squad was on its way (Chapman 2012, 54).

Vancouver did not receive further significant changes to its liquor regulations until 1954, when the Sylvia Hotel was granted the first license to operate a cocktail lounge, an attempt to make 'possible respectable drinking in respectable places' according to the *Vancouver Sun* (Campbell 1991, 120). The cocktail lounge was still a heavily proscribed space however, and while bar service was available again for the first time in some thirty-years, standing at the bar was prohibited (bar stools had to be utilized), women still had to receive service at tables rather than the bar if unaccompanied, separate booths were not permitted, clear sight lines had to be afforded throughout the room, and the venue had to be "as brightly lit as the average kitchen" (a minimum of 3 foot candles) (Campbell 1991, 120). Cocktail lounges were also prohibited from selling draught beer, and this emphasis upon more expensive mixed drinks limited the appeal of cocktail lounges to those of a certain socio-economic status (Campbell 1991, 122).

The legislation which allowed for the landmark opening of the cocktail lounge at the Sylvia had created four new categories of liquor licence: a dining room licence which allowed for the

serving of wine and beer with meals; a dining lounge licence which allowed for the serving of all liquors and was reserved for cabarets and select restaurants; a lounge licence which permitted for the sale of all types of alcohol without meals; and a public house licence which replaced the beer parlour licence and allowed for the sale of beer in establishments not attached to hotels (Campbell 1991, 118). Despite the existence of these new categories, most nightclubs and dance halls remained unlicensed as the government granted the overwhelming bulk of the new permits to businesses housed in hotels. Indeed up until 1965, only three Vancouver cabarets which existed outside of hotels had been granted dining lounge licences by the province. The Cave Supper Club was one of those granted an early licence (1955), however “short hours, meal service, space requirements, and a mandatory cover charge hampered the success of the Cave” following its licensing. In addition the new licence prevented the club from being rented out by private parties who wished to bring in their own liquor (Campbell 1991, 127). Though they faced the threat of police raids, unlicensed bottle clubs could operate more freely and with a higher profit margin than those that successfully applied for legal status, and the bottle club remained firmly entrenched in Vancouver’s nightlife until as late as 1968 (Campbell 1991, 129). In no small measure, the freedom that co-operative jazz clubs such as the Cellar extended to patrons seeking entertainment, company, and a bottle of whisky was a large part of their wider appeal.

The 1940s and 1950s

With Britain’s declaration of war on September 3, 1939, followed by Canada’s own declaration on September 10th, many musicians abandoned their nightclub and orchestra positions in order to enlist. At the same time, hundreds of new jobs sprang up to entertain the

thousands of servicemen and women across country shipping out, returning home, or spending leave. Many young musicians who would ordinarily have had to wait for years to work in a professional setting (such as Vancouver's Phil Nimmons, age 17) suddenly found themselves in demand. Additionally, many of those older musicians who declined enlistment or were excluded on the basis of age had their careers extended, bringing valuable and steadying experience to orchestras which played on with the bulk of their regular musicians now in uniform. Recalls Dal Richards, rendered ineligible for service due to his eyesight, "It was a farce. You'd have some sixteen year old kid sitting in the section next to a sixty year old" (Dal Richards, June 14, 1999).

For many, service in military bands provided invaluable training in sight reading, preparing a generation of players for post-war orchestras and studio work. However, for some young musicians exposed overseas to the sounds of bebop and other forms of modern jazz, and who returned to a post-war atmosphere in which painting, dance, literature, and music all seemed to be in upheaval, the absence of a venue which reflected these attitudes was stifling. While there were myriad musical offerings on a given evening in Vancouver during the late 1940s and early 1950s, none was reflective of the musical changes being wrought in the wake of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk and the rest of the post-war beboppers.

While established mainstream jazz artists such as Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong were presented with some frequency at venues such as the Cave and Isy's during the 1940s and 1950s, the modern jazz which came to Vancouver was limited to the infrequent visits of such American touring acts as Norman Granz' Jazz at the Philharmonic. Such touring jazz groups were usually presented by the Vancouver New Jazz Society, which, co-founded by radio personality Bob Smith, presented concerts at the Denman (later Georgia) Auditorium. When not presenting

touring artists, these concerts, often on Sunday afternoons, drew heavily on musicians regularly employed by the CBC and major downtown night clubs, such as the Chris Gage Trio, vocalist Eleanor Collins, and guitarist Ray Norris. These concerts served to reinforce the musical hierarchy in Vancouver, providing repeated employment and exposure to a handful of musicians.

... [the] Chris Gage trio, Jimmy Whiteman and Cuddles Johnson, Stan Johnson, were everywhere. And when I was a kid, my mom used to take me down to the Orpheum Theatre, to the Eaton's Good Deed club, which was like a Saturday morning, you'd go down for cartoons ... and serials, and a big show, which always featured the Chris Gage trio. You know, who looked like they'd just gotten out of a coffin, who were probably up all night and then did this gig. And this same trio would show up everywhere. Chris seemed to be everywhere. And he'd also backup ... like Lennie Niehaus would come up and ... the Vancouver New Jazz Society would bring up people from LA, and that was the first working unit. And it was, gosh, you know, oh no, here we go again with the Chris Gage trio (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

Though professionally presented, for those young musicians captivated by the recent developments detailed in *DownBeat* and heard on albums ordered into Vancouver record stores, the music left something to be desired.

[T]hey used to have jazz concerts at the Georgia Auditorium, or the Denman Auditorium. It was the same building, but someone kept changing the names. It was at the corner of Georgia and Denman, right? And every now and again there'd be a jazz concert held there by an organization called the Vancouver New Jazz Society. So, I'd only been here a very short length of time and I used to go down there to see what was going on, and I just thought it stank ... I mean, the playing was excellent. It was absolutely immaculate. And that was the trouble, you know? Four bar solos for everybody and nobody made a mistake, ever. And the arrangements ... they kept churning out the same charts every time (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

Faced with such a musical climate and inspired by post-war developments in jazz as exemplified by Charlie Parker and Miles Davis, a group of young jazz musicians in Vancouver came together to establish a space in which to enact jazz in ways that were not otherwise possible.

The Wailhouse

In the years following Word War Two, a group of young musicians in Vancouver gradually came together bound by their interest in bebop and modern jazz, their exclusion from employment in the established studio and night club scenes, an affinity for the emerging counterculture, and above all, the need for a place to practice and rehearse. Most of these players were from British Columbia and had either grown up in Vancouver or had drifted there from the Island or the Interior following graduation from high school. Pianist Al Neil, the oldest of the group, had returned from service in Europe where he had survived the beaches of Normandy, and guitarist (later bassist) Tony Clitheroe had emigrated from England following his service in an RAF band during the war.

The popularity of bebop in Vancouver was, from all accounts, quite low through the late 1940s and early 1950s, and while magazines such as *DownBeat* and *Metronome* were reasonably accessible, the records they advertised and reviewed had to be special-ordered into the local record store(s). Both pianist Al Neil and saxophonist Jim Johnson recalled that it was the record store Western Music which provided the means for many of the initial connections between these players to be made.

We started from nothing. We just had this record store. We met there. It didn't have that many customers, either, come to think of it. But John [Dawe], myself, Jimmy Johnson ... it took a few trips to the record store before we kind of realized that from what the clerk was saying, he'd say, hey there was another guy ordering that record, and so we figured it out, and it basically ended up about 4 or 5 guys, and they were the guys that more or less started the Cellar. (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

The store stocked records, sheet music, and instruments, and provided a long-running day job for Johnson.

Oh, well I worked at Western Music. That was one of the day jobs that I got. I was there for several years, and yeah ... I guess I met [Al Neil] at Western Music, though I more associate him with later things at the Cellar club (Jim Johnson, August 14, 2013).

John Dawe, a trumpet and valve trombone player, had moved from Victoria to Vancouver with his family in 1943. Dawe, who first met Al Neil around 1949, would form particularly close friendships with drummer Bill Boyle, saxophonist Jim Johnson, and guitarist / bassist Tony Clitheroe, and would be an influential member of the group which eventually formed and operated the Cellar.

Entrepreneur and multi-instrumentalist Ken Hole moved to Vancouver from Nanaimo in 1952, enrolling at UBC where he met saxophonist and law student Walley Lightbody. The ensuing friendship would prove to be perhaps the most important for the formation of the Cellar in Vancouver and the later Scene Club in Victoria, as it was through Ken's entrepreneurial energies that the projects got started, and through Lightbody's legal acuity that they were able to navigate the necessary red tape at City Hall to obtain the requisite permits to operate. While in high school on Vancouver Island, Hole had been busy performing in a variety of orchestras and dance bands, often with players like trumpeter Carse Sneddon, who would go on to significant careers in Vancouver's studio and club scene. Unsatisfied with the musical opportunities he found as a student at UBC, Hole began to organize his own ensembles, and to make what contacts he could with likeminded young players. Through these efforts, other members of what was to become the Cellar were introduced to one another. Tony Clitheroe, who though now known as a bassist was playing guitar at the time, was introduced to the scene through Ken Hole.

I met Ken pretty early when I came here. I can't quite remember how that happened. I think he knew the people ... I rented a suite in a house up on Dunbar

somewhere, and they knew him, I think. And they ... I guess they heard me practicing on the guitar, and I guess they told Ken or something, and he came up sometime and we played for a while. I think that's what happened. And so I started doing these strange gigs with Ken, and then he set up the big band and everything. (Tony Clitheroe, August 27, 2013)

Through Hole, Clitheroe also found a day job, working in a car insurance office operated by Ken Hole's father. It would be the last day job Clitheroe would take for several decades, as he became able to support himself entirely from musical pursuits around 1956, a situation brought about in large part by his switch from guitar to acoustic bass, competent players of which were in short supply in Vancouver at the time (Tony Clitheroe, August 27, 2013 and Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

Dubbed the Ken Hole Big Band, the ensemble played engagements at UBC where it was known as the Varsity Dance Band (despite few of its members being enrolled as students), and took work wherever it could find it. Eventually, Hole booked the band on several tours to Vancouver Island where they worked from as far north as Campbell River to Victoria in the south.

I [managed] a restaurant in Kerrisdale called the Kerry Dale Caterers. It had a big convention hall in the back, so I said by god I'm going to put together a band, so I started with these guys here [points at photo] and that's the start of it [the Ken Hole Big Band]. And we started rehearsing during the week, and I bought up an old library, from a guy that had quit. Had about 50 tunes. And then a lot of the good musicians that we had in our group had made arrangements. And they gave me the arrangements if I would use them. So we started rehearsing those arrangements. So we had our own sound. We weren't copying Harry James or Duke Ellington or anybody else ... that's how that band started, and then we took that to the University and it became the Varsity Dance Band. It was the first dance band at UBC. And we played all the big dances and everything out there. And we went on tour. I organized a tour up and down Vancouver Island. We did it about two or three times (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

However successful, the Ken Hole Big Band did not fully satisfy the desire to create a sense of camaraderie amongst the younger musicians in the area, and gave little opportunity for either personal practice time, or for musical expression in a small group format. The big band format also limited the number of musicians who could actively participate, and there were many more wishing to play than there were chairs in the ensemble.

In the mid 1950s, there were few places for musicians to play jazz; clubs such as Isy's and the Cave tended toward floor shows and dance-band music where jazz expression was usually limited to a few bars worth of soloing on some of the more spirited charts. While venues such as the Commodore, Panorama Roof, and Palomar Supper Club specialized in music for dancing, it generally took the form of large dance-bands playing music quite removed from the bebop which was the main area of focus for these younger players. After hours, the main venue for informal jam sessions was the infamous Penthouse on Seymour street. Run by the Philliponi (or Filippone) brothers, the Penthouse was part athletic club, taxi stand, private bar, cabaret, and supper club, which kept notoriously late hours and was so prone to raids by the Vancouver Liquor Squad that it positioned a spotter on the roof to give advance warning of the police's arrival. Despite, or perhaps because of its colourful reputation, the Penthouse quickly became *the* spot in Vancouver during the 1950s for club owners, musicians, waitresses, bartenders, cab drivers, reporters, actors, off-duty policemen, dancers, and anyone who wanted a drink late at night to congregate (Chapman 2012, 43 and 54).

It was a sort of drinking, and bring your own bottle in a paper bag, and it was a I would describe it as a kind of social instrument for people to get together in the wee hours to get together and drink and talk and listen to jazz when there were, there was no ... that was otherwise not accessible. In other words, the classy joints like the Palomar and the Cave and Izzy's, and the Arctic Club ... they shut down at

I am, and they were also very expensive for most of us. But the Penthouse was very informal. As I recall there were like three stories or two stories, and there was a hang out for prostitutes. It certainly wasn't a brothel, but it was well known that if you wanted to connect, the place to be would be the Penthouse. It was a hangout for taxi drivers. And, you know, it did really have a social niche (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

It was at the Penthouse that Vancouver's working musicians could play informally, working on jazz repertoires which were unsuitable for their paid gigs earlier in the evening. Yet the sessions weren't open to any who cared to play, operating instead as something of an off-shoot from the nightclub scene for which the Penthouse was an unofficial clubhouse.

It was strictly jam session. I don't think they ever paid the musicians, the musicians would just go there and play whatever they wanted to. The reason the uptown [younger] guys never got a look-in [at these sessions] was that they really weren't as good musicians as the Fraser MacPhersons ... It was quite cliquey ... the guys who worked the commercial clubs, a lot of them were excellent jazz players, and they sort of had first dibs. And the customers didn't mind that at all. Nobody was screaming for Jim Carney to come up and play, you know (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

Faced with few opportunities to develop their musicianship and indulge their interest in jazz, in the fall of 1955 a group of approximately seven young jazz musicians pooled their resources to rent a house on River Road, just beneath the Fraser Street Bridge in Richmond.⁴⁹ Largely uninhabited, the mix of farmland and light industrial areas along the stretch of River Road near Mitchell Island yielded an unoccupied house at what was then 999 River Road, on the north-west corner of what is now the intersection of River Road and No. 5 Road in Richmond. Long unoccupied, the building's closest neighbour was the Doctor Ballard Dog Food factory which created a stench, but led to the type of sparsely populated area which was perfect for hosting late night sessions (Tony Clitheroe, November 29, 2012).

⁴⁹ Rendered obsolete by the newly constructed Knight Street Bridge, the Fraser Street Bridge was demolished in February, 1974.

The building had ample parking, and soon housed a scrounged player piano, a set of drums, and an acoustic bass. Entrepreneur and bassist Ken Hole was chiefly responsible for the organization of the effort, collecting post-dated cheques from the others involved to cover rent and expenses. Other key players in the establishment of the jam space, which would be quickly dubbed The Wailhouse, were pianists Al Neil and Fred Massey, saxophonist Dave Quarin, trumpeter James Carney, guitarist (later bassist) Tony Clitheroe, saxophonist Jim Johnson, guitarist Jim Kilburn, and saxophonist Walley Lightbody (see Figures 2–5).

I give Kenny Hole a lot of credit for a lot of these ideas. He was one of these guys that always had a smile on his face and was enthusiastic ... and could get that enthusiasm transmitted, and it became contagious, and so, I think he probably found this place, and everybody said “yeah, that’s a great idea” and it was ... one of those things where you’d go down there with your horn at midnight, or ten o’clock at night or whatever, and everybody would have a jam session (Walley Lightbody, December 13, 2012).

Though the experiment would be short lived, lasting only some six months before a tree was toppled in a wind storm and crushed the house, The Wailhouse would provide an essential framework upon which the Cellar was to be built, identifying a core group of young players who were both musically competent and dedicated to the creation of a space within which to practice their art and foster a sense of musical community.

Though the Wailhouse, being some distance from Vancouver, was primarily used by practicing musicians, many of them brought friends, girlfriends, and family members to sessions, and the space soon became a place to drink and socialize as well as a place to make music. Vancouver’s liquor laws were quite restrictive at the time, severely proscribing the places in which public liquor consumption was legal (Campbell 1991 and 2001), and a social space in

which to mix drinking and community with musical activity became instantly popular (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013 and Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

The Wailhouse also served as an invaluable place for young musicians to practice and experiment within a generally supportive community and without the pressure of performative expectations imposed by the presence of an “audience” who were not active participants in the scene. Tony Clitheroe, for example, who was a core member of the Cellar and later a sought-after musician on Vancouver’s commercial music scene, was able to transition from guitar to acoustic bass during the period of the Wailhouse’s existence.

I was getting really fed up with the electronic problems [on guitar] and Ken Hole used to usually play bass, if he was there...Hole very often was not there, but he used to leave his bass there. An old plywood bass. I think what actually started the thing [becoming a bass player], with him not being there, I used to play bass lines on the guitar, right? Because the 4 bottom strings on the guitar are the same tuning as the bass. So I’d play bass lines if nobody was there playing bass, and then one time his bass was there and one time I thought let’s see what this thing feels like, and I picked it up, and of course everything was more or less in the same place, just further away ... greater distances to travel, as it were. And I thought you know, it’s not much of a bass, but it was such a treat to play a purely acoustic instrument after all the battles I was having with the guitar (Tony Clitheroe, August 27, 2013).

Clitheroe’s switch from guitar to bass, made possible by the environment of the Wailhouse, proved to be an essential element to the later success of the Cellar. At the time there were few competent bass players in Vancouver, and Clitheroe’s adoption of the instrument allowed for regular jam sessions and for regular ensembles to be formed.

I figured that well, I’d sort of take one for the team, as it were, and play bass at the Cellar, because I was pretty well available, but I figured sooner or later a bass player’s probably going to show up and I’d be off the hook (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

A multi-instrumentalist who had spent the war years playing clarinet (and saxophone) in England with a RAF band, Clitheroe took no formal lessons on bass yet nonetheless went on to a highly regarded career on that instrument.

[W]hen I started playing bass I had an ear opening experience one night. As a matter of fact I was with John [Dawe]. We were up at his apartment. And I hadn't even thought about playing bass at this point ... I didn't want to play bass, I didn't even know what bass players really did....[A]ny gigs that I had after I came here there was either no bass player in the band at all, or if there was I couldn't hear him, or if I could hear him, I didn't want to hear him. That's what it was like. So one night we were over at John's apartment, there were three or four of us over there, and John put on this record called *Bags Groove*.⁵⁰ You know the one? It was Thelonious Monk on it and Miles, Percy Heath, and I think Kenny Clarke, and I think Sonny Rollins is on one side or something. You probably know that Miles wasn't fond of Thelonious comping behind him, right? So, there was a long solo on one of the tunes where Thelonious laid out and it was just whoever was playing drums, and Percy Heath, and Miles playing. And I'm listening to this, and it was like an epiphany of some kind, right? I thought "my god, is that what bass players do?" You know? The time feel that Percy Heath ... because he played right on top of the beat. And in fact, if anything, slightly ahead of it, and I was taking all of this in, right, and it was an amazing experience. It was like a music lesson during the course of one tune. And then when the thing started to look as though maybe I should play bass to sort of fill out the house rhythm section that we needed, I thought I think I know what I have to do, and know how to do it, now, and I can do it (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

Renowned bassist/pianist Don Thompson, who was a colleague of Clitheroe's in Vancouver for several years, confirms the influence, if not the process.

Tony as a bass player? He had a magic sound. I don't know how he did it, nobody knew how he did it, but he sounded as though he was playing with an amplifier, but he wasn't. He had a sound that was so strong, and this unbelievably perfect time feel. He didn't seem to want to play solos, I don't know why. I don't remember hearing him play very many solos. He didn't seem to want to play solos, but he could play time and he could out swing anybody around. He was an amazingly good bass player. He reminded me, if anybody, of Percy Heath. That's who he made me think of when I heard him play. That perfect time and perfect notes and perfect intonation and ... he really knew how to play the bass and make it work.

⁵⁰ Miles Davis. 1957. *Bags Groove* (Prestige, 1957)

Nobody else had a sound like him, either. And it wasn't just the bass. I mean, he had a nice bass, but it wasn't the bass, it was him. His left hand was really together, and he just never seemed to be working hard at it. But he just knew what to do to make it work. He was really, really good (Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

In no small way, the unfettered opportunity to practice, rehearse, and play at the Wailhouse enabled Clitheroe to make this shift from guitar to bass. Rent paying members all had keys to the space and were free to practice and rehearse whenever their schedules allowed. Such personal practice was then tested in late night jam sessions, most of which occurred on Friday and Saturday night, frequently with small groups of friends in attendance. In such a way, the Wailhouse enabled the scene to occur; to coalesce in a space which provided regular contact and a developing community for players and fans.

By early 1956, the Wailhouse was no longer meeting the needs of the community members, and while the damage inflicted by a wind-fallen tree expedited a move elsewhere, the Wailhouse was by that point already regarded as inadequate in many ways. The location, while perfect for producing noise without the worry of neighbour complaints, was quite far from the action of Vancouver, located near Richmond in an area which was still predominantly a mix of farmland and industrial areas. Lacking regular public transportation options, the Wailhouse was out of the reach of those musicians and fans who did not have access to a vehicle.

We weren't comfortable there. Number one it was too noisy. Every time a big truck went over [the bridge] it was [makes shaking noises]...and it was, the young guys that didn't have any transportation were out of luck, because it was too far out (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

The quick success of the Wailhouse as a gathering place for those interested in bebop and other forms of modern jazz had also buoyed the ambitions of certain core members, and a move to a

more centrally located spot was decided upon. By April of 1956, the musicians behind the Wailhouse would collaborate with a few additional key members to open The Cellar.

Chapter Four

The Cellar

Having quickly outgrown the informal Wailhouse in Richmond, the players involved soon found a new space to house their jazz activities. Located at 2514 Watson Street, the space was situated in the basement of a building which fronted onto East Broadway, between Main Street and Kingsway.⁵¹ Though the Watson Street address is the one most often associated with the Cellar, it should be noted that at times it was referred to as 222 East Broadway.⁵² The entrance to the club was in the rear of the building, and the location provided both easy access to the city centre and the physical separation needed to create late-night noise. The remainder of the two-story building was turned to commercial rather than residential use with offices occupying the ground floor and second level. Detached on three sides, the Cellar building was bounded by Broadway in front, Watson Street on the western side, and a small parking lot in back. The building just to the east was also commercial with the result that there were few restrictions on the amount of noise that could be made in the evening.⁵³ The building was brand new, and the musicians were the first basement tenants. Initially hesitant about renting to musicians, the landlord was swayed by the fact that the Cellar would operate as a private club, and that steps had been taken to incorporate the organization and to acquire the necessary permits and insurance.

⁵¹ See Figure 6 for a map indicating the location of the Cellar and other major Vancouver clubs of the period, and Figure 12 for a period photograph of the intersection.

⁵² For example, the Fall 1957 edition of UBC student magazine *Pique*, ran a full page ad with the Broadway address (see Lightbody, 1957), and the majority of *Vancouver Sun* ads directed patrons to the rear of 222 E. Broadway.

⁵³ Interestingly at one point (c. 1963) this building housed a gymnasium owned by former Olympic weightlifter Doug Hepburn who developed an interest in singing, and was at one point employed on an occasional basis as a bouncer of sorts on busy evenings at the Cellar (interview with John Dawe, January 3, 2014).

Ken and Walley set that up [not-for-profit status], you know, with Walley being a lawyer. We couldn't operate the way we were without it all being done properly ... the health inspectors and everything having to go down there and check everything out, and even to have a license to open the place up we had to be registered (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

Formally incorporated and registered as a not-for-profit organization by law student Walley Lightbody as the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society, the club initially continued much as it had done as the Wailhouse, with entrepreneur Ken Hole as the guiding organizational force.

Most of those who had been part of the earlier Wailhouse remained involved, and other musicians, such as drummer Bill Boyle and trumpeter John Dawe, both of whom had been in Toronto during the Wailhouse period, associated themselves with the new project. Trumpeter Ed Roop and drummer Don Cumming were also part of the Cellar's founding group, as was dramatist, producer, and jazz enthusiast Barry Cramer, who in later years would be a driving force behind the staging of *avant garde* theatre at the Cellar. Artist, designer, and jazz enthusiast Harry Webb was also involved, providing much of the artwork which was to hang in the club, including *The Trio*, which hung over the bar (see Figure 7). In later years he would also design promotional posters for concert and theatrical presentations at the Cellar.⁵⁴ Painter and muralist Frank Lewis contributed a large, red-toned painting which hung over the stairs which led down from the parking lot to the club. Though no images of the complete work seem to remain and its whereabouts is unknown, the image was by all accounts quite striking and a key element of the club's decor.⁵⁵ Along with Harry Webb, Al Neil, and Jim Kilburn, designer John Grinnell also assisted with the club's interior design, and may well have had a hand in the production of club

⁵⁴ See Figures 22–28, and 32 and 40–41, 47 and 48, 50, 51.

⁵⁵ A very small section of this work can be seen in the background of a black and white photograph of the Paul Bley group in the Cellar parking lot. See Figure 17.

advertisements and associated paraphernalia such as membership cards and matchbooks (see Figures 8–10).

Operating as a private members club, the Cellar had a two-tier membership structure. A small group formed the inner-circle as Charter members, which required a monthly contribution toward the rent, while more casual participants held social memberships, which cost a small fee to obtain each year, and allowed the member and a guest access to the club upon payment of a small cover charge.⁵⁶ Charter members often referred to themselves as ‘core’ members, and were often, though not always, practicing musicians. Such members were responsible for the payment of the rent and other operating expenses through a system of post-dated cheques, organized club operations, cleaned the facility, and accomplished all of the other tasks associated with keeping the Cellar functioning. While some, like Walley Lightbody and Ken Hole bore titles such as president, vice-president or treasurer, most charter members simply understood that it was their obligation to help out beyond their rent payment, and that it was only through their efforts that the Cellar would remain open.

We did everything down there. We cleaned the place, we did every damn thing. Each of us took turns. On certain weekends it was so-and-so’s job to clean the place and then somebody else took a turn the next weekend, so ... the place had to be cleaned, the next afternoon you know, to get it ready for the next night. We did all of that stuff. A lot of the people who were social members, and other musicians, they just walked through the door and they did nothing ... they were the customers. We did everything down there to keep that place running. And a lot of the other musicians weren’t aware that we were doing everything in that place ... that the members were taking care of everything down there. They don’t realize how much work we put into the place (John Dawe, November 28, 2013).

⁵⁶ This two-tier system alternately made use of “social” and “associate” as way of referring to the lower, non-executive level members (see Figures 8–10).

The extra work involved with being a charter member brought with it extra privileges, as charter members received keys to the club and access to the space for practice and rehearsal whenever it was not in use. The ability to practice and rehearse freely would prove vital to the development of many Cellar musicians and groups.

The place was available to us. There were about ... well, when it started out, the membership ... we had charter members and associate members, right? The associate members were people who could just walk in off the street, pay \$2 and get an associate membership. But the group that was known as charter members sort of ran the place, and the number fluctuated quite a bit. Sometimes as many as twenty, sometimes maybe only ten or eleven (Tony Clitheroe, November 29, 2012).

Associate, or social members were initially required to be nominated by Charter members, and were granted access to the club as listeners provided they paid a cover charge. Members were then free to bring guests to the club, but were responsible for ensuring that their guests were not disruptive to the music. The cover charge fees collected from associate members and their guests formed the bulk of the Cellar's revenue, and enabled a small financial cushion to build up in the society's accounts.

There must have been a core group of probably about 15 people. I would think. Hard to say now after all these years, and a lot of the names I actually forget now. We paid a yearly fee, forty or fifty or sixty dollars, as time went by it changed as the rent increased, and that kind of insured that at least the rent was going to be paid, and the light bill was going to be paid, you know? The rest [of the income] was kind of the fees that came in through the door (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

Though the rules governing social members seem to have been eased over the years, the early concern was in ensuring that the space remained focused on the presentation of jazz in a serious and supportive atmosphere, and that the Cellar did not become merely a casual social club.

[Becoming a member] wasn't that difficult. Once we got to know you. Then we would allow you in. Because we wanted to make sure that this was a very close

resemblance to a musician's club and an artist's club, and if you were a good artist and recommended by one of the musicians or local people and you seemed like a nice person we'd let you join in. But we were very careful about that. We weren't in it to make money, we were in it to further jazz and the talents of the local musicians and artists.

We kept a very big handle on it, and we had someone on the door all the time. No one could just walk down there and come in unless they had proper identification, and we kept this a very exclusive place to go for the people that supported what we were doing, and that was it. Period. Now if a member brought down a couple of people, he was responsible for those people, and he had to make sure that they were supporting the type of music we were doing and the camaraderie that we had going. Because everyone knew everyone by their first name, you know. And then if someone was really interested in jazz, interested in musicians or artistry, then we would arrange to have them admitted into the club [as a member]. It was very exclusive, but it sure worked out well, because we never had any problems there that I can recall (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

That the Cellar operated peacefully, and to a crowd which was there first and foremost for the music, is confirmed by area resident and Cellar regular Lyvia Brooks.

...it was very calming. It was the kind of jazz I liked. I'm not crazy about Dixieland, I must say, because I just loved to be a bit calmed down after a day's work. And it was beautiful. Absolutely beautiful music. And very soft, always. And very well respected. I think there were all types of people in the audience. All age groups. People that may have acted very differently at another place, perhaps, but everyone was very well behaved here [at the Cellar]. It was like a ... a refuge, sort of. It was sort of a rough and tumble neighbourhood, and this was a calm peaceful refuge in the heart of the neighbourhood. I'd never seen anybody cause a problem there [at the Cellar]. As I say, some of these same people might cause problems somewhere else, but not there. People were definitely there to enjoy the music ... the Cellar was again, like a sanctuary. There was peace and calm, and you were accepted no matter who you were, and you sat and enjoyed the music, and as long as you respected that you were fine there (Lyvia Brooks, December 6, 2012).

The entrance off the parking lot opened to a set of stairs which led down to another door which granted entrance to the space itself. At the the foot of these stairs a pay window was installed much like the ticket booth of a movie theatre. Once a membership card had been produced and the cover charge paid, a button was pressed which released the inner door and

allowed entrance to the club. As the club developed, it seems as though musicians of some repute were generally allowed entry to the club at no charge whether they had a membership or not.

Before you opened the door to the Cellar there was a little window, almost like a cashier window on the left hand side, where you paid whatever ... if you weren't a musician, you gave something ... [musicians] were members by acclaim (Paul Ruhland, November 27, 2012).

In the early years the door was usually staffed by Bill Schlossmacher, who was associated with Ken Hole's restaurant businesses and who was paid a small fee to run the door. In later years this role was filled most often by Ricci Quarin, wife of saxophonist, charter member, and eventual club manager, Dave Quarin.

So we all got together and Walley Lightbody incorporated it, and I was the president and he was the secretary and treasurer. The rest of the guys were members. Then we set up a program, in order to pay the rent, that everyone gave us post-dated checks ... we would just put them through every month to help pay for the rent until it got going, and that way ... we knew we had some capital coming in, and then of course we built the bandstand and so forth, and we got some tables and chairs donated to us, and we started opening up with jam sessions, and anyone ... members could bring a guest along with them and their guest had to pay at the bottom of the stairs, in order to get in because we had boarded it off, and [they] couldn't open the door until they paid, and a little wicket like a movie theatre... they would come in and the money would go to the electricity, and to pay the rent ... (Ken Hole, December 7, 2012).

Initially, the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society rented just one half of the large basement room, stringing a curtain across to hide the unused portion from view. Tables and chairs were donated to the group through Ken Hole's connections in the restaurant industry, and guitarist Jim Kilburn, who was employed as an electrician for the city of Vancouver, did all of the required electrical work. Others chipped in labour to construct the bandstand, bar area, ticket window, and other required elements. Initially, the club operated as a performance space only on the

weekends with performances on Friday and Saturday nights (and occasionally Sundays), as well as being available to charter members to rehearse whenever the space was free.

As a private member's club which was owned and operated by musicians, the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society was able to strike a deal with the local Vancouver chapter of the American Federation of Musicians to avoid paying union scale to the bands which performed there. The head of the Vancouver union at the time apparently appreciated what the Cellar was attempting to do, and promised not to interfere as long as the club did not attempt to become a full-blown commercial enterprise, but remained a co-operative venture only open to members and their guests (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013). While the 1954 amendments to the B.C. Liquor Act may have technically made it possible for the Cellar to apply for a liquor licence, it, as with the vast majority of clubs in the city, remained a bottle club, serving soft drinks and ice and subject to infrequent inspections by the liquor squad. The archaic nature of Vancouver's liquor laws at the time may indeed have contributed in no small way to the almost instantaneous success of the Cellar.

... yeah, there were a lot of people that started coming down there. And at that time in Vancouver, we didn't have very liberal liquor laws, or drinking. If you wanted to have a beer you could go to a hotel beer parlour, which was sectioned off into the men's side and the women's side. And you could only sit on the women's side if you had a woman with you, you know? Men had to go ... single men, had to sit on the men's side. And that went on for years, as far as I remember. So people after they went and saw something downtown in regular hours, wanted another place to go. So I guess the Cellar became kind of a bottle club, that is, people certainly brought their own drinks, because we couldn't sell drinks (Jim Johnson, August 14, 2013).

In later years as the Cellar began both to advertise and to bring in more widely known musicians from the United States, the club sometimes applied for special occasion permits, which provided for the legal sale of alcohol for a limited time on a case-by-case basis.

[the Cellar was popular with students] because it was a place they could bring their girlfriends, and bring a bottle, and that kind of thing ... we had no liquor license. Matter of fact at that time around Vancouver there were some really archaic laws to do with liquor, and once in a while we used to, if we had something special happening down there, we'd get a liquor license. We'd go to the police department and get it all set up and then somebody would bring in one of these portable bar outfits, you know, and we'd do it that way. It was a pain in the neck, having to do it like that (Tony Clitheroe, November 29, 2012).

Many of the musicians involved with the Cellar were attending university or worked day jobs during the week, including Walley Lightbody who was studying law at UBC, Ken Hole who was kept busy both by his father's insurance company and his restaurant businesses, Dave Quarin who worked as a bookkeeper for a shipping company, Jim Carney who was studying at UBC, and Jim Kilburn who worked for the city of Vancouver. Tony Clitheroe for a time worked with Ken Hole's father in his insurance office, but as a competent bass player, was one of the first Cellar musicians to be able to rely on musical activities for a living.

Others purposefully kept their non-musical activities to a minimum, taking part-time or low-stress employment in order to maximize the amount of time and energy they could invest in rehearsing, playing, and thinking about music. Jim Johnson worked at Western Music, while John Dawe and Al Neil took work at the post office.

Sometimes I worked part time over at the post office, which a lot of us did, four hours a day or something, you know, from four or five in the afternoon until around nine at night, and that gave us an amount of free time and pocket money. Booze money and cigarette money. Walking around money ... most of the rest of us had no responsibilities [families]. We were irresponsible people in every way that you could imagine (John Dawe, November 28, 2013).

As charter members, these young players took advantage of their ability to use the space during the week to practice and rehearse.

Ray Sikora's big band rehearsed down there every Sunday morning, or whenever most of us could get up. And uh, all the groups ... all the members were down there rehearsing, and practicing. We used it to practice. I was practically at the place seven days a week (John Dawe, November 28, 2013).

The Cellar quickly began to function as a central focus point in the lives of many of the musicians involved, and several of them rented a house a few blocks away from the club.

For a few years, myself and some other musicians lived in a house, we called it the bebop house, which was about three or four blocks away from the Cellar. So we didn't annoy the neighbours I would wander over to the Cellar during the week, when it wasn't open, and use it as a practice place (John Dawe, November 28, 2013).

As the Cellar evolved and began to bring in musicians from the United States, visiting players would often stay at the 'bebop house,' particularly those, like the Montgomery Brothers, who were repeat visitors to the Cellar and developed friendships with the charter members.⁵⁷

Despite his full schedule outside the Cellar, entrepreneur Ken Hole functioned for the first few years as the *de facto* manager of the club, with Dave Quarin providing assistance with the accounting and bookkeeping.

I would be there on the weekends most of the time. Walley was in and out, though of course he wasn't going to university on the weekends, so he would be there quite often. But I was there on a regular basis, because someone had to manage the place, you know. And I did the hiring of all the groups, and making sure that they were billeted out OK and so on (Ken Hole, December 7, 2012).

⁵⁷ Also known as the Mastersounds before the inclusion of Wes Montgomery. The Mastersounds were comprised of Charles Frederick "Buddy" Montgomery on vibes, Richie Crabtree on piano, William Howard "Monk" Montgomery on bass, and Benny Barthe on drums. Both groups were regular visitors to the Vancouver scene where they sometimes stayed at the Bebop house where several of the Cellar members lived, and often parked their car and gear there. Wes Montgomery became friendly with Cellar guitarist Jim Kilburn, and spent a considerable amount of time at the Kilburn residence.

Recognizing the conflict of interest inherent in attempting to participate as a musician while simultaneously controlling the performance schedule, Hole refrained from performing on weekend evenings, limiting his musical participation to the Ken Hole big band, and to jam sessions.

I did not, on purpose, get in the front of anything. I was a backup. If someone didn't get there, I'd pick up the bass and play the bass, just to fill in. Because I stayed away and did the organizing, and let the other people get featured. All the musicians. And that meant that they couldn't ridicule me for trying to be a big shot. So I just stayed back and did what I had to (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

Though weekday activities and after-hours jam sessions were left to develop organically, there was an attempt to program the weekend evenings in a manner that met with contemporary expectations for what an evening at a jazz club should be. The musicians involved with the Cellar were encouraged to form their own groups, and to develop material sufficient to carry a weekend performance. In rotating fashion, these groups were then granted the opportunity to play two or three sets Friday and Saturday nights to an audience of colleagues, club members, and guests, after which more informal sessions routinely lasted until morning.

I wanted to have a group every week that played for that Friday, Saturday ... you know, so that they could write their own charts and do what they want and give them something to work toward, and then they'd want to come and hear the next group that was playing and I'd just keep revolving them around. And we ended up with ... I can't remember the exact amount of musicians we had. It was, you know, close to a hundred. Probably 75 to 100. A lot of them weren't qualified, but they just wanted to be part of it. And the essence of it, a lot of them got [musical] jobs elsewhere (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

Phase One: 1956–1958

The Cellar opened officially in April of 1956 (the exact date remains hazy) with an informal weekend of sessions, *ad hoc* groups, and late night jamming. The bandstand and eight or nine tables filled the half of the basement which the group was currently leasing, and accommodated a small audience of about twenty members and guests. Within a few weeks however, word had spread sufficiently that the crowd of people hoping to get in on a Friday night could not be accommodated, causing a line to form up the stairs and out into the parking lot. A letter issued to the Cellar membership on May 3, 1956 outlined the issue, and the initial steps taken by the executive to manage the situation.

First, our apologies if any of your friends were turned away on the opening night of “jazz in the Cellar.” If you were present you will no doubt realize that with the facilities we have available, it is impossible to accommodate a crowd anywhere near the size that appeared on Saturday night. It is our regret that we have found it advisable to limit the number of guests to ONE PER MEMBER on Saturday nights, and that persons desiring memberships will have to make application through a member. It is also required that members present their cards at the door and sign in their guests (Cellar memo, May 3, 1956).

This early popularity continued, prompting a hasty expansion of the club.

It was just fantastic, and it caught on so strongly that it overwhelmed us. When it had been open a month maybe, or less, people were lined up around the block to get into the place. We didn’t know what to do, because we were only renting half of the basement. And we had a curtain stretched across it. So we had to rent the other half, and we had to start painting the walls and build more tables. The place just took off like that because there was no other place (John Dawe, December 20, 2012).

Having rented remaining space in the basement, organizers undertook further renovations, relocating the stage to suit the larger space, and adding more tables. Like most jazz clubs of the

period the Cellar was reasonably small, with most estimates suggesting that the low-ceilinged room would have held between sixty and seventy people when operating at capacity.⁵⁸

Neighbourhood resident Lyvia Brooks, who at the age of 17 or 18 worked Friday nights and Saturdays upstairs from the Cellar in her family's shirt shop recalls that;

On Friday nights I would usually have a date that would come and pick me up, well they'd come to the store, and when the store would close at 9pm we would go downstairs to the Cellar and enjoy the music. And quite often on Saturday night too.

I don't know if I had a membership card or what I had. Because I was one of the neighborhood people, at that point, I don't remember if I really required anything. They just seemed to always let me in there. Ken Hole and Walley Lightbody were the two people that were the main guys there. And it was very dark. Always. And all these people were very well behaved, and all listening to the music. All appreciating the music. Nobody talked when the music was on... (Lyvia Brooks, December 6, 2012).

The Cellar was not yet advertising, and news of its existence spread by word of mouth and by local radio disc jockeys who gave the venue the odd mention on-air.

The first three years I found there was hardly any newspaper advertising done, so we must have done it mostly through word of mouth and other organizations, local dj's [that] we would get in touch with and keep the name out there (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

Though the twelve to fifteen charter members were pledged to help pay the rent and utilities on the space, the hope was that the Cellar could become self-sustaining, paying its operating expenses through cover charges paid by the crowds which were being drawn to the weekend performances. In addition to the small \$1 or \$2 door fee, the club sold 7UP, Ginger Ale, Coca-Cola, and ice at a modest mark-up, as well as pre-made wrapped sandwiches which had to be picked up in advance of each evening's performances. John Dawe recalls that the environment

⁵⁸ I asked this question of many interview subjects including John Dawe, Tony Clitheroe, Al Neil, Jim Kilburn, Don Thompson and Terry Clarke. They were consistent in their recollections of the club's size.

was "...very rustic. That's my best description of it. It was a great place to come and you didn't have to spend any money. Everything was real basic" (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

The Cellar was almost the classic *cinema verite* version of a jazz club. Because it was people smoking and you know, little candles on the tables, and round tables, and it was really classic. I didn't know that [at the time]. Maybe it was the very first time I'd ever been at the Cellar, but ... my eyes started watering. And I didn't know what that was all about, but my eyes were stinging me and I was tearing up and I had to leave the club. Well it was [all] the smoking and no ventilation. I'd never been in a smoke filled room in my life. I mean, my Dad smoked a bit, but to be in a closed room with no ventilation ... It really was a cellar, and everybody smoked, constant smoke and I was a virgin [to that kind of atmosphere], and I remember I was practically in pain, and had to leave the club and just air it out. And of course I reeked when I got home, just like we did for twenty-five years [as working jazz musicians] (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

In an attempt to both increase their meagre cash-flow and to make the Cellar a more hospitable place, Ken Hole reached out to his contacts in the restaurant world, a move which inadvertently resulted in the Cellar becoming one of the first establishments in Vancouver to sell pizza by the slice. Local restaurant supplier Tevi Smith had begun to import pizza-making equipment from his native Italy, and provided Ken Hole with the supplies needed to create pizza in-house at the Cellar, including an electric pizza oven.

And a lot of people came down just to try it. And we used to have the little wedges, you know, and sell them for fifty cents or whatever it was, and it was so easy for us to administrate that, especially at two or three in the morning. And then when once we were finished we just put everything in the fridge and went home. That is a first for the Cellar, introducing pizza to Vancouver (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

Though the general consensus appears to be that the pizza itself was quite forgettable, its presence at the Cellar, including its pervasive smell, is one of the most commonly recalled recollections of the club by those that were frequent visitors.

... we usually had some food. I guess you could describe it as food. Bad pizza, mostly. Really bad pizza. I never touched pizza for years after that. I figured all

pizza had to be that bad, right? (Tony Clitheroe, November 29, 2012)

We sold mixer, we sold 7Up and Coke. We had the worst pizza in the world. It tasted like old shoe leather. It was just awful. It was hardly edible. In fact today you wouldn't call it pizza (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

You had to go downstairs [to get into the club]. And you could smell the pizza [coming up the stairs] (Paul Ruhland, November 27, 2012).

While the implementation of pizza sales at the Cellar may have helped to augment the club's cash flow in some small way, the main advantage of the in-house food service was eliminating the need to leave the club to eat, thereby prolonging late night sessions.

By the end of 1956 the club was firmly established and had become the vital centre of a jazz scene which was slowly developing into a viable entertainment alternative to the more mainstream offerings at downtown clubs such as Isy's and The Cave. While there were apparently several hundred social members by year's end (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013), the most regular contributors to the club as musicians and organizers were Ken Hole, Walley Lightbody, Dave Quarin, Fred Massey, Tony Clitheroe, James Carney, John Dawe, Bill Boyle, Jim Johnson, Ed Roop, Al Neil, Jim Kilburn, Harry Webb, John Grinnell, Barry Cramer, Don Francks, Frank Lewis, Don Cumming, and vocalist Doreen Williams. Late 1956 would also see the arrival of vibraphonist Bob Frogge from Kansas City, bassist Freddy Schreiber from Seattle, and drummer Chuck Logan from California, all of whom would be important figures in the next stage of the Cellar's development.

Imports

As soon as it became clear that the Cellar was drawing enough regular business to remain solvent, several charter members began to consider the idea of bringing in some of the American jazz talent they heard on records and radio, but which rarely made it north of the border to Vancouver. Though there were infrequent presentations by the Vancouver New Jazz Society and occasional visits to the downtown supper clubs by such established artists as Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong, there was little modern jazz on offer in Vancouver at the time, and even less by the famous American artists of the day. By banking whatever profits the Cellar made, the charter members hoped to import some of the musicians who inspired them—the hope was to listen, and also to learn.

At any given time, our repertoire would be stuff that we'd taken off the most recent record that somebody would get. None of us had much money, and there was only one record store ... between Clitheroe and Bill Boyle, we could take all the stuff off by ear ... John Dawe was good with the basic harmony and I could do the extended chords, and Clitheroe would just hear the bass and play it. Same with Boyle. But we were basically learners. You know. So whatever you heard there, even in 1957, we weren't playing that stuff as well as New York [musicians were] (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).⁵⁹

Initially, Ken Hole hoped to form an alliance of sorts with Seattle, the closest American city of any size, working out an informal exchange program whereby Seattle based groups would be featured for a weekend at the Cellar while a group of Vancouver musicians played in a Seattle area club. At the time however, Seattle lacked a jazz club or jazz society with the same sort of organizing principle as the Cellar, and the experiment was short lived. While the Seattle

⁵⁹ This came up in the course of a discussion about a CBC Jazz Workshop program from 1956 that featured Al Neil, John Dawe, and some of the other Cellar regulars. I had commented on how mature and accomplished the recording sounded given the age and experience level of most of the players. While true that this particular recording is not on-par with many of the commercial jazz releases of the period, it is nonetheless very good.

musicians by all accounts enjoyed their performances at the Cellar, the Canadian musicians were less impressed with the venues and conditions that they met with following the three-hour car trip south.

When the Cellar first opened up, Ken thought it would be great if we could get a thing going between Seattle and Vancouver. And use some Seattle musicians ... an exchange kind of thing, you know. One of Al's group or somebody's group would go down and play in Seattle, and Ken would line up a group from Seattle to come up and play at the Cellar. So we did a few things sort of like that. It didn't work out very well. We played at a place called Birdland there, which was a ... it really wasn't a jazz place, it was an R&B place mostly. Dancing and a great big barn [of a place]. It wasn't an intimate jazz club. But I'm sure there were clubs around Seattle where there was some jazz going on. I can't think of the names of what they might be though, in that particular period. You know what jazz clubs are like, they open up for six months and then they're gone and you never hear of them again (John Dawe, August 14, 2013).

Undaunted by this initial failure to expand their musical horizons, the charter members of the Cellar began to look at hiring name American artists to play short engagements at the club. Through a combination of in-person requests made to touring musicians in Seattle and Portland and connections facilitated by American expatriates Freddy Schreiber, Bob Frogge, and Chuck Logan, 1957 saw the Cellar play host to a handful of significant American artists.

And basically, with the contacts that I had in LA, from working like that, they wanted to start bringing artists up from there. Harold Land. And I got in touch with Monk Montgomery and he brought up his brothers. Don Cherry, Ornette Coleman ... (Chuck Logan, December 17, 2001).

Between spring and December of 1957, the Cellar would host Art Pepper with Al Neil (piano), Tony Clitheroe (bass), and Bill Boyle (drums), as well as with local legend Chris Gage (piano); the Mastersounds featuring Buddy, and Monk Montgomery; Don Cherry's Jazz Messiah's featuring James Clay (tenor), Don Payne (bass), and Billy Higgins (drums); Sonny Redd with a local rhythm section of Tony Clitheroe, Fred Massey (piano), and Bill Boyle; the

Paul Bley Quartet featuring Dave Pike (vibes), Charlie Haden (bass), and Lennie McBrowne (drums); Lou Levy with Ted Owens (drums) and Paul Ruhland (bass); and Don Cherry and Ornette Coleman with Ben Tucker (bass) and Billy Higgins (drums). An additional highlight of the Cellar's 1957 season was an epic late night jam session attended by the majority of the artists featured on 1957's Jazz a la Carte tour (see Figures 11–17).

These engagements by high profile American jazz artists further solidified the Cellar's place on the Vancouver entertainment scene, drawing a wider audience than would usually attend the weekend showcases for local groups. Perhaps more importantly, these engagements provided the Cellar musicians with an opportunity to learn firsthand from some of the greatest musicians of the era, expanding their repertoires and boosting their confidence both through informal association and professional playing experience. John Dawe recalls that Sonny Redd's appearance at the Cellar introduced the musicians there to "Green Dolphin Street," a mid-1940s movie tune which would go on to become a jazz standard, but which had not yet found its way to Vancouver as a meaningful part of the jazz repertoire (theoriginalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca, 2014).⁶⁰

Generally, these American artists were employed for extended engagements rather than single evenings, and were in town from anywhere between a week to a month.⁶¹ These extended stays at the Cellar offered many opportunities for interaction between the visiting American artists and the Cellar-based players—interactions which resulted in the sharing of musical ideas, the

⁶⁰ The first major jazz recording of this tune was Miles Davis' obscure 1958 LP *Jazz Track*, which would not reach Canada for several months following the Redd engagement.

⁶¹ Paul Bley was at the Cellar for several nights, Ornette Coleman and Harold Land were both in town for more than week, Art Pepper returned for almost a month in the summer of 1959, Charles Mingus was in town for several weeks in 1961, Lee Konitz for a week in 1961, etc.

forming of friendships, and, for the local musicians, the opportunity to gain valuable playing experience both informally in jam sessions, and formally as accompanists. In turn, this experience helped the Cellar regulars by boosting their confidence and by providing motivation and inspiration to continue the at times arduous process of practicing jazz. The ability to collaborate with established American stars, suggested that perhaps they themselves were not so different after all.

... we made a little money, and we had some contacts in the States and then all of a sudden we had musicians wanting to come and play in the jazz club ... they'd come up and play for the weekends and play with the local guys, and be featured ... They started to come in with the understanding that the boys could sit in with them, jam with them. And it caught on, like you wouldn't believe. And soon we didn't have enough room there for everybody on a Saturday night or a Friday night ... I mean it was camaraderie, and everybody talked shop, and everybody was learning from these musicians coming up from California. They'd learn a new method of playing jazz, and some phrasing that we'd never heard before and the next thing you'd know, the local guys would be doing it. And that's how the jazz word spread amongst musicians because we all got to listen to one another and [to] people from other jurisdictions that had other styles and so forth. And that was really good for the young [musicians] in the BC, Lower Mainland area (Ken Hole, December 7, 2012).

Spending time with the American artists they knew from recordings was a highlight for the Cellar members, and an experience that was generally reserved for those who formed the core group of club organizers and players, while the larger social membership and large number of guests formed the bulk of the nightly audience. The charter members of the Cellar meanwhile were directly involved with booking the musicians, picking them up from the airport, providing transportation around town, and participating in sessions and formal rehearsals. Though most imported players were housed at the nearby City Centre Motor Inn (Doreen Williams, December 2, 2012), which was just around the corner from the Cellar at Main Street between east 5th and

6th, some musicians were housed in the homes of Cellar musicians. Dave Quarin and Jim Kilburn in particular developed a reputation for this, as did the nearby “bebop” house which was shared by several of the younger, unmarried musicians.

Recollections of their interactions with these well known American jazz stars were an immediate and enthusiastic portion of the recollections shared by Cellar members. One of the first major stars to visit the club was Art Pepper, who arrived in Vancouver in May of 1957 fresh both from a stint in prison and the January 1957 recording of what would become his most famous record—*Art Pepper Meets the Rhythm Section* (Contemporary 1957).⁶²

... I remember going to the airport to pick up Art Pepper. And I had to wait and wait, and he was held up at customs, and I thought “oh my god. He’s not going to get in.” And the next thing I knew he came through, he had a suitcase under his arm, and I said “gee, what was the hold up?” and he said “Well you know, I’ve got a new album out, and I brought up 8 copies of my new album” and that was the thing that bothered them. “I also had about six bottles of cough medicine which is about 80% morphine,” he said, “They didn’t pay any attention to that at all” (Walley Lightbody, December 13, 2012).

Art Pepper had a lot of trouble getting in [to the country]. We waited around the airport for [a long time] ... we told him we’d pick him up at the airport. Dave Quarin, and me and maybe one other person. And we got in a position where we could see everybody coming out of the proper gate that was coming, and it looked like it got to the last person and then we saw this guy, I guess it was winter, and he had this big coat with his collar up, and it was long ... I don’t know if it was stylish at the time or what. Must’ve been. He seemed to be straggling, and he had one last person to go through and he was carrying a bottle in his hand, and the guy kind of looked at it, and Art Pepper explained it to him, and it turned out it was cough syrup, but I guess the guy [customs official] didn’t know that this was the time before they banned it ... [the cough syrup contained] laudanum. It was the next best thing for a junkie. It took the drug enforcement [people] several years to realize. I think there was a time when you didn’t even need a prescription. Just cough syrup. [It was] just listed as an ingredient (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

⁶² Recorded in January 1957, *Art Pepper Meets the Rhythm Section* would be released in in June of that year (*DownBeat*, June 12, 1958, pg. 28)

To avoid trouble with Customs and Immigration over work visas, Pepper had come up from California without a saxophone, and as he was both fond of Martin saxophones and an official endorser of the brand, there was a bit of a scramble to locate a suitable instrument upon his arrival.⁶³

... I was involved with Art Pepper, because I was working at [the] Western Music store, and Art Pepper was coming to town to play at the Cellar. But because of his record I guess, he had a narcotics record, and he had to cross the border, so he didn't want to bring his horn. So I was commissioned at Western Music to bring him a Martin alto saxophone. But we didn't have a Martin alto saxophone. But I managed to bring every alto in the store out for Art Pepper and he turned them thumbs down. He must've had a contract with Martin ... even then, I guess. So, I flunked out. I had all these saxophones, and he said, naw, I don't want to play those. So somebody managed to get hold of Cliff Binyon, who was an alto player for Dal [Richards] and all the downtown guys, and Cliff Binyon agreed to let him use his Martin saxophone. The only Martin in town, as far as we know. So Art Pepper got a Martin alto saxophone, and he got my necktie and tie pin, which he borrowed from me and never gave back (Jim Johnson, August 14, 2013).

Several of these early experiments in bringing in American jazz artists to perform at the Cellar turned out to be meaningful engagements for the American musicians as well. Though now widely regarded as significant and influential members of the jazz community, in the mid-1950s such artists as Charlie Haden, Don Cherry, and Ornette Coleman were in the early stages of their careers and in many cases were eager to find opportunities to play. The October 1957 appearance of Paul Bley, Charlie Haden, Dave Pike, and Lennie McBrowne is noteworthy in that it closely followed the debut recording sessions of both Haden and Pike on Paul Bley's *Solemn Meditation* (GNP Crescendo, 1958),⁶⁴ and presented the complete personnel from that session. Haden's second appearance on record would be on Paul Bley's *Live at the Hillcrest Club* (America

⁶³ It's also possible that Pepper simply did not have a horn at the time, as his autobiography suggests that he often pawned his instruments to fund his drug habit (Pepper 1994).

⁶⁴ The liner notes indicate that the album was recorded in August 1957, though not released until 1958.

Records, 1958), which is itself a notable recording as it features Bley and Haden with Ornette Coleman, Don Cherry, and Billy Higgins under Bley's direction⁶⁵ (charliehadenmusic.com, 2014). This group, minus Paul Bley, would shortly be known as the Ornette Coleman Quartet.

Ornette Coleman in particular benefitted from the Cellar's non-profit focus upon music for musicians as he was hired to headline a lengthy engagement in November of 1957 at the recommendation of Don Cherry, who had played the club a few months earlier (Gavin Walker, Jan 7, 2014).⁶⁶ These Cellar dates are purported to be some of first opportunities Coleman had been given to play his own compositions as a leader.⁶⁷

In the fall of [19] 57 Don Cherry was back again⁶⁸ ... this time with a very startling group ... this was the first time that these guys had worked together as a group publicly and Ornette Coleman was more than a bit of a shocker!... they did a lot of Ornette's tunes, which at that time were still fairly conventional, but Ornette's solo style was extremely "unorthodox" ...you either dug them or you hated them, but after the 3rd nite [sic] most of us were starting to dig what they were putting down (theoriginalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca, 2014).

According to Ken Hole, who as acting club manager was responsible for the Coleman booking, Ornette expressed that the Cellar engagement represented what was, at the time, a rare opportunity for him to play his compositions and unique musical style for an audience that was supportive of his experimentation, if not at times a bit perplexed by it.

[Y]ou know something, that I'm so proud of? When Ornette Coleman finished his

⁶⁵ The original album release was billed as the Fabulous Paul Bley Quintet

⁶⁶ The November 1957 appearance of Ornette Coleman at the Cellar predates the Hillcrest engagement in L.A. and the formation of this influential quartet by only a few months. The 1957 appearances of all of these musicians at the Cellar are bookended by important early releases by all the players involved, and was an important moment for the development of jazz on the West Coast.

⁶⁷ See Figures 15 and 16.

⁶⁸ The Ornette Coleman gig was, it seems, in November of 1957, though no advertisements exist to prove this. Several of the musicians interviewed recalled late fall or November, and email correspondence with musician Gavin Walker, who attended most evenings of the Coleman engagement as a fan, corroborates these recollections.

playing there, because he was there for about a month, with Don Cherry, and when it was all over he came over and he started crying. And he said “Ken, you are the first person from California and in America who has ever asked me to play and offer me a job, and I’ll never forget it. You’re the first person that’s ever had enough guts to hire me to play. And Ken, no matter where I am, if you ever need me, you’ve got me for nothing to play a concert.” And he left here and went back to California and the next thing you knew he’d gone to New York and become a real celebrity. [T]hat was one of the best jazz moments I ever had. When he cried on my shoulder and thanked me for being the first person to take a risk on h[im] and his plastic saxophone (Ken Hole, December 7, 2012).

I remember that just like that. [Ornette] was so ... just so happy that he’d had a chance to play. And of course play with people who understood music. And he did a good job (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

Though several of the musicians who were involved in the organization of the Cellar were already being heard on Vancouver radio by 1957, the presence of visiting American jazz stars helped to further boost the profile both of the club, and the musicians who most often played there.⁶⁹ The publicity that surrounded pianist Lou Levy’s 1957 performance, for example, led to an invitation for Levy to perform a short solo piano set on a local television program, an engagement which Levy split with Cellar regulars in the Fred Massey Quintet— Massey (piano), Paul Perry (saxophone),⁷⁰ John Dawe (trumpet), Tony Clitheroe (bass) and Bill Boyle (drums) (theoriginalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca, 2014). Though Levy did not use this group for his Cellar performances, he did employ local bassist Paul Ruhland and drummer Ted Owens. Art Pepper’s 1957 engagement as well led to television exposure for Cellar musicians as Pepper, backed by Al Neil (piano), Tony Clitheroe (bass), and Bill Boyle (drums), performed live on a local half-hour

⁶⁹ Bootleg tapes from CBC’s Jazz Workshop list Al Neil leading a group on-air in June of 1956 and Dave Quarin doing so in 1957. See included discography for complete list of personnel.

⁷⁰ Paul Perry Sr., not his son P.J. Perry

television program, “The Cool Pepper Show” (*Vancouver Sun*, May 17, pg. 7) (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).⁷¹

Playing with seasoned American jazz artists was at times rather stressful, and not all of the experiences were positive ones for the Cellar musicians involved. In some cases, the Cellar-based musicians had to negotiate not only the pressures and insecurities inherent in performing improvised music at its highest levels, but with the at times challenging personality traits and personal problems of their visiting guests. Art Pepper’s 1957 engagement presented particular problems for pianist Al Neil. Tony Clitheroe, the bass player involved with Pepper’s Cellar performances recalls;

... that was not a fun gig. Well, Al [Neil] didn’t seem to know what to do. And of course Art was in one of his altered states most of the time. I got along fine with him, had no problems at all. I enjoyed playing with him. But Bill Boyle I think, was playing drums, if I’m not mistaken. It was Bill Boyle, Al Neil, and myself. And Art (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

Clitheroe’s recollections are confirmed by those of Al Neil, who was remarkably candid about his struggles, recounting the stress of dealing with a musical job for which he felt unqualified, an issue compounded by Pepper’s brusque and at times erratic behaviour.

That was one of the toughest gigs I ever played, with that guy ... Total junkies like him like to play with other junkies, and I wasn’t at that time. That would be one reason. I put that together. And the other reason ... I knew all the people he’d played with, and had all of his records. Pepper’s records. And I knew I could comp, and I learned all them off the records, all the standards that he played, and I wrote them out, and handed it to him before we started playing, at the Cellar I thought the first set went pretty good.

The second [set] ... he took a long intermission and he came back up and the very first tune he got ready to play, and I thought he was just going to ... I’d listed about 20 really good standards and he’d recorded them all. I was beginning to relax a bit,

⁷¹ The name of the television show was merely a coincidence, and had not been altered to reflect the guest star, Pepper. Rather, it referred to musician and arranger Dave Pepper, whose big band was featured on the musical series.

like this was going to be good enough for him, you know, and he put his horn up to his mouth and he just [mumbles incoherently] and I ... if he named a tune, I don't know what it was, and then he started playing and indeed, it was a tune I didn't know. And it was slightly off beat, like "Begin the Beguine" or something. So I foolishly ... I thought, there's not much chord changes in this, I'll give it a try, and I tried for a few bars and then realized that [it was hopeless]. Clitheroe got it right, because he used to play all kinds of stuff when he wasn't playing at the Cellar.

And then there was a long intermission again, and he didn't seem to want to come back to play, and he was sort of booked to play one more set, a later set. And then what happened was Chris Gage came in.⁷² Chris and I were good friends. Chris came in, and somehow or other ... I was just sitting forlorn at a table, waiting to get the call back, and the first thing I notice Chris came over to me, and said "Art wants me to sit in." And I said, "OK." And Chris did the rest of the gig. I played the first part of it, and as soon as Chris came in ... it was way better than what I was doing.

Chris played beautiful standards and beautiful harmony, and he knew it wasn't bebop, but he was getting close to it by that time. He was a really good accompanist for Art. And then we still had this half hour TV show, and we'd rehearsed for only 20 minutes or something, a certain number that we'd already played at the Cellar, and live, half way through No, it must have been 10 minutes before we went on the air, he came out, and we'd already rehearsed and he came over with a slip of [music] paper and I looked at it, and I could read a little bit, but it wasn't hard for me to grasp that there was a lot of off-beat stuff and his notation wasn't all that legible. We got through it, but it wasn't ... I think he was a bit disgusted. And he was a guy that never used your name. He never used my name. And he never spoke to us (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

Pepper's displeasure with Al Neil's playing shouldn't be taken as a statement on Neil's musical talents. He was, at the time, a well known and well respected jazz player in Vancouver, and one of the most frequent Cellar collaborators. Though Neil would soon move away from mainstream jazz expression toward free improvisation, mixed media, writing, and performance

⁷² Pianist Christ Gage was widely regarded as Vancouver's top accompanist, and one of the city's finest piano players. Along with his regular working trio of Stan "Cuddles" Johnson (bass) and Jimmy Whiteman (bass), Gage was a fixture at the CBC on radio and television, as well as the house band at the Arctic Club for many years. Gage headlined a myriad of Vancouver New Jazz Festival presentations, was a staple on the yearly jazz festival, and was frequently employed by the large nightclubs downtown to accompany visiting American artists. In the 1960s he led the house band at The Cave.

art, becoming a significant force in Vancouver's artistic *avant garde*, he was, in 1957, still very much enamoured with and proficient at bebop and mainstream jazz expression.

Art's a hard guy to work with anyway—very demanding, and on top of that he's a junkie, which doesn't put him in a good mood. And he had a few words with Al. I think he talked to Al and said "Al it's musical, not personal." Which is worse! Al wished it had been personal. He just didn't like the way Al was laying the chords down. He was very particular about that. He brought some music with him too, some originals that he had, and Al wasn't playing those tunes the way he wanted him to lay the chords down in a certain way. It's touchy stuff (John Dawe, December 20, 2001).

After-Hours

Beyond its function as a formal venue for performances by local and visiting groups, the Cellar existed as the key site for informal gatherings of the Vancouver jazz community. These sessions, which began after the last scheduled set on weekends and at impromptu hours during the rest of the week, were in many ways the most important element of the Cellar for the charter members. While social members and guests were perhaps more focused on the more formal performances, for the charter members, many of whom were working professionals and not able to attend the earlier performances, the late night sessions were the main draw. Staged after most musical jobs had ended, the sessions enabled working musicians to participate in the Cellar scene, and to continue to develop their jazz chops outside their professional duties. The sessions facilitated the exchange of ideas and material, and encouraged collaboration between players who might not play with one another in formal groups. These after hours sessions, (attended generally only by players and the very closest fans and friends), were the site of "the hang"—the gossip, conversation, and networking which forms the vital basis for any scene or musical community.

Through word of mouth, the existence of the Cellar as a welcoming space for jazz musicians until the early hours of the morning became well known, and the Cellar became a post-gig destination for American musicians booked at larger Vancouver venues such as the Georgia Auditorium, Cave Supper Club etc.

Yeah, they'd be someplace else, and then it would be like, so where's the place to go? Oh man, the Cellar! And as soon as they got off, as soon as someone would say the Cellar, and they'd ask where it was, we'd get a phone call—so and so is on his way. And it would be like a welcome mat by the time they got here (Chuck Logan, December 17, 2001).

One of the most memorable of these late night jam sessions occurred in the fall of 1957, on the occasion of what most involved recall as the last visit to Vancouver paid by Norman Granz' touring all-star show Jazz at the Philharmonic. However, it would seem that the travelling jazz show in question was not the famous Jazz at the Philharmonic, but rather one of the concert tours staged by Norman Granz' brother Irving, known as Jazz a la Carte.⁷³ Though the Granz production was officially performing at the Georgia Auditorium, it seems that several members of the show made their way to the Cellar afterwards.

That was a great night. That's the best night we ever had there. That's the last time that the JATP [Jazz at the Philharmonic]⁷⁴ came to Vancouver, and the fella that did it ... Norman Granz, he packed it in after that. And we had everybody there, the whole gang. Chuck Logan ... we went in after [the performance at the Georgia Auditorium] and talked to everybody, in the dressing room. And they got taxis and they all came up. And there was the MJQ [Modern Jazz Quartet]. This bass was there and what's his name, good player, the Modern Jazz [Quartet] guy [Percy Heath] came out [to the club], and he brought his own bass with the little wheel on it and brought it down the stairs [into the Cellar]. Ella Fitzgerald was there, but she didn't sing that night. We all jammed, and everybody got in and played with our

⁷³ See advertisements which billed the concert as "Irving Granz' Jazz A La Carte" in the Vancouver press. *Vancouver Sun*, Saturday November 9, 1957, pg. 51.

⁷⁴ Advertisements for the concert began in early November, but the performance itself did not take place until December 2, 1957 and tickets for the concert ranged from \$4.50 to \$2.50. (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday November 9, 1957, pg. 51 and Saturday November 23, 1957, pg 52).

local guys and they played with the top guys, and then at the end of it we had just Percy Heath and Ray Brown. And Ray Brown played my bass. He liked it too. And this was about 3 o'clock in the morning, and they started a fugue going and they both played opposite each other for over two hours. It was daylight when we walked out. And it was just fabulous. Musically, with our group playing with the top musicians in the world, [it] just blended in beautifully...there was no pressure because we were all musicians, and we all belonged to the unions and all the rest of it. So it wasn't a matter of out flanking anybody. We were just there because ... all these top people coming in realized that this was a jazz club for registered musicians, and it was in-house, it wasn't anything to do with the outside world. Oh, what a great night that was. Just blew me right away. And I didn't [even] play at all (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

"It was great," recalls singer, comedian, actor, and frequent Cellar master of ceremonies Don Francks, "because if I was doing a late gig somewhere, I could drive [over] and go to the Cellar, and hang out" (Don Francks, July 30th, 2013).

One of the beautiful times, was about three in the morning, and I think Jazz at the Phil[harmonic] was in town, they were playing at the Georgia Auditorium. And I didn't go ... I think I had to work or something, and then I went there [to the Cellar] and it was getting late. I don't know what time. Two o'clock in the morning. And in walked these two, I wouldn't say elderly, but they were older, black cats walked in carrying instrument cases. And [we] looked, and looked again, ... and it was Roy Eldridge and Coleman Hawkins. Because at the Cellar you didn't know who was going to drop in. It could be some heavies. This was pretty heavy. So naturally we waited, and they got up and blew, I don't know who was blowing with them ... local cats but [they could] play.

And then everybody split and they [Hawkins and Eldridge] say "well, guess we'd better get going. Maybe you could get us a cab." And I said "No, no, wait. Where are you going?" And they said they were going to the Georgia Hotel, and I said "I'd be glad to take you if you don't mind." And they said "That would be very kind." And we opened the door [of the club] and I had just finished restoring a 1931 Packard Super 8 four-door sedan. Black cherry, like a dark cherry, with black fenders looking like it had just come out of the showroom. I opened the doors and Coleman got in and he moved over a little bit, and he said "Come on jazz," because "Little Jazz" that was [Eldridge's] nickname, "you getting in here jazz?" and he said "no, I'm sitting up here with my man. Ain't this [the car] something." And we got in and Little Jazz [Eldridge] couldn't keep quiet. He was just saying "Hawk, ain't this something. This is a bad joint." Because they used to call, sometimes a car was called a joint, not what you smoke. And Hawk's quiet. And

[Eldridge] is looking at everything and asking what's this, and what's that, and then he said "Dammit Hawk, you've got to tell me, ain't this the best ever [car]?"

And there was just this quiet moment, and he [Hawkins] suddenly said very quietly "Fletcher wouldn't drive nothing else but a Packard." And it was quiet and I looked in the rearview mirror, and Hawk was just sitting there with his case in the back and you could see that he was back in 1931, 1932. Because Fletcher Henderson ... but he never said Henderson, he just said Fletcher, and I knew what he was talking about. And then we sort of had a quiet journey to the hotel. And that's probably one of the neatest times I had at the Cellar. Aside from some really good jamming (Don Francks, July 30, 2013).

Throughout 1957, the Cellar remained fairly low-key in terms of its advertising, preferring that news spread via word of mouth in the musical community and on the University of British Columbia campus, where elements of the student body had found their way to Jack Kerouac, the Beats, and jazz music. Cellar members Jim Carney, Walley Lightbody, and Gavin Walker (amongst others) were active members of the UBC Jazz Society, and spread word of Cellar activities on campus. In later years this relationship would extend to include campus presentations of Cellar-based jazz groups, and concerts and workshops featuring visiting American artists brought in by the Cellar. Through the first few years of the Cellar's existence, there was very little advertising done for the shows produced there, including the appearances of well known American artists. In May of 1957, for example, Art Pepper's engagement went unheralded apart from a brief mention in the Variety page of the *Vancouver Sun* about his appearance on the half-hour television program "The Cool Pepper Show" (*Vancouver Sun*, May 17, pg. 7).

The one exception to the absence of advertising in the Cellar's early years seems to have been on the campus of the University of British Columbia, where by the fall of 1957, the club was advertising in UBC campus magazines. The Fall 1957 issue of *Pique*, a student run magazine,

included a full-page glossy advertisement for the Cellar on its back cover (see Figure 18). It is doubtless not a coincidence that Walley Lightbody, UBC law student and acting Cellar president at the time, wrote a jazz column for *Pique* entitled “The Jazz Scene” (Lightbody 1957, 33–35). In addition to general commentary on the state of the larger jazz scene (Brubeck, Miles Davis etc), Lightbody had this to say about the scene in Vancouver:

In closing I wish to mention that the jazz scene in Vancouver is far from stagnant. The local jazz club known as THE CELLAR [sic] and located beneath the traffic at 222 East Broadway will start swinging six nights a week as of October 4 and will at this time present from the Hillcrest in L.A. the Paul Bley Quartet for ten days. Other artists appearing the near future will be Buddy DeFranco, Conte Candoli, Bob Cooper and Cal Tjader. Anyone interested in more information can usually find me drinking coffee or sleeping somewhere in the Brock (Lightbody 1957, 35).⁷⁵

By the end of 1957, the Cellar had been operating for twenty months and had evolved from its roots at the private house sessions in the Richmond Wailhouse to be a vital and popular part of the emerging Vancouver jazz scene. Initially open only on weekends for a few core members and their friends, the Cellar was now operating as many as six nights per week, hosting well known American jazz stars as well as locally based groups. The Cellar benefitted from Vancouver’s highly restrictive liquor policies as well as from an upsurge of interest in jazz amongst young people fuelled by the post-war counterculture, and found itself a popular enough draw to be financially stable.

As it became clear that the club was not destined for immediate failure but rather could be a successful enterprise, tensions rose within the Cellar’s organizational core as to the purpose and development of the club. On one side of the ideological divide were musicians John Dawe, Al

⁷⁵ Despite using the 222 East Broadway address in the text of the article, the back cover ad featured the 2514 Watson street address.

Neil, Tony Clitheroe and others; players who were focused upon the Cellar as a laboratory and presentation space solely for jazz. On the other side were those, such as Ken Hole and Walley Lightbody, who saw in the Cellar a business opportunity, and sought to broaden the club's programming to increase its popularity and profitability.

The idea for the Cellar had sprung from the need for a place in which the city's younger, less established jazz musicians could have an opportunity to network, practice, and perform, and the majority of the voting membership of the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society continued to see that as the club's main purpose.

... you got to remember that we weren't trying to run a business, we were just trying to keep the place afloat. All we were really after was to get enough people into the place to pay the rent and build up a bit of a bank account so that we could bring some out of town guys in. That was the main idea of the place... As far as publicity and advertising ... we weren't really very heavy on it. We weren't trying to make money, we just wanted to keep it going.

None of us hardly were interested in money, in making money. If it happened, that was OK, but none of us had that drive to want to be studio musicians... none of us had that intention. We had absolutely no ambition to make money out of music. If the money came, that's cool, or if a studio job came that was to our liking, or that we were able to handle ... we weren't against it, but we weren't particularly aimed in that direction (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

However Ken Hole, already an active and successful entrepreneur in the restaurant world believed that the Cellar could increase its audience by expanding its musical offerings slightly to include vocalists and popular music of the day which, while being jazz influenced, fell far short of the bebop focused music the Cellar musicians were playing. Ken's ambition was to increase door revenues sufficiently that the club could book top-tier jazz artists such as Miles Davis, Stan Getz and others.

I think Kenny Hole would have turned the Cellar into a business, but we turned

him down. At least those of us who were voting members of the society. And we just wanted a place to go after hours and at the time, I guess none of us felt that we wanted to get involved with running a business. We just wanted to play. Dumb musicians just want to play, they don't want to make money. So we had a falling out with Kenny Hole and he went his way ... (Jim Johnson, August 14, 2013).

In January of 1958 the voting members of the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society convened a meeting to discuss the future of the club. Though the issues were not personal and the meeting remained civil, the ideological divide between the two sides proved too wide to bridge and resulted in the resignations of both Ken Hole and Walley Lightbody. Lightbody would soon relocate to Vancouver Island to complete the articling necessary for his law degree, where he and Ken Hole would team up once again to open The Scene, a Victoria based jazz club which melded some of the Cellar's operating principles with Hole's commercial and entrepreneurial interests.

There was a really early meeting, we must have rented an office building or something. We did that in those days. And we had a meeting with everybody that played, and a couple of others, I guess you'd call them hangers on, at the time. Lightbody was a player, but he already seemed [focused more on his legal career] ... and Ken Hole. They seemed to have formed an idea that this could go somewhere. Could be a commercial success. And none of us players ... we were all too busy learning how to play, and we all had day jobs. So it might have flown through somebody's mind, but it wasn't talked about as far as I can figure out. And Hole particularly, went on and on about it, his plans. And it finally dawned on us that he was an entrepreneur... So I guess the meeting must have ended kind of ... not totally disruptive, but verging on that. Because we could feel the split ... and the people that wanted to take it one way, and we just wanted to carry on, at least for the time being. With local groups, and the odd group from L.A (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

I remember it well, the meeting we had there. Al Neil was a big spokesman for the, if you want to call it "the other side." I remember saying "well, you know, if that's the way you feel about it, I'm out of here, and I'm tendering my resignation and I'm gone." And Ken said, and surprised me, as soon as I resigned he said "I'm resigning too, and I'm out of here too." I remember that coming as a surprise, because I just made the decision on my own, that I have too many goddamn things to worry about rather than getting involved in a fracas here. I [was] a full time student ... (Walley Lightbody, December 13, 2012).

With Ken Hole's departure, a new manager needed to be found for the Cellar, and saxophonist Dave Quarin was voted into the position. A more or less full-time responsibility, the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society arranged for a small salary to be paid to Quarin in order that he might quit his day job as an accountant.

... Dave Quarin, when the place opened, Dave was an accountant for some company as his day gig. Which, when Ken Hole and Walley Lightbody decided to leave, uh, we made Dave the manager, and he quit his day gig. So we paid Dave a regular salary. Not very much, but it was a salary. So Dave lived on very little for a long time. And he was married then, couple of kids ... most of the rest of us had no responsibilities (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

Quarin's ex-wife, Ricci, who would herself become a key part of the club's operational success, recalls that Dave, upon returning home from that decisive 1958 Cellar board meeting, sat her down and asked if she would be alright with eating hot-dogs from then on, as he wanted to accept the management job (Ricci Quarin, August 29, 2013). Ricci agreed, and Dave assumed managerial control of the Cellar in January 1958.

Well, it was sort of an elective process. He was one of the charter members, so we had a meeting one night and had a vote as to who we'd like to have for the manager of the place (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

In addition to the hiring of Quarin as the club manager, the remaining Cellar members had to elect a new board of directors, and re-register the not-for-profit Cellar Artists and Musicians Society with the appropriate authorities.

Then there was a political commotion about how [it was going to be run]. It ended up with 27 of us in the society, and you had to form a board of directors ... the group of us didn't feel that it was, that they [Ken Hole] could do a good enough job I guess, for what we wanted as an artists and musicians club. Not just a commercial hang out. I guess ... anyways we had to go to a lawyer and put it together, but we did it. So there was a bit of a ... hassle there to some extent, I guess (Don Cumming, August 22, 2013).

... once [Ken Hole and Walley Lightbody] left we got together with a lawyer [and] got everything re-registered properly after [they] left. We went through the whole process of re-registering it. All kinds of wretched stuff that none of us wanted to do (John Dawe, November 28, 2013).

The working arrangement with the local chapter of the AFM was also reconfirmed, and under Dave Quarin's management the Cellar began 1958 and the second phase of its eight year history.

Conclusion

The brief but intense period of activity which surrounds the formation of the Cellar club provides an interesting and valuable case study in the ways in which scenes arise and are structured. We see a group of likeminded individuals who lacked an immediate outlet for their musical ambitions come together through the mutual sharing of taste and of "cultural capital" related to the musical language and cultural codes of post-war small group jazz. The close connections sparked by this initial recognition of shared interest is reflected and strengthened through participation in activities which enact elements of individual and group identity. The intense and immediate gratification of Lacan's reflecting mirror is here found in the discovery of and communion with those who "get" it—those whose musical interests and corollary life-ways are seen as similar to one's own, and similarly opposed to mainstream cultural practices.

These relationships are then formalized through the establishment of first the Wailhouse and later the Cellar; physical sites which accommodated the activity of the scene and around which elements of the scene (musicians, other artists, fans, etc.) were able to coalesce and evolve. Considerations of authenticity and inclusion are here recognized and given shape through the implementation of memberships which effectively measure and record one's level of

commitment to the scene—the extent to which one is an insider (charter member) or outsider (social member), and the amount of cultural capital one possesses relative to the activities of the scene (Becker 1963 and Bourdieu 1983).

Though the Wailhouse and Cellar operated primarily as local scenes, and as but one of many musical scenes operating concurrently in Vancouver, there was as well an immediate intersection with trans-local jazz scenes through an awareness of, and eventual intersection with, similar forms of jazz activity in other areas. John Dawe and Bill Boyle for example, traveled to Toronto during the Wailhouse period, returning with information related to jazz practices in that city; jazz radio and periodicals such as *DownBeat* and *Metronome*⁷⁶ spread information related to scenic activity in American cities; and the self-conscious pursuit of interaction with jazz scenes beyond Vancouver led members of the Cellar to attend concerts outside of their home cities and, eventually, to import American artists to perform at the Cellar. Participation in such trans-local scenic activity, however sporadic, fostered a sense of community which was musically bounded, and which functioned despite distance and regional difference. Participation in the trans-local jazz scene may as well have provided the confidence necessary for the Cellar to continue to function on the local level, despite at times divisive politics within the group which ultimately led to a split amongst the organizing members, and a restructuring of club management.

⁷⁶ *Coda* magazine was at this point still largely concerned with traditional jazz practices rather than with modern jazz expression, and was therefore not of interest to the Cellar membership on the whole. Available only by subscription at this time as well, it is unclear how well informed Cellar members were as to the magazine's existence. No subjects that I questioned with regard to *Coda* mentioned it as being of importance to the Cellar, even once the magazine started to print infrequent news items about the club.

Chapter Five

No Room For Squares: The Cellar as Artistic Hub

Uptown and Downtown:

Despite the departure of business-minded Ken Hole, the Cellar's board of directors and club manager Dave Quarin worked quickly to professionalize the operation. An answering machine was added to the club's telephone which provided information on operating hours and the week's performances,⁷⁷ and in the summer of 1958 the club ran its first advertisement in the *Vancouver Sun* (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday July 18, 1958, pg 17). Positioned in the entertainment section, the ad made use of the 2514 Watson Street address, and advertised simply "Jazz in the Cellar" on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings. This initial ad ran only in the Friday edition of the newspaper, and shared space with movie listings, plays, live theatre, major concerts, and ads detailing the weekly entertainment available at the Cave and Isy's downtown. The musicians who enjoyed steady employment at these establishments and at the nearby CBC studios represented an entirely different musical world to that of the Cellar. Indeed the ideological difference of opinion between Ken Hole, Walley Lightbody, and those that wanted the Cellar to remain strictly a jazz club, was relatively minor in comparison to the dichotomous relationship between the professional downtown players and the habitués of the Cellar.

Vancouver was very, very strange in those days. It was divided into two places. The downtown core, which was tough to break into, and the rest of Vancouver or wherever. And all the rest of us young guys were in the whatever. We were out on the side (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

⁷⁷ Tony Clitheroe, November 29, 2012

Though free of any real animosity, a very real divide existed between those musicians who worked the downtown clubs and the majority of Vancouver's studio work, and those younger players who focused almost exclusively on jazz, primarily out of the Cellar. The split was based partially on ability—the (usually older) downtown players were generally better sight-readers—and partially on musical ideology and lifestyle.

... then all of a sudden in 1955-1956, hard core bebop came back again with a vengeance, and I think that struck some people as being a step backward. You know. I remember talking to Dave Robbins, who was a marvellous musician, trombone player ... he used to come in to Western Music where we used to hang out on Saturdays and listen to records, and he'd open the door and say "Hey man, we don't listen to that stuff [bebop] anymore, that's old time stuff." We'd all laugh and say "yeah sure, Dave." And he [was] partly right, and partly full of crap. But anyway, [that was] the big difference between the guys that played at the Cellar and the guys that played downtown and did the studio work and that. That was the big difference ... [it] was stylistic. We were light years apart that way. Oh man, yeah. And now it doesn't make any difference, because everybody digs everything, pretty well. Things kind of evened out after that, but there was a big discrepancy between styles [at the time] (John Dawe, January 28, 2013).

The musicians who played the clubs and studios of the downtown core were referred to as "downtowners," and those who played the Cellar [and in later years the Black Spot and Flat Five] just minutes south across False Creek, were called "uptowners."

We used to call them the "downtowners." That was Paul Ruhland, and the Chris Gage Trio, and the guys that played the Cave, the supper clubs downtown. I think there were a lot of put-down on both sides. We were stone-ass beboppers who didn't give a damn about anything. Making money or anything, and a lot of us were incapable of making money. You know, just, none of us were great readers or anything. So I don't think any of us had ambitions to become studio musicians or nightclub musicians.

We were just ... we were jazz bums, you know, we didn't appreciate the kind of music they played for a living. Because they were just backing up bad, bad acts most of the time. And then occasionally they'd back up somebody good, some great singer or somebody would come into town. But those guys were real well rounded musicians. They weren't real well rounded jazz-wise, but boy they could

cut anything. You'd put them in the studios and they'd do it on sight! Great sight readers and players like that. But they didn't appreciate us too much (John Dawe, December 20, 2001).

Though the exclusion of Cellar musicians from well-paying downtown gigs was at least initially based upon a lack of professional skills such as sight reading and doubling, the split deepened along musical lines, with the jazz-oriented Cellar players embracing their professional shortcomings as part of their identities as jazz musicians, and the downtown players avoiding a type of music and lifestyle they found disagreeable. Bassist Paul Ruhland,⁷⁸ who was one of the few downtown musicians who had something of a regular presence at the Cellar, confirms the split, and suggests that the exclusion might have worked both ways.

It was a matter of ... the leaders, that were working downtown, were a special group of leaders, and they hired always the same people. They didn't want to hire the Cellar guys because they couldn't read, or were poor readers. So ... I was lucky, I was a good reader, so I got hired for all the CBC shows, for instance... But then you see, it developed to be a kind of a clique thing... We were the downtown guys because we played downtown at the Cave, and we played downtown at the CBC, and it was always the same guys. Whether it was a 10 piece band or a 14 piece band it was always the same people that would be working around downtown. Those guys never got to work at the Cellar (Paul Ruhland, November 27, 2012).

Under the management of Ken Hole, the Cellar may well have begun to hire well known jazz oriented groups such as those of Ray Norris, Fraser MacPherson, Dave Robbins, and vocalist Eleanor Collins, all of whom had a large public profile due to their regular appearances on CBC radio and television and at the major clubs and theatres in Vancouver. Indeed the programming of

⁷⁸ An incredibly well educated musician who had moved to Vancouver from Austria via Winnipeg, Ruhland was a key part of the Vancouver music scene at the time. In addition to being the first call bassist for clubs such as Isy's and the Cave, he was a regular on CBC radio and television where he also provided arrangements and original compositions for the likes of Dave Robbins and others. In 1963 Ruhland would move to Los Angeles where he worked for a variety of groups and in the studios. During his time in Los Angeles he would write an arrangement for Stan Kenton, played frequently with Warne Marsh, and recorded several times including once with Warne Marsh and Claire Fischer on *Report of the First Symposium on Relaxed Improvisation* (Revelation Records, 1972), and once with Forrest Westbrook on *This is Their Time, Oh Yes* (Revelation Records, 1971).

Victoria's Scene club, established by Lightbody and Hole in late 1958, reflected such programming choices. However, with the Cellar firmly oriented as a club dedicated to the needs and interests of its members, its programming remained centred on those who were regular participants, and on whichever American jazz artists they could afford to bring in.

Beyond Ruhland and Ray Norris (who apparently became a Cellar member shortly before his move to Toronto and untimely death in 1958), few of the downtown musicians frequented the Cellar. While it is true that these musicians were all working steadily and therefore unable to attend the scheduled public performances at the Cellar, the club was well known as an after-hours venue for musicians with jam sessions that stretched into the daylight hours routinely. For the most part, musicians employed in the downtown clubs however opted instead for sessions at the Penthouse and, in later years, the Espresso coffee house. That said, photographs do exist which show well known downtown saxophonist Fraser MacPherson participating in a jam session with Cellar musicians and visiting American Bill Perkins (see Figures 34 and 35), bassist Paul Ruhland was an occasional visitor to the Cellar, and ads in the *Vancouver Sun* indicate that the Chris Gage Trio and bandleader Ray Sikora were at times employed by the club.⁷⁹ Sikora in particular played the club frequently in addition to holding rehearsals for his big band there, one of the few spaces large enough to accommodate the group. In the Ray Sikora band (of varying sizes) one may have witnessed the most significant mingling of uptown and downtown players, though the uptown players for the most part did not join Sikora in the house orchestra at Isy's or the Cave.

⁷⁹ *Vancouver Sun*, Saturday, September 5, 1959, pg. 33 included an advertisement for the Sunday, September 6th performance.

The Cellar was a place in which bebop and youth were the predominant characteristics, and where some knowledge of the contemporary counterculture, be it in literature, art, drama, painting, or music, was required cultural currency. Likewise, the scene surrounding the downtown players was predicated upon its own culture to the extent that Cellar players such as Tony Clitheroe, who did find employment downtown, would travel back to the Cellar after-hours rather than attend the downtown players' sessions and hangouts. Nonetheless, there is little doubt that musicians on both sides of the divide had interests in common, and to think that such musicians as Fraser MacPherson, Chris Gage, and Dave Robbins were uninterested in modern jazz is patently absurd. The nuances, politics, and normative expectations of the scene however, seem to have served to maintain and define difference.

Some of these guys would come down [to the Cellar], not all the time, but it was almost ... there was almost a feeling of ... there was a bit of a division there too. Because these guys were club musicians, and some of them, you know, had attitudes. You know, like "these guys are JUST jazz players" and we play jazz too, but we're able to do all this other stuff too. The readers, right? So there was a little bit of a push-pull thing, and that drove the jazz guys into sort of a "we're the real deal" sort of thing. You know. It wasn't like a horrible sort of situation, but there was that tension there. I detected it, and I'd talk to the jazz guys and they say "oh yeah, [the] downtowners were in and a couple of guys sat in and they're not as good as they think they are" etc, etc (Gavin Walker, December 3, 2012).

Wonderful players. But they seldom, in my time, anyway ... they're at least ten years older than I am, but they seldom, if ever came to the Cellar when we were there. They were [not]... we were, we considered ourselves the life blood of jazz, right? You know? Other than the big timers like Miles Davis and Charlie Parker and all the rest of it. But these guys were ... actually making a living playing. There were two major night clubs in Vancouver, one was the Cave and the other was Isy's ... And they were great musicians, I don't have to say that, but they very rarely ... I can't ever remember them playing at the Cellar when [I] was there (Stan Perry, November 4, 2012).

Interestingly, such a split seems to have been evident in the contemporary visual arts and literary communities as well.

... there was a bit of antagonism between the downtowners and the university people. The university people were sort of above it, if you know what I'm saying, and the downtowners used to slight them in various ways. That was the bohemian art, and Al Neil and [poet] bill bissett⁸⁰ are sort of the quintessential representatives of that type of artist in those days. For me the two geniuses of the scene (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

Shared feelings of being marginalized by both society at large and the wider manifestations of their own art worlds may have been the catalyst for the unique and important relationship that developed between the Cellar and the non-musical arts community in Vancouver. Though the Cellar had always formally been known as the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society, it was not until late 1958 and 1959, largely under the direction of then pianist Al Neil, that this wider association took off.

Arts at the Cellar

Known officially since its inception as the Cellar Artists and Musicians Society, the club had long associated itself with jazz fans and supporters who came from different branches of the arts. Visual artists such as Harry Webb, John Grinnell, and Frank Lewis had played important roles in the establishment of the Cellar space, and were, along with non-musician friends and associates, regularly in the audience for weekend performances. Actor, comedian, and vocalist Don Francks, along with dramatist and producer Barry Cramer, were valuable assets to the club as MCs, and

⁸⁰ This is bissett's preferred representation of his name.

the audience on any given night was an eclectic mix of musicians, visual artists, writers, actors, and those drawn in some way to the artistic counterculture of the time.

...that was the time of Jack Kerouac, you know? And the Beat generation and all that kind of stuff, and everything was very cool and quiet ... (Stan Perry, November 14, 2012).

I think they had all kind of audiences. All kind of early, what they called hippie and bohemian audiences (bill bissett, January 9, 2013).

The Cellar was the centre for people who wanted to listen to jazz and the people who wanted to listen to jazz were, let's say, a bohemian minority, as it were. They'd read Jack Kerouac and they'd read Allen Ginsberg and jazz was the hip thing to listen to, and then they took it up seriously and learned something about it. And listened to it, and some of them learned to play it and so on and so forth. So they were the, I guess, the foundation ... [the] youthful jazz crowd here in Vancouver... Fred Douglas and Kurt Lang used to go there. This was even before I knew them, actually (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

Nonetheless, the Cellar was predominately a music club, with few formal attempts, prior to 1959, to actively embrace other art forms.

Well, it was known as ... the official name of the place was the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society, so there was no attempt to reject anyone who wasn't a musician, but mostly it was music that was going on down there, you know (Tony Clitheroe, November 29, 2012).

From 1959 through the early 1960s there was, however, a concerted effort to more proactively engage with forms of art which were, while non-musical, deemed to be complementary in spirit and aim to the bebop and modern jazz being performed. Amongst the organizational core of the Cellar, the driving force towards artistic inclusivity and experimentation at the Cellar was pianist Al Neil.

He [Al Neil] was the personification of what the Cellar was all about. Artistic truth ... sort of alienation from regular society out there... He saw [the Cellar] as a real oasis, a real cultural centre ... And that was a really interesting aspect ... he [Cramer] really wanted to do these plays at the Cellar, and ... it [the

Cellar] became a cultural centre. And Al Neil was really encouraging of that. Because some of the musicians were like [dismissive hand gesture] “man, this is a jazz club, what has this got to do with jazz?” But Al Neil was right there, [saying] “no man, this is all part of it” (Gavin Walker, December 3, 2012).

One of the first major efforts towards this wider inclusivity was the monthly staging of plays at the Cellar.

Complete records of the theatrical events staged at the Cellar have been lost and the recollections of surviving participants are unclear, but it seems that between the spring of 1959 and at least the summer of 1960, a monthly series of plays were staged under the auspices of Barry Cramer, and with the full support of Al Neil.⁸¹ For the most part, these plays were short one-act productions which were designed initially to precede the evening’s musical content, and, later on, to fit within the break between the first two sets.

Yeah, I was mostly responsible for that. But I didn’t think it up ... I met this guy Barry Cramer. He was working at the very first TV station. I forget what it would be called. But he wasn’t onscreen, he wasn’t doing anything creative, and so he was pissed off with the job. He got the idea I guess, and I backed him up on it ... And he started off with Samuel Beckett. And because he had been in broadcasting, without us having to pay any money, when we were ready to put it on, he got publicity ... he had friends that he knew in broadcasting. And [he] got a good turnout. Probably 100 people would show up. And there w[ere] two Beckett plays, and a couple of others by current European [playwrights]... I’ve forgotten them now. But they did go [over] very well (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

The posters produced by artist Harry Webb to advertise these plays also provide rare and useful evidence in the evolution of the Cellar’s marketing strategies. The title of the very first play to be

⁸¹ *Vancouver Sun* ads for plays at the Cellar begin in the spring of 1963. As the initial run of plays was under the auspices of Barry Cramer and Al Neil, featured hand drawn posters rather than newspaper ads, and refer to productions that surviving individuals recall producing years earlier, I suspect that these 1963 productions were re-stagings. As Ch.7 details, the Cellar was in difficulty by 1963, and the staging of short plays at this time may have been part of a strategy to widen the club’s audience.

produced at the Cellar has been lost, but one of the earliest plays staged was Samuel Beckett's *Endgame*, a work which was still relatively new and controversial.⁸²

The thing is those plays [that Barry produced] were not really accepted at the time ... they were still pretty out there. Unlike today. They were like, Beckett was very obscure, and Edward Albee was like [out there] ... nowadays they're part of the mainstream of theatre, but back in those days that was avant-garde (Gavin Walker, December 3, 2012).

The staging of *Endgame* took place between May 24th and 28th 1959, and the 8:30pm curtain time confirms that this production was offered prior to the first set of music at 9:00pm. That no particular band is advertised on the poster suggests that this early dramatic experiment involved a local jazz group, very likely the Al Neil Quartet, given Neil's vocal support of the project. This poster, designed by Harry Webb, is also the first hard evidence that by spring of 1959 the Cellar was experimenting with advance ticket sales for special events rather than a standard door cover charge (see Figure 22). Over the years, advance tickets for Cellar special events would be available at the 711 Shop (a clothing store owned by Barry Cramer's family),⁸³ at Just Jazz Records, and, as this poster informs us, at H. Kaye Books on Howe Street in the downtown core. It is unclear whether the \$1.50 *Endgame* ticket would have also granted admission to the music which followed.

Though the title of the June production has been lost, in July of 1959 Cramer staged a production of Eugene [sic] Ionesco's *The Lesson*. Staged between July 27th and July 30th, *The Lesson* shared billing with the Art Pepper Quartet, which performed at the Cellar from July 4th

⁸² *Endgame* was first staged in April of 1957, and is now generally associated with the Theatre of the Absurd, a term / theory popularized circa 1960 by the work of critic Martin Esslin. Beckett is, along with Albert Camus, John-Paul Sartre, and fellow playwright Eugene Ionesco, associated with both the French avant-garde and Existentialism.

⁸³ This 711 Shop was a family run clothing store, and should not be confused with the later convenience store chain 7-11.

through August 2nd. Harry Webb's poster for this event uses the 222 East Broadway address, and serves to advertise both *The Lesson* and the entire run of the Pepper Quartet (see Figure 23).

Advance tickets were once again available at H. Kaye Bookshop, for the price of \$2. It is likely in this case that the ticket price for the play would not have included admission to the Art Pepper Quartet, as cover charges for imported American groups were apparently usually higher (Ricci Quarin, August 29, 2013 and Joe Geszler August 25, 2013).⁸⁴

The next poster to survive dates from November 1959, and tells us that Jean Giraudoux's *The Apollo of Bellac* was staged at the Cellar by Barry Cramer between November 9th - 12th (see Figure 24). This is the first work that provides evidence that at least some of the plays performed at the Cellar were officially licensed. *The Apollo of Bellac*, for example, was produced "with special arrangement with Samuel French," a New York based publishing house which specialized in plays. This suggests that the performances were popular enough to be able to sustain such expenses, and also suggests the ends to which the \$1.50 admission charge were put. The poster also indicated that the advance sale location had moved, at least temporarily, to the Cramer family clothing store (711 Shop) on Granville Street in the downtown core. No further evidence of theatrical productions from 1959 survives, though if the club kept to its monthly format another four productions would have been staged between *The Apollo of Bellac* in November of

⁸⁴ Also see ticket prices for 1957's Jazz a la Carte performance which ranged from \$2.50–\$4.50. The Cellar as well, being a not for profit, tended to pay the musicians what it could afford to, rather than what it could get away with. Joe Geszler, a regular attendee, recalled that he could afford to go and hear the local groups, but generally was not able to hear the imported American ones due to the cover fee increase (Joe Geszler, August 25, 2013). However, promotional material for Charles Mingus at the Cellar in 1961 listed advance tickets available for \$2.25 (see Figure 40). It perhaps safest to say that admission charges for the Cellar varied.

1959 and the next play for which definitive proof can be provided – Saul Bellow’s *The Wrecker*, staged between April 24th- 28th, 1960 (see Figure 25).⁸⁵

Samuel Beckett’s *Krapp’s Last Tape* was performed the following month, between May 22nd and May 26th, 1960 (see Figure 27).⁸⁶ The poster for this production makes explicit the fact that the dramatic productions took place outside of the busiest weekend days (Friday and Saturday) and ran Sunday through Thursday, once again made use of the 222 East Broadway address, and for the first time gave headline billing to an actor—Michael Magee.⁸⁷ In August of 1960 the Cellar presented Brock Bower’s⁸⁸ *The Tender Edge* in what may well have been the club’s final experiment with theatre until 1963 (see Figure 28).⁸⁹

While Barry Cramer was the key figure in organizing, staging, and directing many of the plays at the Cellar, he was not the only member involved in the endeavour. The director for the *Tender Edge* remains anonymous, and it is not known who directed the other theatrical productions rumoured to have been staged. Gavin Walker and others recall a production of Edward Albee’s *The Zoo Story* being staged during this period (1959-1960), though no poster

⁸⁵ A poster did survive listing a February performance of Tennessee Williams’ *I Rise in Flame Cried the Phoenix*, but the year of the performance cannot be determined (likely 1960). It is the only other play besides *The Apollo of Bellac* to indicate that the material was licensed for performance by the publisher. See Figure 26.

⁸⁶ Liner notes for *Kenneth Patchen Reads with Jazz in Canada* (Folkways, 1959) written by Al Neil in October of 1959 tell us that at least one play by William Saroyan was produced in 1960, but no promotional material seems to have survived.

⁸⁷ Magee (1929–2011) had a long career in broadcasting as actor, writer, producer, and sports commentator, but is perhaps best known as a voice actor in the CBC animated series *The Raccoons* which aired from 1985–1991 (*Globe and Mail*, Tuesday, Nov 29, 2011) accessed Jan 5, 2014.

⁸⁸ American journalist perhaps best known for his 2011 National Book Award nominated *The Late Great Creature*.

⁸⁹ Also see *Coda*, September 1960, pg. 9 for a mention of this production.

advertising its performance has been recovered, and filmmaker Don Cumming recalls having directed a play sometime between 1959 and 1961.⁹⁰

It [the production of plays at the Cellar] was great. I even directed a play. The play was written by Patsy Southgate and was called *Freddie*. It was a metaphor. I actually had to get someone to build a horse. And the whole thing had to do with the horse, and of course horse was a metaphor for heroin. But anyway, this was the play, and it was a husband and wife. I got it out of the *Evergreen Review* ... (Don Cumming, August 22, 2013).

Drawn from diverse, but uniformly avant-garde sources, the plays produced at the Cellar enabled non-musicians to involve themselves in artistic work, and encouraged members of the arts community as a whole to embrace the Cellar as nexus for the artistic counterculture in Vancouver.

It was Cramer and I that more or less [pushed for that]... turned [it] into more of an [artists' club]. Some people didn't like it, but I didn't see that they had any reason to, because we did this kind of thing in the middle of the week, or something like that (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

"The Cellar was the node," suggests Adrienne Brown, daughter of artist Harry Webb, "the meeting point for all these people in these different parts of the arts. They'd all show up [to the Cellar], and they were all friends. It really was a club" (Adrienne Brown, December 3, 2012).

I was not there myself because I was born in 1957, so I have to qualify it there, this is all based on what my parents told me, and it was a big part of their lives, but I gather from what they related to me about it that there was a tremendous amount of interaction between the visual artists and the musicians and the dramatists. Because I think, [that] because it was a non-profit situation and because it was after hours it was quite intimate ... because it wasn't a commercial thing there wasn't that many people [involved] and I think they all knew each other very well. And, they had such great memories [her parents], it was such a positive thing [for them]. I know my father made the posters, and apparently he also acted in some of the plays.

⁹⁰ While Al Neil recalls *The Zoo Story* having been produced during this earlier period of 1958–1960, and Don Cumming recalls directing *Freddie* during the same period, the only evidence for these plays comes by way of *Vancouver Sun* advertisements from March and April 1963. It is possible that these later productions were re-stagings, rather than the original Cellar productions. See footnote 41.

[T]here was that sense of crossing over back and forth, and I know that my father's friendship with people like Jim Kilburn was very cherished. They really got on, there was a deep bond ... My father loved music, and he really 'got' music. He cared about music, but he didn't play an instrument, and he didn't sing (Adrienne Brown, December 3, 2012).

Indeed it was this interconnectivity between the arts which prompted Al Neil's support of the Cellar as an interdisciplinary space, an experiment which began with Barry Cramer's theatrical productions.

Because I ... [was] one of the few probably of [the musicians] ... they were mostly ... bebop was enough for them [and just] to get their music together. And they all had day jobs. But I had access to ... hung around with literary types and artists as well. And knew the Beat situation was going around, and I read all those kinds of books. And [abstract] painters and so on. I kept up with all that kind of stuff (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

Another of the Cellar regulars to embrace and add to the interconnectivity of the arts at the Cellar was actor, comedian, and singer Don Francks. Francks had begun his performance career at the age of ten singing on local radio (billed as Don Franck–Sinatra), and quickly expanded his repertoire to include comedy routines. During the 1950s, he found steady employment at the last of Vancouver's vaudeville houses and at the downtown supper clubs such as The Cave and Isy's. At these establishments Francks was expected to warm up the house with a short act that included songs, impersonations, and comedy, and then to introduce the main attraction of the evening. With a keen interest in jazz, blues, and African American popular music, Francks quickly learned of the Cellar and became an early and frequent visitor as an audience member, jam session performer, and as Cellar master of ceremonies.

When he started coming to the Cellar, none of us knew anything much about him, and he just showed up. And we were all suitably impressed because he was a worker right, at that time, in a foundry, doing the heaviest possible work you could

do, and he'd clean up and when he came to the Cellar he was all ... I forget if what I'm referring to is called the Hipster style back then. A very nice suit, and he'd bring in ... we had little square tables at the Cellar, and he'd bring in a red and white table cloth and lay it down, and bring out a bottle of wine. And we couldn't believe it, the first time he [did] it. We didn't have a liquor license ... any liquor that was in there was under that table, but he put his on the table. And then he asked us, as we got to know him ... if he could do some humour, or I don't know what he called it. And so in intermission ... I said go ahead Don, and he got up and he managed to find all these totally esoteric and obscene black comics, like ... with names like Lord [Buckley]⁹¹ and such ... two or three of them. They were probably released as what were called ... race records. So he got up, and because he was a budding actor, he could memorize like thirty minutes of it, and the accents, pretty close. And he'd get up and ... I don't know if he said, maybe he did, if he introduced them, and said who the work was [from]. He probably did that. And then he'd just start off, and I'd say about 2% or maybe nobody in the audience had heard this stuff, and it was so far beyond. It was beyond Lennie Bruce at the time, for being totally off beat and erotic and whatever you want. But there was no reason that we couldn't, in that place, let him do it. And then he started singing a bit at the end, and he was very good at scatting like Ella, and of course he went to Toronto and became semi-famous, I guess (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

Francks' day job at the foundry paid reasonably well, and in addition to his penchant for sharp dressing, he was able to indulge a passion for automobiles, acquiring and meticulously restoring numerous cars from the 1930s and 1940s. In these cars he then made regular trips to Seattle where he visited record shops in search of rare jazz recordings and race records, both of which were hard to find in Vancouver, with its smaller black community. The records were often badly worn copies which had been removed from juke boxes, but they enabled him to develop a repertoire which was decidedly unique (Don Francks, July 30th, 2013). At the Cellar he was then able to experiment with a type of satirical, adult comedy which preceded by several years the

⁹¹ Lord Buckley, the stage name for Richard Myrle Buckley, was in fact white. Lord Buckley was a stage performer and recording artist often referred to as a "hip comic" who, in many ways, referenced aspects of beat culture and foreshadowed such comedians as Lenny Bruce. In *Chronicles*, Bob Dylan states "Buckley was the hipster bebop preacher who defied all labels...Buckley had a magical way of speaking. Everybody, including me, was influenced by him in one way or another" (Dylan, 2005, 260).

Nonetheless Francks was indeed informed by the work of black comics, knowledge of which he gained through race recordings collected on trips down the American west coast from Vancouver to Seattle, and later while living in California.

popularity of Lenny Bruce. Additionally, his interest in the standard song form and vocal improvisation brought the male voice to the Cellar amidst the monopoly of instrumental jazz, and provided Francks with experience which would later be turned into successful recordings in New York at the Village Vanguard, and at the Purple Onion with Lenny Breau.⁹²

Blues and Haikus–Poetry at the Cellar⁹³

Al Neil's interest in the late 1950s art scene and his particular fondness for beat literature resulted in a familiarity with early experiments combining jazz and poetry, including the 1957 Kenneth Patchen recording *Kenneth Patchen Reads with Allyn Ferguson and the Chamber Jazz Sextet* (Cadence, 1957).⁹⁴ Inspired by what he heard on the album and by what he knew of the San Francisco scene (literature, art, music), Neil reached out to Patchen to see if the poet would be interested in coming to perform at the Cellar. While other Cellar musicians were reportedly

⁹² Jackie Gleason Says *No One in This World Is Like Don Francks* (Krapp, 1963), *Lost ... and Alone* (Krapp, 1965), *Live at the Purple Onion* (Art of Life, 2004). Francks has also had a considerable film career, with roles in movies and television on both sides of the border including a 1968 role with Fred Astaire in Francis Ford Coppola's musical film *Finian's Rainbow* (Warner Brothers, 1968). He remains active as an actor and vocalist to this day.

⁹³ One should be careful not to confuse the Cellar in Vancouver with a club of the same name in San Francisco during the 1950s and 1960s which similarly played host to jazz music and beat poetry, including important experiments in combining the two by such artists as Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Kenneth Rexroth, Stan Getz, Brew Moore and others. See *Poetry Readings in the Cellar* (Fantasy Records, 1957). It is also worth noting that the Cellar in San Francisco was established in 1956, the same year as the Cellar in the Vancouver. Both clubs were basement spaces, and the names likely stem from this, rather than any overt influence of one on the other. Jack Kerouac mentions the San Francisco club in his book *Desolation Angels*, where attending the Cellar is one of the first things he fantasizes about doing once he reaches San Francisco following his summer's employment as a fire lookout in the Cascade Mountains of Washington State. *Desolation Angels* was not published until 1965, but was written close to a decade earlier, at the time of these early jazz-poetry experiments at the San Francisco club (Kerouac 1995, 132 and 136–139).

⁹⁴ It is possible that Neil may have heard Patchen's earlier 1942 radio broadcast with composer John Cage –*The City Wears a Slouch Hat*, as well as Kenneth Rexroth and Lawrence Ferlinghetti's influential *Poetry Readings in the Cellar* (Fantasy Records, 1957).

less than enthusiastic about the proposal, Neil was aided by artist Harry Webb and designer John Grinnell.⁹⁵ Patchen's authorized biography describes the connection;

Through the combined effort of their old friend, jazzman Johnny Wittwer (now back in Seattle) and another fan and jazz arranger John Grinnell from Vancouver, Canada, a new poetry-jazz tour of Washington and British Columbia was launched that February [of 1959]. Traveling without a jazz group, Patchen was met by John Grinnell in Vancouver on February 12th where he met the Alan Neil Quartet with whom he would be working. He dashed off a note to [his wife] Miriam that night, "Late yesterday afternoon Mike Jeffries, young last year law student and Alan Neil, the piano playing leader of the quartet with which I'll appear, came around to motel and we had supper before proceeding to 'The Cellar' at 8:30 for a rehearsal which lasted until eleven. Worked out a lot of material, and things should pan out pretty well as far as readings-band combination is concerned. Neil is very versatile and quick, full of hero-worship of me; and the alto sax player (18 yrs. old) [Dale Hillary] [sic] is almost as talented as Modesto [Briseno].⁹⁶ Drums and bass [Bill Boyle and Lionel Chambers] complete quartet—all young kids. As I say, things should be lively and smooth by [sic] time for first appearance" (Smith 2013, 247).

Though it seems that he was at least initially housed at the City Centre Motor Inn, Patchen spent the majority of his Vancouver stay with John Grinnell, the designer, jazz fan, and Cellar charter member who helped to arrange the engagement and with whom Patchen had corresponded frequently regarding the Vancouver dates (Larry Smith, January 27, 2014, email correspondence).

When Kenneth Patchen came up from San Francisco ... my parents, one of their favourite memories was that he came over for tea, when he was up here. He stayed with the Grinnell's on that visit, apparently, when the Grinnell's were living up on South Granville. Kenneth Patchen was my father's favourite poet, and he just loved his stuff, it was so exciting when he came. And also my dad and Al Neil had met

⁹⁵ It is also possible that Neil may have had help in contacting Patchen from Warren Tallman, an influential English professor who helped to found the creative writing program at the University of British Columbia in the mid-1950s, and who had close ties to both Black Mountain College and to the San Francisco beat movement. Though no definitive connection can be made between Tallman and Kenneth Patchen's appearance in Vancouver it cannot be ruled out, as Neil associated with social groups that included Tallman, Tallman was known to frequent the Cellar, and Patchen's Canadian sojourn included dates at UBC. That said, poet Jamie Reid, who developed a close relationship with Tallman, believes such a connection to be unlikely.

⁹⁶ Of the Chamber Jazz Sextet with whom Patchen had recorded in 1957.

when they were working in the air mail section of the post office at Hastings and Granville just after the war ... and they would all socialize and they would come over to my parents' cottage in Ambleside and this was all going on at the time that his group played behind Kenneth Patchen when they did "As I Opened the Window" and things on that record. So that was a big event in our lives, the making of that record (Adrienne Brown, December 3, 2012).

Al Neil recalled the experience with less detail some sixty years later, but confirms his prior knowledge of Patchen, his admiration, and that contracting the poet was a group effort:

And of course I heard jazz and poetry, through the beats. And from what I heard, there was one really good poet ... I'd heard him reading on one of his early records with a jazz group, and I wasn't impressed by the jazz group but his voice was just like none other for reading poetry. And that was Kenneth Patchen. So we found out where he lived in San Francisco, and we knew that he was doing this stuff right at the very time. And invited him up, and he came. And I had a young 18 year old alto saxophonist [Dale Hillary]. And that went very well. We played 10 days together and then did a CBC [show] and that's where the record came from. Recorded for CBC [which] had a Wednesday Night I think they called it and it went right across, national. So we just lucked out, you know. Somebody came down to the Cellar and heard it (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

Patchen's trip to Vancouver was part of a Pacific Northwest tour which included several dates in Vancouver, on Vancouver Island, and in the Seattle area including the University of Washington (state). The Canadian engagements occurred first, with the American dates occurring after February 22nd during Patchen's return trip to California by rail (Smith 2000, 247-248). Arriving in Vancouver on Thursday, February 12, 1959, Patchen rehearsed with the Al Neil group on Thursday and Friday, and possibly performed with them at the Cellar on Friday evening. On Saturday February 14th, the group traveled to Vancouver Island where they performed in the afternoon at Victoria College,⁹⁷ and that evening at the Scene Club in Victoria (Pat LaCroix, March 16, 2014).

⁹⁷ Though now part of the University of Victoria, at the time Victoria College was associated with the University of British Columbia. That the group travelled to the Island for this engagement and did not speak at a mainland college which held the same name was confirmed by Carol Itter, Neil's domestic partner, on January 28, 2014.

On Valentine's Day, he sent [his wife] a special delivery card expressing his love and this report, "Afternoon reading at Victoria College was a standing room smash hit, much to surprise of sponsors, I think. Kids called me back three times — practically tore auditorium down in their enthusiasm. Hope to rest a bit now in hotel room before tonight's sessions: usual night club hours, start around 10:30, probably end about 2" (Smith 2013, 247).

Following their return to Vancouver and appearances on local television and at the UBC, the group was booked by CBC producer Robert Patchell for a local live radio broadcast on Tuesday, February 17th, which was followed by a rebroadcast on the CBC national network from Montreal on October 4, 1959 (Folkways, 1959). Released soon after as an LP on the Folkways Label and titled *Kenneth Patchen Reads with Jazz in Canada* (Folkways, 1959), with the subscript "with the Alan Neil Quartet," the recording is widely regarded as one of Patchen's best (see Figure 29). According to the liner notes for the album, Patchen and the Neil group performed at the Cellar that evening after midnight, to what would have been a fairly select audience of club insiders (Neil, 1959, pg 1). Backed by Al Neil (piano), Dale Hillary (saxophone), Bill Boyle (drums), and Lionel Chambers (bass), Patchen then performed at the Cellar over the weekend of February 20th–22nd, 1959, an event which prompted the Cellar to run its first advertisement in the *Vancouver Sun* since November 28, 1958 (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday November 20, 1959, pg. 21).

Included with the original album release was a four-page booklet of liner notes written by Al Neil.⁹⁸ Beyond brief biographical information on the musicians involved in the session and the particulars surrounding its recording, Neil addressed at length the often contentious issue of jazz and poetry performances, suggesting that "...God knows most of the attempts have been pretty

⁹⁸ Neil would go on to publish several novels, and these liner notes gives one a glimpse into his early written voice.

awful” (Neil 1959, 2). Neil seeks to separate Patchen from the beat scene as a whole (an effort Patchen himself would make repeatedly throughout his career. Smith 2000); seeking to condemn beat attempts at melding jazz and poetry as having been in someway “dishonest” while simultaneously making Patchen (and Neil by association) the one exception to this rule.

... the thing has to be honest: then even when it isn’t very good ... nobody will get hurt. But when the attempts are both dishonest—on both sides—and bad, it’s not just a cheap scene; it’s a vicious, hurtful farce. Which brings me to the fact that most jazz musicians don’t dig poetry anyway; and this type of thing [mixing it with jazz] will really close the book on it (Neil 1959, 2).

That poetry, and in particular jazz and poetry, was something which was avoided when at all possible by most Cellar musicians is confirmed by bassist Tony Clitheroe, who, when speaking of the contemporary fad for jazz and poetry brought on by the likes of Kerouac and Ferlinghetti offered that;

.... It [poetry] would bring in a few different people, no doubt, who otherwise wouldn’t have known anything about the place. I got stuck sometimes backing these things up. Sort of the Kerouac thing, and so there’d be some two or three uncomfortable musicians in there trying to figure out “well, should we play or not?” or should we lay out for a while, or I don’t know ... And there’s a guy out front reading poetry ... (Tony Clitheroe, November 29, 2012).⁹⁹

Neil as well confirms that though his social circle included visual artists, poets, writers and other prominent members of Vancouver’s burgeoning artistic community, he was often the lone Cellar-based musician at such gatherings.

The Webbs and Grinnell and myself and the other artists would gather on Saturday nights or some nights over in West Vancouver where they lived and party, you know, but that was separate from the musicians. Some of the musicians they weren’t interested in that, most of them weren’t. Not only not interested, they thought it was, I don’t know ... they thought they were going to, the artists were going to be snobbish. They didn’t really know what they were coming to the Cellar

⁹⁹ Nonetheless many Vancouver poets did read at the Cellar, including Bill Bissett, Lance Farrell, and Fred Douglas. Douglas can be seen reading with the Al Neil Trio in the 1964 NFB film *In Search of Innocence* (Forest 1964).

for. If they were authentic fans, or ... ? That was at the beginning (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

Patchen's appeal though was different, asserts Neil, and his authenticity of character and artistic presentation in the face of otherwise "falseface" beat posturing was able to reach the musicians in the quartet that played with him at the Cellar.

Patchen was the one exception. I've heard of many jazzmen who have been digging him all along. Myself, it's been ten years. (On this I should say that it pleased me a lot when Dale Hillary and Bill Boyle went round quoting big hunks of his poetry for weeks after Kenneth left here. They probably dug him more as a man than as a poet, but they did dig him...) (Neil 1959, 3).

Patchen aside, attempts to draw other artistic modes into the Cellar space were not always a smooth or uneventful process, and at times served to highlight the extent to which the performance of jazz in the early 1960s was still very much about the performance of hetero-masculine identity within a hegemonic social space.

Confronting the Other in the Arts

During the 1950s and early 1960s, the arts scene in Vancouver was vital and developing quickly in both literature and the visual arts, yet lacked the infrastructure to support and house the efforts of these varied artists. Beyond the Cellar, and the scene which was tied to the University of British Columbia, there were few places for developing artists to interact with their peers or to engage actively in their work. Poet Jamie Reid, who would co-found the influential Canadian literary journal *TISH* in 1961,¹⁰⁰ describes the Vancouver art world at the time:

¹⁰⁰ An anagram for shit, *TISH* (1961–1969) was founded by Jamie Reid, George Bowering, Frank Davey and Fred Wah in 1961, and was closely linked to the attitudes espoused by Black Mountain College and introduced to the *TISH* members by UBC professor Warren Tallman. *TISH* founders Fed Wah and George Bowering would both go on to be named as Canadian Parliamentary Poets Laureate. The influential Vancouver weekly *The Georgia Straight* (1967–) was an off-shoot of *TISH*, as were several other Canadian literature journals and periodicals. For more on *TISH*, see Davey, 2011.

There was nothing, OK. Believe me. There was nothing. There wasn't ... there would have been the art gallery as a place, but we at that time didn't have any modality, any mode to have access to that. It did come later, but we didn't at that point have access. So, the first art gallery in Vancouver that I remember was the New Design Gallery that opened up on Pender Street, and that didn't open until 1961 at the earliest... (Jamie Reid, August 18, 2013).

As a result, and with the encouragement of Al Neil, Barry Cramer, John Grinnell, Harry Webb, Don Cumming, and others, the Cellar functioned as a node through which these disparate arts intersected. Initially simply a venue in which those with a shared interest in jazz socialized, the Cellar evolved into a more proactive interdisciplinary space.

While accepted and encouraged by some members of the Cellar co-operative, others were less comfortable with these efforts, feeling that they took away from the focus on jazz.

Unsurprisingly, at least some of the resistance to the performance of other artistic modes at the Cellar was rooted in an unconscious performance of what Robert Connell has called hegemonic masculinity—a predominant way of being and expressing maleness, and of supporting the prevailing gender hierarchy (Connell 1987, 86 and Connell 1995).¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ In society at large during the period, as well as within the jazz community (see Piekut 2010, Tucker 2008, Annfelt 2003), this expression of maleness centred around “such values as courage, inner direction, certain forms of aggression, autonomy, mastery, technical skill, group solidarity, adventure, and considerable amounts of toughness in mind and body” (Carrigan 1987, 75). Bound up in hegemonic masculinity is the desire, on the one hand, for the formation of stable social groups through which the participation in and observance of social events remains understandable (the setting and defining of terms) and on the other, with a flight from women and from feminine tendencies (Donaldson 1993, 645). A lived experience which most men benefit from though not all men actively participate in its construction, hegemonic masculinity relies upon social constructions which are supported and maintained through “influential agents” such as “priests, journalists, advertisers, politicians ... playwrights, film makers, actors, novelists, musicians, activists, academics, coaches and sportsmen” – those who regulate and articulate the experiences and fantasies through which gender regimes are enacted and maintained (Donaldson 1993, 646). Interestingly, hegemonic masculinity often excludes black males (Donaldson 1993, 646), perhaps due to the hyper-sexuality so often historically associated with the black male body.

Unsurprisingly, male homosexuality runs counter to hegemonic masculinity, even as queer males may benefit from the very social system their existence subverts. Male homosexuality, with its associations with effeminacy, required hostility between males (between male hegemonic agents) as a basic act of heterosexual masculinity, thereby creating a rift between (male) hegemonic agents (Donaldson 1993, 648). Hegemonic masculinity is then “exclusive, anxiety-provoking, internally and hierarchically differentiated, brutal, and violent. It is pseudo-natural, tough, contradictory, crisis-prone, rich, and socially sustained” (Donaldson 1993, 645). Within the social structure of the Cellar, one can frame reaction to certain art and certain artists within this hegemonic framework.

Perhaps most famously, one of Canadian poet bill bissett's first public readings occurred at the Cellar in the summer of 1961, where he shared billing with fellow poet Lance Farrell.¹⁰²

Booked by drummer and filmmaker Don Cumming (Don Cumming, August 22, 2013) to perform during intermission, the experience was a traumatic one for bissett.

And, the first poetry reading I ever did was at the Cellar...And people threw [things at me] ... my first reading there, I used to like reading in different voices ... it was actually an early form of sound poetry, though we didn't actually even have that term then (bill bissett, January 9th, 2013).

bissett's technique at the time was to read in a variety of voices, many of which were pitched in an effeminate, high falsetto. During one of these sequences, a member of the audience threw a glass at bissett, striking him on the face and cutting him just below the eye.

bill was reading, and he was reading in one of his feminine voices and the crowd that was there was the general crowd that used to go there, salesmen who were a little bit interested in jazz and had a bottle of rye under the table and some Ginger Ale on top of the table to put into it. And bill was reading these poems and they were yelling at him, you know. Faggot and stuff like that, you know. And he just kept on going. And finally, someone threw [something] ... at him. Someone had broken a glass or something and threw a piece of crockery at him and it hit him right under here [the eye]. And it was just by chance I guess that he was right in the middle of a poem that said "I'm going to kill you!" So ... he's bleeding from this, and anyway ... he kept going ... And at that point I thought ... bill ... always [used to] be hustling for money for his magazines and I thought he was a bit of a con man at that point. I thought his approach to art was a kind of shuck, but when he did that, I thought man, this guy's got it man, and ever after that I always had respect for him (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

bissett recalled being terrified that it had been one of the musicians who had thrown the glass at him, as he was in awe of them, and in particular of the saxophonist Dale Hillary. The

¹⁰² The exact date of this reading is unknown, but correspondence with bissett and with poet Jamie Reid seem to put the reading in the late spring or summer of 1961.

experience had a profound effect on him, and was recalled years later in his book *Sailor* (bissett 1978) where he writes;

in vancouvr i was
skreeching up n down
i gess a lot uv
diffrent voices

i dont know i was reeding my
poetry they startid throwing
glasses at me breking around
me avr th floor sum blood
i was cut a bit

frend cum up to me she
sz why dont yu stop bfor
yu get hurt

i didnt i wa going to reed
for so long i red until i
was redy to stop ther voices

making a background for me sum
times riding above thn falling
away hyeena frill n gin

n over on the side lines whun
a th best bass plays i evr herd

smiling at me

(bissett 1978, 7)

Immediately following bissett's reading, fellow poet Lance Farrell took the stage to read, though his poems and their presentation were more widely accepted and his performance was free from violence and heckling.

Lance started to read [after bill] these heterosexual poems with all kinds of swear words and stuff in them in this kind of sweet voice and these guys sort of liked that. That appealed to their [the audience's] sensibilities, so they didn't throw anything

at him. And bill said that after he'd done his set, he sat down and the crowd and the same people that were yelling at him and throwing stuff at him were talking to him as if he was just a normal person (Jamie Reid, August 18, 2013)

bissett confirms that upon the conclusion of his performance, he was accepted into the audience and treated normally; confronted with no hostility or violent behaviour and left to listen to the rest of the evening's music. It is unclear whether the violent reaction to bissett's work had to do with the performance of poetry in general, which, as we have heard, was often met with indifference or bewilderment by the majority of the Cellar musicians, or it was the bizarre, effeminate presentation of the work that upset the crowd.

That's what I've often thought, but I don't know. Because I did notice that in the higher registers they got very upset. Like men can't do high registers because it would only mean one thing, and they're not like that so they threw things to be separate from it. I dunno. It was a theory I had. Heh. Or maybe they just felt like throwing things (bill bissett, January 9, 2013).

Beyond the injury sustained, bissett found the evening upsetting as his poetry's reception ran counter to his assumptions of the space and its accommodations.

That's sort of what I expected, when I read there, at the Cellar, that they would actually appreciate what I was doing because I was, like, doing atonal jazz with words. And I was doing non-linear jazz with words, and I thought they would be able to transition from how they played; non-linearly ... improvisationally, with lots of surprises. [That] they would be able to transition their appreciation of that to writing ... that you could read that way too. You could write that way too. But I've learned a long time ago that's not necessarily true. People that are multifaceted and adept in one art form may not want some other art form that they've not thought of in that way, to be similar...So that's how, regardless of the response, it [the reading at the Cellar] influenced me (bill bissett, January 9, 2013).

bissett had been hopeful that the Cellar would function as a space in which the performance of queer identity would be accepted and recognized as an exercise in rule bending and improvised expression similar to the risk-taking he observed in the Cellar's musical community.

However, in the late 1950s and early 1960s jazz was, at least in Vancouver, still very much a performance of hetero-masculinity—an often athletic display of skill and bravado which was often more competitive than it was inclusive.

Though self-consciously bohemian in many ways, musical expression at the Cellar was itself heavily proscribed. The performance of jazz at the Cellar was generally in keeping with mainstream, bebop oriented forms, and though the early experiments of Don Cherry and Ornette Coleman were accepted (after some acclimatization) by Cellar denizens, pianist Al Neil's own gradual abandonment of bebop oriented expression in favour of free improvisation and mixed media was generally considered incompatible with the club's aims.¹⁰³

... well, I don't know what he got into [musically] after that. Al was weird. He started to get too weird for the Cellar. Quarin would lay into him. Al would jump up off the piano seat and start playing the wall, and stuff like that. That's when we knew something had changed in Al. He's a great ... he loved to be on a stage. Because he does presentations beautifully, that sort of thing. Visual stuff. He's into everything (John Dawe, August 14, 2013).

So great was Neil's dissatisfaction with the limits of mainstream jazz expression that he would quit playing entirely between 1962 and 1966, when he emerged again as part of the Al Neil trio with Gregg Simpson (drums) and Richard Anstey (bass) playing a highly experimental music that often made use of dance, and other artistic mediums during performances. Richard Baker observed in *Coda* magazine that Neil's music from this period,

...sounded strange even to ears already accustomed to Ornette [Coleman], Cecil Taylor and Sun Ra. Neil derived as much from John Cage, Alfred Jarry, the I Ching... as from any trends in free jazz or, for that matter, bop... [D]evelopments during the intervening years make it difficult to realize what a departure these performances represented at the time (*Coda*, Feb 1977, pg 16).

¹⁰³ See the activities at the Sound Gallery (1965), the Al Neil Trio which began public performances in 1966, and the happenings organized by the INTERMEDIA society from 1967. Gregg Simpson's blog has many useful links (www.greggsimpson.com) as does www.vancouverartinthesixties.com.

At the time of bill bissett's ill-fated reading at the Cellar in 1961, he and Neil were in many ways the "quintessential representatives" of bohemian art in Vancouver (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

At that point [1960 - 1961] they [bissett and Neil] would not have been accepted by the general population as artists. I don't know what the general population [would] have thought of them, but you know, they'd think they were odd people or they'd be scared of them, at that time. When the Al Neil trio first took off in 1966 it was really surprising music in Vancouver, I can tell you that. It was really surprising. He got bored with it [bebop], is what happened to him. He didn't want to do it anymore. You have seen his writing? Here comes C7 ... which he doesn't want any more, and they keep saying c'mon Al, play the changes (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

As Neil recalls, there was both confusion and some hard feelings surrounding his evolving musical aesthetic in the early 1960s.

I copped out around 1962. I figured I had had enough and I was starting to hear stuff that couldn't be played in the harmonic structure we were using. I was going crazy because I could hear it and if I tried to play it [Dale] Hillary would turn around and say "play the fuckin' changes," because if I played what I was hearing I would fuck up the rhythm section and the horn players. One night ... I thought, well, I'm going to screw up the rhythm section so I just played it [the solo he was hearing] on the wall ... the wall was right behind me. [Dave] Quarin, who was the manager at the time was really upset. At the intermission he was getting heavy with me at the bar ... (Al Neil to Rick McGrath, December 4, 1972).

... they [at the Cellar] weren't too happy about the way I left that kind of music behind and tried to find another way to present music (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

To be fair, Al Neil, bill bissett, Lance Farrell and other key members of Vancouver's "bohemian" arts scene were pushing the envelope quite hard in those days, with bissett and Farrell perhaps known as much for their poetry and efforts at independent publishing as they were for shocking the sensibilities of the cultural establishment. bissett was particularly polarizing, being both named by Jack Kerouac in *The Paris Review* (1968) as one of the great poets of his time (Berrigan, 1968) and denounced on the floor of the Canadian House of

Commons in December 1977 for using tax-payer funded arts grants to write “pornographic” material. The reaction of the Cellar members to the *avant garde* work of bissett and Neil does however suggest that the Vancouver arts scene as a whole, as well as the Cellar’s role within that larger community, was complex and at times conflicted.

It is also worth noting, as Sherry Tucker did in her treatment of Grover Sales’ approach to sexuality in jazz, that musical classification can and does at times double as “sexual classification, and vice versa” (Tucker 2008, 9). Though also a practical matter of musical incompatibility and evolving musical taste, reaction to Neil’s less “straight-ahead” approach to jazz and improvised expression may well have had a lot to do with hetero-normativity in jazz, and the masculine hegemony which dominated most jazz spaces. Music which was not classified as jazz was free to abandon straightness, and therefore those that abandoned musical straightness were, in large part seen to be opting out of jazz. Jazz has historically operated “as a hegemonic, and therefore straight, masculine discourse,” and though it granted its (male) practitioners some level of “homosocial intimacy” without fear of breaking the hegemonic taboos of homosexuality (it allowed for artistic sensitivity and emotional openness between males perhaps rare in outside society), it only managed to do so by protecting the (social and physical) space jazz occupied from the threat of homosexuality and queer expression (Tucker 2008, 10).

The Bebop Girls

The Cellar’s role as a space for women was similarly complicated. On the one hand, the club provided a liberating space within which women could socialize and consume alcohol free from the proscriptive rules on such behaviour in larger society; and on the other hand, the club

functioned very much as a male dominated space within which women were relegated to support roles and denied full acceptance into the musical community.

Women were banned from B.C.'s saloons in 1910, and only granted access to public social drinking again in 1921 with the establishment of the beer parlour and its separate entrances for male and female patrons. Required to use a different door and to keep to one side of the room, often behind a partition, it was not until 1954 and the establishment of the cocktail lounge in Vancouver that men and women could openly drink in mixed company. Yet even with the establishment of the cocktail lounge, women seeking to drink alcohol without sitting down to a meal had their behaviours carefully proscribed. Though ostensibly spaces open to the use of both genders, cocktail lounges in Vancouver during the 1950s and 1960s were still male spaces within which women were viewed with suspicion, and subject to unique rules for their conduct. Though there were no separate entrances or partitions within the new cocktail lounges¹⁰⁴ booth seats and boxed areas¹⁰⁵ were prohibited and open sight-lines had to be maintained throughout the space (Campbell 2001, 123).

In addition to rules established by the liquor control board, individual establishments also saw fit to proscribe the behaviour and presence of women within these newly created public spaces. In the capital city of Victoria, it was policy in at least one well known cocktail lounge that women could only receive service while seated at tables, reserving service at the bar for males

¹⁰⁴ Working class beer parlours would retain both for years—they were only legally granted permission to remove them in December 1963 (*Vancouver Sun*, December 3, 1963 pg 1), and to this day several surviving parlours from the period in both downtown Vancouver and New Westminster retain signs indicating the separate entrances for men and women.

¹⁰⁵ The “snug” from British pub culture would not have been permitted (a pub snug is a small, private room with direct access to the bar through a private window. Its construction prevents other pub patrons from seeing its occupants, and historically beer prices were higher within the snug than without), nor would private VIP rooms.

only, and in the late 1950s at the upscale Sylvia Hotel, unaccompanied women were denied entry to the facility entirely (Campbell 2001, 123 and 157). While private members clubs flourished in Vancouver at this time, providing alternate spaces for social drinking, paid memberships were generally required to such clubs and, though these payments were often only a token amount, one can imagine that a woman's ability to obtain membership to the majority of these clubs would have been quite limited.

At the Cellar however, the only restriction to access was payment of a modest cover charge. Memberships, while required through the early period of the Cellar's existence, were generally easy to obtain and were not restricted to male patrons. It remains unclear whether the membership itself had a fee associated, but the consensus is that any such fee would have been nominal. The cover charge at the Cellar was itself quite low relative to other clubs in the city, with admission to the local groups usually in the range of \$1.50, and visiting American groups somewhat higher. As a reference one can use the advertised price for Charles Mingus in 1961, which was \$2.25 in advance (see Figure 40). Over the years the cover charge no doubt increased, but considering that the minimum wage in British Columbia in 1965 was one dollar an hour (srv116.services.gc.ca, 2014), and that the Cellar operated on a not-for-profit basis, the admission charge was likely never exorbitant. The majority of the downtown clubs had higher door fees, and the upscale supper clubs such as Isy's and The Cave required that food and drink be purchased rather than brought in (Chuck Logan, December 17, 2001). As a result, the Cellar was one of the few Vancouver night clubs in which an unaccompanied woman could drink and socialize freely in mixed company.

The primary focus on jazz at the Cellar also served to create a safe space for female patrons, as the etiquette surrounding attentive listening prevented most forms of persistent unwanted sexual attention.

It was an interesting neighbourhood altogether, because when we first came there it seemed very safe, compared to L.A., and yet it still was a bit of a rough and tumble neighbourhood. And I was quite young at the time. And when I look back on the pictures I guess I was kind of attractive. I didn't think I was [at the time]. In retrospect [I guess I was]... And I never worried [about being harassed], and I tend to be a bit of a worrier, about things like that...I'd never seen anybody cause a problem there [at the Cellar]. As I say, some of these same people might cause problems somewhere else, but not there. People were definitely there to enjoy the music ... the Cellar was again, like a sanctuary. There was peace and calm, and you were accepted no matter who you were, and you sat and enjoyed the music, and as long as you respected that you were fine there (Lyvia Brooks, December 6, 2012).

Ricci Quarin, then wife of Cellar manager and saxophonist Dave Quarin, confirms that the Cellar was a generally safe and free environment for women.

Oh that's true [that you'd be safe as a single woman]. Because I was dynamite on that door. And whoever worked there on the door got that instruction ... (Ricci Quarin, August 29, 2013).

Saxophonist Gavin Walker, who was nearly a nightly fixture at the Cellar as a youth in Vancouver adds that "I think that's a very good point. Because if [a woman] went to some other club, she'd be hassled all the time, and if she liked the music [at the Cellar] she'd be left alone to enjoy the music" (Gavin Walker, December 3, 2012). Though a highly male, hetero-normative space, the focus upon the music and upon the Cellar as not just a nightclub, but a membership driven space for the advancement of jazz, created a means by which women could deflect the advances of attendant males, who, generally speaking, respected female interest in the music.

Though the Cellar remained a moderately popular place for female listeners whether singly, accompanied, or as part of the college crowd that frequented the club, a small core of women were fixtures on the scene, many playing important roles in the organization and nightly operation of the club. The central female figure was doubtless Ricci Quarin, the wife of Dave Quarin, founding member, club manager, and frequent performer at the space. Though she received no pay for her efforts, Ricci shouldered a considerable amount of the operational work required, including management of food sales and the kitchen area, interacting with food and beverage vendors, preparing the pizzas and sandwiches, and working the door most evenings.

I worked the door. I did what Dave couldn't do. I went in early and I went and I bought all the meat for making sandwiches and the bread, and whatever supplies we needed. And 7Up and whatever the mix guys, they came in and I met them there and let them in and they went through their stuff and filled us up. What else? I made what I was supposed to make. Got everything ready to be made fast. The pizzas ... we were still selling the pizzas. And then I would go home. And get the kids ready for bed after supper and come back [after that to work the door]...I didn't do any of the banking, unless Dave prepared it. And then I did it (Ricci Quarin Gotsch, August 29, 2013).

In charge of the admission booth at the foot of the Cellar's stairs, Ricci Quarin was a key part of the Cellar's operation, allowing young musicians such as Don Thompson, Gavin Walker, Blaine Wikjord, and Terry Clarke entry to the club without charge, while simultaneously tasked with the at times dangerous job of ensuring that no demonstrably drunk and unruly patrons were allowed to pass. As she was busy with her duties on the door, Ricci relied on several of her girlfriends to help out behind the bar selling soft drinks, ice, coffee, sandwiches, and manning the pizza machine.

I had three girlfriends that worked once in a while. They got ... maybe \$5 a night. [They would] serve from behind the bar. They would make the coffee, and at that time Tevi Smith had just got involved, had just purchased the pizza thing in

Vancouver... And before that we were selling Ready Hots or something, which was some kind of really terrible sandwiches out of a silly machine. So when they [audience and musicians] got drunk and it got late, they got hungry, so my girlfriends would come in because it was busy ... (Ricci Quarin Gotsch, August 29, 2013).

With the departure of Ken Hole and Walley Lightbody in early 1958 taking helper William Schlossmacher with them, assistance was needed in helping the club members to keep the Cellar clean, tidy, and in accordance with health inspection guidelines. This role was taken on by Ricci Quarin's mother (Elizabeth McEwan),¹⁰⁶ who would come down to the Cellar at five or six o'clock in the morning and perform the double task of ushering out whichever musicians had still not left for home, and cleaning the space so that it was ready for the next evening.

And then at six o'clock in the morning my mother would come in ... at five if she woke up. And she'd kick everybody out, she'd wake them up and send them on home, so that she could clean the toilets and the floor, and behind the bar and the fridge ... housekeeping. Why? Because we needed somebody to clean the place, and she used to babysit the kids [while Ricci was at the Cellar]. They were just babies at the time. So I'd go over and put them to bed, and there was no problem (Ricci Quarin Gotsch, August 29, 2013).

Coming from the working class neighbourhood of Strathcona in Vancouver's east end, the cleaning job at the Cellar provided a sense of purpose as well as income for Mrs. McEwan.

We paid her. She [didn't] do it for nothing. She had a man living in the basement and he came [along] ... he had nothing else to do. And it was kinda nice. They had a *job* to go to. And my dad had emphysema and he was usually outside smoking a cigarette coughing to death (Ricci Quarin Gotsch, August 29, 2013).

In addition to Ricci Quarin and her mother, a small group of women were regular attendees at the Cellar often performing small club related duties along with Quarin's girlfriends who helped out in larger roles for money. Affectionately dubbed the "bebop girls" by pianist Al Neil, this ubiquitous group included Joyce Kilburn (wife of guitarist Jim Kilburn), Vivian Cook, Carol

¹⁰⁶ Elizabeth McEwan, nee Arnold.

Hunter, Helen Brown, Lois Scott, Jessie Webb (wife of artist Harry Webb), Rae Sawyer, vocalist Doreen Williams, and a female fan now remembered only as Birgit.¹⁰⁷ These women were insiders—knowledgeable about jazz, close friends with the musicians, willing participants in the daily operation of the club, and fixtures on the scene. Nonetheless, the realities of domestic life and gender expectations conspired to remove from the scene those women who became married and then had children.

... mother, who was at home, when I was born in 1957, she would have ... been home in the basement suite washing the diapers, and she said that “I didn’t remember Harry acting. He didn’t tell me that he was acting in the plays,” you know, that kind of thing, a little bit of a chip on her shoulder because he was off late at night at the Cellar having a good time while she was at home with the baby. Not that she didn’t want the baby, but ... (Adrienne Brown, December 3, 2012).¹⁰⁸

But I was sort of out of the scene at that point, busy being a wife and eventually a mother, and with two kids it’s really hard to keep up with the scene ... (Chris (Hole) Birdseye, August 15, 2013).¹⁰⁹

I got married at age 18 and proceeded to have two children shortly after that, and my life changed drastically. If we went anywhere, we went to the Cave supper club ... or they had a club called Isy’s. We went there occasionally. But mostly we were home with the kids ... And I was also trying to help my husband out at his new dental office, so we didn’t have oodles of money to call on, and babysitters are [expensive] ... and my parents were working a lot, so they couldn’t sit with the kids much (Lyvia Brooks, December 6, 2012).

Though Ricci Quarin managed to rely on childcare from her mother to split her time between duties at home and her responsibilities at the Cellar, for the most part, the onset of children

¹⁰⁷ Apparently Danish, Birgit seems to have at one time been the girlfriend of Cellar member and sometimes drummer, Don Cumming.

¹⁰⁸ Jessie Webb, an artist of some significance herself in Vancouver. See Brown, Adrienne. 2014. *The Life and Art of Harry and Jessie Webb*. Vancouver: Heritage House.

¹⁰⁹ Chris (Hole) Birdseye is the ex-wife of Ken Hole, and this quote does not refer to the Cellar, but rather to club experiments started by her husband in the late 1950s and early 1960s such as Victoria’s Scene Club, and Vancouver’s Espresso Coffee House. Nonetheless, I feel they are a valid commentary on the topic at hand.

served to isolate women at the Cellar from the scenic activity of the space. Joyce Kilburn would occasionally bring infant son Rick to the club, but she too found herself spending the bulk of her time at home. In her case, the friendships Jim Kilburn maintained with musicians such as Barney Kessel, Wes Montgomery, Don Cherry, and Charles Mingus, along with his activities as a guitar teacher, brought at least some aspects of the Cellar environment into the home.

For the single women in the group their relationship with the musicians was more sexually complicated, even if romantic affairs did not take place (though some did). Birgit, a woman described more than once as a European hipster, was a regular attendee at the Cellar who was there, it seemed, both for the music and for the attachment the Cellar had with counter-cultural cool.

I mean, she was a cute girl, ok. She was good-looking and she was smart. I didn't actually get to actually meet her and talk to her until quite a few years later. She was a European hipster, is what I'd say. She was somebody who liked culture, in a European kind of way, and she was ... um, I used to see her at the Cellar, and I used to see her up at the Black Spot. A couple of my friends went out with her a couple of times ... a couple of people I knew. And she was just a hip European girl (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

For the married women, the presence of Birgit and others at the Cellar at times caused some concern over the inviolability of their marriages. Though usually taken lightly and treated as a joke, that this concern was somewhat widespread suggests that the hyper-heterosexual image of the jazz musician "preoccupied with sexual conquest of women, many of whom find the jazz musician irresistible" was as much a contemporary construction as a historical one (Sales 1984, 42). It is worth noting as well, that by and large the women in the audience were drawn from the same age demographic as the Cellar founders themselves, most of whom were in their late twenties or very early thirties in 1960.

They were all a little older than me, but I sure liked them. You know, because in those days you'd dress well and it was like, wow. But you know, it was like Johnson and Dawe and those guys were ten years older than me ... and that was their generation of females. So I had to find [women] my own [age - late teens, early 20s] to drag down to the Cellar [with me], and some of them were like "you like this music?" and others were cool (Gavin Walker, December 3, 2012).

The Chick Singer

Of the women collectively referred to as the "bebop girls," only one of them, vocalist Doreen Williams, crossed over from audience member to performer (see Figure 30). The rarity of female performers at the Cellar reflected their scarcity in Vancouver as a whole. That not a single female instrumentalist can be remembered or discovered from this period speaks of the extent to which jazz performance was still highly proscribed along gender lines. There were, as far as can be determined, no female instrumentalists in Vancouver of any note during the period in question outside the classical music world, and certainly none with the jazz chops required to play at the Cellar.¹¹⁰ "Most women," bassist Paul Ruhland explains, "were playing violin or oboe. Nobody [female] was playing saxophone in those days" (Paul Ruhland, November 27, 2012).

You know, I don't remember any instrumentalists... Vancouver did have some good female singers. Most notably, of course, Eleanor Collins, but they were a little bit above [the Cellar]. And Pat Suzuki was another great singer that doesn't get talked about too much. She was Japanese I think, or part Japanese. But they did commercial work and CBC television shows, and they wouldn't [have] been particularly interested in going to the Cellar (Al Neil, December 2, 2012).

Though popular Vancouver star Eleanor Collins would indeed play both the Scene club in Victoria and Vancouver's Flat Five club in the mid 1960s, Al Neil's point is well made that in

¹¹⁰ It appears that Lance Harrison employed a female banjo player named Ruth Dewhurst during the early 1960s (Mark Miller, email correspondence, August 1, 2014).

Vancouver at the time, female musicianship was limited to roles as vocalists of a type of music which, heavily influenced by American popular singers of the time,¹¹¹ was jazz inflected, without actually being jazz.

The first female vocalist to achieve significant fame in Vancouver was likely Juliette Augustina Sysak Cavazzi, who performed under her first name “Juliette,” and began signing with the Dal Richards Orchestra in 1939, when just thirteen years old. Soon nicknamed “Our Pet Juliette” she sang with the Richards Orchestra until 1942, at which time she moved to Toronto and was replaced first by Beryl Boden, and then in 1950 by Lorraine McAllister. American singer Pat Suzuki, though never a full-time resident of Vancouver, was a frequent nightclub draw at such venues as the Arctic Club, Isy’s, The Cave and others. However, the most famous vocalist in Vancouver during the period was easily Eleanor Collins, an African-Canadian born to parents that had emigrated to Edmonton at the turn of the twentieth century (see Figure 31). Moving to Vancouver in 1939, Collins was a staple on regional television and radio broadcasts and would become the first black woman to star in her own television show—*The Eleanor Collins Show*—which was broadcast on the CBC beginning in 1955.

In the main, the women that frequented the Cellar were not musicians but rather jazz enthusiasts drawn by the music and hipsters attracted to the scene. “There were,” says Al Neil, “a number of women who hung-out at the Cellar, but that was just because they liked the jazz scene ... they thought it was hip” (Al Neil, December 2, 2012). In order to have the Cellar

¹¹¹ Lena Horne, Peggy Lee, and Keely Smith, for example. In conversations about Eleanor Collins, she was often compared to Lena Horne in a manner which led one to believe that the comparison was offered on a musical, rather than racial basis.

musicians take her seriously as a musician, Doreen Williams first had to overcome the problem of her gender, and what her gender meant within a jazz context.

She was our number one ... I don't think the word groupie was around, but she seemed to me, once in a while she'd have a girlfriend [with her], but she was a fixture, you know? And so it came about that at that time jazz musicians, especially ones that are just learning the trade, were not so keen on singers, but everybody liked her, and if she was around she'd get a chance to sing a couple of songs. Not every weekend, but she was very discreet about it. She was just one of the boys. I shouldn't have said that (Al Neil, December 2, 2012).

Neil regrets immediately his choice of words, understanding that in order to admit Williams into the inner circle of musicians, he has automatically had to eliminate reference to her gender, and to her gender's baggage within the space which jazz occupied. Yet the temptation to do so is immediate, given the historical context. In order to be considered a musician, to be taken seriously, Williams had to be singled out and removed from associations of femaleness lest it emasculate the male musicians with whom she associated. These dichotomous roles—singer vs instrumentalist—have been historically “paired in such a way as to suggest complementary sexual or romantic union,” a heterosexual norm within which the female “vocalist is not presumed to be just another player, but a sexual object” to the extent that female instrumentalists represent a sort of musical queering. The female singer is constructed then, “not as a musical collaborator, but as a lover/sex object to the band” (Tucker 2008, 11). Neil's ability to consider Williams “one of the boys” enables much of this to be short-circuited,¹¹² and enables Williams to act as a subjective agent rather than a sexual object within the musical context of the Cellar. Though men at times may also occupy the role of singer with little impact upon their gender identity (and indeed male singers are so common as not to be remarkable), instances of women

¹¹² This of course raises issues of its own, but I shall leave that for scholars of gender to pursue.

crossing into the ranks of jazz instrumentalists is exceedingly rare. While many socio-cultural factors combined historically to create this situation, the hegemonic nature of the jazz world cannot be overlooked.

Tellingly, Williams was aware of this process at the time, even if subconsciously. She “lived for the weekends” at which time the club’s late-night sessions would occur, occasions which were, for her, “the best times” the club had to offer. Williams worked the door frequently during the portion of the evenings which were open to the public,¹¹³ and spent the after-hours periods hanging with the musicians. She consciously made the decision not to pursue romantic entanglements with any of them,¹¹⁴ and rather ingratiated herself into their inner circle, talking shop and sitting in whenever she was able (Doreen Williams, December 2, 2012).

She never really had anything to do [romantically] with the guys [at the Cellar] ... And they didn’t like singers so it was a sad thing, because she couldn’t sing there. But they took her out of town and she could get a job there. Everyone wants a girl singer with the guys. And she got to do some of that. But all the women thought that she was after their husbands, but she wasn’t. She was there actually for the music. And the association with hip people (Ricci Quarin Gotsch, August 29, 2013).

In addition to the sexual politics at play, Doreen Williams also had to surmount a resistance to vocalists common amongst jazz musicians. This general reticence to working with singers was based upon an assumption (often well founded) that the vocalist would not be a well-trained musician capable of communicating in musically specific language with the instrumentalists, as well as a tendency for younger, less experienced jazz musicians to be unfamiliar with the skills required in backing up a vocalist.

¹¹³ Williams turned away Bing Crosby’s entourage one evening as the Cellar was at capacity. It is unclear whether Crosby was with them at the time, though one can safely assume that he was not.

¹¹⁴ By her own admission she did engage in affairs with some of the visiting American musicians.

Working with musicians which were at first not eager to include her, Williams started out singing with Cellar groups when they went out of town to Seattle or to Vancouver Island, where the presence of a female vocalist was an expected part of public performance. Whenever possible, she sat in at the Cellar's after hours sessions, and as she became more accepted, began to sing more regularly at the club on weekends, often with the groups led either by Al Neil or Jim Kilburn (*Vancouver Sun*, April 14, 1960, pg. 30). By all reports a talented singer, Williams also played a few engagements at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and at Isy's. Doubts about her own ability, and a marriage in 1960, put an end to Williams' singing career and took her away from the Cellar first to Calgary, and then to Las Vegas where she worked as a concierge for high-rollers at the Sahara before returning to Vancouver in 1965 where she worked booking talent for local hotel chains (Doreen Williams, December 2, 2012).

The Cellar's focus on bebop and instrumental jazz (there were no vocalists among the founding members) meant that the Cellar featured vocalists infrequently. Pianist / vocalist Jean Hoffman, from nearby Portland, Oregon, was featured at the club for a week in November of 1960, in something of a unique presentation (see Figure 32). Though she had released an album under her own name on Fantasy Records in 1957, Hoffman remained little known. Her performance in Vancouver was reviewed by the UBC correspondent for *Coda* following a noon hour concert on campus.

The following week we heard the Jean Hoffman Trio. This comparatively unknown group had just completed an engagement at the Blackhawk in San Francisco and, as is often the case with these lunch-time concerts, the trio appeared by arrangement with the Cellar, a local nightspot which books some of the finest talent into Vancouver. Accompanied by Bill Underwood on drums and Bill Knuckles (?) [sic] on bass we were treated to an hour of fine jazz. With complete lack of announcing or showmanship Jean Hoffman and accompanist held their audience

captive relying more on ... her excellent technique to give us something which is ... rather rare on the jazz scene today – real musical entertainment (*Coda*, January 1961, pg. 8).¹¹⁵

In the summer of 1961 Ernestine Anderson appeared at the Cellar from June 27th through July 9th, easily the highest profile vocalist to do so (see Figure 48). Beyond Doreen Williams, the only locally based singers to perform there with any regularity were comedian, actor, and singer Don Francks; crooner Barry Dale;¹¹⁶ female vocalists Lynne McNeil, a UBC music student who would go on to perform with Dal Richards, and Hagood Hardy; and Donna Wright, who began singing at the Cellar after ownership of the venue eventually changed hands in the mid 1960s.

Conclusion

One of the most interesting things about the scene which coalesced around the Cellar is the way in which it was comprised of members drawn from across the arts, and provided an important public space within which Vancouver's emerging jazz musicians, poets, political activists, filmmakers, actors, and visual artists communed. Indeed, the idea that the Cellar could function as a place of intersection between complementary artistic practices was evident from the the formation of the Cellar Musicians and *Artists* Society in 1956. Though all of the co-operative spaces in this study operated in a similar fashion (more or less), the Cellar provides the clearest and most detailed example of the ways in which art worlds intersect through the sharing of resources, and indeed may come to exist *within* one another. In Vancouver, the Cellar provided a rare opportunity for emerging elements of the city's countercultural arts community to interact

¹¹⁵ Though not reviewed in *Coda* until January 1961, the Hoffman appearance took place in November 1960. The *Coda* article mentions that all the concerts occurred in November.

¹¹⁶ The Barry Dale referred to here should not be confused with the Canadian actor and musician of the same name who became famous for his role on the popular children's program *Harrigan* (1969-1985), and who has numerous credits as a vocalist.

with one another in a shared, public space. At the same time, this scene-within-the-scene provided the Cellar with a large portion of the nightly audience support it required to remain open, and a broader traction within the life of the city than had it not reached out beyond solely musical interests.

Though in many ways democratic and egalitarian spaces, scenes are not universally so, and the Cellar also provides clear examples of the ways in which the processes of identity formation so integral to scenic cohesion can in some ways still be tied to the normative expectations of a mainstream culture to which the scene is, in other ways, subversive. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Cellar, as a jazz space, remained a social structure bound by the constraints of masculine hegemony and expectations of heteronormativity.

Chapter Six

Growth, Maturation, and Mingus

Growth

The initial idea for the Cellar was a simple one—to create a place where local jazz musicians could hang out, rehearse, play, and improve themselves in front of a knowledgeable and generally sympathetic audience. Though the club needed to support a steady cash flow in order to keep the doors open and lights on, it was never intended to be a commercially successful venture, and in its early years relied only on word of mouth and advertisements in local student newspapers to attract its audience. However, as early experiments with bringing in American jazz artists proved to be both economically viable and artistically gratifying, the Cellar's executive slowly expanded the club's public profile in order to support such events.

As mentioned previously, the first mainstream newspaper ad was run by the club in July of 1958,¹¹⁷ a promotional effort not repeated again until November of the same year (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday November 28, 1958, pg. 47). The Cellar placed no further ads until February 20th, 1959, when an ad was taken out in support of the Kenneth Patchen reading.¹¹⁸ This was then followed in March with an ad for the Jim Kilburn Quartet (*Vancouver Sun*, March 26, 1959, pg. 16), and in September with an ad for the Chris Gage Trio (*Vancouver Sun*, September 5, 1959, pg. 33). The advertisement for Chris Gage was likely taken as the performance was a rare Sunday evening show, and one of the few appearances at the Cellar by the popular Vancouver

¹¹⁷ *Vancouver Sun*, Friday, July 18, 1958, pg. 17.

¹¹⁸ *Vancouver Sun*, Friday February 20, 1959, pg. 21.

group.¹¹⁹ The Cellar's erratic placement of ads in Vancouver's leading newspaper continued until the spring of 1960, when the appearance of ads in the weekend edition of the *Vancouver Sun* became a more regular occurrence, whether advertising a specific act, or simply the club in general.

Following early successes with Art Pepper, Paul Bley, Lou Levy, Ornette Coleman, Don Cherry, the Montgomery Brothers and others, the Cellar continued to bring in American artists whenever possible. In November, 1958, tenor saxophonist Harold Land played the club for three nights, bringing with him from L.A. pianist Elmo Hope, drummer Lennie McBrowne, and a very young Scott LaFaro on bass. Club manager Dave Quarin had by this time wired rudimentary recording equipment to the Cellar's stage which he used to record rehearsals and performances at the Cellar. The microphones were well concealed, and unbeknownst to most visiting American artists, their performances were often captured as well.

Though the vast majority of these tapes have never been heard publicly,¹²⁰ a series of events culminated with portions of the 1958 Harold Land engagement being released in Europe on the Fresh Sound label. Though marred by issues with recording quality, this album—*The Harold Land Quartet: Jazz at the Cellar, 1958* (Fresh Sound, 2007)—remains the only recorded evidence of this remarkable quartet. Running nearly 80 minutes, the album presents one

¹¹⁹ Gage was in such demand that it is very likely that Sunday was only evening he was available to play the Cellar.

¹²⁰ Quarin intended these recordings to be private, and never had any intent to release or broadcast them. They were meant only as a record of the activities of the club, and as a pedagogical resource. He is reportedly quite bothered that the leaked Harold Land recording does not pay royalties to Land's estate due to the nature of its release.

evening's concluding set at the Cellar, complete with stage introduction by Barry Cramer and the band's closing theme, Tadd Dameron's composition "The Scene is Clean."¹²¹

The group that Land brought with him to Vancouver was not his usual working group, though Land had and would continue to work with pianist Elmo Hope with some frequency.¹²² The talented and eccentric Hope had struggled with heroin addiction throughout much of his life, and had only arrived in Los Angeles in 1957 following the loss of his New York City cabaret card due to a drug conviction (Feather 1999, pg. 328-329). In Vancouver, his issues with addiction continued.

Oh, Harold Land was here at the Cellar twice. The first band was one of the best bands I've ever heard and there's a tape of it. Elmo [Hope] and Scott [LaFaro] ... I sat with Dale Hillary the opening night there, because my parents let me out because I wanted to hear this, and remember sitting with [Dale] Hillary and [Jim] Johnson and we were right down front and Harold kicked off "Just One of Those Things" at a Max Roach tempo, but no piano. You see Elmo, Elmo was late. He'd been out trying to find his shit, you know. And he came in in the middle of the tune, and kind of wended his way between the tables, and went up and just ... and this thing is going by at a mile a minute, and Elmo just splatted down some chords exactly in the right place. And I remember looking at Hillary and listening to Harold and just ... it was like wow (Gavin Walker, December 2, 2012).

But, yeah, there were some interesting things going on there. Harold Land is so cool. He's so cool. There were a couple of times during the gigs when Elmo disappeared underneath the piano and was rolling around yelling, right? And Harold Land didn't even look. Just carried on playing. "Oh, that must be Elmo down there." (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

Hope had little trouble scoring drugs in Vancouver as dealers were a regular presence, including two who made a habit of shadowing out-of-town players and became known by Cellar

¹²¹ Though the microphones were well hidden and that performances were being recorded was a closely guarded secret, at least some musicians suspected what was going on. Lee Konitz, who played the Cellar in 1961 apparently searched the club for recording devices, going so far as to inspect the bathrooms (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

¹²² See *Harold in the Land of Jazz* (Contemporary, 1958) and *The Fox* (HiFi, 1959).

insiders as the “two horsemen”¹²³ (Jim Kilburn, personal correspondence). Vocalist Doreen Williams recalled an evening during this engagement by the Harold Land Quartet where she and Scott LaFaro had to walk Elmo Hope between them, trying to keep him moving and on his feet to avoid suffering the effects of an overdose (Doreen Williams, December 2, 2012). Indeed, so regular was Hope’s habit that he ended the engagement in debt to the Cellar, which had loaned him money over the course of his stay.

Oh, man. So Elmo, as you know, had a terrible habit. So when the other guys left, Elmo had to stay behind to work off his debts. And I wound up working with him ... I can’t remember who was playing drums, but I played with him for probably a week or something. It was fun, because he’s a fun guy to play with, you know (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

The Harold Land engagement also provides some understanding of the often exploitive relationships which frequently existed between musicians and agents of the music business in the jazz world as it existed outside the artist-run Cellar.

... [Harold Land was] up at the Cellar ... and they had a manager called Tilley Mitchell. And Tilley Mitchell had a Pontiac. This would be about a late 50’s Pontiac, anyway. And this thing was as long as a ship, you know. Mostly trunk. I think it was a two door, but it had a trunk like ... it went on forever. And she brought the guys up. And one night the guys had been playing, the gig had been on for two or three nights already, and we were sitting at a table during an intermission and Harold was sitting there with us and we were having some coffee or drinks or whatever, and somebody ... it wasn’t me, it was whoever else was sitting at the table, made some sort of joking remark to Harold about the advances that he was getting on the gig, right. Payment. Advance payment. And Harold looks at the guy and says “What do you mean?” And the guy says “Well, we’re giving you these advances ...” and Harold Land says “Who are you giving them to?” And whoever it was says “Tilley, Tilley’s getting them.” “Oh really?” says Harold, and he gets up from the table and goes and has an intense conversation with Tilley. Apparently Tilley hadn’t said anything to him about taking the advances (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

¹²³ Heroin is often known by the slang name “horse.”

Rumour has it that following this confrontation the band's manager abruptly left town, leaving the group stranded. While Hope stayed behind to work off his personal debts, Harold Land apparently phoned New York to ask the Baroness Nica de Koenigswarter for assistance in getting the group back to Los Angeles (theoriginalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca, 2013).

The Cellar was not, generally speaking, a great financial opportunity for the American artists that played there, and it was in large part the artist-run nature of the club and all which that implied, which attracted them. At the Cellar there was no fear of not getting paid, no fear of musical censorship, no fear of racial prejudice, and the guarantee of an enthusiastic and supportive reception. That said, the Cellar's executive viewed the opportunity to host appearances of these American artists as a great privilege and therefore sought to pay the artists what they could afford, rather than what they could get away with offering. No records are currently available which detail the economic activities of the club, but recollections of those involved suggest that \$50 a night was the usual fee for out-of-town musicians (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

Following the Harold Land appearance, Don Cherry returned to Vancouver with his wife, and stayed with drummer Chuck Logan for more than a month. Cherry did not headline any shows, but sat in regularly at the Cellar with local groups, on one occasion subbing for trumpeter John Dawe on an engagement backing Herb Jeffries, a vocalist known for his work with Earl Hines in the 1930s, and with the Duke Ellington Orchestra in the early 1940s (John Dawe, February 17, 2014). Cherry was also a featured guest with Jim Kilburn and John Dawe at a Vancouver New Jazz Society concert at the Georgia Auditorium on April 26, 1959—the last concert at the hall before it closed and was torn down. That Cherry would return to Vancouver for such an extended

stay speaks volumes about the atmosphere cultivated by the Cellar, and the personal relationships which developed there between local musicians and their American counterparts. Though Cherry seems to have spent most of his stay with Chuck Logan, he also spent considerable time with guitarist Kilburn, an avid fly-fisherman, who recalls taking Cherry with him on a fishing trip to the nearby Veddar River. Cherry, Kilburn recalls, “sat on the bank and attempted to lure the fish with some fine trumpet solos” (Jim Kilburn, February 8, 2001).

Though the dates for many of these performances remain unclear, between 1958 and 1959 the Cellar also hosted trombonist Carl Fontana who worked with bassist Tony Clitheroe, drummer Bill Boyle, and pianist Tom Thorsburn; as well as pianist Pete Jolly, and trumpeter Joe Gordon. Art Pepper returned for an engagement that ran nearly a month between July 4th and August 2nd, 1959; and *Vancouver Sun* advertisements confirm that Conte Candoli played the Cellar Friday March 9–Sunday March 11th, 1960. In late April of 1960 guitarist Howard Roberts appeared for three days (*Vancouver Sun*, April 14, 1960, pg 30), followed in June 1960 by Harold Land, who returned to the Cellar for a three day engagement, bringing Shorty Rodgers (trumpet/fluehorn) with him. The advance advertisements for this engagement also mention jam sessions at the Cellar on Sunday evenings at 9pm which were presumably open to members of the public (*Vancouver Sun*, June 11 and 17, 1960, pgs. 28 and 10).

In July 1960, the Cellar welcomed tenor player Bill Perkins who worked with a local group including trumpet player Ed Roop, pianist Tom Thorsburn, drummer Chuck Logan, and bassist Tony Clitheroe (see Figure 33). Snapshots of sessions at the Cellar during Perkins’ stay provide evidence of tenor player and “downtowner” Fraser MacPherson sitting-in, and also provide the

only photos of bassist Earl Freeman and tenor saxophonist Bill Holmes, African-American musicians who moved to Vancouver specifically to play at the Cellar (see Figures 34 and 35).¹²⁴

Drugs

Many of the American artists that were brought in to perform at the Cellar were well-known for having issues with substance abuse. Though Elmo Hope and Art Pepper had perhaps the most significant profiles as addicts, numerous other artists were similarly afflicted. Though it appears that those who wished to obtain hard drugs in Vancouver were generally able to do so, for most of the Cellar's regular participants, alcohol was still the drug of choice.¹²⁵

We used to drink a lot in those days. Marijuana didn't come to Vancouver until 1962, at least to our group. We were all sort of on the alert for it all the time, but there was nobody bringing it in our direction.¹²⁶ And at that time it was just a trickle. LSD arrived earlier than 1965, but in 1965 it became a bit more general and it was a bit more available (Jamie Reid, December 7, 2012).

Though the majority of those attending the Cellar, as well as most of the musicians involved stuck to alcohol and what marijuana may have been available, harder drugs were available to

¹²⁴ The advertisement for the Bill Perkins gig on Friday, July 8, 1960, also marks the first time that the Cellar shared space in the *Vancouver Sun's* entertainment page with an advertisement for The Black Spot, another co-operative jazz space which had developed out of the scene at the Cellar (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday July 8, 1960, pg 13). For more on Bill Holmes and Earl Freeman, see pgs. 195–202.

¹²⁵ Vancouver had long been home to a thriving drug industry, the extent of which prompted the passage of The Opium Act of 1908—Canada's first anti-drug law—in response to the opium industry in Vancouver's East End. A series of enforcement attempts and legislative reforms throughout the 1910s, 1920s, and 1950s enacted harsher penalties for drug related offences, and increased the prohibitions to include morphine, cocaine (1911) and cannabis (1923). See Solomon and Green 1988. These laws did little to stem the influx of drugs into the port city and in 1955, Vancouver could claim the highest rates of drug addiction in the Western Hemisphere according to *Maclean's* magazine, which published a story entitled "The Dope Craze That's Terrorizing Vancouver" (February 1, 1955. Vol. 68. No. 3. pgs. 12–13 and 50–54), and described the East End intersection of Columbia and Hastings streets as "Canada's most notorious underground rendezvous" in 1958 (March 1, 1958. Vol 71. No. 5. pgs. 13–17 and 38–41).

¹²⁶ This is corroborated by Ingeborg Paulus, whose 1967 study on the developing use of psychedelic drugs in Vancouver confirmed that marijuana did not "catch on" in Vancouver until much later in the 1960s. Marijuana was considered, among other things, too bulky a drug to carry for dealing purposes, as well as too ineffectual a drug for users accustomed to heroin and other hard drugs. At the same time that a pound of marijuana was reportedly worth \$40.00 in San Francisco and \$70.00 in Seattle, its rarity north of the border saw that same pound fetch up to \$1000 in Vancouver (Paulus 1967, 17).

those who were interested, including visiting American artists. Such activity was not unknown to the local police, and the drug-squad did make its presence felt from time to time.

They just nosed around and did what they were supposed to and they didn't bother anybody and then they took off. It was just highly suspicious that they would come in just when [Art] Pepper happened to be there. They didn't bother anybody. It just kind of interrupted the music for about 10 or 15 minutes, but that was it (John Dawe, August 14, 2013).

Drug use was of course not limited to American musicians, and several members of the Cellar became addicted to heroin during the early 1960s. Al Neil has written about his experiences at length in the novel *Changes* (Neil 1975), and saxophonist P.J. Perry has been similarly open regarding his own struggles with drug and alcohol addictions which began during the late 1950s, and were very much associated with the jazz and counter-culture arts scene of the period.¹²⁷

I knew everyone was shooting up. I mean a lot of people, and I was dabbling a bit. Because it seemed very cool. And I've always liked needles because I've been in the hospital all my life. So they didn't freak me out. But I could never shoot someone else up. It frightened me, what it would do to them. But I didn't care what happened to me (bill bissett, January 9, 2013).

I heard later on in 1961 and 1962 when all of us started messing around with bad kind of dope that [the cops had] been watching that place 24 hours a day, and nobody knew about it. Not the regular cops. The narcotics squad had their eye on it. But the reason apparently was not so much us, it was ... we found out long after the place had been closed that the place had been used by heroin dealers as a place to come in and drop off large bundles of heroin. They would go into the washroom and tape it underneath the sink or take the toilet lid off and tape it under there and then somebody else who was supposed to pick it up would come in later and know exactly where to go and pick it up. This had been going on for god knows, years. And we didn't know a thing about that. That was news to us. I heard about that later (anonymous Cellar interview, August 2013).

¹²⁷ See for example the series of filmed interviews on the subject available at <http://www.jazzstreetvancouver.ca/artists/25> (last accessed April 23, 2014).

Saxophonist Dale Hillary was as well an addict at one point, as were drummers Jerry Fuller and Terry Hawkeye.

It should be noted however, that while some of those associated with the Cellar became involved with heroin addiction, many others remained free of hard drugs and the associated lifestyle.

Black Music, Black Musicians?

As has already been mentioned, the black community in Vancouver during the period was robust and vital for its size, though fairly small in demographic terms within the Vancouver population as a whole. Very few musicians involved with the Vancouver jazz scene were black, and those that were tended to be African-American immigrants, rather than locals from the resident African-Canadian community. The one significant exception to this was trombonist, bandleader, and club owner Ernie King, an African-Canadian entrepreneur originally from Edmonton, Alberta, whose Harlem Nocturne Cabaret in Vancouver's East End¹²⁸ was in many ways the heart of the black music scene in Vancouver.

Known predominately as a home for rhythm and blues, the Harlem Nocturne hosted jazz, blues, and R&B, as well as music of Afro-Cuban and Caribbean origins, striptease artists, and occasional big name acts from the United States including, at various times, the Mills Brothers, Ike Tuner, the Montgomery Brothers, and T-Bone Walker (Ross 2009, 67). King is quoted at length in *Burlesque West: Showgirls, Sex, and Sin in Postwar Vancouver*, Becki Ross' groundbreaking work on the Vancouver burlesque scene, particularly with regard to liquor licence issues which King felt were racially motivated (Ross 2009, 66–71).

No one was harassed more than me. No one...Because I was the only man that owned a black nightclub! I couldn't get a liquor licence. I could only sell food and soft drinks (Ernie King in Ross, 200, 70).

¹²⁸ 343 East Hastings, at Gore Avenue. See Figure 6.

While King may well indeed have faced closer scrutiny due to his unique position as a black nightclub owner, his club's inability to obtain a liquor licence was an issue shared by clubs across the city, the vast majority of which operated outside the law as "bottle clubs" (The Penthouse, Commodore, Panorama Roof (pre-1955), Cellar etc.), or marginally within the law as private members clubs (Pacific Athletic Club, Arctic Club, Quadra Club). The Cave Supper Club, one of the few nightclubs which did obtain a licence in the mid-1950s, suffered significant financial losses as a result, and bottle clubs were a staple of Vancouver nightlife well into the 1960s.

Ernie King was well known as a trombonist and bandleader, having worked extensively in the 1940s throughout western Canada with both a small, mixed-race jump blues band, and the larger all-black Harlem Kings which incorporated some modern jazz charts into their repertoire (Miller 1997, 177-179). Upon the disbandment of the Harlem Kings in 1948, Ernie King returned to Vancouver where he managed a trucking company in addition to running the Harlem Nocturne, which opened in 1957 (Miller 1997, 180 and Ross 2009, 67). King again attributed his inability to find steady full-time employment as a musician in Vancouver during the 1950s to systemic racism.¹²⁹

I was qualified enough to play in the Cave, but they didn't want a guy like me. The owners wanted an all-white band, not a coloured band with me sitting in there. I would have never got a job as a houseman, in the house band at the Cave – there were never any black musicians, unless it was a black band from the States. They knew our black musicians had as much talent or more than anybody else ... So I said I'd prefer to be with a couple of coloured guys, and maybe a couple of white guys, in the East End clubs (Ernie King in Ross, 2009, 66).

¹²⁹ We've seen that many of Vancouver's musicians were not able to support themselves full-time as players, or chose not to in order to pursue other interests. While some took casual part time work (often the single men), others such as Dave Quarin, Jim Kilburn, Chuck Logan, Jim Johnson had full-time day jobs to support their families.

While it is impossible to determine if the downtown clubs such as Isy's and the Cave did indeed have a policy against mixed-race bands, we have already seen that the scene surrounding employment in these clubs and at the Vancouver studios was both highly competitive and highly insular, leading to tensions even between white musicians in Vancouver, and to talk of the downtown scene as a "musical clique," even by those, such as Paul Ruhland, who benefitted from the situation. At the time, competition for trombone vacancies would have included Dave Robbins, Dave Pepper, Ray Sikora, Bill Trussel, Jack Fulton, Ted Lazenby, John Capon, Ian McDougall, and Dave McMurdo, all of whom were competent players, readers, composers, and arrangers (in particular Dave Robbins and Ray Sikora). Mixed-race bands had also been common in Vancouver during the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s (Miller 1997), so while racism may well have contributed to Ernie King's lack of employment at Vancouver's downtown clubs, it seems that other issues may also have been in play. Comments from African-American pianist Mike Taylor,¹³⁰ whose trio acted as the house band at the Harlem Nocturne 1959–1961, and who regularly sat-in after hours at the Cellar, indicates that the situation may have been a bit more nuanced than that related by King.

[Ernie King] played well [but to play in the west end clubs] he'd have had to step up to the plate and practice more. He was more a business man than a musician [running the Harlem Nocturne and his trucking business] ... Coming from the States, I had a bit of a racial thing in my own head [until I] found out how things were different in Canada. Though [it wasn't perfect] ... in the music genre, I didn't find [much racism]. It was about

¹³⁰ Taylor would have a busy and varied career in Vancouver, playing regularly at the Harlem Nocturne and other east-end clubs, at the Cellar, the Espresso Coffee House, and as well as on CBC television, at the Cave, Isy's, and a host of other downtown locations.

how you played. If you played good, you had an open door (Mike Taylor, May 8, 2014).¹³¹

That said, bassist Don Thompson suggests that;

... there was a funny scene with white guys and black guys in Vancouver. It wasn't a very friendly mix. A lot of the time ... there were different parts of town and everything, and I really picked that up, because I hardly ever played with the black guys. I actually asked Mike [Taylor] and Chuck [Logan] one time if I could get together with the two of them and play. And just play some tunes, because they were so damn good. Mike was ridiculous. And Chuck was really a beautiful drummer. But there wasn't a cross over ... it's getting better. It's still not great, but it is getting better. And it really wasn't very good then. Because they were in a different part of town, and their gigs were not in the same places as my gigs (Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

Whether the lack of mixing between white musicians and the few black musicians in Vancouver at the time was a result of an established clique, lack of work, mutually exclusive musical interests, or systemic racism, the general consensus is that during the period of the Cellar's operation, there were few black musicians in Vancouver who were playing in a jazz idiom.

There were very few blacks living in Vancouver. There was one black trombone player called Ernie King, who sort of played rock and roll gigs. I played in his band ... many of us did play with him, he'd sort of tailor the band to whatever the client wanted, and sometimes it would be a fairly large group and other times a small group. But Ernie King was the only black musician that I can recall. And then Chuck Logan of course came along, but he wasn't a native Vancouverite I don't think (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

There wasn't a heck of a lot [of black musicians at the Cellar, or in Vancouver]. It wasn't like Halifax. We didn't have a huge black population. And what few people that were around town that I knew ... black guys in music, there were very

¹³¹ It is interesting to note that Charles Mingus offered this brief statement on racial discrimination unprompted, in 1961's "The Mind of Mingus" CBC television program, in an interview taped at the Cellar. While he is speaking in 1961, and as a visitor rather than a resident, such commentary from as politically engaged a musician as Mingus is perhaps noteworthy.

"Canada. I've always known it to be liberal and freer thinking than most places in the United States ... anywhere I've been in any part of Canada the people have made me feel that they thought I was a man, and I've been many places in America where I'm called not even a man, but less than that." (Charles Mingus in "Mind of Mingus," CBC, 1961).

few, and mostly they were into R&B more than jazz (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

Well, there was a club here called the Harlem Nocturne, and that was pretty well [the black club] ... there weren't that many black players here. There was a piano player that I worked with in the 1970s a lot, piano player and organ player, Mike Taylor, he was around. He was originally from L.A. And then he moved up here. And he was one of the few black players that were around. Chuck Logan was one of them, and of course he was a regular [at the Cellar]. And, there was a really good tenor player named Lionel Mitchell, who was a very fine big-sounding-no-bullshit tenor player that a lot of people liked. And he was an infrequent kind of sitter-in [at the Cellar]. And then there was the owner of the Harlem Nocturne, Ernie King, who was a trombonist. But, you know, he had his own club ... Mike [Taylor] would come down and sit in [at the Cellar], or come down after-hours after they'd finished their gig, but the Harlem Nocturne went on pretty late too, so ... (Gavin Walker, December 3, 2012).

There really weren't [many blacks in Vancouver]. Chuck Logan ... Mike Taylor was another one (Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

There weren't that many [black players] ... maybe ten or twelve guys, that's it (Paul Ruhland, November 27, 2012).

The first black jazz musician to be closely associated with the scene at the Cellar was drummer Chuck Logan, who relocated from San Diego and Los Angeles following his marriage to a Canadian in 1955. Born in San Diego, Logan had been given music lessons as a child, but had been most active as a dancer, working with the famed Bojangles Robinson in the late 1930s. However an injury sustained in the Pacific during World War Two eliminated dancing as an option for Logan, who then turned seriously to the drums in the mid-1940s. Moving to Los Angeles shortly thereafter, Logan gained experience working behind the likes of Big Mama Thornton, Johnny Otis, Pee Wee Crayton, and T-Bone Walker, as well as with Dexter Gordon, Conte Candoli, Wardell Grey, Hampton Hawes and others. After moving to Vancouver in 1955 following his marriage, Logan made contact with Jim Kilburn and Ken Hole in early 1956, and

became a regular fixture at the Cellar playing sessions, with organized groups, and backing visiting American artists from time to time. Indeed, his connections to the jazz scene in Los Angeles made many of the Cellar's early attempts to bring in American musicians possible (Chuck Logan, December 17, 2001). In addition to his musical efforts, Logan worked both as a traffic manager for Ernie King's trucking company as well in law enforcement.¹³² Logan shared the following on how he had experienced the racial dynamic in Vancouver:

I found that it was the French, the East Indian and the Native [who] were worse off than I was. But there was still the unsurety of the black, because of Fort Lewis down in Washington, and the Seabee base in Bremerton. They used to come up here and basically, there was nothing but white girls, and the blacks really didn't know how to handle that situation. You know ... which would create some problems in due time...My colour came into it on occasion, but not much (Chuck Logan, December 17, 2001).

Beyond Chuck Logan, two other African-Americans became, at least for a time, an integral part of the Cellar scene—tenor saxophonist Bill Holmes, and bassist Earl Freeman, who relocated from the United States together specifically to play at the Cellar.

John Dawe and I and two or three others guys were sitting around the Cellar one night, drinking and chewing the fat or what-have-you, and we heard the door open at the top of the stairs, and we heard footsteps coming down, and we sort of looked to see who would come through the door at the bottom, and it was two black guys. One guy is carrying a bass, the other guy is carrying a tenor saxophone. So they looked at us, and we looked them, and they asked "Is this the Cellar?" and we said "Yeah, come on in, have a drink." So they came and sat down and we poured them a few drinks and asked "Where are you guys from?" "Miami." They'd heard about the Cellar all the way from Miami, right? So anyway, I thought I'm off the hook. There was a bass player here and he was probably going to stick around, and they both stayed around for a while, but I think the climate got to them. After about a year and a half or something they disappeared (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

¹³² In later years Logan became a deputy Sheriff, and also worked in the private investigation field.

While Tony Clitheroe recalls Freeman and Holmes as having arrived from Miami, John Dawe recalls that they had come from Los Angeles,¹³³ and had moved North in order to play and practice at a club which presented few artistic limitations, a sense of community, and less pronounced racism than they experienced south of the border. Earl Freeman in particular was a popular addition as bass players were still in short supply, a situation exacerbated by an increasing demand for Tony Clitheroe's services on the downtown scene.

... and there were a couple of other black guys that played the Cellar, they were from [the States]. They moved up here, why I don't know. It was a bass player named Earl Freeman and a tenor player, really good tenor player, named Bill Holmes. They just showed up one night and walked through the door again, out of the pouring rain and dumped their stuff on the bandstand and kinda said "here we are." Actually, a lot of word had spread down to California about the Cellar, and people just kind of showed up in town here. Uh, maybe they were fed up with [racial] problems in the States, and kind of got the idea to try up here, but those two guys, Bill and Earl were in town for [a while] (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

Freeman and Holmes stayed in Vancouver for a few years before relocating, Holmes apparently to Toronto,¹³⁴ and Freeman to Europe in the late 1960s where he recorded with Archie Shepp, Alan Silva's Celestial Communications Orchestra, Kenneth Terroade, Clifford Thornton, and at the Amougies Actuel Festival in the fall of 1969.¹³⁵ Following sojourns to Holland and the U.K., Earl Freeman eventually returned to the United States in the mid-1970s, where he

¹³³ Given the Cellar's relationship with touring groups along the West Coast, this does seem the more likely scenario.

¹³⁴ It seems Holmes was in Canada illegally. He surfaced in Toronto in 1959 where he was briefly part of the MINC club, before being deported back to America in August 1960 (Scott 2008, 46).

¹³⁵ It is unclear who Freeman was officially playing with at Amougies in 1969, though it was most likely with Archie Shepp (with whom Freeman would record several albums) on Oct 26, 1969. A photo widely circulated on the internet also shows him in a jam session at the festival with Frank Zappa, Philly Joe Jones, Grachan Moncur III, Archie Shepp and others. It appears that Freeman also spent some time in Chicago with Sun Ra, but it is unclear when this took place. It is likely that it occurred between his time in Vancouver, and his appearance in Europe in 1969.

continued to record and perform (ninegreychairs, 2013) until his death in the mid-1980s (heshop.free-jazz.net, 2013).

The only other black musician with a regular profile at the Cellar was pianist Mike Taylor, another American who had moved north from California and married Ernie King's niece (Chuck Logan, December 17, 2001). Taylor was active on the East End scene, playing the Harlem Nocturne and Smiling Buddha Cabaret with some regularity, as well as sitting in at the Cellar and leading his own groups there from time to time.

Mike would have played there for sure [Harlem Nocturne], and he would have played the Smiling Buddha, too. Those clubs ... that was a different part of town. [B]ut Mike was a fantastic jazz player, he really was. Because of the race thing, I suspect, I hope I'm wrong, but I don't think so ... he never wound up on any of the gigs I played, in the studios or the clubs or anything. I was never on a gig with him, and I played really a lot. And I was hardly ever a leader, either (Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

In the 1980s, saxophonist Jim Johnson would end his professional playing career working in an Ernie King led band which included Mike Taylor.

I knew [Ernie King] when I was at the Cellar, I used to go down there and jam at the Harlem Nocturne, but that was the last I saw of Ernie for twenty years or so, until 1983. When he called me and said, do you want to play, and I said yeah. So we played from 1983 to 2001. Club dates, that's all it was. Here there and everywhere. UBC and hotels. So I finished playing with Ernie King ... professionally (Jim Johnson, August 14, 2013).

God Bless the CBC

One of the keys to attracting American artists to play at the Cellar was the extent to which visiting players were treated with dignity and respect at the artist-run space, and word of the collegial atmosphere at the Cellar spread quickly through the jazz community on the West Coast. In addition, the Cellar did what it could to ensure that the trip north paid well enough to be

worthwhile. In what would become a trend for decades, the CBC often played a vital role in ensuring the economic viability of these out of town bookings.¹³⁶

We made it as lucrative as we possibly could for them, to attract [outside musicians from the USA]. You know some of the guys in L.A., some of the white guys down there at least, were working studio gigs and other pretty good paying gigs. So they weren't going to take off for three days and come up here and work for fifty bucks a night. Because that's what we paid them at the Cellar, fifty bucks a night. So Dave [Quarin] would line them up some CBC studio work if possible, and Jim Carney was another guy who helped us a lot, because he was going to UBC, and he was a trumpet player, and he became a CBC producer. So he let us know — at that time the CBC had certain shows that had a very loose format that were local TV shows, and the format for those shows was very loose, they could change what they had in mind if suddenly we had someone that they could put on for thirty minutes or an hour. They'd just switch it and put that on instead of what they normally had. They had some loose local shows where they could just put someone in on short notice. So someone like Art Pepper or Conte Candoli or someone like that could make themselves another three hundred and fifty or four hundred bucks doing that, plus have the hundred and fifty bucks from doing the weekend at the Cellar, so it was worth their while to come up. We had to throw them a plum. Some came up without doing a show, you know, and I don't know how they worked the finances for that (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

In the first few years of the Cellar's operation, manager Dave Quarin reached out to the CBC and to local radio to see what interest may have existed for these co-presentations. In this manner, Art Pepper was presented on the *Cool Pepper Show* in 1956, Lou Levy performed opposite the Fred Massey Quartet on a half hour broadcast in 1957, and several other early Cellar presentations were similarly facilitated. However in the late 1950s trumpeter Jim Carney began to work at the CBC as production assistant, and was promoted to producer in 1960, giving the Cellar more direct access to the programming flexibility and financial resources of the CBC.

I was at that time starting to work at CBC television. I was a so-called production assistant or floor director in 1958–1959, and then in 1960 I became a

¹³⁶ I have worked as a producer for both a large Canadian jazz festival and jazz society, and even today one of the chief ways that high profile concerts were funded was through co-presentations with the CBC.

producer. I mean a television producer at the age of 25 shows you how nascent the industry was. And I had this fondness, this avid interest in jazz, so I ended up producing a series of jazz shows, it was a random ... I say series, but it wasn't a weekly thing, it was whenever we had ... the deal with the Cellar was this: if Dave Quarin, the defacto manager of the Cellar, he would have an interest in say, booking Charlie Mingus for a week, and then I would produce a television show. Get the go-ahead to produce a television show. And pay the Mingus group, I forget what it was, \$750, and Dave Quarin would pay them \$750, and the \$1500 was enough to bring them up here for a week. And under that formula I produced shows, Charlie Mingus was the first one, and I forget exactly ... there were about nine shows all in all, and some of them were just local musicians, but Barney Kessel, I remember doing a show with him ... Ernestine Anderson ... my memory is definitely fading (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

Between January and July of 1961, Carney produced a series of jazz programs for the CBC which featured local artists Eleanor Collins, the Ray Sikora Jazz Orchestra, and a live performance from the Cellar featuring the Al Neil Quartet;¹³⁷ as well as performances by Barney Kessel, Ernestine Anderson, the Mastersounds, and Charles Mingus. The only one of these programs to survive in the CBC archives—"The Mind of Mingus"—was originally broadcast on January 12, 1961, and received a national re-broadcast out of Toronto on a program entitled *Quest*, hosted by Andre Allen and produced by Daryl Duke, on March 29, 1961.

I did this Mingus show that was shot in the studio. Studio 41 at CBC television, in what you call a limbo studio, which was pool lighting ... there was Charles Mingus and Dannie Richmond and Lonnie Hillyer and Charles MacPherson just in pools of light. But we also did an interview ... a local anchor dinner time conversation talk show host called Bob Quintrell, interviewed Charles Mingus, and it was my idea to do that. And we got this quite startling interview with Charles Mingus at the Cellar. There was nobody else there, just us and the film crew (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).¹³⁸

¹³⁷ The program featured the Al Neil group with Dale Hillary, and was the only live broadcast to emanate from the club on radio or television (March 21, 1961). See Figures 36–38.

¹³⁸ The program intercut performance footage from Studio 41 with the interview recorded earlier at the Cellar.

In an unrelated experiment also facilitated by the CBC, Carney produced an ultimately futile attempt to make a solo recording of Wes Montgomery, a late-night session which took place at the Cellar sometime after 1961, and was scuttled due to the sudden popularity of stereo recordings.

And Wes Montgomery came to town once and played at the Cellar ... before he was the stellar attraction that he became, [and] I remember trying to produce a record with Wes. I found this music producer in New York ... and said "I've got this guy Wes Montgomery, and he's a really great guitar player, and I could record it," because I had access to CBC television equipment, "but I was looking for a US distributor, and how do I go about that?" And he said, "well, that's a good idea, I'll help out as much as I can, but make sure that it's in stereo." And I said, "What?" And he said, "Make sure it's in stereo." And I said, "Stereo? What's that?" So he explained to me, and the CBC sound technicians were pretty savvy, of course. We had no stereo recording capability at CBC, but with film, in those days, you recorded the sound separately on a 16mm sprocketed tape, and that's one of the reasons for the clapboard, so that you can sync up the tape and the film image. And I thought, well maybe if we got two of these Magna-sync 16mm sound recorders and synced them up, and kept our fingers crossed, we could do the double track then ... we could use two mics and mix it, and all this sort of stuff. And we tried that. And poor old Wes Montgomery sat there until 3 in the morning, not that that was late for him, but we never could get it synced, because the machines were drifting. That was long before they came up with Nagra,¹³⁹ and eventually the wireless connection, which the NFB, who I worked with, later developed (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

In addition to the financial help provided through cross booking artists with the CBC whenever possible, the Cellar allowed the rules surrounding memberships to be more relaxed during performances by out-of-town players. Rather than turn away a paying customer, anyone able to pay the cover charge who was not visibly drunk or belligerent was admitted, membership or no.

Oh [we let in] whoever could pay. We would be foolish [not to do it that way]. At

¹³⁹ Nagra was the brand name for a Swiss-made series of portable audio recorders which became standard equipment for film and television production from the 1960s through to the 1990s.

that point we had to get the money and save the money. Still people were not working for money [Cellar staff and local musicians] (Ricci Quarin, August 29, 2013).

This relaxed attitude toward memberships for performances featuring out of town artists also made it possible for advance tickets to be sold at venues such as the 711 clothing shop operated by Barry Cramer's family, Just Jazz Records, and the H. Kaye bookshop, locations that would often display posters for upcoming Cellar performances. These posters, often designed by Harry Webb, appear to have been the only advertising materials produced by the club other than ads in the *Vancouver Sun*, and the UBC campus papers. While no conscious effort was made to increase their profile beyond these small local efforts, in 1959 *Coda* magazine began to include news from Vancouver in the News and Notes section of their monthly issues, and these brief columns at times included information related to activities at the Cellar.

Coda Magazine

*Coda*¹⁴⁰ was established in May 1958 by John Norris as a magazine dedicated to traditional forms of jazz. The magazine was headquartered in Toronto, where the activities of Mike White's Imperial Band at the Maison D'Ore were of particular interest. Indeed, in early years, *Coda* was available only by subscription and at the Maison D'Ore itself. Relying on just a few columnists in addition to editor John Norris, *Coda* made a interesting plea to its readership to supply information on the traditional jazz scenes of their own cities and regions.¹⁴¹ First expressed in the magazine's inaugural editorial, the message would be repeated over the years, and goes a long

¹⁴⁰ *Coda* was Canada's premier (and most times only) jazz publication 1958–2009.

¹⁴¹ See *Coda* May 1958–March 1959.

way to explain why jazz news from England, Australia, the United States and even South America was printed in *Coda* nearly a year before any news from Western or Eastern Canada made the magazine's pages.

First and foremost there will be news and views on the Toronto jazz scene [monitored by Norris]. Then, any news on Traditional Jazz will be published that we receive from other parts of Canada the U.S., England and, for that matter, anywhere else in the world (John Norris writing in *Coda*, Vol. 1. No. 1, pg. 1).

The first mention of a Canadian city outside of Toronto, Montreal, or Ottawa occurs in March 1959, when the magazine's review of the recent Timex All-Canadian Jazz Show expressed the hope that future programs might include Lance Harrison's Dixielanders as "Vancouver B.C. is in Canada too" (*Coda*, March 1959, pg. 4). This same issue includes Vancouver in the magazine's News and Notes section for the very first time, mentioning Bob Smith's "Hot Air" program on the CBC, and the existence of the Vancouver New Jazz Society (*Coda*, March 1959, pg. 5). Vancouver appears again briefly in the News and Notes section of the following issue in April, mentioning again Lance Harrison's dixieland group and the activities of the Vancouver New Jazz Society. These early Vancouver blurbs have no by-line, and it is not known who submitted them. Mentions of Canadian cities beyond Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, and London then cease until an anonymous submission from Edmonton in July 1959 mentions that the Yardbird Suite had opened in 1957,¹⁴² and that the city was also home to a traditional jazz society¹⁴³ (*Coda*, July 1959, pg. 6).

¹⁴² See Chapter 7.

¹⁴³ This issue also briefly mentions the existence of the Foggy Manor Club in Calgary, the MINC club in Toronto, and the Yardbird Suite in Edmonton as being organized as co-operative ventures.

In November 1959, *Coda* includes its first mention of the Cellar, which is limited to the single line; “The Cellar club has featured the odd attraction with Art Pepper there a short while ago” (*Coda*, November 1959, pg. 10). Vancouver is not mentioned again until January of 1960, when the Vancouver section of *Coda*’s New and Notes section is expanded and for the first time carries the name of its author—John Moller, the secretary for the Vancouver New Jazz Society (circa 1960).¹⁴⁴ Now more than a page long, this Vancouver news section is posited as “the first in a series of reports from Canada’s west coast,” needed as “[f]or too long jazz news from Vancouver has been rather sparse in *Coda*.” Moller goes on to review the past year’s presentations by the Vancouver New Jazz Society on Sunday afternoons at the recently built Queen Elizabeth Theatre, and as part of this recap, refers to a jazz society presentation which featured:

The Tony Clitheroe Quartet, the Jerry Fuller Quintet, and the Dave Quarin Quartet. This was a night for modern sounds as all three combos play regularly at “The Cellar,” the city’s jazz night spot. Doreen Williams was the vocalist of the evening (John Moller in *Coda*, January 1960, pg. 8).

John Moller continued to contribute Vancouver news to *Coda* through the mid-1960s, spending most of his space on activities outside of the Cellar, but making mention of key appearances such as that of Kenneth Patchen with Al Neil in February 1959. It is worth noting that Moller only commented upon the Patchen engagement in March 1960, more than a year after the event occurred, and then was referring to the Folkways LP release which had recently been reviewed in *DownBeat*,¹⁴⁵ and not the actual live performance. John Moller is joined in

¹⁴⁴ John Norris refers to him in *Coda* as the Vancouver New Jazz Society Secretary (*Coda*, October 1960, pg.11).

¹⁴⁵*DownBeat*, January 21, 1960, pg. 36, gave the album a 3 star review, and noted the playing of 18-year-old Dale Hillary.

May 1960 by Pete Wyborn who began to contribute a second segment of Vancouver news titled “Jazz Is Where You Find It.” Though the column was meant to tilt the emphasis back toward a traditional and dixie-land focused discussion, Wyborn’s opening paragraph neatly serves to paraphrase many Cellar musicians’ attitudes toward the Vancouver music scene.

I am writing this additional column on jazz in Vancouver as I feel that John Moller, being a professional man, does not have enough time to cover the whole unusual situation here. Vancouver is a city with the mind of a small town, due mainly to the fact that it outgrew itself in too short a time. As a result, professional jobs, musicianwise [sic], are limited in number consisting of a few larger clubs, CBC studio work and the Vancouver New Jazz Society. This has created a situation which I will classify as [a] “closed shop,” for lack of a better phrase. The same musicians hold the jobs which means that literally dozens of fine jazzmen are reduced to the odd cut-rate one nighters at weddings and banquets etc. This is not meant to be an attack on those musicians ... but merely a criticism of a situation that is holding back the growth of jazz here. The same old faces and sounds time after time, good as they may be, are not inspiring the audiences as only new ideas and additional new blood can (Pete Wyborn in *Coda*, May 1960, pg 9).

The June 1960 issue contains no column by John Moller, though Wyborn’s news report does contain a mention of Howard Roberts’ engagement at the Cellar. Of interest is that Wyborn seems to have been enough of an insider to note:

An unusual sight for a “modern” club was the presence of several leading traditionalists in the non-union jazz field among the audience. Also a surprise was the drumwork [sic] of Howard’s wife, Jill, sitting in on several sets (Pete Wyborn in *Coda*, June 1960, pg. 10).

Though no mention of Vancouver was included in the July 1960 issue of *Coda*, in August 1960, Wyborn discusses the Cellar’s ongoing presentations of American jazz artists, a policy which he deems to be musically successful, and which he surmises is economically prudent due to the size of the crowds he witnessed, particularly at a Harold Land engagement. In September 1960, he mentions the performance of “The Tender Edge,” though does not provide a review, and

gives word that Barney Kessel is due to perform at the Cellar in coming weeks (*Coda*, August 1960, pg 13 and *Coda*, September 1960, pg. 9).

The October 1960 issue of *Coda* provided the greatest coverage of the Vancouver jazz scene to date, including not only the “Jazz Is Where You Find It” news section by Pete Wyborn, but a separate section on the activities of the UBC Jazz Society, as well as a brief review of the Vancouver scene by *Coda* editor and founder John Norris, who had visited the city on his way to attend the Monterey Jazz Festival in California in September, 1960 (*Coda*, September 1960, pg. 1). Wyborn’s report includes a glowing review of the recent Barney Kessel engagement at the Cellar, and a brief one-line mention that the Montgomery Brothers had also appeared at the Cellar during the same month (September, 1960). Of Kessel, Wyborn had this to say:

The electric guitar has probably become the most abused instrument ever over the past five years. However, when taken away from the greasy-haired caterwauling rock and rollers and placed in the hands of a great musician like Barney Kessel it again becomes a thing of beauty to listen to. The Kessel Quartet direct from Los Angeles played a six day stand in August to standing room only crowds at the Cellar. I caught the Thursday night show, which unfortunately was my only free evening, other-wise [sic] I might have been tempted to do a six day stand at the Cellar as a member of the audience. There is no doubt about it that Barney Kessel is great! He not only plays jazz but creates relaxing mood music out of it which quite literally holds the listener in its spell (*Coda*, October 1960, pg. 10).

For this engagement Kessel was backed by his current working group of Marvin Jenkins (piano, flute), Gary Peacock (bass) and Ron Lundberg (drums), and it is worth noting that the experience was recalled with quite a different attitude by some members of the Cellar who were involved with the concert’s staging. John Dawe recalls that the music which so enraptured Pete Wyborn was less well received by some of the Cellar musicians.

Unfortunately this group was a bit of a disappointment to us beboppers, musically speaking. Barney, at this time was "cashing-in" on the then popular "soul-jazz"

craze...it brought in the "mink-coat" crowd, who definitely did not like our uncomfortable metal chairs and wooden tables...Barney canceled out the last 2 days of his booking (John Dawe, theoriginalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca, 2014).

For the Kessel engagement the Cellar ran an ad in the *Vancouver Sun* on August 6th which announced the upcoming concerts which were to run August 16–21, 1960 (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday, August 6th, 1960, pg. 27), and followed this initial advertisement with other advance ads on Friday, August 12th, Saturday August 13th, and an unusual Monday ad on August 15th (*Vancouver Sun* pgs. 29, 18 and 17). The Cellar continued to run ads once the engagement began, buying space on Tuesday, August 16th, Thursday, August 18th, and Friday August 19th (*Vancouver Sun* pgs. 18, 25 and 29). However no ads were placed for the final two days of the engagement (the 20th - 21st), which may lend credence to Dawe's assertion that Kessel cancelled his last two appearances.¹⁴⁶

That the Cellar took the unusual step of running advertisements in mid-week editions of the newspaper perhaps suggests the hope that Kessel would appeal to a broader audience than some of the other artists they had presented, an idea supported by the advertisements' text which made repeated mention of Kessel as a "Poll Winner," and of his having been voted "the greatest guitarist" by *DownBeat*, *Playboy*, *Metronome*, and *Melody Maker* magazines (*Vancouver Sun*, August 12, 1960, pg. 29). One would imagine that the jazz cognoscenti who constituted the Cellar's regular audience would not have needed such enticements, but that such ads may have appealed to more casual jazz fans who may well have had a passing familiarity with Kessel due to his high profile in the contemporary jazz press and on radio.

¹⁴⁶ Kessel did return to play the Cellar in 1963, so if he did cancel his last two nights in 1960, it may have been for some extenuating circumstance rather than his not enjoying his time at the club.

Coda's inaugural news bulletin from UBC makes brief mention of the fact that visiting American artists appearing at the Cellar often presented clinics and performances at UBC, a co-presentation arrangement which was one further way that the Cellar executive could make an appearance in Vancouver economically viable for visiting artists.¹⁴⁷ This brief introduction to the UBC Jazz Society estimates its membership at some three hundred members, not an insignificant audience pool from which the Cellar could draw on any given evening.

John Norris

John Norris' assessment of the jazz scene in Vancouver correctly identifies that many of the most skilled musicians—those playing the downtown clubs—were in situations which prevented them from demonstrating what were no doubt admirable jazz chops.

In a quick round of the Vancouver spots we heard a number of jazzmen but in most instances they weren't able to play jazz ... the type of clientele [prohibited] an out and out jazz policy ... at the Cave ... [o]nce again the jazz numbers remain at the bottom of the book (*Coda*, October 1960, pg. 12).

Norris' favourite group during his brief stop in Vancouver was that of Lloyd Arntzen, whose traditional jazz band was performing material associated with Jelly Roll Morton the night that Norris stopped by for a "delightful evening" (*Coda*, October 1960, pg. 12). His review of the Al Neil group at the Cellar was not nearly so kind.

At the Cellar was the Al Neil Quintet. This is a pleasantly set out club but to attract a steady audience they must offer music of a higher quality than that offered by this group. They were ragged and uninspired. There was no fire or finesse. This may, to a certain extent, have been caused by the overloud and unsteady drumming of Bill

¹⁴⁷ The section also mentions that Gavin Walker, then Vice-President of the UBC Jazz Society was presenting a jazz show on campus radio, an occupation he continues to this day. Walker has presented "The Jazz Show" on Vancouver's CITR station since 1984.

Boyle.¹⁴⁸ A drummer's job is not to play over the rest of the band (*Coda*, October 1960, pg. 12).

Norris doesn't mention the date or time of his visit to the Cellar, so it is unclear whether he attended a paid evening performance featuring the Neil Quintet, or if he happened by one of the club's late night sessions. Regardless, his assessment of Boyle is quite a departure from the usual regard in which the drummer was held, and is perhaps indicative of a listener more attuned to traditional and dixieland forms of jazz drumming more than it is an accurate reflection of Boyle's skill. Bassist Don Thompson, who played with Boyle on numerous occasions recalled that;

Bill was ... very much like Jimmy Cobb, because he didn't have a ton of chops, but he had a groove that just wouldn't quit. And everything he played worked. He couldn't actually ... he couldn't do a roll. He didn't know how to do a roll, but he could really play. [He had] time that was just amazing, and it was very easy playing with him, because he didn't play busy either. He left lots of space, and it was really nice playing with Bill...He was crazy about Philly Joe, but he still came out like Jimmy Cobb. Because he didn't have the chops. If he'd had the chops he probably would have played like Philly Joe (Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

Boyle was self-taught as a drummer, but his lack of technical skill did not prevent him from being one of the most in-demand players on the Vancouver jazz scene at the time, a scene that included Jerry Fuller, Stan Perry, and a young Terry Clarke.

I guess I should have got the message, but the reason that everybody wanted to play with him instead of us hot shot young drummers was that he wasn't busy at all. He just played straight down the middle, and to this day, a lot of people, that's really what they want you to do. You know, the same rules apply ... everybody just wants to hear 'one.' And he played simply and a lot of air, and in situations where there might not have been a piano player or guitar player, they liked the space. He just played the time. He had a nice sound (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

¹⁴⁸ See Figure 39.

As one of the more experienced players on the scene, Boyle was the focus of attention for many of the city's up and coming young drummers, most of whom were studying under famed pedagogue Jim Blackley at the time.

Bill Boyle was one of those drummers that if you look at him playing, he looks so awkward. But if you shut your eyes and listen to his playing, it's really good ... Billy was an excellent drummer, but he didn't have a lot of technique. But he got a lot of work, and he sounded ... it sounded really good. He wasn't particularly loud. Of course at that age I was very critical of all drummers, and technique and all the rest of it, and I had to put all of that aside and just shut my eyes and listen to what he was doing, and then he was very, very good. I mean, he was right into the music. I mean, he played with everyone. He was a downtown heavy. I think of him more as a Jimmy Cobb type drummer. You know, that's how I heard him play. Swing the bridge kind of thing, and cut time. Nothing like what they do today. Yeah. Very tasteful. Very good...I couldn't say anything negative, other than that he was a little awkward to watch (John Lemarquand, February 22, 2013).

In the December 1960 issue of *Coda* both Pete Wyborn and Vancouver New Jazz Society secretary John Moller bemoan the state of jazz in Vancouver, with Wyborn reporting that the “bottom seems to have dropped out of the jazz market in Vancouver” and that crowds at the Cellar were becoming poor, though no details were given as to which groups he may have heard. John Moller, as well, reported that a series of financial misfortunes had placed the jazz society in a perilous position, in part due to the prevalence of high priced American “acts” which were performing in Vancouver with increasing frequency, making competition for audiences increasingly fierce (*Coda*, December 1960, pgs. 12–13).¹⁴⁹

It does appear that following the engagements of Barney Kessel (August 1960) and the Montgomery Brothers (Aug 30–Sept 4, 1960), the Cellar kept mainly to local musicians for the remainder of the year, with the Bob Winn Quartet from Seattle the only non-Vancouver group

¹⁴⁹ Wyborn is likely not speaking of the American artists performing at the Cellar, but the programming presented by the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, the Orpheum Theatre, Isy's, and The Cave, all of which were bringing in well known artists from a variety of genres with great regularity (see *Vancouver Sun*, Saturday February 4th, 1961, etc).

advertised in the *Vancouver Sun* through the remainder of 1960. However in January of 1961, the Cellar would play host to perhaps its most famous American visitor—bassist, composer, and bandleader Charles Mingus.

Mingus

In January of 1961, Charles Mingus appeared in Vancouver to perform at the Cellar. He also appeared at UBC under the auspices of the UBC Jazz Society, and on CBC television on January 12th in a program produced by Cellar member Jim Carney. Advance promotional materials for the engagement list performances from January 10th through January 15th (see Figure 40), but in actuality Mingus' stay at the Cellar was much longer, beginning on Friday, January 6th, 1961, and extending through to January 21st, 1961 (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, January 6th, 1961 pg. 12, and *Vancouver Sun*, Saturday January 21, 1961 pg. 10).¹⁵⁰ The Mingus quartet included Mingus (bass), Dannie Richmond (drums), Charles McPherson (saxophone), and Lonnie Hillyer (trumpet), appearing in Vancouver direct from a series of performances at San Francisco's *Jazz Workshop*. Billed for his Cellar engagement as "the most provocative musician in jazz," (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, January 6th, 1961 pg. 12), Mingus' two-week stay at the Cellar represents perhaps the most widely attended and most frequently recalled presentation in Cellar history, and is the centrepiece to a great deal of Cellar lore.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ There also exists a Harry Webb designed poster advertising the Mingus Quartet at the Cellar that lists the dates of the engagement as December 15th–December 24th (see Appendix A, fig 38.). This poster was designed during the planning stages of the engagement, which originally involved dates in December of 1960. For reasons unknown, though evidently somewhat last minute, the gig was pushed to January, 1961. Mingus only performed at the Cellar once. See Figure 41.

¹⁵¹ The Mingus engagement at the Cellar was brought up by nearly every single person interviewed for this project whether they had attended the event themselves or not.

Plagued by stomach troubles, Mingus had to sub out of the second set one evening, pressing Tony Clitheroe into service playing bass with the rest of the band who, due to the paying crowd, remained behind in Mingus' absence and completed the night's performance.

Well, it was one of those situations where I was working downtown, and I'd left my bass downtown, you know, because I figured I wasn't going to need it. But I couldn't wait to get up to the Cellar and listen to the group. And it was a quartet, it had Dannie Richmond playing drums and a trumpet player and an alto player ... Charles McPherson...it was a great group. And I got up there [to the Cellar] as soon as I could and there was nothing going on. And...I got down to the bottom of the stairs and walked in, and whoever was taking the tickets in the box saw me and said "We're glad you showed up, we weren't sure you were coming." And I said, "what do you mean, who cares if I come or not?" And they said, "You're playing." And I said, "What? Where's Mingus?" And Mingus apparently, I didn't know this before, but Mingus had an ulcer, a really bad ulcer, and he wanted to go back to the hotel. So I walked through the door, and here's Mingus pacing up and down with a carton of cream in one hand and a package of Arrowroot biscuits in the other, you know, looking fierce. And somebody took me over and introduced me to him, you know, and he says "You're the bass player?" and I said, "Well, I ..." And he grabs me by the shoulders and kind of spins me around and aims me at his bass up on the stand, and he says "There it is." And then he says to me "Don't hurt it" (Tony Clitheroe, Nov 28, 2012).

Unsurprisingly, the extended stay in Vancouver was not without its share of drama, including drummer Dannie Richmond running into some legal trouble sufficient to whittle the group down to a drummer-less trio for a few evenings (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013). No incident however, lodged in the collective memory of Cellar audiences more than the night on which Mingus became involved in an altercation with a member (or members) of the B.C. Lions football team. Fifty years later, the exact details of what occurred that evening remain somewhat muddled, though numerous witnesses to the event have shared their recollections, along with

many who only heard about the incident.¹⁵² The exact date of the incident remains unclear, though common consensus suggests that it was near the end of the Mingus' engagement, possibly on the closing weekend (Friday, January 20th, or Saturday, January 21st, 1961). Poet Jamie Reid, who was at the Cellar the evening of the incident recalls it this way:

The story that I've read in the posting that Gregg [Simpson] has made about the history of the Cellar [on originalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca] is entirely different from my memory of it.

Mingus played two sets that night. When I came in, at the beginning of the second set there were rumours abounding that Mingus had already had some kind of altercation with somebody in the crowd. That he had thanked the audience for their attention, in particular the "latent homosexual who was pounding on the cigarette machine." So Mingus was in sort of a high mood, right from the very outset (Jamie Reid, December 7, 2012).

... but anyway the second set began and Mingus starts to play and he's got the entire band there with him, and there's a pretty good crowd there for the Cellar. It was pretty near full. And Mingus is on the stage here [gestures] ... and over to the side, on his left, is a kind of small platform on which there is some sofa type chairs as I remember it ... It was the only space in the place like that. All the rest was sort of regular chairs. [In] the crowd there, the one person I recognized was Steve Cotter, who I went to high school with, who was a football player there, and a bit of a thug, in my recollection. He played for the B.C. Lions at this time. He played guard with them. And so they continued to talk throughout the entire set. And at one point Mingus asked them, and when he spoke he never quite spoke in a polite tone of voice, but you know his request was polite. In the sense that he did request that they be quiet so that others could hear, you know "like this lady here who's sitting all nice and quiet," and he points to a woman named Birgit.

Then at the end of the first half of the second set, he went to the bathroom and he came out with a bathroom plunger, and he stepped up on the platform and had words with them. I couldn't hear what he said. You know they went this way and they went that way, and finally there seemed to be some kind of agreement, and so Mingus was satisfied that they weren't going to make anymore noise and as he stepped off the platform Cotter made some kind of sneering noise at him and

¹⁵² No anecdote was shared by more interview subjects that this tale about Mingus and the B.C. Lions football players. The incident has become inextricably linked to the history of the Cellar in Vancouver, and it eventually became clear through the details included in each retelling of the story which interviewees had indeed witnessed the events themselves, and which had only heard about it.

Mingus just turned around and hit him with the bathroom plunger. And so Cotter got up and took a swing at him, and Mingus just caught it in his hand – like that – and just sort of flung him, you know, behind him, so he spun through three tables, and then he gets back up and Mingus is going towards him and in jumps Warren Tallman, who I hadn't even seen, from this other direction, and he says "Charlie! Charlie! Think about your career!" And so, Mingus just kind of diverts. He just turns, slightly, on his heel, and goes off like a bear, you know, who's just going to forget about it, and Cotter's friends just pushed him up the stairs. And then the whole thing went on from there (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

Though the end of the incident, including UBC poetry professor Warren Tallman's intervention, was not recalled by most contributors, it was corroborated by poet bill bissett who was also at the Cellar that evening, though he was not sitting with either Reid or Tallman.¹⁵³

And one night Charlie Mingus came [to the Cellar], and he was huge everywhere, and at home we were all listening to Mingus and Coltrane [records], and somebody said something during his playing ... And then, Mingus got really mad at them. He reacted as a human being rather than a performer, if there is a fine line difference there, and [the audience member] got really angry back, and then Warren Tallman was there, and he jumped on the stage ... and hugged Mingus and said "it's your career. don't react. don't get into this. let it go, keep playing." And it was one of those gasping situations ... it was very amazing, and I never forgot it (bill bissett, January 9, 2012).

Jamie Reid is clear that his recollection of the evening's events does not correspond to the online report written by John Dawe and published on the originalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca website by artist Gregg Simpson. John Dawe himself was not at the Cellar the night of the B.C. Lions incident, and contributed his history of the event after speaking to several others who claimed to have witnessed the incident. It is noteworthy that this "official" version of the tale has

¹⁵³ Though Tallman was known to Reid at this time as a UBC professor, they were not yet close acquaintances.

the least detail, the least in common with other recollections of the incident, and is quite likely the least accurate version of events that I obtained.¹⁵⁴ The online version of events is as follows:

One nite [sic] Charlie became highly agitated with a table full of noisy football players...he shot off the stand, grabbed one of them by the back of the neck and ran this mother up the stairs so fast he didn't know what hit him!...they settled the rest of the dispute outside...I think Charlie won (theoriginalcellarjazzclub.blogspot.ca, 2014).

Tony Clitheroe recalls the evening slightly differently;

... a couple of BC Lions football players came down one night, and the place was packed. And they were sitting over by the far wall, it was sort of a rectangular place ... the basement was sort of rectangular, and you know, quite a bit longer than it was wide. And I was sitting at the other end of the place, so I wasn't quite sure what was going on, but apparently these two guys were making wise cracks of some sort or other, quite loudly. What kind of wise cracks they were I don't know. But at one point Mingus was playing a solo, and part of the way through his solo he started talking to these two guys, right? And it was something to the effect that "if you guys aren't out of here by the time I finish this solo, there's going to be trouble." Either that, or he said "if you don't shut up." I'm not quite sure what it was. But anyway of course, they continued to do whatever it was they were doing, and at some point Mingus just seemed to fly off the stage and again, I couldn't really see what was going on, but you might say that there was a conflict of some sort, and they left quite hurriedly, these two guys (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

A teenaged Terry Clarke was also at the Cellar that night;

... the last night I went there [to hear Mingus], I think it was a Saturday night, and the place was packed, and I was sitting [points out how close he was to the stage, and to Mingus], and Dannie and Charles and Lonnie, and I'm sitting there like this [mimes rapt attention], and Mingus is playing a bass solo, and all of a sudden you're aware of a lot of noise coming from over in that [points away] corner of the room. And there were three B.C. Lions football players talking, and Mingus is just playing away, and he keeps on playing and says "If you motherfuckers don't stop talking I'm going to come over there and beat the shit out of you." That was verbatim what he said. He kept on playing the solo, they kept on talking, he then

¹⁵⁴ I am including several versions of this event for a few reasons. It is, as mentioned, perhaps the most famous incident to have taken place at the club, and has become lodged firmly in Vancouver's popular memory. As the description of events differs slightly, though also at times significantly from one version to the next—particularly with regard to the "official" version—obtaining the most comprehensive view possible seemed prudent. I was also hesitant to privilege one particular retelling over another, or to set out my own "official" version of events.

put his bass down, and he walked right past me to the bathroom, and got a toilet plunger and went over, and started. And the tables were in the air, and shit was flying, and ... it was like, just fisticuffs, and the whole club cleared. Everybody freaked out. Lonnie Hillyer walked past me, and said "I don't want any part of this, I'm a peaceable man." Those were his words. This is like, etched in my brain, and it so freaked me out - I'd never seen anything like this in my life, and uh, and that's how serious [Mingus] was about his music.

I mean, the whole thing was A), this is serious music, yes we should understand it, B) this man is crazy, C) he's justified, and D) the whole thing is insane, and I hope my Mom and Dad never find out about this. But I watched the whole thing go down (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

Drummer and Cellar member Don Cumming was also at the club that evening, and offers one final version of events.

Well ... it could have been Grey Cup night. It was a football night, anyway. And so the football players, some of them, came down, and they're feeling all ... and they're big guys, and they're just ... celebrating, I guess, or whatever. And Charlie Mingus, says "'scuse, me, you football players. Would you mind cooling it?" You know, asks if they would mind cooling it a bit. The Cellar was like that. People sat there and they would listen. It wasn't a place ... it wasn't background music, it was out front. Well. Of course, it didn't work. He put down the bass, and just went over to this one guy and somehow grabbed him, and threw him. He must have gone about 20 feet. Tables and chairs. [makes crashing noise]. And dig, the guy says to him "man, how did you do that?" That's what he said, the guy that he threw. "How did you do that?" [And after that] everything cooled down [and Mingus went back to playing] (Don Cumming, August 22, 2013).

Mingus' performances had a profound effect on those that came to hear the band, as Terry Clarke, then a student of well-known drum teacher Jim Blackley, recalls.

I'd heard about the Charles Mingus band, but I knew nothing about it, and I said I'm going to go and hear this band. And I took the bus. Down Broadway, whatever, by myself, in my little suit and tie, and got there really early. And I remember sitting by myself, and it was Mingus, Dannie Richmond, Lonnie Hillyer, and Charles MacPherson. It was the quartet. And I had no idea what I was about to hear. I had not heard them, I just knew this was somebody I ought to check out. And that first, that evening, completely changed my life. I was so terrified, and blown away. My head just blew off. And I remember sitting there for the hour break that they took, just thinking ... my whole life flashed before me and what

music was all about, and why did I understand it. What blew me away is that what Jim Blackley and I had been talking about, as far as rhythm sections and rhythms and three beat rhythms and vamps and riffs and things ... Mingus and Dannie were doing it. And Dannie was a self taught drummer, or Mingus had taught Dannie how to play, he had been a saxophone player ... I knew nothing. I was a virgin. And I was just so blown away. And I said, this is exactly what we had been talking about. Now, I get it. The light bulb had gone on. "I get it," you know.

And so he was there for two weeks... Jim Blackley was down there, Jim had Dannie Richmond over to his house and he played a tape of *me*, and he said "you gotta hear this young student I've got, he's fifteen" (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

Bassist Don Thompson, also a young musician on the Vancouver scene at the time, vividly recalls his first encounter with Mingus.

So you open the door to go in and its really, really dark, because Mingus is onstage and they're ready to begin. And its really dark. You can't see anything. But there's a light behind the door I guess, and Mingus ... the door opens and he turns around and he glares right at me, and he says "Good evening, you're just in time to shut up." So that was my first meeting with Mingus. It was really funny. But the band was Lonnie Hillyer and Charles McPherson and Dannie ... they were still talking about what had gone on a couple of nights before that where he beat up some football player and ran him out of the club (Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

Those Cellar members who were fortunate to spend time with Mingus outside of his performances relate that their interactions with him were both meaningful and surprising.

[W]hat impressed [me] ... he had this reputation of being this very angry man, this very bitter, angry man, and his music tended to reflect a lot of that. But I found him very gentle, and in fact he stayed in my apartment for several days, down in the west end, and he loved Scotch, but he couldn't drink it straight, he had to drink it with milk, because he had an ulcer. And ... he said things like "the most any artist can do is leave a little truth, a little beauty." This wasn't exactly the thinking of a mad, an angry, bitter, [man]. He was quite poetic (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

Indeed, quotations taken from the CBC show "Mind of Mingus," which Carney produced, find Mingus expressing a similar sentiment.

The message to pass on ... it's a duty of all people that do love and have found the beauty in life to sort of talk to each other, and if, well ... there's bound to be one among them who's not in love with life enough to save life, or the earth, and by just talking to each other the whole thing will grow. By passing on the truth ... by passing the truth on to people.

I can't play beauty to someone if I'm not feeling beautiful. But if they give me hate in return, I have much of that to give also. And probably more ... that's why I have the ulcer (Charles Mingus in "Mind of Mingus," CBC, 1961).

This half-hour broadcast is in many ways a startling and complex presentation that introduces the viewer to Mingus' music through live performance footage, and to the man himself through remarkably candid interview footage shot earlier at the Cellar. "The Mind of Mingus" received a review by John Clayton in *Coda* the following month (February 1961) in advance of its national rebroadcast, which occurred in March of that year.

Mingus answered the questions in a full and articulate manner, a pleasant change from the welter of platitudes and mumbled incoherencies strung together with "you knows" one so often encounters when musicians are being interviewed. His personality, as projected from the glass screen, appeared warm and human. He knows what the relationship of the musician to music should be – "feel it, understand it, have an opinion on it." ... All in all this was one of the best jazz programs I've seen – because of Mingus himself, his convictions and expression of same in a relaxed, and, at times, humorous manner, and because of the excellent program direction allowing Mingus to put over the fact that his type of jazz is closely connected to and dependent upon life (*Coda*, February 1961, pg. 11–12).

In addition to his nightly performances at the Cellar, and the CBC television and radio interviews produced by Jim Carney, Mingus also performed a short, daytime concert at UBC under the auspices of the UBC Jazz Society.

After a very late start (not his fault) and playing one number Mingus noted a dozen or so people standing at the rear who had not been able to get seats, more were outside the auditorium. He enquired as to whether they had paid, he thought they should. Gavin Walker, in charge of proceedings for the Jazz Society, shrugged off the suggestion that he should take the hat round. So Mingus put down his bass, found a hat and made the collection personally and thoroughly. As he shambled up

the aisle the crowd melted away, but one fellow stood his ground, alone and isolated when all had fled and told Mingus he had paid, at which the hat and Mingus passed him...Now, up to a point, this all seemed quite hilarious, but he dragged it on to such an extent that one began to have an uneasy feeling about it... there was a certain tension (*Coda*, February 1961, pg. 12).

Though this UBC presentation was a concert rather than a workshop, the young players involved with the Cellar nonetheless found opportunities to learn what they could. Bass player Terry Hill recalls that Mingus would at times remain at the Cellar after-hours, which enabled some interaction between the American star and some of the more junior Cellar members.

I was there one evening, I don't know what time it was in the morning. About four of us sitting around, I don't even remember who was sitting at the table, [though] of course I remember Mingus, and what he was letting us know, was how you played. How you become whatever you are. And I can't take his voice off, because it was very gruff. He'd rather punch you out than talk to you I think. He was a pretty rough guy, but what an incredible player. And anyway, he said, in his voice, "what you do, man, is you practice and you practice and you practice, and you get down all the licks of all the great players, and then one day you play yourself, and if it's no good, you kill yourself." [laughs] And at that point I thought about trying to kill myself (Terry Hill, August 26, 2013).

Pianist Mike Taylor recalled one evening during the Mingus engagement when he arrived at the Cellar just in time to catch Mingus' last set. Remaining in the club after the audience dispersed, Taylor took to the stage and began to play the house piano. Mingus, who had also remained behind at the club commented favourably on his playing, and invited him to sit-in with the group the following evening. Taylor, then employed as part of the house band at the Harlem Nocturne was able to arrive in time to play the last set of the following evening with the Mingus group (Mike Taylor, May 8, 2014).

That Mingus was able to stay in Vancouver for such an extended engagement provided a unique and valuable opportunity for Cellar members, who were able to interact with the visiting

artists not simply as enthusiastic members of the audience, but rather, through informal sessions, rehearsals, and simply ‘hanging out,’ to receive valuable musical experience and to form personal relationships.

Conclusion

Scenes, though reliant upon physical locations for their enactment, exist as ephemeral occurrences. Though maintained over the longer term by the sense of identity and community they engender, the scene itself is only truly active in the brief temporal moments in which it is enacted—when scene members come together in the act of musicking. These moments of active participation then come to hold meaning and social signification which may outlive the life of the scene itself. The scene becomes mythologized through the shared, recounted, and at times reconstructed histories of those who enacted it. The social connections formed during participation in the scene are renewed and may be built upon through the use of these mythologized scenic moments.

Chance encounters on a street or in bars often require to be smooth and successful, the resuscitation of connections or mutual interests now marginal to the rest of our lives. In such encounters, and in their repetition, knowledges are reinvigorated ... (Straw 2001, 54)

For the Cellar, no incident represents this process of mythologization, or the resuscitation of prior experiences as the evening of Mingus’ incident with the B.C. Lions football players. Raised consistently as a point of reference by interviewees, it served as a tool for recognition, as a social entry point, and as a point of mutual experience that still, some decades later, served to separate those who were actively part of the scene from those who were not.

Chapter Seven

New Blood

Throughout 1961 the Cellar continued to program a mix of local artists with visiting American stars in what was becoming a rapidly changing musical marketplace in Vancouver. In February 1961, Phineas Newborn played a widely advertised six-night engagement at the Harlem Nocturne (*Vancouver Sun*, February 1, 1961, pg. 21), providing high profile competition at a time when Cellar newspaper ads were becoming more erratic. Newspaper advertisements for weekend performances by local artists were now often run only in the Friday edition,¹⁵⁵ at the same time the Cellar's Sunday evening activities were now often advertised (*Vancouver Sun*, February 25, 1961, pg. 8). These Sunday evening sessions were usually comprised of either a rehearsal band (often that of Ray Sikora) or jam sessions, and as such represented the lowest financial outlay for the Cellar executive as the musicians were generally not paid for their activities that evening.¹⁵⁶

... at one point we adopted a policy of opening on Sunday nights, which we hadn't done for quite a long time. Unless we had somebody there ... a high profile import. I keep using that term, but that's the one I think of. So if we had somebody come in, we'd certainly be open on Sunday night, probably slightly earlier, maybe 9-1 or 10-2 or something like that, as Monday would be the next day. But we decided to start opening the place on Sundays no matter what, with the proviso that it was a rehearsal band ... the local band would work for nothing. So that went on for quite a while, and it went right up, I believe, until the closing of the Cellar (Tony Clitheroe, March 17, 2013).

In the Spring of 1961 both the Montgomery Brothers and Barney Kessel returned for short stays—Barney Kessel from March 17th through March 26th (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, March 10,

¹⁵⁵ In a move one presumes to avoid paying the higher fees for placing advertisements in the Saturday issue.

¹⁵⁶ Though local groups were rarely paid to union scale, whenever the Cellar was financially stable enough to permit it, local musicians were paid for advertised performances at the club.

1961, pg. 14), and the Montgomery Brothers from April 1st through April 8th (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday, April 1 1961, pg. 8), followed by Dick Forrest in May 1961, and Ernestine Anderson in late June through July, 1961. Though *Coda* magazine reported in its December 1961 issue that the Cellar was planning a move from its Broadway and Main location in favour of a downtown venue which would permit more foot traffic, I have found no other evidence that a move was seriously contemplated (*Coda*, December 1961, pg. 10). It remains clear however, that the bulk of the Cellar's advertised engagements during this period were by local artists, the majority of which were drawn from an influx of younger players to the scene.

Several of these young players were drummers, a coincidence no doubt explained by the presence of drum teacher Jim Blackley, who had moved to Vancouver in 1957 and established Jim Blackley's Drum Village shortly thereafter. Though none of the young drummers associated with the Cellar had relocated specifically to study with Blackley, all of them became his students, and recalled that his instruction was integral to their development and success. Drummer Stan Perry arrived in Vancouver from Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he had been involved in a similar co-operative performance space in the late 1950s. Shortly after his arrival in Vancouver, Perry began to study with Blackley, and to participate in the scene surrounding the Cellar in addition, and perhaps at some detriment, to his studies at UBC.

I went to Dal[housie University in Halifax]for one year and flunked everything. I got a job in British Columbia working at a mine, and decided to go back to school, so I went out to Vancouver and I went out to UBC and graduated from UBC, barely. Just arts, English, basically. And I did ok at first, but I got more and more involved with music, and that's when I got involved with the Cellar club out there. And I wound up playing down there all the time (Stan Perry, November 14, 2012).

Vancouver native Terry Clarke was only twelve years old when the Cellar opened in 1956;

My first time was [at the Cellar] 1960 or 1961 ... I was about 15 years old ... So I'd started taking drum lessons with Jim [Blackley], who used to live up on Commercial Drive ... I remember going down there with my jacket and tie. And I'm pretty sure my mom was a little freaked out that I'd be going over there ... Just to go there was exciting. I didn't really care [who the bands were]. It was the learning ... And anybody that played the Cellar had to be good. That was the idea, that they wouldn't let you in there if [you couldn't play]... the bar was really set pretty high, in my mind. And Jesus, I can remember just sitting and listening there over and over and over ... I just sucked in everything. And I learned just as much from Jerry [Fuller] and Stan [Perry] as I did from Jimmy Lovelace ... but in a different way (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

Clarke soon became something of a fixture at the Cellar, as well as at the newly formed Black Spot, a venture modelled very much on the Cellar which attracted a slightly younger demographic.

Jerry Fuller, who began his drum instruction at an early age in his hometown of Calgary, continued his studies under Jim Blackley in Vancouver, where Fuller's father worked as a saxophonist at the downtown supper clubs.¹⁵⁷ Following a year at the Westlake College of Music in California (1958–1959) Fuller returned to Vancouver where he became a vital and regular part of the Cellar scene, playing frequently with the likes of Don Thompson, P.J. Perry, and Dale Hillary as well as with long-time Cellar members such as John Dawe and Tony Clitheroe.

Saxophonists P.J. Perry and Dale Hillary arrived on the scene at more or less the same time, and already knew one another from time spent in the dance band led by Paul Perry Sr. (P.J.'s father) at the Sylvan Lake resort in Alberta. Dale Hillary, born in Edmonton in 1940, was something of a startling protege and was selected, along with drummer Terry Hawkeye,¹⁵⁸ as one of twenty-four young musicians chosen to attend the prestigious Lenox School of Jazz in the

¹⁵⁷ In the late 1940s, Jerry Fuller Sr. led the house band at the Cave.

¹⁵⁸ Terry Hawkeye would be one of the chief organizers of the Yardbird Suite jazz club in Edmonton. See Chapter 8.

summer of 1957 (jazzdiscography.com/Lenox, 2014).¹⁵⁹ Instructors at the school during Hillary's stay included John Lewis, William Russo, Ray Brown, Jimmy Giuffre, Herb Ellis, Max Roach, Dizzy Gillespie, and Oscar Peterson, who was Hillary's small ensemble director.¹⁶⁰ Two years later in 1959, Hillary was not yet 19 years old when he appeared with Kenneth Patchen and Al Neil on the Folkways recording *Kenneth Patchen Plays with Jazz in Canada* (Folkways 1959), and he would go on to spend the 1960s as something of a musical nomad, drifting between Vancouver's Cellar, the Yardbird Suite in Edmonton, and Toronto's MINC and First Floor Clubs (Miller 2001, 94) in addition to working with drummer Philly Joe Jones on a tour that apparently included a stint in Cuba.¹⁶¹

One year younger than Hillary, Calgary born P.J. Perry grew up in a musical family where his father, Paul Perry Sr., led the dance band at popular Alberta resort town Sylvan Lake from the late 1940s through the mid-1960s. P.J. found early work in his father's orchestras, and discovered the Cellar while still a teenager during the fall and winter months that his family spent in Vancouver.

I remember when [PJ] first came to the Cellar. He came down one night, I don't know how old he was, maybe 17 or 18 or something, and he said "Hey man, can I

¹⁵⁹ An anonymous photo of Hillary presumably taken during his stay at the Lenox School, would grace the September 26, 1963 issue of *DownBeat*—the magazine's 11th Annual School Music Issue (Miller 2001, 94 and *DownBeat*, September 26, 1963, front cover).

¹⁶⁰ See program from the 1957 Lenox School of Jazz year end concert, archived at jazzdiscography.com/Lenox/1957prog.htm.

It is worth noting that Peterson would co-found the Toronto based Advanced School of Contemporary Music in 1960. The school existed from 1960–1965, and included as instructors Ray Brown and Ed Thigpen, Peterson's working group at the time. In 1960, the school operated a 17-week term, and charged \$350.00 tuition (*Coda*, September 1960, pg. 22-23).

Hillary returned to the Lenox school in 1958, where he played in a small ensemble led by Jimmy Giuffre and a large ensemble led by Bill Russo (jazzdiscography.com/Lenox/1958prog.htm).

¹⁶¹ Hillary's tenure with Philly Joe Jones remains obscure. He held dual Canadian–USA citizenship through his mother, and this may have facilitated his being able to work in the United States, but little is known of his activities during this period. Hillary claimed to have recorded sessions with both Philly Joe Jones and vibraphonist Dave Pike, though neither has ever surfaced or been documented (Miller 2001, 94 and Gavin Walker, March 8, 2014).

sit in?” First he sent me to the liquor store to get him a bottle. And he got up and played. He sounded like he was going to play real great, but he didn’t know the tunes. Didn’t know the chord changes. He had been playing with his dad’s band as a kid so he actually played the saxophone really well, but his jazz wasn’t together at all. And I think that very night Don Thompson, who was brand new in town and still learning, leaned over and said to him “Hey kid, go home and learn some tunes, and come back in six months.” He did. I think he came back in less than six months, and the next time ... wow! Watch out! Because PJ had gotten a hold of it, and he was down in the Cellar after that all the time (John Dawe, December 20, 2001).

Multi-instrumentalist (bass, vibraphone, piano) Don Thompson also arrived on the Vancouver scene in 1960 at the age of twenty from rural Powell River, some 200 kilometres up the coast from Vancouver, though he had visited the Cellar a couple of times as a teenager.

I’d actually been to Vancouver before that, just to visit. A friend of mine was a drummer ... and [he] went down to Vancouver [and] came back talking about the Cellar. And talking about this fantastic drummer, who was Chuck Logan, [and] said this guy is as good as anybody, he was just amazing. Talking about Chuck and all the guys he’d heard. This was before I’d ever been to Vancouver. But it made me want to go, and check out the club and everything. But I couldn’t really play. I really couldn’t play for a long time.

I think the first time I actually played in a session was with Dave Quarin. I remember ... I didn’t know how to play, but I got up anyhow, and we played a blues or something, and then we were going to do another tune and we couldn’t think of anything to play so Dave said well let’s just play “Just Friends,” and I said well I don’t know that, and Dave said well I’ve got the chords here. So he gave me the paper and I got through it somehow ... I can remember all the guys. John [Dawe] was playing, and Tony [Clitheroe] was playing bass. And they were so good. And here I am, not really knowing how to play, just sort of hanging on, and not really even hanging on, just kind of getting through it (Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

Thompson found employment quickly, working at the Black Spot, the Inquisition Coffee House, the Espresso, and the Cellar with a variety of groups. Thompson’s popularity on the Cellar scene was aided by the fact that Tony Clitheroe was frequently working other engagements, and that Earl Freeman had moved on. During the hours he wasn’t performing

Thompson could be found either sitting in on piano at the Espresso Coffee House in exchange for a meal, or shadowing Vancouver's pre-eminent bassist Paul Ruhland.

Paul was my first bass hero. I mean, I loved Tony, but Tony was different. I'd listen to Tony play and I just really, really liked it. But I listened to Paul, and it was like getting a bass lesson. Because Paul knew stuff about the bass that none of us knew.

I'll never forget ... I used to follow him around. I'd go down to the CBC because you could walk into the CBC anytime, there was no security in those days, so I'd just go down to the CBC and see what was happening ... where the radio studios were, and there was a rehearsal studio actually, on the same street as the Espresso. Just down a couple of doors. And I went in there one day, and Dave Robbins was rehearsing his band for the Jazz Workshop radio show they used to do, and Paul was playing bass. So I just went in, because I knew Paul, and sat down right beside him while they were rehearsing.

And first of all, he was like Tony ... he had a sound that was unbelievable, and a really good French bass. And I was just sitting there listening to him, and the first thing they played was a thing of George Russell's, and it was all twelve tone music, and so I'm listening to Paul play, and the bass line is just so bizarre I couldn't believe it. And I was looking at the part, and when they stopped for a minute I said "what is that?" And he said "oh, it's a twelve tone row", and he explained to me what it was, and how the notes don't repeat and all that stuff. And then the next thing they did was a thing he'd written, and it was a blues or something. I can't remember what it was called ... And the whole first chorus that he played was in the thumb position and four note chords. All these big four note chords, just like classical guitar. Perfectly in tune. And I'm sitting there listening to him play this thing, thinking Jesus! I just couldn't believe it, that anyone could actually do that. And even right now, that's not that easy. Most of the guys around couldn't do it now. But he just had the bass together. He'd just go [strums], and there would be this perfect chord. And there was a whole chorus like that. And I thought to myself at the time, "I hope I never have to play that."

And then of course Paul packed up and left for L.A. and Dave Robbins called me to take his place in the band, and that was the very first thing I had to play. But when I looked at the part, it was just chord symbols. He had just been improvising the part just for fun. But that's how good Paul was. He was amazing. And so ... I used to go to the Cave and sit up in the balcony and watch his hands. And with no microphone or anything you could hear him. He was the first guy you heard when you walked in the door. He had a sound that was unbelievable. Paul was really something. As a composer ... in his own class as a composer. I mean, he was light years ahead of anybody around, to the point where the guys used to ... they just didn't understand him at all. They really didn't. They had no idea at all what he was doing (Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

When Ruhland left for California in 1963, Thompson took over from him in many instances, and was soon featured each week on a half-hour CBC broadcast which featured the Don Thompson group (usually with Terry Clarke) either by themselves or backing up invited guests ranging from Vancouver vocalist Eleanor Collins to Stan Getz.¹⁶²

A New Scene—The Black Spot

When the Cellar opened its doors in 1956 it was the only available space in Vancouver for young musicians interested in exploring jazz to meet and play. Almost instantly popular, the Cellar drew not only from the age demographic of those players that had started it, but quickly attracted the attention of young players still in high school at the time. Though musical skill served as something of an equalizer within the scene, the age gap between the Cellar founders and those who discovered the club in later years was at times startling.

... the thing was, these guys, they were such good players, but there was a difference in the ages of about 8 to 10 years, and when I'm playing with Al Neil I'm thinking he's the same as me, but he's 90 and I'm 75. There was a difference, and when you're 22 that's a big difference (Terry Hill, August 26, 2013).

Even saxophonist Gavin Walker, who as a teenager quickly became a fixture at the Cellar recalls that his introduction to the scene involved significant commentary on his age. Walker was still a teenager when his family relocated to Vancouver, and one of the first people he happened to meet in his new city was saxophonist Jim Johnson, who was at the time still working days at Western Music.

... the first thing I looked for was a music store. And I walked into Western Music

¹⁶² Thompson often played either piano or vibes on these telecasts, in which case the role of bass player was often taken by Robert Witmer.

... and had a few dollars in my pocket and I saw a record that I hadn't seen before and I remember it was a J.R. Monterose record ... And I took it to the counter and the [clerk] said "wow! for a young guy you're really digging the real stuff." And he said "I'm going to go on a break. Do you want to join me for a coffee and a sandwich around the corner?" So I said yeah, and we went around the corner to a place called Mother's Cafe, it was on Dunsmuir Street, and we sat there and he told me all about the Cellar, and it was like I'd struck gold. Because I had no idea that Vancouver had something like that at all. When we were in Mother's Cafe, John Dawe came in. So he was the second person I met in Vancouver. And so, Johnson introduced me, and said "this is a young cat who's really interested in jazz" and he says "we're having a rehearsal on Tuesday night ... why don't you come down to the club and check it out, and we're going to have a rehearsal with our group." And so the group consisted of Jim Johnson on tenor and alto, John Dawe on trumpet, Al Neil on piano ... it was actually his group. Tony Clitheroe on bass and Bill Boyle on drums. So those were the Cellar beboppers. That was my intro. So I sat and listened to them rehearse (Gavin Walker, December 3, 2012).

Much in the same way that the sessions at the Penthouse were essentially closed to the young players in the early 1950s, a situation which caused them to band together and start the Wailhouse and ultimately the Cellar, in time the Cellar itself soon became a scene which was closed, at least initially, to the majority of young players in the early 1960s. With entrance to active participation in the Cellar tied to possession of a certain level of musicianship, many younger players in Vancouver were relegated to the audience. They, like the Cellar founders before them, also lacked the performance opportunities to develop as jazz musicians, a situation which led to the formation of the Black Spot (4345 Dunbar Street) as a co-operative jazz space in the summer of 1960 (see Figure 42).

Terry Clarke, one of the first of the Black Spot musicians to successfully make the transition to playing at the Cellar, recalls the inception of the Black Spot as being nearly identical to that of the earlier Wailhouse and Cellar—the need for young musicians to have a place to meet, share ideas, practice, and play in an environment welcoming to experimentation and failure.

I would go [to the Cellar] with other guys, Dave McMurdo or somebody. We'd all go over there together. So that was *the* club ... we all knew, the Cellar IS the club. And as a backlash to the Cellar, we ... Claire Lawrence and Al Wiertz and a whole bunch of people, we opened up the Black Spot, which was a club up on Dunbar. And I lived up on Dunbar and 27th. So that was our club, which was like a co-op club.

... if you could play at the Cellar you'd arrived. You know? So ... we had the Black Spot going because we weren't good enough in our minds to play at the Cellar. We weren't good enough musicians. "But one day, I'll be able to play down there." And I didn't play there very much. When I did, I was really nervous.

It was a brilliant idea. Because the Cellar ... the main guys, played down there... and it wasn't that we couldn't get in, because there was no liquor, so we could get in there as kids, I guess... But the Black Spot was our club where we could get our shit together. And it was a co-op, which I thought was a great idea. A bunch of guys just chipped in \$25 a month, paid the rent, one of the guys lived above it, and we had access to the club and there was a piano, and drum set and ... we would go to the Cellar and hear Charles Mingus, and then run up the the Black Spot, open the club up and play until 6 in the morning. And then go to high school (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

Located at 4345 Dunbar Street near King Edward Drive, the Black Spot began in 1958 not as a jazz club, but as one of the first coffee houses in Vancouver. The space was apparently called both "Mother's" and "The Living End" before being renamed "The Black Spot," possibly in some sort of hip opposition to iconic Vancouver restaurant chain White Spot (pasttensevancouver.tumblr.com, 2014), or perhaps in reference to its largely black interior design.¹⁶³ The venue bore no signage other than a large black circle painted above the door, and quickly became popular with students from both nearby UBC and Lord Byng High School who brought to the space an affinity for Beat culture (see Figure 43). Initially the space operated as a

¹⁶³ This is only one of many possible roots of the Black Spot name and nobody is certain what indeed the name referred to.

commercial though quite casual endeavour, relying on its clientele to amuse themselves by playing chess, staging poetry readings, or using the house piano.

The Black Spot crowd was a younger crowd. University students and young people aspiring to be beatniks, in the main. It was a beatnik club, that's what it was. Everybody in black turtle neck sweaters and pretending to write poetry and getting up and reading poetry and drinking awful coffee and so on. And the musicians from the University used to go there and play (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

By late 1959, the scene at the Black Spot had tilted towards a regular jazz policy following the frequent attendance of young players from UBC and nearby Lord Byng High School, which had a noteworthy music program. It was also starting to draw the ire of local residents, who were less than impressed with the activities at the space, and in the summer of 1959 a petition was circulated in an attempt to have the Black Spot shut down.

Attempts of a group of young people to turn Dunbar into "beat street" have drawn the ire of neighbourhood residents. They're passing around a petition to have the "Black Spot" closed ... P.S.: the only thing "beat" about the kids I saw around the place was the fact that they were all tired out from working so hard to make the place go as a coffee shop. (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday August 22, 1959, pg. 17).

The attempt was unsuccessful, though by early 1960 the Black Spot's ownership was in difficulty and began to seek additional partners to help share the financial load. At this point drummer John Le Marquand, along with friends Ron Dobson, Morris Jenkins, and Tom Killam stepped in to help keep the space open. Le Marquand was an aspiring drummer studying under Jim Blackley, though the other partners were not musicians.

... the original owners had sold to two people that I knew, a couple of years older [than I was], and they were looking for some co-signers, because the lease was coming up, and they were afraid that they might not be able to make it, and the more people they had on the lease the more the financial burden would be spread. So that's how I got involved, you know, as one of the co-signers. So in 1960, I was an owner ... I was an aspiring drummer ... but neither of the other three were musicians at all. And the club sort of had a beat poetry thing ... nothing very

structured, and then the trio from Victoria came, and they were pretty hardcore jazz. Sax, bass, and drums (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).

Since its inception in 1958, the Black Spot had made available inexpensive memberships, a policy that was continued under the new ownership group and which granted card holders a reduced admission in the evenings when music was offered.¹⁶⁴ Though the club was open from Tuesday through Sunday, there were usually only formal performances on Friday and Saturday, with the other evenings free for jam sessions and rehearsals (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).

The arrival from Victoria of saxophonist Claire Lawrence, bassist Bob Keezer, and drummer George Heller in 1960 helped to reset the focus of the Black Spot, and it quickly transitioned from beatnik coffee house to jazz-based music club, taking ads in the *Vancouver Sun* alongside the Cellar in the summer of 1960 (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, July 8, 1960. Pg. 13). That said, the Black Spot was not as much musical competition for the Cellar as it was an alternate, more youth-oriented space (see Figures 44 and 45).

The musicianship was not professional musicianship. In the Cellar it was generally professional, or at least to my understanding it was professional. They didn't break up in the middle of the set ... and they [the Black Spot guys] would play a couple of things and then casually get off the stand. There wasn't any set thing, and they were more or less jamming more than anything else, I expect. They didn't have any headliners at any time, it was whoever got up and played for them, and if there wasn't anybody playing for them then there wasn't any music, and they would play it on the juke box (Jamie Reid, August 16, 2013).

Much as the Cellar functioned for those who had established it, the Black Spot served as clubhouse and creative incubator for Vancouver's jazz musicians who were just young and inexperienced enough to be left out of much direct participation at the Cellar.

¹⁶⁴ Recollections of club goers suggest it was as low as twenty-five or fifty cents.

I had a paper route. I was really young. I just enjoyed going there and they let me come in and the beauty of that is that I was studying with Jim [Blackley], and everybody was all caught up in the scene, so the beauty of it is that we could go to our lesson and think about music and then go and play. Dave McMurdo had a big band, you'd go there and play Sundays. But I didn't contribute financially to it, I just was always [there]. My mother would come up and drag me out of there, if she had to... Because we'd be there until 7 in the morning (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

Though the younger players who frequented the Black Spot were regular attendees at the Cellar, few managed to perform there with any regularity and the two scenes, while unified musically at times within the Cellar for a particular performance, more often operated as distinct, though at times overlapping, social scenes.

There was quite a separation between the two. Though we would go to the Cellar, particularly if they had some notable person playing there, they never came to our club. We were a lot younger, probably 3 or 4 years younger. But I was 19, you know, and the guys were of that age group, and these [Cellar] guys were 25, 26, and they ... a lot of them [were] professional musicians working downtown Vancouver. So we were just sort of the kids. And it was pretty much that way while the Black Spot was in existence. It wasn't until the Flat Five came around that we became more accepted and actually outlasted the Cellar ... I mean that was still, from our point of view, the mecca in town at the time—1960, 1961. Because they were bringing in some notable people. Charlie Mingus comes to mind. And he caused quite a stir there and impressed everyone. And Art Pepper was there. They were just like on a whole different level, so we more or less ... Glenn MacDonald who was a saxophone player that did play at the Cellar was the only one that consistently played at the Black Spot (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).

The Vancouver correspondent for *Coda* magazine concurred with this general assessment in a report filed in the June 1962 issue.¹⁶⁵

The Black Spot continues to function every night except Monday, though it is somewhat haphazard. A phone call in advance is recommended, but this is the place to

¹⁶⁵ Though no by-lines were provided by *Coda* during this period, it appears that the correspondent responsible for the "Notes from UBC" column which provided the bulk of the Vancouver news through 1962 and 1963 was Adrian Tanner. At the time a UBC student, Tanner is now an anthropologist at Memorial University, Newfoundland (Adrian Tanner, June 24, 2013).

see the new blood of the Vancouver jazz scene in action. At the weekends, for a more sophisticated approach to jazz, the Cellar is the place to go (*Coda*, June 1963, pg. 8).

In late 1961 or early 1962, with the club facing further financial difficulties and in danger of closing, a group of musicians who regularly performed at the club approached John Le Marquand and the rest of the ownership group about the possibility of collective ownership as a means to keep the space open. Known formally as the Contemporary Jazz Society, a group of some fifteen musicians and fans, John Le Marquand among them, pooled their resources and took control of the Black Spot.

What was happening I think, is that the handwriting was on the wall that there was talk of the Black Spot closing when the lease came up, and so people were enjoying playing there so much, I guess just through sheer talk they figured they ought to do something about this. So they actually pooled some money and approached me and the other three guys and made us an offer, and we said sure. It was a lease thing that prompted it. And so it carried on from there... So that was the formation of the Contemporary Jazz Society. It was just a name we thought up, it had no relation to anything, and it was never officially registered as a society. It was just a collection of people, and actually the original people that put money into it, to buy out the original owners of the Black Spot (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).

By June 1962, even the collective efforts of the Contemporary Music Society were not adequate to maintain the operation of the Black Spot, and the club closed its doors, a situation that *Coda* regarded as regrettable but unsurprising.

This month sees the demise of the Black Spot, which claimed to be the oldest coffee shop in Vancouver, being inaugurated in October of 1958. For some time it had been operating on a very shaky financial footing and the attraction of cash customers was not encouraged by the haphazard method of operating — open six nights a week as it was, often little was offered in the way of entertainment. When music was played it was usually well worth the moderate admission fee, but the uncertainty was not conducive to steady business....The really amazing thing about the Spot was that it ever functioned at all considering the number and variety of characters who all had a hand in its operation ... In addition to the directors many others were instrumental in keeping the place functioning — not only musicians

who played for the fun and experience, but also the voluntary kitchen help, book-keepers and general lend-a-handers (*Coda*, July 1962, pg. 7).

However, prior to the club's closure, the Contemporary Jazz Society had been approached by restaurateur Anthony Thorn, who was opening a coffee shop on Marine Drive near Locarno Beach in English Bay, and wanted the coffee shop to offer music as well. The society quickly agreed to relocate to the rear of his establishment in what would become known as the Java Jazz. The Java Jazz was short lived, open only between the summer and October of 1962 (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).

The end of October saw a less happy occasion that is the predicted demise of the Java Jazz Club came about. But this was not the end of this ambitious group of young musicians. Packing their tents and more or less silently stealing away, this group of ex-Black Spot arabs is now encamped at another oasis—3623 West Broadway, due to open officially Dec. 1st. One of our promising young drummers, Jim Chivers, will manage it and spaghetti, pizza, cold drinks and coffee will be served upon request. It will be run on the more practical basis of weekends only - Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 p.m. to at least 1 a.m. (*Coda*, December 1962, pgs. 8-9).

Actually [the Java Jazz] was a very good deal for us. What happened was we got the money for the door, and he got the food sales. And, well, people didn't buy a lot of food, and so he couldn't carry on. And around that time he was coming to us and asking if we could change the relationship, and boy we were hardcore, and said no. But someone had found this building on Broadway, which was pretty much made up ... honestly I don't know what it was originally. Never a club. Pretty much everything was there [though], we didn't do a whole lot to it. We built a stage, and put in some lights for the tables ... and we went down and had a look and I guess we got a hold of the landlord and made a deal and the next thing you know, we're moving (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).

The Flat Five

Originally and briefly known as the Flatted Fifth, the Flat Five (3623 W. Broadway)¹⁶⁶ would mark the last experiment in club ownership by the Contemporary Jazz Society, as well as the most significant development in Vancouver's jazz scene since the inception of the Cellar in 1956 (a club which the Flat Five would ultimately outlast). The Flat Five marked a new level of professionalism from the Contemporary Jazz Society, both from its own musicians who had grown considerably over the last few years, and from the level of imported talent presented at the venue. This mixing of presentations by local artists (many of whom were members of the managing co-operative), along with well-known stars was yet another way in which the Contemporary Jazz Society modelled their success after that enjoyed by the Cellar.

... at the Black Spot time, the Cellar wasn't competition, by the Flat Five they were a little bit of competition. Our skill level went up, we had better players, Don Thompson had moved down from Powell River of all places, and was playing in the downtown music scene, and Terry Clarke, and they played together a lot, and of course joined the John Handy band. But the quality of music just took a leap upwards, in the Flat Five era (John Le Marquand, February 22, 1963).¹⁶⁷

The transition from Java Jazz to Flat Five was overseen primarily by drummer Jim Chivers, who acted as manager of the Flat Five, along with John Le Marquand who operated as the club's Secretary and Treasurer. In 1962 Le Marquand was working for the CBC as a member of the stage crew, and he was able to facilitate the remodelling of the Broadway location to suit their needs as a jazz club.

¹⁶⁶ See Figure 6.

¹⁶⁷The Flat Five experimented with bringing in American artists much as the Cellar had done, though most of this activity occurred in the latter stages of its existence, and after it had ceased to be a co-operative venture (see pages 227-228). In addition to Charles Mingus, the Flat Five presented John Handy, who played with a local band consisting of Don Thompson, Terry Clarke, and Bob Witmer. In 1964 Handy returned to play the Blue Horn, after which engagement Don Thompson and Terry Clarke joined his group and relocated to the United States.

I was able to use my contacts and hired the carpenters to build the stage, and the painter foreman actually had a job on the side where he made decorative lights, so we got lights from him for the club. And CBC was throwing out some risers, so we snagged those, for some seating at the back of the club using those risers. So my contacts with CBC came in handy (John Le Marquand, February 22, 1963).

The jazz society's ambitions for the Flat Five required that they confront a great deal of red tape which had largely been avoided under the more casual operating models for the Black Spot and Java Jazz. Much like the Cellar, a deal was worked out with the local chapter of the American Federation of Musicians to accommodate casual sessions and performances by co-op members, as well as formal presentations of high profile artists.

So we actually did hire musicians, right from the start [as the Flat Five] and then we got nailed by SOCAN or whatever they were, ASCAP before that. Fortunately they were, I dunno, we didn't have to pay very much money, \$50 or something like that. Though \$50 in those days was probably \$400 or \$500 today (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).

The club had originally intended to open in December 1962, but the first advertisements for the Flat Five do not appear until January 4, 1963 (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, January 4th, 1963, pg. 18) 1963, announcing Vancouver's "newest contemporary music club" along with weekend performances by singer Lynne MacNeil and the Don Thompson Trio. Though the Flat Five did take out ads alongside the Cellar and other established nightclubs in the *Vancouver Sun*, they also established themselves as a regular presence in the *Ubysey*, the student newspaper at UBC.

Flatted Fifth? We've all been wondering what it is. It's a jazz club—a real jazz club—not just a wine-bottle checkered table cloth, atmospheric condition. It's a jazz sound – a fine high swinging jazz sound—with high fine swinging jazz musicians (*Ubysey*, March 7, 1963, pg. 6).

The campus paper carried nearly weekly announcements of concerts by such newcomers to the Vancouver scene as multi-instrumentalist Don Thompson, bassist Bob Witmer, pianist John

Gittins,¹⁶⁸ vocalist Lynne MacNeil, drummers Al Wiertz and Blaine Wikjord, saxophonist Claire Lawrence, vibraphonist / pianist Ralph Dyck,¹⁶⁹ and others, as well as offering a student rate of seventy-five cents on Sundays (*Ubysey*, various, courtesy of John Le Marquand).

In a move reminiscent of the Cellar's practices, John Le Marquand's CBC contacts led to the taping of a half-hour broadcast live from the Flat Five in September 1963. Featuring Eleanor Collins and the Don Thompson Trio, the engagement was a resounding success and served to introduce the club to a wider audience than had been present for many of their less mainstream jazz presentations.¹⁷⁰

We even got a television show done, by CBC, and I often wonder whatever happened to that. It was just a half hour, I can't remember who was playing. The biggest draw we had was Eleanor Collins, and we were sold out the two nights she sang, and we even opened the fire doors and people were outside, listening. The club was absolutely packed (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).

In addition to live music, the Flat Five presented visual art shows in the club's spacious lobby (a practice which would ultimately culminate with the opening of the Peter's Ear Gallery in 1965), as well as theatrical productions, staging *Around the World in 80 Seconds* in March 1963 (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday, March 23, 1963, pg. 13), in addition to a high profile charity event featuring the Gastown Players in February 1964. Al Neil, unsatisfied with what he perceived to be musical limitations at the Cellar, began playing at the Flat Five with some regularity in 1963 and 1964, by which time he had largely begun to back away from mainstream jazz performance.

¹⁶⁸ Gittins would become perhaps best known for his work in jazz theory, and for his role in the establishment of the jazz program at York University, Toronto.

¹⁶⁹ Ralph Dyck became both a composer and music technologist whose work with Roland helped to design the Roland MC-8 keyboard synthesizer.

¹⁷⁰ Eleanor Collins performed September 27–28, 1963, though it is not known which evening was broadcast (*Vancouver Sun*, September 27, 1963, pg. 37).

With only minor changes in management within the co-operative group, the Flat Five continued as a co-operative venture through to the summer of 1964.

The Plot Thickens—Other Venues

In the early 1960s other venues emerged which, along with the Black Spot and Flat Five, placed increasing pressure upon the Cellar. These venues, while not co-operative spaces in the vein of the Cellar and Contemporary Jazz Society clubs, did present similar types of modern jazz, often with much higher profile artists than the co-ops could afford to hire, and served to further fracture the small jazz scene amongst a variety of venues. The most high profile of these new venues was the Inquisition Coffee House on Seymour Street in the downtown core (726 Seymour Street), run by local impresario Howie Bateman.¹⁷¹ The Inquisition opened in the spring of 1961 offering a mix of local and imported artists in the world of folk and jazz. Operating as a coffee house without a liquor license,¹⁷² the Inquisition became nonetheless a focal point on the Vancouver scene, eventually drawing such acts as The Montgomery Brothers, Ernestine Anderson, Cal Tjader, Stan Getz, Cannonball Adderley, and the Miles Davis Sextet.¹⁷³ Some of these artists had previously played at the Cellar, and despite the positive relationships fostered there, opted for engagements at the Inquisition as club owner Howie Bateman was able to offer a higher performance fee than the not-for-profit Cellar could guarantee.

¹⁷¹ Howie Bateman was a music enthusiast, and in addition to his ownership of the Inquisition Coffee House, was a regular host on CBC radio and television. Bateman would relocate to Toronto in 1966 where he helped to found *Toronto Life* magazine (*Vancouver Sun*, Thursday, October 11, 2012 pg. D2).

¹⁷² And, strangely for Vancouver, without a reputation as a bottle club.

¹⁷³ The Inquisition also booked high profile folk acts such as The Travellers, Ian and Sylvia, and in July 1962, comedian Lenny Bruce whose show at Isy's had been shut down by the authorities. The Inquisition engagement was hastily arranged and unadvertised (though well attended), and managed to escape the notice of the morality squad.

In April 1963 the Inquisition presented Miles Davis to disappointingly small audiences (*Vancouver Sun*, March 9, 1963, pg. 10), an economic failure which was bookended by the costly appearances of Cal Tjader in February 1963 (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday February 3, 1963, pg. 18) and Stan Getz in October 1963 (*Ubyyssey*, October 4, 1963, pg. 4). Lack of a sizeable turnout for these presentations coupled with the limited revenue stream provided by the Inquisition's nature as a coffee house turned out to be a crippling financial blow and led to the club's closure in December 1963.¹⁷⁴

Some people didn't get their stockings filled this Christmas ... bad business forced [Bateman's] Inquisition coffee house to close anyway. In its short two year life it brought a handful of jazz stars and a host of folk to Vancouver. As Cannonball said when he played there, "This coffee is sure great for keeping you awake, but ..." (*Coda*, February 6, 1964, pg. 9).

That Bateman had such difficulty generating revenue with such high profile acts may well speak to the failures of a business model predicated on a coffee house, but is likely also an indicator of the size of the audience for jazz in Vancouver at the time, an audience which was becoming increasingly fractured between venues and the somewhat mutually exclusive scenes based out of the Cellar and the Black Spot / Flat Five.

Anecdotal evidence as well suggests that the ticket prices for such high profile presentations at the Inquisition were often discouraging to the less affluent regulars who formed the core of the Vancouver jazz scene—those musicians and students who relied upon the Cellar and Black Spot / Flat Five as interactive scenic spaces rather than as intermittent listening venues. In many cases those at the Cellar or Black Spot / Flat Five did not attend the formal concerts at the Inquisition,

¹⁷⁴ According to *The John Coltrane Reference*, Coltrane had been booked to play the Inquisition in late December 1963, but had the gig abruptly cancelled when the club closed on December 17, 1963 (Porter 2007, 293).

hoping instead that the artists involved would find their way down to the Cellar for an after-hours session.¹⁷⁵

The other significant addition to the Vancouver jazz scene in the early 1960s was the opening of the Espresso Coffee House on West Georgia Street at Howe Street by the Hotel Georgia.¹⁷⁶ Ken Hole, who after his departure from the Cellar in 1958 had opened the Scene Club in Victoria with Walley Lightbody, returned to Vancouver in the spring of 1960. Hole had remained active in the restaurant business through a series of overlapping ventures, and came into possession of the Espresso through a business contact who had tired of the enterprise. Though the exact date for the Espresso's opening remains hard to pin down, it appears that Ken Hole took control of the operation sometime in 1960 bringing in pianist Neild Longden¹⁷⁷ as the venue's manager. In addition to his managerial duties, Longden would perform on the piano during the early portion of the evening. The Espresso would never formally hire musical entertainment and rather relied upon musicians dropping in to organize informal sessions utilizing the house piano, bass, and drums. The Espresso benefitted from having a location close to Isy's, the Cave, and the CBC studios, and rarely lacked for musicians willing to play late into the evening.

... the boys started coming in, Don Thompson and th[em], and we started having jam sessions. And I'd go down there after work, and I'd sit in there and have a couple of drinks and play a couple of tunes. And next thing you know it caught on (Ken Hole, August 19, 2013).

¹⁷⁵ Conversations with Terry Clarke, John Le Marquand, and Gavin Walker bear this out.

¹⁷⁶ See Figure 46. The exact address for the Espresso has been forgotten, but it appears to have occupied space between 670 and 680 Howe Street.

¹⁷⁷ Longden would buy out Ken Hole's share of the business in 1961, a welcome move that enabled the Holes to purchase their first house.

One of the most frequent visitors to the Espresso was teenage Don Thompson, who would often fill Langdon's role as piano player in exchange for a meal, and was a frequent member of the *ad hoc* evening groups that formed.

It was a very loose thing. It was a drop in. It wasn't a 'hire them for the weekend come and see them,' kind of thing. It was anybody who came ... Neild Longden was there all of the time running the place, and he was the piano player, a very good one. So that's where Don [Thompson] started sitting in with him and Don would use Ken's bass I think (Chris (Hole) Birdseye, August 15, 2013).

Oh I spent hundreds of hours in that place. With Neild Longden. I'd just go in and play the piano and they'd give me food for nothing. They wouldn't charge me for food, and then I'd just play the piano for an hour or so. That was a fantastic place. I remember countless times, because there would be sessions every night, and sometimes the sessions wouldn't start until 1 o'clock in the morning. Buddy Rich's band was in town once for a couple of weeks, and we played every night, but we didn't start until about 1:30 am. And we'd go home, and the sun would be coming up, you know. And that's when we'd finish. Because they wouldn't shut down until everybody left. It didn't matter. It was just like that, and all the guys in Buddy's band came down. Pat Labarbera, Don Menza and all these guys and they'd ... that's when I met Pat Labarbera (Don Thompson, February 26, 2013).

The emergence of the Espresso as a popular centre for downtown musicians to meet and engage in informal sessions following their paid gigs reduced the once unique late-night atmosphere at the Cellar to being simply one of an increasingly varied number of musical options. Though players such as Tony Clitheroe continued to return uptown to the Cellar for sessions and socialization, there was less incentive for established downtown musicians to engage with the scene at the Cellar. For newcomers such as Don Thompson, there were simply more playing opportunities to take advantage of.

The Cellar 1962–1964

Likely in response to the changing musical marketplace in Vancouver and the increased competition for both audiences and performers that occurred in the wake of the arrival of the Black Spot, the Inquisition, and the Espresso, the Cellar's activity in 1962 was rather low profile, and stuck largely to the presentation of local artists. In March 1962 however, the Cellar narrowly missed out on what would have been a significant booking—tenor saxophonist Dexter Gordon. Gordon was booked to play the club March 8th through 11th, with promotional material produced in support of these dates, and advertisements placed in the *Vancouver Sun* beginning on March 3, 1962.¹⁷⁸ Gordon, however, was not permitted entry to Canada, and the gig was cancelled at the last minute. While this cannot be confirmed, it appears that Gordon attempted to cross the border with his saxophone, yet without the paperwork which would have allowed him to take a paying engagement in Canada.¹⁷⁹ It appears that Gordon attempted to enter Canada on March 8th, the same date as his first advertised booking at the Cellar, as the *Vancouver Sun* advertisement on that day still featured Gordon (*Vancouver Sun*, Thursday, March 8, 1962, pg. 18), while the following day, March 9th, ran an advertisement for Conte Candoli, who happened to be in Vancouver at the time, and was booked in Gordon's stead (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, March 9, 1962, pg. 10).

Following the three-night stand by Candoli, the Cellar stuck largely to local groups for the remainder of 1962. The only significant exceptions to this policy were engagements by

¹⁷⁸ See Figure 47 as well as *Vancouver Sun*, Saturday, March 3, 1962, pg. 43.

¹⁷⁹ That the appropriate AFM and Canadian government paperwork was overlooked seems to have been standard practice for the American artists that played at the Cellar, though one would assume that those, such as Mingus, with high profile CBC engagements would have had to officially involve the union. Navigating such paperwork and the associated fees was one more way in which the CBC aided the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society.

vibraphonist Warren Chiasson, alto saxophonist Lee Konitz, and drummer Jimmy Lovelace.

Warren Chiasson, a Canadian, had grown up in Nova Scotia where he honed his musical talents in the Royal Artillery Band stationed in Halifax, and at Halifax's own co-operative jazz club, 777 Barrington Street (see chapter 8). Nearing the end of his military service in 1959, Chiasson found employment with George Shearing and relocated to New York City. In 1962, no longer with the Shearing band, Chiasson took a job in the orchestra for a touring theatrical production which was to be staged in Dawson City, Yukon. Through his association with fellow Nova Scotian Stan Perry, Chiasson was hired to play the Cellar between June 25th and June 28th, 1962, as he passed through Vancouver on his way to Dawson City.

In an attempt to make the Cellar premises more inviting to audiences, the club closed for remodelling between August 3rd and August 31st, 1962, re-opening over the Labour Day weekend and once again featuring Warren Chiasson, who was back in Vancouver on his way home to New York. Chiasson headlined from August 31st through September 16th, and was followed by alto saxophonist Lee Konitz, who was living in California at the time. Konitz performed from September 22nd through September 30th in a trio which included Tony Clitheroe and Stan Perry.

Since I was a newcomer to the bass I was listening to a lot of Percy Heath and Paul Chambers. If it wasn't for those two guys, I wouldn't have known what to do. So when Lee Konitz came up, I thought this was going to be kind of strange. Because I'd heard Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh years earlier when I was still in the UK, and they were doing a lot of stuff that was ... I thought "What is all that!" So, I didn't really know what to think about it when the gig started, but it got to be a hell of a lot of fun as the week went on. At least it was for me, it might not have been for Lee. It was for me ... (Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2012).

Following Konitz' engagement, the Cellar returned to presenting local musicians, relying heavily on saxophonist Dale Hillary, who headlined the club three weekends out of four in the month of October alone. As the original musicians who founded the Cellar matured, their availability to play at the Cellar for questionable financial returns began to take its toll. Many of the musicians, such as Tony Clitheroe, Dave Quarin, and Stan Perry, became quite active on the downtown scene, greatly reducing their availability at the Cellar. Others who had started families were compelled to take their day jobs more seriously, and some, like Al Neil, had begun to move on to other interests.

You see, I started working in the downtown clubs around 1959, and of course they were six night a week gigs. So there were fairly lengthy periods when I wouldn't be hanging out at the Cellar as I was beforehand. But every now and then something special would happen and I'd book off the gig at the club and go and do the Cellar ... you know, if somebody asked me to or something like that. I think a period of ... years elapsed ... when I was mostly at Isy's. Then we got fired, after the predictable conflict with Isy. And of course by that time the Cellar was just about done, and I was doing less formal things ... a lot of casuals, and at one point I was working the house band, as a matter of fact with Quarin, at this place in Chinatown. I can't remember the name of it. It might have been the Mandarin Gardens (Tony Clitheroe, August 27, 2013).

... when I was young, and the other people like me, when they were young, they didn't give a sweet pippy about the general public, they just wanted to go out and play, and so we got these places so that we could go out and play. We could play whatever we damn well pleased, you know. And we didn't have to be beholden to anyone else. But of course, as we get older, all our attitudes change and now we'll play anything. I played Tommy Hunter's show for a year, you know. In a country and western band. Toured with it and did a television show and everything else. Because it was money. Your values don't change ... but your, what's the word I'm thinking of, your priorities change a little bit. (Stan Perry, November 14, 2012).

The last available evidence for Cellar programming in 1962 reveals that the Jimmy Lovelace Trio performed from November 23–25th (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday November 17, 1962, pg. 30), though the Cellar did place some advertisements in December of 1962 which did not indicate

any particular performer. These generic Cellar ads also begin to advertise that ladies were offered free admission at the Cellar before 1 a.m., a move that was likely an attempt to make the Cellar a more attractive economic proposition than the Java Jazz or Inquisition for its youthful demographic.

The Cellar continued to increase its appeal to audiences in 1963 by beginning to announce in newspaper advertisements that no memberships were required for admission, marking the end of one of the Cellar's most distinctive features—its nature as a private members' club (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday, February 9th, 1963, pg. 18). Strangely, the September issue of *Coda* reported precisely the opposite state of affairs, stating that;

... the Cellar appears to be going downhill – it has changed its policy now to function as a private musician's club operating by subscription. For the sake of Dave Quarin and the others that have supported and guided what used to be the Mecca of the Vancouver scene it is hoped that a long needed transfusion of new blood will occur (*Coda*, September 1963, pg. 11).

As *Coda* was generally reporting events a month or more after they occurred, it is possible that prior to eliminating the membership policy the Cellar may have tried to become more strict about the membership requirement as a revenue stream, perhaps requiring payment (both membership and cover charge) from those regulars and musicians who had previously been granted admission for free.¹⁸⁰ Negative reception to a tightening of the original membership rules could then have led to the decision to remove the membership requirement entirely.

The year 1963 also marked a return to the presentation of short plays at the Cellar, this time advertised in the newspaper alongside the musical performance for the evening. It is unclear whether theatrical productions had been presented continually at the Cellar since the first such

¹⁸⁰ The recollections of musicians such as John Dawe and Tony Clitheroe are vague on this point, and Dave Quarin, the club manager, has refused all requests to participate in this project.

experiments in 1958, though it seems unlikely. In March, 1963, the Cellar presented both *The Red Sock* (March 1st and 2nd) and *Freddie* (March 8–9th and 15–16th), with both plays staged at 12:15 am, between the evening's musical sets (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, March 1, 1963, pg. 54 and Saturday, March 9, 1963, pg. 10). This again suggests that the Cellar was attempting to broaden its audience; by offering the play in the middle of the evening rather than in advance of the musical performance as had previously been the case. The Cellar executive may well have been hoping that the theatrical audience would choose to come early, and perhaps stay late.

In April the Cellar staged Edward Albee's *Zoo Story* (April 5–6th and 12–13th), and presented what appears to be the club's final theatrical presentation on June 25–26th, 1963, with a re-staging of *The Red Sock* (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday April 5, 1963, pg. 30, Saturday April 13, 1963, pg. 16, and Friday, June 25, 1963, pg. 4). At the same time that the Cellar began to revisit the staging of plays within the context of a jazz club, the recently opened Flat Five club also began to experiment with the idea, presenting *Around the World in 80 Seconds* in March, 1963. As the two clubs were sharing performers by this time, it is possible that the same individual(s) were responsible for the renewed theatrical activity at both venues.

The Cellar faced significant competition for its audience in early 1963 as the Inquisition presented Cal Tjader in February (*Vancouver Sun*, February 9, 1963, pg. 18), and both the Miles Davis Sextet (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday, March 9, 1963, pg. 10) and the Modern Jazz Quartet in April (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday, April 6, 1963, pg. 29). Isy's Supper Club presented such acts as Billy Eckstine, and the Cave began to advertise the Chris Gage Trio in addition to its featured entertainment (*Vancouver Sun*, Saturday, April 6, 1963, pg. 29). At the Cellar, the only recurring performer from the club's earlier years was guitarist Jim Kilburn, who headlined repeatedly,

often alongside vocalists Barry Dale, Doreen Williams, and Lyne McNeil. The appearance of vocalists with such frequency marks a further departure from the Cellar's previous operational model, and perhaps signals both an attempt to appeal to a wider audience, and a more limited pool of musicians from which to draw. Other local artists included saxophonist Claire Lawrence, a key member of the Black Spot and Flat Five clubs, saxophonist Glenn McDonald, the Mike Taylor Trio, and, on Sunday evenings, the larger ensembles of Ray Sikora and Bobby Hales. The only American artists advertised to play the Cellar in 1963 were Barney Kessel, who returned May 17 - 25 (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, May 10, 1963, pg. 50), Jimmy Lovelace who returned June 7-9 (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, June 7, 1963, pg. 22), and Freddie Schreiber, who performed on cello with his quartet August 16-17, 1963 (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, August 16, 1963, pg. 22).

... a lot of other places were springing up and siphoning off the [audience for jazz]. Vancouver was a pretty small potatoes kind of town, and there were only so many jazz patrons to go around. Even in the earlier days, we had a lot of months in there where patrons and patronage fell off to hardly anything. A lot of time we had to play for nothing down there, just to crack the nut for the rent (John Dawe, March 08, 2013).

The End of An Era

Though the details surrounding the eventual demise of the Cellar are murky, the club's management passed from Dave Quarin and the Cellar executive to entrepreneur Bill Wright sometime in late 1963. Whether the club was "sold" or simply changed management is unclear, though as no meeting of the executive or board-of-directors was called (John Dawe, Tony Clitheroe), it appears that a major breakdown in club operations had occurred by 1963. The first definitive evidence of Bill Wright's takeover of the club comes in September, 1963, through an advertisement in the *Vancouver Sun* for a performance by Donna Wright, Bill's wife, alongside

the Don Thompson Trio (*Vancouver Sun*, September 20, 1963, pg. 52). *Coda* however, reported that the club had changed hands as early as August of 1963, and that the Freddie Schreiber performance that month was under Wright's auspices.

The Cellar club is not closing after all...Bill Wright is the new backer and manager of the Cellar, and has shown himself interested in maintaining the modern music policy. A group with Freddy [sic] Schreiber (from San Francisco) on Cello [sic] played last month. Since then local jazz groups have been employed and also Wright's jazz singing wife (*Coda*, October 1963, pg. 8).

Ricci Quarin recalls husband Dave Quarin, formerly the Cellar's manager, needing to go out and work more frequently during this period, taking more jobs in the downtown clubs and on the CBC where he frequently appeared with both Don Thompson and Dave Robbins.

The last ad taken in the *Vancouver Sun* for the Cellar ran on November 15, 1963, and advertised "the exotic sounds" of the Clinton Solomon Quartet (*Vancouver Sun*, Friday, November 15, 1963, pg. 28). Solomon was Trinidadian, and his group played a mix of steel-pan and bongos along with a type of song and dance which would not previously have met the Cellar's standards for jazz performance (Gavin Walker, March 18th, 2013). Despite the lack of advertising, the Cellar apparently remained open for some months, and Tony Clitheroe recalls playing on what was likely the Cellar's final Sunday performance with the Ray Sikora Orchestra in December of 1963.

I think it's entirely possible that the last date that I'm aware of was on December 8, 1963. And Ray had his band in there, and I used to play with Ray's band, and I have it down as December 8th, which was a Sunday, and I have nothing else [for the Cellar] afterwards (Tony Clitheroe, March 17, 2013).

The December 1963 issue of *Coda* mentions both the guitar / vibraphone duo of Jim Kilburn and Ralph Dyck which performed at the Cellar in November 1963, as well as the news that pianist

Bud Glover, formerly of Victoria's Scene Club, had been hired on as something of a house rhythm section along with drummer Al Wiertz and bassist Ted Gawks (*Coda*, December 1963, pg. 13). No advertisements can confirm that this arrangement was finalized.

Finally, in March 1964, *Coda* correspondent Adrian Tanner reports that the Cellar had closed its doors in February, 1964.

It may be a symptom of something, I don't know what, but the Cellar died quietly last month. I hate to report this, for more than the obvious reason that the Cellar was one of the best centres for jazz around here in its day. There is also the uncomfortable knowledge that Vancouver jazz clubs have a tendency to die, but refuse to lie down. By the time you read this it may be open again, but I doubt it.

In its heyday around 1957-1958 the Cellar was the avant-garde music centre of Vancouver. Week after week the crowds would pack in to hear local cats battle it out in cutting contests, or hear the truly fantastic sounds of some of the then-unknown names that were being brought in from San Francisco and Los Angeles. One group had Harold Land, Scott LaFaro, Elmo Hope and Lennie McBrowne. Art Pepper played there three times. In 1957 Don Cherry brought in a group. Later he convinced manager Dave Quarin to let him come up with a group led by an absolute unknown—Ornette Coleman. Billy Higgins and Don Payne were also in the group. Many other greats played there—either as booked stars, or as sit-ins Lee Konitz, Paul Gonsalves, Herb Jeffries, Shorty Rodgers, The Montgomeries, Joe Gordon, Barney Kessel, and more. In 1961 Charles Mingus was there, and after one particularly powerful solo, leaped into the audience and started to threaten a B.C. Lions football player with a bathroom plunger. I guess its OK for the Cellar to close now. There aren't those sort of things happening anymore (*Coda*, March 1964, pg. 10).

Minor inaccuracies aside, this short eulogy neatly encapsulates the place and importance of the Cellar both within the musical life of Vancouver and in one of the most intense periods in the development of jazz. For a good many years, the Cellar had not simply been the vital centre of Vancouver's jazz scene, it had, in many ways been *the* jazz scene itself. By 1964 however, its role had largely been assumed by the Flat Five club on Broadway near Alma Avenue in the West End, which through 1962 and 1963 had become the more significant club.

Oh, god, you know [the Cellar] ... it seemed to me it suffered a death, and then all of a sudden it started chugging along. It kept going, but it wasn't the hard-core, this-is-where-everyone-goes-when-they-finish-their-gigs kind of place that it used to be. And our club had taken that position. We had lots of musicians who were passing through come to the club, and playing or just hanging out, which was always pleasing. I don't really know when the Cellar closed. It just sort of lingered and lingered, you know? They weren't advertising that many people, and somehow they were scrambling to get people to play there and, I guess one day the doors didn't open, but I couldn't tell you when (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).

As previously mentioned, the reasons behind the decline of the Cellar were varied, and included both the rise of alternate music venues and complementary scenes such as that surrounding the Black Spot / Flat Five, the increasing popularity of rock and roll, and the maturation of core Cellar members, many of whom had been closely associated with the club since its precursor, the Wailhouse, in 1955.

It wore itself out. When we started out, we were real rank amateurs, that was sure. And seven years later we, some of us, were starting to play awfully damn good. And a lot of guys who wanted to play jazz also wanted to start getting out and doing studio work and nightclub work ... they wanted the money. They had decided to become professionals, and some of us did not go that way. And so, there was not a lot of guys available to play gigs any more on the weekends. Getting the picture? I mean, when Dale [Hillary] and I went in [to the Cellar] in October [1962], we couldn't find a rhythm section! It was impossible. Everybody was working other gigs. Better paying gigs elsewhere at downtown clubs. So everybody had ... the musical skills had escalated like crazy, and some of the people around the Cellar were getting offered really good gigs in other bands around town. Commercial bands. Commercial gigs. And everybody wanted to make a living, so ... you know, it's pretty simple. The place no longer had a group of musicians there to keep supporting the club. They just played down there, maybe after another gig and play later on. [And] we'd all grown up a bit, in some ways. Everybody was starting to mature a bit and get other ideas.

P.J. was off all the time, he was in and out and back in Toronto, and doing some other gigs. And Ray Sikora was down in LA a lot, and Dick Forrest and those other guys were doing other gigs. I know in 1961 I wasn't available to do a whole lot of gigs, and neither was a whole bunch of us. We landed a steady gig in a big band. And a steady gig was unusual for a 14 - 15 piece band, and we were working every night until 1 o'clock. So we weren't available either to go down there and play. We'd go down after the gig was over, maybe. But, you know. Professionalism

reared its ugly head. (John Dawe, January 28, 2013).

John Dawe recalls being particularly burnt out on the realities of the music business after having worked the summer of 1962 playing commercially in a dance band at the resort town of Sylvan Lake, Alberta.

When we got back from that summer gig [in 1962] around Labour Day [and] I had no incentive to play any more at all, and I hung my horn up and I didn't hang around at the Cellar. I played a gig there in October [1962] with Dale Hillary, and that was the last I ever played there ... one of the main factors, [was that] the main group of players down there started to lose interest in it. The main body of players started to lose interest in the place. After Labour Day [1962], a whole bunch of us just wanted to get the hell out of music (John Dawe, January 28, 2013).

Dave was trying his best to keep that place open ... but quite a few of us had been on the same gig all summer, June, July and August, and when we got back into town, most of us were so fed up with the music business or anything to do with it, that when we got back into town in September of 1962, a lot of us didn't even go near the club. We were just fed up, and we went out and started to look for day gigs. It was all over, the fun was over. You know, we'd been working a commercial dance gig all summer and there were hardly any jazz musicians left in town to even play at the place during the time that we were all out of town, and when we came back the place had really disintegrated. Looked like it had fallen apart, and none of us seemed to care. We'd lost interest.

By the time I'd been in music for so many years, I found that most of the music that really good players around town were doing didn't interest me in the least. I mean, I didn't want to work at the Cave, or Isy's, and back up a chorus line, or back up a comedian. Or you know, some really bad acts. Which is what a lot of really good musicians are relegated to doing ... they're making good money at it. But to me, I'd sooner work a day gig then do that (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

Dawe dropped out of music shortly thereafter, acquiring chef's training and finding employment within the kitchens of the Vancouver General Hospital. Not wanting to deal with the intensive practice required to maintain his chops on trumpet, Dawe switched to valve trombone and played around "for a few years here and there, nothing serious" (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

With some musicians drifting away from the Cellar entirely, and others pressed for time due to other playing commitments, it became hard to find musicians able to play at the Cellar, a situation made clear both by Jim Kilburn's repeated appearances through 1962 and 1963, as well as the Cellar's regular use of younger players more closely associated with the Black Spot and Flat Five clubs. At the same time, musicians such as Al Neil, Glenn McDonald, Don Thompson, and P.J. Perry took work at the Flat Five, essentially performing in competition with the offerings at the Cellar. High profile acts at the Inquisition Coffee House such as Miles Davis, Cannonball Adderly, the Montgomery Brothers, and the Modern Jazz Quartet placed additional pressure on the available audience for jazz on any given weekend in Vancouver, though the economic realities of such high profile bookings ultimately led to Howie Bateman's closing of the Inquisition in December 1963, passing the venue on to Ken Hole, who briefly reopened it as The End (*Vancouver Sun*, December 20, 1963, pg. 20 and Chris (Hole) Birdseye, January 28, 2013).

... there were a lot of problems, and Elvis Presley had reared his head, and all the people that we'd regarded as our staunch fans at the Cellar all of a sudden departed like rats off a sinking ship and became rock and roll fans (Tony Clitheroe, November 29, 2012).¹⁸¹

It worked for a while, I guess. Then, while I was still working at Western Music and selling records, Elvis Presley came along, and then the Beatles, and I knew right then and there that things were changing, and that ... I didn't know that it would go down so badly as it has, but yeah ...[rock was more popular] and a new generation of younger people, coming up and they were pretty well hypnotized by Elvis Presley ... and then the Beatles and all that stuff ... and then it all turned into a generational thing, more than anything, I think. The same thing happened with us and we did the same thing to the Dixieland players. We had the same kind of thing going on where we started playing swing and, well, bebop later, but we started putting down the figs ... the mouldy figs, and stuff like that. Although ... we learned not to put it down, and even be willing to play it, commercially and

¹⁸¹ Elvis Presley had actually played Vancouver much earlier, on August 31, 1957 at Empire Stadium. It is possible that Clitheroe is thinking of the Beatles, who played Empire Stadium on August 22, 1964, though it is more likely that he is simply making a general point about the popularity of rock and roll at the time.

wherever. But yeah, when I was in Western Music store I could see that things weren't going very well for the sale of jazz. Jazz records were like special orders at the music store. And classical music was still pretty good, though. They're [classical fans] loyal and true (Jim Johnson, August 14, 2013).

No people. Rock and roll. What's his name ... Elvis. The Beatles. There was no money and there was no up and coming jazz musicians, really. They were all going with the crowd [toward rock] so ... (Ricci Quarin, August 29, 2013).

I was probably one of the first in the early 1960s, when I saw things slowing down, to realize that we were coming to an end. I think it was about the era of Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*, or something. A similar era, in any case, to the Rolling Stones and the Beatles coming in, just that history ... you could say that right across the country the jazz, except for some isolated pockets, was finished (Al Neil, August 14, 2013).

While not the death of jazz itself, the mid-1960s did represent a period of major reduction in the number of venues which presented jazz on a regular basis in Vancouver, and an end to co-operative ventures such as the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society (Cellar) and the Contemporary Jazz Society (Black Spot / Flat Five). Though the Flat Five did manage to outlive the Cellar which closed in February 1964, the Contemporary Jazz Society voted to sell the club in the summer of 1964. The Flat Five then passed to Dave and Karen Parkin who continued to operate it as a jazz club, though one with a more conventionally structured business model. In the summer of 1965 the club was sold once again, this time to Graham and Gloria Humphries who renamed it the Blue Horn. The venue closed its doors for good at the end of 1965.

Conclusion

The success of the Cellar and its traction within the city led to a multiplicity of jazz venues: The Black Spot and Flat Five which were modelled after the Cellar and served a similar purpose for a slightly younger generation of musicians, but also the Espresso Coffee House, the

Inquisition, and high profile jazz presentations at mainstream night clubs and concert venues. This sudden proliferation of venues for the performance of jazz led to a fracturing of the scene over multiple sites—an increase in overall jazz activity, but a weakening of the bonds that linked such activity to certain specific places. As well, original members of the Cellar club were growing older and becoming distracted by other life events. Some were finding musical success and were no longer available to play at the Cellar on a regular basis, others were distancing themselves from music in order to raise families, and some had become disillusioned with the music business entirely. The bonds formed by regular shared experience on the scene were thereby weakened, and this lessening of scenic energy coupled with an increased competition for audience members and the resultant economic pressure, significantly diminished the Cellar's position on the Vancouver jazz scene. As the Cellar-based scene began to hold less relevance for those that had once participated in it, this, along with the popular emergence of rock and roll, made the scene a less alluring prospect for those on the outside, or periphery of scenic activity (the general audience). When combined, these conditions led to a sort of scenic entropy, and the eventual dissolution of the Cellar. For a time, the scene based out of the Flat Five was able to continue, but it too soon succumbed to the widespread cultural shift of the 1960s which tilted countercultural activity away from jazz, and jazzed-based expression, toward other forms of popular culture.¹⁸²

¹⁸² Rock and roll, but also free jazz and similar musical experimentation exemplified by later Vancouver-based organizations such as the Sound Gallery and Intermedia in the mid-1960s.

Chapter Eight

Co-ops from Coast to Coast

Edmonton—The Yardbird Suite

In March 1957, the Yardbird Suite opened its doors in Edmonton, Alberta. The brainchild of local drummer Terry Hawkeye,¹⁸³ the club was modelled after the Cellar in Vancouver, a venue which Hawkeye had visited some months earlier (see Figures 53–55). Excited by what he saw developing in Vancouver, Hawkeye recruited several other Edmonton musicians who were interested in jazz, and began to hunt for a suitable location (Slevinsky, 2007).

...well the driving force person was Terry Hawkeye. All of those people [I mentioned] were in the Ron Repka big band, except for Neil Gunn. And they were all aspiring musicians. And the idea, the impetus behind the whole idea was Terry Hawkeye, who said “Let’s do this!” and they all jumped in, but it was his ambition to do this, to make the Yardbird Suite. And to call it the Yardbird Suite, and he designed the first logo for the Yardbird Suite. He was an artist, among other things. Not the present logo, but it was on the wall of the original location where there were a lot of distinguished signatures of people that had played there. [Hawkeye] was a blinkers-on-one-single-minded-purpose jazz musician. But he knew that he wanted to make this happen, and just recruited people into doing whatever the hell they had to do. And he also got out the hammer and nails. These guys physically built the place (Tommy Banks, February 8, 2013).

Aided by saxophonists Ray and Zen Magus, bassists Gary Nelson and Ron Repka, and jazz enthusiast Neil Gunn, a space was rented in the basement of 10444 82nd Avenue. Again much like the Cellar, the location was largely free from concerns regarding excess noise as the upper

¹⁸³ Hawkeye (b. 1937) had been interested in jazz for some years, and it is rumoured that he travelled to California to take some lessons with Shelly Manne. Though this cannot be definitively proven, it would help to explain his appearance at the Cellar—travelling up the West Coast to Vancouver, and then over the Rockies back to Edmonton. In the summer of 1957, he and fellow Edmontonian Dale Hillary were both chosen to attend the Lenox School of Jazz, where he played in a small ensemble led by Ray Brown (jazzdiscography.com/Lenox/1957prog.htm). In 1959, he was part of the MINC club in Toronto.

floors of the building were occupied by a clothing store, and the club's basement space was shared with the Jacobs Sheen Morris School of Music (Tommy Banks, February 8, 2013).

Those guys [the Edmonton guys] went out and found a little space with a back alley entrance which they rented and they went out and scrounged chesterfields. They actually built the tables in the club. They went and bought a bunch of plywood and those metal screw-on legs and put them together to make the tables. They built a little stage to put the piano on ... they did it all by themselves (Tommy Banks, February 8, 2013).

Edmonton during the late 1950s was experiencing something of an economic boom, and a wide variety of nightclubs and other entertainment venues hired bands of differing sizes. Though rarely offering jazz, these establishments nonetheless provided steady employment for the city's musicians, the majority of whom would congregate at the Yardbird Suite late at night.

Well Edmonton was going through one of its various booms. Edmonton has had lots of booms and busts and it was going through one of those, and there were a lot of clubs here, and a lot of music, and they were hiring musicians. They were all very busy ... And [the Yardbird] let all the musicians in Edmonton, of which there were a lot, at that time, know that this was happening, and everybody finished their commercial gigs that they were working to make a living, and converged on the Yardbird Suite on that opening night (Tommy Banks, February 8, 2013).

The founding musicians split the rent for the space, though the idea proved so popular that with a modest door charge the after-hours venue quickly became self-sufficient. Unlike the Cellar in Vancouver, the Yardbird did not possess a business licence, and did not seek to establish a high profile, at least initially. As with the Cellar, the Yardbird operated as a private members' venue which provided membership cards and required a small fee.

Initially, the Yardbird was only open on Saturday nights, and unlike the Cellar did not offer a regular program of late evening sets followed by more informal sessions. Rather, the Yardbird initially operated exclusively as an after-hours venue.

Nobody got paid scale for playing at the Yardbird Suite initially, because it was an after hours ... its important to remember what the reason [for the club was]. The reason the place was put together by seven guys, was to have a place to play the music that we wanted to play, that they wanted to play, after they had finished playing the music that they had to play. Until midnight we played the music that we had to play to make a living, you know, commercial music. To play jazz, we needed a place with a piano and that was it. And that could sustain its rent, so that was the whole reason, was having a place to play. So there was nobody ... nobody was ever paid to play at the Saturday night sessions, ever (Tommy Banks, February 8, 2013).

Programming soon expanded to include Sundays, when concerts were presented which featured groups drawn from the Yardbird's membership. The remainder of the week the Yardbird remained closed, though members were able to use the space to practice and rehearse. During its informal beginnings, the Yardbird did no advertising, and rather relied on mailings to its membership to spread information on what was happening at the space. As the Yardbird matured into staging more formal concerts, the events were listed in the *Edmonton Journal's* concert listings, but the club refrained from paying for formal advertisements.

The club was operated entirely by the members on a volunteer basis, and, much like the Cellar, memberships were broken into two categories—the executive members who bore some financial risk and were eligible to use the space throughout the week, and social members who formed the bulk of the audience.

It was stupid, but they were called the executive, which meant that you had the privilege of cleaning the toilets when it was your turn, and sweeping out the floors, and getting your girlfriend to run the bar, as it was called, though it served coke and coffee. Or the door. Those jobs were meted out on a rotation basis. My partner Phil Shragge and I became part of what was called, absurdly, the executive, I think maybe less than a year after it opened (Tommy Banks, February 8, 2013).

To help defer costs, the Yardbird Suite offered a limited menu of soft drinks and coffee while in its original 82nd Avenue location. In 1959 when the club temporarily relocated to 106th Avenue

and took over the premises of what had been the Club Anton, the menu was expanded considerably. Now in possession of a full kitchen, the Yardbird began to offer sandwiches, burgers, and salads—simple food able to be quickly prepared by a kitchen staff comprised of musicians, and whichever friends could be persuaded to help out. It was also in 1959 that word of the Yardbird Suite reached *Coda* magazine, which included a brief news section for Edmonton for the first time in July, 1959.

“The Yardbird Suite” is a jazz club formed over two years ago by Edmonton musicians desirous of a chance to play jazz. Since January of 1957 the club has been open every Saturday and Sunday evening at their premises located at 10443 82nd Street. The Saturday sessions, which are of an informal nature, start at midnight and have been known to go on well after dawn has broken. The Sunday show takes the form of a concert. Currently playing there are Tom Banks (pno), Dale Hillary (alto), Phil Shragge (dms). The sessions are further highlighted by the excellent singing of Mark Cohen. Terry Hawkeye and Ken Chaney, now in Toronto and George Urson (dms), now in Vancouver, were amongst the founding members (*Coda*, July 1959, pg. 7).

Between 1957 and 1965, the Yardbird was forced to move locations three times—from its original location on 82nd Avenue to 106th Street, back briefly to 82nd, and then finally to 9810 Jasper Avenue where it replaced The Steak Loft (Miller 2001, 216). Still entirely volunteer driven, the Yardbird began to operate with more frequency, open as many as five nights a week to local performers and regional Canadian jazz artists such as P.J. Perry, Jerry Fuller, and the nomadic Dale Hillary. In 1961 a band billed as the Vancouver Jazz Quintet played an engagement in Calgary, and it is entirely possible that they would have played the Yardbird in Edmonton as well (*Coda*, October 1961, pg. 8). Following a brief closure, the Yardbird reopened in 1965 in a converted garage at the corner of 102nd and 81st Avenues, and it was in this location

that the Yardbird began to expand its offerings to include poetry and theatrical presentations, and where high profile American performers began to be heard (yardbirdsuite.com, 2013).

...the club began to expand the presentation of things, including very serious concerts and they of course were paid, and everyone was paid quite well for playing there. But never at the Saturday night sessions... The union here understood what the place was, and said that it was none of their business. They weren't interested in it ... until the Yardbird started presenting concerts. That was a different story, and when they did that ... first of all the initial sessions were only on Saturday. And then Friday and Saturday nights, and then they started a Sunday concert series. And then they started doing concerts of chamber music, and classical guitar music, and plays, and poetry readings and all of this stuff, as well as jazz, on other days of the week. Wherever there was a formal presentation of something, those people were all paid (Tommy Banks, February 8, 2013).

Though short-lived, this incarnation of the Yardbird Suite hosted such notables as Zoot Sims and Phil Woods before closing its doors in 1967. Though the Yardbird Suite would reopen in 1973 under the auspices of the Edmonton Jazz Society, 1967 marked the end of the space as a co-operative endeavour between like-minded jazz musicians. The Yardbird Suite remains a vital cultural institution to this day, and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2007. It remains the only volunteer run, not-for-profit jazz club in Canada.

Calgary—The Foggy Manor Club

Though comparatively little historical detail is available for Calgary's Foggy Manor Club, it appears that sometime in the fall of 1957 a Calgary jazz co-operative was organized (Hudak 2002, 5), likely prompted by the activities in Vancouver (1956) and Edmonton (1957). In 1959 *Coda* including a brief mention of the Calgary Club in a notice advertising the upcoming Banff Jazz Festival.

Calgary Musicians have got together and formed a club similar to the Minc and the

Yardbird Suite. Called the Foggy Manor Jazz Society they meet at 210A 8th Ave. S.E., Calgary, but we have no further details at time of going to press (*Coda*, July 1959, pg 7).¹⁸⁴

Named the Foggy Manor due to the amount of cigarette smoke which would accumulate in the unventilated room, the club occupied the basement of a building on 8th Ave SE which may originally have housed the Utopia Club, a meeting place for black railway workers in Calgary (Hudak 2002, 5). Established by a not-for-profit jazz society which went by the same name, the Foggy Manor operated much in the same manner as the Black Spot, Cellar, and Yardbird Suite, in that it was a private members' club open only to those in possession of a membership card, along with a limited number of guests. Unlike the Cellar and Yardbird, it appears that at the Foggy Manor musicians were allowed to enter free of charge while others paid a one dollar admission, perhaps as the club was drawing on a much more limited pool of players and wanted to ensure as wide an array of talent as possible for the late night sessions (Somers 1988, 15).¹⁸⁵

Drawing on a mix of older, established players from the city's dance-bands and the local military band, as well as younger, less competent players motivated by an interest in bebop, the Foggy Manor Club was nearly an overnight sensation when it opened in 1957.¹⁸⁶

We were playing once a week in a militia band at Mewata Armouries ... after the practice, every week four or five of us would talk for hours about this new jazz and finding a place to play it (Fred Wah in Somers 1988, 16).

¹⁸⁴ Foggy Manor apparently had a different location, also a basement space, when it opened in 1957 and was forced to relocate to the 8th ave SE location in the Spring of 1958 (Somers 1988, 14).

¹⁸⁵ As the Calgary based Lord Strathcona Regiment included an army band during this period it is likely that at least some members of the Foggy Manor Club were drawn from its ranks, much as was the case in Halifax, with the 777 Barrington Street club.

¹⁸⁶ The Canadian military unit known as Lord Strathcona's Horse had a military band stationed with the regiment in Calgary during this period.

The Foggy Manor club seems to have relied almost exclusively on local Calgary musicians, which, in a town as small as Calgary during the period, must have been something of a limited pool. Musicians such as Dale Hillary, Terry Hawkeye, and Tommy Banks made frequent though irregular appearances from Edmonton, with ex-Calgarian Banks leading and writing arrangements for the Knights of the Manor; a big band that frequently played at the club (Somers 1988, 15). In 1958 the Foggy Manor relocated from their original basement space to another, slightly larger one, further along the same street. In 1961 the Foggy Manor Club welcomed the Vancouver Jazz Quintet to this new space and the engagement was considered something of a musical highpoint for the venue.

This past weekend, Foggy Manor Jazz Society spotlighted the Vancouver Jazz Quintet.¹⁸⁷ This group is about the most exciting I have heard here in a very long time, with the possible exception of Elmer Gill's own group that was here about 2 summers ago. The VJQ is comprised of five people who are young in age, but a lot older in their attitude and approach to music. The group plays all the modern hard jazz sounds, but, though they copy the themes, there is individuality in all the choruses...Trumpet, baritone, piano, bass, and drums all seem to to feel each other and work together to the same end...and they all appear to have a ball while playing. This is particularly obvious between the bass player and the drummer ... (*Coda*, October 1961, pg. 8).

The Foggy Manor's core group appears to have been comprised of pianist Pete Martlinger, bassist Ray Mah, trumpeter Follie Foss, jazz enthusiast Morris "Moe" Levinson, and drummer Shelly Gjertsen. Martlinger, Mah, and Gjertsen seem to have acted as the house band much of the time, though little else is known about these players.

¹⁸⁷ A private recording provided by Don Thompson and marked Vancouver Jazz Quintet 1962 lists Peter Dyksman (bass), Dale Hillary (saxophone), Ray Sikora (trombone), Don Thompson (bass), and Jerry Fuller (drums). While no names are used in this *Coda* announcement, the review does mention that the bass player was from Holland and the drummer from Halifax, so there is a good chance that this version of the group was comprised of: Peter Dyksman (bass), Stan Perry (drums), Don Thompson (piano), possibly John Dawe (trumpet) with baritone saxophone (unknown) instead of trombone.

In November of 1960, E. “Red” Ockwell who edited the Foggy Manor Club’s newsletter wrote to *Coda* that;

The jazz scene [in Calgary] is centred around the Foggy Manor Jazz Society - an after-hours spot. Foggy has a varied history - which is probably duplicate of most jazz clubs on the American continent. Most of them have solved their problems - Foggy has yet to find a format which is satisfactory to musicians and public alike. Starting out in a hole as a musicians after-hours club - was a small success practically over night. Musicians who hadn’t seen each other for years suddenly found themselves shoulder to shoulder - playing - talking - or sharing a jug. Concerts were organized - arrangers and little and big bands sprung up like jack-rabbits for concerts - but after 3 years, the enthusiasm has gone. Maybe everyone has heard everybody else - maybe there’s no sparkplug to lead the way - whatever it is that’s needed, it had better come along soon (*Coda*, November 1960, pg. 7).

In 1961 *Coda* reported a change in management as well as plans to expand the club’s programming to include folk singers, perhaps both indications that club was having a hard time financially. Though few details are available, it appears that the club closed for good in late 1962 only to be reopened by John Uren as The Depression coffee house in September, 1963.¹⁸⁸ As the Depression, the club would be one of the first venues to hire young Joni Anderson, soon to be known as Joni Mitchell (jonimitchell.com, 2014).

Halifax—Jazz Unlimited

While the Black Spot / Flat Five in Vancouver, Yardbird Suite in Edmonton, and Foggy Manor clubs in Calgary were all directly influenced by the pioneering efforts of the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society in establishing their co-operative jazz spaces, a group of young musicians in Halifax embarked in isolation on a similar project in 1957. The post-war years had seen the formation of numerous military bands in Canada, three of which—The Black Watch,

¹⁸⁸ Uren rented the space complete with the club’s stage, furniture, espresso machine, and library of beat literature still in place (jonimitchell.com, 2014).

Stadacona, and Royal Canadian Artillery—were stationed in Halifax and became a breeding ground for young musical talent in the area. These young players received steady pay, exceptional musical training, time to practice, and access to like-minded peers.

They'd only actually started having army bands about 10 years earlier. Post World War Two. So what they did was they went to Europe and hired all these experienced musicians, many of whom were in their forties. They told them to come to Canada, get paid, get a pension, become a citizen ... all this stuff... these guys were good musicians. In a fifty-five piece band there were twenty-eight Dutchmen, and there were only eight Canadians in the band. And they had to get some more Canadians ... Warren Chiasson was one of them. So they gave me an interview with Ken Elloway, the conductor of the Royal Canadian Artillery band, and he said that they would take me. It was sort of like getting a gig with Duke Ellington or something, in comparison to the level that I was at. It was crazy. The next thing I know I'm in the band. And there was a guy named John Schalkwijk, an older Dutch guy who was playing third clarinet, and his job was to teach me. I was not allowed to play a note in rehearsal for two weeks. I had to sit there and watch the music and watch John play it. I was not allowed to make one noise for two weeks, and then I was allowed to work on little parts, and I'd play these four bars and then lay out, and then these four bars [...] (Don Palmer April 13, 2011).

While many of the older musicians considered employment in the military bands to be a career choice, several of the younger players inducted in the 1950s harboured ambitions of playing jazz. In addition to players such as Don Palmer (saxophone), Warren Chiasson (vibes), George Carroll (drums), Dick Crowe (piano), Bob Mercer (guitar), Ron "Moose" Maas (saxophone), Cy True (saxophone), Frank Ridgeway (trumpet), and Keith Jollimore (saxophone), who were employed in Halifax's various military bands, other young players such as Ernie Fong (piano), Stan Perry (drums), David Caldwell (saxophone), Charles Frederick Pearson "Skip" Beckwith (bass), Don Vickery (drums) Glen Sarty (piano), and vocalist Pat LaCroix were as well actively seeking an outlet for their developing interest in jazz.

Halifax was a relatively small urban centre with a limited selection of musical venues, and younger players often found themselves unable to find work in the city's few dance bands and jazz orchestras as the available positions had long been held by other more established local players.¹⁸⁹ Seeking places to play, this group of young jazz musicians sought out fraternity house parties at nearby Dalhousie University, or made the hour and half drive out of town to the Shore Club to host jam sessions. The risks of such a lengthy drive at night on the winter roads prompted the group to try renting space at a local hotel, but the predictable issues with noise soon rendered that idea unfeasible. Sometime in 1957, the core group of these young players met at the Nova Scotian Hotel adjacent to the Halifax railway station for what would turn out to be the inaugural meeting of the Halifax Jazz Society.¹⁹⁰ Joined by supporters Don Warner, leader of the area's most famous dance-band, and Ron Roberts, local radio disc-jockey, the group decided to search for a space in which to operate a club for their musical activities.

Space was soon located at 777 Barrington Street in the basement of what had once been the Parish hall for nearby St. Patrick's church. Located near Cornwallis Street in the city's north end, the space was conveniently situated between the Halifax armoury and the Stadacona Naval base. During World War Two, the building had housed a dancehall known as the Silver Slipper (Miller 2001, 180), a venue so famous for the servicemens' fights that occurred there that it was known colloquially as the "bucket of blood." Though the basement jazz room would enjoy a more genteel tenure, it was often referred to by this older nickname.¹⁹¹ Known officially as Jazz

¹⁸⁹ The most famous of these were the bands of trumpeters Don Warner, and Peter Power.

¹⁹⁰ It seems that at some point the Halifax Jazz Society was officially incorporated as a not-for-profit organization (see Figure 56).

¹⁹¹ As late the 2000s, some members of this jazz co-op continued to refer to it as the bucket of blood.

Unlimited, the venue was most popularly referred to by its address (777 Barrington Street) and it is by this name that it is perhaps best known, though local newspaper reports referred to the space variously as 777 Barrington Street, Jazz Unlimited, and The Jazz Room, which was the club's name as it appeared on membership cards.¹⁹²

The club operated on a co-operative basis much as the Cellar and the Yardbird Suite, with the musicians themselves chipping in to construct the bandstand, tables, chairs, sound system, and other necessary fixtures. Pianist, photographer, and artist Ernie Fong was one of the members chiefly responsible for these renovations, and also provided the Jazz Unlimited stage banner.

Ernie Fong did the heavy lifting [in getting the club together]. He was a jack of all trades, and he played a bit of trumpet and a bit of piano and a bit of drums, and this, that, and the other thing. But we were all looking for a place to play, and Ernie had the connections ... I shouldn't say connections, but I guess, the business sense to ... he rented the place, and he got it for us. As I recall. Remember it's a long time ago. So sometimes my memory is a bit sketchy. But he basically was the mover for us. The rest of us did a little bit of painting and moving furniture and stuff like that (Stan Perry, November 14, 2013).

Jazz enthusiast Buddy Burke was brought on as the club's *de facto* manager, and soon moved into an apartment upstairs from the space. Burke was responsible for ensuring that the rent was paid, the venue was cleaned, and that the musicians could gain access to the space when needed as, while the venue was only open to the public on Sunday nights, it was available the rest of the week for informal rehearsals and sessions.

Sunday was the club's most lucrative evening, as the Lord's Day Act greatly limited the types of businesses permitted to remain open on Sunday. As a not-for-profit private members' club

¹⁹² Membership cards for the space bore the name The Jazz Room, though the club was never referred to as such by any of the subjects interviewed. See Figure 56.

which therefore skirted the provisions of the law, 777 Barrington Street was essentially the only option for those seeking for Sunday evening entertainment.

On Sunday night there was nothing in town. No movies, no places to go, nothing to do. So on Sunday nights we had jam sessions. They were somewhat organized. You know, we'd present a trio, quintet, big band, and guys would work on things to play and we'd charge seventy-five cents to get in. And that's how we paid the rent (Don Palmer, April 13, 2011).

The club became popular as word of its existence spread, and those musicians not playing on a given evening would be tasked with taking the door charges, and with selling potato chips and bottled soda, much of which was used as mixer for the alcohol smuggled in by patrons. These revenue streams enabled the club to remain in operation, and the venue also provided an opportunity for the musicians to play for an audience. As the crowds got larger, it was sometimes possible to pay the bands as well as covering operating expenses from the proceeds brought in at the door.

There were a lot of jam sessions, and advertising people were pitching in to make up posters for the club, and word was really getting around. We took some money at the door, and found some way to pay [for things]. I guess Buddy Burke took care of that. I remember long phalanxes of tenor players lining up to take a chorus. That was kind of fun.

Halifax was really happening, and people were really into the music. Because we had our records, and our records were giving us a lot of information. There were three bands, there was the Navy band, the Black Watch band, and the Royal Canadian Artillery band, which I was a part of. Now the Navy band had done trips right around, and into the States, and stopped at a lot of ports in the L.A. area at the time when a lot of West Coast jazz was being played. Shelly Manne, Bud Shank, Chet Baker, Art Pepper ... and the drummer, George Carroll, had sat in with a lot of these people. So he had the ego that provided him with a germinating influence on the rhythm section. So all these nice forces were happening. You know I'd done my studying a lot, and I was bringing something new to it. The rhythm section ... Roy Eastman was playing terrific bass, and everybody was pitching in. It was a great time (Warren Chiasson, July 19, 2013).

Though the vast majority of the groups that played 777 Barrington Street were drawn from local musicians who gained valuable experience forming and leading groups on the weekend, visiting jazz artists that played Halifax's larger venues would at times make their way down to the jazz club for informal sessions. Perhaps most famously, in 1958 Lionel Hampton made a guest appearance at 777 Barrington Street along with pianist Oscar Denard, playing the evening with guitarist Bob Mercer, bassist Roy Eastman, and drummer George Carroll (warrenchiasson.com, 2014).

It was a good time...and we had lots of guys coming in ... Lionel Hampton. The [Hampton] band played all night [at 777] and we put them on the bus in the morning. Lots of all night sessions, and you never knew if someone was going to show up, or what...It was a good ride. And it was all free. It wasn't money, money, money, it was just a free ride. Everyone was pleased just to have a place to jam (Charles "Bud" Burke, March 13, 2014).

In addition to the odd visiting American star who dropped in after playing the Halifax Forum for an evening's session, aspiring jazz artists from around the Maritimes would make the trek to 777 Barrington Street both to listen and to play. One of the more popular spots in Halifax amongst the younger demographic, 777 Barrington Street drew young artists from outside the jazz scene as well, including a young Denny Doherty who was a regular fixture at the club before forming The Colonials, with Pat LaCroix. The acoustic folk group changed their name to the Halifax III and enjoyed brief success before their dissolution led Doherty to a connection with Cass Elliot which would ultimately result in the formation of The Mamas and the Papas in 1965.

Owing largely to the experience and confidence gained through their association with 777 Barrington Street, 1958–1960 saw a minor exodus of the club's core players as they sought to expand their jazz ambitions beyond the limited opportunities present in Halifax. In 1958, multi-

instrumentalist Warren Chiasson (piano, vibraphone, trombone) lucked into an audition for George Shearing while on leave in New York City, landing the position of vibraphonist in Shearing's quintet. Though still in the army, Chiasson was able to secure an early release on compassionate grounds as it could be shown that employment with Shearing would better him both musically and financially. It was also helpful to his cause that a friend of the Royal Canadian Artillery band director was simultaneously seeking admission to the band on trombone, a position which Chiasson occupied (Don Palmer, April 11, 2012). In July 1959, Chiasson joined the Shearing band at the Newport Jazz Festival, the first engagement in an association which would last some three years.

Buoyed by Warren Chiasson's success in New York, saxophonist Don Palmer left Halifax for New York city in the fall of 1959 where between 1959-1964 he studied jazz and improvisation with Lee Konitz and Lennie Tristano, as well as arranging with Hal Overton and flute with Harold Bennett. The skills Palmer had developed playing with the Royal Canadian Artillery band helped him enormously in New York, where his ability to sight read earned him a reputation as a reliable and capable replacement player. Perhaps best known for his work with Latin bands, Palmer played with the Machito Orchestra from 1967–1969, and the Tito Puente Orchestra from 1969–1972. Additionally, he was the first-call sub for alto players Jerry Dodgion and Eddie Xiques in the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra from 1973–1975.¹⁹³

In the spring of 1958, David Caldwell began studying at the Berklee School of Music, and was joined there in the fall of 1958 by bassist "Skip" Beckwith. While Beckwith had the

¹⁹³ In 1974 Palmer appeared at the Newport Jazz Festival playing tenor and soprano saxophones in a band that included Lee Konitz, Phil Woods, Stan Getz, Gerry Mulligan, Joe Morello, and Michael Moore, led by Teo Macero. The group had earlier recorded for Columbia with Pepper Adams replacing Mulligan, though the album has never been released.

financial resources to complete his studies in two years, or four consecutive semesters, Caldwell had to return to Halifax at the end of 1959 to earn more money, returning to Berklee in September 1961 and graduating in Spring 1962. Beckwith, who returned to Halifax during semester breaks, brought a small ensemble of Berklee students including Gary McFarland (vibraphone), Tommy Check (drums), and Jack Stevens (saxophone) to play 777 Barrington Street at the end of 1960. The following spring Beckwith returned with the Berklee's "A" big band led by Al Ware, which performed at 777 Barrington Street in addition to a number of performances for the local CBC, the fees from which helped to fund their trip (Charles "Bud" Burke, March 13, 2014).

Inspired by Beckwith's success, bassist Athan Katsos, who had begun to hang around 777 Barrington Street while still a high school student in the late 1950s, also studied at Berklee (1961-1963) before moving to Toronto in 1966 to pursue a successful career as a producer and director with the CBC. Following an unsatisfactory tenure at Dalhousie University, drummer Stan Perry struck out for British Columbia in 1959 where he would become a contributing member of Vancouver's Cellar co-operative. Meanwhile drummer Don Vickery also left Halifax in 1959, arriving in Toronto where he would attend Oscar Peterson's Advanced School for Contemporary Music.¹⁹⁴

Despite the departure of several key members of the co-operative to pursue musical opportunities elsewhere, 777 Barrington Street club continued on for several years. In 1961 however they were forced to relocate several blocks south to 599 Barrington Street, and in late 1962 the club closed. What is perhaps remarkable about the existence of 777 Barrington Street is

¹⁹⁴ In 1962 Skip Beckwith would as well relocate to Toronto and attend the Peterson school where he studied under Ray Brown.

that it managed to perform a very similar role as the Cellar in Vancouver and the Yardbird Suite in Edmonton, clubs which benefitted from the knowledge of one another's existence and the casual mixing of players from one scene to the other. Halifax, isolated on Canada's east coast and quite far from any major urban centre lacked such resources. Indeed, despite the shocking similarity in their organization and operational time frame, the western clubs and their eastern counterpart remained ignorant of each others' existence.

I don't think we heard of the one in Halifax. Now I'm speaking for myself, obviously. I don't think I'd heard anything of a club in Halifax, although years later I did hear about a district of Halifax called Africa-town [Africville]? But the Yardbird Suite ... I think we knew about that, yeah [Tony Clitheroe, November 28, 2013].

No. [other than Toronto, jazz] wasn't broadcast. You had to be there. (Paul Ruhland, November 27, 2012).

We heard about the Yardbird Suite, mostly from Dale Hillary, who was a very good saxophone player who came from Edmonton, but I think the Yardbird opened up about a year after the Cellar. But we certainly heard about it. Probably opened sometime in 1957 ... [but we had never heard of 777] (John Dawe, November 28, 2012).

While Stan Perry no doubt commented upon the similarity of the Cellar to the club he had left in Halifax, without national radio broadcasting or a domestic recording industry interested in disseminating Canadian jazz, musicians across Canada remained largely ignorant of each other outside of the groups, such as the bands of Dave Robbins, Phil Nimmons, and others, which were able to secure national broadcasts from Vancouver, Montreal, or Toronto. For those working in smaller centres or in more marginal forms of music, there were few ways to make lasting musical connections outside of one's geographical region.

Toronto and Montreal

Toronto and Montreal presented entirely different musical realities from smaller centres such as Halifax, Edmonton, Calgary, and even Vancouver, both having populations and urban density sufficient to support nightclubs, coffee houses, and other performance venues sufficient so that jazz, to a large extent, was an economically viable pursuit. This is not to suggest that jazz musicians in Montreal and Toronto were getting rich from the performance of jazz, or even that numerous dedicated jazz clubs existed at all times in these cities, but simply that there was enough musical activity to forestall the need for the inception of artist-run co-operative jazz spaces in these cities. There were, generally speaking, enough venues to provide playing opportunities for up and coming musicians, as well as more lucrative work for established players at the larger clubs.

In 1952, pianists Paul Bley and Keith White, along with several other Montreal based musicians founded the Jazz Workshop.¹⁹⁵ Though initially a co-operative endeavour, the Jazz Workshop differed from organizations such as the Cellar in a few key ways. Firstly, though co-operatively operated, membership in the Jazz Workshop was restricted solely to musicians, and sought to offer the Workshop's resources in a more private capacity than was the case at the Cellar, Black Spot / Flat Five, Yardbird Suite, Foggy Manor, or 777 Barrington Street clubs. Most importantly, the Jazz Workshop did not come into existence in response to a lack of available performances spaces for the musicians involved, most of whom were actively playing on the Montreal scene at the time. Indeed, in order to raise funds to rent a dedicated space for the Jazz Workshop, the musicians involved played concerts at the Montreal club Chez Paree, opting

¹⁹⁵ Paul Bley, Keith White, Hal Gaylor, Billy Graham, Bob Roby, Yvan Landry, Valdo Williams, Neil Michaud, George Kennedy, Floyd Williams, and others (White 1988, 78).

to allocate the door fee to the Jazz Workshop rather than to pay themselves (Gilmore 1988, 291-292).

... the Chez Paree would open at one p.m. on any Saturday agreeable to both the Jazz Workshop and them and they would provide all of the necessary services such as the stage, lighting, drinks, etc. and would keep all proceeds from whatever they sold in the club. We would be allowed to charge whatever entrance fee we wished and we could keep all proceeds from this (White 1988, 78-79).

In the other cities we have examined, such opportunities did not exist, and the co-operative jazz spaces which emerged were required to provide the sort of opportunities which already existed in Montreal at venues such as the Chez Paree, Cafe St. Michel, Rockhead's Paradise, Black Bottom, Algiers, Little Vienna and others.¹⁹⁶

Rather, the Jazz Workshop, which rented space above the Video Cafe in September 1952, sought to provide a *private* space within which musicians could practice, socialize, and learn from one another. The Workshop also sought to import American jazz artists to Montreal, but to perform concerts featuring local players, and to engage in private jam sessions with Workshop members.¹⁹⁷ Montreal's Jazz Workshop then, was primarily an exercise in pedagogy, and is perhaps best equated with music schools rather than with the type of do-it-yourself performance opportunity represented by co-operative jazz spaces in Canada's smaller cities. By the end of the Workshop's existence control had shifted almost entirely into Paul Bley's hands, and it was therefore no longer operating as a co-operative venture. Indeed at times the actions of Bley served to exclude dues-paying members of the Workshop, or at the very least, offered them no

¹⁹⁶ Though not all of these were contemporaneous with the Jazz Workshop, they nonetheless indicate that venues for the performance of jazz were plentiful in Montreal. This is also not to say that all of these venues had a full-time jazz policy or were jazz clubs, but rather that they represented spaces in which young jazz musicians could perform, even if irregularly.

¹⁹⁷ Most famously Charlie Parker in 1953.

advantage over the general public. Without consulting the membership, Bley contracted Sonny Rollins to perform at the Jazz Workshop in February 1953, an engagement which was initially met with excitement by the membership yet quickly turned sour.

The Jazz Workshop members that came to hear Rollins, however, were in for a big surprise. They were asked to pay admission. This was bad enough, but to add insult to injury, Paul was asking them to pay full price without a discount! (White 1988, 87).

At the same time, it appears the co-operatively led Jazz Workshop big band, a vehicle for members to practice composition and arranging, shifted into the hands of Workshop member Steve Garrick, and became the more conventional Steve Garrick Big Band (Gilmore 1988, 292). The last concert present under the Jazz Workshop banner occurred in June 1953, and the entire experiment seems to have ended by late 1953 or early 1954 (White 1988, 89 and Gilmore 1988, 292).

In Toronto, the establishment of the Musicians Incorporated Club (MINC) in 1959 comes closer to mirroring the Cellar, Black Spot / Flat Five, Yardbird Suite, and 777 Barrington Street, but differed from those clubs in several key ways. Formed in April 1959, the MINC occupied space at 282 Parliament Street in Toronto's east end and included, as initial members, such musicians as guitarist Sonny Greenwich, pianists Connie Maynard and Robert Johnson, trumpeters Art Williams and Rod McTaggart, drummers Larry McDonald, Billy McCant, and Terry Hawkeye, and saxophonists Bill Holmes and Moe Pryor (Prieyr) amongst others (Scott 2008, 37). Terry Hawkeye and Bill Holmes were of course already familiar with the model of musician-controlled performance spaces from their experiences in Vancouver and Edmonton, and one wonders how much influence they may have had in the formation of the MINC club, in

particular Terry Hawkeye, who had been a key factor in the establishment of the Yardbird Suite only three years earlier. Based in *Coda*'s hometown of Toronto, the MINC club did not have to wait long to find coverage in that publication.

MINC stands for Musicians Incorporated, a group of thirteen young cats who formed a business venture because they had "no place to play and practice—and to play jazz, you have to blow it." The premises at 282 Parliament Street are open for sessions on Thursday, Friday, Saturday after midnight. Sunday from 10:00 pm–2:00 am (*Coda* May 1959, pg. 2)

Much like other co-operative clubs, the MINC did not hold a liquor license, and required the possession of a membership for entry. Andrew Scott reports that MINC memberships cost five dollars in 1959, not an insignificant amount, and one which would surely have dissuaded the casual jazz fan from attending the club's late-night sessions. Predominantly, though not exclusively, a club run by and for Toronto's black jazz community, the MINC occupied slightly different territory than the other co-operative clubs examined thus far. With limited exception, MINC members were reasonably experienced musicians with a list of professional engagements and, in some cases even recordings, to their credit.¹⁹⁸

Toronto, through such venues as the Colonial Tavern, the Town Tavern, the House of Hambourg, and George's Spaghetti House provided ample opportunity to hear and to play jazz (most certainly in comparison to Vancouver, Edmonton, and Halifax during the same period). While the Town Tavern and the Colonial tended to feature American artists and the most experienced Canadian groups available, George's drew primarily from the local studio scene, and from venues such as the House of Hambourg and a variety of other coffee houses and other

¹⁹⁸ Scott 2008, 30–47.

informal spaces offered younger players space and opportunity to hone their craft. John Dawe, who spent nearly a year in Toronto just prior to the opening of the Cellar in Vancouver recalls:

In the early 1950s Toronto was just out of sight. It was just ... everything was cooking there. You know, there was a circuit there, that all the guys from New York played. Montreal, Toronto, Buffalo, Detroit—that kind of circle that went around. They had all of those big cities, in sort of the same area you know, that they could drive to, within a day to each city and they had all these incredible bands come through ... one of the places [in Toronto] that really knocked me out was a place called the House of Hambourg ... Bill Boyle and I noticed all these little side clubs that were off the beaten track, where all the young guys were playing. The guys that weren't in the studio scene and who all played jazz. And they were playing in these funny old converted houses where people were turning their basements into clubs (John Dawe, November 28, 2013).

The MINC then was not a direct response to a lack of venues in Toronto which welcomed jazz and jazz expression, or to a shortage of ways in which young musicians could learn their craft, but rather to the professional difficulties faced by black, American, and newly arrived players to Toronto. Due to the insular nature of the Toronto studio scene and to the strength of the Toronto chapter of the American Federation of Musicians, it was difficult for members of both of these groups—blacks and those newly arrived to the city—to find steady, well paying employment. While the Union served to limit access to those transferring into the Toronto local, and to American musicians who lacked the appropriate documentation to work in Canada, black musicians were additionally hampered in that the majority were weak in such professional skills as sight reading relative to their white contemporaries (Scott 2008, 26–27). As a result, black musicians were often kept out of playing opportunities in the studios and at Toronto's larger

clubs, clubs which tended to rely on those musicians who were simultaneously employed in the studio scene downtown.¹⁹⁹

Most working black musicians in Toronto then were unable to support themselves by playing jazz exclusively, and took work in rhythm-and-blues and dance bands to make ends meet.

Guitarist Sonny Greenwich for example, a regular at the MINC club, was hindered both by his inability to read music, and by his early adoption of the avant-garde developments in jazz represented by John Coltrane and others, at a time when such music was still several steps ahead of the musical offerings at Toronto's mainstream clubs. The MINC served then as a place for both players unable due to Union regulations to work in Toronto, and for players who wished to work together on jazz performance and experimentation following their paying jobs.

It should be noted however that Toronto was a notoriously difficult city for a musician to break into, regardless of race. The American Federation of Musicians required that all musicians transferring into a new local had to wait six months before they could accept regular employment, in order to protect the interests of those musicians already active in the local chapter. In Toronto during the 1950s and 1960s the Union was quite strong, and such rules were regularly enforced. While enduring this waiting period, a musician could accept "casual" engagements of a night's duration, but it was often quite difficult to piece together enough one-nighters to make ends meet. Halifax guitarist Bob Mercer recalled that upon being discharged from the Stadacona Navy band and moving to Toronto in 1961, the strength of the union in that city prevented him from finding any steady employment in town. Rather, he was forced to take

¹⁹⁹ A notable exception to this was black American pianist Calvin Jackson, who immigrated to Toronto in 1950. Warmly welcomed to the city, he enjoyed a high profile on the CBC where he hosted his own weekly TV program (*Jazz with Jackson*), and as a featured soloist in a variety of settings, including a guest engagement with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (Miller 2012, 17).

work in touring bands, working his way throughout Ontario and the United States (Bob Mercer, March 13, 2014). A skilled sight reader and session player, Mercer enjoyed a lucrative career in Las Vegas, Atlantic City, and for American television, yet found the Toronto scene an unforgiving place as a young musician. In Toronto then, it was not so much that there were no musical opportunities available, but simply that there were too many skilled players vying for the necessarily limited number of well paying engagements. American musicians at times faced further complications with the union, and those who failed to secure the necessary paperwork also found themselves at odds with the immigration service (Scott 2008, 42 and 46).

Regardless, the MINC as a co-operative or communal endeavour was short lived, opening in April 1959 and closing by the end of November 1959. In its wake venues such as the First Floor Club appeared, and the MINC itself was re-established on Yonge Street early in 1960, though this incarnation of the space operated on a more conventional business model, along with an expanded music policy that ended the club's days as a purely after-hours venue (Scott 2008, 44).

Conclusion

Local scenes such as those based out of the Cellar, Yardbird Suite, Foggy Manor, and 777 Barrington Street are needfully centred upon specific geographic locations and serve to support the unique needs and interests of their members. These scenes are tied both to the membership that enacts them, as well as to the realities of the wider urban community that houses them (the city, the region, etc.). However, these local scenes are often simultaneously part of a network of trans-local scenes which are united in the expression of a particular music and / or corresponding lifestyle. These translocal scenes are made aware of one another through such resources as radio,

recordings, periodicals, touring activities, and tourism. In some cases, such as that of the intersection between the Cellar, the Yardbird Suite, and the Foggy Manor, there is a direct connection between the scenes, and an at times powerful exertion of influence of one scene over another. Perhaps more frequently, local scenes do not intersect directly with the actions of other similar scenes, but are rather aware of the existence of other such scenes in a more general sense.

The jazz scene, for example, is not bounded for its participants by one particular venue (however important that venue may be) but by an allegiance to certain widespread musical practices and codes of behaviour. The members of Halifax's 777 Barrington Street co-operative, for example, had no direct knowledge of the Western Canadian clubs to which their's was so similar, but yet had a clear understanding of the wider jazz community through access to *DownBeat*, to recordings, and through the touring activities of its membership to cities such as New York, Boston, and Los Angeles. Trans-local, trans-regional, and trans-national webs of influence then emerge through a confluence of the movement of individuals through scenes, as well as the widespread consumption of material produced by the dominant, or meta-scene. In the case of jazz during the period in question, the dominant jazz culture was surely that of the United States, itself made up of a myriad of scenes and styles (New York, Los Angeles, cool, hard-bop, etc.) unified through the jazz press and other trappings of the commercial jazz industry. Importantly, the emergence of jazz scenes in Canadian cities from coast-to-coast, along with a domestic jazz media (Coda and the CBC), would lead to the development of a self-referencing Canadian jazz scene powerful enough to off-set American jazz influence to a significant degree.

Chapter Nine

Conclusion

The co-operative jazz spaces established in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, and Halifax during the mid-1950s began with rather modest ambitions—simply to provide a place for aspiring young jazz musicians to play. Nonetheless, the scenes which arose from that very basic musical desire evolved into complex, multi-layered sites of artistic intersection which in no small way laid the groundwork for the development of jazz in Canada as a domestic interest.

Profoundly effective on a local level in the cities in which they existed, these clubs and the communities which grew to surround them represent, in many ways, the origin story for current jazz practices in Canada. Though these scenes were the by-product of a particular historical moment and eventually succumbed to the ascendancy of new modes of popular culture, these clubs and musicians nonetheless helped to order and organize elements of affinity for modern jazz in Canada post World War Two—to create the “grooves” to which Canadian jazz practices became fixed (Straw 2002, 254). Over the years, these co-operative clubs enabled performance opportunities for emerging Canadian jazz musicians, as well as the slow inculcation of an audience for domestically produced jazz.

The Cellar, the Black Spot / Flat Five (Vancouver), the Foggy Manor (Calgary), the Yardbird Suite (Edmonton), and 777 Barrington Street (Halifax) were not born out of financial ambition, but out of necessity. For those that wanted to play jazz, it was not a matter of seizing opportunities that the scene presented, but of creating the scene itself.

I just wanted to say this about the Cellar, the important role of the Cellar and these ... rather rare birds, these co-ops which all emerged at about the same time. They gave an opportunity for the younger musicians, particularly the younger guys who were non-establishment musicians, to get out there and play. For themselves. They didn't have

to play for a patron, or a sponsor... they played for themselves. And this is where a lot of talent ... [was given] an opportunity to blossom. I think that's one of, if not its most important, functions of these sort of off-off-broadway jazz clubs (Jim Carney, December 2, 2012).

The Cellar itself was ... I always call it the school of music ... it was the only place ... where young musicians trying to figure out who they are or what they are or what they wanted to play and where they wanted to go with it—it was an outlet for them ... And like I said, it was, in my estimation, one of the prettiest, most gorgeous, musical outlets I have ever come across ... the Cellar, it was like going to school. Everybody knew everybody, everybody had something to offer, something to give, something to help. There will never, in my opinion, be another place like the Cellar. Never. (Chuck Logan, December 17, 2001).

These co-operative jazz spaces often served as de-facto clubhouses for those involved not only with jazz performance, but with literature, painting, dance, theatre, and film, all of which reflected the widespread socio-cultural upheaval that marked North America's entrance to the 1960s. Though this intersection of art scenes within the physical space of the jazz club is best examined in Vancouver, the Yardbird Suite in Edmonton was as well host to theatrical presentations from time-to-time, the Foggy Manor in Calgary was home to a comprehensive lending library of Beat literature (jonimitchell.com, 2014), and the musical community surrounding 777 Barrington Street club in Halifax provided a musical grounding for a variety of artists, including folk-rock icon Denny Doherty. In Vancouver, this multi-scenic activity was formalized as the Cellar Musicians and Artists Society, and expressed through the Cellar's active support of poetry, painting, and theatre. Through these activities, the Cellar came to serve as a congregational space for those involved with the counterculture in Vancouver across a wide spectrum of expression.

Well [the Cellar] was very important. We were all being quite creative ... this was all new to us in some ways. Like Ornette Coleman ... That was the big changeover, you know. From the 1950s into the 1960s, that change over was quite ... I mean that opened up a lot

of consciousnesses. People [were] finding out their own potential (Don Cumming, August 22, 2013).

The vastness of Canada and the relative isolation of its population centres has often posed challenges for the development and dissemination of jazz (and other forms of expressive culture), however it may be argued that such conditions have also fostered a certain self-reliance and vibrancy in local music communities. Through the activities of the co-operative jazz clubs detailed in this study, communities outside of the major population centres of Montreal and Toronto afforded musical life-ways to numerous musicians who otherwise would have been denied such opportunities.

I was thinking back on our reunion, and how this club affected the lives of so many people, quite profoundly. Claire Lawrence, a fabulous saxophone player, flute player, musician, he was a backhoe operator [at the time]. It's like wow, you know? And I ended up getting to play music professionally for a few years, but I was never at the level of those guys. So [music is] something I've done off and on for fifty years, and had I not gone to the Black Spot, it probably never would have happened (John Le Marquand, February 22, 2013).²⁰⁰

It [The Black Spot] was kind of a template for what I think the kids should be doing now. I always refer back to the Black Spot, and the concept of why don't you guys get together and form a club, make it a co-op, set it all up yourselves, get everybody to chip in, get a coffee machine and sell sandwiches and charge \$5 at the door, and its all and the rent is covered, and it's just a place to play (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

Through these clubs (at times the only jazz clubs in the cities in which they existed) and the intimate, casual contact which they engendered, jazz became a shared and immediate experience. Participation in the activity of the scene served to break down the division between those on the bandstand and those seated at nightclub tables—a widening of the performative relationship to

²⁰⁰ Claire Lawrence would go on to be a founding member of the rock group The Collectors, which was later renamed Chilliwick. He also worked as a producer for CBC Radio, contributed musical scoring for numerous television shows, and produced CBC Radio's *Jazz Beat* 2000–2006. He remains active on the Vancouver scene today.

include members of the wider jazz community in a way that was participatory, personal, and quite new. These scenes then served to create repositories for a system of memory and myth which, when taken collectively, marked an evolution in awareness for both jazz in Canada, and Canadians in jazz (to borrow a phrase from Mark Miller).

However, as important and lasting as the effects of these co-operative clubs have been, it must be remembered that these scenes were also the by-product of a particular historical moment (1950s nightclub culture), a moment which prioritized and normalized jazz and jazz-like sounds in popular culture (Straw 2002). As the musical interests of the post-war baby boom generation (rock and roll, etc.) subsumed that of the post-war counterculture and the Beat aesthetic, jazz-based musical expression²⁰¹ gave way to alternate modes of popular culture. Despite the existence of a small but enthusiastic community of listeners, there were few opportunities for career advancement as domestic jazz lacked any real involvement with the Canadian entertainment industry beyond a tangential involvement with the CBC. It is telling that the commercial aspects of recording, touring, and pursuing music as an economic activity—themes of aspiration central to Sara Cohen’s *Rock Culture in Liverpool* (1991) and Barry Shank’s *Dissonant Identities* (1994)—were almost completely absent in the conversations I engaged in with participants of these co-operative jazz clubs.

In Vancouver, the on-going success of the Cellar was in some ways undercut by the depth of its resonance within the community, as jazz activities were extended across multiple sites through the establishment of the Black Spot / Flat Five, and Espresso Coffee House, along with high profile jazz-related presentations at venues such as the Inquisition Coffee House, the Cave,

²⁰¹ Here I am including jazz, but also the jazz-based musical expression of dance-bands, and of vocalists typified by the likes of Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Peggy Lee, Bobby Darin, Keely Smith, et al.

the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and others. This spreading of the jazz community across a multiplicity of locations diluted the energy of the scene previously centred on the Cellar, and ensured that audiences for the activities at all of these clubs, while perhaps larger in sum total, were, on a venue-by-venue basis, smaller on any given night (Straw 2002, 255). Paradoxically, this same process, while ultimately leading to a kind of scenic entropy, may well have served to make the Cellar and Flat Five the most widely remembered of these co-operative clubs as jazz activity at the grassroots level became associated with a multiplicity of destinations across the city. This new multiplicity of scenes based around several disparate venues rather than a single, unifying location, ensured that jazz and jazz practices were experienced by a wider cross-section of listeners. While the energy produced by the original scene based out of the Cellar was dissipated, jazz practices were simultaneously rooted across multiple locations in the city, along with all of the cross-scenic activity that implies.²⁰²

Legacy

Though none of these co-operative jazz clubs existed beyond 1964 in their original forms, their legacies have had a lasting and profound effect upon the development of jazz in Canada as a celebrated domestic art form, and upon the construction of a domestic jazz-industry where none existed previously. This Canadian jazz industry, a network of jazz societies, commercially sponsored jazz festivals, jazz record labels, and jazz education initiatives, owes a debt to the early organizational efforts of these co-operative clubs. Though most of the musicians involved with these early co-operative clubs did not achieve any sort of lasting national fame, the

²⁰² As the Cellar was a site of intersection for certain countercultural arts scenes so would these other clubs have been locations in which varying scenes, and varying scenic populations overlapped.

generation of musicians which emerged from these co-operative venues made significant and lasting contributions to the development of jazz in Canada across a variety of platforms (education, performance, organization, etc).

In Vancouver, the Cellar and the Flat Five combined to provide valuable early musical experiences for many local jazz musicians, perhaps most notably drummer Jerry Fuller, saxophonists P.J. Perry and Dale Hillary, pianist, author, and artist Al Neil, as well as drummer Terry Clarke and bassist Don Thompson, both of whom were launched upon international careers following an engagement with John Handy at the Flat Five in 1964. In Edmonton, the Yardbird Suite provided a home for the likes of pianist Tommy Banks and drummer Terry Hawkeye, the latter of whom would be involved in the organization of Toronto's MINC club, and the former with the operation of Calgary's Foggy Manor Jazz Society. Both Terry Hawkeye and Dale Hillary, through their attendance at the Lenox School of Jazz in 1957, became two of the first Canadian jazz musicians to undergo formal training in the United States. These talented and motivated young players then brought home with them valuable experience in performance, composition, and arranging, as well as a tangible connection to the American progenitors of the contemporary jazz world. This experience was then shared through their participation in the activities of these co-operative jazz clubs—Hillary in Vancouver and Edmonton, and Hawkeye in Edmonton, in Vancouver, and, in later years, at Toronto's MINC club. Taken together, this resulted in a new-found and infectious confidence—their experience was proof that Canadian players were able to participate in jazz performance at its highest levels.²⁰³

... because here was [Dale Hillary] who had hit it big, sort of ... I don't know if hero's the

²⁰³ Dale Hillary's tenure with Philly Joe Jones was perhaps particularly aspirational for young Canadian players, especially as the group played a widely attended engagement at the Yardbird Suite in the early 1960s.

right word ... I mean the corollary question is are people here inspired by P.J. Perry? Well, I guess they are. Sure. You know [they showed that] you can play and live here comfortably [and] learn to play and [still] play on the world stage (Tommy Banks, January 8, 2013).

I remember when I first saw Terry Hawkeye it was kind of another sort of legendary, serious guy, and he came in and went up on stage at the Cellar ... and he'd just been in New York, and he was *the guy* ... and this guy was a really good bebop player, and he took the tom-toms off, both the rack tom and floor, and moved them over to the side, so all he had was a snare drum and cymbal. And I said "Wow, what is this guy going to do? Hey man, look!" It was thrilling, you know? Because bebop ... if you can't play on two drums, a cymbal and a hi-hat, you can't do anything else. So [seeing] that whole concept was pretty mind blowing (Terry Clarke, February 20, 2013).

Likewise, the success of Halifax natives Dave Caldwell and Skip Beckwith during the early years of the jazz program at Berklee, provided other Maritime musicians with the confidence to pursue similar goals.²⁰⁴ Warren Chiasson's successful audition for George Shearing and subsequent New York career provided the driving catalyst for saxophonist Don Palmer to relocate to New York, where he studied under Lee Konitz and Lennie Tristano. Following a vibrant 15-year career in New York, Palmer then returned to the Maritimes where he became the first artist-in-residence at the College of Cape Breton,²⁰⁵ helped to found the jazz program at Dalhousie University, co-founded the Halifax-based jazz society JazzEast along with the Halifax International Jazz Festival, and served as an early teacher and mentor to several notable Canadian jazz figures, including saxophonists Mike Murley and Kirk MacDonald. Arguably the most dominant Canadian saxophonists of their generation, Murley and MacDonald have in turn influenced the musical lives of countless Canadian musicians through their teaching positions,

²⁰⁴ Including the likes of Athan Katsos in the 1960s, and Tom Roach later on in the mid-1970s.

²⁰⁵ Now the University-College of Cape Breton

variously, at York University, the University of Toronto, Humber College and a host of regional and national music camps.

By the time I met Don, I had all the Abersold-type patterns and things down. I mean, I could play the instrument. What Don had to tell me though was quite a revelation. I could play the instrument quite well, but I didn't really understand the whole thing [jazz and improvisation] until he started to explain it to me (Mike Murley April 5, 2011).

Likewise, York University's groundbreaking jazz studies program (the first in the country) was jointly developed by John Gittins and Robert Witmer, both active participants at the Black Spot and Flat Five clubs in Vancouver.²⁰⁶

The 1980s saw the establishment of jazz societies and jazz festivals from Vancouver to St. John's which, through a combination of corporate sponsorship, volunteerism, and government aid, served to create the first viable cross-Canada touring circuit for Canadian jazz artists.²⁰⁷ Though several Canadian cities had been host both to jazz societies and annual or bi-annual jazz festivals as early as the mid-1950s, most of these had experienced several periods of inactivity over the intervening decades.²⁰⁸ The 1980s ushered in a resurgence of both Canadian jazz societies and major Canadian jazz festivals in what would prove to be much more stable and long lasting forms. Government funding was provided for certain elements of the jazz festivals, most notably educational and outreach programming, as well as to the festivals' parent jazz societies (where applicable). This funding for jazz societies enabled the year-round presentation of

²⁰⁶ In 1972 York University became the first Canadian University to include jazz studies. The University of Toronto followed suit in 1979.

²⁰⁷ Prior to this network essentially nobody toured across Canada. The population centres were simply too widely dispersed to make tours of this nature economically viable. Even Oscar Peterson attempted only one national tour, traveling as a solo act and performing with local rhythm sections in each city (Mark Miller April 7, 2011).

²⁰⁸ The Yardbird was re-opened in 1967, again in 1973, and finally in its current location in 1984 where it serves as a headquarters for the Edmonton Jazz Society.

concerts featuring both local, regional, and nationally touring musicians, and created a network of host venues to support the regular appearance of musicians (both established and emerging) beyond their regional boundaries. Such regular touring activity in turn served to raise the profiles of jazz artists across the country,²⁰⁹ leading to subsequent performance opportunities, increased CD sales, and teaching appointments.

Though the Toronto and Montreal festivals have long been the largest and most high-profile annual events, when one looks at the *year-round programming* of jazz in Canada during the 1980s–early 2000s, it is the activities of the jazz societies in Vancouver, Edmonton, and Halifax which are most notable.²¹⁰ It is, arguably, the organizational activities of jazz societies in smaller urban areas which have provided the bulk of the touring opportunities for Canadian jazz artists over the past three decades. The year-round programming and volunteer activism of the Coastal Jazz and Blues Society (earlier the Pacific Jazz and Blues Society), the Edmonton Jazz Society

²⁰⁹ While I was in Halifax during the late 1990s and early 2000s, the regular presentations of concerts by JazzEast outside of the summer jazz festival had a profound effect on my musical education, and greatly broadened my awareness of Canadian jazz artists from across the country. Anecdotal evidence from this period suggests that my experience was far from unique. When Halifax based players relocated to attend college / University, for example, they were generally already familiar with their instructors, having heard them perform at a JazzEast concert. Several relocated with the direct aim of studying with musicians encountered through a combination of Festival and regular in-year programming.

²¹⁰ Indeed, neither Montreal or Toronto have a jazz society which functions in quite the same way as Coastal Jazz and Blues, the Edmonton Jazz Society, or JazzEast (until the recent decline in its activities). While these organizations make use of paid employees and interns in addition to volunteers to actively present jazz concerts, workshops, and a variety of outreach activities on a regular basis, organizations such as the Toronto Jazz Society should be more properly considered fan-based organizations focused upon appreciation more than presentation.

based out of the Yardbird Suite, and the JazzEast organization formed, in large part, the lynch-pin organizations for national touring activity during the mid-1980s through early 2000s.²¹¹

With the advent of funding for recording projects through agencies such as FACTOR and the Canada Council for the Arts (1980s / 1990s), and the formation of co-operative jazz labels such as Unity (1986) and Cornerstone (1993),²¹² Canadian jazz recordings began to be more widely produced throughout the mid-1980s–2000s. These efforts, in conjunction with CBC programs such as *Jazz Beat* (1983–2007) and *After Hours* (1993–2007), eventually served to create a well connected, informed and supportive listening audience for Canadian jazz artists both on tour and in their home cities. Indeed, the period from the mid-1980s through the early 2000s may very well stand as a “golden era” for jazz in Canada—a confluence of financial support (both private and public sector) and popular interest that created a welcome place for jazz and jazz artists in Canada (Miller April 7, 2011).²¹³

The case for direct causation between these co-operative clubs and contemporary developments is perhaps impossible to prove. What may be more useful is to engage in an act of

²¹¹ As a producer for JazzEast Rising 2002–2003, my experience at national “block booking” meetings for the annual Canadian jazz festivals, as well as assisting with numerous grant applications for in-year national touring by Canadian artists bears this out. If an artist or group could secure firm commitments from Vancouver, Edmonton, and Halifax, a successful tour was much more likely than a proposal which lacked support from these cities. Engagements in Calgary, Winnipeg, and St. John’s were generally scheduled after such support had been secured. There was little or no involvement between these regional jazz societies and presenting venues in Toronto and Montreal as these venues operated independently on a for-profit business model. That said, numerous tours did manage to include dates in these major centres.

²¹² Commercial label Justin Time was established in 1989 and devoted a large part of its efforts toward recording and promoting Canadian jazz and blues artists.

²¹³ The changing rules surrounding tobacco advertising during this period certainly aided the expansion of jazz festival presentation in Canada during this period, as financial assistance to the festivals was provided by the likes of Du Maurier, the title sponsor of most of Canada’s jazz festivals into the 2000s. The presence of a well informed and enthusiastic jazz critic for the nationally circulated *Globe and Mail* newspaper in Mark Miller (1978–2005) as well served to raise the profile for jazz in Canada during the period.

A sharp decline in funding for the arts, the demise of Canada Council recording grants, the loss of both nationally aired CBC weekly radio shows with a jazz focus and the sharp decline in programming by jazz organizations outside of their yearly festivals seems to suggest that such support is in a period of decline.

imagination by trying to picture the current jazz landscape had these early co-operative ventures not existed. Though outstanding talents (such as Don Thompson, working professionally at the CBC while still a teenager) would likely still have found themselves with a career in music, without the supportive environment that the Cellar provided for the learning and performance of jazz, such careers may well have taken on a different character. For countless other musicians in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, and Halifax, such career ambitions may have proved impossible, and it is quite likely that infrastructure and educational resources for jazz in Canada would have been badly delayed as a result. These co-operative jazz clubs created strongholds for jazz in Canada beyond the major urban centres of Toronto and Montreal, providing widespread cultural traction for jazz in this country. Grassroots organizations which relied heavily upon the scenic communities they engendered, these clubs enabled relationships between artist and audience, mentor and pupil, and colleagues across the arts, which were intimate, immediate, and ultimately long-lasting. In the energy and activity of these scenes jazz was not simply presented as entertainment, but performed and enacted as an expression of identity.

It behooves us however, not to insist that the significance of these co-operative clubs be tied to a notion of tangible gains, or of quantifiable end products with which they can be credited. Rather, these clubs and the musicians which sustained them hold objective value, and are of interest in and of themselves. These co-operative clubs represent a unique moment in Canadian cultural history, and provide evidence, at a time when jazz expression is now overwhelmingly institutionalized, of organically conceived musical practices, pedagogical methods, and forms of socio-cultural organization which are increasingly rare.

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Gigography for the Cellar
(2514 Watson Street, Vancouver, British Columbia)

1957

May 17–19: Art Pepper

August: Don Cherry's Jazz Messiahs

October: Paul Bley Quintet

November: Ornette Coleman Quartet

December 2: Jazz a la Carte Jam Session

Dates unknown for: Lou Levy, Sonny Redd, the Mastersounds, Harold Land

1958

November: Harold Land

Dates unknown for: Howard Roberts, Herman Green, Dick Forrest

1959

February 20–22: Kenneth Patchen with the Al Neil Quartet

March 26–29: Jim Kilburn Trio

May 24–28: *Endgame* (theatrical production)

July 24–August 2: Art Pepper Quartet

July 27–30: *The Lesson* (theatrical production)

September 6: Chris Gage Trio

November 9–12: *The Apollo of Bellac* (theatrical production)

Dates unknown for: Pete Jolly, Joe Gordon, Carl Fontana, Conte Candoli.

1960

February 14–18: *I Rise in Flame Cried the Phoenix* (theatrical production)(nb: year is only probable)

March 9–10: Conte Candoli

April 14: Al Neil, Doreen Williams, Jim Kilburn

April 15–16: Al Neil Quartet w/ Doreen Williams

April 22–24: Howard Roberts Quartet

April 24–28: *The Wrecker* (theatrical production)

May 22–24: *Krapp's Last Tape* (theatrical production)

June 17–19: Harold Land Quartet with Shorty Rodgers

July 16–17: Joe Gordon Quartet

July 8–9: Bill Perkins

August 7–11: *The Tender Edge* (theatrical production)

August 16–21: Barney Kessel

August 30–Sept 4: Montgomery Brothers (formerly the Mastersounds)

September 16: Bob Winn Quartet

September 30–Oct 1: Al Neil Quintet

October 28–30: Tony Clitheroe Quartet

November 22–27: Jean Hoffman Trio

1961

January 6–21: Charles Mingus Quartet

January 28–29: Conte Candoli

February 3–4: Ray Sikora

February 10–12: Dale Hillary Quartet

March 17–26: Barney Kessel

March 31–April 16th: Montgomery Brothers

May 12: Dick Forrest Sextet

May 19–20: Dale Hillary Quartet

May 20: Chris Gage Trio

June 27–July 9: Ernestine Anderson

August 4: Jim Johnson Quaret

August 18: Paul Perry Jr. Quartet

nb: also in the summer of this year note poetry readings by bill bissett and Lance Farrell (dates unknown)

October 6: Dale Hillary Quartet featuring Don Thompson, vibes

October 13: Mike Taylor Trio

1962

May 5: John Dawe Quintet

May 6: P.J. Perry Quintet

May 19: John Dawe Quintet

June 15–28: Warren Chiasson

June 29: Glen MacDonlad Quartet

August 3 - 30: Closed for remodelling

August 31–Sept 2: Warren Chiasson Quintet featuring Ian MacDougall

September 14–16: Warren Chiasson

September 22–30: Lee Konitz

October 5–6: Dale Hillary

October 13–14: Dale Hillary

October 19–20: James P. Johnson²¹⁴

October 26–27: Dale Hillary

November 23–25: Jimmy Lovelace Trio

November: Monty Waters Quartet

1963

February 9–10: Jim Kilburn Quartet with Barry Dale

March 1–2: Jim Kilburn Quartet with Doreen Williams

March 1–2: *The Red Sock* (theatrical production)

March 8–9: Claire Lawrence Quartet with Barry Dale

March 8–9: *Freddie* (theatrical production)

March 15–16: Barry Dale and the Jimmy Kilburn Quartet

March 15–16: *Freddie* (theatrical production)

March 23–24: Lynne McNeil with Jimmy Kilburn Trio and Barry Dale

April 5–6: *Zoo Story* (theatrical production)

²¹⁴ It remains unclear who this performer was, as it clearly was not the famous stride pianist who died in 1955.

April 5–6: Jimmy Kilburn Trio with Lynne McNeil

April 13: *Zoo Story* (theatrical production)

April 13: Glenn McDonald Quartet

April 20: Jim Kilburn and Ralph Dyck

April 21: Ray Sikora Orchestra

April 23–28: Freddie Gambrells Trio

May 4–5: Jim Kilburn Quartet

May 6: Bobby Hales Nonette

May 10–11: Chic Gibson and the Jim Kilburn Quartet

May 17–25: Barney Kessel Trio

June 7–8: Jimmy Lovelace Trio with Monty Waters

June 9: Ray Sikora's 12 Piece Orchestra and Jimmy Lovelace Trio

June 25–26: Joyce King with the Mike Taylor Trio

June 25–26: *The Red Sock* (theatrical production)

August 16–17: Freddie Schreiber plays Jazz Cello with his Quartet featuring Bill Ramsey

August 30–Sept 1: Glenn McDonald Quartet

September 20–21: Donna Wright with the Don Thompson Trio

November 1–2: Ray Sikora

November 15–16: Clinton Solomon Quartet (last Cellar ad)

Appendix A

Photographs

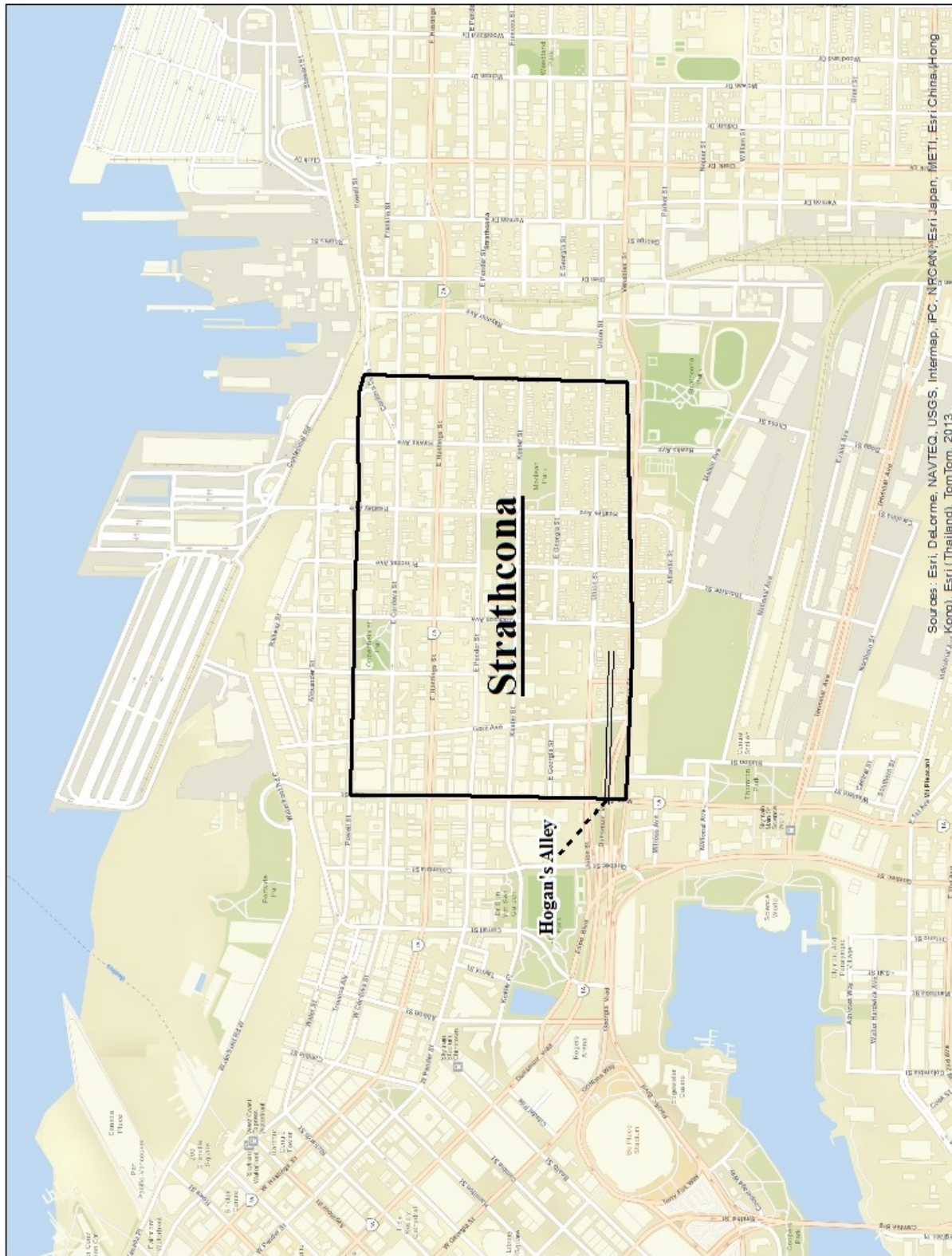


Figure 1: Map indicating the area of Vancouver known as the East End, or the Strathcona neighbourhood. Note that Hogan's Alley is positioned over the Georgia Viaduct, the construction of which obliterated the neighbourhood circa 1970. Map by Bradley Earl Charles Foster.



Fig 2: James Carney at the Wailhouse. Circa 1955. Photo by: George Sedawie. Courtesy: James Carney.



Fig 3: Jim Johnson (saxophone), Bill Boyle (drums) at the Wailhouse. Circa 1955. Photo by: George Sedawie. Courtesy: James Carney.



Fig 4: Tony Clitheroe. Circa 1960. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy Jim Carney.



Fig 5: John Dawe. Circa 1959. Photographer unknown. Courtesy John Dawe.

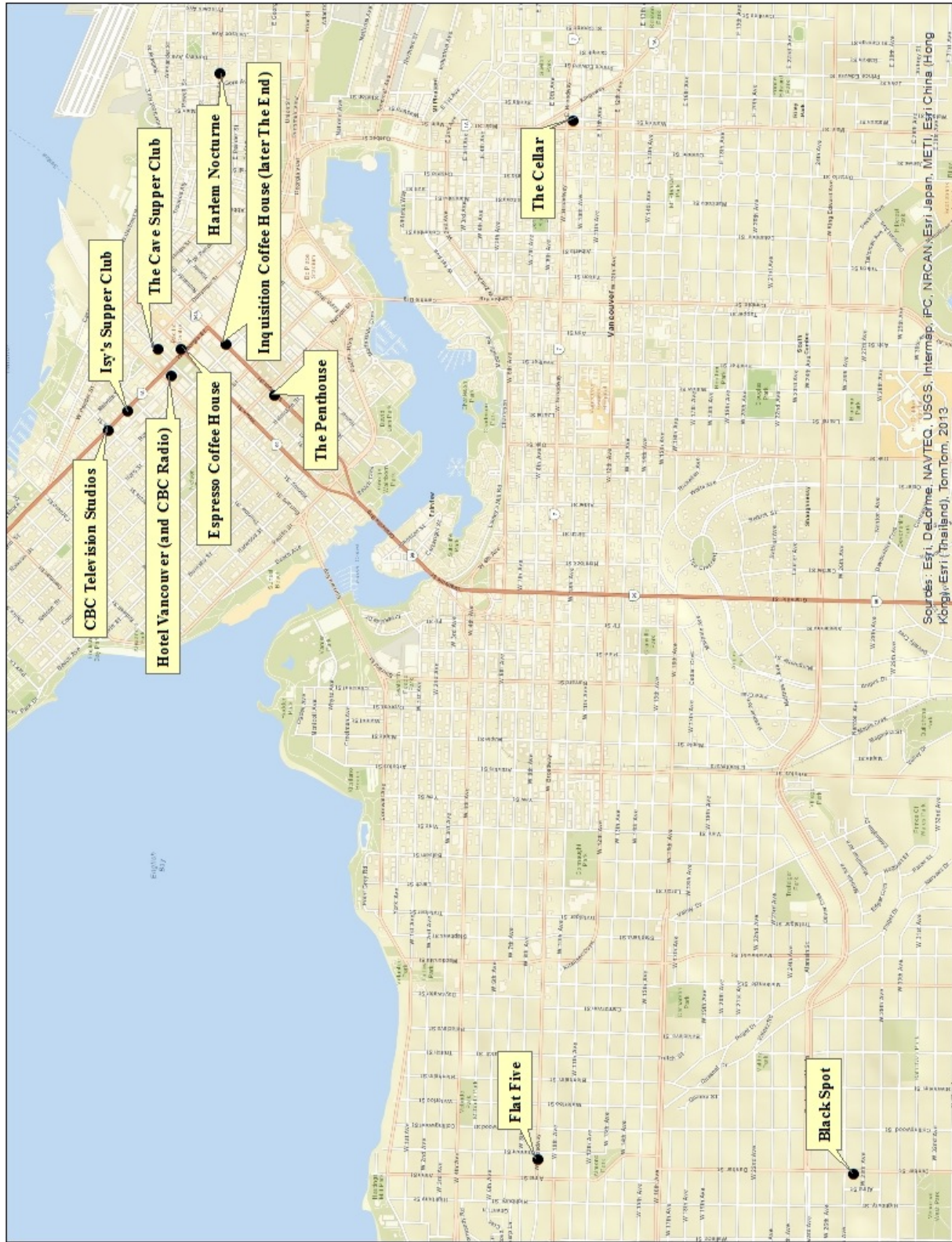


Figure 6: Map indicating location of the Cellar, and other important venues in Vancouver during the period. Map by Bradley Earl Charles Foster.



Fig 7: *The Trio* by Harry Webb. Painted in 1954, this work hung over the bar in the Cellar. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.

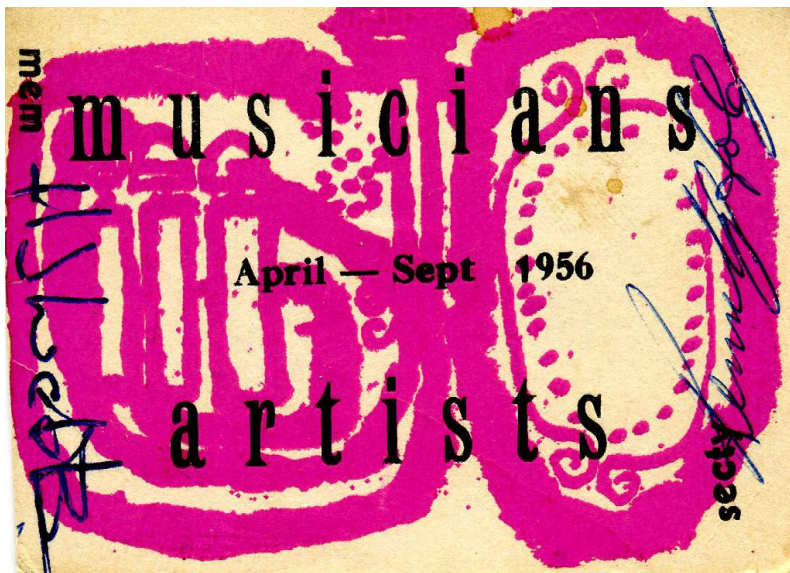


Fig 8: Cellar Membership Card, 1956. Card belonging to Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.



Fig 9: Cellar Membership Card, 1958. Card belonging to John Dawe. Courtesy Gregg Simpson. Note indication of charter membership.

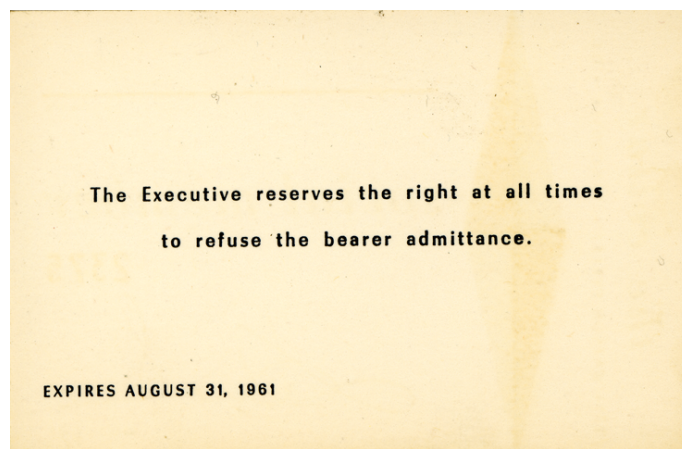


Fig 10: Cellar Membership Card, circa 1960. Unused social membership card. Courtesy Gregg Simpson.



Fig 11: (L - R) Monk Montgomery, unknown, Vivian Cook, Bob Frogge. Also notice the Cellar renovations in progress. The door at the far left led to the exit stairs. Photo by Carol Hunter. Courtesy Jim Carney. Circa 1957.



Fig 12: Corner of Broadway and Kingsway, just a few steps east of the Cellar building. Late 1950s. Photograph by Alvin Armstrong. Courtesy CBC Vancouver.



Fig 13: Don Cherry (tpt), unknown bass player, Chuck Logan (dr). Late-night session at the Cellar, November 1957. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy Jim Carney.



Fig 14: Don Cherry, Chuck Logan (dr), Dave Quarin (sax). Late-night session at the Cellar, November 1957. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy Jim Carney.



Fig 15: Ornette Coleman (sax), Ben Tucker (bass), Billy Higgins (dr). November 1957. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy Walley Lightbody.



Fig 16: Ornette Coleman (sax), Don Cherry (trumpet), Ben Tucker (bass), Billy Higgins (dr). November 1957. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy Walley Lightbody.



Fig 17: (L-R) Dave Pike, unknown, Carla Bley, Paul Bley, Don Francks (with trash lid), Ken Hole, Dave Quarin. Photo taken in parking lot in rear of the Cellar. Circa October 1957. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy Jim Carney. Note slight glimpse of mural by Frank Lewis just to the left of the open doorway.

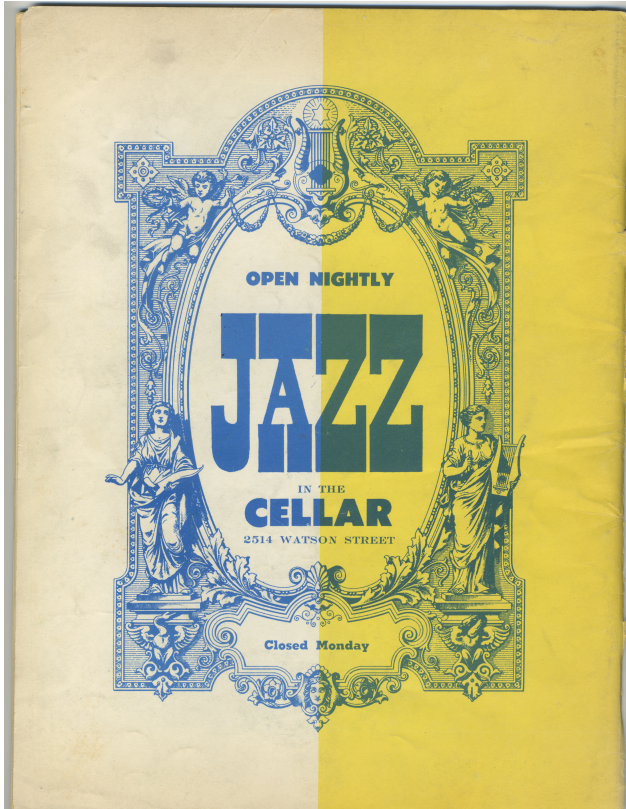


Figure 18: Ad for the Cellar in the Fall 1957 issue of UBC campus magazine *Pique*. Back cover. Courtesy Walley Lightbody.



Fig 19: (L-R) Al Neil, Bob Frogge, Freddie Schreiber, Bill Boyle, John Dawe. Circa 1958. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy Jim Carney.



Fig 20: (L-R) Jim Johnson, John Dawe (back of head), Bob Miller, Vivian Cook. Circa 1959. Photo by Carol Hunter. Courtesy John Dawe.



Fig 21: John Dawe (tpt), Jim Kilburn (gtr). Photo by Bill Boyle. Courtesy Jim Carney.

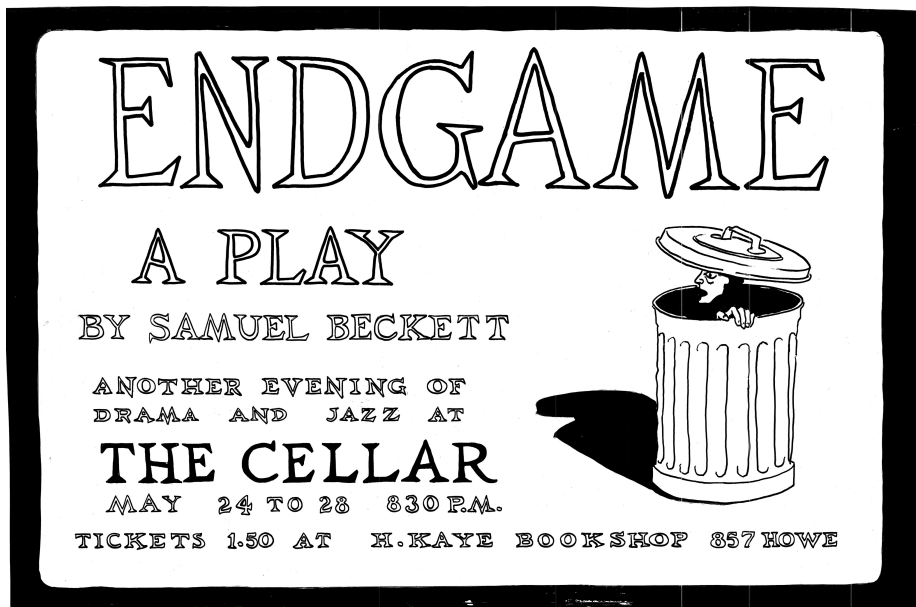


Fig 22: 1959. Poster by Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.

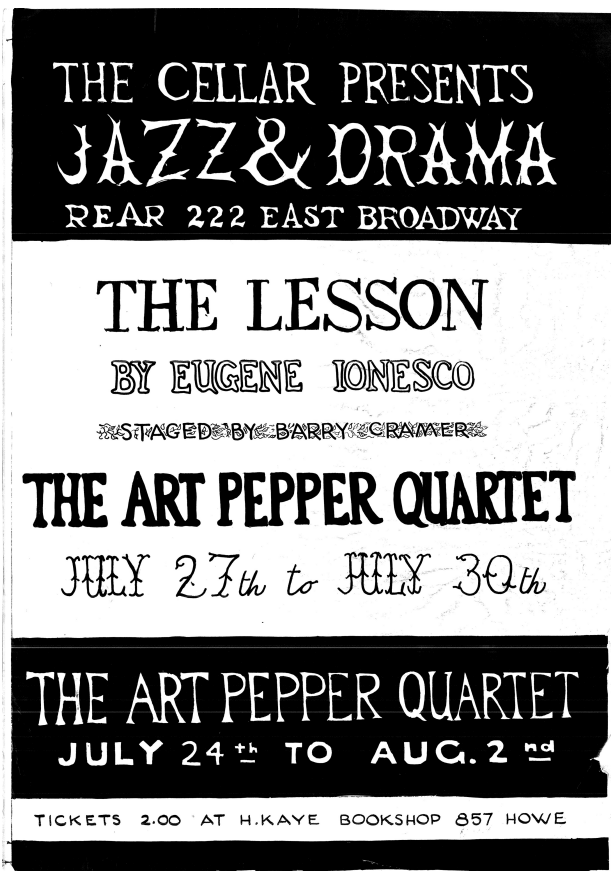


Fig 23: 1959. Poster by Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.

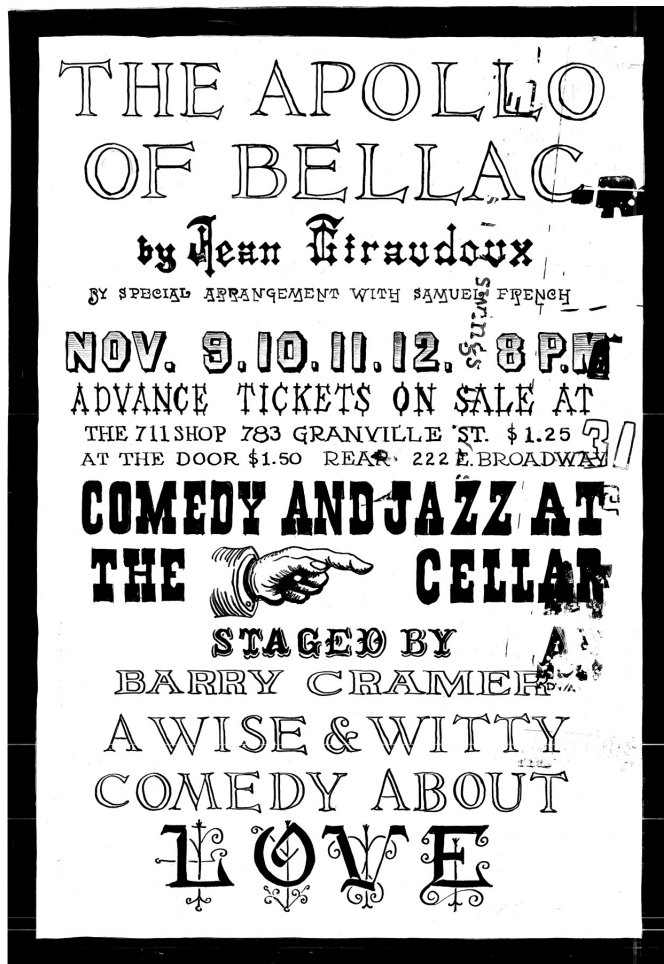


Fig 24: 1959. Poster by Harry Webb.
Courtesy Adrienne Brown.



Fig 25: 1960. Poster by Harry Webb. Courtesy
Adrienne Brown.

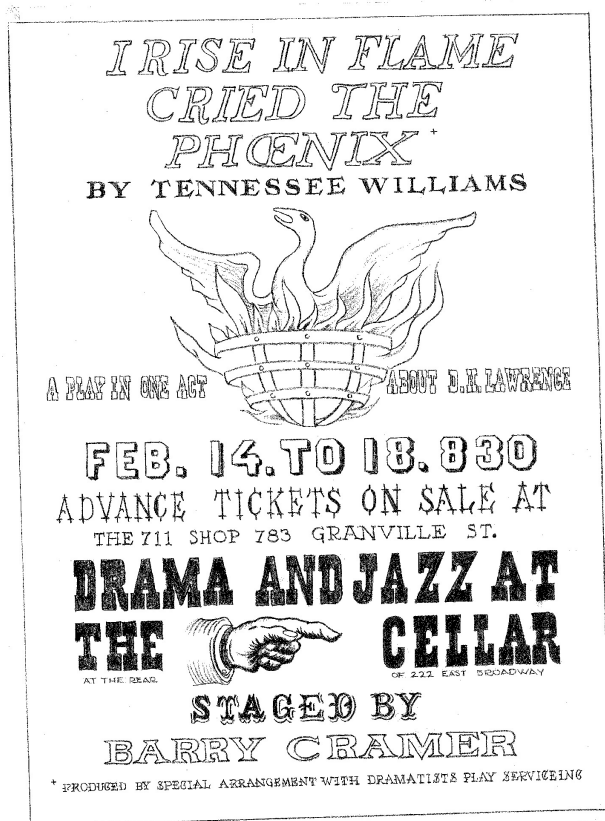


Fig 26: Date unknown (circa 1960). Poster by Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.

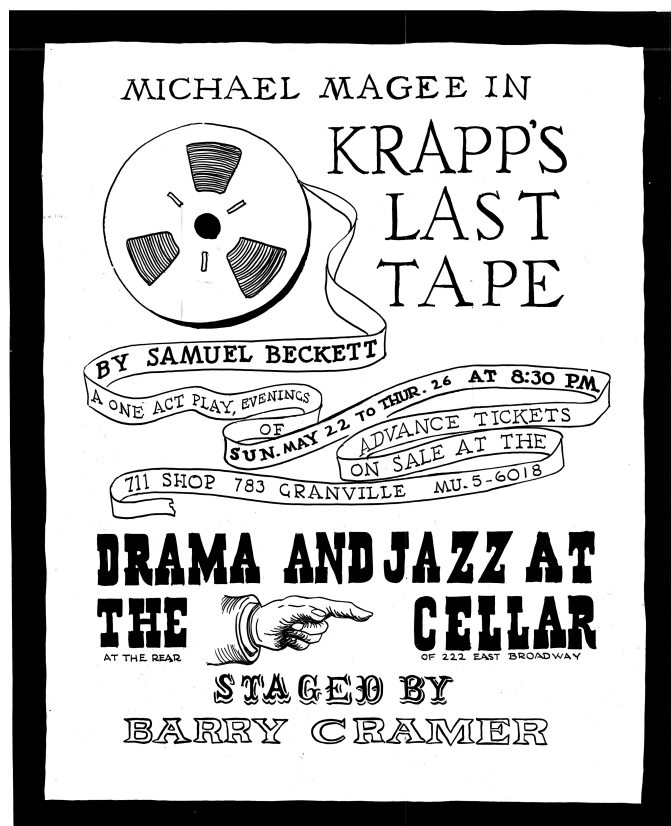


Fig 27: 1960. Poster by Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.

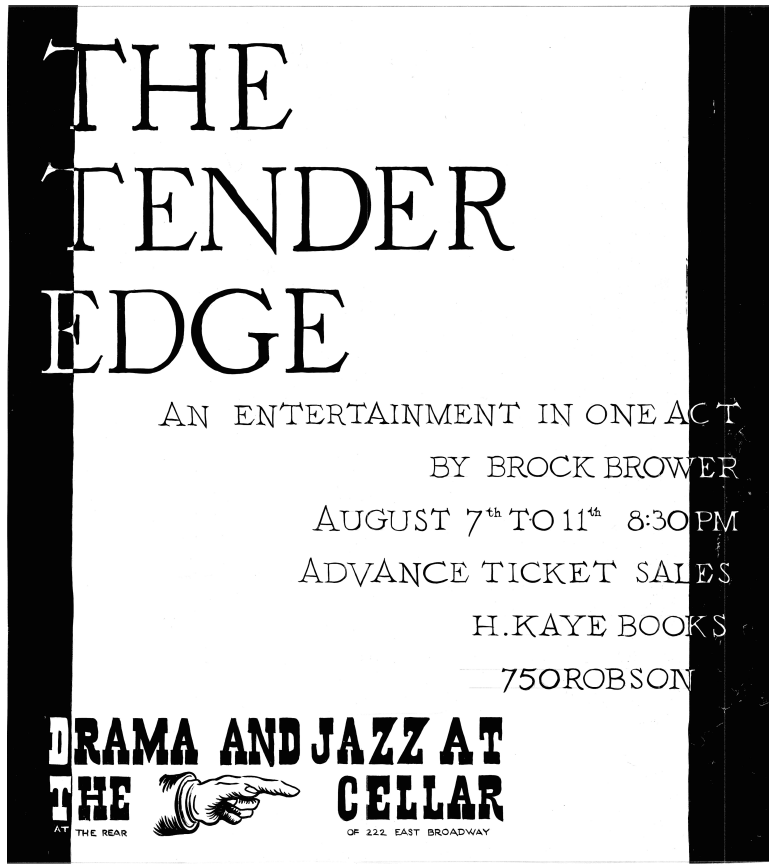


Fig 28: 1960. Poster by Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.



Fig 29: 1959. Album Cover courtesy Folkways Records the Smithsonian Institute.



Fig 30: Doreen Williams circa 1960. With Chuck Knott (bass), Al Neil (piano). Photo Don Cumming. Courtesy James Carney.



Fig 31: Eleanor Collins at the CBC studios circa 1960. Don Thompson (vibes), Chris Gage (piano). Photo by Franz Linder. Courtesy CBC Vancouver.



Fig 32: November 1960.
Poster by Harry Webb.
Courtesy Adrienne Brown.



Fig 33: Bill Boyle (dr), Tony Clitheroe (bass), Jim Johnson (sax), Jack Feyer (tpt), John Dawe (tbn). July 1960. Photographer unknown. Courtesy Jim Carney.



Fig 34: Fraser MacPherson (seated), Bill Holmes (sax), Earl Freeman (bass), Bill Perkins (sax), Chuck Logan (drm), Tom Thorsburne (pno). July 1960. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy John Dawe.



Fig 35: Ed Roop (tpt), Tony Clitheroe (bass), Bill Perkins (sax), Chuck Logan (drm), Tom Thorsburne (pno). July 1960. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy John Dawe.



Fig 36: March 21, 1961. The CBC mobile broadcast unit sets up outside the Cellar. Notice the sign in the front window directing patrons around to the Watson Street entrance. Photo by Franz Linder (267-18). Courtesy CBC Vancouver.



Fig 37: March 21, 1961. Live CBC broadcast from inside the Cellar. Jerry Fuller (dr), Tony Clitheroe (bass), Dale Hillary (sax), Al Neil (not pictured). Produced by Jim Carney. Photo by Franz Linder (261-14). Courtesy CBC Vancouver.



Fig 38: March 21, 1961. Crowd view inside the Cellar. (L-R) Terry Hill, Barry Cramer, two unknown females, Jim Johnson, unknown (striped jacket), Gavin Walker, unknown (seated) Glenn MacDonald, unknown CBC camera man (on other side of partition). Photo by Franz Linder (261-14). Courtesy CBC Vancouver.



Fig 39: Bill Boyle. Photographer unknown.
Courtesy John Dawe.

the cellar presents (1961)

Charles Mingus

Composer-bassist Mingus, who is perhaps the most provocative musician in jazz, is playing his first West Coast engagement in many years, at the JAZZ WORKSHOP, in San Francisco.

Mingus, who has been a trailblazer in jazz since the earliest days of the modern movement, will bring his group to Vancouver for a series of concerts, at the cellar and the University of British Columbia.

at the cellar	U. B. C.
January 10th, 11th, 12th, 15th	January 13th,
9:00 until 1:00	at noon
January 13th, 14th	CBC Television
two concerts each night	January 12th
10:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m.	Time to be announced

Tickets \$2.25 available in advance at 711 Shop, 783 Granville Street
Phone TR 4-9091 MU 5-6012

Fig 40: 1961. Promotional material for Charles Mingus.
Design by Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.

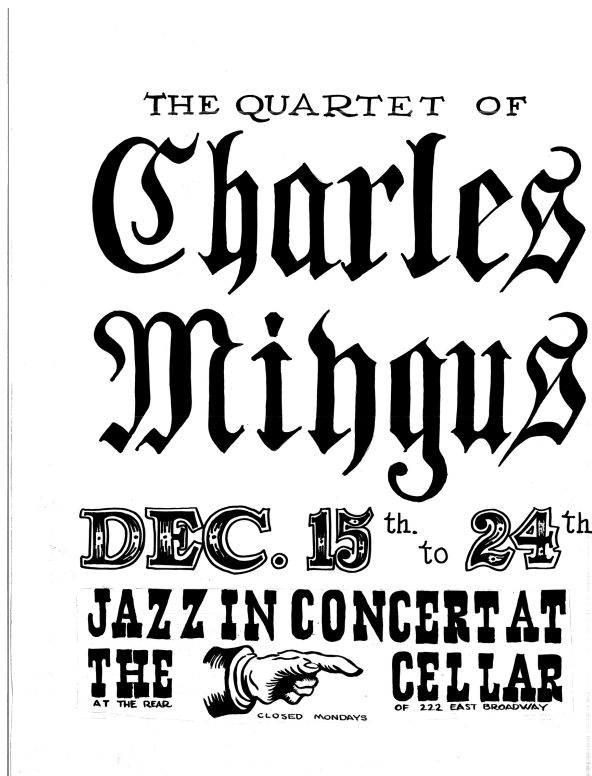


Fig 41: Promotional poster for original Charles Mingus dates. This poster was designed during the planning stages of the engagement, which originally involved dates in December of 1960. For reasons unknown, the gig was pushed to January, 1961. Poster by Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.



Fig 42: Promotional poster for the Black Spot. Circa 1961. Designer unknown. Courtesy John Le Marquand.



Fig 43: Exterior of the Black Spot, circa 1961. Photo by John Le Marquand. Courtesy John Le Marquand.



Fig 44: Inside the Black Spot, circa 1961. (L-R) Bill Fawcett (gtr), Bob Keziere (bass), George Heller (dr), Claire Lawrence (sax), Ron Proby (tpt), John Capon (tbn). In audience note Ken Clarke seated with back to piano, and Terry Clarke next to him. Photo by John Le Marquand. Courtesy John Le Marquand.



Fig 45: Inside the Black Spot, circa 1961. Al Wiertz (dr), Ron Proby (tpt). Photo by John Le Marquand. Courtesy John Le Marquand.

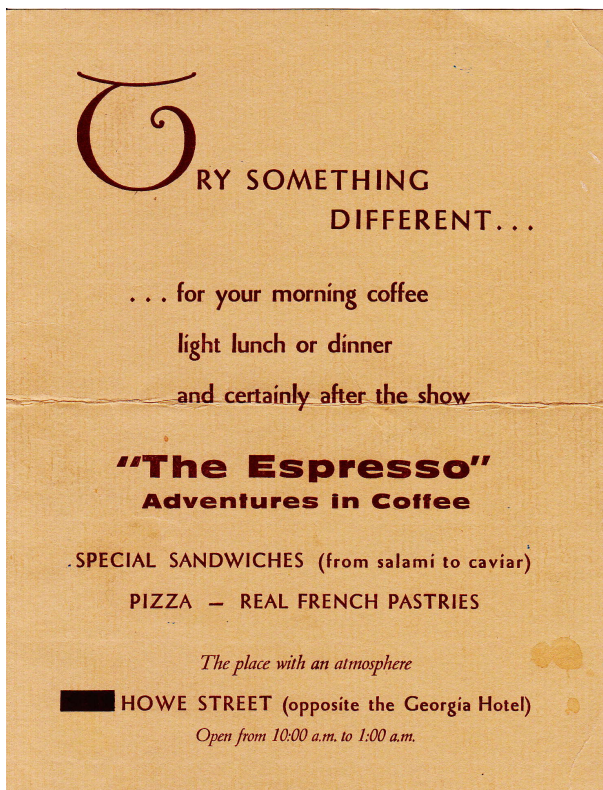


Fig. 46: Advertisement for the Espresso. Designer unknown. Courtesy Chris Birdseye.



Figure 48: Promotional poster for Ernestine Anderson at the Cellar, 1961. Designer unknown. Courtesy Don Thompson.

Fig 47: Advance promotional poster for Dexter Gordon at the Cellar. Design by Harry Webb. Courtesy Don Thompson.

ERNESTINE
ANDERSON



SINGS

IN THE CELLAR

JUNE 27 TO JULY 9

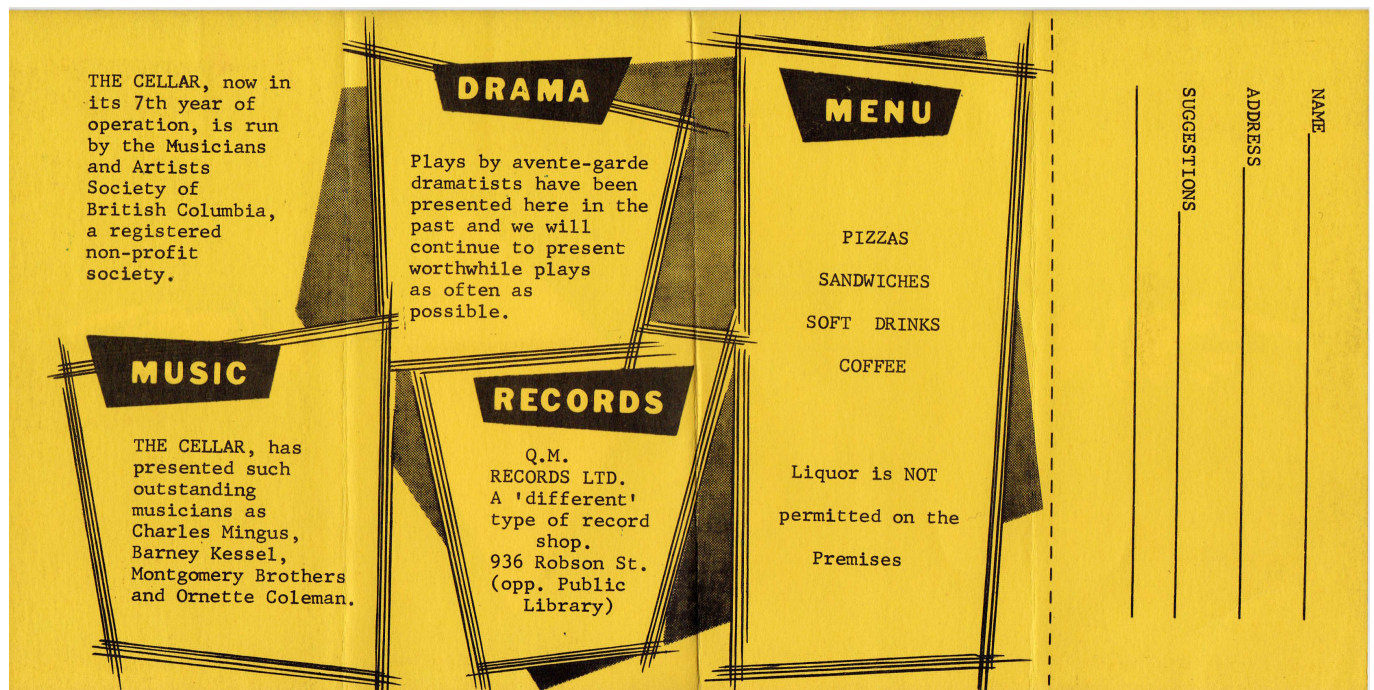
TICKETS ON SALE AT
THE 711 SHOP 783 GRANVILLE
JUST JAZZ REC. 726 SEYMOUR

THE CELLAR

AT THE REAR OF 222 E. BROADWAY



Figure 49: Promotional brochure for the Cellar, circa 1962. Designer unknown. Courtesy Chris Birdseye.



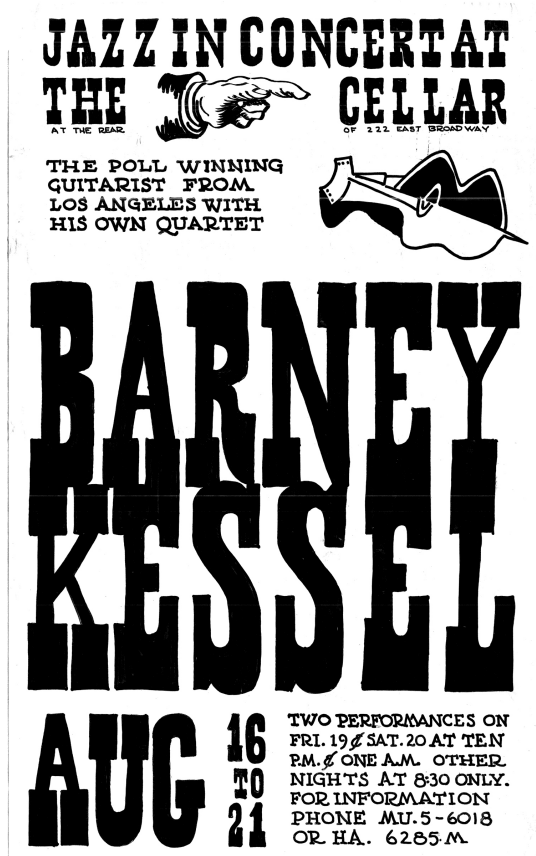


Figure 50: Promotional poster for Barney Kessel at the Cellar, 1960. Design by Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.



Fig 51: Promotional poster for the Montgomery Brothers at the Cellar, 1961. Design by Harry Webb. Courtesy Adrienne Brown.

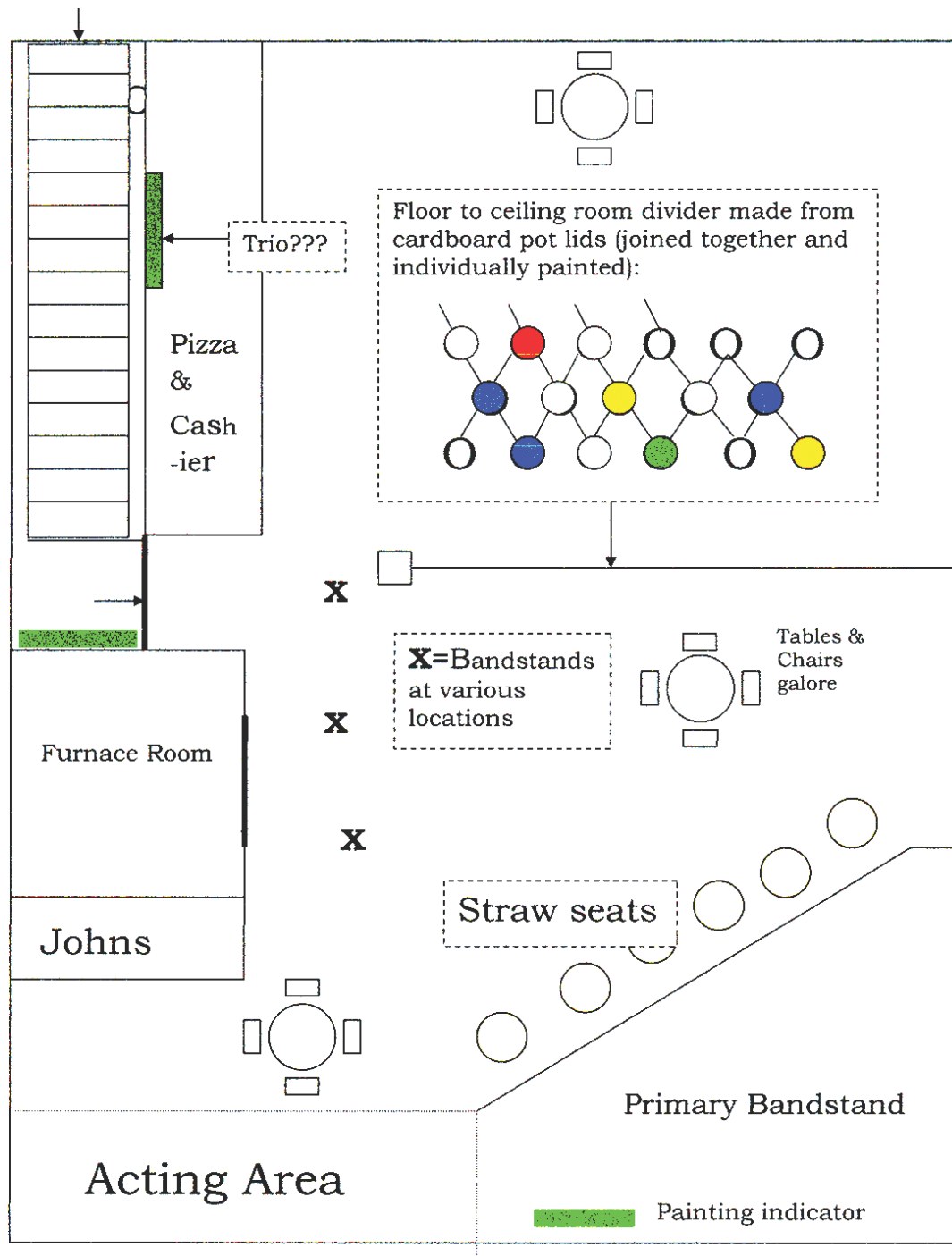


Fig 52: Cellar floor plan. Courtesy Jim Kilburn.



Fig 53: Entrance to the Yardbird Suite, circa 1957 / 1958. Courtesy Edmonton Jazz Society and the Yardbird Suite.



Fig 54: Terry Hawkeye. Courtesy Edmonton Jazz Society and the Yardbird Suite.



Fig 55: Inside the Yardbird Suite circa 1958. Ray Magus (saxophone), Ken Chaney (piano), others unknown. Courtesy Edmonton Jazz Society and the Yardbird Suite.



Fig 56: Membership card for Halifax Jazz Society aka the Jazz Room, aka 777 Barrington Street. Courtesy Dave Caldwell.



Figure 57: Interior of 777 Barrington Street, a.k.a Jazz Unlimited, circa 1957. Note the Jazz Unlimited poster behind the bass player, as well as the homemade cardboard music stands. (L-R) Ernie Fong (p), Roy Eastman (bass), Don Vickery (drums), Bob Mercer (guitar), Cy True (alto saxophone), Don Palmer (flute), Jean Momonie. Photographer unknown. Courtesy Don Vickery.

Appendix B

Fieldwork Documentation

Informed Consent Form

Study Name: *As Canadian As Possible Under the Circumstances: The Cellar, The Yardbird Suite, 777 Barrington Street and the Role of Co-operative Jazz Clubs in Canadian Jazz Practice*

Researchers: Marian Jago
PhD Candidate, Department of Music, York University, Toronto
mjago@yorku.ca.

Purpose of the Research: To examine the history of three Canadian Jazz Clubs - The Cellar (Vancouver), The Yardbird Suite (Edmonton) and 777 Barrington Street (Halifax). This research will culminate in a PhD dissertation, and may be reported in academic journals and at academic conferences.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research: Participate in a recorded interview of approximately one hour's duration.

Risks and Discomforts: We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You: You will help in expanding the knowledge of Canadian jazz history.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researchers, York University, or any other group associated with this project. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

Confidentiality: The interview will be recorded, and you will not be anonymous in the finished research project unless you specifically ask to remain anonymous. IF YOU WISH TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS, PLEASE LET THE RESEARCHER KNOW. The interview will be recorded digitally, and the researcher may make use of written notes. Your data will be safely stored in on

a secure hard-drive and only the researcher will have access to this information. The data will be held indefinitely, unless you wish it to be destroyed. If you request that your data not be kept, paper copies will be shredded, and all digital copies erased from hard drives and portable storage. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact me or my Graduate Supervisor - Dr. Rob Bowman via telephone at (416) 736-2100, ext. 77132, or by e-mail at rbowman@yorku.ca. You may also contact my Graduate Program - (Department of Music, Faculty of Fine Arts, York University, 4700 Keele St. Toronto ON Canada M3J 1P3. 416-736-5186. This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in *As Canadian As Possible Under the Circumstances: The Cellar, The Yardbird Suite, 777 Barrington Street and the Role of Co-operative Jazz Clubs in Canadian Jazz Practice* conducted by (Marian Jago). I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____
Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Marian Jago
XXX XXXXXX Road
Toronto, Ontario
M6H 2X4

PhD Candidate, York University

I, the undersigned, agree that the following photographs may be reproduced in Marian Jago's PhD dissertation (York University), and in any articles or books that may result.

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Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____