

Michael Kahr, Vienna/Austria

CURRENT TENDENCIES IN JAZZ THEORY

Theory – classical music theory and jazz theory

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of current streams in jazz theory and to discuss selected branches thereof. But before digging into the abstract spheres of theories in jazz, let us consider the fundamental meaning of the theoretic approach and its relation to music. The term *theory* is based upon the ancient Greek word *theoros*, which refers to »spectator of something«. ¹ In a scientific sense, theories are products of thought processes and studies that lead to collections of rules and models, aimed at logical descriptions of certain phenomena. These phenomena can relate to natural objects, or abstract events, such as social behaviour. Music, as a truly fascinating and – besides its acoustic properties – abstract phenomenon, has been the subject of diverse theoretic thoughts for a long time.

The first known music theory of the Western world was written by the Greek philosopher Aristoxenus about 400 BC. Since then, the Western music theories have gone through continuous changes and developments. Music theories develop models for the explanation of a variety of musical structures and the forces that govern them. Besides that, music theories may also take philosophical and aesthetical thoughts, as well as ideas concerning music cognition into account. Jazz theorists approach these issues in relation to jazz performance and composition.

There is an intricate correlation between jazz and classical music as well as between classical music theories and jazz theory. As jazz developed highly influenced by classical music, there are many fundamental structures to be found in jazz music that are similar to those in classical music. Several prominent writers of jazz theories have been trained in classical music and its theories, which led to the formulation of jazz theories using much of the terminology and the methodology of classical music theories. ² This contributed to the canonisation of a certain jazz repertoire and to the acceptance of jazz as an art form – a process most welcomed by jazz theorists and musicians alike.

On the other hand, as there are also significant dissimilarities between classical music and jazz, the theories of jazz music show differences to classical music theories as well. The most significant idiosyncrasies of jazz music and jazz theory are a product of the influence of European, African and Afro-American music practices in the evolution of jazz music. ³ The oral tradition of disseminating the concepts of jazz music is one of the results, which participated in the formulation of jazz theories. This will be discussed in more detail below.

1 Claude V. Palisca, »Theory, theorists: 2. Definitions« (*Grove Music Online*, www.grovemusic.com, 23.04.2008).

2 Seminal writers of jazz theories, such as Gunther Schuller, Mark Levine, Bill Dobbins and Henry Martin share a profound knowledge of classical music and earned university degrees in the field.

3 Examples may be the use of blue notes, as well as the rhythmic conception in jazz.

It is particularly notable that the most influential theories in both, classical music and jazz, have emphasized the role of melody, harmony and form above aspects of rhythm and socio-cultural implications. The latter aspect has reached more significance in music theory especially during the last 25 years.

Harmony is the predominant element in music theory in general and in jazz theory in particular. Jazz harmony has developed some idiosyncratic elements that are difficult to explain from the perspective of Western music theory. Basically, these jazz-specific elements include: the functional concept of four-part chords as opposed to the triadic model of structural functions; a specific perception of consonance/dissonance; the frequent parallel motion of intervals and more complex vertical structures; and a colourful treatment of cadences in minor tonalities that cannot be derived from the simple II–V–I scale degree models as used in major tonalities.

In 1996, Henry Martin, one of the most prominent jazz theorists, published an article in the journal *Jazz Studies* that was concerned with an overview of jazz theory.⁴ In 2005, he published a short introduction to the same subject in the journal *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie*.⁵ The following categorization and historical overview of jazz histories up to the year 1996 is based upon Martin's articles. I will discuss and expand upon some of the areas in his research in the course of this essay.

Martin describes three major groups within jazz theory. The first category he refers to is called *pedagogical* and *speculative jazz theory*, which takes the viewpoints of the practising performer and composer into account. Pedagogical jazz theory aims to describe simplified rules and models and concentrates on rudiments, designed for the aspiring performer or composer. Speculative jazz theories can be regarded as the higher level of pedagogical jazz theories. The speculative character of jazz theories becomes apparent in their attempt to propose creative concepts for jazz improvisation or composition.

Martin refers to the second category as *analytical jazz theories*. It takes a position from the outside, from the listener's point of view, aimed at the detailed analytical study of the musical content. This takes a profound knowledge of the musical rudiments for granted. Analytical jazz theory deals primarily with aspects of form, rhythm, harmony and melody, without considering the immediate applicability of its findings by the improviser or composer. Occasionally, jazz theorists tackle aspects of music perception, aesthetics and philosophical issues as well as the definition of jazz in interrelation with its historical background.

The third group, subsumed as *jazz critics*, comprises music fans, journalists and other writers with clear subjective goals. They had a particular impact on all the writings in jazz before 1950. After that, jazz critics seem to focus more on the popular media, whereas jazz analysts have taken over the evaluation of jazz with long-term goals in mind.

Martin acknowledges that the differentiation between these three categories reflects a generalization only and that overlaps between these groups occur frequently. However, I argue that, besides these three groups, there is a large fourth category in jazz theory. Thinking of the many idiosyncratic approaches of improvising or composing musicians in jazz, there must be a profound body of theoretic knowledge that has never been put into words. It exists solely in the minds of these musicians and its only expression is abstract, presented in their

⁴ Henry Martin, »Jazz Theory: An Overview« (*Annual Review of Jazz Studies* 8, 1996), pp. 1–17.

⁵ Martin, »Jazz Theory and Analysis: An Introduction and Brief Bibliography« (*Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie* 2/2, 2005, http://www.gmth.de/www/artikel/2005-04-11_08-23-22_71, 23.04.2008).

recordings, compositions and teaching methods. Their theories are vague in the sense that they are not formulated into a coherent system utilizing any non-abstract means of expression. Therefore these theories are not easy to identify. It is difficult to assign these theories to one of the previous three categories, simply because we cannot evaluate their nature. On the other hand, these theories prove coherence and existence by their consequent application in musical practice.

The significance of this group of jazz theorists becomes even more valuable when we consider the oral tradition of disseminating knowledge in jazz. We will see later that this tradition played a crucial role in the early history of jazz theory. But even today there are many fine musicians who have developed their own original theories about how to play or compose certain things. Considering their ability to reproduce their distinct approach every time they play, we must come to the conclusion that these musicians have formulated their own speculative and analytical theories, which they use in order to generate their original music. This theoretic framework may be a combination of musical facts, such as chord voicings etc. and motoric gestures, for instance.

The notion of this, let me call it *abstract jazz theory*, defies any categorization, but it might well be included in Martin's concept of the jazz theorist as being generally concerned with »the music as music, that is, on the details of the technical issues raised by the notes themselves« as opposed to the approaches of »humanistically inclined scholars investigating from other viewpoints«. ⁶ By pointing out this opposition, Martin raises a delicate issue among music theorists: the rise of the so-called *new musicology*, which also has had its impact upon jazz theory. The claims of the new musicologists were often perceived as an attack among music theorists, which obviously includes Martin. In his article he acknowledges the relevance of »social, historical, commercial and other issues«, but he expresses his viewpoint very clearly: that jazz theorists simply prefer »applying their expertise: attempting to fathom what is happening sonically, to the extent that it can be pinned down«. ⁷

In the midst of Martin's coherent description of the work of music theorists, he provides a somewhat surprising statement: »If nothing else, I would like to point out that what leads most listeners and players to jazz *is* its music, not its connections to other disciplines.« ⁸ This phrase can be understood in a number of ways. To begin with, and that is probably the way it was meant, it expresses a fascination with the music itself as the foremost reason for the theorist's avoidance of other issues correlating with music. But, Martin's statement can also be understood as an excuse by the jazz theorist for the negligence of interdisciplinary issues. The statement is also a quite generalizing one, not supported by more objective arguments such as statistical data. Martin's statement implies the exclusion of most reasons, other than the pure interest in the music, to draw people seriously to jazz. Interestingly, Martin acknowledges the »cultural interactions and the thought processes involved in learning to play jazz« ⁹ much more directly in his 2005 article on jazz theory than in the 1996 article, which accounts for the growing significance of socio-cultural factors in jazz theory.

⁶ Martin, »Jazz Theory: An Overview«, p. 2.

⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Martin, »Jazz Theory and Analysis«.

Early jazz theory

In the early years of jazz, until about 1945, when jazz was generally conceived as entertainment rather than as art music, jazz theory existed primarily within the oral tradition of passing on musical knowledge from the more experienced to the less experienced player. Most players of that time played and improvised by ear or they had some training in classical music theory. Many salient characteristics of jazz music that are now described thoroughly by modern jazz theories were conceived and developed rather intuitively at that time. However, we must not underestimate the knowledge of classical theory, possessed by early jazz musicians such as Jelly Roll Morton, James P. Johnson, Duke Ellington and Fletcher Henderson. It can be only assumed to what extent those musicians used this knowledge in the creation of their music and yet analysts can identify many formal, harmonic and melodic similarities between classical music and early jazz. The expressions of the early theoretic knowledge were limited to music reading and chord identification, which is represented in leadsheets and notated compositions of that time. The oral tradition in jazz theory has contributed to develop a specific terminology in jazz theory, especially with regards to the conception of improvisation and group interaction in jazz. For instance, the jazz-idiomatic term *comping* implies complex strategies regarding the harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment of a soloist or singer.

Pedagogical and speculative jazz theory

The pedagogy of early jazz was represented mainly by the oral tradition among jazz players, the learning of recorded licks and solos by ear, a few published transcriptions of jazz solos and classical music theory. Since the 1950s, modern jazz has started to become recognized as an art form and its success among younger players created a higher demand for pedagogical material. John Mehegan's *Jazz Improvisation*¹⁰ and George Russell's *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization for Improvisation*¹¹ were early milestones in pedagogical and speculative jazz theory. These publications initiated an increasing awareness of jazz-specific knowledge regarding the interrelation of vertical and horizontal musical structures. Especially Mehegan's books were, and still are, widely used for teaching in the many jazz courses that have developed in secondary and tertiary institutions since the 1960s all over the Western world. Other prominent authors of pedagogical literature in jazz include David Baker, Andrew Jaffe, Joe Viera and Jamey Aebersold. The inception of international associations of jazz pedagogues and jazz schools such as the IAJE and IASJ have had an impact upon the spread of pedagogical material designed for jazz music. Unfortunately the IAJE had to file for bankruptcy in 2008 and the future of this organization is more than uncertain.

10 John Mehegan, *Jazz Improvisation* (Vol. 1–4, New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1962–1965).

11 George Russell, *The Lydian-Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization for Improvisation* (New York: Concept Publishing Corp, 1959 [1964]).

Analytical jazz theory

Analytical jazz theory is a rather recent phenomenon that, despite its overlaps with other categories within jazz scholarship, focuses more on the inner mechanisms of music than on their pedagogical distribution. It has always addressed a comparably small audience, which becomes obvious through the fact that, after Winthrop Sargeant's *Jazz, Hot and Hybrid*¹² in 1938 there was no significant publication that dealt with analytical jazz theory until André Hodeir's *Jazz, Its Evolution and Essence*¹³ in 1956, followed by publications by Gunther Schuller and the founding of the magazines *Jazzforschung / Jazz Research*¹⁴ at the University of Music and Dramatic Arts in Graz in 1969 and the *Journal of Jazz Studies* (now *Annual Review of Jazz Studies*)¹⁵ at the Rutgers University in Newark in 1973. In the early 1970s the first dissertations appeared, which focused on analytical and theoretical issues in jazz music. Jazz theory has started to become a serious research area in universities.

Traditional theories of Western classical music and their adaptation for contemporary jazz analysis

Much of the terminology for most analytical as well as pedagogical jazz theory is derived from classical Western music theories, developed from Jean Philippe Rameau through to Hugo Riemann. For instance, scale degree definitions as well as the concept of functional harmonic hierarchies in tonal jazz harmony have been deducted from existing classical music theories.

The application of traditional analytical methods by scholars in jazz has participated in the recognition of jazz as art music. Gunther Schuller's early analyses, for instance, were very important in this respect.¹⁶ However, considering the peculiarities of jazz harmony, the application of traditional analytical methods also has its problems. Most pedagogical jazz theories do not even mention these theoretical insufficiencies; in fact many of them tend to declare themselves as both, theoretic and, at the same time, formulaic instructions for jazz improvisation and composition. Sometimes, the pedagogical approach becomes an excuse for underdeveloped theoretic concepts.¹⁷ Recent publications in the field of analytical jazz theory are more seriously concerned with these theoretical discrepancies.

12 Sargeant Winthrop, *Jazz Hot and Hybrid* (New York 1938).

13 André Hodeir, *Hommes et Problèmes du Jazz, Suivi de la Religion du Jazz* (Paris 1954, Engl. Transl., rev., 1956, as *Jazz: its Revolution and Essence*).

14 *Jazzforschung / Jazz Research* (Graz 1969ff.).

15 *Journal of Jazz Studies* (New Jersey 1973–1981). *Annual Review of Jazz Studies* (Newark, New Jersey, 1982ff.).

16 Gunther Schuller, »Sonny Rollins and the Challenge of Thematic Improvisation« (*Jazz Review* 1, 1958), p. 6. Ibid., *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* (New York 1968). Ibid., *The Swing Era: The Development of Jazz. 1930–1945* (New York / Oxford 1989).

17 »Lassen Sie sich von der Theorie leiten, aber nicht in eine Zwangsjacke stecken.« Mark Levine, *Das Jazz Theorie Buch* (Rottenburg am Neckar: Advance Music, 1996), p. 440. Levine's text was criticised for its theoretic incoherence by: Robert Rawlins, »Review of Mark Levine: The Jazz Theory Book« (*Music Theory Online* 6.1, 2000, www.societymusictheory.org/mto/issues/mto.00.6.1/mto.00.6.1.rawlins.html, 23.04.2008). Other teaching methods for jazz theory, such as Robert Rawlins's *Jazzology* and Frank Sikora's *Neue Jazztheorie* aim for more theoretic coherence, and yet, they claim to be understood as workbooks for the classroom.

For instance, the American researcher James McGowan examined the treatment of consonance and dissonance in tonal jazz in his dissertation *Dynamic Consonance in Selected Piano Performances of Tonal Jazz* in 2005 and in some other publications.¹⁸ He argued for a pluralistic understanding of consonance in tonal jazz and he identified stable tones beyond the triad. McGowan's theory of dynamic consonance is partly influenced by theories of linguistics and psycho-acoustics and it extends and is based upon the theory developed by another American scholar, Daniel Harrison, who identified the functional meaning that is conveyed by each individual tone within a triad or a four-part chord.¹⁹ Studies like these may help to develop theories that are still based upon traditional approaches, yet considerate towards the inherent features of tonal jazz.

Steven Strunk, another established American jazz scholar, examined linear interval patterns within the standard jazz repertoire in a statistical study.²⁰ Strunk used a method that draws from Schenkerian approaches in music theory, which have been extremely influential in the USA since the English translations of Heinrich Schenker's publications during the 1960s and 1970s. Currently, Steve Larson is one of the most active Schenkerian analysts in the field of jazz. Several published articles, his dissertation as well two forthcoming book releases around this research area will stimulate an even greater influence of Schenkerian analysis in jazz.²¹

Schenkerian theory puts forward the idea of coherence as a proof for artistic value, but, as the theory was developed around the tonal classical repertoire, its applicability for the jazz repertoire recalls the previously mentioned discrepancies concerning certain inherent harmonic features of jazz. Nevertheless, Larson used this approach quite convincingly to illustrate the structural layers and the underlying harmonic progressions of jazz music. But, Larson still has to admit that there are certain harmonic phenomena in tonal jazz that, from the viewpoint of Schenkerian analysis, can only be described as *non-standard phenomena*²² such as the functional four-part chord system, the characteristic treatment of consonance and dissonance, the simultaneous appearance of dissonance and resolution, the resolution of a dissonance into a new dissonance and frequent parallel motion. According to Schenker, the frequent appearance of such non-standard phenomena can easily be regarded as an aesthetic weakness.

Despite this apparent discrepancy, Schenkerian analysis in jazz reveals successfully the underlying harmonic progressions, which, as a reverse concept, pictures exactly how many musicians think in the act of melodic and harmonic improvisation in tonal jazz. Bill Evans illustrates this concept in the famous radio interview with pianist Marian McPartland in 1978: »I always have, in anything I play, an absolutely basic structure in mind. Now I can work around that differently, or between the strong structural points differently, but I find the most fundamental structure, and then I work from there.«²³

18 James John McGowan, *Dynamic Consonance in Selected Piano Performances of Tonal Jazz* (PhD Diss., University of Rochester, 2005). Ibid., »Consonance in Tonal Jazz: A Critical Survey of Its Semantic History« (*Jazz Perspectives* 2/1, 2008), pp. 69–102.

19 Daniel Harrison, *Harmonic Function in Chromatic Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

20 Steven Strunk, »Linear Interval Patterns in Jazz Repertory« (*Annual Review of Jazz Studies* 8, 1996), pp. 63–115.

21 For a selected list of Larson's work please refer to the sources of this essay.

22 Steve Larson, »Schenkerian Analysis of Modern Jazz: Questions About Method« (*Music Theory Spectrum* 20/2, 1998), p. 217.

23 *Marian McPartland's Piano Jazz: with guest Bill Evans* ([Audio CD,] Jazz Alliance: 1993, original release 1978).

Besides Schenkerian analysis there are other methods, derived from traditional theories, which are used for the analysis of jazz. Neo-Riemannian theories, based upon the theories of Hugo Riemann, have been used to illustrate chromatic music that moves between different tonal centres. Recently, the American scholar Guy Capuzzo, for instance, has noticed obvious parallels between Neo-Riemannian theories and the pedagogical material of jazz guitarist Pat Martino.²⁴ Another prominent contemporary theoretic approach, pitch-class-set theory, designed for the analysis of atonal music, has been used to analyse harmonic structures in atonal jazz styles such as free jazz.²⁵

Critical jazz theories

Besides the struggles of adapted traditional theories in jazz and the experiments of theories that were developed for bi-tonal, chromatic or atonal jazz, the same critical voices, which have shattered the formalist theorists of classical music within the last twenty years, have called for a totally new, critical look at jazz theories that should take more of the socio-cultural aspects into account. Often, these new approaches completely abandon the traditional theories and methods for analysis. Robert Walser, one of the leading *new musicologists* in the field of popular music, wrote in an essay in 1995: »Prevalent methods of jazz analysis [...] are clearly inadequate to the task of helping us to understand jazz, and to account for its power to affect many people deeply.²⁶ [...] I have no illusions about the capacity of musical notation to represent musical performances completely or accurately.«²⁷

Besides the critique of Walser and others of formalist theories and methods, the critique also turns towards the theorists and analysts themselves. One of the main points of critique is the so-called canonization of certain musicians and their music through their theoretic approaches, which, in turn, would canonize the theorists and analysts of that music as well. Here, I would like to mention a collection of critical and sometimes even polemical essays, edited by Krin Gabbard, entitled *Jazz Among the Discourses*.²⁸

Although most of these critics do not offer revolutionary alternatives for the examination of the inner mechanics of the actual music, their call for an interdisciplinary approach that considers the socio-cultural context of music has led to interesting publications by several jazz scholars.

Prominent figures include Paul Berliner, known for his book *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*²⁹ and Ingrid Monson, author of *Sayin' Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*.³⁰ Both scholars use approaches from ethnomusicology, linguistics,

24 Guy Capuzzo, »Pat Martino's *The Nature of the Guitar: An Intersection of Jazz Theory and Neo-Riemannian Theory*« (*Music Theory Online* 12/1, 2006). Among others, Dimitri Tymocko is a prominent theorist, who works with Neo-Riemannian methods in jazz analysis.

25 Steven Block, »Pitch-Class Transformation in Free Jazz« (*Music Theory Spectrum* 12/2, 1990), pp. 181–202.

26 Robert Walser, »*Out of Notes: Signification, Interpretation, and the Problem of Miles Davis*« (Krin Gabbard (ed.), *Jazz Among the Discourses*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), p. 179.

27 Ibid., p. 185.

28 Krin Gabbard (ed.), *Jazz Among the Discourses*.

29 Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994).

30 Ingrid Monson, *Sayin' Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction* (Chicago: Chicago University Press: 1996).

semiotics and analytical jazz theory in combination with discussions of the historical and socio-cultural context. In their research these scholars juxtapose analyses of transcriptions of jazz solos and compositions to more social aspects of jazz music. These books have become quite popular and their interdisciplinary studies have reached a wide audience.

Interdisciplinary approaches in correlation with jazz have also inspired theorists in areas other than jazz; in fact, in areas other than music, such as management, marketing planning and organization science.³¹ These theorists use the concepts of improvisation in jazz and its various theories in other, non-musical contexts to explain social phenomena. The journal *Organization Science*, which covers theoretic aspects in various areas such as economics, put out a special edition in 1989 concerning the interrelation of jazz improvisation and the mechanisms of organization.³² Berliner's publication is used frequently for citations with regards to jazz in this special issue.

Finally, by reconsidering the significant current tendencies in jazz theory, it becomes clear that there is not one single cohesive method. For instance, not even the terminology for chord symbolization is unified at this stage. It will be interesting to watch new tendencies in jazz theory as they arise to deal with the complexities of improvised jazz music.

Publications of jazz theories

With regards to pedagogical jazz theories, there is a steadily increasing body of printed books distributed in most developed nations. Compared to the situation in 1996, the target market for pedagogical jazz theories has expanded rapidly, especially since the development of the European Union into the eastern countries including Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland and other parts of the former USSR. Every year there is a growing output of new teaching materials concerning jazz pedagogy. Similarly to the state at the time of Martin's article in 1996, there still is the need of a serious study concerning an evaluation of available instructional materials.

In the field of speculative jazz theories, not much has changed since Martin's article in 1996. Still there is no recent theoretic treatise even close to the impact of George Russell's *Lydian Chromatic Concept* or the *third stream* movement. Interestingly, successful jazz composers tend to publish the scores of their music rather than explanations, or even theories about their musical conception. Maria Schneider comes to mind here, as well as Clare Fischer and Bill Dobbins.³³

With regards to analytical jazz theories, the target market is considerably smaller. As a matter of consequence, only a few books have been published in this segment. Analytical journal articles, however, reach their target audience much more efficiently and, indeed, there has been a continuous publication process across journals and in academic disserta-

31 Frank J. Barrett, »Managing and improvising: lessons from jazz« (*Career Development International* 3/7, 1988), p. 283. Noel Dennis / Michael Macaulay, »Jazz and marketing planning« (*Journal of Strategic Marketing* 11/3, 2003), pp. 177–185.

32 »Special Issue: Jazz Improvisation and Organization« (*Organization Science*, 9/5, 1998).

33 Maria Schneider, *Evanescence: Complete Scores*. Fred Sturm (ed.), Vienna [et al.]: Universal Edition, 1998). Clare Fischer, *The Music of Clare Fischer* (Vol. 1–2, Rottenburg am Neckar: Advance Music, 2000). Bill Dobbins, *The Contemporary Jazz Pianist* (Vol. 1–4, New York: Charles Colin, 1985).

tions. Most notably, the new peer-reviewed journal *Jazz Perspectives* has emerged.³⁴ This publication welcomes all areas of jazz studies, such as jazz analysis, cultural studies and historical inquiries.

Besides the printed publications of jazz theory, the internet has had a rapidly growing impact upon the information exchange and the research procedures in jazz theory during recent years. Many prominent journals in the field of jazz studies offer full citations or even full text issues of their articles online. Furthermore, the internet has significantly contributed towards the global dissemination of scores and recordings, as well as towards the world-wide access to videos of performances, conference presentations, clinics and interviews through *YouTube* or other web-based file-sharing systems.³⁵ In the future, the new multi-media technologies may even challenge our linguistic conventions in relation to the presentation of aspects of jazz theory and the internet may also be useful to increase the significance of issues related to jazz theory within our society.

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Zusammenfassung

Die Theorien der Jazzmusik unterliegen, in gleichem Maße wie die Jazzmusik an sich, einem steten und rasanten Wandel. Dieser Artikel bietet einen kritischen Überblick über aktuelle Aspekte in der Jazztheorie und beleuchtet dabei deren historischen Hintergrund sowie deren Probleme und Diskrepanzen. Ein besonderes Merkmal der Jazztheorie ist ihr zwiespältiges Verhältnis zu den etablierten Theorien der allgemeinen Musik, das geprägt ist von der Relevanz klassischer Analysemethoden für den Jazz zum einen und von der Problematik hinsichtlich des vermeintlich kohärenten Erklärungsgehalts von Theorien der klassischen Musik gegenüber spezifisch jazzidiomatischen Strukturen zum anderen. Aktuelle

Zugänge in der Jazztheorie beinhalten eine zunehmende Akzeptanz der, anfangs stark kritisierten, sozio-kulturell engagierten Ideen der sogenannten *New Musicology*-Bewegung, weiters die, vor allem in den USA, festzustellende Etablierung von Schenkerschen Theorien in der Jazzanalyse sowie die wachsende Funktion des Internets als Informationsquelle und Disseminationsfaktor in der Jazztheorie.

