

A CHRONOLOGY OF JAZZ & CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE U.S.

- 1619** – First slaves are brought to Jamestown, VA.
- 1660s** – Slavery is given legal sanction, and begins to evolve as an institution in the North and South.
- 1845-1900** – Minstrel shows, full of ethnic humor and racial stereotyping, become a widespread form of entertainment in the U.S. and contribute to the rising consciousness of African American culture.
- 1865** – The Civil War ends, and the Thirteenth Amendment abolishes slavery. In the South, implementation of legalized racial segregation begins.
- 1866** – First branch of the Ku Klux Klan is established in Pulaski, Tennessee.
- 1867** – Congress passes the Reconstruction Acts.
- 1867** – *Slave Songs of the United States* is published, the first attempt at transcribing African American folk music into European musical notation.
- 1868** – Fourteenth Amendment grants freed slaves citizenship and guarantees their civil rights.
- 1870** – Fifteenth Amendment gives black men the right to vote.
- 1896** – The Supreme Court rules in favor of “separate but equal” segregation laws in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and opens the way for southern states to pass “Jim Crow” laws which required black people to stay out of public places that served whites and take confusing tests in order to vote (also excluding many uneducated whites). Some states pass “grandfather clauses” which gave the vote to those persons whose grandfathers had qualified to vote in 1867, before black people had won the right to vote. In New Orleans, thousands of Creoles are forced to go live uptown with the general black population.
- 1890-1910** – 200,000 black people migrate to the northern cities to escape conditions in the South.
- 1900-1911** – Ragtime becomes the first African American music to achieve widespread popularity and commercial success in America; Scott Joplin becomes the first internationally renowned African American composer.
- 1900** – Booker T. Washington organizes the National Negro Business League to promote black economic advancement.
- 1903** – W.E.B. Du Bois publishes *The Souls of Black Folk*, his treatise on the dilemma of the “double consciousness” of the American Negro.
- 1909** – The lynching of two blacks in Springfield, Illinois leads to the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).
- 1914** – Marcus Garvey founds the Universal Negro Improvement Association, encourages African Americans to participate in a mass exodus back to Africa.
- 1917** – The Original Dixieland Jazz Band (a white band from New Orleans) makes the first jazz record with *Livery Stable Blues*. Members of the band would consistently deny that blacks had anything to do with the making of jazz.
- 1920** – The Nineteenth Amendment gives women the right to vote.
- 1921-1929** – A period of outstanding artistic activity and creativity flourishes among African Americans in New York, referred to as the Harlem Renaissance.
- 1925-1928** – Louis Armstrong records the sessions with his Hot Five and Hot Seven in Chicago that would propel him to international stardom; he would later become an ambassador for U.S. goodwill during the Cold War.
- 1935** – Pianist Teddy Wilson appears onstage with Benny Goodman’s trio, making it the first publicly integrated jazz band.
- 1939** – Billie Holiday records *Strange Fruit*, a protest song about lynchings in the South.
- 1943** – Duke Ellington premieres *Black, Brown, and Beige: A Tone Parallel to the History of the Negro in America* at Carnegie Hall in New York.
- 1940s** – The musical experiments of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, and others lead to the creation of Bebop, the first fully socially conscious and non-commercialized form of jazz.

- 1947** – Dizzy Gillespie features Cuban percussionist Chano Pozo with his big band, paving the way for later blends of jazz with Afro-Cuban elements, and eventually Latin Jazz.
- 1954** – Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* prohibits segregation in public schools.
- 1955** – Rosa Parks is arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat on a public bus to a white man. As a result, Martin Luther King, Jr. leads a boycott.
- 1957** – Martin Luther King helps found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization that promotes a nonviolent struggle for civil rights
- 1957** – Arkansas governor Orval E. Faubus infamously sends out the National Guard to prevent a few black children from entering Little Rock's segregated Central High School. Jazz bassist and composer Charles Mingus responds by recording his composition *Fables of Faubus* for Columbia in 1959. The complete version (with protest lyrics) is recorded for the obscure Candid label in October, 1960, and re-titled *Original Faubus Fables*.
- 1959** – Miles Davis is assaulted by police outside Birdland in New York.
- 1960s** – Black Militancy and the formation of the Black Panther Party are the result of continuing struggles for civil rights despite the legal end to segregation and discrimination.
- 1961** – Singer Ray Charles takes a stand against Jim Crow laws in Georgia by refusing to play before a segregated audience in Augusta.
- 1964** – The Civil Rights Act is passed to make voting easier for African Americans but is thwarted by the power of the states to impose registration restrictions.
- 1964** – John Coltrane records *A Love Supreme*, an unprecedented statement of spiritual commitment by a jazz musician and one of the most successful albums in the history of jazz.
- 1965** – Malcolm X is assassinated as he begins speaking at the Audubon Ballroom in New York.
- 1965** – The Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) is formed in Chicago, a school and cooperative inspired by black nationalistic ideals of artistic independence and self-sufficiency. The AACM becomes a working model for a number of other musical collectives.
- 1965** – With much opposition from politicians in the South, the Voting Rights Act is passed, empowering the national government to override state-imposed limitations on the right of African Americans to vote.
- 1968** – Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated after giving his *I Have A Dream* speech in Tennessee.
- 1997** – The first Pulitzer Prize ever given to a jazz composition is awarded to Wynton Marsalis for his *Blood on the Fields*, a "jazz opera" that draws heavily on Ellington's *Black, Brown, and Beige*.