The best-known recording of Rodgers and Hart’s *Pal Joey* (1940) was released by Columbia in 1950. This recording was part of a larger effort on the behalf of Columbia (under the supervision of Goddard Lieberson) to record classic Broadway shows that premiered before the time that cast recordings were typical. These recordings include, among others, the Gershwins’ *Girl Crazy* (featuring Ethel Merman’s rendition of “I Got Rhythm”) and a three-LP recording of *Porgy and Bess*, and Rodgers and Hart’s *Babes in Arms* (featuring standards like “My Funny Valentine” and “Johnny One Note”). Columbia’s *Pal Joey* includes two standards: “I Could Write a Book” and “Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered,” songs that had already by that point been recorded by numerous jazz and pop artists, including Benny Goodman, Doris Day, and Mel Tormé.

The orchestrations on the Columbia album differ in key ways from the orchestrations of both the original stage production (1940) and its celebrated revival (1952). In contrast to the stage numbers, the recording includes a few prominent improvised solos, and many of the tracks on the Columbia record use a “hotter” arrangement, including swing figures and brass effects. *Pal Joey* is built on an association with an urban underworld epitomized by after-hours jazz clubs and burlesque houses. The Columbia recording of *Pal Joey* brings up a number of questions that can most profitably be answered by looking at the histories associated with musical theater and jazz, which don’t interact with each other nearly as often as the material warrants. The aim of this chapter is to break down some of those disciplinary walls in an effort to better understand the historiography of each field, and to point out the overlap between genres that are typically understood as separate. As a case study, I will consider Rodgers and Hart’s *Pal Joey*, looking at orchestrations, instrumentation, and musicians, probing the places where genres and their histories meet.

**Genre and Respectability: Jazz and Musical Theater Canons**

Disciplines, which Joe Moran notes are linguistically allied with the term “punishment,” can both illuminate and conceal, depending on the degree to which a discipline builds a silo around itself (Moran 2002, 2). Jazz and musical theater histories are actively distanced by the disciplines that corral them, hardening the boundaries of genres: jazz historians have typically crafted historical narratives quite separate from that of pop historians, whose narratives have in turn diverged from histories of musical theater, and so on, despite any musical overlap. Genre designations are undeniably unstable. As David Brackett has recently explored, the meaning of a given genre can change...
over time, affected by the Jausserian “horizon of expectation” that colors the position of those who invoke a given genre, and can mean different things to different people, be they composer, performer, producer, consumer, historian, or some combination of these (Brackett 2016, 3–4). Sometimes historians avoid engaging with the histories of other disciplines because they seek to avoid—consciously or subconsciously—the ideological baggage of a genre, or an inconvenient history that threatens to derail the narrative favored by the historian.

Scott DeVeaux’s article “Constructing the Jazz Tradition,” a crucial intervention in jazz studies, points out the different critical viewpoints that helped fashion the “jazz narrative” (DeVeaux 1991, 525–560). Even early on, critics were mistrustful of the relationship between jazz and commercial pursuits, and critics writing about swing in the 1930s began to employ the terms “hot” and “sweet” to differentiate between what they considered to be authentic swing and “false” or commercial swing (DeVeaux 1991, 531). Further, critics often self-consciously superimposed race onto these terms, reinforcing black/white binaries. This has been harmful to both black and white jazz musicians who do not fit this binary, and to musicians of other racial backgrounds whose stories and realities typically don’t even rate mention.

These early narratives tend to reject commercial swing from the jazz narrative and have gone on to influence contemporary jazz histories, which still tend to shy away from the ways that jazz interacts and interacted with commercial pressures, except in cases, like bebop, where commercial rejection is underscored. Indeed, these narratives have tended to reify jazz’s place among other “art” musics while implicitly endorsing a progress narrative. This linear narrative has made it difficult to understand the reality of jazz at the turn of the century, typically marks jazz of the teens and 20s as “primitive,” and cannot successfully deal with artists who saw great commercial success.

As David Ake explains, while parsing out why jazz historians have generally left the band-leader and composer Louis Jordan out of their histories, the baggage associated with the term “popular”—concomitant with commercial values, aesthetic “lightness,” and often technical simplicity—has led jazz historians to avoid music that was commercially successful in the effort to support the common art/effort/complexity assemblage (Ake 2002, 10). This narrative, of course, minimizes the existence of commercially successful bands and music that interact with the genre category “jazz.” Even bands that are firmly part of the jazz canon are not exempt from these associations, even if these associations are downplayed in typical historical narratives. Elijah Wald’s contribution to the volume Jazz/Not Jazz: The Music and Its Boundaries, takes seriously the love that Louis Armstrong had for the music of Guy Lombardo (and vice versa), deconstructing racialized understandings of “hot” and “sweet” and questioning the old narratives of a centrally canonized figure in jazz (Wald 2012, 31–48). Although efforts such as Wald’s are immensely useful in breaking down old ways of constructing jazz narratives, much work still needs to be done.

The history of musical theater studies shows, likewise, a concern with cultural capital and the ensuing desire to rate musicals among the more elevated forms of art. It comes as no surprise that the term “musical play” (often cast in opposition to “musical comedy,” the genre that flourished in the 1930s and beyond) began to be widely used by artists and critics in the decade that saw the first collaborations of Rodgers and Hammerstein, including Oklahoma! (1943), Carousel (1945), and South Pacific (1949), all three shows that are geographically and musically distant from the city-inspired, jazz-infused scores of many musical comedies of the 1930s. Ethan Mordden asserts that musical comedies have a “populist agenda,” while the musical play has “musical ambitions” (Mordden 2013, 51). Mordden, helps craft a binary where musical comedies are considered frivolous, commercial, and ephemeral, while musical plays are serious, concerned only with aesthetic goals, and worthy of revival.
The term “musical play” is deliberately connected to straight theater and is related to the concept of “integration,” a valuative buzzword that is often intertwined with notions of theatrical maturity. The concept of the integrated musical—a production where the score, book, choreography, set, and costumes all work toward a cohesive artistic whole—is rooted in nineteenth-century European musical values. As Geoffrey Block has said:

Just as Beethovenian ideals of thematic unity and organicism became increasingly applied to dramatic works (culminating in Wagner’s music dramas), Broadway musicals after Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Oklahoma! (1943) would be evaluated on how convincingly they realized a new “ideal type,” the integrated musical.

(Block 1993, 525)

This work-centric focus has relegated many songs, and their shows, to the sidelines. Yet most of the songs that comprise the Great American Songbook (and the countless editions of “real” or “fake” books) are from shows that no one really remembers but were hugely popular and profitable during the time of their premiere. It is often difficult to access the detailed scenarios of musical comedies, especially those of the 1920s and 1930s, as many don’t have published scripts, and access to the particulars of plot, score, and the overall impact of a given production are largely accomplished through archival research. Add to this the fact that cast albums were not typical until after the Decca recording of Oklahoma! (1943)—which was part of a larger project related to canonization and preservation—and one might better understand why these shows are not well known.

The conductor and composer Lehman Engel, in his book The American Musical Theatre (first published in 1967, during the period when many critics bemoaned a supposed decline in musical theater), retroactively catalogs fifteen musicals that he considered to “represent that theater in its most complete and mature state” (Engel 1975, 35). The earliest of these shows is Rodgers and Hart’s Pal Joey, which premiered at the end of 1940. The list goes on to include four shows by Rodgers and Hammerstein, one by Irving Berlin, two by Lerner and Loewe, one by Cole Porter, one by Frank Loesser, one by Bernstein/Sondheim, one by Julie Styne/Sondheim, one by Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, and two with music and lyrics by Sondheim (the latter two added in a second printing of the book). Lehman demonstrates that all of these shows consider the dramatic integrity of each element of the show, from plot and characters to opening and closing acts. Significantly, Engel doesn’t include any shows prior to 1940—he considers most of these shows unrevivable. And in all fairness, although the concept of musical theater as “art” was being discussed in certain corners during the 1930s, songwriters and book writers were more concerned with producing hits. Consider one of the most quoted lines in musical theater history, typically attributed to the producer Michael Todd ( remarking on what he saw to be the certain failure of Oklahoma!): “No girls, no gags, no chance” (cited in Mordden 1983, 139).

Both jazz and musical theater studies have traditionally focused on tunes and artists (and shows, in the case of musical theater) that are considered historically durable and aspire to the condition of “art.” Despite a general reticence on both sides to admit so, jazz and musical theater’s relationship to the hyper-commercial realm of Tin Pan Alley song and, laterally, vaudeville, is a fundamental part of its story. As Mitchell Morris and Raymond Knapp have said: “Like jazz historians, [historians of the musical] rarely bother to note how often those songs also serve—deliberately and even proudly—a broader marketplace” (Knapp and Morris 2011, 81). The contemporary canonization of musical theater dates back to the 1940s, the same decade that is considered by many jazz narratives to mark the arrival of jazz as art, reflecting the desire to create a uniquely American “middlebrow” culture, distinct from the “merely” popular.
Rodgers and Hart

Like Cole Porter and other songwriters who were at the height of their popularity during the swing era, Rodgers and Hart are mentioned only in passing in most jazz histories. A quick survey of Volume 1 of the “Real Book” shows, however, that Rodgers and Hart’s songs are represented far more than any other theater songwriters, including Porter, Gershwin, and Berlin. This may be because their songs are often rooted in a “jazz age” vein—they are frequently full of syncopations, and their harmonic language is more adventurous than many Tin Pan Alley tunes of the period. Most of the songs are also no longer associated with their shows, so they have no baggage relating to character and plot. More directly, however, these songs likely made their way into the repertoire because of the influence of well-known, and by then canonized, recordings by jazz musicians. Consider, for instance, Chet Baker’s 1954 recording of “My Funny Valentine,” The Miles Davis Quintet’s 1956 recording of “It Never Entered My Mind,” Art Tatum’s 1956 recording of “Isn’t it Romantic,” or Benny Carter’s, along with Earl Hines, 1958 recording of “Thou Swell.” All of these recordings followed earlier recordings by the best-known swing bands and vocalists of an earlier period, securing their place in the jazz repertoire.

Earlier swing recordings—including Artie Shaw’s 1936 recording of “Thou Swell” and Benny Goodman’s recording of “Blue Room” (from the famed live concert at Carnegie Hall in 1938)—featured new arrangements of songs that were already contemporarily popular. In the 1930s many audiences were introduced to Broadway songs via the radio, often performed by the leading swing artists of the day, including the now canonized Goodman and Shaw, as well as a host of forgotten dance bands, and featured singers like Martha Tilton and Helen Forrest. These recordings—of songs by Rodgers and Hart, Cole Porter, George and Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin, and others—popularized many Broadway tunes, but the arrangements were often altered. In 1939 Rodgers and Hart wrote a song that critiqued the swing arrangements of Broadway hits in “I Like to Recognize the Tune,” a song written for the musical Too Many Girls. Hart’s lyrics call out musicians like Gene Krupa for “bury[ing] the tune,” and later mention that even Ben Bernie, Horace Heidt, Eddie Duchan, and Kay Kyser—all white show bands that are now considered by jazz historians to represent “sweet” or “commercial” swing—were not “immune” from “bury[ing] the tune.” Rodgers later referred to these swing arrangements as “the musical equivalent of bad grammar” (Rodgers 2002, 193).

Still, the exchange between swing musicians and songwriters was reciprocal. The pit orchestra for the Gershwin’s Strike Up the Band (1930) and Girl Crazy (1931) featured some of the soon-to-be best-known white swing artists of the period, including Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, Red Nichols, and Glenn Miller. Cole Porter’s shows incorporated the sound of swing to produce a fashionable up-to-the-minute newness, seen for instance in the score of Anything Goes. Rodgers and Hart often included swing rhythms and gestures in “collegiate” musicals, which reflected the taste of the young people depicted on stage. In Rodgers and Hart’s Pal Joey, which created something of a fashionable scandal on Broadway, the idiomatic sounds of swing are much “hotter” and tend to signal the disreputability of people and places.

**Rodgers and Hart’s (and Hans Spialek, Don Walker, and Ted Royal’s) Pal Joey**

Rodgers and Hart’s famously adult musical comedy about the trials and trysts of the womanizing nightclub Master of Ceremonies (MC) Joey Evans is considered a classic. The show is both a satirical takedown of cheap nightclubs and a psychological profile of the people who haunt them. The show flew in the face of musical comedy convention: the characters and situation were deliberately depraved, and the score was full of comically “cheap” nightclub tunes, reflecting the
unflinchingly realistic setting. By focusing on a disreputable nightclub and its inhabitants, *Pal Joey* commented on contemporary anxieties related to economic instability and shifting gender roles and entered into contentious exchanges related to nightlife and respectability during the period. The nightclub numbers in *Pal Joey* parody a “hotter”—a term used by critics in the 1930s and 1940s—kind of dance band music than was typical on Broadway. These songs feature driving, harder swinging rhythms, the inclusion of improvisatory brass effects, and lyrics that underscored their deviance from the status quo.

Though Rodgers wrote the songs for *Pal Joey*, indicated orchestral figures in his manuscripts, and conferred with the orchestrator on the final product, it was and is common practice on Broadway to employ an orchestrator to realize the score for pit orchestra. Since shows didn’t run very long in the 1930s and early 1940s, there was no time to spend on the “laborious business of orchestration” (Rodgers 1939). The original orchestrator for *Pal Joey* was Hans Spialek, an Austrian-born musician who worked for the publisher Chappell. By the time he was contracted for *Pal Joey*, Spialek had worked on numerous Rodgers and Hart shows, including *On Your Toes* (1936) and *Babes in Arms* (1937). Rodgers later asked Don Walker, another prominent Chappell orchestrator, to re-orchestrate some of Spialek’s scores (heard in the revivals of *Pal Joey* [1952] and *On Your Toes* [1954]); Rodgers felt that Spialek’s earlier orchestrations were, by that time, too “tame” (cited in Suskin 2009, 105). Throughout the 1930s Broadway had regularly incorporated the idiomatic sounds of swing bands (usually of the “sweeter” variety) into its scores, but, according to Walker, big band orchestration didn’t become typical until the 1940s and 1950s, when it flourished on Broadway. This shift may relate to the large number of dance band players seeking out work in the decline of the swing era.

What appear to be the original stand parts for *Pal Joey* are held in the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization’s theater library. Some important markings exist in these stand parts. The “Overture” part for Trumpets 1 & 2, for instance, lists the names of the brass players, with “1940–1941” indicated; this was a common stamp left by pit players. Since the names survive, I was able to ascertain that nearly all of these players had big band experience. These players were all in the “sweeter,” more commercial white bands, including Paul Whiteman’s orchestra, The Original Memphis Five, Tommy Dorsey’s orchestra, Al Katz’s orchestra, and Charlie Davis’s orchestra. Vincent Grande’s name also appears; he was trombonist for The Original Memphis Five and was best man in fellow trombonist Glenn Miller’s wedding (Simon 1980, 32).

Spialek’s original woodwind instrumentation was typical for the period: Reed 1 (1st alto sax, doubling flute), Reed 2 (oboe/English horn/alt sax), Reed 3 (clarinet/bass clarinet/tenor sax), Reed 4 (flute/clarinet/tenor sax), and Reed 5 (bassoon/clarinet/tenor sax). Rather than typical big band orchestration, the reed parts appear to be true pit doubles, even though certain songs require the reeds to assume the sound of a swing band. When the 1952 revival was mounted, Walker was asked to add his own orchestrations (Suskin 2009, 105). He rearranged the original five reed books to set up a traditional big band arrangement, approximating the hard-swinging bands popular in the 1950s: Alto I, Alto II, Tenor I, Tenor II, and Baritone (a part he added). His orchestrations can be heard on the revival cast recording released by Capitol.

Walker’s early exposure to dance bands affected his approach to orchestration. In 1928, according to his memoirs, one of his arrangements made its way into the hands of Fletcher Henderson, who performed it with his orchestra on the radio (Walker 2013, 8–10). Walker reportedly cold-called Henderson to see if he could write more arrangements for the band. According to Walker, who greatly admired Henderson, he was star struck when he first met the man and his band, which at the time included Rex Stewart, Buster Bailey, and Coleman Hawkins, among others (Walker 2013, 12). He went on to arrange versions of the Ager/Yellen hit “Ain’t She Sweet,” the Gershwin’s “‘S Wonderful,” and more for Henderson’s band. Walker’s arrangement of “I’ve Found What I Wanted in You” was recorded by Henderson for Columbia in 1931. After his
involvement with Henderson he went on to arrange parts for bandleader and radio personality Fred Waring, and eventually met the theater and operetta composer Sigmund Romberg, who helped pave Walker’s way to Broadway. Walker’s early background with Henderson, however, and his knowledge of big band instrumentation and music, shows just how intertwined the path of one of Broadway’s top orchestrators was with the world of commercial swing. Walker eventually became valued for his ability to deal with “hotter” material (Suskin 2009, 80).

According to Walker, the instrumentation of Broadway pit orchestras did not match that of a typical swing band until his work on Best Foot Forward, which premiered in 1941:

I reasoned that a show about prep school students, their senior prom invaded by a fading movie star in search of helpful publicity, should be evocative of the popular danceband records that young people were buying at that moment.

(Walker 2013, 168)

He goes on to say that he was able to accomplish this because George Abbott, the producer for the show, hired the bandleader Archie Bleyer, “well known to dance musicians as an excellent arranger of ‘stocks,’” to direct the pit; Bleyer also helped secure a top notch band, described by Walker as players who “filled important ‘chairs’ in ‘big bands’” (Walker 2013, 168–169). Walker mentions the reaction to this “new” sound in the pit: “Although the critics did not fully understand what had happened in the pit to make the music so bright exciting, they applauded the score. A few even mentioned the orchestrations!” (Walker 2013, 171). Walker used this “new” sound (which by then was conventional) on the orchestrations for the 1952 revival of Pal Joey, giving the pit a full complement of saxophones, plus the addition of strings (see Figure 3.1).

The orchestrations for the two earliest recordings of Pal Joey (Columbia, 1950, and Capitol, 1952) are credited to Ted Royal and Don Walker, respectively. Royal also worked for Chappell in the 1930s and 1940s and worked as an uncredited secondary orchestrator (with Spialek) on the original Pal Joey. He also had experience with and in dance bands, and was thus familiar with dance band aesthetics: from the early 1930s Royal played lead alto saxophone with the Ted Weems orchestra, and he wrote big band charts for Weems, Tommy Dorsey, Paul Whiteman, and Harry James (Suskin 2009, 79–84). A particularly striking track on the Columbia recording is the song “That Terrific Rainbow,” which features the character Gladys, a frowsy nightclub singer. The version of the song on the Columbia recording begins with an instrumental rendition of the raucous chorus, idiomatically referencing the blues and burlesque bands, and is characterized by a slow, smeary, laid-back brass melody overlaid by an improvised clarinet solo. Spialek’s original orchestrations in the introduction feature two clarinets doubled at the third, playing a countermelody to the brass melody (see Figure 3.2). Whether Ted Royal, Richard Rodgers, Goddard Lieberson, or someone else entirely suggested the improvised solo on the Columbia session remains a mystery. “That Terrific Rainbow,” however, serves as an example of how much the harder swinging bands of the 1940s and 1950s had affected Royal’s arrangement and the studio musicians’ approach to the song.

Another striking difference between the original orchestration and that of the Columbia recording appears on the song “Zip.” Originally performed as a mock striptease by the character Melba, a hardboiled reporter channeling Gypsy Rose Lee (perhaps the most well-known stripper of the twentieth century), the song is surprisingly “buttoned up.” At the chorus of the song, as Melba begins her mock striptease, Spialek’s original orchestrations feature delicate woodwind flourishes at the ends of phrases, tasteful brushwork by the drummer, and pizzicato interjections by the strings. It seems that Rodgers and Spialek relished the opportunity to emphasize the comic contrast between the buttoned-up reporter and the famed stripper, using the innuendo-laden language of burlesque movement, rather than sound, for impact. Much of the commentary in
### Pal Joey (1940), Instrumentation:  
(Principal orchestrator: Hans Spialek)

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<td>Reed 1: <strong>Alto</strong>, Flute, Clarinet</td>
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<td>Reed 2: <strong>Oboe</strong>, Eng. Horn, Alto</td>
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<td>Reed 3: <strong>Clarinet</strong>, Bass Cl, Tenor</td>
<td>1 Trombone</td>
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<td>Reed 4: Fl., Clarinet, Tenor</td>
<td>Reed 5: <strong>Bassoon</strong>, Clarinet, Tenor</td>
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<td>Reed 5: <strong>Bassoon</strong>, Clarinet, Tenor</td>
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### Pal Joey (1952), Instrumentation:  
(Principal orchestrator: Don Walker)

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<tr>
<td>Reed 2: <strong>Alto</strong>, Clarinet, Bass Cl</td>
<td>1 Horn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reed 3: <strong>Tenor</strong>, Oboe, Eng. Horn, Cl.</td>
<td>2 Trombones</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reed 4: <strong>Tenor</strong>, Flute, Picc., Cl.</td>
<td>Reed 5: <strong>Baritone</strong>, Alto, Bassoon, Cl.</td>
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**Figure 3.1** Pal Joey, Instrumentation for pit orchestra, 1940 and 1952

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**Figure 3.2** “That Terrific Rainbow,” intro, Clarinets 1 and 2. Transcribed from Reed books 1 and 3 of original stand parts, 1940–41 (Rodgers and Hammerstein Theatre Library)
Pal Joey concerns issues related to sexual containment and its alluring opposite. This song mocks both extremes.

The Columbia recording of “Zip,” in contrast, includes burlesque–reminiscent brass and percussion effects (featuring low trumpet growls and loose tom–tom patter) at the chorus, in addition to the delicate woodwind flourishes from the original. It seems that rather than encourage the sort of subtlety that would have prompted knowing laughs from a Broadway audience, this recording instead plays up the more disreputable elements of the show, signaled through jazz and burlesque affiliated sounds. In this way, in the absence of the staged performance, the recording is more visceral. Perhaps surprisingly, Don Walker’s arrangement for the 1952 revival (featuring Elaine Stritch as Melba) is much closer to Spialek’s original orchestration. One might speculate that Richard Rodgers had something to do with this. The Columbia recording, after all, wasn’t tasked with the same job of conveying character and situation that the stage production was.

Conclusion

Acknowledging the overlap between what are typically considered different musical genres—in this case the overlap between big band musicians and musicians in Broadway pit orchestras, swing band arrangements and Broadway arrangements, and the idiomatic sounds of swing and burlesque and their Broadway analogs—discloses an entirely new area of inquiry. For one, who exactly were the musicians that were employed in dance bands and pit orchestras? What was their musical training? Was improvisation seen as a necessary asset, or a special skill? These players are notoriously hard to pin down and are among the unsung players in both jazz and musical theater histories; as the landscape of the music industry changed, so did their place in it. William F. Lee counts at least 186 working bands in the years between 1920 and 1929, 217 between 1930 and 1939, 147 between 1940 and 1949, and a general decline from there forward (Lee 2005, xii). As demonstrated above, even during the height of the swing era, dance band musicians were doubling as Broadway pit musicians, and the decline of the swing era likely changed the sound of Broadway pits.

Seymour “Red” Press, currently working, at 94 years old, as one of the main orchestra contractors on Broadway, was present for this change. Press started out playing alto saxophone in big bands, including those of Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey, and eventually made his way to Broadway. In an email exchange with Press, he expands on the “large shift” he saw in the late 1950s, as Broadway pits became full of big band players:

I was part of that change. I had played with Tommy Dorsey and Benny Goodman among many less popular bands and I was hired for the show Gypsy in 1959. There were players in that band from Duke Ellington, Stan Kenton, Jimmy Lunceford, Elliot Lawrence, Sauter-Finegan, [and] Paul Whiteman.

(Press 2016)

Press went on to say that his time in big bands prepared him well to blend with a pit orchestra, and especially equipped him with the ability to sight-read (Press 2016). He also mentioned that the racial disparity seen in dance bands in the 1930s through the 1950s was also typical in pit orchestras:

[There might be] a single black musician in a 25 piece orchestra. It changed for a while in the late 60s [and] early 70s. The theater contract called for 25% minority representation in the orchestra. I believe that left the contract in the 80s.

(Press 2016)
Press’s insights are rare, indeed; most pit players from that period and earlier have passed on. In older Broadway shows, records of pit players typically appear in the form of contracts, in an off-hand comment by one of the creators of the show, or in less standard forms (like the scrawl of a name on a stand part); more often than not, these records have been lost. These rare opportunities to glimpse into the realm of Broadway pits have proven that there was a significant overlap between the personnel working in Broadway pits and those in swing bands. It would benefit both disciplines to further probe these alliances. David Brackett states: “Simply because a musical text many not [. . .] belong to a genre with any stability does not mean that it does not participate in one” (Brackett 2016, 3). We would do well as historians to take Brackett’s point and consider genres and their histories not bounded, but fluid and participatory.

Notes

1. Fletcher Henderson, who was known as both a bandleader and arranger in the 1920s, occupies a precarious place in jazz histories because of the above-mentioned binary. Efforts by Jeffrey Magee, and others, have helped recuperate his place in the narrative (Magee, 2005). Bill Siegel’s chapter on Jim Pepper and native identity is one example of ways scholars have deconstructed the above binary in an effort to break out of the monolithic categories of “black” and “white” in jazz history (Siegel, 2016). Gendered binaries, too, have directed jazz histories, erasing the contributions of many female instrumentalists and downplaying the significance of jazz vocalists. Scholars, however, have begun to salvage these histories (Tucker, 2000).

2. Engel’s full list includes the following shows: Pal Joey (1940), Oklahoma (1943), Carousel (1945), Annie Get Your Gun (1946), Brigadoon (1947), Kiss Me, Kate (1948), South Pacific (1949), Guys and Dolls (1950), The King and I (1951), My Fair Lady (1956), West Side Story (1957), Gypsy (1959), Fiddler on the Roof (1964), Company (1970), and A Little Night Music (1973).

3. Michael Todd, quoted in Ethan Mordden, (Mordden, 1983, 139). Though Mordden attributes the famous quotation to Todd, there is some uncertainty as to its origins (see Symonds, 2016, n. 63).

4. George Gershwin is an exception. Gershwin was demonstrably concerned with aesthetic risks and innovations—mostly praised in the jazz-meets-Western classical music idiom, seen in pieces like his concerto Rhapsody in Blue, his piano works Three Preludes, and his “folk opera”/musical Porgy and Bess—and fits into jazz histories that value such concerns. Further, he knew and sometimes played with Fats Waller (they were mutually influential), was respected by Duke Ellington, and possibly began what became a thwarted project with him. He also hired soon-to-be famous jazz musicians to play in the pit orchestras of both Strike Up the Band and Girl Crazy (see Pollack 2007, 157–174).

5. It should be noted that if jazz vocalists were more centrally included in jazz histories, it’s possible that songwriters would naturally take up a more prominent position in the narrative.


7. The players (in the order listed) are as follows: Harry Bloom, Ricky Trent, Arthur Gianone, Vincent Grande, Morris Speinson, Irving Solow, and Eddie Kooden, Ralph Hayes (the last three names were likely subs).


References


