John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie  
1917-1993

- Louis Armstrong, to Roy Eldridge, to Dizzy (further developments of trumpet range as well as technique)
- One of bebop’s “true” composers and master of re-harmonization
- Translated bebop (i.e., small group) to the big band format successfully
- One of the first to regularly use Latin-American & Western African rhythms in jazz
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Timeline

- Born in Cheraw, SC
- Moved to Philadelphia in 1935
- First important gig w/Frankie Fairfax in 1935
- Joined Teddy Hill’s band in 1937 and made first recording (strongly influenced by Roy Eldridge)
- Next w/Lionel Hampton in 1939 and begins to show early signs of bebop in solos (i.e., recordings)
- Also influenced by the drumming of Kenny Clarke
- Joins Cab Calloway band later in 1939
- Begins to take part in bebop jam sessions in 1941
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie Timeline (2)

- Leaves Calloway in ‘41 & w/various bands
- Joins Earl Hines band in 1942 & Billy Eckstine’s band in 1943 (1st “modern” big band)
- Leads own small group in 1944 & makes 1st recording as a leader on 1.9.45
- The 1945 recordings includes Diz’s tunes (Groovin’ High, Salt Peanuts & Bebop) & Diz’s reharmonization of “I Can’t Get Started”

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{C} &\text{Dm7} &\text{G7} &\text{E7} &\text{Cm7} &\text{Em7} \\
&\text{| / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / |}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{C} &\text{Am7} &\text{Dm7} &\text{G7} &\text{Bm7} &\text{E7} &\text{Bbm7} &\text{E7} &\text{Eb7} &\text{Am7} &\text{D7} &\text{Abm7} &\text{Db7}
\end{align*}
\]
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie Timeline (3)

- Began big band in 1945, but failed
- To L.A. in 1945 w/Bird
- Begins big band again in 1946 w/Eckstine’s materials
- Successful big band 1946-49 (video)
- Introduces Cuban virtuoso on percussion (Chano Pozo)
- Toured Europe in 1948
- Height of popularity in 1948
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Timeline (4)

- Starts Dee Gee records in 1951
- Bird & Diz together at Massey Hall (5.15.53)
- Big band fades in 1950’s, but remains active with various groups from small groups to big band throughout remainder of career.
- With OP in 1980 (video)
- Dies in 1993
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Jazz Contributions

- Expand trumpet range & capabilities
- Establish bebop big band
- Used “exotic” scale choices (e.g., bebop, diminished, whole tone)
- Extensive use of altered chords (e.g., b5 & b9)
- Brought Latin-American influences to jazz
- Unique compositions and arrangements (i.e., tunes with intros, tags, interludes, and the use of the m7b5 chords)
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Performance characteristics

- Bebop scale & other systematic use of chromatics
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Performance characteristics

- Emphasis of the b9 or b5
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Performance characteristics

- Signature triplet figure
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Performance characteristics

- Imaginative use of passing chromatic chords
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Performance characteristics

- Four favorite chord patterns
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Performance characteristics

- Distinct Patterns
  - Diminished
    - [Musical notation]
  - Whole tone scale patterns
    - [Musical notation]
John Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie
Performance characteristics

- Notes of indefinite pitch
- Lip curls
- Double time
- Command of high notes
- Hot House analysis (Massey Hall concert)