As the introduction to this volume makes clear, jazz on screen takes many different forms, distributed across different decades, mediated by a range of technological mechanisms, stylistic frameworks, and so on. Faced with a corpus of material united most of all by its disparity, the forging of methodologies which can serve to interrogate the whole gamut of what is represented here might seem hopelessly idealistic or simply naïve. Nonetheless, this chapter attempts to sketch the terms of an engagement with jazz on screen. There are two separate facets to this that serve as arguments running through this chapter. The first develops out of a challenge to some of the categorizations and distinctions that have been applied to jazz on screen, specifically that of jazz within a cinematic context (interpreted broadly) as opposed to jazz in a documentary-style observational context. I will interrogate this dichotomy and argue that it is unhelpful for any kind of real understanding of what these mediatized representations have to tell us. The second starts from the premise that the construction of the visual image is just as significant as the expressive facets of the music. One of the reasons jazz performances on film can seem to offer the listener so much, is via the seductive proposition that by comparison with a sound recording they are less mediated, and thereby more in keeping with the notion of jazz as a music resistant to easy commodification. But jazz on film is never unmediated, regardless of the context in which it is produced; whether by an enthusiastic fan with a hand-held camera, or on a well-equipped television set. The mediation involved may be different from that implicated in sound recording, but as viewers we are directed to view films in specific ways through the deployment of visual codes. I will develop these two arguments in the following sections, in reference to specific instances of jazz on screen, instances

chosen specifically because they exemplify some of the points I am trying to make.

<2> Categorizing Jazz on Film

The disparate nature of how jazz is manifested on screen has given attempts to categorize it added urgency. The early appearances of jazz on film are usually divided in two categories, as designated for instance in the entry on "Films" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*.[1] The first of these is the appearance of musicians in filmic dramas, and the second consists of so-called Soundies (produced mainly between 1928 to 1934) or shorts (produced mainly between 1940 and 1946). In both cases the filmic production employed seems, from a contemporary perspective, rudimentary to the point of being crude. As Amy Herzog explains, the production of Soundies relied on small budgets and limited production time, rather unlike mainstream Hollywood productions. The result was films that presented highly staged performances, complete with obligatory dance routines and a kind of address from the performer to the audience that in her words, "suggested a continuity between the diegetic space and even the space of the viewer."[2] This is one facet that distinguishes the Soundie from much mainstream Hollywood convention, in that it employs a mode of direct address in which the performer 'speaks' directly to the spectator. This kind of address was not unprecedented, though: as Feuer argues, it is typical of the "backstage" musical, and Goodwin traces it back to earlier forms of light entertainment, such as the variety show. As Vernallis points out, it would later become a staple of music video.[3] Naturally the production of Soundies by the larger studios also allowed for greater artistic control over elements of staging. One result is that sometimes the use of cameras and cutting techniques (either via panning shots or a montage-style cut from one shot to another) is clearly choreographed to the music (see Emile Wennekes's chapter in this volume, for instance). Such techniques are a result of the rehearsal that would have taken place at recordings, allowing the director time to create shots tailored to the performance.

Sometimes these staging techniques result in scenes that are highly cinematic in nature, presenting performances that are clearly impossible. Take for instance the Duke Ellington

performance from the 1943 film *Reveille with Beverly,* with the Ellington band performing "Take the A-Train" on a film set designed to look like a train carriage (complete with scenery passing by in the windows).[4] While this Ellington performance was made for the purposes of a Hollywood film, its style of production and placement within the film actually serve to make it a stand-alone performance much in the manner of a Soundie.[5] The band are gathered tightly around Ellington's piano, with vocalists emerging from down the carriage at one point to add to the instrumental texture. This performance requires, naturally, a certain suspension of disbelief, functioning in much the way that staged numbers in movie musicals do. The Ellington band make use of their surrounding (a restaurant car on a train) to fashion a space for performance in a way which seems spontaneous, much like the characters in a film like *Singin' in the Rain*, even if in a rather less flamboyant fashion. The manner in which they do so is designed to create the sense of Ellington leading an informal jam, with the members of his band joining in. It is, in other words, the kind of performance of spontaneity Björn Heile describes elsewhere in this volume. The impossibility of this sequence in the context of the film is framed by a device in which the Ellington performance is introduced by the image of a record spinning on a turntable. At the same time, Ellington breaks one of the unspoken rules of conventional filmic narrative by looking directly into the camera, as if to address the viewer directly when playing, thereby referencing the film musical, specifically the backstage musical tradition.[6]

The technical and stylistic approaches associated with these kinds of audiovisual texts have served to relegate them to a division lower than the sound recording. This demotion happens not only because of the artifice involved in their staging, but by virtue of the fact that musicians would generally have mimed these performances to pre-recorded takes. To some, like Herzog, this prompts an all-too obvious discontinuity: "[a] clear distance between the poorly synched and separately recorded tracks, opens a fissure that makes the viewer's distance from the performance painfully felt."[7] Similarly, the entry in *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* cites "poor production, inferior sets, bad synchronization, and, for the most part, unimaginative camera work".[8] Certainly by today's

standards it is often perfectly clear that these musicians are miming. While in contemporary culture an accusation of miming levelled against a musician can serve to call his or her reputation into question, the era in which such films as *Reveille with Beverly* were recorded was one where miming was perfectly normal, an accepted part of filmic convention. To dismiss screen performances such as Ellington's on the basis that the musicians are miming, would be short-sighted, or rather it would be to impose a contemporary aesthetic hierarchy on a performance recorded at a time when prevailing views were quite different. It may be that viewed from a contemporary perspective this discontinuity is highly unsettling, but that reveals something about the nature of the position from which we, as contemporary viewers, watch. Indeed in the following chapter, Emile Wennekes makes a similar argument, taking issue with the idea that these Soundies were unimaginative and lacking in sophistication.

The question here is one of mediation and representation. The problem is that with Soundies and shorts the mediation, in the form of stylized filmic techniques, is *visible*, so glaringly obvious that it cannot be avoided or ignored. Viewing these films from a contemporary perspective has the effect of amplifying this sense, given how different our preconceptions about filmic production now are. Consider how generally jazz on screen is considered more faithful when the mediation involved is minimal. Arthur Knight describes a tension felt by some musicians who had experienced the operation of Hollywood values and the effect it had on jazz.[9] He presents this in contrast to the production of the famous 1944 *Jammin' the Blues*, a film widely regarded as a landmark for the manner in which it attempts to approach jazz from a perspective more sympathetic to the music. As Knight demonstrates, the film deploys a number of specific stylized cinematic techniques to this end. The result may be generally regarded as a more faithful representation of jazz, but it is a representation just as much as jazz performances filmed for shorts or Soundies around the same time. As Knight suggests, the film attempted "to reformulate the conventions used for representing jazz and African-American musicality, even as it could not escape them."[10]

We can see how this change in production aesthetics has been interpreted as the move to a

less mediated and thereby more authentic representation of jazz. This is nowhere clearer than in the view of *Jammin' the Blues* as the beginning of a move towards a more documentary style of filming jazz, one famously exemplified by the 1960 *Jazz on a Summer's Day*. By separating documentary films from these other categories, as the entry in *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* does, there is a clear sense that filmic technique and aesthetic become a central means of categorization. While shorts or Soundies were filmed in studios, often on specially constructed sets without live audiences, documentaries were and are filmed in live performance, where the camera appears to observe a performance given to a live audience (who are sometimes seen on screen, and sometimes not). That change in perspective is important, because it lends the film an observational tone, or rather, the film constructs itself in these terms. As film theorist Noël Carroll points out in regard to the dichotomy between fiction and non-fiction in films, "[w]hether or not an event is staged, the act of filming involves structuring so that what results is an interpretation rather than the Real."[11] Thus, any documentary-style film *constructs* a sense of reality in just the same way as jazz in filmic drama constructs its sense of fiction.

What starts to emerge from such categorizations is a set of binaries that can be mapped onto a clear division within these filmic representations of jazz, a kind of "before" and "after." The before is when jazz was subservient to a set of production techniques which controlled presentation in very specific ways, exemplified best by the Soundies or shorts of the 1930s and '40s. The after is when jazz might be said to break free of such constraints, as an observational style of production comes to be employed. These binaries could be described as follows: mediated/unmediated, mimed/live, staged/unstaged. But this historical and stylistic divide is problematic. It maps onto a larger narrative trope employed in jazz histories regarding notions of art and entertainment. The trajectory of entertainment to art, as represented musically by the shift from swing to bebop and from formally dressed and elaborately choreographed big bands to a small group informal performance ethos during the 1940s, is paralleled by the freeing of the music from a set of representational devices which held it to a specific set of visual codes. These visual codes serve as a

metaphor for the cultural constraints of entertainment that placed particular demands on musicians during the swing era. Subscribing to this idea about a before and after as regards jazz on film, is not simply about production values and techniques: it is also to invest in an idea about the cultural trajectory of jazz and its location within the categories of art and entertainment. These binaries are revealed as suspect because of their implication in this historiographic project, part of an attempt to create an art/entertainment-based reading of jazz history.

Here I want to posit a different view of the situation, one which seeks to rehabilitate jazz on film and argue for its status as potentially significant, while also challenging this implicit distinction between jazz within a non-real cinematic context, and as framed within a documentary style. The first step in this argument is to see processes of production as constraints, values that constrict the presentation of the music and force it into contexts that may be unnatural or even detrimental. Undoubtedly the performances we see musicians giving on screen are not of the same kind that we have on sound recordings, and the ways in which musicians are depicted performing are not necessarily the same as they might have been in performance situations without the presence of cameras. But the intrusion of mediating factors into the representational process is no different from that imposed by the recording studio at this time.

By all accounts the limitations of time imposed by the short-playing record until the introduction of its long-playing successor late in the 1940s, coupled with the environment of the recording studio, resulted in performances which are not of the same kind of as those presented in front of audiences. Any number of examples could suffice here, but perhaps one of the starkest is the fact that until the long-playing record was introduced, the great majority of recorded jazz adhered to a three to four minute durational constraint. That creates the impression that all jazz was performed within such durational constraints, when that is quite clearly not the case. The effects of such technological mediations are not audible or visible on recordings; they are, essentially, invisible. It is this that has, perhaps, served to relegate jazz on film to a status inferior to that of sound recordings in the eyes of historians and scholars. But to create a hierarchy in which the sound

recording is preferred to the filmic performance because one appears less mediated than the other, is to create a false division where none exists.

It is tempting to see the move to a documentary style as representing a change from a highly mediated process to a much less mediated one. While there is indeed a shift in the mechanisms of production involved, all such texts afford the viewer the opportunity to engage with a musical performance via an audio-visual artefact. Rather than emphasizing differences in production techniques in order to differentiate between texts, I suggest that a focus on this shared element—the fact that all examples of jazz on film involve the same kind of interaction between viewer and text in which meaning is negotiated—is a more productive way forward. This is to recognize that meaning is also created at the moment of viewing, not only at the point of production, and that not all viewers will perceive the results of production in the same way. Seeing the situation this way allows us to begin to reap the rewards from considering what visual texts can add to our understanding of jazz in terms of a viewing experience. Central to thinking this way is to conceptualize production not simply as the nuts and bolts of making a film, nor as a process which is separate from the music, but rather as a set of representational devices which place musicians on the screen in performance in certain ways. Production in this sense is a kind of musical interpretation: it is a reaction to music, expressed through visual devices, and located within a cultural context and a set of filmic practices specific to a certain period. Such an approach might allow us to understand how it is that taken across decades, the evidence on film of the work of a musician like Duke Ellington or Count Basie is not just a history of that musician and their band, but of representation, and how jazz was conceptualized. Regardless of the undeniable differences in production we find writ large across the variety of different filmic categories involved, the bridging of those divides for scholarly purposes has significant potential rewards. This is not to smooth over the difficult and uneven terrain of history to create a conveniently smooth surface; production values and techniques must still be acknowledged and interrogated, but the challenge I pose here is to see jazz on film as a history of ideas about music expressed visually.

<2> Thoughts on Framing

In this section I want to begin developing the second strand of my argument, regarding how the representational codes which place musicians on screen in different ways and contexts can be understood as expressive—musically, and in terms of the modes of representation of which they are a part. To do this I want to begin by mapping out a set of technical considerations. These are perspectives drawn from work in Film Studies, a discipline which has for a long time been concerned with a theoretical understanding of framing devices employed on screen.

Aspects of visual organization are often described under the catch-all heading *mis-en-scène*, an idea which encapsulates modes of visual organization as employed by directors in the process of presenting material on screen.[12] *Mis-en-scène* can cover a wide range of factors, many of which will depend on the context and the specific stylistic expectations at work in any scene. I want to focus on aspects of *mis-en-scène* that are particularly apt in the presentation of the performing body on screen, when that body is static (as it typically is when jazz performance is presented on screen). We can start with the idea of space. There is first of all the space or place of performance. Naturally, jazz on screen tends to be presented in a variety of different spaces: nightclubs (real or imaginary), concert halls, dancehalls, on specially designed sets, and the like. But that space or place is represented on screen for us in particular ways. So it is that a concert hall may be made to feel intimate, a nightclub very formal, and so on. Consider for instance how Jane Feuer describes one of the standard shots in the film musical, whereby the viewer is made to take the place of the onscreen audience via a sequence of carefully choreographed shots.[13] The positioning of cameras is also critical in this sense, because this creates a range of possible shots, as well as making certain angles impossible. So it is that generally most shots of jazz in performance focus on this audience perspective supplemented by side-on perspectives and close-ups (as we will see later, there are some particular examples where other kinds of shots are used).[14] So the positioning of cameras constructs the space of performance for viewers in specific ways. There is also the way that the

camera represents that space, and that leads to the second consideration, that of framing.

Framing is not simply a way of speaking of what is contained within the filmic image, or the border of that image, but rather the idea that the frame "imposes *a certain vantage point* onto the material within the image."[15] Framing is also related to the idea of shot, generally regarded as the basic unit of meaning in film. A shot is a way of representing a subject, and it can frame that subject in very specific ways. The idea of a frame also posits an interior and exterior, and as we will see, that can be constructed and utilized in very different ways depending on the context.

Generally in classic Hollywood practice, bodies are presented on screen according to a convention which utilizes a specific part of the screen space (roughly a 'T' shape).[16] Carol Vernallis points out how the placement of a performer in the center of the image and on the level serves "as a means to establish centrality, stability, importance and clarity."[17] While more contemporary filmic technique makes use of a much wider range of screenic practices, nonetheless there have been clear preconceptions about how bodies should be presented from the very beginnings of cinema. Linked to this is the way the character is framed within a shot. In general terms, the further away the camera moves from a subject, the more possibilities there are for the viewer to find different readings. Conversely, a close-up shot is quite prescriptive, and usually suggests a particular reading, most often in Hollywood convention because it allows us to observe a particular emotion. Susan Hayward's *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts* provides a loose taxonomy for understanding the composition and function of different kinds of shots. Hayward's summary attaches specific meanings or connotations to specific shots: a close-up or extreme close-up connotes intimacy or access to the thoughts of the subject framed. On the other hand, a medium close-up, often used to frame two or three characters, suggests a relationship between those characters, or places them in solidarity.[18]

How might this work in practice? Well, I suggest that the way a musician is placed in a shot may tell us something about what is intended expressively, and what we are supposed to infer. In order to demonstrate, I want to discuss a performance by Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra, recorded

in 1948 as a 'short' titled simply *Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra*.[19] In the first part of this performance, Dorsey is framed in the foreground of a medium long shot, set against his saxophone section (INSERT OWM SPEAKER ICON HERE (EXAMPLE 1.1), see figure 1.1 below).

[INSERT Figure 1.1 here]

In this part of the performance, Dorsey is playing as part of a voiced saxophone passage, so musically there is no distinction between his role and that of the saxophone section; in fact he is part of the section at this point. But visually we can see two important registers of difference: Dorsey's attire sets him apart from the rest of the band, and of course he stands in front and apart from the saxophone section. Visually this difference is constructed through a medium long shot, which allows us to see Dorsey set slightly apart from the saxophones, a distinction which would not be available if we were engaging with this performance through a sound recording. There is also a very slight difference here between Dorsey and the saxophone section in terms of their address to the camera. The musicians in the section seem largely preoccupied with their music, laid out on the stands in front of them, although naturally these stands are not allowed to predominate in the shot. But Dorsey has no music to look at, and instead looks straight ahead. And while this difference is only registered subtly, the inference is that Dorsey is the one playing to us, the viewer.

The piece then moves into a solo passage for Dorsey, and as this happens the camera zooms in to a medium shot, so that Dorsey's upper torso fills the screen (figure 1.2).

[INSERT Figure 1.2 here]

We can still see members of the band behind Dorsey but now he occupies most of the frame. The issue of whether this is a medium shot or a medium close-up is not of real significance, but the filmic strategy is important: it frames a certain kind of relationship within the band in which Dorsey plays as part of the band, but is apart from it when he solos. The zoom in serves to highlight an expressive point: that the ensemble passage leads to a solo in which the playing of a single musician is important, as well as the implication in the shot of a visual access to the interior of the musician. It is worth noting that as the camera zooms in to Dorsey, it moves slightly to the left, so that he is

not pictured front-on playing to the camera, but as if playing off into the distance. The difference here is subtle but important: even though this is a medium shot, it is still observational because Dorsey is not playing to the camera. If he were, then we as viewers would be placed in a different kind of position.

The second sequence from this film I want to discuss involves an ensemble passage near the middle of this piece that involves the whole band (INSERT OWM SPEAKER ICON HERE (EXAMPLE 1.2)). During this section there are a number of antiphonal exchanges between the sections of the band in the style typical of the swing era. So it is that the camera cuts between sections of the band: from trumpets, to piano, to trombones (figure 1.3).

[INSERT Figure 1.3 here]

This is a kind of strategy that might be used when filming a conversation between two actors, using cuts between different shots to represent the sides of the conversation. This representation focuses on the sections of the band, and the musicians function much like actors: when a section or a musician plays or "speaks" they are given the camera's attention (as indeed Emile Wennekes discusses elsewhere in this book). But the framing device does not work quite as straightforwardly as this on closer inspection. The camera does not attempt to track every exchange, mainly because the result might prove disorientating, as it would result in multiple cuts from one camera to another. Furthermore, some of the cuts do not strictly align to what is happening musically. The saxophone section are involved heavily in this passage, but they are never once shown on screen. Instead, sometimes the cut to the trombone section will occur a bar before the entry of that section. So the framing device represents this musical dialogue, but also reduces its complexity for ease of visual representation.[20] This may well be a result of technological limitations: there may not have been enough cameras involved to be able to cover all the different sections of the band.

In understanding how we view films like these, invoking the idea of gaze is useful. The idea of the gaze originates from a famous 1975 article by Laura Mulvey theorizing the male gaze, which has also been appropriated by Lawrence Kramer to become the listening gaze.[21] Central to the idea

of gaze is that as viewers we are encouraged to view images from a specific position. For Mulvey, this was the perspective of the heterosexual male. What Kramer theorizes as the listening gaze is an adaptation of the same notion, to emphasize the idea that we are encouraged to view images, particularly of performing bodies, and to interpret those images as part of the listening experience. In the Dorsey clip our gaze is being directed in a particular way, not simply at the musicians, but specifically in order to observe a kind of musical conversation or relationship. The framing devices in terms of shot composition, use of zoom and cutting, help express these relationships in visual terms. So the visual construction of this passage through the cutting technique, encourages us to listen in a certain way, to identify this antiphonal device via a sequence of stark visual cuts.

In this example, filmic representation does not simply comment on the music, but overlays a certain kind of reading onto it. One aspect of this reading concerns the relationships between the different sections of the band, and between bandleader and band. There is a clear hierarchy implied from the way Dorsey is represented, separated from the rest of the band. This in itself is very different from the informality and performance of spontaneity in the Ellington performance I discussed previously.

These Dorsey and Ellington examples give some idea of the kind of representational devices being used at the time. But they also tell us much about the kinds of preconceptions that were being brought to bear. Here we can see a racially-coded element at work, even if pointing this out does run the risk of essentializing. The informal spontaneous trope applied to Ellington was important for the representation of African-American musicians, as it stressed the idea of music as a natural care-free expression, a notion which is uncomfortably close to a kind of primitivism. The Dorsey example, on the other hand, presents white musicians as serious and professional. Of course it would be dangerous to use two isolated pieces of film to make a general argument about how musicians were represented on film according to a kind of stereotyping. But the representational devices at work here are important, in that they have the potential to point us to wider cultural preconceptions about

jazz and music-making.

I want to consider three further examples that demonstrate how the gaze can be directed through techniques of framing on film. In both cases the examples I will use are from documentary-style films of jazz performance. As I have already explained, in such situations there are likely to be fewer attempts to choreograph film to music as closely as in the Jimmy Dorsey and Ellington examples. As a result the presumption might be that the camera will act as a neutral observer, but as we will see there is often a subtle work of representation taking place which comments on the music. In documentary-style films of jazz performances, camera shots can be just as prescriptive as in earlier filmic styles, highlighting the way that such films are just as staged in their own way as Soundies or shorts.

This first example from a duo concert by vibraphonist Gary Burton and pianist Chick Corea, recorded some time probably during the early 1970s, demonstrates how a kind of classical shot composition has a particular effect in presenting musical relationships.[22] As seen in figure 1.4, the shot employed at the start of this clip is composed in such a way as to frame Burton against Corea. Both players are kept in focus by the depth of field—in turn a property of the kind of camera lens used. The effect is also one of foreshortening: it makes the two musicians seem closer than they actually are on stage. In terms of the sense created by this framing device, by framing the accompanist against the soloist, there is a hierarchy or weighting suggested in the relationship. While Burton is in the foreground, the foreshortening of the distance heightens the sense of their musical relationship. We can see Corea looking across at Burton as he plays, while Burton's attention is focused solely on his instrument. This reinforces the idea that there is a particular kind of relationship on show here: Corea is the one who is following, Burton leading. Regardless of whether this shot was carefully constructed by the director during preparations for filming, or simply happened because of good camera positioning, it is observational and prescriptive at the same time, because it grafts a very strong reading onto the film. The direction of the gaze towards the two musicians, who are presented in a very particular visual fashion, also prompts a particular

kind of listening strategy. The construction of the visual image prompts us to listen for this musical relationship represented in sound, so that we listen for Corea responding *to* Burton.

[INSERT Figure 1.4 here]

Another example of framing devices used to suggest particular kinds of relationships comes from a performance of "Blues in the Closet" by the guitarist Jim Hall, playing in a quartet with Attilla Zoller (also on guitar), Red Mitchell (bass) and Daniel Humair (drums), recorded in Germany in 1973. There is one particular sequence that interests me here, which occurs at the end of the head and the beginning of Hall's solo (INSERT OWM SPEAKER ICON HERE (EXAMPLE 1.3)). Naturally as Hall's solo begins, we might expect the emphasis of the film to change slightly, as we are moving from the presentation of the melody, into the section where individual musicians improvise solos. As shown in figure 1.5, there is a medium close-up shot which frames both Hall and bassist Red Mitchell, and the foreshortening effect puts them very close together. But the use of focus then moves attention from Hall *to* Mitchell, first to the fingerboard of the bass, and then the shot moves down to the fingers of his right hand plucking the strings. The guitar is still in shot, but because it is out of focus it is clearly not the center of attention. Then the camera pulls back slightly and focuses on Hall's instrument as he plays. The whole sequence traces a kind of trajectory: framing both musicians, then moving our attention to the bass, and then back to the guitar.

[INSERT Figure 1.5 here]

The use of focus here is a device for directing our gaze. Unlike the Corea/Burton clip where both players are kept in focus, here the change in focus results in a more prescriptive kind of shot. It is as if we hear what the camera focuses on; our ear follows our eye in listening to guitar, then bass, then guitar and the bass playing together. Here the style of filming—an intimate approach where the cameras seem very close to the instruments—results in a sequence which seems to guide how we listen. It shifts our listening gaze from one instrument to another, through the use of focus and pulling in/out shots. It also suggests something about the relationship between Hall and Mitchell.

Because Mitchell does not appear as distant as in the Corea/Burton example, there is less of an implied hierarchy. And because he is not pictured devoting his attention to Hall explicitly, the inference is perhaps of a more distant relationship. But at the same time, the use of the shifting focus to direct our attention to his bass line seems to imply that we are invited to listen to how he accompanies Hall. We might say then that Hall and Mitchell are pictured in a musical relationship which, while not overtly sympathetic or social, is nonetheless revealed to be highly musically empathetic.

The third example I want to use demonstrates the way in which framing techniques can also impact on a series of other relationships, that between the audience in the performance being filmed and the performers, and our relationship as viewers to both the audience and performers on screen. The stills in figure 1.6 come from a performance by Chet Baker filmed some time during the 1980s in Europe. Three things are apparent here. First, the positioning of the camera in this shot avoids the standard point-of-view perspective of the audience that I mentioned earlier. Here the audience is clearly visible, with the depth of field such that they are clearly in focus, and foreshortening bringing them very close in. Rather than the stage being a clearly demarcated physical space, the audience beyond the stage are brought into the frame, as if the stage extends outwards into the audience. In fact the effect here is as if the stage that separates Baker from the audience is non-existent. The viewer is no longer notionally part of the audience, but placed in a quite different position, able to view both musicians and audience.

[INSERT Figure 1.6 here]

Second, the cameras are visible, and there is no attempt at all to disguise the technological mechanisms involved in filming. This is not a one-off either. Many other films made in Europe around this time employ exactly the same strategy. It is a kind of self-conscious realism, deliberately positioning cameras in such a way that this was bound to happen. On the one hand this strategy works to acknowledge the mediation involved in this performance by alerting us to the presence of technology. But this can be seen as nothing more than a stylistic sleight of hand. What

we never see is the camera that gives us our viewpoint, and so the spell is never broken. Third, and this is clearest in the second shot from figure 1.6, we as viewers are placed in a perspective for which there is no real-world correlation. At times, as in figure 1.6, we are behind the musicians, able to look out at the audience and cameras, to see Baker side on, and the bassist from behind. This is almost like being backstage, except better, because we are on the stage, and yet not conscious of being there at all. At the same time, we can be given close-up shots of some of the musicians in places, drawing us close in. This hyper-real perspective allows us to be distant, distinct from both performers and audience, whilst at the same time being afforded the opportunity to identify with both.

I argued earlier that processes of production say much about the cultural values of the time, that they serve as a commentary on the music. So what might this Baker example say in this regard? The documentary style of film in this case belies the extreme care that has been taken to offer viewers a rich experience, which allows us to see audience and musicians from a perspective that is almost impossible. The framing devices in this film reveal the importance of an aesthetic of performance as a kind of dialogue between musicians and audience. The whole film is staged in order to promote this aesthetic, allowing us to observe but also to participate in this dialogue. The way in which the film breaks down the usual separation between audience and musicians serves as a device to draw us in to the social interactions depicted on film.

The examples I have discussed provide a range of representations of jazz. While some are films of performances, and some performances created for film, in each case filmic technique articulates a sense of what is significant about each performance. The before and after view of jazz on film which I have taken issue with, splits audiovisual texts into two broad categories. But doing so is to ignore the fact that all examples of jazz on film have one important commonality: they all do cultural work in how they depict and frame the musicians performing. Whether or not those musicians are performing in a staged way, as in the Ellington example, or simply being filmed in the act of performance to a live audience (as with Baker, Hall, and Corea/Burton), the film of that

performance guides our viewing in specific ways. This can mean that sometimes our ear is guided (via our eye) to specific instruments or dialogues between musicians, as well as suggesting something about a whole nexus of relationships—between performers and audience, and between us as viewers and those depicted on film. To conclude, when we are shown jazz on film, we are shown it framed, restricted by perspective and depicted in specific ways, whether highly stylized or apparently casual. Nonetheless, the processes by which these depictions and representations take place are worthy of attention, because they say much about how jazz is understood and how film has been complicit in creating our understanding of what jazz is.

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[1] Ernie Smith et al., "Films," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, 2nd ed., by Barry Kernfeld (London: Macmillan, 2002), online as *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed 7 December 2014, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/J149900.

[2] Amy Herzog, "Discordant Visions: The Peculiar Musical Images of the Soundies Jukebox Film," *American Music* 22, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 30.

[3] Jane Feuer, *The Hollywood Musical,* 2nd ed. (Basingstoke: Macmillan 1993), 35; Andrew Goodwin, *Dancing in the Distraction Factory: Music Television and Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 1993), 77; Carol Vernallis, *Experiencing Music Video* (New York: Columbia, 2004), 57.

[4] According to David Meeker, the Ellington segment was filmed on 8th October 1942: David Meeker, *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography* (Washington: Library of Congress, 2013), accessed 5 August 2013, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/html/jots/jazzscreen-home.html.

[5] The Ellington performance appears in the film via the device of one of the characters putting a record on. The shot of the spinning record then dissolves into the footage of the Ellington performance.

[6] Elsewhere in the film, the staged numbers function in the standard way, whereby we take the perspective of the audience in the theatre. The Ellington section stands out for this reason, because in the absence of any on screen audience, the address to the viewer is direct. The Ellington band had filmed their segment for *Cabin in the Sky* just the previous month. In that film their performance is presented quite differently in that it is a staged scene in a nightclub.

[7] Herzog, "Discordant Visions," 33.

[8] Smith, "Films."

[9] Arthur Knight, "*Jammin' the Blues*, or the Sight of Jazz, 1944," in *Representing Jazz*, ed. Krin Gabbard (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 11–53.

[10] Knight, "*Jammin' the Blues*," 29.

[11] Noël Carroll, "From Real to Reel: Entangled in Nonfiction Film," chap. 15 in *Theorizing the Moving Image* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 224.

[12] See, for instance, John Gibbs, *Mise-en-scène: Film Style and Interpretation* (London: Wallflower, 2002); David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 7th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 176–207.

[13] Feuer, *The Hollywood Musical*, 28.

[14] On this point, see David Bordwell, Janet Stalger, and Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (London: Routledge, 1985), 310.

[15] Bordell and Thompson, *Film Art*, 252.

[16] Bordwell, Stalger, and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 51.

[17] Vernallis, *Experiencing Music Video*, 34. See also Bordwell, Stalger, and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 324–25.

[18] Susan Hayward, *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2001), 354.

[19] *Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra* (1948), dir. Will Cowan.

[20] I am grateful to Steve Doctor for pointing out to me that these cuts don't follow the music quite as strictly as it might at first appear.

[21] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975): 6–18; Lawrence Kramer, "Franz Liszt and the Virtuoso Public Sphere: Sight and Sound in the Rise of Mass Entertainment," in *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 68–99.

[22] I have been unable to verify the date of the performance. A posting on a now-discontinued YouTube channel suggested that it was made at the Berliner Jazztage in November 1972.