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THE THIRD AGE TRUST



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Jazz Appreciation

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HOW TO START A JAZZ APPRECIATION GROUP

There is not a great deal to be said about forming a JAZZ APPRECIATION GROUP so the following can only be a general outline on how to start your own Group. Everyone has their own idea on where to start and which musicians to include. Some only like the 'early' music; some the music from the 20s/30s; some from the big band era; some prefer the music from the 'bop' era; some from the cool scene; some listen to the high standards of the various vocalists and I know there are many who enjoy the electric jazz of today. They all play their part! Remember there are only two types of music – good and bad.

You will find that when you hold your first meeting there will be members who are knowledgeable, some who think they are and some who have just come along to be entertained as well as educated. This is the group I think you have to look after first.

For your first meeting I would propose that you either have a programme of the music you enjoy or a programme outlining a short history of the music. To help in this you will find compilations in either the Resource Centre or your Local Record Library.

At the first meeting you can also find out from members attending if they are prepared to give talk themselves. It is a help when others assist. You will also find those who are very entrenched in their views. I take a great delight in trying to change them – playing the music of Miles Davis to Trad Fans.

After two or three programmes, when you have learnt the opinions of you members, it is probably a good idea to go into more detail. You could:-

- Talk about the History of Jazz
- Talk about the great instrumentalists.
- Alphabetically – Armstrong, Coltrane, Davis etc.,
- Or by Instrument
- Or by Big Band
- Or the great Vocalists
- Take a tune and present it played in different ways :-
e.g. 'Misty' played by Errol Garner and Stephane Grappelli and sung by Peggy Lee and Ella Fitzgerald
- Compare one musician with another (Art Tatum with Errol Garner, Gene Krupa with Buddy Rich)

Do not forget there are many CDs in the Resource Centre which can help you put a programme together, and I am sure there is information on the Internet

I have found the following books helpful in supplying information regarding the History of Jazz and Biographies of the Musicians:-

JAZZ by John Fordham – published by Dorling Kindersley

READING JAZZ edited by Robert Gottlieb – published by Bloomsbury

THE NEW GROVE DICTIONARY OF JAZZ edited by Barry Kernfeld published by Macmillan

JAZZ The Rough Guide
THE PENGUIN GUIDE TO JAZZ ON CD

I have them all but they should be available from your Local Library

When you are playing music you cannot be dogmatic on how a programme is presented. I always say 'go with the flow', have music in reserve, but do not be afraid to play a piece which will get your members arguing. It shows they are taking an interest.

Do not forget to arrange visits to the **JAZZ STUDY DAYS AND ALSO BOOK FOR THE JAZZ APPRECIATION NETWORK HOLIDAYS IN EUROPE.**

What ever you do enjoy the music!

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