



**dreams
in double
time**

**jonathan
leal**

**on race,
freedom,
and bebop**

dreams in double time

BUY

**refiguring
american
music**

A series edited by
Ronald Radano,
Josh Kun, and
Nina Sun Eidsheim

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contributing editor

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Cover art: Dizzy Gillespie plays at Eddie Condon's, circa 1960.

Photo by Susan Schiff Faludi / Three Lions / Getty Images.

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**for octaviano
y elevinia,
mary y José**

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I didn't like the way he carried himself, loose and dreamlike all the time, and I didn't like his friends, and his music seemed to be merely an excuse for the life he led. It sounded just that weird and disordered.

James Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues" (1957)

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acknowl- edgments

Dear Dreamer,

In some ways, this book began a decade ago: first as joy-filled jam sessions in Denton, Texas; then as a long essay for a seminar led by Walton Muyumba; then as a series of years-long conversations with Walton, Javier Rodriguez, Masood Raja, Ramón Saldivar, José David Saldivar, Anna Schultz, and Charles Kronengold—and then, finally, as the braid before you now.

In that sense, this book is in many ways a record of young adulthood, a record of a decade of formative experiences, musical collaborations, and dream wanderings with poets and musicians, painters and programmers, composers and agriculturalists, scientists and historians, scholars and writers, living and departed. It bears the traces of a world warped by pandemic catastrophe, ecological collapse, political nefariousness, digital voids, astroc capitalist greed, racial violence, heteroblivious policy—and, crucially, also the traces of those who have been working to counter these forces and bring a different world arrangement into being. Each revision and reharmonization of the following pages has been a modest attempt to grapple with grief and promise through sound and story, to grapple with what it means to find oneself through rhythms and melodies half-remembered. Each iteration has also helped me grow and grow up, has helped me hear anew the immense weight of human inheritance. Writing transforms a writer, dreams the texture of waking.

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Thinking back on some of the journey: in Denton, Walton Muyumba, now a longtime mentor and friend, took me under his wing alongside Javier Rodriguez and Masood Raja, helping me contextualize my efforts as a borderlands musician within a broader story of social struggle and possibility, becoming the spiritual coach I didn't know I needed. Too, Paul and Sandi Rennick, percussionists and composers who have influenced my musical life more than I can articulate, modeled for me the highest forms of care, rigor, and soul in contemporary music education; on and off the stage, I witnessed them stoke performers' unique musical passions and invest in the transformative power of true teamwork, and those moments have never left me. I was fortunate to spend time with them as a younger person, and I'm grateful for their friendship now.

Later, at Stanford, in soft sunlight among the redwoods, a number of generous souls guided me as I refined and pursued the questions that came to animate this book. Ramón Saldívar, José David Saldívar, Anna Schultz, and Charlie Kronengold offered immeasurable support, engaging my ideas, steering my madcap enthusiasms, and genuinely caring for me as a human being. La Maestra Cherrie Moraga opened my eyes to parts of my life I had been too frightened to look at directly; she liberated me from unacknowledged inhibitions and inspired me to dig deeper, to articulate my pieties, and to accept myself such that I might accept and offer love more deeply. And Paula Moya's brilliance, determination, and goodwill served as a constant inspiration throughout my time on the Farm, and I feel exceedingly fortunate to have learned from her.

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Like many books, too, *Dreams* is a record of camaraderie. My interlocutors and fellow graduate student travelers—Maria Cichosz, Calvin Cheung-Miaw, Max Suechting, Jeremiah Lockwood, Tysen Dauer, Gabriela Salvidea, Gabriel Ellis, Ioanida Costache, Juliana Nalerio, Thao Nguyen, Rebecca Wilbanks, Cameron Awkward-Rich, Chris Suh, So-Rim Lee, Michiko Theurer, Annie Atura, Michael Kinney, Courtney Peña, Imán Muñiz, Luz Jimenez Ruvalcaba, Karina Gutierrez, Cristopher Vásquez, Melanie León, Kristin Wilson, Long Le-Khac, Annika Butler-Wall, David Stentiford, Katja Schwaller, Alberto Quintero, Mitch Therieau, Henry Washington Jr., Miguel Samano, Chiara Giovanni, and many others—all provided support as I drafted portions of what became this book by way of writing groups, feedback sessions, late-night ravings, Spotify playlists, caffeine binges, read-a-thons, zany recountings, and creative practices. As our paths have diverged in recent years, these folks have continued to inspire many by bringing their whole selves to their artistic and scholarly practices. Their work is and is of the future.

After Stanford, midpandemic, I moved to Los Angeles, tenderfooted yet hopeful, and I'll always be grateful for how readily and warmly I was welcomed by my new colleagues at the University of Southern California. I feel an immense sense of gratitude for Josh Kun, especially—an inspiring mentor, gifted teacher, and brother in sound and spirit—who was central to this life transition and has been to my thinking about musical possibility since I first wandered into a lecture of his a decade ago. Major thanks, too, to all of my colleagues in the Society of Fellows in the Humanities and the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity, which offered me home bases during my postdoctoral years. My colleagues in these spaces—including Daniela Bleichmar, Hilary Schor, Luísa Reis-Castro, Ruthie Ezra, Jessica Varner, Diane Oliva, Ella Klik, Ajay Batra, Meredith Hall, Alice Echols, Nitin Govil, Jennifer Petersen, Elda Maria Román, Jenny Chio, Cavan Concannon, Mike Ananny, Alice Baumgartner, Lydia Moudileno,

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With much love to you and yours,
Jonathan

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Tano's saxophone. Source: Author's personal collection.

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intro. dreaming otherwise

When I quiet my mind and rest my eyes and grant my memory space, I can still recall the saxophone in my late grandfather's home—there in San Juan, Texas, at the edge of two nations and the center of more histories—the metal and plastic variably reflective when naked in the blistering sunlight, tarnished slightly near the bell but otherwise gleaming and inviting, as if still just arrived from the Sears Roebuck catalog in the sheen of the early 1950s. It would have come by mail, just after World War II, just before my grandfather's military service in the US Army, just before his studies as a music student, just before the birth of his and his wife's first child. From that saxophone, once housed in a modest hard-shell case lined with soft blue fabric, the sounds of varied worlds once emerged with regularity, at times in the company of other instruments and musicians, though most often in the humid dark of South Texan solitude. From its curves once bloomed laconic wind band pieces, local upbeat Tejano classics, buttoned-up swing favorites—and, notably, energetic, earnest attempts at conversing with an iconoclastic Black sound forged after-hours in Harlem nightclubs thousands of miles from the heat mirages of the Rio Grande, made local through ink and vinyl and rumor and report, rendered audible through records pressed and sold and spun and later stored away: *Charlie Parker with Strings*, Charlie Parker and Machito's *Afro-Cuban Jazz Suite*, Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie's *Bird and Diz*.

"I loved music from the beginning," my grandfather told me when I once asked him about these things, reticent as I was about prying into his inner life. As he recalled:

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Aquí en el Valle it was all by ear. There was no sheet music for me, so I learned how to play that way. Then I went to high school, and I learned how to read music, and then I went to college and was a music major and played with the guys who were in the One O’Clock Lab Dance Band at North Texas State College, and those guys could really play. I learned about modern jazz. Everyone was way ahead of me, writing their own music. It was challenging, but I still enjoyed it. I learned so much from listening and playing, and for years and years I played, especially when I came home to the Valley.

My recollections of my grandfather’s saxophonic musicianship are spare; he had all but stopped performing by the time I joined the cosmos. But as I—distant now from our shared homeland—have reflected these past few years on the records he most loved and the artists he most admired, I have felt his tastes steering my questions, his memory guiding my ears. As time has passed and this world has smoldered, remembering my grandfather’s musical dreams and harmonious sensibilities has offered me a shelter, a refuge that, today, finds its form as this offering, *Dreams in Double Time*—a work that in part explores gaps and overlaps in my and my grandfather’s generational experiences as well as meditates on the questions I am left with in the wake of his death. This book, that is—through its loops and syn-copations, its measured longings and layered stories—focuses on a music that inspired my grandfather and a great many others in his generational cohort, as well as a great deal more over the course of the past eighty years (and counting): bebop, an underground Black achievement with a woe-fully “inadequate” name.¹

In the pages that follow, I listen for and alongside musicians like my grandfather and sustain a cluster of questions grounded in relational cultural study: Why was a radical avant-garde music, a wartime idiom created after-hours by Black experimentalists in 1940s Harlem jam sessions, so generative for young, differently racialized nonwhite listeners during the global realignments of the postwar years? How is it that the dreams encoded in bebop, specific to African American experiences, came to transform the lives of differently racialized listeners as they dealt daily with the violences of state and national power? What might a focus on the “other colors” of American undergrounds teach artists and scholars about the pasts and potentials of postnational American dreaming? What kinds of futures can relational histories of musical engagement create?

To begin offering answers to these questions, this book entwines my own scenes of remembrance and consideration with three stories, three arcs, three multitemporal, (audio)biographical narratives that, much like my grandfather's own style of storytelling, loop and intersect, overlap and interweave.² Each story, one flowing into the next, follows one member of what I'm calling a trio of loosely linked, differently racialized listeners—and, in effect, their respective music scenes, contexts, and communities.³ My grandfather didn't know these three figures, never played with them or listened to their music, but I would like to think that they would have gotten along, would have bonded over their shared sounds and mutual interests. Together, their stories, distinct yet inseparable, evoke a dense interplay, a polyrhythmic relation, a sense of a moment greater than the sum of its parts.

The first figure, James T. Araki, was a Nisei multi-instrumentalist, soldier-translator, and eventual literature and folklore scholar credited with helping introduce bebop to Japan during the Allied Occupation, not long after his internment at the Gila River War Relocation Center. The second, Raúl R. Salinas, was a Mexican American poet, jazz critic, and longtime activist who endured the US carceral system for over a decade and whose investments in jazz from behind and beyond bars helped document East Austin's rich music histories and instantiate a bebop-inflected Xicanindio literary idiom. And the third, Harold Wing, was an Afro-Chinese American drummer, pianist, and songwriter who performed with bebop's pioneers—including Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Erroll Garner, Miles Davis, Bud Powell, and Babs Gonzales, as well as singers including Ella Fitzgerald, Shirley Horn, and Etta James—before eventually taking the lessons of the music to his work as a public servant in Newark's City Hall after the uprisings of the late 1960s. By following these figures through their communities during the postwar decades, *Dreams in Double Time* expands bebop's narratives, recording the reach and importance of Harlem's Black experimental musicians among differently positioned and marginalized listeners of color across (and beyond) the United States—audiences newly driven to disrupt the standard logics of racial democracy through their insistent, dissonant dreaming. Working against a backdrop of studies devoted to jazz masters, this book attends to listeners for whom the Black-centered musical revolution of bebop proposed new ways of being in the world, for whom it became an affectively and intellectually powerful force, for whom it offered a symbolic language critical of the larger forces of governmental, state-sanctioned imperialism, for whom it challenged the totalizing singularity of whiteness during the

second half of the twentieth century, for whom it offered opportunities to imagine new critical-artistic forms of confrontation with a racially supremacist, imperial nation emboldened during and after World War II. *Dreams in Double Time's* stories, in effect, shed light on the lasting need for relational antiracist thought, aesthetics, and coalition building—a matter crucial even before there was a United States, a concern vital amid the wartime nationalism of the so-called short-lived American century, and a notion pressing for all of us now, amid the layered crises, looming precarities, and nationalist virilities of the 2020s.

* * *

It's no secret that in the United States, the 1940s were years of widespread tension and acceleration.⁴ Domestic migrations, shifting class dynamics, cultural mediatizations, and racial tensions grew increasingly intense, spurred by the boots of a martial economy. Also accelerating were efforts to maintain the definition of social divisions under the guise of order and renewed security: Jim Crow segregation laws cleaved domestic communities and military units during the war; the Bracero program instrumentalized migrant laborers while denying them long-term securities; Executive Order 9066, issued on the basis of pursuing "every possible protection against espionage and against sabotage to national-defense material," resulted in the xenophobic internment of Japanese immigrants.⁵ Disorganized and paranoiac, these measures were generated from an all-too-familiar defensive position: when met with the real martial and ideological crises that accompany states of war, American government leaders doubled down on the corrosive hierarchies propping up the mainstream national fantasy.

That recalcitrant fantasy remains a cruel mirage, a monocultural siren song built on white supremacist fictions, a corrosive myth protected by what Vaughn Rasberry has called a "racial democracy," or a "regiment of governance" "in which the rights, principles, and affective dimensions of citizenship are distributed to or withheld from citizens on the basis of race"—and in which the regime is upheld by a "network of disciplinary, punitive, and terroristic measures meted out to racial subjects by state and non-state actors alike."⁶ The national fantasy during that crucial period of global conflict became a deafening rallying cry, an unsettling chorus demanding univocality.⁷ And amid its numbing drone, a new, iconoclastic approach to musicking emerged from Harlem's underground—an approach that fused Black migrant aspirations, Harlem's unique magnetisms, and deeper theo-

retical critiques of power and hegemony: what came to be known, “most inadequate[ly],” as bebop.⁸

Before this music was incorporated into postcard narratives of American improvisatory freedom, unsurprisingly, many listeners heard it as simply a new form of Black “noise”: the work of “loose and dreamlike” walkers, the stuff of “disorder, the unthought, the unplanned, the unwelcome, marked by the apparent absence of the human capacity for reason.”⁹ As Vijay Iyer explains it, this “ejection” of Black music “from the category of music [itself] align[ed] directly with the historic and ongoing dehumanization of Black people”—the very dehumanization that those in service of global capitalism have for “the past half millennium” used “to rationalize and justify enslavement, imperialism, plunder, and genocide.”¹⁰ This world-imposing hearing of Black musicking as noise is precisely what makes me so interested in the ways differently racialized nonwhite people engaged with it, lived with its attendant myths, heard in its angularities and complexities a route to dreaming together, with and across difference.

Although Mexican Americans, Japanese Americans, Afro-Asian Americans, and many other racialized groups were already intimately aware of the horrors of midcentury racial democracy in the United States before bebop traveled beyond Harlem’s underground, for some young listeners and practitioners, this music was a revelation that disrupted racial democracy’s divide-and-conquer logics and fostered new understandings of social connection. Hearing this mode of Black musical dreaming that unsettled and affirmed—that blurred boundaries, challenged fixities, invited new modes of being, and rearticulated the force and presence of Black countermodernity—was a transformative encounter, a “meeting of worlds and meanings.”¹¹ The improvisatory, dialogical, embodied, and situational “mode[s] of relation” this musicking insisted on called into question a racial capitalist logic that “incentivize[d] minority groups to claim whatever advantages they [could] instead of recognizing shared struggles with other minority groups.”¹² To listen to and study Black radical musicking—whether as a formerly interned Japanese American newly enlisted in the US Army, or as a Mexican American prison poet recalling the sounds of his East Austin upbringing, or as an Afro-Chinese American negotiating his biracialization and cultural influences while aspiring to a musical career in Newark, or, like my grandfather, as a borderlands proto-Chicano learning modern jazz through recordings and rehearsals and jam sessions—was to begin to understand one’s relationship to others, to rebellion and racialization, to a nation over which one had

little immediate control. It was to start dreaming of new worlds beyond the logics of white supremacy, to begin “fus[ing]” that “dream world to the world of ordinary things,” and, in effect, to start bending the real itself.¹³

* * *

As a concept, dreaming has come not only to signify the literal neural processes that texture sleep, entwine with memory, and disrupt logic and temporality but also—particularly in the United States, amid the radical legacies and neoconservative co-options of civil rights movement discourse—to connote the metaphorical language of individual and communal aspiration, of social and political possibility, of national fantasy and utopian longing.¹⁴

While this book isn’t strictly about the former—it offers neither psychoanalytic readings of cultural productions nor intensive “dream ethnographies” descriptive of a historical unconscious—it does learn from the associative, multitemporal progressions of dream experience, bringing the fractious, contradictory, and remembered to bear on more traditionally linear presentations of theory, history, relation, interiority, affinity, solidarity, and musicking.¹⁵ Here I treat dreams as a shorthand for the interfaces between internal and external, imagined and real, remembered and forgotten, self and other, in order to offer a new way of theorizing creative worldmaking, political activity, sonic invention, and the larger historical fields in and through which such praxes connect and resonate. For just as the forces of history are filled with contradiction and demand multiscalar and multitemporal attention, so, too, do the structures of our literal and figurative dreams outpace our extant modes of description, narration, and theorization—and, much like music, inspire new attempts, new languages altogether.

Connecting this idea of dreaming to radical musicking—or, better, considering radical musicking as a form of dreaming, hearing dreams as a kind of radical music—links this book’s differing yet related stories. To dream in and as music, through and with sound—to listen for and learn with the limits of one’s self, community, and surroundings; to stretch the invisible threads lining the fabrics of the everyday; to dissolve inherited boundaries between processes, objects, phenomena, and people; to think and live in a realm beyond routine expression, beyond the normal limits of articulation—is, as I understand it, to improvise at the edge of form, to create from and layer atop the strangeness of the quotidian, to act on its insistent surreality in the service of a different vision.

This approach of course isn’t new in itself, nor imposed on this book’s individuals and communities from some distant theoretical perch, but instead

is part of a long tradition of artistic-intellectual praxes generated not only in response to but *despite* the devastating cruelties of “modernity’s crucible.”¹⁶ Elizabeth Alexander, for instance, thinks in her work through physical and conceptual spaces of and for Black art by way of a dreamlike “black interior,” a liberated realm for abstract thought with real-world import, an “unfettered dream space” in which “social identity” “need not be seen as a constraint but rather as a way of imagining the self unfettered, racialized but not delimited.”¹⁷ Robin D. G. Kelley, in his landmark *Freedom Dreams*, focuses on the intimate relationships between “revelatory dreams” and “political engagement,” following generations of activists and surrealists alike to emphasize that “in the poetics of struggle and lived experience, in the utterances of ordinary folk . . . we discover the many different cognitive maps of the future, of the world not yet born.”¹⁸ And Daphne Brooks, in her watershed Black sonic feminist *Liner Notes for the Revolution*, writes of “radical dreaming, rehearsals of the what-might-be, the what-could-have-been, the conditional exploration of elusive histories that remain outside of our discreet group that may yet still be conjured and examined through creative manifestations.”¹⁹ From Frantz Fanon to Aimé Césaire, Toni Morrison to Fred Moten, Richard Iton to Saidiya Hartman, Esperanza Spalding to Tyshawn Sorey, Matana Roberts to Camae Ayewa, the figure of dreams as signifying aspiration though not reducing to it, as conjuring new worlds but not reifying them, has been a key motif in antiracist Black study and theory for generations and has gained new urgency and momentum as this world’s maladies have intensified.

As a Chicano scholar and musician raised in and by the US-Mexico borderlands, I entered this strand of Black relational, antiracist worldmaking, like those of the primary subjects of this book, sonically, socially, proximally, relationally. Like my late grandfather—a lifelong borderlands Tejano, amateur saxophonist, bebop-loving listener, and local community builder in the post-World War II years and beyond—and like many others of his generational cohort, I, too, am compelled by the conditions of social possibility that avant-garde, racialized musical practices create. To echo Ronald Radano: I’m interested in the “hyperreal, dream-like aspect of music that so remarkably and continually draws our attention,” in that guiding vibrational energy that “incites passion, prompts deep philosophical reflections, and inspires glorious rhapsodies of poetry and prose.”²⁰ Keeping that dreamlike quality in the mind’s ear, and all it might inspire, is at once a spiritual, social, and scholarly goal of this work.

* * *

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For many radical musicians and listeners during that pivotal postwar moment in the mid-twentieth century, organized sound was not a static object to be handled and analyzed, not a product or document to be fetishized, but rather a means of indexing and fostering new social relations—and thus an important analytic-theoretical medium in its own right. In this book, as a practitioner myself, I emphasize this approach; rather than pursue new theories *of* or *about* music, I aim to understand music itself (more broadly, sound; more accurately, musicking; more directly, “human action: the sounds of bodies in motion”) as a medium for dreaming, speculating, theorizing, connecting, and relating.²¹ As an improvising musician actively bringing formal musical training, improvisation, composition, production, and performance research experience to bear on various modes of theoretical praxis and cultural historical study, I work here to understand musicking as a densely signifying cultural practice just as capable of generative insights about the personal, social, and historical as more traditionally representational visual and textual media forms and practices.²² As I write, I aspire to render and pursue musical theorizing as dreamlike *activity*—much less a noun than a verb—while at the same time attending to Theory as historically conceived within Western academic pathways and philosophical genealogies, reading it in critical relation to the work of ostensibly “minor” figures, activities, and communities.²³ Most directly, by relying on this intentionally open-ended, context- and medium-specific understanding of *theory as action*, I work here to draw attention back to marginalized, differently racialized individuals and communities who have been repeatedly denied opportunities for their own self-articulation, let alone due recognition for intellectual output with a critical distance from things “Eurological,” to borrow George Lewis’s term.²⁴ I work here to draw attention back to theorist-musicians and musical theorists who have largely been understood as such by legitimating institutions only in retrospect, where the underlying project is not one of radical recognition but rather of neutralization by incorporation.

As theorists, as dreamers, bebop’s musicians were asserting Black intellectualism as undeniable and in the process participating in a larger struggle for basic human dignity that, crucially, didn’t overlook racial difference in the pursuit of any re-enlightenment aspirations to universalism, to amnesiac responses to modernity’s ills.²⁵ Part of this effort was an approach to the historical that was shaped by the legacy of forced removal, dehumanization, slavery, and rebellion.²⁶ In their work was an approach to the scrap, the fragment, made concrete by the allusion, the melodic burst, that was generative and subversive, tethered all the while to real-world refer-

ence.²⁷ This intramusical grounding is ultimately part of what made it such a deeply powerful (counter)modernist repertoire: contrary to detractors' claims, bebop musicians on the whole weren't anarchic nor nihilistic but rather invested in the immediate relevance of past traces for the present and the future. The musicians, demonstrably invested in blending the blues idiom so constitutive of past Black musical expression with contemporary pop and European classical gestures—and often with an air of playfulness and mischief, evincing critique in varying affective modalities—brought a new, fervent articulation of circumstance to a moment needing to hear itself.²⁸ “There was a message in our music,” drummer Kenny Clarke once recalled. “Whatever you go into, go into it *intelligently*. As simple as that.”²⁹

Emerging from after-hours jam sessions in Harlem, as chronicled in this book's first chapter, bebop's stylized contours and sonic gestures expressed “minor-key sensibilities,” as Richard Iton once wrote, “generated from the experiences of the underground, the vagabond, and those constituencies marked as deviant—notions of being that are inevitably aligned within, in conversation with, against, and articulated beyond the boundaries of the modern.”³⁰ At the style's aesthetic and political core was a fundamental resistance to the racism and anti-Blackness the US nation-state was founded on, a refutation of “the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death.”³¹ The qualities of these musical expressions—coming when they did, sounding as they did, disrupting what they did—cracked open new universes for listeners not only from coast to coast, lingering with memories of live sets and hovering over record players and jukeboxes, but also well beyond the continental United States, across a world reeling from war.³² In that postwar moment, bebop's dense and layered soundworld created opportunities for variously marginalized listeners to find themselves in relation to others, to imagine new connections and interpret their own local experiences anew, to draft new modes of pleasurable opposition (or oppositional pleasure) by dreaming their own new dreams.

This is indeed the central story of *Dreams in Double Time*: Black bebop musicians' radicalities and complexities; the palpable distances between racially coded sights, sounds, and narratives in the mainstream press; and the very idea of a musical idiom as a midcentury signifier of race, aesthetics, rebellion, and an unapologetically radical Blackness all made it possible for distant yet linked listeners grappling daily with the violences of state and nationalist power to hear the world anew—to hear across the rifts of the 1940s via imaginative, past-informed, and future-oriented responses

to the value systems of Eurological musics and their attendant industries. As Black theorists, as critical dreamers, bebop musicians' objects and processes of focus were largely intra- and intermusical, political, historical, social, and individual. In this way, local instances of musical rebellion—the minutiae, interiorities, and contradictions of improvised performance—for many other listeners modeled an improvisatory mode of communion that in disrupting older musical systems and their attendant histories proved generative at the levels of both aesthetic and social possibility.³³ As a form of revelatory improvisation—as a means of creating soundworlds that, in drawing from the past and imagining the future, revealed qualities of the present—bebop musicians both enacted and inspired critiques of taken-for-granted assumptions about Black masculinity and musicality, personality and community, abstraction and beauty, gone and not yet. “Everything we stood for,” writes Gillespie, found form in sound: “intelligence, sensitivity, creativity, change, wisdom, joy, courage, peace, togetherness, and integrity.”³⁴

So here I explore the notion of sonic dreaming in this postwar moment by way of the “otherwise possibilities” created by Black musicking, doing so by attending to how some of those possibilities became manifest for nonwhite youth coming of age amid the perils of unprecedented global war. I take seriously the fact that the “*Black speculative musicalities*” Iyer has described as “sonically disruptive practices that posit new ways of becoming musical, otherwise possibilities for Black life and Black subjectivities, and radical futurities for the ‘philosophy of the human being’” have always emerged in relation to other proximate communal imaginaries, lived experiences, and dream geographies; such musicalities have repeatedly inspired new visions, relations, and projects, and it’s among the goals of this book to find new ways of describing how this relationality has been experienced.³⁵

* * *

Today, at the edges of my own wakefulness, adrift midmorning in downtown Los Angeles as police sirens scream and car horns morph into half-remembered melodies, a track called “Move” echoes in my mind’s ear—a bright piece performed and recorded in mid-1950s Hollywood while a world rebuilt itself and my grandfather, all of twenty, tried his hand with jazz musicians in the cool reprieve of the southern fall. Recorded by Clifford Brown’s All Stars as part of a jam session, “Move” moves, sears; the take is a minor miracle of physical endurance, particularly for the rhythm section—drummer Max Roach, bassist George Morrow, and pianist Richie Powell—each sprinting in lockstep for over fourteen minutes, their efforts coalescing

into a shimmering ground for soloists to stand on and wail. I've loved the record since I was a boy, and I knew of it only because it was among the many in my grandfather's home. When I listen to it these days, and especially when I spin my grandfather's copy, I can still hear, amid the rush and din of the living, the soft tap of his right shoe.

Thinking of my grandfather being moved by a recording like "Move," of him loving the Clifford Brown All Stars' *Jam Session* LP (1955) on which it appears as much as he did classics by artists including Vicente Fernandez and Lydia Mendoza, has brought me comfort and strength as the years have passed and I have learned more about this world's entanglements and shortcomings. Additionally, thinking of listeners like my grandfather, once proximate in time and sentiment, if not space, to the midcentury clubs of New York and the after-hours studios of Los Angeles, has pushed me as a musician and writer increasingly toward methods of sounding, telling, and listening that make space for the unexpected, the contradictory, the shifts in the story—toward ways, that is, of learning from those edges of our own wakefulness, from those strange and associative logics estranging the mundane; toward ways of hearing the seemingly incongruous sounds and stories of our daily living as not only deeply interconnected but also revealing of the limits of our categories, our musical templates, our means of making sense.

Methodologically, then, I work in this book to find form for that nebulous space between archive and repertoire, event and memory, fact and legend, remembered and forgotten, ultimately listening for antecedent geographies by listening across a compartmentalized present. Approaching musical and cultural histories as "bundle[s] of silences," I read across multiple archives for "minor" materials previously excluded from historical narratives, effectively rendered mute, forgettable, and unnecessary, and then I read those materials in relation to each other.³⁶ In this regard, I follow Brent Hayes Edwards, who has argued that to approach any archive critically "is to read it in concert with another," "supplementing the blind spots and biases of one repository with the additional and differently classified documents in another."³⁷ Even though the material resulting from that cross-pollination never produces "complete" stories, it yields insights only available through comparison and layering, through juxtaposed objects and ideas "that make [productive] trouble for one another."³⁸

One result of this approach is that this book offers a different route through music in the postwar decades precisely *because* it relies almost entirely on these "minor materials": the scraps, the surplus, the forgotten, the incomplete, the inscrutable, the irreducible, the ghost notes. In this book

many “minor” sources, characters, theories, and analytic techniques rub elbows for the first time, and I seek to show that this isn’t a haphazard mix nor a quixotic pastiche but rather a natural weave: a recovering and recombining of stories and materials often omitted within disciplinary academic space for the sake of local clarities. The larger goal of these recoveries, for me and hopefully for others, is more adept structural analysis, more patient and relational critique.

In that spirit: what I don’t wish to do here is present the three primary subjects of this book as “major” figures, significant as they were to their local scenes; instead, by following their activities, I want to highlight the institutional and disciplinary systems that have contributed to their and others’ minoritization.³⁹ This work aligns with that of writers including Saidiya Hartman, Cathy Park Hong, and Alex Woloch, who, theorizing from their different critical coordinates, remind us that calling something “minor” means interpolating it into a structure, a system, a narrative; it means identifying or assigning a function, a position in a hierarchy. It signals a position of power, as well as that power’s perpetuation. To “minor” or “minoritize” is to subordinate, to set one thing aside to emphasize something else, to put one thing in service of something else. And as many have long known, some painfully so: an attention to minor figures can say major things.

This leads to at least two observations, one more practical than the other. The more practical is that actively seeking out material categorized in various discourses as minor is a demonstrable path to new perspectives on extant narratives—a way of uncovering stories that can only be told when attention is shifted to people, feelings, processes, and works subordinated in existing materials. The less practical—and perhaps more candid—is that it’s clear we need better representational forms, tools from a future where the master’s house no longer stands.⁴⁰

Many theorists have long been on this track. On the jazz front, Ben Ratliff once wrote in a *New York Times* op-ed that one remedy for jazz history’s “hard shell of cliché” might well be “the study of the nonfamous”—a mode of presenting jazz “the way musicians have talked about it, not as a matter of schools and eras but as a slow-boiling stew of experience.”⁴¹ Too, scholars and writers including Ingrid Monson, Nichole Rustin-Paschal, Farah Jasmine Griffin, Sasha Geffen, Daphne Brooks, Karen Tongson, and others have, again, counteracted the corrosive macroproject of heteropatriarchy by focusing on how gender and sexuality shape all parts of American music and how women, trans, and nonbinary performers, writers, composers, leaders, business owners, and all else have been not only routinely and systemati-

cally overlooked but in fact actively repressed. All of this work underscores a deep need to foster a recuperative relationship to that which has been left behind—that which has been relegated to pure function, that which has been omitted and discarded. As I understand it today, we need to embrace the B sides of our tangled histories, as they have the potential to reveal far more about our worlds and shared fates than many of us are led to expect.⁴²

* * *

While the core of this book consists of three stories, three loosely linked (audio)biographical narratives, entwined with each other and with my own memories and “time[s] of consideration,” the arguments here don’t rest solely at the level of individual experience.⁴³ Rather, through an (audio)biographical mode, I work to organize structural and historical arguments, engagements, and relations—to focus on the idea that “however singular a person’s life may be, the value of examining it lies in how it [might serve] as an allegory for the culture as a whole.”⁴⁴ While this book closely follows James Araki, Raúl Salinas, and Harold Wing’s lives and works as well as draws on my own embodied experience and recollections of my grandfather’s musical life, individual biographies are less my ultimate focus than the intimacies of the messy structures and systems that living, listening, and dreaming reveal.

I also don’t claim to present authoritative life narratives of the listeners I follow, nor necessarily celebrate them as heroic, unsung geniuses. Instead, I suggest that what I’ve learned of their varying engagements with a Black radical music of the postwar years not only reveals on-the-ground machinations of racial democracy but also specific, improvisatory attempts at musically informed new worlds, at new, “unfettered dream space.” I emphasize this as a formal and theoretical point throughout the book—the idea that the individual narrative is not a terminus, though perhaps an end—because race and racism, though experienced and expressed personally, supersede individual experience, constitutive as racial ideas are to social institutions, political bodies, economic arrangements, and regional geographies. Rather than fetishize the individual as the primary unit of social inquiry—a fetishization with deep roots in many Western epistemologies, a shortcoming at the heart of the American mythos, an obsession central to rhetorics of stardom, celebrity, and troubled genius under capitalism—this book instead works to present senses of people and praxes *in relation*, as expressive of interlinked scales, forces, and pressures. Contrary to both nationalist mantras and atomistic historiographies, *Dreams in Double Time* resists the

narrative templates of heroism, reaching instead for ways of representing personal experiences as inseparable from other lives and broader stories.⁴⁵

And like all stories, the stories in this book are gendered. *Dreams in Double Time* is as much about music as it is about racialized masculinities, as much about the illumination of shared fates as the negotiation of gender identities “tenuously constituted in time, instituted in . . . exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts.”⁴⁶ As I follow this book’s trio through varying scenes and situations, I thus consider the colonial systems of classification and hierarchization that perpetuate violent social cycles across the gender spectrum. I also think through long-circulated stereotypes that have, at every turn, produced real-world effects: Latino men as “macho, hypersexual, lazy, drug addicts and dealers”; Asian men as “hypo-masculine,” “passive, shy”; Black men as “angry,” “violent,” “unintelligent,” and “aggressive.”⁴⁷ I take seriously the gender axis of theorist Sylvia Wynter’s argument that a “Western bourgeois” “conception of the human,” “Man,” has long “overrepresent[ed] itself as if it were the human itself,” resulting in a human classificatory logic built on subjects’ distances from an arbitrary ideal.⁴⁸

As I’ve tracked engagements with bebop as a mode of Black radical dreaming, particularly by way of the three figures whose (audio)biographies anchor my structural analyses, I’ve remained attuned to the fact that bebop’s angularities and attendant cultural narratives have as much to do with aesthetics as they do with a nation-state built in part on the systematic traumatization of young nonwhite men. I’ve considered how this musicking can’t be separated from these psychic geographies, how its musical and social features can’t be dissociated from relational crises of racialized masculinities, how its multisite emergences and institutionalized retellings have always been steeped, consciously or otherwise, in the experiential densities of gendered life. I’ve tracked how gender negotiations are everywhere in this music born of a Black interior, this music absorbed by variously (dis)affected young men who, as James Baldwin writes in his classic bebop fiction, “Sonny’s Blues,” knew “two darknesses” most intimately: “the darkness of their lives, which was now closing in on them, and the darkness of the movies,” against which they “dreamed.”⁴⁹

Following feminist and queer-of-color arts and culture scholars, I write mindful of the ways that corrosive masculinities have warped art practice and scholarship (and certainly music and music history).⁵⁰ I have also kept in mind that “spaces and places are not only themselves gendered but, in their being so, both reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood.”⁵¹ Using individuals’ stories as windows into larger struc-

tural situations, I keep in mind how every location, zone, and scene this book's listeners were part of—the jazz club, the recording studio, the army base, the prison cell, the bandstand, the neighborhood street—was shaped by both racializing and masculinist codes, each code shaping in more and less conscious ways each figure's engagements with sound, space, and other people. The result of this work is a book that invites and aspires toward newly relational questions, toward newly liberated dreaming.

* * *

Again, concerning issues of race, this book is fundamentally relational. Across its case studies, I pay close attention to each artist's site- and time-specific racializations, their engagements with racial difference (and Blackness specifically), and the coconstitutions of their racial identities. I track race as a mode of classification and resource allocation with roots in colonialism and thus the modern world-system; as a logic perpetuated by continuously circulated multimedia representations with immense determinative power; and as a force kept dynamic through ever-changing racial formations.⁵² In effect, this book attends to the specific racial and ethnic categories that listeners like Araki, Salinas, and Wing dealt with as they learned with and from Black radical music: Nisei, Japanese American, and Asian American; Mexican American and Chicano; mixed-race, Chinese American, and Afro-Asian American; and, to be sure, whiteness and Blackness as embedded in the national category of American.⁵³

Race, as a concept, is a sedimentary, location-specific inheritance, a set of differentiating, classificatory logics and practices inseparable from colonial annihilation and communal striving; its expressions form the basis of contemporary capitalisms and necropolitical procedures, constitute the conceptual grounds for onto-epistemologies of the human, shape the ethics and economies of daily living on an ailing planet. Race's presence at virtually all levels of human relation makes it a primary analytic for examining and explaining shifting, unequal distributions of resources—as well as for appreciating the avenues people take not only to become conscious of personal biases but also to become acquainted with the experiences and histories of others.⁵⁴

And in the American context specifically, race is a distinct colonial echo.⁵⁵ The overvalued new world built from the genocides of the colonial encounter was one of systematized, enforced social hierarchy, constructed via the essentialization and taxonomization of phenotypical and cultural difference. This violent sorting was related to a palpable desire to create new

wealth rapidly, a desire acted on via the horrific erasure of indigenous peoples and knowledges and a routinized denigration of Blackness and its eventual nightmarish coupling with chattel slavery. Today the world still owes much of its shape to that imperial belligerence; today the legacies of the colonial enterprise live as necropolitical, climatological, and interpersonal scars on a global scale, beyond the relationship between Europe and the Americas, and whatever futures are pursued will have some relationship to this blood story.

With this colonial history in mind—and the hierarchizing approach to difference it inscribed in the institutions it built (the modern versions of which abound)—this book strives to perform a key operation: a methodological decentering of whiteness in order to grapple with minoritized people in relation to one another rather than in a defensive posture vis-à-vis specters of whiteness, white supremacy, and white people. As has been written about and certainly experienced, racial formation in the United States (via whiteness as an institutional ideal and Blackness as an “ontological plasticity”) tends to encourage and reward competition, with groups compelled to position themselves in relation to Blackness and Black people well before formal emancipation.⁵⁶ George Lipsitz puts it this way: for hundreds of years now, “the power of whiteness [has] depended not only on white hegemony over separate racialized groups but also on manipulating racial outsiders to fight against one another, to compete for white approval, and to seek the rewards and privileges of whiteness for themselves. Aggrieved communities of color have often sought to curry favor with whites in order to make gains at each other’s expense.”⁵⁷ And “yet while every racialized minority group has sometimes sought the rewards of whiteness, those groups have also been able to form interethnic antiracist alliances.”⁵⁸

Local instances of solidarity, difference appreciation, and togetherness among people of color are thus an important, radical thing. This is part of what’s important to me about Araki, Salinas, Wing, and many others’ resonant investments in Black radical music and their related understandings of proximate rebellions: their lives and works evinced artistic engagements that didn’t deracinate the music from its makers (which has been and is still so often the case), that didn’t seek to transform Black musicking from verb to noun, as Amiri Baraka memorably described it, but rather sought to understand better, with increased emotional and experiential clarity, the world as it was for others who shared similar, though distinct, experiences.

Considering differently racialized individuals, communities, and their respective histories *in relation* by centering music making as a form of subversive, alter-American dreaming thus informs this book’s central contributions

on race in and beyond the United States. Building on relational approaches developed by sociologists, cultural theorists, and arts critics, in this book I approach racialization and racism as context specific, and racial categories as interlinked, inseparable as these concept-metaphors are from the messy, real-world intersections of differently positioned people in inexhaustibly complex locations. Approaching race in this way involves breaking from traditional comparatist efforts to pursue social analyses based on “one-at-a-time relationships with whiteness for each aggrieved group,” efforts that effectively recenter whiteness and occlude “polylateral relations among aggrieved communities of color.”⁵⁹ Instead, I place each inquiry and conclusion in conversation with seemingly contradictory communal archives, reaching beyond not only traditional disciplinary norms but also extant narrative templates operative in many cultural histories and criticisms. The central motivation, to draw on Frantz Fanon, is to fight to recover stories of individuals and communities finding strength in one another, and to present those stories in a way that participates in the fight for “the birth of a human world,” “a world of reciprocal recognitions.”⁶⁰ To pursue idioms, that is, that might capture our entangled pasts and, with luck, help us pursue futures premised on mutual concern and coinvestment.

To consider improvisation in this relational racial context—to consider, in particular, the kinds of musical improvisation linked to Black musics and especially to bebop—is to understand improvisation, as Iyer puts it, as “*movement in relation*,” as a maintaining of specificity and difference in pursuit of closeness, safety, and the future tense inherent in survival.⁶¹ Drawing on a conversation between Manthia Diawara and Édouard Glissant—a conversation in which Glissant remarks that “Relation is made up of all the differences in the world and . . . we shouldn’t forget a single one of them, even the smallest. If you forget the tiniest difference in the world, well, Relation is no longer Relation. Now, what do we do when we believe this? We call into question, in a formal manner, the idea of the universal”—Iyer points out that truly relational thought and activity is that which maps “movement in relation to power,” freedom in relation to “histories of enslavement and domination,” and thus dreams in relation to one another.⁶²

By turning to bebop as it was heard and responded to by differently racialized individuals, this book treats as vitally important those instances of knowing coinvestment in others’ strife and creativity that this Black music afforded as a planet smoldered and an episteme shattered. It treats as important the stories of three individuals coming to a form of situational (and, eventually, historical) consciousness in part through their relationship with

a new sound and its makers. This matters because it helps us understand why some white, conservative US listeners during World War II were so afraid of Harlem's new sounds; it's also important amid our disconcerting present conjuncture, filled with so much of the same, unchanging.

* * *

This project's title, *Dreams in Double Time*, evokes the layered speeds, densities, and dissonances that characterized bebop performance and the utopian aspirations of many radical ethnic American artists, committed as they were to exposing and signifying on the United States' racial fantasies, familiar as they were with the layered temporalities undergirding every note, phrase, and set they played and absorbed. Methodologically and formally, then, this book is thus a dreamlike braid, a work in and of double time: improvisational and essayistic, "carefully undisciplined," guided by formal loops and interruptions, temporal bends and overlays. I adopt this form to capture something of the interconnected, multiscalar temporalities of the musical structures and lived experiences of the midcentury conjuncture, to argue for the necessity of multitemporal forms to communicate new truths about dreaming under duress.⁶³

To explain more fully: in many creative music circles, the phrase *double time* often indicates a music compositional gesture in which a key musical element, typically the melody during a solo, is doubled in speed "while the accompanying instruments remain [steady] at the slower tempo."⁶⁴ (In some cases, as in the memorable oscillatory theme of Thelonious Monk's "Brilliant Corners," "all the instruments [double] the tempo together.")⁶⁵ A rhythmic device common to ballads, given their typically slower tempos and longer melodic lines, the simultaneity of slow and fast times offered by many double-time phrases creates a sense of rhythmic contrast and relation—a sense of interconnected, multiscalar processes generated by at least two intimately related musical ideas unfolding at different rates of speed, all within the same musical frame. In *Dreams in Double Time*, I've worked to make this musical device significant to the project's narrative form and content by braiding interrelated stories and memories that unfold at different rates of speed. The intention is to create a sense of generative contrasts, temporal interconnections, avenues for historical defamiliarization.

In each of the following chapters of this book—"After-Hours," "Layered Time," "Quartered Notes," "Among Others," and the epilogue, "Affinities"—the narrative discourse thus shuttles between slower, dilated scenes of improvisatory musicking and faster, compressed prehistories of that musicking

and the agents involved. Drawing on traditions of braided narrative fiction and rhythm-driven music composition, the work aspires to a narrative modality of thick time, of stacked and polyrhythmic temporalities, in order to translate some of the layers of historical sediment present in radical ethnic American musicking into a compound story, “loose and dreamlike,” that resists monotemporal linearity, encouraging a different sense of historical passage.⁶⁶

To accomplish this, I draw on my praxes as a musician, writer, and interdisciplinary humanist to synthesize a variety of differently constructed primary materials, “evidences of *dreams manifest in sound*,” into narrative-driven units.⁶⁷ At times, I work with audio recordings, liner notes, concert and album reviews, and solo transcriptions; at others, with cover art, personal letters, short stories, poems, unpublished fragments, news articles, and personal interviews. As I handle these materials, I actively work to cross-pollinate: I approach each written text, for instance, as akin to a vinyl record containing traces of listening practices, musical affinities, and sound environments ready to be unlocked and amplified with the right interpretive needle.⁶⁸ I also work to bring a literary critical sensibility to musicological practice, treating each solo, riff, and tune as a way of reaching for new “language”—for, as Baldwin once put it, a new system or “vocabulary” that might for a moment “bear the weight of reality.”⁶⁹ Through interviews, I get a sense for how other musicians and listeners understood the issues at stake; through musical transcription and performance practice, I bring an embodied music research perspective to this historical work—not to claim any exclusive knowledge of the past but instead to map temporal gaps and affective registers at the level of my own musicking body, to shuttle between historical artifacts and contextualized muscle memory in pursuit of hidden questions.⁷⁰

* * *

Chapter 1, “After-Hours,” situates readers in this layered narrative, providing context by engaging the history of bebop’s emergence in Harlem and its subsequent spread across the United States. Bicoastal in its geography and polytemporal in its telling, the chapter tracks the music and its culture both as the local work of young Black experimentalists and as a critical, transformative aesthetic force that dramatically altered not only the jazz narrative in the United States but also the country’s intellectual history writ large. Drawing on archival research, literary writing, and interviews I conducted with musicians and historians, this chapter tracks the role of race in bebop’s

initial production and reception, moves critical bebop discourse away from a strictly Black-white binary narrative, and projects outward into an understanding of the relationship among race, musical dreaming, and shared fate. Doing so, I argue, allows us to hear bebop's histories and resonances relationally, in ways that defamiliarize primarily Black-white historicizations of the music and its makers.

Chapter 2, "Layered Time," then engages the life, music, and writing of Nisei jazz multi-instrumentalist and literary scholar James Araki. Like "After-Hours," it utilizes a dreamlike, polytemporal structure, finding form in an essayistic oscillation between recording sessions for a transformative (yet largely unknown in the United States) Japanese American jazz album, *Jazz Beat: Midnight Jazz Session* (1959)—one of the earlier jazz records to utilize studio overdubbing—and the musical and transnational circulations that shaped Araki's life. Bringing together archival research, narrative-driven close listenings, oral histories, personal interviews, newspaper clippings from Japanese and US publications, literary writings, cultural analysis and jazz criticism written by Araki, and albums from late 1940s Japan, the chapter contextualizes a single individual's intimate musical dreaming to illumine broader social and historical systems of subjection. It also provides the first extended interdisciplinary musical and cultural analyses of the primary materials discussed, contributing not only to foundational journalism on Araki in Japan as well as short-form historical vignettes in the United States but also to studies of Asian American jazz more broadly.⁷¹

Chapter 3, "Quartered Notes," continues the looped narrative thread of "Layered Time" and engages the life, writing, and musical imagination of Raúl Salinas. Like the preceding chapters, it, too, utilizes a structure involving braided times, blending narrativized close listenings of archival material as well as jazz poetry records Salinas recorded in the early 2000s (with Mexican American alto saxophonist Tomás Ramírez and Chinese American saxophonist and writer Fred Ho) with Salinas's bebop-informed Xicanindio poetry and journalism of the 1950s–70s, written while enduring the racist cruelties of the American carceral system. Synthesizing archival research, analytic and narrative engagements with Salinas's three jazz poetry albums, close readings of Salinas's printed and performed jazz writings, and a musical and literary critical engagement with Salinas's first live public performance of his most famous poem, "A Trip through the Mind Jail," this chapter illuminates the naked injustices of the American criminal justice system, engages the relationship between literary writing and improvisatory music making, moves beyond a Black-white discourse about jazz writing (and,

by extension, the Beats), contributes theorizations of carceral aurality to contemporary abolitionist scholarship, and offers the first avowedly musical study of Salinas's Xicanindio jazz writing and life to the foundational Latinx literary scholarship on his poetics and politics.

Chapter 4, "Among Others," continues the threads of the preceding chapters and engages the life and work of Harold "Chink" Wing. Like the pages that precede it, "Among Others" creates loops and overlays through its essayistic construction, finding unifying form through a close engagement with a historic photograph and through personal interviews I conducted with Newark musicians and historians, particularly with a former musical mentee of Wing's, Eugene "Goldie" Goldston. Drawing on archival research at the Institute of Jazz Studies, a personal collection of albums on which Wing plays, newspaper clippings, literary writings, and narrative close listenings, this chapter troubles the heroic individualism of hegemonic American fantasies (and masculinist bebop discourses) by focusing on communal virtuosity, collective temporalities, and accompanimental ethics.⁷² It thinks through the relationship among race, music, discrimination, and community by following an Afro-Asian American's reclaiming of a pejorative nickname and his collaborations with primarily Black artists; unpacks the granular musical details of group improvisation; and contributes the first scholarly engagement with Wing's work.

The epilogue, "Affinities," brings the book's themes and figures back together to reiterate the primary themes of the project as a whole. As in a musical reprise, "Affinities" returns to the sense of relation that motivates the form and content of the study, connecting Araki, Salinas, and Wing to one another as well as to other Mexican American, Japanese American, and Afro-Asian Americans who shared similar musical affinities, including my late grandfather, whose spirit animates my questions. Equal parts elegy and summation, this final piece concludes in part by considering my grandfather's engagements with Charlie Parker's music while living in the Rio Grande Valley, the US-Mexico border region my family and I call home; there, at the edge of nation-states, relational, postbinary improvisations on American identity acquire a special charge—race, interiority, and musical praxis converge in heightened, locally specific ways, and, as many musicians have long modeled, in such spaces the thick chords of solidarity often reveal more just futures.

Among these chapters' key interventions are their interdisciplinary analyses of improvisation and composition across media; their attention to underground networks of music circulation, creation, and documentation in and

beyond the United States; their focus on music and racialized masculinities; their investment in “histories from below” that highlight minor figures and materials; and their relational (decolonial) commitment to the study of race and ethnicity. Taken as a whole, *Dreams in Double Time* thus aspires to a relational scholarly-artistic discourse that interweaves figures, sites, materials, and histories often considered in isolation—not to resolve their inevitable tensions in a tidy appeal to a universal but instead to sit with them, listening for their chords.

* * *

As in private and communal dreams, in this book juxtaposed media, memories, archives, and analytic research methods reveal unsung stories. As the chapters unfold, those new stories in turn reveal a larger narrative of how a Black radical music invited differently racialized thinkers of color to critique American racial democracy. As I reiterate throughout, bebop, Harlem’s “new sound,” helped young audiences hear and in some cases disrupt processes of racial subject formation in the United States; an aesthetic revolution initially forged by Black musicians became a remarkable social force for a greater population of racialized Americans, many of them oppressed and economically poor; in its diverse immediacies of expression, it gathered a formidable social significance, one ironically enabled by its circulation within the ideological discursive networks of midcentury commercial markets. This music became a medium for a remarkable social energy; the very *idea* of nonwhite musicians frustrating traditional economies of aesthetic prestige through an undeniably sophisticated communal idiom opened up surprising avenues for differently racialized and positioned listeners of color in their respective communities, listeners pursuing new modes of belonging amid domestic strife and global war. At the heart of this social opening was an underground’s radical experimental ethos: What happens if we play *this* melody over *these* chords? What happens if we invert this pop song’s shape and mood? What happens if we play this phrase twice as fast? What happens if?

For the figures mentioned in this book and the scenes and communities to which they contributed, answering these questions involved engaging defiant, joyous Black musicking, dealing intimately with the logics of localized racializations, and pursuing relational projects in decades marked by profound changes on the local and international levels. Asking “What if?” encouraged the creation of dynamic models—overlays, simultaneities, creative maps—that provided building blocks for innovative approaches to

problems in different domains and, importantly, for ways of being American otherwise, for thinking beyond a violent monoculture. For Araki, what emerged was an intimate understanding of multiplicity that relied on transoceanic experiences, ethnography, historical research, literary criticism, military service, multi-instrumentalism, and overdubbed studio recording; as I argue in chapter 2, “Layered Time,” the lifelong challenge of finding suitable ways to translate incongruous materials and histories into locally meaningful forms unified his experimentalisms across diverse fields and circumstances. For Salinas, what emerged was an understanding of poetic technique and political inquiry linked to the new sound and its aftermath in the jazz milieu; as I argue in chapter 3, “Quartered Notes,” the challenge of finding language for the social and historical forces that bebop was linked to helped Salinas find the voice that would make him a hallmark Chicano poet. And for Wing, what emerged was a sense of creative practice rooted in accompaniment, shaping his musicianship, multi-instrumentality, and composition not around ideals of “heroic virtuosity” but around a communal virtuosity of shared experimentation and mutual development; as I argue in chapter 4, “Among Others,” Wing’s experiences with the new sound—its musical content and its initial creators, as he performed with many of them in Harlem and Newark—ultimately shaped his approach to the relationship between art practice and community building. Each of these individuals, contributing to their local jazz circles as performers and avid listeners, found in the music an interpretive code for their varying American experiences; each of them found in it “some key,” as Ellison once put it, “to a fuller freedom of self-realization.”⁷³

In isolation, the chapters and figures of this book illumine matters important to Chicana, African American, and Asian American aesthetic and political histories, but when considered together, they produce a surplus revealing of deeper postwar thought and feeling, as well as an intimate prehistory of revolutionary coalitional struggles for social justice in the 1960s and 1970s. These stories, indicative of and connected to many more, offer readers a chance to hear and feel bebop differently—not as a mythic symbol of hip inscrutability nor an apex of contemporary jazz neoclassicism but rather as an invitation to relational, antiracist worldmaking. Through its fragments, interruptions, episodes, loops, riffs, and overlays, this book offers readers a chance to hear the ways young Black musicians in wartime Harlem laid the foundations for different senses of American citizenship beyond a Black-white binary in the postwar years—how their music unlocked new ways of thinking and hearing among youth of color across the United States,

how their creativities opened up new worlds of sonic and social possibility for folks just like my own grandfather. This idea, threaded through each of the interlocking chapters, is one of this book's more global takeaways.

As I argue throughout, at times linearly though more often elliptically: for listeners whose full inclusion in the American body politic remained a dream endlessly deferred, the spirit and substance of this midcentury Black radical musicking was a route into an alternative America: an emergent riff-space, a harmonic hyperplane, a corrective convalescence. To listen for a future in it—beyond the drone of white supremacy, beyond the grip of postwar anxiety—was to embrace a vital, shared inscrutability in a hostile, harrying world. It was to hear a world otherwise—to dream jaggedly, feverishly, in the insurgent space of double time.

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- 1 Ellison, "Golden Age, Time Past," in *Collected Essays*, 241.
- 2 I borrow the term *audiobiography* from multi-instrumentalist Rahsaan Roland Kirk. For more on Kirk's work, see especially Josh Kun's discussion of it in *Audiotopia* (135). See also a related use of the term in Leal, "Wild Tongue."
- 3 Here I follow Walton Muyumba's example in *The Shadow and the Act*.
- 4 For more on the perception of acceleration in and of history, see Koselleck, "Does History Accelerate?" See also Greif, *Age of the Crisis of Man*.
- 5 Exec. Order No. 9066, February 19, 1942, General Records of the United States Government, Record Group 11, National Archives. See also Mai Ngai's important remarks on war nationalism: "The nation-state at war generates nationalism of the highest order in order to mobilize its citizens to arms and sacrifice. . . . Drawn in stark terms and heavily dependent upon symbol and ritual, [war nationalism] resists complexity and nuance." Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 171.
- 6 Rasberry, *Race and the Totalitarian Century*, 32. See also Kaplan, "Left Alone with America."
- 7 See especially Kun, *Audiotopia*, 29–47.
- 8 Ellison, "Golden Age, Time Past," in *Collected Essays*, 241.
- 9 Iyer, "Beneath Improvisation." The phrase "loose and dreamlike" comes from Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues," 126.
- 10 Iyer, "Beneath Improvisation."
- 11 Kun, *Audiotopia*, 13.
- 12 Le-Khac, *Giving Form*, 14.
- 13 Stewart, *Ordinary Affects*, 56.
- 14 See Daphne Brooks on related issues in her *Liner Notes for the Revolution* (425–26).
- 15 For an example of a dream ethnography, see Garcia, *Skins of Columbus*; as well as Wang, *Sunflower Cast a Spell*.
- 16 Z. Jackson, *Becoming Human*, 4.

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- 17 E. Alexander, *Black Interior*, 4–5.
- 18 Kelley, *Freedom Dreams*, 8, 10.
- 19 Brooks, *Liner Notes for the Revolution*, 314.
- 20 Radano, *Lying Up a Nation*, 16.
- 21 Iyer, “What’s Not Music.”
- 22 I join a number of scholars in ethnomusicology and musicology in this regard. For work mapping the friction produced by “music” as an analytic category, see Wong, “Sound, Silence, Music.”
- 23 For a history of relationships between continental philosophy and critical theory via dialectics, see A. Cole, *Birth of Theory*.
- 24 Lewis, “Improvised Music after 1950.”
- 25 As Mark Greif puts it, “Re-enlightenment writers conceived the whole of Western history as, once again, a long progress, but one in which something has gone wrong; and behaved as if by running through the entire history of the mind, man, faith, or ideas of human nature, developmentally, they might find the flaw and figure out how to repair it” for lasting, universal benefit. Greif, *Age of the Crisis of Man*, 53; see also especially 22–24.
- 26 See Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*.
- 27 This contrasts with a Baudrillardian sense of the postmodern, which saw in juxtaposition and play the abandonment of meaning altogether. For more, see especially Hall and Grossberg, “On Postmodernism and Articulation”; and Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 151.
- 28 As activity, theory is speculation, hypothesis, suggestion, and modeling *within a medium*; it is content that, by definition, requires material-conceptual form to give it shape and significance. By suggesting that musicking offers both, I maintain alongside others that thought and articulation are not exclusive to the linguistic field. Articulating the content of musical thought linguistically, however, is a deeply complex translational process that, as with all translation, involves productive approximation, both loss and gain. For a remarkable (and in some ways contrasting) analysis of the relationship between the musical and the figurative in the context of Black musicking, specifically see Anthony Reed’s *Soundworks*:

The figurative tendencies . . . tend to be analogical (this aesthetic gesture is like a similar gesture in the physical world), metaphorical (the aesthetic gesture is symbolic action), allegorical (the ensemble models ideal sociality), metonymical (the aesthetic is juxtaposed with supposedly determining context), or some combination of these. Black sound, in these accounts, becomes an indicator of the radically emergent, a harbinger or emblem of utopian possibilities or at least the establishment of separate spaces for being and deliberating together. While I’m sympathetic to those ways of arguing (and inevitably argue that way myself at times), I practice listening as a historically grounded orientation toward the event with the understanding that no “pure” listening to music’s “interior” aspects is possible because each—pitch, tonality, harmony, rhythm, duration, melody—already participates in a symbolic economy (3–4).

29 Quoted in Gillespie, *To Be, or Not . . . to Bop*, 142.

30 Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic*, 16.

31 Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 27.

32 There is no doubt: bebop's *speed*—its structural rapidities, affective urgencies, and unrelenting pace—marked it as a sprinter's music. The tradition maintained an asymptotic relationship to destruction, flirting with the possibility of spontaneous combustion, though never quite getting there. Perhaps this formal feature offered a template, a way in to some way out. As Toni Morrison puts it in *Home*, "After Hiroshima, the musicians understood as early as anyone that Truman's bomb changed everything and only scat and bebop could say how" (108).

Indeed, in addition to the activism in and around bebop in the 1940s, also present was an antiatomic fever: a fear of a bomb that could easily be turned in any direction. As Vincent Intondi and Jacqueline Foertsch have written, the birth of atomic weaponry rippled through arts circles even before the start of the Cold War proper; songs like Dexter Gordon's "Bikini" (1947) and Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown's "Atomic Energy" (1949), notable for their mix of humor, threat, and sex, became emblematic of an apprehension over this exponential spike in state power. Somehow, the splitting of the atom coincided with the splitting of the long tone: the birth of bebop, in that sense, can be heard as a counterspell against annihilation. For more, see Foertsch, *Reckoning Day*, 205. See also Intondi, *African Americans against the Bomb*.

33 And unlike with word-driven political communication, what was conveyed via sound among musicking agents (listeners and sounders alike) wasn't direct, linear argumentation about the ideal reorganization of a society, nor cleanly transcribable manifestos, but instead sound-driven feelings and affects, *felt states* that refuse naming, a sense that new arguments and social arrangements were indeed possible, desirable, and necessary. James Gordon Williams reminds us, "Musical information—relative to performance, composition, and improvisation—is an open form of symbolism, and the interpretation of musical events depends on who is doing the work of analytical listening." J. Williams, *Crossing Bar Lines*, 11–12. So while midcentury Black musicians created Black musical space via improvisation, there were of course no fixed or essential meanings in the sounds they produced but rather a plurality of possible meanings, a wide set of potentialities for listeners and performers, an invitation to activate and extend those possibilities in unforeseen and urgent ways. Bebop, like many forms of musicking, didn't speak its oppositions literally—its solos and accompaniments were largely wordless; the primary practitioners were complex living beings with inconsistent and contradictory goals from performance to performance, moment to moment. As Williams again reminds us, "You cannot hear or see a hip chord voicing and say that that chord voicing is intersectionality" (99); instead, it offered a dense and radical soundworld that, in the postwar moment, proved a generative revelation. See also Leal, review of *Crossing Bar Lines*.

34 Gillespie, *To Be, or Not . . . to Bop*, 297.

35 Iyer, "Deft, Quiet Shout," 94.

- 36 Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 27; and White, *Metahistory*, 1–42.
- 37 Edwards, “Taste of the Archive,” 961.
- 38 Clifford, “Among Histories,” in *Returns*, 13–49.
- 39 Legitimizing bodies often don’t know what to do with people who cut across categories and experience local successes: they often don’t easily fit a narrative or discourse that already has its leading figures in place, and they also don’t necessarily demand any radical refashioning of a canon, no formation of a new discourse with its own gestures and hierarchies. This is an intellectual and political hindrance.
- 40 If *reading* for minoriness in fiction involves attending to overlooked, subordinated details and then mapping the structures they index in narrative discourse and society, then *listening* for minoriness involves much of the same: striving to hear the background, the scaffolding, and, at every turn, the web of relation. As drummer Kenny Washington once put it, “When you listen to jazz you have to go beneath the surface. . . . You have to go beneath all that and find out *why* the drummer is playing like he’s playing.” Quoted in Monson, *Saying Something*, 64. For work on minoriness and narrative, see Woloch, *One vs. the Many*; Hong, *Minor Feelings*; and Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments*. See also James Gordon Williams’s listening for musicians’ breathing (and effectively his disruption of the Cartesian epistemologies still undergirding much musicological study) in *Crossing Bar Lines*.
- 41 Ben Ratliff, “The Sideman Moves out of History’s Shadows,” *New York Times*, April 5, 1998, <https://www.nytimes.com/1998/04/05/theater/jazz-view-the-sideman-moves-out-of-history-s-shadows.html>.
- 42 This is an iteration of what historian Marcus Rediker terms a “history from below”: a type of history that would “explore the experiences and history-making power of working people who had long been left out of elite, ‘top-down’ historical narratives.” Such histories, becoming steadily more common, involve telling “a big story within a little story”; for Rediker the “big story” has often been “the violent, terror-filled rise of capitalism and the many-sided resistance to it from below,” including, for example, the “common sailor who mutinied and raised the black flag of piracy,” the “runaway former slave who escaped the plantation for a Maroon community in a swamp,” and the “enslaved African woman trapped in the bowels of a fetid slave ship.” Here the big story is the violent global realignment of the postwar years, the types of resistances it generated from below, and the ways those ideas traveled and modulated through largely minor individuals. See Rediker, “Poetics of History from Below.”
- 43 Nelson, *On Freedom*, 28.
- 44 Lepore, “Historians Who Love Too Much,” 141.
- 45 Moya, *Social Imperative*, 32–34. See also Le-Khac, *Giving Form*, 56.
- 46 Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 140.
- 47 Wade, “Racialized Masculinity,” 922.
- 48 Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being,” 260.
- 49 Baldwin, “Sonny’s Blues,” 104.

- 50 On this historiographical front, Vanessa Blais-Tremblay's work has been clarifying, particularly her arguments about how racialized masculinities shape the collection of oral histories, the analysis of data, and the presentation of findings. For more, see Blais-Tremblay, "Where You Are Accepted, You Blossom."
- 51 Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 179.
- 52 On coloniality and race, see Quijano and Wallerstein, "Americanity as a Concept"; and Mignolo, *Darker Side of Western Modernity*. On race and representation, see Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*; Hall, "Work of Representation"; and Said, *Orientalism*. On dynamic racial formations, see Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*.
- 53 On the Asian American category and its related discourses, see Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*; and Chuh, *Imagine Otherwise*. On Mexican American/Chicano discourses, see R. Saldivar, *Chicano Narrative*; Varon, *Before Chicano*; and J. Saldivar, *Border Matters*. On mixed-race discourses, see Elam, *Souls of Mixed Folk*; and Roberts, *Resounding Afro Asia*.
- 54 While the visual field plays a crucial role in the racial imagination, race has never been an exclusively visual phenomenon. Rather, as Jennifer Stoever notes, "Aural and visual signifiers of race [have always been] thoroughly enmeshed; sounds never really lose their referent to different types of bodies despite being able to operate independently of them." Stoever, *Sonic Color Line*, 12. Because of this sonic connection, experiences and understandings of "music," that narrower (and in many ways constricting) category, are always mediated by existing conceptions of racialized bodies and their positions in nested hierarchies (local, more than local, etc.). Ronald Radano and Philip Bohlman make this case clearest in their expansive "Music and Race, Their Past, Their Presence," in which they argue in part that the racial imagination "not only informs perceptions of musical practice but is at once constituted within and projected into the social through sound." Radano and Bohlman, *Music and the Racial Imagination*, 5. Because racial ideas are circulated through social fields via music and musical experience (just as visual and textual representations are circulated, a phenomenon classic works like Toni Morrison's *Playing in the Dark* and Edward Said's *Orientalism* get to the heart of quickly), music "may provide one of the most powerful media for listening to and understanding what it is that racism continues to do on a global scale." Radano and Bohlman, *Music and the Racial Imagination*, 37.

For at least the past two decades, humanities scholars across a range of (inter) disciplines have worked from precisely this starting point (the present work included). Josh Kun, in developing his concept of the "audio-racial imagination," has argued across a broad range of material (and in a wide variety of media forms) that the histories of race and popular music in the United States have always been coconstitutive. Kun, *Audiotopia*. T. Carlis Roberts, in studies of the production of the Afro-Asian category in and with music, has in their work remained adeptly attuned to "the organization of sound into taxonomies based on racialized conceptions of bodies," a process they call "sono-racialization." Roberts, *Resounding*

Afro Asia, 4. Further, Stoeve, using sound (not necessarily music) as an organizing unit, has theorized the concept of “the sonic color line,” making clear that understandings and representations of race are much more multisensory, multimodal, and relational than is often assumed in frequently “oculocentric” critical discourses, as Jonathan Sterne puts it in *The Audible Past*. An increasing number of studies in the United States devoted to the triangulation (and permutations) of race, music, and literary arts have essentially this shared question in mind: How and why are “certain bodies expected to produce, desire, and live amongst particular sounds” over others? Stoeve, *Sonic Color Line*, 7.

55 As Aníbal Quijano and Immanuel Wallerstein argue in their influential 1992 essay, “Americanness as a Concept, or the Americas in the Modern World-System”—and as Walter Dignolo expounds with a difference in *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*—the modern world-system was made possible precisely *because* of the Americas: the colonial encounter, the subsequent razing and subjugation of indigenous peoples and their knowledges, and the eventual instantiation of a new capitalist world-economy.

56 “Ontological plasticity” is from Z. Jackson, *Becoming Human*, 59.

57 Lipsitz, *Possessive Investment in Whiteness*, 3.

58 Lipsitz, *Possessive Investment in Whiteness*, 4.

59 Lipsitz et al., “Race as a Relational Theory,” 23. See also Molina, “Understanding Race as a Relational Concept,” 101–2; and Emirbayer, “Manifesto for a Relational Sociology.” As Mustafa Emirbayer notes, “Sociologists today are faced with a fundamental dilemma: whether to conceive of the social world as consisting primarily in substances or in processes, in static ‘things’ or in dynamic, unfolding relations” (281).

60 Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 193. I am also reminded here of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s notion that the most revolutionary research gestures may be precisely those that prompt us “to recognize agency in others, not simply to comprehend otherness.” See Spivak, “Teaching for the Times,” 473.

61 Iyer, “Beneath Improvisation.”

62 Diawara, “One World in Relation,” 9; and Iyer, “Beneath Improvisation.”

63 Redmond, *Everything Man*, 8.

64 Center for Jazz Studies, Columbia University, “double-time,” Jazz Glossary, accessed September 1, 2021, <https://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/jazzglossary/d/doubletime.html>.

65 Center for Jazz Studies, Columbia University, “double-time.”

66 By focusing many of the “slower” narratives on improvisatory invention and (co)creation during recording sessions, I effectively frame the studio, per Fred Moten, as a site of study and practice (rather than solely a place of commodification, exploitation, and erasure); by constructing the “faster” narratives via (audio) biographical portraiture, music analysis, literary criticism, and cultural history, I work to show how these different analytic modalities can converge and reveal stories otherwise overlooked. And again, by braiding these two speeds together, by constructing a history in double time, I work to offer a sense of contrasts, to pro-

vide a feeling of multiscalar, multitemporal interrelation, to show how even the smallest musical gestures can have broad historical resonances. See Abdurraqib and Moten, “Building a Stairway.”

67 Brooks, *Liner Notes for the Revolution*, 7.

68 Some early questions for this project included: Can the word *musician* name a literary sensibility? Can the word *writer* name a musical disposition?

69 Baldwin, “World I Never Made.”

70 This interpretive sensibility draws on examples set in recent years by scholars in literary theory, musicology, ethnomusicology, American studies, performance studies, and art practice. Brent Hayes Edwards’s and Daniel Albright’s calls to “hear across media” in productively analogical ways (that is, beyond metaphorical suggestion); Ana María Ochoa Gautier’s and Jennifer Stoevers’ examples of doing so with different sonic repertoires; Shannon Jackson’s and Philip Auslander’s insights on performance historiography; Georgina Born’s work on musical mediation, creativity, and historical inquiry; Anna Schultz’s historical ethnomusical theories and examples, including her writing on the relationship between archival study and fieldwork; and Josh Kun’s writing on music, encounter, and the audio-racial imagination have all guided my own dreaming across a number of discourses, media, and histories. So, too, has the work of artist-theorists including Michiko Theurer, Claire Chase, Matana Roberts, Esperanza Spalding, Tyshawn Sorey, Vijay Iyer, Kwami Coleman, Steven Feld, and George Lewis, whose intellectual work rigorously connects scholarly inquiry with music making.

See Edwards, “Hearing across Media,” in *Epistrophies*, 253–67; Albright, *Panaesthetics*; Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality*; Stoevers, *Sonic Color Line*; S. Jackson, “When ‘Everything Counts’”; Auslander, “Performativity of Performance Documentation”; Born, “On Musical Mediation”; Schultz, “Music Ethnography and Recording Technology”; Iyer, “Exploding the Narrative”; Feld, introduction to *Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra*; and Lewis, “Improvised Music after 1950.”

71 My efforts in this chapter are indebted to two earlier biographical writings on Araki: Satoko, *Suwingu Japan*; and Atkins, *Blue Nippon*, 180.

72 This includes a song Wing cowrote with Ella Fitzgerald, “I Wonder What Kind of Guy You’d Be,” that slipped by J. Wilfred Johnson’s authoritative *Ella Fitzgerald: An Annotated Discography*: “Research on this title reveals no information whatever, not even its authors” (236). See Fitzgerald, “I Wonder What Kind of a Guy You’d Be,” Decca Records 28930, 1953, 7-inch single, 45 rpm.

73 Ellison, *Collected Essays*, 243.

CHAPTER 1. AFTER-HOURS

- 1 Many scholars over the past few decades have contributed significantly to such efforts. Ingrid Monson, in *Saying Something* (1996), combined ethnography, transcription, and historicization to highlight the importance of the rhythm

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