

**Marion Brown(s) RE: Views and Reviews:  
Towards a Critical Appreciation of Marion Brown;  
Or, A Syncopated Treatise**

It is time for a re-evaluation of the work of artist X.

Re-evaluation, re-assessment... That little 're-': we need to look again, and again, and look backwards. **Regenerate; Refurbish; Retype; Retrace; Revert.** Such terms denote a lack, implicitly unjust, in the treatment of or reception to a particular artist's work. Those two letters say so much: there is something forgotten, something overlooked, there is now an urgency to confront these lacunae.

It is time for a re-evaluation of the work of artist X.

Just imagine how many of these articles you encounter, however well their sentiments are hidden in rhetoric. It's an innocuous opening gambit for critics wishing to challenge their predecessors; a sweeping statement that is both implicitly damning and vague enough not to immediately embolden detractors. Or, in fact, bring the intellectual zeitgeist and exciting theoretical field of the day to bear on a work which did not fare well under the reign of the previous exciting theoretical field. Facetious? Absolutely. But it's a common enough analytical trope that it warrants satire in popular media: 'It's not what you think it's about, say clever people'.<sup>1</sup>

Because evaluation and re-evaluation is oftentimes merely obsequious to critical trends, however, not much new is ever really said. The re-evaluation results in a reframing of terminology. Either that or the claims made are so tangential and vast in scope that they attempt to redefine entire cultural epistem- and ont-ologies,

replacing one absolute with another. Stephen Burt, in *The New Yorker*, casts this idea in aphoristic fictional thesis titles:<sup>2</sup> 'Please adopt my buzzword'; 'The name we've been using for this stuff is anachronistic. Here's a better name'. Even the relatively fledgling metalanguage and metacritical protocol of musicology and jazz criticism has the same flaws:

Our dislikes followed a pattern, a pattern which began with our celebration of an unknown musician ... and ended with our derogation of the same musician ... when he, she or they had achieved popularity.<sup>3</sup>

Nonetheless, when I began writing this text, I wished I could start with an appeal to reassessment. For, with Marion Brown, to make a claim toward an overdue re-evaluation is an impossible luxury. There exists shockingly little writing on Brown, who, despite a diverse and powerful output of music, texts and artwork, is mostly remembered as 'one of the saxophonists on *Ascension*'.<sup>4</sup> It is unlikely that Brown would be too disappointed with that association, declaring that *Ascension* could 'heat up an apartment on a cold winter day', but to view Brown only through the lens of late Coltrane is to do him a disservice.<sup>5</sup> Not least because Brown was not just one of the saxophonists on *Ascension*, but 'directly influenced' its creation.<sup>6</sup> Eric Porter, in *What is this Thing Called Jazz?*, does suggest that Brown is worth deeper study and elaborates on his work, but dedicates fewer than ten pages to him within a more general discussion of 'creative music'.<sup>7</sup> It is difficult to suggest that Brown is appreciated fully when many encyclopaedias get his birthdate wrong by four years.<sup>8</sup>

Why is this? Certainly, one overwhelming factor is that much of his work is so hard to locate. While impulse! reissued a number of records after Brown's death catalysed a brief surge in biographical interest, they remain obscure.<sup>9</sup> Of his written work, only a few of liner notes are obtainable and I was only able to get a copy of *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun: Views and Reviews* (henceforth *Views...*) thanks to the generosity of New York's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Brown's other writings, including *Recollections* and the essay 'The Negro in Fine Arts' - Brown's contribution to John Davis' 1966 *The American Negro Reference Book* - are persistently obscure.<sup>10</sup> Fans since the 1970s have had 'difficulty in locating [Brown's] records'.<sup>11</sup>

Emphatically, Brown's textual scarcity does not reflect a negligible social or cultural significance. In 2012, Governor David Patrick of Northampton, Massachusetts declared September 15 'Marion Brown Day' and urged 'all citizens of the Commonwealth to take cognizance of this event and participate fully in its observance'.<sup>12</sup> Brown was a 'living legend' while he lived in Northampton, said Patrick, and 'the entire Commonwealth will experience an extra measure of soul through [Brown's] well-deserved honor'.<sup>13</sup> Some claim that 'there is no doubt' Brown helped inspire renowned intellectual and 'literary genius' Amiri Baraka.<sup>14</sup> Francis Ward sees Brown as a necessary step in a 'microcosm of jazz history'.<sup>15</sup> If this remains unconvincing, one reviewer believed that 'Djinji's Corner', the second side of Brown's *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun*, was not just 'superb' but

stands alongside *Free Jazz*, *Ascension*, and *New York Eye and Ear Control* as a landmark (the most fully

realized aesthetically) of free group improvisation ... [it] might likewise be said to keynote the direction much of the music would take in the Seventies.<sup>16</sup>

In all anecdotal reports, Brown is recalled fondly.<sup>17</sup> Clearly, his cultural and social impact has been immense. Brown was not a marginal artist, whom I wish to champion as a conduit to greater appreciation of a wider cultural movement or moment. Conversely, I must unequivocally state that Brown is in no way a peripheral figure. Brown has cameos throughout George Lewis' *A Power Stronger Than Itself*, but only ever as an 'also' or 'including'; he appears time and again within a litany of key influences, exemplary players and framing devices for the narratives of better-known players.<sup>18</sup> In both personal and academic accounts of others, Brown appears at key developmental junctures and always indicating what will come next.<sup>19</sup> Even discounting his playing, the historical character Brown cuts is formidable: he was neighbour to James Earl Jones and Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.; he knew Malcolm X and was accosted in a restaurant by Muhammed Ali; shared birthday congratulations with Sonny Rollins (Rollins was born September 7, Brown September 8); he was a running partner and friend of Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones); he borrowed a horn from Ornette Coleman...<sup>20</sup> Consistently, Brown found himself at the centre of the cultural vortexes of Black Nationalism, Civil Rights, the New Thing and other immeasurable cultural shifts. The analytical void that engulfs Brown is thus baffling not owing to any exteriority or alterity, but because he was such a central figure, connected in many ways to many epoch-

defining events (musically and culturally). This text aims towards redressing the tension between Brown's blatant cultural impact and the dearth of critical analysis of his work. Alan Offstein, writing soon after the release of *Afternoon...*, acknowledged that 'while there are no pages to reread that throw much light on [Brown's] current music, neither are there any books to burn'.<sup>21</sup> Sadly, forty years later, this remains axiomatic.

Evidence of this dichotomy is blatant in Brown's work with Elliott Schwartz, with whom Brown recorded *Soundways*.<sup>22</sup> Schwartz and Brown were colleagues in the music department of Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine. Despite being 'contemporary men, if not contemporaries', Schwartz and Brown were equal partners in the creation of *Soundways*, in 'the language of music'.<sup>23</sup> But the pair ended up on vastly different roads.<sup>24</sup> Brown was never fully integrated into the academic establishment and his oeuvre still languishes unstudied and unavailable. Schwartz, meanwhile, was recently awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Southern Maine.<sup>25</sup>

For examples of this opposition without the potential for racialisation, one need only glance at some of Brown's collaborators. Anthony Braxton (the subject of three monographs), Jeanne Lee (subject of a number of studies), Chick Corea (nominated for 63 Grammy Awards, winning 22), Sun Ra, Paul Bley, Ornette Coleman, Wadada Leo Smith, Archie Shepp...<sup>26</sup> However idiosyncratic, 'out' or erratic, all of these musicians maintain a higher profile than Brown in the academic world. It is a long and illustrious list, without a doubt, but Brown was at home with these titans. Far

from a nonentity, Brown found himself gracing the cover of a number of jazz magazines six times. Nor do these cover appearances represent one fecund part of Brown's career before evaporating, but occur fairly evenly between 1965-76. Not only did Brown hold journalistic favour, but editors believed he was prominent enough to effectively advertise and sell magazines.

I wish to draw Brown into critical and popular view. We can make no high claims to re-evaluation, to corrections of previous flaws. Instead, it is high time someone made those flaws in the first place, moving toward a comprehensive understanding: it is high time to evaluate the work of Marion Brown.

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The reader will soon discover that this text is an academic heterodoxy.<sup>27</sup> It is formulated contrapuntally, as a transcritique of Brown's work. My undertaking of the study in this way is inspired by the work of Kojin Karatani, who explores texts through parallax, in transcritique: to read works 'neither from [their] own [internal] viewpoint, nor from the viewpoint of others, but to face the reality that is exposed through difference (parallax)'.<sup>28</sup> In simpler terms, a transcritique is the reading of one text through the shadows of understanding cast by another. It is the means by which Anthony Braxton elicits the reader to respond to the *Tri-axium* texts.<sup>29</sup> My approach draws on Deleuze's notion of *impossibility* 'an original relation irreducible to any form of contradiction. It is a difference and not a negative'.<sup>30</sup> I aim to occupy the parallax space among Brown's texts in order to transcode a domain of totality. That is, it is not a move toward dialectical synthesis, but an embracing

of the works as irreducible works; my critique does not occupy the domain of one determinate position opposed to another, but the gap between these positions. I embrace antinomy as a key to understanding structural or theoretical interstices, not as an unassailable horizon of meaning.

Nevertheless, it would be expedient to clarify my theoretical approach further, through Brown's work. Written two years after the release of *Afternoon... Views...* offers us a coruscating series of first-person accounts of *Afternoon's...* conception, recording and reception. Of course, such a text will always be far from perfect; any textual account of improvisation, or music in general, will inevitably result in a ceiling of meaning being placed on the event of the music itself, forcing it to stagnate in one epistemological state.<sup>31</sup> Any insight proffered by linguistic discussion of the music will be unbalanced precisely by the intrinsic limitations of language beyond the representative sphere of meaning.<sup>32</sup> Brown says himself that 'how [the record] sounds is a result of where the participants were in August 1970', something that can never be replicated, however hard one struggles.<sup>33</sup> All attempts at a synaesthetic account of one expressive form through another will always-already fail, encountering the limitations of either form or a tepid compromise between the two. I have opted not to include any musical transcriptions, believing that transcriptions are inherently gross simplifications of the musical act, and mostly detrimental for this study.

To enhance the confusion, any claim made towards the alterity of music - as an idealised non-object - to the necessary particularity

of linguistic discourse counts 100 fold for improvised musics. Improvisation can never be treated as an empirical object. It is an act of becoming, eternally ephemeral, ceasing to exist even as it manifests. There is thus a distinction to be made between the improvised form and the improvised act, the latter being an endless drive toward the former. The improvised form is ever the goal of the act, yet remains suppressed within the act itself as its existential horizon; the form is both its condition of (im)possibility and its impossible-utopian point. Improvised musical acts are pushes toward realisations of the improvised form, which find satisfaction in endlessly repeating the failed gesture, the failure being the object of the drive itself.<sup>34</sup> The process cannot be reified. Hence the barrier of linguistic analysis, which attempts to treat the act as the form and the process as the object. For any kind of linguistic or textual analysis to occur, there must be some level of concrete, synchronic actuality within the process, which is retroactively enabled only by myopic, restrictive self-reflexivness of the linguistic act.<sup>35</sup> Brad Mehldau: 'So a non-object necessarily becomes a kind of object, or else I will never be able to finish a sentence about it'.<sup>36</sup> Improvisation embraces its own transience, and thus empirically and linguistically can never truly be 'observed'.

This idea is not new.

Evan Parker: 'music is not what you hear in analysis, it's what you hear in the real time of performance'.<sup>37</sup>

Anthony Braxton: 'the physical universe particulars of a given postulation are necessarily connected to the life of that postulation'.<sup>38</sup>

Mehldau: 'No one really cares about music's unexplainable aspect until they start trying to explain it. Only then does it take on a numinous aura of otherness ... If language privileges music in one sense by assigning it a transcendental status above and beyond itself, it also suggests its own failure as a mode of communication'.<sup>39</sup>

Such notions are not exclusive to jazz or improvised musics. When asked what a particular piece of music meant, Robert Schumann famously responded by playing it again.<sup>40</sup>

Improvised music is firmly non-institutional and non-commercial.<sup>41</sup> Philippe Carles and Jean-Louis Comolli have noted that improvised music, ontologically and epistemologically inaccessible from Western hegemonic formulae, 'does not belong in the history of Western arts' despite its 'economic colonisation' through capitalist modes of consumption and value judgements.<sup>42</sup> Wadada Leo Smith demands that improvised music 'cannot be criticised'.<sup>43</sup> Such self-description sets implicit boundaries that we are loath to cross: I aim not to 'criticise' Brown's work as Smith understood the term. I am aware of the 'real and drastic effect-influence of false interpretation (words) on music' and so will instead use the music as a conduit, a point of examination.<sup>44</sup>

The point, ultimately, is this: writing about music can be a bitch.<sup>45</sup> There exists a gaping disc[h]ord between modern, neo-liberal critical analysis and the non-Western musical act.<sup>46</sup> Countless practitioners and academics have explicated such a claim on countless occasions.<sup>47</sup> Orthodox-critical teleological analysis most often falls into the vocabulary of the fawning fan or documentarian

description, or resorts to Jacobian nihilism in an attempt to 'explain' the music.<sup>48</sup> Often, academic discourses of any discipline - from musicology to physics and even those established to tackle this very issue - fails to successfully encapsulate what *music* is.<sup>49</sup> Hegemonic pedagogical and analytical epistemologies of Western Classical music - the source of whichever prefixed -musicology one chooses - often fall short of comprehending anything other than their own articulated forms.<sup>50</sup> Despite his situational distance, Nietzsche's annoyance still rings true: 'how much of [music] can be counted, calculated, brought into formulae ... what would one have grasped, understood, recognised in it! Nothing, almost nothing, of that which is really "music"!'.<sup>51</sup>

Obviously, this is a circumlocutory caveat to my approach to Brown's work, but one that is vital to make and would not serve as a supplementary note. While not explicitly a methodological precept, these concepts must be addressed in some form by anyone writing about any music.

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**'Whence we came!'**

At this juncture, before we delve into Brown's work proper, it is worth appreciating his view of his situational imperative within the musical scene he inhabited. We can thus nuance our reading through Brown's beliefs of music and its use. For, notwithstanding Adorno's judgement that musicology

that would prefer  
to avoid the problems

**'I named it for myself'**

*Views...* offers a charming insight into Brown's creative process and self-identity within the contemporaneous cultural matrix. Dave Borgo is direct in his belief that Brown 'published [*Views...*] in order to set forth his personal aesthetic philosophy'.<sup>136</sup> It is an urgent document, suffused with typographical and editorial solecisms. Perhaps most importantly, however, external to any biographical or bibliographical interest, *Views...*

of analysing production and to confine itself to questions of distribution or consumption remains imprisoned in the mechanisms of the market and hence gives sanction to the primacy of the commodity character of the music<sup>52</sup>

the ephemeral nature of jazz leaves us with much criticism that is descriptive or sycophantic.<sup>53</sup> As David Stowe remarked, one 'must regard the score or record as merely a sign of a large field of social forces that provide the ground for those texts ... we should view the music not simply as a text but as social practice'.<sup>54</sup>

Considering this, we turn to Brown: 'jazz is my music. Black man music'.<sup>55</sup> These epistrophic sentences contain worlds of implication, but they demonstrate a distinct social dynamic between relations of production and the situational matrix from which they emerge. To Brown, music expresses a socialised homology between musical practices and the social and historical context of these practices. The importance of the history of slavery and African antecedents, 'whence we came!', cannot be overstated.<sup>56</sup> Is Brown's self-entrenchment in history not what Nicholas Gebhardt theorises?

The very manipulation and transformation of the material world through a person's [musical] movements, through his or her embodied motions, is

offers the reader an invaluable - though unfortunately unusual - coupler of data: a snapshot of an improvised recording at the moment of creation and its aftermaths. Moreover, we can treat *Views...* as a retroactive score of *Afternoon...*, a textual account of the verbal and informal creation of the work.<sup>137</sup> It must also be said that all reviewers cited were chosen by Brown for inclusion in *Views...* and must refract his own sentiments.

*Views...* enlivens (and subsists) our perception of how the musical act of *Afternoon...* eventuated diachronically, and is, thus, much more valuable than a traditional score. Despite 'none' of *Afternoon...*'s conception being written down, Brown acknowledges that<sup>138</sup>

It is only after a performance that one can examine a creative experience ... Afterwards, it is possible ... to see what really happened ... it is possible for me to listen to tapes of my playing as a photographer would examine contact sheets. He may have shot ten rolls, yet only select ten prints as representative of what is best. It goes the same for me.<sup>139</sup>

While the act of performance itself is 'total (unity of body, mind, time, place, action, &c)', Brown seems to advocate a retrospective, academic and rational distance in the engagement with improvised works.<sup>140</sup> Brown's choice of simile is particularly instructive, the ocular encompassing a representative of existence, since 'what [Brown] see[s],

constitutive of, and constituted by, the relations of domination and exploitation specific to the division of labour in capitalist society.<sup>57</sup>

We must then - as Brown does - orient our interpretation of the social and musicological content of our subject while considering its constitution through its ontological construct. We must make explicit the relationship between the artefact of the record with the situational imperative and social alignment of the musical act within the wider cultural and historical dynamic spheres of its conception. Brown makes strict experiential and existential correlations between his music and the quasi-mythological land of 'Africa'.<sup>58</sup> He formulates a retroactive pan-African musical and ethnic unity, seizing on that retroactive dialectical process as a means to determine or constitute his own presuppositions.<sup>59</sup>

Such unity is a retrospective illusion, the loss of some primordial value or form that never existed.<sup>60</sup> By conflating this illusion with the interpersonal ideological matrix of post-war America - roughly speaking, political boundaries as they correspond to ethnic realities - Brown retroactively creates his own recursive conditions of possibility.<sup>61</sup> The music Brown plays is, in his view, a fractal part of an *ur*-correlationism that pertains to vast cultural and historical diasporic social movements: he

more than what [he] hear[s] ... becomes [his] music'.<sup>141</sup> Brown is a staunch advocate for the primacy of the visual over the aural, perhaps a result of being 'always exposed to visual ... practices' as a child.<sup>142</sup> Consequentially, Brown aligns himself with the Western hegemonic tradition, the difference experienced between 'western' and 'non-western' - by which he means pan-African - cultures being the predominance of the eyes over the ears and vice versa.<sup>143</sup> It is a contradistinction between textual and oral societies. Further, 'in oral societies, the ear interprets what it first perceived visually'.<sup>144</sup> Or, ocular centrality is a necessity of culture. As Dwight Wilson observes of *Afternoon...*, any writing about jazz serves to 'conjure up certain images' and reviews are only able to reflect 'images' back.<sup>145</sup>

*Afternoon...* is a 'tone poem' and Brown's work resembles 'some kind of sound painting'.<sup>146</sup> In line with his self-defined 'Western' tradition, Brown's music pertains to textual and visual 'images'. 'When I play, I'm a narrator - an essayist', he told one interviewer.<sup>147</sup> It is well-known that Brown was heavily influenced by novels, the zenith of the 'Western' textual form.<sup>148</sup>

This is not merely a rhetorical effort to conflate the influence certain forms can have over another, but evidence of the power of the textual over Brown's music. Nor is this a leap from a conversational generality to empirical fact, since Brown often uses movement - an irrefutably visual act - to frame his music. Brown saw *Afternoon...* as 'a spectacle involving music, song, dance

is his own pre-ontological mediator.

It would not be disingenuous to Brown, then, to cite Clyde Mitchell's broad point that

The general perspective is that the behaviour of social actors may be interpreted as the resultant of the actor's shared understandings of the situation in which they find themselves and the constraints of the wider social order in which they are enmeshed.<sup>62</sup>

One slight nuance must be illuminated. To Brown, the situation in which he finds himself is not a 'finding' in terms of chance, but a self-mediated 'finding oneself' in relation to historical contingency. Brown is a social actor affecting a self-generated triangulation (production, consumption, ideology) enmeshed within a social order.

So with what contingency does Brown self-triangulate? In 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition in Afro-American Music', Brown gives the reader a blistering account of jazz's history, social function and implicit future.<sup>63</sup> The article opens by noting that 'the creation and learning of music in traditional African societies is primarily an aural experience'.<sup>64</sup> Hardly contentious. As if writing a totality different article, however, Brown goes on to self-

and movement'.<sup>149</sup> Basketball, to Brown, is a form of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a 'ballet' in which movement and dance coalesce. 'The only thing missing is music'.<sup>150</sup> It is a theatrical event, and overwhelmingly visual: 'what you see is a story that only the players know'.<sup>151</sup> Again, Western artistic traditions prove key to Brown, despite his never having witnessed or experienced them.<sup>152</sup>

To reiterate this dichotomy another way: I have never been to Georgia. I am an English white male, 46 years distant from the time of recording. Does this mean that I cannot fully engage with the nostalgic and biographically infused *Afternoon...?* Are my experiential and empirical influential spheres too far removed from that of the work's inception for me to appreciate its spirit or soul? Offering himself as a case study, Brown suggests I have no reason to worry. Not because of 'the almost full absorption of black culture into white culture', but because, simply, Brown has 'never been to Africa'.<sup>153</sup>

Despite appealing to pan-African ideals and claiming Africa as the land 'whence we came!', Brown never went to Africa.<sup>154</sup> Holistically, Brown's works are manifestations of things he's never seen.

I'm transcribing from one time and place to another ... through listening to their music and reading, I've become a part of their environment ... I never really played black spirituals but I translate them into my music. Little bits of

identify his situational imperative within a maelstrom of cultural and historical matrices. It is an absolute and teleological account of the history and ancestry of jazz, proceeding like this:

**New Orleans Jazz** - to Brown the progenitor of all that followed, alongside Ragtime, New Orleans Jazz was 'collective instrumental improvisation' that combined the spirituals of the slaves with 'guidelines ... dictated by the music and local traditions'.<sup>65</sup>

Amid this genesis, however, the music already began to be misappropriated, when external musicians - sympathetic or otherwise - started to rely on notation rather than spontaneity.

Written music made the subject matter and general style of improvised music accessible to those who could not create their own. In the process, however, the spirit or soul was sacrificed. The spirit comes only from direct contact with the circumstances that nurture it.<sup>66</sup>

It is not something one can fake, 'it can only be done by people who engage themselves as a result of that tradition'.<sup>67</sup> But it is something one can hear: listening to saxophonist Chris Merz, for example, 'one gets the impression that he grew up in one of those communities

melody become footnotes to my past<sup>155</sup>

Through detached diligence and textual study, Brown implies, one need not have any direct contact with the circumstances that nurture one's inspirations. If one engages in the unknown - exposes oneself to otherness - everything becomes 'part of [your] style'.<sup>156</sup> Rational study and observation, the textual and the visual, become developments of oneself.<sup>157</sup>

When engaging in the musical act as observer or listener, one becomes a voyeur, feeding off the reciprocally determinate inter-subjectivity of autonomous individual agents.<sup>158</sup> Brown himself is always an observer, waiting to translate what he sees into music. In films, Brown is a flâneur, wandering through cities looking for inspiration.<sup>159</sup> Henry English's film, in particular, aiming as it does to reflect a jazz performance in its form, presents Brown's voyeuristic city-walks as his musical solo

The film takes its structure from the exposition, improvisation/development and recapitulation typical of jazz performance. The first part introduces Marion and his concept. A session in a recording studio provides the context for the second part: After the head, and going from black and-white to color, the film takes off into a visual fantasia of cityscapes, which ultimately melds visually with the performers. The brief

where jazz and black life  
abounds'.<sup>68</sup>

Here, Brown taps into an analytical barrier in jazz music that has been problematic since its inception. How to define and analyse the 'spirit' of jazz? It is a critical boundary that was identified by Hugues Panassié in 1934, when he compared Jack Hylton and Duke Ellington's recordings of *Limehouse Blues* and found Hylton's lacking in 'swing'.<sup>69</sup> Contemporaneously with Brown, Baraka explicitly racialises the antagonism, stating in no uncertain terms that 'the fiends had conspired to turn fire notes of our human striving ... into bank notes of flattened sensibility ... which they, so confident in their infamy, dared call swing'.<sup>70</sup> How can some music swing and some not, though be technically the same? Brown offers an answer: direct contact, railing against the 'sickening [detached]... sterility of white music'.<sup>71</sup>

Next was **Louis Armstrong** - in leaving King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, 'ushered in the era of the soloist and planted the seeds of bebop'.<sup>72</sup>

Then **Lester Young** - whose 'thematic improvisations' pushed beyond Armstrong's work while remaining in harmony, 'the tradition of Western music'.<sup>73</sup>

**Coleman Hawkins** followed, 'the first great improviser to exploit the possibilities of theme and variation' by combining 'harmony (vertical) and thematic (linear) materials into mysterious

third part returns to Marion, walking across a bridge.<sup>160</sup>

Brown himself effectively admits he was always a flâneur

when I was growing up, I used to walk the streets with my German Shepherd, Vanilla, looking for fights. I was always small, you know, and my dog was very big. I became an extension of my dog's strength (laughing now). When I saw a group of girls coming, I'd run and hide and sic Vanilla on them. Before they got real scared, I'd jump out and rescue them - yes. Now my music is an extension of my strength. Or maybe it's the other way around. I don't know. I like to admit that I don't understand-that leaves me room to improve.<sup>161</sup>

The strength Brown experienced as an observing wanderer, engaging through the proxy of his dog, became Brown's music. Brown's musical engagement later reconstitutes his observations. Or his observations reconstitute his engagement. But Brown's reflexive negation is not so radical as it may first appear. In either case - be it his music as an extension of his strength or his strength as an extension of his music - it is the music that remains the active force, either giving Brown expressive strength, or enacting it beyond his internal limitations.

*Afternoon...*, likewise, materialises through a manifestation of Brown's

juxtapositions of sound and rhythm'.<sup>74</sup>

It may seem audacious to claim Hawkins in this way, but is Brown not simply offering a brief summary of Scott DeVeaux's later, seminal work *The Birth of Bebop?*<sup>75</sup> DeVeaux traces the genealogy of bebop through to Hawkins' 'ingenious balance between the vertical dimension of harmony and the horizontal logic of the melodic line' with which Hawkins outclassed his peers.<sup>76</sup> A certain credence is lent to Brown's observations.

Hawkins gave way to **Charlie Parker** - 'the greatest of all', who built far and above on Young's developments.<sup>77</sup>

**Sonny Rollins** was perhaps the more exciting step, however, dropping the piano entirely at times to 'create more freedom (space) for him to play as he felt'.<sup>78</sup>

Brown's language here presents a wonderfully Derridean double meaning. 'To play as he felt' becoming both 'to play what he wanted' and 'to instantaneously play his feelings as they arose' at the point of discourse and dissemination. Rollins enabled a spatial freedom to allow for both emotive freedom and musical agency.

Echoes of this duality can be found in *Views...*, in which Brown states that 'what you hear is not what a musician actually feels', but a sonic interpretation of that feeling, filtered through the listener's

experientially visual emotional memory, 'the realisation of what is remembered of past experience'.<sup>162</sup> While Brown's Georgia Trilogy (*Geechee Recollections, Afternoon...*, *Sweet Earth Flying*) broadly demonstrate that Brown 'remembered things about Atlanta ... the things that kept me warm all those years', *Afternoon...* is more unambiguously visual and kinetic.<sup>163</sup> *Afternoon...* sonically re-enacts

the things you see  
each day ... walking along  
eating fruit from the  
[trees], picking pecans  
from the ground on the  
way to school, throwing  
rocks at pigeons and  
squirrels; and at each  
other.<sup>164</sup>

The translation and 'transposition' of these emotional and visual, lived experiences epitomise Brown as the ultimate flâneur who, 'armed with his poetic hypersensitivity, could capture the beauty of any environment'.<sup>165</sup> *Afternoon...* is, after all, a tone poem which 'depicts nature and the environment in Atlanta'.<sup>166</sup>

Casting Brown in this light integrates him into an established and inescapably 'Western' canonical poetic-critical tradition, from Baudelaire through Benjamin.<sup>167</sup> J.B. Figi goes as far as saying that 'a sense of poetry inhabits [Brown's] music', terming Brown as poet and musician inseparably.<sup>168</sup> To Jinichi Uekusa, *Afternoon...* is 'impressionistic musical poetry'.<sup>169</sup> And if he is a poet, Brown must be situated within the primacy of the textual, the individual and the shadows cast

experiential matrix and situational imperative.<sup>79</sup>

After Parker, Brown notes, there was a gap 'until musicians realised they could do without chords', wherein **Miles Davis** and **John Coltrane** 'signalled change'.<sup>80</sup>

The most praise, column space and implicit developmental importance is then given to the latest teleological movement: **Ornette Coleman**. 'Beginning where Parker left off, [Coleman] showed how improvisation could be natural, and flow freely without having fixed points in space (harmony and melody), or fixed points in time (rhythm)'.<sup>81</sup>

Brown depicts Coleman's work as the most logical, direct development from the phenomenon of New Orleans Jazz. 'When [people] heard everyone improvising collectively, they thought "Chaos!" Perhaps they had forgotten ... that collective improvisation had been the basis of New Orleans Jazz, and that collectivity is a manifestation of community'.<sup>82</sup> The Free Jazz Coleman signifies not only recalls New Orleans Jazz, but the improvised communities of early slaves and African societies.<sup>83</sup> Brown makes explicit what we have heretofore speculated regarding the use and function of jazz music. By connecting Free Jazz to the first black cultures in America, inevitably improvised because of oppression, Brown indicates the role of jazz in the production of cultural identities. The social basis of jazz music is a radical

by the legacy of the Romantic genius, all of which are entrenched in Western intellectual traditions.<sup>170</sup> Nor is this a convenient oversimplification. In one brief interview alone, a free-flowing valorisation of others' works, Brown applies the moniker 'genius' - with all its Romantic baggage - onto seventeen individuals.<sup>171</sup> While, arguably, the oversaturation of Brown's many 'geniuses' signifies a vernacular tick, with which one shouldn't equate Brown's 'genius' with 'Genius', such an argument belies the clear sincerity in each of Brown's endorsements. Brown was an incredibly intelligent man; he knew what he was saying.

Moreover, he taps into a textual, intellectual teleology of 'Western' traditions. Brown appeals to an entire classical tradition on several occasions. As John Turner notes

Not merely the title, but the whole form and feeling of Marion Brown's tone-poem invite the listener who is familiar with nineteenth century poetry and music to wonder about the nature of its relationship with two French works of the last century, the poem 'Afternoon of a Faun' by Stéphane Mallarmé and Claude Debussy's orchestral 'Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun'.<sup>172</sup>

Reviewer Gunther Buhles is more direct, drawing clear lines between Brown and the classical impressionist tradition:

Before you put *Afternoon...* on the turntable, you should

egalitarianism, as many scholars have noted.<sup>84</sup>

Collectivity found in Free Jazz demonstrates self-mediated community, what Porter calls in Brown the 'therapeutic and transformative' power of improvisation.<sup>85</sup> Jazz, for Brown, circumscribes the materialist individualism of capitalist America and creates cultures of shared values, enacting the complex social dynamic of the musical act *qua* act.<sup>86</sup> It is a means of social orientation, through musical practice; a social act prior to an act of self-expression.<sup>87</sup> Consequently, the teleology Brown advocates is strictly ideological.

Writing decades later and without acknowledging Brown, Gebhardt would agree:

Only by understanding Coleman's decomposition of the jazz act into the illusion of a pure melody is it possible to grasp not only the virtuosic construction of hot jazz and the virtuosic speed of bebop, but the social conditions of their interpenetration.<sup>88</sup>

Brown's history of jazz could be surmised as a dialectical triadic synthesis:<sup>89</sup>

- **Thesis:** the collectivity of New Orleans Jazz.
- **Antithesis:** the primacy of the egotism of the soloist.

listen to Debussy's *Preludes a l'après-midi d'un Faune* ... [Brown's] 'Faun' is as compelling as Debussy's ... but Marion's impressionism is closer to that of the economical ... Erik Satie than to the main representative of the impressionistic style, Debussy.<sup>173</sup>

Brown's titling alone is a polysemic game of resignification, a politics of naming taking place in the wide semantic field that the title evokes. Alongside allusions to Mallarmé and Debussy, Brown manipulates the Ballet Russes collaboration with Vaslav Nijinsky and Igor Stravinsky's adaptation of Mallarmé's iconic poem. But it is that iconicity that presents such a fascinating depth - for *all* of the works and cultural histories that display themselves tacitly in Brown's title are transformative moments that mark a rupture of previous forms and a leap toward European modernism.<sup>174</sup> Aldon Nielsen writes that Brown 're-contextualised modernity by re-appropriating [a]... series of appropriations ... [Brown] uncovered the Africanity of modernist art ... and at the same time reasserted the modernity of black Americans'.<sup>175</sup> We must treat this reading with care, however, since Nielsen doesn't acknowledge Mallarmé's ghost in any resignification, and neglects Brown's own textual exegesis of *Afternoon*... Furthermore, aside from the problematic generalisation of 'Africanity' as a descriptor of 'modern' art, it seems a simplification to suggest that Brown is making an attempt to reassert the modernity of black Americans. For one thing,

- **Synthesis:** collective improvisation and musical freedom.

Coleman himself made the same observation, that

perhaps the most important new element in our music is our conception of free group improvisation ... it played a big role in New Orleans' early bands ... Today, still, the individual is either swallowed up in a group situation, or else he is out front soloing, with none of the other horns doing anything but calmly awaiting their turn for their solos.<sup>90</sup>

Undoubtedly, Brown agreed. Despite being composer of *Afternoon...* and writer and editor of *Views...*, Brown is keen to stress that he can 'take no credit for the results. Whatever they may be, it goes to the musicians [and the implicit situational imperative] collectively'.<sup>91</sup> Understanding Coleman as the next step for jazz, Brown suggests, promotes a double movement between the intersection of subjective situational imperatives and collective possibility, 'mutual cooperation at a folk level'.<sup>92</sup> Mutual cooperation, collectivity, is central to Brown's aesthetic - the individual being a travesty of potentiality.

At the root of all of it was freedom. As John Litweiler has noted, freedom 'appears at the very beginning of jazz and reappears at every growing

Nielsen appeals to modernity as noumenal. The basic coordinates of Nielson's ontological space are limited by their own assumptions: one can't have modernity without the past, one cannot create in a vacuum.

Alain Gerber makes this notion explicit by aligning Brown's music and intellectual lucidity to traditions of classical music, jazz and 'the trends of today's music'.<sup>176</sup> Uekusa elaborately compares *Afternoon...* to several of Debussy's works.<sup>177</sup> Brown independently relates his work to Satie, Ravel and Debussy.<sup>178</sup> If we base our analysis solely on what Brown expresses about *Afternoon...*, analogies to classical forms and artistic traditions promptly develop. Allusions to Mallarmé, for example, function on multiple levels. We 'don't need the story' of *Afternoon...* to engage in it, but we've been given it by Brown himself, so may as well corroborate.<sup>179</sup> And the parallels between Mallarmé's poem - a young faun encounters and pursues several nymphs in an oneiric state of possible false-memory - and Brown's anecdotes about his youth - pursuing and saving girls from his dog, relating to the story 'as ... a dream', and re-enacting the events in memory - hardly need much excavation.<sup>180</sup> We know that Brown studied the poem while at Clark College, that he studied 'not because he wanted to' is irrelevant.<sup>181</sup> He has the knowledge; the means of acquisition are immaterial. The similarities seem too great to account to coincidence.

Yet, outside of any musical and poetic tradition, Brown roots his work deeper in classical mythology. As we have seen, Brown is keen to stress the importance of memory for the

point in the music's history'.<sup>93</sup> Brown traces this 'freedom' as a musically produced cultural identity and implicitly addresses the hidden assumption: there is freedom to be expressed, collective freedom expressed collectively.

A dialogic example is expedient to demonstrate our position in relation to Brown's. Take Wynton Marsalis' 'neoclassical agenda', one which would surely take issue with Brown's historical account.<sup>94</sup> Marsalis is an unashamed elitist who maintains that the beauty of jazz lies in its 'deliberate artifice ... purism is incorrectly perceived as stagnation'.<sup>95</sup> The central tension between Marsalis and Brown's viewpoints pivots around this 'purism'. For Marsalis, 'pure' jazz is derived of bebop and big band jazz, of technical ability and complexity. It is a reaction against the widely disseminated image of the black jazz musician as a 'noble savage', a 'myth perpetuated by those who profess an openness to everything'.<sup>96</sup>

Marsalis writes against an inherent paradox of free improvisation, wherein the input of an amateur can match or surpass that of a seasoned professional, 'the skill and intellect required is whatever is available'.<sup>97</sup> It was a paradox Brown embraced and, antithetically to Marsalis' view, utilised to create a 'sane [equal] sociology' of musical creation, wherein non-musicians and professionals can 'share musical experience'.<sup>98</sup> The amateurs, after all, whose 'competence may be of a different kind', will hold a

improvising performer, but the connections between playing and experience are not superficial or 'primitive'.<sup>182</sup> Memory, as the title of his book *Recollections* emphasises, is vital to Brown, it is 'the mother of the muses'.<sup>183</sup> In this simple phrase, Brown unlocks a Pandora's box of semantic implication. An invocation of Mnemosyne, the mother of all human creativity, is the prototypical appeal to (Western) traditions and poetic formulae.<sup>184</sup>

Through 'Western' detached education at Clark College, Brown became familiar with the 'stories' of classical mythology, Pan, Mallarmé's faun, being one of them.<sup>185</sup>

I learned about it ... I had seen graphic representations of a creature that was half-goat, half-man, playing on bamboo pipes ... I know the myth not so much in terms of Pan being a satyr, as him being a musician, the pastoral flautist.<sup>186</sup>

Allusive semantic layers flow throughout *Afternoon...* to the point of allegory. Brown intimates that Pan, the faun, is a means of self-symbolisation. 'I named it for myself', Brown avers, becoming the faun 'merely revisiting home', in a kaleidoscopic musical rendering of Brown's visual emotional memory.<sup>187</sup>

How are we, then, to respond to Brown's claim that the naming of *Afternoon...* and its similarity to so many realms of inference in so many artistic endeavours was 'accidental'?<sup>188</sup> Such an assertion would be more convincing were he not attempt

different set of musical skills, not restricted by a long pedagogical influence.<sup>99</sup>

But, to Brown, Marsalis' anathema is purism and Marsalis is an aberration, stuck in Western and white forms of music.<sup>100</sup> It is a manifest double consciousness, Marsalis 'always looking at one's self through the eyes of others ... measuring [his] soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity'.<sup>101</sup> Since Brown connects his music explicitly to New Orleans Jazz and the improvisations of slaves, he attempts to redraw the 'noble savage' as a powerful, intellectual and skilful being according to its own cultures. Marsalis, on the other hand, wishes to discount the 'noble savage' poison by demonstrating, as the beboppers did, that black people are able to transcend the aesthetic and intellectual achievements of white counterparts, on the white's terms.

Bebop was, in this sense, the ultimate rebellion because it was *not* a counterdiscourse, but a counterpublic - a democratic elitism. Those dismissed as being naturally incapable took what existed and pushed it far beyond white imaginations. Bebop was a deliberately alienating closed hermeneutic, on the oppressors' terms.<sup>102</sup> We could call bebop ultra-orthodox: not an attempted subversion of underlying ideological principles, but such a rigorous following of those principles that it becomes abhorrent to the ideology itself. An ultra-orthodox demonstrates that ultimate conformism is the ultimate criticism,

to so radically distance himself from any preceding works so many times in such quick succession. In *Views...*, Brown disavows any connection to Debussy, Mallarmé, Nijinsky, classical myth or any prevailing cultural tradition seven times, five of which within two pages.<sup>189</sup> It seems unconvincing to take Brown's - autonomously overstated - claim that he 'had nothing at all in [his] mind in any way to classical mythology' at face value.<sup>190</sup> Considering Brown names his work retroactively, 'conceiv[ing] the sounds first, and nam[ing] them afterwards, after [he has] heard them back', the cognitive dissonance underlying this contradiction is too big to dismiss.<sup>191</sup>

Brown's clear intellect, humour and behaviour in other interviews can help us shed some light on this dichotomy. Elsewhere, contrary to what *Views...* shows us, Brown declares a willing ignorance, a chosen distance.

I don't philosophise about art at all. I don't know what the artist's job is. The only people who think they know what his job is are the people who study artists. Whatever it is, no one wants to pay him for it ... My duty? The revolution? Write this down, now, write it all down. Say that I understand the whole thing and I keep working.<sup>192</sup>

The imperative Brown delivers in this extract shows a man aware that received image is a vital aspect of his work. 'Write it all down', for I am such that I am able to muse on politicised aesthetics while

articulating that the underlying social principles of a social system are unpalatable to the system itself. With bebop, individual freedom and black freedom. 'Natural' skill is circumnavigated; the preternatural - feared by the 'naturally' gifted - arises. Brown would understand Marsalis as operating from a false 'purism', one defined by the oppressive cultures it wished to dismantle.

Speculatively, Brown would have read Marsalis:

Marsalis' aim is to show that jazz music has artistic merit and requires great technical skill at a time when it was primarily scorned as primitive and for this he should be lauded.<sup>103</sup> Undoubtedly, jazz and improvisation has historically been dismissed as insignificant when compared to classical music. To do so, however, Marsalis appeals to hegemonic Western forms, to bring a respectability to jazz that is reliant upon colonial epistemologies.<sup>104</sup> This is his mistake: he does not take jazz on its own terms, instead appealing to the rhetoric of Eurocentric hegemony. In trying to elevate jazz in the eyes of popular culture, he overlooks its endemic, independent value.<sup>105</sup> Marsalis' conceptual edifice is a contortion of a false epistemic centre; 'black man music' on white man terms. After all, while Brown's music 'may seem "Western" in terms of the sound textures, it is non-Western in every other aspect'.<sup>106</sup> Any stylistic assimilation is illusory at worst or 'accidental' at best.<sup>107</sup> As Dwight Wilson puts it, *Afternoon...* is music of the soil,

continually creating in a multiplicity of forms. It is a performative act, one that attempts to balance the dialogue between artistic and intellectual endeavour. Or take Brown's prefatory remarks in *Views...*

thanks to *Down Beat*  
for not reviewing  
[*Afternoon...*] on the basis  
of what I hope is the  
outlook: 'if you can't  
say something good, don't  
say nothing!'<sup>193</sup>

This is a signifyin' statement full of wry, self-deprecatory humour and performative irony.<sup>194</sup> For what musician would take such relish in people *not* enjoying their work? Particularly if that enjoyment could correspond to more sales and thus a better quality of life for the musician.<sup>195</sup> I therefore maintain that Brown is keenly aware of every and all tradition and cultural matrix to which he alludes, but performs himself in an act of self-mystification.

We can validate Brown's awareness of this performative gesture through *Views...* itself. *Afternoon...*'s proposed 'costumes' demonstrate a consciousness toward the performative.<sup>196</sup> Each idiosyncratic outfit of each performer becomes part of the 'spectacle'. Brown shrewdly engineers the performative aspect of dress, manipulating the 'definite semiotics of band dress'.<sup>197</sup> Outfits are now deliberately charged with meaning for the viewer, a vital aspect of the overall visual experience. Not only that, but this extra layer of semiotic discourse is innately individual.<sup>198</sup> Each action, each movement, each sound, each

echoing Brown's folk sentiments.<sup>108</sup>

Brown's music 'comes directly from within the black community'.<sup>109</sup> Any 'deliberate artifice' Marsalis encourages relates only to 'what classical music is concerned with: formalities'.<sup>110</sup> Classical music to Brown is synecdochal for Western, white culture, and founded on a profoundly different ontology to the music he creates. The disparity is not just a matter of vocabulary, but ideological application.<sup>111</sup> At the root of this tension is a simple antagonism: the individual against the collective.

Informally, personally and musically, Brown relates himself firmly within a pan-African tradition. Indicating those early 'aural' cultures, he claims to be 'ear oriented; and, not eye oriented', and engages more clearly with the verbal than the textual, having 'never really understood poetry. [He] can only begin to appreciate poetry when I hear it read'.<sup>112</sup> Even when composing, wherein 'classical music reaches its highest level', Brown wishes to have 'no control', aligning himself to his pan-African tradition through collective improvisation and 'verbal' rehearsals.<sup>113</sup>

All these factors contribute to a gap in the parallax between (Western) individual and collective. Brown doesn't 'get' poems 'because they are so personal'.<sup>114</sup> He contrasts the 'immediate' community of improvised black music - wherein 'individual expression

visual stimulus, we can deduce, is rich in meaning and Brown knows it. Except, it is not that straightforward. Brown provokes the idea that meaning is inherent, yet distances himself from such a claim at almost every opportunity; he simultaneously utilises and rejects the intellectual tradition.

Taking Brown in this way, as a constant performer, always-already renegotiating his position within tradition, we are able to understand the significance of Brown's more provocative statements. As a case study: 'music is just what it is. Music'.<sup>199</sup> The implications of this performative view, as a critique of Western culture, are fairly clear:<sup>200</sup> one cannot see or read too much into music, emerging inescapably at the level of both phenomena and noumena, it exists in the sublime gaps within discourse.<sup>201</sup> It is simultaneously an epistemological obstacle and a positive ontological condition, a double movement that contains its own negation (if music were really 'just music', for example, one would never need to articulate that music was 'just music', especially in the linguistic or textual fields).<sup>202</sup>

But to allow Brown to get away with such a statement would be foolish, the ideological terms of jazz are inevitable, already internal within the act itself.<sup>203</sup> Brown's work, while not affectedly Political nor explicitly engaging in any ideological movement, has precise ideological contours, granted by virtue of its place of origin and means of

[self-identity] is a direct result' - with 'the written ... creative statement of an individual', the composition, filtered through its abstract imaginings 'in the mind', text and rehearsal.<sup>115</sup>

More superficial juxtapositions - visual/aural; textual/verbal - are subsumed into this larger ideological contrast. Sight is internal, personal - aurality is communal, open to all. text is internal and subjective in its interpretation and mediated through literacy. Speech is open and collective, 'the effective form of culture'.<sup>116</sup> Further, 'what is seen has little meaning until speech is used to express the emotions that arise from observation'.<sup>117</sup> Or, aural centrality is a necessity of culture. Brown is forthright about this centrality and its collective nature: 'my most profound gratitude goes out to the musicians ... and most of all --- - TO THOSE WHO LISTEN!'.<sup>118</sup>

Even without a shared language, as Brown explains in relation to slave communities, communication and society is improvised aurally.<sup>119</sup> Brown's choices of pronouns speaks volumes - he is not just a part of the pan-African tradition, but simultaneously *is* that tradition:

Our having made the transition from Africa to America, without the necessary cultural institutions, was a manifestation of a superior adjustment potential and an act of societal improvisation. We brought no books.

production and consumption. As Gebhardt expresses this schema in *Going for Jazz*, 'the jazz act is inseparable from the intentional aspects and the changing character of the musician's social and political relations in time'.<sup>204</sup> Ideology is the mediating mechanism that enables an autopoietic interpellation to occur. It operates in the domain of the unconscious, manoeuvring between the 'fetishised illusion of a substantial core of subjectivity' and individualist, neo-liberal hegemonies.<sup>205</sup> Is this not exactly how one can apply and unfold Nat Hentoff's knotted aphorism that the jazz life is 'the total existence of its players'?<sup>206</sup>

But what is it here to suggest something is 'ideological'? As we have conceded, Brown's ideology notably does not operate overtly. It is instead ideology operating on the tacit level of Rumsfeldian epistemology: the unknown knowns.<sup>207</sup> In other words, ideology operates on a level which structures social reality itself.<sup>208</sup> Even the claim that 'this statement is apolitical' is a paradox, for it cannot be apolitical without acknowledging its place in the political sphere. Not only that, but it subsumes the wholly subjective nature of epistemology into dogma. To return to our point, the attempt to claim music as noumena, as 'just music', is a knowing performance of an intellectual.

English's recollections of cohabiting with Brown in the late 1960s certainly demonstrate that Brown had a

What we learned of our past was taught orally, and very often in song form. The ban on drums and other instruments among slaves was not just imposed to keep them from making music. Slave owners knew that instruments were not only used as music-making devices, but that they could be used as vectors of speech as well. We had to improvise musical instruments [and, thus, communication and community].<sup>120</sup>

We can now fully appreciate Brown's position. Implicitly, Brown rejects the entire philosophic history of the occident individual. From the split between self and world that first found articulation through Descartes through to post-structuralist individual negatively defined, via psychoanalysis and the deepening of the essential 'self', the Euro-American philosophic tradition always gives primacy to the individual as agent of said philosophy.<sup>121</sup> It is a philosophy of separation, grown from 'the soil of an exaggerated theoretical individualism ... which could have been produced only in a social situation in which the original connection between individual and group had been lost sight of'.<sup>122</sup>

Brown's authority derives from a cultural return, harkening back to pan-African improvised and collective cultures through New Orleans Jazz's collectivity, which emphasises jazz's endemic merit, embracing its alterity to Western

strong involvement and vested interest in the fierce ideological battles of the time.

I recall Marion as very cool in temperament ... although it was the height of the Civil Rights Movement, the tensions there from did not enter into our relationship. Marion could see that the film derived from him and his music, so there no issues of unseemly exploitation.<sup>209</sup>

While *Afternoon...* may not be what one may immediately term ideological, Brown is necessarily a product of - and a participant in - the severe unrest and Political activity that surrounded him.<sup>210</sup> 'Music is just music' is a statement that suggests on some level that the function or possibility of music is simply to exist. Judging from his statements on the subject, Brown cannot be said to agree with this detached, 'rational' position. Such an attitude, we may infer, is instructive of the flaws of 'Western' epistemologies. Namely, 'music is the only thing that gives [Brown's] life meaning ... [but] in the West there's not that much utility for these things'.<sup>211</sup>

Brown is more than aware of this tension, melancholically stating that pan-African 'music meant more to [people's] very lives than it does in our society and institutions'.<sup>212</sup>

Music functions as a unifying force that binds people, artistically and

forms.<sup>123</sup> In some respects, Brown's view is a theory of de-linking, of removing the engulfing totality of Euro-American epistemologies and 'modern' rationality. A rebellion against the colonisation of thought through hegemonic interpellation. A rejection of the solipsistic white male particularity taken as a universality.<sup>124</sup> Is this not precisely what we see in Coleman's above-quoted statement? Consequentially, Brown's notion of artistic and social value, worth and affect challenge 'sophisticated' cultural hegemonies: basketball is ballet.

Take *Afternoon...*'s titling, echoing as it does the work of (Western) canonical artists Mallarmé, Debussy and Nijinsky. The resemblances between these canonical works and *Afternoon...* (in structure, 'story' and name) are too great to simply be 'accidental', as Brown claims.<sup>125</sup> So what is Brown doing in so fiercely distancing himself from these other works? It amounts to more than signifyin' by feigned ignorance.<sup>126</sup> Rather, it is a subtler paradigm of nommo, a central philosophical naming process of West African cultural traditions, of which Brown was undoubtedly cognisant.<sup>127</sup> The process of nommo - of naming things, forces, modes - is a means of establishing control and ownership over the named object; a fixing of its particularity while infusing within that object speaker-specific authority.<sup>128</sup> While often analogous to magical or spiritual practices, nommo held an aesthetic function for black Americans.<sup>129</sup> Through nommo, Brown acquires the history and

culturally, to a set of values ... Music functions both as a preserver of tradition and a means of recreation.<sup>213</sup>

Clearly, Brown - from an institutional and academic position - wishes to rectify the fallaciousness of Western hegemony that music is merely entertainment, or, worse, just music. As one of Brown's heroes concisely articulated the matter: 'Jazz music is not just entertainment; jazz took the next step to being a need for our community and our people'.<sup>214</sup>

Many of Brown's contemporaries were more explicit in their articulation of this theory. Mtume was didactic: 'the Black musician must ... be a projector whose message reflects the values of the culture from which his creation owes its existence'.<sup>215</sup> And poets and writers in Baraka's journal *The Cricket* defined Positive Black Music 'as well as all constructive art, *must be free*, and as the same time, it *must contain order* a positive harmony on the physical, mental and spiritual level'.<sup>216</sup>

The inherent duality of Brown's performed identity is found through contemporaneous black literature. By the 1970s, this American movement had found expression in England, too, because 'Black music is too important a social agent ... culturally, socially and politically black music has an important role to play in the black liberation struggle'.<sup>217</sup> The circumlocutory point being, of course, as Gebhardt argues extensively, is that - as Brown was fully aware - jazz operates

significance of *Afternoon...*, challenging the apparent supremacy of Western 'high' art and transferring the impressionistic, personal aesthetic of Mallarmé and Debussy into a collective, pan-African tradition. It is a double movement:

1: Western 'high' art would not exist if not for the abused and oppressed aesthetic, epistemological and experiential principles of pan-African cultures.

2: Black American 'primitive' culture has a history and lineage as intellectual and established as any Western form.

The act collectivises the fundamentally historicised 'aesthetic dimension' of the silent texts beneath *Afternoon...*, relocating them is a specifically African-American cultural tradition.<sup>130</sup> Once again, Brown both aligns himself to and becomes a cultural tradition of black aesthetics.

Furthermore, *nommo* is profoundly connected with the blues, a site of collective African-American social consciousness, rejected as vulgar and inferior by bourgeois arbiters of taste.<sup>131</sup> The significance of this connection lies in Brown asserting that 'my reference is the blues, and that's where my music comes from'.<sup>132</sup> In recapitulating the practice of *nommo* - directly associated with the establishment of a post-slavery, independent black consciousness - Brown simultaneously recapitulates an African-American collective

as the artistic expression of ideology, a medium for an ideological movement.<sup>218</sup> That is, never functioning within just one semantic or symbolic arena.

But while Brown is clear that 'jazz is my music', he is also unequivocal in rooting his music in the geopolitically (African-)American art form of the blues<sup>219</sup>

My reference is the blues, and that's where my music comes from. I do listen to music of other cultures, but I just find them interesting. I don't have to borrow from them. My music and my past are rich enough. B.B. King is my Ravi Shankar.<sup>220</sup>

It is the blues, after all, that was a secular manifestation of a black aesthetic, the dialectic of American life itself.<sup>221</sup> Regardless of the racial and historical nuances that the blues evokes, one aspect is overwhelmingly clear: Brown is identifying himself as American in an American tradition. Not only does Brown claim firm lineage from the blues, but, while acknowledging other musics 'of other cultures', identifies himself as an American and a contributor and benefactor of American art forms.<sup>222</sup>

Here, then, jazz ideology is an evolution of blues ideology,

the ideology of the field slave - the ideology of a new 'proletariat' searching for a means of judging the world. Therefore,

consciousness in his music.  
Through nommo, Brown  
rehabilitates contemporaneous  
dominant aesthetic ideologies  
into a collective black form.<sup>133</sup>

What would Brown himself make  
of this discussion? Perhaps not  
much: he firmly stated that  
'music is just what it is.  
Music'.<sup>134</sup> Besides, Brown is all  
too aware that any textual  
discourse or analysis of music  
is doomed from the outset,  
crippled by its own  
representational and symbolic  
horizons, because 'music speaks  
to us on a higher level than  
words'.<sup>135</sup> Translation: good  
luck trying to bring music back  
down to the literary earth.

\*

even though the blues are  
cast in highly personal  
terms, they stand for [a]  
collective sensibility.<sup>223</sup>

And is this not precisely what  
we see in *Afternoon...*, a 'first  
person experience, as is a  
dream, told collectively in the  
third person'?<sup>224</sup> Brown  
reinforces the idea in his  
description of *Afternoon...*'s  
'second movement', 'Djinji's  
Corner' as 'third person group  
experience, told in the musical  
third person of collective  
improvisation'.<sup>225</sup> The personal  
and collective merge, the  
collective emerging as a new  
personal. Each collective is a  
series of central individuals  
and on linguistic terms.

\*

What I hope has become clear is one overwhelming factor: Marion  
Brown held no qualms in maintaining simultaneous, incompatible  
views. The paper's form should also be vindicated: because of these  
operational antagonisms, the irreducible gaps Brown cultivates, we  
may only begin to approach a totality through a parallax  
perspective. This paper's form is fundamentally determinate by its  
subject. Any difference or internal negation is not a negative or  
contradiction, but a divergence between a continuous stream of  
compossible agents, 'a folding of heterogeneities'.<sup>226</sup> Brown's  
impossibilities cannot be gross contradictions or antagonistic  
differences prior to that which differentiates, since Brown is just  
a man.<sup>227</sup> There is no interdisciplinarity, theoretical conflation or  
two discrete ideologies, for there is just one subject.<sup>228</sup> Marion  
Brown.

The difficulty arises in there being seemingly two Marion Browns, identical yet completely different, an auto-poietic mirror to disjunction. How do we reconcile this provocative ambiguity? Or would such an attempt be a perverse misconstruction? Certainly, we don't wish to fetishise Brown into an epistemological or ontological straitjacket. For Brown(s) occup(y)ies a parallax of impossibility, which, 'rather than constituting identity, constitutes only difference ... a "difference in itself"', the ultimate truth of which is a materialisation of these inconsistencies.<sup>229</sup> To provide one answer, we must diverge from Deleuze's position, as elaborated by Widder. For the 'difference in itself' we have identified in Brown's work precisely *is* constitutive of his identity: it is a qualitative heterogeneity.

For what can be said of Brown's 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...' if it is not a transhistorical legitimising function of his own work, as inscribed within the wider social development of black culture and consciousness? That is, a crystallisation of historical logic and teleology of the musical act as collective praxis. Brown's writing can be treated alongside Sidney Bechet's protean autobiography *Treat It Gentle*, whose 'causal logic ... can be seen to have been formed in the process of trying to understand the transition from slavery to freedom'.<sup>230</sup> For Bechet, the social conditions of collectivity framed 'a profound struggle over the meaning of human freedom in a capitalist society'.<sup>231</sup>

Brown's writing came from within his experiential matrix, an influential horizon bubbling at the side of a powerful narrative of black art and expression. As his old running partner put it:

We want a black poem. And a  
Black World.  
Let the world be a Black Poem  
And Let All Black People Speak This Poem  
Silently  
or LOUD<sup>232</sup>

Or his one-time neighbour:

When the architects of our Republic wrote the  
magnificent words of the Constitution and the  
Declaration of Independence, they were signing a  
promissory note to which every American was to fall  
heir ... It is obvious today that America has  
defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her  
citizens of race are concerned.<sup>233</sup>

But 'write it all down'. 'I understand the whole thing and I keep  
working'.<sup>234</sup> Regardless of the ideological ramifications of the  
struggle for civil rights and legitimate black creative expression,  
the performative plays a defining role.

In the case of Linda Tucci, Brown wrestles with interpellation in  
front of a young white reporter.<sup>235</sup> Brown enacts the blues impulse,  
'a psychological correlative that obscured the most extreme ideas of  
assimilation for most Negroes, and made any notion of the complete  
abandonment of traditional black culture an unrealisable  
possibility'.<sup>236</sup> While discussing the black revolution at an academic  
distance and in a hegemonically white pedagogical space, Brown keeps  
painting 'primitive' art and playing 'primitive' instruments.<sup>237</sup> As  
he engages in the formalities of white American culture, Brown  
performs that which is 'always radical in the context of formal  
American culture'.<sup>238</sup>

It is Brown enacting the 'jazz life', a squaring of relations between musicians' social situation and musical practice.<sup>239</sup> Brown attempts to consolidate on his 'total existence', which encapsulates his experiential and epistemological frameworks as they pertain to the temporal structure of capitalist and individual development.<sup>240</sup> In other words, it is a negotiation between assimilation and rebellion, the blues impulse a symbolic effort to resist or prevent total assimilation after the fact. Brown demonstrates that radical assimilation is an impossibility that enables the rebellious jazz act itself.<sup>241</sup> It is a resistance of hegemonic interpellation after its recognition. That is, Brown (through the blues impulse) takes agency of ideological interpellation after an intermediate, impenetrable act of obscene interpellation without identification (ie. black other in white culture).<sup>242</sup> The blues impulse allows symbolic identity to be achieved by acting as a transitory mediator between subject prior to subjectivisation and the immaterial ideological framework in which it effects itself.<sup>243</sup> It is a balancing act between inherited and lived cultures.

The contradictions in Brown's work exhibit an attempt to occupy the turbulent and undefined (thus absent) centre of black American ontology. It is a performative reconfiguration of a collective identity, a subversive displacement of hegemonic cultural narratives that conducts itself within that same hegemonic field, returning it against itself. Subsequently, it is also a reconfiguration of that field of ontology entire, a redefinition of the conditions of social performativity. Brown occupies the diasporic space of a black man in America in the mid-late twentieth century. He is a man of two identities, both without history and with a strong racial genealogy.

Thus, he manipulates his own representation, 'disavowing the culturally differentiated condition of the colonial world'.<sup>244</sup> Brown appeals to and juxtaposes multiple traditions, in the Williamsian sense of a passage between variety and heredity, 'both as betrayal and surrender'.<sup>245</sup> Whichever way one looks, Brown is in some way Other, his work a product of cultural miscegenation - each perspective destabilising another.<sup>246</sup>

Any apparent contradictions with Brown's work are negotiations of self-interpellation through this parallax Brown inhabits. They are an arbitration between the Western and the non-Western, between 'material and spiritual needs'.<sup>247</sup> Brown is neither 'black primitive' nor just 'American'. Brown is both, synergistically displacing the difference between the two positions into each other. As Brown states: 'I can't switch back and forth'.<sup>248</sup> He occupies the superposition of the dualism between black and American, claiming himself beyond hegemonic roles and commodities. They are two closely linked perspectives between which no common ground is shared. Not antinomies, which cannot be dialectically sublated, but an oscillating, symbiotic shift in perspective.<sup>249</sup> To some extent Brown succeeded: he did not become a commodity. He did not sell. He does not sell. Brown remains a peripheral figure. Crucially, and what makes the analysis of Brown's work so fruitful, is that Brown acted at the crossroads when the Black Arts Movement was becoming diffused into the general intellectual culture of black America.<sup>250</sup>

Tapping into 'the history of the American Negro' through his performative exploration of double consciousness, Brown<sup>251</sup>

ever feels his two-ness, -an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder ... He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face.<sup>252</sup>

Brown is external and internal, academic and revolutionary. Caught between his culture, the system in which he operates and the fact that 'the black world cannot and does not [in 1967] support the Negro creative intellectual', Brown's internal struggles are the affectation of a foregrounded racial self-consciousness.<sup>253</sup> Poising himself between various symbolic positions and cultural identities, we see what Baraka - firmly rooting his theory in Brown's own perceptions - termed 'Africanisms', which

still persist in the music, religion and popular cultural traditions of American Negroes. However, it is not an African art American Negroes are responsible for, but an American one. The traditions of Africa must be utilised within the culture of the American Negro where they *actually* exist.<sup>254</sup>

The paranoia and double consciousness Brown felt was, despite this rallying cry, a fact that - thanks to institutionalised racism -

Brown could never be an American in America, ever instead othered as a black African in America.<sup>255</sup>

Brown is even equated with the poet Felipe Luciano, 'the alto at once lovely and yet cold ... like Marion Brown blows'.<sup>256</sup> Luciano is a natural compliment [sic] to our reading of Brown, since he 'does not see just Black and white but ... feels and is aware of both the good and the bad in all things/everyone and how these are often inseparably bound together'.<sup>257</sup> The unresolvable intercession between the aural and the visual finds its apotheosis here, sitting alongside the performative double consciousness we have seen Brown signify.

I wish you could hear him intoning those phrases  
or, better yet, witness the double consciousness  
that Brother DuBois often spoke of eloquently  
exemplified in the poem 'Library'.<sup>258</sup>

But, as we have seen, Brown's double consciousness is the product of a duality of self-interpellation. We return to our contrapuntal formulation, and can understand Brown for what he is: an active agent of anti-colonial and anti-racist resistance.<sup>259</sup> For, as Edward Said proposes, to politically challenge and break free from oppressive hegemonies requires a dialectical awareness of 'both processes, that of imperialism and that of resistance to it'.<sup>260</sup> Brown thus presents the 'intertwining' contrapuntal analysis that enables radical change. His work is the same work as that of Dr King. Sitting within the discourse of oppression and experienced exile, Brown allows us to

consider imperial domination and resistance to it as a dual process evolving toward decolonialisation, then independence ... to interpret both sides of the contest not only hermeneutically but also politically ... belonging to both sides of the imperial divide enables you to understand them more easily.<sup>261</sup>

Said's discourse speaks of a 'backwards glance' from within exilic cultures, a diachronic detour of multiple histories in a quest for identity and community.<sup>262</sup> Does this not epitomise Brown, 'a man walking into the future backwards'?<sup>263</sup>

We must note that this diversion through Said is not merely self-congratulatory intellectualisation. Alan Offstein:

I believe an enormous leap has been made be [sic] in-ellectual effort and personal necessity ... political and spiritual unity accounts for moving works like *Liberation Music* and *Ghetto Music* and various other calls to arms which nevertheless appeal in a language whose jargon is 'collective improvisation', 'playing free' and 'new music' ... it is the intellectual recognition of just such inhibiting factors ... [Brown's] freedom to look away is a measure of the success of the revolution and a positive indication that the sacrifice of Malcolm X, Angela Davis, Alert Ayler and Ornette Coleman has been worthwhile.<sup>264</sup>

To improvise, after all, is 'to locate liberation not in a faraway future ... but in the present'.<sup>265</sup> *Afternoon...*'s inception among the contemporaneous cultural matrix was tinted with an ideological shade that has been too-readily ignored.

But we can push further still and speculate again on why Brown has so far been unstudied. Quite simply, because he is an exemplary case of delinking, not just Said's anti-colonialism. Brown, as a black creative intellectual, has no seat at the table of 'modern', self-mollifying post-colonialism, the rhetoric of which itself 'leads inevitably to a logic of colonialism'.<sup>266</sup> Despite his connections to pedagogical institutions and the hegemonic intellectual elite, Brown personifies (if not signifies) the dialectical alterity, a periphery arising from the erroneous 'centre' of 'modern' Euro-America.<sup>267</sup> The radical impossibility of assimilation, presenting itself as another impossible-utopian horizon, ensures that Brown remained external - othered - to any false discourse of liberation. For Brown appealed freely to geopolitical epistemologies and racial continuums beyond the paradigmatic and condescending positions permitted for black creative intellectuals within post-colonial thought.<sup>268</sup> Put simply, Brown's autonomous narrative did not fit within established histories and, subsequently, study of his work enables a decolonial hermeneutic aesthetic. Because he was not as prominent as other civil rights campaigners or Black Arts Movements contemporaries, Brown continued challenging hegemonies until his death, not fading in cultural value or being uneasily integrated into the academy on unbalanced terms.<sup>269</sup>

It is the fluid and assimilatory ideology, between assumptions of 'high' and 'low' cultures, that caused Brown to be overlooked.<sup>270</sup> The ambiguous implications of Brown's mixed experiential matrix has meant that his work couldn't wholly be adopted by any one ideological or historical narrative without compromise - the variety of influence and inference results in a music that does not cleanly fit one teleological drive. Brown is coexistent and antithetical to both transcended 'high' cultures and 'primitive' 'low' cultures, in positions defined by black bourgeois intellectuals.<sup>271</sup> Brown interprets an implicitly racialized binary between the interpretive traditions of both sides. Were he claimed as 'high' art for his classicism, it would suggest a suppression and belittling of the validity of the black voice; were he adopted as 'low', it would be with a suppression and repudiation of his classical and Western influences.<sup>272</sup> This is the aspect of music that 'Brown vividly points out [...which] many people caught up in the politic of Black Arts may have forgotten'.<sup>273</sup> Destablising analytic presumptions from both sides, Brown's work became a floating signifier, selectively remembered to fit a neat narrative. Brown can be seen, therefore, as an early member of the 'decolonial generation', fighting against the calcified view of the black artist as a proverbial 'primitive' and the radical counterdiscourse of the Black Arts Movement.<sup>274</sup> Contradictions within Brown's oeuvre are dialogic double gestures, 'the foundational manoeuvre' of decolonial praxis.<sup>275</sup> One position does not take primacy over another, rendering either social or cultural semantic fields epiphenomenological to the other; nor are they two sides of one coin - irreconcilable owing to their distinct, seemingly disparate

ontological conditions. Instead, they are a parallax, always already defining, refracting and returning each to the other – each the instantaneous condition of (im)possibility to the other.

To frame my argument in another way, Brown's enduring silence in historical and musicological studies is evidence of counterdiscourses of cultural narratives that have, historically, been overdetermined by race.<sup>276</sup> While there is in Brown's work an implicit racial critique of society, it sits within a broader, holistic critique of repressive civilisation.<sup>277</sup> That jazz studies are still feeling the repercussions of white journalist canon formation and prevailing 'great man' narratives hardly helps matters.<sup>278</sup> It is the style of re-evaluation and re-assessment – always to a move of (dis)integration of established canons – that has led to Brown's neglect. His works contain many different schools and approaches. Brown could fit into both the white journalistic vision of jazz as well as the Black Arts Movement's paradigms. But because he can fit into both, he was adopted by neither. We can approach Brown on his own terms. We can – and must – treat Brown as a decolonial subject, free from paternalistic fervour.

And it is in the parallax of the decolonial subject that we can understand Brown's power. For despite the current on-going debate between Mignolo and Žižek's reading of Frantz Fanon, Brown exists as a perfect example of a Fanonian decolonial subject.<sup>279</sup> Fixed by neither race, interpellation or duty, Brown works through both Žižek's universality and Mignolo's multiplicities and personifies

Fanon's proleptic decolonial struggle within this parallax of understanding.

In no way does my basic vocation have to be drawn from the past of peoples of color. In no way do I have to dedicate myself to reviving some black civilization unjustly ignored. I will not make myself the man of any past. My black skin is not a repository for specific values. Haven't I got better things to do on this earth than avenge the blacks of the 17th century?<sup>280</sup>

Read through Brown, Fanon does not become a dogmatic potentiality for either Eurocentrism or localised struggle, pervaded in either case by contradistinctions emanating from the acceptance of particular hermeneutic coordinates, but encapsulates the mercurial, pluri-versality of a decolonial subject negotiating his own ontological basis.

As his work with *The East Village Other* shows, Brown helped seek a redefinition of intellectual, creative and material dynamics, 'a new level of consciousness'.<sup>281</sup> It could not, however, be until the epistemic shift away from Euro-American 'modernity' and racialised ideologies that Brown's work could be analysed fully on its own terms. It is as an oeuvre that still aggressively challenges the 'mass media conscience of America ... [the] total technocracy' in its sheer intellect and uncanny (dis)similarity with 'Western' forms: 'EVIL? HARDLY! DISTURBING? YES!' <sup>282</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'It's not what you think it's about, say clever people', *The Daily Mash*, January 15 2015, accessed June 24 2016, <http://www.thedailymash.co.uk/news/society/its-not-about-what-you-think-its-about-say-clever-people-2015011594451>.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Burt, 'All Possible Humanities Dissertations Considered as Single Tweets', *The New Yorker* June 10 2015, accessed June 24 2016, <http://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/all-possible-humanities-dissertations-considered-as-single-tweets>.

<sup>3</sup> Barry Ulanov, 'Are We Cantankerous?', *Metronome*, April 15 (1949): 15.

<sup>4</sup> John Coltrane et. al., *Ascension*, 1966, IMPULSE! A-95. For a few examples: David Such, 'Marion Brown', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, edited by Barry Kernfield (New York: St Martin's, 1994), 158; Marion Brown, *Recollections: Essays, Drawings and Miscellanea*, introduction by Maceo Crenshaw Dailey Jr. (Frankfurt: Juergen Schmitt, 1984).

<sup>5</sup> Brown, quoted in 'Governor Patrick's Proclamation: Marion Brown Day' by Tom Reney, *New England Public Radio*, September 14 2012, accessed June 26 2016, <http://nepr.net/music/2012/09/14/governor-patricks-proclamation-marion-brown-day/>.

<sup>6</sup> Tom Fiofori, 'Space Age Music', *Black World/Negro Digest*, January (1970): 24.

<sup>7</sup> Eric Porter, *What is this Thing Called Jazz?: African American Musicians as Artists, Critics, and Activists* (California: University of California Press, 2002), 246-254.

<sup>8</sup> Notably the Schomburg Center and *The Virgin Encyclopaedia of Jazz*, edited by Colin Larkin (London: Virgin Books, 2004), 120. Brown's birthday is September 8 1931; some claim it to be in 1935. Brown was aware of and exasperated by this falsity. See: Clifford Allen, 'Marion Brown – Pieces of a Conversation', October 18 2010, accessed June 26 2016, <http://cliffordallen.blogspot.co.uk/2010/10/marion-brown-july-8-1931-october-10.html> (interview conducted in 2005, in preparation for Allen's liner notes to Brown's *Marion Brown Quartet* (ESP- 1022); Karl-Michael Schneider, 'Georgia Recollections: The Marion Brown Discography', accessed June 26 2016, <http://discopiezoelektrik.org/marionbrown/>.

<sup>9</sup> See: Lars Gotrich, 'Georgia Recollections: Goodbye, Marion Brown', *NPR Jazz*, October 19 2010, accessed June 26 2016, <http://www.npr.org/sections/ablogsupreme/2010/10/19/130669448/marion-brown>. It is far easier, in fact, to find copies of the tribute *Sweet Earth Flower: A Tribute to Marion Brown* by His Name is Alive (which plays all the compositions from *Sweet Earth Flying*) than it is to get hold of Brown's original.

<sup>10</sup> John Davis, editor, *The American Negro Reference Book* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1966); Brown, *Recollections*; Brown's commentaries, from *Pieces: an anthology* and *Pieces: A Second Anthology* edited by Michael Byron (Vancouver: A.R.C. Publications, 1976), are also elusive.

<sup>11</sup> *Black World/Negro Digest*, March (1972): 79.

<sup>12</sup> David Patrick, quoted in Reney.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Lorenzo Thomas, 'Ascension: Music and the Black Arts Movement', in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, edited by Krin Gabbard (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 262. Other examples see: Iain Anderson, *This is Our Music: Free Jazz, the Sixties and American Culture* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 100; Komozi Woodard, 'Rethinking the Black Power Movement', *Africana Age: African and African Diasporan Transformations in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, accessed June 26 2016, <http://exhibitions.nypl.org/africanaage/essay-black-power.html>. Baraka and Brown were definitely close, for a time. See: Amiri Baraka, 'Marion Brown 9.8.31-10.18.10', *JazzTimes* March 2011, accessed June 26 2016, <http://jazztimes.com/articles/27184-marion-brown>; Brown, quoted in Allen.

<sup>15</sup> Francis Ward, *Black World/Negro Digest*, September (1966): 47.

<sup>16</sup> Henry Kuntz, 'Marion Brown: Duets', *Bells Part I: Free Jazz/Free Music* (California: Henry Kuntz, 1976), accessed June 26 2016, <http://bells.free-jazz.net/bells-part-one/marion-brown-duets/>. Kuntz alludes to Ornette Coleman's *Free Jazz* (1961), John Coltrane's *Ascension* (1966) and Albert Ayler's *New York Eye and Ear Control* (1965): all albums accepted to be vital in the development, proliferation and validation of free jazz. John Litweiler, *The Freedom Principle: Jazz After 1958* (New York: Perseus Books, 1990) and Ekkehard Jost, *Free Jazz (Studies in Jazz Research 4)* (Graz: International Society for Jazz Research, 1975) provide good overviews of free jazz as a contemporaneous phenomenon. For a more holistic overview see Henry Martin and Keith Waters, editors, *Jazz: The First 100 Years, Enhanced Media Edition* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2015).

<sup>17</sup> See: Owen McNally, 'Jazz Saxophonist Marion Brown Let His Music Speak For Him', *Hartford Courant*, December 5 2010, accessed June 26 2016, [http://articles.courant.com/2010-12-05/features/hc-exlife-marion-brown-1205-20101205\\_1\\_hartford-jazz-society-tom-reney-brown](http://articles.courant.com/2010-12-05/features/hc-exlife-marion-brown-1205-20101205_1_hartford-jazz-society-tom-reney-brown); Lee Mergner, 'Jazz Saxophonist Marion Brown Dies', *JazzTimes* December 21 2010, accessed June 26 2016, <http://jazztimes.com/articles/26744-jazz-saxophonist-marion-brown-dies>.

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- <sup>18</sup> George Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), xv, 42, 93, 144-5, 169, 175, 189, 222, 304, 582.
- <sup>19</sup> There is a vast amount of first- and second-hand anecdotal evidence to attest to this claim. See: Anthony Braxton, quoted in *Forces in Motion: Anthony Braxton and the Meta-reality of Creative Music* by Graham Lock and Anthony Braxton (London: Quartet Books, 1988), 47, 71; Ronald Radano, *New Musical Figurations: Anthony Braxton's Cultural Critique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 150, 250; Paul Bley with David Lee, *Stopping Time: Paul Bley and the Transformation of Jazz Music* (Canada: Véhicule, 1999), 129; David Ake, *Jazz Matters: Sound, Place and Time Since Bebop* (California: University of California Press, 2010), 32/158n.43.
- <sup>20</sup> We could go on. We refer to Jones/Baraka solely as Amiri Baraka, throughout this paper. Brown recounts many of these stories himself. Brown, quoted in Allen; Brown, quoted in 'A Fireside Chat with Marion Brown', *All About Jazz*, April 11 2003, accessed June 27 2016, <https://www.allaboutjazz.com/a-fireside-chat-with-marion-brown-marion-brown-by-aaj-staff.php?page=1>.
- <sup>21</sup> Alan Offstein, in *Views...*, 58. Special attention must be paid to Offstein in relation to the other reviewers, for only his review was chosen to take the place of Brown's liner notes when *Afternoon...* was reissued on CD.
- <sup>22</sup> Brown/Elliott Schwartz, *Soundways* (Bowdoin College Music Press, V-41746, 1973). It was later collated with some work with Wadada Leo Smith on *Duets* (Arista-Freedom, AL 1904, 1975).
- <sup>23</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 28-9.
- <sup>24</sup> 'MAN V. MACHINE', *Destination = Out*, June 4 2010, accessed June 26 2016, <http://destination-out.com/?p=1219>. Jon Appleton/Don Cherry, *Human Music* (Flying Dutchman, FDS 121, 1970).
- <sup>25</sup> 'USM To Confer Honorary Doctorate Upon Schwartz', May 10 2004, accessed June 26 2016, <http://www.bowdoin.edu/news/archives/1academicnews/007365.shtml>.
- <sup>26</sup> To go through all his collaborators would take an entire bibliography of its own, but from my examples see: Radano, ... *Cultural Critique*; Porter, 'Jeanne Lee's Voice', *Critical Studies in Improvisation* 2/1 (2006): 1-14; The Grammys Archive, [https://www.grammy.com/nominees/search?artist=Chick+Corea&field\\_nominee\\_work\\_value=&year=All&genre=All](https://www.grammy.com/nominees/search?artist=Chick+Corea&field_nominee_work_value=&year=All&genre=All).
- <sup>27</sup> Not without precedent. It has allies in ergodic literature and Derrida's *Glas*, for an obvious example.
- <sup>28</sup> Kojin Karatani, *Transcritique: On Kant and Marx* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 3.
- <sup>29</sup> Braxton, *Tri-axium Writings 1-3* (Synthesis Music, 1985) vii-x. Braxton asks the reader to 'read through the material in at least six different ways', in order to discover every possible nuance of interconnection between the texts.
- <sup>30</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* (London: Continuum, 2004), 174 n.1; also: Nathan Widder, *Political Theory After Deleuze* (London: A & C Black, 2012), 30-6.
- <sup>31</sup> An observation made by Wadada Leo Smith, *notes (8 pieces) source a new world music* (Leo Smith, 1973).
- <sup>32</sup> See: Brad Mehldau, 'Music and Language', accessed June 26 2016, <http://www.bradmehldau.com/essay-progression/>.
- <sup>33</sup> Brown, *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun: Views and Reviews* (NIA Music, 1973), 7.
- <sup>34</sup> I owe this idea partly to Slavoj Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies* (London: Verso, 1997), 30; Žižek, *Absolute Recoil* (London: Verso, 2015), 236-7; and Nicholas Gebhardt, *Going for Jazz: Musical Practices and American Ideology* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 13.
- <sup>35</sup> Žižek, *Recoil*, 374-7.
- <sup>36</sup> Mehldau, 'Music and Language'.
- <sup>37</sup> Evan Parker, quoted in *Sync or Swarm: Improvising Music in a Complex Age*, by David Borgo (London: Continuum, 2007), 54.
- <sup>38</sup> Braxton, *Tri-axium Writings 2* (Synthesis Music, 1985), 1.
- <sup>39</sup> Mehldau, 'Music and Language'.
- <sup>40</sup> Don Paterson, *Orpheus* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006).
- <sup>41</sup> Derek Bailey, *Improvisation: In Nature and in Practice* (Dorchester: The Dorset Press, 1992), ix-1; Rob Wallace, 'Kick out the Jazz!' in *People Get Ready*, edited by Ajay Heble and Rob Wallace (London: Duke University, 2013), 117.
- <sup>42</sup> Philippe Carles and Jean-Louis Comolli, *Free Jazz/Black Power* (Mississippi: University of Mississippi Press, 2015), 78, 83. See also: Karl Marx, 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy', in *Collected Works*, vol.29 (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 390; Karatani, 9, 20.
- <sup>43</sup> Smith, *Notes*, 11-2; Porter, *What...*, 262.
- <sup>44</sup> Smith, *Notes*, 11.
- <sup>45</sup> My point should be reinforced in the fact that, despite numerous edits, drafts and hours of toil, I could not think of a clearer, more succinct way of making my point. It should go without saying that I repurpose 'bitch'

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away from any sexist or anti-personal connotations into something that carries the sense of, though more forcefully and with hints of exasperation, great difficulty.

<sup>46</sup> See: Kofi Agawu, *Representing African Music* (London: Routledge, 2014), xv, xii.

<sup>47</sup> Various: Robert Linden, *Harmony of Jazz* (London: Garant/Central, 2015), 99; Scott DeVeaux, *The Birth of Bebop* (London: University of California, 1997), 263-4; Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz* (London: University of Chicago, 2009), 510; see also the continuing work of Philip Tagg: <http://tagg.org/texts.html>.

<sup>48</sup> Krin Gabbard, 'Introduction', in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, 10-1. Also: See: Robert Walser, *Keeping Time: Readings in Jazz History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). I use 'orthodox-critical analysis' to denote the Western epistemological, ontological and pedagogical hang-ups from Enlightenment thinking – a Jacobian nihilism, in which an explicit indefatigable progression of knowledge can be seen as an endless regression into conditions identified as conditions identified as conditions... *ad infinitum*. Traditionally Western discourses, by their very nature, serve the impossible task of heightening particularity to clarify with ever more precision. For this particular topic, my chagrin is best demonstrated by an example. Paul Cherlin and Geurino Mazzola's *Flow, Gesture and Spaces in Free Jazz: Towards a Theory of Collaboration* (Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media, 2009), attempts to reduce free jazz interaction to a formula: 'This hot spot is based upon the n! permutations of skeletal digraph sequences that generate the hypergesture space  $\Gamma\pi(1) \rightarrow @\Gamma\pi(2) \rightarrow @ \dots \Gamma\pi(n) \rightarrow @X'$ , 92. In musicology, such an approach suffers from a fetishisation of the 'canon' and the 'Great Composers', a symptom of the cult of the Romantic Genius, as well as a misguided equation of 'music-as-score' with musical experience. See: Graham Lock, 'Postscript 1', *Forces...*, 294-307; Anthony Braxton, *Tri-axium Writings 3* (Synthesis Music, 1985), 1-5; Pamela Burnard, *Musical Creativities in Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1-5; Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2011), 1-17.

<sup>49</sup> See: Fernando Benadon, 'Slicing the Beat', *Ethnomusicology*, 50/1, (2006):73-98.

<sup>50</sup> In musicology and philosophy. See: Tagg; Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 285-332.

<sup>51</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 3. 626, quoted in Bowie, 299.

<sup>52</sup> Theodor Adorno, *Sound Figures*, translated by Rodney Livingston (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 6.

<sup>53</sup> Gabbard.

<sup>54</sup> David Stowe, *Swing Changes: Big Band Jazz in New Deal America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 9.

<sup>55</sup> Brown, quoted in *You See What I'm Trying to Say?* by Henry English, 16mm (1967): available at <https://vimeo.com/19619667>.

<sup>56</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 5.

<sup>57</sup> Gebhardt, 3.

<sup>58</sup> In *Views...*, 9, Brown cites Joseph Hanson Kabena Nketia, *African Music in Ghana* (Illinois: NorthWestern University Press, 1963) and Hugh Tracey, *Ngoma; An Introduction to Music for Southern Africans* (New York: Longman, 1948).

<sup>59</sup> I partly owe this idea to an astute reviewer of Nketia's text, on which Brown relies. Alan Merriam, 'Review of *African Music in Ghana*', *American Anthropologist* 66/3 (1964): 699-700.

<sup>60</sup> See: Žižek, *Event: Philosophy in Transit* (London: Penguin, 2014), 49-50. Also: *Slavoj Žižek and Dialectical Materialism*, edited by Agon Hamza and Frank Ruda (Berlin: Springer, 2016).

<sup>61</sup> For the on-going and wide-reaching account of American ideology and jazz see Gebhardt.

<sup>62</sup> Clyde Mitchell, *Cities, Society and Social Perception: A Central African Perspective* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 8-9. See also: David Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>63</sup> Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition in Afro-American Music', *Black World/Negro Digest*, November 1973: 14-9.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* Clearly, problematic and generalising terms are in use, but these stand as evidence to my prior argument. One can see this view, held generally by many, in full performative power in Jelly Roll Morton's (only recently released) *The Complete Library of Congress Recordings*, an immense document that enacts jazz's aural and oral history. Naturally, such an artefact is also a vivid depiction of the social formulation of the black artist at the time (for a clue: it was recorded mainly in 1938 and not released until 2005. Go figure.) As Baraka put it: 'that noise is good for jassing. What do you call it sir? (It was Jelly Roll so addressed, and he went off to the library of Congress and responded to the question in twelve long-playing records'. Amiri Baraka, 'Masters in Collaboration', in *Blues People: Negro Music in White America* (London: HarperCollins, 1999), 208.

<sup>65</sup> Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...', 17.

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- <sup>66</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>67</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 32.
- <sup>68</sup> Brown, liner notes to Stephen McCraven, *International World* (ASP Records, 1991), 41991.
- <sup>69</sup> Hugues Panassié, *Le Jazz Hot* (Paris: Éditions R.-A. Corrêa, 1934), 34.
- <sup>70</sup> Baraka, 'Masters...'
- <sup>71</sup> Brown, quoted in 'Schallplatten. Weider klassisch: *Gesprächsfetzen*', *Der Spiegel*, May 26 1969, accessed June 28 2016, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-45741303.html>, my translation.
- <sup>72</sup> Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...', 17.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>75</sup> DeVeaux, 95-115.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid., 95, 98.
- <sup>77</sup> Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...', 18.
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>79</sup> Brown, in *Views...*, 18.
- <sup>80</sup> Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...', 18.
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid., 19.
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>83</sup> Ibid., 14-6.
- <sup>84</sup> Lewis Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream: Big Band Jazz and the Rebirth of American Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 81.
- <sup>85</sup> Porter, *What...*, 246.
- <sup>86</sup> Gebhardt, 6.
- <sup>87</sup> We understand 'community' through Braxton, a 'forum for coexistence'. Braxton, *Composition Notes C* (Synthesis Music, 1988), 245. Community is a synthesis of a multiplicity of Brown's 'immediate' response of 'individual expression' as self-consciousnesses. Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...', 16. For the construction of this 'individual expression' in the community Brown evokes, see Stuart Hall, 'Ethnicity, Identity and Difference: Radical America', 16, quoted in Ajay Heble, *Landing on the Wrong Note: Jazz, Dissonance and Critical Practice* (London: Routledge, 2013), 95.
- <sup>88</sup> Gebhardt, 123.
- <sup>89</sup> It is an independent movement, crucially, not entrenched in Fichtean or Hegelian philosophy.
- <sup>90</sup> Coleman, quoted in the liner notes to Ornette Coleman, *Change of the Century* (Atlantic, 1960), CD 81341.
- <sup>91</sup> Brown, liner notes to *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun* (ECM, 1971), ECM 1004.
- <sup>92</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 7.
- <sup>93</sup> Litweiler, 13.
- <sup>94</sup> Walser, 334-9.
- <sup>95</sup> Wynton Marsalis, 'What Jazz Is – and Isn't', *New York Times*, July 31 1988: 31-4.
- <sup>96</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>97</sup> Bailey, 83.
- <sup>98</sup> Brown, in *Views...*, 6-8.
- <sup>99</sup> Ibid., 4.
- <sup>100</sup> For an elaboration of Brown's view of 'Western' see below.
- <sup>101</sup> W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Gramercy, 1994), 5.
- <sup>102</sup> See: Eric Lott, 'Dounle V, Double Time: Bebop's Politics of Style', in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, 243-55.
- <sup>103</sup> See: Steven Elworth, 'Jazz in Crisis, 1948-1958: Ideology and Representation', in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, 57-8, for a succinct lauding of Marsalis. For evidence of a 'primitive' dismissal, see Baraka, 'Jazz and the White Critic', *Down Beat*, August 15 1963: 16-17, 34; Nicholas Ballanta-Taylor, 'Jazz and its Relation to African Music', *Musical Courier*, June 1 1922: 7; Grenville Vernon, 'That Mysterious "Jazz"', *New York Tribune*, March 30 1919: 5. These are a few early examples. See: Walser, (2014) for full examples.
- <sup>104</sup> Scott Yanow, 'Wynton Marsalis Biography', allmusic, accessed May 18 2016, <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/wynton-marsalis-mn0000961688/biography>; Sholto Byrnes, 'Stanley Clarke: The Bass Line Heard Around the World', *Jazz Forum: The Magazine of the International Jazz Federation* May 30 2009, accessed May 18 2016, <http://www.artistwd.com/joyzine/music/clarke/clarke.php#.VzyP6vkrLIU>.
- <sup>105</sup> Rafi Zabor and Vic Garbarini, 'Wynton vs Herbie: The Purist and the Crossbreeder Duke It Out', *Musician* 77 (1985): 52-64.
- <sup>106</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 4.
- <sup>107</sup> Ibid., 19.

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<sup>108</sup> Dwight Wilson, in *Views...*, 38. Wilson's analogy is slightly problematic, connecting as it does to a harshly colonial metaphor of black, 'virgin' soil, but the use here is clear: it is a music of the people, unfettered by Marsalis' 'deliberate artifice' and placed within a sociocultural analytic frame.

<sup>109</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 16.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Gebhardt, 1-32, 167-176.

<sup>112</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 14.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 15-6.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 14

<sup>115</sup> Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...', 16-7.

<sup>116</sup> Baraka, 'Expressive Language' (1963), in *African American Literary Theory: A Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 62.

<sup>117</sup> Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...', 15.

<sup>118</sup> Brown, *Views...*, i.

<sup>119</sup> Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...', 14-5.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 15-6.

<sup>121</sup> See: Martha Jalali Rabbani, *The Development and Antidevelopment Debate: Critical Reflections on the Philosophical Foundations* (London: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>122</sup> Karl Mannheim, 'Self, Society, and the Sociology of Knowledge', in *Self, Symbols and Society: Classic Readings in Social Psychology*, edited by Nathan Rousseau (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 179.

<sup>123</sup> Brown is in good company here. See: George James, *Stolen Legacy: The Greeks were not the Authors of Greek Philosophy, but the People of North Africa, Commonly Called the Egyptians* (New York: Start Publishing, 2012); Yosef Ben-Jochannan, *Africa: Mother of Western Civilisation* (Baltimore: Black Classics Press, 1988); the ongoing *Black Athena* series by Martin Bernal (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1987, 1991, 2006).

<sup>124</sup> For this position I owe much to the work of Walter Mignolo. For a further explanation of the term 'delinking', see: Mignolo, 'DELINKING', *Cultural Studies*, 21/2 (2007): 449-514. Also: Anibal Quijano explicitly linked political and economic colonialism with epistemic colonialism in 'Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad', in *Los conquistados. 1492 y la población indígena de las Américas*, edited by Heraclio Bonilla, (Quito: Tercer Mundo-Libri Mundi, 1992): 437-48.

<sup>125</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 18-9. The narrative ('story') of Mallarmé's poem is remarkably similar to the suggested narrative of *Afternoon...*

<sup>126</sup> Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988). On page 52, Gates elaborates that signifying is 'a trope, in which are subsumed several other rhetorical tropes, including metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony (the master tropes), and also hyperbole, litotes, and metalepsis. To this list we could easily add aporia, chiasmus, and catachresis, all of which are used in the ritual of Signifying(g)'. Brown himself tells us in *Views...* that he has studied the relevant works.

<sup>127</sup> See: Brown, quoted in 'The Artist in Maine', interview by Linda Tucci, *The Black Perspective in Music* 1/1 (1973): 60-3. Also: Angela Davis, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism* (London: Vintage, 1999), 33.

<sup>128</sup> Davis, 33. Also: J. Ryan, *Post-Jazz Poetics: A Social History* (Berlin: Springer, 2010), 84.

<sup>129</sup> For a more detailed exploration of nommo, see: Janheinz Jahn, *Muntu: The New African Culture* (New York: Grove, 1961). Paul Harrison defines nommo as 'the power of the Word ... which activates all forces from their frozen state in a manner that establishes concreteness of expression', *The Drama of Nommo* (New York: Grove, 1972), xx. Molefi Kete Asante describes it as 'the generative and productive power of the spoken word', *The Afrocentric Idea* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 17.

<sup>130</sup> Davis, 164-5. The 'aesthetic dimension' to which I allude I draw from Marcuse. 'The radical qualities of art are grounded precisely in the dimensions where art transcends its social determination and emancipates itself from the given universe of discourse and behaviour while preserving its overwhelming presence'. Herbert Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension* (Boston: Beacon, 1978), 6.

<sup>131</sup> One can see nommo invoked in many blues lyrics. For example:

*Lord, layin' in the bed with my face turned to the wall  
Tryin' to count these blues, so I could sing them all.*

Gertrude 'Ma' Rainey, 'Countin' the Blues' (Paramount, 1925), 12237.

See: Davis, 91-120.

<sup>132</sup> Brown, liner notes to *Porto Novo*, Freedom (1970): FLP-40140.

<sup>133</sup> For more on nommo see Jahn, 133. The movement is collective as one understands the contrast between the significance of Judaeo-Christian naming and nommo. With nommo, the creative and transformative power

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of naming is possessed by living men and women, by community, not just a supernatural deity ('In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God'). Davis, 128-9.

<sup>134</sup> Brown, quoted in English.

<sup>135</sup> Brown, liner notes to *International World*.

<sup>136</sup> Borgo, 32.

<sup>137</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 16.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 25-6.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>141</sup> Brown, quoted in English.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Brown, 'Improvisation and the Aural Tradition...', 14.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>145</sup> Wilson, in *Views...*, 38-9.

<sup>146</sup> Brown, liner notes to *Afternoon...*; 'On Record', *Black World/Negro Digest*, April (1975): 96.

<sup>147</sup> Brown, in Tucci.

<sup>148</sup> Notably by Jean Toomer and Amos Tutuola's work. Ibid., See: Porter, *What...*, 249 and Brown, *Views...*, 1.

<sup>149</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 16.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 17-8.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>153</sup> John Szwed, 'Race and the Embodiment of Culture', *Ethnicity* 2/1 (1975): 27. Brown, in Tucci.

<sup>154</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 5.

<sup>155</sup> Brown, in Tucci.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> A position remarkably similar to current Western literary criticism. See: Derrick Attridge, *The Work of Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

<sup>158</sup> The critical consensus of the jazz act is, almost without exception, understood as an act of self-expression within an idealised, utopian-democratic intersubjective situation. See: Ted Gioia, *The History of Jazz* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Berliner, *Thinking...*; Ingrid Monson, *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Mehldau, 'Music and Language'.

<sup>159</sup> See: English; Robert Fenz, *Meditations on Revolution, Part V: Foreign City*, 16mm, 2003. Flânerie is a form of looking, of observing and translating the visual into other forms: David Frisby, 'The Flâneur in Social Theory', in *The Flâneur*, edited by Keith Tester (Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 81-110.

<sup>160</sup> Henry English, 'About You See What I'm Trying to Say', February 2 2011, available <http://discop.piezoelectric.org/marionbrown/r/youseewhatimtryingtosay.html>.

<sup>161</sup> Brown, in Tucci.

<sup>162</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 5.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. *Geechee Recollections* (impulse!, AS-9252, 1973); *Sweet Earth Flying* (impulse!, AS-9275, 1974).

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>165</sup> Brown, in Tucci; Brais D. Outes-Leon, "'La Barbarie refinada": The Crisis of European Modernity in Gómez Carrillo's Chronicles of the First World War', *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 38/3 (2014): 513.

<sup>166</sup> Brown, liner notes to *Afternoon...*

<sup>167</sup> Tester, 'Introduction', in *The Flâneur*. It is interesting to note that much of the 'Western' tradition to which Brown appeals is French. Speculatively, one could suggest that inspiration comes from his period living in Paris, though of course that could never be verified.

<sup>168</sup> J.B. Figi, in *Recollections*, by Marion Brown, quoted in *Black Chant: Languages of African-American Postmodernism*, by Aldon Lynn Nielsen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 214.

<sup>169</sup> Jinichi Uekusa, in *Views...*, 45-7.

<sup>170</sup> The notion of the proper, uniquely individual is central to our definition of poet and poetry. Peter Dayan, *Art as Music, Music as Poetry, Poetry as Art, from Whistler to Stravinsky and Beyond* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 100. Also: Jacques Derrida, *Signéponge/Signsponge*, translated by Richard Rand (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984). One can also find evidence from poets first hand, for example in Eliot's 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'.

<sup>171</sup> Allen, 'Marion Brown...'. Brown's estimations are not limited to musicians. Some of those included in Brown's litany of panegyrics are Sonny Rollins, the lawyer Johnny Cochran, the painter William White, Ornette Coleman, Wayne Shorter, Amiri Baraka, a chef whose name he doesn't specify and his son Djinji Brown.

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- <sup>172</sup> John Turner, in *Views...*, 11.
- <sup>173</sup> Gunther Buhles, in *Views...*, 50.
- <sup>174</sup> See: Rosemary Lloyd, *Mallarmé: The Poet and His Circle* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2005); H. Järvinen, *Dancing Genius: The Stardom of Vaslav Nijinsky* (Berlin: Springer, 2014); *The Modernist World*, edited by Allana Lindgren and Stephen Ross (Oxon: Routledge, 2015).
- <sup>175</sup> Nielsen, *Black Chant*, 215.
- <sup>176</sup> Alain Gerber, in *Views...*, 48-9.
- <sup>177</sup> Uekusa, 45-7.
- <sup>178</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 15; Brown, liner notes to Amina Claudine Myers, *Poems for Piano: Piano Music of Marion Brown* (Sweet Earth Records, 1979), SER1005.
- <sup>179</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 18.
- <sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.
- <sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.
- <sup>182</sup> I use 'primitive' here in the sense that anybody could thus be a masterful improviser if they had a good memory. It is an idea relating to the spurious 'noble savage'.
- <sup>183</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 5.
- <sup>184</sup> Cynthia Laudadio, *Mnemosyne: Remembering and Recovering the Self Through Identification with The Great Mother and Her Daughters, Athena, Artemis and Hestia*, doctoral thesis (Madison: Drew University, 2009).
- <sup>185</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 18.
- <sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.
- <sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-33.
- <sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.
- <sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.
- <sup>192</sup> Brown, in Tucci. Throughout the interview Brown was painting and playing a homemade instrument simultaneously. (Brown is responding to a leading question by Tucci that alludes to Baraka and the Black Arts Movement. For more specific information, see: James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement: Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s*, (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005).
- <sup>193</sup> Brown, *Views...*, i.
- <sup>194</sup> Gates, Jr.
- <sup>195</sup> See: English, 'About...'.  
<sup>196</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 17.
- <sup>197</sup> Elworth, in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, 72.
- <sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 74n.16, 74n.17.
- <sup>199</sup> Brown, quoted in English.
- <sup>200</sup> Also see: Greg Tate, 'Black-Owned: Jazz Musician Marion Brown and Son Djinji', *Vibe*, November 1994.
- <sup>201</sup> See: Žižek, *The Parallax View* (London: Verso, 2009), 22. Subject's spontaneity is 'the ultimate parallax, the third space between phenomena and the noumenon itself'. Also: Mehltau, 'Music and Language'.
- <sup>202</sup> Jan Voelker, 'From Hegel to Kant: The Thing-of-Itself German Idealism', in Hamza and Ruda, 59-60.
- <sup>203</sup> Gebhardt, 14.
- <sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.
- <sup>205</sup> Žižek, *Less Than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism* (London: Verso, 2012), 129. I owe this line of thought variously to Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), 89; Žižek, *Organs Without Bodies: Deleuze and Consequences* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 119-123; Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1980).
- <sup>206</sup> Nat Hentoff, *The Jazz Life* (New York: Da Capo, 1978), 255.
- <sup>207</sup> From a speech by Donald Rumsfeld, February 12 2002: 'Reports that say that something hasn't happened are always interesting to me, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns – the ones we don't know we don't know. And if one looks throughout the history of our country and other free countries, it is the latter category that tend to be the difficult ones', accessed June 28 2016, <http://archive.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=2636>. There is a gaping silence in Rumsfeld's argument: what of the unknown knowns? That which governs our experience and personal perspective without our cognisance? That, I argue, is the most succinct elaboration of how ideology operates.
- <sup>208</sup> Žižek, *The Sublime Object...*, 30.

- <sup>209</sup> English, 'About...'.  
<sup>210</sup> Ibid. We can infer from English's anecdotes that Brown was involved in some kind of agitation or political unrest at the time.  
<sup>211</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 31.  
<sup>212</sup> Brown, in Tucci.  
<sup>213</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 3-4.  
<sup>214</sup> Sonny Rollins, interview by Hilton Als, April 18, 2016, available at <http://pitchfork.com/features/from-the-pitchfork-review/9865-sonny-rollins-the-saxophone-colossus/>.  
<sup>215</sup> Mtume, 'Trippin' – A Need for Change', *Cricket* (1969): 1-2.  
<sup>216</sup> Norman Jordan, 'Positive Black Music', *Cricket* (1969): 24-5.  
<sup>217</sup> Henderson Dalrymple, *Bob Marley: Music, Myth and Rastas* (Middlesex: Carid-Arawak, 1976), 10.  
<sup>218</sup> See: Thomas, in Gabbard, 270-273. Gebhardt, 167-76.  
<sup>219</sup> While 'blues' is a tad vague and naturally evokes questions of where the blues developed, Brown is clear in his allusions solely to the blues. See: Bob Eagle and Eric LeBlanc, *Blues: A Regional Experience* (Oxford: Praeger, 2013), i-x, xv-xx. Also: Marybeth Hamilton, *In Search of the Blues* (London: Perseus, 2008).  
<sup>220</sup> Brown, liner notes to *Porto Novo*.  
<sup>221</sup> See: Baraka, *The LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka Reader*, edited by William Harris (New York: Thunder's Mouth, 1991), 106. Davis, *Blues Legacies*.  
<sup>222</sup> Eagle and LeBlanc, vii.  
<sup>223</sup> Larry Neal, 'The Ethos of the Blues', in *Visions of a Liberated Future: Black Arts Movement Writings*, edited by Michael Schwartz (New York: Thunder's Mouth, 1971), 107-17.  
<sup>224</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 1.  
<sup>225</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>226</sup> Widder... *After Deleuze*, 35.  
<sup>227</sup> Id est, not an abstract Idea or ideological function.  
<sup>228</sup> See: Žižek, 'The Parallax View: Karatani's Transcritique', *Libcom*, October 9 2006, accessed July 1, 2016, <https://libcom.org/library/the-parallax-view-karatani-s-transcritique-on-kant-and-marx-zizek>.  
<sup>229</sup> Widder... *After Deleuze*, 34.  
<sup>230</sup> Gebhardt, 9. Sidney Bechet, *Treat It Gentle* (New York, Da Capo, 1978). The taped records of Bechet's narrative were made in the 1950s by Joan Reid and Desmond Flower.  
<sup>231</sup> Gebhardt, 12.  
<sup>232</sup> Baraka, 'Black Art', in *Selected Poetry of Amiri Baraka/LeRoi Jones* by Amiri Baraka (New York: William Morrow, 1979). See also: *Anthology of Modern Poetry*, edited by Cary Neslon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 998-9.  
<sup>233</sup> Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., 'I have a dream...', 1963, accessed July 1 2016, <https://www.archives.gov/press/exhibits/dream-speech.pdf>.  
<sup>234</sup> Brown, in Tucci.  
<sup>235</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>236</sup> Baraka, *Blues People*, 142.  
<sup>237</sup> Brown, in Tucci.  
<sup>238</sup> Baraka, *Blues People*, 235.  
<sup>239</sup> Hentoff, 184.  
<sup>240</sup> Ibid. See: Gebhardt, 45-7.  
<sup>241</sup> Gebhardt, 14-5.  
<sup>242</sup> I draw on Louis Althusser and the theoretical state of 'hailing', 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in *Essays on Ideology* (London: Verso, 1984), 163.  
<sup>243</sup> Ibid. See: Žižek, *Recoil*, 62-5.  
<sup>244</sup> Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, translated by Charles Markmann (London: Pluto, 1967), xxi-xxiii.  
<sup>245</sup> Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (Croon Helm: Fontana, 1976), 269.  
<sup>246</sup> Brown fits into neither a 'black' dominant narrative nor a 'white' dominant narrative. See: Gabbard, 22. One can see similar tensions in other jazz narratives: Mingus: 'in other words, I am three'. Craig Harris: 'it's about cutting yourself in half'. Charles Mingus, *Beneath the Underdog* (New York: Penguin, 1980), 7; Craig Harris, liner notes to *Black Bone* (Soul Note, 1984), 10550. Also: Art Sato, 'Interview with John Gilmore', *Be-bop and Beyond 4/2* (1986): 15-21. This was a structural paradox of jazz that Congress eventually acknowledged in calling jazz part of American's cultural and artistic heritage. See: Congressional Record – House, September 23, 1987, H7825-27; Walser, 332-3.  
<sup>247</sup> Brown, *Views...*, 31.

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- <sup>248</sup> Brown, in Tucci.
- <sup>249</sup> Žižek, *Parallax View*, 3-13.
- <sup>250</sup> Thomas, in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, 271.
- <sup>251</sup> DuBois, 5.
- <sup>252</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>253</sup> Harold Cruse, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (New York: Morrow, 1967), 454.
- <sup>254</sup> Baraka, from 'The Myth of a "Negro Literature"', in 'Notes for a Speech', in Harris, 111.
- <sup>255</sup> See: Thomas, in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, 263.
- <sup>256</sup> Vernon Gibbs, *Black World/Negro Digest*, November (1971): 85.
- <sup>257</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>258</sup> Ibid. See Appendix II.
- <sup>259</sup> I formulated a contrapuntal perspective indebted to Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994), 32, 66.
- <sup>260</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>261</sup> Ibid., 366.
- <sup>262</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>263</sup> Brown, in Tucci.
- <sup>264</sup> Offstein, in *Views...*, 54-5.
- <sup>265</sup> Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 142-3.
- <sup>266</sup> Pheng Cheah, 'The Limits of Thinking in Decolonial Strategies', *The Doreen B. Townsend Center for the Humanities*, November 2006, accessed July 2 2016, <http://townsendcenter.berkeley.edu/publications/limits-thinking-decolonial-strategies>. See also: Mignolo.
- <sup>267</sup> Mignolo, 'Delinking: The Rhetoric of Modernity, the Logic of Coloniality and the Grammar of De-Coloniality', in *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, edited by Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar (Oxon: Routledge, 2013), 303-68.
- <sup>268</sup> Ibid. Also: Freya Schiwy, 'Decolonization and the Question of Subjectivity: Gender, Race and Binary Thinking', in *Globalization...*, 125-47.
- <sup>269</sup> This is not so ambitious a term as one may think. As Jon Hendricks noted, noting the ominous 'failure' of the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Art Movement: 'Even though we Afro-Americans are still impoverished, still oppressed, still not yet free, our musical culture is now dominant in the Western world ... in our rush to integration, [we] seem to have thrown our music away'. Jon Hendricks, 'Jazz and its Critics', *Liberator* November (1969): 14-5. Also: Thomas, in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, 264-5.
- <sup>270</sup> As compared with Shepp's rhetoric and Coltrane's didacticism by Offstein, in *Views...*, 52.
- <sup>271</sup> Davis, 122-5. Many black intellectuals (particularly during the Harlem Renaissance) believed that the 'primitive' ingredients of poor and working-class culture needed to be transcended if a black 'great art' could arise.
- <sup>272</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>273</sup> Offstein, in *Views...*, 52.
- <sup>274</sup> A term borrowed from Jafari Sinclair Allen and Ryan Cecil Jobson, 'The Decolonizing Generation: (Race and) Theory in Anthropology since the Eighties', *Current Anthropology* 57/2 (2016): last modified March 21 2016, <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/685502>. Brown himself makes a similar distinction, *Views...*, 6.
- <sup>275</sup> Ibid. Also: Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).
- <sup>276</sup> As Angela Davis puts it: 'given the long histories of slavery and segregation in the United States, it is understandable that black social consciousness has been overdetermined by race. This one-dimensionality is also often reflected in works that attempt to recapitulate those histories'. Davis, xi. Gabbard, 17.
- <sup>277</sup> Speculatively similar, perhaps, to Dr King's later, broader campaigns, such as the divisive 'Poor People's Campaign'.
- <sup>278</sup> See: Gabbard, 21-2; Ake, 18-27.
- <sup>279</sup> Žižek and Mignolo argue over – ostensibly – Eurocentrism. Mignolo accuses Žižek of oppressive Eurocentrism in Žižek's treatment of the Communist struggle as a universal one, arguing that 'relevance is not universal'. Žižek counters by suggesting that, by fragmenting the struggle against capitalism into local, actual forms, Mignolo also fragments the problem and the solution. For Žižek, universality is necessary in responding to the universality of capitalism. What makes the debate so interesting is that both appeal to Fanon to make their case. Mignolo cites Fanon: 'A self-respecting decolonial intellectual will reach instead to Frantz Fanon:

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“Now, comrades, now is the time to decide to change sides. We must shake off the great mantle of night, which has enveloped us, and reach, for the light. The new day, which is dawning, must find us determined, enlightened and resolute. So, my brothers, how could we fail to understand that we have better things to do than follow that Europe’s footsteps?”<sup>280</sup>. In fact, to Mignolo, the issue is greater than the apparent centrality of Eurocentric philosophy dictates. Žižek, however, cites Fanon, at length: ‘There is no black mission. There is no white burden’. Fanon, for Žižek, shows that solutions to the struggle are grounded in the universal problem of capitalism, not particular colonial practice. See: Mignolo, ‘Yes, We Can: Non-European Thinkers and Philosophers’, *Al Jazeera*, February 19 2013, accessed July 17 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/02/20132672747320891.html>. Žižek, ‘A Reply to my Critics’, *Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities*, 28 February 2013, <http://backdoorbroadcasting.net/2013/02/slavoj-zizek-a-reply-to-my-critics/>.

<sup>280</sup> Fanon, 227-230. See Appendix II.

<sup>281</sup> Liner notes to *Anthology: The East Village Other. Electric Newspaper. Hiroshima Day. USA VS Underground. A Collage ESP (1966): ESP-DISK’ 1034.*

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.* See: Brown, *Views...*, 4; Tate, ‘Black-Owned’.

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**Appendix I**

My thanks go out to the staff at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture for sending me a copy of Brown's *Views and Reviews*. It is an exceedingly rare document. For this reason, I have included the entire text of *Views and Reviews* below.

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## Appendix II

Felipe Luciano's 'Library'.

Been seduced once or twice  
The N.Y. Public Library raped me viciously  
Assaulted my nose with book smells  
'Till I almost forgot  
Revolution was a thing of the streets.  
Men with herringbones and blue shirts  
And thick rimmed glasses have signs on them  
That point to Flatbush  
And the rabbi insisted that scholars and crematoriums  
Were compatible.  
Young whites, poring over books  
Memorizing but never learning  
And I wonder how they'll justify genocide  
'I was in the library, honest to God, I didn't even know.'  
Don't matter. The library tempts me  
Sometimes worse than a woman  
With wide baby holding hips and thick calves  
Sometimes I wanna sleep on it, in it, through it and  
Wake up and say, 'Good morning books.'  
I've kissed books before, held them close to my brown skin  
Learned why my mother got moody at the end of every month  
But they never taught me how to fight  
Or how to run from cops sperm bullets  
'Zig zag, Butchy, zig zag, don't run straight fool.'  
Taught me to know but, not to believe  
Moms believes in God  
I believe n revolution  
We both believe in something  
Devoutly.  
So.  
I guess I'll always be tempted  
And sometimes raped.  
'Got to go now books. It's ten o'clock  
And you're closing up.  
God, I wish I could fuck you. G'nite.'<sup>1</sup>

The on-going intellectual struggle between Mignolo and Žižek recapitulate the continuing relevance of this poem. For does not the discussion of young whites buried in the abstract and the violent world around them reflect exactly the contrasts in Žižek and Mignolo's readings of Fanon, as we have seen?

In fact, the full Fanon extract is expedient to nuance our discussion:

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I am a man and what I have to recapture is the whole past of the world, I am not responsible only for the slavery involved in Santo Domingo, every time man has contributed to the victory of the dignity of the spirit, every time a man has said no to an attempt to subjugate his fellows, I have felt solidarity with his act. In no way does my basic vocation have to be drawn from the past of peoples of color. In no way do I have to dedicate myself to reviving some black civilization unjustly ignored. I will not make myself the man of any past. My black skin is not a repository for specific values. Haven't I got better things to do on this earth than avenge the blacks of the 17th century?

I as a man of color do not have the right to hope that in the white man there will be a crystallization of guilt towards the past of my race. I as a man of color do not have the right of stamping down the pride of my former master. I have neither the right nor the duty to demand reparations for my subjugated ancestors. There is no black mission. There is no white burden. I do not want to be victim to the rules of a black world. Am I going to ask this white man to answer for the slave traders of the 17th century? Am I going to try by every means available to cause guilt to burgeon in their souls? I am not a slave to slavery that dehumanized my ancestors. It would be of enormous interest to discover a black literature or architecture from the 3rd century B.C, we would be overjoyed to learn of the existence of a correspondence between some black philosopher and Plato, but we can absolutely not see how this fact would change the lives of 8 year old kids working the cane fields of Martinique or Guadeloupe. I find myself in the world and I recognize I have one right alone: of demanding human behavior from the other.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Luciano, quoted in Gibbs.

2. Fanon, 227-230.