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Bjerstedt, Sven

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LUND UNIVERSITY

PO Box 117  
221 00 Lund  
+46 46-222 00 00

## **"A new educational situation" – perspectives on jazz musical learning in the Swedish jazz journal OrkesterJournalen 1980-2010**

Sven Bjerstedt

### **ABSTRACT**

*This article aims to mirror a time of radical change in Swedish jazz education through perspectives formulated in the jazz journal OrkesterJournalen. During the 1980s, jazz musicians are still typically viewed as self-taught; you learn how to play jazz through listening and through playing together in contexts where fellow musicians function as informal "teachers". The growing formal jazz education is viewed with some scepticism. The music's emotional values are emphasized rather than the intellectual ones, and warnings are issued regarding homogenization and "broiler mentality".*

*During the 1990s, self-regulated, curiosity-driven jazz learning is still in focus. However, there are now also new opportunities to profit from a long formal jazz education as well as an increasing amount of experiences that enable comparisons between Swedish and American jazz education. Based on such experiences, a richer discussion can be conducted about, among other things, the consequences of formal jazz education with regard to tradition and individuality. During the first decade of the new millennium, a Swedish jazz educational profile is appearing more clearly, focusing on the role of personal expression in jazz education, as well as on the role of jazz education for personal development.*

*Key words: jazz education, formal, informal, OrkesterJournalen*

The circumstances for those who learn to become jazz musicians in Sweden, as in many other places, have changed radically over the past half-century. Formal education in jazz is now available at all stages from arts and music schools to university level. It is a reasonable assumption that Swedish jazz musicians' learning processes are considerably different today than fifty years ago. However, there is hardly any research in this field. This article is an attempt to illustrate how these developments are reflected in the central Swedish jazz magazine *Orkesterjournalen* (*OJ*, incidentally also the world's oldest extant jazz magazine).

Back in the late 1950s, jazz educational issues were discussed in *OJ* by jazz writer and aspiring music education researcher Bertil Sundin, among others. It was not until 1969–70 that jazz teaching found its way into the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm as an optional course within music teacher training. During the 1970s, "improvisation teacher training" was established at the conservatories in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö (Arvidsson, 2011: 160, 202–207).

The historical emergence of jazz education in Sweden has been studied mainly by Arvidsson (2011) and Nylander (2014). While Arvidsson focused on the changing status of jazz, Nylander studied jazz education on the *folkhögskola* level from a sociological perspective. This article attempts to investigate how musicians and others have talked about learning processes in jazz by way of a compilation and analysis of debates and viewpoints on jazz pedagogy that occurred in a central Swedish jazz magazine during a time of transition. The quotation in the article's title is taken from a text by Bertil Sundin, where he complains that

jazz nowadays is taught in a different way than before, not directly and outside the musical establishment [...] Jazz has become a topic in music academies. Surprisingly little has been written in *OJ* about this. (*OJ* 1988 No 12: 31)

The aim of this article is to investigate, by way of an inventory of thirty volumes (1980–2010) of the jazz magazine *OJ*, whether and how changes in perspective are reflected in the approaches to jazz musical learning formulated in this journal. (The translations from this and other Swedish sources are all mine.) What kinds of development can be observed with regard to views on what jazz education is and ought to be? The central question of the investigation, then, is about studying the institutionalization of jazz learning in an indirect way: *how do musicians talk about jazz musical learning during a period (1980–2010) when the conditions for this change significantly?*

It is reasonable to assume that the transition from predominantly informal learning to formal learning has had implications both for how musicians play and how they perceive music. The notion that formal, academic jazz education will tend to focus on what is perceived as "measurable", for instance, has often been discussed (and has sometimes been termed "overintellectualizing"; Prouty, 2012: 108). Gullberg (2002) assumes that such an attitude characterizes jazz education at several levels, and she points to a risk of musical standardization due to the fact that jazz education before university, such as on the *folkhögskola* level, "in many cases has focused on the jazz repertoire that has been canonized by the music education environment [at university level], that is viewed as difficult or prestigious, and that can be expected to generate high scores in entrance examinations" (2002: 186).

On the basis of a variety of case studies, Lundberg, Malm and Ronström (2000) summarize a common development in several areas of the Swedish music landscape: "greater expertise – professionalisation – homogenization – formalization – institutionalization – objectification" (2000: 404). When both the number of music practitioners in a genre and their skills increase, this leads to specialization and professionalization, so that repertoire, playing style and appearance will be formalized and homogenized. As an example, Lundberg, Malm and Ronström point to "the transformation that folk music is going through, with the result that Sweden now has a corps of well-trained fully or semi-professional folk musicians alongside the old fiddlers" (ibid: 404), exemplified by a study of "Nyckelharpsfolket" (The keyfiddle people; ibid: 224–240).

It may therefore be of interest to compare the development of jazz with that of the folk music field, where a similar institutionalization has taken place. This development has to a greater degree than jazz academization been the subject of research (cf. Hill, 2005; Åkesson, 2007; von Wachenfeldt, 2015). Hill describes (2005: 24–25) how the Sibelius Academy Folk Music Department since its inception in 1983 has come to influence the activities and views with regard to the Finnish folk music field in a variety of ways that can only be summarized very briefly here. The status of folk music and folk musicians has increased. A hierarchy has been established which is dominated by professional folk musicians. Contemporary folk music has been transformed into a kind of art music. Folk music has been re-contextualized: that is to say that it has been removed from its previous context, and a new culture has been created within the institution. The repertoire and style range of folk music have gone through simultaneous processes of expansion and homogenization. Cooperation among folk musicians and professional performers in other areas has been facilitated. The ways of playing folk music have changed among both university trained and amateur musicians.

With regard to Swedish folk music, von Wachenfeldt (2015) points to the following traditional "rooms for learning": home teaching (in the master's home), weddings, dances, and military barracks. During the 1900s a series of educational institutions for folk music emerged (2015: 96). According to Åkesson (2007), as a consequence of institutionalization, folk music educational material has "helped create a kind of canon of music theory" (2007: 120). von Wachenfeldt discerns two main lines of development in Swedish folk musical learning: (a) from a romanticized ideal of the "solitary artist" to ensemble-based group tuition; and (b) from another romanticized ideal of pitch-based learning to a more complex pedagogy based on written music as a complement to transmission based on ear and body language (2015: 97–100). von Wachenfeldt points out, however, that the ideal image of the musician as an individual artist and folk music learning as a master-apprentice relationship persists in contemporary Swedish folk music practice, thereby maintaining a "myth of innate musicality and auto-didactics" (von Wachenfeldt, 2015, Article I: 127).

A preliminary assumption is that the educational institutionalization and the development from informal to formal learning in the fields of folk music and jazz in some respects seem to have had similar conditions, circumstances and consequences. But there is a need for specific studies of practices and perceptions in jazz, and the present inventory of *OJ* texts about jazz musical learning in the years 1980–2010 is intended to constitute a contribution to this research field.

Folkestad (2006) discusses four ways to define the distinction between *formal* and *informal learning* with respect to (a) situation (does learning take place in or out of school), (b) learning style (by written music or by ear), (c) ownership (didactic teaching or open, self-regulated learning) and (d) intentionality (is the mind directed towards learning how to play or towards playing). The emergence of institutionalized jazz education may have resulted in a development towards more formal learning in these four respects. One aim of this study is to investigate how this is reflected in *OJ* writings during the period 1980–2010.

A comprehensive educational change may of course give rise to several reactions, including conflicting views regarding various aspects of the development. An extensive interview study with fifteen well-known Swedish jazz musicians (Bjerstedt, 2014) noted, for example, the existence of various thematic fields in which different outlooks on jazz musical learning are contrasted against each other, such as (a) an older generation of musicians against a younger one, (b) an autodidactic culture against

an educational one, (c) an "open" educational culture against an orthodox one, and (d) advocates of authenticity against virtuosity (ibid: 338–345).

The notion that processes of change may be illuminated by way of identifying and investigating a selection of thematic tension fields has been the point of departure for the analysis of the present material. The voices in the following presentation are, of course, individual expressions of what musicians and others wished to talk about in *OJ* interviews and debates. When viewed together, however, they may arguably provide a picture of key trends in a period of change. The strong dominance of male voices for most of the period in question is very likely associated with *OJ*'s focus on instrumental music as well as with the overall male dominance in Swedish jazz music during this time. Only in the 00s, a trend may be discerned where voices of female jazz instrumentalists are heard to some extent. An *OJ* survey in 2007 reports that the percentage of female jazz students is 24 % on the folkhögskola level and 16 % on university level (*OJ* 2007 No 5: 12–15).

A hermeneutic approach has been the starting point for selection and analysis of the material. Alvesson and Sköldberg (2008) distinguish four aspects between which a hermeneutic interpretation oscillates: interpretive patterns–text–dialogue–partial interpretations. In brief, starting from the interpreter's preconceptions, questions emanate. The active interrogatory approach is complemented in a dialectical manner by a humble, distanced approach which is dictated by respectfulness towards the autonomy of the object of interpretation. Thus, an interpretive pattern and partial interpretations are worked out in dialogue with the text, rendering a continuous transformation of the interpreter's preconceptions throughout the interpretive process. Alvesson and Sköldberg discern a rather large number of hermeneutic "themes". These, the authors suggest, in combination with the four elements of the hermeneutical circle (whole–part, understanding–preconception) and the four aspects of the interpretive process (interpretive pattern–text–dialogue–partial interpretations) make up a diversity of perspectives that may be confronted with each other in a hermeneutical search for truth: asking questions to the text and listening to the text; penetrating the implicit dimensions of the text; aiming at the fusion of horizons.

Statements about jazz musical learning were excerpted from thirty editions of *OJ*. In order to enable confrontation between different perspectives in accordance with the methodological stance presented above, a number of potentially significant interview statements about jazz improvisation and learning were identified during the initial process of analysis. A number of

analysis of additional excerpts, these categories were confirmed and extended. The process may be described as a continuous effort to integrate reflection and attention, in order to be able to add further insights to an emerging pattern of interpretation on several levels. One should keep in mind the abductive – in a way almost intuitive – feature of this reflective, interpretive process, as well as its continuous interaction between empirical data, hypothetical conclusions and theoretical perspectives.

After an initial discussion of how informal and formal jazz learning is presented in *OJ* during the period in question, the material has essentially been structured in accordance with the thematic fields that were identified during the analysis process. The final section attempts to present an overview of the developments and a brief comparison with a number of studies of folk music institutionalization.

## A transition from non-formal to formal learning

At the beginning of the period in question, *OJ* conveys the general image that jazz musical learning is – and should be – informal. During the 1980s, famous jazz musicians are often presented as self-taught. Formally trained musicians also emphasize the importance of learning processes that are self-initiated and focus on learning by ear. Saxophonist Jonas Knutsson says that “your ear is what’s important, your ability to listen to what is going on around you” (*OJ* 1988, No 7/8: 10).

The ideal: to be self-taught, learning by listening and playing

Saxophonist Lennart “Jonken” Jonsson summarizes his musical training: “A regiment musician showed me how to change reeds, and then he took out the sheet music. After 20 minutes I left. So I’m self-taught on the saxophone” (*OJ* 1982 No 7/8: 4).

Gunnar Siljabloo Nilson describes his first acquaintance with his mail order clarinet:

I sat in the kitchen and began to blow, and after a few hours, I managed to play ‘Blott för dig’ (‘Only for you’) in the low register. Pretty soon I had to move out to a hut where I sat among washing bowls and craft tools and an old wind-up gramophone that went too fast. I played together with Artie Shaw’s recording of ‘Begin the Beguine,’ for I wanted to learn that one, especially the high glissandos. In [the small country village] Notviken we always put

Shaw first. Goodman came second. I’m stubborn, and despite the fact that Shaw’s high notes were even higher on my gramophone, I wouldn’t give up until I mastered them. (*OJ* 1988 No 10: 11–12)

The term “self-taught” does not exclude a context for learning, but it is a different one than in formal music education. The singer Nannie Porres is presented in this way: “Like so many other jazz artists, she is self-taught, which means that she has gone the long way and developed her way of singing in the circle of fellow musicians” (*OJ* 1986 No 6: 10).

The importance of learning by listening to good jazz is often emphasized, especially with regard to certain role models: “There are no great musicians who haven’t attended ‘the Armstrong University’” (cornet player Ruby Braff, *OJ* 1980 No 12: 9). Several musicians agree that listening and practising ought to focus on the music’s roots. Saxophonist Steve Lacy talks about his musical development: “I started with jazz’s earliest forms of expression and I developed right through its entire history, including bebop” (*OJ* 1983 No 1: 14). Saxophonist Anders Ekholm chimes in: “During my high school years I basically went through jazz history, apart from traditional jazz” (*OJ* 1988 No 11: 14).

The most important learning takes place when you play, according to many voices in *OJ*. Several musicians think of active music-making as education. Pianist Lars Sjösten sums up his time as a house pianist at the jazz club Gyllene Cirkeln [The Golden Circle] on Sveavägen in Stockholm: “It was like a jazz academy” (*OJ* 1981 No 4: 11). Steve Lacy says about playing with Thelonious Monk: “In any case it was the school I had been looking for – not Berklee or Manhattan, but that school!” (*OJ* 1983 No 1: 15).

Living together with like-minded musicians is pointed out as important. Lars Sjösten describes the collective accommodation where he lived during an important time period at Inedalsgatan 23 in Stockholm: “There was music around the clock” (*OJ* 1981 No 4: 10). Bassist Björn Alke calls the apartment “a university of greater consequence than the Academy” (*OJ* 1988 No 1: 7).

Several musicians speak of their fellow musicians as “teachers” in an informal sense. Bernt Rosengren says, for example: “In some way, Fager [pianist Claes-Göran Fagerstedt] was my teacher. [...] I have learned a great lot just by listening to how he harmonizes songs and how he voices chords. I have learned from Horace Parlan in much the same way” (*OJ* 1985 No 2: 10). Bassist Björn Alke says:

[Gordon] taught me most about jazz" (*OJ* 1988 No 1: 8). Gunnar Siljabloo Nilson tells of his very first gig: "the accordionist was such a bit of devil that he changed the key when I was about to play my solo and it must have sounded awful until I found my way. But I learned a lot, especially to play in all keys. And that of course was the accordionist's aim" (*OJ* 1988 No 10: 12).

A recurring topic in *OJ* interviews during the 1980s regards the need for musicians to be part of a context. Saxophonist Jonas Knutsson also talks about the dangers of building one's improvisations on what you have acquired from books, "then there is a risk that there will be no connection between what you play yourself and what is happening around you. I have heard many such musicians playing like they played together with a [Music Minus One] comp album" (*OJ* 1988 No 7/8: 10).

In the 1990s, the Swedish jazz education system is in a state of rapid growth. However, in interviews with jazz musicians, *OJ* continues to emphasize, like in the 1980s, that many of them are self-taught. Trombonist Jens Lindgren, who works in older jazz genres, is presented as an autodidact: when he started playing "there was a romantic idea that you were a worse jazz musician if you read music, and I believed that" (*OJ* 1997 No 7/8: 31). Similar descriptions occur also of more modern musicians; for example, guitarist Max Schultz is said to be part of "the large group of self-taught guitarists" (*OJ* 1993 No 10: 18–19), and trumpeter Ulf Adåker is presented in this way: "everything he has learned [...] he has learned on his own through practising and trying and gaining experience. As a musician, he is completely self-taught" (*OJ* 1993 No 11: 2). Despite his training at the Academy, guitarist Ewan Svensson is nevertheless presented as being originally self-taught: "He learned to play first, then to read music" (*OJ* 1994 No 7: 3).

The importance of the musician's own curiosity to jazz musical learning is mentioned in several interviews. For instance, bassist Hans Backenroth describes how his curiosity about context has led him to discoveries: "I wanted to know who influenced Jaco Pastorius [...] Then I discovered Paul Chambers [...] Because he sometimes played with a bow, I followed the trail backwards to Slam Stewart records" (*OJ* 1995 No 12: 22).

Several *OJ* interviews with musicians in the '90s focus on playing by ear and demonstrate rather little interest in the music's theoretical sides. Saxophonist Krister Andersson describes how he refused for a long time to learn music theory and how to read music: "I have a mysterious resistance, I have a hard time learning theoretical systems. It may perhaps have something to do with my school days". Only when he

had become a full-time jazz musician did he begin to study music theory seriously: "I started with the piano to learn the chords. It is necessary if you are to have a chance to understand musical grammar" (*OJ* 1992 No 12: 24–25).

Pianist Jan Strinnholm values playing by ear higher than playing written music: "I was lucky to have started playing by ear, because that was how I learned to improvise and play so as to compose in the moment. [...] I find it pretty uninteresting to only interpret a music sheet" (*OJ* 1998 No 4: 18).

Saxophonist Peter Gullin describes how his musical learning on the violin and later on alto sax was largely based on ear training:

I never did my homework. I played other stuff, imitating things I heard on the radio and improvising a lot [...] I copied from the LP *Portrait Of My Pals* for a couple of years on the alto. I played the record and improvised, and I learned dad's [Lars Gullin] and Rolf Billberg's solos. Then I went to my lessons with the book *Saxophone 1* and was supposed to play pieces from it, and I never knew them. (*OJ* 1998 5: 3)

Saxophonist Arne Domnérus describes the jazz musical learning of his youth:

we were one hundred per cent imitators. You had a role model and did what you could to live up to it. [...] mostly I picked up my skills through playing. To improvise was mostly about embroidering around the melody. (*OJ* 1999 No 12: 2–3)

The voices of the 1980s that have been cited here testify to a unanimously positive view of informal jazz learning in Folkestad's (2006) four respects: learning goes on – and should go on – outside school, by ear, on the learner's own terms and with a focus on playing. This view still prevails in *OJ* during the 1990s, but the picture is more complex with regard to the aspects Folkestad discerns: more learning takes place in school settings with written music and didactic teaching directed towards learning how to play. An appreciative attitude to the link between knowledge and creativity permeates certain statements about the emergence of formal jazz education programmes. However, there are several counterarguments: for instance, musicians warn against homogenization, and they insist that qualities such as authenticity, oral tradition and swing need to be preserved. Statements on jazz learning in *OJ* in the 1990s often commend a curiosity-driven, self-regulated learning process where the

musician's individual expression, creativity and development is in focus. Such observations are the basis for what I later on in this article have named thematic fields for critical discussion of the jazz educational development.

### The emergence of formal jazz learning

The trend toward more formal jazz training is reflected in *OJ* already in the 1980s. Saxophonist Helge Albin argues that "jazz music here in Malmö is in many ways better than in Stockholm," and he suggests that this has to do with "the jazz education programme at the Music Academy" (*OJ* 1981 No 5: 8). Helge Albin points out that the jazz teacher himself learns by teaching: "when you are to teach something, you have to explain clearly what you mean, and at the same time you explain things to yourself. You remind yourself of what is important, and I think that's a very useful thing" (*OJ* 1981 No 5: 9).

Kurt Lindgren speaks in 1988 about "the large number of applicants to jazz programmes at the Academy of Music [in Stockholm]. And they are really young, tremendously versatile and competent!" (*OJ* 1988 No 12: 26). Pianist Carl Fredrik Orrje holds that jazz has "lost a generation," but that there are new times ahead: "One of the signs is the jazz educational activities at the Music Academy in Stockholm" (*OJ* 1988 No 5: 9).

Jazz studies at the Berklee College of Music are mentioned with some scepticism, and the term "Berklee broilers" is coined: "musicians who sound as if someone put carbon-paper between their ambitions" (*OJ* 1983 No 9: 23). The first question in an interview with a Swedish Berklee student, trumpeter Anders Eriksson, is "how great is the danger that you become a Berklee-broiler?" Eriksson declares that the meeting with the school has been a "culture shock" but also that "you get struck by how well organized everything is compared to Swedish conditions, how good *all* teachers are" (*OJ* 1983 No 9: 23). In practising musicians' outlook on teaching materials, some scepticism toward American jazz pedagogy can be discerned. In a review of Sten Ingelf's textbook on jazz and pop harmony, pianist Jan Wallgren considers this book as well as Gunnar Lindgren's and Lennart Åberg's textbook on jazz and pop improvisation, which was issued a few years earlier, to be "more sensible than most jazz textbooks on the international market. Go Sweden!" (*OJ* 1982 No 12: 44).

In several *OJ* interviews with musicians in the 1980s, positive views on the new kind of jazz learning are expressed, such as, for instance, thoughts about how theory and

technique may promote personal creativity. Lars Sjösten says of his studies at the Academy of Music in Stockholm:

The more theory you know, the more fun it is to improvise, the more you learn, the freer you become, he argues. – There is infinitely more to pick from – you learn the rules and then break them, but you must always know what you do. (*OJ* 1981 No 4: 11)

Saxophonist Jonas Knutsson talks about how improved intonation, sound production and legato enabled him to concentrate more on expression when he plays: "Based on that, I add my personality and make my excursions" (*OJ* 1988 No 7/8: 11).

These positive *OJ* arguments about the institutionalization of jazz learning mainly amount to a positive view of the connection between knowledge and creativity. In this context, it can be noted that from time to time the conviction is expressed that it is of importance to formulate a Swedish alternative to the American jazz pedagogy.

### A new path of education: municipal music school – upper secondary school – *folkhögskola* – music academy

In the 1990s, many *OJ* texts indicate that young Swedish jazz musicians now have the possibility to get formal instruction on several stages: from municipal music school over upper secondary school and *folkhögskola* music programmes to the Academies of Music. Pianist Anders Widmark explains that his interest in jazz was nourished at the municipal music school in Uppsala: "there was also something called jazz improvisation" (*OJ* 1991 No 1: 15). Jazz education at upper secondary school level is a novelty in Sweden in the 1990s. Södra Latin is presented in 1991 as "the Stockholm upper secondary school that seems to be jazz's greatest promise for the future" (*OJ* 1991 No 2: 15). In 1993, *OJ* reports that "[s]ome of our most famous jazz musicians become teachers at Sweden's first 'jazz upper secondary school,' the three-year jazz programme at Vasaskolan in Gävle" (*OJ* 1993 No 1: 8). After municipal music school and the music programmes in upper secondary school, there are opportunities to study jazz at *folkhögskola* and music academies. Trumpeter Johan Setterlind did both, and his jazz musical training is presented as typical, "the norm for his generation" (*OJ* 1996 No 2: 17).



## American perspectives on jazz learning

Although Sweden was relatively early, by international standards, to develop jazz education, in the US there was already a long experience of formal jazz training (Arvidsson, 2011: 155). In the 1990s, a number of Swedish musicians had gained experience of studying jazz in the United States, often at the Berklee College of Music. Trumpeter Anders Bergcrantz describes his studies as hard, determined work: "There was a lot of homework. I took care of myself and did my job, quite simply. I developed quickly, perhaps more than I have during any other period of my life. You should probably be young when you go to Berklee" (*OJ* 1995 No 6: 2).

Saxophonist Karl-Martin Almqvist studied at Mannes College of Music in New York 1994–1996 and speaks of the educational progression that characterizes American jazz education:

It was strict at Mannes: you had to learn certain things and show that you knew them before you were allowed to go on. They were strict with the basics. Not least the theoretical instruction was amazing. There was a step-by-step methodology that also meant that you were to practise your skills – for example with regard to harmonization. You could do it like this, or this way, or that way – and then you were instructed to actually do it in all these ways. (*OJ* 2001 No 4: 5)

Bassist Hans Andersson provides a similar picture of his studies at the Berklee College of Music in Boston 1987–1988: "First you have to learn the basics, hard bop and stuff, before they encourage you to work on your own expression" (*OJ* 2005 No 4: 19).

Pianist Maggi Olin directs attention to the dynamics between tradition and individuality. Her studies at Berklee made her "respect the tradition [...] After Berklee, I have tried to find a balance between what made me begin with jazz, and the tradition I learned at school." (*OJ* 1995 No 10: 22).

These kinds of perceptions of the focus on a strict methodology in American jazz education will eventually turn out to be an important aspect when institutionalized jazz education in Sweden tries to find and develop its own ways.

## Positive voices about the institutionalization of jazz

However, all musicians do not share the view that can be said to dominate *OJ* texts in the 1980s and 1990s, namely, that formal jazz education by definition will be problematic. Saxophonist Fredrik Lundin studied in 1990–91 at the New School of Jazz and Contemporary Music in New York. He describes the difference between his own studies and what is done at the 'rhythmic conservatory' in Copenhagen: Danish jazz students are often "very young and they more or less swallow what's offered without reflecting. They are talented but boring." Joakim Milder comments: "I don't think that these schools are 'harmful' in themselves. Those who graduate as stereotypes would surely never have developed any individuality, and those who can think for themselves will probably have been done no harm." Hans Ulrik adds that "It's hardly wrong to be 'good'. Charlie Parker was, and Keith Jarrett's extremely 'good'" (*OJ* 1992 No 4: 19).

Several musicians describe their studies at the academy as a path to gaining musical experience and making new contacts. Bassist Lars Danielsson says of his time at the Academy of Music Gothenburg: "of course the big thing was to meet and play with others who were into the same kind of music" (*OJ* 1989 No 5: 19). Saxophonist Tomas Franck and trumpeter Mårten Lundgren testify to similar experiences in Malmö and Stockholm (*OJ* 1992 No 1: 22; *OJ* 2000 No 2/3: 23). Trumpeter Peter Asplund says about his jazz education: "some lessons were incredibly rewarding, others gave nothing. [...] The meeting with and grinding with other jazz musicians is important" (*OJ* 1995 No 4: 3–4).

Another aspect that occurs in the jazz educational discussion in *OJ* is about existential perspectives that may complement studies in music theory and instrumental technique. As a teacher of improvisation at the Academy of Music in Stockholm, saxophonist Joakim Milder focuses on issues such as stance and aesthetics:

Those who attend the school are so well developed with regard to music theory and instrumental technique. It is really quite unnecessary to devote teaching time to these things. For many, however, it is completely unknown to think in more philosophical terms about the music. [...] All ethical and existential questions are so obvious in the music. (*OJ* 1997 No 4: 4–5)

A positive view on the connection between knowledge and creativity has been noted above. In the 1990s, this view is supplemented with perceptions of benefits of formal



jazz education that are both rather philosophical (thinking promotes musical development) and very concrete (so does playing a lot).

## Thematic fields for critical discussion of the jazz educational development

A number of thematic fields can be discerned where the development of jazz learning toward educational formalization and institutionalization is questioned on various grounds. In this section they are presented under five headings: "Risk of homogenization and codification", "Feeling versus intellect and technique", "In defense of oral tradition and groove", "Change versus rules: consequences of institutionalized learning to freedom and individuality," and "Challenges for jazz education on folkhögskola and academy level".

### Risk of homogenization and codification

Some performing musicians appear to be generally sceptical about formal training in jazz. The trumpeter Anders Bergcrantz expresses his views in an interview: "One can never become a jazz musician through education. That must have come from within already before. So you have to know what jazz is all about before further training. Then you can improve yourself and learn theory" (*OJ* 1990 No 10: 18).

Several musicians warn against homogenization and codification as results of formal training in jazz. Nisse Sandström believes that "there is a 'broiler mentality,' that you should learn quickly," and Gunnar Lindqvist adds: "Now you can look up the Coltrane scales and everything in books and a lot of guys come out with all that with the usual, hard tone, without any particular devotion. Anyway, no personality – it is not themselves" (*OJ* 1984 No 10: 8).

Bassist Kurt Lindgren points to the preservative function of homogenization:

Because jazz playing is being taught, there is also a standardization. [...] It simply becomes harder to be original and personal today. In this, demands for quality change. [...] What I mean is that education is in its essence conservative. It will always be behind that which is innovative, because it makes use of existing material. (*OJ* 1988 No 12: 26–27)

Lars-Göran Ulander summarizes his views on the potential of jazz education potential:

The main effect of education is to raise the level of the mediocre, to create musicians who know what they are doing and who are able to play in different styles. Broadly speaking, musicians without a personality of their own – and I guess this is something new, that the different styles of jazz are becoming codified. (*OJ* 1989 No 5: 17)

Arguments about homogenization are among the most common ones in *OJ* debates on formal jazz learning, and the issue continues to be discussed during the following decades.

### Feeling versus intellect and technology

In many statements, the goal of education – like the goal of playing – is said to be music as emotional expression. Pianist Steve Dobrogosz complains in an opinion piece: "What makes me despair when I listen to today's music is how often the means of expression are confused with expression itself, and that many are not even aware that there must be something behind the tones!" (*OJ* 1981 No 5: 10). Pianist Robert Malmberg adheres to this view: "if the player feels something and manages to convey that feeling to other people, then it is good music [...] Music must not be associated with achievement" (*OJ* 1981 No 6: 8–9, 30).

Saxophonist Lennart Jansson expresses a related line of thought: "Technique does not impress me. If, like me, you have plodded away at etudes for years, you listen for other things than technique" (*OJ* 1986 No 5: 17). Bernt Rosengren "does not want the creation of music to be an intellectual process, a kind of problem-solving. For him it is important not to lose his playfulness. He advocates the emotional aspect" (*OJ* 1985 No 2: 13).

These statements relate to a thematic field that is closely in line with one mentioned in the introduction: advocates of authenticity versus advocates of virtuosity. It may be seen as variations on a theme by Lester Young: "You're technically hip. *But what's your story?*" (Bjerstedt, 2014: 41).

## In defense of oral tradition and groove

Saxophonist Lars-Göran Ulander describes the development: "Jazz nowadays has fallen into a kind of classical music situation. It is no longer passed on through oral tradition" (*OJ* 1989 No 5: 16). Saxophonist Nisse Sandström says of his repertoire classes at the Royal Academy of Music: "It is important that they learn to remember the songs. Jazz is a sort of oral tradition. There should be no fake books. What you know, you should have in your head" (*OJ* 1983 No 11: 7). The same point of view is formulated by Bernt Rosengren: "the worst thing is that the young jazz musicians today must bring this 'secret book' along with all the chords. I think it is a great pity." Sandström, Rosengren and Gunnar Lindqvist discuss the subject together:

Nisse: [...] It is better to know a few songs properly than to bring one of those fake books. What if you go to a jazz festival and there's a jam session until the wee hours. Should we drag along harmony books? Bullshit.

Gunnar: It's embarrassing.

Nisse: Jazz music is an oral tradition.

Bernt: Yes, it ought to be. But I think many feel insecure. They know tunes but they don't feel really safe. Then they bring out the book.

Nisse: They have become accustomed to that fucking book.

Bernt: Yes, it's hopeless. They may know it anyway, but the book provides some safety.

Nisse: Security blanket.

Gunnar: I would die of shame. (*OJ* 1984 No 10: 7-8)

Older musicians sometimes complain that their younger colleagues, in their opinion, have a less developed musical perception in various respects. Saxophonist Gunnar Lindqvist points to the rhythm: "What surprises me very much today is that the young guys are satisfied with the completely dead rhythms found in today's popular music. [...] They are deluded. It's a *fact* that it does not swing, even though they think it does" (*OJ* 1984 No 10: 9-10).

## Change versus rules: consequences of institutionalized learning to freedom and individuality

We have already seen arguments against the formal jazz education programmes warning against homogenization at the expense of personal expression. This thematic field is intensified in the 1990s. The self-taught trumpeter Ulf Adåker is sceptical to

the academization of jazz, which he fears may lock the music in frozen forms, and will not permit instruction in key aspects of jazz. He says that he sees

a danger in this institutionalized education [...] you will learn the 'right' and 'wrong.' It invites you to a different, more regularized way to make music, but this is the one genre that constantly needs to change in order to be interesting, and that thing is very difficult to teach. At the academy you teach that which is easy to make into a curriculum, that which is easy to rate. But perhaps not the most necessary. (*OJ* 1993 No 11: 5)

In 2001, *OJ* publishes an extensive article by Stuart Nicholson declaring that "in the United States, jazz is paralyzed [...]. It is another matter in Europe, where creativity abounds" (*OJ* 2001 No 11: 25). Just as in his later book *Is jazz dead?* (2005), Nicholson points to the "lively jazz education network in the United States" as a cause of the stagnation he sees:

The kind of jazz that is taught at various schools across the United States is centered around mainstream style, built on the conventions of hard bop and post-bop from the fifties and sixties. The music has its fixed rules, is easy to analyse and categorize, and includes definitions of right and wrong that facilitate the teaching process. (*OJ* 2001 No 11: 26)

Far from all students who graduate from these schools will be able to support themselves as jazz musicians, Nicholson argues; and so they

will go back to the teaching industry - now as teachers and often with zero or very little experience of what it means to be a professional jazz musician. It becomes a recycling of teaching: the students become teachers who teach jazz the way they have learned it in school - a way that can easily be explained, analysed, defined and a way in which practical skills can be easily communicated. (*OJ* 2001 No 11: 26)

In this opinion piece, Nicholson however does not write about European or Swedish jazz education in relation to the American situation.

Higher education in jazz has also been established in Denmark and Norway. The focus at Det rytmiske konservatorium (The rhythmic conservatory) in Copenhagen is presented in *OJ* as a more traditional one. Saxophonist Hans Ulrik sees great differences

between jazz in Denmark, Sweden and Norway: "There is much more so called free music in Sweden and Norway" (*OJ* 1992 No 4: 18). Saxophonist Fredrik Lundin agrees: "there are very many musicians coming from the rhythmic conservatory in Copenhagen that sound the same. They have learned how important it is to 'know your jazz'" (*OJ* 1992 No 4: 19).

Several voices in *OJ* comment on the consequences of jazz education for the musician's individuality. Bertil Sundin summarizes the issue:

It is often said that today's college-educated musicians who learn "the academic way," with exercise books with notated solos, will have the music more in their fingers than in their soul, and that it was the other way around when the old informal system prevailed, when you would sit in with different bands, imitate the masters and eventually appropriate a personal style of your own. (*OJ* 1992 No 7/8: 26)

One opinion that is put forward in the educational debate in *OJ* is that one must 'live' one's music; jazz can only be learned through living, not by going to school. Pianist Per Henrik Wallin expresses a general scepticism regarding jazz education at music academies:

Jazz is not something you learn in school. Life experiences shape the music and expression. It is the life you live and what you experience, plus, of course, that you must know your craft. [...] You have to live the music, it's not a style that you practise in school, it's not an achievement – it's life. (*OJ* 1998 No 7/8: 7)

Saxophonist Lars Gulliksson – himself an academy graduate – perceives limitations in the school's ability to teach jazz, because teaching will inevitably shrink the space for the students' own discoveries: "There are educational materials for any purpose. The space for your own discoveries becomes smaller when everything is served. You get to know which scale is right, and then you play it. If you had not known it from the beginning, you would perhaps have found something new and personal instead" (*OJ* 1997 No 3: 21).

Behind arguments of this kind seems to lie a conception that there is a fundamental polarization between two approaches as to what it means to be a jazz musician: is it to have acquired a certain defined body of knowledge and skills, or is it a free,

personal way to be and to make music? Perceptions of such a polarization are also an important ingredient when Swedish institutionalized jazz learning tries to find and develop its own ways.

Saxophone player Ulf Andersson reflects on the risks that formal jazz education would undermine the musician's personality:

One could perhaps see signs of it in the American school with a hundred tenors who have tremendous technique but who sound almost the same. This is not the case in Sweden. I try to help students acquire good intonation and to be able to tune the instrument – but their timbre and tone will always be individual. Just as the voice of each person is unique. (*OJ* 1999 No 11: 6)

Peter Asplund does not think that any jazz talent has been destroyed by the Academy of Music:

I know we discussed it when we attended, [saxophonist] Fredrik Ljungkvist and I, because we had the same teacher in ear training and harmony, we were taught the same system, from Berklee, and we got to learn what scales to use on the chords. But just look at those who have made their own records: there is a great difference between all. (*OJ* 1995 No 4: 4)

Bertil Sundin argues that music schools should provide jazz students with knowledge about jazz history, and that the role and function of the interpreter should be upgraded as well as that of the improviser; all cannot reasonably be great personalities. He calls for "a better balance in terms of the roles of the re-creator (the interpreter) and the creator. The jazz myth of personal expression and creation has gone much too far" (*OJ* 1992 No 7/8: 27).

The overall impression of the educational debate in *OJ* in the 90s is still that individuality retains its place as the jazz musician's hallmark. A further example of this is given in a statement by saxophonist Lennart Åberg who in 1991 is part of a team of internationally renowned jazz teachers at Bob Brookmeyer's music school in Rotterdam, which will aim at innovative and personal qualities in its students: "just the kind of school that I myself would like to attend" (*OJ* 1991 No 3: 20).

### Challenges for jazz education on *folkhögskola* and academy level

The number of opinion articles focusing on the development of jazz education programmes is not great in *OJ*. But in two consecutive issues in 1992 observations are formulated that deserve to be presented in some detail. In *OJ* 1992 No 7/8, Bertil Sundin writes about some of the general challenges that jazz education at all stages, in his view, are facing. The situation has changed, as jazz has now been incorporated into the academic education system. However, it has not yet quite found its home there:

Virtually all music academies today have some form of education in the African American tradition. Sometimes it is called by that name, sometimes the catch-all term "other genres" is used to denote jazz, rock and various forms of ethnic music, thus connoting what is the most important and the first genre: written Western art music. (*OJ* 1992 No 7/8: 25)

Among the most urgent things that remain to be done, according to Sundin, is to consider and deal with the jazz musical heritage in academia in a similar manner as in art music circles:

Within written art music, drama and literature, artists work within traditions that are respected and have a certain prestige. There is no equivalent for jazz. (*OJ* 1992 No 7/8: 26)

Sundin exemplifies with Ellington, whose music is nowhere recreated in a satisfactory way in educational contexts, while this happens in very large scale with regard to the big names in classical music. Another example, he says, is music research:

How is it that the keen youth research and music ethnology write about ragtime and blues but then skip to 1956 and Bill Haley? (*OJ* 1992 No 7/8: 26)

Furthermore, Sundin points out that attitudes to formal music education among jazz musicians and jazz listeners can also be a source of difficulties:

The attitude of jazz aficionados is contradictory. Some great bands are not really accepted because they are also involved in educational activities. Some believe that it is vitally important to jazz to retain its underground character. (*OJ* 1992 No 7/8: 27)

In a 1992 article entitled "Give Swedish jazz its own school!", bassist and educator Ulf Rådelius argues that an independent Swedish jazz educational institution is needed. His starting point is a description of the jazz programme at Skurups *folkhögskola*. Among the values he emphasizes in the education on the *folkhögskola* level is the focus on one's own creativity and personal development. Jazz education must contain

both the knowledge of tradition and an open mind for things that move in the moment, preferably with attention directed forward. It is also necessary to look beyond technical exercises, learning songs and scales and other craft skills. Failure to do so may result in failing "balance between the brain and heart" in the aspiring musicians. [...] I would argue that the *folkhögskola* is a better environment for jazz education than the music academy. [...] We have built in a space for creativity, for creative and personal development in the way we teach. (*OJ* 1992 No 9: 23)

Some voices cited above address the survival of jazz as an oral tradition. Rådelius emphasizes that it is important to develop a special jazz pedagogy based on jazz music's ear-based, oral tradition:

I believe that jazz education should be developed separately and not be inserted into an existing academic university system. Jazz music is basically ear-based and its tradition is essentially "verbal". It is quite natural – without any disparagement of traditional music education – that you can't teach jazz with a methodology that is largely based on notated music. I see an opportunity to take advantage of the "oral tradition" and use it as a method – among others – to convey knowledge. This does not exclude learning from the so-called conservatory model. The important thing, as I see it, is that we must develop our teaching on our own terms. (*Ibid.*)

In the investigated material, Sundin stands out as relatively alone in advocating that jazz programmes should also take responsibility for a musical heritage and that they should also educate interpreters, not only improvisers. Most statements about jazz learning in *OJ* in the 1990s focus on the musician's individual expression, creativity and development. In response to those voices that defend jazz as oral tradition, an ear-based jazz educational alternative is formulated.

## The growth of a Swedish jazz educational profile

During the first decade of the new century the voices of more active jazz educators are heard in *OJ*. Many of them say they are not convinced that it is really possible to teach improvisation. The view that jazz education should focus on personal expression and communication, rather than on technique and analysis, is a recurring theme in several interviews. According to bassist Christian Spering, you can "hardly teach people to improvise," but should "focus on and encourage personal expression – which will be there naturally in all who really have something to say! [...] One should not be too analytical – you need to allow the spontaneous, the personal" (*OJ* 2000 No 10: 5).

A kind of philosophical attitude permeates certain descriptions of jazz pedagogy. Saxophonist Johan Borgström recounts how he felt that he lacked his own musical voice and how Thomas Gustafson then became an important teacher:

he asked questions and I had to come up with the answers myself. The questions were ingenious, they made me think, but they were also simple things like: why do you play the saxophone? [...] The result was a completely new approach to myself, the audience, the context. (*OJ* 2000 No 11: 23)

Saxophonist Jonas Knutsson expresses his appreciation for Sahib Shibab's teaching style; he avoided answering questions about practical tips on scales and exercises:

he had a philosophical approach to music. He talked about form, expression, swing – and he had an attitude reminiscent of the traditional country fiddlers, more practical than intellectual. (*OJ* 2002 No 11: 5)

Several musicians agree that an important task for jazz education is to teach musicians to think for themselves. The pianist and trombonist Ulf Johansson Werre wants to "teach students to develop what they hear within themselves and use it to do something meaningful" (*OJ* 2003 No 11: 6), and Peter Asplund chimes in:

It is important to bring out the creative and personal in everyone [...] I advise them to go out into the woods and practise, or to read this or that book by Dostoyevsky, or to put music to [the Stockholm street] Valhallavägen ... I urge them to play a lot and to be their own judge – not to take for granted what is right and wrong, but to think for themselves. (*OJ* 2004 No 6: 5)

## "A new educational situation"

Pianist Cecilia Persson describes Maggi Olin's attitude as a piano teacher:

She's cool and tough and she taught me that you do not need to keep on making excuses [...] You had to learn to play wrong, to play dirty, to play too much. She helped me across a large barrier of delusions. (*OJ* 2009 No 5: 10)

Saxophonist Joakim Milder, professor in improvisation and ensemble playing at the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm, describes how in one course he concentrates on language, letting musicians mimic ordinary voices:

You communicate, you want to express something. That's what affects me, a voice that is saying something. No matter how complicated or simple the music is. (*OJ* 2007 No 7/8: 7)

In contrast, trombonist Bertil Strandberg says that he wants to avoid completely going into the student's personal expression:

You can't teach very much about improvising, but you can do a lot with regard to instrumental technique, working with the craft [...] the tone, the energy, breathing [...] But I don't want to control the personal expression. (*OJ* 2005 No 12: 6)

Several interviews reflect the jazz educational dynamics between technical skills and knowledge of tradition on one hand and personal expression on the other. Saxophonist Klas Lindqvist speaks of his jazz education on *folkhögskola* level as a problematic experience. He was at that time playing with a traditional jazz orchestra and found it difficult to accept what he experienced as the school's focus on the musicians' creativity without any connection to tradition:

Not much related to tradition. It did not even swing. It influenced the students. So I had two fuzzy years, feeling like in a vacuum, not understanding anything, and going back home now and then to get to blow with Second Line. [...] Within certain types of artistic education in Sweden the focus is on 'finding yourself'. You are thrown into a dark room, the door closes behind you and you have to find a way to get out. [...] At the Academy of Music in Stockholm, where I study now, there's more of the traditional roots for the students to build on. (*OJ* 2005 No 10: 45)

Despite occasional voices that emphasize the importance of jazz musicians' technical craftsmanship and relation to tradition, a focus on personal expression becomes increasingly dominant in *OJ* statements about jazz learning during the first decade of this century.

### Learning for jazz or learning for life

The volume of jazz education programmes exceeds the demands of the labour market. At the end of the investigated period, it is clear that all those who train to become jazz musicians will not pursue this as their main occupation. Out of those who graduated from the *folkhögskola* jazz programmes in spring 2008 at Skurup, Fridhem and Birka, only one person was actually earning his living as a musician two years later (*OJ* 2010 No 3: 31). In interviews, representatives of the jazz programmes express an approach to the purposes of jazz learning where the students' personal development is valued higher than success in the professional life they are trained for. Pianist Maggi Olin teaches at Skurup and she does not find that too many jazz musicians are being trained. "No, it is up to everyone. It is a great advantage for the individual to have gotten the opportunity to play and be creative" (*OJ* 2007 No 5: 14). Mattias Nordqvist, director of studies at Birka, expresses a similar view:

The ambition to educate all for professional careers as musicians is doomed to fail. But we also focus on the individual. The power of music enriches life no matter what you do after attending Birka [...] Jazz improvisation works as a way to find yourself. (Ibid.)

We have previously seen how views on jazz learning have come to focus on the musician's individual expression, creativity and development. During the '00s, this line of argument is developed further, presenting jazz learning as a means of personal development, rather than as a path to the goal of becoming a jazz musician.

### A comparison between the institutionalization of jazz and folk music

Based on the investigated material, the trend towards formalized learning in the field of jazz seems to display both musical and sociological parallels with tendencies that were mentioned in this article's introduction with regard to folk music. Musically,

one dominant perspective appears to be the movement from ear-based learning to learning based on written music. In *OJ*, the viewpoint is expressed that jazz, too, has ended up in "a kind of classical-music-situation" (Lars-Göran Ulander, *OJ* 1989 No 5: 16) where "there are educational materials for every purpose" (Lars Gulliksson, *OJ* 1997 No 3: 21). Jazz pedagogy seems to have to a significant extent come to be based on notation and a sort of music theoretical ("chord-scale") canon (Prouty, 2012: 55) that may be viewed as the result of American influences. In several *OJ* interviews, however, ear-based learning processes are pointed to as being ideal, and a Swedish, ear-based jazz educational alternative is formulated.

Musicians' conceptions about how things ought to be make up a central sociological perspective on folk music and jazz's institutionalization. Åkesson notes that the phenomenon of older folk musical transmission patterns, such as musical family tradition, is now negligible in Sweden; the conditions for folk music have changed, and its character of "performance art" has been strengthened as a result of a number of factors, such as folk musicians' experiences of several different music types, easily accessible archive material, formalized knowledge and skills, as well as musicians getting accustomed to ensemble playing and wanting to make a living as musicians (2007: 302). Similar themes are touched upon and problematized in *OJ* discussions on oral tradition versus institutionalization, for instance in saxophonist Nisse Sandström's utterance: "There should be no fake books. What you know, you should have in your head" (*OJ* 1983 No 11: 7). Åkesson also points to various kinds of development in folk music environments that are characterized by institutionalization: the individual practitioner's skill has come into focus (2007: 50), the performative or 'presentative' aspects of the music have been strengthened, and the transition to being an established genre is notable (2007: 106). Åkesson also holds that the sound character of vocal folk music may change when singing becomes a full-time job for which you have been trained (2007: 236). Comments and reactions to similar trends are also noticeable among voices in *OJ* on formal jazz education; several musicians warn against homogenization and defend the musicians' personal expression.

However, there are also a number of differences between the developmental trends in the fields of folk music and jazz. Firstly, the institutionalization of jazz in Sweden has no nationalistic connotations such as is sometimes the case regarding folk music. In the investigated *OJ* material, no equivalent can be detected in the jazz field to the link between nationalist policies and efforts to raise the status of folk music that may be observed in several countries (such as in Ireland and Finland; McCarthy, 1999: 6; Hill, 2005: 30). Secondly, based on the investigated material, there appears to be an

educational tendency in jazz to emphasize focus on the musician's own creativity and personal development, which does not appear as clearly in the folk music field.

## Summary

Through this inventory of perspectives on jazz musical learning in *OJ*, the three decades between 1980 and 2010 emerge as a transition period with regard to perceptions of formal and non-formal learning. In a previous study based on interviews with jazz musicians (Bjerstedt, 2014) a number of thematic fields were noted where contesting views on jazz musical learning occurred: (a) an older generation of musicians against a younger one, (b) an autodidactic culture against an educational one, (c) an "open" educational culture against an orthodox one, and (d) advocates of authenticity against virtuosity (ibid: 338–345). In the analysis of perspectives on jazz learning expressed in *OJ* during the period 1980–2010, the aspects mentioned (a–d) have been complemented with additional thematic fields of critical discussion. For instance, the ongoing trend towards increased institutionalization has been commented on in the form of warnings against homogenization and codification, and in statements that defend music as emotional expression, the oral tradition and the groove, as well as the freedom and personal expression of jazz musicians.

During the 1980s, the self-taught jazz musician emerges as an ideal in *OJ*. Even formally trained musicians emphasize the importance of self-initiated, ear-based learning processes. Comments on jazz learning expressed in *OJ* in the 1990s also often point out as commendable a curiosity-driven, self-regulated learning process where the musician's individual expression, creativity and development are in focus. According to a prevalent notion, you learn to play jazz mainly by listening and by playing together in contexts where fellow musicians serve as informal 'teachers'. There are diverging views on the emerging formal jazz training. Recurring counterarguments are about jazz not being to the same extent as earlier transmitted by way of oral tradition, and this is said to have negative consequences with regard to, for instance, authenticity, knowledge of repertoire, and swing. Emotional values of the music are highlighted at the expense of intellectual ones. Several musicians warn against homogenization and codification as consequences of formal jazz education. Academic education in jazz music is considered by many to affect the musician's individuality. In the educational debate in *OJ*, the opinion occurs that one must "live the music"; it is said that jazz can only be learned by living, not by going to school, and formal education is said to

shrink the space for musicians' own discoveries. Focus on the musician's creativity and personal development is highlighted as important, and it is considered important to develop a special jazz pedagogy based on jazz music's ear-based, oral tradition.

From the 1990s on, Sweden has offered opportunities for long sequences of formal jazz musical training (municipal music school – upper secondary school – folkhögskola – music academy). Furthermore, increasing educational experiences have enabled musicians to make comparisons between Swedish and American jazz pedagogy. In the light of such experiences, a richer debate can emerge, including viewpoints on the effects of formal jazz learning effects with regard to tradition and individuality. Perceptions of the strict methodology of American jazz education have become important to Swedish jazz educators' aim to seek and develop a way of their own. During the '00s, a significant part of Swedish jazz teachers have themselves experienced formal jazz education in Sweden, and in many cases also in the US. The emergence of a specific Swedish jazz educational profile may be due to this experience base. Stuart Nicholson's pessimistic prediction that "students become teachers who teach jazz the way they have learned it in school" (*OJ* 2001 No 11: 26) does not seem to have been completely fulfilled. For musicians, schools have become a new kind of meeting places that significantly replace venues outside the institutions. Unlike in the past, it is increasingly the case that musicians' outlook on jazz and jazz learning is formed and expressed within the educational system. A central theme of the discussion can be said to be the relationship between different jazz musical ideals, of which several may be perceived as positions on a scale between the poles of freedom and tradition: from an image of jazz as mainly relating to tradition to an image of jazz as mainly communicating the musician's impulses in the present moment. It is about playing "freely" or playing "correctly" – should jazz primarily be an expression of the artist's individuality or of expectations relating to jazz tradition? The overall impression of the investigated material, outlooks on jazz musical learning as expressed in *OJ* during the period 1980–2010, could be said to amount to a partial change of focus in views on Swedish jazz education, making self-expression and communication – rather than technique and analysis – the main issues, and to an increasing emphasis on the importance of jazz education to the musician's personal development. Despite occasional voices that emphasize the importance of the jazz musician's technical craftsmanship and relation to tradition, the focus on personal expression is increasingly dominant in *OJ* statements about jazz learning during the first decade of this century, and several musicians express the view that an important task for jazz education is to teach musicians to think for themselves.



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Senior Lecturer, PhD  
Sven Bjerstedt  
Malmö Theatre Academy  
Lund University  
Box 8100  
SE-200 41 Malmö  
Sweden