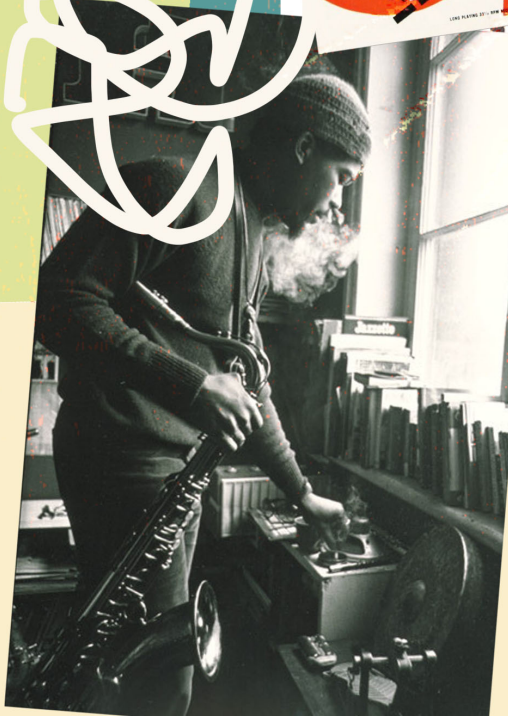


DOWN



Rhythm is not perceived with the intellect, but experienced by the body. This is not an abstract academic observation, but a concrete reality. Rhythm is related to body functions. The movement of swing is related to the heartbeat, and the so much faster vibrating pulsation of free jazz is related to the pulse, which of course has as its driving motor the heartbeat. I am not saying that the pulse in free jazz took over the rhythmic role of the heartbeat. The pulse provides yet another dimension in addition to the heartbeat, a new dimension that is essential to the concept of jazz rhythm.

Operating within this basic framework, the drummers of the new jazz developed just as many individual styles of playing as drummers did in previous eras of jazz.

down  
beat

MARCH 30, 1961  
THE BLUEPRINT MUSIC MAGAZINE  
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VAL WILMER

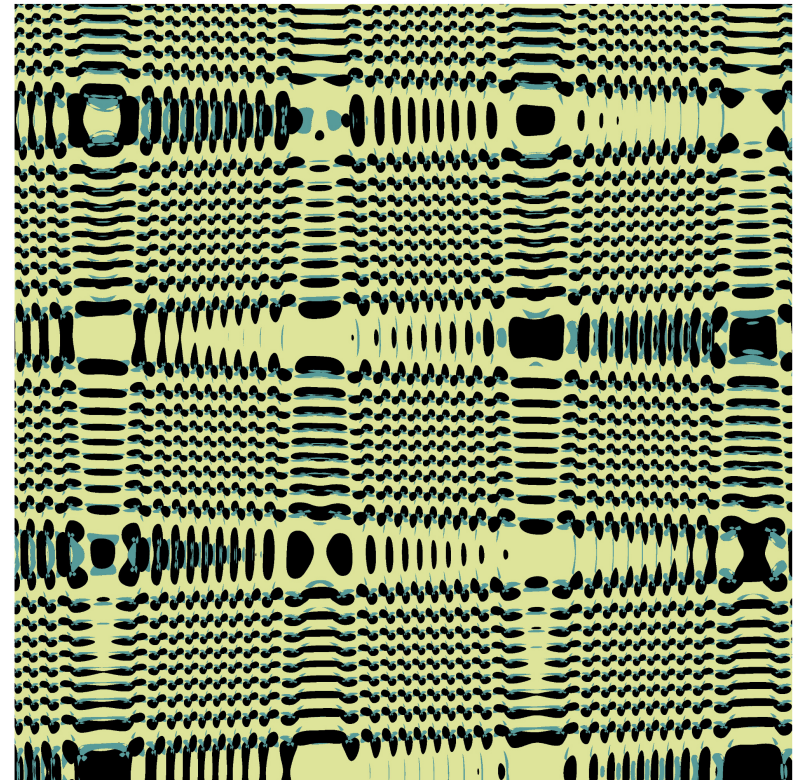
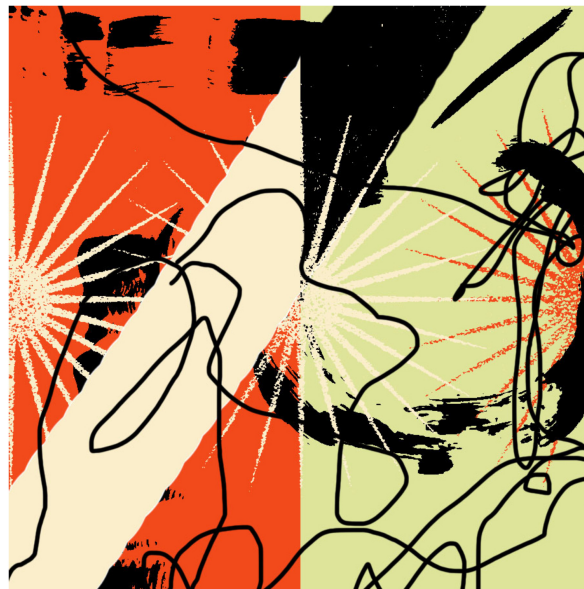
AS SERIOUS AS YOUR LIFE

FROM JAZZ AND THE FREE JAZZ REVOLUTION, 1955-1977





# VISUAL SOUND

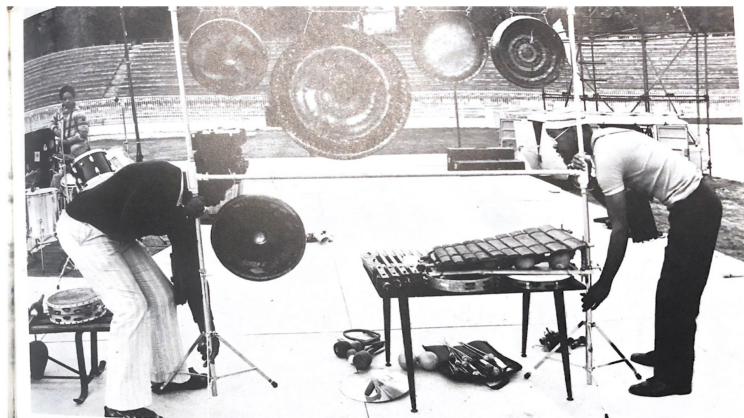




**Jazz is visual music.** One can understand jazz better by seeing it performed. I know that this is true of all music, but it is truer of jazz. The French critic André Hodeir has explained that this is so because jazz, more than European music, is played with the body, the *entire* body. With a musician who is so totally involved in what he is doing, one should not only hear his performance; one should also see it, in order to better understand what he is trying to express.

Jazz people—musicians, fans, critics—have always known about

was the limit. Some musicians are missing; these are usually peo-





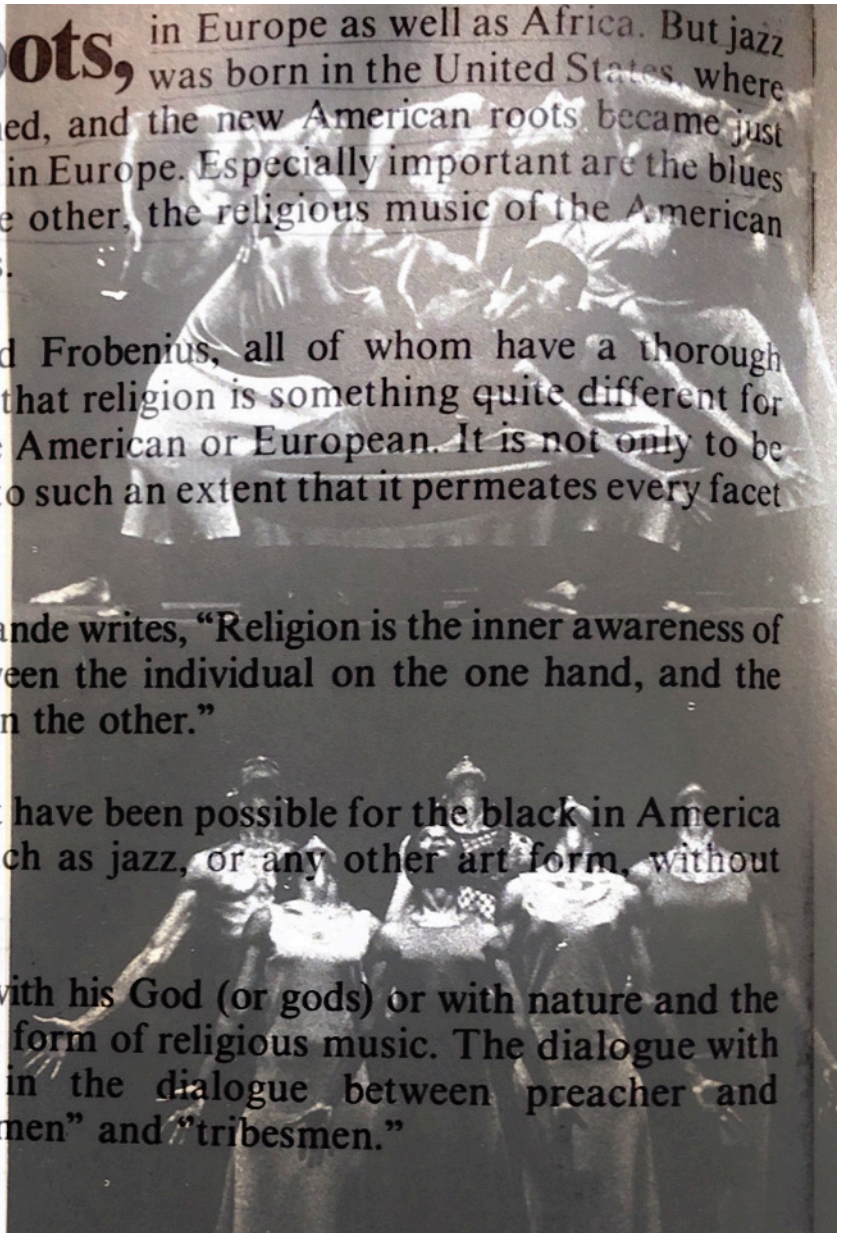
**Jazz has many roots,** in Europe as well as Africa. But jazz was born in the United States, where the old roots had become intertwined, and the new American roots became just as important as those in Africa and in Europe. Especially important are the blues songs on the one hand and, on the other, the religious music of the American blacks: spirituals and gospel songs.

Janheinz Jahn, Fela Sowande, and Frobenius, all of whom have a thorough knowledge of Africa, have written that religion is something quite different for the African than it is for the white American or European. It is not only to be believed, it is to be lived, and lived to such an extent that it permeates every facet of life. Life *is* religion.

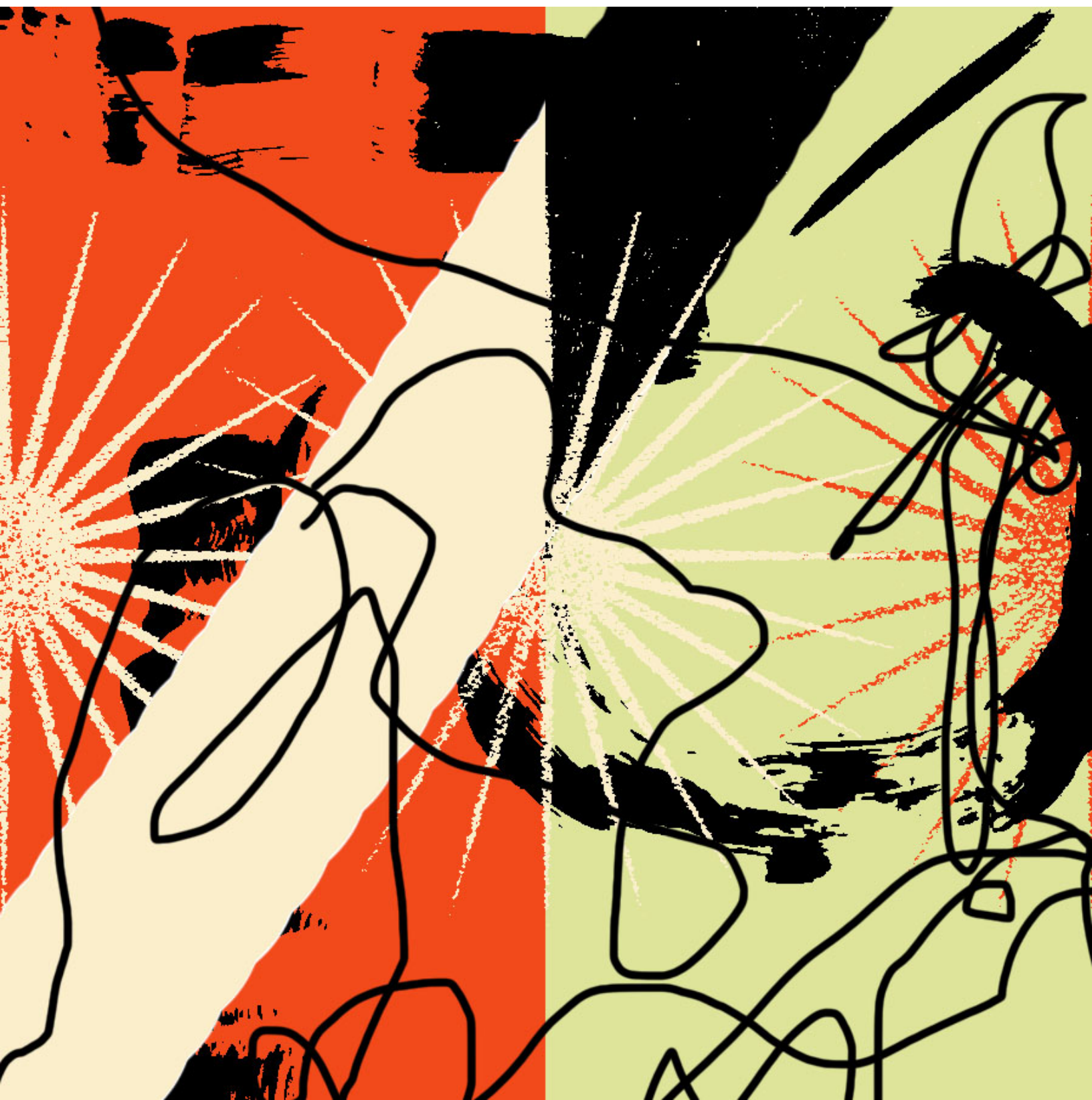
The Nigerian musicologist Fela Sowande writes, "Religion is the inner awareness of a factual dynamic relationship between the individual on the one hand, and the Cosmos and the World of Nature on the other."

It must be stressed that it would not have been possible for the black in America to create a new form of music such as jazz, or any other art form, without religious spirit.

Religious music is man conversing with his God (or gods) or with nature and the cosmos. The dialogue is the earliest form of religious music. The dialogue with God takes shape, materializes, in the dialogue between preacher and congregation—between "medicine men" and "tribesmen."









"John Coltrane felt that music is a universe. And this feeling has influenced me too. It's like you see the stars in the sky and know that behind the ones you can see there are many more you can't see. . . . Whatever there was to say, Coltrane said it."

McCoy Tyner

"John. . . . straddles the old and the new like a colossus. Since Bird (and I would even include Ornette Coleman), Coltrane is the most important saxophonist in jazz. . . . When you listen to John. . . . he's talking about Negro life from early New Orleans to right now. You see, he has a lot to express. . . . There is no question that John Coltrane is a giant in this music."

Archie Shepp



No other musician in modern jazz—and except for Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington, no other musician in the history of jazz—has had an influence that extended as far beyond the boundaries of jazz as did that of John Coltrane (opposite page and title photograph of this chapter). Coltrane was born in North Carolina in 1926 and died in New York in 1967. "Trane" helped change the outlook of the modern world and oriented our thinking and feeling toward the East. Thousands of young people in the Western world today are interested in Asian spiritualism and religion. Countless individuals are meditating. Concerts by great Indian musicians have become a permanent part of concert life in the cities of the United States and Europe. In many people the sense of a "world music"—and indeed a "world spirituality"—is growing. All of this would have been less likely without John Coltrane. In this respect we can compare the influence of Coltrane with that of Hermann Hesse.

Coltrane's influence also extends far into the musical realms of pop and rock. If rock and pop bands all over the world now play "modal" music, it is because of John Coltrane. "Modality" means improvisation on scales, without the harmonic framework of constantly changing chords which derived essentially from popular music and which until Coltrane had formed the basis for the improvisations of jazz musicians. Miles Davis and John Coltrane created this style of improvisation, or more precisely they made the modern world aware of it, for it had had a long and widespread existence—not least importantly in archaic blues and in African music. But for Miles modality was something technical, a tool of the trade. For Coltrane it was something spiritual. Through Coltrane, modality was radiated out in all directions as the musical expression of a new way of thinking. It was therefore Coltrane who achieved acceptance for it. He had comprehended that almost all the music in the world is modal except European music. He was influenced by Indian, Arabic, and African music.



