

**“NO OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRY HAS PRODUCED SUCH A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF AMERICAN JAZZ MUSICIANS AS ITALY”**

Joachim Ernst-Berendt, Journalist and Author of *The Jazz Book*

**“JAZZ MAY BE A TYPICALLY AMERICAN PHENOMENON BUT ITS ROOTS GO WELL BACK INTO THE HISTORY OF MUSIC AND, PARTICULARLY, OF ITALIAN MUSIC. IMPROVISATION IS A KEY IN ITALIAN PERFORMING TRADITIONS.”**

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#### TIMELINE AND FACTS:

- ) In 1805, President Thomas Jefferson professionalizes the U.S. Marine Band by recruiting musicians from Sicily, under the baton of Gaetano Carusi
- ) In the 1850s, Italians begin emigrating to the Port of New Orleans. By the mid-1890s, they constitute the largest ethnic group in the Crescent City.
- ) In 1891, eleven Italians are shot and lynched in Congo Square by angry New Orleans citizens. Many Italians escape from prejudice through music.
- ) In 1917, Nick LaRocca and the Original Dixieland Jazz Band cut the first “jass” record. In his autobiography, Louis Armstrong praises Nick LaRocca.
- ) Two other sons of New Orleans “make some noise” during the next two decades: Leon Roppolo brings the jazz clarinet to the forefront (1920s) and singer/musician Louie Prima triumphs in New York City (1930s).
- ) Childhood friends from Philadelphia, violinist Joe Venuti and guitarist Eddie Lang, set the standard for the jazz duo (1920s and 1930s).
- ) Bandleader Joe Marsala first to hire African American musicians (1930s)
- ) Pianist Dodo Marmarosa jams with the leaders of bebop music (1940s)

- ) Pianist Lennie Tristano astonishes listeners with avant-garde (1950s)
- ) Dottie Giamio Dodgion is one of the first female jazz drummers (1950s).
- ) Louis Bellson becomes the first “white” drummer for Duke Ellington’s Band (1950s). Bellson later marries African American singer Pearl Bailey.
- ) Singers Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett use their celebrity status to advance the civil rights movement in America (1960s).
- ) The Vince Guaraldi Trio score the first “Charlie Brown” special (1960s)
- ) Clem DeRosa co-founds National Association of Jazz Educators (1960s)
- ) Pianist Chick Corea and guitarist Al Di Meola add to fusion (1960s).
- ) Trumpeter Chuck Mangione’s “Feels So Good” wins Grammy (1970s)
- ) Saxophonist Joe Lovano emerges as a major talent (1980s and 1990s)
- ) Joe Viola and John LaPorta retire as educators at the Berklee College of Music in Boston (1990s). Both influenced an entire generation of students.
- ) Italian-born singer Roberta Gambarini moves to America and is compared to Ella Fitzgerald (1990s-2000s), thus extending the Italian influence in jazz.