

## **JAZZ AND FREEMASONRY, TWO YEARS AFTER**

*(MUSICAL PRELUDE)*

### **1-PROLOGUE, A LIST OF NAMES**

Worshipful Master and Dear Brethren,

You may all remember that I had made an effort to examine some possible links between our craft and Jazz; it was almost two years ago and you may remember how I had started addressing you.

Today I have received a message from a brother who lives abroad. He too has aimed the same target, and is looking for the same link between our craft and Jazz.

This presentation that you are about to hear is our joint effort, a combination of what I had found out then and how he has taken my thoughts to further points starting from where I have left.

First there was a name list that I had wanted to share with you, and I will start my speech from the same point as before:

*Louis Armstrong-Jazz Musician*

*Count Basie-Composer, Orchestra leader*

*Irving Berlin-Entertainer*

*James Herbert "Eubie" Blake-Composer and Pianist*

*George H. Cohan, American singer, songwriter & playwright.*

*Nat "King" Cole-Great ballad singer and pianist*

*Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington-Composer, Arranger, Pianist and Orchestra leader*

*Lionel Hampton-Composer and Orchestra leader*

*William C. Handy-Composer "Father of the Blues"*

*Al Jolson-the Actor of the first talking picture (sound movie) (Jazz Singer)*

*Glenn Miller-Orchestra leader*

*Adolphe Joseph Sax-Inventor of the musical instrument saxophone*

*Paul Whiteman-Orchestra leader "King of Jazz".*

Now, please let me ask you a question:

What is the common denominator among these people?

**Louis Armstrong** was an American Jazz pianist and was equally at home as a trumpet player (from which came his nickname of "Satchmo" – Satchel Mouth) and as a singer, he was acknowledged as the world's leading jazz musician of his day.

Count Basie was an American jazz pianist and bandleader, who became one of the longest surviving pioneers of the big-band era.

**Irving Berlin** was also an American composer and songwriter whose best-selling songs ranged from "Alexander's Rag-time Band" in 1911 to "White Christmas" in 1942. He is equally well known for his theatre and film music, which included Top Hat, Follow the Fleet, and Annie Get your Gun. The entire royalties on several of his songs he gave to charity for deprived youths. Irving Berlin started as a penniless immigrant when he came to America. His musical talent earned him fame and fortune.

**Hubert "Eubie" Blake** was a Jazz pianist, dancer, and composer. Both of his parents had been slaves. He composed popular and serious music and remained active as a performer throughout his long life.

**Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington** is an American jazz musician. He was also a composer, arranger and pianist. He was a significant figure in the American 20<sup>th</sup> century music. His impressions of initiation were recorded in his song "I'm beginning to see the light", which was also sung by Louis Armstrong. Ellington's orchestra has been considered as the most prominent jazz group of its era. Duke has always written music to bring out the best abilities and creativities of his team members. Yet throughout the years many musicians have joined or left his group and Duke has rewritten his music according to the talents of his new members. This is how he has become a continuous source of inspiration and a milestone for countless musicians throughout his life.

**Nat King Cole** is still popular for the musical heritage he has left for us many years after his death.

**Al Jolson** has been the leading actor of “Jazz Singer” the first sound movie of cinema history.  
**Glenn Miller** has paved the way of Big Bands in the music world to unprecedented height.  
 Saxophone, the most jazz associated instrument of jazz music have been invented by **Antoine Sax**.

Now, I will like to repeat my question once again.  
What is the common denominator among all these names?

Your natural instinct will prompt you to say “**jazz**”.  
 Yes, “jazz” is the right answer, but there is still a missing part to it.

**All of the names above are your brothers**, who have passed away to eternal east long ago leaving us with their unforgettable deeds, and:

**All of them are Freemasons.**

**Louis Armstrong** was a member of Lodge Montgomery No. 18, Prince Hall Affiliation, New York. He also recorded "You Made Me Love You", also recorded by another Mason, Al Jolson.

**William “Count” Basie** was a member of both a Craft Lodge and Shriner Temple under the Prince Hall Affiliation, New York.

**Irving Berlin** was a member of Munn Lodge No.190, New York City, the Scottish Rite Valley of New York City, and Mecca Shrine Temple. Bro. He wrote the song "God Bless America" for his 1918 musical "Yip, Yip, Yaphank." The song today is regarded by many as America’s second national anthem and is regularly sung at Masonic Lodge functions.

George Cohan was a Life member of Pacific Lodge No. 233, New York City, being raised there November 16, 1905. He received his 32° AASR (NJ) on February 3, 1906. He was also a life Member of Mecca Shrine Temple, New York City.

Nat “King” Cole was initiated in Thomas Waller Lodge No. 49, Los Angeles, Prince Hall Affiliation.

**Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington** was initiated in Social Lodge No. 1 Washington D.C., Prince Hall Affiliation. His impressions of initiation were recorded in his song “I’m beginning to see the light”, which was also sung by Louis Armstrong.

**Al Jolson** was a member of St. Cecile Lodge No. 568, New York City.

**Antoine Joseph Sax** was initiated in Lodge Les Vrais Amis de l’Union in 1842.

**Paul Whitman** was a member of St. Cecile Lodge #569 in New York.

In fact the list is not limited to above names and there are many other jazz musicians in the craft though they are less known in the world.

Then we may ask again, is there a link between jazz music and Freemasonry?

*MUSICAL INTERVAL*

## 2-JAZZ CHORD STRUCTURE-IMPORTANCE ON THE 7TH

Let us start examining this at a technical level and look at the simplest jazz chord; this may give us a first impulse on tracking other similarities between our craft and jazz.

In drawing parallels between Jazz and Freemasonry one cannot ignore the fact that the simplest jazz chord is made up of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> notes in the diatonic scale. In fact, it is essentially the use of the 7<sup>th</sup> note, which differentiates a jazz (or blues) chord from a classical chord. You simply flatten the 7<sup>th</sup> note. As the chord structure gets more complicated you flatten the 3<sup>rd</sup> note next and then the 5<sup>th</sup>.

I will leave you to draw the symbolic parallels according to your own Masonic experience.

In fact there is a good reason why there are seven notes in the diatonic musical scale. As you may know and appreciate Pythagoras was the most important figure in the development of mathematics. He and his followers believed that the universe was designed around hidden numeric relations and that its entire structure was governed by mathematical patterns. They discovered mathematical relations between sounds and developed the concept of “music of the spheres” – the ratios between notes in the diatonic musical scale that we know today actually mirrors the distances from Earth to the seven planetary oracles: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn

Even before Plato, many of the basics of education had already been established among the ancient Greeks. It was the practice for children, before the age of seven, to be given music to develop their soul and gymnastics to develop their body. Much more of Plato's programme - particularly that designed for ages ten to seventeen - had been accepted from at least the time of Pythagoras (6th century BC). But we have only Plato's explanations as to why these subjects were so important.

This equality of proportion was how Plato considered that the unity of the One is carried into the multiplicity of Creation. In other words, the multiplicity of Creation is harmonized by an equality of proportion.

These proportions are also those of the musical scale and hence the importance of music: the soul recognizes the beauty of music because the soul and music resonate to the same proportion. And astronomy was directly linked to music and mathematics, thus also to the One. However, according to Plato music in the educational curriculum must only be such as to inspire courage or temperance.

Astronomy was all-important because Plato associated the heavenly bodies with the 'World Soul' - he did not mean that their physical characteristics were substance of soul but that this was the inner intelligence, which moved them.

#### Importance of the Number 7

It is an aside but seven is a magical number:

Seven is the combination of 3 (heaven) and 4 (Earth). It is a spiritual code for “as above, so below”.

Buddhists speak of “seventh heaven”. In fact this phrase has been adopted by all of us without knowing where it comes from.

We talk of “seven steps to heaven”. This comes from the Hindu belief system where there are believed to be seven “chakras” (energy centers), the awakening of which are essential on the road to spiritual enlightenment

#### Seven wonders of the World

- Colossus of Rhodes
- Lighthouse at Alexandria
- Gardens of Semiramis at Babylon
- Statue of Zeus at Olympia
- Temple of Artemis at Ephesus
- Mausoleum at Helicarnasus
- Pyramids of Egypt

#### Seven colours in the rainbow

- Red
- Orange
- Yellow
- Green
- Blue
- Indigo

Violet

Seven days in the week

We talk of “seven virtues” and “seven deadly sins”

Seven liberal arts & sciences

Grammar  
Rhetoric  
Logic  
Arithmetic  
Geometry  
Astronomy  
Music

Sevenfoldedness is key to unraveling the complex coding in St. John's Revelation. The work continues in rhythms of seven.

The seven-stepped Pyramid of Zoser at Saqqara is the oldest masonry building in the World.

Therefore, you may easily see that what has started as a pure technical approach to similarity between Jazz and Freemasonry have easily led us to more esoteric directions. However this is only a beginning...

*MUSICAL INTERVAL*

### 3- FREEMASONRY, OUR CRAFT

First I will like to start by examining our own craft.

What is Freemasonry?

As it has always been the case before, I have consulted the beautiful basic reference book written by one of our past grand masters in Turkey, Doctor Enver Necdet Egeran. Here is his definition of our craft:

*“Freemasonry is a western culture promoting and progressive institution. Creating love and cooperation links between decent people of higher moral values.*

*Freemasonry helps the social and cultural maturity of humanity.*

*According to this institution, work and labor are the principle duties of human race. Respect and tolerance to individuality and personal opinion are two founding stones of this school of thought. The members target developing their selves first, and then they develop their own society by being developed themselves.*

*Self-control is a prerequisite; accumulation of knowledge and the creation of the environment, which will lead to this self-control, are indispensable elements of self-development*

*Freemasonry is not limited to written texts, which may lead to half descriptions, misunderstandings and misinterpretations.*

*Accumulation of knowledge is expressed under a veil of allegories, and illustrated by symbols and signs so that it may transcend the nations and generations intact.*

*A Freemason is the person who always thinks and creates new thoughts while continuously questioning the old ones. Thinking towards new ideas is the principle duty of a freemason and the basic foundation of a modern society.*

*According to Freemasonry creating new thoughts is the basic driving force of a developing society.*

*This is why the Freemasons continuously develop new thoughts about all the allegories and signs that they were presented with.*

*Freemasonry is a science, and an institution of initiation. Brothers leave back their old lives and direct themselves towards a noble new way of living. Freemasonry means continuous progress and development. All the people with merit and faith are brought together with a universal bond of brotherhood. All the brothers learn to be tolerant to each other's mistakes, imperfections and weak points. There is no racial or linguistic differentiation between the brothers in Freemasonry. Work and labor are as important as thoughts in Freemasonry. Action is the complementary arm of creating thoughts”.*

During making my first presentation at the temple, I met a young brother, Remzi Sanver, whose comments have given me further inspirations.

I will like to share them with you as well:

*I think that the above words exemplify some properties of Freemasonry, yet a description has to be more than that. Identifying Freemasonry as “an institution which brings together people of high moral values” is a right description but there are other institutions doing that. 'People of high moral values' is a property of the freemasonry but not its description. I believe that a description acceptable by mathematicians have to be put forward. In this context we may describe freemasonry as an intersection of ‘traditions’ of ‘initiation’ and ‘building’. Freemasonry is the only institution, which have these properties.*

First group of quotations were extracted from the book of past grandmaster Egeran. Yet I had a point to extract these specific quotations. I am seeking the links between jazz and Freemasonry and all these thoughts are extracted according to this target.

Yet looking at the matter through a wider perspective, one may also notice that all of the above statements are also parts of the greater western school of thought and civilization.

#### 4- WESTERN CIVILISATION

Western civilization has reached this level through many stages of development since the 17th century. The accumulated knowledge of humanity is increasing continuously.

Mankind has first learned speaking, and speaking is followed by the ability of writing.

You may also see writing as a ‘symbolic expression’ of spoken languages.

Writing has made it possible to accumulate and develop thoughts and organization of them of them around certain structures.

No other institution than Freemasonry have managed to consolidate the personal abilities of individuals into a single power which is continuously available for the benefit of humankind without any doctrinal restrictions.

Past grandmaster Egeran had also stated the following view:

*Though all members are a part of a whole, each individual is a unique and an unlike part of the total. Human beings are treated as individuals with their own identities and are not forced into pre conceived social structures. Development of personality is of prime importance. Individuals are encouraged to develop their creative expressions.*

*In order to achieve these targets the developments of freedom, wisdom and finally tolerance is inevitable.*

“Yet, please let me ask you: Is this statement absolutely correct?”

Brethren, let us pause at this point, as there is a question that I will like to ask you:

What is jazz?

#### *MUSICAL INTERVAL*

## 5- MUSIC AND THE SOUL

Music is a subtle, suggestive medium of communication, inevitably open to many interpretations depending upon the interpreters, their thought patterns and cultural heritage. Profoundly devotional natures, whatever their backgrounds, would be bound to "tune in" upon the music of the spheres, and experience deep within themselves the moving contact of the outer self with the inner soul or spirit. Music itself does not know the barriers built into the many languages and dialects we have. It leaps over all cultural patterns, transmitting its own inherent meaning, regardless of the mental prisms that color the impacts. Though no two people may feel the identical reactions, the effects take place, whether it is a rhythmic response in the lesser part of ourselves, or the depths of the soul or spirit that are affected in a way that is beyond words to describe. Perhaps the kind of analysis that is the foundation of some of the published musical criticism is inadequate because it tries to rationalize an experience that is outside the range of the reason.

### JAZZ AND MUSIC

Jazz is widely accepted as a form of music. It has originated from the city of New Orleans at Mississippi delta region of United States about one hundred years ago. It has spread out along to the northern parts of United States through this river.

### JAZZ AND NEW ORLEANS, BIRTHPLACE OF JAZZ

Why is New Orleans the birthplace of Jazz?

New Orleans of those days was the city of immigrants from France. On the other hand slaves from West Africa were also a part of the city inhabitants besides the Creoles. The Creoles were of black origin and they were usually economically better. They also had ties with Europe, and many of their children were educated in the schools and music conservatories of Europe. Further, these people had some freedom to inter-mingle with White Society, something that the Black Society never had.

*On the other hand Slaves had also imported their polyrhythmic and pentatonic interval music from Africa to New Orleans. In those days there were other slaves at other cities of America but at no other city than New Orleans where French origin immigrants have lived they were treated with the same **tolerance** to their culture. Slaves were allowed to sing their original songs while they were working and this have helped them to preserve their musical culture.*

This meeting of cultures in New Orleans has a complex and interesting history of its own and is worth investigation. In any case, at a certain point after the American Civil War, in a racist backlash against the "Reconstruction" the Creole gradually lost their quasi-"white" status and began to meld, economically and socially, into the black society.

This is often said to be the when and where the European musical forms of the day like gavotte, polka, march and others began to mix with African-descended rhythms and harmonies.

Time have passed, Americans have lived their civil war that has ended the institution of slavery. Armies were dissolved and soldiers were released of military duty.

Army bands were also liquidated. The end of the Spanish-American War of the 1890's brought a cheaply available flood of brass band instruments to the streets of New Orleans. The Negroes had brought their music to America but they have also met a new musical style in what would become their new homeland. This new music was traditional European music. They were especially fascinated by the 2/4 and 3/8 marching rhythms of the military bands. The other influence came from the new religion that they have encountered in the new continent. They became Christians. The pain of their agony during days of slavery was soothed in the churches, and the music that they have heard comforted their souls. These were largely religious hymns. They had simple yet strong and colorful melodies and structures. Their French origin masters have taught black people the dance and melodic forms of the traditional European music.

As time went by, a new music emerged out of this blend of cultural heritage. The rhythm of West Africa merged with the musical forms and melody of the old continent.

The immigrants of the new continent have created a new music there. This new music was rooted in the old African and European styles, yet it offered a new joy and liveliness that no music had offered before.

The new music was called jazz.

Today there are different speculations about the origin of this name but the word “jazz” was accepted to define this new music.

The immigrants from Europe and Africa had created a new nation that was rooted in their old continents yet it was distinctly different. The same was true for their music; jazz was new and distinctly different.

*The Freemasons have founded The United States as the embodiment of the ideal Masonic Republic, and the new state has founded her own music, jazz...*

Then, do you think that we assume this similarity of ‘new land’ is only a coincidence?

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In reality the American masons have created a new approach to the concepts of the state and the religion. Until that day the religions had promised its followers a “Heaven” that had existed in the other world after their death.

The founders of America searched for the “Heaven” on this life and in the world that they live in. They have started making their homeland, their country and their state as the “Heaven” itself.

In a short while the United States has become the number one prosperous and developed republic on the world. The concepts of equality, fraternity and liberty become the founding stones of the new country and materialized into reality out of conceptuality.

They became the realities of everyday life for ordinary citizens of the new world long before they were adopted in the old continent after the French Revolution.

*As for jazz music, we have more to say:*

Jazz also developed tremendously after coming into the world of music.

The different cultures, which have fed the roots of jazz, have increased everyday. Different stylistic eras of jazz music have emerged. Ragtime, Boogie-, New Orleans, and Dixieland eras have come and gone. This was followed by Swing, classical and be bop times. Today we are witnessing the emergence of new influences and new styles in jazz music. It seems that there will always be new searches and approaches in jazz for it is a continuously evolving art form.

My point is not conveying you the history of jazz. Yet there is something that I will like to underline strongly. Jazz have never stopped in continuing its development and being open to different roots. It has been nurtured by many different cultures by being open to them as well as nurturing back those cultures. Thus jazz became the true universal music for the mankind.

Today we have reached a point where it is virtually impossible to define the concept of jazz music. There is no common denominator left to define what jazz is technically including the concept of improvisation.

There is one definition that may be considered as unanimously accepted:

*Jazz is expression of what we live through as sound.*

The great jazz master and brother Duke Ellington have expressed these phenomena as following:

*“In future there will not be jazz, there will only be good music and bad music.”*

This original music of America is turning out to be the universal sound and language of humanity as it grows and in the meantime spawns back the very roots that it is originating from.

In short we may conclude that the music of African immigrants of the new continent have become the most interesting music of the 20. Century. Jazz in 100 years has developed much more than the classical European music could have achieved in 700 years.

In my humble opinion this phenomena resembles the spread out of brotherly love of Freemasonry to all directions without any boundaries.

*MUSICAL INTERVAL*

## 6- JAZZ AND IMPROVISATION

Although it is not considered as the common denominator for all varieties of this music, improvisation concept still occupies a very important place for the jazz musicians and their audience.

Improvisation as a word may assume different meanings, but for our purposes we will define it as “plying music the way you wish and feel”. Yet this freedom and feeling also has certain limitations although there are no strict rules about it. When we say that a jazz musician is plying a solo, what we really mean is that he or she is plying a predetermined measure of music the way she feels. This may also mean composing as well. Usually the musician will be plying certain notes, melodies and chords but she will be quite liberal in choosing the length and pitches of the notes that he is plying.

In that sense the musician recomposes the preconceived music and creates a different interpretation according to his own feelings.

This is also one of the basic differences between classical and jazz music. In order to improvise, a musician has to have a great musical knowledge and master skill to handle the musical instrument being played.

The concept of improvisation is not totally new to European music. Variations over a certain melody have been a widely explored musical expression in the old continent. This tradition has also found its way to the New World along with the immigrants from Europe. However it has reached a totally new dimension there.

We may elaborate a little how it developed in the world of jazz music.

In this music the main melody is called the “*phrase*”. All the phrases related to the main melody are called “*thematic phrases*”. When a jazz musician adopts this melody to his own personality it is called “*paraphrasing*.” Plying style where melody is barely recognizable is called “*chorus phrase*”.

Over the years the concept of phrasing has developed. There are phrases written over the harmonic base of a melody, and a totally new melodic line comes into focus in this kind of music. Here it takes a real golden ear to recognize the basic melody.

*In my opinion this concept of phrasing resembles the allegoric expression practiced in Freemasonry. Over the years the jazz music just like freemasonry has started conveying her message in symbolic ways.*

Before starting plying a jazz group first determine the tonality, harmonic structure and rhythm of the music that they are going to perform.

Then they decide on the sequence and the playing measures for each performer.

Detailed arrangements are made for the different players and their individual instruments. Every individual tries to do their best during the performance and brings out his best on the table. Each performer has to ply multiple roles. Sometimes he or she becomes the leader; there are also times when each participant has to be the follower. Being both leader and follower is one of the typical features of jazz music’s nature.

At this moment we may ask once again what jazz is and elaborate its features from a Masonic point of view. Let’s go back to what Master Egeran had said about freemasonry:

*“Freemasonry is a western culture promoting and progressive institution. Creating love and cooperation links between decent people of higher moral values.*

*Freemasonry helps the social and cultural maturity of humanity.*

*According to this institution, work and labor are the principle duties of human race.*

*Respect and tolerance to individuality and personal opinion are two cornerstones of this school of thought. The members target developing themselves first and then the whole society that they live in by being developed themselves.*

Brother Sanver points to a different aspect of this concept:

*Freemasonry helps the human the way to answer the basic questions of life, yet it never claims that the only way to truth is Freemasonry. No dogmas are accepted and no doctrines are prescribed in this search, symbolism is utilized in conveying the basic messages and every individual seeks the truth personally and finds the answers personally.*

*In freemasonry the truth is an ideal point of reference that every individual creates on his way to being mature and development, rather than being an absolute dogma, which dictates our behavior on the world that we live in. For masons truth is a target that we keep on approaching gradually but never attain fully. Therefore no mason may claim that he has reached the truth or possess it.*

All the concepts mentioned above are equally valid for jazz. Respect to individuality, progress through labor, and tolerance is also the hallmarks for jazz music. Let us go revert to the above definition once again:

*There is no racial or linguistic differentiation between the brothers in Freemasonry.*

*Work and labor are as important as thoughts in Freemasonry. Action is the complementary arm of creating thoughts."*

The same is also true for jazz; it expresses the basic feeling about living, and shed some light on the questions of living and existence. The messages are conveyed through the notes, which are open to interpretations You may also consider the notes as the symbols that are not absolute, but reference points, which may take different meanings according to individual's life.

Remember that in Freemasonry there is no discrimination regarding the race, religion and language. Work is as important as thoughts and action complements the thoughts.

The same concepts are equally valid for jazz music.

Those musicians who ply jazz do it together while hearing, supporting and completing each other. The real goal is always exceeding yourself and becoming better while being in harmony with other fellow musicians, preserving your individuality while being a part of the whole.

Allegoric expression of thoughts is also valid for jazz. Instead of strictly plying according to musical notes the music is performed according to the specific time and conditions at the time of plying. It is never played the same way twice. It is reshaped continuously according to what each individual performer lives through at the moment of the actual performance.

## 7- MORE ABOUT THE SIMILARITIES, JAZZ AND FREEMASONRY

This time let us revert to what we have said about jazz music and define it through a different perspective.

Jazz music is a new art form in music with a unique rhythmic structure and sound color. It demands the utmost technical virtuosity and creativity from its performers and followers.

It is clear that in order achieving this level of virtuosity and creativity is only possible by being a sincere and a free-minded person. That person also has to be trained to perfection, also seek that kind of perfection as an individual and be able to decide on the spot according to the prevailing conditions.

While making a solo, the performer is alone on the stage but his fellow musicians continuously support him, and compensate for his flaws during the playing and help in case he is in need.

Jazz musicians do not work at official lodges like the freemasons. Yet the feeling of brotherhood, solidarity, and freedom, being uncomfortable in preconceived patterns are also valid concepts for jazz.

Jazz musicians also possess the same duality as freemasons. They have ambitions deep inside their souls while they have to be humble by nature for progress.

They balance these seemingly contradictory virtues while trying to develop themselves and continue being creative.

As you may easily notice this time we have started with jazz concepts to reach the Masonic ones.

Another interesting similarity between these two orders is the concept and feeling of initiation. Brother Sanver have shared his thoughts with me:

I believe that in this approach to Freemasonry and Jazz the initiation concept must be on the forefront compared to the other concepts.

In my opinion the concept of initiation is the most delicate approach to the target of seeking the truth conceived by human beings. The target is sought by the symbols which makes initiation process a dogmatic and based on questioning. This approach refuses to accept the idea of a prototype human being. Except for the ethic values no generally accepted true values exist and the concept of 'truth according to the individual' is encouraged. Daniel Beresniak had expressed this approach as following:

Instead of the unity of the conformity due to abiding, the unity of diversity due to questioning is suggested.

The concept of initiation is not expressed in jazz music with official degrees as in Freemasonry. Yet the jazz world also has unwritten, unofficial degrees for the musicians.

One may easily notice that individual biographies of jazz musicians are stories of individuals going through unwritten levels of musicianship just like freemasons. They too refuse a prototype approach to music. They utilize a non-dogmatic approach to music based on questioning. A jazz musician reaches his personal truth over the years and reflects this truth in the music that they play for other individuals.

## TEACHING AND EDUCATING, THE DIFFERENCE

Brother Sanver also underlines the difference between teaching and education.

The schools of initiation educate the individual, they do not teach.

Teaching is a one-way process, one who has the knowledge transfers that knowledge to those who do not have it. Such a one-side process may lead to dogmas, and accepting without doubting and questioning.

On the other hand education is a two-way process. One side educates and the other side is educated. The final target of education is not teaching knowledge. Education targets at stimulating the minds of individuals and teaches them how to think, and finally initiate a process of questioning. Learning or teaching is a natural consequence of this process.

From this point of view freemasonry might be considered as a perfect education. This perfection originates from the esoteric and initiative character of Freemasonry. In schools of initiation individuals who are not comfortable with the existing teachings, and those who have further questions about life come together. They seek the answers together according to certain methods yet they always keep their individualities and diversities. Initiation is the inauguration ceremony of this process.

The same concepts are also valid for jazz. In music schools they teach students the technical aspects needed for a musical journey that a musician may make in the future. Yet the most important ingredient of music, that is creativity may not be taught in the schools. Creativity is something that each person has to discover personally within his heart during education. A jazz musician plays together with others; he takes from them as well as giving. Yet he always has to keep his individuality among the fellow musicians and develop himself. Just like it is in Freemasonry, he starts as an apprentice and one day he feels that he has become a master.

*Both in Jazz and Freemasonry wisdom not knowledge is exchanged.*

*Both in Freemasonry and Jazz, one loves, and love lessons cannot be given.*

*Both in Freemasonry knowledge can be transferred not wisdom.*

*Both in Jazz and Freemasonry wisdom cannot be explained, but only lived.*

## MUSICAL INTERVAL

### LODGE RITUALS AND JAZZ RITUALS

Yet it is possible that one of you may make such a remark:

There are strict codes and lodge rituals, which are non-existent in jazz.

This view may depend on the perspective one may utilize to evaluate the statement. There may be two different approaches. The rituals of a Masonic temple may seem strict for an outsider such as the procedures of meetings, opening of the lodges, and the degrees of the meetings.

On the other hand the performance of a lodge between the official procedures is actually performed by improvisation like in jazz music. Kindly remember how we realize speeches, conferences, and other activities at the lodge.

Even in the so-called free natured jazz music there are certain plying traditions and styles. Improvisation is also performed according to certain rules and regulations. There are preconceived intervals, where you may improvise music but again this is still subject to certain technical rules.

There is another side to this discussion. The life outside the lodge is also an important part of a freemasonic existence.

In my opinion freemasonry is initiation of a person to being a perfect and mature individual according to certain moral values and patterns.

The same person also takes personal initiative and responsibility in this process.

Yet this is only one side of the mirror.

What about our lives outside of the temple, we must also elaborate on that.

There we are only guided by what we have learned from the accumulated knowledge of Freemasonry. The life is a long and difficult road. It is not possible to teach a solution to each specific situation and problem encountered on this voyage. Every mason has to improvise on life's surprises according to the principles that he has learned during the time he has spent at the temple.

*Freemasonry is a continuous improvisation of a moral theme on the long and winding road called life.*

Masonic themes just like jazz chords and melodies lead the way for a freemason but he has to walk the line according to his own personal interpretation.

There are times he may feel alone like the jazz musician improvising the melody by rewriting it. Yet again he, like the jazz player is not alone, for he enjoys the comfort of knowing that he may always seek the assistance of his brothers.

### *MUSICAL INTERVAL*

## 8- EPILOGUE

You may say that what we have said about jazz music is also true for other forms of art and music. Yet no other art than music may create the common form and level of joy among the audience like music. And no other kind and form of music is open and tolerant to other musical cultures like jazz.

In my opinion both jazz and Freemasonry are two most distinguished driving forces of change and progress in the history of humanity.

One of them is dominated by wisdom and logic. The other one is dominated by perception and feeling

One of them is closer to our materialistic world the other one is closer to our spiritual world.

Humanity has continuously faced new concepts right after its existence. We have always wondered about what is the true meaning of life, why we are born and live, why we die and what is after life that we do not know.

Many questions around this context were asked investigating the true meaning of life. During this search many explanations were conceived about the existence of humanity regarding the meaning of life. This is a never-ending process and everyday newer explanations are on their way. On the other hand the true meaning of existence is as remote as ever to our perception as new explanations are produced everyday.

Closer we get to the Grand Architect of the Universe; less we understand his true meaning.

*Yet we never give up the search for the eternal truth.*

I truly adore jazz music and feed my soul with this indispensable source of inspiration and expression on every day I live on this planet. The more I listen to jazz, the more I feel inadequate about it. As time has passed on I have started feeling that it is virtually impossible to make a distinction about jazz among other musical styles. All of the musical styles are integrating into one medium, and newer sounds are emerging like the colors of the rainbow among them. No one can exactly say where jazz starts and ends. Yet everyone close to it appreciates that jazz is renewing itself to new richness in musical expressions.

Brother Sanver have found the same similarity in Freemasonry.

For an outsider the diversity of opinions in Freemasonry may look like chaos, yet all that diversity is brought together in harmony in Freemasonry. In fact the opposite is not possible. Throughout the centuries the human race have produced so many diverse cultures. Initiation is an accumulation and distillation of all the best and most delicate values from the cultural heritage of human history. Initiation is also a method of preserving and transferring these values to future generations.

That is why Freemasonry and all other institutions that work with principles of initiation have to accept and be open to all diverse thoughts, opinions and interpretations.

I have personally met and interviewed many jazz musicians. I have written articles about their lives and views. I have noticed that everyone has a unique definition of jazz, which is highly individual.

Many of them have answered my basic question about what jazz is all about.

This is the most commonly agreed answer that I have heard:

*“Jazz is expression of what one has lived as sound and feeling.”*

I will also like to add the following:

*Jazz is not something that is performed by jazz musicians.*

*Jazz is a life style. It is a guideline for questioning the meaning of human existence for those who seek this truth.*

*In fact the whole life is jazz, a spiritual improvisation over a physical theme.*

*Just like the improvisation in freemasonry over divine wisdom. Or it is an abstract improvisation over a concrete truth.*

Brethren

I have not been your guest to teach you anything. In fact I am not capable of teaching Freemasonry. I do not intent to teach jazz music to my music-appreciating brothers too.  
I do not mean to say that jazz and freemasonry have unquestionable and tangible links. Yet I dare to say that both of them are important pillars of human culture.

I notice certain resemblances while being aware that considerable differences exist.  
In my humble opinion the greatest similarity and link can be noticed in the fact that both institutions respect beauty.

At this point of my life I am trying to see things with a new point of view.  
As a brother who is deeply involved in jazz music I had always felt that there was a tangible link and similarity in these seemingly unrelated subjects.

Today I have made an effort to investigate the reasons behind this similarity.  
I have tried to share some of my findings with you, my brothers.

*Louis Armstrong-Jazz Musician*

*Count Basie-Composer, Orchestra leader*

*Irving Berlin-Entertainer*

*James Herbert "Eubie" Blake-Composer and Pianist*

*Nat "King" Cole-Great ballad singer and pianist*

*Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington-Composer, Arranger, Pianist and Orchestra leader*

*Lionel Hampton-Composer and Orchestra leader*

*William C. Handy-Composer "Father of the Blues"*

*Al Jolson-the Actor of the first talking picture (sound movie) (Jazz Singer)*

*Glenn Miller-Orchestra leader*

*Adolphe Joseph Sax-Inventor of the musical instrument saxophone*

*Paul Whiteman-Orchestra leader "King of Jazz".*

Brethren, I will like to ask you once again,  
What is the common denominator among these people?  
I guess that now you may say jazz and freemasonry.  
This is the correct answer, but still there is a missing point.

All of these names belong to human beings.  
Both freemasonry and jazz are means and instruments for us in search for the truth.  
Freemasons and jazz musicians walk on this road to truth according to their individual accumulation of knowledge, culture, education, talents and personalities.  
On my way to truth I have discovered that the two seemingly diverse roads that I take are in fact lead to the same point, or better to say, they are the same roads.

I am not trying to teach my findings to you, all that I am trying to do is trying to awaken your conscious.  
Freemasonry have always taught us to search for the truth but sometimes the truth can be closer than our expectations and we may have difficulty in perceiving it.

My true intention, in addressing to you my dear brothers, is creating a platform of opinion exchange and a foundation for exploring the two unseeingly related pillars of truth in our lives.

I will be delighted if I had managed to start any curiosity for a further question in search of the eternal truth.  
Please accept my sincere gratitude for your tolerance and listening.

I hope that the divine truth will enlighten our efforts as before.

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That was the last sentence of my speech presented in English two years and twenty days ago.  
And today, my brethren, the great Geometrician of the universe has replied to my prayers, and I have received a message from a brother who lives abroad.

Bro. Alan J. Hutchison too has aimed the same target, and is looking for the same link between our craft and Jazz.

This presentation that you have heard is our joint effort, a combination of what I had found out in the past, and how he has taken my thoughts to further points starting from where I have left.

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1-Freemasonry with its real aspects (Gerçek Yuzuyle Masonluk) / by bro. Dr. Enver Necdet EGERAN

2-Inside Jazz (Cazin Icinden) / by Cuneyt SERMET

3- Freemasonry-The story of those searching the light (Masonluk-I igi Arayanlarn Hikayesi) by  
bro. M. Remzi Sanver

4-Variou issues of "Jazz" Magazine, Turkey. (Articles and Interviews with jazz artists)  
By Tuncel GULSOY

5- Sunrise magazine, March 1975; Theosophical University Press)

6- Jazz Chord Structure, the importance of the 7<sup>th</sup>, by Bro. Alan J. Hutchison

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Presentations in Turkey:

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April 10th 2000, **Delta** No: 29, Istanbul

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January 4th 2001, Freedom, No: 35, Istanbul (English)

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November 26th 2001, **Ideal**, No: 01, Istanbul

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February 7th 2002, **Urgent**, No: 48, Istanbul

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March 21st 2002, Sadik **Dostlar**, No 30, Istanbul

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