

Episode 1: A Quiet Revolution

CHP 1: LET GO EVERYTHING YOU BELIEVE

1 “You have to be able to let go everything you believe, everything you’ve seen, everything you’ve been taught and heard to experience the truth because the truth never remains the same. And to me a lie is anything that has nothing to do with now. Truth is now.” – Nicholas Payton



- What is Nicholas Payton saying?
- About improvisation?
- About art and music in general?
- Reflect on the constant state of reinvention/adaptation/interpretation in jazz and improvised music?



2 “...when you have to say something you have to say what’s on your mind.” – Terence Blanchard

- How does the process of musical expression tie into your individual truth? • How is it a reflection of your place and time, ‘right now’? (This ties into what Aaron Parks says at the end of Ep 3 – how you can “hear” who someone is, what they are about, from their music.)

3 “There’s a movement about of some young guys that’s kind of like the quietest revolution in Jazz I’ve ever heard in my life. And it’s amazing because they’re a group of young musicians who definitely have vision.” – Terence Blanchard

- Describe the current jazz revolution. What ties these artists together? What is the collective “vision?”

4 “...the words are always smaller than what, whatever it is you’re trying to describe...”
– Bill Frisell



- Terminology... what is jazz? Several artists define, or describe, jazz in the first few beats of the film, and the question is posed repeatedly throughout the series. As you watch the films, note other definitions and descriptions that come up, and how they relate to the definitions and descriptions you have already heard.
- What is more important - the definition or the diversity? Are they mutually exclusive?



• If the definition of jazz is truly, constantly in flux, perhaps one can find what jazz is by looking at what jazz is not.

• How do you interpret Bill Frisell's statement: **"It's always been about some kind of mystery. . ."**?

5 • What is Avishai Cohen saying when he says of the music, **"the magic exists in... a place where it's before Jazz or Blues"**?



6 **"The term Jazz, in a sense, perhaps is its own worst enemy. But if we redefine what Jazz is in a responsible and careful way, then it won't be its own worst enemy because how people perceive it will change."**

– Herbie Hancock

• How can jazz be "redefined"? In what ways are the musicians in this series redefining jazz?

CHP 2: LESS AND LESS OF WHAT IT ACTUALLY WAS

7 **"I think the problem is, is once Jazz became a thing, it seemed to take on a persona that became less and less of what it actually was."** – Nicholas Payton

• How does the history of jazz illustrate this process of moving away from an openness to a definition?

8 **"...everything has the same core essence."** – Nicholas Payton



• What do you believe is the "core essence" is?

9 **"The longer the clock ticks Jazz is gonna change."** – Russell Gunn

• Review the course of jazz history and look at the diversity of incarnations of "jazz."
LIST LINEAGE of jazz development.

10 **"Because we have so many categories or so many divisions just in life, me, you, black, white, jazz, rock, pop, all, everything is sort of categorized for us. So there's, there's this feeling that there's us and there's all these other things out there. And to me that's quite the opposite from what it really is."** – Nicholas Payton

• What is Nicholas Payton driving at? What is the impact of categorization on the music? How does an art deal with the need for categorization when things are perpetually in flux?

