

## Notes on “Sprezzatura”: Current Influences in Italian Jazz

Irene Monteverde, December 2015

In the 17th Century, Italian writer Baldassare Castiglione explained in his book, “Il Cortegiano” (“The Courtier”), that men should strive to do everything with “sprezzatura” - a sort of stylishness, panache, and finesse. The genius of Italian production is the embodiment of detailed perfection, done with a down-to-earth humility, and reinforced by the ability to get things done while making it look easy. Exuding these aesthetic qualities in fashion, gastronomy, science, or sculpture, is expected, not optional, in Italian culture. (D’Epiro, xi)

Italians’ contributions to the arts, particularly in music, have never been surpassed. Historically closer to Castiglione’s time, we can point to the tireless experimenters Antonio Stradivari (violin), Bartolomeo Cristofori (piano), Ludovico Giustini (composer), and Claudio Monteverdi (opera). (D’Epiro, 249-253) It is also worth mentioning that improvisation is also steeped in Italy’s rich, musical heritage: the *discanto* (Middle Ages), the *basso continuo* (Baroque trumpet cadenzas), and the concept of *virtuoso* (public contests). (Cerchiari, x)

Having lived in Italy for three years, it was obvious to me that this idea of “sprezzatura” is still embedded into the psyche as its presence is felt in everyday life and in everything that Italians do. It is observed in the level of attention that is given to even the most mundane tasks, like hanging clothes to dry or boiling water for pasta. It is perplexing, at first, at least for someone whose earliest memories tell of a hurried and ingenuous American lifestyle rather than the relaxed Sunday passeggiata with her

family. As a musician, maybe I had preconceived notions of how “Italian jazz” would sound. I will admit, however, that I was stupefied when I discovered that this level of careful attention and humble ingenuity carries into the way Italians approach jazz music. In hindsight, it’s not surprising that the musicians of the Italian jazz tradition, carried on by generations who were raised to embody the characteristics of Castiglione’s perfect Italian gentleman, are able to translate the same ideals into their interpretations of one of America’s national treasures. It seems to me that Italian “jazzistas” (as jazz musicians are called there) possess an air of accomplishment mixed with unaffectedness, grace combined with practicality, and to use the title of Kenny Werner’s book, a sort of *Effortless Mastery*. I am not, however, the first to relate the term “sprezzatura” to jazz. Ted Gioia did it to refer to Shorty Roger’s playing in his book “West Coast Jazz”; the term was used often by the late George Frazier, writer of the first jazz column in any American newspaper, the Boston *Globe*; more recently, the New York Times called Cassandra Wilson’s music “the essence of sprezzatura.” I, however, would like to return the word to its Italian creators and try to understand how this cultural ideology morphs so fluidly into the jazz idiom.

It is first important to understand what the term “jazz” means for Italians. Musicologist Marcello Piras confirmed that every European country has their own jazz history, a lineage of musicians that were influenced by the records that were accessible and the various places in which to exchange musical ideas. (Piras, YouTube) In fact, Italians have their own rich history dating back to emigrants (Joe Alessandra in 1895 in New Orleans) and patriots, alike (Giorgio Gaslini’s presentation of “Relazione, Opus 12” at the Sanremo Jazz Festival in 1957, which may have been the first attempt to

combine jazz and dodecaphonic music in Europe). (Heffley, 69) Historian Francesco Martinelli doesn't believe there is a distinct *Italian* approach to *thinking* about jazz. He believes that jazz was, and maybe still is, a hallowed word throughout all of Europe. Jazz represents an attitude that Europeans see in themselves rather than the artful music that American jazz artists had imagined. Martinelli confesses that "jazz is a fantasy creation for the European jazz-lovers and intellectuals, like 'the West' for Sergio Leone - full of true facts, but in a totally reinvented ambiance." (Martinelli, interview)

There is still a profound reverence and nostalgia in Europe for the original American inventors of the swing and be-bop eras. For trombonist Dino Piana, even with all of the exceptional Italian jazz musicians, no one "takes him away" like Coltrane, Miles, or JJ Johnson. (Piana, interview) Pino Minafra recounted that, "all of those musicians, like Sidney Bechet, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, first got recognition and were embraced in Europe." Europe has a presence in the jazz idiom due to its historic sensitivity to these jazz giants who left strong marks on the cultures and individuals in each country. This is why there is still such a reverence for American jazz. ("Play Your Own Thing")

The younger generation of jazzistas hesitate to separate jazz in Italy from its global context. According to pianist Kekko Fornarelli, Italian jazz simply does not exist. (Gaeta, 22) Pianist Simone Graziano feels that there might have been noticeable differences in the Italian sound compared to Americans or Northern Europeans a few years ago, but the distinction is not there anymore. Furthermore, Italian folk music (tarantella, pizzica) has little in common with jazz, so traditional Italian music doesn't seem to play a role in the process. (Graziano, interview)

Similarly, percussionist Alessio Riccio feels more like a European musician than anything else, which directs his focus both as a performer and a composer. When he has worked with musicians, “their country of origin was not such an incisive factor, at least in the first measure...obviously, each one of them was aware of their own culture’s elements which they managed with great maturity, only using those elements at certain times and in certain ways.” (Riccio, interview) Mike Heffley would refer to this idea as being a “conscious” player. “Conscious” musicians are able to strike the right balance between traditional, imposed jazz language and the idiosyncrasies, composed or improvised, that signify one’s own cultural identity. During the free jazz era in the 1950s and 1960s - the *Emancipation*, as he dubbed it - jazz was considered a Western art music. Heffley’s argument would place Italian jazz at its best when it displays its own such “awareness and mastery, in a seamless expression that avoids the Third Stream (in the “European classical” style) trap of bundling without bonding conflicting elements.” (Heffley, 69)

French saxophonist, Louis Sclavis, noted that earlier forms of jazz were exclusive. “Without the proper key you didn’t get access easily. When free jazz came along, these musicians were telling us that we had the right to do this.” Many European musicians felt like they didn’t have the right to play jazz until the free-jazz movement came about. (“Play Your Own Thing”) However, I would argue that the cultural differences displayed in the “sprezzatura” of Italian musicians allows them to see the exclusion/inclusion factor in another way. Enrico Rava said, “I never had the complex that many European jazz musicians had during those years towards jazz, because, for me, jazz itself contains all the elements of my roots, of my culture. They thought ‘Jazz

is American and we (Europeans) should play like them.” To make his point, he considers some Italian jazz figures and their respective contributions: Eddie Lang (birth name “Salvatore Massaro”, invented the soloist element on the guitar), Leon Rappolo (one of the best clarinetist in history), and Joe Venuti (the first great violinist). (“Play Your Own Thing”) Saxophonist Gianluigi Trovesi described the evolution of jazz as such: “The traditional Neapolitan pizza consists of dough, tomato sauce, anchovies, mozzarella. One time I was in Germany and saw a pizza that also had sausage, eggs, and a lot of other things. The history of jazz is like that German pizza. You shouldn’t really touch it! Some people add other ingredients. But, then, is it still a pizza?” (“Play Your Own Thing”)

When I turn on a recording of Alessio Riccio’s *Ninshubar*, I cannot help but feel nostalgia for the Italian way of life (not to mention the pizza)! There is a honesty and a humility that I find very comforting and a certain *sound* that I cannot seem to find in any other music. He worked tirelessly on the album, until every detail and nuance was perfected. Because I am aware that he asserts great care into his projects, maybe it is easier for me to appreciate the level of artistry in Riccio’s music. Or, is there really something special about the Italian approach?

Pianist Giorgio Gaslini, who grew up improvising but not knowing that it was called “jazz,” said that the Italian approach is one that the Americans admire and call “mediterranean jazz.” He says that there is a special element “in the Italian DNA, in everything that we do - this ‘mediterranean way.’ A way that is done without violence and which has a certain tenderness and sweetness that others don’t have...an affectionate characteristic, which can be called ‘Italian jazz.’” (Gaslini, YouTube)

Hungarian drummer, Ferenc Nemeth, also seems to think there is a distinct Italian sound. “I believe the culture and Italian [folk] music influenced their way of playing and writing music - more sentiments, more sensitivity.” (Nemeth, interview) I am not suggesting that Italians have inherent abilities and sensitivities that others do not have. Doing so would expose my argument to the moral questions of genetics and ethnic superiority. Writer Tony Whyton expressed his dissent with Stuart Nicholson’s portrayal of Scandinavian jazz musicians as having “natural” and “pure” abilities. Whyton further notes that Nicholson’s “continued emphasis on the innate sensibilities of Nordic musicians inevitably contributes to the ideological and imperial bleaching of Europe.” (Cerchiari, 370) This is not my intention.

Trying to explain the Italian *sound* is difficult. NEA Jazz Master Keith Jarrett admitted that “music is not something you can use words to describe. In jazz, the narrative is what carries the music forward; the narrative is the musicians, themselves. If you hear something and it changes you, it’s because what you heard was someone who became an innovator by hard work on themselves, not so much on their instrument.” (Jarrett, YouTube) My experiences of hearing jazz by Italian musicians changed me. It is the Italian musicians that document the current state of jazz in their country; I, the author, am only acting as a vessel. Maybe, in this way, it is a similar strategy that Ken Burns and Geoffrey Ward used in producing their 2001 film, *Jazz*, “deliberately looking for those whose lives could tell the story best.” (Whyton, 100) I am not attempting to describe the music herein; instead, I would like to pay homage to the musicians who embody “sprezzatura” in the processes by which they play and produce music.

In 1995, Marcello Piras asked pianist Stefano Battaglia to perform the European premiere of one of Alec Wilder's sonatas for piano and oboe. Battaglia, who had never heard of Wilder before, noticed that some of the music resembled the chord voicings of Bill Evans. Intrigued by the correlation to jazz, Battaglia immersed himself in the works of Alec Wilder. After 20 years of learning and arranging over 60 of his pieces, Battaglia's trio released *In The Morning: Music of Alec Wilder* in 2015 on the ECM label. To Battaglia, it is a mystery that Wilder's work is not more recognized among American players, as it "represents the home of American music in the largest sense, from theatre to movie, from popular to classical, with a wide range of forms and genres." (ECM) Here, the "sprezzatura" factor lies in the time and patience Battaglia dedicated to internalizing the music. The idea of a project taking 20 years to complete might be laughable in American society. This is something particular about Italians - they make time to pay tribute to the story, its contributing members, and to connections outside of the immediate scope of the project.

In 2012, trumpeter Enrico Rava released a disc of his arrangements of selected Michael Jackson songs. He became curious about Jackson's contributions from all of the media attention garnered after the artist's tragic death in 2009. From there, he purchased all of the Michael Jackson albums and DVDs that he could find; he was consumed by Jackson's work and listened obsessively. In Rava's opinion, Michael Jackson was a genius - a great composer and dancer who reinvented the production of music videos. The project, *Rava On the Dance Floor*, tried to maintain the purity of Jackson's music and chose pieces that did not beg for the melody to be sung. The recognizable bass line riff in "Smooth Criminal" and the masterfully-composed waltz,

“Little Susie,” was enough reason for Rava not to want to “jazzify” the sound. Having witnessed a Polish quintet perform jazz interpretations of Michael Jackson songs, in Rava’s opinion, “was a shame, because there’s no reason to do that.” The “sprezzatura” in Rava’s character is not only demonstrated in the attention to musical detail, but also in the level of respect he paid the musicians who played alongside him on his album. During an interview at the Padova Jazz Festival in 2012, three Italian interviewees listened attentively as Rava passionately listed the backgrounds of each member of the band, Parco della Musica Jazz Lab of the Rome Auditorium. (Rava, interview)

Gabriele Evangelista, a brilliant bass player in his twenties, broke a bass string during a trio performance in a Siena club. New York saxophonist, David Binney, and I watched from the back as Gabriele quickly reassembled the instrument while the pianist and drummer continued to play. Shortly after, Evangelista joined-in without even a wince as to what had just happened. “Sprezzatura.” There is long list of musicians who deserve mentioning, as I consider them representative of everything that is beautiful about Italian culture; I will name only a few. Guitarist Roberto Nannetti constructed the UDOO Smart Theremin, an innovative electronic instrument, with a small team of technicians in Siena. It was built specifically for jazz improvisation, as one can easily shift between modes and tonal centers. I was thrilled to be an active member of the project that, surprisingly, was not connected to any media hype or large budget - it felt like I was part of an underground and elite (but not secretive) club.

Bassist Silvia Bolognesi has made a name for herself as a band leader and composer. Equally important is the passion she emits to her students and her



willingness to perform and record with them. Pianist Alessandro Giacchero embodies the Italian determination to quietly (and perfectly) get things done. Beyond his ability to extract the highest level of musicianship and concentration from his students, Giacchero makes his accomplishments in performance and academia seem effortless.

On the contrary, Italian musicians, in reality, are expelling a lot of effort to keep jazz in existence. The economic state of Italy has been on the decline since before the 2008 financial crisis, and is showing no clear trends of recovery. (FocusEconomics) Coupled with political instability, the lack of funding for artistic endeavors has only been magnified. Francesco Martinelli describes the situation as such: Italy is a fragmented country, made of individual towns and cities, wherein further fragmentation materializes depending on one's geographic, social, ideological, familial status. It is becoming more and more difficult for artists, and many young people are emigrating. (Martinelli, interview)

And yet, it seems that what the Italian jazz community lacks in terms of financial resources and an open political system they make up for with their breadth of knowledge, passion, adaptability, perseverance, and openness. Pianist Arrigo Cappelletti once said that "there is no jazz without a challenge. The jazzman (or at least the ideal jazzman) does not rely on what is certain, but constantly tries to break his own rules. He is free by definition." (Cappaletti, 123) The concept of "freedom" is not new to the jazz language, and its very roots may be traced back to the Roman Empire in the second century B.C. It was then that the Roman republican constitution formed a "mixed government," combining elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy to protect ordinary citizens from the entrenched powers of totalitarian leaders. In the

Federalist Papers, Alexander Hamilton refers to the “greatness” of the Roman republic, an obvious influence on America’s leaders who were developing their own ideas of inalienable rights (D’Epiro, 9-14).

Although “freedom” is an engrained attitude, Italians have unfortunately come to expect little more than this from their government. The state has little influence on everyday Italian life, and citizens do not hesitate to describe the complacency and ineffectiveness of their political leaders. “Today, the Italian youth are abandoned and left on their own. Even excellent musicians find it overwhelming to make a living in Italy,” according to Simone Graziano. He lives in Florence, and knows first-hand that a select few jazz musicians occupy the Italian jazz circuit. He feels that American musicians have a more level playing field and opportunities “to fight in a democratic way” to get to the top; jazz talent is scouted in America, and the scene is more advanced and fluid. This has forced many of the restless Italian musicians to try to make a name for themselves on the “underground” circuit, abandoning the hope of becoming known in the public eye. Graziano sees the *American* jazz scene as comparable to the Italian *underground* jazz scene. For this reason, by the time jazz recordings make their way out of Italy, they are already years old. (Graziano, interview)

Franco Santarnecchi is a great example of the talent pool hidden in the underground club scene. An incredible pianist who has recorded internationally with pop and jazz musicians, he has become one of the beacons of artistic expression. As of 2014, he was leading a weekly jam session at Florence’s Jazz Club. Here, some of the most innovative and talented musicians and hip-hop artists can hone their skills, and touring musicians can discover the authentic Italian jazz scene. Santarnecchi was

always surprising his local Florence audience, whether in hosting visiting Brazilian drummers or incorporating the newest electronic sounds. (He was playing the vocoder before I had even heard of Casey Benjamin!) In true “sprezzatura” form, he confesses that he “doesn’t know what ‘hip’ is,” although I’m convinced that he defines it.

(Santarneccchi, interview) His session hosted one of the few venues for rap artists in the city, who were often paired with DJs to *scratchare* (“scratch records.”) As noted in his essay on “resistance vernaculars” in hip-hop, Tony Mitchell notes that one of the features of Italian rap is its manifestation within small and regionally distinct areas, further represented by the artists’ use of their regional dialects. (Perchard, 292) Rap offers a platform to express disdain for the country’s divisions caused by its corrupt political system while demonstrating pride in local traditions. Recognizing the popularity of American artists who have recently melded hip-hop and jazz, it did not surprise me to see Teatro Morlacchi filled with energized Italian youths during the 2014 Umbria Jazz Festival for the performance of Snarky Puppy.

Another possible reason for the popularity of the underground jazz scene is that the musical education may be suffering from hypertrophy (and not only in Italy). There seems to be too many music schools that offer redundant programs. Alessio Riccio recalls that when he studied music, there were at least some scholarships available; but not anymore. He remembers having participated in some courses for highly-qualified individuals in which the cost was free. Perhaps it is because he grew up in a generation of musicians that learned to play by playing, listening to records, and going to concerts. Musicians studied, of course, and followed courses. However, there was the tendency not to frequent the same school or the same teacher for too long. Students were

encouraged to search for specific areas of interest and not to put too much faith into the school system. (Riccio, interview)

This honest confrontation with reality that Italians seem to possess not only make them interesting performers, but also teachers. For Simone Graziano, it is important that students are pushed to find their own musical voice:

“I’ve noticed in the schools that we are teaching a form of jazz that is already dead. The danger is that every student that comes out of the institutions is playing in the same way. My hope, as a teacher, is that each student comes to find out something new about themselves - what type of music they like, how they like to compose, and with what instruments. This is the way we should be teaching because the world doesn’t need musicians that all sound the same. The world needs those who open up their personality. This is my course, my desire, my objective.” (Graziano, interview)

Except for the lyrical tradition, Francesco Martinelli argues that Italy is, unfortunately, a musically ignorant country respect to countries in central and northern Europe. The Swedish professors of Physics or Latin, for example, normally play an instrument or sing in a choir as to give their lives musical enrichment. He feels that “the Italian musical education in schools has always been ridiculous, as conservatories turn out mediocre performers beyond ignorant of technical abilities.” He attributes this to the negative effects of reforms in conservatories’ instruction, the establishment of unqualified musical high schools, and the poor examples that institutions are setting when they support commercially successful, yet unfit, pianists like Giovanni Allevi. Jazz instruction in Italy has become bureaucratic, just like that of classical music, with few exceptions. (Martinelli, interview)

Martinelli’s contempt and unabashed seriousness in his concern for the future of jazz is exactly the “sprezzatura” that will be needed if the music is going to survive and

thrive. He points to the conservatory of Trondheim, at the forefront for their openness among teachers and the encouragement for students to experiment with colleagues from other departments. If there is a wave of popularity in Scandinavian jazz, it is because of the big investments in pedagogy and the promotion of artists abroad. Even in the 1960s, the orchestras of Northern Europe were inviting the likes of George Russell and Bob Brookmeyer, which resulted in talents like Jan Garbarek. (Martinelli, interview)

Considering the aforementioned deficiencies, I would still argue that there is a special quality in approaching jazz that Italians possess, which might have to do with their affinity for and ability to make connections between culture and art. Martinelli, himself, has presented on American cinema, literature, and a number of Jean-Michel Basquiat's works, including "King Zulu," as they related to jazz. Giorgio Gaslini offers "that music has the power to mirror and arouse in the human mind a mixture of images, ideas, reflections, emotions, impulses to action and feelings...I find there is a close connection between music and the other arts, especially with painting and architecture." (Cerchiari, 248) Even Ferenc Nemeth feels a noticeable difference in his playing when he is performing in Italy. He will usually spend a week teaching in Siena, which influences his playing by the end of the week, on an emotional level. Some of his favorite jazz clubs in Verona and Ferrara cause him to playing "in a different way." (Nemeth, interview)

I would like to propose a possible connection between our sensory conceptions and the way we express ourselves artistically. In 1987, Gerald Edelman published *Neural Darwinism*, the first biological theory of mind and consciousness, individuality

and autonomy. Building on Darwin's idea of "natural selection," Edelman suggested that individual experiences are constantly shaping our perceptions at a cellular level. "Every perception is an act of creation," he said. Over our lifetime, our sensory organs take samplings of the world, creating "maps" in our the brain. With experience, the maps grow and transform as we subconsciously define certain experiences as "successful" to construct our reality. We build on the "successful" experiences, with the help of high levels of thought and consciousness, by searching for similar "successful" experiences. Oliver Sacks described Edelman's picture of the brain "as an orchestra, an ensemble, but without a conductor, an orchestra which makes its own music." (Sacks, 356-369)

Neural Darwinism implies that we are destined to a life of self-development; in other words, we construct our own individual paths through life. Arrigo Cappelletti has played with musicians from all over the world, but he voluntarily reverts back to his Italian upbringing as the main source of his creative genius. He states:

The undoubted success of my experiments with Argentinean tango, with Portuguese fado, with popular Russian romances is not a coincidence. Maybe it could have worked with other kinds of music too. This I will find out in the future, if I come across other kinds of music that intrigue me like Puccini's, Sephardic melodies, and flamenco. But I know for a fact that my music will hardly benefit from an exchange with country music, for example, or with the music from Northeast Brazil, or West African music. Jazz music plays a fundamental role in my musical background, but there are many other elements, both inside and outside music, that contributed to creating my musical tastes and tendencies: going for long walks with my father in the mountains; listening to Puccini's operas as a child; my grandfather's music (he was a composer); the choruses of the alpine that I used to listen to when I was a child; the passion of my parents' family for any kind of narrative, be it oral or written...Coming into contact with new and unknown worlds - not necessarily musical worlds - allows us to get to know ourselves better, triggering our positive and negative reactions...I would have never thoroughly understood my passion for melody without my passion for Neapolitan songs and for tango and fado. (Cerchiari, 140)

Italy is a country that reveres the fine arts. As English trumpeter, Ian Carr, once lamented regarding the neglect of the British jazz artists, he cited Coleridge to express his point, "A great musical composer in Italy is a great man in society, and a real dignity and rank are universally conceded to him." (Heffley, 89)

As an extension to Neural Darwinism, I would like to insert the importance of emotional connections. Our earliest experiences are the most profound and become the foundation for our continual musical and cultural understanding. It is proven that the more we experience something, the stronger the memory traces and the more effortless our learning connections become. Memory strength is dependent on how much we care about an experience. Daniel Levitin describes this process as "neurochemical tagging." We tend to tag things that are important to us, experiences that carry a great deal of emotion along with them, either positive or negative. So if a musician cares about a piece of music, if they perceive a musical idea as important, they will put a lot of attention toward it. We also make connections to the artist or what the artist stands for, which helps to shape our musical preferences. (Levitin 198-202)

Martinelli mentions that "jazz" is almost a sacred term among Europeans, and for Italian citizens, its liberating quality has deeply-seated roots in their core values. (Martinelli, interview) To exemplify how Italian jazz musicians use the idea of freedom to extract human behaviors and artist results, I refer to an instruction technique of Sienese musician, Roberto Nannetti. In a recent improvisation lesson that he presented to dancers, Nannetti instructed them to think of themselves as instruments, rather than as individuals. His philosophy is that a physical and mental place exists where the impossible meets the possible. In this place, which is at times abstract and at times

concrete, we are able to represent “universals” (poetry, art, love) that otherwise, we would not be able to understand. Improvisation is one of these places. Unfortunately, it is also the state wherein *form* arrogantly claims to be of use, potentially disguising the highest expression of freedom with the greatest amount of constriction. In an ethnographic sense, “culture” does not exist without developing a relationship between the arts (for example, between music and dance) in order to express these universals. (Nannetti, interview)

However, the push to become a jazz musician might go beyond one’s desire for freedom of expression. It may provide the opportunity to leave Italy in search of financial or personal gain. Pianist Antonio Faraò seems to agree. “I didn’t find luck in Italy, nor can I say that I was helped...it was musicians, like Franco Ambrosetti, who allowed me to be more visible abroad.” (Del Grande) And visible, he has certainly become. Off of his latest release, “Boundaries” (2015), Herbie Hancock put a personal stamp of approval on his arrangement of *Maiden Voyage*. (Ayroldi)

Another ex-patriate, Luca Santaniello, was the first Italian to be accepted to the Juilliard School of Music in 2001, and he has lived in New York ever since. Santaniello and the twenty other Italian jazz musicians who live in New York organize regular dinners, obviously *alla italiana* - pasta with seafood and good wine. The Italian musicians, he says, are content between teaching, recording, and performing, which is different than their compatriots in Italy who seem to always complain about the music scene there. Although New York is an inspirational city, he confesses that it is not always the most comfortable for those who are used to the laid-back beaches of Sicily. Between securing the appropriate documents for residence, a higher cost of living



respect to Europe, the fast and fleeting relationships between people, and the fact that everything is always about “business,” he admits to enjoying his occasional visits back to the Italian jazz community. “In a few months [in New York], I learned and did what would have taken me ten years to do in Italy. I became a full-time musician right away: five or six dates per week with professional musicians with whom I would have never imagined myself playing. Once you try New York, you understand that. For as much as it is difficult to live here, this city is an open book with possibilities for everyone, where your religious, political, ideological, and ethnic affiliation is not important.” (Santaniello)

The cultural developments that are happening throughout Europe and Italy are of special note. With immigration on the rise and funds scarce, Italian cultural associations look to the Italian jazz leaders to instill a unifying, inclusive, and uplifting sense of community. Every summer and winter, FestambienteSud takes place in Manfredonia, Italy. Led by trumpeter Paolo Fresu, it brings together world-class jazz musicians and cultural activities that, hopefully, “lead toward a better and more diverse Italy, and Europe.” The winter 2013 edition focused on women, the youth, and immigrants in Italy. It featured a “Harlem Blues Band” with Jamaican singer Scheol Dilu Miller, a theater production about an African immigrant who moves to Milan to become an actor, and a discussion led by the governor of Lampedusa, Giusi Nicolini, entitled “Women, Immigration and the New European Identity.” (FestambienteSud)

The 15th annual “Musica sulle Bocche” festival took place on the beaches of Sardegna in August 2015. Headed by Italian jazz saxophonist, Enzo Favata, it brought together the likes of Stefano di Battista and Rena Bianca to offer jazz workshops and performances. This year, however, brought a special flair with a particular attention to

migrants and the intersection of music, poetry, and story. The songs and stories of Mamadou M'Bengas from Senegal spoke of immigration, the relationships between people and cultures, and of hope to return to Africa. (Musica sulle Bocche)

I found that the “sprezzatura” that was expected in the 17th century courtier is no less evident in today’s Italian jazz musicians. They are talented, humble, persevering, culturally aware, and for this, I’m honored to have touched on a few points that prove their continued contributions important and their current involvement necessary for the progression of jazz. Areas that could be explored for further research in relationship to this study would include those of pedagogy, neurological processes, and performance studies.

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2015, November 24.

A look at the current Italian economic situation.

Gaeta, Nicola. "Kekko Fornarelli: Crescere Trasforma." *Musica Jazz*. September 2015.

An interview with Italian pianist.

Gaslini, Giorgio. 2007, July 12. Pomigliano Jazz Video Channel. Interview.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNUPoC-B0Kg>.

Gaslini is one of the most significant figures in Italian jazz history. His works spans film, opera, big band, and free jazz. This interview occurs during his performance at the Pomigliano Jazz Festival, which included two other Italian musicians - Roberto Bonati (bass) and Roberto Dani (drums).

Gioia, Ted. *West Coast Jazz: Modern Jazz in California, 1945-1960*. Berkeley. University of California Press: 1998.

A look into the era of "cool jazz," Ted Gioia recounts its rise and fall, the contributions of its figures, how California fell in love with jazz, and how jazz as a whole was shaped by this "cool" movement.

Graziano, Simone. 2014, December 7. Skype interview with the author.

We talked about his education, teaching style, problems he sees in the Italy in terms of opportunities for young jazz musicians, his recordings and future plans, and intellectual property rights (SIAE) in Italy.

Heffley, Mike. *Northern Sun, Southern Moon: Europe's Reinvention of Jazz*. New Haven. Yale University Press: 2005.

This books depicts the "emancipating" effects that jazz had on the European countries. In particular interest is the example of Italy's Giorgio Gaslini and his "conscious" balance between an "American" and "European" way of playing.

Jarrett, Keith. "Keith Jarrett - Interview + Speech at NEA Jazz Masters Awards 2014." Published on Jan 30, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDbOKHOuy9M>

An interview that depicts the pianist's inability to express music through words.

Levitin, Daniel J. *This is Your Brain on Music*. New York. Penguin Group: 2006.

The author discusses the importance of "what the art stands for" and the correlation between memory strength and how much we care about the act of playing a particular piece/style of music. Italians take great care in what they choose to do - there is an "Italian" way of doing something, which carries over into the way Italian musicians play jazz.

Martinelli, Francesco. "Italian Jazz (Essay)." <http://allmuzic-biography.blogspot.it/2010/07/italian-jazz-essay-by-francesco.html>. 2010, July 7.

A history of Jazz in Italy.

Martinelli, Francesco. "Francesco Martinelli Presents Jean-Michel Basquiat's History of Jazz Lesson: King Zulu." <http://www.newark.rutgers.edu/events/francesco-martinelli-presents-jean-michel-basquiats-history-jazz-lesson-king-zulu>

An abstract of the historian's 2013 presentation on Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Martinelli, Francesco. 2014, December 15. Email Interview with the author.

His insightful responses to my questions were driven by his global experiences - he teaches in Turkey and at Siena Jazz in Italy, has been involved in planning jazz festivals, has given lectures on jazz/art/film/literature, and is a very valuable figure to the jazz community in Europe.

Musica Sulle Bocche. Official website. [http://www5.ansa.it/web/notizie/canali/inviaggio/regioni/2015/07/23/musica-sulle-bocche-focus-su-africa-e-tema-immigrazione\\_d788bfdc-7bb6-43e1-bd60-63979b11ac5a.html](http://www5.ansa.it/web/notizie/canali/inviaggio/regioni/2015/07/23/musica-sulle-bocche-focus-su-africa-e-tema-immigrazione_d788bfdc-7bb6-43e1-bd60-63979b11ac5a.html)

Describes jazz festival with attention to immigration.

Nemeth, Ferenc. 2014, December 27. Email Interview with the author.

A Hungarian drummer, he has been involved in the Italian music scene for 15 years performing and giving master classes in Siena, Verona, Ferrara, Umbria, and Orvieto. He has recorded and toured with musicians from all over the world.

Panken, Ted. "Bella Musica: Italy's Vibrant Jazz Scene." *Downbeat*. November 2013: page 40-43. Online.

Since 1934, *DownBeat* magazine has shaped the minds of anyone interested in the jazz and blues idioms, and every music in between. This article takes a look at the 40 year success of Umbria's Jazz Festival. It also provides insight into the Italian jazz ideology, as Gabriele Mirabassi elaborates.

Perchard, Tom. *From Soul to Hip Hop. The Library of Essays on Popular Music*. Burlington. Ashgate: 2014.

This is a collection of scholarly essays written after 1982 that cover hip-hop as it relates to topics including the music industry, history, theories and methodologies, technology, and repertory. Of importance is an essay by Tony Mitchell on "Resistance Vernaculars" that discusses the cultures of Italy, France, and New Zealand.

Piana, Dino. Interview on YouTube. Published on May 12, 2012.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xOxhGyFtmy4>

His thoughts on American and Italian jazz.

Piras, Marcello. "Marcello Piras e Renzo Arbore Parlano di Francesco Forti." YouTube interview. Published on December 16, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnIktnJKlSk>

"Play Your Own Thing: A Story of Jazz in Europe." Dir. Benedikt, Julian and Ulli Pfau. 1959-1975. DVD. BENEDICT PICTURES, EIKON and Delphi Filmverleih. 2006.

This DVD, recommended to me by Francesco Martinelli, is useful for understanding European jazz as a whole, from Polish to German to Italian players, and how each country has produced their own version of jazz. It includes sub-titled interviews of the most prominent players from that time, some of whom are still playing (Enrico Rava).

Rava, Enrico. "Intervista ad Enrico Rava." YouTube interview. Published on February 1, 2013.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h73plKeVzFc>

An interview with Enrico Rava at the Padova Jazz Festival in 2013.

Riccio, Alessio. 2015, January 26. Email interview with the author.

An instructor of drumming at Siena Jazz, his breadth of music knowledge is humbling. His CD, *Ninshubar*, continues to be very influential on my own musical taste. His performances are entertaining and provoking. He generous responses to my questions center around his career and ideas on the Italian jazz scene today.

Sacks, Oliver. *On the Move, A Life*. New York. Alfred A. Knopf: 2015.

An autobiographical account of his life, with surprising references to his visits to Italy. Most important is his account of Edelman's contributions to biology regarding mind and consciousness. I'm hoping to use the information to make a connection between the Italian's experience (culture, perception, etc.) and their life choices, or more specifically, performance and compositional decisions.

Santaniello, Luca. Official website. <http://lucasantaniellojazz.com>.

Gives a look into the New York drummer's experience.

Santarnechi, Franco. 2014, December 22. Email interview with the author.

His short and direct responses are congruent with his quirky personality. He is a prominent figure in the jazz community of Florence, an accomplished and recorded artist, both commercially and "underground," and serves as mentor for more than a few upcoming Italian artists.

Whyton, Tony. *Jazz. The Library of Essays on Popular Music*. Burlington. Ashgate: 2011.

This is a collection of scholarly essays written after 1989 that cover jazz as it relates to topics including the music industry, history, theories and methodologies, technology, and repertory. Especially useful are the last six chapters which involve the reception, scenes, and global perspectives. The countries discussed are Italy, France, Britain, South Africa, and Japan.