

Skain's Domain

Episode 6 - April 27, 2020

0:00:00 Wynton Marsalis: Different music. So we have Anat who was born in Tel Aviv and we have Hamilton who is from Brasilia. I used to look at that in books when I was growing up and it was known as one of the most futuristic cities in the world. So to know him, I just can't get over that and we're gonna start by talking about ragtime. What is ragtime and then the different properties of ragtime? So I'mma start with the question I have for you Vic, is how did you encounter this music?

0:00:28 Victor Goines: Well first of all, welcome everyone, great to be here. Man I can remember when we were younger playing in the elementary school band and all of us had to play The Entertainer. It was just there at the beginning of it all. Little did I understand or know what I was really, really playing but as I have been fortunate enough to study what's happening, ragtime music is so fundamental to everything that we play in the music today. It has syncopation in it, it has rhythms, it has swing in it and the harmonic function that come out of the marching bands of John Philip Sousa and James Reese Europe and everything that makes Jazz what it is, is inside of ragtime.

0:01:13 WM: When you say it has syncopation, what do you mean?

0:01:16 VG: Well, syncopation can be defined in so many different ways from a musical perspective we always say, "It's taking something that's usually on a strong beat and put it on a weak beat." In life we say it's the unexpected. Coronavirus is a syncopation. We certainly didn't expect that, we didn't see it coming but in music, if we had a stationary beat like this and normally we'll go ding, ding, ding, ding... Then we get on that off beat. Bum, ping, ding, ding, ding, ding. That's the unexpected or the weak part of the beat. So we have something like, bu-bu du-pee bu-pee bu-pee, bu-bu bu-pee, bu-du-pee bu-pee bum. In those off beats and Scott Joplin, who was considered the king of ragtime, he would write things that would not only be syncopated within a measure but it would go across the measures, across the bar lines. All of those syncopations help propel the music to go forward.

0:02:14 WM: What is it? What did you love about ragtime? Because I know when we hear ragtime music, we think of something real old. Even old as we are, we thought of something really old. What is it that possibly could have compelled you to wanna know something about it or what did you love about the sound of it?

0:02:29 VG: Well, little did I know about the sophistication of it when I was younger, I just loved something about it within the sound of it. Made me gravitate toward the complexity of it, made me wanna be able to play something that, that was just that challenging.

0:02:42 WM: ah-ah!

0:02:42 VG: And then ultimately, when I started to understand more about it, especially as we did

that concert at Jazz at Lincoln Center, a couple of years, Anat and I. The roots of ragtime and the roots of choros, little did I realize how related ragtime and choro really are. They're like brothers and sisters, if not that close, then cousins at least but I think they're very related inside the same family.

0:03:07 WM: Mm-hmm. Well I'mma go over to a gentleman who defines that form today. He's born in Brasilia. What can I say about him? He's from a musical family. Since six, he was playing the mandolin. He was a professional at 6 years old, his first instrument was a melodica and he led a movement to have national congress in Brazil declare a day, National Choro Day and since 2000, April 23rd in the nation has been known as National Choro Day.

0:03:38 WM: He's innovated so many things, from a 10-string bandolim that he plays to the way he approaches social change to his... So many musicians. He's such a natural musician, he plays with so many people. I could just go on and on about him but I'mma go right over to a Hamilton de Holanda who is with us. You all heard before from Rio but I wanna ask him, how did you first encounter your music and what is it that you loved about choro?

0:04:05 Hamilton de Holanda: So first, thank you for having me, it's a great pleasure to be with you Wynton, and with your friends, Victor, Anat and all of you. It's a real pleasure to be here because I love choro, I love ragtime and we have this beautiful relationship, this beautiful friendship between both and so I was born here in Rio de Janeiro but I grow up in Brasilia since the 11 month so my citizenship is from Brasilia. I'm from Brazil. The first friends of my father was the guys from the choro club; Clube de Choro de Brasilia. The first music I listen was choro, also bossa nova but choro was my first way in the music universe. I love this music because this music has like a union between the person, the musicians and the people. So choro is a social like you have to be all together when you play choro. It's like...

0:05:46 WM: So if you got your instrument, could you... You got your instrument with you?

0:05:52 HH: Yeah, I have here.

0:05:54 WM: Can you just give us an example of the type of song, of one of the early songs you heard?

0:06:00 HH: Yeah but about Scott Joplin, we have a piano player and composer called Ernesto Nazareth and he lives in the same time and I think the composition from Nazareth is like...

0:06:00 WM: Close, yeah.

0:06:00 HH: Close by ragtime. For example if I... I play...

[music]

0:06:53 HH: There is also syncopation and the left hand we have a little bit different rhythm because we have like this.

[music]

0:07:18 HH: Or we can have this.

[music]

0:07:31 HH: Because Nazareth was a composer of Brazilian Tango but in his time at his time we didn't have Choro like a genre. We have Polka and Waltz and some European genre but when Polka arrived in Brazil the musicians put like a flavor, tropical flavor, rhythm tropical flavor and transformed into another kind of music. Before Choro was Maxixe. Maxixe is like...

[music]

0:08:52 HH: More like swing, more swing and a lot of syncopation and today we have many musicians in Brazil who did recordings with both composers Scott Joplin and Ernesto Nazareth, so...

0:09:13 WM: So they put them together.

0:09:15 HH: Exactly.

0:09:16 WM: They have like understanding of it.

0:09:18 HH: Exactly.

0:09:19 WM: So, I wanna go over to Anat. Thank you. Thank you very much, Hamilton, we all in it together man. Every time you start playing like I imagine I'm in front of you, you know it, I like to look at you when you're playing 'cause you'd be getting into your vibe, your look, you have that intensity. So I'ma go over to Anat who also comes from a musical family, with her brothers playing trumpet and saxophone and she attended Tel Aviv School for the Arts, has all kinds of education, ended up at Berklee but she has played with so many musicians. She has a deep love of Brazilian music and she's recorded all kind of recordings in Rio de Janeiro, she's there now.

0:09:57 WM: The people embrace her and love her in all of the cultures in the Brazilian culture they love her playing. Paquito D'Rivera who is one of the greatest clarinetist ever, announces her and said she's one of the greatest players ever on the clarinet and he is truly not lying. She is at home with a lot of styles but she also brings an infectious joy in an ease and a kind of really pure intelligence to the playing of music that is uplifting. So we're happy to have her with us tonight and I'm gonna just start... What I'm asking everybody, you coming all the way from Tel Aviv, what in the world attracted you to Choro and how did you go from there?

0:10:37 Anat Cohen: Well, thank you for this lovely introduction and thank you for inviting me and hi everybody. This is a... The Choro music for me has a direct connection to the fact that I play the clarinet because when I grew up in Israel and I was playing clarinet and I got into playing jazz and I was discouraged from playing clarinet because people said that it's out of fashion, just bring your brother's saxophone or bring any saxophone, just don't bring the clarinet and I went...

0:11:18 AC: I focused on the tenor saxophone for many years. I went into college, at the Berklee College of Music and Berklee College of Music had a lot of international students just like me coming to explore the language of jazz and coming to the source coming to the US and that's where

I met some other international students and a lot of Brazilian people were there and I got introduced to Choro in Boston and suddenly, I was invited to play clarinet and I found music that I don't have to be apologetic about playing my clarinet and I felt like I can...

0:12:03 AC: First of all, I had to dust off the, the case because it was waiting for me but I was not really focusing on it but when I started to play it, I almost treated it like it's a serious technical study. I was fascinated by the music, first of all just by the technicality of it and how... As a jazz musician, that the fact that and as a classical musician because I studied classical music, I found that there was something about this combination of you need to play the melody in a... Can be very demanding but you can also improvise and also play counter lines and since and I knew about the music of New Orleans and I loved how the clarinet can do all those polyphony with the trumpet and the trombone and play lines and I was like "Oh you can improvise by the melody play counter lines use rhythm."

0:13:06 AC: So there was something about this music that I found fascinating and then when I moved to New York in '99, I started to play this music. I had my friend Pedro Ramos, who plays cavaquinho, is from São Paulo and together we had the Choro Ensemble, it was a band that played Choro in New York and well nobody else played Choro in New York. I got into this music by mostly by playing it and only a year later, I went to Rio de Janeiro for the first time it was the end of the year 2000 and my life was never the same.

0:13:47 AC: I discovered the whole culture around the music. The way people sit together, the way people sit in a circle, how the music is such an inclusive music and how you pass it along and you share the moment and you share the happiness of existing and how you have to have so much skill but yet it's been played a lot in a very informal situation that it almost seems like and a lot of time, it has the, people have a beer in front of them.

[laughter]

0:14:29 AC: So it seems like it's very relaxed but on the other hand, it takes a serious concentration, a serious skill and I was fascinated by what the music has to... Brings out of people and how it connects people. I can go on and on but basically.

0:14:48 WM: That was good, it's great.

0:14:51 AC: And I became a clarinet player. I dedicated myself to this music and it brought me back to have chops on the clarinet and I came back to New York and I wanted everybody in New York to come play with the Choro Ensemble, the time we had the weekly gig in a the little French bistro in the east village called Jewels and I was going around and telling all the cats, all the jazzers come on, come play with us, come play with us but when you wanna play a choro, you have to really know the melody.

[laughter]

0:15:22 AC: Now of course cats can hear the harmony and they can improvise on it but the point is not to come and just blow a solo. The idea is to really play all the parts.

0:15:32 WM: Right, right.

0:15:32 AC: So there was just a handful of musicians that actually, they would come into the gig and some of them would bring their music stand and their music and some would learn a song by heart but I really tried to encourage a lot of people and I really wanted to expand the community and to make people know about this music 'cause I was fascinating and I still am and I am in Rio de Janeiro right now and I love choro, if not just for what it is just for the fact that it changed my life.

0:16:04 WM: Wow. Okay but I wanna pick up on a couple of things you said but I wanna ask one part of what you said, I wanna ask to Victor and I know, Victor knows a lot about people having beers in their hand, cause he's from New Orleans.

[laughter]

0:16:18 WM: So he grew up seeing a whole pile of people with beers and everything else in their hand when he played gigs. What do you find in terms of the cultural similarities, like Anat was saying that she embraced the music as a overall culture and the music was not just technically demanding or something you had to shed on your horn but there was also a way of life, a spirit even I love when she was speaking because you could feel it, in the way she was explaining it, you could feel what it brought to her understanding of the cultural connection with the music, people sitting in a circle kind of informal the way how people deal with a thing that has a musical formality to it. What do you see, are there any similarities between that and ragtime?

0:17:00 VG: Well one of the disconnects I think is that and you know when we grew up in New Orleans, there weren't a lot of people trying to play ragtime, we were just happy to have some piano players who were working their left hand. [laughter] the idea of the whole stride component of ragtime. If anything, that's one thing that is a disconnect because in choro for what I have known and for the last time we went to Brazil, we had the pleasure of being in people's home, engaging with them on the music and all and the fact that it was a community thing, but the ragtime in modern times are especially in our time of growing up, that wasn't so much a community thing so, we didn't have the kind of exposure to it like they have the choros In Brazil, they have embraced that as their cultural music, their cultural treasure, While jazz is American treasure, ragtime was kinda lost in the shuffle for a while until some of these young masters came back.

0:17:48 VG: Marcus Roberts, Aaron Diehl, Eric Reed, you know people who started embracing the idea and they did stride and a lot of them do stride but still authentic ragtime that's a whole another story because there's a different kind of syncopation to that as opposed to playing "obbligato" lines over a left-hand and striding which is a very challenging deal but, nonetheless the stride in ragtime are somewhat, while they're similar, they're very different to really embrace that.

0:18:19 WM: Okay I wanna pick up on one thing before I go back over to Hamilton, she was talking about the clarinet and your people were telling you to keep that clarinet in the case and you know we grew up playing pop funk gigs.

[laughter]

0:18:31 WM: Some jazz gigs but if you weren't playing all this music, there wasn't too much clarinet being played, to play jazz so do you find a similarity with what Anat was saying in terms of being a clarinet player, you grew up... You started on the clarinet... Being able to find like

similarities with all the kind of "obbligato" parts of clarinets playing with the trumpets and also the experience of people saying, "Man, we don't wanna hear clarinet, if you don't have a saxophone. A soprano sax is okay but don't bring that clarinet up in here."

0:18:58 VG: Well, some people do not wanna hear the soprano either.

[laughter]

0:19:01 VG: I like something else, something ping.

[laughter]

0:19:06 VG: Yeah but I did I did kind of know a lot of what Anat is talking about is it's a very, very... It's a real thing, because culturally, the music that existed in our cultural experiences our homes and things like that were not necessarily clarinet-driven, if we were fortunate to be around people who embraced classical music and the clarinet, then that was acceptable but we listened to the Temptations and the Four Tops and Cameo and all that kind of stuff. Man, the clarinet didn't have a chance in the world of being out there in the popular scene.

[laughter]

0:19:42 VG: You might be in the marching band in high school on a clarinet, then they put you in the back of the band. I mean, you're disposable but in the music that she's talking about, it's very present and like she mentioned, about the technical aspect of wanting to engage in that. If you walk up on a choro jam session, you might be engaging in something that you might leave with barely a ridge, you know what a mean?

[laughter]

0:20:06 VG: That's a serious engagement, first of all they not complaining of B flat. They're gonna be in A and G and E. All things that are a Clarinet's nightmares.

[laughter]

0:20:16 VG: Am I wrong Anat?

0:20:18 AC: Nope, you absolutely right.

0:20:20 VG: You walk into a choro jam session, you better come armed with band-aids to be able to take the hit and everything else along the way. In New Orleans it was the same kind of thing too because also the traditional gigs that took place in New Orleans were few and far between. You had to be fortunate enough to be around people who will allow you to play it and it's quite different from playing marching bands like we did with Danny Barker or with...

0:20:46 WM: Doc Paulin.

0:20:50 VG: Doc Paulin yeah you came out there with a clarinet you were just another body, you couldn't be heard everybody was playing over you again. So it took a long time to really get up in

there. Michael White was fortunate enough to be up in that a circle and all. I was lucky Don Vappie actually kept at me to wanna play the clarinet in terms of New Orleans situations and I was really lucky when I got... Fortunately, my fortune was Don Vappie's unfortunate situation. He couldn't make a gig so he sent, Danny Barker as a sub. I had a whole day with Danny Barker. I talked to Danny Barker the whole time. He probably said, "Man, can you please just make the gig" But uh at the end of it all...

0:21:28 WM: Let me just explain one thing. Don Vappie is a fantastic guitarist and banjoist, grew up with us playing the funk bands and Danny Parker played with Louis Armstrong and Cab Calloway, he's a legendary old man that taught all of us how to play New Orleans music.

0:21:43 VG: Yeah so Danny Barker was the one who told me he said "Man, just keep playing. Just keep playing the clarinet, don't let anybody discourage you just keep at it, it'll come." And I'm very grateful to have had that one opportunity to be in his presence to hear those profound words which allowed me to try to continue to play it and then as it would be in the most current times in the past 25 years of being with Jazz at Lincoln Center, I have been able to look back upon the many things that I grew up in New Orleans and realize how they fit inside of the puzzle of this whole tradition of music, both in New Orleans in America, in Brazil and around the world.

0:22:23 WM: Okay so I wanna pick up on another thing that Anat said; it's very important and I wanna go with the Hamilton because he's a combination of activists kinda genius musician that she was saying and I wanna really highlight when she said she was in New York city going around to different musicians saying, "Come down and play this music with us." That takes a lot to do, it rolls off your tongue and she's such a diffusive person, she has the type of personality that is embracing, but she was like...

0:22:55 WM: She was out there like a missionary. "Come down and learn this music" and she's from Tel Aviv. Come down here and play, now once you to get down there, you realize "Wow they're playing songs that have four strings. Oh they're playing in these different keys? So you got to come down there ready but that spirit, Hamilton has embodied that in his own country because many times you live in a country and the people of that country don't respect the depth of the artistry in the music that is native.

0:23:21 WM: He's an example of someone who has fought inside of his country to illuminate everybody. He's a great educator and he has been on a campaign for so long, even though he's still a very young man, he's been on the campaign for a long time to do what Anat was doing in his country for their music saying "Hey let's check this music out." So, Hamilton, I just want you to give us a sense of what it is that you were trying... That you wanted to bring to people. Why was it important that you have a National Choro Day and, do you feel that the music is old? Why would you take a old music or music is considered archaic and try to make it be something that's a part of everyone's life?

0:24:00 HH: I think when we have a music with 150 years of history, we have not just music to have fun or not to have concert we have to have all the things; education, concert, have fun. We have... Can you imagine after 150 years we have a tesoro... Not tesoro.

[foreign language]

0:24:33 AC: Treasure?

0:24:38 HH: Treasure exactly.

0:24:39 WM: Thank you Anat.

0:24:43 HH: So it's a treasure. Obrigado Anat. If you have official National Day, I think, the people can see with another eyes. You understand?

0:24:53 WM: Yeah.

0:24:54 HH: With a view of real importance of this news to the culture of Brazil. Our personality, culture, the show is like the first music, first popular music in Brazil. If you have a good memory, we are intelligent we are smart with the country is the same. If you have memory have be careful with our memories, our music, we are Smart, we are intelligence so we can embrace the people and show to the young people, to the child and also to the old people. Choro is music to a whole family of... not just Brazilian but whole family, the young guys, the teenagers also and... the old guys. So we have a tradition, a beautiful tradition and we can play, we can teach, we can record it, we can have fun.

0:26:31 WM: What are some of the things that you... I'm sorry, you saying something?

0:26:37 Moderator: Wynton, it's Adam. I'm hearing that we've got Reginald here with us too if you wanna bring him in.

0:26:40 WM: Oh okay. All right. I thought Reginald wasn't gonna show up here today. We got another special guest. Thank you very much, Hamilton.

0:26:49 HH: You're welcome.

0:26:51 WM: Man, I feel so good about seeing you and Anat. It's like, you know, one thing about this quarantine makes you really have another feeling. When you see friends that you don't see, you feel a deep kinda... It's a depth to the feeling. This guy, Reginald Robinson, he was raised in Chicago and his older brother played the guitar and he listened to big band jazz. The great trumpeter Orbert Davis, fantastic trumpet player and educator in Chicago, always trying to turn the kids on. Much like Hamilton is saying or like Anat is saying, Orbert has been out there for years, turning people on and they went to a school and performed Scott Joplin's The Entertainer, which is the song Victor was singing in the beginning and the piece interested this young gentleman and though he had heard it many times on ice cream trucks in his neighborhood, 'cause he grew up in the hood, he had never considered it a serious piece of music. He taught himself to play the piano and he also composes.

0:27:50 WM: Like Hamilton, he composes. We're talking about choro, he talked about the tradition but Hamilton composes a lot of music in different styles. Very, very modern music. So he taught himself how to compose ragtime music in various styles. He taught himself how to compose music in different styles and one of them is ragtime. He writes a lot of fresh new music that will have the language of ragtime. In 2004, he won a MacArthur Genius Grant so the rest of us are lucky just to have him on here to talk with us and he's explored all the fantastic music of all these great

musicians that we have touched on.

0:28:26 WM: We don't have enough time to really get in-depth but I wanna invite him to get on and I'm gonna ask him the same question I ask everybody, which is: What made you love something like ragtime, growing up in the age that you grew up in? And what is it that you're bringing to it? Mr. Reginald.

0:28:45 Reginald Robinson: Well, thank you. I don't know if you can hear me well.

0:28:49 WM: We can hear you.

0:28:51 RR: Okay.

0:28:52 WM: I like your hat, man. I like that.

[chuckle]

0:28:53 RR: Well I have to look presentable.

0:28:55 WM: You leaning it down a little bit. I like it.

0:29:00 RR: Thank you. What interested me in ragtime music was Scott Joplin. The soul in his music, the depthness in his music and I was 13-years-old and what I heard was, I heard a true expression. My love was art. I mean, I was drawing. That was my thing was drawing. I always liked visual art. That was my first love and when I heard Scott Joplin's The Entertainer, which I heard many times as a young child here in Chicago, living here in Horner Projects, on the ice cream truck during the summertime. It was just another tune, something that attracted us to get our attention, you know, children and people in the neighborhood to know that the ice cream truck was there but when I heard Scott Joplin's music actually on the piano and I was ready. I think at the time, I was ready for it. My brother had been playing all this jazz music from the late '30s so I'd gained an appreciation for that music.

0:30:21 RR: I thought that it was... When I heard The Entertainer and it was just solo piano, that is what really attracted... I was like, wow! I don't need a band. The band is here on the piano [chuckle] It was mysterious. To me, it was mysterious. Because it didn't have any words to it or anything. It was just piano and it was like: Listen. This is what the music said to me, like: Listen. It was, I don't know. I don't really know how to put it into words but it was magical.

0:30:53 WM: Well I know, you write music in this style, which is unusual. Are you near your piano? Can you give us an example of something you wrote? Just a phrase.

0:31:03 RR: Uh yeah. I don't know how much I can play [chuckle]

0:31:05 WM: That's all right. We're not putting you on the spot. Just do whatever you can do. We gonna get Anat up here with her horn if she has it and Victor. We all gonna play. I don't know where my horn is so I don't wanna embarrass myself either.

0:31:17 RR: Okay so. This I see. What can I play that I feel confident in?

0:31:22 WM: It don't have to be long. Just give us a taste.

0:31:25 RR: Okay. Okay, I'm gonna attempt to play a piece called The Pride of Queen City. A little bit of The Pride of Queen City. The Pride of Queen City was a tune that I wrote in 2002 and it celebrated the... It was in celebration of the train line in Sedalia, Missouri, which is the town that Scott Joplin went to college and he had his "Maple Leaf Rag" published in 1899. So The pride of Queen City really was referring to the train. I'll see what I can do.

[music]

0:33:30 WM: You sound good man.

0:33:31 RR: Sure thing.

0:33:32 WM: That's beautiful.

0:33:33 RR: That's written in the style, what they call the early classic ragtime style.

0:33:39 WM: Uh-huh.

0:33:40 RR: I write in different styles.

0:33:42 WM: Yeah, that's beautiful. Let me ask Hamilton if he can get in there, we all on with each other. So if you wanna jump in there, you got something you wanna say. I just wanna ask Hamilton because he writes music too that has the vibe of Choro... I wanna see if he got a composition just a little snatch of it, that we could hear so people can hear how you keep the tradition alive, not just by talking about it but you incorporate it into your music and it doesn't hold you back from doing your thing.

0:34:08 HH: Yeah, I just wrote to Jacob do Bandolim, our father of the Bandolim in Brazil, Jacob of Bandolim.

0:34:16 WM: Of Bandolim. Yeah.

0:34:19 HH: Yeah, I wrote to him...

[music]

[laughter]

0:35:32 WM: It's important... The thing I love too with Hamilton, is he's just always gonna be playing and I think Anat too is like that. Like she'll have her horn with her in a second, I hope you have you your horn with you Anat, 'cause I wanna go back to another thing that you were talking about. Hearing the New Orleans style and the way they swoop up and how they play the "obbligato" parts and I wanted to know if you could give us a little taste of some things that you see or different or give us a little terminology so those of us who might not know that much about the clarinet, can really know what you're talking about.

0:36:04 AC: About the clarinet or about Choro?

0:36:06 WM: About playing the clarinet and Choro, playing the clarinet, playing the "obbligato". You gave us some terminology like you say, the New Orleans, they were playing the high lines and then you noticed the Choro they were playing a similar thing, you talk about syncopation. Just give us an example of things that you hear that are similar it could be a Choro and also, you talked about how you can improvise. So if you could just do something to make it clear to us all of what you're talking about.

0:36:28 AC: No, I guess I should have prepared something.

0:36:31 WM: No, no you don't need to...

0:36:32 AC: This just reminded me of what Victor was talking about before when Hamilton was playing 'cause for us, Victor is gonna be an E-major, I was gonna be jumping in but [laughter] this is gonna be ain't no celebration for us.

[laughter]

0:36:50 AC: I think some things that I always... I find, part of Choro music... And for me, in some ways, is the clarinet, is perfect for that, is finding the way to embellish a melody and the beautiful thing about Choro music and another reason why I fell in love with it is because if you're a classical musician and you don't know anything about improvisation, you can still play Choro. You don't have to improvise. It's about the way, just like in jazz, it's about finding a way how to take a melody and make it your own and to develop a certain vocabulary for... To be able to express yourself with the notes so let's say... Okay, some melodies some slower melodies are less syncopated, obviously. Let's say you take Chorando Baixinho.

[music]

0:38:39 HH: Beautiful. Beautiful.

0:38:44 AC: It has a lot of... You can add vibrato and of course, when you go to the more, to the faster melodies...

[music]

0:39:15 AC: So in some ways it's... When I think like as something to play choro, I like the jazz... The articulation is different in many times than when I play more swung music because it will be less articulated so you have to figure out how to play shorten and to play all the spaces. All the 16 notes are there so even when I don't play a note I still play the note with nothing, while Hamilton has a lot of strings and he can mute and play. I can only play one note at a time unfortunately, you find the clarinet that you play more notes at a time, you just tell me.

[laughter]

[music]

0:40:25 AC: Let's see.

[music]

0:40:54 VG: Beautiful.

0:41:00 RR: Beautiful.

0:41:03 AC: I was hearing Hamilton somewhere in the background.

0:41:06 WM: No you are up in there. You are up in that note because the phone it doesn't match up but you're getting up in there good. I wanna ask Victor, we heard Anat was talking about several concepts she talked about. Once she played the beautiful melody and the way she played it was like the blues, the way she was just singing in it to kind of wish you'd been in the notes and land in to them, that's like a little ask of Sidney Bechet in it.. you know it was not imitative of it but it had the feeling of that and it was beautiful and then when she started to play fast, it's something we always talk about the difference between playing in a 16 note time and playing it at swing time, she was talking about the distance between the notes, what she means is when you play fast the notes still have a distance, between them you have to make them [vocalization]... It's like the rhythm [vocalization]

0:41:59 WM: It's a feeling so when she has breaks, she has to keep the momentum of that... To keep that kind of light buoyant feeling. Vic what I'm asking you about is in terms on playing on that black stick, what about give me an example of the ragtime... The difference between a ragtime feeling and the swing feeling and then how you get the sound of the wood, like she was getting a lot of wood out of her horn when she played that slower.

0:42:31 VG: Right. Even when she played that slower it immediately brought me back to "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" and even that's not in the ragtime tradition, it brings you back to the New Orleans thing.

[music]

0:43:00 VG: So it's right inside of where she's coming from, they're relatives to each other.

0:43:06 WM: So would...

0:43:06 VG: Go ahead.

0:43:07 WM: No, no go ahead.

0:43:09 VG: And then if you could take that same song, usually we play a different song, the "Happy Feet Blues" or something like that on the second part of the New Orleans function, which is what we play at the jazz funerals in New Orleans. We play a dirge when we go to the cemetery because we mourn taking someone to the cemetery but we celebrate their life as we leave so let's just say I took "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" and played it in more of a celebratory ragtime style.

[music]

0:43:57 VG: So it would be like that in terms of the rag rhythm maybe.

0:44:01 WM: Uh-huh okay. Now I wanna... We running out of time. Adam we're gonna open up the questions but I wanna go back to Reginald because he came in there last and I feel Hamilton, y'all can feel him, he wants to play he feels, that's one thing that makes him so lovable his instrument is always ready to be pulled out to give the ultimate demonstration of any concept, I will go back to Reginald, I wanna talk about something that was implied and what Anat said when she said "do you have something that really formal to play" you got to be up on your horn and you have to be a technical thing together but you're in an informal environment so you have two opposite kind of feelings going on and it's something also that Hamilton brought out with us when he said "Hey, this music is our tradition it is a memory in it, it's serious, you could study it but you still can have fun, you could still come up with new things" he's letting us know and explaining to us and indeed him as a musician, he demonstrates that as everybody here demonstrates.

0:45:05 WM: You don't have to choose between choro, your tradition and what you're gonna play and I thought it was beautifully said. So I wanna ask Reginald because he didn't have as much facetime as all of us had, I'mma now translate that into music, which is in ragtime, in the style of ragtime that you play, the bottom is in four and is very string...

0:45:32 WM: Almost like a, it is a march, many rags have four string march form, as choro also some of the traditional, you need to be ready to learn some strings, but the right hand is almost doing the exact opposite. Whereas the left hand has the heavy kind of dance bottom feel march feel, the right hand has a light kind of dancing syncopated three against four ties you into the whole kind of African tradition. I want to know Reginald how you think about that and do you feel it is two opposite things when you are playing or do you put them all together?

0:46:06 RR: To me it's all one mesh. I've seen them all together, it all fits together, it's one thing. You can't have one without the other. Well, no, I shouldn't say it like that. I think that every time my left hand seems to... Sometimes I'll do things with in my left hand that are syncopated. They're not just like straight full bar march field.

0:46:35 WM: Can you give me an example of that?

0:46:38 RR: I don't think I'm ready for it right now.

[laughter]

0:46:42 RR: I don't think I'm ready for it right now. I can try, I could beatbox it.

0:46:47 WM: That's all we do and it's like you're in my house, you don't have to worry about it. We're not judging you. Me and Hamilton have been in places with different states of repair, we played all kind of stuff.

[laughter]

0:46:56 RR: Let's see what I can... I don't know if I can do this. This is a hard piece of music. I'm

still trying to master it now.

0:47:09 WM: Look, you don't have to play the music, just give us an example. Just take a B flat chord or E flat, it's just a concept.

0:47:16 RR: Oh I'm sorry I didn't hear you.

0:47:17 WM: Yeah, I'm saying you don't have to play the music, you could just play the concept. Just say this something I might do on B flat or this something I might do in D. Put us in keys Anat was talking about, this something I would do on G.

0:47:27 RR: Well, I'm probably better at explaining it than playing it.

0:47:32 WM: Okay, alright, yeah. I'm with you.

[music]

0:48:08 RR: I don't know if that's the best example, because there's some parts that are more syncopated. I'm trying to think of an actual song that I can play. Idea of a syncopated passage.

0:48:20 WM: It's alright, you explained it to us, you know.

[laughter]

0:48:23 WM: Here is what you explained to us and it's important and what you explained is important because you explained to us that you think of it as one because sometimes that left hand is straight but sometimes it also will go into the syncopation. So, it's basically the point I was bringing out was that when you play these forms, like you play a ragtime form, you play choro, you have to be ready to play a bottom and a top.

0:48:47 RR: Ah, yes.

0:48:48 WM: I'm gonna go over to Hamilton and I'm just gonna ask him, because another thing I like about Choro is when the base lines move. Sometimes you listen to Pixinguinha playing these lines on the tenor saxophone, it's unbelievable. In between that or my other man who play with Pixinguinha when he's playing the flute. What's the brother's name, starts with an L his last name.

0:49:13 AC: Lacerda.

0:49:15 WM: Yeah.

0:49:15 HH: Lacerda. Benedito Lacerda yes.

0:49:18 WM: Yeah. So if you could just give us an example of the melody and then with that moving line that goes on, you know what I'm talking about?

0:49:25 HH: Yes, for example, when we record "Um a Zero", you remember when we recorded "Um a Zero" ? I did this...

[music]

0:49:54 HH: So, Pixinguinha, he was like the king of counterpoint. So after he, we have here in Brazil, a beautiful tradition of seven strings guitar so because his counterpoint improvisation, a guy called Dino Cazares invented a new instrument based in that tradition, in that solo by Pixinguinha. Not melody solo but melody...

0:50:31 WM: accompany.

0:50:33 HH: Yeah, yeah exactly and this instrument, seven strings, is always improvising. It is an instrument special because they do the accompaniment but in the same time, they improvise melodies. So, for example.

[music]

0:51:21 HH: So, this is like a beautiful tradition, seven strings. Because Pixinguinha invented this kind of playing tenor saxophone.

0:51:35 WM: Didn't you add a couple of strings to the band, did you come up with an innovation... To the instrument? You put two strings or something on it? You play a 10 string instrument.

0:51:43 HH: Yeah, exactly because...

[laughter]

0:51:48 HH: Actually, I love guitar and I love piano, also accordion. When I saw the guy playing guitar with harmony and melody and rhythm all together, I want to do this with my mandolin.

[laughter]

0:52:06 HH: Now I have a 10 strings mandolin. Normally I have eight strings E, A, D, G, I have a low C.

[music]

[laughter]

0:52:31 WM: Okay...

0:52:31 AC: Can I just add something about about just the thought about the seven string guitar and as for whoever wants to learn about choro, wants to learn to play, I think it's really important to understand that there there is the melody that playing the high notes that can be played by the mandolin or by the the flute or the clarinet or many different instruments actually can be solos but the seven string guitar... It's a whole world by itself and the melodies and the language of Choro is definitely in that seven string guitar line. I think it's very, very important to pay attention to those melodies and whoever wants to learn the learn this learn about this music, check out both melodies equally.

0:53:21 WM: I think that's very important what Anat is saying about about any music that has a complexity to it in the depth. Like if you listen to Beethoven symphony, listen to what those violas are playing. The more you get into the guts of some music. So yeah, you know she that's she got she's she's given us a lot of good real ones here tonight. Listen to them, the middle and the bottom of the music always is...

0:53:47 WM: Okay so we talked about a lot of things. I had a great time I learned a lot but now we're gonna, we're gonna open this up. You know, we like to have questions, ask questions of anybody here we will pass them off and on to each other. Don't forget we have Reginald Robinson here, Anat Cohen, we have Hamilton de Holanda, Victor Goines and ask us... Get in here and ask us something so we can extemporize and see what we come up with. Adam?

0:54:12 Moderator: It looks like we've already got a number of questions. We don't have time for too many but we'll get to as many as we can cover.

0:54:19 WM: Okay.

0:54:20 AM: So just to quickly remind everybody, if you have a question you'd like to ask, just use the raise hand feature. So click participants in the bottom of your Zoom window and then there in that participants tab, you can click raise hand and then please just make sure that your full name appears as your user name so we can call on you when it's your turn. First question is coming from Martin Della Rota. You're unmuted. Go ahead.

0:54:46 Martin Della Rota: Okay. Hi, everyone. First, thank you for having me. Hi Wynton. I don't know if you remember me. We met after the Jelly Roll concert and The Abyssinian Mass. I'm from Columbia. So hi.

0:54:57 WM: Okay. Yeah man, of course.

0:54:58 MR: I wanted to say...

0:55:00 WM: It's good to see you.

0:55:00 MR: I wanted to say I'm I'm really sorry about the passing of your father, he was a great man and a great musician.

0:55:06 WM: Thank you. Thank you so much.

0:55:07 MR: So I feel you.

0:55:08 WM: Thank you.

0:55:09 MR: And I want to ask you all, what are your thoughts regarding this situation of the pandemic? Sometimes as artists, we feel a lot of frustration. We feel like we have a duty of being optimistic of bringing joy and it's really hard when you find yourself frustrated by not being able to create as strongly as it is needed right now. So what's your advice on that? How can we not get that frustrated and find optimism?

0:55:40 WM: Well I think what we're doing tonight is a part of it and as you can see, nobody was frustrated. Hamilton is not frustrated. Anat is not frustrated. Victor's not frustrated. Of course, you know we're surviving. I'm always in this situation thinking of people who are struggling to survive and I never answer a question without first thinking and talking about them and a lot of people are in extremely frustrating situations, they have personal situations that are not advantageous to this, they're trying to feed their families, they have no way to make a living. They are struggling. I immediately think, to those people and it's not it's not a few people. There are many millions of people in that position and we're working on stuff all the time and our organization Jazz at Lincoln Center, we're trying to stay afloat. So we're doing everything we can.

0:56:34 WM: A point that I try to make with us, we're keeping our staff together, we're being for real. We work in the context of the trust we've built up much like what you see tonight, the fact that we have a relationship with Anat, and Anat played with Victor, and Victor with Hamilton and Reginald. We don't know him and this is the first time I'm really encountering him but we have a level of the same kind of music. We have an inexperience we're dealing with. The fact that we have that understanding allows us to come together with optimism though we have different points of view and I always say look at those things that Bach used to write and say to people to get them to support his music, the type of humility that was required for a musician on that level of mastery, to survive writing his music and we have to in this period, channel that level of humility and ask those who are in our community to help us.

0:57:21 WM: And if we have the means to help other people, We have to help them and I remain optimistic about the human condition because I'm gonna go back to what Hamilton was saying, the longer your memory is, the more optimistic you are. There's been things before on earth and there will be things again and we have to always plug ourselves into the equation of how we feel. If we feel bad, stuff is bad. So yes, you know, I feel, of course, I've hurt my father passed away, a lot of people's parents and family passed away. Of course, we're struggling.

0:57:51 WM: We don't have the ability to earn money, we're struggling, yes, it's a struggle but many people are struggling. Many people are sick, many people have jobs they have to go to and I tend to put myself in the larger context and say that in the largest context, we're gonna survive, you know and if it's not me to survive, maybe it's Anat. If it's not her, maybe it's Vic or maybe it's Hamilton. Or maybe it's Reginald, we don't know, so just normally, I don't like to just hog the answer and take it all myself but I'm going to just answer that one and we'll go to the next one. So that's how I feel.

0:58:22 WM: I'm always optimistic because but I'm not a naive optimist. I'm optimistic that I'm gonna get up tomorrow and try to do everything I can humanly possible to be in a better situation and to be cognizant of people that try to make intelligent decisions that are not just the best decisions for me and I'm also fortunate to be surrounded by great people in my organization, with my friends, with people I know, it's one blessing. When you get in a, in a bind, you get in a bad situation, you start to understand how important the quality of your friendships are.

0:58:54 RR: Yeah, yeah.

0:58:56 AC: Yeah.

0:58:56 MR: Thank you Wynton. Thanks.

0:58:57 VG: You right.

0:59:00 WM: All right.

0:59:00 HH: I want to say this also, because you have to take the opportunity to produce cool things in the practice solidarity.

0:59:11 WM: Right.

0:59:13 HH: Because be positive, because positive and... The most important for me is that practice solidarity.

0:59:25 WM: Right.

0:59:27 HH: Yes.

0:59:29 WM: Come together, be about that.

0:59:31 HH: Yeah.

0:59:32 WM: Yeah. It's the time for that. It's not time for a slogan.

0:59:36 HH: Exactly.

0:59:39 Moderator: Alright, let's take another question. We've got one from Xavier Moore. Xavier, go ahead.

0:59:46 Xavier Moore: Good afternoon Mr. Marsalis. I'm so sorry your father died.

0:59:53 WM: Thank you.

0:59:55 XM: You're welcome. Anyways, I know a lot of stuff and I also have three questions: One, how can I get an audience? Two...

[chuckle]

1:00:09 XM: Do you have any recommendations on improvisation? Three, I think I know another person and you go play with once COVID-19 is over and you start doing shows again?

1:00:27 WM: Okay, I didn't understand three but I'm gonna answer one and two. I'm going to get our guest to answer one and two. How do you get an audience? I think I wanna see what Anat thinks about, "How do you get an audience?" Anat?

1:00:38 AC: These days or in general?

[laughter]

1:00:46 WM: These days, forget about it.

1:00:47 AC: I think you have to stay true to yourself and be who you are and find how to express it and if you're honest, people will come to you.

1:01:02 XM: Thank you.

1:01:04 WM: Mm-hmm. Okay, anybody else got a answer for that?

[laughter]

1:01:10 AC: Was it vague enough?

1:01:13 WM: No, that was good. There's nothing wrong with that. There's no bad answers.

[laughter]

1:01:16 AC: All right.

1:01:17 WM: You know, okay, the second was about improvisation. Who wants to answer that one? About improvisation. How do you improvise? Not all at once. [chuckle] Vic, you wanna answer it?

1:01:36 HH: Victor.

1:01:39 WM: Reginald?

1:01:40 RR: That's not my forte. [laughter]

[laughter]

1:01:43 VG: Let me respond to some of that Wynton, I was muted out.

1:01:46 WM: Right.

1:01:47 VG: I think in just one sentence only... So, the first question you had is to be present will allow you to develop an audience. So you can be present just like you're doing right now. Stay present in spite of COVID-19. In terms of improvisation we often say that inside of that word is to improve. When we improvise we try to improve upon what's there already. People improvise every day, we're improvising right now, we've improvised yesterday, we're gonna improvise tomorrow and to improvise mean we're making things up as we go along. So in our musical training, especially as an educator, we focus on a lot of the technical things that it takes to play music but I think if you just take out your instrument and start making up things on your own and then find other people who make up things and compare what you're making up to theirs.

1:02:42 VG: In fact, when you find other people who you are comparing yourself to, make it the greatest examples that you can come in contact with. So like Louis Armstrong, John Coltrane, Sidney Bechet, Anat, Hamilton, all the greats you wanna compare yourself today is that way you

Skain's Domain - Episode 6

will have a good measurement to how you compare to something else. You always wanna be next to the greatest thing that's around you.

1:03:10 WM: Okay, what was your third question?

1:03:14 XM: Alright, now. Alright, now this one... Alright...

[chuckle]

1:03:18 XM: So have you ever heard of Jazmin Ghent?

1:03:22 WM: Jazmin what?

1:03:23 XM: Jazmin Ghent, she's a saxophone player.

1:03:24 VG: Jazmin Ghent?

1:03:24 XM: Yeah she's a saxophone player.

1:03:34 WM: I don't... I wish I knew him. I don't know, Vic you know?

1:03:37 VG: We don't know her yet but we're gonna figure out how to meet them somewhere.

[chuckle]

1:03:41 WM: Where?

1:03:41 XM: It's a she. It's a she.

1:03:43 VG: Right.

1:03:43 WM: Jazmin Ghent we're gonna find her, wherever she is, where does she live?

1:03:50 XM: She used to... Well she was born in Germany and then she came to USA and then I forgot where she was. Well...

1:04:00 WM: Okay.

1:04:00 XM: Well you could e-mail her. I met her once.

1:04:06 WM: Okay.

1:04:06 XM: I even got a business card.

[laughter]

1:04:10 WM: Okay. Alright. Well, we're with you, it looks like it's past your bedtime, man, what time you go to sleep?

Skain's Domain - Episode 6

1:04:17 XM: Since I'm staying home I go to bed at 11:00.

1:04:22 WM: How old are you?

1:04:24 XM: I'm 11.

1:04:26 WM: What? [laughter] You're 11 and you go to bed at 11:00? Let me talk to your parents man.

[laughter]

1:04:33 WM: I'm just messing with you. Thank you, man. Thank you.

1:04:35 XM: That's right, I'm 11.

[laughter]

1:04:40 WM: Alright, little brother, thank you.

1:04:46 XM: You're welcome.

[laughter]

1:04:52 WM: How old is your son you played with Hamilton?

1:04:55 HH: Now he is 12 so...

[laughter]

1:05:00 WM: Yeah, man.

1:05:03 Moderator: Alright, let's take another question. We've got one from Henry Berberi. Henry, go head.

1:05:10 Henry Berberi: Hi, can you hear me alright?

1:05:13 AM: Yeah.

1:05:14 HB: I just wanted to thank you guys, first of all, for all the stuff you're doing. It's really cool and it kinda gives us some stuff to do and my question is just... It sounds like you guys are all really well-versed in a whole bunch of different genres of music and how do you guys really approach learning a new genre and getting into it?

1:05:38 WM: Well I think I'mma turn that over to Hamilton 'cause he plays all kinds of music.

1:05:42 HH: I think you have to learn about music theory of course, scales, arpeggios, harmony, but you have to learn lots of melodies, lots of tunes. It's the best food in the sense of... It's the best

food to know.

1:06:07 WM: Yeah. Yeah.

1:06:09 HH: If you learn for example, if you want to play Flamenco you have to learn about 20, 30 or 50 new songs from Paco de Lucía, from Tomatito from Camarón de la Isla. So you have to know about this guy but play the melodies and play lots of tunes. I think that's the recipe.

1:06:39 HB: Thank you.

1:06:41 WM: That's great. That made me think what I need to do.

1:06:44 AC: Yeah, it's a good task for now, for these days.

1:06:48 WM: Yeah 'cause that's the DNA of the music up in there.

1:06:52 AC: I was gonna add, you might also wanna learn to dance to the music.

1:06:58 HH: Yes, perfectly, yeah.

1:07:00 AC: Incorporate it with your corpo, incorporate it.

[laughter]

1:07:09 WM: That's right, that's right and you start to find out how everything is connected 'cause the more things you learn, the more you see how is something is like this, it's like people who know how to speak a lot of languages, they see similarities and they find patterns that are similar.

1:07:24 AC: Yes.

1:07:26 VG: Exactly.

1:07:26 Moderator: All right. Thank you Henry. Alright guys, I think we've just got time for one more question. As we wind down, I'd just like to remind everybody quickly about all the live events we'll be continuing to host we have the question and answer sections, with Wynton Marsalis and special guests, masterclasses and conversations with members of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. Live performances, free education classes and more.

1:07:51 Moderator: We also premiered our gala concert last Wednesday the 15th, it's called the Worldwide Concert for our Culture. It can be found on YouTube, Facebook and at jazz.org/gala2020. So be sure to check that out, if he you haven't. Alright so our last question will be coming from Casey Clark. Casey you're unmuted, go ahead.

1:08:13 Casey Clark: Hi this question is actually for Anat. I remember meeting you last summer at Stanford after your concert. I have a question. I'm primarily a jazz clarinetist but I play saxophone as well but I get more gigs on saxophone. How do you balance both instruments keeping proficiency in both?

1:08:38 AC: When I had to divide my practice and I found it's easier to start playing practicing the clarinet and then move to the saxophone but I think part of the trick is to actually learn how to switch between one another because they both have a very different approach to the instrument. For me the making that mental switch is part of the practice. Not only of each instrument but also to be able to switch your head to what you're doing at the moment, also inside when you're at a gig and you wanna move between one instrument and another you have to make this still mental switch. So just have to get used to it, I think.

1:09:27 Casey: Thank you.

1:09:28 AC: Good to see you again.

1:09:28 Casey: And good to see you too.

1:09:32 Moderator: Great, alright, thank you Casey.

1:09:35 Casey: Thank you.

1:09:37 Moderator: Okay so let's see, thanks again to everybody for joining us and being a part of this community, Jazz at Lincoln Center is a non-profit organization in New York city committed to entertaining, enriching and expanding a global community for jazz. If it's within your means, please consider making a donation. We're extraordinarily grateful for any support and with that, I'd just like to thank Wynton Marsalis, Hamilton de Holanda, Anat Cohen, Victor Goines, Reginald Robinson and all of you who asked questions and participated in this evening. Stay safe out there and we hope to see you again soon. Thanks guys.

1:10:13 VG: Thank you.

1:10:15 WM: Alright, I wanna thank all my guests. I love you all. I'm very appreciative. I learned a lot, until we meet again, much love and respect.

1:10:24 AC: Thank you.

1:10:25 HH: Love you, man, love you.

1:10:26 WM: Yeah man. Yes, indeed Hamilton. Alright, Reginald thanks man.

1:10:30 RR: You're welcome, thank you very much.

1:10:33 WM: Yes sir.

1:10:33 AC: Thank you.

1:10:34 WM: I'm gonna call you bro, Reginald. I gotta rap with you.

1:10:37 RR: Alright.

1:10:38 VG: Alright, now Vic.

1:10:39 VG: Alright man, peace.

1:10:44 WM: Crescent City.

1:10:44 WM: Right?

1:10:46 WM: Thank y'all. Hoo-na-nay... Hoo-na-nay, baby. [chuckle]

[music]

1:11:05 WM: That's Baião.

[laughter]

1:11:14 WM: Alright man I'll see y'all.

1:11:14 VG: Later.

1:11:16 RR: I'll see you. Bye.

[laughter]

[pause]