The Jazz Metaphor for Organizing: Historical and Performative Aspects

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ABSTRACT

Until recently, organizations have had a staid quality about them. Even today, the concept, for many, promotes images of stability rather than change. Yet in today's fast-paced, complex, globalizing world, stability seems inappropriate, even passé. This paper argues that we might update our concept of organization if we were to approach organizing in historical and performative terms, like jazz musicians do. This paper explains how jazz musicians use improvising to perform jazz tunes and how their practices organize jazz as both a dynamic musical conversation and as a narrative with a history. These ideas are then extended metaphorically to rethink organizing and management for the 21st Century.
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I have been interested for some time (Hatch 1997; 1998; in press) in the ways that improvisational jazz performance might be used as a metaphor for understanding and articulating the changes that business organizations face due to globalization and the effects of new technology. In particular, demands on organizations to be flexible, networked with other organizations, and ready to change on a moment-to-moment basis, remind me of the organizations that jazz musicians create, namely jazz bands. For example, to enable more or less full employment, jazz musicians often work simultaneously for multiple bands and, to take advantage of a chance to work an unbooked date, will even form a “new” band simply for the purpose of playing that one job. The web of relationships formed by such flexible work practices is similar to the networking, alliances and temporary partnerships envisioned by many as the future of those organizations that will thrive in the globalized, hypercompetitive economy of the 21st Century (e.g., Bell 1973; Peters 1987; Harvey 1990; Drucker 1993).

Although it is likely that futuristic visions of 21st Century organizations exaggerate the extent to which 20th Century modes of organizing will disappear, a peek inside any large company today will reveal far less stability, bureaucracy and hierarchy than existed 10 or even 2 years ago. It is this change that the jazz metaphor helps us to understand and articulate. I am not arguing that jazz should be the only metaphor we use in our attempts to come to grips with recent organizational changes. However, placing jazz alongside the machine and the living organism -- two root metaphors that have dominated the study of organizations during the 20th Century (see Morgan 1986) -- does contribute a range of new possibilities to understand organizing differently. For instance, where the machine metaphor draws attention to reliability, design for purpose, and the efficiency of engineering solutions, the jazz metaphor emphasizes spontaneity and artfulness. Where the metaphor of the living organism emphasizes convergent adaptation to a hostile environment and competition over scarce resources, the jazz metaphor draws attention to collaboration, and to the ways that humans create difference for its own sake.
The associations between jazz and futuristic visions of organizing in the 21st Century explain why some find the jazz metaphor attractive (e.g., the special issue on jazz improvisation, *Organization Science*, October 1998). However, making the metaphor productive demands that we examine less obvious dimensions of the implied comparison (see also Hatch 1999). In this paper I will examine two intertwined aspects of jazz as a metaphor for organizing. The first is the role of history (and memory) in playing and appreciating jazz. The second and related aspect is performative, that is, playing jazz not only involves situating oneself and one’s performance historically, it simultaneously involves doing something in the moment.

This paper will present a historical-performative description of jazz and use this description metaphorically to suggest ways to re-imagine organizations along lines that are in keeping with projections for their 21st Century forms. As mentioned already, the purpose of developing the jazz metaphor is to draw out the collaborative, spontaneous and artful aspects of organizing in contradistinction to the engineered, planned and controlled models that dominate modern management thought. First I will consider the historical aspects of jazz via ideas contributed by Ricoeur and Augustine. Then performative aspects of jazz will be compared to the ideas of Austin. Finally I will suggest what and how this metaphor can contribute to the discipline of business management.

**Historical Aspects of Jazz**

In his study of the relationship between narrative and time, Ricoeur (1984, citing Augustine) explained how memory (past), attention (present) and expectation (future) produce the threefold present of our experience (the present of the past, the present of the present, and the present of the future). To make his point, Ricoeur (1984:20) quoted from Augustine's *Confessions*:

> Suppose that I am going to recite a psalm that I know. Before I begin my faculty of expectation is engaged by the whole of it. But once I have begun, as much of the psalm as I have removed from the province of expectation and relegated to the past now engages my memory, and the scope of the action which I am performing is divided between the two faculties of memory and expectation, the one looking back to the part which I have already recited, the other looking forward to the part which I have still to recite. But my faculty of attention is present all the while, and through it passes what was the future in the process of becoming the past. As the process continues, the province of memory is extended in
proportion as that of expectation is reduced, until the whole of my expectation is absorbed. This happens when I have finished my recitation and it has all passed into the province of memory.

According to Ricoeur, Augustine interpreted the recitation of a psalm against the backdrop of passing time -- seeing different parts of the psalm in shifting relationship to past (memory), present (attention) and future (expectation). Using Augustine’s words, Ricoeur pointed to one of the key features of any narrative (a psalm being only one example), namely, that every narrative has a beginning, a middle and an end, a characteristic which inextricably links narrative to time.

Both narrative and time can be associated to jazz via the recognition that, like the recitation of a psalm or other narrative, the performance of a jazz tune moves through time from beginning, to middle, to end. Furthermore, like Augustine’s psalm recitation, the part of the tune already played remains active in memory. For instance, consider the use of “the head” in jazz performance. In Western jazz, a head is typically 16, 24 or 32 bars of written or memorized music giving an outline of the harmony and melody of a tune, and often providing a suggested tempo and/or rhythm. A jazz tune typically begins by playing the head through "straight" (with little or no improvisational embellishment). Next the musicians improvise on the head (using a variety of rhythms and altered harmonies that the musicians introduce during the performance of the tune along with licks, riffs and whatever other ideas they choose to contribute). Finally, they return to the head and play it once again as the ending. Thus, with some variation, the head provides both beginning and ending, while improvisation on the head (which can deviate dramatically from the head but always makes some reference to it) forms the middle of the tune.

Short-term audile memory allows the musicians to listen to the head more or less continuously throughout the playing of the tune. In a way, each musician plays the head over and over in memory (the present of the past) while improvisation on the head is played out loud (the present of the present). In this way, past and present interact with one another, just as the musicians interact with each other and with the tune they are playing. Furthermore, as Augustine showed in relation to psalm recitation, the musicians’ memories continuously expand as they play a tune. This involves not only the head, but what each of the musicians plays as the tune develops.
Memory of what has been played permits the musicians to refer not only to the head of the tune, but to one another. For instance, they might repeat a line from a previous solo adding variations the soloist did not consider and, in the best cases, will not anticipate (the unexpected produces much of the excitement of playing and listening to jazz). Thus, playing a jazz tune involves intricate intertwinnings of repetition, reference and improvisation. However, while repetition and referencing involve the immediate past in the moment-by-moment present of improvising, these practices also connect the present with more distant pasts.

Heads, and at least some parts of their improvised history become part of jazz musicians’ long term memories. For example, jazz standards (a kind of canon of widely played tunes) form a collective memory in that jazz musicians are expected to know at least a subset of these more or less agreed upon tunes. Their long term memory for tunes (as well as knowledge of music theory and performance conventions) serves as a shared base of knowledge connecting jazz musicians and allowing them to recognize each other and to perform together even though they may otherwise be total strangers. But in addition to its contributions to forming the jazz community, the collective memory for tunes forms an embedded history of jazz that includes knowledge of all the eras, styles and personalities of jazz music that constitute its history.

History is not merely lying around in collective memory, however, it is called forth by playing jazz. Joseph Roach used the concept of restored behavior to describe this process in terms of cultural renewal in his essay on the Louisiana jazz funeral. Roach (1995:46) borrowed this concept from Richard Schechner (1985:35-116) who described restored behavior as “that which can be repeated, rehearsed and above all recreated.” While jazz improvisation is typically defined in terms of its newness, and naively thought of as unrehearsed or “all made up as you go,” Schechner’s concept of restored behavior is closer to the everyday practice of jazz, as Roach pointed out. According to Roach, the key to reconciling the experience of jazz as innovative and spontaneous with the concept of restored behavior, lies in recognizing that every recreation is a “repetition with a difference”.

In this regard, Roach gave the example of “Jelly Roll Morton’s stomp variation on Scott Joplin’s rag” which he described as a transformation of experience through the renewal of particular cultural forms, in this case the rag (which is where most jazz historians locate the birth of jazz). In fact, the
The entire history of jazz can be interpreted as a sequence of such renewals which have led over the years to the progression of jazz styles from Ragtime, to New Orleans, Swing, Be-Bop, Modern, and Free Jazz (see Hatch, in press, for further discussion). But even at the level of a tune, jazz is formed from the stuff of improvising on the past, in other words of renewals involving repetition with a difference. A jazz tune consists of playing the head then playing a series of repetitions of the head with variations. At each repetition the musicians attempt to “say something new”, that is, to play a variation that moves a step or more beyond variations already played. A typical jazz tune progresses through a series of less and less recognizable variations on the head. Partly this is because, with each repetition, the musicians use one another’s variations as additional material to reference and to improvise on. So, as the tune develops, expectations of more and more daring and creative variations grows, such that, when jazz is well-played, there is the sense that the tune builds toward its conclusion. The ending then transitions back to the head which demonstrates the continuous, though tacit, relationship with the tune’s origins. In a sense, each jazz tune is a microcosm of jazz history moving ever further from its origins yet continually referring back to them, allowing echoes of the past to color expectations for the future and both to inspire present performance.

In the same way that musicians refer to one another’s improvisations while playing a tune, they occasionally also refer to more distant moments in jazz history. For example, sometimes musicians will incorporate into their solo an important or impressive piece of playing that they have heard someone else perform before them, such as part or all of a Coltrane or a Miles Davis solo. This practice is called citation. By playing standard tunes and citing from jazz history, jazz musicians incorporate the ideas and styles of those who previously have had an influence on them and on jazz. When they cite a famous solo or play a standard tune, a bit of jazz history literally passes through them, moving from their memories, out through their lips, hands and feet, into the present moment of performing (moving from Ricoeur’s present of the past to the present of the present, opposite to the move Augustine described). Such references to the past bring the power of historical origins into present experiences of playing the tune uniquely now. These ideas and memories enrich jazz performance and imbue it with the emotionally attractive forces of recognition and continuity as well as constituting history. We might even say that referencing brings the past forward in time such that it can be history.
Another sort of referencing involves citing part of the theme song from a popular television program or film score to enliven a solo (e.g., playing the hook line from the Flintstones theme song). Such incorporations can interject humor, demonstrate agility, or simply act as a cover for having no other ideas to contribute at the moment. These practices demonstrate the eclecticism of jazz, that is, jazz will incorporate any idea offered in the context of playing a tune, so long as it is offered within the rather broadly defined constraints laid out by the head, jazz theory and the conventions of jazz performance. Because jazz is eclectic, it has potentially unlimited sources of inspiration to draw upon. Jazz is a mongrel whose creativity derives from the same qualities of diversity that are predicted to be the driving force behind business success in the 21st Century.

As we enter the 21st Century, we are becoming increasingly aware that, like jazz bands, organizations are dependent on their ability to build and use collective memory (Walsh & Ungson 1991; Casey 1997). The jazz metaphor suggests that analogies of heads and referencing to business practices might prove helpful in learning how organizational memory works and how it can be better used. Heads, for instance, might be metaphorically related to what we already know and are inclined to repeat in organizing, such as procedures, routines or technical solutions to previous problems (Walsh & Ungson referred to technical knowledge about how inputs are transformed into outputs as one category of organizational memory). In this case, improvising on a head would mean playing with technical knowledge. We have recently seen organizations play with technical knowledge, for instance, by placing it in a new context (e.g., via benchmarking), breaking it apart and reassembling it in a new order (e.g., as in business process re-engineering), or reinterpreting it (e.g., through the perspective of the customer as in relationship marketing). Such activities of restoration and renewal are predicted to be a constant feature of 21st Century organizations, however, we also know that such practices fail unless they are imaginatively undertaken. In this regard, jazz offers a prescriptive model for using collective organizational memory more effectively. That is, jazz offers a model of repetition with a difference that restores knowledge with each repeated performance but also allows new ideas to influence old ones.

Alternatively, heads could be related to cultural knowledge, such as core values or the vision of founders, by which past ways of perceiving, thinking and feeling about issues and problems offer experience on which to draw when confronting problems in the present or anticipating those of the
future. Playing a familiar head filled with cultural knowledge can inspire new activities and make them coherent and continuous with the past. In either case, the idea of heads as repeatable chunks of technical knowledge or cultural heritage provides a tangible focus to organizational improvisation (remember, you always need something to improvise on).

As with playing heads and citing, references to moments or persons in history call memories of the past into the present along with their emotional associations and energies. Referencing in organizations typically occurs by telling stories about founders or corporate origins, local heroes and villains, critical incidents, or past successes and failures (e.g., Martin et al., 1983). Thus, application of the jazz metaphor to organizing suggests that storytelling and narrative (e.g., Boje 1991; Czarniawska 1997) are important means of linking history to organizational improvising. This observation returns us to the issue of narrative and to its parallels with psalm recitation and the threefold present with which this section of the essay began.

The main differences between playing a jazz tune and psalm recitation are that the jazz tune is produced collaboratively in the present of the present, and that thus there are multiple memories containing different versions of what has gone before inspiring different but interacting expectations for what will come next. It is the interaction among plural memories and expectations that makes jazz so exciting. Furthermore, jazz musicians deliberately try to dramatically alter the course of the “narrative” every time they play it. Playing jazz well both incites expectations and violates them. The threefold present of playing jazz is thus more pluralistic and less predictable than that of psalm recitation. These differences resonate with predictions that 21st Century organizations will be built on diversity, creativity, collaboration and responsiveness to their multiple constituencies. Thus, through the metaphor of jazz, these differences link Ricoeur’s ideas about narrative and time to understanding radical changes taking place in our organizations. To come at this in a different but related way, I turn now to the performative aspects of jazz.

**Performative Aspects of Jazz**

Jazz musicians say that they “speak” through improvisation. In fact, many use the language of language to describe what they do, or how they or others have performed: “Kevin (the bass player)
had a lot to say tonight,” or “I had nothing to say on that last solo; I couldn’t hear (didn’t have) any ideas”. I am mixing metaphors here, but this is because musicians themselves describe music as a language, and jazz as a conversation (Berliner, 1994). Nonetheless, the fact that jazz musicians say they “speak” through improvisation or “express ideas” in their solos, indicates a possibly helpful association between speaking and performing jazz that invites comparison with some of J. L. Austin’s ideas.

In *How To Do Things With Words*, Austin (1962) made his case for distinguishing what he called constatives (i.e., descriptive statements that can be judged as true or false) from performatives (utterances that do something). He devoted his book to developing criteria for assessing whether or not a given utterance is a performative. Along the way his desire to justify this distinction forced him to make many more, some of which are particularly helpful in understanding jazz and its metaphoric links to organizing, in particular locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, and happy versus unhappy performatives. In regard to Austin’s three types of performative acts, he (1962:109-110) stated:

> We first distinguished a group of things we do in saying something, which together we summed up by saying we perform a *locutionary act*, which is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference, which again is roughly equivalent to ‘meaning’ in the traditional sense. Second, we said that we also perform *illocutionary acts*, such as informing, ordering, warning, undertaking, &c., i.e. utterances which have a certain conventional force. Thirdly, we may also perform *perlocutionary* acts: what we bring about or achieve by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring, and even, say, surprising or misleading. Here we have three, if not more, different senses or dimensions of the ‘use of a sentence’ or of the ‘the use of language’ (and, of course, there are others also).

Austin’s distinction between locutionary acts as *meaningful*, illocutionary acts as *forceful*, and perlocutionary acts as *affecting others*, provides a vocabulary for explaining what jazz does (or does not do). That is, (good) jazz simultaneously has meaning, force, and effect. Any personal experience of listening to good jazz and comparing it to bad should confirm this application. Good jazz has a high level of emotional, intellectual and/or aesthetic content or meaning; it is forceful in the sense that it demands your attention and directs it once it is attained; and it literally moves you -- it turns your head, taps your foot, tenses or relaxes your muscles. It can have even more distant effects, such as changing your music preferences, making you more playful, or annoying you, etc.
Thus, I would argue that (good) jazz is performative in all three of Austin’s senses in which “to say something is to do something”.

It may be important to point out, as does Austin, that the connections between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts are not causal. Locutionary acts involve uttering noises and words and using them with a certain sense and reference. Such acts of meaning are different from, but also part of, illocutionary acts. Austin (1962:114) gave the example of the illocutionary act of congratulating someone, where “to congratulate is necessarily to say certain words.” But this, Austin emphasized, does not mean that the illocutionary act is a consequence of the locutionary act. Illocutionary acts involve more than locutionary acts insofar as they bring about both “the understanding of the meaning and the force of locution” (1962:117). This understanding Austin called “uptake”. In Austin’s (1962:116) words, “I cannot be said to have warned an audience unless it hears what I say and takes what I say in a certain sense”. Through their force, illocutionary acts make meaning known. Perlocutionary acts, in contrast, have to do with the consequences of locutionary and illocutionary acts -- they are what happen as a result of meaning and its force being understood.

This explanation of the links between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts highlights three difficulties that may ensue in the course of speech acts: meaning may not be understood, force not appreciated, consequences go awry. These difficulties can be found in the context of modern managing practices. For instance, it seems to me that many managerial acts (e.g., acquisition, downsizing) have much of their meaning squeezed out of them by over-rationalization which discards, or at least represses, their emotional content (see also Hopfl and Linstead 1993). Managerial acts, such as strategic vision statements, may well be forceful, however, they all too often derive their force, not from the illocutionary power of statements made, but from their speaker’s hierarchical authority. Finally emotionless, authoritative acts by management definitely achieve effects, but not always (or often?) those intended. Where most managers intend by taking action to lead (e.g., make transformational organizational change), the effects of emotionless, authoritative acts are most likely to be superficial compliance with whatever authority dictates, along with cynicism toward the managerial rhetoric that usually accompanies such statements (Etzioni, 1975, called this calculative commitment and described it as typical of business organizations). Such
effects translate into what Austin called unhappy performatives, in this case the performative was unhappy because it did not turn out as the performer wished it would. Austin called this a misfire.

Another type of unhappy performative is what Austin termed an abuse. An abuse is a performative that is insincerely or falsely undertaken (e.g., a promise not meant, a false apology). We can translate the question of performative happiness into the jazz domain by asking: Is simply playing a jazz tune the same as doing jazz? Yes and no. Let me explain my ambivalent response in relation to the problem of abuses. When an audience is unsophisticated and cannot appreciate the performance the jazz musicians are capable of providing, the musicians will often underperform. Instead of improvising, for example, they may play a solo they know by heart, or allow the interaction between soloists and those comping (providing rhythmic and/or harmonic support by playing “behind” the soloist), to be void of meaning and uninspired. Technically speaking, the musicians will be playing jazz (they use jazz forms, respect performance conventions and apply jazz theory appropriately) but the heart and soul of the music is missing. You might say that such a performance sounds like jazz, but is not really jazz.

In Austin’s terms, the problem lies in the lack of force -- the illocutionary act is missing even though locutionary and perlocutionary acts take place (e.g., notes and solos are played, the music subliminally encourages chatting cafe patrons to linger over their drinks). Some may rest the blame for this type of unhappy performative on the musicians’ cynicism (why bother playing well when nobody listens?), but it equally lies with the audience. As Austin made clear, the problem is one of uptake, or as Timothy Gould (1995:29) explained, the offer must be accepted. There are two parties to an illocutionary act, the performer and the audience, and illocutionary acts presume that a connection between them is made.

A problem similar to Austin’s difficulties distinguishing constatives and performatives now confronts us. How do you know that something has been done? You will know when jazz has been done (versus when the musicians simply describe jazz by copying or faking a performance), when you hear it (assuming you are actively listening and can discern the difference). The performative in jazz, as in speech acts, is active, not passive; it is open to engagement versus subject to analysis. To know the performative mode of jazz (which is to know jazz) one must at some level become it (e.g., through
playing jazz, or being fully engaged by listening to it). There is an entering into the act demanded by the performative mode of experience to which Austin referred when he grammatically characterized the performative as utterances with first person singular present indicative active verbs (e.g., “I thee wed”, “I warn you”, “I apologize”). Austin’s difficulties were not the product of his trying to analyze the performative grammatically, but that he tried to analyze it at all. Analysis constantly thrust him into constative mode such that he himself could not do, but could only describe.

I raise this point here because I believe a similar scenario has unfolded in management over the 20th Century. As managers have become more analytical about business practices, they have withdrawn considerably from acts of organizing, that is, they have largely separated themselves from the performative mode that is organizing. Thus, many managers have paralleled Austin’s move in analyzing the performative. Though managers are likely to perceive themselves as living close to the action in their organizations, their action has always been mostly talk (Minzberg 1963; Boden 1994), and their talk has become increasingly less performative thereby losing its meaning, its illocutionary force, and thus its power to affect others.

The jazz metaphor has something to offer in this regard. First, Austin’s ideas suggest that meaning (the locutionary act) must be in place if an audience for illocutionary and perlocutionary acts is to be assembled and influenced. In today’s organizations one of the biggest managerial challenges is to find and keep good employees (similar arguments could be built on finding and keeping good customer/clients, investors, suppliers, alliance partners, etc.). Human resources specialists predict that in the 21st Century, where job security will be a thing of the past, organizations that offer “employability” (training that ensures that the employ can find another job if this one is made redundant) will lose their best employees to firms willing to offer them a higher wage or different training opportunities. Offering meaningful work is one solution to the problem of retention suggested by HR specialists.

While Austin does not put much store in the locutionary act as a point of differentiating between constantives and performatives, it is still true that without locution (meaning), illocution (force) and perlocution (effect on others) are lost (i.e., they are meaningless). Application of the jazz metaphor means giving consideration to what makes jazz meaningful and relating it to organizing practices.
First there is the emotional content of the music, how it makes you feel to perform or listen to it. If it does not touch me, I am more likely to stay within myself, permitting no influence from messages addressed to me to penetrate my being. To appreciate jazz I must emotionally engage with it. Second, there is intellectual content, for example the intricacies of formulating daring new harmonies, rhythms, and melodic lines within the constraints of the form offered by the head of a tune, and within the developing logic provided by improvisation in the context of this performance. If the tune being played is the same one I have heard before, and I am not able to alter its course by my own contribution or at least challenge my ability to anticipate its course, it will not involve me (there will be no uptake). Finally, there is the aesthetic dimension of meaning, the beauty of the music being made, its quality of inspiration. If what is being said provokes my imagination, I become intrinsically motivated to act.

Implications and Conclusions

Jazz is opportunistic, eclectic, a mongrel. It incorporates ideas and takes inspiration without regard or concern for their origins. Jazz is fundamentally interdisciplinary and opportunistic in this respect and so offers a model for a knowledge rich age such as the 21st Century is predicted to be. The metaphoric approach, likewise, seems appropriate to an interdisciplinary and pluralistic enterprise in that it permits us to learn from unlikely juxtapositions, comparisons of things not normally considered similar, yet harboring similarities capable of suggesting heretofore concealed understandings. Like jazz, metaphor delights in making complex and surprising connections, and in this way, jazz and metaphor seem meant for each other. This paper offered development and exploration of the jazz metaphor for organizing based initially in the similarity between the organization of jazz bands and predictions about what organizations will be like in the 21st Century (i.e., networked, fluid, rapidly and constantly changing). In exploring jazz as a potential means of understanding these organizations better, its historical and performative aspects were described and applied to organizing and managing.

Exploring the historical aspects of jazz suggested viewing organizing as sequences of restored behavior, repeated playings of technical and cultural themes (heads), but always repetition with a difference that allows for innovation and change. Thus, improvisation on existing knowledge and
past experience was offered as a model for thinking simultaneously about stability and change, and about history and the future -- ways of thinking (paradoxical, processual) needed by those who will populate 21st Century organizations. In particular, the jazz metaphor suggests that continuity and innovation can both be encouraged by referencing the past in the context of inventing the future, for example by asking: How would Miles (or the company founder) have handled this situation? Such referencing practices demand a personal and engaged appreciation of history, such as is provided by organizational narrative or storytelling.

Exploring the performative aspects of jazz led to recognition that metaphors are often linked to other metaphors. In explaining how jazz is played, it is difficult to avoid the metaphors of language and conversation. This led to an association to Austin’s concept of performativity and a suggestion that jazz be assessed according to the criteria of happy performatives -- meaning, force and effect. Extending these criteria to organizing and management led to a critique of modern management practices in light of the demands placed on managers to be more involved, inspiring and engaged, demands produced by the changing conditions of the 21st Century and informed by the jazz metaphor.

The metaphoric development of jazz in relation to organizing draws out the collaborative, spontaneous and artful aspects of managing by provoking us to do jazz in Austin’s performative terms. In this essay I have tried to demonstrate performativity in a jazz-like way. For example, I have cited the words of Ricoeur, who built on citations of Augustine’s work, and thereby I have engaged in bringing history into the present through referencing. I have also improvised on the words of those I/they have cited -- Ricoeur/Augustine, Roach/Austin/Schechner, Austin, -- borrowing their phrases (e.g., the threefold present, restored behavior, the happy performative) and using them for purposes that are partly mine and partly theirs. In this way I have restored the past, collaborated with it, making history part of the present that this essay presents. This effort is illocutionary to the extent that it has the force of drawing your attention and directing it in particular ways, and will be perlocutionary as intended if you imagine using references to history in the form of technical knowledge and/or cultural heritage to organize in a similarly jazz-like way in the future. If so, the project of developing the jazz metaphor in relation to 21st Century organizing will be, for me at least, a happy one.
References


