



OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
PRESENTS

# Connecting with the Arts



## The History of Jazz

**The Jazz genre of music** encompasses a wide variety of performances, which includes instrumental and vocal repertoire. Jazz originated in the late 19th and early 20th century in African American communities throughout the United States. It has been hailed as “one of America’s original art forms.” A skilled jazz musician will play a tune in many different ways, and will never play the tune exactly the same way twice. The musician may change the melody, harmony or time signature depending on his/her mood or interactions with other musicians. This musical style is called improvisation - the art of creating a unique, new musical statement on the spur of the moment. When one thinks of jazz, the city of New Orleans and guitarist B.B. King often come to mind.

In vocal jazz, singers may sing the lyrics of a song, or improvise with wordless sounds or nonsense syllables. This technique is referred to as scat singing. This is a difficult technique in which the voice becomes the instrument, improvising melodies and rhythms.

**Blues** is another type of jazz that evolved during the twentieth century. It has a slow, swinging beat, and can express sadness, worry or uncertainty.

### Try This:

- 1) Visit The Oklahoman Archives ([nieonline.com/theoklahoman/archive.cfm](http://nieonline.com/theoklahoman/archive.cfm)) and enter your class login information. Search for the word “Jazz” and sort your search results to show “Oldest First” and then answer the following questions:
  - a) In what year was the oldest article about Jazz published in The Oklahoman?
  - b) Locate the article titled JAZZ written on July 06, 1919. Make a list of all of the instruments found in Jazz bands that are listed throughout the article.
- 2) Go to **Youtube.com** and search for the following artists and songs:
  - a) Billie Holiday (Stormy Weather)
  - b) Polly Gibbons (Miss Celies Blues)
  - c) John Coltrane & Johnny Hartman (My One and Only Love)

### Extra Credit:

**Attend a live performance.** OCCC presents Polly Gibbons on Thursday, October 15, 2015, at 7:30 P.M. in the Visual and Performing Arts Center Theater located at 7777 S. May Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK.

