

# APOLLO

## EDUCATION

THE APOLLO THEATER STUDY GUIDE Published by the Apollo Theater Education Program in New York, NY | Volume 5, Issue 1, October 2015

# MEETING DEE DEE'S VOICE





This Study Guide provides information on the artists, jazz, and the history and culture of New Orleans. Activities for students were created for an average 5 - 8 grade level. However, the information can be adapted for older or younger students.

The Apollo Theater is a world-renowned theater known for enriching communities and schools with the arts. Located on 125th street in Harlem, the Apollo has a long history of showcasing the talents of many legendary artists on its stage. As part of our ongoing commitment to providing world class entertainment and education through the arts, the Apollo Theater Education Program is pleased to present a special performance of *Meeting Dee Dee's Voice* as part of our 2015/16 School Day Live series.

*Meeting Dee Dee's Voice* stars vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater and members of the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra. This performance will highlight the human voice as a key instrument in a jazz ensemble. By "meeting" Dee Dee's voice, students will learn more about the art form of jazz, the rich musical history of New Orleans, and the ability of the human voice to build narratives and spark imagination, both with and without the use of words.

# About the Artists



The New Orleans Jazz Orchestra

## DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER

Dee Dee Bridgewater (pictured on cover) has had a multifaceted career spanning four decades. A Grammy and Tony Award-winning artist she is considered to be in the upper echelon of vocalists. Her spin on standards and her ability to re-envision jazz classics has made her a trailblazer in vocal music. Considered a fearless voyager, explorer, pioneer and keeper of the tradition of jazz vocals, she has recorded albums that pay tribute to other great jazz singers such as Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday.

Dee Dee Bridgewater's career has always crossed musical genres. Her first professional experience was as a member of the legendary Thad Jones/Mel Louis Big Band. Throughout the 1970's she performed with such jazz notables

as Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Dexter Gordon and Dizzy Gillespie. After a foray into the pop music world during the 1980s, she relocated to Paris and began to turn her attention back to Jazz. Bridgewater also pursued a parallel career in musical theater, winning a Tony Award for her role as "Glinda" in *The Wiz* in 1975. Her other theatrical credits include *Sophisticated Ladies*, *Black Ballad*, *Carmen*, *Cabaret* and the West End Production of *Lady Day*, for which Bridgewater received the British Laurence Olivier Nomination for Best Actress in a Musical. As a Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Bridgewater continues to appeal for international solidarity to finance global grassroots projects in the fight against world hunger.

Bridgewater is a producer with the Universal Music Group and produces all of her own CDs.

## THE NEW ORLEANS JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Artistic Director Irvin Mayfield founded the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra, in 2002 as a powerful vehicle for celebrating and advancing the cultural and historical legacy of New Orleans Jazz. The concept came to Mayfield after he created the Institute of Jazz Culture at Dillard University where he was the youngest member of the faculty. As he looked around the city for a partner in the Jazz Industry, he found that there was no institution committed solely to the business of Jazz or performing it 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in the city that created it.

This led Mayfield to create the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra, designed to

celebrate and fortify the American Jazz portfolio, while providing the infrastructure for developing the New Orleans Jazz Industry. Nicknamed NOJO, the full orchestra consists of 18-pieces.

NOJO had its first performance in early 2003 at Tipitina's in New Orleans. The Orchestra made history on November 17, 2005, when they symbolically reopened New Orleans with the performance of a piece composed by Mayfield, *All the Saints*, at Christ Church Cathedral less than three months after Hurricane Katrina devastated the city. This commission served as the first major cultural event inside New Orleans post-Katrina.

NOJO has also headlined all of America's major performing arts venues and clubs and produced the first local, ticketed Jazz Concert Series in the history of New Orleans. As a non-profit organization,



Artistic Director Irvin Mayfield

NOJO has forged an academic partnership with the University of New Orleans, where it oversees the New Orleans Jazz Institute (NOJI).

NOJO's latest album, *BOOK ONE* on World Village, a subsidiary of the Harmonia Mundi label, won the 2010 Grammy Award for "Best Large Jazz Ensemble." In 2012, NOJO celebrated their 10-year anniversary with *The NOJO 10*, a series that featured events at Preservation Hall, Tipitina's, the New Orleans Museum of Art, and Carnegie Hall. Earlier this year, Irvin Mayfield and NOJO released *Dee Dee's Feathers*, a collaboration with the great Jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater.

# LISTEN UP!

Similar to *Call and Response*, storytelling in Jazz is rooted in the oral traditions of West Africa and African American experience. In West African cultures, a griot is a wise man who is part musician, part historian, and part storyteller. Jazz musicians embrace this heritage, and greatly respect the elders of their music who pass on the traditions.

## Meeting Dee Dee's Voice

*Dee Dee's voice can do amazing things:  
She can scat, she can solo, and of course, she can sing!  
Sometimes she sings the melody all alone  
Or duets with the trumpet, sounding like a trombone!  
She tells many stories that are funny or sad  
She can choose to use words or sometimes she scats  
Each song that she sings is a piece of her heart  
And the music she makes is the world's greatest art.*

## Try This

- Stage a musical conversation with a friend. If you choose to sing, take turns sharing a phrase then wait your friend to respond with the same phrase.
- Jazz musicians are able to "say" a lot, whether singing or playing instruments. It's not necessarily what is said that makes the music powerful, it's how it's said, and why.
- If you play instruments, take turns playing and listening to one another, while trying to figure out what one another is "saying" musically. Without using words, on your instruments can you sound happy, sad, angry, shy, or silly?

## Words to Know

**Call and Response:** when one musician plays or sings a phrase and the other musicians respond by playing or singing the same phrase right back.

**Duet:** when a melody is shared and sung by two people or instruments.

**Improvisation:** when musicians compose and play music on the spot based on their knowledge and experience. (Track: "St. James Infirmary")

**Melody:** the main part of a jazz tune before and after the solos. (Track: "What a Wonderful World")

**Polyphony:** when several instruments take improvised solos at the same time. (Track: "Treme Song/Do Whatcha Wanna")

**Improvisation:** when musicians compose and play music on the spot based on their knowledge and experience.

**Scat:** singing with jazz syllables instead of words. (Track: "One Fine Thing")

**Storytelling:** Verbally sharing a story or account of something that was told to or happened to you. (Track: "Dee Dee's Feathers")

You can listen to these tracks on the Spotify playlist "[Meeting Dee Dee's Voice](#)". If you do not have an account you can open one for free at [Spotify.com](#).

Some tracks are available on [Youtube](#). All tracks are available on the CD "Dee Dee's Feathers".

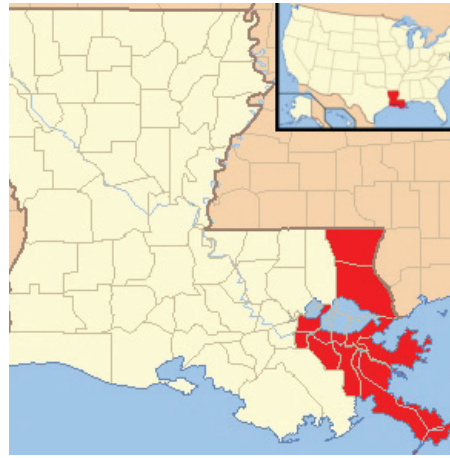


# Where is New Orleans?

**J**azz is a music which could have only been born in New Orleans, Louisiana. Founded by the French in 1718, La Nouvelle-Orléans was settled along a crescent shaped bend in the lower Mississippi River, only 100 miles from the Gulf of Mexico. This strategic location made New Orleans the second busiest port in the country by the mid-1800s. Trade goods like coffee, rice, and cotton were popular imports and exports.

One of the first ships to arrive in New Orleans wasn't carrying imported goods,

however; it was carrying enslaved Africans. Developing a fast growing city required vast amounts of labor and resources. In a dark period in our nation's history, such labor was enforced upon 12.5 million people who were stolen from their homes and had their



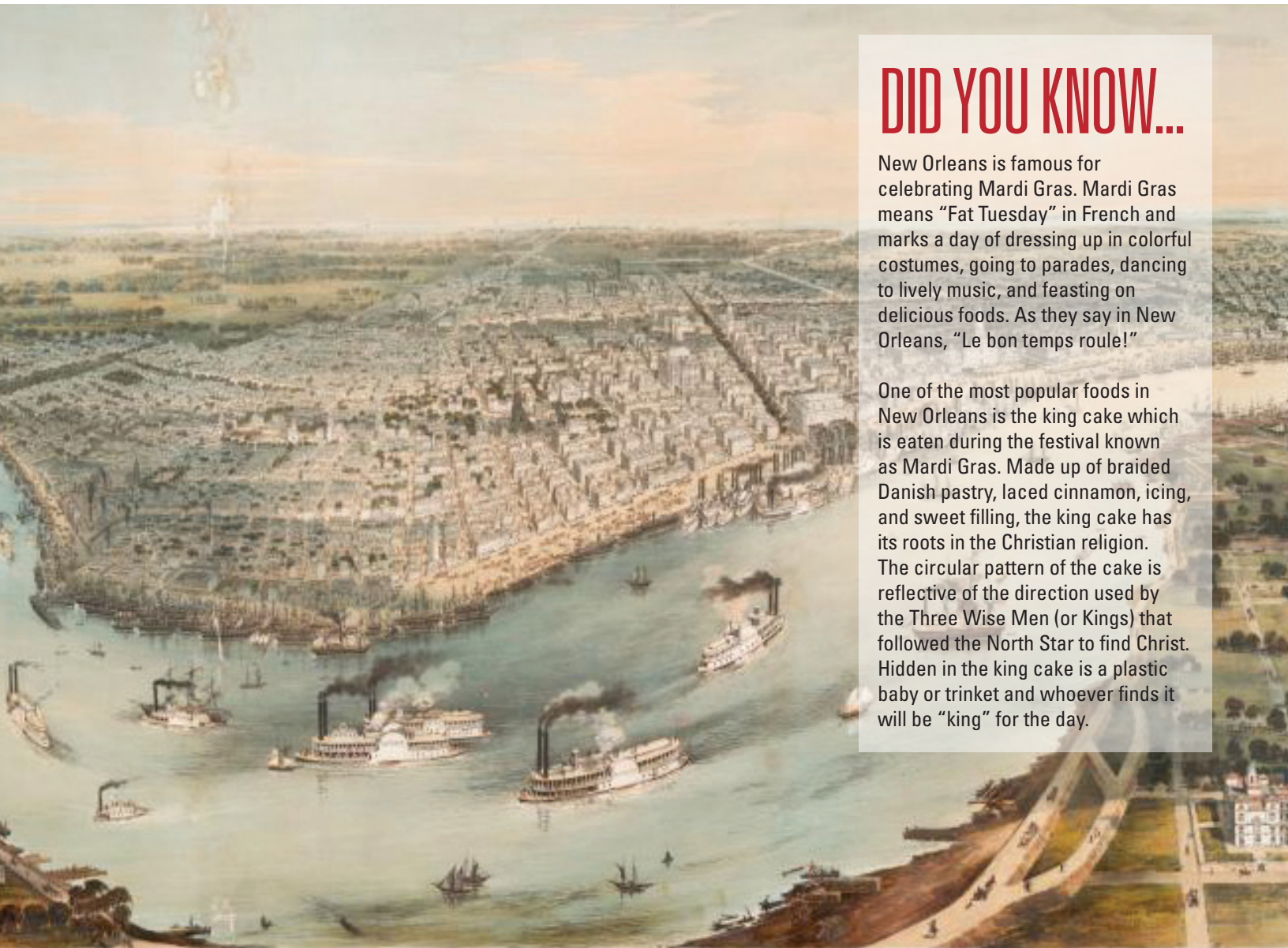
freedoms taken away. In 1719, just one year after New Orleans was founded, the first ships carrying enslaved Africans set shore on the banks of the Mississippi.

Arriving from West Africa after months of captivity at sea, once on land, slaves had to do whatever they could to survive the harsh conditions they encountered. One way of resisting these difficult times was to carry on cultural traditions practiced in their homelands, which provided a sense of hope and community. These activities included dancing, drumming, and singing. Syncopated rhythms and vocal call and response melodies from Africa, combined with European instruments and song forms, met uniquely in New Orleans and, in time, produced one of America's greatest indigenous art forms: Jazz.

## DID YOU KNOW...

New Orleans is famous for celebrating Mardi Gras. Mardi Gras means "Fat Tuesday" in French and marks a day of dressing up in colorful costumes, going to parades, dancing to lively music, and feasting on delicious foods. As they say in New Orleans, "Le bon temps roule!"

One of the most popular foods in New Orleans is the king cake which is eaten during the festival known as Mardi Gras. Made up of braided Danish pastry, laced cinnamon, icing, and sweet filling, the king cake has its roots in the Christian religion. The circular pattern of the cake is reflective of the direction used by the Three Wise Men (or Kings) that followed the North Star to find Christ. Hidden in the king cake is a plastic baby or trinket and whoever finds it will be "king" for the day.







# New Orleans

## A Brief History

A center of the slave trade for nearly 150 years, New Orleans was unique for being a city which granted slaves the right to gather and practice cultural traditions from their homelands. Once a week on Sundays, enslaved Africans were allowed to meet in Congo Square; a market where blacks could socialize, dance, drum, sing, cook, tell stories, and trade goods. The syncopated Bamboula rhythm felt in African drumming and dance, as well as the call and response heard in slaves' singing, would become the backbones of Jazz.

By the turn of the twentieth century, African rhythms long been heard on the streets of New Orleans, were joined by the sounds of European classical and marching music. It was when African American musicians gained access to European instruments, as well as opportunities to learn European song forms, that Jazz started to take shape.

Wind instruments including the trumpet, trombone, and clarinet evoked the bluesy

call and response qualities of African American singing. The horns were then accompanied by snare and bass drums playing syncopated, swinging rhythms. Forming ensembles called brass bands, black and white musicians alike marched through the streets of New Orleans playing for special occasions such as weddings and funerals. But black musicians were doing something white musicians weren't; they were improvising. They were composing music on the spot.

While still heard on the streets, Jazz eventually moved indoors into small "honky-tonk" clubs. Here, new instruments were brought into the jazz ensemble, including the guitar, upright bass, and piano. Early pioneers of Jazz such as Charles "Buddy" Bolden, Edward "Kid" Ory, and Joe "King" Oliver, all helped bring the music to the forefront of New Orleans culture and society in the early 1900s. It was a young trumpeter named Louis Armstrong however, who brought Jazz to the forefront in America. Jazz has become one of our nation's most revered cultural art forms. It lives on to this day and continues to evolve in the place of its birth; New Orleans.

## DID YOU KNOW...

The conversational nature of Call and Response in Jazz comes from West African traditions and the enslaved African American experience; including the aural practices of singing field hollers and work songs.

## Get To Know A Griot

Who is a griot in your community? Who has lived and experienced more than you, someone you can learn from, someone who is willing and wanting to tell their story?

With your teacher's permission, set up an interview with members of your community who may have stories to share regarding your community's history and culture.

To learn about the Apollo Theater Oral History Project check out the video Through the Eyes of an Artist.  
<https://vimeo.com/130876454>

# A MUSICAL LEGACY

Jazz was born in New Orleans, while it grew up in cities like Chicago, Kansas City, and New York. In New York in particular, the following styles of Jazz have developed during the century long relationship between the music and the city:

Swing Cool Jazz Bebop  
Fusion  
Free Jazz Hard Bop  
Afro Cuban

While New Orleans is the birthplace of Jazz, the diversity of the city and its culture have also played an important role in the development of the following styles of music:

Funk Mardi Gras  
Blues Indian music  
Rhythm & Blues Rap  
Rock and Roll Zydeco

## Terms of Endearment

A sign of respect amongst New Orleans musicians is to be given a nickname, suggesting nobility or expertise in music or on one's instrument. Check out these notable New Orleans musicians and their nicknames:



**“King” Oliver**  
Jazz Trumpeter



**Professor Longhair**  
Rock and Roll Pianist and Vocalist



**Dr. John**  
Funk Pianist and Vocalist



**Louis “Pops” Armstrong**  
Jazz Trumpeter and Vocalist



**Fats Domino**  
Rhythm and Blues Pianist and Vocalist

The city of New Orleans has a few nicknames of its own. Here are a few:

### The Big Easy

Life moves at a gentle, slow pace in New Orleans. Go ahead, take the time to talk to your neighbor, or go out and hear live music with friends. The city is crawling with amazing things to do and discover. Don't let life pass you by!

### Crescent City

Named for the city's location on a crescent shaped bend along the banks of the lower Mississippi River.

### NOLA

An acronym for New Orleans (N.O.), Louisiana (LA).





# New Orleans Native Son LOUIS ARMSTRONG

[CLICK HERE](#)

to learn about a  
New Orleans tradition  
called  
the Second Line

**N**ew Orleans native, and Apollo Theater Walk of Fame Inductee, Louis “Satchmo” or “Pops” Armstrong, helped bring Jazz to the forefront of American popular culture. Famous as a trumpeter, vocalist, and known for his scat singing, Armstrong is also credited with being one of the first great improvisers in Jazz. While music scholars and critics agree he was a musical genius and virtuoso on his instrument, it was Armstrong’s warm and charming personality which won audiences over around the world.

Did you know: New Orleans native, and Apollo Walk of Fame Inductee, Louis Armstrong first recorded “What A Wonderful World” in 1967. It quickly became one of his signature songs.

The beginning melody to “What A Wonderful World” shares the same notes / is the same as “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star,” “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep”, and the “Alphabet Song.”

## TRY THIS:

Like Louis and Dee Dee, take a favorite song and instead of singing the words, sing syllables to the melody. Here are some examples that you can practice singing: “boo, da, doo, ba, bop, bam, boom!” How many different instruments can you imitate scatting?

Legend has it that Louis Armstrong accidentally dropped his music during a recording session. Not knowing the words to the song by heart, he sang the melody using jazz syllables instead of words, sounding like his trumpet. Armstrong is credited with being the first jazz musician to record scat singing on his 1926 take of “Heebie Jeebies”.

**CHECK IT OUT:** <https://youtu.be/ksmGt2U-xTE>

**TAKE A LOOK:** <https://youtu.be/E2VCwBzGdPM>

# Hungry For More?

Similar to its music, New Orleans is known for its food. The city's rich history of diverse cultures mixing and founding new traditions unique to New Orleans, dates back centuries.

**See if you can match the name of the food with its description**

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 1. Gumbo        | A) A sandwich served on French bread consisting of a meat or seafood, then "dressed" with lettuce, tomatoes, pickles, and mayonnaise.   |
| 2. Jambalaya    | B) A beverage made of chicory coffee and hot milk, served best with a plate of warm beignets.   |
| 3. Po' Boy      | C) A hearty soup stock (or roux in French) consisting of meats or seafood, the Cajun "holy trinity" of bell peppers, celery, and onions, and often times the African vegetable, okra. |
| 4. Beignets     | D) Features the holy trinity of vegetables. In addition to meats or seafood, this Creole rice dish was inspired by the Spanish dish, paella.  |
| 5. Cafe Au Lait | E) A light, warm French doughnut covered in powdered sugar.   |
| 6. King cake    | F) A braided Danish pastry, laced with cinnamon, icing and a hidden plastic baby or trinket inside.   |

ANSWERS

1 (C); 2 (D); 3 (A); 4 (B); 5 (E); 6 (F)

Learn more: <http://www.neworleansonline.com/neworleans/cuisine/traditionalfoods/>

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