



# **Fashion and Jazz: Dress, Identity and Subcultural Improvisation (Dress, Body, Culture)**

*Alphonso McClendon*

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Born in the late 19th century, jazz gained mainstream popularity during a volatile period of racial segregation and gender inequality. It was in these adverse conditions that jazz performers discovered the power of dress as a visual tool used to defy mainstream societal constructs, shaping a new fashion and style aesthetic.

*Fashion and Jazz* is the first study to identify the behaviours, signs and meanings that defined this newly evolving subculture.

Drawing on fashion studies and cultural theory, the book provides an in-depth analysis of the social and political entanglements of jazz and dress, with individual chapters exploring key themes such as race, class and gender. Including a wide variety of case studies, ranging from Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald to Louis Armstrong and Chet Baker, it presents a critical and cultural analysis of jazz performers as modern icons of fashion and popular style.

Addressing a number of previously underexplored areas of jazz culture, such as modern dandyism and the link between drug use and glamorous dress, *Fashion and Jazz* provides a fascinating history of fashion's dialogue with African-American art and style. It is essential reading for students of fashion, cultural studies, African-American studies and history.

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