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- [“Jazz and Imagination: A Sartrean Approach to Jazz Ontology”](#)

This paper seeks to reframe jazz ontology within Sartre’s theories of the imagination (1941). To Sartre, our imagination allows us to synthesize multiple phenomenological perceptions together into one singular object. For instance, in perception, we are only able to see three sides of a die at most. Despite this shortcoming, after looking at each side of the die, I can easily tell what numbers lay on the hidden edges. I argue that jazz musicians perform a similar feat. By familiarizing themselves with common jazz vocabulary (a phenomenological task), jazz musicians are able to create massive objects that account for the various ways they could perform a tune. When performing, the jazz musician imagines the specific way they would like to perform the tune in the same way that when I choose the face present when imagining a die. This suggests then that a distinct version of each jazz tune exists in every jazz musician’s mind.