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Often credited as being invented by Louis Armstrong, scat singing (or jazz scatting) is when a vocalist uses syllables, rather than meaningful words and phrases, to deliver an improvised solo. The exact syllables and sounds used will vary with the period and style, but some examples might include: doo, be, shoo, bop, ooh, dee, doo, sha-bam Heres a quick example, albeit with a comedic touch: Traditionally, in a jazz group, the vocalist sings the melody and accompanying lyrics to the song, before an instrumentalist might play an improvised solo over the tunes chord sequence. But by taking a scat solo, the singer is freed from the constraints of the lyrics, and is able to improvise creatively in the way that a saxophonist or trumpeter might. Its not an easy skill. If a saxophonist, for example, has a decent understanding of harmony, he or she can press the relevant keys on their instrument to produce a note that they know will fit with the underlying chord. A singer cannot do this: they have to use their ears and contextualise the notes they choose in a way that is arguably more challenging. This concise video below is an excellent introduction with from Michael Mwenso and Brianna Thomas as part of Jazz at The Lincoln Centres Jazz Academy. Trumpeter & vocalist Louis Armstrong is generally regarded as the inventor of scat singing in jazz as much as music can be invented! According to legend, he was recording Heebie Jeebies with his band The Hot Five in 1926 and his sheet music fell off the stand during the middle of a take. As he couldnt remember the lyrics, he sang an improvised solo with nonsensical syllables instead of the proper words. The song became a hit, and Armstrong added the technique to his regular musical arsenal. His recording of Hotter Than That is another fabulous early example, in which Louis uses his voice to create a spontaneous masterpiece that is full of vibrant personality and rhythmic sophistication. In reality, there were probably examples of similar singing styles that predated Armstrongs seminal 1926 recording, with various ragtime vocalists, early pop singers and entertainers using scat-like techniques in the early 20th Century. Pianist, composer and New Orleans innovator Jelly Roll Morton claimed that a comedian named Joe Sims invented scat singing way before Louis Armstrongs time. In a recorded conversation with music historian Alan Lomax, he was quoted as saying: [People] believe that the first scat numbers was done by one of my hometown boys, Louis Armstrong. But I must take the credit away, since I know better. The first man that ever did a scat number in history of this country was a man from Vicksburg, Mississippi, by the name of Joe Sims, an old comedian. Even that, though, is hard to be a definitive start to scat; as with all of jazz, clear lines can be drawn between early scatting and the music of West Africa. In this specific case, its the fixed syllables assigned to percussion pitches which are the closest comparison. The scat singing styles and syllables used by the great practitioners of the art form tended to reflect the periods and scenes in which they existed. Ella Fitzgeralds snappy jazz scat singing is reminiscent of the saxophones and trumpets of the swing and big band era during which she came to prominence. Sarah Vaughans scatting, in the other hand, is rooted in the bebop tradition; no surprise, given her early collaborations with Clifford Brown and Dizzy Gillespie. Later on, Betty Carter was celebrated as a master vocal soloist, her deeply emotive and somewhat wild style reflecting the intense and increasingly spiritual jazz that came about in the 1960s. Meanwhile, Mel Torms relaxed virtuosity perhaps owes something to the cool jazz of the West Coast, where he was based. Other notable scat singers include Anita ODay, Eddie Jefferson, Carmen McRae and John Hendricks. 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Scat singing continues to be utilised in jazz today. Modern-day New York jazz vocalist Cyrille Aimee improvises in the classic straight-ahead tradition, often cleverly inserting quotes from other tunes in the way that Ella Fitzgerald would. Esperanza Spalding stands out for her intricate yet soulful vocal improvisations vocally whilst accompanying herself on the double bass. And, even more recently, vocalist Cecile Mclorin Salvant has emerged as one of the brightest talents of her generation. Amy Winehouse, known primarily as a soulful pop singer, took a scat solo on her funky interpretation of Thelonious Monks Round Midnight, while Kurt Elling, one of the most acclaimed jazz vocalists today, is a virtuosic and emotive soloist. Bobby McFerrin impressively blends scat singing with polyphonic overtone singing and improvised body percussion. In contemporary jazz, the voice might be used as part of the ensemble, even if the piece has no lyrics. For example, David Binney and Edward Simons Oceanos album utilises Luciana Souzas voice as a melodic line alongside Binneys saxophone on complex written material. This probably wouldnt be referred to as scat singing, but is certainly an extension of the tradition of using the voice as a melodic instrument in jazz. Norma Winstone fulfils a similar role at times within Kenny Wheelers music. With all that in mind, weve picked 10 legendary scat solos from jazz history, starting with Louis Armstrong back in the early 20th Century, to contemporary jazz singing great Kurt Elling. See for yourself whats changed (and what hasnt!) across almost 100 years of scat evolution Heebie Jeebies is generally considered the very first scat solo in jazz. A riotous recording by Gillespies innovative bebop big band from 1947. Vaughan uses her whole vocal range on her brilliant one-chorus improvisation on this favourite standard song. 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Hopefully its answered your questions about what jazz scat singing is and given you some great scat solos to listen to! If youd like to learn more about many of the artists here, you can find them in our round up of the best jazz singers of all time; we also split this into more detailed looks at both male jazz singers and iconic female vocalists. Anita O'Day (photo: Tad Hershorn) Louis Armstrong at Carnegie Hall, circa Feb. 1947 Scat singing is vocal improvisation with wordless syllables, combining improvised melodies, motifs and rhythmic patterns using the voice as an instrument, not unlike a trumpet or saxophone.Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughan improvised with intelligence, passion and wit, yet they never lost sight of their lyrics. Jazz ambassador Armstrong, with a voice of gravel and sunshine, is widely known as the cat who first scatted ooh bop sha bam after his sheet music hit the studio floor. However, a singer does not have to use scat syllables to phrase like a horn player, as Billie Holiday would often emulate her musical soulmate, Ben Webster, with lyrics.Despite their differences, these singers were accomplished musicians with an uncanny ability to entertain an audience. Aspiring jazz singers may have the world at their fingertips on their iPads and laptops, but a command of music theory and vocal technique is not enough. To equal the improvisational skills of instrumentalists, one has much listening and practice ahead. Using wordless improvisation will improve your musicianship and phrasing whether you use it in performance or only for personal study. Here is a list of artists and works that represent the Mount Rushmore of jazz phrasing and scat singing:Louis Armstrong: Aint Misbehavin'Ella Fitzgerald: How High the MoonLambert, Hendricks & Ross: Everybodys Boppin'Anita ODay: Tea for TwoSarah Vaughan: Sassys Blues, Shulie a BopAlso: Chet Baker, Betty Carter, Sheila Jordan,Nancy King, Bobby McFerrin, Carmen McRae,Mark Murphy, Betty Roche, Clark Terry,Mel TormLearning the 12-bar blues form is essential, and Centerpiece by Lambert, Hendricks & Ross is an excellent simple blues to begin with. Set your metronome and snap on beats 2 and 4. Feel the swing. Using straight tones, memorize the root movements, then add the thirds and sevenths of each chord. Practice scatting four bars of melody, then four bars of improvisation; repeat through the 12 bars several times. Use the syllables doo bah doo bah do or da bah da bah da, and try to think like a horn player. Record and review your practice to keep track of your improvement.For print works, I suggest studying the solos in the Charlie Parker Omnibook, starting with Billies Bounce and Nows the Time. I also highly recommend both volumes of Hear It and Sing It! by Judy Niemack for ear training and scat exercises. As she advises, Dont scat in public until you can improvise a solo that stands up to the original melody in quality. Dont forget the melody. Transcribe improvised solos you love, not just from vocalists, but horn players, guitarists any instrument. Bob Stoloffs book Scat! is another collection of invaluable patterns and syllables for scat singers. Practice singing scat-syllable patterns using classical and jazz instrumental technique books like Vocal Improvisation by Michele Weir and those based on the Hanon piano method and Arban Method for trumpet. Other crucial resources include Patterns for Improvisation by Oliver Nelson, and improv method books by Jamey Aebersold and Jerry Coker. Aebersold also offers sing-along backing CDs, with tracks similar to his play-alongs for instrumentalists but in common vocal keys.Successful vocal improvisation requires study, insight and patience. Fall in love with your piano and choose songs that sing who you are. Find your own voice.Originally Published September 10, 2014 Scat singing is a form of vocal improvisation that has been an integral part of jazz music for nearly a century. It involves the use of wordless syllables and sounds to create melodies and rhythms, allowing singers to take instrument-like solos and showcase their vocal capabilities in extraordinary ways. Scat singing has been used by some of the most iconic jazz vocalists, including Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Sarah Vaughan.At its core, scat singing is about using the voice as an instrument rather than a speaking medium. Instead of singing lyrics, scat singers improvise melodies and rhythms using vocables, nonsense syllables, or even no words at all. This allows them to create complex, intricate solos that are unique to each performance. While scat singing is often associated with jazz, it has also been used in other genres of music, including blues, R&B, and even rock and roll.Origins of Scat SingingScat singing is a vocal improvisation technique used in jazz music that involves using nonsense syllables or wordless vocables to create melodies and rhythms. The origins of scat singing are not entirely clear, but it is believed to have developed in the early 20th century in African American communities, particularly in the jazz scene.One of the earliest recorded examples of scat singing can be heard in Louis Armstrongs 1926 recording of Heebie Jeebies. During the recording, Armstrong dropped his lyric sheet and improvised using nonsense syllables to fill the gap. This recording is often cited as the first popular use of scat singing in jazz history.However, scat singing may have been used earlier by performers such as Gene Greene, who was known as the King of the Bungaloos and used scat singing in his vaudeville performances. Jelly Roll Morton and Joe Sims are also credited with early use of scat singing in their performances.Scat singing quickly became a popular technique in jazz music and was used by many famous jazz vocalists, including Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughan. Today, scat singing remains an important part of jazz music and is still used by many contemporary jazz vocalists.Understanding Scat SingingScat singing is a vocal style used in jazz music that involves the use of nonsense syllables and sounds instead of words to create an improvisational melody. It is a unique form of vocal improvisation that allows singers to use their voice as an instrument, creating a wide range of sounds and rhythms.At its core, scat singing is all about rhythm. Singers use syllables and sounds to create intricate rhythmic patterns that complement the melody of the song. These patterns can range from simple, repetitive beats to complex, syncopated rhythms that require a high level of skill and precision.One of the most important aspects of scat singing is the use of nonsense syllables. Singers use these syllables to create sounds that mimic the instruments in the band, such as the trumpet or saxophone. This allows them to blend in seamlessly with the rest of the ensemble and create a cohesive sound.Scat singing also allows for a great deal of vocal improvisation. Singers can use their voice to create unique melodies and rhythms on the spot, adding their own personal touch to the song. This improvisational aspect is a hallmark of jazz music and is what makes scat singing such an important part of the genre.READ:How to Write a Pre Chorus: Tips and Tricks for Songwritersscat singing is a unique and exciting form of vocal improvisation that allows singers to use their voice as an instrument. By using nonsense syllables and sounds, singers can create intricate rhythmic patterns and add their own personal touch to the song. It is an essential part of jazz music and continues to be a popular vocal style to this day.Techniques in Scat SingingScat singing is an art form that requires a certain set of skills and techniques to master. Here are some of the techniques used in scat singing:Vocal improvisation: Scat singing is all about improvisation. It involves creating melodies, rhythms, and sounds on the spot, without any pre-planning. This requires a good ear for music and the ability to think on your feet.Swing feel: Scat singing is closely associated with swing music, which has a distinctive rhythmic feel. To scat effectively, you need to be able to feel the swing rhythm and syncopation of the music.Vocalese: Vocalese is the art of setting lyrics to an instrumental jazz solo. Scat singers often use vocalese as a way to incorporate words into their improvisations.Riffs and musical quotation: Scat singers often use riffs and musical quotations to create interest and variation in their improvisations. A riff is a short, repeated phrase, while a musical quotation is a reference to a well-known melody or song.Phrasing: Phrasing is the way in which a singer divides up the musical line into smaller, more manageable units. Good phrasing is essential for effective scat singing, as it helps to create a sense of structure and coherence in the improvisation.Instrumental techniques: Scat singers often use instrumental techniques, such as bending notes, vibrato, and glissando, to create interesting and expressive sounds. These techniques are borrowed from the world of saxophones and trumpets, and can add a lot of color and texture to a scat improvisation.Learning to scat sing takes time and practice, but with dedication and perseverance, anyone can develop the necessary skills and techniques. Whether youre a seasoned vocalist or a beginner, scat singing is a fun and rewarding way to explore the world of vocal jazz.Influential Scat SingersScat singing has been an integral part of jazz music for many years, and there have been a number of influential scat singers who have helped to shape the genre. Here are just a few of the most prominent:Louis Armstrong: Known as the father of jazz, Louis Armstrong was a master of scat singing. He was known for his unique style, which combined his gravelly voice with his virtuosic trumpet playing. Armstrongs scat singing can be heard on many of his recordings, including Heebie Jeebies and Hotter Than That.Ella Fitzgerald: Often referred to as the Queen of Jazz, Ella Fitzgerald was a prolific scat singer who helped to popularize the technique. She was known for her impeccable timing and ability to improvise on the spot. Some of her most famous scat performances include How High the Moon and Lady Be Good.Betty Carter: Betty Carter was a jazz singer who was known for her adventurous approach to scat singing. She was known for her ability to improvise complex melodies and rhythms, and her scat performances were often highly virtuosic. Some of her most famous scat performances include Whats New and Social Call.Bobby McFerrin: Bobby McFerrin is a jazz vocalist who is known for his innovative approach to scat singing. He is known for his ability to create complex polyphonic textures using only his voice, and his scat performances often sound like entire bands. Some of his most famous scat performances include Dont Worry, Be Happy and Blackbird.Cab Calloway: Cab Calloway was a jazz singer who was known for his energetic scat performances. He was known for his ability to improvise complex rhythms and melodies, and his scat performances were often highly theatrical. Some of his most famous scat performances include Minnie the Moocher and The Hi-De-Ho Man.Mel Torm: Mel Torm was a jazz vocalist who was known for his smooth, velvety voice and his virtuosic scat singing. He was known for his ability to improvise complex melodies and rhythms, and his scat performances were often highly polished. Some of his most famous scat performances include Lullaby of Birdland and Too Darn Hot.These are just a few of the many influential scat singers who have helped to shape the genre of jazz music. Whether youre a fan of Louis Armstrongs gravelly voice or Bobby McFerrins innovative approach to scat singing, theres no denying the impact that these artists have had on the world of music.Scat Singing in PerformancesScat singing is a unique form of vocal improvisation that has been used in jazz music for decades. It is often performed solo, with the singer using their voice as an instrument to create melodies and rhythms without using words.One of the most impressive aspects of scat singing is its ability to be performed live in front of an audience. Many jazz singers will use a microphone to amplify their voice, allowing them to showcase their scatting skills to a large crowd.While scat singing is often performed live, there are also many recorded examples of this style of music. Some of the most famous jazz recordings feature scat solos, such as Ella Fitzgeralds rendition of Mack the Knife or Louis Armstrongs Heebie Jeebies. These recordings are a testament to the power and versatility of scat singing.One of the most exciting aspects of scat singing is the ability to improvise a solo on the spot. This requires a great deal of skill and practice, as the singer must be able to create melodies and rhythms that fit with the music without using any pre-written lyrics.scat singing is an impressive and unique form of vocal improvisation that has become a staple of jazz music. Whether performed solo or as part of a larger ensemble, scat singing is a powerful tool that allows jazz singers to showcase their creativity and musicality.Scat Singing in Popular CultureScat singing has been a popular technique in music for decades, and has been featured in various forms of popular culture. Here are some examples:The Jungle Book: The 1967 Disney animated film The Jungle Book features a famous scat singing performance by the character Baloo the bear, voiced by Phil Harris. In the song The Bare Necessities, Baloo scats along with the music, showcasing the fun and playful nature of scat singing.Humor: Scat singing has also been used in comedic contexts, often for its nonsensical and playful qualities. Comedian and musician Reggie Watts is known for his use of scat singing in his performances, often using it to create humorous sound effects or to playfully mimic various musical genres.Pop Music: Scat singing has also made appearances in various pop music songs over the years. In the 1980s, pop singer Scatman John gained popularity for his use of scat singing in his music, particularly in his hit song Scatman (Ski-Ba-Bop-Ba-Dop-Bop). More recently, artists like Ariana Grande and Bruno Mars have incorporated scat singing into their pop songs, adding a jazzy flair to their music.scat singing has proven to be a versatile and enduring technique in music, with its playful and improvisational nature making it a popular choice in various forms of popular culture.READ:What is AABA Form in Music? A Simple Guide for BeginnersLearning to Scat SingScat singing is a form of vocal improvisation that requires a lot of practice and dedication to master. While some people may have a natural talent for scatting, anyone can learn how to scat sing with the right training and guidance.Learn the FundamentalsBefore you start scatting, its important to learn the fundamentals of jazz music. This includes understanding the basic rhythms and structures of jazz songs, as well as the scales and chords commonly used in jazz music. You can learn these fundamentals by taking classes or working with a vocal coach who specializes in jazz music.Practice Your Improvisation SkillsScat singing is all about improvisation, so its important to practice your improvisation skills as much as possible. This means experimenting with different rhythms, melodies, and phrasing, and learning how to create your own unique sounds and styles.Listen to Other Scat SingersOne of the best ways to learn how to scat sing is by listening to other scat singers and studying their techniques. You can find a wealth of scat singing recordings online, as well as instructional videos and tutorials that can help you improve your skills.Work with a Vocal CoachIf youre serious about learning how to scat sing, its a good idea to work with a vocal coach who can provide you with personalized feedback and guidance. A vocal coach can help you identify areas where you need to improve, as well as provide you with exercises and drills to help you strengthen your voice and improve your technique.Keep PracticingFinally, the key to becoming a great scat singer is to keep practicing. Set aside time every day to work on your scatting skills, and dont be afraid to experiment and try new things. With time and dedication, you can become a skilled scat singer and enjoy the freedom and creativity that comes with this unique form of vocal expression.Frequently Asked QuestionsWho invented scat singing?The origins of scat singing are unclear, but it is believed to have originated in African American communities in the early 1900s. Louis Armstrong is often credited with popularizing scat singing in the 1920s and 1930s.Why is it called scat singing?The term scat is thought to have originated from the onomatopoeic sounds used in scat singing, which often include syllables like doo, bop, and shoo. Scat singing is characterized by improvised melodies, motifs, and rhythmic patterns using wordless syllables, similar to a musical instrument.What are some scat singing examples?Some classic examples of scat singing include Louis Armstrongs Heebie Jeebies, Ella Fitzgeralds Flying Home, and Cab Calloways Minnie the Moocher. Scat singing can be found in a variety of musical genres, including jazz, blues, and pop.Who are some modern scat singers?Some modern scat singers include Kurt Elling, Esperanza Spalding, and Bobby McFerrin. These artists have continued to push the boundaries of scat singing, incorporating new techniques and styles into their performances.Who are the best female scat singers?Ella Fitzgerald is often considered one of the best female scat singers of all time, known for her incredible range and improvisational skills. Other notable female scat singers include Sarah Vaughan, Betty Carter, and Carmen McRae.What is the meaning of scat in singing?In singing, scat refers to the use of nonsense syllables to create improvised melodies and rhythms. Scat singing can be used to add an extra layer of expression to a song, allowing the singer to explore different sounds and textures beyond the lyrics of the song. Share copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Love it or hate it? Scat singing or scatting is the art of jazz improvisation where the voice is used as an instrument to create mainly wordless phrases and lines, in much the same way an instrumentalistmight. Or, in the words of early jazz icon Jelly Roll Morton, its something to give a song a flavour. Keep reading to discover more about the history of this longstanding feature of jazz, plus our guide to the best jazz scat solos of all time. Scatting is arguably one of the most divisive techniques in jazz, with some listeners loving the sound of an improvising vocal solo in full flow, and others finding the sound of those strange and expressive syllables somewhat disconcerting. This guide will take a look at what jazz scat singing actually is, as well as outlining the history of its development. Well focus on some of the pioneers of the art form and recommend some great recorded examples of classic jazz scat solos old and new. Often credited as being invented by Louis Armstrong, scat singing (or jazz scatting) is when a vocalist uses syllables, rather than meaningful words and phrases, to deliver an improvised solo. The exact syllables and sounds used will vary with the period and style, but some examples might include: doo, be, shoo, bop, ooh, dee, doo, sha-bam Heres a quick example, albeit with a comedic touch: Traditionally, in a jazz group, the vocalist sings the melody and accompanying lyrics to the song, before an instrumentalist might play an improvised solo over the tunes chord sequence. But by taking a scat solo, the singer is freed from the constraints of the lyrics, and is able to improvise creatively in the way that a saxophonist or trumpeter might. Its not an easy skill. If a saxophonist, for example, has a decent understanding of harmony, he or she can press the relevant keys on their instrument to produce a note that they know will fit with the underlying chord. A singer cannot do this: they have to use their ears and contextualise the notes they choose in a way that is arguably more challenging. This concise video below is an excellent introduction with from Michael Mwenso and Brianna Thomas as part of Jazz at The Lincoln Centres Jazz Academy. Trumpeter & vocalist Louis Armstrong is generally regarded as the inventor of scat singing in jazz as much as music can be invented! According to legend, he was recording Heebie Jeebies with his band The Hot Five in 1926 and his sheet music fell off the stand during the middle of a take. As he couldnt remember the lyrics, he sang an improvised solo with nonsensical syllables instead of the proper words. The song became a hit, and Armstrong added the technique to his regular musical arsenal. His recording of Hotter Than That is another fabulous early example, in which Louis uses his voice to create a spontaneous masterpiece that is full of vibrant personality and rhythmic sophistication. In reality, there were probably examples of similar singing styles that predated Armstrongs seminal 1926 recording, with various ragtime vocalists, early pop singers and entertainers using scat-like techniques in the early 20th Century. Pianist, composer and New Orleans innovator Jelly Roll Morton claimed that a comedian named Joe Sims invented scat singing way before Louis Armstrongs time. In a recorded conversation with music historian Alan Lomax, he was quoted as saying: [People] believe that the first scat numbers was done by one of my hometown boys, Louis Armstrong. But I must take the credit away, since I know better. The first man that ever did a scat number in history of this country was a man from Vicksburg, Mississippi, by the name of Joe Sims, an old comedian. Even that, though, is hard to be a definitive start to scat; as with all of jazz, clear lines can be drawn between early scatting and the music of West Africa. In this specific case, its the fixed syllables assigned to percussion pitches which are the closest comparison. The scat singing styles and syllables used by the great practitioners of the art form tended to reflect the periods and scenes in which they existed. Ella Fitzgeralds snappy jazz scat singing is reminiscent of the saxophones and trumpets of the swing and big band era during which she came to prominence. Sarah Vaughans scatting, in the other hand, is rooted in the bebop tradition; no surprise, given her early collaborations with Clifford Brown and Dizzy Gillespie. Later on, Betty Carter was celebrated as a master vocal soloist, her deeply emotive and somewhat wild style reflecting the intense and increasingly spiritual jazz that came about in the 1960s. Meanwhile, Mel Torms relaxed virtuosity perhaps owes something to the cool jazz of the West Coast, where he was based. Other notable scat singers include Anita ODay, Eddie Jefferson, Carmen McRae and John Hendricks. Its worth mentioning that not all jazz singers scat. Some prefer to focus simply upon interpreting the melody and lyrics and those that do generally use the technique sparingly. Albums by Fitzgerald and Vaughan, for example, certainly do not include improvised solos on every track. The artists mentioned in the previous section are all renowned jazz singers, but there is also a tradition, beginning with Louis Armstrong, of jazz instrumentalists with a sideline in vocals, and many of these have used their improvisational know-how to sing scat solos. Chet Bakers relaxed singing style always matched his cool trumpet playing perfectly, smooth and stripped-back, with never a wasted note. Clark Terrys Mumbles, meanwhile, is novelty-meets-art, with the great trumpeters strangely humorous vocal solo accompanied by the ever-swinging Oscar Peterson Trio. Dizzy Gillespie, another trumpeter, brings his bluesy bebop style to his occasional scat soloing. Scat singing continues to be utilised in jazz today. Modern-day New York jazz vocalist Cyrille Aimee improvises in the classic straight-ahead tradition, often cleverly inserting quotes from other tunes in the way that Ella Fitzgerald would. Esperanza Spalding stands out for her intricate yet soulful vocal improvisations vocally whilst accompanying herself on the double bass. And, even more recently, vocalist Cecile Mclorin Salvant has emerged as one of the brightest talents of her generation. Amy Winehouse, known primarily as a soulful pop singer, took a scat solo on her funky interpretation of Thelonious Monks Round Midnight, while Kurt Elling, one of the most acclaimed jazz vocalists today, is a virtuosic and emotive soloist. Bobby McFerrin impressively blends scat singing with polyphonic overtone singing and improvised body percussion. In contemporary jazz, the voice might be used as part of the ensemble, even if the piece has no lyrics. For example, David Binney and Edward Simons Oceanos album utilises Luciana Souzas voice as a melodic line alongside Binneys saxophone on complex written material. This probably wouldnt be referred to as scat singing, but is certainly an extension of the tradition of using the voice as a melodic instrument in jazz. Norma Winstone fulfils a similar role at times within Kenny Wheelers music. With all that in mind, weve picked 10 legendary scat solos from jazz history, starting with Louis Armstrong back in the early 20th Century, to contemporary jazz singing great Kurt Elling. See for yourself whats changed (and what hasnt!) across almost 100 years of scat evolution Heebie Jeebies is generally considered the very first scat solo in jazz. A riotous recording by Gillespies innovative bebop big band from 1947. Vaughan uses her whole vocal range on her brilliant one-chorus improvisation on this favourite standard song. Just like his trumpet playing, Chat Bakers half-chorus vocal solo here is clear, cool and melodic. Ella Fitzgerald quotes over a dozen other songs on this incredible live performance, including The Peanut Vendor and Ornithology. For additional listening, check out this great example of scat singing on Mack The Knife, which made our list of best Ella Fitzgerald songs. ODay is accompanied by Oscar Peterson on this number at breakneck tempo. Louis Primas performance in the 1967 Disney animation brought scatting to a mainstream audience. This incredible (not to mention funny) live performance is a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald. You can also find one of their iconic duetted scat solos here. This vocalese adds lyrics to Boplicity from Miles Davis Birth of the Cool album, before Murphy, a vocal innovator, takes a fast-paced scat solo. Ellings virtuosic baritone is in particularly impressive form on this old jazz standard. Thanks for checking out this guide! Hopefully its answered your questions about what jazz scat singing is and given you some great scat solos to listen to! If youd like to learn more about many of the artists here, you can find them in our round up of the best jazz singers of all time; we also split this into more detailed looks at both male jazz singers and iconic female vocalists. Scat singing is a vocal improvisation technique in jazz where singers use nonsense syllables instead of actual lyrics. Originating in the early 20th century, it adds a unique, spontaneous element to performances.At a GlanceImprovisation: Scat singing involves creating spontaneous melodies with vocal sounds.Origins: Developed in the early 20th century jazz scene.Pioneers: Legends like Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald popularized scat singing.Modern Usage: Contemporary artists continue to use scat singing in various music styles.The Basics of Scat SingingScat singing is a vocal jazz technique that involves singing improvised melodies using wordless vocables and nonsense syllables. This style transforms the voice into an instrument, creating unique and spontaneous musical expressions.Definition: Scat singing is the use of improvised melodies with nonsensical words in vocal jazz.Characteristics: It features wordless vocables and nonsense syllables instead of traditional lyrics.Vocal Instrumentation: The voice is used as an instrument to mimic instrumental solos.Improvisation Focus: Scat singing heavily relies on spontaneous musical creation.Origins and Historical DevelopmentThe origins of scat singing trace back to the early jazz era, with notable early examples like Louis Armstrongs Heebie Jeebies. It evolved through various jazz periods, growing in popularity and sophistication.Early Beginnings: Scat singing began in the early 20th century jazz scene.Notable Example: Louis Armstrongs Heebie Jeebies is one of the first recorded scat performances.Jazz Evolution: The technique developed alongside different jazz eras, from swing to bebop.Popularity Growth: Scat singing gained recognition and became a staple in vocal jazz music.Notable Scat Singers and Modern UsesNotable scat singers such as Ella Fitzgerald and Dizzy Gillespie have left a lasting impact on the technique. Today, scat singing continues to be adapted in modern jazz and various other music genres, preserving its legacy.Famous Names: Ella Fitzgerald and Dizzy Gillespie are iconic scat singers in jazz history.Modern Jazz: Contemporary artists incorporate scat singing into modern jazz performances.Genre Adaptation: Scat singing has found its way into various music styles beyond traditional jazz. Have you ever heard a jazz singers voice dance around notes without saying a single word? That mesmerizing technique is called scat singing. In this guide, well explore how scat singing lets vocalists improvise with sounds, shaping jazz in new and exciting ways.Discover the secrets behind those rhythmic syllables that turn voices into instruments, and keep reading to learn how to scat like the greats! Key TakeawaysScat singing is a vocal improvisation technique that originated in jazz, where singers use nonsense syllables and wordless phrases to create improvised melodies and rhythms.It turns the human voice into a unique instrument, allowing jazz singers to make up melodies using nonsense syllables or sounds instead of words, popularized by artists like Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald.Learning scat singing involves embracing techniques and styles while drawing inspiration from legendary scat singers like Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald. Aspiring vocalists can start by muting vocals to scat along with a backing track, recording themselves, and listening back for improvement.What is Scat Singing?Scat singing is a vocal improvisation technique that originated in jazz music, where singers use nonsense syllables and wordless phrases to create improvised melodies and rhythms.Definition and explanationScat singing turns the human voice into a unique instrument. Jazz singers use this style to make up melodies on the spot using nonsense syllables or sounds instead of words. They might go doo-bop-a-loo-bam as if their voice was a trumpet or saxophone, playing with different rhythms and pitches.Its like speaking a language that doesnt exist but still feels right in jazz music. Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald are famous for making scat singing popular. People remember them for how they could improvise amazing wordless tunes during their songs.Next, lets explore how anyone can start learning this fun vocal technique!Originated in jazz musicScat singing originated in vocal jazz, evolving as a distinctive form of vocal improvisation that uses wordless vocables, nonsense syllables, or even no words at all. This unique style emerged as an integral part of jazz music nearly a century ago and has since become synonymous with the genre.Jazz legends such as Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald popularized scat singing, showcasing its emotive and free-flowing nature. This vocal technique allows singers to use their voice like an instrument, creating expressive sounds that contribute to the rich tapestry of jazz performance.The practice of scat singing involves a deep understanding of jazz music theory and requires singers to interpret melodies using onomatopoeic syllables and emotive vocal expression.Vocal improvisation using wordless vocables, syllables, or without wordsScat singing is a form of vocal improvisation in jazz where singers use wordless vocables, nonsense syllables, or no words at all to create emotive sounds and melodies. It allows the singer to use their voice as an instrument, showcasing the expressive potential of the human voice.This style originated in vocal jazz and has been integral to jazz music for almost a century, with famous artists like Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald making significant contributions.Scat singing requires a deep understanding of jazz music and the ability to interpret and improvise on melodies using vocables and nonsense syllables, making it an essential aspect of jazz vocal performance practice.How to Do Scat SingingLearn scat singing techniques and styles from famous scat singers to improve your vocal improvisation in jazz.Learning techniques and stylesScat singing involves learning various techniques and styles to effectively improvise with vocables and syllables. Beginners can start by muting vocals to scat along with a backing track, record themselves, and listen back for improvement.Its essential to develop a deep understanding of jazz music and the ability to interpret and improvise melodies using nonsense syllables. Famous scat singers like Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald provide inspiration for mastering this unique vocal improvisation style.Understanding the distinctive approach to timbral and phonemic analysis is crucial in honing scat singing skills. By experimenting with different vocal techniques, beginners can learn to use their voice as an instrument to create emotive sounds that reflect the expressive potential of the human voice in jazz music, making it an integral part of vocal performance practice.Famous scat singersMoving from learning techniques and styles to the world of famous scat singers, its essential to appreciate the impact and contributions of legendary artists like Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Sarah Vaughan.Louis Armstrong is renowned for popularizing scat singing with his innovative vocal improvisations, infusing jazz music with unparalleled creativity. Equally influential, Ella Fitzgeralds mastery of scat singing brought an unmatched level of sophistication and artistry to the genre.Known for her incredible vocal range and ability to mimic instruments, Sarah Vaughan elevated scat singing to new heights with her mesmerizing performances. These iconic figures not only shaped the landscape of jazz music but also paved the way for future generations of vocalists to explore the expressive realm of scat singing.Louis Armstrong revolutionized jazz music through his groundbreaking approach to scat singing, inspiring countless musicians and leaving an indelible mark on the genre. Similarly, Ella Fitzgeralds virtuoso talent in navigating intricate melodic patterns showcased the true potential of scat singing as a form of artistic expression.Tips for beginnersFor beginners, start by muting the vocals and scatting along with a backing track to get comfortable with the rhythm and melody. Record yourself and listen back to identify areas for improvement.This will help you develop your own style gradually. Remember, famous scat singers like Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald started somewhere too. Practice is key! As you progress, learn from different techniques and styles of famous scat singers to enrich your own improvisation skills.Now lets delve into the next section about Famous Scat Singers.ConclusionIn conclusion, scat singing is a captivating form of vocal improvisation deeply rooted in jazz music. Originating in the early days of jazz, this expressive style uses wordless vocables and nonsense syllables to create emotive melodies.Learning scat singing involves embracing techniques and styles while drawing inspiration from legendary scat singers like Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald. Aspiring vocalists can embark on this musical journey by experimenting with vocal improvisation, recording themselves, and delving into the rich history of jazz to refine their skills.With dedication and passion, anyone can explore the boundless possibilities of scat singing as a remarkable facet of jazz vocal performance.

Scat singing examples. Scat meaning singing. This song includes an example of scat singing. Scat singing skill. Scat sininging. What is a scat singing. An example used for scat singing was. Best example of scat singing.