

Winton Burns
Jazz Is Records
23 Broadway
New York, New York

Dear partners,

It has come to my attention that Jazz record sales are plummeting faster than ever. With the rise of downloading and the ever-growing trend of pop music, Jazz seems stuck firmly in the past. It is my fear that Jazz itself may be dying. It might even be dead already!

In the 90's Jazz record sales dropped drastically. In the year 2000, Downbeat magazine stated that Jazz music accounted for only six percent of all record sales. In the 2002, the same magazine said Jazz music accounted for only one percent of all record sales. Even outside forms of music such as Drum and Bass accounted for more over all record sales than every form of jazz combined.

Though Jazz has never been an art form that brings in big dollars on merchandise, it has always survived on live shows. Even in the late fifties when we were all worried that rock and roll would destroy Jazz, it prevailed through endless live entertainment. Now it's next to impossible to get young people excited about jazz. I don't understand it, but kids just aren't digging jazz these days. I fear that we have lost Jazz to the history books. People now don't even know the names of greats such as Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington. Americans know next to nothing about their own form of music.

As I stated before, Jazz has been lost to the history books. We have taken jazz from the streets and placed it into the concert halls and conservatories. Jazz is now no different than Classical music, which has been forced to survive solely on film. No new Classical music has prevailed in almost fifty years. The works of Carl Orff and a few

others are the last of new timeless Classical music. The works of Danny Elfman and John Williams will most likely be forgotten. Jazz is following that same path. The few kids who do aspire to play jazz can now simply go to school for it. Miles went to 52nd street. Duke played seven nights a week. Now Americans pay money to learn an oral, street art form.

So, in light of this news, I have decided to withdraw from Jazz Is Records. For I have lost faith in the future of the music. We started this company in the hopes that we could push Jazz always forward. Though the seventies did us well, we have been losing ever since. We cannot afford to lose money on pushing artists that can't and won't ever sell. Sure, there are a few big names that people know, but even they can only pack small clubs. Nowadays even the biggest names in Jazz could only pack a club or a small theatre. Concert halls can be filled, but those work against us because they take the music away from the people. Teenagers purchase music and very few teenagers want to or can afford to go to a concert hall.

I am at a loss. The music that has been such a huge part of my life is fleeting. I would advise you to think about my words, take a look at your statistics, and think about leaving as well. Don't let hopeless hope destroy what we've already accomplished. I apologize if this comes as a shock, but I'm sure it's been in the backs of your heads for quite some time.

Sincerely,

Winton Burns