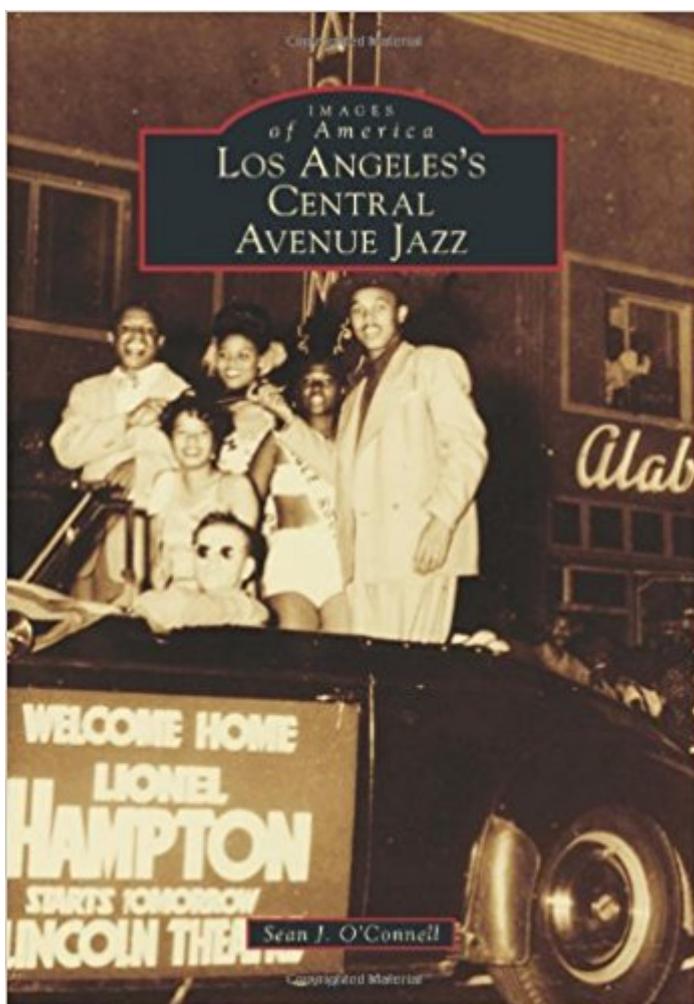


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# Los Angeles's Central Avenue Jazz (Images Of America)



## Synopsis

From the late 1910s until the early 1950s, a series of aggressive segregation policies toward Los Angeles' rapidly expanding African American community inadvertently led to one of the most culturally rich avenues in the United States. From Downtown Los Angeles to the largely undeveloped city of Watts to the south, Central Avenue became the center of the West Coast jazz scene, nurturing homegrown talents like Charles Mingus, Dexter Gordon, and Buddy Collette while also hosting countless touring jazz legends such as Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Billie Holiday. Twenty-four hours a day, the sound of live jazz wafted out of nightclubs, restaurants, hotel lobbies, music schools, and anywhere else a jazz combo could squeeze in its instruments for nearly 50 years, helping to advance and define the sound of America's greatest musical contribution.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Musician, writer, tour guide, and historian Sean J. O'Connell has pieced together the swinging history of Los Angeles' Central Avenue through extensive photograph archives such as the Los Angeles Public Libraries' *Shades of LA* as well as the firsthand accounts of those who walked, played, and listened amid the vibrant sidewalks of mid-century South Central Los Angeles.

Great collection of artifacts from an important and underrated golden age of jazz history. The book

deftly illuminates the day to day experience of Central Avenue through the years through pictures, artifacts and flyers. The vast majority is pictures, the only words are short introductions to every chapter, and captions to every image. Highly recommended to every jazz fan of course, but it would also be a fascinating read to anyone wishing to know more about a powerful artistic scene that flourished despite deplorable housing discrimination and institutional racism in the music industry.

A major disappointment. There were dozens of jazz clubs in and around Central Avenue. Aside from an interior photo of the Club Alabam, there are NO photographs of any clubs that were historically significant - the Finale, the Downbeat, Elks Hall. Not even a photo of an insignificant club! Plenty of photos of record album covers, publicity shots, William Gottlieb photos of great artists playing in New York but no photos of any of the clubs. A photographic context. That would have helped. Don't tell me of the clubs. Show me! To see club next to club, illustrating a tight-knit community would have been excellent. And a decent map of the area, with the clubs, hotels, theaters, restaurants would have been wonderful.

Loved it! Great overview of the subject matter and easy to digest.

This is a nice compliment to the Central Avenue Sounds book. It's pictures are related to the LA Jazz scene. So now you can fit Faces to Names. I'm not a Jazz aficionado but it's good to see LA history. Good book.

People always think of New Orleans or Harlem when it comes to jazz. Well surprise! The city of angels not only has a rich history of carne asada fries, rehabbing celebrities, and terrible airports, but of jazz as well. A must-read for any cursory, casual, or professional jazz aficionado.

It was great to learn about my city's rich history of jazz. O'Connell makes sure it won't be a secret anymore.

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