



JAZZ, EVOLUTION, AND CO-CREATION WITH TRINITY



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We are exhorted to participate with God as co-creators. But how does this work? Let's start here: Science tells us all matter is energy. Teilhard

understood energy is infused with consciousness which allows particles to join resulting in increasing complexity. Now imagine the universe as a venue for a jazz trio – the God Trio. Consciousness provides admission to the venue where band, venue and audience become one, numinous web. Since the Big Bang, all of creation has been inspired and moved by the music (vibration) of the trio. However, one segment of creation has been allowed on stage. Our reflective consciousness (where we are conscious of our consciousness) gives us the ability to play (co-create) with the other band members. With the evolution of humans, the trio became a quartet. Obviously, humanity is by far the least accomplished member of the ensemble. However, from a deep time perspective involving interaction with the original trio members, something akin to an evolution towards Teilhard’s Omega Point is conceivable.

To be a competent jazz musician, we must understand the concept of call and response. Call and response is a technique where one musician offers a riff and a second player answers with a direct commentary or response to the offered phrase. The musicians build on each other’s offerings and work together to move the song along and create a sound that’s inventive and collaborative.

God’s persuasive love we experience as an evolutionary vibration or impulse within us is like a jazz riff from God that elicits a response from us. We respond with our own riff that may or may not be what God had in mind. Nevertheless, based on what we’ve played, God responds to our response in a loving way meant to move us to greater love and wholeness. We can egotistically “play our own music” but God responds to what we play in a way that encourages us to get more in vibrational flow with the other members of the quartet. How this evolves is not known, even by God. Like jazz, it’s new, it’s exciting, it’s unresolved. Free will is clearly in play.

My characterization of the God Trio is strongly influenced by Paul Smith's writings on the Three Faces of God which provides an expansive view of God that both Christians and non-Christians can understand.¹ I use Smith's insightful descriptions, but instead of associating his descriptions with faces, I have chosen to use (vibrational) voices instead. This was done for two reasons.

First, a voice produces sound like a jazz instrument does. Sound is energetic; it's vibration that can elicit a human response on multiple levels: emotional, intellectual, and guttural (physical). Second, use of vibration or voice instead of face gives God a somewhat more mystical and less anthropological character. A God with a face seems fitting for a first-century, three-tiered universe, supernatural theist view of a God in heaven watching and intervening. A God of vibrational energy is more compatible with a panentheistic view where God is everywhere and in everything.

In our quartet example, the drummer (who sets the beat and the tempo for the group) represents the Infinite, Cosmic Voice of God. This is the voice calling us from the future like the vibration of a distant drum beckoning us forward. The sax player (playing the instrument sounding most like the human voice) represents the Intimate Voice of God. This is the voice of a supportive companion advising and encouraging. The bass player (whose deep tones resonate within us) represents the Inner Voice of God where our True Self resides. We are the piano player who can just bang on the keys or be attentive to what the others are playing and join the "Divine dance" as Richard Rohr puts it. Our response to a call (coming from one or more of the "Trinity" players) will more likely be in the musical flow if we pay attention to the "sketch notes" (parables, teachings) Jesus, Buddha, and other enlightened messengers gave us. The sketch notes aren't laws because that would make the music static instead of evolutionary. As Bill Evans states in the liner

notes for Miles Davis' classic jazz album, *Kind of Blue*, sketch notes are "frameworks which are exquisite in their simplicity and yet contain all that is necessary to stimulate performance with a sure reference to the primary conception." God's primary conception involves movement towards greater love and wholeness.

To move along an evolutionary path of love and wholeness, we embrace the sketch notes and consciously respond to each call (evolutionary impulse) from the Infinite Voice, the Intimate Voice, and the Inner Voice in a way true to the sketch notes. God responds to what we play in a way that encourages us to get more in vibrational flow with the other members of the quartet.

When our performance is less than stellar, God lovingly provides more call and response opportunities to help us evolve as co-creators of an unfinished universe. Our calling is to be a co-creative member of the quartet that helps move the universe toward greater love and wholeness.

Had the ancient world known about the Big Bang, jazz, and quantum physics, it is not inconceivable Jesus might have begun a parable with the words, "The kingdom of God is like a jazz band...."

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¹ Smith, Paul R. *Is your God Big Enough, Close Enough, You Enough?:*

Jesus and The Three Faces of God. St. Paul, Minnesota. Paragon House, 2017. See also *Teilhard de Chardin and The Three Faces of God*, <https://www.omegacenter.info/teilhard-three-faces-of-god/>.

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