

Biography of benny goodman



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Benny Goodman the King of Swing American jazz clarinetist and bandleader, he led one of the most popular musical groups, in 1935 Benny Goodman was the first white man to have a black man in his ensemble. He responded to issues of civil rights and paved the way for other musicians to be apart of the influence. He changed the way race and diversity were being seen in that era and helped towards change, Goodman had a show where he played pieces from black musicians such as Fletcher Henderson, also his recordings with musicians helped define the sound of small-group jazz in the Swing Era. It was a big step in jazz that had a huge influence on teenagers and college students that invented new dance steps to accompany the new music. The band involved themselves in issues of civil rights, and equal treatment for all races which helped with the racial change of how people seen band members come together. Their involvement in change helped break the social barrier in the industry, that made you feel their was divide between everyone and music. Change didn't happen overnight but for musicians it took a lot of work and touring to really be seen in that era.

According to the biography on Benny Goodman, " Benny's national popularity helped to make racially mixed groups more accepted in the mainstream." Black and White musicians started playing together to break the pattern of racial segregation and becoming people of just one society instead of everything being divided. This movement helped the Civil Rights Act, which outlaws discrimination based on race and color. In this era racism was a huge part of the society but music brought everyone together throughout the states but some of the southern ones. African Americans at that time had limited opportunities and were forced to create music that

appealed only to white people, they had experienced great disadvantages throughout the history especially in the era of segregation. Benny Goodman hired a black pianist, Teddy Wilson to play in his band, it was illegal in some states from the segregation laws and social norms. Benny once said, " If a guy's got it, let him give it. I'm selling music, not prejudice." African American performers were not allowed to perform in white clubs, touring turned into a disaster as some states did not believe in mixing whites and blacks together for clubs and some states were not into the swing era.

Whites evolved more than anyone they had most of the control in that time, everything was split up schools, churches, and areas of residence. Goodman wasn't going to let the industry stop him, it was the most influential band of the Swing era creating Jazz at a new level of unity. It was such a divided time in history but one thing that brought everyone together was music.

Goodman's music was an important stage in music and he also helped make a statement of the social acceptance of his musical band members proved that music and popular culture could transcend racial differences.

According to Rob Bennion from Gold Standard music, " Jazz music's popular rise during the early half of the 20th century helped pave the way for the civil rights movement of the 60s." Goodman had some of the greatest black musicians of this era, he didn't care if they were black or white as long as they were creative as he was. Other members of his band, trumpeters Ziggy Elman and Harry James, pianists Jess Stacey and Teddy Wilson, and drummer Gene Krupa among others. Goodman helped break down the color barrier by having one of the first integrated bands. Goodman used his fame to spread his appreciation for black music and helped paved the way for the civil rights

movement, more bands started performing publicly with both black and white musicians. According to Michael Verity (jazz historian), jazz “ provided a culture in which the collective and the individual were inextricable, and in which one was judged by his ability alone, and not by race or any other irrelevant factors.” jazz, like the rest of the entertainment business was still segregated in public as in clubs and other venues that wouldn’t allow blacks. The band toured America their popularity started accelerating making music history they had a deep cultural and societal impact on other bands and the people in the world that seen things as black and white only, it was a giant step made in racial relations changing the history of the integration of blacks and whites in society. African-American and white musicians had long played together in after-hours when none was around but never in a public club.

In this historical period diversity affected their interaction with society but Goodman broke that social barrier one night the Famous Carnegie Hall of 1938 concert in New York City

“ So it never crossed our mind to think that on the night of January 16 we would give a jazz concert that would turn out to be a historic occasion,” Goodman said. Goodman took a dozen of African American musicians with him onto stage, the music’s appeal was enjoyed by people regardless of race or political belief. David Radlauer makes a point that “ Goodman sought sidemen equal to his own creativity, skill and precision regardless of race.” It was never about race for Goodman he believed if someone could play he wants to make music with them. Music brought everyone together, it wasn’t about race when music started playing, crowds of people from all races in one room enjoying music. When music is being played, you don’t judge the

artist for their skin color but their talent that they show to the world. Benny Goodman made this transition that influenced other artist and bands to do the same, He made it possible for people of color to have a chance in other fields, the band addressed these issues being in the entertainment industry, it wasn't just about the music. It was about the social movement and bringing people together which became one of the biggest parts of history in the entertainment business and helped bands rise to popularity. It shows that music and everyone coming together putting their differences aside shows the fun of what music brings.

Bibliography

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