Hawkins, Coleman (1904-1969) Encyclopedia Article

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The first jazzman to win fame as a tenor saxophonist, Coleman Hawkins joined Fletcher Henderson's band in 1923 and was already its star when young Louis Armstrong was added a year later. Unmatched on his instrument—once ignored by jazzmen—Hawkins brought his distinctive warm tone to slow ballads like "Body and Soul" and a surging profusion of notes to fast numbers. In the 1930s he worked for five years in Europe, enhancing his international reputation. When bebop appeared on the scene in the 1940s, the innovative Hawkins recorded this new jazz form with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie. His primary interest remained conventional swing, working often with his favorite trumpet man, Roy Eldridge, in both Europe and America.

Further Reading:

Atkins, Ronald, editor. *All That Jazz.* London, Carlton, 1996.

Balliett, Whitney. *American Musicians.* New York, Oxford Press, 1986.

Hentoff, Nat, and Albert J. McCarthy, editors. *Jazz.* New York, Da Capo Press, 1974.