

One house binds 90 years of music history!

2216 Druid Hill Avenue – where the personality of “Sportin’ Life” was born.

Swing ->



Cab and Blanche Calloway lived at **2216 Druid Hill Avenue**. It was while he lived here that Cab Calloway began to figure out how he would make a living by singing about the life and people he met using a coded language understood by African-Americans. His style emphasized call and response and improvised melodies.

1920s-40s

“I am going to sing about life in the ghetto.”

Be Bop ->



Cab Calloway gave Dizzy Gillespie his first job. Dizzy later went on to become the king of Be Bop Jazz. In fact, he left the Cab Calloway Orchestra to do his own thing. Be Bop used new melodies, beats and improvisation. Be Bop musicians started “freestyling,” taking improvisation to an entirely new level – not with words but with instruments.

1950s-1970s

“I am going to show the power of the black mind.”

Hip Hop



Which led to Hip Hop. Even though hip hop is very different from swing, many of the things like the subject, the improvisation of melodies, the call and response, and even the persona of Hip Hop artists really started with Cab Calloway. Hip Hop combines the improvisation of Be Bop with words to tell the story of black life today.

1980s-today

“I am going to sing about the ghetto and show the power of the black mind.”