In a recent talk at the Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Angela Davis said that scholars and other thinkers needed to footnote not only publicly known scholars and thinkers, but others from whom we’ve also learned so much—other colleagues, family members, as well as walking partners and shotgun riders (both these latter terms come from the D.C. I knew as a child of the 1950s and 1960s), exes, and those we meet in passing—friends, and I’d include a few enemies. On the loving side of this equation, above all I want to thank my parents, George M. O’Meally and Ethel Browne O’Meally, from whom I learned almost everything of value that I know. I also thank my grandmother Mrs. Anna Serena Carter Browne Pinn, and her sister, my Big Auntie, Mrs. Ethel Carter Billingsley, ladies I quote, in their sometimes perfumed, nineteenth-century Black lingo, almost every day of my life. Thanks to my beloved sisters Constance Mendes, Marilyn Goldsmith, and Sharon O’Meally Miller. Thanks to my son Douglass Malone-O’Meally, whose wise words pop up here and there in this book. For their undying support, thanks to close friends Ernest J. Wilson III, Stephen L. Good, and Henry H. Kennedy Jr. I won’t name the people I don’t like, from whom I also learned a lot—some decades ago while bussing tables in a frat house, o my Lord! I was listening all the while.

On the more official (but no less heartfelt) side of my intellectual debts, I want to thank the Jazz Study Group at Columbia University, intellectual sisters and brothers by whom I have been challenged and changed for over twenty

I’m also thankful for many other Columbia-Barnard friends and colleagues (past and present), especially Marcellus Blount, Julie Crawford, Eric Foner, Mary Gordon, David Hadju, Saidiya Hartman, Jean Howard, David Kastan, Quanda Prettyman, Samuel Roberts, Edward Said, James Shapiro, Gayatri Spivak, and George Stade.

Special thanks to experts on the music: Leroy Williams, Michael White, Randy Weston, Geri Allen, Herlin Riley, Wolfram Knauer, Kenneth Knuckles, Ellis Marsalis, Wynton Marsalis, Branford Marsalis, and Delfeo Marsalis. I’m also very grateful to comrades Lewis Jones, Lawrence Jackson, John Callahan, Paul Devlin, and Randall Kennedy. Thanks also to D. A. Pennebacker, for granting an important interview. And to William Ferris, Henry Drewell, Patrice Rankine, and Eric Robertson for ongoing conversations about black art and music. Special thanks as well to my mentors Robert Farris Thompson and Sterling A. Brown.

Teaching is a two-way (and sometimes a more-than-twenty-two way) learning process. I’m so pleased to acknowledge learning from these current and former students (aside from those already named): Leo Genjiro Amiro, Nijah Cunningham, Benjamin E. de la Piedra, Lisa Del Sol, Irving Hunt, Jennifer James, Eleaza Kelley, Kaveh Landsverk, Aidan Levy, Jarvis McGuiness, Gail O’Neil, Jessica Teague, Lilith Todd, and Kim Wayans.

Where do projects start? For this book, one place was Reid Hall in Paris, where, in 2009, I met with a roomful of brilliant undergraduates who discovered some of this book’s main ideas along with me. Some members of that seminar have literally never stopped meeting—now over daylong brunches, and recently on a long and lovely Zoom. Special thanks go to Devyn Tyler, Gabriella K. Johnson, Claire Ittner, Morgan Fletcher, Anneka Dunbar-Gronke, and Camille Bernier-Greene.

While teaching in Paris, I was also fortunate to be part of a curatorial team at Jazz at Lincoln Center, another birthplace of this project. Thanks to my beloved
thank teammates C. Daniel Dawson and Diedra Harris Kelley, and to Linda Florio and Emily Lordi. Thanks to Wynton Marsalis, Adrian Ellis, Simone Eccleston, Imani Owens, and Miles Davis (the photographer), and Darryl Sivad.

Much of the work here was first researched and presented as first drafts when I was a Cullman Fellow at the Forty-second Street Library in New York City (2008–2009). Thanks for the leadership at the Cullman of Jean Strouse, and for the many fruitful exchanges with Deborah Baker, Anna Bikont, Akeel Bilgrami, Deborah Cohen, Andrew Sean Greer, Daniel J. Kevles, Hari Kunzru, Julie Orringer, Lauren Redniss, Martha Saxton, Laura Secor, Lore Segal, Ezra Tawil, and Rosanna Warren. That year, I did valuable work at the Schomburg Center for the Study of Black Culture, and at the library of the Museum of Modern Art, particularly in the Papers of Calvin Tomkins. That year, I also benefited greatly from the support, via mail and email, of Kristine Krueger at the Margaret Herrick Library at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Los Angeles.

I am thankful for the University of Guelph, which hosted me as a lecturer and seminar leader in August 2009. I presented first drafts of some of this material at that time. Thanks for the imaginative leadership of Ajay Heble, and for the comradeship of Eric Lewis and Tracy McMullen. Thanks also to Harvard University’s Department of African and African American Studies, which hosted me as an Alain Locke Lecturer in 2015. Some of the material here crystallized as I prepared those Locke Lectures. Special thanks to Henry Louis Gates Jr., Werner Sollors, Glenda Carpio, and Daniel Aaron.

I’m so thankful to my home institution, Columbia University, for its endless support. Thanks to our president, Lee C. Bollinger, for inviting me to give the university lecture in 2008—my first attempt at “This Music Demanded Action.” Thanks to my colleagues and students over thirty years in the Department of English and the Department of African and African Diasporic Studies, and especially to my colleagues and students in the Center for Jazz Studies. Particular thanks to Yulanda McKenzie. To the wonderful librarians at Columbia, many thanks—particularly to Jennifer Lee. I’m grateful for the support of my colleagues at Wallach Gallery, especially Deborah Cullen and Jennifer Mock. To the staff of the University Seminars at Columbia, I am endlessly grateful for the opportunity to deliver the Schoff Lectures at Columbia University in 2016, which formed the seedbed for this book. Special thanks to Robert Pollack, director of the University Seminars at Columbia.

kindness—thanks to Marie d’Origny, Eve Grinstead, and Grant Rosenberg, for their inspired leadership at Reid Hall (Columbia’s Global Center/Paris), I am pleased to thank Paul Leclerk and Brunhilde Biebuyck.

Special thanks to other friends and colleagues in Paris, particularly John Betsch, Claire Burrus, Velma Bury, Claude Carriere, Yves Citton, Jean Pierre Criqui, Joel Dreyfuss, Wendy Johnson, Jake Lamar, Anne Legrand, Alexandre Pierrepont, Daniel Richard, Benjamin Sanz, and Daniel Soutif. Thanks in particular to the Cité Internationale des Arts, the loveliest of artists’ residencies, and to its generous director general, Benedicte Alliot.

Thanks to major cultural institutions in my hometown of DC—to the Smithsonian, which trusted me to curate “Romare Bearden’s Black Odyssey,” another starting point for this project. And to the Library of Congress (LOC), where, as a fellow in 2018, I finally had time to examine certain documents (including the papers of Ralph Ellison) that are nowhere else. Thanks to these Washington superprofessionals: S. Marquette Foley, at the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, and Larry Applebaum and Anne McLean at the Library of Congress. At the LOC, I was so happy looking through the scores of Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, and—thanks to Katherine Blood—perusing rare photographs as well as collage pieces left behind by Romare Bearden.

Thanks for the staff at the Louis Armstrong House Archive for their tireless support. Special thanks for the generosity of Ricky Riccardi and Michael Cogswell. I also learned so much from my colleagues on the board of the Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation—particularly from George Avakian, Stanley Crouch, Dan Morgenstern, George Wein, and Jerome Chazen. For assistance at the Institute for Jazz Studies (Newark), I’m particularly grateful to Tad Hershorn. Endless thanks to the Duke Ellington Society (TDES) for researching the Ellington–Sam Shaw connection; in the TDES circle, Lynne Mueller, Noel Cohen, and Patti Hagan were especially helpful. Thanks to Randall Burkett for his always generous assistance at the African American Collections at Emory University. Thanks also to the librarians at the Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane University, and particularly for the comradeship of Bruce Raeburn. On the New Orleans front, thanks to dear friends Kenneth Ferdinand, Kalaamu Ya Salaam, Jackie Harris, Keith Medley, Tom Dent, Michael White, Alan K. Colon, Lolis Elie, and Dr. Ken Mask.

I’m most thankful for the assistance, over and over again, of the Sam Shaw Foundation and Archive and the generous Sam Shaw family members, particularly Meta, Edie, and Melissa. Thanks also for the generosity of Shaw biographer Lorie Karnath.

This book would not have been possible without the professionalism and friendship of Romare Bearden’s family and foundation. Special thanks for foundation leaders Diedra Harris-Kelley and Joanne Bryant-Reid. Thanks to Bearden documentary filmmaker Nelson Breen, who often shared knowledge
and rare outtakes from his *Bearden Plays Bearden*. Thanks also to Shana Leonard, representing Herman Leonard Photography.

Thanks to the staff of the National Jazz Museum in Harlem, and particularly to founding director Loren Schoenberg, for their assistance in tracking down materials and for many valuable conversations.

This book also had the benefit of editorial assistants: the brilliant Michael Collins and Livia Tenzer. For assistance with researching pictures and permissions, many thanks to Catherine Huff.

Finally, I can’t thank enough Sylvie Fortin, my deeply beloved soulmate.
ANTAGONISTIC COOPERATION