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It takes a fresh, youthful perspective to see the reflection of jazz and politics anew. It takes a musician, one impassioned by the collective bargaining of “trading fours,” where each member of the band takes four measures to solo. If someone forgets to play his four, there is a flagrant void of sound. If you play one measure extra, you're not respecting the form. In the jam session of a Jazzocracy, Americans trade fours with each other every day. We *talk* and we *listen*.

But the story gets much deeper. In the 1950s, jazz musicians became the literal embodiment of American democracy. In one of our largest cultural projects, premier jazz musicians were flown to places beyond the Iron Curtain in an effort to promulgate ideals of democracy. The results highlighted new challenges of political dissent, racial inequality, and segregation—points from which our own democracy had gone astray.

Now, from a new generation, we have a new challenge. It's the challenge to see the evolution of jazz and democracy as forming our next set of mythologies, ones that can cast beyond the tired legacy of Jessie James, or the sadly degraded trends of modern popular music. Are we again on the wrong path? Are we forgetting the very spirit that inspired jazz in the first place? New author, Kabir Sehgal, shows us how we can keep on course and recapture America's rightful soul.

Essays of the Young Emerson (Published by GW Zouck, 2010)

Reading Emerson is a must for every person who believes that individuals can change the world. He is like the favored professor of the graduating student, the inspirational partner of the young entrepreneur, the unwavering friend who stays with us through moments that threaten our well-being. Emerson offers a message that can ward off political and cultural apathy. His words have lasted through generations as a call to intellectual and spiritual arms, from soldiers walking elbow to elbow through literal battlefields in his own time, to citizens and students on the streets and college campuses marked by civil disobedience in our own era. Emerson continues to assist our nation in its ongoing democratic experiment. He should remain a permanent part of our collective soul.

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