

Louis Armstrong (1901-1971)





Louis Armstrong

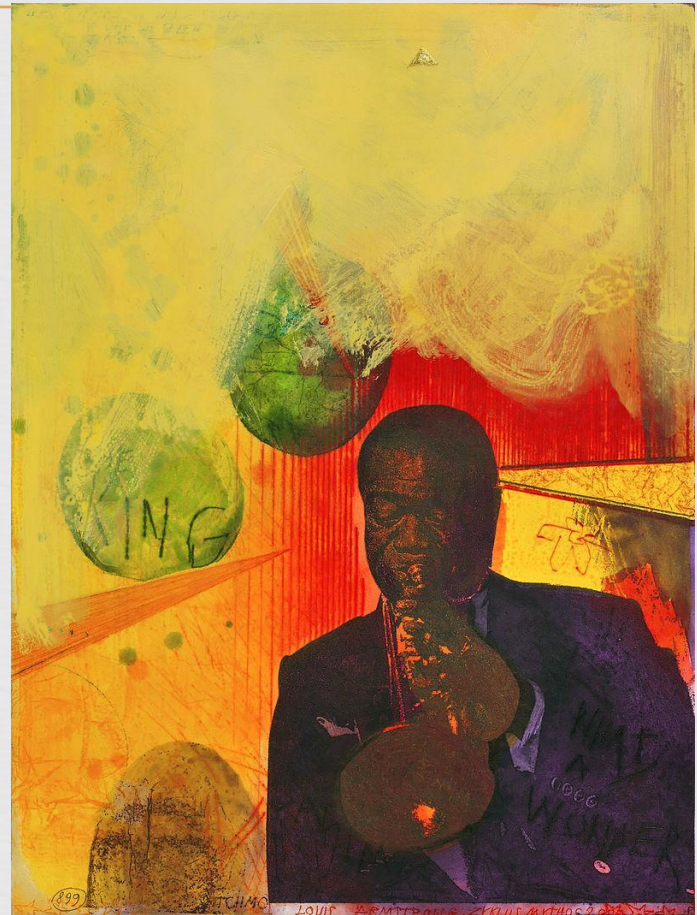


- African-American trumpeter, composer and singer who was one of the most influential figures in jazz.
- Armstrong was a foundational influence in jazz, shifting the focus of the music from collective improvisation to solo performance.



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- Armstrong was also an influential singer, demonstrating great dexterity as an improviser, bending the lyrics and melody of a song for expressive purposes.
- Armstrong was a gifted composer who wrote more than fifty songs, which in a number of cases have become jazz standards (e.g., “Gully Low Blues,” “Potato Head Blues,” and “Swing That Music”).



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- In his early years, Armstrong was best known for his virtuosity with the cornet and trumpet.
- Selmer trumpet, given as a gift by King George V of the United Kingdom to Louis Armstrong in 1933



Louis Armstrong



- His artistry and personality allowed him socially acceptable access to the upper echelons of American society which were highly restricted for black men of his era.
- As his fame grew, so did his access to the finer things in life usually denied to a black man, even a famous one. His renown was such that he dined in reputable restaurants and stayed in hotels usually exclusively for whites. I
- t was a power and privilege that he enjoyed, although he was very careful not to flaunt it with fellow performers of color, and privately, he shared what access that he could with friends and fellow musicians.

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- Armstrong played a two-week engagement in March 1971 at the Waldorf-Astoria's Empire Room, at the end of which he was hospitalized for a heart attack.
- He died of a heart attack in his sleep on July 6, 1971, a month before his 70th birthday

