

# 1960s: Jazz and the Avant Garde



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## Chapter 9

# Key Terms, Music, Figures and Bands

## Terms

Bossa nova  
Soul jazz  
Hammond B3  
Octave  
Ostinato  
CTI Records  
ECM Records  
World music

## Music (albums, works, etc.)

*Getz/Gilberto*  
*Home Cookin'*  
*Sunday at the Village Vanguard*

*Waltz for Debby*  
*The Bridge*  
*Homecoming: Live at the  
Village Vanguard*  
*Red Clay*  
*Solo Concerts Bremen/Lausanne*

## Figures and Bands

Stan Getz  
João Gilberto  
Antonio Carlos Jobim  
Astrud Gilberto  
Jimmy Smith  
Julian "Cannonball" Adderley

Nat Adderley  
Wes Montgomery  
Bill Evans  
Scott LaFaro  
Bill Evans Trio  
Miles Davis 60s Quintet  
Sonny Rollins  
Dexter Gordon  
Freddie Hubbard  
Keith Jarrett  
Keith Jarrett Belonging  
Quartet  
Creed Taylor  
Manfred Eicher

## Meanwhile, Behind the Bluster of the New Thing . . .

During the 1960s and 1970s, two stylistic movements were successful in focusing the attention of jazz musicians, fans, and critics, and seemed to push most of the other jazz artistic endeavors to the sidelines. The onset of free jazz in 1959 and jazz/rock fusion in 1969 (discussed in detail in Chapter 6) became weathervane moments in jazz history, when the rules changed and everyone had to change with them. As we have seen and will continue to see, some jazz musicians jumped into the fray with abandon; others, Sonny Rollins being a prime example, appeared to be lost in the desert and not sure which direction to go. Jazz in the 1960s and 1970s, however, was not merely a two-dimensional world; there was, in fact, a multifaceted and diverse climate of artistic and creative activity, as many musicians chose to operate outside the spheres of free jazz and fusion. In fact, even more than the 1950s, jazz experienced dramatic diversification during the two-decade long period that began in 1959. 1959, the "Beginning of Beyond" year, was the year in which the release of several groundbreaking albums signaled a new era of expanding artistic notions in jazz. Although perhaps not as controversial or groundbreaking as the work of Ornette Coleman or jazz/rock patriarch Miles Davis, the other side of the 1960s and 1970s was rich in creative activity. During this period, Bill Evans, a quiet and introverted yet brilliant pianist redefined the piano trio. Stan Getz, a Jewish saxophonist from the Bronx, imported a darkly romantic new style from Brazil. Pianist Keith Jarrett began performing solo piano recitals that were complex, beautiful—and completely spontaneously composed. Miles Davis, in the years before he began experimenting with rock rhythms and

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instruments, put together what is arguably the most creative and innovative band of his career, if not in all of jazz history. But there's more! In April 1964, as rock music was trying its best to steamroll jazz out of existence, Louis Armstrong, then in his sixties, knocked the Beatles off the Number 1 spot on the *Billboard* Top100 with his recording of "Hello Dolly." It was a small victory in a war that jazz would ultimately lose, but it was a victory nonetheless.

## Stan Getz: Bossa Nova Man

### A Nice Bunch of Guys

Stan Getz was one of the most important stylists to play the tenor saxophone in the modern jazz era. Although his silky smooth tone was rooted in the tradition of Lester Young and he was schooled in the swing bands of Stan Kenton and Woody Herman, Getz defined the modern cool sound of the tenor in the 1950s and 1960s. In addition, his popular bossa nova recordings in the early 1960s started an American love affair with the music of Brazil that continues to this day. Getz (February 2, 1927–June 6, 1991), the son of Ukrainian Jewish immigrant parents, was raised in the East Bronx, New York. His father bought him a saxophone when he was thirteen, and the instrument brought a previously absent focus to his life. "In my neighborhood my choice was: be a bum or escape. So I became a music kid, practicing eight hours a day. I was a withdrawn, hypersensitive kid."<sup>1</sup> Within a year Getz was gigging around town at Bar Mitzvahs and the like, and was accepted into the All City High School Orchestra. At sixteen, he joined the musicians union; by the age of seventeen he was playing tenor saxophone with Kenton and living in California. By this time, he was learning Lester Young's recorded solos note for note, and consciously copying his sound. To Getz, the key to Young's tone was the absence of "reediness":

"I always wanted to take as much reediness out of the sound and hear more of the breath. I came from an era when we didn't use electronic instruments, and I discovered that my dark sound could be heard across a room clearer than somebody with a reedy sound."<sup>2</sup>

After a short stint with Kenton and the Benny Goodman Orchestra, Getz joined Woody Herman's Second Herd (the famous "Four Brothers" band with four tenor saxophones), and established his reputation with an attention getting eight-bar solo on the 1948 recording "Early Autumn." Soon



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after, he left Herman's band to establish his own career. With his baby face and cool, romantic playing style, Getz quickly became a star. In December 1949 (while still only twenty-two years old), he played alongside Charlie Parker and his idol Lester Young at the grand opening of Birdland. Earlier in the year, he was named the *Metronome* Musician of the Year and came in second in the *Down Beat* Readers Poll. Unfortunately, Getz was by this time addicted to heroin (which he had started using while playing with Kenton) and suffering severe bouts of depression. His moods were unpredictable (saxophonist Zoot Sims once famously quipped that "Yeah, Stan's a nice bunch of guys!"), and he sometimes flew into fits of uncontrolled rage. He managed to keep his personal traumas hidden from public view until a botched attempt to rob a drug store in Seattle for morphine in February 1954 garnered national attention (with an infamous photo of him taken in the backseat of a squad car) and a six-month jail sentence. For the next several years, Getz's life was a mess (including an unpleasant divorce and tax problems), although somehow he was able to keep his playing at a high level while winning the *Down Beat* and *Metronome* saxophone polls nearly every year. In 1958, he moved to Denmark, and was able to sustain a comfortable life there for a while, but soon found that his celebrity in the United States was slipping. In 1960, he returned to New York.

### The New Flair

1959 was a year of remarkable change in jazz. The seminal albums (*Kind of Blue*, *Time Out*, *The Shape of Jazz to Come*, etc.), the new modal and free jazz styles, Ornette Coleman's celebrated Five Spot engagement, and John Coltrane's rising status as a star with a new quartet all served to take Stan Getz out of the public radar screen. He attempted to get back on track with an innovative Third Stream album, *Focus*, recorded in July 1961 with the Beaux Arts String Quartet. Although the critics applauded and it won a Grammy Award, record sales were flat. Getz soon got what turned out to be a career changing break however, when guitarist Charlie Byrd introduced him to a new jazz style called *bossa nova* that Byrd had discovered while touring Brazil. *Bossa nova* was the creation of guitarist **João Gilberto** and composer **Antonio Carlos Jobim**, who fused jazz harmonies with the native Brazilian beat known as the *samba*. "João and I felt that Brazilian music had been too much a storm on the sea, and we wanted to calm it down for the recording studio," Jobim said. "You could call *bossa nova* a clean, washed *samba*, without loss of the momentum."<sup>3</sup> The term literally meant "new flair." "In Portuguese, a *bossa*... has come to mean a flair for something. So if a guy has a *bossa* for something, it is a talent for something. And *bossa nova* was a 'new flair.'"<sup>4</sup> Getz was immediately attracted to the slow, moody, seductive style, and he and Byrd recorded an album of *bossa novas* called *Jazz Samba* in one day in February 1962. *Jazz Samba* was an unprecedented success that hit Number 1 in March 1963, spent seventy weeks on the charts, kick started a national *bossa nova* craze, and won a Grammy Award. One song from the album, "Desafinado" broke into the Top Twenty and also won a Grammy.

Getz's next move was to collaborate with the originators of the style, Jobim and Gilberto. Jobim had studied European classical



**Bossa Nova**—a Brazilian jazz style developed by Antonio Carlos Jobim and João Gilberto in the 1950s. 13

music and bebop, and in the mid 1950s began trying to merge the two with Brazilian folk music. His collaborations with Gilberto had created a bossa nova craze in their native country in 1958, which in turn caught the attention of Charlie Byrd. Getz brought the two to New York in 1962 for a concert at Carnegie Hall, and work on an album began in early 1963. Gilberto brought along his pretty wife **Astrud Gilberto** to the sessions, and Getz soon realized that although she had never sung professionally, she had a cool, seductive voice that was perfect for the project. “Gilberto and Jobim didn’t want Astrud on it. Astrud wasn’t a professional singer; she was a housewife. But when I wanted translations of what was going on, and she sang ‘Ipanema’ and ‘Corcovado.’ I thought the words in English were very nice... and Astrud sounded good enough to put on the record.”<sup>5</sup> The resulting album, *Getz/Gilberto* was an even bigger smash than its predecessor, reaching Number 2 (beaten only by the Beatles’ *A Hard Days Night*) and becoming Getz’s only gold record. One of Jobim’s six songs from the album, “The Girl From Ipanema” reached Number 5 and made a star out of Astrud Gilberto. In 1965, “Ipanema” won a Grammy for Single of the Year, while *Getz/Gilberto* won three more, including Album of the Year. Although Getz’s emotional problems continued (he attempted suicide just days after his successes at the Grammy Awards ceremonies), he continued to record until the end of his life. Among the highlights of his post-bossa nova years were two collaborations with pianist Chick Corea, 1967’s *Sweet Rain* and 1972’s *Captain Marvel*.

## Soul Jazz: Hard Bop Meets Soul

As we learned in Chapter 3, both hard bop and soul music emerged soon after the landmark May 17, 1954, *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* ruling. Both styles reflected the rising optimism among African-Americans that progress on racial discrimination and segregation would be imminent. Although both hard bop and soul were heavily influenced by R&B, it was fairly easy to distinguish between the two styles, the most obvious differences being that soul music was from its inception intended to be commercial pop music, and usually had vocals. Hard bop, on the other hand, was instrumental music, and was approached from a jazz musician’s point of view, retaining a strong connection to bebop. If one were to think of the two styles as being on opposite ends of a musical seesaw, **soul jazz** would be at the mid-point, a natural blending of the two. In other words, it was a more commercial version of hard bop or a more jazz oriented version of soul (or yet another way to look at it: somewhere between Art Blakey and Ray Charles). The song that really created the template for soul jazz was Horace Silver’s “The Preacher” from the 1954 debut album of the Jazz Messengers. “The Preacher” was a bluesy, gospel-tinged, groove-oriented song with a strong melody and simplified harmonies; it’s “down home” quality seemingly had something for everyone that liked hard bop, the blues, R&B, or soul. (Most of Silver’s other compositions clearly fall into the hard bop mold, which is where he is categorized in this text.) Using “The Preacher” as a starting point for the nascent style, soul jazz thus began in the mid 1950s. However, because the music

Soul Jazz—a popular substyle of hard bop that drew heavily from R&B and soul music influences. j}

earned its greatest popularity in the 1960s, with no less than five soul jazz recordings hitting the Top Forty (the highest ranking going to Ramsey Lewis's "The 'In' Crowd" at Number 5 in 1965\*), we will include its discussion here rather than in Chapter 3. Our attention in this next section will turn to those musicians whose primary output as solo artists or group leaders was with hard bop's more commercialized cousin, soul jazz.

### Jimmy Smith

Although **Jimmy Smith** was not the first jazz organist, he created the definitive jazz organ style with his deep grooves and stunning technique, and in the process defined the sound of the contemporary organ trio. Smith (December 8, 1925–February 8, 2005) was born in Norristown, Pennsylvania, where his musical instruction began on piano, and eventually attended music college while working his way into the Philadelphia music scene. It was in the mid 1950s that he first heard the organ played in a jazz setting. His attraction was instant: "I heard Wild Bill Davis play the organ in 1955, and I bought myself an organ the next day—I had to have it."<sup>6</sup> Before this time, the organ had been used from time to time by a few jazz pianists as a novelty (most notably Fats Waller and Count Basie in the 1930s), but as of yet had no real tradition. Jimmy Smith made the **Hammond B3** his instrument of choice, an electric organ originally manufactured in the 1930s as a low cost and "portable" (despite weighing over 300 pounds) alternative to a church pipe organ. Its deep, growling sound, created in part by an innovative "drawbar" system to alter its tone, and the use of the rotating Leslie speaker to give it a distinctive tremolo made the B3 the only instrument used by jazz organists—even to this day. (The B3 also became a popular rock instrument in the 1960s when groups such as Booker T. and the MGs, Santana, and the Allman Brothers made use of it.) After mastering the bass pedals to get a convincing walking bass sound, Smith put a trio together with a guitarist and drummer and made his debut at Harlem's Small's Paradise and the Café Bohemia in Greenwich Village in early 1956. Within a month, he was recording his debut album for Blue Note, *Jimmy Smith at the Organ, Vol. 1—A New Sound—A New Star*. Among the album's songs was Smith's version of Horace Silver's "The Preacher."


Over the next few years, Smith was prolific in the studio, including one three-day session in February 1957, when he recorded five albums worth of material. Between 1958 and 1960, he recorded what are considered to be his

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\* The others were Mongo Santamaria's "Watermelon Man" (Number 10, 1963), Cannonball Adderley's "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy" (Number 11, 1967), Jimmy Smith's "Walk on the Wild Side" (Number 21, 1962), and Eddie Harris's "Exodus" (Number 36, 1961).

most famous albums, *The Sermon*, *Home Cookin'* and *Back at the Chicken Shack*, and had a Number 21 hit in 1962 with "Walk on the Wild Side." Smith frequently used guitarist Kenny Burrell and drummer Donald Bailey, although he occasionally augmented his sessions with horn players such as altoist Lou Donaldson and trumpeter Lee Morgan. Blue Note's Francis Wolff often captured the essence of Smith's music with his classic cover photographs, including one of the organist in front of Kate's Home Cooking Restaurant on Harlem's 126<sup>th</sup> Street for *Home Cookin'*, and the organist at home in Pennsylvania with a dog and rooster for *Back at the Chicken Shack*. Although Smith left Blue Note in 1963 and moved to Verve, he returned in 1986 for a few more years before spending his last years label hopping. It is his work for Blue Note in the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, which remains the most essential in defining the sound of soul jazz and the jazz organ trio. Since that time, many jazz organists, including Brother Jack McDuff, Richard "Groove" Holmes, Shirley Scott, Lonnie Smith, and most recently Joey DeFrancesco, Larry Goldings, and John Medeski, have made their mark in jazz. It is still the name Jimmy Smith, however, that is, and perhaps always will be, most closely associated with the jazz organ trio.

**The Jazz Organ Trio** The jazz organ trio is most often comprised of the same instrumental lineup that Jimmy Smith made famous: organ, guitar, and drums. Because the organist plays bass lines either on the foot pedals or with his left hand, typically a bassist is not needed. 

### Cannonball and Nat Adderley

The story of Julian "Cannonball" Adderley's (September 15, 1928–August 8, 1975) entrance into the New York jazz scene in June 1955 is one of the most incredible and often told of the modern jazz era. The altoist and his younger brother, cornetist Nat Adderley, then twenty-six and twenty-three, respectively, had come to the city from their native Florida to catch some jazz, and found their way to the Café Bohemia to hear bassist Oscar Pettiford's band. When the group's saxophonist didn't show, Pettiford noticed that the Adderley brothers had their horns with them (Nat explained that they "had their horns with us, not because we expected to sit in, but we didn't want to leave them in the car—this was New York, right?"). One thing led to another, and soon Cannonball was on stage cutting through the changes of a murderously fast rendition of "I'll Remember April," leaving "everybody with their mouths hanging open."<sup>7</sup> Within a month, he had a recording contract that put him in sessions as a leader with the likes of Paul Chambers, Kenny Clarke, Horace Silver, and, of course, brother Nat. In early 1958, he joined Miles Davis' band, becoming the third member of the famous front line (along with Davis and John Coltrane) that recorded *Kind of Blue*. After leaving Davis in September 1959, he turned his primary attention back to his own group, the Cannonball Adderley Quintet, which by this time included pianist Bobby Timmons, who wrote the group's first two hits, "Dis Here" and "Dat Dere." Other hits soon followed, including Nat's most famous composition "The Work Song" and Cannonball's "Sack o' Woe."

In 1961, Adderley hired Austrian pianist Josef Zawinul, who ended up staying in the group for more than nine years and contributing their most popular hits, including "Walk Tall," "The Country Preacher" and "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy," a Number 11 hit in 1967. As the group evolved throughout the 1960s, Nat emerged

as a major composer as well, although his widely played tunes such as “Jive Samba,” “Hummin’,” “Sermonette,” “The Old Country,” and, of course, “The Work Song” never received the airplay that Zawinul’s songs did. Because Cannonball Adderley played with a smooth, soulful style that never strayed far from the blues, and because he enjoyed album sales that extended well beyond the normal limitations of jazz recordings, he was often subjected to criticism of selling out. Adderley was unmoved. “Our culture predisposes us to link artistry with suffering, a stereotype which Adderley gleefully pushed aside,”<sup>8</sup> wrote soul jazz author Kenny Mathieson. Nonetheless, this became an issue for other soul jazz artists, and as we shall see in Chapter 6, a new crop of jazz musicians in the 1970s.

## Wes Montgomery

Indianapolis-born electric guitarist **Wes Montgomery** (March 6, 1923–June 15, 1968) was like Cannonball Adderley in that he was a marvelously gifted and universally peer-respected musician who enjoyed commercial success and the criticism from purists that accompanied it. Montgomery was one of three musical brothers—Monk played bass, and Buddy played piano and vibes—who were well known in the supper club circuits in their hometown. Wes was self-taught from listening to Charlie Christian records, and learned to play the guitar with his thumb rather than using a pick in the conventional way. In spite of this (or perhaps *because* of this), he developed an innovative way of playing melodies in **octaves**, a difficulty on the guitar because of the muting of the intermediate strings that is required. Throughout the 1950s, he set a grueling schedule for himself, working a full-time factory job by day and nearly every night in clubs. His break came in 1959, when Cannonball Adderley heard him while on tour in Indianapolis and was completely blown away after hearing him. Within months, Montgomery was in New York recording his debut album *Wes Montgomery Trio* for Riverside. Future albums included a collaboration with Adderley, 1960’s *The Incredible Jazz Guitar of Wes Montgomery* (which is widely regarded as his best) and the amazing *Smokin’ at the Half Note*. The latter album, recorded in June 1965 mostly at the Greenwich Village club with former Miles Davis sidemen Wynton Kelly, Paul Chambers, and Jimmy Cobb, is a hard-swinging, blowing session that is truly “smokin’”; no less than Pat Metheny has called it “the greatest guitar album ever made.”<sup>9</sup>

In 1965, Montgomery also recorded two albums, *Bumpin’* and *Goin’ Out of My Head*, which managed to be more listener-friendly (as in: commercial) while retaining a jazz feel. These were transitional albums; from this point on, the guitarist would record mostly pop-oriented albums that in many ways were precursors to the smooth jazz trend in the 1980s. Although there were exceptions (including two collaborations with Jimmy Smith), future albums were primarily in the pop vein, and included *California Dreaming* and 1968’s *A Day in the Life*, which became Montgomery’s only certified gold record in 1969. Unfortunately, he died of a heart attack in 1968 before it reached that milestone.



An **octave** is the musical interval measuring eight diatonic (scale) steps (e., C D E F G A B C). ♯

## Bill Evans: The Art of the Trio

### Jazz Zen Master

**Bill Evans** is the link between the jazz piano style of the 1940s and 1950s that fell into what could be called the “Bud Powell School” and the modernists of the 1960s (Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, etc.). Like virtually every other jazz pianist who emerged in the 1950s, Evans was deeply influenced by Powell (as well as Lennie Tristano and George Shearing), but he was able to craft a new, sophisticated modern style that was, in turn, deeply influential to the next generation of jazz pianists. Evans (August 16, 1929–September 15, 1980) was born in middle class Plainfield, New Jersey. He began playing the piano at age six, but also studied the violin and flute. He first began gigging at the age of twelve, and by the time he was in high school was playing boogie-woogie and the blues, which he found to be welcome respite from the rigors of classical piano. His discipline and work ethic, which often included three hours of practice a day, was fueled by his belief that he was only moderately talented. After studying composition and piano at Southeastern Louisiana College in New Orleans and graduating with honors in 1950, Evans returned to the New York area and gigged around for a year before being drafted into the army. He then took a year off in Florida to read and study Eastern philosophy (especially Zen), but returned to New York in 1955 and enrolled at Mannes School of Music. He soon made an important connection with composer/arranger George Russell, who hired Evans to play on a series of Third Stream recordings, which earned him positive reviews and



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widespread respect in the jazz community. Russell was impressed enough with Evans's playing to write a feature piece for him, "Concerto for Billy the Kid," which appears on his 1956 album *The Jazz Workshop*. Evans soon became a sought after sideman, and worked for Russell, Charles Mingus, Chet Baker, and Cannonball Adderley, among others. He also recorded his piano trio debut album as a leader in 1956 titled *New Jazz Conceptions*. His break into the big time came in April 1958, when he auditioned for Miles Davis and was hired on the spot.

Davis was beginning to investigate the use of modal harmony, and had recently recorded his first modal composition, "Milestones." Evans's work with modal guru Russell seemingly made him the perfect fit for Davis' group. During his eight-month stay, however, the pianist found that he did not provide the power and drive that Davis was looking for, and was ostracized by black fans for being the band's only white member. "Many blacks felt that since I had the top small group in jazz and was paying the most money that I should have a black piano player," Davis remarked. "Now, I don't go for that kind of shit...as long as they can play what I want, that's it."<sup>10</sup> Although Davis did not let race become an issue, it seems to have been for Evans, who had a notoriously low self-esteem and felt as though he was an outsider in the group. It is believed that these insecurities motivated Evans to begin using heroin while playing with Davis, a habit that plagued him with health problems for the rest of his life. (Although he later switched to methadone, a medicinal substitute for heroin, Evans was often sick with hepatitis or other ailments, and his dependency certainly contributed to his early death at age fifty-one.) Evans left the group in November 1958, but Davis brought him back in the spring to collaborate on the album *Kind of Blue*. Evans's participation was crucial to the artistic success of the album, as Davis himself said: "What he did was turn me on to some classical composers and they influenced me."<sup>11</sup> Evans also wrote the liner notes to the album, an extraordinary gesture on Davis' part, who on previous albums had given the assignment to a critic or the producer. During 1958, Evans also recorded his second piano trio album, *Everybody Digs Bill Evans*, and managed to barely eke his way into the *Down Beat* Readers Poll at Number 20.

### Triumph and Tragedy

After leaving Davis, Evans went about the task of establishing a regular working trio, one in which the bassist and drummer would play equal roles in a three-way musical conversation. This was a radical idea, post-bop piano trios, including those led by Oscar Peterson, Nat King Cole, Errol Garner, and Ahmad Jamal, had featured the pianist and relegated the bass and drums to supporting roles as timekeepers. "What was clear from the first was that Bill had something very different in mind from the normal interplay of piano with bass," said producer Orrin Keepnews. "Most so-called trio records are just an accompanied piano player. Bill was looking for something very different—a joined together kind of thing."<sup>12</sup> Key to the success of this concept would be finding a bassist who could play freely and melodically, and could interact instinctively with Evans. In the summer of 1959, he found

that person, twenty-three-year-old **Scott LaFaro**, of whom Evans said: "I was astounded by his creativity, [he was] a virtuoso. There was so much music in him... he certainly stimulated me to other areas."<sup>13</sup> Rounding out the trio was the inventive drummer Paul Motian, who added just the right amount of spontaneous interplay to balance Evans and LaFaro.

Over the next two years, the **Bill Evans Trio** redefined small group jazz by bringing a new level of spontaneous interaction to the rhythm section, while LaFaro did nothing less than reinvent jazz bass playing. Their first two studio albums, *Portrait in Jazz* (1959) and *Explorations* (1961), reflect these changes. The trio's enduring masterpieces, *Sunday at the Village Vanguard* and *Waltz for Debby*, were made in one day, June 25, 1961, when Riverside Records recorded the matinee and evening sets on the final day of a weeklong engagement at the venerable Greenwich Village club. The albums, which chronicle the advances the trio had been working toward for two years, have been called the greatest live albums in jazz history.<sup>14</sup> It is not forceful music, as critic Ira Gitler would point out in the liner notes; instead, the albums have a meditative, Zen-like quality to them. They reflect Evans's interest in Zen as well as the dues he was paying as a junkie. Tragically, the two albums also mark the trio's last performance. Just eleven days later LaFaro was killed in an auto accident on Route 20 in upstate New York. Evans was devastated, and did not work for months while he mourned. It was one of many tragedies in the pianist's life, which included the suicides of his brother Harry and girlfriend Ellaine, and his continuing addiction. However, there were many highlights, including the 1963 album *Conversations with Myself*, on which he used multi-track recording technology to record three different tracks of piano on each song. It won Evans his first of six Grammy Awards.

#### Members of the 1959 Bill Evans Trio

- Bill Evans piano
- Scott LaFaro bass
- Paul Motian drums

## Miles Davis: The Second Quintet

### Miles in Transition

In the months following the release of his 1959 masterpiece *Kind of Blue*, Miles Davis was at the pinnacle of the jazz world. Gushing critical reviews of *Kind of Blue* were coming in. He had a new pianist, Wynton Kelly, one of the best hard bop players ever. He was feeling healthy, and staying home, living the couple's life with Broadway dancer and future wife Frances Taylor. But then, things started to turn for the worse. First, he found out from a newspaper interview that John Coltrane wanted to quit the band, which he did in early 1960. In August, he was beaten by a police officer and arrested outside of Birdland for what amounted to not leaving when the cop told him to "move on." (Davis was on break at the club and had just finished escorting a white woman to her car. Although he spent the night in jail, his case was later dismissed.) Cannonball Adderley quit in September. Then in November, only three months after the release of *Kind of Blue*, Ornette Coleman made his debut at the Five Spot and grabbed the attention of the entire jazz world. Davis wasn't exactly pleased with Coleman's timing or his music. Among his many comments about the altoist were, "He just came and fucked up everybody," and "People will

go for anything they don't understand if it's got enough hype."<sup>15</sup> If Ornette was the "New Thing," Miles Davis, his sextet and *Kind of Blue* were suddenly the "old thing."

The next three years were transitional ones for Davis. Although some great records were made during these years, including *Sketches of Spain* (1959) with Gil Evans and *Someday My Prince Will Come* (1961), he was unable to keep a steady band together for any length of time. However, when his long-time but on-again, off-again rhythm section of Wynton Kelly, Paul Chambers, and Jimmy Cobb left for good in early 1963, Davis finally put together a steady band, one that would rival John Coltrane's quartet as the most influential of the 1960s. It has become known as his "60s Quintet" or his "Second Quintet." On drums was seventeen-year-old dynamo Tony Williams from Boston, of whom Davis would say "was always the center that the group's sound revolved around." On bass, Ron Carter from Detroit. The pianist was twenty-three-year-old Herbie Hancock from Chicago, who played a Mozart piano concerto with the Chicago Symphony at age eleven, and in 1962 recorded his first solo album *Takin' Off*, which included his composition "Watermelon Man." On tenor saxophone was George Coleman, who would stay with the group for only a few months before being replaced by Wayne Shorter, who had been musical director for the Jazz Messengers from 1959 to 1964. (Sam Rivers also filled in briefly in between Coleman and Shorter for a tour of Japan.) Davis' new band got rave reviews at the jazz festival in Antibes, France, in July, and at a benefit concert for the NAACP in New York on February 12, 1964. (The latter concert was recorded and released on two albums, *Four and More* and *My Funny Valentine*, which some [author included] call the greatest live jazz albums ever made. Davis himself described the concert as such: "We just blew the top off that place that night. It was a motherfucker."<sup>16</sup>)

#### Members of the Miles Davis '60s Quintet

- Miles Davis trumpet
- Wayne Shorter tenor saxophone
- Herbie Hancock piano
- Ron Carter bass
- Tony Williams drums

### E.S.P.

By the time Shorter joined the group in late 1964, it was jelling into an explosive, experimental and cohesive unit that straddled the fence between hard bop and free jazz. Although Davis had initially dismissed the "New Thing," he was now moving toward it. At thirty-eight, he was a mentor to his younger twenty-something band members, but because they had openly embraced the "New Thing" from the beginning, Davis also learned from them. "The music we did together changed every fucking night; if you heard it yesterday, it was different tonight. Man, it was something how the shit changed from night to night after a while. Even we didn't know where it was all going to. But we did know it was going somewhere else and that it was probably going to be hip."<sup>17</sup> The quintet seemed to have an uncanny ability to communicate with each other at a higher level than any that came before it, enabling them to bring a great amount of flexibility to the performance of each song. Forms, tempos, styles, and rhythmic pulses were all elastic and open to new interpretations with each gig. "We didn't talk in detail about what we were doing...things would kind of just happen," said Hancock. "You just had to keep your ears open, keep your eyes open, and keep your heart open."<sup>18</sup> Although

everyone wrote for the band, the largest share of the music was written by Shorter, who literally created a new catalog of jazz standards over a four-year span with compositions like "E.S.P.," "Footprints," "Nefertiti," and "Pinocchio."

Between 1964 and 1968, the Davis 60s Quintet recorded six studio albums: *E.S.P.*, *Miles Smiles*, *Sorcerer*, *Nefertiti*, *Miles in the Sky*, and *Filles de Kilimanjaro*. These albums are all timeless works of art that are still magical and enlightening to listen to. This band is often mentioned, along with the Coltrane Quartet and the Charlie Parker/Dizzy Gillespie Quintet as one of the greatest small groups ever assembled in modern jazz. By 1968, however, Davis was once again ready to move on to the next phase of his life and career. His marriage to Frances was over, and he had met a twenty-three-year-old singer/songwriter named Betty Mabry who knew Jimi Hendrix and Sly Stone. She not only introduced Davis to their music, but to them personally. Although their marriage would last only a year, Mabry had no small role in changing Miles Davis' music and outlook on life. We shall look at the dramatic career changes that were forthcoming in the next chapter.

## Sonny Rollins and Dexter Gordon: Tenor Titans

### Detour Ahead

The 1960s were a time of uncertainty and struggle for **Sonny Rollins** and **Dexter Gordon**, two tenor saxophone titans who were approaching the midpoints of their careers. Rollins voluntarily pulled himself out of the music business in 1959 (see Chapter 3) for the stated reason that "I wanted to work on my horn, I wanted to study more harmony, I wanted to better myself."<sup>19</sup> Although Rollins spent hours practicing at night on the Williamsburg Bridge during his sabbatical, he perhaps wasn't being straightforward with his answer. Could it be that he dropped out because he was unsure how to react to Ornette Coleman and the "New Thing"? Or was it because he was overwhelmed by John Coltrane's sudden ascendancy? (In fact, one joke at the time asked, "What ever happened to Sonny Rollins?" The answer: "He was run over by a 'Trane.") When Rollins returned in 1961, he formed a quartet, which included guitarist Jim Hall and a straight-ahead album of standards titled *The Bridge*. By ignoring the free jazz trend, critics said that Rollins was on a mission to save jazz. If he was on that mission, it wasn't long before Rollins abandoned it. In 1963, he released *Our Man in Jazz*, recorded with Coleman sidemen Don Cherry on cornet and drummer Billy Higgins. Sticking to standards (including "I Could Write a Book" and his own "Doxy") but done in a freer, Coleman-esque manner, the album was proof to some that Rollins *was* in touch with the new music and to others that he was pathetically *out* of touch. Other signs pointed to the latter conclusion. He started wearing his hair in a Mohawk, and took up bodybuilding and yoga. On at least one occasion, he appeared on stage at the Five Spot wearing a cowboy hat and a Lone Ranger mask. One music insider said, "It was almost a tragic period for him. Sonny was really at sea. He didn't know what to do, which

way to go." Rollins later admitted that Coltrane's popularity did play a role: "I did start to resent him at one point and I feel very embarrassed by that now. I think I let his success and the attention he was receiving get to me." In any event, Rollins retreated again in 1969 ("I hated music at the time; I went to India, and had no idea if I would ever play the saxophone professionally again"<sup>20</sup>) and, when he returned in 1971, he came with a fusion band with electric bass and keyboards, much to the dismay of his followers.

### Homecoming

Dexter Gordon also struggled in the 1960s, but found redemption in the 1970s. Gordon (February 27, 1923–April 25, 1990) was born in Los Angeles, the son of a dentist whose patients included Duke Ellington and Lionel Hampton. Gordon worked his way up through the club scene of the city's Central Avenue and, in the early 1940s, played in the bands of Hampton and Louis Armstrong. From 1944 to 1945, he played in the innovative hop big band of Billy Eckstine with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, and then moved to New York and became a fixture on 52nd Street. By this time Gordon had become the first bebop tenor player of note, with a huge, honking sound reminiscent of Coleman Hawkins and a bluesy, laid-back melodic style influenced by Lester Young. In 1947, he returned to Los Angeles and became a nightly presence in the after hours cutting contests on Central Avenue, which often found him pitted against tenor player Wardell Gray. "The jam-session thing was going on very heavily at that time, at several different clubs. At all the sessions, they would hire a rhythm section along with, say, a couple of horns. But there would always be about ten horns up on the stand. But it seemed that in the wee small hours of the morning—always—there would be only Wardell and myself. It became a kind of traditional thing. Spontaneous? Yeah!"<sup>21</sup> The Gordon/Gray rivalry was captured on Dial Records' *The Chase*, a hit record that helped establish both tenor players' fame. Gordon's fortunes dimmed in the 1950s, as he struggled with drug issues and two prison sentences. In 1962, he moved to Europe, where he lived for the next fourteen years, recording infrequently and mostly playing with amateur musicians.

Gordon moved back to the United States in 1976, and made a triumphant return at New York's Village Vanguard in December with a quintet that included trumpeter Woody Shaw. Live recordings from this engagement were released on the double album *Homecoming: Live at the Village Vanguard*, which became a top seller. Gordon's heroes welcome and the success of the *Homecoming* album have often been cited as the beginning of a renewed interest in mainstream acoustic jazz at a time when electric jazz/rock seemed to be in favor. (This movement, which in the 1980s would take on the Neo-conservative label, will be discussed further in Chapter 7). The moment was also a personal triumph for Gordon, who left the country in 1962 branded as a drug addict and now for the first time in his life was signed to a major label (Columbia) and leading his own band. *Homecoming* was reviewed as "a celebration of the roots of a giant. It stands as a new plateau in Dex's career and, for us, an opportunity to share in the workings of one of the great hearts and minds of improvised music."<sup>22</sup> Gordon also won

*Down Beat's* 1977 Critics Poll on tenor saxophone. One final highlight to Dexter Gordon's career came in 1986 when he won an Academy Award nomination for his acting in the film *Round Midnight*, in which he played Dale Turner, a jazz musician living in Paris, a role based loosely on the lives of Bud Powell and Lester Young.

## Freddie Hubbard

Like Wes Montgomery, **Freddie Hubbard** grew up in Indianapolis, and it was there he first studied trumpet at the Jordan Conservatory. As a teen, he began playing professionally, often with Montgomery and his brothers and later with his own group, the Jazz Contemporaries. In 1958, at age 20, Hubbard (April 7, 1938–December 29, 2008) moved to New York, where he quickly established himself among the city's elite trumpeters. During his first years in the city he worked with Eric Dolphy, Sonny Rollins, and others and recorded as a sideman on such notable LPs as Ornette Coleman's *Free Jazz: A Collective Improvisation*, Dolphy's *Out to Lunch*, and Oliver Nelson's *Blues and the Abstract Truth*. In 1960, Hubbard signed with Blue Note and released *Open Sesame*, his first of 60 albums as a leader. Then, in 1961, he joined Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, where he worked in the front line alongside tenor saxophonist Wayne Shorter and trombonist Curtis Fuller. Hubbard stayed with the Messengers until 1966, and recorded eight albums with them, including the highly regarded *Buhaina's Delight* (from which "Backstage Sally," Track 13 in chapter 3, comes).

In 1961, Hubbard released what many consider to be his finest LP, *Ready for Freddie*, on which he assembled a stellar band that included Shorter on tenor sax, McCoy Tyner on piano, and Elvin Jones on drums. During this time he also continued to record as a sideman on LPs by John Coltrane, Herbie Hancock, Bill Evans, and Dexter Gordon, among others. By the end of the 1960s, Hubbard was one of the most recorded and sought-after musicians working in jazz, and was recognized as a fiery virtuoso capable of playing exceptionally fast while maintaining a smooth lyricism and warm, rich tone.

As well regarded as he was in the jazz world, popular success eluded Hubbard until the 1970s when he signed with Creed Taylor's CTI Records. In all, he recorded eight albums for the label, mostly in more rock or pop oriented settings, and often working with outstanding backup musicians such as pianist Hancock, tenor player Joe Henderson, bassist Ron Carter, and drummer Jack DeJohnette. His first CTI release was the highly regarded *Red Clay*; his third *First Light*, won a Grammy Award in 1973 for Best Jazz Performance by a Group. He returned to straight ahead jazz in 1977 as a member of the highly regarded V.S.O.P. Quintet, a reforming of the 1960s Miles Davis Quintet with Hubbard taking the trumpet chair for the then-retired Davis. Three albums and a well-received tour resulted from the group. During the 1980s, Hubbard once again led his own groups and continued to record prolifically and tour the world. In 1992, he ruptured his upper lip, a disastrous setback that led to a period of inactivity and the necessity to relearn the basics of playing the trumpet. "I had to go back, get some books, and consult with classical trumpet teachers. I couldn't play

a note for a while because it was so tender. It's so frustrating not being able to blow the way I blew."<sup>1</sup> Hubbard did eventually return, but recorded sporadically in the 2000s. He died of a heart attack in 2008.

## Keith Jarrett: Spontaneous Invention

**Keith Jarrett** is one of the most creative and prolific improvisers of the modern jazz era. With more than one hundred albums to his credit, he has recorded a remarkably diverse catalog of music ranging from spontaneously improvised solo piano, jazz trios and quartets, and numerous albums of baroque, classical, and contemporary piano literature. He is a prolific composer whose orchestral works have been premiered all over the world, as well as a multi-faceted pianist whose influences include bebop, hard bop funk, free jazz, rock, and classical. He has won dozens of awards, fellowships and critic's polls. Jarrett (born May 8, 1945) was born and raised in Allentown, Pennsylvania. He took piano lessons starting at age three, started gigging at age fifteen. At eighteen, he attended Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he was kicked out in his first year for playing on the strings of practice room pianos (among other things). In late 1964, he moved to New York and became a regular at the open jam sessions at the Village Vanguard, where Art Blakey first heard him and hired him on the spot. After a short stint with the Jazz Messengers, Jarrett left and in 1966 joined the Charles Lloyd Quartet. Lloyd's group, which also included future Jarrett collaborator Jack DeJohnette on drums, was trail blazing in that it could comfortably shift between straight ahead acoustic, modal, free and rock-oriented jazz, and became very popular with younger audiences at a time when most younger listeners were tuning out of jazz and listening to rock music (see Chapter 6). It was during his years with Lloyd (1966–1969), Jarrett established a reputation as a charismatic and supremely gifted performer.

In 1966, while playing with Lloyd, Jarrett put together a trio with bassist Charlie Haden and drummer Paul Motian, which was later expanded to a quartet in 1971 with the addition of tenor saxophonist Dewey Redman (Jarrett also played with Miles Davis for a year in 1970). This group, in which Jarrett often played soprano saxophone, became known as his "American" quartet and released fourteen albums between 1971 and 1976. Jarrett also put together a second "European" quartet in 1974 with two Norwegians, saxophonist Jan Garbarek and drummer Jon Christiansen, and Swedish bassist Palle Danielsson. This group is more commonly known as the **Belonging Quartet**, after their first album release of the same name. Incredibly, playing with Miles Davis and leading and writing music for two quartets was not enough of a challenge for Jarrett, who in 1971 began a highly successful career as a solo pianist. His first solo piano album, *Facing You*, recorded for the new German label ECM, went against the grain of the current electric jazz/rock trend and created a blueprint for future solo piano albums from Jarrett and other jazz pianists in the 1970s. Jarrett's next solo effort, 1973's three-album *Solo Concerts Bremen/Lausanne* is arguably

### Members of the Keith Jarrett Belonging Quartet

- Keith Jarrett piano
- Jan Garbarek saxophone (Norway)
- Palle Danielsson bass (Sweden)
- Jon Christiansen drums (Norway)

<sup>1</sup> Shuster, Fred: *Down Beat*, October 1995

one of the most remarkable achievements in modern jazz. The three discs contain more than two hours of music recorded at recitals in Bremen, Germany, and Lausanne, Switzerland, but what is most amazing is that all of the music is completely spontaneously composed. *Solo Concerts* won Jarrett an international following, and was named record of the year by *Down Beat*, *Time*, *Stereo Review*, *The New York Times*, and many other publications. Jarrett followed it with the even more popular *Köln Concert*, another spontaneously composed recital recorded in 1975. He continued to release similar concert recordings into the 1990s.

## CTI and ECM: Redefining Jazz Marketing

Two innovative jazz record labels were founded in the late 1960s that revolutionized the recording and packaging of contemporary jazz. Both **CTI Records** and **ECM Records** were founded by producers with individualistic visions about how music should be recorded and released. As a result, the catalogs of each company have a distinctive sound and style. CTI was the brainchild of legendary producer **Creed Taylor**, who founded the label in 1967. Taylor began producing records in 1954 at tiny Bethlehem Records before moving to ABC in 1960, where he was assigned the job of setting up the company's new jazz label, Impulse!. He immediately developed a distinctive packaging for the label, which included elegant photographs and black and orange packaging. While at Impulse!, Taylor also signed John Coltrane and produced Oliver Nelson's album *The Blues and the Abstract Truth*. Taylor soon left for Verve Records, where he produced Grammy winners *Getz/Gilberto* by Stan Getz and *Conversations with Myself* by Bill Evans. When A&M Records offered Taylor a deal to start a new jazz label in 1967, CTI was born. He brought legendary engineer Rudy Van Gelder (see Chapter 3) and arranger Don Sebesky on board with him, ensuring that CTI's albums would sound great and have well-crafted orchestrations. He also created a distinctive look for his albums with high-quality glossy photographs and colorful, heavy, cardboard gatefold covers. He also used some of the best session players in jazz to back up his stars, such as bassist Ron Carter and keyboardists Herbie Hancock and Bob James.

CTI's stellar roster included trumpeter Freddie Hubbard, flautist Hubert Laws, guitarist George Benson, Antonio Carlos Jobim, tenor saxophonists Stanley Turrentine and Grover Washington, and Milt Jackson of the MJQ. One of Taylor's major signings was Freddie Hubbard, who released a string of popular rock influenced albums, including *Red Clay*, *Straight Life*, *Sky Dive*, and Grammy winner *First Light*. Hubert Laws released an innovative album in 1971 entitled *The Rite of Spring*, which included interpretations of classical works by Debussy, Bach, Faure, and Stravinsky, arranged by Don Sebesky. CTI declared bankruptcy in 1978, but its catalog was acquired by Columbia (Sony) and remains in print today.

Classical musician and jazz lover **Manfred Eicher** founded ECM (Edition of Contemporary Music) in Munich, Germany, in 1969. Eicher is a visionary, more enthusiast than businessman, who from the beginning gave the quality of his productions and his relationships with his artist's higher priority than profit margins. When he

signed Keith Jarrett to record the seminal solo piano album *Facing You* in 1971, the fledgling label had only one album in print, no American distribution, and a total of two employees (including Eicher). The phenomenal success of Jarrett's album was the starting point in ECM's explosive growth. In the 1970s, Eicher was able to sign a remarkable stable of American jazz talent that included Chick Corea, Pat Metheny, Gary Burton, saxophonist Dave Liebman, bassist Dave Holland, and the Art Ensemble of Chicago. He was also successful in signing top European jazz musicians including Jan Garbarek, bassist Eberhard Weber, and guitarist Terje Rypdal. In 1972, Eicher suggested that Jarrett and Garbarek collaborate, which led ultimately to the formation of Jarrett's European "Belonging" quartet.

Like CTI, ECM is known for the immaculate sonic quality of their recordings and their beautiful packaging. Album covers often display minimalist artwork or photography of remote Nordic nature scenes. In the 1980s, the label expanded into classical music with its ECM New Series. Many ECM releases blur the lines between jazz, international-flavored folk, and classical music. As such, the label was at the forefront of the movement that was at the time referred to as "**world music.**" Examples of this type of musical postmodernism can be found in the works of Garbarek and Brazilian composer/percussionist Naná Vasconcelos. Besides Jarrett's solo piano recordings and those of his Belonging quartet, other notable 1970s ECM releases include *Matchbook* (1974), a collaboration between Gary Burton and guitarist Ralph Towner; Burton and Chick Corea's *Crystal Silence* (1972); and Dave Holland's *Conference of the Birds* (1972), one of the decade's defining free jazz albums featuring saxophonists Sam Rivers and Anthony Braxton. Unlike CTI, ECM is still in business, and is still at the forefront of contemporary jazz, with a current artist list that includes Craig Taborn, Tord Gustavsen, Ralph Towner, and Paul Motian.



**World music** is an umbrella term to describe music that incorporates influences from different regions and cultures. 13

## Notes

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  1. Quoted from the liner notes to *Stan Getz: The Girl From Ipanema; The Bossa Nova Years*
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7. *Ibid*, pg 127
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9. *Ibid*, pg 177
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