

Miles Davis & Thelonious Monk - Live at Newport 58 & 63 (1993)

Written by bluesever

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CD 1

01. *Introduction*
02. *Ah-Leu-Cha by The Miles Davis Sextet*
03. *Straight, No Chaser by Miles Davis*
04. *Fran-Dance by Miles Davis*
05. *Two Bass Hit by Miles Davis* [play](#)
06. *Bye Bye Blackbird by Miles Davis*
07. *The Theme by Miles Davis Quintet*

Personnel:

Miles Davis (trumpet);
Cannonball Adderley (alto saxophone);
John Coltrane (tenor saxophone);
Bill Evans (piano); Paul Chambers (bass);
Jimmy Cobb (drums).
Live at the Newport Jazz Festival 1958

CD 2

01. *Introduction by Willis Conover*
02. *Criss Cross by Thelonious Monk*
03. *Light Blue by Thelonious Monk*
04. *Nutty by Thelonious Monk*
05. *Blue Monk by Thelonious Monk*
06. *Epistrophy by Thelonious Monk* [play](#)

Personnel:

Thelonious Monk (piano)
Pee Wee Russell (clarinet),
Charlie Rouse (tenor sax),
Butch Warren (bass)
Frankie Dunlop (drums).
Live at the Newport Jazz Festival 1963

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Though Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk did not perform together on the music in this double-album set, their work is given a wonderful showcase in this 1963 release.

Thanks to the research that went into the box set *The Complete Miles Davis/John Coltrane Sessions* there's a the definitive Newport 1958 date that features the debut live performances to the Miles Davis Sextet's two newest members: drummer Jimmy Cobb and pianist Bill Evans. The gig was part of a festival tribute to Duke Ellington, but that didn't stop Davis from showing off -- aggressively -- what his new band was capable of (six months later he would show the world when the band went to record *Kind of Blue*). This is a revelatory performance for fans of Evans. When Cobb kicks off into Charlie Parker's "Au-Leu-Cha," the tempo is breakneck. Davis' solo is all fire, pure heat, and inspiration. The melody goes by in a blink, and Cobb and Chambers carry the dictum to go faster as Davis gives way first to Coltrane, already moving his angular lines to the harmonic breaking point and doing them not in scales but in modes, fast and footloose. He's down in the groove before giving it to Cannonball Adderley to show off his bebop chops -- which he possesses in spades. He's out of the Bird book to be sure, but his tone is stunning and he's loose, free as a bird as he leaps from one idea to the next before the melody shifts the tune back to Earth for only a second. The sextet doesn't stop when it literally rocks through Thelonious Monk's "Straight No Chaser." Evans' harmonic invention on the tune couldn't be further from the composer's, but it hardly matters. His melodic fire and ability to move tonal mountains in the harmonic intervals is near effortless. Coltrane's solo is notable in that he's squeaking and squawking for the first time on record, and Adderley's for how rich and melodic it is. By the time Evans gets to his solo, he's down in Monk's blues all right, but they're so ornate and beautiful, they swing, sway, and are full of color, as nuanced as they come. There is no academia in his approach -- it's all emotion and sophistication. The rest of the set follows suit: "Fran-Dance," "Two Bass Hit," "Bye Bye Blackbird" (which has never sounded like this before or since), and the blistering "The Theme" all burn with white heat. It's obvious Davis was pulling out all the stops for this audience, bringing down the house, and perhaps realizing himself just what this band was capable of musically. Who knows? It doesn't matter, fans can finally have an accurate record of this performance that has been scattered over other issues, misdated, miscredited, and badly mastered. This volume finally sets straight what happened on that afternoon in 1958 at the Newport Jazz Festival. ~ Thom Jurek

This CD is masterful. A wonderful opportunity for those who already know Miles and Monk to hear more of the kind of sound you love. Two giants at their best in a live recording. If you are unfamiliar with the music of these two greats, this CD is a fantastic introduction to their sound. One word of caution, however, though this is a great CD recording of Miles and Monk together, it is by no means the last word, or note, on the kind of music the artists are, or were, capable of. This CD only demonstrates a tiny facet of the broad repertoires of Miles and Monk. In fact, I

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wouldn't even say that the CD is typical, if there is such a thing when speaking of these two, of their sound. For a great CD which will give the listener the essence of Thelonius Monk, stripped down to his essentials, listen to Solo Monk. This is Monk's solo album, consisting of songs chosen by the artist, each selection recorded in rarely more than one take. For the essence of Miles, listen to Kind of Blue. This CD also was recorded in rarely more than one take per song, with no rehearsals--incredible when one realizes that Miles brought in one composition each morning of the recording session and presented it on the spot to the tremendous ensemble gathered together. A word of criticism about the CD that has nothing to do with the musicians: The CD is nothing, and inferior, when compared to the original LP (That's another word for a vinyl disc for those of you who are too young to know. But if you are to oung to have known that and yet interested in this CD, you are an unusual music lover, indeed.). If you are ever fortunate enough to listen to the original LP you will know what I mean. –Steve Parker

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