

Miles Davis
Biographical Sketch

- 1926 May 25th; Miles Dewey Davis III born Alton, Illinois.
Began playing trumpet in grade school
- 1939 Received his first horn as a birthday gift from his father.
Studied with Elwood Buchanan in St. Louis, Missouri.
- 1942 Began “gigging” professionally with Eddie Randall’s Blue Devils Band.
Was offered a gig with Tiny Bradshaw but his mother insisted that he finish high school.
- 1944 Met Charlie Parker when he came through St. Louis with the Billy Eckstein band.
Played with Eckstine’s band for two weeks as a substitute.
Moves to New York City and seeks out Charlie Parker.
- 1945 May 4-6 - made his first recordings with a band led by Herbie Fields.
- 1945 November 26; recorded with Charlie Parker on Parker’s first record as a leader (“Billi’s Bounce”, “Now’s the Time”, and “Thriving from a Riff”).
- 1946 Toured with Benny Carter.
Recorded in L.A. with Parker and remained in L.A. for eight months.
Joined Billy Eckstine replacing Fats Navarro.
Played briefly with Illinois Jacquet.
- 1947 Rejoined Bird in New York.
Played around New York with various bands which he led.
(They included, at different times, Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane).
- 1948 Played with Oscar Pettiford.
Began collaboration with Gil Evans and Gerry Mulligan resulting in the formation of the now famous “Birth of the Cool” Nonet.
- 1949 In January, he recorded for the first time as a leader for Capitol Records. These dates produced some of the most important records in jazz.
Recorded with the Metronome All Stars.
Traveled to Paris to play in the 1949 Paris Jazz Festival.
- 1950 Played off and on with Tadd Dameron.
- 1951 Did recording dates and radio broadcasts.
Practiced!!!
- 1951-54 Recorded for Blue Note Records; particularly notable were the Sextet

sides with J.J. Johnson, Jackie McLean or Jimmy Heath, Gill Goggins, Percy Heath or Oscar Pettiford, Art Blakey or Kenny Clarke.

1954 Switched to Prestige Records.

April 29 - recorded "Blue and Boogie" and "Walkin". This album helped to re-establish Miles as the leading voice in jazz. The personnel included J.J. Johnson, Lucky Thompson, Horace Silver, Percy Heath and Kenny Clarke.

Recorded with Thelonious Monk.

1955 Successful appearance at Newport Festival.

Underwent a throat operation.

Formed the famous quintet that included John Coltrane, Red Garland, Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones.

1956 Switched to Columbia Records.

Recorded Music for Brass.

1957 Recorded "Miles Ahead" in collaboration with Gil Evans.

Wrote and recorded the music for the French film L'Ascenseur Pour L'échafaud by Louis Malle.

1958 Recorded as a sideman with Julian "Cannonball" Adderley.

Formed a group with "Cannonball" and "Trane" as the front line and Jimmy Cobb, Bill Evans and Paul Chambers as the rhythm section.

Continued his collaboration with Gil Evans.

Recorded his first modal piece, "Milestones".

1959 Recorded his first modal album, A Kind of Blue.

1960 Toured England and Sweden.

'Trane left the band.

1961 Toured with a band that included J.J. Johnson and Hank Mobley.

1963 Formed a new group with George Coleman, Ron Carter, Tony Williams and Herbie Hancock.

Made a series of live recordings at the annual Jazz Festival at Antibes, France.

1964 Wayne Shorter joined Miles' band.

This group remained intact until 1968.

1970 Another change in direction with Bitches Brew.

Miles Davis Innovations

1. Consistently defining the concept of what the jazz combo should be. Inevitably Miles groups have been the models after which virtually all groups have patterned themselves. For example:

Miles	Gil Goggins
J.J. Johnson	Percy Heath
Jimmy Heath	Kenny Clarke
Miles	Paul Chambers
John Coltrane	Philly Joe Jones
Red Garland	
Miles	Paul Chambers
John Coltrane	Philly Joe Jones
Jimmy Cobb	Cannonball Adderley
Wyton Kelly	
Or	
Bill Evans	
Miles	Herbie Hancock
George Coleman	Ron Carter
Tony Williams	
Miles	Herbie Hancock
Wayne Shorter	Ron Carter
Tony Williams	

2. Starting the Modal School. (“Dear Old Stockholm”, “Milestones”, Kind of Blue album)
3. Providing the impetus that moved jazz toward rock and funk. (Starting with Bitches Brew and Miles at the Fillmore albums)
4. Determining a definitive approach to the realization of standards and/or pop tunes. (“Bye Bye Blackbird”, “If I Were a Bell”, “Stella by Starlight”, “Green Dolphin Street”)
5. Defining the role of the rhythm section. (He was a completely liberating influence.)
6. Acting as the training ground for such great jazz talents such as: Coltrane, Rollins, Philly Joe Jones, J. McClean, Bill Evans, Paul Chambers, W. Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, and Tony Williams, et. Al.
7. Expanding the parameters of jazz player’s sound, time, harmony and melody.

8. Creating original and substantial trumpet styles that changed and influenced more than one school of jazz.

9. Producing a large body of recordings, which served as textbooks for modern musicians in the way that the recordings of Louis Armstrong, Lester Young, and Charlie Parker served his predecessors.

*Although he didn't invent entire jazz idioms himself, Miles organized bands of key innovators at early movements in the development of bop, cool jazz, modal and the jazz fusions idioms.

Influence of Lee Konitz and Miles Davis
West Coast or Cool School

Alto Sax

Art Pepper
Bud Shank
Herb Geller
Lennie Nichaus
Paul Desmond

Bass

Red Mitchell
Leroy Vinegar
Curtis Counce
Howard Rumsey
Red Callender
Carson Smith
Monty Budwig

Trumpet

Chet Baker
Conte Candoli
Jack Sheldon
Shorty Rogers
Stu Williamson
Carl Perkins

Baritone Sax

Gerry Mulligan
Bob Gordon

Drums

Mel Lewis
Shelly Manne
Larry Budker
Chico Hamilton

Trombone

Bob Brookmeyer
Frank Rosolino
Bob Enevoldsen

Guitar

Howard Robers
Barney Kessel
Jim Hall

Piano

Hampton Hawes
Claude Williamson
Russ Freeman
Pete Jolly
Andrew Previn
Dave Brubeck
Lennie Tristano*

Tenor Sax

Bill Perkins
Richie Kamuca
Bob Cooper
Jack Montrose
Dave Pell
Bill Homan
Zoot Sims

Composers/Arrangers

Gerry Mulligan
Dave Brubeck
Shorty Rogers
Dave Pell
Bill Holman
Marty Paich
Jimmy Guifire

Well Known Saxophonists who worked w/Miles

Lee Konitz*	Bennis Maupin	Wayne Shater
Sonny Rollins*	John Coltrane*	Dave Liebman
Jackie McClean	Hank Mobley	Steve Grossman
Gerry Mulligan	Joe Henderson*	Gary Bartz
Sonny Stitt	Sam Rivers	Cannonball Adderley
Jimmy Heath	George Coleman	Sonny Fortune

A Few of the Many Trumpeters Influenced by Miles

Clifford Brown*	Stu Williamson	Terence
Balanchard		
Chet Baker	Ted Curson	Kenny Wheeler
Shorty Rogers	Luis Gasca	Tim Hagans*
Jack Sheldon	Blue Mitchell	John McNiel
Nat Adderley*	Lester Bowie	Herb Pomeroy
Charles Moore	Tom Harrell*	Wynton Marsalis*
Johnny Coles	Randy Brecker	Wallace Roney
Eddie Henderson	Donald Byrd	Jim Powell
Freddie Hubbard*		

*Indicates innovators in their own right