



Performing Arts Series

Columbia Artist Management, LLC
presents

***The Miles Davis
Experience: 1949-1959***

A Collaboration with Blue Note Records

featuring

The Ambrose Akinmusire Quintet

Ambrose Akinmusire – trumpet

Walter Smith III – tenor sax

Sam Harris – piano

Harish Raghavan – bass

Justin Brown – drums

with

Donald E. Lacy, Jr. – narrator

Friday, September 30, 2011

Yardley Hall

Johnson County Community College

*Tonight's program will be announced from the stage.
There will be a 20-minute intermission*

Ambrose Akinmusire, trumpeter

By the time the lone standard “What’s New?” arrives with a wink 11 tracks into trumpeter-composer **Ambrose Akinmusire**’s tour de force Blue Note debut *When the Heart Emerges Glistening*, the song’s title has become a rhetorical question. The unneeded answer: *Everything*. Akinmusire has delivered nothing less than a manifesto, a Search for the New Land, a personal statement of such clarity and vision that it’s bound to turn heads around toward this startlingly fresh young talent.

Co-produced by Akinmusire and his label mate and mentor Jason Moran, the album’s 12 songs (10 of which were composed by Akinmusire) feature the 28-year-old trumpeter’s young quintet (tenor saxophonist Walter Smith III, pianist Gerald Clayton, bassist Harish Raghavan and drummer Justin Brown), a close-knit group of longtime friends and frequent collaborators who breathe a remarkable collective identity. *The New York Times* wrote that the quintet “seems destined for much wider recognition,” and described their unique sound as “limber, straight-ahead jazz with mystery and pop instincts that gets around most of the old, pervasive mainstream influences, both of trumpet playing and bandleading.”

The Los Angeles Times recently named Akinmusire one of its 2011 “Faces to Watch,” and offered this description of the quintet’s recent LA performance: “Akinmusire and his band demonstrated a remarkably fluid, adventurous interplay and patiently imaginative way with melody that sounded as steeped in the music’s history as it was hard-wired with the sound of something new. With a chameleonic tone that can sigh, flutter or soar, Akinmusire sounds less like a rising star than one that was already at great heights and just waiting to be discovered.”

The discovery of Ambrose Akinmusire (pronounced ah-kin-MOO-sir-ee) has been a slow and steady process. Born and raised in Oakland, California, it was as a member of the Berkeley High School Jazz Ensemble that Akinmusire first caught the attention of a discerning ear. Saxophonist Steve Coleman was visiting the school to give a workshop and immediately heard promise in the young trumpeter, eventually hiring him as a member of his Five Elements band and embarking on an extensive European tour when Akinmusire was just 19.

The experience proved life-changing. Coleman—considered by many to be the spiritual godfather of the current creative jazz scene—challenged Akinmusire on and off the stage. “Ambrose, what’s your concept?” Akinmusire remembers Coleman asking him on a train ride through Germany. “Concept? I’m 19, I don’t need a concept. It’ll just come one day,” shrugged Akinmusire, raising the saxophonist’s ire. “He really laid in on me. I’ll never forget it,” he recalls. “You’ve got to start thinking about it now,” Coleman told him. “Everything you don’t love, make sure that’s not in your playing.”

Akinmusire took the advice to heart, and returned to his studies at the Manhattan School of Music determined to discover his own voice. “When I got back to school I wrote a list,” he explains. “It was very specific, it had things on it like ‘*I don’t want to be confined by my instrument*’ or ‘*I want to have a sound like a French Horn player*.’ It had harmonic concepts on it. I posted it on my wall so every day I was reminded of it. It caused me a lot of trouble because if a teacher told me to do something and it didn’t really fit what was on

that list, I didn't listen to them. It really made me learn who I was because I had to defend that every day."

After returning to the West Coast to pursue a master's degree at the University of Southern California, Akinmusire went on to attend the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz in Los Angeles, an experience that began to bring his quest into clearer focus. "I went from being the oddball to being surrounded by people who were just like me and having teachers that were stressing [individuality] like Terence [Blanchard], Herbie [Hancock] and Wayne [Shorter]. I learned a lot from Terence. He really got me to be 100% comfortable in the things I was hearing in my head. After the Monk Institute it was just me going for my own sound and my own concept."

2007 was a pivotal year for Akinmusire. He entered and won the prestigious Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition from a panel of judges that included Blanchard, Quincy Jones, Herb Alpert, Hugh Masekela, Clark Terry and Roy Hargrove. That year he also won the Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition and released his debut recording *Prelude...To Cora* on the Fresh Sound New Talent label. He moved back to New York City and began performing with the likes of Vijay Iyer, Aaron Parks, Esperanza Spalding and Jason Moran, taking part in Moran's innovative multimedia concert event *In My Mind: Monk at Town Hall, 1957*. It was also during this time that he first caught the attention of another discerning set of ears, those of Bruce Lundvall, president of Blue Note Records.

"I've been following Ambrose for a while, and I believe he is the kind of musician that jazz needs more of," states Lundvall. "He's finding a very distinctive voice on his instrument, has a fantastic sense of adventure, and is dedicated to pushing the music forward." Lundvall signed Akinmusire, and in September 2010 the trumpeter brought his quintet into Brooklyn Studios to begin recording. Bringing Moran on board as co-producer was a natural choice. "Over the years not only has he been a musician and an artist that I've looked up to, but he's been one of the most blunt and honest people I've ever met in my life, and I just wanted that type of energy in the studio," explains Akinmusire. "He's also one of the few musicians that on every record he's given 100% and that's what I was striving for. He's the guy that people of my generation really look up to right now. I think knowing that he was in the control booth made everyone play harder and reach for things that we maybe would not have reached for."

The album's opening track "Confessions to My Unborn Daughter" immediately establishes several of the quintet's hallmarks including their striking juxtaposition of bombast and beauty, with searing solos turning on a dime to reveal moments of touching tenderness, and the profound frontline interplay between Akinmusire and Smith. The way the two intuitively trade lines back and forth, finishing each other's musical sentences, is surely a result of the 12 years that they've been making music together. "He and I never have any musical conversations," says Akinmusire. "It's amazing, it feels like he's part of my brain and I'm part of his. I know exactly what he's thinking, what note he's going to end on, when he's going to play something, when he's going to stop."

"Confessions" also reveals Akinmusire's penchant for intriguing song titles, as does the album's penultimate track "Tear Stained Suicide Manifesto" (which features Moran on piano). The titles are secret clues to elaborate storylines that he constructs as inspiration for his composing process. "I always put the title first before I write one note," he explains. "I need a whole story to have the format for a composition."

However, some of Akinmusire's compositions do have explicit references. "The Walls of Lechuguilla" refers to the extensive cave system in New Mexico known for the rarity and unusual beauty of its geological formations. "Every day I practice in front of a documentary because I do long tone for an hour and a half and I have to have something in front of me. This time I was checking out the *Planet Earth* series on BBC and they went down into this cave that nobody had ever gone into. They shine the light on the walls, and it was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen in my life, and so I immediately started writing that tune and it came out just like that from beginning to end."

"My Name Is Oscar" is a powerful piece that features Akinmusire's spoken voice backed solely by Brown's relentless drums. Oscar is Oscar Grant, the unarmed 22-year-old African American man who was shot and killed by a transit officer on New Year's Eve in 2009 in Akinmusire's hometown of Oakland. "I just want people to know the story. I don't want it to become this 'f*ck the police' anthem," he says. "Every time I go back home I'm reminded of it, people still talk about it, it's still such a big thing because he got off with just two years, he didn't get charged with murder. It just really resonates with me because I feel like it could have been me or anyone. The piece begins with me observing what happens, then me talking in the voice of Oscar Grant himself."

"Ayneh (Cora)" and "Ayneh (Campbell)" are two delicate interludes that are dedicated to Akinmusire's mother. "Ayneh in Farsi means 'mirror' but more related to 'reflection' and I just wanted to write a piece that felt like an exhale, it's a relaxing thing," he says. "Then I flipped the song around, so the first bar I wrote is the last bar, so I flipped the title around and called it 'Hanya,'" which coincidentally in the Hebrew language is a name that translates as 'Grace of God.'

As for "What's New?" it isn't meant to be entirely ironic, Akinmusire says. "Clifford Brown is one of my favorite trumpet players, and his version of that is just so amazing. So it was sort of a tribute to him, but also just in case you're doubting that I have any type of tradition, there's this."

"*When The Heart Emerges Glistening* refers to being present, emotionally invested, honest—not exclusively in our art, but in every act of expression," Akinmusire says in explaining the album's title. "It's about parting our chests to reveal ourselves to one another and to ourselves, to reflect honestly the 'everything' of us—the ugly, the changing, the vulnerable, the fierce, the solid, the safe. The heart 'glistens' because it is wet, it is fresh. With every act of expression, it is a newly excavated heart, so that through listening closely, we are ultimately chronicling every present moment, and constantly re-examining our changing selves. In bearing ourselves this way, we connect more deeply with one another. The many sides of the album itself are a testament to our complexity and uniqueness as individuals, and the imperative to bare and explore honestly every coexisting side of us."

For more information please contact Cem Kurosmán at Blue Note Records
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Walter Smith III, tenor sax, began playing the saxophone at the age of 7 in his hometown of Houston, Texas. He attended Houston's High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, and in 1998, Smith received a Clifford Brown/Stan Getz Fellowship from IAJE and NFAA; the NFAA Young Talent Award; a full tuition scholarship to attend Berklee College of Music; and a United States Presidential Scholar in the Arts medal. Walter graduated from Berklee in 2003 with a degree in Music Education.

Walter has performed all over the world including such storied venues as Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. Smith has shared the stage and recorded with many notable musicians including Terence Blanchard, Roy Haynes, Christian McBride, Eric Reed, Mulgrew Miller, Joe Sample, Bob Hurst, Myron Walden, Walter Beasley, Lewis Nash, Terri Lynne-Carrington and a host of others. To date, Walter has appeared on over 75 recordings worldwide.

Walter's debut recording as a leader, titled *Casually Introducing Walter Smith III*, was released in 2006 on the Fresh Sound New Talent label and features many of the brightest young jazz talents. His sophomore release, *Live in France*, was released in 2009 and received critical acclaim. His most recent album, *III*, was released in 2010 and was the No. 3 best seller on iTunes in the U.S. for its first week. The recording features Ambrose Akinmusire, Jason Moran, Joe Sanders and Eric Harland.

Over the past few years, besides leading a quintet, Walter is or has been a member of several groups (recording and touring) including the Terence Blanchard group, Eric Harland's quintet, Ambrose Akinmusire's quintet, Christian Scott's group, the Sean Jones sextet, Jason Moran's Big Bandwagon (*In My Mind: Monk at Town Hall*), and the Christian McBride Situation band.

Sam Harris, piano, according to Jason Moran, "plays from a place of sincerity that sets him apart from his counterparts. His willingness to straddle the fence of jazz piano history allows him to create a fresh take on jazz... I will be watching and listening to his every move."

Sam Harris's life in music began at the age of 2, when, thanks to incredible foresight, his mother put him in early piano lessons. Sam quickly excelled in his classical training, and by the age of 10 was competing regularly on the local and statewide levels. At Booker T. Washington Arts Magnet High School in Dallas, Texas, he discovered jazz and was soon consumed with the dual pursuit of classical and improvisatory music.

In 2004 he moved to New York to attend the Manhattan School of Music on scholarship, where he studied privately with teachers like Garry Dial, Jason Moran and John Riley. He has played in bands led by forward-thinking musicians such as Ambrose Akinmusire, Logan Richardson and Linda Oh, and is quickly gaining recognition as an important new voice on the music scene.

Harish Raghavan, bass, was born May 19, 1982. At age 8 he began studying Western and Indian percussion and switched over to the double bass at age 17. Soon after, he was accepted to study with John Clayton at the University of Southern California. While in Los Angeles he also studied with Robert Hurst, among others, and recorded and played with many legendary West Coast musicians.

In 2007 he made the move to New York where he has had the opportunity to record and play with some of the most cutting-edge musicians of his generation: Ambrose Akinmusire, Eric Harland, Aaron Parks, Taylor Eigsti, Vijay Iyer, Kurt Elling, Walter Smith III, Logan Richardson, Dayna Stephens and Gerald Clayton, along with many others. Having been in New York for just a few years, Harish is already beginning to make a name for himself among the rising stars of his generation.

Justin Brown, drums, was born and raised in Oakland, California. He started playing drums in church when he was 2 years old. At the age of 10, he went on to study at UC Berkeley's Young Musicians Summer Program and continued his studies there for seven more years. All the while, Brown continued to play in various groups and settings, including the prestigious Grammy High School All-Star Band.

In 2002, Brown was one of five applicants selected, amongst hundreds, to attend The Dave Brubeck Institute on a full scholarship. In 2004, Brown graduated, then received a full scholarship to Juilliard and made the bold move to New York City. Since then this skilled young drummer has performed, toured and recorded with the likes of Kenny Garrett, Christian McBride, Gerald Clayton, Stefon Harris, Esperanza Spaulding, Terence Blanchard, Josh Roseman, Gretchen Parlato, Eldar, Yosvany Terry, Gonazalo Rubalcaba, Bilal, Ledisi, Ambrose Akinmusire and Vijay Iyer.

Donald E. Lacy, Jr, narrator, is a talented writer, director, actor, comedian and radio talk show host. A San Francisco State University alumnus, Donald holds a BA Degree in Theater Arts, (with a film minor), and a BA degree in Black Studies. His TV/film acting credits include a new film *Cherry* with James Franco; as Denny on the NBC show *Trauma* in 2010; *Jack*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola; *Blood In, Blood Out*, directed by Taylor Hackford; *L.A. Heat* and *Hangin' With Mr. Cooper* on ABC; and *Wolf* on CBS.

Stage credits include *Gem of the Ocean* as Solly 2 Kings; Whining Boy in the *Piano Lesson*; multiple characters in *Peoples Temple* about Jonestown; Gambol in *Nobody Move* at Intersection for the Arts; *Hairy Ape*; *Good Person of Szechwan* at Berkeley Repertory Theater; and as Carlyle in *Streamers*.

In 2006 he appeared in *The Shelter* at the Odyssey Theater in Los Angeles, under the direction of Valery Belyakovich of the Moscow Art Theater. He also appeared in Naomi Iizuka's adaptation of *Hamlet* as "C", directed by Jonathan Moscone. Other credits include *Jitney*, by August Wilson at the Lorraine Hansberry Theater; as Bennie in *Hotel Angulo*, at the Intersection for the Arts; *Soul of A Whore* by Denis Johnson; *Fists of Roses* by Phillip Kan Gotanda; and *Ballad of Pancho & Lucy* by Octavio Solis.

As a playwright, Mr. Lacy has produced several of his plays including *The Loudest Scream You'll Never Hear*, a critically acclaimed drama based on the Atlanta child murders; *Homebase*, a tragic comedy about crack-cocaine addiction; *Evolution of the Soul Brother*, that toured nationally; and his national touring one-man show *Color Struck*, now in its 5th year. He also premiered *LoEshe* at the 1998 Afro Solo Festival, about the life and untimely death of his 16-year-old daughter. In 2011 Donald will present his new one-man show *Sexphobias* at the National Black Theater Festival. Lacy wrote and was acting coach for Jamie Foxx's pilot *These Nuts* and has written a pilot, *Special Delivery*, for Queen of Comedy Laura Hayes. Donald has written feature films *What Goes on When the Mike Goes Off* and *Romeo and Juliet Gettin Busy*.

As a filmmaker he has received a Bay Area Cable Excellence Award and a Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame Award for his public service announcement “Precious Gift.” Mr. Lacy traveled on a 75-city tour with the Harlem Globetrotters as “The Voice.” Donald Lacy is one of the funniest comedians in the country. He has been seen on BET’s *Comic View* and on HBO’s *Def Comedy Jam*. He has two comedy CDs: *Uncensored and Free Speech Costs Plenty*. Mr. Lacy spent his Thanksgiving holiday in 2001 entertaining the troops abroad in a Far East tour that included Japan, Okinawa, Korea, Singapore and Diego Garcia. He returned on the same tour in 2004.

As a headliner, he has appeared in clubs from Chicago to Kaiserslautern, Germany. In 2007 his one-man show *Color Struck* was a runaway hit at the National Black Theater Festival in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. *Color Struck*, by invitation from Congresswoman Barbara Lee, was also performed at the 2007 Congressional Black Caucus in September. In 2008 *Color Struck* returned to the Congressional Black Caucus for a special encore performance.

A committed radio broadcaster since 1979, Donald is a weekly announcer on KPOO 89.5 FM and fill-in host on KPFA 94.1 FM. Mr. Lacy directed and performed segments of Radio Theater for both radio stations. Donald founded the LoveLife Foundation in honor of daughter LoEshe, who was murdered at the tender age of 16. LoveLife has an after-school media and performing arts training academy that broadcasts award-winning radio and television programs. The LoveLife Foundation helped to reduce violence among youth in the city of Oakland to a 32-year low in 1999.

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MILES DAVIS

(Born on May 26, 1926, and died on September 28, 1991)

Miles Davis, an exemplary jazz musician, an iconic innovator, a composer/bandleader/performer, was one of the most important figures in the history of jazz; some called him the “Prince of Darkness” or the “Picasso of Invisible Art.” With his trumpet and his jazz groups, in a career which lasted about half a century, his pioneering performances and recordings were critically important to many stylistic developments and innovations: cool jazz, hard bop, modal and jazz-rock. The decade from 1949 to 1959 began slowly for him with a struggle with drugs, but the end of the decade featured monumental success with the release of *Birth of the Cool* and *Kind of Blue*, two of the most influential jazz recordings of all time.

Davis’s songs of love, passion, rage and happiness and his sounds of profound sadness are distinctly his own. He had a kind of droll humor, a keen intelligence and a forthright personality with which he expressed his philosophy about the skewed social order of the world of his time. He hated racism and often insisted that the word *jazz* was a pejorative term, which he equated with the word “niggers.” In interviews, he unleashed diatribes about racism and hated discussing his past and detailed his guiding musical aesthetic.

Davis was the son of a dental surgeon, Dr. Miles Dewey Davis, Jr., and a music teacher, Cleota Mae (Henry) Davis. He grew up in East St. Louis. At the age of 12, he began taking trumpet lessons and soon played gigs in local bars. At 17, he joined Eddie Randle’s Blue Devils, a St. Louis band, and in 1944, just after his high school graduation,

he had the opportunity to sit in with Billy Eckstine's big band, which was then playing in St. Louis. The band featured trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and saxophonist Charlie Parker, who shaped the bebop style of jazz, characterized by fast, inventive soloing and dynamic rhythm variations. Bebop was fast becoming the dominant sound of the time; Davis's own personal style was generally slower and not as flashy. After becoming acquainted with this new music, Davis went to New York to attend the Institute of Musical Art (now Juilliard).

Soon after arriving in New York, he began playing in clubs with Parker, and by 1945, he stopped studying formally and became a full-time jazz musician, joining Benny Carter's band. He played with Eckstine in 1946-1947 and Parker in 1947-1948, making his recording debut as a leader in a 1947 session that featured Parker, pianist John Lewis, bassist Nelson Boyd and drummer Max Roach. During the period after he played with Parker, he worked mainly as a free-lancer, playing as a sideman in some of the most important combos on the New York jazz scene.

Davis grew close to the Canadian composer and arranger Gil Evans. Evans' basement apartment served as the meeting place for several young musicians and composers, including Davis and Roach, pianist John Lewis and baritone sax player Gerry Mulligan, who did not relate to the increasingly virtuoso instrumental practices that dominated the bebop scene. In Evans' apartment they spent time listening to Charlie Parker and Lester Young, as well as classical influences like Stravinsky, Hindemith, Ravel and Alban Berg, giving Davis an opportunity to reconcile his interest in classical music with his involvement in jazz's leading edge. In 1948, he organized a nine-piece band with an unusual horn section: it featuring an alto saxophone, a baritone saxophone, a trombone, a French horn, a tuba and himself on trumpet. This nonet broke with the big swing band traditions, and instead of using individual voices, Davis featured instruments with sounds in the mellow middle and low registers. Slowing down the frantic bop tempos, Davis's nonet hoped to make avant-garde compositions more accessible. Count Basie said, "Those slow things sounded strange and good. I didn't always know what they were doing, but I listened and I liked it." Nevertheless, some black musicians, many of whom were unemployed at the time, reacted negatively to the new group, which included white musicians, and accused Davis of betraying black music.

The nonet agreed to a contract with Capitol Records, and in January 1949, had the first of three sessions, which produced 12 tracks. The band's relaxed sound had a profound influence on the development of the cool jazz style on the West Coast. Davis aimed to achieve a sound similar to the human voice, through carefully arranged compositions and by emphasizing a relaxed, melodic approach to the improvisations, but commercially, the nonet was not a success until February 1957, when Capitol finally issued these tracks on a compilation LP called *Birth of the Cool*, later to become one of the most influential tracks of all time.

1949 would be the beginning of a momentous decade for Davis, and it was then that he began to co-lead a band with pianist Tadd Dameron; with this band, he traveled to the Paris Jazz Festival. Initially, Davis was fascinated by Paris and its cultural environment, where black jazz musicians, especially Americans, seemed better respected than in the U.S. He discovered that the French had an appreciation of jazz not yet evident in the United States. He was introduced to French intelligentsia from Jean-Paul Sartre to Pablo Picasso. Although many of Davis's friends tried to persuade him to stay in France, and he had begun a relationship with a French actress and singer, Juliette Greco, he decided to

return to New York; nevertheless, after his return, he became depressed, partly because he was separated from Juliette, and partly because he felt jazz critics were ignoring him and hailing others as the leaders of cool jazz. Another factor that gnawed at him was the end of his relationship with a former St. Louis schoolmate who lived with him in New York and with whom he had had two children. But perhaps most important of all, America had now been plunged into the Cold War. The beginnings of the Communist witch hunts were imminent. Also, black audiences were turning away from bebop, which they felt was too complicated; they preferred dance music. In addition, hard drug use was taking its toll on jazz musicians, including Davis himself. For the next several years, he struggled with an addiction to heroin.

Despite all the problems, between 1950 and 1954, Davis grew artistically. His performances and recordings did not follow one from the other as they had earlier, but in January 1951, he began a contract with the Prestige label and completed many recordings with it in the next several years. During this time he also collaborated with other musicians; one who influenced him significantly was the Chicago pianist Ahmad Jamal, whose elegant methods and use of space especially attracted him.

By 1953, Davis's drug addiction was having an effect on his ability to perform. Some of his friends had died from heroin overdoses, and he had been arrested for possession while he was on tour in Los Angeles. Cab Calloway, a jazz singer, had made Davis's habit public in an interview for *Down Beat* magazine. Finally, in 1954, realizing the danger he was in, Davis attempted to end his drug addiction, finally succeeding by going to his father's home in St. Louis for several months and forcing himself to withdraw while there.

After overcoming his drug problem, Davis made five Blue Note records; Blue Note was long considered the finest jazz recording label. With these recordings, Davis took on a central position in hard bop, which used slower tempos and a less radical approach to harmony and melody than bebop, often adopting popular tunes and standards from the American songbook as starting points for improvisation. Hard bop also differed from cool jazz with its harder beat and references to the blues. During this period, Davis's playing with its "nocturnal" quality and his whispering voice earned him the nickname "Prince of Darkness."

Davis made a strong national comeback playing "Round Midnight" at the Newport Jazz Festival in July 1955. This performance led Columbia Records, one of the largest and most major recording studios, to sign him. Because of this new stability in his career, he was able to create a permanent band; Davis recruited the players for a group that became known as his "first great quintet": John Coltrane, tenor sax; Red Garland, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; and Philly Joe Jones, drums. Coltrane was not well known, even though he had collaborated with Dizzy Gillespie. The quintet's repertoire included many bebop mainstays, standards from the *Great American Songbook* and some traditional songs. Beginning in the 1950s, popular songs occupied a special place in Davis's repertoire. He played ballads in a lyrical, introspective and melodic style, often with a Harmon mute, which made his sound more personal and intimate. He held the stemless mute close to the microphone, and over time, its use became his signature. His Columbia recording with the quintet was called *Round About Midnight*; it was released in the fall of 1955. Because he had promised five more albums to Prestige, he was forced to alternate his Columbia sessions with those for Prestige. For Prestige he recorded *The New Miles Davis Quintet*, *Cookin'*, *Workin'*, *Relaxin'* and *Steamin'*. Before leaving Prestige, Davis had to fulfill his

obligations during two days of recording sessions. Even though the recording took place in a studio, each record was made to have the feel of a live performance, including several first takes on each album. The records became almost instant classics and were important in the establishment of Davis's quintet; the quintet did, however, disband in 1957 following personal problems that Davis blamed on the drug addiction of the other musicians.

A new project took place set in the context of a blending of jazz and classical music spearheaded by two former members of Davis's nonet, pianist-arranger John Lewis, co-founder of the Modern Jazz Quartet, and French-horn player, composer and theoretician Gunther Schuller (this music would be dubbed "third stream" by Schuller in 1957). For a Columbia recording, Davis played solos on the flugelhorn, a new instrument for his listeners. He again joined with arranger Gil Evans for his second Columbia LP, *Miles Ahead*, the first of a remarkable series of unusual jazz orchestrations for which he often played flugelhorn as well as trumpet. *Miles Ahead* showcased a kind of big band jazz and such selections as Dave Brubeck's "The Duke" and Leo Delibes' "The Maids of Cadiz," the first classical music piece Davis recorded. Another distinctive feature of this album was the insertion of transitions that link together the different tracks with special editing into a kind of suite.

Also in 1957, the ground-breaking album *Birth of the Cool* was released; the album was later inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame, intended to honor recordings made before the Grammy Awards were instituted in 1959. From the name of the album, *Birth of the Cool*, grew the name and concept of the cool jazz movement. Davis claimed the invention of the cool style and strongly resented the success that was later enjoyed by white "cool jazz" musicians such as Dave Brubeck.

In December 1957, Davis journeyed to Paris, this time to record the score to Louis Malle's film *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud* (*Frantic*), an innovative soundtrack he recorded not using written material, but starting simply from an indication of the harmony and a feel of each piece gleaned from watching the movie and improvising. *Jazz Track*, an album containing this music, won a 1960 Grammy nomination for Best Jazz Performance, Solo or Small Group.

Returning to New York in 1958, Davis successfully recruited Cannonball Adderley for his group, and Coltrane, who had eliminated his drug problem, joined Davis's group (after a highly fruitful experience with Thelonious Monk) as did Philly Joe Jones, creating the Miles Davis Sextet, which recorded *Milestones* in April 1958, an album anticipating the new directions Davis was starting to go in. Almost immediately after the recording of *Milestones*, Davis fired Red Garland and, shortly afterward, Jones, for behavioral problems, replacing them with Bill Evans, who had a strong classical music background, and Jimmy Cobb. The sextet performed and toured extensively and produced *58 Sessions*. Davis and Evans recorded an arrangement of Gershwin's opera, *Porgy and Bess*. Evans had unique, impressionistic musical ideas that had a strong influence on Davis, but after eight months with the group, left them, to be replaced by Wynton Kelly, who had a more bluesy approach.

In the sextet, Davis experimented with modal playing, basing his improvisations on scale steps rather than on chord changes, which were highlighted in the album *Kind of Blue*, which, in March and April 1959, became a landmark in modern jazz and one of the most popular discs of Davis's whole career. Davis had developed a mistrust of the harmonic

limitations imposed by the piano, which led him to this interest in modal music. Modes are scales where the spacing between steps is determined by the nature of each individual mode. There are many musical scales, or modes, throughout the world: the Western major scale with its seven degrees, hexatonic modes with six steps and pentatonic with five. *Kind of Blue* included Bill Evans and was planned around his piano style. Using modal jazz, Davis and Evans prepared skeletal harmonic frameworks that the other musicians saw first on the day of recording, which ensured a fresh approach for their improvisations. At the beginning, *Kind of Blue* was to be Davis's homage to the origins of blues and gospel and to Africa. Davis had first heard the blues at his grandfather's home in Arkansas, only about 60 miles west of the cradle of the genre in the Mississippi Delta. He said of it: "I think that kind of stuff stayed with me, you know what I mean? That kind of sound in music, that blues, church, back-road funk kind of thing, that Southern, Midwestern, rural sound and rhythm. I think it started getting into my blood on them spook-filled Arkansas backroads after dark when the owls came out hooting."

While he was working on *Kind of Blue*, he discovered Africa at a performance by the *Ballet Africain é Guinée*, where he was impressed by the musical and choreographic polyrhythms, but the only African influence he actually used in the album was the rhythm of the *sanza*, the African thumb piano, in the rhythm of "All Blues." Instead, Davis, in his autobiography, said, "We were into Ravel (especially his Concerto for the Left Hand and Orchestra) and Rachmaninoff (Concerto No. 4)." *Kind of Blue*, a ground-breaking album, was extremely popular and enormously influential, becoming the best-selling jazz album of all time, a quadruple platinum (4 million copies). In December 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 409–0 to pass a "symbolic resolution honoring *Kind of Blue* as a masterpiece and reaffirming jazz as a national treasure."

In 1959, just on the brink of the Civil Rights movement, outside the Birdland nightclub in New York where the quintet was performing, Davis was escorting a blonde woman to a taxi, when Gerald Kilduff, a policeman, told him to "move on." Davis told him that he worked at the nightclub and refused to move. The officer threatened to arrest him and witnesses said that Kilduff punched Davis in the stomach with his nightstick without having any provocation. Two nearby detectives held the crowd back and a third detective, coming from behind Davis, beat him around the head, before they arrested him and charged him with feloniously assaulting an officer. He was then taken to St. Clare's Hospital where he received five stitches for a wound on his head. Davis tried unsuccessfully to take the case to court, before eventually dropping the proceedings in order to get back his suspended Cabaret Card, which he needed to return to work in New York clubs.

In sessions held in November 1959 and March 1960, Davis collaborated with the pianist Gil Evans, recording *Sketches of Spain*, containing traditional Spanish music including works by contemporary Spanish composer Joaquín Rodrigo and Manuel de Falla. *Sketches of Spain* earned Davis and Evans a Grammy for "Best Jazz Composition, Lasting More Than 5 Minutes." The decade just passed had been the most creative decade of Davis's career thus far, but he was to continue to work and grow for the rest of his life and continue to push the boundaries of jazz and music in general. In 1986, the New England Conservatory of Music awarded Davis an Honorary Doctorate for his extraordinary contributions to music, and he also received a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1990. He was undoubtedly one of the most innovative, influential and respected figures in the history of jazz.