



Miles Davis Quintet

The First Great Quintet



"In the summer of 1955, after Davis performed at the Newport Jazz Festival, he was approached by Columbia Records executive George Avakian, who offered him a contract if he could form a regular band. Davis assembled his first regular quintet to meet a commitment at the Café Bohemia in July with Sonny Rollins on tenor saxophone, Red Garland on piano, Paul Chambers on bass, and Philly Joe Jones on drums. By the autumn, Rollins had left to deal with his heroin addiction, and later in the year joined the hard bop quintet led by Clifford Brown and Max Roach.

At the recommendation of drummer Jones, Davis replaced Rollins with John Coltrane, beginning a partnership that would last five years and finalizing the Quintet's first line-up. Expanded to a sextet with the addition of Cannonball Adderley on alto saxophone in 1958, the First Great Quintet was one of the definitive hard bop groups along with the Brown-Roach Quintet and the Jazz Messengers, recording the Columbia albums *Round About Midnight*, *Milestones*, and the marathon sessions for Prestige Records resulting in four albums collected on *The Legendary Prestige Quintet Sessions*." - Wikipedia

"The quintet—or, as many critics referred to it: *The Quintet*—recorded their first-to-be-released album on November 16, 1955 in Rudy Van Gelder's Hackensack, New Jersey studio. The resulting album, simply titled *Miles*, is relaxed and swinging. Highlights include a lovely version of the Ellington chestnut "Just Squeeze Me" and Benny Golson's "Stablemates." Speaking of stables, critics have remarked how Coltrane at this point in his development sounds like a young colt attempting to stand on wobbly legs. However, I hear an adventurous young artist, closing his eyes and taking a deep breath before launching into passionate solos. Combined with Davis' spare, less-is-more style, the effect is perfect.

Miles was released on Bob Weinstock's Prestige record label. The quintet, however, had secretly recorded for Columbia Records in late October, 1955. Columbia executive George Avakian was offering Miles big money—\$300,000 in 1950s dollars!—to sign with the label, but Miles still owed Prestige four albums.

So on May 11 and October 26, 1956, the quintet entered Van Gelder's home studio to lay down four of the greatest jazz albums ever: *Cookin'*, *Relaxin'*, *Workin'*, and *Steamin'*. If one is talking desert island discs, give me these four albums; Louis Armstrong's Hot 5s and 7s; Duke Ellington's Blanton-Webster Band recordings; (and a desert isle wired for electricity); and I'll be a happy lad.

Recorded in Van Gelder's state-of-the-art studio much like four nightclub sets, these albums are an embarrassment of riches. Where does one start? *Cookin'*: "My Funny Valentine," "Blues by Five," "Airegin," "When Lights Are Low." *Relaxin'*: "If I Were a Bell," "I Could Write a Book," "You're My Everything," "Oleo," "Woody'N You;" *Workin'*: "It Never Entered My Mind," "Four," "In Your Own Sweet Way," "Trane's Blues." *Steamin'*: "Surrey With the Fringe on Top," "Salt Peanuts," "Well, You Needn't," "When I Fall in Love."

[notes continue in next insert]



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DISC ONE

1. Stablemates (5:22)
2. How Am I To Know (4:40)
3. Just Squeeze Me (7:28)
4. There Is No Greater Love (5:20)
5. The Theme (5:52)
6. 'S'posin' (5:16)

Recorded 16 November 1955

7. Ahmad's Blues (7:25)
8. Surrey With The Fringe On Top (9:06)
9. It Never Entered My Mind (5:24)
10. When I Fall In Love (4:25)
11. Salt Peanuts (6:09)
12. Four (7:15)
13. The Theme (Take 1) (2:01)
14. The Theme (Take 2) (1:05)

Recorded 11 May 1956

DISC TWO

1. 'Round Midnight (5:58)
2. Ah-Leu-Cha (5:53)
3. All Of You (7:04)
4. Bye Bye Blackbird (7:58)
5. Tadd's Delight (4:29)
6. Dear Old Stockholm (7:56)

2. Recorded 26 October 1955

1, 3 Recorded 5 June 1956

4, 5, 6 Recorded 10 September 1956

7. In Your Own Sweet Way (5:45)
8. Diane (7:50)
9. Trane's Blues (8:35)
10. Something I Dreamed Last Night (6:15)
11. It Could Happen To You (6:39)
12. Woody'n You (5:05)

Recorded 11 May 1956

Miles Davis Quintet:

Miles Davis, trumpet

John Coltrane, tenor saxophone

Red Garland, piano

Paul Chambers, double bass

Philly Joe Jones, drums

XR Remastered by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Miles Davis with John Coltrane

Disc One & Disc Two, tracks 7-12 recorded Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, NJ, first issued by Prestige

Disc Two, tracks 1-6 recorded Columbia 30th Street Studio, New York City, first issued by Columbia

Total duration: **3hr 51:16**

CD1: 76:46 CD2: 79:29 CD3: 75:02

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PAJZ 012

Miles Davis Quintet

The First Great Quintet

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[notes continued from previous insert]

"...And believe me, folks, there are many more incredible tracks spread across these four albums. The five musicians spent two days in Hackensack, producing musical statements that will be enjoyed as long as people have ears and taste.

In 1957 Columbia released the quintet's classic *'Round About Midnight* album, compiled from sessions recorded in Manhattan on October 27, 1955; June 5, 1956; and September 10, 1956. By 1957, however, The Quintet was no more. Miles, the recovered junkie, fired both Coltrane and Philly Joe in March for unreliability caused by the needle. Trane returned home to Philadelphia, where he kicked his habit for good. By that summer he was blowing wildly at Greenwich Village's Five Spot in a legendary band led by Thelonious Monk.

In the next three years, Miles would record the masterpieces *Miles Ahead*, *Milestones*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Kind of Blue* and *Sketches of Spain* for Columbia, working with artists such as Gil Evans, Bill Evans, and Cannonball Adderley. In the 1960s he would gather together four young men—Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, and Tony Williams—who would form a quintet as celebrated as the one just discussed.

Yet for fans of a certain age, the Miles Davis Quintet of 1955-56 remains one of the most beloved of all small jazz bands. For many listeners, Miles, Trane, Red, Mr. P.C., and Philly Joe remain The Quintet."

- Mick Carlon, *Jazz Times*, 2011

I've had copies of these legendary albums in my collection for about 30 years. They remain an essential document of an incredible ensemble at its all-too-brief peak, and have been among my favourite jazz recordings since I first discovered them in my early twenties.

And yet I always had a problem with the sound of them. After the excellent 1960s Columbia recordings of the Second great quintet, listening to the First always seemed like going back to another sonic era. It's not just the mono sound, it's the whole thing - constricted, narrow, dull even. It was a time at which recording technology was advancing incredibly quickly, hence the world of difference between the sound of these recordings and those Miles Davis would record a decade later.

A recent acquisition of the Prestige recordings on vinyl prompted me to see whether anything might be done, using Pristine's Ambient Stereo XR remastering system, to breathe new life into these classic recordings. I started working on them about four months ago and quickly discovered that incredible things were indeed possible. And so, in celebration of what would be Miles Davis' 95th birthday, here they are. What began as a personal project seems just too good not to share - I hope you enjoy them as much as I do.

Andrew Rose



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THE FIRST GREAT QUINTET (CD3)
MILES DAVIS QUINTET

miles davis quintet

the first great quintet

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
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THE FIRST GREAT QUINTET (CD3)
MILES DAVIS QUINTET

PAJZ 012

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DISC THREE

1. It I Were A Bell (8:19)
 2. Well, You Needn't (6:21)
 3. 'Round Midnight (5:23)
 4. Half Nelson (4:47)
 5. You're My Everything (5:20)
 6. I Could Write A Book (5:11)
 7. Oleo (6:19)
 8. Airegin (4:24)
 9. Tune Up (5:38)
 10. When Lights Are Low (7:26)
 11. Blues By Five (9:54)
 12. My Funny Valentine (6:00)
- Recorded 26 October 1956

Miles Davis Quintet:

Miles Davis, trumpet
John Coltrane, tenor saxophone
Red Garland, piano
Paul Chambers, double bass
Philly Joe Jones, drums

XR Remastered by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Miles Davis with John Coltrane

Disc Three recorded Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, NJ, first issued by Prestige

Total duration: **3hr 51:16**

CD1: 76:46 CD2: 79:29 CD3: 75:02

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