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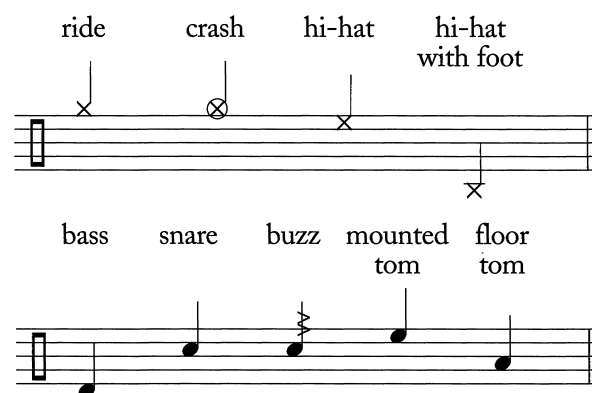
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Key



Chapter 1: Time Playing

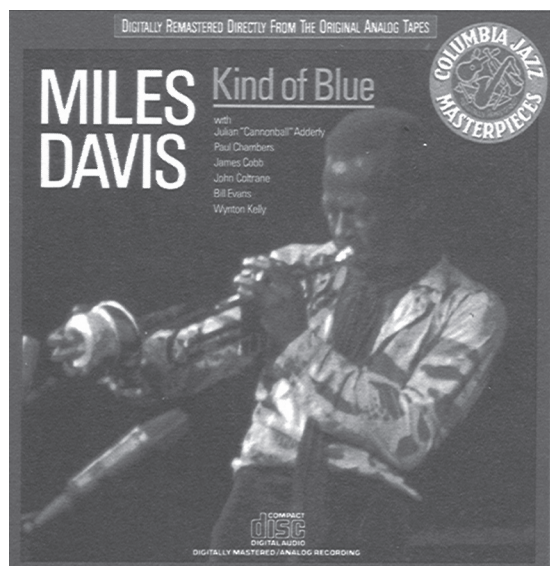
Music's evolution, like that of art, language and architecture, occurs in stages. By the late 1950s the winds of change were blowing strongly. The fifteen-year run of the be-bop ideal — a soloist playing over complex harmonic cycles with rhythm section accompaniment — was beginning to seem too restrained for some musicians. Those that would lead the way into the next phase were looking for a more “open” format.

By 1960 most of the key players of the “new thing” were indicating their direction. Saxophonist John Coltrane recorded his ultimate tribute to the harmonic challenges of be-bop, *Giant Steps*, in 1959 and began to investigate looser structures. Miles Davis' influential recording, *Kind of Blue*, also recorded in '59, included Coltrane, pianist Bill Evans and drummer Jimmy Cobb. It was one of the first recordings to explore a more relaxed way of organizing music, incorporating phrases as long as 16 measures in one tonal mode. These longer phrases allowed the rhythm section players and the soloists a natural opportunity for interaction because they

all were less encumbered by “the changes.” This new musical freedom made the soloists more open to playing off ideas introduced by the rhythm section. At the same time, Ornette Coleman was developing the concept of playing melodic themes followed by collective group improvisation based solely on the mood, spirit, and vocabulary of the melody without any real attachment to a specific key center or even a sense of bar lines. Concurrently, the Bill Evans Trio probed a new notion of playing in which the bass player and drummer became equal participants with Bill in shaping the music. As a result of the introduction of these conceptual changes, and with the increased use of amplification for the other instruments, drummers were being given both greater latitude and a larger responsibility for each ensemble's sound and direction.

To help better understand the “post-bop” concept, let's first take a look at the playing of two accomplished “bop” players who evolved into influential transitional players — Roy Haynes, who's been called “the father of modern drumming” and still sounds fresh today, and Mel Lewis, who has been credited with introducing the important idea of the “open beat.” Roy, nicknamed “snap, crackle, pop” because of his sound and phrasing, played mostly in small groups using high-pitched drums and a very crisp sound. Mel, nicknamed “tailor” because of his ability to “make all of the pieces fit,” is best known for playing in big bands using low-pitched drums and a loose sound. However, both were among the first to widely exploit the “broken-time feel” which was to become commonplace in the 1960s.

The standard “bop” time feeling is a steady, repetitive ride cymbal pattern with the bass drum underneath and the hi-hat on beats 2 and 4. The accents being played really stand out above the dynamically flat time line. The broken-time feel mixes repetitive with non-repetitive cymbal patterns over “2 and 4” or some varied rhythms on the hi-hat. The bass drum most often follows the cymbal line or plays counterpoint. Snare drum rhythms are woven into the time flow in a smooth fashion. By employing broken-time, these men in essence “told” their band mates that each player in the ensemble was responsible for keeping his own time and, as drummers they weren't going to “baby sit” — playing straight time — at the expense of creating good new music.



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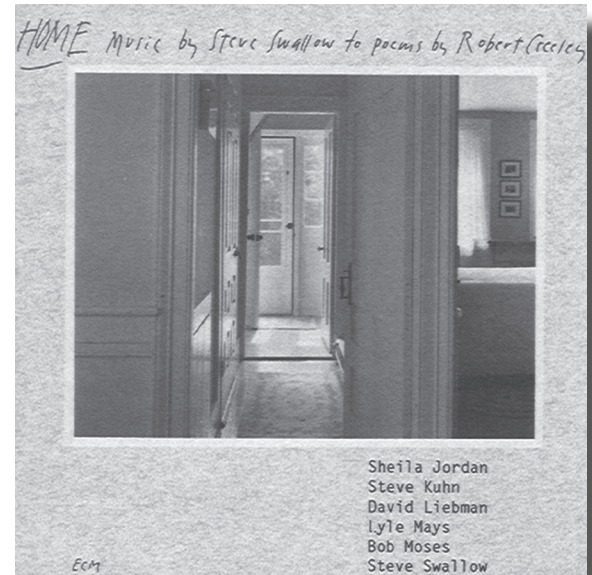
Solo Analysis #2

Now listen to and look at Bob Moses' solo on "In the Fall," a 12-measure tune by Steve Swallow from Steve's recording *Home*, recorded in September, 1979. This five-chorus solo is played over this repeated two-measure rhythmic figure by the bass and piano:



The particulars:

- ☐ Bob plays a five-piece drum kit with two cymbals and hi-hat.
- ☐ The main resolution points are avoided, except at the top of the fifth chorus.
- ☐ Extensive use of theme and variation phrasing.
- ☐ Sound and vocabulary reminiscent of Roy Haynes but highly refined, developed and expanded by Moses.
- ☐ Most 8th-notes are played straight.
- ☐ Good use of space, silence.
- ☐ Bob avoids playing in unison with the vamp. His ideas go against the ostinato similar to the way latin soloists play against the clave.
- ☐ Phrases tend to dissolve rather than resolve, leaving the listener wanting more.
- ☐ Extensive use of the bass drum as a third hand.
- ☐ Fluid shifts from 8ths, to 8th-note triplets, to 16ths.
- ☐ Interesting use of the hi-hat as both a third hand and crash cymbal.
- ☐ Bob uses a small vocabulary to create continuity but fully develops each idea to create intrigue.
- ☐ Nice sound and touch on the instrument.
- ☐ Solo complements the turbulent harmonic feeling.



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"I start with a definite theme, which is not abandoned. It's played with, messed with, cut up and collaged, inverted and stretched, but it comes back. It's never gone until I make the choice to break the theme and begin a new one. It's all question and answer and definite thematic material."

— Bob Moses