

the Mulgrew Miller c o l l e c t i o n

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biography

Mulgrew Miller is among the most prolific pianists in jazz, and as Eric Reed points out, “the most imitated pianist of the last 25 years.” With more than 400 albums to his credit, he recorded with jazz legends such as Art Blakey, Benny Golson, Tony Williams, Kenny Garrett, Joe Lovano, Freddie Hubbard, Ron Carter, Bobby Hutcherson, James Moody, Nicholas Payton, John Scofield, and Woody Shaw. Selected in 1995 by the New York Times as the “most in-demand” pianist in jazz, he was also a well-respected bandleader with more than 15 albums under his own name and wrote a number of tunes that have become part of the standard repertoire.

Mulgrew Miller was born on August 13, 1955 in Greenwood, Mississippi. He began playing piano at age six, picking out hymns by ear. A few years later, his father hired a formal instructor who he remained with for the next decade. Miller performed as a pianist in church, in a rhythm-and-blues band for dances, and formed a jazz trio that played for cocktail parties. At age fourteen, he became a devout jazz musician after watching Oscar Peterson play on the *Joey Bishop Show*. As Miller recalls, “I was blown away. It was a life-changing event. I knew right then that I would be a jazz pianist.” After graduating from Greenwood High School, he attended Memphis State University for two years on a music scholarship.

Miller’s career was launched in the mid-70s when he became a member of the Duke Ellington Orchestra, led by Ellington’s son Mercer (1977-1980). After leaving this group, he honed his skills as an accompanist working with vocalist Betty Carter for eight months (1980). One of Miller’s longtime career aspirations became realized when Woody Shaw recruited him into his group the following year (1980-1981). While a three-year stint with Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers brought him notoriety (1983-1986), he firmly established his reputation during a six-year association with Tony Williams’ band (1986-1992). During the mid-80s, he began to record extensively as a sideman with Branford Marsalis, Bobby Watson, Kenny Garrett, Freddie Hubbard, Woody Shaw, Bobby Hutcherson, Benny Golson, James Moody, and Joe Lovano.

In 1985, Miller recorded his first album as a leader, *Keys to the City*, and he went on to record more than 15 albums under his own name for Landmark, Novus, and Maxjazz. His trio’s performances at Yoshi’s in Oakland, CA and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. were released as a series of four consecutive, critically acclaimed live albums for the Maxjazz label (2002-2003). Miller also continued to tour as a regular member of Ron Carter’s Golden Striker Trio (2002-2012), Dave Holland’s sextet (2007), and John Scofield’s quartet (2010). Miller held the post of Director of Jazz Studies at William Patterson University from 2005-2013. He was awarded an honorary doctorate in the performing arts from Lafayette College in 2006.

discography

Improvisation over chord changes similar to:

If I Were A Bell

from the recording *Live at Yoshi's Volume One* (Maxjazz MXJ 208)

Improvisation over chord changes similar to:

Grew's Tune

from the recording *Live at the Kennedy Center Volume Two* (Maxjazz MXJ 219)

Improvisation over chord changes similar to:

I Didn't Know What Time It Was

from the recording *John Swana and Friends* – John Swana: (Criss Cross Jazz 1055)

Improvisation over chord changes similar to:

You and the Night and the Music

from the recording *Young at Heart* – Tony Williams: (Columbia 487313 2)

Improvisation over chord changes similar to:

From Day To Day

from the recording *Live at the Kennedy Center Volume One* (Maxjazz MXJ 217)

Improvisation over chord changes similar to:

It's Easy To Remember

from the recording *Live at Yoshi's Volume Two* (Maxjazz MXJ 212)

Improvisation over chord changes similar to:

Road Life

from the recording *Live at Yoshi's Volume Two* (Maxjazz MXJ 212)

Improvisation over chord changes similar to:

The Eleventh Hour

from the recording *Live at the Kennedy Center Volume Two* (Maxjazz MXJ 219)

Improvisation over chord changes similar to

Grew's Tune

Moderate Swing

♩ = 125

By Mulgrew Miller

Chord changes and musical notation details:

- System 1:**
 - Chords: C^{13}_{sus} , $C^9(b13)$, $C^7(\sharp 9)$, F^9_{sus} , $E^b M^{11} 7^{(add 11)}$
- System 2:**
 - Chords: $D M^{11}$, $G^{13}(\sharp 11)$, C^{13}_{sus} , $C^7(\sharp 9)$
- System 3:**
 - Chords: $F M^{11}$, $B^b 13(b9)$, $C M A^7$, C^6_9
- System 4:**
 - Chords: $D^b M A^{13}(\sharp 11)/C$, $C M A^{13}$, $B^b M^{13}$, $A M^{11}$, $D^{13}(\sharp 9)$

E^bMA^7 $FMI^7(b5)$ GMI^7/E^b Ob^{13}_{sus}/E^b $Ob^{13}(\sharp 11)/E^b$ E^b $Osus$ OMA^{13}

Ob^{13}_{sus} $ObMA^{13}$ C^7_{sus} C^7 Ab^9_{sus} $Ab^{13}(b9)$

$ObMA^{13}$ $C^7(\sharp 11)$ BMA^7

E^b/G $C^7(\sharp 9)$ FMI^9 Bb^{13}

FMI^9 $E^bMI^9(Add 13)$ DMI^{11} G^7 $\text{X} C^{13}_{sus}$