

With the arrival Thelonious Sphere Monk, modern music—let alone modern culture—simply hasn't been the same. Recognized as one of the most inventive pianists of any musical genre, Monk achieved a startlingly original sound that even his most devoted followers have been unable to successfully imitate. His musical vision was both ahead of its time and deeply rooted in tradition, spanning the entire history of the music from the “stride” masters of James P. Johnson and Willie “the Lion” Smith to the tonal freedom and kinetics of the “avant garde.” And he shares with Edward “Duke” Ellington the distinction of being one of the century’s greatest American composers. At the same time, his commitment to originality in all aspects of life—in fashion, in his creative use of language and economy of words, in his biting humor, even in the way he danced away from the piano—has led fans and detractors alike to call him “eccentric,” “mad” or even “taciturn.” Consequently, Monk has become perhaps the most talked about and least understood artists in the history of jazz.

MONK'S DREAM

THE THELO-
NIOUS
MONK
QUARTET

Monk's Dream is the Columbia Records debut release featuring the Thelonious Monk Quartet: Monk (piano), Charlie Rouse (tenor sax), John Ore (bass), and Frankie Dunlop (drums). Jazz scholars and enthusiasts alike also heralded this combo as the best Monk had been involved with for several years. Although he would perform and record supported by various other musicians, the tight -- almost telepathic -- dimensions that these four shared has rarely been equalled in any genre. By the early '60s, bop had become considered passé by artists as well as fans looking for the next musical trend. This is coupled with the fact that discerning Monk fans would have undoubtedly recognized many of these titles from several live recordings issued at the end of his tenure

on Riverside. Not to belabor the point, however, but precious few musicians understood the layer upon layer of complexities and challenges that Monk's music created. On tracks such as "Five Spot Blues" and "Bolivar Blues," Rouse and Dunlop demonstrate their uncanny abilities by squeezing in well-placed instrumental fills, while never getting hit by the unpredictable rhythmic frisbees being tossed about by Monk. Augmenting the six quartet recordings are two solo sides: "Just a Gigolo" and "Body and Soul." Most notable about Monk's solo work is how much he retained the same extreme level of intuition throughout the nearly two decades that separate these recordings from his initial renderings in the late '40s. Monk's Dream is recommended, with something for every degree of Monk enthusiast.

MONK'S DREAM

THE THELONIOUS MONK QUARTET

- 1 Monk's Dream 5:42**
- 2 Body And Soul 4:29**
- 3 Bright Mississippi 7:54**
- 4 Five Spot Blues 3:15**
- 5 Bolivar Blues 6:26**
- 6 Just A Gigolo 2:29**
- 7 Bye-Ya 5:25**
- 8 Sweet And Lovely 7:48**

Piano - Thelonious Monk Bass - John Ore Drums - Frankie Dunlop
Tenor Saxophone - Charles Rouse

All tracks recorded in New York by Columbia 1962 Producer - Teo Macero