

Bill Evans was born in Plainfield, New Jersey on August 16, 1929 and began his music studies at age 6. Classically trained on piano; he also studied flute and violin as a child. He graduated with a degree in piano performance and teaching from Southeastern Louisiana College (now University) in 1950, and studied composition at Mannes College of Music in New York. After a stint in the Army, he worked in local dance bands, and with clarinetist Tony Scott, Chicago-area singer Lucy Reed and guitarist Mundell Lowe, who brought the young pianist to the attention of producer Orrin Keepnews at Riverside Records.

Evans' first album was New Jazz Conceptions in 1956, which featured the first recording of his most loved composition, "Waltz for Debby". Its follow-up, Everybody Digs Bill Evans was not recorded for another two years; the always shy and self-deprecating pianist claiming he "had nothing new to say." He gradually got noticed in the NYC jazz scene, for his original piano sound and fluid ideas, when in 1958, Miles Davis asked him to join his group (which also featured John Coltrane and Cannonball Adderley) He stayed for nearly a year, touring and recording, and subsequently playing on the all-time classic Kind of Blue album -- as well as composing "Blue in Green", now a jazz standard. His work with Miles helped solidify Bill's reputation, and in 1959, Evans founded his most innovative trio with the now-legendary bassist Scott LaFaro and with Paul Motian on drums. The trio concept of equal interplay among the musicians was virtually pioneered by Evans, and these albums remain the most popular in his extensive catalog. They did two studio albums together in addition to the famous "live" sessions at NYC's Village Vanguard in 1961. LaFaro's tragic death in a car accident a few weeks after the Vanguard engagement -- an event which personally devastated Bill -- sent the pianist into seclusion for a time, after which he returned to the trio format later in 1962, with Motian again, and Chuck Israels on bass.

His 1963 Conversations With Myself album, in which he double and triple-tracked his piano, won him the first of many Grammy® awards and the following year he first toured overseas, playing to packed houses from Paris to Tokyo, now solidifying a worldwide reputation. The great bassist Eddie Gomez began a fruitful eleven year tenure with Bill in 1966, in various trios with drummers Marty Morell, Philly Joe Jones, Jack DeJohnette and others -- contributing to some of the most acclaimed club appearances and albums in Evans' career. His recorded output was considerable -- (for Riverside, Verve, Columbia, Fantasy and Warner Bros) over the years, and he also did sessions (especially early on) with some of the top names in jazz. Musicians like Charles Mingus, Art Farmer, Stan Getz, Oliver Nelson, Jim Hall, George Russell, Shelley Manne, Toots Thielmans, Kai Winding /J.J. Johnson, Hal McKusick and others all featured Evans. In the seventies, he recorded extensively-- primarily trio and solo piano now and then, but also including several quintet albums under his own name as well two memorable dates with singer Tony Bennett.

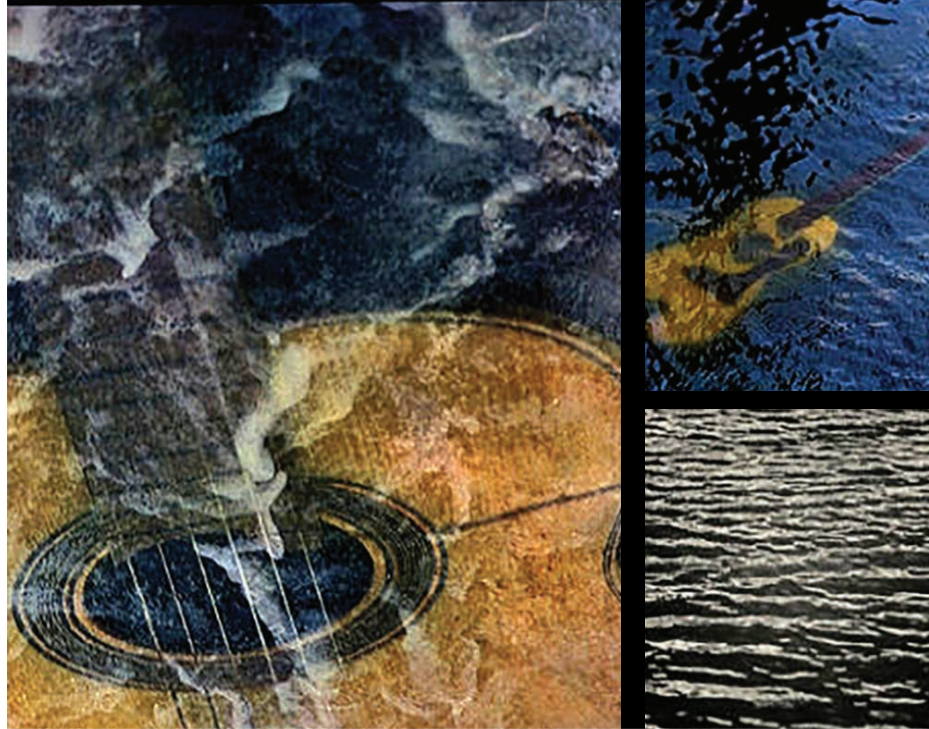
His last trio was formed in 1978, featuring the incomparably sensitive Marc Johnson on bass and drummer Joe LaBarbera, which rejuvenated the often-ailing pianist, who was elated with his new line-up, calling it "the most closely related" to his first trio (with LaFaro and Motian). He suffered yet more family problems and upheavals in his personal life, (often due to bouts with narcotics addiction) and yet brought a new dynamic musical vitality, a surer confidence, fresh energy and even more aggressive interplay to the trio's repertoire. Evans' health was deteriorating, however, though he insisted on working until he finally had to cancel midweek during an engagement at Fat Tuesday's in New York. A few days later, he had to be taken to Mount Sinai Hospital on September 15, 1980, where he died from a bleeding ulcer, cirrhosis of the liver and bronchial pneumonia. He is buried next to his beloved brother Harry, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

While Evans was open to new musical approaches that would not compromise his musical and artistic vision -- such as his occasional use of electric piano, and his brief associations with avant-garde composer George Russell -- he always insisted on the purity of the song structure and the noble history of the jazz tradition. It was a point the highly articulate Evans was quite forthcoming about in the various interviews he gave throughout his career. Consistently true to his own pianistic standards, he continued to enhance his own singular vision of music until the very end.

In his short life, Bill Evans was a prolific and profoundly creative artist and a genuinely compassionate and gentle man, often in the face of his recurring health problems and his restless nature. His rich legacy remains undiminished, and his compositions have enjoyed rediscovery by jazz players and even some classical musicians. Even twenty-five years after his passing, Bill Evans' music continues to influence musicians and composers everywhere and all those who have been deeply touched by his expressive genius and sensitive, lyrical artistry.

Bill Evans Jim Hall

Undercurrent



A harmonically advanced cool-toned and subtle guitarist, Jim Hall was an inspiration to many guitarists, including some (such as Bill Frisell) who sound nothing like him. Hall attended the Cleveland Institute of Music and studied classical guitar in Los Angeles with Vicente Gómez. He was an original member of the Chico Hamilton Quintet (1955-1956), and during 1956-1959 was with the Jimmy Giuffre Three. After touring with Ella Fitzgerald (1960-1961) and sometimes forming duos with Lee Konitz, Hall was with Sonny Rollins' dynamic quartet in 1961-1962, recording *The Bridge*. He co-led a quartet with Art Farmer (1962-1964), recorded on an occasional basis with Paul Desmond during 1959-1965 (all of their quartet performances are collected on a Mosaic box set), and then became a New York studio musician. He was mostly a leader during the following years and, in addition to his own projects for World Pacific/Pacific Jazz, MPS, Milestone, CTI, Horizon, Artist House, Concord, MusicMasters, and Telarc, Jim Hall recorded two classic duet albums with Bill Evans. A self-titled collaboration with Pat Metheny followed in 1999. A flurry of studio albums, reissues, and compilations followed throughout the next few years, with the exceptional *Jim Hall & Basses* standing out for its bass/guitar duet format. Jim Hall died at his apartment in Manhattan on December 10, 2013; he was 83 years old.



Other than four piano solos from April 4, 1962, this set was pianist Bill Evans' first recordings after a hiatus caused by bassist Scott LaFaro's tragic death in a car accident. The first of two meetings on record in a duo format with guitarist Jim Hall, the collaborations are often exquisite. Both Evans and Hall had introspective and harmonically advanced styles along with roots in hard-swinging bebop. There is more variety than expected on the fine set with some cookers, ballads, waltzes, and even some hints at classical music.

UNDERCURRENT

Bill Evans and Jim Hall



Undercurrent - Bill Evans and Jim Hall

1 My Funny Valentine

Written-By – Rodgers & Hart 5:19

2 I Hear A Rhapsody

Written-By – Dick Gasparre, George Fragos, Jack Baker 4:35

3 Dream Gypsy

Written-By – Judith Veevers 4:30

4 Romain

Written-By – Jim Hall 5:18

5 Skating In Central Park

Written-By – John Lewis 5:17

6 Darn That Dream

Written-By – Eddie Delange, Jimmy Van Heusen 5:05

7 My Funny Valentine (Alternate Take)

Written-By – Rodgers & Hart 6:52

Total Time: 36:56

Transferred from a 15ips 2-track tape

Engineer – Bill Schwartau Producer – Alan Douglas

Recorded at Sound Makers, New York City on April 24, 1962, by United Artists Records



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Undercurrent - Bill Evans and Jim Hall

