



The Making of Kind of Blue: Miles Davis and His Masterpiece

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From the moment it was recorded, more than forty years ago, Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue* was hailed as a jazz classic. To this day, it remains the bestselling jazz album of all time, embraced by fans of all music genres. The album represented a true watershed moment in jazz history, and helped to usher in the first great jazz revolution since bebop.

The Making of Kind of Blue is an exhaustively researched examination of how this masterpiece was born. Recorded with pianist Bill Evans; tenor saxophonist John Coltrane; composer/theorist George Russell; and Miles himself, the album represented a fortuitous conflation of some of the real giants of the jazz world, at a time when they were at the top of their musical game. The end result was a recording that would forever change the face of American music

Through extensive interview and access to rare recordings, Eric Nisenson pieced together the whole story of this miraculous session, laying bare the genius of Miles Davis, other musicians, and the heart of jazz itself.

The Making of Kind of Blue: Miles Davis and His Masterpiece Details

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From Reader Review The Making of Kind of Blue: Miles Davis and His Masterpiece for online ebook

Hugh Carson says

Incredible book about one of my incredible heroes.

Marti says

I didn't actually read it - it expired before I had a chance, and I can't find a way to delete it from goodreads. Will re-request it soon, tho!

milton says

another good book on the greatest album in the world. not as good as ashley kahn's but still worth the read.

Robyn says

Great background story to a wonderful album, and definitely worth a read for lovers of the music, but I'm not a fan of Nisenson's writing style (particularly his incessant reference to "jazzmen").

G Miller says

This book is a must have for every jazz lover!

Eben says

This is the most amazing album ever. This book gives insight into this recording. Read while sipping hot coffee, listening to the record (vinyl) on a cold, rainy Sunday morning. Then you will hear the note between the note!

Chavon says

I can't continue to read this book. Having read Davis' autobiography I'm well versed in him as an individual and an artist. Kind of Blue is very technical in it's language and unless you're a musician or someone well versed in musical terms...I think it's hard for a reader to connect with this book. Otherwise I think it's well

written and I would have enjoyed it more if I were a musician.

William2 says

To think it took just two days in 1959 to record this masterwork. Most of the players get a mini-biography. These are fine in the case of Miles Davis, Bill Evans, and Cannonball Adderley, but too meager in the case of John Coltrane and all but nonexistent for bassist Paul Chambers and drummer Jimmy Cobb. The most interesting part of the book for me was the discussion of George Russell's "Lydian Chromatic Concept for Tonal Organization," a sophisticated modal theory of music which greatly influenced Miles, Coltrane's post-Miles work, Charles Mingus and much of the post-bop generation. With that single exception, though, I think the writing about the music itself is rather thin. But isn't this true of all music writing? Sure, one can convey something of the music's emotional effect, something of its reception and historical importance, even an idea of the labors involved in making it, but in the end it's all simulacra. One is reminded of sex in novels. Nor does the writing itself rise to a level of achievement consonant with its subject matter. That said, the book is a wonderful *adjunct* to the recording.

Stuart Elliott says

Kind of Blue is not only Miles Davis' masterpiece, it is the best selling jazz album ever. It is the one jazz album most likely to be a favorite of non-jazz fans and one of the best to give to introduce a friend to jazz.

Eric Nisenson has written a very interesting book on the making of the album, covering not only Miles, but also George Russell, Bill Evans, John Coltrane, and Cannonball Adderly.

If this is one of your favorite albums, as it mine, there is a good chance you will not only enjoy this book, but also find that it deepens your appreciation of the Davis masterpiece.

Jonny Giron says

Good.

Samy says

Is that what you wanted, Alfred?

Jon says

I'm giving it four stars, but that may be partly because I love the music so much. Is there a more evocative and important sonic footprint than Miles' muted trumpet on "Blue in Green?" I haven't come across a sound that pensive and soulful ever, anywhere. The author knows the music, and seems to have been a friend of

Miles. He may get a bit over-serious, especially in linking the music with the young civil rights movement - was every black jazz musician trying to channel 400 years of oppression and rage into the horn? Weren't they simply trying to make musics?

That said, this led me to listen to "Kind of Blue" again last night for the first time in years. Good record.

Karl says

An excellent book. Eric Nisenson's "The Making of Kind of Blue: Miles Davis and His Masterpiece" compleatly and exhaustively covers Miles Davis's 1959 landmark album, "Kind of Blue".

Mr.Nisenson who also wrote"Ascension: John Coltrane and His Quest" examines every note and all of the background detail is discussed in this tribute to the bestselling jazz album of all time. The strengths of this book exist in his dedication to set the recording in of this work in it's social, cultural and historical context.

Mr. Nisensin's focus on everything that led up to the recording of this masterpiece album and its tremendous repercussions on the Jazz world makes for this outstanding work.

This is mandatory reading for every Miles Davis and Jazz fan.

Solor says

Amazing analysis of a masterpiece rich of information and trivial.

Doug Bright says

If you are a fan of Jazz this will be a fun read of the pivotal time and players of when Jazz made the transition from the Bop of the forties to the smooth jazz sound of the sixties. Great sketches of the players on " Kind of Blue" the transcendent work of the transition. For the casual jazz fan the book gets a little too " inside baseball" and a little self- indulgent and verbose. As Miles Davis himself said: " You don't have to play all the notes, just the pretty ones."

The description of the actual recording session itself is only a disappointing few pages long, and the best description probably remains the liner notes by Bill Evans who played piano on " Kind of Blue." The music itself is a masterpiece, of course, launched John Coletrane so maybe trying to write a book about it would be a little like trying to put Picasso into words.
