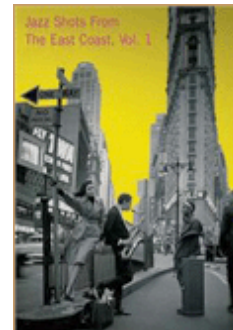


**DVD: Jazz Shots from the East Coast Vol. 1 (2006)**

**Review Rating:** Standard  
**Label/Studio:** EFORFilms / MVD (Music Video Distributors)  
**Catalog #:** DVD-2869052NT  
**Region:** 0 (NTSC)  
**Released:** May 16, 2006

**Genre:** Jazz Performances / Jazz Concerts  
**Synopsis:** Anthology of live and filmed jazz performances of famous east coast musicians.

**Directed by:** none credited  
**Screenplay by:** none credited  
**Music by:** various

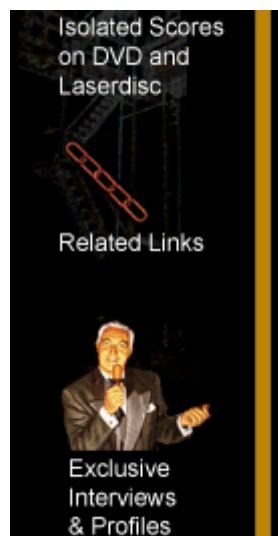


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**Produced by:** none credited

**Cast:** Bill Evans Trio, Ahmad Jamal Trio, Phil Woods Quartet, Thelonious Monk Trio, Johnny Griffin, Oscar Peterson, Duke Ellington, Keith Jarrett, Jimmy Smith Trio, and Roland Kirk.

**Film Length:** 92 mins

**Process/Ratio:** 1.33:1

**Black & White / Colour**

**Anamorphic DVD:** No

**Languages:** English Mono

**Subtitles:**

**Special Features :**

(none)

**Comments :**

The first volume in the **Jazz Shots** series offers a really broad mix of East Coast musicians, and their readily identifiable style.

Few of Bill Evans' appearances exist on video, although there are a handful of collections featuring material from live concerts in Europe, at the Monterrey Jazz Festival (1975) and an Iowa concert in the late seventies. None of the performances on this DVD are given dates and times, although the first of the Evans extracts, "Up with the Lark," is likely from a mid- to late-seventies concert, with Eddie Gomez on bass. (Only a sign reading "Revue" is visible on the background curtain.)

Evans' style was deceptively relaxed; a tune's melody may have been easily recognizable in the opening bars, but the eloquent improv that made up the meat of a song was always captivating, largely because one could hear Evans exploring all kinds of intricate ideas before stepping back and letting bassist Gomez show off his own extended and beautifully rendered solo.

The second Evans extract is a solo rendition of "I Loves You Porgy," taken from a black & white source. On his own, Evans would indulge in heavy bouts of introspection, and the overall tone could sometimes be less smoothly melodic than when a song's sections were shared with other musicians. It's still an accessible version of the Gershwin classic, but his performance certainly recalls the concentrated and abstract patterns in his best solo albums.

The two Ahmad Jamal sets that follow come from a live fifties program, with jazz legends like Ben Webster surrounding Jamal's trio as they play two songs, "Darn That Dream" and "Ahmad Blues," near the corner of a cramped soundstage. A vintage kinescope, the first set is a lively, bouncy rendition with progressive chords and buttery fingering from Jamal on piano. The second song again focuses on Jamal's piano work, with the drums softly supporting him in the background, and the bassist getting a few bars of his own. Visually, the director uses dissolves and modest crane shots to give the performance some visual flair, and he occasionally cuts to the congregated listeners, mostly comprised of older musicians. Both extracts offer an early glimpse at Jamal, who would later gain some mainstream exposure for his jazz version of Johnny Mandel's famous theme from **M\*A\*S\*H**, "Suicide in Painless."

The prolific Phil Woods appears with his quartet from the 2003 **Tribute to Charlie Parker** video, and it's a luxuriously long performance of "My Old Flame," with Woods delivering an extended, crisp solo, and some space given to the quartet's pianist. (Woods, interestingly, recorded a Parker tribute album back in 1957, called **Bird's Night: A Celebration of the Music of Charlie Parker**.)

Also from a live fifties performance is Thelonious Monk and his trio performing "Blue Monk." Like the Jamal extracts, the kinescope features the same visual style, although the trio are mostly photographed against a black back wall, with periodic camera movements revealing the same group of grooving onlookers.

Monk's music is carried over a few decades later in a videotaped club performance of Johnny Griffin doing "Monk's Dream." Having played with Monk, Griffin plays with rock-solid, self-assurance, and the 13 min. rendition is extracted from a 1985 video called **The Jazz Life**.

Jazz music in the eighties, when performed by a small combo, is characterized by a close-miked, intimate nature, and when the musicians didn't stray into easy listening or pop terrain, the results produced some memorable music with lively and aggressive solos.

The Oscar Peterson Trio perform a typically ebullient version of "Place St. Henri," and there's plenty of angles and close-ups in the black & white clip that show the Trio at play, particularly Peterson's amazingly animated hands gliding from singular to chunks of keys.

Three Duke Ellington tunes are performed by the man himself from another late fifties/early sixties date. The tunes - "Moon Indigo," "Sophisticated Lade," and "Take the A Train" - are fairly short, but there's some familiar solo work that fans will recall from single versions recorded at the same period. Clarinet and piano dominate the first cut, while the low and mellow timbre of the bass clarinet introduces the second.

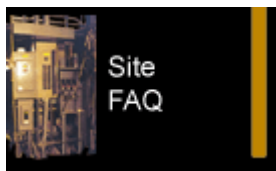
"Take the A Train" is from a different performance, and is joined in progress, likely after some intro or because the cut was part of a medley. The cue runs at 2 mins., but it's a rare treat to see one of jazz' elder statesmen playing one of his signature tunes with solid energy.

It's at this point that the DVD gets a bit brave, and offers not one but two sets with Keith Jarrett during his period with the Charles Lloyd Quartet. Fans of more classic jazz might find it to be a jarring shift, but the sampler nature of the **Jazz Shots** series, certainly in this case, presents a collage of styles from musicians and pioneers testing the boundaries of their predecessors.

The first cut, "Passin' Thru," runs about 12 mins., and somewhat recalls the weirdly ethereal and sincere approach of Chico Hamilton, whose more experimental compositions were brooding, heady, and sometimes a bit too sincere in trying to achieve a higher level of gravitas. The similarities are overt, as Lloyd played flute for Hamilton for a while, although Hamilton's performance style was a bit too humorless; Lloyd's Quartet, as seen in the two black & white extracts from their 1968 **Jazz Casual** appearance, is less formal.

Attired in casual wear, the musicians are also more comfortable grooving in front of the camera - as does gyrating flautist Lloyd - or performing unconcerned with any imminent ad breaks (as Jarrett begins the cue's first quarter by scratching and tapping the wires of his open piano). Whereas the first cut is basically low-key, extended conversations between bass and flute, the second cut, "Tagore," emphasizes more free-style work with tenor and soprano sax, various percussion effects, and bowed bass. Running just over 7 mins., its experimental nature and intense performances in the final quarter are a marked contrast to the remaining material on the DVD. (Note: the two Lloyd cuts are actually listed in reverse order on the sleeve's track list.)

More melodic and an appropriately soothing change from the Lloyd cut is Jimmy Smith's organ play for a maniacally extended version of "Mack the Knife." Also from the same **Jazz Scene USA** appearance as on **Vol. 3** in this series, Smith is



photographed in extreme detail as his hands move across the keys, plus some overhead shots as well. Unlike the other extracts from the same show, we never see the other musicians who are forced to play the same parts for a genuinely brutal length of time. (We do see a guitar neck and some fingering, plus brushes on drums, but little else.)

The DVD closes with two bonus cuts - Oscar Peterson playing "Yours is My Heart Alone," and Roland Kirk's "Untitled Blues." The former is a live outdoor set, and it's an archival kinescope, combining an extreme long shot with cutaways to audiences and food being prepared by vendors. Kirk's set is similarly crude, with long and low audience-level shots covering the band as Kirk smoothly plays sax and breathy flute in the short tune that fades out quickly.

Available separately, this great title is part of a six-part wave that includes [Jazz Shots from the East Coast Volume 1, Volume 2, & Volume 3](#), and [Jazz Shots from the West Coast Volume 1, Volume 2, & Volume 3](#).

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