



PRESS INFORMATION

100th Birthday of Miles Davis in the Elbphilharmonie

Hamburg concert hall pays tribute to musical phenomenon with five concerts

Hamburg, 13 November 2025: Miles Davis was arguably the most versatile, influential and fascinating musician of the 20th century. To mark what would have been his 100th birthday on 26 May 2026, the Elbphilharmonie is revisiting the different chapters of his career over the course of five concerts. In the series entitled **MILES 100**, international jazz stars are set to interpret his work in their own distinctive ways. Ambrose Akinmusire, the star trumpeter of the younger generation of the cool jazz era, opens the series; drummer Bobby Previte revives the funky fusion sound of the 1970s with his »Bitches Brew« project; the NDR Big Band interprets the orchestral album »Sketches of Spain«; and as a special highlight, saxophonist Ravi Coltrane – son of John Coltrane – honours his father's birthday together with Terence Blanchard. Bass icon Marcus Miller, Miles Davis' closest musical partner in the late phase of his career, celebrates albums from »We Want Miles« to »Tutu« and »Amandla« with colleagues including Mike Stern, Bill Evans and Mino Cinelu. Tickets are available from 11 a.m. on 18 November at www.elbphilharmonie.de.

With his laid-back trumpet sound and irrepressible drive for innovation, »Mr. Cool« **Miles Davis** revolutionised jazz several times over, combining it with classical, rock, funk and pop, and in doing so shaping the sound of entire decades. As a bandleader, he had a near-uncanny instinct for spotting talent and nurtured countless future jazz legends including John Coltrane, Wayne Shorter, Bill Evans, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Tony Williams, Joe Zawinul and Keith Jarrett.

Ambrose Akinmusire (3 May), Downbeat's Trumpeter of the Year 2025, performs »A New Perspective on Miles« at the Elbphilharmonie together with the **Brussels Jazz Orchestra**. For Akinmusire, the project is »the best proof that Miles' artistic attitude remains relevant today and continues to inspire new generations«. With its explosive blend of jazz and rock, its driving rhythms, distorted guitar textures and sound effects, »Bitches Brew« ignited the torch for the fusion hype of the 1970s. Jazz drummer **Bobby Previte** (5 May) brings this high-energy mix to the stage of the Grand Hall in his own unique version, supported by Hamburg-based musicians. The **NDR Big Band** (6 May) commemorates an orchestral milestone in jazz history with »Sketches of Spain«. For this concert, the musicians will place the original arrangements by big band legend Gil Evans on their music stands, before continuing the dialogue between jazz and flamenco with double bassist Pablo Martín Caminero. Acclaimed jazz saxophonist **Ravi Coltrane** (30 June) joins forces with leading US trumpeter and Miles devotee **Terence Blanchard** to bridge the gap between the brilliant masterminds John Coltrane and Miles Davis and the jazz of today. To conclude this spotlight on Miles Davis, his peer and collaborator **Marcus Miller** brings together colleagues at the top of their game such as **Mike Stern**, **Bill Evans** and **Mino Cinelu** to celebrate the late works at the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg.

Rather than completing his studies at New York's renowned Juilliard School, Miles Davis spent the mid-1940s frequenting jazz clubs, where he soon began shaping the emerging bebop movement alongside his idols **Charlie Parker** and **Dizzy Gillespie**. In 1949/50 he set a new counterpoint with the recordings for »Birth of the Cool«: the dawn of cool jazz. His collaboration with the congenial arranger **Gil Evans** – who assembled whole orchestras for landmark albums such as »Porgy and Bess« and »Sketches of Spain«, a groundbreaking development in jazz – also left a profound mark on his style. The »first great quintet«, formed around him and saxophonist **John Coltrane** in the late 1950s, stands as an essential hard-bop formation that continues to have an impact on the image of modern jazz to this day. In modal jazz, Miles Davis turned to ancient church modes and non-European scales, striking a chord with the spirit of the times through these unfamiliar sounds: »Kind



of Blue» (1959) became the most commercially successful and arguably most influential jazz album of all time. With his »second great quintet«, he found the ultimate sweet spot between freedom and structure for many jazz fans in the experimental 1960s. With **Herbie Hancock**, **Ron Carter** and **Tony Williams** as a remarkably flexible rhythm section and **Wayne Shorter** on saxophone, he enriched jazz history with groundbreaking recordings such as »E.S.P.«, »Miles Smiles« and »Nefertiti«.

Inspired by rock, soul and the energy of the Woodstock era, he laid the cornerstone for jazz-rock fusion with »Bitches Brew« in 1970. This stylistic explosion influenced musicians across the globe – many of his fellow musicians went on to form legendary groups such as **Weather Report**, the **Mahavishnu Orchestra** and **Return to Forever**. Miles Davis' music grew ever more intense, darker and freer until a sudden decline in health prompted him to withdraw from the scene for several years in 1975. In the early 1980s, the live album »We Want Miles« finally heralded the late phase of his career, during which he moved closer to contemporary pop music. His instinct for the sound of the moment remained unerring, right to the end of his life: he recognised the importance of a young funk innovator named **Prince** early on, and enlisted the young hip-hop producer **Easy Mo Bee** well before genre icons like Tupac Shakur and The Notorious B.I.G. rapped to his beats. A style icon as well as a musical one, Miles Davis also left his mark on the fashion and record cover history of the 20th century: from the smart »Black Ivy« style of his early years to the futuristic looks of Japanese designers in the 1980s – Miles was always ahead of his time and his times invariably followed.

Concert Overview

Sun, 3 May 2026, 20:00 | Elbphilharmonie Grand Hall
AMBROSE AKINMUSIRE & BRUSSELS JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Tue, 5 May 2026, 20:00 | Elbphilharmonie Grand Hall
BOBBY PREVITE REIMAGINES »BITCHES BREW«

Wed, 6 May 2026, 20:00 | Elbphilharmonie Grand Hall
NDR BIGBAND »TWO SKETCHES OF SPAIN«

Thu, 30 June 2026, 20:00 | Elbphilharmonie Grand Hall
TERENCE BLANCHARD & RAVI COLTRANE

Thu, 9 July 2026, 20:00 | Elbphilharmonie Grand Hall
MARCUS MILLER SALUTES MILES DAVIS

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