

Red Garland mixed together the usual influences of his generation (Nat Cole, Bud Powell, and Ahmad Jamal) into his own distinctive approach; Garland's block chords themselves became influential on the players of the 1960s. He started out playing clarinet and alto, switching to piano when he was 18. During 1946–1955, he worked steadily in New York and Philadelphia, backing such major players as Charlie Parker, Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, and Roy Eldridge, but still remaining fairly obscure. That changed when he became a member of the classic Miles Davis Quintet (1955–1958), heading a rhythm section that also included Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones. After leaving Miles, Garland had his own popular trio and recorded very frequently for Prestige, Jazzland, and Moodsville during 1956–1962 (the majority of which are available in the Original Jazz Classics series). The pianist eventually returned to Texas and was in semi-retirement, but came back gradually in the 1970s, recording for MPS (1971) and Galaxy (1977–1979) before retiring again.

the
RED GARLAND quintet
with **JOHN COLTRANE**



Taken from "scraps" or "leftovers" of three different sessions, Dig It! presents distinct sides of Red Garland's straight-ahead jazz persona that manifests in trio, quartet, and quintet formats. One track was issued as led by drummer Art Taylor (Taylor's Wailers), ostensibly John Coltrane in Garland's quartet apart from their association with Miles Davis, and two separate recordings have trumpeter Donald Byrd added to comprise a five-piece combo. Memphis bassist George Joyner (aka Jamil Nasser) is on three cuts, with Taylor present throughout. Though the total time is shy of 34 minutes, this recording represents all of these musicians in transition from their sideman associations to the leadership roles they were in the process of wresting hold of. What have always been Garland's strong suits -- high-class discourse and fleet and fluid bebop -- are heartily dished out with no trace of arrogance. On the swing-era standard "Crazy Rhythm," the Garland trio with bassist Paul Chambers and Taylor plays a concise, hard-charging

version with no wasted motion and the two-fisted chord progressions of the pianist. Coltrane's feature during Jimmy Heath's hard bop icon "C.T.A." is a bit tentative, as he plays only eighth notes in a reserved fashion. But the quintet take of "Billie's Bounce" has Trane rippin' it up in a fervor that doubles the note volume, animated and fast, while also expressing a soulful side. Byrd is fairly inconsequential, only soloing on this and the 16-minute vintage blues "Lazy Mae." It's Garland who takes liberties on this slow, languorous, sleepy-time jam, where he evokes the classic sounds of Teddy Wilson, Earl "Fatha" Hines, and especially the elegant Erroll Garner for a full eight minutes, also quoting the pop tune "Send for Me" and the rambling staircase triplet midsection of "After Hours" before Coltrane and Byrd settle into their own bluesy solos.



The Red Garland Quintet with John Coltrane

Dig It!

- 1 Billie's Bounce 9:26**
- 2 Crazy Rhythm (Trio) 3:27**
- 3 CTA 4:45**
- 4 Lazy Mae 16:09**
- Total Time: 33:47**

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