

A black and white photograph of Bill Evans, a pianist, is the background of the cover. He is shown from the chest up, leaning forward over a piano keyboard. He has long, wavy hair and is wearing glasses and a dark jacket. His hands are positioned over the keys. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and shadows.

2^xHD
FUSION

**BILL
EVANS**
**MORNING
GLORY**

THE 1973 CONCERT
AT THE TEATRO
GRAN REX,
BUENOS AIRES

EDDIE GOMEZ | MARTY MORELL

DOUBLE ALBUM



Photo by Carlos Carrizo.

THE ROAD TO BUENOS AIRES

We at Resonance are very proud once again to join with the estate of Bill Evans to present a pair of very important Evans live recordings made in 1973 and 1979 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

In April of 2018, Argentine music journalist Roque Di Pietro contacted me. He told me that concert recordings existed of two iterations of Bill Evans trios from appearances in Buenos Aires: one from 1973 featuring Eddie Gomez and Marty Morell and the other from 1979 with Marc Johnson and Joe LaBarbera. Carlos Melero, who recorded both concerts, had maintained possession of the original tapes. Thanks to Roque's introduction and some jazz diplomacy, Carlos helped Resonance to acquire the original tapes.

As is our practice at Resonance, we do everything we can to honor the rights of the artists, preserve the integrity of the music and work with the appropriate entities exclusively on aboveboard official releases. These two Evans albums—*Morning Glory* and *Inner Spirit*—were previously bootlegged; the musicians and their families were never paid.

We're proud now to present the first official release of these recordings; official in the sense that all the musicians, estates and rights-holders are now participants. Our mission is to rescue this important music from the shadowy domain of the copyright infringer and to have it take its rightful place in the legitimately sanctioned Bill Evans recorded canon.

Once again, we're fortunate to be able to work with Bill Evans's son, Evan, who is the representative of the Bill Evans estate. We thank Evan for his continued support. Evan's involvement enables us to pursue these important Bill Evans projects, of which these two albums are Resonance's sixth and seventh. Thanks also to our friends Eddie

Gomez, Marty Morell, Marc Johnson and Joe LaBarbera for their support and also for taking the time to share their memories about these performances and these times in their lives.

For both of these releases, we're excited to join forces once again with Evans scholar and enthusiast, Marc Myers, who wrote the lead essays for each album. Marc has been a vital part of our Evans output. His supremely articulate and elevated liner notes for *Some Other Time*, *Another Time* and *Evans in England* lent important context to those projects and will continue to enlighten all who treasure the music of Bill Evans. These are our fourth and fifth Evans releases with Marc and we're extremely happy to have him back.



Bill Evans in the dressing room of the Gran Rex Theater, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1973. Photo by Tito Villalba.

Roque Di Pietro played a vital part in making this project possible and I am grateful to him for the many hours he spent communicating with us about the music and about the man who recorded it, engineer Carlos Melero. I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank author Claudio Parisi, who wrote two chapters in his book *Grandes del jazz internacional en Argentina (1956-1979)* about these Bill Evans concerts, which were milestone events on the Argentinian jazz scene. We're presenting excerpts from his book in which he discusses Evans's two visits to Argentina, during which these recordings came into being.

As always, we're dedicated to telling the complete stories behind the recordings we release and celebrating their legacies. For these albums, we've enlisted the members of both Evans trios whose performances you hear here, as well as important figures who were connected to Evans and his music. I'd like to personally thank the legendary jazz pianist Richie Bierach and the acclaimed pianist Enrico Pieranunzi, who shared with us their great knowledge, wisdom and understanding about this great man.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge photographer Tito Villalba, who took photos at both performances, images we have included in these packages. Among Mr. Villalba's photos that we're presenting you'll see a wonderful shot of Mr. Villalba (with a camera around his neck) with a smiling Evans in 1979.

We at Resonance are also grateful to everyone at Concord Music Group, especially Nick Philips, Mason Williams and Marty Willard, for their good will, which helped immeasurably to make this release possible.

As always, I must thank my co-president, Resonance founder George Klabin, for making this all possible.

These two incredible performances, which span the 1970s, capture Bill Evans and two of his finest trios at their very best. The 1973 concert at the Teatro Gran Rex is remarkable.

From the enthusiastic, impassioned applause you can hear, it's clear that the Gran Rex audience felt it was. And this was a concert that took place at 10:00 AM on a frigid Sunday morning! Evans's triumphant return to Buenos Aires in 1979 was the perfect bookend to these moving performances from one of jazz's greatest and most influential artists.

Zev Feldman

Los Angeles, July 2021

THEIR PASSIONS RAN DEEP

BY MARC MYERS

Riding in the car that picked them up at the airport on Saturday, June 23, 1973, the Bill Evans Trio sensed something big had taken place. Outside, along the grasslands lining the highway into Buenos Aires, Argentina, there were miles of discarded signs and scattered refuse.

Three days prior to the arrival of pianist Bill Evans, bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Marty Morell, more than two million Argentines had turned out to cheer the return of Juan Perón and his third wife, Isabel.

Perón had already been a two-term leader of Argentina, from 1946 to 1955, and husband of the late "Evita" Perón. After spending 18 years in exile in Spain, the former Army general was back to be sworn in to a third term following his re-election in March.

Unaware of the political drama unfolding around them during their first visit to the city, the Bill Evans Trio knew the public was enthralled by the 77-year-old Perón and his 42-year-old wife. "Everyone we met was happy to have him back," Morell told me in an interview for these notes.

Buenos Aires was the trio's second-to-last stop on a five-country South American swing. The tour began in Mexico City and then moved on to São Paulo and Rio Di Janeiro in Brazil, Montevideo in Uruguay, Buenos Aires, and Santiago, Chile.

Along the way, there were a couple of close calls. In Uruguay, there was a national strike. "Everything was closed or brought to a halt," Morell said. "It was eerie." Weeks later, a coup took place and a military dictatorship assumed power.

In Chile, where political tensions were mounting, a military coup occurred less than three months after the trio left. "At our Santiago hotel, they hurried us to our airport car at 5 AM," Morell said. "It was like the film *Foreign Intrigue* getting out of there."

In jubilant Buenos Aires, the trio's concert took place on Sunday morning, June 24, at the city's Cine Teatro Gran Rex. The 2,500-seat, 1937 Art Deco movie theater had been modeled after New York's Radio City Music Hall. According to Morell, the odd hour was the only time available to the promoter.

"It was a good time for us. We had just come off a successful tour in Japan, where *The Tokyo Concert* album was recorded in January," said Morell, who now teaches at the University of Central Florida. "We felt great — relaxed and fluid. Bill never provided us with a song list. He just started a tune and we knew what to play."

The trio opened with Evans's "Re: Person I Knew," an anagram of Riverside producer Orrin Keepnews's name. Evans first recorded the hushed piece in 1962 on *Moon Beams*. It was an evolving shower of poetic beauty. The audience applauded politely.

Johnny Mandel's "Emily" was measured and gently articulated. The frolicking waltz was added to Evans's repertoire in 1966 and recorded first at New York's Village Vanguard. After the final notes, the Argentine audience exploded in applause combined with shouts and whistles.

In a country where the tango dominated the culture, the trio's waltzes were especially appreciated by an audience whose nostalgia was awakened by Perón's return. "We were awestruck by their reaction," Morell said.

But the strong applause didn't spur Evans to play more emotionally. "Once Bill bent over the keyboard and we started playing, it didn't matter if there was an audience there or not," Morell said. "Bill just became part of the piano."

The trio's "Who Can I Turn To" was inquisitive and breathy, its pacing gentle and jaunty. As with the first two songs, Evans yielded early to Gomez, who took an extensive bass solo that drew strong applause. When Evans emerged on the other end, he released sheets of improvisational runs.

Evans's "The Two Lonely People" sounds like dawn breaking, the music rising slowly and widening tentatively, combining adulation with melancholy. "Bill was in good spirits," Morell recalled. "He was due to marry Nenette Zazzara in New York in August. I think he felt his life was changing for the better."

Evans opened Michel Legrand's "What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?" with a brief introspective passage. The song was followed by Richard Rodgers's rollicking "My Romance" that Evans started with a deep pedal tone and chords that disguised the song until it finally resolved in the trio's familiar introduction and the song itself.

On the song, Morell took two solos, dramatically pitting his brushes against bass drum figures. Again, Evans surfaced highly animated. The stormy close sent the audience into a frenzy.

"Playing with Bill, I was trying to emulate Paul Motian," Morell says. "I had listened to all of Bill's early records before joining the trio in '68. I had fallen in love with his '61

trio and its more conversational style. But we all had grown by then. With Bill, you had to be in the moment.”

Bobbie Gentry’s “Mornin’ Glory” is one of Evans’s finest pastoral ballads, with a tugging undercurrent. Despite the song’s tender grace, the audience seemed lukewarm. Powerful reactions seemed to be reserved for songs with dance tempos and intensive solos by Gomez and Morell.

Jerome Kern’s waltz, “Up With the Lark,” from the 1946 musical film *Centennial Summer* had just been added to the Evans repertoire in Japan. Once again, the song’s dance sway received roars.

“This was Bill’s methadone period—he wasn’t stressed out,” Morell said. “There was a tranquility to his playing that morning. When we were in South America, he had a special medical license to carry methadone with him. His life became emotionally and financially easier.”

“Twelve Tone Tune” [T.T.T.] first appeared on *The Bill Evans Album* in 1971 and was Evans’s attempt to turn a twelve-tone row into a compositional narrative. The jagged Evans original was the concert’s most interactive between the three players. Here, Morell’s snare and tom-tom solo combined with Gomez’s lengthy, inventive solo and Evans’s hypnotic cascading lines to produce audience whistles.

Next was “Esta tarde vi llover,” by one of Mexico’s leading romantic composers Armando Manzanero. Gene Lees, a close friend of Evans, had added English lyrics and turned the song into “Yesterday I Heard the Rain.” The trio delivered a deeply passionate interpretation.

The moving “Beautiful Love” and “Waltz for Debby” closed the concert and received a fairly straightforward delivery. At the start of the latter song, however, a loud indistinguishable

shout is heard from the audience. The pleasant shock momentarily slowed Evans, who then sailed into his signature work written for his niece and first recorded on *New Jazz Conceptions* in 1956.

Returning to the stage for an encore, Evans performed “My Foolish Heart” without a bass or drum solo. It was filled with self-examination and unfolding hope and is one of Evans’s finest live interpretations of the song.

“Buenos Aires was still one of the most amazing concerts I’ve ever performed” Morell said. “We played exceptionally well, and the audience’s passion ran deep. As a trio, we had never quite experienced anything like that. Their reaction was unbelievable.”

Marc Myers is a contributing columnist at The Wall Street Journal, where he writes on music and the arts. He posts at JazzWax.com six days a week and last wrote the liner notes to Resonance’s Evans in England.

BILL EVANS IN BUENOS AIRES, 1973

BY CLAUDIO PARISI

The great William John Evans—or simply, Bill Evans—is without a doubt one of the most influential and admired pianists in the entire history of jazz; beyond the jazz world, his greatness was recognized by musicians in and enthusiasts of many other musical genres.

Evans didn’t make his first trip to Buenos Aires until June of 1973, when he performed at a Sunday morning concert there with bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Marty Morell. The concert promoter that brought the trio to Argentina for the first time was the preeminent Argentinian presenter Alejandro Szterenfeld’s *Conciertos Gama*.



Photo by Hans Harzheim.

Because the trip was scheduled at the last minute, there were complications getting Evans and the other members of the trio work visas; when they got to Argentina, Evans had to be granted what's called a "Change of Qualification" because without it, he couldn't have worked. "I brought Bill, Eddie and Marty to the immigration service, and after some bureaucratic haggling, they were cleared for their visas," remembers Hilda Varela, secretary of Conciertos Gama.

The first Bill Evans concert in Buenos Aires took place on a very cold morning, Sunday, June 24, 1973. Eddie Gomez, who wasn't yet known in Argentina, surprised everyone since at the time, people weren't used to seeing jazz bassists who displayed his level of instrumental command and the notion of a bassist taking a prominent role in a jazz trio, as Eddie did, was novel. The impression Eddie made is reflected in a review of the concert that appeared on Tuesday, June 26 in *La Opinion*: "As fascinating as the pianist's unlimited imagination was in 'What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?' and 'My Foolish Heart,' the work of Eddie Gomez, undoubtedly the best jazz double bass player to visit the country, also left an indelible impression."

"I did the house sound for Bill Evans's concert when he came in '73," said Carlos Melero, holding up the box containing the tape he made of that concert. "When Bill Evans came to Argentina with his new trio, he was already regarded here as an international jazz great.

"One eminent Argentine critic characterized Bill Evans's performance as '[b]eyond imagination; the three musicians were incredibly inspired.' As I always did, I recorded the concert. Evans's manager, Helen Keane, knew this, as she was sitting next to me. I'd already set everything up at the rehearsal. I taped a cable to the stage, ran it up to the sound booth and recorded the concert on a Revox tape recorder; I just set it on record and just let it go. There were no effects or EQ added, just the natural sound of the hall.

"I remember when Alejandro Szterenfeld, who produced Bill Evans's concerts in Argentina, told me that I was going to do the sound for this performance. He said, 'Carlos, we have to do a Bill Evans concert at 10:00 in the morning at the Gran Rex.' I had no idea how we were going to pull it off. That day, I can assure you, it was like three degrees below zero (26°Fahrenheit). 'Why is it so early?' I kept asking myself. It seems that it was a question of the trio's other tour commitments so if they didn't do it on that day and at that time, it couldn't have come off at all. You can imagine that on that cold morning they were all wearing overcoats, even in the green room. I remember the composer Domingo Cura and the great Argentinian jazz pianist 'Mono' Villegas were there.

"It was there that I first met Helen Keane, Bill Evans's manager-for-life. We had a friendly conversation. I explained my setup for the house sound and she told me: 'Don't put a monitor on the stage because if the musicians can't hear each other, that's something for them to sort out. They'll balance themselves by changing where they sit.' When they first sat down to rehearse, was the balance OK? It wasn't a perfect at first; they had to make a couple of little adjustments, but that's all.

"It was a marvelous concert. At one point, I was told he was going to play a bolero, 'Esta tarde vi llover' [This Afternoon I Heard it Rain] by the great Mexican composer, Armando Manzanero. I said to myself, 'It can't be!' I was a little nervous because it seemed out-of-character for a jazz musician to play it. Nevertheless, it was glorious. The whole audience murmured when it started and when it was over, they all had their mouths open. It was wonderful; impressive. Manzanero would have been thrilled."

"The first of Bill Evans's only two visits to Argentina was undoubtedly a momentous event for those of us who continue to love his incomparable art," recalled Carlos Carrazo, the noted photographer from Bahia Blanca. "It happened on a cold Sunday morning in June, 1973. I'd gone with my Philips Super 8 camera and positioned myself next to one of

the speakers that the sound engineer, Carlos Melero, had set up in a staircase leading under the stage. After the second encore by Messrs. Evans, Gomez and Morell — a magnificent version of 'My Foolish Heart' — Helen Keane demanded vehemently, 'No, no! Stop filming!' Of course, I ignored her and said, 'It's a souvenir.' Later, in the dressing room, we were able to chat with Bill who told us, regarding his influences, 'You learn a little from everyone.' Helen Keane announced, 'He's the greatest, the most influential pianist in jazz today.'"

"This event was the most important concert I ever saw in my life," observed Professor Oscar Daniel Chilkowski. Chilkowski remembered, "Each of us has our own rating scale but



Bill Evans, Nano Herrera and Helen Keane..
Gran Rex dressing room, Buenos Aires 1973.
Photo by Tito Villalba.

this Bill Evans concert was particularly memorable. The conditions were difficult — his hands must have hurt from the cold. Still, personally, my memory of the concert is that it was heavenly. Everyone agreed with me. I thought it was Evans at his best. The hall was full of musicians; all the musicians were there: Chico (Novarro), Ricardo Lew, etc. Like them, I was in the stalls, row 15. I could see and hear very well. It was wonderful luck.

"I was with my wife. I walked in and I saw Hugo Díaz, my friend, the great harmonica player. Hugo had an impressive jazz collection. He liked folkloric music but, like 'Negro' Eduardo Lagos and 'Cuchi' Gustavo Leguizamón, he also had a great appreciation for jazz. I greeted Hugo: 'What are you doing, man? How are you,' and as I walked toward my seat, Hugo responded with a comical comment, which I later repeated to Melero: 'I'm fine, but I'm still asleep.' He continued, 'But I brought a tape recorder and do you know what I'm going to do? If I fall asleep, then I'll listen to it at night at home,' and he laughed. He sat in the same row I was in. Very close. He was nodding, but he recorded it.

"The first piece, which began after a silence so quiet it felt as if it were practically coming from the grave, was a mystical, almost introverted version of 'Re: Person I Knew.' The audience was under his spell from the moment he started. It began wonderfully, but it felt a little unreal since it was different from the recording we knew, but it wasn't at all gimmicky or bombastic; it was complex, remarkable and elaborate before an expectant audience.

"Then, Evans set a quite different tone with 'Emily.' He began it as usual, with amazing swing. I couldn't control myself and I whistled at a climactic moment in the middle of the song. I felt an immediate catharsis and the audience responded to Bill Evans, applauding wildly. At the end of the theme, the audience went crazy; we continued whistling, shouting . . . it was delirium. The concert went from one success to another, one after the other.

"Evans was ready to leave, but the audience applauded so passionately that he stayed and performed three encores. When the main part of the program ended, I found myself crying like many others in the audience. We were crying because we thought Bill Evans had come out for the last time for a bow. But we were all surprised and thrilled when he came out again and sat down to give us more.

"I like to think he felt that there are no audiences like the one in Buenos Aires that morning. Musicians tell you, the level of emotion, sophistication and fanaticism among Argentinian audiences is legendary. We let him know how much we appreciated him. I understand that Bill Evans didn't like to play encores, but he played them for us and the last one, after thunderous applause, was a great 'My Foolish Heart.' I was drenched in tears.

"After the concert, the line to see Bill Evans moved very slowly. I saw Hugo Díaz. I looked at him. I was crying and he shook his head from side to side, which told me everything. Later, I met Melero and asked him if he recorded it and told him that Hugo had also recorded it.

"I'm sure I must have waited for forty-five minutes in that line. I'm not exaggerating. I left the Gran Rex with five hundred people still inside the hall. It was three or three thirty in the afternoon, but nobody could leave! Emotion killed us all."

"After a gig as a production assistant and interpreter for ABC Impulse on a Gato Barbieri album here in Buenos Aires, which Ed Michel produced, I went on my dream trip to New York," Nano Herrera remembered. "After my plans were set, it was announced that Bill Evans's debut concert in Buenos Aires was to be on the same day as I was leaving for the States. Luckily for me, the concert was in the morning, so I was able to witness the historic

event before I left. Others weren't so lucky, since some people misunderstood and thought the concert was to be at ten o'clock at night and therefore, they missed this impeccable concert. The theater was full of sleepy listeners, attending the concert of a highly sensitive pianist. It was the true embodiment of the expression, 'the early bird catches the worm.'

"Once the concert was over, in Bill's dressing room, I saw the small figure of the great pianist Enrique Villegas. Bill's producer and Helen Keane, who was also there. When finally, I had to leave for New York, my friend bassist Alfredo Remus took me to the Ezeiza airport. It was 1973, a violent time in Argentina. Not long before, Ezeiza airport, was the scene of another type of arrival, that of the former and future president Juan Perón, who returned from exile. The airport was the scene of a brutal fight among Argentine political factions when Perón returned.

"Truly, Bill Evans's music had brought those of us who heard the concert an inner peace. When I was in New York I went every night to the Village Vanguard to hear to him and we reminisced about the warm reception he and the trio received in Buenos Aires.

"I was with Bill Evans in his dressing room," recalled pianist Pablo Ziegler. "I'm lucky to have met him and to have been able to chat a little with him. That show was incredible. He had come with Eddie Gomez. A bassist of his caliber had never been seen here. I was sitting in the front row, so when the concert ended, I rushed to the dressing room to see Bill. I spoke with him about music, in particular, the music of the impressionists. Although my English at that time wasn't great, he was a fairly accessible guy."

"The two times Bill Evans came to Buenos Aires I was lucky enough to be here," bassist Alfredo Remus remembered. "I can place it because my son had just been born, in '73. That's when I became friends with Eddie Gomez and we hung out together. I was a good

friend of Nano Herrera's. We got together and Eddie would come to my house to eat. Bill was staying at the Hotel Claridge on Tucumán Street. Nano invited me to come and meet him and he introduced us. I remember we were in the lobby and first Helen Keane came down with Marty Morell, then Eddie Gomez came down and finally Bill Evans. That was the first time I saw him. It was a huge moment for me because for me, Bill Evans was the greatest musician and the one who showed me the path; the one who changed my life the most profoundly musically. Bill Evans is beyond good and evil. Nano introduced him to me in English. Bill Evans had a very intense personality; he was truly different. I think that's why he brought something so unique to his music. He stood there thinking to himself, looking a little lost and he repeated my name as if he was analyzing it: 'Alfredo Remus, Alfredo Remus . . . Ah! I have a record of yours at my house in New York.'

"That blew me away because, back then I had only recorded two albums. A little earlier, Horacio de Dios, an Argentine journalist, a very good friend of mine, had gone to the United States. He took a bunch of records of music from Argentina to Bill Evans as a gift. He knew I was a fan of Bill's, so among the records he brought Bill was mine. Horacio went to Bill's house and gave them to him. The amazing thing for me is that Bill remembered my album! I couldn't believe it."

Excerpted from the book, Grandes del jazz internacional en Argentina 1956-1979, by Claudio Parisi. Claudio Parisi is an Argentine architect, author and journalist in print and broadcast media. His book, from which this excerpt is taken, contains accounts of visits of such musicians as Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Bennett, Coleman Hawkins, Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Stan Getz, Oscar Peterson, Bill Evans, Charles Mingus and many others. Claudio Parisi is in the process of writing a volume covering the years from 1980 until today.

CARLOS MELERO ON RECORDING BILL EVANS IN BUENOS AIRES

In June, '73 Bill Evans went on tour in South America for the first time. Carlos Melero was a widely admired live sound engineer, pianist ("I beat on it a little") and producer. In 1973, when Evans came to Buenos Aires, Melero was working for producer Alejandro Szterenfeld's *Conciertos Gama* and he did the sound for the Bill Evans Trio's concert on June 24.

Here's Melero's account:

I was always a fan of the piano and knew the art of Bill Evans well. I related to his intellectual approach. Working with him was like a kid's dream. Tour producer Alejandro Szterenfeld told me about the unusual schedule: 10 AM. It was "done at that time or not done." On that famous June 24 at 10 in the morning, it was deathly cold. First, I had to assemble the sound system, choose and set up the microphones, do the sound check, wait for the musicians and Helen Keane (Bill Evans's manager and producer) who decided on the final location of the piano, bass and drums. We didn't use floor monitors. The musicians would correct any balance issues by situating themselves optimally.



Carlos Melero. Courtesy of the Carlos Melero family.

I chose two Neumann U87 microphones for the piano; for the bass an AKG D224E, which has two capsules at the ends, one for high-midrange and the other for low frequencies; and for drums, two AKG C451Es placed behind Marty Morell, above him, on both sides “of his ears.” The piano was a concert grand Steinway & Sons rented from Iribery House only for important recitals. That piano was perfect. My console was an excellent simple Studer-Revox C279 mixing board, which, to this day, I mourn the loss of. In rehearsal Bill Evans would play and look from the piano to the hall seeking approval from Helen Keane. When Helen gave me the OK, along with her first smile (which I thought was wonderful), I was breathing again without tachycardia. Then I had plenty of space and as for “asking for permission,” I didn’t. I concealed my open-reel Revox A-77 from Helen, who later asked me for a copy on a chrome tape cassette. The emotion I experienced that day was only comparable to that of another unforgettable encounter: Duke Ellington.

From a June, 2008 interview with recording engineer Carlos Melero conducted by Roque Di Pietro.

TITO VILLALBA

Angel Alberto “Tito” Villalba, was a jazz drummer and photographer. He was one of the most prominent drummers on the Buenos Aires jazz scene. He admired many jazz greats, but his undisputed idol was Buddy Rich.

Tito took up photography when he was very young. He studied photography at Fotoclub Marina and eventually established himself as a photojournalist.

He photographed top rock stars such as Queen and the Police, but his admiration for jazz musicians drew him toward most of the great jazz artists who appeared at



Bill Evans and Tito Villalba.
Courtesy of the
Tito Villalba family.

Buenos Aires theaters: Basie, Ellington, Mingus, Getz, Dexter Gordon, Bill Evans, Lionel Hampton, Chick Corea, Gary Burton, Michel Petrucciani, Keith Jarrett, John McLaughlin and Weather Report, to name just a few. Singers he photographed included Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Carmen McRae and others.

He mainly worked freelance, but his work was also featured in general interest publications such as *Caras* or *Noticias* magazine and rock publications such as *Pelo* and *Expreso Imaginario* magazines.

Tito Villalba passed away on April 22, 2019 at age 78.

QUITE AN ADVENTURE: EDDIE GOMEZ REFLECTS PLAYING WITH BILL EVANS IN SOUTH AMERICA

When I joined Bill Evans, I was a young 21-year-old. I had already left the Juilliard School, where I had been studying out of high school. When I was 20, I went on the road with Gary McFarland's small group: Gary, Gábor Szabó, Joe Cocuzzo and me. In the ensuing year, I continued to be busy, not with any one band, but just busy around New York. I was always doing something, a lot of different kinds of things. I had a family;

my son was barely a year old. I was trying to work and keep things going. I worked with Gerry Mulligan some, there were some performances with his quintet, which included Art Farmer and Dave Bailey. If I remember right, the pianist was Warren Bernhardt. We were performing at the village Vanguard. Back in those days, there were two bands there, it was the days of when there was a lot of need for jazz.

The village Vanguard had two bands every night. One was the band I was with—the Gerry Mulligan quintet—and the other was the Bill Evans Trio. Bill's bass player was Teddy Kotick. He was from Boston and he spoke with a real Boston accent. He played beautifully; a really good bass player. He recorded quite a bit with Charlie Parker, among others.

At one point during that week, Bill's manager, Helen Keane came up to me after Gerry's set and said, "Bill's in the backyard. He'd like to say hello to you," so I went back. I was really thrilled and a little scared, taken aback, to meet Bill. He'd always been one of my huge, huge idols. I said hello to Bill and Bill said hello to me. He was very kind, very soft-spoken and generous about what he said about me. And he said he hoped that we would get a chance to play together sometime. I was ecstatic to hear his words.

At the time, I was doing a lot of different things. I tried to play jazz as much as I could, but on occasion I would get hired to do something like filling in at the Copacabana. One night I was subbing at the Copacabana for the bass player with Bobby Darin. It was a Monday night and Bobby liked what I was doing behind him. It was first night of his second week and he asked me if I would stay the whole week. I said, "Yes, I'll be glad to." I was with Bobby at the Copacabana and at in the middle of the week, I got a call from Bill Evans. Bill gets on the phone and says, "Hi, I'm Bill." I had no idea that Bill Evans would be calling, and I say, "Bill? Bill who?" Well, I didn't know who Bill was. He said, "No, no Billy, Billy the Kid." He made a joke. Anyway, Bill asked me to go on tour with him



Bill Evans, Eddie Gomez and Marty Morell, 1972. Photo by Christian Rose.



just to see if things would work out with me and the trio. I said, "Of course," and then I had to go to Bobby Darin and quit that gig at the Copacabana because Bill's tour was happening pretty quickly. Bobby was very, very nice and understood. So that's how I met Bill; how we connected up on a musical plane and connected up on an airplane as well.

On the first tour, we went out to California. If I remember right, the tour started at a club in Tulsa, Oklahoma. We went to San Francisco and then we went to Shelly's Manne-Hole and it was at Shelly's, in between sets, that Bill sat down with me and said he really liked what was going on and wanted me to be a permanent member of the trio. Of course, I said yes. Immediately. I was thrilled. Ecstatic. I couldn't believe it. I couldn't believe that I was going to be in Bill's trio. I couldn't believe it the first moment I talked to him. And then when he called me. And when he first talked to me at the Vanguard to say hello, I was thinking, "What? Well, that's enough for me. Bill said some nice things about me and it doesn't get any better than that." And then when I started playing with him and it was working out and he asked me to join trio, it was all very surreal. To this day, it's still surreal.

The tour in South America was part of the ordinary course of the gig. By then, in '73, I'd been with Bill for several years. Helen would call and say, "Okay, we've got a tour coming up. It starts on such and such a date and it's going to be this long." This time, for the first time, it was South America. The tour promoter's name was Alejandro Szterenfeld. He was born in Germany but lived almost his whole life in Argentina. He promoted a lot of big classical concerts—Israel Philharmonic, the Concertgebouw and also jazz—Duke Ellington and us. Szterenfeld traveled with us.

I remember that the Teatro Rex, it had a real majestic old-time look to it; it was like one of those old theaters of the golden age; one of those theaters you could imagine

Eddie Gomez. Photo by Christian Rose.



seeing in a '40s or '50s movie. In my memory, it seemed like it was in black and white. Not that it was rundown, but you had a feeling that there's been a lot of music that had happened in that theater.

One big thing about being in South America that left an impression was that in that era, things were turbulent in the whole region. In Argentina Juan Perón had just returned from exile, which caused violence in the streets. There was a lot of political turbulence and that turmoil added to the feeling that being in this theater at that time, it was as if you were in a '40s movie. The tension was palpable. And later when we went to Chile, people were out in the streets throwing rocks. There was a revolution going on. There was a kind of foreboding, like the feeling at the end of the movie, *Casablanca*, that kind of tension. Dark things going on. This was all new for me. I'd never been to South America before. It was different, that overtone of turbulence. It seemed like there was calamity all around, so it was quite an adventure.

As for the actual music, when I listened to this recording, I was surprised at how good it sounded. Musically Bill always sounded really good, really great. I don't think it was so easy for Bill to travel. Maybe it was easier for me, but when Bill got on the bandstand, he was always at his best. Bill always sounded beautiful. He was always singing, not literally, but he was singing in his music. On this recording, he sounds great and the trio sounds really good. I always liked "Re: Person I Knew." I always like that one. That's sticks to me in my mind; that and "Emily," both of which we played.

The audience reaction was amazing. That leads me to think that this audience was really listening and really in touch; they really could fathom what Bill and Marty and I were doing, individually and as a group. It feels good to get a positive response as a

performer in anything you do. I don't know that it made me want to play any better — I was doing my best anyway — but it's nice to know that the audience is with you. It's a big deal. Sometimes when I see videos of Bill and the trio and when there's an applause, he hardly acknowledges that response. Really, all you can do is just be happy and grateful and know that they're with you. If you listen to some of those Village Vanguard recordings, there's all this great, innovative music going on, and you can hear people talking. At the same time, at the end of the tune, whatever the song is, there's this great applause. So the majority of the people are listening, but some aren't. You can hear the chatter. It's just incredible to me. But when you feel like the entire audience is with you and really tuned in, that's a marvelous feeling, it's special.

I have to say, I was glad to leave Argentina when we did; happy to move on. I just didn't know that Chile was also going through chaotic times. I remember the unrest in Chile even more dramatically, at least what I saw in the streets outside the hotel. Throughout the tour, there was always this feeling like, I don't feel safe here. Let's move on. Let's get out. Looking back, I don't think it was great to be an American down there; the influence that the United States in South America was being felt. But I just wanted to get on with it and let's get on an airplane and go to the next place. Mexico, where the tour started, was a whole different vibe. But Argentina and Chile were memorable in just that feeling of being caught up in a time of real turmoil and revolution.

Bill just sounds so good at this concert. It's a testimony. He's a great artist and incredible extraordinary artists like Bill, once they sit down at their instruments, they're totally immersed and nothing else is penetrating. There's nothing but the moment and giving oneself, one's soul, to the music. That's true of great artists general. Bill was very, very much like that. This concert is testimony to that because it would have been easy to get



Marty Morell. Photo by Christian Rose.

distracted. I remember times in some club or other when Bill played with an overcoat on because he hated their piano. It was just awful, but he sat down and played the piano anyway. It would be out of tune and in bad shape, but Bill was making a statement by wearing the coat, like saying, "I want out of here." Because of the upheaval we witnessed down there, that's kind of how I felt. Not musically, not during the concert, but afterward at the hotel, with all the violence going on. It was a constant feeling of wanting to move on to the next adventure and we did.

A MAGICAL CONCERT: MARTY MORELL REMINISCES ABOUT PLAYING WITH BILL EVANS IN BUENOS AIRES

I met Chuck Israels in the mid-sixties. Chuck was the first musician to mention my name to Bill back then. Arnie Weiss was Bill's drummer at the time and there was some talk of Arnie leaving and there was an outside possibility that I might be considered for the gig, but Arnie decided to stay.

So that was that; it didn't happen. I think that was 1964. So around that time, mid-sixties, I was one of the young cats on the scene in New York. I had gigged with Marian McPartland and Steve Kuhn and worked at the Half Note with Al Cohn and Zoot Sims. I was just gigging around town and I guess my name was getting around.

Eventually, the opportunity came up. Eddie Gomez called me and said that the gig was available, was I interested? and I said, "Man, that's the gig I want." So he said, "Well,

for now it's either between you or Jack DeJohnette." And I said, "Oh well, forget it man. It's taken," because Jack was much more known than I was at the time. And sure enough, Jack got the gig. But I was in the running. Bill had heard my name a couple of times—once from Chuck and then once from Eddie.

About six months later, I heard that Jack was leaving, so I called Eddie. I said, "Hey, what should I do?" He said, "Well, give Bill a call and talk to him." So I called Bill and he couldn't have been nicer. He put me at ease. Of course, I was a little bit intimidated to call Bill Evans, but he was great on the phone. And he said, "Come down to the Vanguard this Thursday and play." I was walking on air, and then I got to the gig and it happened to be a great night. Fortunately, I had listened so much to Bill's music over the years that I was really familiar with his book so anything he threw at me, I knew the chart, so it was a great night. And after the gig he said, "It was a great job, Marty. We think you're perfect for the gig. You'll be hearing from my manager."

The next day, Helen Keane called me and said, "Do you have a passport?" and they flew me up to Ottawa, Canada, to do a concert. It went well and that was it. I got the itinerary for the next tour and the rest is history.

I'd been playing with Bill for about five years when we went to South America for the first time. The first gig after Mexico City was in Rio. The trio was really coming to its own, so it was a great tour. The vibe was amazing. This concert in Buenos Aires happened on a Sunday morning at 10 o'clock. "What? You can do a concert Sunday morning at 10?" "Sir, we're so sorry but it's the only time we can get the theater." "Well, we're on tour, so you tell us when and where to play and that's what we do." We got there and the place was jam-packed. I think somebody said 3,000 people. It was filled to capacity. And it was just a great vibe. I remember from the first note, that concert was magical. It always stood out in my mind as one of the best concerts we played over the years that I was with the

trio. Bill played great and the trio really, really came together on that concert with great energy. And the audience was unbelievable. They were stomping and hanging on every single note that Bill played.

To my mind, it felt like Radio City Music Hall. It had that kind of grandeur. That's how I picture it. It was just massive. Huge. And yet, the sound was great. It felt really comfortable on the stage. It was one of those settings that it could be either great or it could be just horrible, but it turns out it was really terrific. Maybe playing Sunday morning at 10:00 AM had something to do with it. We were fresh. It wasn't at the end of the day like most gigs are. So it was happening, and the energy was really good. Bill was on fire and he played great.

We arrived in Buenos Aires a few days after Perón had returned after being exiled for 18 years. On the drive from the airport to the hotel, you could see along all the roads everywhere, it was strewn with litter. Millions of people had come out to welcome Perón back. There was a lot of political activity at that time all over South America. That was a few months before the coup in Chile where Allende was overthrown and killed. There was unrest all over South America at that time, so it was a historical time to be there.

When we were in Chile, one day, Eddie and I were leaving the hotel. We were going to a jazz lecture that we were invited to go to. We were just walking down the street and we heard all these people screaming and masses of people running and throwing rocks. I said, "Oh man, we better get back to the hotel." So we ran back to the hotel and just took cover in there. We waited until it died down. Then about an hour later, we made it to the lecture. That's the kind of thing that was happening at that time all over South America. When we got to Uruguay, it was on strike. There were no cabs, the banks were closed, everything. This whole country was on strike. It was an interesting time; a lot of political unrest in South America at that time.

This concert at ten on a Sunday morning was one of my favorite performances with the trio. The whole concert was great. At the end, I think it was the second encore, Bill walked off stage and he turned to me and said, "I don't know what to play. What should we play?" And I said, "Oh, let's play 'My Foolish Heart.'" So we went out there and he started "My Foolish Heart" and they just killed him with that. That was the beautiful version of "My Foolish Heart" on this recording.

To be on that stage was amazing. I don't think we'd ever heard anything like that in one of our concerts. We were astounded that it was happening Sunday morning. It was beautiful. It was uplifting and it was a very special concert all around. It's always stood out on my mind as one of those special moments in my years of working with Bill.

For me, Bill could do no wrong. Bill played great always. It was just trying to keep up with Eddie and Bill, those guys always kept you on your toes. So for me, it was always great. It was always an honor. It was always inspiring. And it just stands out, this particular concert in Buenos Aires just stands out in my mind. There are a few of them over the years. But that one really, really stands out as one of the highlights of that particular trio's performances.

It was a period of Bill's life when he was really content. He was about to get married. We had just gotten back from Japan, and I think financially, he was a lot more secure. And when we came back from Japan, Bill seemed like he was rich all of a sudden. They bought a brand-new car and he looked like he was living large. He got a new place to live and he seemed to be doing really well. He was in a really good space and I think all that contributed to his emotional state during this tour. It came on the heels of Japan and then we went down to South America. He was riding high. Bill was in a great space at that time; he was really in a good space and I think it's reflected in the recording.

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BEYOND GENRE, BEYOND STYLE, BEYOND GENERATIONS: RICHIE BIERACH ON BILL EVANS

I first saw Bill Evans when I was a teenager. I'd go to the Village Vanguard or the Top of the Gate to see Bill. I was already playing. I was young and inexperienced, but I was playing jazz. When I first heard Bill, he had the band with Chuck Israels and Larry Bunker, then Eddie Gomez and Marty Morell and then Eddie and Elliot Zigmund. I'd go to the Vanguard whenever he was there. I'd also go see Trane at Birdland and the Village Vanguard. Most days you could get in for three bucks.

When I first saw Bill, I'd already heard the records — *Portrait in Jazz* and *New Jazz Conceptions*. I was completely knocked over by those records because Bill had something nobody else had at that time — just an incredible sensibility about really great classical piano music — Chopin, Rachmaninoff, Debussy, Ravel, beautifully played. He had a great touch. Jazz piano is an interesting hybrid. You have guys like Bud Powell and Horace Silver and Monk with great percussive touches, very flat-fingered with a big sound, projecting like crazy, and then Bill, who was classically trained like Oscar, McCoy, Chick, myself and Herbie. Bill brought that sensitivity, that sensibility of fine classical piano playing into jazz. He did it most clearly on Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue*.

Two of Miles's records before *Kind of Blue* were *Milestones* and *'Round About Midnight*, amazingly great records with Trane and Red Garland. They were brilliant, swinging hard-

bop records. Miles, for his sixth record for Columbia says, "No. I want to do a ballad, medium-tempo record with no up-tempos, without Philly Joe, but with Jimmy Cobb, with Bill, not Wynton Kelly or Red Garland." This was an amazing thing at the time. 1959. It's a mysterious record. And here's the thing: We cannot imagine that record without Bill. He's all over the record. Bill, those chords, on "So What!" "Flamenco Sketches" was Bill's vamp. It had no melody. Bill wrote "Blue in Green," because he recorded it before. The incredible depth of Bill's sound, his touch, and the harmonic beauty of his voicings, his comping behind Trane, behind Cannonball!

Bill supported the soloists. He didn't jab them. When I first heard Bill's trio at age 20, I said, "What is this?" I was lost. The way they played "Stella by Starlight" or, "Re: Person I Knew," I couldn't follow the form. The bass wasn't playing four-four and the drums were very light. Where's the time? Of course, it was advanced to my young ears. But I knew I loved it because here's Bill, completely hunched over, at the Vanguard, playing the most beautiful, elegant, incredibly deep and poetic stuff. You think about the other piano trios, you have Oscar Peterson, "Night Train." It's a big band. Or Red Garland's trio, Ahmad Jamal's trio. These were great artists; iconic, big, tall trees.

But here comes Bill, incredibly sensitive. You feel him first. He goes right to your heart. He doesn't knock you over like McCoy or Oscar. Bill had something then that now, hopefully, we all have—he influenced me and Chick, Keith, and Bley. He had that sensitivity and that depth of expression. Bill was the real deal. He could swing and play great lines and he had great time and interesting rhythmic things with his over-the-bar phrasing, which really comes out in the trio.

I would never go talk to Bill in the '60s or early '70s. I was too shy and I didn't want to bother him. I didn't have anything to say, really. But in '76 I was playing a duo concert with Dave Liebman in Madison, Wisconsin. We opened for Bill's trio with Eddie and



Bill Evans and Richie Beirach in front of Beirach's apartment at 305 Spring Street in SoHo New York City in 1977. Photo by recording engineer David Baker.

Elliot. This was a big honor for Dave and me, because we loved Bill. It was first time I had a chance to meet him professionally. We get to soundcheck. Bill's not there. He's in the hotel watching *Mash*, having room-service dinner. I'm talking to Eddie. I knew Eddie very well. I knew Elliot. We'd played together. They were my brothers, my peers. Then Dave comes in. We do a sound check and Bill comes right over to me and says with that funny New Jersey voice, "Hey, Richie. Hey, man. How ya doin'?" Yeah, good to see you." Just very friendly, warm. It's crazy that he should have such a voice like a New Jersey cab driver, being such a cultured guy. Totally intellectual, but also totally on the ground.

I'm shaking his hand and he's making me feel good, just making small talk and I was just a fan. Then we come to the concert, and I figured Bill would never come to hear our set; he's probably in the hotel or in the dressing room chilling. And then I saw on the left side, there was Bill sitting in a chair. He came early before his set to listen to me and Dave. This was an amazing confidence builder. We're playing and I'm totally inspired. I'm nervous but I'm excited. Luckily, I'm old enough to be professional, so I didn't fold.

We played our tunes and finished up with "All Blues." I have a different reharmonization of it with the G7—I'm playing G major seven sharp five, then I have some other reharmonizations. Bill stayed for the whole set. He was smiling. After we finished, Bill came right over to me and said, "You went to some really interesting places on 'All Blues.'" I was thinking, "He's on the original recording!" From that point, we became friendly. Not so much friends at that point as friendly. He was really more of a mentor to me, an iconic figure. But we liked each other and we would talk.

He invited me to his house for his birthday party. It was a big party. I think he was 50 or 49. It was at the house in Fort Lee, New Jersey. He had a baby and a wife and all piano players from there—Warren Bernhardt, Andy LaVerne and everybody—were

there. I asked Bill, "Where's your piano? What do you have?" He smiled and took me to the special room. He showed me the beautiful Chickering piano that he learned on. Not that big, but what a sound! He played a couple of chords and it sounded just like Bill.

Later, Bill came to my house and we hung out the whole day. I had a beautiful rebuilt Steinway B from 1888, which didn't have a whole octave on top. He sat down and played and the funny thing is he sounded exactly like Bill on *my* piano. Having an identifiable sound is very important. Today you don't often hear people—especially with the piano—who have an identifiable sound. It's difficult to get a personal sound. With the saxophone you blow into it and it's instant. Same with the trumpet. But we have a delay. You hit the key, the key hits something else. But Bill had this amazing identifiable sound. So did Herbie and Bley and McCoy and Keith and Art Tatum.

Sound. That's what I hear with this album from Argentina. The music is great. It's great Bill. This is very relaxed Bill. He's not jamming, he's not banging, he's relaxed. He's not looking for the end of the gig to rush away. The first tune "Re: Person I knew" is 16 bars. It's a 12-bar, C minor blues with a four-bar extension, all over a C pedal. The simplicity of this tune and the brilliance of it is a springboard for improvisation. Staggering. It's a blues with a four-bar tag. Each chorus, the chords are changing suddenly over the C pedal. That's the thing. Bill is about subtlety, different levels of subtlety. He starts at a much lower volume than let's say McCoy or Oscar or Chick. He starts softer, but when he builds—and he always does—it sounds gigantic. My friend George Mraz played a couple of nights with Bill at the Village Vanguard. Eddie was sick and George, a master bass player, subbed for him. George played with everyone; Oscar and Herbie and the rest. I wasn't in town for the gig, so I asked him, "How was the gig?" He said, "Bill Evans is the loudest piano player I ever heard." I said, "What are you talking about?" At the Vanguard, the bass is in the crook of the piano right in between the

piano player and the drums. George said Bill got more sound from that piano—the projection of sound—than anybody he ever played with. Bill's chords were dense. The voicings were rich and you usually had a minor second in the middle of the chord. It created a rub in the voicing and makes it like a little bomb. Boom! Miles knew that. He knew what he wanted. *Kind of Blue*, I still listen to it for inspiration.

I would always go see Bill when he played the Vanguard. He would come over to my place in the afternoon at three o'clock, and we'd have a lunch and talk about piano things and philosophy. Then I'd go with him down to the gig and we'd hang out. It was a wonderful experience. I remember one thing he did that that shows his character. One time, he was sitting by himself at the Vanguard in the back. He looked terrible. He wasn't doing well in this life then. He looked thin. His face looked like a paper plate, a laboratory animal, had no color. He was sitting there drinking water. Some kid went over to him, very respectfully and said, "Mr. Evans, can I talk to you?" "Sure, come here."

He said, "I love your song, 'Waltz for Debby,' but I can't find the music anywhere. Could you write it out for me?" Bill without even thinking said, "Sure." He got some paper and a pen from the waiter, and he's writing out "Waltz for Debby" which is a long, complicated tune. He's doing it for this kid he doesn't even know. Just totally kind; more than kind. It was his nature to help people. That was Bill, and that's what he always was to me.

Eddie Gomez is an amazing musician in his own right. There weren't too many bass players that had that technique. Not just technique, but speed, fluency. Most bass players, even the good ones, were thumpers. They played in the bottom register with a good swing and a great sound. They weren't great soloists because solo was usually in the higher register, and there were usually intonation problems and fluency problems. Scott LaFaro was the first to change that because Bill wanted a dialogue with the bass and drums. He felt that was his path to try and develop that trio.

Scott LaFaro's death was tragic for Bill. The first trio with Paul Motian and Scott was where he hit his stride. *Portrait in Jazz*, was my favorite of those records. Just a perfect, amazing record. "Autumn Leaves," "Spring is Here." Incredible. Then when Scott died, Eddie came in. He was very young and he had those technical chops. Eddie loved Scott LaFaro and Mingus and Paul Chambers. We talked about it for hours. But he had this ability and the confidence of an old master right away, at 22, 23 playing with Bill. You could hear it on that record, *Simple Matter of Conviction* with Eddie and Shelly Manne. Amazing. Eddie kept Bill alive musically. Everything became new again, because you have Eddie playing the bass function—not avoiding the bass function—but then he would also have a musical dialogue with Bill and it wouldn't get in Bill's way. Eddie had great taste, a great sense of when to do it. He had amazing ears.

Bill loved it. Eddie brought out the best in Bill for a long time and brought him back from the edge when Scott was killed. I don't want to leave out Chuck Israels, because Chuck had the toughest position. Chuck came in right after Scott, and he did good. He played beautiful notes right in the pocket supporting Bill. But Eddie brought it to another level. Magical. No doubts. The tone. The sound. He had the chops, the fluency and had the soul. He was easy to play with, "easy" meaning he knew what the music demanded. Not what I wanted. What the music demanded in the moment. He just did it. He was happy to do it. If it meant playing time, in the low register for ten minutes, he was happy to do it. Not just happy, he was committed to do it. Then he would solo. He was a major soloist. If you're a piano player, and you have him in your trio, you could count on a major solo on every tune, which is amazing. Usually in an hour set, you have one or two bass solos for a good bass player, but Eddie, especially with Bill, could fill up at least four solos and maybe solo introduction.

With the bow, he was amazing. He had trained classically with Homer Mensch of the New York Philharmonic. Absolute mother with both. In-tune, strong sound. Also, big

similarity between Eddie and Bill. Big heart. Big, open, giving heart. I can't say enough about Eddie. I love him.

I didn't know Marty as well. We played together a couple of times. I love the way he played. He wasn't as explosive as a lot of the drummers that I like to play with Al Foster or Jack DeJohnette or Billy Hart. But he could swing and he was strong. He had a great simple ride. Very comfortable. Marty and Eddie, that was a great trio for Bill. And as a guy, Marty was great.

The thing about Bill is that his best stuff was with Miles, with the first trio with Scott, and the last trio; parts of the last year. The trio with Scott and Paul Motian and the trio with Marc and Joe, Bill reached heights that he never did before and he even reached places in the end, '79, '80 that he didn't even reach with Scott. Bill had a very heavy classical background; he could play Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, Prokofiev, all of them. In his playing of "Nardis" in the last couple of years, Bill did something that is so unusual for a serious artist. He became young again, musically. Bill took "Nardis" and with those ten-minute solo piano introductions that he did at the end and he turned them into mini symphonies exploring the tune in a way he never did before using the harmonic language of contemporary composers that he already had. This is a staggering event in any artist's life. It was only intro and then when Joe and Marc would come in, he would go back to playing like Bill, the great Bill, that language that he developed. But the content of these intros was amazing and they were all different.

I talked to him about this once in the back of the Vanguard. I said, "Bill, that intro on 'Nardis' was great. Did you ever think of playing like that with the guys? In that language?" He said, "No, I'm just a Tin-Pan-Alley tune player." Then he says to me, "You go ahead." Of course, I did; we all did. The language that Bill used in those "Nardis" intros he never used with bass and drums. Somehow, he couldn't make that leap. Imagine if he did.

This is a wonderful recording from Bill and Eddie and Marty. All you have to do is listen to the first three minutes, the way Bill starts. He creates this mood of intimacy and sensuality. He invites you in. He doesn't hit you over the head like Oscar, or Ahmad, or McCoy. He invites you. A lot of people want to be hit over the head and say, "Show me something." Bill comes at it a different way. But once he gets you, he gets your heart and your head and your stomach. He gets rhythm, he gets the deep sound of jazz piano. And even when he's swinging and burning out, it's still beautiful.

I always go back to his solos on *Kind of Blue*. Here's a true statement that I like to say: Bill's always playing a ballad, even if it's up-tempo, because it's lyrical and it doesn't go *against* the piano. He makes the piano sing. He was just an inspiration beyond words. Not only to me. Think about Keith Jarrett. No matter what he might say about being influenced. Bill influenced Oscar and Hank Jones and Flanagan, even guys who were older than he was because his innovation was so broad and so musical. It went beyond his generation. His influence was enormous. Also, not even so much in methodology or content, the substance of what he played was so intimate. Bill made you think he was playing right to your ear. It was personal. This is a very deep psychological effect people aren't even aware of. They don't even know it but they can feel it because it's like a magnet. Same thing happens with Mozart. People feel the music is speaking directly to them even if you're sitting with thousand people. That's a quality you can't teach. You just have it or you don't. But it's very clear. Miles too. And Trane. Think about the sound, just the sound. Trane's tenor and Miles playing "Funny Valentine" with the mute. It goes beyond genre. It goes beyond style. It goes beyond generations. That's the link where you have Debussy and Bach, Miles, Trane and Bill, Ravel, Rachmaninoff. The greats. These are things that are very easy to feel and difficult to explain.

Gran actuación del contrabajista Eddie Gómez

La música desolada y perfecta de Bill Evans en memorable sesión

"Este concierto lo vengo a grabar y después lo escucho a la noche, porque ahora estoy dormido". La frase del músico santiaguense Hugo Linares suena cruelmente oportuna el domingo a la mañana, poco antes de que el pianista porteñoamericano Bill Evans iniciara, en el cine Gran Rex de Buenos Aires, el único recital correspondiente al país dentro de la gira que actualmente cumple por Sudamérica.

Porque las primeras horas de una mañana fría no parecían el momento más apropiado para tomar contacto con la música concentrada y los climas angustiosos que, valiéndose de una libertad organizada, crean este excepcional improvisador y sus acompañantes, Eddie Gómez en contrabajo y el vibronista Marty Morell.

En embargo, una vez que los espectadores desmoronados terminaron de ubicarse y que los acomodadores atendieron los gritos con que llegaban hasta sus butacas a quienes se habían sentado erróneamente, toda que ocurrió cuando ya habían transcurrido dos temas, el trio logró vencer todas las resistencias impuestas por el horario y se comunicó con la sala casi repentinamente, con una facilidad que si estuviera tocando en transpase y en un pequeño lugar.

Desde más de 19 años, Bill Evans logró lo que ningún otro pianista blanco se atrevió jamás a intentar: modificar los conceptos expresivos de este instrumento dentro de una frase absolutamente personal y de una fenomenal intuición armónica.

Además de sus hallazgos en el piano estándar, este músico de 44 años que ahora usa el pelo hasta los hombros y trata de fingir una juventud juvenilmente favorable, también revolucionó la fórmula tradicional del jazz jazzístico, aquella descubierta por Nat Cole y perfeccionada por Oscar Peterson.

Todos los conjuntos musicales por Evans —el que presentó en el Gran Rex es hasta ahora el que más ha durado sin modificaciones personales— significan una liberación de los instrumentos musicales, que dejan de estar sometidos al estrellado del piano y crean un acompañamiento cohesionado aunque no necesariamente sometido.

El condicionamiento a determinadas pautas armónicas, a un juego de timbres muy particular y a una conducta instrumental gobernada por el virtuosismo técnico y el buen gusto son las únicas, fundamentalmente, restricciones que impone tocar en el trio de Bill Evans.

También son la causa de que sus interpretaciones transcurran en una perfección próxima al automatismo y de que la implacable inteligencia con que están concebidas las frases pareciera reaccionar para las escuelas jazzísticas que contienen que la informalidad sonora y el expresionismo violento sea la única manera válida de mostrar un mundo en crisis.

La obsesión de Bill Evans, Eddie Gómez y Marty Morell es un ritmo torturado, una especie de amarga melancolía que lo mismo transmiten en viejas melodías populares (Mi tonto corazón, Mi romance, Who Can I Turn To?, que en canciones románticas recientes ("Que vas a hacer en el resto de la vida", Esta tarde si flayer) o temas recientes del jazz (Canto canta mi corazón, Vale para Debbie, Peri-Scope).

La claridad expositiva, la admiración por el trabajo de sus compañeros y la confianza en la vigencia de ciertos modelos esenciales de belleza musical es lo que permite al trio de Evans redescubrir permanentemente su material con ansias nuevas. Además fue la causa de que el concierto del domingo no resultara un trámite, una obligación dentro de una gira fatigosa, que podría haber sido, sino una experiencia creati-

va de una intensidad que muy pocos músicos de jazz mostraron en sus fugaces ciclos portátiles.

Fue fácilmente como la demersura fantasía melódica del pianista —definitivamente formidable en "Que vas a hacer...?" y Mi tonto corazón— resultó el trabajo de Eddie Gómez, sin duda el mejor contrabajista de jazz que ha visitado el país.

Fue instrumentalmente portorriqueño de diminuta textura —apenas si llega a abarcar la caja del contrabajo cuando la abraza— aperi, con sus notas secas y un fraseo nervioso pero decidido, el oportuno contraste a la serena ternura de Evans. En cuanto a Marty Morell, modelo de discreción como todos los bateristas que han tenido el trio, pareciera que en lugar de sus escombros, es el viento que azaraba tambores y platillos.

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LA OPINION 1973

Commentary in *La Opinión* referencing the Bill Evans Trio concert on the morning of Sunday, June 24, 1973 at the Teatro Gran Rex in Buenos Aires. Titled "The bleak and perfect music of Bill Evans in memorable session," by the anonymous critic. He also mentioned the great performance of Eddie Gomez ("the best jazz double bass player to have visited the country") and Marty Morell ("model of discretion [...], it seems that instead of his brushes, it is the wind that caresses drums and cymbals"), and the enormous surprise of the public to attend a concert of this nature in the morning.

**Recorded live on June 24, 1973
at the Teatro Gran Rex
in Buenos Aires, Argentina**

Produced for release by Zev Feldman

Executive Producer: George Klabin

Associate Producer: Zak Shelby-Szysko

Recorded by Carlos Melero

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Extra special thanks to Evan Evans and
the Evans family, Eddie Gomez and
Marty Morell

While we were preparing these albums
for release, we were saddened to
learn of the passing of two wonderful
gentlemen who were intimately involved
in documenting Bill Evans's concerts
in Argentina, which we're presenting
here: recording engineer Carlos Melero
and photographer Tito Villalba. These
two albums — *Morning Glory* and *Inner
Spirit* — are dedicated to the memories
of Carlos Melero, Angel Alberto "Tito"
Villalba and Bill Evans.

2xHD Mastering: RENÉ LAFLAMME
2xHD Executive Producer: ANDRÉ PERRY

BILL EVANS piano | **EDDIE GOMEZ** bass | **MARTY MORELL** drums

1. RE: PERSON I KNEW (5:05)

B. Evans/Folkways Music Publishers, Inc.
(BMI)

2. EMILY (6:54)

J. Mandel, J. Mercer/Primary Wave Songs
(ASCAP)

3. WHO CAN I TURN TO? (7:58)

L. Bricusse, A. Newley/Musical Comedy
Productions (BMI)

**4. THE TWO LONELY
PEOPLE (7:37)**

B. Evans/Folkways Music Publishers, Inc.
(BMI)

**5. WHAT ARE YOU DOING
THE REST OF YOUR
LIFE (5:11)**

A. Bergman, M. Bergman, M. Legrand/Ole
Grand Films (ASCAP)

6. MY ROMANCE (9:03)

R. Rodgers, L. Hart/Lorenz Hart Publishing
Co., Williamson Music Co. (ASCAP)

1. MORNIN' GLORY (4:35)

B. Gentry/Northridge Music Company (ASCAP)

2. UP WITH THE LARK (6:52)

J. Kern, L. Robin/Universal Polygram
International Publishing Inc. (ASCAP)

**3. T. T. T. (TWELVE TONE
TUNE) (6:22)**

B. Evans/Ludlow Music Inc. (BMI)

4. ESTA TARDE VI LLOVER (6:15)

A. Manzanero/Universal Music-MGB Songs
(ASCAP)

5. BEAUTIFUL LOVE (13:34)

H. Gillespie, W. King, E. Van Alstyne,
V. Young/Haven Gillespie Music
Publishing Co., Warner Bros. Inc.
(Warner Bros. Music Div.) (ASCAP)

6. WALTZ FOR DEBBY (7:57)

B. Evans/Folkways Music Publishers, Inc. (BMI)

7. MY FOOLISH HEART (4:41)

N. Washington, V. Young/Ann Rachel Music
Corp, Catharine Ninen, Patti Washington
Music (ASCAP)



THE 2xHD MASTERING PROCESS

The 2xHD proprietary mastering provides a unique listening experience as the process digs deep in original recordings to bring out all hidden information, without altering the music in any way, uncovering and bringing out nuances, warmth, depth of field and even the air around the musicians.

The 2xHD logo on an album cover indicates that the recording was carefully selected and the high-resolution mastering was done using the 2xHD process. Created by producer/studio owner André Perry and prize-winning audiophile sound engineer René Laflamme in collaboration with several high-end audio equipment manufacturers, the 2xHD music remastering system combines the best of vintage analog with state-of-the-art DSD and DXD digital technology - a 'Back to the Future' approach. Each musical project is treated with individual attention to the selection of equipment.

Some of the top flight gear used in the process includes a selection of cutting-edge A/D and D/A converters to obtain the most natural DSD or PCM sound, such as a NAGRA-T tape recorder - modified with all tubes playback electronics (With its four direct drive motors and the tape sensor head, The NAGRA-T is one of the best transports ever made), a modified vacuum tube NAGRA HD dac (DSD) to make it possible to obtain real analog sound from a digital master and in some cases even battery power is used so



as to benefit from the cleanest power source possible. The 2xHD FUSION mastering system is powered by super capacitor power supplies with new technology that lowers the digital noise which is heard in the lowest levels, something that was not possible before. The resulting signal is then transformed to high resolution formats by recording it in DSD 256 kHz using the Merging Technologies' Horus A to D converter - which is also powered by a super capacitor power supply. All analog and digital cables are the finest state-of-the-art available today. Also used in the process are Pyramix Masscore (records all high-resolution formats, allowing for great flexibility), an Atomic Clock for re-clocking, and Siltech & Shunyata cables (all digital and analog cables are reduced to a minimum optimal length in the digital conversion and mastering system).

The particular open sound and feeling of having no ceiling to the music are obtained through the 2xHD high resolution transfer. In the case of an original analog master tapes, transfer to DSD 256. In the case of an original 96/24 or DXD/DSD master, transfer is made to analogue using cutting edge D/A converters.

2xHD is an accurate and musical mastering system, earning recognition from peers and from the specialized trade publications around the world.

[2xHD.com / Pure Emotion](http://2xHD.com/PureEmotion)

BILL EVANS MORNING GLORY

1. RE: PERSON I KNEW (5:05)

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BILL EVANS PIANO EDDIE GOMEZ BASS MARTY MORELL DRUMS

Photos by Tito Villalba.

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