The ’60s are usually characterized by either the peace movement or Sex, Drugs and Rock ’n’ Roll. But there was a darker side.

In 1963, the ’60s (the era, not the decade) began in earnest with the assassination of Medgar Evers and Governor George Wallace’s attempt to block the entrance of two black students at the University of Alabama in June, the Civil Rights March On Washington in August, the church bombing in Birmingham which killed four children in September and the assassination of President Kennedy in November.

By 1970, the ’60s showed no sign of slowing down. The White House and the F.B.I. were headed up by paranoid psychotics who after a full day of abusing power found time to work on their enemies lists. The Civil Rights Act had been law long enough to prove that one cannot legislate racism away. The debacle in Vietnam continued to claim a tragic number of American and Vietnamese lives. In May, four college students were murdered on the Kent State campus by the Ohio National Guard for walking by a peace demonstration.
Amid all this, there was Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll. The Youth Culture continued to flourish with new drugs to try, new partners to bed and new bands to check out. Rock & Roll grew up. Gone were the Liverpool pop groups that thrilled 13-year-old girls; Innovative bands like the Jimi Hendrix Experience, Cream, Jefferson Airplane and Sly & The Family Stone were emerging. This music organically gave birth to free form (underground FM) radio, which became widespread and was contributing to the eclectic tastes of the baby boomers coming of age. All kinds of jazz and blues were being woven into the mix by music junkies programming their own shows.

It was in this world that Miles Davis began shifting the center of gravity in his own music in 1968. For the next two years, his music would undergo radical changes, often on a monthly basis. Because only a small percentage of the music he recorded during those years was issued in a timely fashion, the public only heard the music in quantum leaps from "Mademoiselle Mabry" to "In A Silent Way" to "Bitches Brew." Even Miles’ opening theme "Directions" which he played every night in 1969-71 and which he recorded at a November 27, 1968 session (drummer Jack DeJohnette’s first with Miles) wasn’t issued until some 12 years later! Ian Carr, in his excellent 1984 tome Miles Davis: A Biography, wrote, "From August 1969 to August 1970, Miles had recorded enough material for two live double-albums (the Fillmores), a studio double-album (Bitches Brew), a studio single album (Jack Johnson), three sides of another studio double-album (Big Fun), and four tracks from another double-album (Live-Evil). It had been the most productive year of his career." In fact, hours of unreleased music from this period have emerged slowly since Carr wrote that 30 years ago.

On March 6 and 7, 1970, Miles’ sextet (with Wayne Shorter, Chick Corea, Dave Holland, Jack DeJohnette and percussionist Airto Moreira recently added as the sixth member) would take the stage
of the Fillmore East on Second Avenue and 6th Street in New York's East Village. Miles was booked at Clive Davis' urging in anticipation of the release of Miles' Bitches Brew, which pretty much scared the hell out of everybody at Columbia Records with its 20-minute tracks and dense, shifting textures. Clive had witnessed the strong connection between rock artists and the Youth Culture at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967. He thought that older artists' careers could be jumpstarted if they were made relevant to the underground rock scene. The resurgence of Johnny Cash and Miles Davis made him a prophet.

Both Fillmores (East and West) usually had three acts on each show. These March dates also featured Neil Young & Crazy Horse and the Steve Miller Band. If this sounds like an unlikely bill, bear in mind that Young and Miller were as different from each other as each was from Davis. Bill Graham liked pairing diverse acts and incorporating jazz artists into the mix. At the Fillmore West, he had put Rahsaan Roland Kirk on the same bill with Led Zeppelin and even more outrageously, Cecil Taylor opened for The Yardbirds. Charles Lloyd's quartet had played there a number of times and even made a live album at the venue.

Rock palaces had sprung up around the country with great frequency in 1967-68. Most were converted warehouses or old banks or movie theaters that could be easily gutted and outfitted with a stage, a sound system, bathrooms, DayGlo paint and a large floor where American youth were content to stand, nurture their buzz.
and listen to live music. The Fillmore East, however, was unique. It was built in 1925-26, when the Lower East Side was a low-income Jewish neighborhood, as a Yiddish theater. It was called the Commodore Theater and later was converted by Loew's into a movie theater. By the time Bill Graham bought the venue, it had returned to live performances as the Village Theater, where a series of jazz concerts that included John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman and Albert Ayler had been produced in December 1966. It's hard to imagine with such a bustling, creative rock scene, but before Bill Graham opened the Fillmore East on March 8, 1968, New York City had just a few cramped rock clubs like Café Au Go Go. Upstairs at Max's Kansas City and Steve Paul's The Scene. Bill wisely kept the seats, the lobby and marquee as he found them. The theater's capacity was almost 2700, but it felt more intimate thanks to the interior's warm colors, simple décor and straightforward seating design. The stage was big and high with a large backstage area. Where most

rock palaces had gaudy, psychedelic murals painted on the walls, Graham kept the theater's look untouched and hired Josh White to fashion a projected light show above the musicians on stage.

Josh told me recently, "The acts were contractually committed to perform in front of The Joshua Light Show. Remember at the time there was no other stage production. It hadn't been developed yet. We provided an exciting, appropriate background, which matched and complemented the music and enhanced the viewing experience. After the Fillmore found its audience, Bill knew he could sell out the weekend. This empowered him to meddle with acts less known to the audience. Bill loved his music, especially jazz and Latin. We were regulars on the bill; we did a light show for whomever he booked. We were respectful and tried to find a visual groove that worked with the artist. It was the early days of mobile eight track recording. The Fillmore had proven to be a good, friendly house to get a sharp live mix with a hot audience."
When the Fillmore closed, Josh would become a television director, working on, among other things, the revived “Mickey Mouse Club” for Disney.

The Fillmore East was a comfortable place for performers and patrons alike. It was a great place to hang out, and the staff, headed up by Bill’s second-in-command Kip Cohen and publicist Pat Luce, were all warm, friendly and helpful. Sometimes I had to run next door to Ratner’s Kosher Dairy Restaurant to get abused by a cranky old waiter just to remind myself that I was in New York.

Miles was reminded that he was in New York a few days before the March gig when he was arrested for the crime of being black and owning a red Ferrari (he was later exonerated of the charges). The band sounded great on what were Wayne Shorter’s final nights with the group. Columbia recorded it but nothing was done with the music until the second night’s sets were issued in 2001 as Miles Live At The Fillmore East (March 7, 1970). Most likely it was the group’s volume – which caught the recording engineers off guard and led to considerable distortion on the masters – that derailed release rather than the quality of the music. Backstage, I remember both Neil Young and Steve Miller being impressed about being on the same bill with Miles Davis. Young even expressed interest to me in having a feature story in Down Beat (I had done pieces on Jim Morrison and Buddy Guy among others in that magazine).
Vince Aletti covered the gig in the April 16, 1970 issue of *Rolling Stone*, concentrating on Miles' group and performance at the expense of Young and Miller. "Miles Davis' first appearance at the Fillmore East...was a welcome chance to hear the Real Thing in a hall that's given shelter to so much rock with jazz pretensions," he wrote. "He came out looking and sounding tight and steely-hard, knees bent and horn raised, like a heavy spring under tension."

It's been written that most of the audience milled around in the lobby when Miles played. I was there and I don't remember that to be the case. The Fillmore East audience was always open and appreciative. Certainly some abandoned their seats when Miles took the stage, but others did so when Neil Young took the stage. It was a revolving audience but always a respectful one.

Bill Graham would most often hang out in the front office during the shows so I don't remember witnessing Bill and Miles interact. But I always thought of them as very similar personalities. Each was a self-made success with a wry sense of humor and warm, gracious personality that could go ballistic in a nanosecond if he sensed bullshit, lack of respect or an indignity.

Miles recorded the music for Jack Johnson on April 7 and immediately left for San Francisco. From April 9-12, the Miles Davis sextet with Steve Grossman now in the saxophone chair played the Fillmore West with the Grateful Dead and Stone The Crows. The second night was recorded professionally.
by Columbia, but released only on CBS Sony in Japan in 1973 as *Black Beauty*. It was finally issued in the U.S. in 1997 as a two-CD set. Three previously unreleased tunes from the third night recorded by the Fillmore's sound system are included in this set.

Meanwhile, the unique and quizical *Bitches Brew* was released that same month. Wisely, Columbia put out an edited single of "Miles Runs The Voodoo Down" and "Spanish Key" to be radio-friendly. But the big exposure on radio came not from the jazz stations, which were dwindling at the time, but from underground FM rock formats. The coverage in *Rolling Stone* and appearances at the Fillmores were paying off instantly. The album created controversy among jazz fans, but it got a 5-star review in *Down Beat*. It would go on to become Miles' first gold album.

Miles Davis came back to the Fillmore East on June 17-20, this time with Keith Jarrett on organ as the seventh added member. Although Miles had favored recording with three keyboardists in the studio from late 1968 to early 1970, this was his first working band to feature two keyboards. He shared the bill with label-mate Laura Nyro who considered herself one of his biggest fans (she had sent flowers to his dressing room on the occasion of his first appearance there). Columbia Records was once again recording the gig, but this time producer Teo Macero and engineer Stan Tonkel were prepared for the band's rock n' roll volume, using safer mic-ing techniques and recording on an eight-track rather than a four-track tape machine, giving them greater control.
Having been exposed to *Bitches Brew*, the Fillmore audiences on these nights were fully engaged and enthusiastic.

The usually conservative John S. Wilson wrote in the June 19, 1970 *New York Times*, "The group that Mr. Davis is leading at Fillmore East is a compromise between his old quintet and his recording group...on Wednesday evening, this new combination seemed to give him the best elements of the smaller and larger groups - the expansive, atmospheric projection of the large recording group and the drive and bite of the old quintet. Mr. Davis was a commanding figure as he blew typically crisp, sputtering phrases, mixed with sudden, keen leaps over a rumble of exotic rhythmic patterns..."

This time the material did come out a mere four months later as a double album, *Miles Davis At Fillmore*. Teo edited each night from 45 or 50 minutes down to 20-minute medleys. The double album received mostly favorable reviews in the jazz, rock and trade press. The reviewer for *Variety* wrote, "the only label that can be placed on this program is that it's Miles Davis music."

Clearly Miles was happy about his group and the gig. In a September 3, 1970 feature in *Down Beat*, he previews the album for Dan Morgenstein and says, "Did you hear what Keith was playing behind me? He's a bitch. Chick, too...our music changes every month. We extend each other's ideas. I may start a phrase and not complete it because I hear something else behind me that takes me to a different place. It keeps going further."

In August, Gary Bartz replaced Steve Grossman and the band continued to appear in front of rock audiences, touring with Santana (the August 18 Tanglewood performance was recorded and issued on the *Bitches Brew 40th Anniversary Collector's Edition* in 2010). On August 29, the Davis group appeared at the Isle Of Wight rock festival; the set was issued in fragmentary form at the time but released in full on the massive

Miles returned to the Fillmore West from October 15-18 with Leon Russell and Sea Train and again on May 6-9, 1971 with the Elvin Bishop Group and Mandrill. He also played The Electric Factory in Philadelphia on November 15, 1970. The Electric Factory was one of the typical rock clubs with no seats. The audience would stand and sometimes dance when the bands played. But on this night, most of the audience sat cross-legged on the floor, mesmerized by the music.

Rock palaces were soon closing down in many cities and Miles returned to bookings at the larger jazz clubs like Washington, D.C.'s The Cellar Door and concert halls. But the Fillmore gigs had a lasting effect on Miles' career.

I was at his Beacon Theatre concerts on Manhattan’s Upper West Side on July 20 and 21, 1971 and his audience make-up was decidedly younger than it had been just two years earlier. On June 27, less than a month earlier, as a disc jockey on WPLJ, I was part of the live broadcast of the memorable final night of the Fillmore East, which ended at 5:30 in the morning.

By 1972, underground FM stations were becoming formatted and General William Westmoreland retired unscathed. Two years later, a busted and humiliated Richard Nixon crawled out of Washington. In 1975, the United States retreated from Vietnam none the wiser, and Miles Davis stopped making music for 5 years. The '60s (the era, not the decade) were officially dead.

Michael Cusca
January 2014
Producer's note:

This collection contains for the first time the complete concerts that Miles Davis performed at Bill Graham's Fillmore East in New York from Wednesday, June 17 through Saturday, June 20, 1970. When originally issued in October 1970 as the 2-LP set Miles Davis At Fillmore, the sets from each night were heavily edited so that each would fit on an LP side. On original release, the individual songs performed were not identified. (Each LP side was named for the night it was recorded, e.g. “Wednesday Miles,” “Thursday Miles,” etc.)

On this live set, each night has been newly remixed and made whole as it was performed. As a result we are able to present here an additional 100 minutes of unreleased music from those shows. Because the music was recorded on an eight-track tape recorder, each instrument has its own track and a new clarity emerges on these mixes with the group's inner workings laid bare. The remarkable grooves and movable parts of this music have never been heard with such clarity.

Miles performed at Graham's Fillmore West for the first time from April 9-12, 1970. CBS Sony originally issued the April 10 show in Japan in 1973 as Black Beauty. As bonus tracks for this collection we have included three songs from the April 11 show that were not performed at the June 1970 Fillmore East shows. Wayne Shorter's “Paraphernalia” and “Footprints” heard here on CD 1 are from the earlier acoustic repertoire, and Miles was to soon stop performing them. Additionally we include a version of “Miles Runs The Voodoo Down” (on CD 3), which was in the repertoire at the time but not performed during the June 1970 shows. These bonus tracks comprise an additional 35 minutes of unreleased music.

Miles was also presented by Bill Graham at Tanglewood in Lenox, MA on August 18, 1970. The entire recording of this extraordinary performance is available on Bitches Brew 40th Anniversary Collector's Edition (Columbia/Legacy 2010), and video is available for viewing through Wolfgang's Vault.

Miles rarely ever played encores. A rare instance where he did is the powerful version of "Spanish Key" from June 18, 1970 on CD 2.

Richard Seidel and Michael Cuscuna, 2014
CD 1
FILLMORE EAST, June 17, 1970
1. Introduction 0:04
   (Joe Zawinul)
2. Directions 10:24
   (Joe Zawinul)
3. The Mask 11:04
   (Miles Davis)
4. It's About That Time 10:45
   (Miles Davis)
5. Bitches Brew 13:41
   (Miles Davis)
6. The Theme 0:36
   (Miles Davis)

Bonus Tracks
FILLMORE WEST, April 11, 1970
7. Paraphernalia 11:02
   (Wayne Shorter)
8. Footprints 11:13
   (Wayne Shorter)

CD 2
FILLMORE EAST, June 18, 1970
1. Directions 10:10
   (Joe Zawinul)
2. The Mask 11:30
   (Miles Davis)
3. It's About That Time 12:04
   (Miles Davis)
4. Bitches Brew 11:57
   (Miles Davis)
5. The Theme 1:30
   (Miles Davis)
6. Spanish Key (Encore) 10:20
   (Miles Davis)
7. The Theme 0:28
   (Miles Davis)
CD 3
FILLMORE EAST, June 19, 1970
1. Directions 12:50
   (Joe Zawinul)
2. The Mask 10:00
   (Miles Davis)
3. It's About That Time 11:28
   (Miles Davis)
4. I Fall In Love Too Easily 1:48
   (Sammy Cahn-Jule Styne)
5. Sanctuary 3:25
   (Wayne Shorter)
6. Bitches Brew 12:38
   (Miles Davis)
7. The Theme 0:38
   (Miles Davis)

Bonus Track:
FILLMORE WEST, April 11, 1970
8. Miles Runs The Voodoo Down 13:20
   (Miles Davis)

CD 4
FILLMORE EAST, June 20, 1970
1. Directions 10:48
   (Joe Zawinul)
2. The Mask 11:15
   (Miles Davis)
3. It's About That Time 11:04
   (Miles Davis)
4. I Fall In Love Too Easily 1:21
   (Sammy Cahn-Jule Styne)
5. Sanctuary 3:21
   (Wayne Shorter)
   (Miles Davis)
7. Willie Nelson 9:22
   (Miles Davis)
8. The Theme 0:37
   (Miles Davis)
FILLMORE EAST, June 17-20, 1970

PERSONNEL:
Miles Davis, trumpet; Steve Grossman, tenor sax, soprano sax; Chick Corea, electric piano (left channel); Keith Jarrett, organ, tambourine (right channel); Dave Holland, bass; Jack DeJohnette, drums; Airto Moreira, percussion, flute, vocal.

Produced by Teo Macero
Recording engineer: Stan Tonkel
Remixed by Dave Darlington, Bass Hit Recording, New York City in 2012

All selections were originally issued in edited form on October 28, 1970, on the double album MILES DAVIS: AT FILLMORE (Columbia G-30038).

FILLMORE WEST, April 11, 1970

PERSONNEL:
Miles Davis, trumpet; Steve Grossman, tenor sax, soprano sax; Chick Corea, electric piano; Dave Holland, bass; Jack DeJohnette, drums, Airto Moreira, percussion.

All selections are previously unissued.