There's a particularly telling comment at the very start of the recording sessions that comprise this collection, just as the legendary Miles Davis Quintet prepares to dig into saxophonist Eddie Harris's boogaloo nugget "Freedom Jazz Dance." Harris had recorded the initial version in August 1965; within a year it had become a radio hit and a dance-party starter.

Now in late 1966, the Quintet—The Quintet, with Davis and saxophonist Wayne Shorter, pianist Herbie Hancock, bassist Ron Carter, and drummer Tony Williams—was preparing to cover the tune. One of the leading jazz ensembles of the day, known for carving out new musical territory where the hip, experimental edge of the music met the avant-garde, had decided to record a pop-jazz number? That in itself was news.

Davis (to Carter): "In the middle of it, slur it... Yeah. Slur all of it..."
[Carter plays] "Yeah."
[Davis counts off; Carter has trouble with the opening.]
Carter: "Ah...shit."
Davis: "Just play it... No, you don't have to slur all of it, play it."
Carter: "You said slur all of them. I don't know which ones to slur..."
Davis: "Well, slur... half of it." [Carter plays]
"No, that's too common, c'mon..."

Too Common. One could take that two-word complaint as a foundational credo and construct an entire musical philosophy upon it—Miles certainly did. "He was always that way," says Quintet member Wayne Shorter. "He'd be asking for something new, 'Play me something setting its own trend. Play a phrase that has a curve in it, that has an arrow pointing that way. Not this way like everyone else.'"
Avoiding the cliché. Wanting to be surprised. Needing the thrill of the unusual. To some it’s not a choice, it’s who they are—the energy they feed on. In music, that instinct can make for originators and lightning rods. In jazz, it can make for masters of improvisation and merry pranksters. Miles could be all of those, and under his leadership the members of the Quintet would follow. Throughout the tracks on this collection, one can feel his hand on the wheel, pushing and pulling, at times frustrated but enjoying the process, and always steering clear of the common.

*Freedom Jazz Dance: The Bootleg Series, Vol. 5* marks the 50th anniversary of both of his height when the collaborative energy of the Miles Davis Quintet was at its peak, and when the recording of the Miles Smiles album took place. To many historians and jazz scholars, this period captures the Quintet at its artistic apex; to some, it’s when they irrefutably proved themselves the greatest small group ever in jazz. The recordings comprising this collection come from six sessions between late 1965 and 68, catching the group rehearsing, recording and creating their legendary hands of the studio clock ticked away. In the case of the Miles Smiles dates, every note, comment, complaint, and laugh that was recorded is included—the first time the complete session tapes have been made available.

By 1966, the producers at CBS Records—most often Teo Macero—had learned to roll tape often and early on a Miles session. As a result, more than any other studio recordings up to that point in the trumpeter’s career, these tapes caught the Quintet in the process of creating their sound, of approaching material that most often they had minimal familiarity with; in most cases, they were meeting the compositions for the first time in the studio.

These tracks provide an informational mother lode—a term to which Miles might add two more syllables—and given what these tapes reveal, he’d be accurate. *Freedom Jazz Dance* offers much to hear and consider: rehearsals, so-called “false starts” (a try at the opening theme section of a tune without the subsequent series of solos), and incomplete takes that were caught on tape before the final take—the master—was recorded. Notably, and true to Miles’s “first thought best thought” philosophy, the Quintet recorded a minimal number of complete takes.

All the musical details and studio conversation before and between the takes are here too—the fingering and fumbling, the discarded ideas and new thoughts as one take progresses to the next. Random remarks, requests for playback, and “try this” suggestions. Jokes and off-color language.

All together, the tracks and text on *Freedom Jazz Dance* are the breadcrumbs with which one can retrace the Quintet’s musical path, minute by minute, take by take, as they created one classic after another. The music from these recording dates eventually contributed to five albums that define the Quintet’s legacy—*Miles Smiles*, *Sorcerer*, *Nefertiti*, *Miles In The Sky* and *Water Babies*. They are recordings that, upon their release, helped sway the course of improvised music on a global level. To this day and into the foreseeable future, the echoes of what the Quintet accomplished in those years still shape how modern jazz is studied, taught, performed, and recorded.

That’s saying a lot and there’s much jazz pedagogy to support the point, and so there’s been much music released from these years. What’s different about *Freedom Jazz Dance* is that, for the first time in Sony Legacy’s Miles
Davis box set series, the focus is equally on the process as the final product—the how of the Miles Davis Quintet, as much as the what.

Sessions vs. albums: by the time these sessions took place, Miles was well aware of the difference between the process and the end product. He'd been involved with all aspects of high fidelity music recording and its strategies and techniques—multiple takes, post-production editing, sound processing—for over twenty years. In fact the title of this collection derives from his correcting CBS Records producer Teo Macero who misidentifies the composition "Dolores" at one point as "Freedom Jazz Dance." "Naww, this isn't 'Freedom Jazz Dance,'" Miles retorts. "It's part of the 'Freedom Jazz Dance Series,'" he suggests. "[but] it isn't called anything yet."

Ron Carter smiles after hearing the session tapes. "Actually, I have three thoughts. First, the humor is really quite astonishing and again no one is offended if the comments are humorous or not. Try this: 'Don't do this.' Comments that might be thought of as pejorative in a different kind of environment. It's all kind of lighthearted.

"My second thought is how we were all laboring to make it happen with just these lead sheets [containing only a song's melody and essential harmony] that Miles had brought in, like that Eddie Harris tune, trying to find something to do with it. At this point in '66, we had started developing the old library with a new point of view, tunes like 'All Blues' and 'So What,' and we were all trying to make it work with this new material too. We were fighting to do that.

While playing at Chicago's Plugged Nickel in December of '66, in a fit of creative daring, Miles's sidemen—without informing Miles—had decided to play..."
"anti-music." As writer Michelle Mercer reports in Footprints, her biography on Shorter, it was Tony Williams who suggested to the others, "whatever someone expects you to play, [what if] that's the last thing you play?" It took a few sets before Miles caught on; it was as if a giant door opened and an entirely new Quintet was off and running. Shorter says:

"When I heard the guys dropping the bottom out from under me, I knew it was 'Go for it' time! I'd been in the band for a little over a year, and the next thing I know were way out there. It was like ... this is what freedom means."

What to call this new idea? It was freedom—from expected changes, progressions, harmonies, structures—but it wasn't free jazz, not of the same ilk that was coming out of the horns of Pharoah Sanders, Archie Shepp, Albert Ayler, and other "energy" players of that period. The Quintet never went totally out, turning their back on the rich, harmonic intelligence each had accrued, and significantly, they never lost a sense of swing. "Free-bop" is one term offered for this new approach, and it's as good as any other. They followed an in-the-moment logic of their own making, requiring a heightened diligence in being present, focusing, and remembering.

And communicating. As these session tapes show, the Quintet—legendary for their unstated, near telepathic abilities to speak with each other through the music on the bandstand—actually spoke very openly about musical ideas in the studio. To Carter, that was practically a job requirement.

"That's one of the reasons I think Miles picked this bunch of guys. We had a vocabulary, a way of finding words to express our musical feelings or to explain how we need this chord because the third is in the wrong place, or the voicing is in the wrong part of the piano. With Wayne, he'd speak in metaphors, examples that don't necessarily seem connected to the issue on the table. Our language skills were diverse and so different but we had enough in common that we didn't need Miles to be the translator."

Verbal acuity and individual intention notwithstanding, Carter admits to being "quite surprised to hear how we are able to develop 'Footprints' and 'Circle' and other songs with no previous gig experience exploring these tunes. But by this time we had developed a personality as a group, and we were each still developing our skill level—Tony kept playing drums better, Herbie was improving. Wayne had gotten his sound together, and I know I was getting a better sound all the time."

Carter laughs again, thinking specifically of "Freedom Jazz Dance." As it Happened, the bassist—then dipping his toe into the studio world as a session man—had been called to play on the Eddie Harris date when the original was cut. But with no rehearsals, he had no idea Miles would bring in the tune until he saw the lead sheet at the session.

"Too common? Great. man. So give me something else to play. Miles was trying, as was Herbie. Then Tony! But I couldn't hear what they were telling me to do because Eddie's version was still in my head, and it was a little more 'stable'—in a rhythmic sense and not in a bad way. But the groove Miles wanted was completely different. We got it. If I had been a little older I would have said, Hey man, do me a favor. Don't help me.
"But you know what? That's the third thing I hear in these sessions—the determination to get it right. You can hear that we all had some input of how best to make this song work. We weren't asking Teo to come out and help us fix this tune. We looked among ourselves for all the help we needed. We were five guys trying to make this new material sound like we had played it before."

To music fans and musicians, there's much to find and enjoy in the songmaking that unfolds on Freedom Jazz Dance. Here are moments and ideas that merit mention.

"Freedom Jazz Dance" is noteworthy for the manner in which Miles slowed down the tempo from Harris's original, giving it more room to breathe which in turn accentuates the funk feel he was aiming for—when the rhythm drops, it really drops. It's also fun to hear how the group divides elements of the tune's rhythmic pattern between them, such as the dark, phrase-ending piano chord on the downbeat. (Williams: "Mmm, that's nice, Herbie.") How Williams quickly dispatches the idea of using the chattering effect on the temple block after the first take. (Miles: "That's terrible.") Williams: "Sure is...put that in the trash.") And before Take 10, the discussion of various drumming styles of the day (Art Blakey, Elvin Jones) that Williams might call upon to satisfy Miles's request for an up-tempo snare pattern.

"Circle", the slow, smoky waltz featuring Miles on muted trumpet that opens with a Ravel-like flourish, is famous for being built on a reordering of the chords to a previous Miles composition "Dard Dog". It's arguably the most throwback tune on this collection ("Blue in Green", anyone?) and was hailed
as the best track on Miles Smiles by Dan Morgenstern in Downbeat. "Here is the essential Miles Davis, completely himself - and not a bit dated."

One can hear Miles getting testy with certain mishaps - in the studio as well as in the control room - as he tries not to lose the tune's ethereal flame. His colorful language starts to show, yet not without the humor. ("I need moral support. Teo," he says, then adds, "Immoral.") As well, Ron Carter points out that the tune really comes together with a particular four-note sequence on the bass that helps focus the energy of the tune. "By Take 5 I found it. I remember thinking, 'Wait a minute guys, I think I got it, I got something here. I couldn't find the right notes to make it work, get the right phrasing... 1, 2, 3, 4. Then I found it, and thought, There, that's us! It's F#, G, A and E. You can hear me looking for it at 00:14:00:20, 00:41.00:46, 01:16:01:21, 01:25:01:58..."

The grace and subtlety achieved in the solos by Miles, Shorter, and Hancock on the final take are among the highlights of not only this collection, but of the Quintet's history.

"Dolores" is all Shorter, in its wispy feel and fractured form. For a truly unusual structure - five sections through which the horns play, then don't, then return, then lay out, then return again - the Quintet gets it together in relatively short order. ("That's some funny shit," Miles cracks at the end of one take, and Hancock laughs out loud. Later Carter reminds Hancock that it's not AABA and the melody, but "AABC then the melody.") Jazz historian Bob Belden has written how on the final take the tune's structure was still challenging the group, until "Miles just repeats an opening phrase [and] it ends abruptly as possible, with a blast and salvo from Tony."

As Shorter told his biographer, "Dolores" was a custom fit for the Quintet, with built-in pockets of freedom to disengage from the song's form: "We were actually jamming with something called DNA in music in a song, so you just do the DNA and not the whole song - everyone took a certain characteristic of the song and you can do eight measures of it, and then you can make your own harmonic road or avenue within a certain eight measures." This is one of three tunes from Miles Smiles on which, at Miles's request, Hancock does not use his left hand, playing only single lines with his right and creating a harmonically freer sound; the other two are "Orbits" and "Gingerbread Boy."

"Orbits" is another Shorter composition, this one based on melodic snippets that cycle through the theme as well as the solo sections with a rhythmic pulse - urged on by Williams's Latin accents on the snare rim - that loosens, tightens, and loosens again. Through the rehearsal and first takes, one can hear Miles, in typical fashion, customizing the composition - gently applying the brakes to the tempo, whittling the opening theme, quieting William's cymbals - all to give the melody a more focused punch. He gets frustrated, laughs it off ("That's the way it goes!") and gets on Macero's case for "sitting up there and gigging."

"Footprints", which Macero announces first as "Wood Prints" and Shorter quickly corrects him ("FOOT!"), is the saxophonist's best-known composition, a personal take on a minor blues written to order for Miles though it first appeared on Shorter's Blue Note album, Addims Apple. His original version, with Hancock on piano, the tune has a more deliberate foot-tapping rhythmic stamp, squarely rooted in a soul-blues feel (which in fact Shorter's album was consciously aimed at). In the hands of the Quintet eight months later,
“Footprints” was played with a more dreamy air, and a slower, more elastic feel—“floating” as Miles would say. Another difference is the prominent, five-note bass figure that opens the tune and loops throughout—and which Carter handles with increasing feel through the rehearsal and takes. Bassist Reggie Workman and Hancock play it with extra emphasis on the Blue Note recording; in Miles’s version, Carter treats it more gently, by himself, and he proudly says, “I often have a difficult time making a bass line for a tune that satisfies me. But I found a way to play it across the neck, horizontally, but make it sound like I’m playing up and down the neck.”

“Gingerbread Boy” was written by saxophonist Jimmy Heath for his son Jeffery. Miles first heard the tune being played by Cedar Walton at the Village Vanguard. Heath explains: “Cedar was the one that called me and said Miles had come down to his gig. Then Miles himself called and asked me, Hey James, I like that song ‘Gingerbread’, send me a lead sheet.”

Miles’s request took place in early ’66; by May, the Quintet was performing the tune live, following the 16-bar theme as Heath had written it, then 16-bar solo sections (unlike previous versions in which the solos were based on a standard 16-bar blues form). For the recording, Miles added three distinctive trumpet smears in the last part of the theme (“I heard that today in my sleep,” he says on the date). Heath didn’t mind: “Miles added his touch, which is OK by me. That’s my longtime friend.”

Carter points to the master take of the tune as a solid example of the Quintet’s intuitive ability to take chances—in this case with the harmony—with their “mutual independence.”
"If you listen at 4:37 in the song, during Herbie's solo, you can hear me start playing a half-step higher than the key of the song. It shouldn't work, but because of what Herbie's doing, the contrast makes sense—it adds this nice tension at the right moment, even though it should be wrong. And then how do we know when Herbie's solo was ending? We hadn't worked out how many choruses before we played that last take—but when the time was right we all knew, you can hear me going, bum-bum, bum-bum, and the theme comes right on cue, man. Those kind of things happened a lot by that point in the band.

Intriguingly, Maccaro misidentifies the tune at the start as "502 D & D Blues", which can only be a reference to another tune on Shorter's Adam's Apple album, "502 Blues (Drinkin' And Drivin')", written by Jimmy Rowles. Why he should mention that title—perhaps Miles brought it to the date and was considering收录ing it?—remains a mystery.

"Nefertiti" represents a chronological jump of seven months from the previous six tunes on Freedom Jazz Dance, a period during which certain cracks in the Quintet were showing. Miles brought in Joe Henderson on second saxophonist—in effect alerting Shorter to the idea that he was replaceable—and as Carter took on more and more session work, the Quintet recruited a string of substitute bassists, including Richard Davis, Buster Williams, Eddie Gomez, Gary Peacock, Reggie Workman and Miroslav Vitous. "I was busy recording my ass off and making gigs," Carter remembers. We all had our own projects at the same time. Herbie was making records, Tony was getting a lot of ink, and Wayne was writing more and more. Also Miles's health was still kind of up and down. So we weren't seeing the band as a kind of Duke Ellington, longevity gig. We knew at some point it's going to stop."

The "Nefertiti" session brought the Quintet together to tackle another idea. In this case it was a Shorter melody that, in doing what they normally did—rehearse the theme then hit the record button and play it with the solo sections—suddenly a realization hits them all simultaneously.

Miles: "Hey man, why don't we make a tune... just playin' the melody, not play the s(los)...." [General laughter]
Williams: "Right, right! That's what we've been doing!"
Hancock: "That's what I've been thinkin' about."
Davis: "That's it, right?"

Rarely does such a historic light-bulb moment get recorded—with all the attendant energy and emotion. In this case a collective, child-like glee jumps off the recording as the band enjoys their shared discovery of a compelling approach to Shorter's composition: repeating the theme again and again, adding embellishments here and there, Williams taking a lead role, increasing and decreasing the energy—and forgoing the standard chain of solos.

Such a structure was not unheard of. "It's like a bolero," says Carter. He pauses and adds. "Actually, it's just like a passacaglia because the bass line stays the same for the whole piece. At that moment it seemed to me Miles decided to reverse the form and have the melody in fact replace the solos. Then we had an easier time playing that tune even though we were taking it pretty far out and if they could find the melody, I always knew where they were."

"Fall" is akin to "Nefertiti", recorded only a few weeks after—also written by Shorter, and also a performance based on a melodic snippet that keeps
rolling back on itself, with a Tony Williams press roll helping to divide it into sections. It's interesting to hear how Miles and Shorter develop their accom-
pompaniment to Hancock's improvisation, and how the original solo sequence began with Shorter. (Dig his improvisation on Take 2!) By Take 3 they've man-
aged to get through saxophone, trumpet and piano solos, and Miles opted to redo his solo; what was intended as an "insert" — a take of the latter section of
the tune to be later spliced to the front portion of a previous take — actually becomes the final take itself.

"Water Babies", from the same session as "Nefertiti", is another Shorter waltz-time tune that rapidly evolved as Miles felt his way through the begin-
nning, and Williams provided the beat on an open hi hat Charleston cymbal, adding a slight hint of Chinese opera gong. What's impressive on this tune
(and others) is how adept Miles was at deciding when the music was as good as it was going to get, when an acceptable master had been recorded and it
was time to move on to the next tune. Carter chuckles when asked how he knew. "I don't know why Miles would decide, 'OK, got enough, this is good,
let's try something else.' But it's always the right choice — you'd trust his judgment." Interestingly, though this version was recorded before Shorter
reunited with a semi-electric group on soprano saxophone for his 1969 Blue
Note album Super Nova, the world had to wait until '76 for Miles's version to
be released.

"Masqualero" is the one true, alternate take on Freedom Jazz Dance, no
studio dialogue or rehearsal, and unreleased until now. Speaking of knowing
when another try was needed, this track offers a compelling example at what
to many ears would have been a satisfactory take that Miles felt could be
improved on.
“Country Son” is an extreme rara avis in the Miles archive: a rehearsal featuring the Quintet’s rhythm section alone, working out the structure, flow, and most importantly, stylistic shifts (from moody, impressionistic and understated, to finger-popping and soul-infused, to hard-rocking, and then back again) of what would be a distinctive feature on the 1968 album Miles in the Sky.

“Blues in F (My Ding)” is an edit of a longer basement tape made by Miles in his Manhattan townhouse, offering an audio snapshot of a visit by Shorter that includes a left-handed offer of a hamburger...a drink...a steak. There’s a jocular reference to the fact that the Quintet needed to find a replacement for the bass chair: “Maybe Herbie will switch to bass!” (hence this undated recording is concurrent with the rest of this collection). Miles then offers a walk-through a blues he was working on, revealing how he developed on a musical idea—harmonically, rhythmically, stylistically (“That’s the way the Dixieland guys play it…”). Shorter does not recall this specific visit, as Miles often invited him over. He recalls the first of many visits, when “there was a sign on his door that said, ‘If you don’t have any official business here don’t ring the—and he had all these comic book cut-outs, letters, stars and moons and doo-doo, all that stuff. And then ‘Bell, do I ring the bell, I stood there and finally I knocked on the door quietly and he came and opened it. It was just like on this tape—Heyyy Wayne, how ya doin’?”

“No, man, let’s do it. Go ahead and do it.” I said, ‘I can’t play the piano. I just use it.”’ OK Wayyy—use it then!” Meanwhile he was cooking something and I was playing the chords to “Children of the Night.” Man, those are golden memories to me.”

“Play Your Eight” is a final word from Miles in the studio, speaking to Williams during the 1965 Los Angeles sessions for the Quintet’s E.S.P. album. What may first sound like an offhand quip—Miles having fun with the language of time signatures—carries greater meaning in the context of this collection. “Here are many ways you could play this tune,” he also seems to say, “But play it the way you feel it. Play your eight.” Carter says: “Miles trusted all of us, and each of us was willing to accept anyone else’s suggestions. We were just a collaboration of five guys trying to make a tune work.”

There’s an understatement. Freedom Jazz Dance: The Bootleg Series, Vol. 5 reveals the Miles Davis Quintet of 1966 to 68 to be, among its various accomplishments, a paragon of collaborative spirit and collective development. The multiple takes and creative sparks and words and laughter are the evidence, and serve as signposts of a historic musical journey that lasted until the very end. The quartet could be no more. There are indications that Miles—much as he had done with other sidemen in the past, like John Coltrane—did not want to break up the Quintet and offered to keep certain musicians on retainer.

No matter. Carter says, “One of the reasons I wasn’t interested in being put on salary by Miles, I wanted to find out about other music, man. I was already learning what his band was about, but my feeling was the more I work with other people, try out other musical environments, the more I could bring back to Miles’s band and it wouldn’t cost him anything. Also, his work wasn’t as continuous as it would have liked, I couldn’t afford to take off days. I had a wife, two kids, bills, I had responsibilities and I had things I wanted to do.”
Carter was the first to leave the Quintet in 1968. Hancock followed not long after, and Williams in '69. A year later, Shorter departed as well. Music ensembles—no matter how legendary or significant—are volatile, fragile and eventually finite things. Carter is clear about his need to move on but admits that, "after we made these recordings, I just wish we had had a chance to play some of them at a gig to find out what else we could do with them. I mean we did 'Gingerbread Boy' and 'Footprints' a lot, but we were still fooling around, we were onto something—we finally had figured out how to make this sucker work and having a great time with this discovery. That was the time to take 'Dolores' or 'Freedom Jazz Dance' or 'Circle' out and make them really jump off the page."

The number of "what-if's" and regrets a band carries after its demise is directly proportional to the timelessness of its music. The music of the Miles Davis Quintet has no apparent expiration date.

"You know we asked Miles a couple of times to play some of these tunes," Carter adds. "He'd just say, 'Naah—that's too hard.' He was conducting the band. He was the maestro. You don't tell the maestro what to do."

- Ashley Kahn, August 2016

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1. Freedom Jazz Dance
   (session reel) 23:15
   (Eddie Harris)

2. Freedom Jazz Dance
   (master take) 7:14
   (Eddie Harris)

3. Circle (session reel) 11:45
   (Miles Davis)

4. Circle (take 5 - closing theme used on master take) 5:23
   (Miles Davis)

5. Circle (take 6 - released master take excluding closing theme) 5:48
   (Miles Davis)

6. Dolores (session reel) 5:17
   (Wayne Shorter)

7. Dolores (master take) 6:23
   (Wayne Shorter)

8. Orbits (session reel) 14:44
   (Wayne Shorter)

9. Orbits (master take) 4:41
   (Wayne Shorter)

10. Footprints (session reel) 5:48
    (Wayne Shorter)

11. Footprints (master take) 9:52
    (Wayne Shorter)

12. Gingerbread Boy (session reel) 3:44
    (Jimmy Heath)

13. Gingerbread Boy (master take) 7:45
    (Jimmy Heath)

14. Nefertiti (session reel) 11:05
    (Wayne Shorter)

15. Nefertiti (master take) 8:04
    (Wayne Shorter)

16. Fall (session reel) 19:44
    (Wayne Shorter)

17. Fall (master take) 6:40
    (Wayne Shorter)

18. Water Babies (session reel) 8:33
    (Wayne Shorter)

19. Water Babies (master take) 5:09
    (Wayne Shorter)

20. Masqualero (alternate take/take 3) 7:59
    (Wayne Shorter)

21. Country Son (rhythm section rehearsal) 7:43
    (Miles Davis)

22. Blues In F (My Ding) 7:29
    (Miles Davis)

23. Play Your Eight (Miles Speaks) 0:06
    (Miles Davis)

Transcriptions of studio dialogue for all songs are available at
http://www.plosin.milesAhead/Disco.aspx?id=BootlegFJD
Miles Davis, trumpet
Wayne Shorter, tenor saxophone
Herbie Hancock, piano
Ron Carter, bass
Tony Williams, drums

Original sessions produced by Teo Macero, except “Fall” produced by Howard A. Roberts

“Circle,” “Orbits,” “Dolores” and “Freedom Jazz Dance” were recorded in that order on October 24, 1966 at Columbia 30th Street Studio, NYC. Recording engineer: Frank Laico.

“Gingerbread Boy” and “Footprints” were recorded in that order on October 25, 1966 at Columbia 30th Street Studio, NYC. Recording engineer: Frank Laico.

“Masquerade” was recorded on May 17, 1967 at Columbia 30th Street Studio, NYC. Recording engineer: Stan Tonkel.

“Water Babies” and “Nefertiti” were recorded in that order on June 7, 1967 at Columbia 30th Street Studio, NYC. Recording engineer: Stan Tonkel.

“Fall” was recorded on July 19, 1967 at Columbia 30th Street Studio, NYC. Recording engineer: Stan Tonkel.

“Country Son” was recorded on May 15, 1968 at Columbia Studio B, NYC. Recording engineer: Frank Laico.

The master takes of “Orbits,” “Circle” (take 6 with the ending of take 5), “Footprints,” “Dolores,” “Freedom Jazz Dance” and “Gingerbread Boy” were originally issued in that sequence on Miles Smiles (Columbia CS 9401), released on February 14, 1967. The master takes of “Nefertiti” and “Fall” were originally issued on Nefertiti (Columbia CS 9594), released on January 15, 1968. The master take of “Water Babies” was originally issued on Water Babies (Columbia C 34396), released on November 12, 1976.

All other material is previously unissued.
Box Set Produced for release by Steve Berkowitz.
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Executive Producers: Erin Davis, Cheryl Davis and Vince Wilburn, Jr.
Mixed from the original 4-track tapes and Mastered by Mark Wilder,
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go to milesdavis.com
On the track sheets for these sessions, it is indicated that the original title for "Orbits" was "Mass Confusion" and the original title for "Country Son" was "Seeing Thru".

"Blues In F (My Ding)" (CD 3, Track 7) was recorded c. 1967 at Miles's home in New York City: Miles is talking and playing piano, demonstrating a blues he was working on to Wayne Shorter. The bass player that Miles refers to as "Eddie" at 0:27 of this track is Eddie Gomez, who was one of several bass players who subbed for Ron Carter on Miles's live gigs during this period.

"Play Your Eight" (CD 3, Track 8) derives from the January 22, 1965 session for Miles's E.S.P. (Columbia CS-9150), recorded at the Columbia Studio in Hollywood, CA, and produced by Irving Townsend. It is Miles speaking to Tony Williams on the talkback in the control room while Tony is recording the drum solo introduction to the song "Agitation".

For best results—and in order to get the most out of the studio dialogue—we suggest listening to this set on headphones.

—Steve Berkowitz, Michael Cuscuna and Richard Seidel, August 2016