

CHARLES LLOYD BIO (Short)

Charles Lloyd was born March 15, 1938 in Memphis, Tennessee. From an early age, he was immersed in that city's rich musical life and was exposed to jazz. He began playing the saxophone at the age of 9. Pianist Phineas Newborn became his mentor, and took him to Irvin Reason for lessons. Lloyd worked in Phineas Sr's band, and from the age of 12 worked as sideman in the blues bands of B.B. King, Howlin' Wolf, Johnnie Ace, Bobbie "Blue" Bland, and others. His closest friend in high-school was trumpeter, Booker Little.

In 1956 Lloyd moved to Los Angeles and earned a Master's degree from the University of Southern California. During this period Lloyd played in Gerald Wilson's big band and he also had his own group that included Billy Higgins, Don Cherry, Bobby Hutcherson, and Terry Trotter. Lloyd joined Chico Hamilton in 1960, though the band was known for playing "chamber jazz" at the beginning of Lloyd's tenure. His influence as a composer and a player quickly pushed it in a more progressive post-bop direction especially after Hamilton asked him to be the group's "music director." Lloyd's key musical partner in the band was Hungarian guitarist, Gabor Szabo. In 1964 Lloyd left Hamilton's group to join alto saxophonist Cannonball Adderly. During this period he recorded two albums as a leader for Columbia Records, *Discovery* and *Of Course, Of Course*; his sidemen were other young musicians including Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, and Tony Williams. Through 1965-1969 Lloyd led a quartet with pianist, Keith Jarrett, bassist, Cecil McBee (later, Ron McClure), and drummer, Jack DeJohnette. The quartet's music was an interesting fusion of straight-ahead post-bop, free jazz and world music which quickly caught the attention of both jazz fans and critics. They also achieved a fair amount of crossover success with young rock fans and became the first jazz group to play at The Fillmore. Lloyd's album *Forest Flower, Live at Monterey*, became a big commercial hit, largely on the strength of the title track. Other noteworthy albums include *Dream Weaver, Soviet Union, and In Europe*, all on Atlantic.

In 1970, after the quartet disbanded, Lloyd moved back to California and entered a state of semi-retirement. He practically disappeared from the jazz scene, but can be heard on recordings with the Doors, Canned Heat, and the Beach Boys. Occasionally during the 1970s Lloyd played with The Beach Boys; both on their studio recordings and as a member of their touring band.

Upon being approached by pianist, Michel Petrucciani in 1981, he resumed playing actively for two years and then retreated again. Upon his recovery from a near death experience in 1986, Lloyd decided to rededicate himself to music. He started performing occasionally in 1987 & 88. In 1989, Lloyd reestablished an active touring schedule and began recording for ECM Records. The first ECM release was *Fish Out of Water* with Bobo Stenson, Palle Danielsson, and Jon Christensen. The ECM recordings showcased his sensitivity as a ballad player and composer. Between 1993 and 1997 the quartet included Bobo Stenson, Anders Jormin, and Billy Hart. In 1998 the Billy Higgins replaced Hart, and Lloyd alternated between Stenson and John Abercrombie. Noteworthy albums include *Canto, Voice In The Night, The Water Is Wide* (featuring Brad Mehldau, John Abercrombie, Larry Grenadier and Billy Higgins). Geri Allen replaced Stenson, touring and recording with Lloyd between 2001 and 2006 (*Lift Every Voice* and *Jumping the Creek*). Drummer, Eric Harland joined Lloyd's quartet in 2002, following Billy Higgins' passing, and is also a part of Lloyd's Sangam trio, formed in 2004 with tabla master, Zakir Hussain. They continue to perform and record together.

Lloyd maintains an active recording and tour schedule. His "new" quartet with Jason Moran on piano, Reuben Roger, bass and Eric Harland, drums is well matched with Lloyd's creative and adventurous spirit. They have two recordings on ECM, *Rabo de Nube* (2008) and *Mirror* (2010).