**Bill Evans**

**William John** "**Bill**" **Evans** (pronunciation: [/ˈɛvəns/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA_for_English), August 16, 1929 – September 15, 1980) was an American [jazz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jazz) pianist and composer who mostly worked in a trio setting. Evans' use of impressionist harmony, inventive interpretation of traditional jazz repertoire, [block chords](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Block_chord), and trademark rhythmically independent, "singing" melodic lines continue to influence jazz pianists today.

Born in [Plainfield, New Jersey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plainfield,_New_Jersey) in 1929, he was classically trained, and studied at [Southeastern Louisiana University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southeastern_Louisiana_University" \o "Southeastern Louisiana University) and the [Mannes School of Music](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mannes_School_of_Music), where he majored in composition and received the Artist Diploma. In 1955, he moved to New York City, where he worked with bandleader and theorist [George Russell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Russell_(composer)). In 1958, Evans joined [Miles Davis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miles_Davis)'s sextet, where he was to have a profound influence. In 1959, the band, then immersed in [modal jazz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modal_jazz), recorded [*Kind of Blue*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kind_of_Blue), the best-selling jazz album of all time.

In late 1959, Evans left the Miles Davis band and began his career as a leader with [Scott LaFaro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scott_LaFaro) and [Paul Motian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Motian), a group now regarded as a seminal modern jazz trio. In 1961, ten days after recording the highly acclaimed [*Sunday at the Village Vanguard*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunday_at_the_Village_Vanguard) and [*Waltz for Debby*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waltz_for_Debby_(1961_album)), LaFaro died in a car accident. After months of seclusion, Evans re-emerged with a new trio, featuring bassist [Chuck Israels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chuck_Israels).