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New Memoir, "Oceans of Time," Charts the Rhythmic Course of Jazz Master Billy Hart

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Cymbal Press is thrilled to announce the publication of *Oceans of Time: The Musical Autobiography of Billy Hart*. This book represents an important contribution to the jazz canon and is sure to be enjoyed by devoted fans, musicians, and educators alike. The book will be launched July 8th at the Village Vanguard to kickoff Mr. Hart's six-night residency at the legendary New York City venue.



About the Book

Few drummers have traversed more stylistic terrain or logged more miles behind the world's greatest jazz musicians than Billy Hart. Now, in *Oceans of Time: The Musical Autobiography of Billy Hart*, the NEA Jazz Master opens up about his extraordinary life in music, in collaboration with pianist, critic, and longtime bandmate Ethan Iverson.

Spanning his early years in D.C.'s fertile postwar jazz scene, historic gigs with Shirley Horn, Jimmy Smith, Wes Montgomery, Herbie Hancock, Miles Davis, and McCoy Tyner, plus his more recent work as a bandleader and educator, *Oceans of Time* offers musicians and aficionados rare insight into the inner life of a drummer who has shaped the sound of modern jazz.

Rich with storytelling, the book reveals Hart's reflections on race, rhythm, mentorship, and meaning—alongside deep discussions of “the D.C. beat,” the elusive quality of swing, and what it means to live a musical life. Appendices include tributes from fellow drummers, discographical highlights, and a look at Hart's signature drum setup.

As Iverson writes in the preface, “Billy Hart connects the glory years of jazz to the latest contemporary concerns.” This book is the ultimate insider's guide to jazz drumming.

"Want to know what jazz is really about? Listen to Billy Hart." —The Detroit Free Press

Advance Praise for *Oceans of Time: The Musical Autobiography of Billy Hart*

"What a story. What a storyteller..."

– Bill Frisell, guitarist

"Fast-paced and insightful, Billy's vast musical universe shines brightly..."

– Fred Hersch, pianist

"His beat is entrancing, passionate, exuberant, emotional, full, and complete – and it all comes out in this book."

– Buster Williams, bassist

"...It's a fascinating picture of the jazz world he's a part of and helped develop. He chronicles the music he continues to excel at after so much time. Read this book! I couldn't put it down."

– John Scofield, guitarist

"Billy Hart's Oceans of Time is an extraordinary gift."

– Mark Stryker, author of *Jazz from Detroit*

About the Authors

Drummer **Billy Hart** is a musical legend, comfortable in diverse contexts ranging from straight-ahead to avant-garde to pop. In the '60's and '70s Hart bore witness to many major changes in the music while working in the bands of Shirley Horn, Jimmy Smith, Wes Montgomery, Pharaoh Sanders, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner, and Stan Getz. In time he was the drummer of choice for many others, appearing as a sideman on more than 600 recordings; he has also released a dozen albums as a leader. In 2022 Hart was named a NEA Jazz Master, in 2023 he received the Living Legacy Jazz Award from Mid-Atlantic Arts, and in 2025 was part of the first group of musicians awarded the Jazz Legacies Fellowship from the Mellon Foundation and the Jazz Foundation of America.

Pianist **Ethan Iverson** has known Billy Hart three decades and has been part of the Billy Hart quartet since 2003. Iverson was a founding member of The Bad Plus; since leaving that group, Iverson has released critically-acclaimed albums on ECM and Blue Note. Iverson also has a long-standing relationship with modern dance choreographer Mark Morris. As a writer, Iverson has published significant criticism in *The Nation*, *JazzTimes*, *The New York Times*, and the Culture Desk of *The New Yorker*, in addition to posting frequently on his Substack, *Transitional Technology*.

About Cymbal Press

Cymbal Press is an imprint of Constructing Modern Knowledge Press specializing in books about the arts and artists. Cymbal Press' first book was voted *Jazz Book of the Year 2021* by the Jazz Journalists Association. We recently published *The Jazz Omnibus*, a collection of this century's finest jazz writing and photography selected by the Jazz Journalists Association. CMK Press is an independent publisher of influential books by creative educators and artists with more than a twenty titles published in nine languages.

Oceans of Time: The Musical Autobiography of Billy Hart by Billy Hart with Ethan Iverson

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