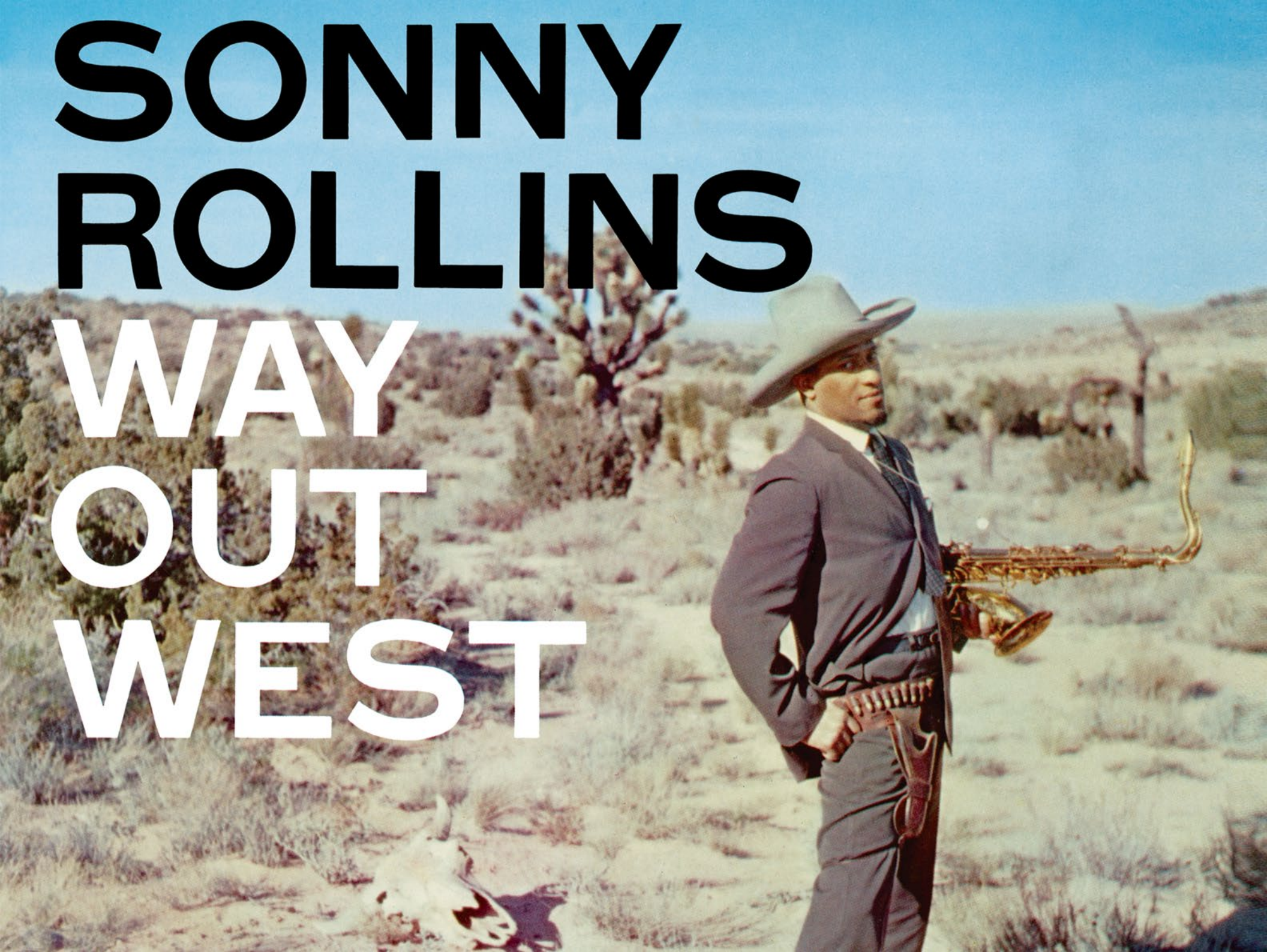
SONNY ROLLINS

WAY OUT WEST



Sonny Rollins Way Out West

SONNY ROLLINS, *tenor sax;* RAY BROWN, *bass;* SHELLY MANNE, *drums.*

ORIGINAL ALBUM

I'M AN OLD COWHAND *by Johnny Mercer. (Time:5.42.)*

SOLITUDE *by Duke Ellington, Eddie De Lange & Irving Mills. (Time: 7.52.)*

COME, GONE *by Sonny Rollins. (Time 7.53.)*

WAGON WHEELS *by Peter De Rose & Billy Hill. (Time: 10.12.)*

THERE IS NO GREATER LOVE *by Isham Jones & Marty Symes. (Time 5.16.)*

WAY OUT WEST *by Sonny Rollins. (Time 6.32.)*

Recorded at Contemporary's studio in Los Angeles March 7, 1957. Produced by Lester Koenig. Sound by Roy DuNann.

ALTERNATE TAKES

MONOLOGUE: YOU GOTTA DIG THE LYRICS (Time: 0.43.)

I'M AN OLD COWHAND (alternate version) *by Johnny Mercer. (Time: 10.09.)*

DIALOGUE: TITLING "COME, GONE" (Time 0.51.)

COME, GONE (alternate version) *by Sonny Rollins. (Time 10.31.)*

THERE IS NO GREATER LOVE (alternate version) *by Isham Jones & Marty Symes. (Time 5.16.)*

WAY OUT WEST (take 1) *by Sonny Rollins. (Time 7.33.)*

WAY OUT WEST (alternate version) *by Sonny Rollins. (Time 6.40.)*

Tracks 1, 3, 5 & 6 are previously unreleased. Tracks 2, 4 & 7 originally released on OJCCD-337-2, a compact disc reissue of Way Out West.

SONNY ROLLINS, THE LEADER OF and vital force behind this album, is a modest, sensitive, sincere and deeply probing young man who is just beginning to be uneasily aware that critics and musicians are hailing him as the new jazz voice, a "colossus," the most creative horn man in jazz, "boss of the tenors," the new Bird, etc.

The general public is not yet aware of Rollins; indeed there are many jazz fans who have yet to hear him. His present appeal is to those whose level of jazz awareness makes them able to respond to direct, honest music which makes no concession to popular tastes.

Rollins himself realizes that he is not yet at the height of his powers. He knows his style is still in the process of developing, and so his awareness of his present pre-eminent position in jazz is tempered by a sense of how much he yet has to learn, and a feeling of responsibility to the many people who have expressed their faith in him.

Rollins arrived at a decisive moment when the modern jazz revolt of the 1940's had spent its initial impetus, and it was possible not only to re-evaluate the basic jazz tradition, but to build upon it. An indication of this is the critical linking of Rollins with *both* Coleman Hawkins, who typifies the warm, melodic swing era style of the 1930's, and Charlie Parker, who invented much of the searing, brilliant, elliptical, iconoclastic style of the "bop" period of the 1940's.

Describing Rollins' style in *Down Beat,* May 2, 1956, critic Nat Hentoff wrote: "Rhythmically, no tenor today swings any more authoritatively than Sonny and few are as sustainedly driven as he. His ideas erupt from the horn with bullet-like propulsion. Melodically, his conception is angular, and his lines are heatedly jagged rather than softly flowing. His tone also is hard, though not harsh. Rollins is close to nonpareil at the kind of playing he obviously prefers."

Today, a year later, Rollins is playing with a fuller, warmer, more swinging tone, as sonorous at times as a cello. His melodic ideas are more flowing; while he fragments the time structure, and achieves variations which are marvels of spontaneous improvisation, he does not allow the listener to forget the original melody.

Sonny's attitudes toward other musicians reveal his own musical tastes. "Hawkins was the most important influence when I first started to play. His way of improvising interested me. He had a very wonderful way of playing the chord changes. At that time, though, I was most interested in whether it was swinging . . . of course I always did like Pres . . . I liked Byas, too. Parker has a conglomeration of all musical ideas I like. He was a big help to me in many ways. I'm in the same tradition, yet different. I'm not analytical. I can only emphasize

Rollins at Contemporary

that I'm still in a developing stage. The sax is a new instrument, there's lots to be done. Actually, I'm trying for new things all the time. I'm changing, even from night to night on the job . . ."

ROLLINS WAS BORN SEPTEMBER 7, 1931 in New York City. Unlike most jazzmen, he had no real interest in music as a boy. His mother started him on piano lessons when he was 9, but they didn't take. Sonny rebelled, and after a month or two the lessons stopped. He went to P. S. 89, then to Benjamin Franklin High School from which he graduated in 1947. In 1944 he took up the alto sax, partly influenced by a cousin who played it. "My mother," Sonny recalls, "scraped up the money and bought me one." He studied music at high school, and at "a 25¢ a lesson place," but while he liked jazz, he was also interested in drawing and did not think of music as a career. In those days Coleman Hawkins was his idol. The great tenor saxophonist lived in the neighborhood, and Sonny remembers waiting on Hawkins' doorstep for him to come home "just so I could see him." Sonny still has a photo which Hawkins autographed to him in 1945.

In 1947, after finishing school, Sonny joined the union and began "gigging" around New York. "I wasn't certain about music, though. My interest began to pick up at the time I made my first records in the latter part of 1948 with Babs Gonzales. After that I recorded with J. J. Johnson, Fats Navarro, and Bud Powell. I also started writing. J. J. recorded my first tune, *Audubon.*

"In 1950 I went to Chicago for the first time, and worked with Ike Day, a great jazz drummer who died about four or five years ago. He was tremendous, and working with him was a great experience. I grew to love the city. When I came back to New York I didn't really work steadily, just recordings and gigs around town until 1951 when I played with Miles Davis for about six months. I still hadn't made up my mind music was to be my life's work. But other people were serious about it; they seemed to appreciate my playing, and that helped me become more serious about it."

In the next few years Rollins' reputation began to grow; and he began to study music, all kinds, not just jazz. In 1954 he went back to Chicago to work at The Beehive, and remained there until he joined Max Roach's Quintet in November 1955. He remained with the Roach group until May 1957 when he left to "go out on my own." Now extremely serious about music, Sonny plans to "find a place to settle, study, and work for my bachelor's degree in Music."

WHILE THIS ALBUM IS UNUSUAL in many ways, it was not done for an effect, or to be different. It was a spontaneous result of Rollin's first trip West as a member of the Max Roach Quintet in March 1957. For some time he had wanted to record without a piano and the desire was reinforced by the fact that Ray Brown was in Los Angeles with the Oscar Peterson Trio, and Shelly Manne was also in town with his own group. If you had contemplated playing with only bass and drums, you would be hard put to find two better men than Brown and Manne, each an acknowledged master of his instrument, and each a clean sweep winner of the No. 1 spot in all three 1956 jazz popularity polls (*Down Beat, Metronome* & *Playboy* magazines).

Since all three participants were working nights, and both Manne and Brown were involved in studio recording calls during the day, the session was called for 3 a. m. The three had never played or recorded together before, and yet, gradually as Sonny produced the various tunes he wanted to play, and Ray and Shelly became involved in working them out, the three men achieved a total rapport. At 7 a. m., after four hours of intense concentration, during which they recorded half the album, and should have been exhausted, Sonny said, "I'm hot now." Shelly who had been up for 24 hours, said, "Man, I feel like playing." And Ray, who was equally tired, and had a studio call for the afternoon, just smiled. It was at this midway point they made *Wagon Wheels.* Then they tackled Sonny's uninhibited, imaginative original, which in honor of the occasion, he calls *Way Out West.* They had found their groove: both tunes (over sixteen minutes of music) were recorded within a half-hour.

It was Sonny's idea to do *I'm An Old Cowhand* and *Wagon Wheels,* good examples of his special gift for finding jazz in what first appears unlikely material. For him, music is not a thing apart from his life. Like many another New York youngster who had been raised on cowboy movies, he delighted in the idea of being "out West" for the first time, and it was entirely consistent with Sonny's personality to express how he felt about being West in music. During the rehearsal of *I'm an Old Cowhand* he said he wanted a "loping along in the saddle feeling . . . I want that cat out on the range all the way," he explained to Shelly. "If we can't get it, we'll do something else." Later on, during the session, when he produced the sheet music for *There Is No Greater Love,* he read the words to Ray and Shelly and explained that while blowing he liked to think of the words and what they meant. "It helps me," he said. And so *No Greater Love* becomes more than just a pretty ballad; even Sonny's tone becomes fuller and warmer, and the performance communicates on a highly emotional level.

Because of the unorthodox instrumentation which leaves each musician so completely exposed, the listener has a rare chance to hear the sound and feel the personality of three unique jazzmen, two acknowledged masters, and a new star who stands on the threshold of a great career.

By LESTER KOENIG
June 6, 1957

The cover photo of Rollins is by William Claxton, internationally known West Coast jazz photographer.

Let's begin with the cover, since almost everything about it reveals another aspect of Sonny Rollins' fertile, rangy imagination.

In the 60 years since Rollins recorded *Way Out West*, few album-jacket photos have risen to the level of this one in all its quirky, audacious splendor. In a parched corner of the Mojave Desert, not so far from Los Angeles, Rollins stands tall in a suit and tie but wearing a ten-gallon hat, holster, and gun belt; on his left hip he cradles his "weapon," the tenor saxophone (as accurate in his hands as any six-shooter). In front of the sagebrush, a cow's skull on the ground mimics the angle of Rollins' bemused gaze. The staging, perfectly captured by the gifted photographer William Claxton, was Rollins' idea. Slightly bizarre and wholly hilarious, it could be seen as a subtle rebuke to those critics who described his tone and phrasing as "sardonic." But this photograph had a much simpler purpose.

As Rollins told author Eric Nisenson in the 1990s, "I loved the old cowboy movies I saw as a kid, Tom Mix and Ken Maynard and Hoot Gibson. They were never about shooting Indians or anything. There were always a lot of bad guys in those old movies, but they were never extravaganzas about beating up the Indians. They used to call them two-reelers, and most of them didn't even have music. Just the sound of hoofs. I still love to watch those . . . ." So when offered the chance to record in Los Angeles during his first-ever trip to the west coast – on tour with the Max Roach Quintet, in which he starred – Rollins decided to give this album a Western theme, as a nod to his early cinema preferences.

This theme encompassed more than a clever photo shoot. Turn over the album cover and the first thing to grab your eye is the box containing the song titles, which surely surprised and probably puzzled record buyers in 1957. There, next to a couple of Rollins originals, a classic Ellington ballad, and a familiar standard, you find two songs that never quite made their way into the general jazz repertoire. Both of them originally appeared in movies of the sort that Rollins loved as a kid: "I'm an Old Cowhand," from a 1936 Bing Crosby film called *Rhythm on the Range*, and "Wagon Wheels," from a 1934 film of the same name. They speak to Rollins' penchant for redeeming unexpected material that, on the surface, struck most musicians as too square for the hip demands of the hard-bop '50s. And taken together with the front-cover photo, they illustrate the sometimes playful, sometimes deadpan humor that has infused Rollins' music from the start.

But the most important information on the back liner is the instrumentation listed just below the title: tenor sax, bass, and drums. No piano. *Way Out West* heralds the true arrival of the "power trio," a format that would feature prominently in Rollins' own work, on disc and in concert, for the next decade, and which has since become a staple of post-bop jazz. (Only the swing-to-bop saxophonist Lucky Thompson had previously recorded in this format, and he did so on only one song, in early 1956.) *Way Out West* represents the first concerted effort to open up the prevailing methodology that had guided jazz since the late 1920s. As such, it provided a crucial foundation for the movement to liberate jazz from its harmonic shackles – what author John Litweiler has called "the freedom principle," which would soon give us the "free jazz" of Ornette Coleman and the avant-garde explorations of Cecil Taylor and John Coltrane.

Much of American history was marked by westward expansion, as pilgrims and settlers headed for wide-open spaces and fewer restrictions than you'd find in the cities east of the Mississippi. When Horace Greeley popularized the exhortation to "Go west, young man," he codified the idea that "west" equaled freedom and opportunity. And that's exactly what Sonny Rollins had on his mind during his first California trip.

Speaking to me from his home in New York, in the summer of 2017, Sonny Rollins further elaborated on the genesis of the piano-less trio heard on *Way Out West*. "I played with great piano players," he said, "so it's not about that. It's about my feeling that I want to create my own motif. [In the trio] I could have the rhythmic support of a drummer, and then I could have the harmonic support of a bassist. But that's the thing about it: It wouldn't be more intrusive on what I might be playing. It's still very freeing to just have the bass providing harmonic content."

Jazz had seen some other trios with unusual lineups for their time. The pioneering tenor soloist Bud Freeman recorded with piano and drums but no bass, a setting also used by Benny Goodman in his early trios and quartets. Gerry Mulligan led a piano-less quartet as early as 1952; in that case, the leader's baritone sax shared the front line with trumpet, which allowed them to create counterpoint and two-note chords. The slightly larger "gypsy jazz" combos of the 1930s also operated without piano (or drums, for that matter); they did feature two or more guitars, however, which allowed for plenty of tightly packed harmony behind the soloists.

But the idea of forming a trio (the smallest unit that you would call "a band") that lacked any chord-producing instrument? And producing an entire album with such a band? Unthinkable. Jazz had evolved into a genre in which the sequence of chords that underlie the melody – the harmonic backbone of a song, a.k.a. "the changes" – would supply the structure for the improvisations that followed. Because of their capacity for playing chords, the piano or guitar carried the weight in this process. Who would ever consider jettisoning that?

Rollins would. And for him, it wasn't even that big a leap.

"I knew about Gerry Mulligan's piano-less group," Rollins told me. But Mulligan didn't really influence the decision to record without piano; rather, it was Rollins' experience working in Miles Davis' quintet in the early 1950s. "We would do something they would call 'stroll,' which means the piano would lay out. And that certainly influenced my own appreciation for that way of communicating." In other words, Rollins had already worked in the context of a trio with bass and drums; it's just that this had occurred within the larger context of the era's leading quintet.

"But also, it goes back to when I first got my saxophone – my mother bought me an alto saxophone when I was seven years old – and I went in the room, and I started playing. I never had any lessons or anything like that; I had heard music, I loved music, loved Louis Jordan and a lot of jazz music I had heard growing up. So I was in the room playing. I often wish I had a tape of what I played," he said as an aside. "But the point is, playing alone was always a pull to me."

(In 1957, Rollins had not yet recorded the several extended cadenzas or a capella improvisations that would fuel his reputation, and his legendary solo-saxophone concerts were still to come. But the roots of all that are here, in a Harlem apartment in the mid-1930s, where a young boy played without accompaniment and liked what he heard.)

Shortly after graduating high school, and before he joined Miles Davis' working band, Rollins often played small gigs here and there with the sort of trio that Bud Freeman had led: piano and bass but no drums. "In fact," he said, "the first time Miles heard me play, we [a drummer-less trio] were playing opposite his group as the intermission band at a place up in the Bronx, the 845 Club. So the smaller instrumentation grew out of the fact that I felt very comfortable trying to create a lot of the work that the other instruments would provide.

"And I was always a guy that went out and played by myself. I used to go to the park; my wife and I used to go to Martha's Vineyard, and I'd always take my horn and play out by the ocean" – a forerunner of the nighttime practice sessions on the Williamsburg Bridge that would add to his mystique in the early '60s. "I always liked to play alone. I don't know why. It was always an attraction to me to create my own music," he said, quickly adding, with characteristic humility, "What I mean by 'create my own music' is getting into the creative space of music in the universe. I'm not doing it myself; I'm getting what's there already. But I enjoyed creating my own background, foreground, motif – everything myself. And that is an integral part of my playing solo."

Of course, once you've trained yourself to take the role of all the instruments in a quartet – to play as a one-man band, essentially – forming a "quartet" that lacks piano doesn't seem like such a stretch.

This 60th-anniversary edition of *Way Out West* contains the six master takes originally issued on LP in 1957, plus the three alternate takes that appeared on the CD reissue in 1988, and a few extra surprises – notably the alternate take of "There Is No Greater Love," and the first of the three takes Rollins and company made of the title track. Both of these have never appeared on disc before now.

We also have two wonderful snippets of studio chatter.

In the first of these, Rollins is apparently speaking to the album's producer, Lester Koenig of Contemporary Records (the visionary west-coast label whose catalog brims with classic bop and cool jazz recordings, as well as the Ornette Coleman album mentioned above). He pleads his case for appending a potentially risqué title to the tune released as "Come, Gone," pointing out that he has based the melody line on the old standard "After You've Gone"; so why wouldn't "After You've Come" make a fine new title? "It doesn't have to be suggestive if you don't think that way," Rollins says, in the high-pitched, back-of-the-throat voice that sounds so incongruous next to his dark, sweeping tenor tone. ("Are you going to give this album to your pastor?" quips Ray Brown. You can hear Rollins relax into a grin.) And in the run-up to recording "I'm an Old Cowhand," Rollins recaps the smart and funny Johnny Mercer lyrics, the better to convey to his cohorts the mood of the song; they never sounded better.

Six decades of accolades for this music obviate the need to parse the tracks one by one. Yes, the clippety-clop rhythms laid down by Shelly Manne – another New York City native, who like Rollins "had never roped a steer 'cause I don't know how" (in Mercer's words) – remain an inspired reminder of "the sound of hoofs" from those old movies. Brown's counterlines on bass are unflaggingly propulsive and unfailingly melodic; they have yet to grow old. Rollins' pure command of saxophone technique continues to amaze. His saxophone glows with promethean fire and protean tone, from its cello-like lower register to the yearning high notes. Add to that

the ability to vary his articulation from phrase to phrase: the staccato swordplay against satiny legatos; the smeary glissandi that transcend the boundaries between individual notes to capture the malleability of the human voice.

And as one listens to Rollins sketch harmonies via just a few perfectly placed notes within his superbly lyrical improvisations – and then alter those harmonies by inserting a flat or a sharp into the onrushing line – his statement about playing all the parts themselves becomes thrillingly vivid. Although he shares his coda on "Wagon Wheels" with Brown and Manne, portions of it exemplify the art of playing completely alone. On the other hand, the ballads distill the collaborative nature of jazz to a spare, fine essence; here, even the saxophonist's improbably rapid flurries still convey the tenderest emotions.

In the age of search engines, any listener can find plenty such commentary and analysis. But the previously unheard tracks deserve a bit more attention. On the newly discovered version of "There Is No Greater Love," Rollins' solo has a bouncy edge and sprightly exuberance: It's full of fireworks, keening upper notes, and memorable fillips. You can see why he would have chosen the originally issued master, which banks the fire ever so slightly to arrive at a more nuanced and expressive statement; the motifs develop more fully, especially in the last minute, as Rollins repeats the two-note phrase that welcomes the final diminuendo. But we can nonetheless count ourselves lucky to have the alternate; even when compared with the master take, it qualifies as a minor masterpiece.

The inclusion of all three takes on "Way Out West" offers the chance to trace the entire lineage of this track. The initial attempt (Disc 2, Side B, track 2) runs a minute longer than the next two, and Rollins uses the extra choruses to pack his solo with New York swagger. The gruff blues phrases; the stair-climbing sequence around 2:30, which he echoes a minute later in a higher register; the cascades that close out the solo 20 seconds later – all vintage Rollins. The previously issued alternate cuts the track down to its final size, but despite its wealth of imagination and technical wizardry, Rollins' solo is slightly disjointed. The master take resolves that issue entirely, weaving a similar breadth of ideas into a flowing, balanced narrative in which all detours lead back to the main road.

(By the way, in the second chorus of this song, Rollins complicates the theme with a fluttery ornamentation that resembles the melodic hook of "Like Sonny" – a John Coltrane composition from 1959, which Coltrane said he had based on a figure he'd heard Rollins play. Given the similar nature of the two riffs, it's quite possible that "Way Out West" was the tune Coltrane had in mind.)

Clearly galvanized by the format that he found so liberating, Rollins soon began rolling out the trio as his main vehicle for club dates and concerts. Eight months after recording *Way Out West*, he undertook his first "live" recording, issued as the two volumes of *A Night at the Village Vanguard*. These discs chronicle two performances on the same day, an afternoon set with bassist Donald Bailey and drummer Pete LaRoca, and the more dynamic evening show, where Elvin Jones' explosive drive joined forces with the rock-solid rhythm and bottomless sound of bassist Wilbur Ware. These remain among the most highly regarded recordings in Rollins' expansive discography.

This was an especially busy period for Rollins. The success of two albums recorded in 1956 – *Tenor Madness*, featuring Coltrane on the title tune, and especially the towering *Saxophone Colossus* – had placed him in great demand among his peers. In the six months prior to *Way Out West*, he played on sessions resulting in four major records – one by Roach's quintet, one from Thelonious Monk (the spectacular *Brilliant Corners*), and two under his own name. And in the next year and a half, he recorded in a riot of groupings: studio quartet sessions under his own name; quintets and sextets led by Roach, Kenny Dorham, and Dizzy Gillespie; a collaboration with the Modern Jazz Quartet; and several tracks backed by a brass ensemble of eight horns.

But in live settings, the trio predominated. In the next ten years – interrupted by the first of Rollins' self-imposed sabbaticals (1959-1961), when he retreated from public performance to rethink his priorities and work on his craft – he recorded a dozen trio dates. Only a handful of these, including the justly renowned *Freedom Suite*, originated in the studio; the rest of them documented performances at the Newport Jazz Festival and at venues in Denmark, France, Sweden, and Switzerland.

And when he finally did bring a chord-producing instrument back to his music – on *The Bridge*, his first record after the sabbatical mentioned above – Rollins chose the guitar, a more limited instrument than the piano in terms of harmonic density. What's more, he hired Jim Hall, a guitarist known throughout his career for his nuanced ear and his expansive approach to harmony. Working with Hall meant that the saxophonist had to give up only some of the openness he had discovered on *Way Out West* and that he had nurtured on subsequent recordings; in this way, it offered something from both worlds.

In late 1962 and '63, Rollins also led a piano-less quartet with cornetist Don Cherry, which toured and recorded on several occasions, mostly in Europe. Cherry was better known as the other horn in Ornette Coleman's band, which also forswore the piano, and which had caused a ruckus when they first appeared in New York in 1959 – though not from Rollins' point of view. He welcomed the fresh breeze from these Los Angeles-based musicians, whom he had met during his 1957 sojourn in California. Coleman in particular shared his love of practicing outdoors; the two saxophonists would play together on the beach, where the surf and wind off the Pacific Ocean forced them to further strengthen their sounds.

It would take another year for Coleman to record his music – on the 1958 album *Something Else!!!!* – and even then, the group included a pianist (Walter Norris). So by the time Coleman arrived in New York, with the piano-less quartet that exploded existing concepts of jazz form and modern harmony, Rollins had already made that transit. And when he sought to more fully embrace Coleman's "new thing" – on the 1966 album, *East Broadway Rundown* – Rollins simply revisited the trio format he had debuted on *Way Out West*.

East Broadway Rundown was the last album on which Rollins used the power trio. Shortly later, he embarked on a second sabbatical from the music business; when he resurfaced in 1972, he brought piano back into the fold, and his subsequent bands frequently sported a guitar as well. Had the chordless trio format lost its luster? Had the prospect of playing "background, foreground, motifs – everything myself" become too demanding?

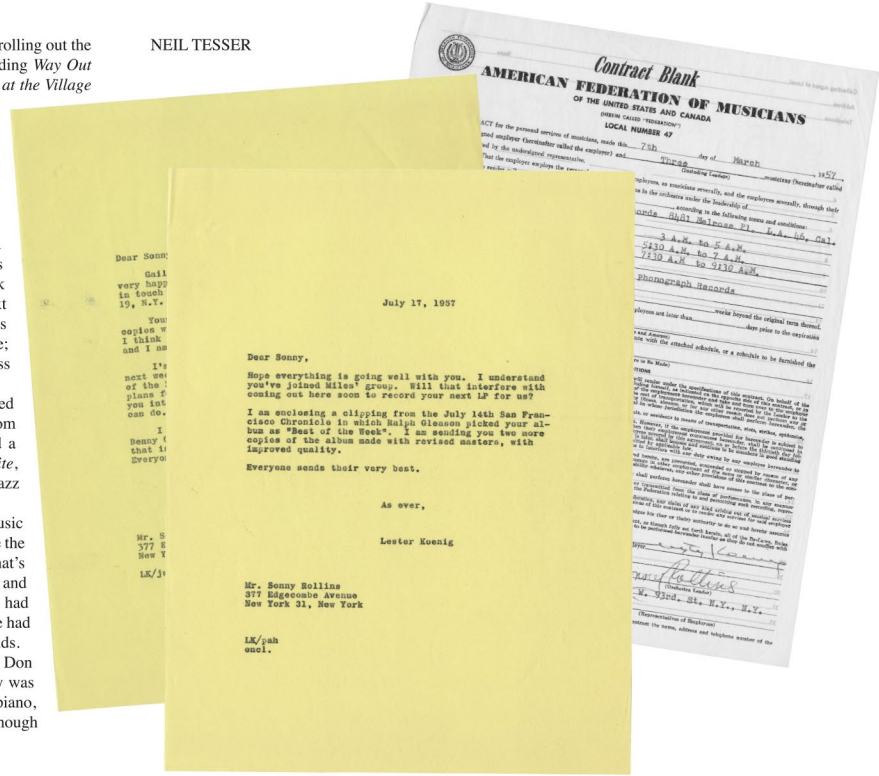
Yes, but not physically or even mentally, as it turns out. "The reason it was demanding," Rollins explained, "was because of the personnel. It was difficult to find a bassist and drummer of the stature of Elvin Jones, Shelly Manne, Ray Brown, or Wilbur Ware. Those people are unusually gifted people who are able to work in the trio format, because that format is more demanding in many ways" – for the bassists and drummers, Rollins emphasized. "It's not demanding on me, because, as I said, I enjoyed playing by myself. I think what was demanding was trying to find people that could be on that level in all the circumstances that I had to do so" – that is, having a deep enough pool of musicians from which to draw in case someone couldn't make the gig.

Speaking with me barely two months before his 87th birthday, Rollins readily acknowledged the importance of *Way Out West* in his musical evolution. But even so, and despite the widespread, nearly universal acclaim for this album – among the five or six grandest recordings from one of the five or six greatest saxophonists jazz has known – he would not abandon his well-documented reticence regarding the quality of his playing.

"You know," he reminded me, "I'm not a good guy for praising or appreciating my own work. That's the reason I like to practice – to get better, to get to the next album. Yeah, it was OK. I had some great people. It was a unique concept; I'm glad I did it. And then William Claxton, that iconic photo. I'm glad it happened, but other than that, I'm not good at rating it."

Fortunately, history labors under no such restrictions.

NEIL TESSER


Contract Blank
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS
OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA
LOCAL NUMBER 47
July 17, 1957
Dear Sonny,
Hope everything is going well with you. I understand you've joined Miles' group. Will that interfere with coming out here soon to record your next LP for us?
I am enclosing a clipping from the July 14th San Francisco Chronicle in which Ralph Gleason picked your album as "Best of the Week". I am sending you two more copies of the album made with revised masters, with improved quality.
Everyone sends their very best.
As ever,
Lester Koenig
Mr. Sonny Rollins
377 Edgecombe Avenue
New York 31, New York
LK/pah
encl.

Sonny Rollins - tenor saxophone
Ray Brown - bass
Shelley Manne - drums

Recorded at Contemporary's studio in Los Angeles March 7, 1957.

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