

Charlie Haden - Biography

As bassist, composer, bandleader, producer and educator, legendary jazz musician, CHARLIE HADEN, is a musician of unique creative and communicative genius. In the late 1950's, as a vital member of the ground-breaking **ORNETTE COLEMAN QUARTET**, Haden revolutionized the harmonic concept of bass playing in jazz .Over the course of his illustrious career he has contributed his virtuosity to numerous recordings with innovative musicians including **Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Keith Jarrett, Pat Metheny, Joe Henderson, Chet Baker, Stan Getz, Hampton Hawes, Herbie Hancock, Michael Brecker, David Sanborn, Carla Bley** and many others. As Francis Davis writes in the August, 2000 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, "No other instrument in jazz is more essential than the bass, both backbone and heartbeat, and Haden is its master

Born in Shenandoah, Iowa on August 6, 1937, Charles Edward Haden began his life in music at the tender age of 22 months, singing on his parents' country & western radio show. He started playing bass in his early teens and eventually left America's heartland for Los Angeles. "This is the first town that I came to when I left high school in Missouri," he recalls. "I came to L.A. just to find Hampton Hawes. And when I got here in 1956, there were a lot of jazz clubs and there were a lot of great musicians on the scene. It was a lot like New York in that aspect -- lots of after-hours jam sessions, and playing as much as you could play. Those were definitely exciting times." Along with Hampton Hawes, Haden also played with such jazz legends as **Art Pepper, Dexter Gordon** and Paul Bley before teaming up with saxophonist Ornette Coleman, trumpeter **Don Cherry** and drummer **Billy Higgins** for regular gigs at the Hillcrest Club. In 1959, that pioneering quartet came east to New York, secured an extended residency at the Five Spot and began recording a series of seminal avant garde albums, including *The Shape of Jazz to Come* and *Change of the Century*, which revolutionized the course of modern jazz. In addition to his hugely influential work with Ornette Coleman through the '60s, Haden subsequently collaborated with a number of adventurous jazz giants, including **John Coltrane, Alice Coltrane, Archie Shepp** and **Roswell Rudd**.

In 1969, Haden joined forces with pianist/composer Carla Bley, founding the Liberation Music Orchestra. The group's self-titled debut is a true milestone of modern music, blending experimental big band jazz with the folk songs of the Spanish Civil War to create a powerfully original work of musical/political activism. From 1967-1976, Haden played in **Keith Jarrett's** stellar trio, quartet and quintet which included drummer **Paul Motian**, percussionist **Guilherme Franco** and tenor saxophonist **Dewey Redman**. In 1976, he joined with fellow Ornette Coleman alumni Don Cherry, Dewey Redman and **Ed Blackwell** to form Old and New Dreams. A few years later he played alongside Dewey Redman, **Michael Brecker** and **Jack DeJohnette** in Pat Metheny's 80/81 band.

In 1982, Haden established the jazz studies program at California Institute of the Arts and in 1986 he formed his straight ahead **Quartet West** with saxophonist **Ernie Watts**, pianist **Alan Broadbent** and drummer **Larance Marable**. Through the '90s, he

continued playing with Quartet West and the Liberation Music Orchestra while also producing and recording or performing with Pat Metheny, **Gonzalo Rubalcaba**, **John Scofield**, **Tom Harrell**, **Hank Jones**, **Kenny Barron**, **Ginger Baker**, Bill Frisell, Jack DeJohnette and Michael Brecker. He has garnered countless awards and Grammy nominations as well as three Grammy's. There have also been a few rare concert reunions with Ornette Coleman. More recently, Haden has collaborated with such jazz greats as **Lee Konitz**, **Brad Mehldau**, **Joe Lovano**, Alice Coltrane and even players outside the jazz genre such as **Beck** and **Ringo Starr**. His love of world music has also seen him teaming with a variety of diverse international players for many years, including Brazilian guitarist **Egberto Gismonti**, Argentinean bandoneon master **Dino Saluzzi** and Portuguese guitarist **Carlos Paredes**. Charlie Haden is beyond category.