

The
FLUTE
of
ROLAND THEODORE KIRK
“RAHSAAN”

Born: Columbus, Ohio, Aug. 7, 1935
 Died: Bloomington, Indiana, Dec. 5, 1977

Introduction:

Roland Kirk visited Norway two times, 1967 and 1970. The first was at Kongsberg International Jazzfestival where I had the opportunity to meet him. He was a very nice man, and when I asked what he thought about vintage jazz, he told that he had played with Fletcher Henderson! It is physically possible, but Kirk must have been a very young teenager then. When I told him about Per Borthen & His Swing Department practicing in a nearby hotel, he grabbed his tenorsax and said let's go! There he played a couple of numbers straight out of the history book. Those who were there will never forget it!!

History:

He was blind from the age of two. He played bugle and trumpet before taking up clarinet and C-melody saxophone, and by the time he was 15 was working professionally as a tenor saxophonist in rhythm-and-blues bands. After working in Louisville, Kirk moved in 1960 to Chicago. He toured Germany in April 1961 and later that year spent three months with Charles Mingus. For the next 15 years he led his own groups, drawing on various combinations of lesser-known sidemen; the Vibration Society, as his band was called, toured widely and played in all styles of jazz. Although Kirk was often, and wrongfully, accused of perpetrating unmusical gimmickry, listeners in the 1960s gradually came to recognize his talents as an improviser, and in the 1970s he even achieved modest commercial success. He was paralyzed by a stroke in 1975, but, by using his skill in playing more than one instrument with a single hand, he was able to resume performing the following year (excerpts from The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz).

His instruments:

If there ever was a multi-instrumentalist, Rahsaan Roland Kirk was the one! When he first appeared with his tenor saxophone, two other instruments in the sax family, stritch and manzello, were permanent parts of his tools. Later, numerous other instruments were included, creating a sound scene nobody else have been close to. However, what really caught this writer was his flutes. How he used these in various ways, from the very soft, to loud screams, duetting with his own voice, is just part of jazz history. You cannot get more personal than Kirk expressing himself through the flutes. I therefore decided to limit a solography to this, or rather these instruments. Even if he had played only flutes, he would still have been considered as one of the greatest artist jazz has ever seen.

Message:

Most of Roland Kirk's recording sessions in the U. S. can be found easily on spotify, but as he travelled much in Europe, there are many CDs from this part of the world which have not been available. Please help!! Postscript of Nov. 2021:

Help received, marvellous, thank you very much, Daniel Gugolz & Werner Schroecker!!

Only sessions with flutes are listed in this solography, which thereby starts in 1961 (and other instruments in the sessions are not listed).

ROLAND KIRK FLUTE SOLOGRAPHY

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Essen, Germany, April 4, 1961**
Roland Kirk (fl), Georges Arvanitas (p), Pierre Michelot (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).
ARD broadcast from Grugahalle, five titles, one has (fl):

5:50 Summertime Solo 5 ½ choruses of 32 bars.
Solo 32 bars to long coda. (FM)

Postscript of Nov. 2021: No, this item precedes Mercury by four months! And it is magnificent, presenting all of RK's flute tricks in one package. One chorus rather straight, then one improvised, then adding his voice, occasionally using stoptime, great energy, concluding with a shrill whistle, unforgettable!!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **NYC. Aug. 16, 1961**
Roland Kirk (fl), Richard Wyands (p), Art Davis (b), Charlie Persip (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Mercury, but no (fl) soli.

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **NYC. Aug. 17, 1961**
Roland Kirk (fl), Hank Jones (p), Wendell Marshall (b), Charlie Persip (dm).
Six titles were recorded for Mercury, issued as "We Free Kings", three have (fl):

21893 We Free Kings Straight 36 bars. Straight 16 bars
to solo 8 bars to fade out. (M)

21899 Three For The Festival Solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

21900 You Did It, You Did It Feature number for (fl), solo
36 bars to long coda. (S)

This is Roland Kirk's first flute session, and also where we first met this great and highly original artist. What we hear here is the essence of his art, and nobody has ever played flute like this and probably nobody will never do it again! The first item, "... Kings", gives a little but exciting taste of what will come, but RK is slightly soft here. Then comes the fast "... Festival", a magnificent combination of flute and vocal, swinging like mad, and so full of strength and uninhibited joy. Finally "You Did It ...", a groovy and bluesy self-conversation vocal/flute, almost undecipherable, a fantastic piece of jazz. Here are the true roots of jazz, at a time when most of jazz was experimenting with finding ways to get away from it... Both these titles are among those played again and again for the years to come, no wonder, the audiences obviously adored them, just as I do. It is quite practical that these items come so early in the solography and are easily available; stream them, and if you don't like them, skip the rest, if you do, be warned, you might be addicted if you continue!!

CHARLES MINGUS **NYC. Nov. 6, 1961**
Jimmy Knepper (tb), Booker Ervin (ts), Roland Kirk (fl), Charles Mingus (p, vo),
Doug Watkins (b), Dannie Richmond (dm).
Thirteen titles were recorded for Atlantic, nine issued as "Oh Yeah", one has (fl):

5762 Passions Of A Man 'Obbligato'. (S)

RK is quite active in this violent cacophonous five minutes sound painting, very well worth playing, but nothing like a solo.

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **NYC. April 17 or 18, 1962**
Roland Kirk (fl), Wynton Kelly or Herbie Hancock (p), Vernon Martin (b), Roy
Haynes (dm).
Three titles were recorded for Mercury/Verve, but no (fl) soli.

same

Same. Eight titles, issued as "Domino", two have (fl):

- | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|---|
| 24646 | Domino | Straight 32 bars. Straight 16 bars
to solo 8 bars. (M) |
| 24648-1 | I Didn't Know What Time It Was | Soli 52 and
16 bars to coda. (S) |
| 24648-5 | I Didn't Know What Time It Was | Solo 64 bars to fadeout. (SM) |
| 24648-7 | I Didn't Know What Time It Was | As take 5. (SM) |

Here RK plays the popular song "Domino" in his own personal way, singing and blowing as life depends on it. The highlight is nevertheless good old "... Time ..." with three takes. Take 1 is slower and one minute longer than the two others. Great!!

ROY HAYNES QUARTET **Englewood Cliffs, NJ. May 16&23, 1962**
Roland Kirk (fl), Tommy Flanagan (p), Henry Grimes (b), Roy Haynes (dm).
Seven titles were recorded for Impulse, issued as "Out Of The Afternoon", one has (fl):

- | | | |
|-------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 10928 | Snap Crackle | Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (M) |
|-------|--------------|---------------------------------|

Great session as such, but only one flute performance, a fine blues with the solo starting out with two soft choruses but then takes off with some vocal efforts..

QUINCY JONES & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. June 15, 1962**
Bigband personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).
Four titles were recorded for Mercury, at least one has (fl):

- | | | |
|-------|-----------|--|
| 25137 | Dyna-Soar | With orch 24 bars to solo 24 bars.
With orch 20 bars to fade out. (M) |
|-------|-----------|--|

New surroundings but RK gives some fine flute to be heard in the middle of the great orchestra and heavy brass.

TUBBY HAYES & THE ALL STARS **NYC. June 23, 1962**
Roland Kirk (fl), Tubby Hayes (ts, vib), James Moody (fl, ts), Walter Bishop (p), Sam Jones (b), Louis Hayes (dm).
Five titles were recorded for Smash, one has RK's (fl):

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Lady "E" | Straight (fl/fl) 24 bars. Solo 24 bars. Straight (fl/fl)
24 bars to duet (fl/fl) 24 bars to fade out. (FM) |
|----------|---|

Two of the best flutists in jazz together, note this one!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Newport, Rh.I., July 2, 1962**
Roland Kirk (fl), Andrew Hill (p), Vernon Martin (b), Clifford Jarvis (dm).
Seven titles were recorded at Newport Jazz Festival, Freebody Park, three have (fl):

- | | | |
|------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 3:06 | Three For The Festival | Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. (F) |
| 8:45 | Domino | Soli 64? and 64+ bars. (FM) |
| 5:31 | 3-In-1 Without The Oil | Solo 14 choruses of 12 bars. (F) |

Postscript of Sept. 2021: One long and exciting version of an old and treasured vehicle "... The Festival" and a new one in the same genre, the very fast "... The Oil", also to become very popular! Note also this concert version of "Domino", faster than in studio, longer and with and ending going into space. Seems like there is something missing in the opening solo.

QUINCY JONES & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 13, 1962**
Bigband personnel including Roland Kirk (fl):
Two titles were recorded for Mercury, one has (fl):

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------|---|
| 22191 | Soul Bossa Nova | Solo 8 bars. With ens 6 bars to fade out. (M) |
|-------|-----------------|---|

Brief but very notable, became a hit song!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Chi. Sept. 6, 1962**
Roland Kirk (fl), Andrew Hill (p, cel-26422), Vernon Martin (b), Henry "Hank" Duncan (dm).
Six titles were recorded for Mercury, three have (fl).

- | | | |
|---------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| 26421-5 | Domino | Straight 16 bars to solo 16 bars. |
|---------|--------|-----------------------------------|

Straight 16 bars to solo 8 bars. (M)

26423 3-In-1 Without The Oil Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
26425-10 Time Solo/straight 40 bars to coda. (S)

Another "Domino", why did they record it again, same thing more or less?! But "... The Oil" is certainly something new and exciting, with a strong tempo, though related to the earlier "... Festival". "Time" shows RK in a more pensive mood, playing soft flute rather straight, although with one outburst, should not offend anyone.

EDDIE BACCUS QUARTET **Chi., Oct. 1962**
Roland Kirk as Theosis Tannis (fl-only), Eddie Baccus (org), Mose Fowler (g), George Cook or Charles Crosby (dm).
One title (more without Kirk) was recorded for Smash:

26680 A Breath In The Wind Solo/straight 20, 24, 4 and 8 bars. (S/M)

A pretty piece of music, five minutes, different tempi and moods.

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Milano, Italy, Nov. 15, 1962**
Roland Kirk (fl), Tete Montoliu (p), Tommy Potter (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).
Concert, TV, three titles, one has (fl):

7:06 3-In-1 Without The Oil Solo 12 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

A long version of "... The Oil" that has the most, including a couple of choruses tapping the flute.

ROLAND KIRK ALL STARS **NYC. Feb. 25, 1963**
Virgil Jones (tp), Charles Greenlee (tb), Roland Kirk (fl), Harold Mabern (p), Abdullah Rafik (b), Walter Perkins (dm).
Five titles were recorded for Mercury but no (fl).

NYC. Feb. 26, 1963
Same except Tom McIntosh (tb), Richard Davis (b) replace Greenlee and Rafik.
Three titles, issued as "Reeds And Deeds", two have (fl):

25711 This Is Always Feature number for (fl), intro
and solo 48 bars. (S)

25712 Reeds And Deeds Solo 48 bars. (M)

Two very exciting flute items on this session! "This ..." is fascinating as a feature number, but for me the highlight is the swinging "... Deeds".

ROLAND KIRK MEETS
THE BENNY GOLSON ORCHESTRA **NYC. June 11, 1963**
Roland Kirk (fl) with large band.
Five titles were recorded for Mercury, one has (fl):

25798 By Myself Duet with (b) to solo 64 bars.
Solo 32 bars (M) to coda. (S)

A fine swinging item this one!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **NYC. June 12, 1963**
Roland Kirk (fl), Harold Mabern (p), Abdullah Rafik (b), Gerald "Sonny" Brown (dm).
Five titles were recorded for Mercury but no (fl).

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Bremen, Germany, Oct. 15, 1963**
Roland Kirk (fl), George Gruntz (p), Paul Rovere (b), Daniel Humaire (dm).
Broadcast, five titles were recorded in TV Studio, Radio Bremen, for 32 Jazz 32032 (CD), first show, two have (fl):

1:15 Domino Straight 32 bars to coda.

(M)

2:33 Three For The Festival Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars.

(F)

same date

Same, second show, five titles, two have (fl):

5:04	Domino	Straight 32 and 32 bars to very long coda.
(M)		
2:22	3-In-1 Without The Oil	Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars.
(F)		

The highlight is an ultra rapid "... Oil". The "... Festival" has a rather short but otherwise exciting solo, while "Domino" is mainly used as a theme, note though the ending of the long version.

ROLAND KIRK **Copenhagen, Oct. 24&25, 1963**
 Roland Kirk (fl), Tete Montoliu (p), Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, Don Moore (b), J. C. Moses (dm), Sonny Boy Williamson (hca-"... Thing", vo-"... Thing").
 Many titles were recorded live at Montmartre, issued on Mercury, nine have (fl):

The Monkey Thing	Solo with (hca) 24 bars. (S)
Mood Indigo	Solo 48 bars. (S)
Mood Indigo alt.	Solo 32 bars. (S)
Narrow Bolero	Solo 36 bars. (M)
Narrow Bolero alt.	Solo 36 bars. (M)
On The Corner Of King & Scott S	Solo 15 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
One For My Baby	Solo 56 bars. (S)
We'll Be Together Again	Intro to solo 46 bars. Solo 8 bars to long coda. (S)
Half A Triple	Solo 2 choruses of 12 bars to 10 choruses 4/4 and 3 choruses 2/2 and 2 choruses duet with (p). (F)

The Montmartre has been the home of so many great jazz visitors to Europe, and so also for Roland Kirk! These are some of his most exciting sessions, also with the very best backing (the great Tete Montoliu was not so well known yet). Here we meet his flutes from all possible angles, "Mood ..." played rather conventionally, or the fantastic very fast and amazing "... Corner ...", or the very slow and beautiful "... My Baby" and "... Together Again", just pick your choice! Nevertheless, the highlight must be "... Triple", where he involves in a long unaccompanied chase and duet with Tete, something I cannot see he ever made elsewhere. Dig the Montmartre sessions!!

Copenhagen, Oct. 24, 1963

Same. Nine titles issued on Magnetic(Lux)MRCD136, five have (fl):

3:09	Three For The Festival	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
5:19	Everything Happens To Me	Intro to solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars to long coda. (S)
6:11	Domino	Straight 32 and 32 bars to very long coda. (FM)
4:22	You Did It, You Did It	Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars to long coda. (S)
7:25	3-in-1 Without The Oil	Solo 16 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

Postscript of Nov. 2021: With the rest of the Copenhagen items we get all RK's most famous items on one session with a beautiful ballad "Everything ..." added!! Here we get the second version of "You Did It ...", RK from start to end, longer than the Mercury version. There is a "Domino" running faster than usual, with the manzello being the solo instrument in the middle with an exciting ending. A fine "... Festival" and a very long "... Oil" with the usual stoptime after four choruses and with three choruses allocated to noise (sounds like farting...) and tapping on the flute. Should I select one particular flute session in the whole solography, I guess this will be it.

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Belgium 1963**
 Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Nils Henning Ørsted Pedersen (b), Alex Riel (dm).
 Video program on Jazz Icons, two have(fl):

- 2:13 Three For The Festival Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
 7:28 Yesterdays Solo 64 bars. (/SM)

A fine, good-sounding but conventionally brief "... Festival". The highlight is a long "Yesterdays", the flute starting the proceedings, later RK comes back with other instruments and solo space for others.

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET

Holland 1963

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Nils Henning Ørsted Pedersen (b), Alex Riel (dm).

Video program on Jazz Icons, two have (fl):

- 5:20 Lover Man Long intro to solo 48 bars.
 Solo 8 bars to very long coda. (S)
 3:16 Three For The Festival Solo 13 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

A magnificent version of "Lover Man!! Starting and closing with the flute accompanied by some unknown instrument (have not seen the actual video) with a combination of the most delicate and rough soloing inbetween. In addition one of the best "... Festival"s!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET

Belgium 1963

Roland Kirk (fl), George Gruntz (p), Guy Pederson (b), Daniel Humair (dm).

Video program on Jazz Icons, four titles, three have (fl):

- 3:45 Everything Happens To Me Intro to solo 32 bars to coda. (S)
 4:30 Domino Straight 32 and 32 bars
 to long coda. (FM)
 2:31 Three For The Festival Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

A shorter version of "Everything ..." compared to Copenhagen, while "Domino" follows the usual structure, although the endings are always crazy and different. Another "... Festival" is received with pleasure.

QUINCY JONES & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Feb. 5/6, 1964

Bigband personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).

Eight titles were recorded for Mercury, two have (fl):

- 31081 Don't You For Get It Solo 4 bars. (FM)
 31085 Peter Gunn Solo 16 bars. (SM)

Note "Peter ...", an excellent flute piece!!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET

LA. May 26, 1964

Roland Kirk (fl), Horace Parlan (p), Michael Fleming (b), Steve Ellington (dm). However, a full orchestra is also heard on "Dirty Money ...".

Four titles were recorded for Mercury, two have (fl):

- 31611-9 Dirty Money Blues Straight, solo, duet with own (vo)
 totalling 5 choruses of 12 bars. (S)
 31611-11 Dirty Money Blues As above. (S)
 31612-1 Ad Lib / Hip Chops Straight. (SM)

LA. July 22, 1964

Same. Eleven titles, issued as "Gifts And Messages", three have (fl):

- 31639 Petite Fleur Straight 48 bars. (S)
 31644 Hip Chops Straight. (FM)
 31647 Vertigo Ro Solo 72 bars. (F)

The "Dirty Money ..."s belong to those everlasting masterpieces of RK, flute and vocal and everything, you just have to listen, words can only guide you so much!! Note also "... Fleur", a beautiful rather straight and conventionally played song.

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET

NYC. Sept. 16/17, 1964

Roland Kirk (fl-only), Bob Moses (vib), Horace Parlan (p), Michael Fleming (b), Walter Perkins (dm), Miss C. J. Albert (vo).

Ten titles were recorded for Limelight / Mercury, issued as "I Talk With The Spirits":

31701	I Talk With The Spirits	Straight. Solo. (S)
31702	Serenade To A Cuckoo	Solo 48 bars. (M)
33990	Medley: We'll Be Together Again People	Solo 32 bars. (S) Solo 24 bars to long coda. (S)
33991	Ruined Castles	Straight. (M)
33992	Trees	Intro to solo 48 bars. Solo 24 bars. Coda. (S)
33993	Fugue'n And Alludin'	Duet with (vib) 16 bars. (M)
33994	Django	Duet with (vib). (S) Solo 64 bars. Straight. Coda. (M)
33995	My Ship	Solo 64 bars to long coda. (S)
33996	A Quote From Clifford Brown	Straight 2 to solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. Straight 2 choruses. (FM)
33997	This Business Ain't Nothing But The Blues	Solo 64 bars to long coda. (S)

A fine all-flute session with an atmosphere much calmer than usual, controlled by the solid Parlan, but nevertheless with much highly noteworthy flute soli, particularly in slow tempo, although you must not overlook/hear the funny "... Cuckoo"! Only RK could get away with his interpretation of "This Business ..."! The highlights must be the beautiful "Trees", as well as "My Ship", where the first chorus is soft, the second not, and dig the highly personal coda!

ROLAND KIRK

Paris, 1964

Personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).
Concert at Olympia, one has (fl):

Three For The Festival	Solo. (F)
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Great flute and vocal and everything for seven minutes here!! I gave up counting the bars this time, so just enjoy!! Note that spotify has mixed up this title and "Boogie Man Song".

ROLAND KIRK

Helsinki, 1964

Personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).
YLE broadcast, four titles, two have (fl):

Mood Indigo	Solo 32 bars. (S)
Three For The Festival	Solo 10 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

Another great versions of good old vehicles, obviously enormously popular with the public! I personally get never tired of "... The Festival"!

ROLAND KIRK 1964

Bremen,

Roland Kirk (fl), George Gruntz (p), Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen (b), Daniel Humair (dm).

Several titles, unknown origin, three have (fl):

5:04 bars	Domino	Straight 32 and 32 to very long coda. (FM)
0:25	Jammin'	With A Wolf
	Undescribable!	
3:53 (F)	Three For The Festival (NC)	Solo 18 choruses of 12 bars.

The wolfing introduction must be heard, going directly into a conventional "Domino", but the closing is exciting as always. Finally, one of the longest "... Festivals", which has everything!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET
1964**London, Oct. 15,**

Roland Kirk (fl), Stan Tracey (p), Malcolm Cecil (b), Ronnie Stephenson (dm).

Note: Liner notes says 1963, but can this be correct?

Four titles were recorded at Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club, one has (fl):

	Three For The Festival	Long special part to appr.
		23 choruses of 2 bars. (F)

This "... Festival" is very different from all others, quite long. It takes almost three minutes for RK to enter, and then he does it with an unheard and softer part until he goes into the usual procedure, which in itself is longer than usual, making lots of space for all kinds of sounds and tapping. Great!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET**London, Oct. 16/17, 1964**

Roland Kirk (fl), Stan Tracey (p), Rick Laird (b), Allan Ganley (dm).

Ten titles were recorded live at Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club, issued as "Live In London", three have (fl):

6:48 bars	The Business Ain't Nothin'	Solo 14 choruses of 8 bars
	But The Blues	with (vo) to coda.
(S)		
6:12 bars	Domino	Straight 32 and 16 to very long coda. (FM)
5:02 (S)	You Did It, You Did It	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars.

Vow, this is exciting! "The Business ..." is a gorgeous performance, where RK not only hums with the flute but really is talking to it, several pure vocal parts, an item out of the ordinary, with political overtones, to be noted!! Then a "Domino" with a different ending as usual, and also here RK is more verbal than usual. Finally a very slow but long "You Did It ...", the third one so far, intense as usual, and he is impertinent enough to let the third chorus consist of one note, and still get away with it.

London, Oct. 21 & Nov. 3, 1964

Same. Ten titles, issued as "Reeling And Rhyming", one has (fl):

	My Ship	Solo. (S)
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A beautiful introduction, but if you believe it will continue that way, you are wrong, because RK has other things in mind ... great performance of seven minutes!! Quite different from the studio session earlier!!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET**Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Jan. 13, 1965**

Roland Kirk (fl), Jaki Byard (p), Richard Davis (b), Elvin Jones (dm).

Seven titles were recorded for Limelight / Mercury, issued as "Rip, Rig And Panic", one has (fl):

34833	Mystical Dream	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
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Fine flute solo here!

ROLAND KIRK**NYC. March 14, 1965**

Roland Kirk (fl), Jaki Byard, Lonnie Liston Smith (p), Major Holley (b), Charles Crosby (dm), Leon Thomas (vo).

Eight titles were recorded live in studio for Atlantic, issued as "Here Comes The Whistler", two have (fl):

	Making Love After Hours	Soli 1, 5 and 2 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
	Yesterdays	Acc. (b-stroke). 32 bars 4/4 with (b-stroke). (S)

The duo Holley/Kirk must be considered one of the most original in jazz! Holley is in charge with Kirk hanging on, and their chase is highly memorable!! Finally, of course, the groovy blues cannot be done better than on "... After Hours"!

ROLAND KIRK & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Nov. 16/17, 1965**

Virgil Jones (tp), Martin Bsnks (flhrn), Garnett Brown (tb, arr), Roland Kirk (fl), Horace Parlan (p, cel, vib), Eddie Mathias (b), Gerald "Sonny" Brown (dm, hap), Monetho Joe (cga), Manuelk Ramos (perc).

Nine titles were recorded for Limelight / Mercury, issued as "Slightly Latin", two have (fl):

37171	Ebrauqs	Solo 32 bars. Straight. (SM)
37174	Safari	With orch. (M)

Maybe not that exciting.

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Boston, Jan. 12, 1966**

Roland Kirk (fl), Horace Parlan (p), Edward Mathias (b), Gerald Brown (dm).
WCBH-TV, presented by Herb Pomeroy, five titles, two have (fl):

2:56	The Blessing	Soli 64 and 32 bars to coda. (M)
3:06	Reeds And Deeds	Solo 2 ½ choruses of 32 bars. (FM)

A rather conventional "... Blessing", while "... Deeds" has all that stuff well known but always fresh and exciting.

THE JAZZ CORPS **LA. Oct. 11/12, 1966**

Tommy Peltier (cnt, flhrn), Freddie Rodriguez (fl, as, ts), Roland Kirk (fl), Lynn Blessing (vib), Bill Plummer (b), Maurice Miller (dm).

Eight titles were recorded for Pacific, two have (fl):

Serenity	Duet with (fl-FR). Solo 16 bars. (S)
Chalan Pago	Solo 64 bars. (M)

Particularly "... Pago" has a very fine and swinging solo!

QUINCY JONES & HIS ORCHESTRA **LA. April 1967**

Bigband personnel including Don Elliott (tp, mellophone), Roland Kirk (fl-only), Bobby Scott (p), Ray Brown (b), (brass), (reeds), (g), (b), (dm), (strings), Quincy Jones (dir).

Twelve titles were recorded for United Artists, issued as "In The Heat Of The Night",

1:37	Peep-Freak Patrol Car	(fl). (S)
2:45	Cotton Curtain	(fl). (SM)
1:34	Where Whitey Ain't Around	no (fl). (S)
1:35	Whipping Boy	(fl). (S)
1:38	No You Won't	(fl). (S)
1:57	Nitty Gritty Time	(fl). (S)
3:34	Shag Bag, Hounds And Harvey	no (fl). (S)
1:10	Chief's Drive To Mayor	no (fl). (S)
1:15	Give Me Until Morning	(fl). (S)
1:49	On Your Feet, Boy!	(fl). (S)
1:14	Blood And Roots	(fl). (S)
5:37	Mama Caleba's Blues	no (fl). (S)

This is a very special session, most properly called a suite, with many very brief elements and all, except one, with very, very slow tempo. RK has a key role, but he is always placed far back in the recording, so one has to concentrate when listening. Only one item, the moving "On Your Feet ...", has a plain flute solo worth mentioning, but the suite as such is a great work of music well worth listening to, although not really a solography object.

ROLAND KIRK **Englewood Cliffs, NJ. May 2, 1967**

Roland Kirk (fl), Lonnie Liston Smith (p), Ronnie Boykins (b), Grady Tate (dm).

Eight titles were recorded for Verve, issued as “Now Please Don’t You Cry, Beautiful Edith”, one has (fl):

102722 It’s A Grand Night For Swingin’ Straight 2 and solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. Straight to coda. (FM)

Yes it is! A remarkable piece to be noted!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Kongsberg, Norway**
1967

Roland Kirk (fl), unknown (p), (b), (dm).
Video program on Jazz Icons, one has (fl):

4:04 Making Love After Hours Soli 1, 5 and 1 choruses of 12 bars.
(M)

Some very nice flute here! More from Norway will be researched later!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Warsaw, Poland, Oct. 12-14,**
1967

Personnel as below.
Five titles were recorded live in the Congress Hall, one has (fl):

5:02 My Ship Solo 36 bars to long coda.
(S)

Starting with a beautiful piano solo, “My Ship” turns out to be one of those RK flute items in slow tempo that are amongst those particularly interesting and exciting!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **Praha, Czech Republic, Oct. 19,**
1967

Personnel as below.
Seven titles were recorded live, TV, at the Fourth Mezinarodni Jazz Festival, two have (fl):

5:37 My Ship Long intro to solo 52 bars to long coda.
(S)

4:41 Making Love After Hours Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars.
(M)

Another “... Ship” but quite different from the polish version; no piano introduction here, and more intense playing, very exciting to compare! Also a gorgeous solo on the gospel-oriented “... After Hours”; nice to be in Praha!!

ROLAND KIRK QUARTET **NYC. Nov. 27, 1967**

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Steve Novosel (b), Jimmy Hopps (dm).
Five titles were recorded for Atlantic at Webster Hall, three issued as “The Inflated Tear”, but no (fl).

NYC. Nov. 30, 1967

Same. Ten titles, seven issued, two have (fl):

13555 Fingers In The Wind Solo. (S)

13557 A Laugh For Rory Solo. (F)

“Fingers ...” is rather special as RK plays his flute rather conventionally and pretty, four minutes all through, while “... Rory” has some exciting uptempo.

ROLAND KIRK & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. June 17/18,**
1968

Bigband personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).
Eight titles were recorded for Atlantic, issued as “Left & Right”, one has (fl):

14713 Lady’s Blues Solo 64 bars. (S)

Nice!

ROLAND KIRK **Newport, Rh. I., July 7, 1968**

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Vernon Martin (b), Jimmy Hopps (dm), Joe Texidor (perc).
Four titles were recorded at Newport Jazz Festival, issued as “Volunteered Slavery”, two have (fl):

One Ton Solo 12 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
 Three For The Festival Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

Another great version of the "... Festival"! However it is almost overshadowed by a magnificent "One Ton", that really means something, dig this one!!

ROLAND KIRK NYC. July 22/23, 1969

Collective personnel: Charles McGhee (tp), Dick Griffin (tb), Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p, cel), Vernon Martin (b), Gerald Brown, Charles Crosby (dm), Joe Texidor (tamb), The Roland Kirk Spirit Choir (vo-group).

Five titles were recorded for Atlantic, one has (fl):

17401 My Cherie Amour Straight. Solo 16 bars. Coda. (SM)

Fine solo here, but mostly rather straight playing.

ROLAND KIRK Staines, Great Britain, 1969

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Vernon Martin (b), Jimmy Hopps (dm), Joe Texidor (perc).

Film soundtrack from "Supershow" (musical film), directed by John Crome, one title has (fl):

4:30 Primitive Ohio Straight/ens. (S)
 Solo 16 bars to very long coda. (M)

The flute is used in the beginning as a kind of sound painting, while the ending is groovy medium swinging with the full group like we are used to.

ROLAND KIRK Paris, Feb. 22, 1970

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Vernon Martin (b), Jerome Cooper (dm), Joe Texidor (perc).

Many titles broadcasted from "Maison de la Radio", issued on France's Concert FCD 109 & 115 "Live In Paris Vol 1 & 2" and others, at least three have (fl):

My Cherie Amour Solo 4:38.
 (M)

Three For The Festival Soli 9 and 3 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

You Did It, You Did It Intro to solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. (S)

Postscript of Sept. 2021: A long and much more improvised version of "... Amour". Then two old favourites which never get too old, first "... Festival" with all kinds of strange sounds, and then "You Did ...", groovy as always. I never get tired of listening to these, sometimes difficult to describe, they must be heard!!

ROLAND KIRK Stuttgart, Feb. 26, 1970

Personnel as above.

Many titles were recorded at concert in Mozartsaal der Liederhalle, four have (fl):

4:35 My Cherie Amour Solo/straight 88
 bars.
 Solo 8 bars to very long coda. (M)

4:25 Roller Coaster Solo/straight. (F)

16:43 Sweet Fire Solo/straight.

(S/M)

8:25 Mood Indigo Solo 24 bars.

(S)

4:55 Serenade To A Cuckoo Solo/straight 3 choruses of 32
 bars
 to very long coda sequence. (M)

"My Cherie ..." and "... Cuckoo" seem to be two of RK's major vehicles from this time on, and particularly the conclusion of the latter is great. "Roller ..."? ... Fire" follow the same structure as below. And one never tires of listening to an "... Indigo".

ROLAND KIRK unknown loc., prob. March 1970

Dick Griffin (tb), Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Vernon Martin, Harold White (b), Joe Texidor (perc).

Eleven titles (nine of them as four medleys) from unknown source, issued on Jazz Hour as "Sweet Fire", four have (fl):

4:25 Roller Coaster Solo/straight 2:00 and 0:50.

(F)

17:20 Sweet Fire Solo/straight 1:25.

(S/M)

4:43 My Cherie Amour Solo/straight 88 bars.

Solo 8 bars to very long coda. (M)

5:22 Three For The Festival Solo 15 choruses of 12 bars.

(F)

This "... Festival" is appearing as "Boogie Man Song", and to call the performance a flute solo is perhaps exaggerated, because half of it simulates a very angry animal. Only RK in whole of jazz could get away with happenings like this! "Roller ..." goes directly into "... Fire", kind of suite totalling more than twenty minutes, interesting.

ROLAND KIRK & THE VIBRATION SOCIETY NYC. May 11, 1970

Personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).

Two titles were recorded for Atlantic, "The Seeker" (Suite) issued, but no (fl)-soli.

ROLAND KIRK NYC. May 12/13, 1970

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Vernon Martin (b), Jimmy Madison (dm), Joe Texidor (perc).

Many titles were recorded live at Village Vanguard, one (fl) item found:

Baby, Let Me Shake Your Tree Vocal/(fl). (S)

This five minutes item is mostly RK 'singing' with occasional flute.

ROLAND KIRK NYC. Jan. 26 & Feb. 4, 1971

Personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).

Many titles were recorded for Atlantic, issued as "Natural Black Inventions: Root Strata", three have (fl):

Haunted Feelings Solo/straight. (S)

Day Dream Intro. Solo 48 bars to very long coda. (S)

Rahsaanic Solo/straight. SM

Three very nice and soft real flute items, far from the 'hot' RK.

ROLAND KIRK NYC. Aug. 31 & Sept. 8, 1971

Personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).

Eleven titles were recorded for Atlantic, issued as "Blacknuss", three have (fl):

22854 Ain't No Sunshine Solo/straight 48 bars. (S)

23009 My Girl Solo /straight 92 bars to fade out. (M)

23012 Which Way Is It Going? Solo/straight. (F)

Three very different but all very exciting flute items, particularly his fast and incredible, or incredibly fast, treatment of "... Going?" is highly amusing.

ROLAND KIRK Paris, 1972

Personnel as below.

One title:

4:41 One Mind / Seasons Solo. (S/F)

Extremely fast and strong flute here!

ROLAND KIRK Hamburg, March 3, 1972

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Henry Pete Pearson (b), Richie Goldberg (b), Joe Texidor (perc).

Eleven titles were recorded live at Funkhaus, issued on Hyena 9347 as "Brotherman In The Fatherland", two have (fl):

5:15	My Girl	Solo.
(M)		
6:54	Seasons	Solo.
(S/F)		

same date

Additional titles, unissued, two have (fl):

4:11	My Cherie Amour	Solo.
(M)		
6:25	Unidentified Tune	Solo.
(S)		

Another "Seasons" is most noteworthy here.

ROLAND KIRK **Paris, March 8, 1972**

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Henry Pearson (b), Richie Goldberg (dm), Joe Texidor (perc).

Ten titles were recorded for TV at Grand Palais, issued on Jazz Icons, two have (fl):

6:53	My Cherie Amour	Solo 120 bars to long coda sequence.
(M)		
4:55	One Mind	Solo. (S/F)

These items are among the most exciting from this period. A quite long "... Amour" and you think it is finished it goes into a very long unaccompanied phase, wow! Also "One Mind" with different tempi is very exciting well worth noticing!

ROLAND KIRK & AL HIBBLER **NYC. March 30/31, 1972**

Roland Kirk (fl), Hank Jones (p), Ron Carter (b), Oliver Jackson (dm), Al Hibbler (vo).

Ten titles were recorded for Atlantic, eight issued as "A Meeting Of The Times", one has (fl):

24239	Daybreak	Obbligato parts. (S)
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Nice and sweet, and flute should have been used more on this session.

ROLAND KIRK **Montreux, Switzerland, June 24, 1972**

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Henry Pearson (b), Robert Shy (dm), Joe Texidor (perc).

Eight titles were recorded at the Montreux Jazz Festival, three have (fl):

5:20	Seasons / One Mind	Solo. (S/F)
11:20	Blue Rol No. 2	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars.
(S)		
3:21	Serenade To A Cuckoo	Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars.
		Straight 32 bars to coda. (M)

On "Blue Rol ..." we get something new, a proper slow blues, very long, never seems to stop, but RK's dramatic flute is only active from the beginning. Also alternative versions of the flute vehicles "Seasons" and "... Cuckoo".

ROLAND KIRK **Boston, Oct. 31, 1972**

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Henry Pearson (b), Robert Shy (dm), Art Perry (perc).

WBCN broadcast "The Jazz Workshop", ten titles, two have (fl):

5:15 Lady's Blues Solo 64 bars to long coda.

(S)

4:34 Serenade To A Cuckoo Straight 16 and 24 bars. (M) to solo 48 bars. Straight 32 bars. (FM)

"Lady's ..." is not a blues, which does not matter the least, very exciting in slow tempo. Another "... Cuckoo" is also interesting.

ROLAND KIRK **Warsaw, Poland, Nov. 12, 1972**

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), Steve Novosel (b), Jimmy Hobbs (dm).
Several titles, three have (fl):

6:06 Three For The Festival Solo 22 choruses of 12 bars.

(F)

5:10 My Ship Solo 36 bars to very long coda. (S)

5:10 Unidentified Blues Solo.
(S)

Another "... Festival", very long, again first half pure flute, the other all kinds of sounds included. "My Ship, beautiful as always. Finally something that starts with a very slow blues, going somewhere I don't know, to come back in the end.

ROLAND KIRK & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 22, 1973**

Bigband personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).
Six titles were recorded for Atlantic, four issued, issued as "Prepare Yourself To Deal With A Miracle", one has (fl):

25932 Seasons – One Mind Winter / Summer / Ninth Ghost Solo.
(S)

This sound painting of more than ten minutes is just one of the fascinating creations that RK can provide, playing his flute for the first six minutes.

ROLAND KIRK **San Francisco. June 8/9, 1973**

Personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).
Large number of titles were recorded live for Atlantic at Keystone Korner, twelve issued as "Bright Moments", two have (fl):

26693 Fly Town Nose Blues Solo. (M)

26694 Bright Moments Song Solo. (S/M)

"Bright ..." is another lengthy and fascinating creation, ten minutes, different tempi, where RK plays his flute most of the time with some 'bright moments' utterings here and there. "Fly Town ..." is more RK as we know him in blues context, playing and singing (probably dancing to), crazy and yet so normal. RK must be one of the most imaginative of all jazz musicians on this earth!!

ROLAND KIRK **Berlin, Oct. 11, 1973**

Roland Kirk (fl), Kenneth Rogers (bar), Donald Smith (p), Henry Pearson (b), John Goldsmith (dm), Anthony Scott (perc).
Six titles, two have (fl):

21:40 Volunteered Slavery Soli 4:10 and 1:40.

(M)

5:30 Freaks For The Festival Solo ca. 20 choruses of 12 bars.

(F)

"... Slavery" seems to be a kind of suite, and the main flute part takes around four minutes, structured as seven choruses of 24 bars. It better be listened to than trying to describe it, but you will find your bebop there. "Freaks ..." or "Three ...", same thing, many normal flute choruses in the beginning with going into space afterwards as many times before.

ROLAND KIRK **NYC. Dec. 31, 1973**

Roland Kirk (fl), Kenneth Rogers (bar), Hilton Ruiz (p), Henry Pearson (b), John Goldsmith (dm), Anthony Scott (perc).

Seven titles were recorded at Village Vanguard, two have (fl):

11:01	Bright Moments	Solo.
(S/M)		
5:23	Three For The Festival	Solo ca. 15 choruses of 12 bars.
(F)		

Another fascinating “Bright ...”, and a different “... Festival” starting with a long baritone sax solo before the flute starts its wailing. After seven choruses RK goes into another world/tune to recover after some indeterminate time to finish with a few ‘normal’ choruses. Always some surprises.

ROLAND KIRK **San Diego, Nov. 5, 1974**

Roland Kirk (fl), Hilton Ruiz (p), Henry Pearson (b), John Goldsmith (dm), Samson Verge (perc).

Eleven titles were recorded live at the Backdoor, San Diego State University, issued on Hyena as “Compliments Of The Mysterious Phantom”, three have (fl):

5:50	Fly Town Nose Blues	Intro 4 bars. Solo 6 choruses of 24 bars. Long coda. (FM)
7:46	Bright Moments	Solo.
(F)		
3:52	Freaks For The Festival	Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars.
(FM)		

The highlight is the fast “... Moments” with RK fluting and singing in high tempo continuously during the first half. Lots of strong flute also on “... Nose ...”.

ROLAND KIRK & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. May 14, 1975**

Bigband personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).

Twentyone titles were recorded for Atlantic, issued as “The Case Of The 3-Sided Dreams In Audio Color”, three have (fl):

30757	Freaks For The Festival	Solo. (FM)
30759	Portrait Of Those Beautiful Ladies	Solo. (M)
30766	Freaks For The Festival	Solo. (FM)

Nothing of particular importance here, most interesting is the latin oriented “... Ladies”.

ROLAND KIRK **NYC. March ?, 1976**

Personnel including Roland Kirk (fl).

Seven titles were recorded for Atlantic, issued as “Other Folks Music”, three have (fl):

31948	Donna Lee	Straight 32 bars. Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars to straight 32 bars. (F)
31950	Anysha	Solo/straight. (S)
31951	Samba Kwa	Straight. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Straight. (M)

Exciting to hear bebop flute on the good old “... Lee”. “Anysha” is a mood piece with beautiful conventional playing. And the easy going “... Kwa” is perhaps the highlight.

ROLAND KIRK **Paris, Nov. 14, 1976**

Steve Turre (tb, perc), Roland Kirk (fl), Hilton Ruiz (p, perc), Phil Bowler (b), John Goldsmith (dm), Michael Hill (vo, perc).

Seventeen titles were recorded live, issued as “The Parting Dream: Paris 1976”, three have (fl):

A Visit From The Blues	Intro. Soli 48 and 24 bars. (S)
My Cherie Amour	Duet with /(tb). Solo 24 bars. (M)
Serenade To A Cuckoo	Straight. Solo 32 bars. (M)

Three good items without being remarkable. Interesting though to hear RK duetting with a trombone!

ROLAND KIRK**NYC. 1976/77**

Personnels including Roland Kirk (fl).

Unknown number of titles were recorded for Warner Brothers at several sessions, three have (fl):

Serenade To A Cuckoo	Straight. Solo 64 bars. (M)
Loving You	Solo. (SM)
Watergate Blues	Solo 24 bars. (SM)

A more exciting "... Cuckoo" here, a nice solo feature on "... You", and typical blues on "Watergate", that's all. RK passed away only 42 years old. This solography gives only a very limited view of this incredible artist and personality.

No further recording sessions.

APPENDIX

ROLAND KIRK**L.A. undated**

Roland Kirk (fl), Ron Burton (p), unknown (b), (dm).

One title was recorded at the It Club, issued on Hyena as "The Man Who Cried Fire":

4:43	You Did It, You Did It	Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars to coda. (S)
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A great version of "You Did It ...", and RK tries to tell us something not only on the flute but vocally by his unique singing at the same time, unforgettable!

...000...