

RON MILES | I AM A MAN

The Best of 2017 | The New York Times

Best of 2017 | Los Angeles Times

Editor's Pick | Down Beat Magazine

The 50 Best Albums of 2017 | NPR

The Best of 2017 | NPR-Morning Edition

Best Releases of 2017 | All About Jazz

Best Jazz of 2017 | Pop Matters

ron
miles



brian
blade

bill
frisell

jason
moran

thomas
morgan

SELECT QUOTES:

"Ron Miles is just a beautiful musician; he's someone with this tone that's like liquid gold. On this album, he applies that gorgeous sensibility to a sort of reflection on civil rights, identity, on justice. There were so many ambitious and envelope-pushing albums made by jazz musicians in 2017. This is a subtler accomplishment but what it does is it really establishes this kind of soulful beauty. And I found myself in a year of turbulence and conflict reaching for it again and again. You know, it was replenishing. It was salutary. It was something that made me feel good. You know, it's just a beautiful statement."

—Nate Chinen, WBGO | NPR-Morning Edition The Best Albums of 2017

"On his remarkable new album, Ron Miles nestles his light and buoyant sound inside compositions that bespeak an aching memory and a righteous ambition... Leading a powerful quintet, Mr. Miles — an underappreciated talent, as both cornetist and composer — uses these seven tunes to meditate on experiences of disappointment, discrimination and transcendence. He and the band sound loose and warm and free, as if unburdened by the reckoning."

—Giovanni Russonello, The New York Times | The Best Albums of 2017

"The cornetist has long been a reliable source for deft compositions and musical conversation with frequent collaborators Bill Frisell and Brian Blade. Here he reaches to greater heights with the addition of bassist Thomas Morgan and pianist Jason Moran. The results are a warm, lushly drawn set inspired by civil rights history and social activism." —Chris Barton, Los Angeles Times | Best of 2017

"...a recording of thought-provoking beauty in overdrive... The music, like Ligon's artwork, takes on the social chaos of the times... music from the heart, full of blues, grit and sass."

—Frank Alkyer, Down Beat Magazine | Editor's Pick

"There is always some big sky in the music of cornetist Ron Miles. That's true as ever on his stunning new album, *I Am A Man*... You'll also encounter a firm resolve, and a calm undercurrent of protest, in this album, which Miles named with the civil rights slogan in mind." —Nate Chinen, Take Five/WBGO.org

"The cornet, as Ron Miles plays it, is an instrument of warm color and rounded projection... Miles has been making his own albums for 30 years, and *I Am a Man* is his finest yet, building on a profoundly intuitive rapport with guitarist Bill Frisell and drummer Brian Blade. What deepens the picture is a conceptual tie-in: Miles was inspired here not only by the civil rights slogan that lends the album its title, but also by a related artwork, Glenn Ligon's turn-of-the-century diptych *Condition Report*. And along with Blade and Frisell, the album features pianist Jason Moran and bassist Thomas Morgan, impeccable team players who also happen to be brilliant individualists. Miles' songs, combining melodic grace and sturdy logic, give the band room to move — and gorgeous material to explore, especially on a heart-stopping entreaty like "Is There Room In Your Heart For A Man Like Me?" —Nate Chinen, WBGO | NPR's "The 50 Best Albums of 2017"

"*I Am A Man* occupies a rare space, existing as a mark of musical pride and dignity, a statement driven by social activism, a history-propelled piece of art, and an album that challenges and unites. What's more, it scores incredibly high marks when viewed from each of those angles."

—**Dan Bilawsky, All About Jazz | Best Releases of 2017**

"One might expect guitarist Bill Frisell, who has so often hired Miles for his own projects, to dominate this session. But it is the leader's composing and playing that stands out, as well as the sympathetic but essential piano of Jason Moran. These performances are typically lyrical and singing, but the arrangements and performances create journeys of real drama so that this record seems also as knotty and complex as any other on this list." —**Pop Matters | Best Jazz of 2017**

"Invigorating... Beyond the reputations that these great players bring to the project, they gel like a band with a long playing history. I'm guessing that the simpatico flows in no small part from Miles's direction and trust, and also from the inspiring material that he's put in front of them." —**Peter Hum, Ottawa Citizen**

"Ron Miles connects African American blues and gospel roots to the tangled branches of contemporary genre-bending jazz with rare perceptiveness... Enhanced by Miles giving his partners the whole score, not just their own parts, these are breezy early-swing figures mixed with modern time-stretches, and graceful sways like 60s Miles Davis, tugged at by free jazz, deep-toned dirges... It is often an understated session, but it exerts a powerful grip." —**John Fordham, The Guardian**

"His compositions call for everyone to play in an unusually egalitarian style, sometimes more or less soloing at once, sometimes playing carefully composed lines, but always sounding like a group of friends having a conversation rather than a jazz band taking turns soloing over a head. The depth of Miles' musical intelligence has never been more perfectly displayed—and he has made plenty of outstanding albums. For all jazz collections." —**Rick Anderson, cdhotlist.com**

"Ron Miles is a cornet player with an easy melodicism and a deeply affective tone... a web of melodies, a tight counterpoint, sounding balanced and composed even with all the improvisational elements... Miles leads with a strong sense of direction and almost spiritual clarity. He can improvise a far reaching melody cleanly and the band is listening hard and responding in real time. At its best the music is like a living thing, organic and breathing. One of Ron Miles' best. Five Stars." —**foresightandafterthought.com**

"A melody from Ron Miles is moonlight distilled down to sonic form. There are times when he exhales a melody and he's the only object in the sky. And then there are those times when the gravitational force of his presence pulls an ensemble around him like a sea of stars. The cornetist's 2017 release *I Am A Man* puts those talents to excellent use, and the hall-of-fame cast of guitarist Bill Frisell, pianist Jason Moran and drummer Brian Blade happily fall into his orbit. The blues are an ever-present force of change on the recording, regardless whether the piece is an old-school ballad or a new-school burner. Miles has a lyrical touch to where he gets a sound to just hang in air, allowing patience and pauses heavy with emotion to get them to radiate with everything they've got before putting the next notes in play. Whether on cornet or trumpet, the sense is that here is a musician who has spent a lifetime immersing himself in his instrument and the creativity inside to make it manifest, and that impression bleeds into every note. A wonderful album from an amazing musician." —**birdistheworm.com**

"It helps of course that Miles has pulled together a stellar band for music of such light and shade, fragility yet solidarity... This is music of spiritual and political change... it's peaceful but not passive: it's music that won't back down. Buy this record. And, better still: spread the word." —**Andy Robson, Jazzwise, UK**