

## 12 JAZZ PIANO FIRSTS

by Jim Aikin

1899



**Scott Joplin** writes "Maple Leaf Rag," which becomes the first huge hit of the ragtime era. In those days, "hit" meant sheet music sales.

1944



**Thelonious Monk** makes his first recordings, with the Coleman Hawkins Quartet. His first recordings as a leader follow in 1947.

1949



Impresario Norman Granz introduces **Oscar Peterson** to U.S. audiences at Carnegie Hall.

1917



At age 18, **Duke Ellington** forms his first band in Washington, DC. Ten years later, he opens at the Cotton Club in New York City.

1940



**George Shearing** first appears, as a sideman with French jazz violinist Stephane Grappelli.

1954



On Nov. 8, **Dave Brubeck** is the first jazz pianist to appear on the cover of *Time* magazine. He is followed ten years later by Thelonious Monk.

1926



**Earl Hines** invites Louis Armstrong to join his band at the Sunset Club in Chicago. Hines's fluid style frees jazz piano from the boom-chuck left hand of ragtime and stride.

1938



John Hammond produces the "From Spirituals to Swing" concert at Carnegie Hall, which kicks off a decade-long boogie-woogie craze headlined by **Albert Ammons**, **Pete Johnson**, and **Meade Lux Lewis**.

1958



**Bill Evans** joins the Miles Davis Sextet. His influential trio recordings with bassist Scott LaFaro and drummer Paul Motian follow three years later, in 1961.

1933



**Art Tatum** steals the show at a contest at Morgan's Bar in New York City, besting rival stride pianists James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, and Willie "the Lion" Smith.

1933



**Teddy Wilson** joins the Benny Goodman Trio, becoming the first African-American musician to appear with a previously all-white group. In the next few years, Wilson plays behind Billie Holiday.

1971



Already a veteran of Charles Lloyd and Miles Davis, **Keith Jarrett** releases *Facing You*, which inspires a decades-long revival of jazz and new age solo piano.