

JAZZ SABBATH: Jazz, Lies & Plagiarism

THE TRUTH

Jazz Sabbath were at the forefront of the underground UK jazz movement in the late Sixties. They were recording two albums in 1969, but both seemed destined never to be released. Until now.

Due to legal disputes with a session player the recording of the second album had to be abandoned and never to be mentioned again. Their first album was finished, but when news broke that pianist and band leader **Milton Keanes** had suffered a massive heart attack, the record label cancelled the release. They didn't want to risk releasing an album from a band that might lose its musical leader.

When Milton was finally released from hospital in September 1970, he found out that a band from Birmingham, had since released two albums containing metal versions of his songs. Milton tried to contact his record label, only to find out it didn't exist anymore and the label owner was in jail. All recalled Jazz Sabbath albums had been destroyed when the warehouse burned down in June 1970; which turned out to be a case of insurance fraud by the label owner.

Without any physical proof that he wrote the songs, Milton was powerless to do anything. Even more frustrating: that Birmingham band had named itself after one of his songs; only adding insult to injury. With the other band continuously releasing more albums of Milton's songs, the three members of Jazz Sabbath decided to part ways.

The discovery of the debut album's master tapes in 2019 and the following re-release of the album in 2020 has changed everything. With the theft by the band from Birmingham exposed, Jazz Sabbath reunited and finally finished recording their second album.

They can now present their songs in their original form, proving that the heavy metal band worshipped by millions around the world are in fact nothing more than musical charlatans, thieving the music from a bedridden, hospitalised genius.

The recently discovered 1968 tapes will be released in November 2024, proving once more that their legacy is so much more than jazz.

THE OTHER TRUTH

Milton Keanes is actually **Adam Wakeman**, longtime keyboard & guitar player for Black Sabbath & Ozzy Osbourne.

In 2013, on a night off in Germany during one of the Black Sabbath tours, Adam and Sabbath's security guard sat at the hotel bar early in the morning. The security guard asked if Adam could play the Sabbath set on the piano in the bar. Adam thought it would be fun to play the songs as jazz improvised versions and then played until the bar staff wanted to go home.

The idea grew, as Adam invented the character and backstory of Milton Keanes (which he always thought to be a great name for a jazz pianist). In 2020 the first Jazz Sabbath album was released, accompanied by a mockumentary about Jazz Sabbath and their unfortunate history.

The mockumentary gained extensive media coverage and sparked some controversy among Black Sabbath fans. The album itself got rave reviews from both rock and jazz critics. A second album, Vol. 2, was released in 2022. Both albums entered the Billboard jazz charts and got special mono Record Store Day releases.

On the albums Adam is joined by Ash Soan (Adele) on drums and Jerry Meehan (Robbie Williams) and Jack Tustin on bass, plus a number of guest musicians, such as Gus G (Ozzy Osbourne, Firewind), Fraser T. Smith (Sam Smith, CeeLo Green) and Simon McBride (Deep Purple). However, all go by their 1960s pseudonyms.