

Select Discography

This list isn't meant to be anything like an exhaustive catalogue of recordings. There are simply thousands of recordings out there today of pianists improvising in all possible styles. We can't include them all here, and frankly, it wouldn't be all that helpful to do so. Instead, here are some carefully selected recordings that everyone interested in piano improvisation should certainly try to hear. They are all recommended as instructive and potentially inspiring to listen to. Classical recordings mostly feature performances of specific compositions, chosen to illustrate the kind of music or performance style most closely associated with improvisation during the period in question.

CLASSICAL

1) Renaissance keyboard music realised on the piano:

Consort Of Musicke by William Byrd & Orlando Gibbons; Sweelinck: *Fantasia in D*
Glenn Gould (piano), Sony B0000028NB

2) Baroque keyboard music realised on the piano:

J.S. Bach *Italian Concerto, Chromatic Fantasy*
Glenn Gould (piano), Sony B00006FI9V

3) Galante keyboard music realised on the piano:

C.P.E. Bach: *Sonatas And Rondos*
Mikhail Pletnev (piano), Universal Classics/DG B00005RCIU

4) Classical piano concertos with cadenza improvisation:

Mozart: *Piano Concertos*
Robert Levin, (harpsichord/fortepiano)
The Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood
Decca L'Oiseau-Lyre 466 131-2, 458 285-20H, 443 328-20H, 444 571-20H, 455 814-20H, 443 556-20H, 452 051-20H, 452 052-20H

5) Romantic piano style: piano rolls from the late 19th and early 20th centuries:

Chopin – The Player Piano
Alfred Reisenauer, Eugen D'Albert, Ferruccio Busoni and other pianists
MDG B00012IPMA

Great Pianists On Piano Rolls
Bernhard Stavenhagen, Eugen D'Albert, Ferruccio Busoni and other pianists
Phonographe B000003R21

JAZZ

1) Early jazz:

James P. Johnson: *Harlem Stride Piano* (1921-29)
EPM B000005GCZ

‘Jelly Roll’ Morton: *Original Mr Jelly Lord 1923-41*
Avid B00004WN1E

Fats Waller: *Fats Waller And His Buddies* (1927-9)
Bluebird B000002WGC

2) 1930s Swing Era jazz:

Count Basie: *April In Paris*
Verve B0000047CS

Nat ‘King’ Cole: *Hit That Jack Live: The Earliest Recording*
GRP B000003N4L

Erroll Garner: *Concert By The Sea*
Columbia B001U14IQK

Earl Hines: *1928-1932*
Classics B000028113

Oscar Peterson: *At The Stratford Shakespearean Festival*
Verve B001HXY9KG

Art Tatum: *Piano Starts Here*
Sony Jazz 4765462

3) Bebop:

Thelonius Monk: *Brilliant Corners*
Original Jazz Classics OJCCD0262

Bud Powell: *The Amazing Bud Powell, Vol.4*
EMI/Blue Note/Toshiba B00001ZTF6

4) Post-bebop:

Bill Evans: *Waltz For Debby*
Original Jazz Classics OJC202102

Herbie Hancock: *Maiden Voyage*
Phantom B000XAMEU6

George Shearing: *Lullaby Of Birdland*

Original B000FKO49S

5) Modern jazz and jazz-rock fusion:

Kenny Barron: *Live At Maybeck Recital Hall (Vol.10)*
Concord B0000006JV

Chick Corea: *Hymn Of The Second Galaxy*
Polydor B000AU1M98

Chick Corea: *Light As A Feather*
Universal B000FDF1KQ

Keith Jarrett: *Facing You, Solo Concerts*
ECM B001BOX2Y0

Keith Jarrett: *The Köln Concert: 24 January 1975 [Live]*
ECM B0000262WI

6) Free and avant-garde jazz:

Anthony Braxton: *Solo Piano (Standards)*
No More B000000LYM

Cecil Taylor: *Unit Structures*
EMI/Blue Note/Toshiba B000CSUY7E

LATIN AND LATIN JAZZ

Eddie Palmieri: *Arete*
RMM B00000124G

Chucho Valdés: *Solo Piano*
EMI/Blue Note/Toshiba 7805972

BLUES AND ROCK

Jerry Lee Lewis: *18 Original Sun Greatest Hits*
WEA/Rhino 0070255RHI

Memphis Slim: *Rockin' The Blues*
Charly B00004V4ME