



**LUCIAN BAN / MAT MANERI  
JOHN SURMAN  
THE ATHENAEUM CONCERT  
THE BELA BARTOK FIELD RECORDINGS**

SSC 1767 LP / AVAILABLE 9/5/2025  
(180 grams vinyl LP)



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For this double release, long time collaborators pianist Lucian Ban and violist Mat Maneri alongside legendary woodwind master John Surman further explore the folk music of Transylvania collected by Béla Bartók more than a hundred years ago. For the past five years the trio has deepened the spirit of their music while touring, as can be heard on their new recordings, **Cantica Profana** (CD) and **The Athenaeum Concert** (vinyl LP only).



Sunnyside

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Bronx-born guitarist **Gene Bertoncini** realized many years ago, upon his return to New York after a sojourn in Chicago, that Saint Peter's Church was "the place to be" and has since been a faithful friend of the "jazz church." With vocalist **Melissa Stylianou**, as well as guitarist Roni Ben-Hur and bassist Josh Marcum, there was a palpable warmth to the institution's Jazz Vespers service (Jul. 6), now in its 61st year. At 88, Bertoncini's hearing has diminished, so he had to cup an ear with one hand to catch Vicar Deivis Ventura's passionate sermon, shaking his fist in the air in ardent agreement when the pastor proclaimed, "If you want peace, work for justice!" His playing was equally youthful and ebullient, evidenced by tasteful arrangements and imaginative intros and codas to the set's standard repertoire. Bertoncini and Stylianou, who first met and performed together in the church 15 years ago, enjoy a close rapport. On this Sunday, they performed, as they always do, the very first song they played together, "My One and Only Love". As Stylianou's lithe, mellifluous tones emerged from the elevated speaker system, like the voice of an angel, lofting upward into the towering chamber, Bertoncini followed and guided her with highly inventive counterplay on his well-weathered classical guitar. The novelty of their performance belied the many times they'd covered this same song, and when Stylianou sang "I give myself in sweet surrender," the lyric's originally romantic connotation was now imbued with spiritual significance. — **Tom Greenland**



Melissa Stylianou, Gene Bertoncini @Saint Peter's Church

**DoYeon Kim** is one of those periodic NYC arrivals whose artistry catalyzes the local scene. At Joe's Pub (Jul. 8), the Korean gayageumist/vocalist played a two-part set showcasing her artistic breadth and depth. Beginning alone on 12-string gayageum (Korean zither), Kim's bare fingers clawed and flicked at the strings, creating an undulant swirl of sounds to set up a dramatic vocal recitative, sung in Korean. Her voice, remarkably pliable and emotive, oscillated between sweet soprano head-tones, soft whispers and full-bore, bloodcurdling chest-belts—a mercurial mix of rawness and refinement, innocence and acumen. Switching to a larger 25-string gayageum, she was joined by Kris Davis (piano) and Tom Rainey (drums) for the set's second half. Rainey's incessant "heartbeat" pulsations and marching snare rolls initially dominated the softer string instruments, but eventually the trio achieved an equitable balance. Kim's right hand bowed or clutched strings as her left struck gongs, shook rattles or depressed and fibrillated the strings with her palm to produce wide vibratos, whooping bends and delicate pitch-shading. Davis often ruminated over soft, fast figures, adding in-the-box preparations for tonal variety. The trio's shared sense of time was in constant flux, flowing but everchanging, like the unending exchange of gases that synchronize the cycle of human breath. A lyrical interlude—Davis skittering over the keys, Rainey rubbing palms across the drumheads, Kim adding a few snarky scratches—gradually built to a tempestuous finale that soon subsided to a few rippling piano chords. (TG)

Flute Bar, a midtown cocktail lounge devoted to the bubbly, isn't exactly a piece of cake for a performer: acts are placed at the entrance, with the noisy bar area to player right and the nooky lounge space to the left. Fortunately, vocalist **Teri Roiger** and bassist John Menegon are pros, with the Zen-like ability to focus and transcend distractions on the every-Thursday gig. Easing into the program (Jul. 10), the first number was an easy, lilting standard with a hopeful message (not unwarranted in these tough times), "Look for the Silver Lining" (Jerome Kern, Buddy DeSylva). And as per the lyric, "somewhere the sun is shining," it sure was, lighting up the husband-wife duo with a blessed synergy in their music making. Roiger's vocals are smooth and serene, kind of transcendental, even in swing mode. Menegon, fond of slap bass, has a rich, robust touch, with intuitive time-keeping support. Moving into "Love Walked In" (George Gershwin, Ira Gershwin) another truth was told. There's a saying about jazz that the best practitioners thereof have a "feeling for it": Roiger embodies that ethos with superb phrasing and evocative storytelling. Menegon offers a smattering of vocals from time to time, and their dual scat on a fun "Them There Eyes" (Maceo Pinkard, Doris Tauber, William Tracey) lifted spirits as did the never-fail swing of Duke Ellington's "In a Mellotone". Closer was good advice in rhythmical perfection from revered singer-songwriter Abbey Lincoln: "Throw It Away".

— **Marilyn Lester**



Teri Roiger, John Menegon @Flute Bar

In its 26-year Birdland residency, David Oswald's **Louis Armstrong Eternity Band** has played in several combinations and permutations. Although Armstrong famously had his Hot Five and Hot Sevens—a Hot Six was a brief blip on the radar—the current iteration of the Oswald band is definitely a very hot six. The seasoned lineup (Jul. 2) was Alphonso Horne (trumpet, vocals), Will Anderson (clarinet, alto), Jim Fryer (trombone, vocals), Josh Dunn (banjo, guitar) and Alex Raderman (drums), with the very experienced Oswald (tuba), a charming, relaxed and witty-to-hilarious leader. Spotlight features revealed each band member's prowess in the classic 1917 standard, "(Back Home Again in) Indiana" (James F. Hanley). With a true-blue New Orleans sound, Horne, in Armstrong mode, sang an homage, first ascribed to trumpeter-jazz founder Buddy Bolden as "Funky Butt", but later attributed to Jelly Roll Morton as "Buddy Bolden's Blues". Horne also executed a terrific rendition of the traditional "St. James Infirmary". Also with a Nola beat, the band performed "On the Sunny Side of the Street" (Jimmy McHugh, Dorothy Fields) with a Fryer vocal that sounded like a '30s recording. Among a varied, thoroughly entertaining program, a highlight was Anderson's alto solo (no backup) of the haunting, durable "Body and Soul" (Johnny Green). "Diga Diga Doo" (Jimmy McHugh), made famous at the Cotton Club by Duke Ellington, had the joint jumping, while "Swing That Music" (Armstrong, Horace Gerlach) closed with plenty of swing. (ML)



The Crescent City can still lay claim to the **Dirty Dozen Brass Band** (DDBB), but the unit, which originated in the 6th Ward, stands as a universal entity. The tumult heard at each gig—on stage and in the house—speaks every language with a Southern welcoming and tenacious drive. DDBB kicked off its annual Blue Note residency on a particularly steamy night (Jul. 8). “The weather is just right,” cornetist Gregory Davis glibly announced. “We’re cookin’ hot dogs on the sidewalk!” Raising temperatures within, the band leapt into a rollicking second-line samba with founding member Davis out front; he had the audience clapping on the backbeat in seconds. The call-and-response between the saxophones (Roger Lewis-baritone, Trevarri Huff-Boone-tenor) and brass (Davis plus Stephen Walker-trombone) was wonderfully tormented by the James-Jamerson-conjuring tuba of Kirk Joseph, another celebrated founder. Julian Addison’s thunderous drumming crackled rimshots in every crevice, punctuating James Brown riffs, but the street beats only softened, perhaps, for Takeshi Shimmura’s blistering electric guitar. With the whole of New Orleans’ marching tradition simmering in this R&B gumbo, Huff-Boone’s modern solos happily shredded the vision of Dixieland with sleeve garters. Even “L’il Liza Jane”, heard in countless iterations for over a century, was infused with renewal. By the point of Addison’s jaw-dropping extended solo and then a “St. James Infirmary” riddled with scream-worthy improvisations by Lewis and Davis, the spent audience came to feel the plight of those hot dogs cooking on the sidewalk. — **John Pietaro**

On a mercifully breezy Saturday night (Jul. 12) at IBeam Brooklyn, Siren Xypher—**Mara Rosenbloom** (piano), **Kyoko Kitamura** (vocals, electronics) and **Melanie Dyer** (viola)—delivered a set that radiated generosity and curious intensity. The trio, a centerpiece of the second annual Brooklyn Free Spirit Festival (produced by the group itself, with Rosenbloom as artistic director), was flanked by a qigong workshop and solo piano set by shamanic healer Kazzrie Jaxen (the following day included an Amina Claudine Myers talk, and performances by DoYeon Kim, Cooper-Moore and Mazz Swift). The music made good on the festival’s promise: to be open-armed, trans-genre and deeply improvisational. Rosenbloom began the set with sparse figures before flooding the piano with crashing chords and resolution-resisting note clusters. Dyer’s viola sang in deeply empathetic, melodic lines. Kitamura (who led a workshop on Anthony Braxton’s Language Music at the festival) generated textures from found objects—shredded paper, glass bottles—emerging into speech, then song: bell-like tones, sudden glossolalia, operatic rises and unnamable utterances. She and Rosenbloom exchanged verses; at times, all three musicians joined their voices. The lyrics evoked an elusive but striving hopefulness: “When peace comes, it’s ephemeral. Peace can live but a moment, and forever.” Kitamura shifted between vocal flights and patching cables on a semi-modular synth. The set glowed with spirit: not just freedom, but care. A music made in and for community, and one that didn’t pretend to resolve the unknown. — **Ariella Stok**



Kirk Joseph (of Dirty Dozen Brass Band) @Blue Note



Mara Rosenbloom @IBeam Brooklyn

“OK, here goes. It’s the last time I’m going to say this,” **Carol Morgan** announced, leaning over the mic at Smalls (Jul. 11), suppressing a smirk. “Today is my 57th birthday and this is a little present to myself,” she added, nodding to her support trio onstage. Morgan cited pianist Thelonious Monk as her hero but plays trumpet in a warm, bell-like mid-range with just enough vibrato: nothing less than classic. Her tone and reach recall Rex Stewart, Bunny Berigan, Ray Nance, Chet Baker and that other (unrelated) Morgan, Lee. From opener “One Mint Julep” (Rudy Toombs) to the Gershwins’ “Strike Up the Band” and a surging “Blue Bossa” (Kenny Dorham), the band simmered with the haunt of another at various times. Guitarist Steve Nelson, seemingly channeling Chuck Wayne, masterfully carved rhythm and lead harmonic colors beyond the mortal spectrum. On “Isn’t It Romantic?” (Rodgers and Hart), the quartet raised the ballad bar to new heights with a painfully beautiful bass solo by Alex Gressel and another breathless guitar improvisation. Morgan called on the moderns too. Charlie Parker’s “Marmaduke”, in all its lengthy bop-line glory, and two standards by Monk, “In Walked Bud” and “Straight, No Chaser”, saw the band thriving (drummer Andy Watson was real, real gone with *presto* hi-hat work). All that music—and then a cake for the birthday girl, which almost silenced her of both hip musicianship and wise remarks. Happiest of days to you, Carol Morgan! (JP)

At Mezzrow on the Saturday (Jul. 5) of Fourth of July weekend, drummer **Billy Drummond’s Freedom of Ideas** trio, with Peter Washington (bass) and Micah Thomas (piano), held court in the narrow cellar. Tourists and aficionados alike queued down W. 10th St., angling for a piece of the West Village jazz mythos. Drummond, who for 35+ years has been regarded as a master technician and unshakable presence behind the kit, led with restraint and clarity. His playing—full of stunningly articulated textures and effortless propulsion—sketched not only rhythms but atmospheres. Washington matched him with elegance, anchoring the trio with pulse and poise. Thomas, the youngest member and its engine of surprise, tore into the tunes from the inside out, fragmenting familiar changes with lyrical, sidewinding improvisation. A former student of Drummond’s, the pianist approached each standard like a riddle. His improvisations worked in bold diagonals: angular, off-axis reimaginings that still landed with logic and internal song. The set list, curated with deep personal resonance, moved through lesser-played corners of the tradition, from Thelonious Monk’s “Think of One” to the hushed reverence of Frank Kimbrough’s “Clara’s Room” (recorded by the drummer in 2022 on his *Valse Sinistre*). “The Coaster” (Grachan Moncur III) nodded to Drummond’s time with Bobby Hutcherson, while the ballad “Blackberry Winter” (Alec Wilder) and “Lawra” (Tony Williams), the latter also from *Valse Sinistre*, closed the set in a haze of abstraction and memory. It wasn’t fireworks, but it burned with quiet intensity. (AS)

## WHAT’S NEWS

**Jazz-Con 2025** (Sep. 15-16)—the upcoming fully virtual, two-day summit uniting innovators from the worlds of jazz, classical, Latin, World Music and indie sectors—recently announced its first round of 30+ global speakers. Included are independent booking agents and artist managers (Gail Boyd, President Gail Boyd Artist Management), festival directors (Lilliam Perez of Havana’s Jazz Playa Festival and Amro Salah, Artistic Director Cairo Jazz Festival), record label presidents (Barney Fields, HighNote/Savant Records) as well as tech innovators, musicians (pianist Lynne Arriale and saxophonist Tom Scott), journalists (TNYCJR’s own Ken Dryden) and others. Attendees will gain actionable insights on rights collection, sync licensing, metadata management, touring logistics and digital innovation. Says Jazz-Con Executive Director Jerald Miller, “We’re creating a truly global conversation that transcends genre and geography. Our goal is to empower artists and industry professionals everywhere with the insights and connections they need to thrive in today’s music economy.” For more info visit [jazz-con.com](http://jazz-con.com).

**Jazz Forum Arts** (JFA) celebrates its 40th anniversary this year with its apex signature event in December, which will feature three nights of the Joshua Redman Quartet (Dec. 5-7). Co-founded by trumpeter Mark Morganelli and his wife, Executive Director Ellen Prior (with original 1985 board members including Dizzy Gillespie, David Amram and Wynton Marsalis, as well as Dan Morgenstern, Bruce Lundvall, Dorthaan Kirk and Gary Giddins), JFA has presented jazz throughout NYC and the metropolitan area at over two dozen locations—from 1985-97 at the Riverside Park Arts Festival (Manhattan) to, since 2017, arguably its crown jewel achievement: The Jazz Forum club (Tarrytown, NY). For the summer months of July and continuing through August, JFA continues its annual “Summer Concerts” series tradition, presenting free jazz concerts along the Hudson River in Westchester County (Dobbs Ferry, Ossining, Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown). For more info visit [jazzforumarts.org](http://jazzforumarts.org).

Last month Brooklyn Conservatory of Music (BKCM) announced the winners of its fifth annual Jazz Leaders Fellowship, which supports Black women and Black non-binary jazz musicians in NYC to further their projects and careers. Violinist **Kersten Stevens** (who studied with the late John Blake Jr. and has performed with Regina Carter, Keyon Harrold and Christian McBride, the producer of her *Queen Rising* album) and Houston, TX-born, now NYC-based vocalist, flute player **Alexandria DeWalt** (who as a Berklee Global Jazz Institute student earned her master’s under the tutelage of pianist Danilo Pérez). The Fellowship comes with an unrestricted \$12,500 award for each, in addition to free rehearsal space and performance/curatorial opportunities. Congratulations are also in order to BKCM Executive Director Chad Cooper, just named to Crain’s New York Business’ 2025 list of “Leaders in Philanthropy.” For more info visit [bkcm.org/jlf](http://bkcm.org/jlf).

The 20th Annual **Francis Davis Jazz Critics Poll** was founded (in 2006) by esteemed jazz critic and author Davis (1946-2025). The results were first published in *The Village Voice*, then *Rhapsody*, NPR and most recently *ArtsFuse* (since 2021). Tom Hull, who assisted Davis in the jazz poll in the last few years up until his passing this April, has since continued its well-established tradition. The year-end poll has become one of the, if not THE, most comprehensive “Best Of” lists in jazz available. Now, for the second consecutive year, Hull helms an almost as-comprehensive mid-year poll. Be sure to check out 2025’s first six months-worth of results (from new releases to reissues and archival albums). For more info visit [hullworks.net/jazzpoll](http://hullworks.net/jazzpoll).

The 2025 Guggenheim Fellowship recipients have been revealed. Among the winners are saxophonist **Caroline Davis**, trombonists **Michael Dease** and **John Yao**, pianist-keyboardist **David Virelles** and violinists **yuniya edi kwon** and **Gwen Marie Laster**. Guggenheim Fellowships (which have supported and been awarded to over 19K individuals) have historically helped artists, writers, scholars and scientists at the highest levels of achievement to pursue the work they were meant to do. As Guggenheim President Edward Hirsch said, reflecting on the Guggenheim Foundation’s centennial, “We believe in the Social Sciences. We believe in the Humanities. We believe in the Arts.” For more info visit [gf.org](http://gf.org).

To submit news email [ldgreene@nycjazzrecord.com](mailto:ldgreene@nycjazzrecord.com)