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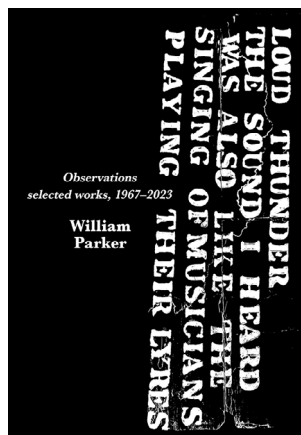
Three most recent releases:



**DoYeon Kim / Wellspring LP/CD/DL**

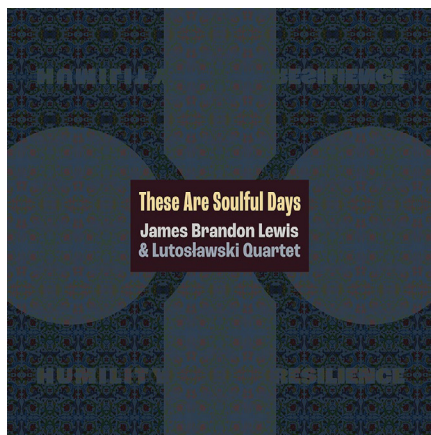
Gayageum master, composer, improviser, force. *Wellspring* is DoYeon Kim's debut album as bandleader, with Mat Maneri, Henry Fraser, Tyshawn Sorey.

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## FESTIVAL REPORT

# GOTHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL

BY JIM MOTAVALLI



C. Anthony Bryant @3 West Club

NINA GALICHEVA



Dylan DelGiudice, Ayumi Ishito @Main Drag

MARC EDWARDS

There were times at the eighth annual Gotham Jazz Festival (Apr. 19) when the dancers were certainly as, if not more, entertaining than the musicians. When somebody really knows how to Lindy Hop, it's kinetic poetry in motion, and the event, for the second year at the 3 West Club, a commodious boutique townhouse hotel, brought out the cream of both the city's swing dancers, and Swing era-styled bands and performers. For almost ten straight hours (from 1:30 to 11 pm), over four floors: two ballrooms and two lounges, with 18 acts, kept the momentum up and the music swinging—in overlap and in competition. This meant either choices had to be made, or a lot of careful moving around had to be plotted to grab at least part of as many performances as possible. (Through it all, dancer-singer **Dewitt Fleming Jr.** exceed many of the acts and got to perform a bit as well.)

Swing is a universal language, confirmed by the opening set from David Ostwald's **Louis Armstrong Eternity Band** in the 2nd Floor Ballroom, which had the leader's tuba characteristically eliminating the need for a bassist. Members came from Russia, Italy, Chile and, yes, the US and the band played together as one, reviving such gems as "Azalea", a ballad written by Duke Ellington for Armstrong in 1944 but not recorded until the two of them performed it together in 1961. It's also refreshing when bands, such as this, eschew the warhorses and delve into Armstrong's Hot Seven recordings from 1927. The Eternity Band additionally played the McHugh/Fields standard "I'm in the Mood for Love" to great effect. Russian trumpeter-vocalist **Konstantin Gevondyan** (founder of the Moscow Ragtime Band) was one of the festival's MVPs, turning up in several other bands beside Ostwald's, including **Terry Waldo's** Gotham City Band (which occupied an evening slot in the 4th Floor Lounge). Waldo is an NYC ragtime treasure, and his jumping piano was offset by Gevondyan as well as by trombonist Jim Fryer, who was chasing the spirit of the late Jack Teagarden—and catching up, too—on "Memphis Blues".

Overlapping Ostwald, in the 3rd Floor Ballroom, was the **AC Lincoln Quartet**, led by the double threat singer-tap dancer, and though he doesn't investigate the book all that deeply (performing "Satin Doll", "Caravan" and "Bye Bye Blackbird", among others), he's a real crowd pleaser. "This next song is called 'Let Me Catch My Breath'," he said half-jokingly, wiping away sweat. Meanwhile, in the 4th Floor

What happens when a festival meant to spotlight a neighborhood gets priced out of it? Judging by this year's Rhythm in the Kitchen Festival (Apr. 16-17), the answer is that the geography changes more easily than the ethos. Founded in 2006 by Hell's Kitchen residents, drummer **William Hooker** and housing activist Bob Kalin, the festival emerged from the neighborhood's artistic community alongside the Hell's Kitchen Cultural Center, a nonprofit tied to local preservation and arts advocacy. It ran for years at various churches, first on W. 40th Street, then W. 57th. This year it unexpectedly reemerged far from Midtown, in the basement of Main Drag, an instrument store and venue on the Williamsburg waterfront. Hooker's wife, Donna, with whom he has lived for nearly 50 years on the same Hell's Kitchen street, summed up the new location: "We had a heck of a time getting here. We're not sure how we're going to get home!" Despite the festival's displacement, the curation still carried a sense of neighborliness: longtime collaborators, friends of friends and younger musicians folded naturally into older experimental lineages.

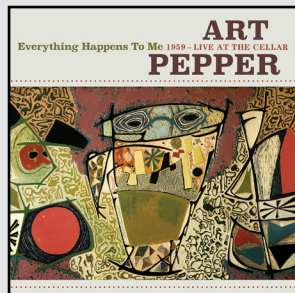
Hooker, who served as MC, delivered a directive to the musicians: "You don't have to cater to anyone in this room." That, more than any address, was the festival's organizing principle. Across two nights, a motley run of small bands and large ensembles performed a multi-generational and intersectional survey of avant garde practice unified mostly by a refusal to behave. **Marc Edwards' Slipstream Time Travel** opened the weekend with the kind of nostril-clearing fervor the drummer has been delivering since his time in the Cecil Taylor Unit, and more recently in noise rock concern Cellular Chaos. Edwards described the band's premise as the idea that time can be "navigated like a flowing current." Tor Snyder and Dylan DelGiudice (electric guitars, with DelGiudice quickly switching to alto) and Evan Palmer (electric bass) laid down a hardcore skree over which Ayumi Ishito's tenor flew; Edwards, behind them, generated heat, pulse and an inexhaustible churn.

**Sam Newsome's** trio—with Brittany Karlson (bass) and Nick Neuberg (drums)—was a study in textural mischief. Newsome waved his soprano in front of the mic for a Doppler effect, dunked the bell in metal bowls, then set them clattering on the floor, played with a balloon balanced on the keys, then disassembled the horn and connected the mouthpiece to lengths of plastic and corrugated tubing, applying the open ends to the

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## BOXED SET



*Everything Happens To Me: 1959 - Live at The Cellar*  
**Art Pepper (Widow's Taste Music/Omnivore)**  
 by Scott Yanow

It would not be an understatement to say that Art Pepper (1925-1982)—whose 44-year deathaversary is Jun. 15—had a difficult life. And, although some might think this is debatable, it would also not be an understatement to say that he was a musical genius. Consider that, despite his life being erratic, dramatic, and at times quite dangerous, no matter what desperate shape he might have been in at the time (unlike his contemporary, the equally-plagued Chet Baker), Pepper never made a recording that was less than extremely good. Musically, the alto saxophonist did not have an off period except when he was absent from the scene altogether.

One of the few young altoists of the '50s (along with Lee Konitz and Paul Desmond) who did not sound as if he was a close relative of Charlie Parker, Pepper was as influenced by Lester Young and Benny Carter as he was by Bird. From the start, when he was a member of Stan Kenton's band, Pepper had his own sound. Unfortunately, he became a heroin addict early on, and even when making his classic recordings of the '50s, he was scuffling. Jail sentences resulted in several

periods off the scene, and other than some brief returns (including a stint with Buddy Rich's big band), he was largely absent during 1962-72. That all changed in the mid '70s when, with the inspiration of his wife, Laurie Pepper, he made an unlikely comeback that found him playing consistently brilliant music, particularly during his final seven years.

There have been many posthumous releases of his previously unissued concert performances, particularly by Laurie Pepper's Widow's Taste Music label. While most are from his later period, this four-CD set, *Everything Happens To Me*, is taken from a ten-day stint at The Cellar in Vancouver, British Columbia that took place in September 1959. Earlier that year, Pepper had recorded as a sideman with Marty Paich, Dave Pell, Jack Sheldon, Herb Ellis, Barney Kessel, Anita O'Day and Mel Torme, in addition to leading the classic *Art Pepper + Eleven*, which showcased him with Paich's arrangements. Despite the activity, as related in the liner notes, outside of the recording studios the 34-year-old Pepper had been struggling in the Los Angeles area, playing tenor in a rock and roll band and even gigging with a country music group.

None of that is apparent during the 30 songs released for the first time here. Pepper is teamed with an excellent, if obscure, local rhythm section comprised of Chris Gage (piano), Tony Clitheroe (bass) and George Ursan (drums). Gage worked with veteran Canadian tenor-saxophonist Fraser McPherson and trombonist Dave Robbins, led one date of his own, and is on part of an album with trombonist J.J. Johnson. Clitheroe and Ursan, both of whom had not previously recorded, would enjoy similar musical experiences, working with McPherson and top Canadian players. Ursan is on an album with trombonists Frank Rosolino and Carl Fontana, and sets headed by George Robert and

P.J. Perry. During their engagement with Pepper, Gage has occasional solos, Ursan gets a few tradeoffs, and the rhythm section gives the altoist the solid foundation that he needed to be comfortable and sound in top form. While switching to tenor for a few numbers, Pepper is mostly heard on his primary alto instrument, on which he plays at his bebop best. Although six of the 30 performances are incomplete, all but the very brief opener "When You're Smiling" are close to complete, with fadeouts taking place near their conclusions. The recording quality is surprisingly quite good, particularly for previously unreleased live performances from almost 65+ years ago—and the sidemen sound inspired by their meeting with musical greatness.

These recordings are Pepper during his first prime period, before he was influenced by John Coltrane, suffered through his longest jail sentences and started really stretching himself emotionally in his playing. Other than his medium-tempo blues "Holiday Flight", which is heard in three versions, and a rendition of "Brown Gold" (based on "I Got Rhythm"), all of the songs are standards. Among the highlights are a surprisingly rapid rendition of "I Surrender Dear", two heartfelt renditions of "Over the Rainbow" and romps through such songs as "(Back Home Again in) Indiana", "Yardbird Suite", "Allen's Alley" and "Strike Up the Band". Although some of the tunes are heard two or three times, needless to say the solos never repeat themselves. Pepper is the dominant voice throughout, really digging into the music, swinging hard and creating an endless flow of inventive ideas within the bebop tradition. If he had faded out altogether in the '60s and not made his comeback, he would still be recognized as one of the greats.

For more info visit [omnivorerecordings.com](http://omnivorerecordings.com)

Scofield's tasteful comping gives him plenty of space during solos. Holland exploits this space to improvise distinctive melodic architecture, which transcends the low range of his instrument to achieve horn-like clarity and immediacy. On several tracks, the bassist trades fours with Scofield, moments that showcase the pair's close camaraderie. The guitarist is casually brilliant throughout: his guitar tone slightly gritty, wetted with echo; his attack changeable, off-center, always surprising; his phrasing quirky yet logical; his melodic sense unerring. His unique approach to chording—suggestive rather than prescriptive, expressing big ideas with only a few choice notes—is a big factor in the overall success of this duet setting.

Although the music is routinely rewarding, there are standout moments. On Scofield's minor blues—punningly titled "Mine Are Blues"—the duo cuts loose from the comfort zone, soloing, trading, then blowing in tandem. On Holland's "Not for Nothing", an easy swinger in 10/4 time, the guitarist sounds like he's got a big smile on his face as he unleashes soulful lines, then lays some ultra-hip chord voicings over the outro vamp. On Holland's "You I Love", he takes a page from the Wes Montgomery playbook, building an improvisation on single-note lines, octaves and chords, then mixing them all together, comping for himself, ending with a definitive statement. The set-concluding, title track is a slice of Americana: Scofield weaving strange but lyrical lines over the tune's "cowboy chords," Holland stepping to the fore with a strong gesture during the latter half of his solo, both finishing their collaborative colloquy in a muted, meditative mood.

For more info visit [ecmrecords.com](http://ecmrecords.com). Scofield is at Warsaw Jun. 12, and The Brooklyn Guitar Festival Allstars "Play John Scofield" (with Nir Felder, Bill Frisell, David Gilmore, Steve

Cardenas, Gilad Hekselman) are at LeFrak Center at Lakeside in Prospect Park Jun. 13 (both events part of the Brooklyn Guitar Festival). See Calendar.



*Peregrine*  
**Peter Erskine (Hard Wag)**  
 by Pierre Giroux

The newly-released *Peregrine* feels less like a project and more like a conversation you happen to overhear at the right moment. Septuagenarian drummer Peter Erskine (who turns 72 on Jun. 5), with Alan Pasqua (piano) and Scott Colley (bass), settle into the album's 11 tracks with the ease of a long association and deep listening. Nothing is forced; everything coalesces. It is that intimacy, which becomes *Peregrine's* quiet strength.

Pasqua's "Gumbo Time" opens with a sly nod to New Orleans, its rhythmic undercurrent gently simmering rather than boiling. The trio resists caricature, opting instead to evoke the city's spirit through color and space. On "BeBop", Keith Jarrett's affectionate gesture to the tradition, the pianist delivers crisp, articulate bop lines, while Colley commands his instrument with muscular assurance. All the while, Erskine keeps the tune moving with interesting timekeeping figures. As The Beach Boys' driving force, Brian Wilson wrote "God Only Knows"

(for the group's 1966 Capitol Records release, *Pet Sounds*), which dealt with the end of a romantic relationship. The rendition of the tune here is treated with reverence. Pasqua captures the reharmonization without disturbing its fragile heart, buoyed by Colley's full-bodied bass support. A welcome surprise is guest Kate Lamont's expressive vocal on Phoebe Snow's "Poetry Man". Two other guests, saxophonist Bob Sheppard and percussionist Brian Kilgore add subtle hues as well.

Throughout, one detects a seasoned patience that recalls the best piano trios of an earlier era. Erskine never crowds the music, offering guiding transitions with a light, decisive touch. Colley listens as much as he speaks, while Pasqua shades every phrase with a storyteller's instinct. The pianist's "Chillipso" delivers exactly what the title promises, easing a calypso lilt into something relaxed yet alert. He stretches the groove just enough to let the phrases develop, while Erskine colors the edges with percussive touches. In 1968, Jimmy Webb wrote "Wichita Lineman", which made *Rolling Stone* magazine's list of the 500 best songs of all time. Pasqua's arrangement here is quietly inventive, allowing the melody to linger; he reshapes the harmony with patience, letting Colley anchor the song, while the nominal leader's brushwork whispers in the background. Album closer is Pasqua's "Dear Chick", on which the trio offers a perky salute to the unattributed "Chick" (presumably pianist Corea).

Throughout, Pasqua's harmonic imagination, Erskine's clarity and Colley's grounding, create a dialogue that feels both immediate and enduring. Even at its most understated, this trio evokes history, friendships and a shared musical language.

For more info visit [hardwagrecords.com](http://hardwagrecords.com). Erskine is at Village Vanguard Jun. 16-21 (with Fred Hersch). See Calendar.

(GOTHAM FESTIVAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

Lounge, singer-banjo player and entertainer **Bryce Edwards**, who's deeply immersed in the '20s, has the period's mannered singing style down pat. He's a one-man revivalist, unearthing such material as Walter Donaldson's 1920 song "'Tain't No Sin (To Dance Around in Your Bones)" —sourced from the sultry Lee Morse 1930 recording. Edwards also brought out the gifted theatrical singer, Reilly Wilmit, for some sweet duets.

Following Edwards in the 4th Floor Lounge, and filling the afternoon slots, were the solo piano of **Mathis Picard**—an extraordinary, classically-trained player who offered two originals of astounding complexity and pianistic skill—and the young trumpeter **Summer Camargo**. At 24, she stood out in the crowded festival program, bringing both high energy and interpretive smarts to her trio's renditions of music generations older than herself. She also proved to be an effervescent presence. Camargo's playing, with ample use of the mute, was assured, assertive, inventive and respectful of the source material—plus she barely needed a microphone.

In the 2nd Floor Ballroom, trumpeter **Alphonso Horne** and the Gotham Kings began with a robust New Orleans-style second line. This aggregation (in Kermit Ruffins' territory) had energy to spare and a really strong ensemble of musicians. Special mention should be made of **C. Anthony Bryant**'s uniquely-styled and phrased baritone vocals and the leader's thrilling high-note specialties. The music was deep in the Crescent City groove, and included a great gospel medley. Overlapping in the 3rd Floor Ballroom, **The Hot Toddlies Jazz Band**, whose lineup included festival organizer, drummer **Patrick Soluri**, were in fine fettle, and featured several singers: **Hannah Gill**'s warm vocals on "In a Mellotone" and "I'm Confessin'"; **Justin Poindexter** sang as well as played guitar; and trumpeter **Michael Cruse** stepped up for a stellar "St. James Infirmary Blues". Later in the evening, in the 2nd Floor Ballroom, Poindexter and vocalist-accordionist **Sasha Papernik**, plus special guests, offered *Always: An Irving Berlin Tribute to Ken Peplowski*. The tribute to Berlin was originally scheduled to feature the late and much-missed tenor saxophonist-clarinetist, who passed away in February and whom Poindexter described as "the world's greatest clarinet player, something nobody would dispute." Papernik's exuberant vocal led with Berlin's first international hit, "Alexander's Ragtime Band" (though churlish critics have pointed out it's not actually a ragtime song). While the theme was Berlin, there were outliers in Bernice Petkere's "Close Your Eyes" (Ella Fitzgerald did a fabulous version, and so did Papernik) and Cole Porter's "Don't Fence Me In".

The early evening slot in the 2nd Floor Ballroom was occupied by **Elizabeth Bougerol & Her Band**, which featured two trombonists. Her material—"When My Sugar Walks Down the Street" (1924), "You and the Night and the Music" (1934)—is of the period, but her singing was tinged with modernism. After a short breather, in the primetime evening slot on the 2nd Floor, Bougerol appeared with the popular **The Hot Sardines**, where she also seemed open to tinkering with the formula, turning "Love Potion #9" into impeccable swing. Competing in the 3rd Floor Ballroom was **Imani Rousselle**, singing with the exceptional **Eyal Vilner Big Band**; she is a true find, whose emergence fully-formed is reminiscent of Samara Joy. On material that ranged from "'Tain't What You Do (It's The Way That You Do It)" and "Darktown Strutter's Ball" to "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?", she demonstrated the full package: wide vocal range, stage presence, control and power. Vilner directs the band when he's not playing alto saxophone or flute, and the musicians are drilled to a fine point. This group really brought out the dancers too, as the floor was packed. The **Gordon Webster** Band played between The Hot Toddlies and

Vilner slots, and later, after Waldo's Gotham City Band's appearance, Webster led the 4th Floor Lounge jam session.

And what of the 2nd Floor Lounge? That was the VIP Room and Artist Lounge where featured artists included pianist-vocalist **Quintin Harris**, pianist **Evan Palazzo** and **Bryce Edwards**' Frivolity Tri-Oh. Closing out the evening in the lounge was polymath, historian, pianist extraordinaire, **Jon Weber**. His gig became a challenge match, with lounge patrons sending out requests, trying to stump him. They never did.

Gotham Jazz Festival's strong turnout (significantly up from last year's edition) and crowded dance floors underscored optimism about the strong future of NYC's swing scene, which is filling several city venues weekly through Soluri's Prohibition Productions, in band residencies at Birdland and beyond.

For more info visit [gothamjazzfestnyc.com](http://gothamjazzfestnyc.com)

(R.I.K. FESTIVAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

mic and to his own body to produce a didgeridoo-like drone. Karlson stretched a plastic tube under her bass strings; Neuberger rubbed rolls of masking tape across his drumheads in a sort of extended-technique cabaret. A scheduled set by vibraphonist Selendis Sebastian Alexander Johnson's group proceeded despite the illness-related absence of its leader. The remaining trio, including **Orchid McRae** (drums) and **Shogo Yamagishi** (bass), kept up a restless undertow while the playing of **Matei Predescu** (keyboard) spread out into ambient space.

In a first-time duo with drummer **Warren "Trae" Crudup III**, visual artist **Ximena Bedoya** transformed the pedal steel guitar into an experimental sound sculpture, vibrating the strings with e-bows and altering pitch by placing and removing small metal objects on rotating jewelry-display turntables. The result was as arresting visually as it was musically, producing wavering drones and ghostly overtones that at times resembled birdsong or distant train whistles, and Crudup met her there, in motion across the kit, with a constantly shifting wash of percussion. Night one closed with the 16-piece **Sam Day Harmet Soundpainting Collective**, spilling off the stage with four horns stationed up the staircase behind it. Harmet conducted using Walter Thompson's hand-signal, conduction vocabulary. Thompson, the inventor of Soundpainting, played Wurlitzer at center stage. With electronics, children's toys and a sound collage built from Tylenol commercials and news broadcasts whose phrases vocalists caught and threw back, the performance took on the unruly energy of a happening, attention-skipping around the room as the piece composed itself in real time.

Opening night two, the **Daniel Carter, Ayumi Ishito, Yuko Togami** trio delivered one of the festival's standout sets. They began with field-recording-like samples—water, birds, wings beating—and from there blurred the line between acoustic and electronic for thirty minutes. Ishito ran her tenor saxophone through processing that bent its sound into something between wind in a tunnel and a robot. Togami played drums the way Carter plays his horns: lighter than air, lyrical, patient. Carter (who switched between trumpet, alto and tenor) at one point dueted in a tenor pairing with Ishito, their instruments talking in a private code. The next trio collaboration—**John King, Jennifer Gersten, Jess Tsang**—went in the other direction: tense, drawn out, a thatch of clangs and agitated taps. King conjured a menacing drone on his electric guitar with e-bow, conventional bow, mixers and laptop; Tsang bowed the head of a concert bass drum, while Gersten attacked her violin with relentless pressure. The performance resembled a malfunctioning orchestra, teetering between precision and disintegration.

**On Ka'a Davis**' 3D Veve offered the festival's nearest approach to conventional song form with his Djuke Music, an African-rooted fusion with rock and free improvisation. Over Don McKenzie's drums and Davis' Jimi Hendrix-tilted theatrics, the band moved between abstraction and groove. Femi Shonuga-Fleming (the Providence-based sound artist who records as sadnoise) set up behind an impressive tangle of cables, and built a brief but memorable piece of dense, processed textures from sampled voice (through what looked like a school intercom mic), flute and an apparently homemade horn-and-coil device, before abruptly disconnecting a cable and ending the performance.

The weekend closed with **Hans Tammen**'s Third Eye Festival All Star Band, a large ensemble conducted by the festival's co-organizer. With Hooker, finally, behind the drum kit, a guitar army—King, Chris Cochrane, Mark Howell, Briggan Krauss—collided with the reeds of Dave Sewelson, Ras Moshe, Josh Sinton, plus synths and daxophone. The set cycled between maelstrom and minimalism and then, inexplicably, careened into the closing riff of The Beatles' "I Want You (She's So Heavy)", all while a smoke machine fogged the stage.

Even separated from the neighborhood that originally defined it, Rhythm in the Kitchen demonstrated the value of maintaining spaces where experimental musicians can gather without compromise. Geography may be negotiable. The need to make a room for this music is not.

For more info visit [rhythminthekitchen.bandcamp.com](http://rhythminthekitchen.bandcamp.com)

(LABEL SPOTLIGHT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

Dunn says. One artist who took that leap of faith is guitarist David Torn, whose *now i imagine a place not the same* was released last month. Dunn invited Torn for a studio visit even before *Kōu* was conceived. "We just totally hit it off from minute one," the guitarist-producer says. A subsequent breakfast meeting about 18 months later came with the invitation to produce a solo album. Dunn and Lee wanted a solo performance. Torn wanted it to be fully improvised. Coming to an agreement was quick. "The business thing took exactly an hour; we were all in agreement on how to proceed," Torn explains. "I think they have the ideas that are perfect for crazy people like me who believe that we shouldn't be marginalized by music fashion or style."

Torn himself is a studio geek who has worked on albums released by CMP, Cuneiform, ECM, Pi Recordings and Windham Hill. But working with *Kōu*, he was content in the role of instrumentalist. "Randall, you're the producer and you're a great mixer. You do this," he recalls saying. "I don't think I had a single note. Randall made a few edits, I may have done an overdub or two. Randall suggested adding a drone on one track." Creating the cover art was also a collaboration, between Torn and artist Arik Roper. Torn looked at Roper's portfolio and suggested mood and color schemes. (When he got the proofs, his only comment was that his hair should be whiter on the back cover portrait.) "The focus on how the artwork appears, everything is in place," he says. "It's more than a label, it's a big idea, featuring people who have singular voices."

This summer will see releases by cellist Aliya Ultan, sound artist-composer Robert Aiki Aubrey Lowe and bassist Henry Fraser. Dunn and Lee have about 30 future releases planned as well, but their dream project? A solo synthesizer record by Herbie Hancock. "We just have big blue-sky thinking all the time," Lee says.

For more info visit [kourecords.com](http://kourecords.com). *Kōu Records* curates *Roulette Jun. 24-25, featuring Aliya Ultan, David Torn, Eyvind Kang, Jessica Kenney and others. See Calendar.*