



*Spectrum*  
**Hiromi (Concord)**  
by Brian Charette

10 years since her last solo piano recording, Hiromi is back with *Spectrum*. In the press release, Hiromi speaks about how different moods in music evoke different hues. Hiromi's first piano teacher colored sections of her sheet music with pencil according to the feeling the passage had: red for fiery, blue for melancholy. Hiromi has developed a broad palette since then, investigating almost every kind of piano playing from counterpoint to ragtime. There are many brilliant unison passages and technical feats throughout *Spectrum* but, in general, the album finds Hiromi foregoing fusion pyrotechnics in deference to a grittier, bluesier sound.

"Kaleidoscope" starts with a minimal undulating motive, which slowly spirals out like a fractal with chasing harmonies and imitative counterpoint. Two-fisted funk snaps you back from your trance before a fugue takes over. The glassy interlude has shimmering chords and ripping ascending thirds that never miss. Blues wails cue the classic boogie-woogie bass pattern of "Yellow Wurlitzer Blues", a cycle of fifths quickly modulating as Hiromi puts the grease on the top. The advanced harmony of the bridge serves as a foil to the blues of the "A" section and brings back the tricky

turnaround, promptly peppered by double-time bop.

The title track is a futuristic folk dance with low-octave stabs, rapid-fire repeated melody and a gorgeous middle section of climbing chord clusters and melismatic grace notes. "Mr. CC" is straight-up ragtime delivered with crisp perfection, a sneaky 7/4 cueing the schmaltzy bridge played in swinging stride with a tinkly high solo before the recapitulation.

Piano enthusiasts of every kind will enjoy this every-decade treat from the gifted pianist. This new recording shows maturity, creativity, blazing solos and surprising juxtapositions of style.

For more information, visit [concordmusicgroup.com](http://concordmusicgroup.com). This project is at Sony Hall Oct. 19th-20th. See Calendar.



*Swing Out!*  
**Eyal Vilner Big Band (s/r)**  
by Scott Yanow

First formed around a decade ago as a modern bop-oriented orchestra (their debut recording included such songs as "Woody'n You" and "Un Poco Loco") the Eyal Vilner Big Band has gradually evolved into a much more swing-based band that plays for jitterbugging dancers. *Swing Out!*, its fourth release, makes the case that it is one of the most versatile and

hard-swinging units in its field.

The dozen selections are full of surprises and consistent joy. Vilner's opening original "Downhill" introduces the group as a fairly conventional big band touched by the influence of Count Basie. That all changes on "In A Mellow Tone" which, rather than emulating Duke Ellington as expected, has Brianna Thomas singing vocalese lyrics based on an obscure Trummy Young trombone solo.

A rollicking "Dinah" by Harry Akst-Sam M. Lewis-Joe Young, Louis Alter-Eddie DeLange's "Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans" (highlighted by James Zollar's trad trumpet) and W.C. Handy's "St. Louis Blues", which is partly based on a Louis Armstrong solo, find the band sounding quite credible hinting at both New Orleans jazz and early swing.

Brandon Bain's vocal on Bob Haymes-Alan Brandt's "That's All" (with Vilner taking a fine alto solo) is '50s swing, "Big Apple Contest" from the 1939 film *Keep Punchin'* is a riff-filled dance number that cooks and Walter Donaldson-Gus Kahn's "My Baby Just Cares For Me" is based on Nina Simone's hit version of the late '50s. The other numbers are Vilner's solid swinger "Going Uptown", a rock-and-rollish "5-10-15 Hours" (a big hit for Ruth Brown written by Rudy Toombs), Sholom Secunda-Jacob Jacobs' "Bei Mir Bist Du Schon" and an episodic and adventurous take on the traditional song "I'm On My Way To Canaan Land", which includes a free section, a gospel-flavored vocal by Thomas and some complex ensembles worthy of Ellington.

While there are some fine short solos, it is the band's spirit that is most memorable, *Swing Out!* is a delight for both listeners and swing dancers.

For more information, visit [eyalvilner.com](http://eyalvilner.com). This band is at The Django Oct. 16th and Birdland Oct. 20th. See Calendar.

*Pianist and Vocalist*  
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Jazz Singer/Songwriters

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celebrating the release of new album  
*Sailing Home*  
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**Peter Eldridge**

8:30pm

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