

# Enesco Re-Imagined



## PRESS KIT

Inspired and dedicated to the work of 20th century classical genius Georges Enesco - **Enesco Re-Imagined** was conceived by Romanian born jazz pianist LUCIAN BAN and American bassist extraordinaire JOHN HEBERT as a celebration and a contemporary jazz *re-imagination* of the works of the great Romanian composer.

Featuring an A list of New York most celebrated jazz musicians – **Ralph Alessi, Tony Malaby, Gerald Cleaver, Mat Maneri, Albrecht Maurer or Joyce Hammann** and Indian tabla legend **Badal Roy** – the album was recorded live at the 2009 Enesco International Festival in Bucharest and was released to critical acclaim by the award winning Sunnyside Records in NYC.

Called by some critics “*a Third Stream extravaganza*” the Ensemble has performed major venues and Festivals on both sides of the Atlantic and is currently touring worldwide (with support from Romanian Cultural Institute in Bucharest) celebrating the release and the work of George Enesco and to illuminate what **Yehudi Menuhin** called “*The 21st century as the century of Enesco*”.

PRESS PRAISE for “Enesco Re-Imagined”

**The New York Times** “*Sparkling new album...*”



*“A spectacular, dreamy affair, rooted, in the celebrated musical reality of the celebrated 19th/20th Century composer, George Enesco . . . Masterful writing!”*



\*VILLAGE VOICE PICK\* Stacey Anderson, Village Voice NY  
*“Trust us; this kind of night only happens once every three centuries”*



*“Enesco Re-Imagined is visionary third-stream music . . . This recording places Ban and Hébert among the great 21st-century interpreters.”*



*"Enesco Re-Imagined receives **CHOC** by Jazzman Magazine, FRANCE"*

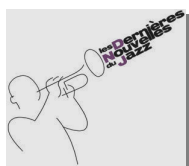


**\*TIME OUT NEW YORK'S TOP LIVE SHOW\***

*"A scary-good group . . . Both orchestrators look far afield . . . Indian percussionist Badal Roy shifts momentum even farther east . . . "*



*"Pianist Lucian Ban and bassist John Hébert have elegantly rearranged the compositions of famed Romanian violinist George Enesco, maintaining their spirit while breathing into them a driving jazz force..."* New York Magazine



*"A colossal work of re-writing the music of George Enesco . . . the group sounds like a 40 piece orchestra!"* by Jean Marc Gelin, **LES DERNIERS NOUVELLES DU JAZZ**, France



*"...interpretations driven by invention and flecked with both frenzy and repose. From sonata to symphony, **George Enesco's** pieces are sliced in a way that lets an Improvising brass/reeds/strings ensemble makes hay with scores that never had jazz in mind, but lend themselves to all sorts of creativity."*

Jim Macnie, Village Voice November 2010



**Mike D. Brownell** (Classical Critic for **All Music Guide**)

*"Recorded at the 2009 Enesco International Festival, the performances here have a lot to offer most listeners. Even purists who aren't big fans of altering original compositions will notice that reorchestrators Lucian Ban and John Hébert do so in a highly respectful manner; perhaps most surprisingly, Enesco's music truly lends itself well to this type of performance, and jazz aficionados may not even suspect that these works were drawn from a "classical" composer. Ban, Hébert, and their ensemble play with a pleasingly laid-back, relaxed mood".*



*" . . . Overall, the chamber-jazz expressionism of, say, Jimmy Giuffre will hold sway, even when drummer Gerald Cleaver kicks the volume level beyond ruminative territory."*

— K. Leander Williams, TONY

**TIME OUT NY**

*"Romanian pianist Lucian Ban, John Hebert and their collaborators have been wringing jazz ballads of melancholic beauty from the cannon of classical composer George Enesco for some years now . . . Here, in a band co billed with bassist John Hébert, Ban celebrates the release of a new live CD on Sunnyside, Enesco Re-Imagined."*

**“Enesco Re-Imagined” CD on the  
“BEST of 2010” lists of JAZZ JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION**



### **John Szwed’s “Best of 2010” list (JJA)**

- 1 Myra Melford The Whole Tree Gone Firehouse 12
- 2 Chris Lightcap Deluxe Clean Feed
- 3 Lucian Ban and John Hebert Enesco Re-Imagined Sunnyside**
- 4 Ches Smith and These Arches Finally Out of My Hands Skirl
- 5 Henry Threadgill This Brings Us to 2 Pi
- 6 Steve Coleman Harvesting Semblances and Affinities Pi
- 7 Norma Winstone. Stories Yet to Tell ECM
- 8 Claudia Quartet Royal Toast Cuneiform
- 9 David Weiss Snuck In Sunnyside
- 10 Scott Coley Empire Cam Jazz



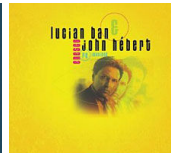
**John Szwed** is Professor of Music and Jazz Studies at Columbia University, Editor-in-Chief of the web site [JazzStudiesOnline.org](http://JazzStudiesOnline.org), and Acting Director of the Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University. He has authored or edited 15 books, and as a journalist has written for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Wire*, *Village Voice* and many other publications in the US and Europe. From 1979 to 1999 he wrote for the *Village Voice* Szwed has produced several recordings and has appeared in a number of documentaries and television specials.

### **Michael J. West’s “Best of 2010” list (JJA)**

1. Christian Scott, Yesterday You Said Tomorrow (Concord Jazz)
2. Vijay Iyer, Solo (ACT)
3. Regina Carter, Reverse Thread (E1)
4. Bill Charlap and Renee Rosnes, Double Portrait (Blue Note)
5. Jason Moran and Bandwagon, Ten (Blue Note)
6. Mary Halvorson Quintet, Saturn Sings (Firehouse 12)
7. Rudresh Mahanthappa & Steve Lehman, Dual Identity (Clean Feed)
8. Steve Coleman and Five Elements, Harvesting Semblances and Affinities (Pi)
9. Geri Allen, Flying Toward the Sound (Motema)
- 10. Lucian Ban & John Hebert, Enesco Re-Imagined (Sunnyside)**



**Michael J. West** is a music writer, historian, collector, and fanatic in Washington, D.C. His music-nerd friends call him “the Anti-Taste,” since taste suggests disliking some forms of music-and he doesn't. He also writes for *JazzTimes*, *Washington City Paper*, the *Village Voice*, and *Decider DC*, among others.



[Lucian Ban / John Herbert](#) | [Sunnyside Records](#) (2010) by Raul D’Gama Rose, CD Review Editor

The life and music of the prodigiously talented Romanian violinist, composer and conductor, **George Enesco** has been well-preserved and generously honored—not simply by the cognoscenti, but by the appreciative audiences of Romania’s George Enesco Festival, that was set up to propagate the music of the composer beyond its preservation in the museum that bears his name in Bucharest. This ingenious album of some of his best-loved work, by another extremely talented Romanian-born pianist and composer, Lucian Ban, is hardly surprising, then. Recorded at the biennial George Enesco Festival in 2009, and cleverly titled *Enesco Re-Imagined*, it is **a spectacular, dreamy affair**, rooted, no doubt, in the celebrated musical reality of the celebrated 19th/20th Century composer. Enesco was a great violinist and an even greater composer, who was beguiled by the world of music that spread across the globe. In the late '20s, he was known to have taken his most famous pupil, Yehudi Menuhin, to a performance of a Gamelan orchestra from Indonesia that performed in Paris. Around that time, Enesco was also known to have rehearsed some music with Uday Shankar, the musician and dancer-brother of famous Indian sitarist, **Ravi Shankar**. Enesco also had a great ear for Romanian folk music and its influence can be heard throughout in his music. Set against this backdrop of Enesco's devotion to ethnomusicology, Ban's interpretations of the great Romanian composer's work are **brilliant, showing an astute understanding of Enesco's proclivities and also a deep understanding of the composer's work**—something shared by bassist **John Hebert**, who also shares in the credits as having arranged Enesco's work for this project.

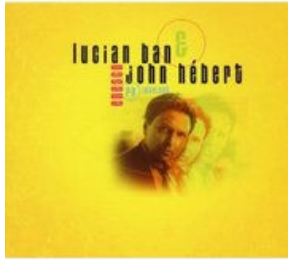
*Enesco's work is well-represented here*, from the beautiful scherzo for violin, viola, cello, bass and piano. "Aria in Eb," to the 2nd movement of the composer's unfinished, 4th Symphony. The writing for strings is exquisitely adapted for horns as well, and Ban also shows some ingenuity in his writing for percussion instruments, such as the tabla in the second movement of "Sonata No. 3," and elsewhere in the "Orchestral Suite" and "Symphony No. 4," and the trap drums throughout the album's scored work. The exquisite counterpoint of horns, strings and percussion in "Octet" demonstrates absolutely **masterful writing**, and shows Ban's sensitivity for Enesco's great ear for the sound palette. A spectacular pianist himself, Ban subdues his own pianism, but elevates his overall musical voice to soar with Enesco's throughout the set. Hebert's playing also displays great melodicism, as he negotiates very difficult parts of the score—typically in the adagio movement of Enesco's "Piano Suite No. 1." **This is a wonderful piece of work**, and hats off to Sunnyside for its foresight in seeing the ingenuity from Lucian Ban's perspective. Violinist Albrecht Maurer's work, as well as that of violist Mat Maneri, together with the rest of the ensemble—especially the percussionists—are additional testaments to this fine album.



Marlon Bishop: WNYC Culture Producer

Although little known even to some classical music enthusiasts, Georges Enesco is one of Romania’s greatest composers--or if you ask Romanian jazz pianist Lucian Ban, one of history’s most underrated talents. That’s one reason Ban decided to revisit some of Enesco’s folk-inspired 20th-century modernist works and recast them as large ensemble jazz explorations. Co-conspirator John Hebert’s bass is prominent in this rendition of Enesco’s **"Aria et Scherzino," a slow piece that has an ovation-worthy climax to please even the most ardent third-stream skeptics**. The duo celebrates its CD release tonight.





# JazzTimes®

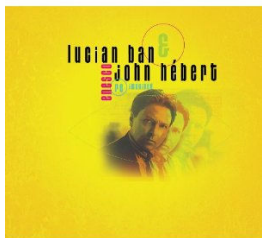
## Lucian Ban & John Hébert Enesco Re-Imagined

Sunnyside Records, March 2011 Print Issue, by [Michael J. West](#)

*Enesco Re-Imagined* is visionary third-stream music. That's undercounting the streams, actually; the album is a compound of musical compounds. Romanian composer Georges Enesco, whose work is here re-orchestrated by pianist Lucian Ban and bassist John Hébert, was known for molding *doina*—a Romanian folk form—into classical structures and settings. Upon this, Ban and Hébert superimpose avant-garde jazz interplay and improvisatory language via the frontline of trumpeter Ralph Alessi, saxophonist Tony Malaby, violinist Albrecht Maurer and violist Mat Maneri. Drummer Gerald Cleaver finds a percussive ally in Bengali tabla player Badal Roy.

While Maurer is the major melodic force, Roy makes the album. His tablas supplement the Gypsy dance rhythms and provide the backbone to “Octet for Strings, Op. 7,” and he combines the percussion with vocal chants on three other tracks. The effect is particularly stirring on “Orchestral Suite No. 1, Opus 9: Prelude,” when Roy melds with Hébert and Cleaver in the low-key but relentless thump of the fusion era, while Maneri improvises darkly over it. Nearly as powerful is Alessi, whose trumpet work is unblemished and elegant. He weeps on “Aria et Scherzino, Aria,” glories in flourishing “Octet for Strings,” and all but prances out of the speakers with his solo (interpolated by Ban) on “Sonata No. 3, Op. 25-Malincolio.”

Nevertheless, Hébert and Ban are the stars here. The pianist insists in his liner notes that Enesco belongs in the pantheon of 20th-century composers, and this recording places Ban and Hébert among the great 21st-century interpreters.



Review by CARL ABERNATHY, West Lafayette

### Lucian Ban and John Hébert: 'Enesco Re-imagined'

I hadn't planned to rip pianist Lucian Ban and bassist John Hébert's new CD, "Enesco Re-imagined," to my computer for a while. But after buying the album this morning, I plopped it into my car stereo and *gorgeous melodies started exploding into wild layers of sound.*

I couldn't wait to listen to the music on my iPod as I walk the dog, because the colors are every bit as vivid as the fall leaves on the trees that line the streets in my neighborhood. Good thing I loaded the CD into my computer, too, because the disc includes extensive liner notes that tell the engaging story of George Enesco (Georges Enesco), a Romanian composer and violinist who was one of the great musical talents of the 20th century. Ban, a fellow Romanian, also explains in detail how they translated Enesco's classical compositions into dynamic jazz renderings.

And trust me, *the music is among the most dynamic Third Stream jazz I've heard in recent years.* One of the most amazing things about it, at least to me, is that the album was recorded live at a festival bearing Enesco's name. Trumpeter Ralph Alessi, tenor saxophonist Tony Malaby, violist Mat Maneri, violinist Albrecht Maurer, drummer Gerald Cleaver and percussionist Badal Roy help Band and Hébert that sound like eight classical/free jazz symphonies on each song.

In other words, get ready for an hour of sensory overload. That's good, though, because I expect to hear something fresh with every listen. And Enesco's compositions provide a cohesive base that makes the individual explorations make sense. It's a fabulous album. Check it out if you can !



Par Jean-Marc Gelin pour **LES DERNIERES NOUVELLES du JAZZ, France**

C'est à un colossal travail de réécriture pour cuivres et cordes de l'oeuvre du compositeur roumain Georges Enesco (1881-1955) que se sont livrés le pianiste et compatriote Lucian Ban et le contrebassiste américain John Hebert pour ce travail présenté en public à.

Comment rendre compte d'une oeuvre aussi complexe que celle de Enesco tout en la modernisant, en la relisant mais sans toutefois la trahir. C'est l'audacieux pari des deux co-arrangeurs qui, c'est le moins que l'on puisse dire ont livré là une oeuvre orchestrale d'une incroyable densité. Si dense d'ailleurs que (tel qu'on pourrait le dire d'un livre) elle a un peu tendance à nous tomber des mains. Il est vrai que la complexité de cette musique s'illustre par la multiplicité de ses grilles de lecture. Chaque morceau ouvre d'innombrables tiroirs avec un art consommé du "passage". Les influences s'y mêlent tout en restant très liées à la musique de chambre du compositeur Roumain, à l'exception toutefois du dernier thème tiré de la *Symphonie Inachevée* de 1935.

Avec pour base une formation orchestrale réduite, les deux arrangeurs parviennent à faire sonner et à donner à l'oeuvre une très vaste dimension orchestrale.

A l'ouverture, *Aria et Scherzino* présente une version très classique, fidèle aux intentions de son créateur. Histoire de garder les repères en tête. Mais tout de suite après *l'Octet for Strings Op 7*. S'ouvre sur des rythmes tribaux grâce aux tablas que les arrangeurs ont eu cette remarquable intelligence d'introduire et qui, tout au long de l'album vont ancrer leurs travaux au delà du folklore Roumain, dans un ancestralité prégnante et entêtante. Trait d'union entre l'histoire roumaine et la transversalité de l'oeuvre d'Enesco.

Mais Ban et Herbert n'oublie pas non plus ce que lui doivent les compositeurs de musique contemporaine. Ils ménagent ainsi quelques espaces d'improvisations libres, presque free dans des sortes d'insert, encadrés dans deux mouvements distincts. Il est en ainsi, après la mystérieuse *sonate pour violon n°2*, de la *sonate n°3 pour violon et piano* que Ralph Alessi et Tony Malaby parviennent à rendre plus étrange encore. *Orchestral suite n°1* comme son nom l'indique laisse l'orchestre s'exprimer librement et tracer des routes d'improvisation. A les entendre, ils seraient 20 ! Où l'on entend la présence incroyable de la rythmique portée par le mariage de Badal Roy et de Gerald Cleaver, pièce essentielle du dispositif auquel il insuffle un dynamisme qui sans lui ferait peut être défaut. Dans un dernier mouvement l'album s'achève par cette *Symphonie Inachevée* (là ils seraient 40 !!) dans une sorte de bacchanale, et de moment d'ivresse collective et communicative.

La multiplicité des approches et leur intelligence perdent néanmoins un peu l'auditeur confronté à l'ambition de l'oeuvre. Déconcerté aussi puisque tout se passe comme si, les arrangeurs hésitant sur le parti à prendre, et soucieux de ne pas dénaturer les intentions du créateur, choisissaient de ne pas choisir en ouvrant juste des fenêtres aussitôt refermées. Le travail, captivant, peu perdre aussi. D'autant que l'on ne peut s'empêcher de regretter les conditions d'enregistrement très médiocres qui, en laissant se perdre le son dans la salle, atténué considérablement la dimension orchestrale de l'oeuvre et ses ressorts rythmiques.

**DOWNTOWN**  
*Music* GALLERY

Review by BRUCE LEE GALLANTER,  
Downtown Music Gallery

**A serious contender for 2010 Top Ten Release!**

Enesco Re-Imagined (Sunnyside 281259; USA)

Romanian-born George Enesco was one of the greatest musicians of the 20th century - a violin virtuoso as well as a gifted and prolific composer (though history's memory reveres him as a player first). Enesco was a prodigy who graduated the Vienna Conservatory at 13, met Brahms, moved to Paris and studied with Gabriel Faure and was friends with Maurice Ravel. This disc contains a lengthy biography as a bonus feature as well as a live video version of one of his pieces played by this ensemble from a concert earlier this year, playable on computer. Since I am not familiar with any of Enesco's music, which is odd since I have upwards of a thousand discs by hundreds of 20th



century composers, I can't compare this with anything I know previously. "Aria et Scherzino" was composed in 1909 and is now more a hundred years old. It is a lovely, melancholy piece for delicate strings, calm piano and simmering horns. "Octet for Strings" starts with a tabla-led groove, Miles-like trumpet and superb Tony Williams-like drums, with strong solos from the trumpet & strings. This complex and compelling passionate music fits the superb skills of this ensemble so well. Lucian's final solo here is outstanding, as is Mat Maneri's dreamy solo near the end. Bravo! "Sonata No. 3 for Violin & Piano" has an endearing melody that reminds of those soundtracks that Morricone wrote for those Italian westerns of the sixties. Both Alessi on trumpet and Malaby on tenor sax take incredible solos here. The other thing that makes this band so special is the consistently spirited and inventive playing of the Ban/Hebert/Cleaver rhythm team. Other highlights include Badal Roy's tabla and vocal percussion, which are used most selectively to enhance certain sections of the appropriate pieces.

As November approaches, we find ourselves considering the most engaging, **best discs of 2010 - this disc is ABSOLUTELY a serious contender!** – *Bruce Lee Gallanter, Downtown Music Gallery*

## **all about jazz** Italy

**4\* Stars** by Enrico Bettinello

È dedicato al violinista e compositore romeno George Enescu [qui Enesco secondo il nome alla francese] questo interessante progetto condiviso dal pianista Lucian Ban - connazionale del compositore - e dal contrabbassista John Hébert [che molti ricorderanno con Andrew Hill e ora, tra gli altri, con Mary Halvorson].

Registrato al festival che ogni due anni viene dedicato a Enescu, il disco mette in pista una formazione davvero ragguardevole, con Albrecht Maurer al violino, l'esperto Badal Roy a tabla e percussioni e uno stuolo di talenti avant-jazz come Mat Maneri, Ralph Alessi, Tony Malaby, Gerald Cleaver a accendere gli arrangiamenti di alcune pagine del compositore.

Il grande interesse di Enescu per la musiche popolari del proprio paese e di altre geografie fornisce a Ban, Hébert e soci una serie di tracciati per costruire un omaggio che non sia una pedissequa "jazzificazione" delle partiture, ma che dalle belle composizioni del romeno aprano ipotesi di senso e di trasversalità.

Un po' come nel caso di Mahler per Uri Caine, il materiale originale fornisce a elaboratori intelligenti una serie di chiavi molte lontane da velleità *third stream* un po' stucchevoli, chiavi che Ban e Hébert utilizzano sia sul versante melodico che su quello della costruzione ritmica - a volte un po' irrigidita dall'uso delle tabla.

Gli impasti dei fiati e degli archi sono gestiti splendidamente, così come gli spazi solisti, nei quali ciascuno dei musicisti dimostra la propria sensibilità, contribuendo a un disco che ha la duplice qualità di farsi apprezzare da solo e di invogliare a riscoprire la musica originale di Enescu.

Record Label: [www.sunnysiderecords.com](http://www.sunnysiderecords.com)

Release date: October 26, 2010 (USA), November 10, 2010 (Europe & rest of the world).



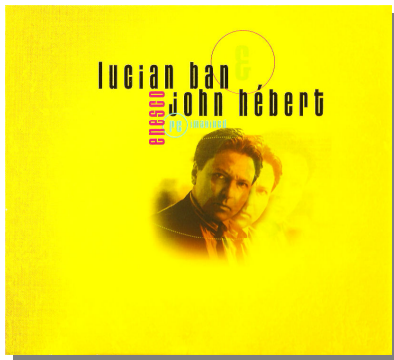
The Sunnyside release includes an enhanced CD with video and an electronic PDF booklet that features a full bio of Enesco plus personal notes from Ban and Hebert.

Marketing: Radio NPR & CMJ Stations, jazziness & web advertizing.

Europe Promo: NAÏVE France. [www.naive.fr](http://www.naive.fr) Distribution: ADA Global LTD, England.

Major support for "Enesco Re-Imagined" CD and project comes from Romanian Cultural Institute in Bucharest, a Romanian public body that promotes interest in Romanian culture abroad. [www.icr.ro](http://www.icr.ro)





**Ralph Alessi** – trumpet  
**Tony Malaby** – tenor saxophone  
**Mat Maneri** – viola  
**Albrecht Maurer** – violin  
**Lucian Ban** – piano & re-orchestrations  
**John Hébert** – double bass & re-orchestrations  
**Gerald Cleaver** – drums  
**Badal Roy** – table, percussion, voice

Recorded Live at 2009 George Enescu International Jazz Festival

More than a century after Romanian composer George Enesco was first introduced to European audiences, pianist Lucian Ban, together with renowned jazz bassist John Hébert, takes on Enesco's music legacy in this daring contemporary jazz re-imagining of some of his unique works for a stunning group of New York jazz iconoclasts.

#### Sunnyside Records Press Release

The combination of jazz and classical music isn't a new thing. Jazz musicians have looked to classical music for inspiration for a long while. Look no further than Charlie Parker and Igor Stravinsky or John Lewis with the Modern Jazz Quartet. There was even a defined movement in the Third Stream. It is the more recent efforts to reinterpret classical works that have proven the mettle of jazz musicians /composers.

Lucian Ban and John Hébert provide an astounding example while creating a distinct and original musical expression based on the framework of another on *Enesco Re-Imagined*. This work sets the bar high in bridging the divide between classical and jazz composition. The project certainly met the challenge head on and also provided a perfect opportunity for the meeting of two generations of Romanian composer/performers. Hopefully, Lucian Ban and John Hébert will increase the public's knowledge not only of a forgotten master but of his truly extraordinary descendents.



YouTube

OCTET <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7Xcc220kFY>  
3rd SONATA: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SDIHYPYJ6Ns>  
ARIA: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0DwTxCnGdY>



For more info, hear samples, etc: <http://sunnysidezone.com/album/enesco-re-imagined>