

HOME PAGE | MY TIMES | TODAY'S PAPER | VIDEO | MOST POPULAR | TIMES TOPICS

TimesSelect | Welcome, berthet | Member Center | Log Out

The New York Times **Music**  Arts  All NYT Search

WORLD | U.S. | N.Y. / REGION | BUSINESS | TECHNOLOGY | SCIENCE | HEALTH | SPORTS | OPINION | ARTS | STYLE | TRAVEL | JOBS | REAL ESTATE | AUTOS

ART & DESIGN | BOOKS | DANCE | MOVIES | **MUSIC** | TELEVISION | THEATER

MUSIC REVIEW | 'GUILLERMO KLEIN'

## A Wide World of Sound With an Argentine Beat



Julien Jourdes for The New York Times

The pianists Guillermo Klein, left, and Jorge Rossy at Merkin Concert Hall.

By NATE CHINEN  
Published: February 17, 2007

Over the last 15 years or so, the pianist and composer Guillermo Klein has made a study of the tensile and elastic properties of rhythm. Along the way, he has built some fascinating bridges between jazz, pop, classical music and the chacareras and tangos of his native Argentina. His best music also carries smart harmonic ideas and surprising bolts of lyricism, but virtually all of it deals purposefully with the subject of groove.

Certainly this was true on Thursday night at Merkin Concert Hall, where Mr. Klein presented new music in the hall's Zoom: Composers Close Up series. The results were scintillating, if a bit uneven: they highlighted the richness of Mr. Klein's musical universe while exposing its muted vulnerabilities.

Each half of the concert began with a dual-piano piece performed by Mr. Klein and Jorge Rossy, his neighbor in Barcelona. The first, "Bon Repos," was a shimmering exercise patently inspired by the phase-shifting efforts of [Steve Reich](#). (Mr. Klein owned up to the influence in the first of several winsome asides.) The second, "Tetris Suite," was more distinctive, gradually coalescing into something rounded and lyrical.

Mr. Klein and Mr. Rossy managed enough meticulous coordination to nearly erase the idea of two separate instruments. This was impressive mainly because Mr. Rossy is best known as a drummer, not a pianist. Yet the chromatic line and slippery pulse of "Tetris" found a far better foothold in what Mr. Klein called its afterthought, an adaptation for jazz quintet with its own title, "Yeso."

Like most of the evening's pieces, "Yeso" employed multiple layers of rhythm, with an asymmetry that felt logical and natural. And in addition to an atmospheric blend of timbres — Matt Pavolka's acoustic bass, Bill McHenry's tenor saxophone and Ben Monder's electric guitar — it featured a vocal turn in Spanish by Mr. Klein, whose quiet singing voice served a warm and humanizing purpose.

Generally speaking, the ensemble served as the better vessel for Mr. Klein's material, because its component parts could function with a degree of independence. Mr. McHenry and Mr. Monder were both conscientious stewards of this privilege, tempering extreme proficiency with selfless humility. In all the right ways, they disappeared into the music.

E-MAIL

PRINT

REPRINTS

SAVE

SHARE



[More Articles in Arts »](#)

### Movies Update E-Mail

Sign up for the latest movie news and reviews, sent every Friday. See [Sample](#)  
[christineberthet@attglobal.net](mailto:christineberthet@attglobal.net)   
[Change E-mail Address](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)



### MOST POPULAR

E-MAILED  BLOGGED  SEARCHED

1. [Housing Market Heats Up Again in New York City](#)
2. [With One Word, Children's Book Sets Off Uproar](#)
3. [Her Autistic Brothers](#)
4. [JetBlue's C.E.O. Is 'Mortified' After Fliers Are Stranded](#)
5. [From 0 to 60 to World Domination](#)
6. [Editorial: Making Martial Law Easier](#)
7. [Think Small](#)
8. [For Yale's Money Man, a Higher Calling](#)
9. [As Clinton Runs, Some Old Foes Stay on Sideline](#)
10. [Paul Krugman: Wrong Is Right](#)

[Go to Complete List »](#)



**Travel**  
nytimes.com/travel

### Is South Beach growing up?

Also in Travel:

- [Where you might find Jessica Alba or Hillary Duff in Miami](#)
- [Spend a weekend in South Beach](#)
- [What to see, eat and do in Miami](#)

ADVERTISEMENTS

So did Mr. Pavolka, with his bass ostinatos, and Mr. Rossy, who spent roughly half the concert on drums.

Moreover, Mr. Klein's quintet writing was simply more engaging than his pianocentric work. "Pigeons" suggested a sneaky brand of chamber jazz; "Iberia" resembled a pop song with a stubborn hiccup. "En Vic" began as a somber ballad but eventually surrendered to an upsweeping tempo modulation.

The concert's highlight, "Blues de Liz," exploited both a superimposed rhythmic tension (three beats over four) and a woozy sense of expansion and contraction. Hearing the song unfold was a bit like riding a painted horse on a malfunctioning carousel. It left the sensory memory of a journey, even though it ended right where it had begun.

[More Articles in Arts >](#)

[Cheat on New York and sneak off with Delta today.](#)

[The New York Times STORE](#)



NYT ESSENTIAL LIBRARY: OPERA  
[Buy Now](#)

[Need to know more? 50% off home delivery of The Times.](#)

Ads by Google

[what's this?](#)

**[A Touch of Jazz - NY Area](#)**

Elegant Jazz Band for Your Event Your guests will love it! Hear MP3s  
[www.touchofjazz.com](#)

**[Medeski Martin & Wood](#)**

An Acoustic Evening The Tarrytown Music Hall 4/26  
[www.tarrytownmusichall.org](#)

**[If You like Pat Metheny](#)**

You'll love the music of Mark Egan Listen Now!  
[www.wavetone.com](#)

**Tips**

To find reference information about the words used in this article, double-click on any word, phrase or name. A new window will open with a dictionary definition or encyclopedia entry.

**Past Coverage**

- [Review/Music; Holding Up a Mirror To Oddities of the Age \(October 5, 1992\)](#)
- [Review/Music; Dutch Quintet Skips From Old to New \(February 25, 1989\)](#)
- [Reviews/Music; Fad and Fashion in Modern Works \(February 25, 1989\)](#)
- [Review/Music; A Guitarist From Italy \(January 7, 1989\)](#)

**Related Searches**

- [Music](#)
- [Merkin Concert Hall](#)
- [Klein, Guillermo](#)

INSIDE NYTIMES.COM



**TimesSelect**



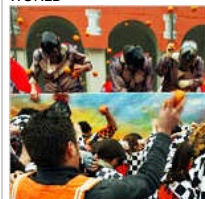
**Barry: The Coroner of Munchkin City**

BOOKS »

**Engines Roar, Hearts Race**

Harlequin, publisher of romance novels, begins a meaningful relationship with Nascar.

WORLD »



**In Italian Town, It's Time to Pelt the Neighbors**

WEEK IN REVIEW »



**Killed in Action, but Not by the Enemy**

**TimesSelect**

**Liptak: When Lawyers and Juries Mete Out Punishment**

U.S. »



**Pipeline Puts Alaska's Governor on the Spot**