



MELISSA STYLIANOU FEATURING GENE BERTONCINI & IKE STURM

# DREAM DANCING



**MELISSA STYLIANOU**, voice  
**IKE STURM**, bass (tracks 1-8, 10)  
**GENE BERTONCINI**, guitar (tracks 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10)

1. **SWEET AND LOVELY** (3:57)  
*Gus Arnheim, Charles N. Daniels, Harry Tobias*  
Anne Rachel Music Corp, Range Road Music Inc, Sony/ATV Tunes LLC, Tobias Harry Music (ASCAP)
2. **IF YOU NEVER COME TO ME** (4:50)  
*A.C. Jobim*  
Ipanema Music Corp (ASCAP), Corcovado Music Group (BMI)
3. **MY IDEAL** (5:16)  
*Richard A. Whiting, Newell Chase*  
Sony ATV Harmony (ASCAP)
4. **IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU** (3:20)  
*Jimmy Van Heusen*  
Sony ATV Harmony (ASCAP)
5. **FOR CHET** (4:29)  
*Gene Bertoncini*  
Four Mile Music LLC of Louisburg (ASCAP)
6. **PERDIDO** (3:30)  
*Juan Tizol*  
Lindabet Music Corporation, Tempo Music Inc. (ASCAP)
7. **CORCOVADO** (4:58)  
*A.C. Jobim*  
Corcovado Music Corp. (BMI)
8. **TIME'S A-WASTIN'** (5:24)  
*Edward Kennedy Ellington, Mercer Ellington*  
Ricki Music Company, Tempo Music Inc, The Duke Ellington Heritage LLC (ASCAP)
9. **MY ONE AND ONLY LOVE** (5:45)  
*Guy Wood*  
Colgems EMI Music Inc, Warlock Corporation (ASCAP)
10. **IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SPRING** (5:41)  
*Richard Rodgers, lyrics: Oscar Hammerstein II*  
Williamson Music Co. (ASCAP)



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IKESTURM.COM  
GENEBERTONCINI.COM  
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Recorded by MARK CONESE at Ambient Recording Company,  
August 10 & 11, 2018 Assisted by ANDY CASELLA  
Mixed by BRIAN MONTGOMERY, February, 2019  
Mastered by RANDY MERRILL at Sterling Sound, November 21, 2019  
Design by JAMIE BREIWICK, B Side Graphics  
Band Photo by BRANDON SARGEANT  
Live Photos by LESLIE dela VEGA  
Produced by MELISSA STYLIANOU & IKE STURM

Gene Bertoncini plays Buscarino Guitars and LaBella Strings  
Ike Sturm plays Gerold Genssler Strings





# DREAM DANCING

Years ago, when my fellow critic Ben Ratliff was filing overnight gig reviews for The New York Times, he was keen on covering not just the hottest new artists but also the city's countless hidden treasures. He found one in the unassuming guitar legend Gene Bertoncini. On March 5, 2008 Ratliff wrote about Bertoncini's solo set at La Madeleine on West 43rd Street. It was just one among many of Bertoncini's evenings there — a humble restaurant gig that lasted 18 years, facilitating endless musical invention — and it prompted Ratliff to offer the following: “Bertoncini enfolds [melodies] in capacious six-string chords and contrary-motion harmony ... using the whole range of the guitar.”

On Dream Dancing we get to hear what that description evokes. This is a player who can access and execute the most inspired ideas on the fly yet with clear intention, all with an ear turned toward the arrangement, the big picture. With vocalist Melissa Stylianou and bassist Ike Sturm, the layers multiply. And magic happens. Dream Dancing captures a marvelously intimate trio encounter between an elder statesman and two gifted collaborators, all dearest of friends across a span of generations.

For Sturm the relationship is like family: he met Bertoncini at age 15 through his late father, the renowned composer and educator Fred Sturm, and the two formed a musical bond that led years later to extensive duo gigs in and around New York. It was Sturm who then introduced Bertoncini to Stylianou, a passionate devotee of the Great American Songbook and charter member of the acclaimed jazz vocal trio Duchess. For the vocalist, new interpretive pathways and intricacies deep within these songs became apparent thanks to Bertoncini's subtle voicings and empathetic listening. This, she learned, was the real meaning of musical collaboration. Like Sturm, Stylianou became enamored of Bertoncini's seemingly effortless, welcoming approach, and a lasting friendship took root.

Bertoncini's distinctive nylon-string sound made a big impression on the young Sturm and remains a model for his own bass sound to this day (the influence of Bertoncini's longtime duo partner Michael Moore is also paramount). That deep current of acoustic guitar in Sturm's oeuvre is notably apparent in his Endless Field duo with the versatile Jesse Lewis. And Stylianou's vocal presence in Sturm's newest ensemble project Heart deepens even further the multifaceted connections between these extraordinary musicians.

Both marvel at how Bertoncini, 84 as of this writing, still discovers ways to refine his artistry and grow as a musician. He could afford to sit back after a lifetime of experiences working with Chet Baker, Lena Horne, Nancy Wilson, Benny Goodman, Buddy Rich, Wayne Shorter, Hubert Laws, Paul Desmond, Tony Bennett and many more. But Bertoncini is even more stimulated by the collaboration and exchange of ideas with a younger generation of artists. Dream Dancing captures those special moments with crystal clarity.

— David R. Adler

