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Live Jazz: Dream Street and Bobbi Page at Vitello's

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By Don Heckman

There's no group quite like Dream Street. True, there was a boy band with the same name active for a few years around the turn of the century. But they were nothing like the seven person Dream Street ensemble that took the stage for a delightful Valentine's celebration Thursday night at [Vitello's](#).

Start with the remarkably intriguing instrumentation: violin, cello, bassoon, guitar, bass, percussion and vocals. Not exactly the line-up one often sees on stage in a jazz club. And, even more uniquely, not the music one usually hears in that setting, either. Dream Street, under the direction of guitarist/arranger/composer Stan Ayeroff, with the vocal styling's of Bobbi Page, brings fascinating perspectives to an imaginative range of material, from Songbook classics to original songs.

Thursday night's program was an impressive display of all that and more. Over the course of twenty songs the Dream Street program offered a program that never faltered, maintaining an irresistible sequence of compelling songs.

Page was at the heart of the action. A busy and successful studio singer whose voice can be heard on countless soundtracks and recordings, she is also a dynamic performing artist in her own right.



Bobbi Page

Singing almost every number, she applied her warmly expressive voice and rich interpretive qualities to such standards as "Just One of Those Things," "Night and Day," "Why Don't You Do Right," "I Got Rhythm," the classic bolero "Cuando Vuelve A Tu Lado" ("What A Difference A Day Makes") and, of course, "My Funny Valentine." In one of the

evening's memorable moments, both "What'll I Do?" and the Ayeroff original, "To Us, To Life, To Love" were sung with the intimate accompaniment of Ayeroff's guitar.

But Page didn't stop there, also adding other originals by Ayeroff, including "All Those Things" (sung in Portuguese) and the touching "Make Me A Poet" and "Highway of Love."



Sid Page, Leslie Lashinsky and Bobbi Page

The setting for each song made the most of the unusual timbral qualities of the instrumentation, particularly well seasoned by the lush tones of Leslie Lashinsky's bassoon. At times, Page's voice was arranged as another element in the luxurious blend of Alisha Bauer's cello, Sid Page's violin and Lashinsky's bassoon. Faster tunes such as "Centerpiece" were driven by the gently swinging rhythms of bassist Tim Emmons and percussionist Brian Kilgore.



Brian Kilgore, Bobbi Page, Stan Ayeroff and Tim Emmons

As I said earlier, there's nothing quite like Dream Street and Bobby Page. If their names are unfamiliar to you, they shouldn't be. New musical experiences are always welcome. And the Dream Street players and Bobbi Page have a seemingly endless supply of eminently listenable new material to offer.

Don't miss Dream Street the next time they make a welcome appearance in your neighborhood. But if that opportunity doesn't arise, check out their self-titled CD, which includes many of the songs performed at Vitello's.

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