

LILI AÑEL



Lili Añel considers music a calling. This six-foot tall singer-songwriter grew up in New York City, where she discovered her passion for music. As a child Añel remembers, singing along to her mother's Cuban, jazz and pop standard albums. It was also her mother who supported Lili's desire to join the church choir. However, it was her grandfather's recognition of how much joy singing brought to her being, which served to set her feet firmly on the path of a career in music. "My grandfather was very influential and instrumental," says Lili. "When I sang in the church choir, he would sneak in to the Mass without telling me. I would ask him later, after letting him know that I saw him in the back, why he came to church at all and then left before it was over. His response was: "To hear you sing. I can hear your voice above the others."

A Philadelphia resident since 2004, Añel has continued to move audiences with her songs, both of hope for the future, and standing in her truth of life's difficulties and conjuring the strength for perseverance. All delivered with her voice, full of low reaches which one feels in their center or a falsetto that is vulnerable and sweet. Of her songs she says "they are snapshots of life and situations I've observed or have experienced, even if not to the letter. I may embellish or change an ending or just make the whole thing up".

While receiving airplay from radio stations across the country, Lili has been embraced by Philadelphia station WRTI 90.1 FM that has offered her tremendous support and has included her, most recently in their series "**NPR Live Sessions From Home**" which featured artist-produced video performances created during the Covid Pandemic. "I am so happy and excited to have the support of WRTI. They are a huge part of the music that encompasses what Philadelphia is about. Living here I feel very much a part of this city and what it is musically", says Añel.

Defying categorization she calls her music a hybrid of "jazz/folk/soul/pop" combined with powerful vocals bringing her to the forefront. Lili continues to win over audiences with her vocal stylings, guitar playing and songs, that while often recalling her many influences (Joni Mitchell, Steely Dan, Janis Ian, Joan Armatrading) prove her own unique style. With reference to this Lili says "I am a sum of many parts ethnically and my music reflects this. I have many influences, but I am totally me. When I am asked "what kind of music do you play? My response is always "I play Lili music". She studied voice and performance at *City College's Leonard Davis Center of Performing Arts* and would later attend classes at *Eddie Simon's Guitar Study Center*. Only able to afford one class, she would audit as many other classes as possible each semester, eventually gaining the respect of her instructors who admired her rigor, allowing her to participate in class like the students who were fully enrolled. She began attending open mic

nights which led to her putting a band together and building a following, leading to the creation of her first record "**Laughed Last**" in 1994.

She has supported Cassandra Wilson, Madeleine Peyroux, Boz Scaggs, B.B. King, Raul Midon, to name a few. *Palmetto Records* released her first CD **Laughed Last** (1994), following with **Hi-Octane Coffee** (2002), **Dream Again** (2007), **Every Second In Between** (2009), all self-released. In 2007, *JazzTimes Magazine* said of Lili "...her songs are consistently excellent..." and proclaimed of her 2009 release "...a cd to blow your mind at first listen...". "**Every Second In Between**" (produced by Glenn Barratt) also made the All About Jazz 2009 Year End Writers Choice for the "10 Best New Jazz Releases" list, along with winning 3 NY Music Awards 2010, Best Singer-Songwriter, Best Jazz Album and Best Female Jazz Vocalist. 2013 saw her releasing, "**I Can See Bliss From Here**", along with 2017's "**Another Place, Another Time**" all receiving critical acclaim.

Better Days (remastered), scheduled for release October 2021, is a re-imagining of Lili's October 2019 album *Better Days*. As a result of the pandemic, the record never had a real chance to be heard or supported by live performances. This time Lili's co-producer Dale Melton who recorded, mixed and mastered the album was able to revisit it with fresh ears and make improvements. With two additional remastered tracks and new artwork the album is being properly marketed to radio stations and reviewers. One of the special bonus tracks is a live version of "Got Me Thinking", recorded at NPR station WRTI in Philadelphia. This stunning live track has never been publicly heard until now. The other bonus track "Climb The Wall" is one of Lili's most compelling songs from her 2013 album ***I Can See Bliss From Here***. In its remastered form the song sits perfectly with *Better Days (remastered)*. This captivating album is sure to please fans and critics alike. The first leg of the tour to support the record is booked with more to follow.

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Links:

NPR Live Sessions from Home - <https://livesessions.npr.org/videos/lili-anel-climb-the-wall>
NPR Live Sessions: <https://livesessions.npr.org/artists/lili-anel>