

Eight New Pieces of the Musical Good Stuff

Also: what I've been reading and listening to recently, and a check on how my newsletter is doing



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Not only is there more music than anyone can possibly listen to, there is also so much good new music that there's not enough hours in the days to listen to it all. On the one hand, this is a good thing. Creativity is alive and dare I say, thriving. On the other hand, finding where all this good new music is can be tough. And there's also trying to clear away a growing amount of, as Ted Gioia so well puts it, AI slop. So far this year, I have listened to over 125 new albums, including archival releases. In January, I recommended eight of them (read all about them [here](#)). I am pleased to share eight more.

I still pinch myself whenever a musician gets in touch with me. It's a reminder that what the writer/critic does and what the musician does do not simply get pitched into the ether. Lili Añel is a New York singer-songwriter who emailed me in February about her new album, *[You Have a Visitor](#)* (self-released). I'm so glad she did. It's something special.

With a small group of just Añel on guitar, Samuel Nobles on bass and Jonathan W. Whitney on drums, her music comes through direct and unvarnished. 'Saw the Light,' with a looping bass line by Nobles, is startling and addictive. It's a tip of the hat to Gil Scott-Heron and weaves together a tale of gritty New York, the search for truth and taking pride in oneself. The rest of the album is a triumph of personal songwriting. While Añel has been compared to Joan Armatrading, Joni Mitchell and Nina Simone, I hear the fierce independence of Phoebe Snow, Janis Ian and Norma Tanega laced deeply throughout *You Have a Visitor*. Check it out.

