

# Alex Harding & Lucian Ban

## Somethin' Holy

Alex Harding baritone sax | Lucian Ban piano

Detroit born baritone sax extraordinaire **ALEX HARDING** and Transylvanian expat pianist **LUCIAN BAN** have been collaborating for almost two decades, founding several groups together, releasing a handful of diverse albums for American and European labels, performing countless concerts and tours all the while documenting an amazing body of music.

*"In near-telepathic collusion, Harding and Ban mean what they say"*

**ALL ABOUT JAZZ**

The pair first release is **Somethin' Holy** (2001, CIMP Records) a duet album with "an arresting immediacy" featuring original compositions and Ellington's *Fleurette Africaine* showcasing the duo chemistry and musical concept. In reviewing the album for the print edition of All About Jazz **Terrell Holmes** says:

*"Ban plays with a fluency and sensibility that recalls Vladimir Horowitz as much as McCoy Tyner while Harding can break your heart with tenderness or shatter you with intensity"*



"Alex Harding and Lucian Ban have developed a fruitful partnership over the years. Harding's bluesy, church-steeped baritone sax is the logical heir to Hamiet Bluiett's, while Ban's tasteful, reflective piano playing combines the elegance and technical precision of the European classical tradition with wide-ranging musical interests and a passion for improvisation"

Jeff Stockton, **ALL ABOUT JAZZ**

- In 2003 their Quintet featuring drum legend **Barry Altschul** along with Jorge Sylvester, Chris Dahlgren was voted **"BEST SHOW OF THE YEAR"** by All About Jazz Magazine New York among shows by Cecil Taylor, Joe Lovano and others.
- In 2004 the quintet release of *Premonition* featuring Damion Reid on drums (of Robert Glasper Trio) Chris Dahlgren, Erik Torrente received **4\*** in an All Music Guide and glowing reviews in the jazz press.
- 2006 saw the apparition of the all star **TUBA PROJECT** featuring legendary **Bob Stewart** on tuba, **J.D. Allen** on tenor sax and **Derrek Phillips** on drums. Budd Kopman reviewing the album in AAJ says:

*"With The Tuba Project, Lucian Ban and Alex Harding have put together a raucous, bluesy, energetic, and at times ecstatic album. Drawing from deep roots in jazz and Afro-American music, these musicians play with a contagious abandon"*

**ALL ABOUT JAZZ**

- Alex Harding own group BLUTOPIA featuring Lucian Ban, Nasheet Waits, Brad Jones releases in 2006 on the Norwegian label Jazzaway - The Calling , to glowing reviews. JAZZ TIMES talks about **"musical sophistication and emotional depth"**
- Alex Harding & Lucian Ban have also recorded with soprano sax master **Sam Newsome** recording **The Romanian-American Jazz Suite** (Jazzaway Records, 2009), an album celebrating the amalgamation of Romanian folk songs and American jazz.

### Sound samples:

African Blutopia <https://soundcloud.com/soundluc/african-blutopia>

Resonance <https://soundcloud.com/soundluc/resonance>

Somethin' Holy <https://soundcloud.com/soundluc/somethin-holy>

### ALEX HARDING

Born in Detroit (baritone sax & bass clarinet) has worked and studied with Yusef Lateef at the University of Massachusetts in 1990, toured Europe performing "Porgy and Bess". Alex joined the **Julius Hemphill** Saxophone Sextet in 1993 then began working with people such as: Muhal Richard Abrams, Craig Harris, Lester Bowie, Clark Terry, Joe Bowie (Defunkt), Frank Lacy, Hamiet Bluiett, Oliver Lake, Greg Osby, David Murray (big band), **Sun Ra Arkestra** and the Queen of soul **Aretha Franklin** at the 2001 "Divas Live" at Radio City Music Hall in New York.

The critics have hailed him as **"the new voice on baritone saxophone, the carrier of the great legacy of Harry Carney, Pepper Adams and Hamiet Bluiett"**. Alex Harding has released several albums as a leader garnering glowing reviews and appeared as guest on more than 20 albums. [www.alexharding.net](http://www.alexharding.net)



### LUCIAN BAN

Pianist Lucian Ban has *"ricocheted among orthodox post bop, free jazz, and inspired hybrids—including his inventive arrangements of the music of Romanian composer George Enesco"* on his all star octet album Enesco Re-imagined (Sunnyside, 2009) co-lead with bassist John Hébert. In 2013 Ban's quartet Elevation released the *"blustery Mystery"* (Sunnyside. Ban also has a duo with American violist **Mat Maneri**, Transylvanian Concert (ECM, 2013), Peter Margasak, Chicago Reader). He has recorded 10 albums as a leader for labels such as Sunnyside, ECM, Jazzaway, etc. His latest album **"Songs from Afar"** by ELEVATION released by Sunnyside Records Jan 2016 received the 5\* review in DOWNBEAT Magazine. [www.lucianban.com](http://www.lucianban.com)