



WILLIAM MEYERS **MUSIC NEW YORK**

July 28 – August 29, 2020

ONLINE – Anastasia Photo is pleased to announce an exhibition of work by photographer William Meyers. *Music New York* is on view online at www.anastasia-photo.com, July 28 – August 29, 2020. A live virtual concert with musician Rhett Miller will take place on July 28 at 8.30pm.

Music New York explores the ways in which New Yorkers encounter music. In the eighteen photographs from the Music New York project featured in this exhibition, William Meyers captures both familiar and uncommon expressions of the city's musical culture.

For more than two decades Meyers photographed in the city's streets, subway stations, concert halls, auditoriums, churches, synagogues, cafes, parks and private homes. His interest was not in celebrity or any particular genre, but in performers of all levels of competence, in voluntary and captive audiences, and the symbolic markers of music's presence in the city.

New York has always had a rich musical culture. Now, as always, there are a large number of immigrants in the population and they bring the music of their native lands. Because it is a center of aspiration, talented and ambitious musicians come hoping for careers in opera, musical comedy, classical music, jazz and all genres of pop. And when, as is inevitable, most fail to make a living in music, they nonetheless continue to play for their own pleasure and that of their friends, in amateur groups, religious settings, and the occasional gig. More importantly, people who never had professional ambitions make music for the same reason people have always made music, because they are driven to it to express their souls.

Meyers, who has no musical ability and cannot carry a tune, was present at the 1956 Newport Jazz Festival when Duke Ellington and his orchestra launched into "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue." At that performance Paul Gonsalves' remarkable 27 chorus tenor sax solo got the crowd dancing and shouting and doing the rhythmic clapping still audible on the recording. Meyers was struck by the ability of music to move people so and conceived that musicians who went on stage and improvised were not just people of extraordinary talent, but exemplars of courage. That awe is part of Music New York.

WILLIAM MEYERS

William Meyers (b. 1938) is a New York photographer and a regular photography critic for the Wall Street Journal. He has also written for the New York Sun, The Weekly Standard, Commentary and Standpoint (UK). Besides Music New York, his photography projects include Outer Boroughs: New York Beyond Manhattan, Civics and Alternate Manhattan.

Meyers' photographs have been published in ARTnews, City Journal, the New York Times, and elsewhere. They have been exhibited in museums here and in Europe, and in group shows and solo gallery exhibitions. Meyers has lectured on photography at Queens College, the CUNY Graduate Center, SUNY Albany, and in Israel, and has been on panels at the AIPAD Photography Show and Aperture Foundation.

Portfolios of photographs by Meyers are in the permanent collections of the New York Public Library, the New York Historical Society, and the Museum of the City of New York, and are permanently hung in the Department of the Classics, Harvard University, and other institutions. Meyers' series Outer Boroughs: New York Beyond Manhattan was published by Damiani in 2015.

IMAGE: William Meyers, Uptown Bounce: Latin Disco, Museum of the City of New York, Upper East Side, 2017.

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