



# BEN THOMAS TANGO PROJECT

## The Hat with the Grin and the Chuckle

*"...an incredibly accomplished virtuoso...an improviser and composer of deep expressiveness, wit, and crisply focused execution... Thomas' music breaks some molds, but it never abandons a connection to tango's fiery melancholy, deep sense of groove, and rhythmic drive."* **Earshot Magazine**

Rooted deep in the traditional rhythms of Argentine tango, yet fearlessly modern in spirit, multi-instrumentalist Ben Thomas' compositions offer a rich tapestry of layered polyrhythms, inventive melodies, and surprising contrasts. Echoes of great bandoneon maestros like Dino Saluzzi, Astor Piazzolla and Osvaldo Pugliese may surface, but always refracted through Ben's personal vision and the splendid accompaniment of his longtime bandmates, clarinetist Eric Likkel & bassist Steve Schermer, along with violinists Laura Coronel and Elizabeth Phelps, and pianist Gabe Hall-Rodrigues. The album's title celebrates the memory of Seattle's larger-than-life French chef, Thierry Rautureau – well known as The Chef in the Hat - whose thriving bistro "LUC" served as the incubator for much of this music over Thomas' several years of performances there. *"...strong rhythmic structures, flowing tempo changes, melancholy, exuberant happiness - a beautiful tango nuevo album!"* **Jazz'N'More, Switzerland**

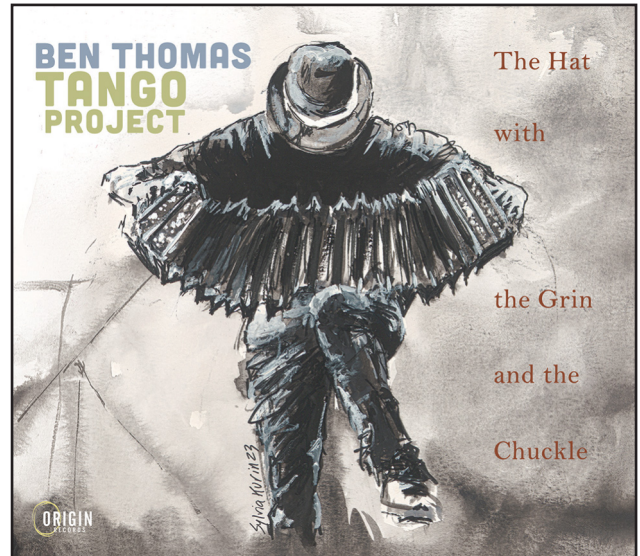
- 1 THE PROMISE OF MORNING 3:56
- 2 SONIA'S MASK 5:08
- 3 THE HAT WITH THE GRIN AND THE CHUCKLE 4:14
- 4 ERIC'S VALS 4:47
- 5 OTHER AFTERNOONS 5:22
- 6 AN UNAPOLOGETIC SHIFT OF PERSPECTIVE 5:00
- 7 VALLEY SHROUD 4:31
- 8 THE SECOND BRICK 3:58

COMPOSED, RECORDED & PRODUCED BY BEN THOMAS

## New Release

STREET DATE: August 22, 2025

RADIO ADD DATE: August 18, 2025



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### MARKETING:

- Home Markets: SEATTLE
- Publicity & Radio Promotion Campaign
- International Performances
- DownBeat full-page label ad
- [www.notesbyben.com](http://www.notesbyben.com)

BEN THOMAS BANDONEON, VIBRAPHONE, PERCUSSION  
ERIC LIKKEL CLARINET  
STEVE SCHERMER BASS  
LAURA CORONEL VIOLIN  
ELIZABETH PHELPS VIOLIN  
GABE HALL-RODRIGUES PIANO

Produced by Ben Thomas  
Recorded & mixed by Ben Thomas at Concinnity Studio, Seattle, WA  
Recorded February/March/April 2025  
Mastered by Ed Brooks at Resonant Studios, Seattle, WA  
Group photo by Jamie Maschler | Ben photo by Juliet McMains  
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