

THE GHOST, THE KING AND I



featuring **Scott Hamilton** & Strings


Sound Liaison

Scott Hamilton - tenor saxophone

Rob van Bavel - piano

Vincent Koning - guitar

Frans van Geest - bass

Hyemi Kim - violin

Jieun Kim - viola

Sohyeon Park - cello

1. I want to be happy (07:21)
2. Eu se qui vous te amar (05:21)
3. Everything I love 6:44
4. Sergei & Bill (03:22)
5. Goodbye Mr. Evans (07:09)
6. In the still of the night (08:22)
7. Weaver of dreams (07:27)
8. Autumn in New York (08:28)

Total runtime: 54:06

| Pure DSD256 recording | Pure DSD256 Master |

The original high-resolution recording (DSD256) was analog mixed and mastered through an HQ analog stereo chain to a DSD256 master.
All other formats are high-quality conversions of this master.



The Ghost, the King and I featuring Scott Hamilton & Strings

There's one moment from the short dress rehearsal before the concert I'll never forget.

Rob van Bavel was exploring Autumn in New York, his right hand pearls on a string, Koning and van Geest in perfect sync with Salon de Musique's lush background.

Right in the center of this breathing landscape of sound, **Scott Hamilton** was sitting, saxophone resting on his lap, head tilted slightly toward the piano, listening intently, eyes closed, a quiet smile unfolding.

Scott picked up his saxophone, played the final theme, then looked up and said, "Rob, that was so beautiful, man, what a hall, what a sound; I could live here."

This recording documents Scott Hamilton at a moment where introspection and scale converge. His playing is marked by a rare emotional candor, less a display of virtuosity than an ongoing process of self-examination. Each improvisation unfolds as a deliberate risk,

shaped by a willingness to engage uncertainty and to articulate his inner states without mediation.

To my ears, Hamilton approaches improvisation as a form of spontaneous creation, closely aligned with artistic disciplines in which revision is impossible and every intention must pass directly into action. Daring to play so on the fragile edge of true emotion is only possible when the surroundings are optimal, and here the award-winning trio of Frans van Geest (the Ghost), Vincent Koning (the King), and Rob van Bavel (the I) are on top of their game. Van Geest keeps the whole thing together with his big, warm double bass sound, while Koning's guitar adds warmth and dynamic color. These musicians are not trying to impress one another; they are simply playing because the act of playing itself brings them closer to something essential. Nothing is pushed, nothing declared. A phrase appears, lingers, and is gently followed to its natural conclusion.



Rob van Bavel often lays out a harmonic space that feels almost like an invitation, allowing Scott to wander freely within it; Vincent Koning and Frans van Geest, in turn, respond with lines that subtly shift the ground beneath them. In these moments, roles dissolve. What remains is a shared listening, where melody and harmony unfold as a single, intertwined pristine thought. And the delightful presence of the magnificent string trio Salon de Musique does not soften this vulnerability; instead, it frames and amplifies it. In my opinion, for this setting a string trio works better than using a full chamber orchestra; the trio does not cover up but blends in, leaving space for the improvised lines of the jazz musicians.



The repertoire, drawing on themes by Jobim, Cole Porter, Phil Woods and Rob van Bavel, is not treated as material to be transformed stylistically, but as a point of departure for Scott's dialogue with Rob, Vincent and Frans. The conversation is lovely, melodic, full of heartfelt expression. Some songs are beautifully framed by a broader composed sonic structure, provided by Salon de Musique. In Rob van Bavel's arrangements, the improvisors are neither absorbed nor opposed, but held in careful balance, resulting in music that welcomes you like a warm embrace.



Engineer **Frans de Rond** created the setup by placing the Josephson C700S microphone at the center, with Scott positioned just behind it. The other instruments were supported by spot microphones, carefully added to keep the soundstage created by the C700S fully intact. The session took place in Studio 1, world famous for its acoustics, sampled by Altiverb and used as a reverb sample on countless recordings. But here, present in Studio 1 itself, we had the real deal: the real hall surrounding each instrument, not a digital sample managed by an auxiliary pot.

When shaping the soundstage, Frans spent a great deal of time achieving the optimal balance between piano, bass, guitar, and string trio using only the C700S, placed in the "sweet spot" of Studio 1, before introducing the spot microphones. Within that image, Rob's Steinway was positioned to the left at 9:00, the bass at 11:55, the guitar at 12:05, and the string trio at 12:15.

Our aim was to create a sound field that felt intimate, yet offered enough depth to serve as a clear, visual representation of the musicians' positions. In that sense, we adopted the same philosophy Rob van Bavel applies in his arrangements: allowing the melodic voice of each instrument to stand out without ever overshadowing the whole. As a result, the piano and the string trio were given clearly defined positions within the sound field, rather than following the more common, radio-friendly approach where instruments are stacked on top of one another with little spatial distinction. The benefit of this approach is that it feels as if you can actually see the musicians in front of you, clearly placed between the speakers.

Peter Bjørnild



"Some musical meetings are too good to let go. When The Ghost, the King and I first played with Scott Hamilton in 2024, the connection was instant. The kind of chemistry that doesn't need discussion—you just know. Within days, we decided: we have to record this.

This album brings together three countries, three musical traditions. Dutch swing meets American jazz lyricism meets Korean classical refinement. Rob van Bavel's arrangements weave these worlds together, letting swing standards breathe alongside intimate ballads while Salon de Musique's strings add unexpected colors and depth.

Since 2008, The Ghost, the King and I have made their mark playing the music they love, the driving groove of Oscar Peterson, the smooth sophistication of Nat King Cole. Scott Hamilton needs no introduction to jazz fans. His tenor sound is unmistakable: warm, melodic, never showing off but always saying exactly what needs to be said.

The addition of Salon de Musique brings something distinctive to the session. The string trio doesn't just accompany, they're part of the conversation. Their classical background brings a different way of phrasing, adding new colors to familiar territory.

This is what happened on October 26, 2025 at Studio 1, Heuvellaan. No edits, no second takes. Just musicians listening to each other, finding their way through the music together."



This album features a blend of jazz standards, Brazilian classics, and original compositions, showcasing the versatility of the trio and string ensemble.

1. ***I want to be happy*** is a nod to the legendary 1958 recording by Stan Getz and the Oscar Peterson Trio.

2. ***Eu sei que vou te amar***, a beautiful bossa nova by Antônio Carlos Jobim and Vinícius de Moraes, was brought to this session by Scott.

3. ***Everything I love*** is a timeless classic chosen by Scott from the great Cole Porter songbook.

4. ***Sergei & Bill*** is my unique arrangement for the trio plus strings, built on the Adagio from the 2nd Symphony by Sergei Rachmaninov. This piece segues directly into:

5. ***Goodbye Mr. Evans***, a gorgeous ballad written by alto saxophonist Phil Woods as a tribute to the passing of Bill Evans, one of my all-time heroes.

6. ***In the still of the night*** is also a timeless classic composed by Cole Porter.

6. ***Weaver of dreams*** is a nice, relaxed swing tune by Victor Young.

7. ***Autumn in New York*** begins with a feature for the String Trio before Scott steps in beautifully.

Rob van Bavel

Recorded by Frans de Rond.
Produced by Peter Bjørnild & Rob van Bavel
Salon de Musique Artistic director: Wonyeong Kim

Original Recording Format

- **Recorded in:** DSD256
- **Mastered to:** DSD256 via high-end analog chain
- **All other formats:** Derived directly from the original master

Recording Details

- **Recording date:** October 26, 2025
- **Recording location:** Studio 1, Heuvellaan Hilversum
- **Recording, mixing, and mastering:** Frans de Rond
- **Producers:** Peter Bjørnild & Frans de Rond
Artistic producer strings: Wonyeong Kim
- **Digital mastering:** Tom Caulfield
- **Cover design:** Tom Beek
- **Studio photography:** Jurjen Donkers

High-End Audio Equipment Used

- **Microphones:**
Main: Josephson C700S
Piano: AEA R88mkII
Bass: Josephson C700S
Guitar: Josephson C715
Violin: DPA 4011
Viola: DPA 4011
Cello: Josephson C715
- **Speakers:** Linkwitz LX521.4 & TAD Compact Evolution
- **Power Amplifier:** Moon 760A
- **AD/DA converter:** Merging Horus
- **Mastering Headphones:** Hifiman HE1000se, Sennheiser HD800S
- **Cables & Power Conditioners:** AudioQuest
- **Network Switch:** SotM

Available Now – Exclusive High-Resolution Download

GKI featuring Scott Hamilton & strings is available on [Sound Liaison](#) in ultra-high-resolution audio formats.

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