

CULTURED

LILAC JAM BRINGS AN INTIMATE MUSICAL AFFAIR TO NEW YORK'S ROCKAWAY HOTEL



ZOË BUCKMAN AND DANIEL J. WATTS
DANCE WITH THE CROWD AT LILAC JAM.

On the terrace of the Rockaway Hotel in Rockaway Beach, Queens, artist and photographer [Zoë Buckman](#) and actor and poet Daniel J. Watts hosted the July 22 edition of Lilac Jam, a monthly curation of music and performance. Each time the gathering assembles, a new lineup of talents performs for a small yet always lively crowd at the beachside venue. Musicians are called up to the stage after observing from the audience, joining their friends for impromptu pieces of soundbite magic. Lilac Jam feels more like a welcoming neighborhood party than a ticketed concert. In last week's third iteration, Lilac Jam's magnetism returned in full force.

As the sun set, guests enjoyed the sounds of Brooklyn-based salsa band Los Hacheros and bites of burrata and fish tacos. The music aficionado-packed space felt pleasantly intimate, humming with conversation and laughter before Watts took the stage with a poignant spoken word performance. Every act was met with applause and instinctive movement—whether a subtle head nod of reverence, or a boisterous execution of the Electric Slide. There was a noticeable dedication to craft and technique by the artists, from the enigmatic songs of R&B singer Tangina Stone to the soulful confidence of special guest Adeline. Work on the drums (by soul revival drummer Homer Steinweiss) or the trumpet (by the Roots member Dave Guy) was as cherished as that of the vocalists.

By the end of the night, nearly everyone was on their feet. Performers mingled with the crowd, shaking hands and sharing smiles, cementing Lilac Jam as a truly democratic musical experience. As instruments were packed up and the Ubers were called, partygoers lingered, savoring every last drop of the evening. Lilac Jam's founders, Buckman and the Rockaway Hotel's Michi Jigarjian, have borne a space as intimate as it is inviting.



TANGINA STONE AND THE WOOLIES.



DAVID J. WATTS, HOMER STEINWEISS AND THE WOOLIES.



MICHI JIGARJIAN AND BRIANNA LIPOVSKY.