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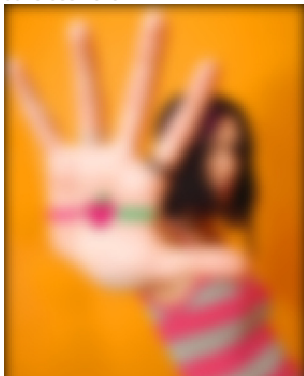
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MUSIC ART STAGE ABOUT TOWN

MUSIC

Jeff Solomon
August 03, 8

Along with Jew's harp and nose flute, the ukulele's usually considered a novelty instrument. Sure, it's fun for a drunken hour, but after strumming that stupid "aloha-oo" song a couple times, it wears out its welcome. If you pick one up and play it, you'll realize why they're not used so much in pop music: Due to the weird tuning and few strings, harmonies are weak. But in the case of Jeff Solomon, the uke's disadvantages work to his advantage as a songwriter. An ex-composition student of Pulitzer-winner Steve Stucky and a classically trained saxophonist, Solomon has enough practical musicianship to turn oddities into very successful, brainy-complex pop songs. On his EP, *Around the Square*, he does just that: He picks and plucks baritone ukulele and sings of love and friendship lost, while his band (bass/drums/ guitar/horns) fills in the rest, with a frat-house goes alt-country vibe.

Living Room, 154 Ludlow St. (betw. Stanton & Rivington Sts.), 212-533-7235; 8, \$10

--- Ted Gordon

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