



VIKTORIJA GEČYTĖ

JAZZ SINGER • PARIS

Controlled power, timeless elegance, swing

SHORT BIO	2
LONG BIO	3
PRESS	6
LINKS	9

SHORT BIO

Viktorija “Vik” Gečytė sings jazz the way people tell stories: with meaning and emotion. Born in Lithuania, educated in the US, at home in Paris, she’s been performing on international stages for the past twenty years. A sought-after guest singer, gracing stages from cozy duos to expansive big bands and leader of her Parisian Vibe Tribe quartet, Vik is a two-time finalist at the Sarah Vaughan Competition, and the 2026 Grand Prix winner at Birštonas Jazz Festival. Known for her velvety alto, playful delivery, and swing in her bones.

Vik has won over audiences at venues in France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, the UK, Malta, Romania, Lithuania, the US, Morocco and Tunisia.

LONG BIO

VIK WHO LIGHTS UP THE ROOM

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“Singers come and go... The lovely Viktorija Gečytė... will hopefully stay with us for a long time.”

Jazz ‘n’ More

A VOICE THAT DOESN’T PERFORM — IT TELLS A STORY

Vik has a dark, grounded alto, the power to fill a room – and the taste to know when to use it. What draws you in is her timing, her poise, and a conversational ease that makes a standard sound like something she’s telling you for the first time.

“The jazz vocalist commands the audience not through virtuosic flourishes, not through vocal power or dramatic one-woman shows, but through the very essence of the song.”

Laima Slepkoaitė, 7 meno dienos, 2026

THE PHONETIC YEARS: WHERE IT ALL STARTED

Vik was five when she first stepped on stage in her native Vilnius, and six when she appeared singing in a music clip on national television. From nine to sixteen she took after-school music lessons at the Balys Dvarionas music school, including with vocal teacher Nijolė Maceikaitė, who opened the door to jazz standards, initially playing them on a reel-to-reel tape player, again and again to catch what singers were doing. In high school, music teacher and former jazz violinist Ričardas Jankauskas gave Vik her first live band training, and at seventeen she was invited to sing with a dixieland sextet – that was her first live band.

She had been studying English since the age of seven, but in post-Soviet Lithuania she learned songs phonetically - by ear. At fourteen, she sang Ella Fitzgerald’s “Mr. Paganini” on a national TV show without knowing what Carnegie Hall was, or what most of the words meant, so she got half of them wrong. At nineteen, she left for America to find out.

SHE NEVER WENT TO JAZZ SCHOOL, SHE WENT TO JAM SESSIONS

On a full scholarship at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania she earned a double BA in mathematics-economics and French, and learned jazz the way it has always been learned: by listening, sitting in, and singing with whoever would have her, from the college jazz ensemble to monthly gigs at a local bar. She rode 6,100 km across the United States by bicycle, for charity and adventure, and paid for part of the fundraiser by holding a jazz concert at a local church.

“There’s also enormous fun and sweetness and vulnerability for those who know her well. It’s always there in the music. Sometimes it makes us cry.”

Sean Gough, pianist, Lafayette College News, 2012

A year as an exchange student in Paris did the rest: jam sessions two or three nights a week, sometimes until 3 am, and a first Paris concert in Le Marais’ bohemian jazz cellar, Les Sept Lézards, where a local singer lent her a mic for her first-ever show as a leader. In 2008, she settled in Paris for good.

The standards, the improvisation, the scatting: she learned all of it on the bandstand.

EMBRACED BY THE JAZZ COMMUNITY

A two-time finalist of the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, she took the third place in 2019, behind winner Samara Joy.

In 2026 she won the Grand Prix at Birštonas jazz festival, one of the oldest in Lithuania, and only the second woman to do so in 45 years. The same festival where, in her late teens, she used to slip into jam sessions without a ticket.

Her songs were chosen for the Lithuanian Jazz Federation’s jazz-of-the-year albums in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2024 and as part of a special edition for jazzahead! in 2026.

“Viktorija is one of the most outstanding jazz artists from Lithuania.”

Laima Slepkovaitė, 7 meno dienos, 2026

SHARING THE ROAD, AND THE LAUGHS, WITH GENE PERLA

Her most lasting partnership is with Gene Perla, the American bassist who played with Elvin Jones, Sonny Rollins, Nina Simone, Sarah Vaughan and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra.

“Vik is someone I can trust to know exactly where we are. The connections with her audiences make her performances sincere and meaningful.”

Gene Perla, liner notes, In The Moment, 2020

She has toured with Gene’s trio since 2008, with Gene as musical director, arranger, composer, tour leader, close friend and mentor. In the US, they have played on both coasts, including a dozen times at Miller Symphony Hall’s Jazz Upstairs series in Allentown, Pennsylvania, where PBS39 and the hall presented them in a full concert recorded live in 2018. In Europe, they have played across Lithuania, France and Switzerland, with festivals in Vilnius (2015), Edinburgh (2016) and Birmingham (2017).

Their records include In The Moment (P.M. Records, 2020) that “overflows with charm” according to Téléràma and which Couleurs Jazz called “a major record”, and Mother (self-produced, 2025), which All About Jazz rated four stars, praising “a vocal presence grounded in storytelling, where timing, nuance, and restraint shape the music’s quiet authority.”

“Vik captures your attention with her swing, her perfect phrasing and, let’s face it, her tremendous class.”

Philippe Desmond, Action Jazz, 2022

AT HOME IN FRONT OF A HORN SECTION

She has been at home in front of horns since the dixieland band of her teens. In Paris, she performed and recorded with pianist Julien Coriatt's Orchestra, and wrote the lyrics for *Blue Lake* (2015), an album that fuses jazz, classical and folk. Its title song is a blues about the lake by her family's country home in Lithuania.

The Frankfurt Radio Big Band (hr-bigband) found the album and invited her to open the 2018 Europa Open Air festival, in the year Lithuania was its partner country, with *Blue Lake* arranged for big band. The band's manager chose her for "the folk colour she brings." It was her first concert in Germany. The band invited her back the following year, to another open-air concert at the historic Schloss Wolfsgarten, with arrangements of her album *No Detour Ahead*.

"When she sings in the language of her country, that power even seems tenfold."

Jazz Magazine, 2015

Other big band dates followed, with the Galaad Moutoz Orchestra (2019, 2020) and as guest at the Šiauliai Big Band's 20th anniversary (2023), where the local press praised the "lightness and elegance" of her singing.

Playing for dancers is among her favorites. Since 2019 she has sung at swing balls, with the Need for Swing septet at Rouen's Festival Vibrations, with the Moutoz Orchestra, and in a quartet at the historic Caveau de la Huchette in Paris.

SHE CAN SING THE BLUES IN HER SLEEP

"Her first mother tongue is the blues," Jazz Magazine writes. A voice that conveys "an emotion for which no other adjective will do but fraternal." Alongside classics, her blues band reaches for songs by James Taylor, Tom Waits, Mose Allison and Sting. The repertoire's first recording is due in 2027.

"She communicates a kind of warm fraternity. It is rare and deeply moving."

Jazz Magazine, 2014

LEADER OF HER PARISIAN TRIBE

Since 2019, she's been leading *Vik & The Vibe Tribe*, a quartet with Nicholas Thomas on vibraphone, Peter Giron on double-bass and backing vocals, and Mourad Benhammou on drums. With the vibraphone as the only harmonic instrument, the quartet traces the bebop lineage with folk inspirations, piercing ballads, and swing. The quartet plays originals by Vik, Nicholas and Gene Perla, and arrangements of the *Great American Songbook*. The band's first recording is due in 2027.

"Vik's voice... at times deep and expressionist, at times mischievous or restrained... supported by the light touches of Nicholas Thomas's mallets... the roundness of Peter Giron's bass lines and the unfailing precision of Mourad Benhammou's playing"

Francis Capeau, Académie du Jazz member, 2021

AND SO, OF COURSE, SHE SMILES

Over the years she has also shared the stage with drummer Adam Nussbaum, saxophonist Nicole Glover, trumpeter Joe Magnarelli, pianists Ignasi Terraza and Alain Jean-Marie, among many others.

She also continues to dabble with different sounds – regularly blowing kazoo solos or experimenting with folk instruments, such as clay whistles, kalimba, balafon or chimes. She was gifted her first kazoo at Burning Man in 2017. “This is the first time I’ve ever applauded a kazoo solo!” exclaimed Jeff “Tain” Watts after hearing Vik play it a few years later.

Singing for Vik is more than making music. “It’s a conversation, an endeavor, and a never-ending journey,” she says.

PRESS QUOTES

Quotes originally in French, German or Lithuanian are translated into English.

“Viktorija seems made for classic swing.”

“...unhurried, undulating phrasing and simple yet tender stories.”

Muzikos barai · Tomas Bakučionis, May 2026

“Viktorija is one of the most outstanding jazz artists from Lithuania.”

“The jazz vocalist commands the audience not through virtuosic flourishes, not through vocal power or dramatic one-woman shows, but through the very essence of the song.”

“Viktorija has a superb feel for swing and has mastered the art of the phrase.”

7 meno dienos · Laima Slepkoaitė, Apr 2026

“...a vocal presence grounded in storytelling, where timing, nuance, and restraint shape the music’s quiet authority.”

“Her phrasing carries an internalized sense of swing, not projected outward, but lived from within the line itself.”

“...feels like slipping into a warm, half-remembered moment.”

“What begins in quiet elegance opens into something more relaxed and outwardly joyful, without losing its coherence. It is music that invites you in and simply lets you stay.”

All About Jazz · Ieva Pakalniškytė, Mar 2026, four stars for Mother

“Spontaneity, playfulness, celebrating her heritage, and faithfulness to jazz standards”

Birštonas Jazz Festival · Zigmas Vileikis, 2026 Grand Prix citation, Mar 2026

“...stirred listeners’ hearts with compositions of lightness and elegance.”

Šiauliai press (saule.lt) · Big Band 20th anniversary concert, 2023

“...a voice, what a voice! Vik’s... deep and penetrating.”

“Vik captures your attention with her swing, her perfect phrasing and, let’s face it, her tremendous class.”

“A favorite.”

Action Jazz · Philippe Desmond, Feb 2022, review of In The Moment

“It is a major record, that of an artist who follows in the great tradition of African-American jazz singers.”

“A deep voice, soft and powerful at the same time, with the perfect technique.”

“...each standard revisited takes us into an atmosphere reminiscent of the American films of the 1950s.”

Couleurs Jazz · Laurent Pierre, Dec 2021, review of In The Moment

"It's hard, listening to Viktorija Gečytė, to convince yourself that she is of Lithuanian origin and didn't spend her childhood in New York's jazz clubs. Nothing seems more natural to her than to move among standards and transcend them with her very assured approach."

"...In the Moment (2020)... overflows with charm."

Télérama · Louis-Julien Nicolaou, Nov 2021

"Vik's voice... at times deep and expressionist, at times mischievous or restrained... supported by the light touches of Nicholas Thomas's mallets, the roundness of Peter Giron's bass lines and the unfailing precision of Mourad Benhammou's playing."

Les dernières nouvelles du jazz · Francis Capeau, Académie du Jazz member, 2021

"...displayed superlative skills as a ballad interpreter on 'Angel Face.'"

DownBeat · Michael Barris, Nov 2019

"...the enchanting, powerful-voiced Viktorija Gečytė."

Jazz 'n' More · Gino Ferlin, Nov/Dec 2018

"Singers come and go. Some of them, not many, find their niche and stay, sending life signs in the form of occasional CDs and concerts. The lovely Viktorija Gečytė from Lithuania, now living in Paris, will hopefully stay with us for a long time."

"...Gečytė's phrasing reminds us of the great Sarah Vaughan."

"It's wonderful, too, how she enters fine scatting in the classic 'Tenderly.'"

Jazz 'n' More · Gino Ferlin, Nov/Dec 2017, review of No Detour Ahead

"...she is among the most exciting vocalists who have come to my attention in recent years... Her dark alto is expressive, her phrasing very individual and interesting, and she simply swings."

Jersey Jazz · Joe Lang, review of No Detour Ahead, Oct 2016

"A good measure of her achievements between Vilnius, Paris and New York is the authority that emerges from her art, an infallible vocal placement, a subtle and sensitive swing articulated through a warm, silky voice."

Couleurs Jazz · Pierre Gros, Jul 2016, review of No Detour Ahead

"The charm of Viktorija Gečytė's performances spreads over a low flame. She doesn't force things or try to flatten you with vocal pyrotechnics... Her voice blossoms in the low and middle registers, with a thousand small different nuances. She has perfect time, and that rare quality in a singer of internalising the lyrics of standards."

"She knows how to light a fireplace fire in the heart of even the most downcast, most neurasthenic spectator... When she sings in the language of her country, that power even seems tenfold."

Jazz Magazine · JF Mondot, Nov 2015

"...beautifully serve the full, deep voice of the diva and divine Viktorija."

"The strength of this album is to move from a swing from deep in time, or a ballad all in strings, to a ravishing 'Lithuanian Suite' in three movements."

Jazz News · Louis Victor, Nov 2015, review of Blue Lake

"...a beautiful setting, too, for the voice of Viktorija Gečytė, who prettily adorns refined melodies. Luxury, calm and voluptuousness for a suit-and-tie orchestra."

Couleurs Jazz · Thierry Giard, Oct 2015, review of Blue Lake

"Viktorija Gecyte's first mother tongue is the blues."

"...a frank, straight voice in a rather unusually low register, with little roughnesses like crumpled paper that give it a delicious grain."

"...an emotion for which no other adjective will do but fraternal."

Jazz Magazine · JF Mondot, review of Blue Lake, 2015

"Gecyte is all about controlled power. She stays in one spot as she sings but her body is all inspired motion and her smooth voice always seems ready to explode."

Lehigh Valley Music · Jodi Duckett, May 2014

"Some singers charm, vamp, seduce... Viktorija Gecyte has a rarer, more personal way of capturing the listener's attention. She communicates a kind of warm fraternity. It is rare and deeply moving."

"...seems to have grasped the essence of the blues: that slightly odd alliance between fundamental melancholy and irrepressible vital energy."

"This girl sings all evening that her man has left her, that her father is dead, that her dog has just been run over by a car... and you leave tap-dancing, finding that the Paris air tastes wonderfully sweet."

Jazz Magazine · JF Mondot, 2014

"Viktorija Gecyte is filling the room with a dusky, easy voice that seems to come from nowhere and go everywhere. Supported by a supple trio of bass, drums and piano, who sails through the slipstream of "That Old Black Magic," "That Old Devil Moon" and other stardust standards. Long before the beer-sign clocks strike midnight, she turns a saloon into a salon."

ICON Magazine · Geoff Gehman, Dec 2013

"...a voice like a great big champagne-colored Brougham d'Elegance. New tires. Chrome wheels with no rust on the spokes. A range that gets eight miles to the gallon, tops—but what eight miles."

"She hit every note in its resonant center, kept her phrasing just at cruising power and sang long lines, some clear, some in shadow. And what a moment when she'd stamp her gladiator sandal on the downbeat to start a blues."

Easton Is Home · Matthew Crain, Jul 2013

"Viktorija's smoky hues... come fully alive when she tackles folk songs from her native Lithuania."

Philadelphia CityPaper · Shaun Brady, May 2013

"Viktorija Gecyte '08 is filling the already filled-to-the-gills Lafayette Bar with a dusky, roomy, easy voice that seems to come from nowhere and go everywhere. ... Long before the beer-sign clocks strike midnight, she turns a saloon into a salon."

Lafayette College News · Geoff Gehman '80, Nov 2012

"Spontaneous, intimate, sensual and fun are descriptions that could be applied to Gecyte's singing, which displays a confidence that belies her age."

The Morning Call · Dave Howell, Mar 2008

LISTEN, WATCH, FOLLOW

WEBSITE viktorijagecyte.com

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