

Susanne Alt

Dark Horse (Venus Tunes, January 30th, 2026)

Amsterdam saxophonist **Susanne Alt** proudly announces the release of her **seventh studio album**. Recorded during the same inspired **New York** sessions that produced 2024's *Royalty For Real*, the album emerges as a companion statement - distinct yet connected - featuring groove-driven compositions captured in a single arc of energy by an elite lineup of American musicians.

Dark Horse is set for release for January 30th, 2026 via Venus Tunes.

Dark Horse came to life when Alt arrived in New York with more material than anticipated. While *Royalty For Real* marked a return to acoustic jazz and paid tribute to trumpet icon **Roy Hargrove**, this new album pivots toward **discovery**, capturing the music that surfaced organically as soon as the tapes began rolling. The result is a cohesive snapshot of Alt's artistry at full sail: melodic, rhythmically compelling, and constantly in dialogue with the city and the musicians around her.



At the heart of the album is its namesake concept: the “dark horse” - an unannounced, unlikely force that transforms the landscape and rewards perseverance. Here, Alt channels that spirit, suggesting that **openness** and **determination** not only weather uncertainty but transform it into momentum, creativity, and meaning.

The sound of *Dark Horse* is warm and immediate, presenting the band up-close with raw edges intact. Alt's lines draw on **Soul, Funk, Latin, and Bop**, while the New York rhythm section maintains a pulse that is elastic and dynamic, allowing musical ideas to stretch, snap back, and spark anew. It is the same chemistry that powered *Royalty For Real*, now reframed in the service of exploration over homage, process over blueprint, and movement over destination.

Album highlights include the funk-tinged opener *Jazz Biotic*, the fusion-leaning *Altitudes of Freedom*, and the raw, driving title track *Dark Horse*. *Au Privave* by **Charlie Parker** was captured spontaneously when the pianist arrived late, while *Maple Jam* nods to pianist Larry Willis. *Cannonballin'* and *Jonesin'* honor bassist Gerald Cannon and drummer Willie Jones III, respectively, and tracks like *Kalunga Dance* reflect the studio's vibrant energy.

The album features an elite rhythm section at its core: keyboardist **James Hurt**, whose work spans jazz, mainstream, and hip-hop/electronic projects; bassist **Gerald Cannon**, longtime member of **Elvin Jones'** band and former **McCoy Tyner** musical director; and drummer **Willie Jones III**, acclaimed for his performances with Milt Jackson and Arturo Sandoval. Cannon and Jones III's seven-year collaboration in **Roy Hargrove's** band brings a deep, intuitive groove to the session.

Dark Horse is a forward-looking record - an invitation to embrace the unforeseen and celebrate the music that emerges when mastery meets openness.

Susanne Alt | Alto, Tenor and Soprano Saxophones, Flute, Percussion

James Hurt | Fender Rhodes, Piano, Clavinet, Organ, Synth, Percussion (Track 3)

Gerald Cannon | Bass

Willie Jones III | Drums

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