You only have to look at musician Gary Lucas’ performing schedule to see how versatile he is. Just this week alone, he has played three totally different gigs.

On Sunday, he was at New York’s Jewish museum playing his original solo guitar score for filmmaker Slawomir Grunberg’s new documentary Fateful Night about the 92-year-old pauper who killed himself on April 7.

Then on Monday, also in New York, Gary was at the premiere of Tom Waits at the launch party of Barney’s New York in Greenwich Village, on the other side of the Road: A Life of Tom Waits.

He followed this a day later by playing the music of John Lennon to celebrate the 40th anniversary of John and Yoko’s infamous Montreal Bed-in.

At the end of the month he teams up with Dean Bowman for a concert in Brooklyn of spiritual roots music and he will also appear next month in Amsterdam and Malaga performing more of his original film scores.

And before that guitarist Gary is appearing at a concert every Sunday at the Jazz Cafe. There are 52 of them this year, and he has constantly performed at the top level for more than 30 years. “The trick is to stay active and fresh,” he says.

Gary, who was raised in Syracuse, New York, and now lives in Greenwich Village, had seriously considered becoming a rabbi. But that was before he discovered music and found it hard to reconcile the two for him.

He recalled: “I came from a family of Reform Jews and we lit the Shabbat candles every Friday night and I went to Hebrew school every Sunday. “I read Hebrew pretty well, too.”

But Gary, who is in his forties, revealed he changed his mind when father Murray asked him if he would like to learn the guitar.

He said: “He arranged lessons for me, but I was terrible – I just couldn’t play.”

“My dad went to Mexico and bought me a Spanish guitar from there and I resumed playing, using that.”

Unfortunately, Gary’s father died on the first night of Pesach last month.

He explained: “I was a seder and dad had not been well for a while. “Before the news even came through, I felt an overwhelming sadness.”

But before he went on tour with him, Gary took a two-year sabbatical to travel and to write music. He remembered: “I had met a 56-year-old lady who I fell in love with – but my parents hated it. “My dad was setting up a business in Taiwan. My maternal uncle lived there, he owned bowling alleys and promoted rock shows.

“I remember the first thing I did when I got there was tune into the English-language American armed forces radio station and who was playing? Captain Beefheart.

“The DJ also said Tim Buckley had overdosed and died.”

Gary’s involvement with Buckley’s son Jeff came later in his career. Gary had an affair with a Chinese film star called Ling, who later became his wife.

But he had to leave Taiwan when a fracas broke out in a club and all foreigners were warned that they had to leave.

Gary took the American embassy’s advice and went home, sneaking Ling into America and they married in San Francisco.

The early 1980s were nuts. They married in San Francisco. But they later split.

Both were originally in Lucas’ band, for which Gary wrote the songs and co-wroted the music by Gary, who also played on both tracks.

But an Italian journalist asked Gary: “What really amazes me is the trend of boycottng Israeli products and institutions over the last few years.”

He said: “They need to make peace with the Arabs and I do think it is achievable. “Israel has made mistakes, but you cannot change the past to suit the present. It is the future that matters.”

And he has played at numerous famous venues, including the Glastonbury Festival and London’s Shepherd’s Bush Empire.

A confirmed supporter of Israel, he recently played a tribute gig to Jeff Buckley at Paris Hard Rock Cafe with Israeli artist Ninet Tayeb.

And despite his adherence to the Jewish state, Gary believes he can still be critical of it.

He said: “I do not like to think of myself as anything I have worked on. “It is incredibly fresh guitar music for the curious and bored and it is direct from the heart. “I do not subscribe to formats and I do not like to be boxed in. “I am always looking for new ways of writing songs so they are not trite – I like every hook to sound different.”

He has recently collaborated on an album, Right’s with Indian Muslim vocalist Najma Akhtar.

The album combines rock, blues, folk and raga and is out next month.

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Gary’s solo albums have been musically diverse, featuring everything from Chinese pop, blues, Indian music and Jewish music.

He added: “I would describe my music to someone who hasn’t listened to it before as being full of surprises. “It is incredibly fresh guitar music for the curious and bored and it is direct from the heart. “I do not subscribe to formats and I do not like to be boxed in. “I am always looking for new ways of writing songs so they are not trite – I like every hook to sound different.”

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