

## Anat Cohen

An established bandleader and prolific composer, idiomatically conversant with modern and traditional jazz, classical music, Brazilian choro, Argentine tango, and an expansive timeline of Afro-Cuban styles, Anat Cohen has established herself as one of the primary voices of her generation on both the tenor saxophone and clarinet since arriving in New York in 1999.

In September 2008, Anat Cohen released *Notes From The Village*, her fourth album as a leader. Recorded at Avatar studios in New York City, the album builds on Cohen's acclaimed 2007 releases, captures the thrilling energy of her live shows, and proves her to be an artistically adventurous writer and performer. *Notes From The Village* finds Anat leading a quartet of some of the most sought-after, engaging young performers in New York, including pianist Jason Lindner, bassist Omer Avital, and drummer Daniel Freedman, with accompaniment from guitarist Gilad Hekselman on three tracks. The album features compositions written by Cohen as well as her interpretations of songs by Fats Waller, John Coltrane, Sam Cooke and Ernesto Lecuona.

“In preparing for the recording,” says Anat “I really wanted to capture the free, risk-taking, open quality this band achieves when performing live. I also wanted to stretch my compositions, and arrangements.”

Early responses to the album have been overwhelmingly positive; *The New York Times*' Nate Chinen wrote that “*Notes From The Village* is a resounding confirmation; yes, she is the real deal”, *DownBeat Magazine* awarded the release four stars, stating that “Cohen makes it seem easy, mixing a gift for melody and an improvisational fluidity that has few peers today.”

Anat's previous outings, *Noir* and *Poetica* were released simultaneously in April 2007, inspiring a string of enthusiastic reviews. *The Washington Post* said that “Cohen has emerged as one of the brightest, most original young instrumentalists in jazz [...] [she] has expanded the vocabulary of jazz with a distinctive accent of her own.” *The Village Voice* spoke of her “Enviably insouciant” and how “she alludes to the mystical in a merry way,” and *Downbeat* magazine expressed the opinion that “*Noir* could be a classic” and “[Cohen's] stately intonation and unforced elegance on clarinet could

take her to the top.”

Anat has performed for audiences in New York’s Village Vanguard, Jazz Standard, Iridium, The Jazz Gallery, and the JVC Jazz Festival. She has also appeared at the Chicago Jazz Festival, Washington DC’s Kennedy Center, San Francisco’s Yoshi’s, Boston’s Regattabar, the North Sea Jazz Festival, the Monterey Jazz Festival, and the Montreal Jazz Festival. Anat’s July 2007 engagement at the Village Vanguard in New York was a historic one; Anat is the first female reed player, and the first Israeli to headline at the club.

Ms. Cohen’s accomplishments have been recognized in a flurry of awards and distinctions from critics and fans alike; She topped the Rising Star-Clarinet category in DownBeat Magazine’s critics poll in both 2007 and 2008, and placed prominently in a total of four categories including Rising Star Jazz Artist - where she ranked second and was the only female artist to make the list. Anat was also mentioned on DownBeat’s readers poll in 2007 and 2008. The Jazz Journalists Association named Anat Cohen Clarinetist of the Year by in both 2007 and 2008 - the first time in the history of the awards that an artist has earned top clarinet honors two years running. *Noir* and *Poetica* both appeared on many year-end best-of summary lists, including those of *Paste* magazine, *The New York Sun*, *Slate*, *JazzTimes* and others.

Born in Tel Aviv, Israel, Anat grew up with musical siblings; her older brother Yuval is himself a saxophonist of note, and her younger brother, Avishai, is one of New York’s busiest trumpeters. She began clarinet studies at age 12 and played jazz on clarinet for the first time in the Jaffa Conservatory’s Dixieland band. At 16, she joined the school’s big band and learned to play the tenor saxophone. The same year, Anat entered the prestigious “Thelma Yelin” High School for the Arts, where she majored in jazz. After graduation, she discharged her mandatory Israeli military service duty from 1993-95, playing tenor saxophone in the Israeli Air Force band.

In 1996, Anat matriculated at Berklee College of Music in Boston. There she met faculty member Phil Wilson, who encouraged her to play clarinet, and other inspiring teachers such as Greg Hopkins, Ed Tomassi, Hal Crook, George Garzone, and Bill Pierce, and an elite international peer group of students.

During her Berklee years, Anat visited New York during breaks between semesters, making a beeline for Smalls to soak up the hybrid of grooves, world music and mainstream jazz that people like Jason Lindner and Omer Avital were then evolving. Back in Boston, she played tenor saxophone in a variety of musical contexts with various bands including Afro-Cuban, Argentinean, klezmer, contemporary Brazilian music and classical Brazilian choro. Anat also began her association with Sherrie Maricle's top-shelf all-woman big band Diva Jazz Orchestra, which continued into the new millennium.

Once ensconced in New York, Anat quickly found work in various Brazilian ensembles like the Choro Ensemble and Duduka Da Fonseca's Samba Jazz Quintet, and started performing with David Ostwald's "Gully Low Jazz Band," which explores the music of Louis Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke, Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet and their Pan-American contemporaries. Anat documented her bona fides on her debut CD, Place and Time, one of All About Jazz-New York's "Best Debut Albums of 2005."

On the liner notes for Notes From the Village, Ira Gitler writes "She is formidable. Long may she continue to enrich the music in myriad ways." There is every indication that her star will continue to rise for a long time to come.

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