

Avishai Cohen  
Double-bass/Composer

Over the past two decades, bassist, singer, composer, Jazz visionary and innovator, Avishai Cohen, has earned his reputation as one of the greatest bass players of his time. His original compositions and arrangements reflect an expansive musical universe and embrace a vital blend of traditions, cultures, languages and styles, from Hebrew, Ladino folk songs alongside pulsating original contemporary jazz.

Following on from the hugely successful release of ‘Almah’ (Warner/Parlophone, 2013), a unique project which combined Trio with a string quartet, Avishai in recent years has taken further steps by introducing ‘An Evening with Avishai Cohen’ to the world, a live project with trio and full Orchestra, which was first presented live in 2015. April 2021 sees the release of Avishai Cohen’s first orchestral album, ‘Two Roses’ with the French label Believe /Naïve. The album was recorded during Cohen’s residency and sold-out concert with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, The National Swedish Orchestra conducted by Sweden’s own Alexander Hanson, and is the continuation of Cohen’s unique live project.

An Evening with Avishai Cohen features his dynamic core Trio of double bass, drums and piano, while the sophisticated, legitimate integration of symphony orchestra lends an added dimension to Cohen’s distinctive sound. Cohen’s music is an intricate tapestry of global and historical influence.

Equally affected by the melodies of Israeli folklore, and the complexity of their Sephardi, Ashkenazi or Yemeni heritages, he reintroduced the traditional Ladino “Morenika,” as well as popular tunes from his native country, such as “Two Roses”, which lends its title to this album. The programme also includes settings of Cohen’s own contemporary jazz and world music compositions and favoured hit songs such as “Seven Seas” and “Song For My Brother” as well as orchestrated traditional Hebrew and Ladino songs like “Puncha Puncha” and other original classical writings and arrangements. Many of his own “classics” take their cues from North Africa, the Middle East, Slavic countries and Russia. The result is an exhilarating musical experience, intimate yet high impact selling out some of the world’s most prestigious halls.

Premiered in Malmö with the Malmö Symfoniorkester in September 2015, Cohen has taken the project to Paris (Philharmonie de Paris), Lyon (Orchestre national de Lyon), Monaco (Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo), Musikverein (Tonkünstler-Orchester Niederösterreich), Wiener Konzerthaus (Brno Philharmonic Orchestra), Flagey and Ghent with the Brussels Philharmonic, London (Barbican, BBC Concert Orchestra), Lille (Orchestre National de Lille), Bordeaux (Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine), Kioi Hall Tokyo, Essen Philharmonic Hall (Essen Philharmoniker), Philharmonie Luxembourg and many others.

Polyarts represents the project ‘An Evening with Avishai Cohen’ globally.