

Yuval Amihai - Bio

Jazz guitarist, composer and bandleader Yuval Amihai was born in Beer Sheva, Israel in 1981. Beginning with piano studies at the age of 8, Amihai switched to the electric guitar at 13, and by the time he was 16 he was leading his own bands and performing regularly around the country. During his mandatory military service, Amihai found great inspiration in classical guitar music and composed a chamber music piece for guitar, piano and a string quartet. His music was selected to be featured in a series of concerts by the city of Beer Shava's Municipal Symphonic Orchestra. Amihai was then commissioned to compose an original work for the city's string quartet, featuring renowned oud and violin player Yair Dalal. Seeking to go further in this direction and broaden his education, Amihai spent the following years focusing mainly on classical music, while maintaining an active performing schedule as a jazz guitarist. He attended the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Rimon School of Music, where he was also a finalist in the school's jazz competition, and studied composition, piano, and classical guitar with some of the country's top teachers.

In 2006, Amihai moved to the city of lights, and quickly became a leading figure on the Parisian jazz scene. He formed his quintet, the Yuval Amihai Ensemble, and won two of the most prestigious jazz competitions in France: The Jazz at Saint-Germain-des-Pres Competition, where he won the First Prize (Best Ensemble), and the National Jazz Competition of La Defense, where he won the Grand Prize (Best Ensemble), and Best Composer Prize. The band also won the third prize at the Hoeilaart International Jazz Competition in Belgium. In the following years, they performed regularly in various clubs, venues, and festivals throughout Paris and the rest of France and Europe.

2012 saw the release of Amihai's debut album, *Yuval Amihai Ensemble*, which strongly echoed the sounds and culture he absorbed growing up in Israel. Following the release, the guitarist won a grant from the French Copyright Organization, Sacem. The album received positive reviews in French media and was featured on many national and international playlists and radio broadcasts. In 2014, he started traveling regularly to New York City and found a new source of great inspiration in its culture and its vibrant scene. In the ensuing years, Amihai recorded albums two and three in his oeuvre, *Longing* (released in 2015 on the French label L'Autre Distribution), and *I Ain't Got Nothin' But The Blues* (2018. Fresh Sound New Talent). Both albums were critically acclaimed and received heavy airplay.

In 2018, Amihai made the pilgrimage to New York City, and soon after his arrival became actively involved, and in demand, performing regularly in some of the City's most revered jazz venues, and sharing the stage with many of the top musicians active today. **With the release of his 4th album, *My 90s Summer*, Amihai presents his US-based debut (and second album for Fresh Sound), and firmly stakes his claim as one of the rising stars on the NYC and international jazz scenes.**