

## Uriel Herman – Biography

Uriel Herman (27), classically trained pianist and composer, operates on the seam between jazz and rock and his music is also influenced by classical music and Israeli sounds. Over the past year, Herman has wandered the world on a kind of journey of discovery – from Tel Aviv to Costa Rica to Berlin and Vienna and recently returned from a composing project in Sweden.

"Classical music and classical playing are still very close to my heart, but what was missing was the freedom, the freedom to break free from the form...the freedom to improvise...to express..." During his visit to Costa Rica, Herman participated in a shaman ceremony that lasted all night long. It was in the wake of this experience that Uriel wrote "White night", a kind of jazz rhapsody, a work based on classical form and elements, but with much room for freedom: "Those spaces that interest me on the stage are the musical domains where you have no idea what it will sound like. Music is the art of time...It takes place within time...It must change and be dynamic," declares Herman.

All the processes he went through culminated in the album "Awake", his new album that contains poems set to new melodies, arrangements of songs by Nirvana and Radiohead, as well as original music. The album won enthusiastic praise:

*"I will join Herman in another journey of 'Awakening'. I have no doubt about that! Those are the places I wish to get to over and over."*

(Yossi Harasonsky, "Harasinsky Musiz")

*"Herman has given new meaning to one of the greatest anthems in the history of rock. He takes it to new places musically, and wordlessly he adds value to his jazz as being the prerogative of all young people regardless of their musical preferences."*

(Zeev Tenne, *Fishtank*, Magazine of Israeli music)

After the album appeared, Herman embarked on a successful round of performances with his quintet. Among other venues, they performed at the Red Sea Jazz Festival in Eilat where their performance drew praise among the press in Israel and abroad.

*"Herman's melodies with their contrasting harmonies, clashing tones, contrapuntal but simultaneously melodic and almost lyrical, grow on you and resonate with a familiar, pleasant sound."*

Meirav Yudelevitch, *Ynet*)

*"Smells Like Teen Spirit has never sounded more oriental. A true masterpiece!"*

(Marcin Pulawski, *Laboratorium Muzycznych Fuzji* Polish jazz magazine)

*"The pianist-leader brought a classical touch and mastery of complex rhythms to an exhilarating programme of 'Bach-to-Brazil'"*

(Bob Weir, *Jazzjournal*, UK)

Herman, a graduate of the Jerusalem Music Academy, studied composition under the Hungarian composer Prof. Andre Hajdu with whom he continues to work closely on various projects to this day. He also studied composition with Prof. Michael Wolpe, and studied piano with the internationally renowned pianist Ilana Vered as well as with Prof. Assaf Zohar.

He has played in classical music recitals as a solo pianist at the Perugia Music Festival in Italy and the Moulin d'Andé Festival in France, among others.

His career so far has included collaborations with esteemed artists such as Eli Degibri, Zohar Fresco, Adi Rennert, Amos Hoffman, Miri Mesika.

In Fall 2008, in collaboration with double bass player Ehud Ettun, "Half colors, Half Voices" was released. The album includes compositions for poems written by legendary Israeli poet Rachel Blubstein. The album immediately received rave reviews from leading Israeli music critics.

*"An explosion of magnitude 8 on the Rechter-Kanner or Wirtzburg-Gelbatz scale."*  
(Ben Shalev, *Haaretz*)

*"Half Colors, Half Voices" is an impressive presentation from musicians who are two of the greatest talents developing in our midst. Pay attention to them!"*  
(Avi Efrati: *Yediot*)

The album was selected by Ha'aretz daily newspaper as one of the top 20 albums of the year!!!

In Summer 2012, Uriel was commissioned by Beit Avi-Chai to create the project "Sha'arey Shamaim." This was a project that drew on Jewish folklore to create a unique combination of original compositions and genre-crossing arrangements of songs by American and Israeli songwriters.

In the same year, Uriel was awarded a grant from the Ministry of Culture and Sport in Israel. He created a performance incorporating video art for the Jerusalem International Film Festival. He also participated in other festivals such as the International Poets' Festival, the Writers' Festival, and more.

As we write these words, Uriel is embarking on a series of performances that are composed of a variety of ensembles, performances with his quintet, performances in trio format, collaborations with singers, and solo performances.

He is also working on a new album... Watch for it!