

**8 JUILLET 2016**  
**CONCERT D'OUVERTURE - POINTE AUX CHEVAUX**

**avec Liat Cohen, 1ère partie & Raffi Besalyan, 2ème partie**

**LIAT COHEN**



*«La guitare de Liat Cohen est à la musique ce qu'un cœur battant est à la vie» Le Monde*

Pionnière de la renaissance de la guitare classique et de la création contemporaine, Liat Cohen donne ses premiers récitals à l'âge de 14 ans.

Surnommée «princesse de la guitare classique» (La Critique), son jeu est habité, sensuel, délicat, inventif autant que virtuose. Premier Prix du Conservatoire de Paris, diplômée de la Schola Cantorum (Diplôme de Concert décerné à l'unanimité avec félicitations du jury), de l'Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris (Diplôme d'exécution à l'unanimité), Liat Cohen est la première guitariste à avoir reçu le Prix Nadia Boulanger Fondation de France. Elle est également Lauréate de nombreux concours internationaux, dont ceux de Rome, Paris et Tel-Aviv.

Distinguée parmi les meilleurs guitaristes mondiaux par *Guitare Magazine* et *Classical Guitar*, Liat Cohen est « une vraie guitariste virtuose perpétuant la grande tradition établie par le légendaire Andrés Segovia, transformant la guitare, instrument intimiste, en instrument soliste s'imposant aux grandes salles de concert tout en conservant ses nuances délicates et chaleureuses » (Professeur Hirshberg).

Liat Cohen se produit sur les cinq continents et collabore avec des grands chefs (Jacques Mercier, Frédéric Chaslin, Jan Talich, Uri Segal...) et les plus grands orchestres et ensembles (Orchestre Symphonique de Jérusalem, orchestre de chambre d'Israël, Orchestre National de Lorraine, Orchestre de Bern, Orchestre Symphonique de Melbourne, Orchestre Symphonique de Haïfa, Orchestre symphonique d'Istanbul, Talich Chamber Orchestra, Quatuor Prazak, Quatuor Zemlinsky...). Elle se produit sur les plus grandes scènes : Rudolphinum de Prague, Radio-France, Théâtre du Châtelet ( Paris ), Palais des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles, Cerclo de Bellas Artes de Madrid, le Palazzo Barberini à Rome, Salle Cortot ( Paris ), Théâtre National du Costa Rica, Opéra de Montpellier, Skirball Cultural Center de Los Angeles, Théâtre de Jérusalem... et participe à de nombreux festivals internationaux ( Gstaad, Montpellier, festival d'Israel, Buenos Aires Guitarras del mundo, Londres, Melilla, Cordoba...).

Muse et musicienne, Liat Cohen explore et transcende son répertoire. Parmi ses projets, des transcriptions pour la guitare des œuvres de J.S. Bach qu'elle enregistre à l'Abbaye du Mont St-Michel alors qu'elle est artiste en résidence. Transcriptions que l'on retrouve sur l'album « **Liat Cohen joue Bach** » et qu'elle donne en récital pour la 20e Journée du Patrimoine Européen. En 2005 paraît "**Latino-Ladino**» chez *Harmonia Mundi*. Album né d'une rencontre passionnante entre la musique baroque espagnole et la musique sud-américaine.

Le tempérament magnétique de Liat Cohen sur scène, sa sonorité noble et lyrique portée par sa maîtrise de l'instrument est source d'inspiration pour de nombreux compositeurs. Dédicataire de nombreux concertos et œuvres pour guitare soliste de J. Bardanashvili, Y. Braun, N. Bonet, G. Shohat, M. Wolpe, Ben-Moshe, R.Kadishson, J. Cardoso, O. Zehavi, E. Pénicaud... elle

enregistre une partie de ce travail sur le disque « **Concertos** » paru chez Warner Classics en 2009. En 2009 elle signe également chez Warner Classics le très bel double album « **Virtuosi** » avec le Talich Quartet. Ses concerts avec le Quatuor Prazak et le Talich Chamber Orchestra sont captés par Mezzo TV ; Le DVD « **Une guitare à Prague** » paru en 2011 reçoit le prix Opus d'Or.

En 2014, Liat Cohen crée un voyage insolite au cœur de la musique classique brésilienne : ***Rio-Paris*** (ERATO-Warner Classics). L'équipage de luxe se compose de Natalie Dessay, artiste lyrique de renommée mondiale, d'Agnès Jaoui et d'Helena Noguerra. Le quatuor d'interprètes se rejoint dans une fascination commune pour les musiques latines et tout particulièrement pour celles du Brésil. Elles distillent leurs talents instrumentaux et vocaux à travers les plus belles œuvres du répertoire de Heitor Villa-Lobos, Badén Powell, João Gilberto, Tom Jobim, et des compositions inédites sur des poèmes de Victor Hugo. **Rio-Paris** atteint des sommets rares pour un album de musique classique et certainement par un album de guitare. Première place toutes catégories et longtemps première place des ventes classiques. Une large couverture médiatique « Vivement Dimanche » de Michel Drucker, « Thé ou Café », « C'est à vous », Radio Classique, France Culture ; les éloges de la presse écrite Le Monde, Le Parisien, Libération, le Figaro ainsi que des reportages et interviews sur France2, France 3, TF1, BFM TV, France Ô. Des concerts aux opéras de Rouen, Marseille, Reims, Limoges, Paris, Metz, Clermont-Ferrand... Une tournée exceptionnelle qui se termine à l'Olympia Paris.

## RAFFI BESALYAN



Hailed as “a true heir of the mainstream of Russian pianism, like Horowitz” (*CHOPIN Magazine*, Japan), “a keyboard phenomenon that needs to be heard by everyone interested in pianists and the piano” (*Fanfare Magazine*, USA), “a formidable pianist with a commanding presence and rich interpretive gifts” (*American Record Guide*) and “a master of his art” (*The Record Geijutsu Magazine*, Japan), Raffi Besalyan has established an international reputation of a magnetic and passionate performer. Active as a recitalist, orchestral soloist, and chamber musician, Besalyan appears in many important music venues worldwide. Critics on both sides of the Atlantic have praised his performances for their virility, poetry, and extraordinary technical command.

Armenian-born American pianist Besalyan made his formal New York debut in Carnegie Hall after winning the Artists International Competition and was subsequently invited to perform at Merkin Concert Hall on the Artists International “Outstanding Alumni-Winners” series. The *New York Concert Review* described him as “Technically brilliant . . . Besalyan played with a great deal of temperament, speed and power . . . audacious spirit and poetic substance, deeply felt tenderness.” Most recently, Besalyan made his Chicago debut in the famed Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center as the featured guest artist for the Chicago International Music Festival. Among his competition awards are top prizes received from the Josef Hofmann

International Piano Competition, the New York Frinna Awerbuch International Competition, and the MTNA National Piano Competition.

In recent years, Besalyan has dazzled his audiences in North and South America, Europe, Russia, and Asia, appearing as a soloist with the Osaka Symphony Orchestra (Japan), the Orchestra Sinfonica Del Festival Di Chioggia in Venice (Italy), the Yerevan Symphony Orchestra (Armenia), the Belgorod Symphony (Russia), the Kharkov Symphony (Ukraine), the New Jersey Festival Orchestra, the Owensboro Symphony (Kentucky), and the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, among others. The *Armenian Reporter Int'l* (New York) stated that a “standing ovation and cries of ‘Bravo’ and ‘Encore’ went to pianist Raffi Besalyan . . . [he] mesmerized the audience with his gracious, delicate, yet powerful presentation of Rachmaninoff’s Concerto No. 3.”

Since his highly successful tour of Japan in 2001, Besalyan visits the country on a yearly basis for concerts and master classes arranged by IMC Music in Tokyo and MAS Management. Articles about Raffi Besalyan have appeared in the *CHOPIN Magazine*, *Asahi*, *Sankei*, *Kobe*, *Nikkei*, and *Yomiuri* newspapers. After a recital in Osaka, *Sotokuan Press* wrote, “The entire hall was devoured by Besalyan’s glorious touch and crystalline sound . . . Besalyan was not just playing the piano, he was creating wonderful art, and treated the piano with his love for the music.”

Some of the highlights also include recitals for Pro Musica of Detroit; The Embassy Series in Washington, D.C.; the “Keyboard Karma” series of Vancouver; “Overture Concerts” in Nelson, Canada; a concert tour and master classes in Japan including a performance of Rachmaninoff’s 3rd Concerto with the Osaka Symphony; solo recitals in Izumi Hall and Phoenix Hall in Osaka; recitals and master classes in Tokyo and Kyoto; a recital tour in celebration of Niigata Nippo newspaper’s 70th Anniversary; recitals in Rachmaninoff Hall and Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatory in Russia; a performance at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.; appearances in New York with the Jasper Quartet for Brooklyn Friends of Chamber Music and with Metropolitan Opera tenor Jon Garrison; live broadcasts of solo recitals on WPR’s *Sunday Afternoon Live from the Chazen*; a fundraising recital for the Madison Symphony Orchestra in Madison (Wisconsin); and recitals with pianist Sara Davis Buechner in New York City.

Besalyan’s debut solo album, *Dance, Drama, Decadence* (IMC Music, Japan), has earned international accolades since its release in June 2012. The album received the prestigious *Jun-Tokusen* Award from *The Record Geijutsu*, Japan’s leading classical music magazine, and was chosen as “*Classical Album of the Month*” by *Mainichi Shinbun*, one of Japan’s largest newspapers. *Dance, Drama, Decadence* was selected as the “*Best New Release of the Month*” by Tokyo FM Music Bird, a prominent radio channel, where the CD premiered in its entirety. In addition, Ongaku no Tomo of Japan recommended and archived the CD as a study reference for music students and professors. *Fanfare Magazine* featured Besalyan in an extensive interview followed by rave reviews of the album, and another glowing review appeared in *American Record Guide*. Besalyan was also interviewed by

Wisconsin Public Radio's Norman Gilliland on *The Midday*, and Dance, Drama, Decadence was aired on WPR (Madison, WI) and KHPR (Honolulu, HI). The album features virtuoso works by Rachmaninoff, Liszt, and Ravel and premiere recordings of colorful folkloristic pieces by Armenian composers Komitas and Baghdassarian.



In 2014, Besalyan signed with GRAMMY® Award-winning record label Sono Luminus. His first critically acclaimed recording of solo works by S. Rachmaninoff and A. Babajanian for the label entitled "The Return" was released in March of 2015 and is distributed by Naxos. "The Return" has already been aired on several radio stations across the U.S. and Canada, such as the WGBH Boston, WRUV Vermont, the SiriusXM Washington D.C., Wisconsin Public Radio, The King FM Seattle, WFMT Chicago, The Grand FM Ontario and CBC Public Radio. And now, WQXR, New York's premiere classical radio station features the album as the New and Noteworthy Release of September, stating "Russia's bid to get Rachmaninoff's remains moved from a cemetery in Valhalla, NY to Moscow caused a stir this summer, after the composer's family balked at the idea. That makes this nostalgia-laced recording by the U.S.-based Armenian pianist Raffi Besalyan particularly timely."

Besalyan has also recorded *The Bach-Busoni Edition* Vol. 1 with Sara Davis Buechner which was released by Koch International Classics in September 2008.

Besalyan received his Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory as a student of Serqey Barseghyan. He received an additional Master of Music degree from Rowan University under Veda

Zuponic and studied at the Manhattan School of Music with legendary American pianist Byron Janis and with Sara Davis Buechner. His studies at the Moscow State Conservatory included classes with Alexei Nasedkin, Victor Merzhanov, and Naum Shtarkman.

In 2014, Dr. Besalyan joined the faculty of Georgia State University in Atlanta where he is currently Assistant Professor of Piano. A former faculty member of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and Rowan University in New Jersey, Besalyan also served on the faculties of Festival Musica in Laguna in Venice, Italy, and the International Summer Music Festival at Rowan. Besalyan has been active as an adjudicator for PTNA and Osaka International Music Competition in Japan, International Chopin Piano Competition in Asia, competitions in Italy, and for various chapters of MTNA. Besalyan is an advisory board member and co-artistic director for The Bach Society of Atlanta.