

AGBU

ARTS

PRESENTS

ARMENIANS IN

Jazz

2025

NEW YORK | BOSTON | DALLAS | PASADENA



ARMENIANS IN
jazz
2 0 2 5

Featuring:

Vardan Ovsepien
Piano

Karen Kocharyan
Drums

Emmanuel Hovhannisyan
Duduk and Blul

Noah Garabedian
Bass

NEW YORK

APRIL 30
THE CUTTING ROOM
NEW YORK, NY

BOSTON

MAY 02
AGBU NEW ENGLAND CENTER
WATERTOWN, MA

DALLAS

MAY 03
HALL OF LIGHTS
CARROLLTON, TX

PASADENA

MAY 04
AGBU VATCHE AND TAMAR MANOUKIAN CENTER
PASADENA, CA



Vardan Ovsepien PIANO

Vardan Ovsepien is an Armenian-born pianist/composer whose studies include Yerevan State Conservatory, Estonian Music Academy, Helsinki Jazz Conservatory, and Berklee College of Music.

Vardan was fascinated by the blend of western classical music with jazz from a young age and has been in perpetual search for unique ways of incorporating the hybrid formation in his composing and improvising. Consequently, a semi-large chamber ensemble (VOCE) was formed in 2005, focusing on the cinematic approach in the musical narrative. Vardan has also developed a remarkable angular geometric world, connected to his background in chess, and his attraction to minimalism and modern architecture, resulting in the publication of 2 books: *Mirror Exercises* (2011) and *Permutation Studies* (2020).

In addition to VOCE and *Fractal Limit*, Vardan has collaborated with artists like Mick Goodrick, Peter Erskine, and Jerry Bergonzi, releasing 20+ albums as a leader and co-leader. Recent awards include *Fractal Limit's* First Prize at the Achava Jazz Award (Erfurt, Germany - 2017), and the Chamber Music America Grant for New Jazz Works program (New York, NY - 2017). Presently, Vardan resides in Los Angeles and instructs at CalArts.



Karen Kocharyan DRUMS

Karen Kocharyan is a jazz drummer originally from Yerevan, Armenia. He completed his undergraduate degree at the Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan and in 1996, he signed a contract with the Paiste Cymbal Company and became a Paiste artist in Tallinn, Estonia, where he completed his master's at the Georg Ots Tallinn Music College.

Since moving to the US, Karen has played with major musicians such as Jerry Bergonzi, Esperanza Spalding, Tim Miller, Phil Grenadier, John Lockwood, George Garzone, Vardan Ovsepiyan, Ara Yaralyan, Lefteris Kordis, Santiago Bosch, Matt Stavrakas, Will Slater, Tucker Antell, and many others. When visiting Yerevan, Armenia for performances, he has collaborated with great Armenian musicians such as Vahagn Hayrapetyan, Armen Hyusnunts, Simon Dolmazyan, Artyom Manukyan, Karen Mamikonyan, and Dave Geodakyan.

Karen has recorded on Jerry Bergonzi's CD project, "By Any Other Name," and with Phil Grenadier's Trio CD project, "Shimmer." Today, Karen lives in Boston, Massachusetts and performs regularly in Boston's Jazz clubs such as the Beehive.



Emmanuel Hovhannisyan

DUDUK AND BLUL

Emmanuel Hovhannisyan is an accomplished duduk player and composer, whose musical journey began with his graduation from the Yerevan State Conservatory in 2005, under the supervision of Professor Dabaghyan. During his time at the conservatory, Emmanuel distinguished himself by participating in several international competitions, earning numerous international prizes for his exceptional musical talent.

Emmanuel's passion for Armenian folk music is evident in his performances with the Sheram ensemble founded in 2016, which specializes in interpreting the works of Ashughs (troubadours) from the 16th century onward. Additionally, Emmanuel founded the Emotion Band in 2015, through which he composed and performed various original compositions, showcasing his versatility and creative prowess.

Emmanuel's career is marked by his dedication to teaching and mentoring new generations of musicians. He began teaching at the Yerevan State Conservatory in 2008 and two years later, founded the Dudukman Duduk School. In December 2021, Emmanuel relocated to Los Angeles and, from January 2022 onwards, has been a faculty member at UCLA's Armenian department. He continued his educational endeavors by joining the faculty of the International School of Music in May 2023, where he brings his rich experience and profound musical knowledge to students in the US, Armenia, and Europe.



Noah Garabedian BASS

Bass player and composer Noah Garabedian holds a BA in Ethnomusicology from the University of California Los Angeles, and a Master's of Music Performance from New York University. He is a 2022 Calouste Gulbenkian In View grant recipient; 2021 Artist Fellow with Creative Armenia and AGBU; and 2022 and 2016 Fulbright Specialist Grant recipient; among other awards.

As an educator, Mr. Garabedian was a visiting jazz professor through Fulbright at Silpakorn University as well as at the São Paulo State Music School - EMESP Tom Jobim. He currently works with the music outreach program at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Jazz for Young People and serves as a part-time faculty at The New School and the Stanford Jazz Workshop.

As a composer and bandleader, Noah has released two albums under his own name, as well as one album as a part of the trio collective, Ember. In October 2020, he premiered "The Tragedy of Hate," a commission from the Peace Resource Center at Wilmington College, and has served as the musical director for "Rhythm Is Life," featuring choreographer and world-renowned tap dancer, Dormeshia.

As a sideman, Mr. Garabedian has performed and toured with Ravi Coltrane, Jeff Tain Watts, and Andy Milne, among others. Mr. Garabedian has also represented the US State Department on two separate tours as a musical ambassador where he performed for the public, taught workshops on music, and collaborated with local musicians.

About AGBU Arts

Armenian culture is as deep as its ancient roots, as rich as its mastery of diverse art forms, and as inventive and ingenious as its people. For this reason, AGBU Arts has become a driving force for developing and showcasing Armenian artists while treating audiences to experiences that reveal the transcendent human spirit in an Armenian context.

Central to AGBU Arts' mission is introducing Armenian culture and traditions to audiences worldwide. Armenians in Film showcases the works of award-winning filmmakers worldwide at leading film presenting venues; and AGBU Performing Artists in Concert at Carnegie Hall gives young Armenian musicians the unique opportunity to perform on one of the world's most famous stages.

Together with global AGBU Chapters, AGBU Arts organizes performance and exhibition opportunities to support and increase exposure to Armenian creatives, collaborating with institutions such as the **Museum of Modern Art (MoMA)**, **Centre Pompidou**, the **MET Museum**, the **British Film Institute (BFI)**, and countless others.

For more information, and to support AGBU Arts, visit: agbu.org/arts