

Music Knows No Borders at VPAC (The Soraya)**Jazz Sensation Anat Cohen and Her Tentet
Celebrate the Release of Her Latest Album,
“Happy Song” at VPAC (The Soraya)****Thursday, November 30 at 8:00pm****Marks The Anat Cohen Tentet’s West-Coast Debut!**

(Los Angeles, CA October 24, 2017) The Israeli-born, Brooklyn-based virtuoso clarinetist, Anat Cohen, presents a tapestry of sound that captures the jubilation of many genres, spanning modern and traditional jazz, Brazilian choro, klezmer and much more.

On November 30, she will bring her *Tentet* with musical direction by Oded Lev-Ari – in its West Coast Premiere – to VPAC (The Soraya) to perform music from her recently released album, *Happy Song*, as part of this season’s *Music Knows No Borders* series.

“We are thrilled to host Anat Cohen *Tentet*’s West Coast debut, and to bring Cohen and her incredible band to our audience first, right on the heels of their brand-new record, *Happy Song*,” said Thor Steingraber, Executive Director of VPAC (The Soraya). “Cohen, an Israeli clarinetist with roots in New York jazz, is a prime example of our *Music Knows No Borders* programming. And with this ten-piece band onstage, you will get to experience Anat Cohen rock out on the clarinet like you’ve never heard that instrument played before.”

About the Anat Cohen Tentet

Anat Cohen is Jazz Journalists Association’s ten-time winner of ‘Clarinetist of the Year’ and has received multiple citations in *DownBeat* magazine’s annual critics’ and readers’ polls in multiple categories. Celebrated the world over for her expressive virtuosity and infectious charisma, Cohen’s series of recordings via her Anzic Records label have seen the clarinetist/saxophonist range from hard-swinging to lilting balladry, from small groups to larger ensembles and back again, exploring a universe of music along the way.

Cohen said of her *Tentet*, “We were looking to create an evocative and exciting experience that is centered around the clarinet. We have accordion, piano, guitar, vibraphone, percussion, drums, bass, trombone, trumpet, flügelhorn baritone saxophone, bass clarinet, cello ... clarinet ... I really love when there is a lot of sound underneath and I can really wail on the clarinet. I love when the drums are playing heavy backbeat grooves and the guitar is howling with distortion and the vibraphone is playing some massive — it is a loud instrument and it can play a lot of sounds -- and the accordion and piano can add to it. And the horns are playing long tones, and the clarinet goes on top of all those instruments. The sensations from this massive amount of sound is completely exciting.”

“The *Tentet* quickly developed a special chemistry,” Cohen continued. “And that chemistry is what determined the sound of the band – the mix of personalities, musically and socially. You never know what’s going to happen, but it was exciting the way everyone was creating new blends, agreeing to try things, venturing out with some group improvisation – we just let it happen, to see where it would take us. The band became what it wanted to be, and then the reaction in New York and Newport was overwhelmingly warm and enthusiastic. For me, it’s thrilling to play the clarinet over the mass of sound this ensemble

produces. The musicians are so versatile and the group so dynamic, from soft and spacious to really rocking, where I can just wail over the top. I love that.”

DownBeat magazine said that “Cohen not only proved to be a woodwind revelation of dark tones and delicious lyricism, but also a dynamic bandleader who danced and shouted out encouragement to her group . . . with her dark, curly, shoulder-length hair swaying to the beat as she danced, she was a picture of joy.”

Chicago Tribune said, “The lyric beauty of her tone, easy fluidity of her technique and extroverted manner of her delivery make this music accessible to all.” *The Wall Street Journal* said, “The New York jazz community has seen a major influx of excellent Israeli musicians in the last 20 years. Among this crowd, the stand-out is doubtless Anat Cohen.”

Single tickets beginning at \$33 are now available; Swinging Jazz series subscriptions are also available. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.valleyperformingartscenter.org or call 818-677-3000. The Valley Performing Arts Center is located at 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330. Ticket prices subject to change.

About Anat Cohen and *Happy Song*

Anat’s latest release and third this year – *Happy Song*, released October 6 -- sees her drawing on diverse musical loves, from Brazilian music to African grooves, from vintage swing to touching ballads. She also explores Klezmer for the first time on record, perhaps surprising for a musician raised in Tel Aviv and long resident in Brooklyn. The new vehicle for these explorations is the Anat Cohen *Tentet*, a group of ace New York musicians that made its debut at the Jazz Standard in Manhattan and the famed Newport Jazz Festival.

Above all, *Happy Song* is another synergistic collaboration between Anat and co-producer/co-arranger Oded Lev-Ari, who is also her partner in Anzic as well as a kindred spirit since their high-school days in Israel. Anat has been declared Clarinetist of the Year by the Jazz Journalists Association every year since 2007, and she has also been named the top clarinetist in both the readers and critics polls in *DownBeat*, the jazz bible, for multiple years running.

The release of *Happy Song* – which features Anat on clarinet exclusively – comes in the 100th anniversary year of the very first jazz clarinet recording, by the Original Dixieland “Jass” Band. When describing Anat Cohen’s presence and impact, Fresh Air’s Terry Gross credits Cohen with “bringing the clarinet to the world” and The New York Times hails her a “Master.”

In many ways, the new *Happy Song* carries on from an initial highpoint of her discography, 2007’s sumptuous *Noir*, which saw Anat weave her various horns through the all-star Anzic Orchestra, arranged and conducted by Lev-Ari. *Billboard* magazine marveled over the “cinematic feel” of *Noir*, with the *Washington Post* praising Lev-Ari’s arrangements as “wonderfully textured and evocative” and *DownBeat* extolling Anat’s solos for their “enviable lyricism” and a way with “pure melody that’s seldom seen.” The *Tentet of Happy Song* boasts a different sort of richness, one that’s full but also fleet and fizzing, with an open, jazzy energy.

The beautiful arrangements are by both Anat and Lev-Ari, with the latter directing the band: Rubin Kodheli (cello), Nadjé Noordhuis (trumpet & flugelhorn), Nick Finzer (trombone), Owen Broder (baritone sax & bass clarinet), James Shipp (vibraphone & percussion), Vitor Gonçalves (piano & accordion), Sheryl Bailey (guitar), Tal Mashiach (double-bass) and Anthony Pinciotti (drums), plus Anat on solo clarinet. After ensemble workshops at Shapeshifter Lab in Brooklyn, multiple nights of knockout performances at the Jazz Standard and the acclaimed showcase at the Newport Jazz Festival, Anat and Lev-Ari took the *Tentet* into Avatar Studios in Manhattan.

About Music Director Oded Lev-Ari

“Putting lightning in a bottle is what Oded Lev-Ari specializes in,” said *DownBeat* magazine in a feature article on Lev-Ari as a producer of albums by the likes of hit band 3 Cohens, iconic clarinetist Anat Cohen and woodwind sage Marty Ehrlich, as well as rising-star singers Amy Cervini and Melissa Stylianou, and the hot

new vocal trio Duchess, featuring Cervini, Stylianou, and Hilary Gardner. Lev-Ari – born in Tel Aviv but a longtime resident of New York City – released his debut album as a leader, *Threading*, in April 2015 via Anzic Records, the label he has owned and directed for the past decade alongside Anat Cohen. Showcasing his talents as a composer-arranger, *Threading* hints at diverse sonic worlds, from jazz sound painters Gil Evans and Maria Schneider to *tango nuevo* king Astor Piazzolla and contemporary classical composers. Ultimately, though, Lev-Ari has his own, individual soundprint, one of cinematic richness and open-hearted lyricism.

Born in 1975, Lev-Ari graduated from Israel's Thelma Yelin High School for the Arts, where he became fast friends with Anat Cohen (and eventually her musical siblings and 3 Cohens band mates, trumpeter Avishai and saxophonist Yuval). He has written more than 500 arrangements and compositions for chamber and wind ensembles, big band and symphony orchestra, as well as various jazz combos. One of Lev-Ari's prime achievements as an arranger is his work on Anat Cohen's 2007 Anzic album *Noir*, which saw her front a large ensemble in numbers from vintage torch song "Cry Me a River" to the Sun Ra ballad "You Never Told Me That You Care."

Band Members

Anat Cohen - Clarinet

Oded Lev-Ari - Musical Director

James Shipp - Vibes / Perc.

Rubin Kodheli - Cello

Nadje Noordhuis - Trumpet/ Flügelhorn

Nick Finzer - Trombone

Owen Broder - Bari Sax / Bass Clarinet

Vitor Gonçalves - Piano/Accordion

Sheryl Bailey - Guitar

Tal Mashiach - Bass

Anthony Pinciotti - Drums

Music Knows No Borders at The Soraya

A musical melting pot comes to the Valley Performing Arts Center (The Soraya) this season, in more than 20 different performances. Curated by Thor Steingraber, The Soraya's Executive Director, the *Music Knows No Borders* events are inventive and bold, infectious and pulsating; putting a positive spin on current geopolitical themes such as migration, race, and religion. The digital age inspires musicians from every corner of the globe, delivering an endless expanse of musical styles, and inspiring innovation and fusion. More than ever before, global artists command a platform to spread their message of cultural unity and social activism. "At The Soraya we give voice to the musical diasporas," said Steingraber. "We are committed to a simple idea—the concert hall is an inviting and inclusive place. The communal joy of music and dance is immediate, intergenerational, and accessible. After all, ears know no borders. Hands clap and feet stomp regardless of nation-of-origin, religion, or cultural background."

About Valley Performing Arts Center (The Soraya)

The Soraya opened its 2017-2018 season on September 16 with a performance of *AMADEUS Live* (Milos Foreman's 1984 Academy Award-winning Best Picture with live orchestra) with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and members of the LA Opera Chorus. The evening honored the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Foundation in recognition of the family's recent \$17 million gift that will rename VPAC as the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Performing Arts Center, known as The Soraya. The gift is one of the largest in the history of the California State University and the system's largest single gift to support the arts; gift to support the programming and operations of the award-winning Valley Performing Arts Center – which has become one of the cultural jewels of the region in the six years since it opened.

The 2017-18 Soraya season signals a new era for the premier event venue. Under the leadership of Executive Director Thor Steingraber, the renamed Younes and Soraya Nazarian Performing Arts Center expands its programming and outstanding multidisciplinary performances. The mission of The Soraya is to present a wide variety of performances that not only includes new and original work from the Los Angeles region but also work from around the world that appeal to all of LA's rich and diverse communities. Located on the campus of California State University, Northridge, The Soraya's season offers a vibrant performance program of nearly 50 classical and popular music, dance, theater, family and international events that will serve to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando

Valley, and further establish itself as one of the top arts companies in Southern California. The award-winning, 1,700-seat theatre was designed by HGA Architects and Engineers and was recently cited by the Los Angeles Times as “a growing hub for live music, dance, drama and other cultural events.”

Calendar Listing for Anat Cohen Tentet

Date: Thursday, November 30 at 8:00pm
Prices: Start at \$33.00. Prices subject to change.

Venue: Valley Performing Arts Center
18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330

Tickets: **Prices:** Starting at \$33.
By Phone: (818) 677-3000
Online: ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org

Press Tim Choy, Niki Blumberg, Davidson & Choy Publicity
Contacts: 323-954-7510 | t.choy@dcpublicity.com; n.blumberg@dcpublicity.com
Gary W. Murphy, Public Relations Consultant
310-914-0178 | gmurphypr@gmail.com