



June 5, 2009
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VOCALIST AYELET ROSE GOTTLIEB RELEASES THIRD ALBUM “UPTO HERE | FROM HERE” ON AUGUST 11

NEW YORK - With her third full-length album, Israeli-born Ayelet Rose Gottlieb has elevated to a rarefied level of artistry. On the new album, *Upto Here | From Here*, releasing August 11 on her own Arogole Records imprint and distributed through ObliqSound, Gottlieb pulls the art of jazz singing out of its safety zone and infuses it with new possibilities, exploring the human voice in a way that few contemporary singers can or will. And Gottlieb does so seemingly nonchalantly, with the panache and authority of an artist who has been making records for decades, not a mere handful of years.

“Unlike so many singers around her, she explores the textures and styles that her voice can produce. She is an instrumentalist on par with any other and a fully integrated member of her band,” notes Andrey Henkin, editor of *All About Jazz*, in the album’s liner notes. *Upto Here | From Here* features a cast of musicians with whom Gottlieb has worked since 2002, some of the most skilled and visionary players the New York jazz scene has to offer: Loren Stillman (saxophone), fellow Israelis Avishai Cohen (trumpet) and Anat Fort (piano), Ed Schuller (bass) and the late Take Toriyama (drums), who passed away in 2007. Gottlieb’s earlier recordings—the avant-garde-oriented debut *InTernal ExTernal* (Genevieve, 2004) and *Mayim Rabim* (Tzadik, 2006), an original song cycle based on the erotic biblical love poem “Song of Songs” and sung entirely in Hebrew—established Gottlieb as an adventurous, even audacious performer. *Upto Here | From Here*, co-produced by Gottlieb and her husband Shahar Levavi, makes it even clearer that Gottlieb is a commanding artist who thrives on the unexpected: Her improvisational acumen is second to none, her confidence as a leader and her range defy description, and her artistic inquisitiveness spurs her to outdo herself each time out.

From the album’s opening track, “Pomegranate Man,” Gottlieb proclaims her independent streak with a freewheeling flurry of exhilarating words that tease the mind: “My pomegranate man/he’s my antioxidant/his juices are so bittersweet/eat him in scoops or grain by grain/we’ll see, depending on the moment’s beat.” On the following track, “Life Is a Structure That Is [Accept It!],” she makes the most of the simplest of sentiments, all the while ignoring the title’s own advice: Her voice swooping and swirling in waves of surprise, Gottlieb and crew (particularly Fort and the reeds) ultimately refuse to accept any limitations that structure might impose on the song’s direction.

In addition to her original compositions, Gottlieb turns to an intriguing array of outside sources for lyrical inspiration for some of the highlights of *Upto Here | From Here*. Both the ballad “The Most Alive Moment,” and the airy, quasi-Baroque “Some Kiss” are based on writings of the 13th Century Persian poet and mystic Rumi, while the minimalist “Letter” and the first section of the title track come from the contemporary Israeli poet Agi Mishol, with translations by Gottlieb (the second section is adapted from composer John Cage’s book *Silence*). “Sweep Streets” finds Gottlieb and her quintet giving musical voice to a famous speech on self-fulfillment by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the album’s only standard, “The Nearness of You,” penned by Hoagy Carmichael and Ned Washington, is rendered softly and sweetly, nearly devoid of drums and bass.

On Gottlieb’s “Wrong Rain [bird thoughts]” and “Hidden Forbidden,” Schuller provides the driving force. The latter is a jaunty, whimsical romp that features Cohen navigating a whistle and Gottlieb coaxing music out of a balloon. Rounding out the set are two more Gottlieb originals: “And In the End,” whose brief lyrics pay homage to a famous Beatles tune, and “Venezia,” not only dedicated to Ayelet’s grandmother but featuring the matriarch’s spoken words superimposed over the band’s improvisations.

For Gottlieb, the album marks a pronounced giant step in an ever-evolving musical journey. “There is something very personal about this record,” she says. “All of the tunes leave a lot of space for interpretation and improvisation, and were written specifically for the individuals you hear playing them on this recording. The album is about family. It starts with a song I wrote for my husband for our wedding; it ends with a song about my grandmother, and in between is a document of my musical family in New York, these five people who have interpreted my music more than anyone else in recent years.

“This is also a record about love,” she adds, “but, not just the peak points of it—the joy or despair. Mostly, it looks at the loneliness and yearning that are within love... at the moments when you are with yourself, with your innermost thoughts. Hopefully this record takes you on a ride through those various emotional fields, and brings you back home at the end.”

Gottlieb’s own ride has taken her to far-flung geographical locales and musical touch points. Born in Jerusalem in 1979 to a European-born father and a mother with Sephardic roots, Gottlieb has absorbed as much music as she’s had the opportunity to: her influences run the gamut from Middle Eastern music to American folk, classical music, Israeli punk, blues, early electronica, experimental rock, Spanish guitar, French Chanson, and, of course, jazz, particularly inspirational figures being Charles Mingus, Ornette Coleman and Betty Carter.

Ayelet played classical flute during her early childhood and into her years at the Arts High School in Jerusalem. She continued her musical education at Rimon School for Jazz and Contemporary Music in Tel Aviv, while holding a steady gig in Jerusalem with Saxophone legend Arnie Lawrence, who was her mentor and collaborator until his death in ’05. She came to the States in 2000 to complete her BM at the New England Conservatory, where she studied with vocalist Dominique Eade, and with visionaries such as Ran Blake and George Russell.

Gottlieb moved to New York in 2002, where she was quickly absorbed into the city’s vibrant downtown scene. She has played in clubs including the Jazz Standard, BB Kings and The Stone, and performed at some of the world’s most prestigious concert halls, including a recent performance at Carnegie Hall with vocal master Bobby McFerrin, and a guest performance at the Israeli Opera House, with Joe Lovano and John Abercrombie. She currently collaborates with Macarthur Genius Award winner John Zorn on two of his projects. On his “Shir Hashirim” composition, she narrates in Hebrew, while an alternate version is narrated in English by living legends Lou Reed and Laurie Anderson. Additionally, she works with “Mycale,” an all female vocal ensemble commissioned by Zorn to create collaborative arrangements to music from his *Book of Angels*.

Ayelet currently splits her time between New York, Jerusalem and Wellington, New Zealand, a puzzle-life that has inspired her to start a new bi-continental band called Pangaea, with one leg in Israel and another in New York. The new project features long-time collaborator pianist Anat Fort as well as bass, percussion, oud and violin.

“When a performance is ‘on’ and all the elements are aligned, there isn’t a more invigorating experience,” she says. “When sound flows through your body and outwards and you feel both grounded and flying in it, when you listen to the musicians around you on the bandstand and feel every note they play as though you are playing it yourself, when you have a direct line to the ears and hearts of your audience, and you know that you are exchanging ‘gifts’ with them, those moments are the ones that are the most precious to me.”

Upto Here | From Here is filled with exactly such precious moments. It heralds the true blossoming of an artist whose gifts are undeniable.