

Emmet Cohen
Biography

Multifaceted American jazz pianist and composer Emmet Cohen has emerged as one of his generation's pivotal figures in music and the related arts. A recognized prodigy, Cohen began Suzuki method piano instruction at age three, and his playing quickly became a mature melding of musicality, technique, and concept. *Downbeat* observed that his "nimble touch, measured stride and warm harmonic vocabulary indicate he's above any convoluted technical showmanship." In the same spirit, Cohen himself has noted that playing jazz is "about communicating the deepest level of humanity and individuality; it's essentially about *connections*," both among musicians and with audiences. Possessing a fluid technique, an innovative tonal palette, and an expansive repertoire, Cohen plays with the command of a seasoned veteran and the passion of an artist fully devoted to his medium.

In addition, Emmet Cohen has established a comprehensive role in the world of the creative arts that extends beyond performing. He is avid about the inter-generational transfer of artistic knowledge, history, and traditions. Himself an alumnus of the YoungArts Foundation, he now produces and directs multidisciplinary high school YoungArts programs nationally that employ creative writing, theater, dance, visual arts, cinematography, music, voice, and jazz. Through designing student curricula and selecting master artists as teachers and mentors, Cohen is in his element, connecting effectively with multi-generational performers and audiences.

Cohen visits 50 schools yearly through Jazz at Lincoln Center's "Jazz for Young People" program and regularly presents jazz history and performance lectures. To honor the pioneers of America's unique musical idiom, Cohen is producing the "Masters Legacy Series," a celebratory set of recordings and interviews honoring legendary jazz musicians—he is the pianist on the first recording featuring Miles Davis drummer Jimmy Cobb. Additionally, Cohen has been involved with interdisciplinary programs directed by choreographers Debbie Allen and Bill T. Jones.

Emmet Cohen's exacting piano artistry has been recognized in many significant forums. He placed first in both the American Jazz Pianists competition (2014) and the Phillips Piano Competition at the University of West Florida (2011). He was a finalist in the prestigious American Pianists Association's Cole Porter Fellowship (2015, 2011) and the Thelonious Monk International Piano Competition (2011). Cohen has appeared in world-renowned jazz events, including the Monterey, Newport, North Sea, Bern, and Edinburgh jazz festivals and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. He has also performed at the Blue Note, Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, Birdland, London's Ronnie Scott's, Jazzhaus Montmartre in Copenhagen, Lincoln Center's Rose Hall, and the Kennedy Center, and was received in the Oval Office by President Obama. He is currently Hammond B3 organist-in-residence at Harlem's Smoke jazz club.

Cohen is leader of the "Emmet Cohen Trio," and pianist and music director for jazz vocalist and television personality Lea DeLaria. A member of both the "Ali Jackson Trio" and the "Christian McBride Special Trio," he has also appeared regularly with Kurt Elling, Billy Hart, Jimmy Heath, Brian Lynch, and Herlin Riley. His recordings include the "Masters Legacy Series featuring Jimmy Cobb" (2017), "New Directions" (2016), with Herlin Riley; "Questioned Answer" (2014), co-produced with Bryan Lynch; "Infinity" (2013), featuring his Italian Trio; and his acclaimed debut CD "In the Element" (2011), with bassist Joe Sanders and drummer Rodney Green.

Cohen holds a Masters Degree from the Manhattan School of Music and a Bachelors Degree from the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, where he studied with esteemed pianist and educator Shelly Berg. In his formative years he was tutored in classical piano at the Manhattan School of Music's Pre-College Division.

A powerful and charismatic performer, Emmet Cohen possess wide-ranging talents that are reinvigorating the contemporary arts world both domestically and internationally and are received enthusiastically worldwide.