



B Natural, Inc. | 357 Upland Avenue | Yonkers, NY 10703

TIGRAN HAMASYAN

PIANIST/COMPOSER

YAMAHA ARTIST

In its ever-evolving state, jazz invites into its fold imaginative artists who freely and courageously pursue their own vision, not only built on tradition but also infused with their own personality and passion. In the case of composer / pianist / keyboardist Tigran Hamasyan, potent jazz improvisation fuses with the rich folkloric music of his native Armenia. He's one of the most remarkable and distinctive jazz-meets-rock pianists of his generation. Tigran's fresh sound is marked by an exploration of time signatures beyond 4/4 into 5/4 and 9/8, charged dynamics, the shifting between acoustic and electric modes of expression, all undergirded by an affinity to the grind of heavy metal.

A piano virtuoso with groove power, Tigran's adventurous project *The Ancient Observer* is his second solo album and his sophomore recording for Nonesuch. It's a collection of new original compositions written over the course of the last three to four years—two of which are based on Armenian melodies. Some of the pieces are through composed and completely written out while others are through composed but with ample space for Tigran to improvise. Many include vocals layered into the mix. Like most of his recordings, the influences of the music are manifold, ranging from classical Baroque dance to J-Dilla-esque hip-hop grooves adapted to piano to a few tracks with pedals connected to a synthesizer—though the Armenian influence, which makes his music so uniquely outstanding, is prominent.

Conceptually, *The Ancient Observer* is a poignant album focusing on the art of observing. *"It's something that humans have been practicing for ages, sometimes even subliminally,"* Tigran says. *"It is especially interesting in today's time. It's the feeling of the ancient eternal and impermanent versus the present day eternal and the impermanent. The intertwining of this ancient with the modern world creates an existential feeling. This album is presenting the observation of the world we live in now and the weight of our history we carry on our shoulders, which is influencing us even if we don't realize it. This album is the observation of influences and experiences I had."*



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Born in Gyumri, Armenia, in 1987, Tigran grew up in a household that was full of music—his father more of a rock fan while his uncle was a huge jazz buff. When he was just a toddler, Tigran gravitated to tape players and the piano instead of regular childhood toys, and by the time he was 3, he was working his way through figuring out songs on piano by the Beatles, Louis Armstrong, Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple, Black Sabbath and Queen. His jazz tastes early on were informed by Miles Davis's fusion period, and then around the age of 10 when his family moved to Yerevan, he came to discover the classic jazz songbook under the aegis of his teacher Vahag Hayrapetyan, who had studied with Barry Harris. *"That's when I understood what jazz is,"* Tigran says. *"He taught me about bebop. He was a great teacher."*