

Elon Turgeman

Guitarist and composer, was born in 1960, in Jerusalem, Israel into a musical family.

His father had an especially fine voice and was a cantor in the synagogue, so that from Elon's earliest childhood, he heard and absorbed the liturgical music of the Jews of Morocco. His mother came from the Azoulai family, who had performed in the royal court of Morocco, and many of his relatives are excellent musicians. Thus the rich and varied musical tradition of North Africa is one of the foundations of his music. In his parents' home, he was also influenced by his older brothers, who played guitar and sang along with records of Elvis Presley, Ray Charles, the Beatles, Frank Sinatra, and others. So he was exposed to Oriental and Western music from the day of his birth.

He fell in love with the guitar as a young boy, and at the age of twelve he began to play seriously, spending most of the hours of the day with his guitar. Two years later, upon reaching the age of fourteen, he already played rock impressively and started his own band, "The Creation," which appeared in clubs and festivals and even produced a cassette for the radio with Elon's original songs.

At that time Elon started attending the Rubin Academy of Music High School in Jerusalem, where he mainly studied classical music. He began to be more interested in jazz at the age of sixteen, when he met the British guitarist, Dave Cliff. While he was studying with Cliff, he was exposed for the first time to the music of Charlie Parker and the be-bop style, and he was influenced by Jim Hall, Joe Pass, Wes Montgomery, and George Benson. At the same time he was appearing with his friends, the musicians Avi Adrian, Sasson Levi, Mark Fallon, Boris Gamar, Tal Bergman, Yossi Fein, and Rony Holan in the best jazz clubs and in the first jazz festival in Israel. In 1978 he joined the Israeli army and served in the Air Force band for three years. At that time he gained a lot of experience accompanying singers and playing various styles of music with the band.

In 1984 he was accepted at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he studied until 1989 with the Jim Hall scholarship for outstanding students. He completed his studies with distinction and was on the Dean's List. While he was in Boston, he studied and played with excellent musicians, including George Garzon, Jerry Bergonzi, Mathias Huse, Bob Moses, and Ian Forman. He was also influenced by modern jazz and musicians such as Pat Metheny, John Scofield, Mike Stern, and Miles Davis. During his time in Boston he started a band named Lava that played original material in the jazz fusion style and appeared in the leading jazz clubs of the city such as Jonathan Swift's, Ryles, 1369, and others. Among the members of the band were Skuli Suerrisson, Wener Gierig, Jakob Levi, and Mike Ringquist.

After finishing his studies he returned to Israel in 1990 and joined the teaching staff at Rimon, the college for contemporary music, where he teaches to this day. Elon Turgeman is regarded as one of the outstanding guitarists of Israel, known for his unique, warm sound.

In the late 1990s, the famous saxophonist and jazz educator, Arnie Lawrence, arrived in Israel, and he chose Elon as his favorite guitarist. Along with Lawrence, Elon appeared countless times all over the country and even in a nightclub in Ramallah, the capital of the Palestinian Authority. When he joined up with Arnie, Elon was joining up with the rich tradition of jazz of his teachers at Berklee, because Lawrence had played with most of the great musicians of the United States from the 1950s until the 1990s.

In addition to the late Arnie Lawrence, Elon has appeared with the best musicians in Israel, in clubs, concerts, and festivals, including the Israel Festival, the Red Sea Jazz Festival in Eilat, the Tel Aviv Festival, the Cinematheque Festival in Jerusalem, and the Shoni Festival. He has played and appeared with James Moody, Avishai Cohen, Arnie Lawrence, Jeff Berlin, Omer Avital, and many other prominent musicians. He also took part in a special concert with a symphony orchestra with the composer and pianist Lalo Schifrin.