



**I Ain't Got Nothin' But the Blues**  
**Yuval Amihai (Fresh Sound-New Talent)**  
 by Anna Steegmann

Guitarist Yuval Amihai has always loved jazz trios, above all Keith Jarrett's trio recordings and fellow guitarist Pat Metheny's first album, the latter inspiring him to take up his instrument. This is Amihai's third album as a leader and first with the Barcelona-based Fresh Sound label after a pair of self-released albums from 2015 and 2012. He introduces a trio with bassist Damien Varaillon and drummer Gautier Garrigue he formed after his move from Israel to Paris 12 years ago and is joined for three tracks by trumpeter Hermon Mehari and tenor saxophonist Amit Friedman.

Besides the Duke Ellington-Don George title track we find standards like Cole Porter's "Love for Sale", Jimmy Van Heusen-Johnny Burke's "Polka Dots and Moonbeams", Richard Rodgers-Lorenz Hart's "You Are Too Beautiful" and his take on his idol Jarrett's "So Tender". In his compositions "Old New Song", "Eviator" and "Yuli" his dexterous playing is at its most tender and heartfelt. Amihai is fond of the blues, to him "one of the deepest connections between the instrument and jazz music."

His guitar is at the core of all tracks, while the other instruments support and nourish, except for

"Love for Sale", "Eviatar" and "Yuli" where the trio expands to a quintet with Mehari and Friedman. Both horns take center stage, they alternate, carry the melody together, then take improvisational flights.

The entire album can be considered background music in the best sense of the word, a wonderful soundtrack to accompany a romantic dinner. The music doesn't show off and force itself on the listener. The masterful melodies, delicate airy phrasing and warm sound are lyrical and timeless. Simplicity and sincerity rule. The earnest emotional tone slowly but surely gets under the listener's skin.

Amihai has won prestigious awards and jazz competitions in France and Belgium. He recently relocated to New York City. If you have a chance to catch him live, bring a date.

For more information, visit [freshsoundrecords.com](http://freshsoundrecords.com). Amihai is at *Bistro Jules* Apr. 25th. See Calendar.



**The Mouser**  
**Tomeka Reid/Filippo Monico (Relative Pitch)**  
 by Ivana Ng

*The Mouser*, an intimate session between Chicagoan-now-New-York-based cellist Tomeka Reid and Italian drummer Filippo Monico (who has worked with

Giorgio Gaslini, Mario Schiano and others since the early '70s) recorded in Milan, Italy, is unstructured play at its best. Imaginative and daring, the two dive into the margins and depths of the cello and drums to uncover a much richer instrumentation and aural palette than one would expect from a duo.

"Let's play," Monico says earnestly on the first track. He and Reid have a natural rapport immediately apparent from the very first note. Their interplay is cerebral yet joyful. "Without Recourse" begins with a flurry of horn-like squeaks and squeals followed by acoustic plucking and guttural tones. Then Reid's melodic sensibility gives way to Monico's gentle brush strokes and soft vocals.

They dive into a more solemn soundscape in "Walk Within the Eye of the Storm". Distinct and forcefully plucked cello lines snake through the low-register shakes and whistles of the drums. They explore still more novel sounds and tones while weaving harmonic grooves and abstract improvisation in the title track. It's only about three-quarters through the recording, in "Wefting Through a Starry Sky", that Reid and Monico return to the sounds more typically associated with their instruments. Cello flows between classical themes and avant-jazz motifs while percussion build in heat. The momentum continues to build in broad strokes and dramatic tremolos in "Intimations of Things to Come", the final track of the 40-minute recording. It's all climax and intensity until the very end, leaving us stunned by what Reid and Monico are able to achieve together in this brief but imaginative set of tracks.

For more information, visit [relativepitchrecords.com](http://relativepitchrecords.com). Reid is at *Happy Lucky no.1* Apr. 19th-20th with *Dave Douglas* and *The Jazz Gallery* Apr. 26th. See Calendar.

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Patrice Williamson isn't a singer, she's a one-woman jazz sampler... She is a woman of many voices, each distinctly intriguing, all distinctly her own.  
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