



APRIL 2010 ISSUE

Reviews

PICK OF THE MONTH

ERNIE ACEVEDO & CONJUNTO IMAGEN WILLIE VILLEGAS & ENTRE AMIGOS

In Concert

(Muziq Inc. Records and Salsa En La Calle NY Style)

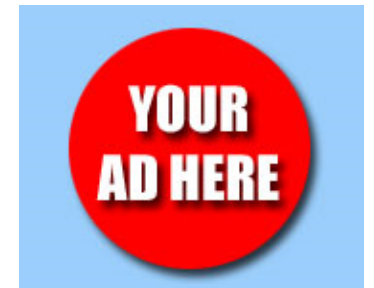
DVD

This new DVD captures two of Brooklyn's hardest working salsa bands in a special performance at the Kumble Theatre, located on the campus of New York's Long Island University.

Celebrating their 20th anniversary, Ernie Acevedo & Conjunto Imagen open the concert, fronted by vocalists Eddie Rosado, Johnny Ortiz and Alex Rodríguez. The stage is adorned with the talents of Arelis Beato & The Tropical Image Dancers. Highlighting Imagen's performance are the selections *Ave María Lola*, *Punteame El Tres*, and *Nuevamente Te Invita a Bailar*.

Closing the concert is Willie Villegas & Entre Amigos (another favorite tri-state salsa band). Singing for Entre Amigos is special guest Frankie Otero (of Wayne Gorbea's Salsa Picante fame), who shares the stage with the Fania All Stars cuatro legend Yomo Toro, the veteran salsa singer Sammy Ayala (of Cortijo y su Combo and Ismael Rivera & Los Cachimbos fame) and Ismael Otero's Caribbean Soul Dancers. Heating up Entre Amigos' performance were the selections *Mayarí*, *El Cantante*, and *Vámonos Pal Monte*.

This two-hour DVD showcases the talents of this couple of seasoned and excellent bands, whose efforts and love for classic salsa keep our musical culture alive. Visit www.conjuntoimagen.com and www.salsaenlacalle.com. – Rudy Mangual



José Luis Morán
La Rumba del Barrio
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3D Ritmo de Vida
Que Siga La Rumba



[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

Somos Son

Bilongo

[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

The Estrada Brothers

Mr. Ray

[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

Manny Silvera

Bassed in America

[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

Bobby Matos

Cuchy Frito Man

[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

Chembo Corniel

Buena Gente

[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

Maña

Tranquilito

[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

Santiago Ceron

Besos de Hada

[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

Johnny Polanco y Su Conjunto Amistad

El Gusto de Mi Salsa

REVIEWS

CHENCHO RIVERA Y SU CONJUNTO ABACOA

Angelitos (Chencho Rivera)

Enjoying a musical career that initially started in 1947 in New York City, Inocencio "Chencho" Rivera (a native of Arecibo, Puerto Rico) relocated to Los Angeles in the early 1950s. In 1960, he joined the legendary Pérez Prado Orchestra as its bassist, touring extensively throughout the world for six years. Upon his return to New York City, he worked with Tito Rodríguez, Ray Barretto, Cándido, Willie Colón, and Cal Tjader, among others. In Puerto Rico, Rivera joined forces with Lito Peña's popular Panamericana Orchestra until 1973, before moving to Boston, Massachusetts, in order to complete his studies at the Berklee School of Music. After graduating, he became a professor at Berklee and led said music school's Latin Ensemble, prior to a short stint with Tito Puente's orchestra in New York City. Chencho Rivera currently lives and works in Arecibo, Puerto Rico. He has traded the bass for the Puerto Rican cuatro – the first string instrument he played as a child-due to its light portability (in comparison to the heavier bass and its amplifier) and melodic voice. His new recording, as leader of Conjunto Abacoa, features ten scores (including two of his own compositions—*Descarga Jibara* and the title track *Angelitos*) and is reinforced with various guest musicians: *Giovanni Hidalgo* (congas), *Eric Figueroa* (piano), *Tito de Gracia* (timbal), *Humberto Ramírez* (trumpet), and *Edwin Colón Zayas* (cuatro). – *Rudy Mangual*



ROBERTO FONSECA

Akokán (Justin Time)

On his second Justin Time release, the astoundingly talented pianist/composer/arranger/bandleader Roberto Fonseca (the 36 year-old stepson of the legendary Chucho Valdés) offers some intriguing piano solos, while facilitating a brilliant fusion of Cuban music and jazz (plus other sonic elements too difficult to classify), thus resulting in a ideal equilibrium of lovely melodies, refined harmonies, and lively rhythms.



Known for his amazing lyricism and regarded by this writer as one of the most creative Cuban pianists of his generation, Fonseca prefers to lead quartet or quintet formats* throughout most of this vibrant session. In addition to his own compositions, he delivers a totally refreshing version of Drume Negrita, Emilio Grenet's

[Windows Media
Quicktime](#)

Siempre Salsa All Stars
Salsa Para Siempre
[Windows Media
Quicktime](#)

venerable canción de cuna (Cuban lullaby), and collaborates with the soulful North American singer/songwriter/guitarist Raúl Midón on the son montuno-tinged Everyone Deserves a Second Chance (if properly promoted, this tune could become a crossover hit of amazing proportions). Not to mention, of course, the tender vocal contributions of the Cape Verdean Mayra Andrade, who wrote the lyrics for the album's fourth track, Fonseca's Siete Potencias. – *Luis Tamargo*

* Depending on the Havanese bandleader's variable needs and requirements, said formats are basically comprised of the following sidemen: Javier Zalva flute/clarinet/baritone sax), Omar González (bass), Ramses Rodríguez (trap drums) and Joel Herrezuelo (Cuban percussion), all of whom are capable of demonstrating an unquestionable high level of spontaneous interaction.

FIESTA ORCHESTRA

Me Está Gustando/I'm Liking It (Caramba Productions)

Originally from New York City and formerly known as "Clara Salsa," Fiesta Orchestra now calls Miami (Florida) home. Fronted by two lead vocalists, Jorge Laureano (the band's executive producer) and singer Lee Malavet, Fiesta Orchestra is guided by the pianist/composer/arranger/musical director Landin K. Battistini. This latest recording, *Me Está Gustando* (I'm Liking It), features a mixed repertoire of originals and standards in both Spanish and English, all swinging to a Latin beat. Big band arrangements and percussive grooves make standouts of the selections *Siempre Así*, *Señora*, and *Llorarás*, as well as the two versions (vocal and instrumental) of the contemporary jazz hit *Street Life* (composed by Joe Sample and Will Jennings of The Crusaders, and originally interpreted by Randy Crawford).

– *Rudy Mangual*



EL GRAN FELLOVE

Mango Mangüé (VampiSoul)

Born in Havana, Francisco Fellove Valdés (professionally known as "El Gran Fellove") grew up singing and performing in the streets of Havana with the legendary conga-playing rumbero Chano Pozo. At the age of 16, he composed the classic *Mango Mangüé*, originally recorded by the popular Miguelito Valdés, followed by Celia Cruz, Tito Puente, Johnny Pacheco, and Aldemaro Romero, among many others. El Gran Fellove was probably the first Latin singer to scat, in a unique style he developed as a teen in the mid-1930s.

This collection of original compositions and other tunes popularized by the iconic Cuban singer/showman was compiled by Luc Delannoy for the Spanish label



VampiSoul. The compilation includes many selections from the late 1950s and early 1960s, which have become standards in today's Cuban songbook, including El Jamaíquino, Baile Mi Rumba, Baila Mi Guapacha, Guapacheando, and the title track, Mango Mangüé. – *Rudy Mangual*

MARK WEINSTEIN

Timbasa (Jazzheads)

A native of Brooklyn (New York), flutist/composer Mark Weinstein joins forces with some of the top young Cuban exponents of Latin jazz in the Big Apple for a celebration of rhythm and virtuosity in this new production titled Timbasa. A trombonist-turned-flutist (he was originally known in the 1960s as trombonist of Eddie Palmieri's La Perfecta), Weinstein continues to be an active member of the New York jazz scene, as well as a professor at Montclair State University. This new recording revisits such jazz standards as Watermelon Man, Milestones, Caravan, and Footprints (while offering new scores penned by Weinstein and Pedro Martínez, and raising the standards of Latin jazz arrangements to their outer limits, without losing the original essence of these classic masterpieces. Backed by a volatile quintet comprised of Axel Tosca Laugart (piano), Panagiotis Andreou (bass/vocals), Pedrito Martínez (all-around percussion), Mauricio Herrera (trap drums/timbal) and Ogduardo Díaz (bongós/batá); Weinstein provides the melodic voice (via his alto and bass flutes) throughout the entire recording. Leading the list of favorites is the title track Timbasa, followed by Watermelon Man, A Ernesto, and Just Another Guajira.

– *Rudy Mangual*



PAPÓ ORTEGA'S CUBANOSÓN

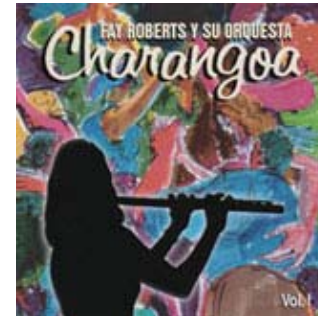
Rumba Nueva (Cubanoson Productions)

This sophomore recording by the New York City-based Cuban music orchestra called Cubanosón contains a total of 13 tracks, including six original scores from the pen of bandleader/pianist Leonel "Papo" Ortega. Founded in 2005, Cubanosón is committed to honoring and nurturing the traditions of Cuban music, as well as all the other rhythms of the Caribbean. Since half of his sideman are of Puerto Rican heritage, Ortega called upon the writing talents of his uncle Sergio Sori to compose a song honoring Puerto Rico. The score is titled *Cantamos a Puerto Rico* and it's one of the highlights of this recording, featuring the tres guitar of Junior Rivera. Other standouts include the selections *A Bailar Con Cubanosón*, the title track *Rumba Nueva*, and a handful of French-language tracks – *Voulez-Vous Danser*, *Histoire D'un Amour*, and *On y Va Tous a Danser*. – *Rudy Mangual*



**FAY ROBERTS Y SU ORQUESTA CHARANGO
Rumba Nueva
(Cubanoson Productions)**

Los Angeles, California-based flutist Fay Roberts leads one of the finest Latin bands in the Southland: Charangoa, a charanga band that performs traditional Cuban music with an instrumentation favoring the flute as the lead melodic voice, backed by violins and a rhythm section of bass, piano and percussion. While this recording (originally made in 2005) is not indicative of Charangoa's current cast of musicians, the band continues to play a repertoire of traditional charanga favorites, as well as more contemporary selections showcasing the flute talents of its leader. Featured musicians in this recording include Fermín Sifontes (piano/vocals), Jimmy Branly (timbal/arrangements), Paul Pérez (bass), and Harry Scorzo (violin/arrangements), among others. – *Rudy Mangual*



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