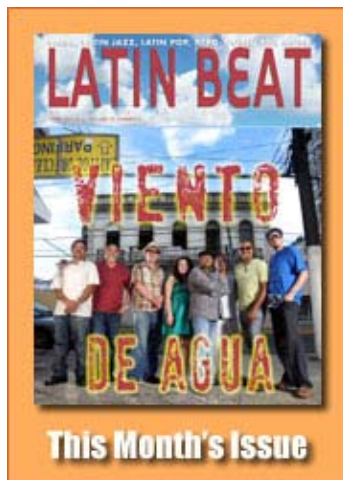




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## JUNE/JULY 2010 ISSUE

# Reviews ⊕⊕⊕

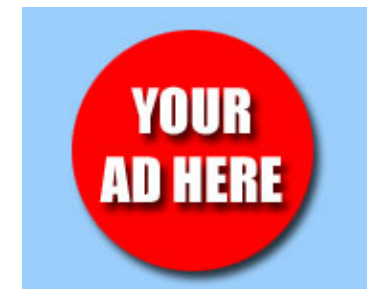
## PICK OF THE MONTH

### VIENTO DE AGUA

#### Fruta Madura

#### (Viento de Agua)

The contagious rhythm of the Puerto Rican plena, combined with Jerry Medina's scat singing, on the opening tune — *Ciudadano del Mundo* (composed by the musical director Ricardo Pons) — sets the pace for the additional tracks of Viento de Agua's second recording — *Fruta Madura* (Ripe Fruit). Viento de Agua is led by the renowned Héctor "Tito" Matos, a master of the traditional percussion of Borinquen's musical folklore, including panderetas (rim drums) and barriles (barrel drums). Unlike its previous New York — made outing, Viento de Agua's most recent disc was completely recorded in Puerto Rico and features its core members and various guests, such as Miguel Zenón (alto sax), Christian Nieves (cuatro), percussionists Vitito Emmanuelli and Héctor Calderón, and vocalists Jerry Medina, Gema Corredera and Pavel Urquiza. Under the musical direction of reedman (and founding member) Ricardo Pons and the leading percussive savvy of Tito Matos, Viento de Agua is one of Puerto Rico's top contemporary ensembles, known for fusing the island's native rhythms (bomba and plena) with everything under the sun. Not to be classified as a traditional bomba-and-plena outfit, Viento de Agua is more in tune as an experimental ensemble searching for new musical possibilities and flavors, while nurturing the progressive evolution of the traditional rhythms of Puerto Rico. Highlighting this recording of original scores are the selections *Ciudadano del Mundo*, *Oye Camiña*, *No Me Apagues La Candela*, and *Lola*, plus the title track (*Fruta Madura*). — *Rudy Mangual*



#### Steve Pouchie

Watch Ur Wallet

[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

#### José Luis Morán

La Rumba del Barrio

[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

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**3D Ritmo de Vida**  
Que Siga La Rumba  
[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

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**Somos Son**  
Bilongo  
[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

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**The Estrada Brothers**  
Mr. Ray  
[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

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**Manny Silvera**  
Bassed in America  
[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

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**Bobby Matos**  
Cuchy Frito Man  
[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

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**Chembo Corniel**  
Buena Gente  
[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

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**Maña**  
Tranquilito  
[Windows Media Quicktime](#)

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**Santiago Ceron**  
Besos de Hada  
[Windows Media](#)

## REVIEWS

### HÉCTOR MARTIGNÓN

#### Second Chance (Zoho)

En su cuarta grabación como líder, el distinguido pianista/acordeonista/ arreglista/compositor colombiano Héctor Martignón presenta su actual quinteto neoyorkino de jazz latino, integrado también por Armando Gola (bajo), Ludwig Alfonso (batería), Samuel Torres (percusión) y Xavier Pérez (saxofones). El quinteto de Martignón cuenta, por supuesto, con la participación de media docena de notables invitados, entre los cuales se destaca Edmar Castañeda (exponente de la adaptable arpa llanera). El repertorio es una combinación de piezas originales y ajenas que demuestran la evolución melódica de Martignón como arreglista y compositor, desde la aproximación montunera de *Guaji-Rita* hasta el sabor sambista de *Bala con Bala*. Como siempre Martignón logra navegar eficazmente en las principales corrientes (cubana y brasileña) del jazz latino, aunque también demuestra su habilidad para integrar el folclor de su tierra natal al antedicho idioma musical, tal como sucede en la presente adaptación de *Coqueteos* — un tema tradicional de la región montañosa de Colombia — al joropo de los llanos colombovenezolanos. — *Luis Tamargo*



### SPELLBOUND

#### United Front (Selfish Recordings)

Los Angeles funqueros Paul Thomas and Bobby Moon are back with the latest musical adventures of the saga of their group, Spellbound. *United Front* finds the dynamic duo of Latin funk and all things alternative unleashing a handful of original scores and a couple of covers, including the Rolling Stones classic *Let's Spend The Night Together* and La Lupe's *Soul Salsa*, all bearing the unique sound and flavor of Spellbound. Guest musicians in the production include Astru Sierra (trumpet), Roger Manning Jr. (Electric piano and Mellotron), and vocalists Candi Sosa and Mark Adams. All songs are arranged and produced by Paul Thomas and Bobby Moon with additional horn arrangements by Mike Daigean and Astru Sierra. Favorite tracks include *Witch Doctor*, *Find Time for Love*, and *Catchin' Up*. — *Rudy Mangual*



### 5° ELEMENTO

#### Swing Para Una Nota (Urtext Digital Classics)

## [Quicktime](#)

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### **Johnny Polanco y Su Conjunto Amistad**

El Gusto de Mi Salsa

[Windows Media](#)

[Quicktime](#)

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### **Siempre Salsa All Stars**

Salsa Para Siempre

[Windows Media](#)

[Quicktime](#)

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Hailing from Mexico City, Mexico, 5º Elemento (The 5th Element) is a jazz quintet on the rise of its popularity performing in national and international prestigious jazz venues and festivals. Led by Mexican pianist and composer Luis Felipe Gordillo, the group was established in the summer of 1999 in Mexico City. This new recording features mainly original scores by Gordillo, as well as works by Gabriel Solares (trumpet) and Juan Cristóbal Pérez (bass). Completing the group are José Angel Ramos (sax) and Mario García (trap drums). Although this recording was just recently released (4/27/10) in the USA, it was originally recorded in 2005. Standouts include the title track *Swing Para Una Nota*, *Elementos*, and *Smiling*, all in the straight-ahead idiom of jazz. — *Rudy Mangual*



## **TRIO ESPERANÇA**

### **De Bach à Jobim**

**(Dreyfus Jazz)**

Aunque tal parece que ha vendido cientos de miles de discos en Sudamérica y Europa desde los años 60, el Trio Esperança — una de las más antiguas y más populares agrupaciones vocales en la historia musical brasileña — es prácticamente desconocido por el público norteamericano. Se espera, sin embargo, que esto cambie muy pronto, considerando la calidad indiscutible de su primer disco con amplia distribución estadounidense, en el cual las actuales integrantes del trio carioca — las hermanas Eva, Mariza y Regina Correa — ofrecen refrescantes interpretaciones "a capella" (en portugués, inglés y francés) de estándares domésticos y foráneos, engalanados con los arreglos inventivos del pianista/coproductor Gérard Gambus\* y las aportaciones favorables de los restantes artistas invitados — el guitarrista Marcio Faraco, el acordeonista Marc Berthoumieux, los percusionistas Silvano Michelin e Inor Sotelongo, y las cuerdas de la Orquesta Sinfónica de Budapest. Lo más importante es que el CD *De Bach à Jobim* logra revitalizar ciertos "clásicos" brasileños, tal como se puede apreciar en el potente dinamismo de *Upa Neguinho* o en la atractiva melodía rítmica del chorinho titulado *Odeón*. — *Luis Tamargo*



\*Identificado como el conyugue de Eva Correa, Gambus logra adaptar orquestalmente un par de temas brasileños (*Caminho da Razão* y *A Rosa*) a sendas piezas del repertorio de J.S. Bach — *Aria (del Tercer Suite para Violoncelo)* y *Cantata BWV 147*.

## **RANDY PLAZA**

### **Legacia de la Salsa**

**(RPlaza Records)**

This debut production *Legacia de la Salsa* from Puerto Rican composer/producer Radamés "Randy" Plaza (based in New York



City), aims to rescue salsa from its current creative darkness. Within the content of a collective musical effort featuring some of the top salsa musicians from Puerto Rico — under the musical direction of pianist Ceferino Cabán — and showcasing the vocal talents of veteran singers Héctor Rey (Salsa Fever), Jaime "Mengui" Rivera (La Solución), and Mannix Martínez (La Sonora Ponceña), a repertoire of 10 original scores justify that this is the real stuff, *salsa dura*. In Plaza's own words: "*Legacia de la Salsa* is salsa music from yesterdays for today's dancers and aficionados of the genre." The production does swing nonstop from beginning to end with brilliant arrangements from Ray Santos, Máximo Torres, David Forestier, Ceferino Cabán, Willie Ruiz and Víctor Baro. Highlighting this recording are the selections *Amarte Es Un Mito*, *Te Voy Amar*, and *Se Me Ha Metido En La Piel*. — *Rudy Mangual*

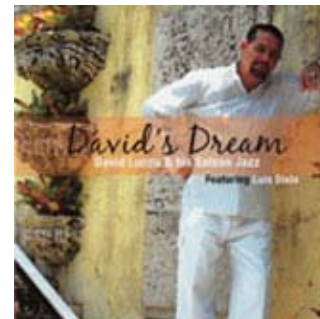


## DAVID LUCCA & HIS SALZON JAZZ

### David's Dream

(PMI)

Percussionist/bandleader David Lucca brings us his debut production as a leader with his group "Salzon Jazz," fusing the rhythms of the Caribbean with jazz tendencies and other world music modalities. A founding member of the popular Fort Lauderdale, Florida-Puerto Rican folkloric ensemble "Plena Es," Lucca called on the talents of reed master Luis Disla to head the musical direction of this new production. A total of eight tracks comprise this repertoire of mostly original scores, all baring the rhythmic swing and flavor of tropical dance music. Trumpeter Ray Vega is the special guest musician of the production featured on two tracks. *La Felicidad*, *One September Night*, and the title track *David's Dream* top the list of favorites in this new recording. — *Rudy Mangual*



## BOOK REVIEW

### JOHN RADANOVICH

#### Wildman of Rhythm- The Life and Music of Benny Moré

(University Press of Florida, 2009)

Ever since he heard Benny Moré's ultimate big band descarga ("¡Qué bueno baila usted!") at a dinner party in New Orleans, back in 1993 — while smoking his first Cuban cigar — John Radanovich became obsessed with the life and music of Cuba's "Barbaro del Ritmo" (Wildman of Rhythm), the incomparable vocalist/composer /bandleader Bartolomé Maximiliano Moré, better known as Benny



Moré (Santa Isabel de las Lajas, 1919-Palmira, 1963) and regarded by most connoisseurs as the greatest Latin American singer of all times. Back in the 1980s, I came across another Benny Moré biography ("Benny Moré: Perfil Libre", UNEAC, 1985), written in Havana by a Cuban scribe named Amin Naser, but it turned out to be rather brief and frail.



It must be noted that I found multiple errors in Radanovich's biography, like identifying the late Nuyorican singing bandleader Tito Rodríguez as "Cuban-born" (p. 53), or declaring that by the end of 1950, "nearly 6 million (Cubans) lived in Havana" (p. 58), or pointing out that the following statement made by Silvestre Méndez revealed what Radanovich defines as "Benny's semi-secret religious following of palo" (p. 164): "in Benny's hands, that guaracha-mambo (*Yiri Yiri Bom*) was (a) tremendous palo". According to my best understanding of Cuban colloquial language, what Silvestre meant to say was that Benny had the God-given ability to turn *Yiri Yiri Bom* into an instant hit of gigantic proportions.

Despite such errors, we must express our gratitude to Radanovich for spending several years to locate and interrogate the surviving family members and musicians involved in the Wildman of Rhythm's saga, while seeking out rare recordings and little-known photographs, in order to tell the story (for the first time in the language of Shakespeare) of the one and only Benny Moré. — *Luis Tamargo*

**NOTE:**

This biography is available from booksellers worldwide. To order direct, call 1-800-226-3822. or visit [www.upf.com](http://www.upf.com)

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