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## Columns ⊕ ⊕ ⊕

AUGUST 2011 ISSUE

### QUÉ PASA IN LA

By Rudy Mangual

Home to some of the most talented and creative musicians and bandleaders on the planet, Los Angeles is host to numerous "all-stars bands," from José Rizo's Jazz On the Latin Side All Stars (currently called "Mongorama"), led by Latin jazz luminaries Justo Almarino and Danilo Lozano, to Oscar Hernández and The LA Salsa All Stars (fronted by piano-extraordinaire Oscar Hernández), to the Dimelo Records All Stars family of salsa bands that includes Tabaco y Ron, Chino Espinosa y Los Dueños del Son, Johnny Polanco y su Conjunto Amistad, La Charanga Cubana, and Lucky 7 Mambo.



**Cintron Band Live**  
Human Nature  
**Windows Media**  
**Quicktime**

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**Vanelis**  
Como Lo Extraño

**Windows Media  
Quicktime**

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**Nayibe**  
Borinquen  
**Windows Media  
Quicktime**

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**Luis González**  
Spain  
**Windows Media  
Quicktime**

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**Rolando Sanchez**  
Vamonos De Fiesta  
**Windows Media  
Quicktime**

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**Steve Pouchie**  
Watch Ur Wallet  
**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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**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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On Sunday, July 10, 2011, all-star ensemble **Ray Carrion & The Latin Jazz All-Stars** debuted at La Cubana Restaurant & Gourmet Food in the city of Glendale.

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Ray Carrion graduated from the Musicians Institute in Hollywood, California. He has recorded and toured with Peter Criss of the legendary rock group KISS, as well as the groups Azteca, El Chicano, Malo and Tierra. This experienced guitarist organized a fresh ensemble of local musicians for a tasty tardeada of Latin jazz and Caribbean rhythms. Heading the cast of players was Joe Rotondi (pianist) who has toured internationally with Tito Puente, Arturo Sandoval, Poncho Sánchez, Paquito D'Rivera, Celia Cruz, and Giovanni Hidalgo. Joe was the regular pianist on the Paul Rodriguez TV show and his credits include recording with Herb Alpert, Francisco Aguabella, Susie Hansen, Armando Manzanero, Pete Escovedo and Linda Ronstadt.

Alberto Salas (pianist/producer/arranger) a native Angelino of Cuban heritage with extensive knowledge of Afro-Cuban rhythms and mainstream pop, makes him the perfect fit for today's diverse music scene. Completely self-taught, he has recorded and toured the world with such legendary artists as Santana, Mana, Los Lobos, Poncho Sánchez, Israel "Cachao" López, The Mavericks, Raúl Malo, Los Super Seven, Andrae Crouch, Christina Aguilera, Orestes Vilató, Ozomatli, the Luckman Jazz Orchestra and the Nashville Chamber Orchestra.

Native Peruvian Octavio Figueroa (pianist/bandleader) came to the United States at age 20 and completed his musical education in Denver, Colorado, before relocating to Los Angeles in 1982. He performed locally with many salsa and Latin jazz groups prior to forming his popular salsa band La Sorpresa, which he led for six years. Figueroa has also performed abroad in Japan and Australia, as well as sailed the oceans as musical director for the maiden voyage of Princess Cruise's Sun Princess. He currently leads the popular salsa band La Combinación with Peruvian sonero and good friend Willy Cadenas.

Completing the all-star cast were bassist Manny Silvera (Johnny Polanco y su Conjunto Amistad), special guest conga player Tony Rosa (Conjunto Libre), flutist/vocalist Gilberto Torres (Guapacha), and on bongó/minor percussions Víctor Baez, Ramoncito, and Virgilio Figueroa. Ray Carrion & The Latin Jazz All Stars will continue performing every Sunday afternoon throughout the summer at La Cubana Restaurant in Glendale from 3 to 6 pm.

Performing around town: Candy Sosa and Sergei at China Grill in Manhattan Beach every Thursday from 7 to 10 pm.

Latin Neon led by Alberto Mirabal performs every Saturday at Limón Latin Grill in Simi Valley.

Two Hombres featuring Eliseo Borrero and Rudy Mangual perform Saturdays at Ortega 120 in Redondo Beach.

Susie Hansen Latin Band will be performing on August 4 at Azusa's Memorial Park, August 11 at the Salsa Summer Series at the Autry National Center in Griffith Park, August 14 at the Conejo

Community Park in Thousand Oaks, and August 26 at the Radisson Whittier Hotel in Whittier.

Los Amigos Invisibles join Rodrigo y Gabriela and The Los Angeles Philharmonic for "Fuego at the Bowl!" on Friday and Saturday, August 12 and 13 at the Hollywood Bowl.

Salsa superstar Eddie Santiago plays the Conga Room on August 18.

Lucky 7 Mambo performs at LACMA on August 20.

The legendary Buena Vista Social Club featuring Omara Portuondo will take the stage of the Hollywood Bowl on August 24.

Oscar Hernández & The LA Salsa All Stars perform at The Autry in Griffith Park on August 25.

Poncho Sánchez Latin Jazz Band will be performing at Culver City's City Hall grounds on August 25.

Mongorama will be performing at the Idyllwild Jazz in the Pines on August 28.

Pete Escovedo performs at the Wine + Jazz Summer Concerts at Hollywood and Highland on August 30.

Ricardo Lemvo y Makina Loca will rock LACMA on September 3.

Cuban iconic singer/songwriter Pablo Milanés performs at the Gibson Amphitheatre in City Walk on September 8.

Johnny Polanco y su Conjunto Amistad play the Whittier Radisson Hotel on September 16.

The Third Annual LA Vida Music Festival is scheduled for September 17 at the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre in Hollywood. Headlining the event will be The Louie Cruz Beltran Latin Jazz Orchestra, Al B. Sure, the Mariachi Divas, Fuego Flamenco, and Chalo Eduardo and the Brazilian Beat.

Son Mayor performs at the Whittier Radisson Hotel on September 23.

Superstar Marc Anthony will be performing at the Gibson Amphitheatre on September 24.

Enjoying new CD releases around town are Bobby Matos Afro Latin Jazz Ensemble (*Beautiful as the Moon*), Candy Sosa y Victor Cegarra (*Guarapo*), Lucky 7 Mambo (*Chapter 1*), Fay Roberts y su Orquesta Charangoa (*Lo Que Quiero Es Charangoa*), and Guapacha (*Something Different*).

Support you local artists and their venues. Peace.



## A BITE FROM THE APPLE

By Vicki Solá

**Steven Kroon** has released a fourth production, *Without a Doubt / Sin Duda* (Kroonatune Records). The percussionist, born in East Harlem to Puerto Rican parents (his grandfather emigrated to Puerto Rico from Curaçao, thus explaining the Dutch origin of his last name) is proud of the "live performance sound" that he and his band have captured as a result of playing and perfecting new material in various clubs before recording.

Onboard with Kroon are Igor Atalita (keyboards), Rubén Rodríguez (electric and acoustic bass), Bryan Carrott (vibraphone), Craig Rivers (flute), Diego López (drums), and guest artists Bobby Franceschini (saxophone), Carla Cook (vocals), Hubert Eves, III (keyboards), and Donald "Spider" Nicks (acoustic bass).



*Monterey* was composed and arranged by Kroon's longtime friend, Oscar Hernández. *On 2* was written and arranged for Kroon by Marty Sheller. *Tombo 7/4* —arranged by Kroon and Carrott — was penned by one of his heroes, Airtó Moreira. Pianist Zaccai Curtis, whom Kroon characterizes as "one of the new young lions," authored and arranged one of his favorite numbers, *Mizu (Agua)*. *On The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face* (composed by Ewan Mascoll), Kroon is joined by Eves, Nicks, and Cook, whom he's worked with for the past decade. The title track (co-written by Kroon and Atalita, and arranged by the latter) is the result of a dream the percussionist had. *Without a Doubt* also happens to be, according to Kroon, an expression used frequently by Oscar Hernández. This CD is a "must have"—check out my favorite tracks: *Monterey* and *On 2*.



**Corina Katt-Ayala** (who played the role of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, alongside John Cusak, in the 1999 motion picture "Cradle Will Rock", and also appeared in "East Side Story" with Marc Anthony) is currently working on a salsa production.

The charismatic and versatile actress/pop singer visited my radio program to treat listeners to a taste of her single *Aunque Me Dueña*, with



music composed by Silverio Germán, and lyrics written by Katt-Ayala.

Raised in East Harlem and the South Bronx, and known for the dance hits *Whispers*, *Now That You're Gone* and *Temptation*, Katt-Ayala grew up

listening to Héctor Lavoe and La Lupe. "I cannot take credit "for my work, except in the sense that I am open to the source — God — that channels it through me", she says, "I'm aware of the blessing of having been inspired by Raúl Juliá's passion for acting, Cher's passion for performance, and the legacy of musicians like Marvin Gaye, Héctor Lavoe and Barbara Streisand. Everything I do as an artist —writer, singer and actress— is the result of the collective energy of the amazing geniuses of yesterday and the ones I get to share this lifetime with."

#### **DJ Jeff's "Hot Pick of the Month": Frankie Morales' Lejos de Ti.**

**Jazz Wednesdays**, a free series that presents guest artists, takes place at the Harbor Conservatory for the Performing Arts. The **Adam Cruz Sextet** performs on August 10. A New York-born drummer/composer, Cruz has worked with Danilo Pérez, Steve Wilson, Chick Corea, Charlie Hunter, David Sánchez, and the Mingus Big Band.

The Harbor Conservatory's Music Program serves youngsters and adults, providing instruction, both vocal and instrumental, in classical, jazz, folkloric and Latin genres.

More information about Cruz's concert, the Harbor's music classes and early childhood education programs, the affiliated Harbor Science and Arts Charter School for elementary and middle school students, the Harbor Conservatory for the Performing Arts, after-school and summer enrichment programs, and college preparation services is available at <http://www.theharbor.org/> and 212-427-2244, ext. 544.

**Around town...** The Big Apple is gearing up for the **11th Annual New York International Salsa Congress' Dance & Music Festival**, slated to take place during Labor Day weekend at the New York Hilton Hotel in Manhattan. The festival opens with a welcome party at Manhattan's Club Caché (August 31), and continues with Eddie Torres & The Mambo King Orchestra, and Jerry Hernández & Orquesta Dee Jay (September 1); The Mambo Legends (September 2); Frankie Morales & The Mambo of the Times Orchestra and Charansalsa



(September 3); and Papo Pepín y su Orquesta and El Gran Combo (pictured) (September 4). The festival closes with an opportunity to sail with the New Swing Sextet on a "Farewell Cruise" (Sept. 5). You can find out more by checking <http://www.nycsalsacongress.com/>.

The new **Copacabana** has been inaugurated. Located on 47th and 8th, the club is open on Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday nights. The Copacabana Supper Club is open Tuesdays thru Saturdays.

This month, the West Gate Lounge features Charanga América (August 6), Sammy González, Jr. (August 13), Pete Nater & Associates (August 20), and Cubanosón (August 27).

On August 6th, the 11-piece **Típica** Novel plays at Wickers (a new venue showcasing Latin bands), located in Hicksville, Long Island.

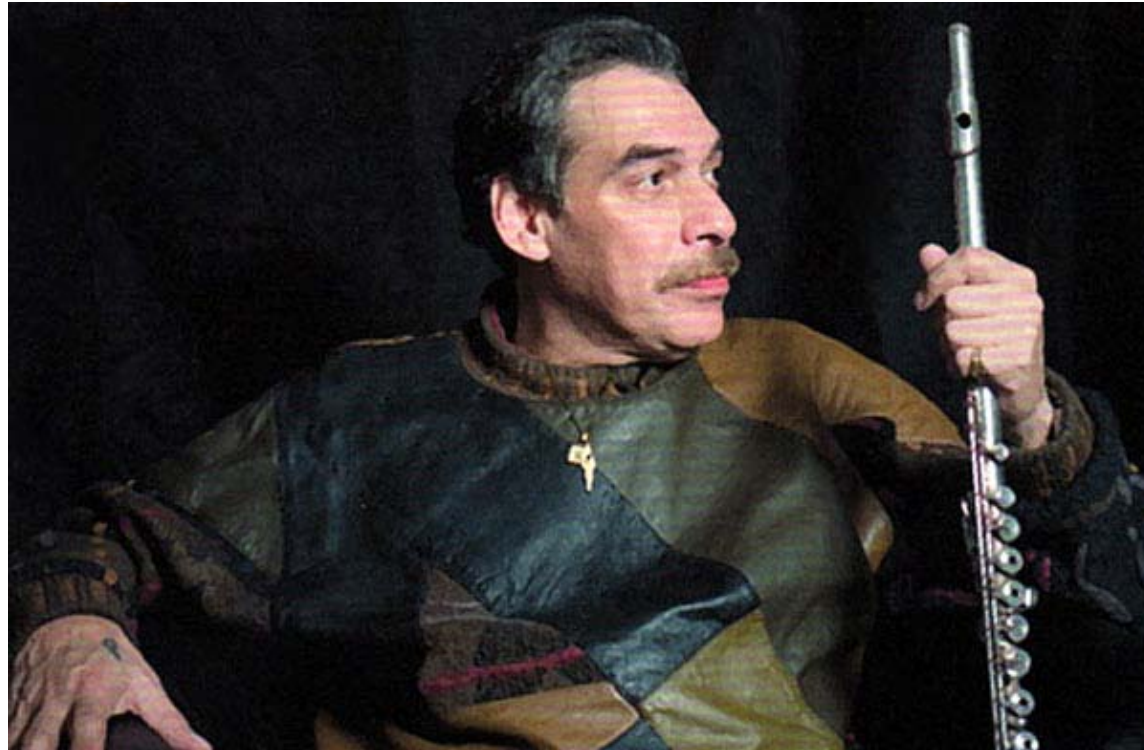
Julia de Burgos' Salsa Wednesdays are taking an August break, but will return the following month with Yolanda Duke (Sept. 7), Grupo Latin Vibe (Sept.14), Charanga América (Sept. 21) and Los Soneros de Oriente (Sept. 28).

¡Hasta la próxima!



## LATIN BEAT MUSIC UPDATE ONLINE

By Nelson Rodríguez



*As the summer ends, the music scene is enriched with some very exciting new releases designed to please fans of Latin jazz and salsa. DJs are sharing vintage music (as MP3s) worldwide through the Internet.*

Probably one of the best recordings of the year so far is the long awaited **José Rizo's Mongorama** project. In this tribute to Mongo Santamaría, KJazz radio host José Rizo has assembled a stellar lineup of West Coast greats, including Justo Almario (former Mongo bandmember) and Mongorama's own musical director, Danilo Lozano (whose father Rolando also played with Mongo), in addition to Ramón Banda, René Camacho, Joey de León, Oscar Hernández, Adonis Puentes, Alberto Salas, Alfredo Ortiz, and Dayren Santamaría, plus special guests Hubert Laws, Poncho Sánchez, Freddie Crespo and Destani Wolf.



**La Surcusal S.A.**, from Barcelona, Spain, is back with its second release of 14 vintage salsa songs (mostly originals) exploring all the Afro-Cuban genres in the CD titled *Sin Fronteras*. Special guests Frankie Vázquez and Héctor 'Papote' Jiménez also lend their talent to this danceable project.

**Rumbaché**, led by percussionist Patricio Angulo, is one of the hottest bands in the S.F. Bay Area. Angulo's band combines classic and contemporary Cuban rhythms in its latest recording, *Llegó La Fiesta*. Just listen to Rumbaché's version of Juan Formell's *Guararé*, as well as the tracks "*Laura*" and "*Traemos la Música*", for a taste of San Francisco "a lo cubano".

Vocalist/composer **Héctor Iván Rivera** debuts on The Bronco label with *Espíritu de Barrio*, a CD arranged by Julito Alvarado, Georgie Padilla, Pin Jiménez and Bobby Valentín. Expect the tracks *Tributo a La Rumba*, *Negra Me Tienes Loco*, *Súbete a Mi Moto*, *Soy Como el Ruiseñor* and *Yo Vengo Aquí* to do well on radio.

One of the local L.A. bands, **Fay Roberts y su Orquesta Charangoa** just released *Lo Que Quiero Es Charangoa*, and this one will surely get airplay all year long, with such cool tunes as *Vengo Diferente*, *No Tiene Rival*, *Danzonete*, *Preparen Candela Cuidado Que Se Pega*, and a cover of Lady Gaga's "Just Dance". Add the talents of guest vocalists Johnny Crespo, Adonis Puentes, Gonzalo Chomat and James Zavaleta for a nice summer treat.

I have written many times before how many Latin musicians excel at mainstream jazz. Names like David Sánchez, Danilo Pérez, Gonzalo Rubalcaba and Arturo Sandoval, among many others, come to mind. Put into this mix drummer **Adam Cruz**, whose latest CD, *Milestone* showcases his talents as a composer, with the support of equally talented players —Miguel Zenón, Chris Potter, Steve Wilson, Edward Simón, Steve Cárdenas and Ben Street.

Cuba's **Harold López Nussa**, another young pianist who is making a name for himself in the jazz world, leads the Harold Lopez Nussa Trio on its sophomore recording, *El Pais de Las Maravillas*, along with his younger brother Ruy Adrián López Nussa on drums, and the great bassist Felipe Cabrera (plus the divine guest saxophonist David Sánchez).

Peru's **Kiki Sánchez** honed his skills with various acts in Lima before moving to Miami and learning from other greats. His fine recording, *Two Worlds* features Susana Baca as guest vocalist on a couple of superb tracks. I also fell in love with four originals penned by Sánchez: *Desires*, *It Will Come To Me*, *Abundance* and *Festejo Landó*.

Also hailing from Miami, the Venezuelan pianist/composer **Silvano Monasterios** offers his CD *Unconditional*, a project that some might categorize as Latin jazz, although it is actually very different as he blends his European training, Venezuelan roots and North American jazz credentials to deliver a wonderful recording.

One of the year's best surprises for me was the new **Dave Valentín** recording *Pure Imagination*, an awesome quintet session propelled by Robbie Ameen, Rubén Rodríguez, Bill O'Connell and

Richie Flores. This Latin jazz gem rocks with some of my favorite tracks —*Slip and Slide*, *Joy*, *Smile*, *Cat Man*, *Hummingbird*, and *Last Minute*.

One of the year's best collaborations has to be Cuban Rhapsody, the Canadian duet session of saxophonist **Jane Bunnett** and pianist **Hilario Durán**. While the music on this CD features mostly standards, these two giants are truly magical.

**Victoria Sanabria** has become a modern trendsetter who wants to do different things with each of her recordings, including her most recent one entitled *Boleros*. Guests Andy Montañez, Ismael Miranda and Mario Hernández add an additional touch to this collection of classic covers.

Straight from Williamsburg, Brooklyn comes the **Williamsburg Salsa Orchestra** led by timbalero Gianni Mano, with great English vocals by Solange Prat and an enjoyable sound that definitely swings.

From France comes the latest recording by **La Contrabanda**, headed by trumpeter Francois Faverais, including the international hit the single *Espacio y Tiempo*. Guest vocalist Kevin Ceballo is featured in a duet with Ricardo Garatea.

Lastly, *Looking From the Top* is the new release from Caché, a seasoned Toronto-based band that musically excels with the tracks *Chiquilla Ideal*, *Humo*, *Sombra Negra*, *El Tema Que No Te Gusta* and *The Day You Left*.



## DESDE BORINQUEN

Por: Elmer González

Fotos ©2011 por Miguel Rojas



David Sanchez



Humberto Ramirez Big Band



Ramsey Lewis



Monty Alexander



Ninety Miles

**PUERTO RICO HEINEKEN JAZZFEST 2011 (PRHJF).** La vigésima primera edición del PRHJF se celebró durante los días 2 al 5 de junio en el Anfiteatro Tito Puente en San Juan. El evento, el más importante en el escenario local del jazz, se le dedicó a la memoria de Dizzy Gillespie y Chano Pozo, figuras legendarias en la historia y el desarrollo del jazz latino.

Como de costumbre, el festival presentó un menú musical variado con músicos locales e internacionales que se desplazaron en diferentes variantes del jazz: latino, moderno y contemporáneo.

Este año, las lluvias incesantes de mayo se extendieron hasta el mes de junio y amenazaron con suspender la actividad que usualmente se celebra en un auditorio al aire libre. Sin embargo, se logró presentar tres de las cuatro veladas programadas.

Bajo un mar de paraguas y con la devoción y el entusiasmo que este evento ha generado en las pasadas dos décadas, cientos de aficionados parecieron disfrutar la oferta musical que presentó la empresa Méndez y Compañía.

El tamborero boricua Richie Flores se presentó la primera noche con su septeto Onda Mora estableciendo la tónica caribeña del jazz, una de las favoritas de la afición local. A éste le siguió las influencias del Caribe Inglés con el pianista jamaíquino Monty Alexander y su concepto Harlem Kingston Express.

El quinteto del saxofonista Ted Nash abrió la segunda noche con un acercamiento a los estilos “avant garde” y la música clásica seguido por el sonido elegante del cuarteto de Ramsey Lewis. El veterano pianista presentó un puñado de piezas en el contexto del gospel, funk, blues y del jazz moderno. Logró una ejecutoria llena de elegancia y maestría musical que entusiasmó a los oídos más adiestrados y conocedores del lenguaje del jazz afroamericano.

La noche finalizó con intercambios enérgicos y brillantes entre el sensacional guitarrista Stanley Clarke y el baterista Ronald Bruner. Un dúo que provocó aplausos de muchos fuera de sus asientos.

Debido a la lluvia, no pudo darse la tercera noche del evento en la que estaban programados el bajista Agustín Barreto y su Fusion Quartet, la estelar vocalista Dee Dee Bridgewater y la banda de Poncho Sánchez quien le estaría rindiendo un homenaje a Gillespie y a Chano con la participación del trompetista Nicholas Payton como invitado.

Una tarde dominguera con un cielo nublado y un par de aguaceros sirvieron de escenario al cierre del festival con la participación de un grupo de estudiantes locales que recibieron varios talleres intensivos que, como todos los años, presenta el programa “Berklee on the Road” con profesores del Berklee College of Music paralelo a la fecha del PRHJF.

Los estudiantes más destacados recibieron incentivos económicos para tomar talleres o continuar estudios en la prestigiosa entidad con sede en Boston, Massachusetts.

Gran interés despertó la presentación en tarima del proyecto "Ninety Miles" con la participación del saxofonista boricua David Sánchez, el vibrafonista Stefon Harris y el trompetista Christian Scott con el respaldo de varios músicos tales como el excelente pianista venezolano Luis Perdomo y el baterista puertorriqueño Henry Cole.

La clausura estuvo a cargo del sonido grande de los 23 músicos de la Humberto Ramírez Big Band quien puso a bailar a muchos con un tributo al los repertorios de Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, La Lupe y Frank Sinatra. Participaron los vocalistas Josué Rosado, Michelle Brava y Mike Ritacco. Un cierre que dejó a muchos pidiendo más y en espera de la próxima edición que podría estar celebrándose en el primer fin de semana de junio de 2012.



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