

# New Release Info

## Paquito D'Rivera

### Benny Goodman Revisited

The first time I heard about New York City, it was from my father, the very day he came home with a record that changed my life forever. I must have been around 8 or 9 years old when on a sunny afternoon in that still beautiful Havana of the mid fifties, my old man brought an LP on a multicolor jacket with six pictures of a clarinetist with the heading: The Great Benny Goodman. The names Harry James, Gene Krupa, Teddy Wilson, Lionel Hampton, and a few other great Jazz artists were highlighted in red, black and blue letters.

Tito—who was the name of my Dad, a classical saxophonist himself— placed the LP on his portable Silvertone turntable and put the needle almost on the edge of the striped surface of the vinyl record. The soft murmur produced for a few seconds by the friction of the minute metallic point on the virgin plastic, accented my curiosity of the unknown even more. Right away we heard the notes of "Let's Dance", the Benny Goodman Orchestra's musical theme. The solid rhythmic section seemed to be like the root and trunk of a strong, healthy tree. On it, the 5 branches of the compact saxophone section bloomed exuberantly, like spring. The trumpets splashed the melody like fresh dew and suddenly stopped to let Benny's crystal clear, playful tone step right in. Like a bird of light, his unique clarinet sound ascended stroking the sparkling stars. My God! That band moved as smoothly as a dinghy down the Hudson river.

Many years later, legendary producer John Avakian, who wrote the notes for the superb 1938 recording that didn't come out until 1956; told me that the theme was arranged by the mastermind Fletcher Henderson for the popular radio show "Let's Dance". The piece was based on the celebrated Invitation to the Waltz, by Karl Maria von Weber.

"What was that?" I asked my Dad, extremely impressed by what I heard, when the first side of the record was over.

"Swing"—he answered with a mischievous smile—, "The Benny Goodman Orchestra at Carnegie Hall."

"Did you say meat and beans?" (The sound of Carnegie Hall was almost like "carne y frijol" in Spanish), I asked, surprised by the relationship my mother's cooking could have to such inspired music.

My old man cracked up laughing, but when he finally calmed down, he explained who Benny Goodman was, Swing, Carnegie Hall and the amazing city where its red brick columns were erected. Ever since, the Jewish clarinetist became my main musical idol and the "jungle of asphalt", the city of my dreams.

Many moons later, in 2009, the entire music world celebrated the centenary of the dean of all clarinetists, and I was so happy when Lucas Schmidt proposed to me the idea of doing a concert commemorating the King of Swing's 100 birthday at the magnificent Symphony Hall in Köln, with my dear friends of the WDR orchestra, under maestro Michael Abene's baton.

A few month prior to the concert, Michael—who happened to play with Benny for a while— and I had a meeting in a piano room at Jazz at Lincoln Center, to pick the tunes to be re-arranged in a more modern style. Pieces like Memories of You, Goodbye, Stomping at the Savoy and (of course) Sing, Sing, Sing, all but one, related to Benny's career where chosen. In those days I was commissioned by the Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival to compose a sonata in 4 movements for clarinetist Jon Manasse and pianist Jon Nakamatsu. The first movement is titled "Benny @100" which I asked Abene to orchestrate for the Big Band. The chart is nothing less than superb, and I most tell you that if it was true what Duke Ellington said about "Good arranging is like re-composing", this is the best example I can think of.

The present project pretends to be not only a tribute to The King of Swing, but to Krupa, Lionel, Harry James, Teddy Wilson, and all of those great musicians that helped giving shape to Goodman's amazing history. As you'll probably notice while listening to this live recording, for me, the experience was unforgettable, due to the exquisite combination of the charm of the ancient German city, the majesty of its Symphony Hall, the powerful, yet sensitive touch of the formidable WDR Orchestra and the magic pen of Michael Abene. I truly hope you guys (and Benny up there) enjoy the product of this work of love.

Paquito D'Rivera  
New York City, August 6-2010

Trackinglist:

Slipped Disc  
Let 'S Dance  
Memories Of You  
Stompin At The Savoy  
Benny@100  
Don 'T Be That Way  
Soft Winds  
Sing Sing Sing  
Goodbye

<b>Label:</b>	Connector
<b>Configuration:</b>	CD
<b>Item-No.:</b>	59882-2
<b>German Street Date:</b>	08.10.2010
<b>Price Code:</b>	S08
<b>Genre:</b>	Big Band Jazz
<b>Barcode:</b>	821895988224

## New Release Info

### Humberto Ramirez & Giovanni Hidalgo

Best Friends

*\* Re-release*

There are certain things that transcend time and space. Love, for instance. Not only is it a moving force within everyone of us, but its inspiring influence affects us all. And its forever presence in music has shown its dimensionality in so many ways, sounds, phrases and scales that we are consistently humbled by its ever changing persona. This force and its sheer grace, fire, passion, humbleness and reverence will move all of us again when we listen to 'Best Friends'.

For Humberto Ramirez and Giovanni Hidalgo, this recording was more than a mere opportunity to reunite in a studio. It was a 'reliving' process. For two humble individuals that were both born in 1963, in Old San Juan, that grew up together, this was a recording that 'had' to happen somewhere down the road. More than being childhood friends, their paths have had their turns and twists, but their bond has never been touched.

After a presentation in the Dominican Republic 2001, where Giovanni and Humberto were performing with their respective groups, they gathered backstage to congratulate each other and have some 'male-bonding'. With the experience fresh in their souls, they talked about the possibility of recording together, something that had crossed their mind many times for years, but had not been possible given their respective schedules. In that moment not only did they reassure themselves that they would record together this year, but they got an unexpected surprise when Horacio 'El Negro' Hernandez, the world class renown drummer (who was playing in the same festival) accepted to be part of this magical recording while in the Dominican Republic.

With three parts of the group already booked, Humberto took it upon himself to have this happen as quickly as possible. As soon as he landed on the island, the next step was to bring to the studio a musician that was a boyhood idol for both him and Giovanni. That's where a cat named Papo Lucca came along. Well known for his virtuosity on the piano with groups such as 'La Sonar Ponceña' and 'The Fania All Stars', Lucca has always shown his love for jazz and Humberto was totally committed to his presence on 'Best Friends'. As soon as Papo gave his 'it would be a pleasure', the only thing missing was a bass player. Here the thought process was very short, given that both Humberto and Giovanni had a common friend who had not only studied with them, but would fully understand the importance of the project and bring more of the element of friendship, bonding and love to the recording. Let's not forget that his talent on the bass is unquestioned. And Oskar Cartaya comes walking in. The quintet was formed and everything was in place for 'Best Friends'.

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With the table set and ready for dinner, it was time to call the boys for supper. And what a feast they had. It was like 'Soul Food For the Mind, Body & Spirit'. Not only was it a time to record, but a time to reconnect. The childhood friends had become one again. This time it was not baseball or basketball on their minds, but music. Harmony, synchronicity, spontaneity and fun was the name of the game. After close to a decade performing with his own group (the Humberto Ramirez Jazz Project), Humberto has developed his voice, direction and vision on the trumpet and has become a respected record producer in the process. In the mean time, Giovanni's congas and percussion have recorded Grammy nominated albums ('Hands Of Rhythm' with Michel Camilo) and performed with world named acts (Paul Simon and Mickey Hart, among them) around the globe. These experiences, blended with the commonality of their backgrounds and brotherhood were put to the test on this historic recording.

Trackinglist:

San Juan Ritual  
Celebrando  
Hasta Decir No Mas  
A Puerto Rico  
Clean  
Herencia  
La Perla  
Best Friends

<b>Label:</b>	Connector Records
<b>Configuration:</b>	CD
<b>Item-No.:</b>	58552-2
<b>German Street Date:</b>	08.10.2010
<b>Price Code:</b>	S08
<b>Genre:</b>	Latin Jazz/World Jazz
<b>Barcode:</b>	718751585522

# New Release Info

## Cuban All Stars

Vol. 2

*\* Re-release*

If you have never been to Havana before (really San Cristóbal de La Habana) then you really must look at the beautiful sights of the capital of Cuba. They attract more and more tourists all the time, and with good reason. The traveller to the metropolis of two million inhabitants certainly mustn't miss the Malecon Promenade or the El Morro fortress which flank the harbour. Hemingway's favourite bars "Floridita" and "Bodeguita del Medio" are also a must. The Botanical Gardens, the Revolution Museum, the Miramar Aquarium and the legendary Tropicana night club, where Frank Sinatra and Josephine Baker once appeared, are also popular attractions. The old town, which UNESCO has declared part of the world cultural heritage, awaits the globetrotter with splendid buildings in Spanish colonial style. And finally the compulsory detour to one of the many cigar factories (e.g. Upmann) tells the visitor more about one of Cuba's most important exports. So you see: the city founded in 1515 by Diego de Velázquez is definitely worth a journey. Doesn't that sound good?

With the "Cuban All Stars" the Termidor Musikverlag is launching a series of nine CDs which will offer the best musicians from the sugar cane, rum and tobacco island a platform to present themselves. This seventy-minute introductory album assembles the most notable stars from the Cuban music scene. It starts off with the great Compay Segundo, member of the Buena Vista Social Club, and his unforgotten evergreen "Chan Chan". Cesar Pedroso, who for more than ten years was the pianist for Los Van Van and delivered hits to famous artists such as Celia Cruz, brings us the high-spirited track "Que Cosa Tiene La Vida". With "Bongo Se Fue Pa'l Congo" (no. 1 in the Cuban charts) Tiburon Morales spreads good feelings and gets us dancing. Pio Leiva, mentioned at the beginning, who has recorded more than a hundred records in his long career, presents his successful piece "Cuando Ya No Me Quieras". "Macoris" by percussionist Patato Valdes is a prime example of the genre of Cuban jazz. Rudy Calzado, also indefatigable in his seventh decade, invites us to sing along with his catch-tune "Kikiriki". And last but not least Juan Pablo Torres presents Glenn Miller's classic "Moonlight Serenade" in a fascinating Latin version.

In the booklet to the CD the musicians are all portrayed individually. And also those keen to know more can read a short chronology of Cuban musical history, from the pioneer days at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Columbus discovered the Caribbean island in 1492) right up to the latest Cuba boom which began at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Trackinglist:

Chan Chan  
Temba, Tumba Y Timba  
Las Trompatas Se Diverten  
Se Quema El Solar  
El Buenagente  
La Reina Del Baile  
Merengue Pilon  
Chiki Chaka  
Anabacoa  
Los Herederos  
Guajira  
Tengo Un Son  
Piano Y Violin  
Cabildo  
El Run Run De Los Soneros

<b>Label:</b>	Connector Records
<b>Configuration:</b>	CD
<b>Item-No.:</b>	59813-2
<b>German Street Date:</b>	08.10.2010
<b>Price Code:</b>	S14
<b>Genre:</b>	World/Ethno
<b>Barcode:</b>	821895981324

# New Release Info

## Luis Frank Arias

Cuba Total

*\* Re-release*

There's virtually no getting past him on the Cuban music scene: he was lead singer for Compay Segundo, the Buena Vista Social Club in its last two years, the Afro Cuban All Stars, and Soneros de Verdad; and of course he played in Wim Wenders' "Musica Cubana". And yet Luis Frank Arias, this charismatic young man, affectionately nicknamed "The Macry" by his fans, personifies not so much the history of Cuban music as its future. "Dirty Urban Sound" is the name of his style which set off an irresistible dance fever on the island of Cuba, a fever which has now spread to the rest of the scene.

Besides having an outstanding voice, Luis Frank is one of the greatest experts on Cuban musical traditions and a superb producer and inventor – with the result that his studio draws the hottest bands in the country like a magnet, and with the musical heritage of the old masters inspires them to follow new trends. In this way a number of trendsetting productions have been created, such as the Cuban hip-hop CD "Homeland" and albums with popular street bands such as the "Babalochas", "Esencia" or "La Operacion" (each embellished with the motto "The Macry presents..."). A trailblazer was "Los Soneros de Verdad – Buena Vista: Barrio de la Habana", in which Luis Frank brought together greats such as Pio Leiva, Manuel "Puntillita" Licea, Julio Padron or Rudy Calzado to perform with the "wild young ones" of Cuba and go on a world tour with them.

"Dirty Urban Sound" is a street sound suitable for clubs and is the precise opposite of polished routine: its sounds, which now rule the whole of Cuba, can be created using wooden sticks, bottles, rattles, drums, trumpets and trombones and, with great electronic sounds, have been woven together to make an utterly trendy mixture. In this format older computer sounds and traditional set pieces are allowed because they suddenly seem as fresh and timeless as the old cars on the streets of Cuba. You can hear them on "Cuba Total", the latest stroke of genius, for which Luis Frank invited twelve of the most treasured top acts – such as the rap queen, Mariana Moracen Saiz – to get together in his studio. With six special guests – including leading Latin pianist Cesar Pedroso – they blended classical son with salsa rhythms, heavy guitars, percussion, thundering wind instrumentation and lots of modern computer technology to create a new style of hip-hop which was to enchant not only DJs and avid clubbers. "Cuba Total" is yet more proof that the Caribbean island of Cuba has always been a step ahead of the others as regards trends.

### Trackinglist:

Con El Apagon  
El Borracho  
Cohero  
La Droga  
Baila Suave  
Eres Cuba  
El Congo Del Congo  
Centro Habana  
Viaje Cubana  
Descarga All Stars

<b>Label:</b>	Connector Records
<b>Configuration:</b>	CD
<b>Item-No.:</b>	59837-2
<b>German Street Date:</b>	08.10.2010
<b>Price Code:</b>	S08
<b>Genre:</b>	Latin Jazz/World Jazz
<b>Barcode:</b>	821895983724

# New Release Info

## Labana

White

*\* Re-release*

Viva la Revolución – Viva la Música! Although there might be good grounds for thinking that the band founder and name-giver of LABANA, Dany“Labana” Martínez, and lead singer Jake Voth joined ranks for political or ideological reasons, that was not the case: it was music that brought the Cuban and the Russian together. And yet listening to white! one cannot help thinking that music like that would not have come from Cuba back in Fidel’s day. Although the Cuban change of government has not brought real political neoliberalism, the musical sea change has finally happened with LABANA. The glorified romanticism of the Buena Vista Social Club has given way to hard but highly musical rap core: the message from bands such as P.O.D., Rage Against the Machine, or Molotov has quite obviously reached Cuba. The maiden album white! calls for a changing of the guard – both of generation and of style.

The number Labana e’ Labana could easily be the anthem for a popular uprising on the streets of Havana, but instead of a timba and salsa sound it has a solid rock basis, with Dany Martínez himself playing the guitar. Almost all the tracks on white! with their mix of hard guitar riffs and powerful rap could almost be classed under the title of Nu Metal. But equally, some tracks could have come from the soundtracks of Hollywood action blockbusters – quite un-socialist. Modern, forceful tracks such as My Lady, white!, The Same!, Hip Hop Star or Warriors portray the Chicanos of Los Angeles, or Miami with its strong Cuban culture, as we have seen in movies like Training Day or Bad Boys. That is doubtless due to the US rapper Soul Elements, who clearly has no problem fraternising with members of former enemy states. Music is a global language!

Even though almost all the musicians now live in Europe and no longer orientate themselves towards the musical tradition of their former homeland, they never quite forget their Cuban roots. Hot rhythms can be found on the album, with typical percussion instruments such as congas, timbales and batá drums, and razor-sharp wind passages. Coupled with rich hip-hop beats and the Vocoder vocal sounds which are all the rage on the US rap scene, powerful, earthy electric guitar and strategically placed turntable scratches, LABANA does not sound as you would expect from Cuban artists – it is quite a surprise. But if you still feel like brandishing your revolutionary fist skywards, you are welcome to do so with Vote 4 Me! This controversial and politically highly ambitious number is a firework that begins with the world-famous 20th Century Fox theme tune and ends in acoustic gunfire. As an election slogan it packs an even heftier punch than Barack Obama’s Yes we can!

When Raúl Castro became the new Number One in Cuba, he talked about necessary changes. He was doubtless thinking more about the capital La Habana than the musician Labana. LABANA as Guitar Heroes? – yes! LABANA as heroes of the revolution? – no! Except for the musical one...

## Trackinglist:

My Lady  
Amorrr  
White  
The Same  
Labana E Labana  
Bailalo Mulata  
Hip-Hop-Star  
Mi Negra Yambu  
No Me Llames Mas  
Vote 4 Me!  
Warriors  
Palo E!  
She Likes My Eyes

<b>Label:</b>	Connector Records
<b>Configuration:</b>	CD
<b>Item-No.:</b>	59870-2
<b>German Street Date:</b>	08.10.2010
<b>Price Code:</b>	S08
<b>Genre:</b>	Hip Hop/Rap
<b>Barcode:</b>	821895987029