

## MAY 2010 ISSUE

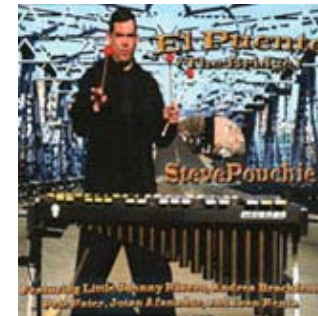
# Reviews ⊕⊕⊕

## PICK OF THE MONTH

**STEVE POUCHIE**

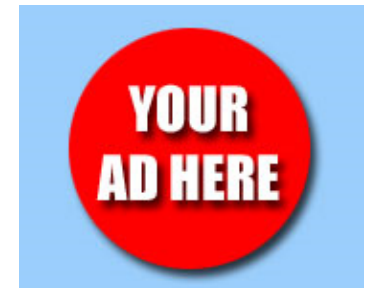
**El Puente/The Bridge**  
(Latin Jazz Alive Records)

New York City-based vibraphonist/bandleader/composer/educator Steve Pouchie brings us his latest recording, *El Puente* (The Bridge), a production that bridges the talents and efforts of this veteran road warrior of Latin jazz with the reality of surviving as a musician in the belly of an urban jungle. Inspired by the musical traditions pioneered by Tito Puente and Cal Tjader, Pouchie delivers a balanced repertoire of original scores and Latin jazz classics, all displaying his unique flavor while reflecting a musical portrait in time. "El Puente" was recorded in the Bronx, in the good company of some of New York City's top Latin jazz players,



including Little Johnny Rivero (percussion), Jotan Afanador (drums), Adán Pérez and Sam Barrios (keyboards), Solo Rodríguez (bass), Iván Renta and Julio Botti (saxophones), Peter Nater (trumpet), and Andrea Brachfeld (flute). They excel on the selections *Journey into Outland*, *Picadillo* (featuring guest Ronnie Puente, Tito Puente's oldest son, on a marimba solo), *The Ghanan Trail* (highlighting Andrea Brachfeld's flute solo), and *Naomi's Fantasy* (with tasty solos provided by Ariel Santiago on flute, Julio Botti on sax, and Erik Piza on timbal). Sharing arrangement credits with Steve Pouchie in this new production is Willie Ruiz. — *Rudy Mangual*

## REVIEWS



**Steve Pouchie**  
Watch Ur Wallet  
[Windows Media](#)  
[Quicktime](#)

**José Luis Morán**  
La Rumba del Barrio

[Windows Media](#)  
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**3D Ritmo de Vida**  
Que Siga La Rumba  
[Windows Media](#)  
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**Somos Son**  
Bilongo  
[Windows Media](#)  
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**The Estrada Brothers**  
Mr. Ray  
[Windows Media](#)  
[Quicktime](#)

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**Manny Silvera**  
Bassed in America  
[Windows Media](#)  
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**Bobby Matos**  
Cuchy Frito Man  
[Windows Media](#)  
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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](#)

## ORQUESTA LA PAZ

### Deja Vu (OLP Records)

Initially established in Caguas, Puerto Rico, in 1972, by Tino Sánchez and pianist/composer Julio César Marrero; Orquesta La Paz was transplanted in 1974 to Philadelphia, where Marrero re-established the band, in alliance with trombonist Freddy Ruiz as co-leader. They recorded their band's first album (*La Paz Debut*) in 1978, generating the hit song *Para Comerte a Besos* (a Raúl Marrero composition). By 1979, while touring in Puerto Rico, the band separated again, an event which would repeat itself on additional occasions throughout the years to come, until the accidental death of Julio César Marrero in 2001. Singer Víctor Aday inherited the orchestra from this point on. On September 30, 2005, the remaining core members of Orquesta La Paz came together for a special show honoring the band's founding members. The success of that show reignited the love and passion of the orchestral members, consequently leading to the making of their band's latest recording: *Deja Vu is Orquesta La Paz's* third CD (and the second led by second for Víctor Aday). The repertoire includes a mix of scores penned by some of the new members of the band, as well as various old favorites composed by the earlier members of the orchestra. Standouts include *Para Comerte a Besos*, *Jimmy a Every Which a Way*, *Esa Mujer*, and *El Vivir del Tumbao*. — Rudy Mangual



## ROBERTO RODRÍGUEZ

### Timba Talmud (Tzadik)

Este es uno de esos trabajos discográficos que me motivan a continuar escribiendo, a seguir teniendo fe en que nuestra música todavía tiene mucho que brindar, ya que existen individuos dispuestos a correr riesgos y a tratar de ser originales. Todo esto sucede, claro está, en una época en la que el atrevimiento de grabar un CD, de por si, equivale frecuentemente a una muerte financiera. Roberto Rodríguez es uno de esos valientes, y Timba Talmud representa una creatividad de alto nivel, una joya de la música afrocaribeña.

En realidad Timba Talmud es un homenaje a la interacción de la tradición musical judía con la llamada salsa. Se trata de una fusión de la instrumentación hebrea con los ritmos afrocaribeños, y el resultado es espectacular. Esto queda ampliamente demostrado mediante los 14 temas —todos muy sabrosos— que componen el disco compacto, comenzando con La Hora, donde inmediatamente sentimos el festivo sabor judío proporcionado por el clarinete de Gilas Harel, la flauta de Itai Kris y el violín de Jonathan Keren. Este número de apertura capturó mi atención instantáneamente, y no puedo sacar de mi mente su alegre melodía. También es preciso resaltar el sabor delicioso de los siguientes



## [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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temas: el danzón/son montuno El Sabor del Shabat (con un solo de trompeta de Oscar Oñoz), el guaguancó The Son of 2nd Avenue (donde el órgano de Uri Sharlin enciende el fogón rumbero), Kids Club Chá Chá y Danzonete Emanuel, un número armonizado alegremente con el órgano y la flauta. Disfruté además con el arreglo original del title track, Timba Talmud (donde la guaracha evoluciona en una patriótica plena), así como con los restantes temas: Havana Shmoltz, un bello y florido bolero; "Babailón", un enérgico merengue que daría envidia a cualquier dominicano; Orán Orán, Orán, pieza acompañada de coro y ritmo charanguero; y Oyemayá, una descarga donde Rodríguez demuestra su poderío en la tumbadora. Timba Talmud cuanta adicionalmente con la participación de los siguiente invitados: Ben Lapidus (de Sonido Isleño) en el tres, Igor Arias Baró en la percusión, y Bernie Minoso en el bajo. Este es un trabajo que nos ofrece esperanza y alegría. Una verdadera delicia. —  
*Eric E. González*

## **MARLIN RAMAZZINI**

### **Quiero Ser Yo**

**(Garra Music)**

Growing up in Guatemala, Marlin Ramazzini was inspired to pursue a singing career as a child while listening to Cuban and other Caribbean rhythms on the radio. She was a disciple of Omara Portuondo (one of the greatest Cuban singers of all times), who helped to refine her vocal technique. Ramazzini toured extensively in the '80s, visiting Russia, México, Central America and Canada. She finally settled in Vancouver in 1990, quickly becoming a pillar of that Canadian city's lively local Latin scene. By the mid-nineties, Marlin was already fronting her own band, under the musical direction of her husband, the Juno Award-winning bassist/composer Fito García. Originally released in 2008, Ramazzini's recording debut, *Quiero Ser Yo* (I Want to Be The One), showcases a polished singer at the top of her career. Featured musicians include Fito Garcia (bassist/executive producer), José Manuel Sánchez (percussionist/producer), Ignacio Cervantes (bassist/co-producer), Raúl de la Caridad (percussionist), César López (alto saxophonist), and Pancho Amat (tresero), to mention just a few. Ramazzini's high-pitched and sensuous voice is best appreciated on the tracks *Quiero Ser Yo*, *Odiáme*, and *Químbara* (Celia Cruz's mega-hit). — *Rudy Mangual*



## **YUKO ITO**

### **Mania De Você**

**(Funny Baby Face Records)**

A native of Tokyo, Japan, Yuko Ito started her early music career when she founded the female rock band "Sissy Boy" in Tokyo and produced two CDs— *Marcy's Factory*, and *Kick Off Boys*. In 1994, she relocated to the U.S. to continue her music education, earning a degree from the City College of New York in jazz vocal performance. The young vocalist's latest release documents her



evolution, from her previously rebellious rock attitude to her current artistic maturity, derived from the songstress' immersion in the passionately rhythmic world of Brazilian music. *Mania De Você* is a warm collection of Brazilian standards penned by a wide range of illustrious composers, such as Antonio Carlos Jobim, Djavan, Luiz Gonzaga, Rita Lee, Carlinhos Brown and Baden Powell. All selections deliver a provocative testament that exudes romance and joy to its listeners. Backed by an all-star band led by Itaguara Brandão (guitar/bass), Yuko Ito is also accompanied by Oriente López (Fender Rhodes/flute), Cidinho Teixeira (piano), Mauricio Zottarelli (drums), Aaron Heick (saxophone), and percussionists Café and Davi Vieira. Singing from the heart, she weaves a beautiful musical tapestry full of infectious rhythms and uplifting arrangements. Standouts include the selections *Berimbau*, *Dindi* and the title track (*Mania De Você*). —*Rudy Mangual*



**SOFIA TOSELLO**  
**Alma y Luna**  
**(Sunnyside)**

Hailing originally from Córdoba, Argentina, and currently regarded as a compelling voice in New York City's jazz scene, Sofia Tosello delivers a debut solo production rooted in Latin American musical culture. Although she has interpreted multiple genres from the entire Western Hemisphere (including but not limited to tango, vals, bolero, filin, son, and jazz), what really stands out is her soothing and soft, but yet strong voice, as well as her clear diction. Singing within an acoustic environment —under the leadership of drummer/percussionist Yayo Serka (a first-call session player) — Sofia comes through like a divine narrator of fairy tales. Her supporting cast also includes guitarists Julio Santillán, Miguel Rivaynera, Byron Ramos, Aquiles Báez and Pavel Urkiza; bassists Pedro Giraudo, Yunió Terry, and Jorge Roeder; pianists Axel Tosca and Osmany Paredes; accordionists Raúl Lavandez and Rob Curto; Anat Cohen (clarinet), Yosvany Terry (sax), Pablo Farhat (violin), and Dyan Abad (trombone), plus numerous percussionists. Favorites include *La Clara*, *Sentirme Libre Contigo*, *Sin Piel*, and the title track (*Alma y Luna*). —*Rudy Mangual*



**ORQUESTA SABADONGA**  
**Pa' Los Rumberos De1 Mundo**  
**(Salsaneo Records)**

Hailing from Caracas, Venezuela, Orquesta SabaDonga is an octet composed of veteran salsa musicians that remain loyal to the roots of the classic salsa sounds of the early '70s (which is indicative of their native country's love and passion for such musical form). Fronted by vocalists Gustavo Gerardo and Angel Berroterán, this new release includes mostly original scores, with tasty arrangements contributed by pianist Willie Melo. Percussionists



Yomar Méndez and Rafael González keep the rhythms flowing, while bassists Julio Antillano and José Soto maintain everyone anchored to such rhythmic foundation. SabaDonga's horns are led by Luis Ruiz (trumpet) and David González (trombone), but also include such guests as José Ramoncini and Francisco Rivas (trumpets); Johan Muñoz, Eliel Rivero and Gonzalo Palacios (trombones). Highlighting this production are the selections *Vengo Bien Plantao*, *Bailar Era Bailar*, *Aquí Traigo Bailador*, and *En Casa de María*. —Rudy Mangual

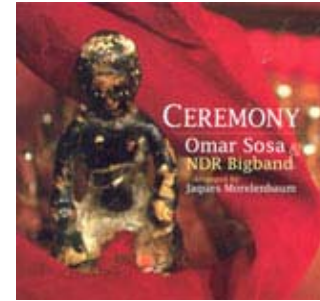


## OMAR SOSA & NDR BIG BAND

### Ceremony

#### (Otá Records)

¿Qué es lo que no puede hacer Omar Sosa musicalmente? Por Dios, el hombre ha realizado, bajo su propio nombre grabaciones de straight-ahead jazz, jazz latino, música global, música litúrgica, y otros géneros que no logro recordar en este preciso momento. El destacado maestro del piano aparece ahora en una magistral y poderosa producción titulada Ceremony, donde Sosa une sus talentos a una orquesta de 18 elementos — la NDR Big Band de Hamburgo, enriquecida con los arreglos majestuosos de Jacques Morelenbaum.



Doce son los espléndidos temas incluidos en este compacto, cuya elegante pieza inicial (Llegada de Elegba) abre camino al tributo ofrecido a los orishas del panteón lucumí. Me agradó sobremedida un par de temas — Danzón de tus Ojos (un sublime danzón donde resplandece el piano de Sosa, y que se transforma, casi al final, en un sabroso son montuno) y Luz en el Cielo, cuyo interesante arreglo se asemeja a una mezcla de danzón con bossa-nova. Suculentos también son los números Mi Tradición (con un arreglo muy original que evoluciona de rumba a danzón y luego a son montuno, bajo un fondo de jazz latino) y Monkurú, cuyo también fascinante arreglo no puede ser categorizado fácilmente, aunque nos sorprende con su creatividad.

El CD Ceremony llega en un momento preciso, debo decir, ya que las big bands están modestamente regresando al panorama musical latino, donde sus ritmos han adquirido demanda de nuevo. Me refiero, por mencionar algunas, a Latin Giants of Jazz, Manny Silvera & Origen y The Big 3 Palladium Orchestra. Omar Sosa y la NDR Big Band de Hamburgo representan una grata adición a esta pequeña, pero memorable lista. Supongo, en mis sueños, que el próximo paso de Omar Sosa será un CD de salsa dura, de la mata. ¿Qué más puedo pedir? —Eric E. González

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