

HILARIO DURAN & PERSPECTIVA



This album was recorded in Cuba on the 25th and 26th of February 2005 at the EGREM Studios in Havana. To record again with the former members of one of Cuba's most ambitious musical projects was long a dream. For years we all performed together as the band for Grammy Award-winning trumpet player Arturo Sandoval. When Arturo moved to the United States, we renamed the group Perspectiva, evolving a new musical perspective. In the early nineties we recorded and toured extensively in South America and Europe. At that time the band had a more pronounced jazz fusion sound, with extensive use of keyboard, electric and bass guitar. During our years touring the world with Arturo Sandoval, and in the years following under our own name Perspectiva, my bond with the members of this band became very strong and deeply personal. We had times of great joy and great challenge. I subsequently immigrated to Canada and started a new phase of my career as a soloist and band leader.

Encuentro en la Habana is a musical re-encounter with Perspectiva after eight years apart, and is a musical celebration of our deep friendship after so many long years of separation. The music shows the joy of the reunion. We kept it simple, but there is a great energy, spontaneity and a musical maturity in our playing. We recorded at the famous EGREM Studios, made famous by Ry Cooder and the Buena Vista Social Club. Jorge Reyes is one of the most accomplished bass players in Cuba. He has performed with the Afro-Cuban All Stars, Irakere, Chucho Valdes Quartet and Roy Hargrove's Crisol. Jorge and I are long-time friends; we first met in 1968 at the Conservatory of Music Amadeo Roldan. In military service in the 1970's we both performed in the army band in Havana. We worked together again in the Orquesta Cubana de Musica Moderna (Cuban Orchestra of Modern Music) from 1976 to 1980, and in 1981 we both joined the Arturo Sandoval Band, working for nine years until Arturo moved to the United States. Two other members of Perspectiva, Reynaldo Valera (congas) and Jorge Luis Chicoy (guitars), have both performed with the Buena Vista Social Club and worked together in Arturo Sandoval's band. Jorge Luis Chicoy has also played with Irakere and Ernan Lopez-Nussa. Special guests joined us in making this album, including Emilio del Monte, a great timbale player, who has performed with Jesus Allemany and Cubanismo, and his son Emilio del Monte Jr, who did a wonderful job with the bata drums on three of this album's tracks. Ernesto Simpson is a great Cuban drummer now based in New York City, and is also a former member of Arturo Sandoval's band and of Perspectiva. Ernesto is one of the most important Latin jazz drummers on the scene today, notably as the drummer for Arturo Sandoval, Richard Bona, Paquito D'Rivera and Manuel Valera. Ernesto plays on 'No More Cha Cha' and 'Perla Marina'. Pedro Martinez, a Cuban conga player also based in New York, was the first place award-winner in the Thelonius Monk Competition in the category of percussion. Pedro has worked extensively with Paquito D'Rivera, Patato Valdes, was featured in the film Calle 54, and is a member of Yerba Buena. He performs on 'No More Cha Cha'. Roman Feliu, the alto player known for his excellent work with the band Irakere, has appeared with David Murray and Isaac Delgado and is one of the young lions in the Cuban scene. He also played soprano sax on the tune 'Perla Marina'.

I have a great emotional attachment to this project. Returning to Havana to reunite with my old friends and colleagues, in the studio where so much great music was made, was deeply satisfying and a creative highlight of my career. As you listen to these tracks, I hope this excitement and creative joy is apparent.



Juno Award Winner 2005
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Hilario Duran



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