

Michael Gamble and the Rhythm Serenaders: F...



HECTOR MARTIGNON'S BANDA GRANDE – "THE BIG BAND THEORY" Zoho Records

Hector Martignon, piano/accordion/conductor/composer/arranger saxophones; John Benitez, bass; Vince Cherico, drums; Samuel Torres, congas/maracas; Chistos Rafalides, vibraphone; Andy Hunter, Rafi Makiel, Luis Bonilla, Alvin Walker, Chris Washburne, Trombones; John Walsh, Seneca Black, Steve Gluzband, Julie Desbordes, Fabio Morgera, trumpets; Enrique Fernandez, Chelsea Baratz, Alejandro Aviles, David De Jesus, Jason Arce & Alex Han, saxophones; String Quartet: Nuine Melikian, Everhard Paredes, Samuel Marchan, & Diego Garcia. SPECIAL GUESTS: Brenda Feliciano, vocals; Joe Burgstaller, solo trumpet; Edmar Castaneda, Colombian Harp; Jorge Glem, cuatro; Roberto Quintero, cajon; Martin Vejarano, gaita (a Columbian flute)/tambura/maracon.

"The Big Band Theory" brings us a completely different look at orchestration and presentation. Hector Martignon is aggressive in arranging and celebrates a Latin perspective, along with showcasing his composer skills on this recording. There is nothing old-school about this production. I love the addition of vibraphone, which I first prominently noticed on "99 MacDougall Street". This is Martignon's third CD release, after being GRAMMY nominated twice. Colombian-born and now living in Harlem, New York, pianist Hector Martignon offers us daring, somewhat visionary arrangements, including compositions by Classical composers Bach & Mozart and the great jazz composer/pianist, Bill Evans. He dives into a composition of Brazilian songwriter, Hermeto Pascoal and surprisingly mixes things up by tossing Mozart in the mix. Martignon speaks of the 1990's and the turbulent 1960's era in the United States as inspirational, as well as his time in Germany during the Christmas holiday season. His music composition celebrating the "Trombone Chorale" is reflective of the pulsating rivers of people streaming like worker ants in and out of subways and/or trains, with Christmas music playing in the background. I found the arrangement on "Estate" to be awe inspiring. Martignon is an artist whose brush becomes his fingers across the 88 keys of his piano or placed colorfully on his accordion. He merges the music and emotion of his Colombian culture into jazz and classical music with strong strokes of creativity and genius.

Below is his take on the Bill Evans composition "Interplay" featuring the art of Wassily Kandinsky.