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BILL O'CONNELL LATIN JAZZ PROJECT
Black Sand

2001 Random Chance Records

Black Sand (a reference to beaches with black sand) is a landmark recording that demonstrates pianist Bill O'Connell's long-standing love for Latin Jazz.



This is O'Connell's first album as a leader in over a decade and he has surrounded himself with a stellar lineup: Andy González (bass), Charles Fambrough (bass), Steve Berríos (drums), Randy Brecker (trumpet), Dave Valentín (flute), Milton Cardona (congas) and Sergio Cardona (percussion).

Over the years O'Connell has played, directed and composed for many of the most prolific figures in Latin and jazz: Sonny Rollins, Mongo Santamaría, Dave Valentín, Jon Lucien, Chet Baker, Kenny Rankin, Conrad Herwig, Emily Remler, Jerry González and The Fort Apache Band, Gato Barbieri, the GRP All-Star Big Band, Hilton Ruiz, Juan Pablo Torres and Charles Fambrough.

"It's been a lifelong love combining Latin and jazz," says O'Connell, "I saw an area where I thought I could grow and create something new - to bring new influences to Latin music from my jazz background."

Black Sand features 11 original compositions by O'Connell that span the musical gamut: "Iguana" (urban Latin), Latin Jazz (Latin/Blues), Blue Brazil (Bossa Nova tinged), "Gentle Rumba" (Afro-Cuban), "Obakosa" (folkloric music with Santeria chants), "It's Alright With Me" (a jazz standard), "Fire Dance" (a trio format) and "Son of a Montuno" (modern jazz) to name but a few.

"My version of Latin jazz is one that encompasses very hard core jazz," points out O'Connell, "and very hard core Latin jazz playing, so the two can be strong separately and mixed together."

O'Connell's artistry and reputation have placed him in the inner circle of New York's music scene. Without question, he is one of the most accomplished musicians on the Latin jazz scene today bar none.

"I've always loved it (Latin Jazz), says O'Connell. Do I have to do it? Yeah, I probably have to, whether there is commercial success in it or not."

Black Sand is Latin Jazz that is sure to please even the most discerning listener.

A tour de force for O' Connell and his all-star crew. Highly recommended.

Review by Thomas Peña

Songs:

1. Latin Jazz 7:23 [[listen](#)]
2. Black Sand 5:31 [[listen](#)]
3. Blue Brazil 4:13
4. Obakoso 3:06
5. Alhambra 4:20 [[listen](#)]
6. Kidz 5:18
7. Fire Dance 6:14
8. Gentle Rumba 9:05
9. Son of a Montuno 5:05 [[listen](#)]
10. Trepidation 6:21
11. Iguana 4:40 [[listen](#)]
12. It's Alright with Me 5:33

Musicians:

Bill O'Connell - piano, all tracks

Andy González - bass, tracks 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11 12

Charles Fambrough - bass, tracks 2, 3, 6, 10

Steve Berríos - drums, all tracks except 4 & 7; chekeres, tracks 1, 3, 7, 8, 11

Joe Ford - soprano sax, tracks 1, 8, 10; alto sax track 2

Randy Brecker - trumpet, tracks 2, 6

Dave Valentín - flute, track 3

Milton Cardona - congas, tracks 1, 3, 4, 11, 12; chekeres and vocal, track 4

Carole Robinson - vocal track 4

Sergio Cardona - percussion track 4

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