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John Santos and The Machete Ensemble



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John Santos and The Machete Ensemble
20th Anniversary (Machete Records - 2005)



This independently produced two-disc set traces the evolution of John Santos and the Machete Ensemble from 1989 to 2005. Furthermore, it supports the bands' conviction that beauty has no boundaries.

Since its inception the band has committed itself to composing and creating music that honors tradition and, often times, flies in the face of convention. Technically, the music is a fusion of North American jazz, Afro Caribbean rhythms, dance and ritual, with a dash of social commentary tossed in for good measure.

Disc One - Unreleased Works (1989-96) features the music of the large ensemble,

which consisted of (at least) five wind instruments, a full rhythm section and vocalists. The ensemble's exciting renditions of tunes such as John Coltrane's Giant Steps and Perseverance speaks to the band's jazz side, while Oye Mi Consejo (Listen to My Advice), Hacia El Amor (Towards Love) and Devuelveme Lo Mio (Return What's Mine) demonstrates the band's ability to please and appeal to dancers.

Disc two - Hoy (Today) features the music of the small ensemble. Moreover, it presents a shift in the bands' style as it sought to widen its compositional elements and create a niche amongst West Coast dance bands. Hacia La Luz (Towards the Light) is a rumba, No Entiendo La Palabra Tener (I Don't Understand the Words) is an Afro Puerto Rican Bomba laced with funk, and Cambia El Canal (Change the Channel) employs straight ahead Bomba and Plena.

A fair number of the tunes speak to social and moral issues such as the destruction of the environment, injustice, colonialism, world peace and honoring one's ancestors. This 20th Anniversary retrospective will please new as well as seasoned listeners. First, the recording is an exceptional introduction to the music of John Santos and the Machete Ensemble. Secondly, the extensive liner notes provide a wealth of information on the bands' development.

Despite the lack of support from any of the major record labels the Machete Ensemble remains firmly committed to the principles on which it was founded. In effect, this recording is a celebration of the artistry, integrity and staying power of John Santos and the Machete Ensemble. Long live Machete!

Tomas Peña
Co-Editor
Latin Jazz Network

For additional information on
JOHN SANTOS AND THE MACHETE ENSEMBLE
please visit: www.johnsantos.com



John Santos Biography

Percussionist, composer, writer and educator John Santos was raised in the Puerto Rican and Cape Verdean traditions of his family, surrounded by music. The fertile musical environment of the San Francisco Bay Area shaped his career in a unique way. His studies of Afro-Latin music have included several trips to New York, Puerto Rico, Cuba and Colombia.

Widely respected as one of the top writers, educators and historians in the field, Mr. Santos is a member of the Latin Jazz Advisory Committee of the Smithsonian Institution and has contributed to the international magazines Percussive Notes, Modern Drummer, Modern Percussionist, and Latin Percussionist. The San Francisco Bay Area community in which he still lives and works has presented him with numerous awards and honors for artistic excellence and social dedication.

Mr. Santos is also a distinguished and creative multi-percussionist and recording artist. His diverse credits (in addition to those listed) include: Grupo Mezcla (Havana, Cuba), Irakere West, Santana, Cal Tjader, Charlie Hunter, Danilo Perez, Linda Tillery, Ignacio Berroa, Omar Sosa, Bobby Hutcherson, McCoy Tyner, Lalo Schifrin, Jon Jang, Yma Sumac, Pete and Sheila Escovedo, Mark Murphy, John Faddis, Batacumbela and Batucaje. He was the director of the Orquesta Tipica Cienfuegos (1976-1980) and the Orquesta Batachanga (1981-1985). Mr. Santos has directed the Machete Ensemble, a world-class Latin Jazz band of international renown since 1986.

Tracks: (click on titles to listen)

Disc 1: Unreleased Works 1989 - 1996

1. **Commitment**
2. **Giant Steps**
3. **Perseverance**
4. **Oye Mis Consejos**
5. **Tumbando**
6. **Circle**
7. **Hacia El Amor**
8. **Devuelveme Lo Mio**
9. **Kongo**
10. **A Los Bailadores**
11. **Omode**
12. **Hearsay**

Disc 2: Hoy - 2005

1. **Hacia La Luz**
2. **All Relative**
3. **Searchin'**
4. **Pequeña Amaly**
5. **La Maraquera**
6. **No Entiendo La Palabra Tener**
7. **You Don't Know What Love Is**
8. **Cambia El Canal**
9. **El Changui De Peraza**
10. **Atardecer Matancero**
11. **La Juventud**



Credits:

John Santos: Tumbadoras, tambora, bongos, percussion

John Calloway: Piano, flute

Wayne Wallace: Trombone, piano, synthesizer

Ron Stallings: Soprano sax, flute

Murray Low: Piano

David Belove: Bass

Orestes Vilató: Timbales

Paul Van Wageningen: Drumset

Melecio Magdaluyo: Alto sax

Orlando Torriente: Lead vocal

Rebeca Mauleón: Piano

Jeff Cressman: Trombone, flugelhorn

Bill Ortiz: Trumpet

Ramon Estevez: Lead vocal, coro

Sal Núñez: Coro

Willie Ludwig: Lead vocal, coro

Special Guests: Armando Peraza, Jerry Medina, Anthony Blea, Bobi Céspedes, Ray Vega, Destani Wolf, Rico Pabón, Jerry Joel Medina Carrión, Obanilú Allende, Camilo Molina Gaetán, Bárbara Valladares, Ismaél Rodríguez, Armando Córdoba, Iluminado Maldonado.

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