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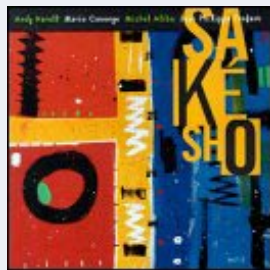
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Sakésho (sah kay' show): "it's gonna be hot"



Telarc/Heads Up Records
HUCD 3069 - 2002 - USA

Produced by Sakésho
Executive Producer: Dave Love

Recorded at Studio Aladin - Paris,
France



Posted on September 15, 2002

Latin Jazz with Afro-Caribbean roots

Picture this: Prior to a gig in Paris, steel pan wizard Andy Narell, pianist Mario Canonge, bassist Michael Alibo and drummer Jean Philippe Fanfant are dining at a Japanese restaurant. Narell orders "Sake Chaud" (hot sake). Alibo says, "You know what that means in (French) Creole? 'It means, It's gonna be hot.'" The name, Sakésho, stuck and the rest, as they say, is history.

Narell, a serious student of Afro-Caribbean music, met his musical associates about 8 years ago on the island of Martinique (two of the band members are from Martinique; one hails from Guadeloupe). It wasn't long before everyone concerned realized that the chemistry between them was special. Since then, they have gone out of their way to perform together whenever possible.

The band draws its main musical inspiration from biguine, the folkloric music of Martinique and Guadeloupe. According to Peter Manuel, author of "Caribbean Currents," biguine orchestras played for dances in a variety of locations, including dance halls, church parties, birthday parties and private affairs. During the 1940's and 1950's, as radio connected the islands of the Caribbean and touring musicians from other islands visited the Lesser Antilles, Guadeloupean dance bands absorbed aspects of Cuban guagancó, Haitian kompa direk and jazz from the United States."

With that said, Sakésho joyously takes things one step further. For example, "Kon Djab Djigidji" is built on an Afro-Cuban (Latin) groove, "Roulé Quadrille" draws its influence from "old school" island rhythms, "Laventille" explores Trinidadian calypso, "Mabouya" is inspired by Thelonious Monk's classic tune - Round Midnight, "Karawak Dream's" pulsating vibrato is a homage to the popular (now defunct) jazz-fusion label - CTI (Creed Taylor, Inc.), "Song for Mia" features the soulful voice of Polo Athanese. It also represents the purest form of biguine on this recording; "Divini" is a beautiful jazz ballad.

Perhaps one way to appreciate Sakesho's music is to toss aside any preconceived notions you may have about jazz or French Caribbean music. Instead, sit back, listen and as they say on the islands, "Begin the biguine!"

Review by Thomas Peña

Tracks: (click on titles to listen)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Kon Djab Djigidji | 5. Mabouya |
| 2. Roulé Quadrille | 6. Divini |
| 3. Laventille | 7. Karawak Dream |
| 4. Grand Fabrice | 8. Song for Mia |



Credits:

Andy Narell: steel pans
Mario Canonge: piano, fender rhodes, vocals
Michel Alibo: bass, vocals
Jean Philippe Fanfant: drums, vocals

Compositions:

tracks 1, 2, 6: Mario Canonge
track 3, 5, 8: Andy Narell
track 4, 7: Michel Alibo

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