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- [INTERVIEWS](#)
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SONIDO ISLEÑO
El Asunto

Produced by Benjamin Lapidus
Label: Tresero Productions

Reviewed by Danilo Navas

Latin jazz a la George Benson? Not quite, although the idea crosses my mind -the eternal habit of establishing comparisons. Anyway, influences do exist, but in this case I would say, there's no room for comparisons. Considered "The New York Latin jazz revelation of 1998" after the release of his first CD, "¿Quién Tiene Ritmo?", guitarist and bandleader Benjamin Lapidus is a fine artist in his own right. With his guitar, Puerto Rican cuatro, and Cuban tres, he has plenty of strings to strike a chord or two...



Sonido Isleño's musical proposal is an interesting combination of modern and traditional Afro-Caribbean elements and jazz. They create polyrhythmical and groovy melodies. Relying heavily on bass and percussion (timbales, congas, bongo, maracas, guiro, clave, Iya, Okonkolo...), vocals, no winds -except trumpet on tracks 6 and 9-, no piano -except keyboard on track 1- "El Asunto" is an excellent, self-produced recording that deserves attention. All compositions -except track 2, "La Vaina"- are co-authored by Frank Cotto and Benjamin Lapidus.

- Benjamin Lapidus** - guitar on all tracks / coro & lead vocal on 9 / güira on 2, 8, 9 / maracas on 9
- Francisco Javier Cotto** - bass on all tracks / Coro on 1, 9 / Lead vocals on 2
- Geraldo Flores** - timbales and all timbale solos
- Greg Glassman** - trumpet on 6, 9
- Henry Mena** - coro on 1 / spoken intro on 2
- Pedro More** - lead vocal on 1
- Jacqueline Oñoz** - coro on 1
- Matt Ray** - keyboard on 1
- Tony Rosa** - congas on 2, 4, 5, 8, 9 / bongo on 3, 7 / agogó & bombo on 5 / güira on 4 / itótele on 1
- Félix Sanabria** - clave, iyá & Okónkolo on 1
- Israel Santiago** - coro on 1
- Renato Omar Thoms** - congas on 3, 6, 7 / bongo on 1, 4 / timbales on 5
- Adam Tully** - coro on 1



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