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SONIDO ISLEÑO
Tres Is The Place

Produced by Benjamin Lapidus
2001 - Tresero Productions

The evolution of Sonido Isleño continues under the skillful direction of Ben Lapidus, considered by many to be one of the most versatile guitarists on today's music scene.

In a recent cyber-chat with Lapidus, he was very optimistic about the group's latest project. "For me it is the best of the three albums, compositionally and arrangement-wise more mature, sophisticated and accessible than the last two albums."

With that said, it is worth noting that Sonido Isleño's past recordings ("Quien Tiene Ritmo?" and "El Asunto") were highly praised by critics and fans alike. In addition, the group's "Jazz Changüi" is featured on "Latin Beat Magazine's" compilation, "Real Latin Jazz - Percussion, Piano & Strings."

Lapidus elaborated on Sonido Isleño's unique sound. "After 5 years and 3 albums Sonido Isleño is still dedicated to playing original Spanish-Caribbean music with a core group of strings and percussion that emphasizes improvisation. We draw from the deep well of traditional Cuban, Dominican and Puerto Rican musics creating new combinations of sounds that are unique yet familiar, interesting, accessible and fun."

The album features 9 tracks in all; each with their own unique flavor and a dash of "Sabor Latino." Some of my favorite tunes include "Rumba Judía," based on a Jewish prayer for peace in Israel and the world, (the song is in Hebrew while the soneos are in Spanish), the soulful "Mi Mujer," "Un Tapón En Nueva York/ New York City Traffic Jam" and the heartfelt, "I Remember Cambrón," dedicated to the late Carlos Borrromeo Planche a.k.a. Cambrón (lead singer of Grupo Changüi de Guantanamo).

The core group consists of Benjamin Lapidus (tres, guitar, vocals and organ), Tony Cruz (bongo, maracas, guiro and clave), Francisco Javier Cotto (bass), Félix Sanabria (congas, claves and shekere) and Héctor Torres (timbales, maracas, bongos).

Featured guests include Dafnis Prieto (drums), Harvie S. (bass), David Masucci (tenor saxophone), Oscar Oñoz (trumpet) and Adam Scone (organ).

I would be remiss if I did not mention the group's ongoing commitment to education. "When we do workshops as a group, we try to cover a wide range of

musics and show how folkloric musics of the Caribbean relate to modern and not so modern North American, African, and European music (Asian too)."

In addition, Lapidus frequently conducts lectures on music from around the world. He will be giving three talks for children and their families at the Museum of Natural History (in February) and recently taught a course called, "Popular Musics of the Caribbean at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice (City University of New York).

According to Peter Manuel, author of "Caribbean Currents (From Rumba to Reggae)", "for the most creative artists, Caribbean music now involves combining international sounds and Caribbean cross-fertilization, while often reaching deep into local traditions for inspiration."

Indeed, combinations of music are the next frontier. Sonido Isleño's "island sound" celebrates the richness and diversity of Caribbean music's past, present and future.

For additional information on Sonido Isleño visit: www.sonidoisleno.com

Review by Thomas Peña

Credits:

Benjamin Lapidus - tres on tracks 1, 3, 6 / guitar on 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 / vocals on 1 and 4 / talking and organ on 4

Francisco Javier Cotto - bass on 1, 2, 4 to 6, 8, 9 / talking on 4 / vocals on 1, 4

Félix Sanabria - congas on 1 to 4, 6, 9 / claves & chekere on 3

Tony Cruz - bongó on 1 and 4 / maracas on 1 / güiro on 1, 2, 6, 9 / claves on 6 / talking on 4

Héctor Torres / timbales on 1, 2, 4, 6, 9 / bongó on 5 and 8 / guagua on 3, maracas on 5 and 8 / talking on 4

Naomi Bloch - vocals on 3

David Masucci - tenor saxophone on 2

Oscar Oñoz - trumpet on 6

Dafnis Prieto - drums on 7

Harvie S. (formerly Harvie Swartz) - bass on 3 and 6

Adam Scone - organ on 2, 4, 5, 8



Tracks:

1. Tres Is The Place [[listen](#)]
2. Mi Mujer [[listen](#)]
3. Rumba Judía (traditional) [[listen](#)]
4. Chuletas [[listen](#)]
5. It Was Going To Happen Eventually
6. El Danzón De La Guajira [[listen](#)]
7. Un Tapón En Nueva York/New York City Traffic Jam [[listen](#)]
8. I Remember Cambrón
9. Acid Cha



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