



## Hamlet and his Latin Jazz Experience.

The Latin Jazz wave is old hat. There are too many hangers-on; too many copy cats and not enough original thinking musicians. But in contrast, the serious craftsmen and women are getting more skilled and penetrating the soul of the Latin ethos – some even growing something akin to “mi Alma Latina” actually. And, of course jazz is today’s “classical” music given us originally by the Afro-American musicians of past and present. And so in praising the art the keepers of its flame, many European musicians create rather wonderful works. The Music has been embraced across the Atlantic pond for decades, with Europe embracing important musicians from Satchmo, Sidney Bechet and Ellington to Mingus, Bud Powell, Ben Webster and Dexter Gordon. Men like Boris Vian spread the gospel of The Music and artists like Mathias Ruegg and now Hamlet Fiorilli are faithful apostles. This record by the latter is one of the latest attempts to share the Latin Jazz experience with serious fans of this and The Music. And it is not only brave but shines with a catalogue of real gems.

*Descarumbiando* shows just how much this group has imbued the spirit of the music. And this is the best news and heralds the musical success of this project. Anyone virtuoso musician can play with great facility, but to play intelligently and thoughtfully – and every once and awhile – to come up with something surprising is a measure of just how the musicians “dig it” and therefore “get it.” That title track, for instance, is like an overture for the record. The jam comes roaring in with rhythms from Brasil and Cuba – samba and rumba – melding like steel, bending and frolicking with the “alegria.” “*Recuerdos*” showcases the full intensity of the percussionists on this date. Their work is outstanding and compliments the inner clave of Hamlet Fiorilli’s piano work. Congas and drums combine sharply and there is a superb flamenco break and the handclaps accentuate the heat of the piece. “*Suite Latina*,” although short is a fine composition rooted in the valse mode but then soon traverses the gamut of rhythms with a dynamic harmonic crescendo, played by the piano almost mimicking a Gershwin roll at first then streaking ahead. “*Ron Y Gin*” is a classic Cuban mambo and son track that is played with swagger.

The rest of the program is anything but predictable. “*El Fuego del Padre*” explores the edges of tonal dissonance and also features some fine conga work. “*Gospa*” is a well-written authentic bolero. “*Tocando Mi Oropel*” is rendered as a chorinho and features a memorable dialogue between Fiorilli’s piano and Simon Pibal’s clarinet. In “*Bluesambongo*” the funky Afro-American and samba rhythmic dialects collide. The highlight of “*Siete Camisas*” is the fine sense of togetherness that exists in the band as they work each other in unison. And “*Tranquilo*” is a quiet closer for the date, but not before the quiet fire of *Hans Lassnig*’s trumpet burns through the bolero.

If there is one quirky slightly distracting aspect to the record it may be the song titles that are a tad contrived, but then the music that follows more than makes up for this. The result though is a surprisingly mature Latin+Jazz record.

Review written by: Raul da Gama (Latin Jazz Net)