

UMS PRESENTS

ALFREDO RODRÍGUEZ TRIO AND THE PEDRITO MARTINEZ GROUP

Alfredo Rodriguez Trio

Alfredo Rodríguez, *Piano*

Peter Slavov, *Bass*

Henry Cole, *Drums*

The Pedrito Martinez Group featuring Ariacne Trujillo

Pedrito Martinez, *Cajón, Congas, and Lead Vocals*

Ariacne Trujillo, *Piano and Lead Vocals*

Álvaro Benavides, *Bass and Vocals*

Jhair Sala, *Cowbell, Bongos, and Vocals*

Friday Evening, March 14, 2014 at 8:00

Michigan Theater • Ann Arbor

58th Performance of the 135th Annual Season

20th Annual Jazz Series

Global Music Series

Photo: Havana Viejo, central market, painting for sale, Havana, Cuba;
photographer: © Bruno Morandi/Corbis.

PROGRAM

This evening's program will be announced by the artists from the stage. There will be one intermission following Alfredo Rodríguez Trio's set.

This evening's performance is sponsored by United Bank & Trust and the University of Michigan Health System.

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Alfredo Rodríguez Trio appears by arrangement with IMG Artists, New York, NY.

The Pedrito Martínez Group appears by arrangement with International Music Network, Gloucester, MA.

ARTISTS

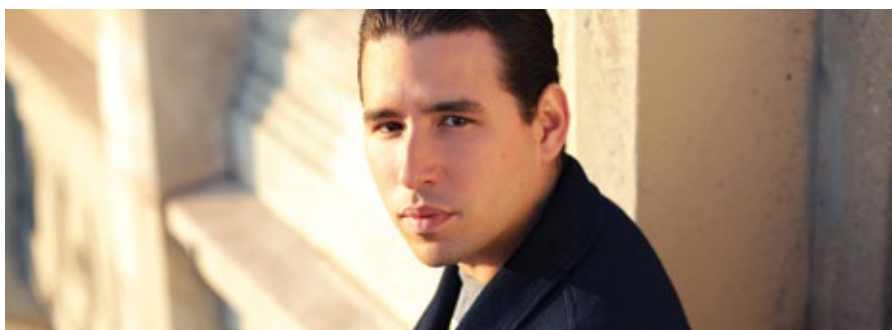


Photo: Alfredo Rodríguez; photographer: Miguel Elizalde

A young pianist of astonishing virtuosity and imagination, Cuban-born **ALFREDO RODRÍGUEZ** calls up images of legendary jazz pianists like Keith Jarrett, Thelonious Monk, Art Tatum, Bill Evans, and his compatriot Chucho Valdés. Schooled in the rigorous classical conservatories of Havana, Mr. Rodríguez's riveting artistry is informed as much by Bach and Stravinsky as by his Cuban and jazz roots.

Discovered at the Montreux Jazz Festival in 2006 by Quincy Jones, Mr. Rodríguez's star has risen rapidly under the tutelage of the famed producer. Since arriving in the US in 2009, he has appeared on numerous prestigious stages including the Playboy Jazz Festival at the Hollywood Bowl; the Gilmore Keyboard Festival; the Detroit, Newport, San Francisco, North Sea, Umbria, and Vienna jazz festivals; as well as in important jazz rooms such as Ronnie Scott's, Sculler's, Yoshi's, Jazz Standard, The Blue Note, and Jazz Alley. Alongside Latin piano legends Michel Camilo and Eddie Palmieri, he performed to sold-out audiences at the Arsht Center in Miami and the AT&T Center in Dallas on Larry Rosen's record-breaking JAZZ ROOTS series.

On his latest release entitled *The Invasion Parade*, the follow-up to his stunning debut on Mack Avenue, *Sounds*

of Space, Alfredo Rodríguez explores his memories of Cuba, the people and the culture he left behind – and finds his new place. Co-produced by Quincy Jones, Mr. Rodríguez's champion and mentor, and featuring a superb ensemble that includes bassist and vocalist Esperanza Spalding, percussionist and vocalist Pedrito Martínez, and drummer and percussionist Henry Cole, *The Invasion Parade* comprises nine tracks including originals by Mr. Rodríguez as well as evergreens such as "Guantanamera," Maria Teresa Vera's "Veinte Años," and "Quizás, Quizás, Quizás." The title *The Invasion Parade* refers to an annual tradition, a carnival parade in Santiago de Cuba commemorating the invasion of the Liberation Army that marked the end of Cuba's War of Independence. In this blocks-long parade, "not only *comparsas* (drumming and dance groups) participate but also all the people of Santiago, they come out and join playing whatever they have – drums, pots, whatever, and singing improvised lyrics," explains Mr. Rodríguez.

The term "invasion" in the title, he's quick to note, "refers to the invasion of the streets by people who come out to participate and celebrate. In my mind it also has to do with an invasion of culture. I wrote and arranged the music but not everybody in the group is Cuban. We

have Cubans but also Americans (such as Esperanza Spalding), a Puerto Rican (Henry Cole), a Bulgarian (bassist Peter Slavov), and it's a mix of cultures in which everybody contributes."

"The invasion of *The Invasion Parade* is a peaceful one, and an honest one," he says. "It's a celebration to which all are invited, exactly like in the conga Santiaguera. That's the message we want to send out."

PEDRO PABLO "PEDRITO" MARTINEZ was born in Havana, Cuba, on September 12, 1973. He began his musical career at the age of 11, performing as a vocalist and percussionist with such Cuban legends as Tata Guines and Los Muñequitos de Matanzas. Since settling in New York City in the fall of 1998, Mr. Martinez has been awarded first place in the annual Thelonious Monk Institute Competition for Afro-Latin Hand Drumming and has recorded (lending his percussion playing and vocal talents to over 100 records) and/or performed with Paquito D'Rivera, Wynton Marsalis, Paul Simon, Eddie Palmieri, Bryan Lynch, Arturo "Chico" O'Farrill, Bebo Valdés, Cassandra Wilson, Joe Lovano, Issac Delgado, Eliane Elias, Stefon Harris, Bruce Springsteen, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, and Sting.

Mr. Martinez was a founding member of the highly successful Afro-

Cuban/Afro-Beat band Yerba Buena, with which he recorded two albums and toured the world. He was featured in the film documentary, *Calle 54*. And his singing and percussion playing were featured in the 2011 Academy Award-nominated, *Chico and Rita*.

The Pedrito Martinez Group (PMG) came together in 2005 at a Cuban restaurant in Manhattan's Hell's Kitchen, called Guantanamera. Regular visitors to their gigs have included Roger Waters, Eric Clapton, Derek Trucks, John Scofield, Steve Gadd, Steve Winwood, and Taj Mahal, to name a few.

The Pedrito Martinez Group has appeared at Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Apollo Theater, The Newport Jazz Festival, globalFest, New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, TED Conference, The Montreal Jazz Festival, The Red Sea Festival, Montreux Jazz Fest, The Sydney Festival, Bonnaroo, Yoshi's/San Francisco, The Umbria Jazz Festivals, Saratoga Jazz Festival, Yerba Buena Gardens Festival/San Francisco, The Red Sea Festival, Festival Internationale, Playboy Jazz Festival, SFJAZZ, The Barbican, The Jazz Standard, and Joe's Pub NYC.

An album by Pedrito Martinez called *Rumba de la Isla*, featuring the music of the flamenco great Camarone de la Isla, was released on Calle54/Sony in March of 2013. PMG's first studio album, *The Pedrito Martinez Group*, was released in October



Photo: Pedrito Martinez Group; photographer: Michael Weintrob

2013 on Motema Music. The album was produced by Steve Gadd and Pedrito Martinez and features special guests Wynton Marsalis, John Scofield, Steve Gadd, Marc Quinones, and Gary Schreiner.

Born in Havana, **ARIACNE TRUJILLO** began her career as a child prodigy concert pianist. Blessed with perfect pitch, she was able to graduate with honors from Cuba's hyper-competitive ISA conservatory while working as a singer and dancer at the legendary Cabaret Tropicana. Since arriving in New York City in 2002, Ms. Trujillo has performed or recorded with Paul Simon (*Song of the Capeman*, Brooklyn Academy of Music, 2008), Paquito D'Rivera, Johnny Pacheco, Oscar de Leon, Luis Enrique, Isaac Delgado, and Savion Glover.

Such impressive bona fides aside, the most important qualities Ms. Trujillo brings to the mix are her ability to improvise both form and content, and her truly relentless sense of time. It's standard Cuban practice to break down to piano, clave, and kick drum, but PMG repeatedly breaks down to piano — just piano — and you have to experience it in concert to believe the unstoppable groove that she lays down, often while singing lead in her powerful and endlessly flexible voice.

The range of expression in Ms. Trujillo's playing and singing encompasses classical, Afro-Cuban, opera, ballet, blues, jazz R&B, soul, and funk. In 2005, she

joined The Pedrito Martinez Group, and has since developed an astoundingly close musical connection with Mr. Martinez.

A scholarship from Berklee College of Music brought bassist **ÁLVARO BENAVIDES** to the US from his native Venezuela. Like Ariacne Trujillo, he is a brilliant soloist with unshakeable timing that allows him to shoulder the entire groove when the rest of the musicians drop out, or to power the band to a devastating *bomba* climax with wicked thumps, slaps, and slides that congeal and combust with Pedrito Martinez's cajón to produce as powerful and uplifting a rhythmic surge as the largest and most aggressive Cuban bands.

Born in Perú and raised in New York, **JHAIR SALA** spent his formative years studying intensively with Pedrito Martinez, having met him when he was 10 years old. He is now in high demand as a session musician and bandleader in his own right, but there is an uncanny magic when he and Mr. Martinez play together. Mr. Sala's touch, timing, and feel are truly remarkable and with literally thousands of hours of studying, performing, and jamming together, the two drummers play as one.

UMS welcomes the Alfredo Rodríguez Trio and The Pedrito Martinez Group as they make their UMS debuts this evening.



Scan for *Buena Vista Social Club is a Party Foul*, a listening adventure featuring musicians from Cuba.

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