

Promoting The Other Sound of Cuba



ARIOSO

The tropical sensuality elegantly expressed in song by Cuban troubadours of the early twentieth century, revived almost a century later with the same charm for classical piano trio.

Through his company **KyG Productions**, Cuban-Dutch pianist **Gustavo Corrales Romero** has been promoting 'the other sound of Latin America' under own management since 2001. After the solo CDs **PALIMPSESTO** (An evolution of the Cuban piano) and **FRESCO** (A wide impression of Latin American classical and contemporary music) and successfully trying out several concert formulas, KyG is on a mission to produce the 3rd CD.

ARIOSO will feature **12 arrangements of traditional Cuban songs** and one original composition for classical piano trio (piano, cello and violin) by Corrales and 5 pieces for piano solo written especially for **ARIOSO** by Brazil-based Cuban composer Yaniel Matos. The fact that violinist Reynaldo Maceo and cellist Douglas Vistel respectively live in Madrid and Berlin makes **ARIOSO** an international collaboration project, with all of the involved components (music, composers and musicians) originating from the Orient of Cuba.

'BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB GOES CLASSICAL'. That's one way of looking at 'ARIOSO'. At the beginning of the 20th century musicians without formal training created songs so beautiful and sophisticated that they are now considered to be classics of Cuban music. Originally sung with accompaniment of a guitar, also sung by trios (two guitars and maracas), Corrales has now translated hits like *'Mariposita de Primavera'* and *'La Bayamesa'* into songs without words.

All the involved artists bring significant experience to the table, all having studied at the 'Superior Institute for the Arts' (Instituto Superior de Arte) in Havana, Cuba, where Corrales and composer Matos graduated. Corrales, Maceo and Vistel all obtained exclusive scholarships to study at the **Tchaikovsky Conservatory** in Moscow, where Corrales was prevented from graduating due to Perestroika, being from a later year than the other two. But not before meeting and playing with Maceo and Vistel, resulting in him writing his arrangements of Cuban golden oldies with them in mind.

Having completed his arrangements in 2014, faced with the challenge of the geographical distance from the two intended musicians, Corrales first recorded a promotional video in 2016 with musicians in The Netherlands to present a taste of ARIOSO. A crowdfunding in 2017 enabled him to do a successful tryout with Maceo and Vistel at Vistel's concert venue in Berlin, resulting in more videos but not the intended CD. The quest to secure the required finances is ongoing.

Corrales is happy, through his arrangements for classical piano trio for ARIOSO, to contribute to the **Cuban repertoires for chamber music and piano solo** and – in the process – to pay a classical homage to the old Cuban 'trova' music tradition presented beautifully by the Buena Vista Social Club before. In addition, the all-mulatto lineup also winks at history by echoing the efforts of a Cuban trio of black musicians who played European classical music in the 19th century.

Corrales and his wife (also his business partner and student), writer-composer-pianist Karen D. Russel de Corrales, want to show that **Latin American classical and contemporary music** is just as worthy of being heard as the European classics and that there is much more to Cuba than salsa, jazz, tobacco and old American cars.

“ARIOSO was designed so that a balance between the academical, the popular traditional and the modern is achieved. The purpose has been to turn these songs into concert pieces. Arranged so that they can be played independently as well as a suite. The original songs were written in a tonal, romantic, very warm and enjoyable musical language. In the arrangements the texture has been made more complex, sometimes varying forms (adding introductions, interludes or codas) and transforming original rhythms. Harmonies of the original music have been left largely intact to preserve the freshness and charm of the songs.”

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GUSTAVO CORRALES ROMERO | piano, arrangements, composition

The Cuban-born Dutch pianist Gustavo Corrales Romero has enjoyed 17 years of professional musical training in the solid tradition of the Russian school for piano since he was 7. Winning a national competition in Cuba at age 18 enabled him to study at the P.I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow for one year. After this he returned to Cuba to complete, at the age of 24, his studies with a **Master Degree in Music**, specializing in Piano at the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA, the Superior Institute for Art) in Havana where he was to stay on as a **professor of Piano and Chamber Music** for three years, during which he completed several post-graduate studies with international guest professors. In 1997, at age 27, he was accepted as a select member of the Cuban National Association for Writers and Artists (UNEAC).

Corrales has a **special passion for contemporary music**. In addition to his annual participation in the International Festival for Contemporary Music in Cuba, in 1997 he co-founded the Association for the Development of Musical Contemporary Art (SODAMC), a **UNESCO-sponsored association** that organized monthly meetings in Havana which included concerts, expositions and conferences, providing a platform for composers, interpreters, musicologists and visual artists; a highly applauded effort that rapidly became a significant part of the Cuban art scene. Corrales performed in all concerts.

Corrales began public performances at the age of 16. Over the years he has acquired a vast amount of podium experience through participation in many national and international festivals and as a concert pianist in South America, the Caribbean and several countries in Europe, especially in The Netherlands where he has been living and working with his wife since 2002. He currently presents himself as the **specialist of classical and contemporary Latin American music** that he is, and has his own production company – KyG Productions – operative informally since 2000, established officially in 2011; producing CDs, books and concerts, with the intention of also offering art.

Besides his **own CD productions** PALIMPSESTO (An evolution of the Cuban piano) and FRESCO (A wide impression of Latin American classical and contemporary music) he has recorded for Cuban radio and television and also features on the CD 'Homenaje' honoring Cuban composer Harold Gramatges in 1997.

In 2007 Corrales obtained the Dutch nationality. In the same year his **debut as a writer**, Los Herederos, written in Spanish, was accepted for publication with great enthusiasm by Ediciones EntreRíos and presented at the Miami Book Fair International. In the meantime Corrales has finished his 2nd book La Ciudad de Los Portales, which is being readied for publication.

REYNALDO MACEO | violin

Reynaldo Maceo was granted a scholarship to study in Russia for artistic merits. Graduated from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow with master Vladimir Malinin he obtained the title '**Master of Fine Arts**' in the category of concert performer and the graduation prize in the specialty of chamber music and quartet **with maestros Dimitri Shebalin and Sergei Petchugin**, respectively members of the prestigious Borodín and Shostakovich quartets.

He collaborated as a soloist, among others, with the Astrakhan chamber orchestra at the Music Festival in Lima (Peru) and the Bach-Vivaldi Festival in the city of Penza (Russia) and recorded for Russian radio and television with the Samara Philharmonic Orchestra. With the symphony orchestra of Yekaterinburg he executed the **Russian premiere** of the violin concert of the famous violinist and Cuban composer José White.

Maceo has performed in several countries: Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, England, Spain, Portugal, Russia, Poland, Morocco, Cuba, Peru, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico etc. He has taught **violin and master classes** organized by the University of Getafe in Madrid and in Cali (Colombia) he was a violin teacher at the Padre Soler conservatory in El Escorial. He has been living in Madrid since 1993 and is a member of the Community of Madrid Orchestra, with which he took part in a concert at **Carnegie Hall** in New York.

Founder and first violin of **Cuarteto Assai**, with which he has performed in prestigious venues throughout Spain and abroad. With this quartet he participated in the recording of the soundtrack of the movie *Carne Tremula* by Spanish director **Pedro Almodóvar**. On 11 April 2006 Cuarteto Assai made its debut in London playing in the prestigious **Wigmore Hall**.

DOUGLAS VISTEL | cello

Having grown up in a **family of musicians** Douglas Vistel began to study the cello at the Conservatorio Esteban Salas in Santiago de Cuba, with teachers Sarvelio Crespo, John Givorkian and Alla Pajomova among others. He studied at the National School of Arts, a student of Alina Neyra, Michail Kustov and Alexander Zhirov. Laureate of the national competitions Alejandro Garcia Caturla and Amadeo Roldán, Vistel received a scholarship to study at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow, where he graduated in 1991 under the tutelage of Prof. Maria Tchaikovskaia. **Semifinalist** of the international competitions Jeunesses Musicales Belgrade and 'P.I.Tchaikovski' in Moscow.

Vistel has extensive experience as a solo cellist in chamber and symphony orchestras and chamber music festivals. Having **worked in almost every musical direction** – from early music to the avant-garde, as well as Latin, pop, rock and jazz – Vistel is the first Cuban cellist to play the 6 solosuites of J.S. Bach in concert. As a composer several of his several chamber music pieces were premiered by him in the chamber concert series of the **New York Philharmonic** in November 2011.

His pedagogical work has included giving courses in cello and chamber music in conservatories in Germany, Spain, Cuba and Mexico. He was also a **judge of the international competitions** 'Gaspar Cassadó' (Spain) and 'Kurt Schwaen' (Germany) and has recorded for Russian television, for the Franco-German channel 'Arte' and for the record label Kreuzberg Records.

Vistel is the founder and artistic director of **VISTÉL'S CelloMusikSalon**, the first concert space in Berlin specializing in music for cello. VISTÉL'S CelloMusikSalon is also the only music hall of its kind in the world.

Operating from this home base and his company CubaKlassik, Vistel's current artistic work focuses on the '**Cello Capriccioso**' Project which employs innovative concepts like private, 'à la carte' and spontaneous concerts to offer its knowledgeable audience a more intimate and intense musical experience, while – at the same time – giving the less experienced public the opportunity to become better acquainted with the music for the cello and deepen their knowledge and enjoyment of the richness of this instrument from the unusual and relaxed perspective of a personal conversation.

YANIEL MATOS | composer

Cuban/Jazz pianist, cellist and composer Yaniel Matos was born in Santiago de Cuba. At 8 he began to study cello and piano at Conservatorio Esteban Salas in Santiago de Cuba till 1994, when he moved to Havana to study Composition. He graduated at the Instituto Superior de Arte with Harold Gramatges and Jose Loyola. Matos has **toured internationally with Issac Delgado, Orlando 'Maraca' Valle, Paulo FG y su elite** among others.

He moved to São Paulo in 2000 and became a member of the Department of Popular Music at Escola Superior de Música da Faculdade Cantareira responsible for the piano related courses. In 2003 he founded **Mani Padme Trio** with Ricardo Mosca and Du Moreira and recorded 'Um dia de chuva' with Red Records, Italy. In 2008 Matos created '**Cuba Jazz Plus**', a contemporary jazz quintet consisting of Cuban jazz musicians.

Other recordings are 'En Movimiento' (2008), 'La Mirada' (**nominated for an Independent Music Award** in 2015) and 'Carabali', featuring songs based on rhythms typical of Santiago de Cuba like French Rumba, Bembé, Conga, and Rumba, partly representative of the African heritage in Cuba through the use of Cuban percussion instruments. In 2016 he was a **judge** at the 15th Independent Music Awards.