

Afro Cuban All Stars - Distinto Diferente (1999)

Written by bluelover

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1 *Distinto, Diferente See All* 2 *Tumbo Palo Cocuye* 3 *Tributo Al Nino Rivera* 4 *Roconciliacion* 5 *Variaciones Sobre un Tema Desconcido* 6 *Al vaiven de mi carreta* 7 *Gandinga, Mondongo y Sandunga* 8 *Huellas del Pasado* 9 *Warariansa* 10 *Homenaje a Martha Valdes* MUSICIANS Yanko Pisaco, trumpet (1-8) Daniel "El Gordo" Ramos, trumpet (1-8) Alejandro Pichardo, trumpet (1, 7, 8) Guajiro Mirabal, trumpet (2-4) Yaure Muniz, trumpet (2-4, 6) Julito Padron, trumpet (7) Alberto "Molote" Martinez, trombone (1, 4-8) Jesus "Aguaje" Ramos, trombone (1, 2, 4-8) Javier Zalba, baritone sax (1, 4) Carlos "Musiquita" Duran, baritone sax (8) Braulio "Babin" Hernandez, tenor sax (10) Orlando "Maracas" Valle, flute (3, 5) Policarpo "Polo" Tamayo, flute (5) Joaquin Oliveros, flute (6) David Alfaro, piano (1-8, 10) Guillermo "Rubalcava" Gonzalez, piano (2) Ruben Gonzalez, piano (5) Frank Emilio Flynn, piano (7) Richardo Munoz, bass (1, 3, 4, 6, 8) Orlando "Cachaito" Lopez, bass (2, 5, 7, 9, 10) Amadito Valdez, timbales (1, 5, 7, 8, 10) Victoriano "Filiberto" Sanchez, timbales (3, 4, 6) Carlos Gonzalez, bongos (1-4, 6, 7, 8, 10) Miguel "Anga" Diaz, congas (1-8) Angel Terry, congas (10) Enrique Lazaga, guiro (1-8, 10) Alejandro Pichardo, maracas (2, 6, 10) Lazaro Villa, claves (8), chorus (1-6, 8) Juan de Marcos, tres, (1-3, 6-9), chorus (1-4, 6, 8), guitar (4, 6) Barbarito Torres, laoud (1, 4, 6) Jesus Ordonez, Julian Corrales, Pablito Mesa, Oman Pedreira, violins (5, 10) Jose Maron, Roberto Herrera, violas (5, 10) Juan Vendera, cello (5, 10) Pedrito Calvo, vocals (1, 4) Fernando Alvarez, Felix Baloy, vocals (1) Teresita Garcia Caturla, vocals (1, 4) Raul Planas, vocals (2) Ignacio "Masacote" Carrillo, vocals (3) Leo Vera, vocals (4) Ibrahim Ferrer, vocals (4, 6) Dennys Martinez, vocals (4), chorus (1-6, 8) Manuel "Puntillita" Licea, vocals (8) Gregorio "Goyo" Hernandez, vocals (9) Omara Portuondo, Lino Borges, vocals (10) Demitro Muniz, chorus (5)

Juan de Marcos González, unsung hero of the Buena Vista Social Club, takes center stage with the release of *Distinto, diferente* ("Unique, different") the forward-looking follow up to his Afro-Cuban All Stars' acclaimed debut album *A Toda Cuba Le Gusta*. González formed the Afro-Cuban All Stars as a multi-generational big band with a mission to explore the island's rich musical heritage and to show the world the diversity, continuity and vitality of Cuban music. The band's Grammy-nominated debut was essentially an homage to the heroes of González's youth: the great singers of the golden age of the fifties. *Distinto, diferente* has a broader scope,

ambitiously paying tribute to the diversity of Cuban music, marrying the past and present. It is also essentially a record for dancing, a hard-hitting affair quite different from World Circuit / Nonesuch's recent Cuban releases.

The new album deploys a variety of contrasting styles including classic son montuno, contemporary timba, swinging big band guajira, Afro-Cuban jazz, danzón, the pure tribal rhythms of abakua, bolero and more. The repertoire is a mixture of González's unique take on Cuban classics and his own compositions including "Reconciliación," a moving plea for Cuban exiles to work together with those who remained on the island. The All Stars' trademark big-band format (four trumpets, two trombones, piano, tres, bass, percussion, and vocals) is at the core of the album's sound, but there is variation with traditional septeto, violin and flute danzón, and voice-and-percussion tracks.

With a cast of over 50 musicians, one of González's aims for the All Stars was for it to act as a launch pad for the careers of other Cuban musicians. He has worked closely with vocalists Ibrahim Ferrer, Manuel "Puntillita" Licea, and Raúl Planas; pianist Rubén González; laoud player Barbarito Torres; trumpeter "Guajiro" Mirabal; and bassist Orlando "Cachaíto" López; all of whom were in the original All Stars line up (and the Buena Vista Social Club). On Distinto, diferente, they return in a different, more contemporary setting.

There was not enough room on the debut album for many of González's musical heroes, but the band was conceived as one of changing personnel, and Distinto, diferente showcases another set of exciting musicians. New additions include the singers Omara Portuondo, Teresa García Caturla (leader of the renowned Cuareto Las d'Aïda), Lino Borges (the bolero star of the early sixties), Fernando Alvarez (ex- Bebo Valdés, Benny Moré), Pedrito Calvo (Los Van Van, Orquesta Revé), and Havana's rising young stars Dennys Martínez (Klimax) and Lío Vera (Irakere, Klimax).

González chose a multi-generational approach for the All Stars to show the continuity of Cuban music but also to create a different edge and energy, combining the experience of the elder musicians with the vitality of a new generation. This aspect is highlighted in Distinto, diferente where the young singers joust with the elder statesmen.

In addition to "Guajiro" Mirabal, the horn soloists include Jesús "Aguaje" Ramos (trombone) and Julito Padrón (trumpet), and the majority of tracks feature the young pianist David Alfaro. There is also an extraordinary trio of flute soloists spanning three generations: "Polo" Tamayo (Ritmo

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Oriental), Joaquín Oliveros (Enrique Jorrín), and Orlando "Maracas" Valle, the rising star of today's scene.

González himself contributes some outstanding tres solos including a tribute to the legendary tres player Niño Rivera. Underpinning and driving the unit are the brilliant percussionists Miguel "Angá" Díaz (congas), Amadito Valdés (timbales), Carlos González (bongos), and Enrique Lazaga (güiro), a true all-star section. --- nonesuch.com

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