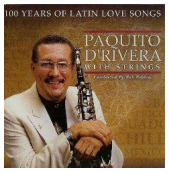
Paquito D'Rivera with Strings - 100 Years of Latin Love Songs (1998)



01. La Morocha (Argentina) 02. Ay Ay Ay (Chile) 03. Tu Mariposa (Columbia) 04. Vereda Tropical (Mexico) 05. Acercate Mas (Cuba) 06. Amor Sin Esperanza (Dominican Republic) 07. Corcovado (Brazil) 08. Sin Tu Carino (Puerto Rico/USA) 09. Amor Sin Medida (Venezuela) 10. Corazon Partio (Worldwide) Personnel: Paquito D'Rivera (soprano & alto saxophones, clarinet); Roberto Perera (harp); Dario Eskenazi (piano); Fareed Haque (acoustic guitar); Aquiles Baez (guitar, cuatro); David Oquendo (guitar); Oscar Stagnaro (bass); Mark Walker (drums); Luis Conte (percussion).

Initiates certainly know that Paquito can let it rip with the best, but don't plop this disc into the player looking for blood & guts; the mood here is about heart & soul. Addressing a program of ten classic Latin American love potions, Paquito is laden with strings—laden, not leaden. Bob Belden conducts the strings as D'Rivera, in an ultimate state of melody, delivers these ten beauties from across Spanish speaking America, from Argentina and Chile to Puerto Rico, Mexico and Venezuela, with layovers in his native Cuba and a nod to the Brazilian Portuguese of Corcovado.

These timeless melodies are rendered on both his more familiar alto saxophone, and his increasingly potent clarinet; the strings never get soppy or overwhelming, and the textures are varied as the orchestra lays out a few times, notably on the Mexican classic "Vereda Tropical." To say that this is superb dinner music or mood music for lovers might ordinarily elicit snickers, but in this case those are indeed accolades and positive attributes of this lovely date. --- Willard Jenkins, jazztimes.com

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