

A close-up, profile photograph of Ray Barretto, a man with curly hair, a beard, and glasses, smiling slightly. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting his face against a dark background.

Ray Barretto Standards Rican-ditioned

with
David Sanchez
Hilton Ruiz
Papo Vazquez
John Benitez
Adam Cruz
Chris Barretto



JOHN BENITEZ

HILTON RUIZ

DAVID SANCHEZ

PAPO VAZQUEZ

RAY BARRETTO

ADAM CRUZ

1. LEAN ON ME *A. Greene / E. Waldman* 8:16
2. TRAV'LIN' LIGHT *J. Mercer / J. Mundy / T. Young* 7:41
3. IVY *H. Carmichael* 4:27
4. SUDDENLY IT'S SPRING *J. Burke / J. V. Heusen* 5:07
5. I HAD THE CRAZIEST DREAM *M. Gordon / H. Warren* 5:27
6. SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR *D. Ellington / B. Strayhorn* 3:46
7. BABY, BABY ALL THE TIME *B. Troup* 6:30
8. BRANDY'S BLUES *R. Barretto* 6:24
9. STRANGE MUSIC *G. Forrest / E. Grieg / R. C. Wright* 4:52

RAY BARRETTO congas on tracks 1 - 5, 7, 8,
scat vocals on track 9

HILTON RUIZ piano

DAVID SANCHEZ tenor sax on tracks 1, 3, 4, 7, 9

PAPO VAZQUEZ trombone on tracks 2, 4, 5, 7, 8

On *Standards Rican-ditioned*, Ray Barretto presents a straight-ahead project with musicians of Puerto Rican descent well versed in jazz. The objective was to show that they could play in an authentic style of the old Blue Note, Riverside and Prestige dates of the 1950s and '60s, in song selections from the "Great American Songbook". Recorded in December 2005, only a few weeks prior to his untimely death, it is the stunning yet gentle farewell by the great conguro—no doubt a milestone in the musical life of Ray Barretto.

— George Rivera

CHRIS BARRETTO alto sax on tracks 2, 8,
congas on track 9.

JOHN BENITEZ bass on tracks 1- 5, 7 - 9

ADAM CRUZ drums on tracks 1- 5, 7- 9

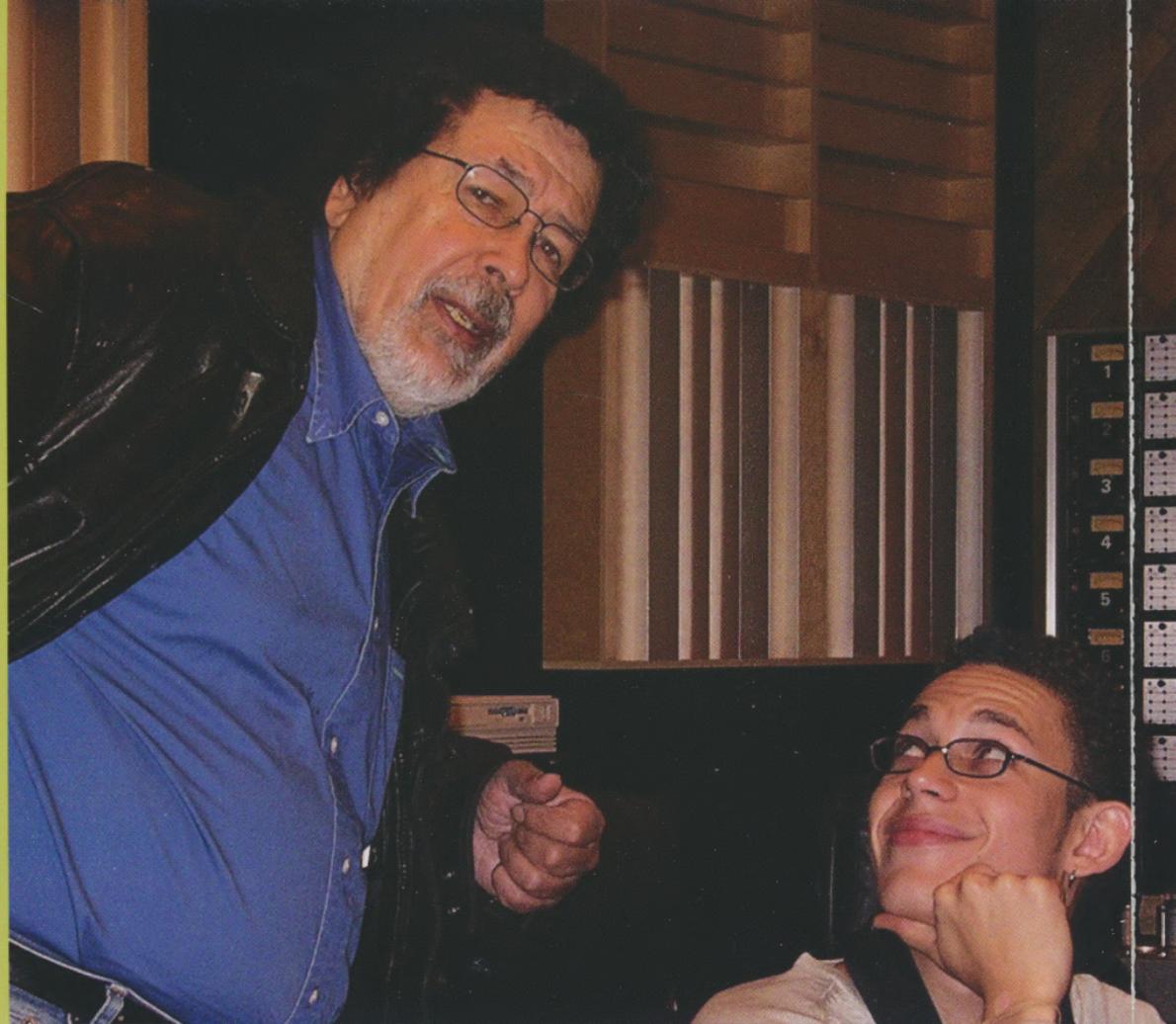


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The term "Latin Jazz" is a misnomer in **Ray Barretto's** estimation. The distinction between "Latin" and "Jazz" makes it either one or the other. It is one thing to play an instrumental mambo or guajira, and another to play in a swing style utilizing Latin percussion. It's either "Latin", or "Jazz"; there is no in-between, as far as Ray is concerned. As pianist/arranger **Hilton Ruiz** puts it, "it's either ketchup or mustard". This is a point of much debate wherever this music is heard. It is out of this discourse that the idea for **Standards Rican-ditioned** was borne.

As Hilton recalls, "Ray called me last year with a concept in mind. He wanted to record a straight-ahead project with a group of musicians of Puerto Rican descent who were well versed in the jazz idiom." He explained that the objective of this project was to showcase the versatility of these musicians. Furthermore, he wanted to show that they could play in an authentic style reminiscent of the old Blue Note, Riverside and Prestige dates of the 1950s and 60s. "Ray had a long history with these labels and he knew what he wanted."

Hilton signed on to the project and was asked to work on the arrangements. "Ray came to my house with all the tunes he wanted to record. I was familiar with a few of them, but Ray knew exactly what he wanted to do with each of the tunes," he recalled. Once he was on board, it was time to put the rest of the band together.

Ray called on some of the musicians he held in high esteem such as saxophonist **David Sanchez**, trombonist **Papo Vazquez**, bassist **John Benitez**, and drummer **Adam Cruz**. Despite their busy schedules, they all signed on to the project without any reservations. He also features his twenty-year-old son **Chris Barretto** on alto sax on two tracks, whose performance according to recording engineer **Randy Crafton** brought Ray much joy. "He was so pleased with Chris' playing on this project that I thought he was going to call everyone he knew, and play his solo for them over the phone", recalled Randy.

Trombonist Papo Vazquez is the only musician on this recording who had previously worked with Ray. He worked with Ray's Latin band, and left, with his blessing, to join Ray Charles' band. "For many years, I have known Ray Barretto to be a great musician who takes pride in his work. I knew something good was going to happen with the line-up he was putting together, and I wanted in.

There was no doubt in my mind about wanting to play on this project," he stated.

On December 14, 2005, the group got together at Kaleidoscope Sound Studios and began recording the nine tunes included on **Standards Rican-ditioned**. Randy recalls, "the time leading up to the session was a little tense, since scheduling was difficult, but Ray was so committed to the idea that he did what it took to keep it all together. He warned me before the session that it may be a little chaotic, but to stay with him. He was right, and I think I did."

"Each player had very specific concerns about 'their sound', as they are accustomed to their own record dates where their sound is the focus of the recording. Ray's instructions to me were to make each of them happy, and worry about how to put it all together later. We did that, and everyone was happy, as the general mood in the studio was very upbeat. Ray chose to be in the room with the musicians, and serve as conductor/music director for the basic tracking, and add his conga parts later. His primary concern with this record was as a bandleader, and not as a conga virtuoso. He certainly had nothing to prove in that category."

Bassist John Benitez adds, "the recording of this project was extraordinary. I was amazed to see this percussionist thinking in terms of melody and harmony, and not percussion. He had this concept, but still afforded us the room to stretch out. He got the best out of all of us. He was truly a great producer."

With the exception of **Brandy's Blues**, an original composed by Ray and named after his wife, all tunes were culled from the "Great American Songbook". The repertoire was representative of the music Ray heard over the airwaves during the 1930's, '40's and '50's, music that had captured his imagination. Ray drew inspiration from the music of Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn **Something to Live For**, Billie Holiday **Trav'lin' Light**, Nat King Cole **Baby, Baby All the Time** and **I Had the Craziest Dream**, Frank Sinatra **Suddenly It's Spring** and **Strange Music**, Harry Belafonte **Lean on Me**, and vocalist Vaughn Monroe **Ivy**.

The song selections as a whole demonstrate Ray's staggering and encyclopedic knowledge of the by-ways of this classic American repertoire. An example, the ballad **Suddenly It's Spring** was performed by a young Frank Sinatra in the early 1940s, but he never officially recorded it. Ray possessed a rare live

radio broadcast check tape of it – which was carefully transcribed by pianist Hilton Ruiz for the present recording.

Strange Music is a tune Frank Sinatra recorded early in his career. This is the only track Ray did not get to completely finish before his untimely death. On January 15, 2006, the day Ray was scheduled to lay down the conga track, he was taken to the hospital after having suffered a heart attack. As fate would have it, he would never return to the studio. What adds extra poignancy to this recording is that, after Ray's death, his son Chris stepped in as associate producer, overdubbed the missing conga track, and finished the mix and mastering. Ray is featured on this track on a scat vocal, which was originally just a reference track intended to mark the position where he wanted to later overdub a conga solo. After listening to the track with Ray's scat vocals, the decision was made to include it as part of the tune.

A surprise for many of Ray's fans may be his deep affinity to one of the earliest Afro-American music genres: the blues. The present recording features two, his own hard-swinging **Brandy's Blues** which would have sounded right at home on an early 1950s Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers LP, and the deliciously funky slow Blues **Baby, Baby All the Time**.

"Standards Rican-ditioned" is an album Ray wanted to record for as long as I can remember. It was something that we spoke about almost daily over the last five years of his life. It was his mission in life. It's amazing how in the end everything fell in place for this musical warrior. On January 13, 2006, a month after Ray recorded this album, he was honored with the National Endowment of the Arts Jazz Masters Award. It is an honor that has been bestowed on only 86 musicians and music industry figures thus far. They say that death is a debt we must all discharge. This debt Ray has now finally paid, but his musical legacy will forever continue to flourish. There is no doubt that "Standards Rican-ditioned" will be viewed as a milestone in the musical life of Ray Barretto.

— George Rivera

Recorded at Kaleidoscope Sound Studio. **Engineer** : Randy Crafton. **Produced by** Ray Barretto.

Associate Producer: Chris Barretto. **Mastering by** Allan Tucker, Foothill Digital. **Photography** :

Jos Knaeperen (cover), Randy Crafton (session photos). **Package Design**: 3+Co. **Executive Producers** : Roger Davidson and Joachim "Jochen" Becker, Becker Davidson Entertainment L.L.C.

Dedicated to my fans and friends all over the world. To my Puerto Rican brothers: with this project, we have shown the world that we are undeniably woven into the fabric of "the American Jazz Art Form." You have given me your friendship, talent, musicianship, honor and respect. For this I thank you. To Joachim Becker, you have helped me realize a dream. To Randy Crafton at Kaleidoscope Sound, my most profound thanks for your amazing engineering skills and musical insight. Our kinship is forever engraved.

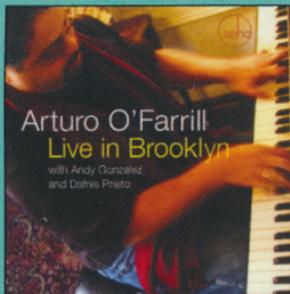
To all the musicians everywhere who have shared my stage, studio, bus, plane, car. It has been my honor to share with you, teach you, learn from you, laugh with you and create with you. Music was my life. Thanks for sharing my life. For my friends George Rivera, Harry Sepulveda, Bob Sancho, it is my honor to call you friends. To Aida, Miriam, Shelley and Diana, for all the Christmases, Thanksgivings, legal advice and macaroons. The last three decades would not have been the same without you. My son Chris, you have fulfilled my every dream. I love you. To my wife Brandy, Mama, I love you. — Ray Barretto

Randy: in his world of quiet, you provided the only "Strange Music" Ray would listen to or hear outside of Chris playing by his bedside at his time of death. For this, I am deeply grateful.

Papa, I'm here. Love, — Brandy



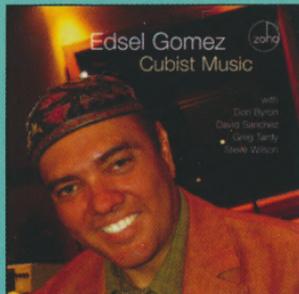




Arturo O'Farrill
Live in Brooklyn

with Andy Gonzalez
and Dafnis Prieto

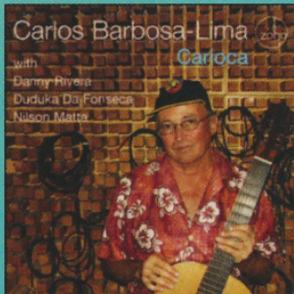
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Edsel Gomez
Cubist Music

with
Ezra Bayon
David Sanchez
Gerry Tandy
Stevie Wilson

ZOHO ZM 200601



Carlos Barbosa-Lima
Carioca

with
Danny Friesse
Duduka Da Fonseca
Nilson Matta

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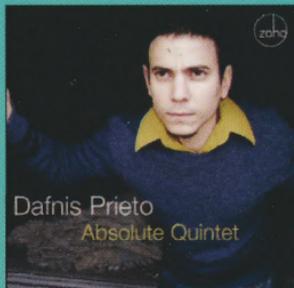
Duduka Da Fonseca
Quintet
Samba Jazz in Black & White

ZOHO ZM 200603



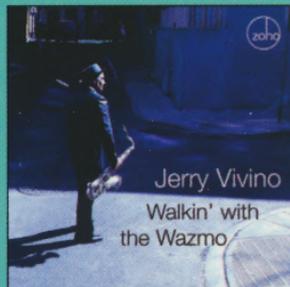
Harvie S
Funky Cha

ZOHO ZM 200605



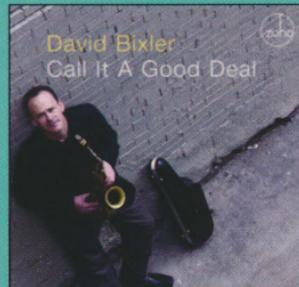
Dafnis Prieto
Absolute Quintet

ZOHO ZM 200606



Jerry Vivino
Walkin' with
the Wazmo

ZOHO ZM 200607



David Bixler
Call It A Good Deal

ZOHO ZM 200608



Harri Stojka
A Tribute to
Gypsy Swing

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Ray Barretto
Standards
Rican-ditioned



1. Lean On Me 8:16
2. Trav'lin' Light 7:41
3. Ivy 4:27
4. Suddenly It's Spring 5:07
5. I Had the Craziest Dream 5:27
6. Something To Live For 3:46
7. Baby, Baby All the Time 6:30
8. Brandy's Blues 6:24
9. Strange Music 4:52



ZM 200610

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