

About El Eco

EL ECO, one of the pioneers of Latin jazz in Boston, is led by Argentinean drummer-composer Guillermo Nojehowicz. Their appearance at the Dominican Republic Jazz Festival marks the debut of Puerto de Buenos Aires 1933, their long-awaited new CD just released by Zoho Music, a record that jazz vocalist Luciana Souza has called “beautiful and important.”

A drummer who plays with the ear of a composer, Guillermo wrote most of the material on this new release. It was inspired by his grandmother’s journey out of Warsaw in 1933, a trip that spared her and her small son from the Holocaust, when so many in their community later perished.

EL ECO’s elegant fusion of Brazilian-Argentinean jazz digs deep into straight-ahead jazz, punctuated by a deep respect for the complexity of Latin and Afro-Cuban rhythms darkened, occasionally, by echoes of Piazzola.

In addition to Guillermo (Claudio Roditi, Donny McCaslin), the band’s members include Brazilian pianist Helio Alves (Joe Henderson, Yo-Yo Ma), Argentinean bassist Fernando Huergo (Antonio Sanchez, Dave Liebman), Italian saxophonist Marco Pignataro (Eddie Gomez, George Garzone), and vocalist Kim Nazarian (New York Voices). On Puerto de Buenos Aires 1933, they are joined by Grammy award winning guest trumpeter Brian Lynch (Eddie Palmieri), as well as Italian accordionist Roberto Cassan, who sadly passed away shortly after this recording.

Guillermo wrote the material for the band’s earlier CD, Two Worlds, immersed in the chacarera of Argentina, the candombe of Uruguay, and the samba of Brazil. One piece – Chacarera de Paloma – was dedicated to a friend who became one of the “desaparecidos” lost in Argentina’s dirty war. Another tune – Uruguay – was written as a tribute to the place where he spent many summers.

Of that record, Fernando Gonzalez wrote, “If the results sound organic, lived-in, it is because they reflect a life experience that is not just bilingual but bicultural. This is music from a place with blurred boundaries: a place of memories, echoes, and startling newness.”

In addition to being featured on NPR’s Jazz Set, EL ECO has performed at the Regattabar and at Scullers Jazz Club in Boston, the Blue Note in New York City, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Festival performances have included Telluride Jazz Celebration, where the line-up featured Herbie Hancock and Terence Blanchard; Freihofer’s Jazz Festival in Saratoga Springs, produced by the legendary George Wein; the Montreal Jazz Festival; the Buenos Aires Jazz Festival; and the Curaçao North Sea Jazz Festival, where the line-up featured Jon Faddis and Richard Bona.

EL ECO guest artists have included Claudio Roditi (trumpet), Luciana Souza (vocals), Romero Lubambo (guitar), Donny McCaslin (sax), Hendrik Meurkens (harmonica), Airto Moreira (percussion), Osmany Paredes (piano), Nando Michelin (piano), Jay Ashby (trombone, percussion), Diego Urcola (trumpet), Avishai Cohen (trumpet), John Lockwood (acoustic bass), Doug Johnson (piano), and Bruno Raberg (acoustic bass).

Past EL ECO band members have included Olga Roman (vocals), Dario Eskenazi (piano), Rachel Z. Hakim (piano), Alain Mallet (piano), Yorai Oron (bass), Philip Hamilton (vocals), Naoki Matsuura (bass) and Lionel Girardeau (bass).