"Trombone virtuoso and innovative composer, Papo combines the best of jazz and Latin music to create a genre that is unique and wild. He's redefined Latin jazz!"
-- Michael Brecker

- 12 brand new original tunes including one created with film maker Bill Lee, and several with Roberto Cepeda, son of the legendary patriarch of the guardian family in Puerto Rico of traditional bomba and plena.
-- Miami New Times

FOR FANS OF: Giovanni Hidalgo, Tito Puente, Eddie Palmieri, Andy Gonzalez, Manny Oquendo, Chico O'Farrill

File under: Afro-Caribbean jazz, World, Jazz, LatinJazz Puerto Rico, Nuyorican jazz

"This great trombonist is stunning in his ability to express himself in so many rhythmic traditions. Papo’s musical imagination allows him to create marvelous lines of improvisation. His musicianship allows him to make any band sound better. Bravo Papo!" -- Phil Schapp

"In the next 10 to 20 years, musicians like Papo Vazquez will be performing a new form of Latin music. Papo is a pivot point in this new music for America and for the rest of the world." -- Eric Figueroa, Batucumbele

The celebratory mosaic of CARNIVAL IN SAN JUAN has been over 25 years in the making. From 1976 to 1978, Angel "Papo" Vazquez was one of the strongest instrumental voices (along with Jerry and Andy Gonzalez, Steve Berrios, and many others) to be heard at the historic Nuyorican Village cultural art center on 7th Street and Avenue A in Manhattan. This multicultural musical magic continued to be conjured up until the early 1980s at the Soundscape sessions produced by Verma Gillis.

Papo moved in 1980 from New York to Puerto Rico, where he lived until 1985 and helped to establish and develop the BATACUMBELE ("KNEEL TO THE DRUM") group. The four original core members of this trail-blazing ensemble -- Vazquez, Cachete, Eddie Guagua, and Eric Figueroa were all salsa refugees from the Luis "Perico" Ortiz Band. By 1984, Papo was ready to lead his first "Bomba Jazz" group in San Juan. This band of pirates included Giovanni Hidalgo, Anthony Carillo, Luis Cepeda, Jimmy Rivera, Eric Figueroa, Jose Gamse, Hector Veneros, Juanico Torres, and Luis Quevedo.

As producer and musicologist Rene Lopez has insightfully observed, "At the age of 45, Papo Vazquez today already represents a most important link to the music of three decades -- the 1960s, the 1970s, the 1980s -- especially per force of his collaborations with musicians such as Tito Puente, Eddie Palmieri, Andy Gonzalez, Manny Oquendo, Steve Berrios, Chico O’Farrill, Milton Cardona, Mario Rivera, and others who were in the forefront of maintaining the tradition of the music. Born and raised in the "Badlands" of Philadelphia, Papo is a first-generation Puerto Rican with very strong ties to the traditional music of Puerto Rico. He is definitely one of the best contemporary arrangers of Afro-Caribbean jazz, the first to fully and naturally integrate the bomba and plena into American jazz."

This album includes appearances from: Bill Lee, Tito Cepeda, Arturo O’Farrill, Milton Cardona, Willie Williams, John Benitez, Horacio Hernandez, Roberto Cepeda, Joe Gonzalez, Fred McFarlane, Victor Jones, Roberto Cepeda, Mario Rivera, Ivan Renta, Carlos Henriquez, Dafnis Prieto and others.

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