

# Jazz Journal

December 2015

## BOBBY MEDINA & THE COSMOPOLITAN POPS ORCHESTRA

### BETWEEN WORLDS: SYMPHONIC LATIN JAZZ

(1) *Libertango*; (2) *Echoes Of Cordoba*; (3) *Bopticos*; (4) *Paraiso*; (1) *Forever My Love*; (5) *Tale Of The Gypsies*; (6) *Calzada Del Cerro*; *My Dream*; (7) *Power Serge*; (1) *La Bikina*; (2) *Tulum*; (1) *Black Orfeus-Canto De Ossanha* (63.47)

Bobby Medina (t. flh. acn, clapping); Guto Lucena (ts, ss, f, pandeiro); Eric Verlinde (p, clapping); Pablo Elorza (elb, b, clapping); Santiago Hernandez (d, pc); Francisco "Junior" Medina (pc); Orchestra Buenos Aires; Orchestra Seattle plus (1) Gustavo Bergalli (t); (2) Gustavo Barragan (g); (3) Bill Anthony (tb); (4) Brian Nova (elg); (5) Darren Motamedy (ss); (6) Mario Hernandez Osorio (v); (7) Nathaniel Schleimer (f). Buenos Aires & Seattle January & February 2104.

[bobbymedina.com](http://bobbymedina.com)

★★★★★

The Seattle-based Medina, whose family roots are Mexican and North American, gave one of the most energetic yet pleasingly varied concerts at this year's Ystad, Sweden festival. A big, clear and attractive sound and a corresponding capacity for melodic phrasing distinguish his playing throughout. On the classic Mexican piece *La Bikina*, played as a lilting waltz, he switches effortlessly from flugelhorn to accordion; his lyricism is also to the fore on the lovely ballad *Forever My Love*. Beautifully recorded, the core sextet, various top-notch guests and two classical orchestras offer a freshly conceived journey into and across worlds both Latin and classical, funky and upbeat, swinging and reflective: witness the widely conceived and beautifully delivered *My Dream*.

The sub-title Symphonic Latin Jazz should not be misconstrued: there's nothing overwrought or extraneous here. The writing for strings is incisive throughout, meshing well with the often blazingly affirmative work of the core sextet and various guests: hear, e.g., Mario Osorio-Hernandez's vocals on the stomping *Calzada Del Cerro*, Gustavo Bergalli's trumpet on *Libertango* or Guto Lucena's soprano saxophone and flute on *Black Orfeus-Canto De Ossanha*. Imaginative arrangements from, e.g., Medina himself, Lucena, Eric Verlinde, Pablo Elorza and Spain's Imma Galiot feature voicings of many

a shifting figure and accent: sample the legato yearning and pizzicato snap in Astor Piazzolla's *Libertango*, the taut, flamenco-fuelled *Echoes Of Cordoba*, the bebop-fired *Bopticos* or the flowing fusion shuffle which drives Medina's joyous *Tale Of The Gypsies* – the last one of many "feel-good" tracks here, including the staccato-sparked *Tulum*. The music is as sensuous and immediate in impact as it is structurally arresting and poetically satisfying – and as such, totally recommended.

Michael Tucker