

Legal Debate on Using Boastful Rap Lyrics as a Smoking Gun



MUSIC REVIEW
A Bit of Beethoven in a Mix of Modern



Minnesota Orchestra Conductor Returns ... For Now

Tweets About Music to Get a Billboard Chart

MUSIC

MUSIC | MUSIC REVIEW

Jazz Brimming With Ideas

Danilo Pérez Celebrates Panama at Jazz Standard

By NATE CHINEN FEB. 7, 2014

EMAIL

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

SAVE

MORE



Danilo Pérez began his early set at the Jazz Standard on Thursday night with a busily efficient overture, laying out many of his themes and protocols for the ensuing hour. Within the first minute of the piece, “Rediscovery of the South Sea,” there was an intriguing bramble of push-pull tensions between bass, violin and percussion; a more spacious motif that Mr. Pérez unhurriedly teased out at the piano; and a hale-sounding Yoruban chant by Roman Díaz, providing his own punctuation on a [batá drum](#).

The evening’s program had been adapted from “Panama 500,” Mr. Pérez’s highly plotted, superarticulate, breezily ambitious new album ([Mack Avenue](#)). A distillation of ideas developed over roughly the last 15 years — mingling elements of classical form, jazz flexibility and Latin-American folk melody — it’s impressive for both its design and its execution, and for the strong implication that those two qualities are inextricable, even indivisible.



Danilo Pérez with John Patitucci on bass and Adam Cruz at the Jazz Standard. Richard Perry/The New York Times

Mr. Pérez built the album around the expressive rapport of two longtime rhythm sections: one featuring the bassist Ben Street and the drummer Adam Cruz, members of his working trio; and the other featuring the bassist John Patitucci and the drummer Brian Blade, his fellow travelers in [the Wayne Shorter Quartet](#).

Mr. Patitucci and Mr. Cruz were in the rotation on Thursday, along with Mr. Díaz and Alex Hargreaves, a prepossessing young violinist and former student of Mr. Pérez. (For the rest of this run, and a tour that continues on to Washington, Boston and Europe, the band’s bassist will be Mr. Street.)

There were a few rough edges in this opening set, but the players showed an impressive mastery of the material, which often wriggled free of stable definitions. Mr. Pérez’s trademark is ensemble writing rich with incident and perpetually shifting gears; he rarely gives anyone a chance to exhale. Mr. Patitucci was pushed especially hard, with bass lines that functioned not only as an anchor but also as a voice in chattering counterpoint with the piano.

The melting-pot dynamic had some historical basis: Mr. Pérez named

“Panama 500” in tribute to the discovery of his native country by Spanish explorers half a millennium ago. It wouldn’t be a stretch to call the album Part 3 of a trilogy, the others being “Motherland” (Verve), from 2000, and [“Providencia”](#) (Mack Avenue), from 2010.

Few jazz artists of his stature have held to such a specific cultural mission, on and off the stage. Though he runs the [Berklee Global Jazz Institute](#) in Boston, Mr. Pérez maintains an educational foundation in Panama City. He founded the [Panama Jazz Festival](#), which just concluded its 11th season under his direction. This month a Danilo Pérez Jazz Club will open in the American Trade Hotel in Casco Viejo, the city’s historic district, with his input.










The main pitfall in some of his new music, including the album’s title track, is a tendency to crowd too many ideas into the frame, sifting through them as if by compulsion. This became less of an issue over the course of the set, during a pair of compact trio expeditions, “Gratitude” and “Panama Viejo.”

And in the closer, which Mr. Pérez announced as “Chocolito,” the ensemble hit its deepest groove, in a polyrhythmic cadence that cycled between five and six beats in a bar. Rogério Boccato joined in on tambourine, and for a good while Mr. Pérez managed to get the crowd clapping a syncopated pattern, making this feel less like showmanship than some kind of communion.

Danilo Pérez performs through Sunday at the Jazz Standard, 116 East 27th Street, Manhattan, 212-576-2232, [jazzstandard.net](#).

A version of this review appears in print on February 8, 2014, on page C5 of the New York edition with the headline: Jazz Brimming With Ideas. Order Reprints | Today's Paper | Subscribe

MOST EMAILED

1. [Op-Ed | Mark Bittman: Butter Is Back](#) 
2. [Nicholas Kristof: A Nation of Takers?](#) 
3. [The New Old Age: A Quiet 'Sea Change' in Medicare](#) 
4. [DealBook: Pitfalls of Reverse Mortgages May Pass to Borrower's...](#) 
5. [Errol Morris: The Certainty of Donald Rumsfeld \(Part 1\)](#) 
6. [Thomas L. Friedman: Putin and the Laws of Gravity](#) 
7. [Literary City, Bookstore Desert](#) 
8. [Today's Editorials: Giving Up on 4-Year-Olds](#)
9. [Op-Ed Contributor: Why I'm Jealous of My Dog's Insurance](#) 
10. [Well: Exercising for Healthier Eyes](#) 

Advertisement

2014 Best Skin Tighteners

skincaresearch.com/FaceLifting

An Unbiased Review List of The Top Performing Skin Tighteners In 2014

Lumosity Brain Games

lumosity.com

Train memory and attention with scientific brain games.

SITE INDEX

NEWS

World
U.S.
Politics
New York
Business
Technology
Science
Health
Sports
Education
Obituaries
Today's Paper
Corrections

OPINION

Today's Opinion
Op-Ed Columnists
Editorials
Contributing Writers
Op-Ed Contributors
Opinionator
Letters
Sunday Review
Taking Note
Room for Debate
Public Editor
Video: Opinion

ARTS

Today's Arts
Art & Design
ArtsBeat
Books
Dance
Movies
Music
N.Y.C. Events Guide
Television
Theater
Video Games
Video: Arts

LIVING

Automobiles
Crosswords
Dining & Wine
Education
Fashion & Style
Health
Home & Garden
Jobs
Magazine
N.Y.C. Events Guide
Real Estate
T Magazine
Travel
Weddings & Celebrations

LISTINGS & MORE

Classifieds
Tools & Services
Times Topics
Public Editor
N.Y.C. Events Guide
TV Listings
Blogs
Cartoons
Multimedia
Photography
Video
NYT Store
Times Journeys
Subscribe
Manage My Account

 **Home Delivery**  **Digital Subscriptions**  **Mobile Applications**  **Email Newsletters**

 **Alerts**

[Gift Subscriptions](#) [Corporate Subscriptions](#) [Education Rate](#) [Customer Care](#) [Crosswords](#) [Replica Edition](#) [International New York Times](#)

© 2014 The New York Times Company | [Privacy](#) | [Terms of Service](#)

[Site Map](#) | [Help](#) | [Site Feedback](#)