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Janio Abreu: Cuba is a Source of Inspiration

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With a certain scent of virtuosity and concert, Janio Abreu and his band are involved in the activities for the 34<sup>th</sup> Jazz Plaza Festival.

«Every year more foreign artists come and they are interested in playing in Cuba», said the young composer, arranger and multi-instrumentalist, in an exclusive interview with CubaSi, and he added: «they come and they even pay for everything just to perform in the Festival and drink from the sources of Cuban music».

As for the participation of Janio Abreu and Aires de Concierto in the Havana appointment of jazz, he told us: «We've had the opportunity to play with Dave Weckl, Grammy award winner, drummer for Chick Corea for many years, and he has come to play with my band, Janio Abreu and Aires de Concierto, but to play my music, something incredible I never dreamt of, but he preferred to play our music, and said that he wanted to steal away the essence of all the rhythms we have and that is what we do».

For the talented musician who moves from clarinet to Sax like fish in the water, one of the main attractions of Jazz Plaza for the foreign musicians «it's about that, they see Cuba as a source of inspiration and a rough diamond; they want to drink from that source and memorize all the secrets of our rhythms and culture».

Undoubtedly it's also a space of growth for Cuban creators: «We Cubans have a habit, and that is we record a disk and in the studio we change many things, and Weckl heard the album, read the scores I sent him, listened to the changes made and he himself rewrote them, and when I was about to explain the changes to him, he already had them on writing, that is, it's a great level of seriousness and professionalism regarding music».

Aires de Concierto will also be presented together with Victor Goines. On this project Janio commented: «He was my teacher in the United States, he is member of the Lincoln Center Big Band and a personal friend. I already recorded a DVD with him under Bis Music record house named ***Our Musical Inheritance***, and we will be at the Jazz Café on the 18<sup>th</sup> and at Cervantes Ward on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m., where another DVD will also be

recorded with Bis Music.

«The first album was named ***Our Musical Inheritance*** because the Cuban rhythms are present, his music versioned with Cuban rhythms and my music, of course, based on Cuban rhythms: there are different rhythms, nengon, pilon, changüi, and in this next album we will include mambo, danzón, chachacha...»

What does the Jazz Plaza mean? It seems a simple question for Janio Abreu: «It's a very enriching experience for us and, especially it spurs us to keep on working so that now that there's so much influence of other music, let's see the worth of ours, of cultivating it us who have running through our blood, for the new generations».

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