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From GramophoneJazz Good CD Guide 1: (By Dave Gelly)

Terry Seabrook – Cubana Bop

Can't Stop Now Seabrook (p); Raoul D'Olivera, Matt Holland (t); Joe Robinson (ts, ss); Bobby Wellins (ts); Dave BarnaM (b); Tristan Banks, Satin Singh, Gareth Stevens, Sewanu TJ James Adekoye William (perc) TSM (E) CBCDI (72 minutes). Recorded 1995.

Seabrook's Cubana Bop is an exciting and highly original Latin band. The rhythms are as nifty as once could hope for but, in place of the customary endless montuno, Seabrook and his musicians have devised a marvellous variety of harmonic and textural effects. He was lucky in being able to call upon Bobby Wellins as guest soloist, who contributes some memorable solos in his inimitable, plaintive tone. It says a great deal for the strength of the band that he fits happily into the proceedings rather than dominating them. Raoul D'Olivera, formerly of Wham! and other pop extravaganzas, is without doubt one of the finest lead trumpeters in Europe, especially in a Latin context, and the ensemble crackles under his leadership. The growth of Latin music in Britain over the past decade has been quite remarkable. From pedestrian beginnings it has increased in skill and confidence to the point where a band like Cubana Bop is contributing something new and exciting to the idiom.

The Story so Far

Terry Seabrook's Cubana Bop

Montreux Jazz Label TCB 03072

These recordings prove just how far Latin music has come in this country in recent years. These are not just Hawaiian shirt-clad aficionados spicing up their normal repertoire with "a bit of Latin". They have mastered the language to the point where they can invent and expand within those forms, be it Latin-jazz or salsa and bestow upon their respective genres their own unique slant.

Cubana Bop's second album features largely original material; (nine tracks by pianist /arranger /leader Seabrook and one *Mi Tres Son* by bassist Dave Barnard). At times the band fondly recalls Horace Silver's blues over a Latin

groove vibe, but given Tristan Banks's well-judged use of the drumset and timbal, leaving respectful space for the afrocuban conga toques of Sating Singh (check the incendiary *Baila* and *Our Man in Havana*), we realise we are in a more authentic latin mode. At other times the band approaches a familiar latin-jazz sound, but seems always to steer clear of the bland and predictable often found in that genre, putting together contrasting themes, changing the mood and rhythmic feeling when not expected and generally playing with taste as well as fire. *The Story So Far* alternates between AfroCuban 6/8 and swing time in such a way that it's difficult to find the join. Then you realise that the two-time feels have the same origin. It may have been done before but not quite in this way. The funky Tower of Power treatment of Lee Morgan's

Sidewinder is another case in point of two styles being merged (but carried through musically, not just so that it reads well in a press soundbite) and works brilliantly. A beautiful album and very highly recommended. Contact www.cubanabop.com

Jimmy le Messurier

JAZZ

CUBANA BOP *The Story So Far* (TCB 03072) With this impressive second CD, pianist Terry Seabrook's Cubana Bop emerges as one of Europe's top Latin bands. The brass is simply phenomenal.

BIG BILL BROONZY *Trouble In Mind* (Spotlite SPJ-CD 900) Broonzy was the first genuine blues artist to appear in Britain. He packed clubs and concert halls on repeated visits throughout the 1950s. These 24 tracks, recorded live in Nottingham, convey the essence of this amiable, accomplished and much-loved man. DAVE GELLY

To order **Cubana Bop** for **£13.99** or **Broonzy** for **£6.99**, each plus **99p** p&p, call **0800 3168 171**

ALEX WILSON'S ANGLO-CUBANO
Anglo-Cubano (Candle/Big City BCCD-79205)
CUBANA BOP
The Story So Far (TCB - 03072)

Afro-Cuban jazz is hotter than a raw tamale in London right now, a phenomenon that happens in cycles. The *Buena Vista Social Club* movie has probably ignited the latest explosion of interest, but the blue touch-paper had been smouldering for years. London likes a bit of Latin, and has done so ever since the Fifties, when Pérez Prado's band topped the UK charts with a fruity mambo ('Cherry Pink And Apple Blossom White') and Edmundo Ros and his muchachos slipped strict-tempo salsa to radio listeners every week. Nothing changes. Latino music is still the world's most danceable sound, with

a truly infectious beat and a macho crispness that techno-thud lacks.

The dance rink at last month's Salsa 2000 outdoor festival was packed, the clubs are offering salsa dance-classes and new bands are forming everywhere. Wise fans, however, will aim for established groups who know the score. Snowboy and The Latin Section, Robin Jones's King Salsa, Geoff Castle's Paz and Steve Rubie's Samara all have a head start, plus one or two Latin-American ringers in their ranks. So too do the two bands whose new albums are featured here.

Both are led by snappy jazz pianists who write most of their own material and all the arrangements. Both studied in the USA and appreciate authenticity. Terry Seabrook's guests include timbales star 'Pucho' Brown,

while Wilson recorded half of his tracks in Havana with local musicians. Both albums gleam with freshness. The ensemble playing is flawless, the rhythms pulsate with power and the solos are strong.

Wilson's line-up includes trumpeter Paul Jayasinha, tenorist Paul Booth and singers Ronald Infante and Lauren Dalrymple. Seabrook boasts trumpeters Raul da Silva and Gary Kavanagh plus tenorists Joe Robinson and Ian Price.

You can catch Cubano Bop at the Ealing jazz festival (Sat 5 Aug), Anglo-Cubano at the Sierra Leone benefit at Subterania (Sun 13 Aug) and King Salsa at St Christopher's Place (Thur 10 Aug). See Listings. Take a Spanish phrasebook and you could even find yourself singing along.

JACK MASSARIK

CUBANA BOP

THE STORY SO FAR

(1) *The Prologue*; (2) *Baila*; (1) *Detour*; *The Story So Far*; (2) *The Sidewinder*; (1) *Our Man In Havana*; *Descent*; (8) *Mi Tres Son*; *No Return*; (1) *Grooving High*; *You Can Take It Or Leave It*; *Eleggua Ago*; *The Epilogue* (56.01)

Terry Seabrook (leader, p); Ian Price (ts); Gary Kavanagh, Raul D'Olivera (t); Dave Barnard (b); Tristan Banks (d, tim); Satin Singh (cga, per). Guests on various tracks: Pucho (tim); Eddie Pazant (as); Joe Robinson (ts); Kico Cowan (f); Omar Lopez Valle (t); Paul Taylor (tb); Charlotte Glasson (bar); Lino Rochas, Veronica Makhemele, Bill Bland (v); Ramon Vallejo, Pat Cameron, Ronald Thomas (v, bta drum). (1) Bexley, October, 1998. (2) Bromley, 1996

(TCOB Records 03072)

This is Cubana Bop's second album and as well as the band's regulars the line-up also includes several guest musicians, the most notable of which is US timbalero Pucho along with his sideman, the altoist Eddie Pazant. In addition, UK Latin percussionist and bandleader Snowboy lent his producing talents to the project which further adds to the excellence of the music.

Pianist Terry Seabrook has contributed the lion's share of the repertoire and there are some fine charts among them. *Baila*, *Detour* and *The Story*, the trio of pieces which open the CD, are good examples. The first two are a mambo and cha-cha, respectively, while the third is a more reflective piece moving as it does between different tempos and moods with Ian Price's tenor providing the solo trimmings.

Lee Morgan's *The Sidewinder* gets the five-horn treatment with the theme given one or two additional twists. Along the way there are alto fireworks from Eddie Pazant while the rhythm section, captained by Pucho, keeps everything moving along in grand style. Along similar lines is *Havana*, a blues in a fast mambo style.

Another darker-sounding piece is *No Return* on which the voice of Veronica Makhemele is woven into the ensembles with Omar Valle's muted trumpet adding further to the broody atmosphere of the piece. *Grooving* is the classic bebop anthem adapted to a Latin groove and it really works well. Gary Kavanagh's trumpet sparkles in true Dizzy Gillespie fashion and there is further solo action from Ian Price's tenor and the leader's piano.

In terms of Latin-jazz this band ranks with the best of them.

Stan Woolley

Top class Latin Jazz

Review of Cubana Bop at the Under Ground Theatre by Annette Keen.

THE SENSATIONAL Cubana Bop played the Under Ground Theatre in Grove Road last Friday and showed us what Latin jazz is really all about.

Offering something genuinely different in the world of jazz, the band consists of six highly talented musicians whose ensemble playing is tight and disciplined.

But within that framework each one can (and did) produce imaginative and scorching solos as well.

Kicking off with Dizzy Gillespie's Groovin' High, front line players Gary Kavanagh (trumpet) and Ian Price (saxophone) both played impressive solos and the Afro-Cuban rhythm which Cubana Bop have made all their own was firmly established for the night.

Original compositions featured heavily in their programme — Without You I Am Lost featured leader Terry Seabrook (keyboard) and some amazing conga work from the band's conguero Satin Singh.

Appropriately enough, this was the gig chosen for the first airing of another original number — The Underground — slower paced but sophisticated and very Latin.

Nat Adderley's famous Work-song — played at some time by almost every big and medium-

sized band — was given the Cubana Bop Latin treatment and a new lease of life.

Ian Price played a solo that had to be heard to be believed and was probably the best of the gig, although Terry Seabrook's ran a very close second.

Heading up to the interval, drummer Adam Riley scorched through several minutes of very inventive and imaginative playing that certainly impressed the audience, before the rest of the rhythm section joined in and shared the spotlight.

Terry Seabrook's opener to Perugia showcased his immensely wide talent — he is truly a pianist of many styles — and this number subsequently turned into a peppy ensemble piece.

Although spending much of the session underpinning his band, he can produce electrifying solos seemingly at the drop of a hat — as was evident again in Lovcsong, which also featured Gary Kavanagh's wonderfully mellow flugelhorn and another cracking Ian Price solo.

The final number — appropriately entitled Cubana Bop — was introduced by Satin Singh on congas. With the stage to himself he gave us a dazzling display of virtuosity and the ensemble playing that followed was a fitting climax to a great gig.