

# **Celebrity Series is now VIVO PERFORMING ARTS**

SAT MAY 2 8PM

BERKLEE PERFORMANCE CENTER

## **CHUCHO VALDÉS ROYAL QUARTET**

**Chucho Valdés** piano

**José Armando Gola** bass

**Horacio Hernandez** drums

**Roberto Jr. Vizcaino** percussion

*Selections will be announced from the stage. There will be no intermission in this evening's program, which will run approximately 90 minutes.*

2025/26 Season Sponsors

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Vivo Performing Arts is supported by the  
Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

### **CHUCHO VALDÉS**

PIANO

Winner of seven Grammy and seven Latin Grammy Awards, the Cuban pianist, composer, and arranger Chucho Valdés is the most influential figure in modern Afro-Cuban jazz. In a rich career spanning sixty years, Chucho has pushed boundaries in pursuit of new expressions in Afro-Cuban music. His influence in the genre is immeasurable, his work establishing the standard by which younger generations set out to create their own.

Chucho's musical education includes formal studies and countless nights on the best stages in Cuba as the pianist with his father, Bebo Valdés, and his orchestra Sabor de Cuba, and with the seminal Orquesta Cubana de Música Moderna. Chucho is perhaps best known as the founder, pianist, and main composer and arranger of Irakere, a landmark ensemble in Cuban music. Chucho led Irakere for more than 30 years, but since 2005 he has focused on his personal career, highlighting his work as a pianist and leading small ensembles, like the Afro-Cuban Messengers, Jazz Batá, and his acclaimed Royal Quartet.

Chucho has been named an NEA Jazz Master, is a recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Latin Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences, has been inducted into the Latin Songwriters Hall of Fame, and received a DC Jazz Festival Lifetime Achievement Award, his name joining an illustrious list that includes Kenny Barron, James Moody, Ellis Marsalis, George Wein, and Dave Brubeck.

A restless visionary forever evolving Afro-Cuban music, Chucho Valdés is as creative and playful as ever on his Grammy-nominated and Latin Grammy-winning release, *Cuba & Beyond*.

### ***FROM THE ARCHIVES...***

Chucho Valdés made his Vivo Performing Arts (then Celebrity Series) debut in October 2010 with the Afro-Cuban Messengers. He returned in November 2012 headlining a quintet; in November 2015 with Irakere; in November 2016 headlining a quintet with saxophonist Joe Lovano; in February 2018 with fellow Cuban jazz pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba at Jordan Hall; in December 2019, when he performed his Jazz Batá program; and in October 2022 when he performed his composition *La Creacion* and was joined by the Yoruba Orchestra. His most recent engagement, In May 2024, was *DUETS* with tenor saxophonist Joe Lovano and vocalist Dianne Reeves. Vivo Performing Arts presents Chucho Valdés for the ninth time this evening.

## **JOSÉ ARMANDO GOLA**

BASS

A native of Havana, Cuba, José Armando Gola, has played bass since age thirteen and attended the Amadeo Roldan Conservatory. He plays both upright and electric bass in various settings, has toured internationally and played at major jazz festivals.

Gola has appeared on three Grammy-nominated albums by Francisco Céspedes (*Paseo*, *Codes*, and *Te Acuerdas*), on Arturo Sandoval's Grammy-winning album, *Rumba Palace*, and on Alejandro Sanz' Grammy-winning album, *El Tren de los Momentos*. He has also appeared on albums by Hector Martignon, Eldar, Raúl Di Blasio, Felipe Lamoglia, Team V.I.P, Marisela Verena, Mayra Casales, Ignacio Berroa, Jose Conde, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Thalía Thalia, Eckroth + Lamothe 6, and Andy Gola & Colé Colé. He also has recorded with pop artists including Jennifer Lopez, Luis Enrique, and many others.

His first album as leader is entitled *Gola Live Things*, which features musicians Tony Perez, Felipe Lamoglia, Mike Rodriguez, Rafael Solano, Ludwig Afonso, Philbert Armenteros, and William Paredes. Gonzalo Rubalcaba and Ignacio Berroa appear as a special guests.

### DISCOGRAPHY:

2024 *Cuba & Beyond*, Chucho Valdés Royal Quartet

2023 *El Trio (Live in Italy)*, John Beasley / Jose Gola / Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez

2022 *I Missed You Too!*, Chucho Valdés & Paquito D'Rivera, with Reunion Quartet

2021 Alejandro Sanz

2019 Gola Akoustik

2014 Gola Elektrik

and many more...

## HORACIO HERNANDEZ

### DRUMS

Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, the most recorded drummer of Cuba, has been the driving force behind the premier Latin and Latin-fused music of the past two decades. Since leaving Cuba in 1990, his drumming has propelled the efforts of Grammy Award winners Michel Camilo, Roy Hargrove, Chucho Valdés, Gary Burton, Alejandro Sanz, and Carlos Santana, as well as Paquito D'Rivera and Gonzalo Rubalcaba. Hernandez is identified by his unique Latin Fusion style, melding the folkloric Cuban clave with the fierce punch, crisp snap, and deep grooves of today's Jazz, Pop, and Rock. Hernandez first gained international recognition as drummer for the legendary pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba and his band, Proyecto. Once in the US, Hernandez--known internationally simply as "El Negro,"--began contributing to a host of the era's truly extraordinary performances, both live and in studio releases. Carlos Santana's *Supernatural* (1999), a nine Grammy Award winner; Alejandro Sanz' *No es lo Mismo* (2003), winner of four Grammy Awards; Eddie Palmieri's *Listen Here!* (2005); and Gary Burton's *For Hamp, Red, Bags, and Cal* (2001) all bear the stamp of Horacio's percussive artistry. His own awards include a shared Grammy with Crisol, Roy Hargrove's band on *Habana* (1997), as well as a Grammy for the 2003 *Live at the Blue Note*, with Michel Camilo on piano and Charles Flores on bass. Horacio's impact extends beyond stage and studio. In 2013, the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, celebrating its 12th Annual Jazz Appreciation Month, recognized Horacio's signature innovative approach to percussion, and included his unique drum kit in the museum Jazz collection, joining such artifacts as Herbie Hancock's cordless keyboard and Benny Goodman's clarinet. A highly esteemed educator, Horacio also serves as a member of the faculties at Berklee, the New School, and Drummer's Collective in New York. He holds an honorary Doctorate of Music degree from Berklee College of Music, joining the ranks of Duke Ellington, William "Count" Basie, and Quincy Jones. His critically acclaimed book and CD, *Conversations in Clave: The Ultimate Technical Study of Four-Way Independence in Afro-Cuban Rhythms* (2000), has become an industry standard. Since 2004, in addition to his many other projects, Horacio records and tours with Italuba--also the title of the group's debut CD release, and Italuba's second release *Italuba II* in 2007--his collaborative quartet. "We are at the point where we are letting the music play us, instead of us playing the music," he says of the case with which the players relate and blend in a sophisticated compositional and improvisational musical dialogue. In 2011, Horacio headlined at the Modern Drummer Festival for the *Modern Drummer* magazine, with his new project band of World Music all-stars, The New World Order. The concert was subsequently released on the *Modern Drummer Festival 2011* DVD. Horacio embarked on a new journey in 2012, contributing his percussion expertise during the making of renowned Italian recording artist Zucchero's newest project entitled *La Sesión Cubana*, which sold out important venues across the globe. The year 2015 saw the birth of Volcán, a band that

reunited Horacio with his old music partners Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Giovanni Hidalgo, and José Armando Gola. Since then, they have launched an ongoing world tour. Horacio was invited in 2018 to be a part of the International Jazz Day in Saint Petersburg, Russia, under the musical direction of master Herbie Hancock.

What comes next, arising from the innovative creation of El Negro, will certainly amaze his audience, as it continues to reveal his dedication to Cuban music; the same music that propelled his brilliant and unique contribution to contemporary music.

## **ROBERTO JR. VIZCAINO**

### **PERCUSSION**

Roberto Jr. Vizcaino is part of a new generation of Cuban percussionists, who preserve and respect the traditions of the culture, fuses them, and recreates them in modern and classic ways. Born into the Cuban musical tradition and joining in since he was five, he sees influences from his father Roberto Vizcaino, Chucho Valdés, Giovanni Hidalgo, Karl Perazzo, Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, Luis Conte, Arturo Sandoval, Richard Bona, Cory Henry, Paquito D' Rivera, Michel Camilo, and Joe Lovano, to name a few. He has played in the main festivals and stages of the world, including North Sea Jazz (Holland), Montreux Jazz Festival, WOMADelaide (New Zealand), Nice Jazz Festival (France), Montreal Jazz Festival, and the Hollywood Bowl in California, to name the most recent. He participated in projects that were nominated for the 2018 Grammy and the 2019 Billboard Awards and was a Latin Grammy winner in 2023 with Chucho Valdés, Paquito D' Rivera and Reunion sextet. Currently member of Royal Quartet with Chucho Valdés, Horacio "El Negro" Hernández and José Armando Gola.