

Ramón Valle & Gustavo Corrales Romero



Cuban classical and jazz by two Cuban masters.

Two pianists. Two styles. One purpose.

Fenix Music Factory · Fenix2 loods, De Kaap (opposite Hotel New York)
Veerlaan 21-J, 3072 AN Rotterdam-Katendrecht
Entrance Fenix *Flex* Factory, Deliplein side, nr. 2 I, left of Fenix *Food* Factory | 1st Floor
Saturday 10 February 2018 · 20:30 hrs · Doors open at 20:00 · €17,50

When was the last time you experienced childlike joy when attending a concert? When **Ramón Valle** ‘The other face of Cuban jazz’ and Latin American classical and contemporary music specialist **Gustavo Corrales Romero** join forces, the live experience is like no other. What you can expect? An exciting, all-Cuban, electrifying interaction featuring their two different repertoires, played on two pianos, spiced up by their own arrangements and compositions and Valle’s signature improvisations, inspired by their classical education, many international influences and Cuban background.

For the concert in Rotterdam on 10 February 2018 we can again confirm at least one premiere by Corrales, besides new works from both Valle and Corrales that were recently premiered, a core repertoire from their latest and upcoming CDs and a big wink to the classical music of Cuban composers Lecuona and Fariñas. In a program especially adapted for the occasion.

A Valle-Corrales concert breathes Cubanness and joy as these two masters of their trade play with each other and the audience. It is a unique crossbreed presentation that curiously combines exotical Latin, excellence and blatant fun. It is alternately intriguing, rousingly rhythmic to the point of danceable, surprising and moving. In mixing in their own sound the two pianists add value to their individual specializations, so you will hear both old and new sounds that nevertheless remain very accessible and exquisite from beginning to end. But the very best part about Valle-Corrales is the infectious chemistry between them. No wonder audiences keep coming back for more.

Valle and Corrales both received a dual Cuban education (regular and in music) from their 7th year. Being from different parts of the country (Holguin and Guantánamo) they met in the musical circuit in Havana, then went their separate ways, built respectable international careers, and later reunited in the Netherlands, where they now both live and work. They share a desire to put the rich Cuban folkloric musical traditions – behind the classical, contemporary and jazz music they perform – in the spotlight and present the fascinating differences and parallels with European and Western music. Both pianists bring an expressiveness to their performances that is warmly welcomed by audiences, and a typical Cuban charm that is magnified when they play together and also felt when they’re not sitting at the piano.

Audience reactions:

“It’s been a great pleasure to experience this.”

“It was wonderful. I am glad I came here this afternoon. I can face the coming week again.”

“For me this is an absolute must-see. I’ll be there as soon as they perform again.”

The pianists will be commenting on their performance in English.

Ramón Valle started studying the piano at the Escuela Provincial de Arte in his home town of Holguín, Cuba, at age 7. He graduated from Havana's Escuela Nacional de Arte (ENA)¹ in 1984. His exceptional talent was discovered in 1985 when he performed in a double concert with fellow Cuban pianist, Emiliano Salvador.

As solo artist and as leader of the jazz quartet Brújula, Valle appeared at numerous festivals (Mexico DF, Bogotá, Havana Jazz Festival) and was soon an established name in the Cuban and Latin American jazz scene. In 1991 Silvio Rodríguez, founder of the Nueva Trova, asked him to join his band Diákara, which he stayed with until 1993. Valle followed this up with an impressive series of performances and projects in Europe since 1995 and his move to Amsterdam in 1997.

In the meantime Valle has become a seasoned veteran boasting multiple appearances at the North Sea jazz festival and a growing list of performances at several important other international jazz festivals including in Montreux, Capetown, Johannesburg and Melbourne. He continues to expand his arsenal of original compositions and has also composed pieces commissioned by the municipality of Amsterdam and the Israeli symphonic orchestra The Sinfonietta of Beer Sheva.

Although the influence of his classical background and especially of the triumvirate Jarrett-Corea-Hancock can be heard, the remarkable thing about Valle's music is his ability to weld these diverse influences together to create a unique style that eludes traditional categories.

'The greatest talent among our young pianists.' Words Chucho Valdés, prominent musician and founder of Irakere, used to introduce Ramón Valle on his debut album *Levitando* [1993]. His discography now consists of 11 CDs, several of which were published under his own label RVS MUSIC. The last two CDs *Take Off* – with arrangements of music by Stevie Wonder, Leonard Cohen, Michel Legrand and John Coltrane besides own work – and *The Art of Two*, the duo project with his cousin Orlando 'Maraca' Valle, were both published with the German In+Out Records, and the next one is in preparation.

www.ramonvallemusic.com

Gustavo Corrales Romero has enjoyed 17 years of professional musical training in the solid tradition of the Russian school for piano since he was 7. Winning a national competition in Cuba at age 18, having concluded studies at the Escuela Nacional de Arte (ENA)¹, enabled him to study at the P.I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow for one year. After this he returned to Cuba to complete, at the age of 24, his studies with a Master Degree in Music, specializing in Piano at the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA)² in Havana, where he stayed on as a professor of Piano and Chamber Music for three years.

Corrales has a special passion for contemporary music. In 1997 he co-founded the SODAMC, a UNESCO-sponsored association that organized monthly meetings in Havana that rapidly became a significant part of the Cuban art scene. Corrales performed in all concerts.

Public performances were begun at the age of 16. Over the years Corrales acquired a vast amount of podium experience through participation in many national and international festivals and as a concert pianist in South America, the Caribbean and several countries in Europe, especially in The Netherlands where he has been living and working with his wife since 2002. He has his own production company, KyG Productions, with which he has been producing CDs, books and concerts and promoting classical and contemporary Latin American music for years.

Corrales has a special bond with several of the Cuban contemporary composers whose work he plays including his teachers and later colleagues Harold Gramatges (winner of the Spanish 'Tomás Luis de Victoria' prize for music in 1997) and Carlos Fariñas and the younger Keyla Orozco (USA), Eduardo Morales (Spain), Yosvani Quintero (Switzerland) and Ailem Carvajal (Italy).

His debut as a writer, 'Los Herederos', written in Spanish, was accepted for publication with great enthusiasm by Ediciones EntreRíos and presented at the Miami Book Fair International. In the meantime Corrales has finished his 2nd book, which is being readied for publication. After solo CD productions *Palimpsesto* (An evolution of the Cuban piano) and *Fresco* (A wide impression of Latin American classical and contemporary music) preparations are underway to produce *Arioso*, featuring Corrales' suite of arrangements for piano trio of traditional Cuban songs.

www.gustavocorralesromero.net

¹ Escuela Nacional de Arte (ENA): National School for Art, Havana, Cuba.

² Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA): the Superior Institute for Art, Havana, Cuba.

Picture: Brigitte Soffner

