EDDIE PALMIERI – A CAREER RETROSPECTIVE
JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER

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PLAYLIST
1st Half:
Ileana 3:50
Crew 13:00
Iraida 3:45

2nd half:
Noble Cruise 14:35
Azucar 14:50

1) MUSIC: "Slowvisor" (from CD *Palmas*)

2) VOX: Eddie Palmieri

"In my opinion, Latin jazz is the fusion of the 21st century. What makes it exciting is the underlying principle of the rhythm section // but when you superimpose the brass on a jazz composition, for example, with the rhythm section, it becomes quite exciting, and interesting, and we certainly hope you enjoy it"

3) **PIERCE (:35)**

AN IRRESISTIBLE LAYER CAKE OF RHYTHMIC FLAVORS; A RAINBOW OF COLORFUL PERCUSSION; AND FROM THE PIANO, CRYSTAL MELODIES AND DARK, PERCUSSIVE CHORDS -- THOSE ARE THE CALLING CARDS OF THE VISIONARY COMPOSER AND PIANIST EDDIE PALMIERI.

MOVE YOUR CHAIRS TO THE CORNERS OF THE ROOM, AS EDDIE PALMIERI LEADS HIS AFRO-CARIBBEAN JAZZ OCTET AND HIS FULL-SIZED SALSA ORCHESTRA, IN PERFORMANCES GUARANTEED TO GET YOU UP AND DANCING. FROM THE ROSE THEATER IN THE

HOUSE OF SWING, IT'S JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER. I'M WENDELL PIERCE.

4) PIERCE:

IN DECEMBER 0F 2012 – JUST WEEKS BEFORE HIS INDUCTION AS AN NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS JAZZ MASTER – EDDIE PALMIERI PRESENTED TWO OF HIS SIGNATURE BANDS AT THE ROSE THEATER. THE OCCASION WAS A RETROSPECTIVE OF HIS REMARKABLE 60-YEAR CAREER, MARKED BY HIS ENDURING FUSION OF AMERICAN JAZZ WITH THE PUERTO RICAN TRADITION POPULARLY KNOWN AS SALSA -- AND IT WAS ALSO HIS 75TH BIRTHDAY.

MORE THAN ANY OF HIS PREDECESSORS, EDDIE PALMIERI SUCCEEDED IN MOVING BEYOND THE STEREOTYPICAL PARAMETERS OF "LATIN JAZZ." HE'S BEEN CALLED LATIN JAZZ'S ANSWER TO DUKE ELLINGTON -- AND TRUE TO A FAMOUS ELLINGTON PHRASE, PALMIERI HAS CONSISTENTLY REACHED "BEYOND CATEGORY" IN HIS EXPLORATIONS.

AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS CAREER, PALMIERI BUILT A MUSICAL BRIDGE BETWEEN HIS OWN PUERTO RICAN HERITAGE AND THE CULTURE OF CUBA, CONNECTING SALSA AND AFRO-CUBAN MUSIC BY WAY OF HIS BEBOP-INFLUENCED PIANO.

LIKE HIS COMPOSITIONS, PALMIERI'S PIANO IS ROMANTIC AND ICONOCLASTIC, BROODING AND EXULTANT.

HERE'S A TASTE OF THAT STYLE IN THIS SOLO PERFORMANCE OPENING PALMIERI'S JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER RETROSPECTIVE.

THAT SOLO IS THE SEED THAT FLOWERS INTO THE BRILLIANT FOREST OF COLORS THAT CHARACTERIZE HIS BIG-BAND WRITING. "ILEANA."

5) MUSIC: Ileana 3:50

6) PIERCE

ILEANA -- LATIN JAZZ MASTER EDDIE PALMIERI, OPENING HIS RETROSPECTIVE 75TH BIRTHDAY CONCERT AT THE ROSE THEATER IN THE HOUSE OF SWING.

BORN IN SPANISH HARLEM, PALMIERI BRIEFLY FULFILLED HIS DESIRE TO PLAY DRUMS WHEN, AT THE AGE OF 13, HE MANNED THE TIMBALES IN HIS UNCLE'S ORCHESTRA. INSPIRED BY HIS OLDER BROTHER CHARLIE, HE SOON FOCUSED ON THE PIANO – BUT HE'S NEVER QUITE LEFT THE DRUMMING BEHIND. HE'S OFTEN DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS "A FRUSTRATED PERCUSSIONIST WHO TAKES IT OUT ON THE PIANO."

7) MUSIC: "Conmigo" (from LP "La Perfecta,")

8) PIERCE

IN 1961, PALMIERI FORMED THE BAND THAT ESTABLISHED HIS SIGNATURE SOUND "CONJUNTO LA PERFECTA." HE ADAPTED THE CUBAN DANCE FORM *CHARANGA*, WHICH TRADITIONALLY FEATURED TWO VIOLINS AND FLUTE; BUT HE REPLACED THE VIOLINS WITH TROMBONES, BRINGING THE MUSIC A HEARTIER, GRITTIER TEXTURE.

9) MUSIC: "Conmigo" (from LP "La Perecta,")

10) PIERCE

THAT MIX OF TROMBONES, FLUTE, AND PERCUSSION – PLUS , OF COURSE, PALMIERI'S PIANO WITH ITS ADVANCED HARMONIES AND EDGY IMPROVISATION – PROVED IRRESISTIBLE TO JAZZ AND LATIN AUDIENCES. IT BECAME THE VEHICLE FOR HIS EARLIEST SUCCESS – AND A TEMPLATE FOR MANY OF HIS SUBSEQUENT CREATIONS.

11) PIERCE

THE SOUND OF LA PERFECTA STILL IMBUES EDDIE PALMIERI'S DANCE-BAND MUSIC. BUT AS HIS CAREER UNFOLDED, PAMIERI BECAME INCREASINGLY ENAMORED OF THE JAZZ GIANTS – PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO PLAYED HIS INSTRUMENT, THE PIANO.

*(Fade in **Duke Ellington, "Money Jungle,")***

DUKE ELLINGTON, THELONIOUS MONK, McCOY TYNER, HERBIE HANCOCK: PALMIERI'S MUSIC WOULD EVENTUALLY TRAVEL THE SAME ROADS AS THOSE ARTISTS. BUT WITH PALMIERI AT THE WHEEL, THESE SONIC TRIPS HAD A UNIQUE RHYTHM – SUBSTANTIALLY INFLUENCED BY THE DRUMMING OF ART BLAKEY.

***(Art Blakey, "Lester Left Town,"** from* The Big Beat*)*

BY THE 1990s, HE HAD FOUND A "PERFECTA" FORMAT FOR SMALL-GROUP INSTRUMENTAL JAZZ: AN OCTET WITH TRUMPET, TROMBONE, AND SAX – AND IN PLACE OF BLAKEY ON DRUMS, THREE PERCUSSIONISTS PLAYING THE TRADITIONAL LATIN INSTRUMENTS: BONGOS, CONGAS, AND TIMBALES.

WITH THIS LINEUP, PALMIERI RE-IMAGINED THE STANDARD HARD-BOP SEXTET IN HIS OWN IMAGE. INSTEAD OF ART BLAKEY'S JAZZ MESSENGERS, HERE WAS EDDIE PALMIERI AND HIS JAZZ *MENSAJEROS.*

12) PIERCE

EDDIE PALMIERI OFFERS THIS INGENIOUS BLEND OF HARD-BOP HORNS AND THE LATIN JAZZ RHYTHM SECTION WITH SAXMAN LOUIS FOUCHE AND HIS LONGTIME BANDMATES TRUMPETER BRIAN LYNCH AND TROMBONIST CONRAD HERWIG. THIS S *"CREW"*

13) MUSIC: CREW Set 1, Track 6 from JALC Concert 13:00

14) PIERCE

THE TUNE CALLED *"CREW."*

JAZZ MASTER EDDIE PALMIERI AND HIS AFRO-CARIBBEAN JAZZ OCTET:

WITH BRIAN LYNCH ON TRUMPET, TROMBONIST CONRAD HERWIG, SAXOPHONIST LOUIS FOUCHE, BASSIST LUQUES CURTIS, WITH THE RHYTHM SECTION OF JOSE CLAUSSELL ON TIMBALES; VINCENTE RIVERO ON CONGAS; AND ORLANDO VEGA ON BONGOS.

THE OCCASION – A CELEBRATION OF EDDIE PALMIERI'S 75TH BIRTHDAY, AND A RETROSPECTIVE OF 60 YEARS IN MUSIC.

THERE'S PLENTY MORE TO COME. BUT BEFORE WE MOVE ON LET'S GET ONE MORE INFUSION FROM THE ROOT OF PALMIERI'S WRITING: IT ALL STARTS AT THE PIANO. THIS IS *IRAIDA.*

15) MUSIC: Iraida 3:45

16) PIERCE

SOLO PIANO ON THE STAGE OF ROSE HALL, FROM NEA JAZZ MASTER EDDIE PALMIERI.

HAVE YOU MISSED ANYTHING? YOU CAN HEAR THIS PROGRAM AND OUR JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENER ARCHIVE SHOWS ALL AT - AT J-A-L-C (DOT) ORG.

DON'T FORGET OUR JAZZSTORIES PODCASTS -- HEAR THE MUSIC IN THE WORDS OF THE MAKERS. FIND THEM ON I TUNES -- AND SOUNDCLOUD.

JUST AHEAD -- EDDIE PALMIERI TAKES US ON HIS OWN 'MAIDEN VOYAGE.' BACK IN ONE MINUTE. THIS IS JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER. I'M WENDELL PIERCE.

17) ID BREAK MUSIC:

18) PIERCE

AS EDDIE PALMIERI TOLD THE ROSE THEATER AUDIENCE THE BEGINNING OF HIS CAREER WAS PRETTY MUCH AS YOU MIGHT IMAGINE FOR A PUERTO RICAN JAZZ MUSICIAN OF THE 1950s: HE LISTENED TO RECORDS BY THE LEADING BANDS AND TRIED TO MAKE HIS MUSIC SOUND LIKE THAT.

WHEN HE GOT GOOD ENOUGH, HE MANAGED TO LAND JOBS WITH SOME OF THOSE BANDLEADERS – TITO RODRIGUEZ AND VINCENTICO VALDES.

FROM THOSE RECORDS, PALMIERI GRASPED THE CONCEPT OF TENSION AND RELEASE OF CUBAN MUSIC – THE DRAMATIC ARC THAT CAN MAKE EVEN A THREE-MINUTE TUNE EBB AND FLOW INTO AN EPIC STORY.

BUT HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THIS CONCEPT WAS PURELY INTUITIVE UNTIL HE ENCOUNTERED THE WORK OF AN EARLY 20TH-CENTURY MUSIC THEORIST --JOSEPH SCHILLINGER.

19) VOX: Eddie Palmieri

"I learned this scientifically when I was brought into the world of Mr. Joseph Schillinger, who was a Russian scientist, mathematician – and there I found out that what was happening was what we call tension and resistance within the composition, that it's a guarantee that it's going to excite. I don't guess I'm going to excite you, I know it. And that's because it's in the composition."

20) MUSIC: "Un Dia Bonito" (from LP "The Sun of Latin Music)

21) PIERCE (:45)

LISTEN TO PALMIERI AND HIS AFRO-CARIBBEAN JAZZ OCTET APPLY SCHILLINGER'S PRINCIPLES INSPIRED BY HERBIE HANCOCK'S ENDURING COMPOSITION "MAIDEN VOYAGE" ON THIS NEXT TUNE.

ABOUT A MINUTE INTO THE PERFORMANCE, PALMIERI TAKES CENTER STAGE FOR AN EXTENDED PIANO FANTASIA. IF YOU KNOW HIS MUSIC, IT CALLS TO MIND – HIS TUNE ENTITLED "UN DIA

BONITO," FROM THE MID 70'S. THAT PIECE NOT ONLY EXPANDED HIS AUDIENCE, IT ALSO REWROTE THE RULES FOR WHAT LATIN JAZZ COULD DO. THIS IS PALMIERI'S "*NOBLE CRUISE*,"

22) MUSIC: NOBLE CRUISE 14:35

23) PIERCE

NOBLE CRUISE -- EDDIE PALMIER AND HIS AFRO-CARIBBEAN JAZZ OCTET, WITH BRIAN LYNCH ON TRUMPET AND CONRAD HERWIG ON TROMBONE. FROM THE ROSE THEATER IN THE HOUSE OF SWING.

IN THIS JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER RETROSPECTIVE, EDDIE PALMIERI HAS MADE A POINT OF HONORING HIS DEEPEST ROOTS – HIS YOUTH IMMERSED IN LATIN-JAZZ DANCE MUSIC, AND THE CUBAN ORCHESTRAS THAT BROUGHT A NEW SOUND TO NEW YORK CITY AS HE WAS GROWING UP.

TO CAPTURE THAT SOUND, PAMIERI AUGMENTED HIS OCTET WITH TWO MORE HORNS, EXTRA PERCUSSION, AND A THREE-MAN *CORO* LED BY VOCALIST HERMAN OLIVERA.

24) VOX: Eddie Palmieri,

"This is the part of the show that has to do now with the dance orchestra, which is – well, this is the way I began."

25) PIERCE

AND HERE AGAIN, THE MUSIC DEPENDS ON THE TENSION, RESISTANCE, AND RESOLUTION THAT PALMIERI LEARNED FROM JOSEPH SCHILLINGER.

26) VOX: Eddie Palmieri

"It's like putting a ball on a string, and you keep winding it up, and that's what we do here; from a piano solo I give it a percussionist, the percussionist keeps creating energy – what we call *masakote.* And that's when it could drive you out of your seat. So remember – I warned you. I warned you!"

27) PIERCE

FROM THE ROSE THEATER, HERE IS HIS 1965 COMPOSITION "AZUCAR PARA TI."

28) MUSIC: *AZUCAR PARA TI* 14:50

29) VOX: Eddie Palmieri,
"That's the way you play our dance music!"

30) PIERCE

AZUCAR PARA TI -- "SUGAR FOR YOU."

EDDIE PALMIERI TRANSFORMING THE HOUSE OF SWING INTO A *CASA DEL RITMO* --WITH HIS LATIN JAZZ ORCHESTRA AUGMENTED BY TRUMPETER JONATHAN POWELL; TROMBONIST JIMMY BOSCH; NELSON GONZALEZ ON THE CUBAN GUITAR-SHAPED INSTRUMENT CALLED THE *TRES;* JOSEPH GONZALEZ ON PERCUSSION; AND SINGER HERMAN OLIVERA.

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER RADIO IS PRODUCED AT MURRAY STREET. THIS PROGRAM WAS WRITTEN BY NEIL TESSER.

OUR PRODUCERS ARE DAVID GOREN ALEXA LIM AND STEPHEN RATHE. AND THANKS TO JOSH LANDES, in spare parts. JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER RADIO IS DISTRIBUTED BY THE WFMT RADIO NETWORK.

30) PIERCE

OUR LIVE RECORDINGS ARE DONE BY ROB MACUMBER AT XM STUDIOS IN ROSE HALL, ADDITIONAL RECORDING AT WWNO IN NEW ORLEANS BY JENNY LAWSON.

CAT HENRY SUPERVISES THESE RECORDINGS AND BROADCASTS. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER IS GREG SCHOLL. AND THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR IS WYNTON MARSALIS.

I'M WENDELL PIERCE. THANKS FOR JOINING US.

COME BACK NEXT WEEK.