

**CONRAD HERWIG**  
**THE LATIN SIDE OF HORACE SILVER**

SPECIAL GUEST MICHEL CAMILO

IGOR BUTMAN • CRAIG HANDY • ALEX SIPIAGIN • BILL O'CONNELL  
RUBEN RODRIGUEZ • ROBBY AMEEN • RICHIE FLORES





1. **NICA'S DREAM** 7:38
2. **SONG FOR MY FATHER** 10:38
3. **THE GODS OF THE YORUBA** 11:39
4. **PEACE** 8:11
5. **THE CAPE VERDEAN BLUES** 9:27
6. **FILTHY MCNASTY** 10:52
7. **SILVER'S SERENADE** 8:55
8. **NUTVILLE** 11:34

All compositions: **HORACE SILVER** (Ecaroh Music) ASCAP

Tracks 5, 6 and 8 arranged by **CONRAD HERWIG**

Tracks 1, 2, 4 & 7 arranged by **BILL O'CONNELL**

Track 3 arranged by **MARC STASIO**



It's been 25 years since **Conrad Herwig** delivered his initial "Latin Side" project – *The Latin Side of John Coltrane*; so universally well-received, it earned the trombonist the first of his now four Latin Jazz GRAMMY® nominations.

The recording represents what has evolved into the front-line, New York-based veteran's now formidable and measurable ongoing "Latin Side" endeavors that, collectively, have become an odyssey of sorts – an ongoing musical path that has now produced an impressive eight intra-connected efforts. The Latin Side "collection" encompasses a second Trane extrapolation (*Qué Viva Coltrane*), a pair of Miles Davis "look-sees" (*Another Kind of Blue* and *Sketches of Spain y Mas*), readings of Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and Joe Henderson material – and now a visage of Horace Silver.

It's essential to note the Latin Side releases are not, as some have characterized, "tributes" to well-known modern jazz icons. Rather, the Latin Side recordings and the consistently inventive arrangements housed therein, reflect interpretive, original sounding "homages" to some of jazz's seminal contributors. In the bandleader's words, Latin Side sessions offer a "reimagining" – or, as I like to say in layperson's terms – a "Latinization" of said artists' music.

On *Latin Side of Horace Silver*, recorded live, as is the case with a number of the previous titles, the group's "core personnel" remains intact. Trumpeter **Alex Sipiagin** and **Craig Handy** – on alto saxophone and flute this time – join Conrad on the front line; the rhythm section consists of pianist and co-arranger **Bill O'Connell**, bassist **Ruben Rodriguez**, drummer **Robby Ameen** and conguero **Richie Flores**. Conrad's connection to each of these musicians spans several years – actually more like decades; suffice to say, each of these players, intuitively so by now, knows each other well.

Conrad again augments the proceedings with special guests. In this "installment," he welcomes a pair of noteworthy artists and long-time associates. Tenor saxophonist **Igor Butman** joins the front line and **Michel Camilo** holds down the piano chair intermittently, alternating with O'Connell.

"Michel is one of the great virtuoso piano soloists, and an amazingly empathetic accompanist," says Conrad, who has known him since the mid-1980s when both played with Paquito D'Rivera. "We hit it off right away." Conrad has also toured and recorded with Camilo on some of Camilo's projects. "It's a 30-plus year collaboration between us. He's like family."



As for Butman, he, too, is a long-time associate. "I've known Igor for more than 25 years. We have lots of musical colleagues in common; we've played at the Newport Jazz Festival and in Europe together. We've co-led a jazz project together."

Conrad's heart-felt commitment to the Latin Side projects – and their resultant authenticity – stems from his deep self-immersion into this musical culture, which includes an undergraduate degree in Afro-Caribbean ethnomusicology from Goddard College. "I started playing Cumbia and Tejano gigs in Texas," recalls the trombonist, a One O'Clock Band alum who also attended North Texas State University (now University of North Texas).

"When I got to New York I joined Mario Bauza's Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra. I also started playing with Eddie Palmieri, Tito Puente, Manny Oquendo, Pete 'El Condé' Rodriguez, Jose Managual Jr. and a host of other Afro-Caribbean legends," he says, modestly rattling off just a partial list. "At the same time, I was playing with many other Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Brazilian musicians," adding, "The trombone is an integral part of these musical styles. I really idolized and studied the styles of Generoso Jimenez, Barry Rogers, Raul de Souza and other greats. It was an amazing learning experience. It made me want to study and honor this art form."

Safe to say, he's been doing that now for quite some time, so much so that his highly-developed Latin Jazz sensibility is only matched – *or exceeded by* – his technical prowess to deliver such music; never mind that this is the same person who owns a substantial straight-ahead musical footprint, one that includes an ongoing Mingus Big Band stint and, speaking of partial lists, time spent with Toshiko Akiyoshi, Frank Sinatra and Clark Terry. Think of it this way: There's a lot more to Conrad Herwig's musical breadth and scope than meets the eye.

With *Latin Side of Horace Silver*, Conrad, as he has done with the seven predecessors, again delivers material with forethought, zest and enthusiasm. He selects each of his subjects with great care. In the cases of 'Trane, Davis, Hancock and Shorter, it is their respective overarching impact that rules the day. Delving into Henderson's compositions represented a more personal reckoning; Conrad toured and recorded with the saxophonist for nearly five years. Similarly, Silver played, what Conrad says is a key piece of his development.

In 2004, the legendary pianist called the trombonist from his Malibu, Calif., home inviting him to play with his band during an upcoming week-long New York engagement. "I jumped at the chance," remembers Conrad. "People flew in from all over the world to see him. For me, I was walking on air. It was a memorable musical experience to perform with one of the all-time greats. He's one of my musical heroes," notes Conrad, adding, much of Silver's work represents "iconic compositions and transcendental improvisations by one of the greatest jazz musicians that ever lived on the planet."

It was not only Conrad's personal experience and familiarity with the pianist, but also Silver's familial roots that led him to *Latin Side of Horace Silver*. The pianist's father came from Cape Verde. "There's an amazing folkloric musical genre called 'Morna,' says Prof. Herwig, Chair of Jazz Studies at the Mason Gross School of Music at Rutgers University. "It's based on a mix of Portuguese and African influences. This is the basis for a lot of Horace's compositional innovations."

There was no shortage of material for the release. "We picked some of our favorites such as 'Song for My Father,' 'Peace' and 'Nica's Dream.' And, we researched some of his lesser-known compositions such as 'Gods of the Yoruba,' which is a 5/4 Afro-Caribbean groove that doesn't get performed that often." Concluding, says the trombonist: "Horace's music is deceptively simple and complex at the same time. For jazz musicians his compositions are fantastic improvisational vehicles."

At this point, it's more than fair to say Conrad knows whereof he speaks. All that remains is to just listen.

*Jon W. Poses & Conrad Herwig met in 1986, the year Poses founded National Pastimes Productions, a touring and artist representative endeavor. The two began working together shortly thereafter. A freelance writer and music columnist for the Columbia (Mo.) Daily Tribune, Poses launched the "We Always Swing"® Jazz Series as a presenting & educational organization. He continues to serve as its Executive & Artistic Director.*



**CONRAD HERWIG** trombone  
**IGOR BUTMAN** tenor saxophone  
**CRAIG HANDY** alto saxophone (tracks 1-3, 5, 6 & 8),  
flute (tracks 4 & 7)  
**ALEX SIPIAGIN** trumpet (tracks 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 & 8),  
flugelhorn (tracks 4 & 7)  
**MICHEL CAMILO** piano (tracks 2, 3 & 8)  
**BILL O'CONNELL** piano (tracks 1, 4, 5, 6 & 7)  
**RUBEN RODRIGUEZ** bass  
**ROBBY AMEEN** drums  
**RICHIE FLORES** congas

Produced by **Conrad Herwig** and **Jeff Levenson**

Mixed by **John D'Uva**

Mastered by **David Darlington** at Bass Hit Studio, New York NY

Recorded: New York City, 2017

Cover Art by **Ying Li**

Photos by **Martin Cohen** (tray) and **Aboud Dweck** (booklet)

Design by **irem Ela Yildizeli**

**Conrad Herwig** performs exclusively on Michael Rath trombones

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