

A Special Collaboration: ¡Qué Viva Manhattan!

A Special Collaboration: ¡Qué Viva Manhattan!

BY RANDY KLEIN,
PRESIDENT JAZZHEADS



As the president of **Jazzheads**, the New York City based jazz label, it has been my honor to collaborate with the talented students and teachers from Manhattan School of Music's Jazz Arts department in creating some of the best recordings Jazzheads has released to date.

Jazzheads' mission is to release the highest quality recordings of improvised music. MSM's Jazz Arts department has a similar mission, which is to teach high-level musicianship and develop excellent improvising musicians. Jazz Arts Chair **Justin DiCioccio** finds and trains students who will be the next leaders in the world of jazz and chooses important historical repertoire to perform and record. Under the leadership of **Bobby Sanabria**, the MSM Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra has been honed into a tight musical machine. The grooves the band plays are infectious and at the same time pay homage to the grand lineage of the music.

Together MSM and Jazzheads have set a new standard in releasing CDs from a university music department. Please understand that it is very unusual

for a recording company to collaborate with a music school. It is even more extraordinary for the two of them to release such a fine array of recordings. But MSM and JH have done this together—producing CDs that deserve the worldwide recognition they are receiving.

This special collaboration began with a meeting I had with the multi-talented, multi-Grammy nominated, drummer, percussionist, and educator, **Bobby Sanabria** who suggested that

Jazzheads release live recordings of MSM's jazz concerts. In all honesty, I wasn't that enthused about the idea. How good could a college band's recordings sound? How would they stand up to the competition of the ever tightening jazz scene? And how and where would we promote such a product? For the most part, college band recordings are less than stellar. Usually the production of the recordings is not up to the industry standard and the music is not played up to a

professional standard. But, that night, in his car, Bobby played a live unmixed recording from the *Kenya Revisited Live!!!* CD. I was immediately captured by the intensity of the music. I couldn't believe this was a college band! It sounded and felt like pros were playing it. And, trust me, this is difficult music to play and interpret. This music hooked me. He also told me that Justin DiCioccio had similarly impressive recordings of the MSM Jazz Philharmonic, Gil Evans tribute concerts featuring Dave Liebman



in the historical role of the great Miles Davis. This was all starting to get very interesting! So, I decided to move forward. Little did I know what a wonderful musical adventure it would be.

When I met with Justin DiCioccio to discuss the details, I was extremely pleased that we both strongly agreed we would only release the best played and recorded music and never compromise.

Lastly, we decided that we wanted a portion of the proceeds from the sales of the CDs to go to the MSM Scholarship fund, to reinvest in the future of the form, reinvest in jazz.

Our latest releases—*The Symphonic Ellington* and *¡Qué Viva Harlem!*—should be in any serious jazz listener's collection. They are garnering excellent reviews and airplay.

Congrats to the MSM team who have believed in this project and have made it all happen! Debra Kinzler, Stephanie Crease, Majel Peters, Paul Kelleher, Dr. James Gandre, Bobby Sanabria, and Justin DiCioccio, it has been my pleasure to collaborate with you.

We will continue to expand the catalog and amaze the skeptics who can't believe student ensembles can be this musical. •

CONGRATULATIONS TO MSM'S WINNERS OF DOWNBEAT'S 37TH ANNUAL STUDENT MUSIC AWARDS

SMALL JAZZ COMBO | UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE COLLEGE
MSM CHAMBER JAZZ ENSEMBLE
Ben Benack, Trumpet
Patrick Bartley, Alto Saxophone
Adam Larson, Tenor Saxophone
Emmet Cohen, Piano
Martin Kenney, Bass
Evan Sherman, Drums

LATIN GROUP | GRADUATE COLLEGE
MSM AFRO-CUBAN JAZZ ORCHESTRA
Bobby Sanabria, Director

VOCAL JAZZ SOLOIST
SETH WEAVER
JAZZ SOLOIST
PATRICK BARTLEY

SMALL JAZZ COMBO | PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL
MSM PRECOLLEGE JAZZ COMBO
Jeremy Manasia, Director
Daryl Johns, Double Bass | Cameron MacIntosh, Drums
Zoe Obadia, Alto Saxophone | Ryan Park-Chan, Alto Saxophone
Julius Rodriguez, Piano | Liam Werner, Trumpet

JAZZHEADS RELEASES

MSM JAZZ PHILHARMONIC

Conducted by Justin DiCioccio

Miles Ahead
Sketches of Spain
Porgy and Bess
Meditations Suite
featuring Dave Liebman and Randy Brecker
Artistry In Rhythm
Music of Stan Kenton
The Symphonic Ellington

MSM AFRO-CUBAN JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Conducted by Bobby Sanabria

Kenya Revisited Live!!!
Featuring NEA Jazz Master
Candido
Tito Puente Masterworks Live!!!
¡Que Viva Harlem!

MSM CHAMBER JAZZ ENSEMBLE AND TACTUS

Conducted by Justin DiCioccio

Sky Changes
Featuring Dave Liebman

