

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Evelyn Palmer
Consilience Productions
(212) 352-0176

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NEW LATIN RECORDING CONTINUES A MUSICAL ART FORM

Nicki Denner, a long-time favorite on the New York Latin jazz scene, has teamed with the incomparable vocalist, Julian Llanos, on her latest recording. Consilience Productions announces the release of this inspired collaboration, entitled "El Medico de Coqui."

The recording spotlights Llanos as a master "sonero," or someone who improvises vocals between choruses. This alluring and magical art form is increasingly rare, representing a time where singers could improvise a story on the spot, commenting on the lyrics of the song or a current event. His romantic baritone, strong and flexible as ever, some 60 years into his musical career, weaves in and out of Denner's lush arrangements performed by her remarkable New York-based band.

The collaboration gives both Denner and Llanos opportunities to demonstrate their impressive ranges of talents.

Denner, who has played piano with Sheila E., Candido, Savion Glover and many other jazz and salsa artists in the U.S. and Europe, is also a superb composer and arranger. Her arrangements explore a range of styles and rhythms, using bold instrumentation and elements of jazz. For instance, Denner gives the traditional Afro-Cuban song, "La Negra Tomasa," a twist by using two Puerto Rican folkloric rhythms instead of more traditional Cuban rhythms. "Pueblo Nuevo," an Arsenio Rodriguez composition originally recorded with three trumpets in the 1940's, is given a fresh interpretation here using three flutes.

Llanos is deeply expressive, improvising vocals on both traditional Afro-Cuban standards and more obscure compositions by Hector Rivera and Arsenio Rodriguez (both of which he worked with in New York during the 60's and 70's). Nicki's liner notes express her sentiments about Julian's impressive talents:

"Originally, I intended for this album to be comprised entirely of boleros (a song form characterized by relaxed tempos, sentimental lyrics, and subtle melodies) since that seemed a perfect form for Julian. However, the range and beauty of Julian's voice influenced me to feature him in a variety of other styles such as son, bomba, and cha-cha-cha."

The title track is based on a poem by Julian's uncle. This original descarga (or open jam), written by Llanos and arranged by Denner, tells the story of "El Médico de Coquí", a colloquial term for a folk doctor who travels the countryside healing people using herbs and natural remedies. Although the literal meaning is not used in the title, a coqui is a tiny, yet extremely loud tree frog native to Puerto Rico, and is a uniquely important part of that island's culture.

Nicki Denner's band features accomplished New York City musicians in a rich instrumentation, including Rolando Morales-Matos on bongo, bell, timbales, congas, panderos, & auxiliary percussion; Shai Hayo on coro, cua, maracas, guiro, & clave; Willie Martinez on coro; Jennifer Vincent on bass; Anton Denner on soprano, alto, tenor and baritone saxophones, flute and clarinets; and Mark Miller on trombone.

This is Denner's third project as a leader and producer, and was recorded in New York City in April and September of 2002. It is currently available online through Consilience Productions (cslproductions.com), CD Baby, and iTunes.