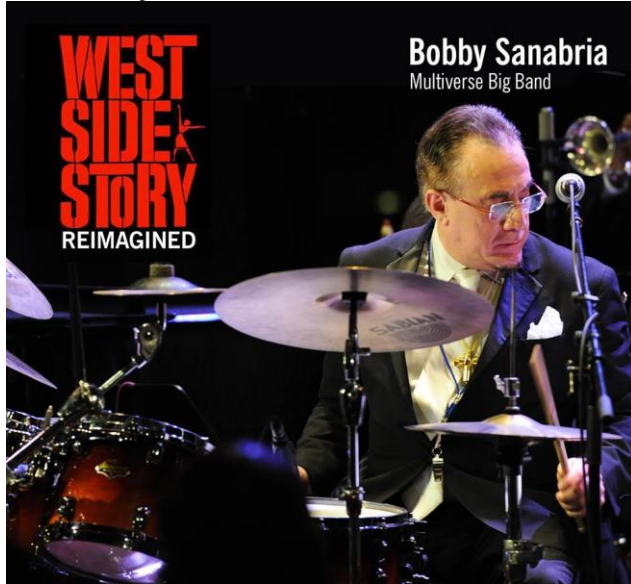


WEEKDAY MAGAZINE

Bobby Sanabria: Gratitude



West Side Story Reimagined by Bobby Sanabria (Bobby Sanabria/Facebook)

by Bobby Sanabria

February 20, 2019

GRATITUDE

Now that the smoke has cleared and the dust has settled I want to let you know, that of course it was disappointing that we didn't get the Grammy award last week. Nobody deserved it more than us on a musical, conceptual, arranging, and performance level – let alone the humanitarian aspect of the recording. Unfortunately I cannot control the politics of the industry, all one can do is be gracious and congratulate all the winners.

As Hyman Roth says to Michael Corleone in Godfather II when they meet in Havana, Cuba and Michael confronts him about an attempt on his life, "This is the business we've chosen..." I want you to realize, awards do not define us. This band is not a vanity project that performs every once and a while with a revolving cast of characters, but a working, breathing entity that has completely changed the landscape of the art of the big band moving the tradition forward and beyond.

It was incontrovertibly documented on our first recording, the Grammy nominated, "Live & In Clave!!!" way back in 2000. If you haven't heard it please do, it was a defining moment in the history of the music. Every subsequent recording we have done with this band has been a Grammy nominated one and in 2018 we celebrated a monumental accomplishment for any big band, our 20th year of existence.

Our "West Side Story Reimagined" recording topped over a dozen 2018 Best of Charts, was the number one jazz recording in the country on Jazz radio, a feature in Downbeat, and had over 40 stellar reviews including the Wall Street Journal which called it a masterpiece. It's a monumental recording standing with the traditions and history of the

music, yet moving the form forward and it was done live in front of a nightclub audience proving once again that as a band we are a force of nature and have no equals.



Bobby Sanabria and his big band (Bobby Sanabria/Facebook)

But what we have to be most proud of and WHAT defines us is how the community at large views us. I'm not talking about fellow musicians. I'm talking about the community who appreciates every single performance we do, respects us, loves us because of the work we do both as an orchestra and as individuals in the fields of education, community outreach, and more.



More than 8,000 people jammed Lincoln Center for 'West Side Story Reimagined'.
(photo: Joe Conzo)

It was demonstrated when over 8,000 fans came to see us at Lincoln Center Out of Doors this past August 10th of 2018. This was the weekend when the Neo-Nazi's marched in Charlottesville. The biggest compliment we got was from an elderly woman who came up to me and said, "I love how you are fighting hate. You've brought this city together." We represent the highest in excellence, artistry, and commitment to the art form. The fact that this orchestra can instantaneously change from a concert jazz orchestra playing the most complex of arrangements to a hardcore big band strictly for dancing is a thing of wonder. THAT is what defines us. I'm proud to be associated with each and everyone of my musicians both on and off the stage and I'm forever grateful to YOU, the fans who supported this project so that the recording could be finished and in turn is helping the musicians of Puerto Rico through its continued sales.

Bobby Sanabria and Jaime Bernstein talk about 'West Side Story Reimagined' on BronxTalk

I'm also forever eternally grateful to the entire Bernstein family, in particular Jamie and our close friend Janis Seigal, for being so supportive of this endeavor. In keeping with this spirit, as a gift to the community we will be doing a special FREE performance of "West Side Story Reimagined" in the heart of the South Bronx at 52 Park on June 2nd (my birthday) of 2019 with special dance choreography by Danza Fiesta. Many thanks to the BMHC (BX Music Heritage Center), and the South BX Culture Trail of Casita Maria. THIS is what defines us, on to the next project! Bobby Sanabria MULTIVERSE Big Band - TRUMPETS: Kevin Bryan (RIP), Sharif Clayton, Max Darché, Andrew Neesley, SAXES:

David Dejesus (alto, soprano, flute), Andrew Gould (alto, flute), Peter Brainin (tenor, flute), Yaacov Mayman (tenor, clarinet, flute), Danny Rivera (bari), TROMBONES: David Miller, Tim Sessions, Armando Vergara, Chris Washburne, FLUTE/PICCOLO: Gabrielle Garo, ELECTRIC VIOLIN: Ben Sutin, RHYTHM: Darwin Noguera (piano), Lep Traversa (electric bass), Orestes Abrantes (congas, vocals, itotele batá), Matthew Gonzalez (bongó/cencerro, barrí/ de bomba, Iyà batá, pandereta), Takao Heisho (guiro macho, clave, cuica, Cuban and Venezuelan maracas, agogo, gong, sirens, cencerro), Bobby Sanabria (Musical Director, drums, police and Brazilian whistles) ARRANGERS: Jeremy Fletcher, Eugene Marlow, Nate Sparks, Takao Heisho, Andrew Neesley, Jeff Lederer, Matt Wong, Niko Siebold, Danny Rivera, Bobby Sanabria.

Aché (positive energy)

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Drummer, composer, arranger, educator, BOBBY SANABRIA is considered one of the most articulate musician-scholars of Latin jazz. Called by JazzTimes magazine a, "...force of nature...," he was the drummer for Mario Bauzá, the legendary creator of the genre. Tenures with Tito Puente, Dizzy Gillespie, Mongo Santamaria, solidify his place in Latin jazz history. His new CD, the Grammy nominated West Side Story Reimagined, a Latin jazz interpretation of Bernstein's immortal score has been hailed a masterpiece.

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