



DVD: Musica Cubana - Amsterdam (2004)

Review Rating: Good

Label/Studio: Icon Entertainment / VSC / MVD Visual

Catalog #: ICO-1593

Region: 0 (NTSC)

Released: April 3, 2007

Genre: Concert / Afro-Cuban Fusion-Jazz

Synopsis: Live concert featuring Pio Leiva and the Sons of Cuba.

Directed by: n/a

Screenplay by: n/a

Music by: Pio Leiva and the Sons of Cuba

Produced by: n/a

Cast: Pio Leiva and the Sons of Cuba

Film Length: 100 mins

Colour

Languages: Spanish Stereo 2.0

Subtitles: _

Process/Ratio: 1.77:1

Anamorphic DVD: Yes

Special Features :

5 Bonus Secondary Concert Extracts: "Fiebre De Ti" (4:17) + "A Buena Vista" (4:57) + "Para Bailar" (5:13) + " Sombrero " (3:23) + "Second Encore" Guanta Namera" (6:32)

Comments :

Musica Cubana: Amsterdam, like the first volume in this 2-part series (sold separately), features a mélange of vintage Cuban and Latin pop-jazz classics, but unlike the **Tokyo** concert DVD, Pio Leiva actually gets more of the spotlight to sing solo and alongside the group's main male vocalists. His first song, "Mi Chiquita Quiere Bailar," is backed by keyboards, congas, and male vocals, and it's probably his best performance in the concert. In the classic "Quantanamera," Leiva's spoken lyrics are effective, but his efforts to croon the melodic parts are very coarse; his difficulty in hitting the right note becomes apparent when the chorus is spot-on, and this is perhaps his weakest moment in an otherwise quite lively concert.

"Lario Lario," also performed in the **Tokyo** concert, is also included here, and is part of the director's more concerted effort to retain moments of audience participation and interaction with the musicians. "Liego El Quachiro De Guanara" is Leiva's final piece, after which he disappears from the concert until the last song of the night.

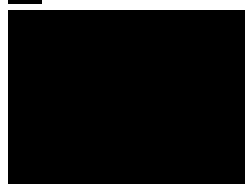
Unlike the edited **Tokyo** concert, there's less of an effort to smoothen the old/new musical elements; the synth pop/rap ditty "Chiki Chaka" was featured as a bonus item on the **Tokyo** disc, and the editors for that production cut from the emcee's live stage intro to an actual music video. In the **Amsterdam** DVD, the live performance is retained, but even near the concert's final third, it feels



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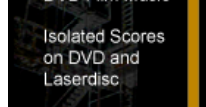


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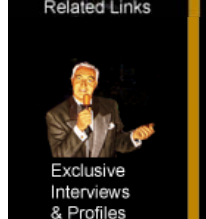
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out of place, given the smaller group of musicians stay within more precise Afro-Cuban jazz demarcations. The "Chiki Chaka" girls and rappers reappear for the night's final song (along with Leiva), though here it's more organic, as the song morphs from Afro-Cuban to light pop, with long chunks of audience interaction.

Of note in this disc are longer stretches of dueling vocals – potent, aggressive, and energetic – and chunks of decent improv and extended instrumental solos, like the conga piece that starts the concert, and rhythmic chunks on piano and percussion in the excellent "La Canta A La Vida." As with traditional jazz performances, every musician gets his moment of improv in the sharply performed "Opus Sonsoneando," which runs for a meaty 10 mins.

Amsterdam lacks *any* formal main title credits (where the heck did they go in the final edit session?), but the DVD includes 5 bonus songs from a second concert somewhere in Holland, featuring a different assembly of musicians (except the lead vocalist, who appears in the **Tokyo** concert).

Unlike the feature-length concert edits, these extracts (which should've been given a Play All option) have song title captions (but again, nothing acknowledging the artists), and the edits glide between dancing audience members and stage performances. Aside from an electric bass and keyboards, the instruments are mostly traditional acoustic, and there's some excellent solo work between vocal parts ("Para Bailar" contains a superb and particularly witty guitar improv).

It's also the most overt attempt to present a more faithful rendition of the original **Buena Vista Social Club** [BVSC] sound. Far behind the musicians is a huge portrait of Leiva, which, without any documentation on the DVD, leaves us to deduce that these segments are perhaps from a tribute concert, after Leiva's passing in 2006. Even from these five concert extracts, this is another tour stop deserving its own DVD release.

Performed songs: "Nadie Baila Como Yo," "Doble Personalidad," "Mi Chiquita Quiere Bailar," "Quanta Namera," "Lario Lario," "Liego El Quachiro De Guanara," "Que Es Lo Que Cae," "Chiki Chaka," "Le Canta A La Vida," "Opus Sonsoneando," "Mala Lengua," and "Anabacoa."

This title is part of a two-part series: [Live in Tokyo](#), and [Live in Amsterdam](#).

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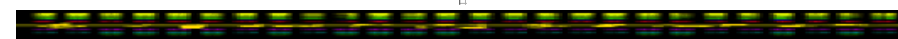
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