

*Nominated for a Latin Grammy
as best instrumental album*

Día y medio

A Day and a Half

Paquito D'Rivera

Berta Rojas

11 Grammy Award Winner Paquito D'Rivera pairs with guitarist extraordinaire, Berta Rojas on an exciting and singular duet. Together, they pay tribute to jewels of the Paraguayan musical tradition including pieces by the great composer Agustin Barrios. Together they present a program that is attractive and fun to listen to, which received unanimous critical accolades:

"Día y Medio (A Day and a Half) is the staggering new collaborative album by Berta Rojas and Paquito D'Rivera.

In a word, Paraguay has much to celebrate and the world should be celebrating with them, especially in the new-found exposure to the amazing music of this amazing country. This new CD from Rojas and D'Rivera is the soundtrack of rediscovery and celebration. Rojas and D'Rivera perform so unabashedly and so flawlessly that one might lose sight of the musicianship as the beauty of the compositions shine through the perfect playing of each piece. This is what they have created—a partnership that has shined the spotlight on the composers and the music instead of their own unique virtuosity. This is rare. They make the listener hear Paraguay."

Travis Rogers, Jr *The Jazz Times*

"Virtuous and moving"

Terra *Argentina*

"After a Caribbean arrangement of 'Las Abejas,' it was time for nostalgia with songs that were played in Cuba during the saxophonist's childhood: 'Memories of Ypacarai' arranged by Costa Rican, Edin Solis; a modern and melancholic 'Pajaro Chogui,' combined with bits of 'Galopera'... very high level of interpretation."

ABC Color *Paraguay*

"Classical guitarist Berta Rojas is more than just another renowned concert artist; she is the international cultural ambassador of her homeland, Paraguay. As such, she's long been on a one woman crusade to make better known the under appreciated classical music of this small South American nation. On Día y medio (OnMusic Recordings), a program of 12 duets with Cuban clarinetist and saxophonist Paquito D'Rivera, Rojas focuses on the compositions of Agustín Barrios and other 20th century Paraguayan composers whose work is largely unknown and begs more attention.

Some works, such as Demitrio Ortiz's winsome "Recuerdos de Ypacarai," saunter gently while others, thanks to the incorporation of rhythms created by the indigenous Guaraní people, boast a more robust character and complex structure. Día y medio is much more than just a celebration of virtuosity for its own sake; its entrancing performances are alive with the spirit of a distant land that has spawned a profusion of elegant and intriguing music."

Mark Holston *Latino Magazine*



Mangoré. This regional project aims to bring music of Agustín Barrios "Mangoré" to lands covered during his journey through the Americas. The trip is planned in 3 stages carried out visiting Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Honduras, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Panama, Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago, among others, culminating in El Salvador where Agustín Barrios spent his last days. Local artists open the show and then start tunes of Berta's classical guitar and Paquito's unmistakable sound on sax and clarinet.

The CD **"Día y medio" (A Day and a Half)** is a result of this tour, in which both perform works by internationally known Paraguayan composers. The album title refers to Paquito's comment saying that a day and a half is not enough to know the Paraguay. Thus was born the idea of giving a new rhythm and fresh air to music with Paraguayan roots.



PROGRAM PIECES:

Agustín Barrios

- Las Abejas
- Maxixe
- Caazapá
- Choro de Saudade
- Danza Paraguaya
- Preludio en Do Menor

Demetrio Ortiz

- Recuerdos de Ypacaraí
- Mis noches sin ti

Herminio Giménez

- Che trompo arasá

José Asunción Flores

- Cholí

Mario Clavel

- Quisiera Ser

Guillermo Breer

Mauricio Cardozo Ocampo

- Pajaro Chogüí – Galopera

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Berta Rojas

Berta Rojas is a guitarist who moves easily between classical and other genres of music. Rojas has captivated music-lovers in the Americas, Europe, and Asia. Most notably, she has appeared at both the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and the Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York. In 2004, she opened the International First Ladies Summit in Paraguay with special guest Hillary Rodham Clinton. Praised by the Washington Post as a "guitarist extraordinaire," and by London's Classical Guitar Magazine as "Ambassador of the Classical Guitar," her musicianship and warmth make her an audience favorite.

The Kennedy Center has recognized **Rojas'** artistic excellence by selecting her as a Fellow of the Americas for the Performing Arts. She holds a Masters Degree in Music from Baltimore's prestigious Peabody Conservatory.

Beyond her musical talents, **Rojas** is committed to supporting South American artists. She is currently working as the director of the Barrios WorldWideWeb Competition, the first international guitar competition to take place via YouTube. She also directs the Ibero-american Guitar Festival held annually in Washington DC.

Critics have spared no praise about the quality of her performances:

"90 minutes maintained at the highest level of performance and interpretation"

Colin Cooper Classical Guitar Magazine / October 07

"The performance Paraguayan guitarist Berta Rojas gives on this enterprising, very entertaining new release is top class from beginning to end. Her phenomenal seemingly effortless technical ability allows her the luxury of presenting some very difficult works with finesse and beauty."

Steve Marsh Classical Guitar Magazine / Octubre 07

".. an ambassador for the Classical guitar.."

Tim Panting Classical Guitar Magazine / Diciembre 07

"Only once in a great while does a classical CD come along which is so impeccable in every aspect of professionalism—heart touching musical artistry, interesting repertoire, and excellent technical production. Paraguayan guitarist Berta Rojas' 'Cielo Abierto' is one of these."

Jim McCutcheon Soundboard / Diciembre 07



Paquito D'Rivera

Born in Cuba, Paquito D'Rivera began his career as a prodigy child. He is a founding member of the Orquesta Cubana de Musica Moderna leading the group for two years while simultaneously playing the saxophone and clarinet with the National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba. He is also a founding member and co-director of the innovative musical ensemble Irakere, which was nominated for several Grammy awards. He won one of them in 1970.

Paquito received a total of 11 Grammy Awards for Funk Tango, and Riberas y Merengue, among others. In 2005, President George W. Bush presented him with the National Medal of Arts at the White House. Paquito D'Rivera is the first artist to win a Latin Grammy in the categories of Classical Music for The Soldier's Tale (L'Histoire du Soldat) by Stravinsky and Brazilian Dreams with The New York Voices.

In addition to his 30 solo albums of jazz, bebop and Latin music, his contributions to classical music are impressive and include performances with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Symphony, the Warsaw Philharmonic, the Baltimore Symphony, among others. Paquito has also acquired a reputation as a composer of great dynamism, recognized in 2007 with the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in music composition.

"...Best that night was Paquito D'Rivera's, 'Gran Danzón' (The Bel Air Concerto) in its world premiere. A spiky and imaginatively colored piece of Latin American orchestral writing..."

Joe Banno Washington Post / Febrero 2002

"...'"Gran Danzón' ...this dazzling work...reveals D'Rivera's sophistication as a composer..."

L. Peat O'Neal Washington Post / Junio 2002

"...The Second half became a Paquito D'Rivera show. Mr. D'Rivera, a gifted saxophonist and clarinetist has become the man to call if you want a concert-hall presentation of Pan-Latin music. All in rich Carnegie Hall-style arrangements . . . Mr. D'Rivera is a formidable musician, and in his clarinet playing, with lovely, clear low registers and never a squeaked high note. He was at his best..."

Ben Rattliff New York Times / Saturday November 01