


Okónkolo

Bohemian Trio



Yosvany Terry | Yves Dharamraj | Orlando Alonso





Producer: Adam Abeshouse and Bohemian Trio

Recorded by Adam Abeshouse, at Adam Abeshouse Studio, 2016

Mixed and Mastered: Adam Abeshouse

Photo: Laura Razzano

Graphic design: Lisa Walters Designs

Innova Director: Philip Blackburn

Operations Director: Chris Campbell

Publicist: Steve McPherson

Innova is supported by an endowment from the McKnight Foundation.

THANK YOU: First and foremost to our families for their support during this amazing journey to release our first album; to Adam Abeshouse, for his wisdom as a recording engineer, producer, and musician; to Tania Leon for giving us the opportunity to make our debut on the Composers Now Festival at Symphony Space; to all the composers whose music we perform on this album -- Pedro Giraudo, Manuel Valera, Maurice Ravel, Andre Previn, and Yosvany Terry -- many of which are our friends and colleagues who dedicated their time and talent to write specifically for the trio. We would also like to thank Amilcar Navarro, Makoto Matsuo, Artem Kulakov, and Jeff Davidson for their extraordinary help in providing video materials for the trio since our first performance.

Okónkolo

Bohemian Trio



Yves Dharamraj | Yosvany Terry | Orlando Alonso





Okónkolo

Bohemian Trio

The first thing you notice when listening to this remarkable trio is the sheer beauty of the playing. At the fore is phrasing and feeling and technique, careful listening to one another, and a determination to express something meaningful.

After the initial effects of Bohemian Trio's sound penetrate the sensibilities, other aspects of the performance begin to demand attention. One could easily succumb to that indefatigable tendency to question everything — and I suppose it's fine to do so; it is part of our natural impulse to want to make sense of things. Does that phrase sound a little like Ralph Vaughan Williams? Is that a jazz tune or merely jazzy? What to make of those Afro-Cuban rhythms, that bit of percussion, those improvisatory passages?

And isn't this an odd configuration: piano, reeds and cello?

Bohemian Trio consists of saxophonist-composer Yosvany Terry, pianist Or-

lando Alonso and cellist Yves Dharamraj. Terry and Alonso, Cuban-born and trained, and the French-American Dharamraj (who is part Trinidadian) are paving a new course, one that wholly relies on their refined abilities while embracing that dangerous, edgy quality one finds in complex jazz and lots of contemporary classical music.

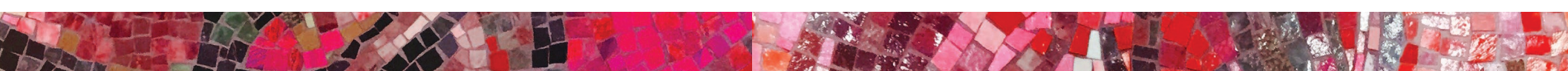
Terry and Alonso studied at the rigorous and reputable music conservatory that's part of Cuba's National Art Schools before coming to New York City. Alonso furthered his studies at the Manhattan School of Music and the Juilliard School. Terry has attended Juilliard and the Mannes School of Music where he has concentrated on composition.

In 2012, the two Cuban expats discussed forming a group in order to explore ways to develop and share a new kind of music. Well, not exactly a new kind of music but, rather, a particular, original way of playing music that's an

amalgamation of their abilities and interests. They wanted a third colleague, and not someone who plays a typical jazz instrument such as upright bass or trumpet or drums. Alonso suggested a friend, cellist Dharamraj, with whom he had once collaborated.

That would be enough. Drums would give them no significant advantage; Cuban rhythms would be sufficient to drive their music. And they liked the idea of a trio: "Three forces creativity," Terry says.

The result is a kind of chamber music, rooted in the classical tradition, that's profoundly informed by the musical practices of the Americas, especially the Caribbean and Cuba. All three players are masters of their respective instruments. Listening to, say, the trio's arrangement of Ravel's Passacaille from the Piano Trio in A minor or Prelude No. 5 from Andre Previn's "Invisible Drummer," one could easily imagine Alonso performing works by Scarlatti or Chopin or Philip Glass or





any number of other classical composers. He is a sensitive accompanist and an agile and robust soloist. Much of the trio's propulsive energy come from him.

Dharamraj's cello adds a surprising range of tonal and emotional content to the music. In "Push Gift" by Pedro Giraudo, he takes center stage, driving the tune forward with syncopated fury. In "Impromptu No. 1 — For Gershwin" by Manuel Valera, he adds beautiful harmony and texture, and he anchors the song with phrasing in the lower register as, Alonso plays a romantic, swirling solo, followed by Terry whose soprano sax oozes a high melody with elegance.

Giraudo, an Argentine bass player and composer who lives in New York City, also wrote the short tune "Hiroshima" for the trio. Valera is a Cuban pianist and composer in New York City. Both are friends of Terry. Both are active in the city's contemporary jazz scene.

In pursuing its brand of music-making, Bohemian Trio is fortunate to have a composer in residence. Terry contributed four tunes to the new CD "Okónkolo" which showcase his impressive gifts. His

compositions reveal an intimate merging of creative impulse and technical ability. He knows what the instruments are capable of achieving, and he knows how to push his colleagues (and himself) to produce music whose fascinating individual parts combine into a mesmerizing whole.

"Bohemia (Recuerdos de Infancia)" is a fine example of Terry's multifaceted approach. It begins with the chromaticism of the late-Romantic era, then launches into a modal section reminiscent of eastern European folk music. Dharamraj takes over about midway through, offering a solo enriched with soulful slides and shimmering harmonics. "Bohemia" develops these two sections in various ways, with Terry's saxophone doubling the melody in the cello and offering its own lovely flourishes while Alonso commands the piano as though he were performing a Schumann trio.

The CD concludes with the title track, "Okónkolo," which imports Yoruba rhythms and pays tribute to the important influence of West African culture on Cuba. Undergirded by a swinging dance rhythm, the song includes hints of Brazilian choro, Argentine tango and Cuban

rumba, all packaged as contemporary jazz. It's an exciting conclusion to an exciting commercial debut.

This music might be understood as a product of a generation of musicians who are ostensibly active in jazz circles but who are conservatory trained and well acquainted with both the classical music of Europe and the classical songs and rhythms of Latin America and the Caribbean. In religious and cultural practice, the combining of traditions produce an altogether new system, itself vibrant, full of joy and sorrow, informed in no small measure by the past. The academic term for this is syncretism.

We might think of Bohemian Trio as the result of a particular kind of syncretism, a commingling of various musical styles and lived experiences, and this can help us as we seek to explain the group's generous display of talent.

Or we can just listen and marvel at the beauty of it.

Adam Parker
Charleston, South Carolina
September 3, 2016





Okónkolo

Bohemian Trio

Orlando Alonso Pianist

Yves Dharamraj Cellist

Yosvany Terry Saxophonist & Percussionist

- 1** Tarde en la Lisa, **Yosvany Terry** **7:22**
- 2** Push Gift, **Pedro Giraudo** **7:04**
- 3** Impromptu No. 1 -- For Gershwin, **Manuel Valera** **5:59**
- 4** Bohemia (Recuerdos de Infancia), **Yosvany Terry** **7:41**
- 5** Prelude No. 5 from Invisible Drummer, **Andre Previn** --
Punto Cubano de Domingo, **Yosvany Terry** **13:32**
- 6** Hiroshima, **Pedro Giraudo** **3:08**
- 7** Passacaille from Piano Trio in A minor, **Maurice Ravel, arr. Bohemian Trio** **7:25**
- 8** Okónkolo (Trio Concertante), **Yosvany Terry** **8:50**



innova is the label of the American Composers Forum.
©©ASCAP & BMI, 2017. All Rights Reserved.
www.innova.mu www.bohemiantrio.com