



SHARON LYNNE WILSON

CENTER FOR THE ARTS

FALL 2009

QUARTER NOTES

Newsletter of the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts

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Wilson Center presents *Danzón*

This fall, the Wilson Center offers a recipe for pure joy and pulsing energy. Take one sizzling Latin dance company, add a dash of an effusive chamber jazz quartet, and a pinch of a prolific composer and performer, and *sopreiza!* You get *Danzón*!

On Saturday, November 14, Chicago's **Luna Negra Dance Theater**, the Turtle Island Quartet, and Paquito D'Rivera will perform a new work of an old dance as part of the Wilson Center's Performing Arts Series. *Danzón*, once the official dance of Cuba, originally evolved from the Haitian contradance—a consistent pattern of movement with the phrasing of music. Given Luna Negra's reputation for fast-paced, high energy contemporary ballet, there is no doubt that choreographer Eduardo Vilaro has reinvented and reinvigorated this traditional dance form.

Unlike most dance performances, the *Danzón* event features live music with the multi-GRAMMY® award-winning **Turtle Island Quartet** and **Paquito D'Rivera**.

Turtle Island is the name the Native American Indians gave to the North American continent. The Turtle Island Quartet is known for its focus on music of the Americas—fusing jazz and chamber music and even sometimes throwing a little bluegrass or folk into the mix. This unparalleled approach explains the two



Luna Negra Dance Theater Photo: Kristie Kahns

GRAMMYS® for *Best Classical Crossover Album* in 2005 and 2007. As one reviewer from the *Orange County Register* explained, "The [Quartet] hasn't so much crossed over between genres as much as it has embraced and absorbed them." You will be able to experience this crossover first hand when the Quartet performs on the Wilson Center's Jazz Club Series **Friday, November 13**, the night before *Danzón*. The Friday night program, *A Love Supreme: The Legacy of John Coltrane*, showcases Turtle Island's well-versed improvisation in its tribute to a jazz legend.

The genesis of the *Danzón* project began in 2002 when the nine-time GRAMMY® winner D'Rivera approached the Quartet with several compositions and arrangements of traditional *Danzón* music. After some improvisational jam sessions at D'Rivera's home, David Balakrishnan,

Turtle Island founder, violinist, and also a composer and arranger, described the alliance as a "wonderful intersection" of classical and jazz sounds and styles. With help from a Chamber Music America grant, a recording and subsequent tour of *Danzón* ensued for the five musicians. Not too long after the recording and the tour, Luna Negra's Vilaro heard the music and was inspired to create a project with his dancers. Commissioned by Chicago's Harris Theater, the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center at the University of Notre Dame, and the Music Center at Strathmore, *Danzón* premieres at the Harris on October 17.

With Turtle Island's improvisational style of music-making and D'Rivera's spontaneous jazz approach, playing the same exact notes for every dance performance could be a creative energy killer.

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Mission

To be the catalyst for lifelong discovery and exploration of the arts.

Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts

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Danzón
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While that thought may have crossed Balakrishnan's mind in the beginning, he soon realized that his role as an accompanying musician for the project provided new insight. He explained that he "wasn't just a witness to the dance, but inextricably linked as well as completely inspired. It was like seeing the musical notes on stage through the bodies of the dancers."

Wilson Center audiences have the rare opportunity to experience the confluence of both audible and visible art forms with Danzón coming to the Kuttemperoor stage in November.

Tickets for *Danzón* start at \$25. For more information, to watch a *Luna Negra* video, or to purchase tickets, visit wilson-center.com.



Turtle Island Quartet Photo: Peter Serling

Three Days in November

Luna Negra Dance Theater and Turtle Island Quartet take up residency at the Wilson Center

With artists as innovative as the Luna Negra Dance Theater and the Turtle Island Quartet, one stunning performance just isn't enough. Tapping into the versatility and creativity of these artists, the Wilson Center has put them to work for several activities showcasing their talents.

- **Luna Negra school group performances**
Thursday, November 12, 10:30 am and 12:30 pm

This special performance is designed to engage young audiences in the creative and playful development of several dance pieces, introduced and narrated by the company's artistic staff. For group or single tickets, contact the box office at (262) 781-9520.

- **Workshop for Educators**
Thursday, November 12
Teachers of all disciplines will explore creative ways to use dance throughout the curriculum, engaging students in new and dynamic learning. For information, contact Laura Aaron Sear, Education Director, at (262) 781-9470, x5037.

- **Turtle Island Quartet evening performance**
Friday, November 13, 8:00 pm *A Love Supreme: The Music of John Coltrane*. For tickets, contact the box office at (262) 781-9520, or purchase online at wilson-center.com.
- **Luna Negra Dance Theater with special guests Turtle Island Quartet and Paquito D'Rivera evening performance**
Saturday, November 14, 8:00 pm *Danzón*
Join the artists for a post-performance Q&A! For performance tickets, contact the box office at (262) 781-9520, or purchase online at wilson-center.com.

Danzón is supported by the Performing Arts Fund, a program of Arts Midwest funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional contributions from Wisconsin Arts Board, General Mills Foundation, and Land O'Lakes Foundation.



Paquito D'Rivera

Photo: Lane Pederson

