



The Vibesman

Mike Freeman ZonaVibe

VOF Recordings

Mike Freeman is a New York City-based jazz vibe player. He was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska and studied with Bobby Christian before graduating from DePaul University in Chicago. The music on this CD is Latin jazz and is reminiscent of the great Cal Tjader.

Freeman states in the liner notes that the inspiration for one tune was based specifically on Tjader's "I've Waited So Long." In listening to all the tracks, one cannot help but hear a connection between Freeman and the late vibe master.

"MongoMarley" is reminiscent of "Afro-Blue," and "Too Groovy" is loosely based on the Sergio Mendes tune "Groovy Samba." The percussionists on this CD, Papo Pepin on congas/bongos and Harry Adorno on timbales, are outstanding and give the Afro-Cuban tracks their authentic feel and sound. Rueben Rodriguez's great bass lines along with Mauricio Smith's flute playing helps give the ensemble its classic Latin jazz sound.

Freeman's improvisations are excellent, and all the compositions are well crafted and skillfully arranged. I highly recommend this CD, as Freeman is not only carrying on the great Latin jazz vibe tradition, but is also bringing his unique voice and substantial contributions to the genre.

—Jeff Moore

Mike Freeman ZonaVibe "The Vibesman"

10 Weeks Jazzweek Radio Chart #26 July 30, 2012
Several Weeks Roots Music Chart #9 July 20, 2012

Pre-Nomination round of the
Grammy Awards and Latin Grammy Awards



Columns ⊕ ⊕ ⊕

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A BITE FROM THE APPLE

By Vicki Solá

Fronting the band called Zona-Vibe, vibraphonist **Mike Freeman** (known for his work with Lucho Cueto's Black Sugar) has released the CD titled "The Vibesman" (VOF Recordings). "I've enjoyed performing and recording with some of the best Latin musicians around for many years now," says Freeman. "In addition to the great cast of rhythm section players and other guests I was fortunate enough to work with here, it was especially satisfying to include a good friend from my college days, Jim Gailloro. His addition deepened the cultural mix and brought in a taste of the rich Chicago tenor saxophone tradition. I like the fact that the music for this recording is very diverse in style and sound, but all of it feels good and grooves in its own way. There's a lot of different things going on musically and I find that it's still fresh and enjoyable to listen to, even after hearing it many times over."

Freeman, who has also worked with Ray Mantilla's Good Vibrations Band and José Mangual/Jimmy Sabater's Son Boricua, is currently co-leading a recording project, in conjunction with salsa singer Julio Salgado.