



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**HAROLD LÓPEZ-NUSSA SIGNS WITH BLUE NOTE RECORDS &
RELEASES VIBRANT NEW SINGLE “FUNKY” FROM HIS FORTHCOMING
LABEL DEBUT *TIMBA A LA AMERICANA* OUT AUG. 25**

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Pianist and composer **Harold López-Nussa** has signed with **Blue Note Records** and announced an August 25 release date for his striking label debut [*Timba a la Americana*](#), a vibrant album teeming with joy and pathos that was inspired by the pianist’s recent decision to leave his Cuban homeland and begin a new life in France. Produced by **Michael League** (Snarky Puppy), *Timba a la Americana* presents 10 dynamic new original compositions performed by a tight-knit band featuring harmonica virtuoso **Grégoire Maret**, **Luques Curtis** on bass, **Bárbaro “Machito” Crespo** on congas, and Harold’s brother **Ruy Adrián**

López-Nussa on drums. The album is introduced by the irrepressible lead track “**Funky**,” which is available to stream or download today.

[WATCH THE OFFICIAL VIDEO FOR “FUNKY”](#)



López-Nussa has been building a global following over the past two decades since winning the prestigious Montreux Jazz Piano Competition in 2005. He has captivated audiences across the world with his thrilling performances, released nine acclaimed albums as a leader, and was featured as part of the 2011 all-star project Ninety Miles with Stefon Harris, David Sanchez, and Christian Scott. Born into a musical family in Havana, his music reflects the full range and richness of the Cuban musical tradition with its distinctive combination of folkloric, popular, and classical elements, as well as its embrace of improvisation.

“I’d been talking with Don for some time when I was still in Havana,” López-Nussa recalls of his conversations with Blue Note President **Don Was**. “We’d have these discussions just talking about music – records he loves, records I love. Eventually it became about me joining Blue Note. After the contract was done, that was a heavy moment for me. I felt this huge responsibility because of the history of the label. Don totally understood that. He had a lot of confidence in us, which gave us confidence. He wanted us to do what we were feeling, what we wanted to share.”

López-Nussa felt a strong urge to escape the conventional thinking about song form and structure that’s defined Latin jazz since the 1950s. In collaboration with League, the bassist and founder of Snarky Puppy, the two sought new settings for the clave patterns that are the heartbeat of Cuban music. They grabbed elements of danzon, the foundational dance that began in Matanzas in the late 1800s, and the stately son tumbao riffs that frame the songs of Beny More and so many others. They worked with ancient bata drum rhythms used to summon the deities, then incorporated them into the choppy polyrhythmic agitations of modern improvising collectives. They linked the catcalling mambos of Dizzy Gillespie and Machito to modern ideas about song structure.

The result is López-Nussa’s most expansive and ambitious work to date, a provocative, lavishly colorful song cycle that amounts to a top-to-bottom modernization of Latin jazz. Cuba provides the anchoring point of origin; from there López-Nussa and his band volley ideas in a spirit of cosmopolitan modernity that transcends regions and genres and eras.

Timba also marks the first time López-Nussa has recorded using electric instruments and synthesizers. “Michael really encouraged me to explore that this time. We had this nice Rhodes and then he brought in some other equipment and we got really into mixing these electronic sounds. That was directly because of Michael. He understood about my need to respect tradition, but he also picked up on my restlessness. He got me out of being comfortable.”

López-Nussa credits League with cultivating a creative fearlessness in the studio. “He wants whatever can expand the possibilities – he just gets ideas flying around. And what amazed me, as we went on, was how he stayed inside the energy we had when we first played together.”

“There are some tunes you can think of as having the classic rhythms from long ago, rumba and conga and so on,” López-Nussa says. “Then there are some tunes where the foundational rhythm is not that obvious, and there is some complexity, which I also love. But I didn’t want to lose the groove. I love to dance and I always love it when people are dancing. It says to me that the music is alive.”



PHOTO BY PAULO VITALE

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