



Gabriel Alegría Bio

One of the most influential figures on the current jazz scene in Perú, Gabriel Alegría was born into an artistic family in Lima in 1970. Alegría's grandfather Ciro was Peru's most famous novelist and his father Alonso is Perú's most acclaimed playwright.

The Afro-Peruvian Sextet currently tours in support of their latest release *Pucusana* (August 2010) which includes the singles "Taita Guaranguito" and "Pucusana" representing the Peruvian landó and festejo sounds respectively. The recording includes guest appearances by Russell Ferrante and Arturo O'Farril as well as the band's permanent members Freddy "Huevito" Lobatón, Hugo Alcázar, Laura Andrea Leguía and Yuri Juárez. The bass chair on the album is shared between Ramon DeBruyn and John Benitez.

Alegría combines his experience playing jazz as it developed in the U.S. with a passionate interest and careful study of the black music of coastal Perú. By incorporating and exploring the common African roots found in both styles, he has developed a uniquely Afro-Peruvian jazz music concept. The rich legacy of the black music of coastal Perú can be heard in a contemporary jazz context. In all of Alegría's work, a cross-cultural exchange between the Americas is always present, carefully defining Afro-Peruvian jazz music as the newest voice to come from Latin America.

Alegría's 2008 release *Nuevo Mundo*, on Saponegro Records, soared to the top of both Jazz Week World Music charts and CMJ's jazz charts, staying on the air for more than 6 months. The CD includes collaborations with jazz artists Tierney Sutton, Bobby Shew, Russell Ferrante and Bill Watrous as well as with the formidable native Afro-Peruvian artists Freddy "Huevito" Lobaton (Peruvian percussion – *cajon*, *quijada*, *cajita*), Hugo Alcazar (drums), Jocho Velazquez (acoustic guitar) and Joscha Oetz (bass). The CD, which includes six compositions by Alegría and his Afro-Peruvian jazz arrangement of the Gershwin classic "Summertime," represents his most varied work as a trumpeter and composer to date.

Most recently Gabriel completed the groundbreaking "Tour Peru", a new model in touring that included fans that accompanied the Afro-Peruvian Sextet throughout Peru. He has also performed concerts for the United Nations and various diplomatic missions from around the world. The Afro-Peruvian Sextet has appeared in over 400 concerts and master classes throughout North America. During the course of a career that has spanned the globe, Alegría has appeared in concert and/or on recordings with Arturo O'Farrill, Maria Schneider, Plácido Domingo, Kenny Werner, Ingrid Jensen, Tierney Sutton, The Peruvian National Symphony, Bill Watrous, Russ Ferrante and Alex Acuña.

Currently Associate Director of Jazz Studies at New York University, Alegria earned a doctorate in jazz studies from the University of Southern California, a master's degree from the City University of New York and a bachelor's degree from Kenyon College. His knowledge of Afro-Peruvian music is the result of fieldwork and time spent in Perú learning from the art form's greatest exponents.