

Elemental

by AGUANKÓ

There is much to recommend about "Elemental". The balance of ballads to bright, catchy tunes is perfect. The photos and graphics are sensitive and elegantly artistic. And, the recording quality is stellar: As I listened, I recalled the crystalline audio quality of Dizzy Gillespie's "Fiesta Mojo". Try the comparison and I think you'll hear what I mean. I think you'll hear "Elemental" by Aguankó on WEMU for years to come.

Linda Yohn, WEMU, 2013



Alberto Nacif: Born in Oaxaca, México, where Cuban derived rhythms were part of the everyday music, began playing congas at a young age. Originator and host of the Cuban Fantasy program on WEMU-FM for 10 years, Alberto studied and honed his percussion skills with top Cuban master drummers, and is a devoted life-long student of the drum. He has performed nationally and internationally with Dizzy Gillespie, John Faddis, Jane Bunnett, Munequitos de Matanzas, Arturo Sandoval, and Frank Emilio Flynn.

He has recorded with the Lunar Octet, Francisco Mora, Marcus Belgrave, Tumbao, Tumbao Bravo. Nacif was also on the board of directors at U of M's prestigious University Musical Society and was instrumental in hosting many Cuban music shows including Tito Puente, Celia Cruz, Albita, El Canario, Arturo Sandoval, Afro Cuban All Stars, Buena Vista Social Club, Ibrahim Ferrer, Cubanismo! and Los Muñequitos de Matanzas. His recording of Aguankó "Elemental" culminates a life-long dream to create a recording of his original compositions.

Jose "Pepe" Espinosa: Born in Havana, Cuba, in one of the best known and most versatile percussionists today. A veteran of over 80 recordings, his extensive resume boasts tours with Cubanismo, the AfroCuban All Stars, Arturo Sandoval, Chucho Valdés, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Frank Emilio Flynn, and many other orchestras and small groups. His vast knowledge as a professional musician in so many different settings along with his expertise in the recording studio make him an ideal partner in Aguankó's debut recording "Elemental". His musicianship and guidance have helped this recording to be a successful, high-quality release. His work in the studio included recording timbal, bongo, and small Percussion instruments, but also in mixing (along with Alberto Nacif and studio engineer Geoff Michael) to achieve the special sound of this recording. The recording mix and final aural qualities are truly exceptional! **Look for Jose "Pepe" Espinosa's first CD release as a leader later this year!**



Wesley Reynoso: Born in La Isabela, Dominican Republic, has studied at the Instituto de Musica Sagrada in San Juan, Puerto Rico; The French Conservatory; Harlem School of the Arts; Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. Reynoso has played alongside some of the greatest musicians in the industry including: salsa greats like Alfredo De La Fe, Rey De La Paz, Paquito Guzman, Herman Olivera, and Hector Tricoche; and jazz greats like James Carter, Café Da Silva, Romero Lubambo, Paul Keller, Joe Lovano, Steve Turre, and Antonio Sanchez. He has also performed with Latin jazz artists such as Memo Acevedo, Richie Flores, Luis Quintero, Roberto Quintero, Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros, the late Patato Valdez, and Dave Valentin, and most recently with his Wesley Reynoso Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra in New York City, and also with vocalist Thalia. His stylish playing and profound understanding of Latin-Jazz piano make him an exciting performer to see and hear.