

Music Diplomacy of Cuban Timba Band Los Van Van



Los Van Van is a major timba music band in Cuba. And the ensemble is prepping for its fifth tour in the United States to promote his latest album “La Fantasía” (The Fantasy), according to a report published by the Albuquerque Journal on Sunday.

The group will perform in Plaza Mayor at National Hispanic Cultural Center on Wednesday, August 19. Besides Albuquerque, they are appearing in Washington, D.C., New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Denver and Miami.

Los Van Van is known for their high-energy sets that focus on Cuban music. The band has released more than two dozen albums since 1969 . The most recent is 2014’s “La Fantasía.” This also will be the first U.S. tour without the founder, Juan Formell, who died in 2014.

His son, Samuel Formell, is the director of the band and its drummer. He says coming to the United States for a tour is an honor now that there are diplomatic ties between the two countries.

In addition to the Los Van Van concert, a Cuban film series has been airing at the NHCC.

The third and final screening will take place on 7 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 20. The screening is free to the public.

"Habanastation" is a 2011 drama directed by Ian Padrón. It was filmed in western Havana and addresses inequalities in Cuba through the relationship between two children of different social strata.

The film was submitted as the Cuban entry for Best Foreign Language Film at the 84th Academy Awards.

Officials at the NHCC say the concert will be a huge celebration, with dance demonstrations, DJs, dining options from M'Tucci's Cocina Grill and its sister restaurant M'Tucci's Italian Restaurant, paletas from Pop Fizz and an after party at The Library.

The band has a [Grammy Award](#) to their credit, the 2000 Latin Grammy awarded to the album *Van Van is Here* ('Llegó Van Van').

In January 2010 "A Cali," a song from Van Van's latest album was selected as one of the winning songs of the 2009 [Cali Fair](#) held in the Cali (Colombia), a city known as Colombia's "salsa capital". The selection was made through a public poll that registered 30,742 votes. Van Van's "A Cali" received 7,905 of the votes, or 26% of the total.

Los Van Van has consistently managed to adapt its style to the times, and remains, after 35 years, Cuba's most popular dance band.

Los Van Van has been a school for outstanding singers and musicians. Past members with successful careers as solo artists include Pedro Calvo, Angel Bonne, [Changuito](#), José Luis "El Tosco" Cortés (founder of the first timba band [NG La Banda](#)), Cesar "Pupy" Pedrosó and others.

Los Van Van lineup of singers has also included Mayito Rivera, Roberto Hernandez "Roberton", Yeni Valdes and Lele Rosales. During 2011 Mayito Rivera left the band going for a solo career and was replaced by Mandy Cantero.

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