

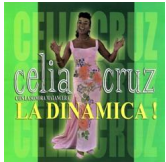
## Celia Cruz con La Sonora Matancera - La Dinamica! (1991)

Wpisany przez bluelover

Wtorek, 19 Czerwiec 2012 16:32 - Zmieniony Piątek, 24 Lipiec 2015 20:51

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*01. Tamborilero 02. Juntitos Tu Y Yo 03. Cuidate Bien 04. Baila Baila Vicente 05. Lalle Lalle 06. Nadie Me Lo Quita 07. Al Vaiven De Palmeras 08. Tumba La Cana Jibarito 09. Sigo Esperando 10. Para Tu Altar 11. Resurge El Omelenko 12. No Hay Nada Mejor*

Celia Cruz. No doubt about it, there have been few singers in the world in the same league as Celia Cruz. Often compared to Ella Fitzgerald or Sarah Vaughan, she had a star on Hollywood's "Walk of Fame" and was made Doctor Honoris Causa at Yale University even though her English was far from impeccable. But above all, for the past 40 years she was UNANIMOUSLY hailed the Queen of Salsa ; that alone was something of a feat. Charismatic with a devastating amount of energy, the exceptional singer Celia Cruz was born in Barrio Santo Suarez, a little town near Havana (Cuba) on 21 October 1924. Her talent for singing was noticed during her teenage years. The story goes that the neighbours would even go to listen at the door to hear her singing lullabies to her little brothers and sisters. Her career was mostly a classical one. Encouraged by one of her cousins, she took part in a singing contest organised by the Cuban radio. She won hands down, joined the conservatory of music and was later engaged by one of the most popular Cuban orchestras of the time, La Sonora Matancera. Their singer -Myrta Silva- had left the group and Celia arrived at just the right time. At first, Myrta Silva's fans were strongly against Celia who they took for an imposter. But the Cuban radio and the group were behind her. In 1951 the first album by La Sonora Matancera featuring Celia Cruz was released. A series of international tours followed (Latin America, the Caribbean, the United States, Europe...), films, television shows etc which brought the Lady of Salsa little by little to the forefront. The turning point in Celia Cruz's career came during a tour by La Sonora Matancera in the Americas. It was 1960, Fidel Castro had taken power one year earlier. In Mexico, Celia decided to leave Cuba and move to New York. The Latino community in exile, especially the Porto Ricans of which many lived in New York, welcomed her with open arms, asking her to be their spokesperson. She refused to play such a clearly political role, but naturally became a symbol, not only for Cubans and Porto Ricans but also for Colombians, Mexicans, Argentineans... in other words, all Hispanics. "My English is not even that good, she admitted. And then there are words that cannot be translated. The word "Sugar" does not have the same flavour as our "Azucar !" ("Azucaaaaaaar !" was her war cry, a word she pronounced in her very

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own special way, an exclamation often heard during her songs).

Over the years, Celia Cruz made some historic recordings. Her collaborations with Tito Puente, Johnny Pacheco, Fania All Stars (the super-group of which she was a leading figure), Willie Colon... and even David Byrne have left their mark on the history of Afro-Cuban music. She has acted in several films (including "The Perez Family" in 1995 alongside Anjelica Huston and "The Mambo Kings", a film made in 1992 with Tito Puente, Antonio Banderas and Maruschka Detmers). Regardless of the latest fashion, her concerts were always sold out, bringing together people of all ages and origins. "But the most incredible thing about Celia Cruz", according to one of her photographer friends, "was that she did not even seem to realise that she was a star. She answered the telephone herself, and was the same person in town as on stage". Since 1962, she was married to Pedro Knight (the lead trumpet player with La Sonora Matancera). He taught her to cook, she washed his shirts herself when they went on tour (and they say that she hung the wet washing up between the hotel rooms). She said that he was her inspiration. They were Salsa's mythical couple.

Celia Cruz passed away on July 16 2003. A great lady whose death is a tragic loss for Latin music. ---Magali Bergès

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