

Hybridization of Cuban Music and Jazz

Pieces by Gonzalo Rubalcaba

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Outline


- **background information**
- **selected Cuban music genres and**
- **interpretations by Rubalcaba**
 - *danzón*: “El Cadete Constitucional”
 - *bolero*: “Silencio”
 - **musical analyses**
 - **selected examples**
- **conclusion**

Background: Gonzalo Rubalcaba

- **jazz pianist and composer**
- born in **1963, Havana**
- **musical family → Cuban heritage**

“With all the things from childhood, the games and *boleros*, talk and *charangas*, with that careless time, with fact of that music smelling like authentic nature, I fulfill the circuit of my life.” (Rubalcaba, 1997)
- **classical training**, also influenced by **jazz musicians**
- studied **composition at Institute of Fine Arts (Havana)**
- **1985**: “discovered” by Dizzy Gillespie

Danzón

- originated from the European **country dance (E); contredanse (F); contradanza (Sp)**
- to Cuba in **18th century**
- first Cuban *contradanza*: “**San Pascual Bailón**” (unknown composer)
- ***contradanza* → *danza* → *danzón***:
national dance of Cuba
Miguel Faílde Pérez: “Las Alturas De Simpsón”,
premiered **1879** in **Matanzas**
- played by: ***orquesta típica***
- use of ***cinquillo cubano*** 

Danzón

- **rondo form** (classic form: A-B-A-C-A):
 - **A: *introducción*** (introduction)
 - **B: *parte de clarinete*** (clarinet part)
 - **C: *parte de metales*** (metal part)
- form: A-B-A-C-A-***montuno***
= “*danzón con montuno*”
- end of 19th century new orchestral format:
charanga
- early 20th century: *charanga* + **piano**
→ ***charanga francesa***

“El Cadete Constitucional”



- “El Cadete Constitucional” – “The Constitutional Cadet”: composed by **Jacobo González Rubalcaba** (1895–1960)
- recording from the **Archives of the Center for the Investigation and Development of Cuban music** (CIDMUG); *Retrospective Officielle des Musiques Cubaines*, Vol. 4 (FA 176)
- **instrumentation:** *Charanga Típica Cubana*
- **form:** *danzón con montuno*
- **clave:** *cinquillo cubano*

Interpretation by Rubalcaba

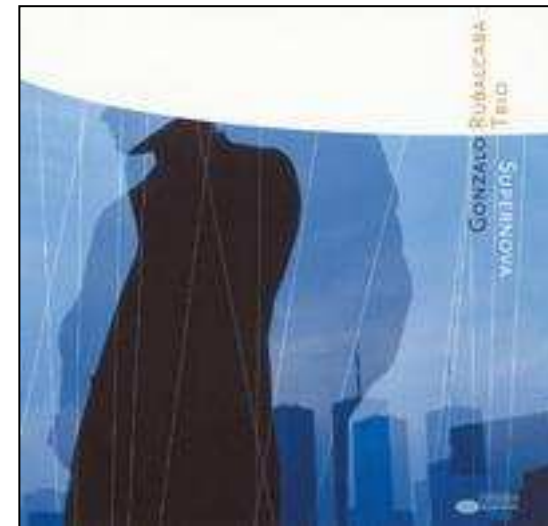


■ musicians:

- Gonzalo Rubalcaba (p, keys)
- Carlos Henríquez (b)
- Ignacio Berroa (d)
- Luis Quintero (timb, güiro)
- Robert Quintero (cga)

■ CD: *Supernova*

- recorded on 2–5 of December, 2000
- New York City (NYC)
- Blue Note 5-31172-2



The *Bolero*

- beginnings in **final third of the 19th century**
 - “Tristezas” (J. Sánchez)
- **Cuban song style**, worldwide popularity (e.g. “Bésame Mucho”, “Perfidia”, “Quizás, Quizás, Quizás”)
- **character**: sentimental, lyrical, melancholic;
topic: love
 - “*El bolero es un mensajero público y popular del amor*”
- **meter**: duple meter
- **form**: binary song form
- **melody**: long, flowing melodies; accompaniment in background

“Silencio”



- “Silencio” – “Silence”: composed in 1932 by Puerto Rican composer **Rafael Hernández** (1892–1965)

- **sentimental character**, melancholic content:

Duermen en mi jardín las blancas azucenas, los nardos y las rosas. Mi alma, muy triste y pesarosa, a las flores quiere ocultar su amargo dolor. Yo no quiero que las flores sepan los tormentos que me da la vida. Si supieran lo que estoy sufriendo, por mis penas morirían también.

Silencio, que están durmiendo los nardos y las azucenas. No quiero que sepan mis penas, porque si me ven llorando morirán.

- recording: “Antonio Machín Quartet”, **1934** (HQ 58); recorded as *bolero son*

Interpretation by Rubalcaba



Solo-Interpretation:

- Gonzalo Rubalcaba (p)
- CD: ***Solo***
 - recorded on 8–10 of June, 2005
 - Miami (FL)
 - Blue Note 3-55534-2

