

Rafael Monteagudo

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Rafael Monteagudo (Drummer/Percussionist) arrived in the US in 2000 from Havana, Cuba. His areas of focus include jazz, funk, fusion, Latin Jazz, and Afro-Cuban. He plays drumset, timbales, congas, bata, and bongos. It was the thriving musical environment that he came from that inspired him to play drums at the young age of eight. He grew up in a neighborhood in Havana that has produced some of the most famous Cuban musicians. The musical traditions in Havana are rich in both popular and folkloric music. It was through sharing the strong African traditions that are inherent in Cuban culture that Rafael gained such a wide range of styles.

Rafael continued his studies at the prestigious Escuela Nacional de Arte (ENA) and later at Felix Varela Conservatory in Havana. While in Cuba, Mr. Monteagudo had the opportunity to work with some of the best-known Cuban jazz and folkloric groups, including Calle 42, Eddy Mesa, jazz quartet Carisma and the Conjunto Folklorico of the Univeristy of Havana to name a few. He also performed at various prestigious festivals such as the Havana Jazz Festival and Cuba Disco.

Since Rafeal has been in the US, he has performed in such venues as Lincoln Center, Central Park Summer Stage, The Jazz Galery, Joe's Pub, BANF, Blues Alley, the Smithsonian Institute, Kennedy Center, Aspen Jazz Festival, Key May Jazz Festival, the Rochester Jazz Festival, the Caramoor Jazz Festival, the Sedona Jazz Festival on the Rocks, Artscape, the Painted Bride Art Center, and the Cherry Blossom Festival. He has toured with the

Washington Ballet, Yosvany Terry, Walter Bell, Carlos Delpino, Chuchito Valdez, and the Pedrito Martinez Project among others. He has played with Michele Rosewoman, Desmond Child for his induction into the Songwriters Hall of Fame, Lou Volpe, Bill Summer/Hombres Calientes, Yosvany Terry, Alfredo De La Fe, Yerba Buena, and Marlon Simon/Nagual Spirits, among others. He has also worked with various production groups, such as GALA Hispanic Theater, the In Series, and the youth of Soul y Sol. He recently played for the new Musical Cuba Libre with music and lyrics by Desmond Child and Davitt Sigerson.

Rafael was instrumental in starting Future Connection, a collective Jazz trio with drums, bass, and piano. The trio has been working together for the past year. They had their premiere performance at the International Society of Bassists Convention in 2009. They are fervently working on their first CD of all original music that will be released in 2011.

Mr. Monteagudo has taught regularly at the Latin American Folk Institute in Maryland as well as offers master percussion seminars at universities and music schools. He has given workshops at Coppin State University, University of Richmond, the Levine School of Music, Loyola College, George Mason University, the Baltimore International Rhythm and Drumming Society, and the International Scholars Conference in Washington, DC. He has also taught workshops with Yosvany Terry's band at BANF in Canada as well as in Jamaica and Drummers Collective in New York with Pedro Martinez. Rafael's percussion workshops include drum set techniques, applying Afro—Cuban rhythms to jazz, hand drums, and the various styles of Afro-Cuban music.

Rafael has just released his first instructional DVD "Clave in Modern Drumset Playing". This is the first in a series of videos that incorporates many of the African and Afro-Cuban rhythms, including those played on congas and batás that he grew up with. The unique twist that Rafael adds is how to play these rhythms on the drum set. This allows drummers to gain interdependence in playing using a new method that can bring excitement to their practice.

Rafael has also accompanied dance classes for Robert Battle, Hunter College, Marymount Manhattan College, and the Royal Academy of Dance Summer Intensive. He has also worked with and composed music for B3W Dance and Alafia Afro-Cuban Dance Ensemble and has also worked with Footworks Percussive Dance Ensemble and Oyu Oro Afro-Cuban Dance.

Rafael was featured in Modern Drummer in October 2004. He uses and is endorsed by Sabian cymbals and Kaman Music/Toca Percussion. □