

Cal Performances Presents

Saturday, February 10, 2007, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Spanish Harlem Orchestra



Oscar Hernandez	<i>piano, leader</i>
Ray De La Paz	<i>vocals</i>
Marco Bermudez	<i>vocals</i>
Willie Torres	<i>vocals</i>
John Walsh	<i>trumpet</i>
Peter Nater	<i>trumpet</i>
Arturo Velasco	<i>trombone</i>
Dan Reagan	<i>trombone</i>
Melecio Magdaluyo	<i>baritone saxophone, flute</i>
Luisito Quintero	<i>timbales</i>
George Delgado	<i>conga</i>
Jorge Gonzalez	<i>bongo</i>
Hector "Maximo" Rodriguez	<i>bass</i>

Cal Performances' 2006–2007 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

About the Artists

The story of the **Spanish Harlem Orchestra** is the story of the music of the people who nurtured the essence of urban Latino culture in this fabled bastion of urban and ethnic culture in New York City.

The vibrant East Side community known as “El Barrio”—located to the south of 125th Street, Harlem’s main thoroughfare—is an integral part of new Hispanic culture in New York and has radiated the inextricable flavor of Latino culture to the four corners of the globe. Spanish Harlem is the birthplace for salsa, Latin soul, boogaloo and countless other variants within the tropical Latin idiom. From Tito Puente to Marc Anthony, this small enclave has exerted a monumental effect on the sound of American music today. Led by world famous pianist and arranger Oscar Hernandez, the Spanish Harlem Orchestra has quickly established itself as the curators of this tradition borne of “El Barrio.”

As artists integral to Latin culture in the latter half of the 20th century began to pass—Machito, Puente, Rodriguez and Celia Cruz—the beacons of salsa’s tradition had begun to dim. Latin music producer Aaron Levinson recognized that without a new generation of practitioners the salsa community could not proliferate and the traditions of “El Barrio” would erode.

Levinson approached Hernandez, perhaps the most seasoned and sought out pianist, producer and arranger in Latin music of his generation. In addition to being pianist, arranger and musical director for the globally renowned Rubén Blades, Oscar Hernández has enjoyed a prolific musical career recording and performing with such world-renowned artists as Latin music king Tito Puente, Queen of Salsa Music Celia Cruz, Latin pop star Julio Iglesias, Juan Luis Guerra, Ray Barretto, Dave Valentin, Johnny Pacheco, Ismael Miranda, Pete “Conde” Rodríguez, Oscar D’Leon, Luis “Perico” Ortiz, Libre, Grupo Folkorico Experimental, Willie Colón, Kirsty MacColl and Earl Klugh, as well as many others. Oscar was also the musical director for Paul Simon’s Broadway show, *The Capeman*, working closely with Simon in the studio constructing the musical arc of the con-

troversial show. Hernandez also co-produced Simon’s *Songs from the Capeman* CD and the musical’s unreleased original cast recording.

Their first album, *Un Gran Día en el Barrio* (“One Great Day in the Neighborhood”), on Ropeadope Records, was released in 2002. This *clave*-powered crash course features some heavy-weight selections, including Tito Rodríguez’s “Mama Guela,” the enchanting Pedro Flores *bolero* “Obsesión” and the Willie Colón-Hector Lavoe classic “La Llego la Banda.” The *mambo*, *cha-cha-cha rumba* and *guajira* are blended together in a zesty musical dish by these Puerto Ricans in the Big Apple—a dish best served on the dance floor. Its impact was further acknowledged when the release garnered a Grammy Award nomination in the Best Salsa Album category in 2003, and the recognition continued as the group won the 2003 Latin Billboard Award for Salsa Album of the Year-Best New Group.

The Spanish Harlem Orchestra has quickly established itself as one of the pillars of contemporary Latin music. Using the most accomplished players in the New York Latino community, Hernandez carries on the tradition with outstanding performers like Ray De La Paz, Willie Torres and Marco Bermudez handling vocals.

The Spanish Harlem Orchestra has appeared throughout the United States, in Chicago, Connecticut, Los Angeles, New York City, Philadelphia, Rhode Island, San Francisco, Seattle, Virginia and Washington, D.C. Internationally, they have been filling venues in Barcelona, Belgium, Dublin, Istanbul, Holland, London, Manchester, Paris and Scotland. Appearances in 2003 at the prestigious Montreal Jazz Festival and the legendary Newport Jazz Festival had audiences on their feet and clamoring for more.

With their Grammy Award-winning album, *Across 110th Street*, the Spanish Harlem Orchestra has taken their appeal and rhythmic seduction to the next level. The 13-piece salsa outfit is sure to light a fire no matter whether you are a seasoned *salsero* or a first time *mambonik*.

The follow-up to *Across 110th Street* is set for release in spring 2007 on Six Degrees Records.