



Friday, October 9, 2015, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Orquesta Buena Vista Social Club®



Alejandro González

Adiós Tour

Featuring Omara Portuondo, Eliades Ochoa, Manuel “Guajiro” Mirabal,
Barbarito Torres, and Jesús “Aguaje” Ramos

Tonight’s program will be announced from the stage.

This performance is made possible, in part, by Corporate Sponsor US Bank.

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Orquesta Buena Vista Social Club

Omara Portuondo	<i>lead vocals</i>
Eliades Ochoa	<i>guitar, vocals</i>
Manuel "Guajiro" Mirabal	<i>trumpet</i>
Barbarito Torres	<i>laúd</i>
Jesús "Aguaje" Ramos	<i>musical director, trombone, vocals</i>
Papi Oviedo	<i>tres</i>
Pedro Pablo	<i>double bass</i>
Rolando Luna	<i>piano</i>
Idania Valdés	<i>vocals, percussion</i>
Carlos Calunga	<i>vocals</i>
Alberto La Noche	<i>bongos</i>
Filiberto Sánchez	<i>timbales</i>
Coayo	<i>congas</i>
Luis Alemany	<i>trumpet</i>
Luis "Guajirito" Mirabal	<i>trumpet</i>

ORQUESTA BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB grew out of the 1997 release of the Grammy Award-winning, bestselling album *Buena Vista Social Club*, and its line-up continues to include a number of the original artists featured on the landmark recording and film.

The group—which has been touring the globe in different forms, guises, and combinations since 1997—takes to the road one final time in 2015 with a series of concerts and related cultural events that celebrate the Orquesta's storied journey as ambassadors for Cuban music. The *Adiós Tour* represents the distillation of more than 1,000 shows over 16 years involving more than 40 musicians. During that time, the group has evolved into a customized, dynamic, multigenerational big band in which veterans and younger performers have combined to celebrate Cuban musical tradition with flair and élan.

At the forefront of the group are musicians who will be recognized from the Buena Vista Social Club film: trumpeter Guajiro Mirabal, *laúd* virtuoso Barbarito Torres, band leader and trombonist Jesús “Aguaje” Ramos, vocalist and guitarist Eliades Ochoa, and incomparable vocalist Omara Portuondo. A younger generation of Cuban musicians is represented by such talents as the renowned vocalist Carlos Calunga and virtuoso pianist Rolando Luna. Ms. Portuondo, a member of the original Buena Vista Social Club, won a Latin Grammy Award and scored a Grammy Award nomination for her 2008 recording *Gracias*. Ms. Portuondo has been singing and performing since she was a teenager in Cuba in the 1940s but, as *The New York Times*' review of *Gracias* noted, the years have done nothing to mitigate her vocal prowess: “Her voice is rich, shapely, dynamic and still sultry.” The *Los Angeles Times* described her voice as a formidably potent and emotionally limber instrument, noting that “her 100-minute set in San Francisco showed that she's an even bigger talent onstage.”

Mr. Mirabal's distinctive trumpet sound and the personality embodied in his playing

have earned him the moniker “The Trumpet of Cuba.” His blistering tribute to the *son conjuntos* of the great Arsenio Rodríguez, *Buena Vista Social Club Presents Manuel Guajiro Mirabal*, was nominated for a Grammy and a Latin Grammy and its release was met with widespread praise: “Mirabal's stunning performances recapture the bonhomie and verve that endeared the *son montuno* style to all within earshot” (*The Wire*).

Mr. Ramos's trombone has been an integral part of World Circuit's Cuban recordings for more than a decade, and both his playing and bandleading skills have made him a key feature on tours by Ibrahim Ferrer and Ms. Portuondo. As musical director for Ms. Portuondo and Rubén González, he gained attention on the international stage: “He understands how to truly make the trombone sing” (*Boston Globe*).

Mr. Torres was musical director for Celina González's Grupo Campoalegre and worked with many of the biggest names in Cuban music and for such international stars as Oscar D'León. He has also played with the Afro-Cuban All-Stars, and his solo album *Havana Café* featured guest appearances by Mr. Ferrer and Ms. Portuondo.

The past few years have been tremendously successful for the orchestra, playing to sellout crowds in renowned venues, including the Paris Olympia, London's Royal Albert Hall, Barcelona's Liceu, the Konzerthaus in Vienna, Luna Park in Buenos Aires, as well as at prestigious festivals around the globe.

Each of the Orquesta's artists has his or her own take on a wide range of Cuban music styles and has put an individual stamp on *son montunos*, *danzón*, *cha cha cha*, *boleros*, and Cuban jazz. Having honed their skills over many years, their passion for the music remains undimmed, and this remarkable group of musical giants performs with an exuberance that is as vital as ever.

On March 23, 2015, *Lost and Found*, the final Buena Vista Social Club album, was released.



Omara Portuondo (*vocals*) began her career as a dancer at the famous Tropicana cabaret when she was still a teenager. In addition to dancing alongside her sister Haydee, the two girls also sang with a group called

Los Loquibambla, a combo that specialized in a Cubanized version of the *bossa nova* with touches of American jazz.

Omara and Haydee—joined by Elena Burke and Moraima Secada—became the Cuarteto d'Aida, directed by pianist Aida Diestro. Ms. Portuondo toured with the group for 15 years before recording her first solo album, *Magia Negra*, in 1959. She stayed with the quartet for several more years before launching her solo career in 1967. Ms. Portuondo also sung with Cuba's high-profile Orquesta Aragón, with which she recorded several albums and toured the world through the 1970s and 1980s.

Propelled by her success with Buena Vista, Ms. Portuondo entered the 21st century as an international sensation, with tours and festival dates that crisscrossed the globe. Her awards and accolades in that time have been numerous, and most recently include a Latin Grammy for her solo album, *Gracias*. In spring 2011, she and pianist Chucho Valdés released the album *Omara & Chucho*, which received critical acclaim.



Hailing from the countryside near Santiago in the east of Cuba, **Eliades Ochoa** (*guitar and vocals*)'s roots are in *guajira* (Cuban country music) and his trademark cowboy hat

and penchant for wearing black have led some to dub him "Cuba's Johnny Cash." His contribution to the Buena Vista Social Club sessions included his distinctive guitar playing and his lead vocals on "El Cuarto de Tula," and

his own *guajira* showcase on "El Carretero." Away from the Buena Vista connection, Mr. Ochoa recorded the 1998 album *CubAfrica* with Manu Dibango, and in 1999 the album *Sublime Ilusion* was released, with producer John Wooler and special collaborations by Charlie Musselwhite, David Hidalgo from Los Lobos, and Ry Cooder. The album received a Grammy nomination as Best Tropical Latin Album. In October 2010, Mr. Ochoa's *AfroCubism* album was released, on which Mr. Ochoa and Grupo Patria play together with Malian musicians, including Toumani Diabaté, *kora*; Bassekou Kouyaté, *ngoni*; Kasse Mady Diabaté, vocals; and Djelimady Tounkara, electric guitar. The AfroCubism band toured throughout Europe, Canada, and United States in 2010 and 2011, and the recording received a 2012 Grammy nomination as Best World Music album.



Manuel "Guajiro" Mirabal (*trumpet*) has been a key figure in the Cuban music scene for over 50 years and has played with just about every Cuban star you could care to mention during his

years in the Orquesta Riverside, the Orquesta Cubana de Música Moderna, and at the famous Tropicana cabaret. With these groups and others, such as the Estrellas Areito and Opus 13, Mr. Mirabal toured Europe and Latin America extensively.

During World Circuit's now legendary recording blitz in Havana in 1996, Mr. Mirabal featured on all three of these seminal albums: *Afro-Cuban All-Stars' A Toda Cuba Le Gusta*, *Buena Vista Social Club*, and *Introducing Rubén González*. Having been an integral part of many albums in the Buena Vista series and a key member of Ibrahim Ferrer's touring band, Mr. Mirabal released his debut solo album, the Latin Grammy-nominated *Buena Vista Social Club Presents Manuel "Guajiro" Mirabal* in 2004.



Barbarito Torres (*laúd*)'s professional career started in 1970 with *Serenata Yumunina*, a group led by Higinio Mullens. In three years he was discharged and traveled with *Siembra Cultural*, later renamed

Grupo Yarabi. Eventually he settled in Havana and became a permanent member of *Orquesta Cubana de Cuerdas*. Later he joined *Celina González* and her *Grupo Campoalegre* as their musical director; at the same time, he was featured with *Grupo Manguare*, recording and touring with both groups. Mr. Torres is well known for his contributions to the Afro-Cuban All-Stars and the *Buena Vista Social Club*. Both ensembles won a number of awards, including a Grammy for the *Buena Vista Social Club* album in 1998. Since the *Buena Vista* project, Mr. Torres continued with his solo career, touring around the world with his group. In 1999 his first solo album, *Havana Café*, is released and in 2003 *Barbarito Torres*.



Jesús "Aguaje" Ramos (*musical director, trombone, vocals*) was born in 1951 in Pinar del Rio, where he began his musical studies in the National School of Arts. He

started playing the trombone in local groups until 1979, when he moved to Havana and began playing with the great *Cuarteto d'Aida*, with whom he toured in Europe, Latin America, and Africa. That same year he took part in the *Estrellas de Areito* recordings. During the 1980s and 1990s, Mr. Ramos toured and recorded with such artists and groups as the *Caribe Expreso*, *Adalberto Álvarez*, *Reinaldo Montesinos*, *Omara Portuondo*, *Tata Güines*, and *Richard Egües*.

Mr. Ramos has played on the World Circuit recordings of the *Buena Vista Social Club* and the Afro-Cuban All Stars, and the solo albums of *Ibrahim Ferrer*, *Rubén González*, and *Omara Portuondo*. He was Mr. González's musical director, and he has been touring extensively since 1997 with the various *Buena Vista Social Club* projects.