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Daniel Cros Releases New Album August 10

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Daniel Cros, Las vueltas que da la vida (ROSAZUL) Release coming on August 10th

Much rain has fallen since the days when he was the singer and lead guitarist in a mod band appearing on National TV in Spain. Since then, Daniel Cros has followed a trajectory that has been seduced progressively by pop, jazz and Latin rhythms, now he has brought all these genres together into one unique style.

His new work brings together a selection of twelve songs that identify with key moments in his solo career: his percussion studies in Havana, songwriting studies in the US, his encounter with La Vieja Trova Santiaguera and his regular collaboration with Cuban musicians in Barcelona (Spain). As a result of these experiences, his songs are built on rhythms such as cha cha cha, son, guaguanco, bolero and the tango.

The album, released by Rosazul (his own label) and distributed in major online stores, includes new recordings of songs that were already part of his previous four albums. He

has radically changed the arrangements of some of these and even presented them in a different language from when they were originally recorded.

In his own words: "After studying music intensively for 3 years at the Taller de Musics School in Barcelona, being absorbed with piano improvisation, arrangements, music theory and combos I attended a workshop called "Introduction to Cuban music" with Guillermo Céspedes (from the Conjunto Céspedes) where he taught me how to "tumar" on the piano in five seconds. That simple way of arpeggiating the chords opened up a new window of sensations, and from then on, the invisible rules of "son" gave me wings to fly and I started to incorporate the "tumbao" in some of my songs."

After that experience, Daniel decided to learn AfroCuban rhythms in Cuba, so in 1999 he travelled to Havana and studied at the Conjunto Nacional Folklórico, a music and dance school located in the Vedado neighbourhood. There he could learn first hand the basic patterns of the three AfroCuban rhythms: the yambú, the columbia and the guaguanco, performing at the Conjunto Folklórico with musicians from different countries.

He explains: "It has taken me more than 10 years to maintain the clave pattern without losing the tempo. As easy as it may seem, sticking to the clave rhythm for 15 minutes without missing the beat it's not an easy task but it's so important as it's the foundation of the AfroCuban rhythms."

Accompanying the artist on the album is an impressive line-up of musicians: Cubans Raul Fuentes on piano, Yoan Sanchez on percussion and Rafael Coello "el Pochi" on trumpet, Catalan Ferran Cubedo on the baby bass and Daniel Cros who wrote and composed all of the songs, sings, plays piano, Spanish guitar and lute as well as also creating the CD artwork.

Regarding his work with Cuban musicians he comments: "When I started collaborating with local Cuban musicians it was a continuous struggle between order and chaos and an endless stress when coordinating rehearsals and recordings with them. I tried to work with musicians from other genres but I couldn't achieve the same "sabor". So working with them has been both enriching and exhausting because some of them have a chaotic, unpredictable way of behaving, but today things have settled down as I work with more organized and serious musicians.

"A very special moment in my career was the meeting with mytical Cuban group La Vieja Trova Santiaguera, where we shared stage at the Festival Internacional de la Cançó d'Empúries (Girona, Spain) and ended up performing together in front of 2.000 people."

SONGWRITING

The songs are based on well-defined musical structures that alternate the AABA form ('De par en par', 'En la palma de mi mano', 'La rosa azul') with the verse/chorus ('Siempre nos quedará Paris', 'Más y más', 'Aire de mar') proving solid songwriting skills.

Skills which were shaped through different experiences in the US: "As my girlfriend by then was from Concord, New Hampshire, In 1998 I travelled to the US to attend an event called "the Songwriting Expo" in Pasadena where I met Pat Pattison, considered one of the authorities in lyricwriting. Discovering these new concepts then was surprising to me as most of us songwriters in Spain didn't have access to this information and just did it our way, mostly by imitating the craft from established artists we admire. Then later I studied thoughtfully Sheila Davis's books to understand the lyricwriting craft from a professional standpoint. So from then on I started incorporating these concepts into my songs, which was a quite traumatic process as initially lead me to produce a series of rigid songs, which had no soul, a sort style exercises. So I started to pay more attention to concepts like structure, rhyme and rhythm which I had been consciously unaware of and which I'm sure they gave more strength to my songs. Only with time and practice I could recover the spontaniety I had before I started getting in touch with these ideas."

The lyrics on the other hand, arise from a deeply romantic feeling of someone who lives between the remembrance of lost love and the enthusiasm for love that is yet to come. There is also space for the history of a child's attachment to a drum ('Mi tambor') and the philosophical 'En la palma de mi mano'. His lyrics, which seek to find the right words and respect the natural accent, and melody, live in happy prosody.

Undoubtedly, Daniel Cros is a great artist both as a songwriter with his ambition to create classics, and also a performer, in the way he manages to convey what he feels passionately but also temperately. He recreates his own world, where love (lost & found) is the only thing that matters. He uses art and expression in a way that gives true meaning to his life.

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