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Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture presents

**Elio Villafranca Trio &
The Bronx Arts Ensemble Woodwind Quintet**

Acclaimed in both the jazz and classical worlds, a performance by the acclaimed Cuban pianist-composer along with the borough's premier chamber group

Saturday, October 14, 2017, 7:30 PM

"an inspired and visionary musician" – Wynton Marsalis

[Elio Villafranca] writes and plays with the passion and deep understanding of musical nuances with chops equal to some of the greatest pianists Cuba has ever produced. –Downbeat Magazine

[LINK TO PHOTOS](#)

(Bronx, NY) – Known for his artistry in both jazz and classical music, the Cuban pianist/composer **Elio Villafranca, his Trio, and the Bronx Arts Ensemble (BAE) Woodwind Quintet** come together for the first time for Villafranca's "Cinqué - Suite of the Caribbean." This is the first time this work will be performed in this hybrid configuration, linking classical and jazz musicians and using instruments traditionally featured in classical repertoire. The performance, which will also feature additional music from Villafranca and the BAE, will take place Saturday, October 14 at 7:30PM, at the Hostos Community College Repertory Theater, located at 450 Grand Concourse in the Bronx.

Villafranca, a new resident of the Bronx, is known for ambitious projects that fuse the jazz idiom with extensive knowledge of percussion and Latin rhythms, and "Cinqué – Suite of the Caribbean" is one of his most acclaimed works. The musical highlight of the evening focuses on the influences of the Congolese traditions of rhythms, melodies, and dances – through the music of Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and Cuba. Villafranca showcases the unifying elements of the islands, which share similar cultures despite their diverse histories. This work is inspired by the life of Joseph Cinqué, a slave born in Sierra Leone who, while on the way to being illegally sold in Cuba, revolted aboard the Amistad and gained his freedom. "Cinqué – Suite of the Caribbean" was regarded as one of the top concerts of the Jazz at Lincoln Center 2015 season. [A clip can be found here.](#)

The BAE Woodwind Quintet, derived from the core of musicians that encompasses the Bronx Arts Ensemble, is comprised of talented artists performing in major NYC area orchestras including the American Symphony Orchestra, NYC Ballet Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke's and numerous Broadway orchestras.

“The music chosen by BAE for this concert reflects the backgrounds of many of the people who live in the Bronx. They will recognize some of the music from their own heritage, as it explores the Afro-Cuban diaspora” says Judith Insell, Music Programs Manager for the Bronx Arts Ensemble. Villafranca shares: “Playing with the Bronx Arts Ensemble not only is an exciting project but also represents the meeting of the three musical styles that constitute the fabric of my music: Afro-Cuban, classical, and jazz.”

This is the first time that “Cinqué – Suite of the Caribbean” will be performed in this configuration: with both classical and jazz musicians. While typically considered a jazz musician, Villafranca explains, “When I write music, I try to write from a classical point of view. In classical music, the melody has an arc, a beginning, development and end. In jazz, you can write one line, and then from that point on you can develop. But I want to feel like the music is complete even if nobody’s going to solo. I don’t like to rely on soloists; I like to rely on music.” The partnership with the Bronx Arts Ensemble is a natural one.

The program opens with Paquito D’Rivera’s “Aires Tropicales” performed by the Bronx Arts Ensemble Woodwind Quintet -- Theresa Norris (flute), Bill Meredith (oboe), Mitchell Kriegler (clarinet), Atsuko Sato (bassoon), and Rheagan Osteen (french horn). This original seven-movement work was written specifically for a wind quintet and premiered in 1994. The movements are: “Alborada,” a slow introduction; “Son,” with an ostinato Latin bass line in the bassoon and horn; “Habañera,” a trio movement for flute, clarinet and bassoon in the style of Ravel; “Vals Venezolano,” a lively Venezuelan waltz; “Dizzyness,” an homage to the late, great Dizzy Gillespie; “Contradanza,” an upbeat Cuban dance honoring Ernesto Lecuona; and “Afro.” Following, Elio Villafranca is joined by Ricky Rodriguez on bass and Arturo Stable on drums/percussion/toys for a selection of his original compositions. The trio and quintet conclude the program with “Cinqué.”

Tickets are now available and are \$15 (\$5 for students). They can be purchased by calling (718) 518-4455 or online at www.hostoscenter.org. Box Office window hours are Mon. – Fri., 1 PM to 4 PM and 2 hours prior to performance. Hostos Community College can be reached by the IRT 2, 4, 5, and busses Bx1, Bx2, Bx19 to East 149th Street and the Grand Concourse.

Support for Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture programs is provided by the Eugenio María de Hostos Community College Foundation, with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Coalition of Theaters of Color, the Office of NYC Councilmember Rafael Salamanca Jr., and the Office of New York State Assemblyman José Rivera.

About Elio Villafranca

Since his arrival in the U.S. in 1995, pianist and composer Elio Villafranca is at the forefront of the latest generation of remarkable Cuban musicians that are making major contributions to the international development of modern jazz. Born in the Pinar del Río province of Cuba, Villafranca was classically trained in percussion and composition at the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana, Cuba. He is a faculty member at Manhattan School of Music and Juilliard School of Music, as well as Temple University in Philadelphia.

Last year Villafranca was among five pianists chosen by Chick Corea to perform at the first Chick Corea Jazz Festival at Jazz at Lincoln Center. His *Letters to Mother Africa* was selected by the *New York City Jazz Record* as one of the top concerts of 2016. His album *Caribbean Tinge* (Motema) received a 2014 Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik nomination (German Records Critics Award), as well as selection by *JazzTimes* and *Downbeat* magazines for features in their Editor's Pick sections. He also received a 2010 Grammy nomination for Best Latin Jazz Album of the Year, for his performance, composition and co-production on the album *Things I Wanted To Do* by Chembo Corniel. In 2008, Elio Villafranca was also nominated by The Jazz Corner as pianist of the year. His 2007 album, *The Source in Between* was in the top ten of the *JazzWeek* World Top 50 Chart for 11 weeks. His first album, *Incantations/Encantaciones*, was ranked amongst the 50 best jazz albums of the year by *JazzTimes*.

Villafranca was honored with the BMI Jazz Guaranty Award, and received the first NFA/Heineken Green Ribbon Master Artist Music Grant for the creation of Concerto for Mariachi for Afro-Cuban percussion and orchestra. Villafranca has performed and/or recorded with Wynton Marsalis, Chick Corea, Jon Faddis, Billy Harper, Sonny Fortune, Giovanni Hidalgo, Eddie Henderson, Miguel Zenón, Cándido Camero, Johnny Pacheco, Pat Martino, Terrell Stafford, Billy Hart, Paquito D'Rivera, Eric Alexander, Lewis Nash and David Murray, amongst others. He has toured Europe and has performed at world-renowned venues and events including the Blue Note Jazz Festival, the Blue Note Jazz Club in Milan, the Umbria Jazz Festival in Perugia, Italy, the North Sea Jazz Festival at The Hague, Holland, the Guinness Jazz Festival, and a national tour of Ireland.

About The Bronx Arts Ensemble

For over four decades, the Bronx Arts Ensemble has performed exciting music programs that showcase the Bronx's ever-expanding cultural landscape and honoring the borough's diverse cultural heritage. Their professional ensemble and guest artists perform a broad array of musical styles, suited for diverse audiences, young and old. Taking the lead in presenting live music performances throughout the Bronx, BAE has sustained partnerships with host venues such as Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture, Lovinger Theater-Lehman College, Pregones Theater, and Bartow Pell Mansion. During the summer months, BAE also provides outdoor concerts in parks throughout the borough, namely Pelham Bay Park & Van Cortlandt Park.

About the Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture

Founded in 1982, The Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture, based at Hostos Community College of the City University of New York, serves the cultural needs of residents of the South Bronx and similar inner-city communities who do not have the means or inclination to attend arts events in mid-town Manhattan. The Center, which includes a 900-seat theater, a 350-seat theater, and museum-grade art gallery, creates forums in which the cultural heritages of its audiences are affirmed and nurtured. The Center's programming consists of a performing arts presenting series; a visual arts exhibiting series; periodic festivals promoting cultural traditions, especially Afro-Caribbean; The Hostos Repertory Company; and an individual artists' program with commissions and residencies. Nearly 60,000 partake in the Center's programs each year.

www.hostoscenter.org

About Hostos Community College

Eugenio María de Hostos Community College is an educational agent for change that has been transforming and improving the quality of life in the South Bronx and neighboring communities for nearly half a century. Since 1968, Hostos has been a gateway to intellectual growth and socioeconomic mobility, as well as a point of departure for lifelong learning, success in professional careers, and transfer to advanced higher education programs. Hostos offers 27 associate degree programs and two certificate programs that facilitate easy transfer to The City University of New York's (CUNY) four-year colleges or baccalaureate studies at other institutions. The College has an award-winning Division of Continuing Education & Workforce Development that offers professional development courses and certificate-bearing workforce training programs. Hostos is part of CUNY, the nation's leading urban public university, which serves more than 500,000 students at 24 colleges. <https://www.hostos.cuny.edu/>

What: Elio Villafranca Trio & The Bronx Arts Ensemble Woodwind Quintet

Elio Villafranca, piano; Ricky Rodríguez, bass; Arturo Stable, percussion

Theresa Norris, flute; Bill Meredith, oboe; Mitchell Kriegler, clarinet; Atsuko Sato, bassoon; Rheagan Osteen, French horn

When: Saturday, October 14, 2017, 7:30pm

Where: Repertory Theater, Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture, 450 Grand Concourse, Bronx, New York 10451

How much?: \$15 (\$5 for student and Under 18)

Phone Number: 718-518-4455

Box Office: Window hours are Mon. – Fri., 1 PM to 4 PM and 2 hours prior to performance.

Website: www.hostoscenter.org

Subway/Bus: IRT Trains 2, 4, 5 and Buses BX1, BX2, BX19 to 149th Street and Grand Concourse.