

EUROPEAN CD RELEASE

MAY 19TH 2018

MANUEL VALERA TRIO

with Hans Glawischnig & E.J. Strickland

“THE PLANETS”

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| 1. Sun Prelude I | 1:43 |
| 2. I Mercury - The Messenger | 4:54 |
| 3. Sun Prelude II | 2:10 |
| 4. II Venus - Peace | 3:23 |
| 5. Intro to Earth | 1:32 |
| 6. III Earth - The History of Us | |
| 7. IV Mars - Ancient Warrior | 5:18 |
| 8. Sun Prelude III | 1:10 |
| 9. V Jupiter - Joyous Thunder | 5:17 |
| 10. VI Saturn - The Wise One | 4:51 |
| 11. VII Uranus -
Morphing Skies | 5:49 |
| 12. VIII Neptune -
Prophet of the Seas | 5:49 |

BONUS TRACKS

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| 13. LLora | 4:20 |
| 14. Mona Lisas
and Mad Hatters | 5:01 |

TOTAL TIME: 55:58

STREET DATE May 1, 2018
ARTIST Manuel Valera Trio
TITLE The Planets
CATALOG # 1109 Mavo Records
GENRE Jazz, Latin jazz, World
UPC S090523225
SUGGESTED RADIO TRACKS 2 9 11 14

“Mr. Valera is often relentless and blistering at the keyboard, but a shape-shifting melodicism is embedded in everything he plays.”

**Giovanni Russonello
/ New York Times**



ABOUT THE MUSIC

Manuel Valera’s *The Planets*, draws upon and interprets the wisdom of late Russian composer and conductor Nicolas Slonimsky whose *Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns*, originally published in 1947, became a seminal opus for musicians, composers, and educators. The likes of Arnold Schoenberg, Freddie Hubbard, and John Coltrane cogitated Slonimsky’s analysis of pandiatonic progressions, double notes, and palindromic canons. Valera assumes the mantle of understanding and translating this iconic work for a new generation. By so doing, Valera becomes a prophet of our time, serving as an inspired evangelist of a once arcane yet timeless music theory manual, and elevating it again to the pantheon of creative literature. Indeed, Slonimsky’s work is to music what Strunk and White’s *Elements of Style* is to grammar.

While the melodic and harmonic material on *The Planets* can be traced to Slonimsky’s *Thesaurus*, Valera incorporates a thematic device which serves as the organizing principle of the album. Almost every piece is named for a celestial body, a planet or star in our galaxy. Valera, a sparkling pianist, improviser, and composer, tries to characterize each planet with an impressionistic rendering: not just drawing upon cosmology and astronomy but mythology. He invokes Roman myths to personify each composition, to awaken them with life, and in turn, fashion them into something contemporary and meaningful. It’s a lofty goal: Valera isn’t just shooting for the moon. He is going for infinity and beyond. And if there wasn’t a limit to how many hours the studio was booked, Valera would still be there, with his capable partners Hans Glawischnig on bass and

www.manuelvalera.com

«...he is still a champ. His chops enable him to execute ornate designs at warp speed, while generating ferocious rhythmic thrust.»

**Thomas Conrad /
Jazztimes**

E.J. Strickland on drums. The trio grooves, dashes, fades, and runs with a single mind, as if there's a gravitational force locking in the groove. There were few if any fits or spurts during the session. This group is on the same proverbial page.

Since antiquity, philosopher kings have looked to the stars for meaning and inspiration. Today's scientific community navigates general relativity of the galaxies and the quantum mechanics of the atomic world to explain the human perception of reality. But ultimately, looking up at the stars is looking into the past, as light finally reaches us after hundreds of lightyears in transport. By channeling the past spirits of planets and stars, Valera has given us an opus

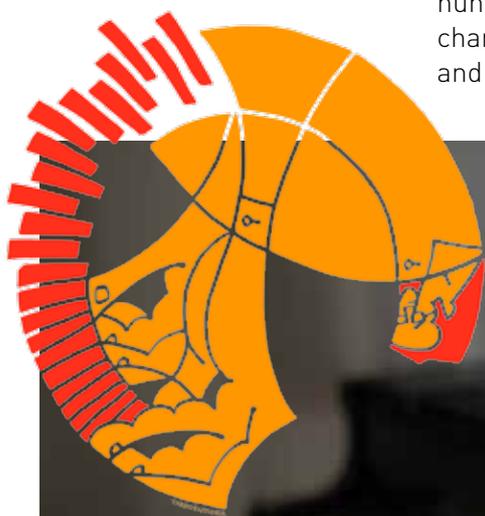
for the here and now. You're listening to a dazzling triumph of an album that will be reckoned with by future generations. Valera's *The Planets* is to today what Coltrane's *Interstellar Space* was to the music world just decades ago.

Valera isn't just a star but supernova of talent, intelligence, and grace. And his music will convince you that as you look into the blackness of space, there are discernible and universal vibrations of sound that will envelop you fully and without warning.

—**Kabir Sehgal**

Multi-Grammy & Latin Grammy Award Winner

New York Times bestselling author



THE COMPOSER

Born and raised in Havana, Grammy nominated pianist and composer Manuel Valera since arriving in NYC has become well known in the modern jazz scene, garnering national reviews and lending his talents as a pianist and composer to such notable artists as Arturo Sandoval, Paquito D'Rivera, Brian Lynch, Dafnis Prieto, Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, Jeff »Tain» Watts, John Benitez, Samuel Torres, Joel Frahm, Yosvany Terry and classical violin virtuoso Joshua Bell among many others.

This dynamic and prolific artist has recorded 13 cds as

a bandleader with touring projects ranging from his Grammy nominated group New Cuban Express to his modern contemporary trio to solo piano.

Valera is the recipient of many composition grants — most notably Chamber Music America's New Jazz Works three different times, the Dranoff International 2 Piano Foundation and the ASCAP Young Jazz Composer Award. He has travelled the world performing in more than 30 countries at some of the biggest international venues and festivals in the world.

THE PLANETS

The Planets is the latest commissioned piece by pianist and composer Manuel Valera. Commissioned by Chamber Music America/Doris Duke 2017 New Jazz Works program, the piece uses the solar system as inspiration and it's harmonically and melodically based on Nicolas Slonimsky's Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns. Each part of the suite aims at an impressionistic characterization of the astronomical qualities of each planet. In addition, Greek mythology's gods (and Roman counterparts) particular energy and connection to the planets were also an inspiration in the process. i.e. Mars: The God of War, Jupiter: The God of the Sky.

People have been looking at the planets and stars for millennia. The planets in many ways hold the secrets to the things that we here on earth are forever curious about. Such as the big bang theory and many other elements of our history. The mystery of what we know and don't know about the planets is one of the inspirations for the piece



and by using and developing the material from Slonimsky's Thesaurus, Valera creates harmonic and melodic sequences that have as much in common with Arnold Schonberg as they do with John Coltrane's compositions. Slonimsky's book has been a source of influence for composers such as Coltrane, Alan Holdsworth and Frank Zappa.

Valera has been working and developing the concepts from the Thesaurus for the past 15 years in New York and The Planets marks a new period in Valera's deepening and never-ending studying and understanding of Slonimsky's masterpiece.

www.manuelvalera.com

CONTACT BOOKING & PRESS

To schedule interviews with Manuel Valera, book this artist or request more information, please contact Stefany Calembert.

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