

**SING OUT A JOYFUL NOISE  
LOS HOMBRES CALIENTES  
YOSHIS JAZZ CLUB, OAKTOWN  
JUNE 28, 2003**



The Significant Other and I managed to take in Los Hombres Calientes at Yoshis Jazz Club in Oaktown this Saturday after several misfired attempts during the week. We had first run across this remarkable jazz group playing in a Tower Records in New Orleans during the Jazz Festival two years ago and both of us were absolutely blown away by the music of this group, which has since gone on to gather extraordinary critical acclaim throughout the world.

The brainchild of trumpeter Irvin Mayfield, a prodigy all of 22 years of age, and seasoned percussionist Bill Summers, this band has been cracking open preconceptions about jazz right and left while pulling in so much critical praise that Mayfield is starting to get tired of the Grammys, laudatory reviews and awards.

Yoshi's is one of those nightspots that performers just love for the acoustics and the intimate atmosphere. If you are good, then Yoshi's pulls out the best, and the best become superlative, while the superlative soar into the heavens. Los Hombres does a heavily Latin/Africano inflected mix that had the crowd stomping on their feet, dancing in the aisles, singing in Spanish, Portugese, various African dialects and clapping until their arms were sore.

Most definitively a "crossover" band, LHC has pulled in fans who would never have approached jazz in its chillier, more cerebral manifestations, while still holding true to the command, "make a different masterpiece every night". They included a nice bit of audience participation on "Foforo Fo Firi". The high point of the set might have been the longest tune: Mayfield's complex yet bluesy composition, "Creole Groove." All the soloists had plenty of opportunity to shine, including the other supporting players: pianist Victor Adkins, drum dynamo Ricky Sebastian (who replaced founding member Jason Marsalis a couple of years ago) and bassist Edwin Livingston. Adkins weaved some serpentine lines that evoked the complexity of the great McCoy Tyner. At a couple points, the players broke into a classic New Orleans second-line street-beat, bringing it all back to the place referred to as "the northernmost Caribbean city" by Summers.

There followed a playful "A Night in Tunisia", dedicated to Dizzy Gillespie, which had Summers blowing an eerie riff over the mouth of his shaker drum into a microphone before leading off into a grandstand performance that had him repeatedly tossing the drum into the air during the song. They concluded the two hour show with a segue from "Mardi Gras Mambo" into "New Second Line" (from their 3rd CD, "New Congo Square") evoking "The Duke" and good old-fashioned Dixieland jazz, but with the curious Cuban inflection that has been the signature for this band, the hottest to come out of the Crescent City in over 25 years and most certainly the hottest jazz ensemble in the world today anywhere.

Not surprisingly these guys have been touring all over the Caribbean, including Haiti, Cuba and Jamaica, playing and recording with some of the hottest and most legendary talents in Latin music. The power of Calle 57 and the Buena Vista Social Club goes out and hopes to erase those lines on the world map that senselessly divide people from one another. More power to The Hot Boys if they can even half-way succeed even halfway.