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Latin jazz party is loud, full of the joy of life

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Berney Theatre

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4 out of 5 stars

By Chris Smith

LATIN jazz musicians know how to throw a party.

And whether it's big or small, the music is always hot, often loud, and full of joy of life.

The Hilario Duran Trio kicked off the party Saturday night with a powerful first set that ran the gamut from Cuban danzon to a Latin arrangement of Charlie Parker's Segment.

In the second set, the party band grew to 10 as Winnipeg's Papa Mambo joined Toronto-based pianist Duran, bassist Roberto Occhipinti and drummer Mark Kelso in a rousing party and tribute to the rhythmic pulse of Latin music.

The Duran trio has very powerful ensemble play, powered by the strong, percussive attack of Duran..

Duran flies over his piano keys on his solos, generally percussive but light when needed, and comps wonderfully behind his trio mates. Duran and Occhipinti have a strong rapport based on long service - the bassist recorded on New Danzon, the source of many of the tunes for the first of their two weekend shows as part of the Izzy **Asper Jazz** Performances series.

The set with Papa Mambo opened with the Latin-jazz classic Manteca. The two bands mixed well from the start. The Rodrigo Munoz-led Papa warmed to the occasion of guesting with the Cuban-born Duran and its broader sound with hand drums and horn section really lifted the house into party mode.

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