

L.A. JAZZ SCENE JANUARY 2009

BOB COMDEN

ILIANA ROSE CUBAN JAZZ BAND AT THE LEFT COAST WINE BAR

Iliana Rose and her Cuban jazz Band performs at the Left Coast Wine Bar in Glendale every Friday night. I is a very charming place, located across the street from the new Americana shopping center. Left Coast is on Harvard and Brand Blvd. It's a great location, with some street side tables and chairs, great for sunny days or balmy California evenings. The wine bar serves a variety of wines and beers. The menu includes appetizers and cheeses, a variety of sausages, mixed olives, hot sandwiches and desserts.

The music is presented in a comfortable area upstairs with small tables and art work on the walls. On the night I attended, Iliana Rose sat at the piano and sang, accompanied by good sidemen: Sergio Gonzales on cajon drums and bongos, Roy Alnashef on congas, Aleks Peck on guitar, (Iliana's husband) David Zasloff-trumpet and Margarita Hermosillo sitting in on guitar and vocals.

Rose is a first generation Cuban American. Her parents were born in Cuba and Rose was born in Miami. She has a ten-piece band with 3-horns that plays a lot of music festivals. Rose studied jazz voice at the University of Miami. She is very influenced by her Cuban roots and has been in Los Angeles about six years. Rose loves playing Cuban standards so she puts the Left Coast Wine Bar in a very festive mood. She's a very charming performer with a good sense of humor, as well as being a talented pianist and singer. She sings in 5 languages: Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese and English. Rose has a lot of charisma and I enjoyed the group's energy and spirit.

Rose began the evening with a medley, starting with "What A Difference A Day Makes," singing in Spanish and English, with a solid air of conviction. Peck added a marvelous guitar solo and Zasloff added tasty licks with his muted trumpet. Then the tune went into a vamp style with lots of percussion from Alnashef and Gonzales. The group did a Cuban version of "Jingle Bells," putting everyone into a holiday mood before segueing into "The Peanut Vendor" in a jam session style. It was an uplifting version and everyone got a chance to solo on this one.

Margarita Hermosillo joined the band playing guitar and singing "Veinte Años," which means "20 Years." She sang in harmony with Rose. It was beautifully done. The set closed with "Quizas, Quizas, Quizas" which means "Perhaps, Perhaps, Perhaps." The song was made famous by Nat King Cole. The tune was lively, with a danceable groove to it.

Rose sang and played with a lot of zest as Zasloff played muted trumpet then did a fine solo. He also did some interesting scatting in a coro style. Rose sang with lots of soul as the tune went into a montuno, with Alnashef on conga solo and Gonzales showing off his skill with the cajon drum. It was a very entertaining evening of Cuban Jazz.

The Left Coast Wine bar is a quaint, charming place, with a relaxed, comfortable vibe. Check it out soon. It's a nice place to stop by for wine and a snack or a longer evening of music. Check the calendar section for the month's listings.

JANUARY 2009



L-R Sergio Gonzalez, Roy Alnashef, Iliana Rose, David Zasloff and Aleks Peck at LEFT COAST WINE BAR in Glendale

Photo by Bob Comden