

Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, three-time Grammy nominee Diego Urcola has been a member of the Paquito D'Rivera Quintet since 1991. Additionally, the oft-in-demand trumpeter performs regularly with the legendary saxophonist Jimmy Heath, the Caribbean Jazz Project and the Dizzy Gillespie Alumni All-Star Big Band.

Urcola's musical studies began at the age of 9, in the Music Department of the Colegio Ward where his father Ruben served as director. He continued his studies and in 1988 he received the title of Profesor Nacional de Música from the Conservatorio Nacional de Musica. Subsequently, having received a scholarship to study abroad, the trumpeter and flugelhorn player moved to Boston where he attended the prestigious Berklee College of Music. In 1990 he received his diploma with an emphasis in Jazz Performance. Less than a year later, he made the jump to New York where he established himself as one of the truly gifted and versatile young artists. As noted, his affiliation with D'Rivera's various projects began almost upon arrival. He also began working with a number of other well-known artists. In the mid 1990s he toured with Slide Hampton, the great trombonist and arranger, in a group the bandleader referred to as "The Jazz Masters". Urcola toured extensively with the United Nations Orchestra under the leadership of D'Rivera after Dizzy Gillespie's death. He also spent a short time working with Wynton Marsalis, including performing with the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. In 1997, he received his master's degree in Jazz Performance from Queens College, in New York, a school whose well-respected jazz department was anchored by Jimmy Heath. That same year, Urcola earned second place honors at the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Trumpet Competition. The honor broadened awareness of his work.

During the next few years Urcola received key assignments from players a generation or more older than him. The late saxophonist-icon, Joe Henderson, invited him to join his band. So did trombonist Steve Turre. Other associations for Urcola at the time included work with the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band and with Wayne Shorter for a broadcast TV special titled, The 2nd Annual Celebration of America's Music.

Urcola's exceptional technique served him well. In 1999 the late vibraphonist, Milt Jackson, formed an all-star band, asking him to participate. A year later, Urcola became a member of the International Vamp Band, founded by iconoclastic bass player Avishai Cohen. In 2001, as part of the D'Rivera quintet, he earned a Latin Grammy; the following year, Urcola, again working with D'Rivera, took part in the film *Calle 54*, the acclaimed music documentary. Tours of Europe, The United States and Latin America followed under the banner of the Calle 54 All-Star Band.

Urcola, when he's not busy working with others, often leads his own ensembles. His first record as a leader, *Libertango* (Fresh Sound), was issued in 1999. In 2003 he released *Soundances* (Sunnyside), which received critical acclaim culminating in nominations for the 2004 Latin Grammys and the 2005 Grammy Awards.

The trumpeter's third record *Viva* (Cam Jazz), released in 2006 and nominated for the 2007 Grammys, marks a key moment in his now full-blown career. The recording features a core band that would make anyone jealous. Edward Simon, leads a rhythm section that includes bassist Avishai Cohen and drummer Antonio Sanchez. Pernell Saturnino adds percussion. Meanwhile, D'Rivera is heard on some cuts as is Dave Samuels and Jimmy Heath. The final piece of the puzzle is master trombonist Conrad Herwig.

On *Viva*, it has been noted that there exists a sensibility of experimentation that is vibrant throughout. Meanwhile, Urcola has said that one of his goals is to integrate his homeland's voice into the jazz idiom. "I like to bring the tango flavor from my country into the mix," he said, adding, "But, foremost I'm a jazz musician."

2006 was marked by important events. For *Funk Tango* (the debut release of D'Rivera's own record label) Urcola is asked by the master to play the valve trombone on a few tracks. This instrument used to be played by Claudio Roditti in the first groups that Paquito put together when he first arrived in New York City in the early 80's. Since then the valve trombone has been an important addition to Urcola's arsenal on his own projects, Paquito's Quintet and also other groups like Guillermo Klein's *Los Guachos*.

In 2010 Urcola recorded his second project for CAM JAZZ. *Appreciation* features a quartet with Luis Perdomo on piano, Hans Glawischnig on bass and Eric McPherson on drums. This setting allows Urcola to have plenty of space to stretch out his trumpet chops as well as nine original compositions dedicated to some of the most influential musicians in his life.

In 2013 he released *Mates* on Sunnyside. The friendly South American tradition of drinking mate between friends served as inspiration for this recording. Urcola wanted to mirror the give and take of this culinary and social tradition with that of the musical duet. To achieve this, the trumpeter recorded a number of intimate meetings with a handful of his closest musical associates, including bassist Avishai Cohen, vibraphonist Dave Samuels, harpist Edmar Castañeda and bandoneón player Juan Dargentón.



Discography as a leader

MATES SUNNYSIDE 2013

Appreciation CAM JAZZ 2011

Viva CAM JAZZ 2006
2007 GRAMMY NOMINEE
Best Latin Jazz Album

Soundances SUNNYSIDE 2003
2005 GRAMMY NOMINEE
Best Latin Jazz Album
2004 LATIN GRAMMY NOMINEE
Best Latin Jazz Album

Libertango FRESH SOUND 1999

Discography as a sideman

Jimmy Heath Big Band
Togetherness
David Weiss Endangered Species:
The Music of Wayne Shorter
Paquito D'Rivera Quintet
A Tribute To Mario Bauza
Paquito D'Rivera Quintet Funk Tango
Paquito D'Rivera Portraits of Cuba
Paquito D'Rivera Quintet
Live at the Blue Note
Paquito D'Rivera Tropicana Nights
Paquito D'Rivera A Night in Englewood
Enrico Pieranunzi Latin Jazz Quintet
Live at Birdland
Various Artists Calle 54
Chano Dominguez New Flamenco Sound
Bebo Valdes Bebo de Cuba
Bebo Valdes Bebo Rides Again
Avishai Cohen Lyla
Avishai Cohen & IVB Unity
Avishai Cohen At Home
Guillermo Klein & Los Guachos Carrera
Guillermo Klein & Los Guachos Filtros
Guillermo Klein & Los Guachos
Los Guachos II
Guillermo Klein & Los Guachos
Los Guachos III
Danilo Perez Motherland
Dee Dee Bridgewater Dear Ella
Claudia Acuna Wind from the South
Diane Schuur & CJP Schuur Fire