



LOS CALVOS Estos Son Los Calvos

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EL PALMAS MUSIC

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FORCED EXPOSURE

60 Lowell St, Arlington, MA 02476
ph: (781) 321-0320 • fx: (781) 321-0321
fe@forcedexposure.com

DESCRIPTION

Few have done as much for salsa in Venezuela as band-leader, composer and pianist **Ray Pérez**. He burst on to the scene in the mid-60s with his group **Los Dementes**, creating the blueprint for guaguanco, Pachanga, and boogaloo in Venezuela. When the name salsa began to be used as something of a catch-all-term he was still at the forefront, recording two hugely-popular salsa albums with Los Dementes in 1967. Remarkably, that very same year, he also recorded two albums with a brand-new group, **Los Calvos**, that showed how as well as being the genre's most visible band-leader, he was also pushing the nascent genre to its limits. *Estos Son Los Calvos* is the first of the two albums he made with Los Calvos. On it, he recruited a drummer (unprecedented at the time for a salsa ensemble, which always used percussionists), switched from the trombones of Los Dementes to the much harder, direct sound of trumpets, and he recruited **Carlos Yanez**, best known as **El Negrito Calavén**, as singer. Whereas Los Dementes had been aligned with the slightly pop sound of tropical orchestras, Los Calvos took an almost-jazz approach, allowing room for the musicians and vocalists to improvise, and they also took inspiration from the sounds of surf rock swirling around Caracas. Opening track "El Kenya" is the clearest example of that surf rock influence. They were intent on creating their own dance craze, and the song had all the credentials: rollicking montuno piano from Pérez, ingenious scatting and vocal improves from Calavén, and a middle section where the drums and trumpets battle it out hard. It's followed by "Mi Salsa Llegó", which Pérez had already recorded with Los Dementes; here, it's a tougher beast, the sparser hits of the drums and trumpets giving a harder sound evocative of the times. Los Calvos was a group made up of some of Venezuela's finest musicians. The legendary **Frank "El Pavo" Hernandez** was on drum kit, with revered names like **Alfredo Padilla**, **Carlos "Nene" Quintero**, **Pedro García**, **Miguel Silva**, **Enrique Vazquez**, **Rafael Araujo**, and **Luis Lewis**, also involved in the group. Their versatility allowed Los Calvos to go from the slower, haunting groove of "Negrito Calavan", on to "Bailemos Kenya", another attempt by the group to create their own version of "The Twist". Los Calvos never played live, but that was always the intention. But the spirit of Los Calvos remained when Pérez then formed **Los Kenya**. Los Calvos would never have the same successes as Pérez's other groups, though, Pérez has revealed that the two albums he made as Los Calvos are some of the most fun he ever had recording.

TRACKLISTING

- A1. El Kenya
- A2. Mi Salsa Llegó
- A3. Yo El Director
- A4. Que Pasara
- A5. Yo Sin Ti
- A6. Negrito Calaven
- B1. Bailemos Kenya
- B2. Oigan Guasanco
- B3. Tranquilo, Tranquilo
- B4. Comiendo Pan
- B5. Cariñito
- B6. Te Vieron Con Otro

HIGHLIGHTS

- Few have done as much for salsa in Venezuela as band-leader, composer and pianist **Ray Pérez**. He burst on to the scene in the mid-60s with his group **Los Dementes**, creating the blueprint for guaguanco, Pachanga, and boogaloo in Venezuela.
- Pérez recorded two hugely-popular salsa albums with Los Dementes in 1967. That same year, he also recorded two albums with a brand-new group, **Los Calvos**.
- *Estos Son Los Calvos* is the first of the two albums he made with Los Calvos.
- Whereas Los Dementes had been aligned with the slightly pop sound of tropical orchestras, Los Calvos took an almost-jazz approach, allowing room for the musicians and vocalists to improvise.

Press Contact: publicity@forcedexposure.com