



ISRAEL VARELA

Photo: Giovanni Romano

"Inside the music of mexican composer-drummer-singer Israel Varela is a rare mix among mexican, andalusian, and contemporary jazz colors. Ultimately, though, the surprising Mexican artist from Tijuana has figured a way to integrate all three seamlessly in this dynamic and creative drumming, singing and compositions, blending traditional forms with contemporary Jazz, flamenco, and mexican traditional rhythms".

For the last two decades Varela has been one of the most in demand drummers in Europe/Asia/ America, capturing the attention of the international music scene. But it is in the context as composer/drummer/singer that the gifted artist from Tijuana has revealed all his creativity and distinctive style with his trio and other solo projects.

He has performed in with multitudes of renowned Jazz, Flamenco, Classical and Pop artists including rewarding gigs with: Pat Metheny, Charlie Haden, George Benson, Bireli Lagrene, Bob Mintzer, Mike Stern, Yo Yo Ma, Jorge Pardo, Raimundo Amador, Bob Sheppard, Giovanni Hidalgo, Hiram Bullock, Abe Laboriel, Andrea Bocelli, Alex Acuna, Pino Daniele, Kai Eckhardt ,Montse Cortes, Otmaro Ruiz, Carles Benavent, Diego Amador, Fuensanta la Moneta, Joaquin Cortes, Karen Lugo, Rasha Rizk. Touring with some of them in India, Indonesia, Mexico, Belgium, China, Tunisia, Spain, Swtzerland, Argentina, USA, UAE, Qatar, France, Italy, Singapore, Chile, Peru, Jordan, and Malaysia.

As a producer/arranger he has been very active for the last 10 years producing Jazz, Pop, R&B artists, in America, Europe, And Asia.

Born in 1979 in Tijuana, Mexico, Israel grew up in a family filled with singers, pianists, guitarrists and orchestral conductors. He began to perform in public at the age of five, singing and playing piano. Years later at the age of ten he began doing gigs as a drummer with the best Tijuana local Jazz bands, and studied under Gonzalo Farrugia, and Andrei Tchernizev.

A major turning point in his life happened in 1995 when his talent was discovered by the great Alex Acuna. At the age of fifteen he was studying in Los Angeles privately under Alex Acuna(1995-1998), and later under Dave Weckl (1998/2000) also privately. On 2000 he moved to Milan where he studied at the G.Verdi Conservatory.

On 2003 he moved to Seville to explore all the demanding techniques, rhythms & harmonies of Flamenco Music under Diego Amador, Luis Amador, and Miguel Vargas at the gipsy village 3000 viviendas. This became an important period for

Varela as during this period he developed his own voice as a drummer and as a composer knowing the flamenco tradition and using his own original style to add to it.

Currently he lives in Italy, in Pontinia, and leads his own Trio. and other projects as a band leader.

Israel Varela Trio albums:

"Tijuana Portrait" (2007)

"Border People" (2009),

"Zamar" (2012),

"Invocations" (2015),

"As Above so Below" (2018)