



## Caminando Alex Bellegarde - (Justin Time / Fusion 3)

Ralph Boncy, Voir, Le 6 juillet 2006

“Ce n'est certainement pas un hasard si le quartette d'Alex Bellegarde a gagné le Grand Prix de jazz General Motors au FIJM l'année dernière. La preuve par neuf sur ce disque dont le titre évoque le penchant avoué que le contrebassiste québécois ressent pour les musiques du monde. Rassemblés autour de lui: l'impressionnant sax alto Erik Hove, le batteur Yvon Plouffe (un «world aficionado») et le pianiste Yoël Diaz dont on n'a pas encore dit assez de bien. Avec le percussionniste invité Orlando Lavielle pour un petit zeste en bonus, le groupe est à la fois solide, structuré et spontané. Ici, on ne fait pas du latin pour se laisser aller à la facilité, mais on ne fait pas du jazz sérieux au détriment du plaisir pur.”

★★★★

<http://www.voir.ca/musique/disque.aspx?iIDDisque=11530>



## The Montreal Gazette - Disc of the Day

Irwin Block, The Gazette, July 7th 2006

“Bassist Alex Bellegarde's CD - part of his award for winning last year's competition for best new Canadian group at the Montreal International Jazz Festival is dedicated to the late Skip Bey. The compositions reflect an infatuation with Cuban rhythms and jazz styles that flow there from. Lead melodists are Cuban-born Yoël Diaz and Erik Hove, the up and coming alto sax player. The rhythms and counter rhythms are tastefully laid out by drummer Yvon Plouffe and Cuban expatriate Orlando Lavielle on congas. Bellegarde's tunes are brightly crafted, the group swings, and the CD marks a promising debut.”

<http://www.canada.com/montrealgazette/news/preview/story.html?id=ed94aaa8-feb8-4fa1-94aa-ceb643caa604>



## Alex Bellegarde Quartet *Caminando*

Servicesmontreal.com, Le 7 juillet 2006

“Bassiste et compositeur montréalais, le sympathique Alex Bellegarde dirige son propre quartette ainsi que l'Ensemble Jazz Urbain de Montréal en plus de jouer régulièrement avec plusieurs artistes cubains, de s'être produit dans plusieurs festivals et de composer la musique de productions théâtrales.

Alex Bellegarde et son quartette ont reçu le Grand Prix du Jazz 2005 à Montréal, ce qui leur a permis d'enregistrer de disque avec ses musiciens tous très présents sans jamais s'écraser l'un l'autre dans les 10 compositions. Bellegarde à la contrebasse nous propose une très belle plage en particulier, la neuvième, intitulée Désert, parfaite pour écouter à l'extérieur en fin d'après-midi / début de soirée accompagné d'Erik Hove, sax alto, Yvon Plouffe, batterie, Yoël Diaz, piano, et à titre d'invité aux percussions, Orlando Lavielle.”

<http://www.servicesmontreal.com/jacqueline/cd.alexbellegarde.html>



## **Caminando: Latin jazz, jazz tout court**

Alain Brunet, La Presse, Le dimanche 23 juillet 2006

“Voilà un projet attendu du contrebassiste et leader Alex Bellegarde, lauréat 2005 du Grand Prix de Jazz General Motors au Festival international de jazz de Montréal. À ses côtés, on retrouve Yoel Diaz, c'est-à-dire le meilleur pianiste cubain établi à Montréal, le très inventif saxophoniste alto Eric Hove (qui s'est démarqué à l'Off festival avec son groupe électrojazz Soundclash) et le compétent batteur Yvon Plouffe, auquel s'ajoute le conguro Orlando Lavielle, un vrai de vrai. Participant à moult formations, exploitant différents sous-genres jazzistiques, Bellegarde (qui s'illustre en tant que soliste sur la pièce Brown's Groove) réunit ici un fort bel ensemble, solide et soudé comme il se doit. Les concepts harmoniques de ce quartette s'avèrent éminemment modernes, les rythmes varient entre le jazz (tout à fait bop dans A Blues or Not!, par exemple) et ceux de la culture afro-cubaine, les improvisations sont exécutées avec ferveur par des professionnels accomplis. Il est d'autant plus réjouissant de penser que ces musiciens deviendront encore meilleurs au cours des années à venir. En passant, Alex Bellegarde se produit ce soir au Upstairs avec Yoël Diaz et le batteur Jim Hillman.”

(+): La clarté, la cohésion (-): Aucune transgression des règles

Alex Bellegarde Quartet Caminando Justin Time

★★★★

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/article/20060723/CPARTS/60723032/5079/CPARTS03>



## **Alex Bellegarde Quartet Caminando (Justin Time)**

Geoff Chapman, The Toronto Star, August 17<sup>th</sup> 2006

★★★

“For this Montreal quartet the album is reward for its winning the Grand Prize award at last year's Montreal jazzfest and its good. Bassist Bellegarde, extremely active in his city base, dedicates it to legendary bassman Skip Bey and plays a forceful, versatile role on the 10 tunes he composed. There's strong Cuban references, with pianist Yoël Diaz and guest conguro Orlando Lavielle interacting smartly with lively alto saxist Erik Hove and drummer Yvon Plouffe. The result is supple and usually tasteful as the group capers through an energized terrain where only infrequently the collegiate atmosphere dissipates. Especially intriguing tracks are "Native", "Brown's Groove" and "A Blues or Not!.”

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[http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article\\_Type1&c=Article&cid=1155678611291&call\\_pageid=968867496921&col=969048868981](http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_Type1&c=Article&cid=1155678611291&call_pageid=968867496921&col=969048868981)



## **Alex Bellegarde Quartet Caminando (Justin Time/Fusion III)**

Len Dobbin, The Montreal Mirror, August 17<sup>th</sup> 2006

“This is a memorable outing from this bassist's GM Award-winning group, one that includes Erik Hove and Yoël Diaz. Try “A Blues or Not! (8/10)” (LD)

<http://www.montrealmirror.com/2006/081706/disc.html>

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## Alex Bellegarde Quartet - *Caminando*

### CANOË NOUVEAUTÉS ET AUTRES

#### Du jazz à l'année

J. Sébastien Chicoine, Canoë Montréal, 21/08/2006

“Gagnant du Grand Prix de jazz General Motors en 2005, le Alex Bellegarde Quartet (A.B. à la contrebasse, Yoël Diaz au piano, Erik Hove au sax et Yvon Plouffe à la batterie et Orlando Lavielle aux congas comme invité spécial) nous présente avec *Caminando* un album à saveur latine dédié à la mémoire du bassiste Skip Bey qui nous a quittés il y a peu de temps. Dans les mots de Bellegarde lui-même: «J'aime la liberté du jazz et la joie des rythmes cubains. Surtout, je me fie toujours sur l'habilité de la musique à transcender les barrières et rassembler le monde.» C'est à la fois spontané et presque cérébral, mais jamais à l'excès dans une direction comme dans l'autre. On sent bien le plaisir que ces gars-là ont à jouer ensemble et y'a rien de mieux à écouter! (8/10)”

<http://www2.canoe.com/artsetculture/musiquelivres/discotest/archives/2006/08/20060820-142750.html>



## Alex Bellegarde

Christophe Rodriguez, Ici- Montréal, 24/08/2006

“Il est l'un des quatre contrebassistes montréalais à être de toutes les *jam sessions*. Pilier de L'Upstairs, fin connaisseur des rythmes latins le dimanche soir avec le pianiste Yoël Diaz, Alex Bellegarde peut revendiquer le titre d'incontournable. En plein cœur du festival, il nous offre *Caminando (Justin Time)*, subtil mélange de jazz latin et d'harmonies bop que le grand Dizzy n'aurait pas renié.”

[http:// www.icimontreal.com](http://www.icimontreal.com)



## Alex Bellegarde *Caminando*

Reiner Schwarz, Toronto Jazz FM 91, 30/08/2006

“A fine collection of work and with time I expect that two or three of these will become ‘timeless’ pieces in my collection! In Jazz today it's about composing and playing masterfully as always, originality of voice and style however, are more difficult to establish than ever imaginable ...Alex sails the high waves in a sea of plenty, his players are blissfully on board for this noteworthy debut.”

[http://www.jazz.fm/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=blogcategory&id=39&Itemid=87](http://www.jazz.fm/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=39&Itemid=87)



## Alex Bellegarde Quartet : Caminando

Paul Serralheiro, La Scena Musicale (page 44) September edition 2006

★★★★☆☆

"This recent quartet release, the fourth by this Montreal bassist, comes in the year following his winning the Grand Prize GM Competition at the Montreal International Jazz Festival. A very active musician around town, Bellegarde has taken a shine to Cuban music, a prominent fact on this disc, in which he performs his compositions with the help of a native-born pianist from that country, Yoël Diaz, and guest conga-player Orlando Lavielle, all of whom are ably supported by Erik Hove's mellifluous alto sax and Yvon Plouffe on drums. Despite the Latin jazz connotations of the title track (which is taken from a verse by Spanish poet Antonio Machado), this album is happily eclectic in its grooves, moods and melodies...thankfully not just another trip on the Latin jazz bandwagon. The title tune is built up from a refreshingly simple ostinato figure and develops into a vigorous saunter, not a tiring high-octane chops-fest that can be so irritating about some Latin jazz. The only tune that dangerously skirts the genre's clichés is 'La Vaca', but overall there is a pleasant variety here, including some hard-bop lines in 'Got Lip' and a Caravan-esque melody and vamp in 'Native'. This is a mature release from a young dues paying player on Montreal's effervescent jazz scene."

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<http://www.scena.org/index-en.asp>



## Alex Bellegarde Quartet : Caminando

Mike Chamberlain, Coda Magazine (page 35) Nov/Dec edition 2006

"Bassist Alex Bellegarde's quartet were the winners of the 2005 GM grand prize at the Montreal International Jazz Festival, and Caminando, their debut album, is part of the prize.

Recorded in one session at Studio Karisma in Montreal, Caminando is a completely charming debut by the group, which includes drummer Yvon Plouffe, Cuban-born pianist Yoël Diaz, and remarkable alto saxophonist Erik Hove. Guest percussionist Orlando Lavielle also appears on the album, dedicated to Montreal-based bassist Skip Bey, who died during that year's festival.

As he states in the liner notes, Bellegarde has always been fascinated by Cuban rhythms, and explorations of those rhythms forms the core of the recording, though not the whole of it, with the bebop styled 'Got Lip' the notable exception. Indeed, the jazz and Cuban music are well-balanced in the writing as are the contributions of the musicians. On 'Native,' for instance, Diaz, with a latin touch, and Hove, with his raspy tone, slide back and forth between lead and accompanying roles almost seamlessly as Bellegarde and Plouffe gradually build up the rhythmic tension.

The triumph here is that without prior knowledge, one would think that this is anything but a debut album. Kudos all around on this one, and here's looking forward to the next effort. "

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<http://www.coda1958.com>



## Caminando

Alex Bellegarde Quartet | Justin Time Records

Dan McClenaghan, review courtesy of AllAboutJazz.com

USA

"The freedom of jazz and the joy of Cuban rhythms are what bandleader Alex Bellegarde says he loves, and *Caminando* combines spontaneity and structure for an affair of the heart. The Montreal-based bassist leads a vibrant Latin-leaning quartet featuring Cuban-born pianist Yoel Diaz; alto sax man Erik Hove; drummer Yvon Plouffe; and a special guest, percussionist Orlando Lavielle.

The set opens with the title tune, featuring a tranquil Cuban percussion groove behind a sweet and simple melodic line from Hove. 'Got Lip', a burning up tempo romp, sounds like a cousin of Coltrane's 'Giant Steps'; 'Native' opens on some dark Afro-Cuban percussion that leads into a piano sparkle which introduces a brooding saxophone interlude. 'Timba Tune' has pianist Diaz splashing right colors across the keyboard behind Hove's searching alto, before the tune shifts into a spicy Latin rhythm.

There's a lot of land (and some sea) between Montreal and Havana. But Alex Bellegarde and his musical compatriots transcend geography on a sonic visit to the land between with 'A Blues or Not', a tart, boppish Blue Note-esque blower, before closing with 'En Moin de Deux', an insistent free jazz affair that gives the leader a chance to show off his chops. "

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<http://www.allaboutjazz.com>

## WILSON & ALROY'S RECORD REVIEWS

David Bertrand Wilson, review courtesy of Wilson & Alroy's Record Reviews, USA (1/03/2007)

★★★★☆ Alex Bellegarde Quartet, *Caminando* (2006)

Montreal is crawling with jazz musicians, and acoustic bassist Bellegarde beat them all out for a 2005 composition award at the Festival International de Jazz de Montréal. All the tunes here are his, based on Cuban rhythms. Helping out are Cuban pianist Yoël Diaz, whose astonishing classicist technique ("Native") reminds me of Gonzalo Rubalcaba, and Cuban congero Orlando Lavielle. Adding more standard post-bop flavor are alto saxophonist Erik Hove (playing in a harsh Trane-ish idiom) and drummer Yvon Plouffe. Apart from a couple of features ("Driving On A Rainy Night"), Bellegarde is content to stay on the sidelines most of the time (I saw him playing as a duo with Hove, and he was much more upfront) but he continually prods the band forward with concise, muscular figures (title track). The focus here is on the compositions, and they're tasty and distinct, from the lively take on timba "La Vaca" to the laid-back "Native" to straight jazz numbers like "A Blues Or Not" and "Got Lip." While so many jazz numbers are just a bunch of notes thrown over the chord chart, Bellegarde always starts with a memorable theme: "Timba Time" is one of the catchiest things I've heard in years, with a lithe melody and fun, frisky playing all around. (DBW)

<http://www.warr.org/oddjazz.html>



## Caminando

Alex Bellegarde Quartet | Justin Time Records

Paolo Peviani, review courtesy of AllAboutJazzItalia.com  
ITALIA

“Strano connubio, quello tra il freddo Canada e la calda Cuba. Ma il jazz ci ha abituato ad abbinamenti ben più estrosi e del resto la contaminazione è nella natura stessa di questa musica.

Dedicato alla memoria del contrabbassista Kaspar Crumby Bey, meglio noto come Skip Bey, *Caminando* è un album canadese (o forse sarebbe meglio dire statunitense) nell'impostazione armonica, ibrido nella struttura melodica e cubano in quella ritmica, che esplora le atmosfere più disparate, con risultati altalenanti.

Alcune tracce, quelle meno riconducibili ad espliciti modelli di riferimento, sono molto ben riuscite. Suonano fresche, originali, delicate. Altre, di impronta prettamente jazzistica o smaccatamente caraibica, hanno un che di già sentito che ne sminuisce il valore.

Complessivamente siamo comunque di fronte ad un buon disco, ad un jazz suonato in tutta spontaneità ma non superficiale. Una piccola sforbiciata qua e là alla scaletta, andando ad eliminare i brani meno riusciti (“Gotlip”, “A Blues Or Not!”, “Driving on a Rainy Night”) e sarebbe un ottimo album. “

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## In cammino / Caminando

Alex Bellegarde Quartet | Justin Time Records

Cosimo Parisi, review courtesy of MusicBoom Italia  
ITALIA

“Il gruppo del contrabbassista canadese **Alex Bellegarde** ha ricevuto, meritatamente, dei premi in patria e così la **Justin Time** lo ha preso sotto contratto permettendo una maggiore visibilità internazionale. La musica è ricca di colori latini, apportati dal pianista cubano **Yoel Diaz** e dal percussionista **Orlando Lavelle**, presente in quattro brani, che danno al tutto un'atmosfera solare, di immediata ricezione da parte del pubblico.

Il sassofonista contralto **Erik Hove** ha studiato con **Greg Osby** e dà con la sua voce intensiva un'impronta precisa ai brani, ben congegnati da parte del leader, che ama dare ai suoi musicisti la libertà di cui hanno bisogno ed allo stesso tempo una via da percorrere tutti insieme (camminando, come dice il titolo del disco).

Il batterista **Yvon Plouffe** completa il gruppo con un ottimo swing, pur se lavora di solito con artisti canadesi che si muovono in altri ambiti, dal rock al pop. La musica di **Alex Bellegarde** ha il pregio dell'immediata riconoscibilità, con composizioni efficaci che permettono di distinguersi nel panorama del bop internazionale. Seguono la via indicata da altri famosi gruppi, cioè la ricerca di un suono di gruppo e di un'identità collettiva, riuscendovi con successo. “

[http://www.musicboom.it/mostra\\_recensioni.php?Unico=20061011042002](http://www.musicboom.it/mostra_recensioni.php?Unico=20061011042002)