

BEYOND SALSA PIANO

THE CUBAN TIMBA PIANO REVOLUTION



VOLUME 9 • Iván “Melón” Lewis, pt. 4

by Kevin Moore

photography by Tom Ehrlich and Gimena Berenguer

audio and video companion products available at www.timba.com/piano



REVISION 1.0
©2010 BY KEVIN MOORE
SANTA CRUZ, CA
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

No part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise, without written permission of the author.

ISBN-10: 1450545661
ISBN-13/EAN-13: 9781450545662

www.timba.com/piano
www.timba.com/audio
www.timba.com/gears
www.beyondsalsapiano.com
www.timba.com/users/7
kevin@timba.com



Table of Contents

Introduction to the Series	8
How the Series is Organized and Sold.....	8
Book	8
Audio	9
Video	9
Series Overview.....	9
Companion Series	10
<i>Inside Cuban Percussion</i>	10
<i>Beyond Salsa Percussion</i>	10
Introduction to Volume 9.....	11
Chapter 1: From Son Montuno to Timba	13
Exercise 1 – Exploring Timba Piano Techniques and Tumbao Length	14
Reviewing I-IV-V-IV in pre-1990 Cuban Music	14
<i>I-IV-V-IV Variation 1a</i> – tracks 1 & 2	14
<i>I-IV-V-IV Variation 1b</i> – tracks 3 & 4	15
<i>I-IV-V-IV Variation 1c</i> – tracks 5 & 6.....	15
<i>I-IV-V-IV Variation 1d</i> – tracks 7 & 8	16
<i>I-IV-V-IV Variation 1e</i> – tracks 9 & 10	16
<i>I-IV-V-IV Variation 1f</i> – tracks 11 & 12	17
Exercise 2 – Controlled Improvisation With a Traditional Son Montuno Tumbao	17
Chapter 2: <i>Catalina</i> – Melón’s I-IV-V-IV Variations.....	18
<i>Catalina 1a</i> – tracks 13 & 14	18



<i>Catalina 1b</i> – tracks 15 & 16	19
<i>Catalina 1c</i> – tracks 17 & 18.....	20
<i>Catalina 1d</i> – tracks 19 & 20	21
<i>Catalina 1e</i> – tracks 21 & 22	22
<i>Catalina 2a</i> – tracks 23 & 24	22
<i>Catalina 2</i> Transition – tracks 25 & 26	23
<i>Catalina 2b</i> – tracks 27 & 28	24
<i>Catalina 2c</i> – tracks 29 & 30.....	25
<i>Catalina 2d</i> – tracks 31 & 32	25
Chapter 3: <i>Por la naturaleza</i>	26
Leonel Limonta’s Classic Freelance Compositions.....	27
<i>Por la naturaleza</i> – tracks 33 & 34	27
Chapter 4: Melón’s Cuerpo and Fixed Montuno Style.....	28
The Approach	29
The Fixed Montuno Section	29
Chapter 5: <i>Se te fue la mano</i>	30
Issac Delgado’s Classic Compositions.....	31
<i>Se te fue la mano</i> – Cuerpo and Fixed Montuno Section – Notes and Analysis	32
Fingering Note 1: Playing Two Notes with the Thumb	33
<i>Se te fue la mano</i> (cuerpo) – 16 th note notation – Tracks 35 & 36	34
<i>Se te fue la mano</i> in Concert	47
<i>Se te fue la mano</i> – Tumbaos.....	47
<i>Se te fue la mano 1a</i> – Tracks 37 & 38	48
<i>Se te fue la mano 1b</i> – Tracks 39 & 40	49



<i>Se te fue la mano 2</i> – Tracks 41 & 42	50
<i>Se te fue la mano 3</i> – tracks 43 & 44.....	51
<i>Se te fue la mano</i> – motivo – tracks 45 & 46	52
Chapter 6: <i>Con la punta del pie</i>	53
<i>Con la punta del pie</i> – Cuerpo and Fixed Montuno Analysis and Notes	54
<i>Con la punta del pie</i> (cuerpo) – 16 th note notation – Tracks 47 & 48	56
About Alain Pérez.....	65
<i>Con la punta del pie</i> - Tumbaos.....	66
<i>Con la punta del pie</i> – intro – tracks 49 & 50	66
<i>Con la punta del pie 1a</i> – Tracks 51 & 52	67
<i>Con la punta del pie 1b</i> – Tracks 53 & 54	68
<i>Con la punta del pie 1c</i> – Tracks 55 & 56	68
<i>Con la punta del pie 1d</i> – Tracks 57 & 58	69
<i>Con la punta del pie 1e</i> – Tracks 59 & 60	69
<i>Con la punta del pie 2</i> – Tracks 61 & 62	70
Chapter 7: <i>Pa’ que te salves</i> (“ <i>La sogá</i> ”).....	71
<i>La sogá</i> – Cuerpo and Fixed Montuno Section – Analysis and Notes	71
<i>La sogá</i> – Tumbaos.....	86
<i>La sogá 1a</i> – tracks 65 & 66	86
<i>La sogá 1b</i> – tracks 67 & 68	87
<i>La sogá 1c</i> – tracks 69 & 70.....	88
<i>La sogá 2</i> – tracks 71 & 72	89
Chapter 8: <i>La competencia</i> (“ <i>Hit Parade</i> ”).....	90
<i>La competencia 1</i> – motivo – tracks 73 & 74	91

<i>La competencia 2a</i> – tracks 75 & 76	92
<i>La competencia 2b</i> – tracks 77 & 78	93
<i>La competencia 2c</i> – tracks 79 & 80.....	94
<i>La competencia 3</i> – tracks 81 & 82	95
Chapter 9: <i>La temática</i>	96
<i>La temática's</i> Harmonic Progression	97
Controlled Improvisation on <i>La temática</i>	97
<i>La temática 1a</i> – tracks 83 & 84.....	98
<i>La temática</i> Exercise 1 – tracks 85 & 86.....	99
<i>La temática</i> Exercise 2 – tracks 87 & 88.....	100
<i>La temática 1b</i> – tracks 89 & 90.....	101
<i>La temática 1c</i> – tracks 91 & 92	101
<i>La temática 1d</i> – tracks 93 & 94.....	102
<i>La temática 1e</i> – tracks 95 & 96.....	102
<i>La temática</i> Exercise 3 – tracks 97 & 98.....	103
<i>La temática 1f</i> – tracks 99 & 100	105
<i>La temática 1g</i> – tracks 101 & 102.....	105
<i>La temática 2a</i> – tracks 103 & 104.....	106
<i>La temática 2b</i> – tracks 105 & 106.....	107
<i>La temática 2b</i> – tracks 105 & 106 (8 th note notation).....	108
Fingering Note 2 – Consecutive Octaves.....	108
Chapter 10: <i>Tú tranquilo</i>	109
<i>Tú tranquilo 1a</i> – tracks 107 & 108.....	110
<i>Tú tranquilo 1b</i> – tracks 109 & 110.....	111



<i>Tú tranquilo 1c</i> – tracks 111 & 112	112
<i>Tú tranquilo 1d</i> – tracks 113 & 114	113
Chapter 11: <i>Me falta La Habana</i>	114
<i>Me falta La Habana</i> – tracks 115 & 116	115
Chapter 12: <i>Movimiento</i> and Latin Jazz	117
<i>Movimiento 1a</i> – tracks 117& 118	118
<i>Movimiento 1b</i> – tracks 119 & 120	119
Photography Credits	120
Looking Ahead	121
For Further Study	122
Suggested Reading	122
Suggested Listening to Prepare for Subsequent Volumes	123
Acknowledgments	125
About the Author	125
Earlier Volumes of <i>Beyond Salsa Piano</i>	126
Continuing the <i>Beyond Salsa Piano</i> Course	130



Introduction to the Series



How the Series is Organized and Sold

Each volume of *Beyond Salsa Piano* consists of two or three separately sold products:

- 1) a book like this one with text and musical notation (hard-copy or eBook)
- 2) downloadable MP3 audio files demonstrating the musical examples, accompanied by a clave click track, at full-speed and in slow motion, with the left and right hands panned hard left and right
- 3) when available, downloadable computer video files showing a Cuban pianist performing each musical example at full speed, in slow motion, and with variations

You can choose any combination of the three to fit with your personal style of learning.

Book

The book you're reading now can be purchased at www.createpace.com/3427357 as a hard-copy bound paperback book. Alternatively, it can be viewed online and/or printed on your computer's printer from the website www.timba.com/piano. The books contain music notation for each exercise in both 8th notes (American-style) and 16th notes (Cuban-style), as well as explanatory text and historical information. If you don't read music and aren't interested in the explanations and history, you can choose to buy only the audio and/or video products.

Audio

The audio files do not come with the book. They're available as a separate downloadable product from www.timba.com/audio. For each notation example, there are two ultra-high quality MP3 files made directly from 24-bit wave files. The first is recorded at normal tempo and the second in slow motion at 50 beats per minute. Each file begins with a countoff consisting of four main beats on the bell and one cycle of clave. After the countoff, the bell drops out while the clave continues. The right- and left-hand piano parts are separated and panned hard right and left respectively. This way, you can use the balance control to solo just one hand. The audio files can be burned to audio CDs or played on an MP3 player. If you have audio on your computer, I highly recommend taking advantage of the new generation of computer programs that will allow you to change the tempo and/or key of any of these audio files and to loop them to fit your style of practice. Particularly useful are: Amazing Slowdowner™, Transcribe!™ and Emulator X®, all of which can be downloaded from their respective companies' websites.

Video

The video product, like the audio product, will be available as a separate download from www.timba.com/audio. There will be one video file for each exercise. The pianist is expected to be Iván "Melón" Lewis, one of the greatest Cuban pianists of all time and the subject of Volumes 6, 7, 8 and 9. Melón plays each exercise slowly, then at full speed, and finally adds variations such as he might use in a live performance. Volumes 10, 11 and 12 will focus on César "Pupy" Pedroso.

Series Overview

Beyond Salsa Piano is a history and anthology of the role of the piano in the Cuban rhythm section – from its first appearance to the present. In a broader sense, it's a study of the *tumbao* – the art of creating music from layers of repeating rhythmic and melodic phrases. Whether these syncopated figures are called *tumbaos*, *guajeos*, *montunos*, riffs or vamps, this Afro-Cuban concept lies at the heart of nearly every popular music genre from salsa to rock, funk, R&B, hip-hop and jazz.

While presented as a set of method books, the series doubles as a history course and record-collecting guide for listeners, dancers, and players of instruments other than the piano.

Perhaps the most important goal of the series is to provide a comprehensive understanding of how *tumbaos* are constructed, their central role in the texture of Latin music of all eras, and the endless possibilities they provide for creative composing and arranging.

Volume 1 begins around 1900 and covers the origins of the *tumbao* concept using exercises adapted from genres – such as *changüí*, *danzón*, and *son* – which pre-date the use of piano as the primary



instrument for tumbaos in Cuban music. This material is designed to be playable by near-beginners, players of other instruments, and arrangers seeking to acquire a basic facility on piano.

Volume 2 covers the period from 1940-1959, during which the piano became a constant and dominant presence in nearly every Latin rhythm section and during which Cuban music had a profound global influence on all forms of popular music. The difficulty level ranges from beginning to intermediate.

Volumes 3 and 4 cover the eclectic period between the Cuban Revolution and the Fall of the Berlin Wall – from 1959 to 1989.

Volume 5 introduces the *timba* genre that began in the 1990s. It includes a history and discography of the era, a detailed description of rhythm section “gears”, a list of the most important piano innovations of the 1990s, and finally a series of 32 instructional tumbaos, all on the same chord progression, demonstrating these innovations.

Volume 6 onwards – Each book concentrates on the style of one Cuban pianist, with note-for-note transcriptions, based in most cases on MIDI files performed by the volume’s featured pianist. For example, the subject of Volumes 6 through 9 is Iván “Melón” Lewis, the phenomenally innovative pianist who played with The Issac Delgado Group from 1995 to 1998. Beginning with Volume 10 we’ll begin our study of César “Pupy” Pedroso of Los Van Van and Los Que Son Son.

Companion Series

Inside Cuban Percussion

Each volume of this series is devoted to the style of a single Cuban percussionist or bassist, breaking down the subtle details that make them sound so funky and teaching them with a right-brain video approach designed to emulate the way these musicians themselves learned intuitively in the musically fertile environment of Cuba. The first three volumes will be out in late 2010 and feature the legendary NG La Banda drummer, Calixto Oviedo.

Beyond Salsa Percussion

This series analyzes the gear change systems of various Cuban bands and provides exercises designed to enable the rhythm section of any band to utilize gear changes and other Cuban rhythm section devices in their own material and invent their own gear change systems. For more on gear changes, see *The Tomás Cruz Conga Method*, Volume 5 of *Beyond Salsa Piano*, and my free online articles in the Timbapedia section of www.timba.com (www.timba.com/encyclopedias).



Suggested Listening to Prepare for Subsequent Volumes

** indicates album download (w/full booklet) is available on www.latinpulsemusic.com as of 2010.

This list is chosen for both overall musical quality and relevance to the tumbaos and pianists that will appear in future volumes of the "Beyond Salsa Piano" series.

GROUP	ALBUM	PIANIST	LABEL
Paulito FG y su Élite	<i>Con la conciencia tranquila</i>	Sergio Noroña	Nueva Fania **
	<i>Paulito FG (El bueno soy yo)</i>	Emilio Morales	Nueva Fania **
Bamboleo	<i>Yo no me parezco a nadie</i>	Lázaro Valdés	Ahí Namá **
	<i>Ya no hace falta</i>	Lázaro Valdés	Ahí Namá **
	<i>Ñññño!</i>	Lázaro Valdés	Ahí Namá
Charanga Habanera	<i>Hey You Loca</i>	Juan Carlos González	Magic Music **
	<i>Pa' que se entere La Habana</i>	Juan Carlos González	Magic Music **
	<i>Tremendo delirio</i>	Juan Carlos González	Magic Music **
	<i>Charanguero mayor</i>	Tirso Duarte	Ciocan Music **
	<i>Live in the USA</i>	Tirso Duarte	Ciocan Music **
	<i>Chan Chan Charanga</i>	Tirso Duarte	Ciocan Music **
Danny Lozada	<i>Tanto le pedí</i>	Juan Carlos González	
Issac Delgado	<i>Rarities (Exclusivo para Cuba)</i>	Iván Melón Lewis	Ciocan Music **
	<i>El año que viene</i>	Iván Melón Lewis	RMM
	<i>Otra idea</i>	Iván Melón Lewis	RMM
	<i>La primera noche</i>	Pepe Rivero	ARTEX**
	<i>La fórmula</i>	Roberto Carlos	Ahí Namá **
Manolín	<i>Para mi gente</i>	Chaka Nápoles	Ahí Namá **
	<i>De buena fe</i>	Chaka Nápoles	Blue Metro
	<i>Jaque mate</i>	Chaka Nápoles	Caribe
	<i>El puente</i>	Chaka Nápoles	Ciocan Music **
Los Van Van	<i>Disco Azúcar</i>	Pupy Pedroso	ARTEX **
	<i>Lo último en vivo</i>	Pupy Pedroso	QBADisc
	<i>Ay dios, ampárame</i>	Pupy Pedroso	Caribe Records**
	<i>Ésto te pone la cabeza mala</i>	Pupy Pedroso	Caribe Records **
	<i>Llegó Van Van</i>	Pupy Pedroso	Pimienta Records **
	<i>Chapeando</i>	Roberto Carlos	Unicornio Records **
NG La Banda	<i>En la calle</i>	"Peruchín" Argudín	QBADisc
	<i>Simplemente lo mejor de NG</i>	"Peruchín" Argudín	ARTEX (BIS) **

GROUP	ALBUM	PIANIST	LABEL
Klímax	<i>Mira si te gusta</i>	Tony Pérez	Eurotropical
	<i>Juego de manos</i>	“Huicho”	Eurotropical
	<i>Oye como va</i>	Marcos Crego	Eurotropical
Klímax and Manolito	<i>Concierto Eurotropical I</i>	“Huicho”/Manolito	Eurotropical
Manolito y su Trabuco	<i>Directo al corazón</i>	Manolito Simonet	Bembé Records
	<i>Contra todos los pronósticos</i>	Manolito Simonet	Eurotropical
	<i>Marcando la distancia</i>	Manolito Simonet	Eurotropical
	<i>Para que baile Cuba</i>	Manolito Simonet	Eurotropical
	<i>Se rompieron los termómetros</i>	Manolito Simonet	Eurotropical
	<i>Hablando en serio</i>	Manolito Simonet	EGREM
Los Que Son Son	<i>Qué cosas tiene la vida</i>	Pupy Pedroso	EGREM
	<i>La buenagente</i>	Pupy Pedroso	Pimienta Records
	<i>Mi timba cerrá</i>	Pupy Pedroso	EGREM
	<i>Tranquilo que yo controlo</i>	Pupy Pedroso	EGREM
Revé y su Charangón	<i>Se sigue comentando</i>	Roy Alain Sain	BIS**
	<i>Fresquecito</i>	Pachy Naranjo, Jr.	BIS**
	<i>De qué estamos Hablando</i>	Pachy Naranjo, Jr.	
Azúcar Negra	<i>Andar andando</i>	Aisar Simón	BIS**
Michel Maza	<i>Fieeesta</i>	Sergio Noroña	Envidia**
	<i>Que hablen los habladores</i>	Sergio Noroña	Envidia**
Angel Bonne	<i>Circunstancias</i>	Yaniel “El Majá”	EGREM
	<i>Bonne & Bonne Co.</i>	Wilfredo Naranjo, Jr.	EGREM
Havana d’Primera	<i>Haciendo historia</i>	Tony Rodríguez	EGREM
Various	<i>Gracias Formell</i>	Melón Lewis, Emilio Morales	Ciocan**

For suggested listening within the 1960-1989 time period, please see the Discography and Online Book sections of the Timbapedia section of www.timba.com.

Acknowledgments

photography: Tom Ehrlich, Gimena Berenguer

editing and conceptual guidance: Orlando Fiol, David Peñalosa, Curtis Lanoue, Tomás Cruz, Bill Wolfer, Osvaldo Martínez, Marc Bischoff, Gabriel Wilder, Sue Taylor, Peter Maiden, David Cantrell, Ryan Mead, Michael Spiro, Roberto Morris, Wendy Black, Alexey Berlind, Michael Lazarus, Colin Johnson, Majela Serrano, Abel Robaina, Keith Johnson.

About the Author

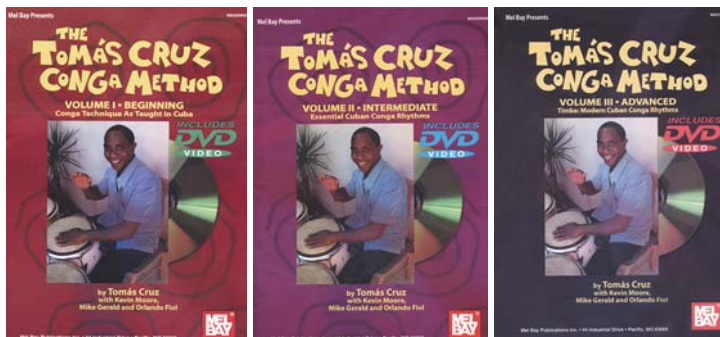


Melón Lewis, Kevin Moore – Los Angeles, 2009

Kevin Moore (kevin@timba.com) is the co-founder and music editor for the world's largest Cuban music website, www.timba.com, to which he has contributed the free online multimedia book *The Roots of Timba*, dozens of book-length articles, discographies, record analyses, interviews and the daily Cuban music blog *La última*, which is nearing its 10th year of publication.

In the early 2000s Kevin co-wrote *The Tomás Cruz Conga Method, Volumes 1-3*, a critically acclaimed method book used as a text at various educational institutions.

The Tomás Cruz Conga Method – Volumes 1, 2, & 3



Published by Mel Bay



As musical director, composer, arranger and violinist of the California-based salsa band Orquesta Gitano he co-produced the 1998 CD *Salsa Gitana*.

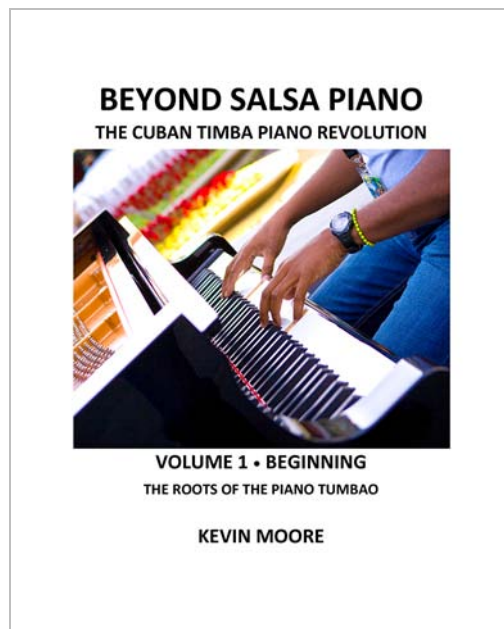


Available for purchase and download at www.latinpulsemusic.com/albums/show/2



Earlier Volumes of *Beyond Salsa Piano*

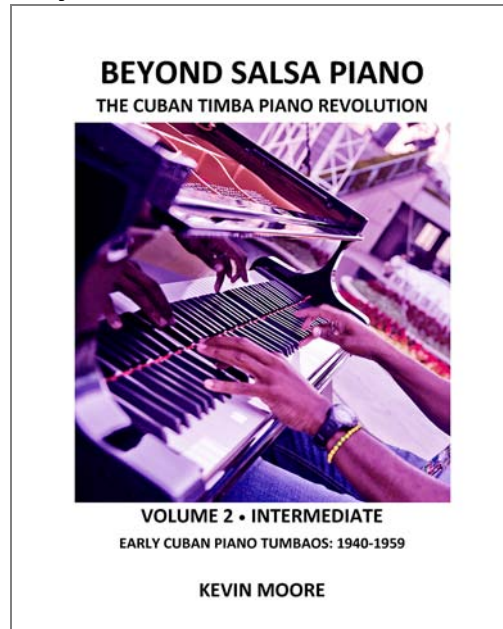
Beyond Salsa Piano • Volume 1



www.createspace.com/1000252022

www.latinpulsemusic.com/albums/show/353

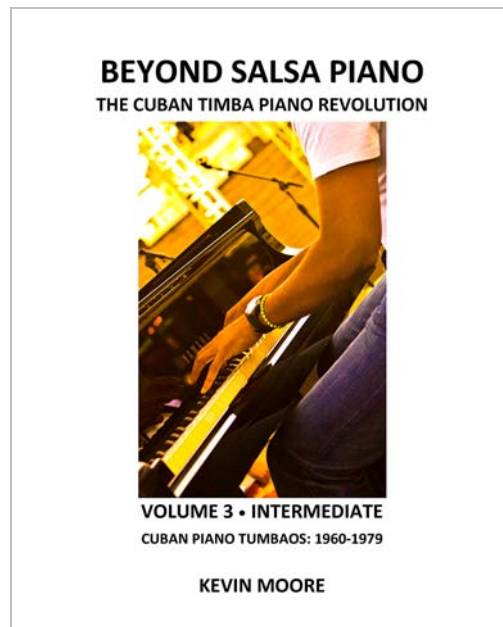
Beyond Salsa Piano • Volume 2



www.createspace.com/3419799
www.latinpulsemusic.com/albums/show/359

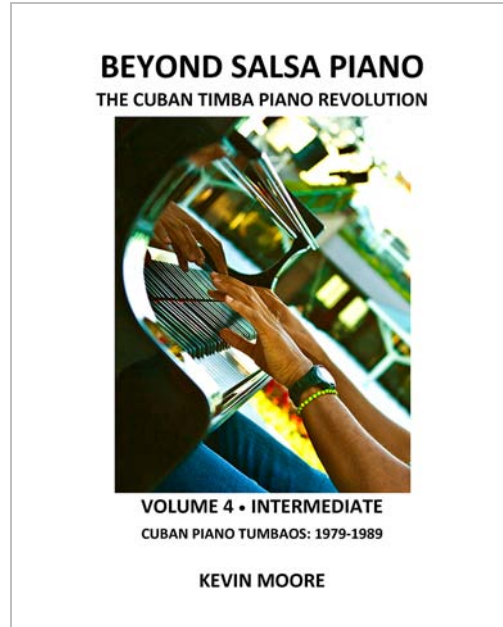


Beyond Salsa Piano • Volume 3



www.createspace.com/3427343
www.latinpulsemusic.com/albums/show/361

Beyond Salsa Piano • Volume 4



<https://www.createspace.com/3427345>
www.latinpulsemusic.com/albums/show/363

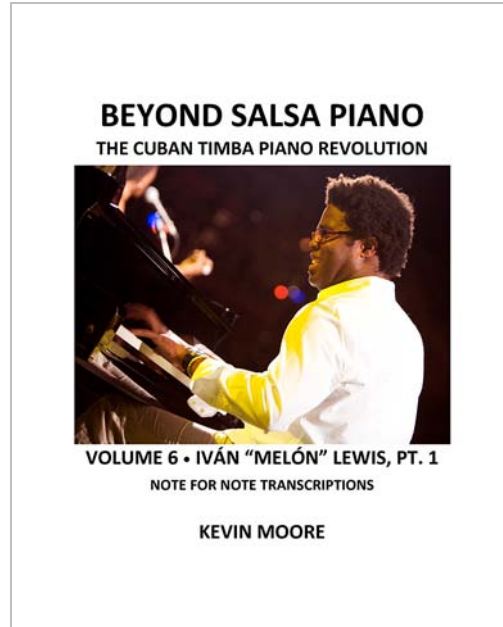


Beyond Salsa Piano • Volume 5



www.createspace.com/3427349
www.latinpulsemusic.com/albums/show/363

Beyond Salsa Piano • Volume 6

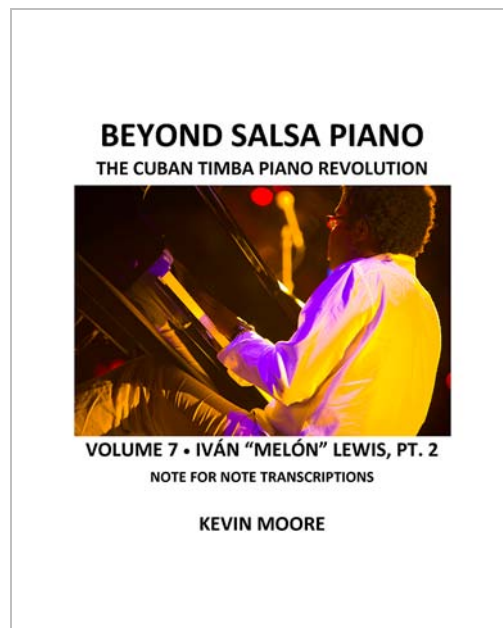


www.createpace.com/3427351

www.latinpulsemusic.com/albums/show/364



Beyond Salsa Piano • Volume 7



www.createpace.com/3427354

www.latinpulsemusic.com/albums/show/365

Continuing the *Beyond Salsa Piano* Course
Beyond Salsa Piano • Volume 8



www.createpace.com/3427355

www.latinpulsemusic.com/albums/show/366



Many more volumes are planned, covering a wide range of the greatest modern Cuban pianists. Next up is Pupy Pedroso of Los Van Van and Los Que Son Son.

For a completely updated list of all *Beyond Salsa Piano* products:

www.timba.com/piano

For audio and video files to supplement this book:

www.timba.com/audio

Look for announcements on *Beyond Salsa Percussion*:

www.timba.com/gears

