



*Comparsa!*  
*Música De Latino America*

## Comparsa Press Clips

**The Gazz**

June 9th, 2006



Eduardo Canelon, lead singer of Comparsa, West Virginia's leading Latin Music group, is flanked by Elizabeth Segessenman and Al Peery, as they cook on some music that had more than a few people dancing in front of the Davis Park bandstand on Saturday during FestivALL Charleston.

### **WVU Today**

September 8th, 2003

Comparsa has become synonymous with salsa, one of the most popular forms of dance in the world. The group, which was formed in Elkins, W. Va., has a growing local fan base. The group's lead singer, Eduardo Canelon, is originally from Venezuela.

### **WVU Today**

January 20th, 2004

While COMPARSA was formed in Elkins, the group's lead singer, Eduardo Canelon, is from Venezuela and the band plays salsa and other Latin American music. During the fall semester, the band was so popular with students, ISO decided to invite the group back for an encore performance.

### **Huntington Herald Dispatch**

August 3rd, 2003

#### **Good, clean party keeps hundreds of customers returning to Heritage Station**

Party on the Patio has become so popular that some job-seekers want to work at Heritage Station just to help out at the event. "This is my day off" said Isabel Fox, a 29 year-old employee of Heritage Station, who relaxed while listening to the Elkins, W.Va.-based band Comparsa and hanging out with friends during a recent party.

Fox said she specifically asked for the night off because she enjoys that particular band so much.

"I love the Latino music" said Stephanie Dobak, a 29 year-old from Montreal Canada.

### **Huntington Herald Dispatch**

February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007

By [Dave Lavender](#) The Herald-Dispatch

#### **MUSIC: Saddle Ridge goes international with Comparsa show**

HUNTINGTON -- Painted up with murals of a Mail Pouch barn, American flags and Clint Eastwood, Saddle Ridge Rock 'N' Country Saloon is used to hosting country music.

But come Friday, the club hosts another kind of country -- music straight outta Venezuela as the club welcomes the world-beat music of Comparsa, the Charleston-based ensemble led by Venezuelan native Eduardo Canelón.

The group's music infused with the rhythms and melodies of Latin America, Africa, Spain and the Caribbean, runs 9 to 11 p.m. with some dance instruction between sets.

Canelón, who has lived in Charleston for the past couple of years, is no stranger to the music scene in West Virginia.

For the past seven years, he has traveled regionally playing the music of his native country in such groups as Montaneros, Comparsa and Duo Divertido, a group he has with flutist Elizabeth Segessenman, who is also in Comparsa.

Canelón, who is a manager at the eclectic live-music-filled restaurant, The Bluegrass Kitchen in Charleston, said the move to the Capitol City from Elkins has been fruitful.

He loves soaking up the scene.

"I've been in West Virginia 24 years, but seven years ago, I went back to my roots and started playing this music," said the self-taught musician. "I have gotten pointers here and there. There are just so many good guitarists here in Charleston, Ryan Kennedy, Steve Himes, Robert Shafer and Michael Lipton. I love listening to the different musicians to see the way they communicate with their instruments. I really enjoy being here in Charleston, and I feel like we are starting to take off."

Comparsa, which simply means musical group in Spanish, is working on a CD of originals at Treehouse Productions in Charleston, and is performing regularly around the region.

"We're playing a lot more and it is helping us out as a band," Canelón said. "We starting to build up a real repertoire."

That repertoire is literally pulled from all over the globe and spiced with the interplay of the flute and Canelón playing either the classical guitar or the traditional four-string Quatro, a traditional Venezuelan instrument.

Those instruments are joined by a couple of Voodoo Katz (the electric bass of Deron Sodaro and the percussion of Mark Davis, who also sings back-up vocals).

Al Peery, a trombonist and percussionist is the newest member of the group.

"We really want to teach cultural diversity," Canelón said. "We're not just another blues band or funk band, not that I don't like that stuff. I love that stuff and reggae and jazz, but I am trying to bring something different, and what we bring is a little bit African, a little bit Venezuelan, a little bit Mexican and Brazilian."

No worries, the band doesn't build a dance fever of meringue, salsas and boss novas and just leave the crowd hanging.

"In between the sets, we get out there and show people how to dance who are not familiar with the moves," Canelón said. "We get down the basics. The main thing that people should remember is to just go out and shake your booty."

February 21st, 2008

## **The Gazz**

The Entertainment Guide of the Charleston Gazette



Charleston's Latin dance band Comparsa performs at the Cultural Center Theater on Saturday in a FOOTMAD-sponsored concert. At 7 p.m., the group will host a free salsa dance workshop.

### **MUSIC: Comparsa's debut CD worth the wait**

#### **REVIEW**

**By Adam Harris**

*For the Gazette*

Though Comparsa came together in 2003, Charleston's premier Latin band is only now releasing its debut CD, "La Nueva Comparsa." It comes out just as

the band has some high-profile shows around Charleston, including Saturday's FOOTMAD show at the Cultural Center Theater. Eduardo Canelon, the band's founder, singer and guitarist, was born in Venezuela and at age 9 moved to Elkins, where he began learning and playing the styles of his native land. Just like the group's live shows, the music on Comparsa's CD is peppered with the flavors of Venezuela, Cuba and Mexico.

Overall, the record has plenty of percussive flair. That plus layers upon layers of rhythm and mingling flute and trombone culminate to make all the tunes on "La Nueva Comparsa" instantly and irresistibly danceable.

Each song is in a different style, and the styles span the entire Latin world with sambas, salsas, merengues and bossa novas. The recording, done at Bob Webb's Treehouse Productions, is well polished and captures the group's varied sound superbly.

On the title track, singer Canelon plays syncopated strums on the cuatro (a Venezuelan four-string guitar) underneath Elizabeth Segessenman's flute and Al Peery's trombone. The jumpy rhythm changes pace about 90 seconds in, and each band member is featured, including bassist Deron Sedoro and percussionist Mark Davis. Toward the finish, Canelon adds a bit of a gritty vocal flair that puts a slight edge on the smooth Latin groove.

Canelon handles most of the vocal duties. In the case of "Sambo de Brazil," he sings in both English and Spanish, describing the 700-meter Sambodromo in Rio de Janeiro, a dedicated parade space with bleachers on either side. Judging by the song's sing-along chorus, the music of Comparsa would be right at home at the Sambodromo.

The band's groove mellows for "Linda Mujer," which is included twice — once with Spanish lyrics and then restyled and retitled later on the disc as "Beautiful Girl."

The fire returns with "Pajarillo," a traditional Venezuelan folk song, and "Vamos a Bailar" ("Let's Dance"), a bouncy salsa number inspired by the guitar style of Carlos Campos. The album closes with "Guantanamera," one of the most-recorded Latin American songs of all time and a proven crowd pleaser at Comparsa's shows.

With "La Nueva Comparsa," Comparsa has excelled in capturing its vast and varied catalog without any overkill. Each player shows tremendous competency throughout, and at nine tracks and just under 40 minutes, the record is paced perfectly without any filler.

*In addition to Saturday's 8 p.m. FOOTMAD show at the Cultural Center Theater, Comparsa has several CD release parties coming up for "La Nueva Comparsa," including March 8 at The Vault, March 22 at The Empty Glass and March 29 at Capitol Roasters.*

To contact Adam Harris, e-mail [tunereview@gmail.com](mailto:tunereview@gmail.com).

**If you go**

Comparsa, 8 p.m. Saturday, with free 7 p.m. salsa dance workshop. Adults \$18, seniors \$15, students \$10. Sponsored by FOOTMAD. Cultural Center Theater, state Capitol Complex. Call 415-3668 or visit [www.footmad.org](http://www.footmad.org).