

## THE ROOTS OF CHICHA 2 - Out October 12, 2010 (Barbès Records)

### ABOUT THE BANDS

All the bands on the second volume are distinct from volume one, with the notable exception of **Los Destellos**. Los Destellos' guitarist and bandleader Enrique Delgado very much created the genre and an entire generation of Peruvian musicians mined his style and ideas. It is only fitting that he should open a compilation in which he probably had an influence most of the songs.

Also represented on the album is **Walter Leon's Los Ilusionistas**, whose song *Colegiala* went on to become the most recognizable *cumbia* of all times, albeit in a re-recording by a Colombian band which became Nescafé their song in the 1980's. To this day, most Europeans were first introduced to *Cumbia* by hearing Nescafé TV commercials.

**Grupo Celeste's** Como un Ave is one of the first *cumbia* tracks to introduce the somewhat harder sound that would become *Chicha* in the 1980's. Grupo Celeste went to be hugely popular in Mexico where they had a direct influence on the development of Mexican *Cumbia*.

**Manzanita** is one of the unsung heroes of *Chicha*. Viewed by many as equally influential as Enrique Delgado, he never enjoyed the same level of recognition. He was a superior guitar player, composed all his own material and displayed a sensibility that wouldn't have been out of place downtown Manhattan. He could hopscotch from virtuosic improvisation to quirky pop tunes and electric *huanos* in a way that remains unequalled.

**Los Shapis**, whose tour bus graces the cover, are the first band to actually use the term *chicha* exclusively. They became one of those proverbial overnight successes with their first single, *El Aguajal*, a *cumbia* cover of a folkloric Andean tune. This marked what could be called the second period of the *Chicha* movement. One where reverbs and synthesizers started mimicking more closely the sound of the Andes while pushing the music in a more urban direction.

**Chacalon** was *chicha's* working class hero. A son of the Lima slums, he was viewed as somewhat of a bad boy, he sang about hardship, family, work, suffering and drinking – all of which he was personally familiar with. Of all the *chicha* singers, he is probably the one lower class urban Peruvians associated with the most. 70,000 people attended his funeral.

**Compay Quinto, Los Ribereños and Los Walkers** all showcase the strong Afro-cuban influence, which is such a strong part of the *chicha* sound.

There are only two Amazonian bands on the album, both from the river town of Iquitos – once the center of the amazon's greatest oil boom.

**Los Wemblers** provided Los Mirlos with a couple of their bigger hits, including *Sonido Amazonico* and *La Danza del Petrolero*, included here. There has been talk of a Los Wemblers reunion lately.

Raul Llerena, known as **Ranil**, is one of the most fiercely independent artists to come out of Peru. His fame never really left his native Iquitos, where he is, to this day, something of a folk hero. He started recording in the mid-70's but lately has been mostly involved in running his own radio station from Belen – the poor indigenous section of Iquitos. His shows are a mix of music, folksy wisdom and social commentaries. He will be playing outside of Peru for the first time ever this summer in Berlin, with *Chicha Libre* as a backing band.

Together with the first volume, this installment of the Roots of Chicha should present a broader and more accurate panorama of a music that was ignored for too long. Of course, in the course of thirty years or so, there are many more bands that could fit on two albums. Due to the intricacies of the Peruvian music business of the 1970's, a number of tracks couldn't be included, hopefully, this could change and more bands could be released from the gold mine that was the Peruvian *chicha* movement.