

DAFNIS PRIETO BIG BAND

Inspired to make his biggest statement yet, Cuban-born drummer, composer, bandleader, and 2011 MacArthur “Genius” Fellow **Dafnis Prieto** is thrilled to launch the **Dafnis Prieto Big Band (DPBB)** and record his first big band album, *Tribute*.

One of the leading musical voices of his generation, Prieto will compose and rearrange works of his own, showcasing his talents as a trailblazing composer while honoring musical heroes and mentors such as **Eddie Palmieri**, **Henry Threadgill**, and **Steve Coleman**, and make an artistic statement that will transcend time and culture.

Since arriving in the U.S. from Cuba in 1999, Prieto has been fearless in his vision, playing and writing across styles, always with a forward-looking eye. He is known for his inventive, sensitive drumming and propulsive rhythm. His compositions mix lush melodies with polyrhythm, displaying a range of musical vocabularies from Latin jazz to classical chamber music. He has composed for numerous configurations, amassing a catalog of more than 50 original works.

Prieto is committed to maintaining a bold vision for his music. The 18-piece DPBB will include some of the world’s best Latin jazz musicians, many of whom have previously played his music in his other bands. The DPBB will include three horn sections (saxophones, trumpets, and trombones), as well as a rhythm section featuring piano, bass, congas, bongos, and Prieto on drums. The band, joined by several of Prieto’s mentors as special guests, will record their debut album in New York City in September 2017, to be released worldwide in spring 2018. For this project Prieto is teaming up with GRAMMY and Latin GRAMMY-winning producer **Eric Oberstein**, long known for his work producing big band projects with **Arturo O’Farrill**.

Prieto sees his big band album as an opportunity to honor his heroes. The project will feature new versions of his pieces “**Song for Chico**” and “**The Triumphant Journey**,” previously recorded by **Arturo O’Farrill and the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra**, paying tribute to Cuban composer and Arturo’s father **Chico O’Farrill**, as well as trumpeter **Dizzy Gillespie** and *conguero* **Chano Pozo**, respectively. Prieto will also write and record several new compositions, including “**Una Vez Más**,” dedicated to **Eddie Palmieri** and trumpeter **Brian Lynch**. Other tracks will include arrangements of Prieto’s “**Two for One**,” originally commissioned by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and premiered by his sextet at the 2012 Newport Jazz Festival, as well as “**The Sooner the Better**” and “**Prelude Para Rosa**” from his 2008 release, *Taking the Soul for a Walk*.

With this project Prieto continues the tradition of drummers leading big bands, including **Chick Webb**, **Gene Krupa**, **Buddy Rich**, and **Mel Lewis**, among others. He has had longstanding relationships with champions of the big band sound, including Arturo O’Farrill, Eddie Palmieri, and the late **Bebo Valdés**.

Dafnis Prieto plans to perform with the Big Band nationally and internationally following the album release in 2018. For all booking inquiries and more information, please contact us at artists@hanswendl.com.