

L.A.'S ONLY JAZZ PAPER A SCENE

Susie Hansen Representante de la Salsa (Jazz Caliente)

Issue No. 275

In celebration of her group's 20th anniversary, violinist Susie Hansen has recorded and released her third CD. Leader of a constantly working nine or ten-piece group that performs both salsa and Latin jazz, Susie Hansen plays for dancers and listeners alike. While the rhythms are always danceable and the tempos perfect, her music also features plenty of solo space.

On Representante de la Salsa, the Susie Hansen band starts off with three salsa numbers including one sung in English. An eight-minute four-song "Frank Sinatra Cha Cha Cha" medley is delightful and fun. Other pieces include a charanga, mambos and flat-out Latin jazz. Among the key sidemen are pianist Joe Rotondi, bassist Rene Camacho and the percussion of Jimmy Branly, Joey DeLeon and Tiki Pasillas, with vocals taken by George Balmaseda, several of the bandmembers and Susie herself. Most selections also include tenor-saxophonist Tim Messina and trombonist David Stout.

With Susie Hansen's violin in the lead, the music on Representante de la Salsa is quite infectious and difficult to resist. It is highly recommended and available from www.susiehansen.com.

Scott Yanow