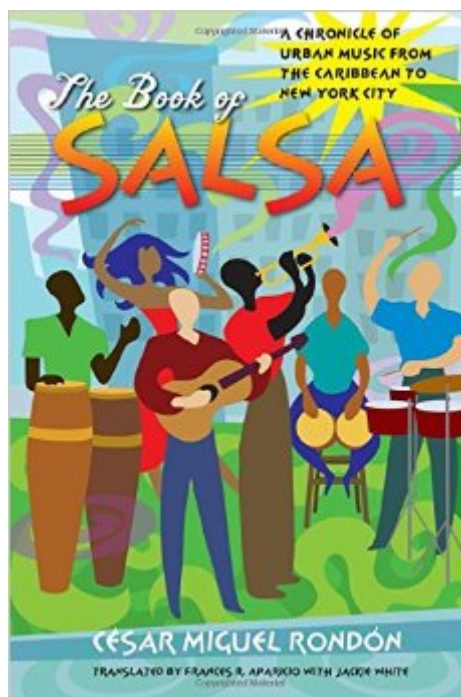


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The Book Of Salsa: A Chronicle Of Urban Music From The Caribbean To New York City (Latin America In Translation/en Traducci3n/em TraduÅ§Ã£o)



Synopsis

Salsa is one of the most popular types of music listened to and danced to in the United States. Until now, the single comprehensive history of the music--and the industry that grew up around it, including musicians, performances, styles, movements, and production--was available only in Spanish. This lively translation provides for English-reading and music-loving fans the chance to enjoy Cesar Miguel Rondon's celebrated *El libro de la salsa*. Rondon tells the engaging story of salsa's roots in Puerto Rico, Cuba, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela, and of its emergence and development in the 1960s as a distinct musical movement in New York. Rondon presents salsa as a truly pan-Caribbean phenomenon, emerging in the migrations and interactions, the celebrations and conflicts that marked the region. Although salsa is rooted in urban culture, Rondon explains, it is also a commercial product produced and shaped by professional musicians, record producers, and the music industry. For this first English-language edition, Rondon has added a new chapter to bring the story of salsa up to the present.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I would ordinarily not review a book I didn't finish, but Rondon made two errors in the first 28 pages so grievous that I put the book down for good. First, about the debut album from Eddie Palmieri's band *La Perfecta*, he claims: "Eddie's older brother, Charlie, was the pianist and in charge of composing and arranging most of their repertoire." If he owned this album--one of the most

important in the history of salsa--he could plainly see that Charlie wrote the liner notes and did nothing else on it. Then, a few pages later, he attributes the song "Micaela" to Pete "El Conde" Rodriguez. Now this is an error so common that Fania records itself has made it on at least one of their compilations, but Rondón should know better. There were two different artists named Pete Rodriguez on the Fania label--Pete "El Conde" Rodriguez, the salsa singer who did "Catalina La O," among other classics, and Pete Rodriguez (and his Orchestra), who was dubbed "The King of Boogaloo." It was the latter who did "Micaela." It's bad enough that Rondón, a Venezuelan, tries desperately to maintain that Venezuela was as important to the history of Salsa as Puerto Rico, but these huge factual errors (as well as minor ones--the original Perfecta included a flautist and was heavily influenced by charanga, though Rondón seems not to know this) indicate a stunning lack of knowledge about his subject and a failure to get anyone to fact check his work.

I read this book in its original Spanish version, so I can't comment on the translated English version now available. The Spanish version was an entertaining read with a "Sociological Perspective" about the rise of Salsa in the 60's and 70's mostly focused on the artists on the Fania label - which is considered the "Golden Age" of Salsa Music. If you're a fan of that era, it's definitely worth a read. It'll bring back lots of memories. I only gave it 4 stars because the author, as has been pointed out by other reviewers, was a little loose with the facts and sometimes gets some of the details wrong. Although overall he gets the gist and spirit of the music and the times right. The other thing is that the author refers to Venezuela quite a bit, his home country, when this story is really more about Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico and New York who were the real stars of this music (besides Celia Cruz of course). But, cut the dude some slack, he's proud of his home country like everyone in the Caribbean is... (Que viva Colombia !Carajo!) Highly Recommended to fans of Old School Salsa.

Rondon became a TV Producer the same way he became an author. He is smart enough to do research and knows how to exploit people's ignorance. Rondon, an egghead from Venezuela knows nothing about the true essence of the Salsa Movement. He interpretes everything all the way from a Venezuelan perspective, a place that is light years away from the eye of the storm, New York City. Because of this, and his natural national chauvinism, he tends to downplay the Puerto Rican and Nuyorican phenomenon that is the catalyst and heart of the story. There are too many errors and misinformation in this book. While the voluminous publication is nice to look at, with a few photos, it is misleading and a waste of time. Rondon recognized the dire need and hunger for a book like this and hastily put one together. That is his true talent, he is an empresario. Although Cubans are

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