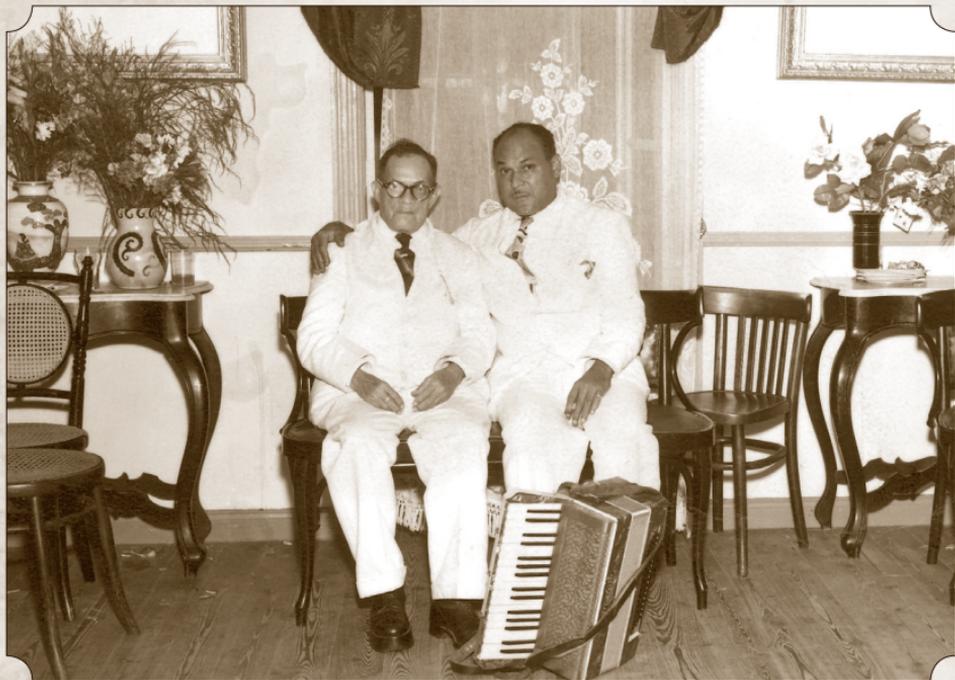
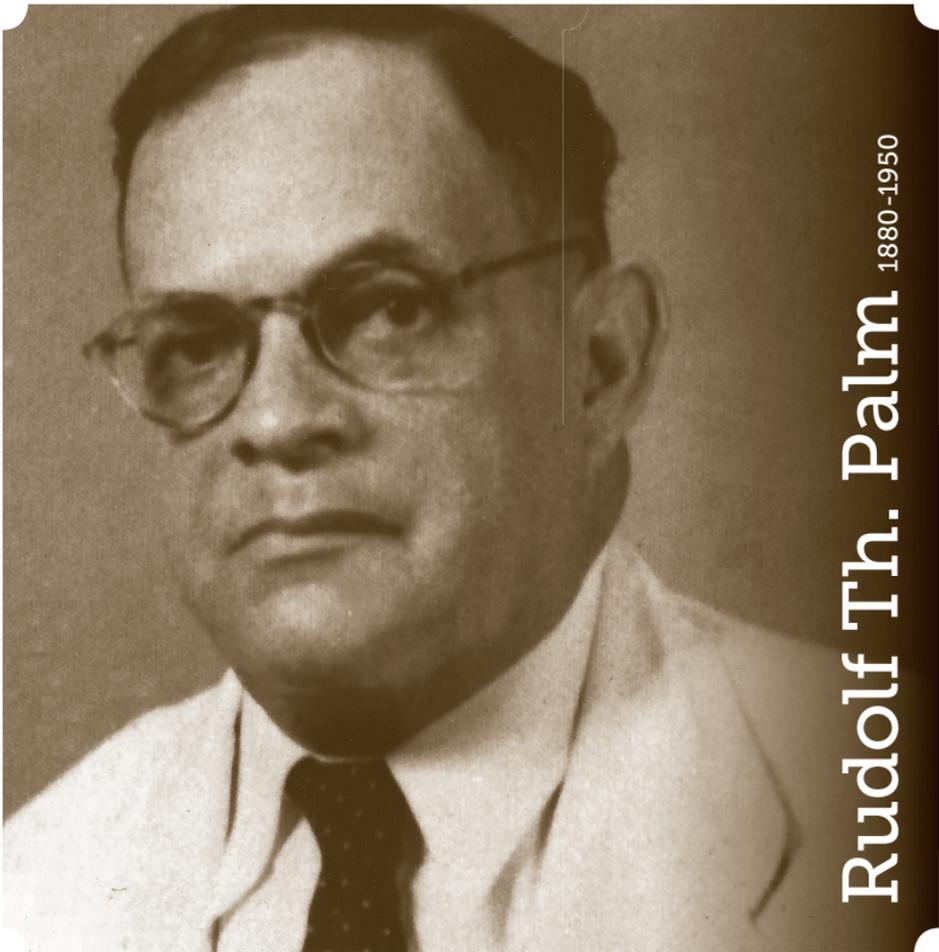


Piano: Robert Rojer

Rudolf Th. Palm

1880-1950





About Rudolf Theodorus Palm

The multi-talented composer and musician Rudolf Theodorus Palm was born in Curaçao on 11 January 1880. At the age of seven, Rudolf Palm started to take flute lessons with his grandfather Jan Gerard Palm (1813-1906), who is often referred to as the "Father of Curaçao's classical music". With Jan Gerard Palm, Rudolf also learned to play clarinet, piano and saxophone and further received lessons from him in music theory, harmony as well as composition and orchestration. Rudolf taught himself to play the double bass, mandolin, organ, cuatro and guitar.

At the still young age of nineteen, Rudolf Palm was appointed music director of the Citizen's Guard Orchestra in Curaçao. This music directorship was becoming a Palm tradition that had started in 1841 with Frederik Wilhelm Palm. As an organist, Rudolf Palm played for many years in the Protestant Fort Church (1901-1946), in the Jewish Emanu-El (1911-1950) and Mikvé Israel synagogue (1926-1928) and in the Igualdad Lodge (1903-1950). In 1901, Rudolf founded the chamber orchestra *Los Dispuestos*, consisting of twenty musicians, and some years later the sextet *Los Seis*. Rudolf was also the music director of *De Harmonie*. As a solo performer he gave several organ concerts and also acted as a piano accompanist in various concerts. For many

years he played the flute as a member of the *Curaçao Philharmonic Orchestra*. Rudolf Palm received recognition as a composer of what is today known as the typical dance music of the 19th and early 20th centuries of Curaçao. Besides music for piano, he also wrote compositions for ensembles and for philharmonic orchestras. His eldest known composition, *La Coronación*, dates from 1898. It was played during the festivities that took place in Curaçao to celebrate the crowning of the Dutch Queen Wilhelmina. In addition to instrumental music, Rudolf also wrote songs for poems written by Curaçaoan poets and writers. The first recording of Rudolf Palm's



music took place in 1929 in New York for the Brunswick label.

Rudolf Palm married Elvira Raimundo Prais and, of his children, most notably his sons Albert Palm (1903-1958) and Edgar Palm (1905-1998) followed in his footsteps and continued the tradition of composing and performing music. Rudolf died on 11 September 1950 in Curaçao. The cortege at his funeral was headed by the *St. Vicentius Harmonie* playing a funeral march that Rudolf had himself composed in his final days. It was one of the best attended funerals in Curaçao's history. The island of Curaçao was paying its respects to one of its great musicians.

This music album

This album contains a selection of the many waltzes, pasillos, danzas and danzóns that Rudolf Palm wrote for the piano.

A typical *Curaçaoan* waltz consists of two or three parts, each of sixteen bars. Rudolf Palm had a clear preference for composing waltzes consisting of three parts. The changes in tonality between the parts that he introduces into his waltzes create a contrasting effect and increase the sparkling charm of each waltz. Besides the colouring added through the introduction of multiple parts and the changing tonality,

the attraction of his waltzes is enhanced through their vivid rhythms, which reveal his Latin American tastes and origin. Several of Rudolf Palm's waltzes were written in honour of loved ones, such as his granddaughter *Rina*, his friends, as with the waltz *Hermanos Hellburg*, and the Willemsen family in *Adiós a Curazao*, composed when they moved from Curaçao to live in Panama. *Myrna* and *10 de Abril* he dedicated to his students Myrna Dovale and Charles Henriquez respectively. The waltz *La Inspiración* (also known as *Burengerucht*) was inspired by a neighbour's quarrel - an attentive listener will clearly hear two people squabbling in this waltz. The waltz *Paseo de Zaquitó* dates back to the time that people in Curaçao took moonlight rides in gondolas from Punda, the east part of Willemstad, to Zaquitó. Unfortunately, this natural canal was filled in and no longer exists.

The *danza* is generally considered to be the most exquisite and poetic form of 19th century Caribbean art, with the first danza being published in Havana in 1803. Traditionally, the danza consists of two or three sections. The first section can be traced back furthest in history, with its origins in the English country dance of the 16th century. In 18th century France, country dance became contredanse, from which the cotillon and the quadrille developed. The contredanse was very much *en vogue* in the French colony of Saint Domingue, as Haiti was then called. After a slave rebellion in 1791, numerous French colonists fled to the Cuban province of Oriente, taking their contredanse with them and sowing its seeds in the fertile Cuban soil. The enrichment of Hispano-Cuban culture with French colonial music at the end of the 18th century was a critical factor - the spark that induced the birth of the



Caribbean danza. Henceforth, the French contredance with its more northern and restrained character became the introduction part of the danza, while the following parts evocate the emotional exuberance of passionate Latin-Iberian chants and of African rhythms.

This album includes two danzas composed by Rudolf Palm: *Noche Buena* and *Calina y Paulina*. *Noche Buena* dates back to 1900 and translates to Christmas Eve, an occasion that used to be celebrated with friends and family gathering in one another's houses for a wonderful dinner after attending midnight mass.

The *pasillo*, also called a Latin American *mestization*, is a typical Latin American adaptation of the European waltz. It originated in the first half of the 19th century in Colombia where it received the name *pasillo de paso*, a dance of small steps. Beyond Colombia, the *pasillo* became popular in Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Central America, and also in Curaçao. The style, tone and tempo of the *pasillos* differ from country to country. In the Curaçaoan *pasillo*, the right hand plays a tuneful melody in a lyrical flowing style while the left hand can be characterized more as a whirlwind: strict rhythms such as the dactylus pattern combine with freely moving passages functioning as countermelodies while being at the same time showplaces of pianistic virtuosity. In Curaçao, not only Rudolf Palm, but also Jacobo Palm (1887-1982), Charles Maduro (1883-1947) and José Maria Emirto de Lima (1890-1972) became

known for their beautiful *pasillos*. This music album includes three *pasillos* by Rudolf Palm: *Como tú lo quieres*, *Rafaela* and *Los dos Amigos*.

The *danzón* originates from Cuba. It developed in the second half of the 19th century as a successor to the *contradanza* and the *habanera*. The *danzón* reached its heights of popularity in Central America and the Caribbean during the first two decades of the 20th century. The rhythm of the *danzón* has a stronger African character than the *contradanza* and the *habanera*. This is created by the repetitive use of the Cuban (not the Curacaoan) *cinquillo*. As with several other dances emanating from the Caribbean and Latin America, the *danzón* was initially regarded as scandalous. The rhythm of the *danzón* led to couples dancing with sinuous movements of their hips. *Winy*, composed by Rudolf Palm, is the best known *danzón* from Curaçao. The left hand follows the rhythms of the Cuban *cinquillo* and of the *clave*. The *clave* is pre-eminently the rhythm used in the Cuban *guanguancó*, one of the earliest creations of the Cuban *son*. In Rudolf Palm's time, a courtesy visit to Rudolf's home was often part of the stay for foreign musicians traveling to Curaçao. Matamoros (1894-1971), one of the most recognized composers of boleros and *son*, and Celia Cruz (1925-2003), known as the *Queen of Salsa*, honored Rudolf Palm with their visits. Such cultural exchanges may partly explain Palm's interest in Cuban music.

Robert Rojer

Robert Rojer (Curaçao, 1939) is a great-great-grandson of the father of Curaçao's classical music Jan Gerard Palm (1831-1906). Robert started his musical training under the guidance of his maternal grandfather, the musician and composer Jacobo Palm (1887-1982). Robert Rojer was brought up in the ambience and traditions of 19th and early 20th century Caribbean music. He then went to the Netherlands to study medicine, and continued his musical training there. He specialised in Internal Medicine and was appointed a professor at the University of Groningen in 1999. Alongside this successful career, Robert Rojer continued to find time to be an active pianist and composer. In 1988, his *Curaçao Waltzes for two pianos* were released in Belgium and in Curaçao (RGIP CD 87017) and these were followed, some years later, by another CD, *Notas Musicales* - a comprehensive collection of danzas by the Cuban composer Ignacio Cervantes (1847-1905). In 2008, Rojer released a unique CD with 30 pieces composed by Jan Gerard Palm. This fourth CD, with a selection of the music composed by Rudolf Palm, once again demonstrates his talent to brilliantly interpret the lively rhythms and elegant melodies that characterize so many of the compositions of the musical Palm dynasty of Curaçao.

Maduro Music Foundation

The Maduro Music Foundation was founded in 1987 on the occasion of Maduro Holding's 150th anniversary. The purpose of the foundation is to preserve and promote Curaçao's musical cultural heritage. The *Curacao waltzes for two pianos*, composed by Robert Rojer and performed by Harold Martina and Robert Rojer, was its first CD release. This was also the very first CD of music composed by and played by musicians from Curaçao. Since its initiation, the Maduro Music Foundation has released 15 CDs, including well-known performers such as Julian Coco, Randal Corsen, Tica Giel, Magdalena Kuhn, Harold Martina, Edgar Palm, Robert Rojer, Nic Møller, Wim Statius Muller and Charles Sweets. This 16th CD, with music composed by Rudolf Palm and performed by Robert Rojer, is released in the year that Maduro Holding celebrates its 175th anniversary and the Maduro Music Foundation its 25th anniversary.

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Text: Johannes I.M. Halman



1	Winy.....	Danzón	5:03	10	Los Dos Amigos.....	Pasillo	3:05
2	10 de abril.....	Waltz	5:06	11	Los Hermanos Hellburg.....	Waltz	3:45
3	Aida.....	Waltz	4:13	12	Myrna.....	Waltz	2:00
4	Calina y Paulina.....	Danza	2:37	13	Noche Buena.....	Danza	3:21
5	Como tú lo quieres.....	Pasillo	3:03	14	Olga Antonieta.....	Waltz	3:15
6	Edna.....	Waltz	3:48	15	Paseo de Zaquitó.....	Waltz	1:53
7	Elka.....	Waltz	3:20	16	Rafaela.....	Pasillo	2:35
8	Elsie.....	Waltz	3:52	17	Rina.....	Waltz	1:57
9	La Inspiración (Burengerucht).....	Waltz	2:04	18	Adiós a Curazao.....	Waltz	2:45