



# THE JOHAN WILLEM FRISO ROYAL MILITARY BAND

PLAYS

**JAN GERARD PALM (1831-1906)**

A SOUVENIR FROM 19TH CENTURY CURAÇAO

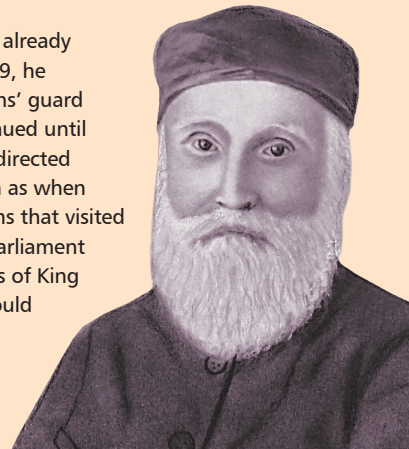


## About Jan Gerard Palm

Jan Gerard Palm, one of the Caribbean's most prominent 19<sup>th</sup> century composers, lived from 1831 to 1906 on the island of Curaçao. Palm is often referred to as the "Father of Curaçao's classical music". Jan Gerard Palm played several musical instruments including piano, organ, lute, clarinet, flute and mandolin. As an organist, Palm played for many years in the Jewish Emanu-El and Mikvé Israel synagogues, the Protestant Fort Church and the Igualdad Lodge on Curaçao. Jan Gerard Palm was also a regular contributor to the widely read and influential periodical *Notas y Letras* (Notes and Letters). This periodical was published on Curaçao in the period 1886-1888, with numerous subscribers throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

As a composer, Jan Gerard Palm can be characterised as original, bold and sometimes even brazen. The uniqueness of his creative talent was his ability to combine delicate sensitivity and forceful vitality. His waltzes and mazurkas show a rich use of harmonic variations. His polkas, marches and galop reveal his buoyant lifestyle. Palm was often progressive, in the sense of not being afraid of using chords that were (and still are) relatively unusual. The rhythms that he wrote for each of his danzas are typically complex, very Creole and sensual. In the predominantly prudish 19<sup>th</sup> century, Jan Gerard Palm was the only composer who dared to write sensual tumbas. Alongside dance music, Palm also wrote larger works for the orchestra and for piano and violin, marches and several pieces for services in the synagogue, the Protestant church and the Lodge.

By a relatively young age, Jan Gerard Palm already directed several musical ensembles. In 1859, he was appointed music director of the citizens' guard orchestra on Curaçao, a function he continued until 1881. During this period Jan Gerard Palm directed numerous concerts with his orchestra such as when they accompanied Italian opera productions that visited Curaçao, the opening ceremonies of the parliament and the festive public birthday celebrations of King Willem III. Typically these performances would include several of his own compositions.



# This Music Album

This album includes a representative subset of compositions that Jan Gerard Palm specifically composed for and played with the citizens' guard orchestra in Curaçao.

The *Curaçao waltz* can be characterised by its rich use of syncopations in the melody as well as the rhythmical accompaniment. A typical Curaçao waltz consists of two or three parts, each of sixteen bars. Jan Gerard Palm succeeded, in all his waltzes, to create, within this tight regime of a limited prescribed number of bars, a passionate and imaginative succession of chords that are not only a pleasure to listen to but also provide wings to the feet of dancing couples. Several of Jan Gerard Palm's waltzes were written to sublimate a moment of sorrow, to honour loved ones, or to express elation. The *Engelenzang* waltz is not only one of the most beautiful but also the oldest known Curaçao waltz and dates from before 1867. Jan Gerard Palm wrote this waltz dreaming of singing angels visiting him to take away his soul... The second part of Palm's waltz *Mita* was reused by Pedro Elias Gutiérrez in 1914 when he composed *Alma Llanera*. It became one of the most popular *joropos* from Venezuela.



A *march* can be recognized by its strong regular rhythm. Originally marches were expressly written for marching and were performed by military bands. With the extensive development of brass instruments, especially in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, marches became more widely popular and were often elaborately orchestrated. With the formation in 1841 of the military band and the citizens' guard orchestra in Curaçao, the march also became popular in 19<sup>th</sup> century Curaçao. Jan Gerard Palm composed numerous marches which he performed with his citizens' guard band. In mood his marches range from moving death marches to brisk military marches and hymns. His *Cantique Funèbre* and *Rouw Loge* were played at memorial services in the Igualdad and De Vergenoeging Lodges. In 1881, Jan Gerard Palm composed and directed the *Treurmars Brion* which was performed when the mortal remains of the Curaçao born Admiral Pedro Luis Brion, who had fought in the Venezuelan War of Independence, were officially handed over by the Dutch government for re-internment at

the National Pantheon of Venezuela. His *Marcha Unión*, *Marsch Curaçao*, *Generaal Joubert* and *Hendrik's Marsch* are fine examples of the marches composed for ceremonies and festive celebrations. The *Marsch Curaçao* most likely dates from 1863 when Jan Gerard Palm dedicated two of his marches to King Willem III. This march was so popular, that even many years after Jan Gerard Palm's death it was still played during military band parades.

Nineteenth century Curacao newspapers commented about the *fantasies* that Jan Gerard Palm wrote. The *Curacaosche Courant* mentions a performance on 11 November 1882 with a first and second fantasy in *Salon Capriles*. And on 25 January 1885 a concert in the Fort church with three fantasies. The *Curacaosche Courant* reports that "Style, taste and arrangement of the fantasies are wonderful and that the surprising modulations create an outstanding effect". In the review Palm is called "The best musician that Curacao has ever produced".

The *mazurka* originally stems from Poland and is a stylised dance, in triple metre with a lively tempo and a heavy accent on the second or third beat. In the mazurkas composed by Jan Gerard Palm, one may observe the influence of the Polish-French composer Frédéric Chopin. However, unlike in Chopin's mazurkas, in the Curaçao mazurka the accent is on the first beat. Another striking characteristic of the Curaçao mazurka is the *valse dansante* that is often used in the third part of a four-part mazurka. Palm's mazurka *Qué Bueno!*, contains a fine example of this feature.

The *danza* is generally considered to be the most exquisite and poetic form of 19<sup>th</sup> century Caribbean art. *Erani ta malu* (literally, Erani feels sick) is one of Jan Gerard Palm's most popular danzas. Palm composed this danza around a topical and satirical text, based on an incident that caused much gossip in 19<sup>th</sup> century Curaçao. Erani pretended to be sick and informed her boss that she would not be able to work for some time. However, in reality, Erani was pregnant but she did not dare to tell...

The *tumba* is the most internationally renowned form of Curaçao music and has an African-derived rhythm. The traditional tumba can be characterised by its often-satirical lyrics that allude to scandals in Curaçao society. Jan Gerard Palm was the first composer to write music to accompany the lyrics of tumbas. This made him very popular among the more humble people on the island. The tumba *Awaseru* is a good example of the numerous tumbas written by Jan Gerard Palm.

The *Galop* dance gets its name from the fastest running gait of a horse. The galop was a forerunner of the polka and was a particularly popular choice to close an evening's dancing. Jan Gerard Palm's galop *Mi Pikete* opens with a surprising and very dynamic introduction followed by a sparkling galop.

Jos Pijnappel and Hans van der Heide conscientiously arranged the music pieces included on this music album. They have succeeded in capturing and preserving the authentic spirit of Jan Gerard Palm's compositions.

## The Johan Willem Friso Royal Military Band

The Johan Willem Friso Royal Military Band continues the traditions of the former Royal Military Band from The Hague (established in 1829) and the Johan Willem Friso Band from Assen (established in 1819). Her Majesty Queen Beatrix graciously issued the designation 'Royal' to the new Johan Willem Friso Military Band and, from 1 January 2005, the official name of the band became the Johan Willem Friso Royal Military Band. The Band provides musical accompaniment at official receptions held by Her Majesty the Queen for Heads of State and ambassadors. The band further provides musical accompaniment at military ceremonies and during public relations events. The Royal Military Band (musicians and staff) comprises 81 personnel, including 50 top musicians, and is based at the Johan Willem Friso Barracks in Assen.

## Arnold Span - Musical Director/ Conductor

Arnold Span (1962) received his first musical lessons from his father, who was a conductor. After secondary school, he studied at the *Music Academy of Twente* in Enschede, the Netherlands. His primary subjects were Clarinet and Musical Directorship. The second phase of his studies started by attending the *Messiaen Academy*. Since January 2009 Arnold Span has been the musical director/conductor of the Johan Willem Friso Royal Military Band. Span also conducts the Vriezenveense Concert Band (which has Royal accreditation). The latter band has been awarded various prizes on the national and international stage. Span's recent highlights include the 2000 national championships with the St. Joseph Royal Concert Band from Oldenzaal and the 2003 national championships with the Vriezenveense Concert Band. With the latter band, he also won the Prix D' Excellence at the 2004 European Championship in France. In January 2006, the Vriezenveense band won the national title at a competition in Venlo. His cooperation with, and accompaniment of, various national and international artists and concert performances are also noteworthy.



## The Performing Musicians on this CD

Flute:	Bart Schmittmann, Gerda Verhulst and Mieke Keizer
Piccolo:	Diana Mols
Oboe:	Joop Ploeg and John Theunissen (English horn)
B-flat clarinet:	Frank Huibers (concertmaster), Clemens Bollinger, Lauri Bruins, Roel Claessens, Ad van Duinhoven, Richard Grobben, Rita Kleinjan, Liesbeth Klok, Joris Lumey, Jody van Overbeek and Nienke Zijlstra
E-flat clarinet:	Nico Goudkamp

Bass-clarinet:	Benny Eissens
Bassoon:	Ruud Extra and Michèlle Janssen
Alto saxophone:	Paul van Batenburg and Kimmy Reef
Tenor saxophone:	Peter van den Broek
Baritone saxophone:	Rudi Direks
Horn:	Gerben de Boer, Riane van Kooten and Sjoerd van der Veen
Trumpet:	Christelle van den Berg, Leo Harmsen, Ramses Helmus, Egbert Stroeve, Friso Valkema and Herbert Vreeman
Trombone:	Willem Cageling, Patrick van den Hoven and Piet Durk Meyer
Bass trombone:	Toine Weterings
Euphonium:	Karen Hekker, Jiri van der Kaaij and Klaas Pereboom
Bass tuba:	Chris van den Heuvel, Onno Jagers, Jakob Korf and Gert Webbink
Percussion:	Emile Laarveld, Paul Schrader and Sito de Vries
Kettledrums:	Herman Fokkema
Contrabass and bass guitar:	Johan Weghorst



### Colophon

- Text: Johannes I.M. Halman  
Music arranged by: <sup>1</sup> Hans van der Heide ([www.heidemusic.nl](http://www.heidemusic.nl))  
<sup>2</sup> Jos Pijnappel ([www.jospijnappel.nl](http://www.jospijnappel.nl))  
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([www.palmmusicfoundation.com](http://www.palmmusicfoundation.com))  
Recording: Anteun Hoesen Recordings ([www.hoesen.com](http://www.hoesen.com))  
Recording supervisor: Peter Kleine Schaars ([www.peterkleineschaars.nl](http://www.peterkleineschaars.nl))  
Cover design: Creja Design ([www.creja.nl](http://www.creja.nl))  
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