

**ACE TROMBONIST, COMPOSER, and ARRANGER WAYNE WALLACE returns with his  
LATIN JAZZ QUINTET for their NEW RELEASE  
¡BIEN BIEN! — OUT SEPTEMBER 15th on PATOIS RECORDS**

**\*Featuring Julian Priester, trombone and Kenny Washington, vocals \***

“Wallace’s arrangements, populated with tightly synched, beefy horn charts and sturdy Latin percussion, are inspired...”  
— Jeff Tamarkin, Jazz Times

“Wallace’s band made it clear from the first note that they were here to get down. NOW... Wallace’s quintet is like an elite commando unit: lean, mean and packing some serious heat.” — Forrest Dylan Bryant, Jazz Observer

**AMG ALBUM PICK** – *The Nature of the Beat* “...Wallace is an extraordinary trombone player and improviser, of that there is no doubt.” — Michael G. Nastos, All Music Guide

2009 Annual Critics’ Poll, Trombone Category — DownBeat Magazine

**Master trombonist, composer, arranger, and producer... WAYNE WALLACE** is all those things, and he is increasingly on the rise. After being on the “Talent Deserving Wider Recognition” list in DownBeat’s Critics’ Poll for two years in a row, this year he was “recognized,” making it to the trombone pantheon in DownBeat’s 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Critics’ Poll. But beyond the accolades, Wallace is a dedicated musician whose love of Latin Jazz inspires him to create music that not only radiates joy but educates listeners about the many streams of North and South American musics that have flowed together to create this genre. With a formidable career that has seen him on the stage and in the studio with countless luminaries of contemporary music from all genres (Count Basie, Ray Charles, Joe Henderson, Celine Dion, Carlos Santana, Lionel Hampton, Earth, Wind, & Fire, Sonny Rollins, Pearl Bailey, Aretha Franklin, Tito Puente, Lena Horne, Pete Escovedo, Stevie Wonder, John Lee Hooker, Earl "Fatha" Hines and cellist Jean Jeanrenaud of the Kronos Quartet to name a few), Wallace’s light is burning bright with a growing catalog of critically acclaimed releases on his **Patois** label, which also supports the efforts of numerous fellow West Coast musicians whose careers are blossoming. **¡BIEN BIEN!** is the second release of **The Wayne Wallace Latin Jazz Quintet**, whose debut CD *Infinity* was voted “Album of the Week” by Latin Jazz Corner; spent two weeks at #2 on Jazz Week’s “World Music Top 50 Charts”; and led Nelson Rodriguez of Latin Beat Magazine to declare: “Based on this CD, Wayne Wallace has become my choice for the title of ‘Musician of the Year.’” **¡BIEN BIEN!** is an intriguing collection of three Wallace originals, a Memo Acevedo tune, and five “straight ahead” tunes that Wallace has masterfully reconfigured into extremely satisfying Latin Jazz vehicles. He and his band mates **Murray Low** (piano); **David Belove** (bass); **Michael Spiro** (Latin percussion and percussion arrangements); and **Paul van Wageningen** (trap drums), have created another tour de force, and the presence of two special guests – the legendary trombonist **Julian Priester** and the up-and-coming virtuoso jazz vocalist **Kenny Washington** – beautifully augments the cohesion of this longstanding ensemble.

**¡BIEN BIEN!** opens with the title track, a head-bopping tune by Wallace that features his signature tight horn writing, featuring **Wallace** with fellow trombonists **Julian Priester** and Bay Area favorite **Dave Martell**. Before he takes his own blazing solo, Wallace gives the floor to pianist **Murray Low**, who ably demonstrates why he is one of the most trusted names in Latin Jazz. This tune is also a shining vehicle for drummer **Paul van Wageningen**, another veteran of the Latin scene whose stunning virtuosity as a soloist is icing on the cake; his grooves are always rock-solid, and his break out moments are truly exhilarating. Wallace’s arrangement of *Freedom Jazz Dance (Baile De Libertad)* is a phenomenal transformation of this famous Eddie Harris tune, which is here treated as a Puerto Rican Bomba featuring two vocalists, **Orlando Torriente** and **Kenny Washington**. Torriente opens with a rousing incantation before Washington delivers a sure-fire, virtuosic statement of this tricky head, with lyrics by Eddie Jefferson. It is amazingly spot-on both technique and intonation-wise, and his scating is so blistering that we understand clearly why Andy Gilbert proclaimed in the East Bay Express that “...he’s an oversize talent who can scat with the harmonic daring and rhythmic command of a bebop saxophonist.” Washington and Orriente trade fours at the end of the tune, and it burns the roof down. Adding to the temperature is a rollicking backup chorus of only six singers that make enough sound to be mistaken for sixty. On the amiable Wallace original *Mojito Café*, Wallace displays incredibly nimble chops and laser-like intonation.

*Building Bridges* is a tune by the Colombian Afro-Cuban drummer Memo Acevedo that features more of Wallace's deliciously intricate horn writing, again covered by Wallace, Priester, and Martell, who all take excellent solo turns. In his ever-informative liner notes, Wallace explains that this tune celebrates the cities of San Juan, New York City, and Havana, which have all at one point been "... at the nexus of blending modern music styles and propelling them forward." Thus, Wallace shows the electric intersection of Puerto Rico, the US, and Cuba in what is a truly electrifying performance. The quintet turns in an exquisitely sensual and heartfelt reading of Ellington's *In a Sentimental Mood*, rendered here as a slow bolero. Wallace achieves a touchingly vocal sound with the plunger mute, and all his statements of this iconic melody are utterly heart breaking. **David Belove**, who trades in his electric bass for an upright here, has a standout solo full of melodic inventiveness and lyricism. Wallace's *Playa Negra* is an "...ode to the town and beach of Playa Negra on the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica." This is a funky, hard-grooving "cha-cha-cha" that features an explosive conga solo by percussionist **Michael Spiro**.

On the Ellington tune *Going Up! (¡Súbete!)*, Wallace pays tribute to trombone giants Lawrence Brown, "Tricky" Sam Nanton, and Juan Tizol, who were dubbed as "God's Trombones". He's joined by the legendary **Julian Priester** (a former member of the Ellington orchestra), and **Dave Martell** for rousing trombone section playing as well as exciting solo turns for each, with Wallace again making great use of the plunger mute. Wallace whimsically turns one of Sonny Rollins's early be-bop tunes from 1954, *Solid*, into an Afro-Cuban "cu-bop" jam that recognizes the contribution this tenor colossus has made to the cause of Latin Jazz since, as Wallace writes, "*St. Thomas* showed us how well calypso and jazz could work together." The disc's closer, a brilliant re-working of John Coltrane's *Africa*, is a heartfelt tribute to the late saxophonist **Ron Stallings**, who in fact is one of the chorus members on track #2. (Stallings also made a wonderful contribution to Wallace's CD *The Nature of the Beat* as both lead vocalist and on baritone sax.) Wallace's solo statements are impassioned, using the full compass of the horn from searing tenor to growling bass. As the tune drives towards its inexorable conclusion, it stops just short of resolving to the tonic, creating the sense of a life cut all too short. As Wallace states in his liner notes, "*The search for new means of expression is a constant in music and life that occurs when we surrender in grace and embrace the unknown.*" With this disc, Wallace and his quintet affirm that they have gracefully surrendered, and we thankfully embrace their work.

The musically multi-lingual San Francisco native **Wayne Wallace** possesses fluency in countless styles, and has worked with a staggering number of luminaries from across the musical spectrum. He is known to many as "The Doctor" for his production skills, but he is also a lauded composer who received an N.E.A. grant for jazz composition to compose a three part suite "Digging Up the Roots" that reflected the diverse musical cultures of the San Francisco Bay Area. He is also active as an educator, and his own teachers included Julian Priester, Bobby Hutcherson and Will Sudmeier. In addition, he also studied at La Escuela Nacional in Havana, Cuba, and continues to travel to the culturally rich island nation as both a student and educator. His independent label, **Patois Records**, has released critically acclaimed CDs by all of its artists.

Venerated trombonist and Chicago native **Julian Priester** has played with countless jazz masters such as Duke Ellington, Max Roach, Clifford Brown, Sonny Stitt and Dinah Washington, as well as blues and R&B artists such as Muddy Waters and Bo Diddley. He has also been a sideman on albums by Freddie Hubbard, Stanley Turrentine, Blue Mitchell, Art Blakey, Joe Henderson, McCoy Tyner, Johnny Griffin, and Sam Rivers. In 1961 he took part in John Coltrane's *Africa/Brass* ensemble and in 1970 he joined pianist Herbie Hancock's fusion sextet. In the 1980s he became a member of the Dave Holland quintet and also returned to Sun Ra's band; the 1990s saw the addition of Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra to his schedule. Priester was recently co-leader with drummer Jimmy Bennington on 'Portraits and Silhouettes' which received an Honorable Mention in [All About Jazz New York's](#) "Best Recordings of 2007", which culminated with the two appearing at the 30th Annual Chicago Jazz Festival. He has recorded six solo albums, two for Riverside.

New Orleans native **Kenny Washington** is a virtuoso jazz vocalist of the first order, with scintillating scatting technique and laser-perfect intonation. After a nine-year stint in the U.S. Navy Band that found Washington performing throughout globe, he settled in the San Francisco Bay Area and began performing and recording in various jazz clubs. He appeared in Roy Nathanson's off-Broadway production "Fire at Keaton's Bar and Grill" which ran in both London and New York with a cast that included Elvis Costello and Deborah Harry. After a weeklong run with vibraphonist Joe Locke's all-star band at *Jazz at Lincoln Center's* prestigious Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, Andrew Gilbert of the [East Bay Express](#) declared that Washington "...walked away with the audience in his pocket." Locke later proclaimed: "*Kenny's one of the very greatest living male vocalists, without a doubt.*" Washington recently released a solo CD, [Kenny Washington: LIVE at Anna's Jazz Island](#).