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**PAINTED BRIDE TAKES PASSAGE THROUGHOUT THE RHYTHMIC LANDSCAPES OF  
THE AFRO-CARIBBEAN ALONGSIDE GRAMMY NOMINATED LATIN/MODERN  
JAZZ PIANIST-COMPOSER ELIO VILLAFRANCA**

PHILADELPHIA DEBUT OF NEW PROJECT WITH WORLD-CLASS LINE-UP  
INCLUDING VICTOR LEWIS ON DRUMS

Philadelphia PA – Cuban-born Latin/modern jazz pianist-composer **Elio Villafranca**, internationally acclaimed, locally revered for his genre-bending approach to modern jazz **returns to the Bride to debut a bold new project**. A prolific musician and educator with strong on-going creative and educational **ties to Philadelphia's jazz community**, Villafranca promises a tour-de-force performance on **Saturday, October 29**. His last performance as leader in Philadelphia was February of 2008 at the Bride.

*"The musical history of Cuba is full of extraordinary pianists... I am certain that Elio Villafranca is amongst the best representatives of the new generation of Cuban pianists and composers..."*  
-Paquito D'Rivera

"It is not difficult to sort out Villafranca's musicality, brute force, effervescence, topicality, virtuosic independence, patience, candor, and brazen delicacy." –*All About Jazz*

Using an interpretive musical approach echoing **Duke Ellington's Colored Syncopators**, **Elio Villafranca** continues to produce uniquely bold compositional works. Backed by Jass Syncopators, special guest **Victor Lewis** on drums, and members of **Los Pleneros de la 21**, **Villafranca** challenges the boundaries of modern jazz once again this time fusing it with the syncopated nature of Afro-Caribbean rhythms including '**Bomba**' and **Plena** of Puerto Rico. Villafranca leads a world-class ensemble joining each musician's creative energy with a **folkloric dancer** offering audiences an opportunity to experience a rich a multi-layered call-and-response performance dialogue.

**Featured Personnel:**

**The Jass Syncopators:** Victor Lewis – drums, Greg Tardy – tenor sax, Sean Conly – bass, Elio Villafranca – piano-compositions; **Los Pleneros de la 21:** Loisa Gutierrez-Rivera – dancer, Juango Gutierrez – barril-buleador, Nelson Mateo Gonzalez – barril-primo.

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## PAINTED BRIDE / ELIO VILAFRANCA / ADD-2

### Event Details & General Information:

#### **Event/Bill Details:**

**ELIO VILAFRANCA & THE JASS SYNCOPATORS**  
featuring Victor Lewis and special guest members of Los Pleneros de la 21  
Sat. October 29 | 8pm

#### **Box Office/Tickets:**

Tickets for the performance are \$25 in advance and \$30 day of show. To purchase tickets or more information, call 215.925.9914, or visit [paintedbride.org](http://paintedbride.org). Patrons enrolled in the Bride's ticket discount program receive 20% off of single tickets all season long and 40% off tickets during semi-annual sales. Students and seniors with ID receive a 25% discount on performances. Box office hours: Tues – Sat, 12 noon – 6pm.

#### **Venue Address/Location:**

Painted Bride Art Center is located at 230 Vine Street on the northern edge of Old City, Philadelphia.

### ABOUT Elio Villafranca:

#### **Show/Artist related links:**

Artist website: [www.eliovillafranca.net](http://www.eliovillafranca.net)

Video clip: <http://youtu.be/5-efiGFJzWg>

Image 1: <http://tinyurl.com/4xxbu37> (Elio Villafranca)

Image 2: <http://tinyurl.com/3ol9xux> (Victor Lewis)

#### **Artist Bio:**

Born in the Pinar del Río province of Western Cuba, pianist and composer Elio Villafranca was classically trained in percussion and composition at the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana, Cuba. Since his arrival in the U.S. in late 1995, he has been involved in jazz and Latin jazz scenes on both the East and West Coasts. Based in New York City, he is resident professor at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA.

Elio Villafranca is at the forefront of the latest generation of remarkable Cuban pianists, composers and bandleaders that for several years has been making major creative contributions to the international development of modern jazz. In the 2010 Grammy Awards he was nominated in Best Latin Jazz Album of the Year, for his performance, composition and coproduction in the album Things I Wanted To Do by Chembo Corniel.

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### **PAINTED BRIDE / ELIO VILAFRANCA / ADD-3**

He has released three albums as a bandleader that were each well received. His last album, *The Source in Between*, 2007, remained in the top 10 of the JazzWeek World Top 50 Chart for eleven weeks, and his first album, *Incantations/Encantaciones*, was ranked amongst the 50 best jazz albums of the year by JazzTimes magazine in 2003. In 2008 Elio Villafranca was also nominated by The Jazz Corner as pianist of the year and he received the Jazz Twirlie Nomination by Dick Crockett, of "The Voice" at 88.7FM, for his album *The Source In Between*.

That year, Mr. Villafranca was also honored by BMI with the BMI Jazz Guaranty Award and received the first NFA/Heineken Green Ribbon Master Artist Music Grant for the creation of his *Concerto for Mariachi, for Afro-Cuban Percussion and Symphony Orchestra*. Villafranca was

also pianist in the CD *La Guerra No* by John Santos Y El Coro Folklorico Kindembo, which was nominated in the 2010 Grammy Awards as Best Traditional World Music Album. Over the years Elio Villafranca's music has featured jazz master artists such as Pat Martino, Jane Bunnett, Terell Stafford, and Eric Alexander, among other notable instrumentalists.

Elio has also performed nationally and internationally as leader of his quartet, and as a sideman he has collaborated with leading jazz and Latin jazz artists including: Wynton Marsalis; Jon Faddis; Sonny Fortune; Giovanni Hidalgo; Eddie Henderson; Miguel Zenón; Cándido Camero; and Johnny Pacheco.

Villafranca has toured Europe and has performed at various worldrenowned venues and events including the Blue Note Jazz Festival in Ghent, Belgium; at the Blue Note Jazz Club in Milan and the Umbria Jazz Festival in Perugia, Italy; at the North Sea Jazz Festival at The Hague, Holland, the Guinness Jazz Festival and a national tour of Ireland.

#### **Select Press Quotes:**

Jazz Times Magazine 2003 Critics Picks Top 50 Best Jazz Album

"Wherever he goes, one must follow." --All About Jazz

"Villafranca is at the level of his countrymen, Chucho Valdes and Gonzalo Rubalcaba..."  
--Philadelphia Tribune

"...joyous harmonic lyricism... His intuition was right on the mark." --Latin Beat Magazine

"He will often glide over all 88 with an ease usually kept for God's grown prodigies of classical music." --Latin American Rhythm Magazine

"Until you see Villafranca perform, with eyes zonked out in contemplation of the keys, you may not put him in the same serious light as Monk, Corea or Mingus, but he warrants the comparison." --Splendid Reviews

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**PAINTED BRIDE / ELIO VILAFRANCA / ADD-4**

**ABOUT Painted Bride Art Center:**

Continuing its role as a catalyst for independent artists from the region and around the globe – Painted Bride Art Center enters its 42<sup>nd</sup> year offering audiences alternative travel passage to experience a world of culture fueled by various artistic forms and genres including music, dance, theater and the visual arts.

[Bride Experience \(YouTube promo clip\)](#)

-30-

**PRESS NOTE:**

**For additional information, to request an interview or work sample,  
please contact: Phil Sumpter, Director of Marketing and Communications  
at (215) 925-9914 ext. 15**