

## **LATIN BEAT MAGAZINE**

### **Album Review**

By Rudy Mangual

A native of the Pinar del Rio province of western Cuba, and a current resident of New York City, Elio Villafranca is a brilliant and pianist/composer/band leader who is regarded as one of the new Cuban masters of the ivory keys. This second bandleading recording finds Villafranca exhibiting his straight-ahead bebop postbop and free jazz modalities through a repertoire of original compositions. Nevertheless, his Caribbean flavor and roots seem to be always close by, defining his unique style. Featuring tenor saxophonist Eric Alexander (and anchored by Dafnis Prieto, on drums, and Jeff Carney, on acoustic bass), this new production showcase a fine balance of authentic Cuban piano-ism and creativity that defies the boundaries of conventional jazz genres. The title track (The Source In Between) is featured in two versions (straight-ahead and Latin jazz), revealing how Villafranca hears the music in both worlds. Villafranca is also backed by Yosvany Terry (alto and soprano sax), Arturo Stable (percussion), and Ferenc Nemeth (drums) on selected tracks.