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**Edward Simon Trio
Live In New York At Jazz Standard**

Studio recordings are wonderful documents of musicians and ensembles at certain milestones, yet they can be a bit unfair to both listeners and musicians who are interested in the natural development of the music. These recordings remain one of the only reliable ways to disseminate music but are generally recorded with newly learned material and time limitations. There would be little regard to evolution of the music. This meant that listeners have been limited to hearing groups live to understand the true, working relationship between the musicians and the music.

Pianist/composer **Edward Simon** has recognized this disparity and has decided to release the first live recording in his discography, **Live In New York at Jazz Standard**. The recording was done with his outstanding trio featuring two astounding sidemen, bassist John Patitucci and drummer Brian Blade.

Simon has become a well-known name among jazz aficionados. Originally from Venezuela, the pianist has been performing alongside tremendous talent like Greg Osby, Bobby Watson, and Terence Blanchard since the early 1990s. Simon began recording as a leader around the same time.

The pianist has continued to blaze a unique path in the music world. Simon has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards, including a 2011 MacDowell Fellowship, a 2010 Guggenheim Fellowship, and two Chamber Music America grants. He has been a member of the SF Jazz Collective for the past three years and has recently joined the 90 Miles ensemble alongside Nicholas Payton, David Sanchez, and Stefon Harris.

Simon has had long relationships with the members of his regular trio. He originally met drummer Brian Blade in an ensemble co-led with saxophonist David Binney in 2000. The trio featured here first appeared on Patitucci's *Songs, Stories & Spirituals* release for Concord in 2003. Of course, Patitucci and Blade are well known as longstanding members of the celebrated Wayne Shorter Quartet.

The trio has been playing together for nearly 10 years and has recorded two studio albums, *Unicity* (CAM Jazz, 2006) and *Poesia* (CAM Jazz, 2010). *Live In New York at Jazz Standard* was recorded on December 18th and 19th, 2010, shortly after *Poesia*



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was released, at the fantastic New York jazz institution, Jazz Standard.

Only the live setting is conducive to the unrestrained and extended improvisations showcased on this recording, which includes highlights from these two nights. Some of the compositions appeared on the previous studio albums, thus the band had been performing them for some time. Here the vibrancy of a New York audience in such an intimate setting allowed for new subtleties and ideas to emerge, revealing to listeners how the music evolved since its original airing.

The recording opens with “Poesía,” a lyrical and nuanced composition by Simon, which displays the dynamic and expressive range of the ensemble. Antonio Carlos Jobim’s “Chovendo Na Roseira” was originally introduced to the group by vocalist Luciana Souza for the Songs, Stories & Spirituals album. The song is performed in a unique 7/4 time signature and provides an opportunity for Patitucci’s bass to be front and center.

The Simon original “Pathless Path” begins with an impressionistic ethereality before a restrained tension helps build to climax, only to movingly die away. The classic John Coltrane composition “Giant Steps,” which the group has been playing regularly for some time and appears on Poesía, receives an intriguing makeover introduced by solo piano leading to a mid-tempo and highly intelligent rendition of the harmonic barnstormer. Finally, the set closes with “Pere”, an energetic Latin tune by Simon that has been featured on Paquito D’Rivera’s Grammy Award winning album Funk Tango, here showcasing the astounding group interplay and dynamism that makes this trio so special.

Performances of the **Edward Simon Trio** are rare, which makes **Live In New York at Jazz Standard** all the more valuable for listeners. It is compelling to hear such a tremendous group of musicians that are so attuned to each other play with such passion in a live setting.

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