



## **YOSVANY TERRY**

Saxophonist, Composer & Educator & Chekeré  
[www.yosvanyterry.com](http://www.yosvanyterry.com)

“Since arriving in New York City in 1999, Cuban saxophonist, percussionist and composer Yosvany Terry has helped redefine Latin Jazz as a complex new idiom”

– *The New York Times*

Yosvany Terry traces his family’s roots to the kingdom of Dahomey, or present-day Benin. After being taken to work in Haiti and Jamaica, his relatives eventually were able to immigrate to Cuba in roughly 1910. As a child, Yosvany embraced the African musical and religious traditions that were a fundamental and integral part of his home life.

Born into a musical family in Camaguey, Cuba, he received his first musical instruction on the violin from his father, violinist and chekere player Don Pancho Terry who led Maravilla de Florida, the 1950s-formed collective widely acknowledged as one of Cuba’s most respected Charanga groups. As a result of his father’s legacy, Yosvany’s childhood house was home to music and an extended family of Cuban musicians.

Yosvany went on to study Western classical music in Havana at the prestigious National School of Arts (ENA). He chose the saxophone as his primary instrument for expressing his music to a global audience, selecting piano as a way to explore rich textural harmony and translate his music into original compositions and arrangements. His music draws inspiration from parallel and intermingling traditions that have roots in the Caribbean and West & Central Africa, as well as from European harmonic traditions and the broad range of Jazz Traditions. Yosvany became interested in Jazz at 14 and began educating himself via bootlegged tapes and records that found their way to Cuba. In 1995, he began traveling to the U.S. to join the faculty at Stanford Jazz Workshop and to tour with his first Jazz project, Columna B. He has lived in the U.S. since 1999.

Yosvany’s work cross-pollinates technical mastery with experiential vision and a desire for inter-cultural expression. A deep commitment to participating in meaningful exchanges compels Yosvany to perform and record with some of the world’s most talented musicians. Collaborators include Steve Coleman, Rufus Reid, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Vijay Iyer, Jeff “Tain” Watts, Avishai



Cohen, Eddie Palmieri, Silvio Rodriguez, Baptiste Trotignon and Gerald Clayton. Yosvany received a Grammy Nomination, for his New Throned King CD and is a Doris Duke Artist award recipient.

A natural teacher and cultural bearer, Yosvany is driven to share talent, craft and experiential knowledge with the emerging generation of creative musicians, as well as preserve and deepen the understanding of the music from the Caribbean and other parts of the African Diaspora. Over the years, he's taught courses and delivered master classes across the country and throughout the world. He has served such notable institutions as Princeton University, The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, the Brubeck Institute, NYU, Goddard College, Boston University, Casa de las Americas in Havana, Royal Conservatory of Music in Winnipeg, Banff Center for the Arts and Creativity, Columbia University, the University of Salvador de Bahia, University of Rio de Janeiro, and he continues to be resident instructor at the Stanford Jazz Workshop. In 2015, Yosvany joined the full-time faculty at Harvard University as a senior Lecturer and Director of Jazz Ensembles in the Department of Music.

## **CONTACT**

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