



**ULTIMATE**

**G**al Tjader

*Selected by*  
**EDDIE**  
**PALMIERI**

ULTIMATE

## Cal Tjader

Selected by  
EDDIE PALMIERI

The Ultimate series presents "Best of" collections with a difference. Today's top jazz artists select and share their thoughts on their favorite tracks by *the* jazz giants. It's a perfect way to be introduced to the masters of jazz.

As one of the indisputable masters of Latin jazz, Cal Tjader's abilities as a vibraphonist and composer are legendary. His long-time friend and collaborator, Latin piano virtuoso Eddie Palmieri, presents his favorite Tjader performances here and comments in the album's liner notes that Tjader was "a visionary, at least a decade ahead of his time . . . What he did for Latin music can't be forgotten."

Total playing time: 58:53

- |                                    |                                   |   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. <i>Guajira en Azul</i>          | 6. <i>Picadillo</i>               | 11. <i>Leyte</i>                        |
| 2. <i>Sahib</i>                    | 7. <i>Borneo</i>                  | 12. <i>China Nights (Shina No Yoru)</i> |
| 3. <i>Pantano</i>                  | 8. <i>Soul Bird (Tin Tin Deo)</i> | 13. <i>Daddy Wong Legs</i>              |
| 4. <i>The Way You Look Tonight</i> | 9. <i>Fuji</i>                    | 14. <i>Triste</i>                       |
| 5. <i>Curaçao</i>                  | 10. <i>Sunset Boulevard</i>       | 15. <i>The Prophet</i>                  |
|                                    |                                   | 16. <i>Ritmo Uni</i>                    |

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A complete list of Ultimate titles is available inside.

Original recordings produced by *Creed Taylor* or *Esmond Edwards*Cover photograph from *Ray Avery's Jazz Archives* · Eddie Palmieri photograph by *Jimmy Katz*visit us at [www.vervemusicgroup.com](http://www.vervemusicgroup.com)

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# ULTIMATE Cal Tjader

Cal Tjader plays vibraphone on all tracks accompanied by:

1. **Gujira en Azul** (Eddie Palmieri—Cal Tjader) 3:26  
**Eddie Palmieri** (piano) with Julian Priester, José Rodríguez, Mark Weinstein (trombone); Barry Rogers (trombone, congas); George Castro (flute, percussion); Bobby Rodríguez (bass); Ismael Quintana (percussion); Tommy Lopez, Manny Oquendo (drums); Claus Ogerman (arranger).  
 Recorded May 25, 1966 at Van Gelder Recording Studio, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey  
 Available on CD: *Cal Tjader and Eddie Palmieri El Sonido Nuevo (The New Soul Sound)* Verve 314 519 812-2
2. **Sahib** (Stan Applebaum) 2:39  
**Lalo Schifrin's Orchestra**: Ernie Royal, Clark Terry (trumpet); Urbie Green (trombone); Robert Northern (French horn); Don Butterfield (tuba); Walt Levinsky (flute, woodwinds); George Berg (bass clarinet, bassoon); Leon Cohen, Irving Horowitz (oboe); Phil Bodner, Phil Kraus, Stan Webb (woodwinds); Jimmy Raney (guitar); George Duvivier (bass); Jack Del Rio (congas, tambourine); Johnny Rae (timbales, percussion); Ed Shaughnessy (drums); Schifrin (arranger, conductor).  
 Recorded April 25, 1963 at Webster Hall, New York City  
 Available on CD: *Several Shades of Jade / Breeze From the East* (2 LPs on 1 CD) Verve 314 537 083-2
3. **Pantano** (Lonnie Hewitt) 3:35  
 Lonnie Hewitt (piano); John Hiliard (bass); Armando Peraza, Alberto Valdes (percussion); Johnny Rae (drums).  
 Recorded November 20, 1964 at A & R Recording, New York City  
 Available on CD: *Soul Sauce* Verve 314 521 668-2
4. **The Way You Look Tonight** (Jerome Kern—Dorothy Fields) 3:09  
**Claus Ogerman and his orchestra**: Hank Jones (piano); George Duvivier (bass); Willie Rodríguez (percussion); Ed Shaughnessy (drums); Lewis Eley, Paul Gershman, Harry Glickman, Louis Haber, Julius Held, Leo Kruczek, Harry Lookofsky, George Dekner, Gene Orloff, Raoul Poliakin, Alan Shulman, Sylvan Shulman, Paul Winter (violin); Maurice Brown, Charles McCracken, Morris Stonzek (cello); Sid Edwards, Lucien Schmidt (strings); Ogerman (arranger, conductor).  
 Recorded May 11, 1964 at A & R Recording, New York City  
 Original-LP issue: *Warm Wave* Verve V6-8585
5. **Curaçao** (Cal Tjader) 6:15  
 Jerome Richardson (flute); Chick Corea (piano); Bobby Rodríguez (bass); Carlos "Patato" Valdez (congas); José Mangual (timbales); Victor Pantoja (percussion); Cal Tjader (overdubbed cymbal).  
 Recorded on February 9, 1966, cymbal overdubs probably February 11, at Van Gelder Recording Studio, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey  
 Available on CD: *Soul Burst* Verve 314 557 446-2
6. **Picadillo** (Tito Puente) 7:04  
 Personnel, except **Palmieri** (arranger) replaces Ogerman, same as track 1  
 Recorded May 24, 1966 at Van Gelder Recording Studio, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey  
 Available on CD: *Cal Tjader and Eddie Palmieri El Sonido Nuevo (The New Soul Sound)* Verve 314 519 812-2
7. **Borneo** (Lalo Schifrin) 4:11  
 Personnel, except add Lalo Schifrin (piano), recording date and location, and CD issue same as track 2

8. **Soul Bird (Tin Tin Deo)** (Chano Pozo—Dizzy Gillespie—Gil Fuller) 2:38  
 Lonnie Hewitt (piano); John Hiliard (bass); Armando Peraza (percussion); Johnny Rae (drums).  
 Recorded June 25, 1965 at Van Gelder Recording Studio, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey  
 Original-LP issue: *Soul Bird* Verve V6-8626
9. **Fuji** (Cal Tjader) 2:30  
 Jerry Dodgion (flute); Lonnie Hewitt (piano); Dick Hyman (organ); George Duvivier (bass); Stan Applebaum (celeste, arranger, conductor); others unknown.  
 Recorded November 27, 1963 in New York City  
 Available on CD: *Several Shades of Jade / Breeze From the East* (2 LPs on 1 CD) Verve 314 537 083-2
10. **Sunset Boulevard** (Claus Ogerman) 2:36  
**Claus Ogerman and his orchestra**: Seldon Powell, Jerome Richardson (flute); Patti Bown, Hank Jones, or Bernie Leighton (piano); Kenny Burrell, Jimmy Raney (guitar); George Duvivier (bass); Willie Rodríguez (percussion); Ed Shaughnessy (drums); Les Double Six (vocal); Ogerman (arranger, conductor).  
 Recorded May 13, 1964 at Van Gelder Recording Studio, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey  
 Original-LP issue: *Warm Wave* Verve V6-8586
11. **Leyte** (Cal Tjader—Lonnie Hewitt) 3:04  
 Personnel and CD issue same as track 9  
 Recorded December 2, 1963 in New York City
12. **China Nights (Shina No Yoru)** (Nobuyuki Takeoka—Yaso Saijo) 2:30  
 Personnel, recording location, and CD issue same as track 2  
 Recorded April 23, 1963
13. **Daddy Wong Legs** (Cal Tjader) 3:42  
 Paul Griffin (piano); Richard Davis (bass); Armando Peraza (percussion); Sol Gubin or Grady Tate (drums).  
 Recorded June 2, 1965 in New York City  
 Original-LP issue: *Soul Bird* Verve V6-8626
14. **Triste** (Cal Tjader) 4:10  
 Paul Horn (flute); Lonnie Hewitt (piano); Al McKibbon (bass); Armando Peraza (percussion); Wilfredo Vincente (congas); Johnny Rae (timbales).  
 Recorded August 28 or 29, 1961 at Webster Hall, Hollywood  
 Original-LP issue: *In a Latin Bag* Verve V6-8419
15. **The Prophet** (Cal Tjader) 4:33  
 Probably Marvin Stamm (trumpet); possibly Hubert Laws (flute); unknown (strings); João Donato (organ); Red Mitchell (bass); Ed Thigpen (drums); unknown (vocal); Don Sebesky (arranger, conductor).  
 Recorded September 19, 1967 in Hollywood  
 Original-LP issue: *The Prophet* Verve V6-8769
16. **Ritmo Uni** (Eddie Palmieri—Bobby Rodríguez) 3:51  
 Personnel, recording date and location, and CD issue same as track 6

Original recordings produced by Esmond Edwards (track 15) or Creed Taylor

## Ultimate Cal Tjader

*His given name was Callen Radcliffe Tjader. His parents were Swedish-Americans, he was born in St. Louis, and his first claim to fame was as the drummer in Dave Brubeck's ultra-progressive octet and trio. Could anyone be a more unlikely pioneer of Latin jazz? Yet Cal Tjader (1925–82) is without question one of the masters of the genre. His conversion came after he switched from drums to vibes for a chair in George Shearing's quintet, where he first played with percussionist Armando Peraza and began listening to the great Latin bands in New York. From there it was a short step to forming his own group, which was based in San Francisco in the late 1950s and really took off after adding Mongo Santamaria and Willie Bobo, two of the reigning Latin percussionists on the East Coast.*

*After building his reputation with several albums for the Fantasy label, Tjader signed with Verve in 1961, where he saw his popularity continue to soar with several ambitious projects. One of the most innovative, and a cornerstone of Latin jazz libraries to this day, is *El Sonido Nuevo*, Tjader's 1966 encounter with composer–pianist Eddie Palmieri. This classic, and their subsequent collaboration Palmieri & Tjader on the Tico label, made a deep impression on Palmieri. "Its amazing how Cal, even in his grave, is driving me up the wall, just like he told me he would," the pianist joked when commenting on his departed friend. "But I had a great time digging deeply into these recordings, with the help of my son Eddie II, who is my manager and co-producer." Along the way, Palmieri, Sr. also provides some essential insights into the evolution of Latin jazz.*

*Bob Blumenthal*

## Eddie Palmieri on Cal Tjader

Cal looked like he would have been a great business partner with someone like Steve Garvey. He had that all-American boy look, like Mickey Mantle when he came out of Oklahoma. But he was the most natural vibist that I have had the pleasure of sharing a bandstand with. When we did our albums, he came in and recorded parts after my orchestra had done its tracks. He never missed an entrance or an exit, and what he played was just incredible. And he was playing with my band La Perfecta when it was at its height. He had come to me and requested recording with my orchestra, which was the greatest compliment.

I had never played with Cal, but I had heard him. To understand his inspirations, you have to go back to the groups my brother [pianist] Charlie [Palmieri] was in, especially Tito Puente's band. Cal heard Mongo Santamaria and Willie Bobo with Tito at the Palladium in New York and loved what he heard. He took Mongo and Willie to the West Coast, and that just blew everybody away.

At one time, the West Coast was considered five years behind New York in Latin music. That's because the umbilical cord ran directly from Cuba to New York. All of the great musicians and arrangers were coming to New York, and in the Fifties you could get classic charts for fifty cents or a dollar. Between Machito, Tito Puente, and Tito Rodriguez, great singles were coming out every week. And little by little, the bands started to head west on tours. I remember driving west, through Texas to Los Angeles, with Tito Rodriguez back in 1958. That helped the West Coast to start catching up.

When Cal Tjader brought Mongo and Willie to San Francisco, though, that turned it all around. The two of them were the greatest on their instruments, Mongo on congas and Willie on timbales, and that was the stimulus that affected the entire West Coast. Musicians out west should be

grateful to Cal if only for that. He was a visionary, at least a decade ahead of his time. From that point on, Latin music on the West Coast became serious. When you have something that you present well, and then the most incredible musicians want to come in and play, it happens. The greatest musicians want to come to your band, which is what happened with Cal.

Mongo and Willie were idols in New York already. I had freaked out the first time I heard Mongo with Tito Puente, and when he and Willie went West it was like the Dodgers and Giants moving. "Who was this guy Tjader?" we wondered. Then we heard him, and realized that his music was an extension of what Dizzy Gillespie, Chano Pozo, and Mario Bauza had started.

The stimulus from your personnel makes your concept work. If you've got Phil Rizzuto in the middle to backhand the ball when it's hit up the middle, you take note. When you've got percussionists providing you with rhythmical scales, it can't help but enhance your playing — especially when you're as natural as Cal. Also, his sound and his sentimental feeling were so gorgeous; and how he employed that sound with his technique when he played a ballad. Cal loved his instrument, and he embraced every note. You hear that in his compositions, too: that sensitivity, that knack for playing within the accompaniment.

Cal's perception was keen. He knew what he wanted, he went out and got it, and it has lasted forever. Cal wanted authenticity to the highest degree. When he brought in someone like Claus Ogerman on our album, he gave us the opportunity to blend completely. The key was Bobby Rodriguez, the greatest Latin bass player we had. I don't think I was as prepared then to record with a jazz great like Cal Tjader as I am now. The band was at its peak, though; and Cal didn't come in and pick and choose sidemen. He said, "Give me your band, the whole shit," which was the way he always dealt with music.

"Guajira en Azul" is a lesson in how to create tension and release with breaks. Cal loved that.

"Sahib" is a beautiful melody that just flows. I love Cal's sound against the guitar.

"Pantano" is a good tune, and has a nice swinging piano solo by Lonnie Hewitt.

Cal plays beautifully on "The Way You Look Tonight", and Claus Ogerman, the arranger, worked with us on *El Sonido Nuevo*. Cal gave us the green light to change anything we wanted, which shows how open-minded he was. He gave musicians great confidence and relaxation. Willie Rodriguez, who was the daddy of all the percussionists like Willie Bobo and Johnny Pacheco, is on this track.

"Curaçao" is one of Cal's great compositions. His tunes always get to you. And the musicians on this track — Chick Corea and Patato Valdez! You have to remember that when Teddy Roosevelt rode up San Juan Hill, Patato sold him the horse. And Bobby Rodriguez was there, José Mangual. Quite a rhythm section.

"Picadillo" is another track from *El Sonido Nuevo*. That was Tito Puente's composition, and Tito was very important to Cal.

"Borneo" is like a Javanese gamelan, which I read about in Joseph Schillinger's book. Lalo Schifrin's arrangement is just great.

"Soul Bird" comes from "Tin Tin Deo". It's an example of how Cal drew great musicians to his group. Lonnie Hewitt plays beautifully, and so does Armando Peraza.

"Fuji" is a great composition by Cal, and the rhythmic structure shifts very effectively.

"Sunset Boulevard" is another example of how compatible Cal and Claus Ogerman were. In this setting, you hear Cal's jazz influences, the way you hear Gonzalo Rubalcaba's jazz influences when he plays with guys like Charlie Haden.

"Leyte", another great original, really has Cal's personal signature.

"China Nights" is just impeccable playing by Cal. I love Lalo Schiffrin's use of muted horns in the arrangement; it's something I'm working on right now in an extended composition of my own.

"Daddy Wong Legs" is another of Cal's best compositions. Armando Peraza is featured here, and he is another one of the pioneers. Armando and Patato were very important back in Cuba in the '40s, when they played together in a conjunto. Can you imagine what that band sounded like?

"Triste" has another nice 6/8 rhythm, as well as fine Paul Horn flute.

"The Prophet" has a beautiful melody, also one of Cal's, which makes the composition work. Don Sebesky, who did the arrangement if I'm not mistaken, wrote a book on arranging that I have found to be very valuable.

"Ritmo Uni" comes out of La Perfecta's most controversial album. What was so controversial was that Manny Oquendo had brought in the [Cuban] Mozambique [dance] rhythm. [So] I was accused of being a Communist by all of these Cuban professionals who had first arrived from Cuba. We were the first band that headed where the Cuban bands would eventually end up, playing rhythms that no one knew how to dance to at the time. By using the Afro feeling, and having the four trombones go haywire, it just creates an amazing effect — but the rhythm always stays Afro.

Look at the picture of Cal and me on our Verve album cover, and you'll see that we were quite complementary. We both had those Peter Gunn haircuts, the way we dressed, we even both had [Jaguar] XKEs at the time. That picture was no put-on. I wrote a waltz for our second album called "Resemblance", and when I heard that Cal had passed away I went downstairs in my house and played it.

He was the Clark Kent of music, the most wonderful human being, no airs. He just stepped back and listened. What he did for Latin music can't be forgotten. He carried it 3,000 miles, all across the country. Cal still lives in my heart, and pays no rent.

Eddie Palmieri, as told to Bob Blumenthal

## Compilation

Supervised by **Richard Seidel** • Selected by **Eddie Palmieri** • Sequenced by **Bob Blumenthal** • A&R coordinated by **Samantha Black** • Researched and restored by **Carlos Kase** • Remastered by **Suha Gur** and **Kevin Reeves** at Universal Music Studios—East • Production coordinated by **Bryan Koniarz** • Production assistance by **Tom Greenwood** and **Ken Thomson** • Text edited by **Deborah Hay** • Art directed by **Hollis King** • Art designed by **Cicero deGuzman, Jr.** and **Zoë Miller** • Art production coordinated by **Sherniece Smith** • Photographs of Cal Tjader from **Ray Avery's Jazz Archives** (front cover of booklet and CD label) and **Cynthia Sesso Archives** (back cover of booklet) • Photograph research by **Cynthia Sesso** • Special thanks to Eddie Palmieri II, Michael Lang, Peter Keepnews, John Wriggle, the Institute of Jazz Studies, and the staff at Universal Music Studios—East • All photographs are © 1999 Herman Leonard or Tom Taves.

## A Brief History of Verve

In 1944 Norman Granz promoted his first concert, a benefit held at the Philharmonic Auditorium in Los Angeles. The live recording, issued in 1946, was a prototype of swinging jazz in concert, known as Jazz at the Philharmonic (JATP).

After his initial labels, Clef and Norgran, had been established, Granz inaugurated Verve Records in 1956 — and he brought these earlier efforts under the Verve banner. The Verve catalog grew through the Fifties and Sixties to include most of the major figures in jazz.

Verve, which now incorporates the Mercury Records/EmArcy jazz catalog, is devoted to reissuing its classics on CD while continuing to record major talent producing new jazz classics today.

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## Eddie Palmieri on Verve

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**Gal Tjader**