



Claude Diallo Situation · Two Grand Pianos

with Zaccai Curtis and Keisel Jiménez

LONG BIOGRAPHY

Zaccai Curtis, YAMAHA grand piano

Claude Diallo, YAMAHA grand piano

Luques Curtis, bass

Túpac Mantilla, drums

Keisel Jiménez, percussion

CLAUDE DIALLO SITUATION — TWO GRAND PIANOS. ONE EXTRAORDINARY MUSICAL EXPERIENCE.

Claude Diallo Situation presents a rare and spectacular live experience: **two Yamaha grand pianos on stage simultaneously**, featuring Swiss pianist **Claude Diallo** and American pianist **Zaccai Curtis**, both Yamaha Artists, alongside acclaimed bassist **Luques Curtis**, Colombian drummer **Túpac Mantilla**, and special guest Cuban percussionist **Keisel Jiménez**.

At the heart of this exceptional project is the musical connection between Zaccai and his brother **Luques Curtis**, the acclaimed bassist of Claude Diallo Situation. Together with Claude Diallo, they create a powerful musical dialogue driven by virtuosity, improvisation, deep groove, and a shared passion for jazz and Latin music.

The repertoire features music from **Cubop Lives!**, the Grammy-winning Latin Jazz album, bringing the energy and sophistication of Afro-Cuban jazz to the stage. With Túpac Mantilla's dynamic Colombian drumming and Keisel Jiménez's distinctive Cuban percussion, the ensemble creates a rich and expansive rhythmic landscape.

The combination of **two grand pianos, bass, drums, and Cuban percussion** creates a powerful sound and a visual spectacle rarely experienced in a live jazz setting.

A first-time experience of its kind — two grand pianos, five exceptional musicians, and the irresistible pulse of Latin jazz. Claude Diallo Situation is a unique international concert production created for major jazz festivals, concert halls, and prestigious cultural stages.

ZACCAI CURTIS – PIANO

Zaccai Curtis is an acclaimed American jazz pianist, composer, arranger, producer, and educator, and the **2025 Grammy Award winner for Best Latin Jazz Album** for his acclaimed recording *Cubop Lives!*. Deeply rooted in jazz, bebop, and Afro-Cuban music, Curtis has developed a distinctive voice that combines virtuosic piano playing with sophisticated rhythmic language and a profound understanding of Latin jazz.

A native of Connecticut and now based in New York, Curtis has performed and recorded with leading artists including **Eddie Palmieri, Christian Scott, Donald Harrison, Cindy Blackman Santana, Lakecia Benjamin, Brian Lynch, the Mambo Legends, and Avery Sharpe**. He is also a three-time ASCAP Young Jazz Composer Award winner and was named a **Rising Star in the DownBeat Critics Poll**. Together with his brother, bassist Luques Curtis, he co-founded TRRcollective, an artist-driven record label and creative community.

CLAUDE DIALLO – PIANO & COMPOSITION

For more than 30 years, Claude Diallo has been connecting people through music. As a Swiss jazz pianist, composer, and bandleader, he stands for a modern and open approach to jazz that tells stories. His music combines virtuosity with

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emotional depth, improvisation with composition, and reflects the diversity of his international career.

With his ensemble Claude Diallo Situation, Claude Diallo has developed a contemporary jazz sound driven by spontaneous interaction, melodic clarity, and expressive storytelling. His compositions invite audiences on musical journeys while creating spaces for encounter, inspiration, and shared experiences.

An important milestone in his career was his recognition at the Montreux Jazz Festival Bösendorfer Solo Piano Competition, which brought him international attention at an early stage as an exceptional pianist. Today, Claude Diallo is a recording artist with the American label Dot Time Records as well as an official Yamaha Artist.

LUQUES CURTIS – BASS

Luques Curtis is regarded as one of the distinguished bassists of his generation, moving effortlessly between modern jazz and Afro-Caribbean musical traditions. Raised in Hartford, Connecticut, he studied at Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Already during his time in Boston, Curtis performed with musicians such as Gary Burton, Ralph Peterson, Donald Harrison, Christian Scott, and Francisco Mela. Since then, he has worked with numerous internationally acclaimed artists, including Eddie Palmieri, Gary Burton, Sean Jones, Christian Scott, Stefon Harris, Orrin Evans, and many others.

Curtis is also a member of the Curtis Brothers, together with his brother Zaccai Curtis, and is active as a composer and producer. His discography includes more than 100 commercial recordings. In 2025, he received a Grammy Award for Best Latin Jazz Album in connection with Cubop Lives; he has also contributed to numerous Grammy Award-winning and Grammy-nominated productions.

His musical approach combines rhythmic precision, tremendous stylistic openness, and an exceptional ability to give space to the musicians around him. In his collaboration with Diallo, Zaccai Curtis, Mantilla, and Jiménez, his bass playing forms one of the essential foundations of the ensemble.

TÚPAC MANTILLA – DRUMS & PERCUSSION

Túpac Mantilla is an internationally acclaimed drummer and percussionist whose extraordinary rhythmic versatility brings a distinctive energy and depth to the Claude Diallo Situation. Originally from Bogotá, Colombia, Túpac has performed at prestigious venues and festivals worldwide, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Montreux, Newport and North Sea Jazz. A Grammy-nominated artist and collaborator with musicians such as Bobby McFerrin, Esperanza Spalding and Ustad Zakir Hussain, he combines jazz, Latin, world and contemporary rhythms with remarkable musicality and improvisational freedom. With Claude Diallo Situation, his dynamic drumming and percussion create a powerful foundation for the ensemble's internationally inspired, genre-crossing sound.

KEISEL JIMÉNEZ – PERCUSSION

Keisel Jiménez is an internationally acclaimed Cuban percussionist and a master of timbales, congas, drums, and Afro-Cuban percussion. Born in Camagüey, Cuba, he trained in classical percussion at the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana before establishing himself as one of Cuba's most versatile and sought-after percussionists.

Jiménez has performed and recorded with some of the leading names in Cuban and Latin music, including **Alexander Abreu & Havana D'Primera, Isaac Delgado, Alain Pérez, Orlando "Maraca" Valle, and Arturo O'Farrill & the Afro**



Latin Jazz Orchestra. Since moving to New York, he has become an integral part of the city's vibrant Afro-Latin jazz scene, performing at major venues and festivals internationally.

With his deep knowledge of Cuban rhythms, exceptional versatility, and explosive musical energy, **Keisel Jiménez brings an authentic and powerful rhythmic voice to Claude Diallo Situation.**

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