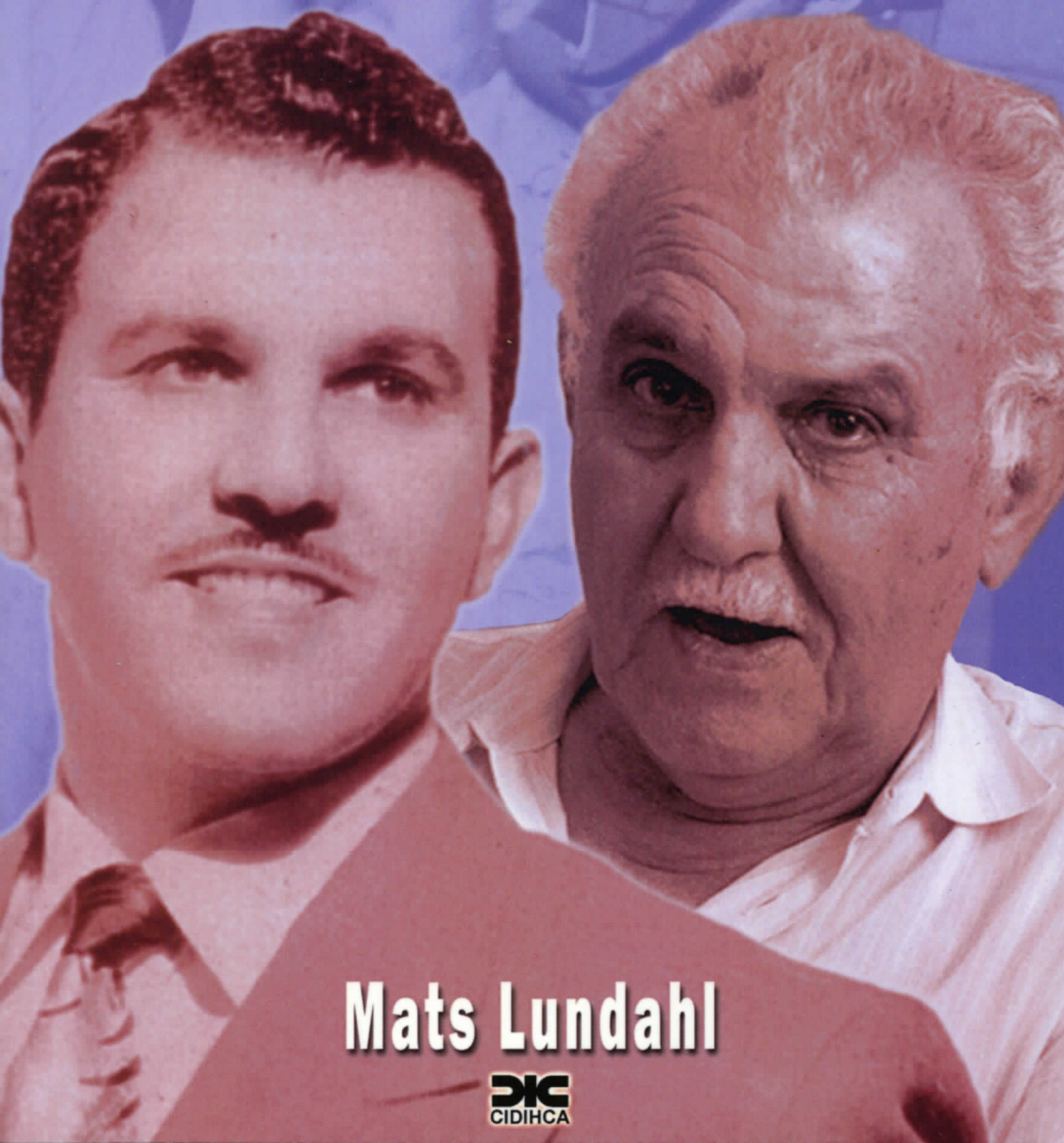


The Man Who Brought Jazz to Haiti:

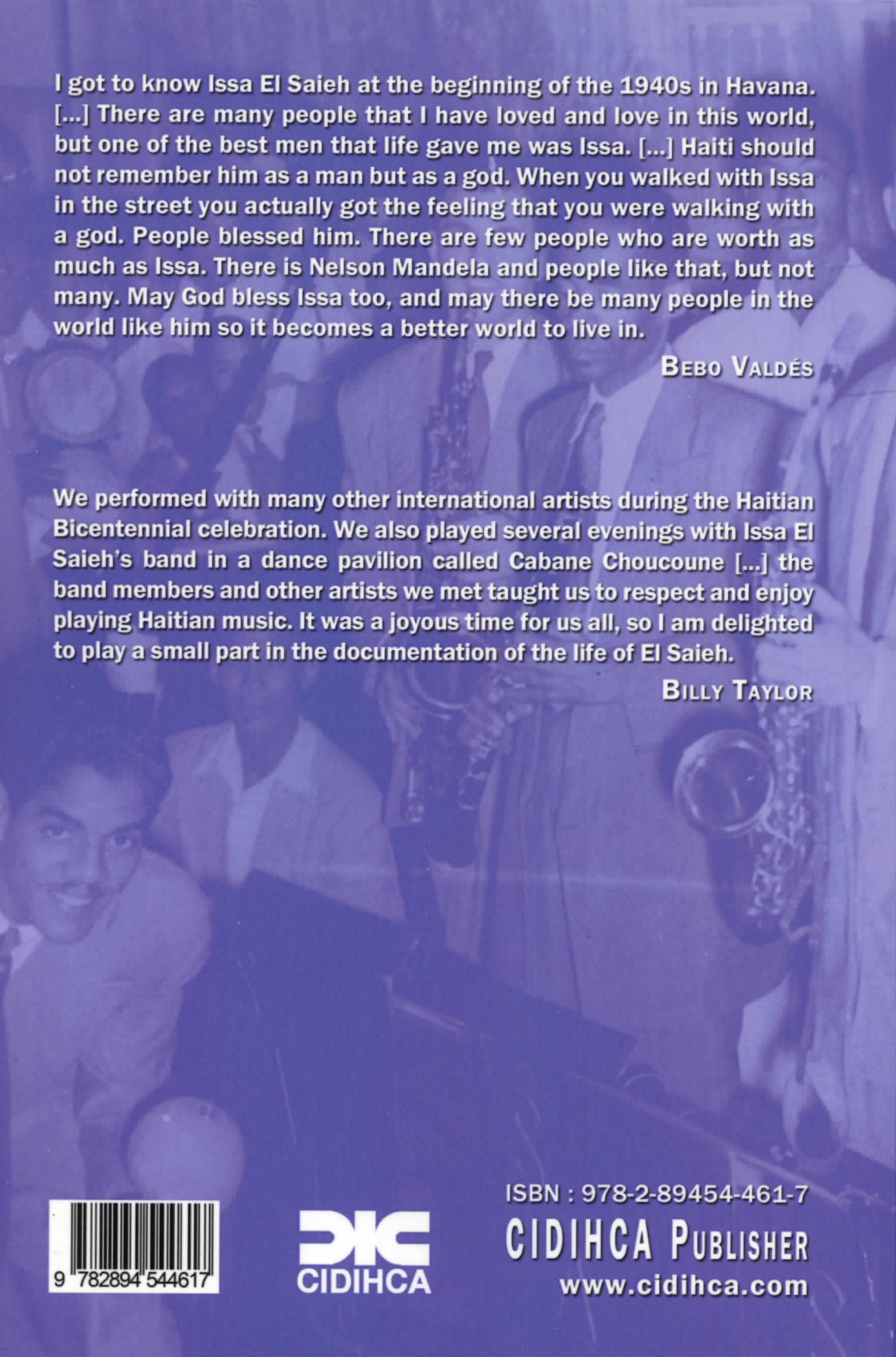
THE STORY OF

Issa & Saïeh



Mats Lundahl

DIC
CIDIHCA



I got to know Issa El Saieh at the beginning of the 1940s in Havana. [...] There are many people that I have loved and love in this world, but one of the best men that life gave me was Issa. [...] Haiti should not remember him as a man but as a god. When you walked with Issa in the street you actually got the feeling that you were walking with a god. People blessed him. There are few people who are worth as much as Issa. There is Nelson Mandela and people like that, but not many. May God bless Issa too, and may there be many people in the world like him so it becomes a better world to live in.

BEBE VALDÉS

We performed with many other international artists during the Haitian Bicentennial celebration. We also played several evenings with Issa El Saieh's band in a dance pavilion called Cabane Choucounne [...] the band members and other artists we met taught us to respect and enjoy playing Haitian music. It was a joyous time for us all, so I am delighted to play a small part in the documentation of the life of El Saieh.

BILLY TAYLOR



CID
CIDIHCA

ISBN : 978-2-89454-461-7

CIDIHCA PUBLISHER
www.cidihca.com

Table of Contents

Foreword by Billy Taylor	13
Foreword by Bebo Valdés	15
Preface	17
<i>Chapter 1</i>	
The Setting	23
Haiti around 1950	23
Port-au-Prince	26
<i>Chapter 2</i>	
Me, Myself and Haiti	37
Arrival in the Black Republic	39
Grand Hôtel Oloffson: A Swedish Hotel in Haiti?	40
Issa	45
<i>Chapter 3</i>	
Issa	47
From Bethlehem to Port-au-Prince	47
The Arab Migration	49
Issa's Early Years	51
Back in Haiti	53
The Family Man	56
<i>Chapter 4</i>	
The Musician	59
New Cultural Winds	61
Creating an Orchestra	67

<i>Chapter 5</i>	
Super Orchestre Issa El Saieh	73
The Benefits of Rehearsing	75
Changes of Personnel	78
Tanbournè and Singers	82
<i>Chapter 6</i>	
International Influences	89
Musical Studies in New York	89
Bebo	95
<i>Chapter 7</i>	
The Bicentennial	105
The 1949 Bicentennial	108
Too White	116
<i>Chapter 8</i>	
The Belle Époque: Magloire	127
Bon Papa	127
'Se wiski m' bwe'	133
<i>Chapter 9</i>	
Apogee and Decline	141
The Orchestra in the 1950s	141
The New York Connection	145
The Last Years of the Orchestra	151
Helping Others	155
<i>Chapter 10</i>	
Love, Sex and Tradition	163
Love and Marriage	164
Sex	168
Traditional Songs	171
<i>Chapter 11</i>	
Voodoo	175
Rada and Petwo	176
Yanvalou	181
Good Looks and Bad Smells	183
<i>Chapter 12</i>	
History	189
Dessalines and the Madwoman	189
The Acaaus: Caroline and Jean-Jacques	191

Table of Contents

The Death of President
Yankee Go Home
Others

Chapter 13

Dòdòf, Sicot, Trouillot,
Rodolphe 'Dòdòf' Legro
The Cabane Choucounè
Webert Sicot and Joe Tr
Guy Durosier
Nono Lamy

Chapter 14

Budd, Bebo and Billy
Budd Johnson
Bebo Valdés
Billy Taylor

Chapter 15

Folklore
Hi-Fi Haitian Drums
Voodoo Drums in Hi-Fi

Chapter 16

Hamit, the Syrian
The Whorehouse Customer
Hamit
Petit Pierre
Murder
Fort Dimanche

Chapter 17

Galerie Issa
The Birth of an Art Form
Issa the Art Dealer
The Painters: André Pierre
André Normil
Jacques Chéry

Chapter 18

A Day at the Circus
Saturday Night and Sunday M
The Gallery to End All Gallerie

Table of Contents

The Death of President Hyppolite	194
Yankee Go Home	195
Others	196
<i>Chapter 13</i>	
Dòdòf, Sicot, Trouillot, Durosier and Nono	201
Rodolphe 'Dòdòf' Legros	201
The Cabane Choucounè Ensemble:	
Webert Sicot and Joe Trouillot	206
Guy Durosier	212
Nono Lamy	217
<i>Chapter 14</i>	
Budd, Bebo and Billy	225
Budd Johnson	225
Bebo Valdés	229
Billy Taylor	231
<i>Chapter 15</i>	
Folklore	237
<i>Hi-Fi Haitian Drums</i>	237
<i>Voodoo Drums in Hi-Fi</i>	247
<i>Chapter 16</i>	
Hamit, the Syrian	253
The Whorehouse Customer	256
Hamit	257
Petit Pierre	258
Murder	263
Fort Dimanche	266
<i>Chapter 17</i>	
Galerie Issa	273
The Birth of an Art Form	273
Issa the Art Dealer	277
The Painters: André Pierre	284
André Normil	286
Jacques Chéry	290
<i>Chapter 18</i>	
A Day at the Circus	293
Saturday Night and Sunday Morning	299
The Gallery to End All Galleries	301
Table of Contents	11

<i>Chapter 19</i>	309
Last Chorus: Ginen	
Appendices	319
<i>Appendix A</i>	
Issa El Saieh and his Orchestra:	321
A List of Personnel	321
The First Band (1943-44)	322
The Second Formation (1944-1947)	323
The Third Orchestra (1947-1951)	
<i>Appendix B</i>	
A Partial List of La Belle Creole 78 Records,	325
LP Records and Compact Discs	325
with Issa and his Associates	332
78s	334
LP Records	
Compact Discs	337
References	349
DVDs	350
Interviews	
Photographic Memorabilia	353

Foreword

by Billy Taylor

WHEN I FIRST CAME TO NEW YORK, I found a wide variety of places that provided entertainment. In Harlem, there were movies, cabarets, dance halls and nightclubs where who performed in the streets for a living. I was hired, as her accompanist, by the singer Ethel Waters who was brought to the Belasco theatre on Broadway. In addition to the star, Miss Waters, there was a band in the pit, pianist Mary Lou Williams, Rogers, the Hall Johnson singers and dancers who danced to Haitian music. My limited run but the audience loved it. I played piano in a show that had a lot of fun. I enjoy. I had already played with Mary Lou's band and many West-Indian pick-up bands. I spent in Haiti was a unique time.

Bebop was the new style of jazz that caught everyone's attention and I had just finished *Basic Bebop Instruction*, so my friend asked me to co-lead a modern jazz group. I played bebop and other aspects of jazz with the Haitians. We selected bebop tunes.