

## Bill Cruz

Cuban-American singer/songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, producer and composer Bill Cruz has been recording and performing music for over 20 years. His work has evolved from stage to studio to composer's chair, yet has always retained his signature characteristics of emotional honesty, literate expression, and compelling melodicism.

Cruz launched his independent production company in 1998 with the goal of producing records for himself and other artists outside the major label system. His first album, *Three Shades*, a sonically bare and painfully honest journey through dissolution and loss was called one of the best folk/pop albums of 1999 by Miami's *New Times*. The shows in support of the album's release quickly established him as one of the most dynamic and compelling live performers anywhere — equally engaging when fronting a full band or alone on a stage with just an acoustic guitar.

The following year, two of the songs from *Three Shades* were licensed for the PBS TV show *Barrios*, and Cruz was suddenly presented with numerous opportunities to compose music for broadcast. After considerably expanding the home studio he built for *Three Shades*, Cruz started a commercial music production service and began composing and producing music for PBS as well as clients such as Sony, 20th Century Fox, Texaco, Microsoft, Publix, FPL, Tricon, and the Boys' and Girls' Clubs of America. Since then, his production company has scored hundreds of segments for broadcast media and has earned a reputation as one the most stylistically versatile music services in South Florida.

In 2004, Cruz released *Spirit Parade*, heralding a move into more experimental musical territory. It's multi-layered sonic textures framed songs which explored the connection between physical and spiritual space. Even though the seamless blend of organic and electronic instrumentation might be the album's most distinctive musical characteristic, its heart lies in the stories it tells. The common thread among reviews and responses to the album is the recognition of an attention to detail in the lyrics and the construction of the storytelling that is quite simply not often found in pop music. Just like his debut, *Spirit Parade* was self-released and Cruz was responsible for every sound on the album — not just writing and arranging all of the material, but also singing every vocal part and playing every instrument on the recording.

The natural progression and long-time goal for Cruz as a composer was realized when he began scoring for film. His first score was for the critically-acclaimed and award-winning documentary *The Sugar Babies* (2007). The film, set primarily on the island of Hispaniola, presented the unique opportunity of creating a score which

blended African rhythms with ambient instrumentation and sounds constructed from location field recordings. Two new songs, *Devil's Work* and *Branded*, were also written and recorded specifically for the documentary and included in the film. *Celia The Queen* (2008), a documentary about the great Cuban singer Celia Cruz, posed the challenge of creating a score for a film that was already filled with the music of its legendary subject. The subtle, yet emotionally powerful score garnered much praise at the film's Tribeca premiere, where Cruz was included in the festival's ASCAP Composer Spotlight panel.

Throughout the years, Cruz has continued to produce and collaborate with other artists. Most recently he produced, co-wrote, recorded and performed on “The Voice” finalist Karina Iglesias' debut album *The Way*. He also produced, recorded and performed on Calahoney's *Too Many Hawks* . Among his current projects are scores for upcoming documentary films from Siren Studios, and a return to his own original music with a series of download-only releases, followed by a new album, tentatively titled *13*.