

# MERIDIAN BROTHERS



*Photo, Mariana Reyes*

## Bio

From Bogotá - Colombia, MERIDIAN BROTHERS is a contemporary *neo-tropicalista* group founded in 1998 from the interests of Eblis Álvarez (composer and multi-instrumentalist) as a musical laboratory for a small audiences and distributed at the time in cassette format.

Starting in 2007, the project became a live act formed by a group university friends: María Valencia (wind instruments, percussion and keyboards), Eblis Álvarez (vocals, guitar and direction), Mauricio Ramírez who joined the band in 2016, replacing Damián Ponce (Drums), Alejandro Forero (keyboards), César Quevedo (bass) and in sound engineering, Alejandro Araujo (replacing Juan Camilo Montañéz).

The group performed its first concerts in 2008 at the local Bogotan scene, later reaching national festivals, and then acquired international recognition from the release of its fourth studio

album "Desesperanza" (Soundway 2012) appearing in important magazines and specialized music websites. (see press).

From 2010 to the present, the project undertakes international tours playing at important music festivals and venues in Europe, The United States and Latin America including the Roskilde Festival (Denmark), Rencontres trans musicales (France), Worldtronics (Germany), Festival Paleo (Switzerland), Rock al Parque (Bogotá-Colombia), NRMAL Festival (Mexico), Bahidorá Festival (Mexico), SummerStage (NY, U.S), Lincoln Center (NY, U.S), Big ears festival (Knoxville, U.S), among others. (see live performances).

MERIDIAN BROTHERS has released albums with several independent music labels such as La Distritofónica (Colombia), Soundway records (UK), Discrepant (UK), Staubgold (Germany), Names you can trust (USA), Bongo Joe (Switzerland), OKRA (Japan).

## Style

The style of MERIDIAN BROTHERS is part of the *neo-tropicalista* movement in Colombia taking place at the beginning of the 21st century. The roots of the group can be found in the ephemeral *Ensamble Polifónico Vallenato* project, where its members (Eblis Álvarez among them) dedicated to experiment with influences from traditional Colombian music such as vallenato, cumbia, *Bullerengue*, 'palenquero' sextet format, 'Gaita' format, etc.

MERIDIAN BROTHERS proposes an experimental line of these origins with an ever-changing, very personal and histrionic proposal. The first recordings ("El Advenimiento del Castillo mujer"- 2005/2014 La Distritofónica/Discrepant, "Meridian Brothers VI" - 2009 La Distritofónica, "Meridian Brothers VII" 2011 La Distritofónica) focused on the search for sound paths with diverse unconventional formats within an electro-acoustic direction.

Since the album "Desesperanza" - 2012 Soundway, MERIDIAN BROTHERS has systematically structured their style, drawing inspiration from references from traditional Colombian (and Latin American) discography in a detailed way. The records after "Desesperanza" (see discography) focus on a particular style of the traditional discographic history, and format it in a postmodern and futuristic

'recreation' of each reference. Cumbia with electric guitar, vallenato, Latin funk/rock, salsa, traditional accordion music, music for electric organ, are among the styles developed by the band prior to 2022.

In August 2022, “Meridian Brothers & El Grupo Renacimiento” is released, about the imaginary Bogotan band “Grupo Renacimiento”, dedicated to salsa, the seventies-style Latin-soul under the legendary record label Ansonia, a label that restarts its activities in the 21st century after 32 years without making new recordings.

MERIDIAN BROTHERS has earned a reputation as a cult band in Latin America. The group has been cataloged by music journalists as a futuristic avant-garde proposal, which preserves roots reminiscences of Latin music, due to its sound, style and theatrical expression.

**Discography** (<https://meridianbrothers.com/discografia.html>)

#### Studio albums

- 2005 – El Advenimiento del castillo mujer (La distritofónica/Discrepant)
- 2009 – Meridian Brothers VI (La distritofónica)
- 2011 – Meridian Brothers VII (La distritofónica)
- 2012 – Desesperanza (Soundway records)
- 2013 – Devoción “works” (Staubgold)
- 2014 – Salvadora Robot (Soundway records)
- 2015 – Los Suicidas (Soundway records)
- 2017 – ¿Dónde estás María? (Soundway records)
- 2020 – Cumbia Siglo XXI (Bongo Joe records)
- 2021 – Paz en La Tierra (Bongo Joe records)
- 2022 – Meridian Brothers & El grupo Renacimiento (Ansonia)

#### Singles & collaborations

- 2012 – Escuchen el grito (Names you can trust)
- 2013 – Niebla Morada (Soundway records)

- 2014 – Fiesta que viva la, ensamble polifónico vallenato (Staubgold)
- 2014 – Lamento calavera (Names you can trust)
- 2017 – Remixes: Los wemblers de Iquitos (Barbes records)
- 2018 – Meridian Brothers y El grupo renacimiento (Names you can trust)
- 2019 – Colombiana, El Niño de Elche (Sony Music)
- 2021 – Sencillos Cumbia siglo XXI (OKRA)
- 2021 – Abelardo Carbonó y Meridian Brothers (OKRA)

#### Achievements – most relevant press articles

*see more at:* (<https://meridianbrothers.com/prensa.html>)

- 2012 – Gilles Peterson, “Guaracha UFO”, best song of 2012 (<https://www.dummymag.com/10-best/the-10-best-tracks-of-2012-according-to-gilles-peterson/>)
- 2012 – Les inrockuptibles, “Desesperanza” best albums 2012 #71 (<https://www.lesinrocks.com/musique/nos-100-meilleurs-albums-de-2012-10070-26-12-2012/>)
- 2013 – NPR.org, “coplas para cantar al atardecer” favorite songs of 2013 (<https://www.npr.org/sections/bestmusic2013/2013/12/11/249734685/npr-musics-100-favorite-songs-of-2013>)
- 2014 – World music central, Best albums 2014 (<http://worldmusiccentral.org/2014/12/19/best-world-music-albums-of-2014/>)
- 2015 – Live Ableton blog “Sounds in context” (<https://www.ableton.com/en/blog/sounds-in-context-meridian-brothers/>)
- 2016 – The needledrop, “Los suicidas” review (<https://www.theneedledrop.com/articles/2016/1/meridian-brothers-los-suicidas>)
- 2017 – NPR: “Meridian Brothers: The Musical Madcaps Of The Tropical Baroque”

<https://www.npr.org/sections/latino/2017/08/31/545284499/meridian-brothers-the-musical-madcaps-of-the-tropical-baroque>)

2017 - The Guardian: “Meridian Brothers: ¿Dónde estás María? review - tuneful journey from Argentina to Mexico”  
(<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/sep/07/meridian-brothers-donde-estas-maria-review-tuneful-journey-from-argentina-to-mexico>)

2020 - The Needledrop “Cumbia siglo XXI review”  
(<https://www.theneedledrop.com/articles/2020/9/meridian-brothers-cumbia-siglo-xxi>)

2020 - The Needledrop “Best albums 2020”  
(<https://youtu.be/VN562bgJRZ4>)

2020 - Bandcamp: “Best of 2020” (<https://t.co/79WQOT92MH>)

2020 - The quietus: best albums of 2020 #28  
(<https://www.albumoftheyear.org/list/1543-the-quietus-albums-of-the-year-2020/2>)

2020 - Sounds and colors Magazine: Best of 2020  
(<https://soundsandcolours.com/articles/brazil/best-albums-of-2020-56992/>)

2021 - Matt Groening on His Love of Jazz, How It Found Its Way Into ‘The Simpsons’ and Curating a New Jazz Video Playlist (including Meridian Brothers) for Qwest TV  
(<https://variety.com/2021/music/news/matt-groening-jazz-playlist-qwest-tv-simpsons-interview-curated-jazz-video-playlist-drops-on-qwest-tv-1235098215/>)

2021 Songlines Magazine: Best new albums around the world (Meridian Brothers, Paz en La Tierra), November 2021  
(<https://www.songlines.co.uk/best-new-albums/the-10-best-new-albums-from-around-the-world-november-2021>)

2021 Bandcamp: Best of 2021 “Future History”  
(<https://daily.bandcamp.com/best-of-2021/best-of-2021-future-history>)

2021 NPR: Best music of 2021, by Felix Contreras  
(<https://www.npr.org/sections/npr-music-2021-staff-picks/2021/12/16/1064170418/felix-contreras>)

2021 The Needledrop: Top 50 tracks of 2021

(<https://youtu.be/IgFi5eF6PFg>)

2022 NY Times: The Meridian Brothers' Eccentric Mastermind Is Electrifying Roots Salsa

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/02/arts/music/meridian-brothers-el-grupo-renacimiento.html>)

### Most prominent concerts, venues and recognized festivals

2015 Festival NRMAL, Ciudad de México- Mexico

([https://youtu.be/\\_uFlSk-Ntw](https://youtu.be/_uFlSk-Ntw))

2015 Summer Solstice, The Cleveland museum of art, Cleveland-US

(<https://www.clevelandart.org/about/press/media-kit/cleveland-museum-art-presents-solstice-2015>)

2015 Cedar Cultural center, Minneapolis-US

(<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2015/06/22/bands-from-around-the-world-on-cedar-avenue-in-minneapolis>)

2015 Down the rabbit hole, Ewijk- Netherlands

(<https://www.concertarchives.org/concerts/down-the-rabbit-hole-2015--3>)

2015 Boskovice Festival, Boskovice- Czech republic

(<https://www.boskovice-festival.cz/en/history-festival>)

2015 Dour Festival, Dour- Belgium

(<https://www.dourfestival.eu/en/artist/detail/Meridian-Brothers/>)

2015 La mar de Músicas, Cartagena-Spain

([https://lamardemusicas.cartagena.es/2015/ficha\\_artistas.asp?id=117](https://lamardemusicas.cartagena.es/2015/ficha_artistas.asp?id=117))

2015 Clandestino, Botna-Sweden

(<http://clandestinofestival.org/2015/bonik-sv/meridian-brothers/>)

2015 Milhoes de festa, Barcelos-Portugal

(<https://artesonora.pt/breves/11-nomes-fecham-o-cartaz-do-milhoes-de-festa15/>)

2016 Teatro Colón, Bogotá-Colombia

([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csu\\_KD089is](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csu_KD089is))

2016 Budapest Ritmo, Mupa, Budapest-Hungary  
([https://www.mupa.hu/en/program/world-music-jazz-popular-music/budapest-ritmo-2016-10-16\\_19-00-festival-theatre](https://www.mupa.hu/en/program/world-music-jazz-popular-music/budapest-ritmo-2016-10-16_19-00-festival-theatre))

2016 Keroxen Festival, Tenerife-Spain  
(<https://losimperdiblesite.wordpress.com/2016/10/27/keroxen-merienda-cena-en-el-tanque-parte-3-sabado/>)

2017 Musee du Quai Branly Jaqces Chirac, Paris-France  
(<https://www.quaibrantly.fr/fr/expositions-evenements/au-musee/spectacles-fetes-et-evenements/concerts/details-de-levenement/e/meridian-brothers-37610/>)

2017 Paradiso, Amsterdam-Netherlands  
(<https://diginights.com/en/event/2017-10-04-meridian-brothers-in-paradiso-paradiso>)

2018 Teatro Metro Festival TACEC, La Plata-Argentina  
(<https://musicaclassica.com.ar/festival-tacec-2018/>)

2018 Festival Músicas do Mundo, Sines-Portugal  
([https://www.fmmsines.pt/pages/956?news\\_id=1176](https://www.fmmsines.pt/pages/956?news_id=1176))

2018 Opera Lyon- France (<https://www.opera-lyon.com/en/20182019/underground-concert/meridian-brothers-and-le-quatuor-wassily>)

2018 Festival Bananada, Goianias-Brazil  
(<https://www.redbull.com/br-pt/fotos-festival-bananada-2018>)

2019 Bahidorá, Cuernavaca-Mexico  
(<https://passportexperience.com/artistas-carnaval-de-bahidora-2019/>)

2022 Summerstage, Staten Island NY, US  
<https://cityparksfoundation.org/events/ana-tijoux-2022/>

2022 Levitt Pavilion, Los Angeles CA, US  
<https://dola.com/events/2022/8/12/meridian-brothers-subsuelo-djs-tickets>

2023 Global fest, Lincoln Center, NY, US  
<https://www.globalfest.org/gfartists/current-artists>

2023 Teatro Nacional Sucre, Quito – Ecuador (With the Orchestra of Andean Instruments of Quito)

<http://www.QUITOINFORMA.gob.ec/2023/03/21/festival-de-musica-sacra-meridian-brothers-con-la-orquesta-de-instrumentos-andinos-donde-estas-maria/>

## Quotes

“The Meridian Brothers’ Eccentric Mastermind Is Electrifying Roots Salsa” – NY Times

“Genius prophets of colombian weirdness” - MTV Iggy

“For those who haven’t heard previously heard them, Colombia’s Meridian Brothers are easily among the most interesting groups in South America” – AFROPOP

“Tuneful, clever and enormous fun” - THE GUARDIAN

“The Meridian brothers push all boundaries of what you think you know about music.Promise, you'll love it” – NPR

“So why listen? Beacuse it takes a strong will and clear musical vision for a band to cut through all the music for which Colombia is known” – NPR

“A dream world between electronic experimentation and regional folk” - LE MONDE

“Tropical madness from the most consistent of all the “world for club culture” labels.

Twisted cumbia at around 150BPM... terrorises the dancefloor!”-  
GILLES PETERSON



Photos:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ewah1uv5jbhig5n/AAAp3Y4ESXliagz3MYWHTVaHa?dl=0>

Album - "Cumbia Siglo XXI" (2020)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGSkNO-bgng&list=PLr5Fuae79WC07KmJ46mx9sN6rwA7GwgMd>

Album - "Meridian Brothers & El grupo renacimiento" (2022)

<https://youtu.be/5s7Tf04vgY0>

TECH RIDER

<https://meridianbrothers.com/rider-espanol-meridian-brothers.pdf>

CREW (traveling): 6

HOSPITALITY RIDER:

[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/982ywdg682p882j1eoiku/MERIDIAN-BROTHERS\\_hospitality.docx?dl=0&rlkey=y66bb1sn4pkouod2ytllmbux0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/982ywdg682p882j1eoiku/MERIDIAN-BROTHERS_hospitality.docx?dl=0&rlkey=y66bb1sn4pkouod2ytllmbux0)

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