

The New York Times

Mr. Pollak, an Austrian who mastered American tap in New York, then altered it by falling in love with Cuba.

– Brian Seibert, July 12, 2013

Max Pollak's "Sakura," ... gorgeous, rhythmically complex arrangements in four-part harmony.

– Brian Seibert, March 27, 2013

MAX POLLAK

... of Los Muñequitos de Matanzas

– Jon Pareles, May 8th, 2011

THE HUFFINGTON POST

Max Pollak's RumbaTap: A Polyrhythmic Explosion Of Afro-Cuban Sounds

– Sofia Verzbolovskis, March 20, 2009

La Tribune

Max Pollak insuffle une dose de délire au Festival Orford

– Steve Bergeron, July 15, 2013

Max Pollak: 2011 Hooper Award, 2011 Bessie Award Nom., 2010 Individ. Artist Grant (N-Manhattan Arts Alliance), 2008 NYFA Fellowship in Choreography, One of "25 To Watch" (Dance Magazine).

The only non-Cuban member of *Los Muñequitos de Matanzas*, Cuba's famous Rumba ambassadors, Pollak is a prestigious name on the international tap and world music scene. Critics and peers worldwide acknowledge his superior musicianship and his highly individual style called "*RumbaTap*" - a pioneering blend of Afro-Cuban song and dance with American tap and body music.

His innovative a cappella vocal arrangements received critical praise in *The New York Times*. Originator of Cuba's first tap festival, he has been teaching and performing there since 1998. Among others, he worked with Cuba's top Rumba groups, Chucho Valdés, Lila Downs, Ray Brown, Phil Woods, Paquito D'Rivera, Danilo Perez.

He is recognized for making classical music more accessible, playing in prestigious venues and festivals in Austria, Germany, France, Canada, the US and Cuba. He has performed as soloist with members of the *Vienna Philharmonic*, *New York Philharmonic*, *St. Luke's Chamber Orchestra*, *Les Violons Du Roy* and more. For such occasions, six internationally acclaimed composers have written orchestral works with tap/percussion parts expressly for Pollak. He is also a recording artist, published writer and on faculty at Sarah Lawrence College.



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Video Links

Max Pollak & Duluth Superior Symphony
Orch. Tap Dance Concerto



Solo with audience and Duluth orchestra



RumbaTap singing Guararey de Pastora



Adios, duo with piano



Tango Flute duet with Kaori Fujii



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Max Pollak's Credits:

New York Stage Performances

- **West Point Eisenhower Hall/Hunter College:** Duke Ellington's Sacred Concert (2013)
- **Lincoln Center – Jazz at Lincoln Center,** Alice Tully Hall, Meet The Artist, RumbaTap, Manhattan Tap, Feet 2 The Beat, Beat The Donkey (1995 – 2008) (Soloist w/ Cyro Baptista; Ray Brown, Danilo Perez, John DiMartino, Yosvany Terry, Dafnis Prieto, Bobby Sanabria's Quarteto Aché)
- **Central Park Summer Stage:** RumbaTap (2008), Beat The Donkey (2000)
- **Joyce Theater:** RumbaTap (2005), Urban Tap (2002)
- **Joyce Soho:** RumbaTap (2007, 2006)
- **Apollo Theater:** Dana Leong's Life After Dark (2009)
- **Doris Duke Theater:** RumbaTap (2001 – 2007), Dejelaba Groove (2005), Global Jam (2004), Tap City (2001 – 2007)
- **New Victory Theater:** Urban Tap (2001)
- **Public Theatre:** Shakespeare Sonnets on Tap (2007), Global Fest w/ Roxane Butterfly (2006)
- **Symphony Space:** Guest Soloist w/Los Muñequitos de Matanzas (2011), RumbaTap (2010, 2008, 2007), Jazz Nativity as Third King (usually played by Jimmy Slyde) w/ Paquito D'Rivera, Slide Hampton, Dave Valentin (2005)
- **Town Hall:** Barry Harris Spring Concert w/ Jimmy Slyde (2002), Super Son Cubano w/ Jose Fajardo, J.P. Torres (1999), Manhattan Tap (1992)
- **Hudson Theater,** RumbaTap (2010)
- **Tribeca Arts Center:** Lost Jazz Shrines featuring Phil Woods, Roxane Butterfly (2008)
- **92nd Street Y:** RumbaTap (2007), Kathak Ensemble (2006)
- **La Mama:** RumbaTap (2007)



New York Club Performances

- **Joe's Pub:** RumbaTap (2012, 2007), Dana Leong (2009), Los Muñequitos de Matanzas (2002)
- **Jazz Standard:** TrioNada (2008), Grupo Los Santos (2008)
- **BB King's:** Jazz Nativity (2012, 2011, 2010, 2009)
- **DROM:** RumbaTap (2012, 2010, 2009)
- **Zinc Bar:** Samuel Torres Forced Displacement Band (2013), TrioNada (2010)
- **Cachaça:** The Paul Carlon Octet (2008)
- **Birdland:** Jazz Nativity (2006)
- **Makor:** RumbaTap (2003), Beat The Donkey (2003)
- **Bacchus Room:** Host of regular Jazz and Tap jam (2006)
- **Les Gamins:** Regular Weekly Tap Show (2003)
- **Bacchus Room:** Host of regular Jazz and Tap jam (2006)
- **Les Gamins:** Regular Weekly Tap Show (2003)

National Performances

- **Ordway Center,** St. Paul, MN: RumbaTap Residency & Performance Flint Hills Int. Children's Festival (2013)
- **Cowan Center,** UT at Tyler, TX: East Texas Symphony Orch. (2013)
- **Eisemann Center,** Richardson/Dallas, TX: Plano Symphony Orch. 30th Anniversary Gala (2012)
- **Symphony Hall at DECC,** Duluth, MN: Duluth Superior Symphony Orch. (2011)
- **Galvin Fine Arts Center,** St. Ambrose University, Davenport, IA: RumbaTap Residency & Performance (2011)
- **Concerts On The Hudson,** Weehawken, NJ: RumbaTap (2010)
- **Kennedy Center,** Washington D.C.; Beat The Donkey (2003) Urban Tap (2001)
- **Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival;** RumbaTap (2007, 2005) Jimmy Slyde and Friends (1996)
- **Chicago World Music Festival,** Chicago IL: Beat The Donkey (2003)



- **Smithsonian Institute**, Washington D.C.; Lalo's Urban Myth (2008)
- **Festival International**, Lafayette LA; Beat The Donkey (2004)
- **Wesleyan University**, Middletown CN; Beat The Donkey (2003)
- **Battel Chappel**, New Haven CN; Duke Ellington's Sacred Concert (2003)

International Performances

- **Quebec, Canada**: Orford Festival, Les Violons Du Roy (2013)
- **Kitchener, Ontario**: Center In The Square, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orch. (2013)
- **Tokyo, Japan**: Kokuritsu Olympic Center, Tokyo International Tap Festival (2013)
- **Istanbul, Turkey**: Akbank Jazz Festival - Nardis Jazz Club; International Body Music Festival - Notre Dame de Sion Concert Hall (both 2012)
- **Moscow, Russia**: Durov Club; St. Petersburg, Russia: Jagger Club, (both 2012)
- **Rio De Janeiro**: Rock In Rio & SESC Copacabana (2011)
- **London, UK**: Ronnie Scott's Club (2010), Sadler's Wells, Peacock Theater (1998)
- **São Paulo, Brasil**: Centro Cultural, Centro Cultural da Juventude Ruth Cardoso, Teatro Nair Belo (2010)
- **Berlin, Germany**: Filmbühne am Steinplatz: Jazz ' N Tap (2008)
- **Barcelona, Spain**: Mercat de les Flors: Max Pollak en Vivo (2008)
- **Athens, Greece**: Philipos Nakas Conservatory: Solo Concert (2008)
- **Lefkada Island, Greece**: Founder of annual Rhythm Summit Festival (2007-2014)
- **Riga, Latvia**: International Tap Dance Festival: RumbaTap (2007)
- **Düsseldorf, Germany**: Tap Ahead Festival (2007, 2006, 2003)
- **Bern, Switzerland**: Köniz Castle: Solo Concert (2007)

- **Havana, Cuba**: RumbaTap (2006) (2001) Cuban Tap Festival, Tambo Cuba (2001)
- **Helsinki, Finland**: Feet Beat Tap Festival (2006, 2005, 2003, 2002)
- **Tokyo & Kyoto, Japan**: RumbaTap (2013, 2009, 2005)
- **Vienna, Austria**: Konzerthaus, Guest Soloist (2004)
- **Agadir, Morocco**: Timitar Festival; Beat The Donkey (2004)
- **Talinn, Estonia**: Russian Theatre; Talin Tap Festival (2004, 2003)
- **Berlin, Germany**: International Tap Festival; Solo Concert (2002)
- **Kuopio, Finland**: Kuopio Dance Festival (2001)
- **Lisbon, Portugal**: Cool Heat/Urban Heat (2001)



International Tours

- **Solo Concerts** (1995 – 2013): Austria, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Japan, Latvia, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine
- **RumbaTap** (2004 – 2013): Austria, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Monaco, Switzerland, Turkey
- **TrioNada** (2008, 2007): Austria, Germany
- **Beat The Donkey** (2000 – 2006) w/Cyro Baptista: Belgium, France, Holland, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Switzerland
- **Cool Heat – Urban Beat** (1998 – 2001) w/ Tamango & Rennie Harris: Australia, Denmark, England, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, Portugal, Scotland
- **Feet 2 The Beat** (1997 – 2001) w/ Rod Ferrone: Canada, Colombia, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Venezuela
- **Manhattan Tap** (1992 – 1997): Canada, England, France, Scotland, Switzerland



Films / Documentaries

- **Tap Or Die** (2013) US Documentary
- **Da Me La Mano** (2003) Dutch Documentary
- **La Historia de la Rumba** (2002) Cuban Documentary
- **Como Se Forma Una Rumba** (2001) US Documentary, featured at “Latin Beat Film Festival”, Lincoln Center
- **Latido Latino** (2000) Spanish Documentary
- **The Tango Lesson** (1997) Tap coach for lead actor Pablo Veron

Discography

- **RumbaTap** (2014) Max Pollak
- **Clave Heart** (2013) Grupo Los Santos
- **TrioNada** (2008) TrioNada
- **Roots Propaganda** (2008) Paul Carlon Octet
- **Lalo’s Urban Myth** (2008) Lalo’s Urban Myth
- **Lo Que Somos Lo Que Sea** (2008) Grupo Los Santos
- **Other Tongues** (2007) Paul Carlon Octet
- **Love The Donkey** (2005) Beat The Donkey
- **Cyro Baptista & Beat The Donkey** (2002) Beat The Donkey
- **El Otro Lado** (2001) Syotos Band, members of Tito Puente Orchestra
- **Cool Heat – Urban Beat** (1999) live at Spoleto Festival, Italy

Published Articles

- **Dance Magazine**
 - » *What I love about Tap*: Max Pollak reflects on his favorite moments in Tap history (May 2008)
 - » *Tap Dance Technique* (September 2007)
 - » *Global Tap* (May 2007)
- **Ballet Tanz Magazin**, Germany
 - » *A Brief History of Tap Dance* (2002)

- **On Tap** (International Tap Association Newsletter)
 - » *Making Money To Cabaret With Vaudeville Generations*: Phace Roberts, Rod Ferrone (2001)
 - » *Closing The Gap – Tap Generations*: Buster Brown, Roxane Butterfly (1999)
 - » *Interview with a Tap Diva*: Tina Pratt (1999)
 - » *The Real Jimmy Slyde* (1997)

University Lectures/Residencies (1995 – 2013)

- Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY
- University of Minnesota, Minneapolis & Duluth
- New School for Social Research, NYC
- Australia: Worawa Aboriginal College, Melbourne
- Cuba: Instituto Superior de Arte, Escuela Nacional de Arte; Havana
- Germany: University at Leipzig

Updated as of January 19, 2014

