

NOVALIMA

PLANETARIO 

BIOGRAPHY

Started by four friends from Lima with a shared passion for traditional Afro-Peruvian music and global DJ culture, Novalima stands in the common ground bridging past and future, uniting tradition and innovation.

From their humble start, file-sharing musical ideas and producing their first album in separate countries at the dawn of the internet, Novalima is now a live musical force revered worldwide for breaking boundaries and uniting seemingly irreconcilable genres, communities, and generations. They have created an inspiring movement and revolutionized the music scene in their native Peru by bridging a longstanding divide between the mainstream and the minority Afro-Peruvian community, who have struggled against discrimination and cultural dissolution for generations.

During their career, Novalima has garnered worldwide critical acclaim from mainstream (**NPR, UK Guardian, Wall Street Journal, La Presse, Metro, Billboard**) and underground media (**Giant Step, Remezcla, Sounds & Colors, Nat Geo**) alike, delivered legendary performances around the world at festivals such as **Roskilde, WOMAD, Pirineos Sur, NYC Central Park, Montreal Jazz Festival** and **Chicago's Millennium Park**, earned a **Latin Grammy** nomination for **Best Alternative Album**, and were featured in cult filmmaker **Robert Rodriguez's** hit Mexploitation movie ***Machete***.

While their sound is futuristic and cutting-edge, the roots of Novalima's music reach back hundreds of years. In a far-too familiar tale, African slaves were brought to Peru as early as the 1500s until the middle of the 19th Century, establishing an outpost of the African-Diaspora on the Pacific coast of South America. Over the years, the soul and rhythms of Africa melded with the melodies and instruments of Europe and the Andes. The result is rich musical repertoire that existed for generations on the periphery of Peruvian popular culture.

The founders of Novalima, **Ramon Perez-Prieto, Grimaldo Del Solar, Rafael Morales**, and **Carlos Li Carrillo**, became friends and started playing together in Lima during their high school years, playing a pivotal part in the 80s underground **hardcore punk**, and the 90s **psychedelic/acid-rock** scenes. As children of artists and intellectuals, Ramon, Grimaldo, Rafael and Carlos were well educated and well traveled, and while they listened to traditional Peruvian folk music regularly in family

reunions and in the street, they relentlessly explored new sounds in **Rock, Dub Reggae, Latin** and **Electronic Music**, which became grounds for their own discovery.

During their early experimentations blending Afro-Peruvian sounds with electronica, the four founders were living in different parts of the world. From their homes in **London, Barcelona, Hong Kong, and Lima**, they emailed song ideas to each other. These long-distance recordings resulted in their 2002 debut album, the self-titled **Novalima**.

The reception to the album exceeded their wildest expectations, eventually reaching **platinum sales** status in Peru, and for their next album they invited more Afro-Peruvian musicians to join their recording sessions. The outcome was **Afro**, an album that was released worldwide in 2006 to tremendous acclaim and put Novalima on the international music map. The **London Metro Evening Standard** raved, "*Novalima has more than succeeded in bringing the spirit and soul of Peruvian blues into the 21st century.*" **Afro** held the **#1 spot on the US College Music Journal Latin Alternative and New World Radio Charts** for ten weeks combined.

Soon after *Afro* was released, the founders returned to Lima and invited top Afro-Peruvian musicians to join Novalima making it a true band, setting the groundwork for live musical creation and intensive global touring.

On their 2009 album **Coba Coba**, released on the acclaimed world music label **Cumbancha**, Novalima expanded the critically-acclaimed formula they developed and took their inspiring fusion in new and exciting directions by delving further into the African diaspora and bringing influences from **reggae, dub, salsa, hip-hop, afrobeat** and **Cuban son**. In anticipation of the band's acclaimed 2009 US and European tour, they released **Coba Coba Remixed**, featuring exclusive remixes by top DJs and producers including **Da Lata, Zeb, Faze Action, Seiji, Boozou Bajou, Haaksman**, and more. At the same time, a stunning music video for the band's song "Coba Guarango" was featured on the homepage of YouTube and quickly amassed well over 100,000 plays in 24 hours.

After two years of constant touring, the band gathered in their home studio in Lima to record and mix the album **Karimba** that took Novalima's sound into new places. They introduced both new sounds and traditional rhythms like the **Panalivio, Zamacueca, Ingá** and **Tondero**, while maintaining their distinctive afro and dub sound. Their reputation at home allowed them to work with the top traditional musicians in the city, inviting vocalists **Pepe Vasquez, Rosita Guzman, and Sofia Buitron** as well as guitarists **Roberto Arguedas** and **Felix Casaverde** (former guitarist of **Chabuca Granda**), in addition to members of the live band.

Karimba was released on **ESL Music** (Thievery Corporation) and garnered astounding accolades from **NPR, Giant Step, Nat Geo Music** and more, while also topping the

iTunes World Music Chart and cracking the **Top 10 Billboard World Music Chart**. After the release, Novalima embarked on a worldwide tour that took them to stages in USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Latin American throughout 2012 - 2014.

In 2013 the band released ***Karimba Diabolic Remixes***, through Brooklyn's **Wonderwheel Recordings**, hand selecting some of their favorite remixers including **Seiji** (UK), **Da Lata** (UK), **Jeremy Sole** (US), **DJ Smash** (US), **DJ Sabo** (US), **Thievery Corporation's Rob Garza**, **Nickodemus**, and more to re-interpret ***Karimba*** with their own vision.

During 2014 and 2015 Novalima recorded their newest album, ***Planetario*** slated for release on **Wonderwheel Recordings** on June 16th. The album's name points to Novalima's continued growth and many international connections – much of the album was recorded on tour when they collaborated with top local and international musicians. There is a strong connection to **Colombia** created through a remarkable recording session in **Bogota** organized by members of **La-33** including **Sidestepper** vocalist **Eka Muñoz**, **Pernett** and **La Mamba Negra**. The album also brings in artists from around the world such as **Marc de Clive Lowe** (UK/NZ), **Panko** from **Ojos de Brujo**, and **Kumar** (Cuban rapper based in BCN).

Remixes from the ***Planetario*** are already under way with **Bomba Estéreo**, **Quantic** and **Nickodemus** lined up to put their spin on these new tracks.

Novalima has designed a brand new live show that will debut in **Lima** as part of the country's celebration of 100 years of Afro-Peruvian culture. The band will tour worldwide starting this June.

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