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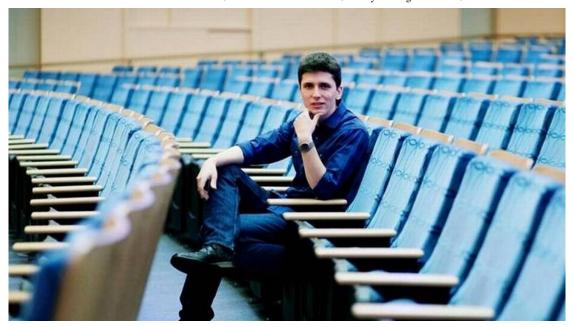
On the Beat

Eric Oberstein scores his fourth Grammy

BY DAVID MENCONI

DMENCONI@NEWSOBSERVER.COM

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Eric Oberstein, on the job at Duke Performances. File photo by Juli Leonard.



Eric Oberstein's Grammy hot streak continues with another Latin Grammy Award, which he won Thursday night.

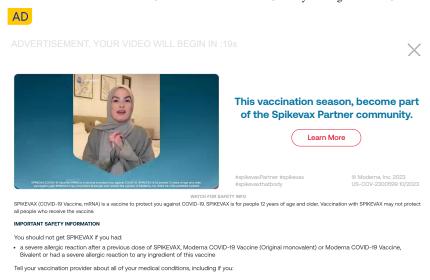
The Durham resident won in the category of best Latin jazz album for "Cuba: The Conversation Continues," which he produced with longtime collaborator Arturo O'Farrill's Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra. This is Oberstein's second Latin Grammy, to go with two regular Grammys for a total of four overall.

"As a kid, I never had dreams or thoughts of this happening," said Oberstein, who is also associate director of Duke Performances. "I didn't get into this for awards or money but because I love the music. Latin jazz and Cuban music is my heritage and my passion. So it's become my side hustle that I do for fun, and because I believe in the work. We've been on a crazy streak the past two years."

Conceptualized as a cross-cultural fusion, "Conversation" brought Cuban and American musicians together to record in Cuba. In fact, Oberstein arrived there on the day in December 2014 that the Obama administration announced that it was renewing diplomatic relations with Cuba.

"That just elevated the whole thing," Oberstein said. "We were in the studio two days later and the energy in the room was amazing. It was a memorable record and I'm proud of it."

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Next up, Oberstein is scheduled to produce a big-band album for Cuban drummer Dafnis Prieto, a 2011 MacArthur Fellow. Oberstein has also been working on an album with Bombadil, a folk-rock group made up of his fellow Duke alumni.

But you won't hear his name called when the next round of regular Grammy nominations are announced on Dec. 6.

"I'm taking a breather this year," Oberstein said with a laugh. "I'm working on other projects right now, but we're in between cycles on all of them."

David Menconi: 919-829-4759, @NCDavidMenconi

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