

Playful Impact: Latin GRAMMY Winning Marta Gomez and GLP Music Collaborate to Boost Spanish-Language Appreciation with Traditional Latin American Songs on *Coloreando Dos*

Colombian-born singer, composer, and arranger Marta Gomez and GLP Music bring a new set of traditional songs from Latin America to follow up on their previous Latin Grammy-winning production.

Designed to encourage language learners and heritage speakers alike, the album showcases the multiple Latin Grammy winner's strengths. "I am more aware than ever of the message and ideas in songs for children," says Marta Gomez, the creative force behind ***Coloreando Dos*** (GLP Music; release: November 2, 2018). This collection of songs in Spanish draws on traditional Latin American rhythms and forms that highlight the fun and beauty of the lyrics.

Along with the album, GLP Music is releasing a songbook with Spanish lyrics and their English translation. Additionally, parents and caretakers of young learners can find dedicated cultural notes for each song at www.glpmusic.nyc

Gomez won her first Latin Grammy with *Coloreando* in 2014, her initial album with GLP Music. Then Gomez became a mother herself and gained new insight and inspiration for music that crosses generational lines and transmits the treasure of folk poetry and song in Spanish.

"From the comments and feedback we got early on, we learned there really is a demand for music that's steeped in cultural stories," explains Angela Jackson, GLP Music founder and president. "It showed us that listeners want and need more releases in Spanish. We knew we had to involve Marta, whose mix of musical prowess and deeply informed playfulness were perfect for the project."

Gomez took up the challenge. Thanks in part to her work with GLP Music, she developed a strong interest in music education and spent more time working with young listeners. "When we approached Marta for the first album, she was excited but had never recorded any children's music before," says Jackson. "Since then, her passion for children's music and educating kids has led her to be part of a nonprofit in Barcelona offering free music lessons. She's a champion of language learning and music education. She really grew into this passion and cares deeply about community."

This passion dovetails with GLP Music's commitment to music as a vehicle for language learning and cultural appreciation, whether listeners are exploring a new language or deepening their love of their linguistic heritage. In an era of global interaction, knowledge and appreciation

are in high demand, and GLP Music strives to give children of all backgrounds increased access to languages and cultures through music.

With these goals in mind, Gomez chose her songs carefully: “I am more aware now of how important it is to sing songs that have a strong and powerful message,” she remarks. “For girls especially because you want songs that are respectful towards women and that do not discourage women from being independent and strong.”

Gomez, however, shows her power and ability to engage, giving listeners fresh interpretations of beloved rounds and game songs, lullabies and ballads. With lush, warm vocals and sparkling guitar strings, with captivating instruments and percussion, Gomez welcomes young and old into the imaginative wonder of childhood.

“The album has a variety of rhythms and song forms. They are from all over Latin America including Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, which we hope will resonate with listeners from a variety of Latin American backgrounds,” says Rex Niswander, GLP Music’s co-founder and head of A&R. “The liner notes give a lot of context and history for the songs for those new to the sounds and styles.” Many songs incorporate fun rhythms like vallenato, as well as fanciful views of everyday life, where nature and people are transformed into colorful characters, from kissing stars to struggling bakers.

The process of song selection was highly personal for Gomez, who often lets melodies percolate before shaping them into complete arrangements. For the traditional songs on this album, “I chose some songs and sang them a little bit at home by myself with the guitar and recorded them. Then when I show them to the rest of the band, I give them complete freedom to explore, to give the songs their own style and heart,” an approach enhanced by Gomez’s close friendship with many of the musicians on *Coloreando Dos*. “That is why the arrangements are created in rehearsals and the studio. Sometimes the songs end up sounding completely different than that first recording I made at home and that is wonderful for me! I get to watch the songs develop and grow so much.”

“We see this project as doing more than helping language learners,” says Jackson. “It’s reflecting the need to understand those different from us, to be able to translate and understand each other, so that we can respect, value and celebrate each other. That mission fuels our work. If we can introduce kids to different languages, cultures and music, we can positively impact their lives and their worlds.”

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