

P U T U M A Y O P R E S E N T S  
LATINAS Women of Latin America

**Totó La Momposina** is a magnificent singer and dancer from Colombia who has earned respect and admiration around the world for the power and spontaneity of her live performances. Drawing on the music and dance of the Colombian Caribbean, her work is informed and inspired by a rich cultural mix that combines elements of African, Native American and Spanish traditions.



On stage, Totó's dynamic repertoire is accompanied by a range of traditional percussion, guitars and wind instruments. Born into a family of musicians spanning five generations, Totó learned to sing and dance as a child. As a young woman, she traveled from village to village researching the various local rhythms and dances. She has been performing professionally since 1968, and has presented her vivacious and inspiring stage show for appreciative audiences around the world. One of her many career highlights was performing in Stockholm, Sweden for the Nobel Prize ceremony of countryman and fan Gabriel García Márquez,



**Mariana Montalvo** was forced into a life of exile in 1974, living in France since the coup that brought the military regime of Augusto Pinochet to power. Her connections to her roots have remained steadfast, however, and Montalvo provides fresh interpretations of the traditional music of Chile. With influences from the *nueva canción* tradition of sophisticated and powerful music based on folkloric song forms, Montalvo's music descends from the work of legendary Latin American singers such as Victor Jara, Violeta Para and Mercedes Sosa. For many years she was a member of the popular group Los Machucambos, which is famed throughout Europe for their faithful interpretations of South American traditional music.

Mariana's original compositions feature instantly accessible melodies and unique instrumentation such as the South American charango (a type of small guitar), quena (pan pipes) and traditional percussion. Her Putumayo album *Cantos de Alma*, is overflowing with engaging melodies, lushly poetic Spanish lyrics and the exotic flavors of South America.

**Belô Velloso** is the niece of two of Brazil's most popular musicians, Caetano Veloso and Maria Bethânia, so it is not surprising that she was raised in a very musical environment. As a child in the state of Bahia, the Brazilian region with the most profound African cultural influences, Belô was exposed firsthand to the work of some of the greatest names in MPB, or popular Brazilian music, as well as samba, bossa nova, and other traditional Brazilian styles. She moved to Rio at the age of 19 to pursue a career in music, and was helped by her famous aunt and uncle through guest appearances on her first album. In a review of her second CD, the New York Times praised her work saying "Belô touches the melodies as if they come straight from the heart."



Artist Biographies

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