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spoken.



**PALABRAS DULCES
PALABRAS AMARGAS**

(sweet words, bitter words)

A FILM BY VOCES PRIMERAS, LLC

Palabras Dulces, Palabras Amargas

Sweet Words, Bitter Words

Year: 2009

Length: 45 min.

Producer : Voces Primeras, LLC

Directors: Linda Garcia Merchant, Maritza Nazario

Poets : Alicia Tellez Vega, Martha Cartagena, Martiza Nazario, Evon Flores Barrera, Milka Ramirez, Maria Del Carmen Calderon, Marixa Rojas, Zoraida Ortiz

Director of Photography : Steven Lemieux Jordan

Still Photographs: Kathryn Haviland

Editor : Andrew Dena, Steven Lemieux-Jordan

Music: Various Artists

Released: May 2009

Synopsis

'Tonight we present something marvelous'. In doing so, we tell the stories of the women of Dulce Palabras. Stories of urban life, intergenerational connections, poetry of the people, growing older with a bang, empowered sexuality and domestic violence. Seven original works performed by their authors, this film touches on the universal understanding that we are not alone; that life is a shared and relative experience.

A 45 minute documentary featuring the work of La Dulce Palabra, the multicultural, multigenerational spoken word ensemble that began as a collaboration between Amigas Latinas and En Las Tablas Performing Arts Group. Featuring the work of Alicia Tellez Vega, Martha Cartagena, Martiza Nazario, Zoraida Ortiz, Evon Flores Barrera, Milka Ramirez, Marixa Rojas and Maria Del Carmen Calderon.

Screenings

Women's History Month, Center on Halsted, 3.27.2010

Orlando Hispanic Film Festival, Official Selection, Orlando Florida, 9.19.2009

6th Annual Barrio Arts Festival Institute of Puerto Rican Arts & Culture (Historic Humboldt Park Stables) 9.19.2009

Texas Film Premier, M.A.L.I. Women's Film & Performance Arts Festival, Austin International Youth Hostel, Austin, Texas 5.28.2009

Premier, 2009 Sor Juana Festival of Performing Arts, National Museum of Mexican Art Chicago, Illinois 5.15.2009

Amigas Latinas

Founded in 1995, Amigas Latinas is a nationally recognized GLBTQQ organization whose mission is to empower Latina lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning women by providing a safe environment, personal growth, support, education, and advocacy to impact family, friends and the larger communities we live in. Amigas Latinas' Vision is to celebrate who you are with pride and acceptance, without boundaries or limitations, fearlessly and unapologetically.

En Las Tablas Performing Arts

Located in the northwest side of Chicago and servicing the Chicago community at large, En Las Tablas Performing Arts is a not-for-profit community arts organization that offers a range of performing arts classes whose mission is to provide an open and affirming space for aspiring dancers, poets, actors, musicians and singers of all ages. Founded in 2006 by Maritza Nazario and Milka Ramirez.

The Poets



Maritza Nazario

Maritza was born in the countryside of a small town in Puerto Rico, surrounded by trees, streams and mountains. She was always regarded as the "Drama Queen" of the family. Not satisfied with her artistic accomplishments in Puerto Rico she came to Chicago to pursue her dreams. She holds a B.A. and M.A. in theater and has extensive experience as a playwright, poet, actress and theatrical director. Nazario is enjoying a successful run of the musical/theatrical piece, entitled "Gracias, Rafael". based on the life of famous Puerto Rican composer Rafael Hernandez. Maritza is the executive director of En Las Tablas Performing Arts, a not-for-profit, performing arts community organization, in the Hermosa neighborhood in Chicago co-founded with Milka Ramirez. She is also the original artistic director of La Dulce Palabra Spoken Word Ensemble.

Milka Ramirez

Milka Ramirez was born in Puerto Rico and raised in Chicago's Humboldt Park area in a family of twelve lively, loving and "Colorful" characters. She is employed with Chicago Public Schools as a School Social Worker in the Humboldt Park area. Milka holds a bachelor's degree from Mundelein College and a Master of Social Work degree from Chicago State University. She is a doctoral student at the University of Illinois, Chicago-Jane Addams School of Social Work. Her research interest is in the area of Homophobia and she writes prose and poetry an act of political activism. She is a core member of La Dulce Palabra and co-founder of En Las Tablas Performing Arts in Hermosa Park.

Martha Cartagena

Martha Cartagena is a native of Puerto Rico, migrated to Chicagoland area with family during childhood; a Spanglish child raised within borders. Describes her self as a "proud and out Lipstick Dyke with an insatiable passion for life, poetry, music, drumming and women." Determined to dismantle the silences thru Spoken Word, "poetry and writing have become my outlet, my tool for re-birth."

Alicia Tellez Vega

Alicia Tellez Vega is a Mexican raised on the southwest side of Chicago who uses her creative energy to express her sexuality, humanity, and sensuality through words and dramatic performance. As a professional advocating for the rights of child abuse victims, dramatic performance has provided her a constructive outlet to release the negative.

Evon Flores Barrera

Evon Flores Barrera, born and raised in Chicago's Humboldt Park always knew she had a strong desire to express herself through writing and performing. Evon embraces her Afro-Taino roots and liberal sexuality which she passionately executes through the art of spoken word.

Maria Del Carmen Calderon

Maria Del Carmen Calderon was born in Arecibo, Puerto Rico and works in social services. She began writing poetry nine years ago. The driving force that inspired her to write was capturing the multitude of life experiences, captivating unique moments in life and visualizing the beauty of our existence and connection to other beings and the earth.

Marixa Rojas

Marixa Rojas was born in Puerto Rico and raised in Chicago. She grew up in Humboldt Park within a small family, and being the middle child spent a lot of time being alone. She started writing in high school to fill the void. This in turn helped her to find the true joy expressing her inner feelings and the art of poetry. Through the support of the women of La Dulce Palabra she was able to conquer one of her fears, speaking in public. She can now share her one of her many creative sides, which is writing poetry.

Zoraida Ortiz

Zorayda Ortiz, an athlete Rugby player for Chicago North Shore Women's rugby team has a degree in Biological Sciences with a Minor in Women's Studies. She likes to play with words and the concept of manipulating words in a formal fashion. You can find aspects of Rugby, Science, and Politics in her poetry. Z is a Gardener and Entrepreneur when she's not fighting the city's implementation of the "Pink Line," or daydreaming of a day when commuters get cash transfers back on C.T.A. buses

The Producer

Producer: Voces Primeras, LLC

Started in June 2006, Voces Primeras, LLC, is a production company dedicated to creating and distributing documentary-style features of pioneering Latinas to the educational, political and retail markets. The goal is to provide resources that expand the understanding of the 60s and 70s in our collective American history—research not available through traditional channels and in danger of becoming extinct because of the lack of documentation.

Voces has produced three documentaries, 'Little Giant: Margaret Cruz' (2007), 'Las Mujeres de la Caucus Chicana' (Women of the Chicana Caucus) 2007 and 'Palabras Dulces, Palabras Amargas' (Sweet Words, Bitter Words) 2009.

Present productions include the 'Chicana Por Mi Raza: Uncovering the Hidden History of Chicana Feminism (1965-1985)' . Sponsored by the Department of Women's Studies & Program in American Culture, University of Michigan, this ambitious project is a web-based archive that documents the development of Chicana feminist thought through an interactive timeline, digitized archival materials, filmed oral histories, and secondary sources.

Voces is also producing its first narrative film, written and directed by Garcia-Merchant, entitled 'Four in Grace'.

The Co-Directors

Maritza Nazario

Maritza was born in the countryside of a small town in Puerto Rico, surrounded by trees, streams and mountains. She was always regarded as the "Drama Queen" of the family. Not satisfied with her artistic accomplishments in Puerto Rico she came to Chicago to pursue her dreams. She holds a B.A. and M.A. in theater and has extensive experience as a playwright, poet, actress and theatrical director. Nazario is enjoying a successful run of the musical/theatrical piece, entitled "Gracias, Rafael". based on the life of famous Puerto Rican composer Rafael Hernandez. Maritza is the executive director of En Las Tablas Performing Arts, a not-for-profit, performing arts community organization, in the Hermosa neighborhood in Chicago co-founded with Milka Ramirez. She is also the original artistic director of La Dulce Palabra Spoken Word Ensemble.

Linda Garcia Merchant

Born and raised on Chicago's West Side, Linda Garcia Merchant's experience growing up during the 1960s and 70s with a mother active in both the Feminist and Chicano movements was pivotal in shaping her views today. Influential activists that included many of her mother's friends surrounded her and, absorbing all the discussions on politics, history and world events and standing by her mother's side at protests or political conventions, she began to cultivate her own voice at quite a young age. She developed a strong conviction for activism and civic responsibility. And, having experienced some of the most exciting social and political events, Linda was inspired to capture on camera the Latino influence of those times.

Linda received a Bachelor of Science, with honors, in advertising/design/photography at Western Illinois University. She was voted Volunteer of the Year by the Partnership to End Homelessness in 2005. She is a current member of the National Association of Latino Independent Producers, National Association of Latino Arts and Culture, Amigas Latinas, Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (Women Active in Letters and Social Change) and the National Women's Studies Association.

The Crew

Cinematographer: Steve Lemieux-Jordan

Steve Lemieux-Jordan has led a multifaceted life and career that began in England, before moving on to France, and then the United States. From his hands-on apprenticeship in Chicago 's largest commercial photo laboratories, to founding his own video production company, to joint ownership of Evanston Photographic Studios - Steve's quest for excellence and cutting-edge technical expertise has been the hallmark of his entire life. Steve most recent accomplishment is as author of "Kevin the Brave", an imaginative work of mystical fiction that reflects the depth of his creative talents.

Still Photographer: Kathryn 'Katie' Haviland

Originally from Lakewood Ohio, Katie began her photographic training at Lakeland Community College in Mentor, Ohio and completed her bachelor's degree in photography and masters degree in Interdisciplinary Art at Columbia College in Chicago. She has spent time shooting abroad and has sold many images from her travels in numerous multi-artist shows.

Katie has spent the last decade or so in many different aspects of graphic design and is currently an adjunct instructor of photography and design at the International Academy of Design & Technology, Chicago.

Educational Consultants: Lourdes Torres, Ph.D. Associate Professor, Latin American and Latino Studies Program and Vincent de Paul Professor, DePaul University Maria Oropeza PhD Candidate, University of Washington, Maria Cotera, PhD, Associate Professor, Program in American Culture Department of Women's Studies, Director, Latina/o Studies Program

Production Team: Evelyn Segura, Adriana Rivera, Victor McCallin, Nicholas Roberson, Lily Lemieux Jordan, and Maddy McNear

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