

Amigoe- Curacao- Dutch Antilles August 29, 2009



If it is up to May Peters (right) she will take bolero singer Gryssel Ramirez, with whom she presented her book in Amersfoort, right along to Curacao for a few gigs.

Visions of a fiery woman

From the 43 letters of ¡Música, Maestra! - Letters from Puerto Rico the reader can taste what the world looks today, especially in the culturally rich Puerto Rico. With the precision of a studio artist during a recording, May Peters records verbal and nonverbal communication of students, housemates, car salesmen, flight attendants and fellow passengers during her spirited journey through life. It could have been easily more than 100 letters from this jazz virtuoso and conservatory teacher who has played many times during the Curacao Tumba Festival, as her father hadn't passed away in 2001. Communication with him - and the feedback that he gave his daughter - always was an extra incentive for Peters to climb into the pen.

Erudite

But don't take it wrong: because of the wild-spontaneous in her way of being of this top musician she is not less erudite, sophisticated and hyper intelligent. The way she spots cultural-historic, colonial-political, psychological and behavioral aspects of music in everyday life and know how to distinguish original appoints is both profound and humorous.

An example of the depth of Peters shows her preparation to teach music to go in Puerto Rico: graduated as a performing artist she undertook training as a teacher Spanish; Dutch, French and English was not enough to really citizens in Puerto Rico. It is a fitting reward for her efforts that the giants of salsa and Caribbean jazz consider her as one of them. Curacao could see that with its own eyes now when Peters worked with the Colombian salsa phenomenon Alberto Barros.

God Save the Queen

Nine out of ten passengers complains if they have to take off their shoes at the Immigration Department of an airport. Peters is the one who is even happier: (letter 1) I am happy when I take my shoes off at the security gate. I would prefer to spend the rest of the trip on socks. I am telling this to a long, old Englishman who says to share that feeling with me. I just had to wear my old red leather slippers from the Van Baerlestraat, even if they are worn.

Two Indian security young males seem not to want to crawl along my laptop. My plane leaves in half hours. Must show him my ticket. I do not have a watch with me. At last one decides, as slowly as possible, to search my bag. The mouthpiece bag is carefully examined. 'What's that?' 'Oh, my God!' I am frightened. 'That's my mouthpiece, I am a musician.' Buzzing on my lips I play the English national anthem. The elderly English couple next to me laughs. The trombone cream of thirteen years old and the vaseline for the slide he takes to be sure.

Naïve

At the Conservatory (in Puerto Rico) I was received this morning with all deference by Marco Pignataro, the Italian head of the Jazz and Música Caribena. In the first room where I walked, the bass teacher was teaching. Oh, you must be the new trombone teacher, said the teacher in English. I whistled like Javier. My Venezuelan buddy Javier Plaza taught me Spanish from the slum. I discovered that only years later when I could understand it! 'I have to do that', he reacts.

'Please speak Spanish, please. I am here to learn Spanish, I say with aplomb.

'Why the hell did you come to Puerto Rico? Okay, besides the fact that it is a beautiful island with nice weather and beautiful men.

To tell you the truth. I'm here for the salsa.' 'Oh, yes, you must be here!'

Hours later I discover that I was talking with Eddie Gomez. The famous jazz bass player Eddie Gomez, who played with Michael Brecker for years. If I recognize him on a poster, I immediately get a Tadaaa! Feeling. Oh, oh. But, at that time I thought I was dealing with an anonymous bass teacher. At the conservatory everyone calls me 'maestra' (teacher) even my own colleagues. They are so

sensitive to status!

It is not surprising that for a sensible person like Peters time is different. So she sighs: I became four years older now recent months. The last life-limiting action was to get my trombone in a gig bag to the States intact. It's wise to be silent about the mental state of the trombonist. Will I die early of heart failure like my father in 2001?

If you want to know how to deal with someone who does not say what she edits prior censorship but out flaps, this book is a godsend.

Text: Sharlon Monart

Photo: May Peters Maestra ¡Música!

Vocation and Passion

Saturday, August 29, 2009 ¡Música, maestra! will be introduced officially in Amersfoort. The positive view on life of May Peters (1964) and her need to gather and disseminate knowledge is to be found on every page of this book. As the blurb states, this involves a Limburg girl who wanted to be a missionary at age ten (she corresponded with a missionary sister in Africa), at its fourteenth journalist (she interviewed teachers and wrote comic books and radio plays) and her fifteenth musician.

Vocation, passion and virtuosity: it's all packed into this attractive woman in each of its tantalizing letters now some of books handy to assist in ¡Música, Maestra! - Letters from Puerto Rico.