

May Peters :

Limburgian latina and world musician

In front of me is sitting a woman, full of fire. She expresses herself in 'Limburgs' (the language of South Holland), then she talks again about the Gooi (the center of Holland), exuberant gestures she makes articulating words like 'caramba' you're hearing. When we talk about the destination Puerto Rico her eyes are sprinkling. Talking about music she sits in her chair cheerfully and her feet automatically are making rhythmic movements. 'In Puerto Rico I live 100 meters from the Atlantic Ocean. I hear the everlasting roar of the ocean, while I drink my first cup of coffee on my balcony. After my warming up program for trombone, I go downstairs to meditate on the beach, just around the corner.' This is May Peters, a Limburgian Latina, a dynamic world musician with an indomitable motive. A woman of extremes, with an inner balance who is driven by passion for music and people.

*M*ay Peters was always a merry misfit. Merriment coupled with a good dose of creativity is in her genes. No wonder that since her childhood all kinds of things flashed through her head and possibilities came along her way, which she took eagerly. Only five years she conjured up the first note of a flute. Hardly three later she started with a horn; a cor. Who or what is a 'cor'? Afterwards she played in the local harmony orchestra. Fedded by the Limburgian culture she got plenty of opportunities to set the right tone with her sounds. At the Carnival, during parties, everywhere where music was been played, May was present. When she was ten, she wanted to become a missionary, being fourteen she wanted to be a journalist and at fifteen a musician. On that age she choose, not an obvious instrument especially for a woman, the trombone. And May knew for sure. She wanted everything! She saw live as an outstretched hand hiding beautiful chances. May took them and became a musician, journalist and actually also a bit of a missionary.

HIGH FLIGHTS

Running through her curriculum you see that May's life has high flights. She completed her music study Electronic Organ in 1987 at the Conservatory of Maastricht, continued a study Trombone Jazz at the Conservatory in Hilversum. She gave workshops in the Netherlands, the Caribbean, the United States and South Africa. She worked as a teacher Spanish at the University (Hogeschool) of Utrecht, Tilburg and Eindhoven. She is a correspondent and writes for www.caribemagazine.nl She performed with famous orchestras on national and internationally renowned stages in 21 countries. In the Netherlands and far beyond with the Cubop City Big Band and the Ronald Snijders Extended band, to mention a few. And much more names and festivals, like the Glenn Miller Memorial Orchestra. Besides all these names, all these qualities we end in Puerto Rico and find May Peters in all her strength and purity. 'In Puerto Rico I taught at the Conservatory. But above all I made music with the people. If I hear instrumental sounds, there is an inner force who directs me towards it. And then the party really is going to begin. Together with rumberos from the disadvantaged neighborhoods, salsa stars on the Fiestas Patronales, car drivers with the rosary at the rearview and a gun in the glovebox, with jíbaros in the mountains, on the spontaneous bohémias with artists, playing music with simple people of the street and feeling the exciting sounds of bomba, plena, salsa, rumba like meridians through your body, that's the life I chose'. It is clear that May is popular on quality concerts, but her happiness does not exist of matter or luxury.

ADVENTURES AS A MECHANIC

'Well, I have indeed a considerable experience and received robust trainings. But if you ask me to follow my passion I should have had training after all to be a car mechanic earning my money.

So we naturally come to her adventures which she had in Puerto Rico and had to endure in her seventeen year old Olds Mobile Cutlass Supreme. When her father, Jan Peters, received a picture in 1994 he described the car as a vehicle that already would have been disappeared for years of a trailer park in Limburg. Now, sixteen years later a Lincoln Town Car played an important role in her life. On the most impossible moments the 'limousine' had to be fixed and on the moment that she had to prepare a goodbye dinner for friends the car didn't start. The same Lincoln Town Car took her to dear people which whom she became long life friends. She cherishes all these encounters, the same like she still embraces life in Limburg. Those two worlds she connected in a creative way in a book which appeared recently.

LETTERS FROM PUERTO RICO

¡Música, maestra! a book with a colored cover. You see the sun and that's definitely the fact when you are going to read the book. More than 250 pages, letters which May wrote to her family in Holland while living in Puerto Rico. The love for the country, the chaos, the exuberant fun, the characteristics of people in a small community, the slow working bureaucracy, the real life and especially the love for music are bundled together as a symphony on paper. In the book we read how the sky blue colored Lincoln abandones her from time to time, how she has to ticker on the side of the road.

Interestingly she tells about rich musical traditions, about exotic residents of the island, what she experiences as a music teacher at the Conservatory. As a lover of good food and drinking she enjoys the irresistable local kitchen and fortunately she leaves a lot of recipes, so you can hold the cheerfull atmosphere in which this book was written.

May Peters lives in many worlds. Dynamics is part of her life; music is in her hand luggage. At this moment she still resides in Berkelaar and lives next to her father's farm. It will not last long then she will fly away again. Caramba! she'll say. Where to, is not clear yet. For those looking for a few sunny hours reading this publication is highly recommended. The book is for sale in the Dutch bookstores or ordered by www.maypeters.com Who knows one even manages to get a signed copy.