

## Latin Music Series Coming from PBS in January

Written by Robert ID4447  
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Thru strategic Partnerships with People en Espanol and The Smithsonian Latino Center, a BBC/WGBH project Launches On Air, Online, In Print, and in the Community – a new Series premiering Jan. 21, 2009.

The series, 'Latin Music USA', will be broadcast to audiences in both English and Spanish

The series features memorable characters and vibrant music and dance showcasing the impressive range of Latin music in the US, including, among others, Salsa greats Willy Colon and Marc Anthony; the Latin-inflected sound found in much of sixties Rock and Roll from the Drifters to Motown to the Rolling Stones; the genius of Texas accordion player Flaco Jimenez; Carlos Santana; Linda Ronstadt; the legendary Chicano rock band Los Lobos; megastars Gloria and Emilio Estefan; Ricky Martin and Juanes; Miami hip hop rapper Pitbull; and Reggaeton performers Daddy Yankee and Tego Calderon. The life experiences of these and many other unforgettable artists will reveal how Latinos have reinvented music in the United States and forged new identities within this country, while never losing sight of their own rich traditions.

From Latin Jazz and Mambo to Salsa, Tejano, Chicano Rock, Latin pop, and Reggaeton, Latin Music USA tells the story of the rise of new American music forged from powerful Latin roots and reveals the often overlooked influence of Latin music on Jazz, Hip Hop, Rhythm and Blues and Rock and Roll - and on all of American culture. It's a fresh take on our musical history, reaching across time and across musical genres to embrace the exciting hybrid sounds created by Latinos, musical fusions that have deeply enriched popular music in the US over more than five decades.

Produced by a world-class production team at WGBH and the BBC, Latin Music USA "invites the audience into the vibrant musical conversation between Latinos and non-Latinos that has helped shape the history of popular music in the United States," says series producer Adriana Bosch. The multimedia project is anchored by a four-hour documentary series that premieres on January 21, 2009 on PBS stations nationwide.

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“Latin Music USA has the potential to be a cultural milestone, advancing Americans’ understanding of Latino rhythm and music as a dynamic player in shaping American society past, present and future,” said John F. Wilson, senior vice president and chief television programming executive, PBS. “And music, the universal language, communicates this phenomenon in a most irresistible way.”

### Strategic Partnerships

PBS co-producer WGBH is also proud to announce an online and in-magazine partnership with People en Espanol, the top-selling Hispanic magazine in the United States, and its website PeopleEnEspanol.com. The partnership will include exclusive editorial features and content across both brands. “The relationship with People en Espanol has allowed a remarkable extension of the series. Exclusive online content on the People en Espanol website and in the magazine will give both visitors and readers a sneak peek of interviews and concert footage,” says Margaret Drain, vice president national programming WGBH. “We are thrilled to be working with them on this project.”

Latin Music USA has also joined with the Smithsonian Institution’s Latino Center to develop programming and a celebration of Latinos and Latino culture in the United States, centering on an event on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at a Smithsonian venue in Washington, DC. The program will kick off with a symposium about Latin Music USA and include program producers, musical artists, musical historians and others who will talk about the film and highlighted artists.

“The storyline of musica Latina—its history, diversity, challenges, triumphs, and connections to contemporary social issues—is as engaging as its sound, inviting us to explore more deeply the American Latino experience,” says Daniel Sheehy, Ph.D., acting director of the Smithsonian Latino Center.

“Our vision for this project has always been ambitious—to extend to multiple platforms in both English and Spanish—to invite as many people as possible to celebrate Latin music and the rise of Latino culture in the United States,” says Elizabeth Deane, series executive producer. “The collaborations with both People en Espanol and the Smithsonian’s Latino Center have certainly brought our goals to fruition.” In keeping with the multi-media, bilingual project approach, Latin Music USA is planning major events for the project in LA, DC, NY, and is working with PBS stations to develop Latino heritage events around Latin Music USA in a number of communities leading up to the series premiere. Also, the project is currently in dialogue with other media partners in the arenas of radio, Spanish-language television, and music print and online.

## **Latin Music USA Series**

The upcoming 'Latin Music USA' is a story about American music. Fusions of Latin sounds with jazz, rock, country, rhythm and blues - music with deeper roots and broader reach than most people realize.

The series will air in two parts:

### **Wednesday, January 21, 2009 (9:00pm-11:00pm) on PBS**

Program One: The first program traces the rise of Latin Jazz and the explosion of the Mambo and the Cha Cha Cha as they sweep the US from East to West. Latin Music infiltrates R&B and rock & roll through the 1960s.

Program Two: Puerto Ricans and other Latinos in New York reinvent the Cuban son and the Puerto Rican plena, adding elements from soul and jazz to create Salsa, which becomes a defining rhythm for Latinos the world over.

### **January 28, 2009 (9:00pm-11:00pm) on PBS**

Program Three: In California and across the Southwest, a new generation of Mexican Americans, raised on rock, rhythm and blues surrounded by country and western music reaffirm their cultural identity in Tejano, Chicano rock, and Latin Rock.

Program Four: The last program in the series looks at the Latin pop explosion of the turn of the century, focusing on the success of artists like Ricky Martin, Gloria Estefan and Shakira in the English-language market in the context of an increasingly Latinized US. As studios focus on star-driven pop, Latino youth gravitates toward urban fusions - Spanish hip hop, rap and Reggaeton - while rising numbers of Latinos entering the US create new markets for Mexican regional music and Rock en Espanol.

More information about PBS and this series can be found at <http://www.pbs.org> , one of the leading dot-org Web sites on the Internet.

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\*People en Espanol was launched in 1996 as a special issue, and today has become the top-selling Hispanic magazine in the United States. Published 11 times a year, People en Espanol's guaranteed circulation is 500,000 and reaches over six million readers every month with its editorial mix of Hispanic and popular entertainment, fashion and beauty trends, and compelling human-interest stories. People en Espanol delivers original editorial content that captures the values, contributions and impact of today's Hispanics in the U.S. For daily news, photos, blogs, exclusive behind-the-scenes video and celebrity scoops, visit [www.PeopleEnEspañol.com](http://www.PeopleEnEspañol.com) - now also available in English.

\*About Smithsonian Latino Center

The Smithsonian Latino Center is a division of the Smithsonian Institution that ensures Latino contributions to art, science and the humanities are highlighted, understood and advanced through the development and support of public programs, scholarly research, museum collections and educational opportunities at the Smithsonian and its affiliated organizations across the United States and internationally.