



Salsa Talks: A Musical Heritage Uncovered

Mary Kent

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Salsa Talks is a celebration of this music, in the words of the artists, promoters, arrangers, bandleaders, and singers who have lived to the rhythm of the clave beat. These "insiders" talk about the music from their own unique perspective.

With a contents page that reads like a Who's Who in salsa music, you can skip from young Celia Cruz's first singing contests to her challenge of acceptance by fans as La Sonora Matancera's new singer; India's transition from dance-hip hop music to her first encounter with cigar-smoking salsa legend Eddie Palmieri. You can flip to Joe Cuba's memories of the Palladium days and how Cheo Feliciano's voice soared under his leadership. You'll cry when Cheo relives his most difficult moments battling drug demons and rejoice when his fans embraced him again after rehab. You'll learn how the Fania All Stars were formed and why this seminal group has played such an important role in salsa history. You'll hear about royalties, or lack of same. Where the term salsa came from. What is the clave. The real story behind the Buena Vista Social Club. Music and religion. The seedy side of the business. What it takes to be a musician. New York's contribution to salsa music. Marc Anthony's stage fright. The panorama stretches from New York to Cuba, to Puerto Rico, to Colombia and Venezuela. When and where they were born, their musical influences, their successes, their failures. As actor Andy Garcia said in his endorsement, this book is "A treasure trove."

The 416 page hardcover coffee table book is beautifully designed in full color. Three level index, bibliography, glossary.

Mary Kent has taken over 300 original photos, adapted artists' stories and the salsa music scene, and distilled them into an entertaining, riveting, lively discourse with an impact comparable to the live music experience. Each page recounts personal stories of triumphs, explanations of musical terms, anecdotes and highlights of moments in history. Together they paint a fascinating landscape of salsa's musical heritage. The artists bare their souls and reveal their strengths, their weaknesses, their fears, their aspirations, their disappointing moments, their musical feats.

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