

*"Black and white, wild and tender, a balance between the duality of the forces of nature,"* are the words used to describe Chicago pianist, composer and educator Liza Micelli's musical works. (Ana Teresa, *El Nuevo Día*, Puerto Rico)

Liza Micelli has always been interested in humanity and our interconnectivity. Her genre-bending music seeks to combine a myriad of contrasting influences into one cohesive sound, occasionally treating us to her sweet unassuming vocals. Following a fervency for the Afro-Caribbean sound, her curiosities lead her from Chicago to Puerto Rico at the age of 21. After studying at the prestigious Conservatorio de Música de Puerto Rico, she would record her well received album *La Gran Dictadora*, co-produced by mentor and acclaimed Latin pianist Luis Marín, in collaboration with guest artists Richie Flores, Pedro Perez (Gilberto Santa Rosa), Jimmy Rivera (Batacumbele) and Manolito Rodriguez.

Liza began playing piano by ear at the age of three, writing songs with sister and fellow musician Dina Micelli. After noticing her inclination for improvisation at age 12, her piano instructor recommended she explore jazz studies. She would grow up studying with the great Chicago educators Skip Green, Peter Saxe and the late multi-percussionist Rubén Alvarez.

Liza's career has been as versatile as her musical interests, having the privilege to play with celebrated jazz and Latin musicians Eddie Gomez, Elias Lopez, Cheo Feliciano, Jerry Medina, David Sanchez, Batacumbele, Richie Flores, Manolito

Rodriguez and pop artists Ardnaxela, Viva Nativa, Sister Nancy, and Moha (musical director) among others. She has been invited to present at educational clinics around the U.S. and Latin America.

Liza's skills as a pianist and performer would begin a five year career as an on-screen keyboardist for Fox's hit show *Empire* under Lee Daniels, Sanaa Hamri, Danny Strong and Debbie Allen. Her unique teaching style continues to draw her to the screen as a personal coach for actors such as Anthony Fleming of Starz's *Power Book IV: Force*. She's shared the screen with people like Patti LaBelle to Alicia Keys and has enjoyed further study and mentorship with the world renowned pianist, composer and educator Danilo Perez, saxophonist Tony Malaby and Kenny Werner in conjunction with the Berklee Global Jazz and Effortless Mastery institutes.

Be on the lookout for Liza's next musical project, which examines the creative influence of First Nations people on the origins of Black American music.

In Liza's own words, "The musical and social gifts I received in PR and during my studies at the Berklee Global Jazz Institute continue to inform my perspective and message as a creative and citizen of this global community."