

The creative class

Hot in Miami:  
Michelle Bernstein

The personal legend

50 years of bossa nova

Dudamel baton rocks L.A.



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## The new Latin face at LA's Walt Disney Concert Hall

Gustavo Dudamel hasn't worked a day in his life and doesn't intend to start in 2009, even as he takes over as the music director for the Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestra. For Dudamel, every day is a play day, as it has been since he was a kid growing up in Barquisimeto, Venezuela. Back then — only two decades ago — he would line up his toy soldiers, assign them instruments and lead his imaginary ensemble through the most intense passages of Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov and Shostakovich.

At age 15, he took the helm of the Simon Bolivar National Youth Orchestra in Venezuela and became a conducting sensation. It was there that his passion ... no, his absolute joy of music came bubbling forth and created his trademark directing style. Dudamel took command of the world stage in 2004 — at age 23 — by winning first place in the Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition in Germany, a contest that sifts out the best up-and-coming classical talent: It was his first time leading a professional orchestra.

On Sept. 21 of this year, still a kid in so many ways, yet a giant within elite musical circles, he steps up to the podium at L.A.'s famed Walt Disney Concert Hall for a five-year stint with one of the best orchestras in the

country. He is 28 years old.

With a mane of curly black locks that often fly in a blur, a flair for dramatic expression, arms that seem as if they will become unattached and a smile that drowns audiences with charm, Dudamel is his own international brand. He is mesmerizing.

With such a charismatic personality at center stage, one might forget the music altogether, but Dudamel is among the first to point out that the conductor is only a small part of any performance. An orchestra is a community where everyone plays an important part, and the conductor's job is merely to serve as a bridge between the composer and the musicians. His job demands humility.

One of Dudamel's first projects in Los Angeles will be setting up a music program for youths similar to the one in Venezuela. Jose Antonio Abreu founded the National System of Youth and Children's Orchestras of Venezuela in 1975. Abreu began with 11 students and volunteer teachers. Today, there are more than 200 Venezuelan youth orchestras, and the best of the musicians are seated in the Simon Bolivar National Youth Orchestra.

On a grander scale, the program tries to act as a magnet for kids from poor neighborhoods who are at risk



*At age 28, Venezuela's Gustavo Dudamel takes over the L.A. Philharmonic.*

of becoming involved with drugs or crime. Those who wholeheartedly attach themselves to the orchestras are proven to have greater chances of living a better life. Dudamel intends to reach out to the same kinds of at-risk kids in Los Angeles.

"The music saved me. I am sure of this," Dudamel said on "60 Minutes." "With all these bad things around you, you are exposed to these things, very close. The music gave me a way to be far of these things."

If you don't plan to be in L.A. anytime soon, you can watch Dudamel on YouTube, or pick up Dudamel's album "Fiesta," which showcases Latin American classical composers from Argentina, Venezuela and Mexico.



## Former c-store owner now runs energy powerhouse

A 1976 high school graduate from Stone Mountain, Ga., with no college plans and no immediate job openings, Livia Whisenhunt saw an ad in the paper for a convenience store that was being sold in the area. Two hundred fifty dollars down and some

creative financing bought her the title and ownership. From making sandwiches behind the counter to figuring out how much wholesale fuel she needed, Whisenhunt did it all. But when someone came along six months later and offered her a \$2,000 profit, she took it.

Her entrepreneurial spirit kicked in once again in 1985 when she launched her own business. Today, she is the president and CEO of PS Energy Group Inc., an Atlanta-based company that provides business, industry and government with energy and transportation solutions. A top 50 diversity-owned business, PS Energy Group provides transportation fuels, emergency fueling and fleet management services, including etrac™, a wireless telematics solution that improves productivity, profitability and the quality of the environment through asset monitoring and vehicle tracking.

With sales well over \$185 million, Whisenhunt's leadership skills have earned her numerous awards, including being named one of the top 100 Latino entrepreneurs by PODER360° in 2008. And she still has half her career left.



*Nouvelle Vague in concert at Rockefeller Music Hall in Oslo, Norway.  
Photo by Martin Stabenfeldt*

## Brazilian beats

2009 beats a steady rhythm toward another new year, yet little has been mentioned about the 50th anniversary of Joao Gilberto's groundbreaking album, "Chega de Saudade." On one hand, it's understandable. A laid-back yet pulsating musical genre like bossa nova is easily lost in a world of techno-rap, pop-factory tunes and merengue. But, if you are a jazz buff or a lover of all things Brazilian, you know that Gilberto's 1959 album ushered in a new era of international acclaim for Brazilian artists, and that, to this day, bossa nova is often heard unwinding in the background when audiophiles are in need of relaxation.

Gilberto and composer Antonio Carlos Jobim were able to create an art form that transcended traditional Brazilian sambas. The artists ushered in a highly innovative sound that also turned out to be highly addictive, much to the delight of Brazilian record producers searching for the next big idea to push record sales. Perhaps it was no small coincidence that at the time, Elvis was remaking the music industry in the Northern Hemisphere.

In the United States, jazz front men Charlie Byrd and Stan Getz fell in love with bossa nova and began incorporating it into their own budding repertoires. Subsequently, Byrd, Getz, Jobim and Gilberto worked on a Grammy-winning collaborative: "The Girl from Ipanema" was an international smash hit, and decades later, the Library of Congress would add it to the National Recording Registry. The tune is an icon of bossa nova's unique musical style, which has the ability to mix intimate and soothing lyrics with a driving percussion and an invigorating bass line.

Bossa nova has hung around and found popularity with a diverse mix of contemporary international artists. Lisa Ono, born in São Paulo and later a resident of Japan, has more than 20 bossa-nova-themed albums. Nouvelle Vague of France draws from a variety of styles arranged bossa nova style. Shakira and Dave Brubeck have also paid their tributes to the sultry Brazilian sound. Bossa nova releases in 2009 include Diana Krall's "Quiet Nights" (Verve) and Eliane Elias' "Bossa Nova Stories" (EMI).

## World-record feats

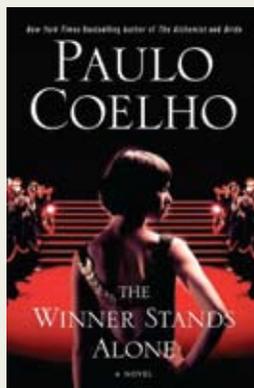
"The Alchemist," Paulo Coelho's literary gem first published in 1988, has been translated into 67 languages. According to the 2008 Guinness Book of World Records, that is the translation record for any living author. Coelho's most recent novel, "The Winner Stands Alone," hit bookshelves last year. It marks a resting point in a two-decades-plus journey that has transformed the former songwriter (and tortured political prisoner) from Rio de Janeiro into a philosopher of life with an international following.



*Paulo Coelho, photo courtesy the artist*

At the heart of Coelho's philosophy is the idea of Personal Legend, unique to all, a calling from birth, and always in danger of being buried under the avalanche of life's demands. "It's what you have always wanted to accomplish," writes Coelho. "Everyone, when they are young, knows what their personal legend is. At one point in their lives, everything is clear and everything is possible. They are not afraid to dream, and to yearn for everything they would like to see happen to them in their lives. But, as time passes, a mysterious force begins to convince them that it will be impossible for them to realize their personal legend."

Yet, not everyone will reach this point of self-awareness and fewer still will have the fortitude to change their lives in order to fulfill their legend. Criticism and fear are just two of the obstacles that stand in one's way.



Coelho knows that journey well. Before achieving international fame, he had to overcome a myriad of obstacles. As a teenager, he was given electric shock treatment in a psychiatric hospital, a place he was taken to by his parents who thought his rebellious nature was a sign of madness. Later, he was put in prison for alleged subversive activities against the Brazilian dictatorship (authoring political cartoons) and subjected to physical torture.

Coelho's spiritual awakening, one that ended the life of a self-described hippie, came in 1986 at the age of 38. He walked the Road to Santiago, a spiritual pilgrimage on the Iberian peninsula, and reconverted to Christianity. He would later describe this experience in his first book, "The Pilgrimage," published in 1987. The following year, "The Alchemist" was published.

Visit the [www.paulocoelho.com](http://www.paulocoelho.com) for more information.



*"Sassy Diva" and "Congo Beat" by Maria Dominguez*



## Rompiendo barreras (Breaking boundaries)

National Hispanic Heritage Month celebrates the intricacies of cultural music, dance, food and art in the Latino community. Our three featured artists speak fondly of the love for their culture and how that love cannot be separated from their very existence, especially as it pertains to their passion as artists. The distinct art tapestries of these artists come together full circle. They become integral contributors in providing a glimpse into the worlds in which they live. The common thread shared of proud heritage and the boldness that is reflective of community is indeed timeless.

### Maria Dominguez

Maria Dominguez acquired her bachelor in fine arts from the School of Visual Arts. Her public artist career began in 1985 while serving as an intern for the Citiarts mural-making workshop. Since that time she continues to wear many hats as artist, artist educator and arts administrator.

Dominguez has been the recipient of distinguished commissions that include the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in 2002. "El-Views" a permanent installation at the Chauncey Street Station in Brooklyn, N.Y., received the "Excellence in Design" award by the New York Municipal Society in 2004. She was also officially invited by the city of Milan, Italy to create a mural installation for the government building at the Triennale de Milano. Dominguez's beautiful murals adorn many buildings throughout the boroughs of Brooklyn and the Bronx as well.

Dominguez's personal works have been included in numerous solo and group shows here in the United States, Japan and Italy. Her artistic efforts have earned her awards from The National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council for the Arts and New York Foundation for the Arts.

Dominguez has worked with The Guggenheim Museum's "Learning through the Arts" program and she was head of the Education Department for the Latino Museum,

El Museo del Barrio, for seven years. Dominguez is currently artist in residence with Young Audiences of New York.



*"Trio" by Adrian "Viajero" Roman*

Dominguez's passion for jazz and Latin music inspired her Hot House music series. "Conga Beat" provides visualization rhythms of Latino-Caribbean music. "Sassy Diva" pays homage to Sarah Vaughn and "Saxsy" portrays the seduction of the saxophone. Of her photos of live performances, Dominguez notes, "Musicians seem to be immersed by traveling color spotlights and are transformed almost into caricatures — diffusing their faces and highlighting others." These photos led Dominguez to use deep contrasting colors to depict those color spotlights and portray "the intensity the musicians apply to their instruments to bring us the pleasure of hearing it."

### Adrian 'Viajero' Roman

Adrian "Viajero" Roman is a mixed-media artist whose work demonstrates "that one's life is nothing more than a voyage of infinite possibilities." He states, "Viajero" evolved from a straw hat and Guayabera wearing elderly traveler, into the philosophy of my work. The term "Viajero" is



*Maria Dominguez*



a representation of our journeys and my purpose is to carry the consciousness of timeless being, in the midst of a time-bound experience.”

Born and raised in New York City, Roman received specialized lessons at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and attended The Arts Students League of New York with his older brother, Fernando. He received his degree in fine arts from the New World School of Art, in Miami, Fla. and studied graphic design at NYIT in New York City.



Adrian Roman

Roman’s canvas includes various types of wood. From his travels to Puerto Rico, he learned that wood is one of the oldest mediums used there. “The grain on each piece of wood represents its own distinct fingerprint or path.” With the artwork “Trio,” the strength of those words ring true. “Trio” is one of many works dedicated to tobacco field workers and cigar rollers that Roman states “are many times forgotten.” His “main objective is to get all people to



identify with and appreciate the varied cultural traditions and lifestyles that exist within communities.”

“New Orleans Sunshine” and “Celebration” by José Acosta



Adrian Roman has traveled throughout the Caribbean, Mexico and numerous cities across the United States. His paths in life have been dedicated to the pursuit of simultaneously exposing himself to a wide range of learning experiences and cultures and sharing that information and knowledge with those he encounters.

Roman is said to be an “emerging artist,” yet his strong artistic images and philosophy might soon be considered by some as already emerged.

**José Acosta**

La familia has always been the most important source of José Acosta’s artistic inspiration. Born in Cuba and immigrating to the United States as a toddler, his paintings depict his personal history and surroundings. “I am very proud of my Cuban heritage as well as my American citizenship,” he boasts. “I paint the things that I know and that have meaning to me. I paint from my heart expressing a little hope and happiness.” Apparently that hope and happiness was felt by the judges at the Dutchess County Fair in 2004 when Acosta’s participation in his first exhibit won him best in show.



José Acosta

“Bright colors, swirling figures and vibrant energy characterize my paintings,” says Acosta. One of his two paintings, “New Orleans Sunshine,” was created after a trip to New Orleans in February, 2009. “I was amazed by all the beauty. New Orleans is an inspiration to the world because of their successful efforts to rebuild their great city and overcome all odds.” His second piece, “Celebration,” is all about the celebration of life and Jose’s full enjoyment of life through music, dancing, art and food. Permanent collections of Acosta’s work are located at the University of Pennsylvania, Touro College, Lancome and United Cerebral Palsy.

Acosta hopes his paintings inspire others to strive for their dreams and he envisions “a future world where we will all live in peace and plenty.”



## Ubiquitous, gelatinous flan



Great recipes for flan, choco-flan and crème caramel are online, or try R.J. Rawley's recipes at [flan.holiday.com](http://flan.holiday.com).

Flan is found in recipes as far back as ancient Rome. It was during Roman times that domesticated chickens were first kept for laying eggs. The Romans, with eggs in surplus and consulting the Greeks' knowledge of cooking, developed new recipes, one of which turned out to be a custardly concoction known as flan. It was originally a savory dish (not sweet, but aromatic and pleasing to the palate). The Romans concocted many dishes that we might find interesting, such as eel flan. They also had a very nice sweet flan that was flavored with honey.

The Roman Empire was destined to fall and on its ruins arose Medieval society. Yet the transition between ancient times and medieval — though often violent — was somewhat contiguous. Flan survived barbarian invasions (and perhaps pacified a barbarian or two). It surfaced as a generally sweet dish but still based on the old idea of mixing creme and eggs to form a custard. Our word for flan actually is derived from the Latin, "flado" (meaning flat cake), which became "flaon" in Old French.

Interestingly, flan found two outlets. In Spain it became a sweet custard generally made with caramelized sugar. The mixture of milk, eggs and sugar was cooked slowly in crocks and relished by many. Besides the Roman influence, the Moors introduced citrus and almonds which are commonly found to flavor flan. Once Christopher Columbus found America the rush to the riches of the region brought the richness of flan with it. Nearly everyone in Central and South America loves flan in its various custardly forms. It has become especially associated with Mexico where flan is exquisitely produced in the kitchens of rich and poor alike.

Flan dishes may be made of glass, Pyrex, porcelain, stainless steel and even have a non-stick teflon coating, though we do not recommend Teflon. The key is to have the inside of the dish be smooth so the flan drops easily out of the pan in one piece when the dish is turned over onto a plate.

The key to good flan is using pure cane sugar, precision in following instructions and meticulousness in attention to the process. What this means is watching the flan closely to remove it from the heat when it is done. You will know the flan is ready when an inserted knife comes out clean.

Rawley has tested flan recipes from all over the world. His favorite variations, including asparagus flan, are at [flan.holidaycook.com](http://flan.holidaycook.com).



## Yearning for yerba

Along the Parana-Paraguay river system in South America, Indians have long harvested the leaves of certain holly trees to make a hot, invigorating brew. These days, drinking yerba maté is both invigorating and stylish, not to mention a good way to boost your health. The all-natural elixir, which certainly has its share of antioxidants and array of vitamins, is claimed to fight cancer, improve digestion, help the heart and quicken the mind without the side effects of caffeine, among other things. Or you could just drink it because it's satisfying.



The proper way to drink yerba maté would be in a gourd and through a wooden straw, or you can buy a stylishly crafted maté and bombilla (straw with a filter on the bottom end) online at any number of sites.

Yerba maté is best steeped in hot, but not boiling, water, else the taste becomes bitter. Find great recipes on the Web.

### Yerba maté energy pudding

From "Thrive." Serves 2

- 2 bananas
- 1 cup blueberries
- 2 1/2 ounces dark chocolate
- 1/2 cup raw, almonds, soaked
- 2 teaspoons finely ground yerba maté
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt

Process everything in a food processor and serve.

## Hot in Miami: Cuisine á Latiná



*Chef Michelle Bernstein infuses passion and energy to create her style of "luxurious, approachable food."*

Magazine and "Best New Restaurant 2006" by Food and Wine Magazine.

Bernstein, who earned a James Beard award last year for "Best Chef South" and is frequently seen cooking up a storm on cable food shows, is clearly onto something.

As is usually the case with exceptional talent, Bernstein took to the kitchen early in life and completed her first study of culinary art at her mother's side. "I grew up in a Latin-Jewish household," explains Bernstein as she huffs her way through 95-degree air while walking her dog. "Everything that was important was discussed around the dinner table. It's a family tradition." At the time, the family was working on a strategic plan to prepare the Passover feast. "The question is always how to dazzle everyone, again," she explains, sounding much like a detective trying to crack an elusive code. "I'm thinking Florida crab soup, a nice mix of heirloom tomatoes, mozzarella and ricotta and wagyu beef steak."

Hold it ... wagyu beef steak? Bernstein is also known for using locally grown, seasonally available ingredients, and cattle farms aren't exactly pervasive when flying into Miami International Airport, particularly cattle farms stocked with cows that moo in Japanese. Turns out Bernstein was able to find such a farm just up the road in Ocala. "It's hard sometimes to buy locally, but it can be done," she says. One hundred percent of her ingredients are, in fact, grown in the Sunshine State.

Earlier this year, Bernstein created the Miami chapter of Common Threads, an after-school program she discovered in Chicago that teaches underprivileged kids ages 8 to 11 to cook, socialize and eat healthy one recipe at a time. And just a few months ago, Bernstein and her husband/business manager, David Martinez, opened their third restaurant in Palm Beach's Omphoy Ocean Resort. You can find many of Bernstein's recipes in her latest cookbook, "Cuisine á Latiná."

### Caribbean chicken fricassee, cont'd

Heat a dutch oven or other large heavy pot over medium heat, then add the oil and let it get nice and hot. Meanwhile, season the chicken pieces with salt and pepper and dredge them in the flour. Working in batches of 2 or 3 pieces at a time, add the chicken to the hot oil and cook until golden on both sides, about 5 minutes per side. As they are done, remove the chicken pieces from the pot and set aside on a plate. Spoon off and discard about half the fat from the pot.

Add onion, bell pepper and garlic to the pot and cook, stirring, until the vegetables are softened but not browned, about 5 minutes. Stir in the ginger, jalapeño, allspice and wine. Bring to a simmer and simmer until the wine is reduced by half, 6 to 7 minutes. Stir in the stock, Worcestershire, soy sauce and ketchup. Return the chicken to the pot, cover and simmer until chicken is cooked through, 30 to 40 minutes, removing the lid to stir the sauce every 5 or 6 minutes.

### Caribbean chicken fricassee Serves 6

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 chicken, cut into 10 pieces
- Kosher salt & freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 medium Spanish onion, finely chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 1-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and coarsely chopped
- ½ jalapeño chili, with seeds
- Pinch of ground allspice
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- ¼ cup thinly sliced scallions, white and green parts
- 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh cilantro (leaves and stems)
- 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter



If you can see it, remove and discard the jalapeno from the stew (it might have broken up during the cooking, which is fine). Stir in the scallions, cilantro, parsley and thyme. Taste and correct the seasoning if necessary. Stir in the butter. (The fricassee can be cooled and refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 2 days. Reheat gently before serving.)

Divide the stew among 4 dinner plates or shallow bowls and serve.



Members of the Afro-Cuban All Stars, a pulsating ensemble of international acclaim led by Juan de Marcos González (middle, top with beret)

## The creative class

Frequently lost in the recognition of our Latino influences are those who come from Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Colombia and are born of the African Diaspora. Afro-Hispanics make up 45 percent of the population in Brazil, 62 percent in Cuba, 26 percent in Colombia and 84 percent in the Dominican Republic. In the United States, the number of Afro-Hispanics is roughly 6 million to 8 million people.

Multiple layers of African, Hispanic and sometimes Taíno identity often present difficulties when navigating life in a country obsessed with race and ethnicity. "Conversations on race and culture in this country ... are too often limited to black and white and ... erase Dominicans," explained Junot Diaz in an interview with Milca Esdaille. He also noted, "I live in Harlem and am often challenged by African-Americans: 'Hey, why can't you folks just speak English?' Some are upset when we're unwilling to define ourselves merely as black."

To make matters even more confusing, a tiny fraction of the Afro-Hispanic population has never set foot in a Latin American country. Instead, they hail directly from the African continent. Equatorial Guinea is Africa's only Spanish-speaking country.

While their number within the general population is small, Afro-Hispanics make a significant impact on American culture through literature and the arts, sports, music and gastronomy. Diaz, who recently won a Pulitzer Prize for "The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao," joins Norberto James Rawlings and Georgina Herrera as accomplished literary artists who draw heavily from their Afro-Hispanic backgrounds.

Yet while some Afro-Hispanic authors are beacons of success, others struggle to have even a single work published in English. "Donato Ndongo-Bidyogo has written

critically acclaimed novels, more than 2,000 articles and compiled literature anthologies from his native Equatorial Guinea, but that is still not enough to get his novels published in English," writes Victoria Okoye in the journal *Adelante* from the University of Missouri. "Despite a small, loyal following, Ndongo and other Afro-Hispanic authors receive little notice in the wider world of Hispanic literature."

Afro-Hispanic Review, a publication from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., explores the depth of Afro-Hispanic literature and culture in its bi-annual journal. You can find out more about this under-promoted class of writers at [www.afrohispanicreview.com](http://www.afrohispanicreview.com).

The list of athletic superstars who share Afro-Hispanic roots is robust. It includes world-champion boxers, soccer players and champions from track and field. IZiane Castro Marques, born in São Luís, Maranhão, Brazil, is a 6-foot-tall point guard for the Atlanta Dream of the Women's National Basketball League. A versatile, all-around player, she averaged nearly 10 points per game in the 2008 season. Albert Pujols, born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, won last year's American League Most Valuable Player award, the highest individual honor in Major League Baseball.

Music wouldn't be the same without Tego Calderon, a rap and reggae artist from Santurce, Puerto Rico, Kiki Sanchez, a jazz pianist from Lima, Peru, or Juan de Marcos González, the musician behind one of the most infectious sounds ever born in the Caribbean. González is the leader of the Afro-Cuban All Stars and also helped produce The Buena Vista Social Club. Both groups have toured internationally and can be sampled on YouTube.

It helps to remember, particularly during a broad-based celebration such as Hispanic Heritage Month, that Spanish-speaking peoples are in no sense homogenous, and that the best way to really find out where people are from is the old-fashioned way: Talk to them, one on one.