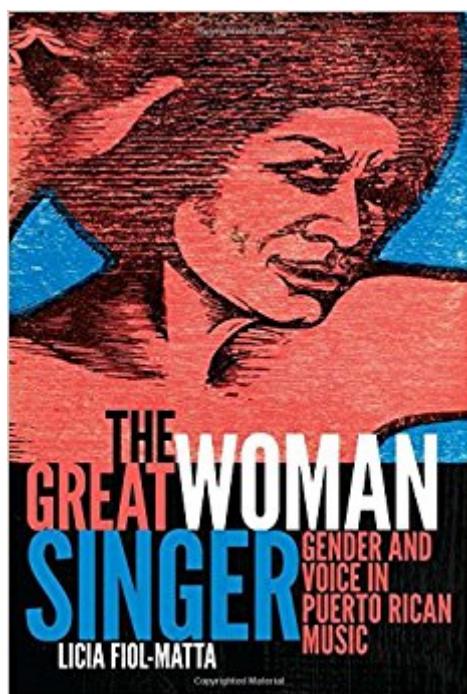


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The Great Woman Singer: Gender And Voice In Puerto Rican Music (Refiguring American Music)



Synopsis

Licia Fiol-Matta traces the careers of four iconic Puerto Rican singers—Myrta Silva, Ruth Fernández, Ernestina Reyes, and Lucecita Benítez—to explore how their voices and performance style transform the possibilities for comprehending the figure of the woman singer. Fiol-Matta shows how these musicians, despite seemingly intractable demands to represent gender norms, exercised their artistic and political agency by challenging expectations of how they should look, sound, and act. Fiol-Matta also breaks with conceptualizations of the female pop voice as spontaneous and intuitive, interrogating the notion of "the great woman singer" to deploy her concept of the "thinking voice"—"an event of music, voice, and listening that rewrites dominant narratives. Anchored in the work of Lacan, Foucault, and others, Fiol-Matta's theorization of voice and gender in *The Great Woman Singer* makes accessible the singing voice's conceptual dimensions while revealing a dynamic archive of Puerto Rican and Latin American popular music.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"In this rigorous and original read, Licia Fiol-Matta puts a welcome nail in the masculine script dominating conversations about Latin popular music and Puerto Rico's musical history. Her critical biographical approach and her archive of the voice provide new standards for interdisciplinary research, while her treatment of female pop stars such as the giant, but largely

obviated Lucecita Benítez, is simply moving and beautiful." (Arlene Díazvila, New York University)"In this book Licia Fiol-Matta brilliantly engages the complex politics that unfold in the performances, vocal nuances, lives, and times of four extraordinary Puerto Rican female pop singers. The intense 'thinking voice' in her writing re/sounds the conceptual density of the singers she investigates, whose complex figurations are primarily approached through a psychoanalytic study of the voice. Her detailed historical research and analytical incisiveness uncover the many crucibles of the vocal archive generating a rich acoustic tapestry that constitutes a remarkable transformation of feminist, queer, and colonial music scholarship." (Ana María Ochoa Gautier, author of *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia*)

Licia Fiol-Matta teaches in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at New York University. She is the author of *A Queer Mother for the Nation: The State and Gabriela Mistral*.

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