



# La Voz de Esperanza

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- We advocate for a wide variety of social, economic & environmental justice issues.
- Opinions expressed in La Voz are not necessarily those of the Esperanza Center.

## La Voz de Esperanza

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Articles due by the 8th of each month

## Policy Statements

\* We ask that articles be visionary, progressive, instructive & thoughtful. Submissions must be literate & critical; not sexist, racist, homophobic, violent, or oppressive & may be edited for length.

\* All letters in response to Esperanza activities or articles in La Voz will be considered for publication. Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.

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## Pecados y Milagros

was Lila Downs 7<sup>th</sup> studio album. Among other themes, the album focuses on the violence that plagues Mexico. She believes that her music can help express the anger, frustration and fear that has wreaked havoc on Mexico.

She has transformed the heartache that she has felt about the drug-related violence into music. Singing traditional songs of Mexico has allowed for a release of that pain. The addition of new songs reinforces the comfort of having a strong cultural identity that withstands and repels this violence.

The music of Pecados y Milagros offers a much needed refuge for Downs and her audiences, particularly in Mexico. To reinforce that refuge, she turns to the humble sights of strength and decency that nurture the souls of Mexicanos daily and incorporates these into song — like that of women who grind maize and make tortillas. Of this she says, “*I’m looking for the heroines and heroes of my time — one of them, I composed a song about — the women who make tortillas — they are the strength of our country and they work with their hands the sacred element of our sustenance in all of the Americas: corn.*”

This issue of La Voz de Esperanza is very much in tune with the themes that Lila has worked on with her music. Being from Oaxaca and having a mother who is indigenous, she has always prioritized the indigenous, issues of immigration and border issues. Recently, she began to speak out publicly against domestic violence. The first article in this issue (p. 3 & 4) is an exclusive to La Voz. *Silent Victims, Hidden Crimes: Immigrant Victims of Violence* (p. 8-10) by Glenaan O’Neil of The Texas Civil Rights Project. It focuses on immigrant women and the violence they often experience that keeps them under the control of abusive spouses for fear of being deported or losing their children. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the rights of migrant women are discussed.

On another level, this issue also addresses violence against children in *Ending Corporal Punishment: Why You Should Never Spank A Child* by Amy Wright Glenn. Patricia Castillo of the P.E.A.C.E. Initiative suggested the article to people interested in pursuing the theme of spanking for Domestic Violence Awareness Month that occurs in October. The broader issue of violence against children is a subject I hope to explore in future issues.

Violence against La Madre Tierra is also addressed in *Fracking in the Eagle Ford Shale* (p. 18 & 19) by Alice Canestaro-García and in *March Against Monsanto* (p. 15 & 16) by Cynthia Kurkowski. The latter is a report on a recent worldwide march against GMOs that are destroying the production of the earth’s natural foods and plants.

At times, when Lila Downs begins a concert, she will make an offering to La Madre Tierra with a copita de mezcal. She is a strong advocate of Indigenous efforts to defend Mother Earth. The Puentes de Poder community school of the Esperanza will explore the topic of The Rights of Mother Earth in a summer school series. It will bring prominent mestiza thinkers to the Esperanza to educate us on this global movement. Find the complete schedule on page 20. Tributes, poems and announcements round out the rest of this issue.

Lila Downs continues in her quest to work for social and cultural justice in her own music-inspired way. And we, here at Esperanza, continue, in our way, to work for social justice and cultural preservation. It will be wonderful to join forces with Lila Downs at the 2014 concert at the Majestic Theater, here in San Antonio. For more on Lila see pages 12 and 13. Hope to see you there to welcome back, once more, our now Tejanita, Lila Downs. ♦

**ATTENTION VOZ READERS:** If you have a mailing address correction please send it in to [lavoz@esperanzacenter.org](mailto:lavoz@esperanzacenter.org). If you want to be removed from the La Voz mailing list for whatever reason please let us know. La Voz is provided as a courtesy to people on the mailing list of the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. **The subscription rate is \$35 per year (\$100 for institutions).** The cost of producing and mailing La Voz has substantially increased and we need your help to keep it afloat. To help, send in your subscriptions, sign up as a monthly donor, or send in a donation to the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. Thank you. -GAR

**VOZ VISION STATEMENT:** La Voz de Esperanza speaks for many individual, progressive voices who are gente-based, multi-visioned and milagro-bound. We are diverse survivors of materialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, classism, violence, earth-damage, speciesism and cultural and political oppression. We are recapturing the powers of alliance, activism and healthy conflict in order to achieve interdependent economic/spiritual healing and fuerza. La Voz is a resource for peace, justice, and human rights, providing a forum for criticism, information, education, humor and other creative works. La Voz provokes bold actions in response to local and global problems, with the knowledge that the many risks we take for the earth, our body, and the dignity of all people will result in profound change for the seven generations to come.