

# CLAUDIA GÓMEZ

A photograph of Claudia Gómez, a woman with dark, curly hair, smiling and sitting on the floor. She is wearing a light green, off-the-shoulder top and black pants. She is holding a red acoustic guitar. The background is plain white.

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Claudia Gómez has a long and fruitful musical career that started in San Francisco twenty-five years ago, where she earned a reputation as one of the most graceful and moving singer-songwriters of the San Francisco Bay Area. Her starkly beautiful lyrics - intensely honest, insistently personal - float elegantly on waves of lush harmony and supple rhythm, delivering an experience that is at once ancient and entirely original.

Her mastery of the American jazz idiom, combined with her fluency in the broad spectrum of Latin American traditions and her flawless voice, have allowed her to transcend the conventional boundaries of genre to create a music universal in its appeal. The San Francisco Chronicle called her "one of the best singers in town"; the San Francisco Examiner called her "a Bay Area treasure"; and she has entranced audiences from London to Bogotá to Tokyo with her dazzling performances.

**“ Claudia Gómez is not a singer who interprets easy music, nor is she looking to seduce immediately. Her art and intentions are more profound than that and there is only few people who can perceive it through the elaborate arrangements and the versatile mastery of her voice ”**

Cesar Pagano Villegas – Colombian Music Journalist.

Born into a musical family in Medellín, Colombia - at the feet of the Andes, between the rainforests and the Caribbean - Claudia began playing guitar at the age of twelve. She made her performance debut at age 14, and by the time she was 18 had begun touring her native country with an all-female group called Cuarteto Ellas. After extensive periods of study and performance in London and Colombia - during which she absorbed the musical heritages not only of Latin America (Cuban son, Brazilian samba, Colombian cumbia) but of Europe as well (particularly folk and rock) -

Claudia settled into the fertile artistic soil of the Bay Area, where she quickly established herself as a central figure in the Latin music community. In subsequent years she has continued to expand and strengthen her skills with arrangement and composition, mastering the American art form of jazz and merging it with her rich international background and tremendous vocal talents to develop a unique musical identity.

In San Francisco, Claudia performed alongside the masters of jazz and Latin American music, including Toninho Horta, Tuck & Patti, Kenny Rankin and Alex de Grassi. In 1995, Claudia became a member of the vocal- percussion ensemble Crosspulse, with whom she travelled nationally and internationally. Claudia has performed regularly at premier Bay Area venues such as Yoshi's Nitespot, the Great American Music Hall, the Kuumbwa Jazz Center, Kimball's, and the Noe Valley Ministry. She has played major music festivals throughout California, including the San Francisco Jazz Festival, the Monterey Jazz Festival, the Russian River Jazz Festival, the San Jose Jazz Festival, Festival at the Lake, and the Filoli Jazz Series, among others.

In San Francisco, Claudia recorded three albums as a solo artist: ***Claudia Canta Brasil (Arete Records, 1989's)***, ***Salamandra (1992, Clarity Audio Recordings)*** and ***Tierradentro***, originally released by Green Linnet Records in 1996, although now Tierradentro is an independent recording.

Claudia left the Bay Area in 1998 to search for her music and poetry roots in Spain, where she lived until 2002. There she played with various Latin American musicians, among them, Gladston Galliza (from Brazil), Pavel Urkiza, from Cuba, Antonio Serrano, from Spain, Orlando Sandoval, from Colombia, and with them she recorded her fourth album *Vivir Cantando*. In 2002 she moved back to Colombia to go deeper into her music traditions and from there she travels the world, presenting her unique and personal vocal and guitar interpretation of Colombian musics as well as her own compositions.

Upon the returning to her native Colombia, in 2004 Claudia records ***Majagua***, considered by many to be one of the best albums of Colombian music to come out in that year.

Having Colombia as her home base since 2002, Claudia continues to travel around the world performing her own music or representing Colombia in various settings: United States, Mexico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Spain, England, Holland, France, Germany and Japan, among others.



In 2009 Claudia released ***Arropame que tengo frio***, an exquisite album with a selection of 16 Romances from the Atrato River (Colombia) which won a grant from the Colombian government and it's the joint result of a doctoral research by Alejandro Tobón and Claudia's desire to recognize and appropriate vocally other musical models present in the cultural diversity of Colombia.

At the end of 2010, Claudia puts out a challenging album with solely her guitar accompanying her voice and her own compositions. Twelve songs that speak of love to nature, love to animals, love to brothers, family and friends. ***Claudia Gomez Tal Cual (Claudia Gomez As Such)*** is an intimate and acoustic delivery of her most inner feelings, a dialogue between her voice and her guitar. No editing, no technical tricks, a live recording, truly unplugged.

**CLAUDIA GOMEZ TAL CUAL (2010)**

A Solo album with her voice, her guitar and her compositions. Twelve songs about love, nature and friends. Recorded in Medellin, Colombia. Mixed and mastered in Madrid, Spain.

**ARROPAME QUE TENGO FRIO (2009)**

“This CD book sets in context the history of romances in the Atrato river culture and presents a selection of 16 songs from more than 250 chants compiled during 7 years of research. Accompanied by guest musicians, Claudia Gomez's voice becomes “black romance”, wrapping up our souls”

Alejandro Tobon, researcher and author of the 100 page booklet that accompanies this CD



**Produced by:** Claudia Gomez and Alejandro Tobón

**Musicians:** Claudia Gomez, Pavel Urkiza, Alejandro Tobon, Guillermo Lozano, Ludmil Vasilev, Veronica Ramirez, Rodrigo Henao

**Recorded in:** Medellin, September 2009

**Recording Engineer:** Luis Jaime Angel

**MAJAGUA (2004)**

“Majagua is a culminated art piece where talent, work, folklore, innovation and love is mixed”

Sara Araujo Castro, El Espectador.

Original compositions and traditional Colombian music in a jazz context. Recorded in Colombia with the best traditional and contemporary musicians at the time: Puerto Candelaria, Hugo Candelario, Antonio Arnedo, Orlando Sandoval, Guafa Trio and many others.

**VIVIR CANTANDO (2000)**

“Like a reconciliation with the night, like the rain on a Sunday night is this new work from Colombian singer songwriter Claudia Gomez... A voice that seduces and takes us to the collapsing of the subtlest romanticism and caresses our ear with music that sounds like Madrid, like Latin Jazz, and like our mountains”

Ana Victrola, Revista Diners.

**Produced by:** Claudia Gómez and Orlando Sandoval

**Musicians:** Claudia Gómez, Jerry González, Pavel Urkiza, Gladston Galliza, Nanda Kumar, Orlando Sandoval, Antonio Serrano, Alain Pérez, Salvador Cortés, Yuri Nogueira

**Recorded in:** Madrid, January-June 2001



**TIERRADENTRO (1996)**

“The deceptive simplicity of this pristine South America –in Northern California recording– with only graceful guitars, delicate percussion, occasional background voices, acoustic bass and minimal synthesizers whispers as augmentation- allows the utterly gorgeous voice of Colombian native Claudia Gomez to float in all its warm, radiant beauty through 14 tunes”

Derek Richardson, The San Francisco Bay Guardian

**Produced by:** John Santos and Jo Menell

**Musicians:** David Belove, Jeff Buenz, Carlos Oliveira, Wayne Wallace, John Santos Claudia Villella, Rosa Granadillo

**Recorded in:** Oakland, California, 1992



**SALAMANDRA (1992)**

“The sincerity of this performance is enhanced by the extraordinary steps taken in the recording process. Only two microphones were used to capture these intimate, small group sets, and several sound compromising steps typical in mass-produced CD projects were eliminated. The result is a recording of exceptional quality. As a vocalist, Gomez is worthy of comparison to such nueva canción exponents as Mercedes Sosa and Soledad Bravo”

Mark Holston, Hispanic



**Produced by:** Michael Spiro

**Musicians:** Jeff Buenz, Brian Pardo, Marcos Silva, Rebeca Mauleón, David Belove, Michael Spiro, John Santos, Edgardo Cambón, Eric Rangel, Rubens Moura, Angela Silva, Ismael Rodríguez and Claudio Amaral

**Recorded in:** San Francisco, California, 1992

**CLAUDIA CANTA BRASIL (1989)**

Claudia's first commercial album, this is a live recording of a concert at Kimball's Jazz Club in San Francisco, on April 1989. Recorded by Bud Spangler for **KJAZZ**, See's Candies, it is a vivid memory of a great concert, superb recording quality, and a document of Claudia's 'Brazilian phase' in homage to the Brazilian musicians who inspired her through out all her musical career. Outstanding San Francisco Bay Area musicians accompanying Claudia: Ricardo Peixoto on guitar, Gary Brown on bass, Frank Martin on Keyboards, Dennis Broughton on percussion.



**“Honey-voiced .... Her voice came across with clarity and warmth .... One of the best vocalists in town”**

Jesse Hamlin, San Francisco Chronicle

**“Although her abilities as a guitarist and arranger shine brightly ... it is something more elemental that will captivate you. Her beautiful lyrics and profound messages combined with the gorgeous simplicity of her voice provide a forum for the shedding of a tear ... the opening of a flower ... the baring of a soul ... the joy of hope and love. It is precisely what we need in this world today”**

John Santos, Latin American historian, performer, and producer

**“Claudia’s voice, whether presented in English, Portuguese, or Spanish, is as rich as a steaming cup of dark Colombian brew”**

Mark Tolson, Hispanic Magazine

**“The caressing quality of that voice belies its sure strength; what you remember are not the flashy surges of power but the way she stretches a note as if it’s saltwater taffy, pulling it into a pure steady line with just a hint of vibrato at the end”**

Chiori Santiago, East Bay Express

**“Fusing [Latin American] rhythms with shades of jazz and acoustic colors, Claudia paints a gorgeous portrait of contemporary Latin American music”**

Jesse “Chuy” Varela, KBRG & KPFA, KCSM Radio

**“Her special blend of poetry with a wide variety of Latin American music is what makes Gómez unique, giving voice to ancient songs and expression to the struggles and aspirations of the new woman in contemporary Latin American society”**

Randall Kline, producer, San Francisco Jazz Festival

**“Her flawless contralto easily straddles the emotion of lush and sensuous ‘bossa nova’ to the near-raucous Carnival energy of ‘samba’”**

Charles Levin, East Bay Phoenix Journal

**“Claudia Gómez is sort of a Colombian Joan Baez, singing quietly in a perfect, airy voice of love, of freedom, of peace, and of “the birth of a new world”**

Hear Music, Berkeley, California

**“The velvet quality of Claudia’s ancient wooden voice suddenly dresses up with a voice of hidden secrets, with a passion that stirs within you when you hear her sing. Her powerful and energetic arms of wise hands, are able to draw sensual images from her guitar, a world of postcards, from outdoor landscapes to the inside corners of our intimacy”**

Martirio, Spanish flamenco fusion singer

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Cesar Pagano Villegas – Colombian Music Journalist

**RIP-ROARING JAZZ AT THE RIVER**

The San Francisco Chronicle / Jesse Hamlin

"Saturday was a medium scorcher, musically and weather wise. It began on a wonderful Afro Brazilian note with Escola Nova de Samba dancers and Chalo Eduardo's Brazilian Beat, featuring the honey-voiced Claudia Gomez. They performed spirited music of traditional Afro Brazilian and popular music. Gomez's lovely voice came across with clarity and warmth, singing songs by Brazilian composers Dorival Caymmi and Djavan. She sang circles around the famed Brazilian singer Flora Purim, who closed Sunday's show with a noisy Electric set..."

**CLAUDIA GOMEZ, TIERRADENTRO CD**

Billboard magazine - World music

Colombian-born, Bay Area-based singer songwriter Claudia Gomez explores a variety of Latin musical styles with a marked Brazilian influence on this enchanting label debut. Led by Gomez's strong, affecting vocals, this exquisitely simple and elegant set is marked by the gorgeous flamenco styling of the title track, the percolating multitracked vocals of "Soltarlo", the beautiful choral harmonies of "Aguacerito Llové", the African influenced call and response of "La Guayabita" and the light, sambafied aura of "Debi Llorar" and "Recuerdos de Medellin".

## THE BRUNCH OF LOVE

The East Bay Express / Chiori Santiago

Partnership is the key to any repast and the smooth, lilting melodies of singer Claudia Gomez with guitarist Jeff Buenz and percussionist John Santos was a perfect combination for a Sunday brunch at Kimball's East. If anything, I'd opt for a double order of music, hold the food... The Claudia Gomez Trio managed to glide skillfully through this performance minefield, artfully leading from a sleepy sweet opener through some glistening low key ballads until, by the time it got to an upbeat arrangement of Pablo Milanes composition in the second set, the roomful of diners had laid down their forks to listen. ... In this spare trio format, Gomez has found the proper environment for her singular voice. The caressing quality of that voice belies its sure strength; what you remember are not the flashy surges of power but the way she stretches a note as if it's saltwater taffy, pulling it into a pure steady line with just a hint of vibrato at the end. It's the group's central instrument, supported by an open framework of Santos' nicely restrained percussion- a kind of commentary of bongo, timbal, and maracas-, and the interwoven threads of Buenz's bass. The simplicity of the numbers is what makes them so effective; the band's easy camaraderie and lack of showiness is appropriate for the

setting. For the opening number, Gomez wrapped her melted-butter and syrup-sound voice around Saudacoes, a tribute to Joao Gilberto by Brazilian composer Egberto Gismonti. The time was languid and as full of promise as a sunny morning in early spring, which is exactly what the day happened to be. The musicians seem to be orchestrating a fantasia-type score to the drifting falls of plum blossoms that had week burst forth along East Bay streets. Gomez's original compositions draw from the rhythms of Brazil, Caribbean and her native Colombia. Her piece "This Love" was a headily romantic as pair of mimosas and another "Recuerdos de Medellin" featuring an unusual rhythm-inspired by, Gomez explained, the Indian culture that defined the Medellin region of Colombia, played on maracas behind a lyrical ballad..

... The trio was in fine form, swinging into an original number by Buenz, joining Gomez with a little scattling, followed by a rendition of a Cuban melody "Debi Llorar" that had been arranged as a samba. ... Was that all right? Gomez asked when they finished. "We kind of wanted a twenty-voice choir for that one" It wasn't necessary. The Claudia Gomez Trio's strength is that it can make simplicity fill a room.



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CLAUDIAGÓMEZ

DVD

