



Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music

By Margarita Engle

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Girls cannot be drummers. Long ago on an island filled with music, no one questioned that rule—until the drum dream girl. In her city of drumbeats, she dreamed of pounding tall congas and tapping small bongós. She had to keep quiet. She had to practice in secret. But when at last her dream-bright music was heard, everyone sang and danced and decided that *both* girls and boys should be free to drum and dream.

Inspired by the childhood of Millo Castro Zaldarriaga, a Chinese-African-Cuban girl who broke Cuba's traditional taboo against female drummers, *Drum Dream Girl* tells an inspiring true story for dreamers everywhere.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 1–4—Engle's spare, rhythmic text gets at the heart of the struggle to achieve a dream in this picture-book biography about a Chinese African Cuban girl who aspired to play drums even when society's double standards stood as a barrier. Growing up in tempestuous 1930s Havana, during a time when universities were often shut down because of their opposition to the dictatorial President Machado, Millo Castro Zaldarriaga dared to dream of playing percussion instruments—timbales, congas, bongós—but her father was adamant that "only boys should play drums." But still she persisted in her hopes and eventually, with the help of her sisters and music teacher, became a member of the renowned Anacaona, Cuba's first all-girl dance band, founded by her sister, Cuchito Castro. López's zinging, neon-tinged art highlights the island's diversity, depicting the drum girl's flights of fancy set against the backdrop of carnival scenes and outdoor cafes. Details of Cuba's and the protagonist's Chinese, African, Taíno, and Spanish roots are seamlessly interwoven into the lyrical narrative and luminous acrylic paintings. The alliterative text parallels the snappy syncopation of the subject's instruments. The heroine's tenacity in the face of naysayers will inspire all dreamers, and the illustrator's smile-inducing cameo on the last page emphasizes the universality of Millo's story. For those looking for more nonfiction titles about female musical powerhouses, such as Monica Brown's *My Name Is Celia/Me llamo Celia* (Cooper Square, 2004), Katheryn Russell-Brown's *Little Melba and Her Big Trombone* (Lee & Low, 2014), and Carole Boston Weatherford's *Leontyne Price: Voice of a Century* (Knopf, 2014). An author's note gives more background on the groundbreaking percussionist. —Shelley Diaz, School Library Journal

Review

2017 Carnegie Medal winner

* "A beautiful account of a young girl's bravery and her important contribution toward gender equality in the creative arts."

—**Kirkus**, starred review

* "The heroine's tenacity in the face of naysayers will inspire all dreamers, and the illustrator's smile-inducing cameo on the last page emphasizes the universality of Millo's story...For those looking for more nonfiction titles about female musical powerhouses."

—**School Library Journal**, starred review

"The text and illustrations work together beautifully here, creating a story that will imbue readers with inspiration and a yearning to make music of their own."

—**Booklist**

"A valuable addition to the growing library of stories about strong Latina women."

—**Publishers Weekly**

"With its emphasis on artistry and visual metaphor, this title bears a strong kinship with Yuyi Morales' *Viva Frida*, but it also brings an accessibility that young viewers (and teachers) will appreciate."

—**Bulletin**

"Engle's poetic text takes its cues from Zaldarriaga's chosen instrument, its rhythm at times steadily assured and at others loose and improvisational...[E]very spread is full of motion, with some of the illustrations requiring a ninety-degree turn, as if the book itself has got to dance."

—*Horn Book Magazine*

"Engle's poetic narrative combined with Lopez's warmly ethereal folk-art illustrations to evoke a nighttime tropical dreamscape."

—*New York Times Book Review*

About the Author

Margarita Engle is a Cuban-American poet and novelist whose work has been published in many countries. Her many acclaimed books include *Silver People*, *The Lightning Dreamer*, *The Wild Book*, and *The Surrender Tree*, a Newbery Honor Book. She is a several-time winner of the Pura Belpré and Américas awards, as well as other prestigious honors. She lives with her husband in Northern California. For more information, visit www.margaritaengle.com.

Rafael López grew up in Mexico City, where he was immersed in the rich cultural heritage and color of street life. He is the illustrator of many vibrant picture books, including the acclaimed *Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music* by Margarita Engle and *Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood* by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell. He has received the Pura Belpré and Américas awards multiple times. Rafael Lopez also designs and creates community-based murals nationwide. He divides his time between San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, and San Diego, California. Visit him at rafaellopez-books.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Christopher Kennedy:

Typically the book *Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music* has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of gain. The book was published by the very famous author. The writer makes some research just before write this book. This kind of book very easy to read you can obtain the point easily after scanning this book.

Mia Shaw:

The book untitled *Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music* contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains the woman idea with easy way. The language is very clear to see all the people, so do certainly not worry, you can easy to read the item. The book was compiled by famous author. The author will take you in the new age of literary works. You can read this book because you can read on your smart phone, or device, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can open up their official web-site along with order it. Have a nice examine.

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