

The Best of Both worlds at 23-years old

- Camila Llorente

"Mila, really became a little engine to take me on my way," opines Nani Garcia about the arrival of her daughter to her life, on a zoom call from Venezuela, right before she is interrupted by an enthusiastic little voice in the background who is looking for her attention.

Mila: "*Esto es para ir a la playa*," grabbing things from the baby bag.

Nani: "*Ya va chichi, que estas haciendo?*, Sorry give me a second."

Finding time for her music and her daughter has been a unique experience but complicated at times. "Mila doesn't really like it when I sing. I think she feels that when I sing, it's the moment that I can't be with her, and that kind of makes her a little bit obfuscated, so it's like trying to balance the time," Garcia says.

In two years, the singer-songwriter has gone through many changes in her career and personal life. She is a mother and an artist, and even though many have a false notion that motherhood immediately cancels career success, Nani is living proof that everything can happen if you wish and work hard for it. With the help of her family, she has learned how to balance the best of both worlds.

Starting her musical journey at an early age, in her senior year, she decided to move to Boston and start a major in Music Business at Berklee College of Music, a place that would put her through many challenges that prompted her to get where she is right now.

December 2017, Caracas, Venezuela – The *Gaitas* Intercollegiate season begins, the most anticipated time of the year for young Venezuelans, on their senior year. Different schools in Caracas gather at various festivals to celebrate Venezuelan musical culture, with shows with a lot of production. Maria Fernanda Garcia was the principal soloist of her *Gaitas* group representing her school.

"Gaitas was like the turning point, that moment when you get on the stage of *El San Ignacio*, singing in front of 3,000-5,000 people, I don't even know what the actual number was, that's when I was like, 'what the fuck this is what I was born to do,' Garcia said. "I saw how people were crying on my solos, and I didn't understand anything, like that connection with people. You are standing on a stage, and you don't know who they are, but they know perfectly who you are and what you want to tell them."

After two years of facing the life of a mother and a college student at the same time, she decided to move back to her home city.

2020, the year that put everything and everyone's life on pause. The year that affected the music industry the most. The year that artists tried new forms to reach their audience. That was the year that *Nani La que Canta* was born. The 23-year-old took this time to focus on her

social media, participating in different contests, posting videos of her singing every day and making her audience and Instagram engagement grow.

"Reggaeton for the soul," a project that started on her gigs at Berkley, became widely recognized after her presentation in *Escuela de Nada*, a Venezuelan comedy podcast. Merging reggaeton with neo-soul and R&B, she captivates and transports you to another dimension. Creating a medley of reggaeton songs, playing with the instrumentals and her ethereal voice, she hypnotizes the audience who fell in love with these types of performances on her social media.

The pandemic also pushed her to start writing her songs, in the meantime that she was writing for another artist, the social media projects were enough to attract people's attention from the music industry, leading Garcia to meet the Venezuelan producer Andresmustdie, who decided to bet on her talent and push her to place her music out in the world.

Inspired by artists who don't like being placed in a box, like Nathy Peluso or C.Tangana, she describes herself as "an artist who struggles every day to be as honest as possible in her music and as graphic as possible with what can be done with a sound. I try to give the listener images with my music that takes them to that universe that I'm talking about and that they feel completely involved in my music."

In just 24 hours, her debut single reached more than 20 thousand listens on Spotify – "*Culebra*." A fusion between Avant-garden pop, hip hop, and Latin roots, a story about betrayal in the form of a green reptile, told through haunting and sophisticated sounds synchronized with a voice full of intention and meaning. The singer can showcase what she wants to do with her music and make you feel in her world.

Disruptive and provocative, her second single – "*Choqueloque*," a track with a crazy and complex production, gives room to spotlight the versatility of her voice. The song narrates with sharpness and freshness an ephemeral night with someone from the past, empowering her in the situation lived. By the hand of her producer, Maria Vertiz, the stupefying beats will take you to a room full of electric blue and orange colors while making you want to dance to the rhythm of the Latin roots.

Associating colors and emotions to enigmatic sounds and a voice of an explosive character, the singer fulfilled a dream never dreamed, placed in the same lineup as one of her musical references, Nathy Peluso, the Venezuelan-born, participated in the South by Southwest 2021 festival, making her music known to a different audience.

"It was really special. The SXSW thing came as a total surprise to me. They contacted us for the festival, and I swear it was so crazy. I played with my best friends from college. I took them to New York and played there at SOBs, which is just too cool and iconic in New York. And really, the experience was a whole other level. I mean, to this day, I still don't believe it,

and I don't really understand it. Like no, I don't understand the magnitude of what I did," Garcia said.

A former student of Berklee College of Music, a single mother who had to go back to her home country, a rising artist who enjoys attempting new things in the musical spectrum, and a woman living the best of both worlds. Nani, a dreamer, an achiever that is preparing for the release of her first EP, "Is going to be very special for me, very close to my heart, and very vulnerable, which I think are things that you haven't heard yet," Garcia said.

She wants to move people's souls with her music, "inspire them to do honest things, to tell the truth," she said. Facing difficulties and betting for her music, Nani demonstrated that the one who risks has nothing to lose but everything to gain.