




Mercedes Sosa


- CANTANTE -



Erased once Haydée Mercedes Sosa who was born in San Miguel de Tucumán, in Argentina, on July 9, 1935, ironically the day of the independence of Argentina. Descendant of Calchaquies, French and Spanish, her father was a worker in the sugar industry who worked in the ingenio Guzmán, while her mother worked as a laundress for wealthier families. In adolescence she became a teacher of native dances; she also sang. In October 1950, encouraged by her friends, she decided to participate in a radio contest. Hiding behind the pseudonym Gladys Osorio, her emerging talent as a singer made her triumph in a competition. The artist imposed herself thanks to her deep voice. She is also very close to her indigenous roots from northern Argentina, but such a belonging was frowned upon. Later, she will be called "La Negra" in reference to her indigenous origins. She was marked very early on by the injustice suffered by the original peoples of Argentina, which will be the basis of her progressive orientation that will soon lead her to the movement of the new Songwriter, the bearer of her values. In 1960 she joined the Communist Party of Argentina. Her struggles are naturally oriented towards human rights, justice, but also later in defense of the environment. In 1965 she publicly reclaims her political claims in the folk festival. She will become, along with other folk singers of the country, with Atahualpa Yupanqui and Jorge Cafrune, one of the great icons of the struggle against social injustices and the discrimination of indigenous peoples. In the 1970s, when she began to sing the texts of poets and authors like Pablo Neruda, she entered the legend. From 1970 to 1973 the albums she released are the most representative of the revolutionary ideal of the singer. With the military dictatorship, it is the moment of censorship, of the disrespect for human rights and of the crimes against humanity. The songs of Mercedes, like those of other artists of the same register, are prohibited in this period and some artists have to go into exile. Voices of the small mixed-blood people, peasants and workers in the shadows and later intellectuals and militants mistreated by the military dictatorship. They call "The voice of Latin America", Mercedes Sosa is the mother of the oppressed peoples. Her strong and deep, serene-sounding voice, is forged by passion and is inspired at times by the pen of poets like Pablo Neruda, as well as in the poems of Félix Luna, which she sets to music with the composer Ariel Ramírez. The singer stood up against dictatorships and gave voice to the poor, to farmers, to the young and to hispanophone workers. In 1979 she was arrested along with her audience. She also had to leave her country for a while to go to Europe (Paris and Madrid between 1979 and 1982). In 1983, at the end of the dictatorship, she returned to Buenos Aires, where she was received in triumph and returned with a repertoire that had enriched with influences of tango, jazz and rock. In 2008 she was named UN Women Goodwill Ambassador by UNESCO.

9 JULIO 1935 - 4 OCTUBRE 2009





“La cultura es lo único que puede salvar un pueblo, lo único, porque la cultura permite ver la miseria y combatirla. La cultura permite distinguir lo que hay que cambiar y lo que se debe dejar, como la bondad de la gente, el compartir una empanada, un vino...”

