

LISA MORALES bio

On her third solo album *She Ought to Be King*, Lisa Morales once again affirms her stature as a world-class singer-songwriter, with a distinctive perspective and a remarkable capacity for looking both inward and outward. The Texas-based artist draws deeply resonant insights from her own experiences navigating the storms of life and making sense of the complex landscape of relationships.

She Ought to Be King continues the creative evolution that's produced Morales' singularly compelling body of recordings. Singing in English, Spanish and Spanglish, she matches her revelatory lyrics with an expansive musical vision that draws upon an eclectic range of stylistic influences to create music of rare emotional depth.

"I just write about what's going on with me," she says, "so I can purge that feeling and move forward."

The 12-song *She Ought to Be King* maintains the high standard of emotional forthrightness that Morales established on her prior solo efforts *Beautiful Mistake* and *Luna Negra and the Daughter of the Sun*. Prior to going solo, she recorded four acclaimed albums with Sisters Morales, the beloved sibling duo in which she partnered with her sister Roberta, who passed away from cancer in August 2021.

Such new Morales compositions as "Freedom," "Reach Out," "Desperately," "Rain in the Desert" and "Our House," consistently cut to the heart of her experiences as a mother and daughter, while the Spanish-language numbers "Suéltame" and "Sirena" demonstrate Morales' uncanny ability to transcend language barriers to communicate timeless emotion.

She Ought to Be King was produced by noted singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist David Garza, and features bassist Tim Lefebvre, keyboardist Rachel Eckroth and drummer Beth Goodfellow. The album also features key contributions from such notable guests as Rodney Crowell, who co-wrote and sings co-lead vocal on the heart-tugging "Flyin' and

Cryin,” which also features Los Lobos’ David Hidalgo on accordion; and Santana co-founder Gregg Rolie, who plays organ and provides backing vocals on the rousing, and the timely topical “Freedom.”

She Ought to Be King’s birth cycle presented certain challenges that tested Morales’ resolve. She explains, “During COVID I had my sister, who was going through cancer, living with me and my two teenagers doing junior high and high school virtually. I’m used to being by myself when I’m writing, so with a full house it was hard to be creative. I asked a friend if I could go to her place in Taos, New Mexico for a week, so I wrote there and finished five songs. We had planned on recording five new songs with David Garza, but I also sent him some older songs that were very personal to me, just to get his reaction. He loved all of them, so we ended up recording the entire album.

“I loved every moment of making this record,” she continues. “I really felt like I was making art. I texted Rodney Crowell, asking if he would sing background on ‘Flyin’ and Cryin,’ and he said, ‘I’ve lived this; we need to make it a duet.’ We chose to record the album at Sonic Ranch outside of El Paso. It’s an amazing place that’s far enough from everything that you really focus on the art. We had bonfire rituals at night and huevos rancheros in the morning, and we gathered with other bands who were recording there for dinner. It was a beautiful experience and I didn’t want to leave.”

Lisa Morales has been pursuing creative fulfillment and emotional illumination for most of her life. Like her cousin Linda Ronstadt, Lisa and her sister Roberta grew up in a musical family in Tucson, Arizona, learning to perform traditional Mexican music while developing broad-ranging musical tastes. After moving to Texas, they attracted interest from the country music establishment in Nashville, but instead chose to pursue an independent musical path, developing a distinctive sound and attitude over the course of six albums between 1997 and 2012. The pair’s indelible vocal harmonies and emotion-charged live performances won Sisters Morales a loyal fan base.

Driven to pursue a more individualistic, iconoclastic path, Lisa went solo in 2011, releasing *Beautiful Mistake*, a revelatory song cycle on which she spun life’s tragedies and disappointments into bracing songwriting. Morales’

2018 release *Luna Negra and the Daughter of the Sun* reached even more deeply into her soul. Her solo albums won universally ecstatic reviews. For example, *Lone Star Music* called *Beautiful Mistake* “one of the most beautiful records that will be released all year” and “an absolutely flat-out devastating and stunning work of art.”

“There’s a strength and vulnerability to being a woman,” she states. “Two months after my daughter Graciela was born, my mother had cancer. I was taking care of a toddler, breastfeeding a baby, being a caregiver to my mother and touring, all at once. That wasn’t easy, but you stand up and keep going, and you end up the better for it. I think that it’s the same in music.

When not writing and recording her own songs, Lisa has found time for various outside projects, such as producing and contributing vocals and guitar to Hayes Carll’s 2002 debut album *Flowers & Liquor*, and co-writing “Waiting For the Stars to Fall” for Carll’s 2008 album *Trouble in Mind*.

She Ought to Be King gracefully documents Lisa Morales’ ongoing artistic evolution. “I’m stubborn,” she says. “I don’t seem to give up and I love what I do for a living. I started out determined to write my own way and create my own sound. But then I started trying to fit into what the business wanted, which was a big mistake, so I went back to who I am. I did this with Sisters Morales as well. We had this sound that was our own, and then were signed with RCA, which diluted it. After that, we forged a better version of our sound, and we made our best music because of that. I’ve done this in relationships as well, so now it’s ‘this is me!’

“The longer you do this,” Lisa Morales asserts, “the more confident you become, because other people’s view of you matter less. I’m more comfortable and pleased that I’ve stuck to creating music that accurately portrays me as who I am.”