



Composer Spotlight: Gabriela Lena Frank



Who is Gabriela Lena Frank?

Gabriela Lena Frank is an American pianist and composer. She writes music for orchestras and choirs. She also writes music for solo instruments and small groups. Recently she wrote an entire opera!

Gabriela has won many awards, including a Latin Grammy. She is known for her groundbreaking work on behalf of composers of all backgrounds and abilities.

Where is Gabriela from?

Gabriela grew up in Berkely, California. She learned about many different traditions from her parents. Her mom shared her Peruvian and Chinese heritage. Her dad shared his Lithuanian and Jewish heritage. Gabriela loves to explore her multicultural heritage through music.

Where does Gabriela live now?

Today Gabriela lives in Boonville, California. Boonville is a small, rural town. She and her husband have a farm in the mountains. Gabriela also runs the Creative Academy of Music there. The academy is a place for new composers to focus on their work.

What is important to Gabriela?

Gabriela believes it is important for musicians to be active in their community. She calls this belief arts citizenship. Gabriela practices arts citizenship by working with schools, hospitals, and prisons. Arts citizenship is also part of the Creative Academy. Through this work, Gabriela is helping to redefine what it means to be a successful musician.



What music by Gabriela is part of Schooltime: Meet the Orchestra?

You will hear “The Mestizo Waltz” from *Three Latin American Dances*. Mestizo refers to someone with mixed ancestry, like Gabriela. The Mestizo Waltz combines the music of indigenous Indian cultures,



African slave cultures, and western brass bands. It is a joyful dance that celebrates multiple traditions coming together.