

## Yma Sumac – Mambo! (1954)

Written by bluelover

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01. *Bo Mambo* (Moisés Vivanco, Billy May) - 3:17 02. *Taki Rari* (Hernán Braña, Billy May) - 1:50 03. *Gopher* (Konrad Gozzo, Billy May) - 2:15 04. *Chicken Talk* (Moisés Vivanco, Billy May) - 3:02 05. *Goomba Boomba* (Billy May) - 4:12 06. *Malambo No.1* (Moisés Vivanco, Billy May) - 2:54 07. *Five Bottles Mambo* (Moisés Vivanco, Billy May) - 2:47 08. *Indian Carnival* (Moisés Vivanco) - 2:04 [play](#) 09. *Cha Cha Gitano* (Moisés Vivanco, Billy May) - 3:50 10. *Jungla* (Moisés Vivanco, Billy May) - 2:22 11. *Carnavalito Boliviano* (author unknown) - 2:05 [play](#)

Personnel: - Yma Sumac - vocals - Rico Mambo Orchestra - Billy May – conductor.

Capitol got on top of two '50s fads at once by issuing an album of Sumac tackling mambo. Yma (characteristically) held nothing back, and the result was one of her more enjoyable LPs, with respectably swinging mambo grooves crafted by Billy May. "Five Bottles Mambo" is one of her most astonishing vocal workouts, dropping into guttural growls that are downright bestial, and making one wonder how exactly they got away with that in the conservative milieu of the 1950s. --- Richie Unterberger, All Music Guide

Yma Sumac, a mystery unsolved even today, is the only singer known to possess close to a staggering 5 octave voice. While less than a handful of singers have managed to capture Sumac's high notes, none have managed to acquire those notes including Sumac's lowest registers. More amazing, is that Yma Sumac had no formal training! It has been said she is unable to read musical notes! How did this phenomenal lady with the beautiful face and extraordinary voice come to be?

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Born on September 13, 1922 (official, finally, as I have held the actual birth certificate in my hands) in the high mountains of Ichocan, Peru, little Zoila Augusta Emperatriz Chavarri Del Castillo, had dreams of being a great singer. However, such a dream was deemed almost impossible in Peru and especially for a "proper lady." But the girl was unstoppable. Around the age of 9 she could often be seen high atop a mountain in the High Andes singing ancient Peruvian folkloric songs, to a group of rocks, which she pretended was her audience. Entranced by the beautiful birds that sang nearby, she began to imitate them, by incorporating their high pitched sounds into her "repertoire."

Her voice matured somewhat by age 13 and local Peruvians took notice. Much to the unhappiness of her parents, she was invited to appear on Argentinean radio. Soon enough South America was quite enchanted with this amazing voice. In 1943, she would record around 16 songs in Argentina (most of which have been released on CD in the last decade).

Conductor Moises Vivanco met and later married the young lady, now renamed Imma Sumack and along with a dancer (Cholita Rivero), formed a group called "The Inka Taky Trio." Together they performed traditional Peruvian music. They had minor tours all over South America. But both Vivanco and Imma Sumack had bigger dreams. After all, she is believed to be a direct descendant of Atahualpa, Peru's last Incan emperor! Sumac's mother's maiden name was Atahualpa, the same as that of the last ruler of the Incan civilization, Yma Sumac could be regarded as "a princess royal and spiritual leader of the mountain people of Peru...(occupying) a unique position in the Inca religion."

The trio moved to New York and continued performing. Americans were not prepared or particularly interested in the music, finding it a bit bizarre. But many were enchanted with Sumack's lovely face and voice. One night in a small New York club, a talent scout from Capitol Records was present. The man apparently saw great potential in this young lady. He immediately signed them to Capitol records a MAJOR American record label!

However, changes would have to be made. 'Imma Sumack' would be changed once again, to 'Yma Sumac' a more glamorous spelling. The focus would be on Yma, and Vivanco would be "the man behind the Diva." The simple "twangy" traditional Peruvian accompaniment would have to be incorporated into large and lush orchestral versions if it were to take on Universal appeal. This would be a challenge, but one the Vivanco's could meet! Now in her mid 20's Sumac's voice had reached it's unparalleled peak, and her beauty intoxicating. A now classic record, 'Voice of the Xtabay' was recorded in 1950 and sold over 100,000 copies WITHOUT

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major publicity!

After a massively successful concert at the Hollywood Bowl that same year, Yma Sumac would become world famous and travel the globe and become a vocal phenomenon. Sumac toured and recorded albums for the entire decade of the 50's, appeared in at least 4 films, had worldwide fan clubs and was eventually declared "the 8th wonder of the world." Major movie stars and opera singers were great fans of hers. Some of her childhood movie idols were now fans of hers!

While Sumac and her husband remained true to the ancient Peruvian language of Quechuan and Spanish, they occasionally ventured into Italian arias and songs not originally intended for vocal interpretation. Sumac performed Claire De Lune and The Magical Flute, astonishing critics and audiences into 20 minute standing ovations on numerous occasions. No other singer would have the vocal capabilities to make such arrangements possible.

In the 1961 Yma Sumac was to do two weeks of concerts in Russia. The demand for her was so great there, she stayed a staggering 6 months, and performed for royalty on many occasions. By tours end, she and husband Moises Vivanco were more than ready for [their second and final] divorce.

In the early 1970's with the encouragement of a few fans, Yma Sumac recorded a complete album of psychedelic music, titled 'Miracles.' Her now infamous temperament dominated the entire project and the album was quickly pulled from record stores everywhere, once "complications arose." This is one of the rarest of Yma Sumac memorabilia today, and is occasionally listed on Ebay. It seems to be a hit among her younger fans and continues to grow in popularity, as of this writing.

In the 1980's Sumac's career was rejuvenated by young fans all over the world wanting to experience the phenomenon for themselves. She had wildly successful sell-out tours from the mid-80's into the 1990's. By the mid 90's, Sumac's popularity reached even greater heights as the new term "exotica" (in correlation with what has come to be wincingly called "lounge" by today's standards) was coined and became a favorite genre among eclectic crowds of younger fans.

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The millennium brought a handful of surprise personal appearances, the highlight of which resulted in Yma Sumac being awarded the Orden Del Sol of Peru in May of 2006. She traveled to accept the honor in person, and stayed two weeks, accepting other awards almost daily.

It may come as a surprise that a woman could become a legend with only 5 major albums! But with a voice like Sumac's, all you have to do is listen and you will know why. Her albums have been reissued for over 50 years, over and over, such is the demand of newer generations who discover this almost supernatural voice. Miss Sumac passed away at 86, on November 1st, 2008, in Los Angeles, CA. She was interred in Hollywood Forever Cemetery a week later. ---  
yma-sumac.com

Yma Sumac nace con el nombre de Zoila Augusta Emperatriz Chávarri del Castillo, un 10 de Setiembre de 1922, en Ichocán, Cajamarca, Perú. Sus padres fueron Sixto Chávarri y Emilia del Castillo Atahualpa. Desde inicios de su carrera se dijo que Yma Sumac era descendiente directa de Atahualpa, último de los reyes Incas, y esto fue confirmado por el Consul General del Perú en los Estados Unidos de América, José Varela y Arias, en un documento con fecha 23 de Mayo de 1946, que dice: "Certifico por este medio que a mi buen entendimiento y en concordancia con las asersiones de autoridades en la historia de los Incas y la historia Peruana en general (cuyos nombres serán publicados según requerimiento), Imma Summack es una descendiente del Emperador Inca Atahualpa, habiendo sido su madre doña Emilia Atahualpa, descendiente directa del último Emperador Inca del Perú."

En un artículo publicado en "La Crónica" en Lima, Perú, en Noviembre de 1950, se dice que Yma Sumac fue descubierta por un empleado del gobierno cuando ella cantó, a los 13 años de edad, en un Festival del Sol, realizado en su pueblo natal ante 25 mil espectadores. Él llevó la noticia de su voz hasta el Ministro de Educación. El Ministro, alternadamente, arregló para que Yma viaje con su familia a Lima, donde ella se presentó en un concierto. Entonces, ella fue ingresada en un colegio de muchachas católicas, el Instituto de Santa Teresa.

Un año antes que Yma Sumac arribe a Lima, el músico ayacuchano Moisés Vivanco había formado la "Compañía Peruana de Arte", conformado por 46 bailarines indios y músicos . Como estudioso de la música folklórica, Moisés asiste al concierto de Yma y le propone integrar su conjunto musical. Inicia formalmente su carrera como "Imma Sumack". Yma Sumac hace su debut en radio con el conjunto de Moisés a principios de 1942. El mismo año, en Abril, hacen

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su debut internacional en radio Belgrano de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

El 6 de Junio de 1942 Yma Sumac se casó en ceremonia civil con Moisés Vivanco, en la ciudad de Arequipa, Perú. Luego de casarse, Yma Sumac parte con Moisés Vivanco y su conjunto en una gira artística, presentándose en Argentina donde realiza en 1943 sus primeras grabaciones discográficas. También llega a Chile y Brasil, y en 1945 se presentan en México. La voz de Yma Sumac recibe elogios de la crítica internacional por su perfección que va entre 4 y 5 octavas en la escala musical.

En Enero de 1946, habiéndose disuelto la Compañía Peruana de Arte, Yma Sumac llega a los Estados Unidos de América junto con Moisés Vivanco y su prima Cholita Rivera, integrando el trío "Inca Taky". Sufren una serie de altibajos de 1946 a 1949 tratando de lograr el reconocimiento de su arte en el país más poderoso del mundo, pasando incluso por un período en el que se dedican al comercio de atún cuando Yma Sumac se embaraza de su primer hijo. El 7 de Febrero de 1949 nace Papuchka Charlie, primogénito del matrimonio Sumac-Vivanco. Seguidamente va mejorando su trabajo artístico hasta lograr un contrato con la compañía discográfica "Capitol Records" y se mudan a Hollywood en 1950 teniendo su primer gran concierto allí en Agosto del mismo año, y en Setiembre graba su primer álbum "Voice del Xtabay".

Hasta 1959 graba 6 álbumes para la Capitol Records. Así mismo, trabaja en el cine norteamericano y se consolida como una gran estrella Hollywoodense. En 1957 se divorcia la pareja Sumac-Vivanco pero en 1959 se reconcilian y vuelven a casarse. En 1961 inicia en la URSS una gira mundial, siendo invitada por el mismísimo Secretario General de la URSS Nikita khrushchev. Recorre Asia, Europa y América. Nuevamente se instala en los Estados Unidos de América en 1965 y se divorcia Yma definitivamente de Moisés Vivanco, quien viaja a España.

Las giras y los cambios en el gusto musical popular en la segunda mitad de los años 1960's hacen que la música de Yma Sumac tome un nuevo giro y a principios de los años 70's graba el álbum "Miracles" con el cual revitaliza su carrera y es reconocida por el público juvenil. A mediados de los 70's viaja a Lima, Perú, residiendo varios años aquí. Durante los años 1980's y 90's retoma mayor actividad artística en los Estados Unidos y Europa, haciendo diversas presentaciones en conciertos, teatro en incluso en cine y televisión. Se hacen compilaciones de sus discos y documentales sobre su vida. Para el años 2000 y hasta la actualidad existen muchos artículos publicados sobre Yma Sumac, especialmente en la Internet, donde cuenta con dos páginas Web y sus discos siguen siendo vendidos en compilaciones de diversos países a nivel mundial. Ella aún se mantiene en actividad a pesar de sus años.

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Yma Sumac falleció en Los Angeles Noviembre 1 del 2008. Por su propia voluntad, ella fue enterrada en Hollywood California, donde ella vivió sus últimos 60 años de su vida. ---  
yma-sumac.com

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