

Daniel Rodriguez

TENOR

BIOGRAPHY

To those who have come to love him as the so-called “Singing Policeman,”—the New York City cop who helped bring the country an uplifting spirit of promise and hope with his stirring rendition of “God Bless America” after the September 11 terrorist attacks—it is no surprise that Daniel Rodriguez has always been a spiritual man. His first two albums, the debut *SPIRIT OF AMERICA* and the romantic *FROM MY HEART*, both included a spiritual song as a testament to the driving force in his life, and he has welcomed the opportunity to work with institutions such as the USO, the City of Hope, Dr. Robert Schuller’s Crystal Cathedral and numerous law enforcement organizations. Thus, *IN THE PRESENCE*, his first album devoted to inspirational music released by Seattle-based Blix Street Records, is a gift whose time has come.

Besides beautiful and timeless songs sung in Daniel’s full-bodied tenor, the album features two hallmarks. First, a pair of stunning duets with soprano Lea Salonga, best-known as the star of Broadway’s “Miss Saigon” and “Flower Drum Song.” Salonga teams with Daniel on Andrew Lloyd-Webber’s “Pie Jesu” from “Requiem” and the traditional “Panis Angelicus.” Second, are the last three musical arrangements ever written by the late composer-arranger Johnnie Carl, long-time Crystal Cathedral Musical Director.

Rodriguez and Carl had met when Daniel started performing at the Crystal Cathedral. “It was a great marriage because I love full orchestras and powerful music. There was a brilliance to his art. ‘Amazing Grace’ builds with intensity and incorporates the theme from Ravel’s ‘Bolero’ in a dramatic finale.” In addition, Carl’s vision lives on in the songs “How Great Thou Art” and “On Eagles’ Wings.”

As with every “overnight” success, Daniel’s road to his current place as “America’s Beloved Tenor” was long and rife with all the detours and potholes of every life path. He began singing in his youth, the product of a musical, multi-cultural family where his Puerto Rican roots intermingled with the rich fabric of New York City. His father and grandfather both sang. Others in his family played various instruments. By junior high school, he was enrolled in theater arts and performing in musicals as well as dramatic roles.

At 16, he presented his first recital at Carnegie Hall; at 17, he was billed as the “17-year-old Baritone.” Then, at 19, he put music aside to raise his family, going to work to make ends meet. For five years, he did just about any job that would put food on the table: short order cook, catering chef, cab driver, truck driver. But, at 24, he decided to go back into music, which he did with a very entrepreneurial spirit.

Through the New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, Placido Domingo would give Daniel Rodriguez a listen. Domingo was in the planning stages for his Young Artists program at the time. “I went to the Met and sang for Maestro Domingo, and he invited me to study with him in Washington. I saw the Mayor, told him what had happened, and he said, ‘You have to do that, it’s your calling,’ and I said, ‘Well, you’ll have to give me the time off.’” Daniel studied with Maestro Domingo for a year and half.

Since then, he has performed at the 2002 Winter Olympics, the PBS Memorial Day concert in Washington, D.C., the Tournament of Roses Parade, the 2004 Republican National Convention and President Bush’s “Celebration of Freedom” Inauguration concert, and on television’s “The Late Show with David Letterman,” “Larry King Live,” “Live with Regis and Kelly” and “Oprah,” among many other high profile events. He officially retired from the NYPD in June of 2004.

Now with three records under his belt, Daniel is looking to the future with the same inquisitive optimism that has brought him to this point. His goals include the Broadway stage, opera and, possibly, acting in dramatic roles. “I don’t want to limit myself,” he says. “For me, life is an experience, life is a ride; you can’t say ‘I’m going to take this road, and that’s it.’ Life has twists and turns, and you have to be able to navigate through them. Always consult your higher power. And let yourself be led too. People say ‘What do you want to do?’ and I say, ‘Well, God knows what I’ll be doing. I just kind of follow the signs.’ There have always been doors that open for me, and it’s having the courage to walk through them and experience what’s behind them that has made life interesting and has gotten me where I am. It’s about enjoying the ride.”