



# PANAMÁ UNIDOS EN CANCIÓN

## PRESS RELEASE

Panama, February 1, 2021. - The **"Panama, Unidos en Canción"** ("Panama, United in Song") contest, promoted by Panamanian artist Patricia Vlieg and Jóvenes Unidos por la Educación ("Youth United for Education"), seeks to be an experience in which participants discover the cultural value of traditional Panamanian songs, through research and promotion of these songs. The contest is aimed at young people between 15 and 24 years of age, Panamanians or foreigners residing in Panama and Panamanians living abroad.

**"Panama, Unidos en Canción"** will provide participants with the opportunity to appreciate the relationship between Panamanian songs and history, culture and identity. It also encourages intergenerational dialogue in the research process and the awareness that identity is an experience in which young people are immersed.

Contestants have until February 27 to register as a team and until March 27 to submit a video with the chosen song and the narrative explaining the relevance of the song. In the pre-selection phase, ten videos will be chosen. From the ten-videos' short list, three will be chosen. The winners of this phase will be accompanied by a multidisciplinary team that will support them to produce their videos professionally. The contest has prestigious national and international jurors, versed in disciplines such as history, music, cinematography, lexicography and ethnomusicology.

Patricia Vlieg is an award-winning musician, singer, composer and arranger. In the past five years she has been working on the research of emblematic and traditional Panamanian songs. For her, the lifeblood of a country is having its own folk songs to sing. "It is the protection and recovery of our own consciousness, vital nourishment while transiting the turbulent waters we navigate as people and as a generation. We need to start singing our folk songs again; start listening to them in a new light; allow them to caress our hearts once again; allow our children and youth to learn them. As we do this, we allow folk songs to be what it should represent for a country: a link that connects and communicates through multiple generations; a source of sustenance and strength; a legacy of love and pride; and an opportunity for those who are on the outside to get to know us and our culture intimately."

Nivia Rossana Castrellón, mentor of Jóvenes Unidos por la Educación, comments:

"The contest is a platform for intergenerational convergence in which youth and adults from the same environment dialogue about their cultural roots as expressed by a song. It is a beautiful way to celebrate the Bicentennial of the Republic. As always, Jóvenes Unidos por la Educación is proud to participate in this contest hand in hand with Patricia Vlieg and is grateful for the support of the companies and institutions that accompany us as a fundamental part of this event: Banesco, the Panama Canal, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture, Ricardo Pérez, CoSPA and FUDESPA.

## PATRICIA VLIEG

*Patricia Vlieg, singer, composer and arranger, is, as well, a guitar and keyboard player.*

*Her work is a combination of a variety of rhythms and styles rooted in the Latin American musical tradition, and elements of jazz and other genres. She began her musical studies in*



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*Panama, her country of origin, and continued them in Berklee College of Music where she was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Music with a concentration in arrangement and performance. She also studied vocal performance in the New England Conservatory of Music. In 2005, Patricia released Origen, in which she blended various Latin American rhythms and elements of jazz in an homage to her cultural heritage, again revealing her versatility as a composer, arranger and vocalist. In 2011 she released her album "A una Cantora", a tribute to Mercedes Sosa and produced in collaboration with Argentinian pianist Lilián Saba and her quartet and in 2015 her latest work, Cabanga, a thematic 14 song-album which explores and elaborates on Panamanian folk and art songs. Patricia Vlieg, gracefully combines elements of the Panamanian music with those of jazz, classical, and other Latin American musical traditions. This album is a collaboration with Popi Spatocco, former pianist and musical director of Mercedes Sosa.*

*Internationally acclaimed soloist, she has performed in several countries: Argentina, Brasil, Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, United States, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Japan among others.*

## YOUTH UNITED FOR EDUCATION

*Jóvenes Unidos por la Educación is a youth alliance that aims to influence to make education a national priority. Its mission is to promote the effective exercise of the right to quality and inclusive learning for all children and youth in Panama.*

*A key factor for its development and scalability has been the strategic alliances with public and private actors. These alliances have made it possible to finance and carry out activities and programs such as the International Citizen Advocacy Laboratory with the support of UNDP, Fondo Chile and AGCID and the Latin American Citizen Action Laboratories 2019 and 2020, with the support of the Panama Canal, Banesco and Fundación Sus Buenos Vecinos.*

*Currently, Jóvenes Unidos por la Educación has a weekly radio program -Qué Dicen los Jóvenes- ("What Do Youth Say") on Radio Ancón. They are weekly columnists in the newspaper "La Prensa".*

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