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The People's Poet: Life and Myth of Ismael Rivera, an Afro-Caribbean Icon

Rosa Elena Carrasquillo

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The People's Poet: Life and Myth of Ismael Rivera, an Afro-Caribbean Icon Rosa Elena Carrasquillo At the height of his career in the 1970s, Ismael Rivera shared the stage with salsa greats such as Benny Moré, Tito Puente and Celia Cruz, and is recognized as one, if not the most, important figure in this music. The People s Poet tells the fascinating story of Ismael Rivera s life and the development of his iconic image among the African diaspora. He revolutionized tropical music with his unique singing style and improvisational skills. Today, however, few people in the mainstream U.S. have ever heard of him, but he is lionized in various Afro-Caribbean communities as a bastion of cultural nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Rivera s life story resounds with the imperative issues in Puerto Rican history from the 1930s to the 1980s. This well-researched book uncovers new information about Rivera and includes many archival illustrations.

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