



Rita Moreno: Memorias (Spanish Edition)

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Rita Moreno: Memorias (Spanish Edition) Rita Moreno

En esta lúcida autobiografía, Rita Moreno nos hace partícipes de su extraordinario periplo desde los sencillos inicios de su temprana niñez en Puerto Rico hasta que se convirtió en una leyenda de Hollywood y en una de las pocas artistas, y la única hispana, que ha ganado un Oscar, un Grammy, un Tony, y dos Emmy.

A la edad de cinco años, Rosita Dolores Alverio, nacida en la idílica isla de Puerto Rico, se embarcó en una borrascosa travesía por mar con su madre, que la llevó hasta los turbulentos barrios del Bronx, donde descubrió que la danza, el canto y la actuación serían el escape de su accidentada niñez. A sus trece años, debutó en Broadway y poco después, en los años dorados de la meca del cine, se trasladó a Hollywood donde trabajó junto a estrellas de la talla de Gary Cooper, Yul Brynner, y Ann Miller.

Cuando fue descubierta por Louis B. Mayer de MGM, el propio magnate declaró: “Ella parece una Elizabeth Taylor hispana”. Gene Kelly la eligió para interpretar el papel de Zelda Zanders en *Singin’ in the Rain*, que la lanzó a la fama y a su actuación ganadora del Oscar, en *West Side Story*. Pero durante mucho tiempo Moreno fue encasillada en el estereotipo de “versátil nativa” un rol que le fue casi imposible eludir.

Aquí, por primera vez Rita reflexiona sobre su prolongada lucha por superar las barreras raciales y sexuales de Hollywood. Estudia a fondo la vulnerable jovencita que ocultaba su glamorosa fachada y cuánto le costó encontrar su lugar en el mundo. Habla con franqueza de su relación con Elvis Presley, de sus encuentros con Howard Hughes, y del apasionado romance con Marlon Brando que la llevó hasta un intento de suicidio. Y nos enseña los bemoles de un matrimonio “perfecto” y las incomparables alegrías de la maternidad.

Impregnada del brillante desparpajo y la profunda perspicacia de Rita Moreno, esta autobiografía es el deslumbrante retrato de una estrella del teatro y el cine que anhelaba convertirse en lo que realmente es ella... y lo logró.

Rita Moreno: Memorias (Spanish Edition) Details

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Ash says

Maybe I am still being affected from when I met Rita Moreno on March 6th and got her autograph at a bookstore...

Or it could be I have idolized since I saw her as Anita on West Side Story. I was mesmerized by her performance. Maria who?

Either way, I really enjoyed her memoir. It was short, my only complaint really, simple and to the point. It wasn't a salacious tell-all and it wasn't supposed to be. That would have cheapen her story.

I felt like it was a love song or an ode to the places and people who cared, loved or shaped Rita Moreno to who she is. Juncos, where she spent the first five years of her life, her Mami, Marlon Brando, I cannot believe Anita and Jor-El got in on!, her husband of nearly half a century, Lenny.

It felt like Rita Moreno was talking to me about me. It was that organic.

KOMET says

A few minutes ago (it is now 6:16 PM EST August 16, 2018 as I write this), I finished reading this candid and compelling memoir of a most remarkable woman. Rita Moreno I had known about first-hand since the 1970s, from having seen her on the TV shows 'The Electric Company' and 'The Rockford Files.' She struck me then as a cool, attractive woman who was sure of herself and had class. Aside from that, I never gave much thought to Rita Moreno the person beyond the TV studio, movie set, and stage.

But in reading 'RITA MORENO: A Memoir', I was able to look into the life of someone who wasn't born with a silver spoon in her mouth. She had to fight for everything she got. That strength came from her mother who brought her at the age of 5 to New York from Puerto Rico (which she describes in such rich and colorful detail from her childhood memories) to make a new life for them both. Rita's father had abandoned them sometime earlier. They lived for a time in a shared apartment in the Bronx. Her mother took on odd jobs such as cleaning the homes of white families, saving up money til she was able to move both herself and daughter Rita into their own apartment in Manhattan. Rita was a very spirited, energetic little girl and one of her relatives in New York suggested to her mother that she get dancing lessons for Rita. (Her teacher was Paco Cansino, who was "not only a Spanish dance teacher; he was the ultimate Spanish dance teacher. He was the teacher and uncle of Rita Hayworth.") This marked the beginning of what would be an almost 70 year career full of fantastic highs (such as Rita Moreno winning the Best Supporting Actress Oscar for her role as Anita in "West Side Story") and frustrating lows.

Rita Moreno is one of the few surviving actresses today who started out in the era of the studio system in Hollywood. She first worked for MGM (where she had a small role with Gene Kelly in the musical "Singing in the Rain") before going on to work at 20th Century Fox.

There is so much more to Rita Moreno than meets the eye. That's why I would encourage the reader of this review to take some time and read deeply into the life of a person who traveled quite a journey through life, worked with some of the most famous and distinguished figures in the world of cinema and stage, had a

loving family, and managed to stay true to herself all the while.

Clarissa says

RITAAAAAA!!!!!!! ERES UN IDOL COMO ACTRIZ Y COMO MUJER!

Leilani says

A quick, easy read that I found hard to put down due to its glimpses of vintage Hollywood glamour and what it felt like to play "the ethnic type" for so many years. As with most star bios, you get the stories of misbehaving costars and fun anecdotes along the way, but I wish she had said more about the making of West Side Story - it was done in a flash. Still, her stories were mostly interesting and surprisingly frank.

Also, a little more editing might have helped - I spent most of the book wondering why she never even tried to find her younger brother once she was an adult, only to find in a stray sentence toward the end that she did try, unsuccessfully.

Marie says

Rita Moreno's life is more than interesting. She's a smart, funny, thoughtful woman who came to Hollywood via small roles, and later conquered Broadway and television. Her stories about Marlon Brando and other lovers are romantic, truthful. Well worth a read for a casual fan or someone like myself who's always loved Moreno's work in any medium.

Adrian Jackson says

My experiences with Rita Moreno were limited to The Electric Company and West Side Story prior to reading this book. I knew nothing about her fantastic screen career or love affairs. I enjoyed hearing her tell her own story on audio and I respect her honesty. A bio with no sugar coating!

Erin says

CW for suicide attempt, botched abortion, and abusive relationships. This was so. damn. good. Listen to the audio and let Moreno's gentle, warm voice wash over you. Her emotional depth, her self-reflection, her wit and humor - they all shine through so clearly in this.

Jenny (adultishbooks) says

To start with, I am mildly obsessed with Rita Moreno. Everything she's in, I've loved her performance and

find her to be an enigmatic performer. Still, I have not sought out everything she's done (there's a lot). Prior to this past month, I couldn't even pick her out of a lineup and totally didn't recognize her as Rogelio's mother in Jane the Virgin.

I wanted to pick this up a couple years ago but just got around to the audiobook. I loved this. It was raw and honest and details a life that was truly amazing. I especially appreciated how honest she was on her 45-yearlong marriage and how she was willing to be vulnerable. I loved her performance of the narration, even getting choked up at certain parts. She even GIGGLES. The memoir was structured chronologically which is great for someone as anal as myself. This was the perfect celebrity memoir and should be held up as a model for how it should be done.

SIDE NOTE: It has to be said: I can't think about her and Marlon Brando having a sexual relationship for too long or I might spontaneously combust.

Nikki says

Full Review at Foil the Plot

Most of us probably know of Rita Moreno from her role as Anita in West Side Story. Her trademark? Being the Latina "spitfire." She's the "Hispanic Elizabeth Taylor." If you know anything else about her, it's probably that she's the first Hispanic woman to win the Oscar. Or more notably, that she's one of the only performers to EVER receive an Oscar, a Grammy, a Tony and an Emmy. Well, now she can add best-selling author to that ever-growing list of talents. In her self-titled memoir, Moreno opens up about life on and off the screen, touching on family, love, loss and her tumultuous rise to fame. Quintessentially, she's the all-American dream.

Moreno's story is broken down into four parts, each one chronicling her evolution from humble little Rosita Dolores Alverio from Juncos into the sizzling songstress/screen siren, Rita Moreno. It's a tumultuous journey of insecurity, doubt, passion and self-discovery told in the most raw and honest of ways. In it, she describes the lush landscape of her native Puerto Rico, her struggle to break on to the Hollywood scene and her harrowing and debilitating relationship with bad boy, Marlon Brando. On the surface, Moreno's life seems so perfect but underneath it all it's one built atop broken promises --- by her mother and father, by Hollywood and by many lovers --- the strength she pulls from all these experiences though, that's what makes this book such an incredible one to read. Her story is as captivating as she herself is on screen.

You can really get a feel for Moreno's personality solely by looking at the way she tells her story --- it's exotic, wild, imaginative, vivid and rich with detail. As a reader, I became keenly aware of all of my senses and was atune to the world in an entirely new way. It's particularly evident in the first part where she relives her childhood. Moreno speaks of it as though she's still that child. You view the world through her young eyes and get to experience that sense of wonder and magic and blissful unawareness that comes with being an innocent, little kid. This book is packed with insight as Rita recounts her rise to fame and her experiences on the silver screen. I loved how she reviews her past performances in a more objective way. It's interesting to see what she's most critical about and what of those early performances she can really appreciate. Also, the black/white photographs don't hurt either!

Rita goes into detail on how much the film industry has changed since the 50's and 60's. Back then, stereotyping was common practice and she was viewed as the "universal ethnic girl." She's worked hard to break way from the trade-marked Latina "spit-fire" image that was portrayed of her, instead vying for roles

that cast her as a genuine, realistic person. I was really excited to read about her time on the West Side Story set, but much to my dismay, this chapter of her life is somewhat glossed over. What I did love was how Moreno touches on fond and not-so-fond memories of the more well-known contemporaries of her time (Gene Kelly, Joan Crawford, Natalie Wood, Elvis --- to name a few) which acts as a tribute to them, in a way. Ultimately though, this book isn't about Hollywood, it's about her and appropriately so. Each intricate detail and every little story chronicles some important facet of her amazing life and incredible journey.

One of the most evident things she talks about are the hardships she's endured. The issues in her working life are nothing compared to the ones she endures in her love life though. Her tumultuous relationship with Marlon Brando coupled with constant abuse led her to attempt suicide, but it's her inner strength and determination that pulls her through it. And this is why she's so admirable. She's got the fortitude and gusto to walk away having learned something. Moreno's journey is a tragic one, but unlike many of the Hollywood greats, hers has a happier ending than the Judy Garland's and Mario Lanza's of her day. Rita is a woman who did what she had to do to survive and become successful. She's a woman who never loses sight of the end goal. She is admirable and brave. In the end, Moreno is shaped less by the characters she played and more by the experiences behind them.

Moreno is a multi-faceted woman --- she's strong, passionate, vivacious, demure and incredibly self-conscious. Despite wearing a tough and sexy visage, like many of her contemporaries, she's more than just another pretty face. This book is her personal narrative on how she conquered the world and, if anything, it's one of the most authentic books I've ever read. She's had quite the journey and even though it wasn't always the easiest, it was certainly an incredible one.

Marisa Gonzalez says

Rita Moreno's memoir...it is a great one! She tells her story of childhood in Puerto Rico, moving to "Nueva York" and her rise to fame and success. Reading this book was like sitting down and having a conversation with her. I loved its honesty, its ups and downs and its humor. I highly recommend this book for young Latinas. It is very inspirational. A truly classy lady!

Roxanne (The Novel Sanctuary) says

Honest and beautiful.

Rosa says

Wonderful memoir. Rita Moreno's account of life Puerto Rico and NYC is so spot on. An excellent actress! I specially enjoyed reading about her mother and her marriage.

"One of the few things that I disdained while filming the movie (West Side Story) was the makeup used to paint Puerto Ricans the same color. We Sharks were all the same homogeneous brown! Our gang, including me, was a uniform tobacco brown color, and that was just plain wrong and inaccurate. Puerto Ricans, with their varied genetic ancestry - Spanish, Taino Indian, Black, Dutch - are born with a broad palette of skin colors, from outright white to true black".

Micaela says

Rita Moreno's dramatic life has had more twists and turns than I ever knew. A strong yet vulnerable woman who can dish the old school Hollywood dirt with the best of them, yet she does it with respect. Her journey to America as a child was harrowing, her rise to fame was a bumpy road, yet she persevered and succeeded. The stories of her relationships with Brando and her husband Lenny was told with appreciable candor. Cheers to Rosita (Rita), a fascinating and incredible woman!

JoAnne Pulcino says

RITA MORENO A MEMOIR

Rita Moreno

The wonderful journey of a young girl from Puerto Rico brought to New York who became an actress, a dancer, a singer and an outspoken advocate for great causes. She is one of few performers who has won all four acclaimed awards in the entertainment industry. She is the proud winner of the OSCAR, the EMMY, the TONY and the GRAMMY.

It is the story of her early start in show business at age fourteen as a dancer who rises to the top of her field. Her triumphs, her challenges and her doubts are well covered in the book. Her obsession with Marlon Brando and her long marriage to her doctor husband become an integral part of the book written by a woman who has an outspoken and interesting voice.

LAPL Reads says

Moreno's candid autobiography details the evolution of Rosita Alverio, a starstruck girl from Puerto Rico, into Rita Moreno, the award-winning actress and star of classic films such as *West Side Story*, *Singin' in the Rain* and *Carnal Knowledge*. Throughout the book Moreno contrasts the soaring triumphs of a career (where she earned every major performing accolade) with painful personal tragedies that nearly ended her remarkable life.

Rita Moreno stands as the archetype of success within the entertainment industry. She has been a working actress for over sixty years and conquered every medium in the entertainment industry, with awards to prove it. Despite this very public success, Moreno's life has remained obscured because she never led a tabloid-friendly lifestyle. She provides glimpses into her life and work, revealing a woman of substance who has suffered many personal trials that were not publicly known.

Much of the book confronts the challenges of being a woman of color working in Hollywood. Moreno is the third individual to win competitive Grammy, Oscar, Tony and Emmy Awards. Upon her arrival in 1950s' Hollywood she attempted to market herself as the next Elizabeth Taylor, but her Puerto Rican heritage effectively caused movie executives to cast her in stereotypical roles: Latina spitfire or an exotic ethnic. She

never felt comfortable with these roles, but accepted them in order to support her family. Despite this ongoing challenge, Moreno was able to find work that allowed her artistry to flourish, validating her talent and establishing her credentials as a serious actress.

Moreno shares vivid stories about her experiences during some well-known productions, including her Academy Award winning role as Anita in *West Side Story*. While she avoids outright gossip, she shares recollections about her working relationships with legendary figures like Jerome Robbins, Mike Nichols, Natalie Wood and Gene Kelly. She also incorporates humorous fare and amusing anecdotes including the fact that the outrageous role of Googie Gomez (a character in the play *The Ritz*) resulted from a joke she acted out for playwright Terrence McNally at a party. And she won a Tony for the role.

Perhaps the most surprising admission in the book concerns a tortuous affair with Marlon Brando that nearly killed her. Moreno met Brando in the 1950s and eventually succumbed to his charms, acknowledging that he was the first true love of her life. Brando had genuine affection for her, yet chose to string her along for more than a decade and reveled in making her jealous. In an act of revenge, she attempted to make Brando jealous by dating another man, Elvis Presley! The affair reached a tipping point in the early 1960s when Moreno realized she was pregnant, and Brando insisted she terminate the pregnancy.

The most substantive aspect of the book is the emphasis Moreno places on finding her own voice. After wading through years of personal angst and insecurity regarding relationships and work, she was able to settle into a life where she was finally secure. Moreno found empowerment through political activism, broadening her work options through stage and television, as well as building a family with a man to whom she would be married for nearly 50 years. The book serves as a testament to the remarkable, strength, courage and wisdom of Rita Moreno, both the actress and the woman.

Reviewed by Nicholas Beyelia, Librarian
