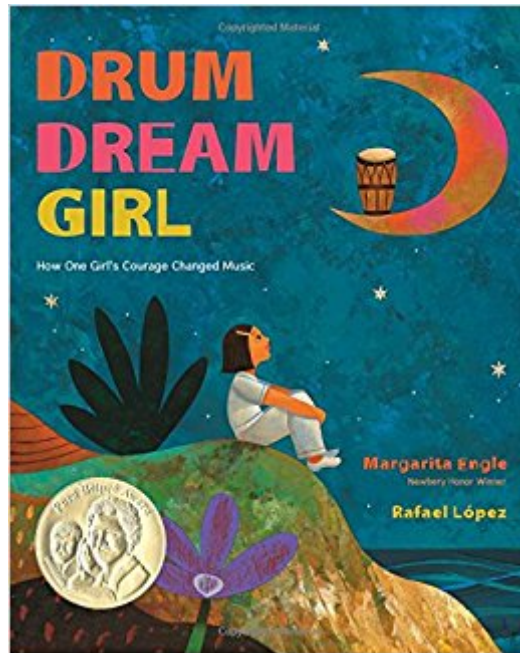




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# Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music



## Synopsis

Girls cannot be drummers. Long ago on an island—filled with music, no one questioned that rule—until the drum dream girl. In her city of drumbeats, she dreamed of pounding tall congas and tapping small bongos. She had to keep quiet. She had to practice in secret. But when at last her dream-bright music was heard, everyone sang and danced and decided that both girls and boys should be free to drum and dream. Inspired by the childhood of Millo Castro Zaldarriaga, a Chinese-African-Cuban girl who broke Cuba's traditional taboo against female drummers, *Drum Dream Girl* tells an inspiring true story for dreamers everywhere.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 48 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (March 31, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0544102290

ISBN-13: 978-0544102293

Product Dimensions: 8 x 0.4 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 38 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #7,965 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Central & South America #2 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Musical #5 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Music

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

Gr 1—4—Engle's spare, rhythmic text gets at the heart of the struggle to achieve a dream in this picture-book biography about a Chinese African Cuban girl who aspired to play drums even when society's double standards stood as a barrier. Growing up in tempestuous 1930s Havana, during a time when universities were often shut down because of their opposition to the dictatorial President Machado, Millo Castro Zaldarriaga dared to dream of playing percussion instruments—timbales, congas, bongos—but her father was adamant that "only boys should play drums." But still she persisted in her hopes and eventually, with the help of her

sisters and music teacher, became a member of the renowned Anacaona, Cuba's first all-girl dance band, founded by her sister, Cuchito Castro. López's zinging, neon-tinged art highlights the island's diversity, depicting the drum girl's flights of fancy set against the backdrop of carnival scenes and outdoor cafes. Details of Cuba's and the protagonist's Chinese, African, Taíno, and Spanish roots are seamlessly interwoven into the lyrical narrative and luminous acrylic paintings. The alliterative text parallels the snappy syncopation of the subject's instruments. The heroine's tenacity in the face of naysayers will inspire all dreamers, and the illustrator's smile-inducing cameo on the last page emphasizes the universality of Millo's story. For those looking for more nonfiction titles about female musical powerhouses, such as Monica Brown's *My Name Is Celia/Me llamo Celia* (Cooper Square, 2004), Katheryn Russell-Brown's *Little Melba and Her Big Trombone* (Lee & Low, 2014), and Carole Boston Weatherford's *Leontyne Price: Voice of a Century* (Knopf, 2014). An author's note gives more background on the groundbreaking percussionist.

—Shelley Diaz,  
School Library Journal

2017 Carnegie Medal winner \* "A beautiful account of a young girl's bravery and her important contribution toward gender equality in the creative arts." —Kirkus, starred review \* "The heroine's tenacity in the face of naysayers will inspire all dreamers, and the illustrator's smile-inducing cameo on the last page emphasizes the universality of Millo's story...For those looking for more nonfiction titles about female musical powerhouses." —School Library Journal, starred review "The text and illustrations work together beautifully here, creating a story that will imbue readers with inspiration and a yearning to make music of their own." —Booklist "A valuable addition to the growing library of stories about strong Latina women." —Publishers Weekly "With its emphasis on artistry and visual metaphor, this title bears a strong kinship with Yuyi Morales's *Viva Frida*, but it also brings an accessibility that young viewers (and teachers) will appreciate." —Bulletin "Engle's poetic text takes its cues from Zaldarriaga's chosen instrument, its rhythm at times steadily assured and at others loose and improvisational...[E]very spread is full of motion, with some of the illustrations requiring a ninety-degree turn, as if the book itself has got to dance." —Horn Book Magazine "Engle's poetic narrative combined with Lopez's warmly ethereal folk-art illustrations to evoke a nighttime tropical dreamscape." —New York Times Book Review

I bought this book for my 2.5 yr old daughter and she absolutely loves this book and has asked to

read it for bedtime every night for about 2 months now. She can also recite verbatim the first half of the book now. There are certain repetitive phrases that she also loves saying "big, round silvery moon-bright timbales." It's so fun to hear her recite it from memory. And I appreciate the multi-cultural theme that underscores this book as well. Overall, an interesting, aspirational book about a little girl's dream and how she achieved it.

What a beautiful story. The words read like a sweet evening beat. My daughter loves this book and I love the positive message that it share with her- she can be anything she dreams of being.

Yes-this is a great alternative to show you can do anything despite the gender bias - LET'S BREAK IT DOWN.Well done, Margarita - keep them coming, our 3 YO is growing up and needs more like this!

Drum Dream Girl is amazing! The illustrations are vibrant and creative. When you look at them you really think of the world through the eyes of an imaginative child. The story itself is also really wonderful! Not only can it be a book that promotes multiculturalism, it also promotes confidence in young girls to pursue their dreams. I recommend this book to everyone of any age!

Drum dream girl is a beautifully illustrated book which talks about the issue of fairness when it comes to being a girl and not being allowed to do something that is traditionally only for boys. My preschool children love this story. It has opened up great conversation about how it might feel to be excluded and what actions could be taken. What would you do? Would you help a friend? Is it fair? Love this book!!

Great picture book based on a historical character's desire to become a drummer. Children will love reading and listening to this enchanting story. The artwork is lovely. Parents will enjoy reading again and again.

Good book

Engle tells of a time and place where a girl playing drums simply wasn't acceptable, and of a girl who became a skilled drummer anyway. Lopez's richly colored dreamy illustrations evoke hot Cuban nights and truly bring the narrative to life.

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