

LUZ RIOS

Independent pop artist Luz Rios has all the ingredients of success: great pipes, songwriting chops, an experienced management and promotion team and the endorsement of Joan Sebastian, a lion in the Latin music world.

Rios is releasing her fourth album, "Aire," Nov. 18 via her own LCR Records with distribution from Select-O-Hits. The Mexican native attended high school in Ontario, Calif., where she's currently based. She has spent the last 11 years playing local gigs, radio festivals and county fairs; she almost signed to key Latin indie Balboa Records several years back and is now managed by former Balboa national director of promotions Frank White.

White played Rios' demo for Sebastian, who agreed to a duet on the title track (the first time Sebastian has recorded a composition by someone else, according to White) and an invitation to open for the regional Mexican star on tour next year.

"It was a dream come true," Rios says. "He understands my taste for music. I don't like just one style."

To that end, Rios has two singles on the air: pop track "No Me Da La Gana" and "Aire," the Sebastian duet. The song debuted on Billboard's Latin Pop Airplay chart before a more banda-heavy remix by top producers the Twins went out to regional Mexican stations in major markets. That version debuts this week at No. 40 on Hot Latin Songs.

"I could just as easily write a cumbia or a ranchera," Rios says. "If you make a connection, that's where the magic happens."

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

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UNDERGROUND ALUMNI

Deer Tick (Aug. 16, 2008) signed with Partisan Records, which will reissue "War Elephant" Nov. 11 . . . William Fitzsimmons (Feb. 9, 2008) signed with Brick Wall Management and released his sophomore set "The Sparrow and the Crow" Sept. 30 . . . Latch Key Kid's "Streets of Gold" was featured in an episode of MTV's "The Hills" four times in October.

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- No - The right devices to handle full-track downloads are not prevalent enough among mobile music consumers.

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