

ESTEVEES, SANDRA MARÍA (1948–)

Born in the Bronx, New York, raised by a single, working class mother, Esteves' early life was disrupted when she was sent to live in a Lower East Side Catholic boarding school at the age five. Her formative years marked by the strict discipline of the English speaking school were augmented by fun-filled weekends with her mother and family in a Spanish speaking environment. In later years, Esteves studied fine arts, writing and communications. Coming of age in the 1960s and 1970s, Esteves thrived in the Nuyorican atmosphere of the city, identifying with ethnic and racial consciousness, progressive social and political movements, and discovering her poetic voice in public presentations. Her first collection of poems, *Yerba Buena*, appeared in 1980 followed by *Tropical Rains: A bilingual Downpour*, 1980, and *Blues Town Mockingbird Mambo*, 1990. Esteves worked as a literary artist with the Cultural Council Foundation of the CETA Artistic Project, the New York Shakespeare Festival, and the African Caribbean Poetry Theater. She continues to write and perform her work.