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New Orleans' own "GulfAlive" is Grammy Nominee!

New Orleans, LA - November 30, 2011 – The funky New Orleans children's CD, *GulfAlive*, has been nominated for a Grammy for Best Children's Album. Nominations for the 54th Annual GRAMMY Awards® were announced Wednesday night by The Recording Academy®, and *GulfAlive*, written, performed and produced by native New Orleanian couple Gwynn Torres and Sid Berger (performing as The Banana Plant), was one of five nominees selected from a field of more than a hundred and twenty entries that included artists like Amanda Plummer and John Lithgow.

GulfAlive brings to life the enchanting wildlife and lifestyles of Southern Louisiana. All ten songs are fun-filled snapshots of animals and aspects of the Gulf in musical styles of the region, including New Orleans funk, Cajun waltzes, island rhythms, gospel and more.

According to Torres, "When we heard that the oil-spill response plans of major oil companies discussed how to protect walrus in the Gulf, we felt an obligation to enlighten the world about our wonderfully unique region." Berger adds, "We put to music much of what we treasure about living in Southern Louisiana and the New Orleans area."

The entire album was produced in a tiny closet studio under the stairwell in Torres and Berger's home. Berger laughs, "The studio is so small and airtight, you pretty much run out of air in 30 minutes. I had to install a long hose leading to an electric air vent from another room just to keep us conscious when we were recording!"

Complementing the CD is a coloring book filled with illustrations by New Orleans artist, Gus D. Levy, father of Gwynn Torres. The illustrations delightfully reflect the subject matter of the songs with jumping dolphins, flying seagulls, pesky alligators, proud pelicans and more.



There's even a video of the Cajun-style song "No Walruses in the Gulf" both on YouTube and on The Banana Plant site. "By making this project multi-dimensional, we hope kids and adults will have an opportunity to truly engage in the sound and diversity of this area," explains Torres.

Other songs and sounds on the CD include:

The rhythm and blues of "The PeliCan," the tropical flavors of "Everything Starts with Plankton," the funky grit of "The Crab Song," "Albért Alligator" and "Life on the Half Shell," the dewlap-dooowop ballad "Green Anole," the Cajun waltz "The Ibis, the Egret and the Heron," the Mardi-Gras-Indian-inspired street chant "Every Drop of Water" and the joyous, gospel-like "Little Creatures." You can hear clips of all the songs at www.thebananaplant.com

A portion of the proceeds generated by the sale of *GulfAlive* benefits Gulf Coast restoration through the efforts of the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana.

Gwynn Torres and Sid Berger are veteran New Orleans advertising executives who've frequently used their songwriting skills on client jingles over the years. As branding and creativity specialists, they provide consulting services and workshops for select clients. They also work together on Torres' online toy store, CreativityInstitute.com, dedicated to offering toys that nurture creativity in children. The store features the team's original puppet scripts and a children's art workbook entitled "Look, I'm Drawing!" written by Torres and illustrated by her father, Gus Levy.

Sid Berger is a past-president and founding member of New Orleans Artists Against Hunger and Homelessness (NOAAHH), an organization started by Allen Toussaint and Aaron Neville. Both Torres and Berger are currently active members of the NOAAHH board.

The *GulfAlive* CD and coloring book are available through creativityinstitute.com or by calling 888-814-TOYS.

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