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ARRR YOU READY FOR A MUSICAL ADVENTURE?  
New Orleans Grammy Nominees Release Family-Friendly Pop Opera!

*New Orleans, LA – October 8, 2012* – Following the success of their freshman album, “Gulf Alive,” nominated for a 2012 Grammy for Best Children’s Album, The Banana Plant has just released “Treasure Swamp – A Pop Opera.” Written, performed and produced by New Orleanians Gwynn Torres and Sid Berger, who perform as The Banana Plant, “Treasure Swamp” is a 22-song musical adventure story for the whole family.

Set in a cypress swamp in the Deep South, “Treasure Swamp’s” theme revolves around a greedy pirate who sails in with plans to drain the swamp in search of Jean Lafitte’s treasure. The swamp animals join forces to thwart the pirate’s evil plan and save their homeland. At the heart of the “Treasure Swamp” story is a message about appreciating the real treasures in life.

“We designed the story so no one has to die during the struggle with the pirate,” explained Torres. “It was important to us to illustrate conflict resolution in a kid-friendly way.”

The music of “Treasure Swamp” ranges from hard rock to ballad pop to Cajun, gospel, jazz, blues and even a tango. The entire story is told in song, with a female chorus of frogs explaining the action throughout the 43-minute soundtrack. All the characters sing, so there’s a rich variety of voices, including love-struck possums, a cagey raccoon, a pesky monkey, the villainous pirate and lots more. Said Torres; “We performed all the voices ourselves, which was both fun and challenging.” “Especially challenging,” added Berger, “since our custom home recording studio under our staircase is only big enough to fit one person at a time!” Clips of all the songs can be heard at [http://www.thebananaplant.com/treasure\\_swamp.html](http://www.thebananaplant.com/treasure_swamp.html).

Inspired by the Disney work of Alan Menken, as well as rock opera standouts such as “Tommy” and “Jesus Christ Superstar,” “Treasure Swamp” was originally conceived of as a puppet opera. “But then we realized the show could work equally well on a full-size stage with real actors as it could in a puppet theater with hand puppets,” explains Berger. “We’re already in production of a full-length puppet video of the show, which should be finished in a few weeks.” The trailer is online now at <http://www.thebananaplant.com/video.html>.

The music CD of “Treasure Swamp – A Pop Opera” is available now, either digitally or packaged, through [creativityinstitute.com](http://creativityinstitute.com), (888)-814-TOYS, as well as CDBaby and other online music vendors.

*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](http://CreativityInstitute.com), dedicated to offering toys that nurture creativity in children. The store features the team’s original puppet scripts along with the Grammy-nominated “GulfAlive.”*

*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 active members of NOAAHH’s Board of Directors.*

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