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Voice2Rep

“Volver al Corazón” available in musical platforms

An intimate look at the reality of women living in prison in Mexico

Mexico City, November 17, 2022. In Mexico there are currently over 200,000 people deprived of liberty, of which more than 12,000 (6%) are women, INEGI reported in the National Census of National and State Penitentiary Systems 2022.

It is a well known fact that the entire prison population lives in a generalized state of neglect, and women are the most vulnerable population due to their perceived status as a minority, which often leads to budget cuts and lack of adequate infrastructure.

Women deprived of their liberty are usually abandoned, starting with the physical space since they generally occupy male prisons annexes, which means that the spaces are not entirely adequate or sufficient for them to experience a dignified and safe process inside jail. Little is said about the subject outside the most specialized areas, adding the invisibility of a problem that is further complicated when analyzed from a gender perspective and in the face of the growing violence against women that plagues the Mexican territory.

In this context, **“Volver al corazón”** (“Going Back To The Heart”, in English) was born with an album of nine songs composed collectively by women who live in prison created and directed by Leiden, in which their testimonial songs, these women deprived of their freedom, find in music a tool to share their powerful experiences, perspectives and stories.

Leiden is a singer-songwriter, sociologist, activist, and producer with more than ten years of experience, who during the pandemic held collective creation sessions with women deprived of their liberty in five women's prisons in Mexico together with the Plan B Foundation (first video-penitentiary country), with the purpose of composing testimonial songs, which were later put to music and produced by her, to give rise to the album **“Volver al corazón”**.

She is the first artist to receive support from Voice2Rep in Mexico, a Liberian-born Accountability Lab program with a presence in other African countries that provides rising stars a platform to make their voices heard, connect with socially conscious leaders in the music industry, and develop the skills they need to shape the future of their countries through music.

“This project is a real tool for social transformation, not only for those who have created it, but also for those who listen to the lyrics of each song. It is a cry and demand for justice that cannot be ignored”, says Leiden Gomis.

"Volver al corazón" is another tool to question our role as a society in making people deprived of their liberty invisible, in an inefficient justice system," shares Eva Sander, Director of Accountability Lab Mexico. "Through joy, sensitivity, and vulnerability we have access to the people who require our help; it helps us to know the stories of thousands of people without process, without follow-up", she adds.

Through 18 collective creation sessions in five women's prisons: the Guanajuato Social Readaptation Center (CERESO), the Nezahualcóyotl Bordo de Xochiaca Penitentiary and Social Reintegration Center, the Santiaguito, Almoloya Penitentiary and Social Reintegration Center, and the Women's Social Reinsertion of Escobedo in Nuevo León, the women deprived of their liberty share their stories that give life to the musical lyrics that make up the album, which has a diversity of musical genres, among which the Ranchero, Corrido Tumbado, Ballad, Cumbia and even a touch of Ska.

About Accountability Lab

[Accountability Lab](#) is an international organization founded and led by [Blair Glencorse](#), which supports change-makers to develop and implement positive ideas for integrity in their communities, sparking positive social and economic change.

About Plan B Educación Social

[Plan B Educación Social](#) was born as a foundation based on ideological principles of social education and to respond to a changing society, in need of resources that enable their quality of life in the field of education, training, and social intervention.

About Sello JUEVES

[Sello JUEVES](#) is the first label for women in music in Mexico, created by Leiden and Adryana Marroquín, musical and stage artists with more than ten years of experience.

They use the power of the community to give prominence to creative women in the new musical ecosystem.

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Links:

<http://www.leidenmusica.com/>

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