

## Meet Juan and Julia!



Juan



Julia

Saludos Musical Explorers!

We are so excited to introduce bomba and plena to you! Our ensemble, Los Pleneros de la 21, has been together for more than 30 years. So we are much more than a band; we are a musical family. In fact, some of us are even blood family. We are father and daughter, passing these traditions down from one generation to the next. Bomba and plena have taught us a lot, not only about ourselves, but also about the world, different cultures, and the power of music, song, and dance. We're so honored to share our music and our culture with you.

Nos vemos pronto, y a gozar con la bomba y la plena!

Juan and Julia

Musical Explorers  
c/o Carnegie Hall  
881 Seventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10019

Leaving from  
Harlem, Manhattan



Arriving at  
El Barrio, Manhattan

## We asked Juan and Julia ...

**What are some of your earliest memories with music?**

**Juan:** I first started playing music at age eight, when my father bought me a pair of timbales. So instead of playing with cars and in the park like a lot of my friends, I was busy playing timbales!

**What is your favorite holiday or tradition to celebrate?**

**Julia:** Christmas celebrations in Puerto Rico run from Thanksgiving through February 2. The best ritual during that period is the parrandas. You and a bunch of friends surprise people in their homes at any time of the night, playing music very loudly until they let you in. You eat all their food and then the homeowners go with you to the next home. This is done all night long. The parrandas are officially done when the homeowners make an asopao de pollo (chicken stew); then it's off to bed!

**What is your favorite thing about performing bomba and plena?**

**Juan:** It is the feeling that I am touching my soul, in some sort of trance, and being able to connect with other musicians.

**Julia:** Music is like medicine for me. I can be very tired, sad, or even angry, but once I hear the music, and I am surrounded by people that are like family, everything is OK!



San Juan, Puerto Rico



Puerto Rican Day Parade in NYC