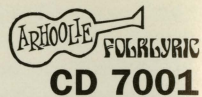


MEXICAN-AMERICAN BORDER MUSIC

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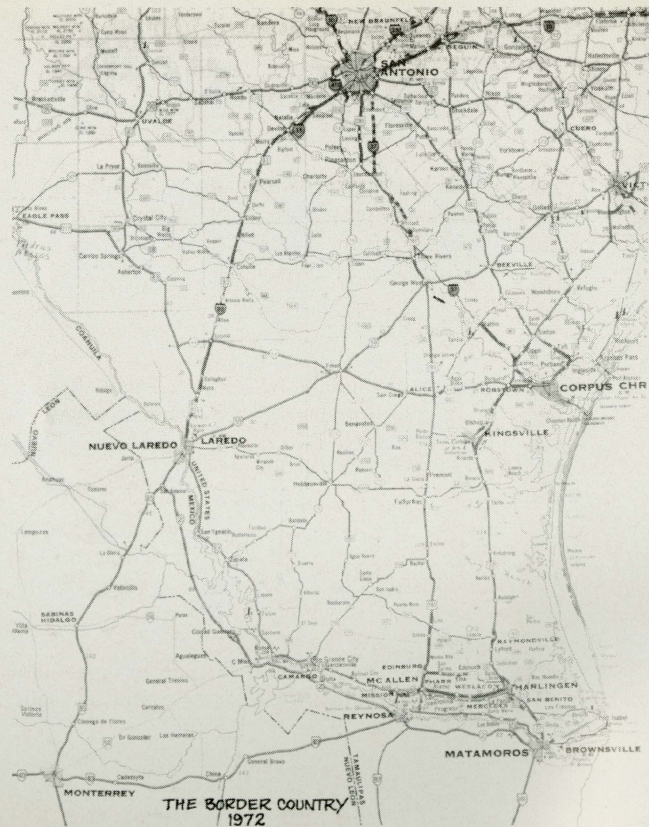


MEXICAN-AMERICAN BORDER MUSIC

Volume 1—An Introduction

Pioneer Recording Artists 1928–1958





MEXICAN-AMERICAN BORDER MUSIC

This collection brings you 26 historic performances by pioneer Mexican-American recording artists, made over a thirty year span beginning in 1928. The records were originally produced in the form of 10-inch 78 rpm, and since the mid-1950s 7-inch 45 rpm phonograph records, designed for home use or to be played on juke boxes. The singers and musicians who made these records helped popularize and perpetuate a number of traditions which today constitute the roots of Tejano, Chicano, or Mexican-American music which is slowly growing and becoming an integral part of America's popular music. Among the audio snapshots heard here are those of early accordionists, fiddlers, solo and duet singers, guitarists, orchestras, *mariachis*, a brass band, and *conjuntos nortños*, the latter selected with a bias towards the Texas-Mexican border area. The California scene is represented by only a few samples because

it has been more Mexican and urban in contrast to the unique regional rural traditions which developed in south Texas and northeastern Mexico. The emphasis of this collection is on the rural singers and their songs rather than on the urban composers, vocalists, orchestras, and Latin combos. Contributions by pioneer urban singers and composers such as Lalo Guerrero, Chelo Silva, Carmen y Laura, as well as regional orchestras are presented on other releases in this and Arhoolie's **Tejano Roots** series.

The border between the United States and Mexico, **La Frontera**, stretches for almost 1500 miles from San Diego and Tijuana on the Pacific Coast, to Brownsville and Matamoros on the Gulf of Mexico. That border, part of which follows the lower Rio Grande valley to the Gulf, is a political reality, but not necessarily a geographic or cultural one. Although much of this region consists of mountainous and often barren desert,

it is a musically rich, vital, and dynamic frontier.

Along the western end of **La Frontera**, the music generally reflects the most popular regional traditions of central, west and northwest Mexico due to the steady migration northward of Mexicans from the country's interior and western states. Since the turn of the century vocal duets and trios as well as a great variety of orchestras and solo singers have been part of the Mexican-American music scene. Since the late 1930s the soundscape of the western border region has also included *mariachi* music (with its roots in the state of Jalisco) which has become the national sound of Mexico. Since the 1940s, with the influx of migrant workers from Texas and rural parts of northeastern Mexico, Norteño accordion music has become very popular in California and all over Latin America. Today, in the early 1990s, the sound of *bandas*, up to 16-piece brass bands, known traditionally as *Bandas Sinaloenses* or *Bandas Zacatequenses* to identify their regional origins, are experiencing unprecedented popularity pri-

marily among recent immigrants. Many *bandas*, however, are becoming rapidly homogenized, utilizing electronic instruments and removing regional characteristics from their sound and repertoire with the hope of reaching a wider audience.

Moving east along the Arizona/Sonora frontier, a mining boom brought prosperity and population growth to the region around the turn of the century. Today, not only Mexican, but Native American traditions are a vital part of the local popular music scene. One example is the instrumental accordion and alto sax-driven dance music of the Tohono O'odham people, which today is widely heard at dances and known as "Waila" or "Chicken Scratch." This sound is similar to that of the sax- and accordion-led *conjuntos* which seemed to have originated in and around Monterrey, N.L. In parts of northern New Mexico a very old Hispanic fiddle tradition can still be heard along with guitar-led *conjuntos*. Unfortunately these regional traditions, like many others, were not commercially recorded

until the late 1950s and were never widely distributed.

The focus of this collection is on the dynamic roots of Texas-Mexican **Norteño** and **Conjunto** music which developed on both sides of the lower Rio Grande and which are well documented on commercial recordings. Extending hundreds of miles north and south of the Rio Grande lies a vast and rather isolated region dominated by San Antonio, Texas, in the north and Monterrey, Nuevo León, in the south. This region, which did not have an enforced border until the 1920s, is the cradle of Norteño and Conjunto music. Until the turn of the century, the polkas, waltzes, *mazurkas*, *redovas*, *huapangos*, and other rural dances popular in this area were usually played by one or more fiddlers, accompanied perhaps by guitars and a string bass or a clarinet and a drum. Such regional musical ensembles were known as *orquestas típicas*. By the end of the 1800s, the small, loud, but rugged and versatile button accordion had invaded the region's *ranchos* from Europe. The diatonic accordion (a

few musicians preferred the more expensive piano accordion) accompanied by a drum, and later the *bajo sexto*, slowly became the most popular rural dance music and pushed aside string bands, guitar-playing duets, and *orquestas típicas* and by the mid-1900s gave even big orchestras competition.

As more of the rural population moved to the cities, so did their music. By the mid-to-late 1930s the accordion was being tested as accompaniment for duet singers on records and on radio broadcasts, and by the late 1940s the sound of two voices accompanied by an accordion, *bajo sexto*, and string bass was the dominant one which appealed to the working classes. Since evolving as the last Mexican regional style and the only uniquely Mexican-American tradition, Norteño or Conjunto music from the Texas-Mexican border area has spread throughout much of Spanish speaking America. The trios, bolero singers, genteel orchestras, and *mariachis* which appealed more to the middle and upper classes have not vanished but also continue to be an important

element of the Mexican-American music scene. Today, as Tejanos and Mexican-Americans throughout the US have become more affluent, and as immigrants continue to renew and re-enforce Mexican traditions, the spectrum of musical and cultural expressions has widened. Mexican-American music is today remarkably varied and diverse ranging from traditional regional rural to modern urban groups which include elaborately arranged *mariachis*, smooth trios, techno *bandas*, orchestras of every variety and even

Spanish rappers. There are also legions of pop *grupos* featuring sexy singers and utilizing synthesizers along with all the latest gadgets of the global pop music world. To my ears the rural traditions, especially *Musica Norteña*, are the most soulful and powerful. Accordion-led *conjunto* music, like many other American vernacular traditions, reached its zenith in the 1950s and 60s and this collection documents some of the genre's finest moments as preserved on commercial recordings.

(Chris Strachwitz - editor 1994)

THE ARTISTS, MUSIC AND SONGS:

1. BRUNO VILLAREAL: Es Un Capricho (*instrumental polka*). Bruno Villareal – accordion; with unknown guitar and drum (*tambora*). (BS 94599, Texas Hotel, San Antonio, Tx., 8/16/1935)

Bruno Villareal was the very first important artist to record the then developing distinct accordion music of south Texas. He is accompanied here by a bass drum in the traditional manner heard at country dances since before the turn of the century. Bruno Villareal

was born May 21, 1912, in La Grulla in the Rio Grande valley. Almost totally blind since birth, he was known by the 1930s as "El Azote Del Valle" (The Scourge of the Valley). He traveled from town to town performing on the streets throughout south Texas, where he is still fondly remembered, usually playing a piano accordion with a tin cup attached, hoping for whatever offerings people would make. Bruno Villareal was inducted into the Con-

junto Music Hall of Fame in 1987. He died on May 15, 1990. (For more of his recordings note ARH/FL CD 7016 - **The Conjunto Accordion Pioneers.**)

2. PEDRO ROCHA & LUPE MARTÍNEZ: Corrido de Pennsylvania (The Ballad Of Pennsylvania) (*corrido*). Vocal duet with guitar by Pedro Rocha. (W402623, San Antonio, Tx., 6/12/1929)

Pedro Rocha and Lupe Martínez were one of the best and most popular vocal duets in San Antonio from the late 1920s to the late 1930s. Their enormous repertoire included not only the popular songs of the day but many older ones as well as *corridos*, or topical ballads, which were their specialty. Some *corridos* were very old while others were perhaps composed shortly before the recording session. They dealt with events, tragedies, conflicts, or personalities which were in the news or on people's minds. The tradition of the *corridos* continues to the present day and ballads are in greater demand than ever, representing a remarkable body of popular literature. Many *corridos* today, how-

ever, are fiction due to the demands of the commercial media including films, TV, and records, who use the story of a *corrido* as a script for a film or TV soap opera. *Corridos* based on true events can subject the composers, singers, and producers to legal problems or even revenge from accomplices or relatives.

The sound of two voices accompanied by one or more guitars was THE popular sound of *cancioneros* or songsters during the 1920s and 30s who would serenade for a per-song fee in the streets, the plaza, restaurants, house parties, taverns, or wherever they could find an audience. Further selections by this pioneer San Antonio *dueto* can be heard on our CD collections ARH/FL 7019/20: **Historic Corridos From The Border**; the CDs **Cancioneros De Ayer** ARH/FL 7032 & 7033; and **The Mexican Revolution**, a 4 CD set ARH/FL 7041-7044.

The Ballad of Pennsylvania

The 28th day of April
At six o'clock in the morning,
We left under contract
For the state of Pennsylvania.



Lupe Martínez, left; Pedro Rocha, right.

My little china doll said to me,
"I'm going to that company
to wash your clothes
and take care of you."

The contractor said to me,
"Don't take your family
so as not to pass up any jobs
in the state of West Virginia."

"So that you know I love you
When you leave me in Ft. Worth,
When you're already working
write me from where you are.

"When you get there
write me, don't be ungrateful,
In reply, I'll send you
My picture as a remembrance."

Good-bye, state of Texas
with all your fields.
I'm going to Pennsylvania
to keep from picking cotton.

Good-bye, Fort Worth and Dallas,
towns of much importance,
Now I'm going to Pennsylvania
to avoid becoming a vagrant.

On arriving in Milwaukee
we changed locomotives,
Then sped out of the city
at eighty miles an hour.

When we got there
and got off the train,
the Italian women asked us,
"Where are you Mexicans from?"

The Mexicans responded,
those who already spoke English,
"We come on a contract
From the town of Ft. Worth."

These verses were composed
when I was on the road,
They are poems of a Mexican
by the name of Concestino.

Now with this I take my leave
with my hat in my hand,
And my faithful companions
are three hundred Mexicans.

3. LA FAMILIA MENDOZA: *Aunque
En Miles Calles Vivas* (Wherever You
May Live) (*canción*). Leonor Mendoza –
vocal & guitar; Francisco Mendoza –
vocal & triangle; Lydia Mendoza – vo-

cal and violin; María Mendoza – vocal and mandolin. (BS 014176, Blue Bonnet Hotel, San Antonio, Tx., 9/14/1937)

The Mendoza Family was THE pioneer family of Tejano music, with daughter Lydia emerging in 1934 as the first Tejano Star. This recording is by the whole family as they performed and traveled with the lead vocal by Mrs. Leonor Mendoza. The story of the Mendoza family and daughter Lydia is documented in the book: **LYDIA MENDOZA – A FAMILY AUTOBIOGRAPHY** by Chris Strachwitz and James Nicolopoulos (Arte Público Press – Houston, Tx., 1993) and is available from Arhoolie Records.

Aunque En Miles Calles Vivas
(Wherever You May Live)

Wherever you may live
I will always come to see you
with that desire to see you
and a longing to talk to you.

And since you're so pretty
like a freshly cut flower,
your only fault is that
you fool around with others.

And you corral me so
that I can't get out,
and you throw a lasso
around me like the best cowboy.

And since you're so pretty
like a freshly cut flower,
Goddamn woman!
I'll teach you how to behave!

4. NARCISO MARTÍNEZ: La Pollita
(instrumental polka). Narciso Martínez – accordion; Santiago Almeida – *bajo sexto*. (BS 014083, Blue Bonnet Hotel, San Antonio, Tx., 9/13/1937.)

Narciso Martínez was the acknowledged Father of Conjunto Music. He was the most popular accordion playing recording artist who, by emphasizing the melody side of the instrument and leaving the bass parts to his *bajo sexto* player, developed a snappy, staccato sound which was copied or imitated by virtually every accordionist who followed him. Through the popularity of Narciso's many and widely distributed records, he helped mold and crystallize what today is known as Norteño or Conjunto accordion music.



Narciso Martínez, left; Santiago Almeida, right.

Although Narciso did not sing, beginning in 1946, he accompanied many *duetos* on their recordings for the IDEAL label.

Born in 1911 in Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Narciso Martínez grew up on the U.S. side of the river and played for dances all his life. His repertoire was an interesting mixture of traditional Mexican regional dance tunes and styles and those he heard played by Czech, German, and Italian bands in the area. Narciso Martínez died on June 5, 1992. His recordings are available on Arhoolie CD 361 (Cassette 9055), which contains his best IDEAL recordings made between 1946 and 1960). Several additional instrumentals from the 1930s are found on ARH/FL CD 7016: **The Accordion Pioneers**.

5. LYDIA MENDOZA: Piensa En Mí (Think Of Me) (*bolero*). Lydia Mendoza vocal and 12-string guitar. (BS 99261, Texas Hotel, San Antonio, Tx., 2/22/1936)

Lydia Mendoza is perhaps the single most important and historic pio-

neer recording artist not only in Tejano music but in the entire field of Mexican-American music. She became popular in her native Texas, as well as all over the southwest, in Mexico, and throughout the Spanish-speaking Western hemisphere. Born in Houston, Texas, Lydia made her first recordings with her mother and father as **Cuarteto Carta Blanca** in 1928 when she was only 12 years old. (A sampling of the Mendoza Family is heard above.) Lydia became famous as a solo singer shortly after she recorded "Mal Hombre" in 1934. (That original performance, along with many of her first hits, can be heard on ARH/FL 7002.) She soon became known as "La Alondra de la Frontera." With only brief interruptions to raise a family, Lydia went on to become "La Gloria De Texas" until her retirement a few years ago as the result of a stroke. Lydia's sisters, María and Juanita, became well-known and prolific recording artists on their own in the early 1950s as **Las Hermanas Mendoza** (heard on Arhoolie Cass 3017). Some of Lydia Mendoza's finest selec-



Lydia Mendoza, left; with Eli Oberstein recording at the Texas Hotel, San Antonio, Texas, October 1936. (In background are Leonor Mendoza, left, and María, right.)

tions from the 1970s are heard on Arhoolie CD/C 3012 - **La Gloria De Texas.**

Piensa En Mí (Think of Me)

If you feel a deep longing, think of me!
If you feel like crying, think of me!
Don't you see I worship your divine image,
Your innocent mouth while still so young
taught me sin.

Think of me when you kiss!
Think of me also when you cry!
You may take my life when you want it,
For it's useless to me without you.

6. EL CIEGO MELQUIADES: Viva Laredo (*instrumental polka*). Melquiades Rodríguez – fiddle; with unknown guitar and bass. (BS 02743, Texas Hotel, San Antonio, Tx., 10/20/1936)

El Ciego Melquiades (The Blind Fiddler) as he was billed on all his recordings from the 1930s, was a very popular musician in the San Antonio area during the time of the Great Depression and he is well remembered for playing house parties and festive occasions of all kinds and for his many fine recordings. Since the invasion of the accor-

dion, the Mexican fiddle and string band tradition has just about disappeared from the border music scene. Twenty years ago a fiddle-led *conjunto* from Michoacán had a surprise hit on many border area juke boxes and the group toured extensively. On the whole, however, you will hardly hear a fiddle today except drowned out by trumpets in a *mariachi*, in an American country band, or occasionally in the mountains of New Mexico or on the streets of Juarez. Other recordings by El Ciego Melquiades as well as other fiddlers in that tradition, can be heard on ARH/FL CD 7017: **String Bands: The End of a Tradition.**

7. LOS HERMANOS CHAVARRÍA: Peregrina (Wanderer) (*canción*). Alfonso Echeverría – vocal & guitar; Martín Echeverría – vocal & guitar. (BVE 83849, Texas Hotel, San Antonio, Tx., 8/7/1934)

Along with Rocha & Martínez, the Chavarría brothers, as their name was always spelled on the record labels, were one of the pioneer *duetos* to record in San Antonio and their fierce rural, defiant, and unrestrained vocal style made

them remarkably popular for over a decade. The family emigrated from Parras, Coahuila, in 1922 to become sharecroppers near Lytle, Texas, just southwest of San Antonio. Alfonso, the high voice, was born in 1901 and Martín, the lower voice, was born in 1908. Their father, Caytán, was a versatile musician who played fiddle for the traditional *Matachín* dances and also bass in various orchestras. Martín and Alfonso began singing in the fields and later went to San Antonio to test their skills on customers at the Plaza de Zacate. The Chavarría brothers made their first recordings in June, 1930 and soon appeared at the National Theatre, the Plaza Hotel, and broadcast over KMAC. They recorded prolifically for all three major labels over the next seven years. As musical tastes changed during the Depression in favor of sweeter, more sentimental sounds, the brothers who stayed with their uncompromising traditional vocal style, fell out of favor. In the early 1950s they made one final commercial record for the Falcon label. In 1974 I had the pleasure of meeting

both brothers through Fred Zimmerle, one of San Antonio's finest accordionists, who had long been a great admirer of the Chavarría brothers. Martín died in 1977 and Alfonso in 1982. Further recordings by the Chavarría Brothers can be heard on all our releases mentioned above under Rocha & Martínez.

Peregrina (Wanderer)

Wanderer, with eyes clear and divine,
and cheeks aflame with the light of day
Dear woman with lips of purple
and radiant hair that shines like the sun.

Wanderer, you left your land
of virginal snow and pine,
and sought refuge under my palm trees,
beneath the skies of my tropical land.

When you leave my palm trees and my
Sierra,
Oh enchanting wanderer
Don't forget, don't forget my land,
Don't forget wanderer, don't forget my
love.

If you leave tomorrow or soon,
enchanting woman of my heart
your memory lives on in my land,
dear woman you are lovely as the sun.

8. **ORQUESTA PAJARO AZUL** (The Blue Bird Orchestra): **La Cucaracha** (The Cockroach) (*canción*). Unknown vocal duet with orchestra: J. Rubén González – violin & probably leader with unknown trumpet, 2 saxes, trombone, guitar, bass, piano, drums. (BVE 83940), Texas Hotel, San Antonio, Tx., 8/11/1934)

“La Cucaracha” is a song dating from the time of the Mexican Revolution and was still very popular in the 1930s when this full San Antonio orchestra recorded it featuring a typical duet vocal. This orchestra made many recordings for the label which gave the ensemble its name and their recordings were marketed in the company’s Mexican and American series as well. Orchestras, ranging in size from violin, guitar, and string bass trios to fifteen pieces or more including brass and strings, have always been an important element of border music. (Note CD 7018: **The Pioneer Mexican-American Orquestas**.) During the 1940s and 50s, Beto Villa’s orchestra became the most popular dance band in the southwest (note ARH CD/C 364: **Beto**

Villa and CD/C 368: **Orquestas Tejanas**) and the Tejano orchestra tradition has been carried on more recently by Freddie Martínez, Sonny Osuna, Isidro López, Little Joe & La Familia, and Rubén Ramos just to name a few.

La Cucaracha (The Cockroach)
The cockroach, the cockroach,
it doesn’t want to walk anymore,
Because it doesn’t have,
because it needs marijuana to smoke.

The Carranzistas are already going,
They are going to Laredo.
They are no longer Convencionistas
Because they are very frightened.

9. **PEDRO ROCHA & LUPE MARTÍNEZ: Jesusita** (*canción*). Pedro Rocha – vocal & guitar; Lupe Martínez – vocal; plus unknown second guitar. (DEP 71, El Paso, Tx., 9/1/1934)

In contrast to this popular duo’s *corrido* above, here is a typical *cantina* love song from the 1930s.

Jesusita
When I left my home
I went to the bar to drink,

there I found Jesusita
and began to court her.

I asked her name, since
she was such a beautiful woman,
and smiling she told me
her name was Jesusita.

I asked her mother how
old her daughter was.
“Jesusita will be 15 years
old this September 16.”

It’s a reasonable age
for her to learn of love,
and if God gives me license,
I will pick this fair flower.

She laid down two conditions,
if I were to marry her;
from the 27th of March
to the 27th of April.

What happy songs
the birds are singing
what adorable gestures
you make at me with your eyes.

With that I bid farewell,
little white lily flower,
here end the verses
composed for Jesusita.

10. **ORQUESTA DEL NORTE: Jesusita En Chihuahua** (*instrumental polka*). Fernando L. Cabello – drums and probably leader; with cornet, 2 violins, flute, clarinet, piano, guitar, and bass. (BVE 42183, El Paso, Tx., 4/20/1928).

Related in name only to the previous song, this very popular polka was recorded in 1928 by this delightful *orquesta de salón* from El Paso. Although the recording dates from less than a decade prior to the performance by the Blue Bird Orchestra, the sound of this group takes the listener back to the turn of the century or before. For further examples of orchestras from the border note ARH/FL CD 7018 **The Pioneer Mexican-American Orquestas**.

11. **LOS MADRUGADORES: Nunca Te Creas** (Don’t Ever Believe) (*canción*). Pedro J. González – vocal; Victor Sánchez – vocal & guitar; Jesús Sánchez – vocal & guitar. (W 113716, Los Angeles, Ca., 1933)

On the West Coast, in Los Angeles, the two most popular recording groups during the 1930s and 40s, were Los

Madrugadores and the Padilla sisters (heard on cut # 13). Los Madrugadores means the early risers, referring to the audience which listened to them perform on the early morning, 4 to 6 AM, radio programs. Los Madrugadores and the radio programs were started by Pedro J. González, who initiated Spanish language radio in Los Angeles in 1928. Although Mr. González enjoyed performing, the radio audience soon preferred his accompanying singers and musicians, especially the Sánchez brothers who, with the addition of several extra guitarists, soon made hundreds of records. Los Madrugadores became so popular that several groups by the same name broadcast, played jobs and made recordings by apparently mutual agreement. Chicho and Chéncho were the most prominent and popular singers among the other Madrugadores. Groups by the same name continued to work all along the border up into the 1970s. Further selections by Los Madrugadores can be heard on our various collections noted under #2 above.

Nunca Te Creas (Don't Ever Believe)
 Don't ever believe in women, my friends,
 Even though they tell you they love you
 passionately
 Even though they tell you heaven is their
 witness,
 They only promise a man a love that is false.

I once had a girl,
 and in her arms I slept
 I once had a girl
 and in her arms she embraced me.

The ungrateful one
 made fun of my love,
 and held in her heart
 the most horrid and terrible betrayal.

12. BERLANGA & MONTALVO:
Ella Es Mi Delirio (I'm Crazy About Her) (*canción*). Andrés Berlanga - vocal & guitar; Francisco Montalvo - vocal & guitar; with probably José Rodríguez (El Tigre Del Valle) - accordion. (SA 2805, San Antonio, Tx., 10/28/1937)

Andrés Berlanga, who today still lives in San Antonio, is another of the pioneer recording artists. He started his singing and recording career in the

1930s with his partner, Francisco Montalvo. Mr. Berlanga, who plays both guitar and *bajo sexto*, recorded in the same makeshift recording studio at the Texas Hotel the day that now-legendary Mississippi blues singer Robert Johnson put some of his most emotional performances on wax. Besides the wonderful rough voices singing this typical *cantina* song, what makes this recording special is the fact that it features an accordion accompanying the traditional vocal duet who themselves play guitars. This is one of the very first recordings of what is today known as *Conjunto* music. Andrés Berlanga can also be heard with **Trio San Antonio** on ARH CD/C 311 **Conjuntos Norteños** well as on several of our collections.

Ella Es Mi Delirio (I'm Crazy About Her)
 They think I'm a drunk,
 with one foot in the grave
 Because of an ungrateful woman
 Who had no pity on me.

I was crazy about her,
 she was my sweetheart
 but her betrayal of me

caused me great suffering.

If you see me drunk here
 with my group of friends,
 It's because I'm celebrating
 the loss of that woman.

There are no women in this world
 who pay off in the end,
 so when you get involved with one
 check her out beforehand.

Good-bye proud girl,
 this is my farewell to you,
 If you see me drunk
 you'll know you were the cause of it.

13. LAS HERMANAS PADILLA:
Sueño En Río Grande (I Dream of Big River) (*canción*) (Margarita Padilla). Margarita and María Padilla - vocal duet; accompanied by Los Costeños: Manuel Acuña - director; with probably Sr. Flores - trumpet, Manuel Gill - violin, Ubaldo Acuña - clarinet, Isidoro Castro - guitar, and Simón Casas - string bass. (MLA 310; Los Angeles, Ca., July 29, 1938)

Las Hermanas Padilla, Margarita (first voice) and María (second voice),

were the biggest selling female *dueto* in the Mexican-American music field from the late 1930s into the post-war years of the late 1940s. Working out of Los Angeles, they were sometimes billed as the Andrew Sisters of Mexican music. Living in one of the centers of the recording industry, they became international stars quite early in their career. Born in Tanhuato, Michoacán, the Padilla sisters came to the United States in the late 1920s. Their parents, devout Catholics, had been threatened during the time of the Cristeros for protecting priests during that era of religious persecution in Mexico. The girls learned most of their early repertoire from their mother and grandfather, as well as directly from artists who were invited into the family home while appearing at a theatre in the neighborhood. The Padilla sisters were encouraged by their father to sing and he would pay them five cents for two songs (ten cents for long *corridos*!) which encouraged them, his private *mariachi*, to learn almost a thousand songs by the time they began to appear on radio in the mid-1930s.

The girls were an instant hit on the radio and at live appearances and in 1937 were asked to make their first records. Most of their recordings were made for Columbia and RCA and are widely available. Although the author of this selection is given as Margarita Padilla, the lyrics are probably based on a very old song.

Sueño En Rio Grande (I Dream of Big River)
One beautiful morning,
I dreamed of you as a rose
You were white with eyes like a goddess,
and amongst the flowers I kissed you.

In Rio Grande there is a paradise
and it is a path I came to know,
it is a sanctuary of precious jewels,
and it's there that I'd like to put you.

As I gaze upon you
filled with anguish for your love,
how I wish I could feel the joy of your
dreams,
of your beauty, pretty woman.

For your beauty the flowers weep
and the stars are unable to shine,
Even the moon loses its luster,
that's why I will adore you forever

In dreams you are like a radiant rose
fragrant, pretty and sensuous
And I remember you are my goddess
The loveliest of the ravine.

As I awake I want to see you
And though lost, it was you I sought,
But I could never find you
Because it was through a dream that I
knew you.

14. BANDA TÍPICA MAZATLÁN: La India Bonita (The Beautiful Indian Woman). (Mex 2281, Mexico City, D.F., ca. 1949)

This *banda*'s name translates as: Regional Brass Band from Mazatlán, and represents one of the first commercial recordings of the large 14- to 16- piece brass bands, known as *Bandas Sinaloenses*, very popular at most social functions in the state of Sinaloa in which Mazatlán is located. Twenty years ago I encountered a *banda* just like this one, playing a dance in Mazatlan. After almost fading into oblivion this powerful and dynamic regional Mexican musical tradition has burst forth as the number one popular dance music

among immigrants, especially on the West Coast. The tune is a beautiful traditional waltz known to most Sinaloa brass bands. *Bandas* from other regions of Mexico, Zacatecas, Jalisco, and Michoacan in particular, have different rhythms. Many of the currently popular *bandas* have lost their regional identity to the point of replacing many of the instruments with synthesizers. Banda Movil was one of the first to climb the charts and Banda Machos has a current hit with "El Sangre De Indio." The best known and most popular traditional *banda* still touring is Banda Sinaloense "El Recodo" de Cruz Lizarraga who has recorded extensively.

15. CONJUNTO TRIO SAN ANTONIO: Que Me Gano Con Llorar (What's The Use of Crying) (*ranchera*) (Andrés Berlanga). Fred Zimmerle – accordion & vocal; Andrés Berlanga – *bajo sexto* & vocal; Juan Viesca – string bass. (Rio 371, San Antonio, Tx., ca. 1951)

Although a *conjunto* and not a trio in the traditional sense of three voices

so popular in Mexican music, Trio San Antonio indeed consisted of three remarkable San Antonio musicians. Fred Zimmerle, whose grandfather was an immigrant from Germany, was born in San Antonio in 1931 into a musical family. His father, Willie Zimmerle, played accordion and his mother accompanied him on guitar. Three uncles also played music as well as Fred's own sisters and brothers with brother Henry Sr. and nephew Henry Jr. becoming famous pioneers on the San Antonio *conjunto* scene. In the early 1950s Trio San Antonio was locally very popular and recorded extensively. Fred Zimmerle is one of my favorite accordionists with a lovely lilting style heard on all his early recordings. His vocal partners have been variously his brothers, Andrés Berlanga or the superb Esteban Jaramillo. The string bass, once an essential part of any *conjunto* in south Texas or northern Mexico, known as *contrabajo* or *tololoche* in Spanish, was in the able hands of the late Juan Viesca, who invigorated any *conjunto* he played with. Trio San Antonio can be heard more fully on ARH

CD/C 311 (9 selections) and on ARH CD/C 376 among other collections. Although the song's text is no classic, the performance is spontaneous, full of joy, and so typical of the best *cantina* music of that period.

16. SANTIAGO JIMENEZ: La Cubanita (*redova*) (Santiago Jimenez). Santiago Jimenez – accordion; with probably Lorenzo Caballero – guitar; and Ismael González – bass. (Mer 12003, San Antonio, Tx., ca. 1949)

Among the first wave of accordionists to get a chance to make recordings, was Santiago Jimenez. He was born in San Antonio in 1913 and put his first instrumental polkas on wax in 1937. (These, along with his last recordings, can be heard on ARH CD/C 414: **Don Santiago Jimenez - His First and Last Recordings.**) As a youngster Santiago learned a lot of tunes from his father, Patricio, but later in life became a prolific song writer and composer in his own right. Today Santiago Jimenez is remembered for songs like "Margarita, Margarita" and "Ay Te Dejo En San

Antonio" as well as for instrumental polkas like "Viva Seguin" and "La Piedrera" (many can be heard on various Arhoolie collections). Don Santiago's first records were labeled as by "El Flaco" (the skinny one) and twenty years later one of his sons, Leonardo, became internationally famous as Flaco Jimenez. Another son, Santiago Jimenez Jr. is today also carrying on the Jimenez family tradition, very much in his father's style. All three Jimenez family accordionists have recordings available on Arhoolie.

17. SANTIAGO JIMENEZ: El Rancho Grande (The Big Ranch) (*ranchera*). Santiago Jimenez – accordion & vocal; with probably Lorenzo Caballero – guitar; and Ismael González – bass. (DI 285, IM 236A, San Antonio, Tx., ca. 1948)

Officially titled "Allá En El Rancho Grande" this old song became a hit all over Mexico and the Spanish-speaking world shortly after 1936 when a movie by the same name was released starring Tito Guizar and Lorenzo Barcelata. It was the first in a long line of *ranchera*

films which proved very popular among the masses and helped entrench *ranchera* music and *mariachis* as Mexico's national music. Santiago Jimenez makes a wonderful, gutsy polka version out of this song which was well received on the juke boxes of the southwest in the late 1940s.

El Rancho Grande (The Big Ranch)
Over at the big ranch
where I used to live,
there was a ranch girl
who happily used to tell me:

I'm going to make you some pants,
just like the rancheros wear.
I'll start them with wool
and I'll finish them with leather.

18. VALERIO LONGORIA: Sin Tu Cariño (Without Your Love) (*bolero*). Valerio Longoria – accordion & vocal and his *conjunto*. (Cor 2238, San Antonio, Tx., ca. 1951)

Valerio Longoria, although born in Clarksdale, Miss., in 1924 of parents who worked as field hands, introduced the genteel lyrics and rhythms of the

bolero to the *conjunto* repertoire. Growing up in south Texas, Valerio picked up the popular accordion to accompany his excellent, rich, lyrical voice. He was determined to earn his living playing and singing rather than working the fields, even though he has done more than his share of stoop labor in his life. Valerio began his long and distinguished recording career in 1948 in San Antonio and has remained popular ever since by performing perhaps the widest repertoire of any *conjunto* musician. Valerio is a master of polkas, *boleros*, *rancheras*, *cumbias*, *corridos*, and whatever else is new and strikes his fancy. Today Conjunto Longoria includes several sons and a grandson. Recipient of the National Heritage Award, Valerio is today a respected elder statesman in the *conjunto* world who still plays festivals, dances, and all kinds of special events. He has many recordings available and among his best are Arhoolie CD/C 336 **Caballo Viejo** and Arhoolie CD/C 357 **Texas Conjunto Pioneer** (featuring "La Tragedia De Ramón Delgado.")

Sin Tu Cariño (Without Your Love)
Listen my love to what I say to you;
Without your love I am unhappy,
Without you at my side I could never live.
That's why I beg of you
That you love me just the same
As I love you.

19. LOS DONNEÑOS: Canción Mixteca (Mixtec Song) (*canción*). Mario Montes – accordion & vocal, Ramiro Cavazos – *bajo sexto* & vocal with bass and drums. (Oro 233, Monterrey, N.L., ca. 1960)

"Canción Mixteca" is an old traditional song found in almost every book of Mexican folk songs and Los Donneños revitalized it when they recorded this emotional version in the popular *Norteño* style which became a regional hit. Los Donneños got their name from the fact that both musicians lived in Donna, Tx., in the late 1940s when they made their first recordings. With the fine lead voice of Ramiro Cavazos and the lilting accordion of Mario Montes, they continued to be a very popular *conjunto* in the 1950s and 60s and recorded dozens of

albums and hundreds of singles for various labels on both sides of the border. Most of their recordings were for Mexican Columbia (a CD of some of these sides is now available on Sony) and Falcon Records of McAllen, Tx. Besides being the lead voice and *bajo sexto* player, Ramiro Cavazos is also a prolific songwriter and today operates the RyN record shop and label in McAllen, Texas. In the mid-1970s he introduced me to Los Alegres De Teran and helped Les Blank and I film many great moments for our documentary film **Chulas Fronteras**. Ramiro Cavazos is seen singing "Canción Mixteca" with a member of Conjunto Tamaulipas in our second film about Border Music, **Del Mero Corazón**. (Both films are available on video cassette from Arhoolie Records and the soundtracks for both are on ARH CD 425.)

Canción Mixteca (Mixtec Song)
How far from the soil
where I was born,
Intense nostalgia
invades my thought.

As I see myself so alone
and sad like a leaf in the wind,
I would like to cry,
I would like to die of sentiment.

O, land of the sun,
I sigh to see you,
Now how far away I live
without light, without love.

As I see myself so alone
and sad like a leaf in the wind,
I would like to cry,
I would to die of sentiment.

20. LOS NORTEÑOS: Por Esos Montes (La Primavera) (Over Those Hills) (My Youth) (*ranchera*). (Unknown vocal duet with unknown *mariachi* accompaniment). (DI 227 - IM250A, probably Los Angeles, Ca., ca. 1949)

The composer, singers and musicians who made this record are unknown but I consider this performance a minor masterpiece of regional music. *Mariachis* in the late 1940s used only one trumpet and then, as today, the most soulful and authentic *mariachis* worked in *cantinas* or in plazas accompanying good, but often unknown singers. The

song is what sold the record and this one, although known by two titles, has become a popular evergreen.

Por Esos Montes (Over Those Hills)
Over those hills my youth has flown,
with the anguish of the sparrow-bird,
my youth has tried to abandon me,
leaving me only pain and sorrow.

I can love, as a true lover does,
but at a whim I can also forget.
And if one day you find I belong to
another,
I'll sing to her just as I sang to you.

Now I say good-bye to my faithful friends,
I'll give a full account to one and all,
Now I bid farewell to my buddies,
all that's left for me is pain and sorrow.

21. LOS ALEGRES DE TERÁN: El Güero Estrada (The Blond Estrada) (corrido) (Edilio Hinojosa, composer). Eugenio Abrego – accordion & vocal; Tomás Ortiz – *bajo sexto* & vocal with unknown string bass. (Fal 709, McAllen, Tx., ca. 1964)

Los Alegres De Terán, named after their home town of Terán, just

southeast of Monterrey, N.L., were among the founding fathers and became the #1 popularizers of **Música Norteña**. The extraordinary and widespread popularity of this *dueto/conjunto* once and for all established the combination of two voices accompanied by the lilting sound of an accordion and the steady plucked rhythm of a *bajo sexto*, as THE popular music of the working classes not only throughout the border country but all over the southwest and throughout much of the Spanish-speaking Western Hemisphere. The combination of sadness expressed in Tomás Ortiz's voice and the joyful, exuberant accordion fills from Eugenio Abrego made for a winning team almost from the beginning when the two joined forces for their first recordings around 1946 on the very hard to find Orfeo label out of Monterrey, N.L. (If anyone has a cache of these Orfeo 78s, please contact me and I will reward you well!) Los Alegres De Terán soon became best sellers for both the Falcon label and Columbia of Mexico and



Los Norteños de Nuevo Laredo – left to right: Humberto Delio Peña – accordion; Ramiro Treviño – guitar; Sergio Hernández – drums; Alvaro Garza – sax; Salomán Garza – *bajo sexto*; Ramiro Gonzalez – bass. Photo taken at a “concurso” sponsored by Cerveza Corona in Victoria, Tamaulipas, around 1960 where Los Norteños de Nuevo Laredo won top honors competing with 119 other conjuntos! Photo and information on the group provided by Humberto Delio Peña.

their mournful *rancheras* were heard on the radio and on juke boxes everywhere. This short *corrido* (ballad), "El Güero Estrada," is typical of recent fictional *corridos*, often based on factual events dealing with popular subjects but made for commercial consumption. Fiction is safe and avoids revenge or law suits on the part of relatives or other wronged parties in true stories. Their best recordings for Falcon may soon appear on CDs on EMI who purchased the label some years ago. A recent CD on Sony of some of their late Columbia/CBS recordings is mediocre at best. Los Alegres De Terán are as important to Norteño music as the Carter Family is to American Country music and they deserve better. Eugenio Abrego died in 1988 and so did the spirit of the *conjunto* although Tomás Ortiz is carrying on with a new accordionist.

El Güero Estrada (The Blonde Estrada)
Gentlemen, I am going to tell you a true
corrido.

The story of the blonde Estrada, smuggler
and killer
Who assassinated men to get their money.
In the state of Tamaulipas on the banks of
the Rio Grande,
Lived the blonde Estrada, his den was a
hive
Of souls clamoring for justice, a land
soaked in blood.

The wetbacks who crossed to the United
States
Chose midnight as if they were bandits.
And as they returned he killed them and
threw them in the river.
Rio Grande, big and full, your waters run
quickly,
You are not the one who kills, but you take
them already dead
And the evil doer benefits from all of their
wallets.

But the law of destiny, it is already sealed,
And on one November 22nd it came to the
blonde Estrada.
The police apprehended him when he
least expected it.
He would confess to the evil of thirty-two
deaths
And they applied the fugitive law and

later they burned the bodies.
And that's the end of the story of the
fearful blonde Estrada.

**22. LOS HERMANOS PRADO: A
Puñaladas** (Through Knifings) (*ranchera*)
(Enrique Garza Salinas, composer). J.
Guadalupe Prado – accordion; Anselmo
Prado – first voice & guitar; Homero
Prado – second voice & *bajo sexto*; with
Rudolfo Hernández – sax, Aurelio Alanis
– bass, and unknown drummer. (DV
339, Monterrey, N.L., ca. 1960)

This *conjunto* consisting of three or
more Prado brothers was very popular
in the Rio Grande Valley during the
1960s. They performed in the classic
Monterrey style, where the sax and ac-
cordion are tight and obviously know
each other well. Like so many brother
duets, the Prado brothers are superb in
their harmony work and their *conjunto*
sound is one of the most haunting and
unforgettable experiences to my ears.
Their best recordings were for the Del
Valle label of McAllen, Tx., which was
sold in the 1970s to a Florida firm.

A Puñaladas (Through Knifings)
I am going to kill a love by stabbing it,
In order to tear it out of my existence.
Here where you swore sincere love,
Here is where your kisses and my pleas die.

I cannot deny that it was a great love,
The both of us made castles of tinsel.
On my side I built with good marble,
You on yours with papers of crystal.

I trusted so in your little shining eyes,
I trusted so in your woman's words.
I heard the people say a thousand things
about you.

I, in love, by God, condemned her.

That is why I want to kill by knifing out
Those ruins, those cinders of your love.
Here where you swore sincere love,
Here is where your kisses and my love die.

**23. LOS TREMENDOS GAVILANES:
Vete De Mi** (Begone) (*bolero*) (DAR).
Juan Torres – accordion & vocal;
Salomón Prado – *bajo sexto* & vocal; and
conjunto. (DV 855, probably Monterrey,
N. L., ca. 1960)

Los Gavilanes achieved enormous
popularity in the 1960s and 70s. Salomón

Prado was born May 13, 1932 in General Teran, N.L., and began playing the guitar at age 19 and a few years later began to work with his cousins, Anselmo and Guadalupe Prado, known as Los Hermanos Prado (note selection # 22). In 1960 after recording several singles and albums for Del Valle, Salomón went on his own. He recorded "Rayitos Del Sol" as a solo singer accompanied by Eugenio Abrego of Los Alegres De Terán and "Corrido De Monterrey" with his own *conjunto*, Los Regiomontanos, but none became hits. Juan Torres was born December 27, 1938, in Cadereyta, N.L., and came from a very musical family. Around 1948 he learned to play the *bajo sexto* from his father and then picked up the violin. In 1950 Juan began to practice on a borrowed one-row accordion which was becoming the popular instrument, especially among country people. In 1954 he left for Monterrey and a few years later formed Los Gavilanes. In 1962 Salomón Prado and Juan Torres joined at the request of Cristobal García who owned Del Valle Records because he

wanted to record them together. From the first single released on Del Valle it was the magic of two very appealing voices and compatible musicians who quickly became irresistible to the listener whether in person, on the radio, or on records. By the 1970s they were billed as Los Tremendos Gavilanes or Juan Y Salomón to distinguish them from a number of other Gavilanes who were trying to cash in on their amazing popularity. Los Tremendos Gavilanes recorded for every regional label, making over 100 albums and they were equally popular on both sides of the border.

Vete De Mi (Begone)

Begone, if that's the way you want it, cruel destiny,

Begone, and may you have good luck on your way.

I won't cry so I won't embitter your goodbye,

Ask God for good luck in this life.

Well then, tomorrow when nostalgia invades you,

Perhaps you'll understand that I have need for your love.

And you'll return, and you'll return repentant,

Ask God to let me love you still.

24. LAS HERMANAS DEGOLLADO:

Postas De Retrocarga (Shotgun Shells) (*ranchera*) (Esteban Tirado). The Degollado Sisters (Panchita & Adela) – vocals, with unidentified *conjunto*. (Bronco 70, McAllen, Tx., ca. 1960)

The popularity achieved by the Padilla and Mendoza Sisters as well as Carmen & Laura, during the 1940s and 50s opened the way for other women *duetos*. Panchita and Adela Delgollado made a number of wonderful records accompanied by a tough, almost ferocious *Norteño conjunto* and this typical *ranchera* is one of my favorites. Women have traditionally had a hard time entering and succeeding in the commercial music world, especially in the Mexican-American culture which does not welcome them on the public podium. Women face a whole gamut of problems from jealousy on the part of boyfriends or husbands who resent other men watching or even just seeing their women, to the fact

that most will not be able to devote much time to music because raising a family usually interferes. At the time of these recordings almost all songs in the *ranchera* style were composed from a man's viewpoint. The singers however, as Lydia Mendoza and her sisters tell in the book "Lydia Mendoza - A Family Autobiography," easily turned the songs around in their heads and poured out their feelings as if they were singing about men! As in American Country music, only since the 1960s, with rare exceptions, have women written their own songs from a woman's point of view. Lydia Mendoza's recording of "Mal Hombre" in 1934 was a sensation perhaps in part due to her nerve to do it! (Other women *duetos* are heard on ARH CD/C 343 – **The Women**.)

Postas De Retrocarga (Shotgun Shells)

I don't know what to do in this world, this world is so full of deceit, there's no more love, all is a lie, all is a lie, love does not exist.

There are vain and deceitful women that easily give their heart, they promise eternal love,

Prado was born May 13, 1932 in General Teran, N.L., and began playing the guitar at age 19 and a few years later began to work with his cousins, Anselmo and Guadalupe Prado, known as Los Hermanos Prado (note selection # 22). In 1960 after recording several singles and albums for Del Valle, Salomón went on his own. He recorded "Rayitos Del Sol" as a solo singer accompanied by Eugenio Abrego of Los Alegres De Terán and "Corrido De Monterrey" with his own *conjunto*, Los Regiomontanos, but none became hits. Juan Torres was born December 27, 1938, in Cadereyta, N.L., and came from a very musical family. Around 1948 he learned to play the *bajo sexto* from his father and then picked up the violin. In 1950 Juan began to practice on a borrowed one-row accordion which was becoming the popular instrument, especially among country people. In 1954 he left for Monterrey and a few years later formed Los Gavilanes. In 1962 Salomón Prado and Juan Torres joined at the request of Cristobal García who owned Del Valle Records because he

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 Begone, and may you have good luck on your way.
 I won't cry so I won't embitter your goodbye,
 Ask God for good luck in this life.

Well then, tomorrow when nostalgia invades you,
 Perhaps you'll understand that I have need for your love.

And you'll return, and you'll return repentant,
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24. LAS HERMANAS DEGOLLADO:
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that most will not be able to devote much time to music because raising a family usually interferes. At the time of these recordings almost all songs in the *ranchera* style were composed from a man's viewpoint. The singers however, as Lydia Mendoza and her sisters tell in the book "Lydia Mendoza - A Family Autobiography," easily turned the songs around in their heads and poured out their feelings as if they were singing about men! As in American Country music, only since the 1960s, with rare exceptions, have women written their own songs from a woman's point of view. Lydia Mendoza's recording of "Mal Hombre" in 1934 was a sensation perhaps in part due to her nerve to do it! (Other women *duetos* are heard on ARH CD/C 343 – **The Women**.)

Postas De Retrocarga (Shotgun Shells)

I don't know what to do in this world,
 this world is so full of deceit,
 there's no more love, all is a lie,
 all is a lie, love does not exist.

There are vain and deceitful women
 that easily give their heart,
 they promise eternal love,

then just as easily go their way.

Please excuse, you that are good women,
please pardon my wild words,
I only refer to one ungrateful one
who trampled my heart in the mud.

They are not content with just one,
they want to fool around with many,
They are like shotgun shells,
they want to hit all over the place.

They are very sweet and slick
when they see the money shine,
they don't care if you are young or old,
they just want to enjoy themselves with
your money.

25. LOS HERMANOS BANDA:
Gregorio Cortez (The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez) (*corrido*) (P.D.). The Banda brothers: Rodolfo & Amado – vocals with unidentified *conjunto*. (DV 347, Monterrey, N.L., ca. 1958)

The ballad or *tragedia* of Gregorio Cortez which happened in 1910, is well documented in Americo Paredes' book **With a Pistol in His Hand** (University of Texas Press). The first recording of "Gregorio Cortez" was made in 1929 by Pedro Rocha and Lupe Martínez on two

sides of a 78 rpm disc playing over 6 minutes (heard on ARH/FL CDs 7019/20 - **Corridos de la Frontera**). The ballad has proven to be a remarkably popular one and has been sung by troubadours and *conjuntos* throughout the border country ever since and was the basis for the film **The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez** featuring Edward James Olmos. The version by Los Hermanos Banda heard here is a short one, typical of the roughly 3 minutes generally heard on a 45 rpm juke box record. The Banda brothers had a popular *conjunto* in the 1960s and lived in the lower Rio Grande valley (not to be confused with Los Hermanos Banda from Salamanca). The two brothers' wonderful harmony accompanied by a lilting and smooth accordion made them favorites along the border for many years.

Gregorio Cortez

In the country of the Carmen
look what has happened
The main sheriff died
leaving Roman wounded.

The following morning
when the people arrived

Some to the others said
they don't know who killed him.

They were investigating
and about three hours later
They found out that the wrongdoer
was Gregorio Cortez.

Cortez was wanted
throughout the state
Alive or dead may he be apprehended
for several he has killed.

Said Gregorio Cortez
with his pistol in his hand,
"I'm not sorry for having killed him
It's for my brother that I feel sorry."

Said Gregorio Cortez
with his soul aflame
"I'm not sorry for having killed him
self defense is permitted."

The Americans came
like the wind they flew
Because they were going to win
the three thousand pesos reward.

They continued toward Gonzáles
several sheriffs saw him
They did not want to continue
because they were afraid of him.

Came the hound dogs
they came on his trail
But to reach Cortez
was to reach for a star.

Gregorio Cortez said,
"What's the use of plans
If you can't catch me
even with those hound dogs."

The Americans would say,
"If we see him what shall we do to him,
if we face him head on
very few will return."

In the corral of the ranch
they managed to surround him.
A little more than 300 men
and there he gave them the slip.

There around Encinal
from all that they say
They had a shoot-out
and he killed another sheriff.

Gregorio Cortez said
with his pistol in his hand,
"Don't run, you cowardly rangers,
from one lone Mexican."

He turned toward Laredo
without a single fear,

"Follow me, you cowardly rangers,
I am Gregorio Cortez."

Gregorio says to Juan
at the ranch of the Cypress,
"Tell me what's new
I am Gregorio Cortez."

Gregorio says to Juan,
"Very soon you will see him,
go on talk to the sheriffs
to come to arrest me."

When the sheriffs arrived
Gregorio presented himself
"You'll take me if I wish it,
because there is no other way."

Now they caught Cortez
now the case is closed,
His poor family
he carries in his heart.

Now with this I take my leave
in the shade of a cypress,
Here we finish singing
the tragedy of Cortez.

**26. LOS NORTEÑOS DE NUEVO
LAREDO: El Chicano** (The Chicano)
(*ranchera*) (Juan Villa). Salomán Garza –
vocal & *bajo sexto*; Rodrigo Martínez –

vocal & bass, Humberto Delio Peña –
accordion; Sergio Hernández – drums;
Alvaro Garza – sax. (DV 650, Monterrey,
N.L., ca. 1964)

I could think of no better way to end
this Introduction to Mexican-American
border music, than with this superb
performance combining a great song
rendered by a classic Monterrey style
conjunto norteño with sax and accordion
jelling to perfection, with two great
voices harmonizing out front, all in per-
fect synch to create this masterpiece.

El Chicano

I am going to work in the north
to earn a lot of money.
Then when I want to have some fun
I will come to spend some time in Laredo.

In Laredo you can find anything,
come here if you want to have a good time,
There is beer, *mariachis*, songs,
and women that know how to love.

In Laredo I have a dark-skinned girl,
that I love for her charm and beauty,
And if God wishes,
I will return and marry her.

I will take her to live at my side,
to love her with total passion,
To give her all my love
and to surrender all my heart.

I am going my dear friends,
let's all shake hands,

Even though I'll be in the United States,
I won't deny that I'm a Mexican.

Yes, now I go and say good-bye,
I say good-bye with pleasure and care,
I am going to work in the north
so I can come and spend some time in
Laredo.

(Credits continued from back cover.)

Re-issue edited and produced by Chris
Strachwitz.

Cover photo: Pack mules crossing the
Rio Bravo in early 1920s, possibly
carrying contraband. Courtesy: Pho-
tography Collection, Harry Ransom
Humanities Research Center, The
University of Texas at Austin.

Cover by Wayne Pope
Original 78 and 45 rpm recordings from
the collection of Chris Strachwitz.
Sound restoration by George Morrow
of Echo Productions, using the
NoNoise System.

Pre-1942 discographical data from Ri-
chard K. Spottswood: **Ethnic Music
On Records, Vol.4** (University of Illi-
nois Press). Details of post-1942 re-
cordings from Chris Strachwitz.

Selections # 8, 14, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, & 26
were previously re-issued on Folk-
lyric LP 9003; all other selections re-
issued here for the first time.

Transcriptions and translations of se-
lections # 8, 14, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, 26
are by Pepi Plowman and Silviano
Barba; all other songs were tran-
scribed and translated by Zack and
Juanita Salem.

Biographical notes and comments by
Chris Strachwitz.

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MEXICAN-AMERICAN BORDER MUSIC
Vol. I: AN INTRODUCTION:
The Pioneer Recording Artists



1. BRUNO VILLAREAL:
Es Un Capricho (Polka)
2. PEDRO ROCHA & LUPE MARTÍNEZ:
Corrido de Pennsylvania (Corrido)
3. LA FAMILIA MENDOZA:
Aunque en Miles Calles Vivas (Canción)
4. NARCISO MARTÍNEZ &
SANTIAGO ALMEIDA: La Pollita (Polka)
5. LYDIA MENDOZA:
Piensa En Mí (Bolero)
6. EL CIEGO MELQUIADES (The Blind Fiddler):
Viva Laredo (Polka)
7. LOS HERMANOS CHAVARRÍA:
Peregrina (Canción)
8. ORQUESTA PAJARO AZUL:
La Cucaracha (Canción)
9. PEDRO ROCHA & LUPE MARTÍNEZ:
Jesusita (Canción)
10. ORQUESTA DEL NORTE:
Jesusita en Chihuahua (Polka)
11. LOS MADRUGADORES:
Nunca Te Creas (Canción)
12. ANDRES BERLANGA &
FRANCISCO MONTALVO:
Ella Es Mi Delirio (Canción)
13. LAS HERMANAS PADILLA:
Sueño en Rio Grande (Corrido)
14. BANDA TÍPICA MAZATLÁN (Banda Sinaloense):
La India Bonita (Vals)
15. CONJUNTO TRIO SAN ANTONIO:
Que Me Gano Con Llorar (Ranchera)
16. SANTIAGO JIMENEZ: La Cubanita (Redova)
17. SANTIAGO JIMENEZ:
El Rancho Grande (Ranchera)
18. VALERIO LONGORIA:
Sin Tu Cariño (Bolero)
19. LOS DONNEÑOS:
Canción Mixteca (Canción)
20. LOS NORTEÑOS with MARIACHI:
Por Esos Montes (La Primavera) (Canción)
21. LOS ALEGRES DE TERÁN:
El Güero Estrada (Corrido)
22. LOS HERMANOS PRADO:
A Puñaladas (Ranchera)
23. LOS TREMENDOS GAVILANES:
Vete de Mi (Bolero)
24. LAS HERMANAS DEGOLLADO:
Postas De Retrocarga (Ranchera)
25. LOS HERMANOS BANDA:
Gregorio Cortez (Corrido)
26. LOS NORTEÑOS DE NUEVO LAREDO:
El Chicano (Ranchera)

Edited by Chris Strachwitz

Total playing time: 74:40

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