

1. **Tu Pensabas Hacerme Sufrir** (cancion)
(Berlanga & Gaytan)
2. **Amigo Que Andas Haciendo**
(aka: Por Esos Montes) (cancion) (PD)
3. **Viva El West Side** (polka)
(Fred Zimmerle – Tradition Music Co.)
4. **No Me Estorbes** (cancion) (PD)
5. **Virgencita De Mi Vida** (cancion) (PD)
6. **Yo Bien Quisiera** (cancion) (PD)
7. **Yo Me Enamoré** (cancion) (PD)
8. **Borracho Perdido** (cancion) (PD)
9. **La Chivita** (redova)
(Fred Zimmerle – Tradition Music Co.)
10. **Al Cortar Una Gardenia**
(cancion) (Marco Rivera)
11. **Cuando Mas Tranquila** (cancion) (PD)
12. **Tenia Una Negra** (cancion) (PD)
13. **La Cosita** (polka) (PD)
14. **Blanca Flor De Alexandria** (cancion) (PD)
15. **Seca Tu Llanto** (cancion) (PD)
16. **La Rafaelita** (cancion) (PD)
17. **En La Sombra** (cancion) (PD)
18. **Concha Perdida** (cancion) (PD)
19. **La Pierdrera** (polka) (Santiago Jiménez)
20. **Cuatro Tiros Pesados** (corrido) (DAR)
21. **Palabras De Amor** (vals) (PD)
22. **Me Ablas Y Te Vas** (cancion) (PD)

Fred Zimmerle – vocals and accordion
(guitar or bajo sexto on selections without
accordion)

Andrés Berlanga – vocals and bajo sexto

Steve Jaramillo – vocals and bajo sexto

Juan Viesca – string bass & gritos
(violin on # 21)

plus:

Larry Zimmerle – bajo sexto on # 9

Manuel Arellano – vocal on # 4 with Berlanga

Martin Chavarria – vocal & bajo sexto on
22 with Fred Zimmerle

Recorded at Fred Zimmerle's home in San Antonio,
Tx on May 4 (# 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16,
17, & 18), May 5 (# 1), May 6 (# 3, 4, 8, 9, 13,
19, 20, & 21), and May 12 (# 15 & 22) of 1974
by Chris Strachwitz using two Neuman mikes
and a Nagra IV-S reel to reel tape recorder.

All photos © by Chris Strachwitz

All selections noted as PD are arranged by Fred
Zimmerle and © by Tradition Music Co. c/o
BUG Music Co (BMI)

10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, & 20 previously
unreleased (all other selections were previously
issued on Arhoolie LP 3004 and/or CD 311.

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10341 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito, CA 94530, U.S.A.

FRED ZIMMERLE'S CONJUNTO *Trio San Antonio*



ARHOOIE
9052

FRED ZIMMERLE'S CONJUNTO

Trio San Antonio

This recording session with Fred Zimmerle's conjunto "Trio San Antonio" resulted in some of the best, soulful, honest, fierce, and energetic singing and playing by these pioneers in the conjunto/ norteño music field.

Accordionist, singer, and bajo sexto player Fred Zimmerle was deeply steeped in the regional Mexican music of south Texas and he greatly respected, honored, and admired the older players' music and songs.

Not only are many of the songs heard on this disc from the repertoire of legendary San Antonio recording artists, Los Hermanos Chavarria, but Fred also introduced me to the Chavarria brothers (Martin & Alfonso) in person and one selection by Fred and Martin Chavarria is included.

(Also note: Arhoolie CD 7054 – Los Hermanos Chavarria).

Bajo sexto player and singer Andrés Berlanga began his musical career in San Antonio's plaza de zacate during the Great Depression of the 1930s when he also made his first recordings.

String bassist Juan Viesca (who also played violin and guitar) played his "bull fiddle" in a truly powerhouse, "rock-a-billy" style which along with his gritos energized us all.

Fred's alternate second voice and bajo sexto player was Steve Jaramillo, who blended splendidly with Fred's lead. This CD brings you almost all the fine performances by these remarkable musicians which I was able to capture on tape on those four memorable days in 1974.

Fred Zimmerle was born on February 13, 1931, in San Antonio and died there on March 5, 1998. His father, Willie Zimmerle, was also an accordionist while his mother, Anastasia, accompanied on guitar. Fred's grandfather, Fritz Zimmerle who had emmigrated from Germany, also played accordion and left his very German name! Three of Fred's uncles also played music: Santiago (Jimmy)-accordion, Félix-fiddle, and Secilio-guitar. Not only his father's generation, but most of Fred's own older siblings were musical as well. Sister Caroline sang; Henry Sr. played guitar and sang, and recorded with El Ciego Melquiades as well as with Trio San Antonio; while brother Santiago played bajo and bass and also recorded with the Trio. It is no wonder that Fred, the youngest, learned to play almost by osmosis!

Growing up during the Great Depression in San Antonio must have been almost a rural experience. Fred's father worked for the city of San Antonio



Juan, Fred, and Steve.

and had six teams of mules which he used to grade the dirt streets of the barrios since in those days only the main streets were paved. The family house at the time of these recordings, on N.W. 18th Street, sat on the site where the Zimmerle family had their corral in the 1930s which was also home for the mules as well as other domestic animals. When Fred was six years old, he began to play guitar and tried to sing. In elementary school he became the leader of a harmonica band. By age ten, Fred played his first "job" – backing his uncle Jimmy on guitar at a wedding. By 1945 Fred played guitar and bajo sexto with Felix Borrayo's conjunto and shortly thereafter took up the accordion after his father. In 1946, at age 15 Fred organized the first Trio San Antonio with Jeremia on bajo sexto and Prof. Ismael Gonzalez on string bass who usually played with Santiago Jimenez.

In March of 1949 RCA Victor Records sent a team from Mexico City and recorded some of the conjunto or norteño

music which was rapidly becoming popular on both sides of the border. Although Victor Records in New York had recorded Texas-Mexican border music extensively in the pre World War II era, by the early 1940s they had given up on this relatively marginal genre and left the job in the hands of their Mexican corporate partners. On March 7th and 10th of 1949, Trio San Antonio was one of the first groups (conjuntos) to record for RCA along with José Morante's Conquistadores. At this time there were no established recording studios in San Antonio and the recordings were made at radio station KOMO. Although most of the 12 selections recorded were instrumentals – because that's what had been selling well for Narciso Martínez and Santiago Jiménez – Fred Zimmerle and his Trio San Antonio became one of the pioneer conjuntos to record for a major label in the post World War II era. Although produced by their Mexican affiliate, these recordings were also pressed and distributed by RCA

Victor in the United States.

As accordion music gained wider popularity, more and more local Texas labels jumped on the bandwagon marketing this new popular sound. Trio San Antonio next recorded for the Alamo label – this time in the studios of radio station KCOR which became the first to present all-Spanish programming in San Antonio. Then followed recordings for Falcon, Rio, Corona and Ideal, not necessarily in that order.

Fred Zimmerle admired Narciso Martínez, Santiago Jiménez, and Jesús Casiano but personally preferred a slightly slower tempo. Fred also loved to hear Lydia Mendoza, the Chavarria brothers, Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martínez, and El Ciego Melquiades with whom he sometimes played and sang. Fred respected the old timers and learned a lot from them. He also wanted to bring back older songs and keep the older music going as you can clearly hear on this CD.

Like so many traditional musicians,

Fred got a "real job" soon after he got married to Herminia, better known as "Minnie," in 1950. He worked for Kelly Air Force Base for 35 years until his retirement in 1986. Although Trio San Antonio no longer played the cantinas and dance halls all over south Texas as they had done in their heydays around 1950, they continued to play almost every weekend, especially at Lerma's Night Club on North Zarzamora Street. After Arhoolie released the LP album, Trio San Antonio was invited to play at the Wolf Trap Folk Festival near Washington, D.C. in 1975. Fred also began to teach button accordion classes at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center and in 1989 he was inducted into the Conjunto Hall of Fame.

Bass player Juan Viesca was known as El Rayo del Contrabajo (The Thunderbolt of the String Bass) around San Antonio for many years and what a truly remarkable musician and personality he was. He was always in great demand to accompany many artists on their records and in the

early 1970s he had been working with the popular actor and singer "El Piporro." In the 1940s and 50s Juan Viesca worked and recorded with Santiago Jiménez, Narciso Martínez, Pedro Ayala, Valerio Longoria, Trio San Antonio, among other well known conjuntos. Mr. Viesca also played violin and contributed much to the good feeling and lively spirit of the Trio San Antonio. His real enjoyment came when during a performance he would sometimes pour lighter fluid on his bass fiddle and set it on fire! Although it probably singed the varnish, he never destroyed his bass! Juan Viesca was way ahead of all the rock bands who put on similar gross acts years later. His one great wish was to appear on the Lawrence Welk TV program but this unfortunately never materialized. Juan Viesca however did appear in Washington, D.C. on several occasions to take part in the annual American Folk Life Festival where he accompanied accordionist Pedro Ayala. Juan Viesca died on Sunday, September 2, 1990.

Andrés Berlanga was born on November 30, 1907, in Mexico and he died in San Antonio, Tx. on July 23, 1996. He came to the United States when he was three years old by crossing the Rio Bravo with his parents. His wife still kiddingly refers to him as "El Mojado" (the wet-back). Andrés Berlanga grew up in the rural area near San Antonio where his father had found work in the fields. As soon as he was old enough, Andrés joined his father and then worked for various labor contractors. By the time he was married in 1926 Andrés was already a hopeful singer and guitarist. He recalled making his first records in 1934: "Tomas Acuña (of the Acuña Music Co.) started us and he rehearsed us. He teamed me up with Santos Guerrero and we sang two songs – I think it was at the Grand Hotel on Lexington here in San Antonio and we were paid \$ 40.00 for two sides." Later that year, Mr. Berlanga teamed up with Francisco Montalvo who would become his long time partner and they recorded

prolifically until 1937. That same year Berlanga & Montalvo landed a regular 15 minute radio program over KMEC which for the next three years was sponsored by beer and toothpaste companies. Making these early records and getting his name in front of the public certainly helped in finding jobs. Much of Berlanga's singing was done in the plaza de zacate where tourists would ask for "La Paloma," "La Cucaracha," and "El Rancho Grande" but they would often pay 25 cents or even \$1 for these songs. In those days of the Great Depression that was good money especially when the regular charge was 10 cents per song. But he also worked with Montalvo in cantinas and in the streets of south Texas. That public demanded mostly corridos – "Los Tequileros" and "Contrabando del Paso" were in great demand. They would travel by catching freight trains and apparently got to know the railroad police quite well and never had any trouble even with the immigration people.

In 1951 Mr. Berlanga joined the armed forces and upon discharge a few years later he became a civil service employee. He worked at the same Air Force base as Fred Zimmerle and had quit playing music all together until Fred got him interested again in the 1950s.

Esteban "Steve" Jaramillo, from Yorktown, Texas, spent most of his life in the fields and doing other hard work. With a large family to support, Steve enjoyed music as a hobby and had the eternal hope to make it big in the music business. Fame, however, outside his immediate circle of fans, friends, and relatives escaped not only him but most other regional musicians at that time. They were and remain the unheralded and largely under appreciated pioneers of a lovely, lilting, and poetic dance music which has since made it very big and musically conquered much of the Spanish speaking Americas.

Chris Strachwitz
(1974, 1989, and rewritten in 2004)

Some of the Songs

I. TÚ PENSABAS HACERME SUFRIR

Tú pensabas hacerme sufrir
con decirme que no me querías,
yo más tarde vi tus procederés
y pensé en el favor que me hacías.
Yo te amaba y tú eras me delirio,
te adoraba y no lo comprendías,
me mirabas, y llorando de celos
yo lloraba, y pues, te reías.
S61o tú destrozaste me vida
porque en ti yo sufrí mis quereres,
por tu amor me olvidé de mis padres
y desprecié el amor de otras mujeres
No me pesa el haberte querido
ni el amor que ahí gasté sólo en ti,
sólo espero que Dios te castigue
porque tú no me quieres a mí.
Seguiré por el mundo buscando,
conquistando amores y placeres,
tus suspiros me encuentran llorando
y me dicen que ya no me quieres.

2. AMIGO QUE ANDAS HACIENDO

(aka: Por Esos Montes)

—¿Amigo; qué andas haciendo por esos montes?
-Amigos, ando buscando el amor de una morena.

Ando buscando una joven
que me arole y me duerma,

I. YOU WERE TRYING TO MAKE ME SUFFER

You were trying to make me suffer
when you told me you didn't love me;
later on I saw what you were up to,
and I realized what a favor you were doing me.
I loved you deliriously,
I adored you and you didn't understand
you would look at me, and weeping with jealousy
you would cry, and you, you would be laughing
You alone destroyed my life,
because I suffered all my love for you;
for your love I forgot about my parents
and scorned the love of other women.
It doesn't bother me that I loved you,
nor that I expended all my love on you;
I only hope that God punishes you
because you don't love me.
I'll continue on searching through the world,
conquering loves and pleasures;
your sighs find me weeping,
and they tell me you no longer love me.

2. IN THIS WILDERNESS

"Friend, what are you doing wandering in this wilderness?"
"Friends, I'm wandering in search of a brown-skinned
woman's love."
I'm searching for a young woman
who will rock me and put me to sleep,

porque en la noche no duermo,
no sé qué será de mí.
Prieta, supe que estabas
por esos montes,
que te trajeron tus padres
por no dejarte casar.
Aunque la vida me cueste, aquí la tengo que hallar,
porque lo que digo, cumplo,
yo nunca me sé rajar.
Vengo en mi caballo pinto
para venirte a llevar,
porque lo que digo, cumplo,
yo nunca me sé rajar.

because I can't sleep at night;
I don't know what will become of me.
Little darling, I found out
that you were somewhere in this wilderness,
that your parents brought you here
so as not to let you marry.
Even if it costs me my life, I must find her here,
because I keep my word;
I've never known how to be a coward.
I come riding on my pinto horse
to come and take you away,
because I keep my word;
I've never known how to be a coward.



Serenading the neighbors.

4. NO ME ESTORBES

Ahora puedes seguir tu camino
y más nunca te acuerdes de mí,
hazte cuenta que no me conociste
y lo mismo yo no te conocí.
Si con nuevos amores nos vemos
ni uno ni otro se vaya a enojar,
porque yo te lo dije con tiempo:
-No me estorbes, ni te he de estorbar.
Pobre el hombre a quien tú le finges,
que no sabe lo que es la mujer,
que no sabe que fuistes traidora,
pero pronto te va a conocer.
Ya me voy, me despido conforme,
ya me voy por el mundo a navegar,
vov en busca de nuevos amores:
- No me estorbes, ni te he de estorbar.

7. YO ME ENAMORÉ

Yo me enamoré de una muier,
pensando en que ella me amaba,
me desengañé de sus procederés,
y de mi amor se burlaba,
Pero anda ingrata, yo te perdono,
allá lo verás con Dios, si acaso vas a tu trono.
Yo no te aborresco ni soy vengativo,
ni menos con las mujeres,
tu amor tiene mancha.
yo soy un testigo, sin duda con ella muere.
Pero anda ingrata, yo te perdono,
allá lo verés con Dios, si acaso vas a tu trono.

4. DON'T GET IN MY WAY

Now you can go on your way
and never be reminded of me;
get it straight: you never met me,
and I never met you.
If we see each other with new lovers,
let neither of us get mad,
because I told you ahead of time:
"Don't get in my way and I won't get in yours."
I pity the guy for whom you put on an act,
he doesn't know what you are, woman,
he doesn't know you were a cheat,
but he'll get to know you quick enough.
Now I take my leave, I bid farewell contentedly,
now I'm leaving to wander the world,
I'm leaving in search of new loves:
"Don't get in my way and I won't get in yours,"

7. I FELL IN LOVE

I fell in love with a woman thinking that she loved me;
I was disillusioned by her ways, and she mocked my love.
But go on, cruel woman, I forgive you,
you can take care of it with God;
if by chance you should reach Heaven.
I don't despise you nor am I vengeful,
still less so with women; your love bears a stain,
as I'm a witness, and with that mark, it surely dies.
But go on, cruel woman,
I forgive you,
you can take care of it with God,
if by chance you should reach Heaven.

6. YO BIEN QUISIERA

Yo bien quisiera decirte lo que siento pero
hoy no puedo decirte mi pasión.
Si tú pudieras calmar mi sufrimiento
ya tiene dueño, ingrato corazón,
ya tiene dueño, ingrato corazón.
Ay, busca, busca a un ser más poderoso
y que te pueda tu amor corresponder.
Así no puedes nombrarme por esposo
ni yo puedo nombrarte mi mujer,
qué desventura, qué dicha sin placer.
Así algún día con otro amante sufres,
haz un recuerdo de aquél que fue el que amó.
De aquél que siempre a ti te fue constante
y lo arrojaste.
Con tan cruel rigor lo despreciastes,
con tan cruel rigor.

6. I REALLY WANT TO

I really want to tell you what I feel
but today I just can't tell you about my passion.
If you could only ease my suffering,
but your cruel heart already has an owner,
your cruel heart already has an owner.
Ay! go look, search for a more powerful being
who might be able to return your love.
That way you can't call me husband
and I can't call you my wife;
what misfortune! what pleasureless good fortune
So someday when you're suffering with another lover
remember the guy who loved you.
Remember the guy who was always faithful to you,
and whom you cast away.
With such cold-hearted cruelty you spurned him,
with such cold-hearted cruelty.



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Steve Jaramillo – vocals and bajo sexto

Juan Viesca – string bass, & gritos
(violin on # 21 only)

Cover (l to r): Andrés Berlanga,
Juan Viesca, & Fred Zimmerle

Pioneer Conjunto/Norteño artists, Fred Zimmerle's *Trio San Antonio*, bring you some of the best, soulful, honest, fierce, and energetic performances ever recorded.

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