



APPALSHOP AND THE GUADALUPE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER PRESENT

# encuentro

## COMING TOGETHER

APPALSHOP  
APRIL 10-20, 1991

GUADALUPE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER  
JUNE 1-30, 1991

Appalshop



An Appalachian and Chicano Cultural Exchange



One would never know from watching television, going to the movies, or listening to the radio that there are more than one hundred distinct, identifiable cultures in the United States. Put this fact with the idea that, as William Faulkner expressed it, "Without our stories, how will we know it's us?" and one begins to sense the depth and magnitude of the problem. The choice seems to be a narrow one, either become homogenized or invisible.

Fortunately, there is a face saving alternative: actively to resist the proposition and create a third possibility, which is what Appalshop has been about these past 22 years. By providing training, production, and distribution in a variety of mediums (theater, film, television, radio, recording, and photography) Appalshop is providing the means for Appalachian people to tell their own stories in their own voices. In doing this, we are doing what our forebearers did for us, in new mediums to be sure but with the same intent, that is, to cultivate our heritage with an eye to passing it on to those who will come after us.

Success in cultivating one's traditions is not a given, any more than a successful garden is assured. To tend a tradition in the speedy, dislocated mass market climate of the past 50 years requires inventiveness and a critical sensibility. The Appalachian culture of 1991 is not the Appalachian culture of 1931; storytelling does not occur now in the same way it did then, for example. But ask today's Appalachian artists what are their traditions and how did they come by them, and I believe that you will be satisfied that they are conscious of being part of a creative discourse with their heritage that reaches back in time, even to other lands.

What excites Appalshop about this festival of two of our country's many cultures is the opportunity to place the Chicano and Appalachian traditions side by side and admire their histories, differences, and similarities. The festival is a celebration of our peoples' efforts, even their stubbornness, to be neither bland nor to disappear.

## Dudley Cocke • Appalshop

In the past when we were told "Go back where you came from," our simple reply was to say that we were where we came from. Chicanos trace their heritage to Native American and Mexican origins that predate European presence in the Southwest. Our ancestry is found in the "Mezitisaje" or merging of our Native, African, and Spanish pasts. Our presence in Texas and the Southwest dates back to the 16th and 17th centuries. We became foreigners in our own land in 1836 with the creation of the Republic of Texas, and later in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that settled the Mexican American war. Ever since we have been relegated to second class citizenry.

In spite of overwhelming odds, and because of the very life and vigor of the people, our culture has remained vital and productive. The tenacious perseverance of the people has been manifest in the cultural expressions of the artists, poets, musicians, dancers, teatristas, and folk who refused to be erased or blended; rather we have influenced. Today the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center is dedicated to the encouragement and reinforcement of these cultural traditions and explorations.

Similarly, Appalachia has resisted the advent of assimilation and elimination. Appalshop equally dedicates itself to the survival and development of this original cultural expression.

In celebration of ourselves the Appalshop and the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center offer this opportunity to see Appalachian culture and Chicano culture, as a unique experience in true substance and genuine American culture.

## Pedro A. Rodriguez • Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center

Uno no se daría cuenta que mas de cien separadas é identificables culturas existen dentro de los Estados Unidos, si se guiara únicamente por lo que se ve y se escucha en la televisión, la radio, o el cine. Si uno liga esto con la idea que espresó tan bien William Faulkner, "Sin nuestros cuentos, cómo sabremos quienes somos?", entonses empieza uno a darse cuenta de lo amplio y profundo del problema. Las alternativas resultan muy estrechas; o nos asimilamos, o nos volvemos invisibles.

Afortunadamente sí hay una alternativa; activamente resistir est propuesta, y crear una tercera posibilidad. Es decir lo que Appalshop ha venido haciendo desde hace 22 anos. Con el proveer entrenamiento, producción, y distribución, en una variedad de medios (teatro, cine, vídeo, la radio, grabación, y fotografía), Appalshop proveen los medios para que la gente de Appalachia cuenten su propia historia y sus propios cuentos en sus propias voces. Con hacer ésto, hacemos lo que hacían nuestros antepasados para nosotros, desde luego que en nuevos medios pero con el mismo propósito, es decir el cultivar nuestra herencia para dejárselas a quienes nos siguen. El cultivar nuestras tradiciones no es un hecho fácil de lograr, como no es lograr un jardín abundante. Para cuidar de una tradición en un ambiente de mercado masivo, deslocado, y apresurado de los ultimos 50 años, requiere ser inventivo, y con un criterio sensible. La cultura Appalachia de 1991 no es la misma de 1931; por ejemplo el contar cuentos no ocurre en la misma forma ahora como lo era en aquel entonces. Pero pregúnteles a los artistas de Appalachia que cuales son sus tradiciones y como las conocen, y estoy seguro que estarán satisfechos de lo concientes que están ellos de ser parte de un discurso creativo con su herencia, que los lleva muy atrás en el tiempo y aun a otras tierras.

Lo que nos emociona en Appalshop de este festival, que es un espejo de dos culturas distintas de nuestro país, es la oportunidad de colocar dos tradiciones, la Chicana y la Appalachia lado a lado, y poder admirar sus historias, diferencias, y semejanzas. Este festival es una celebración de nuestros esfuerzos, aun nuestra obstinación en no llegar a ser ni insipido no llegar a desaparecer.

En el pasado cuando se nos decía "Vayanse para de donde vinieron," nuestra simple respuesta era que ya estábamos en el sitio de donde veníamos. Los Chicanos trasan su herencia a orígenes Indígenas y Mexicanos, anteriores a otras presencias Europeas en el suroeste de los Estados Unidos. Nuestro abolengo se encuentra en el mestizaje de las culturas Indígena, Africana, e Ibérica. Nuestra presencia en Texas y el sueste de los Estados Unidos, data desde los siglos 16 y 17. Nos convertimos en extranjeros en nuestro propio país en 1836 con la creación de la república de Texas, y mas tarde en 1848 con el tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo; resultado de la guerra entre Mexico y los Estados Unidos. Desde entonces hemos sido relegados a ciudadanos de segunda clase.

A pesar de grandes obstáculos y a causa de la misma vida del pueblo, nuestra cultura se a mantenido vigorosa. La obstinación y perseverencia de nuestro pueblo se ha manifestado en las expresiones culturales de nuestros artistas, poetas, músicos, danzantes, teatristas, y demás gente que se han rehusado a ser asimilados ó borados; por lo contrario, hemos influido.

Hoy día, el Centro Cultural Guadalupe se dedica a fortalecer y fomentar esta expresión cultural. Asimismo Appalachia ha resistido la asimilación y eliminación. Appalshop por igual se dedica a la supervivencia y desarrollo de esta expresión cultural tan original.

En celebración propia Appalshop y El Centro Cultural Guadalupe ofrecen esta oportunidad de ver las culturas Appalachia y la cultura Chicana, en forma única para experimentar y apreciar algo verdaderamente sustantivo, lo que es cultura genuinamente Americana.

# ENCUENTRO

coming together

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# FROM THE VALLEY TO THE MOUNTAIN



Nimrod Workman, 96 year-old retired miner, folksinger, balladeer. Photo: Doug Yarrow

by Robert Garfias

**W**e celebrate in this festival, two separate traditions which grew out of similar contexts yet which manifest uniqueness and distinctiveness. The fortuitous joining of two such singular musical traditions might at first give cause to wonder at why they are presented together. Is there some deeper significance of which we are not immediately cognizant?

Appalachian Mountain music and Conjunto music each grew out of a grass roots tradition with close ties to a distinct local and regional community. Each has managed

one big united voice, here are two strong traditions which doggedly assert the will to keeping on saying things in their own special way. All the while USA Today and MTV are trying to tell us we are all really just the same and that they know just what we like best.

Actually, while such things seem unusual they do happen in spite of all the attempts by the media to convince us that we are no longer interested in our regional identity. The popular music of Hawaii is an example which also comes to mind, along with some of the new popular Native American forms such as the Pow-wow and the Waila. As we begin thinking about it, in fact, there are hundreds of examples of local or regional styles of American music traditions which have been kept alive because of a local consciousness of a separate identity, one which makes them apart from, while at the same time, a part of the larger fabric of the American identity. The real meaning of cultural diversity lies in this ability to come together while maintaining this strong sense of individuality.

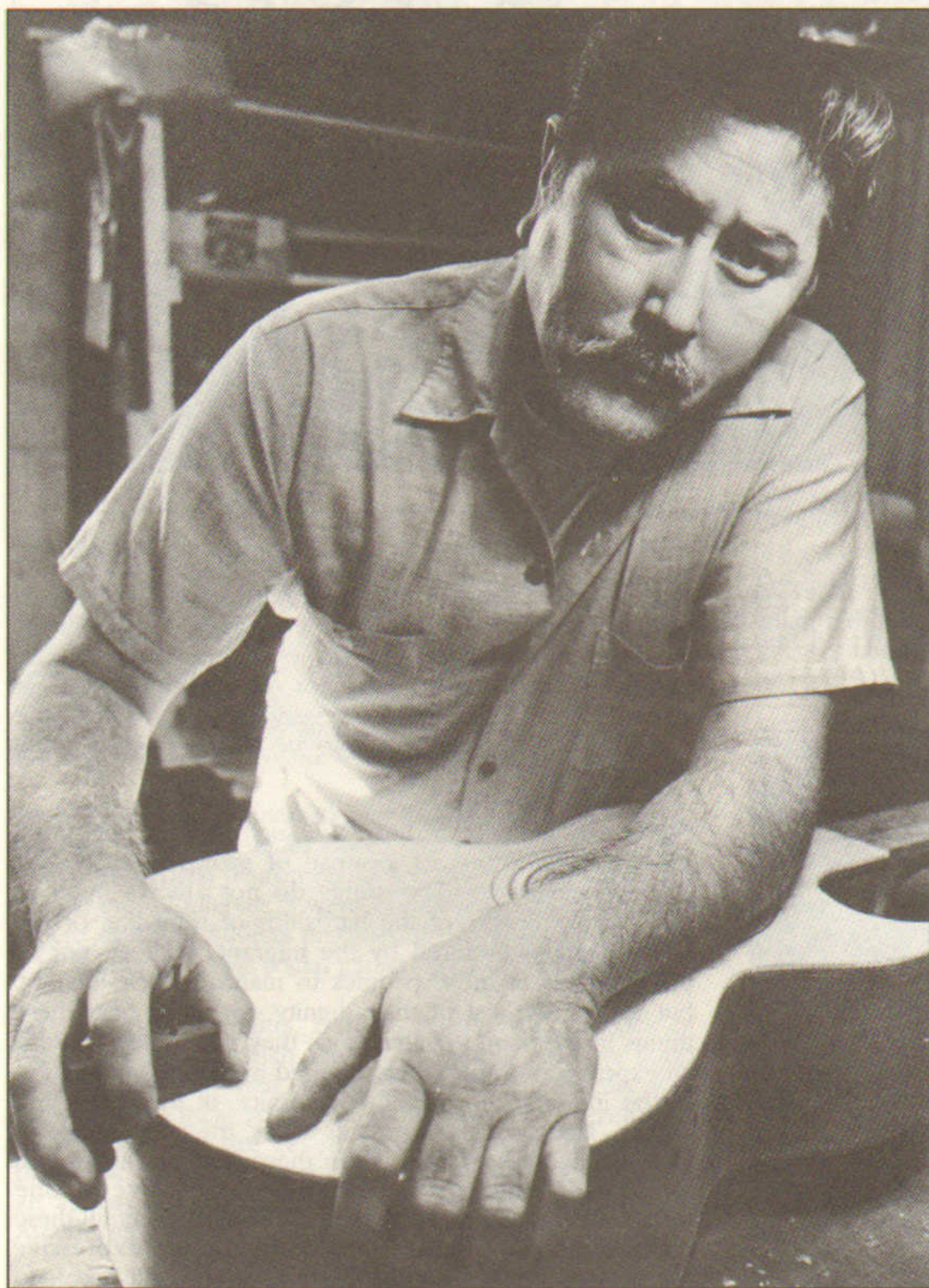
**O**f the two traditions presented in this encuentro, the music of Appalachia represents the older practice. Rich in variety and itself subject to gradual changes and emphases, the music of American Appalachia can trace its roots back to the songs and ballads of the British Isles and to the dance music, in particular the fiddle tunes, of the earliest American arrivals. And yet there is something distinctively American about this music, something which says that it is much more than just a transplanted tradition manifesting our roots in the British Isles.

The lilt and pulse of the music of these hills is something more than that of the original Irish fiddle tunes or Scots ceilidhs which were their source. In that "high lonesome sound" is the record of another voice and another set of experiences which speak of this land more than that of their origin. One of those voices, and one not often recognized, is African. The banjo has added a characteristic timbre to the American mountain music ensemble and although the idea of sticking a guitar neck onto a snare drum to make a new instrument, may smack

of American ingenuity, the roots of the banjo, in fact, lie in the African Savannah region, an area from which came many African slaves to the United States.

The banza, the precursor to the banjo, is one of many long necked lutes used in the West African Savannah region. All have wooden bodies covered with some kind

of skin to produce the characteristic percussive sound combined with that of the plucked string. Throughout the West African Savannah region these instruments are played by minstrels, highly respected poets, historians and singers of praise songs. Forbidden to use their own languages in the United States and not permitted to make instruments like those they knew in Africa, these slaves



Alberto Macias, bajo sexto maker, son of the late great bajo maker, Martin Macias.

to survive against the persistent onslaught of more easily accessible national popular forms being transmitted through the media. Together they represent a striking example of cultural tenacity and of the richness and variety of America's cultural traditions. In spite of the nation's often cited ideal of a cultural melting pot, one in which all of us come together singing the same song in

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could not express themselves directly through their shared and remembered African traditions. The banjo represents a combination of subtle defiance and ingenuity in the structuring of a new instrument out of already known and acceptable materials, and yet one which allowed a sublimated form of African traditional expression.

**T**he plucking technique, while highly refined and modified in the United States, still owes its basic system to the minstrels of West Africa. Even in the style of singing there may be some elements which are West African in origin. The high long sustain tones of the West African Griot, or minstrel, frequently trail off into a mournful wail and then alternate with sections which are wordy and rapid. One cannot hear the late Roscoe Holcomb singing Pretty Polly without remarking that there is something here very different from the traditional ballad singing of the British Isles.

Blended together in a great complex of songs, stories, ballads and dances the music of Appalachia has not only survived robustly but has become one of the clearest root





traditions of the nation. It has served as the seed source for the more popular form known as Bluegrass as well as for much of what we know now as Country Western music. In fact, in many instances, the line between these traditions is, for all practical purposes, indefinable. It has also served as an important influence in newer American styles, those which have developed even since the age of the recording industry, like Hawaiian popular music and even, to some degree, the Texas Mexican border style, or conjunto music.

**T**he music of the Texas Mexican border area is now generally known as conjunto music. The word conjunto is generally equivalent to the concept of ensemble with the sense of coming together. This music has its roots in the large cultural area of the Southern part of Texas which spills over into Northern Mexico. It is a unique form of music, and one which developed primarily within the United States, unlike many other Mexican forms known in the United States which owe their development to specific forms of Mexican origin.

Closely linked to the Central European music traditions of the Czech-Bohemian and German immigrants to the South

Texas area, the local Mexican population in South Texas began by incorporating these musical elements and before long had completely appropriated them. While the old rural German and Czech polka bands serve as the original inspiration for this music it very soon became something else, something indelibly associated with the life of Mexicans in the United States.

**O**n this base of Central European dance music was imposed a new set of expressive elements, some Mexican and others drawn from the rich mixture of Mestizo and Indian culture already manifest in the many musics of Mexico. The use of plaintive sustained and slowly dropping thirds, so typical of many Mexican musics, itself perhaps a blend of the yodel-like calls and songs of the Indians of Mexico and the Iberian love of the sound of thirds as harmony is characteristic. There is also a distinctive fire and spice characteristic of the "Western frontier" nature of Northern Mexico.

The polkas, huapangos and songs of the Norteño style, or Northern music, as this music is also known, was soon adopted by the entire Texas Valley population. Because the American migrant farm worker population continues to be made up primarily of Mexicans from the Texas Valley region, in a short time the sound of conjunto music and the names of its star performers have become known in Michigan, Illinois, Washington State, Oregon, Utah, Idaho, Colorado, etc. in addition to the entire Southwest. Today the polka-like sound of the button accordion and the 12-string bass guitar is a sound so characteristically Mexican and so widely known that many might be surprised to consider its European roots.

The sound of the Mexican conjunto ensemble is as much a banner for the peoples of the Rio Grande valley as it is for the largest number of Mexicans and Mexican Americans living in the United States. Its sounds have been disseminated widely throughout the Mexican communities of the United States and in many regions has all but completely supplanted the numerous other traditional musics of Mexico. It in turn has affected the development of other forms, such as the "Chicken Scratch" music of the Southwest and the newly popular Waila of the Tohono O'odham, formerly known as the Papago, Indians of Arizona.

**T**he ancient Chinese knew well the significance of a people's song. They long centuries ago established bureaus of song whose responsibility it was to collect the folk and popular songs of the many regions of China. The purpose was not so much to have a collection of songs as the symbolic one of having the people's loyalty assured by having been presented with their songs. The presentation of their songs and their preservation in the capital insured the continued allegiance of the populace.



Conjunto Dancers, San Antonio, Texas

Photo: Al Rendón

The people's songs were, in a real sense, thought to contain the essence of those same peoples. In these times we tend not to place quite so much value on the significance of what we sing nor on the songs we hear around us, and yet, in many very significant ways the songs of a region continue to be a true and valuable indication of its spirit.

**I**n this festival we hear two such distinct, yet strong manifestations of a sense of group identity and cohesiveness. The songs do not always need to speak directly of the hardships of rural life, or the injustices endured by the migrant workers, nor of the struggles of these peoples to maintain their identity, but not at the cost of their dignity, for us to hear these things in the sound of the songs they sing. They are also an expression of the values asserted in these communities, of the importance of family and unity, of friendship and loyalty. These songs express as styles, the entire range of joys and agonies of rural life in these changing times and while each tune may strike us as expressive of one sentiment or another, each style is a distillation of all these feelings from the group into one cohesive expressive form. Does the high and lonesome sound still speak to the people of Appalachia? As one Texas musician said when he was asked if the people still listened to conjunto music, "If they started playing some other music here, even the flies wouldn't come anymore."

**Robert Garfias is a professor at the University of California at Irvine**

From the Appalshop film "Tomorrow's People"

photo: Robert Cooper





# MOUNTAIN MUSIC

## *a tradition of change*

by Rich Kirby

In London City I used to dwell  
There I courted Pretty Polly that I loved so well  
—traditional, 19th century

Play me some mountain music  
Like Grandmaw and Grandpaw used to play  
—Alabama, 1989

It seems safe to say that whatever image you may have of Appalachia and the rural South, music is part of it. From the blues guitarist to the square-dance fiddler to the honky-tonk pianist to the fireside ballad singer, the traditional musician is part of what defines the region, for the people who live there as well as for everyone else. Whether through stereotype or experience, we tend to think of southern music as old, unchanging, rooted in the past. And this is often true; but like all stereotypes it is only partly so. The real story is much more interesting.

However traditional it might be, "mountain music" has never stopped changing and growing. Musicians in the south, as everywhere, have always learned from each other. The music that we try to sum up with terms like "country" or "folk" or "ole time" is the result of hundreds of years of cultural and social interactions. Every group of people, every social and historical movement, throughout the history of Appalachia and the South, has left its impression on the music.

In the early days, most of the European settlers who came to the South were from the British Isles. They brought with them the folk traditions of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. At the time of the Revolution, transplanted British folk music could be heard all over the colonies, and in the isolation of the rural South these traditions took on a life of their own.

The earliest white traditional songs in the South were probably the ballads, story songs that were widely sung in England and especially Scotland. All over early America people entertained themselves with the stories of Barbara Allen and her lover or of the farmer who gave his wife to the devil, who gave her back. Soon people were making up ballads on local themes, like Omie Wise murdered by her sweetheart or Wild Bill Jones the outlaw.

Alongside the unaccompanied ballads was the fiddle. Though it was sometimes called "the Devil's riding-horse," it was the typical instrument of the frontier. Small enough to ride in a saddlebag, it went everywhere; and the dances where southern fiddlers provided the only music were for a long time the basic social gathering of the region.

Like the ballad singers, fiddlers started with a stock of tunes from the British Isles. Like them, fiddlers soon began making up their own music, and a whole galaxy of regional and local style and repertoire soon developed. Partly this was the result of rural isolation; but the distinctive sound of southern string music is also due to an almost immeasurably large contribution from African Americans.

The first slaves arrived in America a year before the Pilgrims. Over the next two centuries millions of Africans were kidnapped into a life of servitude in this country. Though their circumstances were tragically different from other immigrants, they had this in common: they brought their music with them, and that music had a major influence on the music of the nation.

So deeply is Africa woven into the fabric of Southern music that it is hard to separate out the African contribution. Rhythms, call-and-response, and

improvisation are among the specifics. Among the most tangible contributions was the banjo, an instrument from west Africa widely adopted in America. It was recognized as the typical black instrument even before white musicians of the nineteenth century stole it and its music for the blackface "minstrel" shows. In countless communities, black musicians learned fiddle and white musicians learned banjo, and not long after the Civil War the typical country dance party would feature fiddle and banjo together—the earliest stringband.

Unfortunately this sort of sharing did not usually extend beyond music. As Jim Crow took hold in the South, as African Americans began to look toward the cities of the North, black musicians developed the new musical forms of ragtime and blues, especially in the Piedmont of North Carolina and Virginia. And they turned to other instruments—piano and guitar. The guitar is of Spanish ancestry, introduced to America through Florida and the Southwest. Probably black musicians learned it in the deep South. White musicians from Appalachia recall first seeing the instrument in the hands of black people recruited to the upper South to build railroads and mine coal.

In any case musicians, as always, learned from each other. One result was the "classic" string band of banjo, fiddle, and guitar. These bands played a wide variety of music, from traditional dance tunes to ballads to rags to blues. Mostly the string bands were white, though their music was a racial fusion. Black artists tended to play blues and rags and, in the cities, went on to originate jazz. Rural black guitarists raised the instrument to new heights of beauty and virtuosity.

Around 1920 all this creative ferment began to be first broadcast, then recorded, as the electronic age began to take hold. Musicians from distant communities and different communities began to listen to each other, and the process of change began to speed up. Musical styles which originated in remote rural areas began to play all over the U.S. Black, white, and Latino artists could



June Appal recording artist Uncle Charlie Osborne, who recently turned 100, is regularly featured at Appalshop's Seedtime Festival. Photo: Maxine

incorporate each other's sounds in their music. Radio and records were segregated (African American artists were marketed as "race" music) but communication across styles and across regions became a fact of life.

The subsequent development of this music, in the cities and in mass media, is another story. World War II brought millions of Americans into contact with each other's cultures, and in the following years radio and television created more and more nationwide markets. Music from Appalachia and the rural South provided the foundation for today's country, blues, bluegrass, and a lot of jazz and rock. But this music, which is a remarkable combination of influences over space and time, still very much exists in its own right. Whether or not we call it "traditional," it is a vital force in communities across the region. As they have done for centuries, Southern musicians are pulling in influences from all over and combining them into a musical heritage, a process that has gone on for a long time and shows no sign of ending anytime soon.

Mandolin

Photo: Sam Adams







Valerio Longoria

## VALERIO LONGORIA Y SU CONJUNTO

One of the most influential stylists of conjunto, Valerio Longoria literally grew up playing the accordion, starting when he was only seven. He's been at it for 60 years and the mark he's left is indelible and identifiable. Never bound by tradition Valerio is often called a genius and a pioneer not only for his vast legacy of original music - many now standards - but also for the string of conjunto music firsts credited to him.

Besides being the first to perform standing, instead of seated, he also brought boleros to conjunto, combined playing while singing, and was among the first to incorporate other instruments with the traditional ensemble.

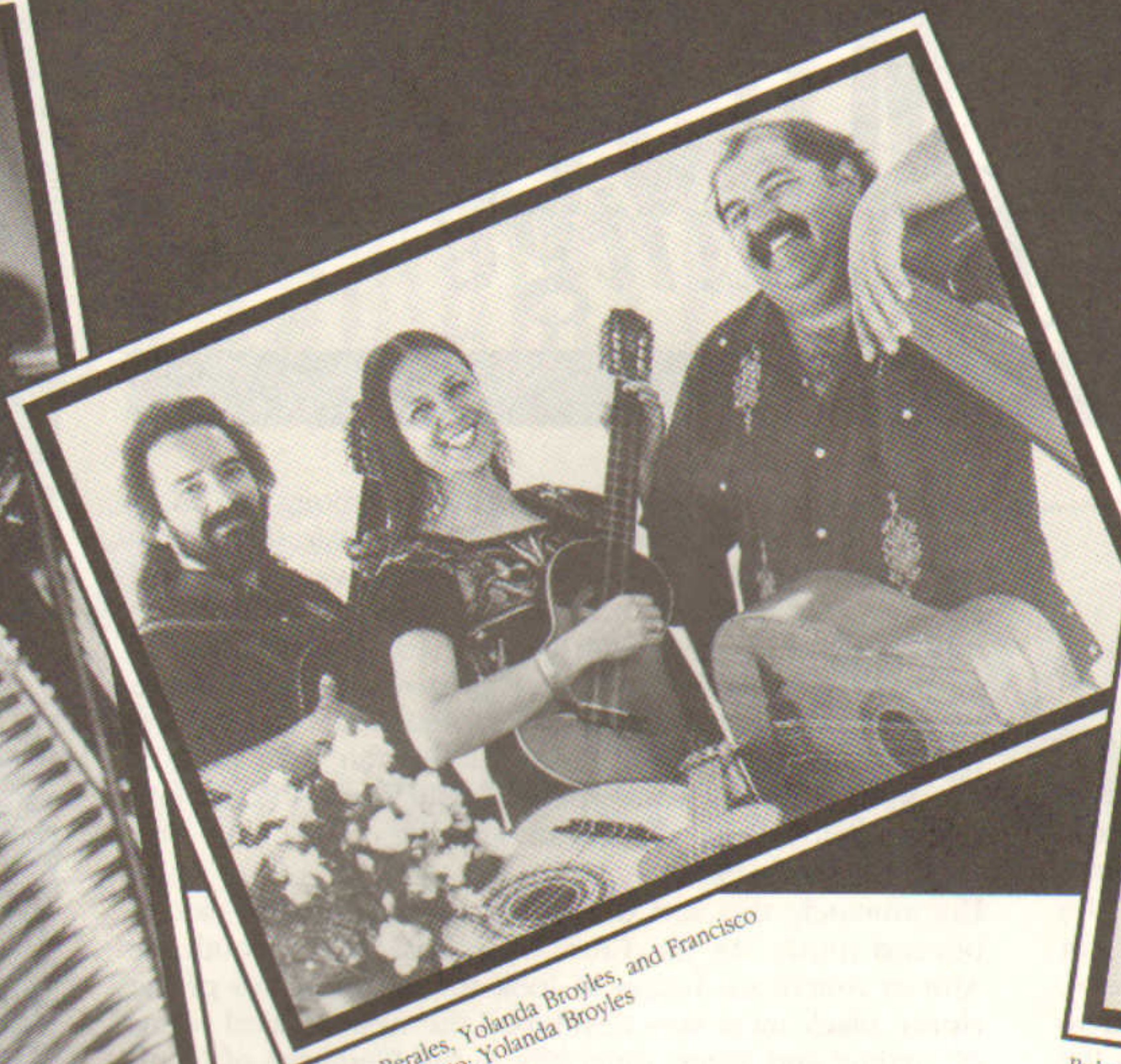
His love of the accordion has led Valerio to more than figuring new ways of playing it; Longoria modifies and repairs accordions when he's not playing and he was among the earliest to retune and retrofit the instrument, giving the conjunto accordion its distinctive sound.

His recording debut in 1947 with San Antonio's Corona Records was the beginning of a catalogue which now exceeds 200 recordings. One of the first to be inducted into the Conjunto Music Hall of Fame, Valerio Longoria was declared a national treasure in 1986 and awarded the National Heritage Award by the National Endowment for the Arts. But he is no museum piece. An active performer, he continues to experiment and incorporate new elements to his performances. Equally at ease with country rock and jazzy blues as with chotis and polkas, Valerio's free and expressive accordion style has been a significant influence on many younger accordionists.

His sons, Valerio, Jr., and Flavio, as well as his grandson Valerio, IV, learned from him to play in his conjunto. They will be joined by Juan Garcia.

A master with a strong sense of sharing, Valerio has taught hundreds of players and continues to do so as master accordion instructor for the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center.

Valerio's most recent recording, released on the Arhoolie label in 1990 includes a wide selection of rancheras, boleros, cumbias, and polkas.



Roberto Perales, Yolanda Broyles, and Francisco González. Photo: Yolanda Broyles

Photo: Al Rendón

## FRANCISCO GONZÁLEZ Y SU CONJUNTO

Francisco González was born and raised in East Los Angeles where many of the musical traditions of Mexico converge. As a youth he acquired a first-hand knowledge of jazz, rock, salsa, norteno and jarocho musical traditions from which he later drew as a street musician, and as co-founder, leader, and composer of Los Lobos (1973 to 1976).

During the past ten years Francisco has worked in many capacities as a specialist in Mexican/Chicano music: in performing as a string musician (specializing in the Jarocho, or Mexican harp), in film scoring, in lecture demonstrations, serving as an artist in the Los Angeles Unified School District, and providing musical direction for many professional theater productions.

Since the 1970s, he has done pioneering work in musical direction and performance in Chicano theatrical productions, working with the Bilingual Foundation for the Arts (Carmen Zapata) and El Teatro Campesino, for which he received widespread recognition.

In addition to theater work, Francisco regularly performs Jarocho and Norteno music individually and with his trio Francisco González y su Conjunto at clubs, fiestas, and other social gatherings throughout the United States. Accompanying musicians are Yolanda Broyles-González and Roberto Perales. Francisco González also offers workshops for musicians, and lecture demonstrations on Chicano drama and music at schools, universities and for community groups. Francisco González y su Conjunto is a member company of the American Festival Project.

Roberto Perales was raised in Los Angeles and learned to play the guitar at an early age. The noteño and mariachi styles were the staple music of many a house party, and blues, rock and roll, and swing also influenced his early playing. Perales currently plays the jarana with Francisco González y su Conjunto. He also plays bajo sexto, vihuela, bass, violin, and requinto jarocho.

Yolanda Broyles is a native of the Arizona/Sonora borderlands and has lived in California, Arizona, Texas and the Federal Republic of Germany. She studied with Valerio Longoria in Texas, where she performed widely. In recent years Yolanda Broyles has focused on performing jarocho music in addition to norteño and Huasteca. Her preferred instruments are the eight-string jarana and the vihuela. She is a professor at the University of California in Santa Barbara.



Ruby Nelda Perez

Photo: Al Rendón

## LOS ACTORES DE SAN ANTONIO

The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center's Theatre Arts Program produces three to four plays each year and offers instruction in acting, directing, stagecraft and make-up, as well as creative dramatics for children. Through these classes and its policy of open door auditions, the Theatre Arts Program has been able to identify and nurture a strong corps of actors and technicians, who in 1986 founded Los Actores de San Antonio.

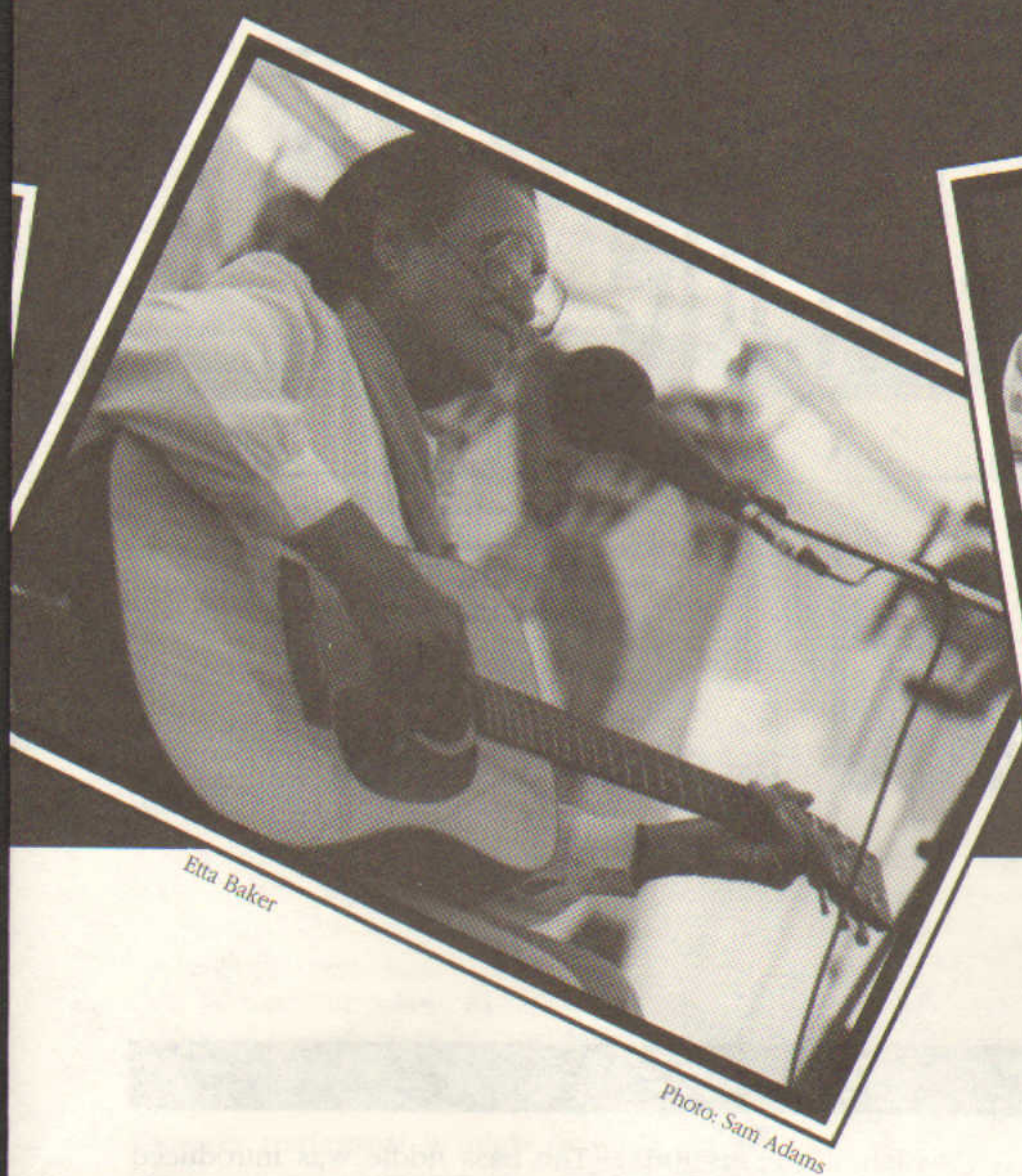
Plays vary from English to Spanish, but the most successful productions have been those which incorporate both languages, thereby allowing audiences of all ages and backgrounds to understand and appreciate the work on stage. In July 1988, the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, with major underwriting support from The Ford Foundation and the City of San Antonio, hosted the TENAZ XIV International Festival of Chicano Latino Theatre. The week-long event offered master workshops in theatre arts to some 150 festival registrants, as well as evening performances for the general public by twelve outstanding companies from the U.S. and Latin America.

"A Woman's Work," is a one-woman bilingual (English/Spanish) play written by Latina writers Silviana Wood, Mary Sue Galindo, Enedina Casarez-Vasquez, Beverly Sanchez-Padilla, and Denise Chavez. The play is compiled, edited and performed by Ruby Nelda Perez.

Ruby Nelda Perez participated in and helped to establish such groups as Texas A & I University's La Compania de Teatro Bilingue, Kingsville, Texas; El Teatro Bilingue de Houston, Houston, Texas; Los Actores de San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas; El Teatro de la Esperanza, San Francisco, California. She is a member of TENAZ (Teatro Nacionales de Aztlan) an international network of Chicano/Latino Theatre.

"A Woman's Work," is an ongoing touring show with over 100 performances including Joseph Papp's Latin American Theatre Festival in New York City; the Smithsonian Institution's Hispanic Heritage Month in Washington D.C., LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) conventions in Washington, El Paso, Texas and Albuquerque, New Mexico; El Encuentro Chicano in Mexico City; TENAZ Theatre Festivals held in Cuernavaca, Mexico and San Antonio, Texas; a one month residency in Peru and various Latina/Women's Organizations in Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado.





Etta Baker

Photo: Sam Adams



Tommy Bledsoe, Angelyn DeBord, and Kim Cole.

Photo: Larry Childress



Marion Sumner and Lee Sexton

Photo: Appalshop

## ETTA BAKER

Etta Baker is part of the African-American tradition of blues music and finger picking guitar of North Carolina and the Virginia Piedmont. Born in 1913 in Caldwell County, North Carolina, Etta grew up in an environment with music. She recalls that as a child she would wake up to the smell of breakfast cooking and the sound of her father's guitar. Evenings often drew to a close with the Reid family playing music late into the night. Music was in the bloodlines: her grandfather was a banjo player; her father played not only guitar, but banjo and fiddle as well; harmonica and jew's harp were her mother's instruments. All of her brothers and sisters played instruments, as did aunts, uncles and cousins. Not surprisingly, Etta tried as early as possible to get in on the act. When she was three years old and still too small to hold the instrument, she would place her father's guitar in the middle of the bed and try to pluck out chords. Her father finally bought her a small guitar of her own. Etta also learned to play fiddle, piano and banjo at a young age. When she grew older, Etta would perform "around the settlement" with her family. Corn shuckings, entertainments, dances - there was always a community social event at which they could play. The Piedmont music scene in which Etta grew up was noteworthy in its degree of racial integration. Etta grew up playing with white and black musicians and for integrated audiences in social settings as well. Etta's own family can claim Irish and Native American lineages, as well as African-American.

Today Etta lives in Morganton, North Carolina where she raised nine children and played locally. She began playing in wider circles in 1958, with appearances at the 1980 World's Fair in Knoxville, the 1984 National Folk Festival at Wolf Trap, as well as concerts in West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia, New Jersey and around North Carolina.

Etta's current repertoire consists mostly of finger-picked, pre-blues rags and breakdowns, hymns, popular tunes, and blues played on the six string guitar. Her favorite tunes are the oldest, those she learned from her father.

Etta was honored with a North Carolina Folklore Society Brown-Hudson Award in 1982, and in 1988 she received a North Carolina Folk Heritage Award.

—exerpted from Leslie Williams' interview, Old Time Herald, April 1990

## ROADSIDE THEATER

And we believed in the family  
And the Old Regular Baptist Church.  
We believed in John L. for a while  
'Til things couldn't get much worse.

Oh, they tell me times were harder then  
And I remember that for a while.  
But I remember the way my Daddy laughed  
And the way my Mama smiled.

—Song Chorus from Roadside's  
SOUTH OF THE MOUNTAIN  
by Ron Short

Roadside Theater's home is in the central Appalachian coalfields of east Kentucky and southwest Virginia. Roadside's members, most all natives of the region, have called on their heritage of storytelling, music, and the church to develop a theatrical form which combines a natural storytelling style with acting and music. This style allows Roadside to speak to its audience in a forthright and intimate manner. Roadside's plays are influenced by the body of archetypal tales, oral histories, and ballads that are a special part of the Appalachian tradition. Smithsonian Magazine has described this content and style as "dramaturgy with a difference; a hybrid form of play-acting as organic to this hardbitten coal country as the Cumberland walnut; an Appalachian oral history carefully crafted into down-home docudrama."

Roadside is an ensemble company of 13 artists and administrators. Over the past 15 years, the theater has created 14 original plays, trained dozens of performers, writers, and directors, and toured seven of its original productions to a variety of audiences in more than 700 communities in 39 states and Europe. The company has performed a number of times off-Broadway in New York City, at the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife in Washington, D.C., and has represented the United States at international theater festivals in Los Angeles, Seattle, Philadelphia, Sweden, Denmark, and London.

Roadside is a part of Appalshop, the Appalachian media arts center, and is a founding member of Alternate ROOTS, the Alliance for Cultural Democracy, and the American Festival project.

## THE LEE SEXTON BAND

Lee Sexton has lived all his life in Linefork, Letcher County, Kentucky, where he is a mainstay of the area's traditional music. Lee grew up in a family and a community full of banjo players, and he learned the instrument as a boy — his first banjo was made from a groundhog hide and cost a dollar. He did some professional playing in the 1940's but soon went to work in the mines. He worked there for twenty years, retiring in 1964 with black lung disease. Lee played steadily during his mining days and especially afterwards, at square dances, schools, festivals, and radio shows.

Lee Sexton's banjo playing is highly personal. He began in the traditional clawhammer or drop-thumb style, then—like many mountain musicians—taught himself the three-finger style that Earl Scruggs, Don Reno, and other bluegrass players were using. When a mining accident damaged his hand he could no longer play three-finger style but he developed a powerful two-finger "roll" that combines the syncopation of three-finger playing with the energy and drive of clawhammer. Lee's music can be heard on his June Appal release, "Whoa Mule", which was included in the Library of Congress Select List for 1989. The title song was also used for a popular music video on The Nashville Network. The Lee Sexton band also features his son Phil, daughter-in-law Debbie, and Marion Sumner. The band's repertoire is based on mountain tradition and includes Western swing and contemporary mountain music.

Marion Sumner of Isom, Kentucky, is often called "fiddle king of the South," a title he has earned in over fifty years of fiddling in nearly every conceivable situation. Growing up in an east Kentucky family of traditional musicians, Marion was playing old-time music by the age of 10 and Western swing (which he heard on radio) by 15, influenced especially by Arthur Smith and by Hugh Farr of the Sons of the Pioneers. Marion made his radio debut in 1936 and has been a professional musician ever since. He toured across the South with an impressive roster of performers including Roy Acuff, Kitty Wells, Ernest Tubbs, Johnny and Jack, Don Gibson, Jim and Jesse, Cowboy Copas, and Archie Campbell. After thirty years on the road he came home to east Kentucky in 1965. He still maintains an active schedule of teaching, performing, and studio work. Marion's long experience makes him at home in any musical situation. His energetic, highly improvisational style combines old-time country, and swing elements into a style that could be called "hillbilly jazz."





# The Unofficial Conjunto Primer for the Uninitiated Music Lover, Revised



By Carlos R. Guerra

## Welcome

It is a music as original as any the U.S. has ever produced, and, not yet a century old, it has a following substantial enough to support hundreds of full-time musicians, a complete record industry and a growing number of radio stations. Still, conjunto music, with an occasional exception, remains a secret to all but the people it emerged from, the same people who support it today.

Suddenly, conjunto music is being discovered by vast numbers of people. The better known musicians are drawing big crowds in major European venues and Chicano record distributors are getting large orders from several countries in Europe and from Japan.

### What's going on?

It's simple, Hollywood, Nashville, and even the Smithsonian have discovered it and spread the word. Many Americans are finding that "Lady of Spain" isn't the only melody accordions can produce. They're discovering that the squeeze-box is the source of wondrous sounds, played in rhythms which — like the accordion itself — they always thought were corny.

Furthermore, they are finding that unlike so much of the new music of today which is digital and computer generated, this is a music richly expressive and infectious.

This primer is a welcome for new fans. We hope new conjunto lovers will find the beauty of this treasure.

It is a happy and often boisterous music made primarily for dancing. Spanish lyrics revolve around German accordion sounds to pulsating rhythms provided by modern basses and drums. El Conjunto emerged from the same meld of mejicanos and the German immigrants that coexisted in southern Texas in the early twentieth century.

It remains today largely the music of los mejicanos, but there is more than the mixing of cultural influences that makes it different. Conjunto music originated as the music of the lower classes in a time and in a society that allowed for little upward mobility and even less mixing of its social classes. And it has remained just that, with no apologies.

### Origins

Texas in the late nineteenth century was rough and inhospitable. Mexicans remained culturally separate, because, unlike the non-mejicanos, there existed well-developed social institutions that supported their mejicanismo. Contact with Mexico was frequent since Mexico was geographically closer — and friendlier to them — than the U.S.

Mexico, like most of the western world, was swept by a wave of popular music — essentially salon music, or musica de baile — that included polkas from Germany and Poland, waltzes of the famed Austrian composers, redowas and schottisches, occasional quadrilles and even minuets.

These forms were easily absorbed by the already musically inclined Mexican culture and the process of Mexicanizing them began immediately. The huapango (huasteca in origin) and the canción ranchera were modified into the hodge-podge of this música de baile.

The turn of the century Mexican society was a rigid two-class social system. Mejicanos were either gente decente or gente pobre (decent people or poor folk) and most were gente pobre. Mexico's popular music at the turn of the century was usually made by orquestas típicas, which were ensembles of strings, horns, and voices. There were many of these local groups in Mexico and in Texas, too.

The accordion, introduced into Mexican culture by the Germans around the turn of the century, had a significant and lasting impact. The poor rural tejanos took to it quickly since it could mimic several instruments simultaneously and it was cheaper to pay one acordeonista than an orquesta.

The diatonic accordions had capacity for producing both melody and bass parts, and the tuning and button arrangements are such that when two adjacent buttons are played together, they usually produce a third interval, the basic harmony of Mexican vocals.

The accordion was first played solo or with a tambora de rancho, apparently some sort of homemade drum. Other instruments, violins, various woodwinds, and guitars were teamed with the accordion, but the classic match was yet to come.

The conjunto was born when the bajo sexto was added for rhythmic bass accompaniment. This reed-bass string duet arrangement quickly became the popular music form for dances, a basic entertainment form of the lower class.

Tejano orquestas típicas continued to be popular, but they remained the preferred music of the gente decente (or "los high society," as they were then called) and the conjunto became the choice of the poor folk.

### Development

The pairing of the solo acordeón and the bajo sexto at the turn of the century created a core sound of conjunto

which still exists today. The bass fiddle was introduced soon after, and there were early experiments with saxophones. The invention of the gramophone created a group of consumers hungry for records of their own music. Conjunto filled that need.

The first conjunto recordings were made by the major record companies, and the recording and distribution continued until World War II when shortages of needed materials brought the industry to a standstill. After the war the majors dropped conjunto music and moved their recording operations to Mexico. This left a large market unserved.

Chicano entrepreneurs jumped into the business, recording in living rooms and garages and pressing their own records in small numbers. The Chicano record industry developed with limited resources and remains geared for small runs even today. Forced to keep costs down by economic factors, these recording companies developed low cost methods of producing their products.

Often, this meant one-take recording sessions and doing without the most sophisticated recording technology. Success for these indigenous record producers was difficult. They were selling to only a part of the market, mejicanos, and they were among the poorest people in the country.

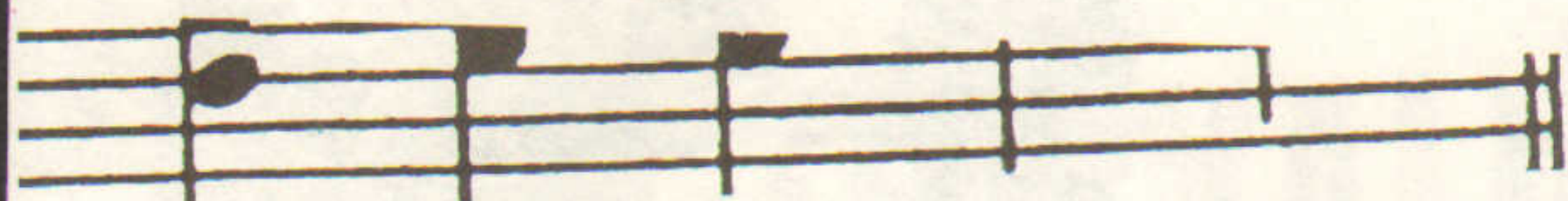
If, on the one hand, this resulted in recordings of relatively inferior technical quality, on the other hand, it also encouraged the recording of music in great variety and production in small quantities.

Now, few mainstream recording artists can claim more than a handful of albums, while twenty LP's is not an unusual number for the older conjuntos and several have so many singles in their discographies that they have lost count. Several have over a hundred albums to their credit.

The music developed social institutions as well. The bailes, originally festive events, eventually spawned the commercial baile grandes that charged admission at the gate. Other entertainment forms, especially nightclubs, remained underdeveloped in Texas until liquor by the drink was legalized and this became feasible. Like the country and western subculture, conjunto music developed a substantial culture around large dances and dance halls.

After WWII, conjunto music came into its own. Fortunately, many legal barriers of segregation were relaxed for Mexican Americans. Nevertheless, separate Anglo, Black and Mexican societies continued to be a





Valerio Longoria's accordion classes offered by the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center

Photo: Al Rendón

reality. The returning Mexican American soldiers set off an important population shift of mejicanos to the cities.

This urbanization crowded large numbers of rural people in strange and often hostile environments. Conjuntos became a unifying force that provided familiarity in the new urban areas. The popularity of conjunto music by the '50s was so great that even orquestas began including accordionists in the line-ups.

Playing in large halls instead of intimate surroundings, conjuntos adjusted accordingly. Drums and electric basses replaced the stand-up bass in the standard conjunto and P.A. systems replaced el puro pulmón (sheer lung power).

And there were other developments, as well. The drums settled and slowed the tempo of the music, making it possible for accordionists to concentrate on the more complex fingerwork which today distinguishes conjunto music. Returning soldiers brought with them influences they'd absorbed from their contact with mainstream America. The new American dance styles crept into the bailes.

Polkas, chotises, redovas, and huapangos continued to be played, but the polka began to evolve away from its Germanic origins and into the distinctly Chicano product we have today. The essentially European dance floor stylings of the past were replaced by a smoother, gliding dance form, el tacuachito.

El tacuachito has now become very localized, and touring musicians play to local preferences of tempo — el compás — to suit the local dance styles. A purer form of el tacuachito is still found among many of the older dancers of the Rio Grande Valley. Smooth, gliding and very stylized dancing is found in the area around Alice, Robstown, and Corpus Christi and rhythms other than polkas are quite popular.

San Antonio styles often include stylized side movements sometimes called el serruchito (the saw). West Texas bailadores move more rigidly, with stiffer movements, or el tiezo (stiff). The Lubbock area prefers a fast, racing style with quicker tempo, bien corridón (very rushed).

Dancers are admired for their natural fluidity, and it is an expression which is often as entertaining for the spectator as the participant.

### The Basic Conjunto

The basic conjunto is now an ensemble of accordion, bajo sexto, bass, and drums. Perhaps in recognition of its

diverse origins, the conjunto world seems to encourage diversity and growth. The basic quartets are traditional, but many conjuntos also include a wide variety of added elements, from saxes to synthesizers.

### Accordion

The accordion is the lead melody instrument. The accordion of today is a modified version of the first one, invented in 1822 in Germany. Of the three basic types of accordions, diatonic, piano and chromatic, most acordeonistas prefer the diatonic, which like a harmonica, produces one note when the bellows are pulled and a number of notes when they are closed.

The treble or melody is on the right side, the bass is on the left, and the notes are produced by forcing air over multiple reeds.

Diatonic accordions vary widely, but conjunto players usually prefer the 3-row Vienna style accordions, usually German-made, though some opt for the more expensive Italian brands of diatonics, the piano accordions or the full 5-row chromatic accordions.

Vienna style accordions, also called Italian style, have 1 to 3 rows of treble buttons on the right side, each row being a major scale, and 4 to 10 bass buttons on the left. Since diatonics are limited to major and minor scales with no chromatic variations, they come in various key combinations, the most popular being F/B/E and G/C/F.

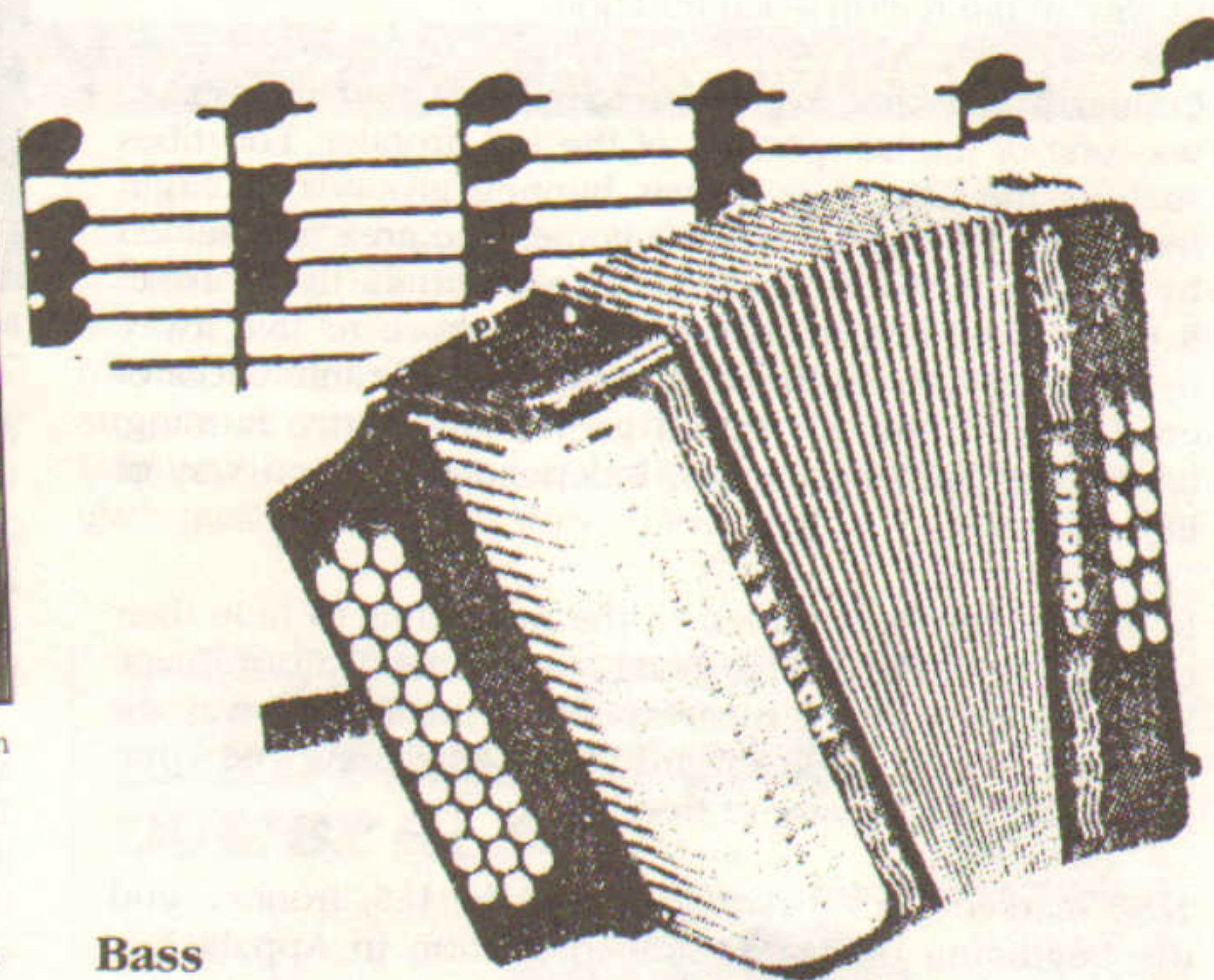
Many players re-tune and occasionally rearrange the reeds, and some remove the bass reeds, which have been all but abandoned by conjunto players who concentrate on the intricate pasadas, or runs, on the treble side.

### Bajo Sexto

The bajo sexto is the other key element of the conjunto sound. This often underrated twelve-string guitarlike instrument adds a bass rhythm and melodic counterplay to the accordion. The bajo is tuned an octave below the standard guitar except for the last two strings which are tuned up a half-step. Many of the bajo sextos used nationally and in Mexico are made in San Antonio by the Macías family.

Originally acoustic, the bajo is now usually amplified. New developments include the bajo quinto, which is a ten-string version of the bajo-sexto, the replacement of the bajo sexto with a standard six-string guitar, the standard twelve-string guitar, and a modified four-string guitar.

8' 7' 5' 8' 7' 6' 8' 7' 6' F8' 7' 6' r 8' 7' 6'



### Bass

The electric bass was added to the conjunto in the fifties, giving the conjunto a solid bass line. Previously, some conjuntos used a contra-bass or stand-up bass but the advent of amplification brought this local progression. The electric bass is now considered a part of the standard ensemble.

### Drums

The first accordionists, according to some accounts, often played with a tambora de rancho, though there is some question as to what exactly these drums were. But the drum disappeared when the accordion was teamed with the bajo sexto and didn't reappear in the conjunto until the late '40s and early '50s.

When drums were added to conjuntos in the '50s, they were only used in performances. They were left off recordings because producers considered them too crude and noisy. At first, people ridiculed their introduction, but eventually the standard trap set became another basic element.

### The Music

People tend to generalize conjunto music as being "musica de acordeon," "polka music," "regional," "ranchero" or the like. These generalizations often have just enough truth to make them credible, but each excludes far more than it includes.

Certainly, la polka is a big part of the rhythmic underpinnings of conjunto music, but it is far from all of it. Since the beginning, conjuntos have also played waltzes, schottishes, redovas, and huapangos. The canción ranchera, which is now a polka with vocals, has become part of the repertoire, along with the conjuntoized boleros, tangos, chahachás, rock, blues, country, and cumbias. The list is still growing. Creativity and originality are important in the conjunto tradition. A different sound, a different arrangement, a different rhythm, a different anything, is expected of each conjunto.

Those who are attending a conjunto performance for the first time can expect the very same thing as those who have seen it performed before.

Expect to be surprised!

**Carlos R. Guerra is a native of Robstown, TX, and has been a conjunto fan since childhood. In addition to writing, he is producer-director of the video portion of Guadalupe's Conjunto Festival.**



## Mountain Tales and Music

When Cecil Sharpe, noted British collector of folk songs, came to America at the turn of this century, he found that Appalachia had maintained a closer contact with the European musical and storytelling traditions than the European countries themselves.

Roadside Theater's MOUNTAIN TALES is a performance of the traditional stories and songs that have been passed down from generation to generation in the central Appalachian Mountains. Roadside's storytellers are from the region and learned these stories and songs directly from their families and older people around their home. The ensemble company tells them in Roadside's storytelling/theater style that aims to perpetuate the vital quality of the region's oral tradition.

Central Appalachia, with its terrain of rugged mountains, was one of the last pockets of the U.S. frontier. For tribes such as the Cherokee, it was hunting grounds of virgin forest; Daniel Boone called it home. The area was settled by those relatively few hardy folk (primarily of Irish, Scottish, and English descent) who chose to live away from - what was to them - the questionable influences of civilization. They got by on game, subsistence farming, barter, and herbal remedies. Independence was a way of life.

In 1938, Cherokees turned to the mountains to hide their children from the forced march west - the Trail of Tears. For a hundred years, runaway slaves made their way up the Appalachian chain toward the Susquehanna and Ohio Rivers and the promise of freedom.

1890 marked the official closing of the U.S. frontier, and the beginning of heavy industrialization in Appalachia. Italian and eastern European immigrants and African



Ron Short and Tommy Bledsoe of Roadside Theater at School

Photo: Patricia Reynolds

Americans came to work in the booming coal and timber industries. These newcomers brought their own stories and music - the banjo from Africa, the mandolin from Italy are examples. The result was not a meltdown of distinct traditions to a heavy sludge, but rather a lovely stew with each ingredient distinct and the whole nourishing.

Some of the stories Roadside tells are known as the Jack Tales. In these stories, the hero, who is called Jack, is an everyman character. Usually he is a boy of indefinite age living with his widowed mother in poverty. Initially he sets out on a journey to seek his fortune. The story varies according to the difficulties and powerful forces he

encounters along the way. Jack always triumphs sometimes through intellect, more often through sheer will and blind luck. There are hundreds of Jack Tales including some about Mutsmeg, a female equivalent.

Other Tales feature a wide variety of characters and situations. They are the animal tales of African derivation or stories based loosely on real people and real circumstances which have been told and re-told until they have reached a special category of creative history. Like the Jack Tales, all are representative of the ongoing struggle of people to better their lives.

—Dudley Cocke, Roadside Theater

## Teatro Chicano

Chicano is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "Mexican-American, a person of Mexican descent yet born or raised in the United States." It is also important to note that the Mexican provinces of what is now known as Texas, California, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada and Utah were part of the Republic of Mexico. In 1848 the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed and Mexico surrendered its land to the United States of America.

The treaty provided that native Mexicans had the choice of returning to their motherland (but what motherland, for where they were had been their motherland for years) or remaining to become American citizens and be looked upon as foreigners by the Anglo-Americans who quickly classified them as aliens. Native Mexicans who chose to remain on their native soil suffered unfortunate consequences ethically and morally.

Nicolas Kanellos, writer/editor of Mexican American Theatre; Legacy and Reality writes, "From the beginning of the Hispanic stage in the Southwest the relationship of performers and theatres to the community and the

nationality was close; the Hispanic stage served to reinforce the sense of community by bringing all Spanish speakers together in a cultural act, the preservation and the support of the language and the art of Mexicans and other Hispanics in the face of domination from a foreign culture."

Between 1900 and 1935, the two cities with the largest Mexican population, Los Angeles and San Antonio, naturally became theatrical centers. Yet during the depression, the forced and voluntary repatriation of Mexicans not only depopulated the communities, but to a great extent also the theatres.

In order to survive, theatrical artists banded together in cooperatives, but could not sustain their efforts. Meanwhile, the tent theatre continued into the 1950's, often setting up right in the camps of migrant farm laborers. It is these traveling theatres that were in part responsible for giving a first exposure of the Hispanic theatrical tradition to some of the young people that would create a Chicano theatre in the late 1960's.



Los Actores de San Antonio "Real Women Have Curves". From Left: Irma Escobar, Sonia Rodriguez, Lisa Suarez, Mariana Vasquez. Sitting: Ruby Nelda Perez. Photo: Al Rendón

Chicano Theatre was born in 1965 under the direction of Luis Valdez in an effort to assist in organizing farm workers for the grape boycott and strike. Chicano theatres soon spread to campuses and communities throughout the Southwest. From the very beginning, the hundreds of Chicano theatre groups performed in streets, parks, churches or any space available in order to communicate to the grass roots their social and political messages. From the Chicano Theatre movement have sprung many of today's Chicano actors, directors, producers, professors and professional companies. In 1971 TENAZ, "Teatros Nacionales de Aztlán," was formed and has since organized 15 Chicano theatre festivals across the country.

—Ruby Nelda Perez, Los Actores de San Antonio

## The Harp in the Americas

The history of the harp in the Americas begins in the late fifteenth century. It was then that Spanish expansionism brought soldiers to our shores in search of new colonial dominions and riches. In addition to cannons, horses, and Catholicism, the Spanish soldiers brought with them their musical instruments: the violin, the vihuela (a relative of the lute and guitar), and the harp. In Mexico the harp was introduced when an expedition named "Vera Cruz" ("True Cross") landed in Cempoala (now known as Veracruz) on the Mexican Gulf Coast. On this ship was a soldier-musician called Pedro, who was an expert harpist. Native peoples from all Mexican regions soon began to appropriate the harp into what was and remains one of the richest and most varied of musical cultures in existence.

The new Spanish stringed instruments underwent various adaptations, and a new musical repertoire was created, drawing upon Indian and African rhythms and existing Native American and Spanish musical styles. In less than fifty years' time, Mexico was actually exporting violins and harps to Europe. As the harp gradually lost its popularity in Spain, to the point of its extinction as a folk instrument, its popularity grew enormously throughout Mexico.

Few countries have evolved as many varied harp styles as Mexico. Seven major and distinct traditions exist today in Mexico and what is now the southwestern United States including those of Veracruz, Jalisco, Michoacan, Zacatecas, Durango, Guerrero, and Chiapas. Each has its own distinct musical repertoire, playing style, and harp construction. Far from being confined to their native regions, these styles and their repertoires have migrated in all directions.

Among those that have found new homes are the very popular Veracruzano and Jalisco styles, found today in California, for example. With the vast migrations of Mexicans northward came many masters of the Veracruz harp, such as the legendary Andres Huesca, who died in East Los Angeles—far from this native Veracruz. Many Chicanos have become heir to his enormous legacy. Among them are Francisco González and the members of his trio, who have learned the jarocho (i.e. Veracruz) tradition in the way oral traditions are characteristically learned: through the ear and the heart by listening to other musicians, and to the songs sung by our parents and grandparents.

—Francisco González



## Gallery

Appalshop and Guadalupe have collaborated on an exhibit which provides each community with an opportunity to learn more about the other's through the media of photography, popular arts, and video; through oral histories; and through an exhibit catalogue. The exhibit is on display at Appalshop from April 10 through the month of May, and in San Antonio during June.

### San Antonio artists featured in the exhibit include:

- Elpidia de la Cruz, whose embroidered "deshilados" include Huichol Indian designs from Mexico
- The Barrientos Family, whose piñatas carry on a family tradition and are a part of many community celebrations
- Beatriz Ximinez, whose cement sculptures include animal designs which join traditional and contemporary influences.
- Several types of prison artwork such as tattoos, embroidered handkerchiefs, and altars made from gum wrappers and cigarette boxes

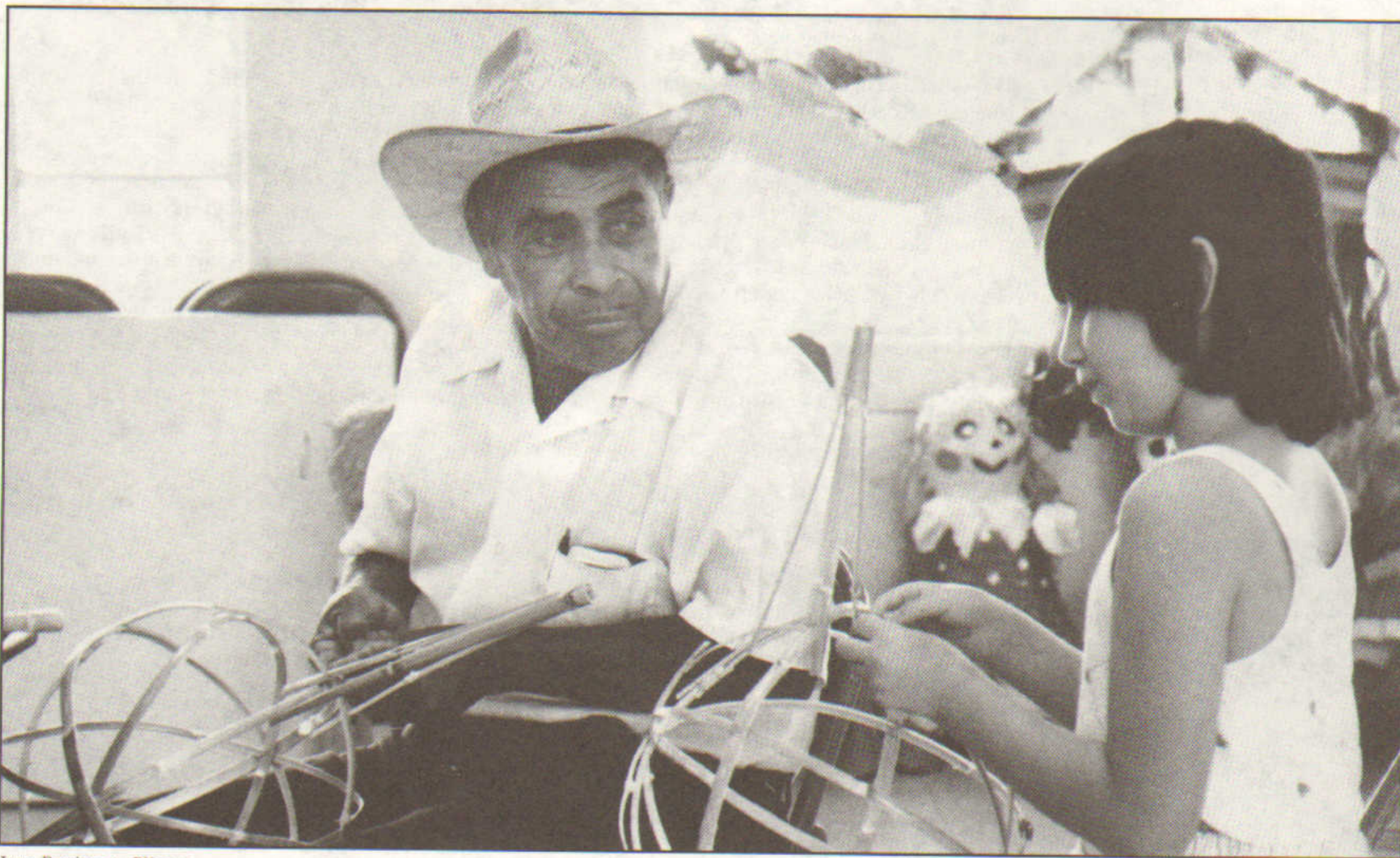
The work of the San Antonio artists is accompanied by photographs and oral histories which provide background on how the work is created and how the arts have passed

down through the generations and moving with families from communities in Mexico to the West Side of San Antonio.

### Appalachian artists in the exhibit include:

- Minnie Black, from East Bernstadt, Kentucky, whose gourd art includes several members of the animal kingdom—both real and imagined
- Fred Carter, from Clintwood, Virginia, whose wood sculptures provide powerful images of the coalfields
- Charley Kinney, from Lewis County, Kentucky, whose colorful paintings tell fantastic stories of mountain life
- Geneva Caudill, Louama Banks, and Thelma Banks, three sisters from Little Cowan, Kentucky, whose quilts include traditional patterns such as a "Flower Basket," and a "Crazy Quilt" embroidered on velvet
- William "Pictureman" Mullins, a photographer from Jenkins, Kentucky, who documented life in the mountains in the 1940's and 50's

The "Pictureman" photos are accompanied by oral histories of people featured in the photographs or those who knew him.



Juan Barrientos, Piñatas

## Film

### Miners and Mining in Appalachia and the Southwest: An Evening of Film and Discussion

The program will include a screening of "Salt of the Earth" and clips from the forthcoming Headwaters television program on the 1990 United Mine Workers strike against the Pittston Coal Company in Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky. Beverly Sanchez-Padilla, a San Antonio-based activist and media artist will show excerpts from her latest work, "El Corrido de Juan Chacón," a documentary "ballad" describing the life and legacy of Juan Chacón, the Mexican-American labor activist. Chacon was one of the leaders of the strike dramatized in "Salt of the Earth." Sanchez-Padilla will also discuss the current state of organized labor and the struggle for workers' rights in the Southwest. Buck Maggard and Anne Johnson of Headwaters Television will join union leaders and coalminers from Central Appalachia in a discussion of the opportunities and challenges facing working people in the coalfields.

"Salt of the Earth," 1953 (94 minutes) One of the first American films to deal forthrightly with labor struggle and to present the realities of Mexican-American life with dignity and understanding. The film recreates the year-long strike of Mexican American miners in New Mexico against the Empire Zinc Company. This drama also depicts

the miners' sometimes difficult acceptance of help from their wives when the men are forced off the picket line by the Taft-Hartley Act.

Beverly Sanchez-Padilla is a teacher, playwright, film and video producer, and community organizer. A native of New Mexico, she taught the first course on the Mexican-American woman at the University of New Mexico. Sanchez-Padilla has produced numerous documentaries about Mexican-American life for public television, and wrote "La Guadalupe que Camina," a performance piece based on the true story of a nun who challenges traditional roles in the Catholic church.

Anne Johnson is the project director of Headwaters Television, the award-winning public television series produced by Appalshop. Johnson directed, among some twenty other programs, "On Our Own Land," a documentary about reform of land use laws in Kentucky that won the 1990 DuPont-Columbia Award for Broadcast Journalism.

Buck Maggard is the community liaison for Headwaters Television. He is a longtime community organizer around such issues as stripmine reform, the campaign to insure black lung benefits for injured miners, and civil rights. He has been affiliated with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Highlander Center.

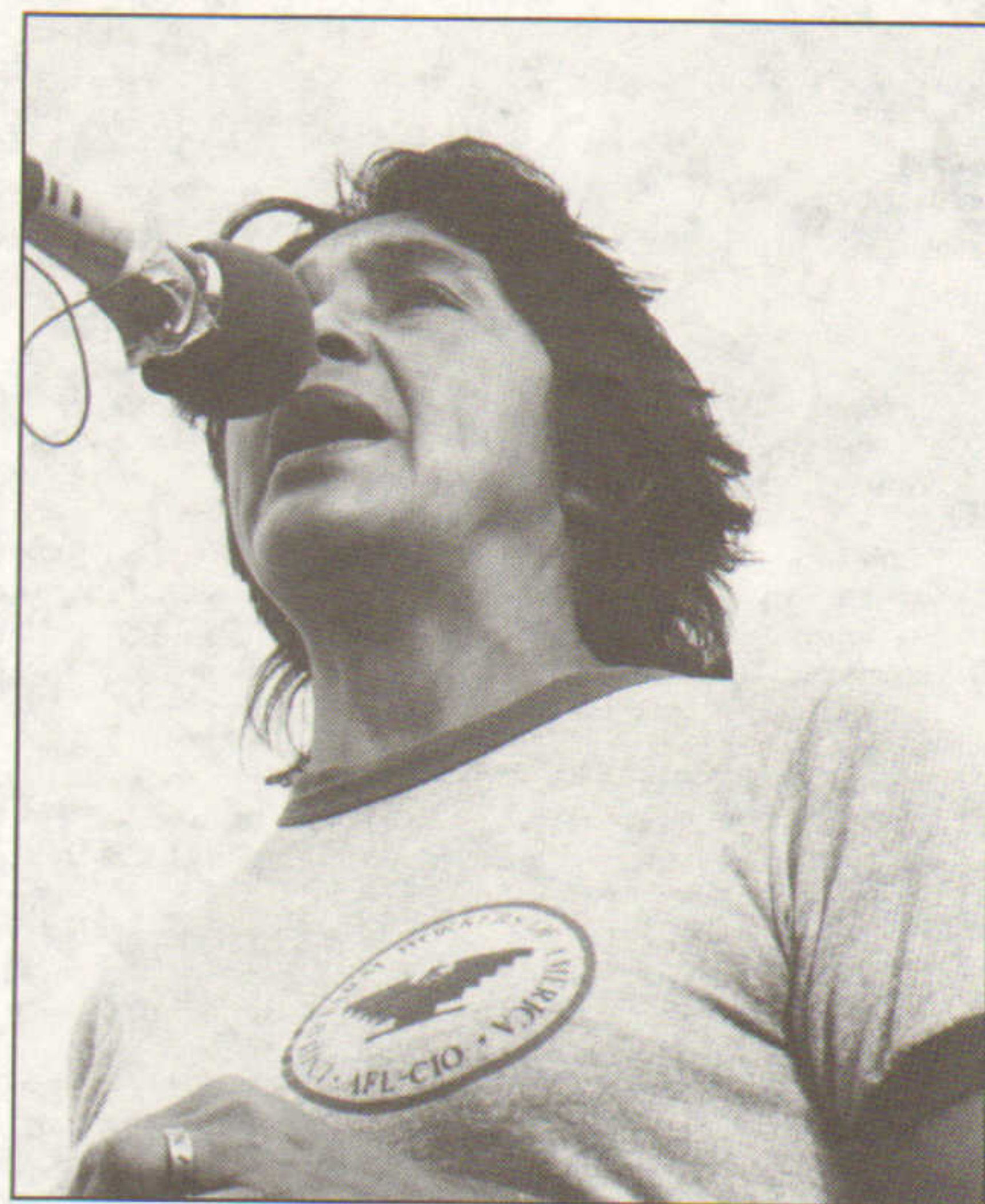
## PICTUREMAN MULLINS



Effie and Collins Hollyfield and family Photo: William R. "Pictureman" Mullins

### EFFIE AND COLLINS HOLLYFIELD: ORAL HISTORY

...Oh we got pictures, pictures, pictures. Let's see, I could tell you about their age probably. This girl (in the picture) was 4 I'd say, 4 years old; this one 3 and this, 2....and what would that be....1938, 39....that was about when it was. He just volunteered to come up. Anybody wanted to have a picture made he would just make it you know. Most of the time on Sunday. Why he would come to you you didn't go to him. He was about the only photographer at that time around in here. He would snap it and he would bring it back when he got it done. I went to his office one time and had some of my children graduated from high school. He made some of their pictures. No sooner than he would get that little hood all over his head and sighting around... it didn't take very long.



From "El Corrido de Juan Chacón"



## APPALSHOP

*"Appalshop is an unsentimental exercise in authenticity, in fierce defense of regional culture. It suggests that there's another way to measure the quality of life in the U.S. today: not in terms of how many items from K-Mart you can cram into a kitchen, but in terms of your ability to express yourself in your own language and to live a life in which work and play, family and neighborhood, creation and recreation are part of the same experience."* —Pat Aufderheide, "In These Times"

Appalshop is an arts and education center based in Whitesburg, Kentucky, in the central part of the Appalachian Mountain region. In 1991 Appalshop celebrates its 22nd anniversary, marking over two decades of growth from a storefront training project to an internationally known arts institution with 35 employees and a budget of \$1.6 million. Through these years Appalshop has developed a recognized body of work focusing on the history, culture, and social issues of the Appalachian region and rural America. More than 100 films and videos, 62 records, 12 original dramas, 2 photography books, 3 slide shows, 7 radio series, and an additional 43 works-in-progress reflect Appalshop's commitment to providing a clear and steady regional voice. In 1987 the National Endowment for the Arts recognized Appalshop as one of "the nation's most important arts groups."

Appalshop began in 1969 as Community Film Workshop of Appalachia, part of a national program to train poor and minority young people in the skills of film and television production for jobs in that industry. In an effort to stay in the region, the artists trained at the Workshop incorporated Appalshop as a not-for-profit media arts center and began creating their own jobs. Appalshop currently includes:

The Appalshop Center, which presents visual, performing, media and literary arts and education activities in Appalshop's gallery, 175-seat theater, and in collaboration with other community groups. The Center also produces an annual festival of traditional music and storytelling, "Seedtime on the Cumberland."

Appalshop's Media Arts Center (Appalshop Films and Headwaters Television) produces film and video about Appalachian history, culture and social issues; presents and exhibits media arts and houses an audio visual archives; distributes to an international audience; and features the Headwaters Television series on a five-state consortium of public television stations. Education and training programs include the Appalachian Media Institute which provides training for high school students and the Appalshop School Initiative.

June Appal Recordings, Appalshop's record label, records and distributes traditional and contemporary music from the region.

WMMT-88.7 FM Community Radio and Production Projects programs 130 hours weekly, produces and distributes audio works on issues of regional importance, and offers free training for community volunteers.

Roadside Theater produces and presents original plays based on the history and culture of the Appalachian mountains. Roadside tours regionally, nationally, and internationally.

From the Appalshop film, "Sunny Side of Life."

Photo: Bill Blanton



Conjunto Dancers, San Antonio, Texas

Photo: Al Rendón

## GUADALUPE

The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center (GCAC) was incorporated in 1979, as the Performance Artists Nucleus (PAN), a non-profit organization whose mission was to sponsor arts and cultural events designed to serve the needs of the Mexican American Community in San Antonio, Texas.

Today the GCAC is the largest community-based institution in the United States dedicated primarily to the development and promotion of traditional and contemporary Mexican American cultural arts. The Center operates on an annual budget approaching \$1.5 million and serves audiences estimated at 100,000 across ethnic, cultural, economic and geographical boundaries. Support for GCAC is generous and broad-based.

GCAC is comprised of five programming divisions, Xicano Music, Theater Arts, Visual Arts, Literature, and the historic Guadalupe Theater, a 410-seat, handicapped-accessible, multi-purpose facility that includes a small art gallery and a large auditorium equipped for stage and screen presentations.

GCAC has a permanent staff of eighteen professionals. In the course of a year, GCAC provides short-term employment or exhibition opportunities to more than 400 individual artists, writers, actors and performers, and about 50 music, dance and theatre groups.

Throughout the year, the Visual Arts Program offers instruction in Mexican/Chicano art history, painting, drawing, ceramics, printmaking and photography; the Xicano Music Program offer instruction in voice, mariachi, flamenco and conjunto music at seven sites around town; the Literature Program presents readings and conducts classes and workshops; and the Theater Arts Program has classes in creative dramatics for children and is home to a resident acting company, Los Actores de San Antonio.

GCAC presents The Tejano Conjunto Festival, a traditional music festival now in its 10th year; a Performing Series, including the concert series "Live At the Guadalupe!" featuring outstanding Hispanic composers and performers of classical, jazz and other popular forms; San Antonio CineFestival, the oldest and largest Hispanic film/video festival in the U.S., now in its 15th year, the ten day festival has attracted thousands of viewers, media artists, scholars and students to its public screenings, symposia and related activities. Hecho A Mano/Made By Hand, a Fine Arts/Fine Crafts Market, is a successful exhibition and sale of art and artisanry composed of participants from various parts of the world, but especially from Texas and the Southwest. The San Antonio Inter-American Bookfair exhibits scores of independent and university presses from the U.S. and Latin America, presenting such renowned writers as Maya Angelou, Isabel Allende, Carlos Fuentes, August Wilson, and Alice Walker. TONANTZIN is a tabloid magazine of arts and literature published by the Publications Department.

The National Endowment for the Arts awarded GCAC a coveted Challenge Grant which reflects GCAC's growing national stature and permanence as an institution for the Hispanic Arts.

**The American Festival Project** is a national coalition of artists joined with a consortium of presenters and a network of community co-sponsors. The Project grew from the belief that cultural exchange, based on equality and mutual respect, can provide a context in which Americans can better understand one another in all of their diversity.

The American Festival Project began in 1982 when John O'Neal, then director of Free Southern Theater, and Dudley Cocke, director of Roadside Theater, were worrying about a national increase in Ku Klux Klan activity. They decided to tour each other's community — one predominantly black, the other white. The following year Bob Martin and the Peoples Theater Festival in San Francisco brought Roadside and Free Southern Theater together with A Traveling Jewish Theatre and Teatro Campesino for the first national festival, which became the model for the Project.

The American Festival coalition of artists has expanded to include Roadside Theater, Junebug Theater Project, El Teatro de la Esperanza, A Traveling Jewish Theatre, Carpebag Theater, Ruben Sierra/Seattle Group Theater, Robbie McCauley and Company, Francisco Gonzalez y su Conjunto, Liz Lerman and the Dance Exchange, and Urban Bush Women.

Encuentro/Coming Together will begin a series of five festivals taking place across the country in 1991 and 1992. Each festival takes on the character of its host community by involving local artists and diverse audiences. Additional festivals include the Urban Cultures Festival in Philadelphia, coordinated by the Painted Bride Art Center with the Frankfordstyle Group Ministry, the Jaasu Ballet at the Village of Arts and Humanities (Ile Ife), the Meredith School, and the Taller Puertorriqueño, an Artist Teacher Partnership in Seattle, Washington, sponsored by the Seattle Group Theater; and the Mississippi American Festival, coordinated by a rural Mississippi network including the Brickfire Project, Hines Jr. College, Mississippi Cultural Crossroads, Rural Organizing and Cultural Center, and Rust College. Festivals include performances, workshops, panel discussions, and collaborations with schools and community centers. The American Festival Project is a special project of Appalshop.

