

ESPERANZA: 30 YEARS OF C

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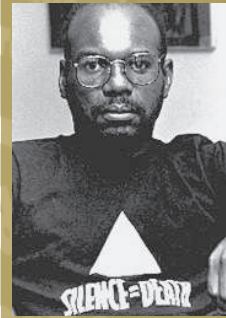
Editor's Note: In the first 10 years of the Esperanza, the LGBT community came out to the San Antonio public via the Esperanza's programming. Esperanza eventually paid a price in 1997 with the defunding of city arts monies — however, the investment in the queer community contributed to Esperanza's 30 years.



ELLAS, a Latina lesbian group, that was founded in 1987 met at the Esperanza. In 1993, they began sponsorship of an annual lesbian dance, *ELLAS Night Out*. Pictured are Margarita Elizarde and Irene Rodriguez (deceased) at an Esperanza anniversary celebration.



THE BLACK EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE MEDIA ARTS: AN EVENING WITH MARLON RIGGS



(now deceased) was co-sponsored with the Guadalupe Center. It screened *Ethnic Notions* and *Tongues Untied* in 1991 on the evening War broke out in the Middle East. A vicious conservative backlash, locally and nationally, prevented the films from being screened in most PBS stations except for San Antonio where the films premiered on the local PBS affiliate, one of the few stations in the nation to screen them.

OUT AT THE MOVIES

initially sponsored by *The Media Project* and *Esperanza* began in 1992. Pictured at the 4th OATM in 1995 are Vangie Griego, Dennis Poplin, Sterling Houston, Daryl Chin, Eric Deemer, Robert Karimi, Gertrude Baker, Gloria Ramirez and Graciela Sánchez (seated). OATM films would eventually be a source of the defunding of the Esperanza that happened in 1997.



THE TX LESBIAN CONFERENCE

began in Dallas in 1988 and continued each year until 2014. In 1990 the 3rd



TLC co-sponsored by the Esperanza was held at the Menger Hotel in downtown San Antonio.

It included a film festival screened at the Guadalupe Theater that caused a furor with over 300 calls to City Hall protesting the use of a public facility for lesbian films. The calls demanded that the Guadalupe be closed down. Pictured are panelists at a '90 TLC workshop with Lety Gomez, Janice Pichler and María Limón.

SA COALITION FOR RACIAL UNITY

members in front of the San Antonio city hall for the Anti-KKK Rally & Cultural Celebration of 1996 (right). The poster (below) shows La Muerte who takes a Klansman away yelling, "¡Qué, qué, qué?!!!!" Pictured (below left): Kate Herrington, Gloria Ramírez, Philip Ávila, Dennis Medina,



Mike Rodríguez, Antonio Díaz and friend. The Queer community was present at the Anti-KKK Rally & Cultural Celebration en force with poets, performers and speakers including (right) Victoria Zapata Klein with son Paco, Jesus Alonzo, Graciela Sánchez, Paul Bonin-Rodriguez, Karen Whitney and Peggy Apple. The event planned with Eastside leaders had participants of all ages from throughout the city.



QUEERS PRESENTES! PART I

os y recuerdos

It's queer to be different—queer to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, Two-Spirit, transgender, intersex or to have any “other” kind of gender or sexual identity.

But in San Antonio, it's also queer to have a progressive political voice—queer to be out as anti-war, anti-capitalist, pro-choice—queer to talk about sexism, homophobia, racism, classism and all of the other oppressions that permeate our daily lives.

Our commitment to *resistencia y conciencia* has marked us as queer—other—different throughout our history.



THE RACE PLUS series formalized Esperanza's belief in connecting communities with seminars on race, class, sexuality and more. It featured, among others, (above, left to right) Loretta Ross, director of the National Center for Human Rights, Scott Nakagawa, former NGLTF Field Coordinator, Mab Segrest, author of “Race Traitor” and Barbara Smith, author. Group pictured: Gertrude Baker (deceased), Graciela Sánchez, Barbara Smith and Michael Marinez.



THE SPRING DANCE OF MAY 1997, celebrated the opening of the 2nd floor & stairwell of La Nueva Esperanza. Pictured above are Jan Olsen and Martha Prentiss who served as disc jockey for the evening dance.

LAURA AGUILAR'S PHOTO, SANDY'S ROOM, stirred controversy at *Engendros*, an exhibit on gender and sexuality in 1996. It was the subject of derision by a columnist who called for censorship of fat women. Monica Palacios, lezbo comic, star of *Greetings From A Queer Señorita* (above left) was also under fire by the columnist in 1998. Astrid Haddad (above right), Lebanese Mexican cabaret singer and satirist, also a lesbian, performed at the Guadalupe theater in *Heavy Nopal* in 1996 co-sponsored by the Esperanza.



CHERRÍE MORAGA has graced Esperanza stages many times. In 1998 she came for a reading of *Waiting in the Wings: Portrait of a Queer Motherhood*. Pictured are Gloria Ramirez, Graciela Sánchez, Celia Herrera Rodríguez and Cherríe.



THREE POETS AND A LAWYER in November 1998 with Amy H. Kastely, Sharon Bridgforth, Yolanda Chávez-Leyva, Gloria Anzaldúa and Maria Elena Gaitán initiated conversations on art, culture, and politics that eventually led to the community's decision to file a lawsuit to counter the Esperanza's 1997 defunding by San Antonio's City Council.

