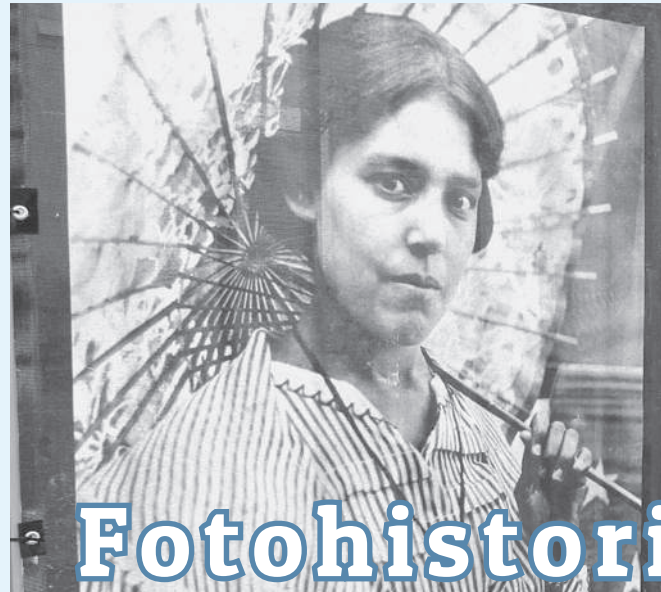




In 2001, Rita Vidaurri sang to Lydia Mendoza (seated) at the homenaje to Lydia Mendoza at Plaza de Zacate.



# Fotohistori

## ARTE ES VIDA

Arte Es Vida is an ongoing program of the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center that strengthens the Westside Community’s cultural grounding—the sense of selfhood and identity, rooted in creative expression and cultural practice. It addresses issues of cultural equity and democracy and examines the role of artistic and cul-

tural expression in a society that typically treats communities of color with oppressive attitudes of racism, sexism and homophobia—a legacy of cultural domination in the U.S. Reclaiming one’s own cultura and history empowers communities and individuals to participate more fully in civic life. Successful programs of Arte es Vida have included An Altar for Emma celebrating Emma Tenayuca and the pecan shellers strike from 1933-1938 and an homenaje to Lydia Mendoza, the legendary Tejana musician on her 85th birthday that took place at Plaza de Zacate. The event resulted in the discovery of a whole community of elder artists when Rita Vidaurri took to the stage to sing to Lydia Mendoza. Ultimately, this resulted in the birth of Las Tesoros de San Antonio. Another project of the Arte Es Vida program is MujerArtes now in its 22nd year.



Beatriz Llamas, La Paloma del Norte



Rita Vidaurri, La Calandria



Blanca Rodríguez, Blanca Rosa

## LAS TESOROS

Las Tesoros de San Antonio are a group of women elders whose incredible singing careers soared both, locally and internationally, in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. All four artists grew up in the Westside of San Antonio, Texas. They include: Rita Vidaurri, “La Calandria”; Beatriz Llamas, “La Paloma del Norte”; and Blanca Rodríguez, “Blanquita Rosa”. A fourth member, Janet Cortez, “Perla Tapatia”, passed away in 2014. Each woman was inspired by and connected to other important Tejana singers including the great Lydia Mendoza and international star, Eva Garza, who died at an early age but opened doors for many other female singers. Rita, Beatriz, and Blanca have re-emerged as a fierce trio, releasing a new CD in February of 2016. Las Tesoros will perform at Esperanza’s Paseo del Westside.



Las Tesoros as a foursome. Janet Cortez, Perla Tapatia, second from the left, passed away in 2014.

Eva Garza visiting her Courts where she graduated from Lanier High School with basketball and baseball.



## MujerArtes







# ias del Westside

er family at the Alazan-Apache  
ew up. She attended  
where she was also a  
ball star.



through recordings and photographs shared at the Casa de Cuentos. Enlarged mesh banners depict faces, families, and landmarks from the early 1900s to the 1950s and are installed throughout the Westside along Guadalupe St., at the Alazan-Apache Courts, and along the fence of J.T. Brackenridge Elementary. This museo de la calle reclaims public space in Westside barrios validating their lives and cultura as part of San Antonio's history. As a part of Fotohistorias, we have brought recognition to international stars like Eva Garza, the first Latina to be broadcast in the Americas by CBS during the 40s and Gloria Rios, the "queen of rock and roll" in Mexico—virtually unknown in their own backyard—the Alazan Apache Courts!



Eva Garza, international singer who sang on CBS' Viva America.



Gloria Rios, known as "la reina de rocanrol".

Fotohistorias del Westside, part of the Arte es Vida project, allows gente to tell the stories of their lives in the Westside



Gloria Rios singing to her mom and daughter at home at the Alazan-Apache Courts. She was famous for performing & translating hits like "Rock Around the Clock"/ "El Relojito" in Mexico.

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Started in 1995 and operating out of a Casita on El Paso St. for almost 22 years in San Antonio's Westside, the MujerArtes Women's Clay Cooperative part of Arte es Vida programming is about to move into a new home at El Rinconcito de Esperanza. The women's clay cooperative has empowered low-income women of San Antonio's Westside using clay to give expression to their lives. To date, they have had many special exhibits, the last being the remarkable, "Barrio de Barro: Reclamando y Recordando el Westside de San Antonio." Look for the opening of their new space in the next few months.

