

# SAN ANTO'S WORLDWIDE FAMOUS HISPANIC ELVIS HAS PASSED

John Esquivel lived his life as *Hispanic Elvis* in San Antonio entertaining tourists and locals for decades before passing on to the great stage in the sky at 76 years of age on March 31, 2022. Using downtown's Market Square as his stage—Esquivel would be seen

riding his bicycle dressed in Elvis glam. The news of his passing resulted in the posting of many photos by folks with him in a variety of poses wearing sparkling Elvis costumes with a homemade guitar and oversized glasses. Whether referred to as an

Rock” garnering over 88,000 views and almost 500 comments. John Esquivel was aware of his worldwide fame as Hispanic Elvis stating in a 2014 interview (Lorne Chan, MY SA): “I’m on YouTube, Internet, Facebook, Google, website, email, I’m *worldwide famous*. I got my picture in Australia, Argentina, Canada, China . . . I didn’t have much education, but you don’t have to be educated to be smart, and you don’t have to be tall to make it big.” At every major celebration of San Antonio whether Diez y Seiz, Cinco de Mayo, or Fiesta, the five-foot-one-inch tall Hispanic Elvis would appear with gyrating moves on rubbery legs posing with children, youth and elders. By all accounts, he was simply “living his dream.” The Esperanza staff, board, and Buena Gente

join in expressing condolences to John Esquivel’s familia and fans as we remember him riding by to join in protests, parades and marches. Mi Tierra Restaurant, his home base, put out a statement on his passing saying: “...*John Esquivel, better known as Hispanic Elvis, has left the building. He was a true entertainer and a San Antonio icon. No trip to Mi Tierra or Market Square was complete without snapping a quick picture with the King and he will live on in so many memories.*” His photo is now on the restaurant’s altar. The King of Rock and Roll, San Anto style, will live on in our memories. Que descanse en paz y poder en el cielo. May he rest in peace and power in the great stage in the sky.



Hispanic Elvis’ photos were often snapped at Mi Tierra restaurant, his home base.

impersonator, entertainer, or street performer there’s no denying Hispanic Elvis’ authenticity: with his high rasquache DIY costumes and Elvis-like dance moves to real or imagined music, he was and will remain, unforgettable. He liked to keep a bit of mystery alive about himself so he spoke very little of his personal life. His youngest brother, George Cisneros, however, revealed that John was born and raised in the Westside close to the Guadalupe Theater and played guitar in a band in the 60s, performing at historic venues like Patio Andaluz. His flair for fashion was honed in his youth when he enjoyed dressing up, buying clothes at Penner’s. Early on, he would perform in front of the Alamo and pose as an Elvis mannequin in front of Ripley’s Believe or Not. A mural of Hispanic Elvis by Colton Valentine depicts San Antonio’s own Rock and Roll King riding his bike in full costume. Hispanic Elvis’ fame extended beyond San Antonio thanks to local tourists and to tik tok where he is seen dancing to “Jailhouse



Hispanic Elvis always wore a variety of sparkly costumes and carried his homemade guitar.



Mural of Hispanic Elvis at 802 San Pedro Ave. by Colton Valentine