

Beatriz Llamas “La Paloma del Norte”

August 5, 1938 — May 15, 2023



Autograph card used by Beatrice as a Tesoro de San Antonio.

Beatriz Llamas, *La Paloma del Norte*, who was part of the Esperanza's *Las Tesoros de San Antonio*, was born in Aguascalientes, México. When she was 11, she moved with her mother and sister to Edinburg, TX to join their father. When he became ill, Beatriz and her mom began to clean houses and would sing along with the radio as they cleaned. Her mother had been a singer known as *La Varita de Nardo* but was forced to quit singing by her husband. She taught Beatriz to sing showing her mannerisms in front of a mirror and encouraged her to enter local talent contests.

In 1951, when the Llamas family moved to the Westside of San Antonio Beatriz entered her first talent contest sponsored by *H&H Coffee* at the **San Fernando School** auditorium. Although she did not win first place, Rita Vidaurri offered Beatriz the opportunity to sing on radio. When she entered her second contest at a *KCOR* radio talent contest at the **Alameda Theater**, Matéo Camargo, the show's host and his wife,

Velia, wound up offering Beatriz a spot in their radio show and in live performances.

When *KCOR* moved from S. Flores to Durango St., Beatriz shared the stage with the brothers of *Trio Los Osos*: Alfonso, Alberto and Arturo López with whom she fell in love with and married in 1964. The *Trio* later became *Mariachi Chapultepec* who played at *Mi Tierra* and *Mario's Restaurant* and who toured with many famous singers including Antonio Aguilar. A tragic fire in Chicago claimed the lives of the three brothers in 1970, a story told in “*Vuela Paloma del Norte*,” also known as “*El Corrido de Mariachi Chapultepec*,” by Gumersindo Antúnez. Her husband's death devastated Beatriz who stopped singing to dedicate time to her children. The public and fellow musicians, however, would not let her go, so she began to slowly tour again.

A superstar outside of Texas, Beatriz's image graced magazine covers in Oklahoma, Illinois, and California throughout the 1970's. In 1990, the **Texas Music Museum** honored Beatriz Llamas, Lydia Mendoza and Rita Vidaurri with an exhibit at the **Texas State Capital Rotunda**. In 1995, she was inducted into the **Tejano Music Hall of Fame**, followed by induction into the **Tejano Conjunto Hall of Fame** early in 1999.

In recent years in spite of a stroke, Beatriz performed as part of *Las Tesoros de San Antonio* a fierce quartet of vintage performers: Rita Vidaurri [*La Calandria*], Janet Cortez [*Perla Tapatia*], Beatriz Llamas [*La Paloma del Norte*] and Blanca Rodriguez [*Blanca Rosa*]. *Las Tesoros* became an instant hit and became part of the select group of **Texas Commission on the Arts Texas Touring Roster**.

After the passing of Janet Cortez and Rita Vidaurri, Beatriz and Blanquita continued singing as *Las Tesoros* and in 2019 were honored as **National Endowment for the Arts Heritage Fellows**. Beatriz's fiery determination and passion for singing will always be remembered and her voice will live on in the archives of conjunto and ranchera music. Condolences to Beatriz's familia and many friends en el mundo de música. *Su voz vive y su espíritu se nos quedará en la memoria*. Beatriz Llamas, *La Paloma del Norte*, siempre presente!



Beatrice Llamas, *La Paloma del Norte* recorded many LPs & 45s on various labels, many of them based in Texas.



Blanca Rodriguez (*Blanca Rosa*) and Beatriz Llamas (*La Paloma del Norte*) pose with their NEA Heritage Fellows medals that they received in Washington D.C. in 2019.

