

# En Memoria

EDITOR'S NOTE: Two recent deaths caught my eye recently: singer, Paquita del Barrio, who belted out feminist rancheras and even sang here in San Antonio at Randy's Rodeo; and Tongolele, an iconic dancer of the golden era of Mexican cinema, who was actually a Mexican American woman from Spokane, Washington. She made her name in Mexico after

leaving the U.S. at 15 to pursue her passion of dance much like Eva Garza and Gloria Rios who grew up in San Antonio's westside and left for Mexico as teens to seek careers in music. Graciela and I actually met Tongolele in Mexico City at a book fair where she was selling her autobiography in the 90s. Both women were inspirational and will long be remembered.

## Paquita la del Barrio



Paquita la del Barrio, born Francisca Viveros Barradas on April 2, 1947 died on February 17, 2025 at her home in Xalapa, Veracruz at the age of 77. A Grammy-nominated performer, Paquita's powerful voice and songs empowered women to call out men for boorish behavior in relationships with them. Notable songs like *Rata de dos patas*, *Me saludas a la tuya* and *Tres veces te engañe* confronted men directly on their bad behavior towards women and quickly became feminist anthems in Mexico and all of Latin America and the U.S. In an interview in 2008, with the *Miami Herald*, Paquita said, "I am defending women. It is very important. I am a woman. I speak of my experiences." Paquita was nominated for Grammys several times and in 2021, she was honored with the *Billboard Latin Music Lifetime Achievement Award*. The world has lost its greatest soldier against machistas, malagradecidos and inútiles, but her music and legacy live on. QEPD

## Tongolele



Tongolele, iconic dancer of the golden era of Mexican cinema died on February 16, 2025 at 93. Her hip movements caused a sensation in Mexico and drew public criticism, but her vibrant personality and striking beauty won over presidents of Mexico as well as notable writers and artists of the golden era of Mexican cinema. Born Yolanda Ivonne Montes Farrington on January 3, 1932 in Spokane, Washington, she left the U.S. at 15 years old to pursue her passion of dance after dancing as a child for the *International Ballet of San Francisco*, California, as part of a Tahitian revue and performing in San Francisco nightclubs as a teen. In a 2014 interview with The Associated Press, Tongolele remarked, "I never thought, 'I want to be famous.' I just wanted to dance," She added, "I didn't even realize that I was a star of the show... I was just happy dancing." Tongolele's career was celebrated with the *Agustín Lara Award* in 2012 honoring her artistic contributions and 65 years on stage. At the time of her death, she was one of the last surviving stars from the *Golden Age of Mexican Cinema*. QEPD

# ¡Presentes!