

Our Beloved, Luci Orta, has taken flight

Lucia “Luci” Orta, age 64, a native of the community of Montopolis, part of East Austin, was unexpectedly bestowed her angel wings on Saturday, June 1st, 2024. Luci was settling into retirement in San Antonio, in her new home, where she passed. She had become one of the *Buena Gente* of the *Esperanza Peace & Justice Center* and quickly became a favorite at many events. She was preceded in death by her beloved parents; Lucas and Angelita (López) Orta whom she had cared for selflessly in their last years of life.

For Luci, *familia* was the most important thing in her life and becoming involved in their lives was her way of showing the immense love she had for them. No matter the crises or the celebration involving a family member, Luci was there to see them through it from her youngest nieces and nephews to her cousins and siblings to her parents and grandparents whom she also helped cared for in their last years of life.

As new generations were born, Luci was there—nurturing great nieces and nephews and new cousins, as well as their parents.

As busy as Luci was, availing herself to her family, she still found time to have a chosen family of friends that included artists, activists, academics and *amigxs* from everywhere who represented the many communities that she was part of: She was part of the queer community in Austin from the time of *ALLGO*’s inception (originally, *Austin Latino Lesbian Gay Organization*) in 1985; part of *La Peña Cultural Center* (now *La Peña Gallery*) that in conjunction with *Las Manitas Restaurant* promoted social justice through the cultural arts; part of *Alma de Mujer*, a project of the *Indigenous Women’s Network* that offers gathering



space at a retreat center on a 22 acre site in the hills of Northwest Austin; a part of *Escuelita del Alma*, a child care center for babies to kindergarten children that Luci loved to interact with. Before coming to San Antonio, Luci also worked at *Hotel San José* in Austin off of South Congress where I saw her often stopping to get a cup of coffee at Jo’s next door.

Luci, *Li'l Bear*, *Mi Negra* played at life hard—loving everyone and everything immensely. Her smile, her dimples, her trenza, her cap, her being will be etched in the hearts of the many who met her. Her big caring heart allowed her to give of herself selflessly: setting up tents

and chairs for cultural events, serving food and drink, painting murals and hanging art exhibits, helping organize rallies and protests, marching, partying, dancing, and loving, most of all. As María Limón wrote: *Love is more than a feeling; it's an action, a way of moving in the world. Lucy made room for people—in her heart, in her home and in her world. She had a way of accepting people,*

of delighting in them, of celebrating life

The *Esperanza Peace & Justice Center* board, staff, & *Buena Gente* extend our heartfelt pésame to Luci’s family and community. May the memory of a life well lived sustain the many that loved and were loved by Luci Orta. ¡*Que en paz descanse!* ¡Luci Orta, *sumamente, presente!* c/s

