

Adios, querida Lydia

Surrounded by family and gente humilde from San Antonio and pueblos throughout South Texas, Lydia Mendoza was laid to rest at San Fernando Cemetery on December 27, 2008 a week after her passing. The rosary, the evening before, was a testament to Lydia's life as *mujer after mujer* spoke of how Lydia had motivated them as singers, musicians and *mujeres*. Las Guadalupanas de Laredo, her number one fans of a lifetime, came to pay tribute in song with one of the women picking up Lydia's twelve string guitar to accompany her *compañeras* singing for each mystery of the rosary. Lydia's legendary guitar that was to remain mute forever more, except in the memories

influence Lydia had had on conjunto and Tejano music and the esteem they had for her as a person.

At the rosary, as well as at the funeral mass the next day at the Guadalupe Church on the Westside of San Antonio, Yolanda Broyles-González, author of *Lydia Mendoza's Life in Music / La historia de Lydia Mendoza* delivered a moving eulogy emphasizing the monumental significance of Lydia's life who was recognized as *La Cancionera de los Pobres* bridging migrant pueblos throughout the United States singing about the condition of women and the lives of the poor. In addition to connecting *raza* throughout the U.S., Lydia's music also connected Latinos throughout the Americas and Cuba.

May 21, 1916 – December 20, 2007



Las Guadalupanas de Laredo, Texas serenade Lydia



Rita Vidaurri, *La Calandria* sings Amor Eterno

and recordings left behind, intoned the sentiments of people gathered to pay their last respects.

Among the *mujeres* paying tribute to Lydia that night was Rita Vidaurri who spoke about Lydia being the first *Mexicana* to open venues for women in music making it possible for young girls like herself and Eva Garza to grow up in the Westside of San Antonio and become international stars throughout Latin America.

Also present voicing their tributes were las cantantes: Beatrice Llamas known as *La Paloma del Norte*, Lucha Nieto and Blanca Rosa Rodríguez who noted that she had had 5 mentors as a singer, and with Lydia's passing, she only had one left, Rita Vidaurri. La Señora Zimmerle and Salome Gutiérrez spoke of the

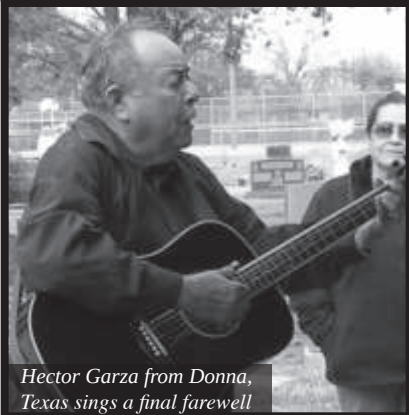
In *Lydia Mendoza, A Family Autobiography* published by Arte Publico Press, Lydia recalled that after a show in Medellin, Colombia, many joined in public prayer for her to return to the region. Such was the effect Lydia had on gente.

In the heart of Westside barrios, Lydia was laid to rest serenaded by *Mariachi Alegre* in a final farewell. *La Paloma del Norte* sang a few strains of Lydia's signature song, *Mal Hombre* that Lydia learned as a young girl finding the lyrics in a gum wrapper. That song eventually propelled Lydia to international stardom.

Rita Vidaurri, *La Calandria*, Lydia's longtime friend and comadre sang her a heartfelt *Amor Eterno* standing beside her casket. Hector Garza, also a longtime fan and friend, from Donna, Texas borrowed a guitar and gifted Lydia with another farewell song.



Yolanda Broyles González from Tucson



Hector Garza from Donna, Texas sings a final farewell



Beatrice Llamas, *La Paloma del Norte*, sings