

Other West Side Efforts

- In May 2002, at the Plaza del Zacate (in collaboration with the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center), we held an homenaje and 85th birthday party for Lydia Mendoza, a beloved Chicana musician whose singing career spanned over 60 years, from the 1920s to the 1980s. One of Lydia Mendoza's granddaughters and, a great granddaughter, sang a few songs to honor Lydia. She had found out about the event in the newspaper, and Maria Elena Gaitan and Juan Tejeda worked with her closely to teach her rancheras and norteños. This gathering offered a rare and important moment for these relatives to acknowledge Lydia's work and value for the Chicano community, as well as for their own lives. These two young women have continued to perform throughout the San Antonio community, singing musica Tejana in Lydia's tradition.

Yolanda Broyles Gonzalez facilitated conversation after the event. Over 500 people attended. Several filmmakers taped the performance, with an interest in making a documentary on Lydia Mendoza's life. There was also an article written about Lydia Mendoza in the *San Antonio Express*, which has a readership of over 200,000 and a front page story in the *Current* which has a distribution of over 50,000.

- The Alameda Theater worked with visual artist, Juan Ramos, in 2002, who created images of the Plaza del Zacate during the 1920s and 30s. Ramos digitally photographed contemporary subjects and then placed them in scenes that depicted stories of elders recounting San Antonio of the past, especially La Plaza del Zacate. This project builds on efforts by the Esperanza to reclaim public space, including our reclamation of Plaza del Zacate (renamed 'Milam Park' after a general in the confederacy), and the Plaza de Islas. We hope that these efforts will continue, and that Plaza del Zacate can become an important space for socially engaged public art in the future.
- The Esperanza continues to publish personal historical stories and photos of local community members. Photographs shared by participants of Casa de Cuento *pláticas* are published along with stories researched and written by community members who have never been published before. As people read each other's stories, they become interested in writing their own stories, and submit them to *La Voz de Esperanza*. Recently, Pablo Martinez wrote about his grandmother in relation to the December 2003 Posadas, while Esperanza Garza wrote a story about her grandmother, who was one of a few young girls who were recorded by folk song collector Alan Lomax when he visited San Antonio in the 1930s.