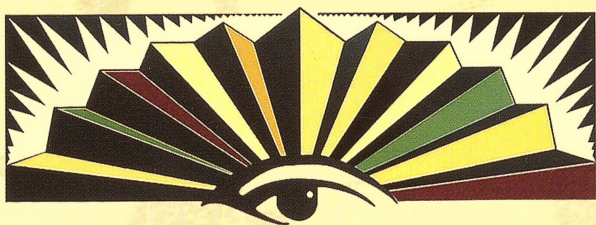


THE
NARCISO MARTINEZ



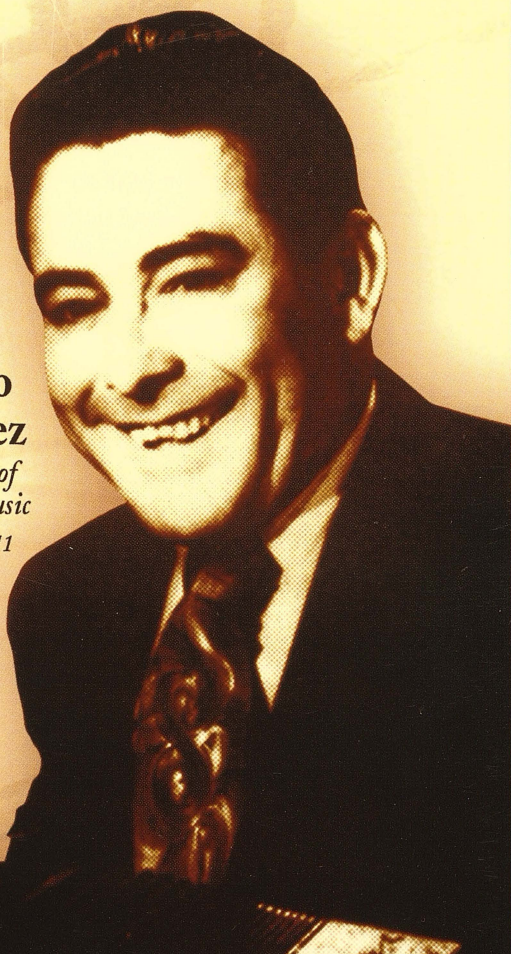
CULTURAL ARTS CENTER

225 E. Stenger
San Benito, Texas 78586
(956) 367-0335

**Narciso
Martinez**
*The Father of
Conjunto Music*

October 29, 1911

—
June 5, 1992



Narciso Martinez Cultural Arts Center EVENTS

CONJUNTO FESTIVAL

Scheduled annually on the grounds of
Plaza de San Benito, home of the
Narciso Martínez Cultural Arts Center,
225 E. Stenger, San Benito, Texas 78586
See website at www.cityofsanbenito.com for dates.

ACCORDION & GUITAR LESSONS

By appointment
Juan Lugo: 956-200-5833

WRITERS' FORUM

Second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m.
Open to the Public

INTERNATIONAL POETRY FESTIVAL

Every April at various locations throughout the
Rio Grande Valley and northern Mexico, featuring
the Poetry Pachanga

AUTHORS' NIGHT

Held during the month of April, featuring live
public readings of short stories and poems, and
performances of songs composed by
local musicians.

ART EXHIBITS & PERFORMANCES

Periodically held throughout the year,
featuring the works of area artists and musicians.

NARCISO MARTINEZ CULTURAL ARTS CENTER

PRESERVING THE INTEGRITY OF TRADITIONAL CONJUNTO MUSIC AND HISPANIC CULTURE

The Narciso Martínez Cultural Arts Center is an organization dedicated to the preservation, promotion and development of the rich and cultural heritage of the Mexicano community. This heritage includes the visual arts, music, theater, dance and literary works.



Narciso Martínez was born in 1911 in Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico, but lived most of his life near San Benito, Texas. The Narciso Martínez Cultural Arts Center was named in his honor as the result of his philosophy of being a proud man of Mexican



ancestry and working class origins; a man of the people who over the years gave of himself and his musical talents so that others could enjoy his contributions; a man who was willing to share his rich musical and Texas-Mexican border experience.

He has been labeled as “the father of Texas-Mexican conjunto.”

Narciso was the first successful recording artist who made hundreds of recordings of mostly instru-

mental dance tunes emphasizing the melodic side of the accordion and leaving the bass parts to his bajo sexto player, according to Arhoolie Records. This established a new sound, a sound which to this day is immediately identifiable as Texas-Mexican Conjunto Music.

In 1935 with Narciso on the accordion, teamed with bajo sexto player Santiago Almeida on the bajo sexto, they began a highly productive collaboration leading to the establishment of their new sound in an embryonic conjunto style. In 1935 Narciso and Santiago made musical history with the recordings of the polka *La Chicharronera* and the schottishche *El Tronconal* on the Bluebird record label. The results were impressive and Narciso Martínez was on his way to becoming the most prolific and most popular accordion player after 1935. He

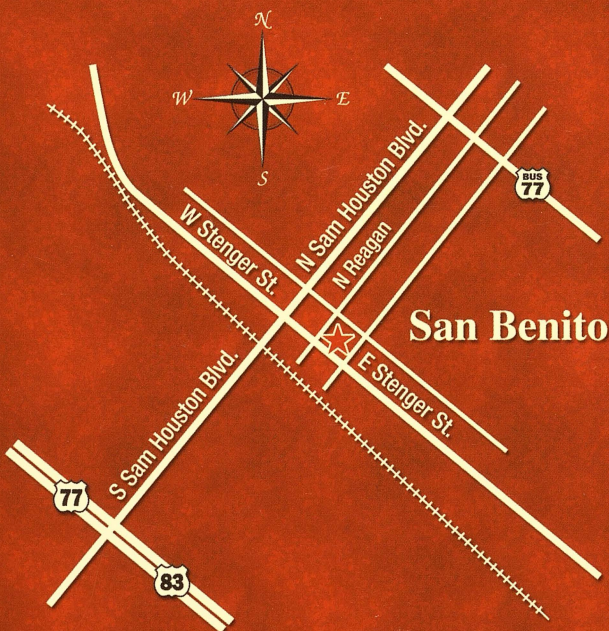


was given the epithet of “El Huracan del Valle” in recognition of the great storm of popularity his music generated. He was indeed, a pathfinder.

Narciso Martínez led the evolution of a new style of accordion-driven music, until his death at the age of 64 in 1992. He represents a major historical artist not only for the Rio Grande Valley but for the rest of country as well. Narciso recorded through 1991 before falling ill in 1992, and performed for various events locally and state-wide. In 1982 Don Narciso was inducted into the Conjunto Hall of Fame in San Antonio, Texas. In 1983 he received the National Heritage Award from the National Endowment of the Humanities in Washington, D. C.

Other facets of the Arts Center include a writers’ forum, periodic speakers/lectures/performance, accordion and guitar lessons, poetry readings, book signings, art exhibits and of course, the annual Conjunto Music Festival that attracts thousands of conjunto enthusiasts from across the country. That event is typically held in October and features a three-day lineup of quality accordion-based musicians who thrill the crowd of spectators and cause spontaneous dancing and cheering during these fun-filled, star-lit performances.





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Cultural Arts Center**

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