

HISPANIC-LATINO HERITAGE MONTH 2011

SELENA QUINTANILLA-PÉREZ

“LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING ARE INDISPENSABLE TO EACH OTHER.” — JOHN F. KENNEDY

- Born April 16, 1971, she was a trailblazing Mexican-American singer/songwriter, and was considered the Queen of Tejano Music and even the Mexican Madonna.
- She released her first album, “Selena y Los Dinos,” at the age of 12, and in 1987 won Female Vocalist of the Year at the Tejano Music Awards. This led to a recording contract with EMI.
- In 1990, her album “Ven Conmigo” became the first Tejano album by a female vocalist to be certified gold. In 1993, she won a Grammy for Best Mexican-American Album for “Selena Live!”
- She helped build and operate her own clothing line and boutique, Selena Etc.
- She was murdered at the age of 23 by Yolanda Saldivar, the president of her fan club. Reactions to Selena’s death were compared to those of Elvis Presley and John Lennon.



<http://bit.ly/pLxio0>

Selena’s short life can be summed up largely by the fact that at every turn, she proved people wrong. From her very early days when her father discovered her vocal talent only because she sang while he was teaching his son to play guitar, to her family struggling to make ends meet by performing at weddings and even on street corners, to becoming one of the most successful singers in a genre dominated by men, she never allowed people to tell her it was impossible.

She recorded her first record with her band, Selena y Los Dinos, at age 14, and became the first Tejano singer to sign a contract with a major record label when she signed with EMI Latin in 1989. It wasn’t long before she began dominating the Tejano Music Awards and the Grammys. As her popularity grew, she began branching out into new business ventures, specifically her own clothing line and boutiques, Selena Etc. The line was so successful she entrusted her friend and fanclub president, Yolanda Saldivar, to run it. That decision would turn out to be the one truly wrong move Selena made.

On March 31, 1995, Selena was murdered by Saldivar during an argument over claims that Saldivar was embezzling money. She was two weeks shy of her 24th birthday, and two days away from her third wedding anniversary. Her first record containing English-language songs, “Dreaming of You,” was released after her death, and debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 chart. It remains one of her best-selling works, and she remains one of the best-selling Spanish-language artists of all time.



<http://bit.ly/oRIFCq>

“A LEADER IS ONE WHO KNOWS THE WAY, GOES THE WAY, AND SHOWS THE WAY.”
— JOHN C. MAXWELL