



Quintanilla Jr - still busy in the music biz

Many music fans may know **Abraham “Abe” Quintanilla II** only as the father of Tejano singer **Selena**.

But as he told our correspondent **Ramon Hernandez** in a recent interview,

he's been in the music biz for a long time.

Abraham “Abe” Quintanilla II is living proof age is just a number as he keeps on keeping on.

At one month shy of 70, his birthday is February 20th; Quintanilla shows no signs of slowing down. A close look at his features reveals nary a forehead wrinkle and only a couple of faint laugh lines.



The second of six siblings -- Gloria, Abraham, Eddie, Yolanda, Héctor and Isaac – Quintanilla, who is the only singer in the group, was initially influenced by trios such as Los Tres Caballeros.

However his musical roots date back to Nicolas Quintanilla, his grandfather Eulogio's brother whose blood line produced members of **Trio Los Duques** and all of **Los Agues**. Eulogio's son Abraham, Quintanilla's father, also sang and all his brothers played guitar so it was no surprised when, in 1955, he and two other members of the Roy Miller High School Choir – with a piano and an upright bass – formed

The Gumdrops

, whose repertoire consisted of Four Aces and Four Coins covers.

That was the beginning of which is now the Quintanilla Family musical dynasty.

Today, he is probably the shrewdest music producer in the business in this market. As the saying goes, the apple does not fall far from the tree and his son, **Abraham III** a.k.a. A.B., who has already produced

Thalia

and many other international stars, is presently in Miami producing compact discs for

Verónica Castro

and her son

Cristián

Meanwhile, Quintanilla and his daughter **Suzette**, now the V.P. and his right arm, prefer to remain in Corpus Christi overseeing the Q Productions music empire. His staff includes long-time promotions director and PR man Joseph E. Valdez and A.B.'s eldest son, Svani. And it is obvious Quintanilla is very proud of his 18-year-old grandson, who is on hand to conduct the Selena Museum tours and run the museum's gift shop. But little do the people in the guided tours realized that Svani is an accomplished drummer and also produces at his own home studio.

Inside the Q Productions compound, Quintanilla is kept busy listening to hundreds of demos he receives from bands hoping to be picked up by the label and be the recipients of Abe's Midas Touch; and his latest discovery is **Olinda**, an attractive blonde, blue-eyed Chihuahua-native now living in Denver, Colorado.



In addition, he is now making his state-of-the-art stage/video complex available to bands who want to produce a broadcast quality DVDs. Quintanilla makes his top-notch video services alluring by using three to four high resolution cameras plus the option of a 250-person live-audience. However, the icing on the cake is that the audio is mixed in three formats, digital stereo, 5.1 surround and DTS surround sound. Some of their most recent releases are the "Flaco Jiménez Live" and "Campanas de América En Vivo" DVDs.

Of course everyone wants to know if there're any more new Selena releases and the answer is yes. What Quintanilla did was to compile the best of many rare Selena interviews and performances on the Johnny Canales Show dating back to the late 1980s. Furthermore, the DVD is narrated by Canales. This for Selena fans is as good as seeing Elvis' early performances on the Ed Sullivan, Steve Allen and Tommy Dorsey television shows.

The second Selena DVD in the works is a knock-out live performance at the Bayfront Coliseum

in 1993. Watching the crisp, sharp, rare footage on a screen that extended from the floor to the ceiling and listening to the music on a kick-butt surround sound system sent chills up this writer's spine, not to mention the goose bumps and the lump in my throat at reliving this historical musical event.

All this is the work of songwriter, now head of the video department, Rick Vela, a former Dino, graph artist Frank Gallegos plus Grammy Award winning Manny Guerra protégé, Brian “Red” Moore mixing each audio production.

And speaking of audio productions, a feather in Quintanilla’s cap, and a credit to his reputation, is “Música de Mi Abuelo.” The CD, which consists of waltzes, huaplanos, polkas, sonatas and redovas performed by Narciso Martínez, Bruno Villarreal, Pedro Ayala and other founding fathers of conjunto music are a jewel to behold and listen to, as not re-mixed, but superbly, digitally re-recorded. The musicians on this gem are Felipe Pérez, accordion; Jesse García, bajo sexto; Moore, bass; and Daniel Flores on drums. This CD is Quintanilla’s musical educational gift to this generation and many generations to follow.

As for the original Dinos, Quintanilla says someone recently found several lost tapes at Sugarhill Recording Studios in Houston and sent those to him. So is there a Los Dinos “lost tapes” CD in the future? Only he knows and one thing is certain – that Quintanilla will never cease to surprise us.

As for Selena’s museum, her father says last year over 26,000 people viewed the many numerous exhibits, but I bet they didn’t get to see Quintanilla’s private collection of metal automobile replicas and his collection of “homies.” Or the large space where a team of graphics artists are working on creating the artwork for future posters and CDs plus silk-screening tee-shirts for Q Productions artists, plus any other band that needs this service.

For more information visit the only official Selena Website, www.q-productions.com .