

LIFE HISTORY OF JOSÉ LUIS MORENO MANCILLAS.

Life comes to us through our ancestors, but when we know their history we can understand and appreciate their legacy. This first part of Jose Luis life is more about his family of origin and his ancestors.

Paternal lineage of the family tree.

The oldest known history begins in Spain with the marriage of Don Melitón Maguregui and Doña Serapia Palacios. They had two sons: Jesús and Carlos Maguregüi Palacios, who decided to travel to the city of Gómez Palacio, Durango in Mexico, to live with Melitón's brother, a Jesuit priest. They later settled in the town of Hidalgo in the same state. Jesús Maguregui Palacios, José Luis' great-grandfather, was a musician by trade, he restored violins and devised a technique to teach music reading (solfège). He had two marriages. When he became a widower of the first one, he married Ascensión Herrera Villa, with whom he had most of his thirteen children, most of whom were musicians. María Luisa Maguregui, one of his oldest children, was the mother of Luis Moreno Maguregui, progenitor of our Moreno Mancillas family.

The family of Don Jesús Maguregui, fled Durango during the Mexican Revolutionary War, settling in the city of Jiménez, Chihuahua, from where they ended up fleeing due to problems with General Francisco Villa, because he kidnapped their eldest sons, so that they would constantly entertain his parties. The most outstanding musician of this lineage is Antonio Maguregüi Herrera, violinist, composer and arranger. Founding member of the Symphony Orchestra of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua.

Maternal lineage of the family tree.

The other two branches of the family. are Leopoldo Mancillas Parral and Ana Sotelo Carréon, parents of Angela Mancillas Sotelo, who was the mother of José Luis. The history of the Mancillas Sotelo family takes place in three regions: Durango, California and Chihuahua. Their circumstances were as follows: Leopoldo Mancillas was orphaned at an early age in Durango, so he spent his childhood in an orphanage, where he learned to play the piano and discovered his gifts in the visual arts. He met Ana Sotelo Carreón with whom he decided to marry and start a family. When their first four children were born, they decided to emigrate to Glendale, California, where he was able to find a stable job as a sculptor in the city cemetery. When his stay in the United States was conditioned by the naturalization process, Don Leopoldo decided to return to Mexico and at the invitation of Antonio Sotelo, Ana's brother, they decided to live in the city of Chihuahua.

Ana Sotelo Carreón's parents were María de la Paz Carreón and Calixto Sotelo, who played the cello in the Durango Symphony and complemented his work as a barber. According to our mother Angela's comments, grandmother Ana played the guitar and organized get-togethers where plays were staged and opera music was performed.

Our parents, originally from the state of Durango, met in Chihuahua and married in 1950. Luis Moreno Maguregui and Ángela Mancillas Sotelo had ten children, suffering the bereavement of the first two who were not born. Later came: José Luis, Rosario, Ana María, Angelina, Juan, Antonio Martín, Víctor Leopoldo and Rosa Elena. Of these, Rosario and Juan died as children.

Our family life was difficult, but music has been a highly compensatory element that has always accompanied us throughout our lives. When rescuing our family tree, it can be appreciated that the artistic legacy is important, especially towards the musical activity. In our family José Luis initiated and motivated the rest of our siblings, with his passionate dedication, to work in music both professionally and academically.

THE YOUNG MUSICIAN.

José Luis, the eldest of six siblings, was born on March 1st, which in astrology is known as the "Day of Artistic Sensitivity". Since he was a child, he had an inclination for drawing and plasticine modeling, tasks that he performed with great ease and creativity. In his childhood, his participation in the Chihuahua Children's Choir, whose repertoire consisted of choral and sacred works of classical music, was an important antecedent in his aesthetic and artistic formation. At the age of 16 he would have his first encounter with a musical instrument while in high school, when he learned his first chords on the guitar and participated in the University Rondalla (a group of guitars and voices), which meant for him an explosion and revelation of his inner music, a revolution that would give a new turn to his life.

His character, a contrasting combination of tenderness, sensitivity, restlessness, rebelliousness, idealism, conviction and passion, would lead him to drop out of the first months of the recently initiated medical career he was pursuing just to please his father. Discussions, scoldings, and a total opposition to his desires to devote himself to rock music, led José Luis to make the determination to leave home to look for his own way of life. However, this apparent "breaking point" would open his mind and will and clear the way for his brothers, guided by his example. What at first may have seemed in the eyes of his parents a passing fad or whim, grew into a firm determination to

dedicate his life fully to what José Luis was very good at and what filled his heart with joy.

The first musical group where he played electric guitar in Chihuahua was called Los Vostok (Russian space-age ship), that was followed by another group called Tawa. This was in the mid seventies and the rock music they played was that of famous bands of that time such as The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Rolling Stones, Cream, Deep Purple, Jimmi Hendrix, Doors, Steppenwolf, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Grand Funk, The Who, Moody Blues, Chicago, Santana, etc. In 1971, José Luis achieved his dream of forming a super rock band where he was the lead guitarist: Ocico (they took this name "because they liked to talk with their whole snout'...), and due to artistic merits, they obtained a televised presentation for the annual collection of the Junior Chamber of Chihuahua. This was followed by "La Familia", a band made up of several talented musician brothers who invited José Luis to join them, as they admired his great ability with the guitar. The music played by these last two groups was already less commercial and a little "heavier".

In the meantime, José Luis was alternating rock music with his new job, entertaining dances and parties in groups of the city with a more commercial twist, such as Arena Show Band and some others. Arturo Ochoa, a renowned musician and producer of the city, listening to my brother singing (who preferred not to do it due to his shyness) discovered his timbre, vocal ability and the possibilities of his voice, and encouraged him to take over the vocal solos of the songs. And he was good at it too, since he had a wide vocal range and a good command of the falsetto technique, which allowed him to sing technically difficult songs in the high register of Led Zeppelin, Earth, Wind and Fire, Bee Gees, among others. This discovery made him a double instrumentalist, an added value in his musical interpretation that enriched his musical expression and that of the groups with which he participated.

His great curiosity and restlessness also led him to explore and learn about different currents and philosophies of the hippie movement of the seventies and to avidly read the literature of the time that would feed his ideas. Books like Steppenwolf (Der Steppenwolf, in German), Demian, Siddhartha, Le Matin des Magiciens (Return of the Wizzards) and many others, blew his imagination and opened his understanding. It would be during that same period that he would adopt a vegetarian diet, taking it with discipline and seriousness. Yet another source of controversy to add to his list of "rebelliousness". Later he would read Caballo de Troya by J. J. Benítez and Viaje a Ixtlán and Las de enseñanzas de Don Juan by Carlos Castañeda.

The professional activity would have to be conquered by the young musician in an environment not very favorable for the development of this activity, where art and music at that time and place had very little social value. Feeling that he could no longer fit in his city, in 1974 he decided to leave in search of new paths and opportunities for development and growth. His first destination was Mexico City, where he played with a band in Ciudad Satélite. There he lasted only a short time. Then, he tried his luck outside the country, in Los Angeles, California, USA, for a short stay. Back in Mexico, he achieves a certain stability in Guadalajara, where he does very well, thanks to projects, family and work contracts. Until he finally set his sights on Tijuana, a border city with a great musical movement, the mecca in Mexico for many musicians of the time, where he found shelter, sustenance, an interesting artistic project and the possibility of developing professionally. A place he loved and where he would remain for the rest of his life.

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[From Ana]

I want to open here a parenthesis where I will personally refer to the influence that my older brother exerted on me, both musically and in the way of thinking. Three and a half years were the age difference between me and my brother José Luis, which chronologically speaking made us the closest of the brothers. He was an idol for me and a reference to follow and imitate. I remember when he started bringing musical instruments to the house for his band rehearsals and seeing my interest in music, he took the time to introduce me to it. When he brought the electronic keyboard, he briefly explained to me how it worked, the musical notes and how to make melodies with them and how to change timbres and voices. On the drums, with his help I learned how to grip the drumsticks and how to use the various pedals, cymbals and drums. He would also teach me the lyrics of the songs in English and their correct pronunciation. He learned English directly by studying and singing the lyrics of the songs he performed and by asking my mother, who lived as a child in Los Angeles, California, to translate and teach him the pronunciation. But for me the most valuable legacy he left me were his guitar lessons that he taught me with great patience, pedagogy and affection. This was so important for me that this instrument would be the starting point of my musical vocation, which led me to teach guitar and rondalla in schools and to obtain an economic support for it. Later I would become a professional orchestra cellist.