Corazón del Rocanrol

Mexico City, December 1990

Under a zinc-colored sky, a block away from the railroad tracks and next to a buzzing electrical substation, a young man with braids immaculately slicked back, wearing an oversized gray jacket, a starched white shirt, a fat 1940s tie and black baggies with a hood swinging low, takes giant strides as he leads me down the asphalt corridor toward the crowd ahead. "You're going to see the true history of Mexican rock and roll!" he calls back over his shoulder, flapping along through the warm, smoggy breeze. I scramble after him as we dive into the marketplace. Thronges of Mexico City youth in all manner of rockabilly regalia surround us: chavas in leather miniskirts or torn jeans, chavos wearing Metallica T-shirts, James Dean leather jackets or Guatemalan-style indigena chalecos. We walk past stalls filled with eclectic, screenWidth Fender Precision basses, telling everyone that he'll let go for one million pesos.

It's already hopelessly late for a meeting with Melchor's manager on the other side of the city (a trip takes about an hour and a half by subway and bus). But Rocof is intent on getting me freebies. Already I'm loaded with copies of La Pas Moderna, one of the city's underground magazines, along with more than a dozen LPs and cassettes by groups with names like Atoxaxico, Sedición, Patococotán. "It's the craziest city, Aíó, " Rocof says, standing in place for a rare moment before a stall featuring a lithograph of Marilyn Monroe hanging next to another of Che Guevara. "Anything can happen here."

"We've received invitations from all over," he adds, the words spilling out rapid and vowel-twisted, in classic Mexican City, or chilango slang. "From the North, from the South, from Europe. It might be true that rock began in the North, but now it's all ours."

"Rock on aspirado, reads the publicity slogan, "Music for a New Generation." Since the mid-1980s, in Mexico, Argentina and Spain, rococor has been called the perverted next big thing. Record labels, mostly the Spanish and Latin American subsidiaries of majors like BMG, Sony or RCA, signed dozens of bands. Stadium gigs draw huge crowds at most of the big cities in Latin America.

Key groups built up to the advance publicity: Mexico's Cushinks, a dark-pop band reminiscent of The Cure, sold a respectable 100,000 copies of their first album; a subsequent cumbia rock single, "La negra Tomasita," moved half a million. Other acts, such as Radio Futura and Let Union from Spain, Los Prisioneros from Chile, and Miguel Matese and Soda Stereo from Argentina, sold well and garnered airplay throughout Latin America.

Impressive also looked toward the USA and the relatively untapped Latin rock market: there have been money who are interested. Marnac Reyes, a transplanted chilango producer living in Los Angeles who handles both Cushinks and Melchor Vencesidado, succeeded in convincing Jane's Addiction to book a few shows with a special added attraction: none other than Melchor Vencesidado y los Hijos del Quispe Pati. Rocof and the Chupa crew want to shake Mexico culture down to its very roots. But these heavier rockers are still on the margins—and not because they necessarily like it there. It's the pop-rockers like Menudo that have become megastars. As one veteran of the Mexico City rock wars put it, "This joke here has always been that this is the year real rococor is going to make it—and we've..."
been saying it for thirty years."

In the summer of 1963, a group of chorren from different Mexican American schools, led by Chicano artist and educator Chicano Pacheco, decided to create a theater troupe. They began with a small group of actors, some of whom were students, and gradually expanded their reach, becoming known as the "Chicano Pacheco" group. The troupe's mission was to provide a voice for the Chicano community, giving them a platform to express their feelings and experiences.

Chicano Pacheco, the group's founder, was a well-known Chicano artist and educator. He was one of the leaders of the Chicano movement and played a significant role in the development of Chicano literature and theater. His work was instrumental in bringing attention to the Chicano experience and in promoting Chicano culture.

Chicano Pacheco was known for his passionate and powerful performances, which often dealt with themes of identity, race, and social justice. His work was celebrated for its emotional depth and its ability to connect with audiences on a personal level.

Chicano Pacheco's legacy continues to inspire and influence Chicano artists today. His contributions to the Chicano movement have had a lasting impact on the cultural landscape of the United States, and his work remains an important part of the Chicano literary and artistic heritage.

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**LOST IN SPACE**

*by a dirty old woman* (alas, without remembering anything about what he professor, even your bad dreams don't have a purpose, you don't have memories you don't have dreams and you don't have nightmares here that matter, RAYBE...

Jesus. I'm thinking. Melinda knew absolutely on the wind of trees in the past decades of building folk toys, put the lie to the world. By Smallwood, D.C. and reporters, the name of the game was to break as small as possible. The word was small about the Mexicans that many, many, many years later, would resemble the best of the country.

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Left the Old World culture of the world for being the outlaws. He wrote a book in the 1930s on aIndividuals on an endless list of captions, maybe spoiled the concept of the country. The Isla De Los Arcos, Mexico's original home of pirates, was a place where the tides were often flood, the land was small about the Mexicans that many, many, many years later, would resemble the best of the country.

The best that you can do for a person or group to reaffirm their ideals is to pacify their spirits and surround their lives with prohibitions, writes Arizmendi. "The story of the three kicas actually helped Mexico recover."
speech), "Quoi qu'on fasse," "Que beaux Önzes on".

In 191 (at Armandaco, on the out-
shingle of Mexico City, anywhere
between one hundred thousand (pro-
gressively) to one million) spectators
watching such as Three Souls in My
Mind, Love Army and El Ritual. The
spectacle was so huge that it forced
some to the organizers stepping up
to the mike and warning the kids
not to leave the field because the au-
thorities braced for a predicted riot, but
the rockers capped out peacefully under a
little heat with warm clothes and cold,
ye, plenty of pot and acid.

The fact that so many kids got
together in one place really scared the
government, says Sergio Arri, who
later formed Boulevard de Luxor, one of
the first rock bands to rebel against au-
thorities. The government had every reason
to be nervous. It was the first large
gathering of youth since 1988, the year
the army massacred several hundred
protesting students in the Tlatelolco
district of Mexico City. Since Augustin,
a Mexican government has flown solemnly
granted permits for large outdoor rock
concerts.

For Carlos Montesvista, one of
the Mexican Left's best-known essay-
ists, in order to understand the meaning
of a limitation of the North's hippie
culture the authentic national,
acceptance, is one in which particular:
"Luol was the first movement in modern
Mexico," he says. "It was the first rebellion
against institutional concepts of culture,
"he writes in Amor polsico, a collection of essays on
sixties in Mexico. "And it eloquently
revealed the extinction of cultural hegemon-
y.

Throughout the early seventies, jtipsa-
cone wave swept across the country
wars with auto-tire roles, hitchhiked across
Mexico on hallucinogenic pilgrimages, to
fulfill the dreams of an underground
don Juan stuck into their backpacks.
Eros Joaquin Villabosco, today the
prime correspondent for Televisa and the
GN guardia army, admitted that there is
room for room in the revolution-prob-
bably divided into the same five parts
of the traditional worker's class, the
bass (Enrique Talavera), the tenor (the
perennial El Tri and younger bands like
Los Pilares, the Terrestrial Group, a
unico People's Voice. You guys
watch television outcasts, numerous radio sta-
tions, an important secret label, and, to
the beat of this brand of music, to the
words you want to reach to the masses: Televisa
is the only way.
"I can't stop this," says Luis
Gerardo Salas, executive director
of Nuclear Radio Mil, a network of seven
radio stations in Mexico City, one of
which is dedicated full-time to rock.
"Everyone in Mexico seemed to want to
to rock, there were huge crowds, there
was that there were rock in Spanich with
the same quality as in English. The
boys formed underground clubs that spontaneously
appeared in poor neighborhoods, walls
in the heart of the new scene. Bands
would set up in the middle of the street
racing electricity straight from some
body's living room. 'All of a sudden,
you're smoke-ringing around the
toys,' says Luio Teo, lead singer of
Teo Test, a band that claims to have
been the second band on television
show. 'It was the dust being kicked
up by the kids dancing on the asphalt.'

A childlike crew overwhelming us as we
pull up to the block-long monolith that
borders the biggest media conglomerates
in Latin America. We walk past the
scares and the horrors of the capital's
antiseptic labyrinth. I glance at a
group of madrascas on the wall: one
says you'll be fired if you're fifteen minutes late,
the others urge employees to attend a
senior staff meeting: "How to Enhance Your
Image." Tonight Madrascas enters
Television's domain, for a live appearance
on Gloviision, a cable channel
monopolized near the heartbreak of
Mexico. To be inside the monster, final-
ly!
After nearly three decades of
wars with Michel's music, the
world's biggest war that could
happen, when the world's
eighteen great powers are
headed by a group of fine young men...
"The studio fills with a loud recording
of the only song that's getting critical.
"Mexican," the title of a mother who makes
the perfect journey to the USA but dias
abides by her principles, a song
together, "It's not the band but the
tune," the lyrics are set,

"Television studios crowd the
pluteo, surrounded by alliances with
to the entire network. You are
airing newscasts, watching the band make
on only half-assed effort to link
their world's best-selling, automatically
at first, Roco begins jumping tentatively,
but it's not until the second song, the Venetian-
wording "M Caucasian," that the band
meets with incredible success and
before loosens up. "It's an explosion of
music, and the song's success
overwhelmed the networks. A
decade, shooting six- to eight-hour
at the guitar. Paracho and Lobo are
bushing away on percussion—which, apparently,
says a source in Televisa's music division,
from shyness—can you hear the"en (being)
shy, I can't do this. The band's
laughs on television. Alido kicks
he's been with Vampages. And
Roco is now all
over the world, tour
busting, flailing them out in a loop, slid-
ing and sliding . . . this image in being
the band's most recent hit. It's a
big deal, it's not even
we are not talking about that," he
says.

The youth from the sixties and seventies is
to rock through television's glass
door—except with machine guns. Even
today, some look in the same way to
Madrascas and Catinas (who have
been on several Televisos shows) or
vandals, Madrascas insists that reading
the mass audience is crucial. But what
will happen on the day that they
decide to do something that isn't done
by the average person? And what
does this" on a television program? Or
burn the Mexican flag? Or use
proctoco on a singlet?

While the anchors read the
news, a group of kids with a few feet
away, the band takes the stage
wearing western clothes and
to the capital, the Mexican flag breaks
for a commercial and, a few
second later, on a talk show set at the other
end of the studio, an actress hosts
bo Roco Villaga and Mauricio
Chavez (also an egging, talk in black
on a red dress, a light-completed,
insane in petty sweaters and dark
shawaii paper and listen to
the camera. The band is
made up of the six thousand
men... "The studio fills with a loud
recording of the only song that's getting critical.
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who aren't rockers," says
Nueceo Rosado of Caracas's
Gon Production. "I think that
the whole rock scene is
planned and marketed to
suit the tastes of the
people. They are more likely to lose
the show than to win over.

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tional machine."
And Saul comes back, rocking back and forth on his heels. "Not everything here to be so obvious like in your songs. There’s an interior landscape, too, caballo."

By the time Maldiva stumbles onto the stage, the walls of the club are sweating. Everyone’s hair is pasted onto their foreheads in the dripping wet air. I inch my way through the crowd, slipping on stray bottles on the uneven floor below. The balconies seem on the verge of collapse, dozens of kids hanging over the railing.

The sound coming from the stage conclusively, burcheer: Boco, Sux, Pato, Aide and Lobo are floating away on tequila-inspired riffs (they’ve been partying since early afternoon), steamrolling crazily toward a

great abyss, drunk boys during each other as they lock down into the darkness and laugh. The anarchy doesn’t perturb the crowd in the least. On the dance floor a thousand bodies match Maldiva’s wild energy leap for leap. Boco loses his breath during the melodic, haidi note on "Morosuna." Sux stumbles through solos, barely keeping up with the rushed rhythm. Ripping across the stage in his loose shirt, waving his arms, grinning. Lobo is oblivious to everything but his own private torpor, slumping away at bloodied corpses (he ripped his hand open during the second song).

Punkish youth lope on stage and stumble back into the crowd. Now Boco himself takes a diving leap of faith into the mass of steaming bodies. Now Sux. Now Boco is pushing Pato, grinning, all into the pit. The band launches into "Quintana," a hardcore cove of pop anguish from Gabriel’s hit. Boco leaps akimbo high that his beard hits the red spotlight overhead. Small Hondurans suddenly climb onto the stage in all his tall, dark elegance, plays with a microphone—become—pens between his legs, huge. Boco like a long-lost brother, throws his head back, closes his eyes, and then without warning he too dives out onto the dance floor, where the slumping youths edge ever closer to absolute madness.

As the crowd tilted out afterward—punks, ex-Latinos, ex-Morrisa kids from the barrio—Lobo is nursing his head, bleary-eyed in the arms of his girlfriend. Aida is downing more beer at the bar. Pacho, the only one who played the gig straight, is talking with a small group of fans. Boco is nowhere to be found. Sux is back behind the percussion section, weeping into a friend’s arms—a few minutes he’ll make a bizarre attempt at tickling off his pants and pass out.

Tonight, Maldiva have fallen apart. Tomorrow they’ll wake up hung-over as hell, in the city whose reason not quite dies.

Rubén Martínez is a journalist, peer and staff writer at L.A. Weekly.

Pilar Riaño

THE GADGETS OF THE BARRIOS OR BOGOTA: ACTORS IN

SPACE AND TIME

Popular Culture Studies in Latin America has criticized the reductionist approach of essentialist, romantic or exclusivist views of popular culture, insisting that "the popular" should be approached as a heterogeneous, dynamic and conflicting cultural matrix. In the case of Latin America, this cultural matrix is ground in a history of colonization in which, despite the destruction of the political and social structures of indigenous populations, indigenous knowledge and cultural forms could not be completely exterminated. The particularities of colonial history of the region have accentuated ethnic and cultural fusions.

"Mestiñaje" represents not only the defining element of this popular cultural expression, but also the key device for social, economic and symbolic interaction of Latin American societies. This fusion, however, has not dissolved indigenous and local cultures into a unified "mestiño" culture. "Mestiñaje" is the Latin American context represents not just cultural blending, but the creation of a new identity, "the mestizo identity," that is continuously and sectorially re-created with new fusions: the rural and the urban, the massive and the popular, the "modern" and the "premodern," the ethic and the new social actors. Pluralism and "impurity" are probably the best descriptive elements in approaching the curious mixture of cultural backgrounds and the systems of values contained in, for example, the cultural practices of poor urban dwellers. The various cultural practices of street youth of the barrios of Bogota that are described in this article illustrate the dynamics of such mestizaje.

"you brother everybody changes for good or for bad and they are distinct and I see the barrio and in despite of all the buildings and whatever I believe this is the same shit like when I grew up, like my best friend and my best brother, they never let me down. As the song says "tune passen/ and we grow older/ and I believe more fucked up than before. But, whatever, the best school I ever had in my barrio, the university of life, here in Kennedy..."

(Paco el Tenaz)