

Handout 2 - Introducing Selena



Selena Quintanilla-Pérez was born in Lake Jackson, Texas on April 16, 1971. She began performing at a young age in her family's restaurant with her older brother and sister. Despite being unable to speak the language fluently, Selena sang in Spanish by learning the songs phonetically. The family group soon became called Selena y Los Dinos, and after a move to Corpus Christi, they started regularly performing at weddings, school events, quinceaneras, and fairs. Soon, they were signed to a local record company and between 1986 and 1988, they released five albums.

As the lead singer, Selena became a main figure in Tejano music, which was traditionally a male dominated genre. After winning Female Entertainer of the Year at the Tejano Music Awards, she began releasing music simply as Selena. Her self-titled album was released in 1989, and peaked on the *Billboard* Mexican Regional charts at #7. Her subsequent albums were equally successful: the second album *Ven Conmigo* was the first Tejano album by a woman to go gold with 500,000 sales, her third album *Entre a Mi Mundo* produced her signature song "Como La Flor" and her fourth album *Amor Prohibido* charted on *Billboard* 200 charts. In 1993, she released *Live!* which earned a Grammy for Best Mexican/American Album. Outside of music, Selena served as a spokesperson for Coca Cola from 1987 and into the 90s, and ventured into fashion by establishing her clothing line and fashion boutique, Selena Etc. which featured locations in Texas, and engaged in philanthropy work.

With her popularity after the success of *Live!* and *Entre a Mi Mundo*, Selena had plans to release an English crossover album. However it was never completed. Selena was murdered by the president of her fan club on March 31, 1995. Her legacy still persists through a 1997 feature length film starring Jennifer Lopez, tribute concerts, a commemorative postal stamp, festivals, and a museum run by her family.