

*HONORABLE MENTION, DOCUMENTARY  
LOS ANGELES LATINO FILM FESTIVAL 2007*



*SELECTED TO AIR ON NATIONAL PBS SERIES  
"INDEPENDENT LENS"  
APRIL 1, 2008*

## QUOTES ABOUT "COMPANERAS"

*COMPANERAS is a soaring tribute to a tenacious group of women proudly making their voices heard in a largely male dominated profession.*

- Norman Lear

*A beautiful sensitive film about Mariachi music and the dedicated Latinas who are defying generations of tradition by playing it with such fierce passion and talent. I could and do identify.*

- Vikki Carr

*There's as much drama behind the scenes as there is in the passionate music. An honest and complex exploration of what it means to be a "professional" musician. The vocal performances thrill.*

- Hale Milgrim, former president, Capitol Records

*A beautifully realized music documentary that interweaves the daily struggles of these talented Latina musicians with remarkable concert performances.*

- Loretta Munoz, producer, ASCAP

*A rich, textured documentary that explores the phenomenon of female mariachi and the sacrifices these women make to play their explosive, soul-stirring music.*

- Michael Brook, Artist, Producer, Composer  
*"An Inconvenient Truth," "Into The Wild"*

## FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

*SXSW 2007*

*Nashville Film Festival, 2007*

*Maryland International Film Festival, 2007*

*Tuscon Film and Music Festival, 2007*

*Sidewalk Film Festival, 2007*

*Heartland Film Festival, 2007*

*Boston Latino Film Festival, 2007*

*LA Latino Film Festival, 2007*

*Rocky Mountain Women's Festival, 2007*

*Sheffield (UK) International Documentary Festival – Videotheque, 2007*

## ABOUT THE FILM

This documentary feature film profiles America's first all-female mariachi band, Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles. Founded in 1994, the 12 members of Reyna shatter age-old stereotypes while expanding the popularity of mariachi music. In a culture and a musical tradition that has long been male-dominated, these women are true pioneers, literally giving voice to Latinas.



Beginning with a brief history of mariachi and the founding of Mariachi Reyna, the film then alternates between heart-stirring performances and behind-the-scenes band drama. Interwoven throughout are the stories of two women: 19-year-old Angelica, a devoted groupie of Reyna, who comes to Los Angeles to fulfill her dream of auditioning for the group, and Cindy, the group's leader and the only non-Latina, who struggles to assert her authority over the other members without alienating everyone.

As the stories of Cindy and Angelica unfold over the course of the film, portraits of various other members of the group reveal how personal lives often conflict with the women's desire to be full-time musicians. The issues raised are universal to women everywhere: how to balance family life with career, how to achieve equal pay, how to deal with emotional conflict, how to balance competing priorities.

Musically stunning and emotionally compelling, this intimate film sheds light not only on a unique and fascinating Mexican tradition, but also on larger issues of gender and culture in American society.

*Directed and Produced by Elizabeth Massie and Matthew Buzzell  
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