

# Journeyman is on the road, even at home

*Joe Posada's hard 'work' is paying off*

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Special to Conexión

For a man who claims to have no job, entertainer Joe Posada sure works a lot.

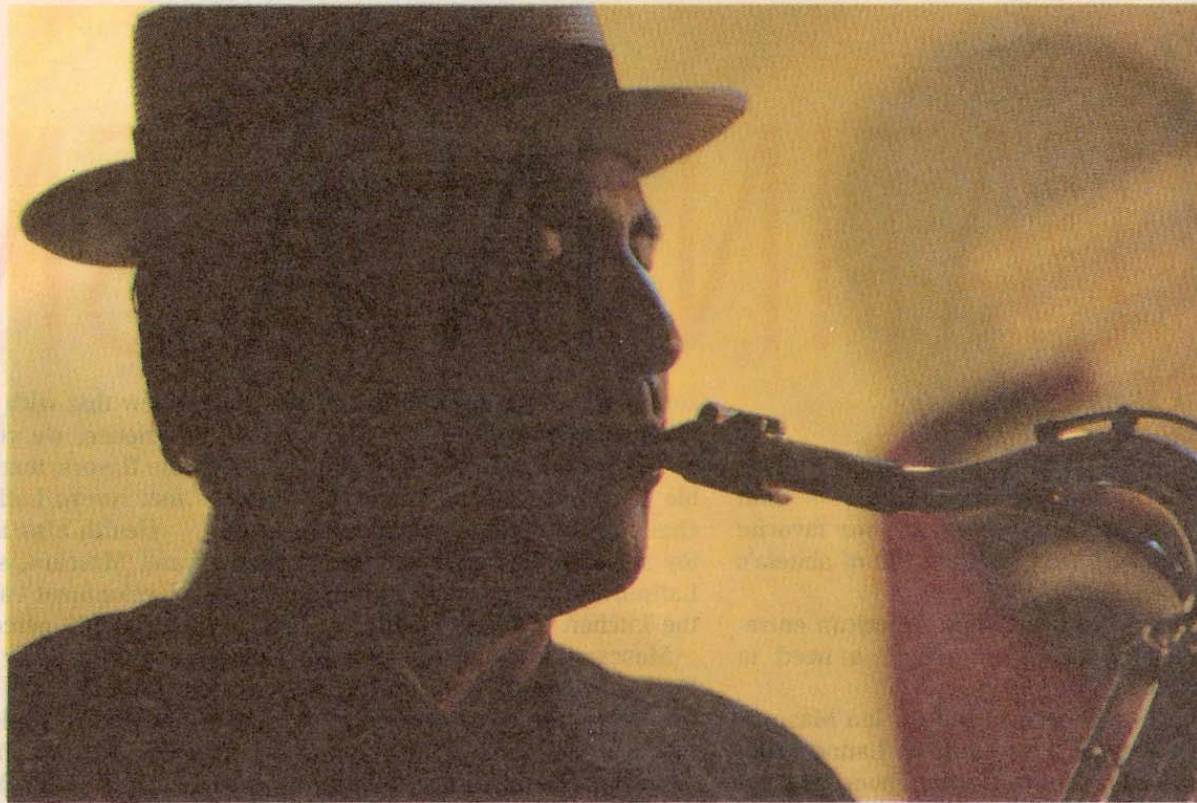
And in the four decades he has been "jobless," Posada has been a singer, songwriter, arranger, producer and studio musician, oftentimes performing six gigs a week. He recently launched his own record label, too.

Truth be told, the 51-year-old musician actually is self-employed. He just doesn't consider toiling in the music business a job.

"I've never had a job in my life," Posada said proudly during a recent interview, although he sheepishly admitted working an assembly-line job at the former Pace plant when he was 19.

"I used to screw the lids on jars," he laughed. The job was short-lived, though. He quit six months into it after cutting his finger on a jar.

Besides, Posada didn't need it. His saxophone skills made him a highly sought musician in Tejano's Golden Age in the 1970s. As a journeyman player, he joined several bands with some of the music's biggest names,



DINO CHIECCHI/CONEXIÓN

Though Joe Posada has been in demand since the 1970s, he never stops working to improve his craft.

such as David Marez, before becoming a top composer in the 1990s.

In November, he'll be inducted into the Tejano R.O.O.T.S. Hall of Fame Museum in Alice.

These days, you can catch him performing at the Cigar Club on the far North Side; Rosario's Mexican Café y Cantina downtown; or Landry's Seafood

House on the River Walk. When he's not playing one of his four different saxophones on stage, you might see him crunching on a button accordion or coaxing perfect notes from his Gemeinhardt flute.

Between gigs, he spends his time writing songs, looking for new talent and dabbling on the production end of the music business. Last year, he started

his own label, Baby Dude Records. And this fall, he'll release his first DVD, a Corpus Christi concert featuring 13 of his favorite songs, running the gamut from one of his first hits, "Valiente," to his most recent one, "Con un Cachito."

"He writes, he arranges and he is a studio musician. You could call him the hardest-working guy in Tejano music,"

said Ricardo Peña Davila Sr., a.k.a. Güero Polkas, a disc jockey at KEDA-AM radio.

Although he has made his mark in the Tejano music genre, you'll find Posada — a lifelong resident of the city's West Side — has expanded his selections over the last few years to include a healthy dose of jazz and even contemporary cover tunes that appeal to a variety of fans.

"Tejano has always been in my heart and jazz has always been near it," Posada said. His latest album, "Then and Now," includes 10 Tejano songs and five jazz tunes.

Among them is "Grover's Magic," a nod to one of his heroes, Grover Washington Jr., and "Overjoyed," his own arrangement of the Stevie Wonder hit.

On two recent Thursday nights at the Cigar Club, a trendy nightspot near Loop 1604 and Stone Oak Parkway, an overflow crowd spilled onto a patio and adjacent sidewalk outside. Sweaty patrons gyrated to sizzling salsa tunes and popular dance songs of the last three decades.

"He's the reason I go. When he's there, the crowd is there, and they really appreciate his music," said Roderick Battles, a regular who owns his own printing business.

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