



Like father, like son

STORY AND PHOTO BY SHAUNA BITTLE/EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Retratos is an occasional photo feature.

THIS WEEK:

Joe and J. Posada

Father-and-son musicians support each other in doing what they love.

The story behind the story:

During a stop at Rosario's, I heard the Joe Posada Jazz Trio playing. I stayed to watch the band and the dancers and was moved to make this picture. I learned afterward that they are father and son.

Salsa dancers engage each other in a variety of sensuous moves in the bar of Rosario's Restaurant as First Friday art walk patrons pass outside. Onstage, the Joe Posada Jazz Trio responds to the dancers' energy by playing a little louder, a little faster.

Joe Posada fills the room with the sound of his saxophone and then lowers the instrument to deliver lyrics in his strong, clear voice.

"This one is for all the players out there," Posada announces before launching into "Me and Mrs. Jones."

On cue, the trio slows the rhythm. J. Posada, the band's drummer and Joe's son, sets the pace.

Joe and J. have been playing together professionally for 10 years, but both are lifelong musicians.

Joe Posada got his start playing Tejano music as a teenager more than three decades ago. His son began his career as a drummer before age 10, learning from the musicians who played with his father.

Both look back on a life filled with music. Joe Posada has always made a living as a musician and has never done anything else. As a professional

musician, he toured frequently, but always made it a priority to balance his career and family lives.

He took his wife, Roslyn, and three children on tour whenever possible, and relocated the family to Albuquerque, N.M., for a while when a series of gigs called for an extended stay.

"I always wanted to play with my father as a kid," says J. Posada, who has childhood memories of falling asleep in beds of packing blankets onstage during his father's shows.

Though Joe had doubts about exposing his children to the late hours and transient nature of the musician's life, J. loved being near the music and players.

According to J., being on the road with his father helped him see how musicians can make a living doing what they love.

"My father set a great example. He's the whole package: a working musician, father and husband. He gave me the confidence that I could work and make a decent living."

"I'm a working musician. Wow. I've become my father!" J. says, then laughs.

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J. POSADA