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20th London Film Festival
Programme Notes



CHULAS FRONTERAS
(USA 1976)

Director	Les Blank
Producer	Chris Strachwitz
Production Company	Brazos Films
Photography (colour)	Les Blank
Editor	Les Blank
Assistant Editor	Maureen Gosling
Music	The Nortena Musicians of Southern Texas and North Mexico.
Sound	Chris Strachwitz

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LEADING PLAYERS:-

Narciso Martinez, Lydia Mendoza, Flaco Jimenez, Los Alegres de Teran and the people and musicians of South Texas and North Mexico.

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LES BLANK, one of the most exciting independent film makers around, has put his devotion to the art of cinema in the service of his love for American folk music. His previous films have been "The Blues Accordin' to Lightnin' Hopkins"; "A Well Spent Life" (on Blues man Mance Lipscomb); "Spend It All" (on contemporary Cajun life in Louisiana); "Dry Wood" (on black or Creole Cajuns); and "Hot Pepper" (on Creole Bluesman Clifton Chenier).

CHRIS STRACHWITZ, for the past 16 years producer of Arhoolie, Folklyric, Old Timey and Blues Classics LPs and now proprietor of the Down Home Music Company in El Cerrito, a store specializing in many types of American folk and ethnic music, pooled his resources with Les Blank to make this film a reality.

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Musica Nortena, although not the only Chicano music heard in the South West, has evolved since the turn of the century into the last Mexican regional style and the only uniquely Mexican-American style. Immediately recognizable by the two voice harmony and the accordion as a lead instrument, Musica Nortena has developed from several traditions including the German-Bohemian melodies, the accordion dance music, the traditional Mexican two voice harmony, and songs which have been passed on from generation to generation but with also many contributed by local song writers and corridistas (balladeers). Over the past 30 years this style of music has become very popular not only in the Northern parts of Mexico and the South-West, but throughout Mexico and even Central and South America. Musica Nortena has also spread north to Michigan, Ohio,