

## Document Citation

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## Corpus: A Home Movie for Selena

USA 1998

**Director/Producer/Screenplay:** Lourdes Portillo  
**Production co:** Xochitl Films  
**Editor:** Vivien Hillgrove  
**Photography:** Emiko Omori, Fernando Cano  
**Sound:** Sara Chin  
In English and Spanish with English subtitles  
49 minutes

**With**  
Abraham Quintanilla  
Suzette Quintanilla  
Vincente Carranza  
Cherrie Moraga  
Sandra Cisneros  
Rosa Linda Fregoso  
Frank Fregoso

This latest work by award-winning Chicana filmmaker Lourdes Portillo [who brought her film *The Devil Never Sleeps* to Wellington in 1995] is a dynamic, skillfully crafted documentary about Tejana singing star Selena Quintanilla Pérez, who, in 1995, was fatally shot in a Corpus Christi motel by Yolanda Saldívar, a business associate. Portillo's compelling close-up look at the life and career of the slain singer traces Selena's transformation from a popular Tejana singer into a Mexican American icon.

Inspired by Selena's short life and tragic death, Portillo traveled to the Texas-Mexico border to interview the singer's friends and family as well as fans – especially Mexican American teenage girls – who consider her a major influence in their lives as a symbol of hope and cultural pride. Through candid interviews, archival footage of Selena's performances and news coverage about the murder, the documentary presents a sharp and moving portrait of a talented, ambitious yet accessible star who put Tejano music on the national map of popular culture. — San Francisco Film Festival, 1999

The life and violent death of Tejana superstar Selena left an indelible mark on Corpus Christi, the singer's hometown. Selena's legacy is the subject of *Corpus*, Lourdes Portillo's moving and provocative documentary. With interviews conducted at the local radio station, at Selena's favorite eatery and at the singer's grave, Portillo's film is steeped in the passion of Selena's cult-like following. But *Corpus* works on several deeper planes, exploring the darker side of fame (Selena was murdered by the president of her fan club) and revealing the hopes, fantasies and fears of some Latina youth. Interviews with cultural critics including Sandra Cisneros and poignant scenes from the Tejano Academy, where young girls aspire to Selena-like success, reveal the double-edged sword of Selena's fame. As a high-school drop-out who died young, she isn't necessarily the role model many parents would choose for their children. Still, her grace, beauty and talent have brought great pride and enduring hope to a community, and her music continues to lift the hearts of her fans everywhere. — Taos Talking Pictures Festival, 1999