

Dancer, businesswoman, 53, dies

■ Guadalupe 'Lupita' Lopez Jackman turned musical talents into record company with husband

By Katherine Pfrommer

STAFF WRITER

Guadalupe "Lupita" Lopez Jackman, an accomplished dancer and businesswoman who created a record company that focused on danceable jazz, died Jan. 9 in Mexico City after a lengthy battle with liver cancer. She was 53.

Born Feb. 14, 1950, in Mexico City, Mrs. Lopez Jackman grew up with a large family in a home full of music and dance.

Her father was an excellent dancer who taught all his daughters how to dance, husband Bill Jackman of Oakland said. She also loved music, particularly popular music and Brazilian tunes.

At the age of 16, she graduated with certificates in secretarial skills and accounting.

Mrs. Lopez Jackman worked in Mexico City for several decades as an administrative assistant until she opened her own boutique for women's clothing in the early 1990s.

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HUSBAND

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In 1994, she came to the Bay Area to live with a friend on what was supposed to be a six-month trip to hone her English skills. In 1995, while out dancing, she met her future husband.

"We met at Kimball's Carnival dancing salsa in 1995," he said. "She was a beautiful swing dancer. She was able to dance salsa and swing — and she never set a foot in a dance studio or took a class."

The couple married in 1996 and settled in Oakland. It was the first marriage for both.

The pair went dancing every weekend, mostly at the Claremont Hotel, her husband said. Often, they would have the dance floor all to themselves.

Mrs. Lopez Jackman took business classes at Merritt College, but she wanted to help people and was interested in the

health field, her husband said. So she transferred to College of Alameda, where she took courses to become a dental assistant. She worked for about six months before her illness forced her to stop.

Several years ago, Mrs. Lopez Jackman approached her husband about recording his music — something he wouldn't have done on his own, he says.

In 2002, the couple formed their own company, Lupita Records, to create jazz music for dancing as well as listening. The creative force behind the company that shared her name, Mrs. Lopez Jackman was president and CEO, as well as record producer.

"The whole thing happened only because of her," Mr. Jackman said. "She set it all up."

Mrs. Lopez Jackman sent out a demo tape, urged him to

record CDs, wrote the liner notes and more.

"It was only because of her support, encouragement and her aesthetic input," he said. "The dance, popular orientation came from her. It was a joint project. I'll never do it again."

Together, the couple produced six CDs and a dance video.

In August, when her cancer became inoperable, Mrs. Lopez Jackman traveled to Mexico City to see family. She stayed there for her remaining months surrounded by family — including her numerous nieces and nephews who tended to her.

In addition to her husband, Mrs. Lopez Jackman is survived by four sisters, one brother and numerous nieces and nephews, all of Mexico City.

A memorial service is scheduled for 10 a.m. Saturday at St. Jarlath Church, 2634 Pleasant St., Oakland. The program includes some of Mrs. Lopez Jackman's favorite Latin tunes as performed by husband Bill on grand piano and Terry Hilliard on acoustic bass.

Contributions can be made to the American Cancer Society.