

# LOS LONELY BOYS

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## Biography

Los Lonely Boys are a family tradition.

The family band is a great rock'n'roll institution - from the Everly Brothers and the Beach Boys to the Black Crowes and Hanson. There's something about the unstudied perfection of sibling vocal harmonies that creates a distinctive, irresistible style. Los Lonely Boys, three brothers, aged 21-25, from a tiny town in West Texas, are about to write a new chapter in this compelling saga of America's musical families. They began as their father's backing band. Now, Los Lonely Boys will make their own mark.

Los Lonely Boys are the three Garza brothers: Henry on guitar, Jojo on bass, and Ringo on drums. This remarkable trio of brothers has been making music together since they were small children and now has a decade of professional experience under their belts as well. Los Lonely Boys write, sing, and play music drawn from diverse sources, blending their influences into a seamless style. Weaned on Tex-Mex, country, blues, and rock pioneers like Richie Valens, Chuck Berry and Fats Domino, and such pop music giants as The Beatles, Los Lonely Boys augment those solid basics with red-hot guitar playing, percolating rock and Latin rhythms, and dynamic interplay and luscious vocal harmonies -- all three brothers also sing -- to produce songs rife with engaging hooks, expressive lyrics, and melodic sumptuousness.

The band's self-titled debut album is packed so tightly, it's hard to believe all of this music was created by a trio. Though Henry, the oldest of the brothers, has been hailed as the inheritor of the great Texas guitar tradition epitomized by Freddie King, Johnny Winter and the Vaughan Brothers, he is also the greatest young player in the burgeoning Latino rock guitar style pioneered by Carlos Santana. Backed by tight, intense rhythmic support from his brothers, Henry's playing makes Los Lonely Boys one of the most exciting new bands to emerge in the new millennium. Ask no less an authority than Willie Nelson, who has called Los Lonely Boys his favorite band and invited them to record this album at his own Pedernales studio.

"Everybody seems to be digging us, which is great," Henry says. A fast and affable talker, he has a colloquial conversational style reminiscent of another Texas musical hero, Doug Sahm. Henry relates how their father, Ringo Garza, Sr. taught the boys how to play music family style, by his own example. Garza played with his seven brothers in a family conjunto group, The Falcones.

"Our dad had five brothers and a sister and they had a great conjunto band in the '70s and '80s," Henry explains. "They did a mixture of stuff that nobody was playing back then, a mixture of conjunto with country music and Spanglish. They were really popular in South and West Texas; they had a top 10 song once. They basically just fell apart after the tragedy of one of the brothers dying, the drummer."

"My dad was always into rock and country apart from playing conjunto music. He wanted to be like Elvis and the Beatles. He started playing when he was eight."

"We learned from him at home at first. He would let us come to gigs and watch him, then when we got older he let us come up and sing a song with him."

"We listened to our dad more than the radio. [He] was our biggest influence. We looked forward to the chance to get up with his brothers and sing 'La Bamba.' We were into oldies like Richie Valens, Chuck Berry, none of the stuff that was being played on the radio. I just wanted to write my own songs, man, I wrote my first song when I was four years old. He brought this little guitar home to me and put it in my hands and I knew I thought 'I'm never gonna let this thing go, man.' I went into my room when I first got it and put a couple of notes together just by ear, found a way to play it, wrote some lyrics, then I showed it to my dad. My influence was totally my dad. I would hear him singing about girls leaving, just from listening to him sing I got this idea and I wrote a song called 'She Left Me.' It's just got a few lines in it."

Henry's middle brother Joey aka Jojo also began playing guitar before switching to piano and then, finally, bass. The family band became complete when younger brother Ringo picked up playing the drums.

"When Ringo was nine my dad gave him a drum set," Henry recalls. "I taught him to play it and he learned in like 30 minutes man, it was like it was meant to be. And since Ringo is his real name, that's freaky, right?!! He's been playing ever since."

The boys had soon percolated into a musical unit of their own. After the breakup of their father's band, the boys began backing him at his solo shows. The band played their first show with their father while still pre-teens.

"We were backing my dad, because after he left his brothers he started playing in country bands and stuff with other guys, emulating the music of Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings and the outlaw gang. My dad's got kind of that image."

The music they made with their father was a mixture of classic rock'n'roll, country and Tex-Mex. Recognizing that his sons possessed prodigious talent, Garza relocated the group to Nashville. Although Los Lonely Boys flew under the radar of the record industry along Music Row, their time in Music City did benefit the three brothers greatly.

"We were in Nashville back and forth through the 1990s," Henry explains. "When we first went to Nashville we were still playing with my dad, but we started growing as individuals and writing for ourselves and I guess we just kind of outgrew him in a sense. We needed to get away from dad, not in a bad way, but we started working on our own and all of a sudden we were playing our first gig in Atlanta, without him. Things weren't going so well in Nashville, so we came back to Texas and started doing our thing here."

Solidified as a trio, the band developed a reputation as one of the most exciting live acts on the extremely competitive Texas and Southeast circuit, but the years of studying the classics allowed Los Lonely Boys to develop their superior vocal and songwriting skills as well.

"We got our harmonies from listening to our dad's brothers' band," Henry says. "He taught us and we learned by listening to him, just by ear, we never took lessons or anything, he just told us the sky was the limit so we would just listen and listen and listen and kept playin' and learnin' and practicin' through our whole childhood, never stopping."

The brothers never even bother to arrange their spectacular vocal harmonies.

"We just fall into place automatically," Henry says. "When we're writing a song, if I'm writing Ringo will just automatically sing the harmony and Jojo will come in with his. It just comes out. It's kind of freaky cause it's kind of magical, man, we're all three brothers and we all have a deep passion for music. When we play together it's spontaneous, it's so natural."

The album's opening cut, "Senorita," sung in Spanish and English, is a perfect example of the group's approach.

"My brother Jojo was writing music and I was thinking of some lyrics to rhyme to it," Henry recalls. "I rhymed 'bonita' with 'senorita' and we came up with these chords and just made it into a song, man. We speak Spanish slang all the time in Texas, it's not really proper Spanish, it's more of a street slang. The rhyme was kind of catchy. We've known the traditional Chicano music or conjunto music, tropicale, Latin music. When we grew up our father and all them did that, so we sort of went the other way. It wasn't easy, because people would say 'you don't sound like a Mexican band' and we can do that too but we wanted to do something that was us, something new. That's what me and my brothers did, and now we're bringing it around to where we're recording it and people will be able to hear the way we do it in today's world. I think it's going to go over real well, even in the Hispanic community, because I don't hear anything like that other than Santana."

Though the brothers know how good they are as a live band, they are amazed at how well the recordings worked out in the studio.

"We tried to record before and I was never really happy with the way it came out," Henry admits. "But on this album I can honestly say I'm happy with the whole thing, the guitar tone, the guitar parts, vocal parts, the way the whole vibe of the record É I'm really proud of it."