



Quinceañera bouquet

1979

Gift of San Juana (Janie) Treviño

Approximately 9 inches diameter (22.86 cm)

2004.076.002

San Juana (Janie) Treviño carried this bouquet of artificial flowers and streamers at her *quinceañera* mass and celebration in Edinburg, Texas, in 1979. The bouquet was part of

a wardrobe, purchased in Mexico, of pink clothing and accessories that included a ball gown, headpiece with veil, gloves, handkerchief, folding fan, and cushion for kneeling.

The Spanish word *quinceañera* stems from *quince* meaning “fifteen,” and *años*, meaning “years.” It can refer to a young woman of fifteen, or the event that celebrates her fifteenth birthday. Many cultures around the world mark the transition of adolescents to adulthood, and the *quinceañera* is a common (but not obligatory) rite of passage for young women in Latin America.

The origins of the *quinceañera*, which is full of symbolism and ritual, are unclear. They may include roots in pre-Hispanic rituals for young women, which were later overlaid with Christian traditions and courtly rituals and dress introduced by Europeans.

At its heart, though, the event marks the young woman’s entry into adulthood within her community and church. Her parents; her godparents or *padrino* and *madrina*; a court of other young women and men, her *damas* and *chambelanes*; and other guests at the religious ceremony and subsequent celebration all accompany and welcome her into this community. The *quinceañera*’s beautiful dress, bouquet, and other accessories are not mere decoration; they underscore the singular importance of the event in the young woman’s life and that of her family.



San Juana Trevino, with her escort, *damas*, and *chambelanes*; Sun Palace, Edinburg, Texas, 1979. 2004.094.001c.

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