

BIO

A legendary star of the stage and screen Vikki Carr has captivated audiences nationally and abroad for over 50 years with her melodic voice and presence. She is one of the best-loved and most accomplished entertainers in the United States, Latin America and Europe. In her illustrious career she has garnered four Grammy Awards including a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Recording Academy and has released over 60 best-selling recordings. She has performed for the Queen of England, five United States Presidents, wartime soldiers in Vietnam and sold-out audiences around the world. She has worked in radio, television, film and theater. Her music embraces four languages and she is among the first artists to bridge the cultures of the United States and Latin America, paving the way for many performers today. .

Born Florencia Bisenta de Casillas Martinez Cardona in El Paso, Texas and raised in Southern California, the eldest of seven children, who would later change her name to Vikki Carr, began performing at the age of four singing Adeste Fidelis in Latin at a Christmas program. She was signed to a contract with Liberty Records in 1961. She recorded He 's A Rebel, which first became a hit in Australia. That title was soon followed by the unforgettable release, It Must Be Him, which charged up the charts in England. One year later, the single was released in the United States and earned Carr three Grammy Award nominations. The international hit emerged again when she and the song were featured in the storyline of the Academy Award winning movie Moonstruck. After It Must Be Him came a string of hits including With Pen In Hand, for which she received her fourth Grammy Award nomination, The Lesson, Can't Take My Eyes Off of You and For Once in My Life. .

In addition to her many album releases, Vikki Carr has appeared on stage and television. She has starred in productions of South Pacific, The Unsinkable Molly Brown and I'm Getting My Act Together and Taking It on The Road. In 2002 she starred in the Reprise production of Steven Sondheim's beloved musical "Follies" in Los Angeles, garnering glowing reviews from the LA Times, Hollywood Reporter, and Variety. Two years later, Los Angeles PBS affiliate, KCET, filmed a special Vikki Carr: Memories, Memorias: a salute to the English-language hits of the 1940s and 1950s originally composed by Latinos, and featuring guest appearances by Jack Jones, Pepe Aguilar and Arturo Sandoval. PBS again tapped Vikki to host and star in a new production celebrating the music of Mexico, Fiesta Mexicana, which was featured on all PBS stations in 2008.

A frequent musical guest on major network variety shows, including Dean Martin, Ed Sullivan, Perry Como, and Carol Burnett, Vikki also taped six specials for London Weekend TV. As an actor, she appeared on the Bing Crosby Show, Mod Squad, Fantasy Island, Baywatch and many other shows. Vikki was the first female to regularly guest host for Johnny Carson on the Tonight Show.

The diversity of her rich voice is impressive. She can belt out the blues or touch the heart with a soft romantic ballad. Frank Sinatra said, "She possesses my kind of voice", Dean Martin called her "the best girl singer in the business" and Bing Crosby and Ella Fitzgerald named her among their three favorite female singers of all time. Elvis Presley was also very fond of her and even remarked on stage in Las Vegas many times that Vikki Carr was one of his favorite singers and that he liked her because "she sang from the gut" and introduced her at many of his personal appearances in which she attended.

Vikki Carr has received many prestigious awards throughout her career. In addition to the 2008 Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, these honors include the 2011 Medallion of Excellence given by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, 2009 Vietnam Veterans President's Award, 2005 National Hispanic Media Coalition Impact Lifetime Achievement Award, 2003 Latino Spirit Award, 2003 Tito Guizar Award, 2002 Trefoil Award, 2000 Inductee, Latino Legends Hall of Fame, 1998 Imagen Foundation "Humanitarian Award, 1996 Hispanic Heritage Award, 1991 Girl Scouts of America Trefoil Award, 1990 City of Hope's Founder of Hope Award, 1988 Nosotros Golden Eagle Award, 1984 Hispanic Woman of the Year, 1981 Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, 1974 Doctorate in Law from San Diego University and Doctorate in Fine Arts from St. Edwards University, 1972 American Guild of Variety Artist's "Entertainer of the Year", and the Los Angeles Times' highly respected "Woman of the Year" for 1970. She has earned the career achievement award of the Association of Hispanic Critics, Chicago's Ovation Award and the YWCA Silver Achievement Award.

As a humanitarian, Carr's list of accomplishments is equally as impressive. Her commitment to education and leadership development for Latino youth extends throughout her career. Vikki established the Vikki Carr Scholarship Foundation in 1971 in California. Now based in Texas, the program offers scholarships to Latino students in Texas who wish to pursue their dreams of a college education. For the past 42 years more than 300 scholarships totaling over \$350,000 have been awarded to students attending the Nation's leading Universities. Former VCSF recipients include a Superior Court Judge, the first Mexican-American Astronaut, Doctors, Attorneys and Teachers. With the majority of the recipients returning to their childhood communities to give back. Carr held benefit concerts to support Holy Cross High School in San Antonio for over 20 years. Her philanthropic support has also extended beyond the Latino community to many health related charities, several which benefit children and families. Serving for two years as chairperson of The American Lung Association, Carr was at the forefront of the anti-smoking campaign. St. Jude, The American Heart Association and The National Breast Cancer Foundation are just a few of the many organizations Carr has supported. In 2011 she was an "ambassador of hope" for children in San Pedro Sula, Honduras as she performed at a fund-raising event for Fundacion Amigos de Guarderia Infantiles.

In May 2009, the Humana Health Organization entered into a celebrity endorsement agreement with Vikki who was the spokesperson, in television, radio and print advertising, for Humana's Medicare supplement program, in English and Spanish, throughout the U.S. southwest.

2008 marked the fifth decade of this highly successful and multi-faceted career. To mark this accomplishment she teamed with mariachi master Jose Hernandez and his Mariachi Sol De Mexico con La Sinfonica Nacional de Las Americas to produce a 50th Anniversary Album. The recording, entitled Viva La Vida, includes new songs as well as recognizable standards featuring lush strings and vocal arrangements by Mr. Hernandez, and was released by Sony Latin in September of 2012.

The now Grammy nominated, Viva La Vida is Carr's "thank you" to all of Latin America and her fans here at home for all the love they have shown her throughout the years. Continuing her efforts to unite people through her music, Carr invites her audience to truly "Viva La Vida" – Live Life and to live it abundantly. With no slowing down in sight, Vikki welcomes the opportunity to continue to share her gift of music.