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Lucho Gatica, Farewell to a Chilean Music Icon

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Santiago de Chile, Nov 14 (Prensa Latina) He made bolero his religion and acquired fame the same in Cuba as in Mexico, but still went further, to the United States, to become himself icon: Lucho Gatica, a farewell that marks the mourning in his native Chile.

Luis Enrique Gatica Silva had just turned 90 years old. His death in Mexico, where he lived, shook social networks in tribute to one of the essential figures of the romantic song.

He kept the Lucho Gatica forever and reached the firmament in different ways.

'My father is loved in Cuba, he is loved in Spain, he is loved in Brazil, in Mexico, and in so many countries, but of course this Chilean affection is different and special for him,' said his Mexican daughter Juanita Gatica Cortes.

Chile venerates him today with the decree of official mourning announced by Interior Minister Andres Chadwick, who joined in the praise to one of the greatest ambassadors of Latin American music in the world.

'We have decreed this day of official mourning for the death at 90 years of our

great Lucho Gatica. The king of the bolero, filled us with emotion and pride with his music around the world,' Chadwick wrote on Twitter.

A bronze statue was unveiled at the Regional Theater, with the figure of the winner of the Latin Grammy Award for Excellence in 2007 and that of his brother Arturo, in his native Rancagua, central Chile.

His last album, *Historia de un amor*, dates back to 2013. He made duos with the Italian Laura Pausini, the Portuguese-Canadian Nelly Furtado and the Canadian Michael Bubble, among others.

But much earlier, Lucho Gatica became essential to the romantics of the 1950s and 1960s with hits such as *Piel Canela*, *Contigo in la distancia*, *Besame mucho*, *El reloj*, *No me platiques más*, and Chilean classic *Yo vendo unos ojos negros*.

In January 2008 he was included in the Hollywood Walk of Fame, with number 2354. He had three marriages, the latest with Leslie Deeb. He left seven children and 11 grandchildren.

To consolidate his fame also in the English-speaking market, he came to alternate in the United States, where he settled after his first divorce, none other than with Elvis Presley and Nat King Cole.

The municipality of Rancagua decreed three days of communal mourning for the death of the singer. They called him Master of the bolero, and for his admirers what stood out most was his soft and seductive timbre.

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