



Rogelio Smiley Rojas Moctezuma

August 20, 1952 - December 26, 2025

Rogelio Smiley Rojas Moctezuma passed away in San Antonio, Texas on December 26, 2025 at the age of 73. He is survived by his children Itzpapalotl, Ehecatl, and Kuautli and his partner/significant other Trina.

Smiley was born in Chicago, Illinois on August 20, 1952. In 1970, he began moving back and forth from Chicago to San Antonio. In his teens, he garnered the nickname Smiley. This was the result of a slightly older gang member attempting to jump/ initiate Smiley into a local gang. But the gang member was not able to commit to hitting Smiley/ Rogelio due to the huge nervous smile on Rogelio's face. The gang member then said that Rogelio's name should be Smiley. In that moment the nickname was born and stuck forever more. In 1973, he relocated from San Antonio to big bad Califas/California. There he started a family in the mission town of San Juan Bautista -- where he had his firstborn Itzpapalotl and second born Ehecatl, with his first wife Olivia Chumacero. They divorced after nearly 10 years. In 1992, he married again. This time with Cristal Gonzalez, whom he was with for 17 years. With Cristal he had his third born, Kuautli, and had been a stepfather to Ixchel Gonzalez. In 1998, he relocated one final time, moving back to San Antonio, where he returned to the very first home his family had purchased in the 1970s. It is the house that remained his home until his passing.

In 1990, Smiley received his bachelor's degree in theater, performance, and

social change from the New College of California in San Francisco. In 2000, he received his master's degree in bilingual education ESL/Spanish from the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Smiley was a very multifaceted person. A founding member, jefe, talent, and compadre in numerous circles/societies. These include El Teatro de la Raza in Chicago, IL (1970), El Teatro de los Barrios, & La Raza Unida Party in San Antonio, TX (1970-1972), El Teatro Nacional de Aztlan Quinto Festival De Los Teatros Chicanos-Primer Encuentro Latinoamericano in Mexico City, Teotihuacan, and Tajin (1974), El Teatro Campesino in San Juan Bautista, CA (1972-1998), El Teatro Familia Aztlan (1985-1998), California Art Council Residency (1982-1998), United Farm Workers with Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta (1972-1998), Jazz Poets of San Antonio (2006-2014), and Grupo Danza Xinachtli in California and Texas for five decades.

No matter the space, time, and place, Smiley was a proud Chicano through and through. His pride in his identity, por la Raza, en la causa, and sociopolitical activism shined through in his lifelong passion for the arts, teatro, acting, dance, music, writing, education, and even as a fire breather. His fellow teatristas, activistas, and loved ones affectionately joked that Smiley looked like Carlos Santana, or with a beret on his head, he could pass for Che Guevara. "Que viva la revolución. Que viva."

Smiley and his partner/significant other Maria Trinidad Delgado came together in 2017 and bonded over originally being Chicagoans that attended the same high school in the 60s. Though they knew of each other back then, it wasn't until their elder years that they became a couple, eventually rebuilding a home and living together in San Antonio for 8 loving years, until Rogelio's passing

Smiley leaves behind his children Itzpa Rojas Rau, Ehecatl Chumacero-Rojas, and Kuautli Gonzalez Rojas and his grandchildren Sofia Alysa Mata,

Gabriella Itzal Rojas Rau, Diego William Rojas Rau, and Oziel Sol Pedroza Chumacero. He was preceded in death by his sister Mary Ellen Boruck Rojas, his father Raymond Rojas, and his mother Maria Elena Garcia Rojas.

The celebration of life will be held at San Fernando Cemetery II in San Antonio, TX on Friday, January 2, 2026 at 11:30am. Community, loved ones, friends, and family are welcome.

Cemetery Details

San Fernando II

746 Castroville Rd
San Antonio, TX, TX 78237

Previous Events

Memorial Tribute

JAN 2. 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM (CT)

San Fernando Cemetery #2
746 Castroville Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78237

Tribute Wall

RC

“ On October 19, 2025 this was our last picture together. I will forever be thankful for all the memories we share together, including holidays, road trips, and all the birthdays we shared together . No more pain brother.RIP Love you with all my heart 💕💕



Rosie Rojas Castillo - January 02 at 11:14 PM

HG

“ Smiley, fue muy corto tu tiempo en nuestra tierra, pero que memorias y que Camino tomaste para tu familia, nuestra gente y nuestra comunidad Chicana. Supiste hacer arte y promover nuestra cultura, y luchar por justicia para La Raza y especialmente para los de abajo, Smiley que pases al otro lado en Paz y Felicidad y que te encuentres bien con nuestros antepasados Hector Helen Teatro De Los Barrios y LA Raza Unida!Que Viva LA Raza!!!!



Hector F. Gonzalez - January 02 at 07:00 PM

VN

“ You always showed up for all the special moments in my life. May you RIP Tio 🕊️💙 going to deff miss seeing you for holidays, birthdays and beach days when the family comes to visit us in corpus but I know you will always watch over the family



Vanessa Narvaiz - January 02 at 09:12 AM

MD

“ You will always hold a special place in my heart!



Maria Trinidad Delgado - January 02 at 01:02 AM

IR

“ Papi this is you and I saying goodbye at the airport in Pensacola, Florida summer of 2016. ☀️
Forever in my heart. ❤️



Itzpa Rojas Rau - January 02 at 12:16 AM