

HOUSTON TRIBUNE

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Mariachi Music Returns to Houston

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The elegant sounds of mariachi music will once again fill the air as Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán returns to Houston.

The mariachi group, composed of expert musicians and vocalists, will perform on Friday, October 5, 2001, at 8 p.m., at the Wortham Center's Lillie & Roy Cullen Theater at Mariachi Vargas en Concierto [Mariachi Vargas in Concert], sponsored by Ford, Lincoln Mercury and Ford Credit. Also performing are Mariachi MECA and Victoria Acosta.

Originally slated to be a Father's Day serenade, the concert was rescheduled due to the flooding that took place just days prior to the concert's original date in June.

The charm of the concert lies with the 12-piece, Mexico City-based ensemble, recognized as the leaders and most accomplished musicians and vocalist in the mariachi music industry in the United States and Mexico. Mariachi Vargas is known for its masterful arrangements of traditional favorites and original compositions which distinguish this group from other mariachi groups around the world. Having existed since 1897, the group sets the standard for mariachi musicians around the world, for students who study this traditional style of Mexico's music and most importantly, for the fans who continue to appreciate this music.

Additional featured artists will captivate the audience with their poise, grace and versatility of musical performance, including Houston's very own Mariachi MECA, a student group from the Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts Center. This is the second year this award-winning group, made up of students from Sam Houston and Reagan High Schools, will open the concert.

"The concert is part of a celebration of a traditional musical style that is over 100 years old, which Ford is helping to showcase in hopes of preserving this age-old genre," said James Kennary, regional marketing manager for Ford Division. "We are especially pleased to showcase local student talent, like Mariachi MECA, who are carrying on this tradition for, hopefully, another hundred years," he added.

Victoria Acosta is a 9-year-old songbird, known as the "little princess of mariachi." Discovered at the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza Vocalists' competition in San Antonio, Victoria, then 8-years old, took home Best of Show honors. She will open for Mariachi Vargas in Houston and McAllen.

"Lincoln Mercury is extremely proud to bring this first-class concert experience with the internationally acclaimed Mariachi Vargas to Houston for a beautiful celebration of family, culture and tradition," said Steve Hammond, regional marketing strategy manager for Lincoln Mercury. "This is a concert that touches the heart through the songs about love and loss sung by Mariachi Vargas," he added.

Houston is the first stop on the 2001 Mariachi Vargas Texas Tour, sponsored by Ford, Lincoln Mercury and Ford Credit. Then, Mariachi Vargas will perform with the Valley Symphony Orchestra in McAllen, on October 6. The final stop is in San Antonio, for the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza, a three-day celebration from November 16-18, filled with workshops, competitions and culminating in a grand concert.

Mariachi Vargas en Concierto is presented by Ford Division, Lincoln Mercury and Ford Motor Credit Company. Supporting sponsors for the concert include AeroMexico, State Farm Insurance, Que Onda Magazine, Reliant Energy, Gallery Furniture and the El Dorado Communications Inc. family of stations: KQQK-FM 107.9 and KEYH, La Ranchera. Concert tickets may be purchased by visiting Ticketmaster online at www.ticketmaster.com, calling 713-629-3700 or visiting any Ticketmaster outlet at Fiesta, Foley's or Kroger's. Showtime is set for 8 p.m.