A rousing grand finale

Mariachi Vargas will wrap up event

BY HECTOR SALDAÑA

It’s the highlight of a seven-day mariachi immersion: Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán’s performance Saturday at Municipal Auditorium.

The concert, which officially wraps up the 16th annual Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza, starts at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call (210) 225-3855. Muñiz Public Relations produces the popular family event.

Four years running, the 70-piece UTSA Symphony Orchestra led by Eugene Dwyer performs with Mexico City’s Mariachi Vargas.

The 12-piece Mariachi Vargas is known around the world for its dozens of albums and film appearances and has recorded with Luis Miguel and Tania Ronstadt.

Expect an emotional, rousing and passionate night of music. The evening celebrates not only virtuosity but education as well. It’s also fun and showy with mariachis decked out in sombreros and adored charro suits.

“It’s high-jolting energy,” said Dwyer.

Pepe Martínez (left) and Steeven Sandoval of Mariachi Vargas belt out a song at a recent show.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE MYSA.COM

MARIACHI VARGAS DE TECALITLÁN

WHAT: Grand finale concert of the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza; also features student mariachis

WHERE: Municipal Auditorium, 100 Auditorium Circle, downtown

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Saturday

TICKETS: $20-$100 at Ticketmaster outlets

For student mariachis who have competed and participated this week, it’s an inspirational moment as they perform onstage.

Pepe Martínez is musical director of the Mariachi Vargas, which was founded by his great uncle.

Since 1975, it has been his task to stay true to family traditions that date back five generations. Such authenticity is why Luis Miguel came to him for “Mexico en la Piel.”

For student mariachis who have competed and participated this week, it’s an inspirational moment as they perform onstage.

Pepe Martínez is musical director of the Mariachi Vargas, which was founded by his great uncle.

Since 1975, it has been his task to stay true to family traditions that date back five generations. Such authenticity is why Luis Miguel came to him for “Mexico en la Piel.”

The majority of the mariachi are now younger musicians that are no relation to the family,” Martínez told the El Paso Times.

“But we still have those old men who are 50 and over, including myself, who have 48, 45 and 34 years of music under the belt. So we have that possibility of teaching the younger ones to preserve our rhythm and style of workmanship.”

Martínez acknowledged that traditional roots music occasionally goes way to commercial considerations with inclusion of melodies featuring the songs of Juan Gabriel and Vicente Fernández.

“There are certain songs and artists that we know we have to perform because the people like them so much,” said Martínez.