Harvard mariachi band to compete to S.A.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.

When you think of Harvard University, you might think of ivy-covered towers, the Hasty Pudding Club or a mariachi band.

Ivy League students, used to getting weird looks, will join the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza.
Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza attracts Harvard group

Continued from 16

ways been headlined by Mariachi Vargas.

Now festival events include a mariachi art exhibit at Centro Cultural Aztlán and a performance by harpist Julie Martinez at the Instituto Cultural de México.

“I love that we have great community partners that are a big part of the extravaganza, such as the Centro Cultural Aztlán and the Instituto Cultural de México,” said festival producer Cynthia Muroz.

“This, combined with the fact that we’ve attracted an Ivy League university to the event, shows that people embrace and celebrate the cultural tradition of mariachi music.”

Despite the fact that Mariachi Veritas hails from a part of the United States not normally considered mariachi country, Varmontes says that the group’s dedication is as just as fierce as that of troupes from around the Southwest.

“We work hard every year to be the best that we can be,” Varmontes said. “Every year it changes because we get new members, and it’s hard for new members to come in and memorize 20 songs in a couple of weeks.

“So we often work off our music. But when big shows come around, like the (Cultural Rhythms) annual festival, we take many hours to prepare our set, memorize it, and present ourselves as a professional mariachi.”

The reason I wanted to bring the mariachi to the competition was so that we can challenge ourselves, and find another way for us to get better and grow, and also have an experience that we’ve never had before. Not only competing, but challenging ourselves in a new and different way and getting to interact with other students mariachi.”

Janani, a Madison High School graduate majoring in music, plays the violin in the group. She said Veritas plays music more than just traditional mariachi music.

“T’ll not typically mariachi — I’m a big fan of Selena,” she said. “We do some songs of hers, I enjoy ‘Cielo Rojo,’ that has a very intense aspect to it, and Demi’s ‘Tu Tú.’ I like ‘Como La Flor,’ and ‘No me Queda Más.’ Obviously not really mariachi, but a lot of the people we play for really like it and they recognize these songs, especially here in the Latino community at Harvard. We also play ‘Todo Sólo Tú’.”

“I’m half Iranian, half Mexican. I grew up more with the Iranian aspect than the Mexican aspect. In San Antonio, the culture is basically Mexican, so I grew up listening to Selena when I was younger, and knew about her history, when she died, the movie. I have all her albums. It was really important for me, growing up in the household.”

Mariachi Veritas is made up of nine members who come from across the country — California, Massachusetts, Texas.

Janani said the group has run up against some mariachi stereotypes that have nothing to do with the seeing oddity of being from Harvard. When they participated in the annual “Cultural Rhythms,” they were asked to welcome festival guest Salvador Hayek at the airport.

“So we got the privilege to go to the airport, and greet her when she flew in,” Janani said. “One of our players, champagne, is a Latina, she’s from Mexico, and she made a comment about how she thought mariachi was supposed to be a little short and a little round.

“And she was surprised to see a Lebanese Mariachi that was tall and thin.”