

# ***The Hecho en las Américas Series Continues*** **With LEYENDAS DEL MARIACHI** **Bringing Together Musical Icons from the Most Famous** **and Distinguished Mariachi of the Past Three Decades,** **the New Band Makes Its U.S. Debut at The Soraya**

**Thursday, January 25 at 8pm; *Tickets Start at \$39 and on Sale Now at [TheSoraya.org](https://www.thesoraya.org).***

(Los Angeles, CA) January 11, 2024 — The Soraya’s **Hecho en Las Américas Series** returns on Thursday, Jan. 25 for a spectacular one-night-only event — **Leyendas del Mariachi**. The all-new band brings together the most famous and distinguished mariachi of the past three decades and makes its United States debut for this event at The Soraya. Legendary members from Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán, Mariachi Los Camperos, Mariachi Cobre, and Mariachi América de Jesús Rodríguez de Hajar take The Soraya’s Great Hall stage together as one for a performance that promises to be an inspiration for generations music lovers.

## **About The Soraya’s Hecho en Las Américas Series**

When we began Hecho en Las Américas nine years ago, we did so in response to CSUN/Northridge’s Chicana/o Studies Department,” said Thor Steingraber, The Soraya’s Executive and Artistic Director. “Those folks knew there was a vibrant San Fernando Valley Latino/Hispanic community that was eager to experience the music and dance that is so much part of their culture. I am happy to say that now Hecho en Las Américas is woven into The Soraya’s Signature Series and has grown to become a pillar of our annual performance programming.”

Norteña specialists, Los Tigres Del Norte, blew the doors off the theatre when it performed during the Valley Performing Arts Center’s (VPAC) first season in 2012 (now called The Soraya). Soon after, Mariachi Vargas performed back-to-back concerts in 2013 and 2014 and proved that VPAC, now known as The Soraya, would become a home to Latin American artists and audiences in greater Los Angeles. **Hecho en Las Américas** was born.

The series was named to be inclusive of all the communities and cultures in North, Central and South America—and the artists whose work inspires and carries on those traditions.

### **About the Artists for LEYENDAS DEL MARIACHI**

**Pepe Martínez Jr.**, born in 1969, made his foray into the music world at 16 by joining Mariachi Juvenil Tecalitlán, followed by Mariachi Juvenil de México and Mariachi América de Don Jesús Rodríguez de Híjar. His illustrious journey continued as he became an integral part of the renowned Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán for over 24 years. Currently residing in Los Angeles, CA, he leads his own group. Notably, Pepe Martínez Jr. commenced his musical career at the young age of 16. Importantly, he is the heir to the legacy of his father, Don Jose “Pepe” Martínez, the eminent composer, and Music Director for Mariachi Vargas from 1975 to 2014. Many considered Don Jose as the face of the group, and Pepe Martinez Jr. carries forward his father’s musical heritage.

**Ismael Hernández** embarked on his musical journey at the tender age of 8, apprenticing with his father, Chato Hernández, in Mariachi los Jilgueros as a vihuelist. A pivotal moment arrived at 18 when he relocated to Los Angeles, California, where José Hernández and Mariachi Sol de México welcomed him as a violinist. Subsequently, he joined Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano, honing his skills over a remarkable 25-year career. Encouraged by Nati Cano, Ismael later established his own ensemble, Mariachi Tierra Querida de Ismael Hernández.

**Julio Martínez**, born in 1961 in Mexico City, embarked on his harp journey at the age of 12 under the guidance of esteemed teachers Felipe Aguilar, Mario Barradas, and Celso Duarte. Notably, he marked his musical footprint with the release of his debut harp record, “Latinoamerica y su Música,” in collaboration with Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán in 1988. His career unfolded further in 1989 when he joined Mariachi Sol de México, contributing to the soundtrack of the film “American Me” recorded in Los Angeles. Julio represented Mexico at the “Europalia ‘93” Festival in Brussels with Mariachi Arriba Juárez in 1993. In 1995, he became part of Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán, touring globally for an impressive 22 years. Currently, Julio Martínez is an active member of the renowned Mariachi Mexico de Pepe Villa, established in 1953, and he proudly graces the ensemble of Mariachi Las Leyendas.

**Eloy Pérez** is a distinguished member of the Leyendas del Mariachi cast. Born on July 18, 1977, in Huamantla, Tlaxcala, Eloy began his musical journey at the age of 11 when he moved to Puebla to study trumpet and music. In 1988, he joined his father’s mariachi group and, at 15, seized his first professional opportunity with Mariachi Juvenil de México under Martin Ramírez. Subsequently, he enriched his experience with Mariachi Gold and Silver of Pepe Chávez, sharing a section with the legendary trumpeter, Miguel Martínez, for two years. Eloy’s musical odyssey also includes contributions to Mariachi Azteca by Carlos Fuentes, Mariachi Gallos de México, Mariachi Real de Jalisco (official of Mexico’s largest folkloric ballet by Amalia Hernández), Mariachi de América by Don Jesús Rodríguez de Híjar, and a notable tenure with Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan from 2007 to 2009 and 2014 to 2016. Presently, he showcases his trumpet prowess as a member of the Internacional Mariachi Puebla.

**Esteban “Steve” Carrillo** is a prominent member of the Leyendas del Mariachi cast. Born and raised in Tucson, Arizona, Steve commenced his mariachi journey with the groundbreaking youth ensemble, Los Changuitos Feos de Tucson. From 1968 to 1974, he toured extensively across the United States with the group. In collaboration with his brother Randy Carrillo, Steve co-founded Mariachi Cobre in 1971, serving as its Musical Director for an impressive 52 years. Currently residing in Orlando, Florida, for the past 41 years, Mariachi Cobre has been the resident mariachi at Walt Disney World’s Epcot theme park. Esteemed as the Director of Mariachi Cobre, Esteban “Steve” Carrillo brings decades of musical expertise to the stage.

**Juan Rodríguez** commenced his violin studies under the guidance of his father, Primitivo Rodríguez. His musical journey began at the age of eight with Mariachi Aventureros, where he played alongside his father and honed his skills in music theory under Master Nicolás Castañeda Cabral. In 1985, driven by the pursuit of a better future, he migrated to the USA, joining Mariachi Los Galleros de Pedro Rey in 1989. Later, in 1991, he became an integral part of Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano, accompanying renowned artists like Lucha Villa, Lola Beltrán, Juan Gabriel, and Pepe Aguilar. Juan’s illustrious 26-year tenure with Mariachi Los Camperos saw him contribute to multiple albums and collaborate with artists such as Joan Sebastian and Mariachi V.

**Germán López**, hailing from Mascota, Jalisco, was born in 1972. His musical journey commenced at the age of 13, alongside his father Domingo López, as a vihuelist with Mariachi Navidad. In pursuit of new horizons, Germán emigrated to the United States in 1996. His journey led him to Mariachi Imperial de México, under Mario Rodríguez “El Mono,” from 1998 to 2002. Subsequently, he joined Juan Jiménez’s Estrellas de México until 2004. The year-end of 2004 marked a significant chapter as he became a member of Los Camperos de Nati Cano, contributing over 13 years to the renowned ensemble. In 2017, Germán opted for a career change, prompting his relocation to Northern California. Germán López, a versatile musician, continues to enrich the world of Mariachi with his passion and talent.

**Fernando Hernández**, born in 1966 in Mexico City, began his musical journey at 10 with Mariachi Ardillitas, touring Mexico. Over the years, he showcased his talent with Mariachi Latino, Azteca de Jesús Vázquez, and Nuevo Zapopán. Notably, he was the lead mariachi at the Blanquita Theater, accompanying artists like María de Lourdes. From 1985, he contributed to renowned groups such as Mariachi Gama, Mariachi México 70 on Televisa’s “Siempre en Domingo,” and Mariachi 2000. Fernando’s rich career also includes collaborations with Mariachi Arroyo, Emperadores, and Arrieros de México. Currently, he directs Mariachi Embajadores and teaches at the Ollin Yoliztli School in Garibaldi.

**Rafael Palomar**, affectionately known as “El Maestro Palomar,” is a distinguished retiree from the world-renowned Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán, acclaimed as the best mariachi globally. With 23 years as director, Maestro Palomar excelled as both lead singer and guitarist, leaving an indelible mark on Vargas’ younger singers. His influence is evident in approximately 35 recordings, now considered classics of the genre. Retiring from Mariachi Vargas at 47, Maestro Palomar continued his musical journey as the director for Mr. Ezequiel Peña. Leading the Mariachi Palomar de Ameca, he toured Mexico and the United States, contributing to recordings with esteemed artists like Linda Ronstadt. We are honored to have Maestro Palomar as our musical director for HMA, paying tribute to his extraordinary legacy.

**Javier Rodriguez**, born in Tlaltenango de Sanchez Roman Zacatecas, Mexico, began his musical career at the young age of eight with maestro Nicolas Castañeda and his father Primitivo Rodriguez. Upon studying, six years later, he began to stand out as a trumpeter. Rodriguez emigrated to the United States at the age of 15 where he began to participate in the Mariachi Nuevo Zapopan alongside his uncle. Shortly thereafter he returned to Mexico to continue his studies at the University of Guadalajara. While he continues his studies, he participates in Ramón Ibarra's Mariachi Los Toritos and a versatile orchestra.

Throughout his career, Javier Rodriguez has participated in different renowned mariachis such as Mariachi Sol De México and Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano. During these years, Rodriguez had the opportunity to travel on several tours to different places in Europe, Japan, South America and the United States where he played for Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama.

During his career with Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano, he accompanied several artists such as Juan Gabriel, Pepe Aguilar, Linda Rostand, Luis Miguel, Aida Cuevas, Alejandro Fernández, Antonio Aguilar and many more others. He also had the opportunity to play with the New York Philharmonic, the Spanish Youth Philharmonic, the Dallas Philharmonic, the National Philharmonic of Mexico, the Guadalajara Philharmonic Orchestra, the Querétaro Orchestra and the Guanajuato Symphony Orchestra.

**Francisco “Paco” Aguilar** launched his career with Mariachi Juvenil Tecalitlán, later joining Mariachi AMERICA and accompanying artists like Isabel Pantoja and Lola Beltrán. As an exclusive mariachi for ROCÍO DURCAL from 1995 to 2000, he toured worldwide. Aguilar co-founded Mariachi Sonidos de América and later contributed to Mariachi Nuevo Tecalitlán (2005-2020), performing with renowned artists like Alejandro Sanz and Vicente Fernández. Besides being a Yamaha Artist and arranger, he instructs trumpet in international workshops, showcasing his rich musical expertise.

**Jose Moyces Vargas Basulto** began his musical journey at age 16 in 1981 at Plaza de los Mariachis in Guadalajara under the guidance of Jesús Castillo. Over the years, he contributed his musical talents to Mariachi Los Toritos for a decade, touring Spain, Austria, and various other countries. Subsequently, he joined Mariachi San Francisco for three years, followed by another three with Mariachi Sol de América. His extensive career continued with Mariachi Nuevo Tecalitlán, spanning over two decades and worldwide tours. Moyces has collaborated with esteemed colleagues such as Chabelo García, Daniel Rosales, Steven Sandoval, Oscar Arellano, among others, showcasing his dedication to the mariachi tradition.

**In addition to *Leyendas del Mariachi*, upcoming 2024 Hecho en Las Américas Series**

**Performances include:**

Sat Feb 10 | 8pm

*Jazz at Naz | Great Hall*

Eliades Ochoa with special guest Harold López-Nussa

Sway to the hazy melodies and poignant rhythms of Cuba. Colorful island sounds linger in the air as the famed Buena Vista Social Club guitarist brings the music of his homeland to the stage along with the young and fiery López-Nussa on piano. This master session is a pulse-elevating evening of Latin Jazz you won't soon forget.

**Sat May 4 | 8pm**

**The Great Hall**

**Culture Clash *May the 40<sup>th</sup> Be With You***

The iconoclastic Chicano performance troupe proudly returns to The Soraya with an all-new show that serves up an explosive cocktail of humor and satirical outrage. This eclectic group of California natives has profoundly explored the evolution of LatinX culture on stages and screens for four decades. The historic anniversary performance, *May the 40th Be With You*, dares you not to laugh out loud. The legacy of Culture Clash lives at CSUN both onstage as well as in the University Library Special Collections and Archives, where a significant multi-volume set of their documents and letters live and breathe.

**For tickets and interview requests, please contact:**

- The Soraya Communications Associate [Marie Estrada \(marie.estrada@csun.edu\)](mailto:marie.estrada@csun.edu)
- PR Consultant [Gary Murphy \(garymurphypr@garymurphypr.com\)](mailto:garymurphypr@garymurphypr.com)
- [ACCESS YOUR PRESS KIT HERE.](#)

For questions or ticket information, visit [www.TheSoraya.org](http://www.TheSoraya.org) or call the Ticket Office at (818) 677-3000. Office hours are 11a-4p, Tuesday through Saturday.

**About the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)**

The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for The Performing Arts (The Soraya) is an award-winning, state-of-the-art 1,700-seat theatre designed and built by HGA Architects and Engineers and opened in January 2011 as the Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC). Through a transformative gift by Younes and Soraya Nazarian the venue was renamed as The Soraya in 2017. Vibrant programming has served to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley and its 1.8 million residents, and as one of the top arts and culture venues in Southern California. Since its inaugural season, The Soraya has presented over 500 artists and companies across the genres of music, dance, theater and film and is a highly in demand location for filming and rental events.

The Soraya's 2023/2024 Season boldly advances the expansive sound of orchestras both traditional and contemporary; the freestyle vibe of jazz; an array of dance luminaries, and a cultural bounty drawn from the musical well of global voices. The Soraya continues its vigorous commitment to innovating, excelling, and amplifying access by offering a wide variety of performances that reflect Los Angeles' many distinctive communities and featuring new and original work and artists from the local region as well as nationally and around the world.

Located on the vibrant campus of California State University Northridge (CSUN), The Soraya and the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication share an integral link that enhances student access and opportunities in the arts and performing arts. A \$5 million contribution from record producer and former California Lieutenant Governor Mike Curb was pivotal in ensuring

the completion and opening of The Soraya in 2011. For his founding support and in acknowledgment of the integral relationship between the Mike Curb College and The Soraya, Mike Curb is recognized as one of The Soraya's Cornerstone Benefactors. This partnership fosters academic and artistic excellence, elevating the talents and the future growth of CSUN's students through master classes, student tickets, concerts of student ensembles, and students appearing alongside renowned artists such as Wynton Marsalis, Aida Cuevas, and Martha Graham Dance Company.

**What:**           **Leyendas del Mariachi**  
**When:**        Thu, Jan 25 at 8pm  
**Where:**       Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)  
                  18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330  
**Tickets:**      Tickets are \$39-\$109  
**Website:**     <http://thesoraya.org>  
**Phone:**       818-677-3000

#### The Soraya Press Contacts

Marie Estrada, Communications Associate, The Soraya  
P: 818-677-6691 | E: [marie.estrada@csun.edu](mailto:marie.estrada@csun.edu)

Gary W. Murphy, Consultant  
P: 213-700-9645 | E: [gmurphypr@gmail.com](mailto:gmurphypr@gmail.com)

# # #