

## Reaching Across Borders

**The Tech Museum to host premiere films, dance workshops and community conversations during country's largest celebration of Mexican tradition**

**¡VivaFest! San Jose Mexican Heritage and Mariachi Festival kicks off Sept. 18**

**SAN JOSE, SILICON VALLEY, CA** – To welcome an elaborate celebration marking the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual San Jose Mexican Heritage and Mariachi Festival, The Tech Museum will swing open its doors for the renowned fiesta, blending the world of science with Mexican music and film.

For one solid week in September, the museum will transform into a stage that presents the rich range of scientific and cultural experiences of Mexican-Americans and Mexico during the country's largest celebration of Mexican culture and customs. The festival is the cornerstone of the Mexican Heritage Corporation's programming, which also features year-round music and dance education in local schools, museums and community centers. The festival is a singular family-oriented event of music, film, arts and educational events, drawing more than 50,000 people to the heart of Silicon Valley.

“Cultural awareness and inter-cultural competence are especially important in this 21<sup>st</sup> century global society,” Ann S. Bowers, chairperson of The Tech Museum's Board of Directors, said. “Cross cultural events such as the Mexican Heritage and Mariachi Festival present a wonderful opportunity to understand different values and beliefs while building bridges across communities in Silicon Valley and around the world.”

This year, the museum and festival organizers agreed to offer an expanded range of events from Sept. 18 – 25. They include:

**\**MEXICO* (An IMAX film) - September 19th, 7:00 p.m.**

Using text from Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes and ancient Aztec and Mayan poetry, narrator Martin Sheen leads viewers on a visual journey through Mexico's rich and varied past and present. From the tumultuous crowds at the Annual Independence Day celebration in Mexico City the audience is transported back three millennia to the ancient Olmec, Toltec, Zapotec, Totanac, Aztec and Maya civilizations – the roots of Mexican culture.

**\* *When Worlds Collide – The Untold Story of Our Culture*, a documentary followed by a Q&A with screenwriter Ruben Martinez - September 20th, 7:00 p.m.**

In 1492, two worlds that for thousands of years had developed completely independent of one another suddenly came into contact. In the following decades, those two worlds painfully and haltingly began to merge. *When Worlds Collide* examines power, religion, wealth, and the nature of identity and ethnicity in the Americas right up to our own times.

**\* *Danza Folklórica Escénica*, followed by a Q&A with filmmaker Olga Najera-Ramirez, professor of anthropology at UC-Santa Cruz - September 21st, 7:00 p.m.**

*Mexican Folkloric Dance* tells the story of the vibrant art form through the life and work of the internationally acclaimed artist and choreographer, Rafael Zamarripa. A former member of the Ballet Folklórico de Mexico, Zamarripa is an innovator who has kept the art form alive among young people, founding and inspiring dance companies in Mexico and the U.S. Mexican folkloric dance is a stylized, choreographed art form designed to display the cultural diversity of Mexico with energy, heart, and intricate technique

**\* A Film & Community Conversation – Sept. 22nd, 7:00 p.m.**

*At the End of the Day*, a short film by San Francisco filmmaker Dionisio Ceballos kicks off a panel discussion with members of Los Lobos, NPR reporter Richard Gonzales, Thomas Saenz, President and CEO of MALDEF and Olga Briseño, founder of the Association of Hispanic Journalists.

Topic: “Music plus Civility = Sustainability – How the Arts and the Green Movement Impacts Migrant Farm worker Conditions, Everyday Manners and Life After SB 1070 and the Tucson Shootings.”

**\* Music & Dance Workshops – Sept. 22- 23**

The ¡VivaFest! Workshops are a three-day conference featuring workshops in Mariachi Music, Voice and Ballet Folklórico Dance. All mariachi instrumental and vocal classes will be instructed and directed by members of world renowned Mariachi Cobre, direct from Walt Disney World. Ballet Folklórico Dance will feature instruction by acclaimed instructors, including from Colima, Mexico Rafael Zamarripa.

**\* Eva Longoria’s documentary *The Harvest* - September 24th, 7:00 p.m.**

*The Harvest/La Cosecha* is the story of the children who work as many as 12 hours a day, six months a year in the scorching hot sun, without the protection of child labor laws. These children are not toiling in the fields in some far away land. They are working here, in our back yard, in America. More than 400,000 migrant child workers in the U.S. journey from their homes traveling from state to state, farm to farm, crop to crop, picking the produce we all eat. Many of these children are American citizens. All are working to help their families survive while sacrificing the birthright of childhood: play; stability, and school.

“The collaboration between the world of science and the world of the arts was first invented more than 2000 years ago by the Greeks. The creativity that exists in science exists equally in music and the arts – the thinking and cognitive reasoning skills, and the catalysts for inspiration,” said Marcela Davison Avilés, president and CEO of Mexcan Heritage Corp. “We’re not dreaming up anything new, but we are *imagineering* anew. What would happen if you combined one part music, with one part science and many enthusiastic students? The festival seeks the answer to this new experiment with an ancient educational model.”

All films and the “Community Conversation” are in English.

Tickets are on sale now for \$10 each. For ticket sales and more information, visit: [www.thetech.org](http://www.thetech.org) or +1 (408) 294-8324.

For additional information on the full festival go to [vivafest.org/tickets](http://vivafest.org/tickets) or + (408) 920-6070

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### **About The Tech Museum**

The Tech Museum is a hands-on science and technology institution designed to engage people of all ages and backgrounds in experiences that educate, inform, provoke thought, and inspire action. Ensnconced in the heart of Silicon Valley, the museum captures the spirit of the region through innovative content and programs such as The Tech Challenge, our annual team design competition for youth, and the internationally renowned The Tech Awards, which recognizes technology to benefit humanity. Daily, The Tech Museum celebrates the present and encourages the development of pioneering ideas for a more promising future.

### **About The Mexican Heritage Corporation**

Now in its 20th year, the San José Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival presents ¡VivaFest!. With a mission to affirm, celebrate and preserve the rich cultural heritage of the Mexican community and showcase multicultural arts within the region and nationally, MHC both presents and produces a vibrant array of multi-disciplinary arts programs in theatre, dance, and music education and in the visual arts. To learn more about the San Jose Mexican Heritage and Mariachi Festival, and MHC visit <http://www.mhcviva.org>.