

## ¡VivaFest! means mariachi music

By Crystal Chow

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¡VivaFest!, San Jose's weeks-long Latino destination festival, is about to unfurl its yearly offerings of music, dance, art and, new this year, a speaker's series.

On Aug. 1 at 7 p.m., the celebration takes the form of a free mariachi gala--the 23rd annual presentation--titled "Songs in the Key of Mexico--a Vintage Evening of Music from South of the Border."

Presented with Symphony Silicon Valley as part of the Target Summer Pops series, the headliners will be Mariachi Sol de Mexico.

The internationally renowned group of 13 musicians was formed in 1981 by José Hernández, a fifth-generation mariachi. Hernández is a four-time Grammy nominee who has recorded with the likes of Selena, Vicente Fernandez, Luis Miguel, Bryan Adams and the Beach Boys.

(In addition to founding the all-male Sol de Mexico, Hernández assembled Reyna de Los Angeles, America's first all-female professional mariachi ensemble.)

Mariachi Sol de Mexico will not be the only featured artists at this concert, which takes place at the Tower Lawn at San Jose State University. This year, rising stars of mariachi music will also get a chance to display their talents in front of a large audience.

¡VivaFest! continues Sept. 14 with a day of family activities, music and food in a salute to Mexican Independence Day, taking place at Discovery Meadow in downtown San Jose.

On Sept. 16, an online exhibition opens of "The Artistic Mestizaje," an outdoor mural artwork by Carlos Perez, a project co-presented with the Google Art Institute.

Other ¡VivaFest! events include speaking appearances by Academy Award, Grammy and Golden Globe winner Paul Williams on Sept. 26, as well as Rita Moreno, winner of those same entertainment awards plus a pair of Emmys, on Oct. 17. For more information, visit [vivafest.org](http://vivafest.org).

--Crystal Chow