

Mariachi Presentation:

Going back: looking at mariachi music through time.

CHRONOLOGY:

Cocula is the birthplace of the mariachi.

Pre 1900: Lots of string bands, called “Conjuntos de Arpa”, especially in Jalisco. Hybridization process of indigenous elements/interpretation/rhythms/ with Spanish church and popular music. First written reference to mariachis is disputed. Exact meaning of the term also disputed. So what? It’s alive and well and thriving in the Southwest.

1840: According to Silvestre Vargas, Placido Rebolledo led a mariachi in Tecalitlan comprised of violin, harp, and guitarra de golpe.

1852: A priest named Cosme Santa Ana writes to his superiors complaining about mariachis and fandangos taking place during Holy Week. He takes away the musicians instruments only to find that the mayor hires more of them. The enraged priest resigns his post shortly thereafter

1859: Another priest writes in his diary about another episode in which mariachi music is mentioned. Comprised of harp, violins and bass drum.

1880: Gaspar Vargas, founder of Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan is born.

1890:

Cirilo Marmolejo, leader of Mariachi Coculense born on July 9, 1890.

1897/1898: Mariachi Vargas formed in Tecalitlan, Jalisco by Gaspar Vargas.

1900’s Porfirio Diaz promotes mariachi music as Mexico’s national music. Mexican Revolution spurs urbanization and a sense of mestizo nationalism which helps promote mariachi music and native Mexican music.

1905:

Mariachi Cuarteto Coculense, led by Justo Villa, plays in Mexico City for the first time for Porfirio Diaz on the occasion of his birthday.

1906:

May 23, 1906: Lucha Reyes born in Guadalajara Jalisco.

1907:

“one version of mariachi history tells how, in 1907, Mexico’s last dictator, General Porfirio Diaz, organized a garden party for a visiting US Secretary of State. Since he wanted to include Mexican music, a quartet from Jalisco were contracted—and told to change their white cotton trousers for the charro suites worn by the men who owned the haciendas where they worked as servants. A quartet, even in their fancy dress, still seemed too poor for the occasion, so eight musicians and two dancers were contracted. The Jaliscan son was never the same again, and mariachi, along with its costume, was born”. World music the Rough Guide, vol. 2: Latin and North America, Caribbean, India, Asia and the Pacific.

1908:

Mariachi Cuarteto Coculense is the first mariachi to record. Three American record companies record this group in Mexico City.

Tito Guizar born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico.

Jose Marmolejo is born in Tecolotlan, Jalisco. Leader of Mariachi Tapatio. Nephew of Cirilo Marmolejo.

1910-1920: Mexican Revolutionary period:

1911:

November 30, 1911: Jorge Negrete is born in Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico.

1915

November 15, 1915. Miguel Aceves Mejia born . Ramiro Burr notes he was born on November 13, 1917

1916:

December 24, 1916: Lalo Guerrero born in Tucson Az. Author of La Cancion Mexicana, first recorded by Lucha Reyes.

1917:

Pedro Infante is born on November 18, 1917 in Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexico.

Tata Nacho published the popular song, “La Pajarera”.

1919,

May 17, 1919: Antonio Aguilar born in Villanueva Zacatecas, Mexico.

The first arrangement of El Jarabe Tapatio was published. Known as “El Jarabe Nacional”.

1920:

“It was by all accounts, the Revolution that brought mariachi music from the small rural towns of Jalisco (and the surrounding states of Nayarit, southern Sinaloa, Colima and southern Michoacan) to national, and even international prominence. The Revolution provided a tremendous impetus towards interest in “popular culture” in Mexico, and one consequence of this was the arrival in Mexico City of the Mariachi Coculense of Cirilo Marmolejo in 1920”. Jonathon Clark 1993, liner notes to Mariachi Coculense de Cirilo Marmolejo.

1921:

May 3, 1921: Cuco Sanchez born in Altamira Tamaulipas.
Silvestre Vargas joins his father’s mariachi group as a violinist.

1923:

July 23, 1923: Amalia Mendoza is born in San Juan Huetamo, Michoacan.

1925: The bar El Tenampa is host to Cirilo Marmolejo’s mariachi. This began the tradition of gatherings of mariachis in the Plaza Garibaldi looking for work.

1926:

Jose Alfredo Jimenez is born on January 19, 1926 in Dolores Hidalgo, Guanajuato, Mexico.

1928

July 25, 1928: Tomas Mendez is born in Fresnillo, Zacatecas, Mexico.

1929:

Pepe Dominguez wrote Aires del Mayab.
Albur de Amor was a big hit.

1930’s Mariachis begin to appear in the movies and are heard on the radio. Trumpet is added to the list of instruments used in the mariachi ensemble when Emilio Azcarraga Vidaurreta, founder of Mexico City radio station XEW, insists on it because the strings sound too thin for the radios of that time.

1930:

Radio XEW is founded by Emilio Acarraga Vidaurreta.

1931

September 1, 1931: Javier Solis is born, Gabriel Siria Levario in Mexico City, Mexico.
Mariachi Coculense appears in the film, “Santa”.
Peerless Records founded by Don Eduardo C. Baptista.
Mariachi Vargas plays in Tijuana Mexico, the furthest the group has ever ventured.

1932

Lola Beltran born on March 7, 1932 in Rosario, Sinaloa, Mexico.

Silvestre Vargas takes over managing his father Gaspar's mariachi ensemble.

1933:

Nati Cano born in Ahuiscolco, Jalisco

Mariachi Coculense plays at the World's Fair in Chicago.

1934: Mariachi Vargas performs for the inauguration of Lazaro Cardenas. He decides to stay in Mexico City.

November 30, 1934: Lucha Villa born in Camargo, Chihuahua, Mexico.

1935: RCA "Victor Talking Recording Company" sets up a record factory in Mexico City. Begins pressing records on August 28 , 1935.

1936: Alla en el Rancho Grande, a movie featuring Tito Guizar, launches the singing charro phenomenon and the golden age of Mexican cinema in Mexico.

1937

Pepe Guizar writes the song, "Guadalajara". Recorded by Lucha Reyes and later Demetrio Gonzalez.

Jose Marmolejo's group, Mariachi Tapatio, appears in the films Las Cuatro Milpas and Jalisco Nunca Pierde".

Mariachi Vargas appears in the film "Asi Es Mi Tierra" the first of over 200 films in which they appeared over time, and they record their first recordings.

1938:

La Tierra del Mariachi, a film, that includes mariachi musicians premieres.

1939:

The film Con Los Dorados de Villa, includes mariachis.

1940's Pedro Vargas, Jorge Negrete, Pedro Infante. Lucha Reyes. Mariachis in the movies.

1940:

February 17, 1940: Vicente Fernandez born in Hentitan el Alto, Jalisco.

1941: Miguel Martinez becomes Mariachi Vargas's first permanent trumpeter.

1944:

October 4, 1944/Rocio Durcal is born in Spain.

June 24, 1944: Lucha Reyes dies. Suicide?

Ruben Fuentes, a violinist, joins Mariachi Vargas, and soon becomes its musical director.

1946:

July 15, 1946: Linda Ronstadt born in Tucson, Az.

1949: Pedro Infante launches the popularity of el bolero ranchero with the recording of the song, "Amorcito Corazon".

1950's Lola, Miguel Aceves Mejia, Jose Alfredo, Javier Solis, Amalia Mendoza. . Vargas reigns supreme. Pedro Infante and Jorge Negrete die, but are on top until their untimely deaths. La Consentida, La Torcacita. Movie classics made during this time included appearances by Lola Beltran and Jose Alfredo Jimenez, as well as Miguel Aceves Mejia, Luis Aguilar, Demetrio Gonzalez, and others.

Mariachi Mexico de Pepe Villa popularizes the use of two trumpeters in its mariachi ensemble and becomes a popular backup group.

1950:

January 7, 1950: Juan Gabriel is born in Paracuaro, Michoacan. Real name: Alberto Aguilera Valadez.

Javier Solis records his first song for CBS.

Mariachi Tapatio takes part in the earliest television transmissions from Mexico.

1951:

Jose Alfredo Jimenez publishes a bunch of songs, including Ella, Cuando El Destino and Cuatro Caminos.

1952: Pedro Infante and Jorge Negrete appear together in Dos Tipos De Cuidado, the only film in which both actors appear in the same scenes together.

1953:

December 5, 1953: Jorge Negrete dies.

1957:

April 15, 1957: Pedro Infante dies after the plane he was co-piloting crashes in Merida Yucatan, Mexico.

Cuco Sanchez publishes various songs, including "Arrieros Somos" "La Cama de Piedra" and "Te Parto El Alma".

1958:

Ana Gabriel is born on December 10, 1958 in Guamuchil, Sinaloa, Mexico.

Jose Marmolejo dies.

1960's

Lola on top. Appears in several feature films including Mexico de Mi Corazon, and Cucurrucucu Paloma.

Lucha Villa begins to record in early 60's and appears in movies like El Mariachi Canta, El Gallo de Oro, Mexico de Mi Corazon and Me Canse de Rogarle, among others.

Antonio Aguilar records dozens of albums and is the star of just as many films.
Vargas reigns supreme
Irma Serrano, Flor Silvestre, Lucha Moreno, Maria De Lourdes, Dora Maria and others
are all top notch singers who are popular in this period.

1960:

Cirilo Marmolejo dies in Mexico City at the age of 70.

1961-62:

UCLA Institute for Ethnomusicology starts a mariachi class.
Jose Alfredo Jimenez releases the classic album, "La Enorme Distancia". Backup group
is Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan.

1962:

Guadalupe Pineda born in Guadalajara Mexico.

1963:

Los Camperos de Nati Cano formed in Tijuana Mexico.
September 24, 1963: Aida Cuevas born

1964: Los Changuitos Feos founded in Tucson.

1966:

April 19, 1966: Javier Solis dies.
Vicente Fernandez signs his first record contract with CBS, Mexico.
Belle Ortiz starts a mariachi program in the San Antonio Independent School District.

1968:

August 7, 1968: Pepe Aguilar born in San Antonio, Texas.

1969:

September 28, 1969: Pedro Fernandez is born.
August 29, 1969: Lucero born in Mexico City, Mexico.
Nati Cano opens his famed restaurant, La Fonda in Los Angeles.
Gaspar Vargas, founder of Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan, dies.

1970's Lucha Villa, Yolanda Del Rio, Mercedes Castro, Chelo, Vicente Fernandez,
Chayito Valdez. Juan Gabriel. Jose Alfredo dies. Lola Beltran in top form. Vargas still
on top. Mariachi Cobre founded in Tucson by former members of Los Changuitos Feos.
Volver Volver recorded.

1970: Mariachi class offered in San Antonio high school. (NYT 4/24/05)

1971:

Mariachi Cobre formed in Tucson Arizona by Randy Carrillo and others, former members of Los Changuitos Feos.

April 24, 1971: Alejandro Fernandez born in Mexico City.

1972:

October 2, 1972: Angeles Ochoa born in Tijuana, Mexico.

Vicente Fernandes releases the album, "Arriba Huentitan", which includes the song, "Volver, Volver".

1973:

November 23, 1973: Jose Alfredo Jimenez dies.

1979:

First mariachi festival in US held in San Antonio Texas, organized by Belle and Juan Ortiz.

1980's Rocio Durcal, Juan Gabriel, Aida Cuevas, Tucson International mariachi Conference is founded.

1980: Rocio Durcal releases her first ranchera album, which includes her biggest hit, Amor Eterno, written by Juan Gabriel.

1981:

Mariachi Sol de Mexico founded by Jose A. Hernandez.

1987:

Linda Ronstadt releases her first all Mexican album entitled, "Canciones de Mi Padre".

1988:

Linda Ronstadt wins grammy for Canciones de Mi Padre.

1990s: New guard: Guadalupe Pineda, Pepe Aguilar, Alejandro Fernandez. Paquita Lola dies.

1991:

Linda Ronstadt releases her second mariachi album, Mas Canciones.

Juan Gabriel wins lifetime achievement award at the Billboard/Univision Latin Music Awards.

1993:

Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles formed. Most popular American all female mariachi. Formed by Jose Hernandez and Laura Sobrino.

1995:

July 15, 1995: Tomas Mendez dies. Author of Cucurrucucu Paloma, Gorioncillo Pecho Amarillo.

1996:

March 24, 1996. Lola Beltran dies.

1997:

Maria de Lourdes dies.

Mariachi Vargas launches year long celebration of its 100th anniversary.

1998:

Vicente Fernandez is inducted into the Billboard Latin Music Hall of Fame

2000:

Cuco Sanchez dies on 10/06/2000.

2001:

June 11, 2001: Amalia Mendoza dies.

2005:

Article in the New York Times: (Sousa? Many Students March to Mariachi Instead", by Patricia Leigh Brown, Sunday, April 24, 2005)

"Across the country, more than 500 public schools now offer mariachi as part of the curriculum, said Daniel Sheehy, a mariachi expert and director of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings in Washington, D.C."

"Mariachi is also taking root in Milwaukee, Chicago, Tucson and Albuquerque and in small towns with large migrant populations like Wenatchee, in eastern Washington."

2006

November 6, 2006: Miguel Aceves Mejia dies.

March 25, 2006: Rocio Durcal dies of cancer.

Daniel Sheehy releases the book, "Mariachi Music in America: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture".

2007:

April: 25th Anniversary of Tucson International Mariachi Conference.

June 19, 2007: Antonio Aguilar dies on June 19, 2007.

Here in Tucson in the past month and coming up:

- Viva Arizona workshops and concert in August held at the UA School of Music.
- Ana Gabriel at AVA / Casino Del Sol in August.
- Harmonia Fiesta Concert Fundraiser for Cathedral: Mariachi Cobre, Aida Cuevas, Vicki Carr, various school mariachis, including the one from Davis Elementary. Several high school mariachi groups, and two baile folklorico groups. This past week.

- Sept. 13: Alejandro Fernandez in concert: Last night.
- Sept. 15: Saturday: Mariachi USA festival.
- October 17: Pepe Aguilar
- Mariachis can be practically any day of the week in various restaurants throughout the region: La Fuente, La Parrilla Suiza, El Mariachi restaurant, Casino del Sol.

Elsewhere:

Festivals: Las Vegas, Las Cruces, Tucson, San Jose, Los Angeles, San Antonio, Guadalajara.

Chandler Mariachi Festival last weekend.

International Mariachi Conference in Guadalajara Mexico was just held and ends on 9/14. It featured performances by the top mariachi groups in the world as well as top singers like Lila Downs, Lucero and Guadalupe Pineda.

9/15-9/16: Annual Las Vegas Mariachi concert this weekend.

9/23 – 9/30: San Jose International Mariachi Festival

Other conferences/festivals in Denver and Las Cruces coming up.

MARIACHI MUSIC TODAY: The Current situation:

As the Latino population in the U.S. continues to spread throughout the country and grow as it has been, the popularity of mariachi music in the United States also continues to grow and spread. One can find groups in Washington DC, Detroit, Miami, Seattle and of course, throughout the Southwest. Mariachi music, in fact, is a global phenomenon and is quite popular in Europe and throughout Latin America.

One distinction that some folks make is that between “working mariachis” and “commercial mariachis”. I don’t make this distinction. I think it is all a part of the same phenomenon. I also throw into the mix the importance of the ranchera genre and the ranchera singer. Without these, mariachi music would not be as popular as it is today.

I am not a purist. I do not think one type of music or musician is more important or authentic than another. Popular music is constantly evolving and changing. That cannot, nor should it, be stopped.

Top acts: Mariachi Cobre, Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan, Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano, Mariachi America, Mariachi Sol de America, Mariachi America de Jesus Hajar, Vicente Fernandez, Lila Downs, Alejandro Fernandez, Pedro Fernandez, Ana Gabriel, Juan Gabriel, Aida Cuevas, Pepe Aguilar, Alejandra Orozco, Guadalupe Pineda.

Lots of great singers are members of mariachi groups: Each mariachi has at least one male singer that can sing his butt off. The good ones have several.

In the schools, mariachi education programs abound: Locally at: Davis Elementary, Cholla High, Salpointe Catholic, Sunnyside, Pueblo, Tucson High. Los Changuitos Feos. Pima College is offering a concentration in mariachi music, and there are degree programs in other places (Jeff Nevin's stuff in Chula Vista).

Nationally, mariachi education programs can be found all over the country. MENC has a mariachi interest group with a website for members that includes a lot of instructional materials.

Websites proliferate, offering the seeker a wide variety of information. Puro Mariachi etc. Fiesta Del Mariachi, mariachi discussion groups, bulletin boards, online readings.

Resources:

- Fiesta del Mariachi <http://www.fiestaweb.org/>;
- Puro Mariachi <http://www.mariachi.org/> ;
- Tucson Citizen mariachi related video links:
<http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/mariachi07/videos.php>

Mariachi resources: Scores, clothing, materials for instructors through MENC Mariachi interest group. CD's, film, concerts, and movies.

Youtube to see old film clips.

Wikipedia includes lots of entries for mariachis and singers. BEWARE OF Wikipedia!! Just because something is there does not make it true! Anyone can contribute to a Wikipedia entry... even know it all that don't know it all.