



MEXICAN JAZZ EXISTS

FESTIVAL

AUSTRALIA
October 2016

Mr. Luis Felipe Ferra
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Mr. David Sullivan
Committee Secretary
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee

PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra

ACT 2600
Australia

Submission to establish a cultural fund Australia - Mexico

Dear Mr. Sullivan and members of the Parliament,

Mexico is closer to Australia geographically than England, the cultural gap between Mexico and Australia is greater and the challenge is to reduce it as much as possible. Evidence shows that cultural understandings and proximity lower the barriers between two countries¹. We can overcome distance but we cannot put aside “culture”. We know that Australians are eager to know more about Mexico. Evidence to that is the successful annual MexFest event at Federation Square in Melbourne, that last September attracted more than 50,000 people.

In previous years, the Mexican Hola Film Festival has also had the favor of the Australian viewing audiences. In the academic field, Professors Barry Carr and Professor John Sinclair have written about “How the Taco Conquered Australia” (an economic and sociological study on the impact of the Mexican food in this country). On the Mexico’s side, the Australian Film Festival in Mexico City has also attracted thousands of filming fans.

¹ Anne-Ce’lia Disdier, Silvio H. T. Tai, Lionel Fontagne, Thierry Mayer (2009) Bilateral trade of cultural goods, Rev World Econ DOI 10.1007/s10290-009-0030-5, Kiel Institute 2009.

In the context of the commemoration of the 50 years of bilateral relations between Australia and Mexico to be celebrated next year, in this brief submission we propose the creation of a small cultural fund to promote another side of Mexico in Australia. As an example, we present the exciting concept to organize an annual boutique Mexican jazz festival in Australia:

Why Jazz?

Jazz is a “culture breaker”. It helped to reduce the divide between the African-American Community and the “all white population “in the USA in the 1920’s. Since then, Jazz has been adopted by the world as an “international musical language”, in the way that not actual spoken languages have been able to achieve. The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, the Montréal International Jazz Festival and/or the Copenhagen Jazz Festival attract hundred of thousands of fans who are united just for their devotion to Jazz.

In a deeply multicultural country as Australia, the Mexican community is a minority that will grow shortly; therefore it’s commendable to promote Mexican jazz because according to UNESCO jazz is a musical genre that “reduces tension between individuals, groups and communities.” And we Mexicans want to become fully integrated to Australia through arts and culture. For this reason, the idea to create more contact points where Australians and Mexicans have the opportunity to strengthen ties, share experiences and openly engage with the community are essential.

The Mexican Jazz Exists Festival

There is Jazz in Mexico too. The main idea is to celebrate and share Mexico’s great cultural contemporary diversity in Australia, one of the most cosmopolite countries in the world, by organizing the first Mexican Jazz Festival in Australia.

Standing together with the foreign policy as well as with Mexico’s official touristic campaigns, the objective of the Mexican Jazz Exists Festival is to create an “excellent jazz event for everyone”, where the Australians have the possibility to get closer and meet another face of Mexico, a face that escapes from labels, stereotypes and common places. The main reason is because the Mexican musicians dedicated to this genre are amongst the most virtuous in the world (Antonio Sánchez, Magos Herrera, Gerry López, Alex Mercado, just to mention a few). For the last ten years, Mexico has had a vibrant jazz scene, the same effervescence of the Mexican jazz scene demands to be known beyond its borders.

To put it simply, Jazz is synonym of empathy, dialog, cohesion, innovation and integration, not just in the musical field but also in the social context, that’s the reason why since 2011, UNESCO proclaimed 30th April as International Jazz Day. Mexico is very well positioned in Australia: the four thousand highly qualified Mexicans who call Australia home love Jazz and would love to share the Mexican Jazz contribution with their Australians fellows and eager to learn more about Australia’s counterpart. Therefore, in this privileged framework, it is necessary a festival that would rise to the occasion: where Mexicans triumph abroad and who possesses an intelligent, reflexive and multicultural identity.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these proposals

Greetings,

Luis Felipe Ferra & Valeria Estefan

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APPENDIX



Registro No. 1023
Ante la junta local de
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

Mr. Luis Felipe Ferra and Mrs. Valeria Estefan recently shared with me their goodwill plan to make the first Mexican Jazz Festival (MEXICAN JAZZ EXISTS FESTIVAL) in Australia, the last trimester of 2016. This totally motivates and excites the SUTM (*Sindicato Único de Trabajadores de la Música*; Unique Syndicate of Music Workers), where I serve as the Main Director. A great thing missing in the Mexican jazz, and with Mexican popular music in general, is the internationalisation.

Until now it is been common that those who migrate are the artists, not the promoters. But, taking advantage that Mr. Luis Felipe is studying Arts and Cultural Management at The Melbourne University, we cannot afford to dismiss the opportunity. Mainly, because it is about a festival which would celebrate Mexican contemporaneity, a perspective that in my opinion can positively impact Australians and it can create in the near future more profound links between both our countries.

Best regards,

~~VÍCTOR~~ GUZMAN



GOBIERNO DEL
ESTADO DE
HIDALGO



To whom it may concern,

Australia is a land of opportunities. And now that Mr. Luis Felipe Ferra and Mrs. Valeria Estefan, tireless Mexican jazz promoters, are living there, more than ever a great opportunity shows up. In the context of the so-called Mexican Jazz Renaissance it would definitely become an opportunity for our musical talent to carry on on a cultural, artistic and genuine dialogue with Australia.

As Director of one of the main jazz festivals in the country, Hidalgo Jazz International Festival, I would like to express my complete interest in the fulfilment of the first Mexican Jazz Festival in Australia, MEXICAN JAZZ EXISTS FESTIVAL. I am certain that it is about a chance that will unify our jazz scenes and once a festival collaborates, the other promoters will like to do the same.

Mexican quality talent deserves to be known beyond our frontiers and Australia deserves to have access to first class projects of international relevance, as it is our jazz.

MR. OLIVER ALEJANDRO HERNÁNDEZ IBARRA
DIRECTOR



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