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The Big Squeeze 2010 Accordion Festival Launches in Dallas on March 6, 2010

Texas Folklife and the Latino Cultural Center Partner to Present Accordion Festival Featuring Youth Contest, Documentary Presentation and Concert with Ginny Mac and Baraja de Oro

DALLAS, February 19, 2009 – The Latino Cultural Center is proud to partner with Texas Folklife to launch The Big Squeeze 2010 in Dallas March 6, 2010 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. – with free admission.

Now in its fourth year, this statewide festival is a full day devoted to the squeezebox – as the accordion is sometimes called – with a free youth accordionist contest and a concert program featuring leading DFW bands Ginny Mac and Baraja de Oro.



The annual Big Squeeze accordion contest is open to up-and-coming Texas musicians 21 years of age or younger in any genre of accordion-based music including Cajun; German, Czech, and Polish polka; Tejano, Conjunto and Norteño; Western; and Zydeco. **Auditions will be at the Latino Cultural Center Saturday, March 6th from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.** Auditions are open to the public and contestants must arrive at 4:00 p.m. to register and warm up.

The contest will be followed by a **screening of the film *The Big Squeeze* at 6:30 p.m.** Produced by famed director Hector Galán, *The Big Squeeze* documents contestants during the first two years of the Big Squeeze contest. From the urban barrios of Houston to the *colonias* along the U.S.-Mexican border, we find musicians carrying on a passionate musical legacy fueled by family, friends and food.

The audience will then be treated to **live accordion music from conjunto masters Baraja de Oro and country star Ginny Mac – starting at 7:30 p.m.** Despite their young age, Baraja de Oro members have years of experience living accordion music soulfully and daily as a family affair. They are led by *acordeonista*, lead vocalist and patriarch of the family, Mario Barajas. Hailing from Waxahachie, Texas, Barajas began playing accordion and recording professionally at the age of 14 with some of the best entertainers in the Tejano music industry, including Grupo Fama. Baraja de Oro has distinguished itself for its dynamism, professionalism and commitment to their heritage and community.

Ginny Mac, singer-songwriter and accordionist from Fort Worth, Texas, is a veteran professional – even though she hasn't yet graduated from Texas Christian University. Her style emphasizes Western swing, but she embraces jazz, big-band and a variety of other influences. Her band, Ginny Mac &

The Road to Texas Band, is a high-energy group that packs a ton of energy in a small package. The group is known for their innovative songwriting and intricate arrangements, although they love to throw a few classics in the mix.

The Big Squeeze is supported by the members and Board of Texas Folklife, the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs, the City of Houston through the Miller Theatre Advisory Board, the Houston Endowment, the Cogburn Family Foundation, the Still Water Foundation, the City of Austin through the Cultural Arts Division and by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts and an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support is provided by regional businesses including Hohner, Inc., SugarHill Recording Studios, Embassy Suites Hotel, and Sign Effects in Austin.

Texas Folklife

Texas Folklife is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to presenting and preserving the diverse cultures and living heritage of the Lone Star State. For twenty-five years, Texas Folklife has honored the authentic cultural traditions passed down within communities and explored their importance in contemporary society. Texas Folklife has been called “one of the state’s true cultural treasures” by the *Austin American-Statesman* for the accessible, joyful arts experiences we provide. Located in SoCo just south of downtown Austin, Texas Folklife can be found next door to the Continental Club, at 1317 South Congress Avenue. For more information, contact (512) 441-9255, info@texasfolklife.org or visit www.texasfolklife.org.

Latino Cultural Center

The Latino Cultural Center is a division of the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs. The mission of the Latino Cultural Center is to serve as a catalyst for the preservation, development and promotion of Latino arts and culture in Dallas. The Center is located at 2600 Live Oak, Dallas, Texas 75204. LCC Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For additional information, please call 214-671- 0045 or visit www.dallasculture.org/latinocc.

About the Big Squeeze 2010 Youth Contest

Selected contestants from the statewide auditions and mailed-in entries will receive travel stipends to take part in the semifinal event May 1st at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin. At that time, up to four finalists will be awarded \$300 each and an expense-paid trip to Houston to compete before an enthusiastic audience of 6,000 accordion fans at the “Accordion Kings & Queens” June 5th at the Miller Outdoor Theatre in Houston. The Big Squeeze 2010 grand-prize winner will be selected at the concert by a panel of judges with help from the audience. The grand prize winner will receive a prize package valued at \$3,000, including a \$1000 cash prize, travel expenses to Houston, a new Hohner accordion, and a day-long recording session at the historic SugarHill Recording Studios in Houston, as well as promotional support from SugarHill, Hohner, Inc. and Texas Folklife, and other professional opportunities.

About The Big Squeeze Documentary

The film premiered at the South by Southwest Film Festival in 2009 and has been featured on public television stations nationwide. The film features inspiring young artists at home, and follows them as they take the stage for the final contest at the “Accordion Kings & Queens” festival in Houston. Festival cameos of Zydeco greats Chubby Carrier and Step Rideau, conjunto star Mingo Saldivar, and country western singer/songwriter Ginny Mac are included. Hector Galán is an award-winning filmmaker who has produced and directed eleven films for the PBS series *Frontline*, two films for *The American Experience*, and many critically acclaimed independent films.

