

Subject: Mariachi Halcón del Río and Mid-Columbia Ballet Collaborate in Performance
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Mariachi Halcón del Río, the flagship music ensemble of Chiawana High School (Pasco), will be featured in Mid-Columbia Ballet's (MCB's) newest choreographic commission by Rex Wheeler. The score is compiled by Mariachi director Allen Madsen and will support a choreographic narrative that celebrates the female spirit through themes of beauty, playfulness, humility, and strength. Guided by the musical structure of Mariachi, Wheeler will stay true to the vocabulary of neo-classical/contemporary ballet while creating a work that is guided by the musical structure of Mariachi. Wheeler and Madsen began collaborating in September 2017 and rehearsals began January 3rd, 2018.

The new work will premiere at MCB's *Spring Repertory: Jungle Book and More* production March 16th-17th, 2018 at Richland High Auditorium. Additionally, MCB will sponsor the collaboration if it is chosen to be performed at the Regional Dance America/Pacific (RDA/P) festival held April 10th- 13th 2018 in Spokane, Washington.

About the Artists

Mariachi Halcón de Río is now in its fourth year of existence and the music group dedicates itself to presenting traditional and contemporary Mexican music to all audiences. Madsen, has been an active performer, accompanist, teacher and music director for over 20 years. Wheeler is originally from London and trained with The Royal Ballet School. He has choreographed two previous works for MCB; *Ember (2016)* and *Silly Kiss, (2017)*. Currently, Wheeler is a dancer at Smuni Ballet, based in San Francisco.

Mariachi Halcón del Río: <https://www.facebook.com/mariachihalcondelrio/>

Rex Wheeler: <http://www.rexswheeler.com/>

About the Company

MCB is nationally recognized for its high honors as Southeastern Washington's premier performing dance company, with an annual season of three productions that represent a diverse repertoire spanning from classical ballet to cutting edge contemporary dance. A suite of seven programs constitute MCB's educational outreach endeavors which focus on equity in dance experiences for K-12 students and the accessibility of dance to the elderly and to those with special needs.

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