

## Film Review: 'Mateo' Chronicles Career of First White Mariachi Singer

By Kam Williams  
For *The Skanner News*

Matthew “Mateo” Stoneman is a proverbial 98-pound weakling with eyeglasses and a concave chest. But don't let that underwhelming physique fool you. The nerdy redhead is also a felon who has done a long stretch behind bars in California for robbery and grand larceny.

But while most of his fellow inmates were pumping iron in an effort to become buff, Matthew served his sentence learning to speak Spanish and to play the guitar in order to be able to sing Mariachi, a genre

Los Angeles where he eked out a living between panhandling on street corners and competing with seasoned Chicano performers for gigs at parties and restaurants.

But because Matthew was Caucasian, he managed to gain a little notoriety as the world's first white Mariachi singer, which led the L.A.



'Mateo'

An uplifting testament to the notion that it's still possible for a sinner to find his true calling and turn his life around

of music he was introduced to by Latino cons he met in the slammer.

And after being paroled, he struck out on his own around

Times to publish a lengthy profile on him.

He would eventually venture to Cuba to record his own album over a number of years,

enlisting the assistance of some surviving members of the legendary Buena Vista Social Club as sidemen.

On the island, he also met the girlfriend who would bear a child, albeit of questionable paternity.

All of the above is a far cry from what one might expect in a biopic about a gringo born and raised in a tiny town in rural New Hampshire.

For that reason, Matthew Stoneman makes for a fascinat-

ing subject in *Mateo*, a delightful documentary directed by Aaron I. Naar (*I'll Sleep When I'm Dead*).

An uplifting testament to the notion that it's still possible for a sinner to find his true calling and turn his life around after first paying his debt to society.

**Very Good ★★★**

**In English and Spanish with subtitles**

**Running time:** 88 minutes

**Distributor:** XLrator Media

## RACC Taking Applications for Artist-in-Residence

The Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) in Portland, Oregon, invites artists living in the Portland metropolitan area and producing work in visual, performing, literary and/or media arts to submit qualifications for an artist-in-residence project at the City of Portland Archives and Records Center (PARC).

This project is part of RACC's public art residency program, Intersections.

This is the second in a series of residencies for PARC and the selected artist/team will be asked to explore records related to 82nd Avenue. For many years 82nd Avenue served as the eastern-most boundary for Portland, with portions annexed early in the 1900s and other areas annexed as late 1990. For some areas that are now part of the city, historic records do not exist in the city archive. The city has grown and expanded far beyond this area, and yet 82nd is still perceived by many as the boundary to east Portland. The artist/team will create work in any media that engages and/or is a result of working with the collections and staff at PARC.

The project budget is \$15,000. The application deadline is Sept. 28, 2015. To download the RFQ, click here. Pre-application tours of the PARC are encouraged and will occur on September 8 & 11; space is limited and reservations are needed. Send reservation request to [intersections@racc.org](mailto:intersections@racc.org) with subject line "Visit Archives".

Intersections residencies explore the "art of work" and the "work of art." The program encourages artists in all disciplines to explore new working methods and develop socially engaging, interactive art experiences in community settings.

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