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**CRESCENDO PRESENTS A PIÑATA OF LATIN AMERICAN CHORAL MUSIC
FROM THE BAROQUE TO THE PRESENT: ZAMPOÑAS, ANYONE?**

From the Spanish conquest onward, European and native Latin American musical traditions—and instruments—have converged to create a startlingly varied body of compositions and performing styles.

In April, Crescendo, whose music director, Christine Gevert, is a native of Chile, will present two concerts in Great Barrington and Lakeville featuring this music and a number of exotic instruments, including the charango (a small very bright guitar), the bombo (an Andean bass drum) and the zampoña (a Peruvian panpipe in use for more than 2,000 years).

The program, “Hidden Treasures of Latin American Choral Music,” ranges from the contemplative to the rousing, and includes both sacred and secular pieces. One of the oldest is “Xicochi,” a setting of a villancico, a Spanish poetic form, by Gaspar Fernández (1566-1629) in the Nahuatl language. The most recent: “Oceana” by the Chilean composer Javier Fairas (b. 1973), a choral setting of a Pablo Neruda poem.

The concert will present the United States premiere of a villancico by Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco Sánchez (1644-1728), “Cuatro plumajes airosos,” an allegory in which a hawk, a turkey, a swan, and a phoenix are each represented by a singer.

The many other pieces on the program include the Gloria from the “Misa Criolla” of Ariel Ramirez (b. 1921), a mass performed in its entirety by Crescendo in 2006 to much acclaim;

also two works of Juan Orrego Salas (b. 1919), one of them his *Canticos de Navidad*, Op. 22, three short motets for female voices—including an Alleluia that has been compared in mood and quality with the work of his mentor, Randall Thompson.

Performers include the Crescendo Choir and the Crescendo Vocal Ensemble, along with period and folk instrumentalists, including the Alturas Duo and other specialists from Boston, New York, and Hartford. The conductor will be Ms. Gevert.

The concerts will be held at the First Congregational Church, 251 Main St., Great Barrington, at 6 p.m. Saturday, April 17 and at Trinity Church, 484 Lime Rock Rd., Lakeville, at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 18. A talk about Latin American music will be held 30 minutes before each concert by Juliet Mattila. Tickets are \$25, \$10 for children under 18. (A group rate is available for the Great Barrington concert.) For tickets and information, call 860-435-4866, e-mail sales@CrescendoBerkshires.org, or go to www.CrescendoBerkshires.org.

The concerts are supported in part by an Alfred Nash Patterson grant from Choral Arts New England and by the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism.

Crescendo was founded in 2003. It provides an ongoing program of music performance and education, chiefly for the communities of Connecticut's Northwest Corner and nearby Massachusetts and New York. It offers workshops, lectures, master classes, and choral and instrumental concerts.

With the participation of international performers and teachers as well as non-professionals, Crescendo's programs reach audiences of all ages and levels of experience.

Keith Johnson, Crescendo

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