

# Chile

## Latin American ensemble recalls past works toward cultural understanding

By MELODY WARD  
Of the Emerald

Pueblo Unido stands bathed in magenta, moving in time to robust rhythms — flowers caught up in a musical wind.

Lead singer Kemy Cavallari's Incan heritage shows in her sharply defined features, outlined cleanly and sharply like a condor's visage. Her voice is strong and free when she sings, eagerly melodious when she speaks.

The Latin American folk ensemble performed Thursday night in the EMU Ballroom, capping a three-day series of events sponsored by the Eugene Committee for a Free Chile.

"We want to show what happened in Chile, the cultural richness that flourished, through

government-stimulated growth of culture," Cavallari says.

That culture was destroyed, she explains, by the 1973 military coup, which executed or exiled supporters of President Salvador Allende, including most folk musicians and "tried to silence the voice of the people."

"Now what we want to show is that in spite of that oppression, people continue to express themselves through their culture."

"No matter how simple the lyrics may be, for the people of the Americas, the Indian music has become a symbol of resistance," Kemy Cavallari prefaced a traditional Incan folk song. "It is being raised as a banner of hope."

The song was about a young Indian who was asking for permission to live with a girl. "The custom

of Indians in Hispanic America for centuries is to live together for a year before marriage to see if it works out. It has proven very healthy," she laughs.

"All of us have lived in the United States since the coup," Kemy Cavallari says. The group is based in San Francisco. While most active in the Chile solidarity movement, Pueblo Unido often performs at benefit concerts for American Indians or anti-nuclear organizations.

"We work basically at the cultural level. Culture is the product of people's frustrations, of people's struggles, of people's hopes — that's where people's roots are," Kemy Cavallari says.

"My song is not for killers who hunger for money or power, but for the people who labor so that the future may flower," she quotes from a Victor Jara poem. Many of his songs were addressed to the oppressed conditions of Latin American mineworkers.

The folk music performed by Pueblo Unido, which means "people united," grew out of the Latin American Indian tradition. It evokes participation involuntarily, swelling with intense feeling both vibrant and reflective. It typifies the Chilean new sons movement.

"They have had a long history of repression." Outside the Ballroom, folk art, fashioned by imprisoned laborers is being sold to

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Photo by Erich Boekelheide

"El pueblo unido jamas sera vencido" rang from every throat as Pueblo Unido played its final number for a clapping, jubilant crowd last night. That phrase is the main theme expressed in the folk music of Latin America: the people united will never be defeated. Pueblo Unido was formed in the United States following the 1973 military coup which overthrew democratically-elected Salvador Allende. Since then, the group has continued to perform traditional and contemporary folk songs made popular during the Chilean new song movement of the 1960s. Folk music, crafts and art were financially supported by the Allende government, and group spokesperson Kemy Cavallari says the folk arts continue to represent the resistance of the Chilean working class, nearly two-thirds of the population.

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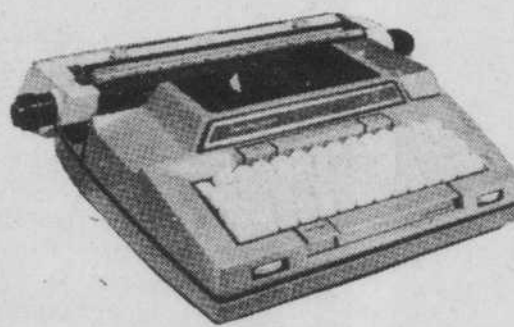
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