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Rolling World Premiere

Steve Yockey's  
**Blackberry Winter**

A tour-de-force performance filled with love, humor and grace

**April 15 - May 7**

Directed by Craig Willis

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— Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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**MUSIC** BY J.D. SWERZENSKI

**FOLK IT UP**

Eugene Concert Choir packs a full day of Latin American Folk into the Hult

GASPAR COLÓN

After opening its season pulling from classic Christmas fare (*A Christmas Story*) and pop-oriented crowd pleasers (the Burt Bacharach songbook), the Eugene Concert Choir will step out of the box a bit with two performances this Saturday, April 30: Latin American Folk For Kids at 11 am and *Cantata Criolla* at 8 pm, both held in the Hult Center's Silva Concert Hall.

Each show takes advantage of the considerable talents of visiting vocalists Ider Alvarez and Gaspar Colón, renowned operatic singers in their native Venezuela and, increasingly, around the world.

Latin American Folk For Kids, as the title suggests, offers a family friendly mini-concert pulling sounds from across Central and South America. Alvarez and Colón will feature respective tenor and baritone voices in a handful of performances of folk and classical songs from their Venezuela.

In addition, Mexico City-born and currently Eugene-based singer and performer Samuel Becerra will trace Latin music and culture to its pre-Columbian roots, with a recital of indigenous music played on Becerra's personally crafted clay flutes and a display of Aztec-era regalia. The performance is set to conclude with a performance of the chorizo-themed folk song "Maria Moñitos," in which the 110-person choir will feature student singers from a number of Eugene-area elementary schools. By sheer number of voices, it should offer a spirited closer to the concert.

A concert warm-up featuring a display of Latin crafts and music by the UO's Los Wallatos Andean Music Ensemble will kick things off at 10:30 am, should you and the kiddos want to make a full morning of it.

The entertainment gets a bit more adult-oriented with the Concert Choir's performance of *Cantata Criolla*, also at the Silva Concert Hall on Saturday night. Though not often featured in the classical repertoire, Antonio Estêvez made waves when Venezuelan conductor Gustavo Dudamel led the L.A. Philharmonic in a performance of the piece in April of 2014.

Alvarez and Colón in particular drew raves for their respective portrayals of Florentino, the troubadour, and the Devil, who face off in a vehement duel during *Criolla's* climax. (Imagine the end of *Don Giovanni* mixed with "The Devil Went Down to Georgia," and you're about in the ballpark.) With the Eugene Concert Choir and the Eugene Symphony Orchestra backing both soloists, the concert at the Silva Theater should prove similarly kinetic. A Latin dance party with live music by Lo Nuestro will follow in the Hult lobby. ■

Visit [eugeneconcertchoir.org](http://eugeneconcertchoir.org) or call 687-6865 for tickets.

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