

Andes Manta

Andean

Hudson Valley, New York

With their mastery of more than 35 traditional instruments, the four Lopez brothers in Andes Manta bring to life the vibrant and intricate music of the indigenous peoples of the Andes Mountains of South America. Their music ranges from the haunting melodies of the highlands, played on the panpipes and flutes, to the joyous dance rhythms of village festivals, blending pre-Columbian and Catholic rituals. Their combined musicianship and deep understanding of the music of their homeland is evident in their highly entertaining performances; there is no better group to express the timeless power and appeal of this ancient musical culture.

The Lopez family roots are in the tiny village of San Gabriel in the remote Ecuadorian Andes. Although the family moved to the capital city of Quito in 1960 to find a better life, they imparted the cultural traditions and music of their ancestors to all seven of their children. From an early age, each child learned to make and play the flutes and panpipes of bamboo. Fernando, the eldest, showed a remarkable talent for music and was sent to the Quito Conservatory to study classical guitar. However, he found he was more drawn to Andean folk music he heard while visiting relatives in the countryside. By their early twenties, Fernando and his brother Luis were recognized in Quito and beyond as remarkable musicians and bearers of their tradition.

In 1986, the Lopez brothers were invited to present a series of concerts at Bard College, and the reception they received led them to take up residence in the United States. Two other brothers, Bolivar and Jorge, joined the group within a few years and Andes Manta was formed. Between the four brothers, the group has mastered the full range of the instruments played by native Andean musicians. Fernando plays strings - *charango*, *bandolin* and guitar, while Luis is a virtuosic player of the *charango* and the *quena*, the Andean flute. Bolivar is a noted wind musician, a master of the *rondador*, the Ecuadorian panpipe that produces a unique “chordal” note. Jorge, the youngest, specializes in stringed instruments, but like all the brothers, can play all 35 instruments used in their music.

Since coming to the United States, Andes Manta has appeared in 47 states, touring throughout the year, appearing on major concert stages, in festivals and at universities and schools, where they are considered matchless mentors of Andean culture. They have numerous recordings to their credit, and have been featured at venues ranging from Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York, to the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.