

## Chile's Inti Illimani Displays Sonic Splendors

### Pop Music Reviews

The fact that Inti Illimani has yet to enjoy the fruits of massive commercial success even in the Latin pop world is bewildering, considering that few Latin American acts can rival the Chilean group in terms of the sheer beauty of its sound.

On Friday, the veteran ensemble was enthusiastically applauded during a two-hour presentation in which the only drawback was its setting: Caltech's Beckman Auditorium.

From the opening tune, the gorgeous "Danza Di Cala Luma," to a wonderful charango solo by Horacio Durán, there was a nagging feeling that a concert hall just wasn't the right venue for such a spirited act. The informality of a small, lively club would be the ideal terrain to enjoy the group's musical spirit.

With 30 years of music-making under its belt, the group is considered to be the apex of the genre known as Andean music. The term refers to the deceptively simple melodies played by the indigenous population of the South American territory bordering the mountain range of the Andes.

If there is one Latin brand of music that could be prescribed as "chicken soup for the soul," this is it. Heartwarming and inviting, An-

dean music is based on the delicate combination of various string instruments (charango, ronroco, guitarrón) and flutes (quena, zampoña), creating a light, wistful feeling. Much like a Zen affirmation, Inti Illimani's music floats within your soul, filling it with calmness and hope.

On stage, the group performed a few numbers from its new album, the exquisite "Lejania" ("Remoteness"). But most of the show was devoted to the band's classic material, which at one point became the anthem for leftist intellectuals struggling to create a more humane type of government in the dictatorship-ridden Latin America of the '70s.

—Ernesto Lechner