

Xicochi
SSA, continuo, perc.

Gaspar Fernandes

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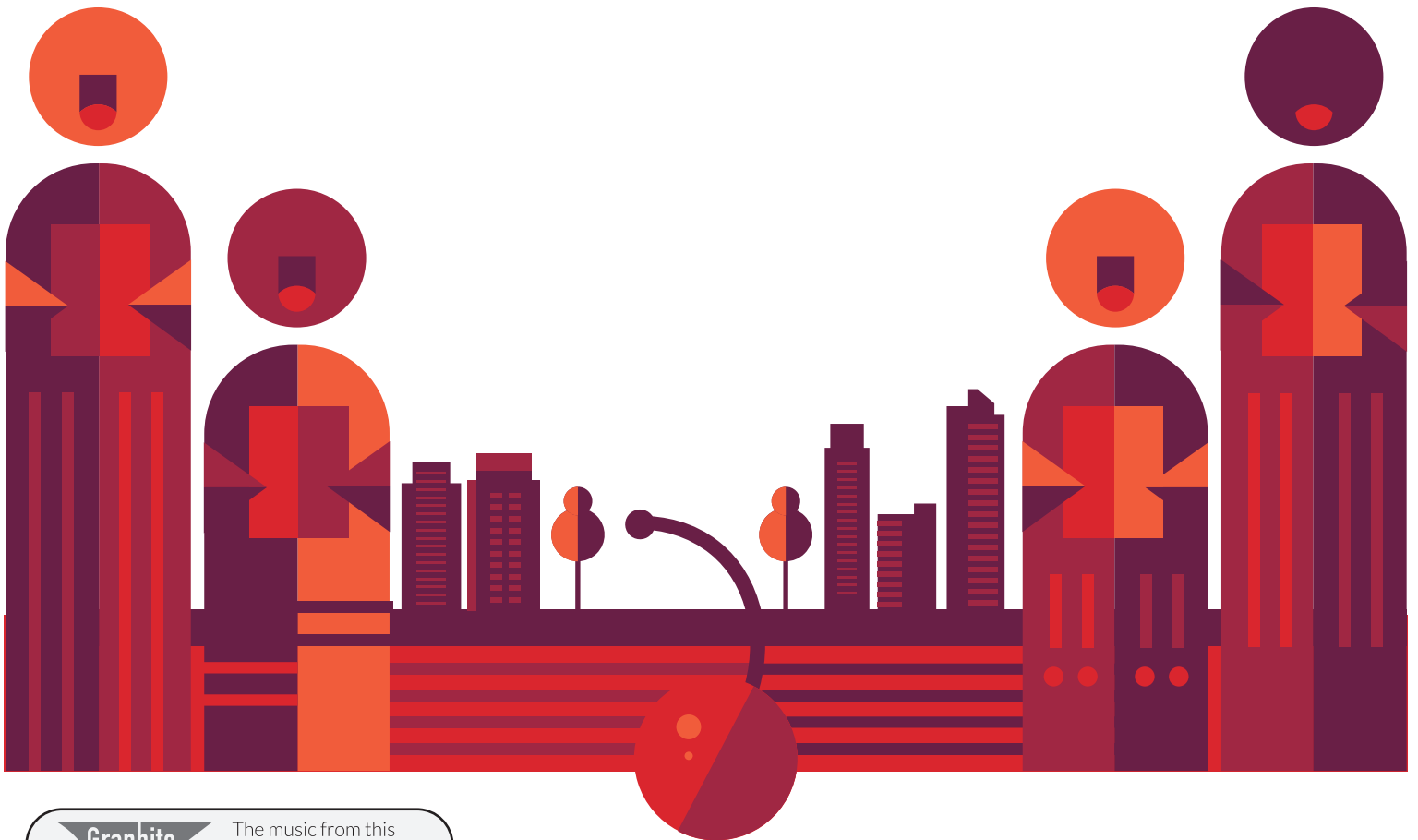
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BORDER CROSSING

Xicochi

SSA choir, continuo and percussion

Gaspar Fernandes



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Xicochi

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for SSA choir, continuo and percussion

Gaspar Fernandes (1566-1629)

Performing edition by Ahmed Anzaldúa

as performed by Border CrossSing

♩. = 90

C **4** *p* (3rd time: *mf*)

Soprano 1
Soprano 2
Alto

solo p (3rd time: *f*) **tutti**

Xi - co - chi, xi - co - chi,
Xi - co - chi, xi - co - chi, xi - co - chi, xi - co - chi,
Xi - co - chi, xi - co - chi,

p (3rd time: *f*)

12 **G F G C G F G C**

S1
S2
A

solo **tutti**

xi - co - chi co - ne - tzin - tle.
xi - co - chi co - ne - tzin - tle, co - ne - tzin - tle.
xi - co - chi co - ne - tzin - tle.

19 **G F Em Am Dm C F Dm G F Em Am Dm C/E F**

S1
S2
A

solo

Cao-miz hui-hui jo - co in an -
Cao-miz hui-hui jo - co in an - ge - los me.
Cao-miz hui-hui jo - co in an -

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*Repeat three times with different voicing for each repetition. 1st repeat solo, 2nd & 3rd repeat tutti

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28 **Dm** **G** **C** **F** **G** **C** **Dm** **C** **Am** **Dm** **G**

S1 ge - los me. Cao - miz hui - hui jo - co in an - ge - los me,

S2 *tutti* Cao - miz hui - hui jo - co in an - ge - los me,

A ge - los me. Cao - miz hui - hui jo - co in an - ge - los me,

36 **C** **Dm** **Am** **Dm** **C** **Dm** **G** **C** (Repeat 3 times)

S1 in an - ge - los me, in an - ge - los me.

S2 in an - ge - los me, in an - ge - los me.

A in an - ge - los me, in an - ge - los me.

42 1st time: *f*, 2nd time: *p*

S1 A - le - lo - ya. A - le - lo - ya.

S2 1st time: *f*, 2nd time: *p* A - le - lo - ya. A - le - lo - ya.

A 1st time: *f*, 2nd time: *p* A - le - lo - ya. A - le - lo - ya.

49 **Much slower, with freedom** (♩ = ca. 100)

Soprano solo* A - le - lo - ya. A - le - lo - ya.

S1 *pp* A - le - lo - ya. A - le - lo - ya.

S2 *pp* A - le - lo - ya. A - le - lo - ya.

A *pp* A - le - lo - ya. A - le - lo - ya.

*This soprano solo is generally improvised; the notated solo is a suggestion, but performers are encouraged to create their own.

Text:

Xicochi conetzintle
Caomiz huihui joco in angelos me
Aleloya

Translation:

Hush little beloved child,
Behold, there are angels here to rock you to sleep.
Hallelujah

Pronunciation:

ʃikoʃji konetsintle
ka:omis wiwi ɟoko in angelos me
aleloja

Historical Context and Performance Note:

Very little is known about the Portuguese-Mexican composer Gaspar Fernandes. It is clear that a musician with this name worked in Évora, Portugal; Guatemala City, Guatemala; and Puebla, Mexico although it is still uncertain whether it was the same person or several people with the same name. Xicochi is one of many villancicos by the Gaspar Fernandes who worked in Puebla Cathedral, notable for writing works in pseudo-African and indigenous languages in addition to numerous works in Spanish. This performing edition incorporates performance traditions associated with Xicochi from various communities in Central Mexico and is how Border CrosSing often performs this work. Editions that reproduce only the notes and rhythms as they appear in the manuscript preserved in the Oaxaca Codex, without the addition of these performance traditions, are freely available and in the public domain.

This villancico from the early 1600s has become a standard of choral Christmas repertoire in Mexico. In the manner of the early Baroque, the music itself illustrates the text expressively. The alto lead-in for each new phrase, the use of ternary meter, and the consonants of the Nahuatl language all contribute to paint a picture of a mother rocking a child to sleep. This work is often performed in a wide variety of voicings, with the two upper parts often assigned to children, or in different call-and-response groupings. It has become a tradition in many Mexican congregations to separate the “Hallelujah” section from the rest of the work, creating the effect of angels singing to the mother and child; we enhance this effect by performing this section a cappella and by adding a soaring improvised soprano cadenza. It is also traditional in some Mexican communities to sing several repetitions of this piece, changing the dynamics and performing forces each time. One additional performance tradition is the use of goat-hoof shakers by the choristers, meant to imitate a baby’s rattle. Generally, this added percussion part will play the following rhythm throughout: | ♩ | ♩ |

The instrumentation is flexible. While a harpsichord or organ would both be historically-appropriate harmony instruments, this piece is most often performed in Mexican congregations with guitar or regional strummed string instruments such as the jarana, vihuela, or harp. Various bass instruments can be used, including cello, bassoon, or double bass; for Border CrosSing performances, we generally omit the bass instrument or only add it for the loudest repetition.

- Ahmed Anzaldúa



Founded in 2017, Minnesota-based Border CrosSing envisions fundamental change in classical music culture, so that every concert, every audience, and the artists on stage truly reflect the cultural reality in which we live. Border CrosSing’s work provides opportunities for people from different communities to understand each other in new ways through Puentes, a concert series centering Latinx culture and music; Heritage Choir, an inclusive community chorus with a focus on exploring cultural heritage; educational programming; and communal singing events. For more information visit www.bordercrossingmn.org