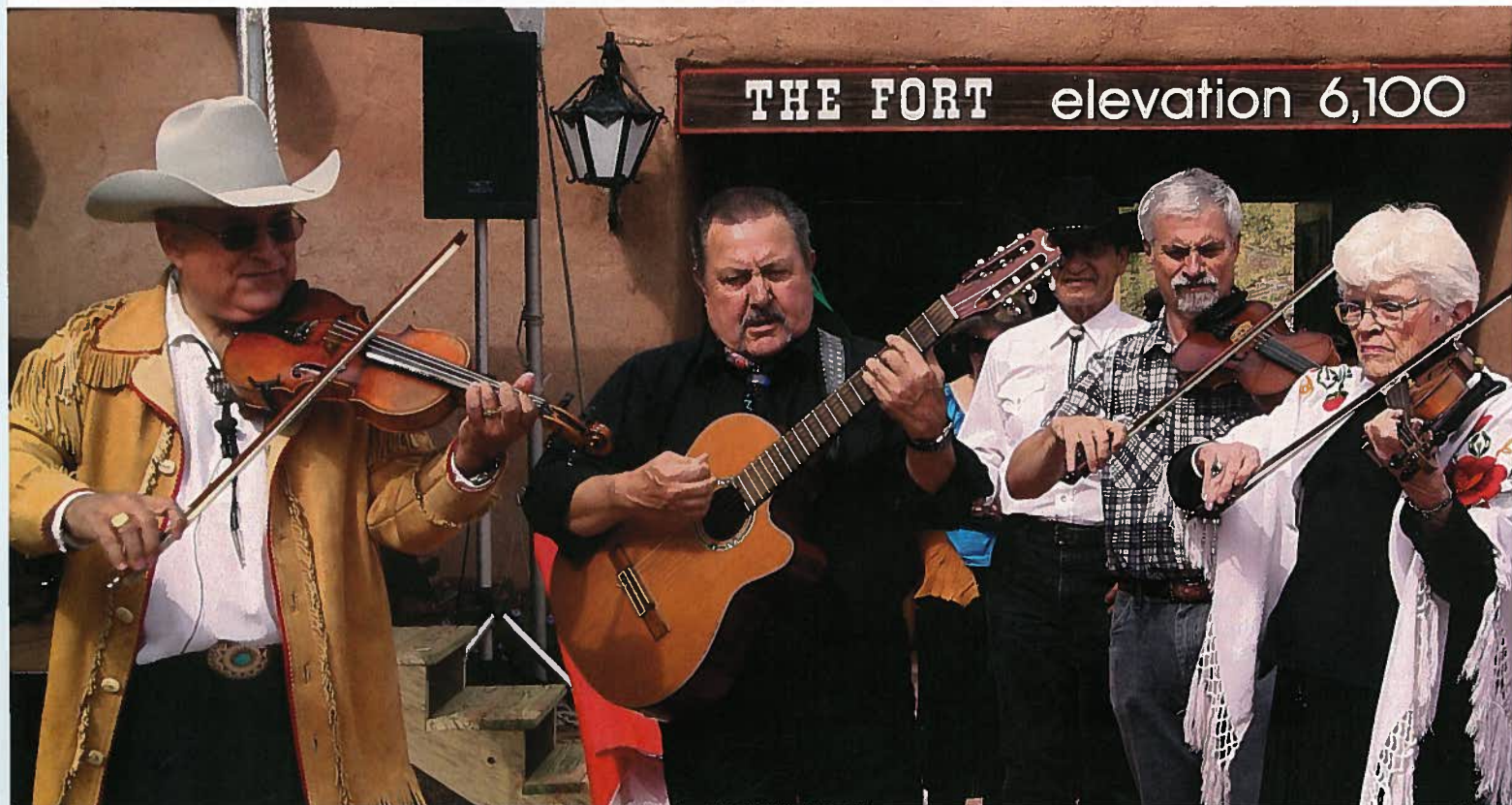


Colorado Creators

ARTISTS, MUSICIANS & WRITERS



Lorenzo Trujillo, left, performs with family and friends, playing the music his family has passed down for centuries.

Ellen Aires-Truj

The Songs of Colorado's First Spanish Settlers

LORENZO TRUJILLO'S FAMILY never forgot the old songs. In 1598, when his Spanish ancestors first settled in what's now northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, the songs they sang were already centuries old. And for generation upon generation since then, parents passed the music to their children in a chain that to this day remains unbroken.

When Trujillo sings out joyously and plays his violin, joined by family and friends on guitars and other instruments, and when they perform the old-time dances called "cuadrillas," they are performing the music they grew up playing at massive family gatherings.

"We are not reenacting or recreating," Trujillo said. "We are the living past and living history of the early days in Colorado and New Mexico, both genealogically and culturally."

But while much of the music seems plucked from a time capsule, it has actually continued to evolve – something that's necessary to prevent the songs from becoming mere relics of the past. Trujillo sings "La Entrega de los Novios," a traditional wedding

song with roots stretching back as far as the wedding of El Cid in the 11th century. The song's 38 verses offer advice to the newlyweds, but for each wedding, family members come up with new verses that are custom tailored for the particular couple.

That's one of the songs that's featured on the CD *The Golden Age of the Southwest: 1840 to Hollywood* by Lorenzo Trujillo and Friends. The album's "Las Cuadrillas," an instrumental suite, marks one of the first times the lively but nearly forgotten dance tunes have been recorded. The CD also traces the evolution of Hispano music to the post-World War II era and then to Hollywood movies, with swelling strings, blaring trumpets and classic pop tunes like "Perfidia." – by Matt Masich

To learn more, including how to buy Lorenzo Trujillo's music, visit www.lorenzotrujillo.com.