



# Folkloric Queens: Performing Queerness in the Andean Patron Saint-Fiesta

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The Andean regions of Peru and Bolivia share histories of colonization and national formation that narrate how gender, sexuality, and indigeneity have been contested terrains across time. Within these processes, folkloric music and dance have been crucial since the early twentieth century to articulate imaginaries of the nation in both countries. Folkloric patron-saint fiestas (festivals), which feature music and ritual dances, were crucial platforms and remain iconic celebrations today. In this talk I offer a rearticulation of Andean folklore by drawing from fiesta case studies featured in my current book project, *Folkloric Queens: Performance and Queer Indigeneity across the Andes*. In this book I introduce the term “folkloric queen” to describe queer and trans artists in Peru and Bolivia who are critically appropriating Andean folklore to imagine more inclusive possibilities for thinking the nation and indigeneity through performance. Centering shared Quechua and Aymara Indigenous cultures between these two countries, as they are represented in fiestas, I argue that nationalistic notions of Andean indigeneity become undone when we consider queerness as an additional way of knowing. Against a backdrop where the relationships between folklore, indigeneity, and the nation are often thought in heteronormative terms, I index material and embodied changes to folkloric performance in fiestas that unveil queer sites of knowledge production.



**Enzo E. Vasquez Toral** is a Peruvian researcher, performer, and educator who serves as Assistant Professor of Performance Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. His work sits at the intersection between Indigenous studies, performance studies, and gender and sexuality studies in the Americas, and his writings have appeared in over a dozen of journals and edited collections. Dr. Vasquez Toral currently serves as Book Review Editor for *Theatre Survey* and incoming Focus Group Representative for Performance Studies at the Association for Theater in Higher Education in the US. He holds a PhD in Performance Studies from Northwestern University, a MA in Latin American Literature and Culture from Princeton University, and a BA in History and Literature from Harvard University.