



# Jaleo

newsletter of the  
flamenco association of san diego



VOLUME I No. 12

JULY 1978

## Gypsy Genius

By Brook Zern

(Originally appeared in  
the Village Voice, May  
8, 1978.)

If you've ever witnessed a flamenco guitar concert by Carlos Montoya or Manitas de Plata, here is some good news: You can atone for this indiscretion by going to see the gypsy genius called Sabicas, who is playing his first New York concert in years at Town Hall on May 7 at 7 p.m.

Now the bad news: If you liked Montoya or Manitas, you probably won't like Sabicas. He has none of the charisma of these lesser artists, and only a fraction of their communicative powers. All Sabicas has is the ability to play concert-style flamenco guitar so well that no one else could even touch him for nearly four decades.

Sabicas was born in Pamplona in 1917. Then as now, people in that northern Spanish city thought of flamenco as the disreputable noise made by those low-life southerners, the Andalusians. Nobody played flamenco in Pamplona, so Sabicas started out just like the rest of us would-be flamenco guitarists: He got some phonograph records and tried to figure out what the hell was going on.

By the time he was 20 he was Sabicas, which is to say he was the supreme flamenco virtuoso of his time. He had totally dominated the instrument, technically surpass-

(continued on page 7)



### ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

## Jaleistas & Jaleo Survive a Year

Well, we did it -- and in pretty good form! This is our twelfth issue of Jaleo, and it looks like we will be around for awhile longer. In the poverty stricken, disorganized, ego-sensitive, highly factioned, anti-organization world of flamenco, it is extremely unlikely that a venture like this would be conceived or given birth, let alone survive and grow.

The existence of Jaleistas and Jaleo is due to a whole set of circumstances that are not likely to occur very often. First, several of us in San Diego had just spent time in Spain and were fired up to do something. Juana de Alva returned first to San Diego and started everything with a juerga at her home and an inspirational speech aimed at initiating regular juergas, that was

delivered from atop a large rock. She received a positive response and the monthly juergas were begun. The juergas were important to Jaleo in two respects: First, they gave it reason to come into being as a means of communication for people attending the juergas. Second, the juergas financially supported the newsletter, and still do to a large extent, since most of the early members were primarily interested in juergas, not an educational magazine. The cost of starting a decent newsletter without the juergas would have been prohibitive for any of us. Juana de Alba should also be thanked for all of the time she has put in over the course of the year; she has been the center of all activity, around which everything has revolved, and without her constant presence, the whole thing would have failed long ago.

But there were others who were of critical importance, especially in the early stages. Betty (Jobe) Reineking put a tremendous amount of work into the issues of the first six months, practically single handedly organizing and typing each issue, as well as writing articles and editorials and doing artwork. Stan Schutze, a person with no real interest in flamenco, became enthused with the newsletter idea and was responsible for most of the graphics ideas and the layout of Jaleo, as well as organizing the business end of Jaleistas; without him, Jaleo would certainly not have anywhere near the appearance it does. We also have to thank him for donating a typewriter when he left to work in the Middle East. Paco Sevilla came back from Spain loaded with ideas for articles and was the main force in starting the spread of Jaleo to areas outside of San Diego in January.

We have to thank the many San Diegans who, in spite of feelings of inadequacy concerning knowledge of flamenco, educated themselves and wrote articles so that we could publish something besides announcements. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Peter Baime of Milwaukee, who jumped into the battle at an early stage and allowed his name to be associated with what was still just a local venture. And just when we were beginning to despair of ever arousing any interest in the outside world, Roberto Reyes and La Vikinga of New York gave us strength to go on, with articles, announcements, and lists of people and businesses to contact. There are so many to thank now -- Chuck Keyser, Brook Zern, Gary Hayes, and many more. So, thank you to all who have assisted in any way -- including sending in for a subscription or contributing money (we have had many generous contributions). Each

of you should feel pride in what we have all created together and realize how special it is and how unique were the circumstances that brought it about.

A word about money. This has been a truly non-profit venture; every penny has gone into the cost of materials and mailing the newsletter (minus a few dollars for juerga supplies). All work on the Jaleo has been voluntary, including the writing of articles. Even so, we may have to increase subscription costs eventually, due to the increase in cost of mailing. One of our goals in the near future will be to pursue advertising more actively; if this succeeds, we will be able to do even better things with Jaleo, keep subscription costs down, and perhaps even begin to pay for articles.

Sorry to use a cliché, but this is your newsletter; Jaleo is what the readers make it. We have no full-time staff to do all of the work for you. What we print is, for the most part, what the readers send us. With that in mind, here is a review of what we need from you and our general policies.

Articles can be of many types: informative, personal experience, biographical, opinion, or ?? They may be of any length; if you only have a small amount to say, consider sending it as a "Letter to the Editor" (these must be addressed to Jaleo or Jaleistas so that we know they are intended for publication). Articles expressing primarily opinion, we usually feature as a "Punto de Vista." Biographies, especially of Americans who are succeeding as professionals in flamenco, are of great interest.

If possible, please send articles typewritten; otherwise, please write as clearly as possible, taking extra care on personal names and places. If we ever get Jaleo back on schedule, the deadline for receiving material for each issue will be the middle of the previous month; at present, it is more like the end of the month.

We can also use:

- response, pro and con, to articles.
- artwork, either line drawings or high contrast black and white.
- photos; black and white only, preferably snapshot size or negatives.
- flamenco verses containing words in calo.
- reviews of performances, either written by you or from other publications.
- reviews of records or new music.
- announcements of performances and teachers in your area; it doesn't matter whether there aren't enough subscribers in your area for the announcement to serve as advertising, the idea is to inform flamencos around the country of what is going on.

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--reports and photos of local juergas.
--guitar music written in either tablature
or standard notation; we can rewrite it for
you, but be sure it is written the way you
want it.
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--names and addresses of potential subscribers or advertisers.

These are a few ideas -- you come up with the rest! You can sit back sipping your sangria as you peruse your monthly issue of Jaleo while mumbling to yourself, "Very interesting, good job, good job!" and perhaps watch the newsletter get thinner, become bi-monthly, or fade away completely, as the odds say it should have long ago. Or you can do a little something every now and then and watch Jaleo grow bigger and better. There is a choice!



JALEO

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: Bill Martin, John MacDonald, Jesus Soriano (photography)

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: Brook Zern, Jerry  
Lobdill Roberto Reyes, La Vikinga, David  
Blakley, Gene St. Louis.

The goal of Jaleistas is to spread the art, the culture and the fun of flamenco. To this end we publish the JALEO newsletter, have monthly juergas and sponsor periodic special events.

Membership-Subscription is \$8.00 per individual and \$10.00 per family or couple. Announcements are free of charge to members and businesses may display their cards for \$6.00 per month or \$15.00 per quarter.

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WELCOME TO JALEISTAS - NEW MEMBERS

San Diego: Elizabeth & Francisco Ballard, Sheryl Tempchin, Jessie & Don Johnson, Mr. & Mrs. & Lisa Estala, Greg & Jo Mellon, Victor & Margarita Urganda; Canada: Angel Monzón, Mrs. A.M. Robertson, Tom Patton; Herbert Goullabian (Colorado), Robert Weisenberg (Wisc.), Suzanne & Michael Hauser (Minn.), Johnny Beard (Okla.), Michael Fisher (N.Y.), Teodoro & Isabel Morca (Wash.)

## LETTERS

Dear Editor:

(re: comments about the alegrías falsetas contributed by Roberto Reyes in the May issue of Jaleo.)

When I first met Roberto, he taught me a lot about compas, just as you indicated in your, "it is perhaps even more important to realize that the following falsetas can be accented in several different ways." And that is the way Roberto used to practice. BUT, it never sounded relaxed or had any "aire." You were commenting about flamenco compas. That has nothing to do with the "breaking down" of a falseta into doublets, triplets, etc.

My many years as a concert pianist (piano major in college) taught me that basic technique is the same, whether for guitar, piano, tuba, etc. In learning a falseta in triplets, one must accent the first note of each triplet, or the first note of each quadruplet, or the first of every four notes in doublets.

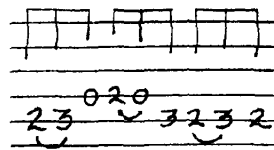
Of course, when Paco de Lucía or Sabicas play these kinds of runs at high speed, you cannot hear these accents, but believe you me, they know that they are there!

Sincerely,  
La Vikinga

Comments by acting editor, Paco Sevilla:

The omission of some of Roberto's comments on this point was due to my not then, nor now, understanding the value of the point you are making. In my years of teaching hundreds of people to play flamenco guitar, I have never come across a person who did not naturally accent the first note of each triplet, that is, the note which falls on the beat or the foot tap. Perhaps I am missing the point, but I do not understand how one could play any other way.

On a related subject, I found an interesting point in the valuable article on Manolo de Huelva by Virginia de Zayas in the recent Guitar Review #43. The point was made that, "When the guitarist plays falsestas, the ligated notes give light and shade of three strengths." I was puzzled by that comment for awhile, until I decided that the author must be referring to triplet ligado passages played with the thumb, as in the example given here. In each beat there are three different sounds, an accented plucked note, a non-plucked note, and an unaccented plucked note. The author goes on to say that



this effect is lost in modern playing where so much picado is used; with picado, there are either two sounds, accented and unaccented, or one homogeneous sound with emphasis on the major compás beats. A minor, but interesting point.

Dear Jaleo,

...Los felicito y haré todo lo que de mi parte esté para que Jaleo lo conozcan por esta parte del Canada.

Espero que me comuniquen, si quieren que los envíe algún material de estas actividades que por aquí llevo realizando.

El día 2 estuve a ver al amigo Morca y su Sra., así como al guitarrista, Gary Hayes. Las alegrías de Morca son magníficas, bueno, como maestro y amigo, me pareció muy bien.

Hasta pronto amigos,  
Angel Monzón  
Vancouver, B.C.  
Canada

(The following is from one of the founders of Jaleo, now living in Iran)

You should be preparing for the next juerga by the time this letter arrives. I suspect that the newsletter is in the final stages of frantic last-minute preparations. Jesus is prompt with his photographs, as usual, and perhaps writing articles. Paco is beating the bushes for the "meat" of flamenco and the contents of the next Jaleo. And Juana, the hardest working Jaleista of them all, is generously providing help in all other areas where there is a need.

I can envision your contingent of Spanish ladies, with their castanets softly purring, like cars with their motors running, in anticipation of their mid-month communion with fond memories of Spain. Sumptuous food is being prepared and costumes made ready. Jack Jackson is carefully selecting an itinerary of music to make sure that the evening starts in the right mood.

María Teresa Gómez will arrive with her troupe of pint-sized gitanas to inspire and warm the hearts of everyone in the room. Ernest Lenshaw will squeeze more ladies than the rest of us put together. Yuris won't say much, but is always present, articulately expressing himself on the guitar.

More people arrive, the air thickens, the wine flows. Duende sparks as the evening reaches critical mass. There are many new faces and new members. Deanna is uninhibited and sexy. Jesús is cruising around in seventh heaven. Juana is managing to greet and entertain 175 new arrivals, plus dance and

sing and collect money on the side. At midnight, Rosala takes the floor and captures those of us who are weak of heart with her "sensual intensity."

And in the corner there sits an empty easy chair with an unopened can of beer on the arm rest. The thought of this chair brings a lump to my throat, because it represents one of the most gratifying experiences in which I have had the pleasure to indulge. The excellent quality of people and friends, and the joy of seeing the spark that brings them to life, are real pleasures not soon to be forgotten.

Stan Schutze  
Tehran, Iran

## PUNTO DE VISTA

### HOW PURE IS PURE?

I have a bone to pick with the holier-than-thou flamenco purists. The attitude that "my flamenco is more pure than your flamenco," sometimes really rubs against the grain.

Any ethnic dance, when removed from its original setting (usually the plaza of a small pueblo) and put on stage, is no longer "authentic." There must be special lighting the music is often canned or amplified, and choreography must be set to insure a uniform performance. I remember once seeing a company from India that advertised completely authentic, unadulterated, folk dances. The dancers filed through the same monotonous pattern umptine times, and it was the biggest bore imaginable.

Flamenco is the product of enculturation by some of the most creative and innovative people on earth, a people who have borrowed from many different countries and cultures. When I am told that castanets or the bata de cola have no place in flamenco, that women should not do heelwork, duo dances are a "no-no," etc..., I say, "Let's carry this theme to the ridiculous, ultimate extreme! How about shoes? Shouldn't we go back to dancing barefoot? Let's get really authentic and eliminate plastic earrings and nylon ruffles (we can go back to ironing and starching each cotton ruffle for hours; I can remember a time when I spent more time ironing ruffles than I did performing on stage). How about the music? How authentic are the new falsetas and techniques? Why don't we eliminate the guitar altogether and go back to palmas and other percussion instruments?



One of the reasons that the San Diego Flamenco Association has flourished is that we have avoided, thus far, the elitest snobbery that inhibits participation and stifles creativity. We have a mixture of Spaniards and non-Spaniards, professional performers and beginning students, and long-time aficionados as well as those just recently introduced to flamenco. There is an attitude of sharing and tolerance at the juergas which allows people the freedom to participate. If the non-Spaniards felt that they were being criticized by the Spaniards for their lack of authenticity, or students by professionals for their imperfect technique, or newcomers by the aficionados for their limited knowledge of flamenco, everyone would be immobilized by the fear that they might be doing something "wrong" and the juergas would come to a screeching halt.

One of the difficulties in teaching flamenco and the beauties of executing it, is that there is no "right" way and, therefore unlimited possibilities of expression. At the juergas there are no two alike: Rayna speaks articulately with her heelwork, Rosala and Luana with the sinuous movements of their arms and torsos, Julia Romero, with one shake of her shoulders, has the whole room in the palm of her hand, and Juanita Franco has the entire bag of pellizcos at her disposal.

I believe that there is room for both the old and the new, for the traditional and the innovative, and that, as a thriving and evolving art form, flamenco has room for and can encompass a great variety of styles, approaches, and techniques. Participants should be judged on their own unique merits and not by someone's imaginary or antiquated measuring stick!

Juana De Alva

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#### BULERÍAS OF THE 70's

In May, Paco Sevilla offered a class in bulerías for intermediate and advanced students. Fourteen people showed up for the class which began at 7:00 p.m.

Paco began this class with a brief discussion of the Andalusian region of Spain (cradle of flamenco) and explained where many of the most noted cantaores and guitaristas come from. This flamenco geography lesson made it clear that there are various regional flamenco styles and that they are

interrelated. For example, Paco described the flamenco atmosphere of Madrid as being a flamenco melting-pot, and the guitar playing is characterized by "tricks" -- "You've got to be tricky to play in Madrid." Tricky means using many unusual techniques, falsetas and compas structures. This trickiness seems to be the result of many flamencos from different regions competing and trading their respective "trucos de tocar."

After this introduction, Paco provided us with some inspiration by playing some modern bulerías, which set the mood for the real objective of the class, that of learning some of the latest techniques and false-tas of bulerías as styled by such flamencos as Paco de Lucía, Serranito, Manolo Sanlúcar and a number of others. The actual class was conducted by first handing out music in tablature form for a series of falsetas and rhythmic techniques by each of nine artists. After a brief refresher in the reading of tablature, Paco demonstrated each falseta and then played it so that we could all record it. Then we were able to tape from records examples of bulerías as played by the original composing guitarist. By the end of the evening, we each had (unless you had a taperecorder breakdown) about one hour of recorded lesson and one hour of recorded bulerías by various artists. The class finished after midnight, and after five hours of listening, recording, and practice, I felt the class was, for myself (and, I'm sure, for the others who attended), very worthwhile and a real inspiration for continued interest in flamenco guitar.

Muchísimas gracias, Paco,  
Hasta la proxima,  
Ken Boyd

(Comment by Paco: Thank you for the kind words, Ken. I would like to add a few words of explanation, since each person who attends a class like this tends to focus mainly on those aspects which most interest them.

I felt the purpose of this class was not just to teach falsetas, but to demonstrate a series of concepts; my objectives for this class were:

- to show that regional styles still exist in the playing of bulerías (in this case, styles from Madrid, Sevilla, and Jerez).
- to demonstrate general techniques that can be used to produce a more flamenco and modern sound.
- to teach falsetas and rhythms that demonstrate unique techniques or concepts.
- to supply a tape of more-or-less up-to-date bulerías as played by modern artists;

aside from those listed above, these included Manuel Molina, Pedro Peña, Dieguito de Morón, Juan "Habichuela," Parilla de Jerez, and Paco Cepero.

-- to expose the participants to modern singers by having most of the recorded examples feature the guitarists as singing accompanists.



## FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, FLAMENCO LANGUISHES

(The first in a series of articles about "upgrading the flamenco market.")

### *La Vikinga and Roberto Reyes*

New York Times: Anna Kisselgoff wrote this about the Ballet Nacional Festivales de Espana, "...the company now has flamenco artists of authority. By choice, they opt for the popular over the deep, but that is their privilege."

New York Post: dance and drama critic, Clive Barnes, observes, "Now we are reduced to smaller, somewhat less distinguished groups, such as that of the Madrid-born Jose Molina....There was a lack of what the Spaniards call DUENDE, a lack of that personal sense of matador-tragedy that is the essence of Spanish dance at its noblest and most ennobling."

Dance Magazine: Critic, Linda Small, remarked about the Ballet Nacional Festivales de Espana, "...the Andalusian taranto, alegrías, and bulerías are not museum pieces and cannot be danced well without feeling and without the spontaneity of the moment."

For all artists in any art form, the future is never secure....but right now, flamenco is at its lowest ebb. People expect to see the Spanish stereotype in flamenco, regardless of the abilities of the performers. When the day comes that we can introduce flamenco with the artist's real name, Joyce Roth, rather than the traditional Juanita Reyes, flamenco will have come a long way.

To give you an idea how far we are from that, guitarists are still busy learning millions of falsetas and not taking enough time to learn and study flamenco dance. Sure, we're doing all the obvious things, ending llamadas together, going into bulerías, etc., but accompanying requires much more than that. Top-notch accompanists such as El

Marote and Habichuela see a dancer for the first time and they can tell immediately from what teachers, if any, the dancer has studied. For example, the straight modern arms of Paco Fernández and María Merced are quite different from the flowing arms of Matilde Coral and Flora Albaicín. But more importantly, each dancer or teacher has his/her favorite way of creating rhythm patterns within a given rhythm. In soleares, Carmen Amaya felt more comfortable and creative working in fast triplets and accenting from the 12th beat. Paco Fernández and María Merced love to work in quadruplets, starting from the 12th beat. On the other hand, Manuela Vargas and Jose Quintero like to work the accent and feeling coming from the 1st beat, mostly in triplets. It is with this kind of knowledge that quality creating can be done at the moment. Knowledge of the song and the styles of different singers is even more crucial.

It is not enough for a flamenco dancer to be expert only in flamenco dance, but he/she must also be expert in the guitar music and how each guitarist plays in his own style. He/she must know in the moment when a guitarist likes to play soleares with a feeling of triplets or quadruplets, accenting from the 12 or the 1, or whatever number of ways that a soleares may be interpreted or felt. Of course a dancer will try to influence the guitarist and all others in a group as to what kind of feeling he/she wants to express in his/her dance. But the influence should not be done with words. It is with this kind of knowledge that one can create quality phrasing "on the spot."

If a dancer has his/her routine and choreography created on the number system, instead of the proper pellizco with the singer, cambios with the singer, and other gestures, it will fit, but it won't work for a quality performance. Dancers often know many routines, but are still not flamenco dancers -- no matter how many concerts they appear in. If one must be a flamenco dancer one must eat, sleep, and live flamenco 24 hours a day. And when dancing, he/she must finish with such exhaustion from the feeling and the dancing, that he/she must be carried off the stage. Flamenco is not knowing many dances. but executing one dance like it was the last dance of your life!

Last, but most importantly, the guitarist and the dancer must know the cante. One important example, a renowned gypsy cantaor likes to sing soleares with extra waiting line, holding long notes, and he'll end on the correct beat if the guitarist marks the

accents and closings obviously and accurately. He also likes to do the cambios after the guitarist has already played them. If a singer is not sure when to start or end a section, the guitarist must influence the singer, such as playing a cambio because there's where it should have been. And in turn, that becomes a cue for the singer. On the other hand, there are some excellent flamenco singers who sing soleares in perfect "cuadrado" form (perfect, but less interesting -- it robs the guitarist and dancer of their spontaneity!).

My main points are:

- a) Flamenco dancers have to stop watering themselves down by learning too many routines and other forms of dance. They should spend more time learning flamenco guitar music and flamenco song "por baile."
- b) Flamenco guitarists should spend less time learning more solos and take some dancing lessons. And they should learn to sing some flamenco songs "por baile." I believe that with this extra knowledge we can bring something new and fresh to flamenco.
- c) In Spanish classical dance, the guitarist must play the music exactly as written. In all forms of the dance, choreography is set to music, to be performed in the same manner concert after concert. Flamenco is unique! It is a rare jewel unlike any other art form. In the words of Linda Small, "True flamenco is danced without castanets and is improvised....Flamenco dancer, singer, and guitarist are in touch with the source....!"

(The next article to appear in this series will be "Educating the Public...What to look for in Flamenco.")

(GYPSY GENIUS - continued from page 1.)

ing the immortal Ramon Montoya (uncle of Carlos) and beginning to create his own music in a new but very flamenco style. More importantly, he had gained an uncanny mastery of compás.

In flamenco, compás means measure; it refers to the often complex rhythmic cycles which both underlie and define most traditional forms. To say it is indispensable is to understate the case, because, without compás, these distinctive forms dissolve into aimless, nameless, non-flamenco meanderings. Sabicas has internalized these flamenco rhythms and he manipulates them brilliantly. It was this ability, rather than his unbelievable digital dexterity, which led Carmen Amaya to seek out Sabicas to accompany her amazing footwork. It was

compás that helped clinch the title of número uno for Sabicas.

Among the flamencos only, of course. The public had its own notion of what flamenco guitar should be, and Sabicas--despite a spate of marvelous records and well-received recitals--was outvoted.

First, there was Carlos Montoya, whose early records revealed an interesting style and a good understanding of flamenco soon submerged in an array of mannerisms--choppy, disjointed rasgueado strumming; absurdly extended legato passages, played entirely with the left hand for extra effect and rambling tremolos that wowed the crowds but lacked flamenco content and compás; even the habit of loosening his guitar strings to permit more tricks at the cost of the instruments tone.

Manitas de Plata, on the other hand, never had anything to do with flamenco. Instead, he found a way to parlay a great gypsy face and cosmic chutzpah into one of the great stage acts of all time.

Manitas is not merely ignorant of compás but he is also a lousy guitarist, unable to play a complete run or a coherent melodic falseta (flamenco variation or riff). And while this may be news to his fans, it is not news to him. He has cheerfully acknowledged as much to me and others with the temerity to ask. "But," he adds, "I have one thing those flamenco guitarists don't have--a Rolls Royce in front of my huge villa."

Sabicas will never compare with Manitas as a showman. He won't jump down off the stage and stroll through the aisles, or hire three back-up guitarists to drown out his fluffs. Instead, he'll have to do what he does best. He'll play flamenco. And because he now has competition--specifically, a young phenom called Paco de Lucía who may already be his peer--he'll be out to prove something. It should be a good concert, if you like flamenco.



# One Magnanimous Flamenco Lost

by Roberto Reyes

On May 20, 1978, Roberto Aguilar (Bob Strack), an ardent flamenco aficionado and solo flamenco guitarist in New York City, died at the young age of 47. He was widely known among flamencos here and abroad for his enthusiasm and encouragement.

As a flamenco personality, he was unique! In the professional flamenco world, more often than not, flamencos express negative statements toward one another. Roberto, on the other hand, always had something good to say about the different artists, continually reminding of the beauty of each individual way of performing. He made a point of supporting flamenco by attending concerts and frequenting the local flamenco "hang-outs." The "house guitarists" would always invite

him to play. For me and the proprietors, he was a welcome sight....such a healthy, good-looking man who silently commanded attention just by his over 6 foot 4, about 350 pound frame. When I worked at La Sangria Restaurant on Hudson St., he was a regular customer, ever ready to play a couple of guitar duets and solos. If it was a good night, he would sing and play in any language requested (his second love of music was country-western). He created an ambiente that everyone could share. Seated next to his lovely wife, Karin, he seemed SO powerful, yet he would delicately strum the guitar with the greatest finesse and sip a screwdriver, being careful not to moisten his majestic "Vandyke."

Even in death, Roberto exudes the same powerful elegance. Looking at his face, so many memories come flooding back. He had that same expression of concentration that he had some 15 years ago, on a summer Sunday afternoon, sitting on a small wooden stool in the middle of Washington Park, playing bulerías. With thousands of people crammed around different musicians playing repertoire from country to classical, ethnic to popular, it must have been predetermined that I would stop to listen to Roberto Aguilar. After admiring his music, I asked if he would give me guitar lessons. He graciously agreed. I started to study flamenco with him as a hobby, but Roberto inspired me to become a professional and suggested that I study flamenco dance as well (I heeded his advice and studied with Mariquita Flores at Ballet Arts in Carnegie Hall). Roberto warned me that it was very difficult for a non-Spaniard to learn flamenco. He taught me at an early stage that there's a lot of mystery attached to flamenco, and that he didn't, by any means, have all the answers.

During the mid-60's, Roberto Aguilar played solo guitar for four years in the renowned Jai-Lai Restaurant on Bank Street in Greenwich Village when flamenco was in its heyday. What recollections I have of waiting in line



outside the restaurant, where people waited patiently for the good food and a table near the guitarist. Roberto always greeted everyone warmly, making a point of remembering their names and professions. And what magnanimity! He continually invited visiting guitarists to play, whether they were professional or aspiring students....a rare occurrence in the paranoiac world of flamenco!

He made other dreams come true. The wish of every flamenco guitarist is to find a vintage Spanish-constructed guitar, and Roberto always had a good collection (I bought my first guitar from him).

When we shared a cab coming home from the Jose Molina concert, I told him that I had solved some of the mysteries of flamenco that he had spoken of 15 years before. At the Sabicas concert, he approached me in the lobby of Town Hall and said that he couldn't sleep for days, thinking about the enigma I had uncovered. We promised to get together real soon.

Unfortunately, now, I'm too late!

MORE ON ROBERT STRACK by Gene St. Louis

It is with sincere sadness that I announce the death of one of our members (Robert was one of the first in the New York area to become a member of Jaleistas) and a dear friend, Robert G. Strack, flamenco guitarist, in New York City, on 5/22/78. He leaves behind his loving wife, Karin, and daughter, Barbara, by his first marriage.

With him goes the memory of a gifted entertainer who pursued the life of a flamenco by immersing himself in the art to an enviable degree. His knowledge of flamenco, his storehouse of falsetas, and his willingness to share these were paramount in establishing him as one of the most popular and knowledgeable flamencos in the area.

To me he was someone special because ten years ago he was my introduction to New York City and the flamenco nightlife. From that point on we became the best of friends, and he offered me inspiration and guidance in both my guitar and personal life.

One of his unique qualities was his uncanny ability to mix with people and get them into a festive mood. He could draw the shyness right out of a person and have him function as part of a group. This one quality, more than any other, made him not only popular, but valuable.

This is being written not only for myself, but for all those who were fortunate enough to have been touched by this huge man of gentle ways.

## The Three Sides of Carlos Montoya

### SIDE ONE

"...The artistry and genius of Carlos Montoya have established him as without a rival in the world today and as probably the greatest of all gypsy guitarists of all time.



Montoya's innate sense of perfection enables him to embellish his playing with the ultimate in counterpoint and theoretical knowledge....Montoya can be credited with being a pioneer on his instrument and raising it to the level of concert violinists and pianists. He has so mastered the intricate and complex style of the guitar, that today it is not known as just as a guitar or gypsy guitar, but as the Montoya guitar." (from the record cover, Galaxy 4826)

"Montoya is a dependable artist and last night, as before, he ripped through the intricacies of the flamenco repertoire with disarming ease. Fandangos, farrucas, chufas and the like, were all on the program to admire, marvel at and pat the foot with." (San Diego Union's music critic, Donald Dierks -- known to be normally tough on guitarists)

"Montoya's technique on the guitar is quite more prodigious and flashy than Segovia's. It includes operations in the left hand that strike sparks of very technical silver." (San Francisco Chronicle)

"Montoya showed himself to be a first-rate instrumentalist with a fiery musical temperament and a repertory of rare selections. At the end of the concert there were cheers and shouts of 'Ole!'." (New York Times)

"A sold-out Town Hall and an audience that overflowed onto the stage greeted Carlos Montoya at his concert. An evening of captivating variety." (New York Times)

"All the superlatives that have been bestowed upon Carlos Montoya are still true. He is a magnificent artist with unbelievable magic in his fingers." (Pittsburgh Press)

"The most phenomenal music this reviewer has ever heard..." (New Orleans Times - Picayune)

\* \* \* \* \*

## SIDE TWO...

### «Putting Montoya in Perspective»

by Patrick Taggart

(Appeared originally in the Austin American-Statesman, on Sunday, April 16, 1978)

To most of us, the words Carlos Montoya and flamenco are interchangeable. He's the only person we've ever heard play it, the name most commonly associated with it. There are many others, of course, but who are they? Names please?

No one could have been more surprised than my own self, then, when in the mail came a ream of material from the Austin Guitar Society about Mr. Montoya. Montoya is playing Wednesday night for the Paramount Theater third anniversary. Jerry Lobdill, president of the group, said he had sent it along "in an attempt to put Montoya in perspective."

And what a perspective.

Here's something Brook Zern writes in Guitar Review: "Montoya, nephew of the immortal Ramon, has proclaimed that he owes nothing to Ramon. For a concert flamenco artist to make this claim -- well, the best comparison would be a classical guitarist insisting he owed nothing to Segovia; the truth of the remark soon becomes sadly evident. Montoya's early recordings reveal an interesting component of Gypsy-style, non-virtuoso flamenco; this was gradually replaced by a bag of crowd-pleasing tricks which include endless legato runs played with the left hand, rambling tremolos, and other disjointed effects..."

And from Lives and Legends of Flamenco by D.E. Pohren: "For thousands of record and concert fans (Montoya) is Mr. Flamenco. When brought up in a professional conversation, however, he is nearly always dismissed with a shrug...."

"Perhaps the most fascinating facet of Carlos' playing is his extraordinary mixture of good and bad taste. His playing often contains an undeniable gypsy drive and

"duende," only to be quickly destroyed by some absurdity, some flashy, misplaced "pica-do" or 60 seconds of continuous "ligado"...

"Some time ago Montoya ran out of recording companies with whom he could repeat his same tireless "toques," and he turned to new gimmicks, such as his record of combined flamenco-jazz. Bad taste? Of course, but it will probably prove trend-setting."

And Lobdill, in writing for the Guitar Society Newsletter, adds: "He exploits every flashy technique used in flamenco to the maximum without concern for musical propriety. For example, he has been known to do long rambling "ligado" runs while holding his right hand up so that the audience can clearly see he is playing only with his left hand."

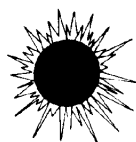
Good grief, can't a guy get a break?

Some of the critics admit that flamenco is like many things, a cultivated taste, and their objections speak mostly to persons informed on the art of flamenco. They also admit that the man is clearly talented. It is what he has done with the talent that bothers them....

Montoya himself is gypsy, so no one can argue that he is a musical carpetbagger as well as a shallow, flashy artist. And Mrs. Montoya, who spoke to the American-Statesman last week by phone for her husband (he speaks very little English) said Montoya doesn't put much stock in what individual critics have to say. He'd rather leave judgements up to his audiences.

In any case, it will be interesting to see what Austin audiences think of his duende, ligado runs, and toques. If Montoya is indeed boring and unmusical, it will be detectable whether or not the listener has a background in flamenco.

According to the Willie Nelson theory, good music is music that is pleasing to the ear, so if Montoya is a fraud, it will be because he is a poor musician, not because he bends or breaks the rules of flamenco style.



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This is not a defense of Montoya; my own recollection of a Municipal Auditorium performance several years ago is one of some excitement and a good dose of tedium. And it's not to take anything away from those who wish Montoya would preserve a purer flamenco style. It simply means that to those who don't particularly care what flamenco should sound like, Montoya's performance will be judged by different -- and equally valid -- standards.

## «Carlos Montoya»

by Jerry Lobdill

(from The Austin Guitar Society Newsletter, March 1978)

Carlos Montoya recently won the Guitar Player magazine poll as the world's greatest flamenco guitarist for the fifth straight year. Wherever he plays, he plays to packed houses and has done so for many years. When he plays here (Austin) in April, it will probably be the same. Yet those who know flamenco have no interest in seeing or hearing Montoya. How can this be? Surely he must be the greatest or he wouldn't be where he is today, would he? Yes, he would, and in my opinion, he is one of the worst; in fact, only Manitas de Plata is worse. This is not just my opinion, but an opinion that is widely held among people who know flamenco.

The contrast between Montoya's playing and that of Sabicas, Carlos Ramos, Diego del Gastor, Niño Ricardo, Mario Escudero, or Paco de Lucía, is stark. Montoya's playing is colorless, choppy, repetitious, boring, and sloppy. Everything sounds the same. There is nothing musical about it. On the other hand, all of the other guitarists play musically -- with varying degrees of feeling to be sure, but all are obviously far more talented than Montoya. Musically Montoya is a zip. Then why does he sell?

There are two reasons why Montoya sells well. First, he is a good showman (so is Manitas). He exploits every flashy technique used in flamenco to the maximum, without concern for musical propriety. For example, he has been known to do long rambling ligado runs while holding his right hand up so that the audience can clearly see he is playing with only his left hand.

The second reason he sells well is that he has been promoted. It is not difficult to build an image for a foreign ethnic performer. Americans have no standards against

which to judge such performers. Most people would probably say with conviction that Ravi Shankar is the world's greatest sitar player although they have never heard his records and wouldn't sit quietly through one side of an LP of his performances anyway. He has been well promoted here.

When Carlos Montoya decided to become an American citizen in 1940, he did a very smart thing. He married a New York dancer who knew American show biz. Together, they managed to pull the proper strings, and soon Carlos was well entrenched with the New York promoters. Mrs. Montoya knew that anyone backed by New York interests was virtually guaranteed to be a nationwide success. Americans subconsciously believe that only people living in New York are qualified to judge an artist's proper position in the pecking order. Carlos was sold to the American public as Mr. Flamenco, and, in a few years, he had an image as solid as Coca-Cola. He has recorded extensively and has made many concert tours around the U.S. It is safe to say that he has made far more money for himself and his promoters than any other flamenco guitarist who ever twanged.

Carlos Montoya and his contemporary colleagues (Ricardo and Diego are now dead) are living proof that a well-developed musical talent is not enough to insure a good living, nor is it even required if one knows how to hustle.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SIDE THREE

by Paco Sevilla

Carlos Montoya was born December 13, 1903 in Madrid, into a gypsy family. Many of his relatives played the guitar, including his mother, "La Tula," and his very famous uncle,

Ramón Montoya, patriarch of the Montoya family and one of the important developers of the modern school of flamenco guitar playing (Ramón's playing was instrumental in the development of such guitarists as Luis Maravilla, Sabicas, and Mario Escudero)

Carlos began to play guitar at about eight years of age and was sent to learn





from Pepe el Barbero, a barber who taught flamenco on the side (a not uncommon combination in the flamenco world -- especially in the past); he spent one or two years studying with the barber, his only formal teacher. Carlos is most emphatic about his guitar relationship with Uncle Ramon. He says, "One point I would like to make clear is that my own style was not influenced by that of my uncle, Ramón." (Guitar Review) On one of his record covers, we read, "Unfortunately for young Carlos, he not only had to follow in the footsteps of such an uncle, and be compared to the established genius of the older man, but he had also to face the fact that his uncle had little or no interest in him and wished to teach another member of his family -- on the grounds that young Carlos did not, in Uncle Ramón's eyes, have the ability to succeed to his mantle." (Galaxy 4826). Ramón wished to teach his own son who apparently did not fare too well since we have no record of his playing. Carlos must have been inspired by Ramon's playing (there are instances where Carlos definitely plays versions of Ramón's false-tas, although they don't occur very often), but he feels fortunate not to have studied with Ramón, since he was able to develop his own style, favoring picado, thumb, and rasgueado over the elaborate arpeggio style of Ramón (Carlos uses few arpeggios). One writer makes the point that part of the big difference between the playing of Ramón and Carlos comes from their early careers; Ramón emphasized accompanying singers, while Carlos played primarily for dancers. That makes sense to this writer, for, as we shall see, Carlos has played for an impressive list of dancers, and it would explain some aspects of his playing; Ramón had a lyrical, melodic style of playing, with much rubato and liberal bending of compas, while Carlos' playing is (no matter what else it may or may not be) always well marked rhythmically.

Carlos singles out a guitarist, Luis Molina (1885-1925; he had a style leaning toward that of Ramón Montoya with much arpeggios and picados and died in a car crash at an early age), as one he admired in his youth especially for his "staccato" (picado?) and thumbwork; another guitarist who he says was "very flamenco" was Angel Baeza.

Carlos says that in about 1912 (nine years old?), he began to frequent bars playing for singers and dancers. Most references state that Montoya began to appear in cafes cantantes at age 14, wearing short pants, but he says that his first professional appearance was at a fiesta in a small town where he stayed for three days at age 15. In either

case, he was in his early teens when he first began to appear in Madrid's cafes cantantes (flamenco clubs) playing in the cuadros. Carlos says, "One difference the clubs then and those of today is that we were served by the girls then; they would serve and sit with us. The girls from the show would also mix with the customers; it is not like that in Spain today." (Guitar Player) There were rooms reserved for the "señoritos" (patrons) who would have private fiestas after the shows were over -- often lasting into the next day or even for several days. Carlos started his career going to bars to be hired for these fiestas -- a system he says he didn't care much for. Usually, he worked with two singers, one who sang "de atras," that is, "behind" to accompany the dance, and one who sang "de adelante," or "in front" as a solo. He claims to have played for such renowned singers as Antonio Chacón (the most famous singer in flamenco's history; he was especially known for his singing of such things as granainas and malagueñas), Bernardino de los Lobitos, and Manuel Pavón. He played in the cafe, El Brillante and at La Incomienda, where he accompanied people like dancer Manolo Mertel, La Gabriela, Emilia Vez, and La Salud, who he says danced like a man and was more powerful than Carmen Amaya (Salud Rodríguez, 1870-1930, danced like a man in men's clothes, and was the



CARLOS MONTOYA WITH GABRIEL "MACANDÉ"

first teacher of El Estampío). Eventually, Carlos worked at the famous Cursal de la Madalena where he accompanied El Niño Gloria (Rafael Ramos Antunez, 1887-1937, was considered one of the greatest singers of bulerías and saetas; his style was a big influence on the singing of Manolo Caracol and Antonio Mairena) and Cojo de Málaga.

Most of the great artists sooner or later showed up in Madrid, and Carlos had the opportunity to play for some important dancers, including Antonio de Bilbao (noted for his incredible footwork), Juan el Estampío (most famed male dancer in the first part of this century), La Macarrona (1860-1947; one of the greatest bailaoras of all time, although she did very little heelwork), La Camisona, and he claims to have accompanied Carmen Amaya when she was still a child.

Montoya makes the claim that he was the first to play solos as a special attraction after the cuadro performance, but Donn Pohren in his book, Lives and Legends of Flamenco, lists at least two other guitarists who played primarily as soloists in the 1800's; Paco el Barbero (1840-1910) played solos in the early cafes cantantes, and Paco Lucena (1855-1930) is said to have introduced picado three-fingered arpeggios, and three-fingered tremelos into flamenco playing.

In the 1920's, Carlos served in the military in Morocco, and then, in 1928, Antonia Mercé, "La Argentina," probably the first to take large Spanish dance companies on worldwide tours, came to Madrid and selected him as her accompanist; the company went first to Paris and then toured Europe for the next three years. Once again in Madrid, Montoya decided to return to Paris to look for work; for the next three years, he played in the Casino de Paris with Lolita Mas and lived a life of luxury, earning up to \$400 a day (Guitar Player).

In 1933, Montoya toured the world as accompanist for Tere-sina (Teresita?), a dancer of the classical bolera school, and, in 1934, he came to the United States with her for the first time. In 1938 he returned to this country with the company of La Argentinita and then came again in 1939-40, when he was stranded in



New York by the war. At that time, he met his wife-to-be, Sally, a Spanish dancer of Scottish descent, who used the professional name, "Trianita." He also became an American citizen.

It was sometime in 1941-42 that Jose Greco joined the Argentinita company, which was then built around Argentinita, José, Pilar López, Manolo Vargas, and Carlos Montoya, still a relatively unknown guitarist. Greco says about Carlos, "In those days, Montoya was a young man, about my age, a little rough, a little wild, a friendly fellow, but unpolished. Montoya was really the only fellow in the company with whom I could have a few laughs....a strange combination of sophistication and primitivism." (The Gypsy in My Soul) He adds that, for an exorbitant fee, Montoya gave him a few lessons in dancing alegrías.

In 1941, Carlos made his first recordings in America, and then, in 1945, when La Argentinita died, he embarked upon his solo playing career (one reference says his first solo concert was not until 1948). This writer does not know if Carlos was the first, as he claims, to give entire concerts of flamenco guitar music, but he certainly was the first to popularize the flamenco guitar on an international level. It is important to remember that, at that time, he had about thirty years of experience behind him as a professional accompanist. Many of his solo pieces derived from his experience accompanying large dance companies that performed not only flamenco, but also regional and classical dances; thus, his concerts and recordings include such numbers as Jota Aragonesa, "Gaita Gallega" from Galicia, "La Sardana," "El Vito," "La Lagarterana," "Rapsodia Valenciana," "Sacromonte" by Joaquin Turina, and "Malagueña" by Lecuona. His accompanying did not come to an end. He collaborated for years with the great dancer, Vicente Escudero (they gave at least one triumphant concert, in New York in 1955), and he made a number of records accompanying singers and dancers, including one with dancers, Tere and Juanele Maya, as well as his niece, Rosa Montoya.

For more than thirty years Carlos has concertized widely and in many parts of the world his name is synonymous with the flamenco guitar. He says, "In the United States I do about 100 concerts a year. Then I go to Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and all over Europe and do another 125 more concerts. Every year I do about 225 to 250 concerts, which is too much." Considering that he is one of few ethnic performers who can still fill a hall with 2-3000 people, Carlos Montoya must be the wealthiest flamenco guitarist that has ever lived.

According to his wife, Carlos apparently does not have the patience necessary for teaching; he says, "There is no time for teaching,

and also, I do not have a passion for teaching. Teaching is a very delicate thing." (Guitar Player) One of his "students," Anita Sheer, has transcribed some of his music, which is available commercially.

Carlos' first guitar was made by Manuel Ramirez. At that time, Manuel's apprentices were Santos Hernández and Domingo Esteso (both of whom went on to become guitar builders of great renown), and Montoya eventually owned guitars by both of these makers, especially favoring an Esteso that eventually was destroyed in an accident. When Santos died, Marcelo Barbero went to work in his shop and made guitars following Santos' patterns. Montoya played a Barbero guitar for a long while (Marcelo died in 1956 and Carlos was still playing his guitar in the mid-1960's). Barbero's apprentice was Arcangel Fernández, one of today's top makers, and Carlos, staying true to this line of guitar constructors, now favors the Fernández guitars, about which he says, "The action is very soft, but you know, my speed is enough. It is a wonderfully soft guitar and I like it very much." (Guitar Player) Regarding "soft" action, Carlos adds, "For me, a guitar must have a soft action...It is more difficult to get good sound out of a soft-action guitar as you must control the vibration more. When the bridge is higher, you get more volume. I always have my guitar tuned below the usual pitch." (Guitar Review) For those unfamiliar with guitars, "soft action" refers to a guitar being easy to fret with the left hand, that is, requiring very little pressure. This quality is built into a guitar, but can be considerably enhanced by using low tension strings and lowering the bridge so that the strings lie low to the fingerboard. Montoya goes even further and lowers the pitch of the guitar one or two tones so that the strings are under less tension. In some ways, this makes the guitar easier to play, but it also decreases the volume of sound (Carlos compensates by using a microphone) and it greatly increases the rattling or buzzing of the strings against the fingerboard. Those who have heard Montoya in recent years, may have noticed that the rattling of the strings is often so predominant that almost no musical tone can be heard above it.

In one interview, Carlos said he uses Aranuez bass strings and Savarez trebles, but more recently, he says he uses La Bella wound second and third strings and a variety of different first strings. He has an unusual philosophy concerning changing strings. On

several occasions he has said that he does not change strings very often, sometimes keeping the same set for "six or seven months (normally, a working professional guitarist will change strings about once a week -- more or less often depending on the amount of playing, the guitar, the amount and chemistry of the perspiration, and personal preference). Carlos says, "Sometimes strings by these companies last for a long time and sometimes not, but if they are good, I will keep them on indefinitely." (Guitar Player)

Carlos says that he has never practiced very much, usually just warming up for a half hour or so in the morning and again before a concert.

Today, at age 74, Carlos has no thoughts of quitting his concert career. He says, "Why retire? My fingers are very strong... Play better this time, play more freely, more well, the people follow me. It's a wonderful thing really, it makes me happy making pleasure for other people." (Austin American Statesman) When not working, Montoya divides his time between New York and Madrid. He and Mrs. Montoya have two sons, one of whom plays the guitar well, but not as a profession.

How do we resolve the dilemma presented by the widely divergent views of Carlos Montoya? How can one man be the greatest flamenco guitarist of all time applauded by millions, a non-musical fraud or commercial sell-out scorned by his peers, and at the same time, a man with a tremendous flamenco background and a deep knowledge of his art? Here is this writer's view:

Commercial or popular success is not necessarily linked with artistic merit, as has been pointed out in other articles; a prime example is Manitas de Plata, who has neither Carlos' ability nor experience. Therefore, we need not concern ourselves here with Montoya's popularity. The next question is why the negative attitude, ranging from total disinterest to outright hatred, by the flamenco world? Donn Pohren suggests, "There is without a doubt a great deal of envy at Montoya's long reign as the world's busiest concert guitarist, his countless records, and, in general, his lucrative status in having been the United States' fair-haired boy of the flamenco guitar for the past twenty years (now closer to thirty). And of course, his acceptance into, and lionization by, New York society." (Lives and Legends). Envy cannot be the whole answer, though; one does not see this resentment directed toward Paco de Lucía and his

tremendous success. The negative attitude must have its basis in the feeling that Montoya does not deserve the acclaim he has received. Why would this be?

The problem begins with Montoya's publicity, which makes many claims that are just not true. He may or may not have been the first to give complete concerts of solo flamenco guitar, but he was not flamenco's first solo performer, as we have seen (also, Ramón Montoya, Niño Ricardo, and others made solo records in the days of the 78's). He is not and never was flamenco's master technician or virtuoso. He uses the thumb well in ligado or mixed ligado-plucked passages, but does not use much in the way of driving, rapid plucked passages, nor has he developed the alzapúa (see "Flamenco Talk") as did Ramón Montoya, Sabicas, and the modern virtuosos. Thumb is, therefore, about average. Picado is above average, although he usually mixes ligado notes into picado passages and seldom does straight scale runs like many of the modern players (straight scales are musical-suspect anyway, although they can be exciting). His arpeggios are practically non-existent and, therefore, hard to judge. Montoya's tremelo technique is above average for old-time players, but musically, his tremelos are not very creative. In his rasgueado passages, Carlos uses only three fingers (excludes the little finger); if we judge him against his contemporaries and not against modern players (countertime has been highly developed in recent years), he is above average, with excellent rhythm, good compas, and strong, snappy strokes. Left hand: In his peak years, Carlos played very cleanly and had good mastery of the fingerboard, although, mainly in the lower positions; he came nowhere near the imaginative use of the entire fingerboard as did Ramón, Ricardo, and Sabicas. The only technique he excels in is the playing of long ligado passages, often with the left hand alone; he may well be the "greatest" in this particular technique, but unfortunately, it has limited valid application, and he has over-used it considerably.

So, judging Carlos against most old-time accompanists, he would come out well above average as a technician, but rating him as a soloist, he would be about average in the area of technique.

But technique is not everything, as Carlos himself says when talking about flamenco playing today, "Playing has been advanced technically very much over the years. However, I don't think it has advanced musically to any great extent. I don't believe that

anyone has the feeling of the old artists." (Guitar Player). He adds, "Today the guitar playing is much more technical, more fingers, more brilliant. I believe that they have lost the humanity and the art. Before, there was less technique, but more feeling, more emotion....Now there are only two or three guitarists in the world who make the guitar an art, but there are thousands of very very good guitarists." (Guitar Player).

So, let's take a look at the music, the art of Carlos Montoya -- that which "comes from the heart." This will be a little difficult, since musical taste is so personal, but there are some points that can be made.

Carlos has a unique style that is immediately recognizable; this is an achievement that should be the goal of every flamenco guitarist and is an important criterion for judging playing. Montoya always plays with strength, drive, and emotionality -- also very important to good flamenco playing. His compás is usually excellent. He often has good melodies (I still play a dozen or so of his melodies that I learned as a beginner and they often elicit "ole's" from unknowing Montoya critics) and he seems to feel deeply what he plays.

One hears the best of Montoya's playing on his early records, especially when accompanying singers or dancers. He accompanies well, staying in the background except when filling appropriate spaces with melodies, and he keeps good compás. Concerning accompaniment, he says, "The important thing, though, is to remember to play behind the singer, one cannot anticipate. The singer is improvising, so the guitar must follow. It is acceptable to change chords a little bit late, but never early." (Guitar Player)

About his playing in general, Carlos says, "I have deliberately kept to the old Flamenco, but have enlarged upon it in my manner of playing." (Guitar Review). His manner of playing is essentially "old style." This style of playing, usually used for accompaniment, is characterized by the following: Emphasis on thumb, rasgueado, and ligado techniques with very little use of arpeggios long picados, and tremelos; primarily single note melodies, with little use of harmony or counterpoint; little emphasis on composition so that a solo piece would consist of falseta-rasgueado-falseta-rasgueado-etc. This style is very appropriate for accompaniment since it does not overshadow a singer, and the simple falsetas can be played with great feeling to inspire the other performer. However, it has limited use for solo playing, since there are not enough techniques and

gimmicks to maintain interest, and solos require more elaborate musical composition. This is where Carlos ran into trouble. Instead of changing his style in order to play solo, he tried to elaborate and develop the limited primitive style. Instead of adding arpeggios, he did longer ligado and rasgueado passages; he did add the tremelo, but uses it in a simple, primitive manner. So, in spite of the addition of gimmicks like playing with one hand and doing snare-drum imitations, Carlos' style is still primitive, but done in an "ostentatious" manner, as Donn Pohren phrases it. In addition, the applause of the audiences for his flashy moves must also have guided Montoya's development; he began to play faster and faster, using longer and longer one handed passages, until there is today very little good flamenco music left in his playing.

In conclusion, Carlos Montoya, a man who knows his art, who understands what flamenco is about, has incurred the disfavor of many flamencos because he has tried to extend his art beyond the limits of its potential, permitted an uninformed public to mold its growth, and encouraged publicity that makes extravagant and unrealistic claims (paradoxically, all of these things are necessary for commercial success). Carlos says that he does not care what reviews say about him, and that he receives sufficient reward from bringing pleasure to millions of people. Yet, deep down, every serious artist must crave the recognition of his peers and desire to have a place in the history of his art; he has to be bothered by the fact that the general public has no knowledge of what he does (they love Manitas too) and their approval is meaningless -- except to the bankroll. Carlos Montoya deserves a measure of respect for his experience, his knowledge and accomplishments. While disapproving of the state of his solo playing and realizing that a few of the more perceptive in his audiences will be turned off of flamenco, one can still recognize that he singlehandedly made the flamenco guitar a household word around the world and created an audience for the rest of us.

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 "Flamenco Songs" with singer Soledad Miralles, Stimson Records SLP 16 (78 rpm rerecorded on 33 rpm LP). The record company slipped in two cuts on each side of La Niña de los Peines, accompanied, I believe, by Manolo de Badajoz; the comparison of these two couples does not come out too well for Carlos and Soledad.  
 "Carlos Montoya Plays the Flamenco Fire Guitar" Galaxy 4826. Contains one of the best examples of his siguiriyas, which are usually pretty bad.  
 "Carlos Montoya Plays Latin Favorites," Spinorama M 98.  
 "The Incredible Montoya Presents Porrina de Badajoz," Victor LS-5145.  
 "Flamenco Fire," ABC Paramount, ABC-191; with singer-dancer Tere Maya.  
 "Flamenco Festival," RCA LPM 1713; a very interesting and enjoyable record, including the singing and dancing of people like Juanele and Tere Maya, Rosa Montoya, Felipe el de Triana, Emilia de Córdoba, and others.

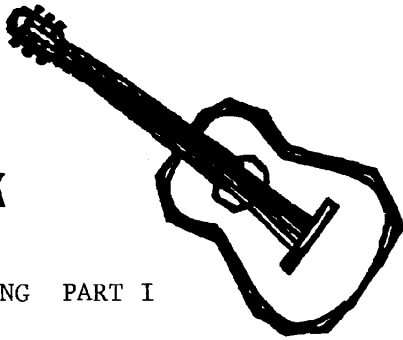
## **Carmen Mora in California**

Carmen Mora, flamenco star of the Ballet Nacional Festivales de España which recently finished its international tour, is now in California where she is teaching and performing. Carmen, who was born in Madrid, studied with many of Spain's great teachers, toured several times with José Greco, was principal dancer with Alberto Lorca's "Ballet Lorqueana," and was featured as an attraction at the famed tablao, Café de Chinitas. Currently, she is the main attraction at the El Cid in Los Angeles and is giving classes both in L.A. and San Diego. See announcement section for further details.

# FLAMENCO

## TALK

### GUITAR PLAYING PART I



**AFINAR** - to tune the guitar (in tune = afinada); occasionally one hears "templar" for tuning (from this word comes "temple" used to refer to the singer's introductory tune-up).

**AIRE(el)** - the style, air, or flavor of one's performance.

**AL AIRE** - open; playing without the cejilla.

**ALZA PÚA(el)** - means literally, "to lift the pick;" refers to a right hand technique in which the thumb strums and plucks individual notes in various rapid combinations, sometimes accompanied by simultaneous tapping with the ring finger.

**APOYANDO** - using the rest or supported stroke (from the verb "apoyar").

**ARPEGGIO(el)** - arpeggio; plucking the notes of chords singly in sequence, rather than simultaneously.

**BEMÓL** - flat, as in B flat or Bb.

**COMPÁS(el)** - the rhythmic aspect of music; in flamenco, the word incorporates the concepts of rhythm, number of beats in one rhythmic or melodic cycle, and accentuation.

**DEDOS(los)** - fingers; in guitar playing, the thumb (el pulgar) is referred to in music as "p", the index (el indice) as "i," the middle (el medio) as "m," the ring finger (el anular) as "a," and the little finger (el menique or pequeno) as "x," "c," or ?

**DESAFINADA** - a guitar out of tune.

**FALSETA(la)** - flamenco melodies played on the guitar (as contrasted with strumming); sometimes called "variaciones" (variations).

**GOLPE(el)** - the tapping on the face of the guitar done with the ring finger of the right hand; it may be a sharp click done with the fingernail or a dull thud made by hitting only the flesh of the finger. This is an important technique for establishing strong accentuation.

**LIGADO(el)** - a slur or tied note; notes that are played with the fretting hand alone, that is, without plucking the string with the right hand.

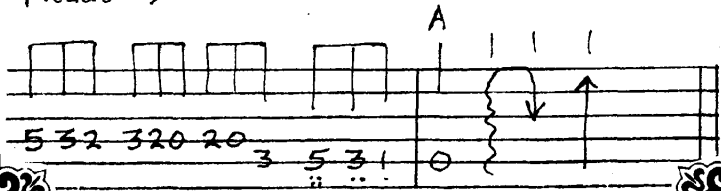
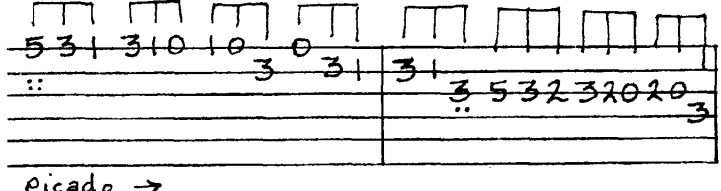
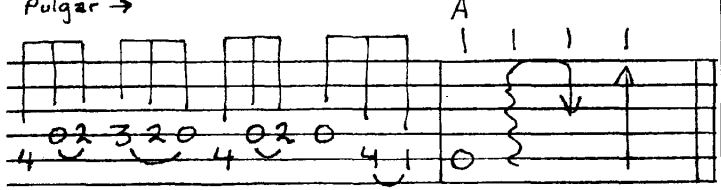
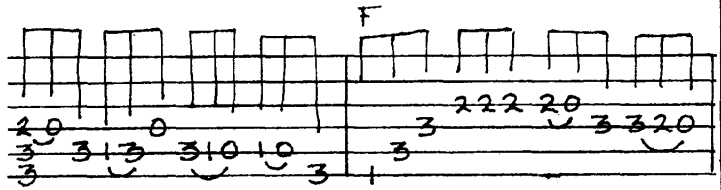
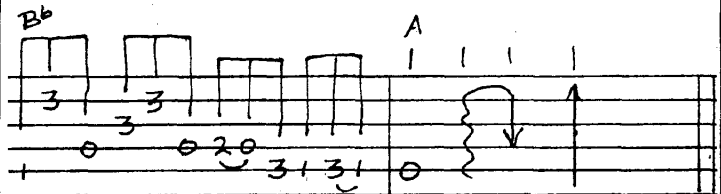
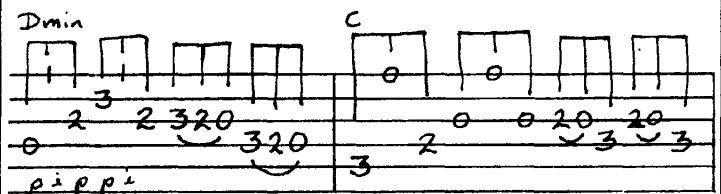
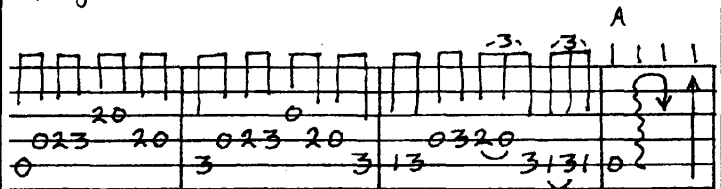
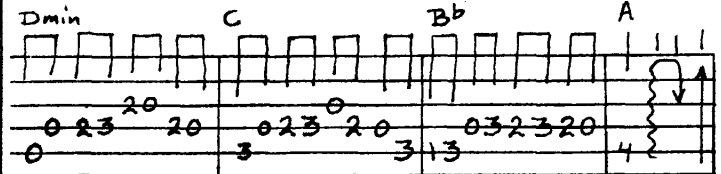
**MANO(la)** - hand; right hand = derecha; left hand = izquierda.

**MAYOR** - major mode.

**MENOR** - minor mode.

## Tangos

from  
Roberto Reyes



## MISCELLANY



Left to right: Luisa Pohren, Antonio Sanlúcar (brother of Esteban Sanlúcar), Bob DeVore, La Perla de Cádiz. (photo, courtesy of Bob DeVore)

### What Our Audiences Are Saying

The following are comments overheard at flamenco dance performances. On all three occasions they were made by one elderly woman to another:

"Look how colorful they are; they're such a happy people, singing and dancing all day long!"

"They're no good - those are white people; come with me and I'll show you some real Mexicans!"

"I hope they own their own house; you could never make all that noise in an apartment!"

#### Omitted Announcement:

KENNETH SANDERS plays solo guitar (classical, flamenco, modern) Friday and Saturday nights, 6-9:00 P.M. at the Jolly Franciscan restaurant, 31781 Camino Capistrano in San Juan Capistrano, Ca. For reservations, call: (714) 493-6464.

Jaleistas wishes to thank John MacDonald for the contribution of a paper cutter; it was very badly needed. Thank you John!

## New Flamenco Guitar Music

"THE EXCITING SOUND OF FLAMENCO - JUAN MARTÍN"

Two books: "Zambra Mora" and "Brisas Habaneras"(guajiras), \$3.75; "Mi Rumba" and "Aires Gaditanos"(cantiñas), \$5.00.

United Music Publishers LTD, 1 Montague St., London W.C.1

Review by Paco Sevilla

These books of music by the British guitarist, Juan Martin, are two more examples of the excellent music being transcribed for flamenco guitar these days. The music is taken directly from the commercially available record, "The Exciting Sound of Flamenco" (Argo ZDA 201) and is accurately notated in music and tablature. The "Zambra Mora" (D-tuning) and the guajiras are good solo pieces, made up of material from different sources (the zambra is very similar to Luis Maravilla's) with only a small dose of originality. The pieces in the other book, rumba and alegrías (E major-minor), are less effective solos, but have more originality and contain some good ideas. Available from Theodore Presser Co., Bryn Mawr, Penn.

#### NEW JALEISTA:

Born to Thor and Peggy Hanson, a son, Wyatt James; he has already attended his first juerga.

## Juerga in Concert

### *La Vikinga*

On April 21, 1978, Antonio de Jesús (cantor), Roberto Reyes (tocaor), and myself, gave a concert in Northport, Long Island. We followed our usual procedure of sending flyers to aficionados in the surrounding area. It "paid off" as the house was packed. Roberto always tries to explain to the audience before the concert begins, a little bit about what flamenco is, and that the artists and the audience are about to embark upon an adventure.





ANTONIO DE JESUS

In keeping with the spirit of the evening, he invited all the flamencos in the audience to come up on stage and participate in our encore, "fiesta por bulerías." George Thompson played guitar, his wife, Bernadette, and Alicia Laura danced, and Antonio and Roberto competed in letras and desplantes. The moment was captured by our "trusty" video-tape deck.



ROBERTO REYES AND GEORGE THOMPSON

The juerga continued nearby at the home of George Thompson until the next day (see photos).

(From the Editor: La Vikinga included a program from this concert; the numbers were: Sevillanas, Recuerdos de la Alhambra, Alegrías, Cante with guitar, and after intermission, Bulerías, Soleares, and Rumba.)



MADELINE BERGER

## June Breakfast Juerga

THE ESTHETIC & SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF FLAMENCO  
WITH REFERENCE TO JUERGAS

by *David Blakley*

García Lorca, a Malagueño, when writing of flamenco and the Málaga region, spoke of flamenco as, "the music of the people who think with their hearts." This article will be primarily a mini-treatise on some of the esthetic and spiritual aspects of flamenco, with reference to juergas.

The breakfast juerga failed to jell. Dancing never really materialized, and, although it was guitaristically excellent with the steadfast and driving presence of Paco Sevilla, there was no singer of cante jondo. An interesting definition of flamenco states that the song is the primary element, that it alone could truly stand alone as the complete embodiment of the soul of flamenco.

As the writer approached the locale of the juerga, he was very agreeably impressed by the rather surrealistic scenery of the chaparral country, which was reminiscent to him of suburban Córdoba. Consider, readers, how fortunate we have been to have each juerga set in a lovely, usually Spanish



Dancing Sevillanas



Louis  
Hendricks



Juanita Franco



Jesus Soriano singing rumbas

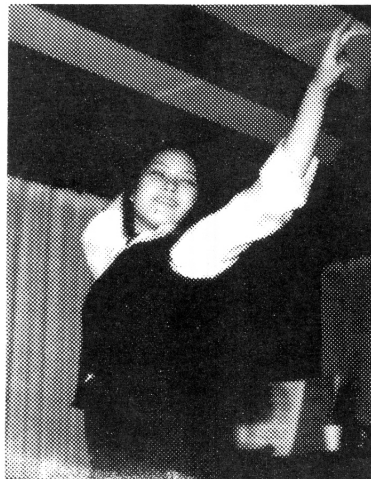
Julia  
Romero,  
Paco  
Sevilla,  
Yuris  
Zeltins  
(right)



## A YEAR OF JUERGAS



Masami Hopper



Juan Molina, Laura Crawford, Mercedes







Deanna Davis in Soleares



Tom Reineking and David de Alva



Juana de Alva



One of those "juerga" moments



Rosala & Ernest Lenshaw



Joe Kinney

Mercedes  
Molina,  
Ken Sanders  
(guitar)



style, home in a kaleidoscopically enchanting series of locations! Special mention must be made of the presence at the last juerga of a phenomenal collection of fine fotos of flamenco artists, unique posters, collectors recordings, and superb pictorial books dealing with the Spanish peoples and regions.

Though "horizontally" abbreviated, the juerga had some periods of "vertical" intensity that make a flamenco session memorable. Fond memory brings the light of that morning around me; picture if you will, at 5:00 in the morning, men and women seated in the brightly lit kitchen, sending forth in corruscating flow the scintillating rumbas and lusty drinking songs of Spain (where one still finds a hearty and dedicated multitude who do not believe that either God or State, next door neighbor or social approbation, shall determine the alpha and omega of the musical rejoicing of, "people who think with their hearts."). At about that time, Paco came briskly trotting through the living room, guitar in hand, bound for the patio which overlooked the orange and avocado orchards of the valley. He sang out, "I'm hurrying to play as the sun rises!"

"What to play at such a moment?" queried the writer.

Eloquently and concisely came the return volley, "I'll be doing SOLeares."

A haunting and stirring thing, there in the cool of the morning, to hear that "musica profunda y obscura" silhouetted by the gentle rays of a sun creeping atop a distant ridge

"Flamenco is close to liturgy," wrote Madariaga, and the spiritual kernel found in flamenco is as true a spirituality as that of a Bach cantata or oratorio, the chants of the Orthodox and Catholic churches, or the sacred temple dances of India, Thailand and Indonesia (from which the exquisite arm and hand movements of flamenco dance is clearly derived). Interestingly, the outcry of that spirituality seems to be in contradiction to or at least entirely different from the aforementioned; unlike those "credal" utterances, which have "certain" beliefs, "absolute" faith, and the undeviating serenity that accompanies; flamenco is, at its best, the cry of the "rebel without a cause," of the torn, trampled and lost who can yet rise for a moment with a resounding "VIVO YO!" How alone I am, how stupendous the great dark "cañon" before me, and I am weak, but, as a young Spanish lady once confided to me, although life is difficult, it is worth living and I'm going on!

Enjoying some nectarous Málaga wine at the Bar Orca in Málaga and chatting with a Malagueña as we listened to a particularly transfixing and restless bulerías, that "desert music" of nomads on the march. I stated, "Esa es música del desierto!" and she answered, "Sí, es música del desierto." Desierto, it is fascinating to note, translates both as desert and despair -- an existential despair, akin to the Latin root which means "to stand out."

"Bright and calm is my soul, like the mountains in the morning light." wrote Nietzsche in "Thus Spake Zarathustra" -- and that was the writer's true sentiments as, at about 6:00 a.m. we took the dance platforms to the van and departed -- and to think that in many places they "roll up the sidewalks" at 10:00 p.m.!

A parting word: Reader, support the juergas religiously; participate in each one as though it were your last. The writer has travelled in Europe, Asia, Africa, N. America, the Caribbean, and across the Pacific, and can testify that there is nothing to be found for the joy of life that compares with a true Spanish juerga.

## JULY JUERGA

JALEISTAS ANNIVERSARY JUERGA - JULY 15th

In honor of Jaleista's first anniversary, we are holding the July juerga at the site of our initial formative juerga a year ago - the Palmer ranch in El Cajon.

Maus and Mary Palmer, parents of Juana De Alva, have been involved in the graphic and plastic arts all their lives. Maus, an artist by profession, has chosen circus and dance as the main subjects for his oil paintings (some of which may be viewed in Maus and Juana's mutual studio at the juerga). Mary, who studied theater and dance, has been active in both over the years, appearing professionally on Broadway, working in little theater and teaching modern dance. Both have been long time followers of Spanish and flamenco dance and special admirers of Carmen Amaya.

As last year, this will be an outdoor-indoor juerga, beginning on the lawn, patio and bar-B-que areas and moving indoors to the STUDIO as the evening cools off.

Date: July 15th

Starting time: 6:00 PM

Location: 1721 Vista Way (end of Lisbon Lane)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements are free of charge. They must be in our mailbox by the 15th of each month and will be discontinued after publication in two issues unless we are notified to renew them. Businesses may display their cards for \$6 per month or \$15 per quarter. Please send all correspondence to:

JALEO, Box 4706, San Diego, CA. 92104

### new york...

CHATEAU MADRID; Lexington Hotel, 48th & Lexington, NYC. Dancer-singer, Alicia Montes; singer, Paco Ortiz; guitarist, Pedro Cortez.

DON QUIXOTE RESTAURANT; Sheraton Hotel, Rochester, N.Y. Dancer, Estrella Morena; singer, Pepe de Málaga; guitarist, Pedro Cortez, Jr.

EL QUIXOTE RESTAURANT; Hoboken, New Jersey. Dancer, Laura de Granada; singer, Antonio de Jesús; guitarist, Roberto Reyes.

LA BILBAINA; 218 W. 14th St, N.Y.C. Dancer, Mara; singer, Paco Montes; guitarist, Miguel Arrieta.

LITTLE SPAIN RESTAURANT; 239 W. 14th St., N.Y.C. Dancer, Esmeralda; singer, El Farraón; guitarist, Miguel Arrieta.

MESON FLAMENCO; 207 W. 14th St., N.Y.C. Dancer-pianist, La Vikinga; singer, Lino Montes; guitarist, Roberto Reyes.

FLAMENCO DANCE TEACHERS IN NEW YORK. The following dance instructors teach at the Jerry LeRoy Studio, 743 8th Av., N.Y., N.Y. (tel: 212 CI 5-9504): Estrella Morena, Mariano Parra, Azucena Vega & Edo Sie.

Mariquita Flores is teaching at Ballet Arts Studio, Carnegie Hall Bldg., 154 W. 57th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10019.

GUITAR INSTRUCTION, Ithica, N.Y. by Michael Fisher. Phone: (607) 257-6615

### texas...

FLAMENCO GUITAR INSTRUCTORS in Texas: Edward Freeman in Dallas; Jerry Lobdill in Austin; Tom Blackshear in San Antonio; Miguel Rodriguez in Houston.

RAMIREZ FLAMENCO GUITAR - studio model with traditional pegs, new condition. Contact Jerry Lobdill (see above or call 892-1412)

THE AUSTIN GUITAR SOCIETY has a newsletter dealing with classical and flamenco guitar; Subscription is \$3.00 per year. Austin Guitar Society, c/o Jerry Lobdill, 6708 Beckett Rd. Austin, Texas 78749.

PANADEROS FLAMENCOS, by Esteban Delgado, recorded by Paco de Lucía - accurately notated sheet music; \$2.75 in the USA, \$4.50 foreign, ppd. Southwest Waterloo Publishing Co., 6708 Beckett Rd., Austin, Tx. 78749.

### california

CASA LINDA in SANTA BARBARA is featuring guitarist, Chuck Keyser, and dancer, Suzanne Keyser, on Sunday evenings; 229 W. Montecito.

### san francisco...

THE SPAGHETTI FACTORY at 478 Green St. in North Beach, features a cuadro flamenco, Friday through Sunday; shows at 9 & 11:00.

FLAMENCO RESTAURANT, 2340 Geary Blvd., has solo guitar Mondays and Tuesdays from 6:30 to 10:00 p.m. Features Spanish food & wine

EL GALLEGO, at 24th & Van Ness in the Mission District, features Spanish food and solo guitar (currently Gregorio Stillaman) on Mon. through Wed., from 7:00 to 10:00 pm

LA BODEGA in the North Beach area, serves only a paella dish and features the dancing of Carla Cruz, accompanied by her husband, "Nino Bernardo."

DANCE INSTRUCTION:  
Adela Clara and Miguel Santos, Theater Flamenco, (415)431-6521.  
Rosa Montoya at the Dance Spectrum Center, 3221 22nd St. S.F. (415) 824-5044.  
Teresita Osta, Fine Arts Palace, (415)567-7674  
Jose Ramon, 841 Jones St., S.F. (415)775-3805

FLAMENCO MUSIC & DANCE, a five day workshop; From August 18-21, San Francisco's "Theater Flamenco" led by Adela Clara and Miguel Santos will guide beginning and intermediate flamenco dance classes. There will also be master classes in flamenco guitar and films and lectures. Write: Recreation, Parks, and Community Services (Camps Division), 2180 Milvia, 4th floor, Berkely, CA 94704.

### los angeles...

MATADOR RESTAURANT features dancer, Margo, cantaor, Antonio Sánchez, and guitarist, Benito Palacios. 10948 West Pico Blvd. Phone: (213) 475-4949.

EL CID now offering Spanish tablao-style entertainment, featuring a house cuadro made up of dancers, Juan Talavera, Raul Martín, and Liliana Morales, with singer, Concha de Morón, and guitarist, Antonio Durán; this show is followed by the special attraction, Carmen Mora with Juan Talavera, Concha, and Antonio Duran; the third show is the same cuadro as the first. 4212 Sunset Blvd; phone: (213) 666-9551.

VALADEZ STUDIO of Spanish and Mexican Dance  
7900 Seville Ave. Huntington Park, CA. 90255.  
Telephone: 213-589-6588.

## san diego...

DAVID CHENEY, flamenco guitarist, is now playing at the Fish House West on old Highway 101 in Cardiff. He is playing Thursday through Saturday, from 9-1:30 p.m. and Sundays from 4-8:00p.m.

RAYNA'S SPANISH BALLET in Old Town. With dancers: Rayna, Rosala, Luana Moreno, Debbie Valerio, Theresa Johnson, Scott & Jennifer Goad, and Rochelle Sturgess; guitarists are Yuris Zeltins and Paco Sevilla. Sundays, 11:30 - 3:30 p.m. at Bazaar del Mundo.

EL TORITO is featuring dancers, Juanita Franco and Carmen Camacho, with guitarist, Joe Kinney, on Wed. eves. at 8:30, 9:10, and 10:00 p.m. Mission Valley; tel: 296-6154

FANTASIA ESPANOLA is appearing on Thursday evenings at La Posada Del Sol Restaurant on Fletcher Parkway, featuring dancers Juana De Alva, Deanna, Diego Robles and Jorge 'El Callao' and guitarist Paco Sevilla.

DANCE INSTRUCTION by Carmen Mora (see article); beginning, intermediate, and advanced classes held every other Monday between 2:00 and 5:00 p.m. Contact Juana de Alva or Paco Sevilla. (see San Diego instructors).

### INSTRUCTION: (Area 714)

DANCE	Juana De Alva	442-5362
DANCE	Juanita Franco	465-8673
DANCE	María Teresa Gómez	453-5301
DANCE	Rayna	475-3425
DANCE	Julia Romera	279-7746
DANCE	Rosala	282-2837
GUITAR	Joe Kinney	274-7386
GUITAR	Paco Sevilla	282-2837

### etc...

THE BLUE GUITAR in San Diego carries books by Donn Pohren, new books of music by Sabicas and Mario Escudero, and a complete line of guitar supplies. Flamenco guitar lessons by Paco Sevilla. All guitar strings, half price. See ad for location.

GUITAR MUSIC AVAILABLE. Music of many top artists, both modern and old-style, transcribed by Peter Baime. Write: Peter Baime, 1030 W. River Park Lane, Milwaukee, Wisc. 53209.

GUITARISTS AND STUDENTS are welcomed to accompany dance classes. Call Juana at 442-5362.

PAINTINGS OF SPANISH DANCERS FOR SALE; painted and offered by Ernest Lenshaw, 1106 Edgemont, San Diego; call 714-232-4507.

BACK ISSUES OF JALEO AVAILABLE. Issues from Vol. I, numbers 1-6, will cost 50¢, but all other issues will now be priced at \$1.00

JUERGA SITES NEEDED. Contact Juana De Alva at 442-5362.



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