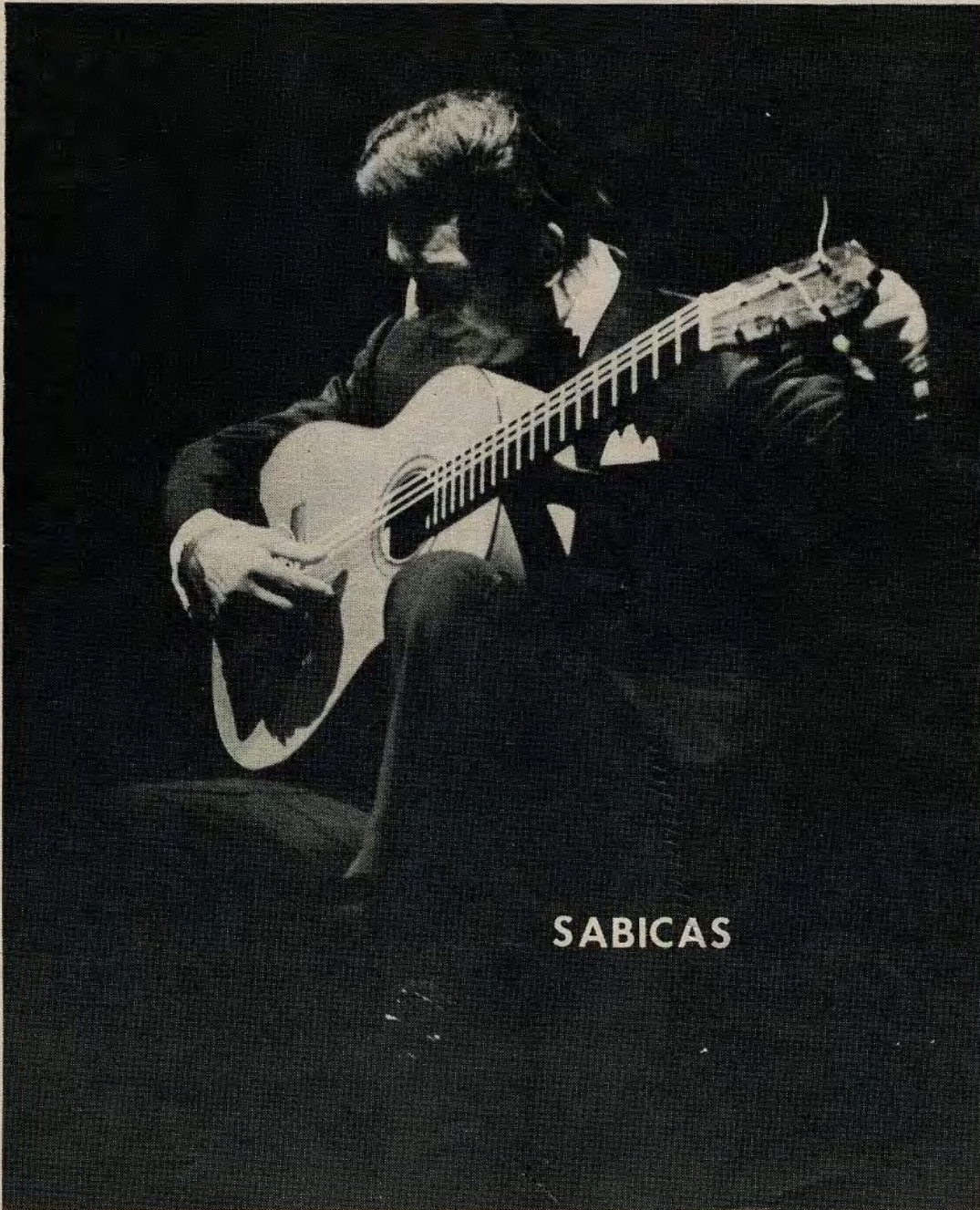


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SABICAS

JALEO

newsletter of the flamenco association of san diego

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APRIL 1981

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

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COVER PHOTO: Sabicas in concert in New York. photo by Janet Lee.

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Conversaciones

con...

SABICAS

by El Niño Chileno

The call from Gino D'Auri came at three o'clock in the afternoon: "El maestro has agreed to meet you for lunch on Thursday, can you make it?" I said, yes, I could. If it was the last thing I ever did. Sabicas! The living legend. The name alone is enough to inspire reverence in the heart of any flamenquista. For over half a century, Augustín Castellón, better known as Sabicas, has reigned as the undisputed monarch of the flamenco guitar. The opportunity to meet him in person came during his last visit to Los Angeles where he was to appear in concert at Mt. San Antonio College and at UCLA's Royce Hall. Gino D'Auri, the well-known flamenco guitarist in Los Angeles who has become the unofficial host to visiting flamenco greats, was instrumental in arranging my interview with Sabicas.

Thursday, February 5th, we met at 2 pm in front of the Mark Twain Hotel in Hollywood, an older establishment that Sabicas has patronized for almost thirty years during his visits to the City of the Stars. A few minutes later the dapper, shaded figure of the maestro appeared through the hotel doorway. Sabicas greeted me warmly as if I had been an old friend he had not seen in years and, after a few brief formalities, everyone agreed on lunch at the Chile Lindo, a small -- Chilean, of course -- restaurant on nearby Sunset Boulevard. The idea suited my own Chilean tastes just fine and we proceeded to the restaurant in my car. During the short ride I presented Sabicas with some recent issues of Jaleo which he reviewed with approving comments of, "fantástico, eso no se ve ni en España!"

Trim and of erect posture, Sabicas looks remarkably fit and quite limber for his sixty-four years of age. He is a warm, affable, yet intensely private man, who was visibly reluctant to talk about his personal life. I chose therefore not to press that type of question. He does not conceal, however, his pride in his accomplishments as an artist, speaking freely and with great gusto about his adventures on and off the stage. Soft



SABICAS IN NEW YORK (1979); photo by Janet Lee

spoken, yet forceful in his mannerisms, he punctuates his phrases with constant gestures of his small, powerful hands. At times his voice would taper to a barely audible thread when recollecting some fond memory; the next minute he would break into hearty laughter while relating some of his saucy escapades.

Sabicas exudes a deep love of his art and of life in general. He refers constantly to other younger guitarists as "los muchachos" as if they were his own sons, and feels very fortunate to have been able "to teach a little." Sabicas enjoys good food and particularly ice cream immensely, grabbing a cone whenever he can. He does not take alcohol, however, and stopped smoking and drinking coffee about five years ago. "Coffee makes me feel like I want a cigarette, so I gave it up, too," he states. His roving eye for beautiful women seems very much alive, however, and he is obviously flattered by their attention.

In spite of his accomplishments, Sabicas remains a true gypsy at heart. He comes across as a simple, down to earth and modest man, sometimes to the point of being self-effacing. He usually travels alone, carrying important contracts, checks and documents stuffed in his coat pockets, as he does not fully trust the mail service. "I do not know what to do with all these papers before the concert," he says, "they will not fit in the pockets of my tuxedo."



SABICAS WITH EL CHILENO IN LOS ANGELES

It is difficult to spend time with Sabicas and not only develop an increased admiration for the artist as well as a good deal of liking for the human being. Lunch at the Chile Lindo stretched for nearly three hours. The more "formal" part of my interview was about one hour long, as I did not deem it proper to keep the tape recorder on at all times. The following is a transcription of my interview with him, with only a minimum of editing done for readability. Inevitably, some of the flavour of his comments has been lost in the translation, as Sabicas speaks little or no English. We hope, however, to give our readers a further glimpse into this most extraordinary artist through this "conversacion."

JALEO: First of all, on behalf of all Jaleistas, let me thank you for agreeing to meet us today. There is much written about you, some of it true, some of it probably not. I'd like to begin by asking you to give us a biographical sketch of your first years in Spain.

SABICAS: Well, I was born in Pamplona. At the age of five I began to make noise on the guitar, and at eight or nine, I can't remember, I appeared in public in a theater


(continued on page 5)

EDITORIAL


This month in the center of this issue, you will find a questionnaire for the "Directory of Flamenco Artists" which will be published next fall. This should be a highly informative and useful work; the results will, in part, depend upon the effort put forth by Jaleo's readers. If you are involved in any way, at any level, in the performance of flamenco (professionally or just for yourself) you should be included. Just as important will be your efforts to get these questionnaires into the hands of artists who do not read Jaleo. You can make copies yourself or write to Jaleo for additional copies.

One item omitted from the questionnaire is approximate age of the artist. If you wish, you may indicate whether you are: A) under 20, B) 20-30, C) 30-40, D) 40-50, E) over 50.

Jaleo frequently receives letters requesting that we include more guitar music in our magazine. We are not opposed to such a practice, but there are several reasons it does not happen more often. The main reason is that we do not receive much music from the readers and Jaleo's editors do not have the time nor interest in ferreting out interesting guitar falsetas. In addition, there is so much good guitar music available today in written form that it really is a waste of space for us to print a great deal of music (except when it is used to illustrate a point). We have pointed out a number of these music sources (Paco Peña, Juan Martin, Sabicas and Mario Escudero collections, Peter Baime, etc.) and a guitarist will get much more from these and his records than he ever could from isolated falsetas in Jaleo. We also have to be careful about printing the music of living performers. In spite of these arguments, as stated above, we are not opposed to considering for publication a music sent in by the readers.



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for the first time. Afterwards I moved to Madrid where I began to play professionally. I won an award at the Teatro Novedades, a very beautiful theater in Madrid, and well, that's how I got started. After a while, when the war broke out in Spain I left for Buenos Aires, then toured South America and later the United States, and eventually I stayed here.

JALEO: You began playing at a very early age. What was that that awakened your interest in the guitar and particularly flamenco music?

SABICAS: *Bueno, we gypsies love that form of art.* My father played a little; he was never a great guitarist, but he liked it very much. I used to watch him and loved the way he played. An uncle of mine, who was not a guitarist but who knew a couple of positions, took the trouble to show them to me, and thus my uncle became my first and only teacher. That was enough for me. In about a week I was strumming a small guitar they bought for me. I played tunes that I picked up from blind men in the streets. There I got started with flamenco and, according to people, I had some aptitude for this sort of thing, and for that reason I have been able to do something with the guitar, perhaps more than anyone else. I have traveled throughout the entire world with my guitar. I have always tried to do things well with the guitar, mainly for "los muchachos" who are up and coming, trying to straighten them out -- although I wasn't that fortunate myself. *No one taught me anything.* But be as it may, I have always liked to teach whatever I could, and do whatever I could for others.

JALEO: Are there very many aspiring artists who come to you for advice?

SABICAS: Yes, they do seek my advice. I give it to them freely. I have done nothing but teach all my life to anyone who wanted it. They ask me, "Do you like this, or that?" I am always glad to give advice, always, always. Others charge money. Not me. "How are things coming along?" I ask them. "Give me the guitar, try this," I say, to you, to anyone.

JALEO: You have been a source of inspiration to many guitarists throughout the world. Who inspired you in your development as a guitarist?

SABICAS: There were two guitarists whom I enjoyed listening to very much. They were the absolute best there was at that time. Ramon Montoya, who died in 1949, and El Niño de Huelva, who is also deceased now.

One in the classical flamenco, the other in the gypsy form. I loved listening to them, their recordings. I used to say to myself, "If I could only play like that!" I admired them very much. I listened, but I never copied anything from them. Ever since I started playing, I always did it my own way. I played whatever sounded right to me, and it seems that it also sounded right to others. Thus, I stayed with my own things and continued to study the guitar, because in those days, well, there was much "afición." The guitar is, of course, very fickle, and you must be with it all the time, as much as you can, and even that is not enough. Sometimes after you have been practicing a certain piece for hours, you still make mistakes. "Why am I making a mistake?" you ask yourself. "My fingers are all right. Why?" I have always found the guitar very difficult. Now I find it more difficult than ever. The guitar is very fickle, very fickle indeed, very difficult.

JALEO: Did you come in contact with dancers and singers who helped you develop and improve your style?

SABICAS: Yes, yes, of course. In Spain I played for all the good singers and dancers because that is the way it was done in those days. The flamenco guitar was never played solo. When I tried it, the artists would laugh at me. But I went ahead anyway. Sitting on my chair, I played whatever I thought I could play, wherever I could. And people liked it.



SABICAS PRIOR TO HIS LOS ANGELES CONCERT
(photo by Frank Campbell)

I was fortunate and began to play solos more and more, but at the same time accompanying dancing and singing for all the great artists in Spain.

JALEO: Do any particular artists stand out in your mind?

SABICAS: Yes. One of them was Carmen Amaya. When we were young, I saw her for the first time in Barcelona. She was performing at Casa Almanquet. I saw her dance and it seemed like something supernatural to me. She was very young then. She went to Madrid after that and eventually we saw each other in Buenos Aires after the (Spanish) war. I never saw anyone dance like her. I don't know how she did it, I just don't know. As far as singers, I liked La Niña de los Peines and Manuel Torres; I also liked Tomas Pavón, the brother of Niña de los Peines and a few others.

JALEO: When you began playing the guitar, did you have any inkling of the impact you would eventually have upon the musical world?

SABICAS: No, "que vá." I never thought I would ever be able to play at all! I was only five when I started making noise with my guitar. My mother, poor dear, would say to me, "Please, go to bed, it is already 3 o'clock in the morning!" I would reply, "Yes, yes, Mama" while still going tram, tram, tram, on the guitar. I loved it then and continued doing it all my life.

JALEO: What happened after you left Pamplona as a child?

SABICAS: Well, I was eight or nine years old and I went to Madrid with views towards becoming a professional artist. I took my entire family with me. I always took my father and my brothers anywhere I went. We stayed in Madrid until we left for America in 1937. We stayed in Buenos Aires until 1940. In the meanwhile we toured the Americas, but returned to Buenos Aires in 1940. That year we signed a contract with Sol Hurok who brought us over here. I remained here with Carmen (Amaya) and the family until 1945, when we moved to Mexico. Carmen returned to Europe while I stayed in Mexico. In 1955 Carmen came back and together we came to the United States. I remained here after Carmen left for Spain permanently. I have resided in New York since.

JALEO: Do you have any intention of moving? Are you happy in New York?

SABICAS: Well, yes, I guess so. I have gotten used to it. You live there and you get used to it.

JALEO: I enjoyed listening to some of your adventures off and on stage. I was particularly amused by your being caught in 1939 by a major earthquake, the "Terremoto de Chillán," in Valparaiso, Chile, when 15,000 lives were lost. I was in that city, too, at the time, but I was only a few months old then.

SABICAS: Yes, it caught me in the middle of a farruca. People began jumping from their seats and running out of the theater. For a while I thought they didn't like the way I was playing, but then I saw the big chandelier swinging from the ceiling. To tell you the truth, I had no idea what an earthquake was. If I had known, I would have dropped dead then and there. Luckily, nothing happened to us. The building housing the theater was new and stayed in one piece.

JALEO: Have there been other similarly memorable episodes in your career?

SABICAS: Every artist is faced with the unexpected. One could almost write a book with the almost daily occurrences. Especially someone like me who does not speak English. I am embarrassed because I have been here for forty years. Some people I meet ask me (Sabicas speaks in English), "How long have you been here?" and I say, "Two weeks." "Oh," they say, "your English is very good for just two weeks!" If they only knew I've been here forty years, they'd throw me out!

JALEO: You were away from Spain for a good many years, weren't you?

SABICAS: Yes! Almost thirty. They called me after thirty years. It seems that there were some "certámenes," guitar awards, and they honored me. I was not in Spain at that time. They sent an emissary from Málaga from the "Cuarta semana de estudios flamencos," who said they wanted to present me with the Gold Medal for the flamenco guitar, but that I had to go to Spain to receive it in person. And I did it. In 1967, almost thirty years to the date from the time I had left. I traveled to Málaga and returned to New York the same year. Later I traveled to Japan on a tour.

JALEO: How did it feel going back to Spain after so many years?

SABICAS: Oh, what a great thrill! You see, after almost thirty years! What emotion, to see the places where you grew up. There wasn't enough time to see every thing, as I was over there for only four weeks, two in Málaga and two in Madrid. I would have liked to stay for six months or a year, but I had other commitments.

JALEO: Did you give any concerts during your first visit?

SABICAS: No, but I could not help appearing on television. I was not going there to work, but the television found out and they talked me into it. I told them I wasn't prepared, that I had not studied anything, but I just couldn't get out of it. Ever since, every time I have been back, I have had to do a television appearance. I recorded a few albums once. In 1971 I went with the "Festivales de España," which is one of the best groups of its kind there is. We did a tour of Spain, and in 1974 I went back for the last time. I have not been back since because there are no ships from New York, and if there are no ships, I won't go.

JALEO: Your aversion towards flying is well-known.

SABICAS: Yes, yes. Airplanes no. I had to go to Japan once and spent eighteen hours in the air, besides all the waiting around. In other words, almost a full day, and to tell you the truth, that is too much flying for me. Time goes by so slowly. It seemed like an eternity had gone by, but when I looked at my watch only ten minutes had passed.

JALEO: Do you feel any different when you appear before Spanish audiences as compared to the way you feel in front of American audiences?

SABICAS: Well, the American public knows quite a bit, understands the guitar very well, particularly the aficionados. Very much! As much as anywhere in the world, maybe more. When I appear before the public in this country, particularly in the big cities, I know they will understand me, more or less.

JALEO: How did you develop the compás in your own playing? Was it the influence of dancing and singing; or were there other factors?

SABICAS: Well, yes, it was the "ambiente" (environment). Without ambiente you cannot do flamenco. A guitarist by himself, playing only what he wants, may have the fingers and the talent, but alone, he cannot do it. He needs the ambiente, the palmas, the singing, the dancing. Every single day. That helps very much. Without that it is very, very hard.

JALEO: You have been quoted as saying that in order to be a good soloist you must accompany dancers for twenty years and singers for another twenty. Do you care to elaborate?

SABICAS: Yes. The flamenco guitar, as

I said in one of my records, represents three careers in one. The way it used to be, the guitarist never rehearsed with the dancer. If she said to him, for example, to play "por alegrías," he could do it with his back towards her if each knew what had to be done. Nowadays, dancing is very different. Now they tell you, here you do a falseta, here you end, and so on. That makes it different. So, your first career is playing in a cuadro flamenco for twenty years, for everyone who dances -- naturally, without rehearsing. Singing may be even more difficult. You have to "measure" the singer's voice, to see at what speed he sings. There are some who sing slowly and if you play too fast he will drown -- and vice versa. You have to play exactly the way each person sings; this is very difficult. And then, of course, you must play correctly, as we say "por derecho" (on your own). Each one of those phases takes twenty years. Now, there are some who take less than sixty years and think they can do it in thirty or fifteen. There are those who play well for the cante, but not for the baile, or well for baile, but not for the cante. There are those who are "corto" (have a small repertoire) or "largo" (have a larger repertoire). To be complete and well-rounded, however, is very, very difficult. To know all there is to know in the flamenco guitar is very difficult indeed.

JALEO: Are there any flamenco guitarists that you personally enjoy listening to?

SABICAS: (without hesitation) Paco de Lucía. He plays very well. He plays everything very well. I like him very much.

JALEO: Could you relate to us some of your experiences with Paco de Lucía?

SABICAS: Yes. Paquito came to New York when he was fifteen years old. He reminded me of myself when I was getting started. I liked him very much. A very good boy, very well-educated. He plays very well. He spent some time with me. He was just learning then, but already played very, very well, and always will. It is natural for him to do so. There are other muchachos who also play well, like Serranito, Manolo Sanlúcar, among the better known. There are other boys who accompany dancing and singing very well, like El Habichuela and many others in Spain. Naturally, it is in Spain where you find them. But Paco (de Lucía) is playing very well. Better than ever.

JALEO: How do you feel about Paco de Lucía's experiments in non-flamenco guitar music?

SABICAS: I do not believe he needs that. He is a great artist and he does not need to do that because it doesn't even suit him. It can only take away from him. You cannot ever leave flamenco. If you take on another style, if you want to do something else you will lose what you have. He has no need to play other things because it is just not for him. It will not benefit him in any way, nor is it for him. No, no, I do not know why he has done it. He spoke to me in April over the phone. He said he was coming to do this, that he liked it and that he wanted to learn about it. He has nothing to learn from it! He plays flamenco extraordinarily well. What need does he have to play those other things? Besides, he is out of place with those other boys who are very good in their field, the best there is. Paco will not continue to play that. He will continue to play flamenco, in concerts, which he does very well. So, I cannot conceive he is playing that. I have not been able to tell him. I would like to see him to tell him. As always, I tell him exactly how I feel. He knows I have always spoken to him as a father to a son. He has always listened to me. But now, it seems that he has left the normal path and I cannot understand why. I do not know why. He doesn't need it at all.

JALEO: What is your opinion of American flamenco guitarists? Is there anyone who has impressed you particularly?

SABICAS: Well, there are some muchachos who play very well, but as I said, without the "ambiente" it is very difficult. Nevertheless one must admire their dedication because it is really admirable. There are some who go to Spain. They want to work, even for free. The same for the Japanese. They go to Spain and they get into a cuadro flamenco. They want no money. They just want to learn. That is really admirable.

JALEO: Do you believe it is essential to go to Spain to find the ambiente, or is it possible to find it elsewhere?

SABICAS: No, no. You must go to Spain. That is where it is, and you must immerse yourself in it. Otherwise, you may have good fingers, good technique, but to play the true flamenco, in compás, you must go to Spain. There is no other way.

JALEO: Are there any non-Spanish guitarists who have particularly impressed you?

SABICAS: Well, no. I have not seen any really outstanding one. There may be some, but I have not seen them.

JALEO: What about dancing and singing? Do you also feel they must be learned in Spain?

SABICAS: It is the same. For anything that has to do with flamenco, you must go to Spain and get into a cuadro for two, three, four or five years. In that way you can become a good artist and have the knowledge you need. Otherwise it is very hard, and I do not think you can ever make the mark.

JALEO: With all the changes that have taken place in Spain lately, what course do you feel that traditional flamenco will take in the next few years?

SABICAS: You have to consider the large number of tourists who travel to Spain. In that country we have some thirty million citizens, plus another thirty million tourists. One must work for them many times. Naturally, most of them know nothing about flamenco, and one has to give them something they can understand, be it in the guitar, singing, or dancing, and the art is becoming all the time, shall we say, less and less flamenco. Flamenco then, is being lost...well, maybe not being lost, but they are trying to give the public something it can understand. In other words, the true "cante gitano" is heard very seldom in Spain. It may exist in small gatherings, but not for the wider audiences. One can hear good cante in some festivals, but outside of that, the public wants to hear lighter things like rumbas or bulerías which it can understand. And one must live with all people.

JALEO: What about the gypsy culture which gave rise to flamenco? Do you think it can survive in this modern era?

SABICAS: We gypsies normally carry on with our customs. True, some sixty or eighty years ago, a gypsy rarely married a non-gypsy, but nowadays it happens commonly. Things are looser now. Well, the world has changed. It continues its course. And who knows what will happen in the next twenty or thirty years?

JALEO: Do you believe that flamenco should continue in its traditional form, or that it could be favorably influenced by other forms of music and still retain its flamenco character?

SABICAS: Well, much of the music from the Americas comes originally from Spain. Flamenco will continue its own course, because otherwise it would not be flamenco.

Now then, there are a few things that when played in the flamenco style may be well received at the moment. For example, there are some Chilean songs that are played "por bulerías" which sound very nice. This sort of thing can be done. But true flamenco, pure flamenco, must always continue in its course.

JALEO: What type of guitar do you have presently? What qualities do you look for in an instrument?

SABICAS: I have a Ramirez guitar. But for example, what we look for is the "pulsación" (action; feel of the strings) and how it suits us, because the "pulsación" is something personal to each flamenco guitarist. Classical guitarists can play almost any type of guitar. We flamencos are not interested in the looks of the guitar. What we are interested in is that it fits us well, "que nos vaya bien." When the "pulsación" is right you can get more sound out of the guitar.

JALEO: What type of strings do you prefer?

SABICAS: I like strings a little on the high tension side, but still with a little "give" to them. There are some guitars that are so stiff that I just cannot play them. Mainly, with my string technique -- if you play very strongly, "a martillo" as we say in flamenco, almost "en la tapa" (fingers hitting the face of the guitar) you cannot play a hard guitar, a classical style guitar, you just can't. In other words, it is just the opposite of what many people believe. A guitarist who has a strong technique needs a soft guitar, while those with a soft attack, who play barely touching the strings, do better with a stiffer guitar.

JALEO: What string height do you prefer?

SABICAS: I prefer average in most cases, not too high not too low. Perhaps a little on the low side if possible, but not too much. For me, the guitar should not be too stiff nor too soft, not too high nor too low.

JALEO: What about your strings? Do you mix them?

SABICAS: No, I do not. Whatever type I select I use all six of the same brand.

JALEO: Do you have strong preferences about "clavijeros," that is, machine heads or wooden pegs?

SABICAS: In many ways, machine heads are very good because you can tweak them slightly to tune while you are playing without having to stop, which, of course,

you cannot do with the wooden pegs. But wooden pegs are lighter, so personally I like them better.

JALEO: Do you have any advice with respect to the care of fingernails?

SABICAS: Well, it depends pretty much on the way you play. There are some guitarists who have constant fingernail problems. They break them often, and not necessarily from playing too much. I just do not know why. Maybe it is the way they strum or tap. I don't know. There are others who use their fingernails too much while playing. That is not good technique, because they do not play with "seguridad" or strength. The fingernail should be as short as possible, almost at the level of the flesh, maybe just slightly longer. That is enough. You will have more security and perhaps your nails will not break quite as often.

JALEO: Do you reinforce your fingernails?


SABICAS: Sometimes I apply some of this stuff that "los muchachos" use...what do you call it? But not too much, because as my nails get too thick, it becomes harder for me to play; a thick nail does not produce good sound. It is good to prevent your fingernails from chipping though.

JALEO: You were telling me earlier that you should spend many hours with your guitar...

SABICAS: ...as much as possible. The more the better. Nowadays, the way things are in the world, one does not have enough time. Normally, though, two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening should be enough, but no less than that.

JALEO: What method of practice do you recommend?

SABICAS: You must do everything. You cannot do just one thing, because you will improve on that, but the rest will suffer. You should do fifteen minutes of picado, tremolo another fifteen minutes, arpeggios another fifteen minutes, thumb work another



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fifteen minutes. After one hour then you should go over whatever you think you need. But never practice one thing more than others unless you have fallen behind on that. For example, if you do everything well but the picado, you should spend more time practicing it in order to bring it to the level of the rest. If everything is equally good, then fifteen minutes to half an hour of each should be sufficient.

JALEO: You told us before that sometimes you feel you have not played well enough, even though the audience may be very enthusiastic.

SABICAS: That happens to every guitarist in the world, in fact, to every singer and ever dancer, too. Some days we do it well, while other days we do not, or at least not as good as we would like to. This, of course, only the artist knows. The public will not notice unless you have made gross mistakes. Only the performer knows what he wants to play, how much feeling he wants to put on a given passage. It is something very personal.

JALEO: What differences are there between the Sabicas of 1980 and the Sabicas of the 1940's as far as style, technique or repertoire?

SABICAS: Well, I very seldom like to talk about myself. I think it is in poor taste to talk about oneself. The public must do the talking. Some people ask such strange questions. Once there were two bullfighters in Spain, Joselito and Belmonte, the two greatest of their time. Someone once asked Belmonte, "Say, is it true that Joselito is better than you are?" The same has happened to me many times. People ask me, "Is it true that you are the best guitarist in the world?" What am I supposed to answer? I just shut up, turn around and leave. It is in poor taste, not nice at all. The public is the one who places the artist where he belongs. The public pays to see you and is the ultimate judge of your talent. How could anyone possibly say "I am the best?" In order to be someone, you must contribute to the art of the guitar. Playing what others play, even if it is arranged and you play it better, is not all. One must put something else into the guitar. For example, certain picados, arpeggios on all strings, or "alzapúas" on almost all strings were not known. Not because it is difficult, because the muchachos can do anything. Some have enormously strong fingers. The problem is knowing how to use them, and that is difficult. I have good fingers.

How do I use them? Not by racing over the strings. Racing is not good for the most part. Thus I have contributed towards the guitar in almost every aspect of modern technique, which is what the boys play today. They arrange it, they copy it, they turn it around, and that is it, anywhere in the world. When people ask, "What is this? What is the soleá? The rondeña? The taranta?" they reach for a record of Sabicas to find out. There are hundreds of muchachos who do many things that have nothing to do with "el toque." What is hard is to do things well in "el toque," and not just do new things. Take the soleá, for instance. Some say "I've done this or that with it," but I say, "No, sir, don't do anything with it!" Within "el toque" you can eat your guitar if you want, but follow the proper path. Do not deviate. That is that! In the flamenco guitar, nobody creates anything anymore. The one who created the most was Ramón Montoya, who died in 1949, as I said before. He was the best guitarist of his time, fifty years ago. Nevertheless, not everything he played was his. All the other great guitarists died and he was left alone. He took some 60% or 70% from others and he contributed 20% or 30% of his own. For sure, he gave it his own "gracia," his "sello" (stamp; personal style), his way to arpeggio, and tremolo, his "gusto." That was Ramón Montoya. The best guitarist we had fifty years ago. His arpeggios and tremolos were marvelous. The man did not play in the pure gypsy style, but he did play very well and he was, of course, the best of his time. So, to be able to really do something with the guitar one must contribute. If you do not, it is very difficult to make history.

JALEO: How do you compose? On the guitar? On paper? Mentally?

SABICAS: Mentally, or rather, in every single concert, I do something new. I only prepare 50% of what I play. The rest, I compose as I go along according to God's wishes. That is the way flamenco is. You never know when you are going to "rasguear" or when you are going to do something different. Someday it may not work out, but it hasn't happened so far. It doesn't matter what you have prepared in advance. In flamenco, there is no such thing as "Variation Number 1" or "Variation Number 2" -- at least for me!

JALEO: Do you write music?

SABICAS: No!

JALEO: Have you seen any of the tran-

scriptions that have been made of your music?

SABICAS: Yes, I have seen a few, but you see, true flamenco cannot be written, flamenco is a thing of the moment. Sometimes you play very well, other times you can't play at all. No one knows why. Maybe you do not feel well. I just do not know. Sometimes you are happy and everything comes out fine. Other times you sound like a bad aficionado. That is the way it goes.

JALEO: Do you have any ambition to do something different or new in flamenco that you haven't already done?

SABICAS: As I said, flamenco has to be pure. You cannot leave its path. The muchachos are trying to leave it. They do strange things that are not in "el toque." For instance, they play "por bulerías," very nicely. Bulerías are very beautiful, very nice, but that is not all. One has to play twenty other toques of flamenco equally well, and that is very hard. Flamenco has changed a little, in that cantes without compás, such as the rondeña, taranta, malagueña, granainas and others are not sung very much and played even less. People stick to the soléa, bulería, siguiriya, and the "toques de compás" only. But they are leaving, well, it is not as much that they are leaving, but rather they do not listen to other things, and therefore those tunes are getting worse all the time. In flamenco you must do everything, because everything is good when done properly. Sadly though, as I said, flamenco is shrinking, becoming smaller and flatter.

JALEO: How many concerts have you done on this present tour?

SABICAS: Eight in all. I will return to New York and do four more.

JALEO: On the average, how many concerts do you do a year?

SABICAS: Well, not many. One is not young anymore, and it is hard being on the road all the time. Your nerves are not twenty years old anymore. So, I do not do too many concerts. The ones I do though, are well paid and I do them in places I like and where I can have a good time. That is the way to do it. Once, a long time ago, I did seventeen concerts in twenty-one days. I couldn't even conceive doing that anymore. Now I like to take my time, visit places I like and do it properly, "todo bién, todo bién."

JALEO: How far in advance do you book your concerts? Do you know when you will

be back to Southern California?

SABICAS: I never know. My manager handles all that. He just hands me my schedule and my reservations.

JALEO: Tomorrow you perform at UCLA's Royce Hall. When was the last time you were there?

SABICAS: To tell you the truth, I do not know. I can never remember one place from another. I would make the worst policeman in the world. If the suspect wore the slightest disguise I would never recognize him. All cities look alike to me. I stick to my guitar, think about my music, and pay very little attention to anything else.

JALEO: I understand you always stay at the same hotel in Los Angeles.

SABICAS: Yes, ever since the first time I came here. I have a proverb, "Mas vale malo conocido que bueno por conocer." (Better something bad you know than something good you do not.) If a place is all right I always return there. I normally stay at the Hiltons, or the new ones, what do you call them -- the "Inns," I believe, but not here in Los Angeles. I went to the Mark Twain for the first time twenty-six years ago, in 1955, and I liked it. It is like a private home. You can come and go as you please and it is close to everything. Other hotels are so far from everything, no place to eat, nothing. Here in Los Angeles, I just go back to my hotel.

JALEO: Does it bother you to be recognized in public places and approached by strangers?

SABICAS: Well, you come to expect it. It does not frighten me anymore. I have gotten used to it.

JALEO: Do you like to eat late in the evening?

SABICAS: No, except when I give a concert. I never eat before a concert. But when I am not working I dine at 7, 7:30, 8 o'clock at the latest. This is something I have gotten accustomed to here in America because in Spain we eat very late, 9 or 9:30 at night. You don't get done until 11 and then you have to go out for a walk to digest the food. New York, however, is the only city in the world where you can go to a restaurant any time, day or night. If you feel like eating a paella at 3 o'clock in the morning you can get it. The only place in the world.

JALEO: Are you planning any new recordings?

SABICAS: Not for the moment. I have recorded a lot, fifty-three long-play

albums. That is enough. I did the very first concert with an orchestra some seventeen or eighteen years ago...We recorded it and people seemed to like it. We have done another one that is now finished and I am not sure whether we will record it or perform it. We'll see.

JALEO: Do you plan to appear with a dance company again?

SABICAS: No, not anymore. It is very expensive, and promoters are not interested. If they can fill a theater with just a soloist, why should they be interested?

JALEO: Maestro, on behalf of all Jaleistas I thank you for sharing this time and your thoughts with us.

SABICAS: Encantado, encantado, el gusto ha sido mío.

Sabicas In Concert At Royce Hall

by El Chileno

On Saturday, February 7th, Sabicas appeared in concert at U.C.L.A.'s Royce Hall. I had the opportunity to meet the maestro a few days before (see "Conversaciones con Sabicas" elsewhere in this issue) and was invited by the artist to take a few pictures of him backstage, which provided me with a rare glimpse of a master performance. I did, however, spend most of the performance sitting in the concert hall and was able to attest to the excellent acoustics of the auditorium. I made a passing remark to the stage manager about the nice way the sound carried throughout, and she wrote down on her report, "associate of artist complimented Royce Hall on its excellent acoustics." Thus, as far as the official record goes, I am an "associate" of Sabicas!

The three part concert included: taranta, fandango, farruca, "castellana," soleá, rondeña, alegrías, "Danza Arabe," malagueñas, guajiras, tientos, and "Marcha Militar." A clamorous standing ovation by an enthusiastic audience which really filled the 1,800 seat hall brought some half-dozen curtain calls and encores consisting of a zapateado, "Piropo a la niña," "Malagueña," and a "muy flamenco" potpourri of American Jazz and Dixie themes.

Throughout the performance, the Sabicas style was very much in evidence, with liberal use of alzapúa in the fandango and soleá, fast picado in the taranta and farruca, and left-hand work in the tarranta and rondeña. There was, however, a more

melodic, soft touch to his interpretations which was not quite as evident in the past. His rondeña and "Danza Arabe," for example, had an almost pleading tone about them. The zapateado offered during the encore was equally melodic, of an almost classical quality.

The touch of brashness present in some of Sabicas' earlier work was replaced by a deeper, thoughtful and more mellow sound. In spite of the "jondo" quality of much of the program, any trace of excessive seriousness was dispelled by the artist in his rendition of American themes which brought hearty cheers from an already captivated audience.

Listening to the Sabicas of today, one cannot help but think of other great Spanish artists such as Casals and Segovia, who have produced some great works well into their eighties. One wonders whether, at a young 64 years of age, Sabicas might not be entering another phase in his career and yet realize unknown potentials as an artist.

* * *

The following is the review that appeared in the Los Angeles Times on Feb.9, 1981. It is a good example of flamenco ignorance and poorly written fakery:

SABICAS PLAYS FLAMENCO GUITAR

by John Henken

Styles of flamenco guitar are as numerous and varied as its practitioners. Even so, the style of Sabicas is distinctive, as he proved in three sets Saturday evening in Royce Hall.

Though he has a large and enthusiastic following -- much in evidence Saturday -- Sabicas indulges in relatively little overt exhibitionism. Indeed, there was only one major left-hand-alone display, which may well set some sort of record in a field not noted for restraint.

Flamboyance Sabicas has, and plenty of it; else his music would hardly be flamenco. It is seldom an end in itself, but rather the expressive means. Sabicas plays as freely and personally with the traditional forms as anyone, and relies on bursts of flamenco pyrotechnics to tie things together.

In this he is not always successful. Sabicas makes each piece a chain of short, contrasting ideas, a style which can lead to unfocused rambling. He touches the banal almost as often as the genuinely exhilarating.

Classical influence is readily apparent in Sabicas' music, if not his technique, which has the snap and bluster of more folk-oriented flamenco. Traces of Sor and Turina weave in and out of his pieces, kept largely devoid of stereotypical melodic patterns. His Malagueña, for example, "La Caleta," had not a trace of the tune associated with the name, but then his third encore was almost a transcription of Lecuna's famous "Malagueña."

The audience was ready with adulatory support at every turn, from an appreciative little gasp when he crossed his base strings for the snare drum effect in "El sitio de Zaragoza" to loud applause for his acknowledgement of previous applause.

SAETA

(from: FISL NEWSLETTER, April 1969)

by E. Zatania

Each spring people travel from all parts of the world to witness the ritual and splendor of Semana Santa (Holy Week), in Sevilla. Semana Santa is the week of Holy Thursday and Good Friday as observed by the intensely religious people of Spain. It is during this week, devoted to the contemplation of the Passion of Christ, that the characteristic processions take place.

Secret religious cults, "cofradías," existed in Sevilla since the dim beginnings of Christianity. However it is only since the 16th century that certain of these "cofradías" became dedicated to the revival of the faith of the general people. For this reason the Holy Week processions were originated. In the beginning these processions were solemn and unadorned. At the head of the procession a flag or banner was carried. Then came the "cofrades" (members of the cofradía), forming two lines, and people who for personal reasons wished to take part in the devotion. At the end was the crucifix carried by a priest or a noble, surrounded by the "hermanos de luz" (members of the brotherhood carrying candles), and the "hermanos de sangre" (those carrying images). This simple basic format has successively developed into the richness and splendor of today's Semana Santa -- justifying its universal fame. The cofrades still wear the rough white linen gowns tied at the waist with a rope. Around the neck they wear the shield of

their respective brotherhoods. They walk barefoot, their faces covered with the familiar pointed canvas hoods. As the procession makes its way through the narrow streets, a band plays a slow solemn march. At intervals the group stops before a balcony or platform where a cantaor is waiting to deliver his saeta, a cante full of Andalusian mysticism and personifying the spirit of Holy Week.

The saeta is sung to Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary, never to the saints, although their images do form part of the procession. The many beautiful letras of saeta express the greatness and suffering of Jesus and the grief of the Virgin Mary. The coplas are of either four or five octosyllabic lines:

Mira una rosa de pasión
cuentate siete puñales
una corona de espinas
y tres clavitos mortales.

Quien t'ha clavado en esta cruz
quien t'ha puesto espinas
quien t'ha herido este costado
que está tu Mare Divina
con el corazon traspasao.

El sol se vistió de luto
y la luna se eclipsó
las piedras se quebrantaron
quando el Señor se expiró.

One frequently hears the terms "saeta por siguiriya" and "saeta por martinete." Hipolito Rossy defines "saeta por siguiriya" as a copla with the words of saeta sung to the melody of a siguiriya. He says that "saeta por martinete" is the same thing, but uses the melody of martinete. These definitions do not seem correct, since the melody of saeta is just not that varied. Donn Pohren's definitions are a lot easier to believe. He says that "saeta por siguirita" refers to a saeta done to the compás of siguiriyas, while "saeta por martinete" is a saeta sung with free rhythm (the latter style being both more common and more traditional). Here is a good place to add that saeta is sung without musical accompaniment (In Spain it has recently become a minor fad to sing saeta to the guitar accompaniment of siguiriya, which tends to water down the effect of the cante.) for the benefit of you guitarists who like to thump your strings during the cante.

Today the distinction is also made between the "old saeta" and the "new saeta,"

although the authorities fail to agree on the definitions of these terms as well. Rossy says the old saeta was a simpler, less flamenco version of the new, based on some synagogue chant. He also says it was a boring, decadent cante which was destined to be replaced. He believes the new saeta to date no earlier than the second decade of this century and to have been a direct creation of the great "saetero," Manuel Centeno. He adds that some people attribute this creation to Don Antonio Chacón, but that this is improbable due to Chacón's advanced years at the time, as well as his reluctance to sing in public or out-of-doors at that time.

Ricardo Molina and Antonio Mairena do not believe in the ancient roots of the saeta. They believe that the saeta sung today developed during the Golden Age (late 19th century) along with the rest of cante flamenco as a derivation of tonás (Tonás were ancient songs of the wandering minstrels which developed into today's martinete, debla, and carcelera, as well as the tonás grandes, chicas, and del Cristo.) or a corruption of Catholic liturgical chants. They say the so-called "old saetas" were simple evangelical narratives which were recited more than they were sung and which can still be heard in countless Andalusian localities. At any rate it seems agreed that the saeta sung today was influenced to some extent by liturgical chants.

One other fact seems to be agreed among the authorities and that is that Holy Week in Sevilla has lost its religious significance through over-commercialism. Hipolito Rossy considers this partly a by-product of the "new saeta." He says that to sing the old saeta, all one needed was a strong voice and good diction so that the listeners would understand the content of the copla. The old saeta was heard with profound respect. A few years after its creation the new saeta overtook the old with the result that the crowds during Semana Santa cheer and applaud the cantaor who is able to execute this now difficult cante and go so far as to protest when the singer does not do well. It was never foreseen that a cante would be created by the professionals which would be too complex and require too much technique for the layman to interpret.

Molina and Mairena criticize the "innovators" who, lacking artistic, flamenco and musical knowledge, corrupt

the traditional saetas which they are unable to learn correctly. The letras are becoming superficial and frivolous as are the melodies. Spontaneity is replaced by exhibitionism. For these reasons we hold in even greater reverence the names of the great saeteros: Silverio, El Nitri, los Cagancho, El Marrurro, Curro Dulce, El Mellizo, Manuel Torre, Niño Gloria, Pastora Pavón, Tomás Pavón, Manuel Centeno, Manuel Vallejo...

The Saeta

(from: Guidepost, March 24, 1967; sent by Marilyn Bishop)

by N. Clements

Perhaps the finest artistic expression of the Andalusian Holy Week -- and certainly its most unique feature -- is the popular devotional song known as the saeta. It is heard with increasing frequency as the Lenten season wanes, but finds its fit and proper setting in the processions of Holy Week. As the various figures and tableaux parade slowly through the streets, the band stops playing and only the drums mark the pace. Then, from a street corner or balcony, a solo singer directs his plaintive melody toward an image in the procession.

The saeta, as sung today, is an authentic form of the flamenco music known as cante jondo (or cante grande). It borrows its complex melodies from traditional gypsy cantes, the martinetes, tonás, and siguiriyas which date back at least to the beginning of the nineteenth century. While these songs have remained for the most part without a limited circle of admirers and performers, the saeta is a truly popular song, sung throughout Andalucía during the Easter season by professional and non-professional singers alike.

Yet only recently has the saeta come within the orbit of flamenco styles. Its traditions take it back well before the emergence of flamenco music, to the missionary fervor of the Counter-reformation. The original saeta, according to the testimony of 17th and 18th century documents, was sung or chanted by priests during certain religious processions, within and without Andalucía, as a means of persuading sinners to repent and confess their sins. From this context derived the name "saeta" or "arrow," as the songs were intended to penetrate the soul of the

listener and induce his conversion.

It was natural that saeta singing should have gravitated towards services and ceremonies of Easter week, a time when the contemplation of man's guilt and Christ's atonement becomes a strong stimulus to the believer's repentance. But it took the talents of a zealous reformist missionary, Diego José de Cádiz, to turn the saeta into a truly popular musical form. This interesting individual made his appearance in Andalucía during the last third of the 18th century when the spirit of rationalism, filtering into Spain through the Franco-philic court of Charles III, threatened to exterminate Spanish catholicism. His eloquence, fiery sermons, and missionary fervor are reported to have made the Spanish soul vibrate, and not the least of his weapons was his talent for musical composition. Aside from more ambitious forms, his "saetillas" (little saetas), which he himself sang after sermons and during penitential processions, achieved rapid popular success and became quickly disseminated and imitated. Eminently popular in character, they hardly differ in spirit from any of the saetas sung today. To give one example:

Fuiste por Judas vendido,
sudaste sangre en el Huerto,
fuiste preso y maltratado,
pagando mi desconcierto.

You were sold by Judas,
you sweated blood in the Orchard,
you were seized and maltreated,
paying for my confusion.

(Verses from his paraphrases of the "Miserere" are reportedly still sung, as saetas, in Marchena.)

The missionaries carried the saeta throughout Andalucía even during the height of later religious persecutions, until 1835, when the religious orders were excommunicated. At this point the saeta went temporarily underground, to be sung in secret, or from side streets and doorways; here, as a consequence, it became a music of the people, from then on to be the creation of the laity rather than the clergy.

The saeta quickly found a new home within the *cofradías* -- the lay fraternities which organize and carry out the various sections of the Easter Week processions. First in Sevilla, then in surrounding provinces, the *cofradías*

began to sing saetas at their meetings; when they were once again allowed to appear on the streets in Holy Week, the saeta came with them. The saeta is an unbroken Eastertime tradition from this time (about 1850) on down to the present.

Yet, as previously noted, the early saeta (saeta antigua) is not the flamenco saeta popular today, but, as might be expected, a simpler melody derived directly from liturgical chants; it may, perhaps, be the personal creation of José de Cádiz himself.

The flamenco style, bursting out of gypsy homes to the taverns and cafes of Andalusian cities and then to theater stages, gradually absorbed the saeta and altered its style and character. Musically, the flamenco saeta differs most notably in its long and florid melismatic phrases. A normal performance presents two verses, the second usually sung to a variant melody on a higher pitch level, and thus more difficult and brilliant than the first. As for its change in character, the composer Joaquín Turina, wrote eloquently (1928) of the new "flamenquismo" in saeta singing: "The professional singer is no longer in dialogue with the image; he tries, rather, to show off. When he finishes, the public demonstrates its approval with applause and "olé," or perhaps protests. In sum, the saeta tends to be a spectacle...

"Nevertheless, the public still claims its rights, and in a few solitary alleyways one may hear the voice of a woman singing the saeta antigua, the most beautiful of all, the Nazarenes, the metallic clash of lances, and the distant roll of drums. It revives an entire epoch; it is the exaltation of religious emotion, producing moments of great beauty."

The old saeta may still be heard in certain smaller towns and villages scattered through Córdoba, Sevilla and Huelva provinces: particularly in Castro del Rio, Puente Genil, Bollullos del Condado, Mairena del Alcor and Cabra.

As for the flamenco saeta, it is by no means limited to the professional singer and many an aficionado may be heard singing with authority and conviction during Holy Week. And those professional singers who conscientiously preserve the pure gypsy style in their singing may give excellent performances as well.

If the melodies of the flamenco saeta are derivation, many of the verses are the same traditional verses created in the time of José de Cádiz; and the modern verses

almost invariably continue this tradition. The first saeta verses, when not written by missionaries, were adapted from old romances; the people took these over and made them their own, and then began to create verses of their own, drawing for their style upon the traditional Andalucían copla of their secular folk music.

And at their best -- what verses they are! In the best tradition of flamenco lyrics there is not a word too few or too many. Concise, pungent, to the point, they typically focus upon a specific detail of the Passion, and through an intuitively well-chosen symbol or image, make their point. For characters and incidents they draw upon the Gospels and the Apocrypha, and particularly upon the traditions of the Seven Stations of the Cross. Favorite characters reappear again and again: Peter denying Christ, Pilate's struggle with his conscience, Judas's treachery; but the central figures are naturally Christ, burdened with his cross, in agony in the Garden, crowned with thorns, mocked by the mob; and Mary, sorrowing for her son's suffering.

It is the peculiar quality of popular Andalucían devotion -- sentimental, superstitious, impulsive, direct -- that lend the verses their weaknesses and their strengths. Disinclined to become involved with theological concepts, the Andalucían is well able to sympathize with human suffering, whether that of a mother loving her only son or the torture of a crucifixion. And just as his polychrome wood images reproduce his subject at a specific emotional crisis, with each crystal tear-drop set lovingly into place, his verses focus with concentrated intensity upon the one moment or the one detail necessary to suggest the complete action or figure and its emotional meaning. This, after all, is what poetry is about.

Es María más bonita
que la azucena en el campo,
que la rosa en el rosal,
y la nieve en el barranco.

Mary is more beautiful
than the lily of the field,
and the rose on the bush,
and drifted snow.

La Virgen de la Esperanza
no tiene comparación;
sale al campo, y al instante,
en el cielo sale el sol.

The Virgin of Hope
is beyond description;
she comes into sight and at once
the sun rises in the sky.

•
"¿Dónde vas, muerte cruel
con la mano en la mejilla?"
"Voy a darle la muerte
al que es autor de la vida."

"Where are you going, cruel Death,
with your hand on your cheek?"
"I'm going to bring death
to the author of life."

•
"¿Cuál de vosotros discípulos,
morirá por mí mañana?"
El uno al otro se mira,
y ninguno contestaba.

"Which of you, disciples,
will die for me tomorrow?"
They looked at one another
and no one answered.

•
Orando al pie d'un olivo
sudó sangre el Redentor.
el llanto acudió a sus ojos,
la angustia a su corazón.

Praying beneath an olive tree,
the Saviour sweated blood;
tears came to his eyes
and anguish to his heart.

•
Estrellas de dos en dos,
luceros de cuatro en cuatro
alumbraban al Señor
la noche del Jueves Santo.

The planets two by two,
the stars four by four
illuminated the Lord
the night of Holy Thursday.

•
Jesus le salió al encuentro
a aquella perdida gente.
"¡Yo soy!", dijo, y al instante
se cayeron como muertos.

Jesús stepped forth to meet
that faithless people.
"I am He," he said, and at once
they fell as if dead.

En el patio de Caifás
cantó el gallo y dijo Pedro:
"Yo no conozco a ese hombre
ni fue nunca mi Maestro."

In the patio of Caiaphas
the cock crowed, and Peter said:
"I don't know that man
nor was he ever my master."

En ti, Pilatos, caerá
la sangre del Nazareno
si lo sentencias a muerte
y salvas a Barrabás.

Upon you, Pilate, will fall
the blood of the Nazarene
if you sentence him to death
and release Barrabas.

La corona del Señor
no es de rosas ni laureles,
que está tejida de espinas
que le traspasan las sienas.

The crown of the Lord
is neither of roses nor laurels,
it is woven of thorns
that pierce his brow.

Del pueblo todo en presencia
metió la mano en la pila.
Pilatos dio la sentencia
lavándose, y su conciencia
quiso dejarla tranquila.

In the presence of all the people,
he put his hands in the basin.
Pilate gave his sentence
as he washed them, and hoped
to put his conscience at rest.

Míralo; por allí viene
el mejor de los nacidos,
con una cruz en los hombros
y el rostro descolorido.

Look: there he comes,
the best of born men,
with a cross on his shoulders
and his face drained of color.

Cuando Jesús vaciló,
rendido por la amargura,
y en la piedra se sentó,
quebrantó la peña dura
con un suspiro que dio.

When Jesus stumbled,
torn by bitterness,
and sat upon a rock,
the hard rock cracked apart
with one of his sighs.

En la calle l'Amargura
Hijo y Madre se encontraron,
y no pudieron hablarse:
de duro mármol quedaron.

On the Street of Bitterness
the Son and the Mother met,
and neither one could speak;
they became as hard marble.

Hacia el Calvario camina,
ya no puede con la cruz;
las fuerzas le van faltando,
y a su largo camino
un hombre le va ayudando.

On his way to Calvary
he can no longer bear the cross;
his strength is failing him;
and on his long road
a man comes to help him.

Cuando clavaron un brazo
el otro ya no alcanzaba;
una soga le amarraron,
los verdugos le tiraron
y el cuerpo descoyuntaron.

When one arm had been nailed,
the other didn't reach;
tying a rope to him
the executioners pulled
and disjointed his body.

Es tan estrecha la cama
que el Rey de los Cielos tiene
que por no caber en ella
un pie sobre el otro tiene.

So narrow is the bed
where the King of Heaven lies,
that for lack of room
one foot crosses the other.

Nació la primera saeta
al pie de la misma cruz
y se envolvió en un suspiro
de la Madre de Jesús.

The first saeta was born
beneath the cross itself,
wrapped in a sigh
of the Mother of Jesus.

"Toas" las "mares" tienen
penas y amarguras,
pero la tuya es mayor,
que llevas siete puñales
"clavaítos" en el corazón.

All mothers know
pain and suffering
but yours is the greatest
for you carry seven daggers
piercing your heart.

El sol se vistió de luto
y la luna se eclipsó
las sepulturas se abrieron
al morir el Redentor.

The sun dressed in mourning
and the moon was eclipsed,
the sepulchres opened
when the Saviour died.

Sobre un peñón solitario
se eleva una cruz vacía
y envuelto en blanco sudario,
muerto en brazos de María,
está Cristo del Calvario.

Upon a solitary crag
rises an empty cross
and wrapped in white linen,
dead in the arms of Mary
is the Christ of Calvary.

MORCA

... sobre el baile

CHANGING FLAMENCO IN CHANGING TIMES

I do not think that there is anyone who is not in awe of the natural phenomena of a wormy caterpillar that eats for awhile, then spins a cocoon, and later emerges as a most beautiful butterfly, ready to fly, completely transformed forever into a creature of beauty.

When one enters into the beautiful world of flamenco in its totality, it is not unlike the caterpillar starting its transformation from one form to another, for there is constant change in both the person and in the total art of flamenco. I am writing this article, not on one specific aspect of flamenco, but as an overview of a total, ever-changing flamenco. The change

grows from an unchanging taproot that is deep in a very old tradition of many cultures with many feelings and emotions. It is like a very old and beautiful tree that is strong of trunk and root, but is forever growing new branches, some more beautiful than others, adding to its total quality.

We still hear much about "old flamenco" and "new flamenco," but in reality it is all "flamenco" in an ever-changing form, much like the turning of a kaleidoscope with only seven pieces of glass in it, making ever-changing, seemingly complex patterns, yet with only seven pieces of glass. The basic rhythms and structures of flamenco have been well-established for a very long time; within these rhythms, there is an infinite series of possible rhythmic patterns and it is always exciting to see and hear the creative process of guitarist and dancer in search of another rhythmical pattern, another series of contra tiempos and, with tongue in cheek, what I call the search for the "ultimate contra tiempo" or better yet, for the dancer, "the ultimate desplante."

But seriously speaking, it is this very search that gives flamenco its changes. For the dancer, it is a search for other ways of movement within the tradition and there is so much to draw from; I really feel that flamenco offers unlimited creative growth possibility, being such a varied and complete dance form with so much room for personal creative search. With so much history, so many cultures, each adding to the whole, the dancer can forever blossom.

Much of the change that has taken place in the dance of flamenco has been in the technique -- both the movement of the whole body and in the audible rhythms of footwork, palmas, etc. As I have said in past articles, most of this change comes from very strong, creative individuals who have had such an influence that their styles have altered the styles for the rest of us forever.

One very strong influence for the male dancer was the late, great Vicente Escudero, a unique individual who was loved by many and thought crazy by many others, but was without a doubt, one of the strongest and most influential forces involved in the change of male flamenco dancing. He was a scholar who wrote books about his thoughts on dance, drew very modern and abstract drawings of his dance styles and set down in writing a sort of ten commandments of

flamenco dance. He considered himself the tower and pillar of old and profound flamenco and it is interesting that this is the very style that was the great influence for Antonio Gades, a style that is very contemporary and has influenced much of the male flamenco dancing of recent years.

Yes, the old is the new and the new is the old, and changes are just changes, for the underlying roots, feelings, emotions and, yes, art, do not change.

I remember when I was touring throughout Spain with Pilar López and we were on the Mediterranean coast, doing the summer festivals, and almost everyday I would go to the beach in the morning for some sun and a swim. I would think of the stories of Carmen Amaya, how she would say that the sea was such an influence on her, and I would think while watching the waves come in and out that they never repeat the same shape, always different patterns and rhythms, yet coming from the same ocean -- the same water but always changing. I would think that when dancing flamenco, I would try to let it be ever-changing, letting the soul search for new means of expression within the boundaries of whatever rhythm I was doing.

It is always exciting to see the changes in trends of flamenco, especially in the dance or the costuming, and to see the pendulum swing back and forth between styles or approaches and to see who is influencing the dance at that particular time. A few years ago it was the style to dance extremely slowly and the soleares of a great artist like Maria Soto was something that was pure dramatic joy. It was a slow style that very few people could do because it required tremendous inner understanding and strength; to dance really slowly, with knowledge and control, your art really has to be in order. Everyone in the early 1960's was dancing super slowly. There were periods before that where it was the style to dance super fast and you would see bulerías done at 100 miles an hour.

Now the trend is to dance a very set "routine," with steps set beat by beat with the falsetas of the guitar, much like composing music. You almost have to be working with the same guitarist for a very long time and also be in great control over your emotions, trying to reach the exact same effect every time you dance. There have been trends of "footwork only," where the rest of the body has been sacrificed, or trends of standing for long periods of

time, doing just braceo, emoting much drama. There were trends of just dancing in contra tiempos, and also in costuming, with very short dresses for the women and street suits for the men.

All trends show a search and they are good and non-stagnant. From a total blend of trends and fads comes much creativity and that is what all art is about. I use the word art as the ultimate creative expression of flamenco, ever-changing flamenco, yet never changing in original feeling, in the original purpose of expressing man's highest ideals of his being. As you stand up to dance, let the totality of flamenco move you, not in pieces, but as a whole, for it is this wholeness that is never changing; it is that inner search for the whole -- body, spirit, mind, soul, and all of the emotions -- that is forever fresh. Let your flamenco be like the seasons, forever changing, yet forever returning. Let yourself enter the world of flamenco like the caterpillar enters the cocoon and emerges as something beautiful, and let your dance soar into your own world of creativity and self-expression.

-- Teo Morca

GAZPACHO DE GUILLERMO

ELITISM IN FLAMENCO

Have you ever wondered why there is so much conflict in flamenco? Or why there is so much conflict in the world in general? Of course, there are many reasons and corresponding social implications. I think that elitism in its many forms is one of the main causes of conflict. Let's discuss elitism and see if this is the direction you are going in, or want to go in.

The Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines the noun "elite" as: "the choice or select part; esp., a group or body considered or treated as socially superior." So elite is defined in terms of others. Without anyone to be superior to, the elite has no identity per se. It is obvious that there are differences in talent among individuals. Other obvious differences can be found in such things as origin, nationality, seniority, knowledge, and financial security. Conflict arises not in the

reality of the differences, but rather in the assertion of superiority.

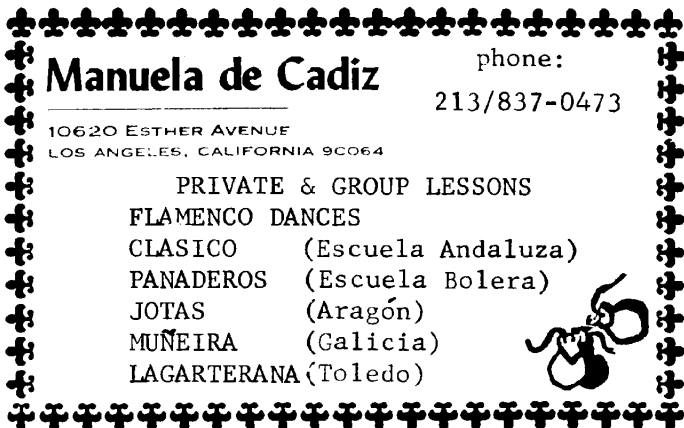
Let's make some elitist flamenco statements and see if they illustrate this more obviously:

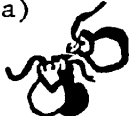
- 1) Flamenco is the best and most difficult kind of music.
- 2) Cante flamenco is superior to the baile and the toque.
- 3) Soleares is better than fandangos de Huelva.
- 4) Sevilla is better than Granada.
- 5) New flamenco is better than old flamenco.
- 6) Percussion is superior to melody and harmony.
- 7) Successful flamencos are more dignified than unsuccessful ones.

Conflict arises in the assertion of these types of belief systems. I would like to continue the discussion with a short paragraph dealing with each elitist statement listed. You could probably think of other statements, but let's limit it here to the ones above.

A prevalent belief is that flamenco is better and more difficult than any other kind of music. In each branch of music there is an elitist snobbery. Talk to some classical and jazz musicians and you'll find a certain percentage of each group who feels superior. Can any music be superior as a whole? Is every flamenco song by every flamenco performer better than all other songs of all other musical forms? Is flamenco fortunate that there are other musical forms to be better than? Or, are we, as artists, all equal?

For years in Spain the cante has been the most popular of the components of flamenco. Cantaores were the highest paid, followed by the other artists. Demand has decided who is more important in the public's eyes with any product. Those of less significance have had to accept less money.


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Many flamencos do not listen to other kinds of music. This is the cause of an internal type of elitism. Some of my flamenco friends do not listen to or perform fandangos de Huelva, farruca, tanguillos, or verdiales. They are only interested in soleares, siguiriyas, and bulerías. If you get refused entry to a juerga, this may be the reason.

Regional elitism develops when there are no threats of an international or national nature. The old competition between Sevilla and Granada is a good example. A similar type can be seen in music and sports' competitions. Is New York great because the Yankees have won more World Series?

Many flamencos believe that either new or old flamenco is superior. I used to think that new flamenco was better until I read Teo Morca's observation that flamenco is like a tree with roots, trunk, and branches. Extending the comparison, you could say that the world itself is like a tree. All different types of music and nationalities are merely branches of the same tree. Should one branch choke the roots or other branches?

Music's components are rhythm, melody, and harmony. Rhythm is the meter and the mathematical counting branch. Melody is the movement of notes, and harmony is the movement of chords. Different combinations of these components determine the beauty of any music. While there is certainly a difference of ability in composition among individuals, I don't think the usage of any one of the musical components is superior by nature.

The last item deals with a more social question. Are successful flamencos more dignified? Human dignity does not have to be earned. The king of Spain and the "pordioseros" at the entrance of the Alhambra are equally deserving. On the other hand, denial of human dignity is a cause of violence. If you treat panhandlers with respect, they will react with personal pride. If you treat them with disdain, they will respond accordingly. So in Spanish we have the concept of "Usted." Originally this meant "Vuestra merced" or something like "your mercy." You don't have to wear fine clothes, live in a prestigious neighborhood, or have other external measures of security to be "Usted." While success and security are certainly desirable, it's easy to become elitist over them.

The choice is yours regarding elitism.

If you choose not to be elite, the burden of the challenge becomes yours when others assert their beliefs. When there is this assertion, do you respond as elite also, which adds fuel to conflict? Or, is there wisdom in not being a responder, in not playing their game? Finally, how do you do this without being a doormat, always being stepped on?

* * *

"Flamenco!! La Guitarra de Sabicas"
(Polydor ELI Stereo 23 85 044) 1973

This is a great recording in all aspects. Sabicas, in the twilight of his brilliant career, gives us another memorable performance. Originally released in Spain in 1972, this may be Sabicas' last recording.

In "Variaciones de Alegrías" he presents a mixture of his own old and new material with a new aire. He flies through the piece effortlessly, with a rich sound. "Embrujo Sevillano" is a composed bulería, played note for note on another record and in his concerts. This is Sabicas' answer to all the modern bulerías coming out in the last fifteen years. Just as fandangos was the rage of flamenco for years, bulerías has become the new mania. Sabicas is astonishing in his bulerías and it really is an "embrujo." "Mi Soléa" is quite effective, and impeccable. "Campanitas," a farruca, is multiple tracked with two or three guitars. Side one ends with "Piropo a Galicia," a gallegada, also having multiple guitars.

Side two begins with a powerful rendition of Lecuona's "Malagueña." This is followed by a brilliant tarantas that Sabicas calls "Ecos de Linares." The rest of the album is excellent: "Duquelas de Triana" (siguiriyas), "Viniendo del Alba" (rondeña), and "Villancicos de Jeréz," a Christmas song.

Sabicas has given his whole life to flamenco. If this is his last record before retirement, he has ended his recording career with a brilliant masterpiece.

-- Guillermo Salazar

El Concurso de Cante Jondo de Granada, 1922

by Paco Sevilla

A flamenco contest in Granada in 1922? With all of the flamenco activity taking place today in Spain--festivales, contests, study weeks, tablaos--why discuss a contest that took place over a half a century ago? One answer is that it was a fascinating and unusual event. But to really understand the importance of this event, it is necessary to know a little about the state of flamenco at that time.

The period of the "café cantante" (similar to the tablao of today) had begun in the mid-1800's and had brought flamenco to the public for the first time. The gypsy cante was brought out from back rooms and family gatherings into the commercial world. At the same time, the cante-andaluz, especially the malagueñas, was being developed and eventually reached great heights of popularity. After the turn of the century, the cante-andaluz--all the forms of fandangos--began to dominate the performing scene and the cante gitano slowly disappeared from public view. The cafés cantantes closed and a new era of flamenco began--the era of the "ópera flamenca."

During the period of the ópera flamenca, flamenco moved from the café cantante to the theater. By 1910 the trend was obvious and, by 1920, in full swing. Flamenco appeared in the "zarzuelas" (musical comedies) where it was mixed with operatic arias and often accompanied by orchestra and piano, as well as by guitar. Travelling Spanish ballets brought flamenco-style treatments of Spanish classical dance and music to theaters in Spain and around the world. There were many artists in this "period of the Niños" as Antonio Mairena put it (Niño Marchena, Niño de Huelva, Niño Ricardo, La Niña de la Puebla, etc.) and they made many records and huge fortunes. Non-gypsy singers became great stars and sang primarily variations of the fandangos, the Latin American inspired milongas, guajiras, and columbianas the popular tanguillos, zambras, and garrotín, and other popular songs done in an exaggerated flamenco style. Usually, these singers had beautifully trained and often operatic voices, and they often used a falsetto voice, abusing this technique that had first been used in flamenco by Antonio Chacón. A list of these performers

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would include: Angelillo, Pepe Marchena, Pepe Pinto, Juanito Valderrama, La Niña de Antequera, La Niña de la Puebla, Rafael Farina, Antonio Molina, and Manolo Escobar. These were hard times for the gypsy singers, although some, such as Manolo Caracol, at times joined this commercial world, made lots of money, and did some damage to their reputations among flamenco purists.

Not until the 1950's did there begin a resurgence of interest in the gypsy cantes and the ópera flamenca began to disappear.

The 1922 Contest of Cante Jondo in Granada took place as the ópera flamenca was getting into full swing. Information about the event has been scarce, and accounts are often filled with conflicting and mythical material. This article was made possible by the unplanned appearance of a great deal of information from many different sources. The events leading up to the contest were uncovered by the tremendous amount of research done by Felix Grande and revealed in his monumental work, Memorias del Flamenco.

The motivating force behind the contest was Manuel de Falla, the internationally renowned composer of "La Vida Breve," "El Amor Brujo," "El Sombrero de Tres Picos," "La Fantasía Bética," "Noches en los Jardines de España," etc. Falla had been born in Cádiz, and his music was greatly influenced by flamenco; he believed flamenco to be the source and fountain of "natural music. When he adopted García Lorca's native city of Granada as his own, he continued his deep interest in flamenco and often gathered with friends to discuss it and listen to records of the great artists such as Manuel Torre and La Niña de los Peines. In the few years right before 1922, Falla had been intently studying the history and origins of the cante. As we shall see, this study was to result in a pamphlet, published in 1922, in which he wrote: "The majestic canto gravo (cante jondo) of yesterday has degenerated into the ridiculous 'flamenquismo' of today. The sober vocal modulation--the natural inflexions of the song that result from the divisions and subdivisions of sound--has become an artificial, ornamented trend that is more like the decadence of the worst Italian epoch than like the primitive cantes of the Orient, with which our songs can be compared only when they are pure."

Falla gradually began to form the idea of doing something for flamenco besides incorporating it into his musical works. The idea of a contest for non-professional cantaores came from his friend, Miguel Cerón, as they walked through the gardens of the Generalife,

Falla wrote to an English friend, "We want to purify and revive that admirable cante jondo that should not be confused with the 'cante flamenco' that is a degeneration and almost a caricature of the former."¹

Falla, along with the artists, writers, and musicians who associated with him, began to plan for the contest. Their hope was to save the cante jondo from extinction by finding the little-known and pure cantaores who they believed were hiding in the small towns of Andalucía. They mistakenly thought that this cante jondo was a song "of the people," of the non-professionals.

To fund the project, the organizers appealed to the city government and to the "Centro Artístico y Literario de Granada" (Artistic and Literary Center of Granada). To that end, Cerón and Falla wrote a letter that was signed by a prestigious list of personalities, including composers Falla, Turina, and Oscar Esplá, musicologist Adolfo Sálazar, Pérez Capas (later, director of the National Orchestra), Fernández Arbos (director of the Madrid Symphony), Miguel Salvador (president of the National Society of Music), poets García Lorca and Juan Ramón Jiménez, the painter Zuloaga, and intellectuals like Alfonso Reyes, Ramón Pérez de Ayala, and Fernando de los Ríos. Many other influential people--Rusiñol, Monpou, Pedrell--supported the project.

The contest received the financial support it needed and planning intensified. Manuel de Falla gave up all of his professional artistic life for more than half a year; in that anti-flamenco period, only his tremendous effort made the contest possible. Invitations were sent around the world--Ravel and Stravinsky agreed to attend if their lodging and travel expenses were paid, but the Granada government turned that request down. A site had to be found; many, such as "El Paseo de los Tristes" and the "Campo del Principe" were rejected; finally, it was decided that the contest would be held in the Alhambra, in the "Plaza de los Aljibes," a large open area bounded by the fortress of the Alcazaba, the palace of Carlos V, and the parapets overlooking the Darro gorge, the Albaicín, and the Sacromonte.

The rules and format of the contest had to be worked out. Although the actual competition was to be limited to non-professionals--in the hope of finding the "pure" cante of the "people" (Falla, García Lorca and others felt that commercialism was responsible for the decadence of flamenco)--

famous cantaores would be invited to perform. These celebrities had to be selected, as did the judges for the contest. Only the traditional cante jondo would be permitted; prizes would be awarded for the siguiriyas, martinetes, carceleras, cañas, polos, medios polos, saetas viejas, soleares, and serranas. In addition, Falla wanted to have academies of the cante throughout Andalucía during the four or five months before the contest. His plan was for famous and knowledgeable cantaores to meet in bars or taverns with the young singers to pass on to them the old cantes that were being forgotten. This plan never got off the ground--one reason being the reluctance of the old masters to teach their "secrets."

Enthusiasm for the contest was not universal and much effort was expended in battling the opposition. There were innumerable meetings and newspaper articles where the merits and drawbacks of the venture were debated. Some modern writers give us a feeling for the criticism leveled at the contest. Antonio Mairena says that the organizers were mistaken when they believed that what they were looking for was "something of the people." They were unlikely to find the "...jewel of art and Andalusian culture that was about to be lost."²

Donn Pohren writes: "The contest was much criticised because of being limited to non-professionals. The professionals said, quite rightly, that there were not enough amateurs with such a profound knowledge of the cante as the contest required. The organizers had the romantic notion that the pure cante is of the people. Sadly, it is not; generally speaking, it is of the professionals, and only a minority of them."³

Ricardo Molina wrote: "Those artists and intellectuals--Madrileños, Basques, Catalanes, Valencianos--gathered in Granada for the purpose of the contest like a conjunction of the heavenly bodies in order to define nothing less than the basic truths and doctrines of an art about which they knew nothing, had to provoke an inner, unspoken irritation in the high priests of the art."¹

Felix Grande offers a refutation of Molina's remarks. He says that the "high priests are always irritated by something and are often unjust and arrogant. The artists and intellectuals did not go to Granada to define the art of flamenco, but to join with Manuel de Falla in the task of defending flamenco as an art--something intellectuals had never done before. Some of the artists, including Falla, were not so ignorant of flamenco, and they did not gather as a 'conjunction of the heavenly

bodies,' but, rather, with great humility; Falla did not even vote in the contest and did not sign his name to an important work of his that was published by the Centro Artístico." Felix Grande believes that Molina was influenced by Mairena, who, in spite of his encyclopedic knowledge of the cante, "...often has a typical gypsy attitude: No payo (non-gypsy) knows about the cante, flamencologists are invariably ignorant, the gypsies made flamenco out of nothing and the payos had nothing to do with it ever."¹

There was difficulty finding contestants. Part of the reason was the city chosen as the site of the contest; Granada lies outside of the geographical cradle of cante jondo (Sevilla-Jerez-Cádiz). It was unlikely that quality contestants would be found in the barrios of Granada or the neighboring towns. The cantaores of Sevilla questioned and ridiculed the whole idea: Who was going to sing? All the good singers sang for money. The students? Who are they? They don't know the songs being required! The whole thing was being done to glorify the Granadan singer, Frascueto Yerbagüena, etc.

Diplomacy was required to counteract the negative feelings. The flamenco guitarist, Amalio Cuenca, was sent to try to convince the Sevillans that the purpose of the contest was to try to revive the cante jondo. Perhaps the fact that Antonio Chacón, Manuel Torre, and La Niña de los Peines were invited as guest artists helped to diminish the antagonism somewhat.

Finally, in June of 1922, the months of preparation came to an end. In the weeks before the contest, the Centro Artístico published a pamphlet written by Manuel de Falla, entitled El Cante Jondo--Canto Primitivo Andaluz, the first profound study of the musical origins of flamenco and the basis of many subsequent studies. Federico García Lorca gave a lecture entitled, "Historical and Artistic Importance of the Primitive Andalusian Cante Called Cante Jondo." Andres Segovia gave four guitar concerts. Ignacio Zuloaga presented a show of his oil paintings. On June 7, there were final ceremonies: Falla's pamphlet was read; twenty-four year old García Lorca read part of his new "Poema del Cante Jondo;" guitarist Manuel Jofré played peteneras and siguiriya; Andres Segovia played por soleá.

All was ready. The judges, presided over by the great maestro, Antonio Chacón, included the guitarists Andres Segovia and Amalio Cuenca. Antonio Mairena tells us that Antonio Chacón was the greatest authority on the cante of that time--very know-

ledgeable about the cante gitano, which he admired greatly. With him on the jury were the great gypsy singers, Manuel Torre and Pastora Pavón--La Niña de los Peines--".but only as decorative figures, because, to the vested interests of those times, they were just two mummies that shouldn't be brought back to life. Neither of them had any voice or vote in that place, and both suffered the inferiority complex common to all gypsies. All that was heard was the pontific voice of Don Antonio Chacón, 'la campana gorda,' he who was followed by a whole retinue of artists and intellectuals. How painful was the presence of Manuel Torre and Pastora Pavón, perhaps the two greatest figures in the history of the cante gitano. Those sponsoring the contest were looking for a cante that they felt had been lost, and they were unable to find it in the new, nor in the old. How unfortunate that the hidden treasure they sought, they had so near them, yet, at the same time, so far..."²(p. 31)

The Plaza de los Algibes had been decorated by a group of artists under the direction of Zuloaga. A stage had been built and decorated with blue and white tiles, rugs, and embroidered "mantones de Manila" (shawls). Large lights were hung on the surrounding towers and special boxes built for the music critics and the Spanish and foreign press.

On the 12th of June, a number of the judges and organizers, including Chacón, Manuel Torre, Pastora Pavón, Falla and Zuloaga, were gathered in a cafe and were taking turns singing. At that point appeared the central figure in the Concurso de Granada --Diego Bermúdez "El Tenazas." Old--about seventy years of age--short, with an impassive face, small clear eyes, grey-haired under his ramshackle Cordobés hat that he never removed El Tenazas sat silently listening. The legend says that he had retired from singing thirty years earlier after having his lung punctured in a fight and losing some of his voice, and that he had walked from Puente Genil, a distance of about 175 kilometers, in three days to get to Granada. Writer, Edgar Neville, who says he was very close to the events surrounding the contest, describes the first encounter with El Tenazas:

Chacón pointed out very respectfully and courteously, in a manner appropriate for addressing one's elders, "You know now that this is a contest of the cante grande, that is, all the other flamenco cantes are eliminated because they do not interest us."

"Sí señor," answered El Tenazas, "that is why I have come."

"Well then, you will show us!"

Ramón Montoya picked up his guitar and took his seat as Tenazas was saying, "Play por siguiriyas!"

And shortly, the old one opened his mouth and from it came forth a deep lament--terrifying, strong, a cry of the centuries, the cry of a people, supreme anguish, and a hair-raising letra (verse).

Chacón opened his eyes wide and seemed to want to enter the mouth of the old man, who continued with a tremendous siguiriya, finishing with the following letra:

Yo no puedo más,
que para vivir
como estoy viviendo,
prefiero esmerar.

Tears came from Chacón's eyes and he embraced Tenazas, saying, "But do you know what you have just sung?"

And Tenazas, with a small smile, answered, "How could I not know? They are the cabales (a kind of siguiriyas) that my teacher Silverio (Silverio Franconetti, one of the greatest singers of the 1800's) used to sing."

Donn Pohren writes that, as Tenazas sang, "...the expressions of the group changed from polite surprise to amazement to acceptance into their select group. Falla expressed all of their feelings by simply stating, 'This man is an arsenal of pure cante.'"³

The contest was held on the evenings of June 13 and 14. Some four thousand spectators watched the proceedings. On the second night it rained and many in the audience held their chairs upside down over their heads as umbrellas. Aside from the judging of the contestants, there were guest performances by Antonio Chacón, La Niña de los Peines, Manuel Torre, and the great dancer, La Macarrona. The accompanists for the event were Ramón Montoya, Manolo de Huelva (two of the most revered guitarists in flamenco history), and José Cuéllar.

The biggest "find" of the contest was El Tenazas. In spite of the fact that he spent the days recording for Odeon Records and, on the 14th drank heavily with his friends, so that he was reportedly drunk during his contest performance, and was an old man no longer in his prime as a cantaor--in spite of all that, he completely overshadowed all of the other participants and won the top prizes in siguiriyas, soleares, and cañas. Pohren writes: "During the contest itself,

El Tenazas captured the hearts and tears of the aficionados, especially of the old-timers who understood the treasures that he was unveiling. Molina Fajardo writes that El Tenazas began by singing the two following *siguiriyas*:

Mundito engañoso
las güertas que da,
que los pasitos que yo doy p'alante
se me van p'atrás.

(Deceitful world,
with turns you give,
each step I take forward
seems to take me backward.)

Como sé que contigo
no me he de lograré,
por eso mis penas nunca van a menos,
siempre van a más.

(As I know
that you'll never be mine,
my sorrow never lessens,
but always grows.)

"Behind the platform an old gypsy woman was weeping. Next to her La Macarrona called out her warm approval. El Tenazas continued singing, and when he finished, above all the ovations could be heard the shouts of the stirred aficionados: 'Padre del cante jondo!'"

Later, in 1929, a pamphlet was published that filled in some details of the life of El Tenazas. Born about 1850 in Morón de la Frontera and raised in Puente Genil, he was a disciple of Silverio Franconetti and was also influenced by Diego el Fillo. According to this account, he stopped performing as a professional cantaor just before the turn of the century, after an occasion on which he had been singing *por soleá* and *por siguiriya* and got no response from a cold audience; when Tenazas had finished, a youth appeared on stage and sang *por fandanguillos* (*fandangos de Huelva*), for which the crowd applauded wildly. El Tenazas swore never to sing again and retired to work anonymously in the orchards and olive groves--eventually ending up a guardian for pigs in Puente Genil. The legend that says he retired due to a knife wound is apparently untrue. Felix Grande adds that he stopped singing because he was not capable of adapting to the new styles of singing--the *cante* had been for him, not an occupation, but more of a religion.

In 1922, when Tenazas saw the rules for the contest, he must have been elated, for they were made to order for him. Felix Grande also refutes the story that Tenazas

walked three days to get to Granada and says that he arrived by train, dressed in new clothes, thanks to a collection taken up for him by the mayor of his town.

The prize money that El Tenazas won in Granada represented a considerable sum to one who had been living so long in poverty. So, after the contest, he gave the money to Andres Segovia to hold for him, and when he was ready to leave, a friend of Segovia's sewed it into the lining of his vest--to insure that it reached home with him. When El Tenazas left Granada, he returned to anonymity and seven years later, in 1929, died and was buried in some spot that remains unknown to us.

Diego Bermúdez "El Tenazas" was not the only "discovery" of the Granada contest. A twelve year old gypsy, Manuel Ortega Juárez, later to be known as Manolo Caracol, was a sensation and won a prize (Mairena says it was a special prize for children, but this is unsubstantiated by other accounts). Manuel Ortega did not exactly spring from the "grass roots" as an unknown folk artist; he came from a long tradition of professional flamenco and bullfighting artists--he was the great great grandson on his mother's side of El Planeta, the great grandson on his father's side of Curro Dulce, and his father, who was first called "Caracol," was a highly regarded cantaor. Born on Sevilla's "Alameda de Hercules," Manolo had a very gypsy voice and singing style, but became one of the most popular and successful flamenco artists of the "opera flamenca" period by adapting and catering to the desires of the public; he incorporated every commercial device imaginable and in the 1940's teamed up with Lola Flores for a very successful period of performing and film-making. When the *cante gitano* returned to popularity in the 1950's, Caracol returned to the pure *cante*, recorded an anthology, and opened the *tablao*, "Los Canasteros," in Madrid.

Another prize went to the legendary gypsy of Granada, Francisco Gálvez--better known as Frasquito Yerbagüena; a prize went to María Amaya "La Gazpacha," a relative of Carmen Amaya who Mairena calls, "...a stupendous *festera* who danced very well the *zambra* of Granada," ²(p. 32), and yet another to José Soler "Niño de Linares." Mairena writes that there were other prizes for, "...the *senoritas* of Granada's high society who sang some little things"; these included Carmen Salinas, Conch Sierra, and "La Goyita." The prize for outstanding guitarist was split between Manolo de Huelva and José Cuéllar.

And that was it! There was a fiesta to finish the event and then the cante gitano vanished from the public eye for some thirty years.

Debate continued about the value of the contest. In later years, Antonio Mairena would write, "In Granada, nothing happened, that is, all that happened was what had to happen... a poor man, then very old, Diego Bermúdez "El Tenazas"... was the only thing that was found in the treasure of the small towns of which they had spoken so highly and continue to speak of as the source of cante jondo." ²(p. 31)

Some critics called the contest a disaster and a complete failure in its aims to discover interpreters of the traditional cante jondo among the "people" and to save some of the ancient forms from extinction. The organizers did not realize that the cante jondo is not a folk music for the amateur, but is a difficult art requiring a dedication possessed by few who do not consider themselves to be professionals. In addition, beautiful as the Alhambra was as a site for the contest, Granada was not the ideal location for such an event because the region is not known for its interpreters of the cante jondo; contestants were, therefore, required to come long distances--a difficult task for the often very poor non-professional singers.

On the positive side, the contest accomplished many things. Recording was done during the days of the contest and, thus, some ancient forms were saved for posterity. A few singers were brought to light, and audiences had the chance to see some great flamenco artists. But Felix Grande writes that, even more important than the actual event, were the long months of preparation and the battling against the anti-flamenco factions. Intellectuals around the turn of the century--people like Eugenio Noel, Baroja and Unamuno--had very much despised flamenco, associating it with variety shows, sleazy bars, and loose morality. After 1922, those in the world of culture and art had to admit that flamenco is an art or keep their mouths shut. Never before, nor since, had so many intellectual and artistic talents gathered in the defense of the cante flamenco. Through the efforts of these men, lead by idealists like Falla and García Lorca, the cante acquired dignity and acceptance in cultured circles; the new interest in this art resulted in studies of the music, letras, history, and to more extensive recording. Felix Grande feels that much of what flamenco has today is due to the efforts of Falla in

Granada. Without the Concurso de Granada, the contest in Córdoba in 1956 would have been unlikely--that contest where Fosforito II was discovered, Juan Talegas was acclaimed and Fernanda de Utrera won a prize. And perhaps the "Concurso Internacional de Art Flamenco" in Jerez in 1962 might not have happened.

Today, we have flamenco academies, study weeks and, of course, the important festivals. We take all of these things for granted. But in the first half of the 20th century, the Concurso de Cante Jondo de Granada stood alone to offer itself as a model for the future.

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3. Pohren, Donn, Lives and Legends of Flamenco, 1964.
4. Stanton, Edward F., The Tragic Myth: Lorca and Cante Jondo, 1970.



Records by American Guitarists

by Paco Sevilla

"LOS VIENTO DEL TIEMPO": The flamenco guitar of San Luis. (International Book and Record Distributors, 4011 24th St., Long Island City New York 11101.)

I find this record difficult to review for two reasons: First, solo guitar does not usually interest me a great deal, and guitarists who send me their solo records to review should realize the risk they run. Second, San Luis, a resident of New York, is an unusual guitarist--difficult to pin down or categorize. On listening to him, one is struck by a number of obvious qualities. His sound is strong and clear--and well recorded. The musical introductions for all of the numbers are very beautiful. Most of the time it is hard to trace the origins of his ideas; for the most part, he seems to fit neither in the old nor the new. San Luis is a lyrical musician; he seems to enjoy beautiful sounds and has the ability to savour single notes, to give them time to breathe and reach the listener. His rasgueos are strong and crisp, as are most of his other techniques; he uses technique to play music, not to dazzle the listener. His

arpeggios are generally good, tremelo is adequate, as is the picado, which is not used to show off speed; his thumbwork is not always strong, however, and he does not use alzapúa on this record; his strums have good attack, but are not particularly advanced in variety of technique, nor in rhythmic inventiveness.

Sound pretty good so far? It should! San Luis is a musician with good potential and he has produced an interesting record. But, in spite of that, I feel there is something that doesn't feel quite right. When San Luis plays falsetas, there is, at times, something about them that does not sound flamenco. Some falsetas do not seem to be in compás (a melody may count out correctly and yet still not "feel" in compás). Other falsetas do not sound flamenco due to an improper choice of plucked verses unplucked notes, improper choice of stressed verses unstressed notes, or, occasionally, weakness in attack.

In addition, to my taste, San Luis needs to pay more attention to composition. He tends to wander, scattering his beautiful ideas and mixing them at random. He is a lyrical guitarist and often his pieces are fantasy-like, musical thoughts coming and going without particular order. There are probably some listeners who will enjoy this approach. Almost all of the pieces have very dynamic and captivating introductions; unfortunately, it is difficult for some of the pieces to live up to their introductions.

Here are my feelings about the selections on the record: The strongest pieces are the siguriya and the granaina. The siguriya, especially, is filled with beautiful and inventive ideas; it is very melodic and not what one is accustomed to hearing. The granaina is more traditionally based, and the variations on old themes and the original passages lend great interest; I was sad to hear a fragment of Albéniz' "Asturias"--San Luis doesn't need that (at least, not on a record).

Interesting, although less well composed pieces, are the tangos, danza mora, and guajira. Both the danza mora and tango have many beautiful parts, but lack coherence as solo compositions, the danza mora having that fantasy quality with awkward transitions. The guajira is unusual in having most of the melody played within or during strumming techniques; almost the whole piece consists of rasqueado.

The least effective numbers are the soleá, rumba, and bulerías. The soleá has a gorgeous introduction and then falls apart;

it just does not sound like soleá nor good flamenco. The rumba suffers from weak falsetas and lack of structure. The bulerías counts out correctly and actually has more coherence than some of the other pieces, but I can not get comfortable with the feel of it as a bulerías--neither in the rasgueos, nor in the melodies. The closest thing I can compare it to would be a weak version of a Manolo Sanlúcar "cuplé-style" solo bulerías.

The zapateado is not in the same league with the other pieces on this record, being primarily a bastardization of Mario Escudero's "Repiqueteos Flamencos."

Conclusion: The pieces on this record can make interesting listening music. San Luis is talented and creative, has much potential, and deserves to be listened to. I would like to see him accompany and accompany, both singers and dancers, for a couple of years and, perhaps continue to listen to the established masters. With just a little bit more solid foundation to work from, he could be an outstanding soloist.

Additional notes: The album jacket, designed by San Luis, is beautifully done and the song titles are tasteful--"Fiesta de Cádiz"(tango), "Los Vientos del Tiempo"(soleá), "Taconeo Brillante"(zapateado), etc. San Luis was kind enough to share some of the methods he used to make the record. He did the taping in his apartment with a TEAC A-6100 ½-track master tape recorder and two Shure microphones (the quality of the sound is excellent). He took the tape to a studio to have it sequenced (no editing was done) and some reverb added. He then had the records pressed.

This record can be ordered directly from San Luis by sending \$6.95 to:

St. Louis
231 W. 13th St.
New York, N.Y. 10011

RODRIGO IN CONCERT

May 15th

WILSHIRE EBELL

With El Yuri

Remedios Flores Maria Diaz

and guest artists

Juana DeAlva & Diego Robles



ARTISTS IN PROFILE

LA CONJA

by El Chileno

Conja Abdessalam was born in Los Angeles, California; her father is Egyptian -- thus her name, Conja, which is often mispronounced or misspelled "Concha."

Conja began her study of flamenco dance at the age of ten; her first teachers were Teo Morca and Luisa Triana in Los Angeles. A few years later, she traveled to Spain where she studied with Tomás de Madrid, Manolo Marín, and Ciro. About five years ago she became interested in singing as well. In this respect she is pretty much self-taught, although she has worked with

Rubina Carmona and her experience with Carmen Mora's company facilitated her development.

While in Spain, Conja performed extensively in Los Canasteros (the tablao of Manolo Caracol) and El Corral de la Pacheca among others. She recently finished a tour with the Boston Flamenco Ballet, October through December of 1980, which covered most of the United States. As far as the future goes, Conja plans to return to Spain, probably this spring, and stay for an indefinite period of time. Conja is presently appearing nightly at El Cid in Los Angeles with guitarist Antonio Durán.

FLAMENCADA

Make your plans now to join other Jaleistas and members of the Casa de España (San Diego chapter) on a two week tour through the cradle of flamenco September 5th to the 20th. Planned itinerary includes visiting Mijas, Ronda, Sevilla, Jerez de la Frontera, Granada, El Puerto de Santa María, Algeciras, Ceuta, Tetuán and finishing up in the nation's capital with excursions to Toledo, Avila, Segovia, El Escorial and la Granja. We will catch at least one of the two nights at the flamenco festival "Tablaos Flamencos de la Vendimia" (see Jaleo March 1981) and another flamenco night at the ranch "Hacienda de Toros" and three free evenings in Madrid to visit tablaos if you wish. The \$1,500 price includes air fare from San Diego, first class bus transportation throughout the tour, hotels, main meals and excursions. Individuals may extend their stay up to six months by prior arrangement. For more detailed information call:

Reynolds Heriot 714/926-6800





LATE ANNOUNCEMENTS

MOSAICO FLAMENCO, with Pilar Moreno, Deanna, and Paco Sevilla, will perform Sundays (8-12:00 PM) in April at the Blue Parrot restaurant, 1298 Prospect in La Jolla.

GINO D'AURI IN CONCERT: Gino D'Auri will present a concert of solo flamenco music, using an amplified guitar and electronic effects, on Friday, April 24 (8:00), at the Center of the Form, 1453-B 14th St., Santa Monica, Ca. Tickets are \$6.00.

TEO MORCA IN FINLAND: Ari Salin of Finland tells us that local aficionados saw a television performance by Teo Morca, doing his flamenco version of a theme by J.S.Bach. He adds, "Small world, isn't it?"

PACO DE LUCIA: Ken Sanders, one of our L.A. area correspondents, talked to Paco de Lucía on the phone and tells us that Paco will be back in the USA for another series of concerts with DiMeola and McLaughlin in April. Also, Lucía's new album should be out in a few months. The March issue of Guitar Player had an interview with Paco and the other members of the trio.

FOR SALE: 1966 José Ramirez flamenco guitar. First model, pegs, excellent condition. \$2000 or best offer. Call: 406?728-1957.

IN SEARCH OF the following record which was released in France around 1960 "Paco Espinosa Et Sa Guitare Flamenco", Festival FX 1108M. Would like to obtain the original or a cassette of it. Would appreciate any inf. Marco Medina, 1267 Bernard West #1, Outremont Quebec, CANADA H2V1V8

EL MESON FLAMENCO in Alexandria, VA features dancer Ana Martínez with guitarist Paco de Málaga.

EL TIO PEPE in Georgetown features dancer Raquel Peña and guitarist Fernando Sirvent.

EL CARIBE in two locations - Columbia Road and Georgetown, DC area - features guitarist Torcuato Zamora.

EL BODEGÓN on 1637 R Street NW (DC area) features dancers María Candelas, Natalia Monteleón, guitarist Carlos Ramos and cantaor Manolo Leiva.

ARCHIVO

The Making of an Anthology

by Caballero Bonald

(translated by Brad Blanchard)

(Editor's note: This is the fourth in a series that will run for the better part of a year. The readers should keep in mind that the recording of the "Archivo del cante flamenco" was done in the years preceding 1967. Many of the artists who are described in these articles are no longer living.)

PART IV - UTRERA

Utrera is a pueblo that is eminently Andalusian. But this attribute by itself does not mean too much. It is well-known that Andalucía is not a country, but rather a complex unity of countries, each differentiated by very visible physical and spiritual characteristics. The Andalucía of Utrera is, of course, that which finds its most definitive representation in Sevilla. It doesn't fit, apparently, the concept of a tragic Andalucía, but there is something in its happy outward appearance of vitality that contains a good dose of hidden pathos. Utrera, like all of these pueblos, is rich in land and livestock, generous to a few and miserly for many.

The local cantes -- the ones

reelaborated masterfully by La Serneta and Juaniquí, by El Pinini and Rosario la del Colorao -- were born, as is the norm, in those miserable gypsy communities that blanketed the fertile landscape of Sevilla, mixing themselves initially with groups of Moors and "campesinos" (country people) without land. Geographically, and also from the historic point of view of flamenco, Utrera is situated on a cross-roads. It influenced and was influenced by the cantes of Triana and Jerez, of Alcalá and Lebrija and -- in a very curious manner -- by some styles of cantiñas and bulerías of Cádiz. The flamenco forms of Utrera -- above all, its prodigious soleares -- have incorporated all of the pure, solemn and emotional intensity of the primitive cante. Its creative dynamism has been in this respect, exemplary.

We were in this fortress of flamenco on two different occasions after the first exploratory visit. Our purpose was to gather from Utrera those examples which could best represent the two branches of flamenco -- the professional and the more or less anonymous. For that purpose, we already counted on Fernanda y Bernarda de Utrera, cantaoras sufficiently well-known outside of the local area, on Miguel el de Angustias, a butcher by profession and also a person quite removed from flamenco professionalism, and on El Perrate, an itinerant laborer. After much coming and going, we accomplished the first meeting in a mill outside of Utrera. We were in the middle of deep olive orchards, exuberant orange groves and the interminable pastures. There was an unspoken ceremonial atmosphere in this mill which had been converted into an improvised -- and unexpected -- flamenco stage, thanks to the good disposition and the afición of its owner. The preparation for the "fiesta" was somewhat laborious. It was already in the early morning hour when the first true signs of cante were heard. Manuel el de Angustias and el Perrate were with us.

Manuel el de Angustias is a middle-aged gypsy, dark-skinned, neat and well-integrated into the society of Utrera in spite of conserving his racial purity. He lives freely and sings only for his friends. He is one of the organizers of the so-called "Potaje," a type of annual celebration, like a ritual examination, where the best -- and more scarce -- group of cantaores of the district gather. The long series of soleares that Manuel el de Angustias sang served to link together,

without prior arrangement, the styles of Alcalá and Triana, although modified by the local coloring. He didn't know, of course, how to establish boundaries in the succession of these cantes. It's even possible to say that one couldn't put definite boundaries -- although one could in their essential profiles -- on the similarities and differences between the soleares of Triana and Jerez, Cádiz and Utrera, Lebrija and Alcalá. In the first place, we aren't sure which were the first primitive soleares of Triana. Manuel el de Angustias thinks that each gypsy sings what he heard sung in his own circle; if what that cante carries within is true, nothing else matters. It's possible that by the middle of the last century, and by means of the competition and creative stimulus created by the cafés cantantes, that an intertwining was produced in the diverse styles of soleares that were then known. The variants of Jerez, Triana, Utrera and Alcalá must have influenced each other through the mouths of their interpreters, mixing some of their most characteristic attributes. Today we know, for example, which were the soleares of la Seneta, bound to Triana and Utrera because that is where the great cantaora of the past century lived, and of those of Joaquín el de la Paula which were native to -- like their creator -- Alcalá; we know this in the same way that we know the siguiriyas of Diego el Marruro, cante and cantaor from Jerez, or those of Enrique el Mellizo from Cádiz. With respect to the many branches of these songs, perhaps it is not proper to speak of "local" soleares and siguiriyas, but rather of personal styles. Each cantaor must have created a form based on a tradition common to the original nucleus of flamenco. It's evident that when these were created they had to be first reduced to a basic modality, and later divided and subdivided according to the virtue of the versions expressed by any particular interpreter.

El Perrate de Utrera is a worthy exponent of the local cantes. In his examples of soleares there are no specific distinctions, but in them is reproduced with evident faithfulness the aire of a style that still has not been decomposed by public adaptations. El Perrate is a gypsy with legitimate flamenco credentials. His grandfather was a poor but great cantaor that no one knew of, and El Perrate is married to a daughter of Manuel Torre; his sister -- la Perrata, mother of Juan el

Lebrijano -- is a very interesting cantaora from Lebrija. These are the only things that appear important to him when we question him about his notions concerning flamenco. He has grown up since childhood in this climate; he sings because he has learned how to sing. When man is missing that which is most necessary, the cante becomes an intimate form of expressing that necessity. It is like the treacherous and evasive saying, "cantando la pena, la pena se olvida" (singing about suffering, the suffering is forgotten). Without knowing how to explain it, El Perrate makes us understand that flamenco was born when the gypsy was trying to free himself from the anguish of his difficult jobs and his long experience of injustice. Flamenco has never been a work song; rather it has been an anguished method of extroversion springing up during idle moments from the harshly punished heart of the race. El Perrate seems to intuit that, if flamenco didn't exist, gypsies would have to invent something similar to let loose that knot of human uneasiness that boils inside. Perhaps for this it was born.

We again returned to Utrera, during a second trip on these Andalusian trails. We previously had set a date with Fernanda and Bernarda, professional cantaoras whose participation in the "Archive" we considered indispensable. Fernanda is one of the purest and most qualified contemporary artists in the cante por soleares. Her sister Bernarda is a cantaora in a lighter flamenco vein, but here cantes "por fiestas" and her bulerías with the flavor of Utrera are also perfect examples of compás and expressive emotion. Both have performed outside of Spain and they have been able to buy a house with their savings. Of their travels they have only the diffuse and picturesque memories common to all gypsies who have traveled outside of Spain, that is, the deformed and rudimentary notion of a world seen with an inborn capacity for understanding and assimilating it. Fernanda and Bernarda have achieved, in the meantime, what they wanted most: their own house in their pueblo. It is moving to see these two gypsies, after having recently left their needy family circles, show with overflowing pride the now secure -- and legal -- evidence of their property. The distance between the original style of life in which flamenco developed and its latest conquests are radical also from a material point of view. It continues to be explicable --

and desirable -- that it has happened in this way.

Fernanda and Bernarda were waiting for us in their house, where they had organized a small party. They were going to Paris the next day. We arrived at midnight, after looking for and picking up in Seville the guitarist Eduardo el de la Malena. The whole family was already gathered and waiting for us: the elderly mother (who recently died) an aunt -- María Peña, who sang without guitar and without power some old cantifias of Rosario la del Colorao, half jota gaditana and half soleá bailable -- and an abundant group of discrete relatives and annoying "animadores profesionales" (overenthusiastic onlookers). The party, slow at first, soon turned into that intertwined and unforeseeable magic of intimate gypsy gatherings. We had thought that the simple act of installing the recording equipment might have disturbed that atmosphere which was so expressly appropriate. Several people did seem a little bothered by the comings and goings of the sound technician, who was trying to set up the apparatus in a back room of the house; he must have seemed suspicious to them.

Fernanda has inherited from her elders all of the whole and primitive purity of flamenco. Her soleares are truly unsurpassable. No one has reworked and enriched, in our days, the shining record of local tradition as she has. The old styles of Utrera -- intertwined, at times, with those of Alcalá and Triana -- go together admirably in the very noble, sobbing, and profound expression of Fernanda. We believe that more than a century ago her family must have produced one of those characteristic gypsy focal points where flamenco was shaped by the communicative formulas into that which we know today. Fernanda and Bernarda -- grandchildren of El Pinini -- speak of the cante "de los suyos" (of their own people), of the gatherings in which the gypsy girls of Utrera have participated, of the almost religious encounters with the great cantaoras who were still living. Fernanda captures with a masterful "cultura de la sangre" (culture in her blood) the tragic and sumptuous root of that legacy, while Bernarda has the most genuine "festeria" outpouring. In one way or another, all human feeling and artistic temperament of local flamenco history appear powerfully integrated in the expressive fervor of these two optimal cantaoras.

Fernanda and Bernarda's mother loved to fill in information about flamenco for her daughters. She alluded, with sharp emotion, to Merced la Serneta and to Juaniquí (born respectively in Jerez and Lebrija, but who lived and forged their flamenco styles in Utrera), to el Pinini and to Rosario del Colorao, to the cantaores of "the household," who despised celebrity, and to the ostentatious gypsy rituals of the end of the century. Uncle Juaniquí lived in a shack, far from the pueblos, like a hermit. Those were different times, when the inveterate poverty of the flamenco creators could still be wielded with willful dignity against the false tinsel of fame. "You now see," said this elderly and pleasant gypsy woman, "those who are starting now only listen to the radio. And later, it is as if they are bored when they sing. To sing the truth, you need to have lived that truth beforehand."

And she was right. Her opinion is closely linked to the already mentioned essential difference that exists between a cantaor who narrates his own life and another who limits himself to repeating themes and concepts foreign to his experience. We insist that the creator of the

JUERGA DEL SUR

At the insistence of a multitude of Yankee aficionados, we are organizing our first Confederate juerga to be held Memorial Day weekend, May 22-25, at the height of honeysuckle season here in Georgia. In addition to the usual flamenco shenanigans there will be swimming and tennis available nearby, fishing on the Chattahoochee, Atlanta, a half-hour drive to the south, and the mountains an hour drive to the north. We will try to accommodate as many as possible -- a pattern of sleeping in shifts usually develops, with everyone just conking out on the floor at the end (this is not as orgiastic as it sounds). All flamencos are welcome -- this would be a great opportunity for southern aficionados to mobilize. For more specific information and directions write or call:

Marta del Cid
773 Nile Drive
Alpharetta, GA 30201
Tel.: 404-993-3062

cante is one thing and the transmitter of it is another. And that has nothing to do with the fact that today's cante may stylistically be better than ever, in spite of having resigned from its inner social nurturing and running the risk of being converted into a falsified product for exportation.

SAN DIEGO SCENE

by Juana De Alva

FEBRUARY JUERGA

The Junta's cry for juerga sites "Don't be intimidated by the size of your house!" was answered by a last minute offer of a home in the South Bay area. The proposed Oakwood recreational facility never materialized and our apologies to anyone who was not notified of the change of plans. The cuadro leaders have since held a strategy meeting and promise that, in the future, juerga information will be timely and accurate.

Our hosts for the February juerga were Carmen and Harold Outcult. Carmen was born in a small town, Tierrantona, in Zaragoza, Spain. She has been in the United States for fifteen years. Harold, now retired from the Air Force, was stationed in Zaragoza and involved in amateur judo competition. It was at one of these competitions (which Carmen's family had come to observe) that Harold and Carmen met. After an extended courtship, they were married and, on Harold's retirement from the Air Force, they moved to the USA and the San Diego Area. Neither had had much exposure to flamenco until joining Jaleistas but had always enjoyed "la musica alegre y la musica sentimental."

The juerga was definitely alegre and warm in the intimate surroundings. Many of the regulars were there plus some long time abs absentees. Dancer Rosala Moreno who now resides in Santander, Spain, was back in San Diego for a brief visit and guitarist Charles Blankenship is back after several years of world travel and flamenco experiences (which we hope that he will share with Jaleo). Magdalena, from Mexicali danced her alegrías to quadrasonic guitar accompaniment (El Yuri,

Charles, El Chileno and Roberto Vázquez); Ernesto and Julia joined in many Sevillanas and La Camarona dominated la sala with bulerías and soleá. A few photos were turned in but Jaleo must plead guilty to having misplaced them. Look for them in a future issue when they turn up.

APRIL JUERGA

This month's juerga will be hosted by Cuadro B in the home of Larry and Ana Gilbert. Ana, born in Barcelona, Spain, was educated in a convent. She became a registered nurse at which she has worked all her life. She came to the United States in 1956. She has always enjoyed dancing and has made up and performed her own Spanish dances. It was not until she moved to San Diego and joined Jaleistas, however, that she became interested in flamenco dance which she is now studying.

Larry Gilbert was born in Florida. A retired naval officer, he was exposed to flamenco on his several visits to Spain on his tour of duty, though the best flamenco he saw, he reports, was on the island of Malta. Larry and Ana met in 1963 at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center where he was involved in training recruits and she as an R.N. They were married the same year and moved to San Diego in 1966. Both are active in La Casa De España and Jaleistas. Larry is studying Spanish and flamenco also.

We thank Ana and Larry for offering their home. Cuadro B members are listed in the junta report.

Date: Saturday, April 18
 Place: 1130 Via Trieste, Chula Vista
 Phone: 426-7659
 Time: 8:00 p.m. to ?
 Bring: Tapa (hors d'oeuvres)
 Guests: By reservation only -- call Thor or Peggy Hanson at 448-4139.

Donation: \$5.00 for guests (non-members or non-Jaleo subscribers). Exempt are subscribers who live over 100 miles from San Diego or first guest of member holding single-plus-guest card.

Directions: (From I-5 take "L Street" East, right on Melrose, left on East Naples, right on Via Trieste. (From I-805) take Telegraph Canyon Rd (west), left (south) on Nation (1st light), right on East Naples, to Via Trieste. PLEASE PARK ON EAST NAPLES.

THEME OF THE MONTH

In order to lend variety to the juergas we're going to try to have something special every month. This month the theme will be TANGOS. So listen to your records, brush up on your tangos letras, steps and falcetas and palmas and come prepared to share.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements are free of charge to subscribers. They will be placed for two months if appropriate and must be received by the 1st of the month prior to their appearance. Include phone number and area code for use in the DIRECTORY. Send to JALEO, P.O. BOX 4706, San Diego, CA 92104. JALEO CORRESPONDENTS

If you would like to assist JALEO by acting as a correspondent for your city, please contact our P.O. Box and let us know. We need to have an update at least every two months.

updates

JESUS SORIANO & BENITO GARRIDO are featured Sunday afternoons 1:00-4:00 at El Moro Cuisine in San Diego. They sing & play popular Spanish songs. Call: 222-2883.

VICENTE ROMERO'S TABLAO FLAMENCO is presently engaged in a two month 18 state educational tour, bringing flamenco to young audiences across the country. Prior to performances a packet of supplemental information including a teacher's guide and the history of Spanish dance is provided to help increase the students' understanding and appreciation of the performance.

EL CID in Los Angeles now features Antonio Durán, Concha De Morón, Antonio Sánchez, Juan Talavera, Ana María Suarez and Rosal Ortega on Thur. through Sun. and Marcos & Rubina Carmona Tues. and Wed.

RENÉ HEREDIA presented 3 concerts in March at the Monastery Restaurant in Denver, Colo. with his "Flamenco Fusion" group which includes bongos and bass player. LA ROMERA is now available for private and group flamenco dance lessons in the Seattle, Wash. area. Call 206/283-1368.

MORCA DANCE THEATER will be in residence Apr 2-4 at Florida Keys Comm. College, Key West, FL and Apr 23-25 at Pioneer Arts, Sequim, WA. They just completed 3 other residences, 2 in WA and one in GA where Teo was setting a choreography for the Savannah Ballet.

ZORONGO FLAMENCO will be in residence on Apr. 8-10 at the U. of Wisc. at Stevens Point, Apr 23-25 at Itasca & Hibbing, Minn. Comm. Colleges and Apr 30-May 2 at the U. of Minn., St. Paul and Minneapolis campuses. This group, which features guitarist Michael Hauser, Dancer Suzanne Hauser and singer "La Cordobesa," is presently performing at Señor T's in St. Paul, Minn.

concerts

ZORONGO FLAMENCO will make a dinner theater appearance at the U. of Wisc. at Menomonie on Apr 1 and concerts Apr 13 at Mich. Tech. U. -- Houghton, Mich., and May 1 and 2 at the St. Paul campus student center. Joining Zorongo for this tour will be dancer Manolo Rivera and singer Dominic Caro. Laura Moja Spanish Dance Company will present a concert featuring three choreographic premiers Apr 2, 8:00pm, Phoenix Jewish Center.

Guitarist Peter Baime will perform a solo concert at the U. of Minnesota, Apr 9, 8:00pm and for the opening reception at the Canadian guitar festival, GUITAR '81, Toronto, Canada, June 22, 6:00pm.

Mano A Mano guitar concert featuring Anita Sheer and Laurie Randolph. Apr 4, 2:00pm, at The New School, 66 W 12 St., New York City. Phone 212/741-5687.

Rodrigo in Concert with singers Yorgo Grecia, Remedios Flores and María José Díaz, guitarist El Yuri, and guest dancers Juana De Alva and Diego Robles, Wilshire Ebell Theater, May 15, 8:00pm, L.A.

classified

Guitarist Wanted by dance company, regularly booked. Write BALLETT FIESTA, P.O. Box 02315, Portland, OR 97202 or call: 503/775-1026 or 636-5940.

Panaderos Flamencos, by Esteban Delgado recorded by Paco de Lucía -- accurately notated sheet music: \$2.75 in USA, \$4.50 foreign, Southwest Waterloo Publishing Co., 6708 Beckett Rd., Austin, TX 78749.

Rosa Montoya's Bailes Flamencos is currently available for the 1981-1982 booking season. The company consists of ten performers and presents both flamenco and classical Spanish. For more information contact: Donald Cate, 734 Arkansas St., S.F., CA 94107 415/826-2998.

Mini Workshops and Choreographies by Teo Morca available through 1981. Write to Morca Academy, 1349 Franklin, Bellingham, WA 98225 or call: 206/676-1864.

Guitar Music Available: Music of many top artists, both modern and old style, transcribed by Peter Baime, 1100 W. River, Park Lane, Milwaukee, WI 53209.

For Sale. Books by Don Pohren, music by Mario Escudero and Sábicas, plus a complete line of guitar supplies (strings 1/2 price). The Blue Guitar, see ad for location.

Guitarists and Guitar Students Welcome to accompany dance classes. Call Juana 442-5362 (San Diego).

Back Issues of Jaleo Available: Vol. I no. 1 to 6 \$1.00 each. All others \$2.00 each. Add \$1.00 per copy for overseas orders.

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FLAMENCO COSTUMES:

Clara Martinez 714/831-2596

DICTIONARY OF FLAMENCO

REMATE (EL) - the closing of a cante by switching to a different, but related, cante, such as closing a solea with a change to the tones of alegrías or to a bulerías.

RIO GUADALQUIVIR - the "flamenco" river that crosses most of Andalucía, passing through or near many flamenco centers from the Cádiz area to Córdoba, with headwaters near Granada.

ROCÍO - located in "Las Marismas" (swamp-lands) between Cádiz and Huelva; the site of the annual Romería de Rocío (pilgrimage to Rocío) in May; a time of much merrymaking and a fair amount of flamenco; the occasion gave rise to the sevillanas rocieras, the most popular style of sevillanas.

ROMANCE(EL) - a story sung in flamenco song form.

ROMERÍA (la) - religious pilgrimage; occasion for much merrymaking and sometimes flamenco.

SACROMONTE - the old gypsy quarter of Granada, made up of cave homes; now mostly deserted except for some of the larger ones reserved for tourist flamenco shows.

SALA DE FIESTAS (la) - a room where entertainment such as flamenco is presented; a tablao.

SALIDA(la) - singer's entrance or "tune up;" also called "temple" from the verb "templar" (to tune); the dancer's entrance.

SEMANA SANTA (la) - Holy Week, the week before Easter; in Andalucía, the traditional

time for the singing of the saetas.

SEVILLA - the famous flamenco city in the heart of flamenco country; there is still a considerable amount of flamenco activity and flamenco is still a way of life in some of the surrounding pueblos like Alcalá de Guadaira, Utrera, Dos Hermanas, Los Palacios, Mairena del Alcor, and Morón de la Frontera. Here were born the soleares and forms of the bulerías, tangos and fandangos grandes, as well as the popular sevillanas; the inhabitants are called sevillanos(as).

SILENCIO (el) - part of the alegrías where graceful arm and body movements are emphasized, with almost a complete absence of footwork; it is not sung and is commonly played in the minor mode on the guitar.

SOLO DE PIE (el) - a section of footwork done without guitar or cante - usually accompanied by palmas.

SORDINA (la) - Anything placed under the strings to muffle the sound during practice

SOSTENUDO - sharp, as in C# (Do sostenudo)

SON (EL) - literally "sound" or "tone"; used in flamenco to mean basic rhythm or beat, as when a singer says to a guitarist "Hazme son" (give me some rhythm) so he can sing.

TABLAO (el) - a nightclub that presents a complete cuadro as entertainment.

TACÓN (el) - the heel; the striking of the heel against the floor; also, the heel of the guitar.

TACONEO (el) - heelwork; sometimes used to refer to any footwork.

TAPA (la) - The top or sound board of the guitar; sometimes called LA TAPA HARMONICA.

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