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LYDIA TOREA

"THE BLONDE GYPSY
BRINGS HOME TRADITION"

(from: Arizona, Feb. 22, 1981)

by Maxine Olmsted

The women entered the sprawling, U-shaped building in the northwest Phoenix and walked along a short hallway. They could hear castanets purring and clicking heels rapping and hands clapping. It was not the staccato sound of applause, but fuller tones, more purposeful.

A class in Spanish dance was warming up. Lydia Torea was at her desk, finishing a phone conversation. Someone said she thought of hand-clapping as, well, just hand-clapping, and didn't know there could be so much to it.

Miss Torea offered the expert explanation: "There are two kinds of hand claps in flamenco dance." Not counting the applause kind, of which Miss Torea has had her share. "One is the sorda. The fingers are closed and the palms of both hands are cupped so that when they slowly strike together a low, muffled sound results." That was one sound coming from her studio.

"The other is the abierta," Miss Torea continued. "The palms don't meet. Instead, the closed fingers of one hand, forming a paddle, rapidly strike the hollowed palm of the other, causing a higher, sharper sound."

The Lydia Torea Dance Conservatory has the traditional equipment of a ballet studio: wooden floors, barres and a mirrored wall.

"Ballet is a necessary background for so many physical activities," Miss Torea said. "It's my understanding that some athletic coaches even give their teams exercises comparable to ballet's barre and center floor work. Many years ago flamenco dancers, in particular, as opposed to classical Spanish



LYDIA TOREA AND MANOLO RIVERA

dancers, wouldn't waste time on ballet training. Eventually, they came to recognize and appreciate the beauty of the quality known as 'line' that ballet background gives their performance."

Miss Torea knows. As a teenager, she was dancing with Europe's leading gypsy company when it performed for the king and queen of Belgium at the royal couple's command invitation. Two years later, as female dance lead of the Jose Greco Spanish Dance Company, she partnered with Greco in another command performance at England's Covent Garden at the royal invitation (command) of Queen Elizabeth II.

Three years later, in her early twenties, she formed her own Spanish dance company. Rudolf Nureyev, then guest principal dancer with the Robert Joffrey Ballet Company, had heard of her. He went to see her company perform at New York's Liborio Restaurant, a place noted for dance-knowledgeable audiences. Nureyev returned twice with members of the Joffrey Ballet to watch Miss Torea and her company bring audiences to their feet.

Earlier, at North High in Phoenix, the blonde pom-pon girl used other methods to

bring students to their feet.

Lydia Dolores Dzambik knew by the time that she was 10 that she was going to be a dancer and that Spanish, flamenco and classical would be her medium. Born in Lorain, Ohio, the only child of a Czechoslovakian father and Spanish mother, Miss Torea was the star of doting parents, Spanish grandparents and a Spanish uncle.

She acquired the Spanish language by osmosis: Her grandmother spoke no English. "So," Miss Torea said, "I had no choice. All day long I heard nothing but Spanish from my grandmother and English from the others. You learn to understand each language separately. I've never translated from one to the other."

One winter her parents vacationed in Arizona and were so delighted with this part of the West that they sold their Ohio home and eventually moved to Phoenix. "The house was always full of music and laughter," Miss Torea said. "I think they go hand in hand. Mom sang in church choirs and at weddings. I'd twirl and dance. I remember when I was about three years old -- this was in Lorain -- an aunt gave me a grass skirt. It was heaven to me, a real live costume. I think that was the beginning of my interest in dance.



LYDIA AT THE AGE OF NINE

"In Phoenix Mom started me when I was about eight years old with Dorothy Hamilton. I took a few ballet classes and then changed to the Jack Cione studio which was closer to home. I took tap, jazz, ballet, for maybe three months. About that time we joined a Spanish club.

"We learned that Eddie Fernandez, a cook at the Veteran's Hospital, was going to teach Spanish dancing. I was fascinated. I'd never seen it, but because Mama was from Spain that's what I wanted to do. I started with Eddie when I was about eight and a half, and thirty years later I'm still Spanish dancing."

Her talent and the intangible called presence were such that by the time she was ten Fernandez said that she must study ballet along with flamenco. He sent her to Mary Girard Tierney. "I was with her off and on for several years and returned to her even after I'd joined the Greco company."

Miss Torea first travelled to Spain when she was 11. Her grandmother wanted to visit her own mother in Galicia, northern Spain, and Miss Torea's mother wanted her to study with El Estampío, one of the great masters of flamenco, in Madrid.

Miss Torea laughed. "It's not what you know, it's who you know. We had a letter of recommendation to El Estampío from a symphony conductor who was a friend of a friend of our family.

"El Estampío lived in an old section of Madrid. We went up three flights of rickety steps to his apartment. The master teacher couldn't have been more than five feet tall. He was wearing a shabby little robe and slippers. He looked at me in surprise and jabbered 'Onononono, much too young. You'll be here only four weeks? You can't learn anything in that time. I take only professionals.'

"Mama pleaded and begged until he finally weakened, but with a warning: He had four schools of zapateado -- heel work -- and he thought I'd be able to learn only the first school.

"Immediately he wanted to change my name. As a young man he'd been a bullfighter and had been badly gored. "Lidiar" in bullfighting is to fight the bull with a large cape -- 'lidiar el toro.' My second name, Dolores, he simply shrugged aside, saying, 'We'll call you Lolita.' Incidentally, when I later chose my mother's maiden name, Torea, as my professional second name, I learned that "torear" means to bullfight. So my name, Lydia Torea, means double.

"Apparently I was a quick study with

Estampío because we stayed six weeks rather than four. I learned all four schools. He cried the day we left for America. He wanted me to stay and study with him, but Mama wasn't about to leave me there.

"I promised I'd be back as soon as I'd finished grade and high schools. We kept in touch, but he died just three months before I returned to Spain."

Meanwhile, Miss Torea was dancing in Phoenix Musical Theater productions, Fernandez' programs, and at small conventions. One summer vacation when she was 13, her mother took her to Mexico City where she concentrated on Spanish classical dance. But when high school graduation came in 1960, they were on a ship to Spain and Madrid.

"We had to go by ship," Miss Torea said, laughing. "A plane couldn't have got off the ground loaded with all our trunks. Most Spanish dance costumes require so much packing space with their multiple tiers of ruffles and trains, the many pairs of hose, bulky fans, and then, of course, Mama and I had our own wardrobes to bring."

She had a year of study in Madrid with Spain's foremost teachers: Hector Zaraspe, ballet; Regla Ortega, flamenco; and Alberto Lorca, classical Spanish. During that year she had her first professional work, starting in the Corral de la Moreria: "A tablao flamenco. It's a restaurant-nightclub where only flamenco is performed. You have a marvelous dinner and you sip wine and have cheeses and bread and see flamenco. I worked in a cuadro where everyone but myself was an authentic gypsy. Their hair was so black and mine so blonde. I'd arrive for work in my starched pink crinolines. I looked like I still was on North High's pom-pon line."

A classical company, Ballet Español de Alberto Prodillo, followed Corral de la Moreria. Then came the gypsy company, Sonidos Negros, an all-flamenco company, which danced for Belgium's King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola.

Soon after her year of study, Miss Torea auditioned for the Greco company. Greco didn't believe she was a natural blonde. She was placed in the chorus the first year. Her coloring was so different from that of the Spanish brunettes that Greco insisted she dye her hair "back to its natural black." But the persistent blonde roots constantly needed tinting. Greco had to concede she was a blonde and blonde she has remained.

Greco chose her for his female lead when the company received the command performance invitation from England's Queen Elizabeth.

"This was in 1962," Miss Torea said.



LYDIA WITH NUREYEV

"Maria Callas was on the same bill. We performed for the Queen of England and all the royalty. Oh, the fanfare."

During the last of her three years with Greco, she had a cameo role in the motion picture Ship of Fools. Her audition was the kind every young actor yearns for. The director had seen her dance. He'd learned she was an American, which would eliminate time lost while his directions were translated into Spanish. When she was taken to him, very nervous, for the audition, he assured her he was impressed with her dancing but wondered about her acting ability.

"I don't know where I found the guts to say it," Miss Torea said, "but I looked him straight in the eye and said, 'Dancing is acting, too. You do it through facial expression and movement. You do the same with acting on a screen.' I never did have a screen test. When told I had the role I thought, 'Omygod, what if I can't do it?'"

"That was thirteen weeks of sheer bliss. Whether I was to work that day or not, I'd go to the studio to watch the filming. It was a busman's grand holiday."

Forget the glamour of concert touring. "Each year we would start with a United States tour, and when they say one-nighters they mean one-nighters. We'd swallow a ton of miles in a six-month period. When we had two nights in the same hotel we thought we'd gone to heaven.

"It was get up every morning at six, ride all day in the bus, get out, rush to see if you could find a grocery store to have something decent to eat when the show was over,



LYDIA WITH HER GUITARIST EDUARDO SANTIAGO FIGUEROA

because in a lot of little cities they roll up the sidewalk at nine o'clock. You can't live on hot dogs.

"We cooked in our rooms, against hotel rules. My roommate and I carried a real live little kitchen -- an electric fry pan, a plate each, our own utensils, cups, and glasses. But if we wanted soup and steak, we made the soup first, ate it, cleaned the pan and then cooked the steak.

"Of course it wasn't all one-nighters. We worked Las Vegas two years in a row at the Riviera Hotel with Tony Martin, we did the Greek Theater, the Hollywood Bowl. We toured Mexico, Canada, Sweden, Norway, Copenhagen, Reykjaví, Iceland.

"Ship of Fools wound up my three years with Greco. I returned to Spain and formed my own company. It was all flamenco -- a gypsy couple, female singer, guitarist, and two male dancers. I also did all the choreography and costuming. And believe me, when Nureyev made those three visits at the Liborio restaurant, I was more nervous than I ever was dancing for royalty. Nureyev and his Joffrey friends were authorities.

We played Puerto Rico's Caribe Hilton Hotel, the Hollywood Palace, Phoenix's Sombrero Playhouse for a week. I don't remember how many weeks we were at the Liborio. We did several gigs on the borscht circuit in northern New York State.

The responsibilities of choreographing, designing costumes, attracting engagements, rehearsing a tired company, catching transportation, performing no matter how rotten she felt, attempting peaceful arbitration among artists with low boiling points all began to pall after a year and a half. Miss Torea disbanded the company and sent the members back to Spain. She worked one summer in Santa Fe, New Mexico, but when her parents moved to Las Vegas she settled there, too.

"I was just kind of tired of the whole thing," she said. "I decided to stay put for awhile. I got a job as a dancer in the Folies Bergere chorus at the Tropicana Hotel. I jumped around with everybody else wearing all those crazy hats and feathers. But I didn't have to think and I didn't have to worry. It was like a rest period. It also fed my depleted bank account.

"I did some concerts in Los Angeles and Burbank and then returned to the Tropicana where I learned they needed a Spanish team for Cugat and Charo who would be arriving to do a Christmas program. I auditioned, made it and was with Cugey and Charo for four hilarious, wonderful years."

She miled in memory. "We had a marvelous, long tour in Japan. Oh, let me tell you: There's a difference in audience response and the greatest difference I thought was in Japan. At the end of a number there's a



LYDIA IN HER STUDIO IN PHOENIX

picked up and went to Spain. For four months I took classes, went to the theater, visited my family, just mingled with the flamenco scene.

"It was a rejuvenation. I decided to move to Phoenix, my home, and open a studio!"

This is where Lydia's parents and husband, Bruce Henderson, got in the act. The four of them bought a church building in the northwest Phoenix and converted it into a large dance studio and two residences.

Besides teaching, Miss Torea has formed Artes Bellas, a group promoting exposure to the Hispanic performing and fine arts for elementary schools as well as for the public.

Miss Torea has been rehearsing for a concert March 4 through 7 at the Performing Arts Center. Her partner will be Manolo Rivera. They and other artists will present folk, flamenco and classical Spanish works.

"It pleases me to know," she said, "that there is a group of Americans who are the best in classical Spanish and flamenco dancing. We had intense Spanish training with the very best teachers. When we've returned to America we've kept the authenticity and purity of this kind of dance. Maria Alba, Roberto Amaral, Maria Benítez, Felipe de la Rosa, Roberto Lorca, Teodoro Morca, Manolo Rivera, to mention a few. All of these are American-born.

We studied in Spain at a time when that country was in its heyday of great teachers. We have maintained those standards."




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split-second pause, then the people tilt their heads to the right and nod three times, nod three, clap three, and continue this strange procedure. It's scattered, not in unison, and not having encountered it before it took a couple of performances for me to accept it. Well, there was Hawaii, Minneapolis, and, of course, Acapulco -- now there's a wonderful audience. We did Las Vegas often at the Tropicana.

"And then I retired. For three years I didn't touch my palillos -- castanets -- my shoes got cobwebs, my ruffles were packed in the trunk. I was tired of working. I didn't even practice. I ran bets in Las Vegas at MGM's Jai-Alai, the hotel that burned recently.

"Then one day I looked at myself and said, 'There's no future in this, dummy.' So I

EDITORIAL

The response to the forthcoming Directory of North American Flamenco Artists has been most impressive and we are guaranteed of a successful publication. In order to maximize this success it appears necessary to clear up some points of confusion and to encourage all of Jaleo's readers to put forth an effort to spread the word.

First: The directory is not for professionals only. It is intended for all participants in flamenco, at all levels. The questionnaire, in its attempt to convince the professionals, did not make this clear. The purposes of the directory are many and would include the following:

- A survey of the current flamenco scene in North America.
- A means of setting up communication between flamencos in local areas or regions.
- A source of contacts for travelling flamencos.
- A source of contacts for employers looking for artists or companies.
- A means of self-promotion for individual artists.
- A means of promotion for dance companies, luthiers, teachers and nightclubs.
- A source of information about teachers of dance, guitar, and cante.
- An enjoyable and informative insight into the flamenco situation in North America.

We need to include as many people as possible -- and that includes guitar builders, record collectors, dressmakers, castanet makers, etc. We could not make questionnaires to cover every possibility, but all are welcome to submit information.

Every reader of Jaleo needs to make certain that he informs every flamenco he or she knows about this effort and even make copies of the form to pass out. Only in that way will this be a comprehensive work.

LETTERS

Dear Jaleo:

In the small town of Ahmednagar, in the province of Maharastra in India, a Canadian guitarist stopped briefly and went on his way. In the hostel center at which he stayed, he left behind on the library table several copies of the Jaleo. This is strange enough, especially for one to carry so many copies of the magazine to so far away a place. But it is stranger yet how we came to know about it.

An American named Jim, who has been wandering around the world, finally settled

in Ahmednagar and met and talked to the Canadian guitarist, but no mention was made of San Diego nor the Flamenco Association. After the Canadian left, Jim went into the library and saw the Jaleo magazines and, out of curiosity, began to read them. In the very first one, he came upon the photo of Ernest Lenshaw and in the next issue he read the article about Ernest's participation in the flamenco scene. He was excited for he had been very close to the Lenshaw family during the time when we lived in San Francisco. It had been over twenty years since we had seen each other.

A few days ago, Jim came to San Diego and told us about this unusual happening.

Hilma Lenshaw
San Diego, CA

PUNTO DE VISTA

A GUITARIST'S VIEW OF THE DANCE

by Paco Sevilla

As a guitarist accompanying the dance, I have had the opportunity to observe a number of common weaknesses in dancers. If I were a dancer, I would want to ask myself the following questions (I'm sure that dance teachers could think of many more):

--Do I perform each of my steps or movements with my whole body--with harmony from head to toe--or do I move one part of my body only, as if detached from the rest?

--Do my steps and movements flow one into another, or are there gaps and moments of confusion (preparation or thinking pauses) between some of them?

--Is my whole technique "bien sentao," well planted with a low center of gravity and solid movements, or do I jump around, bounce, and have many extraneous movements?

--Do my "pellizcos" make sense? That is, do those special movements that give the baile its life, humor, and gracia, have an idea behind them, a purpose--do they communicate something--or are they just memorized moves that have lost their vitality as they have been passed from teacher to student to friend to student...etc?

--Do I vary the position of my head, raising or lowering it according to the line of the body, or do I over-use one position?

--Is my facial expression consistent with the mood of the dance?

--Do I have any mannerisms (shoulder twitches, head tosses, facial ticks, etc.) that occur

throughout my dances and detract from the rest of my dance?

--Do my arms always know what to do, or do they sometimes just hang around between steps?

--Am I using my hands the way I want at all times, or am I sometimes carrying them around as dead weight?

--Do I articulate my footwork clearly with well planted and strong steps?

--Do I understand the rhythms (both compás and accentuation) of my footwork in a conceptual manner, or do I just follow a memorized sequence?

--Do I use my footwork musically, or do I just tap and pound the floor in a monotonous, unvarying stream of noise?

--Are my llamadas (signals to guitarist or singer) a real means of communication, or are they just a memorized pattern of steps? If I were 15 feet away from a guitarist on a large stage, with footwork muffled, and a floor-length skirt hiding my feet, would my llamadas still be clear?

--Are my cierres (closing llamadas) clean and solid, or do I come to rest after the music has stopped, taking extra steps, moving my arms to position, or wobbling and weaving to get my balance?

--Are the pauses after each cierre within the dance of a length that will create the effect I want, that is, are they long enough to allow the dance to come to rest and set up a slower mood, but not so long that they break the thread of the dance?

--Does my dance structure "make sense;" does it develop themes in logical ways, or does it jump at random from one unrelated step or movement to another without thought for continuity?

--Can my dances be easily accompanied; are changes in the flow of the dance clearly communicated, or is the dance "over-choreographed" to set falsetas and full of unpredictable stops and tempo changes? Can I do my dances with an unrehearsed guitarist and singer if I have to?

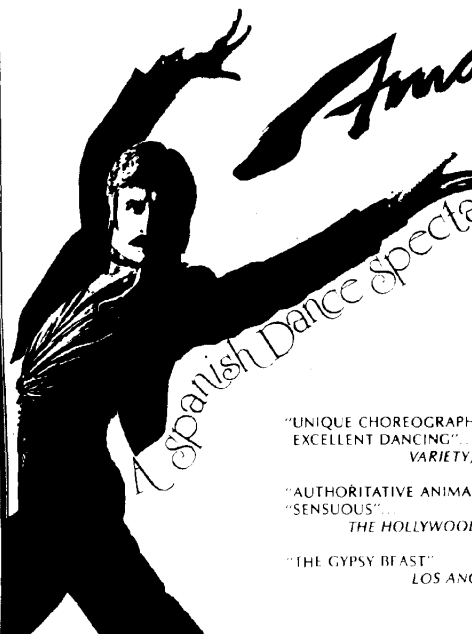
--Do I know how to do my dances with cante, how to highlight the cante, and how to adapt the dance to slight variations in the cante?

--Do my dances suit the mood of the different cantes--do I attempt to interpret each baile in a unique manner, or do all of my dances look the same?

--Do I practice palmas as part of my dance technique and attempt to develop their potential for contratiempos (likewise for castanets if I use them)?

Ever wonder what became of Gerald Howson, the author of The Flamencos of Cádiz Bay? In the April edition of Habladora, the flamenco newsletter published in London, is mentioned a lecture, "The Guitar in Flamenco" given by Gerald at the British Institute of Recorded Sound on March 3rd.

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Conversaciones

con...

RODRIGO

by El Chileno

When Sabicas referred to "los muchachos" during his interview with Jaleo (April '81), he might have had someone like Rodrigo in mind. "Los muchachos," as Sabicas calls them, are those up-and-coming young guitarists who currently are, or will be, making history in the world of flamenco. The young, tall Californian who is the subject of this month's "Conversaciones" however, belies Sabicas' notion that good flamenco guitarists are only born on the opposite shores of the Atlantic. If not Spanish-born, Rod Hollman, known as Rodrigo, is certainly Spanish-bred, as he did live on the peninsula for many years, where his art thrived and matured as it probably can only on that side of the Atlantic.

While in Spain, Rodrigo, who speaks Spanish as a native, with only a trace of an American accent, met and married Remedios Flores, a striking "gitana" from Ronda. She is a born dancer and singer, having had little formal instruction in either. It is hard to imagine a flamenco couple who complement each other better than Rodrigo and Remedios, who appear together on stage frequently. Remedios sings like, well, like only Andalusian people can. "Throaty yet caressing voice," said the San Diego Union. Her cante, whether a rumba or a taranta, always reflects the unfettered emotion of the moment.

One must listen to Rodrigo in order to fully appreciate his capabilities as an artist. It is difficult to classify his style (as if one could ever "classify" flamenco accurately), but the strong gypsy underpinnings are quite evident, with an occasional fast burst of modern (Paco de Lucía-ish?) ligados which Rodrigo somehow manages to make sound like picado. Airs of Melchor de Marchena? Diego del Gastor? Maybe. One thing is certain: Rodrigo is not an imitator. His style is about as personal and creative as one can find in flamenco.

As a person, Rodrigo is a quiet and unassuming man. "Un hombre de pocas palabras," he might appear somewhat distant in the beginning, but it does not take one long



RODRIGO

to realize the intensity of his feeling for his art. His career as an accompanist dates back a decade or so, but more recently, Rodrigo has begun to concentrate earnestly on solo appearances in the United States, with a concert at Wilshire Ebell Theater in Los Angeles on May 15th, and another one scheduled in Carnegie Hall in New York.

Our conversation was held at the home of singer María José Díaz, who paved the way to much introspection and serious flamenco soul searching with a genuine and hearty paella.

JALEO: You have gone full circle, or so it seems Rodrigo. You were born in California, but studied in Spain for quite some time. Now you are back here again. How did you get started in flamenco?

RODRIGO: I began playing the guitar when I was nine. My mother wanted me to learn an instrument, so we just picked the guitar. I didn't even want to practice, or play. They just forced me to take lessons. Initially I played steel-strings with a pick, and then I got into jazz when I was about fourteen, but

got bored with it. I didn't like it. My mother saw me losing interest in the guitar and went out and bought what she thought was a classical guitar album, but it turned out to be Carlos Montoya. She wanted me to learn classical and she didn't know the difference between Montoya and Segovia. So I listened to it for three or four months and began to like it. After the Montoya record, my mother bought me albums by Sabicas and Escudero, which probably were the only ones around then. I would have eventually gotten interested in flamenco anyway, but it was the Montoya record that got me started. I went to Tijuana and bought myself a nylon string guitar and started imitating Montoya's music.

JALEO: Was there anyone in your family who played or dabbled in the guitar?

RODRIGO: No, no one.

JALEO: Do you have any Spanish ancestry that you are aware of then?

RODRIGO: I am half Ukrainian, that's all, and since flamenco is an oriental or Eastern type of music...Russian people have a lot of Eastern blood in them, so if you are supposed to have it in your blood, maybe I have a little bit of it...The A minor, E⁷, D minor chords...

JALEO: What happened after the Montoya album experience?

RODRIGO: I began to take some lessons with people who played flamenco. I went to the Blue Guitar in San Diego and took lessons from Ed Vaughan for a few months, and then from David Cheney. At that time I was listening to a lot of Sabicas and imitating him, but I started losing interest in flamenco again as I began to find it boring. So David Cheney let me tape some old flamenco anthologies that he had picked up somewhere along the line in Spain or wherever. They had guitarists like Melchor de Marchena, Manuel Moreno, and Juan Moreno from Jerez, and some other old style guitarists; when I heard their music I became interested in flamenco again -- I was attracted to that type of playing, the gypsy style, the "duende" that you have in those styles, with a lot of thumb and things like that.

JALEO: When was your first exposure to flamenco dancing and singing?

RODRIGO: When I went to Spain when I was twenty-one. I had played flamenco for four or five years off and on. A couple of years I played almost ten hours a day, and then I was a week-end flamenco player for a while. Then I had a chance to go to Spain, and that's where I came in contact with dancers and singers.

JALEO: Had you made any public appearances prior to going to Spain?

RODRIGO: When I was fifteen I worked in a restaurant. I also had a rock-and-roll band for two years and we played in San Bernardino, San Diego, then I went back into flamenco again.

JALEO: How much experience did you have then with flamenco prior to going to Spain?

RODRIGO: My experience was more with the feeling of how to play gypsy guitar and accompany the singing. I practiced to records so much and listened to singing for so many years from such a young age that my brain had become accustomed to the Spanish tones more than to our Western tones here in the United States. I did not sit down and practice the guitar to learn a long "picado" or anything. I just sat down to try to play with the true flamenco feeling that would be like Melchor de Marchena or others like him in Spain, which is the true "duende" of the flamenco guitar. That is what I tried to imitate when I did flamenco. I didn't sit down and try to learn a Mario Escudero "guajira." I didn't bother with that. I tried to learn how to play siguiriyas and soleares the way you are supposed to and how to accompany the singing and things like that. So the first time I went to Spain I wasn't there a month and I had so many juergas on top of me I couldn't take them -- I sprained the tendons in my hand. People were singing all night long every type of singing, and I was able to accompany it perfectly because of all the listening that I had done.

JALEO: How did the decision to travel to Spain come about?

RODRIGO: I began giving lessons to a friend of mine who owned a gas station and was married with two kids. Then he started to become -- this is when I was twenty -- really interested in flamenco guitar. One night I said, "We are not going to get anywhere if we don't go to Spain!"

Then he said, "Okay, ten months from now, in June, we'll go to Spain."

And it worked out that way. He paid me \$1,000 to go with him to interpret the language and give him lessons for six months. He came back after six months, and I stayed there.

JALEO: I assume that you spoke Spanish fairly well. Where did you learn it?

RODRIGO: In high school.

JALEO: Where was your first stop in Spain?

RODRIGO: Madrid. We bought a car there. A SEAT, for \$1,000, a brand new one.

JALEO: What year was that?

RODRIGO: Seventy-two. We stayed in Granada for about a month, and then accidentally we pointed on the map to Ronda, in Málaga, went there, and I stayed for two years. I came

back to the States for about a year and then went back to Spain again.

JALEO: Do you remember your very first experience with flamenco in Spain?

RODRIGO: It was with the singing. In Granada the next door neighbors invited us over for drinks and some of their daughters began singing fandangos de Huelva. That was the first time. The real first experience was when we got to Ronda and we stayed at a house...these people that we knew in Granada had a house in Ronda and they rented us a room. Their son liked flamenco and he played a little bit, so after he heard me play, he told all his friends that there was an American in town who could play flamenco. We had a party of about a hundred and fifty people in what they call "Casa del Rey Moro" which is an old moorish castle on a side street in Ronda -- overlooking the Tajo River which runs through the town. There were an awful lot of people there. For twelve hours I played non-stop. I'll never forget it. On the way to the juerga, which was at about 8:30 at night, I remember walking down this cobblestone street, and there were four boys walking with me and one of them was singing tientos. We were walking down the street and I was accompanying him as we walked.

There was one club, called "La Peña Sin Nombre." It belonged to businessmen who got together on Saturdays. They really liked me a lot. I would accompany them on week-ends. Then I got to know four or five gypsies in the community. They were getting me over to their house every night, or they would come to my house. They sang and I accompanied them. There was sort of a rivalry between the Peña Sin Nombre and the gypsies. I said, "I can only play here on Saturdays and I want to play every day." So I moved over to the gypsies and the people at the Peña Sin Nombre wouldn't speak to me for years after that, almost until the end of my stay in Spain.

JALEO: Where did you live over there?

RODRIGO: We rented a house next to the Iglesia Mayor in Ronda, Calle Moctezuma. My wife, Remedios, worked there next door. I met her six months later.

JALEO: What was it like when you first met?

RODRIGO: Well, she used to sing out the window as she was cleaning the house and I was attracted to her voice. Then one fellow, a mutual friend, set up a date for us to go to a movie, but we ended up going to a "discoteca."

JALEO: Did you have much experience dating Spanish women prior to that?

RODRIGO: No, but I think I married a Spanish woman when I began playing flamenco guitar;

that's how it had to be. It just took a few years to meet the right one. And then we lived in Ronda for two years, and I used to ah, I formed my own cuadro flamenco in a cave that had been turned into a bar a long, long time ago. It was all broken down. We white-washed it, varnished some wood furniture that they had, and I put posters all over the town; we held private fiestas for tourists that came into Ronda. We did that for a long, long time, which paid pretty good money. And then gradually Remedios began singing with us, dancing rumbas, picking people out of the crowd and getting them to dance and everything.

I would say I had hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of hours of accompanying flamenco singing. Every imaginable cante. I was fortunate because Ronda was a place where there weren't many guitarists. There were many good aficionados of cante grande -- like there was one doctor who could sing every style of fandango de Huelva and every style of verdiales, to the millimeter. Days and days with these people, and then there were other interesting people, not professionals, who could sing well. I began getting a reputation in other towns around the area, in the "Serrania de Ronda." In those towns there would be singing contests. I accompanied so many of those, I don't even know how many. Once I had fifteen singers and each one of them had to sing three cantes. As the only guitar player, you do nothing but change the cejilla up and down the whole night. I am trying to generalize for you because, otherwise, I would end up writing my book right here. And I made a lot of money. I used to get paid pretty well for a private party. The "señoritos" would want to sing and I would accompany them. We would go up to a finca, or a bar, and we'd go to the back room; I would stay there as long as it took -- eight, ten, twelve hours -- and I would get my 1000 or 1500 pesetas and go home, but only after getting really drunk and tired. And I played at a lot of gypsy fiestas -- lots of bulerías, lots of soleares. I would say that Ronda for me was the right place at the right time to learn my music, but at the same time, you got to go through a lot of hours of playing, a lot of drinking, a lot of putting up with a lot of stuff. You just don't sit down and play for half an hour. You play for hour upon hour until you begin to hallucinate. You can't go in and play for an hour and then forget it; it has to go on for hours. I became a Spaniard with the singing...my solos didn't develop until a few years later, when it was more lucrative for



RODRIGO PLAYING IN A FERIA WITH EL TURRONERO (CENTER); THE BROTHER OF RANCAPINO IS SECOND FROM THE RIGHT

me, when I went to work down on the Coast -- la Costa del Sol -- and I began working in hotels where I would give mini-concerts, half-hour shows, for groups of tourists. That's when I got serious about getting together solos and things like that.

JALEO: Did you bring your own guitar or did you buy one there?

RODRIGO: I had one that I had bought over here, and I traded it in Granada, made by Manuel Diaz, about ten years old now.

JALEO: We were talking about your first trip to Spain. I understand you were there a second time.

RODRIGO: Right. The last happy year I was there we moved to Málaga. I played in various tablaos in Málaga, such as that of La Repompa de Málaga and her sister, and worked with Gitanillo de Vélez. And then I worked in Nerja in a club for a while. There I began to play solos. Then we came back to the States. That was the end of my first trip. Three years of it.

JALEO: Why the decision to come back?

RODRIGO: Oh, I was homesick.

JALEO: Was your first child born in Spain?

RODRIGO: Yes.

JALEO: Was it difficult moving around and working while taking care of a small child?

RODRIGO: Awfully. But I am not the first one who has done it. It is a very typical thing to do.

JALEO: Your mother lives here in San Diego, I believe. Did she have hopes you would take up a profession other than the guitar?

RODRIGO: She is still hoping (chuckle), still hoping. She tried to get me interested in music as a hobby, but I was practicing so many hours a day that it was hurting my school, and I was discouraged from playing. But in the end I did what I wanted to anyway which is what I am doing now, performing.

JALEO: Did you have any set plans for your return to the United States?

RODRIGO: At the time I felt that the only thing that counted in flamenco was the juerga and to accompany the singing properly; since then I've changed. I still believe that is true, but I am interested in other things now, in solo playing mainly. So we came back and looked for work. There wasn't much work to be had. My wife and I didn't have much of a repertoire together, and I had a hand injury that happened in Spain. I would like

to say to anybody who is trying to learn flamenco, don't ever let anyone tell you that you are supposed to hold your hand in a right angle (bent wrist) position, especially when you do rasgueado. You should hold it in a very loose position and try to keep it away from a right angle position which creates too much tension. I was doing a lot of rasgueados with a strong right angle in my hand and I ripped up my tendons. So I played virtually with only my thumb for two years, just ligados and thumb work. That is probably the reason why that dominates my style of playing now. I got in that habit. But then after a while I met a classical guitarist -- this was towards the end of my first trip to Spain -- and he said it could be just a question of an eighth of an inch, changing the angle in your wrist, and you may be able to go back to playing tremolos and arpeggios again. When I was sixteen or seventeen I had an arpeggio and a tremolo which were as powerful as Manitas de Plata's, which are very powerful, or Montoya's, very fast and loud. My arpeggios were strong. I lost all that because of my injury, and the classical guitarist told me to move my hand out a little bit, maybe an eighth or a quarter of an inch, and keep my shoulder relaxed, avoiding tension in the shoulder or right arm -- and sure enough it worked. Little by little I began recuperating, recovering what I already knew and getting better at it. I had quit picado too because it hurt my wrist, and I found out that, as far as picado goes, you are supposed to keep your wrist relaxed. You should take the position that is most natural and comfortable for you, and take it from there. Don't let anyone hold your wrist in one position to begin to do picado. One reason I feel that Paco de Lucía can do picado the way he does is a question of millimeters in his tendons. He just has the right length of arm and fingers to fit. I think it is a physical thing with him besides having the intelligence, but he has just the right size of hand and arm.

JALEO: Who are the flamenco guitarists that have inspired your style the most? Has that changed throughout the years?

RODRIGO: Well as far as Melchor de Marchena, Manuel Morao and the others go, all of those guitarists have made me concentrate on playing flamenco guitar mostly with my thumb. Also, I think that sometimes they play the compás hard, sometimes softening it, which is when the singer begins to sing loud, and then softens his voice down. They play the compás quick, then they play slow, all in the

same measure. They may be playing soleares and play the first part of the compás normal speed, but towards the end they'll slow it down a bit. I think that when I play solos it is almost like I am accompanying a singer. I try to use the feeling that one uses when one is accompanying the singing. And then it is also a matter of trying to imitate those styles. It is a kind of flamenco that I feel is pure emotion because you get your fast and your slow, your soft and your loud, one note and then twenty notes all mixed up into one.

When Sabicas plays, it is all the same, all going at the same speed. It all sounds like triplets going at the same velocity and the same loudness. That kind of a thing. And then after that, after years, you begin making up your own things, and then you find out they are no good. So you go back to imitating and then, once in a while, you find something that is different and you like it and you build up on that until hopefully, one day, you'll come up with your own style of playing. That is, if you are lucky. If you are not lucky, you either give up or continue to try. You can only imitate so much, and then you either have to identify with them or you have to identify with yourself. Depends on the type of personality you have. If you want to identify with yourself, then you'll find your own way to play flamenco guitar, whatever it is you are playing.

JALEO: Is there much of Carlos Montoya's style that stayed with you?

RODRIGO: I think when I was young he inspired me with his rasgueado. It was really nice and powerful, a lot of emotion in it.

JALEO: You met Diego del Gastor in Spain, didn't you?

RODRIGO: I met him a couple of times at a bar -- talked to him for five minutes -- and another time I saw him play at a party for half an hour. That's all the contact I ever had with him. I have a couple of his tapes. For a while I imitated him, his ideas of long ligado runs in bulerías; I used to try to imitate that, which now has come out as something else, but he could have some base in what I do now. For example, I might do a ligado run in bulerías, which is twelve beats, or ten beats, or whatever -- the whole compás -- and then I'll play it, say, twice as fast as he did. Instead of four notes to the beat, I'll play eight, which is what I do now. That could be based on Diego's playing, but it's changed. It is like Paco de Lucía took Sabicas's picado and things like that and made them faster and longer. So, I got a base, a little bit of everybody in me, but it

is probably hidden.

JALEO: Is there one single flamenco guitarist who inspires you above all others or with whom you identify strongly?

RODRIGO: I don't think I have one, no. If I put on a record or a tape and at that particular moment it makes me feel real happy, then for that moment I am enjoying that player. I may listen to his record the next day and not like it so much. Sometimes I am in the mood to listen to Paco de Lucía and other times I am not. So it just depends, everyone has their own thing to offer. I will listen to all of it. Sometimes I'll enjoy it, sometimes I won't. Sometimes I feel like playing the guitar, sometimes I don't. Anyone who does it well I respect, and I'll try to learn from him. If he doesn't have anything to teach me, I'll still continue listening to him. I never listen to a guitar player just to learn. I will listen to a flamenco player to be entertained; if he entertains me then I like him.

JALEO: How do you feel about what Paco de Lucía is doing now with DiMeola and McLaughlin?

RODRIGO: My opinion is that anyone who is able to create his own style in the music that he plays, that makes him stand out, is an excellent and brilliant musician. The most difficult thing in the world to do with any instrument is to create a personal style. It is very difficult to do, and it should be everyone's goal.

JALEO: Do you read music? Do you write it?

RODRIGO: I read real bad. I do not write. A few years ago I became real interested in Arabic music. I used to listen to Radio Tangiers, and that has really influenced my style. Actually I have taken melodies directly from them and transposed them in the guitar -- in the rumbas, in all my music. That really enlightened me, to get familiar with Arabic music.

JALEO: Let's get back to your experiences upon returning from Spain for a moment...

RODRIGO: Well, we didn't have too much luck initially meeting the flamenco people around town. We worked at a few places, like the Restaurant Madrid in La Jolla, we did a few private parties, around 1974, and that's about it. Real slow, and then I got fed up. I hadn't completed what I wanted to do on my guitar and I decided to go back to Spain and to continue it. So we went back a second time. We went to Ronda and then I decided to go to work in Málaga again, in Nerja, a club job that I did for a while. Then I got an offer to live in Algeciras, supported by

La Peña del Cante Grande. I would go every night there and perform with the aficionados and they would round up so much money, 500 or 1000 pesetas, pay for our food for as long as I wanted. Then I got a job in a tablao flamenco in La Linea, where I worked out for about a month. That place closed because they weren't getting any business. I learned an awful lot in Algeciras, about bulerías and rumbas, mainly. I met some really nice people, no one famous, just plain very nice folks.

Back in Ronda I met a singer named Curro Lucena. I began to accompany him once in a while. He had made five albums already and was well-known. He did twenty festivals a year. He offered me the chance to make an album for Belter Records in Barcelona. The record was released on the Olympo label. That opened other doors. I began meeting other people. I did a couple of festivals with Curro, one in Córdoba, with Beni de Cádiz, and Habichuela, and one in Ronda. The one in Ronda that I did just before I came back, about a year ago, was with Fosforito, Diego Clavel, and Manuela Carrasco. In that festival, I did something that had never been done before by any guitar player, and that was to give a concert in a singing festival. I took up twenty minutes of the whole festival with solos, which is a long, long time for the guitar. It worked out really well. I played danza, mora, taranta, siguiriya, and bulería. That was toward the end.



CURRO LUCENA AND RODRIGO
DOING A SCHOOL RECITAL

JALEO: Tell us some more about the experience of cutting an album in Spain.

RODRIGO: Well, we practiced for about four months. It has fourteen different types of singing, everything from serranas to malagueñas de Chacón, tango, everything. We worked on that for about four months, and then took a plane to Barcelona, which was also paid for, and we recorded it in seven hours. If I had to do it over again, I would have had palmas with the music. I am happy with the record because a lot of the stuff we did was original; we worked it out together. It was a step further for me. Then we went on radio in Barcelona and promoted it a little bit. Did a lot of newspaper articles, which I have at home.

JALEO: Tell us about Curro de Lucena.

RODRIGO: Very humble, very nice. He used to work with La Singla, and La Chunga also. But he is one of those who never got lucky. Never had any challenges to find his luck.

JALEO: How about Cara Estaca?

RODRIGO: I worked with him in Nerja for a few months. If I were going to form a Spanish Ballet Company and I were a promoter, he would be the first one I would call. He could turn into a second Jose Greco. He is the most...he is about thirty-four now, deaf in one ear, and a little bit "mudo"; he was a gypsy from Salamanca -- Rafael Farinas is his name -- and he danced with his feet like nobody dances. He must have lost five kilos every time he worked on stage. Very commercial, did a lot of jumping around on stage, smashing his feet, clicking his heels, very

commercial you know, but very good. I used to get real nervous when he did his solos; my kidneys would kill me after he got done with the boards, with all that pounding. Very difficult to accompany because he danced so fast. It was a real good experience for me, made me feel proud of myself that I eventually was able to accompany him. I got to know what he did.

JALEO: Why was he called Cara Estaca (Wooden-stake Face)?

RODRIGO: Because of the kind of face he makes when he dances. A really strong face. Then all of a sudden he breaks out in a smile.

JALEO: What about your experiences in working as a soloist in hotels?

RODRIGO: I would go down to a hotel and talk to the director and tell him I gave concerts for groups of tourists. So, once a week, as the tourists would change, I would go in and they would present me as a flamenco guitarist, and I would play Malagueña, and danza mora, and bulerías with one hand, and I would do all kinds of things for a half-hour and make three or four thousand pesetas which would be enough to eat for the whole week. And I liked working only half an hour a week, or an hour. When that was slow, I'd get a club job, working either with dancers or what they called rumberos -- young kids who sang rumbas and played bongos in the pubs in Torremolinos and around there. I would work for those people and accompany rumbas and tangos all night long for people as they ordered Cuba Libres. And then the other times I would spend several hours a day in my room trying to get my playing together. One thing that got me really serious about my playing was when I performed in two flamenco "Certámenes," guitar contests, in Jerez. One year I did it and then two years later I did it again. I didn't win anything, but I worked on a soleares for six months. It had a lot of jazz parts in it, so I experimented with it, but when it was received really badly, I dropped it. When I gave my concert in London I had to get sixteen solos together, and then I really started working on my material and composing it.

JALEO: Let's talk about your concert in London.

RODRIGO: I was working at some club, I don't remember where. I was depressed and was talking to a gentleman, an Englishman, and said to him, "Why can't I give a concert in Europe, and become famous, you know."

He said, "Why don't you try London?"

"How can I do something like that!"

He said, "I know a man who used to promote

(continued on page 28)



IN NERJA WITH SINGER PACO POLO
AND CARA ESTACA (ET)

Remedios Flores

Some comments by the wife of Rodrigo

by El Chileno

JALEO: Remedios, what did your parents say when you began dating an American over there?

REMEDIOS: They did not object, because they already knew him and they liked him. They knew he was "una buena persona." They did not mind, because nowadays, just as society accepts gypsies, we accept others. In the past it was different. A gypsy could not marry a "payo," but now it is very common.

JALEO: What was it that attracted you to Rodrigo?

REMEDIOS: Really, in the beginning it was "el toque" which impressed me very much. Then I began to become interested in him as a man. It made me very happy to hear him play at all those parties, because he did it very well.

JALEO: Where did you learn to sing?

REMEDIOS: No se ni como! You know, as you work you feel like singing!

JALEO: Are your parents still in Ronda?

REMEDIOS: Yes, only my father. An aunt of mine raised me, though, since I was two years old. She is like a mother to me.

JALEO: Do you have other relatives?

REMEDIOS: I have two brothers.

JALEO: When did you learn English?

REMEDIOS: Poquito a poco (little by little).

JALEO: Did you speak any English when you met Rodrigo?

REMEDIOS: No, just a few words and very poorly.

JALEO: I have noticed that your English has improved considerably the last few months.

REMEDIOS: Well, yes, because I am always a little embarrassed when I speak it, and now everyone says I speak it well.

JALEO: I have noticed that there are many famous flamenco artists, such as Sabicas and Montoya who speak very little or no English. Why do you think that is so?

REMEDIOS: Well, gypsies do not like to be forced into anything, and it is very difficult to learn. We did not learn it in school, but I learn because my children are in school and they teach me. I put forth the interest and I do not like being left out.

JALEO: But you understand perfectly well, don't you?

REMEDIOS: Si, because "yo soy un smart-cookie."

JALEO: What are your children's names?

REMEDIOS: The oldest is Raquel and she is seven. One boy is Alberto and he is three and a half, and the other is Daniel, two years old.



JALEO: Tell us about your experience of being married to an artist like Rodrigo. You seem to complement each other very well.

REMEDIOS: I am very proud of having married him; as a husband and a person, I love him very much. But I am also very proud because I think he is a great artist too. "Lo vale."

JALEO: Rodrigo was telling us that the singer he can accompany best in the whole world is you. You seem to complement each other very well.

REMEDIOS: Yes, because I sing in such a way that he will not be held back. Guitarists often feel subordinated to the singer, or the dancer. I know what satisfies him in the guitar, so I let him play any way he wants, and I am pleased to sing with him when he plays freely. I am very used to his style.

JALEO: What are your favorite numbers?

REMEDIOS: I like everything, tarantas, bulerías, everything.

JALEO: Tarantas must be particularly difficult for both the singer and the guitarist, as it is a very free style.

REMEDIOS: Yes, but for me it is not difficult, because I do sing very freely. Some Americans think that flamenco has to be one-two-three, but there are many artists like

Chocolate, Aguejetas, and others who are very good, "con mucho pellizco," who sometimes do not sing compás. But if the "cantaor" and the guitarist "se acoplan," then the compás does not matter too much.

JALEO: How long have you two been married?

REMEDIOS: Seven years.

JALEO: How often do you rehearse together?

REMEDIOS: I never practice. I always sing as I feel at the moment. If I practice something today, I may not be able to sing it tomorrow because I sing depending on how I feel. If I feel sad, or happy, that's the way I sing, and I can't practice those feelings ahead of time. My voice reflects how I feel at the moment.

JALEO: Do you miss Spain?

REMEDIOS: Mucho! Mucho!

JALEO: Would you like to go back and live there?

REMEDIOS: Well, I would, if I could enjoy the same standard of living one does here. I would prefer to live there under those circumstances.

JALEO: What do you like the most about San Diego?

REMEDIOS: Well, I really do not like it all that much. Everything is so far. You have to drive your car everywhere you go. But I do like the friends I have made here, the Casa de España, the Jaleistas, aficionados, artists, and people like that. And I enjoyed the last juerga very much, it had "mucho duende." (Referring to the March Juerga in Del Mar.)

PASTORA IMPERIO: ALMOST A CENTURY OF ART

(from: Blanco y Negro, Sept. 1979; sent by Manuela de Cádiz)

At the age of ninety, the great bailaora and actress, Pastora Imperio, has died (1979). Pastora made her debut in 1902, when she was thirteen years old. Her artistic name was given to her by Don Jacinto Benavente after seeing her dance, although during the course of her long career, she had several nicknames -- "La Giralda de Sevilla," "La Faraona," etc.

Her success was as great in films as on the stage; she appeared in a number of films that found immediate success -- "La Danza Fatal," "María de la O," "La Marquesona," "Canelita en Rama," "El Amor Brujo," and "Duelo en la Cañada," the last filmed in 1959.

Pastora died on Friday, September 14, the result of heart failure. With her passing went one of the best bailaoras in the Spanish arts.



**PASTORA IMPERIO:
CASI UN SIGLO DE ARTE**

D
LESTER
V
O
E

on
Guitar Care



OILING FINGERBOARDS

I am a constructor of flamenco and classical guitars. In this series I would like to share some techniques that can greatly improve the quality of your guitar and maintain it at its full potential. To keep your guitar playing properly with the least amount of effort, you should be able to recognize a problem and adjust it or take it to a repairman before it gets worse.

Let's start with the fingerboard. A good quality guitar will have a solid ebony or rosewood fingerboard. Inexpensive guitars use plywood or a hardwood stained to look like ebony. This article will deal with the solid ebony or rosewood fingerboard.

Why does the fingerboard cause so many problems? Aside from the tuning pegs, the fingerboard is the only unfinished wood surface on the exterior of the guitar. Wood that is not finished is subject to the effects of humidity change. As the water content of the air changes, a raw wood surface will absorb or lose moisture. As the wood expands and contracts with the seasons, the frets can work loose and rise in their slots causing string buzzing.

Drying out seems to be the most common problem. Only one side of the fingerboard is exposed, so it will shrink and "cup" as it dries out. This can result in uneven frets, a warped neck and even cracking of the soundboard along the edges of the fingerboard.

A simple preventative treatment to these problems is a regular application of linseed oil. The wood absorbs the oil it needs (instead of moisture) and helps to protect against moisture loss and gain. Here is a step-by-step sequence that can be easily followed when changing strings:

Materials you will need:

- 0000 grade steel wool
- Boiled Linseed Oil
- A rag of absorbent material, like cotton

Both the Boiled Linseed Oil and 0000 steel wool are available at paint or hardware stores. Buy a pint of the Boiled Linseed Oil and in a future article I will give you a formula for a fantastic guitar cleaner that



uses linseed oil:

1. With strings removed, check for dirt accumulation on the fingerboard and tarnish on the frets. Remove the dirt and polish the frets with the steel wool. 0000 is the finest grade and will not harm the wood, even if rubbed against the grain.
2. Dab some oil on a small piece of cloth and use this to apply the oil, covering the fingerboard between each fret.
3. Allow the wood to soak up the oil for a few minutes.
4. With a dry rag, wipe off all oil not absorbed by the wood.

That's all there is to it. If this treatment is done four times a year you will greatly lengthen the life of the fingerboard and help avoid costly re-fretting, fret leveling or action adjustments. I routinely do this to all guitars that pass through my shop and I instruct the owners of my guitars to do the same. The ones that do have little or no problems with their fingerboards.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lester DeVoe sends us the following brief description of how he became involved with flamenco and guitar building:

In 1974, while I was a student of the classical guitar, I heard my first flamenco guitar concert. I fell in love with the music Mariano Córdoba played that night. It was something I never heard before and I was attracted to the rhythms and the feeling of the music.



LESTER DEVOE IN HIS SHOP

Soon after the concert, Mariano moved to Sunnyvale, California, and I began taking lessons from him. I was practicing many hours a day on a cheap flamenco guitar and never had the opportunity to play a good guitar. Mariano owned a 1924 Santos Hernández, but didn't allow anyone to handle it. At one of my lessons we were interrupted by a phone call. Mariano left the room and I was alone with the Santos. I reached down and plucked the strings, listened for Mariano, then picked up the guitar and began to play. The guitar seemed to play effortlessly and I felt as if I were playing beyond my abilities. That kind of experience rarely happens. I was lost in the guitar when Mariano returned, and as I sheepishly returned it to him, I said, "I want a guitar like this one."

After looking everywhere for a guitar with the sound and feel of the Santos, I realized that guitar makers were not producing that same quality of guitar anymore. About this time I met Gabriel Sousa, a master luthier. I liked his work and wanted to order one of his guitars, but he was in poor health and no longer able to construct. The only way I was going to have a guitar like the Santos was to make one myself. Gabe sold me some wood and gave me helpful advice. I felt tentative but comfortable, since I had worked with wood since I was eleven years old.

Mariano let me study his Santos and Gabe allowed me to work on the guitars in his fabulous collection. It was an invaluable opportunity to be able to study and repair the instruments of the great masters -- Manuel Ramírez, Santos Hernández, Marcelo Barbero, José Pernás and Hermann Hauser, Sr. Although the knowledge I gained helped me to develop my own style, my work is most influenced by Santos Hernández and Manuel Ramírez.

While I continued playing for parties, receptions and the Spanish dance classes of Gloria Voges Mohr, I found my true forte is building. The quality of guitars I produce brings me great satisfaction and, as demand grows, I find myself building more and playing less. I traveled to Spain and Germany to obtain the finest woods and built a shop at my home in San Jose, California. I presently have orders for guitars that will take two years to complete.

As I was able to start with the generous help of dedicated artists Mariano Córdoba and the late Gabriel Sousa, I would like to share some of the techniques I have learned.

September Flamenco Tour

Donn Pohren is going to conduct a sixteen day flamenco tour of Andalucía -- from September 3rd to the 18th (1981). It is an opportunity to experience flamenco in its native habitat under the experienced guidance of author-guitarist Pohren.

Travelling in a Mercedes van that will hold nine people, the tour leaves from Madrid (and ends there) and will visit scenic and historic sites, flamenco bars and peñas (clubs) throughout Andalucía. There will be two nights dedicated to the flamenco contest and festival of Mairena del Alcor (among the most serious flamenco events of the season), and three days in Jerez during the grape harvest celebration (vendimia) with its associated flamenco activities -- including entrance into flamenco casetas. Throughout the tour, there will be extensive contact with flamenco artists and aficionados.

The cost of the tour is 43,000 pesetas (as of April 1981, about \$500) and includes transportation, accommodations (double room, private baths) and tour guidance. Not included: food, drinks, entrance fees, or other incidentals. To make reservations (haste is advised), contact:

Society of Spanish Studies
Calle Victor Pradera 46
Madrid 8, Spain.

ARCHIVO

The Making of an Anthology

by Caballero Bonald

PART VI - MAIRENA DEL ALCOR

translated by Brad Blanchard

Mairena del Alcor is a small, shining pueblo surrounded by olive and orange orchards. The plaza is like a patio with its baseboards painted rose and indigo and a central garden filled with fragrant flowers. The name "Mairena" suggests a phonetic effect of beach and sea, seen later on a horizon that seems to cap some unsuspected marine landscape. But all that is a product of the imagination. We are in the heart of the agrarian plains of the Andalusian basin. Mairena del Alcor is proud that Cervantes should remember it in El coloquio de los perros (a novel); a carved stone gives witness to the fact: "And before daybreak I was in Mairena, which is a place four leagues from Sevilla" (from El coloquio). We arrived in the middle of the afternoon, with a furious sun beating against the white village.

It was Antonio Mairena who took us to his pueblo. Antonio is, naturally, the favorite son of Mairena. His ample popularity as a cantaor could only be produced in places like this, inhabited by almost only one numerous family and where even daily life is like a humble communal expression. In more populous places, one is never a grand cantaor for the many, but rather for those nuclei of aficionados who always constitute a more or less ample minority. But Antonio Mairena, to his pueblo, is a symbol of artistic lucidity and a permanent source of pride. It is impressive, when one is not used to it, to see him cross these wide, flowered streets followed by the respect and admiration of all the people. We believe that, within the always restricted

popularity of an authentic cantaor, it would be difficult to repeat a similar scene in any other corner of Andalucía.

Before arriving in Mairena del Alcor we had made a special call in Dos Hermanas, a step away from Sevilla and another from Utrera. Juan Talega was waiting for us in a modest bar near the plaza. Although a resident of this agricultural area that borders the marshes of the Guadalquivir -- "nazarenos" they are called -- the cante and the life of Juan Talega are linked to Alcalá de Guadaira. Dos Hermanas, in spite of its location in the geographic cradle of flamenco, belongs to other expressive spheres. Juan Talega, now almost in his eighties, is the son of Augustín Fernández, a great but anonymous cantaor of the past century, and nephew -- as was Manolito el de María -- of Joaquín el de la Paula, the unforgettable craftsman of the soleares which bear his name. Heavily built and proud, with noble gypsy bearing, he represents to perfection the so often mentioned and almost lost group of great cantaores that can be found in their native regions. Juan Talega in this sense is an exceptional example. Faithful preserver of the old styles of Alcalá and Triana, of Jerez and Utrera, he is one of the two or three greatest present day exponents of the cante -- when considered according to its truest and most rigorous historical roots. Talega is an ultimate example of dramatic clear-sightedness and expressive wisdom. Each one of his cantes constitutes a supreme lesson in sobriety, in pathos, in the exact measuring of the compás, and in emotive tension. No one today could give us more direct and precise human and artistic data than that which was given to us by this faultless heir of the most illustrious branch of the gypsy creators of Alcalá -- that of the "houses" of the Talegas and the Paulas. His cante is the expression of his life. When the day comes that he can no longer sing, a whole important cycle of the history of flamenco will have been closed.



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Juan Talega accompanied us to Mairena del Alcor. With us too was Tomás Torre, the son of Manuel, whose cantes we had taped before; also, the guitarist, Eduardo el de la Malena, and José María Velázquez, an intelligent flamenco chronicler. We met in a kind of small club, then empty, after having managed to avoid having the place overstocked with friends, aficionados, and curious people. Antonio Mairena had found his brother Francisco, a good cantaor -- although little more than anonymous -- of siguiriyas and soleares, as is Manolo, the youngest of the brothers. We could not include either Antonio nor Manolo in our "Archive" because of previous exclusive contracts. Francisco is a man now mature, of graceful gypsy-andalusian stance, very influenced by the serious, uncompromising flamenco conception of his brother Antonio. His cantes have much spontaneous personal fervor and some glimpses of extraneous influence, but they are always true. Francisco only sings for his friends (and only occasionally), and this opportunity was especially welcomed by him.

The fiesta in the small club of Mairena was long and fruitful and was continued in a venta close to Alcalá de Guadaira on the way back to Sevilla. Most of these recordings had considerable documentary interest for us and an irreplaceable stylistic value. The simple fact of having gathered the cantes of Juan Talega presupposes -- as with some other admirable cases of older cantaores who contributed to the Archive -- the fertile and definitive fixation of all of a whole exceptional range of flamenco creations.

"HISTORY OF CANTE FLAMENCO - AN ARCHIVE"

Publishers Central Bureau is again making the "Archive" available. These are the recordings that are being described in our series of articles, "Archivo" and this is an opportunity that should not be missed if you do not already own these records. The "Archive" was one of the most interesting anthologies, as it was recorded in juerga situations, rather than in studios. There are five records and seventy five selections, including most of flamenco's major song forms; for example, there are over ten styles of siguiriyas and more than twenty styles of soleares. The records feature thirty four cantaores and eighteen guitarists, including Diego del Gastor, Parilla de Jerez, and Paco Cepero, along with a lot of old-timers.

To order, send a check for the amount, plus \$2.25 handling charge (for any size purchase) along with the title, catalogue number, and quantity desired, to: Publishers Central Bureau, Department 102, 1 Champion Ave., Avenel, New Jersey 07131 (N.Y. and N.J. add sales tax; \$10 minimum order)

- #S43601 History of Cante Flamenco \$11.99
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G A Z P A C H O D E G U I L L E R M O

PERSPECTIVE

How important is flamenco to you? Obviously, it is very important since you read Jaleo, and you probably perform for money or as a hobby. Have you ever thought of making a list of priorities in your life? Where would flamenco be on the list?

For the hobbyist flamenco may not even be on such a list. Let's delve into this a bit more and see. Life has certain necessities which must come first. Only then are the other things given any importance. Here is my list of priorities, which I'm sure will be different from yours. You may want to draw one up, and check it periodically since you probably go through changes.

Guillermo's List of Priorities

1. Oxygen: Try to listen to one side of a flamenco record without breathing. You won't make it, excluding hyperventilation and 45 rpms.
2. Physical Freedom: If you are bound with ropes you will not be able to be on time for the sevillanas at the nightclub.
3. Warmth: Try hitch-hiking on the Autobahn in Germany in January. After one half-hour without getting a ride, I'll guarantee you will temporarily forget about flamenco.
4. Water: You can go without food for a while, but water is needed in some form daily. Try a competition fast between water and flamenco to see which you go for first.
5. Food: For the body to move its muscles and function in all ways nourishment is a prerequisite.

6. Shelter: Flamenco is frequently performed outdoors in the summer. A little rain has a big effect on floor surfaces and expensive guitars.
7. Human Contact: Total self-sufficiency is a rarity in "civilized" places. Few grow their own food, build their own houses, cut their own hair, live completely alone, and have time for flamenco in the evenings after "work."
8. Flamenco: By now it's almost urgent to get some.
9. Friendly Companionship: You need someone to talk about flamenco with.
10. Intimate Relationship: Only after all of the above.

Ridiculous, you may say. Think about it a while longer and make up your own list. My apparent exaggerations may not be so ridiculous after all. I would love to see your list.

* * *

"DIEGO DE MORON"

(Movieplay Serie Gong 170.914/6)

This is a difficult record to review. Let's start by introducing Diego de Morón as one of the nephews of the legendary Diego del Gastor. He is the son of Luis Torres "Joselero." Diego de Morón, formerly known as Dieguito, has also recorded several LP albums with his father.

"Aire Fresco" is the opening number. It's a Morón style bulería in A minor, featuring single note melodies and lots of choking on the strings. It is very effective except when the second guitarist misses the chord changes several times. The cover of the record says that "Aire Fresco" is based on a theme by Atahualpa Yupanqui, the South American singer-guitarist. Diego is accompanied by the members of his group in all of the selections. The group features J. J. Palacios and Miguel Angel Bullido on drums and percussion, Chicho Hipolito on bass, and Gustavo Gonzales and Carlos Carcano on keyboard.

The next selection is "Recuerdo de Julia" a soleá. The introduction is a psychedelic sounding combination of synthesizer and guitar rasgueado with no compás. Diego then enters in perfect soleares compás in the jondo style of his uncle. This is one of the most serious pieces on the record. The synthesizer at first seems out of place, but only because it hasn't been the customary way to present flamenco.

The alegrías is titled "Te Hubiera Entregado Todo." It has phrasing taken

directly from an alegrías by Paco de Lucía, but also has its own stamp. Side one closes with "Sin Descanso," a tangos. This has a delightful, but somewhat serious approach. There are two guitars again here, and I suspect that Diego has overdubbed and is his own second guitarist.

Side two starts with "Despertar," a rondeña. Synthesizer, cymbals, and drums open the piece and play for a whole minute before the guitar enters. It is a long and drawn out rondeña, with much repetition and monotony. Monotony is to some extent part of the hypnotic attraction of flamenco however. Halfway through this eight-minute rondeña it starts to pick up with a 3/4 beat. The whole group joins in the repetitive melodies until the end of the piece.

The tarantas, "Serena Calma," begins with cymbals, jingle bells, and the sounds of wooden percussion instruments. The guitar does a traditional introduction to this nice tarantas. This must be something more recent for Diego, since he didn't play tarantas when I met him, at least not to my recollection. Even Diego del Gastor didn't play tarantas, but rather the tarantos, which is not the same thing, especially with regard to the cante.

The second bulerías is called "Recovecos." This is interpreted much faster than the other, but still with a good Morón aire. The record ends with "Sueños Rotos," a media granaína. Once again this must be something Diego picked up in Madrid, since few in Morón would play such things. He does give it a Morón sound -- until the synthesizer joins in. Then he does traditional type granadinas until the end of the record.

What is it about this record that is hard to accept? For me it is the primitiveness of the Morón style, mixed with the futuristic synthesizer interpretations. Of course, it all depends on what the word "jondo" means to the listener. If it means a closeness to the earthy events of life, such as birth and death, then the trained flamenco listener may be disappointed by some things on the record. However, if the listener accepts that even non-flamenco people can be close to the earth in their own way, there may be tolerance, if not acceptance, of non-flamencos.

As I have said in several previous reviews, most hard core flamencos will not appreciate this kind of record. On the other hand, as most acid trippers and peyote button poppers would assure us, the earthiness of birth and death is common to all human beings.

Flamenco has no monopoly on true "duende."

--Guillermo Salazar



SAN DIEGO SCENE

JUANITA FRANCO DEBUTS AT EL MORO

by Nina Espinoza

Thursday evening, April 30, provided a rare opportunity for flamenco aficionados in San Diego to experience an emotionally packed and masterful performance of flamenco as Juanita Franco made her dancing debut at the El Moro Restaurant. Inspired by a full house, the brilliant guitar of complete virtuoso Rodrigo de España and the forceful and emotional singing of Andalusian poetress María José, Juanita gave one of the best and most memorable flamenco performances I have witnessed in a long time. Her natural affinity for flamenco and technical mastery of many flamenco forms allowed Juanita to respond to the expectations of the enthusiastic audience, which included many serious flamenco aficionados attending El Moro especially to see Juanita perform.

The first show, which started at 8:30, was a warm-up session for dancers, singer, guitarist and the gathering audience. The second and third performance, however, saw a transformation in both audience and performers as Juanita, Rodrigo, María José and Angelita allowed their fierce emotions and superb talents for flamenco to surface to a fiery peak. Edged on by palmas and encouraging and complimentary shouts from the audience, Juanita went through a spectrum of bulerías, alegrías, and rumbas in brilliant fashion. The end of each dance was marked by resounding ovations and towards the end of the third and final performance many of the aroused dancers in the audience joined Juanita on stage to dissipate their heightened emotions through participation in the dances. Even after the guitar had produced its final

sound, dancing continued with the rhythm of palmas.

Juanita was originally contracted to appear at El Moro every Thursday but, as a result of her inspiring performance on Thursday, she will now be appearing every Friday and Saturday as well. Rodrigo and María José had already been performing at El Moro on Fridays and Saturdays. I hope that the local flamenco enthusiasts will continue to support Juanita, Rodrigo, María José and the young and evolving dancer Angelita by regular attendance at El Moro. Many of the aficionados attending Thursday's presentation felt that the best which can be found in flamenco had come together in this group. It is unreasonable to expect that every performance will have the quality and emotional content of Thursday's presentation since such performances require a spontaneous fusion of the emotions of artists and audience, but it is gratifying to know that in the right atmosphere this group is capable of reaching the highest levels of flamenco expression.

A few words should be directed at the cost of attending a performance at El Moro. This is a relatively small, but very elegant Spanish-Italian restaurant, with no bar. It provides a cozy atmosphere for an intimate expression of flamenco, but presents a real financial problem for the owners who must provide a reasonable compensation to the performers, pay other costs, and make a profit from a relatively small clientele that gathers early, takes up all the space in the restaurant and remained for all the performances. After considering various alternatives, El Moro settled, for the Thursday performance, on an \$8.00 minimum per person which included drinks and food. These may seem rather steep to some, but most of the people in attendance felt that it was a reasonable charge. A few felt it was more than reasonable. In any case, I could not find any complainers at the end of Thursday's performance.



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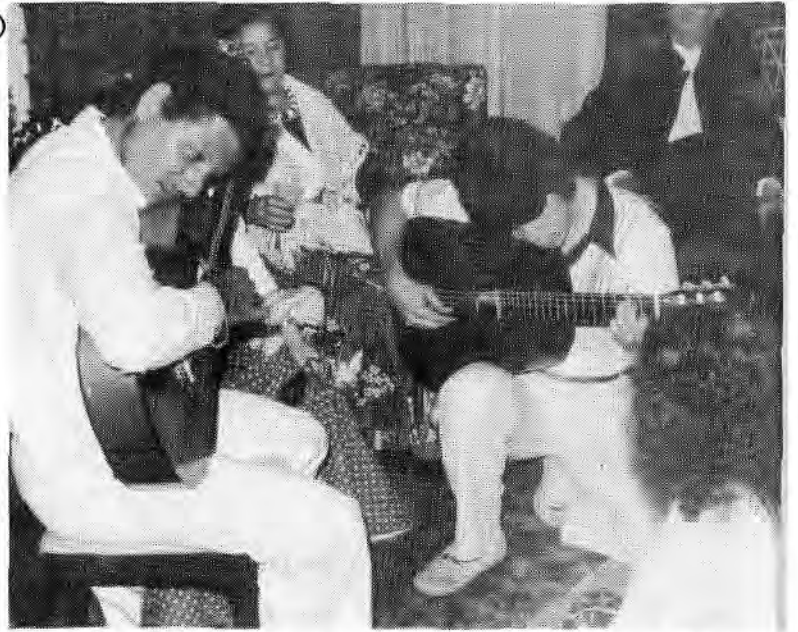
EL MORO

(1) MARIA JOSE SINGING HER SEVILLANAS DE GUADALUPE; (2) JUANITA FRANCO DANCING ALEGRÍAS; (3) AGELITA DANCES BULERÍAS; (4) MARIA JOSE DANCES RUMBA.

photos by Mary Ferguson



(1) (2)



(3)

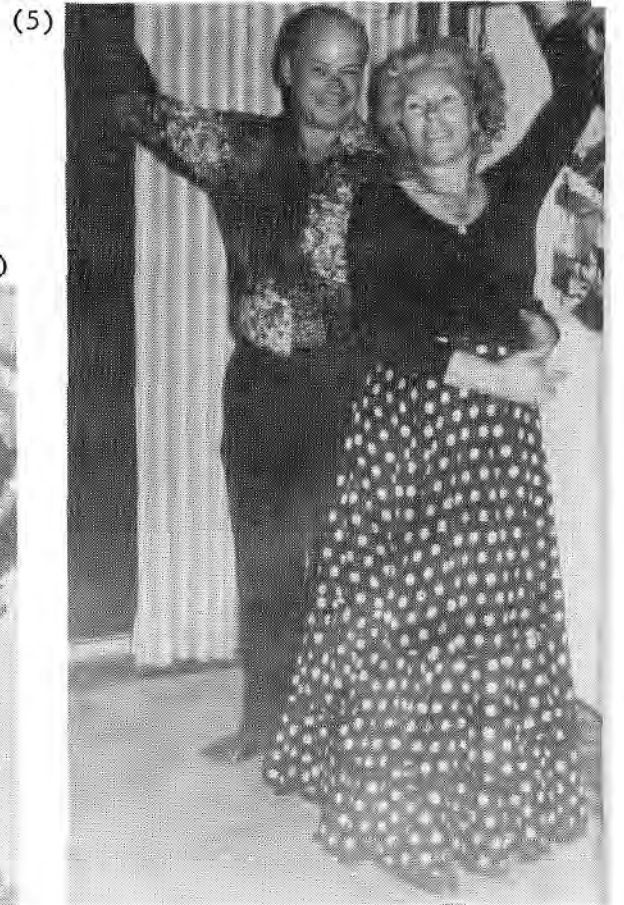
APRIL JUERGA

text & photos by El Chileno

- (1)JUANA DE ALVA CUTTING BIRTHDAY CAKE;
- (2)ROY LOPEZ AND DAVID DE ALVA JAM OUT
- (3)LEFT TO RIGHT GUITARISTS EARL KENVIN, TONY PICKSLAY, EL CHILENO & TOM SANDLER.
- (4)PACO SEVILLA PLAYS FOR MARIA CLARA
- (5)HOSTS LARRY & ANNA GILBERT.



(4)





EARL KENVIN & RAFAEL DIAZ
WORK OUT SOME CANTE



Last month's juerga was held at the beautiful home of Larry and Anna Maria Gilbert in Chula Vista. The light rain that sprinkled off and on during the evening did not deter some sixty or so Jaleistas and guests from attending what turned out to be an extremely lively event.

This juerga had a special significance in that it doubled up as a birthday party for Juana de Alva, founder and most active member of Jaleistas. Several "feliz cumpleaños Juana" sung por sevillanas and por alegrías were heard in her honour during the evening. The hostess, Anna Maria, offered a solo paso doble to everyone's enjoyment.

Two outstanding guitarists visiting San Diego, David de Alva and Roy Lopez, along with our own Paco Sevilla, participated actively with professional-quality toques for dancers Magdalena and Marina and Marvila Madrid, all of them Juana de Alva's students.

Many other aficionados, including Benito Garrido, Jesus Soriano, Earl Kenvin, and

Frank "El Chileno" Campbell helped in livening up other dancers and singers. Cantaoor Rafael Díaz brought "el duende" out with cante jondo later in the evening. The juerga closed however with a light tone with sevillanas and alegrías by Ernest Lenshaw, Maria Clara Romero, and hosts Anna and Larry into the wee hours of the morning.

JUNE JUERGA

This month's juerga will be unique in many ways. It will be held at the Ocean Playhouse Restaurant in the city of El Cajon which specializes in Spanish (not Mexican) cooking and sea food. Flamenco dancer, Eduardo Montemayor from Texas, will be performing with Mosaico Flamenco and remaining for the juerga. It will be a perfect opportunity to make a whole evening of flamenco beginning with a Spanish dinner (reservations suggested), watch a flamenco show and then continue the music and dance into the wee hours.

The Ocean Playhouse is owned by the Johnson family and run by Bcelona born Catalina, her two sons Alberto and Mark and daughter Dolores. Vivacious is the word for Catalina who came to the U.S. in 1963. She enjoyed flamenco back home and one of her dreams is that "todo el mundo conozca nuestro baile y cultura" - that everyone get to know our dance and culture. She is surely doing her part by serving excellent Spanish food, presenting a flamenco show twice a week and being such an enthusiastic hostess. (Another Johnson enterprise is Johnson's Hardware and Glass in Lemon Grove.)

Eduardo Montemayor is only twenty years old but has performed on several national tours, is the male soloist with "Los Flamencos de San

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PILAR SEVILLA
DANCER

Antonio," is currently teaching with Nana Lorca and will be performing with Miss Lorca and José Greco in Los Angeles in June.

DATE: June 20

PLACE: 691 El Cajon Blvd

PHONE: 442-8542

TIME: Dinner from 6:00; 1st show 8:00; juerga begins at 10:30; restaurant closes to the public at 11:30.

GUESTS: Space is limited so please take another occasion to introduce a friend to Jalefistas.

Special notice: no private bottles can be brought into the restaurant until after it is closed to the public at 11:30.

Directions: Take Hwy 8 east, take the first turn off for the city of El Cajon (El Cajon Blvd). The restaurant is on the right hand side just past Washington Ave.



(RODRIGO, continued from page 16)

jazz, and maybe he can turn you on to somebody that could promote you in London."

So eventually I began writing to Basil Douglas in London, who had managed Paco Peña a few times. I sent him a tape and described some of my experience and things, and he decided he would organize it for me. Of course, I had to finance the whole thing. He did all the publicity and I had an excellent turn out at Wigmore Hall. It holds 500 people and 300 turned out. A lot of money was lost, but I gained a lot of confidence in myself. I had the satisfaction of playing in London, and there are probably four or five concerts that I would not have given here in the United States if it had not been because I played at Wigmore Hall. They do not let you perform unless they know where you are coming from, like at Carnegie Hall or at the Wilshire Ebell. They don't want to be held responsible; if a bad musician goes there it gives them a bad reputation, so it always helps to have something you've done before. It was a great experience. I flew to London and stayed there for about four days. I didn't even have enough money to eat. I had

to contact a friend who loaned me money to get back to Sevilla. I just had enough money to take a train to Arroyo de la Miel in Málaga, which was where I was living at the time.

JALEO: How long did you stay in Spain the second time?

RODRIGO: Four years. That was a long stretch.

JALEO: Why did you decide to come back to the States the second time?

RODRIGO: Because the political situation changed in Spain. All the hotels were going on strike, and the money situation got terrible. What money I had saved up, I decided to use to come back here. And I had reached a point in my life where I had decided I wanted to become a soloist and go into that area in a commercial way. I had two more children, so I had to forget about being an artist and become a money-maker.

JALEO: Were all of your children born in Spain?

RODRIGO: All of them, yes. As a result, what I am doing here, as everyone can see, I am giving these concerts, these shows, and it's a commercial thing. I am doing my music and my art, but I am trying for a higher goal. Six years before, I was satisfied with accompanying soleares correctly for three hours, that was what turned me on. Now it is different.

JALEO: It must be difficult nowadays to make it to the top like Sabicas or Escudero, for example, did before.

RODRIGO: I don't think Sabicas or Escudero had that much difficulty making it to the top. The same with the Romeros. I think it was an easy road. Anyone who came to the States twenty or thirty years ago, you can imagine, anyone who did a trémolo or a rasgueado could father a crowd, and you could easily get an agent.

JALEO: There are some who do not believe there is a lot of value in Montoya's or Manitas de Plata's playing, but yet they have become very famous indeed. Do you think good promotion had something to do with it?

RODRIGO: Oh, yes indeed. Manitas de Plata filled Carnegie Hall. He is the only instrumentalist to fill Carnegie Hall nine times in three years, that is, once every four months. When Manitas de Plata filled Carnegie Hall, I guess I was sixteen or seventeen years old, he was filling it with midnight performances, two shows a day, whatever. So you can imagine the kind of promotion he had, the kind of money that was spent; whether Picasso or Dali had anything to do with it, or Brigitte Bardot, he had a lot of famous

people behind him. He is an intelligent person as far as money goes, and also a real good entertainer. And if it wasn't for him, or as Paco Sevilla once said, "these people made flamenco a household word for us." We are just living off of what they have done. No one would know what flamenco was if it weren't for Montoya.

JALEO: Do you feel that you have to compromise your integrity as an artist to some extent in order to become "famous?" Would you be willing to do that? Become flashy, showy, that sort of thing?

RODRIGO: (after a pause)...yeah, yeah, you've got to, a little bit. You've got to do certain things fast; what you can do real fast, you should try to dominate that. You don't walk out on stage like you are in your bedroom; you walk out with a smile and work the people up; you may want to play soleares or siguiriyas, but it may not be the right thing to do -- people might not like it; so you'll have to choose another tune. That's about all I think you have to compromise. But if what you do is good, and you can pull it off well, you can be successful in it. I don't think you have to compromise any more than that. I think Paco de Lucía is doing what he really enjoys. I think he is fascinated by jazz. Anybody that can pick the guitar like he does with his right hand would be fascinated.

JALEO: Have you ever met Paco de Lucía?

RODRIGO: No, but the second time I went to a flamenco contest in Jerez, since picado is one of my stronger points, I wanted to be around people that "picado" as fast as Paco or faster, to see what it was like. And I did. I was sitting in front of fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen-year-olds, you know, twenty of them, just picadoing like lightning. And I got used to it after a while and I said, "Well, it's good up to a certain point and then that's it."

So I am sure that if I met Paco de Lucía and was in the same room with him I wouldn't be so surprised. There was a fifteen-year-old kid who could do picado at an amazing speed, but he couldn't do ligado or anything else.

One thing that I could say has helped my guitar playing in the past couple of years, and helped me to develop my own style as a soloist and accompanist for singing is that my wife lets me play my guitar the way I want to play. In Spain you have to have so much respect for what the singer is doing, you know, you don't want to play too many falsetas; you don't want to be too showy with the singers, and I always felt that I was holding myself back when I accompanied sing-

ing. While doing that, I am not developing my full potential. My wife sings a few types -- she'll sing tangos, or alegrías, or tarantas -- and in those I am able to do exactly what I want to. She's not going to tell me, you know, "Don't cut my singing." She is about the only person that I really enjoy accompanying. I think that if I went back to Spain now I would probably get hit over the head by every singer that I came in contact with, but I don't like to be held back. I don't intentionally want to choke people when they sing. I've always respected the cante and lifted the singer up so he could triumph, but I can't do that any more because I enjoy playing.

I think that's why Diego del Gastor only accompanies the people he did, because they let him play the guitar the way he wanted to play. Diego del Gastor and Antonio Mairena would have been a duet twenty years ago if Antonio Mairena hadn't raised his hand at Diego and told him to quiet down on the guitar a little bit. Diego got mad and left.

When you are accompanying singing, you always seem to be making the way for the singer so that he can come in, and I've found that most of the times, if the singer is good, he sings the same siguiriyas with the guitar or without it. Sometimes they prefer to sing without the guitar because they don't have the competition. I think that the best singing accompaniment is when you can sort of adorn the singing, with the guitar creating sort of a harmony. That's about the extent of it. That's good accompanying. Maybe after a line of song you could throw in a falseta or something, a couple of notes to sort of give it punch, but that's about it. And I am bored with that now. If my wife is singing tarantos, for example, and she sings the first line, if I want to take thirty seconds and do whatever I do, I have to or I become emotionally frustrated. So whoever wants to sing with me has to put up with it. That's the one thing I do best, accompanying cante jondo, but I just do it in my own way now. I have to play a lot more guitar with it now than before.

JALEO: What was it like to accompany Agujetas?

RODRIGO: Fun, old memories. He is an excellent singer. He sings in a monotonal gypsy style and develops the monotonal to the hilt, which is the way I like to play my guitar. I like the monotonal. Agujetas is an excellent singer. He knows what he's doing. He can turn the siguiriyas upside down, inside and out, any way he wants to and it comes out right. Very difficult to accompany though, very difficult, you've got to be

right on him.

JALEO: How do you feel about Camarón de la Isla?

RODRIGO: El Camarón is the La Niña de los Peines of today. He has revolutionized the guitar, he revolutionized Paco. When Camarón changed his singing style, that's when Paco de Lucía changed his style of guitar playing. He picked up Camarón's melodies and put them on the guitar. So Camarón is the genius of today. He's the one who has changed it all. He changed the guitar, the singing, made tangos and bulerías popular. He's done it all and it is because of him that they have developed the rock-and-roll style of flamenco. Everything that has come after him, like Las Grecas, is based upon what Camarón did. His style comes from La Linea, which is next to Algeciras, and he got his style from two people, El Rubio de Algeciras, an old man who sings, and another man called Joaquín el Canastero. They imitated Moroccans in their way of singing, but in the flamenco style. Camarón developed that even further.

JALEO: It is the dream of every aspiring flamenco aficionado to go to Spain and study. What advice would you have for them?

RODRIGO: It all depends on what they want to study. For the singing I can't comment on that. It is something that happens to our vocal cords when we are little. They develop in a certain way. There has to be a reason that only Andalusian people can sing flamenco. Germans, French, Italian, Americans, they can all sing opera in Italian, but the only people who can sing flamenco in the world are certain people from Andalucía. It might be a plumber, an ice-cream vendor, whoever -- they'll sing you a fandango that no one in the world can sing. It makes you wonder if soleares are more difficult than what Pavarotti sings. So for the singing, I don't know. There have been some Americans who have tried, but I think that it is basically a language thing. As far as the dancing goes, the opportunities are great from what I hear. You can study in Madrid. If you get good enough, there are all kinds of foreign people who are working in tablaos. I think that probably the best thing to do is to go to Madrid and do what they are all doing. If you ask how people learn how to dance, I think that Japanese or American people who are learning how to dance have opportunities that are much better than what the best dancers in flamenco history had. Carmen Amaya -- who taught her? As they say, she watched the waves rolling in at the beach. In those days people didn't go in and study for two or three years like you can do now-

adays from a maestro. They say El Farruco was dancing in the banks of the river when he was ten years old; who the hell taught him? And you see it in Spain, those little kids that dance. Either you've got it or you don't. If you've got it, you'll get it, you will learn it. I think I play flamenco fairly well and, as far as lessons go, I've had almost none. So if you are going to learn how to play, you will learn it anyway.

For the dancing, you can go into Amor de Diós, which is where all the Japanese people go, or go watch the tablaos, or take lessons from Juana de Alva, which may be the best thing to do out of all of them, or whatever, and if you really want to learn it, you will eventually find a way to get good at it -- if you have it in you. And you have it in you. And you will suffer the way I did to get to work in a tablao. You'll eventually begin to learn more and more and you'll get it together. You'll do it for free and every day you'll get a little better. And if you don't give up, some day you'll get to be a good dancer. It is not like some people say, "I'll go to Spain for two months and I'll get to be a flamenco dancer." No, even the good people there have had to struggle to get a steady job and to keep it. The last time we were in Spain, just before coming home in the summer, four hundred pesetas were being paid to the dancers in the tablaos. I don't know how much that is in dollars (about \$6.00), but it was much less than they paid ten years ago, and those are really good people who know how to dance.

As far as the guitar goes, I think my advice is, like singing, or dancing, if you want to learn good flamenco, figure at least on a good ten years of learning it little by little. That will give you plenty of time to learn it. You will learn it if you learn it little by little and you take up those ten years. And after those ten years, you'll be playing flamenco. You'll pick up some in the States, pick up some there, at parties, get a job, and little by little it will all take form. But our mentality is to go buy a book, and in six months you think you are doing it. No, it takes a good ten or fifteen years to get it all together -- maybe twenty years to put all the pieces together. If you live in Spain for a while, you'll pick it up, a lesson here and there. You'll practice, you'll hear records, you'll get it all together, you'll learn it. There is no quick method.

JALEO: There are probably a lot of American artists who go over there and never make the mark.

RODRIGO: Yes. What I am going to do with my two sons if they want to play the guitar is, before they get into anything, I'll have them learn how to accompany old style records. I'll have them learn how to imitate Melchor de Marchena or Diego del Gastor and old people like that, and teach them how to accompany La Fernanda. After that they can learn from El Camarón and get ready for whatever else might happen. But you shouldn't begin with Camarón because you'll have missed the whole thing. You have to start from day one, from the beginning of flamenco to... that's the only way you'll learn how to play. You see, Paco de Lucía knows how. He can sit down and...I'm sure that one day he played tientos like Manolo de Badajoz with La Niña de los Peines. He didn't sit down and start playing Paco de Lucía falsetas when he was five years old. You've got to start the old style and learn the compás and then work your way up. Anybody who starts with Paco de Lucía, or Habichuelas, or someone like that, will have missed a lot because all these new styles of playing are throwing out a lot of it, are skipping a lot of the old compás. But they know that it's there because they knew how to play it when they were little; that's why they are able to play and understand the new so well.

You go to Spain and you get off the plane and you are in Málaga and you walk into a bar with your guitar...you know, you could go into a bar -- there are certain barrios where you can go in with your guitar and start playing if it's not too late at night. You might get a couple of people to sing for you. And then they'll invite you over for dinner. Then you get two more people to sing. That's the way to start, that's what I would do. I would go into a small bar in Sevilla or in Málaga, pick up my guitar and start playing. I might get kicked out, or I might meet somebody who could sing and he'd take me over to his house where I'd meet another person, and another person, and then years from then I might be a good flamenco player. I would have had a lot of jobs, and I might even become a great flamenco player, and I would know how to accompany everything, and I would have lived in Spain as a Spaniard would. That's how to do it.

JALEO: How are foreign artists received generally in Spain?

RODRIGO: I think really well-accepted, as long as you don't play better than they do.

JALEO: Did that happen to you?

RODRIGO: Well, you know, ah, if you are working with other artists, if you are working with other guitarists, it always helps

not to play better than they do if you want to keep your job. But if you are working with singers, you should play as well as you can. I don't know, I began it when I was so young, I don't know what to say about flamenco, I really don't. I may sound like I am trying to say it's like the sun and the wind, you know. I'm not trying to do that. I don't know what to say about it. I don't know. It's like that Sabicas interview. The only thing he had to say was practice your picado. Basically, he did not have anything to say about it. I don't know what to say about it.

JALEO: What are your feelings about being a "technician" on the guitar?

RODRIGO: The only way you can be a technician is if your emotions don't dominate your hands, you are always going to make a lot of mistakes and you are not going to learn a particular piece perfectly because you will always be changing it as your emotions change. See? I am a very emotional person, so my style of playing has a lot of mistakes in it. I can't sit down and practice a scale because I would get bored with it and by the time I got on the stage I couldn't play it anyway. That's why I say I am not a "technician." People who are, just do technique, they are not playing the emotional side of the music. Even though I do have technique, it doesn't dominate my style.

JALEO: How do you practice?

RODRIGO: When I study it is just a matter of trying new material. If I make up a new falseta that is what I practice. I don't do scales. I don't believe in practicing scales. If you are a classical guitarist and want to learn trémolo, begin with the "Recuerdos de la Alhambra" and, by the time you learn how to trémolo, you'll have the piece at the same time. You'll save a lot of time that way. Now, as far as my technique on the guitar goes, I think, since I was young I was always fascinated with the sound of ligados; they always fascinated me much more than picado, more than any other technique. I've always felt comfortable playing with my thumb. Maybe that comes from my first four years with the guitar when I played with a pick; maybe there is something in my subconscious that just makes me feel that way. So I've developed that, and if I've contributed anything to the guitar, I think I've contributed in a way by showing that you can play long series of ligado runs, not rambling styles, but scales, as if they were picados, but much faster. I can create with them as if I were playing rock-and-roll or jazz. Almost the

same as with Paco de Lucía, except that I do it more less with ligados. I can also reach a higher velocity. I can play bulerías at a normal speed and play four notes to a beat, whereas the fastest you could go with picado is three notes to the beat. And that's what I've offered. That will probably be my contribution to the guitar. I've increased the velocity of the thumb and the velocity of ligados, not in a messy way, but I've made them into runs that I can show you note for note. Besides that, there are original melodies that I have running throughout all of my music.

JALEO: You tune down one fret, don't you?

RODRIGO: (with a chuckle) Yes, I tune down, so do you! (laughter)

JALEO: I got it from you, and it does work well.

RODRIGO: Seriously, the reason for it is that I do so many ligados. If I kept it at the normal tension, by the time I was forty, I'd have arthritis in my left arm and in my fingers. It is too much work. Somehow I feel that the guitar with the strings a little bit looser, but not too loose, allows the ligados to come out clearer. I've found that when strings are not new and they've been sweated on a lot, you get a better sound from ligados than you will with new strings. I don't know what that is, but I have found that to be true.

JALEO: What kind of strings do you like?

RODRIGO: Savarez. And I like the wound second and third, since I do a lot of ligados and I get almost a picado sound from those second and third strings.

JALEO: How often do you change them?

RODRIGO: Once a month or once every six weeks. If I do a concert, I prefer to have strings a little on the older side because they won't go out of tune; since you are using a microphone, you are not getting quality sound anyway from your instrument, and it doesn't matter so much what the tone of the guitar is.

JALEO: How do you protect your fingernails?

RODRIGO: I have used Pegamento y Medio for a long time. It doesn't damage the nail. It lasts a couple or three days and then you take it off and put it on again. It doesn't take off the top of my nail. I care for the nails on my left hand just as much and wear them long.

JALEO: What types of audiences turn you on, or turn you off in flamenco?

RODRIGO: Oh, I think people who have spent money to go in and see you are really going to concentrate. So any time you've got someone that has come to you openly and with the

willingness to concentrate on what you are going to do, you've got 99.9% of the battle won right there. The only thing you have to do is show those people that you are concentrating on what you are doing, that you are giving it all you've got, that you do it well, and that you appreciate their applause, and you'll never lose any audiences. The only times when I've had bad audiences has been while working in nightclubs and restaurants, but in a concert, I've never had a bad audience and I don't expect to ever have one. People know. People always appreciate when you give them something. If you don't have an audience that is appreciative of what you've done, it's because you haven't given. They are watching every movement you are making. You are naked up there. If you are not giving, they know it right away.

JALEO: How do you feel about the audiences at the juergas?

RODRIGO: They are the worst -- in Spain and here. The worst. Never can play the guitar in silence, forget it, because there is drinking going on and there is always a certain number of people who go there just for fun; there are three or four of you who want to do art, and the rest of them don't. And you have to have those other people there because, if they are not there, you don't feel like performing. I am sure if just the artists in San Diego got together and had a fiesta, it would be a nice, quiet fiesta, but it wouldn't be the same as having a hundred people in the kitchen and the halls, all around. That's all part of it. There is no solution to that.

JALEO: Are there any similarities between our juergas and those in Spain?

RODRIGO: When you are making money it's a different thing. You are serving the people in the juerga and one mistake, like getting up and putting your guitar in the case at the wrong time, can start a whole big fight, and then you've lost your money and you've lost the night. I would still like to go to a juerga and play for fun in Spain, but I don't know what that is like yet. I always played for money. You don't have much freedom. There would be times when I had five or six singers sitting around in a circle and I almost had to attend each one individually, in other words, humor one by trying to get him to sing and find his tone, and then another one would say "I can't sing malagueñas, I don't feel like it." If he happened to be a rich doctor, I'd say, "Oh, yes you can," and get him to do it; then he would feel good about it and that would mean more money for me at the end. Things like

that. As far as the juergas in Spain and the juergas here, well, the juergas in Spain have the singing. The juergas here we just don't have as much singing. We've got the dancing, more than enough good dancers here. The flamenco juerga in Spain is really for singing, not dancing. That is basically the difference. The gypsy juerga is all singing. Some people might get up and dance a little bit, but no one does a full soleares or sevillanas; no, it is based upon the singing, you want to get down to concentrating on how to sing a cante and accompany it well.

JALEO: Do you think we can create "ambiente" here, or is there something missing that can only be found in Spain?

RODRIGO: The only thing that is missing is more singers, that's all. Like it or not, singing is the crux of the whole thing. We've got the dancers and the guitarists, but we need people to sing. And we need something else. We need the people to listen to those who do sing, and appreciate them more than the guitarists and the dancers. The people who go to the juergas are not appreciating those that do sing, and if we can get people to shut up and listen to the people who are singing, then we'll have good fiestas. But that seems to me that the one thing that is taken the most for granted is the singing. And that is the most important part of the whole juerga. I am not speaking just for my wife, because Pilar Moreno sings, María José sings, Juana de Alva sings sevillanas, Rafael Díaz sings, and you can't take that for granted.

JALEO: Can you tell us a little about your concerts?

RODRIGO: The last three concerts I've given, I have tried to mix the solo guitar with the dancing and singing to make it more interesting. The last concert we gave in Tijuana, we mixed by giving two solos, then there would be a dance number and then a solo. I liked that, but it sort of defeated my purpose as a guitar concert. Turned out to be more of a juerga. So, the one at the Wilshire had guitar in the first part, then a middle part with a half an hour of flamenco, and the last part only guitar. So, it was a guitar concert with an interval of flamenco. I think that kind of a concert is the most enjoyable type of flamenco guitar concert. It is hard for some people to listen to a whole hour of guitar; if you throw some color in, it also gives a chance for more people to come, you get a broader audience. And also I really enjoy working with the people here, and there are people here who are really, really good at what they do and have really good personalities for stage work and they should be

given an opportunity to do it, whether it is on the low level with me, or a high level with somebody else. I say low level because I am not a famous artist in the United States. And I am quite happy to do that, and it helps me out at the same time.

JALEO: What are the solos you do?

RODRIGO: I do danza mora, tientos, serranas, granainas, soleares, bulerías, two rumbas, malagueña flamenco, siguiriya, taranta, garrotin, entre otros.

JALEO: We have covered a wide-range of subjects and thank you for sharing your thoughts with us.

RODRIGO: I just don't know, I can't speak about it. I envy people who are able to explain what they do. I just can't. Some people go to Spain for a month and they can describe their experiences in great detail. I lived there for seven years and I can't even talk about it.

JALEO: Well, I think you have done it very well. Thank you again on behalf of all flamenco aficionados.

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

FLAMENCO JAM SESSION every Sun 2-6pm at the Meson Don Quijote, 110 Chestnut St, Philidelphia, Pa. Everyone is welcome.

JULIA LOPEZ teaches flamenco dance at 110 Chestnut St. Philidelphia, PA.

BETTYNA BELEN is currently offering a beginning & intermediate flamenco dance class, Sat 11am-3pm, through Community Services at Los Angeles City College.

EL MORO CUISINE in pacific Beach (San Diego), now features guitarist Rodrigo, dancers Juanita Franco & Angela & singer María José Jarvis

JOEL BLAIR is now teaching flamenco guitar in the Vancouver, B.C. area, 604/873-0789.

MOSAICO FLAMENCO with guitarist Paco Sevilla, dancer Deanna & singer Pilar Moreno perform Fri & Sat at the Ocean Playhouse restaurant at 691 El Cajon Blvd. in El Cajon and Sun at the Blue Parrot restaurant at 1298 Prospect in La Jolla. (San Diego area)

ARTES BELLAS, INC. was recently formed in Phoenix, Arizona, by flamenco teacher/dancer Lydia Torea to help promote flamenco in Arizona. For information call or write 3650 West Bethany Home Road, Phoenix, AZ 85019, 602/841-0028.

MARIANO CORDOBA plays Friday and Saturday nights at the Don Quixote Restaurant, 206 El Paseo De Saratoga in San Jose, CA, phone 378-1545.

concerts

DANZA DE ESPANA with ROBERTO AMARAL and company will perform Sunday, June 14 at the Wilshire Ebell in Los Angeles. For information and tickets call: (213) 785-2359.

GUITARIST PETER BAIME will perform for the opening reception at the Canadian guitar festival, GUITAR '81, Toronto, Canada, June 22, 6:00pm.

classified

FOR SALE: Francisco Barba flamenco guitar; \$1,650.00 or trade. Tomás Mellado, 4337 15th Ave NE #503, Seattle, WA 98105, phone: 206/632-1299. Will be driving south to Texas at the end of June.)

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 Sabicas, 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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Rubina Carmona 213/660-9059

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Blue Parrot (La Jolla) 714/454-0131
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Juanita Franco 714/481-6269
Maria Teresa Gomez 714/453-5301
Rayna 714/475-4627
Julia Romero 714/278-4008

GUITAR INSTRUCTION:

Joe Kinney 714/274-7386
Rodrigo de San Diego 714/469-7732
Paco Sevilla 714/282-2837

FLAMENCO COSTUMES:

DICTIONARY OF FLAMENCO

(Miscellaneous words that were accidentally omitted the first time around.)

- CÓRDOBA** -- the old Moorish center in northern Andalucía; variants of fandangos, alegrías, and soleares developed there; inhabitant is called a **CORDOBÉS(A)**.
- FLAMENCO** (el) -- a form of music involving song, dance, and instrumental music that developed in Andalucía, Spain; it is composed of two major elements, the gypsy and the Andalucian, which in turn evolved from an number of influences, including Arabic music, other Spanish folk musics, and, more recently, Latin American music.
- FLECO** (el) -- fringe seen on Spanish shawls and dresses.
- FONDO** (el) -- the back of the guitar body; sometimes called **EL SUELO**.
- FRUNCIMIENTOS DE ENTRECEJO** (los) -- the knitting or drawing up and together of the eyebrows for expression.
- GACHÓ** (el) -- caló word for one who is not a gypsy; **GACHÍ** = female non-gypsy).
- GADITANO** (a) -- a native of the Cádiz area; the Roman name for Cádiz was "Gades"; the name of the city gradually changed, that of the inhabitants did not.
- GITANO** (a) -- Spanish gypsy; the gitanos refer to other gypsies as "húngaros."
- GOLPE**(el) - the tapping on the face of the guitar done with the ring finger of the right hand; it may be a sharp click done with the fingernail or a dull thud made by hitting only the flesh of the finger. This is an important technique for establishing strong accentuation.

And lastly, here is an attempt to distinguish between several types of sounds that are used in the cante--aside from actual words:

FARFULLOS or **FARFULLEO** are short syllables used in the singer's warm-up or in the chorus sections of modern rumbas and tangos; examples are "tirititran, tran tran" or "lélelele..."

QUEJÍOS are the "ay's" that may be used as a salida or used to extend words, or insert between words.

JIPÍOS are the breaks in the voice or tremulous vibrato sounds that give the cante a weeping or wailing quality.



LATE ANNOUNCEMENTS

ROSA MONTOYA IN SAN DIEGO: Madrid born gypsy flamenco dancer, Rosa Montoya, will be in San Diego from July 22nd to the 26th. She will offer 2 hour flamenco workshops for those five days to interested dancers from the San Diego and Los Angeles areas and possibly attend a Jaleistas juerga. Price of each workshop will be \$20.00 per person (private one hour sessions \$35.00). Those interested, contact Juana De Alva any morning before 8:00am at 714/442-5362.

YORGO GRECIA FLAMENCO TROUPE "Command Performance" at the Sullivan Center, 7631 W. Melrose Ave., Buena Park, on Saturday, July 11th. Greek dinner served from 5:00 on, show at 9:00. Tickets at Buena Park Rec. Center or Buena Park Chamber of Commerce. Sponsored by the Fine Arts Commission of Buena Park.

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