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**MARCOS & RUBINA CARMONA**



# JALEO



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JANUARY 1982

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## ALGO SOBRE VICENTE ESCUDERO

POR: Gabriel Ruiz de Galarreta

English Translation  
p 35



Vicente Escudero fué un gran visionario del baile flamenco, en aquella época, refiriéndonos a la 3a. Década del siglo actual. No hay duda alguna de que, con su enorme genio y originalidad -- en cuanto al baile español se refiere -- aportó ideas e imágenes nuevas, desconocidas hasta ese entonces por todos los de tal ambiente. Gracias a él, desde su tiempo se han interpretado bailes que ningun bailar anterior a Vicente pensó en hacer! Cuando llegó Escudero al baile, los bailarines (no bailarines) interpretaban farruca, alegrías, bulerías, tanguillos, la giga (baile inglés), garrotín, zambras, rumba catalana, y pare de contar!

Escudero ideó y aportó -- para hombres -- lo que podríamos llamar "Bailes Mayores", tales como la caña, el polo, la romera, soleares, siguiriyas, martinetes, la debla, alboreá, tarantos (corregidos y aumentados éstos, más tarde, para bien del arte flamenco, por "la única", Carmen Amaya), etc.

También aportó Vicente ideas nuevas en el vestir del bailarín y bailaor; aún recuerdo como vestía para la "Farruca del Molinero", de Falla: Una pierna enfundada en la media, la otra al aire, un brazo con la camisa remangada, y el otro al aire también. Además, con frecuencia en el escenario, solía redoblar sus uñas fuertemente, imitando el sonido de minúsculos "palillos" o castañuelas, mientras se retiraba a un lado del proscenio, y al hacer su "mutis", reicaba con sus dedos sobre la tapa del piano y desaparecía entre atronadores aplausos. Claro que esto ocurría en Francia, en París, donde él tenía su "cuartel general" y era ya famoso. Me honra mucho el haber sido amigo suyo y acompañarle en sus bailes con mi guitarra (no muchas actuaciones), en la capital francesa.

Repito que admiré enormemente a Vicente Escudero, y me enorgullece el haber sido amigo suyo, pero únicamente en esa faceta suya, en ese aspecto....Al Vicente Escudero, como bailaor, ya es otro el pensar mío, estando seguro de que, al igual que yo, hay y

hubo, muchos otros que pensaron lo mismo. Pero pasemos a "la historia".....

Sobre el año 30, más o menos, se presentó en Madrid Vicente Escudero, con su mujer y fiel compañera Carmina, encantadora y minúscula bailarina (de igual categoría que él, en cuanto al baile se refiere). Los demás componentes del elenco, no vienen al caso. Vicente ya era un poco conocido en España debido a que un tiempo atrás, con gran boato y propaganda, se estrenó en Madrid una película titulada, si mal no recuerdo, "El Bodegón", filmada en Francia y, como tal y lógica consecuencia, una "Españolada" auténtica.

Yo era un niño por entonces, un jovenzuelo, pero asistí a la "premiere" con mis padres y aún recuerdo algo de ella: La estrella femenina era María Albaicín, auténtica gitana española, bella, hermosa, joven, buena bailarina, y que murió prematuramente en París luego de hacer tal film. Vicente Escudero figuraba como bailarín y semi-protagonista. Fabián de Castro como guitarrista; era español, mayor él, de porte y maneras correctas, y no mal guitarrista en esos días. Creo que también tocó su guitarra en esa película Carlitos Montoya. (Si estoy equivocado, como imagino que él leerá Jaleo le ruego lo diga a través de la revista; Carlos y yo somos viejos amigos, desde hace muchos años.) No recuerdo quién era el galán principal, pero me "suenan" el nombre de "Amalio Cuenca. ¿Te acuerdas tu, Carlitos? La Película fue calificada en España como "bodrio", y estuvo poco tiempo en cartelera. Sin embargo, debido al "Bodegón", ya el nombre de Vicente Escudero "sonaba" algo en España.

Por entonces había un Semanario madrileño, titulado Estampa, con buenos reportajes, buenas fotos, y audaz para aquel tiempo.

En esta revista se hizo una gran propaganda al la presentación y debut de Vicente Escudero, en el Cine Avenida, de Madrid. Creo recordar que habían tres o cuatro

páginas de Estampa, con distintas fotografías de Escudero, algo raras y sospechosas para auténticos flamencos, y, sobre todo, con una exagerada y disparatada propaganda de Vicente y sus bailes. Pero hay que reconcer que era él mismo quien todo decía al reportero: Prácticamente dijo que en España no se sabía bailar flamenco, que nadie le igualaba bailando; que era el mejor del mundo y que lo iba a demostrar, etc. Estas declaraciones dejaron pasmados y sorprendidos a los españoles, sobre todo a los flamencos, quienes no salían de su asombro ante tal osadía; esa auto-propaganda fué la comidilla del día en peñas cafeteriles -- artísticas y taurinas -- de aquel maravilloso Madrid de entonces.

Llegó la noche del debut de Vicente Escudero en el Cine Avenida de Madrid. La sala -- convertida en teatro para tal ocasión -- abarrotada de público; no cabía un alfiler ya. Yo asistí (¿Como no?) con mi padre, Pepe el de la Matrona, Juan Sánchez, "Estampío", "el Médico" Don Tomás, Filemón Merino (el primer discípulo que tuvo Estampío, y quien tomaba lecciones en la cocina de mi casa). Filemón Merino era de Valladolid y un poco mayor que yo. Mi padre se lo recomendó a Juan y éste dábale lecciones en mi casa, acompañándoles yo con mi guitarra (quizá algún día escribamos algo sobre estas lecciones caseras, pues merece la pena por su gracia y detalles). Más tarde, Filemón se hizo profesional, -¡y bueno!-, radicándose en París, con Emelina Torres, su mujer y gran bailarina.

Volviendo al Cine Avenida, también se hallaban con nosotros Acha Rovira, bailar Vasco, bueno por farruca, a quien el de la Matrona llamba "El Gallo Inglés" -- quizá porque era rubio, de tez clara -- y otro bailar de quien no recuerdo el nombre. Pepe Muñoz "El de la Matrona" y Juan Sánchez "Estampío" eran muy amigos de mi padre; frecuentaban mucho mi casa y, por eso, me querían bastante; ambos me enseñaron "el paso castellano" para tocar, acompañando cante y baile. En cuanto yo podía, estaba junto con ellos en el "Cafe Madrid", en "Los Gabrieles", "La Mezquita" o "Casa Pololo."

En la sala se hallaban todos los flamencos que tuvieron "parné" aquella noche (andaban mal económicamente casi todos), ansiosos en ver lo que Vicente había anticipado por la prensa capitalina: ¡Que era el mejor..! Entre los que asistían aquella noche, recuerdo a Perico del Lunar, Luis Yance (gran guitarrista flamenco como ejecutante), el bailar Linares (bueno, pero en "chufra", en cómico), los maestros de baile Pagán,

Roig, Reyes; muchas flamencas de baile (algunas famosas), y la fabulosa y inolvidable Pastora Imperio, a quien muchos años más tarde, tuve el honor de tocar.

Enorme el ambiente y la expectación; se oyen comentarios no muy agradables para Vicente Escudero. Nosotros estamos sentados cerca del escenario, sobre la quinta o sexta fila. La tensión aumentaba, según transcurrieron los minutos que faltaban para alzarse el telón.

Yo había observado aquella noche que Estampío portaba en una mano una bolsa, no muy grande, de papel marrón, conteniendo algo que me intrigaba. Le pregunté varias veces que "qué" era aquello, y él me respondía siempre, con su sonrisa maliciosa y su voz fina, "Ya lo vas a ver, niño...Ya lo verás, Grabiélito...!" Y yo, cada momento más curiosidad.

Y llegó la hora; el telón se alzó; la cortina se abrió; apareció Vicente Escudero, los suyos, y aquel "recital" de baile flamenco y español transcurría ante el asombro de todos los flamencos y artistas que allí estábamos. Todo nos parecía absurdo y, desde luego, fuera de compás, "esparraabaos" toitos los bailes. Naturalmente, si la figura lo hacía mal, cómo lo haría el elenco....

No habían pasado muchos bailes, cuando ante el asombro nuestro, Juan Sánchez "Estampío" se levantó de su asiento y, con su voz inconfundible, andaluza, fina, sencilla, gritó, "¡Señó Escudero....usted no sabe baila, ni ná, ni ná....!"

Sacó un par de botas flamencas que guardaba en aquella bolsa de papel, misteriosa para mi hasta ese momento; las lanzó al escenario, y siguió gritando,

"Póngaselas usted! Ellas le enseñarán a bailá flamenco....!"

No hace falta decir la que se "armó" en la sala; la mayoría del público aplaudíamos con fuerza a Juan. La minoría, -poca-, le chillaban y silbaban.. Siguió "el recital", pero ya todo confuso, algo accidentado; mucha gente se retiró, al igual que nosotros, y dicen que Vicente Escudero ya no "daba una".....

Y ocurrió que Escudero, quien creo que venía por un mes prorrogable de contrato, no llegó a las dos semanas con su espectáculo en el Cine Avenida, y se regresó a París, su "cuartel general", completamente fracasado como bailar, hablando mal de los flamencos Madrileños, jurando tomarse venganza contra ellos algún día.

Pasaron unos añitos más. Me encontraba en Oran con la Compañía Teatral Alcoriza acompañando con mi guitarra a los cantaores "Pena Hijo", Florencio Castelló y al bailar

Filemón Merino. Nuestra Compañía no iba bien y estábamos "varados" (en España teníamos guerra Civil); yo comencé a tocar (junto con el guitarrista "Niño Posadas") al famosísimo cantaor por entonces. Huyendo de nuestra cruel y horrible guerra, andaban por aquella ciudad marroquí, también, Argentinita, Pilar Lopez, Luisita Estesos, los famosos toreros "Bienvenidas", y varios nombres conocidos que ahora no recuerdo. Encarnación Lopez, "La Argentinita" (Q.E.P.D.) me ofreció contrato en su elenco y marchó a París a preparar unos recitales por Europa. A los pocos días me llegó el pasaje y dinero; embarqué in Oran, desembarqué en Port Bou, y allí mismo tomé un express que me condujo a "La Ville Lumiere", "La Ciudad Luz", la Capital de Francia, y creo que del mundo entero en aquella época....

No puedo menos que recordar mi "entrada" en París, ya que para mi, fue algo imborrable, imposible de olvidar nunca: Llegué de madrugada a la Estación donde finalicé mi viaje; encima de la misma "gare" (estación) se hallaba el hotel, al cual subí por una escalera mecánica, de movimiento, primera que yo veía y pisaba en mi vida juvenil. Desde "recepcion" me condujeron a la lujosa y estupenda habitación que Argentinita me había reservado; me zambullí en una elegante y mullida cama y me dormí inmediatamente, cansadísimo como estaba de tan largo viaje.

Me despertó el timbre del teléfono, pensando yo que acababa de dormirme; en realidad habían pasado varias horas, ya que vi en mi reloj las diez de la mañana. Me dijeron que me iban a subir el desayuno, pues "Madame" Argentinita me esperaba a las 11 A.M. para el ensayo. A los pocos momentos llegó un impresionante criado con aparatoso vestido de librea, trayéndome un fabuloso desayuno, como correspondía a un hotel de primerísima clase en aquellos tiempos. Todo me parecía un sueño fantástico, maravilloso; tomé el desayuno, abundante y exquisito; me bañé, me vestí y, enseguida, llamé al sirviente del hotel; acudió solícito, muy cortés, y me condujo a un nuevo destino y mundo para mí.....

Estábamos en plena primavera parisina, que es fantástica. Caminábamos por las regia alforbras de aquellos pasillos pasillos elegantísimos del hotel; los efluvios de las acacias -- en todas las calles de París creo que hay estos árboles -- penetraban a través de los abiertos ventanales del edificio entero, haciéndome sentir un olor que jamás he percibido en parte alguna; al mismo tiempo yo escuchaba cada vez más cerca, según caminábamos, las notas suaves y ensoñadoras de un

piano, en el cual alguien interpretaba con maestría "Sevilla" de Albeniz, y alguien también repicaba unas castañuelas, "palillos", maravillosamente, acompañando la música famosa del inmortal autor español Isaac Albéniz. En esos momentos viví, sentí, algo que no es fácil explicar, algo sublime para mí..! Algo también, que no se puede olvidar jamás ....París...., primave ra....Sevilla de Albéniz....Argentinita esperándome, tocando sus "paliyos." Y todo aquello en el marco de un hotel de gran lujo, elegante, y en un mundo desconocido para mí hasta ese instante .....!! Así fue como "entré" en París..!

(English translation on page 35)

## LETTERS

Dear Jaleo:

A really great dancer is thrilling because he or she can combine beautiful technique with emotional maturity, passion and spiritual energy. It is a rare privilege to be able to see or work with great dancers. Many live too far away, while others tour infrequently or teach irregularly, if at all. It is sad to think of all the great dancers who will never be seen again because they have passed away or are retired. Many died anonymously, while others are represented in books by static pictures or written recollections. Only recently have dancers begun to appear in films.

This is why I feel lucky to have been able to attend Teo Morca's workshop. Teo is an active and vital dancer, a great dancer. Basic technique is practiced regularly, but creative new choreographies keep the purpose of the art alive. Teo loves flamenco, and the dancers in his classes can feel this. He is contemporary, but at the same time possesses years of priceless experience. He has hundreds of wonderful stories to tell.

I appreciate all of this. Teo is a great dancer and he is here now. I don't want to forget this or take it for granted.

Susan Cole  
Studio City, CA

## PUNTO DE VISTA

GUITAR OLYMPICS

John W. Fowler

The "Guitar Olympics" and "Olympics III" articles by Peter Baime in your August and October issues, respectively, were very interesting and useful, in my opinion.

Although I am writing to offer several corrections and suggestions, I stress the positive value of these articles, and my purpose is only to strengthen them and encourage additional work in the same general direction.

Some of my corrections may seem to be mere technicalities, but some people may consider them significant. For example, John McLaughlin probably would prefer for people to know that it is he, and not Al DiMeola, playing with Paco de Lucía on "Frevo." The F-sharp notes indicated in the tablature for this unison scale would be F-natural, also.

Perhaps the most important correction has to do with the measurement of the scale velocity itself. I believe that a fairly common error has been made; an old riddle illustrates it: if a clock strikes its bell with intervals of three seconds, how long does it take the clock to strike twelve o'clock? The immediate answer which most people think of is 36 seconds. This is wrong, however, if we interpret the question to mean: how much time passes between the first striking of the bell and the last? The correct answer is 33 seconds, because the twelve strikings enclose only eleven intervals between strikings. Similarly, if one times a scale of 37 notes and arrives at 2.3 seconds, then one should divide 36 by 2.3 to obtain the rate of notes per second, not 37. As a result, the rate is 15.65 notes per second, not 16.09. This difference, less than 3%, seems small, but as Mr. Baime points out, any increase in scale speed comes hard at speeds approaching these.

In order to verify that this error was responsible for the difference between the results published in these articles and those of a friend of mine, I checked the case of the scale by Sabicas quoted in the October article. The part of the scale timed was also 37 notes long, and although the time itself was not published (only the results of 12.13 notes per second was given), it is virtually certain that the time obtained was 3.05 seconds. This follows for two reasons; for one, after 15 careful measurements, my average result for the same scale was 3.07 seconds, which is so close to 3.05 that the difference is negligible in view of the measurement uncertainty, and the other reason is that there is simply no time expressed with a precision of hundredths of a second which can divide 36 notes to yield 12.13 seconds. On the other hand, 37 notes divided by 3.05 seconds gives the quoted result. My answer came out 11.73 notes per second. If all of the speeds quoted in the articles are

corrected, they drop by varying amounts, with the shortest scales (in terms of the number of notes) dropping the most.

While the case of the Sabicas scale was easy to explain, Paco's scale in "Palenque" presents a more difficult problem. With the help of my friend, we located the fastest scale in the piece, which turns out to be in sextuplets and includes some ligados. We timed the fastest part of this scale repeatedly at full speed and at half speed on a Teac four-track reel-to-reel tape recorder, obtaining a result of 14.92 notes per second. This is too different from Mr. Baime's 16.07 to be explained by the effect discussed above. We were not able to discover the reason for the discrepancy, but we feel that our result is relatively accurate.

Now for the suggestions. It is my impression that a rather standard way of referring to scale speed is to quote the metronome setting for quarter notes corresponding to playing the scale in sixteenth notes. Thus Paco's 14.92 notes per second on the "Palenque" scale could be expressed as 224 on the metronome. The conversion is simply to multiply the rate of notes per second by 15, even if the scale itself is not in sixteenth notes; additional remarks should be added if a possibility of ambiguity threatens. Guitarists who work diligently on their scales usually are very familiar with the sound of sixteenth notes played at any given "quarter note equals" metronome setting, so this way of quoting speed should be much more straightforward for the people who are interested. I doubt that many people respond meaningfully to notes per minute, which has been used in the articles. Also, the suggestion given to the readers in the October issue for investigating the experience of playing 12 notes per second seemed unrealistic; rather than set the metronome at 60 and play 12 notes per click (an almost impossible task because of synchronization difficulties), one should set the metronome at 180 (half-way between the standard markings of 176 and 184) and play sixteenth notes, i.e., four notes per click.

Another suggestion is to expand the description of how the measurements are made and what the uncertainty is. For example, the value of the measurement depends upon the resolution of the stopwatch (or other clocking device), the number of measurements which were averaged, and the standard deviation of the results (for more information on such parameters, one should consult a text on probability and statistics). As an illustration, my measurement of the Sabicas scale

employed a stopwatch with a resolution of 0.1 second, I made 15 measurements, the mean was 3.07 seconds for 36 note intervals, and the standard deviation about the mean was 0.047 seconds. The fact that the standard deviation was quite smaller than the resolution of the stopwatch means that my measurement was resolution-limited, and so the measurement error should be considered to be about plus or minus half the resolution, i.e., 0.05 seconds. Therefore the true time is very probably something between 3.02 and 3.12 seconds, and this implies that the notes-per-second rate was between 11.92 and 11.54, to a high degree of confidence. The corresponding metronome values are 179 and 173.

While quantitative analysis of the scale speeds of the great flamenco players is fascinating, one should bear in mind several other effects which play important roles. The difficulty of the scale is obviously one of these. Another is the guitarist's willingness to approach his technical limits in public performance and on records. This means that the results of such measurements should not be viewed as an indicator of what a given guitarist is capable of doing, except in a fairly loose sense, and they are not necessarily a reliable way of ranking players in terms of technical achievement. What they do is a clear idea of the current state of the art of scale playing in the realm of flamenco guitar (and related styles) and an example of what is humanly possible on the instrument. These can be valuable to anyone seeking to achieve excellence in this kind of music.

My last suggestion is that Mr. Baime be encouraged to continue investigating the current (and, for that matter, historical) activity in developing high-speed scales by such great flamenco artists as he has discussed so far. This aspect of technique, while sometimes denigrated for unconvincing reasons, is certainly one of the most exciting aspects of modern flamenco guitar music, as well as other styles played by other masters well deserving of much wider attention.

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#### COMMENTS BY PETER BAIME:

First I wish to acknowledge the errors that were indeed contained in the "Olympics" articles. In my haste to prepare them, I fell victim to the empirical truth contained within the "old riddle." What immediately came to mind was the child's game of adding the fingers on both hands to equal eleven,

which is done by starting on one hand and counting in retrograde from ten to six, then simply adding the five fingers on the other hand to total eleven. I would like to put aside those questions of error, not to escape my regret, but to address those thoughts that encompass the broader picture that was implicated in the article's intent -- and seemingly supported by Mr. Fowler. But before addressing those, I would like for a moment to explain the techniques used in obtaining the transcriptions.

As the title and tone of the text suggested, there was a bit of tongue-in-cheek in that undertaking, but beneath the facade were two purposes: First, to strip away all the adjectives used to describe guitarists with advanced motor skills, and support those descriptions with the same type of statistics afforded Bruce Jenner, and, secondly, to encourage the dialectical exploration of our chosen field of expression, so as to reveal objective technical information that will supplement the wealth of subjective information.

I recorded the chosen passages from a turntable to reel-to-reel tape at 15 ips, and made the initial measurements at 7-1/2 ips, or half speed and one octave lower. Then I double-checked at 1-7/8, 3-3/4, 7-1/2 and finally back to 15 ips. This was all timed on a chronograph wristwatch that registers to hundredths of a second on a digital display. I then measured the metronome settings for the quarter note on a new device called a tempo watch, which uses base seven arithmetic; this served as an approximate check on the previous calculations.

Unfortunately I forgot to include those metronome settings with the musical material. There is, of course, equipment error to contend with. Equipped with a bank of four tape decks (two cassette and two reel-to-reel, the \$1,000 Akai being the cheapest), I selected the Revox for the task, with a .03 wow/flutter specification. This was compounded by similar turntable error; so one is unassured of 100% accuracy. Faced with this type of technology at our fingertips, we must take into account the obvious human and musical elements. Obviously, all of the participants included in the "olympics" are not playing the same musical passages. Realizing that, indeed, ascending scales are more difficult to play than descending, I chose mainly scales that included a little of both. Even that aside, some are definitely more difficult than others. So my intent should really be considered as a general survey and approach to the question, How fast

is fast?" Well, at least we have a general idea, so let's move on.

I would like to thank Mr. Fowler for his careful attention and time that was taken to correct the logic and mechanical errors contained in the "Olympics" articles.

(more "Olympics" on page 29)



## INCOME TAX

Income tax time is right around the corner. If you are a working flamenco who claims self-employment, then it is critical that you keep careful records and claim all of your legal deductions. This article is not being written by a knowledgeable tax consultant, so the author will remain anonymous -- in case there are some overzealous IRS Jaleo readers out there. This is being written from a guitarist's point of view, but the idea should be applicable to other flamenco performers as well.

The biggest tax deduction can be your automobile expenses. This is a tricky area. As I understand it, you cannot deduct travel to and from work. But you can deduct any travel you do during work. If you go to your studio for rehearsal and then go from there to a restaurant to perform, the latter trip is deductible. Also, if you go from house to house to give lessons you may be able to deduct much of that. There appears to be a number of ways to calculate your travel deduction: you can add up the applicable miles; you can add up auto expenses -- gas, oil, tires, repairs, etc.; or you can just take an estimated percentage of your total mileage. The latter method may produce the best results (and is the easiest); some artists deduct as much as 90% of their total mileage as business travel. That can amount to as much as a couple of thousand dollars for just local travel.

If you travel to a distant city to perform, deduct everything -- car expenses, air fare, motels, food, etc.

Clothing that is worn only for work (tuxedos, ruffled shirts, boots, etc.) can be deducted, as well as cleaning expenses.

For your guitars, you must decide how long they will last, and then you deduct a percentage of their cost each year. The same with sound equipment (microphones, amplifiers, etc.). Deduct all of your guitar strings and anything else related to the guitar.

Your phone bills can also be deducted if you do business out of your home. Also

studio rentals, guitar lessons, and perhaps much of a trip to Spain.

Here are some other items you might not think of: crazy glue (for fingernails), all publicity, all photographic work, including photos taken by friends at your performances, flamenco records (for study), tapes and tape recorders, flamenco books or guitar magazines (including Jaleo subscription), stationery and postage for letter writing, and anything else that applies to your career.

These may seem like small things, but they add up. So start adding.



## Martha Nelson

1922-1981

We were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Martha Nelson, one of the earliest supporters of Jaleo. The New York Society of the Classic Guitar sends us the following, written by Gregory d'Alessio:

Martha Nelson, for the past 20 years Secretary of the New York Society of the Classic Guitar, Associate Editor of The Guitar Review, writer, and musicologist, died of cancer on November 7th in Atlanta, her birthplace. As Music Director of the Society of the Classic Guitar, Miss Nelson organized over 270 concerts in which many international guitar luminaries participated. Among her close friends were Andres Segovia, Julian Bream, Carlos Barbosa-Lima, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Rose and Albert Augustine, Carl Sandburg, Victora de los Angeles, and Alicia de Larrocha. She was also friend, confidante, and advisor to many young guitarists who went on to professional careers. Miss Nelson's erudition, writing skills, and musical knowledge constantly manifested itself in the pages of The Guitar Review. She was responsible for expert editing of Andres Segovia's autobiography (Vol. I) and The Segovia Technique by Vladmir Bobri. A student also of flamenco -- its dance, song and music -- she wrote several definitive pieces on that art for The Guitar Review. Always in search of folk music, she did extensive research in Spain, Brazil, and Portugal. She was a modest performer on the guitar, but played with great musicality; as a player of castanets, she achieved expert status.

The guitar world will mourn the loss of this brilliant and gifted personality.



# MARCOS & RUBINA CARMONA

AN INTERVIEW

by Paco Sevilla

JALEO: Rubina, why don't you begin by giving us your background up to the point where you met Marcos.

RUBINA: I started to study flamenco in about 1964; I had done folk singing, folk dancing and played an instrument for years. When I first saw and heard flamenco it bit me. I first studied with Isa Mura and then I went into Adela Clara's "Theater Flamenco" and did her first concert with her when she was getting started in 1965. Right after that I went to Spain for the first time. In Madrid for a few months, I studied with Mercedes and Albano; they're old-fashioned, but they give you a very solid foundation in the basics. I also took some ballet classes with José Granero, but soon realized I was a little bit out of my league. Mercedes and Albano helped me to contact Bernardo el de los Lobitos to learn the cante.

JALEO: Why were you interested in cante at such an early stage of interest in flamenco?

RUBINA: Actually, before I went to Spain I had started to work at the Spaghetti Factory (a long established tablao in San Francisco) and there was no singer. I had a voice and started by singing sevillanas -- I wanted to sing, even if only to understand dancing better. Isa Mura sometimes sang there and she had a great influence on my development as a singer and dancer, as did a woman named Isabel who sang canciones and really turned me on. Those two women inspired me to take the double-barreled approach right away.

JALEO: Back to your experience with Bernardo el de los Lobitos. Did you know at that time what a legend he was?

RUBINA: I was pretty unsophisticated at that time and didn't know the significance of almost anything that was happening to me. Bernardo used to come to my pension several times a week and give me classes. Even more valuable than the singing lessons was when he would sit and tell me about old Andalucía, old customs, and about how to present oneself as a flamenca -- if you were singing or dancing something, he told me "como estar," how "to be" and present your "persona." He appreciated the fact that I could sing, as did Joselero later, and that I had potential as a professional flamenco singer -- maybe not as a heavy-duty cantaora in Spain, but it was obvious to them that I would be able to come back to America and defend myself. So they were very good to me.



JALEO: Was he working then?

RUBINA: He was at the Zambra, but mostly as a festero because he was just too old and fragile to take a seven-night-a-week routine.

JALEO: So how long were you in Madrid and what happened afterward?

RUBINA: After four or five months in Madrid, we went to Sevilla, Málaga, Tangiers, staying about a month in each place. In Sevilla we went to the Feria. I've seen the Feria three times -- each time from a different perspective: the first time as a tourist in 1966, the second time in 1971 with Marcos as aficionados, and then the third time, in 1973, after it had moved to its new location, when we saw it from the inside, as professionals.

JALEO: What then?

RUBINA: Back to the United States, to New York, where I had my first child, then to Philadelphia where I met Frank Miller and other local flamencos like Mimi Bitting and Chip Bond; Chip and I did some shows in the area. My husband didn't want to stay at the university there, so we went back to San Francisco, where my marriage fell apart and I was out on my own. I hadn't been dancing too much due to my pregnancy, but in San Francisco I had the opportunity to work at the Spaghetti Factory again, with David Jones and Isa. I started to study with Ana Martínez, who was working at the Casa Madrid, with Paco de Málaga. She was very good for me; she straightened out a lot of things that I hadn't understood about flamenco rhythms -- how to get away from that aspect of learning a routine and thinking about it as a choreography that has been implanted in the

floor rather than thinking about it as music to be complemented with marking and footwork. I was just starting to learn what flamenco is all about as a total entity and not think about it strictly from the point of view of a dancer. I'm grateful that I learned that, because I've never been that strong of a dancer per se -- I consider myself to be a musician who sings and dances. So I was just starting to see the light at that time...and then I met Marcos.

JALEO: Marcos, how did you get started?

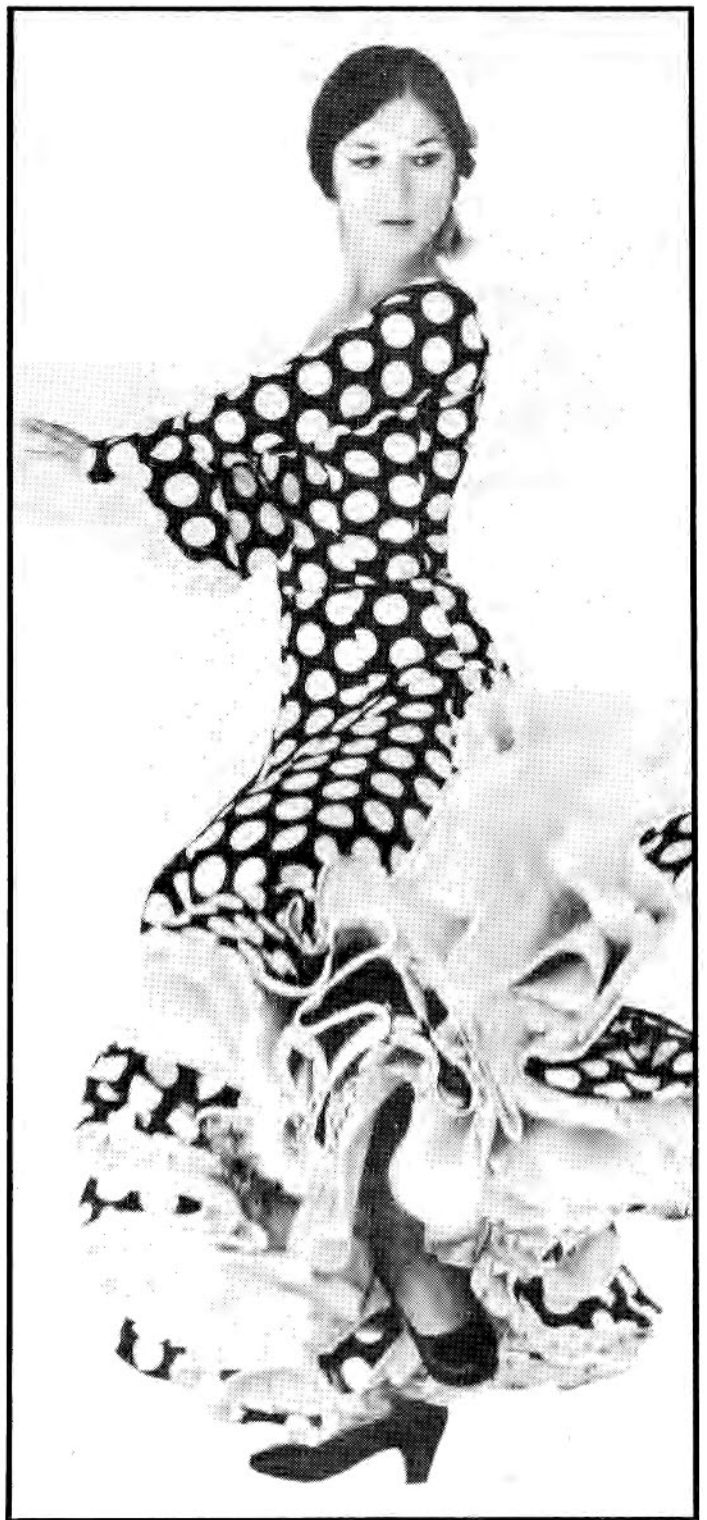
MARCOS: My last year in high school I started playing guitar and singing -- remember the Limelighters and the Kingston Trio? I started singing and accompanying myself and eventually played at parties with a group. Then in college, I drifted away from it all, until in 1966, I went to the Spaghetti Factory and saw, I think, David Jones and Freddie Mejia -- very good guitarists. I knew immediately that I loved the whole thing, it touched something in me that nothing else had before. What I enjoyed about it -- and has never changed -- was the guitars behind, accompanying the singing and the dancing. I enjoyed the solos, but it didn't do the same thing for me.

So I got a hold of a guitar and started hanging out and watching. I was working on my master's degree and so it wasn't until 1968 that I started to play the guitar and have a rudimentary idea of what a farruca was or a bulerías. I took a few lessons from Bernardo and a couple from Mariano Córdoba. Then I quit school and decided to play the guitar. I started working in the Spaghetti Factory as a doorman. And that's where I met Rubina and in 1970 we went to Spain.

JALEO: How did that trip come about?

RUBINA: Well, we got married in 1970 and later that year went to Spain for a year.

MARCOS: We went directly to Morón, which was already dying down a bit, and set up house-keeping. I remember driving into town on the bus the first time and going to the cement factory -- the main product in Morón is cement -- which set the tone, with dust everywhere. That was in September. I started listening to the music and immediately I realized that the rhythm was different...I could recognize soleá or bulerías, but it was different. Gypsies were doing it in their own territory; it hadn't been transported to America yet. I loved it, although I also realized that I didn't really like Morón playing. I went crazy for about four months because I didn't speak any Spanish at all and Rubina had to do it all for me, which helped, but put me in a lot of awkward situations. I



RUBINA IN 1975

took some lessons from Diego, more to get to know him than for what he was going to show me...which turned out to be right, since most of what he showed me were things that he pulled out of his head at the moment or old falsetas that he had been playing for years. I learned things, but I forgot them. His music was beautiful when he played it, but I immediately recognized that his playing was

very, very personal...extremely personal... and I was not that person. I saw some good fiestas and saw flamenco at its roots. The person who turned me on more than anyone else in Morón was Paco del Gastor. He was with Bambino at the time and would drift into town, crazed out of his head, and start playing all over the place. I didn't like all of his virtuosity, but he was much more modern than Diego, and in accompanying he would go for positions and play something from there. I had no idea what he was doing, but I was fascinated by it. He was a good guitarist... sort of the only Hell's Angel in Morón!

Juanito also made an impression on me... and Dieguito...all of them more than Diego, since they played much more music. Diego's was a very spiritual type of playing; he'd sit down with someone like Fernanda, in a fiesta, and the two of them would just go into their own beautiful world together. But I couldn't enter that world -- I was too complex...and I realized how important the life style was to that music; that's where that music came from. It is only with the virtuosos like Sabicas and Paco de Lucía that you can take the music out of context and it holds up fine; it is very accessible if you have the hands to do it and the feel for it. But Diego's music was very personal.

JALEO: Rubina, what were you doing while Marcos was working with the guitar?

RUBINA: Mostly crying! I hated Morón from the moment I laid eyes on the place. But I did learn a great deal because I studied cante with Joselero and baile gitano with his son Andorrano who taught me how to dance bulerías, and I commuted once a week into Sevilla for a long lesson with Matilde Coral. So I had some excellent dance and singing instructions.

JALEO: How did you happen to select Matilde Coral?

RUBINA: I saw her dance and said, "That's for me!" I saw the way she used her arms and I recognized her musicality. From her I learned bulerías, some siguiriyas, some taranto, soleá and alegrías.

JALEO: Rubina, what were your lessons with Joselero like?

RUBINA: He was very supportive and conscientious in his teaching. I had never had the nerve to try the deep cantes like soleares or siguiriyas before that time, so I wanted to study with a master to make sure I would do it right. He taught me five or six different styles of soleares and at least two styles of siguiriyas.

JALEO: How did he explain the difference between styles?

RUBINA: By their melodies and traditional letras (words). He had an encyclopedic knowledge. I couldn't repeat them all at this time. I have forgotten many of those fine distinctions because, since then, I have tried to find cantes that are good for dancers and they might not be all that pure -- in fact, I know they are not. But he taught me the pure styles of Alcalá or Utrera...

MARCOS: I learned a lot of my accompanying there, because I played for the classes and went over these things as he was teaching her the melodies.

JALEO: What was his approach to compás?

MARCOS: I don't think he was very intellectual about it. He would just say yes or no.

RUBINA: I would write the thing down and put the accents in.

MARCOS: Those people just feel it...they feel the rhythm so strongly and it is totally unconscious.

RUBINA: One of the best times I ever heard Joselero sing was when he was angry out of his head, insulted because there was a fiesta being planned and he was not included as a paid artist -- he could come and sing if he wanted to. He was so angry that he came over to our house and sang a siguriya that just about peeled the plaster off the walls.

JALEO: What was your child doing all that time?

RUBINA: My daughter, even though she got sick from the cold, for the most part had a very good time in Morón because she was able to run around with all the gypsy kids. We never had to worry about her. She got an incredible Andalucian accent that used to freak people out all the time. She started dancing very well also...she wanted to do it and just picked it up. Up until about five years ago, Ixchel could be around singers or guitarists and dance her bulerías. She would never cut a singer off no matter how long they sang and then she would tag it at the end with her desplante. Now she is retired,

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DAUGHTER IXCHEL DANCING IN 1974

which is too bad because she did it very well...she was born into it!

JALEO: What happened after Morón?

MARCOS: After weathering the winter in Morón, I started understanding what was going on musically. I discovered that bulerías is in sixes, not twelves -- no one ever told me that before -- and that my technique was all wrong, the way my hand position was, etc.

Then we went to Lebrija and met Pedro Bacán and I took a couple of lessons from him. This was before Pedro decided to really bear down and practice the guitar, although he played very well and already had a definite style. We were also around Pedro Peña and Miguel Funi. Then we moved to Utrera and got to see those people -- Fernanda and Bernarda, Inez and Pepa de Utrera. The people from Lebrija and Utrera were pretty closely related, as was the music.

In the spring we went to the Feria in Sevilla. We went with a guy named Rafael -- from around here -- who knew a lot of people in Lebrija. He had gotten in with them through Chris Carnes and, because he was so gracioso, they all liked him. We hooked up with him and saw a lot of flamenco in the streets. There would be huge families, with

beautiful women dressed in kaftans, not "lunares" (polka dots), looking like they were from India. They would sit in a circle and the "patrón" of the group would point to one and say, "Tu," and they would get up to sing or dance. Sometimes there would be a guitar, other times not. We had three days of bulerías and rumbas pumped into us. We also crashed a lot of casetas and saw the Mairenas in a fiesta, Fernanda and Bernarda, Miguel Funi, and lots of Sevilla's guitarists.

Then we came back to San Francisco. My head had been completely turned around and it took a year and a half to digest what I had absorbed. I left my doorman job and got on stage at the Spaghetti Factory. At that time Ernesto Hernández was dancing and there was Lourdes and Isa Mura, and the guitarist Benjamín, as well as others who came and went. We worked around until 1973 when we felt the need to go back to Spain.

JALEO: How were you playing at that time? Was it a Morón style?

MARCOS: I was already off into whatever my own thing was at that time...not really any style. What I was doing was at least dance-able and singable...it was workable. The

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major falsetas I played were from Paco (del Gastor)...off of tapes mainly.

JALEO: And you Rubina, what stage were you at?

RUBINA: I knew I was on to something, but I still didn't feel that strong. I was singing more than dancing. Once I started singing, the singing was first and dominated. My dancing was getting better and I knew I was going in the right direction. That was part of the reason that we went back to Sevilla. I wanted to study with Matilde and hopefully work as a professional in Spain.

MARCOS: And I knew I wanted to listen to guitarists from Sevilla and not Morón. Listening to the locals in the Feria during our previous trip settled it for me. They blew my mind far more than anybody in Morón did -- with the exception of Paco.

So we set up in the Plaza la Mata, which is right off the Alameda, in a nice apartment that had been La Romera's place and was located right over Luisa Albéniz' dance

academy. We were in a very good ambiente. Rubina started going to Matilde's dance classes and I went along to play...I was at the point where I felt I could handle the class--I couldn't have done it in 1971...no way! That opened everything up for me. El Rubio and Diego Amador were her guitarists and I got to watch her rehearse with them and sometimes I would play along with them. There was a Japanese guy who was a very good guitarist and I learned a lot from him; when he left, I got his job. There was a lot of pressure; I had to learn all kinds of things that I've already forgotten. But I got to play for people like Chano Lobato, who'd come in to sing once in a while, and Rafael El Negro when he was fooling around por bulerías -- the first time I had played for a top bailaor in Spain. It was very easy to do and I found myself doing things rhythmically on the guitar that I didn't know I knew...I didn't know, I just followed him! And Matilde danced so well, por bulerías; it was that Sevilla style with sixes and stops... all so clear that it was almost impossible to run through one of their stops.

In the last six months of that year, Matilde got us in with Pulpón, the "Padrino" of Sevilla, the top flamenco agent in Southern Spain. He was the agent for Matilde, Farruco...you know...he was it! Through him we worked several jobs in the Feria. It was strange; he didn't care who he sent out on a job. You show up and have no idea who you will be working with. We got to work with lots of good people...that's where I met Curro Fernández, who is one of Sevilla's top singers for dancing right now. That was the first year the Feria was in the new place, out in Los Remedios, and all sanitized and clean. I remember going out in the taxi and saying, "Oh man, I'm going to play in the Feria!" But we were also scared. We got to the doctor's caseta, which belonged to a medical association in Sevilla, and they had hired a big group to play. When two other guitarists showed up, I felt much better



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about the whole thing. Then more and more dancers showed up, including Pepa Coral -- Matilde's sister -- and her brother, Mimbres, and the singer Curro Fernández. I had never seen a cuadro that big before...I was glad there were three guitarists. It turned out to be one of the easiest gigs I ever did in my life because we did sevillanas, fandangos de Huelva, alegrías, rumba and bulerías. There was no soleá -- who would listen to soleá when everybody was drunk. There was no pressure at all. I was covered by the other guitarists and just had a good time.

So we spent our afternoons sitting in Pulpón's office with everyone else, waiting to see him, to see if we could work that night. Then we met another guy who hired us to work and I played as second guitarist with Ramón Amador, who has become an important artist in Sevilla. It was his brother, Diego, who I was really after to take lessons from. Eventually I got to know Diego and used to go to his house, where I met his family and Raimundo, who was running around on a 50 cc chopper. Most people in this country don't even know about Diego Amador, but he worked in all the best tablaos, with Matilde for a long time, and was basically a rhythm guitarist who had incredibly good taste in falsetas -- they were always perfectly right for the situation, little pellizcos. He was like Habichuela, on a little lesser scale. Habichuela has a little more technique and a bigger name, but it was that same, right-on, tasteful playing; less was more. Raimundo was really into playing a lot, but he hadn't played in public much. While working in a caseta one night, Raimundo turned and played a big rasgueado countertime thing for me, ignoring everybody else and smiling like an idiot; he certainly could play countertime rasgueados!

JALEO: Who is Joaquín Amador?

MARCOS: He is from Alicante, the brother of La Susi and married to Manuela Carrasco.

Then Diego Amador got fired because he played too gypsy and Matilde wanted more falsetas. So El Rubio, Manolo Domínguez, stepped in and began to work with her. Matilde was getting into heavy choreography and liked long falseta passages where she could float about. Diego couldn't, or wouldn't, do it, but Rubio could give her the music she wanted. So I got to meet El Rubio. Then I took a few lessons from Rafael Mendiola. He really amazed me, since he was quite modern and into Paco de Lucía. He had only been playing five years, but his mother told me he practiced ten or twelve hours a day; it was amazing to acquire that facility

in that short of a time. He taught me my first Paco falsetas; that was in 1973 and before that I had been bewildered by Lucía's material and didn't have the hands to play them; my mind was just at the point where I could start grasping the countertimes. He was the first person to show me how they went, so it was illuminating working with him, and he'd sometimes come into the studio because he was working for Matilde -- she had the best guitarists in town and so I got to meet them all.

I used to enjoy watching the gypsies out in front of the bars, a group of kids about ten years old, and they played so well -- no falsetas, just compás and singing. I realized that if you didn't know that, you couldn't play flamenco. I enjoyed the accompaniment aspect of flamenco from the very beginning and I haven't changed.

JALEO: What happened after you worked at the Feria?

RUBINA: We went to Benicasim. Pulpón set us up with our first seven-night-a-week contract.

MARCOS: I had the good fortune to have Manolo Vargas as the first guitarist. He was



RUBINA DANCING IN VALENCIA, 1973



VALENCIA; (L TO R) MARCOS, JARILLO (SINGER), MANOLO VARGUS

a wild man on the guitar -- played really well, although a bit sloppy. He put out an amazing amount of energy. The singer was Carmen Montoya, who later became part of "Montoya." The whole group was gypsy, except for us, which was a thrill, because that was exactly what we wanted to hear.

JALEO: How did they feel about you?

MARCOS: We had very good luck with gypsies.

RUBINA: Except for Carmen Montoya.

MARCOS: But Carmen wasn't prejudiced against us; she was against everybody in the group and we were glad when she left after four weeks. In general, I had no problem with gypsies. I think my looks helped because I looked like them -- blue eyes and all -- and I had a respectable wife and a daughter. And I was at a place where I could play second guitar to a good guitarist and not get in his way...I may not have inspired him, but I didn't get in his way and provided him with a cushion. After that job we came home.

RUBINA: When we came back, we wanted to live in Marin County. But we hadn't realized what was happening with real estate values, and the only apartment we could find wasn't what we wanted. We also found that we didn't fit into the life style there. At the same time, we were working in the Spaghetti Factory and we were starting to get this "business" from people that we were too "commercial." After spending a lot of time and money getting our technique together and an act that we could present, we were told that we were too

commercial. We had a good time working with Rosa Montoya and Marcos kept us alive for a while by playing solo in a restaurant, "El Greco," in San Anselmo. We worked every job available to us in that area, including as street musicians -- against traffic noise and dancing on cement.

MARCOS: In 1975 I came down to Los Angeles to see what was happening. I had the name of Dario Cabral, who met me and took me around to meet people. So I met Ester Moreno and Bruce Patterson and saw the El Cid and the Matador. It was a gorgeous day, warm and sunny, and I ran into Niño Sanchez, who asked me if I wanted to work the Renaissance Fair. The six weekends he offered was a lot better than anything I had going at the time, so we moved down. Dario was leaving for a job in Texas with Yorgo and he said, "Here's my place, move in!" We had a lot of luck...I went to Rainbow studio and started meeting people. We were new people in town and we had no enemies. We worked with Juan Talavera in Santa Barbara; then we started working with Teo Morca and Bruce Patterson, and also doing a lot of studio work, playing for classes and people who wanted to practice. It was marvelous -- we had been starving. And I learned a lot, being around Bruce, who plays really well.

RUBINA: One thing that worked for us, and has consistently worked for us, is that we are good back-up artists. That's why we were able to do so well at studio work...and we



WITH TEO MORCA IN THE MID-1970'S: (L TO R) RUBINA, MARCOS,  
TEO, BRUCE PATTERSON, ISABEL MORCA

could both work.

JALEO: Rubina, were you mostly hired for singing or dancing?

RUBINA: Both. I've probably done more singing, but I would always do both because they would have, in me, an extra dancer and that makes it cheaper.

With Teo Morca I grew a lot as a singer, because I did some very serious cantes, like martinetes, saetas, cañas, and mirabrás. I stretched my technique and repertoire to its highest point, and I've been able to draw on that basic body of material for concert work ever since. I have continued to accumulate new material, of course, but most of that has been in a lighter vein.

Teo, Juan Talavera and Roberto Amaral have hired me both as a singer and dancer, and have provided me with distinct areas of growth. Marcos and I performed with Juan for several years at Santa Barbara, and on one of those occasions, we were able to collaborate with Juan and his other top artists (Susana de Alcalá, Oscar Nieto, Conja de Morón, Antonio Durán) in the planning of the whole series. It was one of the most rewarding experiences I've had in the art form.

Later, with Roberto Amaral, I trained as a classical dancer, which was a complete change for me. It was extremely difficult but the result was a huge overall improvement in my

dancing, just in terms of control and strength. In Roberto's most recent concert I performed as 1) a classical dancer, 2) a flamenco dancer, 3) a flamenco singer, 4) a rock back-up singer, and 5) a costume designer! Sounds crazy, but I loved it.

JALEO: How about your latest trip to Spain?

RUBINA: That was in 1978. We decided to go straight to Madrid and try to be completely professional, to crack the professional scene. We succeeded to a certain extent, although circumstances prevented us from going as far as we wanted to -- mainly because our daughter's education was a problem and, also, we all got terribly sick during the summer.

When we first arrived in Madrid, we found a boarding-house near the studio "Amor de Diós" and began playing for classes, taking classes with Ciro, and I took classes with Azorín, which was a very nice treat for me because he is a wonderful teacher and a very dynamic individual, and I love the jota. We stayed there for about a month. I worked in a sleazy venta outside of town that gave me the hours of midnight to about 6:00 A.M., which I hated, and I wasn't sorry when it terminated promptly.

We obtained a job in Alicante through the good offices of Gallardo. It was a good job -- although it didn't pay very much and since we were keeping an apartment in Madrid



plus paying for the pensión in Alicante, we had to eat in "económicos" and became very ill.

We worked with Josele who had taken his whole family to Japan on two occasions and earned enough money to open his own tablao in his hometown of Alicante. We worked with his sons and daughters, plus several local people. When that job ended, in September, we returned to Madrid for a month and a half. I continued studying and worked in Las Cuevas de Nemesio, where I was lucky enough to meet some fairly anonymous gypsy artists - Juan and his cousin Mari -- who were a great inspiration; they were lovely people and extremely good artists. So I had the opportunity to work in the evenings, take classes during the day, and then go into the studio and work on all the things I had seen the night before. Sadly, that all ended when we had to go home -- we were all sick and I was expecting my second child. So we came back. MARCOS: I'd like to add a few things to Rubina's story. When we first went to Amor de Diós, we immediately ran into several people we knew and had a really easy entrance. I started playing for classes. Ixchel and Rubina were taking several classes a day, five days a week. The place was crawling with Japanese guitarists who didn't need to earn money, since they got money from home, and that made it hard for others. But Ciro asked me to play for his classes and so I fell right into it. He held his classes in a room right near the bar. He'd have at least twenty people in his classes and the room would get really steamy. The more steamy it got, the wetter the guitar became and the more quiet it was; quieter and quieter it became until it seemed like nothing was happening, even though I was beating on it. Then, when he was choreographing, he would have his ladies do everything agonizingly slowly and it was very hard to keep compás -- particularly when you have twenty people feeling it somewhat differently. So invariably they would pick up speed and Ciro would scream "No corras, no corras!" (don't speed up), sometimes looking right at me. I didn't enjoy that particularly, so I told Ciro, "You know, and I know that I'm not speeding up -- the girls are taking it and I can't hold them back."

He replied, "I know!"

I said, "So why are you screaming at me?"  
"Because you can take it!"

Ciro is a very cerebral dancer, but I enjoyed it most when he was fooling around. For all his complex choreographies, when he just dances, he is very simple and very, very

good.

When we returned from Alicante, I became involved with La Tati. She's completely crazy, but probably the best bulerías dancer in Spain -- and she is not gypsy, which is quite interesting. Even the gypsies recognize her as one of the best, if not the best, and I've seen her do it on stage and she has incredible energy and talent. But she is also incredibly crazy, although delightfully so, and very intelligent. One of the funniest classes I had with her was with a rumbera who sang and wanted to learn some dance steps to do with her songs. She had horrible compás, very strange since she was a gypsy, and during the lesson, Tati would look at me as if to say, "I don't believe this!"

There were so many hours of playing in the studio that it was very tiring and very difficult. The hardest classes I had were the ones where Alfonso (Bermúdez) was taking from Ciro and asked him for the most difficult material possible. So Ciro would oblige him and make up these incredibly impossible things that were not even really playable on the guitar; I hated that hour!

Of course, in the bar downstairs, I met a lot of good people and heard a lot of good guitar playing. It was there that I met Juan Maya for the first time. He's a real "caballero" -- good looking, well-mannered and a great artist. I saw him play for the first time under less than perfect circumstances for him, and he carried the whole show. He's a real monster on the guitar. JALEO: What were your impressions of the Alicante experience, Marcos?

MARCOS: Alicante is a very pretty little town on the coast and becomes, in the summertime, the beach for Madrid, since it is only six hours away by car. Josele, the club owner, had two sons who played the guitar and, I think, two daughters who danced. The sons played very well and sang very well the rumbas and some of the cuadro stuff. So I was the third guitarist which seemed strange, but within two nights the older guitarist disappeared -- they were only working in the club because their father made them, not because they wanted to. I worked with sixteen-year-old Josele, Jr., who was the better of the two guitarists and I played pretty much second guitarist to him. He was a teen-ager who didn't really want to be there. He would never change his strings and his bridge had a sharp edge that would cut the strings...he didn't want to bother fixing it -- and so, invariably, once a night a string would break. As soon as that happened it would ruin the number, because he

would leave the stage and leave me alone, which put a lot of pressure on me due to all the noise -- with eight people in the cuadro. But some nights he played very well and I learned some good things from him. When he disappeared for two weeks, I played the show alone. The other artists were a little upset for the first couple of nights because they were mostly gypsies and used to hearing certain things, but after that things settled down and it was a good experience for me.

At least once a week all the gypsies in Alicante -- which was mostly one family -- would come into the club late, just before the last show. Josele, the owner, would curse, but there was nothing he could do about it -- he was trapped and had to oblige them with his hospitality because they were family. Even the daughters, although they were gypsies, would be upset, because they knew that these people did not want to see the show, but only came to party afterward. At first, I thought that was great, I would get to see some good things. But it turned out that none of them were artists, although some of them could beat out basic compás on the guitar or sing a little. So it got old very quickly and I found myself trying to figure out how to hide my guitar when I saw them come in; sometimes I gave it to Rubina and she would take it home, while I was trapped into waiting around until we got paid. Therefore, Josele Junior had to let them use his guitar and he hated it. And they would make him play for them, which he didn't want to do.

Enrique Melchor was married to one of Josele's daughters who didn't work in the tablao. On his way south to work the festivales, Enrique stopped in Alicante and stayed for two weeks. He worked in the tablao during that time as a soloist -- he didn't play in the cuadro -- and played primarily material off of his first record. He played very well, amazing! He was an interesting person and struck me as being more American than myself, dressed in tennis shoes and wearing glasses, rather than dressing up as most of the artists in Spain do. He was mild-mannered, soft-spoken, and very intelligent, trying hard to make a name for himself and get a European tour.

JALEO: Are there other artists that you especially enjoy?

MARCOS: As a guitarist, I have profound respect for Paco de Lucía, although I am not particularly interested in listening to a lot of what he is doing. I guess, of all the guitarists, the one I enjoy the most is Habichuela -- the oldest one, Juan Carmona.

He is the epitome of what a flamenco guitarist should be: He has tremendous technique, which he does not abuse -- he plays very short -- impeccable taste, beautiful aire, and he is knowledgeable and mature in his playing. When playing well, nobody can touch him in the accompaniment of the cante. For baile, I've never heard anybody like Juan Maya. Below those two, and not by much, are numerous known and unknown artists who play so well -- who can say who is better or who is worse?

RUBINA: One of my favorite singers is Curro Fernández of Sevilla, who often sings for Manuela Carrasco. I particularly enjoy artists from Sevilla and the Sevilla style of flamenco -- the Montoyas, Curro, etc. But there are so many artists who work so hard and well in Spain and yet go largely unappreciated.

JALEO: When you returned to Los Angeles, did you have any trouble getting back into things?

RUBINA: We came back to find Carmen Mora working at the El Cid and we had the opportunity to work with her. I was expecting my second child and so I wrapped myself up in a big shawl and worked only as a singer. When Carmen was in L.A., we had many good fiestas, but none since she left. And, artistically, her show was one of the high points of the El Cid; she had a very well-prepared show, if anything too well-prepared, a concert or theater type show. We found it a challenge and it was nice to do that caliber of work.

I stopped work to have my baby, but Marcos continued on and has been there for about three years. That has pretty much been our main work since returning from Spain. Except, of course, for working with Roberto Amaral in his concert.

JALEO: What do you see in the future?

RUBINA: It is hard to say. After having tried out various forms of straight jobs, we find our interest in flamenco returning.

MARCOS: As long as flamenco is presented as it usually is here, which is poorly...I mean, the talent is here, but there are not people who can conceptualize how to put it all together well. And I don't mean individual concerts, because the large stage doesn't allow flamenco to come alive as it does in a club, although fine presentations can be done. Since we can't have festivals here, tablaos and occasional concerts are the only possibilities -- and these have to be done with sensitivity. Flamenco is a foreign art over here and it is an intense art form. If it is not presented right, people won't like it; once they get past the flourishes of the dresses and the quick stops, they find that



MARCOS AND RUBINA IN TAMPA FLORIDA IN 1976  
CONJA DE MORÓN SINGING

it is very heavy music. The energy level on a stage is very high. To me it is impossible to watch a flamenco show while eating. That reminds me of one of the best shows we've been involved with, in Florida with Rafael Ruiz, Conja, and Andrea Martínez. We performed in the round, in a very nice nightclub, with a good sound system and the show was timed so as not to interfere with the eating. So it was very successful.

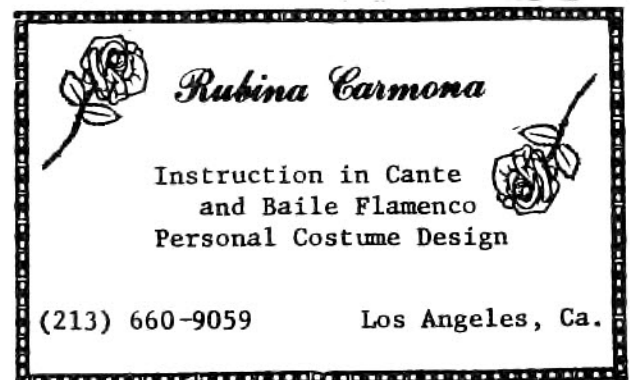
JALEO: Do you have any thoughts about how foreign artists can fit into flamenco?

MARCOS: I think that a foreigner will forever be on the outside looking in if he really understands what flamenco is about. Flamenco is a cultural thing and there is no way you can divorce it and still call it flamenco. So what we have to do is to accept that part of it and try to understand it the best we can. If you try to separate flamenco from its culture, you are not doing flamenco, but rather "flamencoesque." I find myself in conflict with people who have not immersed themselves in the flamenco/gypsy culture in Spain and tried to understand how that affects the music. I feel separate from those people. And we don't mean technique, for the technical level of a performer has nothing to do with it. It is a feeling. For example, I find I often have too many thoughts going through my head while playing to be able to reflect the simplicity of flamenco. In Spain, the foreigner has to

accept that he is on the outside. He knows, and the gypsies know, that he is not one of them, and can't be unless he gives himself up totally to it -- which most of us cannot do. Being on the outside, you have to put up with a certain amount of abuse.

RUBINA: Another problem for a foreigner is getting technical or artistic recognition and being able to advance oneself. You have to work longer and harder and still accept a subordinate position in Spain. Many Spanish groups will not hire a foreigner, although some do -- like La Singla when she had Susanna Hauser with her.

MARCOS: And over here, being a foreigner is not such a problem, but the market for your product is almost negligible, no matter how good you are. So you can't win as a foreigner in flamenco. You just do it because it does something for you and it has something that you need and...too bad!!



*Rubina Carmona*

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# VIII FIESTA DE LA GUITARRA

(from: ABC, July 9, 1981)



JUAN CAENO



photos by Paco Sanchez

ENRIQUE MELCHOR



DIEGO CLAVEL



EL CABRERO WITH GUITARIST JOSE LUIS POSTIGO



RRERE DE LOS PALACIOS WITH AZUQUITA

## II FESTIVAL "JUAN TALEGA" DOS HERMANAS

photos by Perea

(see article  
page 22)





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photos from ABC Archives



**TERREMOTO: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY**

(from: ABC, Sept. 8, 1981; sent by Gordon Booth by Jerónimo Roldán

From a very young age, Terremoto de Jerez, showed indications of his excellent artistic qualities, beginning his first steps as a bailaor. Since then, he almost always closed his performances with the compás of the baile, with his particular way of doing it with the most exquisite aire of Jerez. Later, he began to demonstrate his aptitude as a cantaor, distinguishing himself with the unmistakable stamp of his extremely flamenco voice. The personal style, genius, quality, and expression awakened and formed one of the great figures of the cante of our time. His first recordings were done in the beginning of the 1960's, always with the accompaniment

**TERREMOTO AS A BAILLAOR IN "EL GUAJIRO"**  
 Thirty years ago, Fernando appeared with this cuadro, which included Carmen Carreras, La Camboria, Matilde Coral, Manuela Vargas, El Poeta, El Toro, and Romerito de Jerez.

of the guitar of Manuel Morao. His last record, an outstanding production called "Sonidos Negros," was a true anthology of the most pure expression of his cantes, and a similar demonstration by his brother-in-law, the guitarist Manuel Morao. During a four or five year period, Terremoto performed in Madrid, in the best salas de fiesta, such as Los Canasteros and Las Brujas, among others, but he always felt a special admiration for his home region, to where he returned and remained until his unexpected and sudden death from a heart attack on September 6, 1981.



## FESTIVALES 1981

VIII FIESTA  
DE LA GUITARRA,  
MARCHENA

(from: ABC, July 9, 1981; sent by Gordon Booth; translated by Roberto Vázquez)

by Miguel Acal

We are in Marchena, with the first triumphant festival, with the first full house -- almost 4,000 people, thanks to the great faith of Manolo Moraza and the arduous labor of the team he directs. Sixty duros (almost \$3.00) the admission and a constant struggle to promote the festival are the keys to the triumph. The festival opens half an hour later than planned. And Juan Caeno leaves in the air some cantes por soleá that remind us of the mystery and greatness of Juan Talega. And after him -- not in vain is it called the festival of the guitar -- Enrique de Melchor inundates the plaza with cadences. His guitar is pure gold.

The powerful voice of Manuel Vargas emerges. It is well-known in Marchena, but that doesn't cause his siguiriyas to be less impressive. His flag is up high, which he adorns with some cantes de trilla in perfect form. On a sour note -- he was in a hurry because another festival awaited -- Luis de Córdoba performs por granainas, tientos and fandangos. The cante of El Gloria is very difficult to do, and Luis does not measure up to it. His was a correct performance, without a place for delirious ovations, although they like him well in Marchena. He also sang por peteneras, without convincing.

Curro Malena and the guitar, originally from Marchena, of José Luis Postigo, is not at a great height, even though he makes clear his professionalism and his limitless giving of himself.

The best part of the evening arrives, artistically, with Diego Clavel. He sang a malagueña that ended por granainas, with an

enviable force and comprehension. Later he sang por alegrías and finished por siguiriyas -- the well-known one of Manuel Molina -- that is systematically demanded from him. Before that he did cantes of Cagancho and Marrurro, in a superior manner.

The first part closes with Los Farrucos. Antonio Montoya's dancing is something indescribable. Pilar and Farruquita were not up to the level of other occasions, but Antonio erases everything. It seems impossible: the capability, the strength, the feeling of compás, the brilliant flexibility of this man. With him, the dance is an undecipherable wonder.

Los del Rocío opens the second part with some beautiful sevillanas dedicated to Pepe Marchena and Melchor. They have good voices and good musical ideas. El Cabrero is well received. His fandangos have penetrated deep. He did better things por siguiriyas, but they were less acclaimed. And after him, Calixto. The winner of the Bional did medias granainas, soleá and fandangos de Cepero without attaining the level of other occasions. Chiquetete closed por tangos, bulerías, soleá -- the cante of El Zurraque with a very long temple -- and por sevillanas at the end, as is almost obligatory.

It was a good evening of cante and a triumph -- we hope to God it is only the first -- that gives encouragement and hope. The formula of Marchena, constant work and cheap admission prices, has shown itself to be good. We hope somebody will copy it.

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II FESTIVAL "JUAN TALEGA" DE DOS HERMANAS

(from: ABC, July 18, 1981; sent by Gordon Booth; translated by Roberto Vázquez)

by L. Granado

Two very significant facts with regard to the previous edition have been repeated this



year at the II Festival Flamenco de Dos Hermanas, Juan Talega. On one side, the large attendance -- about 4,000 people -- came to confirm the popular interest that flamenco has in Dos Hermanas. On the other side, the new triumph of El Cabrero. He arrived late, when the festival was about to finish, and he again obtained a clamorous success.

The festival began, half an hour late, with Paquito Jarana, a young promise on the guitar who was in an acceptable class, although he did not attain the artistic heights of last year. José de la Tomasa sang por malagueña, siguriya with a remate por soleá, and finished up por fandangos, as a tribute to Antonio de la Carsá. He has quality, but he had small faults in his performance. The contract he had to perform in Moguer later that same evening was the reason he performed first. The haste and the intranquility due to the need to be present at that "festival onubense" (of Huelva) might have led to those light deficiencies of the artist. El Rerre de los Palacios, in his long performance, tried his luck in all facets of flamenco. He performed as usual and the audience reciprocated.

The best performance of the first part was by Turronero. He gave of himself completely, expending lots of energy, enlivening the show with his cante por bulerías, and he was given a great ovation. He was accompanied by the guitar of Manolo Domínguez, who played extraordinarily and made the audience vibrate. Los Farrucos closed this first part, the phenomenal performance of Antonio Montoya standing out. His dancing is simply amazing.

The second part, much better than the first and of great artistic quality, was opened with the masterful performance of

Fosforito. The cantaor from Puente Genil knew what he was doing at all moments. He performed with precision and diligence, and received several ovations. He sang por soleá, tientos, tangos and alegrías, and he proved abundantly his enormous artistic ability and the privileged spot he occupies in the field of flamenco. Chiquetete was also at his best. He sang what the audience asked for. He was strongly acclaimed, and he had to lengthen his performance by more than fifteen minutes, because El Cabrero, who was to close the festival, had not arrived. The cantaor from Algeciras, proving great comradeship, lengthened his performance, something very rare for him, until El Cabrero made his appearance.

This significant gesture of friendship that honors a good professional like Chiquetete, was tarnished by the lack of respect and the inconsiderate attitude of a large part of the audience, who didn't keep their composure and paid hardly any attention to the cantaor when El Cabrero made his appearance and became the center of all stares.

Once on stage, El Cabrero became the great winner of the evening. He made contact with the audience right away and the latter gave him its biggest applauses. His cante por fandangos, with the clearly socio-political content of the verses, brought the thousands of aficionados out of their seats.

The II Flamenco Festival of Dos Hermanas "Juan Talega," in short, has constituted a full success in an artistic as well as an economic sense. The expectations of the organization were absolutely exceeded and a considerable number of aficionados had to watch this flamenco event standing up.



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## WITH PACO PEÑA IN CORDOBA

AN INTERVIEW BY TONY PICKSLAY

(Although Paco Peña speaks excellent English, this interview was done in Spanish and then translated and edited by Tony Pickslay.)

This past August I managed to get to Spain. Since I had read in *Jaleo* about Paco Peña's guitar courses and, since I had been studying his *Toques Flamencos* for about 1½ years, I was very eager to meet him and hopefully be able to talk to this first class guitarist about the many things that interested me as a student guitarist and about the flamenco center that he was establishing. So, with my wife and son we went to Córdoba one day to search for the Plaza del Potro where the Center is located. After working our way through the maze of narrow streets, complicated by one-way traffic, but aided by many helpful passerbys, we found it: a small plaza with a fountain and a statue of

a "potro" (colt). The neighbors come to get water with long cane rods which they put up to little spouts high on the fountain. It is actually only one short block from the main street that runs along the banks of the Guadalquivir and perhaps a 5 to 10 minute walk east of the heart of Córdoba.

Eventually we were able to contact Paco, and I spent an entire day observing his classes. Afterwards he kindly consented to spend some time in an informal interview, even though he obviously was tired after having personally taught well over 100 students in the preceding 4 weeks. I found him to be a true caballero and professional artist: dedicated, intelligent, good sense of humor, personable, buen mozo (handsome, according to my wife) and very eloquent on the many aspects of the art of flamenco. We were also fortunate to meet his family -- wife and



children, mother, brothers and sisters. A marvelous group of people.

The following notes were condensed from an hour-long, taped conversation in Spanish. I have omitted parts that duplicated material to be found in other articles appearing in the previous issue of Jaleo:

TONY: Paco, what motivated you to establish the flamenco center? How was it organized and what are your future plans?

PACO: I always spend summers in Córdoba. Year after year people would ask me, "Paco, how can I advance my study of flamenco?" I didn't really know what to answer. I would tell them to go to Andalucía and find a teacher who could also help to introduce them into the flamenco scene. But that is difficult and costly, especially for a foreigner. So I decided to establish a center, a place where anyone interested in flamenco could go to get information or get involved in flamenco. It would be a way to keep alive and spread the interest in flamenco. After making that decision I asked myself what activities shall we have? And, of course, I immediately thought of guitar seminars, since that is my area and I knew I could handle it with a minimum of organization. It would be my energy, my responsibility, my work. We started advertising the courses and I began thinking of other activities I could offer so that the students would come more intimately in contact with flamenco. Dance and singing accompaniment came immediately to mind, both areas that I know well. Students could not only learn the guitar, but also how to accompany. We would also offer recitals, and presentations of dance and song. And so I arranged a series of such activities to complement the guitar seminars this summer. I also considered offering dance classes, but that would be difficult to organize for the first year.

This year has been a great success! Many people came and it has been a great experience. I don't claim that everything was perfect, but the center has been established and will continue. Next year, based on this experience, we will try to improve the program. Next year I think I will offer two week courses (they were one week in 1981). After a one week course you are exhausted. I think it would be preferable to take it a little easier, and one would learn more with two weeks and at a more relaxed pace. I also plan to add dance classes and to provide Spanish classes. I have found this to be a necessity because many people come here who do not speak Spanish well. Or they may be

accompanied by a wife or friend who is interested in this country and its culture and needs to speak a little Spanish. Hopefully, the local government will be in charge of giving these courses. I would also like to find places with sports facilities, a swimming pool for example, since the people who come here are young and might like to have a little vacation also. All of that can help a person to learn flamenco; a relaxed person is more receptive. I am learning many things. I need to make a bar here in the Center where students can relax after a day or evening of work. Also, I would like to provide the opportunity to see the festivals in Andalucía, of which there are many. And more lectures on guitar construction or the theories about flamenco and its origins.

This year was a great success, but next year will have even more activity and be even more intensive. In summary, with this experience, I will improve whatever I can.

TONY: I understand that next year you might need to group students by level of experience.

PACO: This year, too. But since it was the first year, I didn't know what to expect. I taught every class myself. I tried to give extra time to students having difficulty. Next year I expect to have an assistant. I will teach the material and my assistant will be in charge of helping the students perfect each lesson.

TONY: In the two classes I observed today you brought in a dancer and a singer, and worked with the students on accompaniment. Did you reach that point in each of the four courses?

PACO: Yes, but each week was different. We might work on different rhythms, or the same ones but with different emphasis. That's the wonderful part of it. It really depends on the quality of the students. If they are receptive and intelligent, it goes better and many interesting things happen. If they are less well-prepared, the class has to adapt and go to the more basic elements. The level of each student is something we will have to look at a little closer next year.

TONY: So, almost everyone arrived with more or less ample knowledge of flamenco. You reviewed the basics and then...?

PACO: Well, actually no. With some exceptions, very few who came knew how to play the rhythms properly. It's a curious fact. I don't say it with arrogance, but as a reality. And I offer myself to help change that situation. I have the utmost respect for anyone who wants to learn flamenco. But, I found I had to start with the basics.

TONY: How do you think a person who wants to

learn flamenco should proceed? What things should he or she do?

PACO: Each person should determine the number of hours he needs. The more, the better. I believe it is important to do things well. Let's not deceive ourselves: flamenco has its limitations and if it is not played well it is worthless! On the other hand, if it is played well, it receives much respect. If you just play rhythm in some flamenco style, and you do it well, people who understand flamenco will sit and listen for a whole hour. I mean, it isn't the number of hours you practice, nor the number of things you know, but how well you play what you do know.

That is my first recommendation: try to do everything well from the very beginning. Secondly, learn the rhythmic structure of each style, its particular character. This is most important. After that, you gradually work with more complicated falsetas (melodies) knowing how they fit into the rhythm. I also recommend that you study slowly. Study technique. Use small finger movements, study picado, arpeggios, thumb technique, every day if possible. And finally, listen as much as possible to flamenco music.

TONY: What about nail care, length, etc.?

PACO: Length is a personal thing. Each person has to find how best to make contact with the string. I find that when I study more, I like the nails shorter. I don't need the nail. When you study less, the nail helps.

TONY: You hear a lot about improvisation in flamenco. Do you improvise in a concert? Do you do anything unforeseen or is everything prepared?

PACO: Yes, I improvise. But let's not deceive ourselves. Improvisation is a subject that is a little taboo. One improvises, yes, on a theme that one already knows. Suppose I know 200 falsetas in soleares. If I sit down to play soleares, I don't mean that I will play a "new" soleares, but, based on my experience, my material, my ability and understanding of the rhythm, I start playing things and I combine them perhaps in a different way this day. Different from any other day. In reality I have to improvise. Otherwise I would be bored. I need to surprise even myself. If I am inspired it comes out well. Other times it is very difficult to play.

TONY: This process continues each instant?

PACO: Yes. It depends on what I have already done. Based on that, I look for inspiration to do what follows. The music itself inspires you. When you are inspired

you take risks. You venture into more difficult terrain. But that is what it is all about. If it comes out well, you feel alive (creating). If not, well it just didn't work.

TONY: You start over, try again.

PACO: Exactly. That is the risk in it and that is the beauty of it. That is why it is so important, so wonderful to give a concert. You have a responsibility and a challenge.

TONY: Does it also depend on the singers and dancers?

PACO: Yes. It is much easier when you are accompanying. You are constructing a musical work of art with more people. Each one contributes. Each one is inspired by the others. More things happen when you accompany. If you are alone you must have much greater breadth. It is much harder to play, to create in those circumstances.

TONY: And the audience has an impact. If the audience understands, feels and is receptive...?

PACO: Yes, but I have to isolate myself from the audience. I am in my world and I like to explore in my own way, although, knowing the audience is there and that I have to convince them. But that is my problem.

TONY: I met a Spaniard in the small town on the coast where we are staying who considered that many successful artists have become separated from the roots of flamenco and so have become less authentic interpreters. Would you like to comment?

PACO: That is a close-minded and purist comment. If one has creative ability, capacity to translate the language of the people into something more advanced, more complicated, he should do it. He remains authentic and bases his creativeness in the ancient traditions of the people, but he has an ambition to grow, a healthy ambition. He can't play the same things they did ten or twenty years ago. I do insist that for something to be worthwhile in flamenco, it must inevitably be based in tradition. The music came from the people. Paco de Lucía today plays differently from everyone, but it is 100% flamenco -- another flamenco. He knows so much and has absorbed the culture of thousands of years. He has a creative genius and interprets the music in his own way. But no one can tell me that it isn't flamenco. It is a question of opinions, too. If you don't like it, fine. But you should respect it.

TONY: In your own case, you come here to Córdoba continuously and so you don't lose contact.

PACO: Yes, I really live here in Córdoba. I happen to have another home that I use (in London), but that doesn't matter. Even if I

didn't live here, I have my company with me. I am breathing the best of flamenco from first rate artists. The best ones I can get.

TONY: Even in the small towns flamenco is changing, correct? They listen to records, hear all the artists.

PACO: Yes. It's a curious phenomenon. Today everyone plays like Paco de Lucía: in Spain, in Andalucía, everywhere, just as before they played like Niño Ricardo. That's because Paco de Lucía is fundamental, an innate creator, but as I said before, 100% flamenco. And his interpretation is so good that everyone has to imitate it. So the comment (about losing authenticity) totally loses value because it is the artist who advances, and the people follow.

When Sabicas was discovered, everyone played a little like him. Although he didn't have as much influence as Ricardo, he became a revolution. Then came the modern wave, represented by Paco de Lucía. And flamenco has changed, it keeps changing and will always change. That is what keeps it alive, interesting. These artists are pioneers, the geniuses who create those changes.

TONY: Paco de Lucía often plays alone now. What has happened in the song and dance?

Has each been advanced by its interpreters?

PACO: Yes. Paco doesn't advance alone. His knowledge comes from flamenco. He knows flamenco perfectly and how to improve song and dance with his accompaniment. A show is much more interesting when he is accompanying. His division of the rhythms is more advanced, more subtle, more difficult, and that affects everything. Logically, he also wants to express himself alone, too. He wants to write new compositions with different effects. Since he is a guitarist, he does it for the guitar. But his inspiration comes from singing, from the rhythms.

TONY: In the dance, for example, are there new steps, new ways of interpretation?

PACO: Yes, it changes, too. The creative people want to do something that hasn't been seen before. They are influenced by the other artists they see. Years ago Antonio influenced many dancers, and he is not an isolated example. The same thing happens in singing. There has always been singing in the style of so-and-so, of Caracol, of Fosforito, of Mairena, etc., and so people imitate in the singing, following the style of the masters. It's the same with everything.

TONY: Do you think it is necessary for one to dedicate oneself totally to flamenco in order to achieve something good, to be able to create?

PACO: I don't have enough time to work even on flamenco. I dedicate as much of my life to flamenco as possible and would like to dedicate more of my life to it. I can't play classical, only flamenco, because I feel that all the time is required for flamenco. But I do like to enjoy other music...

TONY: But here in Spain there are people who care for sheep or work in a bar or have some other job, but are known as good singers, dancers or guitarists. Can those people produce a flamenco as good as the full-time professional?

PACO: I would say they are limiting themselves. If they are creators, the more time they dedicate to it, the more they will achieve. It's a question of time. You immerse yourself in an activity. As we said before, you play an hour or four in one rhythm and things start happening. It's the same thing. It's the professional who advances most. There is no doubt about that. The best singers, dancers and guitarists are professionals. They have talent and they develop it. Now the genius that a goatherder or bartender has, he will always have, and he is an artist. But if he would work more on that art, he would improve it. It's logical. That's the way I see it. There are very good singers who aren't professionals. The "ambiente" in Andalucía tends to improve flamenco, because it is that "ambiente" that created flamenco. But the quality is always better in the professionals who are always working, changing, improving their artistry.

There is another aspect to this question -- the festivals. Unfortunately, there are so many now that flamenco artists are in demand and highly paid. The philosophy is that the more artists, the better, and they want the top ones. Since there are a lot of artists, many people go to see them at some stadium with thousands of people, amplification, an uncomfortable situation, bad for flamenco. But the artists have everything handed to them on a silver platter. They know that at a given time it will be their turn and that they will sing two numbers, and the next day 100 or 200 kilometers away they will do the same two numbers. Quality suffers. The artists don't have to push themselves. This doesn't mean that the non-professional sings better than the professional, but that life is too easy for them. I want professionals to earn a good living, but the attitude of the professional singer is changing considerably. I refer to singers because as you know, to speak of flamenco is to speak of "cante."

TONY: So festivals are the most important

source of income now?

PACO: Now, yes.

TONY: Records, too.

PACO: Yes. That area is very commercial now, too, and there is a lot of activity there.

TONY: One more question. I haven't heard much said about the gypsies since I have been here in Spain. The book I am studying now divides flamenco rhythms into gypsy and Andaluz branches. I understand that most gypsies are integrated into Spanish society, now. What do they bring to flamenco now-a-days?

PACO: The gypsies are certainly integrated, very integrated into Spanish society. The theme of the relationship of the gypsies to flamenco has always been a delicate one. They are marvelous interpreters of flamenco. They sing gypsy rhythms. I call it gypsy style (agitanado). But from my point of view those rhythms are more gypsy because the gypsies interpret them more. But flamenco song includes all of that. It is Andaluz. It is not gypsy song, but rather flamenco song. There are rhythms which have developed more within gypsy families or within the cricle of gypsy life, and the gypsy artists interpret them better than many non-gypsy artists. Many more gypsies interpret them better than many non-gypsies. That is a fact.

I like the gypsy style very much, but too much weight is being given to the idea that the gypsies created flamenco. It just isn't so. I don't deny for a moment their value and contribution to flamenco's development. To the contrary, it is a phenomenon. But now-a-days many researchers insist that flamenco is a gypsy phenomenon. It's not true. Flamenco was born only in Andalucía. There are gypsies all over Spain, Europe and the world. None of them, with a few exceptions, sings or dances flamenco. The gypsies who know flamenco learn it from Andalusian gypsies or from Andalusians. There is no doubt about that. Outside Andalucía they don't even have that facility in the voice, so typical of flamenco. That occurs only in one region, Andalucía. Nowhere else do people know how to sing flamenco. The idea that the gypsies created flamenco started perhaps with the appearance of the book, El Mundo Y La Forma Del Cante Flamenco, written by Richard Molina, from Córdoba, with Antonio Mairena. It was a very important book, which has become the Bible of flamenco. Molina gave much credit to the gypsies for having created flamenco. And since it was the first important book written that treated this topic, and it was a very good book -- daring

for that time -- many people since have based their opinions on this book. But they have changed the idea of the book, advancing more and more the concept of the isolated, persecuted gypsy and insisting flamenco is a gypsy phenomenon. I don't believe it. I think flamenco is a 100% Andalusian phenomenon. And the gypsies of Andalucía are Andalusians. Flamenco includes all Andalusians -- 3000 years of cultural heritage. Andalucía has had song, dance, music, "alegría," creativity, and genius for centuries, with and without gypsies. The gypsies have provided one of many ingredients to Andalucía, a very important and valuable one. But we should keep things in perspective.

## GAZPACHO DE GUILLERMO

### REVIEW TIME

Several things come to mind when doing a review and I would like to use this month's column to explore them. Some of these things have been mentioned briefly in previous articles, but I'd like to add to them at the risk of sounding repetitive, in the light of so many prevailing attitudes found in the flamenco world.

The first thing is the failure to distinguish between a record and a review of it. I've gotten into a few discussions with readers who read about a certain record, but had never heard it. Any such discussion must be intellectual, as opposed to experiential, in nature. Sure, a certain amount of pleasure can be derived from pure knowledge of having read a review, but this cannot be as valuable as hearing the record itself. A map of Spain is not Spain; a travelogue is not a trip; a review cannot be a record. Many prefer to sit around the armchair and hear stories about flamenco rather than to experience it.

When doing a review it is difficult to avoid the issue of praise and criticism. On the surface praise seems good and criticism bad, at least to the artist. The artist however prefers criticism to being completely ignored. Praise seems to be a kind of external reward and criticism a kind of external punishment. The reviewer then is perceived as some type of powerful person with potential goodies to pass around. A

closer look at the issue shows that most of us have a dependence on the good opinions of others. The more praise we get, the more terrified we are of criticism. The obvious solution then is to rid ourselves of the obsession to be praised, and then the fear of criticism goes away with it.

Any reviewer has a certain amount of biased opinions which will come out during the course of the review. Some opinions are so much a part of a person that they come out effortlessly and quickly. Opinions may or may not be valid and, in either case, they have a tendency to influence perception. If possible try to hear any record before reading the review. Then perception is sharper, and more intelligent listening may take place. Intelligent listening deals with awareness of the recorded information, not with opinions or facts about the talent and life of the artist. Even the reviewer has to listen to the record first. Try it!

Let's discuss adulation also, since many readers may have strong feelings about the artist being reviewed. As we mature, we lose most of this adulation. What many do in flamenco is to "put other's heads above their own." There are two things that may be psychologically harmful in the long run -- other people beating one's ego down and oneself beating it down. Extended periods of adulation, beyond childhood, may be as dangerous as being surrounded by envious criticism. After years of cowering in the presence of others, what may take over is just the opposite, a desire to lord it over others, and rise to the top. Accompanying this change are intense competitiveness and endless comparison.

Finally, let's try to answer the question, "What is a record?" My observation is that a record, much like a live performance, is an attempt by the artist to share some of his energy with others. A new record can definitely recharge the listener's energy. However, there are two inherent dangers -- the everpresent tendency to lapse into vicariousness and the desire to imitate. Both states of mind seem to support the myth of dominance and subservience.

A good source for flamenco records is Casa Damas, Calle Sierpes 65, Sevilla Española. Write to them and ask for a quote of prices. Quicker service may be provided if you send a bank draft in "pesetas."

\* \* \*

#### A FEW RECORDS BY RAMÓN DE ALGECIRAS

I first heard of Ramón de Algeciras when I bought the American release of "Misa Flamenca"

(Philips Stereo PCC 623). On this record, Ramón plays second guitar to Serranito on a few bands. That was the only information I had about him until around 1969, when I met him at a department store in Pittsburgh. He was touring the United States with dancer Carmen Rojas and the department store had hired the group to make appearances promoting "Mediterranean Days," to sell European products and vacations.

Of course, since then, Ramón has come into prominence as one of the most sought-after cante accompanists in Spain. Also, he has a separate career as second guitarist to his brother, Paco de Lucía. Ramón's accompaniment style is in the school of Niño Ricardo, like so many other guitarists. Ramón seems to have cleaned up the toque of Ricardo and plays it very cleanly, where Ricardo had lots of feeling, but played so much more sloppily. In later recordings Ramón mixes the predictable Ricardo material with Paco de Lucía material. Below is a list of some albums featuring Ramón de Algeciras:

- "Canta Juanito Valderrama; Belter 12-724 (w. Manolo Carmona, 2nd guitar)
- "Pepe Pinto"; Belter 22.217 (w. Manolo Carmona)
- "Su Cante," Fernanda Y Bernarda de Utrera (w. Juan Maya); Movie Play S 21.442
- "El Chato De La Isla"; Polydor Stereo 23 85 018 (1971)
- "Rogelio Beltrán, El Puebla"; Triumph Stereo 24 96 203 (1973)
- "Isabelita Vargas"; Triumph Vol. 13 (numbers not known)
- "Juan López, Chiquito De Camas"; Triumph Vol. 15 (numbers not known)
- "El Mundo Del Flamenco"; Philips 63 28 025 (1971) (w. Paco and Pepe Lucía)

--Guillermo Salazar

## Guitar Olympics

by Peter Baime

For your amusement or scrutiny I would like to answer all the letters concerning these "olympics" by adding two more contestants: Paco Cepero and Melchor de Marchena. In terms of speed picado, they make a good comparison between old and current.

The Melchor example comes from a bulerías on a solo album (Hispavox, HH 10-151). The falseta occurs near the beginning of the piece, which is in A major, where he has just come out of similar passages that resolved to E7 and A chords, respectively, and has just entered D major. He filled out the compás

$\text{♩} = 152$ 

## BULERIAS (MELCHOR DE MARCHENA)

Transcribed by Peter Baime

Beat 12

Beat 12

② = Left hand fingerings

## SOLEARES (PACO CEPERO)

 $\text{♩} = 199.2$ 

\*Timings are measured between quote marks (" ")

\*Timings are measured between quote marks (" ")

just preceding the example with five beats of D major, and the example rounds off the answer to resolve again on A major. The example was played in 3.54 seconds which computes to 10.16 notes/second. Careful listening to Melchor's faster passages reveals a rather rough technique, with adjacent strings being struck, on occasion, simultaneously with melody notes. The coordination between the left and right hands also suffers a bit when he plays rapidly and, at times, the left just can't keep up with the right. The best setting for Melchor is, indeed, as an accompanist, where he demonstrates his aggressive, but controlled technique.

Paco Cepero, who has a phenomenal background in accompanying, is a first-rate soloist as well. The example presented here occurs at the end of the soleares, recorded on "La Guitarra de Amuleto" (EMI CO62-21415). He is really pushing the tempo here and even

manages to increase it slightly from the first compás to the second, which is the one I timed. The first line came out to 12.63 notes/second and the second line, 13.28 notes/second. All of this is done with incredible clarity and precision and ranks him among the fastest. It does contain one ligado note, but that hardly affects the overall time; the ligado does allow him to recover from playing two very rapid notes at that point.

I must caution the reader that this information is not to be construed to imply anything beyond the clinical information presented and, furthermore, to keep in mind the many variables presented in my reply to John Fowler (see page 7).



## GUITAR STRINGS

(from: FISL Newsletter, Sept./Oct. 1970)

by M. Zatania

Nylon strings as we know them today came into being in the mid-1940's. They were developed by Albert Augustine who obtained nylon in various gauges from the DuPonts. The strings were accepted with some difficulty. For the die-hards La Bella still makes a gut string with silk core for the wound basses. Gut strings were before my time. However, I understand the main drawbacks were stretching and breakage.

Today's basses consist of nylon or silk thread cores wound with brass or bronze alloys. This wound metal can be polished or unpolished. Polishing cuts down fret board noise from finger-sliding, but limits string life. Most bass windings are silver-plated which protects wire from perspiration corrosion. Several string-makers offer nylon strings wound with pure silver. These do not turn green under severe perspiration conditions, however, the silver does not seem to have as good a sound as bronze or plated copper windings. Theoretically the winding's function is only to add weight to the core. Nonetheless the windings do react in certain ways that influence the sound. It would be interesting to have strings made with the windings of metal with the highest atomic weight. Tungsten would be a good candidate as would gold. We once asked a French string-maker to supply strings with 14-karat gold windings. He quoted \$30.00 per set, factory cost.

Treble strings are of two varieties: single large nylon strands and multiple small nylon threads wound with plastic. Only 2nd and 3rd wound trebles are available here although there have been some wound 1st strings imported from Spain occasionally. The one-strand nylon treble strings are sometimes treated by a heat process which changes their molecular structure increasing overtones. This process is called "rectification." A string-maker in Paris makes a string which he calls "Ramon Montoya" which is non-rectified and which he advertises as "brilliant."

Unwound treble strings are made right where the nylon itself is produced (most often DuPont Laboratories), according to the string-maker's specifications. At one time nylon monofilament fishing line was similar to the monofilament used for guitar strings. Recently the processes employed for fishing

lines changed the characteristics so that the nylon is very limp. This is an improvement insofar as the way the line winds on a fishing reel; however, the same characteristic makes it worthless as a musical string.

The core of wound strings contains from six to eight strands of nylon. Each strand in turn is made of multiple nylon threads which are wound on a spool. The number of strands used for a particular string may vary from maker to maker. The strands are placed doubled in a lathe-type machine which is made specifically for this purpose. After the strings are locked in they are stretched under pressure and pulled to a certain length or "tension." (Some string-makers stretch the core until it is actually in tune.) The wire or plastic is then wound on, the whole operation taking about a minute. Strings made where the inside nylon core was not placed under much tension before winding have a "rubber-band" characteristic when held loose in the hand. They tune up slower and are therefore said to have more sound life. However, when the core stretches, which it does when tuned, the winding becomes separated allowing dirt and oils to deaden strings. Also, a sharp bridge will soon work its way between the winding and cut or weaken the nylon core. If the same or greater tension is given the core before winding as it would normally receive tuned to pitch, the string will tune up faster and will curl up when held in the hand. (The core once released pulls the winding together.) Another quick test to determine tension is simply to stretch the string by hand and see how much "give" it has.

Now we come to gauge, tension, and action, terms which every guitarist should understand. Gauge refers to thickness and is measured by a micrometer. These instruments measure to the nearest 1000th of an inch. Flamenco and classic strings generally don't list gauge on string packages. As a rule, all other things being equal, heavier gauge gives more volume and requires higher tension to tune to pitch. Conversely, thinner gauge gives less volume and requires less tension to tune.

The term "action" is sometimes used interchangeably with "tension." It is best to speak of action when referring to the distance of the strings from the fret-board. Or, more generally, action means how the strings act or feel when played. The action can be changed by the tension of the string. However the guitar's basic action is built in. The bridge saddle, neck, and fret board construction determine the action, but all

factors of guitar construction interact in a complex manner which is far beyond my limited understanding.

"Tension" is the amount of pull placed on the string to tune it to pitch. Tension is determined mostly by: (1) composition or density of the metal or plastics; (2) number of nylon or silk threads in the core or by thickness or density of the nylon in the treble strings; (3) the construction of the guitar particularly the tuning mechanism, nut and bridge.

It is interesting to note that way back in 1636 Pere Mersenne published the four basic laws of string acoustics and they are as follows:

- 1) The number of vibrations per second is proportional to the length of the string.
- 2) The number of vibrations per second is proportional to the square root of the tension to which the string is subjected.
- 3) The number of vibrations varies inversely as the thickness of the string.
- 4) The number of vibrations is inversely proportional to the square root of its density.

There are four prime reasons for short string life. Breakage is common where the strings are pressed against the frets, where the right hand contacts the strings in rasgueados, and at the bridge saddle and nut. The first and fourth strings are most susceptible and wear through soonest. When strings break frequently at the bridge saddle and/or nut, the bone or plastic may be too sharp and should be removed and filed to a smoother edge. Occasionally one encounters strings which are simply defective and which break soon after they are placed on the guitar. Most guitarists who don't accompany dancers don't have the problem of breakage at all since they generally don't attack the strings aggressively, but use the "classical" approach.

All guitarists are faced with the fourth and most common threat to string life:

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perspiration. Oils and dirt lodge between the winding and in the core giving the "rubber-band effect." The strings lose brilliance and volume and become difficult to tune. Excessive perspiration (a common problem with younger guitarists), can actually deaden strings in a day. Talcum powder on the hands is used by many guitarists. This facilitates playing but also gets into the strings. Washing strings would be the answer here. A mixture of soap, water and salt is a good cleanser and safe for strings. Washing hands before playing also helps. Some professionals use amonia to clean their wound strings. Others turn the strings around end for end to prolong their life.

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## Guitar Care

HANDLING CRACKS



The wood making up the sound box or body of a flamenco guitar is very thick and constantly under the strain of the pulling strings. Excluding the internal bracing, it may be as thin as 1.5 to 2.0 mm (1/16"-3/32"). I can think of no other musical instrument as delicate.

Cracks to the body, especially the top, are fairly common. Drastic changes in temperature or humidity or a bump can cause cracks. In most cases the trauma of a crack does more damage to the owner than to the guitar. There seems to be a time of healing the guitarist must go through before he can give up his guitar long enough to have it repaired, and this is the biggest problem. The delay in getting the guitar repaired often causes the most damage. This is what to do if your guitar cracks.

1. Loosen the strings. This relieves the tension on the sound box and will reduce the chance of pulling the crack apart wider. For this reason airlines require you to loosen the strings before transportation. In the event a guitar is already cracked or damaged in handling, the damage won't become more extensive due to string tension.

2. Try to stabilize its humidity environment at 50%. Put the guitar in a large plastic trash or dry cleaner's bag to seal out any dry air. A crack exposes fresh wood surfaces to changes in humidity. If exposed to dry air, the crack will widen.



3. Take the guitar to a repairman as soon as possible.

A repaired crack does not noticeably affect the tone or looks of a guitar. Most cracks start as hairline cracks and this is when they should be repaired. Glue can be worked into the crack and then cleated from the inside to become barely noticeable. If the crack has dried out and opened, a repairman will have to add a splint or patch to fill in the gap. An open crack is very costly to repair. It requires matching new wood and refinishing.

To avoid cracks, the best protection is to store your guitar in a sturdy case, away from heat sources at 40%-60% relative humidity.

--Lester DeVoe

## Concert Reviews

SARITA HEREDIA AT THE CENTRO ESPAÑOL

A Review by Ron Spatz

It was 8 PM on a balmy California October Friday when our party arrived at the Centro Español in Torrance (a few miles south of Los Angeles).

The Centro Español is a charming little restaurant, serving continental Spanish dishes and imported wines. The food is very tasty and the Spanish wines are, well, Spanish wines, with all the characteristic earthiness. In my opinion, importing table wines into California is akin to Jerez de la Frontera importing sherry (or maybe the African diamond coast importing zircons).

While waiting for the flamenco show to begin (which was a half-hour later, thereby demonstrating another authentic Spanish characteristic), we were presented with the voice of Edgar Reyes. Señor Reyes is a pleasant appearing Puerto Rican fellow with a very good voice. However, the thump and bong of his overamplified electric guitar reverberating against the acoustic-oriented walls rendered conversation impossible.

Finally, activity stirred in the corner by the stage. Sarita was coming. But no, wait! Much to our delight, we were presented with an unexpected surprise...our friends Benito Palacios and Chinín de Triana were standing there in all their glory. We were then provided with some very exciting dancing and singing, accompanied, of course, by the strains of Benito's Rodríguez guitar cleanly cutting the air. At one point, Benito played his excellent granadinas. My only criticism at this point is that I would have enjoyed a

great deal more if it were played without the cejilla on the third fret. (Editor's comment: What is wrong with a cejilla on the third fret?)

Then the moment came. Sarita made her appearance at the back of the crowded room. From the warm reception she received, it was obvious that she is a favorite with the patrons of the Centro Español. We were soon to discover why. She brings to the stage a manner that leaves you with the feeling that you are sitting in her living room and she is talking and joking with you across the coffee table.

The mood first set was one of lightness and joviality, but this was immediately transformed to one of cante jondo as she leaned over her old and beautiful sounding Ramírez and launched into a form of soleares lavishly laced with the gypsy minor scale. It actually made my spine tingle. The rest of her performance was devoted almost entirely to bawdy songs in Spanish, with a somewhat rumba/tango/zambra accompaniment, and a great deal of seated zapateado and palmas pyrotechnics -- all executed with unerring precision. The show was then closed with a lively cuadro, consisting of Chinín, Benito, and Sarita's troupe of several very talented and pretty dancers. All in all, the entire performance was absolutely dripping with duende. We left very tired, but happy we had made the fifty mile trip through heavy traffic.

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LOS FLAMENCOS HEREDIA

by Yvetta Williams

On October 23, 1981, Centro Español Spanish Restaurant in Torrance, CA, presented to a full house, "Los Flamencos Heredia" in concert, with Sarita and Carmen Heredia and Company. They keep very fine company indeed. Benito Palacios played the guitar, Chinín de Triana sang and Carmen Heredia, Debra López and Kristina Borquez danced.

The program opened with sevillanas, were followed by alegrías by Carmen, Chinín and Benito. The next, verdiales, was danced in Spanish classical style, with castanets by Kristina Borquez, singing by Chinín de Triana and beautifully accompanied by Benito Palacios.

Sarita Heredia entered and did a beautiful show -- she is a "one woman cuadro." She plays a fantastic, strong, melodic and rhythmical guitar -- great tremelos, arpeggios and thumb technique. She sings beautifully with real gypsy feeling and much enthusiasm. She also

dances, that is, does the footwork while seated and playing the guitar, singing and doing jaleos and palmas. Her palmas, pitos, and jaleos are excellent. She is a comic, tells jokes, loves the audience and the audience loves her. She is a full flamenco show, very, very special and inspiring.

She played soleares as a solo on the guitar. It was very strong, beautiful and gypsy in feeling. Well done.

Next were a group of rumbas where she played, sang, danced, joked, did palmas and pitos (yes, at the same time). Her next rumba had fast, comical, tongue-twisting "letras" and lots of activity. She did a rhythm section with many "contra-tiempos" with hands, fingers, tongue, golpes, drum rhythm on the guitar and feet. It was a show-stopper ending in a frenzy with everything going at once. Unbelievable!

Sarita and Carmen did the next number starting with a palmas demonstration of great quality and then into a zambra with Carmen dancing in the Moorish style of dance with finger symbols. Sarita finished her program with a bulerías doing all parts of the cuadro. Knowing how difficult it is to do any one part of flamenco well it is indeed unusual to see one person doing it all well at one time. A special treat of excellent quality. She can be seen and heard every Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday night at Centro Español Spanish Restaurant from 7-12 PM.

Benito Palacios, Chinín de Triana and the dancers returned for the third part of the program with singing, dances and a guitar solo and ended the program with a roaring and spirited bulerías with everyone taking part and even Chinín dancing.

Centro Español Restaurant seats 52 people and both the 8:30 and 10:30 shows were full. The menu at the restaurant is typical Spanish fare, featuring paella and Spanish wine and beer.

The evening was marvelous, lots of fun, with excellent flamenco entertainment, good dinner, and a friendly group of aficionados.

## ARCHIVO

### The Making of an Anthology

by Caballero Bonald

PART XIII -- CÓRDOBA AND MADRID

translated by Brad Blanchard

Córdoba was the final stage of our last trip to Andalucía. As in any other southern

latitude outside of the geographic limits where flamenco was born and became defined, Córdoba has nourished a sense of the cante whose expressive base could only superficially acknowledge the pedigree of the original styles. On expanding outside of its native confines, the cante influenced or adopted many other manifestations of popular Andalusian songs, or it stimulated the creation of diverse regional deviations of the primitive flamenco forms. The extremely ample network of fandangos especially summarizes the uncountable profusion of extra-territorial affluences -- more or less legitimate -- of flamenco. Each province, and even each pueblo, has its own fandango, some more artificially conditioned than others by the propagation of the cante outside of its territorial place of origin. In general lines, each artist amplified or lessened, in accord with his knowledge and understanding, that stream of flamenco doctrine that branched throughout Andalucía.

In addition to its fandangos, closely connected to the sphere of Málaga, Córdoba has also created some peculiar styles of soleares, serranas and alegrías which, instead of being considered innovations, could be considered as superficial local adaptations of the illustrious cantes of Cádiz and Sevilla. We were especially interested in gathering those versions from the oldest and most prestigious cantaor in Córdoba, José Moreno Onofre, who belongs to a family clan that is typically Andalusian. Onofre -- now in his eighties -- has been a shepherd, a butcher, a picador, and a broker. He is like a character who has come from the Córdoba of the beginning of the century. He lives on his memories. His father also enjoyed a certain fame as a singer and picador.

We had met Onofre years ago -- through Ricardo Molina, whose recent death has deprived flamenco of its most serious contemporary investigator -- and we once again made contact with him through the mediation of an enthusiastic interpreter of the cantes of Córdoba, the painter, Antonio Povedano, who brought us together in an old taurine tavern close to La Judería. We thought that it would be very profitable for our "Archivo" to solicit the collaboration of Onofre -- always generous and friendly -- with a view towards conserving those peculiar variants of the local flamenco style. Onofre truly admires the great forgers of the cante of lower Andalucía, but he strives to eradicate the seed of flamenco of his native geography. He has even opted to create new verses for

his soleares and alegrías, with the deliberate -- and in this case childish -- objective of also making his concept independent, boasting of certain cultured tinges intermingled with popular tones. His cantes are, evidently, a direct consequence of the acclimatization through Córdoba of other flamenco forms originating in Alcalá and Cádiz. Onofre's accent is more honest and natural in the fandangos de Lucena, so much within the borders -- non-gypsy -- of the styles of Málaga. Transplanted, historically and geographically, from the atmosphere where flamenco was engendered, the cante of Córdoba is more a popular song than a gypsy-Andalusian derivation, more an external melody than "a fire burning within."

#### Final Note

As we already have pointed out, some recordings of the present "Archivo" had to be made in Madrid, inevitably necessary because of the habitual residence in the capital of various indispensable professional and non-professional cantores. Nevertheless, following the same rigorous plan as we had during our trips to Andalucía, here we also made an effort to prepare each one of the necessary gatherings with an appropriate atmosphere, avoiding beforehand the system of recording the songs in a recording studio. That we were far from flamenco's native zone was not sufficient reason to change our objectives.

The cantaores residing in Madrid who contributed to our "Archivo" -- taking advantage of the most favorable settings and occasions -- were the following: José Menese and Juan el Lebrijano, born, respectively, in Puebla de Cazalla and Lebrija, in the Province of Sevilla -- without a doubt the purest and most complete professional artists appearing in recent years; Rafael Romero, from Andújar, in Jaen a mature gypsy cantaores with an extremely ample repertory and a complete flamenco vocation; Pericón de Cádiz, now a classical interpreter of the styles of his native city; Rodolfo Parrita, non-professional, a young and isolated example of purity in the reconstruction of the cantes primitivos; María Vargas, a well-known cantaores, native of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, a faithful exponent of the cantiñas gaditanas and fandangos onubenses; Fernando Montoro, a great aficionado from Granada, completely at the margin of professional flamenco and a good exponent of some almost lost variations of soleares; Angel de Alora, one of the most noble present representatives of the cantes malagueños.

(Editor's note: This ends our series of translations from the record anthology, "Archivo." We hope that all flamenco aficionados have taken advantage of the opportunity to order this set of records. The reader should keep in mind when reading these articles that these recordings were done about twenty years ago and many of the cantaores are no longer alive. We wish to thank guitarist Brad Blanchard for persevering in his translations of this difficult material for over a year. He has just completed his Master's Degree and will soon be going to Spain to live with his Spanish wife, Paca. We will be losing a friend and translator, but perhaps we will gain a couple of foreign correspondents.)

(continued from page 5)

#### A FEW WORDS ABOUT VICENTE ESCUDERO

by Gabriel Ruiz de Galarreta

Vicente Escudero was a great visionary of the baile flamenco in period of the third decade of this century. There is no doubt that, with his enormous genius and originality -- with regard to Spanish dance -- brought new ideas and images, unknown in those times to those in the flamenco "ambiente." Thanks to him, since his time dances have been interpreted that no bailaores before Vicente had thought of doing. When Escudero first arrived on the scene, bailaores (not bailarines) danced farruca, alegrías, bulerías, tanguillos, the jig (an English dance), garrotín, zambra, rumba, catalana, and stop counting there. Escudero thought up and contributed what we could call "bailes mayores" (principal dances) for men -- la caña, el polo, romeras, soleares, siguiurias, martinetes, deblas (Editor's note: the dancer, Antonio, is generally given credit for first performing the cantes without guitar -- martinetes, etc.), alboreá, tarantos (later corrected and developed by the one and only Carmen Amaya), etc.

Vicente also contributed new ideas to the dress of the bailarín and bailaores; I still remember how he dressed for the "Farruca del Molinero" of the Falla: One leg sheathed in a stocking, the other bare, one arm with the sleeve rolled up and the other bare also. In addition, often on stage he used to roll his fingernails strongly, imitating the sound of tiny "palillos" or castanets as he retreated to one side of the stage, and when he did his "mutis" (exit), he used to tap with his fingers on the top of the piano and

disappear amid thunderous applause. Of course this happened in France, in Paris, where he had his "cuartel general" (head-quarters) and was famous. I was very honored to have been his friend and to accompany him in his dances with my guitar (although not many performances) in the French capital.

I repeat that I admired Vicente Escudero enormously and it makes me proud to have been his friend. But only in that aspect of him ...about Vicente Escudero as a bailaor I have different thoughts, and I am sure that there are and were many others who thought the same. But let's go to "history"...

It was about 1930, more or less, that Vicente Escudero was presented in Madrid, along with his wife and faithful companion, Carmina, an enchanting and tiny bailarina who was Vicente's equal in the dance. The rest of the company is irrelevant. Vicente was then known a little in Spain, since some time before, a movie titled "El Bodegón," if I remember correctly, premiered in Madrid with great pomp and propaganda; it was filmed in France and, as a logical consequence, was a true "españolada" (a cliché of "typical" Spanish themes). I was a child then, but I went to the premiere with my parents and still remember something about it: The female star was María Albaicín, an authentic Spanish gypsy, beautiful, young, and a good dancer, who died prematurely in Paris after making that film. Vicente Escudero appeared as a dancer and had a minor acting role. Fabián de Castro was the guitarist; he was Spanish, advanced in age, with correct manner and bearing, and not a bad guitarist for those days. I believe that Carlitos Montoya also played the guitar in that film. (If I am wrong -- and since I imagine that he must read Jaleo -- I beg him to let us know through the magazine; Carlos and I are old friends from many years ago). I don't remember who the male star was, but I seem to recall the name, Amalio Cuenca (do you remember, Carlitos?). The movie was assessed a hodge-podge in Spain and appeared for only a short time. Nevertheless, due to "El Bodegón," the name of Vicente Escudero was somewhat known in Spain.

In those times, there was a Madrid weekly, called Estampa, that had good reporting, good photos, and a boldness for that time. In that magazine there was a great deal of promotion for the presentation and debut of Vicente Escudero in the Cine Avenida in Madrid. I believe I remember that there were three of four pages in Estampa with different pictures of Escudero that were unusual and suspicious to the true flamencos and, above

all, an exaggerated and preposterous promotion of Vicente and his dances. But it should be recognized that it was Vicente himself who told it all to the reporter: He said that in Spain they didn't know how to dance flamenco, that nobody was his equal in the dance, that he was the best in the world and would demonstrate it, etc. These statements left the Spaniards surprised and stunned, especially the flamencos who couldn't get over their amazement at such boldness; this self-promotion was the topic of conversation of the day in the artistic and taurine peñas that met in the cafeterias of that marvelous period in Madrid.

The night of Vicente Escudero's debut in the Cine Avenida of Madrid arrived. The hall -- converted into a theater for the occasion -- was filled to capacity; not even a needle could be squeezed in. I attended (how could I not?) with my father and Pepe el de la Matrona, Juan Sánchez "Estampío," "El Medico" Don Tomás, and Filemón Merino (the first student of Estampío, who took lessons in the kitchen of my house). Filemón Merino was from Valladolid and a little older than I was. My father recommended him to Juan who gave him lessons in my house, where I accompanied them with my guitar (perhaps someday we will write something about these kitchen lessons -- they are worth the trouble, due to the gracia and interesting details). Later, Filemón became a professional, a good one, making his home in Paris, with Emelina Torres, his wife and a great dancer.

Returning to the Cine Avenida, we also found with us Acha Rovira, a Basque bailaor who was good in farruca and who El de la Matrona called "The English Rooster" -- perhaps because he was blond with light skin; there was also another bailaor whose name I don't remember. Pepe Muñoz "El de la Matrona" and Juan Sánchez "Estampío" were good friends of my father; they came often to our house and, as such, liked me, and taught me "el paso castellano" for the guitar when accompanying the cante and the baile. As much as I could, I used to be with them in the "Cafe Madrid," in "Los Gabrieles," "La Mezquita," or "Casa Pololo."

In the hall were found all of the flamencos who had "parné" (money) that night (almost everybody was doing badly economically), anxious to see that which Vicente had said in the press -- that he was the best! Among those who attended that night, I recall Perico el del Lunar, Luis Yance (a tremendous flamenco guitarist, technically), the bailaor Lineares (very good in "chufra," in the comic dances), the dance teachers Pagán, Roig,

Reyes, many flamenco dancers (some famous), and the fabulous and unforgettable Pastora Imperio, whom I had the pleasure of playing for many years later.

The atmosphere and the expectation was incredible; one heard comments that were not very kind to Vicente Escudero. We were seated near the stage in about the fifth or sixth row. The tension mounted with the passing of the minutes until curtain time.

I had observed that night that Estampío carried in one hand a small brown paper bag containing something that intrigued me. I asked him several times what it was, and he always responded, with a malicious smile, "You will see very soon, child...you will see Grabiellito!" And I grew more curious with each moment.

The moment arrived; the front curtain lifted; a second curtain opened; Vicente Escudero and his people appeared, and that "recital" of baile flamenco took place to the astonishment of all the flamencos and artists that were there. It all seemed absurd to us and, of course, was all out of compás, "esparrabaos" all of the bailes. Naturally, if the star performer was doing badly, imagine how the company would do...

Not many dances had passed when, to our astonishment, Juan Sánchez "Estampío" rose from his seat and, with his unmistakable, refined Andalusian voice, shouted, "Señó Escudero...you don't know how to dance, not in the slightest!"

He took out a pair of flamenco boots that he had in the paper bag that had been a mystery to me until that moment, threw them onto the stage, and continued shouting, "Put them on! They will teach you to dance flamenco!"

It is not necessary to say what an uproar occurred in the hall; most of the audience applauded Juan, but a few people whistled and told him off. The "recital" continued, but in a confused and mistake filled manner; many people left, including us, and said that Vicente Escudero was not worth anything. It happened that Escudero, who I believe came with a contract for at least a month, did not complete two weeks with his show in the Cine Avenida before he returned to his "headquarters" in Paris, completely unsuccessful as a bailaor and speaking badly of the Madrid flamencos, swearing to get revenge against them some day.

A few more years passed. I found myself in Oran with the "Compañía Teatral Alcoriza, accompanying on guitar the cantaores "Pena Hijo" and Florencio Castelló, and the bailaor Filemón Merino. Our company did not fare

well and we were stranded (the Civil War was going on in Spain); I began to play, along with the guitarist "Niño Posadas," for the then very famous cantaor, "Angelillo." Fleeing from our cruel and horrible war, were to be found in that same Moroccan city, Argentinita, Pilar López, Luisita Estesó, the famous bullfighters, "Bienvenidas," and other well-known names that I can't recall. Encarnación López "La Argentinita" (R.I.P.) offered me a contract with her company and then went to Paris to prepare some recitals for Europe. A short time later I received money and my passage; I boarded in Oran and landed in Port Bou from where I took an express to "La Ville Lumiere," "La Ciudad Luz" the capital of France and, I believe, the capital of the whole world at that time ...

I must relate my "entrance" into Paris, since, for me, it was something that I will never be able to forget: I arrived at the station that ended my trip; above the "gare" (the station) was the hotel, to which I entered on a moving staircase -- the first I had seen or stepped on in my young life. From the "reception" they took me to a luxurious and stupendous room that Argentinita had reserved for me; I dove into an elegant and plush bed and fell asleep immediately, extremely tired from the long journey.

The telephone woke me, and I thought I had just fallen asleep; in reality, a number of hours had passed and I saw by my watch that it was ten o'clock in the morning. I was told that my breakfast was being brought up, since "Madame" Argentinita was expecting me at eleven o'clock for rehearsal. A few moments later, an impressive maid in a spectacular uniform arrived, bringing me a fabulous breakfast -- appropriate for a first class hotel in those times. It all seemed like a fantastic dream to me. I ate the abundant and exquisite breakfast, bathed, dressed, and called the hotel servant, who came immediately, very courteously, and took me to a new job and world...

We were in a full Parisienne spring, fantastic in its beauty. We walked on the magnificent rugs of those elegant hallways of the hotel; the scent of the acacias -- I believe these trees are found on all the streets of Paris -- came in through the open windows throughout the building, an odor that I have never again smelled anywhere; at the same time, I heard, closer and closer as we walked, the soft and dream-like notes of a piano on which somebody was skillfully playing Albéniz' "Sevilla," and somebody else was playing palillos (castanets) wonder-

fully, accompanying the famous music of the immortal Spanish writer, Isaac Albéniz. In those moments I lived and felt something that is not easy to explain...something sublime for me! It was also something that one can never forget...Paris, springtime..."Sevilla" of Albéniz...Argentinita waiting for me, playing for palillos. And all of that in a luxurious hotel and in a world that had been unknown to me up until that moment. And that is how I "entered" Paris!

## JANUARY MEETING

Jaleistas has reached another crisis point in it's existence: juerga sites are becoming scarcer and scarcer, local member participation has reached a low ebb, the same slate of officers has been serving for the last three years and we have been without a juerga coordinator for over a year. If Jaleistas is to continue as an association the current situation must be remedied.

No juerga has been scheduled in January and we hope that all those interested in preserving the ideals and goals of our organization will join us at Jaleo headquarters for our annual meeting and election.

DATE: January 16

TIME: 7:00pm

PLACE: 1628 fern

PHONE: 234-7897

BRING: a folding chair

Directions: Take Hwy 94 east off I5; take 28th Street exit and turn right; right again at Broadway, left on 30th; 30th will become Fern. Jaleo headquarters is on your left between Cedar and Date behind a cream-colored, two-story house with turquoise trim.

## 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, PO 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 PO Box and let us know. We need to have an update at least every two months. OUR APOLOGIES to Theater Flamenco for not including their announcement about December Flamenco Dance Workshop. We hope that it was a success. Please continue to inform us of your activities by the 10th of the month previous to publication, i.e., Jan 10 for Feb issue.

## updates

CENTRO ESPAÑOL RESTAURANT presents "Los Flamencos Heredia" on Fri & Sat nights at 8:30 & 10:30pm. (See reviews in this issue.) The club is available on Sundays for use as a performance hall. Located at 1517 W. Carson St., Torrance, CA 90501, 213/328-2366.

## concerts

PETER BAIME IN CONCERT Jan 14, 8:00pm at the Oregon Institute of Technology in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Private classes will be given on Jan 15. For infor. contact the institute.

JUAN SERRANO IN CONCERT: Jan 17 at 2:30, Civic Arts Theater, Walnut Creek, CA; Jan 23, 8:00, at the Sunset Cultural Center in Carmel, CA; Jan 29, 9:00 at the Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society, in El Granada, CA; Feb 28 at 2:00 at Warner's Theater in Fresno, CA. JOSE MOLINA BAILES ESPAÑOLES will appear at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, CA Sun, Mar 14, 1982, at 2:30 & 7:30pm. For info call 213/577-5511.

## classified

FOR SALE: 1978 conde hermanos flamenco guitar \$2,000 or best offer, Sobrinos de Estesos, formerly owned by Mariano Cordoba, flamenco machine heads, plush-lined hardshelled case Robert Arnold 205/872-1493 evenings.

FOR SALE: 1973 Gerundino Fernandez flamenco guitar, previously owned by Carlos Lomas (see cover Aug '79 Jaleo), incredible projection, \$1,700, Tomas Mellado, 4337-15th Ave. N.E. #503, Seattle, WA 98105.

WANTED: Flamenco dancers, singers, guitarists and aficionados who are interested in enjoying themselves by taking part in juergas in the Los Angeles area. Call Yvetta Williams at 213/833-0567.

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: Rosa Montoya, 267 Teresita Blvd., S.F., CA 94127.

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 complete line of guitar supplies (strings 1/2 price). The Blue Guitar, see ad for location.

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.

GUITARISTS AND GUITAR STUDENTS WELCOME to accompany dance classes, San Diego area. Call Juana 442-5362 before 8:00am.

BACK ISSUES OF JALEO AVAILABLE: Vol. I no. 1 to 6 \$1.00 each. All other \$2.00 each. Add \$1.00 per copy for overseas orders.

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