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GUILLERMO ~~RUIZ~~ RIOS



JALEO



newsletter of the flamenco association of san diego

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

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A VISIT WITH LUIS MARAVILLA

SPECIAL REPORT TO JALEO

Shortly after checking into a pensión called "La Isla" on the Calle del Prado, I felt it was time to go for a walk. As I turned the corner to my right I noticed a sign with a silhouette design of a guitar, bearing the name Luis Maravilla. I remembered visiting this shop in 1971, but was surprised to find out that my pensión was right around the corner and that the shop was still in business. As I would find out later, the store actually has been there for thirty years. Luis Maravilla started it in 1954 as a business for his father, a cantaor from Sevilla named "El Niño de las Marianas". It was only after the death of his father that Luis Maravilla would take over the store and teach guitar there.

Since the store was closed when I first rediscovered it, I had to return another time to arrange an interview with Luis. For those not familiar with this artist, Luis was a fairly prominent dance accompanist and guitar soloist in the thirties, forties, and fifties. He also was especially good at cante accompaniment during his peak years for the likes of Bernardo de los Lobitos, Pepe Valencia, Angelillo, Roque Montoya "Jarrito", and many others. At any rate, Luis agreed to do an interview for Jaleo during the latter part of December 1984, and I showed up at his shop with my tape recorder.

The interview started out with normal biographical type questions:



AUTHOR GUILLERMO SALAZAR WITH LUIS MARAVILLA

Jaleo: When and where were you born?

Luis Maravilla: I was born in 1914 in Sevilla.

J: How was it that you became a flamenco guitarist? Were there guitarists in your family?

L: Guitarists, no! But my father was a flamenco singer. He was, at that time, a very well known cantaor, El Niño de las Marianas, Luis López Benítez; and he signed a contract to come to Madrid to the "Teatro Maravilla", to a play that was called "La Española Que Fue Más Que Reina". In this theatrical work there was a "fiesta flamenca" put on for Eugenia de Montijo and all those people.

J: Eugenia de Montijo?

L: Eugenia de Montijo, the empress who was from France. The comedy was about the "duquesa" who was empress and married



EXTERIOR OF LUIS MARAVILLA'S SHOP

Napoleon III in France. Then, in this work, there were scenes of a typical "fiesta flamenca" in Granada, and in this "fiesta" my father sang. He came under contract from Sevilla to sing and I came with him; I was a little boy and there I began to play the guitar. The guitarist who accompanied my father said to me, "¿Te gusta la guitarra?", because I had "mucha ilusión" to hear him play. Then he said, "¿Quieres que te enseñe?". I said "bueno". Then he said "I'm going to teach you without your father knowing." Then I would go to the theater and he would teach me there in the "camerino" (dressing room). Then when I had some relative knowledge he said to my father, "Come in, I want to show you what your son is doing." My father was very surprised; he wasn't expecting it at all. Immediately after that he bought me my first guitar and that's how I got started.

J: And then you began playing for singing and dancing shortly after that?

L: No, I began playing first because I was a child with short pants. Then I had my debut in the "Teatro Pavón" here in Madrid the very same day they gave the "La Llave del Oro del Cante" to Manuel Vallejo. Manuel Torre gave it to him. (Luis then pulled out a photograph of the event.) This was the first time I played in public in a theater. On that occasion I accompanied two singers, one named Roldán and the other Emilio "El Faro". But of course I was only a child, and my father understood that in order to accompany older singers...well, it wasn't aesthetic. So we found a young cantaor, Enriquito Ruiz, who was my age, and my father gave him the name "Vallejito" in honor of Manuel Vallejo who had won "La Llave". He sang and I accompanied as a pair of "niños infantiles" and this lasted a little over a year.

J: Who are some of the people in this picture?

L: (pointing) Manuel Torre is this one, he's giving the "Llave del Cante" to Manuel Vallejo. Here I am with short pants, and on that occasion I accompanied this man (pointing to them) who was Emilio "El Faro" and this one who was Roldán. And all these others were cantaores of that time: La Trianita, Niña Rubia, Niño de Valdepeñas, Manuel Torre, and my father who also sang there. This one is Victor Rojas, who was a guitarist and the brother of Pastora Imperio. This was Antonio Rico, who was "el presentador"; José Cepero, another famous cantaor who I worked with a lot also. This is the guitarist Pepe de Badajoz, this is another guitarist Manuel Martel; this is Manuel Torre's son; and another guitarist named Enrique Mariscal.

J: What was the date of this event?

L: October 6, 1926. At that time my name wasn't Luis Maravilla. I was known as "Mariana, Hijo", because my father was "El Niño de Las Marianas"; so I was "Luisito López, Marianas Hijo". And later, through other circumstances, I called myself "Maravilla".

J: Did you then begin to accompany dancers professionally?

L: No. At that time there were "espectáculos" which were called "Opera Flamenca". These were mainly for "cante"; of course there was baile, but the important thing was the "cante" and the guitar. Some of the guitarists who were professionals at the time were Román García, Marcelo Molina, Manuel Serrapí "El Niño Ricardo", Pepe de Badajoz...let me say, even though I was a little younger than them, I belong to the same generation of guitarists. Luis stepped over near the back of the shop and brought out three scrapbooks full of memorabilia from his long career. There were programs of concerts, newspaper clippings, and many photographs.

L: These are full of the outstanding events of my career. In 1927 in Sevilla at the hotel Alfonso XIII, "La Niña de los Peines" sang accompanied on the guitar by Javier Molina. At the same performance sang "El Niño de las Marianas" accompanied by his son Luisito López "who is a virtuoso in spite of his young age" (quote from a news clipping). The King and queen of Spain were present, along with "La Niña de los Peines" and Javier Molina so you can see it was a very important event. Also it was the inauguration of that hotel.

L: Then in 1928 I won the "Copa de Guitarristas" in the "Teatro La Zarzuela" in Madrid, and José Cepero won the prize for cantaores. This was in September of 1928. And it was here that I began to call myself "Maravilla"; because the jury which had as one of its members Primo de Rivera, who was president of the government during that dictatorship...he was from Jerez and was "muy aficionado al flamenco" and had helped organize these festivals; the "Copa" of cante was called "La Copa Chacón", and of the guitar "La Copa Montoya". Then Primo De Rivera of the jury said "mi voto va para ese niño, que es una maravilla". And from then on I used the name Luis Maravilla, so I used the name "Marianas, hijo" for two years, in 1926 and 1927. Primo de Rivera didn't give me the name directly, but I used the name after that.

As a result of this prize, I was able to make my first recordings. The company "La Voz de su Amo" contracted José Cepero and myself to record a series of records of which now they've made reproductions after fifty years. They were made in 1929, and you can see how I used to play when I was 14 years old. I was Cepero's guitarist for some time, through 1930 and '31. During this time other stars were Manuel Vallejo and his accompanist "El Niño Pérez", Juanito Varela, Manuel Badajoz who played for Paco Masaco (?), Isabelita de Jerez, a famous cantaora from that epoch also, El Niño Caravaca and Ramón Montoya.

J: Ramón Montoya accompanied cante at these performances, didn't he?

L: Yes, always; at that time he didn't do anything but accompany.

Luis and I went through his books for about an hour after this discussing all the important phases of his career: his inactivity during the civil war, his study of classical guitar with Miguel Llobet, his tours of North and South America, his broadcasts on the radio in New York, and his time with the Pilar López dance company from the mid-forties to the mid-fifties. He even toured with a symphony doing the

performance of a guitar concerto in one half of the concert and flamenco accompaniment in the other half. I regret to report that my tape recorder did not capture all the details. Its batteries had enough energy to turn the tape, but not enough to record the rest of the interview.

Below is a list of some of Luis Maravilla's LP recordings. I do remember him saying that "Tañidos de Guitarras" was only the second LP recording of flamenco guitar solos; the first being Ramón Montoya's. Both records were recorded originally in France.

Discography:

"Alegrijas y Penas De Andalucía," Westminster WL 5135, w. Pepe Valencia (1951)

"Tañidos de Guitarras," Westminster WL 5194 (1952)

"Cantaiores Famosos," Pathe STX 20001, 20002, 20003 (3 record anthology)

"Pilar López," Capitol Classics PL8020

"Flamenco Español," Capitol TI0033

"Flamenco Puro," La Voz de su Amo LCLP 158 Odeon-EMI (1960)

"Flamenco," Command-ABC RS 931 SD

"Luis Maravilla, Lección De Guitarra Flamenca," Hispavox HHS 10-297 (instructional record with tablature)

"Una Guitarra, Luis Maravilla, Ritmos De España Y América," Clave 18-1366 (ES) (1975)

--Guillermo Salazar

LETTERS

LOOKING FOR ACTION

Dear Jaleo,

Thank you for sending the back issues. The Ramón de los Reyes Company puts on a big, colorful show two or three times a year, otherwise there is no flamenco life in Boston. Not a single flamenco club! (Although 'Cantaiores' in Cambridge is warming to the idea of a flamenco night every so often.)

I envy you and your Jaleistas and their juergas and hope to enjoy el arte in a vicarious manner through all the wonderful articles, reports, interviews, photos, bios, etc. from these past issues. Again, muchas gracias.

Larry Caporal
Brookline, Mass

[Editor: Perhaps there are some other people in Massachusetts who would like to see more flamenco or would like to get together for a juerga. That's how Jaleistas started--people getting together to share. Write Jaleo if you are interested--especially if you are willing to be listed as a contact person in your area in the Directory.]

FLAMENCO SUPPLIES

Ann Fitzgerald of Sevilla, writes:

I have recently put together a MAIL ORDER CATALOGUE for flamenco supplies and would appreciate it if you could include it under your mail order section. I have lived in Sevilla for the past 11 years and have been a professional professional and feria dress-maker most of this time. Below please find some of the items I have listed in the catalogue: Cassettes, Castanets, Combs, Fabrics, Fans, Gift Items, Hats, Jewelry, Patterns, Picos (small shawls), Mantones (lge shawls), Dress & Slip Trims, Lace Mantillas (shawls for head combs).

If one of your readers would like a copy of it, they could send \$3.00 (money order please) to Ann C. Fitzgerald, Cruces 3, 1A, Sevilla, España 41004.

Thanks for everything,
Ann Fitzgerald
Sevilla, Spain

FLAMENCO SOCIETY SPONSORS MONTROYA CONCERT

Dear Jaleo,

On March 15, 1984 The Flamenco Society of Northern California presented Carlos Montoya at Flint Center to a capacity crowd. The hall at De Anza College, Cupertino, California holds approximately 2500 people. The 81 year old virtuoso inspired five standing ovations during this historic concert. The energy of the Spanish gypsy maestro is limitless as demonstrated by his exciting playing and his schedule of 100 concerts a year.

The Flamenco Society intends to produce more concerts of this calibre in the future. The Society's activities also include jam sessions the last Monday of every month at Fargo's in the Old Mill Shopping Center of Mountain View. Anita Sheer and Luis Angel who run the juergas, also sponsor concerts throughout the country. In April, the Society celebrated its third anniversary. Dancers, singers and guitarists and aficionados came to celebrate. For information on classes, concerts or juergas please contact:

Flamenco Society
P.O. Box 41006
San Jose, CA 95160

JALEO CAUSES BURNING OF MIDNIGHT OIL

Dear Jaleo,

I gives me great pleasure to enclose my check for my first years subscription. I hope we will have a very, very long association.

Thank you for putting my letter in Jaleo. To be published in my first issue was worth more than the cost of the subscription. It took me until 1:00a.m. to read cover to cover. I could not put it down.

Looking forward to the next issue.

Wally Jordan
Birmingham, MI

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS IN A BEGINNING GUITAR PLAYER'S LIFE

Dear Jaleo,

Being stuck in an out-of-the-way town in Arizona, and having little or poor instruction, I've been a "beginning" flamenco guitarist for over ten years. When I got my first guitar pegs, someone told me to use violin peg dope. My pegs had a tendency to slip anyway, and when I put peg dope on them they would not hold at all. Since then, I've talked with experienced guitarists who cuss peg dope so much that their comments are unprintable in a magazine of this caliber. So use chalk! Not gymnastic chalk, but plain white chalk used on a blackboard. With several applications your pegs should hold.

I remember playing in front of an audience for the second time in my life. I wanted to make a good impression so I had brand-new strings. Of course new strings stretch and go out of tune--even if allowed to sit overnight. One technique is to pull new strings away from the body of the guitar to tighten them. The best thing is to play them and to "break them in". The left hand seems to slide over and fret used strings easier than new ones. If I had known these things I wouldn't have gotten up in front of an audience and tuned all night.

Nothing like having the spotlight on you, the dancers looking at you with apprehension, and.....Well, I can laugh about it now and hope to save some other poor beginning guitarist by sharing my experiences.

Sadhana
Chiba-Ken, Japan

OLD NEWS FROM AUCKLAND

Dear Jaleo,

I'm writing a few lines about local flamenco activities in New Zealand as you may like to include them in a future edition. Auckland's flamenco scene has been good in 1984--Spanish flamenco singer Leo Azzopardi opened new premises in Auckland City (Costa Brava Restaurant) and imported husband and wife team Antonio Utreras (guitar) and La Tani (a gypsy dancer from Granada) to entertain. Along with myself under the stage name, Juanita Flores, they present an exciting flamenco show in the restaurant each evening. I teach in Auckland and have my own performing group "Spanish Fiesta" Dancers. We presented concert programmes throughout 1984 performing Spanish Regional, Classical and Flamenco styles.

There are small groups of flamenco enthusiasts in other parts of New Zealand. As usual, it's a fairly small network, with everybody trying to get together whenever possible. Yes, we have seen "Blood Wedding" and "Carmen" and the more recent Canadian film "Flamenco at 5:15", so we don't feel too far from the rest of the world.

All the best,
Jane Luscombe

[Editor: Our apologies to Jane. This letter was inadvertently omitted from an earlier issue of Jaleo. We are always interested in flamenco activities around the world.]



'GYPSY GENUIS' HISTORIC - EXCLUSIVE VIDEO RELEASE BY MANUEL AGUJETAS DE JEREZ (CANTAOR)

For the first time in flamenco history the legendary Manuel Agujetas de Jerez performs on video cassette. The world famous maestro of the Jerez dynasty of gypsy flamenco singing gives an historic performance that will remain forever. Beautiful cantes por Soleá, Fandango Grande, Siguiriyas, Malagueñas, Romeras, Taranto, Tientos, Bulerías. Length-90 minutes in color. This video features the special collaboration and original guitar accompaniments of recording and concert artist RODRIGO. Don't miss out on this first world release as it is a collectors item. No studio video of this kind has ever been made. Order Beta or VHS. Only \$49.00. Send cash, check or money order to Alejandrina Hollman. 148 Taft Ave., #11, El Cajon, CA 92020. The performance took place on August 5, 1985. An educational "must" for guitarists and singers. Allow 3 to 4 weeks for delivery.

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GUITAR MAKER FINE-TUNES HIS CRAFT IN GARAGE-SHOP

[from: San Jose Mercury News, August 21, 1985]

by Pamela Kramer

With his head bent slightly, Lester DeVoe trained his eyes intently on the progress of his left fingers along the guitar's neck. His right hand traipsed across nylon strings, caressing, cajoling, commanding rich flamenco tones from the instrument's body.

"I don't do my own guitars much justice," DeVoe said quickly in the silence following a false note.

Returning the guitar to its case in his Evergreen workshop, he wore a smile holding the shyness of the brief performance and the confident pride in his creation.

Heralded by Jaleo, a San Diego-based flamenco publication, as a master guitar craftsman whose instruments "are now among the most sought after," DeVoe, 33, says he got his start nearly 11 years ago when he couldn't find a guitar that satisfied him.

Three of the world's most renowned flamenco and classical performers use his guitars.

"I had the intent of being a professional (performer)," he said, rubbing down a nearly finished instrument in his workshop-garage.

DeVoe had been studying classical guitar, he said, when he heard a flamenco performance by Mariano Córdoba of Sunnyvale.

"I thought the music sounded neat -- I liked the rhythm, the feeling of it," he said of the emotional style that evolved in southern Spain.

While studying under Córdoba, he said, he became fascinated with a 1924 guitar made by Santos Hernández -- "probably the most famous guitar maker of all time" -- that his teacher would not let him touch.

"One time the phone rang, he went to answer it, and I plucked the strings," DeVoe recalled. "He didn't say anything, so I picked it up and started playing it."

"I never know how to describe it," he said, pausing. "You think something you're doing is right, and all of a sudden you realize there's a whole world out there you never knew existed."

"It's like if you're a runner and you've only worn heavy shoes, you didn't know about light-weight shoes, and then you find them."

No longer satisfied with his factory-made Japanese guitar, DeVoe set out in search of a sound and feeling comparable to that of the Hernández instrument.

"I couldn't find one," he said. So he determined to create it himself.

The first attempt, using a kit purchased in San Francisco, never was completed. "I realized, this is just plywood," DeVoe said.

He turned to guitar-maker Gabriel Souza in Mission San Jose and initially met with little more success. Souza, now deceased, already was ill and would neither build DeVoe a guitar nor take him on as an apprentice. "I'd ask him questions, and he'd say, 'That's a secret.'"

But Souza sold DeVoe some cypress and spruce, recommended a book and asked him to help repair his collection of rare instruments for shows. That repair work, DeVoe said, taught him most of what he does now.

Using a mirror similar to a dentist's tool, he poked around the insides of the instruments to see how they were made and to find out what techniques resulted in different sounds -- largely determined by the thickness and material of the top and its bracing to the sides -- he liked.

"I haven't really departed much from tradition," he said, poking the mirror around inside one of his guitars.

DeVoe sold his second guitar to another of his teacher's students for \$400. After a few music festival exhibitions, he began to receive custom orders.

"The first couple of guitars I made, I was still making them for myself," he said. "Then I thought, this would be a nice profession."

After nearly a decade, that choice finally began to pay off. DeVoe now builds about 10 or 12 flamenco and classical

guitars a year. The flamencos sell for \$2,350 and the classicals for either \$2,600 or \$2,800.

About 80-90 percent of his guitars are custom-built from individual orders, fitting each instrument to the owner's hand size and musical taste. The rest go to stores in the Bay Area and in New York.

Sabicas, a New York-based Spanish gypsy described by the Village Voice as "the supreme flamenco virtuoso of his time" with 53 albums to his credit, used a DeVoe guitar exclusively until last summer, when it was damaged. DeVoe has finished repairing the guitar and is waiting for the next Sabicas tour in the area to fine-tune it to the performer's tastes.

Sabicas discovered the guitar after DeVoe sent it to the American Institute of the Guitar in New York. "He went in one day, played the guitar, and came in again and played it for four hours," DeVoe said.

DeVoe guitars also are used by flamenco artist Juan Serrano and by Pepe Romero, who with his father and two brothers form the most famous classical guitar quartet in the world.

"I made some guitars for Paco de Lucía, probably the most famous young player around -- he can play so fast, it's unbelievable, and he plays clean."

"But the Conde Brothers had given him one when he was young, and he only uses theirs," DeVoe said wistfully of the brothers he described as the biggest flamenco-guitar makers in the world.

DeVoe has been to Europe twice in search of wood, and some \$10,000 worth fills his garage with a rich, comfortable smell.

Guitars in all stages of development are stacked on shelves and hang along the walls of the workshop -- from rough-hewn logs to boards to instruments receiving their final polish.

"You're used to seeing guitars hanging in a store for \$100, or \$89," DeVoe said. "Just the wood in these costs a couple hundred dollars."

Spanish cedar is used in the necks of DeVoe's guitars, with durable ebony laid over it for the finger, or fret, board. Ebony also is used for the tuning pegs on the flamenco guitars, while the classical models have metal tuners called machines.

DeVoe's flamenco guitars feature Spanish cypress on their backs and sides to give the instruments a "bright, immediate, penetrating" sound in which "trebles ring out and the basses growl."

The sides and backs of his classical guitars are made of rosewood, usually Brazilian, bringing a "mellower, more sustained ... pure, full" tone to the music.

The tops of both models use German spruce, which DeVoe said always has been the first choice among builders for sound transmission because strength and qualities of clarity and balance. Veneer on the head, where the pegs are, and the entire bridge, where the other ends of the strings are tied, also are made of the rich rosewood. Inlaid strips of ivory highlight the bridge and protect it from the strings.

Tools of his trade fill his workshop -- protective goggles and a headset for operating the equipment that cuts the shapes, evens the edges and assures uniform thickness in the pieces; a large trough to boil the wood in; a heated rod used to form the sides and a large wooden mold to set the sides in.

DeVoe used to craft his own inlaid wood rosettes, the mosaics surrounding the sound hole. But the meticulous process of lining up more than 1,000 pieces of multicolored wood each just one-fortieth of an inch square to form the pattern became cumbersome, he said, and "nobody seemed to care."

He now sends his pattern of 22 roses to a German factory that produces the finished woodwork.

One of the final touches to a DeVoe guitar is polishing with material far finer than sandpaper -- the same material used to smooth the windshields of aircrafts. DeVoe does not use wax, he said, because it can deaden the sound.

The finished product is feather light.

"I have much more success making them than playing them," DeVoe said. Ever since he started dating his wife, Kathy -- complete with serenades -- he has changed the priorities in his life so that "If I play an hour a week, I'm doing well."

With running three days a week, swimming three days a week and driving a county bus in the afternoons on weekdays, he

said, he no longer had enough time to spend with his family and to practice diligently.

While year-old daughter Elaine still is too young, 3-year-old Emily helps in the workshop, glueing pieces together.

Just as the great flamenco guitarists pour themselves into the performance of their emotional music, "I put a lot of emotion in it," DeVoe said.

"But I'm doing it now for a living, too."



MARIA BENITEZ:

FLAMENCO AS A WAY OF LIFE

[from: New Mexico, August 1985; sent by George Ryss]

by Nicole Plett

If New Mexico has a Hispanic soul, Spanish dancer María Benítez is surely custodian of some part of it. And if New Mexico's soul belongs to the Native American, this dark-eyed dancer probably inherited it anyway.

Of Native American and Puerto Rican descent, María Benítez has lived and danced in New Mexico since the age of 10. Leading lady of the colorful arts of distant Spain, she recaptures, in movement, the dramatic meeting of the Old World and the New. Clad in vivid traditional dress, with regal carriage of head and torso, undulating arms and hips contrasted with staccato footbeats, her dance speaks to the very essence of this land of stark natural contrasts.

Since 1972, María Benítez's *Estampa Flamenca* has thrilled Santa Fe audiences and summer visitors with the intimate ensemble performance that is flamenco's hallmark. Beginning with summer shows in Tesuque, the company moved to another club outside Santa Fe for several years, then came downtown four years ago to hearty popular acclaim. This year, María Benítez's *Estampa Flamenca* performs nightly, except Tuesday, at the Santa Fe Sheraton Inn. Dancers Monolo de Córdoba, Rosa Mercedes, and Susana Aranda accompany Benítez to the mournful song of gran cantador Luis Vargas and gypsy guitarists Guillermo Ríos and Rafael Rosas.

Despite the drama of her performance presence, the offstage Benítez is a warm, unassuming woman who expresses herself with refreshing directness. Only her dark, expressive eyes and striking profile betray the presence of the fiery performer within.

"Flamenco isn't an entertainment where you just sit there and are entertained," she warns warmly. "You do have to put out some energy as an audience. And this is why so many people leave our shows exhausted. Because they feel that tension, and they feel excitement, and they involve themselves emotionally."

"Spanish dance is much more than entertainment -- it's an abstract and provocative art form. I always say, if you want to be entertained, go to a poodle show and watch the dogs jump through hoops!"

Nurtured over the years in the caves of southern Spain, flamenco was not so much an art as a way of life. There, fiercely independent gypsy settlers pursued a life unfettered by the quest for material wealth, rarely willing to exchange their precious independence for a weekly paycheck.

At once a personal and collective experience, flamenco, in its pure form, was the total expression of gypsy culture. Its development can be traced to the 16th century when, backed by the power of the Spanish Inquisition, the Kingdom of Castile sought to rid Spain of its ethnic minorities. Gypsy, Muslim, and Jew were persecuted during this period, and drew together as a result. The stirring, universal appeal of flamenco is attributed to its multicultural heritage of Muslim, Jewish, Indo-Pakistani, and Byzantine arts.

In its native habitat, flamenco dance was a vehicle for feeling. Spurred by music and song, the dancer's performance represented a baring of the soul and an emotional release. Duende, a trance-like emotional plateau, was its ultimate

expression. American Spanish dancer, La Meri, once described the flamenco's allure thus: "Nothing excites us so much as that which we can never quite understand or that which we may love but never possess." Just as American jazz grew out of the spontaneous expression of oppressed blacks, today's concert flamenco is an outgrowth of the gypsy's anguish.

An acclaimed modern interpreter of flamenco, Benítez embodies both passion and virtuoso technique. Her dance is one of broad physical expression, and it is also an art of nuance. A spiraling arm, the tilt of the pelvis, a shoulder shrug, and an arched eyebrow send electrifying messages to her audience. A staccato kick to the hem of her gown can send reverberations across a room.

Hailed in performances at home and abroad, Benítez attracted new critical acclaim with her 1984 New York season. Her performances include New York's Delacorte Dance Festival, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Kennedy Center, and the prestigious American Dance Festival. Featured on the cover of *Dancemagazine* last year, Benítez has appeared on television in the Perry Como Christmas Special and as the subject of the PBS television film, *Estampa Flamenca*.

"María Benítez has a striking force as a flamenco dancer," says José Greco, America's foremost Spanish dancer, who met and partnered with her for the first time last year. "In her performance she retains a style and stamina that is quite unique in a woman. Since the great Carmen Amaya, the only woman who I've found so surprisingly impressive is María Benítez."

Benítez says the rhythm, music, song, and dance that are daily components of traditional Native American life were a definitive influence on her career in Spanish dance.


Benítez was born in Cass Lake Indian Hospital, Minnesota. Her mother, Geraldine Harvey, is a 30-year veteran of service to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Herself the offspring of an Oneida mother and Chippewa father, Harvey and her husband divorced early. With her daughter, Harvey began her career with teaching jobs among the Cheyenne, Blackfoot, Sioux, and Apache, in reservations in Montana, Iowa, South Dakota, and, finally, New Mexico.

"My mother and I were always involved with the ceremonials and the dances, either as participants or as spectators," says Benítez. "I think the singing and the rhythms of American Indian dance have many similarities in flamenco. Both are part of their way of life -- something that children learn in the home. They are also a very personal expression of themselves, and a celebration of life."

"One of the main differences is that many of the Indian dances have a religious connotation, whereas the Spanish dances do not," she explains. "In both, however, you lose awareness of the physicality of the dance and transcend to another plane, so to speak."

At the age of 10, Benítez's life became more settled when her mother began teaching at Taos Pueblo, where she stayed until retirement. Here, Benítez began her first weekly ballet lessons.

"Back in Taos, I was determined to become a ballet dancer. So I used to get up at three o'clock in the morning and steal



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my mother's keys to the gym. Then I'd do a complete ballet barre. Well, that lasted about two nights -- until I decided there must be a better way!

"I'm afraid the Taos Indians were the first ones to see my dancing," she continues. "I made my debut as the Sugar Plum Fairy in the Christmas program. And my debut in Spanish dance was there also, on the plaza, during the fiestas. At 15, I did the malagueña of Lecuona and a farruca in a homemade dance outfit."

Her debut may have been tentative, but Benítez's passion for Spanish dance began with her first lesson and has never wavered. At 19, with her mother's support, she left for Spain, where she studied and performed for five years. She entered her first company there and toured as soloist and principal dancer with the María Rosa and Paquita Rico companies. In 1968, she returned to Taos with her Spanish husband Cecilio Benítez, to await the birth of their son, Paco.

For Benítez, the return to New Mexico was a return to her roots. "We've traveled all over, we've toured and toured, and there are so many beautiful areas of this country, but there's something about New Mexico country -- I think it's the ruggedness -- that I feel very close to," she explains. "And the strength, the power of the country. Also the mystery of this area, there's tremendous mystery here. And these are all things which are part of Spanish dance."

Once threatened with extinction, Spanish dance is currently enjoying a lively international revival, attributed, in part, to the liberalization of Spain following the death of dictator Francisco Franco. Also credited is Spanish dancer and choreographer Antonio Gades, creator of the explosive, popular 1983 film *Carmen*, a wordless interpretation of Bizet's tragic opera. Both Gades's company and that of Seville's legendary Mario Maya presented extraordinarily successful New York seasons this year.

"Gades's movies are reaching a huge audience, which is what we desperately need," says Benítez. "No matter what the purists and aficionados say, I don't think flamenco's gone to the dogs or become too commercialized. No. These people are adding a new element into flamenco and I think it's done nothing but good."

With a long-standing interest in both preservation and innovation in Spanish dance, Benítez performs works by some of Spain's leading artists. "Te Lo Digo Bailando," choreographed by Ciro, has been popular in company repertory, as well as dances commissioned from Mario Maya, Hector Zaraspe, and Alberto Lorca.

As a culmination of their interest, Benítez and her husband are now putting the final touches to the establishment of the Santa Fe-based Institute for Spanish Arts. Cecilio Benítez, co-artistic and technical director of Estampa Flamenca, says he expects the institute to become a magnet for an international constituency of dancers, musicians, choreographers, and theatrical technicians.

Three years in planning, the institute makes its debut in September with a sizzling Spanish arts festival featuring flamenco guitarist Sabicas, and performances by La Familia Peña. Beginning with seasonal workshop residencies by leading Spanish performers, the institute will eventually sponsor tours by the Estampa Flamenca and other artists and a school outreach program aimed at its audience of the 21st

century. The realization of this ambitious project is evidence of the Benítez's enduring relationship with their adopted home state.

"Many of the artists I bring from New York are surprised at the tremendous attention that we get here during the show," remarks Benítez with amusement. "And I have to keep reminding them that it wasn't always like this. It just didn't happen overnight."

"It has been an extremely loyal audience and I feel very grateful for that. But it also took a long time. I remember at El Nido, we'd do a whole show for Winnie Beasley [a well-known Tesuque resident] and four Tesuque firemen. But it was an invaluable training ground. A golden opportunity."

When asked if anything would ever cause her to leave New Mexico, Benítez replies with an emphatic, "No. Some people have said, 'But, María, you can't do Santa Fe forever.' Well, why not? What's wrong with performing two months in Santa Fe forever? We do New York, we travel abroad. But what is wrong with performing here two glorious months of the year? With being in my own home, not breaking my back on the road? With performing to a wonderful audience? Who could ask for more? You've got to count your blessings!"

CAMARON DE LA ISLA IN 1985

The following reviews of a couple of this year's festivals are of particular interest because of the constant reports of the demise of Camarón de la Isla, his failing health or loss of voice. It is true that he fails to show up for many concerts and usually sings briefly, obviously anxious to make his appearance as short as possible. Yet Camarón remains the number one draw in the festivals and his lack of dependability is generally accepted as part of his mystique. Here are two reviews of more successful appearances.

CAMARON DRIVES THEM CRAZY

[from: *El País*, May 19, 1985; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Paco Sevilla]

by A. Alvarez Caballero

Camarón was there. This time he was there, without suspense nor nervousness brought on by uncertainty. Hardly had Manolo Fernández finished his fiery and fervent words of presentation, when the Palacio de los Deportes [Madrid] was in a full fiesta. The gypsies had turned out en masse and there was no way they would stay quietly in their seats; they got up, wanting to get near the stage, and the security forces had to be increased in order to avoid what turned out to be inevitable--the invasion of the areas near the stage. Camarón drives them crazy.

But, of course, it wasn't only the one from La Isla. Enrique Morente, in spite of the fact that his cante is not the type that would best connect with the type of audience that predominated that night, had a good performance, with feeling and profundity in the tonás, granáinas, and soleares, and with relief and festiveness in the aires de Huelva and the bamberas-tangos done in homage to Lorca.

Lole y Manuel did one of their classic recitals. What they do is to sweeten flamenco, to remove some of the roughness and to borrow from other musical forms more consistent with our times. That is, perhaps, the secret of their notable popular impact, especially among the masses of youth. Since, in a certain sense, there remains some connection with serious flamenco--alegrías, bulerías, tangos--distorted, certainly, but at least there, the experience can be valuable because it brings the art to people who would otherwise not understand it. The outstanding triumph of this singular couple was a solo cante por bulerías by Manuel that was truly extraordinary.

Los Montoya also repeated their recent performances, with their usual magnetism, their strength that sometimes exceeds reasonable limits, vulgarizing "un arte buleriero" [the art of bulerías] full of gracia and "gitanería" [gypsyism]. The

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playing, rich and possessed, in the festive cantes, of Periquín Jero and Diego Carrasco contributed greatly to their success.

The guitar was shining at great heights throughout the night, with Pepe Habichuela and Tomatito in good form, even though the sound system practically eliminated the low, warm tones and left us with only a sharp, piercing metallic sound.

And Camarón, to sum up, in spite of his desire to cut it short, to get away as fast as possible, still left us with a tremendous cante por tarantos, three profound bulerías, alegrías and fandangos. Camarón has a special instinct for calling forth the duende in his cante. A genius? Definitely!

* * *

A GREAT MOMENT FOR CAMARON

[from: El País, Aug. 14, 1985; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Paco Sevilla]

by Angel Alvarez Caballero

Camarón is at a great period of his life. It is the third time I have heard him in this festival season and it makes three times I have heard extraordinary singing. He has a way of doing it, of placing his voice, a rajo [rough voice] that is so flamenco--it would be difficult to find anything to compare with it among today's cantaores.

In Almuñécar (Granada), he stood out in soleares and bulerías, his voice breaking down on occasions--but only that broken, agonized voice is able to transmit the essential tragedy of his cante. Even the cantes called "festeros"--bulerías and tangos--are, in Camarón, rooted in the quejío and suffering. The guitar of Tomatito, the favorite tocaor [guitarist] of De la Isla, must go on record as serving him in an ideal manner, with a toque that is perfectly suited to the cante, without losing its own brilliance and well-defined personality..."

ENRIQUE EL COJO DIES

[from: Sur Dominical; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Paco Sevilla]

On Friday, March 29, 1985, just two days short of 73 years of age, the great bailaor and teacher of bailaores, Enrique Jiménez Mendoza -- better known as Enrique el Cojo -- dies in Sevilla.

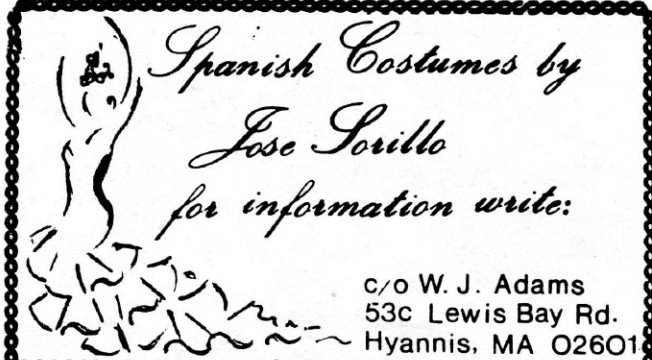
He was born in Cáceres [Extremadura] on March 31, 1972 and at age 4, moved with his family to Sevilla. As a child he suffered an injury to one of his legs that left him crippled for the rest of his life, but that did not stop him from dancing up to the time of his death. He was what is called a natural phenomenon.

Enrique was the teacher of an infinite number of dancers and many personalities such as the Duchess of Alba. What he gave to his art cannot be measured and his secret lay in the ability to put what he had to say into compás. In recognition of his efforts, Enrique el Cojo received in recent years the "Medalla del Trabajo" (1980), "El Puente de Plata" (1981) and the "Medalla de Plata de Bellas Artes" (1984), and the hearts of all flamencos as well as all of those who came in contact with him.

As the result of a thrombosis that had given him trouble for some weeks, Enrique died in his home in Sevilla on Calle Amor de Dios. May he rest in peace.



Enrique el Cojo



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A GREAT GUITARIST DIES

[from: Latino, Sept. 1, 1985; sent by Paul Heffernan]

The flamenco guitarist, Carlos Ramos, died at 69 years of age in Torre del Mar (Málaga) on August 18. He lived in Washington D.C. since 1964, where he worked every night in the flamenco show at Restaurante El Bodegón.

Carlos learned to play the guitar on his own and, in 1940, he went to Madrid to develop himself artistically, there, he performed with some of the best flamenco artists of that time. He was named one of the best flamenco guitarists on several occasions by the magazine, Guitar Player. He toured to most of the important cities of the USA and made two records, one as a soloist and the other with the flamenco singer, Niño Almadén.

Carlos Ramos created and developed a personal style of playing the guitar that was known for its high level of composition and technical development; he added to the ideals of the traditional musical forms of flamenco.

Before going to Spain for a vacation, he was given a farewell homage in El Bodegón. Waiting for his return in November, who would have thought that it was his final farewell?

His good friend, the painter Paco Castillo put it well in saying that this has been an irreparable loss for all of us. He will forever remain in our hearts.

"Se ha callado su guitarra
con la prima y el bordón;
en Málaga nació su arte
y en Málaga terminó."



CARLOS RAMOS

PACO PEÑA IN LOS ANGELES

by Ron Spatz

[Our apologies to Ron. This report should have appeared in an earlier issue. The workshop took place in 1984.]

December 7th represented for Los Angeles Flamenco guitarists both a sad and a happy day. Sad because it was the anniversary of the Pearl Harbor bombing; happy because it was also the day Paco Peña gave a concert in Los Angeles.

As soon as I discovered that he was scheduled for a concert at the California State Northridge, I immediately got in touch with Professor Ron Purcell, the head of their guitar department, to see if it was possible to arrange a workshop. Well....the bottom line was yes, it was possible, but it took dozens of phone calls and a lot of anxious waiting. Then, it came right down to December 5th before we had confirmation for a workshop the afternoon of the 6th, and due to such last minute arranging, we wound up without a suitable room at the University. So....in a last minute panic, I volunteered my home. At the time, I was somewhat apprehensive as to how the Maestro would feel about this. However, my fears were totally unfounded. Paco is one of the politest and most gracious persons I have ever met. The workshop was warm, personal, and intensive. The underlying theme of all his advice was compás (not terribly surprising). "Without precisely metered compás, you don't have Flamenco." Paco would like very much to return to L.A. with his Troupe for a total Flamenco Workshop. (We're going to work on this.)

The next day he gave his concert to a packed audience, and following his own advice, it was superb. Anyone wishing to coordinate a concert and/or workshop for Paco in this country, please contact me at (818) 883-0932.



PACO PEÑA AT GUITAR WORKSHOP IN LOS ANGELES

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TEO MORCA WORKSHOPS

MORCA IN OHIO

by Bruce Catalano

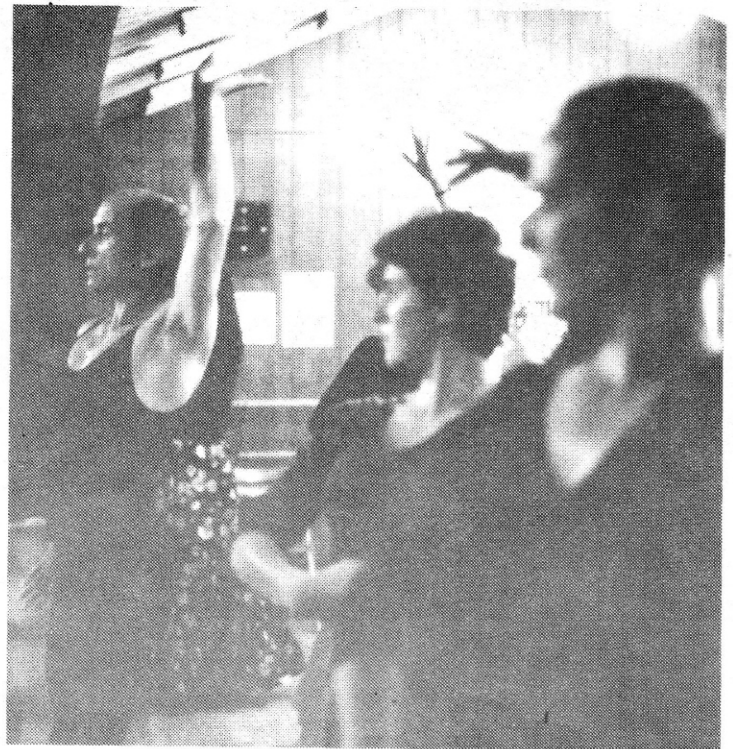
Teo had given a two week residency at the Fairmount Spanish Dance Company. Libby Lubinger, artistic director, located in Novelty, Ohio, just outside of Cleveland. This performance occurred midway through the residency and was received enthusiastically by everyone in attendance, including the Plain Dealer critic, guests, and the Fairmount Spanish Dancers themselves.

The residency itself, occurring the first two weeks of July, 1985, was tremendous. The Fairmount Dancers, a company of 15 dancers, a singer, and 3 guitarists were so impressed with Teo, not only as a consummate Spanish dancer and teacher, but with the overall warmth and genuineness of his personality. Plans are already underway to have a return engagement next year with him and hopefully his whole company.

By the way, Teo also put in many words of support about Jaleo to all of us here. I know that many of us already have subscriptions, but it never hurts to give a plug.



MORCA PUTTING INTENT STUDENTS
THROUGH THEIR PACES IN OHIO WORKSHOP



THE DANCE OF GYPSIES

[from: The Weekly, Seattle, Washington, May 29-June 4, 1985]

by Carol Jane Bangs

A recent Garfield cartoon strip featured the popular cat in a perfect stereotype of this generation's conception of the "Spanish dancer"—fringed hat, clicking castanets, stomping feet. Nothing could have more thoroughly laid this cliché to rest than Teo Morca and Sara de Luis' first poignant duet at the Broadway Performance Hall last Saturday night. No hat, no castanets, no thundering feet. Rather, the music of J.S. Bach and a visual expression of human longing that drew audible gasps from the audience. Several standing ovations that punctuated the evening testified to an audience whose expectations had not been simply confirmed, but rather profoundly enlarged and redefined.

Teo Morca and Sara de Luis should be better-known to local audiences; they have lived and worked in the region since the '70s. But because flamenco and other Spanish dance forms have not benefited from the dance boom of recent years, these artists are still too often passed over as "ethnic" dancers and their performances under-attended. Last weekend's performance, equal to the best dancing one could find in Spain, should change all that. As one Seattleite studying in Seville commented after a recent Morca visit there, "There is no one in Spain dancing better than Teo; perhaps there is no one in the world."

Flamenco, for the uninitiated, is a variety of music, dance, and song associated historically with the gypsies of Andalusia, a province in the southernmost part of Spain. Like American jazz, flamenco has obscure origins; some say it was carried by the gypsies from India, embellished with Moorish touches, and then developed into the form in which we know it today. But, like jazz, it is still a growing art form, actively embracing innovations and original interpretations of traditional forms.

Most people, if they think of flamenco at all, think of the dance, with its brilliant costumes, sensual movements, electric pairings of male and female dancers. In Spain the dance is but a small part of flamenco activity, coming after the singing, or cante, and the music of the flamenco guitar. Americans are generally unfamiliar with the almost Oriental-sounding flamenco singing, but almost everyone has heard a flamenco guitarist, if only as part of a movie soundtrack, or as the all-too-easily-ignored "background music" in a restaurant. American fans of Spanish guitarist Paco de Lucia are often unaware that, despite his collaborations with jazz and classical musicians, he is one of the world's best flamenco artists and is the first choice as accompanist for many of Spain's best singers.

According to the most recent DanceMagazine, Spanish dance is becoming more popular in both the U.S. and Europe, due to the growth of smaller companies, and Seattle is keeping pace with the rest of the country. Aficionados, as amateur and semiprofessional performers call themselves, are keeping flamenco alive in the most unlikely places—Deming, Bellingham, Gibsons BC, Olympia, the Olympic Peninsula. Port Townsend may well hold the U.S. record for the most flamenco per capita. Since 1976 this town of 6,000 has had at least one professional flamenco performance per year, including a rare concert by gypsy guitarist Dieguito (nephew of the legendary Diego del Gastor), and regular informal fiestas.

Flamenco dance combines technical sophistication with profound emotion. There is none of the aloof detachment of either classical ballet or what might by now be called "traditional" modern dance. A flamenco performance encourages, even demands, intense personal involvement; it exercises the viewer's eyes and ears and, at its best, the viewer's deepest self. It is this potential for deep emotional, some would say spiritual, involvement, what Spanish poet Garcia Lorca called *duende*, that creates life-long aficionados from flamenco initiates.

Flamenco dance has its roots in the Eastern dances brought by the gypsies to Spain centuries ago, in the court dances which also evolved into *escuela bolero* (Spanish ballet), and in the regional folk dances of Andalusia. In its oldest forms it was a dance of the upper body and arms, with minimal footwork. In his *Iberia*, James Michener describes a

gypsy wedding at which the participants kneel around the bride and groom, dancing sensuously with arms and torsos. This is surely primitive flamenco.

Around the turn of the last century, as flamenco dancers were brought onto the stages of nightclubs and performance halls, dancers began to employ more complicated steps, marking out varied and complex rhythmic patterns with the heels and soles of their shoes. Some historians have speculated that these fancier steps resulted from the flamenco dancers' attempts to mimic the dynamic effect of the American tap dancers whose performances were often the highlight of European musical reviews. Whatever the inspiration, the complicated steps became integrated into the flamenco tradition, and most descriptions of flamenco today refer to "stamping feet" and "clicking heels."

Modern flamenco falls into two main categories. Performed flamenco is that most often publicly encountered, in Spain or elsewhere. This is the flamenco of bright colors, long ruffled skirts, embroidered shawls, tight pants, and polished shoes. The dances are usually choreographed in advance (although true flamenco allows for last-minute variations) and the dancers require a sturdy wooden stage or platform which acts as a sounding board for their footwork.

Fiesta flamenco is less formal. One encounters it at weddings, christenings, or public bars in Spain, and at *juergas* (private parties) in the US. The dancers may or may not be trained, but are usually dressed in ordinary street clothes. Their dances are spontaneous, improvised, relying on knowledge of traditional steps and rhythms but combining them in highly personal expressions. Guitarist, dancer, maybe a singer, will all improvise, taking turns at "leading" the group, then falling back into accompaniment much as the members of a jazz combo exchange solo roles in the course of a single tune.

A guitarist might play a quiet melody of *falseta* with a dancer coming in as he finishes the theme. The dancer will build up the tempo to an urgent, exciting pace, and then, with a movement of the arms and a recognizable pattern of footwork (often just three solid marked beats) will signal the guitarist that the dance movement is ready to close. Both dancer and guitarist know what is happening even if they've never rehearsed, but the audience is often surprised when music and dance, rushing along at fever pitch, end suddenly and miraculously on the same beat.

What both kinds of flamenco dance have in common is the erect posture and "strong" arms also seen in Spanish ballet, the graceful hand movements called *flores* (flowers), and the ever-present percussion provided by finger snapping, hand clapping, tongue clicking, and combinations of footwork. While the gestures of flamenco have no specific meaning, they convey a great range of emotion. A man and a woman dancing together maintain almost continual eye contact, while a solo dancer focuses on the audience, demanding attention and involvement.

Currently, a handful of professional flamenco performers make their home in Seattle and the Puget Sound region. Best-known of these is certainly Teo Morca, a world-class flamenco dancer who has toured with major Spanish companies as well as with the best American companies, achieving international renown as a soloist and choreographer.

Retreating in 1978 from the smog and freeways of Southern California, Morca bought and old church in Bellingham and, with his wife and partner, Isabel, opened the Morca Academy of Dance. A few years later he instituted the country's only all-flamenco dance workshop, held each year in August, and attracting dancers from as far away as France and New Zealand, testament to Morca's international reputation as a teacher of flamenco.

Morca works extensively with local dance companies, choreographing a range of work, from pieces for First Chamber Dance and Pacific Northwest Ballet to the choreography for the recent Portland Opera production of *Carmen*. This summer he will teach at PNB's summer school, helping the ballerinas to "get some arms, some upper body strength."

In the past two years, a vibrant dancer from California named La Romera has emerged as the area's most active booster of flamenco dance. La Romera teaches dance, but she also organizes concerts, *juergas*, and dance workshops. For several months she staged twice-monthly shows, first at Enoteca, a wine bar downtown, and then at the G-Note Tavern.

Many of these concerts featured guest artists from the Bay Area or Vancouver, as well as guitarists and dancers from the Puget Sound region.

Dancer Sara de Luis has combined flamenco with a varied dance career over the past 25 years. Now a teacher at Seattle's Dance Lab, she recently completed an engagement with the legendary Luisa Triana in Las Vegas.

Two years ago, musicians in Seattle had a rare opportunity to study with one of Spain's best flamenco guitarists. The University of Washington school of ethnomusicology imported Pedro Bacán, a virtuoso from one of the best-known Andalusian gypsy families (his aunts, Bernarda and Fernande de Utrera, are reputed to be the best women singers in Spain). While in Seattle as a visiting professor at the U, Bacán, his wife, and their two children lived with local guitarist Jim Kuhn, who helped Bacán find local students.

When the Intiman Theater staged its production of Garcia Loca's *Blood Wedding* this past summer, it was Kuhn who was asked to compose and play flamenco music for the show. Teo Morca was brought in to choreograph some scenes and, as he puts it, "teach the actors how to look Spanish" (by which he means having erect posture, something Americans apparently lack).

While one can find some flamenco guitar from time to time, flamenco singing is almost impossible to encounter unless one is on the invitation list for private concerts or has friends in the know. There are no resident professional flamenco singers in Seattle, although a few people have been lucky enough to hear performers from out of town. Last month, at a quietly publicized concert at a Pioneer Square gallery, about 35 people gathered to hear Angel Romero, a flamenco singer originally from Malaga, who now works for the British Columbia ferry system.

There may be an increase in flamenco activity in the Northwest, but the interest is not entirely recent. Here in the Puget Sound area, in Seattle and Vancouver particularly, aficionados have been active for years. Choreographer Mark Morris began his dance studies as a student of Spanish dance, and went to Spain to study flamenco before concentrating on modern dance. During the mid-to-late 1970s, Alan Yonge, one of the more knowledgeable students of flamenco in the US, ran a weekly flamenco radio program for KRAB. It may have been the only such program ever to air in this country. Yonge now runs a recording studio specializing in flamenco tapes, including reissues of classic recordings made in Spain over the past three decades. For years, the now-defunct Pablo's Spanish restaurant on Roy Street featured flamenco dancing every weekend. Gary Hayes, who goes by the professional name of Gerardo Alcalá, was the featured guitarist on weeknights and now tours the country with the Manolo Rivera Dance Company. Playing flamenco guitar in Seattle, he points out, is not a very lucrative job.

If Pablo's provided an "aboveground" venue for flamenco, the real action was taking place "underground," at juergas often organized several months in advance, at which aficionados paid up to \$20 each for the privilege of hearing guest artists from out of town. The most popular of these visitors was undeniably the late Anzonini del Puerto, a flamenco singer and festerero (one who makes the party happen), who spent several months each year in the US. At one juerga, held at the Lake Washington home of opera chief Glynn Ross, Anzonini kept a group of nearly 50 paid subscribers spellbound well past midnight with his old-fashioned style of flamenco cante, his minimalist dancing, and his hearty potage -- a thick soup made with garbanzos, garlic, and chorizo sausages (Anzonini was a pork-butcher by trade).

Even during the '60s, when most of the big flamenco dance companies, such as José Greco's, were losing audiences and could no longer command the interest they had enjoyed in the '50s (when flamenco reached its zenith of popularity in the US), Seattle was known to the touring companies as a good town for flamenco. Many of the area's younger aficionados got their first taste of flamenco at a José Greco or Lola Montes concert in Seattle. The ranks of these loyal fans are swelled by members of the region's Hispanic community, for whom the music reverberates with emotion, nostalgia, or ethnic pride. At a concert/fiesta at the G-Note last fall, a group of women tourists from Seville enjoyed the show, then proceeded to get up and join in a rumba with their native "Sevillanas."

Unlike the folk dance and other ethnic music with which it is all too often grouped, flamenco does not look only to the traditions of the past. As does any true art form, it begins with tradition in order to evolve, to grow, to remain living and vital. It is this flexibility, this vitality, that is drawing many new audiences to flamenco, much to their wonderment and delight.

FLAMENCO TEACHER'S ROOTS DEEP

[from: *The Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Ohio, Sunday, July 7, 1985]

by Wilma Salisbury

"Flamenco is like a kaleidoscope with seven little pieces. You put them together in different ways, and you get a flowing plastique, full of life and magic."

So says Teodoro Morca, renowned flamenco dancer who is teaching a two-week workshop at Fairmount Center and will give a lecture-performance tonight at 8 at Hawken School.

The art of flamenco, as Morca views it, is a classical form deeply rooted in the history and culture of Spain. Although it grew out of an improvisatory gypsy tradition, flamenco dance has a technique as structured and a look as regal as that of classical ballet.

Unlike classical ballet, however, flamenco does not strive for a light, ethereal quality. On the contrary, it turns the dancer inward and responds to the pull of gravity.

"Flamenco is very earthy," said Morca, an American of Spanish and Hungarian ancestry. "I sometimes make my students dance in bare feet. One hundred years ago, the gypsies didn't have fancy boots. They danced very close to the earth."

The flamenco look Morca exemplifies is characterized by the arched back, lifted torso, bent knees, curved arms and proud carriage of the head. With his slim body outlined in tight black trousers, the flamenco dancer sways his hips and moves forward in minimal movements. With his high-heeled boots, he beats the earth in staccato rhythms. With his fluid wrists, he traces sinuous patterns close to his body.

The technique for the female flamenco dancer is the same. But she wears her hair sleekly pulled back from her face and displays her body in a tightfitting dress with a long ruffled train.

Integral to the dancing is the mournful flamenco music with its Moorish vocal inflections and strict rhythmic patterns.

"Flamenco is an interplay of music, song and dance," said Morca. "The guitarist and the dancer must work together."

Within the rigid structure of rhythm and phrase, dancers and musicians express their individuality by improvising complex variations and counter-rhythms.

"In flamenco, you don't want a clone," said Morca. "In this art form, you look for individuality."

In Spain, Morca found that few dance instructors teach flamenco technique. Instead, they teach flamenco dances. So indigenous is flamenco style that Spanish dancers learn its vocabulary and accent on the streets.

"I went to Spain with a one-way ticket," Morca said, recalling his first trip to the cradle of flamenco more than 30 years ago.

"I had a good technical base before I went. I wandered the streets and lived in pensions. When I started to work with Pilar Lopez (one of Spain's greatest dancers), I stepped right in. The first week I was with her, I danced on a European tour."

Morca had stepped right in to a performing career the first time he set foot inside the studio of the legendary Ruth S. Denis in his native Los Angeles.

"I wandered into her studio when I was 15 years old," he said. "They needed boys for a concert of ethnic dances. One of the teachers grabbed me and had me doing everything from Abdullah to Spanish dances."

Morca subsequently studied with members of the Cansino family of vaudeville fame and many other master teachers. At the height of his performing career, he appeared as guest

artist with José Greco, Luis Rivera, María Alba and Tony Alba. With his wife Isabel, he formed Morca Dance Theater, a duet company that has performed throughout the world with symphony orchestras and flamenco musicians.

"With flamenco, you need only man, woman and music," he said. "You don't need a real corps de ballet."

For many years, Morca Dance Theater crisscrossed the country doing one-night stands. In one season, the tireless little company performed 130 concerts in 42 states.

Ten years ago, however, Morca made a drastic change in his lifestyle. After a 10-week teaching residency at Western Washington University in Bellingham, he gave up teaching part time at four California universities, abandoned the gypsy life that had kept him living out of a suitcase between Los Angeles, New York and Madrid, and settled down with his wife in beautiful Bellingham. There, he opened a dance studio in a 100-year-old building that once served as a Baptist church.

Although Morca has slowed his pace since then, he has not stopped dancing. Tall and lean with a proudly lifted torso and narrow hips, he looks every inch the dancer. Standing in front of the workshop class in his black warm-up, gold neck chain and brown boots, he is a model of flamenco posture at age 51.

"My body is hanging in there," he said. "I am getting a black belt in karate. I do a half-hour warm-up before class. I can dance for six hours in a row in class when I am teaching."

"I take care of my body. I don't do knee drops or jotás anymore. In flamenco, you can polish subtleties as you get older. If you refine the technique and listen to the body, you can be powerful with minimal movements."

"I don't do old-fashioned one-night stands any more. I do my workshops and a cohesive tour. I don't turn down everything, but a performing date has to be fairly enticing before I take it. You have to be realistic. Otherwise you're just burned out."

"As I get older, I will probably phase into workshops. But I will not lose my integrity as a dancer."

Morca's popular flamenco workshops sell out in Bellingham. His students come from as far away as New Zealand, and they range in age from 11 to 65. Some are professional dancers. Others enroll for fun or therapy.

Flamenco enjoyed its greatest commercial success in the United States 20-30 years ago when it was popular in nightclubs, Morca said.

"Now the only outlets are the concert field, television and the few nightclubs that are left," he said. "The art has become far more accessible, but there has not yet been an upsurge in outlets for it."

"Flamenco comes and goes. But art is art. The fact it is not selling does not hurt the art."

DANCERS TALK ABOUT FLAMENCO

[from: The Herald, Bellingham, Washington, Thursday, August 22, 1985]

by Joan Connell

Magazine publisher Harriet Bullitt was in New York researching flamenco dance at the Guitar Institute when she learned how many people knew about Teo and Isabel Morca.

When she mentioned she lived in Seattle, the man at the reference desk responded: "Seattle...That's near Bellingham, isn't it? That's where the Morcas are!"

Bullitt is one of 39 men and women here for the past two weeks to study flamenco at Teo and Isabel Morca's Franklin Street studio.

"The Morcas, Mount St. Helens and the Boeing Company," Bullitt joked. "That's what defines the Northwest to some people."

She told the story last week at a picnic in Boulevard Park that became an impromptu dance concert for participants in the Morca's flamenco workshop. It left the park's usual crowd wondering what was going on.

Three Spanish guitarists wailed songs flavored with the cultures that influence the flamenco dance form: the gypsies of Andalusia, who carry with them traces of Eastern Europe, the Far and the Middle East; and the cultures of the Iberian Peninsula.

In cutoffs and blue jeans, flounced and flowered skirts, they cut loose and improvised the steps they are mastering in Morca's classes: zapateado, the rapid, rhythmic footwork; braceo, the Moorish-influenced arm movements; palmas, hand-clapping, and the contrapuntal rhythms of castanets.

Dancers traveled to Bellingham from Chile, New Zealand, Canada, Colorado, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Texas and places in between to attend the Morca workshop, an annual event for the past seven years.

Some, like Seattle's Sara de Luis, are professional dancers; others are beginners. The youngest participant--and one of the most talented, Teo Morca says--is Johanna Denis, 11, a Texas dancer. Flamenco has a different appeal for each participant.

"I like the strength of it, the theatrics," Elise Hunt of San Antonio said. "But what interests me the most is that it represents the culture of a people."

The workshop concludes with a celebration and dance performance.

* * *



WORKSHOP IN BELLINGHAM

TEO MORCA: HE'S CREATING HIS OWN DANCE FORM

[from: The Herald, Bellingham, Washington, Thursday, August 22, 1985]

by Joan Connell

In flamenco perhaps more than any other form, a dancer's body is his instrument, the source of rhythm and percussion as well as lyrical, liquid movement.

Two weeks ago in Bellingham, as he performed a rigorous portion of flamenco repertoire under blazing skies at an outdoor festival--with not a drop of sweat on his brow--Teo Morca, 51, demonstrated again that his body is in excellent shape.

After 36 years of performing, Morca still can elicit from dance critics adjectives that range from "magnificent" to "profound." A University of Washington medical researcher who included Morca in a study of dancers who have been performing 25 years or more, gave his X-rays and cartilage rave reviews. That discounts the notion that middle age signals the end of a dancer's career.

"I know I'll reach a turning point sometime, and when I reach that point I'll deal with it. But every dancer that stays young treats his instrument properly," Morca said. Like his wife and dancing partner, Isabel, he is a gourmet cook, an enthusiastic eater, and a conscientious dieter.

"Lola Montez used to have a favorite saying: 'Zippers don't lie.' I can honestly say I've never let out a pair of pants in my life," he said.

Physical fitness is really a side issue to Morca, who was born in Los Angeles to a Hungarian-Spanish family.

His performing career began at 15, as Abdullah the Gong Player in a recital at modern dance pioneer Ruth St. Denis' school in Hollywood.

He received ballet training from Ballet Russe expatriates, many of whom ultimately settled in California. Flamenco training from José Greco, Jose Cansino and others built on that classical foundation.

Los Angeles in the 50's was a hotbed of Spanish dance, and Morca recalls doing four or five grueling shows a night in cabarets, coffeehouses and clubs.

Before long, he was leading dancer with Pilar Lopez' Baile Espanole, and toured the international circuit with her 35-member company.

Concert tours in theaters were one thing, but the nightclub scene in the U.S. and Europe offered steady work and created a certain kind of energy, Morca said--the energy required to command the attention of people who were drinking, talking, smoking while he performed.

In 1975, Teo, Isabel and their son Teo, Jr., now 21 years old, moved to Bellingham and converted an old church on Franklin Street to a studio/school.

"I knew right away that the town itself couldn't support us as performers. But I fell in love with the fact that we had our own space. I'm a chronic rehearser, and love to know that even at 2 in the morning I can work on things."

The old routines of one night stands continued for a while, but as the Morca Academy grew--up to 200 students a year now study ballet, flamenco, jazz and classical Spanish dance--Teo began doing more choreography, setting pieces on regional companies and having performance/workshops in cities across the U.S.

In 1982, he won the St. Denis award for choreography, named for his early mentor, Ruth St. Denis.

Teo also was a member of the National Endowment for the Arts peer review committee, a national board responsible for evaluating dance companies to be awarded government grants. He is also a member of the Washington State Arts Commission.

The touring schedule continues, with dates already set next year for Hawaii, Alaska and possibly a return to New Zealand, where Teo and Isabel had a successful season in 1982.

His choreography, which mingles principles of flamenco and classical Spanish dance with ballet and music by non-Spanish composers from Bach to Respighi is untraditional and unique.

"I'm not doing 'pure' flamenco; I use tradition as a base --and when I choreograph a piece, I take the company in mind."

"It's hard to put a person in a mold," Morca said. In addition to dancing, he has trained as a gymnast and is

working on a black belt in karate. "Labels are fine, but I'm creating my own dance form."

He marks his 10 years in Bellingham as a success, disproving the warnings from associates who said he'd never survive in such a backwater town.

MORCA

...sobre el baile

FLAMENCO DANCE'

THE THEATRE AND CHANGING TIMES

I watched the performer on stage dance her taranto with the accompaniment of three over-miked guitarists, two over-miked singers, bass viola and violins. I wondered a bit about the future of flamenco dance--its style, technique, interpretation and how today's world will influence this art form. I thought about all of the rhumbas and electronic instruments that you see and hear now. In fact that is what you almost see and hear exclusively. Is the so-called pure flamenco going to be preserved outside of Spain where you seem to see more batas de cola, more siguiriyas, tientos, clasicos, and serious flamenco--where you see and hear many serious artists trying to preserve the roots of flamenco? As a performing art, where is flamenco going and where are the goals and focus of the professionals that do flamenco for a living?

I would like to talk about this future of flamenco dance. I am often asked about where I feel that flamenco dance is going and how it is evolving. I am not one that can foretell the future of flamenco nor do I pretend to know where it is going in its development, but there have been many interesting things that have been happening for the last few years in the world of flamenco dance that give some indication of where flamenco is going in the future. Actually, the future is now and flamenco is a reflection of the times. It is ever changing, like jazz is forever changing with the mood of the now of the world.

The roots of the tradition of flamenco were set down many years ago and they are still being set down and there will always be people with the philosophy of "no change" and the other people with the thought of "constant change." In the last hundred years or so, we have seen this art form evolve from an expression of people who performed for themselves and for intimate gatherings of people who "knew and understood." We have seen the era of the cafe cantantes, the involvement of the singing, the golden age of the singers that are still copied today, the ones that made the tradition. We have seen the dancers that crystallized the dance forms, the Estampillos, Antonio Bilbaos, Frascillos, Macarrona, La Malena, Paico, Antonio, Escudero, Amaya and so many others. We have seen the guitar evolve from a strumming, plucking instrument of basic accompaniment to the toques of the Ramón Montoyas, Sabicas, Lucías. Very few have seen the "natural artists" who gave inspiration to these pros, for they were the people of flamenco's earth--the people that gave birth to the feelings and emotions and reasons of flamenco. They did not perform in cafe cantantes but wherever they felt like expressing their pure selves--usually behind closed doors, in open fields, along the rivers or wherever the open sky gave a bit of light. Flamenco, from its basic beginnings--whenever that was--has been evolving from its roots to the many types of branches that have grown from these roots. It is only natural that, with its very human temperament, drama, emotion, feeling, innate feeling of art, the art of life, that it would become a performing art. It is natural that it

would follow the trail of the people of the land to the cafe cantantes to the tablaos, festivals and eventually to the concert stage as a theatre art which is as powerful a theatre art as any performing that has evolved from the human race.

The basic "look" of flamenco, the technique, the line, the rhythms, and songs have long been established in essence. The technique has been going through a constant evolution from the many outside and inside influences that it comes in contact with. Flamenco dance has been influenced by many other forms of dance and even the purists have made that clear. It is also influenced by changing times. Whether new styles are more advanced or less advanced is not the point, but whether they interpret what flamenco is.

One of the main changes of flamenco has been its focus more and more on theatre productions rather than small tablao shows. Most of the major artists inside and outside of Spain do not want to perform in clubs and fiestas alone.

The theatre trend started many years ago and, with a bit of rebirth and recycle of flamenco, it is the concert stage that is its primary focus. This 180 degree turn is of great interest in the dance as it changes the whole choreographic picture and choreographic approach. It demands a look at a technical approach, as well, that will reach out to a bigger space and to the last row of the audience--much farther away than in an intimate tablao.

This focus on theatre is happening in all facets of flamenco. The finer guitarists want to be concert soloists. Many singers only want to work with a guitarist and do concerts on their own or record and the dancers are looking to production and are feeling the pressure of doing something other than a cuadro flamenco on a concert stage. This switch to a theatre focus creates whole new possibilities and it is important that the theatre not be used as just a larger space to do what is done in a small space. It is a challenge that is worth striving for to let flamenco shine through to its maximum. This will take imagination and creativity. It has been done, and it should be done, if that is what artists want to do--become concert performers. I have seen fine artists who look great on a small space but do not know how to adapt to a larger hall and they wonder why they are not a success.

Some examples of artists who adapted well are Antonio. His Martinete was a master piece of theatre and spacing and it was pure flamenco to the core. People are still copying him. Mario Maya is doing wonderful theatre works with flamenco. Antonio Gades is doing very interesting theatre works with flamenco themes, without losing the arte. The art is there but it takes imagination to get past the chorus line, Bobbie Twins type of choreography that is so often seen for theatre. I have seen flamenco dance suffer, especially lately in Spain when you see the single soloists as I did for a week at the Cumbre Flamenco Festival in Madrid this last spring. I saw quite a few fine dancers and without exception, they were over powered with two or three fine guitarists that were over microphoned as were the singers. They used a very small amount of space choreographically and did not project past a few rows in front. They did not use the theatre to their advantage, which you must do with flamenco. This does not mean to change flamenco but it means that you have to expand your energy and have your expression, your technique and interpretation reach out to all--and it can be done. Flamenco

is energy and on that level alone, you must not be just inside yourself and be cool but expand your inner spirit so that it fills the theatre. I cannot explain a technique for this but it is worth thinking about when you get onto a large stage.

To me it is a shame that flamenco in Spain is so wrapped up in the contemporary sounds of today. So many dancers are into the loudness of dancing to organs and every other instrument that makes it like rock and roll. As if loud is better. I have seen so many dancers that look like they have very little energy because they seem to feel that their back-up sound will carry them through. If dancers would look at the concert stage and then think of what flamenco dance is --its infinite amount of possibilities in choreography, technique, interpretation--then I feel that flamenco would adapt well to the theatre in a very powerful way. This refocus to concert from its beginning roots of, "almost for the self," would work in this day and age of TV and "BIG".

People have been talking about the demise and the corruption of flamenco dance as far back as the cafe cantantes. It seems that each era of flamenco had its artists and aficionados that felt what was right for the times and what was changing that was right and what was wrong. I happen to be an optimist and feel that there will always be flamenco for flamenco's sake, done for the reason of just doing and expressing. There will always be people getting together in juergas and fiestas for the love of flamenco. It appears at times that most people only want to perform for money and not for the love of expressing and feeling flamenco. This goes for the hypocrites who say what is pure and right and then do whatever they have to to make a buck. So much for their integrity and purity of art. But that is another story.

It is best to practice what you preach, for flamenco will always be an art of the times and will always surmount the individual and go on and on. Society changes, life styles change and we have seen a shift from personal performing to television, recordings and other forms of almost impersonal performances. The theatre is definitely a prime focus of flamenco for the artists who want to reach the public in a serious and artistic way. It is good to keep in mind the challenges and excitement of putting flamenco on the stage, with its time and space situation and still get across what flamenco is.

It is exciting to go back mentally to the beginning and imagine the evolution of flamenco dance. Even if it is your imagination with very little history of the past, there is enough in the immediate past to give many ideas about the dance. People have been dancing flamenco for centuries and what they have been dancing is their non-verbal feelings. They have been dancing with singing and then there is verbal and non-verbal expression. Then came the music and the rhythms and the many rhythmical expressions that came about an crystallized. All of these possibilities can be adapted to the theatre stage, for flamenco by its very nature is human expression of people that live life. There are many ways of expressing this life through the beautiful voices of dance, the singing movement, the countless varieties of compas. All can be the inspiration to choreograph this life movement--for it is theatre.

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ful. Carmen Amaya did it. She was a small woman but she knew the inner secrets of energy. Energy breeds energy and she exploded her energy to the far corners of any theatre. Jose Greco, in his time, had many dancers who had more complex steps than he, but he knew how to "walk" flamenco and his farfuga was flamenco and theatre for he expanded himself. The secret of the theatre is "giving"--sending out your energy. The challenge of theatre for a dancer is also choreography.

I have talked about flamenco dance choreography in other articles, but it is worth repeating that for the concert stage, the public is there to see you as a dancer, but they should not only be seeing good dancers dance but dancers dancing good, interesting, exciting and varied dances. In other words, good choreography. Choreography is a very separate art form and being a good dancer does not guarantee being a good choreographer also.

I will finish up by saying that in these changing times, the arts in all of their facets are flourishing and the concert stage has become the focus of concert dance. Flamenco has become a concert dance form for many fine artists. Touring companies again are starting to form and travel the world, carrying flamenco to the far corners. Choreography that can maintain the roots of flamenco with all of its feelings and energy and can project to the back row while having the interest and imagination of a beautiful painting--this will be a flamenco of the times--a flamenco of the now--of the future. Flamenco is like a beautiful kaliedoscope. It is forever changing by whatever turn and time you give it but inside it has the roots of but a few pieces of glass. In flamenco terms, these roots are the vital tradition of a melting pot of cultures that have given birth to this variable garden of art.

--Teo Morca

RYSS REPORT

NEW YORK

Villa Del Parral on 213 W. 14th Street is one of the many Spanish restaurants in New York City. This exactly is where the comparison ends! Parral, owned by "Mr. Flamenco," Jesus Ramos, bailaor and chef is undoubtedly headquarters for flamencos...keep it that way...get there EAT, DRINK, and PARTICIPATE...Juegas till 6:00am Sunday morning (what with two or three aficionado-cantaors at the bar).

If you ignore this, and do not go, let me tell you of some of the nobility that passed through its gates in recent times: Paco de Lucía, and his two brothers Ramón and Pepe de Lucía. The greatest of the bailaoras, La Tati went there after each concert, had her meals there, participated in the juergas and had her farewell party there. Mario Maya's gitanillos frequented whenever possible. Cumbre Flamenco went there in its entirety, Carmelilla Montoya, El Güito, Serranito, Morente and all their participating artists...Sabicas and Mario Escudero make appearances--Ramos himself appears at every flamenco function and helps artists, whenever he can.

Villa de Parral has as guest cantaor; Pepe de Málaga, recently returned from Florida. He is probably the finest and most presentable stage cantaor of flamenco; his guitarist at Parral is Diego Castellón, ever popular tocaor, brother of Sabicas.

Piasta de Campostella in New York City, July 25 through 28 included Estrella Morena, bailaor Orlando Romero, with Pepe de Málaga and guitarist José Ma. Moreno.

Spanish Dance Arts Co. presented 4 shows at University Theatre Lorca, Santana and Marques participated. This took place the beginning of June.

Liliana Morales presented a beautiful show in May. Her guest artists were two male dancers, Jesus Ramos and Orlando Romero; Arturo Martínez on guitar and Miguel de Cádiz was her cantaor.

Aficionados, big news for autumn, New York: Chateau Madrid is reopening at a new location with slight change in ownership. It would be Park Avenue near 29th Street. Pepe de

Málaga, Estrella with Emilio Prados on guitar would form the flamenco attractions...this is an exceptionally good neighborhood for Paellas and I mean Mesa de España on 27th Street near Park Avenue -- Guitarist in-residence is Roberto Reyes at this exceptional, excellent restaurant.

In this computer-orientated age, nearly everyone is writing new programmes for his computers. Roberto Reyes had been using a machine that played palmas for his toques; he now acquired a synthesizer and is experimenting on the programming, which must be exact in order to be valid. Thus, it came about that my guest Domenica Caro and myself were entertained with a beautiful rendition of Cepero's "Tientos" with all the possible background musical effects by computer guitarist Reyes!!

It is rumored that Cumbre Flamenco could be back in New York City for the Latin Festival...possibly with La Tati at the helm.

This letter comes to you from work and the heat of Texas! San Antonio has a heavy flamenco population. Master classes were held there by Teo Morca (last week in June) and José Greco (week of June 4th). María Benítez is sure to have a few shows there; as it is she will be in Plano (near Dallas) in autumn. I have added a success story of María Benítez from New Mexico, this I acquired from one of our engineers.

--George Ryss



PROFILES

CARLOS SANCHEZ

Born in Madrid, Spain, Mr. Sanchez began his study of the guitar at the age of twelve. At the age of thirteen, he continued his studies at the Conservatory of Music in Madrid. He studied music with the professor of music, Regino Sain de la Mata. At the same time, he took private instruction with Juan Garcia de la Mata for one year. He also studied four years with the great classical guitar professor, Haurio Herrero.

After six years in the Conservatory, Mr. Sanchez became attracted to flamenco music and started an extensive study of that media. His natural aptitude for classical and flamenco music enabled him to progress swiftly in its perfection.

His professional career started in 1950 with a touring company in Spain. In 1957, Mr. Sanchez became the first guitarist of the company Rosario Ballet Español. He played classical solos and flamenco accompaniment for the dancers.

From 1962 to 1968, Mr. Sanchez became first guitarist with Antonio Ballet de Madrid, making concert tours around the world. He travelled in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, South America, Central America and North America.

Mr. Sanchez has been doing concerts in colleges and Universities in North America since 1973.

He was the first flamenco artist to be invited to perform at the New Orleans Jazz Festival, which attracts New Orleans' top artists annually. He was also a faculty member of Tulane University's Music Department where he taught classical guitar. He also performed in Santa Fe's production of the Opera "La Vida Breve" as solo guitarist.

Mr. Sanchez has made numerous recordings in Spain and South America, both solo and with the flamenco company. His latest recording which was made in North America is entitled SOUL FLAMENCO. He has performed before the King and Queen of Denmark and for Spanish royalty.



RECORDING REVIEWS

"NEW" RECORDINGS AVAILABLE

by Paco Sevilla

Anita Paloma sends us an article from ABC, March 3, 1985, written by a Señor Montoya. It touches on a number of subjects: Ricardo Pachón, knowledgeable in flamenco was producing a series of programs on that subject for Spanish television, to be called "Flamenco en Vivo." Mr. Montoya asked him how it was going.

"...it was cancelled when we were halfway finished!"

"Why, Ricardo?"

"The truth is, I don't know! All I can tell you is that they told me to stop and I stopped. There must have been somebody new who came along and didn't like it much."

Montoya then goes on to say, "Well, that's how things go in this country, and it wasn't an isolated incident, especially when it comes to this Andalusian art. I have been told that an American named Cristóbal Silver [Cristóbal Dos Santos--Chris Carnes] who is a professor at Berkeley, a university in California [Chris lived in Berkeley, but is not a professor], dedicated himself to making recordings from 1961 to 1969 of fiestas that included such pure flamenco artists as Diego del Gastor, Juan Talega, Manolito el de María, El Perrate, etc., and now, recently, he offered it all, nearly three hundred hours of cante, to official offices of the government in Andalucía, such as the Junta de Andalucía or the Diputación de Sevilla, for a modest price so that they could edit and release them.

The response was negative and the University in California bought them. So now you know: if you want to hear pure cante, go to California!"

The University of California did not buy the tapes. They are being offered by that very same Cristóbal under the label, Zincali Recording Co. The complete list of materials now available are to be found elsewhere in this issue. There is a series of tapes of Diego del Gastor playing for such renowned cantaores as Fernanda de Utrera, Manolito el de María, Juan Talagas, and others, a tape featuring the singing of Juan Talegas, Antonio Mairena accompanied by Cristóbal Dos Santos in La Cuadra, a 45 minute tape of the great Manolo de Huelva, and two tapes of solo guitar by Cristóbal Dos Santos.

I ordered a sampling of these tapes and was generally pleased by what I received. Since I haven't listened to them in depth, I won't attempt a review at this time. The sound quality of the recordings varies considerably, the "Fiesta Circulo Mercantile" series being quite good, while the Mairena tape, that of Manolo de Huelva, and those of Cristóbal are often quite distorted. I recommend that aficionados, sample some of the tapes before going all out in purchasing them. Some people will put up with anything to hear the cante or unusual guitar playing, while others may not feel it is worth the effort. The offerings of Zincali Recording are to be applauded and supported, but I do feel that the buyer should approach his purchasing slowly and be sure it is what he wants before leaping in.

* * *

"LA VIDA FLAMENCA"

FILM OF THE FLAMENCOS OF MORÓN DE LA FRONTERA IN 1978

by Paco Sevilla

Ronald Radford send me a VHS video cassette of an 18 minute film, "La Vida Flamenca," written, narrated and directed by Aaron Miller. The video was made by photographing the projected film and, so, was not of the best quality, but I found it adequate. The film features the guitar and singing of Agustín Ríos, the dancing of Pepe Ríos and several others who danced and sang, in an informal setting. I found it to be a delightful 18 minutes and well worth seeing for any aficionado.

Apparently the film is available for rental for about \$40, from:

Dr. Aaron Miller
1028 N. Duchesne Dr.
St. Charles, MO 63301
(314) 946-9828

If there is sufficient interest, there is the possibility of having the film made available as a video.

* * *

"SOL Y SOMBRA"--GUILLERMO RÍOS - FLAMENCO GUITAR

(WEST COAST RECORDING 1985, CASSETTE)

by Paco Sevilla

Guillermo Ríos began studying the guitar in Spain in 1970 with Juan Maya and Niño Ricardo. Since then, he has worked with many top artists, both in Spain and America, including dancers Manolete Maya, Carmen Mora, and Ricardo "El Veneno", and singers, Chano Lobato, Chato de la Isla, Agiyetas, Rafael Romero, and others. He has also appeared with the companies of José Greco, José Molina, Ramón de los Reyes, José Antonio, María Alba, and María Benítez. He has performed twice in the Carnegie Recital Hall and is currently guitarist for María Benítez.

Listening to Guillermo on his cassette, "Sol y Sombra", one realizes that he is a fine flamenco guitarist who plays without a "foreign" accent. His playing throughout the tape is technically quite good. I was, however, disappointed with his selection of music. Unlike with classical music, it seems to me that we expect something more in a flamenco record than the repetition of the "compositions" of others. To play the compositions of other artists as part of a night club performance or perhaps even as a small part of a concert in order to add some variety to one's act, is one thing. To put these things on record, especially when the originals are available, is something different and seems purposeless to me.

The first piece on this tape is a colombianas, most of which is the music of Manolo Sanlúcar, with Sabicas material tacked on to the end. The clash in styles is not a subtle one. The rumba, "Ami Amor", credited to Pepe Habichuela, seems to be one long, wandering introduction, with hints of some popular major key rumbas and Paco de Lucía's colombianas; it never gets off the ground. The rondeña, credited to Juan Maya and Guillermo, is quite nice, well played, and has the now-expected Lucía-type rhythmic section.

The piece entitled "Recuerdo de Sevilla" (originally, "Recuerdo a Sevilla"), by Niño Ricardo, is for me an inferior version to the many I have heard recorded. What was originally a beautiful, rhythmic moorish fantasy, has been reduced to sentimental mush, with some of the truly beautiful parts omitted. It is possible that Niño Ricardo taught this piece to Guillermo, complete with a Sabicas-style introduction, but it seems unlikely that it was meant to be played this way.

Side two features three pieces that are credited to Guillermo and one by Pepe Habichuela, a jaleos that is not a particularly attractive solo number. The granaína is a beautiful composition; it is creative and well-played. The soleares are played largely in the upper regions of the guitar neck, resulting in an attractive dissonance. Guillermo uses quite a bit of rasgueado and tends to create chorded sounds, rather than memorable melodies. This is not necessarily a criticism, just an observation. Flamenco is not always beautiful melodies. I found this to be true of the bulerías, which are also played in dissonant tones.

In summary, I find this tape to be very listenable, without containing much that is memorable. The recording quality is okay--perhaps a bit heavy on the bass. Those who enjoy guitar solo music will probably enjoy it. As I said, the playing is quite good and authentic.

There were no instructions included with the tape for obtaining a copy. On the cassette is what appears to be a phone number: (408) 372-STAR. Other than that I can only suggest writing to Guillermo Ríos, care of "María Benítez, 1617 Vuelta Place, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

JUAN MARTIN - THE SOLO ALBUM (1985)

by Paco Sevilla

Juan Martín, of Great Britain, gives as his background that he spent time in Málaga and "...went on to gain wide experience playing with many of Spain's leading singers and dancers before attaining his present eminence as a solo recitalist and recording star." He has a number of previous recordings: "The Exciting of Flamenco" (Argo ZDA 201), "The Flamenco Soul of Juan Martín" (Decca SKL 5256), "Olé, Don Juan! Flamenco en Andalucía" (EMI NTS 126) and the cassette to accompany his excellent flamenco guitar method, El Arte Flamenco de la Guitarra (available in the USA from, Theodore Presser, Presser Place, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010). Juan has also published some of his early recorded "compositions". This music is extremely well written, but, unfortunately contains little that is original, being collections of other artist's falsetas.

According to the notes on the record album jacket, Juan has spent the eight years since his last record doing recordings with jazz musicians and with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He claims that this new record "The Solo Album" contains primarily original material. It is to his credit that this claim is true. I applaud his originality and his musicality; I'm not so sure about his contribution to flamenco.

We get a hint of what to expect when we read the titles of the pieces: "Guernica" (taranta), "Miró's Metronome" (bulerías), "Leonardo's Head of Christ" (farruca), "Velázquez' Prince Baltasar Carlos on Horseback" (alegría), etc. Original, but...?

The taranta is clean and pleasing. It changes into a 4/4 rhythm that is not readily identifiable as a particular flamenco rhythm. "Miró's Metronome" creates an interesting sound by using a metronome to represent palmas. The guitar has a distant sound, with lots of rhythm, that is quite nice and has a good aire, although I didn't get much of a flamenco "feel" from the melodies.

The farruca is another pretty piece, especially when it uses an Argentine tango rhythm as the back-up. But the flamenco moments are few. The alegrías is a take off on Ramón Montoya's early "jota-style" alegrías (used a great deal by Sabicas). The beginning and end, normal alegrías, are pretty sloppy, probably the least well-played music on the record. The center section, the "escobilla", takes off and leaves flamenco far behind to create a beautiful effect.

"Sadness of The King," a soleá, rambles along--not bad, but nothing outstanding. Juan demonstrates a weak tremolo and, while his technique is generally adequate, he is never overwhelming. In slow parts of his pieces he plays very clearly and musically.

"At the Carnival," starts out as a very exciting guajira and then bogs down in key changes. The granaina, "Lorca's Dream," was for me the best piece on the record with some long mellow arpeggios and a very nice tremolo.

The serranas, must pass without comment, and the final zapateado does nothing to stand out, being more or less traditional.

This is not a bad record and I recommend it, especially for those who enjoy solo guitar music in general. It is an attempt to do something different, which can be applauded and enjoyed, but it does not point out any new directions for flamenco. [Hey John, remember the Pensión Sánchez on Calle Echegaray and a little book about the life of Carmen Amaya?]

This record is available for \$9.50 from:

Juan Martín Promotions
54 Windsor Road
London N3 355
England.



CONCERT REVIEWS

SPANISH FIRE IN THE BAY AREA

[From: The Daily Californian, March 1, 1985]

by Michaela Schneider

Flashes of red and legs, guttural cries, and above all the driving rhythm. No, this is not a Broadway sleaze parade for depraved voyeurs. The synthesis of guitar, voice, and dance that is flamenco reaches sensual heights that defy the boundaries of the average American sensation seeker's experience. But neither is this powerful and subtle art food for ostentatious aesthetes. Rather, flamenco speaks from the old and strangely tortured gut of Andalusia, the southeastern region of Spain. Some say Arab, Indian, and Jewish in origin, it is associated primarily with gypsies. But to define this very living art form in terms of its pedigree is to miss the thrill of feeling it. "Feel" is a more appropriate word than to "see" or "hear" in describing the experience of being caught up in this pulse of sound and movement.

To achieve this captivating tension that is flamenco's core, all performers must work together. In this way flamenco is comparable to a tight jazz ensemble. But while jazz is played around an initial melodic theme, flamenco is structured on a series of set rhythmic patterns. Tension comes from the variations of tone and melodic color which change from exuberant to brooding to dissonant. A familiar parallel is the sound of Miles Davis: repetitious and soulful with painful breaks.

Visually flamenco is the ultimate mating dance. Anyone who has seen the dance movie "Carmen" cannot deny the erotic appeal. The alignment, arched back, and suggestive gestures are willfully and organically sexual. Women and men accentuate their differences and attractions in the dance-play. Like the music there are set stock phrases to be filled out according to the performers' mood. But because there is no ideal model to follow, each dancer's form is personalized.

Nonetheless, flamenco often appears to be highly stylized and even a caricature of itself. The emotional intensity may strike the audience as exaggerated and contrived, but this is a misconception. Flamenco is by nature unabashedly passionate and expressive. If a performer reaches a fevered pitch, it is said that he or she is possessed. The term used to describe this borderline state is *duende*, meaning a kind of supernatural pain. Supposedly it is an experience that transcends technique but simultaneously requires a commanding virtuosity. It takes emotional integrity, experience, and artistic proficiency.

But flamenco isn't all self-indulgent romanticism. It is for the audience as much as the performers. And like many other specialty imports, it is alive and well and contributing to Bay Area culture.

The group Anda Jaléo, one of several local groups, put on an enthusiastic show with guitarists Keni "El Lebrijano," Augustine Rios, and guest Roberto Zamoras at the newly renovated La Peña two Fridays ago. Taking its name from a

Spanish Civil War song, Anda Jaléo performs in the more graceful and feminine style of Seville, according to founder/director Patricia Inez. The program consisted mainly of solo dance with guitar and "palmas," or rhythmic clapping, and hoots of encouragement. "Carmen" this was not: playful rhumbas, a hat-dance called "columbianos" with Rubina Valenzuela, and "soleares" dances performed by the tall blond Patricia and polka-dotted Raquel Lopez and none of the choreographed slickness of Antonio Gades, principle performer in "Carmen".

The first half of the show seemed to drag but the second, kicked off by palmas, guitar, and the voice of Augustine Rios, was definitely more charged. It was hard to tell which took more abuse, the guitar or the taut and trembling face of the singer. Some say that flamenco song, or "cante jondo," is an acquired taste. At first exposure it may sound like the dying gasps of an enraged burro, but to a willing fan it is poignant and wrenching even if the words are foreign. To have heard Augustine sing one song made the evening worthwhile. The audience was released from semi-hypnosis by the following dances which built to a frenzied fanfare as the

whole gang stomped off-stage.

Should everyone then bustle off to the next Anda Jaléo concert to get a piece of the action? Doubtful; flamenco is not a something-for-everyone crowd pleaser. It is best seen in a small space, preferably smoke-filled with a cozily inebriated crowd. There are a few fairly large companies that tour, but intimacy may be sacrificed for choreographed sterility at these events. The Bay Area has an established community of flamenco artists and enthusiasts, and while one may never be sure who or what will be performed, it is always worth the surprises. The aficionado can bicker about which style is more authentic or how much gypsy blood a performer has, but in this improvised genre it is emotional conviction that makes the show. So if you are considering seeing "Carmen" for the fourth time or discover a latent urge to roll hips and stomp feet, then by all means hot-foot it down to your nearest bodega for a little flamenco fire.

Flamenco can occasionally be seen at La Peña on Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley, at El Greco Restaurant in the Cannery between North Point and Columbus on Friday and Saturday nights, at La Bodega on Grant St. Wednesday nights in San Francisco, and at the Mill Valley Community Center every first and third Saturday of the month.

* * *

THINGS CLICKED AT MANDEVILLE

[from: The San Diego Union, April 13, 1985]

by Anne Marie Welsh

Whether it's the fiery heel-clicking of a flamenco or the buoyant leaping of a jota, good Spanish dancing is just about irresistible. San Francisco's Theater Flamenco earned enthusiastic bravos and olés at Mandeville Auditorium last night with a program cunningly varied and paced.

The company of six dancers and two musicians is theatrically sophisticated. Their director, Dini Roman, has an impressive background in training and performance. And clearly the dances are fully choreographed beforehand.

Flamenco does not readily lend itself to group choreography, so the best works in that style were solos and duets in which dancers, singer Mercedes Molina and guitarist Federico Mejia shared equally in the improvisational effect.

Roman herself is not your basically arrogant gypsy. She's small, quick, sinuous when she wants to be, yet open-hearted in the quality of her movement. In "Madruga," she teamed up with Miguel Santos for an erotic duet, made more suggestive still by the shawl he removes from her shoulders and re-wraps about her torso as she twirls.

An opening number and the later "Majestad Espanola" had their choreographic roots in ballet, but the latter trio for women maintained a lovely lilt to the naive rhythms of a Spanish waltz.

Both jotas moved the program from the stone floor of a gypsy hothouse onto the warm earth outdoors. I must confess to a life-long bias for the jota.

* * *

'EMBRUJO ESPANOL' ENCHANTS AUDIENCE

[from: Star, San Antonio, Texas, Friday, June 21, 1985]

by Ricardo Sanchez

A sparse audience greeted the enchanting magic of Spain last night at Beethoven Hall with a standing ovation.

La Compañia de Arte Español presented "Embrujo Español" (Spanish Bewitchment), and the dancing was excellent, with only a few flaws by some unpolished performers.

It was an evening of cultural diversity, for Spain itself is not a singular statement--it is a land reflecting different cultures and languages.

The first program segment was a conjoint statement merging the sensual serenity of classical ballet with the fiery passions of flamenco. Languid and fluid, the dancers melded with one another, so that differences poetically collided.

During that segment, a dancer dropped her fan, but she

later retrieved it with flair as if it was part of the choreography.

The early segment was the slow part of the evening's program, akin to some of the moods of García-Lorca's "Romancero Gitano (Gypsy Ballads)." Its title, Concierto de Aranjuez, was the clue for a moment of cultural confluence.

After a short intermission, the program became flamenco at its best, with two masters coinciding with precision, passion, mirth and enjoyment.

José Linares displayed his prowess on the guitar and his "cante hondo" elicited the allure of Spain with its plaintive yet resonant sounds--a spiritual welling up of images reflecting the North African heritage of 700 years of occupation.

Added to those sounds were the magical notes of Teodoro Morca's feet and hands stamping out a sonata worthy of the standing ovation he received.

According to Fernando Herrera, an ex-guitarist turned flamenco pianist, "Teo Morca is a dancer of four 'tercios'."

A tercio is a third of a concert or bullfight, and it takes great tenacity to be able to fully dance such a cuadrilla to the heady beat of flamenco.

Two particularly promising dancers are Rocío, a vivacious and sensually delightful woman who has a childlike delicacy and the aplomb of a vibrant gypsy woman in her movements, and Rolando Sosa, the veritable image of a gypsy with a likeable sauciness.

The costuming was beautiful, its colors resplendent and their allure a moving fantasy.

The choreography by La Chiqui was impeccable, marred only by the need for further polishing by some of the more inexperienced dancers.

The program is surely one of the highlights of the San Antonio Festival. It will be repeated Saturday at 6p.m. at Beethoven Hall. It is an event well worth attending, for it has a truly magical sensibility that is quintessentially an Embrujo Español.

The majesty of Linares and Morca is well complemented by Rocío, Rolando and La Compañia de Arte Español--entertainment that is definitely first class.

* * *

SPANISH JOURNEY FASCINATING

[from: The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, Ohio, Tuesday, July 9, 1985]

by Wilma Salisbury

"A Trip Through Spain" was billed as a lecture-performance by dancer Teodora Morca Sunday night at Hawken School. Because of the informal nature of the program, however, Morca preferred to call it a "chichat performance."

A natural showman with great flair, Morca burned up the stage with his fiery Spanish dancing. Guitarist Bruce Catalano assisted with live music in the flamenco finale. But most of the accompanying music was played on tape on a sound system of poor quality. The only costuming was a change of shirt for the flamenco number. There were no sets or lighting designs to enhance the theatricality of the dancing.

Nonetheless, Morca spoke and performed with such passion for his art form that he caught the intense flavor of Spanish dancing with sound and movement alone.

Morca, an American-born Spanish dancer who is leading a flamenco workshop this month at Fairmount Center, described Spain as "a country of many countries." Explaining the characteristic dances of different regions from Galicia to Andalucia, he talked about folk dance, classical ballet of the bolero school, modern Spanish theater dance and flamenco. In addition to a flamenco alegrías, he performed two theater dances and a castanet concerto.

In "El baile de Luis Alonso," set to Spanish symphonic music by Jimenez, Morca integrated flamenco heel beats and rhythms with athletic jumps, kicks and big movements through space. Accompanying himself with his castanets, he performed with such vigor that he was slightly winded when he introduced the next piece, a castanet concerto set to a Liadov scherzo for piano and orchestra.

Standing mostly in one spot, Morca accompanied the piano

with zapateado rhythms that sometimes doubled the piano and sometimes went against it in a lively counter rhythm. As Morca played, he moved his shoulders, arms and hips in rhythmic gestures that sometimes made the concerto a dramatic dialogue and sometimes a sexy dance.

Although most of the program was light and entertaining, Morca took a serious artistic stance in his choreography to Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor. The last piece one might expect to hear in a program of Spanish dancing, the great keyboard work appealed to Morca, he said, because of its rhythm, passion and sensuality.

Dancing to a recording of the work played on a pedal harpsichord, Morca rigidly followed the rhythm and phrase of the toccata. His sharp heel beats imitated the sharp attack of the harpsichord. His quick changes of direction related to the instrument's dramatic releases.

His spiraling turns caught the harmonic sense of sequences and cadenzas. In the fugue, he made no attempt to visualize the contrapuntal texture of the music. Rather, he worked with its rhythmic structure to form a dramatic abstract dance.

After the performance, Morca described the Toccata and Fugue as "a humbling piece." Although he danced to it with pride, he also retained a sense of humility before the music that gave his performance a poignant quality.

While Catalano played a flamenco guitar solo, Morca caught his breath and changed from a navy-blue shirt to a magenta one with a dashing blue neck scarf. In the flamenco finale, he improvised with freedom within a strict rhythmic structure and performed a long unaccompanied solo that integrated rapid heel beats, finger snaps and hand claps into a brilliantly showy cadenza.

The audience, which had clapped along and shouted "Ole!" on cue, wanted more. But Morca said, "Hasta luego," and left the stage.

* * *

[The following five reviews were inadvertently omitted from an earlier issue of Jaleo.]

SEÑOR RADFORD DIO MUY BUEN CONCIERTO

[From: Stillwater News Press, Stillwater, OK, February 28, 1985]

by Randy Pease

Bueno!

The exclamation was heard often Wednesday night during a special flamenco guitar concert by Ronald Radford in the OSU Student Union Little Theatre.

Blending a relaxed stage presence with technical expertise and a genuine love for the Andalusian Flamenco tradition, Radford simply beguiled his audience.

Almost as enchanting as the flamenco music was the historical and personal background Radford used to preface each selection. He opened the program with a song he learned on a park bench in Cadiz, and continued with tunes learned in gypsy lairs, in the living rooms of flamenco masters, under a tent at a flamenco festival, and in the cafes and cantinas of Seville, Granada, and Malaga.

In the various strums, rolls, arpeggios, and percussion techniques, Radford demonstrated the influences several cultures had on the music of southern Spain, including the Sephardic Jews, the Arabic-speaking Moors who ruled Spain for 800 years, and gypsies who migrated from northern India.

Incredible as it seems, at times, Radford would be playing rhythm, melody, the bass line--even drums--simultaneously. One Moorish piece, written for an Arabic stringed instrument called an oud and using a modal tuning, could well have been performed in the old Alhambra during the 12th Century A.D.

Radford also paid homage to his idol and former mentor, Carlos Montoya, by playing a piece his mother bribed him into learning with a four-layer chocolate cake. Radford also played the first piece of flamenco music he ever heard--a Montoya recording he learned from a \$1.98 grocery store album.

The Tulsa native encored with a rousing gypsy love lament punctuated by much hand-clapping and shouts of Ole! and Bueno! Radford's concert was sponsored by OSU Allied Arts.

FLAMENCO GUITARIST PROVES AUDIENCE HIT

[From: The Lawton Morning Press, Lawton, OK, April 27, 1985]

by Pat Raffaele

Cameron University's Theater was transformed into a club in southern Spain Friday evening as flamenco guitarist Ronald Radford conjured up images of gypsies, dancers and festivals.

Radford, a Tulsa native, gave an excellent performance, which was sponsored by the Southwest Oklahoma Opera Guild. The audience of approximately 100 responded to his performance with shouts of "ole" and extended applause.

The guitarist opened the concert describing his definition of flamenco music and displaying his sense of humor. He introduced the audience to flamenco music with an opening number that was both exciting and haunting.

Radford's second number, done in the flamenco form of "granadina," was a sad and melancholy romantic melody. The next number, done in the flamenco music form of "seguriya," was one of the evening's best. This may be because it was the first number Radford learned from his famed teacher Carlos Montoya.

During the gypsy lament, Radford created the sound of drums and bugles until the audience could almost visualize a somber procession.

Radford concluded his concert with one of his favorites and one of his best pieces done in the form of "tarantas." This number, which Radford said is soul music of the gypsies, is strong and forceful, but at the same time mournful and touching. This was one of Radford's most expressive performances of the evening.

During the concert Radford also treated the audience to a classical guitar number, which was a beautiful romantic love song.

The enjoyment of his music was enhanced by his explanations and stories before each piece performed.

The opera guild should be commended for bringing such a delightful performance to Lawton.

Radford deserved the spontaneous standing ovation he received since it is truly amazing that one man and his guitar can evoke such a wide range of exciting and exotic images.

* * *

RONALD RADFORD

[From: Siftings Herald, Arkadelphia, AR, May 9, 1985]

by John Linn

For an hour or so last Monday evening, the Russell Fine Arts Auditorium on the Henderson campus was transformed into something resembling a dark, vaulted Spanish cave. For a brief time the hot, dusty South Iberian night descended upon Arkadelphia and covered the audience in the cave-like auditorium with the haunting sense of romance that only a brush with Old Spain can provide. Flickering images of ancient Seville, Granada, and Malaga with their fine Moorish castles and colorful gypsy inhabitants darted about the illuminated stage as one tune after another flowed from the deft fingers of flamenco guitarist Ronald Radford.

Such melodies as "Bulerias," "Granadina," "Tarantas," and, of course the old favorite, "Malaqueña" wafted down from the stage alternately stimulating the audience into the "palmas" (keeping time by clapping along with the guitarist) and sending the audience into melancholic states of reverie with images of Old Spain floating before the mind's eye. "Holy Week in Seville" was a particular favorite with the small but highly appreciative audience as Mr. Radford charmingly simulated the sounds of drums and bugles.

"Romantic: Anonymous." The achingly lovely strains of this piece evoke the sweet passions and plaintive joys of romantic love. Not well known, the tune is nonetheless one of those you carry around with you for days.

Mr. Radford interspersed warm, colorful commentary on such subjects as the history and tradition of flamenco music and his own experiences in Spain among his stunningly played musical pieces. His virtuosity on the finely handcrafted flamenco guitar was apparent even to the most inexperienced listener. All pieces were played from memory since flamenco

music has not found its way onto the written score. The flamenco tradition is passed on from one artist to another. Mr. Radford received his training from two sources. One was directly from the greatest flamenco master, Carlos Montoya, and the other was from the gypsy guitarist-singers with whom he studied while in Spain on a Fulbright Scholarship.

When the concert, which was sponsored jointly by the Student Activities Board of Henderson State University and the Arkansas Arts Council, was over, the listener felt as though he had personally experienced all the passion, the charm, the grace, the mystery, and the beauty of Romantic Old Spain. All-in-all it was an enchanting evening. As the last, sweet, poignant note was played, it seemed to hang there tremulously like the last, shimmering glow of light from a sunset. As with the sunset, you hoped it would never end.

RADFORD BRINGS A BIT OF GYPSY TO LAWTON, SILL

[From: The Cannoneer, Ft. Sill, OK, May 2, 1985]

by Tim Ford

A little bit of the gypsy wandered through Lawton and Fort Sill last week, and by the time it left hundreds of people young and old had heard its soul.

That little bit was flamenco guitar, and not just any old flamenco guitar, because it was played by Ronald Radford, a former Fort Sill soldier who with the Army's help went on to become a master of the ancient, complex folk music.

Radford's visit to Lawton, sponsored by the Southwest Oklahoma Opera Guild, began with several residencies in which he explained and played flamenco for school children, including a group he held spellbound Friday at Sheridan Road Elementary School.

Friday night about 200 people were treated to an evening with Radford in concert at Cameron University Theatre. Radford proved a winning, all-around communicator, explaining each selection's background and recounting highlights of his years learning flamenco with the gypsies of southern Spain.

And then there was the communication in the music. Radford played a flamenco guitar more musically complex and interesting than the flash-and-stomp show tourists usually see in Spain. The music ranged from mournful to festive, romantic to explosive.

One fan in the audience helped send Radford along to worldwide acclaim. He was retired SFC Joe Simms, who taught Radford to play the drums 20 years ago so that the young GI could get into the 97th Army Band at Fort Sill.

Radford had joined the Army when he saw that his draft number would be coming up.

He was already a professional flamenco guitar player, having been bitten first by a \$1.98 album featuring Carlos Montoya on one side and the Havana Hot Shots on the other.

He auditioned before the great Montoya backstage at a concert in Radford's hometown Tulsa. Montoya was impressed and gave Radford free lessons in New York City.

He took basic training at Ford Leonard Wood, MO.

"I played harmonica, and I actually did that classic scene where there's a bunch of soldiers out on the hillside, and one of them pulls out a harmonica and starts to play," Radford said.

Radford was sent on to Fort Sill, where he was a cannonner. But his guitar talents became known, and he played a few private parties.

It was at a Christmas party that the 97th band's CWO4 Gordon Williman heard Radford play.

"Walliman said something to the effect that this guy's too good a guitar player to be a cannon cocker," Simms said.

So Walliman turned Radford over to Simms. Now the problem was how to get him in the band. The Army had all the guitar players it needed.

Simms figured anyone who could master the complex rhythms of flamenco could master the 13 basic drum beats. After about 10 minutes of lesson and a half-hour of practice, Radford auditioned. He passed. Barely.

"One of the things I've always wanted to know is whether you had anything to do with that," Radford told Simms.

"No way. If you would have failed, that would have been it," Simms said.

The lessons showed up in a way Friday night. During the concert Radford made his guitar sound like a snare drum in an intriguing selection about an Easter procession.

Radford never did play the drums very much in the Army. Instead the Army used him where one entertainer could play, such as in the Fort Sill clubs.

A year later Radford was at a crossroads, he could go to Germany as a cannonner or to Vietnam as a musician. He chose Vietnam.

"The Army helicoptered me all over the rice paddies to hospitals and orphanages," Radford said. Sometimes it was hard to leave the kids behind, he said.

And the Vietnamese people, being used to stringed instruments, were fascinated by Radford's playing wherever he went.

One day in Vietnam a band sergeant handed Radford a trombone and said, "Report for the parade in an hour."

Radford protested that he didn't know how to play trombone. "Fake it," was the sergeant's reply.

"So I did, and three weeks later I was playing third chair slide trombone," Radford said.

The Army gave Radford room to grow artistically, he said. And it helped him by documenting his career.

When he was in Saigon, the Army arranged Radford's first two formal concerts.

"They printed up programs with my picture on them and everything," Radford said. "I feel those programs and all the letters I got from people in the Army really helped me get the Fulbright Scholarship."

Before the Army, Radford had planned on working a tramp steamer over to Spain and just wandering around with the gypsies.

He did end up wandering around Spain with the gypsies, but the Army helped him get a scholarship to do it with some money in his pocket.



PRESS RELEASES

MIGUEL BERNAL TO APPEAR IN BLOOD WEDDING

Michael Bernal, will be appearing in California in a modern adaptation of Lorca's "Blood Wedding." He will portray the role of the woodcutter. A demanding role that requires him to be on stage during the entire run of the play, incorporating acting, singing and dance movement.

Mr. Bernal's career started at the age of seven. Dance classes became his passion whether tap, jazz, ballet or Spanish, which became his forte. Acting came later only after being offered a featured role in Ross Hunter's movie musical production of "Lost Horizon," dancing and singing with Liv Ullman and Bobby Van. He then concentrated on his acting craft under such teachers as Squire Fridell, Carmen Zapata and special seminars on acting with Lucille Ball. His acting has lead to roles in various stage and television productions. He recently completed an original musical directed by Gene Nelson, and is slated for a guest appearance on HOB's "Not Necessarily the News."

Though much time and concentration was devoted towards his acting classes, Mr. Bernal, kept his dance studies going in steady progress, with teachers like Inesita and Carmelita Maracci. His studies in Spain and Mexico have brought him in contact with reknown artists such as Rosario & Antonio, Pilar Lopez, Ballet Folklorico of Mexico and Jose Greco. After a few months of study with Jose Greco, Mr. Bernal was invited to work as a soloist with Greco and Nana Lorca, performing in concerts and symphony programs. The highlight was performing with the "Boston Pops Symphony" during their New Years Eve nationally televised celebration.

See "Flamenco Calendar" for dates and locations of appearances.



MIGUEL BERNAL

* * *

CAROLYN BERGER & DANCERS AT ACADEMY WEST IN SANTA MONICA

Associated Independent Artists will present Carolyn Berger & Dancers at Academy West Theatre in Santa Monica on Saturday and Sunday evenings January 25 and 26, 1986.

Among other works to be presented will be the restaging of Berger's "After Zambra," a middle eastern/flamenco choreography incorporating dancers and musicians from both styles. Originally based on flamenco choreography by Berger's teacher, Lupe del Rio, "After Zambra" was premiered in 1981 with belly dancer Leilani Taliaferro and flamenco soloists Pollyanna Garcia-Hayes and Berger, accompanied by eight dancers on palmas. In the 1986 version, the Zambra choreography will be by Berger and the piece will feature several flamenco and belly dancers accompanied by flamenco singer/guitarist, Clark Allen, and drummers on dumbek, a traditional middle eastern drum. Carolyn Berger, who describes herself as a modern/percussion dancer, sees "After Zambra" as a work - in - progress which will continue to change and grow as she continues to learn.

Academy West Theatre is located at 1711 Stewart Street in Santa Monica. General admission is \$5.00. Performances begin at 8:30 PM. Seating is limited and reservations are necessary so please phone (213) 382-6928 or (213) 828-2018 in advance.

* * *

EL OIDO

Minneapolis, MINN--Between October 21 and November 19, Zorongo Flamenco will tour east to west and south to north in the U.S., plus side trips to Canada. The initial engagement in Kellogg, ID, will set the tone for cries of "Ole" that will continue into Vancouver, BC, and later in Las Vegas and San Rafael, CA. With the close of the fall tour, Zorongo will round out with a special fall performance at University of Minnesota's St. Paul Student Center, November 21-22.



CAROLYN BERGER (photo by Alan Thewlis)

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Zincali Productions has made available a collection of invaluable tapes of Diego del Gastor and the people he was associated with in and around Moron de la Frontera.

There are four 90 minute cassettes featuring Diego with singers Fernanda de Utrera, Manolito el de la María, and Juan Talegas (\$15.00 each). There is a 60 minute tape of Antonio Mairena in La Cuadra, along with a number of other artists (\$15.00); two tapes feature Diego and guitarist Cristóbal Dos Santos with some of the above singers. There is also a 46 minute cassette of Manolo de Huelva, who is unavailable on records (with some minor exceptions) for \$15.00, and two tapes of solo playing by Cristóbal Dos Santos, an American guitarist whose playing is highly respected both in Spain and in the United States (\$8.00 each).

For more information write to: Global Information Distributors, 53 Eldridge Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941.

This is a unique opportunity and deserves full support by all serious aficionados.

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Born in 1942 in Córdoba, Spain, Paco Peña has been playing professionally since the age of twelve and has toured Europe both as a soloist and as part of the "Paco Peña Flamenco Company" to wide critical acclaim.

Dedicated to conserving the pure artistry of flamenco, Mr. Peña established the seminar "Encuentro Flamenco" offering the aficionado an intensive program of study as well as the opportunity to live in Andalucía, the heart of this musical culture.

He has recorded nine albums for Decca Records including three live performances and a duo effort with Paco DeLucia, another world renowned flamenco guitarist. He has also made several highly successful tours of Australia, given recitals with the company at festivals in Hong Kong, Edinburgh, Holland, and Aldeburgh and performed to audiences in Japan and London, all to widespread enthusiasm.

Paco Peña appears regularly worldwide on Television and has received extensive praise for his shared recitals with John Williams.



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LOS ANGELES JUERGAS



CHENIN DE TRIANA ACCOMPANIED BY EDUARDO AGUERO

photos by Dick Williams

JANUARY

by Yvetta Williams & Ron Spatz

This Juerga found us at a new location--the recreation room of a large condo complex in Canoga Park. Our host was Steven Schade, the manager of the complex. The place is ideal for juergas and we have been invited back.

In the normal feast or famine syndrome, we had practically every guitarist in Los Angeles there, plus the great cantaor Chinin de Triana, and would you believe, three dancers. On top of a hard day of rehearsals, Coral Citron and Marlene Gael danced their hearts out. (God bless them.) Later on



LEFT TO RIGHT: YVETTA WILLIAMS, EDUARDO AGUERO, CHENIN, CORAL CITRON, MARLENA GAEI



LEFT TO RIGHT: YVETTA, EDUARDO, BILL FREEMAN, CORAL, BUY WRINKLE, BENJAMIN SHEARER AND MARLENA

Katina Vrinios pitched in. Even with so few dancers, there was tremendous ambience added by Chinin and different guitarists taking turns accompanying him. Guitarists present were Eduardo Aguero, Stamen Wetzell, Benjamin Shearer, Guy Wrinkle, Dennis Hannon, Bill Freeman, Yvetta and Ron.



JANUARY '86

The next Los Angeles Juerga will be Saturday, January 11, 1986 from 7:00p.m. to midnight in the recreation room at 13900 Fiji Way in Marina del Rey. Bring your favorite pot luck dish and drink. Coffee and tea and paper plates, etc., will be provided.

Rosita McCool has graciously reserved the recreation room for a flamenco party. Everyone who would like to participate is encouraged to come and share in an evening of flamenco music, dance, song and fellowship. We encourage this to be a time of sharing, helping each other to understand and appreciate all the various segments of flamenco and a chance for guitarist, dancers, and singers to work together, get to know each other better, and find ways to promote flamenco.

We also encourage those who want to see a flamenco show to go to El Cid and enjoy their show and not to come to the juerga for we have no intention of putting on a show. If you want to be a critic please offer your skills elsewhere and don't come. This juerga is hopefully a place where beginning as well as professional dancers and musicians can get together to share without feeling they are on center stage in a performance. This is a party and it could be a workshop and if a dancer wants to stop in the middle of a dance to show the guitarist where the llamada comes, they can feel free to do this, and we hope this will happen.

In the spirit of sharing, encouraging and enjoying a flamenco experience we do hope you will attend and bring friends and family who enjoy being around flamenco music and people. Teachers feel free to come and bring your students.

There are visitor parking spaces by the tennis courts and apartments and additional parking at the Fisherman's Village. Take the Marina Expressway to Lincoln then to Admiralty Way to Fiji Way. It is near the Fisherman's Village. For more information call Yvetta Williams (213) 833-0567 or Ron Spatz (818) 883-0932.





photos by Robert Robinson

STUDENT GROUP PERFORMS IN SAN DIEGO ACCOMPANIED BY SINGER CHARO BOTELLO

**LAURA MOYA SPANISH DANCE COMPANY
GUEST ARTISTS FROM LOS ANGELES
TO JOIN SPANISH DANCE COMPANY**

The Laura Moya Spanish Dance Company will appear in "Flamenco Moro" on Saturday, January 4, 1986, at 8:00 p.m. at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts.

Renowned flamenco dancer Cruz Luna will team with Laura Moya accompanied by flamenco guitarist Antonio Duran and flamenco singer Kathy Mejia. Other guest artists will be Asha Gopal (dances of India) and the Ali Baba Middle Eastern dancers.

The first half of the program will consist of Spanish classical and flamenco dances. The second half, "Flamenco Moro," will trace the roots of flamenco from India through the Middle East to Spain.

This one-night-only concert will be presented by the Institute for Hispanic Dance, a non-profit organization whose goal is to promote and perpetuate Hispanic dance and music in the Southwest.

Tickets available at Diamond's Select-a-Seat and the Scottsdale Center for the Arts Box Office - \$10 and \$7.

SAN DIEGO SCENE

AROUND THE TOWN

San Diego guitar and dance students have taken the initiative to form a small flamenco group to gain performing experience. Their troupe, called "A Touch of Spain" has been bringing flamenco to senior citizen homes throughout San Diego.

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ABOVE LEFT TO RIGHT: ELENA, MARISA, JERONIMO, CHARO, "EL PINTOR," LISA MELLIZO, CECELIA
BELOW: ELENA, LISA AND CECELIA DANCE FANDANGOS





LEFT TO RIGHT: CHINITA, JUANA, ELENA, EL PINTOR AND CECELIA

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The fee is \$300 all inclusive. Space is limited to ten dancers, so reserve your space by sending a \$100 deposit to Harriet Bullitt. Make checks out to COPPERNOTCH DANCE WORKSHOP. A map and more information will be sent out upon receipt of the deposit.

Send deposit to:

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 9&10 DAVIS, CA--UC Davis
 11 SALINAS, CA
 12 SANTA CRUZ, CA--UC Santa Cruz
 13 MERCED COLLEGE THEATER
 15 OXNARD, CA--Oxnard College
 16-18 SANTA BARBARA, CA--UC Santa Barbara
 19 OXNARD, CA
 20 SAN DIEGO, CA--U.S.C. (La Jolla)
 29-31 SAN FRANCISCO, CA--Marines Theater
 5 ANGELITA
 LA MIRADA, CA--Lamirada Civic Theater
 5 SAN DIEGO JUERGA
 5 ESTRELLA MORENA, NEW YORK, NY--Town Hall
 28 NORTHERN CALIFORNIA JUERGA (See "UPDATES" for details).
 3&5 SABICAS--SANTA FE, NM--Institute for Spanish Arts
 4&6 ANTONIO PORTANET--poet-singer-guitarist SANTA FE, NM--
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NOVEMBER '85

- BLOOD WEDDING
 1-10 SAN FRANCISCO, CA--Marines Theater
 14-15 PASADENA, CA--Cal Tech Pasadena
 16 FULLERTON, CA--Plummer Auditorium
 25 NORTHERN CALIFORNIA JUERGA (See "UPDATES" for details).
 21-22 ZORONGO FLAMENCO--U.M. St. Paul Student Center

JANUARY '86

- 11 LOS ANGELES JUERGA (Call Yvetta Williams 213/833-0567
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