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PABLO RODARTE



# JALEO



newsletter of the flamenco association of san diego

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JALEO, BOX 4706, SAN DIEGO, CA 92104

OCT/NOV/DEC '85

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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 (\*See back cover for explanation.)

## CAMARON DE LA ISLA

## "I'LL LIVE AS LONG AS I HEAR MY SOUL"

[from: Europa Viva, Sept. 1985; submitted and translated by Brad Blanchard]

"I was born in La Isla de San Fernando, in Cádiz, the fifth of December in 1950; I grew up there. My name comes from an uncle of mine, because when I was young I was so small and white that he called me Camarón, which is like a tiny shrimp, that's what they call it there. My family was a poor one. I'm poor, I can't read or write, I've always looked to make my living on the street. My father had a blacksmith shop, and I went there to work. The only thing I've done since I was small is work and sing. My mother used to sing, but artists in my family...I'm the only one. And the cante, I think my mother started me in it. When I was born, I already had it in me. I've always liked it; it's my life and my world, even though when I was young I wanted to be a bullfighter, but I was too afraid.

"When I was 16, I started singing professionally, with Miguel de los Reyes, and later I went to Madrid with Dolores Vargas and worked a long time in the tablao Torres Bermejas. There I sang solos, and, finally, it was there that I met Paco de Lucía. He would go to see me, he liked me and we recorded my first record, "Rintintín." Then, later, would come "Rosa María," "Arte y Majestad," "Castillo de Arena"... I was in Madrid for 15 years. Now I live in La Línea with my wife, Dolores, my two daughters and my son."

In a hotel on the Paralelo in Barcelona, it is only two hours before his next performance. In a small room, which he shares with José Fernández "Tomatito," the guitarist and friend who

accompanied him for years, it smells damp; it is in the low part of the city next to the sea. From the window we see a landscape of patios and uralite roofs which don't help diminish the heat. "It's hot here, isn't it?" complains Camarón. "I would've liked a nicer hotel." Sitting across from him, face to face on the beds, with the tape recorder on a table, the man is seen openly. The sunken cheeks, prominent cheekbones, and wide chin, accent the genuinely gypsy features of Camarón. The hot, clear eyes, at times insecure, speak of a delicate man, timid and deeply human. Tiredness and pain are reflected in his face. He has come from Zamora today, and in Zamora he couldn't sleep. A sprained ankle from a stupid fall bothers him constantly and a cold forces him to continuously take Bisolvón, aspirins, decongestant drops and Nolotil for the pain.

Then we speak about flamenco, his music, about the criticism he receives, about Andalucía and the gypsies. His words come out softly, as if there were no hurry. "Andalucía...is me. I have Andalucía inside and it comes out when I sing. And even though I know nothing about politics, somehow I feel like a defender of the rights of the gypsies because they look up to me a lot. Yes, a lot! The situation of flamenco in Spain seems very interesting to me. Young people, especially, are accepting it, especially in Cataluña, which is linked to flamenco, even though in Andalucía it's more of a daily thing."

Camarón, has 34 years of life behind him, with just a few years less of cante. Records recorded, 12 in the last 15 years. Since 1979, when "La Leyenda del Tiempo" appeared--and the song "Volando Voy," was so popular--the introduction in some of his records of electric instruments, and music and musicians foreign to flamenco, has awakened the anger of the more orthodox "mairénistas"--defenders to the end of the more pure tradition, venerated in the figure of the brilliant, and now deceased, Antonio Mairena, who raise angry voices against a musician who investigates, who experiments with other sounds, but who never is even a little bit removed from cante flamenco, from the deep and sad "quejío" that springs from his soul, from the most remote part of its history.



CAMARON DE LA ISLA AND TOMATITO IN 1982

What do you say to the criticism and opposition of those who say that the C tedra de Flamenco de Jerez shouldn't award you the highest honor, the Llave de Oro del Cante?

"About the criticism, I have no opinion, because like everyone, they have the right to think what they want, right? And the Llave de Oro del Cante, I don't want them to give it to me, because I'm still young, and I still have a lot to do."

Camar n moves nervously in his seat. While he calls for water for the photographer and me, and coffee for himself, the front rows of the Plaza Mayor del Pueblo Espa ol are filling up.

"You should realize that if I do rock, or whatever I do, I'll always be the same, because what comes out from inside me is flamenco. What I can't do is leave it, because this music is of the most delicate and it has more roots than others, like in jazz. I don't mean to say that it's better or worse, but it has a lot of culture. I will never stop doing flamenco."

--Why have you had musicians like Carlos Benavent, Jorge Pardo, and Joan Albert Amarg s on your latest records?

"Because they are fine artists. What I do with them is interesting and doesn't stray away from the precepts of flamenco. Even though the public over 40 years old won't understand like kids who are twenty, right?"

Paco de Luc a, that monster of the guitar, also from C diz, is a cornerstone in the works of Camar n and the mirror in which all flamenco artists necessarily look. Speaking about guitarists, Camar n says that, "There are some who play very well, but they listen to Paco and I don't know what happens, but they stop moving, and they don't know where to go, they do everything thinking of Paco." Tomatito, who doesn't leave us for a second, agrees with a gesture that says he knows who the maestro is, but it still hurts a bit: "It's just that Paco has said everything, and we guitarists don't know what else to say."

The collaboration of the musician from C diz is a constant factor in the works of Camar n. "Paco de Luc a is my well. What Paco does...that's where I draw my music from. Inside what is his, I look for what is mine. We met more than 15 years ago. We met each other, we appreciated each other, and we still appreciate each other. He has always wanted to play for me; he has always liked what I sing."

While we speak, Tomatito is sitting and strumming his guitar, unmoved. His blushing cheeks, the meaty features, are the living symbol of calm; Tomatito always seems calm. He is also a fundamental figure in Camar n's life. He is his support on stage, his guitar fills the silence--at times too long--and during his tours, he is always at his side.

Camar n asks about his suit, about what time it is. Sitting on the edge of the bed, he touches his bandages.

"I keep getting more nervous before the festivals, but later, when I'm on stage, I'm completely calm. It used to be the opposite. When I sing 'a gusto,' I feel a great satisfaction. If I have a good sound and I feel comfortable, I feel good with either a tango, or por buler as, or siguiriyas. When I sing poorly, I even get hoarse, when the sound doesn't catch me right...I don't know, a lot of things can happen."

"And letras [words to songs], there are many that I like. The ones on my latest record, "Vivir ," are by Pepe de Luc a, but, later, I arrange them to suit me. And I sing a lot of Federico Garc a Lorca. I've sung a lot of things that I don't really understand, because I'm not educated in that, but they say something to me, and if they say something to me it's because of something. The words have some meaning; whatever it is, it's very strong."

--How does fame agree with you?

"Sometimes I wish no one knew me; I would like to go around anonymous, but other times, when I feel good, then it doesn't matter. But when I'm feeling a little, you know, deficient, I don't want anyone to see me."

--And that the payas take their hats off to you...?

"Hombre, that's nice! Sometimes it's too much, but in the end it's always nice to start with nothing and then they know you."

During the summer, work is hard. Performances in the farthest points of the country, perhaps trying to make up for lost time, many hours pass by on the road. "When I've been away from home 3 or 4 days, I'm crazy about getting back and seeing my wife and kids. Especially in the summer, when the tours are 8 or 9 days long.

"I want to work around here [Barcelona] because I think the public of Catalu a wants to see me and I haven't been here for a long time. Also, I want people to listen to me, because some say I'm in bad shape; others say I'm skinny and I want them to see that I've always been thin, even though sometimes more than others, but also...what a summer I've had! All day in the car, with the heat..."

--What do you do when you're not working?

"Well...I listen to music--flamenco, jazz or rock...I like everything I hear. I play the guitar, to work out the notes of

my songs, although I'm not a tocao like Tomatito. I don't know; I do everything I like; I don't do without anything."

Camar n complains about being poorly promoted; he's a little sick of the record companies. "Now I'm waiting to sign a new contract with Fonogram--I also have an offer from CBS--if they pay me what I want."

With the change of subject, his voice is less enthusiastic, as if he spoke of someone who would never agree with everything. "I'm interested in working with them, but they don't treat me as I deserve. What I want is for them to promote me, what every artist wants. But they are stingy. If you ask them to promote you, they say they are bankrupt, you understand? Artists should be treated with respect. Besides, I've been in this for a long time, I sell records and the young public is on my side, and what I want is to be with the public and move on ahead."

With a gesture between masculine and childish, he asks me what suit he should wear tonight. After insisting that he wear whatever he wants, he changes his white pants for dark ones, the right one for a festival flamenco. Later, before the mirror, without a shirt, while he runs his fingers through his wet hair, I look at his thin body, almost like a child's, as fragile as his words when sometimes, insecurely, he asks for advice.

--Camar n, you are really thin.

"Yeah, I know," he answers with a soft voice, with an almost imperceptible air of sadness.

And in the dressing room, Camar n greets everyone, kind with all; many gypsies living now in Barcelona speak with me about him. Among the most sincere, one remembers when they "fought bulls" together in the middle of the street in San Fernando when they were only ten. Bambi, the former director of los Tarantos [a tabla] in the Plaza Real de Barcelona, tries to define Camar n: "Even though he seems extroverted, he's very shy; I've known him for years." A couple who are his owns on the coast.

"It's hard to find friends. People seem to like me a lot, but then they might go and say to another, 'You should see how this guy is' (said sarcastically) and they had been with me and they didn't say anything to me. Sometimes they don't act like people or anything. If they have something to say, they should say it to me."

And, at this point in the conversation, we have to talk about the black legend called heroin that has been following Camar n for several years.

--It seems that some flamencos, to play or sing, have gone on from wine to other drugs...

"What do you mean! The best way to do things is to be natural and when I work I do everything natural; when I'm going to do something important I'm fresh, not like people say. And when I'm not working I smoke a cigarette at certain moments."

--But many people say you use "horse".

"No, hombre, if I used that, how could I sing? They say that because there's a black legend about me, the same that they say I don't show up at festivals. If I don't show, it's not my fault, it's the agents', who sign a contract, and if they put the bull in front of me and I don't go, they say it's my responsibility."

--The words of the song "Vivir " (from the latest record of the same name): "Vivir , mientras que el alma me suene, aqu  estoy, para morir cuando llegue" (I'll live as long as I hear my soul, here I am, to die when it comes). What do these words refer to?

"Vivir  is an answer to what people are thinking, since they say I do this and that...Also, I did it for my love towards my mother, because people tell her many things about me and she's old now. 'Vivir ' is: here I am now to die when it comes, not when I want...but how could I want to die with such beautiful children and my life before me? Now is when I have to struggle,

because if the rudder goes astray, everything goes astray. I want to take care of myself because it will be 8 or 10 more years before I can leave my children well-off. I don't have ambitions to make a lot of money, I just want to live comfortable, and besides that, I want my children to be taken care of when they are grown up."

--What is love for you?

"It depends; I'm very strange. I always have been but now more because I have my wife, and that's who I love.

"They say we gypsies are machos, but no way. All I want is that what I say be done in my house. Understand? My wife does everything I tell her. Nowadays it's hard to find a gypsy woman like mine, pure gypsy; I got her when she was 12 and now she's 22. I made her. She respects me, and that's what I want, along with my children and my mother. Because of them I have the energy to struggle."

--Are you religious?

"I believe in God because that's what's been stuck into our heads. I believe in something, but more in what's here on earth than in what's up there."

by Isabel Caderque



LETTERS

A SECOND OPINION ON MOLINA CONCERT

Dear Jaleo,

I am shocked and extremely disappointed in your editorial staff for printing the so-called "review" of Jose Molina's Bailes Españoles in your most recent issue (Vol. VIII No. 2).

I could rebutt this disgusting piece of slander point for point, such as when the "critic" cites the use of taped music in Carnegie Hall as belonging in a cabaret or rehearsal studio. I would remind him that taped music was also used by the renowned Ballet Nacional and by Mario Maya. However, to rebutt the piece in this manner dignifies it way beyond its merit.

I will simply say that when a person who does not even identify himself elevates himself to the stature of "critic" and uses a forum such as Jaleo from which to make personal attacks upon respected artists it is the publication and its readers who lose. The publication damages its credibility and the readers around the country, indeed around the world, receive irresponsible and incorrect information.

What the so-called "Shah of Iran" wrote was certainly not a review but a vengeful personal attack on Mr. Molina, the printing of which is a disgrace.

As a member of the audience the night of the performance I would like to reassure the readership of Jaleo that Mr. Molina and his company gave the kind of exciting and dynamic performance we have come to expect and I am sure New Yorkers look forward to his concert return with much anticipation.

Regards,  
Shauna Hankoff  
N.Y., N.Y.

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IN SEARCH OF A TEACHER

Dear Jaleo,

I am a student of flamenco danza now for 5 years and am very much dedicated to the art form.

At present I am seeking a teacher of the cante and would ask who you would recommend as the best, or a few best, in the country in terms of their love of teaching cante, their ability to break it down for a student, and their love of singing.

I am interested in moving anywhere in the USA to study. I seek the right teacher--where there would be personal *sympatico*.

Thank you for any suggestions you might offer.

Sincerely  
JoAnn Zugel  
Santa Cruz, CA

[Ed. Any suggestions for JoAnn may be sent care of Jaleo.]

\* \* \*

PRAISE FROM VIRGINIA

Dear Jaleo,

I received the latest issue last week. Through Jaleo, I've received flamenco tapes, videotapes, dance supplies, news of workshops and trips, and much, much more.

This magazine has been invaluable in keeping aficionados aware of what is going on in the flamenco world. I'd like to read an article on Paco Sevilla, a person who has helped make this possible.

Keep it up!

Ana Wrenn  
Virginia Beach, VA

[We thank Ana for her kind words. Paco responded to this question sometime back that he'll let someone do a 'bio' on him when he retires as editor of Jaleo.]

**A Classic Combination**  
**PACO PENA & D'ADDARIO**

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 aricanado an intensive program of study as well as the opportunity to live in Andalucía, the heart of this musical cultura.

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.

Paco Peña uses  
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## FLAMENCO

[from: HiFi/Stereo Review, January 1966; sent by Guillermo Salazar]

by Donn Pahren

[Editor's Comment: The article, written in 1966, not long after the appearance of Donn Pahren's The Art of Flamenco, is a condensed version of that book, with some additional material included. It is interesting to read a point of view expressed twenty years ago and then compare it with the present state of flamenco. For example, Donn expresses the complaint that artists were imitating the past and not being creative enough! Today, he would certainly complain of the opposite -- that artists are being too creative and not sticking to tradition.]

The art of flamenco is a great deal more than a flashy style of Spanish music and dance, as is commonly believed in this country. It is an expression of a way of life, of the day-to-day activities of many of the inhabitants of southern Spain. To be a "flamenco," one does not have to be a performer -- a flamenco is anyone who is emotionally and actively involved in this unique approach to the problems of living. To understand the art of flamenco, it is absolutely necessary to understand that it is an outward artistic representation of the flamenco way of life.

The traditional flamencos are natural actors. Their preferred life is in the streets and cafes, where they can see and be seen, admire and be admired. They enjoy being nattily dressed, and each of them has an indestructible sense of being somebody unique. Flamencos are at once expansive, authoritative, friendly, condescending, formal, dignified, and above all, individualistic. They are not ambitious, and are capable of living happily with only the basic necessities. The concepts and developments of progress are reprehensible and incomprehensible to them. They scorn the rat race and its participants, together with such obnoxious modern phenomena as demanding traffic lights, motor-cluttered streets, shining cafeterias, and other manifestations of a grim, unseeing civilization bustling to no clear destination.

Flamenco music has traditionally served as an emotional outlet for this group of people. And thus, when the music is removed from its native habitat (and those habitats are now few and scattered), it becomes an art without roots. Authentic flamenco flourishes today only in a few hidden corners of Spain. All other music that we refer to as "flamenco" has to a greater or lesser extent been diluted, commercialized, and deprived of its soul.

The use of the word "soul" here is not a literary affectation, for it is in the miracle of duende (or soul), not through technique, cleverness, or sophistication, that the greatness of a flamenco artist is demonstrated. A concept that defies precise definition, duende can best be explained as the exposure of the soul, its misery and suffering, love and hate, offered without embarrassment or resentment. It is a cry of despair, a release of tortured emotions, to be found in its true profundity only in real life situations, not in the commercial world of theaters and night clubs, as a product that can be bought and sold or even produced at will. In the art of flamenco, the duende is sought and found through song, dance, and the guitar.

There are many theories about where flamenco came from and when and how it developed. The word conjures up images as varied and contradictory as Spain itself. Although the music we call flamenco is of great age, we do not know if it was called by that name at the time of its conception and early life. But the fugitive existence of the persecuted Moors, Jews, and gypsies, and the Christian outcasts who joined them, suggests one possible origin of the term. The Arabic words *felag mengu* mean "fugitive peasant," and since Arabic was a common language in Andalusia in the fifteenth century, it is likely that this term was borrowed from the Arabs and applied to all those who fled to the mountains. Through usage in Spanish, *felag mengu* may have been transformed to flamenco, eventually being adopted by the fugitives themselves and applied to their music.

There are other theories. According to one popular -- and rather poetic -- explanation, the similarities between the postures and movements of flamingos and flamenco dancers (with their brightly colored costumes) led to the art's being called "flamingo" and eventually "flamenco." Although it is wholly discounted by

serious students of flamenco, this amusing example of folk etymology dies hard. Another frequently advanced theory, and a more plausible one, is based on the fact that in Spanish the word "flamenco" also means "Flemish." Spain ruled Flanders from the late fifteenth century to the early eighteenth, and Flemish soldiers, called flamencos in Spain, had the reputation there of being rowdy and pretentious, much as did the early exponents of flamenco music. According to this theory, the underground types who originated and developed the art of flamenco were called "flamencos" because of their similarity to the Flemish soldiers, and their music later became known as flamenco.

Whatever the origin of the term, flamenco developed as an art of the lawless and oppressed. It came to be practiced almost exclusively by Andalusian gypsies behind closed doors.



With few exceptions, payos (non-gypsies) were not wanted, nor did they particularly desire to take part. Like that of early jazz, the atmosphere in which flamenco was nourished was a drunken one, replete with prostitutes, bandits, smugglers, and murderers, as well as gypsy blacksmiths, horse dealers, fortune tellers, and so forth. There is disagreement as to whether flamenco is a gypsy art -- many non-gypsy theorists deny the gypsies' creative role in flamenco, and the gypsies feel similarly about the payos -- but it is agreed that the gypsies played a major role in developing flamenco into the great art it is today.

The gypsies came from the region of the Indus river, near the present-day border between India and Pakistan. This has been proved to nearly everyone's satisfaction by similarities between the Gypsy language and the Indian Sanskrit, as well as by other factors too complex to discuss here. They are thought to have made two migrations into Spain -- the first with the eighth-century Moorish invasion, in which they played the role of camp followers and entertainers, the second and larger in the middle fifteenth century, when a good many of them (having been driven from India by Tamerlane about 1400 A.D.) spent some fifty years reaching Spain by way of Persia, Russia, the Balkan states, northern Italy, and France. Many of the tribes remained in countries along the way, while others strayed north into Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany, and England. Those who reached Spain continued south in search of the sun, and found their paradise in Andalusia.

It is probable that the gypsies brought with them a folklore based on that of their region in India, which in Andalusia mingled with other musical influences, namely the Jewish, Moorish, and Christian (Gregorian chant is thought to have had a particularly strong influence). These widely varying cultures blended, or rather were forced together, in the late fifteenth century and in the sixteenth when Christian leaders ordered the expulsion from Spain of all "undesirables" (gypsies, Moors, and Jews). Many of them refused to leave, and took refuge in

mountain wildernesses, banding together for strength along with Christian dissenters and fugitives from law.

The musical union of these cultures very likely formed the first foundation of flamenco as we know it today. The gypsies had the opportunity of hearing at first hand Jewish, Moslem, and Christian religious chants and folk music, influences they incorporated into their own oriental musical background to form a rich new art.

The Andalusians would like to take credit for the actual creation of flamenco and grant the gypsies a role only in its development. For various reasons, I believe it is safe to conclude that both the gypsies and the Andalusians played important roles in creating flamenco, principally because to those who know modern flamenco well, it is quite obvious which are the gypsy-inspired cantes (song forms) and which are Andalusian. The gypsy cantes are primitive, gusty, raucous, and wildly moving; the Andalusian tend to be more lyrical, flowing, literary, and superficial.

Song is the greatest of the elements of flamenco, which, listed in the traditional order of importance customary in Spain, are: song, dance, guitar, and jaleo. The song was the originating element, and is flamenco's very base and soul. A true appreciation of flamenco can not be reached unless the song is viewed in this perspective. Its verses range through all life's aspects -- gaiety, tragedy, wisdom, love, hate, beauty, violence, tenderness, sadness. These aspects are traditionally expressed with incredible poetry -- sometimes instinctive, when the verses are creations of the people, sometimes more polished, when the verses flow from the pen of the practiced poet.

There are many song forms, called cantes, and within each cante there are many variations. For instance, the soleares is a basic cante of flamenco. However, different regions and towns developed their own original ways of interpreting the soleares, as did several creative artists. Thus there exist soleares de Alcalá (soleares from the town of Alcalá de Guadaíra), soleares de Utrera, soleares de Jerez, soleares de Cádiz, soleares de Triana, and so forth, and with more finely drawn distinctions, there are the soleares of various artists, such as the soleares de Joaquín de la Paula, soleares de Enrique el Mellizo, and soleares de la Sarneta. All these soleares have come down to us, each with a different personality and intrinsic emotion. Singers perform these cantes much as they were sung by their creators, adding certain touches of their own, but in general adhering to the original form. A very accomplished singer such as Antonio Mairena will sing many different styles of all the cantes. Others are content with the cantes and styles of their particular regions.

The flamenco song has become badly bogged down as a creative art today. Young singers tend merely to imitate the phonograph records of their famous predecessors instead of injecting their own personalities into the cante, and this is one of the side effects of modern communication. Before such widespread imitation was possible, both singers and guitarists were forced to draw upon their creative abilities. Needless to say, it made for a far richer art.

Flamenco dance has changed entirely since its inception. Traditionally, the gypsies poured out their emotions through their arms, hands, fingers, upper torsos, and faces, emitting a natural fire and originality unblemished by formal schooling. Now academies send forth numberless graduates, all of whom have memorized identical or similar dance arrangements. Footwork often takes up half of a dance (to the detriment of imagination), and castanets, an innovation borrowed by theatrical flamenco from Spanish ballet, impede the smooth flow of hands and fingers (a vital element of true flamenco), replacing it with noise. But far removed from commercial flamenco, hidden in villages among the olive trees, there are still dancers who dance by instinct, who can still engulf one with the beauty of naturalness. This is the true flamenco dance.

The guitar is almost sacred ground. The flamenco guitar as played in theaters, concert halls, tablao's, and recording studios is loved by people the world over -- because it is exotic, and because they can feel in the music a primitivism, force, and emotion that has been lost to many other arts. But this means only that the concert flamenco guitar has not entirely dissipated its original inheritance of earth, wind, and torment. Not entirely, but the virtuosos are busily working on it. Play faster, insert more notes, flash, ostentation, up and down the neck, arpeggio complexities, tremolos, blinding runs, speed, technique, technique, TECHNIQUE....They are straying far from flamenco. They earn a great deal of money, but they communicate little.

The real flamenco artist needs only enough technique to enable him to transmit his emotions to himself and to his public.

This other, uncommercial side of the flamenco guitar must be heard to be believed. It is rare because poets are rare, and flamenco guitar-playing poets even rarer. It shuns the superficial to embrace the significant. It demands sensitive listeners and captures their hearts. They are not merely astounded by technique, they are moved by a delicate and powerful music. There are very few guitarists who have been able to preserve this tradition. If I were to make a list of them, not one of the big-name Spanish guitarists I have heard could be included.

The hand-clapping, finger and fingernail snapping, shouts of encouragement, rhythmical stamping of feet and clacking of tongues that are components of flamenco music and dance are collectively termed jaleo. This is an essential and extremely difficult art in itself. It demands a complete knowledge of the compás, or set rhythm, for timing is of the utmost importance. The jaleador who claps out of beat throws off the entire group and destroys its communication.

Jaleo is complicated by the fact that not all of flamenco's cantes have a compás. Those that do, of course, are danceable. Those that do not are only sung, and the guitar accompanist has the difficult task of following the singer within a traditionally set, but rhythmless form. The danceable cantes are those best suited for animated or intricate jaleo. The jaleo for the non-rhythmical and for the very profound, rhythmical cantes is usually limited to murmurs and exclamations of encouragement, of which "olé" is the most common.

The foregoing are the modes of flamenco expression, but there are levels of flamenco as well, levels both of profundity and of difficulty. Since it is the song, or cante, that is the root of all the art, it is best to speak of these levels in terms of song. There are three: the cante grande or cante jondo, the cante intermedio, and the cante chico.

Cante jondo (deep song) is the original expression of flamenco. It is the pure song, the trunk from which all the others branch, and in its oldest form was derived from ancient religious songs and chants, which later developed into a more generalized lament about life. Cante jondo includes by far the most difficult group of forms to interpret. It can be dominated only by the full use of the lungs and throat, and it demands great emotion and effort. When sung properly, it has the power to sweep the aficionado along on its melancholy course.

Although very moving and difficult to interpret, the cante intermedio is less intense and more ornamental than the cante grande. It can be said that the cante intermedio is as profound as its interpreter. Many of the cantes classed as intermedios are characterized by certain strange discords and rare oriental melodies, which can be observed in the tarantas, cartageneras, mineras, and the murcianas. Unimpeded by a set rhythm, most of them are sung freely and are therefore not danceable. They are probably the most vocally beautiful cantes of flamenco, although not as profound as cantes grandes.

The cante chico (light song) is both technically and emotionally the least difficult to interpret. Consequently, there are many more chico singers than singers of the other categories. (This is not to say it is by any means easy to sing.) Cante chico is characterized by an emphasis on the rhythm and by its optimistic outlook. The verses deal poetically with love, women, animals, and Andalusia and its people. There are country cantes, mountain cantes, inland cantes, and cantes from the southern Mediterranean coast. All are characterized by one power: the ability to restimulate one's faith in mankind, in life -- and in faith itself.

This division into jondo, intermedio, and chico is carried through the remaining modes of flamenco (the dance, the guitar, and jaleo) and makes it clear once again that what is truly difficult in flamenco has nothing to do with intricacies of footwork, technical expertise, or the operatic qualities of a voice; it is, rather, the ability to convey profound emotion.

What has been covered so far amounts to an introduction to the art of flamenco as a whole, so it now becomes possible to discuss individual flamenco forms specifically, and, while relating a little of the more recent history of the art, to mention a few of the great flamenco artists, both past and present. The forms of flamenco are divided into two major groups: the Andalusian forms and those inspired by gypsies. One of the latter, the soleares, or soleá (meaning "loneliness"), is at present flamenco's basic song, dance, and guitar solo in the jondo, or profound, style. Its verses are usually sad, but more philosophically than tragically so. Because of its great influence on many other



J. GARCIA Y RAMOS

flamenco cantes, the soleares is known as the "mother of the cante," although it is not certain that it was the first. It is also classified as cante gitano (gypsy song) in contrast to cante andaluz (Andalusian song).

The siguiriyas is flamenco's most plaintive and moving form. Also called playeras (from *plafir*, to mourn, grieve, or bewail), the siguiriyas is thought to have originated as a mourning lament. Even today its verses generally deal with death and hopelessness. The siguiriyas was considered too sacred a cante to be danced until Vicente Escudero did so in 1940. Since as a dance form it has grown up in a theatrical atmosphere, castanets are often used, an incongruous element in a dance of such potential beauty and depth. Like the soleares, the siguiriyas is classed as cante jondo and cante gitano.

The bulerías is the favorite festive cante of the gypsies. Through it they pour out all their infectious sense of abandon and gaiety. This cante is usually light, often humorous, and, when performed by the gypsies, its dance is original and frequently hilarious. It is the most difficult component of flamenco for guitarists because of the speed at which it is played and because of its complex accentuations and counterpoint. The bulerías is classed as cante chico because it is easier to sing than the cantes grandes, and its verses usually deal with lighter topics.

Other less popular but important gypsy cantes include the tonás and its derivatives: the martinetes, deblás, and carceleras. These cantes grandes of the gypsy forges are sung without guitar accompaniment and traditionally are not danced. The tonás is thought by many to have been flamenco's original cante. The carceleras (cárcel means jail) is a form of the tonás developed by gypsy inmates of Andalusian prisons. Another festive favorite of the gypsies is the tangos de Cádiz, a salty song and dance from the port of Cádiz.

There are many other gypsy-inspired cantes that in modern times have taken on a stronger Andalusian influence than have those already mentioned. These include, among others, the caña, polo, serranas, livianas, alegrías, tientos, mirabrás, carecales, romeras, and cantañas.

The purely Andalusian-inspired cantes are the fandangos originally derived from the jota of northern Spain, which had an Arabic origin. The fandango family of cantes includes the malagueñas, verdiales, jaberías, rondeñas, tarantas, taranto, cartageneras, murcianas, mineras, granafinas, and media granafina. These are termed cantes intermedios (intermediate songs) because, generally speaking, they lie between the cante grande and the cante chico in difficulty of execution. They are airier, less raucous, and more sophisticated than the gypsy-inspired cantes and lend themselves better to high, clear, flexible voices. They are very Moorish in nature, and one can detect in them a more polished verse content, the philosophizing of the learned poet in

contrast to the cruder (but perhaps more powerful) verbalization of the gypsy.

It must be emphasized that what we have been discussing so far are pure forms that no true devotee of flamenco would confuse or attempt to mix in performance. It is one of the more distressing aspects of modern commercial developments in flamenco that these cantes have become confused. At first this was done deliberately by certain gifted (if misguided) performers for purposes of "show business," and later by lesser performers out of sheer ignorance and a desire to please audiences.

It was toward the end of the eighteenth century that flamenco emerged from its almost ritualistic secrecy in the mountains of southern Spain and came before a wider audience. When it became popular enough among the Andalusian upper classes, a few gypsy professionals were able to support themselves by hiring out for private juergas (sessions of flamenco music-making), and in time they gained more than local fame. These are the artists -- all gypsy singers -- whose names begin flamenco's known history: Tío Luis, el de la Juliana (Uncle Louis of the Juliana); Vicente and Juan Macarrón; El Planeta (The Planet); Diego el Fillo; María Borríca (Little Mary Donkey).

As flamenco grew in popularity, clever businessmen realized its economic possibilities. In 1842, the first small café cantante opened its doors -- it was really nothing more than a glorified tavern featuring a few flamenco artists. Other taverns followed suit, still on a humble basis, appealing mostly to the poorer classes. The flamenco offered in these establishments, as well as that in the private juergas of the wealthier aficionados, remained relatively pure. The artists who performed them were among the greatest in flamenco history and they began, in many respects, a Golden Age of flamenco.

Soon big money entered the scene. Luxurious cafes were opened, and the little flamenco taverns were forced out of business -- they could not compete with the salaries offered by their more elegant counterparts. Flamenco was removed from the poorer classes and became almost exclusively a plaything for the rich. By the 1860's and 1870's, cafés cantantes were a national rage, and flamenco artists stepped from behind every tree to populate them.

In the beginning, even the luxury cafes attempted to present a pure type of flamenco, but had to abandon the policy as competition increased. Attention-drawing spectacles were introduced and, as in all situations where money becomes the final and sole objective, the art fell into decadence. By the 1880's and 1890's commercialism had taken over entirely, to the extent that eventually the very public that had caused the decadence rebelled against it. They withdrew their support, the fad died out, and the cafés cantantes ceased to exist.

Flamenco was returned to the humble folk in the form of theatrical novelty acts. In this setting it went from bad to worse, culminating, in the 1920's and 1930's, in a phenomenon called "ópera flamenco," a ludicrous attempt to inject operatic techniques and staging into flamenco. The few purists left -- and no matter what the general state of affairs, there have always been purists and outstanding artists -- retired in disgust to their villages, and authentic flamenco was not far from dying out.

The singers who perhaps played the largest roles in flamenco's development include El Planeta, Diego el Fillo, Silverio Franconetti, Tomás el Niri, the Caganchos, Enrique el Mellizo (Henry the Twin), Joaquín de la Paula, and the man often considered the greatest of all time, Manuel Torre. All sang in a gypsy style, and all were themselves gypsies except Franconetti, an almost legendary figure born in Seville of an Italian father and a Spanish mother. Among guitarists, we can begin with Antonio Pérez and El Maestro Patiño, two nineteenth century accompanists who played in the typical old-style manner -- thumb-driven, rhythmic, and hard-driving, with many rasgueados (rolling effects produced by running the fingers over the strings continuously). This way of playing has been maintained through the years by a small, hard core of guitarists, whose number steadily dwindles as commercialism increases.

Under the influence of the cafés cantantes, different schools of singing and guitar-playing blossomed forth. The pure Andalusian cante was popularized to a large extent by two men, Juan Breva and Antonio Chacón, both singers with high caressing voices perfectly suited to their type of cantes. Unwittingly, these two singers, both of unquestionable integrity, prepared the way for the decadence of the cante andaluz and of cante flamenco in general. The masses found this easier, more flowery type of flamenco to their liking, and soon many inter-



*The art of flamenco, even in the somewhat diluted theatrical form, can still retain its powers of fascination. Dancer Manuela Vargas and her flamenco company at the Spanish Pavilion were among the most successful entertainers at the 1965 New York World's Fair.*



preters were singing such commercial versions of it that it became more closely identified with popular commercial music than with flamenco.

The situation was similar with the guitar: the new school was dedicated to pleasing an uninitiated cafe public with technique and tricks. Paco el Barbero and Paco Lucena began the trend, but Ramón Montoya, a gypsy from Madrid, can be given the credit for its rapid advancement and acceptance by the public. He dazzled everyone with his creativity and flashing hands, the very flashing hands that drove a good deal of the meaningfulness and soul from his playing. He set the course for a flood of younger guitarists, including all of today's popular idols -- Sabicas, Carlos Montoya, Mario Escudero, Juan Serrano, Niño Ricardo, and the latest rage in the United States, Manitas de Plata. It might be said that the road taken by these guitarists has carried them beyond true flamenco into a no man's land. There they are developing a distinct art, an internationally fused art, an art free from boundaries and nationalism. It could well be labeled flamenco internacional.

The dance did not change radically until flamenco was moved into theaters. The early figures were all gypsy dancers of the gypsy school - Miracielos (the Sky Watcher), El Raspao (The Scratched One), Enrique el Jorobao (Henry the Hunchback), Rosario Ja Honrá (Rosario the Honest), La Macarrona (The Macaroni), La Malena, and La Sordita (The Little Deaf One). They were followed by such dancers as Antonio de Bilbao, Antonia Mercé (La Argentina), and Encarnación López (La Argentinita), non-gypsy and even non-Andalusian dancers who introduced the inevitable overemphasis on technique into their watered-down flamenco versions of Spanish ballet. This has resulted in what is called "flamenco ballet," which has been popularized the world over by the companies of Antonio, Pilar López (Argentinita's sister), José Greco, Jiménez and Vargas, Luisillo, and so on. Within this atmosphere Carmen Amaya was able to maintain her highly personal version of the traditional gypsy dance, although even her programs were badly commercial at times. Another controversial dancer, Vicente Escudero, is still, at the age of seventy-five, executing his highly imaginative type of dance that fits neither into the ballet nor the gypsy style.

Happily, there are still unspoiled exponents of the authentic

gypsy dance scattered around Spain. They are mostly unknown outside a tight flamenco circle and, with an exception or two, they earn little with their art. I could single out Anzonini de Santa Marfa (also known as El Chonini), Paco de Valdepeñas, La Pipa de Jerez, La Chicharrona, and, in a more polished but still authentic style, Maleni Loreto, La Chunga, and Luisa Maravilla.

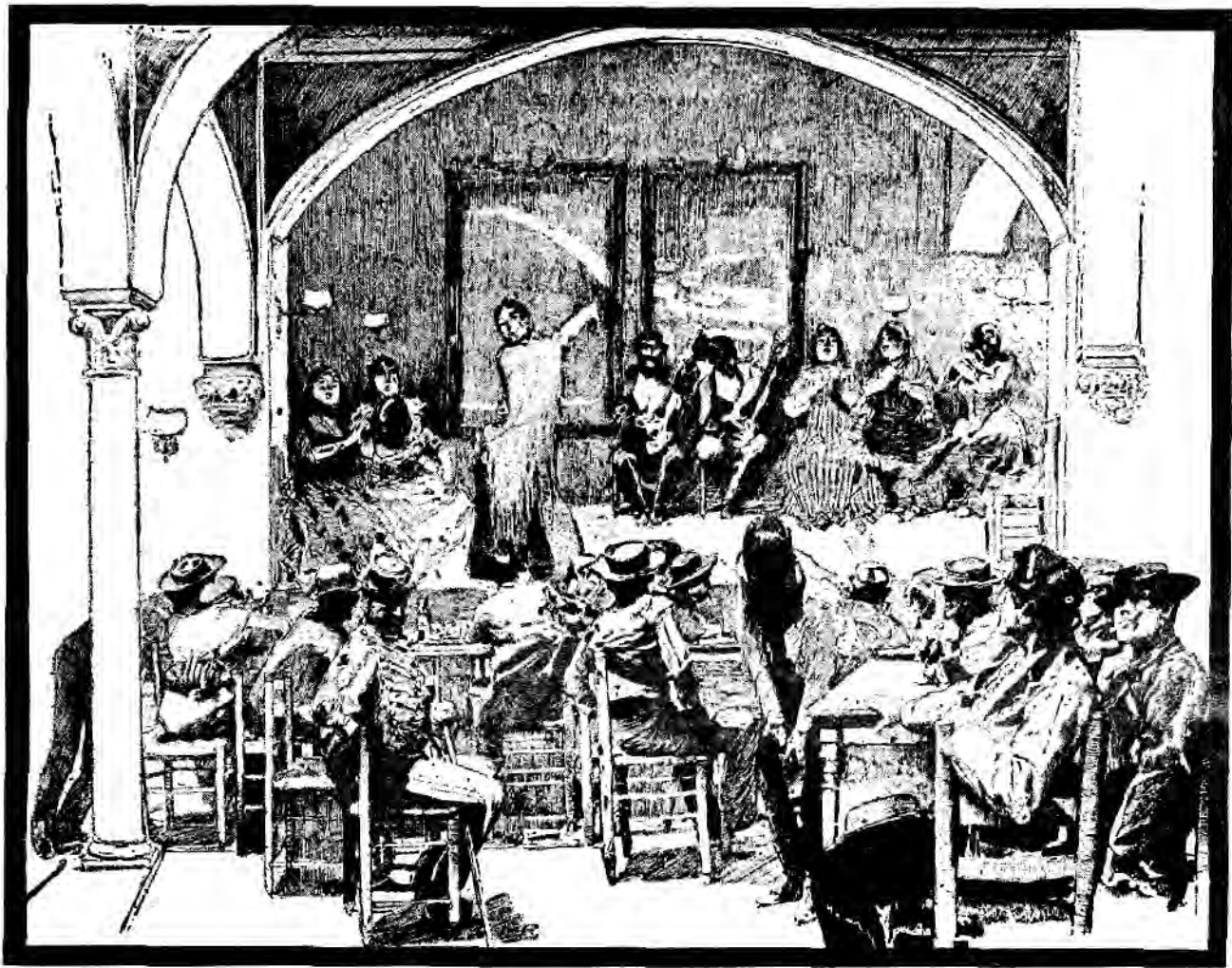
And this brings us to the final stage of flamenco history: the rediscovery. In the 1950's authentic flamenco was found again by a group of French and Spanish intellectuals. Recorded anthologies were made, and the results were almost shocking -- the Spanish public was not interested at all, but foreign listeners were captivated. Artists completely unknown in Spain suddenly found themselves international figures.

However, the inevitable has taken place. Spurred on by the initial success of the anthologies, record companies flood the foreign market with commercial recordings -- a few good, most trash. Troupes of flamenco performers flock overseas, but with a few notable exceptions the work of these dancers is extremely mechanical. In Madrid, thirteen tablaos, modern cafés cantantes, have opened to handle the influx of tourists interested in this earthy art. Their offerings, unfortunately, are decadent to one degree or another.

A valid comparison can be made between the effects commercialization has had on flamenco and on American jazz. Both began as the expressive outlet of oppressed peoples, and both have lost much of their impact and meaning as the oppression was reduced. In both cases, this vital loss of innocence and profundity has been replaced by technique, tricks, and musical complexities, although in jazz the process has taken a much shorter time.

Parallels in their courses are clear. The primitivism and soul of such jazz artists as Jimmy and Mama Yancey, Ma Rainey, Bunk Johnson, and the early Louis Armstrong correspond to the jondo in flamenco. The modern training schools for both are also similar, with musicians of a more mechanical nature toying with basic arts that they have outgrown emotionally, changing them, drawing them more and more into the cool shade of sophistication.

The state of flamenco, however, is improving, although only a small percentage of what is available to the general public approaches any semblance of purity. And truly great moments



in flamenco can really be attained only when all its components -- the song, dance, guitar, and jaleo flow spontaneously in the atmosphere of a juerga, in an intimate gathering where time is forgotten amidst laughter, melancholy, and wine.



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## FLAMENCO: THE WAY IT WAS

[from: Lookout, Oct. 1985; sent by El Chileno]

by Donn Pohren

[Editor's Note: This article, the major part of which was taken from the author's book, A Way of Life, gives us Donn Pohren's point of view some twenty years after the publication of his first book and the article reprinted in the issue of Jaleo. Donn has been pretty much out of the flamenco scene for a number of years, but has resurfaced in order to update his book. This article is followed by a reader's comment from a subsequent issue of Outlook (a magazine for Americans living in Spain); the "Ugly American" still lives!]

### THE LAST 'JUERGA'

Whirling dancers showing shapely legs, snap turns calculated to send flying the flowers from their hair, fancy footwork, castanets, a guitarist executing technical miracles in the background, a singer wailing something or other further in the background... that is nearly everyone's idea of flamenco, be they Spanish or foreign. In fact, it is nearly the only type of flamenco to be found today, the type prevalent in tablaos, night clubs, theatres, even in the flamenco festivals.

You might be wondering what other type of flamenco there could possibly be. A key word here is "sophistication." The flamenco described in the above paragraph is a highly sophisticated version of the traditional flamenco of the pueblo. The sophisticated dancer is largely academy trained, often in several styles of dance (classical, flamenco, regional, perhaps jazz), a highly polished technician who eventually transcends the flamenco of down home. Modern flamenco guitarists go the same route, becoming so musically and technically sophisticated they can with ease incorporate universal influences into their flamenco which are recognized and acclaimed by today's international audiences.

"All right," I am often told, "so flamenco is changing with the times. That is necessary for its development."

That argument does not hold water, for the sophistication and internationalization of flamenco are robbing it of its very essence, its only reason for being: the emotional expression of an unsophisticated people. I am not alone in my analysis. One of flamenco's remaining purists, the fine singer Manuel Soto "Sordera," expresses it thus: "There are many present-day artists who go commercial because it is artistically easier and the ignorant majority loves it. Such artists call it 'evolution,' when in reality it is simply artistic prostitution."

A terrible thing is happening. One of the world's most highly emotive folk expressions is being transformed into mere entertainment.

It is not really anyone's fault. It happens with all the emotive folk arts (witness the blues), and was bound to happen to flamenco once it emerged from behind closed doors. And "closed doors" is no exaggeration. The most widely accepted theory of the birth of flamenco is that it is a music developed by the fugitive groups back in the time of Fernando and Isabel, the Catholic Kings (late 15th century).

Within a period of a few years those confused leaders set about purging Spain of its religiously "impure" elements: the Jews, the Moors and the Gypsies. Those who wished to convert to Catholicism were allowed to. The rest were told to leave Spain. Thus, in one astonishing move, Spain lost the elite of its professional class (the Jewish doctors, bankers, alwyers, financiers), much of its labour force (the Moors, excellent agriculturalists, constructors, craftsmen), and many of its thinkers (Jews and Moors), a monumental blunder from which Spain still has not recovered.

However, each of the forbidden groups had its rebellious. They refused either to convert or to leave, instead heading for the hills and forming fugitive camps. (The very term "flamenco," in fact, may derive from "felaq mengu," which in Arabic, the most common language of Andalusia at that time, signifies "fugitive peasant.") These fugitive bands were swelled with Christian dissenters and outlaws, which would contribute yet another musical heritage to the flamenco melting pot, composed of the musical and dance traditions of the Jews, Moors, Gypsies

and Christians. Even today the similarities between the traditional music of these cultures and flamenco in its pure form are striking.

When flamenco first began finding its way into print (first half of the last century), it was still a music and dance of Andalusia's very poorest and oppressed illiterate, including a good number of law offenders, who "expressed" amongst themselves ("performed" was an inappropriate term at the time) behind those closed doors. The sensitive well-to-do who did appreciate this music involved themselves by paying the flamencos for a "juerga," or jam session featuring flamenco singing, dancing, guitar and recitation (still behind closed doors). This no doubt was flamenco's first professional manifestation.

Flamenco remained an in-group minority art for a long time because the Andalusian middle class highly disapproved of flamenco, its exponents, and its free-swinging way of life infamous for its incredibly high alcohol intake, its sexual freedom with prostitutes, many of whom were fellow flamencos (the incidence of venereal disease was high in the flamenco world), and irresponsibility in general.



"...FLAMENCO EXPRESSION  
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AS EATING. OR, BETTER SAID,  
DRINKING, FOR A LOT MORE OF  
THAT WENT ON THAN EATING  
IN THOSE HUNGRY DAYS..."

It was not until around 1850 that a few entrepreneurs got the feeling that flamenco could be good business. They began opening "cafés cantantes," the first known attempts to bring flamenco to the general public. The experiment was a success, and flamenco's so-called "Golden Age" was underway. The poverty-stricken flamencos entered the category of "professional artists," and their lot improved considerably.

The new stimulus caused creativity to blossom, and flamenco expanded with new forms and new styles. The creativity was within traditional boundaries, in good flamenco taste, and it really was a Golden Age. But not for long. Once the novelty of the whole thing began wearing off, the public began demanding more for its money than natural folk expression. It had to be fed larger and larger quantities of fun and diversion, or it would

drift away. So before long the Golden Age became the Tarnished Age. All sorts of non-flamenco contrivances made their appearances, and flamenco's purity was left by the wayside. The artists who went along with it thrived, while all-powerful empresarios sent those who refused to adapt back to the atmosphere of the intimate juerga.

Big time flamenco went from bad to worse (from the Café Cantante to the night club to the theatre to huge bullring spectacles), finally becoming so base it offended even the Good-time Charlies who had been the cause of its debasement in the first place. The ensuing disgust with commercial flamenco engendered a "return to purity" movement, beginning in the 1950s. The remaining purists were sought out, recorded, and featured in flamenco festivals and contests throughout Andalusia (in Madrid, Spain's first tablao, "La Zambra," also stressed the pure, among the very few tablaos ever to do so). This movement swept through the flamenco world, and soon many of those long-neglected artists were able to compete with the commercial heroes, rising to the height of their eminence in the 1970s.

Alas, the movement was short lived.

What happened this time? Many factors were involved, but basic human greed was the principal one. Success quickly went to the heads of the purists. They went from rags to relative fame too quickly, and were soon demanding higher and higher remuneration for their art. The empresarios had to organize on a larger scale, and were soon attracting a non-aficionado public willing to pay to see what it was all about. This new audience, of course, grew bored with pure flamenco and began to fall off, causing the empresarios to throw them crowd pleasers. Which is history repeating itself, and today finds us on the familiar downhill road, the same road flamenco was traversing just a century ago.

But this time it goes deeper, for today's affluent times have razed flamenco down to its very roots. Even the pure artists are demanding so much payment that intimate juergas, flamenco's only group vehicle to true expression, have all but disappeared; only the wealthy can afford them. With the disappearance of the juerga, the carefree flamenco way of life is also on its way out. What is left? Business. Flamenco today is basically business, just another branch of the vast world of entertainment.

When I first became involved with flamenco in Spain, back in 1953, there was still a strong division between the commercial and the pure. The commercial artists were in it strictly for money, and would prostitute their art in any way to keep the money rolling in. The purists on the other hand included both professionals, who made their living in private juergas in which their pure art was well appreciated, and the non-professional aficionados in the towns and villages of Andalusia, to whom flamenco expression was as natural as eating. Or, better said, drinking, for a lot more of that went on than eating in those hungry days.

Back then it was incredibly easy to get a juerga going. One had only to visit the flamenco bars, those inexpensive sanctuaries where the flamenco hung out; there was at least one in each town in lower Andalusia. If the flamencos were in, the chances were they were already juerga-ing. If they were not deep in juerga, a few rounds of wine would do the trick. If they were not in, one had only to wait around until they did show up, or perhaps inquire after one or two of the more prominent; invariably some little boy would be dispatched to advise them. They would be flattered and curious (not to mention thirsty and always ready for a good time), and before long would materialize, soon followed by their cronies.

In such informal situations no money changed hands. All that was expected was plenty of wine which, at around five pesetas the litre, was no problem.

If you knew where to go -- the Barrio de Santiago, in Jerez, or the Cruz Verde, in Málaga, or the Santa María, in Cádiz, the Casa Pepe, in Morón, other neighbourhoods and bars in Alcalá de Guadaíra, Utrera, Legrija, Los Palacios, Mairena del Alcor, La Puebla de Cazalla, Dos Hermanas, Arcos de la Frontera, Chiclana, San Fernando -- you could not miss, and as the traditional flamenco of each of these localities was distinct, the variety of flamenco and human experience was forever exciting and rewarding.

Permit me to describe a typical juerga situation of those days. This one began in 1960 at Utrera's first "Potage" (literally: garbanzo bean stew), a flamenco gathering designed to raise funds for the local brotherhood of gypsies. (The Potage has since grown out of all proportion and today is valid only for

making money. In 1960 some one hundred souls attended, nearly all gypsies, and it was held in an old dirt-floored warehouse on the outskirts of Utrera. Today noisy mobs of 1500 or more attend, paying outlandish prices and getting served very poor "potage" and even worse artistry.) Many of flamenco's great artists were performing, including Antonio Mairena, Juan Talega, La Fernanda and La Bernarda de Utrera... But I went in particular to hear and meet the guitarist.

The gathering was relatively intimate, and the warehouse turned out to be fine acoustically. The artists were an imposing bunch, among the most famous in the flamenco world, with their corresponding over-sized egos (a normal and helpful, even necessary, asset in any of the performing arts). Even in such a group, however, Diego del Gastor was unquestionably the foremost figure at that table. Not at first glance, I should add, for septuagenarian Juan Talega, with his rugged, nearly black face contrasting sharply with his thick mane of white hair, his solid body appearing as powerful as his deep, profound voice, sat looking every inch the godfather.

Diego's prominence was of a more subtle nature. Born in 1908 of a relatively wealthy gypsy cattle dealer and gypsy mother who weaned him on the soleares of his birthplace, the mountains of Ronda, Diego exuded an aristocratic air that was in no way put on. With his nearly white face and white hair combed carefully to one side to cover a balding spot, Diego looked far more like Spain's ambassador to England than a gypsy guitarist, regardless of his otherwise distinct gypsy features.

His air of refinement was so great that one was apt to forget that Diego was, after all, from a primitive and crude ambience, and that during the course of a juerga he might drop ashes or cigarette butts or spittle on your living-room floor, that he didn't know how to manipulate a seat toilet and was not too good with silverware. Although his father had been considered well-to-do, none of the family, friends, relatives or acquaintances of his youth had the vaguest notion of such things. All were illiterate. Meals were spooned from the communal stew pot, fingers were used for eating whenever possible. Bathroom facilities did not exist, nor running water. Floors were usually dirt or cobblestone. Entire weeks were spent driving cattle from one village to another, selling them, returning home, sleeping under the stars en route.

Diego was extremely shy by nature. This night in Utrera he began cautiously, pleasant enough although not at all at ease. But as the juerga progressed and empty wine bottles began filling the long table he was enveloped by an air of decisiveness. His accompanying became more assertive as the wine flowed. He gave a remarkable lesson in the art of accompanying that night, proving himself even superior to his legend.

Two days later I was off to Morón de la Frontera in search of Diego, in a meeting that was seriously to affect the course of my life for the next fifteen years. Following Diego's instructions, I arrived at the Plaza San Miguel, a quite lovely square situated in the upper part of Morón, about mid-morning. As I entered Casa Pepe, a bar that for years had served as headquarters for Morón's flamenco element, I immediately spotted Diego, standing at the bar reciting poetry in a rather raucous manner, his hair dishevelled, face unshaven, eyes gleaming, gesticulating wildly.

"Pour wine, good fellow/Luis de Vargas is paying/he who helps the poor/and tramples the rich..."

Diego finished his lament, written by the late Fernando Villalón (a marquis and ironically, one of Morón's richer citizens in his day) and began expounding on its merits and on those of the poet, who had been a good friend of his and "who was not at all like most of the rest of the rich sons-of-bitches in Andalusia." He suddenly spotted me and called, "Hola, come have a drink." We had only talked briefly in Utrera and I was afraid he wouldn't remember me, but he did, seemingly because there were very few foreigners interested in flamenco in 1960, and apparently none who had made his way to Morón and to Utrera.

It turned out I had arrived at an excellent time, for Diego was still going strong from the Utrera gathering of two nights earlier and had just arrived back to Morón himself that morning. He had stayed in Utrera drinking and generally carrying on, and had not eaten or slept in the interim. This was not unusual for Diego. In his prime, he used to take the six-day Seville fair in stride without even seeing a bed. The last time he did this, when no longer in his prime, he suffered a stroke.

I had to marvel that anyone can even play the guitar after two or three sleepless days and nights of drinking, but in time I

came to learn the formula. First of all, one must possess an extraordinary capacity for alcohol and an extremely low-level need for sleep and food, achieved by Diego and others like him through many years of living the flamenco life style. Diego and most others in the flamenco world had learned to pace themselves. At the beginning they keep up with everyone else, perhaps surpass them due to their enormous capacities, but when each one's moment of uncertainty arrives he slacks off and sips for a time while munching on a few tapas, until he feels his head clear a bit. He can then drink steadily again for some time, slack off again, and so forth, for hours and days.

What about sleep? The flamencos learn to nap at every desired opportunity, and the most minimal nap of perhaps fifteen or twenty minutes goes a long way with them. I have seen Diego nap in a chair in the corner of Casa Pepe when I thought he was surely too far gone to continue, only to have him bound up after a half-hour, ready for another twenty-four. In fact, flamencos prefer such naps to a full night's sleep because naps avoid, or at least postpone, hangovers. The avoidance of hangovers is an important factor in the prolongation of juergas. But when the juerga was definitely over, for it had to end sometime, Diego used to taper off slowly, switching gradually to milk and fruit and catnapping in chairs and other such uncomfortable contrivances until he thought he had the hangover licked and he could afford to go to bed. This plan worked well throughout most of his lifetime.

That morning in Casa Pepe several rounds of wine were consumed while Diego and his friends took turns reciting the "flamenco" poets: Villalón, García Lorca, Antonio and Manuel Machado, José Carlos de Luna, others. Several times following recitations Diego launched into erudite but not pedantic explanations of the poems if he thought them unclear or confusing, above all with those of García Lorca, many of whose poems are open to manifold interpretations. This was a new experience for me, for here united were a flamenco guitarist, a butcher, a pastry-maker, a shoemaker, an office clerk, a retired cabbie, a barber, and two temporarily unemployed construction labourers reciting from memory and intelligently discussing the poetry created by some of Spain's finest minds. A few of these people were illiterate or nearly so, yet they were enthralled by complicated symbolism and imagery that appeal only to the most highly educated minorities in other countries.

After a while the poetry started wearing thin and they switched to singing humorous songs, rapping out the best on the heavy wooden bar.

Diego got going on certain unique pre-Civil War tanguilios, some political in nature, others quite spiced up. Many were very clever and had the group cracking up. Others caused his friends to shuffle uneasily and glance about, for they reeked of anti-regime, and secret police were everywhere in Spain at that time. However, I came to find out the danger was not great in this case, for everyone in town knew who the secret police were. Besides, by 1960 the police had become quite tolerant at village level; one really had to go out of his way to incur their wrath. In Diego's case, even more so. He was respected as an artist and gentleman, and the police knew that when he was drinking this normally spoliitical person might start blurting out "barbaridades." They either ignored him, or secretly chuckled along with him.

Fresh friends arrived at the bar throughout the afternoon, had their flurry of mood-making drinks, and joined us. Gregorio, the big peaceful mason who had spent fifteen years in prison after the war, who could drink impossible quantities and was not truly drunk until he started roaring his sole soled, his eyes not quite focusing, an impish grin on his face. And Fernandillo, a nearly black gypsy, who at that time made his living partly by unloading trucks but basically by the con, illiterate but with a razor-sharp mind.

It was not two o'clock in the morning and Pepe, owner of the bar, had to close up. No one, of course, wanted to break up the gathering, and at Diego's suggestion we loaded up a few bottles of wine and a case of beer and followed him out into the summer night. We did not go far, moving down a street lighted only by the moon and through a large, barely discernible doorway to the right. We emerged into a large, walled-in court that shone blindingly in the moonlight. Three of Diego's five sisters lived here with their families, as did Diego's sole remaining brother, Melizzo, and his elderly mother, quite senile at the time and confined to a wheel chair. Diego's sisters claimed they lived there with Diego in order to "take care of him," but

of course in reality it was the other way around. During those hard years Diego was the only one in the clan who regularly brought in money, and was in large part responsible for supporting the entire family.

Diego was in the mood to play, and one of his nephews brought him a chair and his guitar. The rest of us settled down on the ground, distributed the wine and beer, and waited. Diego, his hair silver in the moonlight, his nose gypsy-besked in aithouette, began playing. It took only a moment to realize that this was like nothing I had ever heard. It was not even like the Diego of the Utrera gathering, the excellent accompanist. This was a mystic Diego, opening his soul for his friends in this moonlit courtyard. No technical frills merred the pure emotion; each note was significant. The music broke forth, ebbed, surged again, like some magic surf. Extremely forceful phrases were followed by passages of utmost delicacy; long silences heightened and dramatized this tapestry of feeling and beauty into which each of us was being woven. I was spellbound. I had heard much music in my thirty-one years, but none anywhere near so moving as this.

Diego played on for perhaps thirty minutes. Not a sound, not even an olé, was heard. When the last notes were carried away on the warm summer air the silence continued for a few moments longer, and then all hell broke loose. Fernandillo, sitting next to me, commenced tearing his shirt off his back, then into shreds, then hurling them to the ground and stomping on them (it was his only shirt, I later learned). A roar of "Diego" and "Olé" engulfed the courtyard, and everyone was embracing Diego. The place was complete bedlam. Diego's entire family had also heard, and were also demonstrating excitedly. This could only lead to one thing: merrymaking for at least the rest of the night. Everyone sang and danced, Diego's young nephew, Paquito, played, as did Diego's brother, Melizzo. Pepe of Casa Pepe was awakened and more wine and beer purchased. Sometime during the night a pair of municipal policemen dropped by to see what all the ruckus was about, had a wine or two, told us to try to hold it down a bit, and departed, shaking their heads and grinning.

About seven in the morning we went down to the Bar Nuevo Pasaje for coffee spotted with brandy or aguardiente. After the twenty-some hours of juerga, I felt not particularly tired, nor exhilarated, but instead felt like something worthwhile had taken place during those hours, something that was truly worth pursuing. These people, I felt, had the answer, or at least were far closer to it than we in our punch-in world of nine-to-five. I could not put my finger on anything we had truly accomplished, nothing that would move worlds, or make any difference to anyone tomorrow. Perhaps the answer is that we had lived those hours. Ambitions, daily bread, schedules, pressures, mores and standards had been forgotten, time had been erased. Perhaps for the first time I began fully to understand just what the flamenco life style represented. I liked what I felt.

Diego and Fernandillo (in a borrowed shirt) were talking about running out to the Peñón for the day. It would be warm and beautiful, and the Peñón was a glorious place, they explained, to nap on the sunny sand and hear the waterfalls play. We'd pack some beer and wine on ice, take some vegetables and meat and make a guiso (stew). This fetching plan snapped me back to reality.

"My god," I told them. "My wife was expecting me last night for dinner!"

"Hombre," one of the group answered casually. "So were ours. If you do everything your wife wants, you don't live!"

So the picnic was on. Diego talked a cab driver into taking the day off and coming with us, carrying half the group in exchange for his food, wine and gasoline for the day. I took the other half. (In 1960 only the wealthy, cabbies and foreigners could afford cars; not one of the flamenco aficionados I knew throughout Andalusia owned a car, not even those considered well-heeled.) We purchased the wine and beer from Pepe and also borrowed his huge stew pan, got the food and ice at the market-place, and were soon bumping due south over a terrible dirt road.

We arrived at a towering railroad bridge that spanned a deep divide, at the bottom of which ran the River Guadalquivir. Nearby, the river cut between high cliffs, spreading into a tranquil lagoon. At the far end tumbled a most inviting waterfall, high enough to stand under and let the water beat on one's body. High on the cliffs lived hundreds of birds of all sizes -- cawing crows, sparrows, hawks, vultures, eagles -- and at any



Above, author Donn Pohren (centre) with singer Manolito de Murcia

"...THESE PEOPLE HAD THE ANSWER. OR AT LEAST THEY WERE FAR CLOSER TO IT THAN WE IN OUR PUNCH-IN WORLD OF NINE-TO-FIVE..."

one time anywhere from two dozen to two hundred birds would be gliding high overhead.

The trip had been well worth it. The spot was spectacular. And here we spent the day, swimming, napping, drinking, a little singing and guitar playing, but mostly relaxing and regaining strength. The food prepared was memorable; memorably good if you had an excellent digestive system, memorably bad if not. The salad of tomatoes, green pepper, garlic, onion, black pepper corns, oil and vinegar, all in considerable abundance, was delicious, as was the stew of pork, potatoes and vegetables if one could handle the effects of the handful of hot red pepper that Fernandillo so casually tossed in. Fernandillo maintained that he was not only the best, but the best looking chef south of Paris (he had never been further afield than Seville), and these were his specialities, explosively succulent as we spooned them from the communal salad bowl and stew pan.

On the way back to Morón we stopped off in Coripe, a spotlessly clean little town so remotely located that many of its citizens at that time had not even been to Morón, just 17 kilometres away. But Diego had been to Coripe many times during juerga excursions, and seemed to know half the town. The first task was to attempt to quench our ravenous thirst with quantities of the most refreshing ice cold beer I can remember. The beer revived us instantly, and Diego decided to break out his guitar. The locals were delighted. Flamenco with the guitar was a rare event in this isolated village, and in this case was even more notable because the great and eccentric Diego del Gastor was playing.

The day was sinking fast. It was nearly 10 p.m., and I could see that the group was getting revved up again and that the juerga could go on indefinitely. Which was well and good, except that I had a wife and child at home who were used to some measure of stability and consideration. I began suggesting I had to leave, but everyone was having far too much fun to consider the idea. I insisted, however, and finally two of the group who had to work next morning decided to depart with me, leaving the rest to pack into the taxi when the Coripe bar

closed.

An hour later we arrived at Casa Pepe. Innocently, I intended to drop my two new friends off and head straight back to Seville, but to no avail. My friends insisted on inviting me to the "penúltima" (next-to-the-last, for Andalusian folklore has it that the last arrives only with death), nearly carrying me by force into Casa Pepe. And guess what? A most lively session was in progress, involving most of Diego's young nephews, four of whom were up-and-coming guitarists. Another, Andorrano, was a singer-dancer; his dancing, above all, was unique and inspired. Since it was Sunday, everyone in Casa Pepe had been drinking all day and was by now literally aglow, taking turns dancing, singing, inventing crazy antics. My good intentions dissolved, and closing time found me happily drinking and enjoying life.

By now it had dawned on me that to break from these people you could not indulge in formal good-byes. There is always somewhere else to go, something to do, and they will never let you go unless you are most determined and wilful which, I must confess, I rarely was. I have always believed that life is too short to avoid good times. Within reason, of course. This particular night, for instance, they wanted to continue over in the gypsy courtyard, as we had the previous night. I finally decided the best way out was to merely disappear into the night. I was later to learn that this is precisely what they all did on the rare occasions they decided to go home.

It was during the latter part of those riotous years (1965) that we decided to open a flamenco centre, in a farm outside of Morón, designed to show international aficionados the real thing. We held some three juergas a week (starting around midnight and lasting until sunrise, if not considerably longer), offered flamenco lessons, and in general helped our guests experience the best Andalusia had to offer. Diego, of course, was a mainstay, both in lessons and many of the juergas. We remained open eight wild years, closing only with the decline of the flamenco life-style, when the artists' fees soared out of

reach and, worse yet, most of the fun disappeared. The flamencos discovered money and what money can buy, and turned all their efforts in that direction. Their former creed, the scorning of material possessions and the exaltation of freedom and independence, was abruptly reversed.

Today the vast majority of flamencos, above all the new generation, abhor the old life style, act as if flamenco has been liberated from all that disagreeable dissipation. Most avoid juergas like the plague, demand exorbitant fees if they do deign to accept. They have switched to whisky, dress fashionably, frequent the discotheques and mod bars, have bank accounts... In short, they act just like the dull rest of us.

Of course, there still remain a few who would like to continue their former way of life, but the "Prohibido el Cante" signs and the blaring TV in all the bars make it impossible. Progress has seen to it that flamenco remains bottled up until show time, when it emerges not as spontaneous, emotional expression, but as a rehearsed, repetitious, workaday quest for gold.

I can only feel fortunate to have participated in that unique life style so many years, and feel sorry for younger aficionados who no longer even have the opportunity. One thing is certain: if Progress has offered a substitute, I have yet to hear about it.

\* \* \*

#### The Last Juerga

It came as quite a surprise that you should devote six pages of your magazine to a dissertation of flamenco folk music and dancing by Mr. Pohlen.

I feel sure it did not occur to you that the vast majority of your dedicated readers couldn't care less about this subject and are assumed to be a bit more selective and sophisticated relative to the company they keep.

The writer's education and flair for writing appears to be wasted on these flamenco people whom Spanish Kings prohibited from serving in their armed forces and from crewing and emigrating on ships destined for the New World. A vast number of these fandango people do not need to be glorified (for any art form) as their main contribution to this great country is through begging, indolence and lawlessness.

John S. Taylor, Jr.  
Puerto de Santa Marfa



#### RECORDINGS OF DIEGO DEL GASTOR

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, Manolita el de la Maria, 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.

## PABLO RODARTE

### AN INTERVIEW

by Guillermo Salazar

Background: Pablo Rodarte, a native of Denver, Colorado, studied under the direction of the Lillian Cushing School of Ballet, was a dancer with the original company of the Denver Civic Ballet, and left for New York in 1965 at the age of 18 to pursue a career in Spanish dance and flamenco. After a few months of tutorship under the Jeoffray & American Ballet Theatre Schools, he resumed his pursuit for knowledge in the traditional academies of Spain, where he has lived, studied and danced for the past twenty years. He began his training under the tutorship of Antonio Merin, Mercedes y Albano (family of La Quica y Frasquillo), Pedro Azorin (authority on the Jota Aragonesa), and Miss Karen Marie Taft (Danish Instructor in the Bournoville School of Ballet).

Within a year, Pablo was auditioned and contracted by Rafael de Córdoba to perform as soloist with Mr. Córdoba's company in the "Festival of Picasso," Toulouse, France. The "Three Cornered Hat" was the ballet and the company was attired in the original costumes of Pablo Picasso under the auspices of the Paris Opera. Rafael de Córdoba then returned to Spain to resume a tour of the Iberian peninsula appearing in summer "Festivales de Espana." Spain then inaugurated its national television network, and Mr. Rodarte was engaged as lead dancer in the telecast of its first jazz ballet under the direction of Sandra LeBragus, International English Choreographer and "Ex-Bluebell Girl," known for her work in South American and English television. Being of true pioneer stock, Pablo then returned to the opposite end of the globe, to Australia where he began instructing Spanish Dance for the British Ballet in Sydney, Australia. In due time, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra was to play works of Manuel de Falla conducted by Moshe Aahman, and Mr. Rodarte was asked to dance and choreograph these works, furthering his popularity in Australia, which led to cabaret, theatre and television performances. Also, through his endeavor, Sydney audiences were to witness the opening of the first Spanish Cabaret in Australia. Such was his success that a six-month tour of the Far East was offered him and a ballet of four, taking them to Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippine Islands, Hong Kong and Macao, also performing in cabarets, theatre and television.

Upon receiving news that Spain was to install nationwide color television, Alberto Lorca, choreographer and director of the company "Antología de la Zarzuela," contracted Pablo for one year bringing him back to Spanish soil. Thus, began a new chapter in his artistic career. Submerging himself in the art of flamenco, Pablo Rodarte began to work the flamenco tablao circuit, performing in the tablaos of Los Cabaletas and Torres Bermejas in conjunction with Rauli, a famous dancer. It was during this time that Mr. Rodarte was to begin studying under Angel Torres, a very well known flamencologist, for whom Mr. Rodarte, to this day, is totally indebted, for the knowledge and insight acquired under his direction. As one of Spain's leading flamenco authorities, Angel Torres has coached such artists as Antonio Gades, Mario Maya and Carmen Mors. Angel Torres has also performed and instructed on the Continent, Australia and in the United States.

A Broadway musical then took Mr. Rodarte to the Scandinavian countries. Mr. Bent Medding, Denmark's leading theatrical director, asked Mr. Rodarte to dance in Copenhagen's debut of "Man from La Mancha," which also took him through the provinces and Sweden. Yearning to return to his homeland, Mr. Rodarte joined the company of Jose Molina, making several tours of the United States and Canada, performing with great success in such places as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center and the Denver City Auditorium. Again, returning to Spain, he formed his own duo and traveled to Oslo, Brussels and Berlin, and then formed a trio comprised of Carmen Cubillo and Luis Porcel, former soloists with the companies of Antonio Gades and the Spanish National Ballet. The trio worked for two years consecutively in the Canary Islands, five months in Baghdad and two months in Cairo, at the famous mena house. Mr. Rodarte then returned to the United States once again, with Maria Benitez to dance with her in Santa Fe, New Mexico and

resume another American tour, closing in New York at a gala performance with Mr. José Greco. Recently, Mr. Rodarte has finished the 1985 season of the Central City Opera's production of Bizet's "Carmen."

Jaleo: Tell us a little about your recent experiences in Spain.

Pablo: Okay, as you know, Guillermo, I've been there since 1964. I want there when I turned 18 and have been there ever since. I was gone ten years before I came back to the States, you know, so I've seen a lot happen; and I think, in the past ten years since Franco died, flamenco has undergone a big change, because now there is freedom of speech. During Franco's time everything was suppressed, and I think all the people, like all the flamencos, like the gypsies and the andaluces, are using this as a protest, a means of expression. Flamenco is a political movement, it's a social happening, you know, and they're using this for protest now; so you're getting a lot of theater things--Mario Maya does a lot of that--to protest for the gypsies. So it's a wonderful thing; it's like a rebirth, and a lot of things are happening, you know. It's created a big interest in Spain now; before it's just been the tablao flamenco, very much alive in Andaluca, but you know Andaluca has been suppressed under Franco's regime; only now are they using that to ask for social...human rights, because it's been a very neglected province. So a lot is happening in the theaters, which is wonderful, and the people are being made aware of flamenco, the Spanish people themselves; before that it was just in the tablao and for the tourist, right? So now they get it in the theaters and they're waking up, and it's becoming very much alive.

J: So in your recent flamenco experience you mainly noticed one thing, the protest type of flamenco that was...

P: Yeah, Mario Maya just finished two shows. The first one he did, what was it? Camelamos...

J: Naquerar.

P: Yeah, Camelamos Naquerar. That was the first one he did, which was a bit hit in Madrid, because it was the first time they had seen flamenco on that scale, in that sort of theatrical sense, you know; and what's the other one he did, the later one, which he did down in the Lavapiés?

J: "Ay".

P: And then Antonio Gades, of course, what he did with "Bodas de Sangre" was another revolution; he took Garcia Lorca's poem and he did a thing on that, which was excellent, and that was a big rage in Madrid.

Then, after that, he did "Carmen," which I just saw in Madrid; he did "Carmen" the stage play; I prefer the film, the stage play really dragged on. He traveled with that, of course, through Europe and that was just a rage. So he's done a lot to bring the public's attention to flamenco.

Then I think the tablaos are taking a turn, because the public is becoming aware of flamenco, they're starting to become a more critical public; so therefore the standard is going up. Now you're getting important figures like...I just saw a man who was wonderful, his name was Manolo Soler, he was from Sevilla; he hasn't danced in ten years. He's had a lot of problems, marital problems, you know typical thing in flamenco life. You know it's not a happy thing, it's very tragic. This is another thing I wanted to express about foreigners connected with flamenco; it's very important that you have a personal conflict going on in your life. It can only be used as an expression by somebody who has got something going on inside, you know, conflict, personal convictions, and that lends itself to that expression. So like I say, Manolo Soler is wonderful, wonderful...and he hadn't been dancing for ten years. He just felt like he had to say something. So he's not a young man.

And then you have La Tati, wonderful, wonderful, wonderful dancer, you know, bulerías and that; Matilde Coral, she's doing wonderful; the other one, Msnuela Carrasco, she was another thing when she came out, you know, she was gypsy, she was wonderful...and so it's really wonderful, because you get a lot of young kids interested now, you know, they call them the "Macarre"...

J: What is that?

P: Macarrs are the youth who are protesting; you know, they want social change, they want this, that, and the other. You get a lot of these people getting involved in flamenco now, and so you get all this young blood.

J: What about foreigners?

P: I've been away from the States for twenty years, and when I was in Spain I was a novelty; there weren't many of us foreigners there, right? And now you get, God, Japanese, English, Australian, or...everybody coming. I've seen a lot of foreigners come and go, but I don't see many foreigners stay.

J: That's an interesting point.

P: They come and they pick up choreographies, so they don't stay.

J: So they're more interested in picking up routines.

P: Routines, right. So, I don't believe that is dancing; that's not flamenco dance.

And I think it's very difficult because we're coming from foreign cultures; I'm a foreigner as well. When I arrived in Spain I was the milk and cookie boy, you know, all American boy. I was looking at everything through my American eyes, because of the way I was brought up, and it took a while for me to stop doing that and to start accepting. Over the years I got over that. I'm so glad because it changes your outlook. I miss Spain very much. To me that's my home. I've got my friends, my lifestyle, and everything there.

Back to the foreigner. So many foreigners do this: They come, they pick up the routine, they spend their time in the studio. The studio is very important; you have to pick up your technique there. But the dance, the soul, whatever you want to call it, that other thing, you've got to get down among the people; you've got to be among the flamencos; you've got to live that life; you've got to feel that. So you've got to have something...a drive inside yourself, whatever your convictions are, you've got to have something to lend to that expression.

The foreigners are involved in footwork. To them flamenco lies in the feet, and the more complicated the better. That's an exhibition. Flamenco to me is what takes place with your upper body; the upper body...how can I explain it? Raza! Race! We all have a race in us; the thing is that the andaluces, the gypsies, they exhibit this race in their dance because they're very proud. That's the thing that the foreigner finds very difficult to learn and which they just overlook. They never learn to work their upper bodies because...the andaluces, the flamencos, the gypsies, they stand in a natural way because of their race; they are very proud; that's the way they're made. So it's very difficult for a foreigner to capture that. It's a foreign thing to them: being proud and to assert themselves. So that takes a long time--if they even concern themselves with it. I go to classes, and I say, "Oh God, what fabulous footwork, what footwork!" But they don't "say" anything; there's nobody inside them. There's no "peso"...you know what peso is? Peso is personality of your...yourself; they have none of that. They haven't asserted themselves.

And you get a lot of foreigners who deny their identity and who want to become gypsies, right? This whole gypsy-mania, you know, they've got to be gypsy. I have so many gypsy friends and I consider them my brothers and my sisters, but I have never had to give up my identity. I've done the other way. I'm very proud of where I come from, you know, Chicano, Mexican ancestry, of whom I am; I'm very proud of myself. You have to be, and so I've never given up my identity...and they have accepted that. You're never going to be gypsy; you can't be what you're not. So that's the whole thing about flamenco; flamenco is an expression to assert who you are. If you give up an identity you're only hitting your head against the wall. What else can you say?

J: What about the various places you've been in Spain? Do you do pretty much work out of Madrid?

P: I was a while down in Sevilla, I've been in Málaga, I've been in Cádiz, and my base has been Madrid, yeah. That's where show business goes on, that's where you're going to get your contacts, that's where you're going to be able to work, right? So almost everybody who wants to pursue flamenco as a career, you know, they come from Andaluca and they always end up in Madrid because that's where the nucleus... that's where you're going to get the...work.

J: Do you ever get employment out of Spain?

P: Oh yeah, all the time. I've traveled all over the world through Madrid. I've been all over, I've been as far as Australia, I've been in the Far East, I've been all over Europe.



- J: That's a pretty common thing to get contracts out of Spain?
- P: Yeah, yeah, isn't that nice? Thank God! Sure. I was just recently in Baghdad, and Cairo last year, and before that was in Israel. Then I was in the Canary Islands, you know? I've been very fortunate to have been able to work all this time, because that supported me, paid for my studies, paid the rent, the food, you know, I've been so fortunate. You have to make a sacrifice...and there is a way; you'll always survive if you want to choose this as a life style, because it is a life style. Dedicate your life to it! I don't believe in dabbling. That's why you get all these other things around the world, these flamenco things...it's a very superficial...image. You know what I'm talking about.
- J: What is your feeling about how flamenco is to be presented? For example, many people feel that everything has to be in the "cuadro" style or format.
- P: Flamenco lends itself to a great theatrical sense, as long as it...it has to be done in a very intimate...I don't believe in big theaters. They even do it in stadiums, my God! It becomes so cold then. It's always been done in an intimate atmosphere.
- J: Where did you see flamenco in a stadium? Where was that, do you remember?
- P: In the flamenco festivals down in Andalucia. They have big places, and it tends to lose because it's too far away. You're too isolated from the performer.
- J: But not football stadiums.
- P: Yeah, I've seen it in Madrid in football stadiums, and it loses. I believe it has to be done on a small scale, but in that small scale so much can be done, you know, as far as lighting, staging. I think flamenco lends itself tremendously to that.
- J: Have you seen much flamenco in family or juerga type settings?
- P: Sure, I used to go to Villa Rosa a lot.
- J: That closed down many years ago.
- P: Then there's this place around...Café Andalucía, I think it was called, where everybody hangs out, and another place called Candelas--a lot happening there, everybody goes there after hours, very small, very relaxed, sometimes it happens, sometimes it doesn't. It's very, very, very relaxed, unforced! So, I've been able to see a lot of things, you know.
- J: So it wouldn't be paid flamenco, for money?
- P: No, no, no, no! This is your crowd; "la basca" they call it, your...your friends. Oh God, you know, that goes on every night, and like I say, sometimes things don't happen. People are working all day, they struggle, trying to make a living. You just hang out there! And so, that's what I miss very much.
- J: What about that place called "Saturday's"...or something like that?
- P: "Yesterday's," oh yeah, I think it's lost a lot. I think it's changed over. It's gone down to Candelas now. I say I've been in the States a year and a few months now...maybe it's changed, but "Yesterday's," everybody was going there.
- J: Was that a place for professionals to hang out if they wanted to get gigs?
- P: Oh yeah, definitely.
- J: Are there any "señoritos," or has that pretty much disappeared?
- P: You know, I don't think it's like in the old days. You mean someone who is giving you backing. It's very...God, I haven't seen any around, Jesus. One should be so lucky! Gades ran into things like that. I think that really existed more under Franco, because, I guess, it was a tremendous suppression. You depended on that. But now there are so many people involved in it; like now you have the Ballet Nacional, the Spanish Ballet Nacional, which is more Spanish dance. I don't care for companies of that size. It starts to look like Radio City Music Hall, you know, precision. The Ballet Nacional started with "Antología" under Alberto Lorca and it was Spanish dance. They go into Spanish dance because it is such a grand scale. They resort to Spanish dance, the Spanish classical pieces.
- J: Flamenco being a part of that presentation also.
- P: Yeah, they include it in there, and yet, most of the time, it's not really flamenco oriented. They are Spanish dancers who do flamenco, instead of the other--a flamenco who would do Spanish dance. If a flamenco dancer does a Spanish classical piece there's a different "matiz," there's a different coloring, and its a different expression, as opposed

to a Spanish dancer who does flamenco. To me it doesn't cut it. Like "Antología"; when they started, it was a small company and they did beautiful things; but then they made it a national ballet and you get hundreds of dancers like Radio City Music Hall. And it's funny, you know, have you ever seen Pilar López' company on the stage?

- J: No!
- P: Well, it was wonderful, because it was a large company, but there was so much personality. You had all these great dance personalities; you had Alejandro Vega, Jiménez and Vargas, you had Alberto Lorca, you had...God, so many, all of them that she had, all these great male dancers...and female dancers. They were great personalities! It wasn't Pilar López and her corps. There were definite personalities. You went away and you knew who was dancing in her company. Today you don't; you know that somebody has a company and that there are dancers. You come away talking about whoever's company it was. You don't come away talking about "she" or "he". I think Spanish dance or flamenco has lost its "aire". Just now people are waking up to the fact that it's not the technique; it's what you got inside! Your personality is very important, because it is you. It's become so much...I guess because of the modern age...execution: the contratiempo you can do, the faster heelwork you can do, the more spectacular...it's exhibition! But you still have people like I said, like Matilde Coral, you have Manolo Soler, you have these flamencos that come up, that move you.
- J: Do you have any advice for students of the dance?
- P: Foreigners should study from everybody, right? But then after that you've got to do your own thing, because otherwise you are still copying. You still haven't established who you are. So it's very important to study from all these people, but you don't go out and...I learned this routine from such and such...and you perform that routine; that's just an execution, a technical execution which anybody can do. The thing is to take what you have learned, and to develop your own personality, and do your thing.
- Mr. Rodarte may be contacted at: 1581 W. Nevada Pl., Denver, Colorado 80223; phone: (303) 722-4036.

## EVOLUTION IN CARMEN AMAYA'S FLAMENCO STYLE AS PERCEIVED BY THE CRITICS

by Meira Weinzwieg

Carmen Amaya was a gypsy flamenco dancer who gained international star status in the 1940's. In a majestic and creative way, she gathered the power of her full self and the power of the traditional flamenco art form, to bring this dance to an unequalled height of popularity. Her innovations left a permanent impression on her contemporaries and on those who followed her. Yet by the end of her life Amaya's innovations were completely integrated into the traditional aesthetic from which she sprung.

Amaya's essential heritage was the gypsy tradition and aesthetic\*. In flamenco, the dance evolves as a reactive, emotionally exposed, commentary. The content and structure are improvised, using traditional signals of communication and a traditional vocabulary. The singer strings together a series of short verses, consisting of poetic images of emotion, or nuggets of traditional wisdom. The verses are chosen to make a comment on himself, the dancer, the audience, or life in general. The dancer reacts or "comments" on the unfolding moment, shaping the dance either in contrast/rebellion or harmony to the sung statement. The audience is a participant, albeit passive, identifying emotionally (racially) with the artists. The flamenco audience, somewhat like the jazz audience, perceives a dialogue, with a series of arguments and resolutions, which becomes insight: as the dance unfolds, and is internalized by each viewer individually.

"Flamenco is...an integral form of feeling the cosmos and the small world of one's personality." (Vicente Romero, *Dance*, Nov. 1962.) Flamenco people move within an unalterable scheme of outcast status, and their behavior is very regulated

by laws internal to their society. Within this unchanging world erupt an infinite variety of situations and emotions, which give the gypsy his conceptual freedom. The internal life of feeling, and fantasy, is externalized in flamenco. The height of the gypsy aesthetic consists of a conjunction between profound emotion and supreme objectivity. These fatalistic climaxes of emotional insight, when they don't self-destruct, lead full circle to the carefree humor of flamenco culture. In concert, the viewer experiences the deep inner reality of all the participating artists, as well as his own.

For example, sexual distinction is pronounced in gypsy culture, and so, in flamenco dance the male and female differ. The male dances from the waist down. He holds his chest out, the body weight shifted over the metatarsals. In place or walking, he changes his weight in steady tempo from the left to the right foot, alternating back and forth with the knees, hips, and ankle joints loose enough to create an impression of smoothness, but without any excess side to side motion. The arms move reflexively, describing alternating circles of each shoulder joint in front of the body, the head is straight, the glance outward and slightly upward. From this symmetry, the male will throw his body to either side, forward, or back, with a sudden, off-tempo impulse. In this off-balance posture, the male will cross one leg in front of the other and kick it out again, and just before falling will throw his weight the other way by crossing the gesturing leg behind the other and out again. Again, he will save himself just in time by taking a smooth step forward accompanied by a small circle of the hands to show that he has "tied off" the situation. Men also create rhythmic patterns with their feet, bringing the whole foot sharply and repeatedly to the ground in a stamp, or bringing the metatarsal down sharply, then lowering the heel in a separate, punctuated action.

Women dance from the waist up. Their lower body alternates in regular tempo from one foot to the other, walking or in place, with the knees and ankles loose and the hips reflecting the change of weight by breaking outward as the body weight shifts side to side. The weight is carried back, over the heels, in a "seated", bent-knee position. The waist is flexible, the torso lifted, the back arched, head pulled back, and arms circling from the shoulders in a broad radius which extends behind the body. The arms move slowly, the wrists circle, the hands and fingers extend and flex. The head is arched back and tilted up, the gaze either out and up, or down at the floor.

The male dance demonstrates virility, agility, and skill in "slight of hand." The female dance communicates graciousness, sensitivity, and majesty. In developing a commercially viable dance technique, Amaya drew from both male and female flamenco dancers.

Carmen Amaya mastered the male footwork techniques and incorporated them into her dance. The fast footwork was very commercial, and had far-reaching effects on her technique. She was forced to shift her weight from the traditional, backward lean of women, forward over the metatarsals in order to achieve velocity. From this center of balance she could execute sharp, percussive movements which had previously been the province of males. For example, she altered the "broken turn," in which the upper body rotates bent at a 45° angle from the axis of the turning lower body. Before Amaya, women had performed this turn softly and lightly; she performed it sharply and percussively. Her speediness, which was her greatest commercial asset was, in flamenco terms, a male rather than female quality. Yet the constant realignment of weight from back to forward caused an undulation along her spine which was reflective of female upper body expression. And the consequent dynamic interplay of opposing centers of gravity and tension gave a vibrating, held quality to Amaya's dancing which embodied the majestic, female style.

José El Chino, Amaya's dancer/father, taught her footwork, turns, male body postures, and sharp weight shifts. Amaya also assimilated ideas from Vicente Escudero, an early mentor and famed flamenco dancer, and Rafael El Gato, a family friend who invented a virile dance called the Farruca. Amaya learned the feminine dance from her dancer/mother. She also drew from La Tanguera, La Salud, La Macarrona, and La Malena, who were well-known dancers of an older generation with and for whom the prodigy Amaya performed. (Paco Sevilla, *Jaleo*, Nov. 1980.)

The flamenco arena contrasts with daily gypsy life in allowing free emotional externalization, and in allowing some sexual transference. Men often sing women's verses, and vice versa; men often imitate women in comic dances, and women may also

take on certain male steps. Before Amaya, La Salud had worn male costume, and during her time, Argentinita and Pilar López (well-known Spanish dancers) had worn jackets, skirts, and boots (Elsa Brunelleschi, *The Dancing Times*, Jan. 1964). But Amaya costumed herself in white pants and a white jacket, and this became her trademark, one of the elements which led to her commercial success.

In this costume, Amaya performed long, high speed footwork solos and multiple fast turns. But she did not limit herself to male costume; she also tossed her long, black hair and dressed in bright glittery dresses. She lengthened the train of Spanish dancers to 15 ft. (over three times her height). She used the train to spectacular effect by wrapping it slowly around her, then kicking it to unwind mid-air. Amaya freely appropriated elements of both male and female movement, and exaggerated them for the international market.

By wearing pants, becoming successful and thereby becoming the sole provider for her large family, Carmen Amaya could play out her masculine aspects, and hence paradoxically arrive at an artistic maturity which was powerfully female. During the span of her career, she gradually let go of the over-exaggerated gimmicks. She shortened her heelwork passages, let go of multiple turns, fly-away hair, and the frenetic movement typical in male dancing. She replaced them with the female expression of silence; a stillness in which the upper body arch could be brought into focus by slow, sustained movement in the arms, and the face could reflect Amaya's inner life with greater subtlety. American critics had an excellent vantage point from which to perceive these changes: Amaya performed extensively in the U.S. between 1941 and 1945, then left and returned 10 years later, debuting in Carnegie Hall on Sept. 30, 1955.

There will follow an examination of selected writings on Carmen Amaya by English-speaking critics. Their essays and reviews have been separated into two categories: pre- and post-1955. Their descriptive phraseologies have been pulled out of context and sorted, first into date and author, then into broad categories of imagery. Certain authors, such as John Martin and Walter Terry, reviewed Amaya repeatedly both before and after 1955. Their work pre-1955 will be compared and contrasted to their post-1955 work, to analyse the differences they each saw in Amaya, and to see how their perceptions of her changed. The imagery systems of other authors will be examined to see what the consensus is with respect to Amaya's developing style, during both her first and her second visit to the U.S.

On the occasion of Amaya's first Carnegie Hall appearance, on Jan. 13, 1942, John Martin reviewed her for *The New York Times* (Jan. 14, 1942). He said that "the evening was something of a let-down." Amaya was "...a vivid personality, and a fine dancer, within a range that is limited but quite sufficient...she makes use of her dynamics entirely legitimately and with reasonable artistry." He continues, "...when she is at her best, which is to say when she is doing her characteristic gypsy dances...she dances superbly, every fibre of her body sentient of line, mass, and dynamics." On the other hand, "there is nothing classic about her...she is lacking nuance, variety, and distinction."

Four months later, Walter Terry says Amaya was "...far from attractive, in the lyric sense," although she is "knock-out entertainment." In the context of a very enthusiastic review, Terry describes Amaya: "rousing...dynamic...fiery...volcanic...explosive...animal..."

Terry was not unique in his perception of Amaya. Of 354 descriptive words found in selected reviews, 49 describe her in terms of non-human, violent forces, including machine-guns and tornadoes. During this time, a powerfully attractive woman was called a "bombshell," i.e. potentially destructive. Sol Hurok stressed this mode of descriptive terminology in the publicity packets formulated by his office for Amaya. Yet his implication of Amaya as femme fatale was unsuccessful. This was just the time when women in the U.S. were being channelled into the workforce: such a powerful, passionate woman, in pants, must have been somewhat threatening to American males. Describing her appearance, 7 words from the articles selected portray Amaya as a "beauty", or "rare flower", while 28 say she was "no beauty", "far from attractive", "dark", and "strange".

The perception of Amaya as non-human extends itself into animalistic adjectives (39), such as "panther", "broned", "gypsy", "primitive", and "barbaric", which emphasize the distance between her and the audience. In 75 different words, like "viscious", "lashing", and "seething", Amaya is seen as human, but violent. John Martin refers to her "artistry", but 12 descriptions say her

dancing is "not art", "not classic", etc.

However, Amaya was definitely seen as powerful. Her technique: "calculated" and "flawless", is described on 21 occasions. Her "vigor" and "force" are mentioned 49 times, and 21 words signify "amazing", "incredible", and "extraordinary". Her effect on the audience is described 8 times in a positive light: "compelling", "irresistible", "warming"; but 18 say she is "terrifying", "disturbing", "deadly", and "demonic". In contrast, Amaya's human, positive qualities are described in 20 ways, like "profound", "dignity", and "brimming". Amaya is called "gypsy" 7 times, but she is called "Spanish" only once.

Some clear patterns have emerged. Amaya is sensational, perhaps attractive, but not quite human, and certainly not an artist. She lacks distinction and is gypsy, associated with primitivism, but not Spanish, which was associated with known artists such as La Argentinita. She is "warming" but also engulfing and demonic. She is passionate, but not sexy. Edwin Denby says Amaya is "in the process of becoming a recitalist... the whole thing is off-balance, but highly interesting" (Looking at The Dance, Mar-April, 1942). The American audience was responding to Amaya's speed and circus-like qualities of sensationalism and exoticism. And they were interested in Amaya's developing artist. But they were not identified with her, and therefore couldn't perceive the more subtle aspects of her flamenco.

After a 10 year absence, John Martin describes Amaya: "...she left us as a whirlwind gypsy without much form or discipline, she returns to us an artist." She has "perfected a sharply etched, fiercely concentrated stage portrait of Carmen Amaya." He says, "the quieter she is, the more intense is the latent power behind her movement." She is "incandescent", and "magic". "Nothing is wasted, when she raises an arm, however slowly, it stays raised." He speaks almost lovingly of the "merest little... wisp of a woman," "her taut little body," "small, dark face," and "nervous feet" (The New York Times, Oct. 1, 1955).

On Oct. 9, Martin says, "the new Amaya is overwhelming," "...a breathtaking artist." He calls her "the most competent of all possible guides into the beauty and essence of her work." All of her "tempestuous virtues... have been cleared of obstacles, simplified, directed into more objective channels, suffused with comment." She is "no longer simply the high-tension gypsy night-club dancer of earlier days" but a "...great lady." She is "animated by a feeling of latent violence, held in check by an equal power of control. When she lifts an arm 'it is as if it were forcing itself through a weight of water.' She 'stands still... frequently, and with incomparable eloquence..." He concludes, "In our time we have had a handful of great Spanish dancers -- La Argentine, La Argentinita, Escudero... we can do no less than add the name of La Amaya to the list."

Walter Terry reveals a similar shift in perception "...there is a regal ferocity about her which commands respect, for here is the artist." She has "enormous beauty" and "dramatic grandeur." In Amaya "the heat of passion is freely revealed but held within bounds by her mastery of the dancer's discipline" (The New York Herald Tribune, Oct. 1, 1955).

He elaborated a few days later. "Amaya has returned as a polished sensitive artist." "She has a new sense of dedication and an inner power to match the outer brilliance of action..." She is "beautiful", "aristocratic", and "Spanish", "...a power when she is motionless..." "Her solos were each a masterpiece of the flamenco art... transmitting through the movement signals of her race and culture, elements of life itself." He concludes, "Amaya was the star, one of the brightest in the world, ethnic or otherwise." (Oct. 9)

In England, Elsa Brunelleschi comments "that with the passing of time the fire of Carmen's dancing, uncomplicated and immensely Spanish, has filtered through and purged all into an art of pure and clear quality" (The Dancing Times, May, 1959). And Peter Williams said, "in the space of a few moments she can convey the contrasting sorrow and joy... to be able to do this in dance is obviously to have reached the pinnacle of art" (Dance and Dancers, Jan., 1964).

Bill Butler calls Amaya a "legend", and a "goddess", alluding to her female power. He saw her in Spain: "resistance was impossible...surrendering, I whistled, shouted 'bravo', 'olé', even to my utter amazement and embarrassment, 'huba huba'. But my considerable demonstration was completely lost in the ovation she received from her countrymen, who knew far better than I what she was supposed to be doing and whether she had done it" (Dance, April, 1954).

After 1955, of 479 descriptions culled from selected critics, 8 still insist that Amaya is "not classical," and "not feminine." But none, in this selection, assert that she is "not art." Amaya is still a "phenomenon of nature," and a "seismic disturbance," but from 66 terms which describe natural phenomena and 9 animalistic adjectives 11 are more muted, less violent. "Smouldering", "incandescent", and "frictional heat", are examples. Amaya's animal qualities are now associated with her naturalness, not with her race. Amaya's gypsy lineage is referred to twice in connection with "urchin" and "whirlwind", but 8 times with "Queen", "aristocracy", "ambassador", etc. Critics describe her as "honest", and "genuine" 16 times.

In 25 descriptions of the audience experience of her, such as "fascinating", and "exhilarating", there are no references to demonic or evil forces. "Essence", "whole", and "awakened", address the evolution in Amaya. And 69 terms address Amaya's new world standing: "towering", "pinnacle", "full of divine fire", etc. There are 84 descriptions which characterize Amaya's power directly, without resorting to dehumanizing adjectives: "potency", "force", and "projection". Amaya's technique is, as before, "perfect".

In 21 descriptions, Amaya's attitudes towards the audience is seen as very active: she "assaulted", and "conquered" them. But the audiences no longer frightened or shocked. Amaya is still 25 times "angry" and "furious". But 32 words refer to a wider range of emotion in her: "tragic", "nervous", "ebullient", and "lusty". The perception of Carmen Amaya's appearance is 8 times "beautiful", 37 times "tiny" and "lithe", identifying with the contrast of her little body moved by powerful energy. She is called "masculine" in 4 ways, and she is also called "Spanish" 4 times.

After 1955, John Martin legitimized Carmen Amaya as an artist. Amaya's way of dancing had changed in a way that allowed him to experience her deeply. She had formed a connection with her inner self and with her audience, which demanded moments of listening, sensing, and assessing. Amaya had travelled the full circle. She had appropriated traditional male dance and had become both commercially successful and emotionally powerful. Gradually she evinced more of the qualities traditional in a female "deep" dancer. She turned less, moved less, used her footwork selectively, kept her hair tied back. She held her postures longer, moved her arms more slowly, allowed herself quietude on stage. Martin perceived the "magic" of his deep emotional bond with her during these silences. He could then follow her into one of her sharp, off-balance moments, identifying the emotional contrast of that break out and pull in. He was drawn into the flamenco audience relationship: he participated in Amaya's inner life as it unfolded before him.

In flamenco the artist does not develop independently of the audience. The artist is neither catalyst nor observer, but rather, mouthpiece. Amaya's appropriation of male techniques changed the way women today dance flamenco. But her relationship with her audience was understood in the traditional way of female gypsies. She objectified herself, listened, and tried to become one with her public (the community). This attitude is implied in the values of majesty, graciousness, and sensitivity desirable in the female dance. And the emotional connection which she established is clearly reflected in the later critical writings of John Martin, Walter Terry, and their contemporaries, which are examined here. Amaya assaulted her audience with intensity and sensational performance devices such as male attire, fast footwork, and a 15 ft. train. But after 1955 some elements of the American audience were able to perceive her objectivity, and hence enter without fear into her subjective world. Mariano Parra remembers: "Carmen Amaya in a soleá or sequiriyas. She did a turn and just sat down and picked up her bata (train), and I can remember her fingers just crawling so she could feel the end of it. It was part of her dance. Nothing was separated from what she was doing."

[\*Nowadays, flamenco is considered to be the property of all Spain, but when Amaya first came to the U.S., flamenco and gypsy were considered synonymous. "Flamenco dances, as distinguished from the Spanish regional dances, are gypsy steps to gypsy folk music, usually performed by a woman soloist." (News-week, Jan. 27, 1941, 62)]

[\*"Deep" refers to "jondo", as in "cante jondo" or the "deep song" of Andalucía]

## XIV CERTAMEN NACIONAL DE GUITARRA FLAMENCA

"DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF MANOLO DE BADAJOZ"

(DECEMBER 14, 1985)

[Sent by El Chileno]

A brief note to let you know of the results of the XIV Certamen (of guitar in Jerez). There were eight finalists, all from Spain, although there may have been foreigners among the semi-finalists. Six of the eight finalists were from various regions of Andalucía, and two from Madrid. Styles ranged from "contemporary" (i.e. Paco de Lucia-like) to very traditional (Sabicas). One contestant from Huelva, José Luis Rodríguez, had an outstanding technique, very clean and with great sound, and was very well liked by the audience, but he did not make it to the top three. His playing was deemed "too outdated," as my teacher José Luis Balaio, who was a member of the jury, told me later. The winner was a guitarist from Madrid called Rafael Fernández Andújar, whom I (and probably most of the public) had scored the lowest. He had a weak and uninspiring sound, and did nothing for me or the rest of the audience. The guitarist that received the highest acclaim judging by the cheers and applause was Manuel Moreno, local boy from Jerez (nephew of Manuel Morao's), but he received second place from the jury. I thought there would be a riot when they announced the winner. Different rasgueados for different folks I guess. The third place went to a fellow from Jaen named José Moreno.



## THE FIRST SCHOOL OF FLAMENCO GUITAR IN SPAIN

[from: Diario 16, May 3, 1985; sent and translated by The Shah of Iran.]

It had to be in the barrio which Serafín Estébanes Calderón defined as "the crucible in which the cante is melted, mixed and recast." And curiously enough, it was a guitarist from Alicante who, tired of roaming the world and nostalgic for his roots, teamed up with a Sevillano in order to incubate the idea. Many travails were required to start up, but now it is reality--Seville has its first school of guitar.

The name of the street is a premonition, or at least so we hope.

"It's curious that the street is called Victoria and that it lies dead center in the heart of Triana," Mario Escudero tells us. "The truth is, we have placed all our hopes in this undertaking both Sami and myself, and we hope to come out victorious."

--I think it is the first time a school of guitar has been established in Spain, ¿No?"

"Indeed. There are courses of varying lengths, and of course, many guitar teachers, very good of course, who give classes at their homes. But a school for guitar has not existed up to now. In the school, which is located at Number 20, Victoria Street, between Pagés de Corra and Rodrigo de Triana, there are four levels of teaching: beginners (basic), intermediate advanced and professional. Of course, the lower levels are conducted in groups while the upper levels consist of small groups or individual instruction."

--Also you teach music notation and reading?

"I think a teacher of flamenco would do well to understand musical notation. I recall that when I was at Villa Rosas, learning notation caused me problems. El de la Matrona, Cepero, E. del Luner and other friends told me not to learn scales because this would detract from me. But I think it is well demonstrated that learning musical structure is no handicap

to the flamenco guitarist. Not only must one learn to play by ear, but also one must learn technique. Whoever has quality, and force will continue having it. And furthermore will know a little more about music; this is good, No?"

Sami Martín is the one who takes care of administrative affairs and gives classes as well, although the important and famous one is Mario Escudero.

--Sami, do you have many students?

"We began this with much work; the place is very small and we have been at this only a short time. Nonetheless, the students now number over twenty. And for the coming months we have quite a few applications from abroad. Mario is a well-known performer throughout the world, and I myself have travelled throughout a good many countries. By years end, we shall have to think seriously about moving to larger quarters."

--Are your fees high?

"The prices are these: 4500 ptas. per month (\$30) for nine groups classes in first level, 6500 ptas. per month (\$41) for nine classes in groups of two or three, 1000 ptas. per hour (\$6.25) for private lessons on the third level, and 1500 ptas. (\$9.50) at the fourth level. Arrangements for professional compositions is negotiable."

--Have you received any grants?

"No! The truth is, no public organizations have supported us. We have the support of the mayor of Triana. Paco Arcas wants

to have the first guitar school of Spain carry the name of Triana and to have a greater influence than it does at present."

--Paco Arcas must be a man who is in love with his town and a man of good taste.

"Exactly! He has promised us aid within his capabilities and gives us every possible assistance. Also, Mr. Vallecillo has promised us something."

They began at zero. El Centro Triana de Guitarra Flamenco, with Mario Escudero and Sami Martín as professors, has had no official aid, despite being the first school of flamenco guitar in Spain. We believe it should be an absolute victory and a challenge to those who claim to aid culture in this land.

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## ANTONIO GADES:

## I'M NOT READY TO BECOME PART OF FLAMENCO HISTORY

[from: *Bocaccio*, Sept. 1970; submitted and translated by Paco Sevilla]

(Editor's note: In reading the following interview with Antonio Gades, keep in mind that it took place 15 years ago, long before the fame of "Bodas de Sangre" or "Carmen.")

--Antonio, we are not particularly interested in what you can tell us about your profession, your art; we want to know how you think and your positions on the large and small problems of today, and, from that, deduce something about your real personality. We know we can't eliminate the dance, given that Antonio Gades is the end result of his art, an art that shapes his public and private life.

"In the life of a man there are certain dates, places or names that are landmarks in his memory, point of reference at the moment of recalling, and ordering his evolution."

--As a point of departure, can you tell us some of the dates that have signified important changes in your way of living or thinking?

"I remember my first job, when I was eleven years old, as a helper with Gyenis. The first time I attended a dance school. 1953, when I became part of Pilar López' company. A more personal time, when they unexpectedly operated on my father--one of those things that you don't expect to happen and makes you see life differently. Also, my marriage to Maruja and the separation. And when I met the woman with whom I now live."

--Antonio, how do you see your father?

"He always gave me freedom. He used to say: The good and the bad that you do will be for yourself; I want nothing for myself."

--How was your marriage to Marujita Díaz?

"The marriage happened because it had to, and the separation was logical--we had nothing in common."

--The dance, your art, your profession, has undoubtedly had an influence on your personality and often must have disturbed your private life. How has the dance influenced you, both positively and negatively?

"I believe that the dance has been a positive influence for me and has given me friendships and acquaintances, the culture that I have, everything."

--In what environment are you happiest?

"Among artists who are not intellectuals. Everywhere I have tried to surround myself with people who have artistic restlessness. Dancing outside of Spain has permitted me to know other kinds of learning; I have learned from painters, musicians, writers, etc., who have sensitized me in such a manner that I think the dance has allowed me to know and live in a certain environment, and then that environment has been reflected in my dance."

--You began to work with the photographer, Gyenis. Would you have liked to be a good photographer?

"Yes, and I haven't left it altogether. But most of all I would have liked to write."

--Have you tried?

"I don't think there is anything that I have desired and not tried. I feel a great inclination toward the creative professions, but I also feel that one must be a professional in these things, that is, it is not enough to be an amateur. When I became interested in painting, I tried to learn from painters and art critics until I could decipher and evaluate paintings of different styles and periods in accordance with my own feelings."

--Have you ever read, or has anybody ever told you something that has stayed engraved in your memory and integrated itself into your way of thinking?

"Sí. On one occasion César González Ruano told me: Antonio, surround yourself with intelligent people and they will give you everything; the rich cost money!"

--Earlier, we asked you about the environment in which you are most content, but, from what would you like to escape?

"From many situations, many times, because I am very shy. Many times I feel trapped when I can't be natural. But now I can choose."

--You have given dance classes at La Scala in Milan. Do you like that educational aspect of the dance?

"I believe that you learn a great deal while teaching. When I teach, it has almost always been in the form of an exchange with dancers who have interested me in some way and who have wanted to learn something from me. But, in La Scala, I taught on a different level. I have always tried to be very honest with myself and, with others, I have said don't continue, it's not worth the trouble. But I have allowed others to continue dancing and I have taught them, knowing that they would never learn, but they have to keep dancing."

--This constant travelling around the world must have allowed you to see Spain in comparison with other countries and from an opinion about our generation and our time.

"Yes, as you say, but this comparison or contrast is in no way critical; I have been able to observe a constant dehumanization in the daily life of other countries, to which we are not accustomed and I don't believe is for the best."

--In what must have been a new experience for you--how was your experience with film making and, if you could choose, who would you like to work with?



ANTONIO GADES IN HOLLYWOOD  
WORKING ON HIS LATEST  
PICTURE FROM EIGHT A.M.  
TO EIGHT P.M.

"It was, in fact, a new experience and I enjoyed it. It allowed me to know different people and to live in another world. And I don't think it is over, as I would like to continue making films. More important than with whom, would be the person I would play and the idea of the film."

--If you could choose a personality or theme to bring to a film, what would you choose?

"There is one personality that really interests me, although not in the mystical and unreal form that we know; I would like to play the real Jesus Christ."

--What is that real personality to you, and what is your position with respect to today's religion?

"I am interested in Jesus Christ as a man; if only we could see him as he really was--one who brought about a moral and spiritual revolution in the only way that it could have been done at that time. I am sure that if we could see Jesus Christ as he was, we would leave everything to follow him. With respect to the religious situation, I have no problem, since I feel that respect for others, truth, and feeling of freedom, above all, are religions and moral norms that leave us without any doubt."

--How does Antonio Gades feel about politics?

"I don't think one can be apolitical, that is, I don't think we

FOTOS COLITA



should adopt a position of indifference."

--What about the problem of the young people and will the new generation be able to solve the political and social problems of the future?

"In the first place, I don't believe in the problem of the youth; I believe the new generations are more intelligent and, like always, the youth are divided into two groups--those who think for themselves and don't conform to the present structures, and those who are influenced by their parents. Today, children are born in front of a television and, when they reach the political age, they have to confront an ideological struggle. When you see, for example, that both Russia and America pay mercenary troops to keep China in check, you see that everything is relative"

--Since we are on the subject of politics, what is your opinion of Viet Nam, the Middle East, and the current of anti and pro American sentiments that are forming in the world?

"There is no solution; they are wars that would be resolved if it were desired, but America and Russia make steel, so they have to burn it up. With regard to the United States and Americans, they are very different in their own country from what they are outside of it. I have been to New York, Chicago, and other places on a number of occasions; my personal opinion is that I didn't find them enjoyable.

--What does Gades hope for in his private life, in his future?

"Man lives within structures that suffocate and absorb him. I have said that I will stop dancing soon; I don't want to go down in flamenco history. I have danced in order to release an artistic restlessness, to be able to live afterward, and to do what I am able to do. I have sacrificed myself; I have done it thinking of the near future, when I will not have to depend on anybody and I can be free to do what I want to do. But, I always thought, above all, to do it young, and when I decide, whoever wants to follow me may do so.

--If you could, what would you change in your life?

"Nothing! I have lived well, including the bad times I have been through."

\* \* \*

### CRISTINA HOYOS

#### "The Artistic Partner of Antonio Gades for 15 Years"

[from: Hoy, Oct. 15, 1985; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Paco Sevilla]

Cristina Hoyos, the almost inseparable partner of Antonio Gades in his ballet (they have danced together for more than sixteen years), has been involved for some weeks now, in her third film experience, after "Dodas de Sanare" and "Carmen,"



CRISTINA HOYOS

with the movie, "El Amor Brujo," directed by Carlos Saura. Cristina interprets the role of Candela in the new film with Antonio Gades and Laura del Sol, the young actress who was the incarnation of "Carmen" in the film.

Cristina, from Sevilla, thirty-eight years old, began to dance at a very early age. Thanks in part to the encouragement of her mother.

"I was twelve years old and my mother asked me if I would like to participate in a children's program of Theater and dance. She asked me fearfully, because she knew me. I said yes, but I knew I would have to overcome my shyness."

--How did your passion for dance begin?

"I don't know! In my family there was nobody who had been involved in the baile. I only remember that I began to dance as a young girl and that I didn't like to dance in front of people. I was very shy; my family was very humble. But, little by little, I became an aficionada of the baile. Now I can say that this profession means everything in my life."

--Is Candela the most important personality you have interpreted in the movies?

"All the roles have been important. I remember that my role as the star in "Bodas de Sangre" was very beautiful. Then, in "Carmen," I had my own role as Antonio Gades' helper, and now I am very satisfied to be playing Candela in "El Amor Brujo."

--Do you really prefer the theater to film?

"Yes! I like the theater better because I live it with greater intensity. Also, I have worked much more on stage than on movie sets and I think it shows. I prefer the theater--the contact with the audience adds another emotional dimension."

Cristina realizes that she has achieved a state of great compatibility with Antonio Gades in the dance. "When we dance together," she affirms, "it is as if we are one. And, at his side, one learns something every day."

--What is the personality of Candela like?

"Candela is a woman who marries and then is assassinated later by her husband, although the husband continues to see her ghost after her death."

--Will it be difficult for this film to exceed the success of "Carmen"?

"I don't know. All of us who are involved in the film have great hopes for it."

--But you will still continue to present "Carmen" around the world?

"Yes! Before beginning the filming of 'El Amor Brujo,' we did a tour of Germany, Austria, and almost all of Europe, and we can say there is no lack of requests for 'Carmen.'"

\* \* \*

### LAURA DEL SOL RETURNS FROM THE OSCARS

by Andres Garcia and José Sereno

Laura del Sol, the young star of the Spanish movie, "Carmen," that was nominated for an Oscar, returned from Hollywood, hopeful in spite of not having received the prestigious award.

--Laura, you seem a little sad.

"No! I'm not sad. If you mean because I didn't get the Oscar, I'm not sad nor feeling cheated."

--Deep down, did you hope that you might win?

"Deep down, yes! But we also knew that 'Fanny and Alexander' had more points in its favor."

--How did you feel when they were giving the awards?

"You can't imagine how nervous I was. I think because there is always a chance."

--What do you have for the future after you finish the movie "Los Zancos"?

"The first thing I have to do is take a vacation and then, later, in June, I have to go to Germany to do another film."

--How is your relationship with Carlos Saura's son?

"Stupendous, absolutely stupendous!"



LAURA ADMITS BEING NERVOUS AT THE OSCARS EVEN THOUGH SHE KNEW THAT SHE MIGHT LOSE TO "FANNY AND ALEXANDER"



LAURA DEL SOL ON HER ARRIVAL AT THE LOS ANGELES AIRPORT TO ATTEND THE OSCAR AWARDS PRESENTATIONS

\* \* \*

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## REMEDIOS AMAYA: A BRIEF INTERVIEW

by Jaime Palon

[from: Hola, Aug. 1984; translated by Mary Sol West]

Remedios Amaya has finally gotten over the trauma of the zero points she received in the Eurovision song contest--trauma that in its day cost her many a performance contract and also many tears.

"I wanted them to see me sing live in front of an audience, because I knew that from there on everything would change."

Remedios has been performing since last December 28th until just a few days ago in the show "Arte," with Carmen Sevilla, Concha Márquez Piquer and Marfa Jiménez. As a result of this performance she has already signed forty-five contracts for the summer and she assures us she will double that amount.

--Apart from all this, what else has it meant for you to sing with the famous?

"I have learned a lot from them and that has been very useful for my career. I have learned to walk on a stage, to talk to the audience, to move, etc."

--Was there ever any problem about who would perform first, whose name should appear first or be the biggest, etc.?

"No, I never saw problems of that type or of any other type, for that matter. I lost my voice halfway through the tour and all of them were very nice and filled in for me."

--While she plays with her twenty-one month old son, Luis, her husband, Román, tells me that she came very close to being the star in "Carmen," the Saura movie nominated for an Academy Award.

--How was that Remedios?

"Carlos Saura was looking for the leading lady for that movie and somebody told him about me. He showed up at my house at three-thirty in the morning, saying that he picked that time because he wanted to see how photogenic I was just out of bed."

"We got up and started to party right there because he wanted to see me dance. Finally, I didn't get the role because I didn't know classical dance, which was necessary for the movie."



REMEDIOS AMAYA WITH RAMON AND THEIR SON LUIS

\* \* \*

## SAURA, GADES COMPLETE FLAMENCO TRILOGY AFTER 'CARMEN' SUCCESS

[from: The Japan Times, Sept. 1985; sent by Sadhana]

by Luis Carlino

Madrid (Reuter-Kyodo)--The men who made Spanish cinema's biggest-ever hit--"Carmen"--are bringing their trilogy of flamenco films to a spectacular close with a 1915 ballet about gypsy love and passion.

Carlos Saura and Antonio Gades are nearing the end of shooting "El Amor Brujo" (Love the Magician), the story of two gypsies whose love can only bloom when the ghost of the murdered husband of one of them is charmed away by a fiery dancer.

Choreographer Gades said the film, based on a ballet suite by Manuel de Falla, will add the visual lure of a big production to the understated passion of pure flamenco conveyed by "Blood Wedding" (1981) and "Carmen" (1983).

"It is a large-scale project, a choral work," he told Reuters at the Madrid studios where the nine-week shooting of the film is schedule to be completed soon.

Gades and director Saura have fleshed out the 27-minute ballet into a feature-length musical drama which climaxes with the popular "ritual dance of fire."

"That's where we pull out all the stops," producer Emiliano Piedra said. "Antonio's choreography is well out of the ordinary and we use some 100 dancers. It's very spectacular."

The film blends classical and flamenco music, straight drama and dancing against a bleak background of contemporary gypsy life. It foregoes the play-within-a-play approach successfully used in "Carmen."

"This is a very difficult work. The previous ones were, after all, films made by a dance troupe. Here we are ordinary people who dance," Gades said.

Cristina Hoyos, the lead dancer who played herself in Carmen, is Candela, whose thwarted by her parents' decision to marry her to Jose.

Laura del Sol, the film Carmen, plays the young gypsy who dances Jose's ghost away from haunting Candela.

"Lucia is a gay extrovert who intervenes to allow everyone to live happily ever after," she said.

The soundtrack consists of traditional flamenco tunes plus a freely-arranged performance of the suite's 13 numbers by Spain's top conductor Jesus Lopez Cobos and the country's national orchestra. Popular singer Rocio Jurado renders the three songs written by Falla.

Pedra, sole producer pending his application for state support, says his problem will be to persuade foreign distributors to delay showings until next May's Cannes film festival, whose rules would allow the scheduled Christmas launching of the film in Spain only.

But he cautions that advance deals and the precedent of "Carmen" do not guarantee international success.

"Carmen is a phenomenon which defied all calculations and is very hard to analyze: it could have been the opera, the dancing... most likely everything," he said.

"Carmen meant that our dances and music were taken seriously at last," Piedra said.



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## THE SHAH SPEAKETH

STATE OF THE ART BARCELONA  
OCTOBER 1985

Barcelona--the city with a sleaze factor rivalled on the Iberian peninsula by only Lisbon, perhaps. Dirty, slightly decaying and decadent, like a dowager rich in brocade and dingy of petticoat.

The washed and decorated buildings, be they heroic or humble, the scrubbed populace of dignified demeanor, the white-washed cemetery walls--these all belong to Spain. To Barcelona belong the comings and goings of sailors, bedraggled women with thin limbs and black or missing teeth, the parade of the shabby and of the outlandish. The weird and beautiful madness of Gaudi and Dalí, et al. growing from that warm rot peculiar to Mediterranean ports, producing an absurd beauty animated by the breath of danger and the occasional spurt of adrenaline that addicts the adventurous.

By day, the Ramblas, like a great sorta, pumps a chaotic life through the heart of the city, the jumbled noises of buying and selling, the hustling and the loitering, the exotic of the homo sapiens mixing with the exotic of caged birds and monkeys for sale. By night, the merchants and their respectable buyers dissipate on the warm breeze, the flow reverses, and the Ramblas sucks into its dark, the doors of the city. As the hour grows later, the denizens of night concentrate under its lamps or slide among the shadows motivated by whatever their various appetites may be, knowing that any satisfaction is nearby, often attainable at a price. By the early morning hours, the sediment has settled slowly towards the end of the Ramblas, nearer the water and the Plaza Real and stirs about ever so sluggishly. And this, Dear Reader, is the location of whatever scant flamenco entertainment Barcelona has to offer.

Here, in Barcelona, Carmen Amaya and her clan were born; here Vicente Escudero chose to spend the last of his dwindling years. And here, a handful of good teachers and academies operate at present. Nonetheless, flamenco never has been strong here and Catalans scarcely tolerate anything Spanish, flamenco included. Two regular tablaos exist here in addition to two or three taverns where flamencos congregate from time to time "pá jeleer".

The first of these is El Cordobés on the Remblas. Its tablao is quite acceptable and probably impressive to the tourist trade. In addition to the standard flamenco numbers, well performed but not fabulous, Las Bodas de Luis Alonzo was danced by the two stars Rosario and Pablo. Such an ambitious interpretation is almost doomed to mediocrity from its inception; the music requires a large corps of dancers or at least a very variegated choreography that pure flamenco would be hard pressed to provide. Let's leave poor abused Luis Alonzo to the theaters. Rosario is a mature dancer, adecuada but not extraordinary. Pablo is a young lad who has yet to learn about partnering. Let's hope he doesn't treat his wives and concubines with the same indifference he shows Rosario, or he will reach a state of solitude rarely to be attained in a place like the Ramblas. Otherwise, his technique is sharp and precise. When we asked him (after the performance, of course) where he had gotten his formal training, he replied that he had had none. We repeated the question to make sure we were both discussing the same subject, and got the same reply without a blink or waver. We persisted no further, too polite to remind him that lying is a venial sin.

We had the pleasure of enjoying this show in the company of several members of the Dance Theater of Harlem, who were in town on tour. These elegant ladies and gentlemen demonstrated such an unrestrained enthusiasm for the proceedings that I'm sure they will be long valued by the tablao. Members of the cuadro dropped the usual "olés" and "srsas" and adopted the squeals, yells, yelps and rebel cries that emanated from the audience and a good time was had by all.

Unfortunately for Los Tarentos on the Plaza Real nearby, the same conclusion can not be made. We went there only reluctantly, remembering that in years past its show never had risen above the level of "deplorable," and hoping that they had cleaned up their act. But alas! "Plus, a change..." Apparently each and every member of the tablao had lost the capacity to

blush. The first of the audience to defect were the Japanese. A clump of Nipponese businessmen arose en masse and, shooting bows in all directions, disappeared. Various tourists in groups of various numbers departed sleepily over the next half hour, then odd-and-end stragglers followed. Finally only one pair of hands was heard in the hall, our own. (Use of the royal or editorial "we" still only entitles one to a single set of hands.) We began to appreciate our rare positions as a critic and one-man audience at a private, if pitiful show. At the end of each number, we demonstrated creative applauding techniques, some of which were inspired by the "minimalist" movement in art. Tiring after a while of such nonsense, we asked the cuadro if they wouldn't like to knock off early in order to go home and to sleep. Perversely, they said no and implored me to stay, and I did so until they had finished the set.

No one visiting Barcelona should miss eating at "Caracoles" a local institution of well-deserved fame. They specialize in local cuisine, seafood in particular. The crowning schievement is sugrete, a Catalan seafood medley floating in a delectable, slightly sweet red sauce. Also superb are their renderings of paella, roast kid, merluza and bacalao viscaíno. For dessert, after you've eaten each and every one of the above, don't miss their crema catalana which is an interesting and delectable variation of the ubiquitous flan. Great expresso!

The only other good "serious" restaurant we have found in the Ramblas and which we recommend without reservation is El Restaurante Moderno on the Calle Hospital. This is a good place to take your girlfriend and/or wife or a business chum. The menu is classical Spanish and very well prepared, the locale clean and attractive, the service attentive and courteous. Twenty-five dollars will feed two (wine included) royally at either of these establishments. We have found also three excellent Basque restaurants in other parts of the city, and the visitor to Barcelona should not miss the opportunity to feed on the fine cuisine of the "joteras".

On the same block as the "Caracoles" are two taverns where flemencos gather informally. One night, we approached one, directed within by the cante por fandango wafting on the musty breeze. By the time we reached the door and ordered a drink, the music had ceased, and a sultry disquiet simmered in the air. By the time we had finished our drink, the bar had boiled over into a brawl. One customer, a portly, elderly cantoor who had refused to sing on account of some insult or other, lay sprawled on his back on the floor, another group had spilled out into the street in a whirl of violent motion, and the air thickened with exhortations. Convinced that the flamenco atmosphere there was shot, and hoping not to meet the same end, we departed, picking our way through the flailing confusion, and wandering up the street past the flesh houses and the skulking demireps seeking pulsating neon enticements.

The following night we returned to try our luck at a place across the street from the above-mentioned. Here, we found things calmer. We joined a small group of local aficionados who were singing, playing, and beating palmas. Grieciosos and hospitable, they honored us with a couple of dedications. A good time was had by all.

Off the lower third of the Ramblas is a small museum which currently is showing an exhibition of torture instruments and methods dating from the medieval times to the present. Outside its entrance, an authentic, working guillotine is set up, although roped off. Inside, one can read about, and touch and caress, an assortment of things for wrenching, shredding, pounding, flaying, playing, cracking and crunching, ever so slowly, the human organism, and thereby enslaving its will. Three or four years ago, we had the pleasure of attending, at the Botanical Gardens, the vastest, most impressive exhibition of poisonous snakes we have ever seen collected anywhere. Fascinating specimens of slinking death--fell green mambas from Gabon, fers-de-lance from Cuba, cobra from India, vipers from Thailand, and two hundred more of the mortal and exotic had reached Barcelona by different paths and had collected together under one roof. Across the city and overlooking all human and animal life, the gnarled, tumorous towers of Gaudi's Sagrada Familia Cathedral, breathtakingly odd and beautiful, rises like a monster from a prehistoric swamp and surveys from on high all that crawls, walks or rolls down below. And vegetable-like architecture sprouts from the ground, adorned with odd growths, oddly beautiful, like the city itself.



# MORCA

... sobre el baile

ALEGRÍAS, THE JOYOUS

## CONCERTO OF FLAMENCO DANCE

One of the greatest influences in today's style of flamenco dance was the dance, the art, the personality and intuitive creativity of the late Carmen Amaya. While she was alive, she was a flamenco cult hero and had everyone scrambling for a touch of her style, energy, aire and genuine duende. Sometime in the late 1940s or early 1950s it seems that she created a bit of an ongoing miracle with her rendition of alegrías, especially the escobilla, the footwork section where, instead of dancing with guitar accompaniment, she did a solo of footwork to a strong 3-count rhythm done to the palmas accompaniment of her company. She wore pants on her slender body, with a long cut vest, and she pulsed that ONE, two, three, ONE, two, three, ONE, two, three rhythm into the flamenco world--and it has not stopped since. This alegrías not only influenced every alegrías from that time on, but influenced almost everybody's style of every other dance. In this so-called modern day, when you are hearing electric guitars, organs, cellos, and flutes in flamenco, and see so many set routines, that pulse of Carmen's is still beating like a joyous heart that will not die.

While this article deals basically with the many styles of alegrías, it is this mentioning of Carmen's contribution that will give meaning and credit to this past genius of flamenco, who I had the good fortune to see dance her alegrías and I also was completely influenced to this day.

Alegrías, cantinaes, romeras, mirabrés, rosas are all of the same rhythmical family, with an aire that was born to dance. Within its 12 count structure, it has blossomed and evolved into a variable concerto of music, song and dance. I relate it to a concerto form because it not only has the rhythmical flow of all flamenco dance and singing forms of this type, it also has movements and styles within its basic style, so that within the dance there are movements that demand a variety, a maturity, an aire and a technique that is the height of interpretation and control. This variety of interpretive movement and feeling is one of the main differences that alegrías has from other flamenco forms of dance. In classical music, a concerto is a form that usually has an allegro movement for a beginning, followed by an adagio or slower movement of sustained lyricism and ending with other movements that are allegro or up-beat in mood and style. This is also in an abstract relationship, the way and the uniqueness of dancing por alegrías. Although alegrías is generally related to that beautiful old city of aire y gracia called Cádiz, alegrías like all of the flamenco dances of today, is universal throughout southern Spain. Even a style called cracoles which is the same compás but danced in a more similar form to other flamenco dances, is sometimes called the alegrías of Madrid.

I would like to give just one popular example of the interpretation of alegrías and I mention one because there is an endless variety of approaches choreographically. The opening movement, the entrada really oozes with aire and sets the mood of the total dances, as this is the main part of the cante, the singing which is so unique, and this is where the main differences happen when the name is called "romeras" or "mirabrés", or "cantinaes", etc. As I have mentioned in other articles, subtlety in flamenco is powerful and it is the subtle differences in interpretation that make the dances different, whatever the title. The gradual "rega" type buildup that a dancer can do while the singer sings and the guitarist plays in those tones that can move the stogiest non-aficionados to sit up in his chair, is something that is the beauty of a flamenco happening like this. The dancer moving to the flow of music and song, interpreting that aire and joy that is alegrías. Slowly the energy flows stronger,

more dynamics, pulse, rhythm, power, exciting desplantes, more flow, energy breeding energy, and then a cierre that is explosive in its stillness. The next movement, usually a slow, flowing fasetta in adagio form, is where the contrast and arte can leap out. There is traditionally no cante here. It is the space where the art of the dancer can weave an ever flowing picture of what lyrical, total, flamenco dance movement is all about. This is the movement to savor like the finest of neclars de Jerez. Carmen Amaya came back to this movement at least two or three times during the dance, although today it is usually done only once. You can climb into space and space into you so that you and your surroundings are one. This is a feeling that I have when I dance por alegrías, as that flow is like the endless flow of life itself. This is not meant to sound poetic, but it is feeling in words that I express here. For contrast to this movement, the next pulse is usually a call (llamada) to do a 4 or 5 compás very up-beat movement, sometimes called the "Castellana." This snaps one out of the flow and lyric movement when the singer again comes in to sing this attack of a movement, which usually comes to as quick of a close as its abrupt start. This type of dynamics gives alegrías a power that is unique in flamenco dance. Sometimes the slower fasetta movement is again brought back at this time or, if not, the third basic movement comes in, which is the escobilla de pies, or footwork section, which again is a complete contrast to the other movements. This is the section, the "zapateado of alegrías" where the dancer can show the artistry of the footwork as a musical, rhythmical instrument of flamenco. The traditional pulsing of this movement is in 6's, 3's and 2's, as is very different in attack and interpretation from the preceding movements. Sometimes the guitarist just plays a sort of sing-song 6-beat pulse and the dancer will have to come up with some very creative material not to enter into repetitious boredom. This can be a super inventive time, as was done by Carmen Amaya, or it can be a very predictable series of footwork sequences that go on and on, which often happens. Traditionally, there is a two compás cycle that the guitarist can play, and this can be turned into something beautiful. With a bit of creative thought, a fugue-like series of footwork can be done, for example, for part of it, creating some musical rhythm and matice. A bit of interesting doubling, soft attacks, loud and slow, one compás of something out of nowhere, followed by a series of unrelated yet similar movements that tie it all together with interesting dynamics. What I like to see is an interesting use of arm and body movement to enhance the visual aspect of the footwork; footwork should look as interesting as it sounds. Why just grab the skirt or grab the vest and let one-eighth of your body look and sound interesting, when the total body can be enhancing the aire of the dance. This escobilla (probably a word coming from the old brushing steps that are typical of the older style footwork) is where Carmen Amaya had the guitarist stop and proceeded to do her solo of footwork with palmas accompaniment. To this day, many dancers have put that in, and some female dancers are still putting the pants on with all of the similar (no one can do the same) mannerisms and doing this homage to Carmen, whether they know it or not. I personally do it every time I dance my alegrías, which has been a homage to her from the first time that I danced it. I have worked out something that is very original because I did not have a group at the time of origin to play palmas for me, so I created a whole escobilla playing my own palmas in accompaniment and counterpoint. I know that I am the first to ever do this and when I was dancing at the Cafe de Chinitas in Madrid, a different group of dancers would come in almost every night to see my alegrías with me playing my own palmas and I am proud that I have done something original in flamenco. Individuality and originality are so very important in flamenco, as it is in any art. It is great to be inspired by others, but to be inspired to find yourself, not to try to copy, for especially in flamenco which has so much to do with personal feeling and emotions, to copy is only to copy a shell and never the contents of the art. The escobilla section of the alegrías usually builds to a powerful energy of tempo and dynamics to enter into a finale of either an up-beat cantinaes type ending or often a llamada to enter into a final bujerías ending. This last is very common, for ever since flamenco became a performing art for the public, there seems a natural need for a rah-rah ending. This is good and bad, in my opinion, for sometimes the arte is sacrificed for noise and speed and frenzy, alright in alegrías at times, but it takes greater art and control to maintain the original aire of the dance. I have often seen a beautiful

taranto, for example, ended with a rumba just to get the big applause that speed, frenzy, and noise seems to bring out in the public. I am getting off the subject of alegrías, but all flamenco is related and these examples can be foods for thought about any facet of the arts.

Many of the older transitions in flamenco dance are coming back and, to me, that is beautiful, for tradition is the glue that holds much of the art together while it grows with inspiration and intuitive and imaginative evolution. For example, a few years ago when I was dancing in Spain, I asked a guitarist to play the old "ida" transition from alegrías and bulerías, a sort of a noncountable bit that the guitarist plays and the dancer does a set series of movements to. He laughed at me and said that "that was really too antique." Now, I see it revived from everywhere, from the teachers at Amor de Dios to the National Ballet of Spain and this last spring while in Seville, this antique "ida" became a real joy of fun for Mario Escudero and myself, as he had not played it in years and, far his opening of the academy of guitar, we did it for the T.V. people that came. We had more laughs over the ida that now is back again. Nothing is old or new in flamenco. A few years ago, I taught a garrotín in my all flamenco workshop. People asked me "what is garrotín?" and one guitarist that was working with me did not know how to play it, as it was something that just was not done anymore. Now it is being taught by everyone in Spain and the marvelous teacher and artist, Ciro, was teaching garrotín while I was in Spain this last spring.

Alegrías is really a compás that sums up all of flamenco, for in flamenco you can cry while you are laughing and laugh while you are dying. Dancing the joyous concerto of flamenco can be living the art life to its fullest. It can be a lesson in all of its moods and temperament. Alegrías translates into "joy, ecstasy, pleasure." These are worthwhile pursuits and when one dances alegrías, romeras, mirabrás, cantiflas, you know that you are living a dance that speaks of what life should be. Go beyond steps, song, sound, music, become la vida alegría, become flamenco...

--Teo Morca

## JUAN VAREA

### IN MEMORIAM

[from: Candil, Sept.-Oct., 1985]

by Manuel Yerga Lancharrs

According to the information that I have acquired, Juan died at his home address, 19 Plaza Manuel Becerra, in Madrid, the 8th of November, 1985.

Already at fifteen Juan used to spend long hours in Madrid talking to and learning from Fernando el Herrero, Perico el del Lunar, Manolo de Badajoz, Maneli, Calcetines y Pepita Caballero. All of them became his unconditional teachers as soon as they realized the excellent artistic qualities that the young man from Burriana had.

He had so much interest in learning everything and in proving that he was capable of doing that it didn't take him long to start to sing with one who, later on, would become his friend: Perico el del Lunar. After that he went to Barcelona to record with the cantaoira, Locita Cabello, who had previously obtained the contract with the recording company. From the sixties until the present time, every chance I had to go to Madrid on my frequent political visits, if I had any free time at all, I tried to visit with Juan, if only for the enjoyment that I got just talking to him. He knew so many of the old cantaores! Juan was such a good and humble person that it used to take him no time at all to totally captivate me and take me back to the twenties.

We have written many a letter back and forth through the years! How very many times I have asked him for information on this cante or that cantao! He was fortunate enough to know Fosforito, Chacón, La Rita, La Pastora, Mojama, El Torre and so many other great artists, and he learned something from almost all of them, thanks to his immeasurable afición and his perfect musical ear. However on everything he sang, which

wasn't a little, he imprinted his personal style, making everything seem his own. It is for this reason that many aficionados from Málaga believe he created a style por malagueñas, when the truth is that he used to interpret a style by "La Trini," which one day he heard Bernardo el de los Lobitos sing. He used to tell me with the goodness that filled his conversation, "That's what they say in Andalucía, that I have created cantes, but in reality I have only created a couple of fandangos, one of them inspired by the cantaoir and guitarist 'El Rubio Para'. That fandango, that for better or for worse is mine, is credited around Huelva to my dear friend, El Niño Leon--may he rest in peace. He, however, never had any trouble telling the truth--that he learned it from me."

One of the last letters that I received from Juan is the one that appears photocopied in this "in memoriam," and the reason for publishing it is so that my readers can see the tremendous interest of its content in relation to everything I am saying here.

All the letters from him that I keep--and which are many--constitute an enormous wealth of flamenco wisdom and memories of those who had already left and who were his friends and teachers.

Juanito Varea: Complete cantaoir, of strong and clean voice, specialist in the interpretation of cantes from Levante and excellent performer por malagueñas.

May you rest in the peace of our Lord!

[Editor's note: The Letter that was reproduced repeats some of the information given in the above article.]

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## THE FLAMENCÓ CANTAOIR, JUAN VAREA, DIES

[from: El País, Dec. 10, 1985; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Mary Sal West.]

by A. Alvarez Caballero

Every time an old cantaoir dies, the flamenco world loses a very deep part of itself, because it is they, the few veterans who still remain, who are the depositories of an art which is being lost, at least in the purity and fidelity to the roots which these artists still are capable of bringing to their art.

Juan Varea, who died yesterday in Madrid, was 77 years old. He was born in Burriana (Castellón de la Plana), to a non-gypsy family that had no singing tradition. In his childhood he assimilated a deep inclination toward the cante, which became his profession when he was merely an adolescent. Juan Varea sang with responsibility and knowledge for almost 60 years. Without ever becoming a genius, that singer whose cry makes the audience reach peroxysms, he always concerned himself with doing the cantes with dignity; for this reason he was very respected by the flamenco world. He was also a creator of cantes, especially some forms of fandangos and some styles from Málaga, but we have to consider him basically a good performer of practically all the styles.

He began his career in Barcelona, but soon afterwards came to Madrid, brought by Angelillo in 1926. He would never leave Madrid again, except for occasional working trips. His most important period was the many years he spent in the tablao Zambra, being a member of that historic cuadro which won the prize of the Theater of Nations in Paris and where Varea shared merits daily with some of the best flamenco artists of this century.

Of Juan Varea, Anselmo González Climent the flamencologist wrote: "He practices a dramatic and respectful conception of the flamenco art. The cante is for him, objectively, a sacred entity, and subjectively, a burning, intoxicating instrument. He respects the forms, but he introverts them, revives them and introduces into them the current of his own individuality."

In the last few years of his life, Varea was practically retired from singing due to his failing health. In 1984 the Catedra de Flamencología of Jerez gave him the Premio Nacional a la Maestría in appreciation of his lifelong dedication to flamenco. Not too long afterwards, he was given an important homage in the Teatro Monumental of Madrid. Lately, he had participated in the flamenco program "De los Flamencos" produced by the second network of TVE in the chapter dedicated to the cantes minero-levantinos.

## GUAJIRAS DE LUCIA

by Paco Sevilla

This music transcription of Paco de Lucía's early guajiras was sent to me by its publisher, Gitarren Studio-Musikverlag [Blissestraße 54, D-1000 Berlin 31 (West), Germany], who hold the copyrights as of 1985. Paco de Lucía's version of guajira is not, in my opinion, the definitive guajira; I think Manolo Sanlúcar, among others, went on to create solo compositions with much more aire of the guajira--light, sensuous, syncopated and Latin. However, the "Guajira de Lucía" has been a popular piece, is loaded with musical ideas, and certainly a technical challenge. This music is very well written, in both standard notation and tablature, as you can see from this small sample:

In the United States, this music is said to be available through: Guitar Solo Inc., 1411 Clement St., San Francisco, CA 94118.

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## EL MORAO

[from: New York Times, Dec. 12, 1985; sent by Rodrigo]

by Jack Anderson

Because Whitman Hall at Brooklyn College is a large theater and El Morao, the flamenco troupe that performed there Sunday night, is a little company, one feared that the hall might dwarf this group of two guitarists, three singers and two dancers. But passion triumphed over physical dimensions and El Morao soon made Whitman Hall seem as intimate as any gypsy nightspot in Andalusia.

The group takes its name from that of its director and leading guitarist, Manuel Morao, and the program featured much of his music. Often, he was joined by his brother, Juan Morao, also a guitarist. In addition, there were songs composed by José Vargas, one of the group's vocalists. The other singers were Luis de Pacote and Lorenzo Galvez.

The guitar music ranged from the ruminative to the rhapsodic. The singers' throaty wails and lamentations sounded as if they came from the depths of their souls. At times, when the spirit moved them, they even burst into bits of dancing.

But most of the dancing was left to Ana Maria Blanco and Manuela Carpio. The two were paired in "Caracoles," "Mirabras" and "Bulerias." But each also presented several fine solos.

Miss Blanco held the attention for the way her arms moved in a serpentine manner while her feet beat crisp rhythmic patterns on the floor. She was particularly remarkable for her ability to make her heelwork murmur through long passages of trills.

Miss Carpio was altogether different in manner. What made her striking was the way she would whip up excitement and threaten to dance herself out of control while, all the time, remaining in perfect charge of the situation. Indeed, one could tell that she disdained mere agitation and, although the audience kept cheering her on, she refused to accede to its demand for spectacle until she was good and ready to display her virtuosity.

The choreographic sequences would turn into crescendos and the steady patter of heelwork would be interrupted by brushes and kicks to the side and sudden stamping exclamations of feet against floor. It was this sort of excitement that made El Morao seem a little company with a great heart.

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THE SHOW "JEREZ POR EL MUNDO" RETURNS FROM  
ITS NORTH AMERICAN TOUR  
AFTER TWO MONTHS OF SUCCESS

[from: Diario de Jerez, Dec. 14, 1985; sent by El Chileno;  
translated by Paco Sevilla]

by Luis Rebelles

"Jerez por el mundo," the flamenco group directed by Manuel Morao has returned to our city after a tour of two months in North America, where, according to their statements in a press conference yesterday, they had numerous successful performances.

The flamenco group, headed by the guitarist, Manuel Morao, is made up of his brother, Juan Morao, also a guitarist, the cantaores, Luis de Pacote, José Vargas, "El Mono," and Lorenzo Galvez "Ripoll," and the bailaoras, Manuela Carpio and Ana María Blanco.

The tour, which began October 14 with a performance in the Casa de España in New York, was negotiated through the Spanish Consulate of New York, which arranged for performances in Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Dayton, Kansas City, Washington, Connecticut, Detroit, Cincinnati, and New York. In all, there were 32 performances in different states and they finished up with a December 1st performance in Carnegie Hall in New York, one of the most important theaters in the world. That appearance, not among those originally contracted, took place because of the success the group was having.

The key to their success was explained yesterday morning in a press conference held in the cultural room of the San Benito area. It was important Manuel Morao explained, "because we have put forward our authenticity, our roots. There is a certain American public that is used to seeing easy flamenco, where the choreography and lighting are more important than the flamenco art itself."

The show was presented in sites ranging from theaters to universities. Performing in a university, at an unusual hour for the "flamenco ceremony," such as the morning, did not stop, "...the young American audiences from applauding. Those youths understood and felt our art."

Manuel Morao stated also that, "...in that land they are very prepared culturally, they see many shows and know the arts very well."

With regard to the Carnegie Hall performance, of which the artistic director was, logically, very proud, he said, "...to present us there is an accomplishment. This theater has 3,000 seats and it was filled. At the beginning of the tour we were afraid that



THE GROUP WHICH COMPRISES "JEREZ POR EL MUNDO" RETURNED TO JEREZ AFTER TWO MONTHS OF SUCCESS IN THE AMERICAS. Photo Iglesias

we wouldn't be understood, but after the triumphs we experienced we became more confident.

"It is true that we arrived in North America as an unknown group," continued Manuel Morao, "but we did it with much heart and feeling. The key to our success was our ability to mesmerize with the cante, baile and flamenco guitar of Jerez."

Manuel Morao also indicated during the press conference, at which the whole group was present, that the impresarios had been interested in preparing a return tour and, if one of the offers comes through, it would materialize next autumn. He concluded by saying that, "this is one more success, thanks to the Consulate of Spain in New York, recorded for Jerez."

## JUAN MARTIN

From the Editor:

In the last issue of *Jaleo*, we reviewed a new record by the British (now, apparently, Spanish) guitarist, Juan Martín. The following is material that he sent us--to give another side of the story. Keep in mind that the Spanish newspaper article prints only what he says about himself. The articles from the British guitar magazines give the critics point of view.

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### JUAN MARTIN: THE SUBTLETY THAT GIVES FEELING TO THE STRINGS OF THE GUITAR

[from: *La Tribuna de Marbella*, Aug. 11, 1985; sent by Juan Martín, translated by Paco Sevills.]

by Eduardo Palacios

Juan Martín can be considered, along with Paco de Lucía, as one of the best known, internationally, of the Spanish guitarists. He has sold a half million records and was number ten on the best selling record list in Great Britain with his theme for the television series "The Thornbird." He has given concerts in the United States, Japan, Switzerland, France, Italy and England. He has played with Al Di Meola, Santana, Miles Davis and many others. His flamenco guitar method is one of the most used in all of Europe and he has also written two other books of musical compositions.

Established for some years in England, where he married an English woman, "...she is very flamenco, speaks Spanish with an Andalusian accent--a blond gypsy!" with whom he has a six year old son, this man from Málaga, born who knows how many years ago--he won't say--in La Cartuja, desires to return to the land of his birth, for the fog of London doesn't allow him to feel the vital rays of the sun.

Juan Martín, who has a house in Estepana, doesn't let a single summer go by without spending a few days on his Costa del Sol. His stay in his hot Spain seems to revive his afición for the strings and he takes advantage of all invitations that come up to delight the listener with his deeply felt strums.

Last Thursday he played in Marbella, invited by the Peña flamenca "Sierra Blanca," which is organizing the "I Curso Internacional de Guitarra Flamenca" [The First International Guitar Course]. He believes that these undertakings will be highly positive in contributing to the efforts to give the flamenco guitar its just place within the art.

For Juan Martín, the guitar, "...has had very bad luck." Besides the fact that very few records are sold in this musical specialty, the problem lies in that it is a very profound art and not everybody is prepared to feel it, ...which is a shame."

"I believe that the rhythm of the bulerías is the most important rhythm in the world and, yet, it has not left Spain," he affirms, sadly, "I think about how famous the BoasaNova is --that's how it should be with the bulería. There are jazz players who can't comprehend the full extent of the rhythms of the bulería."

Just before coming to Spain, he came from Montreux [France], where he played in the company of the famous jazz man, Miles Davis. That performance may result in his appearance on Spanish television, on the program, "Jazz entre Amigos."

Aside from that, he is waiting for his latest record to come out, his ninth, that was recorded in London by WEA.

He explains that he left Spain because, "...nobody becomes famous in his own land." One fine day in 1972, he was contracted for a concert in London. Based on that performance--the British press gave him good reviews--offers began to pour in. The Spanish guitar is widely accepted and has an enthusiastic following outside of our borders.

Juan Martín, a friend of Paco de Lucía since he was fifteen years old, has given eighty recitals outside of Spain this year. For him, who learned fandangos to the rapping of the knuckles of El Niño de Canillas on a wooden table, the guitar, "...has been a drug." About Paco de Lucía, he says that he executes better than anybody and plays very well. "What he has done has been to give a very big boost to the guitar." In imitating him, one tends to play very fast, with technique, "...but you have to elicit feeling also. The guitar is a very difficult instrument; for that reason, that he dominates it so well, he is so admirad."

In regard to his style, Juan defines it as, "...a personal way of playing, in which the heart and feelings dominate the technique. You have to be subtle with the guitar."

But Juan Martín does not discount other styles of music. Sometimes he plays classical music and he enjoys Albéniz and Falla, although his music always drifts toward flamenco shores.

In regard to his published guitar method, it took him five years to write *El Arte Flamenco de la Guitarra*, an obligatory work for those studying this instrument. He has also written two books of compositions for the guitar.

Tuesday he leaves once more for the leaden skies of London. The 19th he has a program on British television. It is also possible that he will do a tour of Germany to present his new record.

[The following three articles are from the British guitar magazine, *Classical Guitar*.]

### JUAN MARTIN

by Barbara Andrews

Spanish Institute, London. 28 February 1985.

It had been some years since I had heard Juan Martín's playing of live flamenco so I was glad of the opportunity to attend this recital to a small but packed audience at the Spanish Institute. I was interested to see what had developed over the time that he had been involved with other musical ventures.

In spite of the bad acoustic we were treated to a confident and masterful performance. The material was new, of Juan's own composition, and he seemed totally relaxed and familiar with the pieces. This is not surprising, since he is recording several of them at the moment for his new album and is obviously much involved with this particular music at present.

I do not propose to comment on technique--feeling myself hardly qualified--except to say that I was barely aware of it. Juan has the mastery of his technique to such an extent that it is relegated to being merely the vehicle for expression, rather than an end in itself. With some top class guitarists I find I spend more time being amazed at technique than listening to what the artist is playing.

The pieces were well constructed, almost studied, and yet somehow still managed to retain an air of spontaneity that was very flamenco. Juan's command of compás is superb and this, in my opinion, is one of his great strengths, contributing much to the authentic flamenco feel of his playing. It is an aspect which many guitarists in this country seem to find difficult to perfect.

From the sadly quiet short programme I particularly enjoyed the seguiriyas, farruca, tarantas and bulerías. Solo guitar can rarely capture the truly 'jondo' air of the cante but this was one of the rare occasions. In the seguiriyas, with no big build-up to a baladís ending, the tension remained intact and one was left feeling as if hanging in the air; merciless and satisfyingly frustrating! It echoed the eternal tension of Goye's painting perfectly. The farruca was highly individual, serious and haunting. It made the back of my neck prickle. The bulerías was excellent, crisp, hard-driving and exciting but with plenty of light and shade. I think even the Jerezanos couldn't have complained! However, the high-spot of the evening had to be the piece inspired by Picasso's 'Guernica'. In three parts, Prelude, Attack and Lament, the first and last were in tarantas form but the middle part, while blending well with the others, could not quite

be defined as any known flamenco form. It might have had a touch of fandango but I really think Juan has invented a new rhythm! This Guernica set must become one of my all-time favorites. The three parts-ominous, deadly and agonising -- so evocative of the painting, were heart-breaking and utterly beautiful. I have to admit I had tears in my eyes.

It is my impression that Juan Martín, always for me one of the more flamenco of guitarists, has matured into a style and sound quite definitely all his own. I am very much looking forward to the forthcoming record if it matches up to this performance.

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### JUAN MARTIN

by Carlos Estrada

Wigmore Hall, London, 3 July 1985

One could liken flamenco to a hardy seed which grows in the soil of almost any given country and climate. Each tree from each seed blossoms into a new form, distinct from previous forms and from its brothers. Thus under the same genus 'flamenco' we have the talents of Paco de Lucía, Manolo Sanlúcar and other greats; Paco Peña, Ian Davies and Juan Martín are also trees from the seeds of the mother plant, each one an individual and each with his own particular characteristics.

Juan Martín, with a singular and admirable conviction in his work, stands apart from his contemporaries. Here is flamenco without the honoured traditional values, yet as innovative and evocative as anything others have dreamt of or attempted. His guitar is his canvas, and his brush paints the strings with a talent capable of conjuring up images of Goya, Velázquez, Picasso or Lorca. He has his own individual and recognizable style, coupled with an unerring sense of rhythm and, more important, of timing. The result is an enjoyable and, indeed, enviable combination of professional entertainment and high class artistry.

This Wigmore Hall recital served as a showcase for Juan Martín's latest LP. Seated somewhat farther back from the front row than is customary, he opened his set with the lament of a taranta and a fandango. During the next few pieces it became evident that we were to be treated to an exciting evening of varied toques and always interesting falsetas.

The 3rd of May, a seguidilla, rasts in my memory along with the Alegrías de Pablo which closed the first half. Juan Martín has a polished stage manner that immediately puts the audience at ease, drawing them into his world of flamenco while he speaks freely and engagingly in order to help us gather the ideas behind the pieces. Taking inspiration many times from paintings and history, the titles to Juan's works are often as evocative as the pieces themselves, yet remain remarkably firmly within the boundaries of traditional forms. Juan's language is a modern, new one, neither a shadow nor a copy of other 'flamencos' but truly an individual statement and all the more interesting for that.

At times Juan held the audience in the palm of his hands, though thankfully we were not literally in that position when he demonstrated the different palmas in his introduction to the bulerías! An unusually quiet and attentive audience could be seen to enjoy the more lively rhythms of the guajira, zambra more, bulerías and rumba which closed the second half.

This enthusiastic and capacity audience (how many guitarists can actually fill the Wigmore Hall?) demanded two encores; and another rumba and an improvised alegrías ended a balmy summer's evening of stimulating entertainment.

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### THE SOLO ALBUM

Guernica (taranta); Miró's Metronome (bulerías); Leonardo's Head of Christ (farruca); Velázquez's Prince Beltrán Carlos on horseback (alegrías); Sadness of the King (soleá); At the Carnival (gusjiras); Lorca's Dream (grenadinas); Goya's 3rd of May (seguidilla); Danza (zapateado).

by Graham Wade

Juan Martín (guitar) WEA WX17

Juan Martín's three previous solo albums were issued in 1973, 1976 and 1977, respectively and now at last we have a further opportunity to listen to the true guitar of this imaginative and virtuosic flamenco artist. In this recording Juan Martín both works within the traditional flamenco forms and creates his own material, emerging from an indebtedness to the great Niño Ricardo to that moment where a guitarist in this idiom defines his own creative identity in a distinctive style.

The titles of the pieces reflect Juan's concern to involve the public in a meaningful relationship to flamenco. Just as a lot of classical guitar music relies on visual imagery in its title to achieve its effect (viz. Koehlin's The Prince's Toys or Tippett's Blue Guitar) so this album leans towards impressionism. Flamenco solos usually have titles such as Ecos de Triana or Noches de Málaga and use the flamenco form itself to define the mood whether alegrías or tarantas or whatever. Juan has taken this process one stage further and takes us into the realm of art, history, and fantasy, as well as relying on intimations of Spanish geography or personal mood. At times this may seem a little tendentious, raising more questions than can be answered through the flamenco idiom. But at its best as in Guernica the artist can achieve a lively fusion between his personal vision and the available medium. The naming of pieces in this way is particularly effective in recitals where the flamenco player can explain the background to the piece before playing.

The playing itself is consistently superb. Juan Martín is an outstanding virtuoso by any reckoning and over the fifteen years that I have followed his career, including a dozen Queen Elizabeth Hall recitals, his technical brilliance has steadily developed, matching the interpretation sensitivity of his musical imagination. In the guitar world, for a number of reasons, Juan Martín's qualities have not always been given their due. This solo album should set the matter straight--it is the work of a sensitive composer, an imaginative artist and a virtuoso guitarist. His tone colours, superb rhythmic drive, and deep commitment to his art should prove an inspiration to all classical players and they should allow themselves the tolerance of purchasing a flamenco recording on this occasion in order to advance their understanding of the infinite expressiveness of the guitar.

### PRESS QUOTES FROM MONTREUX (FRANCE) JAZZ FESTIVAL 1985

Vevey Riviera, 18th July 1985

After the stylish Californians, the flamenco guitarist Juan Martín offered us a superb interlude from jazz. Virtuoso and powerful, sensitive and at the same time earthy, Juan Martín deserves to escape the greyness of England where it seems he now lives. You have to see him to understand that with or without jazz the guitar is an instrument with almost pianistic qualities.

Le Matin, 18th July 1985

A flamenco set and the classic flamenco guitar with Juan Martín. Nothing but a chair, a microphone and an austere and empty stage. Simply superb. Gifted with an astounding technical mastery, the musician blended in that something extra which lifts the heart: refinement and emotion.

24 Heures, 19th July 1985

The presentation of the flamenco guitarist Juan Martín was an interlude of calm and delicacy, of virtuosity and warm Latin feeling on Tuesday evening at the Montreux Festival, just before the Vienna Art Orchestra.

A moment of pure musicality given by a self-taught musician.

Journal de Nyon, 19th July 1985

After California, Spain. Claude Nobs isn't afraid of paradox: before the avant garde jazz of the Vienna Art Orchestra of which the Veud Press has sung praises, the guitarist Juan Martín presented an attractive repertoire of Andalusian flamenco. Alone facing his public Juan Martín said he was surprised to have been invited to participate in this concert which was dedicated to the cause of modern jazz. A simply and touching individual, done a disservice by a failing sound system he nevertheless managed to cast a spell on his public.

## GUILLERMO RIOS

We would like to apologize to Guillermo Rios for mentioning him Guillermo Ruiz on last issues cover. These sorts of mental errors pop up at the most unfortunate times.

Guillermo: None of the addresses you have sent us are working. Mail is returned as undeliverable. Please bring us up to date.

Guillermo is performing in Carnegie Hall in New York on March 29, as part of the American Institute of Guitar IV International Festival, and we wish him great success.



## REVIEWS

### STUDENTS DANCE THROUGH SCHOOL

[from: San Antonio Light, Sept. 7, 1985; sent by Teo Morca.]  
by Josie Neal

*Teo Morca: "A real amazing talent. Not just cute but art is there and what natural compás."*

Last month, when most students were busy squeezing the last drop of fun from summer vacations, two young San Antonians chose to be--in school. It was no ordinary school, however, that made Johanna Denis and Veronica Guel happily forgo two precious weeks of freedom. The two recently returned from the Morca Academy of Creative Arts in Bellingham, Wash., where they studied in the annual flamenco workshop of one of the country's acknowledged masters of Spanish dance, Teodoro Morca.

"I loved it," said 10-year-old Denis, who was to repeat the phrase over and over during an interview last week. It was her first trip away from home and family, and that, along with demanding classes, was an important part of the learning experience. "The most exciting thing to me was that I went so far--especially without my mom! But to me, it was worth it, because I need that opportunity if I want to be a star."

Such things as learning to be away from one's mom at an

early age are important to Denis, who has had the goal of "being a star" firmly in her mind for several years. "I did miss my mom," she admitted, "but I'm glad I got the opportunity, because it's a good head start. I really do want to be a professional, and I learned a lot of things I can use here."

Daily classes kept them busy: basic elements of flamenco such as brazeo (arm movements), zapateado (footwork) Palmas (hand-clapping) and comas (rhythmic patterns) were studied in morning technique classes. Afternoons were devoted to learning dances from the traditional repertory. Denis' class learned a farrauca and a caracoles, Guel's class learned a columbiana and soleares.

Evenings were spent studying films of renowned flamenco dancers such as Carmen Amaya and Antonio Gades, and listening to lectures on Spain, flamenco style and costuming. Watching a film of the legendary La Chunga, a gypsy who danced barefoot, Denis was amazed to discover that she could hear the footwork.

Even recreational time had valuable insights to offer. Denis recalled that they danced on the beach during one outing so "we could feel our feet. Each one (of the students) got up and danced. I danced with Morca!" she said, glowing with pride.

Guel, 17, agreed the students had many opportunities to put their newly gained knowledge to work. "We had little juergitas (impromptu performances)," she explained. Guitarists played, and each dancer danced "whenever you felt like it."

One of the things both girls learned was a new awareness of the body as their means of expression--their instrument. For Guel, that valuable lesson meant "to be aware of your body, and to be proud," and also to realize that footwork isn't the most important aspect of flamenco dancing. "Footwork is 40 percent of it," said Guel, "the body, hands and arms make up the rest. It was wonderful to feel my hands moving and never catching up with each other!"

Guel, who said the experience was as demanding mentally as it was physically, enjoyed being with others of like interests. "Just being around (the other dancers) influenced me a lot," she explained. "You could learn just by looking--the different styles, the little things. I was like a sponge, trying to soak up as much as possible, and so was Johanna."



YOUNG ARTIST JOHANNA DENIS ATTENDED WORKSHOP BY TEODORO MORCA



**SPANISH DANCE PRIMER**

[from: The Washington Post, Oct. 31, 1985]

by Pamela Sommers

the following is a review of performances at the Smithsonian, Baird Auditorium, by the Spanish Dance Society under the Direction of Marina Keet, with guest artist Jose de Udaeta, from Spain. The lecture/demonstration was introduced by Prof. Nancy Diers-Johnson of George Washington University.

I have been studying Spanish dancing for about 35 years and have only begun to skim the surface," declared Marina Keet at the start of the Spanish Dance Society USA's lecture/demonstration Saturday evening at Baird Auditorium.

For all her modesty, this multi-talented woman has gone well beyond "skimming," devoting a good part of her professional career to absorbing, performing and passing on the glories of both classical and regional Spanish movement and music.

As a producer of lucid and varied entertainments, Keet has few equals. This past weekend, her well-trained ensemble, joined by castanet virtuoso Jose de Udaeta, presented two completely different programs that provided the spectator with both a condensed education and theatrical fireworks.

As Keet offered witty commentary from a lectern at the side of the stage, members of the group, dressed in a wide assortment of traditional costumes, performed an astounding range of seguidillas, fandangos, jotas and other dances to live and recorded music. Some were light and bounding, others sultry and grounded.

Thirty-two dances, plus one of Keet's own ballets, were performed over the course of the two programs. Though the level of dancing ranged from highly polished to merely competent (all of the dancers are Keet's students at George Washington University), one couldn't help but admire the uniformity of bearing and placement, and the overall good feeling generated by these performers.

The crowning jewel of both programs was de Udaeta. This ebullient man fairly quakes with rhythmic vitality. His fingers move over his instruments at overwhelming speed, producing

sounds that conjure up chattering teeth, rain on the roof, typewriters. He performs to the music of Scarlatti, Mozart, Rimski-Korsakov and, of course, that of his native land, conjuring up rhythms not unlike those of this country's most inventive tap dancers. To see his fingers working incessantly, his arms whirling, his eyes flashing, is to experience rhythm as one has never experienced it before.

\* \* \*

**ALBA'S NEW TROUPE MAKES DEBUT**

[from: New York Post, Jan. 8, 1986; sent by Leo Lozada]

by Sonia Reyes

The legendary empress of flamenco, says she has had a life-long affair of the heart with Spanish dance.

To go the distance, says Alba, you must "love it [flamenco] with all your soul, almost more than anything else. That's the only thing that has kept me going."

Alba will debut with her newly formed 11-member Spanish Dance Theater at Marymount Manhattan Theater on Friday and Saturday with five premieres.

A Chicago-born Manhattan resident with family in Burgos, Spain, Alba spends half the year touring and conducting master classes nationwide and in Europe. She was last seen here in a special appearance with *Flamenco Moro* in January '85.

Onstage the self-assured bailarina struts, clicks and stamps her feet with a devil-may-care, self-possessed attitude. But offstage, there's another Alba.

"I'm the opposite offstage. You'd never know, to see me walking down the street, that I'm a dancer. I'm fairly shy and ordinary."

After so many years of taconeos (heel-clicks), the diminutive Alba still puts her all into performances.

"I'm all there. I don't think dance steps count or mean anything, unless you bring something else to it: your soul and feelings of the moment."

Alba was 15 when she danced professionally with the Ximenez

Photo Ruth Bolduan



MEMBERS OF THE SPANISH DANCE SOCIETY AT THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE. JOANA DEL RIO, DIANE PISANO AND LIVA.



MARIA BENITEZ

Vargas Company of Madrid. Dance was her dream and she studied ballet and later modern dance with Martha Graham.

Shades of modern dance permeate some of her more contemporary pieces like "Porto Del Vino," danced by Ruth Mayer, a soloist with the American Ballet Theater.

Alba gets all mushy about this piece. Or rather, about the dazzling black silk shawl which will drape Mayer's body in "Porto Del Vino."

It was a special gift from two very special people, Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, two modern dance pioneers with a gusto for ethnic dance. They are credited as being among the first to introduce flamenco to this country.

"Papa Shawn gave me the shawl in the '60s when I was performing at Jacob's Pillow. Shortly after that, he died; I loved him very much." Thus, Ruth Mayer will make dance history when she evokes the spirit of Ruth St. Denis.

In "Fiesta Colombiana," Alba explores South American folk dances with "elaborate Cumbia costumes."

Another favorite, "Yerma," will have Alba dancing a duet in bare feet with partner Victorio Korjhan because "I didn't want any sound on the floor. I felt for that particular dance it would be distracting."

\* \* \*

## SPANISH PROGRAM

[from: The New York Times, Jan. 14, 1986; sent by George Ryss]

by Jennifer Dunning

Castanets chattered and feet rapped out their beat in "¡España!," a program presented by the Spanish Dance Theater on Saturday at the Marymount Manhattan Theater. But this was an unusual evening of Spanish dancing, filled with dramatic vignettes as well as strong performing.

Maria Alba is an unforgettable performer whose presence is that of an earthy and ageless goddess. Animated by teasing passion in "Asturias," choreographed by Miss Alba and Victorio Korjhan, her partner in the smoldering duet, she had the dis-

arming winsomeness of a young peasant woman in the "Fiesta Colombiana." Choreographed by Roberto Cartagena to traditional music, "Fiesta Colombiana" provided the program's most interesting dancing, with weaving, dipping patterns moved through by torch-bearing women and a sword-flashing suitor danced by Mr. Cartagena.

The vignettes portrayed an aging papa returning home to his mostly female clan; two lusty, blind lottery sellers, and, with a little uncomfortable hokeyness, citizens of Madrid during the Spanish Civil War. Mr. Korjhan nearly stole each show. His elegant Spanish dancing is eccentric in its incorporation of acrobatics with familiar steps and stances. He is also a daredevil and humane comic actor.

Ruth Mayer, a guest artist like Miss Alba and Mr. Cartagena, offered a brooding, dramatic duet with a flowered Spanish shawl, said to have been owned by Ruth St. Denis, lit dramatically by Maxine Glorsky. But this was a company that stood on

its own. It was completed by the ingratiating Maria Constançia, the elegant Willa and a little sizzler named Monte. The musicians were Arturo Martinez and Kuni Ochiai, guitarists, and the singer Maria Elena.

\* \* \*

## "MARIO ESCUDERO AT THE Y"

by Solomon "El Medico" Liebowitz, M.D.

On Sunday, January 12, 1986, Sr. Mario Escudero once again demonstrated his incredible mastery of "El Arte del Flamenco". An incredible performance was given, divided into three parts. The first third consisted of solo guitar presentations by Sr. Escudero. All of these were played with the duende that we expect and always receive from him, but his playing of Navidad Andaluza and a soleares were soul shaking.

The second third consisted of a mini-juerga with Sr. Escudero, Luis Vargas singing, and dancing by Manolo de Córdoba. Luis Vargas' voice brings one back to flamenco puro -- that type of melodic gravelly voice that is not heard too often these days and is sorely missed. His Serranca Andaluza (Ed: ??Serrana Andaluza, perhaps) was a true cante jondo rendition. Ah, if I could only sing like Sr. Vargas, I might be tempted to give up medicine. Sr. de Córdoba's dancing was fiery and perfect. This small group managed to create the atmosphere of an intimate barrio cafe, despite being in the middle of a dark stage in central Manhattan.

The third part was truly a collector's item. We saw a film "Testament of a Dancer" consisting of a selection of pieces performed by legendary Vincente Escudero in 1959. Although the original sound track was lost, it was recreated by the original guitarist, Mario Escudero, and lip-synced by Luis Vargas. Manolo de Córdoba reproduced the dance sounds. The overall result gave the appearance and sound of what must have been the original studio version. Sr. Escudero danced milonga, zapateado and farruca.

This was an incredible afternoon that was wildly and enthusiastically received. There is certainly a good market for good flamenco in New York.

\* \* \*

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## SABICAS PROGRAM

[from: The Los Angeles Times, Jan. 20, 1986; sent by George Ryss]

by Marc Shulgald

Flamenco guitar shouldn't work in a 1,900-seat concert hall. It seems a contradiction in terms. Ideally, the setting for this hot-blooded, improvisatory music would be an intimate, smoke-filled cafe in Seville.

So how did Sabicas, the veteran Spanish musician, overcome the coldness and distance of Royce Hall, UCLA, on Friday? Not with the show-biz pizzazz of a Manitas de Plata, or with the intensity and blinding virtuosity of a Paco de Lucia. He did it with taste, skilled pacing and a total command of the subtly diverse styles of flamenco.

In a fast-moving program, the guitarist traveled easily, and often brilliantly, through a dozen or so five-minute musical excursions.

His compositions never bogged down in repetition and rarely suffered from a lack of melodic invention. "Cuervas del Sacramento," for example, offered several inventive modulations. "Semana Santa en Sevilla" opened and closed with an enticing, Arabic-flavored, strummed bass melody.

Such an effect was used here as a means to an end. Flamenco, of course, has more than its share of pure flash and Sabicas did not disappoint those who came to gasp: strummed crossed bass strings that created a snare-drum sound in "Arabia," left-hand-alone passage work that dazzled eye and ear, etc.

Mostly, though, the playing inspired silent respect, rather than demonstrative waves of jaleo. But the standing ovation that followed the final strums of "Fiestas en Jerez" was spontaneous and genuine.

\*\*\*

## THE FLAMENCO OF THE MORCA

[from: The Garden Island, Feb. 5, 1986.]

by Pamela Kaneshige

Flamenco! The very word connotes images of snapping dark eyes and the unbridled display of passion, sounds of rhythmic heel-drumming, castanets, and a crowd urging dancers to greater efforts.

If you have or have not seen emotionally-charged flamenco dancing, you will want to be in attendance when the Marca Dance Theatre presents its exciting program at the Kauai War Memorial Convention Hall, Thursday, February 6 at 7:30p.m.

The Marca, Teodoro and Isabel, co-direct the Morca Dance Theatre, for which they perform solos and duos. Marca will offer a satisfying cross-section of flamenco rhythms and several Spanish-style dances inventively choreographed by Teodoro and Isabel.

This writer has not forgotten the excitement the Morcas engendered on stage in the Denver area some four years ago. At that time they charmed their audience with a magic boots fantasy, and cast a true spell with the love duo to Pachelbel's "Canon in D." This last dance has been proclaimed a masterpiece.

In 1982 the troupe was celebrating a quarter century of touring throughout the U.S. and Europe, where Marca Dance Theatre's programs have given much enjoyment. Well-known dance critics have praised the artistry of the original choreography that expands tradition.

This concert will also feature flamenco guitarist Victor Kalstaa. Often, there are selections set to the music of Vivaldi and Bach. And why such a mix of continents and centuries on a program of Spanish dance? Why not, for in the unwritten history of dance, new blendings of movement and music create what eventually becomes the traditional.

From Spain, because of her particular history and incorporation of cultures, comes a wealth of dance form. Teo Marca in his choreography draws from classical court and regional folk dances, the Spanish ballet of the "Bolero Era," and contemporary modern Spanish theatre dance, which uses all forms of movement.

Let's explore some of these sources so important to Marca, the artist honorably dubbed "Dancing Eagle" by the Taos Indian

Puebla.

Court dances were modified forms of Spain's regional folk dances. In the sixteenth century dance technique was formalized to fit the nobleman's etiquette. And adaptations of dances stepped across international boundaries, for it was easy for French, Italian, and English courtiers to acquire the idea of Spanish court dance while visiting the palaces of Madrid.

Folk dance is a general term for dancing that originates among the people and expresses the particular nature of the people. A participatory form rather than a presented one, the basic patterns encourage self-expression through improvisation.


Some Spanish dances have gestures strange to other European dances. This may be because gypsies, numerous in Spain, brought with them what might have been Indian gesture dances which evolved with Moorish influence. The Andalusian gypsies have been a major influence on Spanish dance.

Getting back to flamenco, (not "flamingo") although there are many regional variations, today this term is used more to describe an improvised style of flamboyant stamping and fiery display rather than a particular dance. For all we know, dance movements born in Europe, Africa, and Asia meet in flamenco, which has its roots in the unabashed expression of joy.



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### LOS ANGELES JUERGAS

by Yvetta Williams and Ron Spatz

#### AUGUST 1985

August, 1985, found us at Nora's Place (a South American Restaurant) in the Valley. This time we had a respectable balance between guitarists and dancers. We had many regulars and some new faces. Of course, we also had the usual negative aspect of holding open juergas at restaurants: namely, an abundance of "Lookie-Loos" under the impression they were watching a floor show and criticizing whatever aspect that didn't hold their attention. Our (L.A. Juerga organization) reaction to such department is "participate...or shut up and watch...or...stay home." On the more positive side, the stage, dance area and acoustics were great. Participating in the dance were Katina, Coral Citron, Marlene Gael, Carolyn Berger, and Juana Escobar. Guitarists were Ben Shearer, Guy Wrinkle, Mickey Kayne, Yvetta and Ron.

\*\*\*

#### JANUARY 1986

In January, 1986, Chuck and Rosita McCool sponsored us at the recreation room of a condo complex in Marina del Rey. It was a small but active bunch with a lot of participation. (The Jaleo announcement with date and place arrived in L.A. a week later.) For those we missed by phone, our apologies. Incidentally, many of the phone numbers on our list are outdated. Anyone particularly interested in notifications should ascertain we have the correct number.

We had Ben Shearer, Bill Freeman, Gene Foster, Yvetta and Ron on guitar...Carolyn Berger, Anna Konya, Joy Padilla, and Eric Cortez dancing. Bill also provided *cante*.

Chuck and Rosita had such a great time they asked us back. Those interested, we will be back there Saturday, May 10th, 7:00p.m. The address is 13900 Fiji Way, Marina del Rey. Take Marina Expressway to Lincoln, then to Admiralty Way to Fiji Way. After you pass Fisherman's Village, watch for a small driveway. Parking is limited. It may be easier to park at Fisherman's Village and walk (not far). Bring tapas.



GUITARISTS GATHER AT JANUARY JUERGA. LEFT TO RIGHT: BILL FREEMAN, GENE FOSTER, RON SPATZ AND YVETTA WILLIAMS.




DANCING AT AUGUST '85 JUERGA JUANA ESCOBAR, MARLENE GALE AND CORAL CITRON

photos by Dick Williams



KATRIA VRINOS DANCES AT AUGUST JUERGA






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### updates

FLAMENCO HOSPITALITY new listing in the "Directory" will be added for those wishing to offer assistance or lodging for flamencos visiting in their area.

SAN DIEGO JUERCAS are usually held on the third Saturday of each month. For information call Paul Runyon 619/272-2082 or Basilio Ceravolo 619/274-9093 or 488-3360.

LILIANA MORALES is performing currently with singer Luis Vargas and guitarist Arturo Martinez at the Ponce de Leon Spanish Restaurant in New York City.

ZORONGO FLAMENCO has produced the Flamenco Ballet "Yerma" based on the play by Federico Garcia Lorca which will be presented in the 1986 season.

MARIA BENITEZ SPANISH DANCE COMPANY will appear at the Mandiva Center at UCSD in La Jolla, CA on April 11 and at Beckman Auditorium in Pasadena, CA on April 12.

THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA FLAMENCOS SOCIETY presents juergas on the last Monday of every month at Sainte Claire Hilton in San Jose, CA. Performers as well as observers are welcome. Call (488) 723-0354.

GUITARISTS AND GUITAR STUDENTS WELCOME to accompany dance classes, San Diego area. Call Juana 440-5279

MANOLO MARIN RETURNS TO THE U.S. this summer to give flamenco dance workshops. For information call Anita Paloma 415/383-6380 or write P.O. Box 372, Larkspur, CA 94939.

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