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MANOLETE



newsletter of the flamenco association of san diego

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SUMMER 1986

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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BLANCA DEL REY

OR TO BE BORN WITH DUENDE

[from: *Dominical*, May 11, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Paco Sevilla]

by Nieves San Martín
photos X.M. Albán

Blanca del Rey, one of today's best flamenco dancers, gives the best she has to give every night in the tablao "El Corral de la Morería." She has performed on stage in Russia, Japan, Italy, Argentina, Jordan, Holland, etc. But her natural environment is the tablao. There, she has been shaping herself into an artist since she was twelve years old. She always says she was born dancing and has never set foot in a dance school. She never wanted to be anything but a dancer.

After an interruption of some years due to her marriage, Blanca returned to the tablao in 1980 with a maturity and control of movement that astonished the critics of the time. Sporadic appearances on the television program "La Danza" and an occasional recital have provided the only opportunity for a wider audience than that which frequents the tablaos to witness the magic of the dance of Blanca del Rey.

--What qualities should be combined to form a good flamenco dancer?

"First you have to feel, to live deeply what you are doing. Without that inner world you can't even begin. Then, you must have the ability to express that inner world, to transfer it to your body. You can learn a technique, but you can't learn the ability to make your feelings appear on your face, in the hands and body."

--So, technique is not enough?

"Technique can be learned, but there are those who do not study it; rather, they have inner drives that move their hands

and body. Later, they gradually move toward perfection by looking inward. There are people who use a mirror to study, but I cannot. It distorts me, intimidates me, and makes me feel observed and criticized by myself. I have to see myself from the inside, and I know that, if what I see inside looks good, then I am doing well on the outside. Now, videotapes have demonstrated that I was right.

"They talk about complete or incomplete bailaoras. The decisive point in a good dancer is not whether she is more or less complete, or has a better or worse technique, although all of this may be important. The audience forgets all of that when a dancer has other virtues that make them forget about those details. Those virtues are "el alma" [soul], art, duende, and angel."

--What makes for purity in flamenco dance?

"In the first place, purity is feeling and living what you are doing. Secondly, it is dancing things that are worth the trouble and then not to corrupt them. For example, you can't dance a siguiriya and end it por bulerías. The two things don't go together. Neither can you suppress the role of the cante. The siguiriya was born as a cante and you must dance the song; you must respect the terrain of the cantaor and the rules demanded by a siguiriya. You can't subdue the cante and the guitar in order to be more entertaining to the gallery, to get an easy applause. You have to do things as they are. If not, the artist knows he is not giving authenticity."

--What are "duende" and "angel"?

"I would say that duende is a very special internal way of being when you are dancing. When the duende is with you, you feel a...how do I explain it to you...a special kind of 'gracia'. I believe that duende and ángel are the same thing, although ángel could mean 'gracia' or 'aire' and duende something more profound. But, basically they are the same, a pleasant state of being where you feel no obstacles, where you can dance freely with no sensation of body weight; it is a state of harmony so great that you begin to create and you are capable of creating a thousand new things and dance all night long without stopping, without tiring; your body floats, your hands and arms move by



BLANCA DEL REY IN THE TABLAO "CORRAL DE LA MORERÍA"; GUITARIST: DAVID JONES, FELIPE MAYA, CURRO DE JEREZ



BLANCA DEL REY AND ANTONIO

themselves, and you have been aware of nothing but the music and the cante, fusing with them to the extent that you are unaware of your own existence. That is duende! At that moment, you identify so strongly with the baile that you are the baile and the cante. Even more--I can tell you that dance is music in movement and the poem of the cante."

--How do you get to that point?

"It is a happy state that I try for every day, although I don't always achieve it. I want so badly to get there that I put forth great effort. How can I explain to you what is in my soul? It is a secret that is hard to put into words. It is an internal effort where there is no place for the fury, no place for the desire to dance better. You break yourself down inside and empty yourself of everything. Then it surges forth and comes out. Sometimes it comes with no effort; you are dancing and it comes in a soft friendly way. It comes when you are lifting your arms with a special sweetness. It is odd that it doesn't come the same way every time. Other times when I am dancing, I am uncomfortable and can't find myself. Then I feel a great sadness as I dance and, suddenly, it comes through that sadness. Once you have it, you don't want it to ever end. It is a state of joy that is unequalled by any other happiness. It is a marvelous inner harmony that you can find nowhere else away from the stage.



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DON'T LET FLAMENCO RUIN YOUR LIFE!

This is a true confession of how I and others have become entangled and eventually infected with flamenco. In 1965, I attended my wedding as did several others. One of them was named Bobby Turner, who at that time could play a hot bulerías. (CAUTION: The bulerías is one of the most contagious forms of this disease.) I was infected from that moment until this very day. Bobby became cured as have others, like Joe Trotter, but these cases are all too few.

Once, in the San Francisco area, I attended a party with Agustín, Freddie Mejía and a nice young woman named Lynn Write. Someone asked Lynn if she was a dancer and she replied that she was NOT. But when the music started, she began shaking her skirt and marking time. Then she started singing and I knew that she had an advanced case of flamencoitis. I eventually found out that she and her husband, Benji, had sold their house in Morón de la Frontera to Donn and Luisa Pöhren. The house was used as an institution for those poor infected souls, but eventually it closed. However, Donn has not given up and has written several books warning people about the flamenco way of life. He is now conducting what he calls "Unusual Tours" of the infected area.

Jaleo magazine is kept together by an over-worked staff who cares about English speaking people who are suffering from this infection. Of course, there is more information available in the Spanish language. So, if you have an article that you want to share with the rest of us, please try to get it translated before sending it in.

You might think it's enjoyable, even fun, to sit around the house playing guitars, singing and dancing all day, but remember:

Don't let flamenco ruin your life! This nice young man could have been a butcher or attended barber college, but no, he became obsessed with flamenco.

--Sadhana



SABICAS WITH PEPITA LLASE, MADRID 1930

From the Editor:

I want to take this opportunity to thank some very special people who have made Jaleo possible in recent years. As many of you faithful subscribers know, Jaleo has been close to going under on several occasions in these last two years. It seemed like everywhere I went this summer, people said things like: "Sorry to hear about Jaleo," "Too bad Jaleo died out," "We sure used to enjoy Jaleo, too bad it's gone!" "Why did you quit working with Jaleo?", etc.

Well, as you know, we are still around -- thanks largely to the stubborn persistence of Juana de Alva. We have lost much of our staff and costs have skyrocketed to the point where we have to save for three months to put out an issue, and even then it is tough and goes sometimes. Magazines normally cannot survive on subscriptions alone and, when they do, must have a fairly high price for each issue. We don't have much advertising, but those few advertisers who have stuck with us through the years -- Antonio David, Lester DeVoe, The Frame Station, The Blue Guitar, Safeguard Science Co. and Chula Vista Travel deserve a great deal of appreciation and support. We thank them.

I have digressed from my original intent. I want to express special appreciation to a few people who have persisted in assisting Jaleo and supplying us with material, in spite of almost a complete lack of feedback -- almost to the point of seeming to be snubbed -- and certainly very little positive reinforcement. Often they didn't even know if Jaleo would publish again. Teo Morca has submitted an article for just about every issue since the early days of Jaleo. Many regular writers have come and gone in the past eight years, and others, like Guillermo Salazar, still contribute on an irregular basis, but Teo just keeps going. Thank you Teo. Then there is my vote for America's #1 aficionado: George Ryss, of New York. He just keeps sending piles of material about what is happening on the American flamenco scene. A lot of it never gets into print, some is not published until years after he sends it, but he keeps digging it up and sending it, investing a great deal of time, expense, and effort. Thank you, George. In Spain, Brad Blanchard and Tito Paco, (formerly El Chileno) keep sending material, piles of it, sometimes even translated, and at their own expense. Much of the material never gets into Jaleo because we lack translators, but they keep sending it -- without appreciation of any kind. Amazing! Thank you Brad and Tito Paco. And we must not overlook the Shah, who has supplied us with numerous articles, sometimes controversial, and while in Spain, kept a flood of articles, often painstakingly translated, coming our way. Thank you Shah.

This is not an appreciation to be taken lightly -- there would have been no Jaleo the last couple of years without these people. A lack of material to publish would have been the straw to break the flamenco's leg! So, once more: Thank you to you all, and to everyone else who has taken the time to help out. I don't mean to slight those of you who send occasional articles or even a single item -- you are essential to making Jaleo varied and interesting -- but on this occasion, I wanted to focus on those stubborn souls who persist in the face of isolation, and never knowing if their efforts are worth anything. I assure you they are worth plenty. Thanks.

--Paco Sevilla



LETTERS

THE GREAT FLAMENCO MYSTERY

Dear Readers,

I'm writing in response to two letters in the last Jaleo: Joe Bubes, Pittsburgh, PA and Rodolfo Acedo, Pirtleville, AZ. (Mr. Acedo, I would like to recommend Greg Stitt, P.O. Box 44014, Tucson, AZ 85733. He is an excellent guitar instructor and has studied with Mariano Córdoba; see Jaleo Vol. VII No. 5.)

I have lived in Arizona for many years and recently spent some time in Pittsburgh. Of course, I'm always in search of other flamencos. I have read in Jaleo about juergas in Akron, Ohio, a short drive from Pittsburgh and was annoyed at these readers for not listing a number. I phoned all the dance studios

and guitar shops listed in Pittsburgh's yellow pages; NOTHING! So for the next four months I had to content myself with one person juergas. Ugh!

Over the years, it seems that I was the only non-professional to take advantage of Jaleo's FREE listing to subscribers in the directory. Today, I seem to be the only one listed under, "Flamenco Hospitality" (except for Richard Mois, Calgary, AL, who has no number listed). It's a good way to meet people.

I have had a few good juergas when dancers from out of state called me via Jaleo. I have had no problems with my number being listed. Perhaps some reader will explain why others do not take advantage of this service and clear up this mystery.

Questioningly Yours,
Sadhana
Chiba-Ken, Japan

GIRALDILLO NOW AVAILABLE

A bit of information. The "Giraldillo," a cultural guide put out by the Andalusian Assembly is now being put out in English every month. If any of your subscribers would be interested I'd be happy to send it along or they could write directly to "El Giraldillo, C/Azafrán, 25, 41003-Sevilla. The guide is free, but send the postage (\$5.00--6 months \$10.00--1 year). There is also a yearly guide to all of the flamenco festivals in Andalusia as well. The Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Andalucía, Asesoría de Actividades Flamencas, Cuesta de Rosario 8, Sevilla will send it upon request (write for it in May-June of each year for the year in progress. I'm also sending the Advance Program for the "IV Biennial of Flamenco Art." Please publish this for your subscribers for these performances are the best around. The 'Junta' is also trying to get Manolo Sanlúcar (guitar) and Matilde Coral (dance) to set up workshops during the biennial.

Hasta la vista
Ann Fitzgerald
Seville, Spain

LOST IN INDIANA

Dear Friends,

I'd like to get information where (close to this small city in Indiana, 70 miles west of Indianapolis) I can get flamenco dance instruction or find other companies who either dance or play flamenco. I've been dancing flamenco for the last 3 years, but after our moving from Houston, I'm completely lost about it. If there's any, I might drive up to Chicago or down to St. Louis to get periodic instructions. Thank you for your providing me the information in advance.

Yours,
Yuri Kitamura
Terre Haute, IN

TOLERANCE AND SUPPORT FROM SAN ANTONIO

To the Editor:

About a year-and-a-half ago, I wrote you requesting information about Jaleo, and had long since given up hope of a reply, assuming that the magazine met an untimely end. So I was agreeably surprised to find recently that Jaleo is still very much alive, and I was even more surprised to find you had reprinted some of my reviews from the San Antonio Light.

Okay -- I'll forgive you for not asking my permission. And since your magazine apparently is having a bit of a financial struggle, I'll overlook the fact that you didn't offer me a reprint fee. I'll even send you the price of a subscription, if you will do two things in return.

One: start sending me the magazine. (It would be nice of you to throw in the two issues (Vol. VIII, Nos. 2&4), in which my articles appeared.)

Two: if you reprint any more of my work, please have your copy editors check more carefully for typos. (I'd hate to have readers think I was a careless writer.)

Do we have a deal? I hope so. I've enjoyed reading the issues I've seen, and look forward to future ones.

You might be interested to learn that there is a great deal of activity in flamenco and Spanish dance in general here, and much of it is very good. In particular, the Olé Restaurant and Cabaret presents an outstanding troupe directed by Gisela Noriega.

Other promising companies include La Compañía de Arte Español, under the direction of José and Carmen "La Chiqui" Linarés; the National Spanish Dance Company of Timo Lozano, and Ballet Folklórico de San Antonio, soon to be directed by Chuny Amaya, niece of the late Carmen Amaya.

Best wishes for continued success,
Josie Neal
Dance Critic, San Antonio Light

[Editor: We thank Ms. Neal for her tolerance of our bumbling and support of our effort. Her Jaleos are on their way and we'll try harder to catch them...ah those...typos.]

PUNTO DE VISTA

MANITAS DE PLAYA Y DIENTES DE ORO

When I hear a non-flamenco say "I have A flamenco album," inevitably it will be one of three artists: Carlos Montoya, Sabicas, or Manitas de Plata. The latter of the three was not even mentioned in Donn Pohren's book, Lives and Legends of Flamenco.

I have heard so many bad things about this guitarist that it was ten years after I started collecting flamenco records that I had the good fortune to actually hear one of his old albums in which he accompanied a singer. Since then I have collected several and it occurred to me that, if Manitas de Plata doesn't play with a tight compás, it's because he doesn't want to.

I wonder why it is O.K. for someone like Prince to display showmanship and twirl around when playing his guitar, but it's not okay for Manitas de Plata to do his thing. (I must admit, however, that I have never seen him perform.)

Someone once told me a story of a person who asked Manitas de Plata what it was he had that other guitarists didn't have. His answer: "A Rolls-Royce!"

-Sadhana



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CAMARON DE LA ISLA

EL NIÑO QUE FUE UN DULCE

[from El Pais Semanal, May 11, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard, and Gary Hayes; translated by Mary Sol Fuentes]

by Maite Contreras
(photos by Chema Conesa)

In the two centuries of flamenco's documented history there is a small triangle that deserves a separate chapter. Between Conil, El Puerto de Santa Maria, and Medina Sidonia, lies enclosed the tidal swamplands, the land of the saltworks, "las ventas, la luz y el cante." Just right there, in the Isla de León (San Fernando), where the three roads meet, a pale and blonde gypsy, Sagittarius was born 37 years ago; he was José Monge, son of a blacksmith and a canastera gypsy, known as Camarón de la Isla.

Mairena said of Camarón, "Canta gracioso" (he sings cutely). Caracol went further, "Ese niño es un dulce" (that boy is a jewel). All the old cantaores and aficionados agreed: "a child prodigy." The admiration of the young people recognized his style and influence, and in his audiences, he brought to flamenco large numbers of followers of other types of music.

Camarón--baptized thusly by his uncle, Josecelo who saw his nephew as a tiny transparent shrimp--does not like to submit himself to third degree interrogations. He sings "par derecho" (straightforward and correctly) and explains himself in that way; he speaks little, without repeating himself, and so that he will be understood. His unforgettable voice has come to be worth three times its weight in gold, and around him, nobody wants to leave him alone. This man, who as child wanted to be a bullfighter, is not afraid of strong emotions. Complex interests are woven around this gypsy who sings, "how unfortunate is my destiny; nobody gives me warmth, no matter who I get close to;" with this cry, he makes the hair of the most demanding stand on end, drives his fans crazy, and is, today, tremendously famous for his art based on profundity and a dark, black legend that is not without foundation.

The morbid shadow of his supposed dependency on a drug called "horse" appeared on the street one dark day and, since then, the loose rumors have not ceased to be heard: "He is in bad shape, he is going to ruin himself with drugs; I hope he comes and sings... Maybe he won't be able to... The festival won't be any good if Camarón is not there; He should take care of himself better, there are detoxication clinics in Switzerland... At least if it were alcohol... that wouldn't affect his cante... Caracol drank 'un puñco' (a lot) and he did okay! Yes, but horse is worse and you end up a wreck.

It was 1983 and suddenly there was total silence in the soccer stadium of Alcalá de Henares. Camarón had just appeared on stage and was about to sit down on a wicker seat chair. "Camarón, guapo, genius, Camarón, Camarón...". Screams of recognition. "He has come, he has come and he is going to sing, I can't believe it... amazing." These and other similar phrases have been heard in every concert of the gypsy genius. When, the following year, during the Cumbre Flamenca organized by the Department of Culture, it was announced that he would be unable to appear in the theater Alcalá Palace, there was those who would not believe the sad truth about the death of his brother, Juan Monje, the day before. At this time he had missed a number of concerts, and unfortunately, the black fame was established. Nevertheless, this has not stopped the sell-outs in any town or province where it is announced that Camarón will appear. "If he doesn't come, what can we do about it; just in case I have my ticket." In flamenco circles it is rumored that his admiration and friendship with the bullfighter Curro Romero has caused him on occasion to say, "Look at Curro, he also doesn't show up sometimes and you see how people feel about him." In any case, the public has remained faithful to him and his records sell like hotcakes. His case is unique in our country.

Camarón lives in La Línea de la Concepción with his wife and three fantasies, "with my Gema (two and a half), my Rocío (one and a half) and my Luis (seven)," and it goes without saying that he is crazy about them. When he records he goes to Madrid and spends his time between a hotel and Valle del Kas. He leads a normal life and his fourteenth record, "Te lo dice Camarón," is about to come out.





Behind him lay the super record sales that have made him the voice of the young flamenco vanguard. His last live performance this past year, in the Pacio de Deportes de Madrid, brought forth an explosion of applause and "vivas" by more than 15,000 fervorous followers, who thereby forgave him for the frustrating no-shows that he had become known for in recent times. Meanwhile, the aficionados have not forgotten themes such as "La leyenda del tiempo," "Viviré," "Calle Real," "Yo viva enamorado," and "Como el agua." In his latest records, it is the dependable Tomatito who accompanies him on the guitar. This time, without setting a precedent, his friend Paco de Lucía does not appear.

To see him was not easy; everybody answers the phone

except for him. Finally, one Monday, we saw him come down the stairs, "el monstruo," the flamenco king flanked by the recording representative, the song writer Antonio Humanes, and the rest of his entourage. For an instant I thought I was looking at Jesus Christ: ghostly, gaunt, black, tiny, long haired, a cap, bearded and glasses. His tiny feet, encased in low-topped suede boots, also black, followed one after the other, carefully, as if each told the other when it was its turn to move. He exudes elegance and style as he walks and has such class that, even if he wished to pass unnoticed, he could not. He radiates something magic, bordering on the realm of the occult. One derives pleasure from looking at him but also feels embarrassment even when he doesn't know he is being observed.

--Why do you say that the gypsies have always been hippies?
 "Pues sí, this is a belief that has always attracted me. There must be something beyond our existence and that entity must have something to do with the gypsies. Because, for example, the names of the Saints, Salvador, María, Andrés, Gema, are gypsies, and this thing of the hippies came about because Jesus Christ was the first to wander with a cart and a burro and with long hair and a beard."

--What a heritage! And you, when did you sing for the first time?

"The first time...well, when my mother brought me into the world and, the second time, when my uncle Joseico baptized me. In this LP we did an alegría in homage to La Perla de Cádiz (Antonia Vargas), and it was my uncle who also gave her this nickname. He was my godfather, father, my uncle--he was everything to me."

At twelve years old he began to work in the forge with his father.

"I was already using a 26 pound hammer and I used to escape to sing in a venta. While the other children in the school were studying for tomorrow, my childhood was the forge, the anvil, nails and other metalwork."

--Tell me about Caracol.

"He was a genius; it will be centuries before another phenomenon like him appear. When I was a child the now deceased Juan Vargas, owner of the Venta told Caracol to take me to Madrid. Caracol said, 'Bah, that blonde kid can't sing, etc.' This stayed imprinted on my mind and, later he died wishing that I would come to work for him in his tablao, Los Canasteros. But it was a strange thing that I would see him...later when I was working in Torres Bermejas and Mairena would come in, I would continue singing normally, but when Caracol entered, all I had to do was see him--and even though I knew him better and all--all I had to do was see him and my mouth became dry. I don't know why."

--And where did he want you to work?

"When he found out that I was in Madrid, in Torres Bermejas, he would go there almost every night and, right there in front of the people make me stop and sing for him. Well...it must have been because he had worked for many years in Torres Bermejas and Don Felipe would ask him if he remembered when he used to pay him 250 pesetas and Caracol would cuss him up and down. Caracol would tell him to forget about the past. That's the way geniuses are."

Thinking about the great artists of the past his gaze takes on a soft distant tone. He feels nostalgia and he smiles to himself. Now the Eastern memory of Camarón runs free and old Antonio Chaqueta comes to the forefront. From him Camarón learned the complex countertimes and tongue twisters that he dominates like nobody else. "What a terrible shame that those flamenco peñas don't have a big photo of you nor La Perla; the cantes that Antonio Chaqueta left us should not be lost." [paraphrase from a song by Camarón.]

Melancholic and captivating, he says that the tablaos have fallen into decadence and flamenco still has not achieved the importance it deserves, that these things are not in their right place... "a little confused," that things are not clearly seen, that it is difficult to get a grasp on anything, and that he doesn't understand all this stuff about being in the vanguard of flamenco, that, humbly, "I'm just here and the people will have to decide. I want to make very clear this thing of Chaqueta and so many others who died without making it and, of course, without earning money from flamenco."

"In the new record there is a soleá por bulerías of the deceased Chaqueta; nobody remembers him and he was one of the most knowledgeable of all cantaores--he knew more styles than anyone and he died without being mourned and without glory. I have given him, an homage, with just rhythm on a small table 'de colmao', without a guitar or anything. It was the least I could do, since it wasn't done while he was alive--I don't understand why people do things after someone's death when its not worth the trouble. It has to be while they are alive. I believe...later, it doesn't matter. He used to have a small complex because of his age, and when I worked in the Taberna Gitana in Málaga and I used to come in very well dressed; all he would say to me was, 'I have friends too, you know!'"

"I didn't know him very well, but almost every day I went there to party, mainly to irritate him, because he would sit there and wait for me to ask him to sing, but I wouldn't ask him, and finally, he couldn't take it anymore and he would get up and dance and sing the way he used to. And then he would



CAMARÓN DURING HIS PERFORMANCE IN THE FIESTAS OF SAN ISIDRO

sing for me and tell me about everything, about many cantaores that today are not even mentioned, about Las Pompis, La Moreno, José de Paula, Currillo la Jeroma, El Mani and many others who count for very little today because they were never recorded."

--Well, since you won't talk about your mother--may she rest in peace--and her special way of singing "Al Gurugú" de Pastora [a tango made famous by La Niña de los Peines] or why they call you a giant in flamenco, can tell us what you think about science investigating ways to prolong life, searching for immortality?

"I don't really see much purpose. For me personally, to live 60 or 70 happy years, and that's how I plan to live them, being the way I am, and will be until I die, I'm satisfied; I don't want to live much more. The years are not forgiving, and there has to come a time when something will start to hurt, and I would prefer not to exist, than to continue on suffering. It's the law of life, God decides and we can't know the destiny of each person. But, I don't really know about these things...!"

Three intellectuals who have come from Barcelona and a dentist are striving to do a complicated reconstruction in Camarón's mouth so that he will have no changes in his enunciation. Within a few hours, he will have to sit in the white chair of torture and he turns green just thinking about it. Resigned and weary, he continues:

"Now I want to give my utmost, to fight for the next ten years to earn enough money to leave my children well cared for; then I just want to stay home. Of course, I want to give more than that. The people don't know all that goes on, how the sound systems can be poor, how the impresario can call you or not call you, or call you twelve hours before you have to go to Barcelona and then you arrive to find they want you to perform with a sound system that should be used for selling chickens--some boxes and loudspeakers like they use in the carnivals. They have tried to boycott me, you know. If I ask for a thousand duros [\$30-40] more...let me tell you, it is stupid to complain that I ask more than others."

--You must have had friends come out from under the rocks?

"I choose my friends. There are very few. There used to be two or three and now I hang out with one or two. They have taken advantage of the circumstances because I don't say much. Now I want to remake myself, not to make a new image, but to take a new direction. I want to work more and charge more, as I should have all along. I want to give the public a pure flamenco, using the new possibilities and ideas, but without breaking the old rules."



Two short documentaries, a full length film in France, and a tour of Czechoslovakia await him. Torrente and Humanes, his new representatives, talk about him with unabashed enthusiasm. Comparisons with Plácido Domingo and even Mozart are tossed about: "He is an absolute musical genius," continues T. Malvido, almost beside himself, "There is nobody at his level, he is a phenomenon that only appears every so often in history. His intuition, knowledge, and interpretation. . . only he knows how each copla should sound, how what has to be should be, within a certain circumstance. Sincerely, I prefer him to Andrés Segovia. He is an international talent, restricted to the canto. We are just waiting for his mouth to be fixed and then he has a lot of work; he will have to budget his time carefully. Then we will decide what will be most productive for him. He will give large recitals with a new system that follows the schedule that he wants. His direction of work has undergone a radical change."

--Who has decided all of this?

"He has, exclusively! He is going to sing in Spain like the Rolling Stones do in the United States, with everything paid and under his conditions."

He postulates that he who wants Camarón is going to have to pay, that he is going to be presented as a superstar and put an end to this business of putting his name on a program without telling him, in order to book the ticket sales, and then, five hours before the supposed performance, say that he wasn't

able to appear for medical reasons. "He wants his place and is tired of being exploited--enough of the foolishness."

Torrente's mouth is filled with Camarón and he gives me the impression that he is excessively emotional about flamenco and not very accustomed to dealing with the gypsy. He and Humanes think they will be in charge of him from now on. But, according to the way things are going between them, the only thing I see clearly is that the task will be difficult. At the moment, the reins are in the hands of the man from La Isla.

Perhaps more than one executive or organizer has not understood him, or perhaps, and this is more serious, they have not known how to accept him as he is, with his eccentricities. The music industry in other countries faced a similar situation a decade or so ago. The idols are very difficult people to deal with, but they bring in lots of money as long as you know how to deal with them and keep them in the fold.

--Camarón, why do you sing?

"I think it is the only thing I know how to do and my mother brought me into this world for that reason. It takes away my problems--sometimes when I'm feeling upset, I pick up a guitar and get involved until the irritation goes away. Before I go out on stage, my body shakes and I don't recognize anybody, but it goes away when I feel the satisfied audience and have a good sound. I don't do anything that is completely my own creation, but I put my soul and personality

into it and it comes out how I feel it. Flamenco is a mystery, with dark sounds that I don't know how to define, inspirations that I don't know..."

--What is it to be in heaven?

"Well, you can only imagine; I doubt there are words to describe it. I try to be the best I can; although I seem to be a slightly sad person, deep down I'm juvenile and happy."

--So why do you appear sad?

"I guess it just goes with my personality and feelings."

--The way gypsies are?

"The gypsy race will not die. I want it to endure, for it not to mix and for it to continue its purity."

--What does "vacilar" mean (vacilar=to show off)?

"To smoke a fat joint and get completely stoned (laughs). It's been a long time since I have done it, you know! I only show off for my children."

--And the vertigo?

"I didn't have it before--I used to ride my bicycle down from the Suazo bridge in San Fernando, but now I just go up there and I get dizzy. I think it comes with responsibility--the years make you harder, more formal. What do you want? Demasiao..."

--And the women? It has been said that you are a bit unusual...

"I don't know, I think that at one time, when I came to Madrid at 17 years old and I was blond and cute, I don't know, it's normal that one should have girls that would stay over and all. But I am different. I don't look to see if they are pretty or ugly; I have always looked deeply into people. I know how to tell the bad from the good and I know things before they happen. For me the woman would be the guitar, the companion of the cante, the girlfriend."

He speaks softly, in a bitter, and delicate tone. He is extremely shy. Before, he used to be embarrassed to enter a bar and hear himself singing on the radio. This man who lives life at a fast pace, the devil of the orthodox, puts up with, nevertheless, more than the Suazo bridge that even Napoleon couldn't cross. Camarón, as a version of the modern gypsy, gallops along with the age and, now, relaxing after a hard photo session, he says to me:

"The world is slowly devoured. I don't think that phrase means anything. I heard it said by a great flamenco lyricist, Joaquín el Canastero and I don't know why it appeals to me so much."

His cosmic wisdom and his mathematical rhythm come from far away. To dig any deeper into him would be to mistreat him.



CAMARÓN DE LA ISLA WITH TOMATITO

--Well, adiós! If you are only going to sing in large recitals, I'll hear you there. I was going to invite you to sing at my birthday party. . .

"When is your birthday?"

THE ENIGMA

[from: El País, May 16, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Paca Sevilla]

by A. Alvarez Caballero

Camarón, the phenomenon, the great cantaor he is, will probably go down in history more as a social event with very unusual characteristics.

Never in the art of flamenco has there been a figure with such wide popularity and influence. Not even Pepe Marchena, who was also a tremendous agitator--with no negative meaning to that word--of the masses, cause the same explosions.

Camarón is not just an artist for the flamenco aficionados, although it is true that the aficionado holds him in the high esteem he has earned through is excellent and personal manner of interpreting the cante. But he is much more than that. Many of the thousands of people who filled the Sports Palace [Madrid], came to see Camarón and nothing else, and they will not again see any flamenco show unless it includes the man from La Isla.

Through what strange mechanisms this has come to be, is a difficult thing to establish. Because, to be precise, Camarón is a humble person, very introverted, and has never wanted to make his art a forum for anything. Others who have tried to do that have failed miserably. Camarón suddenly found himself the idol of the masses, in an art form that, by its own nature, is normally the heritage of only a few, of a certain minority, and the day it stops being that, it will have lost a great measure of its identity.

This, perhaps, is what is happening to the cante of Camarón --in crossing all the normal borders, the limits of "lo jondo," is it not becoming something different? That would not be desirable, although his cante certainly maintains its faithfulness to the roots and preserves those elements of authenticity and purity that are absolutely essential in flamenco. Yet, his is an art that reaches the multitudes that are completely closed to any other cantaor. It is really something to think about, this enigma Camarón, whose reason for being the ultimate escapes me!

RECORD REVIEW

TE LO DICE CAMARON

[from: El País, April 18, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Paca Sevilla]

by Angel Alvarez Caballero

("Te lo dice Camarón", Philips 826.818, 1986)

It has to be said again: Camarón is a special case in the cante. And this is a special case in his discography, at least in recent years. He does not collaborate with any of the Lucías as has been the case up until now. He takes credit for the musical direction himself, and the only guitar to appear is that of Tomatito, who plays marvelously, of course, since there is complete understanding between the tacaor and the cantaor, a subtle connection that would be hard to surpass. The result of all this is quite different from recent productions of Camarón, in which, like it or not, the music of Paco and his people imposed a certain level that remain basically the same on each record.

In this context, the present record is much more personal and, why not say it, much more flamenco. The tremendous jondura [profundity] of Camarón appears constantly, especially in four of the cantes: There is a beautiful alegrías paying homage to La Perla and her mother, Rosa "La Papera", a one of a kind fandango, and a bulerías and soleáres that are done "a palo seco," without guitar accompaniment. These last two numbers--one of them a soleáres in homage to Antonio "El Chaqueta"--are truly exceptional. In La Perla and El Chaqueta, we have two

names that are recurrent keys to the cante of Camarón.

The cantaor definitely was not in his best voice, nor in the proper physical condition to be able to develop his work and guarantee the absence of problems in the recording--according to my sources, there were many problems and, in certain cuts, the technicians had to work real miracles in piecing together parts of different takes.

But Camarón has genius and genius is always evident. Suddenly it occurs to him to do away with the guitar in bulerías and soleáres, to be alone with his voice and his gut feeling, por "lo jondo", and it is heaven to hear him. The magic of the cante of Camarón--always!



THE AGONY OF THE TABLAO

[from: Dominical, May 11, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Paca Sevilla]

Nobody doubts that flamenco, brewed in the land of Andalucía, is a pure manifestation of our indigenous culture. Spain is the only country in the world to give rise to flamenco. It is true that there are imitations. It is true that the rest of Spain is bothered to see the Spanish confused with the bullfighter and the gypsy woman dressed in ruffles. But the absurd part is that the purity of flamenco is not protected today by a cohesive political entity. There is no encouragement for new artists. There is no official school. The youngsters who wish to learn have to go hungry to pay for private lessons. The tablaos are dying because they are considered a business and a luxury for the tourists.

Ten years ago, there were fourteen tablaos in Madrid. Today, there remain only five or six, some of them at the point of closing. And the government of Madrid is finishing them off by imposing a high tax, which, even though the officials didn't intend it, is strangling the only place where one can still enjoy flamenco.

For some students of flamenco, the tablao has been fundamental in the history of this living art, as much in developing new artists as in preserving the already existing. To others, the tablao has permitted the adulteration of flamenco, creating an imitation for tourists. There has been a little of everything, but the majority of today's best artists have come out of the tablaos and gone on to work in theaters. From the tablaos have come Antonio Gades, Manuel Vargas, Lucero Tena (Corral de la Morería), Mercha Esmeralda (las Brujas), Camarón de la Isla (Torres Bermejas), La Chunga, María Albaicín, and Isabel Pantoja (Corral de la Morería), Faica, Matilde Coral, Rafael el Negro, and La Tati (Torres Bermejas).

Flamenco, an art born in silence through the centuries, blossomed into public performance early in the last century when Silverio Franconetti got the idea to bring the best artists together in what he called a "café cantante," the predecessor of the tablao. Before that, flamenco occurred spontaneously in community and family fiestas and was performed in juergas given by "señorita" [the wealthy], who paid to have flamenco at a gathering of friends.

When the café cantante died out in the first third of the 20th century, due to the influence of the French can-can and a change in the public's taste toward foreign things, flamenco took refuge in gatherings of the "cabaes" [the "informed" aficionados]; this was the predecessor of the Peña flamenco.

But, in the 1950's, interest in popular, indigenous culture returned: "There was a movement that began about 1955, the rebirth of flamenco, motivated by a record anthology, by the publications of Anselmo González Climent, by the creation of the Cátedra de Flamencología de Jerez de la Frontera, which inspired a series of poets and writers. It was an intellectual movement that encouraged an idealistic concept of flamenco," José Blas Vega, one of Spain's top flamencologists, told Dominical. The roots of flamenco were investigated; flamenco was revived; it was rescued from the back room and the flamenco show was alive again. The tablao was born.

But flamenco, as a show, was born in the past century, with a stigma that has never been completely removed. In those

days it was for lazy people who lived a decadent life, carousers and gypsies. The puritanical society did not believe a woman should dance on stage. The señorito sought out a cantaor, at times half-dead from hunger, for his juergas, exploited him and did not respect him as an artist.

The stigma continues. After a golden era of resurgence, flamenco is now looked upon as something for tourists. Very few who are looking for a place to have a drink in the early hours of the morning decide to end up at the stage of a cuadro flamenco. The tablao continues to have a bad reputation, although for different reasons than before. It is true that the tablao has been guilty of some betrayals and cheapness, but very few people recognize their role in developing new talent, as privileged places where magic and improvisation happen, where all is possible, and any night there can be surprises.

Manuel Flecha, member of a dynasty of cantaores and bailaores, son of El Flecha de Cádiz, nephew of the Chaquetas, brother of Chaquetón, performs in El Corral de la Marería. It is Flecha's opinion that there, "have been certain tablao that have presented a flamenco that lacks somewhat in purity. But in general, that has not been the case. All the important artists have passed through El Corral. People believe that they won't find purity here. I believe that the artist sings the same in a tablao as in a theater. When I am in my flamenco world, I don't know whether I am in El Corral or in Denmark. I sing with the same purity, the same effort and delivery that I would in a theater."

While those old gatherings of the cobales to savour this art are dying out, the tablao are also dying. "It must be said," affirms Blas Vega, "that there have been good tablao and bad tablao. I believe that the tablao filled an important need in a time when the flamenco that was being produced in the theaters was mummified and very adulterated, mixed with other musics and not very well defined. The theater flamenco of thirty years ago did not create passion in the audience, nor permit the artist to feel emotion and get into character. The tablao, and this was its success, brought flamenco to a new audience, an audience of aficionados. It was intermediate between the theater and the private fiesta, which was the privilege of the señorito who had money or the flamenco insiders."

Although the academies can to some extent take over in training new talent—not always necessary, for there are always the self-taught—there is still the need for an arena such as the tablao, just as the aspiring toreros in the bullfighting school need a ring in which to face a true bull. The bull in flamenco is the audience. The audience provides the atmosphere and the warmth for the artist. This in spite of the fact that, when all is said and done, the performer in this art, must sing, play or dance primarily for himself.



'GYPSY GENIUS'

HISTORIC - EXCLUSIVE VIDEO RELEASE

BY
MANUEL AGUJETAS DE JEREZ

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INTERVIEW WITH MANOLETE

Manolete has toured as principal dancer with the National Ballet of Spain, under the direction of Antonio Gades. Born in the Sacromonte, the gypsy caves of Granada, Manuel Santiago Maya began his career at the age of seven. At the age of 12 he was already dancing alongside some of the greatest flamenco performers, such as Antonio Gades and El Farruco in the company of Pilar Lopez. Since then he has performed in Spain, Europe, Japan, North and South America.

Manolete has recently begun to develop himself as an original choreographer. In 1985 he brought his group to the Picasso Exhibition in Montreal, with resounding critical success. In August of this year he appeared at the Harrison Auditorium of the University of Pennsylvania in celebration of El Dia de la Hispanidad. Other members of the troupe for this appearance were dancer Ilsa Rosal, singer Ramon El Portugues and guitarist Felipe Maya.

The following interview took place in Madrid, June 3, 1986 and was conducted by Meira Wainzweig (M), Ilsa Rosal (I) and Helena Paislay (H).

M-What is your name?

"Manuel Santiago Maya."

M-How did you start to dance?

"I started dancing in the caves of the Sacromonte, in Granada, for the tourists, because we needed money for food. My brother, Juan Maya Marote, went to Madrid. He brought me to Madrid when I was 12, because he thought I could do something with my dancing. I started to study, to work, and developed myself little by little. I worked with many famous flamenco people, until the moment came when I could do something on my own, with a group, like with Ilsa (Rosal), or in Japan, directing it myself. I've been working a lot all over Europe and Spain, with the most important groups, like the Cumbre Flamenca, presented by the Spanish Ministry of Culture."

M-What did you like in Madrid when you first arrived?

"I didn't like to study much, hardly with anyone. I studied by myself, because my brother made me go into a studio and work alone. But I got better little by little, with practice, and with the dancers that were famous then, like El Güito, Farruco, Mario (Maya), Antonio Gades, within the school of Pilar López. She has been the dancer who developed almost all the male dancers that are famous today, and the fountain for all of us that are a little younger than the dancers I mentioned. We used the school of Pilar, until the moment arrived when each of the younger ones who drew from her has added something of their own, whatever they feel, and it has evolved a little bit."

M-Before you came to Madrid?

"I liked the atmosphere of my family, where there was no theater of any kind. We would have a wedding, a baptism, a party among ourselves...I've always liked that, then and now. Maybe I appreciate it more now. But we used to work for the tourists, without knowing how to dance...we didn't know how to dance."

M-What did you do?

"I had to come here. All the schools, all the dancers, were in Madrid. In Granada there was no school of any kind—none. Here I started to work in the studio, alone or accompanied, and to see what there was to see: theater, flamenco, the tablao, which were very strong, because all the artists who are famous today were working in the tablao. People have grown up drinking from that fountain, until the moment arrives that they can express their own feeling, which is what is happening now."

M-What do you mean by your "personal touch"?

"The studio is practice, where you have to do what the teacher tells you. Afterwards, as you go along, each person has to put what they feel about this art. You have to give it what you feel, without having to be told by a teacher."

M-Is it your body or your soul that makes your dancing different?

"Both. Before, you can't do it, because you don't have enough practice. Maybe you put your face into it, because it is very difficult for you to dance, because you don't know how. So your face reflects the effort that you're making. It's in your face because it doesn't fill your steps. Now, because it's yours, maybe it's easier for you, and it comes out without your realizing how you're dancing it."

M-How is your dancing different from that of Güito, Mario Maya, or Antonio Gades?

"Because each of us has his own style, and puts his own personality, or what he feels, into the moment he dance."
M- But is the way of dancing, are the shapes the same?

"No, because although each of us knows how the others dance, each one of us gives the dance his own final touch--his own shape, shall we say."

M- You have done some very original choreography.

"Well, I have done a few things, many things, but I'm not very interested in working as a choreographer, or anything like that. I always work with groups where we are few people and where we are rehearsing in order to reach a feeling of unity within the group. You can't charge the person who hires you, like Ilisa, or like Cinthia, for choreography, because you're working within a group."

M- How do you get your ideas?

"As I go along. Sometimes an idea comes, and sometimes nothing comes."

M- Do you like to play with different rhythms?

"Yes, I do. Because 28 years ago, there were some rhythms that were free, that were only for singing. But I think that every kind of music can be put to rhythm and danced and sung, which is what we are doing now. There was a song called the *rondeña* which had no rhythm, and which is being done now to many different rhythms; the only thing is that the tones are still *rondeña*. But you can put it to any rhythm: *solea*, *bulería*, anything you want."

M- How should things change? What gives you the right to change them?

"I think everything has an aspect of risk, a "sin". If you change something or want to put it to rhythm, like the *rondeña*, and it's valid, well, look, it's been one more step forward, and it's valid. But if you want to put something to rhythm and it doesn't work, well, you've taken the risk for nothing."

M- How do you know if it works or it doesn't?

"I don't know until it's done in public. The audience will tell. If they like it, it's valid. If they don't like it, normally, it's not valid."

M- Who is your audience today?

"Spain is my audience. It's the same if they're big or little people--the audience is a people, where there can be a worker the same as there can be a person who has his Rolis Royce waiting for him. This is the audience that always will exist in all theaters, and for everything that is involved with art."

M- And how do the gypsies see your dancing?

"I think they like it, No? They see me as a gypsy, with a little esthetic, but, finally, pretty pure in my own way."

M- Are you pure gypsy because you're true to yourself?

"I would have to think about that. It's not because a person is true: if one had to dance now the way they used to dance, I think no dancer would do anything, because there was no esthetic then."

M- Do you mean body line?

"Body line, I think that is important, because, before, people didn't work in theater. It was less important because we danced among ourselves. But I think that to do theater, you have to have a little esthetic."

M- Aside from body line, what figures into this esthetic?

"The arms have to work, the head has to work, the body line has to work; a series of things has to be complete in order for the thing to work, in order for it to be art."

M- You have done some theatrical things, *entrances*, for example, that have seemed to me to be very original. How do you put music to your dancing?

"We continue using the same music, the guitar, which is what we've always danced to. But speaking of *entrances* and *exits*, they must be done very beautifully, they must be very well done. Because if you turn off the lights for 20 or 30 seconds, the audience will get bored, that's normal. You have to turn the lights off, and in three seconds turn them on again, with people having gone in and come out--that is how they do it in theater, and that's how it ought to be, I think."

M- Would you like to have your own company, where you could have complete artistic control?

"To that point, no. I would like to have my own company, of course, but I think that there are many choreographers, who, depending on what it was for, I would have to call upon. Because I dance, aside from being a bit of a choreographer. I would have to call in choreographers that are known, that are valid."

M- Who would you call?

"It would depend on what I wanted. If we're talking about flamenco, depending on how many people it was for, I would call Güito. Right now I don't think I would call anyone else for

flamenco. If it were choreography for a theater work which involved dance, there are four or five others who I think are pretty good, even though their dancing might not be as pure as Güito's."

M- Did anyone in your family dance before you?

"Juan Maya Marote, who is now a guitarist, used to dance. I started to dance because of him."

M- Did he teach you your first steps?

"Yes."

M- How did he learn?

"I had help from my brother, but he learned on his own, from all the people that used to dance in the caves. There has always been a fountain to learn from. There was a man named Miguel Heredia, who used to dance. He is still alive, and he used to teach all the kids, like Mario Maya, Juan Maya, Juan Habichuela, a guitarist who also used to dance. There is always someone older than you to learn from."

M- And your parents?

"My mother danced, [right now she is working in the Cumbre Flamenca], and my father sang..."

M- And your grandparents?

"My maternal grandfather was a guitarist. His name was also Juan Maya. He was well known in Granada because he used to work in private parties, and in the caves. Of course he wasn't nationally known, because he never left Granada. This was 70 years ago."

M- When you go to the theater, do you see things other than flamenco?

"Yes, a lot. I like everything in the art world: ballet, opera, jota, all folkloric things; in general, modern things."

M- Do you like modern music?

"I like everything that's involved with music, dance, and theater, and I go to see it."

M- Have you taken any ideas from any theater, opera, or modern music that you've seen?

"Yes, the ideas. I have taken things from the modern style. I like the way modern dancers move their arms, because they're not static, they're always moving, and I think that's beautiful. They move their bodies and their arms very well."

M- Have you taken any ideas about staging?

"Yes, the ideas I have gotten of staging have been mostly with regard to the use of lighting, how to give it at the right time and in what way."

M- For example, where did you get the idea of turning out the lights in the middle of a dance?

"As you know, I worked with Antonio Gades in the Ballet Nacional for one year. When he went to the theater to check the lights, although I didn't have to rehearse, I always went along, because I know that sometime soon I would need that knowledge. I learned a lot. For example, that idea of turning off the lights and then turning them on again, came from him."

M- Would you like to make a film some day?

"Sure, but I'm really not an actor. I would like to dance in films, but to be an actor would be very difficult for me--I'm not an actor."

M- Could you tell me how you are unique as a dancer?

"I really couldn't tell you, because when I dance, I don't see myself. I see myself on video and I don't see myself as being any more special than anybody else. I do see myself as being different from other dancers. I don't know if it's better, or worse, but I do see myself as being different."

M- How?

"Because each person puts their personal touch, and so it must be the difference between each person."

M- Are you following a tradition that comes from your family, from your roots?

"People say that to be a gypsy can be 10% of being an artist. And I'm not even sure about that, because there are many people who are not gypsy, and who dance, sing, and play the guitar very well. We always have a small advantage, because we've lived flamenco in our homes, and maybe that's the reason. But I don't think that being a gypsy helps you dance much better."

M- How are you affected by the flamenco atmosphere that you were raised in?

"The things you have lived always stay with you. In theater, they always do something of home life, they do something that is valid, and it's presented as if they were in their own home, dancing at a party. I think the audience likes that, because it shows a situation where there is no esthetic, there are no lights, it's as if you were really at a family party. I think the audience likes that, it reaches them."

M- What words of advice, artist to artist, would you give a

ballet dancer?

"It's not important to be either gypsy, or American, but it is very important to always be immersed in the atmosphere of whatever folklore or dance you want to do. If you separate yourself from the circle of the dance, you can't pick up its 'salsa', its flavor. If the dance has its own flavor, you separate yourself from that. You can be a pretty good dancer, but you'll always be lacking a little bit of flavor, because you separate yourself from the circle. You can't just do footwork, you also have to join the circle of the dance that you like."

M- Should a person study alone, or with other people?

"With people that fit your style. There are always people that work for you, because no one was born knowing how to dance. You have to do an apprenticeship, the same in flamenco as in any other kind of dance."

M- How does one find his personality as a dancer?

"That's difficult, isn't it? Because I don't know what that personality is. For that, the dancer has to help him or herself, because I can't know his personality, how he thinks inside, or how he wants to open himself."

M- How did you open yourself?

"I wasn't aware of it. Because from the way I danced 20 years ago, I feel that I dance very differently now. I wasn't even aware of the change."

I- Do you think that flamenco is getting better known through the Gades films?

"I think the films that Gades has made, of stories about families, and death in families, have given flamenco a lot of importance. And along that path I think that many more things can be done, because people are starting to appreciate flamenco, and it's moving out into the international world. Before, flamenco couldn't get out of Spain much, because travel took so long. There wasn't enough money to pay for travel. And the government didn't fund cultural exchange, as they do in other countries. It was always an individual thing, and, of course, it's very expensive to take a group out of Spain. But today I think it's clear that touring is different, because they fill the theaters. Nowadays, the person who risks bringing a flamenco group or a work of Gades into the international scene is less likely to lose his shirt."

I- Do you think that flamenco can influence the dance of other countries?

"I think that just as a flamenco dancer can esthetically copy another kind of dance, another dancer can draw from flamenco in the same way."

I- Do you think flamenco can contribute to modern dance?

"Every form of dance can always copy from another, because it's all dance."

I- Is that dangerous?

"That's the thing. You can do something, for example, something flamenco. But it must be valid. The person dancing knows more or less if he's dancing well or badly, or if something is badly done. If you're working in a country where people like things that aren't well done, you keep going--you keep dancing in a way that's not right, because that's what people like. But that's not what is should be. We have to try to dance in a way that works all over the world."

I- Do the flamenco artists that are touring the world now have a lot of power?

"I think so. Before, flamenco was a very individual thing. Now, people are doing theater works, for example of Garcia Lorca or Miguel Hernández, great poets who had been forgotten. It's being done through the union of all the people that work in the group. Today, individuality plays less of a role in flamenco. Of course, there are some people that, whether they like it or not, are individual, they can't be anything else. Or because they haven't tried to do something with a group."

I- Does the individual's technique have to do with this?

"I think that if you're going to dance in a theater, you can't, for example, dance in a little part of the stage, and in the other part turn off the lights. You have to dance the whole stage, cover the whole stage, no matter what its size. And you need a minimum of technique in order to dance in a big theater."

I- Is this good or bad for flamenco dance?

"It doesn't change much, unless the person dancing wants to change it. I just think you need a little technique."

I- When you started, did people dance in big theaters?

"No. Before, that wasn't done. At that time, during the period of France, there were only theaters for Lola Flores, Carmen Sevilla, Paquita Rico, Valderrama, and other pop singers. Flamenco was in a bad way."

I- Did you think it would continue that way forever?

"I knew that when Franco was no longer in power, that we would be able to do much more, and that is what has happened. Flamenco was dead."

I- Do other flamencos feel the same way?

"I think that at least 50% of them have the same ideas. I'm seeing the process unfold pretty well. It's going slowly, because the great teachers should be supported by the government, so that children could begin to study and work with them, so flamenco won't be lost. I am not internationally known. The most important thing in this art, I think, is to fill a theater, because people know you. They should always know you because you've done something worthy of recognition, but they have to see you. Here in Spain there is very little, and when you do something important, you do it once every four months. There is no way to completely penetrate flamenco. No country wants their folklore to be lost, so I think the government should take some responsibility for solving this. They should have the important masters teaching seven or eight year olds, so that when those children are 17 or 18, they can be a base for the new generation. We don't have enough money to do it ourselves."

I- Isn't there a way of having a company or ballet, like they do in other countries?

"There isn't one. It could be done, but if you're talking about Farruco or Güito, they don't earn enough money to buy a place where they could teach children. It costs a lot of money, and without the help of the Spanish government, those teachers will be lost. I think that if we could work a little more, three or four of us could get together, Güito, Farruco, and a few more, to build a studio where children could go to study. The important thing is that they love flamenco, and if they love it, they have to pursue it, just like anything else. Because today we no longer have parties at home where people dance. It's different now. For example, I know that in Cuenca, when there is a party, they dance the jota, from the time they are children. For that reason, the jota keeps re-inventing itself. But nowadays the gypsies live in apartments. So we can't have flamenco parties, because they would throw us out onto the street. So little by little, our parties are being lost. They practically don't happen anymore. In Andalucía? Not at all! It's certain that flamenco is being lost."

I- You used to teach in Granada.

"I went to the mayor of Granada and asked for a grant of 500,000 pesetas. I want to pay for the studio, teach the local children, and feed them something, for six months, which was the time I had contracted the work in a club in Granada. But the mayor ignored my petition, and I lost six months. I think you have to be in the vicious circle of politics in order to get the mayor to even talk to you. I think that in Spain we support our valuable artists much less than they do in other countries."

I- Would you like your daughters to dance?

"I'm glad that the big one (Judea, 11 yrs.) is dancing, but I don't want her to suffer the way I did. She has my help--I can support her with words and with actions, so that she won't go through what I did. And maybe if things aren't going well for her economically, I can help also. I don't think she'll have the same problems I did. But if she's not going to do something that's worthwhile, she should dance as a hobby--I've already told her that."

M- Tell me about Carmen Amaya.

"Carmen Amaya invented something that had never been done before. She danced with the rhythm of percussion, with palmas, and without any other accompaniment. Before her, people only danced with the guitar. She used the hand-clapping as percussion, just as if it had been played on wood or on any other drum surface. It was very valid, because, aside from a good sound, it had such strength that even today all dancers repeat things of hers. I think that 100 years could go by and we'll still be using her steps."

M- And she became an international star.

"That's right. Because she did something new."

M- Was she from Granada?

"No, she was from Barcelona."

M- And she had nothing to do with Granada?

"Well, that's hard to tell, because her name was Amaya, and in Granada there are many Amayas. There was a trunk where each family branched off to wherever they needed to go. But since the name is Amaya, the Amayas of Granada must have something to do with that branch of Carmen Amaya."

M- Does your dancing have anything of her style?

"Yes, a lot. My brother Juan worked for eight years with

her, and he would bring me all her steps, and of course I still do many of her things."

M- Was she very masculine in her dancing?

"She was just as masculine doing footwork as she was feminine wearing a long bata de cola."

I- Is the difference between how a woman dances and how a man dances very important in flamenco?

"It used to be."

I- And now?

"There exists much less difference, because as we were saying before, a person has to be complete in all aspects of the dance. You can't have no arms and no body sensitivity, and footwork like a machine. Not a man, nor a woman. You must have footwork and feeling, you must have arms and body, you can't dance like a stick. The idea that a man has to dance one way and a woman another way, is dying. The audience wants that change--we are the ones who don't want to change. We talk about one quality as opposed to the other, but the audience doesn't even notice the difference. 20% might notice if a woman has more feet than arms, or a man has more arms than feet. We are the ones who say that a woman should have more arms than feet. I don't know why. A person who gets to be somebody, a dancer, has to be complete. If they weren't, they wouldn't be anything."

M- You said that you like the way modern dancers move their arms. When you see something you like, how do you apply it?

"I use my own facility for movement. Because I don't have the same facility of movement that modern dancers have. I apply it to my own way of moving, because I can't do exactly what they do, because they have different training. I move the way I feel, but I can always pick up something."

M- Do you go into a studio and watch yourself in the mirror?

"No, I go to see something modern, and what I like sticks in my mind. I like a certain movement, and the image stays with me, and even if I don't study it in the mirror, it seems that I do more or less the thing that I liked. I carry it out in my own way of moving, but the image that I have makes the thing that I saw come out."

M- What companies have you seen that you've liked?

"I liked the Stalingrad Ballet, the National Ballet of Paris, all the Russian Ballets..."

M- Did you see any traditional theater in Japan?

"Yes, I loved Kabuki; it's very personal to the Japanese, and it's very beautiful. In order to learn Kabuki, I would have to enter into the life there, stay in Japan, join their circle..."

I- What is the most important thing in the world for you?

"The most important thing in the world is that I love to dance. The second most important thing, which is more difficult, is to create. They go hand in hand. If you're a creator, you are a fountain for the people coming up from below, who can take something from your creation."

I- Do you have the responsibility of being a creator?

"Yes, I think that a creative person who doesn't struggle for it has committed a crime. He might want to be comfortable, or he might not want to take the risk. But it's a crime not to at least try to present him or herself to the public and to the people who will dance after him."

I- Is the art world more problematic than other worlds?

"No, I think that's a question of education. Everything is a question of education, because there shouldn't be problems in any profession, because each person knows who and where they are professionally. If he misrepresents himself, it's because he's ignorant."

I- Is the life of an artist worth all the insecurity?

"Everything has its advantages and its disadvantages. Learning to dance, or knowing how to dance, is already enough compensation, because you wanted to dance. Afterwards, if work doesn't come easily for you, you're always going to have that problem. But the most important thing that you have done is to learn how to dance. You can be more lucky or more unlucky, you can struggle more or less. I think that the struggle is always good."

I- Is your U.S. debut an important thing for you?

"Very. I was in Rochester seven or eight years ago in a tablao flamenco, a restaurant called the Don Quijote. I went to New York to see if I could find Sabicas, but he wasn't there. I wanted to do something, but in New York only the Sangria was

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open, I think that the Chateau Madrid was closing, and there was no way to get a job that would tide me over until something more important came along. I had to come back to Spain."

M- Would you like the American gypsies to see you dance?

"Sure, that would be interesting, although I don't know how the American gypsies like flamenco...maybe they don't like flamenco..."

H- Would you like to work with ballet or jazz artists in the U.S.?

"Sure, that would be interesting."

M- Family parties are being lost and flamenco is becoming a theater form. Was it this way 100 years ago? Did your family always live from flamenco, or did they support themselves in other ways and have flamenco as a family thing?

"Before, flamenco wasn't in the theaters. There were very few theaters. We danced at baptisms, at weddings, or sometimes, without baptism and without wedding, we would have a couple of drinks and dance. I think it was a way for us to move beyond the limits of our lives, of expanding ourselves, because we really didn't have much to eat, much to drink, or much to sleep, we didn't have houses... I think it was a way of escaping boredom, because we had to expand ourselves in some way. If we danced, then we danced, if we sang, then we sang, the same as some people get it into their heads to break windows. My father was a fruit-seller. My mother has always danced, in the zambra, in the Camino Monte, where lots of people went for vacation. The typical things to see there were the Alhambra, and the Camino del Monte, which is where the gypsies lived. They didn't go to see the dance--they went to see where the gypsies lived, how they lived, whether they were dirty, whether they wore mustaches, or were badly dressed--their way of living. It wasn't exactly the dance, I remember that it was more or less a people living very poorly that they went to see. Of course, things changed. It started in a cave where people started to enter. Not tourists, but Spaniards, who would come into a cave and have a drink, because we had to eat, and we had to say, 'Come in, sir, and have a drink'--and they stayed and they enjoyed themselves, and they gave us money to eat, and that was how the zambra got started. Then they started promoting it, they made records of the Sacromonte, and started to work with the hotels. 'You must see the Zambra of the Sacromonte, it's very cheap!' In the end, people came to see it, but in the beginning they came to see a people living poorly."

i- When was this?

"About thirty years ago things started to change, the big promoters came."

M- Didn't tourists come as long ago as the twenties?

"It's probably been 100 years since they started dancing in public in the caves of the Sacromonte. The caves also had another history. The caves of the Sacromonte used to be the stables of the Arabs. From hundreds of years ago, the caves were where the Arabs kept their horses and where we lived. Spaniards would go to see the caves."

M- Were the gypsies there with the Arabs?

"I think that we had to have been. If not with the Arabs, then with the Christians, as they were called. But I think we must have been there."

M- And did you dance?

"I think we have always danced. I don't know how, but I think that the Arabs must have taken with them something, maybe not of the gypsies, but of Spain, of Granada, or of the other Spanish cities. And that we must have picked up some Arabic things, in our dance. Although I don't think that flamenco is Arabic. When you go to the Arabic countries, their dance has nothing to do with ours: the arms aren't the same, the body isn't the same, the legs aren't the same. There would have to be much more similarity."

H- And Indian dance?

"I think we have an affinity with all oriental dance, if it's true that we come from India, as they say. I think that there is a lot of connection musically, but again, not much in the dance. It might be that 100 years ago there was more connection, for example in the arms, in the hands, but it's been lost. It might be that it has become the use of finger-snapping in our dance..."

M- Do you mean that the Indian hand gestures have become gypsy finger-snapping?

"I think so. It is clear that the dancing is similar. Arabic dancing is also similar to Hindu dancing. But it might be true that the gypsy thing of marking rhythm with the feet and hands

wasn't ours to begin with. I don't know. I have a book where the Indian gypsies are dancing with sticks. They fight with sticks, and they dance with sticks. It's a ritual, like the staff which gypsy men carry here, as a symbol of authority and as a weapon. Only it's a real staff, a stick, not a walking stick with a handle. Two couples danced, as if they were fighting. And the gypsies of Russia do the same thing."

M- When you were young, you used to go into a studio and practice. What did you do?

"I got bored a lot. I was by myself, and you know what it is to be young. I loved to dance, but I still got bored. I worked a little, because I was afraid of my brother Juan, who used to reprimand me a lot. I had to go in, but I didn't want to. Now I like to rehearse more, because I am more aware of the importance of this art. Before, I gave dance and music much less importance. When you're younger, you like to go out, go to the movies and play. I've always liked art, and music, and I loved to dance ballet. I would like to have been a ballet dancer, but I didn't have the money to study."

M- How old were you when you wanted to do that?

"Well, I never got started, I just liked it. And I thought I had talent, because I've never studied ballet, and yet today we are opening flamenco dance so much. We seem a little like ballet dancers, although without training, without a barre..."

M- How old were you when you first got this idea?

"When I came to Madrid, when I was 14. In Granada I never saw anything. I came to Madrid, I started to work in a tablao, to make enough money to eat, to send money home to my parents. Studios were more difficult to pay, and of course there was not enough money."

M- Do you study now?

"When I have something important to do, yes. I spend a month or so in the studia. But in between I don't study many hours a day."

M- How are your days?

"On a normal day, when I'm not touring, I come to the dance studio on Amor de Dios. If there are classes to give, I give them, if there aren't classes to give, I don't give them, but I still like to be around, with my friends, to stay in touch with our circle. I like to be with friends, like Güito, who dance, or sing, or play the guitar, not to lose contact, because it gives you flavor (salsa). I used to go out every night to see a tablao, to see what there was that was good. But now I go out less, because there's nothing worth seeing. Terrorism, the high crime rate, have been the demise of the tablaos. My normal day is to rehearse, and rehearse, and when I finish rehearsing, to go home. I like to be at home."

M- Does flavor come more from people than from practice?

"I think so. The flavor is always there. If a person wants to learn jazz, the most appropriate thing would be to get together with jazz people. I think people get flavor from other people. If you go right on time to jazz class, and then you start working at a typewriter, you can learn the little bit that they have shown you, but without flavor. I think you always have to be within that world. I think you learn less if you learn a little step and then go home and start to do something else. I think that if you join the circle, even if you don't catch the step, the step will eventually come to you, because you are absorbing their way of being, the way they function, and how they can do that little step even though you can't. You absorb the INTENTION, which is worth much more than just doing the little step. I think..."

M- What do you think about flamenco in Japan and America?

"Everything is a matter of pleasing an audience. Pleasing an audience is an art in itself. Some people get it with more agony, some with less. I also think that being able to do flamenco all the time is a factor. Artists go to those countries to work, but they stay only for a short time, for three or five months. And when there is someone to study with and who is paid, money becomes a factor, because maybe there is someone to teach you and you just can't afford it. That's why I always say that there should be someone that wouldn't have to charge, and that could pay your living expenses at least, so people could study."

M- What idea do Americans and Japanese, for example, have of flamenco?

"I see more and more people come each year. Each year more people like flamenco, they come to learn it, and there are even some people who dance pretty well, which is important--that it take root well."



ESTAMPAS Y CUENTOS DE ANDALUCIA

by El Tio Paco (formerly El Chileno)

I am still not sure what to call it. A twist of fate, divine inspiration, sheer folly, or all the above. It was like a Close Encounter of the Third Kind, with its irresistible call to whatever Devil's Tower Mountain is called around here. The fact is that, with little conscious planning on my part, I found myself here, and by the look of things, I may stay around for a while. Even if you didn't care for flamenco, the Andalusian Scene might crowd your senses a bit. If you are a died-in-the-wool aficionado, it could prove overwhelming. Wanting to share some of my experiences with other Jaleistas, but finding myself unable to tie them together into a coherent article, I thought I'd pass them on in the rough, as they occur. While our points of view may differ, perhaps these Estampas y Cuentos Andaluces will echo your own experiences from times past and help you relive them. Or for those who have yet to make the pilgrimage, it might just be the final call to do so. At times the eyes of the New World may seem naive when looking at the events of the Old, and I hope that some of my observations will not be interpreted in any way as criticism of a way of life which I have come to love and admire. In any event, in the hope they prove even mildly informative or entertaining, I offer them for what they are worth. May these writings be a small tribute to the great people of Andalusia, the kindest, warmest, and friendliest in the world.

A Way of Life

"En la vía tó es prestaito, así que hay que disfrutá..." (In life, everything you have is just loaned to you, so you must enjoy). (Andalusian saying.)

Here, it doesn't take long to realize flamenco is far more than an art form, but rather a way of life. And one that requires a tough constitution. Bitter winter cold in homes that can't be heated, and dusty, windy, hot summers. A soil neither generous nor bountiful. Tiny white homes perched precariously on hilltops, clustered into a maze of alleys that seem to have no end. Old women in black, mourning long departed husbands. Men with several-day stubbles in deeply weather-creased faces. A speech almost devoid of the letter "l", spoken in short staccato phrases that sound more like bursts of machine gun fire (and about as intelligible) to ears accustomed to New World Castellano. The ever present cigarette. A diet that reads like the American Heart Association's list of Things-To-Stay-Away-From, everything washed down throughout the night with copious amounts of "fino". But there is El Arte. You listen, see, and feel it. It almost makes you forget the rest... What the heck, I never thought there was much "duende" in carrot juice and alfalfa sprout salad anyway.



THE AUTHOR WITH ROMERITO DE JEREZ AND CHANO LOBATO
(WELL ON HIS WAY TO BECOMING "TIO") SEVILLA, MARCH '86

What's in a Name? (Or How I Came to be Known as El Tio Paco).

I used to think it an act of snobbery for a flamenquista of Anglo extraction to take on a Spanish name. After all, forebears that hail from the British Isles are just as honorable as those from the Iberian Peninsula, and being a Smith or a Jones makes you no less worthy of El Arte than if your name were Pérez or González. That is, until I found out that a common Scottish name, well known to anyone who ever tasted canned tomato soup in the USA proved a hopeless tongue-twister in Andalusia. I counted on the first name at least being manageable. After all, Ol' Blue Eyes should have been famous here at one time. But if he was, his name undoubtedly (and thus mine) must have been Francisco, or Curro, or Paco. But what about "Tio?" Well, you need other qualifications, such as grayning at the temples (which lends you an air of respectability), and a demonstrated proclivity for fino. This might be the final touch to earn you the much coveted title of "Tio" (not to be mistaken with its generic form, commonly written with a small "t"). The titling (or "Tío-ing"?) ceremony generally takes place more or less formally at a suitable location (such as the neighborhood bar), where the Tio candidate must demonstrate his ability to pop the cork of several bottles of fino (many bearing the name of illustrious predecessors such as Tio Mateo, Tio Pepe, etc.) by briskly tapping it on a hard surface, and sharing the contents with the bibulous membership committee (which could be composed of anyone who happens to be present). This must be accomplished preferably with several different brands of fino, and the aspiring Tio must demonstrate his vast command of the subject by NOT trying this technique on a bottle of La Ina, as this popular brand has no cork, but rather a screw cap. This would cause the neck (or entire bottle) to shatter, subjecting the candidate to much humiliation and shame, not to mention his automatic ineligibility to bear the respected title. He will be called by the generic form for some time though, pronounced with a certain intonation that leaves no doubt as to what station the unfortunate one occupies in life. For me, it was a close call, but I am sure glad I made it.

On Learning Flamenco

Among Andalusian children, a guitar is as common as a baseball bat in the hands of Little Leaguers in the U.S. By the time they are 10 years old, they wield it for its purpose about as well. For many of these kids it may be their one and only toy. And even little girls, like their American sisters, are beginning to assert their right to the game. Dancing is learned along with the first steps in life. Palmas ("palmes") well before that on your mother's lap. El cante is something you do while cleaning the house, working the fields, the "fragua", or simply to pass the lonely hours. As natural as breathing. It is not a matter then of "whether" you do these things, but of "how well" you do them. To be an Andaluz (or Andaluza), then, is to be a guitarist, singer, dancer, or any combination thereof. Those with a special gift may be found by a teacher who will put the finishing touch. For the few lucky ones, it may mean a living ("dá pá comé..."), and for the elite, a ticket to the high life and peaks that go along with it. But the rest (including us late comers from other lands), already have "learned" as much as they ever will, and must be content with it. Not to despair though, because El Arte will always be there "pá disfrutá..."

Las Ferias

The proponents of the Big Bang Theory of Creation of the Universe will find support for their beliefs at the Feria de Sevilla. It is the biggest bang of them all, from which a succession of smaller, but no less energetic events spawn throughout the region to last the entire summer. After Sevilla comes Rota, Jerez, El Puerto, Córdoba, Sanlúcar, and on and on. Each will have its own individual flavor, perhaps a different name (Feria del Caballo, de la Manzanilla, de San Antonio, etc.) but the common denominator is having as much fun as it is humanly possible. For several days, the town will be practically paralyzed, as all the available energies are directed towards making the event a success, which invariably is. The noise level is deafening, with each caseta, amusement ride and shooting gallery having an all out decible war with its neighbors, which will go on day and night for the duration. Limitless quantities of the most scrumptious foods and delicious beverages (witness the Sanlúcar Manzanilla Ferial) for every taste, round the clock dancing, clapping of the hands, parading, and general merry-making throughout the night until it is time to go in the morning. In spite of the vast quantities of alcohol consumed, drunks are a rare sight, and except for isolated events, obnoxious or

disorderly conduct is almost unheard of. Depending upon the feria, casetas may be strictly private, with an uniformed ID-checking guard at the entrance, to completely open to the public. Most casetas fall somewhere in between though, where a well placed friend, dropping the right name, or waving an impressive photographic camera will gain you ready access without many questions asked. Although Sevillanas are the order of the day, followed closely by rock, there is little flamenco played at ferias, and as I am told, less every year. Thus, although there is much "ambiente" at ferias otherwise, the flamenco-seeking purist would do well looking elsewhere for inspiration. There are a few notable exceptions, such as the presence of Juanito Villar and El Camarón at the Chiclana Feria *this year, but generally there is little advanced notice and one must look carefully and take some chances.* All in all, however, ferias (as most important events in Spanish life) seem to be essentially family affairs, shared by everyone from tiny tots to the very elderly, everyone being granted due respect, consideration, and allowed to participate in their own measure. Therein perhaps lies the immense popularity and success of the ferias, where the tight bonds Andalusians have toward family, friends, community, and the land, are reasserted once again. With a big bang.

Certamen del Cante

It was to take place on Saturday night at the local cinema in a small town. Quite an event it was, with people crowding the main entrance and cars parked anywhere they would or wouldn't fit. My tiny SEAT found its place a few blocks away, on a sidewalk between a milk truck and several motorscooters (I figured at least no harm could come from the latter). The late December chill had already drained all residues of heat from every building in town, including the cinema, and Tío Pepe was only partially successful in helping us maintain normal body temperature in the unheated hall. People of all ages everywhere, from tiny tots in their mother's arms, to serious listeners occupying mainly the front rows. The precarious sound system only succeeded in amplifying the already poor acoustics of the room. The contestants were having considerable difficulty competing against the various other events of interest which prevailed throughout the hall. We had found seats around the middle, and behind us a cheerful "tio" loudly toasted to the beauty of a trio of young girls who giggled in acknowledgement. A few rows away, a group debated animatedly whether the next round should consist of Cruzcampo or Tío Pepe, while trying to appoint a representative to make the necessary trip to the bar. It appeared the matter was not resolved satisfactorily, because the entire group stood up and exited in mass. Elsewhere, a young man walked among the rows trying to get his cigarette lit with only limited success, as we lost sight of him near the exit door with his cigarette in his mouth still unlit. No doubt a shortage of baby sitters had complicated matters considerably that evening by forcing virtually every mother to bring her children to the theater. Many of these tots wished to have food, a change of diapers, or their favorite toy, now under a seat several rows ahead retrieved at once. And so on. The cantaores tried their hardest, but were simply no match for them. Nevertheless the show went on, and after the last contestant had his "palo", an intermission of sorts took place to allow the jury to deliberate for a winner. Throughout the evening, the lights in the theater had been flickering ominously, and as we made our way to the bar to await the jury's verdict, the electricity finally went out altogether. We sipped the last of our Tío Pepe by emergency lights, assisted by the flames of cigarette lighters and matches, until a brief inspection outside the theater made us realize the entire town was submerged in darkness. Evidently the power failure was not confined to the cinema, and as the time went by (now well after midnight), it became obvious the problem was going to take some time to resolve. Somewhat disappointed, but eager to get into a heated automobile, we left, making our way back to Jerez in a countryside illuminated only by the stars and a moon peeking from behind the clouds every now and then.

I never found out who the winner of the Certamen was.

The Man from El Gastor

"...and I am Don Diego del Gastor, and you can start looking for another guitarist!". (Diego to an officer of the Guardia Civil.)

Some say he was born there. Others claim it was Grazalema, or even Algodonales. Whatever the truth is, there is no doubt about which town it was he carried into legend. I was told you could reach it by taking either C-339 or N-342, both narrow, winding mountain roads just a few "clicks" out of Algodonales,



EL TIO PACO AT THE ENTRANCE TO EL GASTOR.



WALL PLAQUE COMMEMORATING DIEGO DEL GASTOR

but I wasn't having much luck. My asking for directions to El Gastor met with puzzled stares as if I had just disembarked from a Martian spacecraft. Until a keen goat-herder tending his animals by the roadside, and no doubt accustomed to dealing with such aliens quickly realized it was "Er Gastó" I really wanted. From then on it was easy going. First left turn across the river, just past the "venta", and then about 3 kilometers up the hill. And up the hill it was. I could see snow capping the higher mountains, and as I climbed it became increasingly colder, making me thankful for a working heater in the little SEAT. There was a cozy looking bar in the town's tiny main square. The Fino Victoria was incredibly comforting. A juke-box of sorts was blasting away some rock tune ("Quiet Riot, I think). Our very young barmaid had never heard the man's name, and could be of no help. The only other customers were some teen-agers playing earnestly at a rather loud computer game, and we didn't even bother asking them.

We paid our "veinte duros" check and walked out in the cold air again, seeing the two older men slowly walking up the street. I politely approached them and told them of our predicament. Did they know him? Of course they did, but why would two "Americanos" bother to come all the way up, and on such a cold day? We said, er... we admired him very much, and just wanted to see the town whose name he had made famous. The men's eyes lit up, their faces beamed. Obviously the "Americanos" were lunatics, but such dedication had to be rewarded. They would tell us all about him they said, as we were whisked to another bar across the street. "He was a strange man (un hombre muy raro), very independent, and set on his ways. If he felt like playing the guitar, he could do it all night long. But if he didn't, all the money, or the Guardias in the world couldn't make him do it," they told us over coffee and Soberano Cognac. "They used to call him 'El Pitito', because of the whistle he carried in his pocket to tune his guitar." And where did he get his music? "Anywhere he could, from classical themes, to folk tunes he would hear in other towns." We wanted to see the home where he lived. They said they'd gladly take us there on their way to a Retired Persons Hall, where the younger of the two men, who had introduced himself earlier as El Relojero (The Watchmaker) was performing that evening. "Have you ever heard fandangos played on the accordion? Well, tonight you will, because I am the world's first, and only, flamenco accordionist. Not only that, I am truly a one-man orchestra, and I have been booked to appear tonight before a group of senior citizens here in El Gastor." The sun was setting as we walked down the narrow, dimly lit alleys where we could see patches of ice begin to form. A third man, apparently a town official of some sort, wishing to add his welcome, joined our group. They pointed out to us with pride one of the many perfectly maintained, whitewashed homes which bore a plaque proclaiming "The House Where the Amazing Flamenco Guitarist Diego del Gastor Lived and Developed Artistically in the Years 1912-1941." They would also show us his original home, just a few yards away, where the "caballeriza" (barn) was. The older Amaya had been a successful animal trader, and made a living more comfortable than most. Both homes had long since changed hands, but not the well deserved landmark status. The "caballeriza", a small (perhaps 10 by 20 foot) room with an unbelievably low ceiling had been converted into a basement which served as a wash/utility/storage/miscellaneous area, now with direct access to the house via a narrow staircase. I thanked our host, as I wondered how many, or what size horses they could have crammed in there. As if guessing my thoughts, one of the men said: "It was of course a somewhat bigger space back then, without all these improvements. They could manage 5 or 6 horses at the time in there..."

But we wanted to find out what he was like as a young man, growing up in El Gastor. Might there be other people around, perhaps friends or family who knew Diego intimately as a youth? Family, no. Of course his parents were long gone. There was a brother, an excellent guitarist in his own right, but who had lost his mind and passed away long ago. There was also a sister, a deaf-mute perhaps, probably deceased too. It was rumored that she also played the guitar, maybe better than either brother. Friends? Ay, yes, a neighbor, La Menacha, still lived next door. By then our small entourage had been augmented by a couple or three more people who did not wish their knowledge of Diego to be left out, as we advanced towards La Menacha's home. Forewarned, she was waiting for us by the door of her even smaller but spotless dwellings. She invited us in, and we all sat around a small round table, tucking our knees under the heavy tablecloth. I quickly realized it covered a



EL TIO PACO, INSPECTING THE "CABALLERIZA" AT DIEGO'S CHILDHOOD HOME



EL TIO GREGORIO AND EL TIO PACO WITH LA MENACHA, IN EL CASTOR

"brasero" full of hot coals under the table, the whole thing doing a far better job than any central forced-air heater I ever saw. La Menacha was a small, gray haired woman, well in her 80's, with a handsome, deeply lined face. She must have been a very attractive lady at one time. Did she remember Diego? "Yes, very well." Did they attend school together perhaps? "No, que va!, there were no schools in these 'pueblos' in those times. An itinerant teacher might happen by every now and then and teach you the basics. No compulsory, state-supported education then. Each child had to bring a 'perra chica' or whatever the parents could afford to pay, and the class would convene in the church or any suitable location that could be found." But we had heard that Diego was known as an educated man. "And indeed he was. Always well dressed, and very well mannered. He read a lot. All kinds of books, anything he



EL RELOJERO, PLAYING THE ACCORDION "POR FANDANGOS".
PICTURE OF THE TOWN OF EL GASTOR IS NEXT TO HIM.

could get his hands on. Very good looking boy too. Sometimes people who didn't know him took him for a señorito, but, he was proud to be 'un gitano'. Friendly, no, I wouldn't say so. He was shy, especially with girls. He never did marry, you know?"

A finer picture of the man slowly emerged, drawn by the finer brush strokes of those who had known him, confirming a larger than life image we already had. An honest, fiercely independent man, who would never compromise what he believed in. An artist who shunned fame and riches, and who never even owned a "good" guitar. A man who could tell a "Guardia" where to go if he didn't appreciate his art. Not many like him, that one, Diego Amaya, el del Gasto. Then or ever.

The room had become very cozy with things remembered as they had happened or wished they had. We could have stayed, but show time was approaching, and El Relojero was a punctual man. We kissed La Menacha goodbye and departed for the Retired Persons Hall.

At the Hall, a substantial crowd was eagerly awaiting the performance, warming up to it with cerveza, fino, brandy and coffee, or a mixture of thereof. My eye caught sight of a large (perhaps three by three foot) photo of Diego on one of the walls. I was impressed with the extremely good quality of the work, done obviously many years before. El Relojero said it was the work of a man in Ronda (where he presently lived), and that he would put me in touch with him. Perhaps he would even make a copy. Just look him up at El Bar Los Olivos any morning around 11 a.m. He goes there to pick up his messages.

The show was a resounding success. Unfortunately, the celebrations had to be cut short. It was getting late, and we still had a "juerga" to make somewhere near Olvera. We bade a warm farewell to our most gracious hosts, hopped in our tiny car, and followed the winding downhill road out of town. We hadn't uncovered any earth-shaking news about the man from El Gasto, nothing that hadn't been told many times over in books and magazines. But I felt a sense of kinship to the place and people that saw him grow, and that made me know him a little better too. Perhaps it was my imagination, but the photo showed him with a faint smile in his lips I had never quite noticed before.

I think I'll go to Ronda one of these days. I'll tell you about it after I do.

A Rare Treat

I came across the announcement while lazily perusing the *Diario de Cádiz*, with a "café con leche" and a "sol y sombra" beside me on Saturday morning. The event was to take place in Chiclana, a small but lively coastal community some 15 or 20 km. south of Cadiz. Like most towns in the area, it too boasts its feria, aptly called La Feria de San Antonio in honor of its patron Saint. Although far smaller in magnitude than similar festivities in Sevilla or Jerez de la Frontera, the Feria de Chiclana is no slouch, and the very special treat in stock for Saturday June 14th, was the appearance on stage at the Caseta Municipal of two giants of El Cante, Juanito Villar and José

Monge, the latter better known as El Camarón de La Isla. For those who do not know the origins of the latter's nickname, it comes from the shrimp-reddish hue of his hair (plus perhaps his pint-size stature), and his origins in the town of San Fernando (La Isla), just a few miles from Chiclana. Presently a resident of La Línea de La Concepción (just this side of Gibraltar), performing in Chiclana was for El Camarón a home-coming of sorts.

The show began at about 1:30a.m., under cool, clear night skies, but with a strong "Levante" wind that played havoc with the sound system, not to mention the audience. The caliber of the artists made up by far for any such minor inconveniences, and I would have gladly defied much worse elements for the privilege of seeing them.

First, it was Juanito Villar. This exceptional cantaor from the city of Cádiz is one of the most popular in Spain today. He has a strong, but well tuned, melodic voice. His style is expressive, often emotional, but dignified, and never to the point of histrionics. He is what can be called "muy completo" as a singer, i.e., one who does everything well. I had seen him on stage once before at the Falla Theater in Cádiz, and was extremely impressed. I had listened to his recordings many times before, but as it is frequently the case with outstanding



JUANITO VILLAR WITH EL MORAITO; CHICLANA, JUNE 1986



EL CAMARÓN WITH TOMATITO; CHICLANA, JUNE 1986

performers, the celluloid cannot fully reflect his capabilities, and seeing Juanito in person greatly increased my appreciation for his art. At Chiclana, he did soleá, bulerías, fandangos, and alegrías (can a Gaditano NOT do alegrías?), accompanied by El Moraito de Jerez on the guitar. The latter is one of the most outstanding young guitarists of the province, who without doubt, will go very far. Sharing the stage with El Camarón is not an easy job, but Juanito Villar is a consummate artist, and he did

not disappoint the audience that night. I would not be surprised to see of Juanito assume top billing in el canté one of these days, which he truly deserves.

Shortly after Juanito's performance, a flurry of activity took place around the stage, and preceded by a coterie of friends, managers, and bodyguards, a bearded Camarón walked on stage, with Tomatito by his side. It might have been the lateness of the hour, or the grueling schedule these artists keep, but Camarón appeared frail and unsteady. On the other hand, Tomatito looked like he had stepped out of a Pepsi commercial, the picture of health itself. I do not know where his nickname comes from, but it may be from his youthful, almost cherubic looks. There is no one in el cante flamenco who has ever attained such wide recognition as El Camarón has, or perhaps ever will. He has recorded and sold, world-wide, more albums than any other "cantaor" in history. It would not be unfair to say that he can take a good deal of credit for elevating with his voice (albeit with a reciprocal relationship) Paco de Lucía's guitar to its present heights. He may do the same for Tomatito, who is a consummate guitarist in his own right. In sum, Camarón is an artist the like of which the world sees once in a generation. The whiny, pleading quality of his voice was still there that evening. But the abrasive, raw emotion was not. Is it perhaps that, for Camarón it has been "too much, too soon"? I do not know, but regardless of what happens in the future, El Camarón de la Isla will retain his place in the history of el cante forever among the greatest of all times.



IAN DAVIES

[sent by Peter Zander]

by Carlos Estrada

The Beatles started it! -- Ian originally wanted to study electric guitar but started, in 1963, at age nine, on the Spanish guitar because the mother of a friend of his happened to be Spanish, had come over during the Civil War, had married an Englishman, and taught Ian the guitar and to read music. At Grammar School took 'A' level in Harmony. Mrs. Berta Chamberlain and son and Ian accompanied the Spanish dancing classes of Lucille Armstrong, who had lived in Spain and there studied Spanish dances -- regional and flamenco dances -- accompanying public performances. Playing duets and solo.

The flamenco bug had bitten: buying flamenco records; listening to the experts from Spain; copying note for note. At 11 Ian also studied classical guitar, for the sake of his technique, worked for two years with Ronald Taylor, Principal of the Hertfordshire Guitar Academy. Prizes at local music festival competitions.

At 13 back to flamenco: "More free and open to inspiration and improvisation." First job in Antonio's Restaurant in Covent Garden, accompanying not only local London flamenco performers, but also well-known visiting Spanish professional artists, who demanded a new standard of accompaniment from him. Only three nights a week--because of homework.

One of these visiting performers and a member of a flamenco company from Spain both gave Ian introductions to the distinguished guitarist Victor Monge "Serranito", whom Ian met on his next visit to Spain. The result was that Ian was invited, on his next visit to Spain the following year, to play at his tablao [probably Corral de la Morería] and accompany flamenco dancers and singers.

At 14 Ian recorded 'Flamenco Excitement' on the EMI/Columbia label, and at 15 toured the United Kingdom in solo recitals which included the Purcell Room in London.

In 1970 Victor Monge came on a recital tour to England, and mentioned to Ian that another 'tablao', the prestigious 'Cafe de Chinitas' in Madrid, needed one more resident guitarist...Three weeks later the 16 year old Ian was installed as a full-time professional flamenco guitarist in Spain's top tablao!

There followed ten years working in Spain, under the influence of two great flamenco guitar players, Victor Monge, and also Paco de Lucía, who had first heard and met Ian at Antonio's restaurant in London, and who helped him both while he was in London and in Madrid.

In 1972 Serranito formed a Trio, and invited Ian to join him and Luis Pastor. They toured Italy and Spain, and in Madrid performed in the Teatro de la Zarzuela. They appeared at the Carnegie Hall and the Alice Tully Hall in New York. They



were joined by Luis Carmona, 'Habichuela', Jose Ortega 'Manzanita', and Felipe Maya for recordings on the Hispavox label.

In 1973 Ian went on an extensive tour of Italy with El Cambario and his Spanish Ballet Company, which took in Switzerland and the Canary Islands.

In 1974 Ian joined the Maria Rosa Ballet Company, and toured Spain and Russia. In 1975 he joined the newly-formed Siluetas Ballet Company -- their dates included the Victoria Palace, London, in March 1976 -- as First Guitarist, composing and playing solo. The Company was run by Jose Antonio and Luisa Aranda, both of whom had been Principal Dancers with Antonio's famous Spanish Ballet Company. World tours up to 1978. During this period Ian also recorded on the Hispavox label, and of ten tracks recorded eight were his own compositions. He also recorded three other flamenco and classical albums on the Amanecer label, mostly of his own compositions, in his arrangements for two guitars performing with Fletcher.

In 1979 Ian re-joined the Maria Rosa Ballet Company and, in 1980, toured with the Antologia Company, previously, known as the Spanish National Ballet Company.

Between touring and theatre engagements, frequent recordings as session player on steel-string, acoustic, Spanish and electric guitar.

Ian Davies gave his inaugural London recital at the Wigmore Hall, part of the Lute and Guitar Series, on 21 April 1985. 'He was marvellous' said veteran guitarist Ivor Mairants. A Critic compared him with Serranito. A large audience gave the performer the warmest reception. The concert was attended by Their Excellencies the Spanish Ambassador and Mrs. Jose J. Puig de la Bellacasa. The Sherry Reception before the recital was sponsored by Williams and Humbert.

Ian made a recording of a programme of his flamenco compositions and arrangements for BBC Radio 3's series 'Music for Guitar' on 24 April 1985. This is scheduled for transmission in June 1985.

On 15 March 1985 Ian appeared on 'Pepple Mill at One' for BBC Television with Julian Lloyd Webber and Rosalind Plowright, and performed with them Villa-Lobos' 'Bachianas Brasileiras Number 5."

Ian is performing a programme of flamenco and classical works in the Holywell Music Room in Oxford -- 'The oldest concert hall in Britain' -- as guest of the Wadham College Music Society on Thursday 6 June 1985. This will be the Society's final concert of the academic year.

Plans for the 1985/86 season include a national tour of guitar and music societies, and visits to Germany and Spain.

There will also be another Wigmore Hall recital on Sunday 25 May 1986.

Ian Davies has made extensive recordings of his own original flamenco compositions on the Hispavox and Amanecer labels. He was recently invited to submit tapes to Nimbus Records, who had heard his broadcast on Radio 3 in June last year, and were interested in discussing a recording contract. Virgin also invited him to submit a tape, to the same purpose.



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SHORT STORIES POR BULERIAS

by Tio Paco

Why In Jerez?

It couldn't have been any other way. It is said they originated in the barrio de Santiago in Jerez de la Frontera. Some even pinpoint their beginnings in the Calles Nueva and Cantarera. But be as it may, bulerías have always been "un cante de Jerez," and always will. They, well, just sound like Jerez. In Triana they speak a little too softly, while the ways of Cádiz are more suited to the alegría. But in Jerez, if you listen carefully, people talk "por bulerías." Each and every sentence in their speech, mostly consisting of short but very meaningful ones, has the right accent and intonation from which no doubt, the bulería just naturally evolved. And the little gypsy girls playing in the streets, hopscotch and skip rope por bulerías as well. No, it couldn't have been any other way.

Fiesta de la Bulería

[The following is a translation of an article which appeared in *El Diario de Jerez* on September 1, 1986, concerning this event held yearly in the Bulería Capital of the World; translated by El Tio Paco]

Over four thousand people enjoyed the XIX Fiesta de La Bulería

With a strong "levante" [wind from the east] and many people lining up at the ticket office, at 10:30 PM on Saturday commenced the XIX edition of the Fiesta de la Bulería, which took place in the bullring and which was attended by over four thousand people according to the organizers.

The "fiesta" began with the show "Jerez por el Mundo," directed by Manuel Morao, who kicked off the first part with his guitar, drawing the first applause of the evening.

He was joined shortly by Luis de Pacote, Lorenzo Gálvez Ripoll, and José Vargas "El Mono" in the "cante". The dancers were Ana Parrilla, Manuela Capilla, and Ana María Blanco, with his brother Juan Morao accompanying him as second guitarist.

Even though a bit long for a single number, almost one and a half hours, they forced the public to set aside the traditional "pescaito" [fried fish] and "fino" [sherry wine] and concentrate totally on the "palmas" in this first part of the Fiesta.

During the second part, which began around midnight, all of the seats in the bullring were full of people who had left the recently ended football match [Translator's note: between Jerez and Huelva. Jerez won] in the nearby stadium.

Even though La Paquera de Jerez and El Camarón de la Isla were the main course of the evening, Rancapino, Manuel Soto, better known in the world of flamenco as "Sordera", and Manuel de los Santos "Agujetas" left a very nice taste on the palates of the aficionados of good flamenco.

The time for La Paquera came; she said she was very happy to be included in this edition of the Fiesta, and that she loved Jerez very much. Hers was a short but brilliant appearance, where she demonstrated that she is the only one who can do the authentic bulerías of our land.

If this "cantante" of our land raised the expectations of the audience, El Camarón was truly the climax. This much awaited artist said he would sing first some alegrías de "Cáiz" [Cádiz] and then "anything else you want," which drew a standing ovation from the public. He was accompanied on the guitar by Manuel Morao "Moraito", Manuel Parrilla, and "Tomatito". [Not true, just Tomatito].

The third part, the closing of the Fiesta, in which the majority of artists participated, put the icing on the cake to the XIX Fiesta de la Bulería at about 3:30AM. The public thoroughly enjoyed it, forgetting the argument between the Cátedra de Flamencología and the Delegation of Cultural Activities.

Another View of The Fiesta De La Bulería, From Behind the Scenes

The scene of mass confusion would escape comprehension by an orderly anglo-saxon mind. It has taken me twenty minutes to get a bottle of Cruzcampo beer, even though I stand right by the makeshift bar, just inches away from the bartender. Maybe my South American accent does not sound assertive enough. But the bartender really is working as fast as he can to meet the customers insatiable demands for beer, fino, Cokes, Fantas, and



FIN DE FIESTA WITH L-R: LA PAQUERA DE JEREZ, RANCAPINO ELSORDERA (SITTING), PARRILLA AT THE GUITAR, RIPOLL, "MORAITO" AT THE GUITAR AND DANCERS MANUELA CAPILLA AND ANA MARIA BLANCO.

whisky, and I patiently wait my turn. Refreshments are needed. It is a hot and windy night, with the strong "Levante" blowing up clouds of dust which gets in your clothes, hair and breathing passages. The telephoto lens in my camera already has a layer of dust which makes me wonder if I'll be able to get any pictures at all. The stage is set in front of the Terrido 13 in the Plaza de Toros de Jerez. There are hundreds of chairs all over the arena, which at one time must have been laid out in some semblance of order. Spectators who paid 700 pesetas fill the arena, while several thousand more jam the "tendidos" having paid 350 pesetas apiece. The entire gypsy community of Jerez seems to have turned out in mass to listen to its very own music. I look around trying to find someone I know, and see El Carbonero standing nearby talking to Ana Penón's husband. I go up to them and say hello. The lights dim announcing the start of the second half of the event. El Carbonero signals me to follow him, and we make our way towards the stage through an obstacle course of chairs, baby prams, picnic baskets, and people, people everywhere. The stage is cordoned off and heavily guarded by dozens of uniformed policemen and plainclothes security people carrying walkie-talkies. We sneak under the fence railing and I am detained by a guard who demands to see my pass. I have none, but El Carbonero (a true celebrity in Jerez) says something to him in a low voice, and I am allowed through with a quick apology. There are many more people milling about behind the stage, in the very same spot where two weeks earlier Rafael de Paula and Paco Ojeda killed four bulls "mano-a-mano". I spot several familiar faces. Ana María Blanco is there. She danced an *alegría* along with Manuela Carpio earlier. The two dancers are radiantly beautiful. Ana María's small son is sound asleep in his carriage under grandmother's watchful eye. Manuel Soto "El Sordera" is nearby preparing to go on stage soon. Just last week I listened to him on the Radio Cádiz in a recording of a masterful *bulería* with Sabicas, and I am eager to meet him. El Carbonero introduces us and we chat briefly, drinking Fanta and whisky. El Sordera, an affable gitano with an easy smile, comments on his close friendship with El Carbonero's father, cantor Eduardo Lozano (a payo), who would have been his age (fifty-nine) were he still alive today. They talk about how El Arte brings gitanos and payos together, and how people are people first, and ethnic groups next. El Moraito comes out, guitar in hand from the dressing rooms, and signals El Sordera. It is "curtain time" for them. They exit, and I engage in small talk with one of the Fiesta officials. Manuel Agujetas is standing nearby and I extend my hand to shake his briefly. Out in the ring the audience roars. El Sordera and El Moraito are doing a *bulería*,

with four thousand people doing *palmas* "a compas"! It is an electrifying scene. Two weeks ago the same people were celebrating the death of the bull at the hands of "los diestros", but tonight this is a celebration of life, and lively it is. After El Sordera, it is Manuel Agujetas' turn. Manuel's cante is good, probably the best in its style, and like the finest of wines, is not for the masses, but rather for small groups of true connoisseurs. I spot Manuel Morao standing around with a Coca Cola paper cup in his hand. The official offers to introduce me to him, and he does. El Morao is a stocky man about the same age as El Sordera, and like him, an "institution" in the world of Jerez flamenco. I tell him I come from California, where I knew his former fellow guitarist, Mariano Córdoba. They were both Antonio's guitarists in his Ballet a long time ago. Manuel is delighted. He has just come back from the USA, where he was on tour with the "Jerez por El Mundo" company (see *Jaleo* Vol. VIII, No. 4), and is getting ready to go again. We chat a while and agree to meet again and talk some more later in the week, at the Venencia Cafe which he frequents. El Carbonero who is standing by one of the "burladores" (fences in the bullring behind which the bullfighters and support team stand--safely --to watch the bull) signals me to come over. He is talking with announcer Pepe Marín, who is also a well-known radio personality in Jerez, and wants to introduce us. I am an assiduous listener of "Con Nuestro Acento", a mostly flamenco program Pepe broadcasts every morning from Radio Jerez beginning at 8:30 AM, and am delighted to meet him. As we talk, La Paquera, dressed in a stunning black Quiana-like dress is preparing to come on stage, and Pepe Marín walks ahead to announce her appearance. Parrilla is her guitarist tonight, and they both do a fantastic job. This cantaora is gifted with a very nice and powerful voice, which she likes to display by doing a cante without the microphone. She tries this tonight, and to my utter amazement, her voice although strained, does carry quite nicely throughout the huge bullring. The audience applauds in a frenzy. While they scream "otra! otra!", a sudden flurry of activity takes place in the alley leading to the dressing rooms and artists' entrance. As if sensing something, La Paquera declines an encore and departs the stage. The word is that El Camarón has finally arrived. He was singing in Sevilla earlier (1:00 AM) that night, and people were wondering whether he would make it to Jerez tonight. But he did, and preceded by a large group of security men and body guards, along with guitar-toting Tomatito close by, makes his grand entrance onto the stage area. The usual crowd of mostly teen-age groupies goes wild, as a *deju-vu* of Elvis Presley's heydays, and has to be held back by the guards. The public is



GUITARIST MANUEL MORAO DOING A BULERIA WITH BROTHER JUAN MORAO AT THE GUITAR.



MANUEL MORAO WITH ANA MARIA BLANCO.



EL TÍO PACO (LEFT) WITH EL SORDERA AND A FIESTA OFFICIAL



EL SORDERA WITH EL CARBONERO

obviously enthralled with the arrival of The Star, who accommodates with his usual diet of Soleá (por medio), tangos (Señó arcade mayó, digale usté a los ladrones. . .), and bulerías (Tirititi-ti-tando de frío. . .). He does this superbly, but can't help it, he's probably done them 100 times this month. Tomatito, is also his usual assured-self, displaying his technical excellence. Maybe it is an anti-climax, but it all sounds a bit "Hollywood" (i.e. routine and rather plastic) to me. Somehow, I think I enjoyed El Sordera's cantes more. After a brief encore "por fandangos", they swiftly depart the stage, again surrounded by managers, security men, and fans. A glassy eyed, pretty teen age girl manages to break through the guards and embraces El Camarón kissing his neck, while others try to tear at his clothes. Eduardo Gutierrez, a promoter from San Fernando and close friend and mentor of El Camarón from his early beginnings has promised to introduce me to him, and hopefully secure an interview. Evidently tonight is not the night, and it'll have to wait for a more propitious occasion. But now the "Fin-de-Fiesta" scene is gearing up. As usual, all the participating artists (minus Camarón, of course), will share the stage for a grand-finale. There is a lot of singing, dancing, palmas, and merry-making on stage. Even the guitarists get to try a few steps "por bulerías" to everyone's enjoyment. It is almost 3:00AM, and I want to beat the crowds and ensuing traffic jam and quickly head towards the exit to the ring. I wave good-bye to El Carbonero and thank him for his help getting back stage. On my way out, I pass a stand serving vast quantities of "pescaito" (mixed fish fry). The fish looks great and I could use some, but I don't want to delay any longer. The show will be over in a few minutes, and the crowds will be jamming every exit as well as the parking areas (i.e. streets, sidewalks, and anywhere a car will more or less fit) around the ring. It is barely 3:00AM, and I know just about every eatery in El Puerto will still be open. Who would ever think of going to bed this early in the summer anyway?

The "Cursos De Verano"...That Could Have Been

-El Tío Paco

La Catedra de Flamencología in Jerez is just a short walk away from la Iglesia de San Miguel, next to which El Carbonero's Guitar Academy is located. A most typical and picturesque setting in Jerez, perfect for an "intensive" summer course. I was looking forward to the "Cursos de Verano del Arte Flamenco" that had been announced for August. But the handwritten sign posted on the padlocked door read succinctly: "Cerrado hasta el 15 de Septiembre. No habra Cursos de Verano" (Closed until September 15. There will be no Summer Courses). It wasn't until several days later that an article in El Diario de Jerez confirmed the sad news, with an explanation of sorts. A translation of this article follows. It may shed some light on why we New World flamencos tend to squabble so much among each other. This tendency seems to be well rooted. If you

have difficulty following the reasoning in the article, you are in good company. No one else here seems to understand it either.

Line-Up for the XVIII Fiesta de la Bulerfa Confirmed

The Catedra Accuses Taboada of "Undue Appropriation of the Festival"

In reply to the statements made by the municipal delegate of Cultural Activities, Juan Taboada, to the *Diario de Jerez*, published last Sunday about the celebration of the XVIII Fiesta de la Bulerfa, the Catedra has made public a communique in which it blames the delegation of Cultural Activities of "undue appropriation of the organization of this Festival, without taking the Catedra into consideration in the slightest."

The delegate of Cultural Activities has said last Sunday that this Festival with deep roots in our city hadn't been held yet "because of the Catedra de Flamencología".

Likewise, in his statement, Juan Taboada referred to the cancellation of the traditional summer courses that the Catedra organized, and that, according to Taboada, "many foreigners have come to our city specifically for these courses and will be inevitably disappointed."



CANTAORES EL MONO, LUIS DE PICOTE; DANCER ANA PARILLA AND GUITARIST MANUEL MORAO



GUITARIST PARILLA DE JEREZ AND EL CARBONERO WITH DANCER ANA MARIA BLANCO

The reply given by the Catedra de Flamencología explained that, "the fact that this institution has not requested to this date assistance from City Hall for its celebration of the Fiesta de la Bulerfa, does not mean that it had refused to organize it, because there are negotiations taking place with another entity which has offered its help."

"City Hall may organize however many flamenco shows it wants, but should never," continues the Catedra, "invade with such lack of imagination the cultural domains of the Catedra, usurping the name, 'Fiesta de la Bulerfa, which it does not own, and which is one of our traditional activities since 1967; let alone, appropriate its prestige and vintage, continuing the chronological denomination, assuming 'a priori' without foundation, whether or not the Catedra plans to organize it. The Catedra is free to celebrate it or not, since it is under no obligation to do so."

Regarding the cancellation of the summer courses, the report adds that they will not be held for "obvious reasons, knowing ahead of time that it could not count on the traditional assistance from City Hall."

In regards to the line-up that the delegation from Jerez offers, the participation by La Paquera de Jerez, Camarón de la Isla, Sordera de Jerez, Rancapino, Agujetas, Tomatito, Parrilla de Jerez, Morao and the cuadro flamenco "Jerez por el mundo" directed by Manuel Morao has been confirmed.

The Catedra however regrets, "the incomprehensible absence of great artists who were not included in spite of the enormous budget of three million pesetas (about \$20,000)."

In closing, the Catedra regrets in its statement that, "it is being blamed for the lack of celebration of this event, when in fact it is being denied any type of help, to the point of having created another foundation of flamenco, which aims at eliminating and cancelling out the labours of a cultural center in Jerez with nearly thirty years of history, thus channeling away the interest of the "aficionados" with false expectations, which damage the good name of Jerez in the world of flamenco."



A24

NOTES FROM JEREZ

BALAO AND EL CARBONERO RECORD WITH "PICONERO" AND "PERRO DE PATERNA"

[from: *Diario de Jerez*, August 25, 1986; sent and translated by El Tío Paco]

by Juan de la Plata

Guitarists from Jerez, José Luis Balao and Manuel Lozano "El Carbonero" have recorded two albums accompanying with their instruments the cantaores "El Piconero de Arcos" and "El Perro de Paterna." The album with "El Piconero" was just released and the one with "El Perro", in which his son "El Cachorro" also sings, will appear shortly. (Note: "El Carbonero" is currently cutting a record with cantora Ana Pena, which will be released soon. It promises to be an exceptional one!).

This first recording for both the young cantaor "El Piconero de Arcos" as well as the craftsmen of the flamenco guitar [Note: not true, Carbonero has several other records, most recently one with Chiriva del Valle]. This album has been recorded in Málaga, because as we know, the multinational record companies have long turned their backs at flamenco.

"Llevo la sierra en mi cante" is the title of the first recording, in which we are shown with a good deal of dignity the "cante serrano" of "El Piconero", presented by the wise hand of poet Antonio Murciano who has written a beautiful work.

The cantaor from Arcos de la Frontera interprets tangos very well, does a soleá which "grabs", sings the malagueña with feeling, pleases with his fandangos, sounds like a "gaditano" in the alegrías, and executed the siguiriya without difficulty. But, undoubtedly, where he shines is in the bamberas and "aires de trilla," which he pronounces with great "serrano" flavour.

"Carbonero" and Balao accompany him "al alimón" [as a duo] in the tangos and bamberas, and in the rest they split the accompaniment, so that the former, Manuel Lozano does the soleá, the alegrías, and the siguiriya, achieving a very "jondo" flamenco sound, while Balao puts music to the trilleras, mala-



PEPE BALAO WITH EL PERRO DE PATERNA BACK STAGE AT THE FALLA THEATER IN CADIZ



GUITARIST PEPE BALAO AND MANUEL LOZANO "EL CARBONERO" AT THE PEÑA DE PATERNA



MARIANA CORNEJO PRACTICING WITH EL CARBONERO AT THE GUITAR WHILE A FRIEND LOOKS ON

queñas, and the fandango with a delicate sensibility and exquisite artistic taste.

To the strength and neatness of the voice of "El Piconero de Arcos", these two great maestros from Jerez have been able to add the musical counterpoint, impeccably done. From their wealth of knowledge as great artists from Jerez. We look forward to seeing them involved in many more enterprises, especially in the land that gave them birth, and where their true standing and professionalism is not yet fully appreciated.

DANCER, ANA PARRILLA, IN LONDON

The magnificent dancer from Jerez, Ana Parrilla [sister of guitarist, Parrilla de Jerez] is performing in London these days as first dancer in the ballet of Cordobés guitarist Paco Peña. After she returns from England, Ana Parrilla will probably travel to the United States, as part of a group of artists from Jerez who plan a tour of that land.

SOLOMONIC RULING IN PATERNA

A few days ago the traditional petenera contest was celebrated in Paterna, with the first prize remaining vacant, and the cantaora Mariana Cornejo achieving the first award in the "cantes libres." In order that the 175,000 Pesetas [about \$1,300] would not be left unawarded, the organizers came up with the idea of dividing this amount in equal shares among the contestants, but with the prior condition that each cantaor give a recital in the Peña de Paterna. Curious, but true.

That is the way to stimulate the flamenco youth, and help it open its ways through those towns of God, where flamenco is still in less-than-expert hands. This inexperience is not only the patrimony of a few towns though.



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-THE THIRD CUMBRE FLAMENCA-

MACHADO, MADRID AND BULERIAS

[from: El País, April 18, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Charlene Gerheim.]

by A. Alvarez Caballero

The Third Cumbre Flamenca began yesterday as it does every year on its date in April, with a representative show of the flamenco of today.

This edition plans to cover some sessions not covered in Madrid, to repeat others and to disregard, unfortunately, some first rate names whose absence I find it hard to justify. Conferences, lectures, and discussion and the publication of three articles will complete the activities.

The entertainment began today and will continue until the 27th with a show entitled "Puntales" which will bring together four outstanding exponents of "lo jondo". Of the four, the most interesting of the program, perhaps, is Mario Escudero--a concert artist of the flamenco guitar. His path has taken him far and wide, while in Spain he has hardly performed. He is a truly exceptional artist. Along with him will be the baile of La Tolea and Mario Maya and the cante of Enrique Morente--a well known.

Tomorrow, a show entitled, "Cantando la pena... la pena se olvida" (Songs of sorrow--the pain that is left behind), based on the book, *Cante hondo* by Manuel Machado. All the coplas are by the great sevillian poet who so dedicated his life to flamenco. Calixto Sánchez, Chano Lobato, María la Burra (daughter of Tío Gregorio el Borrico) and Juana de Jerez (daughter of Tía Juana la del Pipa) will do the cante. Three great guitarists--Manolo Franco, Pedro Bacán and Maralito Chico--will perform the toque and two young ballaores, Carmen Ledesma and Currillo de Bomujos, el baile.

The program for Sunday the 20th will be dedicated to flamenco madrilleno. The title is very apt: De Lavapiés a Santa Ana. It is a mosaic of distinguished names, the family "los Pelao's" among them.

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday will be dedicated to something called "Parallel activities" ("Actividades paralelas"), which will cover the themes "Youth and creation" ("Juventud y creación") por F. Almazán, "El flamenco en Madrid" by J. Blas Vega, and "New techniques for refining guitars."

Thursday the 24th will once again be a show of entertainment. "Al son de la bulería" will be a fiesta flamenco to end all others. It will be genuine to the core, with such big names as la Paquera and her family Los Méndez--all 15 of them!--Los Parrilla de Jerez, la Fernanda y la Bernarda de Utrera, with Paco del Gastor (phenomenal in his style of toque, as is that of Niño Jero). Also, the jaleos of Extremadura will be remembered with the presence of Indio Gitano and José Salazar (son of Porrina de Badajoz).



ENRIQUE MORENTE

CONCIERTOS

Teatro Alcalá-Palace

Alcalá, 90

DIA 18 VIERNES 20.30 HORAS

PUNTALES

TIEMPOS DE GLORIA

Mario Escudero	La Tolea	Enrique Morente	Mario Maya
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DIA 19 SABADO 20.30 HORAS

CANTANDO LA PENA... LA PENA SE OLVIDA

Cante	Toque	Baile
Calixto Sánchez	Manolo Franco	Carmen Ledesma
Chano Lobato	Pedro Bacán	Currillo de Bomujos
María la Burra	Maralito Chico	
Juana de Jerez		

DIA 20 DOMINGO 19.00 HORAS

DE LAVAPIÉS A SANTA ANA

LOS FLAMENCOS DE MADRID

Diego Losada
y el grupo Macande
Zahira y Juan Carmona
La Tola
El Yunque y Felipe Maya

Dinastía de Los Pelao's
Faico, Toni el Pelao,
Ricardo el Pelao,
Pelao Chico,
La Uchi, La Tere, La Loli,
El Cadenito y La Choro

DIA 24 JUEVES 20.30 HORAS

AL SON DE LA BULERIA

Niño Jero
Indio Gitano y Juan Salazar
Fernanda y Bernarda
de Utrera
y Paco del Gastor
La Paquera y Porrilla de
Jerez
Ana Parrilla
Juan Parrilla

Familia "Los Méndez":
Tío Dolores, Luisa Torrán,
Tío Eduardo, Tío Pili,
Paco Ruiz, Manuel de Jerez,
Rafael Aguirre
Pepa Méndez, La Morgan,
Paque Flores, Alonso Flores,
Jaseta Méndez
Antonio Méndez, Rubichi
y Alonso Méndez

DIA 25 VIERNES 20.30 HORAS

EMPUJANDO

EL ARTE JOVEN

José Antonio Rodríguez
Los Carbonell
Antonio Carbonell y Montayola
Miguel Carbonell y El Baio
José Serrano

Gerrardo Núñez
y Carmen Cortés
Rafael Requena
Aurora Vargas y Quique
Paredes

DIA 26 SABADO 20.30 HORAS

SOLERA VIVA. Zambra del Sacromonte y Trilona Pura.

Sacromonte

Toque	Cante	Baile
Pepa Amaya	Toni Maya	La Lili, La Chon de Porras,
Chispitas	María la Palopero	María Amaya,
		Pepa la de Marote
		Carmela Amaya,
		La Salina y La Jardin

Trilona

Toque	Cante	Baile
Manolo Brenes	Tragapones	Pepa la Calzona
Gutiérrez el Viejo	Antonio Suárez	Pastora la del Pati
	El Coco,	Carmen la del Titi
	El Hereje y El Molí	Juan el Breve,
		El Conejo y El Palaje

DIA 27 DOMINGO 19.00 HORAS

PACO DE LUCIA acompañado por:

Ramón de Algeciras (guitarra),	Carlos Benavente (bajo)
Pepa de Lucia (cante y guitarra)	Jorge Parra (flauta y saxo)
José María Bandera (guitarra)	Rubén Santos (percusión)
	Juan Ramirez (bailor)

ACTIVIDADES PARALELAS

Círculo de Bellas Artes

Marqués de Casa Riera, 2

DIA 17 JUEVES 20.00 HORAS

HOMENAJES

Proyección del video:
in memoriam de Juan Varea.

DIA 21 LUNES 20.00 HORAS

JUVENTUD Y CREACION

Conferencia y debate moderado por Francisco Almazán

DIA 22 MARTES 20.00 HORAS

EL FLAMENCO EN MADRID

Conferencia y debate moderado por José Blas Vega

DIA 23 MIERCOLES 20.00 HORAS

NUEVA TECNICA DE AFINAR GUITARRAS

Presentación de la guitarra de Antonio Losada y sus
innovaciones técnicas.

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* * *

FOUR "GREATS" IN "LO JONDO"

[from: El País, Sunday, April 20, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Charlene Gerheim]

by A. Alvarez Caballero

Cumbre Flamenca: Featured Performers

Mario Escudero: concert guitar

La Tolea: baile, with the cante of Talegón de Córdoba, Jesús el Almendra and Alfonso el Veneno and el toque of Tito and Diego Losada and Juan Carmona

Enrique Morente: cante, with the toque of Paco Cortés

Mario Maya: baile, with the cante of Rafael de Alcalá and Antonio Carrasco and el toque of Melchor Santiago and Paco Jarana.

Teatro Alcalá Palace. Madrid. April 18, 1986

Four top performers. And I don't include here any of the horrible sounds that are passed off as flamenco these days. Of the outstanding personalities in the art of flamenco who are to

begin the Third Cumbre Flamenca, four unique and exceptional artists are featured.

Mario Escudero, for starters, is a classic example of the concert flamenco guitarist. Of those still living, he is the youngest of the "old" masters of this form. (The others are Carlos Montoya and Sabicas.) I use the term "old" in the noblest sense of the word. He holds the undying essence of flamenco in trust for all of us to experience. And we know just how important such a legacy is.

Many will say his style has remained old because it does not keep up with the modern rhythms and speed of the new generation of guitarists. But his toque has something else--nostalgia and evocative charm. Above all it has great beauty.

We are speaking of a man who was and is a master, who dominates the technique, although one is hardly aware of it for the apparent ease with which he plays. The heart rules.

Enrique Morente, el cantaor, is in some ways also classic, as in the classic rebel. He is a nonconformist in all that he has done. His instrument, his voice, is a wonder of versatility, of seeking out tones that oppose one another. They are antagonistic, as though he seeks to discover the cante in phrase that he sings.



MARIO ESCUDERO

He triumphed once again and could do so also because he was complemented by the guitar of Paco Cortés--a humble and quiet man who can accompany the cante and give it life.

The baile was represented by two artists who varied radically from each other. La Tolea is a bailaora of the pure style, instinctive and full of fiery passion and strength. Mario Maya, on the other hand, directed all of his movements with the greatest precision. His baile is cerebral, innovative and risk. So profound is his dance that he appears weightless, his moves swift and graceful, if not ethereal.

AN HOMAGE TO REMEMBER

[from: *El País*, April 20, 1986]

by A. Alvarez Caballero

Each year the Cumbre Flamenca combines entertainment with cultural activities. This year began with an homage paid to two important cantaores and a flamencologist. La Cumbre has published works in honor of the late Bernardo el de los Lobitos, Juan Varea and Arcadio Larrea. The idea seems splendid to me. It reveals the scope of this organization in its efforts to document and preserve the art.

This session concluded with a video in memory of Juan Varea. It is a shame that they did not make a montage that would have edited all but this cantaor from the film because its real importance is in the last segment which featured three cantes by Varea. They were truly the most moving and the last that he was to sing before he was taken from this life.

AURORA VARGAS BROUGHT THE DUENDE

CUMBRE FLAMENCA. EMPUJANDO (EL ARTE JOVEN)

[from: *El País*, April 27, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard, translated by Hans C. Ruyter]

by A. Alvarez Caballero

José Antonio Rodríguez (guitar in concert), Los Carbonell; Antonio and Miguel Carbonell (cante); Montoyita and El Bula (toque). Gerardo Núñez, in concert and accompanying Carmen Cortés (baile), with Guadiana and Miguel el Rubio (cante). Mario Cortés on guitar with contrabass and flute. Rafael Riqueni (guitar in concert), with Nicasio on contrabass; Rafael Heredia on guitar, with flute and percussion. Aurora Vargas, cante and baile, with Quique Paredes in toque and Jarillo and Enrique Pantoja doing palmas. Teatro Alcalá-Palace. Madrid, April 25.

It was a colorful evening that left the people generally dissatisfied, except for the final performance of Aurora Vargas, who put things in place with flamenco, eternal flamenco. There was a mediocre level of sufficiently interesting quality. It began with José Antonio Rodríguez from Córdoba, a serious guitarist who performed in the classical tradition with great beauty. He went from the difficult material (farruca, taranta, alegrías) creating a complex sound in which, in spite of that, gave priority to feeling and *jondura* over technique.

The Carbonells could be a good example of what happens with many young artists of today. The more so with them, if possible, because they are related to Enrique Morente; artistically this connection is sure. Antonio, who is extremely young, sings what Enrique sings; he tries to do it like Enrique and copies him even in gestures and postures. Miguel fits into the school of Camerón, mixing the two schools in a somewhat strange manner--they are two types of singing that have nothing in common with each other.

Night of excellent guitarists. Gerardo Núñez from Jerez searches also for new sounds, exploring and coming close to jazz, the music of today. But when he stays with the pure flamenco, he continues to be an extraordinary tocanor, imaginative and with brilliant expression that is at times almost Baroque--very effective. Although he is not gypsy he has the aire of Jerez. He accompanied, along with other musicians, the cante of Guadiana and el Rubio, and the baile of Carmen Cortés, a dancer who is also seeking new direction, although without deviating one bit from the orthodoxy of the baile flamenco. What Carmen is doing is very interesting because, being a great dancer, her creative vein leads her at times to solutions that are strange, but of rare beauty, connecting perfectly with the same creative tension of her accompanist, Núñez.

Riqueni, from Sevilla, another notable guitarist, has also fallen for the temptation to hook up with a group of instrumentalists. I still cannot help but find the single guitar more to my liking, since it is the traditional instrument in flamenco and it seems to me that it translates the essentials of the *jondo* in a much more direct way, and that came to my mind with Riqueni.

And finally, Aurora Vargas. She was flamenquísima, inspired, "quejandose" in cantina and tientos-largos with that foggy and grave voice of hers and then creating true madness in bulerías. Splendid Aurora Vargas, a beautiful woman with her own style image, who sings, dances, has duende and knows how to transmit it to the public with great profusion and generosity. Quique Paredes performed the toque correctly, perfectly, in an exem-

piary manner, and Jarillo and Pantoja--especially the latter--gave the palmas and jaleo which warmed up the fiesta in which, in the end, all the performers took part.

A GROUP OF ARTISTS FROM THE "CUMBRE FLAMENCA" ON TOUR THROUGH AMERICA

Among them, the guitarist from Jerez, Gerardo Nunez

A group of artists who had great success in the last "Cumbre Flamenca" organized by the Ministry of Cultural Activities, will be on tour through the U.S.A. and Latin America, beginning August 20 in New York.

The show which will be presented in this tour will be headed by the dancers Antonio Canales, who was a soloist for the National Spanish Ballet, Cristobal Reyes, who has already been a member of important companies, and the dancers "La Tati", trained in Madrid, "La Tolea", a follower of the style of Carmen Amaya, and Carmen Cortés, who has appeared with Mario Maya on several tours.

Also as first figure is the concert guitarist Gerardo Nunez, contributor to the Cátedra de Flamencología in Jerez, whose interest in music has taken him into experiments in the area of flamenco-jazz.

They will be accompanied in the cante by Gabriel Cortés, Pedro Montoya, "Talegón de Córdoba", and Alfonso "El Veneno", gypsy artists who have sung for dancers of great prestige, and in the guitar, by Juan Carmona, Diego Losada, and Juan Salazar.

The appearances, organized by the Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música (National Institute for the Scenic Arts and Music) is an attempt to support and spread flamenco art, and will begin on August 20 in New York, continuing to San Francisco, Caracas, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile, Lima, Guayaquil, Bogota, Panama, San Jose de Costa Rica, Guanajuato, and Mexico City.

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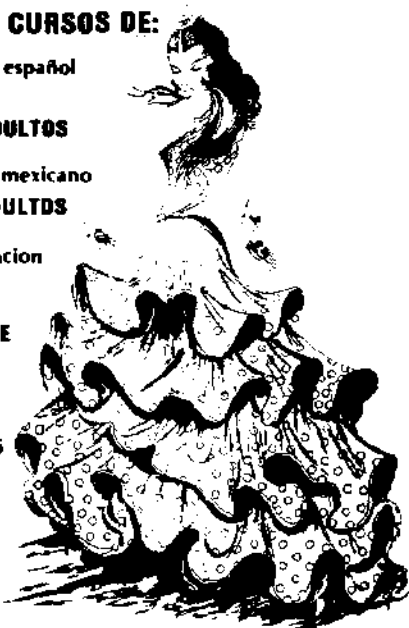
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PROGRAMA/PROGRAM

FIRST PART/PRIMERA PARTE

- 1) Martinete The entire company/La compañía
- 2) Rondena Carmen Cortés, dancer/bailaora
Gerardo Nunez and Juan Salazar, guitar/guitarras
Cante: Alfonso el Veneno and Pedro Montoya
- 3) Alegrías La Tolea, dancer/bailaora
Diego Losada, Juan Carmona, guitar/guitarras
Cante: Talegón de Córdoba, Gabriel Cortés, Alfonso el Veneno
- 4) Tangos Entire company/La compañía

SECOND PART/SEGUNDA PARTE

- 1) Solea Gerardo Nunez, guitar/guitarra
- 2) Faruca Antonio Canales, dancer/bailaora
Diego Losada, Juan Carmona, guitar/guitarra
- 3) Solea por bulerías La Tati, dancer/bailaora
Gerardo Nunez, Juan Salazar, guitar/guitarra
Cante: Talegón de Córdoba, Alfonso el Veneno, Pedro Montoya
- 4) Cantinas Cristóbal Reyes, dancer/bailaora
Diego Losada and Juan Carmona, guitar/guitarras
Cante: Alfonso el Veneno, Pedro Montoya, Gabriel Cortés

ABOUT THE COMPANY

CUMBRE FLAMENCA. Flamenco, the artistic expression of Spain's Andalusia, is a special phenomenon that tears at schemes, overflowing boundaries of race and age. It is rich in gypsy dancing, guitars, powerful voices, bulerías. Since Spain's return to democracy, in 1976, the nation has undergone a process of cultural enrichment, tolerance and experimentation. Cumbre Flamenca provides a prime example of the new climate under which arts progress in Spain. Sponsored by Spain's Ministry of Culture, it converges old and new flamenco talent in an effort to preserve, promote and disseminate gypsy culture. Cumbre Flamenca was introduced in 1983. The project was conceived "hoping that it would be more than just another flamenco festival." The idea was to present the most lively and representative art-

ists under conditions that permitted the full development of the spontaneity, strength and wisdom peculiar to this form of artistic expression, so much part of the Iberian tradition, and yet unknown and not understood. Cumbre Flamenca successfully toured Spain, Europe, Latin America and the USA, where it participated in the 1984 edition of Festival Latino in New York. More recently, Cumbre Flamenca has broadened its scope, always searching for new ways of presenting flamenco art. To that end, Cumbre Flamenca 1986 is sponsoring gatherings with artists of the older generation, as well as exploring the field of theory by holding workshops and publishing "notebooks" in honor of the legendary figures of flamenco, like Bernardo El de los Lobitos, Juan Verea and Arcadio Lerren Palacin.



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CUMBRE FLAMENCO 2ND EDITION

by George Ryss

This Cumbre was not related to the 1984 Cumbre! Different artists, in No. 2, it was the bailarín who led each show...and each dancer has his/her show. However, Gerardo Núñez played a guitar solo "Solea" and his wife Carmen Cortés danced the beautiful (and rarely seen) Rondeña. The guessing game "Who was coming" started months ago. La Tati, La Polilla, Manolete, actually Tati, La Tolea, Carmen C. with Antonio Canales (soloist of Ballet Nacional) and the great Cristóbal Reyes; of course Tati stole the show (her stage presence, misencène are unique or any artists), La Tolea is exceptionally canastera. Yes, people said it was the greatest flamenco show in years: led by the voice of Córdoba Talegón, Gabriel Cortés (husband of Gitanilla de Bronze) El Veneno, possibly from Puerto and popular Pedrito Montoya (of campas fame) kept combination of vocal attainments and palmas. The guitarists were coupled in twos Nuñez-Salazar and Diego with young Habichuela. Cumbre left for San Francisco from here, then Caracas, Rio, Buenos Aires, Córdoba (Argentina), Montevideo and Santiago. They are returning to Broadway in November for possibly a month's stay.

More rumors have it that a big troupe of gitanos will show in New York for December. El Farruco with two daughters, I heard Tia Fernanda de Utrera, possibly Chocalate. The guitarists are definitely old Juan and Pepe Habichuela, as per Juan Jr.

The main Payo of Cumbre: Talegón told me that he was giving a Homenaje to García Lorca, August 24 with La Tolea and one guitar at Public Theatre at 3. I showed up to find out "that he had fabricated his own recital," there was none! Later I went to the Park to listen to the last concert of the Cumbre.

Ballet Nacional will be in New York, May 1987. They will present the Greek opera Medea then.

* * *

CUMBRE FLAMENCA IN THE PARK

[from: New York Times, August 26, 1986; sent by George Ryss]

by Jennifer Dunning

There was almost as much activity in the audience as on stage when Cumbre Flamenca performed Sunday night at Central Park's Delacorte Theater. A leading dance attraction in the New York Shakespeare Festival's Festival Latino this year and in 1984, Cumbre Flamenca drew standing ovations after nearly each of its eight numbers. There were sharp cries of delight and encouragement from the audience. But the fiery dancers, singers and musicians needed no encouragement. The night was cold and windy but it seemed utterly appropriate when smoke appeared to rise from the stage toward the end of the evening. Though no one quite matched the mesmerizing presence of El Guito in the 1984 engagement, the duende or demonic inspiration of flamenco was clearly in full possession here.

Formed in 1983 and sponsored by Spain's Ministry of Culture, Cumbre Flamenca--which translates to the "best" or "acme" of flamenco--is a touring company of mature and young Spanish performers of flamenco, the gypsy dance of southern Spain. The group has also been doing research and preservation work lately with older performers, as well as publicly honoring the great figures of flamenco history. And there was a variety of dance offered on Sunday, with four of the seven rhythm forms represented that offer the framework for flamenco improvisation. But what was most apparent was the generosity of the Cumbre Flamenca performers.

There were the eloquent hips and flashing eyes of La Tati, the company's reigning female star, whose good humor and virtuoso technique were seen to full advantage in her solea por bulerías. Cristóbal Reyes's cantinas gave that mercurial star a chance to work his jaunty way through a compendium of heel, full-sole and half-toe beats to an amazing variety of rhythms. Antonio Canales was an elegant stylist in his famica, which boasted extraordinary turns in which the supported leg zipped to the ground and up again.

The company was completed by the sultry La Tolea in the alegrías and the stylishly dressed Carmen Cortés, whose rondena was a thing of cool fire. The singing of Talegón de Córdoba seemed to pulse up from the deepest earth, to be complemented by the lighter but equally impassioned singing of Alfonso el Veneno, Pedro Montoya and Gabriel Cortés. There was fine guitar playing from Gerardo Núñez, Diego Lasada, Juan Carmona and Juan Salazar. Several of the musicians took an amiable turn dancing at the finale, with a lightfooted and donnish Mr. Montoya nearly stealing the show.

* * *

CUMBRE FLAMENCA IN SAN FRANCISCO

[from: San Francisco Chronicle, Aug. 1986; sent by Betsy Sihner]

by Kate Regan

More than 30 years ago, the great flamenco dancer Vicente Escudero wrote of the serious and majestic rhythms of his art and lamented the "cocktail flamencos" that were adulterating forms whose fiery beauties need no additives. Indeed by the 1950s, this Andalusian gypsy art, once a florid interaction of dance, music and song, was in danger of sinking into an empty tourist attraction, complete with gaudy costumes, pompous posturings and ill-suited borrowings from ballet.

Escudero would have cheered along with the rest of the crowd Thursday night when La Cumbre Flamenca, a selection of Spain's most brilliant flamenco performers, opened the city's first Festival Latino at La Union Espanola. All that was oldest,



CUMBRE'S CARMEN CORTÉS

heart-stirring and true in flamenco looked thrillingly fresh. Combining as it does intricate formal improvisations with the deepest emotions, it is an art of intense contrasts, of sophistication and guts.

La Cumbre, meaning the best or "summit", is not a company but a group of individuals chosen by the Spanish government to represent the heights of flamenco artistry. It was thus an evening of solo dancing, ranging from the smoldering rondena of Carmen Cortés to La Tati's sexy and humorous solea por bulerías;

from La Tolea's lightning-flash changes of mood and tempo, to the explosive farraucas of Antonio Canales and Cristobal Rey's traditional alegrías.

In flamenco, as in Indian Kathak dance, which it strongly resembles, musicians and dancers work together, spinning the dance between them like a marvelous web of sound and vision. The seven rhythmic forms of flamenco are formally strict but allow for tremendous range of mood and personality within the framework.

The dancers walk a perilous tightrope between intense technical demands and an emotional savagery that threatens to tear apart their control. In her rondena, Carmen Cortes, her face frozen in a mask of grief and rage as ritualized as the makeup of a Japanese Noh actor, seemed to be stamping on the sorrows of the world, in a celebration of tragedy as disturbing as it was enthralling.

La Tolea's equally chilling solo achieved a catharsis so profound that it seemed she'd never come back from the edge—until she snapped into her lacy, frolicking finale.

It is the combination of icy precision and wild emotion, both fighting for supremacy, that makes great flamenco so spell-binding. La Tati, a ferociously gifted woman who can create sexual tension with one twist of her hips, progressed in her bulerías from unbridled and earthy comedy to a lighthearted liltting charged with sensual power. She brought to her dancing the sort of reckless abandon that only a technical virtuoso can dare.

The two men were no less triumphant, dancing with the eloquence and natural pride inherent in flamenco. Antonio Canales, who looks like a tall cherub and moves with demonic swiftness, brought poetry and elegance to his dramatic jarruca, with not a gesture in excess. And Cristobal Reyes, who created much of the choreography for the group, piled climax upon climax in his alegrías almost to the point of emotional exhaustion in the viewer.

The wonderful guitarists and singers were indispensable to the evening's spell. Haunting and impassioned, the voice of Talegon de Cordoba spoke of pain and joy as old as the earth. The other singers, Gabriel Cortez, Pedro Montoya and Alfonso "El Veneno," were no less moving. Gerardo Nuñez (solo and lead guitar), Diego Losada, Juan Carmona and Juan Salazar were the fine musicians.

The three-hour program was almost too much of a good thing, although every segment renewed one's delight.

La Cumbre will give its third and final performance tonight, again at La Union Espanola Cultural Center, located at 2850 Alemany Street. While it has an informal, hospitable ambience suited to flamenco, the center's ballroom, with unbanked seats and inadequate lighting, is not the best place to watch dance. In the case of such rare artists, however, don't quibble: go and be astonished.

Festival Latino's four other events, ranging from theater to dance to comedy, will take place at the Victoria Theater, 16th and Mission streets.

DANCE THEATER COMES TO FLAMENCO

by The Shah of Iran

Flamenco specialists consider Mario Maya to be an excellent bailaor, sometimes of great purity, and without a doubt with much power in his dance. This man, raised in the Sacromonte of Granada, unites with his personal dance a growing artistic uncertainty which caused him to create in Seville in 1983 the group "The Mario Maya Dance Theater" with eighteen members and the ambition to create a wider public for the dance and at



JOSE GRECO JR. (LEFT) WITH MARIO MAYA IN AMARGO (JOSE'S BEAUTIFUL SISTER CARMEN ALSO DANCES IN MARIO'S GROUP)

the same time to bring about an integration of traditional dances with contemporary forms of dance.

Amargo is the first fruit to result from this work, and though it has been choreographed several times, the passionate and tragic plot, so Lorquian has lent itself very well to a novel choreography in which Mario Maya has avoided the superficial





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and accented the symbolic elements with an intense poetic tone. The structure of the performance remains faithful to the flamenco dance, but tastefully integrates a dramatic relation amongst the dancers, which has nothing to do with tradition. At the same time, the plot is subordinate to the movement. Mario Maya has said, "As a gypsy and Andalusian, I direct all my interest towards finding in flamenco the dignity and the original meaning, uniting the folk expression with present day theater. For a long time, flamenco was considered the lament of Andalusia, something which always had existed, but was known only in its superficial form! Songs of passionate romance and dances for entertainment. The plaintive lament of a minority, their genuine sensuality and their rhythms have lost their true meaning. I am dedicated to seeking out the authenticity and originality of flamenco, from the ritual ceremony reserved for the few, at the beginning, flamenco transformed itself into a cultural statement for the many."

The action of *Amargo* takes place in an atmosphere of nocturnal unreality under the influence of a full moon, another element of Lorquian recurrence. Mario Maya calls upon all his ingenuity in order to transform the action into a magical reality which ends up converting the piece into a true ballet.

Flamenco Libre concludes the program and consists of dances such as soleá, tarantos, and soleá por bulerías in which the interpretative difference of each artist can be appreciated, or tangos and alegrías in which the work of the entire group can be enjoyed. As the title [*Flamenco Libre*] indicates, this part of the show attempts to liberate and remove from their habitual frameworks these common "palos".

IT IS MAN WHO LIBERATES DANCE

ANTONIO GADES AFFIRMS THAT IT IS MAN WHO LIBERATES DANCE

[from: *Diario de Jerez*, July 26, 1986; sent and translated by El Tio Peco]

Antonio Gades, who is presenting in Madrid his version of "Carmen", believes dance does not liberate man, but on the contrary, it is the human being that can make dancing free.

In an interview with Efe, Gades pointed out that "this is not a matter of profession, but of principles," emphasizing that freedom means respect towards others, "to live and let live, with your own sense of ethics and convictions."

For Antonio Gades, the fact that his wife, Marisol, supported the electoral campaign of Herri Batasuna (purported to have connections with ETA separatists) meant another statement of freedom. "She is free, as I am, and I never ask her any questions, we respect each other."

Gades chose the protagonist of Carmen, of Bizet's opera, "because she was a person true to herself, because she was not willing to live a lie. When she falls in love, she does it truly, and when she leaves Don Jose for the bullfighters, she would rather die than to do without her latest choice."

The dancer affirms that the most important aspect of dancing is feeling, and believes that the choreographer is wrong when he bases his work in the dancers' technique.

"One must not forget that feeling came first, and it was man, with his freedom, who expressed it through dance. Man dances because he is sad, or happy, to celebrate a birth, or to mourn a death," the dancer remarked.

For Gades, "if feeling is restrained with a magnificent technique, there can be no spontaneity or flexibility in dance," but "let me go on record by saying that for me technique is important, even though one must forget it."

"Carmen," the movie that Saura made in collaboration with Antonio Gades, represented in the world of dancing, one of the most significant events in recent years, receiving many awards in several countries, including the Soviet Union.

For the dancer, painting inspires his work more than music. "I am strongly influenced by painting, which is one of the arts that I enjoy the most, especially by the works of Mondrian, who happens to be my favorite," he indicated.

"Instead, music does not have great influence in me, because I play with silences. When I put something together," he explained, "first I conceive the choreography, then I look for the music then I can fit into the shoe like another one of the parts."

Antonio Gades thinks that "maybe next year" a choreography for "El Amor Brujo" by de Falla may be possible.

EL AMOR BRUJO

[Reviewed by Colón ABC, March 1986; sent by The Shah]

Spanish production (1986). Title "El Amor Brujo". Directors; Carlos Saura and Antonio Gades. Based on the libretto of Gregorio Martínez Sierra. Principal interpreters; Antonio Gades, Cristina Hoyos, Juan Antonio Jiménez, Laura del Sol, and Emma Penella. Photography; Teo Escamilla, Music; Manuel de Falla.

Carlos Saura is continuing in the lyrical-folklorical theme that has yielded him such excellent dividends of international success. After "Bodas de Sangre" and "Carmen" he concludes the trilogy with "El Amor Brujo". This is an unexpected propensity for things Andalusian in this highlander. All the themes on Andalusia that have been written or filmed are revived in this Saurian trilogy which has approached this deep and complex world from a personal perspective.

"El Amor Brujo" is a mixture of tablao flamenco, folklore, and flamenco disco. The gypsy village is reconstructed in the studio with the intention to recreate an atmosphere related to pictorial hyperrealism (TV antennas and junked automobiles) and related to the background of "West Side Story" (background sounds of sirens and trains, red skies, scenographic stylization of zones on the outskirts of the City). The splendid music of de Falla is mixed with gypsy songs of various origins which creates a conflict between two irreconcilable musical worlds. The plot is brought up to date: Carmelo loves Candela from childhood, but she marries José who is unfaithful and carries on with the young Lucía and dies defending her (which one?) in a brawl. Carmelo is thrown into jail, and when he returns to the village he attempts to conquer Candela but she is enthralled by the ghost of José. Only the intervention of Lucía can free her from the spectre so that Carmelo and Candela can begin a new life.

The libretto of Gregorio Martínez Sierra was already feeble in its own time and was surpassed by de Falla's music. Its transformation into the basis of a filmed drama does not enhance it. As a choreographic show [*El Amor Brujo*] suffers from Saura's lack of cinematic grasp of the dance. It is enough to observe how he resolves the famous scene of "The Fire Dance" in order to be convinced that Saura does not have the proper sensitivity to approach the complex world of de Falla and flamenco. The weight of theatricality is excessive. Nor did Gades know how to create the type of cinematographic choreography that is needed in order to develop before the camera.

The most outstanding feature, aside from the spectacular visuality and the measures of de Falla, is the always-magnetic presence of Cristina Hoyos, a sort of gypsy Agnes Moorehead who, when she looks straight into the camera and dances, overcomes everything around her.

Flamenco does not entirely fit (?) in cinema, nor does de Falla have much better luck. Neither of the previous two filmed versions of "Amor Brujo"--Antonio Románs' in 1949 with Ana Esmeralda, Mariolo Vargas, Miguel Albaicín and Pastora Imperio, and Borriá Beletás in 1967 with la Polaca and Gades himself--nor this new one either does credit to the irresistible force of the music, or the antiquated passionate worlds that are bound up in flamenco.

FLAMENCO IN GAUL, INCREDIBLE SPECTACLE

[from: *Correo De Andalucía*, April 6, 1986; sent and translated by The Shah of Iran]

Very rarely does one attend a night of flamenco such as the one celebrated last Saturday (May 31, 1986) in the beautiful French locality of Dioron, France. Organized by the local radio station, under the artistic direction and presentation of Santi Romates, the evening in the "Sala Palas" can be termed glorious in terms of art, and melodic in terms of organization. Two cantaores, one cantaoira, two bailaores, two guitarists and 4 hours of duration provided the ingredients of success.

In cante: Fosforito who substituted for El Cabrero, who was indisposed, José el de la Tomasa, and Aurora Vargas. In baile: Carmen Ledesma and Meme Reina, accompanied by the cantao Jarillo and cantaora Juana Reina. In toque: José Luis Postigo and Manolo Domínguez. Great sound and lighting system, simple and effective staging and the presense of more than a thousand spectators.

With enthusiastic applause they received the sounds of the bulerías with which Domínguez and Postigo opened the evening. After this beautiful opening, Domínguez outdid himself in a rich and beautiful toque for granafas. Following him came the cante from the lips of El de la Tomasa, accompanied by Postigo. Not even the exhaustion of having just arrived from Vienna after 20 days of singing in the Lorquian "Bodas de Sangre," could diminish the excellence of this Sevillian cantao. What good taste, beloved reader, por soleá, por cantiñas and por fandangos del de la Carsá! From that moment on we had a hunch the evening was going to take the high road of great art, and so it was. Then came the temperament, the boldness, and the pure plaintive voice of Aurora Vargas. Aurora liberally fanned the powder and lit the fuse with alegrías de Pastora, bambieras and bulerías and was required to repeat this number by the audience on their feet who would not allow her to go to her dressing room.

On top of such a great act came the baile. With the cantes of Jarillo and Reina and the guitar of Domínguez, Meme Reina danced por soleá with the most authentic stamp of the old Sevillian school, reaching the sublime limits of her art. Next, Carmen Ledesma, with the guitar of Postigo made the alegrías her own, full of delicious good taste. Finally, they danced por bulerías with the enthusiastic audience keeping compás with the palmas and by looks and gestures.

Fosforito in full control of his faculties, put the final touches on this first half of the spectacle, possessed by the perfection of the guitar of Manuel Domínguez. Giving everything he had, enthusiastic and clear of voice, he sang por cantiñas, lientos and tangos, taranto and fandango, galvanizing the fans with the excellent spread of his cantes. In the bull-sessions of the hallways and lounges all were exclaiming over the great night of art they were living. Here we pause to discount the notion that the French audience would understand little or nothing of the cante. In Oloron the public is critical, appreciates and understands. It's not in vain that Santi Romates has his numerous flamenco audience trained to distinguish the wheat from the chaff and what's pure from what's not.

If the popular saying has it that the second half is never as good as the first, this refrain is out of order. What a second half, beloved readers! What communion between artists and the recipients of the art! What immense joy upon the countenances of the beholders.

Paco de Marbella, and Andalusian who settled twenty years ago in Oloron, opened this session with the guitar of Postigo,



JOSE LUIS POSTIGO



FOSFORITO



JOSÉ EL DE LA TOMASA



AURORA VARGAS



CARMEN LEDESMA

with a cante por bulerías and a suite of fandangos of which we make special note of the ones in the style of Curro de Utrera. And once again came Fosforito in order not to cool off or to allow the strings of Domínguez to cool, soleá, cantes de Cayetano, seguriyas, campanilleros, bulerías, and... "encore! encore! encore!" came the general cry of the public loathe to leave their seats. And Aurora again, better still, more authentic, with more flavor still, fell in with Postigo with lientos and tangos and bulerías, dancing to the compás of an old cante with fresh memory. An earthquake, friends, an authentic earthquake. And I write this after calming down from an evening which will not be repeated soon. Once again El Tomasa with a seguriya to be framed in the heart. Manuel Torre relived in 1986 the purity of the blood of the one who carried in his veins the blood of Pepe Torre. And the delirium. Just as it is written, the delirium. What a mood, what a coming together, what style, what feeling...! And finally, to close out a diverse and complete night -- por toná and a thousand applause picking up its remate ... "And if this isn't true, may God strike me dead if he wants to..."

Around 2:00a.m. a brief and moving homage to the director of the Noches de Andalucía in Oloron, Santi Romates. All the artists were on stage as was the Giralda of Seville, rendered in

clay from Triana and the Giralddillo in bronze and the whole team from the Royal Betis Soccer Club (the Seville soccer squad)...Santi wept, we and the artists as well, and for this reason this guitars struck up again and the cante por bulerías was made king, and the dance... And the audience, number one that beautiful, incredible night would not come down from their high enthusiasm.

(And in the words that close many a good tale:

"Colorín, colorao,
Este cuento
Se ha acabado!")

-The Shah

NOTES FROM MADRID

[from: ABC, June 3, 1986; sent by The Shah]

by J.L. Montoya

The cantaor Juan Peña "El Lebrijano", and guitarist-composer Paco Cepero, along with a common friend Julio Alavrez, are going into business in Madrid. There was a time in which the artists from this land went to the capital to work, to build up some following, but it seems that time has changed and now investment is made backwards, with an attempt to conquer the forum not with art, but with finances. Paco himself explained:

"It's a night club in the 'Rociero' style in which the decoration imitates the hermitage. There will be both group acts and individual performers."

--Did it cost you all much?

"Well, as yet, we haven't made the final reckoning, but yes, it will be a considerable amount, since we stunted on nothing."

--Will it have a name?

"We have named it 'Al-Andaluz' and it is located on the street Capitán Maya. It opens the first week of June."

--What else have you been up to Paco?

"I have just finished a record with Rocio Jurado and most of this summer, at least July and August, I shall be working with the Mexican singer José José. Regrettably, I shall miss going to the flamenco festivals. Madrid is Madrid, but I still enjoy shooting down to my land once in a while."



JUAN PEÑA "EL LEBRIJANO" AND PACO CEPERO

NOTES FROM THE FAR NORTH

OR FLAMENCO FROM THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN

[from: ABC, June 3, 1986; sent by The Shah]

by J.L. Montoya

Since I wrote a few lines above on a guitarist, Paco Cepero, I shall now continue with another, and afterwards with yet another, since once I get on the subject of six strings, we might as well add a tail to the comet. The second we shall discuss is Rafael Riqueni, a trianero [person from the Triana neighborhood

of Sevilla]. I was chatting with him this past Sunday just hours before he was to climb into an aluminum bird which would carry him to nordic lands, where, as a guest of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he will give a series of recitals.

--The schedule, Rafael!

"Well, June 3rd in Helsinki, the 5th in Stockholm, the 6th in Upsala, the 9th in Copenhagen and the 11th in Oslo."

--How will you make yourself understood among those people?

"God only knows. Anyway, in each place there will be a representative of the Spanish Embassy to accompany me."

--What do you plan to play for those chilly folks?

"I shall play flamenco; the only classical number will be 'Sevilla' by Albéniz."

--Are other artists going with you?

"No, I'm going alone; these are recitals of mine with no accompaniment."



RAFAEL RIQUENI

As for the other guitarist I said I would mention, he is José Cala "El Poeta" who took ill and lost his appetite for life the day they buried Paquirri [late matador who was dispatched into the hereafter by half a ton of raging beef--The Shah]. He never got over it, even to this day. I asked Naranjito de Triana about him, since they are good friends.

"He's a little better. he can get up by himself and take a couple of steps, and even take care of his personal functions. He takes down his guitar and plays a few chords. But no more. At times, he recognizes those around him, other times not."

And since it's always nice to be remembered, I would like to mention here that I received a post card from Japan from the Sevillian bailaora María Jesús Pagés who is with the company of Antonio Gades and who says they will be performing the whole month of June in Russia. We hope that they will give a wide berth to Chernobyl, although given the political convictions of Gades they will probably give a concert on top of the very ruins of the defunct nuclear plant in order to prove that nothing really happened there--Who knows?

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ENRIQUE MORENTE PERFORMS CANTE JONDO IN THE ROYAL THEATRE WITH THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

[from: El Pais, May 16, 1986; sent and translated by The Shah of Iran]

Enrique Morente, cantaor from Granada, 42 years of age, always carries something of a scandal with him, for better or worse. He now confronts a new and delicate experiment, something which to date has not been attempted so far as we know. Of course there have been concerts of "serious" music with vignettes of cante flamenco. But here, the attempt is made to meld the cante and classical music into complete homogeneity. This evening in the Royal Theatre, Enrique Morente will sing flamenco accompanied by two guitarists, some palmeros and the 60 musicians of the Symphonic Orchestra of Madrid, directed by Luis Izquierdo.

The composer and arranger of the orchestral scores for this concert is Antonio Robledo. The work is entitled "Fantasia de Cante Jondo Para Voz y Orquesta." "What is this?" someone asked the cantaor. The cantaor reflected a moment, then replied, "Well, it's a work for flamenco voice and orchestra, with the music composed and arranged by Antonio Robledo, a great composer and a man who is concerned with Spanish music, and with whom for the first time in history, I believe, a cantaor has joined forces and helped compose music with a classical musician and concert pianist..."

Enrique Morente speaks carefully, choosing his words well as if he were on the very razor's edge of his thoughts discovering the "Fantasia de Cante Jondo" for himself, then concludes, "Well, on the eve of the debut it is a bit difficult to explain and define clearly what we have done. I will understand it more clearly when we perform it."

I asked him to explain the actual creative process they used in this collaboration, and Morente explains. The proposal of the cantes is his, but Robledo doesn't just limit himself to making a musical arrangement of them or an illustration, but has made an authentic composition in each case. "He didn't make an arrangement for each theme or each cante, but rather he made entirely new compositions for each of the cantes I offered him." From which I understood—and I hope I am not sticking my neck out, since it is well known that anything can happen in an innovation—that the cante jondo is merely a base of departure...

The flamenco guitar has a place in this concert but not in the way one would expect because, as Morente explains, he does not wish to do what a cantaor and a guitarist normally do when they go out on a stage or a tablao to perform.

We are contemplating an entirely different experience that will confront Enrique Morente. "What will the orthodox flamencos, the purists say?" I ask the cantaor. And the cantaor doesn't have to contemplate his answer very long. "Good grief! I understand that such things at first glance seem important and that I am a traditionalist at heart, a lover of tradition, and thus I usually am surprised when I see things out of place, because I love the roots and origins (of flamenco). I know there are going to be people who are surprised, but if a work of art is well-executed, or at least is well-meant, that's all that really counts." Of course, he hadn't answered my question. I called this to his attention and he broke out laughing when I repeated the question verbatim. "Oh well, I think they will say I am crazy, and I understand. They are pretty much right—I am."

Why would an artist such as Enrique Morente, who could be comfortably installed in a position earned by many years of effort, chase after something new? The cantaor is completely convinced it has something to do with destiny. "My mind doesn't allow me to be at ease and to repeat myself much; each of my performances is different...on account of my set of mind. That's how I am. And therefore, I like adventure, and I like risk. Without them I wouldn't know how to live. Many times I pay a heavy price, but other times I receive beautiful rewards."

Certainly the artistic credo of Enrique Morente can be summed up in few words: "Purity must be preserved, but sometimes things must be stirred up in order not to stagnate and also in order to know what not to do in case things don't turn out right." New and unpublished things can be injected into flamenco without betraying the essence of true flamenco. If it is done with art, and talent, with sincerity and without vanity, Morente believes that the innovations are positive and true.



ENRIQUE MORENTE IN REHEARSAL

The cantaor recognizes that what has been done in recent years and continues to be done and accorded the hallmark flamenco "renovation" has had the possibility of commercial exploitation and many times has misled the public, but that this is bound to happen in all the arts. But there are important things, new expressions, the will to continue (and this is very important in flamenco), and new sounds to allow us to continue.



UNIVERSAL GYPSIES

"Pala Negra, por bulerías and blues, and iconoclastic and unpredictable group."

[from: El Pais, June 6, 1986; sent and translated by The Shah of Iran]

by Nacho Sáenz de Tejada

Performances by one of the most interesting, anarchic, open, unpredictable and flamenco of groups, "Pala Negra," are not extravagant. With varying orchestrations throughout their long and uneven rise, the backbone of this group has been Raimundo and Rafael Amador, gypsies of Sevilla who add or subtract musicians of differing types, according to the needs and desires of the moment. For this reason, each performance is unexpected and anything can happen.

When they had not yet reached 15 years of age, brothers Raimundo and Rafael Amador began working with the Montoya family in one of their most emotional performances of flamenco, outstanding for its authenticity. Prodigious guitarists, with innate technical abilities, especially Raimundo, they can be included in the new generation of gypsies who do not adhere strictly to the canons of orthodox flamenco, for which reason they are always surrounded by controversy.

This openness has permitted them to collaborate with Camarón de la Isla, Toti Soler, Rafael Riqueni, Radio Futura and, most significantly, Kiko Veneno—with whom they cut their first record. Introduced to the electric guitar, and therefore to rock, their gypsy roots have been influenced by this music. Their guitar improvisations have attained an unsurpassable level by mixing gypsy "hondura" with rock phrasing. They can be heard on their two LP's, now augmented by the mini-LP "Guitarras Callejeras" in which they have put aside their flourishes

and, with two flamenco guitars and one voice, attack classical rancheras, as well as old themes already recorded with Veneno, without forgetting their inseparable rock. The performance of *Pata Negra*, one of the most peculiar to appear on Madrid's stages this year, is presented jointly with that of "Hambre y Moral". This is a duo from Cadiz, formed by Juan Diego, voice, and Fernando on saxophone, both ex-musicians from the group "Affaire Niña Monica," whose performance is original and surprising, and completes the programs of a good gypsy--Andalusian evening.

PATA NEGRA

[from: *El Pais*, June 14, 1986; sent and translated by The Shah of Iran]

by Nacho Saénz de Tejada

Pata Negra must be seen and heard live, because they represent something unusual. From the point of view of a show in which perfection is the goal, this duo represents the opposite extreme. These are two visceral guitarists who put the heart before the head, and though there are some rough spots, each time the guitar sounds or Raimundo sings, these are quickly forgotten.

They know the language of flamenco from birth and, with their technical command and background in "swing", *Pata Negra* launches into blues and rock. Their songs are based on bulerías and rumbas, toques in which they are masters, and when they wish to get deep, they prefer the orthodoxy of blues to either soleares or siguiriya, with magnificent improvisations by Rafael.

They alternate flamenco falsetas with rock riffs, without

forgetting the cante jondo, which they attack without compromise and with the purest of classical styles in the toque and cante.

With excellent versions of their themes from the old days with Veneno, Pata Palo, and Ratitas Divinas, straight rock, some rancheras, complete absence of prejudice or pre programming, and anarchy on stage, there was nothing one could do but suffer because at any moment they could reach the sublime.

The Sevillians "Hambre y Moral," playing for the first time in Madrid, perform an odd kind of rock-cabaret with musical complexity, and, at the end, everyone improvised a chaotic jam which ended with a drum solo por bulerías by Raimundo Amador.



A FRAME FOR THE FLAMENCO COMPETITION

[from: *El Pais*, May 15, 1986; sent and translated by The Shah of Iran]

by Francis Luis Cordova

The National Competition of Flamenco Art of Córdoba which was celebrated from the 17th to the 23rd of May has reached its thirtieth anniversary laden with a prestige and respectability unforeseen by its creators in 1956. The Grand Theatre played a special role in the special tribute City Hall paid these events. On its renovated stage, this artistic coliseum was inaugurated officially with a recital commemorating the 30th anniversary of the National Flamenco Competition which featured the participation of Antonio Fernández Díaz "Fosforito", Victor Monge "Serranito", Matilde Corral and Paco Cepero.

This national competition has 133 participants; 91 in cante, 23 in dance and 19 in guitar. This massive enrollment denotes the transcendancy and enlargement of this contest in the general flamenco world.

Ever since Fosforito opened the list of winners in 1956, the most illustrious names in cante, baile and toque have been included in this triannual event. Among these have been Antonio Mairena who received the "golden key" for cante, José Menese, Paquera de Jerez, El Lebrijano, Chano Lobato, El Cabrero, Mario Maya, Carmen Albéniz, Paco de Lucía, Manolo Sanlúcar, Paco Cepero, Habichuela, and Merengue de Córdoba.

The creation of this contest has its precedent 24 years earlier in the competition celebrated in Granada in 1922 brought about by the efforts of Manuel de Falla and Federico García Lorca. The City Hall of Córdoba took up this torch which was extinguished the same year, and with the help of some aficionados, particularly Ricardo Molina in whose memory a journalism prize has been created in conjunction with the contest, called the first edition of this contest in order to impregnate the traditionally festive Cordovan May with Andalusian art, every three years.

The contest establishes, besides the award for the most complete cantaor, six distinct prizes in the category of cantes, four in baile, and two in guitar. In order to underline the artistic diversity of flamenco, the different palos, seguiriyas, soleares, alegrías, tarantas, peteneras, bulerías, fandangos, serranas, among others are expressly acknowledged.

Besides the possibilities of career advancement the festival offers the participants, there are 12 prizes of 100,000 pesetas and one of 200,000.



TWO FRONTIERS OF THE CANTE II JORNADAS FLAMENCAS

[from: *El Pais*, April 18, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Charlene Gerheim.]

by A. Alvarez Caballero

This year's Jornadas Flamencas de Fuenlabrada turned out to be two very interesting sessions. The first was dedicated to the café cantante, with a warm exchange of conversation with Romualdo Molina. Then a video from a program on T.V.E. was shown that featured *La Rubia* and *El Canaria*. Gabriel Moreno was accompanied by the outstanding guitar of Carlos Pardo.

Gabriel Moreno was a perfect choice for the video. Not



GUITARIST OF PATA NEGRA, RAIMUNDO AMADOR

only is he complete in his deep understanding of the various flamenco styles, but he can interpret them faithfully. He has respect for the original purity of style and has that rare sense for la jonda. With such an encyclopedic knowledge he has focused, however, on certain cantes, with special emphasis on the styles of Psuvón (those of Tomás and Niña de los Peines).

In the voice of Gabriel Moreno we denote a sweet sense of the world, a form that is exquisite and delicate. It does not fail at any point or fall into the unworthy category known as "bonito", which is nothing more than a trill of the voice and void of substance. On the contrary, Gabriel Moreno gave a splendid recital. He chose hard and difficult numbers and resolved them in a grand manner.



POR BULERIAS. . . ¡Y OLE!

[from: El País, April 23, 1986; sent by Brad Blanchard; translated by Nancy Lee Ruyter]

by A. Alvarez Caballero

Indio Gitano (cante) and Juan Salazar (toque). Fernanda and Bernarda de Utrera (cante) and Peco del Gastor (toque). Los Parrilla de Jerez: Manuel and Juan (toque) and Ana (baile), with Antonio de Malena (cante). La Paquera (cante) and her family, Los Méndez (cante and baile): Tía Dolores, Luise Torrán, Tío Eduardo, Tío Pili, Peco Ruiz, Manuela de Jerez, Rafael Agarrado, Pepe Méndez, La Margari, Paqui Flores, Alonso Flores, Joselito Méndez, Antonio Méndez, Rubichi and Alonso Flores. Niña Jero (toque).

Madrid, teatro Alcalá Palace, April 24.

Before the fiesta, there was a round of soleares, and that was good because the soleá is the mother of the bulería and because La Fernanda was there--if that one does not sing por soleá, it is as if we are left orphans. It was without doubt Fernanda's voice that was the most impressive of the evening, even though to the majority, it did not seem so. This voice was the most honda/jonda, profound, without brilliance, muted, going with much struggle to where it wanted to arrive--when it managed it. But from the beginning "ey!", already it was producing in us a twist of shivering and chill that I will never know how to explain.

Before that, El Indio Gitano had sung. He is also almost always great in soleares, and he was on this occasion; afterwards, in the jaleos de Badajoz (almost the equivalent of the bulerías), worried that a piece of scenery was about to fall on him, El Indio was already a bit thrown off the track.

La Paquera came out to leave us speechless with that peculiar personality of hers, and she did leave us speechless of course, in a manner completely opposite from La Fernanda. She has a sharp voice, ability, and can permit herself the luxury of leaving the microphone when she feels like it. She first sang bulería por soleá and afterwards played captain to all of her family, Los Méndez, and all of those who stamped on the stage with their martial, aggressive, outrageous and captivating "aire"--which the public received in a friendly manner.

Ana Parrilla danced soleares and bulerías por soleá. I had been wanting to see her, but never before had had the chance to attend more than inconsequential performances. Pay attention to Ana Parrilla! There is in her a bailaora of the old style who reminds us of some women of the baila jonda, of which there hardly remains anything today but the legend. With not one hair out of place, without the flower falling from the hairdo, without a stamp, with no shuddering, Ana Parrilla left us with some of the sequences of feminine flamenco dance that are the most beautiful I remember.

And right after, the rest of the program was a magnificent "buleriara" recital in which the art of La Bernarda was especially brilliant. The written word has its limitations, certainly, and there are things that definitely cannot be explained. It was one of those demonstrations in which I think that we were able to come close enough to a flamenco art that is still authentic and in a pure state.

Many of those who sang and danced there are not professional artists. They learned to sing and dance like that in their homes, in family fiestas, in the gypsy barrio of Santiago and San Miguel in Jerez. The dance of Luisa Torrán is true and emotional. The dance and song of Tía Dolores has nobility and an unusual solemnity.

El Tío Pili makes a short thing of singing and dancing, but has fabulous gracia. Tío Eduardo sings por bulerías marvelously. Manuela also performed the song and the dance of course, with somewhat disquieting duende in her performance. The boys Paqui and Joselito delivered some styles that many professionals would like to have for themselves.

The playing was another fiesta. Five great guitarists, some truly exceptional; precisely because of the coming together of so many of such quality, perhaps they did not find sufficient space for each one to offer all that he knows in the bulerías family of flamenco music that can be more, much more.

A great fiesta of bulerías, the most beautiful fiesta of bulerías that I remember to have witnessed.



IV BIENNIAL FLAMENCO DE SEVILLA

SEPT. 8 - OCT. 4

Each Biennial of Sevilla comes up with a new and more interesting program. This year they seem to be organizing the performances by forms of cante. The result is a real flamenco feast. Here is the schedule of events. It makes very interesting reading if you know something about the artists. We look forward to some reviews of these performances and thank Ann Fitzgerald of Seville for sending the program.

- Sept. 8: Opening Ceremony of the Biennial
Performance by the Montoya Family.
- Sept. 9: "SEVEN DAYS OF SONG CYCLE"
THE BEAT OF THE FESTIVAL
Singers Aurora Vargas, Bernarda de Utrera, Boquerón, Nana de Jerez, Romerita de Jerez, Turronero, José Mercé, Juan Villar, Juana la de Revuela
Dancers Juane Ameya and Peco Valdepeñas
Guitars Diego de Morón, Peco Cepero and Parrilla de Jerez
- Sept. 10: THE ORIGINS
Singers Agujetas, Cepillo, Manuel Mairena, Miguel Vargas, Tío José el Negro and Tomasa
Dancers Angelita Vargas and los Biencasas
Guitars Enrique de Melchor, Peco del Gastor and Peco Peña
- Sept. 12: FOR CANTIÑA
Singers Bení de Cádiz, Chano Lobato, Curro Malena, María Vargas and Pansequito
Dancer Ana Parrilla
Guitars José Luis Postigo, Manolo Dominguez and Quique Parades
- Sept. 13: THE ENDLESS NIGHT
The Fernández Family and the Vargas Family (Jerez-Seville), The Peña Family (Lebrija) and the Pinini Family (Utrera)
- Sept. 15: FANDANGOS
Singers El Cabrero, Laonor Díaz, Luis Caballero, Peco Toronja, the Flamenco Peña of Huelva, Perejil and Pies de Plomo
Dancers The Flamenco Peña of Huelva
Guitars Azuaga, Juan Díaz and Manolo Brenes
- Sept. 16: THE EASTERN PART OF THE SOUTH
Singers Canillas, Carmen Lineras, Curro Lucena, Diego Cleval, Encarnación Fernández, Piñana and Tía Marina
Dancer El Güito
Guitars Carlos, Juan and Pape Habichuela and Piñana (son)
- Sept. 17: SONGS OF "IDA Y VUELTA"
Singers Ana Reverte, Chano Labato, Gabriel Moreno, Luis de Córdoba and Naranjito de Triana
Dancer Pepa Monte
Guitars Manolo Franco, Rafael Riquani and Ricardo Miño
- Sept. 18: LOS MONTES SING
Verdiales groups from the mountains of Málaga, Troubadours from Las Alpujarras, Fandango group from Lucena and "Baila el Monte"
- Sept. 19: Singers Camarón de la Isla and Manuel Molina
Guitars Manuel Molina and Tomatita
- Sept. 20: Peco de Lucía
- Sept. 22: ANTHOLOGY OF SEVILLANAS
Singers "Corraleras" de Lebrija, El Pali, Los Romeros

- & de la Puebla, Manuel Pareja Obregón, Pedro
Guitars Bacán, Pedro Peña and Sal Marina
Dance The Rocío Loreto Group
- Sept. 23: THE GIRALDILLOS
Singer Calixto Sánchez
Dance Mario Maya
Guitar Manolo Franco
- Sept. 24: FLAMENCO PIANO
Arturo Pavón, Felipe Campuzana and José Romero
- Sept. 25: Dance Pilar López
Guitar Sabicas
- Sept. 26: TODAY, MADRID
Sept. 27: Manolo Sanlúcar
Sept. 29: Afternoon Session: LEARNING FLAMENCO
Song & Bulerías and Campañilleros Group of Jerez
Dance and the Dance Group of la Venta de Vargas
Evening Session: MENTA Y CANELA
Singer Lole
Dancer Manuela Carrasco
- Sept. 30: SHOW IN HONOR OF "LA LLAVE DE ORO"
Singers Chocolate, el Lebrijano, Fosforito, and José Menese
Dancers Farruco, Matilde Coral and Rafael el Negro
Guitars Enrique de Melchor and Pedro Bacán
- Oct. 1-3: Singing competition for the Second "Giraldillo" of song
- Oct. 4: Closing Session
Enrique Morente and the Bética Philharmonic Orchestra.



SUMMER COURSE: SPANISH DANCE SOCIETY USA

[Submitted by: Matteo, The Foundation for Ethnic Dance, Inc.,
17 West 71st St., New York, NY 10025, (212)877-9565, and
Nancy Lee Ruyter, Dance Department/School of Fine Arts,
University of California, Irvine, CA 92717, (714)856-7284]

Spanish dance instructors and students from the United States, Colombia, New Zealand, and West Germany spent June

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16 to July 3 at George Washington University (Washington D.C.) in an intensive course on the first six levels of the Spanish Dance Society syllabus. This syllabus, similar in structure and intent to the Royal Academy of Dancing syllabus, was developed by the Spanish Dance Society of South Africa (founded 1965). It comprises six junior, three senior, and two teacher levels. Each level consists of exercises and dances from the area of regional, escuela bolera, and flamenco dance.

Primary instructor for this special course was Marina Keet, Lecturer in Dance at George Washington University since 1982, who presents her students in frequent productions in the Washington D.C. area. Assisting her was Visiting Examiner Luisa Cortez.

Ms. Keet was a founding member of the Spanish Dance Society and a major contributor to the syllabus during its formative years. She has studied extensively and intensively in Spain, and teaches a wealth of material -- from all Spanish dance genres -- in addition to the syllabus itself.

The Spanish Dance Society is the only international society dedicated entirely to the training of qualified Spanish dance instructors and performers and to the maintenance of high standards in the teaching of Spanish dance. The syllabus was compiled by a group of fourteen Spanish dance specialists including both performing artists and teachers. Since the beginning of the Society in 1965, autonomous branches have been founded in: Italy (1978), Great Britain (1979), the United States (1981), and subsequently in West Germany, Malta, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Australia, and Israel.



(LEFT TO RIGHT): VISITING EXAMINER LUISA CORTEZ, SANORALABY, CHELA JACOBO, MATTEO, CAROLA GOYÀ, JANE LUSCOMBE, INSTRUCTOR MARINA KEET, NANCY LEE RUYTER.



A NEW TECHNIQUE FOR TUNING GUITARS

[from: El Pais, April 25, 1986; sent and translated by The Shah of Iran]

by Angel Alvarez Caballero

The professional gypsy tocaor Antonio Losada presented, in connection with the Cumbres Flamencas in Madrid, a new technique of his own elaboration for tuning guitars. Losada is a self-instructed guitarist who earns his livelihood as a tocaor in a tablao in Madrid.

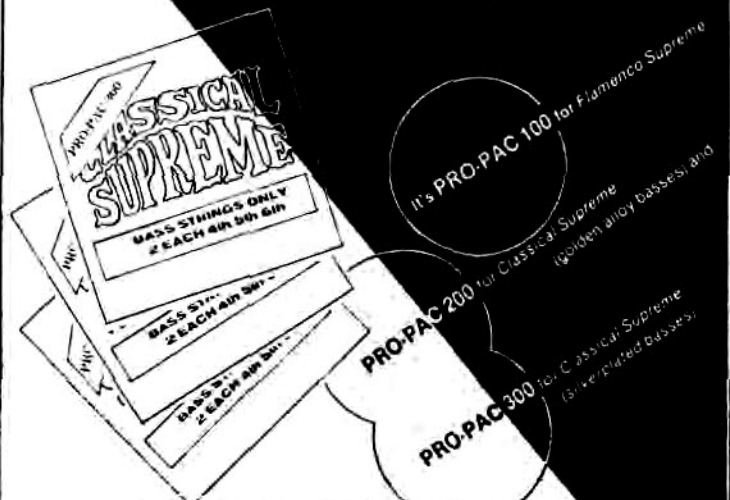
The tuning of guitars still presents problems of considerable magnitude, some of which Losada tries to obviate by employing this new method which he discovered while practicing his hobby of guitar-making. The new technique consists of modifying the frets, traditionally straight, with differing curvatures, especially those belonging to the second string of the instrument, which seems to be the most troublesome to tune.

Professional guitarists, as well as guitar builders, were present in the room in which this presentation took place. Losada, after explaining the theory of his invention, gave several practical demonstrations on an instrument he had prepared for this purpose and invited anyone present who cared to, to try for himself, which several did. The musicologist Sabas de Hoces tried out [the instrument] and declared the discovery of Losada to be astonishing and of great potential.



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MORCA

... sobre el baile

WOOD THAT LAUGHS, STRINGS THAT CRY: THE FLAMENCO GUITAR

Countless years ago, peoples began inventing musical instruments to imitate the rhythm and music of nature and also to express and extend their feelings, to communicate their emotions, both on a human and a spiritual level. One of these genius instruments has evolved as the guitar, specifically, for this article, the flamenco guitar. I do not know of anyone who can say for certain when the first flamenco guitar was made or who made it, but, indeed, it was a strong bit of genius that so strongly captured the flamenco musical soul. The guitar was the late comer in flamenco. For centuries, songs were sung freely with rhythmical accompaniment of tapping sticks and canes and, obviously, palmas. Dance was done with bare feet against the earth or in whatever footwear was available. No fancy boots with nail filled heels against hard wood floors; that would come later with the discovery that flamenco was destined to become a universal performing art. Although the guitar was the late comer in the total picture of flamenco art, it was this instrument and its music that unified and made cohesive this magical trilogy of music, song and dance.

Bits of artfully crafted wood, six strings stretched to the tension of 3 octaves and, magically, an instrument capable of expressing the total range of human joy and sorrow, depth of feeling and emotion, and even the reason for living, when blended with the song of the soul and the dance rhythms of life. The guitar was a natural for flamenco expression, for it has a range of mood, rhythm, depth, soul, tone and melody that comes from the many races of people that gave it birth.

One of the main differences between flamenco guitar and other related instruments is the pulse. A gypsy violin wants to cry, to woo to smile, to seduce. To all of this the flamenco guitar adds a pulse to mark the heart beat and rhythms of the soul. Not bow against strings, but fingers against strings, caressing the compás, the mood, the melody, the feeling of music, song, and dance, that is of the earth and spirit. In a quantum leap from the golden era of the café cantante, the playing of the flamenco guitar has gone from pluck and strum to the interpretations of countless flamenco styles and forms, both in accompaniment and as a solo instrument, with a range of technique that was unheard of a few years ago. Since there are no videos or films of this beginning era of the café cantante, when flamenco melted together music, song and dance as a performing art for the pleasure of the public and a bit of a living for the artists, and there are very few real early audio recordings of this flamenco era, it would be interesting to use a bit of "Sherlock Holmes deductive reasoning" to guess how this evolution of flamenco guitar accompaniment might have begun to take form with the song and dance.

The flamenco guitar as we know it today seemed to develop around the same time as the emergence of flamenco as a performing art in the era of the café cantante. Up until the time of the middle of the nineteenth centuries, guitars in Spain were basically "Spanish guitars", and were constructed the same whether they were used for classical, folk or flamenco. It is generally credited to a few artists, such as the famed guitar maker Antonio de Torres Jurado, who constructed the flamenco guitar as we know it today in basic design. With the use of Spanish cypress for the back and sides, constructed in a thinner manner than the thicker, mellower rosewood guitar, he was able to achieve that vibrant and distinctive sound that is a natural accompaniment for the sound of the flamenco cante and has the driving rhythm capability for the percussive sounds of the dance. It is always amazing to see natural evolution occur out of necessity, and subtleties of guitar construction came along as the popularity of flamenco evolved. The traditional flamenco guitar has other differences from the classical guitar both internally and externally. One of these differences is the golpeador which protects the guitar from the finger tapping

techniques of flamenco playing. Since the flamenco guitar evolved as an accompanying instrument for the song and dance, it had to meet the technical, aesthetic, emotional and artistic needs and demands that are unique in flamenco dance and song. Over the years, all of the needs seemed to have been met by many of the guitar makers, to accomplish making a guitar that can provide the harsher type of sound that matches the flamenco voice, a brilliance and treble clarity, a crisp and percussive action and sound, and the ability to provide a driving rhythmical force to meet all of the power related to the dance. The development of the guitarist as a professional flamenco accompanist was very different from playing for a singer or dancer in a private fiesta. The café cantante and early tablaos demanded a "show", with its time and space requirements of going on and "turning on" at a set time, for a set series of events, songs, dances and, in general, a molding of flamenco into a more constricted setting of events than was originally the case.

Flamenco, by its very nature, with built-in emotion and theatricality, very quickly drew out the various genius elements that a guitarist would need to compete--yes, compete--with the cante that was so popular at the time. Guitarists were, after all, human, with all of the desire to have the public attention and adulation that the singers were receiving and so, very soon, within the structure of accompaniment, they started to develop techniques other than the thumb and strum. Soon, left hand ligados, extended falsetas, picados, tremolos, and arpeggios started to appear with the "genius" of the time. Quotes in various books mention El Maestro Patijás, Paco el Barbero, Paco de Lucena, Javier Molina and then, of course, Ramón Montoya, who set basically the technique patterns and structures used today with most of the professional flamenco guitarists. The guitar makers have kept up with the evolution of the guitarists techniques and their personal and individual desires and needs in action, sound, tone and feel. Flamenco guitar making is high art in Spain, and the names of Santos Hernández, Marcelo Barbero, Domingo Esteso, Ramírez, Reyes, Arcángel Fernández, Condes, Gerundino and others, ring out as does the music from their beautiful instruments.

This intense period of flamenco evolution was a very high creative cycle in the flamenco world. Great singers with their traditional guitar accompanists developed so quickly that many became soloists with their growing repertoire and technique even in this earlier stage of development. Dancers started to create choreographies that also became tradition in time; they started to dance to the cantes, setting them into structured forms, and the cantes to these dances became set for the dance, of course being different for each singer, but still in a structured mode. The guitarists of course were great inspirations here, because many of the falsetas that they created became part of the dance tradition.

It was not too long after the era of the café cantante started that artists and aficionados began developing the idea of what was modern and what was tradition, what was old and what was new, what was good flamenco and what was bad flamenco. The combination of flamenco becoming a performing art in front of the public and a very quick evolution of styles and forms quickly polarized people into the "pro and con" of just about everything related to flamenco, and it is still going on to this day. Just as Ramón Montoya was creating what could be considered a greater trend towards technical virtuosity, people like Perico el del Lunar senior and Diego del Gastor and others, of course, were adapting a simpler technique with great depth and feeling, with the primary purpose of the "aire" of flamenco. Flamenco, of course, has that vastness of depth and art that can bare and sprout many branches of expression and that is what it has been doing for a very long time now and will continue to do as long as there are individual artists to express it and love it.

As I have mentioned before in other articles, flamenco cannot stay static in any one set mold. Tradition is being formed all of the time, for tradition is created by those dynamic individuals who create styles, forms and moving experiences in the art. Guitarists played a great role, as I have mentioned, in the development of both the song and the dance. The great guitar soloists of the past, such as Ramón Montoya, through the greats of today such as Sabicas, Paco de Lucía, Sanlúcar, Serranito, Escudero, and so many others, are all great accompanists who have inspired and have been inspired by great singers and dancers. Who can never forget the great artistry of Carmen Amaya and Sabicas together. They were magic and inspired each other to fantastic flamenco. Flamenco is still evolving in form and structure, and it is the guitarist who often sets the

evolving trend. The taranto for dance, for example, has many falsetas that have become traditional for the dancer to dance, and this is a form that is recent history. Both Pilar López and Antonio and Rosario claim that they were the first to dance this form. Luis Maravilla was another guitarist who set falsetas to works like caña that became set forms for the dancers to dance to. Estampío, who was one of the great teachers of the classic zapateado, was inspired to set his zapateado de las campanas to melodies inspired by the musical genius of the guitarist.

Whether so-called old-style or new-style flamenco, accompaniment by the guitarist, blended with the song and dance should be an inspirational interplay between the artists. This seems basic and to many great artists it is, because they know that it is the whole of this great trilogy, along with good jaleo, that makes for a true flamenco experience. If a guitarist goes his way and the singer goes his or her way and the dancer is out there doing his or her thing without that interflow of feelings for each other and that necessary entunement, then it is nothing but technique being blown to the wind.

Who has not watched a Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers movie and has not been moved with awe at their beautiful togetherness, moving as if one, blending with the music in a way that is timeless choreography and supreme artistry. That in reality is just one example of true flamenco in its essence of becoming at one with music, song and dance. That bit of wood and string, in the hands of a sensitive musician has become more than a name, more than a thing called a guitar. It is one of man's and also woman's ultimate achievements in creative expression and when it is taken beyond the solo expression to blend with the soul of the singer, crying out life's meaning, and pulses the rhythms that beat through the dancer, feeling at one with the earth, then it truly is music of life's soul, blending with the orchestras of all nature. As long as there are those that love this blended essence of flamenco, then there will always be flamenco, not old, not new, not modern or traditional, for these are all labels that limit, but true flamenco of the spirit that transcends all of earthly limitations, a living, breathing flamenco that expresses infinity of feeling. Bits of wood, tuned strings, a bit of soul and caressing fingers, AY! musica flamenco...

—Teo Morca

RYSS REPORT

Dear Jaleo:

I have been here in Savannah, Georgia, since April; this is probably my last week here. This is one of America's most beautiful towns, with all its huge oak trees (with Spanish moss) and avenues of palm trees. To add to its historic value, the town planners have added twenty-six squares, "plazuelas". There is no flamenco here.

At the end of May I was pleasantly surprised to hear that the 10th annual "SPOLETO" Festival (founded by Gian Carlo Menotti) in neighboring Charleston, So. Carolina, had invited the National Spanish Ballet for three performances. I was one of the few who knew what a tremendous performance they always presented. The Royal National Ballet, previously under the leadership of Antonio Gades and Antonio, had visited the USA in 1983; performing in all states. The Ballet has been regrouped and is now managed by the famous Maria de Avila, partner of Vicente Escudero, Juan Magriña.

The program itself commenced with Seis Sonatas Para La Reina de España and ending in the gigantic tragic work from Greece, MEDEA...probably the first time that a Spanish Ballet transcended its frontier; alas with spellbound success...we only hope that a film version of the MEDEA will be made available to the public.

The Ballet was under the leadership of Jose Antonio, a very fine male dancer; the performance of Juan Mala, piroquette continuity of Antonio Marques and the ending bulerias by these men and especially Javier LaTorre (Valencia) stunned the audiences...The internationally known Merche Esmeralda appeared as guest dancer and only danced her "Solea"; her flamenco hands are probably unequalled in the business. Ana González played the title role Medea; some of the other principal roles were danced by José Greco's daughter Lala...most of the choreography was old and treasured including that of Alberto Lorca, Pilar

Lopez' partner from Holland of 30 years ago.

The costumes were like the dancers themselves: faultless, sheer beauties. Scheduled for five guitarists, only Luis Habichuela played. Manolo Sanlúcar, originated and recorded the entire Medea; in a way a flamenco guitar concerto with full orchestra. Sanlúcar's work was that of a master...the other live guitarist was Jose Ma. Banderas from Algeciras, nephew of Paco de Lucía, who plays with the stunning Lucía velocity. The cantaores were young Palacin (Jerez) who has been with the Ballet some time and Alcalá who sang for La Tati in 1984 in New York.

I have added information on the opera Medea that appeared in the Savannah paper and which I augmented by telling the public about the dance version as given at the Spoleto Festival and probably nobody knew about.

Staying at the same motel as the artists, I was personally able to meet all of them. On one occasion Habichuela listened in my car to his brothers playing for Panesquito.

--George Ryss



PROFILES:

AT HOME WITH RENE HEREDIA

[from: The Denver Post, July 27, 1986; sent by Guillermo Salazar]

by Richard Johnson

The glossy fingernails of Rene Heredia's right hand flash as he gestures in his Denver home. He is a Spanish gypsy, a flamenco guitarist, and the nails of his right hand have been shellacked to toughen and strengthen them. If they weren't varnished, he tells me, they would become thin and brittle, as if sandpapered, for they strike the strings of the guitar more than 70 times a second when Heredia performs.

Youthful-looking at middle age, Heredia took his place among the world's foremost flamenco guitarists after Carmen Amaya, the famous Spanish dancer, chose him as her lead guitarist when he was 17. "She opened up a whole new world for me," he says. "Right away, at an early age, I was pushed into the company of great dancers and guitarists. She was a dancer's dancer, and through her I met the inner circle of flamenco."

Rene later studied with Sabicas, one of the guitar masters he met through Amaya. The elderly Sabicas was in the audience May 4 when Rene performed a solo concert in New York's Carnegie Hall. Sabicas has expressed pride in his protégé, calling Heredia "the most sensational young flamenco guitarist in the United States."

Having succeeded Sabicas and other aged masters like Carlos Montoya, Heredia anticipates an increasingly strenuous performance schedule in Europe and Asia as well as in this country in the next few years.

He lives with his wife, photographer Candace Bevier, in a house in central Denver built by the late painter and sculptor Wolfgang Pogzeba. It is shielded from the street by a brick wall and a wrought-iron gate which opens onto a small courtyard filled with flowers. A roof skylight spans nearly half the width of the house, richly appointed with paintings, sculptures, rugs, folk artifacts, and photographs. Many of Candace's framed prints hang in the lower level. It is there, in a glassed-in studio, that Rene teaches flamenco and classical guitar and sometimes flamenco dance: "Dancing is how I stay in shape," he says.

Heredia was born in Granada, Spain, to a large (11 children), poor family, but he grew up in Los Angeles, where the family moved when Rene was 10. The entire family loved music and dance: Rene's father, Jose Heredia, was an ornamental wrought-iron artisan who loved the gypsy traditions and taught dance and guitar to several of his children.

By the time he was 13, Rene was performing professionally with his sisters (who danced); and after performing throughout Europe with Amaya, he traveled for several seasons as lead guitarist with Jose Greco. Subsequently, from 1961 through 1963, he studied classical music in Paris, adding French to his languages, which include the gypsy tongue, Rumanian, as well as Spanish and English.

In Paris, he recorded his composition "Alborada Flamenca" ("Flamenco Dawning"). The album won France's Grand Prix du

Disque.

That honor and his studies of music stimulated him to compose for the guitar. More than 17 of his compositions are registered with ASCAP. Most of the works he played in his recent Carnegie Hall appearance were his own compositions, although he also performed several pieces by Sabicas.

"Alborada Gitana," or "Gypsy Dawning," is a symphony suite for guitar and orchestra and was performed this year by both the Denver Symphony Orchestra and the Denver Chamber Orchestra.

It was a four-week engagement with a flamenco dance troupe that brought Heredia to Denver in 1966. When the group was invited back the following year, Rene began to think of settling in Denver. "I liked the people I met," he says, "and I liked the spirit of Colorado." He bought his home in 1975.

Heredia traveled throughout Colorado then in the Chautauqua series of the Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities. "Most students of flamenco guitar in Colorado are either my students or students of my students," he says, and, in fact, others fly in from New York City and other music capitals to study for two or three weeks with Heredia.



RENE HEREDIA

At this point in his life, the guitarist is his own manager and has several musical enterprises under an umbrella company called Gypsy Productions, Inc. These ventures include Flamenco Fantasy Productions; Rene Heredia, Concert Guitarist; and Rene Heredia's Flamenco-Jazz Fusion. The latter group--featuring electric bass, percussion, flute, and saxophone in addition to guitar--fuses jazz and flamenco melodies and rhythms.

"Flamenco fusion isn't jazz or salsa," Heredia says. "It is unique, and we are the only ones doing it in America."

Proud that he is a gypsy, Heredia collects gypsy memorabilia and is knowledgeable about the history of his people, their lifestyles and philosophies over the past 300 years. "Gypsies," he says, "have been persecuted because they are different in attitudes. They are religious people, usually Catholic, but they live for the spirit of happiness and have a free lifestyle. They usually don't adhere to the rules and regulations of a molded

society."

Their music is characterized by complicated rhythms, clapping, stamping, and a passionate and sometimes almost wailing song. The songs have undercurrents of Arabic music, alternating between excitement and tranquility or sadness.

Friends of Rene Heredia are not surprised, then, when the musician breaks into song or dance or a spontaneous display of his virtuoso technique at gatherings. It's in his blood.

PRESS RELEASES:

FLAMENCO MAGNET IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST: LA ZAMBRA THEATRE

by Hap Sermol

Among the numerous centers of flamenco activity in the Pacific Northwest is La Zambra Studio/Theatre in Helvetia, Oregon, located a few miles west of the city of Portland. La Zambra is Portland's flamenco venta ("hang-out"). For more than a couple of years now, La Zambra has been the scene of exciting juergas featuring accomplished flamenco artists.

Diana Solano is the director of La Zambra Studio/Theatre. She is also the director and featured dancer of Arte Flamenco Dance Company, which performs at La Zambra, local clubs, schools, festivals and private functions. Diana studied flamenco dance in Spain with Maria Magdalena, Paco Fernández, Beti Ortiz, and in New York with Azucena, Estrella Morena, and Maria Alba. In Madrid, Diana performed at Las Cuevas de Nemesio. In New York, she appeared at Chateau Madrid, The Alameda Room, Lincoln Center with the Boston Flamenco Ballet, La Sangria, La Paella, and Casa Miguel.



DIANA SOLANA



FALY DE CADIZ AND JOSÉ SOLANA

In addition to performing, Diana teaches flamenco dancing at La Zambra Studio. Her dedication to this art has inspired a remarkable growth in the appreciation of flamenco dancing among her students as well as her audiences. Diana is joined by other talented performers of Arte Flamenco. The cantora is Faly de Cadiz who grew up singing saetas from the balconies of Seville and Cadiz during the Semana Santa celebrations. She also toured Spain singing zarzuelas.

Other artists who perform with the company include virtuoso guitarist John Shelton, dancers Susan Ferretta, Diana LoVerso and Maria Moreno; singers Dorothy Sermol and Joan Glassel; guitarist/singer Juanito el Pollito, dancer/singer Manolo Mateo, and guitarist Roberto Lorenz. Diana's accompanist on the guitar is her husband, Jose Solano. Jose studied guitar in New York with Pedro Cortez, Guillerma Rios, and Pepito Priego.

Arte Flamenco has been funded by the Metropolitan Arts Commission, the Oregon Arts Commission, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

If you plan to be in the Portland area and wish to attend or participate in one of the future juergas, please contact Diana at (503) 647-5202 or write to: Arte Flamenco, Rt. 1, Box 664, Hillsboro, Oregon 97124.



"GUAJIRAS DE LUCIA"

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REVIEWS:

FLAMENCO TRADITION LIVES ON
IN SUPERB CONCERT BY RADFORD[from: Lincoln, NE Journal, March 17, 1986]

by Laurence West

So what's a name like Ronald Radford doing in the world of flamenco? The man who bears that name strode self-assuredly on stage at Kimball Hall Saturday evening to explain. His life's direction was changed when his mother bought an old album by Carlos Montoya, a real Spaniard and the undisputed king of flamenco. The music indeed spoke to his heart, and ended his rock 'n' roll career.

As many musicians do, he talks of a union with his instrument. When he plays, his cheek is pressed to the cypress wood, and his fingers hammer and pull sounds from the nylon strings that literally fill the room. He talks of time he's spent with the gypsies, and explains, through personal experience, humor and poetry the enormous range of emotions found in their music. Hearing the nostalgic, mournful "Cante Jondo," or deep songs, and the festive, often explosive dances, you cross over with him into a realm in which visual and sensual dimensions are incorporated into the sound itself. You feel the heat, the dust and the magic as you listen.

If there was too much strumming and too little picking in the first half of the program, it only served to make the second half more enjoyable. My favorite was the Tarantas, a lament of the Andalusian coal miners--picked and strummed to absolute perfection. After nearly a dozen flamenco songs, all delivered with impeccable technique, the experience was complete when the audience joined by clapping the rhythm for a final gypsy tango. Olé!

FLAMENCO GUITARIST DRAWS HUGE APPLAUSE

[from: The Lincoln Star, March 17, 1986]

by John Cutler

To know Ronald Radford's flamenco guitar credentials is to know the origins, workings and emotions of gypsy life in southern Spain.

Radford would not let an appreciative Kimball Hall concert crowd hear one note Saturday night without explaining each work he performed.

As Radford proceeded through his opening piece, "Soleares," this "soul" became at once apparent in his playing techniques. Radford hugged his guitar and hunched, yearning to evoke the most from every strum.

Radford reached one stopping point and made the distinction between flamenco and classical guitar music, such as what will be heard at Tuesday night's Lincoln Symphony concert with Angel Romero.

The flamenco guitar uses wooden tuning pegs, much like the viola or violin. The front panel is coated with hard lacquer or acrylic, so the fingers can drum out dance figures. Tuning differs. The wood is tighter than that used in classical guitar construction. Performance techniques vary in strumming and plucking styles.

Notes flew by. The Kimball crowd conjured up images of gypsies with castanets, clapping, singing and dancing at "La Feria de Sevilla," the Sevillian counterpart of the Lancaster County Fair.

The "Tarantas" concluded the evening. The song is a mournful lament of gypsy coal miners, a style found by Carlos Montoya deep in the heart of the Andalusian population. "This is my favorite," Radford said just before beginning the work.

An audience participation number was a perfect encore. Radford asked the crowd to join in a "juerga", or gypsy tango piece. "They'll throw you in jail for passive listening in Spain," Radford chided.

The audience joined in "psimas" clapping, shouted a few rounds of "Olé!" and relished the atmosphere for a few final moments.

At one point in the concert, Radford stopped playing for a few minutes and told of the most important lesson he had learned from his travels through Spain.

It was on a visit to the home of Senor del Gastor, one of the old masters of gypsy music.

"The most important ingredient of flamenco performance is love," del Gastor told his awed student, "love of the authenticity and of the music."

"The second most important ingredient is your love of the audience with whom you are performing. And the third most important ingredient is that those who are listening must also listen with love."

The concert had been a great success, a labor of love, and an evening to remember.

FLAMENCO FIRE

[from: The Advance Monticellonian, April 23, 1986]

by Ted Frank

A jubilant Seark Concert of the Arts ended its current season of performing arts events by calling on guitarist Ronald Radford for a performance of fiery flamenco. He responded by presenting a sun-splendored program of the music of southern Spain.

Radford strummed and plucked his instrument, bidding his audience to come inside his reminiscences of Cadiz, of playing on the park benches of Seville at midnight, and of the twangs and cries of the mosques and minarets left behind by flamenco's Moorish ancestors. Wherever he led, listeners willingly followed.

His flamenco selections spanned the human range. They were universal. They were everyman's joy and lament. Opening with the "alegrías," Radford drove his fingers into a series of blurred attacks on strings and soundboard. He beckoned and mesmerized his audience into "listening with the heart." He invoked scenes from Goya and Picasso, and his strummed phrases reawakened literary moments from Lorca and Hemingway.

His right hand created drumrolls and bugle calls to begin and end "a seguiriya." His left hand duelled his right as he improvised the "bulerías" style of accelerating beats and mad thrumming. Both hands worked in graceful concert to explain the lush, time-honored phrases of the Málaga community--popularly known and borrowed for several "malagueñas".

Radford alternated music and travelogue to marvelous effect, tracing his conversion from rock sound to flamenco tones, from learning notes to learning to feel the blood, earth, and the sky behind the sound. Last Thursday, he persuaded his listeners that his commitment was not so much to the culture of Spain, but to an ancient link with spontaneous, human utterance.

His instrument--"Oh, guitar, heart pierced with five swords!" --was his larynx and organ of speech. He used 10 "swords," his 10 fingers, to invoke the melodies and rhythms of the tribal gypsy.

Much of what was played echoed some of Hollywood's best film scores: one may have heard Newman's "Sarabande" from his "Captain from Castile" or perhaps Waxman's Espanic fabric in "For Whom the Bell Tolls." But the spirit of flamenco covers a lot of ground. It's Anthony Quinn as "Zorba" and "Stompano" crunching on ouzo glasses, and it's Melina Mercouri or Katina Paxinou mashing the new grapes with their feet.

Seark Concert of the Arts showed its maturity and judgment in selecting this flamenco concert. Ouring its 10 years, it has brought many outstanding performers--some with flying feet, some with feet planted solidly on the ground, but none with a foot in their mouth. Seark Concert, as always, put a jubilant foot forward. And its flamenco was dynamite. "Olé!"

FLAMENCO MUSIC AND DANCE TRANSFORM
BARN INTO A SENSUAL GYPSY CABARET[from: Coasting, May 28, 1986; sent by R. Abbott]

by Jeff Demarco

Dance, song, guitar and rhythm--these four fundamentals of flamenco were present in abundance last Friday evening as the barn at the Mission Ranch in Carmel was transformed into a gypsy cabaret from sunny Spain. The intimate character of that venerable edifice made it a perfect setting for "An Evening of Flamenco Dance and Music" with dancers Lourdes Rodriguez, La

Monica and Rubina Valenzuela accompanied by guitarist Keni "El Lebriano". A special appearance was made by guitarist and flamenco master Agustín Ríos.

The evening was replete with sensuality and color. The audience was a diverse and eclectic mixture of personalities, and was well prepared to join right in with clapping hands, stamping feet and the occasional "Olé!" The atmosphere grew steamy as the performance progressed, fueled by the energy, intensity and gut-level eroticism of the entertainers.

One of the most striking characteristics of flamenco is its remarkable use of rhythm. The dancers intertwined complementary hand-clapping beats to form a rapid, pulsating undercurrent of emotion. Its structure varied from piece to piece, but flamenco was always present in some form. The sound resembled that of castanets, which were heard only once in the program, in the sevillanas. The guitar was used in an extremely percussive manner that constantly reinforced the beat as well, with complex strum patterns, plucking and tapping of the instrument itself.

There were guitar solos in each half of the concert. The first, played by Keni, was based on the characteristic descending fourth figura that is easily identified with Spanish music. The driving energy and rhythmic underpinnings of this selection entranced the audience. Agustín Ríos opened the second half with three solos as well, which were much more difficult for the neophyte to understand and follow. His technique and involvement with the music were both unparalleled, but the sound seemed to be harsh and the structure amorphous with only an occasional strum to regain everyone's interest.

The singing was unusual. Rubina Valenzuela used her earthy, almost gruff voice effectively throughout the program, capturing an Arabic flavor as she serenaded and encouraged the dancers. Late in the second half, Ríos added his voice to the ensemble. Even rougher and more emotional than Valenzuela's, it seemed just perfect.

Then there was the dancing. Each of the dancers had her own style, and made the best of it. Rubina Valenzuela slinked her way through the sensual rumbas while La Monica charmed the audience with her grace and power in the solea and the Alegrías de Cadiz.

The shining light of the night was without question Lourdes Rodríguez. She magnificently incorporated all phases of flamenco movement in her solo dances, from the subtle to the flamboyant. The whole body is used in flamenco dancing, and Rodríguez used hers to the utmost. She stamped, kicked, turned and posed while keeping a cool demeanor. Her hands were always following graceful movements in much the same manner as in ballet, but were just as adeptly used to raise her flowing skirts to exhibit legs and feet or to trace the lines of her body in an erotic fashion.

The only addition one might have wished for was a male dancer to serve as a foil for the women. Ríos helped to fill this gap when he joined in with stamping and strutting in the finale. It was a satisfying close to a wonderful experience.

WORLD-CLASS GRECO DANCES BEAUTIFULLY WITH S.A. TALENT

[from: Express-News (San Antonio, TX), July 7, 1985]

by Ed Conroy

José Greco is alive and well and dancing up a storm at the Café Olé.

Clad in black velvet, brandishing a scarlet cape or stealing a lace mantilla from his partner, Greco's presence is magnetic enough to hold even the most dispassionate attention.

What better way for cabaret culture to get a foothold in San Antonio than by a visit from the past master of Spanish dance and his protégés?

In tandem with Café Olé's highly professional house company, Greco and his stars put together a performance that, in sheer exuberance, energy and skill, easily pleases even the most jaded of tastes.

In particular, young Greco protégé Eduardo Montemayor (a San Antonio native) demonstrates his ability to galvanize an audience with what is probably the most remarkable fusion of traditional Spanish and contemporary influences embodied by anyone living. He easily invites comparison with the younger Greco himself.

Nor is Greco shy in the least about his young charges. With

Montemayor and Gabriel Sanchez in their opening "Boquerini," a classical cavort in formal Spanish Renaissance style, he used his castanets to convey the eagerness with which he exacted excellence from the younger men.

Together with Gisela Noriega and Maria Ameifa in "Costellana," Greco displayed his engagingly flirtatious charm in a casual, easygoing rendering of a country courtship dance, with musical accompaniment sung by the young ladies themselves.

These two pieces, in particular, have long been standards in Greco's repertoire, and reflect his influence in popularizing Spanish dance by combining elements from different regions and times. "Broquin," in particular, was curious for its mixture of piano accompaniment by what sounded like a sonata by Jean Rameau.

Afficionados of flamenco, though, had everything they could possibly want from the extremely flamboyant and energetic house company, under the direction of veteran Spanish dancer Gisela. Her meditative and sultry performance with Andrés Stegman and Oscar Treviño in "Asturias" demonstrated that she knows how to convey that essence of dark soul, duende, to all.

Then again, the company displayed their individual talents in a lively "Bulería" that brought half the audience along with them, clapping in rhythm as traditionally hieratic, gypsy harmonies flooded across stage from the guitars of José María Perella and Alejandro Herrera.

Yet the sparks that began to fly toward the program's end had already been ignited one piece earlier by Eduardo Montemayor and Gisela Noriega in a positively hot "Tango" that took over the pulsebeat of anyone within earshot. Montemayor somehow combines the agility of Chinese acrobat with the dignity of an Arab dervish, while Noriega exudes a gypsy sensuality and power that reminds one of why Bizet wrote "Carmen."

A FEEL FOR FLAMENCO

[from: The Reader, July 24, 1986; sent by Elizabeth Ruddy]

by Dinah McNichols

A friend of mine--freckle-faced, blue-eyed, and California-blond--recently began lessons with well-known flamenco dancer/instructor Esmeralda Enrique. So enamored of her new footwork has La _____ become, in fact, that a friend of hers is contemplating a novella: U.S. bachelorette of discreet and discerning tastes masters the art of flamenco, moves to Mexico City, and unbridles a passion that mesmerizes two continents. Or as a local arts mover-and-shaker is alleged to have recently told instructor Enrique, "Flamenco is the sexiest thing," he's even *seen on-stage*.

Enrique takes such perceptions and/or misperceptions in professional stride. She knows it was Hollywood that put the first rose between a dancer's lips ("There never is, never was") and left her to her torrid dance while men smoldered. While acknowledging that the public derives a basic familiarity with flamenco through such clichés, Enrique is more understanding of our enjoyment than of the critics'. "They still look and see only twirling skirts and the castanets, when they should be seeing line and extensions and rhythms. They don't feel us. And we have studied for years, worked on technique for years--not because we want to be 'sexy dancers.'"

Enrique has been dancing flamenco since she was twelve. A Texas native, she and her sister Carla (Heredia) moved to California in their late teens to study under well-known Los

Angeles dancer Luisa Triana. After two years with her company, the sisters were featured in performance at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and embarked on a West Coast tour. José Greco contracted them to perform with him in Las Vegas for two more years. (Says Carla, "We were at Caesar's Palace, on the same stage as Sinatra. We got to see him every night.") Esmeralda credits José Greco, who is now sixty-seven years old, with making flamenco "more appealing, more understandable" for North Americans. Yet while the Spanish dance is resurging in popularity--witness the success of Antonio Gades in the Carlos Saura film *Carmen* and the more recent local plaudits awarded to the Maria Benítez Spanish Dance Company--she cautions that people may be disappointed when they see "pure flamenco." Which is merely to say, marvel at the expressiveness and the technique, don't look for roses.

Even for purists, however, flamenco undergoes periodic mutations in its long evolutionary train, which some pundits claim to trace through Phoenician, Greek, Roman, Jewish, and

Moorish settlements in Spain, not to mention the integration by Andalusian gypsies of the musical folk forms and scales with which they came into contact. The most recent and noticeable trends in flamenco--in women's costuming--occurred in the Sixties, when the ankle-length dresses were instead, and briefly, worn knee-length, and beehive hairdos topped many a dancer. Today in Spain, the dance itself is changing to incorporate more elements of jazz. "It's almost a 'pop flamenco,'" says Enrique, and although she herself prefers classic flamenco, she adds that, as in all realms of dance, the technique grows increasingly complex. "The rules are the same, but within each, there are more changes of syncopation, counterpoint, and rhythm--all in places where fifteen or twenty years ago, they never used to be. The feet move faster, and turns are sharper."

Enrique had toured around the world before she came to San Diego in January of this year to found the Esmeralda Enrique Dance Company, which currently comprises four members: the two sisters, Barbara Alba, and San Francisco dancer Cruz Luna. While the company works through the problems inherent to any fledgling arts organization, Enrique teaches ongoing beginning and advanced-level flamenco classes.

The company's debut performance is Saturday, July 26, at the San Diego City College Theatre, at Twelfth Avenue and C Street, downtown. Included in the two-hour, twelve-dance program are classical Spanish dances as well, mostly zarzuelas, or humorous operettas. Vocalist Pilar Moreno will accompany the dancers, and Paco Sevilla, editor of the locally published *Jaleo*, a quarterly flamenco magazine that enjoys worldwide readership, performs on the guitar. The performance is at 8:00p.m.

FLAMENCO FLOURISHES IN FIESTA PLAZA

[from: *Express News* (San Antonio, TX), August 4, 1986]

by Ed Conroy

Why is it that some of the most talented flamenco dancers in this town are to be found, not just on the stage of the Arneson River Theater, but at--of all places--a restaurant/cabaret?

The answer is simple and natural enough, considering flamenco's roots in countless eating and drinking establishments throughout the Iberian Peninsula. In its native environment, flamenco is as much to be savored as a good red wine or a succulent seafood paella.

Though transplanted from Spain to San Antonio, that ideal environment now flourishes at the Olé Restoran & Cabaret, located in the southwest corner of Fiesta Plaza. The result is a floor show second to none in this town.

Owner Leonard Noriega and his wife Gisela have assembled a troupe of dancers and musicians who bring an intensity of enthusiasm and a refinement of technique to their performances rarely seen on large public stages in this town.

Add the dancers' magnificent, highly authentic costumes and you have a visual spectacle that, even apart from the dance, demands attention.

Noriega has employed the services of choreographer Antonio de Cordova in the creation of this new show, entirely different from that some San Antonio dance lovers may have seen when José Grillo performed at the Olé last year. It doesn't lack for fire or flash in the least.

With Noriega acting as master of ceremonies, the evening's program encompasses some nine numbers ranging from the popular sarazuela "Baile de Luis Alonso" and the dignified "Leyenda"--in which Gisela Noriega dominates the stage--to a lively "Zapateado" and rollicking, concluding "Rumba Flamenca."

One of the most striking aspects of the Olé troupe as a whole is the extraordinary precision of both their zapateado footwork and self-accompaniment on castanets. In the "Zapateado" number, in particular, Gisela displays her footwork virtuosity, clad in traditional Spanish riding attire, crop in hand, on top of one of the tables just below the stage.

The rest of the troupe, including Perla Montoya, Sylviana Perello, Dolores Zúñiga, Andre Stegman, Oscar Treviño plus José María Perello and Alejandro Herrera on guitar, forms what has to be the tightest flamenco ensemble in this city bar none.

Noriega adds an ingenious touch in the final two pieces, "Guajira" and "Rumba Flamenca," coming on stage to sing and urge on Gisela and the company to reach an exhilarating climax.

Anticipating his clientele's natural desire to dance, Noriega has provided not only an excellent dance floor but a very good

band, Norma and the Class Stars, featuring Norma Ramos, a singer who shows some not inconsiderable promise.

Above all, Noriega's kitchen knows how to produce tasty Spanish seafood dishes in addition to traditional Mexican fare. The Olé Restoran & Cabaret seems to be doing well enough as a restaurant, but may come into its own as a dance scene once it gets better known among local cognoscenti as the place to go.

DRAMATIC PRESENCE ADDS FLAIR

[from: *The Plain Dealer*, Tuesday, Sept. 9, 1986]

by Wilma Salisbury

Dancer Teodoro Morca brought dramatic stage presence, theatrical flair and polished technical skills to his solo concert of Spanish dance Sunday night at Lorain County Community College. Morca, who is presently leading a two-week flamenco workshop at Fairmount Center, was at his best in his specialty. But he also made a strong impression in modern Spanish dance, a castanet concerto and an amusing mime dance.

An American who lives and teaches in Bellingham, Wash., Morca could have passed for a gypsy dancer if he had not revealed his roots in his informal spoken program notes. Relaxed and spontaneous, he spoke with none of the fire that ignited his dancing.

Tall and slender with a ring of frizzy hair around his balding head and a dark mustache accenting his bold features, he projected the image of an individual who was born to be onstage. A disciplined dancer, he exemplified the Spanish style with his lifted chest, arched back, graceful arms, bent knees and flexible feet. In great shape at age 52, he clearly articulated every movement and kept his line pure, even in the freest improvisations.

Morca introduced himself to the small audience in "Leyenda," a modern Spanish dance performed with castanets to taped piano music by Albeniz. Commanding attention with sharp dynamics, rapid heelwork and quick turns, he gave an enticing hint of what was to come in the flamenco dances. "Polo Gitano," a modern theater dance, was inspired by flamenco. But in bulerías, seguidillas and romeras, Morca demonstrated the real thing. Snapping his fingers, clapping his hands and pounding his heels into the floor, he created rhythmic counterpoints for the expressive movements of his hips and arms. Especially impressive were extended virtuoso cadenzas that built tension with rhythm and dynamics. At the most intense moment, Morca stopped abruptly, leaving the audience stunned, then beginning a new crescendo of danced rhythms. In some phrases, he added fancy foot-crossings and quick kicks. In the Cuadro Flamenca that ended his 2-hour show, he also sang a few notes flamenco-style.

Assisting Morca in the flamenco numbers were guitarist Josele Del Rio and cantadora Marija Temo. Besides improvising accompaniments for the dancing, Del Rio played solos with free intonation, energized rhythm and Oriental melodic inflections. Temo contributed mournful melodies in the throaty wail of the flamenco singer and also took a turn as a dancer in the Cuadro Flamenca. In the finale, guitarist Bruce Catalano joined Del Rio, and Fairmount Spanish Dancers Sandra Bohl, Sally Dolch, Sherrie Pallotta and Mario Rowley brought a needed feminine element to the performance.

Providing contrast to the fiery flamenco were Morca's showy castanet solo performed to a piano concerto by Litoff and his mime dancing of "Botas Mágicas," the story of an aging cobbler whose feet begin moving in flamenco rhythms when he puts on a pair of magic white boots.

At the end of the performance, Morca paid tribute to Fairmount Center, one of the few arts schools in America that is helping to preserve the rich tradition of Spanish dance.

OLE! FLAMENCO GUITARIST DRAWS CROWD TO FEET

[from: *The Southwest Daily Times*, Liberal, KS, Sept. 23, 1986]

by Esther Groves

Shouts of "Olé!" and standing ovations accompanied the performance of flamenco guitarist Ronald Radford Saturday night at Liberal High School in a free concert hosted by Liberal

Area Cultural Arts Council.

The spellbinding alegrías, with which Radford opened the evening served as an introduction to what followed—a cross between folk music and art music, minor (actually Phrygian mode, from E to E on white piano keys) with complicated rhythms, characterized by variations so fast that the flying fingers of Radford's right hand blurred before the eyes.

"Olé!" and "Bueno!" were the right responses, and the Spanish equivalent of "Pick it, boy!"

Flamenco is dance music, with rhythms furnished by a player's taps or slaps on the guitar, dancers' castanets or heel-tapping, or spectators' clapping "palmas fuerte" (loud) or "palmas sordas" (quiet), Radford said.

Flamenco guitar is also a natural invitation to a vocal solo. No wonder that when Radford once sat in a Cádiz, Spain, city park at 3 a.m. because he hadn't been able to find a room, his strumming drew a singer and people who clapped and turned the happening "into a gypsy flamenco jam session."

Spanish gypsies came from northern Ireland around the eighth century, he explained. Their songs and dance rhythms, plus the influence of religious songs of Jews and Muslims—the Moorish influence in Spain is strong, from Alhambra-type architecture to "Olé!" ("Allah!")—are echoed in the wide range of flamenco variations.

These influences plus Radford's musicianship and personal engagement with the audience enable him to take the guitar part of the guitar-dance-song folk festivity and make it stand by itself.

In "Granadina," which evokes "the sparkling fountains of Granada," Radford's hands sparkled as well. "Holy Week in Seville" was an arrangement by the great guitarist Carlos Montoya, who heard young Radford play and volunteered to teach him free of charge in New York. It starts and ends with drumming on the guitar as a religious procession approaches and passes, with a middle section containing melody and accompaniment.

Before playing the explosive "sevillanas" the flamenco artist asked, "Did anybody here bring castanets? Castanets go with this piece." No one had—but at Wellington, Radford told the Times, when a woman from Sevilla heard "sevillanas", she and her husband jumped onto the stage and danced as he played "and brought the house down."

"Sevillanas" showed Radford stopping strings and playing a melody at the same time with his left hand while providing a storm of accompanying runs, arpeggios or chords with his right.

A classical Etude with melodic emphasis contrasted with "Malagueña", an imaginative flamenco version with interesting variations, and with the Moorish-influenced "Zambra", disciplined, driving yet haunting, with more range in pitch and sound effects.

At intermission Radford taught Milly Love to play castanets. She figured that in show-and-tell today, that would "sure beat a hawk egg!"

"Bulerías" involved complex, syncopated rhythms, while "soleares" (ancient gypsy "deep song") used an equal variety of expression to communicate that life includes suffering.

A classic-guitar lullaby by Francisca Tarega preceded the bright major-key "Guajira", a result of Cuban influence on Spanish conquerors. "Tarantas", full of accompanying runs with a strong downward pull, came from miners in Andalusia, the southern-Spain home of flamenco.

His encore "Tango Gitano," with which Radford sang and the audience clapped, brought concert-goers again to their feet. Olé!

JUANA ESCOBAR AT RIO HONDO COLLEGE

by Ron Spatz

September 20th, Juana and her newly formed Cuadro Flamenco appeared at the Rio Hondo College in Whittier. The size of the crowd was impressive. The stage, unfortunately, was on the same level as the audience, rendering viewing of the dancer's feet impossible unless you were several feet tall. The first part of the evening was filled with guitarist William Davila playing selections by Spanish composers. Juana commenced the Cuadro performance with a beautifully orchestrated Jaleo. The troupe then moved smoothly and rapidly through the usual repertoire presented by a cuadro. The presentation was very flamenco, assuming a "knowing" audience was present plus many enthusiastic college students. A high point was the long and stunning Farruca by Miguel Bernal. Juana was terrific, as always.

Other performers were guitarists Antonia Duran, Bill McGeary; dancers Margarita, Koka La Japonesa, Rasanna; singer Antonio Alcazar. My opinion of the format (unbiased, of course) was that the guitar portion should be shorter and the Cuadro lengthened proportionately.



EL CID

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Los Angeles, CA: A flamenco video-party and juerga was presented on Sunday October 5th which included rare videos of Carmen Amaya and Lola Flores. (from Katina)

New York, NY: Arabesque magazine (One Sherman Square, Suite 22-F, NY 10023) regularly features articles on flamenco artists. See July-Aug. '85: Flamenco Moro and interview with Carlota Santana; July-Aug. '86: Spanish Dance Arts.

Washington, D.C.: The Spanish Dance Society presented concerts October 25th and 26th at the Marvin Theater. (from Marina Keet)

Santa Barbara, CA: Carlos Montoya performed at the Lobero Theater on August 8th followed by the Ballet Español de Los Angeles on the 9th.

Miami, FL: Congratulations to owner Juanito and singer Cacharito de Malaga on the opening of the new Cacharito's Place in Centro Vasco on July 30th.

Portland, OR: Adela Clara presented a three day flamenco workshop August 8, 9, 10 at the Reynosa School of Dance. Rhythms taught were Farruca, Soleares, Tientos and Bulerías.

Mexicali, Mexico: Congratulations to Magdalena Cardoso on the opening of her Escuela de Danza Española. Benito Juarez Boulevard #1990 local 6-8 Plaza Universidad.

Tijuana, Mexico: Flamenco guitarist Daniel Contreras is now residing in Tijuana and trying to get a flamenco show going. He has been performing at the Pantera Rasa on weekends.

Portland, OR: Viviana Orbarbeck presented a Spanish dance workshop from July 8th to 25th which included flamenco and regional dance.

Toronto, Canada: Paula Moreno Spanish Dance Company held a summer festival at Harbourfront August 27 to 30. The company also maintains a school which offers classes in flamenco regional and classical Spanish dance and flamenco and classical guitar. (See Directory.)

LOS ANGELES JUERGAS

EL CID

PRIVATE DINNER AND FIESTA FLAMENCA

by Juana DeAlva

October twentieth and twenty-eighth, El Cid restaurant of Hollywood, California held its second invitational dinner-juerga. The first juerga, held earlier this year, was such a success that many had to be turned away. Co-owner, Jack Haywood, promised a repeat performance and true to his word, offered not one, but two gatherings this time around. Jack says that the idea behind the fiestas is to bring Southern California flamenco performers together in an atmosphere of camaraderie. He feels that the flamenco community in the United States is so small that its members need to stick together and support each other. These invitational juergas are El Cid's effort to foster this goal. The following is a brief report of the October twentieth gathering which we attended.

The evening began at six o'clock with cocktails, leaving an hour and a half to mingle, re-established old contacts and make new ones. Dinner, chicken in wine sauce, was at 7:30 with a performance at 9:00. The performers for this evening were singers Antonio Sanchez and Pepita Sevilla, guitarist Paco Arroyo, and dancers Yolanda Arroyo, Angelita, Linda Vega, Valeria Pico, Jesus Cano and diminutive guest artist Aubrey. Antonio Duran was the scheduled guitarist for the get together



CUADRO AT EL CID (L-R) YOLANDA ARROYO, AGELITA, ?, ANTONIO SANCHEZ, PACO ARROYO, JOSE CANO AND PEPITA SEVILLA.

on the twenty-eighth.

The show opened por soleá with Linda, Yolanda and Angelita accompanied by the cante of Antonio. Jesus Cano danced por alegrías followed by Pepita with rumba. Angelita and Antonio united for tientos-tangos and then the representative of the next generation of flamenco performers, little Aubrey (who appears to be about eight years old) danced fandangos. The cuadro assembled to sing -- not dance -- sevillanas (a refreshing twist). Linda Vega danced alegrías with a shawl. Jesus and Angelita executed a classical piece followed by bulerías with Antonio, Yolanda, Linda and Pepita. Yolanda performed siguiriyas and the show closed with fiesta por rumba with performers exiting through the audience. The show, directed by Angelita and Antonio and supported throughout by the superb guitar of Paco Arroyo, was high energy and delightful.

Following the performance the stage was thrown open for audience participation. Some of those present included: dancers José Greco (in town for a concert with Maria Benítez), Lola Montes, Juan Talavera, Carmen Chevere, Oscar Nieto, Valerie Pico, Paco Vera, Concha, ChaCha, Katina Vrinós, Angel Recio, Raúl Martín, Eugenio Berdugo and son Daniel recently arrived from Sevilla, and Suzana, Victor Soto, Carla Herrdía and Michele Botello from San Diego. Singers up from San Diego included Charo, Remedios Flores, Pilar Moreno, Pepe León and from the Los Angeles area: Concha, Miguel de Malaga and Yorgo Grecia. Guitarists from Los Angeles: Benito Palacios, Antonio Durán, Gino D'Auri, Yvett Williams, Ron Spatz; from San Diego: Rodrigo, Yuris Zeltins and Oscar Aragón.

We regret missing the gathering on the twenty-eighth when an equally impressive list of guests will be present. Congratulations to El Cid! ¡Viva Flamenco!

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SAN DIEGO SCENE

BY Juana De Alba

FLAMENCO IN TIJUANA

In years past tijuana, Baja California, sister city to San Diego, California, has been a center for flamenco with several instructors, regular nightclub shows and frequent concerts. With the recent arrival of flamenco guitarist Daniel Contreras to the area we hope to see a revival of flamenco in Tijuana.

Born in Aguas Calientes, Mexico, Daniel began as many other guitarists studying classical, jazz and rock and later became exposed to flamenco. His pursuit of flamenco took him to Spain in 1973 where he studied in Barcelona under Enrique Calzas, worked in numerous clubs throughout Spain and won the distinction of Fine Flamenco Guitarist of Foreign Extraction at the Fiesta de Mairena de Alcor in honor of Manolo Caracol.

In 1975 a grant from the Mexican government took him to Italy to participate in an experimental program in musical composition. While in Italy he also worked as a solo guitarist in Rome, Milan, Venice and Genoa. His guitar playing took him to Switzerland, Belgium, the Canary Islands and finally back to the North American continent and the United States in 1976. Here he has worked mainly in Los Angeles, Chicago, and for the past eight years, covered all of Mexico.

Now residing in Tijuana, with his wife Teresa, he hopes to establish a flamenco show on a regular basis in one of the local clubs or restaurants.



DANIEL ACCOMPANYING ANTONIO IN TONICOS SPANISH RESTAURANT
IN TIJUANA



DANIEL WITH JUANA DE ALVA

AROUND THE TOWN

Flamenco seems to run in cycles in San Diego and perhaps elsewhere also. Five years ago one could see flamenco at the Ocean Playhouse in El Cajon, at the Andalucia in La Jolla, Bazar del Mundo in Old Town, Don Carlos Restaurant in La Mesa, El Moro in Pacific Beach and Olamendes in Capistrano. Then Andalucia, El Moro and Ocean Playhouse closed and flamenco disappeared everywhere but Bazzar de Mundo.

Happily, flamenco appears to be again on an upswing with the popularity of the flamenco movie Carmen and the Cumbre Flamenco and Flamenco Puro coming to the United States. Here in San Diego (besides Bazzar de Mundo) there is flamenco in San Diego's new Horton Plaza, The Tablao Flamenco will celebrate its third anniversary in February and Drowsy Maggie's in North Park has both guitar concerts and flamenco shows. The newest addition to San Diego's flamenco scene is "Flamenco Night at Hajji Baba's" in Mission Valley. A Lebanese restaurant which presents Arabic music and belly dancing five nights a week, Hajji's presents flamenco shows on Tuesday nights at 8:30 and 10:00p.m. The intimate and casual atmosphere and the Middle Eastern decor lend themselves well to a flamenco ambiente.

The show, which is varied weekly, but changed totally once a month, has a core of two dancers, Juana De Alva and Carla Heredia, guitarist El Pintor and singer Miguelito in addition to apprentice dancers and invited guest artists. In October the show included Liana De Alva and Michele and guest singer Juana Escobar. In November Miguelito returns from Spain and Helena Casandra and Carmen join the cuadro.



AT THE HAJJI BABA RESTAURANT IN SAN DIEGO ON FLAMENCO NIGHT. (L-R SEATED): A FRIEND, GUSTAVO, SINGER MARY SOL, DANIEL AND WIFE TERESA. (STANDING): SINGER ROSA, JUANA DE ALVA, GUITARIST DAVID DE ALVA.

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A PROJECT IN COMMON

[from: Tiempo, August 18, 1986; sent by El Tío Paco]

Before the end of summer, the details will be finalized for a long-play recording that no doubt will be much talked about. It is being prepared by Paco de Lucía and Manolo Sanlúcar, the two most universal Spanish flamenco guitarists. The project, carried out with a good deal of care by the two composers, has been in the conceptual stages for several years, although work on it began concretely about four months ago.



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georgia

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florida

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 Roberto Lorca 576-4536
 Rosita Segovia 642-0671
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minnesota

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illinois

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 86 Club (Chicago) 312/338-1212
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arizona

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california

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 Jack C. Ohringer (Vallejo) 707/642-5424
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 Alberto de Almar (Mill Valley) 415/383-6115
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 Ken Sanders (Laguna Beach) 714/499-4961
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san francisco

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los angelesFLAMENCO INFORMATION

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213/244-4228

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213/660-9059

213/223-1784

213/463-1614

213/660-9059

213/881-1470

213/833-0567

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Tablao Flamenco

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619/474-3794

DANCE INSTRUCTION

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619/222-1020

Juana de Alva

619/440-5279

Juanita Franco

619/481-6269

Maria Teresa Gomez

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619/475-4627

Julia Romero

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