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Newsletter No 181

May 2009

NEXT MEETING:

**FINAL REHEARSAL FOR
SPANISH CIRCLE - ENSEMBLE
AND INDIVIDUAL**

14 MAY 2009, 7:30PM

AS FOR EVERY MEETING, VISITORS ARE
WELCOME - £5

UPCOMING EVENTS:

SPANISH CIRCLE READING

19 JUNE 2009

7.00 PM CAVERSHAM

PERFORMERS SHOULD REGISTER THEIR
PIECES WITH GARY IF THEY HAVE NOT
ALREADY DONE SO

INFORMAL CONCERT & SOCIAL

(GUEST + MEMBERS)

SUNDAY JULY 12TH

PERFORMERS ARE INVITED TO
REGISTER THEIR PIECES WITH GAVIN
BY THE JUNE MEETING



BGS Meeting News

Last Meeting - May

- Roberto Martínez (guitar) and Carmen Pacheco (dance)

The evening provided a journey into the history and rhythms of flamenco with live and recorded illustrations, some traditional and modern guitars to compare and audience participation.

Rob was taught by Michael Leigh, a disciple of Pepe Martínez. He went on to join Tani Morena's company "Ballet Espanol" taking the place of a very youthful Paco Pena. This company performed a programme of regional, classical and flamenco works at theatres, music clubs and festivals throughout Europe. Many young musicians played for the company at the start of their careers including the cellist Steven Isserlis and the classical guitarist David Russell.

In 1990 Rob joined Carmen Pacheco's company "Los Ritmos Flamencos" which she had formed in 1984. Los Ritmos Flamencos performed at small theatres, arts clubs, cabaret venues and television in the South East. Before this, Carmen had toured Europe and the Middle East as principal dancer in a Spanish ballet company. In between these tours she performed with the "Trio Andaluz" on Arts Council supported tours of principal UK theatres (including prime time appearances on all major TV networks) in the top London cabaret venues. Carmen is now a respected teacher and choreographer with a studio in Surrey.

The session proved to be very illuminating and enjoyable. In particular, when Roberto shown some videos of quite young children performing Flamenco, we got a real sense that Flamenco is really "in their genes". For them, it is as natural as breathing, whilst for us, it is something we have to learn. Although that makes the study of Flamenco particularly

daunting, for some reason, it increases the desire to play it, and to get some distant sense of what it feels like in a very different culture.

Roberto took us through a couple of palos (styles or forms). I won't attempt to note everything that was covered, but just a few highlights. Further information on palos, is available at <http://www.esflamenco.com/palos/enmalagena.html>.

(The other forms can be investigated via the list on the left pane of the above page).

We were first introduced to the Solea and the Buleria where some differences and similarities were discussed.

“Soleá” comes from “soledad”, or “solitude”. I often think of it as the Flamenco Blues, though I have never heard this translation. Interestingly, like the word “blues”, it is often used in the plural “soleares”.

The link above shows 2 accent patterns for the soleá:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Or else:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 y 10 11 12

The Buleria is a lot faster than the soleá but both have a basic scheme of 12 beats.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

or, also:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

I have in my notes that although the metre is quite similar, only the Buleria has the stress on the 12. This does not quite gel with the patterns above, but I guess it just goes to show that in a dynamic largely oral tradition, there is not necessarily just one definition for everything.

Here is another link which talks about how the basic framework of the Soleá metre is modified in real live music

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soleares>.

I also really like the example Roberto gave us to help remember the Buleria pattern – Bernstein's “I like to be in America”.

There was also some interesting discussion of the wide use of Andalusian Phrygian mode (apart from in the Alegrías). This is variation of the standard Phrygian mode (a scale built from the white notes on a piano, starting at E – often used by heavy metal bands), where the 3rd is raised (G# instead of G). I also have some notes about categories of cadences – “por arriba”, “por medio”.

See http://www.bookrags.com/wiki/Andalusian_cadence for discussion of this and other modes.

Lastly, it was helpful to receive a thumbnail sketch of some of the key flamenco guitarists over the last century or so, ranging from Ramon Montoya to Nino Ricardo and Agustín Sabicas in the early days, to modern day luminaries such as Paco de Lucia, Vicente Amigo, Tomatito, and Gerardo Nunez.



Next Meeting – Spanish Circle – Last Rehearsal

Our 3 ensemble pieces by Derek Hasted are:

- *El Kidd*
- *Penultimate Waltz* - which moves on seamlessly(!) to
- *Brazil Nut*

It's our opportunity to get all our weeks of practice (right guys?) to come together before the big night.

All members planning to play at the Spanish Circle are invited to bring along their music and in the "members" part of the evening, to give a dry-run of their performance. Among other things, this will enable the planners to time the session.

Upcoming Meetings

- Sunday June 14th – Members evening + ensemble Spanish Circle
- Sunday July 12th - Informal concert (Guest + members) and social
 - Orsolya Pataki from the Rosewood Trio will be putting on a performance of about 40 minutes. Members of the society will be requested to put together a set of performances for another 30 minutes. We will then finish up with about 40 minutes of socialising over wine and snacks, before breaking for the Summer Recess in August.
 - Members wishing to play should register their pieces with Gavin by next meeting (June) to enable him to construct the programme for the evening.
- August – no meeting – Summer Holidays
- Sunday September 13th – members evening

Upcoming Events

- JUNE 19 - Spanish Circle Reading

Doors open at 7:00 pm to allow us to unpack and warm up. Show starts at 7:30 pm

Caversham Centre
School Lane
Caversham
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 8HX

- JUNE 21 - Student concert 3.00 pm SHP