

State TheatreNJ.org
Keynotes

Flamenco!

Andrea del Conte Danza España



The State Theatre in New Brunswick, New Jersey welcomes you to the school-day performance of *Flamenco!* by the Andrea Del Conte Danza España. This colorful, high-energy show introduces the centuries-old art form of flamenco. It is an art form that acknowledges its rich history but also looks forward to the future, absorbing new ideas and rhythms that reflect flamenco's multicultural origins.

These *Keynotes* provide information and activities that will help you understand and enjoy the performance. We hope that this guide will also help you find connections between what you see on the stage and your own personal experience.



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The State Theatre, a premier nonprofit venue for the performing arts and entertainment.

Andrea Del Conte Danza España is made up of dancers, singers, and musicians who perform the centuries-old art of flamenco. In their show, they will introduce the three essential ingredients of flamenco: dance, guitar, and song, emphasizing the integral relationship between them.



At the Show

During the performance, pay attention to the dancers' movements and also to the voices and instruments. Watch the way the guitarists, dancers, and singers communicate with each other throughout the show so that everyone is working together.

Meet

Andrea Del Conte

Performer, choreographer, and teacher Andrea Del Conte is the Artistic Director of Andrea Del Conte Danza España. Born in Rochester, New York, she began studying classical ballet at the age of four. At age 16 she went to Madrid, Spain to study Spanish classical, folkloric and flamenco dance. Over the past 30 years, she has spent a great deal of her time living and studying in Spain. Her favorite teachers include Carmen Cortes, Carmela Greco, La Cintia, Faico, Toleo and Jose Galvan.

In 1975 Andrea Del Conte created her own one-woman show, which she debuted at Repertorio Español in New York City. She founded Andrea Del Conte Danza España in 1979. Besides performing, directing and choreographing for her company, she is one of New York City's most important flamenco teachers. Her awards include Attitude Magazine's Ethnic Dance Award, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts Award for Excellence in Teaching, and the Outstanding Life Achievement Award for a Career in Dance by the Association of Latin Entertainment Critics. She has served on the dance faculty of Long Island University, Manhattanville College, Hunter College, Penn State University, the Beaufort (South Carolina) Arts Residency Program, Nevada Ballet, Cirque de Soleil in Las Vegas, East Carolina University, and the University of Richmond in Virginia.



Bulerías.....**The Company**

The most festive of the flamenco dances, *bulerías* take their name from the Spanish word *burlar*, which means “to play a trick on” or “to make fun of.” This fast-paced, 12-count rhythm gives the dancers an opportunity to show off their skills.

Musical Interlude**Musicians**

The guitarists and singer perform a medley of flamenco songs.

Tientos/Tangos**Lia Ochoa**

Tientos are among the most majestic, rhythmic, and sensual of the flamenco dances. They are a slower form of the lively *tangos* that follow it. (The flamenco *tango* is not the same as the famous tango from Argentina.) This piece gives the dancer a wide range of expression, from sadness to joy.

Martinete**Rick Santiago & Yloy Ybarra**

The rhythm of the *martinete* was probably first developed by the blacksmiths working at the forges of Triana in Seville. It shows off the strength and skill of the male dancers.

Vida Breve**Andrea Del Conte**

Inspired by the opera, *La vida breve*, by Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, this dance showcases arm movements, heelwork, and the percussive sounds of the castanets.

Musical Interlude**Musicians**

Alegrías**Sol Koeraus**

The word *alegría* is Spanish for “joy.” Using the *bata de cola* (dress with a train), the dancer expresses the joyful feeling of this famous dance from the city of Cádiz.

Farruca.....**Rick Santiago**

The *farruca* is a solo dance, similar to *tangos*, traditionally performed only by men. It is thought to have originated in Galicia in northwestern Spain.

Fandangos.....**Lia Ochoa and Sol Koeraus**

In the 18th century, the *fandango* was a popular folkloric dance throughout Spain and its territories. In flamenco, it is counted in 12s and can be danced with a partner.

Soleá por Bulerías**Yloy Ybarra**

Soleá (pl. *soleares*) is one of the most popular forms of flamenco. This *soleá por bulerías* is a rhythmic 12-count dance with many quick stops and build-ups that give the dancer a great range of expression.

Finale por Sevillanas**The Company**

This famous partner dance from Seville is one of the oldest flamenco dances, seen frequently during the annual *feria* (festival) and danced by young and old alike.



Flamenco is a traditional style of dance, guitar playing, and song from the Andalusia (Andalucía) region of southern Spain. Flamenco is highly dramatic. The performers' ultimate goal is to express a strong emotional idea—such as passion, joy, sadness, loneliness, or humor.

The history of flamenco goes back hundreds of years. No one can say for certain when or how flamenco began, but it clearly grew out of a mixture of different cultures: Andalusian, Islamic, Jewish, and Gypsy, to name the major influences. Flamenco has many styles and forms. These are grouped into about 50 different categories, known as *palos*. Each *palo* comes with its own set of rules governing rhythm, harmony, tempo, verse structure, etc. Within these rules, the performers are free to **improvise**—make up the music, dance steps, and words—as they are performing them. For this reason, no two flamenco performances are ever completely the same.

Flamenco is still practiced today, and is enjoying growing popularity. In the 1980s a movement known as *nuevo flamenco* (new flamenco) promoted a fusion of flamenco and other styles of music and dance. Artists are mixing flamenco with tango, jazz, rock, salsa, Afro-pop, and even hip-hop!

Flamenco is song.

Flamenco is music.

Flamenco is dance.

Flamenco is feeling.

Flamenco is life...

love... pain...

rage... passion...

different cultures: Andalusian, Islamic, Jewish, and Gypsy, to name the major influences. Flamenco has many styles and forms. These are grouped into about 50 different categories, known as *palos*. Each *palo* comes with its own set of rules governing rhythm, harmony, tempo, verse structure, etc. Within these rules, the performers are free to **improvise**—make up the music, dance steps, and words—as they are performing them. For this



The Birthplace of Flamenco

Flamenco originated in **ANDALUCÍA**, a region in southern Spain that includes the provinces of Almería, Cádiz, Córdoba, Granada, Huelva, Jaén, Málaga, and Seville. Its capital is the city of Seville. The region's climate varies: subtropical on the Mediterranean coast, temperate on the Atlantic coast, and cooler temperatures in the highlands, where snow is not unusual. The warm climate of the valleys and plains is ideal for growing oranges, olives, sugarcane, wheat, corn, and other grains.

The history of Andalusia is an eventful one; since the distant past, it has been settled or conquered by many different civilizations—people from Africa and the Middle East to northern Europe. Each of these groups left a lasting impression on the culture of the region, including the music, dance, and song of flamenco.



There are three main elements that work together to create a balance of music, rhythm, and movement in a flamenco performance:

DANCE (BAILE)

In flamenco, the dancing is very dramatic. For men, the dance movements involve complicated toe- and heel-clicking steps (*taconeo*), while the traditional women's dance is based more on graceful arm and hand movements.

GUITAR PLAYING (TOQUE)

A flamenco guitar is slightly smaller and lighter than a classical guitar. The flamenco guitarist (*tacaor*) uses special playing techniques, rhythms, and harmonies in their music.

SONG (CANTE)

Flamenco began as purely vocal music, with no accompaniment other than handclaps. The role of the singer (*cantaor/cantaora*) is still very important. Both words and melody of the songs are improvised around traditional rhythms and chords. The singer strives for *duende*—an emotional connection with the audience through the power of the music.



Flamenco

Style

There are more than 50 different *palos*—categories—of flamenco. Each *palo* has its own mood, rhythmic pattern, and performing traditions. Some are sung with no instrumental accompaniment, while others may use a guitar and other instruments. Some *palos* are danced while others are not. Some are traditionally performed only by men or only by women, while others might be performed by men and women.

Costume is another aspect of flamenco style. The dancers use their costumes (as well as their faces and bodies) to express themselves.

Male flamenco dancers traditionally wear close-fitting black pants with a shirt and short jacket or vest. The women wear the *bata de cola*, a long skirt with many layers of colorful ruffles.

The skirt weighs about ten pounds and trails five feet behind the dancer! Throughout the dance, the women lift and shake the ruffles to emphasize their movements. Female dancers also wear a long, fringed shawl (*mantan*) folded into a v-shaped pattern and often tied around the waist. The shawls add color and pattern to the flamenco clothing and help accentuate the movement of the hips. Elaborately decorated fans, often trimmed with lace, are used by female dancers to show off elegant hand and arm movements.

This is a typical man's flamenco costume from the late 1920s.



This female flamenco costume features a fan and the long skirt known as the *bata de cola*.

Flamenco dance is immediately recognizable for the rhythmic stomping of the feet and the sweeping movements of the arms. The dancers spend years learning the specialized movements and rhythms that are used in a flamenco performance. Using these rules and traditions as a guide, the dancers *improvise* (make up their moves on the spot) rather than perform routines that are *choreographed* (planned out in advance).

Traditionally, flamenco dancing is very different for men and women. The male dancer (*bailaor*) focuses on complex foot movements and does not use the upper body very much. In contrast, a female dancer (*bailaora*) mostly uses graceful movements of the hips, hands, and arms, and also her skirt (*falda*) and shawl (*mantan*). The movement of her hands is called the *floreo*, and the movement of her arms is known as the *braceo*.

The dancer's footwork (*zapateado* or *taconeo*) requires special shoes (*zapatos*) with nails driven into the soles. Just like the metal plates used on the bottom of tap-dance shoes, the nails help bring out the sound of the footwork. Flamenco dancers use different parts of their feet to produce different sounds and rhythms. The picture on the right shows the flamenco terms for the different foot parts that are used to strike the floor.



What Does Your "Duende" Look Like?

Flamenco dancers use their bodies to express *duende* (DWEN-day), a word that can be translated as "soul," "emotion," "spirit," or "magnetism." What are some of the physical ways we use our bodies to show how we are feeling?

Choose an emotion and create a shape with your body that shows that emotion. Practice your shape until it looks the same every time you do it, and make sure you can hold it without moving or speaking.

Demonstrate your shape for the rest of your class. Let them walk around you while you remain frozen in position. You should remain silent, but your audience should say aloud what they see. Does your shape look strong? Happy? Frightened? Can they guess the emotion expressed by your shape?



COMPÁS (RHYTHM)

The foundation of flamenco is rhythm. Flamenco artists use the term *compás* for the different rhythms that keep the singers, musicians, and dancers together during a performance. To lose the rhythm (*fuera compás*) is considered a serious fault in a flamenco performer. Flamenco rhythms are very complex; often you will hear several different rhythms being played at the same time.

Rhythm instruments used in flamenco include the hands, feet, *palillos* (pa-LEE-yos), and the *cajón* (kah-HONE), a box-shaped drum played with the hands. Sometimes even the guitarist joins in by slapping the body of the instrument like a drum to emphasize the beat.

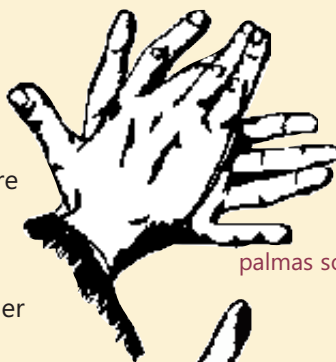


cajón

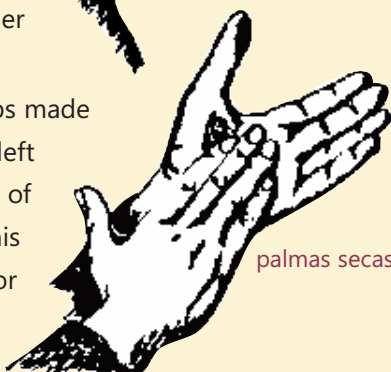
PALMAS (HANDCLAPS)

Palmas, or handclaps, are used to help keep the rhythm, and also to encourage the other performers. There are two types of *palmas*:

- *sordas* - "deaf" *palmas*, a muffled handclap made by clapping together the cupped palms of the hands
- *secas* - "dry" *palmas*, loud handclaps made by hitting the cupped palm of the left hand with the three middle fingers of the right hand. Another term for this kind of handclap is *palmas claras*, or "clear" *palmas*.



palmas sordas



palmas secas

PALILLOS

Known in English as castanets, in Spanish as *castañuelas*, and in flamenco as *palillos*, this percussion instrument helps accent the rhythm of the music. *Palillos* are made from two spoon-shaped pieces of wood tied together with a string. To play *palillos*, fasten the string around your thumb and rest the instrument against the palm of the hand. Use your four fingers to strike the two pieces together, making a clicking sound.



palillos

Beat It!

Most of the music we listen to has a rhythm based on 3 or 4 beats. Flamenco, however, often uses a 12-beat rhythm. See if you can master a couple of them.

Begin by clapping steadily like a fast heartbeat, counting out loud from 1-12 with each clap.

Now try this 12-beat pattern, used in flamenco dances such as the ***soleá***, ***alegría***, and ***bulería***. Clap 12 times, but this time make beats 3, 6, 8, 10, and 12 much louder than the other 7 claps. Your clapping pattern should be:

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

It may make it easier to count aloud the 12 claps in groups as follows, clapping loudly only on the 1's:

1 2 1 2 3 1 2 1 2 1 2 1

Now try your hand at learning the rhythm of the ***seguriya*** and the ***martinete***. This time the loud beats are beats 1, 3, 5, 8, and 11. Your clapping pattern should be:

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

You can also count aloud the 12 claps for this rhythm in groups as follows:

1 2 1 2 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2

Keep repeating these patterns over and over, until you've got them!

Andalucía - a region in southern Spain and birthplace of flamenco

bailaor/bailaora - a male/female flamenco dancer

baile - dance

bata de cola - the long, ruffled skirt and train on a flamenco dress

braceo - the arm movements of the flamenco dancer

cajón - a drum shaped like a box and played with the hands

cantaor/cantaora - a male/female flamenco singer

cante - song

castañuelas - "castanets," a hand percussion instrument that makes a clicking sound

chico - "little"; in flamenco it describes a fast, happy song

compás - the special rhythms used in flamenco

duende - the emotional force that inspires flamenco

escobilla - an long solo that shows off the flamenco dancer's footwork

falda - flamenco dancer's skirt

flamenco - a style of music, song, and dance from Andalucía, Spain

floreo - the movement of the flamenco dancer's hands

golpe - stamping the floor with the entire bottom of the foot

guitarra - guitar

jaleo - shout of encouragement and approval

jondo - "deep"; in flamenco it describes a slow, sad song

llamada - a signal or call that the flamenco dancer gives to the guitarist to change the rhythm

mantan - shawl

palillos - another word for *castañuelas*

palmas - rhythmic hand clapping used as an accompaniment to flamenco

palos - the different styles of flamenco

pitos - finger snapping used as an accompaniment in flamenco

planta - stamping the floor with the ball of the foot

punta - stamping the floor with the tip of the toe

Roma - also known as Gypsies, one of the cultures that created flamenco

seca - "dry"; in flamenco used to describe loud, high-pitched handclaps (*palmas*)

soleá - one of the basic *palos* of flamenco, a slow, solemn style also known as *soleares*

sorda - "mute"; in flamenco used to describe quiet handclaps (*palmas*)

tacón - stamping the floor with the heel

taconeo - the heel movements used in flamenco dance; also used to describe footwork in general

tocaor/tacaor - a male/female flamenco guitarist

toque - guitar playing

zapateado - footwork

zapatos - shoes

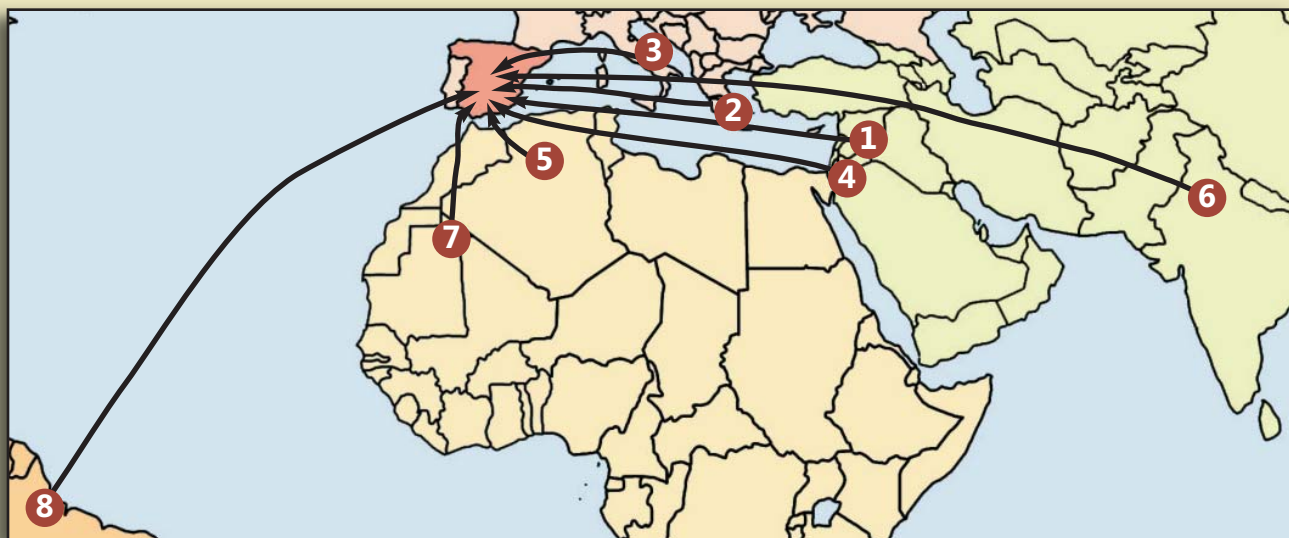


Jaleo

During the performance, you will frequently hear the performers calling out to each other. Their expressions of approval and encouragement are known as *jaleo* (ha-LAY-oh). You might hear them calling out some of these words and phrases:

¡Olé!
Asi se canta
Asi se toca
Asi se baila
Anda
Vamos ya
Eso es

Do you know the meaning of these Spanish words? Do we have anything similar to *jaleo* in this country? Where?



Flamenco Timeline

1100	1 Phoenicians found Cádiz.
500	2 Greeks colonize Spain, introducing a forerunner of castanets.
200	3 Romans annex Spain, introducing a forerunner of the guitar.
100	4 Jews migrate to Spain.
BC	
AD	
771	5 Moors (Muslims from North Africa) conquer southern Spain. For the next 8 centuries, Muslims, Christians, and Jews coexist under Islamic rule.
1400s	6 Gypsies from northern India reach Spain.
1469	Ferdinand & Isabella marry; Spain unified under Catholicism; Spanish Inquisition persecutes non-Catholics for next 330 years
1492	First anti-Gypsy laws in Spain
1500s	7 African slaves are brought into the region.
1560	More stringent anti-Gypsy laws are passed in Spain.
1600s	8 Latin American influences on flamenco begin.
1745	<i>Gitanos</i> (Gypsies) in Spain must settle down or be executed.
1869-1910	"Golden Age" of flamenco
Today	Flamenco influences and is influenced by cultural traditions from around the world.

Flamenco has been evolving for more than 600 years. A truly multicultural art form, it has been influenced by the varied peoples who have lived in Andalucía over the centuries—particularly the Roma (or *Gitanos*, Spanish Gypsies). The roots of flamenco extend far and deep: to Cuba, Egypt, Greece, India, Morocco, and other regions in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. It blends Moorish (from northern Africa), Jewish, and Christian traditions. Later contributions came from Latin America, and especially Cuba.

Flamenco is not written down, but passed on from one generation to the next. In this way, it continues to absorb new rhythms and new ideas.

Flamenco Fusion

Create a physical timeline of flamenco in your classroom by stringing a line of yarn around the walls. Divide your class into small groups to research what was happening at different periods in history. Use index cards to label or draw events that helped shape flamenco and attach them to the appropriate place on the timeline.

Think of an example of cultural fusion besides flamenco—in music, dance, film, food, or even in your neighborhood or family. Describe this fusion. What are the cultures or elements that are combined?

One of the most important groups in the development of flamenco are the Roma, commonly called Gypsies in English and *Gitanos* in Spanish. (Roma is the preferred name.) Originally from India and Pakistan, the Roma migrated to different parts of the world as early as 400 A.D. Today there are an estimated 12 million Roma worldwide, with about two-thirds living in Europe.

Some cultural elements that are common to Roma worldwide include a common language (Romani), a strong sense of group identity, and a rejection of traditions from the outside world. Many Roma are traditional nomads, moving from place to place in their caravans. Romani tribes are divided into clans, groups of related families. Marriages usually take place at a young age—12 or 13—and are generally arranged by the couple’s parents.

Since the 14th century, the Roma have been widely persecuted wherever they have traveled, including the U.S. During World War II (1939-1945) 500,000 Roma perished in Nazi concentration camps. Though discrimination continues today, the Roma have become increasingly active in working to establish their rights and preserve their heritage. In 1979 the United Nations recognized the Roma as a distinct ethnic group.

The Roma first arrived in Spain around 1425, at the start of a period of great social, political, and religious conflict. Spain’s Christian kingdoms were reaching the end of a nearly 700-year campaign to reclaim the region from Islamic rule. When the last Muslim stronghold fell to King Ferdinand V and Queen Isabella I in 1492, Spain completed the transformation from a collection of independent kingdoms into a single large, Roman Catholic monarchy. This period marked the beginning of the Spanish Inquisition (1478-1834), when non-Catholics were severely persecuted: forced to convert to Catholicism, expelled from the country, or even put to death.

Though they were not treated as severely as the Jews or Muslims, the Roma suffered under laws and practices designed to undermine their culture. Large groups of Roma ended up migrating south to Andalucía, a more remote region of Spain where they were slightly more tolerated. Behind closed doors, flamenco flourished. Absorbing the musical influences of Muslims and Jews, the Roma created songs and dances that reflected their life under the Inquisition. It is from this period that flamenco takes its traditional themes of sadness and struggle, resistance and survival—themes that are still alive in flamenco songs today.

The end of the Inquisition meant greater tolerance for the Roma and their culture. In southern Spain, flamenco dance schools began to appear in the 1760s. The Golden Age of flamenco (1869-1910) saw the creation of *cafés cantantes*, cafés where audiences paid to see flamenco performances. This kind of public exposure helped to popularize flamenco throughout Spain.



A Spanish Romani girl from Granada. Note the similarity of her clothing, hair, and posture to elements of traditional flamenco style.



Art as a Mirror

Flamenco began as an art form shaped by immigrant and

marginalized peoples. It often reflects the feelings and experiences of the oppressed.

Find a poem, song, or painting that reflects the artist’s ideas about some kind of social or political injustice. How does it make you feel? Would you have the same emotions if you simply read an account of the unjust situation in a book or article?

Why do you think art is used so frequently to express big ideas about the world we live in?

Discover the Land of Flamenco

Working with one or two classmates, investigate one aspect of the region of Andalucía or of the city of Córdoba. Here are some suggested topics:

- government
- music
- history
- geography
- education
- art
- cuisine
- language
- current issues

Report back to the rest of the class about what you learned.

Build a Word Wall

After the performance, brainstorm with your class as many words as you can think of to describe the show: what it looked and sounded like, how it made you feel, things it made you think of, etc. Write all the words on the blackboard. This is your word wall.

Working on your own, select ten words from the wall that you think describe yourself. Write a poem or essay (at least one paragraph) about yourself that uses the words you chose from the word wall.

For extra credit, find out the Spanish word for each word from the wall you used for your personal essay.

Write a Review

After the show, write a review of the performance. Don't just say if you liked it or not; be sure to say *why*. Use specific examples from the performance to support your opinions. Here are some elements of the performance you can discuss in your review:

- the music
- the singing
- the dancing
- the costumes
- the lighting
- the teamwork among the performers
- the variety of the pieces performed
- the balance of the different elements: were the *toque*, *cante*, and *baile* all given equal importance?

Share your review with the State Theatre.

Email it to:

education@statetheatrenj.org.



A performance is only a performance if there's an audience to see and hear it. As a member of the audience, you are a partner with the artists in bringing the performance to life.

Live performances have special rules.

Attending a live performance is not the same as watching a movie or television show. You will be in the same space with the performers and the rest of the audience. Any noises or movements you make will disturb the artists and spoil the experience for the rest of the audience. Here are some basic rules to follow at the theater:

- Before the performance starts, turn off and put away all electronic devices—cellphones, iPods, games, etc. And please, no texting or web browsing during the show!
- Do not bring food or beverages into the theater.
- Stay in your seat.
- No talking or whispering once the show begins.
- Do not take photos or make any video or sound recording of the show.



Know your role.

During the show, your job is to focus all your energy and attention on what's happening onstage. The way you respond to the show matters a great deal to the performers. Laugh at the funny parts. Applaud if you like what you see and hear.

When the performance ends, stay in your seat until your group is dismissed by the State Theatre staff.



Resources

BOOKS:

Flamenco!, by Gwynne Edwards; photographs by Ken Haas. Thames & Hudson, 2000.

Gypsies and Flamenco, by Bernard Leblon. University Of Hertfordshire Press, 2003.

Indigenous Peoples of the World - The Gypsies, by Anne Wallace Sharp. Lucent Books. 2002.

Song of the Outcasts: An Introduction to Flamenco, by Robin Totton. Amadeus Press, 2003 (book & CD).

MUSIC:

Best of Flamenco, Arc Music, 1998.

Legends of Gypsy Flamenco. Arc Music, 2002.

Masters of Flamenco Guitar. Blue Note Records, 1997

The Rough Guide to Flamenco. World Music Network, 2007.

VIDEO:

Carlos Saura's Flamenco Trilogy (Blood Wedding, Carmen, El amor brujo). Eclipse from Criterion, 2007. Rated PG.

Flamenco, directed by Carlos Saura. New Yorker Video, 1997. Not rated.

INTERNET:

Andrea Del Conte Danza España website:
www.delconte-danza.com

Andalusia and its culture
www.andalusia-web.com/culture.htm