

*State* TheatreNJ.org  
Keynotes

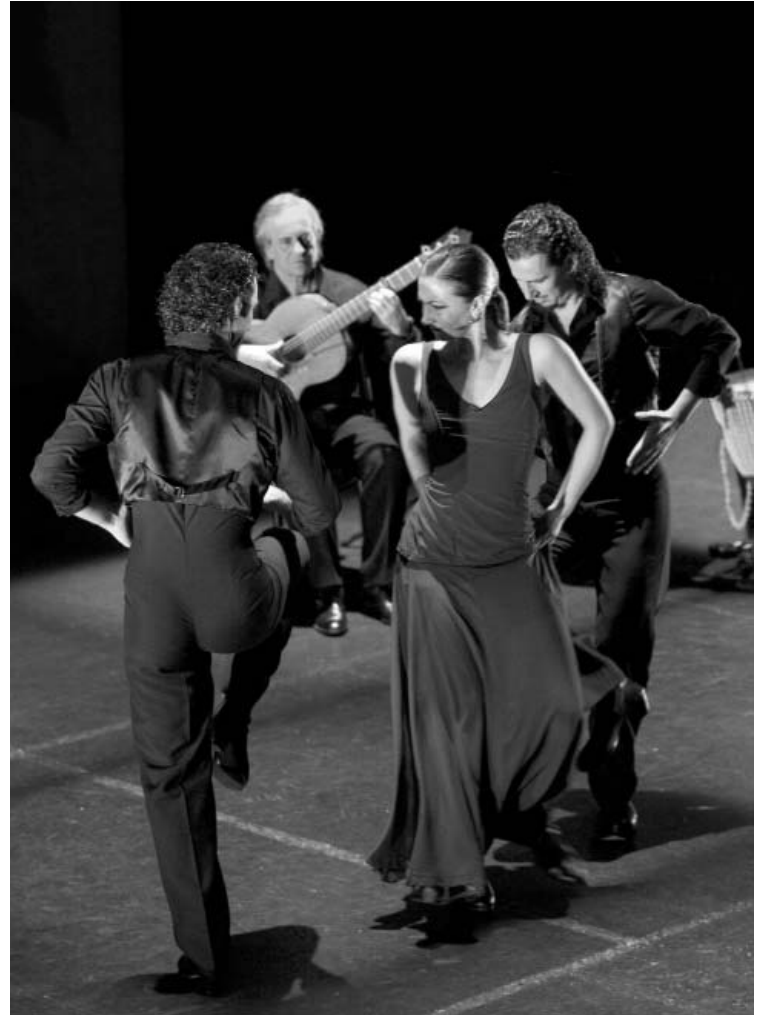


*Paco Peña*  
*Flamenco Dance Company*

# Welcome!

The State Theatre in New Brunswick, New Jersey welcomes you to the performance of Paco Peña Flamenco Dance Company. This dramatic, high-energy show offers a window on 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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Edited by Katie Pyott

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## About the Performance

Paco Peña Flamenco Dance Company is made up of guitarists, singers, and dancers who perform the centuries-old art of flamenco. In their show, they will introduce the audience to the three essential ingredients of flamenco: guitar playing, song, and dance.



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



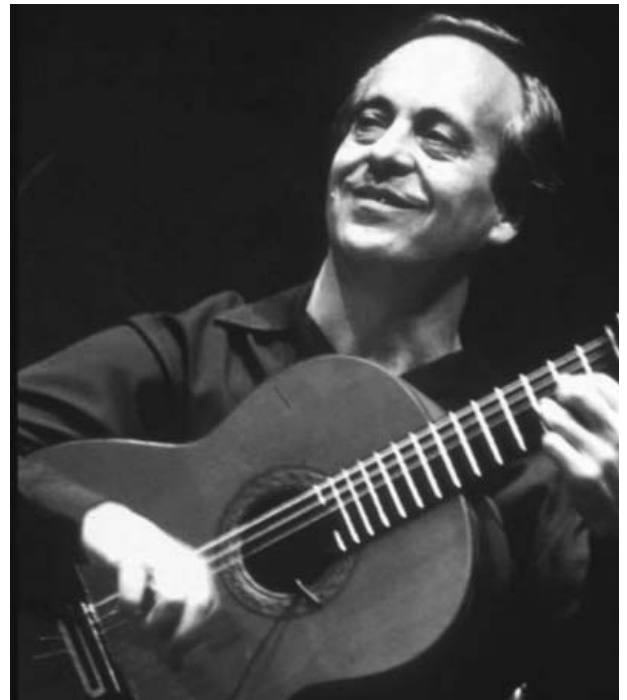
## Meet Paco Peña

During his 50-year career, Paco Peña has become known around the world as a master flamenco guitarist. Born in 1942 in **Córdoba**, Spain, he began learning guitar from his brother at the age of six and made his first professional appearance at the age of 12. In the late 1960s he left Spain for London, where his recitals of flamenco music captured the public imagination. He has since shared the stage with fellow-guitarists, singers, and instrumental groups from a wide range of musical genres, including classical, jazz, blues, country, and Latin American.

**CÓRDOBA** - a city in Andalucía, a region in southern Spain known as the birthplace of flamenco.

Since the 1970s Paco Peña has performed regularly with his own company of flamenco guitarists, singers, and dancers. He personally selects each member of the ensemble, combining young talent with older, established performers. The Paco Peña Flamenco Dance Company has taken flamenco in new directions with groundbreaking shows that combine flamenco with theater, classical music, and other traditions. The company regularly performs at major festivals and theaters on four continents.

Beyond performing, Paco Peña works hard to share his knowledge with others. In 1981 he founded the Centro Flamenco Paco Peña in Córdoba. In 1985, at Rotterdam University in the Netherlands, he was appointed the world's first professor of flamenco guitar. Today his home base is in London, but he still spends a large part of the year in his native Andalucía. In 1997 he was named Oficial de la Cruz de la Orden del Merito Civil, an honor bestowed by King Juan Carlos of Spain.



# What Is Flamenco?

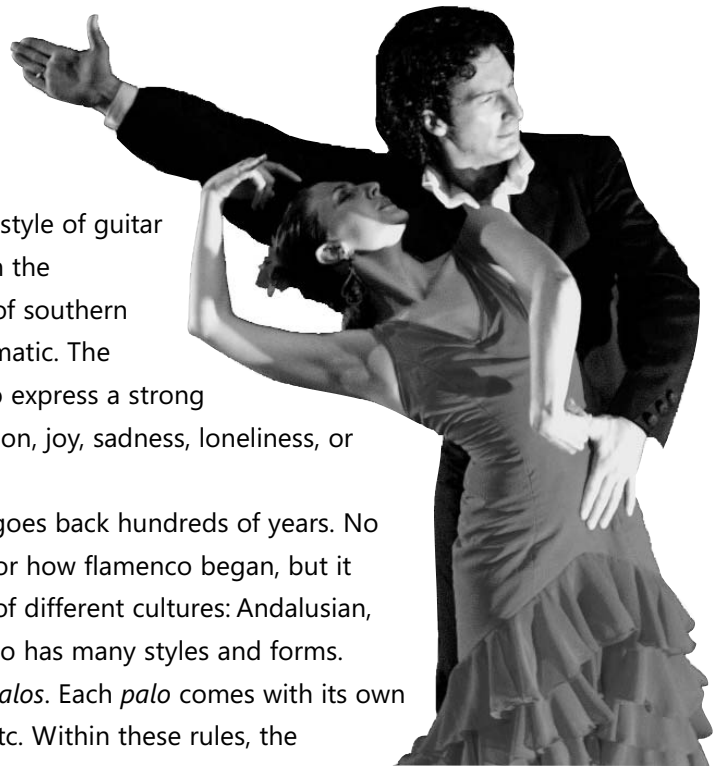
*Flamenco is song.  
Flamenco is music.  
Flamenco is dance.  
Flamenco is feeling.  
Flamenco is life...  
love... pain...  
rage... passion...*

Flamenco is a traditional style of guitar playing, dance, 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!



# 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.



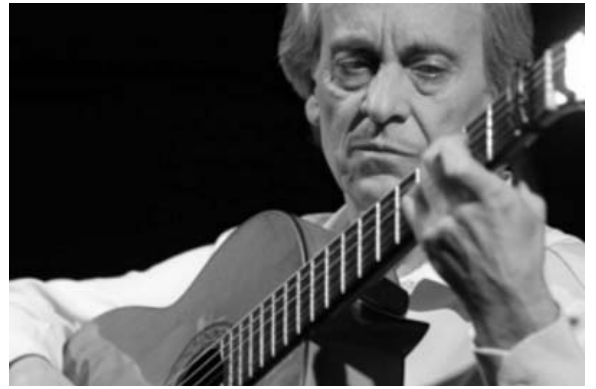
# The Elements of Flamenco

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

## 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.

## 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.

# Flamenco Style

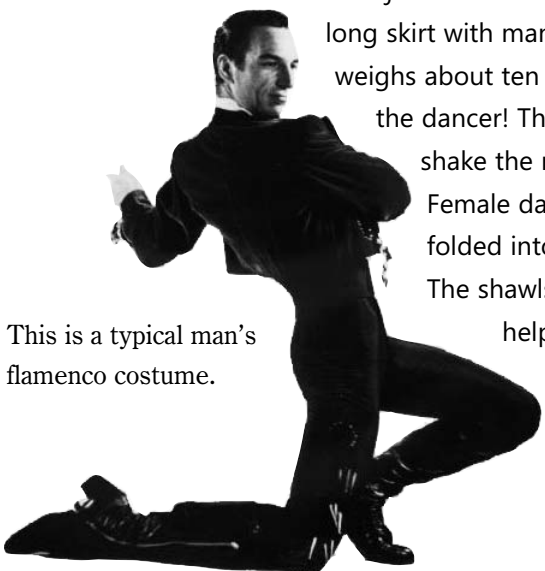
There are more than 50 different *palos*—categories—of flamenco. Each *palo* has its own mood, rhythmic pattern, and performing traditions. Some are sung with no instrumental accompaniment, while others may use a guitar and other instruments. Some *palos* are danced while others are not. Some are traditionally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

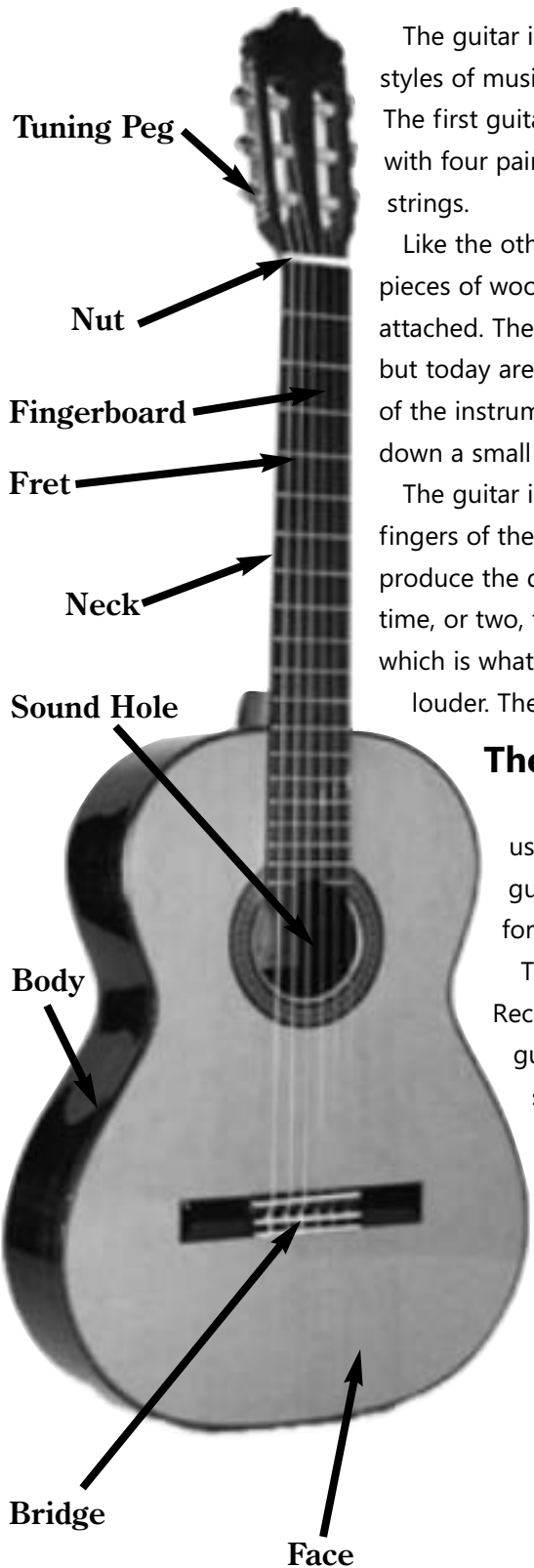
Female dancers also wear a long, fringed shawl (*mantan*) folded into a v-shaped pattern and often tied around the waist. The shawls add color and pattern to the flamenco clothing and help accentuate the movement of the hips. Elaborately decorated fans, often trimmed with lace, are used by female dancers to show off elegant hand and arm movements.

This is a typical man's flamenco costume.



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

# Flamenco Guitar



The guitar is an instrument that is played all over the world. It is used in many different styles of music besides flamenco: classical, rock, folk, jazz, and more. Its roots are in Spain. The first guitars, dating back to the 15th century, were very small, and were originally strung with four pairs of strings. In the late 1700s, the double strings were replaced by six single strings.

Like the other instruments in the orchestra's string family, the guitar is made from thin pieces of wood that are glued together, coated with varnish, and baked. Then the strings are attached. The modern guitar has six strings. The strings were originally made from cat-gut, but today are usually made from metal or nylon. The strings stretch almost the entire length of the instrument. They are attached at the top by *pegs*. From the pegs the strings travel down a small piece of wood called the *nut* down the *neck* and over the *body* to the *bridge*.

The guitar is played by plucking the strings with the fingers of the right hand. With the fingers of the left hand, the guitarist presses the strings down against the *fingerboard* to produce the different notes required in the music. A guitarist can play just one string at a time, or two, three, or even all six strings at once. Plucking the strings makes them vibrate, which is what makes the sound. The inside of the guitar is hollow; this helps make the sound louder. The hole in the middle of the guitar's body also helps us hear the sound better.

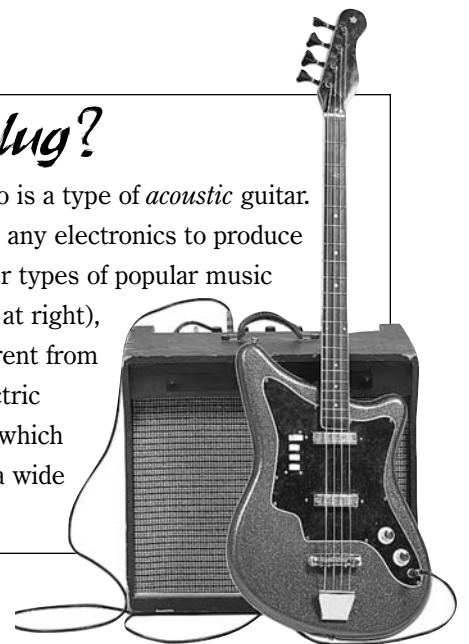
## The Flamenco Guitar

The guitar used in flamenco is smaller and lighter than the acoustic guitar used by classical musicians. Several types of wood are used to make a flamenco guitar: cypress for the back and sides, cedar for the fingerboard, pine or spruce for the top, rosewood for the bridge, and ebony for the fretboard.

The flamenco guitar was originally used to accompany singers and dancers. Recently, solo flamenco guitar has developed into a separate art form. Flamenco guitar techniques include strumming styles and patterns that give this music its special sound, and tapping or hitting the body of the guitar to emphasize the rhythm.

## Where's the Plug?

The instrument used in flamenco is a type of *acoustic* guitar. Acoustic instruments do not use any electronics to produce their sound. Rock, jazz, and other types of popular music often use *electric* guitars (shown at right), which look and sound very different from their acoustic counterparts. Electric guitars are electronically wired, which gives them the ability to create a wide range of sounds and effects.



# Flamenco Rhythms

## COMPÁS (RHYTHM)

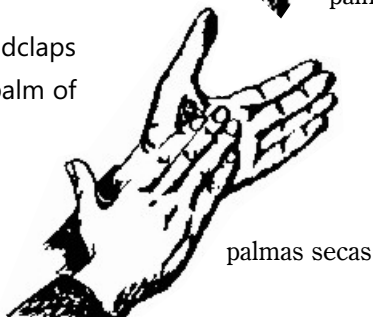
The foundation of flamenco is rhythm. Flamenco artists use the term *compás* for the different rhythms that keep the singers, musicians, and dancers together during a performance. To lose the rhythm (*fuera compás*) is considered a serious fault in a flamenco performer. Flamenco rhythms are very complex;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

## 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*.



## 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*



*cajón*

## 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 *seguiriya*. 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

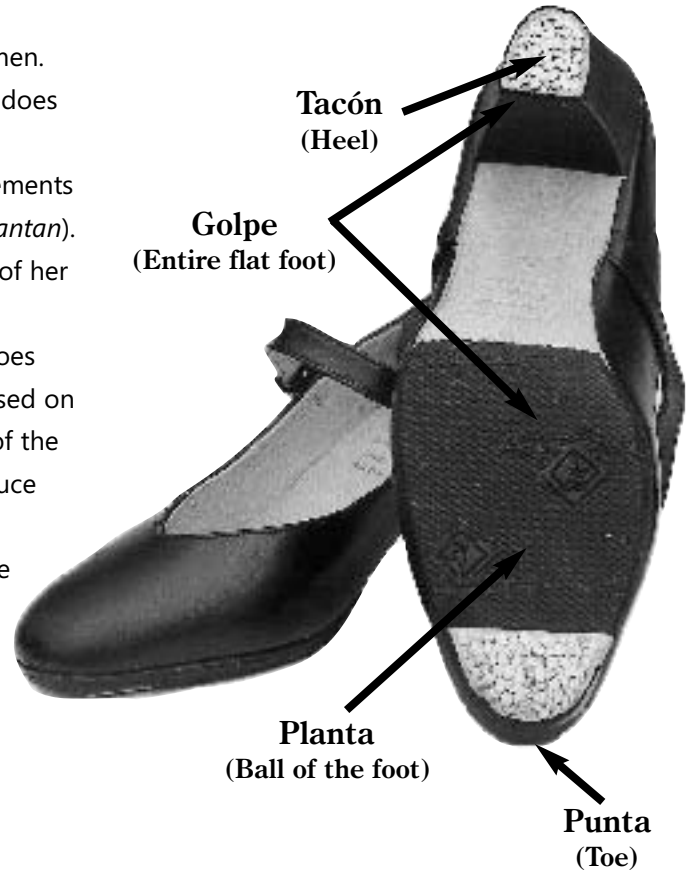
Keep repeating these patterns over and over, until you've got them!

# Flamenco Dance

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.

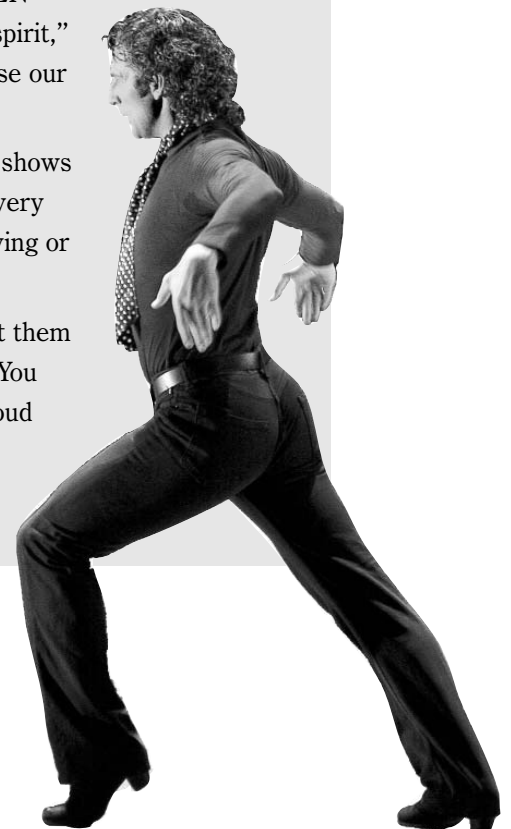


## What Does Your "Duende" Look Like?

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?



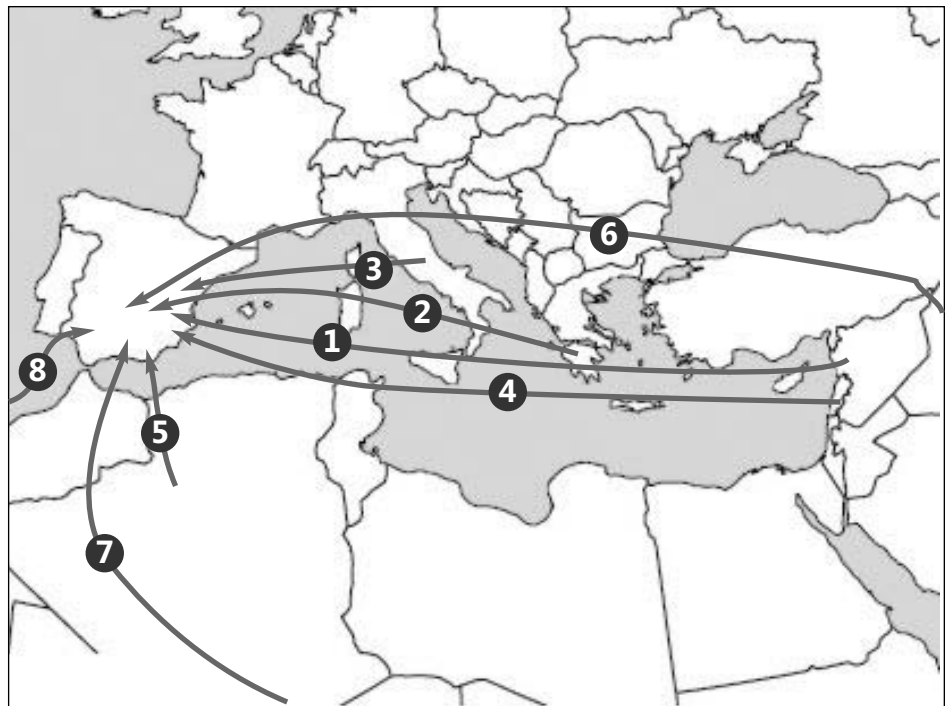
# The Roots (and Routes) of Flamenco

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 Timeline

1100	<b>1</b> Phoenicians found Cádiz.
500	<b>2</b> Greeks colonize Spain, introducing a forerunner of castanets.
200	<b>3</b> Romans annex Spain, introducing a forerunner of the guitar.
100	<b>4</b> Jews migrate to Spain.
BC	
AD	
771	<b>5</b> Moors (Muslims from North Africa) conquer southern Spain. For the next 8 centuries, Muslims, Christians, and Jews coexist under Islamic rule.
1400s	<b>6</b> 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	<b>7</b> African slaves are brought into the region.
1560	More stringent anti-Gypsy laws are passed in Spain.
1600s	<b>8</b> 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 Fusion

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?

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.

# Flamenco Roots: the Roma

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.

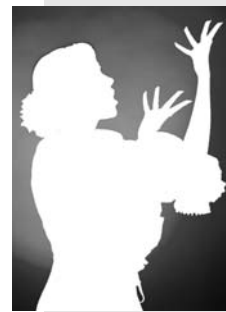
Though they were not treated as severely as the Jews or Muslims, the Roma suffered under laws and practices designed to undermine their culture. Large groups of Roma ended up migrating south to Andalucía, a more remote region of Spain where they were slightly more tolerated. Behind closed doors, flamenco 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.

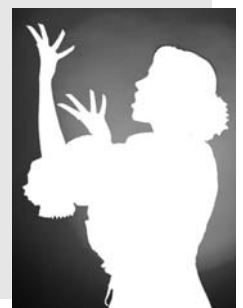
## Art as a Mirror



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? Does it give you the same emotions you might get 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?



# Talking Flamenco

**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

Throughout the flamenco 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?



# Classroom Connections

## Build a Bridge to the Land of Flamenco

Paco Peña says that he wants to “build a bridge between the rest of the world and the region of [his] birth.” 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 brief 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](mailto:education@statetheatrenj.org).



Roman Bridge (*Puente Romano*) in Córdoba



graffiti on a wall in Granada



Paco Peña Flamenco Dance Company

# Things to know Before You Go

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. You should not be texting 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 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!



## Resources

### READING:

*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)

### LISTENING:

*Arte Y Pasion*, live performance by the Paco Peña Flamenco Dance Company with the Losadas. Nimbus Records, 1999

*The Art of Paco Peña*. Nimbus Records, 1995

*Best of Flamenco*, Arc Music, 1998

*Legends of Gypsy Flamenco*. Arc Music, 2002

*Masters of Flamenco Guitar*. Blue Note Records, 1997

### WATCHING:

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

*Paco Peña - Misa Flamenca*. Kultur Video, 2005

### SURFING:

Official Paco Peña website: [www.pacopena.com](http://www.pacopena.com)