

PROGRAM NOTES FOR OCTOBER 25TH CONCERT
THE MYSTICAL MUSIC OF ANDALUCIA

Introductory Remarks

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to this evening's program entitled *The Mystical Music of Andalusia*. The focus of this evening's program will be on the influence of a little known element that contributed greatly to the exoticism and mysticism of Andalusian culture – orientalism. There were three layers of orientalism that were imposed upon Andalusian culture throughout its long history and these also gave to the culture its sense of antiquity and exclusivity.

During the first part of our program, through selected pieces of Spanish music, we are going to visit some of the ancient cities of Andalusia, where initially orientalism, exoticism and mysticism held sway.

During the second part of our program, Kevin and I are going to take you to a Gypsy juerga, where we shall meet up with the 3rd and final layer of orientalism that was imposed upon Andalusian culture through the Gypsies. As well we shall experience some of the deep emotions and heart stopping excitement of this very special Gypsy celebration.

Revised
~~Winston~~

ANDALUZA

But first, let me tell you a little about Andalucia.

Emerging from a spectacular defile in the Sierra Morena mountains, one comes upon Andalucia. The pass that forms a natural gateway through the mountain range was once where ancient Iberians worshipped their gods in prehistoric caves and where, in later centuries, Christians and Arabs threw one another off the high cliffs in their own bloody struggle.

In the 15th century, the pass made an excellent hiding place for gypsy brigands who lay in wait for unsuspecting travellers that had to make the dangerous journey through the mysterious mountain range in order to reach Andalucia.

Considered to be one of the oldest civilizations in the world, Andalucia was thought to have been first settled by an ancient people from Africa. Some sources called them Iberians. The ancient Iberians were passive and conservative and loved the rich, fertile land to which they had come. Their civilization was highly evolved and they even had rules for writing poetry.

Invaded over and over again, by the more violent Mediterranean cultures, the ancient Iberians managed to maintain their passivity. This passivity enabled them to absorb the various influences of the conquering cultures while remaining steadfast and faithful to their own set of beliefs that was rooted in mysticism and something called the duende.

Over the centuries, the Andalusian belief system has not changed and is one of the peculiarities that has given the culture its sense of antiquity and exclusivity. For this reason when one goes to Andalucia for the first time and hears the music, one either loves it or hates it.

EN LA PLAYA

When the first ancient oriental people came from Africa to Andalucia, they had to cross the Pillars of Hercules, today known as the Straits of Gibraltar. Once past the Pillars, they found themselves in a vast, mysterious sea. Having navigated this huge body of water, they came upon a land from where they could watch the sun sink into the mysterious ocean they had just crossed, hissing as it disappeared.

In the morning when the fiery ball rose again, the ancient travellers gazed upon golden sand and gorgeous green water. Here in this beautiful land that flowed with wine and oil, they put down their roots and imbued the already rich Andalucian culture with their own exotic Eastern ideas.

ORIENTAL

Once upon a time, there was a mythical kingdom called Tartessos. Tartessos was situated in the lower valley of the Guadalquivir River that ran through ancient Andalusia. The Tartessians were brilliant and kind and were one of the earliest oriental cultures to settle in Andalusia.

They were also the only culture to have their own king. King Arangthionius, who, according to legend, had been raised by wild animals, was very kind and very just. He saw to it that his people welcomed and respected all their visitors. The King was as well exceedingly generous and it was not at all uncommon for vessels to leave Tartessos with a ship's cargo full of gold. These vessels carrying such enormous wealth were known as the Ships of Tarshish.

The Tartessian culture was highly evolved and had its own music. In our next selection, the hauntingly, beautiful *Oriental* by Enrique Granados, we are going to hear the influences of two elements of ancient oriental music, the use of parallel double notes which in themselves had a mystical symbology and the deeply sad melody.

CADIZ

Around 10,000 B.C. another Oriental culture, the Phoenicians, having heard of the enormous wealth of Tartessos, set sail in their ships to find this Mythical Kingdom. During that same period, they discovered and invaded Andalucia. They established an important seaport at Cadiz. They also erected two bronze columns in the beautiful harbour of Cadiz and built a temple that they dedicated to their god Hercules. Yearly rites were held in the temple that included singing, dancing, incantation, prostitution and child sacrifice.

The ancient city of Cadiz was famous for two things, its food and its lascivious ladies. Known as the Wicked Dancers of Cadiz, these beautiful, black-eyed maidens who had been brought to Cadiz by the Phoenicians from India and other parts of the oriental world, were in reality, sacred prostitutes. They worshipped the goddess Astarte and belonged to the Cult of Fertility. Their dancing reflected many of the same elements found in the ancient sacred temple dances of India. In later centuries these elements were to have an enormous impact on Spanish dance and imbue it with oriental exoticism and mysticism that set it apart from all other dance in the world.

Now come with me back in time to the ancient city of Cadiz. It is 10,000 B.C. and it is midnight. It is the Night of the Festival of Yearly Rites. The waves are gently lapping at the giant pedestals upon which the great temple of Hercules sits. Out in the harbour, the two bronze columns are bathed in the mysterious, silvery light of the full moon. Inside the darkened temple, flames from the braziers hanging upon the walls reflect beautiful black eyed maidens wearing only their diaphanous veils, moving sensuously to the seductive music of the ancient harp and flute.

CORDOBA

In 206 B.C. the Romans invaded Andalusia and renamed it Baetica because of the strong African and Oriental influences they had found. That same year the Roman Consul ordered the destruction of the beautiful oriental city of Cordoba and the rebuilding of Roman Cordoba.

Unlike the magnificent Arabian dynasty of later centuries, Roman Cordoba was indeed a shoddy affair. Streets were not paved, there was no running water and houses were little more than pieces of wood, left over from the destruction of Oriental Cordoba, held together with mud and straw.

In 45 B.C. Caesar utterly destroyed Roman Cordoba because she had sided with Pompei over a political question. 22,000 were killed. Cordoba was again rebuilt, the next time out of stone, marble and bronze and became one of the most luxurious cities in the Roman colonies. Today if you visit Cordoba, you will still see ancient Roman and Oriental Arabian influences.

TANGO

The Romans greatly admired the advanced Oriental culture they had conquered and for this reason many things were permitted to continue. Among these was the Temple Dance of Cadiz.

The Roman soldiers in particular, loved to go to Cadiz and watch the beautiful temple dancers perform their sensuous Phoenician Fandango. Their dancing was so captivating and so intoxicating that it turned many a soldier's head and made him quite forget his duty.

It was the Romans who renamed the Phoenician Fandango and called it the Roman Tango. The Roman Tango retained many of the elements of the Phoenician Fandango such as the crossing of hands and feet but was also characterized by a heavy step on every 4th beat of the rhythm. Its dance patterns followed the popular artistic designs of the day that included circles, wedges, rectangles and oblique lines.

In later centuries, the gypsies adapted the Roman Tango to suit their own needs. Danced by a woman wearing a sombrero it continued to reflect the exoticism and mysticism of the ancient Temple Dance of Cadiz.

~~NB: STAGE MANAGERS, MOVE PIANO PUT STAND IN PLACE FOR VIOLIST AND TURN STAND LIGHT ON IF NECESSARY.~~

AND STAND.

INTERLUDIO

~~SET UP CAMPFIRE AND EXTENSION CORDS. TAPE DOWN SO NO ONE TRIPS AND THERE IS NO HAZARD FACTOR. DO NOT TURN ON UNTIL PLACE IN SCRIPT AS MARKED. AT THIS POINT CAMPFIRE WILL REMAIN LIT UNTIL END OF THE CONCERT.~~

MOVE ONE TREE TO FRONT OF STAGE WHERE INDICATED
TIE RIBBON TO ONE OF THE BRANCES

~~SET LIGHTS AS LOW AS POSSIBLE.~~

PART TWO OF MYSTICAL MUSIC PROGRAM OCT. 25TH/03

Orientalism continued to exert itself on Andalusian culture through the coming of the Gypsies. In 1447 about 800 gypsies arrived in Andalusia from India. They brought with them their exotic oriental customs, costumes, music, dance and rhythms. They especially adored Granada because its mystical oriental aspects reminded them so much of India. They also greatly admired the Andalusian strong sense of tradition and readily identified with the songs and dances of their new country.

Applying their famous interpretive skills they took many of the ancient songs and dances of Andalusia and adapted them to suit their own needs. This process of adaptation was enormously important because through it, the influences of orientalism that the gypsies had brought with them from India were fused to Andalusian culture which in turn continued to imbue the culture with exoticism and mysticism.

THE JUERGA Danza de la Sedducion

Now as promised we are going to take you to a juerga. A juerga is a very special Gypsy celebration that is usually held out of doors in an isolated area of the countryside, away from prying eyes. It is quite spontaneous, no one knows when a juerga will take place or how long it will last, it ends when the money runs out.

There is always music, dancing and singing and the preparation of special foods. On occasion, the ancient ritual dances are performed but these are never danced if there are gadjos (nongypsies) present.

STAGE MGR - TURN ON CAMPFIRE

The juerga begins with the lighting of the traditional bonfire. The men of the camp seat themselves on the ground in a circle around the fire. They are wearing caps and brightly coloured silk kerchiefs, knotted at the neck. In the distance the women are preparing the special food that will be served later in huge cauldrons suspended over cooking fires.

A handsome gypsy rides into the camp. He is mounted on a spirited, white horse. He wears a black cape lined with red silk and he carries two revolvers. Flinging his cape back over his shoulders he begins to recite some of the ancient poetry in the language of the Gypsies.

One of the men in the circle starts to clap out a rhythm with his hands. A woman steps inside the circle and she begins her own palmadas. Someone else begins to tap out a rhythm with the heels of his feet while yet a different rhythm is heard being beaten out on the rungs of an old battered up chair.

As the rhythms intensify, the woman slowly raises her arms over her head and as the flames of the fire leap up into the night sky behind her she begins the ancient ritual *Danza de la Sedduccion*.

SACROMONTE

Without pause a beautiful Gypsy woman steps into the circle. She is one of the clan's dancers that entertains the gadjos from time to time outside the camp. There are appreciable murmurs from some of the men who already know about her fiery temper and the small dagger she carries.

She is wearing her many coloured flounced skirts in which she has hidden her gold coins. Large hoops dangle from her ears and glitter in the firelight. Her black hair is long and loose and she has a tambourine.

Assuming the ancient flamenco pose she raises her tambourine and strikes it sharply 3 times. Born in the caves of Sacromonte, her dance will reflect the strong will and courage of her people to continue living their own particular lifestyle as they have done so for centuries, in spite of the terrible persecutions that are still carried out against them.

THE LAMENT (based on Playera #5 Doce danzas Espanola)

There is much discussion after the fiery Sacromonte. Cups are refilled with the favourite golden manzanilla wine. Injustices are remembered.

In the distance a lone figure dressed in black, approaches. Her head is covered with a black shawl. In her hand she holds a tambourine, the mystical symbol for death. Her shuffling step betrays the heavy burden of pain and sorrow that she has carried for years. An older member of the clan, this woman still mourns the loss of a beloved husband and son torn from the family by the hated Guardia Civilia only because they were Gypsies, never to be seen or heard from again.

Through her dance she will express the ancient Gypsy Lament. Her beautiful arm movements will speak of her deep grief, her anger and her defiance against Fate. Yet at the same time they will also express her resignation and acceptance of that which cannot be changed – Destiny.

STAGE MANAGERS PLEASE MOVE PIANO BACK SET UP VIOLA STAND AND ITS LIGHT.

AFTER THE DANCE PLEASE BRING PIANO FORWARD, FOR NEXT PIECE OF MUSIC AND SET VIOLA STAND OUT OF THE WAY.

MALAGUENA

After the old Gypsy leaves, the camp is silent each occupied with their own thoughts. More than one is able to share her grief and pain.

The mood changes. A guitarist strums the opening notes for the Malguena. At the copla another gypsy stands and pours out his heart in a deeply moving cante intermedio. He is filled with the duende that dark, mysterious force that exists only in Andalucia. The clan is also touched by the duende and his song finds acceptance. He is encouraged to continue with shouts of ole and anda!

FIESTA DE LAS CALDERAS

It is now midnight. A strange atmosphere falls over the camp. The men are subdued, the women stop their cooking and the children are told to be quiet. Even the dogs cease to bark. Coming over the brow of a hill are some long robed figures. These are the witches of the clan and they have chosen this night to make their appearance. They are carrying tambourines and small cauldrons in which they have prepared special herbs and potions. Tonight they will use these special herbs and potions in a most secret ritual dance.

EL VITO

The camp is again silent after the witches depart. Their barbaric, mystical dance has recalled memories of the primitive religious rites that were once carried out in the prehistoric caves and temples of ancient Andalusia and have as well, reminded members of the clan, the power the witches hold over them.

As the dawn breaks, there is the sound of singing coming down the road, jubilant and celebratory. It is Paco, victorious from the previous afternoon's fight in the bullring. The men gather round him eager to hear the details of the fight while the younger women glance at him with flirtatious eyes from a respectful distance.

To honour Paco's victory in the ring one of the younger gypsy women begins to dance. Her ancient dance from Sevilla evokes the movements of the bullfighter as he faces the bull in the ring while the guitar accompaniment provides the atmosphere of danger and excitement that is ever present at five in the afternoon.