From Spain to UCLA: The Culture of Flamenco Music

¡Olé!

"Flamenco is the world's most exquisite dessert"

~Antonio “El Chocolate” Nuñez

Course Description:
In our modern world, we are faced with intolerable violence and hate. Some argue it is race or money or even culture that divides one group from another. In spite of our differences in morals, thoughts, and beliefs, or culture, all humans share a homogeneous trait: music. It is this trait of music that could bring these divergent cultures together to a shared musical experience. The world is filled with genres of music that are vastly diverse and come from distinctive cultures. These cultures are related to one another through their common production of musical structures. Sometimes the musical features of several cultures- that have at times been divided by war and prejudice- are joined in a single genre. This seminar explores one such genre: Flamenco from Spain.

Flamenco is a form of art, originating from Andalusia of southern Spain, which consists of song (cante), dance (baile) and guitar playing (toque). Flamenco has a rich history in war, poverty, love, and even wealth. These themes will be discussed in a broader context during the quarter in relation to the weekly topics that include, but are not limited to, influential musicians, racism, globalization of Flamenco, old versus “modern” Flamenco, and how Flamenco has been integrated into the musician’s everyday lives. We will explore explicit socio-cultural questions about why a certain form of music emerges at a particular time? How does a musical structure form in a particular society and how it may have, at some point in time, become a global phenomenon? Further, we shall discuss specific anthropological theories, such as reciprocation and gypsy diasporas, and apply them to the various facets of Flamenco.
Course Objectives:
At the end of this seminar, students will be able to answer, with confidence, the following questions:

- What is Flamenco?
- How has flamenco evolved from its original musical structure?
- Where is it today?
- Who are/were the most influential figures in Flamenco?
- How is the current culture of Flamenco related to its ancestral cultures?
- How can we apply Mauss’ theory of reciprocation to other cultures?
- Does music shape culture?

Students will be able to listen to flamenco analytically versus a passive approach.

Additionally, I anticipate that students will have a deeper understanding of this culture of music and be able to compare Flamenco cross culturally so that they can discover the differences and similarities of music from around the world.

Course Requirements:
Check the course website regularly! Check the course website regularly! Check the course website regularly! Check the course website regularly! Check the course website regularly! Check the course website regularly! Check the course website regularly! Check the course website regularly! Check the course website regularly! Check the course website regularly!

Participation and Attendance: Since this is a 1-unit class, based on the Pass/No Pass system, all students must attend AND participate in order to obtain a “Pass.” Unfortunately, if you miss 2 or more classes, you will automatically receive a “No Pass.”

Readings: Read the assigned weekly readings! Readings will be posted on the course website. Once you have finished each reading, pose a question about it, and email it to me the night before class (before midnight). I will pick a few questions from the list so that we can have a brief, yet engaging conversation about the reading(s).

Assignments:
Assignment 1: Each student is required to watch the short film (25 minutes) Los Almendros-Plaza Nueva and write a one-page response paper. The film is on reserve in Powell library’s Media library. This short film gives a brief encounter with Romani- gypsies in Spain and how
they view flamenco. Pay attention to the palos that are being performed. Due 4\textsuperscript{th} week. More information will be provided in class.

Assignment 2: Each student is required to write a one-page research paper on any of the terms that are listed below. Post your response on the discussion board before its due date, during 6\textsuperscript{th} week. I also want a hard copy of your paper by 6\textsuperscript{th} week. I will assign students terms, or if there is a particular term a student wants, they can choose their own on the first come first serve system. In this way, we hope to discuss as many flamenco terms as possible.

Terms:

- Compás
- Tablao
- Cante
- Bulería
- Federico García Lorca
- Baile
- Alegria
- Cante Jondo
- Toque
- Solea
- Cante Chico
- The Moors
- Paco de Lucia
- Gitan
- Rumba
- Camarón de la Isla
- Andalucía
- Jerez de la Frontera
- Sabicas
- Ramon Montoya
- Palo
- Duende
- Carmen Amaya

Final: I will assign students a compás of a specific palo (Solea, Alegria, or Bulería). Students must learn the compás of their palo, and accompany me (with another student with the same palo) while I play the guitar or play a CD track. We will set up appointments outside of class for this exercise! More information will be provided in class.

Additional Information:

You do not need to know Spanish or know how to read music in order to take this course! Translations will be provided on every DVD (via subtitle) or in class, so don’t worry.

Some time after week 5, we will plan an OPTIONAL trip to a local tablao at either the Fountain theatre or El Cid. More information will be discussed in class.

I will post various palos on the course website so that students can have a fuller understanding of our lectures and discussions. It is very important for students to listen to these palos so that they can contribute to our weekly discussions, and are able to follow the compás of the palos for their final project.

Changes in the Course Outline:

Some changes may be made in specific reading and assignments during the course of the quarter. Any changes will be described during lectures and posted on the website.

Finally, since this is a class that discusses music, it is only appropriate to have guest performers! So throughout the course, we will have guest guitarists (including yours truly), singers, dancers, and (perhaps) speakers. Live music demonstrations will be used as a way to discuss and reinforce our weekly topics.
<table>
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<th>WEEKS</th>
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<td><strong>1-An intro to flamenco:</strong> a brief history and its origins.</td>
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<td><strong>2-Musical structure of specific palos (songs): compas and the interaction between the dancer, singer, and guitarist.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3- The significance of Solea, Alegria, and Buleria.</strong></td>
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**Readings:**


**Video Clip:** Rito y Geografía del Baile: #3 “Café Cantante (hacia 1900)”

**Reading:**

**Students will learn how to listen to flamenco constructively this week!**

**4- Old vs. modern flamenco (the various cultural influences).**

(Assignment 1 due)

**Reading:**

**Reading:**

**Movie Clip:** (in class) “Sabicas: King of the Flamenco Guitar”

**5- The 19th and early 20th centuries: artists and how they popularized flamenco.**

**Reading:**

**Movie Clip:** (in class) “Francisco Sanchez- Paco de Lucia”

**6-Paco de Lucia and his impact on flamenco**

(Assignment 2 due).
### 7- Flamenco and the everyday lives of the musicians.

**Reading:**

### 8- Flamenco in western culture (cinema, literature, non-Spaniards, etc.).

**Reading:**

**Guest Performer:** TBA (I hope)

### 9- The globalization of flamenco.

**Movie Clip:** (in class) “Rito y Geografía del baile: #11 Japones”

**Guest Performer:** Jose Tanaka, Japanese flamenco guitarist.

### 10- demonstration of a peña and potluck

**Guest Performer(s):** Mojácar Flamenco group.

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### Bibliography of readings and movies:


Francisco Sanchez- Paco de Lucia (DVD)

From Granada to Jerez (DVD)


Rito y Geografía del baile: #11 Japones (DVD)

Rito y Geografía del Baile: #3 (DVD)

Rito y Geografía del Toque (various clips will be provided online [I hope])(DVD)

Sabicas: King of the Flamenco Guitar (DVD)


**Additional Movies** that I will have on Reserve in the Media Library (in other words, they are *not required*, but for your personal viewing pleasure!)

Flamenco (Flamenco (DVD) A film by Carlos Saura)

Flamencos siglo XXI (21st century flamencos)

Víctor Monge "Serranito", en concierto 2002 (Víctor Monge Serranito, in concert 2002)