



Flamenco: the Land Is Still Fertile

WHAT and WHY:

Flamenco is a highly emotional art form, capable of moving people in a way few other arts can. That, and its close association with Spain, led UNESCO in 2010 to declare it part of the **Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**.

When most people think of flamenco, they think of the dance, and in addition, they imagine that it has always been something learned in an academy and intended for stage performance. **Nothing could be further from the truth.**

In fact, not only is **the singing** more important than the dance, but for more than a century flamenco has been mostly associated with fish mongers, blacksmiths, and especially the **farm laborers** of southern Spain - people of low social standing and very modest means. Most were *gitanos* (Spanish Gypsies). Flamenco, it turns out, is **an art of the dispossessed.**



Antonio de la Malena performing

Through world-class performance, interviews, a narrative and other means, we have used *Flamenco: the Land Is Still Fertile* to show all this. In the process, we have tried to create a documentary that not only celebrates the art form, but also **the people** who created and maintain it, a people who are often over-looked, who have let flamenco sustain them through the hard life they have had to endure.

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To allow for different kinds of presentations, we have several versions of the documentary:

- * feature-length ("director's 2nd cut," an hour & 39 min., and "the original," an hour & 45 min.);
- * four **half-hour episodes**;
- * two **one-hour episodes** (the latter two intended primarily as a television mini-series)

THEMES and ISSUES:

Like many other traditional arts, **flamenco is in danger** of disappearing. Showing what it is, and what it is not, is a key step to keeping it alive - important in a world in which respect for science and financial success have lessened people's ability to respond to emotions. **Traditional arts can and should adapt** to a changing world, but that adaptation needs to be an inner response from those immersed in the tradition rather than being imposed from without, whether by market forces or by performers who borrow from other traditions in an intellectual desire to do something new.



Flamenco: the Land Is Still Fertile also attempts to set the world straight on the contributions of **gitanos to flamenco - controversial territory** but important because to deny this minority community credit for its achievements leaves it in the shadow of the negative connotations in which it often finds itself. As famous guitarist Diego del Morao adds, "Its how we [*gitanos*] express ourselves, right?"

Ma and Malena (bottom right) and part of crew starting to set up to film a solo.

GETTING IT OUT TO THE WORLD:

We will distribute the documentary in North America (USA and CANADA), Western Europe (special focus on SPAIN), North Africa (especially MOROCCO) and JAPAN. We began presenting it in SPAIN in 2022 and in the USA in 2023...

- * **TV Broadcast:** national educational television in the USA (PBS etc.)
- * **Conferences:** conferences related to world music/dance, ethnomusicology, and gitanos in the United States, Spain, Morocco, and Great Britain
- * **Academia:** presentations at colleges/universities in the United States and Spain
- * **Events & Festivals:** a limited festival release, plus events in Spain, Morocco, France & USA

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DISTRIBUTION PLAN (cont.)

* **Grass Roots:** presentations in North America to public libraries & community centers; in Spain to places related to where we filmed; and elsewhere to organizations such as Instituto Cervantes and Instituto de Cultura Gitana. **NOTE:** we have already presented it in the prestigious Filmoteca Nacional as organized by the Government of Soain and sponsored by the Instituto de Cultura Gitana.

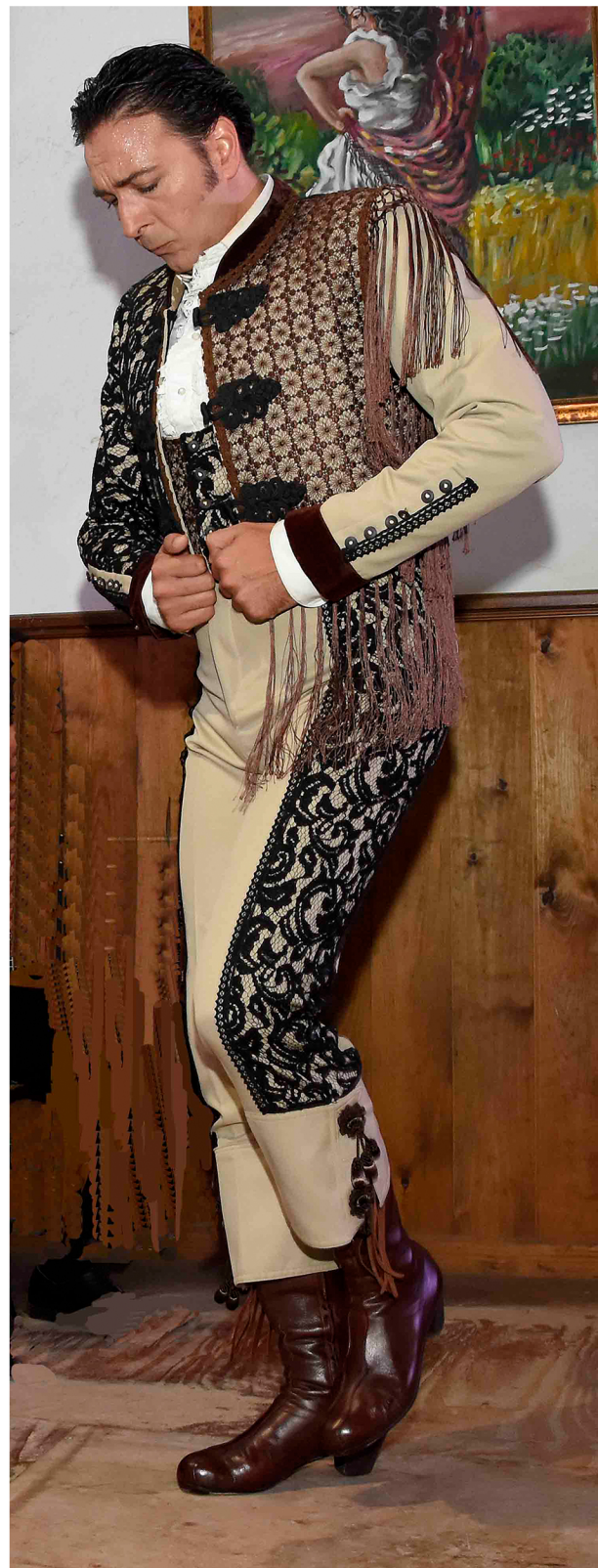
PRINCIPALS:

DIRECTOR/EDITOR Eve A. Ma's prize-winning work has screened in film festivals in eight countries on four continents, and aired over national PBS in the United States. A former history professor, lawyer, and cultural non-profit director who speaks several languages, her prior careers inform her work.

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR/NARRATOR Antonio de la Malena, a prize-winning, world-touring *gitano* flamenco singer from Spain's "cradle of flamenco," has extensive experience as an artistic director for stage productions. He was also producer/director of his own film short, and has experience as an actor.

Ma and Malena are joined by **a significant number of the world's greatest flamenco performers plus key expert informers,** from Antonio el Pipa to Niño Jero el Periquín, from Tía Juana la del Pipa to la Macanita, from Diego Fernández to Manuel Morao.

Antonio de la Malena with Eve A. Ma



Antonio el Pipa dancing

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