



DEEP BLUES / FLAMENCO JONDO

Two Cultures, Two Struggles, One Human Condition

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The similarities between Flamenco and the Blues are striking, not so much in the structure of the music but with regard to the people who produced it and still interpret it – the Spanish gypsies and the African-Americans. Both musics were created in the south of their respective countries, and the subject matter is often identical. Flamenco and the Blues sprang from suffering and discrimination, from the people.

When trying to define “the real thing” in both musics, the words used are “deep” and “jondo” – which have the same meaning. What stands out when examining the cultures, looking at the images and hearing the sounds, is a shared human condition.

It is this human condition that will be treated with love and respect, avoiding sentimentalities and clichés, in a documentary format that will capture the sight and sounds of two historical art forms.



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It is our most passionate music, rooted in ancient Africa but brought to blossom in America at the doorstep of the twentieth century. It is a living heritage of song born in poverty, persecution, and hard labor, born of love and love betrayed, of holiness and sin, the pleasures and the pains of the flesh, the experience of tragedy, comedy, despair, desolation, and pure joy. It is the Blues.

“Blues is something that you don’t find in no notes, you don’t find it on paper – it is something which is in your heart.”

Robert Lewis Jones, aka ‘Guitar Gabriel’

“The musician *is* the document,
he *is* the information.” *Ben Sidran*



Ground Zero, Clarksdale MS

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GENRE Documentary	LOCATION Mississippi Delta, USA & Andalucía, Spain
RUNNING LENGTH Approximately 90 minutes	WRITERS Félix Grande, Beni Perlmutter, Spain Larry Cohn, Beni Perlmutter, USA
PROJECTED BUDGET \$1.6 million	FORMAT HD
DISTRIBUTION OBJECTIVE Theatrical release-worldwide, satellite and cable tv-worldwide, dvd sales and rentals, sales of soundtrack, publishing of a book on the subject	NOTE In the course of the production, enough material will be generated to allow for a parallel television series of six one-hour programs

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USA	SPAIN
Writers: Larry Cohn, Beni Perlmutter	Félix Grande, Beni Perlmutter
Artists: B.B. King <u>Taj Mahal</u> Buddy Guy Zora Young Cassandra Wilson etc., etc.	Agujetas Moneo Manuel Molina Rancapino Esperanza Fernández Juana la del Pipa etc., etc.
Production: table21films, San Francisco	projazz, Málaga
Interviews with: Amiri Baraka Harry Belafonte Larry Cohn Bill Cosby Morgan Freeman Ben Sidran etc.	Ángel Álvarez Caballero J.M. Caballero Bonald Antonio Gala Félix Grande Curro Romero Rafael de Paula etc.
Portrait of Taj Mahal · Acrylic on canvas by Peter Winter	Sponsors: ERICSSON 

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STRATEGY

The subject matter of Deep Blues / Flamenco Jondo will provide the basis for a documentary film and several television programs of great audiovisual impact, a truly unique musical and cultural document. Each program would consist of interviews with and performances by a well-known blues artist and a flamenco artist of the same caliber. Stock footage and photographs of old blues and flamenco performers, as well as exterior footage from southern United States and the south of Spain, will also be incorporated to establish similarities between the two areas and the cultural background in which the music flowered.

There would be one Spanish interviewer/conductor and one American throughout the programs, not necessarily well known “faces” but both with profound knowledge of the music. In addition to narration, the interviewer will touch many subjects: childhood, poverty, racial discrimination, love and religion-- to establish the effect these experiences have had on the music. We are trying to get into the human aspects, as well as the musical, of the blues and flamenco. The artists (Spanish and American) will be present on the set simultaneously: We see how Taj Mahal and Agujetas respond to each other’s music, how B.B. King and El Lebrijano have certain experiences in common.

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During the interview in English, Spanish subtitles will be used and vice-versa, thereby reaching the largest possible audience and at the same time respecting the two languages and their idioms. The actual music performances should be, when possible, an almost spontaneous part of the interviews, creating a feeling of authenticity and intimacy many times lost in a straight stand-up performance. There will also be interviews with experts in the music and with performers who know the principal artists.

There are also several interesting commercial possibilities that would provide a variety of revenue streams. These include traditional film, DVD and television outlets along with new media content that exploits both audio and visual mediums. The documentary films content, imagery, and education value becomes the stepping off point that unlocks a wealth of entertainment opportunities. Cultures are explored and preserved. The voice of a human condition is identified and respected.

In summary, the series seeks to be a bridge between two marginal worlds of great beauty and power. If the subject is treated with love and respect, avoiding sentimentality and clichés, it is possible to create a film and programs that are romantic, moving and almost magic.

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IMPACT

The project is based on the music of two groups —gypsies and blacks— who once left behind their culture and roots —in Asia and Africa, respectively— to resettle, of their own choice or through force, in distant, different cultures, mostly in Europe and America.

Both groups were discriminated against by these new cultures. Gypsies seemed to seek their identity by becoming nomads, and for a time in Spain there were prohibitions against their cultural manifestations. In America, blacks suffered slavery. But if gypsies and blacks left their birthplaces behind, they carried memories of cultural identities that are much more than skin deep. Part of those memories are their customs and music.

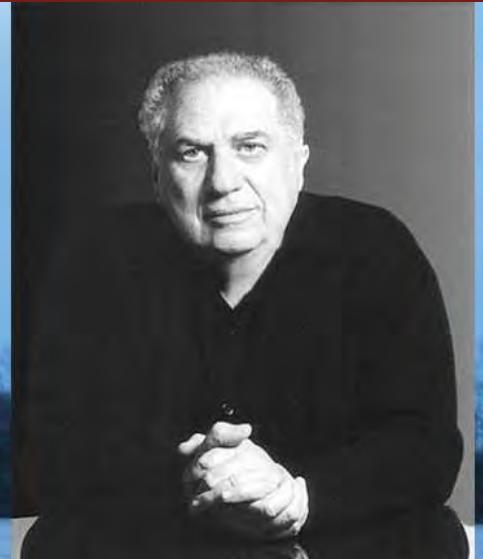
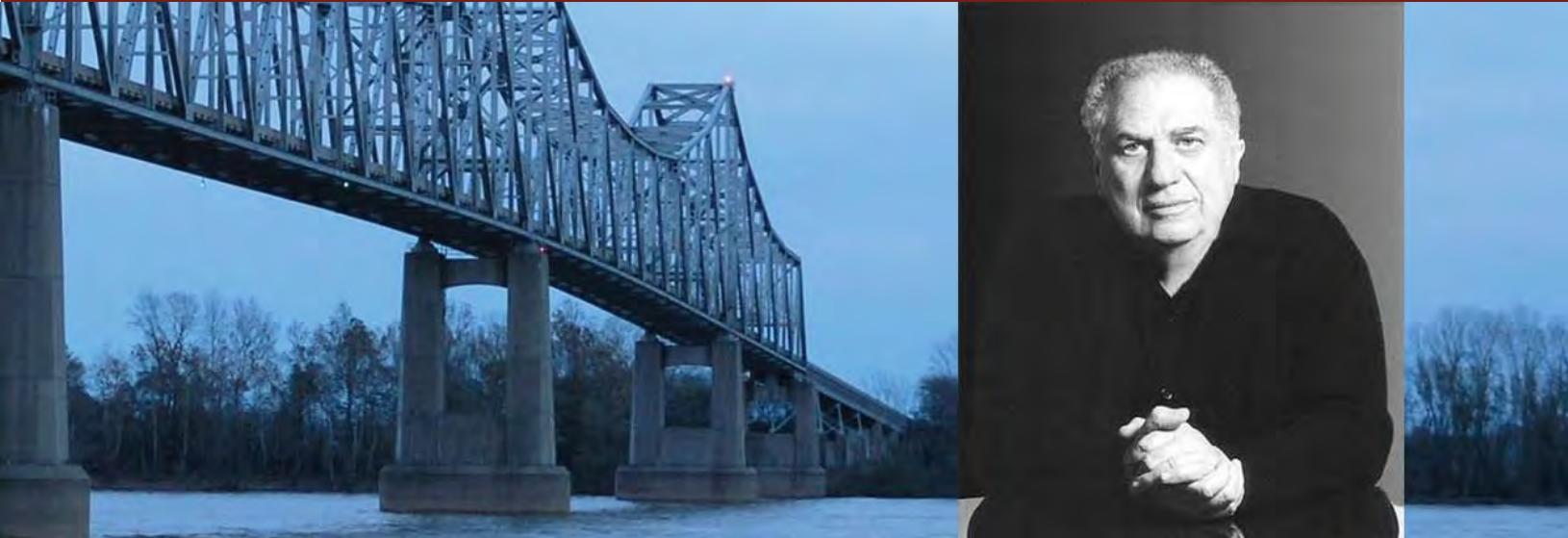
Generations of blacks and gypsies born in these new places not only express what remains of their own musical wisdom, but also adopt what they hear around them and adapt it to their expressive needs. For example, the gypsy does not invent flamenco, but establishes a distinction in this art between his style and that of the non-gypsy. Both peoples enrich their musical expression through their deep sense of rhythm, which is possibly what unites what we today know as blues and flamenco.

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In sociological terms, these two groups have other things in common, such as the discrimination and exploitation they have suffered, each in the southern part of their countries: the gypsies in Spain and the blacks in the United States.

The different episodes in this film and series include an exchange not only of music, but of the ideas of these two groups about common problems over the centuries, and their ways of understanding such human experiences as love, poverty, wealth and jail. These subjects were both spoken and sung about in two music styles, sometimes almost in secret, as if committing a crime.

The project is a cultural bridge, anchored on the European side of the Atlantic in the area of Los Puertos and other southern cities such as Sevilla, Huelva, Córdoba, Málaga and Granada; and on the other side, in the Mississippi Delta and extending to Chicago, Detroit and other points.

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LARRY COHN

Larry Cohn created and produced Sony Music/Legacy Recordings award-winning *Roots n' Blues* series. He has received Five Grammy Award nominations during his career, winning in 1991 for “*Robert Johnson: The Complete Recordings*.” Cohn also received the Memphis Blues Foundation’s W.C. Handy Award in 1991 for the Johnson set and was given a special award by the foundation for his work in “*Keeping The Blues Alive*.” Sony Music, Inc. also presented Cohn with its first President’s Award for his work on *The Robert Johnson Project*, which sold over 2 million double CD boxed sets.

Cohn’s book “*Nothing But The Blues: The Music And The Musicians*” won the Ralph J. Gleason Book Award, given jointly by BMI and Rolling Stone magazine. Cohns book was also awarded the coveted Deems Taylor Award, given by ASCAP. The book was also inducted into the Memphis Blues Foundation’s Hall of Fame.

Larry Cohn will be co-writer and content advisor to the film and the tv series in the United States, which guarantees the authenticity of the project.

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REFLECTIONS ON BLUES

America's major artistic contribution to world culture is undeniably the Blues and its direct offspring, Jazz. Original art forms, but not without echoes of European and Caribbean influences, they have permeated and influenced popular music throughout the world since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Blues, with anguish and emotions built upon work-songs, spirituals, gospel music and field hollers, originated by Black Americans in the deep south, the state of Mississippi in particular and functioned as forms of expression: sorrow, hardship, joy, social issues, everyday subjects and always despite the attendant misery, hope!!

Blues is a social music, a means of communication as well as similarly, a means of education and a method of venting the many frustrations inherent in the human condition. Further as Muddy Waters once stated to this writer, "blues is a matter of heart and not of color." Nowhere is this truer than in the artistry of Flamenco. Born of similar socio/economic circumstances, the poetry is virtually identical to American blues; in content, subject matter and approach. Only the language is different and everything else runs on parallel tracks.

Lawrence Cohn

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FELIX GRANDE

Spanish poet, novelist, essayist and critic.

He has been awarded, among others, the **1978 National Literature Prize** and the **2004 National Prize for Spanish Letters**.

In 2005 he was made a corresponding member of the Hispano-American Royal Academy.

In 1998, in a popular vote, he was proclaimed the best writer on flamenco.

In 1997 he was made a corresponding member of the North American Academy of the Spanish Language.

As a flamenco specialist he has written *García Lorca y el flamenco* (1992), *Agenda flamenca* (1987), *Memoria del flamenco* (1995, winner of the National Flamenco Prize), and *Paco de Lucía y Camarón de la Isla* (2000). He is a member of the *Cátedra de Flamencología y Estudios Folclóricos*.

Félix Grande is co-writer and content advisor for the film and the series, which is a guarantee of the project's rigor and seriousness.

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REFLECTIONS ON FLAMENCO

"The roots of Andalusian Gypsy art feed on suffering. Among its causes have been everyday despair, particular injustices, sorrow, fear, and that mysterious occurrence which manages to convert men's collective pain into tremendous music that somehow evokes an indomitable force. Even the festive energy of some forms of Andalusian Gypsy music derives less from the platform of joy, serenity and self-assurance than from the electrical charge of urgent ambition. It is an alleviation under threat, a jubilation shot through with nerves, a provisional totality. In flamenco, festivity is not allowed the peace of continuous extroversion. It is an internal and urgent joy, often wounded or, at the very least, scarred over. It is the joy of one who is joyless, and is therefore deeper and more contagious, but always riddled with tension."

For tragic is the history of the origins and development of flamenco song. A proper understanding of flamenco art, including the guitar and dance as well as the singing itself, calls simultaneously for a proper understanding of poverty, grief and fear, and also of the exemplary resistance of the Andalusian Gypsy to the pain around him, and his enigmatic readiness to express the entire life of his heart in the harrowing language of flamenco art. And that is precisely what overwhelms us."

Félix Grande

AGENDA FLAMENCA 1985

"the flamenco singer does not invent, he remembers." J.M. Caballero Bonald

"without music, life would be an error." F. Nietzsche

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**V
GALPACHO ANDALUZ**

e Morón de la Frontera

MENAJE A DIEGO AMAYA

INTERVENDRAN LOS

Antonio

Menese

Julia

RENA

Fosforito · Ma

ini España

El Gato

JULIA



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