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DANCE REVIEW

Ida y Vuelta Flamenco makes outgoing entrance

Company glitzy, enthusiastic during Gypsy Tea Room show

By Margaret Putnam

Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

Not smoke nor chatter nor flash of camera could stay Ida y Vuelta Flamenco Dance Company from its appointed rounds Saturday night at the Gypsy Tea Room. The troupe attacked floor, drum, guitar and vocal cords with unflagging energy, letting up for two intermissions, before resuming with, if anything, more energy.

The smoke and the chatter lent a bit of Seville ambience to the show, mixed with a goodly dose of Texas State Fair. The dancers and musicians held forth in one room; in another competing sounds of country music made for a highly distracting counterpoint beginning at 11 p.m. Most of the time, the flamenco crew out-blasted its neighbors, but a guitar lullaby had no

chance.

You'd never guess anyone cared. Certainly not artistic director Julia Alcántara, the Dallas native who got her beginning with Conté de Loyo before studying in New York and Albuquerque, N.M. She grinned and leered, grabbed the mike to bully the audience into agreeing, yes, they were having a great time and yes, "Here in Dallas, Texas, we are in need of *arte*." A cheerleader with castanets, she turned the intensely inward nature of flamenco upside down.

As a dancer, however, her specialty is turbulence: She churns like whitecaps in a hailstorm. She slams into the floor in a half-crouch, stamping, tossing, flinging skirt every which way as her head arcs and arms trace wild curlicues in the air.

Her alter ego is Joseph Gonzales, as tall as she is short and as severe as she is wild. He moves in slow motion, creating sharp-edged pictures out of every dramatic angle. In his *soleá*, he strides, eyes down, to center stage, where he slowly rises to his toes and lifts

his arms overhead, looking like a beacon in the gloom.

Much more flamboyant is Eduardo Artura. Onstage with others, he's the center of attention. Dressed unconventionally in shirttails, his hair falling into his eyes, he's sexy and tough. He whipsaws the air with flashing arms and legs, sometimes with sinuous grace, at other times with a jagged roughness. Along he's not quite so imposing, though his footwork is lightning fast and his moodiness quite marvelous. Like Jose Greco II, he loves the flashy turn and quick drop to the knee, but unlike Mr. Greco, he's pretty rocky.

The fourth dancer, Carolina Holguin, stares balefully at the audience and slashes the air with her arms, like a beautiful witch you wouldn't want to cross.

Providing vigorous support to the dancers were Vincente Griego, hoarse and forceful, guitarist Jonathan "Juanito" Gordon and percussionists Greg Beck and Jamal Mohamed.

Margaret Putnam writes about dance for The Dallas Morning News.



DYNAMIC DUO: Julia Alcántara and Joseph Gonzales of Ida y Vuelta Flamenco Dance Company were a dramatic pair Saturday night at the Gypsy Tea Room.

The Dallas Morning News: Randy Eli Grothe