

## **The political and artistic impact of Federico García Lorca's *Anda Jaleo* on flamenco in Spain and the United States**

Of the many Spanish *canciones* compiled, arranged, recorded and popularized by Federico García Lorca and La Argentinita, *Anda Jaleo* is probably the best remembered and the most frequently performed.

Recorded in 1931 for the record label His Master's Voice the song was performed by Lorca in many of his poetic lecture demonstrations and in his play, La Zapatera Prodigiosa. La Argentinita transformed *Anda Jaleo* into a popular dance in the late 1930s and early '40s, and her dance company toured the piece throughout North and South America. In Spain during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), *Anda Jaleo* was a Republican Army resistance song with politically explosive lyrics. In post-Franco Spain, *Anda Jaleo* reemerged as a vibrant flamenco song, the *bulerías*.

This paper explores the phenomenon of *Anda Jaleo* and the role played by Federico García Lorca and his artistic companions and sympathizers in the song's dissemination. The song's lyrics, often transformed, and the song's longevity and vitality gives voice to 20th century Spanish thought, culture, art and politics.

### **Federico García Lorca's Artistic Impact, his Death, and the Aftermath of his Death**

Federico García Lorca has been a pivotal artistic presence in Spain, the United States, and many other countries since his first book, Impressions and Landscapes, was published in 1918. He was not an isolated figure, but part of an elite group of intellectuals and artists that included Spanish dancer La Argentinita, painter Salvador Dali, composer Mañuel de Falla, bullfighter Ignacio Sanchez Mejías, and director, Luis Buñuel.

Many of García Lorca's literary works have a strong flavor of the folklore of southern Spain. He was interested in the life of the *Gitanos* and their music and dance, poetically described in his book of ballads, Romancero Gitano, published in 1927, and in his book of poems, Poema del cante jondo, published in 1931. In this period, he wrote

with an eye to revitalizing ancient forms of Spanish poetry. He incorporated the Spanish ballad poetic pattern, used traditional stanzas from Moorish poetry, took inspiration from the classics of Spain and Greece, and the works of nineteenth century Spanish romantics. He also found inspiration in the Latin-American modernists, his literary contemporaries, Shakespeare, the French symbolists, and the surrealists.

Because of the influence of his uncle Federico and due to his immediate surroundings, García Lorca's youth was steeped in the culture of rural Spain. In 1921 he took flamenco guitar lessons with two Gypsies from Fuente Vaqueros, a suburb of Granada where he was born. He exclaimed in a letter to a friend that he was able to accompany the flamenco songs *fandangos*, *peteneras*, *tarantos*, *bulerías* and *romeras*.

García Lorca frequented the Sacromonte caves of Granada, where he developed friendships with the dancers and singers. By 1920 García Lorca and his friends, composer Manuel de Falla and philologist Ramón Menéndez Pidal, were visiting the Gypsies of the Albaicín and Sacromonte to formally collect songs and ballads.

In 1929, García Lorca studied at Columbia University in New York City. His stark and dramatic Poeta en Nueva York is a poetic vision of his experiences there. He then traveled to Havana where he delivered his famous lecture, Teoría y juego del duende. In 1930, García Lorca returned to Madrid, reconnecting with La Argentinita. In 1931 the two artists recorded the Old Spanish songs García Lorca had been memorizing and collecting since childhood. Most of them were re-harmonized or re-written by him for the recording project. The songs are now considered to be García Lorca's, though it is more accurate to regard them as his collection of songs. The songs were and are still often performed in *cuadro flamenco* groups and Spanish dance productions, the most popular ones being *Anda Jaleo*, *Zorongo*, *El Cuatro Muleros*, and *En el Café de Chiníatas*. García Lorca's childhood connection to the songs is underscored by the fact that *En el Café de Chiníatas* was taught to him by his great-uncle, also named Federico, a musician

who earned his living playing the *bandurria* at the flamenco nightclub Café de Chiníatas in Málaga.

On his performing the songs, his brother, Francisco García Lorca notes that "Federico was happiest when he was singing the songs, reciting his poems, or chanting his plays to his friends in his raspy, hypnotic voice.... He never read his work, he performed it, often accompanying himself on the piano or guitar" [from Francisco García Lorca's 1986 book, In the green morning: memories of Federico, published in New York by New Directions Books).

The quote refers to the many musical recitations delivered by García Lorca on various themes. Several of these were lecture demonstrations, accompanied by La Argentinita who would sing, dance or perform castanets to García Lorca's piano or guitar playing and his poetically delivered essay. García Lorca would also occasionally sing and accompany himself on the piano or guitar during these events. The Old Spanish songs that García Lorca and La Argentinita had previously made famous as recordings were often included in these events.

From 1932 until 1936 García Lorca continued to write poetry and write and produce his own plays. He toured Spain with his University traveling theater group, La Barraca, following the travel routes established earlier by the Teaching Missions. The company presented the classical plays of Lope de Vega, Cervantes and Calderón de la Barca, and plays and sketches about other artists and writers. The company would arrive in town and build an outdoor stage in a courtyard, or work out of a home, barn, museum or small theater.

Many of the works presented by La Barraca were socially critical. Lope de Vega's Fuenteovejuna was particularly so, containing themes of the exploitation of the peasantry by a corrupt and brutal oligarchy. Under García Lorca's direction the play became a mixture of song, dance, action and social message. The play was criticized by

conservative political powers in Spain, who found it disturbing and potentially politically dangerous.

In August 1936, Federico García Lorca's life ended tragically at age 38 in Granada. On a visit to his family, Falangists arrested and within days, shot him in the mountains near Viznar in Fuente Grande, close to Granada. He was executed because he was gay, because of the socially critical themes in his poetry, plays, and the plays performed by La Barraca, and because he was sympathetic to the Republican cause. During Franco's dictatorship it was maintained that Lorca was 'apolitical', and that his death was due to strictly non-political causes. In fact, Lorca identified himself closely with the aspirations of the Republic and with the Popular front. By 1933 the poet had signed a manifesto condemning the Nazi persecution of German writers. When Mussolini invaded Abyssinia in 1935, he cancelled a projected visit to Italy and signed another anti-Fascist manifesto. On Sat. 15 Feb. 1936, the day before the Spanish election, *Mundo obrero* (the communist newspaper) published a manifesto seemingly read by Lorca at an Alberti function. The first signatory is Lorca's:

*Intellectuals in favor of the popular front:*

Political parties separated by considerable theoretical divergences, but united in defense of freedom and the Republic, have wisely joined forces in the formation of a broadly based Popular Front. We intellectuals, artists and members of the liberal professions would fail in our duty if, at this time of undeniable political gravity, we refrained from making public our opinion on a situation of such importance. We all feel the obligation of joining our well-wishes and our best hopes to what is undoubtedly the aspiration of a majority of the Spanish people: the necessity for that free and democratic government whose absence has been so lamentably obvious in Spanish life during the last two years.

We reaffirm our support for the Popular Front not as individuals but as a numerous group of representatives of Spanish intellectual life, and we do so because we want liberty to be respected, the standard of living raised, and culture brought to the widest possible range of Spaniards

(From Ian Gibson's The death of Lorca. Published in Chicago by J. Philip O'Hara, Inc. in 1973).

Lorca's death became a rallying point for intellectuals and artists worldwide who opposed the Franco regime. In November 1937 Franco went on record saying that the Nationalists had "shot no poets," a remark he would regret for years to come since all of García Lorca's sympathizers knew the statement was untrue.

### **The history of *Anda Jaleo* - *The Diligence* and *The Smugglers of Ronda***

In the 1920s, Lorca and his companions collected these popular songs and ballads by visiting the caves of the Gypsies of Granada. They also relied upon a variety of 19th century Spanish song compilations, including Francisco Ocón's *Cantos españoles: colección de aires nacionales y populares*, and José Hurtado's *Cantos populares asturianos*.

Ocón's and Hurtado's collections include early versions of *Anda Jaleo*, variously entitled *The Diligence*, and *The Smugglers of Ronda*.

Hurtado recognized the following verses of the song popular from what he describes as an "earlier" time:

Arriméme a un pino verde	I came upon a green pine tree
por ver si me consolaba	So I could be consoled
y el pino como era verde	when I saw how green the pine was
al verme llorar llorabal.	It made me weep.

#### **REFRAIN**

Anda jaleo, jaleo,	Let's shout, let's clap and cheer
Ya se acabó el alboroto	We have all caused a rucus

y vamos al tiroteo.

now let's get on with the shooting.

### **Federico García Lorca and La Argentinita's 1931 recording**

Ten songs, including *Anda Jaleo*, were recorded in 1931 by Lorca and La Argentinita on five gramophone plates, with one song on each side of each plate of 25 cm. and 78 revolutions per minute. The records became extremely popular in Spain at the time.

Angel del Ríos' transcriptions, published posthumously for Lorca in 1941 by the Hispanic Institute at Columbia University in New York City, clearly demonstrates a 12-count compás cycles in the bass line of Lorca's *Anda Jaleo*, with heavy accents falling on counts 12, 3, 6, 8 and 10 - an alternating 3/4 and 6/8 rhythm. Ríos notes the following as verses compiled, recognized and harmonized by García Lorca:

1. Yo mé (arrimé) subi a un pino verde	I spied (drew near) a green pine tree
por ver si la divisaba	To see if I could have a glimpse of her
Y solo divisé el polvo	But I could only see the dust
del coche que la llevaba.	Raised by the car she traveled in.

#### **Refrain:**

Anda jaleo, jaleo!

Ya se acabo el al boroto

Y vamos, al tiroteo, y vamos,

Al tiroteo.

2. No salgas paloma al campo	Don't come out to the fields, dove
mira que soy cazador.	Look, I'm a hunter
Y si te tiro y te mato	And if I shoot and kill you
para mí será el dolor	I'll be the one to grieve

para mí será el quebranto

I'll be the one on is distressed.

**Refrain** (as above)

3. En la calle de los Muros

Down Muros Street

mataron, a una paloma.

A dove has been killed.

Yo cortaré con mis manos

With my own hands I'll cut

las flores, de su corona

the flowers for her wreath.

*Anda Jaleo* became the popular title of the song with La Argentinita and García Lorca's rendition, though in a dance program note La Argentinita pays tribute to earlier versions of *Anda Jaleo* which according to the note is a "romance of the smugglers of the 19th century" and a dance about "the cavaliers of the Sierras in their fights, loves and adieus."

**Anda Jaleo in La Guerra Civil Español - "Tren blindado" - the *estribillo***

During the Spanish Civil War, one of Lorca's collected songs, *Anda Jaleo*, underwent a major transformation and diffusion among Republican soldiers. The *estribillo* (refrain) of the song, performed now with politically explosive lyrics, became the refrain for other songs that had undergone a similar war time transformation, the most popular example being *El Quinto Regimiento*, the original of which is the Spanish song *El Vito*.<sup>1</sup>

The lyrics included here, all circulated during the war, refer to *los sublevados* - the Nationalists - the enemies of the Republic, and to *tren blindado* - the mythical armored

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<sup>1</sup>The original *estribillo* (refrain; chorus) of *El Vito* was often sung in conjunction with *Anda Jaleo*. It is: Con el vito, vito, vito; con el vito, vito va; yo no quiero que me miren; que me pongo colorá. Una malagueña fue a Sevilla a ver los toros; y en la mitad del camino la cautivaron los moros.

train of the Russian revolution. According to the song, this train caused the enemies of the Spanish Republic to retreat in terror:

**Tren blindado** (Music: Anda Jaleo)

Yo me subí un pino verde	I climbed up to a green pine tree
/: Por ver si Franco llegaba: /	To try to see if Franco had come.
Y sólo vi al tren blindado,	and I saw the armored train
/: lo bien que tiroteaba :/	it's guns, blasting away.

**Refrain**

Anda, jaleo, jaleo (jaleo)	Come on - shout, scream.
Silba la locomotora	The engine hissed,
/: Y Franco se va a paseo: /	as Franco passed by.

**2°**

Yo marché con el tren blindado	I marched with the armoured train
/: Camino de Andalucía: /	on the way to Andalusia
Y vi que Queipo de Llano	and I saw how Queipo de Llano
/: Al verlo retrocedía :/	Seeing it, was forced to retreat.

**2 °Refrain**

Anda, jaleo, jaleo (jaleo)	Come on - shout, scream.
Silba la locomotora	Hiss, engine
/: Y Queipo se va a paseo: /	at Queipo as he goes by.



3°

Por tierras altas de Burgos

/: Anda Mola sublevado: /

Ya veremos cómo corre

/: Cuando llegue el tren blindado: /

Into the land of Burgos

Mola marched indignantly.

But we see him run!

When the armoured train comes.

### 3° Refrain

Anda, jaleo, jaleo (jaleo)

Silba la locomotora

/: Y Mola se va a paseo: /

Come on - shout, scream.

the engine hisses,

at Mola as he passes by<sup>2</sup>.

[London 1978].

### Franco regime

Immediately after the war censorship was in full force in Spain. No mention could be made of individuals associated with the Republic, arrests, or executions, meaning that García Lorca and his works, including his collected songs, were not available and they were not discussed, at least publicly. Other popular songs provided an emotional catharsis, but by proxy, since the real nature of grief and distress could not be named. An example of this is Concha Piquer's song *No te mires en el Río*, which owes a clear debt to Lorca's ballad Romance anónimo. The song tells of one who commands his sweetheart not to look out the window into the river. When he returns he finds her dead in the river, and as the waters carry her away, she seems to him to be a rose. At first glance the song seems basic and sentimental. But it carries an emotional burden of anguish and desolation, loss and mystery. Its meaning is not found on the surface, but in what Vázquez Montalbán calls "*una lógica subnormale*." The need to express what was repressed made popular consciousness elliptical. In songs, the meaning had to be sought not in the words, but in the tone, the stress, in what wasn't being said, in the metaphors. This was suppression beneath the level of conscious

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<sup>2</sup>The translation is my own.

thought itself, encapsulated in the word "aboulia" - where time and space are experienced as a void.

In Spain in the 1940s, most of Lorca's collected songs, especially *Anda Jaleo*, probably due to its explosive transformation during the war, went underground to resurface in *peñas* and relatively low-key venues at first, either with an air of self-protection or open defiance, and then in larger venues in the 1950s. Oblique mentions of Lorca, similar to Concha Piquer's song, existed in a variety of poems, plays, dances, theatrical, film and literary venues throughout the Franco regime. In 1952 Lorca's friend and artistic collaborator Edgar Neville produced and directed the film Duende y Misterio del flamenco. A seemingly innocuous overview of Spanish music and dance in 1952, the film alludes to Lorca's death in a segment featuring the flamenco song, the media granadinas of Granada in which the Gypsies of the Sacromonte gather for the funeral of a favorite singer, and a favorite "poet."

Dance contributions during the 1940s-50s include pieces with the titles subtly changed, like Pilar López' theatrical flamenco La Zapatera y el Embozado. Based on García Lorca's play, La Zapatera Prodigiosa, the dance was presented in 1951. Spanish dancers Rosario and Antonio presented Zorongo in 1950, the lyrics, obviously García Lorca's, performed by Rosario within the context of the piece.

It is clear that the above named dance artists enjoyed successful international reputations, and may have been given leeway in their presentations. Their works were probably deemed "good for Spain's international image," thus the inclusion of redos of García Lorca's plays and songs. It is also probable that the Franco regime sought to diffuse, confuse and mystify the circumstances of Lorca's death by allowing that the original versions of the songs be heard.

## **La Argentinita, Pilar López, and José Greco in the United States and South America 1938-1945**

In the United States during the Spanish Civil War and the years following until La Argentinita's death in New York City in 1945, La Argentinita and her sister, Pilar Lopez, joined forces to present memorable theatrical dances to García Lorca's plays, poems, and songs, including a popular version of *Anda Jaleo*. Program notes from the December 17, 1938 performance of La Argentinita's dance company at the Fifty-first Street Theater in New York City describe La Argentinita's Anda Jaleo as a "romance of the smugglers of the 19th century" and a dance about "the cavaliers of the Sierras in their fights, loves and adieus." The program credits García Lorca with the music.

A review of La Argentinita's Anda Jaleo, presented at the Majestic Theatre on Sunday, November 13, 1938, briefly describes one performance:

A dance interspersed with songs and miming, all excellent and diverting, is Anda Jaleo (García Lorca)...This brief and dramatic dance was probably the high spot of the evening. It had a quality of perfection, geometry of movement, a certain sculptural integrity that made the audience cheer it to an encore that was just as perfect.

Dance critics often labeled La Argentinita's Anda Jaleo "catchily rhythmic" [Dance 1940:42], or mentioned the dance briefly as "the delightful García Lorca song "*Anda Jaleo*" [Martin 1942a:13], with no other information as to the thematic or choreographic nature of the dance included. In an appreciation to La Argentinita in the 1938-1939 Sol Hurok touring program brochure, the editor of Dance Magazine, Paul R. Milton, mentions the "pulsating rhythms of [her] Anda Jaleo" [Milton 1939a:2]. The program brochure also includes three *coplas* [verses] and the refrain of *Anda Jaleo* on the back page, though the dance Anda Jaleo was apparently not included in the aforementioned available brochure. Many newspaper accounts consider it to be one of La Argentinita's best and most popular dance numbers.

Comments about dance movements or concrete descriptions of the theatrical elements contained within La Argentinita's Anda Jaleo are not included in these dance reviews. Choreographic descriptions of this work may not still exist in the United States, though it was often performed. However, tangible evidence of the choreography does survive through José Greco. This tangible evidence, a film of José Greco's dance company performing *Cordoba*, which is a re-staged version of La Argentinita's *Anda Jaleo*, is the direct result of Greco's affiliation with her. Greco's Spanish Dance Company presented Greco's redo of La Argentinita's *Anda Jaleo*, called *Cordoba*, and other Lorca-inspired works from the 1950s into the 1970s, the notable presentation being for the Voice of Firestone on television in the late 1950s.

### **Jose Greco's "Cordoba"**

José Greco presented many of the dances he had performed with La Argentinita and Pilar López in his new dance company beginning in 1948, including *Anda Jaleo*, renamed *Cordoba* from the late 1950s on. The piece clearly demonstrates Greco presenting the original themes from La Argentinita's *Anda Jaleo*, renamed *Cordoba* by Greco.

Performed in the film by José Greco and Lola de Ronda to a live orchestral score, and Ronda's singing of García Lorca's lyrics, Greco begins the dance with a recitation, including a familiar verse of *Anda Jaleo*. The dance movement is adapted into the rhythm of a *bulerías*, and Lola de Ronda accompanies her dancing with castanets. Here, the dancers are dressed in riding clothes - major themes of the dance being the mountains of the Sierra Morena, the male lover, who is apparently a smuggler, and the parted lovers, with the male lover appearing as a spirit or a memory.

It is likely that García Lorca had artistic input in the creation of La Argentinita's choreographic *Anda Jaleo*, because the two artists frequently performed this and their other popular Spanish songs as lecture demonstrations. Greco's version of *Anda Jaleo* (which he has called *Cordoba*), a redo of La Argentinita's original dance, may thus be directly related to García Lorca's artistic vision.

The slow political and artistic thaw of the 1960s paved the way for more open performances of Lorca's works. Since the political change of 1975, Spain has witnessed a complete rebirth of all things Lorca, including his plays, poems and prose, dance performances based on Lorca's works (notably including Antonio Gades' seminal theatrical dance piece, *Bodas de Sangre*, and Mario Maya's *Amargo*, based on Lorca's poem), musical, literary, and theatrical tributes, and redos and reredos of all of Lorca's songs, including popular flamenco versions of the songs by Camarón de la Isla, Paco de Lucía, and notably, a recent recording by Carmen Linares.

### **Carmen Linares and the TVE presentation**

Recorded in 1993, Carmen Linares' version of García Lorca's collected Spanish songs, including *Anda Jaleo*, is profoundly flamenco and a *bulería*. Relying on the original recording, newer musical sensibilities, and additional instrumentation, including percussion, flute and drums, Linares and a group of contemporary flamenco

artists have updated and revitalized the songs, much in the same way that La Argentinita and Federico García Lorca did in 1931.

It is thus that *Anda Jaleo* has come full circle – from ancient folk song collected, reharmonized and revitalized by Federico García Lorca and La Argentinita, to political resistance song, to popular theatrical song, to vibrant flamenco song. The Old Spanish songs, particularly *Anda Jaleo*, have kept Lorca's memory alive all these years, and most likely will continue to do so for many years to come.

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