

## **Flamenco fascinates, reveals Spanish passion and spirit / Lorenzo Medel, 16, in recital**

[SUNDRY STROKES By Rosalinda L. Orosa](#) (The Philippine Star) Updated August 15, 2012 12:00 AM [Comments](#)

[\(0\)](#)

“Flamenco! Cuerdas de Fuego” was staged by a rather unusual group: whereas flamenco companies consist of predominantly male dancers, or at least of a balanced male-female combination of dancers, the one which Filfest presented at the Insular Life auditorium in Alabang was exclusively female except for a male dancer, Antonio Vargas. Ginajane Grey directed the entire spectacle.

The fascinatingly varied program featured Vargas and La Conja in “Conversation with Castanets”, a dialogue between lovers which conveyed flirtation, courtship and romance expressed, of course, through eloquent masterful castanet-clicking.

Another number had Adolfo Tinuat marvelously strumming on the guitar while the vivid silhouette of Ginajane Grey’s lithe figure was seen gracefully, alluringly, sensuously moving to the music.

Again an innovative dance that added further dimension to the flamenco was the opening “Bach Toccata” which had the company in a novel, imaginative choreography to Bach’s classical organ music played on the guitar, this rendering the dance most original.

“A Lesson in Dance” arrested and sustained attention, with Vargas as flamenco teacher and Grey as pupil. Artistic license allowed Grey to learn the routine at the very first lesson, following Vargas’ arm and leg movements to perfection. What a joyful miracle it would be for the dance world if all students could learn the flamenco as effortlessly, here given an eye-catching, magnetic demonstration!

The grey-haired Vargas, obviously the most senior in the company, exhibited in his solo dance “Solea por Bulerias” incomparable elegance, dynamism and the arrogant air called for — indeed demanded — by the flamenco.

Initially performing without accompaniment, Daphne Vargas, wife of Antonio, manipulated her white, wide manton (shawl) deftly and cleverly — twirling it around her arms and shoulders, holding it aloft and waving it, often calling to mind a bullfighter teasing and enticing a bull with his cape.

After the complex sequence with the manton, Daphne lifted her skirt and its long train to exhibit rapid, pounding foot work.

In “Segiriyas”, Clarissa Di Salvo stunned the audience with her superb technique: arched or graceful arms, fantastic zapateados and taconeos that sounded like thunderous horses’ hooves, sudden, arresting pauses and dizzying twirls — all these expressing overwhelming passion and spirit. The soul of Spain.

The younger dancers — Victoria Santos and Dianne Francisco — performed “Tangos” with Grey and Daphne Vargas, captivating viewers as they exuded charm and grace.

In the finale, each member of the company engaged in a brief solo to deafening applause. Earlier, Clarissa Di Salvo and La Conja exhibited admirable versatility dancing as well as singing with heart and soul to the excellent accompaniment of guitarist Jose Ismael Sierra and of the similarly versatile dancer Antonio Vargas as percussionist.

While members of the audience joined the dancers’ hand-clapping during the finale, the irrepressible Antonio Vargas enjoined them to come onstage. Filfest chairman Vicente R. Ayllon, president Vicky F. Zubiri, secretary Lina Racho among others responded to the invitation, with Vicky and Lina briefly demonstrating their talent.

As Vicky came down, I told her in levity, “You were the best!”

Among lovers of the dance who avidly watched the Flamenco group were former Ambassador to Spain Juan and Pilina Rocha, Doña Elena Colomé, widow of the late Spanish Ambassador Delfin Colomé, Chloe Romulo Periquet who is adept with the castanets, violinist Gina Medina, flamenco teacher Clara Ramona, her student Dr. Olivia R. Francisco, and art patron Tony Pastor.