

Random Thoughts on Dance (and other things)

by Marina Harss



— Gabriela Granados (in green), Juan Siddi and Aurora Reyes of American Bolero Dance Company.

Last but not least, I attended a flamenco *tablaó* presented by the [American Bolero Dance Company](#), at a social club, the Chian Federation, in Queens. As usual, it was an informal affair, put together through the efforts of Gabriela Granados, dancer, teacher, and tireless impresario. The first half was devoted to her students and an energetic salsa duo, Karla Choko and Franklin Liranzo (Liranzo's plunging neckline was, itself, a showstopper). But it was after the intermission that things really got going. The excellent young *cantaor* Félix de Lola, sang a slow, brooding *seguiriya*, accompanied only by the guitar of Basilio Georges. Granados, dressed all in black, head covered with a mantón (as if in mourning), gave a dramatic recitation of García Lorca's "Romance de la Pena Negra," eyes flashing as she intoned "¿Y a ti qué se te importa? / Vengo a buscar lo que busco, mi alegría y mi persona." Then she danced an earthy *soleá*, dipping and turning, fearless in her sadness. Aurora Reyes, a force of nature, sang an upbeat number about *toreros* in her strong, brazen voice, while also dancing, her small, solid frame exploding with vigor. (One of the great things about flamenco is that it's not just for the young and lithe. In some ways, the dancing improves with age, as all inhibitions melt away.) The final number was for La Conja, an eagle-eyed master of rhythm, whose syncopated footwork and claps

carved their way into the interstices of the music. The momentum of her solo (a *soleá por bulería*) grew and grew, until the whole stage was swept up in the flame of her dancing. This was not a night of virtuosos, but something far more rare: real people, masters of a specific tradition, really *dancing*.