ENTREVISTA

DAVID LEIVA

Fotos: Teresa Sala

Este joven tocaor almeriense, pero formado en la barcelonesa escuela de Manuel Granados, ha publicado recientemente el primer volumen de su "Método de cante y baile flamenco y su acompañamiento". Por ello queremos conocer un poco más a este sonatero, dada la grata aceptación que ha tenido su publicación, tanto en los círculos académicos, como entre los profesionales del ramo.

Repasando tu currículum descubrimos que posees formación de guitarra clásica, pero ejerces la docencia de la guitarra flamenca, ¿qué tienen en común?

Mi formación en la guitarra clásica ha sido posterior a los de la guitarra flamenca. Es poco común hacer esto, lo más habitual es hacerlo a la inversa. Para mí ha sido un lujo poder tocar música de Bach, Villalobos, Barrios, Brouwer, Falla, Rodrigo, Albéniz... grandes maestros de la música. Con esta formación clásica he ampliado muchos conocimientos sobre armonía, repertorio clásico, técnicas de guitarra clásica, dirección de orquesta, asignaturas de pedagogía, armonía de jazz, músicas del mundo... Creo que el guitarrista flamenco debe de ser ante todo músico y apreciar toda la música, ya que de todo se aprende. A mis alumnos les intento transmitir esta idea y les crea una motivación extra.

T his young flamenco guitarist from Almería but trained in the Manuel Granados School in Barcelona, has published recently the first volume of his "Método de cante y baile flamenco y su acompañamiento". That is why we want to know better this guitarist, due to the pleasant acception that his publication has had in the academic circles as well as among professionals.

Going over your curriculum, we discover that you have learnt classic guitar but you teach flamenco guitar, what do they have in common?

My education in classic guitar was later than my education in flamenco guitar. It is not common to do this, the most usual thing is to do it the other way round. For me, it has been such an experience to play music by Bach, Villalobos, Barrios, Brouwer, Falla, Rodrigo, Albéniz... great masters of music. With this classic training I have broadened my knowledge of harmony, classic repertoire, classic guitar techniques, orchestral conducting, pedagogy subjects, jazz harmony, world music... I think the flamenco guitarist must be a musician above all and must appreciate all the music because we learn from everything. I try to transmit that idea to my students and it creates an extra motivation in them.

16 La Flamenca
Sin duda ha sido Manuel Granados el mayor impulsor de tu vena jonda, ¿cómo definirías esa labor que lleva realizando tantos años en Barcelona?

Para mí es mi gran maestro y le admiro por todo su trabajo, es un privilegio poder trabajar con él en el Conservatori del Liceu. Su labor pedagógica desde el año 1991 ha sido para muchos una labor pionera y de ejemplo a seguir. Cuando yo me incorporé a estudiar con él, el plan de estudios no sólo tenía la disciplina de Guitarra Flamenca sino que contemplaba una serie de asignaturas complementarias a la especialidad como Historia, Teoría Musical del Flamenco, Acompañamiento, Composición, Flamencología... que luego han servido para materializar los estudios que conocemos actualmente en el resto de los Conservatorios Superiores que han incorporado esta disciplina.

Del mismo modo supone un gran orgullo para el arte flamenco que el Conservatorio del Liceu impartá la disciplina de guitarra flamenca, ¿en qué consisten los planes de estudio?

El Conservatori del Liceu, como bien sabemos, es uno de los conservatorios más importantes del mundo y que haya sido el primer conservatorio de música de España que haya introducido estudios de guitarra flamenca es de admiración y un ejemplo a seguir para todos los conservatorios y escuelas de música de España que aún no han introducido los estudios de guitarra flamenca. Los planes de estudios recogen el grado elemental, medio y superior incorporando postgrados y masters para aquellos licenciados en la especialidad de Guitarra, adecuándolos al nuevo Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior, conocido como el "plan de Bolonia".

Últimamente se habla mucho de la Cataluña flamenca, principalmente por esas grandes voces que copan el panorama nacional pero, ¿cómo ves la escena de la guitarra?

En Barcelona hay muy buenos guitarristas como Juan Manuel Cañizares, Chicuelo, Pedro Sierra... de fama internacional y grandes escuelas como la de Miguel Borrull. Hay nivel suficiente para que el flamenco esté orgulloso de los artistas flamencos catalanes que exportan la cultura flamenca por todo el mundo. Cataluña ha tenido y tendrá un lugar en la historia del toque, cante y baile flamenco.

También tienes otras inquietudes musicales, acercándote a otros estilos, ¿de qué modo se compenetran con el flamenco?

El flamenco ya es un género musical firme y sólido y, si se respetan sus bases fundamentales, sonará flamenco, independientemente del instrumento con el que se interprete. Con esto no quiero decir que hacer una escala de jazz encima de un patrón por bulerías suene flamenco, error que cometemos muchos jazzeros. En mi grupo hemos incorporado a otros instrumentistas de otros géneros como el jazz o el clásico pero respetando estas bases en ritmo y armonía para que no se haga una distorsión del género.

Without a doubt, Manuel Granados has been the main driving force of your side, how would you define the labour that he has been doing for so many years in Barcelona?

For me he is my great master and I admire him for all his work, it is a privilege to work with him in the Liceu College of Music. His pedagogic labour since 1991 has been for many people a pioneering work and an example to follow. When I started studying with him, the syllabus not only had a Flamenco Guitar course but it also contemplated a series of complementary courses to the speciality like History, Musical Theory of Flamenco, Accompaniment, Composition, Flamencology... that later have been useful to materialise the education that we know currently in the Colleges of Music that have incorporated this discipline.

Likewise, flamenco art is proud because there is a flamenco guitar discipline in the Liceu College of Music, which is the content of the syllabuses?

The Liceu College of Music, as we know, is one of the most important colleges of music in the world and the fact that it has been the first college of music in Spain to introduce flamenco guitar studies is admirable and an example to follow for all the colleges and schools of music in Spain that have not yet introduced the flamenco guitar studies. The syllabuses have the elemental, middle and superior grades, having postgraduate courses and masters for those graduated in the Guitar specialty in the framework of the new European Higher Education Area, known as "Bologna process".

Lately, there has been a lot of talk about "Cataluña flamenca", mainly because of these great voices that stand out nationally but, how do you see the guitar scene?

There are many good guitarists in Barcelona like Juan Manuel Cañizares, Chicuelo, Pedro Sierra... with international fame and great schools like Miguel Borrull. The flamenco can be proud of the flamenco artists from Catalonia because they export flamenco culture all over the world. Catalonia has had and will have a place in the history of the flamenco guitar playing, singing and dance.

You also have others musical interests, approaching other styles, how do they work with flamenco?

Flamenco is already a firm and solid music genre and if its fundamental bases are respected, it will sound like flamenco, independently of the instrument you play. With this I do not mean that doing a jazz scale in a bulerías pattern sounds flamenco, a mistake that many jazz-lovers make. In my band we have incorporated other instrumentalists of other styles like jazz or classic but always respecting the rhythm and harmony bases so there is not a distortion of the genre.
By the way, which have been the reasons why you have published your method?

The idea arose due to my experience as pedagogue. Every year, I give seminars on singing and dance accompaniment and I handed the students scores with only the guitar accompaniment. As a consequence of not finding any didactic resources that provide an integral study of the voice and the guitar, I opted for preparing a material that, at the same time, could be added to the educational offer in colleges and schools of music. On the other hand, the written flamenco pedagogy has been mostly based on concert flamenco guitar and in techniques, styles, etc. In the other disciplines, singing and dance, there is not too much information. I wanted this method to be an easy tool for all levels and do it in a practical way. It is also aimed to be a guitar method, because if you play the different *falsetas* in their levels and you also play the accompaniment, you are doing two things at the same time, because you are learning to play the guitar and to accompany, I mean, you learn from the singing. I have wanted the CD that accompanies the book to be educational above all. This was fundamental for me.

I usually ask the guitarists that the young people that approach this instrument think more in a solo career than in accompanying the singing, what do you try to inculcate in your students?

Flamenco guitar has evolved in so many aspects that it is no longer just an accompaniment instrument. Consequently, I understand the guitarists that only love concert flamenco guitar. I try to inculcate both things in my students, the fact that the flamenco guitar was born from the singing and it is where you have to learn from (that is the reason why I made this method), but we have to adapt ourselves to new times and to try to do both things because each discipline gives you a different sensation.

You are also standing out as composer of some dance shows, do you think that your method can help to compose the music for scenic flamenco shows?

This method is a tool for the guitarist so he can build a dance traditional structure and he can also have it as an example of inspiration when doing or composing it. The flamenco guitarist is usually the musical creator of any flamenco show, because he is the one that composes the music.

At last, can you tell us something about your upcoming activities?

In April was released my book "Suite de flamenco" a book+CD that has concert works for flamenco guitar. In May will be released the 2nd volume of "Método de Cante y Baile Flamenco" that is focused on *tangos* and *elegias* with some of their derivatives. This time Mauri, a great flamenco singer, has collaborated on the singing. In June will be released "Combo flamenco" a book+CD that gathers flamenco styles written for four voices: flamenco guitar, flute, bass guitar and percussion.