



**Course GA-25**

**INITIATION TO THE PRATICE OF FLAMENCO THROUGH  
RHYTHM: DANCE, SINGING, AND THE GUITAR**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The flamenco-appreciative audience is not usually a mere passive spectator. To fully understand and enjoy a flamenco performance, or even to participate in an improvised get-together, it is essential to be knowledgeable, with regard to its practical dimension, about the language of song (cante), dance (baile) and guitar music (toque). One of the exclusive characteristics of flamenco is its percussive accompaniment with hand-clapping by using one's palms, as well as feet tapping, where the performer-participant has to master the complex rhythmic language of this Andalusian art. In the course of a performance, the hand-clappers have the function of maintaining the base-line of the rhythm (rhythmic cycles), while, at the same time, they must be able to react to the stretches of improvisation in which the other performers (the singer, the guitarist, and the dancer) may become involved, since it is those same handclappers constitute the link among the three disciplines.

**OBJECTIVES**

One of the master keys to the understanding of the language of flamenco is that of rhythmic measure. Thus it is that this Course has the following objectives:

1. To bring the student closer to the expression of this art through the practice of percussive accompaniment (hand-clapping by using one's palms, feet tapping, knocking sounds, whistling sounds, noisy back-up, etc.)
2. To know the traditional structures of flamenco dance and understand the language and codes used by the different disciplines
3. To develop students' rhythmic and choreographic memory
4. To promote the ability to work as a team

**REQUIREMNETS**

**No** prior knowledge of flamenco is required.

**No** guitar is needed.

Avoid the use of footwear with rubber soles.

The use of some sort of recording device (an actual recorder, mobile phone, etc.) will be necessary.



## METHODOLOGY

All the theoretical content of the Course is designed so as to facilitate its subsequent implementation by means of the following procedures:

1. Rhythm-based exercises using a metronome at different speeds.
2. Throughout the Course, accompanying invited artists with hand-clapping, while making use of one's palms, too.
3. The performance of simple choreographic fragments of dance.
4. The analysis of the melodic structures of basic singing styles, as well as of traditional flamenco guitar repertoire.

## SYLLABUS

The syllabus content is organized in two blocks:

### I. Theoretical content

1. Study of the fundamental concepts of rhythm and rhythmic values (black notes, quavers, semiquavers, triplets and rests), as well as binary, ternary, and combination measures.
2. Analysis of the traditional structure of the key dance types: explanation of the use and characteristics of the structural elements involved (waiting beats, rhythmic cadences, callings out loud, foot tapping, and final rhythmic cadences)

### II. Practical content

3. To learn and practice the technique of palm-based hand-clapping (open and muffled) to achieve precision through:
  - a clean and homogeneous sound
  - coordination between hands and feet
4. Execution of the basic rhythmic values: black notes, quavers, semi-quavers, triplets and rests
5. Make simple rhythmic configurations based on counterpointing and syncopation.
6. Working on measures typical of tangos (binary), sevillanas (ternary), sure-measured *bulerías* and fasttime *alegrías* (as 12-beat combinations)
7. To identify the structural elements of different styles of flamenco dance (waiting beats, up-toning cadences, callings out loud, foot tapping and final rhythmic cadences) and accompany them appropriately with palm-based hand-clapping

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| • Mid-way Exam:          | 20% (theory exam 10%, practical exam 10%) |
| • End-of-Semester Exam:  | 30% (theory exam 15%, practical exam 15%) |
| • Final Essay Assignment | 20%                                       |
| • Active Participation:  | 30%                                       |



### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Expósito, J. M. (2013). *El compás flamenco de todos los estilos*. APOSTROFE.

Marín, L. F. (2004). *Teoría musical del flamenco: ritmo, armonía, melodía, forma*.

Acordes Concert.

Núñez, F. (2013). *Comprende el Flamenco*. Madrid: RGB Arte Visual.

### **Webpages to be consulted**

<http://www.flamencopolis.com/archives/4539>

<https://flamencometro.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Los-Compases-Flamencos.pdf>

### **Glossary of Terms**

<http://www.flamencopolis.com/archives/2160>