

## Flamenco & Graffiti – a unique fusion by Madrid & Beyond as part of The Iberia Connection for Largay Travel

In collaboration with Germán Jiménez, Casa Patas; Done and Zeta, and Pepa Garrido



Madrid & Beyond, the leading incoming luxury travel agency for Spain and Portugal, showcased *Flamenco & Graffiti*, a unique fusion – and world first! – of flamenco and urban art in a specially created performance at Hotel Villa Magna in Madrid on Saturday November 2, 2019.

*Flamenco & Graffiti* was developed in collaboration with Germán Jiménez; the prestigious Madrid-based flamenco conservatory and foundation, Casa Patas; urban artists Done and Zeta; and flamenco dress designer Pepa Garrido. It was part of *The Iberia Connection*, a special event celebrating Madrid & Beyond's partnership with US travel company Largay Travel.

Wearing white flamenco outfits created by the Seville-based designer, dancers Isabel Rodríguez and José Jurado performed a single 20-minute piece accompanied by Alejandro González Moreno on guitar and singer Juan de Mairena. The performance began with the typical 'bulerías', Andalusian song accompanied by clapping and dancing, evolving into a joyful piece inspired by the Cádiz sea before reaching its crescendo with the style known as 'guajiras', Cuban folksong long since adopted into the flamenco tradition.

However, what started as a traditional flamenco show turned into a completely unparalleled performance when urban artists Done and Zeta approached the stage, spray paint cans in hand, and began to spray paint directly onto Rodríguez's elaborately ruffled dress and Jurado's well-fitted jacket. Working fluidly as the dancers moved around the stage, the artists decorated the flamenco costumes with abstract circles and swooping marks in red and pink paint, building on the widely recognized flamenco pattern of polka dots.

Following the performance, Rodríguez's dress was displayed for guests to view up close and the artists hand-signed prints.

Madrid & Beyond founder, Nigel Hack, said: "It was truly a unique performance, fusing folklore, history, dance and contemporary Iberian art in a highly original way. The symbiosis between a traditional discipline such as flamenco and an artistic form as radically modern as urban art reflects the innovative spirit of Madrid & Beyond. We always aspire to be creative for our travelers, crafting magical moments that don't just blur into one, but rather stand out as happy memories which can last a lifetime."

The performance followed a trade show organized by the Spanish travel agency which gave the US travel agents the opportunity to meet hoteliers from four and five-star properties all over Spain and Portugal. The initiative was part of Madrid & Beyond's 20th anniversary celebrations and included an announcement from Hack of a new Portugal office opening in Lisbon in early 2020.

## Notes to the editor

**Madrid & Beyond** is the leading incoming luxury travel agency for Spain and Portugal based in Madrid, Spain. Founded by Nigel Hack in 1999, Madrid & Beyond creates authentic, personalized travel experiences across the Iberian Peninsula for discerning and sophisticated travelers. The agency prides itself on being able to offer clients the most unique and unforgettable experiences that cannot be found online or in a guidebook, and on facilitating access to the most interesting people in contemporary Iberia. Madrid & Beyond's extensive and exclusive network of collaborators, including artisans and art restorers, top chefs and winery owners, flamenco musicians and soccer insiders, allows travelers to get under the skin of Spanish and Portuguese culture. Madrid & Beyond also has excellent relationships with the best four and five-star luxury hotels across the Peninsula and takes care of all client logistics and travel requirements. Hack, a former history teacher based in Madrid for over 20 years, set up the company out of a burning passion for Spain and a genuine desire to share more widely the people and places that had inspired him. Madrid & Beyond now designs hundreds of trips every year for clients from all over the world. The team comprises 27 multi-lingual travel specialists in Spain and the US and boasts a collection of important accolades. Most recently, Hack was named a Conde Nast Traveler "2019 Top Travel Specialist" and was included in Travel + Leisure's 18th annual A-List of top agents and tour operators.

**Largay Travel** was founded in 1969 by Roland F. Largay. Paul Largay, Roland's nephew, joined the organization in 1982. Amanda Klimak, current company president, equity partner, and Virtuoso advisory board member, joined the team in 2001. Collectively they've traveled the world and built one of New England's premier travel management organizations. Headquartered in Waterbury, Connecticut, Largay provides a staff of 60 dedicated, experienced advisers, whose average tenure exceeds 20 years. To ensure all the unique needs of each respective sector and traveler are satisfied, the company is strategically divided into three separate divisions: leisure travel, group and incentive, and corporate services. Largay Travel is a branch of the Tzell Travel group, and proud members of the exclusive Virtuoso network of trusted travel specialists.

**Flamenco** is one of the most significant expressions of popular art which exists in the world today and one of Spain's greatest contributions to the performing arts. It was born in the working-class communities of Andalucía with the Gitano (Roma) people playing a significant role in its development over centuries. Other influences include Arabic Muzinic song, Jewish synagogal song, the Christian liturgical tradition and even music of Afro-Cuban origin. Flamenco is now recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

**Casa Patas Live Flamenco** was born in Madrid in 1984 in a period of profound change and social, political and cultural transformation. Considered a reference point in the world of flamenco, Casa Patas offers an extensive program of first-class live flamenco shows, from Monday to Saturday. Since the beginning, Casa Patas has programmed flamenco concerts, introducing new artists and musicians with a different show each week. Two key aspects characterize the quality of their shows: on the one hand, they are exceptionally demanding in the choice of artists, whilst at the same time they take great care of everything

connected to the performances. In their venue in the historic *Barrio de Las Letras* in central Madrid, the *tablao* is a small theatre and is completely separate from the restaurant, ensuring guests pay the due attention and respect to the artists, thus contributing to a more heartfelt performance. The building is also home to the Casa Patas Flamenco Conservatory Foundation founded in 2000. A non-profit, the Foundation's main objective is to disseminate and promote flamenco by teaching, researching and organizing shows both in Spain and abroad. During the last 10 years, the Foundation has taken flamenco to more than 40 cities on five continents. In 2019, 200 people have taken up flamenco lessons with Casa Patas, indicating an art form that is in very good health.

**José Antonio Jurado** is a Cordovan dancer with a degree in Spanish and Classical Dance who trained with teachers such as "El Güito". In 2001, he joined the Andalusian Dance Company and in 2003, started to work with Cristina Hoyos. From 2005, he worked with the María Pagés dance company, one of Spain's most internationally renowned dancers and choreographers. Jurado has collaborated in the assembly of several shows such as "Bodas de Sangre" by Antonio Gades and has shared the stage with some of the most important dancers of our time: Belén Maya, Rafaela Carrasco, Manuel Liñán, among others. For several years, he has combined an artistic career with teaching as a professor of dance at the Casa Patas Flamenco Conservatory Foundation.

**Isabel Rodríguez** began her career at just 14 years of age with Catalan company *Somorrostro* participating under the direction of Javier Latorre in shows "Andanzas" in 2002 and "Inconexus XXI" in 2005. Rodríguez later trained at the Institute of the Arts Barcelona and has since toured the best theaters in the world with the María Pagés company and taken part in prestigious festivals such as "El Grec 2003" and the *Nou Barris Flamenco Festival*. Rodríguez was the recipient of the Vicente Escudero Prize in 2002 and the Juana La Faraona Prize in 2004.

**Oscar Done** was born in Barcelona in 1976. A graffiti artist since the early 1990s, he made his mark the world over as part of an underground scene. Over time, his dream became a working reality and he is now a full-time artist and designer. Done has taken part in group and solo exhibitions and worked with different brands including Converse, Samsung, Jim Beam, NYC, Disaronno, Estrella Galicia, New Balance, Cutty Sark, Absolut, Red Bull, and Repsol.

**Pablo Herrero, AKA Zeta**, was born in Spain in 1970. He excelled in visual arts from an early age, studying at the School of Arts and Crafts in Madrid. He discovered his preferred medium graffiti in the mid-1980s and now works in graphic design, advertising, illustration, and music production. Zeta's work has been shown in over 30 exhibitions both in Spain and internationally and he has been commissioned by prestigious brands such as Coca-Cola, Nike, Casio, Absolut, Universidad Juan Carlos I, Universal, Movistar, Red Bull, Adidas, Microsoft, Swatch and many more.

**Pepa Garrido** is a flamenco design label and store established in Seville in 1996. Innovative in their designs, Pepa Garrido work with new and old fabrics, combining well-known frills with uniqueness and style at the same time as employing tradition craftsmanship. Their designs evolve with fashion without losing the essence of flamenco and always with the single objective to make dancers feel unique and feminine. Carmen Cañaveral, daughter of founder Pepa Garrido now heads up the label, designing and making new collections with a small team and presenting them at the best flamenco fashion shows in Spain. Pepa Garrido dresses are worn by some of the most celebrated dancers at shows throughout Spain and around the world, including in Paris, Germany, Miami, New York, Venezuela and Mexico.

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