

The Paco de Lucía Project continued

“By the time he assembled the second sextet, Paco was at his peak, he was the wise old man, the master, and the players were all so young. It was a different dynamic,” reflects Limón. “Alain Pérez is arguably the best Latin bass player of his generation. Antonio Serrano is the best jazz musician in Spain; and you have Piraña, whom Paco loved, the best percussionist in flamenco’s history. And then you have Antonio, and David, and Farruco ... Each one of them is a soloist, a leader. This band is the best flamenco group in the world.”

Meanwhile, guitarist Antonio Sánchez has embraced the challenges of his uncle’s legacy with unflinching grace.

“I take carrying on Paco’s music with great humility. It’s a real challenge,” said Sánchez, who joined his uncle’s group as a second guitar in 2010. “The name is a burden only if you don’t study, if you don’t apply yourself and work. Working with this group is a huge responsibility, very demanding, but it also brings out a lot of love on my part — and no fear. On the contrary, I was eager to do this. It has been great to remember him every day in his music, but also it has been great to see how this group has evolved, matured.”

While accompanying de Lucía, the members of the group showcased their talents mostly in the space for jazz-style soloing that the guitarist had opened in his music. As it turns out, besides the obvious challenges, the sextet’s reunion also presented opportunities.

“Every day we seem to be doing something different, and it’s great fun, very enjoyable, and it brings us together,” said Sánchez. “And we also started to realize that we can pay tribute to Paco with our own music. There will always be classics by Paco in the program, songs like “Zyryab” or a rumba like “El Cafetal,” but now also some of our compositions, things we used to do with him in rehearsals but were never recorded. It’s a chance to capture and bring back some of those little things we had with Paco, and it’s beautiful.”

BIOGRAPHIES

ANTONIO SÁNCHEZ (*guitar*) was born in Madrid in 1984 and introduced to the flamenco guitar at a very young age by his uncles, Paco de Lucía and Ramón de Algeciras, and his cousin J. M. Bandera and studied under Juan Manuel Cañizares. His career started in the flamenco tablaos of Madrid and Barcelona, and he has toured with the flamenco ballet companies of Antonio Marquez and Domingo Ortega. He joined Paco de Lucía’s group over a decade ago as second guitarist, and has toured with him throughout Europe and North America.

ALAIN PÉREZ (*bass*) was born in Trinidad, Cuba and his early musical studies included classical guitar and piano. His early Cuban musical credits included recordings with Chucho Valdés and Issac Delgado, and was part of the “Cuba Team” all-stars that toured Europe in 1998. He made his recording debut with Paco de Lucía in 2004 on the Latin Grammy-winning CD *Cositas Buenas* produced by Javier Limón. Pérez has also collaborated with Celia Cruz, Enrique Morente, Paquito D’Rivera, Chick Corea, Diego el Cigala, Jerry González and many others, and released a number of solo recordings, including the 2015 CDs *El Alma del Son: A Tribute to Matamoros* and *Hablando con Juana*.

ANTONIO SERRANO (*harmonica*) is a Madrid native who studied harmonica from the age of 7. He studied under the great Larry Adler, with whom he first achieved international recognition on the European concert stage. His studies have ranged from classical to blues, jazz and pop. He has played or recorded with Toots Thielemans and Wynton Marsalis, and performed original classical concertos for harmonica as well as arrangements of Gershwin, Piazzolla, and others. He and Paco de Lucía are credited with introducing the harmonica to flamenco when Serrano joined the guitarist’s ensemble in 2004. He has released 11 solo albums, including *Harmonious* in 2012,

DAVID DE JACOBA (*vocals*) is considered one of the most important young flamenco artists in the world today. His debut album *Jubileo*, produced by Lucky Losada and Carlos de Jacoba, was nominated for “Best Album by a New Singer” at the Flamenco Hoy Awards. The CD featured a who’s who of flamenco stars, from Pepe Habichuela and Vicente Amigo to Juan Antonio Salazar and Tomatito. Paco de Lucía chose David to accompany him during his last four years of touring. David’s credits also include collaborations with flamenco greats Enrique Morente, Joaquín Cortés, Sara Baras, Niño Josele and Duquende, as well as leading figures in Latin jazz such as as Giovanni Hidalgo and Jerry González.

ISRAEL SUAREZ “PIRAÑA” (*percussion*) is one of the most renowned cajón (box drum) players in the world. He began his career with the singer Niña Pastori and has performed with a panoply of major stars including Vicente Amigo, Sara Baras, Antonio Canales, Arcángel, Luz Casal, and Buika, as well as American pop artist Lenny Kravitz, Portuguese fado star Mariza, and Latin pop singers Ricky Martin and Alejandro Fernández. Piraña (whose nickname refers to the ferocious piranha fish) has toured and recorded in Paco de Lucía’s ensemble for over 10 years, a special honor given De Lucía’s groundbreaking role in introducing the Peruvian cajón to the traditional flamenco ensemble.

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FARRUCO (*dance*) is the brother of the great dancer Farruquito. Born Antonio Fernández Montoya in Seville in 1988, he took his famous grandfather's artistic name, Farruco, as his own. He made his debut in the international flamenco scene in Berlin at the age of two and made his US debut in 2001 in his brother's show "Farruquito and Family." In 2006, he premiered his first solo show, embarking on a world tour that included New York City Center. His credits reach beyond flamenco, including performances with Beyoncé, Bjork, Marc Anthony and Paulina Rubio. He toured his second choreographed work "Los Farruco" from 2008-2009, during which he found time to write music and lyrics for Tomatito, Los Makarines, and for his brother's flamenco show 'Puro.' In 2010, he joined Paco de Lucía's company, performing over 100 shows worldwide with the guitar legend.

JAVIER LIMÓN (*producer*) A graduate of the Madrid Royal Conservatory, where he studied classical piano, oboe, and guitar, Javier Limón began his career as a composer, working with various flamenco artists. Raised in Spain, he traveled to New York City at an early age to train in American arts schools.

After meeting Bebo Valdés and Jerry González, Limón began working in Latin jazz and with Cuban musicians in addition to working on flamenco. In 2004, Limón was awarded the Latin Grammy for Producer of the Year for his work on five records: *Lágrimas Negras* by Diego el Cigala and Bebo Valdés; *Cositas Buenas* by Paco de Lucía; *El Cantante* by Andrés Calamaro; *El Pequeño Reloj* by Enrique Morente; *Niño Josele* by Niño Josele; and the multi-artist collection *Tributo Flamenco a Don Juan Valderrama*. In 2009, Limón won a Grammy Award for Best Latin Jazz Album for recording *Juntos Para Siempre*, a series of father-and-son piano duets by Bebo and Chucho Valdés. Limón has combined several professional occupations in the worlds of art and communication. Although he has mainly focused on composition and the production of albums, film scores, and television shows, his work as a communicator and teacher is equally impressive. He is currently the Artistic Director for Berklee College of Music's Mediterranean Music Institute.



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