

Vignette: Alle Lloyd

The flamenco dancer made her *entrada* slowly and silently gliding to centre stage where she was spotlit by a natural, cool, white light. She remained still for just a moment so the viewers could observe her *estampa*, her displayed stance, form and dress, her personal signature look.

She wore a rose pink floor length *bailaora's gown* with inserted gaudets for extra flair and tiered ruffled *volutas* from the thighs to the ankles. A darker rose pink piping edged and outlined each flounce.

The small round mirrors called *lunares*, which used to be sewn all over such dresses, and, dating from the gypsy migration out of India two hundred years ago, had, over the passage of time, been replaced by modern-day, representative, large cream polka-dots.

The dress, and the neckline, which was heart-shaped, added to her female, very feminine form, while the short, cupped sleeves, which helped her to move and shape her arms during the performance of the arm movements of the *braceo*, featured an enhancing, double flounce.

Her thick, black hair was centre-parted and drawn back behind her head into an elegant bun, held in place by a medium-sized, fan-shaped, mantilla comb, which was also rose-pink. The plain, gold *barette* slotted into her hair beside the rose-pink *peineta*, held in place a row of three cream carnations behind her right ear. She wore plain gold, climber earrings.

Her arms formed her frame at shoulder height. With palms facing outwards she began her wrist and hand twirls known, significantly as *floreo*, beginning with both little fingers, followed by the ring fingers, middle fingers, the index fingers and thumbs, then, reversing the sequence. She continued both these finger and wrist movement sequences, while moving the arms slowly to above her head.

When she began to advance forward in *paseo*, she, with a backward flick of, first her right leg and foot, followed by the left leg and foot, flounced the dress into the space behind her skilfully. Next she executed a right knee lift, followed by a left knee lift flouncing the dress into the space in front of her. She paused and performed finger snapping, *pitos*, which at first sounded like singing crickets on a summer's evening. With further enthusiasm the pitos sounded like loud pistol shots.

She dropped to one knee, and, as she pulled herself up, rotated into an upright position, her skirt rippled outwards swirling around her body and ankles. She adopted *la oposicion*, the asymmetrical positioning typical of flamenco dancers, where the body and arms face one way but the head faces another.

She looked like the stop-frame photography of an unfurling rose-pink and cream flower, from her wrist curls and finger twirls to the swirling hem of her skirt.

I had expected her to have rose-pink or cream *zapatitos* on her feet but she was wearing conspicuous, empowering, flamboyant red with a double buckled strap across the instep.

Her flamboyant, red shoes were the most subversive statement I have ever heard.

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