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Olé!

Flamenco act attracts students on
college campuses

By Nabeel Jaitapker
Editor

The music blared. The dancers danced. The intensity was unimaginable.

The *Ida y Vuelta* Flamenco Dance Company had only been performing in Dallas since January when they decided to stop at North Lake College for an entertaining afternoon performance Oct. 12.

Many educated viewers, already buzzing with the group's unseen quality, flooded the performance hall to see an act which was a lot different from other flamenco acts playing around Dallas, in that this company had a singer, Vincente Griego, who complimented its music.

Ida y Vuelta, a Spanish term for 'coming and going,' was founded by Julia Alcantara, the brain behind Alcantara Arts. With *Ida y Vuelta* as her latest project, Alcantara wants to introduce flamenco to a whole new audience — a younger one.

Raised in Dallas, Alcantara moved to New Mexico to finish her BFA degrees in art and painting. In Albuquerque, she rounded up her flamenco education by working with acclaimed artists such as Eva Encinias-Sandoval, an instructor at

the University of Albuquerque, and Pablo Rodarte, one of the most famous flamenco dancers on the scene.

With most of the routines being part of an improvisation, *Ida y Vuelta* expresses the art form of flamenco.

"My new exploration of *cante* (song) is improving my skills of improvisation, and that has definitely helped me understand the collaborative nature of the art

form," said Alcantara.

In just under a year, Alcantara has managed to bring together several accomplished artists in their own right, such as Jonathan "Juanito" Gordon, a Boston native, who has received rave reviews for his guitar playing (including the *Boston Globe* that called him "an excellent flamenco guitarist.")

Carolina Holguin, a performer with Pablo Rodarte's *Dance*

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Photo by Nabeel Jaitapker

Members from *Ida y Vuelta* performed at the Performance Hall Oct. 12. From left to right are Carolina Holguin, Vincente Griego, Guanito Gordon, Julia Alcantara and Eduardo Arturo.

Flamenco captures audience

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Espana, and Eduardo Arturo, a native dancer from Monterrey, Mexico and a student of Rodarte's, are also a part of this troupe that includes Greg Beck, a UNT graduate and skilled percussionist.

Beck is known for the many styles of music he performs, including rock, jazz, fusion and Afro-Cuban.

Apart from performing at other DCCCD campuses, *Ida y Vuelta* also played a few venues this month that included the State Fair of Texas and a jammed-packed Gypsy Tea Room in downtown Dallas.

"The flamenco dancers were really entertaining," said Phillipe Garza, student.

"This is one of the best performances I've seen at North Lake College. The guitarist (Guanito Gordon) in particular, was very informative about the history of flamenco, and I learned a lot about the art form," said Julie Francis, student. "It's great that SPAR brought them in because college life can get pretty hectic."



Photo by Nabeel Jaitapker

A LEG UP: Julia Alcantara of *Ida y Vuelta* performs a solo number for the audience at North Lake College's Performance Hall.