



Herlinda Lopez & Deanne Poulos

(dual and individual biographies)

Herlinda Lopez and Deanne Poulos, the founders and principle dancers of *Flamenco del Sol*, met over thirty-five years ago when they studied with Laura Moya, the long-time Spanish dance doyenne in Phoenix. Both studied ballet, jazz and modern dance since childhood, so they have established a disciplined and well-rounded dance base.

Ms. Moya's Company afforded them opportunities to perform at the great concert halls in town, Gammage Auditorium, the Herberger, the Orpheum, Scottsdale Center for the Arts and Symphony Hall, as well as at classic hotels such as the Biltmore, Camelback Inn and Mountain Shadows. Ms. Moya had studied in Spain and performed in New York at nightclubs, as well as Carnegie Hall, before coming to Phoenix with her family. For decades, both Deanne and Herlinda were featured soloists with the Laura Moya Spanish Dance Company.

The flamenco world is small, and both principle dancers have worked with masters of the art. Herlinda has studied with Jose Greco, Nana Lorca and Maria Magdalena in Spain, among others. Deanne has performed with Cruz Luna, Oscar Nieto and Paco Vera. Both have worked with Daniel de Cordoba.

In 2007, Ms. Moya passed away at the age of 92. Herlinda and Deanne acquired all her music, costumes and accoutrements and it is their honor to carry on her legacy. It is their aim to dance well into their eighties, as she did.

Currently, they are privileged to study with the *Reina Flamenca* in Phoenix, Lydia Torea. Ms. Torea danced internationally with Jose Greco and in Las Vegas with Xavier Cougat and Charro.

Proud to be distinguished as Roster Artists with the Arizona Commission on the Arts since 2004, Herlinda and Deanne share a passion for perpetuating and passing along the rich culture of Spanish dance. As performers and instructors, they cover folk, classical and flamenco styles, with traditional music, costumes and choreography. They appear at libraries, schools, museums and festivals, as well as private functions. A recent honor was headlining at Symphony Hall with the Phoenix Symphony.

Herlinda Lopez inherited her love for dance and music from her musical family. In the 1920's and '30's, her grandfather, Felipe Lopez, taught music in Phoenix and neighboring mining towns. Her Uncle Phillip led a local orchestra called *Phillip Lopez and his Spanish Serenaders* that included her Uncle David and her father, Angel. They performed regularly at the Arizona Biltmore and on KTAR radio.

Her parents moved to East Los Angeles where Herlinda began her early dance training at age seven with ballet, jazz, and modern at the American School of Dance in Hollywood. Later, she also studied Afro-Cuban, Latin and tap dancing. She studied academics at East Los Angeles College, University of California at Irvine and Saddleback College.

Upon returning to Phoenix in 1966, she commenced studying with Laura Moya, director of the Institute for Hispanic Dance and joined Ms. Moya's company. She expanded her Spanish dance training by taking workshops with world-renowned flamenco greats Antonia Triana and Teodoro Morca.

When she and her husband moved back to the Los Angeles area to raise their family, she continued to advance her studies with Lola Montes, Professor Antonia Rojas and Angelita Macias. She performed throughout Southern California at schools and theaters, as well as in television, motion pictures, and commercials. A highlight was intensive workshops at Cypress College with Nana Lorca and Jose Greco, which culminated in theater performances. Herlinda always will cherish the privilege of going to Madrid and studying under Maria Magdalena at Amor de Dios, and traveling to various provinces.

When she and her family returned to Phoenix over a decade ago, Herlinda resumed performing with Laura Moya's company as a principle. Currently, she studies with Lydia Torea for choreography and classical style. She values her role as a Spanish dance instructor. As an instructor and performer, Herlinda is fulfilling her passion for preserving her heritage and sharing the rich culture of Spain with our community.

A Phoenix native, **Deanne Poulos** began studying ballet at the age of five and Spanish dance at the age of eight. She danced with the Laura Moya Spanish Dance Company, as well as with Arizona Ballet Theatre, a precursor of Ballet Arizona. After earning a degree in English from Occidental College in Los Angeles, she returned to her hometown and worked as resident choreographer, performer and dance instructor for Actors Lab Arizona, a professional theatre company. She was commissioned by Actors Lab to write an educational show about dance that toured the state. In addition, she appeared regularly as a soloist with Laura Moya's Company.

For more theatrical opportunities, she returned to Los Angeles to perform in various musicals and choreograph various shows. She was a lead dancer in a feature film starring Shelley Winters and Ned Beatty and she portrayed principal characters in a series of musical fairy-tales that aired on cable television around the country. She would come to Phoenix for guest engagements with Laura Moya and had the opportunity to perform with flamenco greats, Oscar Nieto, Paco Vera, Cruz Luna and Daniel de Cordoba.

Upon returning home to Phoenix, Deanne has involved herself in the local arts community as an on-air announcer for KBAQ radio, Marketing Director for Ballet Arizona, emcee for the annual Get Out Arts Expo, a grants panelist for the Arizona Commission on the Arts, a marketing consultant for the Arizona Dance Arts Alliance, a judge for the annual Celebration of Dance and a board member of the ariZoni Theater Awards. She has choreographed several musicals throughout the Valley.

Currently, Deanne remains committed to *Flamenco del Sol*. She teaches Spanish dance during the intensive summer sessions at ballet studios operated by former Ballet Arizona principal dancers, Yen Li Chen and Donald and Sybille Dadey.