



Rafael Cortés

blanco y negro

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Rafael Cortés – blanco y negro

Musician or bandit? According to an old Spanish saying, these are the two choices when you are born on the winter solstice. As life would have it, the great Paco de Lucia, who died in February 2014, was also born on 21 December. Upon his hero's death, Rafael Cortés wasted no time going in the studio to record *blanco y negro*, a CD dedicated to Paco de Lucia.

Thanks to his Granada-born father, Rafael Cortés has firm roots in the Gitano culture. Although brought up as the son of an immigrant family in Essen, his frequent visits to Andalusia allow him to gain first-hand experience with the local music. Granada is home to a particularly vibrant oral Flamenco tradition. Young Rafael is taught by local guitarists and also absorbs the style of Paco de Lucia, admiring his ability to go beyond the conventional. He confesses: "Since I discovered Paco, I've never lost my sense of curiosity". At the age of 14, the prodigy had already integrated classical, jazz and latin influences into his style, leading one teacher to let him go because he had nothing further to teach him.

Since the mid-eighties, his artistic output has grown into a considerable body of work: five albums under his own name, music for film, collaborations with pop stars including Rosa, El Cigala, Maria Serrano and Carles Benavent and, finally, a meeting with his idol Paco de Lucia at the Leverkusener Jazztage. His concerts have received standing ovations all over Europe. In the last few years, Rafael Cortés has fulfilled one of his lifetime dreams by setting up his own studio. The serenity and artistic freedom he gained from this move was already evident on his "Parando El Tiempo" album as well as the follow-up album "Cagiñi". Now, the outstanding guitarist has delivered "blanco y negro", yet another album overflowing with enthusiasm, serenity and aplomb, not forgetting emotional grandeur.

Once again, the outstanding master of the guitar takes us on a journey through the many colourful Flamenco styles, from clarity of light to deep sadness, just like the title says. The 8 original compositions on the CD cover a broad range of emotions.

Rafael Cortés dips deep into the well of richly expressive southern Spanish Gitano culture and heritage: whether Buleria, Guajira, Fandango, Rumba, Bolero or Soléa, - the guitarist gives the music his own personal touch. Abrupt tempo changes and occasional melancholic moments lie at the heart of this multi-faceted album.

Rafael Cortés' "blanco y negro" album is a coherent homage to the works of Paco de Lucia: fiery Andalusian spirit inspired by libertine delight, each note the bearer of soulful emotion. A tribute to the 'MAESTRO de los maestros' – there's no better way of saying it. A sincere musical bow before the towering greatness of Paco de Lucia.

If you would like to receive a physical or digital copy of the CD or have general questions regarding the artist, album, publisher or composer, please do not hesitate to contact us! The artist is also available for interview.

PR contact:

Imke Höltmann | phone: +49 (0)40/88 172 88-5 | i.hoeltmann@herzogpromotion.com

Hanns-Christian Gerth | phone: +49 (0)40/88 172 88-6 | h.gerth@herzogpromotion.com