

# FROM THE JONDO OF THE FLAMENCO

GRANADA 1922. FIRST CANTE JONDO CONTEST



"Desde lo jondo del flamenco. Granada 1922. Primer Concurso de Cante Jondo" (From the jondo of the Flamenco. Granada 1922. First *Cante Jondo* Contest) aims to show the history of an idea that revolutionised flamenco, the chronicle of a group of intellectuals who brought tradition and innovation together to achieve the success that we can see today.

The commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the first *Cante Jondo* Contest, held in Plaza de los Aljibes at the Alhambra in Granada, is a fantastic opportunity to present and explain the project led by Manuel de Falla as a modernist, defiant gesture that made history in the world of flamenco.

There are around 230 pieces in the exhibition. The selected items have been chosen to give an idea of the background, history and results of a feat that democratised, vindicated and elevated flamenco to the category of an art form. The artistic objects on display reflect the complexity and cross-cutting nature of the Contest; photographs, paintings,

drawings, documents, ceramics, posters, correspondence, musical instruments, costumes and visual and sound documents all come together to tell the story.

This variety is also evident in the sources of the exhibits which have been taken from national, regional and local museums, archives and libraries, centres, associations and foundations, both national and international, and private collectors involved in the project.

The narrative of the exhibition is structured into seven thematic areas that encompass the historical events seen in the First *Cante Jondo* Contest. Each is presented as a micro-story, arranging ideas and images into stories through an overlay of readings.

## **Thematic Areas and Units**

Thematic area 1.

**Granada and the Alhambra:  
Settings for a story.**

Thematic area 2.

***Aula del Cante Jondo.***

Thematic area 3.

***Touched by the duende.***

Thematic area 4.

**The protagonists:  
Modernity and eclecticism.**

Thematic area 5.

**Do we dare have such a contest?**

Thematic area 6.

***The Aurora del Cante.***

Thematic area 7.

**... And what remains to be sung.**

# GRANADA AND THE ALHAMBRA: SETTINGS FOR A STORY

*I have heard about "cante jondo".*

*For me, "cante jondo" is the impression of primitive popular singing, when flamenco singing has been refined. I would like to see the Alhambra in "cante jondo".*

**Santiago Rusiñol.**

This explains the social, cultural, anthropological and historical context of the Alhambra and Granada in 1922. This includes the related locations and the venue for the contest: Plaza de los Aljibes in the Alhambra.

This space includes some images of the period from all corners and areas of the city and the Alhambra that were closely linked to the people involved and the competition; Plaza del Campillo, where the Café Alameda was located - a meeting and gathering place for the *rinconcillistas* -, Calle Real in the Alhambra - the location of the Taberna del Polinario - and Plaza de los Aljibes - the setting for our event - are some of the images forming the start of our tour.



View of the Albaicín from the Alhambra  
Otto Wunderlich

**1920-1922**

Spanish Cultural Heritage Institute.  
Ministry of Culture and Sport

# “AULA DEL CANTE JONDO”

*You can see how important “cante jondo” is, and how right it was for our people to call it that. It is deep, truly deep, deeper than all the wells and all the seas that surround the world - much deeper than the actual heart that creates it and the voice that sings it - because it is almost infinite.*  
**Federico García Lorca.**

What are *cante jondo* and *cantes primitivos* (primitive songs)? How did the leading figures understand these concepts? This area begins with the concept of *cante jondo*, its features

and forms, the theories and accounts of Antonio Machado Álvarez, known as Demófilo, in his *Colección de Cantes Flamencos (Collection of Flamenco Songs)* of 1881.

The *jondo*, an almost unattainable concept, mystical and magical, pure, enigmatic, wild and profound, became the ultimate aim of the organisers who were seeking to recover it and give it aesthetic and social status.

The Alhambra began to establish itself as the heart of the flamenco scene after the arrival of the Barrios family in Calle Real in the Alhambra.

Antonio Barrios, popularly known as "El Polinario", ran a tavern built on some Arab baths next to the Mosque. That was the venue for flamenco gatherings and evenings and it was where the germ of the idea for the *Cante Jondo* Contest began to develop. "El Polinario" - a good *cantaor* (flamenco singer), in the most genuine style of the *cantes* of Juan Brea and a notable guitarist of old chords,

a follower of the school of the famous *tocaor* (guitar player) Francisco Rodríguez Malipieri, an expert in primitive guitar playing - illuminated those initial evenings accompanied by his son Ángel.

Around the figure of Antonio Barrios "El Polinario" were frequent guests, artists, writers, poets and politicians, who would later become the precursors of the First *Cante Jondo* Contest. Thus, Santiago Rusiñol, Ignacio Zuloaga, Miguel Cerón, Federico García Lorca, Manuel Jofré, Manuel Ángeles Ortiz, Hermenegildo Lanz, Fernando Vílchez, José Mora Guarnido, Fernando de los Ríos and Ruiz de Almodóvar, among others, would lay the foundations, guided by Manuel de Falla, for what they called "the recovery of *jondo* songs".



*Cante Hondo. "Cantares", songs and "coplas" composed in the popular style of Andalusia.*

Imprenta Helénica, Madrid

Manuel Machado

**1912 (First edition)**

Library of Andalusia



Antonio Barrios

John Singer Sargent

**1895-1900**

Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife.

Ángel Barrios Legacy. Alhambra Museum

# TOUCHED BY THE “DUENDE”.

*When Manuel de Falla visited Granada for the first time, on the occasion of the homage paid to him by the Centro Artístico in September 1919, he was predisposed to offer part of his destiny to the city. He already knew its sounds, its light, its echoes, silences and legends.*

**José Ramón Ripoll.**

Manuel de Falla permanently settled in Granada in the summer of 1920, initially staying in the pension Alhambra in Calle Real until he could move into a property at number 11, Antequeruela Alta, in January 1922.

Falla arrived in Granada with a strong interest in popular music, which he had already demonstrated in his previous works.

His influences from the world of flamenco and Andalusian folklore were already evident in works such as *La Vida breve*, *El Sombrero de Tres Picos*, *El Amor Brujo* and *Fantasia Bætica*.

From the early days of his arrival, the composer became involved in the city's cultural scene and surrounded himself with a circle of intellectuals who used to meet at the Café Alameda. They were known as the *rinconcillistas*. During gatherings and while drinking coffee there were exchanges of experiences and ideas among a mixed group of artists, writers, musicians and politicians, including José Mora Guarnido, Francisco Soriano Lapresa, Constantino Ruiz Carnero, José Fernández Montesinos, Melchor Fernández Almagro, Luis Mariscal, Francisco y Federico García Lorca, Manuel Ángeles Ortiz, Antonio Gallego Burín, Fernando de los Ríos and Edgar Neville, among others. Together with Manuel de Falla, they would be the pioneers of a project to recover and raise the status of the old *cantes*; to reclaim the integrity of the *jondo*.

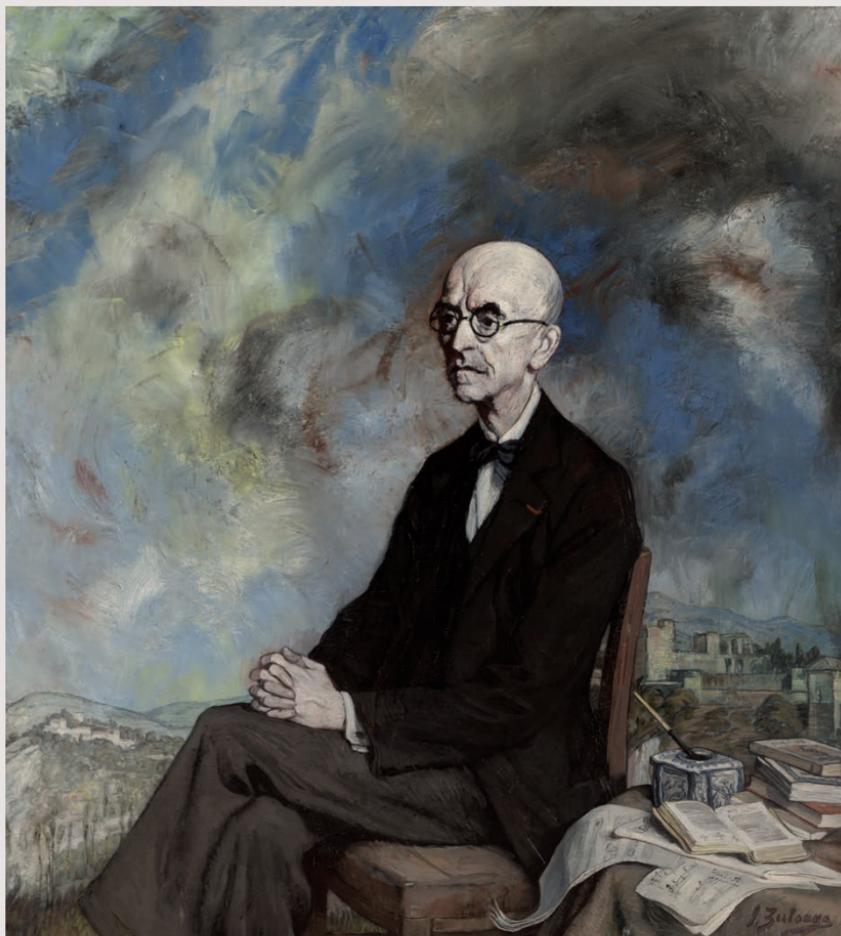


From left to right; Adolfo Salazar, Francisco García Lorca (front), Manuel de Falla, Ángel Barrios and Federico García Lorca in the cellars of the Alhambra

Roberto Gerhard

**1921**

Archivo Manuel de Falla



Manuel de Falla  
Ignacio Zuloaga

**1932**

Ignacio Zuloaga Museum, Pedraza Castle.  
Enrique Laborde Suárez-Zuloaga Collection



Federico García Lorca  
Manuel Ángeles Ortiz

**1924**

Federico García Lorca Foundation Archive.  
Federico García Lorca Centre



Ignacio Zuloaga

Ramon Casas

**Circa 1905**

Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona

# THE PROTAGONISTS: MODERNITY AND ECLECTICISM

Intellectuals and scholars - led by Manuel de Falla and under the regenerationist and Krausist ideas of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza - formed the heart of the cultural intellect of Granada's Silver Age, becoming the leaders and organisers of the event. Tradition and the romantic notion of the *jondo* were postulated as an argument and theoretical background.

This space shows the strength of the community and the wide range of ideas and people taking part and working together to guide the Contest to success.

# DO WE DARE HAVE SUCH A CONTEST?

*One afternoon, Manuel de Falla and Miguel Cerón were walking alone in the gardens of the Generalife and they returned to the subject. Falla insisted that "cante jondo" was on the verge of disappearing, and Cerón suggested that perhaps its death could be prevented by organising a contest for non-professional "cantaores", old people who were not influenced by the new fashions.*

- Do we dare to have such a contest?*
- he asked.*

*Manuel de Falla stood up, looked at his companion attentively and only said:*

- Of course!

***And this one yes! Passion was the basis of the rehabilitation of "cante jondo", the trigger for the great Spanish controversy, the cornerstone of the successful First "Cante Jondo" Contest, held in Granada on 13 and 14 June 1922.***

Activity was hectic in the months leading up to the event. The preparations were not easy since financial support and sponsorship were needed, but the project was well underway and the organisers' publicity work was the key to its success. The network of friends extended beyond the musical/artistic sphere and of course beyond the geographical boundaries of the region of Andalusia. Through correspondence and telegrams, they began to report on developments and progress with the event. Zuloaga, Trend, Joaquín Turina, Óscar Esplá and Juan Ramón Jiménez are some of the figures of recognised prestige who, to a greater or lesser extent, were beginning to become involved with the project.

The Centro Artístico, Literario y Científico de Granada played a special role as the institution that sponsored the project. Granada council funded it, together with artists to whom the event owed a great deal: Zuloaga and Rodríguez-Acosta.

Controversy soon flared up. There was criticism in the local and national press. Anti-flamenquistas and leading flamenco figures did not support the event. Countering them was the speech by a young Lorca, the flamenco guitar recital by Manuel Jofré and the guitar concerts by Andrés Segovia, which drove the project onwards towards its completion.

# THE “AURORA DEL CANTE”

*It should be noted with the utmost caution that preference will be given to contestants whose popular style of singing conforms to the old practices of the classic “cantaores”, avoiding any abusive flourishes and restoring to “cante jondo” that admirable sobriety, unfortunately lost, which constituted one of its greatest beauties.*

**Manuel de Falla.**

And so we arrive at the festival on 13 and 14 June. The guests were intellectuals, writers, musicians, artists, members of the national and international press and the people of Granada. The two days of the event were made unforgettable by the women dressed in Romantic-style

costumes from the mid-19th century, a stage erected between the defensive towers of the Alhambra, Puerta del Vino and the Palace of Charles V, with the Albaicín neighbourhood in the background and the performances involving singing, dancing and guitar playing.

Antonio Chacón, Antonio Ortega Molina, Joaquín Cuadros, Manuel Jofré, Ramón Montoya, Andrés Segovia, Gregorio Abril, Amalio Cuenca, Rafael Gálvez and José López Ruiz formed part of the jury. Diego Bermúdez el Tenazas, Juan Soler Niño de Linares, Manolo Caracol, Frasquito Yerbabuena, Concepción Moya, María Sierra, María Amaya la Gazpacha, Antonia la Ciega and Carmen Salinas entered the contest. José Cuéllar and José Cortés played. These performances were combined with guest appearances from Juana la Macarrona, Manuel Torre, Antonio Chacón, Manuel Pavón, Dolores Hidalgo la Capitana and her *zambra* and the guitars of Ramón Montoya and Manolo de Huelva.

The material culture generated is the main theme running through this space: the poster designed by Manuel Ángeles

Ortiz with the help of Hermenegildo Lanz, paintings and works related to the contest, such as the work *Cante Hondo* by Julio Romero de Torres and the diplomas of the winners. This route ends at the heart of the exhibition, creating an atmosphere designed to transport the visitor through their senses to the nights of 13 and 14 June. This is a recreation of the stage with elements of the decorative elements designed by Zuloaga. Light, sound and smell effects will coexist with the reproductions, created by students at the José Val del Omar Art School in Granada, of the costumes designed by Zuloaga and Manuel Ángeles Ortiz for the women and gypsies of the *zambra* flamenco style.

*Zambra* makes a special appearance through works by artists such as Anglada Camarasa, Zuloaga, López Mezquita, Rodríguez-Acosta and Torres Molina, among others, which aimed to raise the status of the image of gypsy women, the traditional dance of Granada and their involvement in the event.

**GRANADA**  
**CORPUS CHRISTI 1922**



**1<sup>ER</sup> CONCURSO DE**  
**“CANTE JONDO”**  
**(CANTO PRIMITIVO**  
**ANDALUZ)**

Los Días 13 Y 14 De Junio

**8500 PESETAS DE PREMIOS**

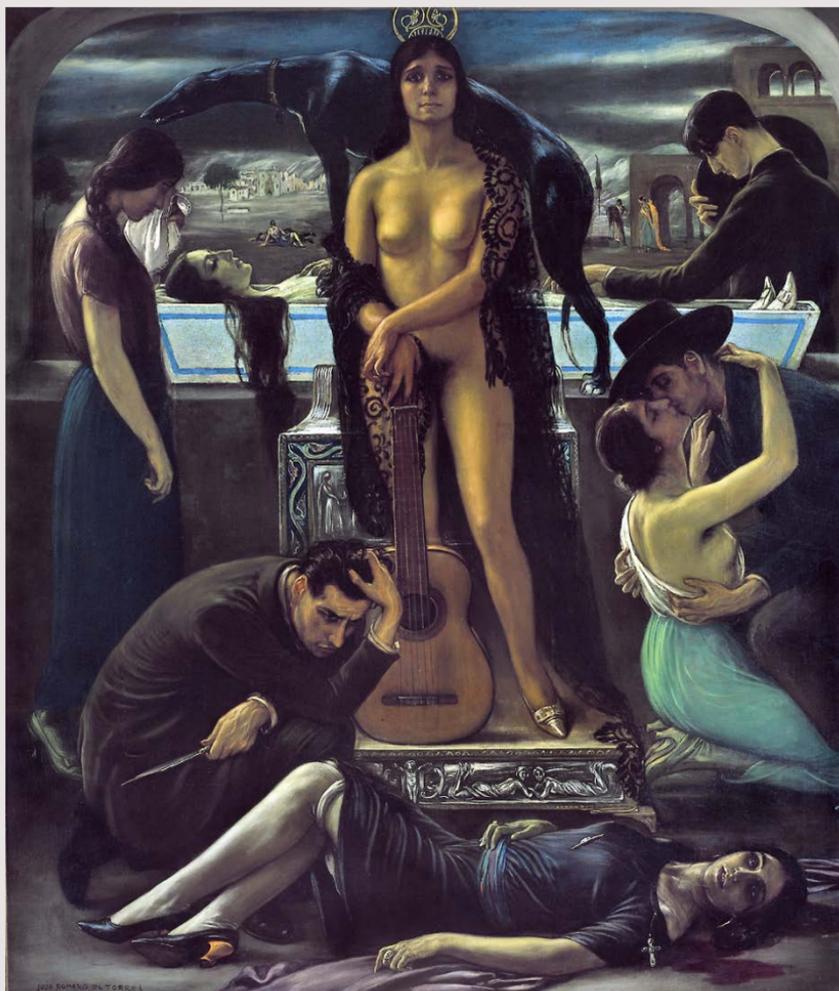
Poster of the *Cante Jondo* Contest  
Manuel Ángeles Ortiz

1922

Juan de Loxa Family Collection



Collective caricature of the *Cante Jondo* Contest  
Antonio López Sancho  
1922  
Granada City Council



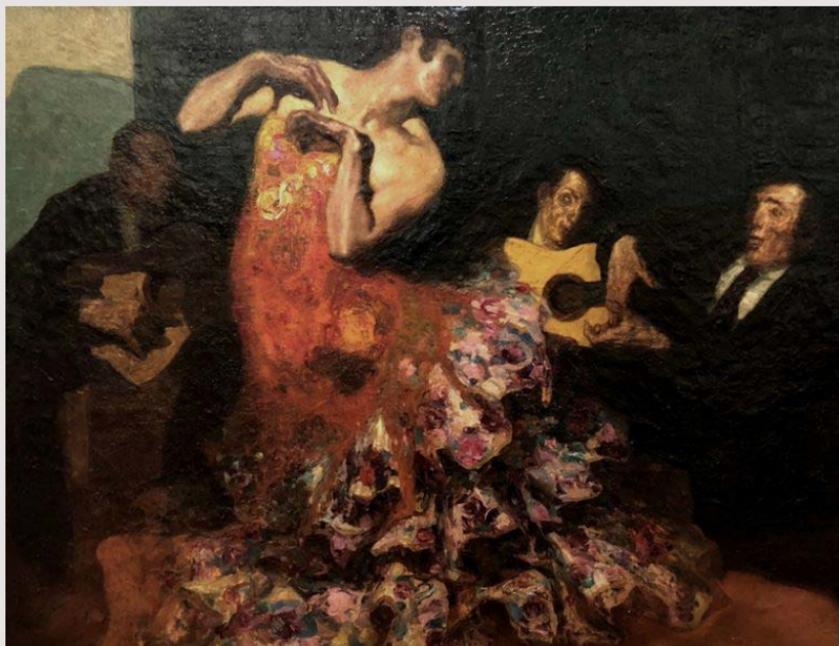
Cante Hondo

Julio Romero de Torres

**Circa 1922**

Julio Romero de Torres Museum.

Cordoba City Council



Gypsy dance

Hermenegildo Anglada Camarasa

**1902**

Museum of Fine Arts of Asturias.

Pedro Masaveu Collection

# ... AND WHAT REMAINS TO BE SUNG

*I do not intend to condition all subsequent flamenco activities to the Plaza de los Aljibes. But to deny that Falla and Granada inaugurated a process of rehabilitation and revision that would later include the contests of Córdoba and Jerez, the "cantes de las minas" contests, the abundant festivals of today, the spread of flamenco studies, the respect of intellectuals, etc., would be to deny too much. It is to deny too much.*

**Félix Grande.**

Did those leading the project achieve their aims? Can we say today that *cante jondo* was being lost? What did holding the event mean for the history of Flamenco?

The exhibition concludes with the wake the Granada Contest left behind it, creating a milestone in the history of flamenco, establishing the foundations of what today we can say is an art form that has gone further, being classified by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage since 2010.

The organisers were pioneers in the holding of what would be the model for later Flamenco contests and festivals such as those held in Cádiz, Sevilla and Córdoba, the Cante de las Minas de La Unión Contest and so many others. This space will present a selection of the most representative posters from 1922 to 1972.

We could not forget about the voices and sounds forming part of the event and which, thanks to the avant-garde approach of protecting intangible heritage, have been saved for posterity through recordings on slate discs by Diego

Bermúdez el Tenazas, Niño Caracol, Manuel Torres, Antonio Chacón, La Niña de los Peines and Manuel Vallejo.

The exhibition ends by reminding us that it is not alone in wanting to celebrate the event's anniversary, since 50 and 75 years after the event, the Contest gained recognition during 50<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary events.

**Rafael Gómez Benito**  
**and Rodrigo F. Gómez Jiménez**  
(Curators of the exhibition)



Le cahier de musique

Juan Gris

**April 1922**

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía

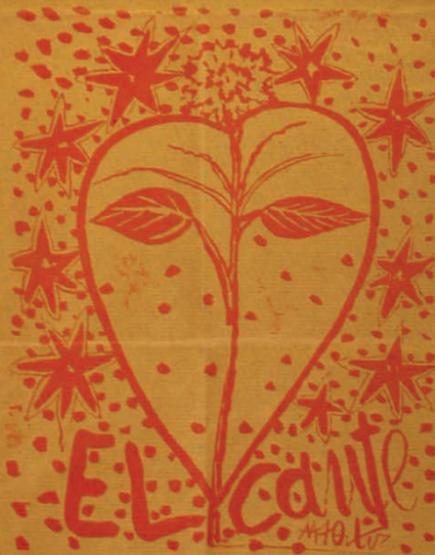
# CINCUENTENARIO

## concurso cante jondo granadanada

RADIO POPULAR EN RADIO POPULAR

13 días flamencos, 13, del 13 al 25 de junio

caballero bonald • angel caffarena • josé heredia • antonio burgos • carlos cano • audi-  
ción manolo caracol • manifiesto canción del sur • rios ruiz • francisco almazán • juan  
de loxa • fernando quiñones • audición andrés segovia • recital poesía setenta • manuel  
gerena • agustín gómez, etc.

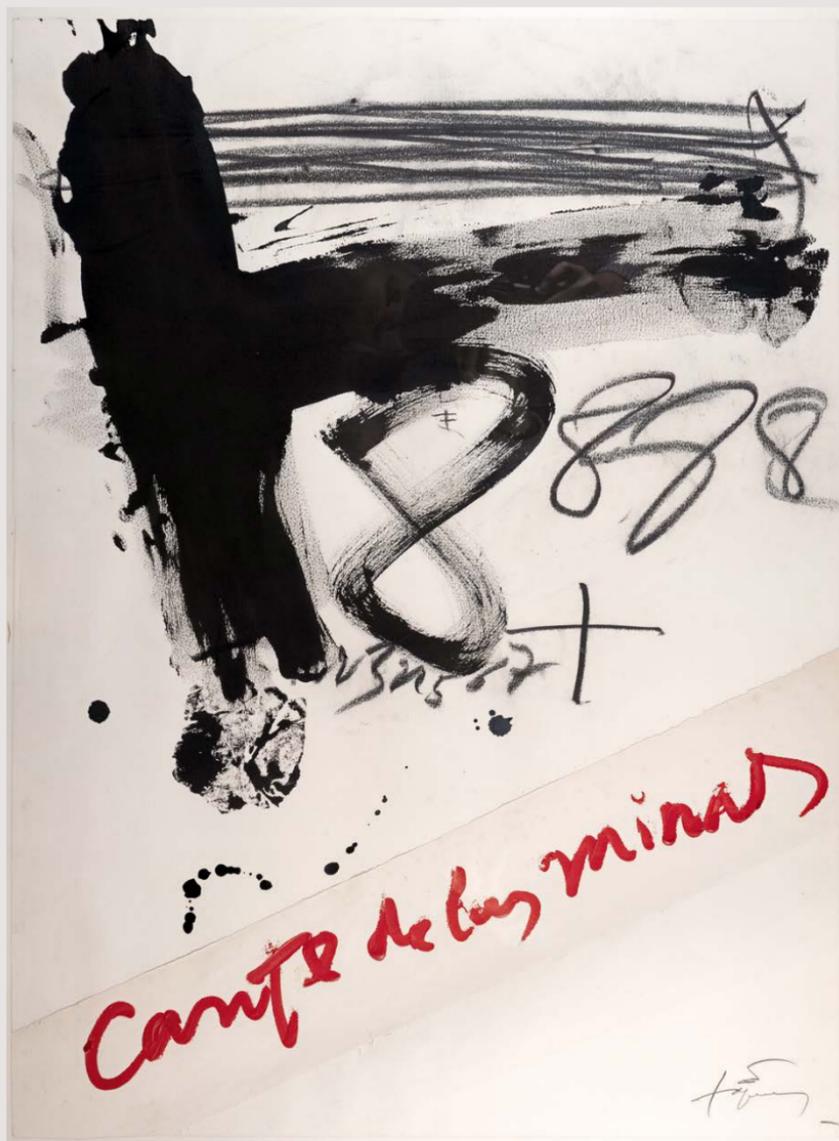


organiza poesía 70

Poster commemorating the 50th Anniversary  
of the *Cante Jondo* Contest Granadanada  
Manuel Ángeles Ortiz

1972

Juan de Loxa Family Collection



Poster of the Festival Nacional del Cante de las Minas. The Union

Antoni Tàpies

1996

Cante de las Minas Foundation. La Unión, Murcia

# DESDE LO JONDO DEL FLAMENCO

(FROM THE EV P\$V OF r8( FLAMENCO))

## **TEMPORARY EXHIBITION**

From June 21 to September 11, 2022.

Temporary exhibition room of  
the Granada Museum of Fine Arts.

Palace of Charles V. Monumental complex  
of the Alhambra and Generalife.

## **OPENING TIMES**

Monday to Sunday, from 10 am to 8 pm.

## **FREE ADMISSION**

