



**I Pregón Taurino of New York City**  
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# I PREGÓN FOR THE NEW YORK CITY CLUB TAURINO 2006

## By Ignacio de Cossío y Pérez de Mendoza

Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening and thank you to all for being with me on such a special day. In the first place, I would like to thank the New York City Club Taurino for giving me the opportunity to be here with all of you to talk about the bulls and my native city of Sevilla as a key piece in understanding the history of tauromaquia.

I am no stranger to American soil, because in 1988 I came to the US for the first time to study in eleventh grade in Whitmore-Prescott High School in Michigan. And my stay here was so satisfactory that I did not hesitate to return the following year to graduate from Northview High School in Los Angeles, California. It was precisely there that I wrote my first taurine work, “Los toros”, for an assignment in my World History class in May of 1991. Also during those glorious student years I was able to get to know 22 of the 50 states that today make up your beautiful country.

The fiesta of los toros has long had a warm and close friendship with the United States through famous people such as Ernest Hemingway. In his first work, “Death in the Afternoon”, he reveals to us one of the important keys in our century: “With *petos*”, said Hemingway, “will begin the decline to decadence of the toro bravo”. A brilliant insight from an authentic visionary four years after the imposition of the *peto* with the consequent abuse that later would extend to all taurine plazas. The bull loses so much in the *peto* that even today’s bull comes out destroyed and lacking any prestige. \*

Other great Americans approached the corridas de toros with an almost mystical respect. This was the case of the director Orson Welles who, in spite of dreaming about making a taurine movie, was brought to a halt by the reality of the complexity of the cinematography of the genre, and affirming that if he someday were to try it, his film would talk about toros and toreros but under no circumstances would a toro actually appear in the film, much less a scene in the plaza. That is because to transmit the emotion of the plaza is an arduous and difficult undertaking. And Welles was right as the taurine films made to date have had little success because they lacked realism on the big screen. One of the few films that have not fallen into this trap may be “Torero” which was filmed in Mexico by Carlos Vela in 1953 and starred the Aztec maestro Luis Procuna.\*

And lastly, before embarking on my analysis of the historic significance of Sevilla, I want to mention two other figuras and great ambassadors of the fiesta brava: the diestro John Fulton, maestro of toros and of paint brushes, enamored and captivated by the barrio of Santa Cruz in Sevilla right up to his final days; and the young Joseph Patrick Kennedy II who spent many afternoons in tentaderos with Manuel Benitez “El Cordobés” as guest of honor of the *ganaderos* (bull ranchers) Guardiola.

In fact I remember an amusing anecdote that the ganadero Jaime Guardiola told me as a direct consequence of Joe’s summer visits to “El Toruño” at the end of the 1970’s. Joe never forgot the Spain of his youth and when years later he became the Congressman for the Democratic party, one night at a dinner given by the Spanish Ambassador in New York, he was asked if he knew Spain, and he answered “Not only do I know Spain, but there I am known as ‘Pepe de Utrera’!”\*

The word ‘Maestranza’ recalls a time past in which Sevilla gave birth to many new things. After a long siege, King Fernando III “The Saint” had just taken possession of the city where caballeros and princesses were entering drunk with victory on one side of the city, and those who had lived there until then were leaving by the other side. It was then that a group of the most distinguished caballeros who had entered Sevilla formed the Brotherhood of Nobles under the sponsorship of Saint Hermenegildo (later known as the Virgin of the Rosario) with the purpose of providing a system of self-defense of the city and control of the

population. These noblemen trained in arms, always on horseback and in time they acquired a high degree of equestrian skills.\*

In addition to equestrian exercises, very early on they initiated parallel activities, with the primary objective of celebrating festivals, in which bulls would leave their mark on the horsemen.

The thing is that, almost since the beginning, they set themselves apart from the civil powers and from the City Council and felt closer to their kings their lords, who protected and encouraged them.

It has been said that the Austrians [the Hapsburg kings] were big fans of the bulls, and for this reason the maestrantes would organize their fiestas de toros from horseback, first in the Plaza San Francisco and later in the Plaza del Arenal where they constructed a rectangle closed off on one side by the mud wall of the Convent del Pópulo and on the other side by the Cerillo de Baratillo\*. Later they would build the Plaza de la Maestranza in this very place, over the old plaza.

Over time, the equestrian toreo was giving way to toreros on foot, who went from being servants of the nobility on horseback to becoming the center of the fiesta de toros. This brought with it a revolution, making the actors jump off their horses and onto the sand to confront the bulls of the Utreran ganaderías that were undergoing the biggest expansion in the history of herds of brave Spanish bulls. These included Conde de Vistahermosa, which was the base in later years of Santa Coloma, Saltillo, Murube, Ibarra and Parladé; and Cabrera and Vázquez. They faced toreros like Romero and Costillares who came out of the tragic and bloody world of the slaughterhouses. All of this happened, has happened and is happening in our plaza.

A corrida de toros in the Maestranza makes us re-live this epoch and feel that we are the next link in the human chain of those that came before us. And it makes us understand why ‘Maestranza’ comes from the word ‘maestro’ and why we call those whom we admire ‘maestros’.

There is no doubt that what has made this continuity of the Maestranza possible for so many centuries is that everyone considers it very much their own; because it has imposed silence and discretion; because it has exerted itself as a cultural and learned patron - and because it has always been, as many know, close to the Convents, to the most needy, and to Sevilla.

The sense of hierarchy and the way in which this sense manifests itself make up the base of what is called ‘protocol’. Sevilla’s most primitive customs are proof of how deeply rooted this feeling is in the city. This noble tyranny pertains not only to people’s preferences as a result of their posts, position, ranking or honors, but it also extends to a whole world of customs rooted in tradition that are difficult – if not impossible – to uproot. And there was nothing more preserved and inexorable than the silence of the Maestranza.

An ingenious friend of mine said that the customs of corridas de toros are so well preserved that in the last two centuries that the *montera*\* has been in use, the only thing that has changed are a few centimeters of height of the “ears” on top. But the tradition of protocol in the Plaza de Toros of the Real Maestranza de Caballería of Sevilla has made it irresistibly captivating.

The Royal Academy of Spain defines the word ‘*silencio*’ as simply abstaining from talking, but the true significance of this term is difficult to express. It is like....a *lance*\* of Pepe Luis [Vázquez], a *derechazo*\* of [Curro] Romero, a *kikiriki*\* of Morante [de la Puebla], a *natural*\* of El Cid, a good pair of *banderillas* of Julio Pérez “El Vito”, a great *puyazo*\* of “Camero”, the pasodoble ‘Maestranza’ [played] by the orchestra of maestro Tejera\*, the sound of the *clarines*.....it is, as the great Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa said in his already-historic *pregón*, as though Sevilla keeps talking when it goes silent.

With the passage of time and changing fashions, little is left of the two wise and sentencing silences that could be glimpsed in each corrida through snippets of that custom that was converted into a holy tradition. The first [silence] was that in which all was suspended before the beginning of what was already intuited to be a great *faena*; and the other second silence was the disapproval at the end of a mediocre *lidia* [performance] when everything is as cold as a glacier and filled with indifference. Little by little everything is fading out, even the silence of Sevilla.

This sensation is usually felt at the end of the Feria when the hotels, empty of foreigners [people not from Sevilla] and taurinos, resist thinking that it will be next year before the *crème de la crème* of the taurine world will return to their hotel rooms; before they will hear the tertulias in their salons and on their terraces after the corridas; before they will have to stay up all night to receive and lodge their distinguished clients. It is when the fairgrounds of the Feria look like a sacred cemetery of a black tie ball, where the silence of the plaza returns and is present in its 15 little taurine alleys\* with the last deaf echo of the hooves and the wheels of the carriages, pulled by grand horses and refined mules. Many are we who will try once and again to lean over the railings of the emptied out casetas, without life and devastated with the nostalgic insistence and civilized desire to hear again the strum of the guitar, the sound of a small beer glass or the *taconeo*\* of a pretty gypsy girl.

It would be an injustice not to mention the artistic creator of this silence that is so inexpressible; that creator was the Sevillian *pueblo* of my elders. Its happy character made us value the sentiment in a special way, not very reasonable but rational, which is demonstrated in the sand of the Maestranza. Antonio Machado reminds us:

“A clarion note  
tears out,  
penetrating  
breaks the air with a vibrant  
stab ...  
Roaring of the timbales.  
Out leaps the bull  
in the sand.  
It snorts, it roars ...  
Battered rustles from  
a percale cape... ”

In this [poem] one can understand this mysterious sentiment when it happens, for such is the grandeur of the impressive and unequalled silences that are the unique and instinctive response to the creation of beauty and art.

Cities are differentiated by the character and charm of the people of their neighborhoods. In Sevilla, there are neighborhoods where the bowels of the streets guard their history and taurine legends that have never been revealed but are alive for those who have had the luck to share their epoch of greater splendor. It is there that the best university of toreo was forged with all the styles of toreo represented by their best interpreters.

These were the times when the slaughterhouse at the Puerta de la Carne was the backdrop and school for toreros. I have not yet figured out if it was the ruthless or the bloody atmosphere that awoke in these boys the instinct to test themselves in the face of danger.

The best example is the oldest maestro from the barrio of San Bernardo – the brilliant, lively, astute, quick-tempered, violent and irascible Joaquín Rodríguez Costillares\* who invented the *veronica*\* and the *volapié*\*, competing with and besting the men from Ronda – Francisco and Juan Romero – only to be

defeated later by the grandson of the first and the son of the second, Pedro Romero\*. He lived his youth in the ambiance of a house where his torero father managed to be a servant in the Maestranza while employed at the slaughterhouse. Another matador from San Bernardo was José Delgado Guerra “Pepe Hillo”\*, heir and avenger of Costillares in facing the great Pedro of Ronda, before writing the first book on tauromaquia and then falling to “Barbudo” in Madrid.

There was also Curro Arjona “Cúchares”\* who was born in Madrid but lived and grew up in San Bernardo near the memory of his grandfather, the torero Curro Guillén\*, his hope broken by “Retinto” in Ronda in that melancholic epoch of toreo after the War of Independence. The happy and showy character of and then Cúchares led to the birth of toreo with the muleta whereby the matador could play with the bull so that it was no longer a matter of only setting up and killing the bull. He was the father of the torero Currito and son of the banderillero Costuras who became a prestigious figura in spite of yielding, in time, to “Frascuero”\* and “Lagartijo”\* and the triumphs of “Cara Ancha”\*. His biggest rival was Manuel Dominquez “Desperdicios”\* who had a long and adventurous life including going to Argentina and Brazil where he became a slave trader and a revolutionary, and who never took his only remaining eye off him [Cúchares] – the only eye that was left him by “Barrabás” of the ranch of Pérez de la Concha in Puerto de Santa María in 1857.

A daughter of Cúchares would marry another torero of the barrio, Antonio Sánchez “El Tato”\*. Raised at the gates of the slaughterhouse, he was characterized by his intuitive elegance and good taste, about which one critic said that after being gored he would cover his shirt with his capote so that the blood soaking it would not give away the wound. His example of presence and cornadas was taken to a new level by the attractive Antonio Reverte\* who, although he did not have the nerve of El Tato, would die in front of “Grillito” in Bayonne. El Tato had to have his leg amputated due to an unfortunate goring in Madrid by “Peregrino”, a bull of Vicente Martínez, and with his retirement also went one of the toughest rivalries that existed in toreo – that of El Tato and Antonio Carmona “El Gordito”\* who was a great creator of placing *banderillas al quiebro*. And it was precisely this one [“Gordito”] who, after retiring years before, would shave his mustache and return to the ring to give the alternativa to “El Espartero”\*, a life cut short “by and for art” – according to the words of his legend in San Fernando – under the shadow of “Perdigón” of Miura. Is it a Masonic sign of death? His toreo, full of quietude, stillness and suicidal valor, would serve as the inspiration for later toreros such as Antonio Montes and Juan Belmonte from Triana, and for Jaime Ostos from Ecija, and even the poet Fernando Villalón who came to describe his funeral with astonishing reality in the last verses of his “Poema del 800”.

“The coachmen in black  
and in the riding crop a black ribbon.  
Young boys of the Alfalfa:  
Well-dressed young boys;  
black cummerbunds around their waists,  
and ribbons in their hats.  
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Eight horses carried  
Espartero’s coach”.

We arrive now at the Vázquez family but let us not forget toreros such as Machío Trigo and Carmona “El Camisero”, the banderilleros Manuel Rojas “Rojitas”, Manuel Rodríguez “El Tito de San Bernardo” and Joaquín Rodríguez Juaquinillo; the picadors Manuel and José Trigo; the novilleros Juan Pazo and the Vázquez brothers, Rafael and Juan.

The patriarch of the Vázquez family was also an employee at the slaughterhouse and Pepe Luis, the eldest of his three torero sons, worked for a while as an unsalaried apprentice in the slaughterhouse. Oh those Vázquezes – what a family! Pepe Luis, Manolo, Antonio and Rafael – a bouquet of toreros! And toreo based

on grace, intuition and lightness – toreo learned in secret in the large corrals of the slaughterhouse. It was crystal-clear art that is still an example of how far beauty and grace in toreo had come, and the limits of aesthetic emotion that are possible in toreo.

Battle, boldness, bravery, art, valor, impulse and inspiration. It is as though we had suddenly learned what it means to be a torero. All the more for us who have not seen them torear - all this has come down to us. They do not see or will see it in silence from on high; but we will talk among ourselves and for generations to come, feeling it in our souls.

Oh that Vázquez family! Always active! Pepe Luis and Manolo – Manolo and Pepe Luis – both so very Sevillian, so much our own, they put their hearts into it and gave us the best, steady and stable, feeling in turn all the responsibility of toreo, whose art is the essence of life. For this, such love and such pain and suffering.

Three great currents ran through Pepe Luis - Gaillito's knowledge of the bulls, Belmonte's solemnity in the opening of the *compás* [performing in an open stance] and Chicuelo's cheer with his feet together. His toreo seems like the work of a goldsmith, making grace profound. *Naturales*, *derechazos*, the sudden *kikirikí*, a *molinete*\* in the very face of the bull, the *ayudado por alto*\* with two hands, the *pase de pecho*\* lasting the full body from the horn to the tail, leaving the bull to catch its breath, to see him come from very far with the *cartuchito de pescao*\*, and those sublime *medias lagartijeras*\* – all are parts of the profile of the Blonde God of San Bernardo.\*

If toreo was being performed in profile, Manolo put it in front. He was like no other, and especially in his last epoch, he appeared to maintain all of it – the fiesta, the traditions and the respect for a ceremony that plays with the drama of life and death without taking any of the advantages that genuine artists do like planning and constructing their world. I want to imagine him dressed in green or in sky blue and gold like on his triumphal afternoons, citing from in front with his prodigious left-handed pass of which he always made a show in the most difficult and beautiful moments of toreo. Nobody suffered as much as he did in order to enjoy the honey of triumph in his home town until an unforgettable Corpus in Sevilla would cross his path\*, when the door that is the most glorious of all opened wide for the “Sorcerer of San Bernardo” – for the son of the superintendent of the slaughterhouse in his neighborhood – for the young genius of Las Ventas [Madrid] – for the mature torero and man who dreaming so much of this wish, converted his greatest dream into reality.

What is there to say of the last great maestro of San Bernardo, Diego Puerto\* – or, ‘Diego the Valiant’ – born in this neighborhood of illustrious toreros on the edge of this slaughterhouse in which his father also worked. His *sevillanismo* [innate sense of being from Sevilla] took him, like a whisper, from terror to the harshness of his more than thirty gorings; to explosive and open joy when he closed off a series of passes with his *adornos*, one-handed *cambios* in the very face of the bull and with those little quick steps so characteristically Sevillian. This joyous and true toreo, without any concession to bad taste, put him firmly in the taurine Parnassus.\*

The watch, with its throbbing tic-tock, fancies itself to be the heart of time and of time past, goes and comes back again, because our subconscious is the individual theater of all the tragedies that are repeated. The men that lived then are born again. That which was believed to be lost is recovered. Even in a neighborhood like San Bernardo the *olés* of the Monumental\* still echo, the same Monumental that withstood the best years of its legend with its marble boxes and its nearly 20,000 souls.

Three *temporadas* [seasons] sum up the Monumental's glorious taurine history, from its foundation laid in the shadow of José [Joselito “El Gallo”] and bulls of Contreras that kicked off the plaza in 1918, to the afternoon of the first official retirement (of the four recorded) of Rafael El Gallo in September of the same

year, and then to the triumphal return of Rafael with bulls of Pérez de la Concha together with Manuel Granero and Manuel Belmonte, which would be the last performance in this plaza.

The most active year in Sevilla, taurinely speaking, was in 1919. One day, the 28<sup>th</sup> of September, 1919, bore witness to its greatest event. With a half hour of difference, there was a corrida de toros in the Maestranza and another in the Monumental. Sevilla was divided between the followers of Belmonte, who went to the Maestranza, and the followers of the Gallo who went to the Monumental. One memorable afternoon of the competition, in the middle of the feria of San Miguel, when Manuel Jiménez Chicuelo took the alternativa at the hands of Juan Belmonte and with Manuel's own brother as witness with a bull of Santa Coloma in the plaza of Baratillo [the Maestranza] and at almost the same time the diestro Juan Luis de la Rosa took his alternativa from Joselito "El Gallo" with Varelito – who substituted for Sánchez Mejías who was wounded – as witness with animals of Guadalest in the plaza in San Bernadino [the Monumental]. In the end, three ears for the young Gallo [Joselito] and silence in Triana\*.

The following year both plazas agreed not to have coinciding corridas during the feria de abril {Sevilla's April Feria}. It was decided that the first corridas would be celebrated in the Monumental and the rest in the Maestranza. José and Juan alternated and performed in both plazas, and it seemed that the duel of the plazas was at an end. The tragedy in Talavera a month later not only ended the life of José but also the dream of his Monumental.

In the Alameda de Hércules we will find the Gallos, Rafael and José. As to the first, although he was born in Madrid 200 meters from Los Cibeles, he grew up in Gelves and lived for a long time in the Alameda and it was there that, according to history and his legend, his toreo was born based in something as difficult to explain as inspiration and 'duende' [magic]. Rafael, who was always classic and a dreamer, gave us majestic *suertes*\* such as the pass of the '*Celeste Imperio*\*', the *serpentina*\* and the *cambio de mano por la espalda*\* – all these before he would have one of his famous attacks of fear and run away. The exquisite art of the "Divine Bald Man"\* in his 29 active *temporadas* was balanced between brilliance and disillusionment. It is said that for him there were no fads, no concept of what was fashionable to do, and time seemed to pass him by as he was never a torero of his own time – nor of any other time – and for this he lived close to everybody, the public and aficionados alike, surrounded by love and general respect. No one who had the opportunity to know him has forgotten his Havana cigars, his wide-brimmed hat, his way of dressing and walking down Calle Sierpes\*. And often in the dim light of morning he seems to me to be present in these places so loved by him, and he smiles at us. The elegance of Rafael was foreshadowed by another neighbor of his, a maestro, in this illustrious neighborhood like Antonio Fuentes\*, successor to the good taste of "Lagartijo", and the final executioner of the famous "Perdigón".

His niece, Piruja Sánchez Mejías, the daughter of the great Ignacio\*, tells us that one day in Pino Montano, Rafael was shaving and asked her to buy him a new beige jacket to wear in an upcoming festival, although it is clear that the word "beige" was not in the vocabulary of the great Rafael.

"Pirujita, Pirujita", he called, "Do me a favor and go to the Campana and buy me a jacket of the color...color...café con leche (coffee with milk). Teresa had run down the long corridor of the second floor of the house, Rafael repeated the request phrasing it in these words that are incomparably Sevillian: "Pirujita, my child, please do not forget – more milk than coffee!"

The youngest Gallo, José Gómez Ortega "Joselito El Gallo", soon settled into the Roman Alameda\* next to his illustrative mother, Gabriela, and his brother, Rafael, in a house that shared a wall with the Chicuelo family. From here, having left behind the farmland of Algarrobo in Gelves where he was born, he would write the best pages of the Golden Age of tauromaquia, unseating the until then all-powerful and talented "Bombita"\*, the worthy successor of "Guerrita"\*. Almost from the beginning his toreo was encyclopedic and permitted him to conquer the two most demanding publics: first, that of Madrid in the afternoon of 25 quites in the famous corrida of Vicente Martínez in 1914, and then the following year in

Sevilla with a glorious success with the bull “Cantinerero” of Santa Coloma, a performance for which he was awarded the first ear ever given to a matador in the Maestranza. He was master of all and especially *largas*\* and passing with one hand. He was masterful in his way of taking the bulls off the horses and putting them into the *suertes*\*, with an exceptionally creative imagination. He was an extraordinary banderillero on both horns – sure, powerful, orthodox and joyful. Great with the muleta and exhibiting the highest technique, he liked to *torear en redonda al natural*\* with the *estoque*\* held lightly in the muleta. He was the precursor of today’s *toreo al natural*; he dominated the *volapié* and the *suerte de recibir*\*; and he had a great desire to explore new paths which led him to raise the Vistahermosa bulls that exist today, braver and more noble that would allow his colleague and inseparable friend, Juan Belmonte, to realize a type of *toreo* that José dreamed about, that has lasted right to our times. It is said of him that he was killed by the bull “Bailor” in Talavera de la Reina on May 16, 1920. Sevilla went into mourning and the Macarena covered the emerald flowers that Gallito [*Joselito*] had given her in black. His brother-in-law, Ignacio Sánchez Mejías\* – restless, agitated, uneasy, heroic and master of banderillas put in *al dentro*\* – accompanied him on the cartel that fatal afternoon, ignorant of what would be his own fate 14 years later\*. Federico García Lorca lamented:

"There was no prince in Sevilla  
 who could compare to him  
 nor sword like his sword,  
 nor heart so true.  
 Like a river of lions  
 was his marvellous strength,  
 and like a marble torso  
 his solid wisdom.

The air of Andalusian Rome  
 gilded his head  
 where his smile was a spikenard  
 of wit and intelligence.

What a great torero in the plaza!  
 What a good peasant in the Sierra!  
 How gentle with the sheaves!  
 How hard with the spurs!  
 How tender with the dew!  
 How dazzling the fiesta!  
 How tremendous with the final  
 banderillas of darkness! "

From time to time I would listen to my uncle José María de Cossío talk about Joselito’s personality by way of an anecdote that happened one day in the plaza of Cuatro Caminos in Santander. José was toreaing and all of a sudden an *espontáneo* leapt into the ring. The maestro from Sevilla retrieved the young man gently from the ring while the ungrateful lad showered him with punches and kicks – with no response from the maestro. My uncle saw it all astonished and aghast from the *barrera* in *tendido* one, and after the *corrida* he sighted José in the hotel.

“Oye – José! This inconsiderate youngster bloodied your face and kicked your arms and legs black and blue! But what surprised me most were your response and your attitude. It would not have mattered if you had defended yourself. Why this attitude? Out with it – what’s up?”

“Dear, dear José María, it’s normal. We have all at one time or another been likewise filled with this poison [of being taken over by fascination and passion of bulls and *toreo*].”

A torero who reminds us of this privileged mindset is the maestro Paco Camino. Nobody naturally knew more quickly than the “Niño Sabio” of Camas\* what was needed to fix, mould and *lidiar*\* whatever bull was in front of him. His rhythmic *chicuelinas de frente*\* and his slow and perfect *volapié* have no heirs in recent times. The *estocada*\* of Camino, unlike the diligent swords of “Algabeño the Elder”\* and Pepe “El Algabeño”\*, which were of an archaic style – powerful and crude – appears to sustain itself in the air like a feather. After Camino, it would be Juan Antonio Ruíz Román “Espartaco”\*, a worthy representative of ambitious and natural intuition based on excessive *afición*, who would be the king of toreo for almost a decade.

From Triana he went to the Alameda, armed with his wisdom, and he almost crossed paths with Belmonte, Manuel Jiménez Chicuelo\*. His bullfighting, half José, half Belmonte, was based on grace, understatement, in planting his feet together and, with that *chicuelina* of Betis Street pivoting on the soles of his feet, he left his mark on many bullfighters like Pepe Luis Vázquez mentioned above; Pepín Martín Vázquez\*, another one ahead of his time who knew how to combine all the Sevillian inspiration with the placement and the manner of linking cape passes as Manolete until a Valdepeñas bull in 1947 crossed his path; and Manolo González\*, the bullfighter of Trinidad with his Mudejar airs in the shadow of the furious bull named “Capuchino” from the Graciliano Pérez Tabernero ranch, he of the miraculous afternoon of the three *chicuelinas* in Barcelona of which they said it was as if the angel atop the Giralda whirled around the Guadalquivir, as the other angels clapped in the background.

On the other side of the large river on its right side is Triana – facing la Maestranza and Seville – the seafaring and pottery-making doorway to the Aljarafe countryside. These were hard times in which the surrounding villages searched for their identity in the old homes of neighbors, in fights and domestic quarrels, and especially in the forges, which marked the line between the inhabitants of the Gypsy Cave and of the Civilian Cave.<sup>1</sup> The forges were a dark fiery hell where the songs and dances of the gypsies asserted themselves over the commotion.

The imposing presence of “Cagancho”\* and the *temple* of “Gitanillo de Triana”\*, friends since childhood, both from Triana, both sons of blacksmiths of the forge and relatives of great singers, broke away from these forges and fought desperately with all of the other aspiring bullfighters in Triana to survive and triumph in the old enclosure of Tablada. The two immersed themselves in Belmonte’s bullfighting. While Joaquin [“Cagancho”] brought majesty and beauty to Triana bullfighting, always with his hands at medium height, elegance and impeccable style, gypsy expressiveness and with the best sword; Curro [“Gitanillo de Triana”] did the same with *temple* in his bullfighting with the capote, lowering his hands until they reached his legs. Gypsy art, of Triana’s Gypsy Cave, would come to form dynasties, of “Tragabuches”\* and “El Lavi”\*, who conceived of bullfighting as an art, the aesthetic of the great bullfighter as knowing how to handle himself, the rhythm of movement and grace of embellishment.

One 31st of May, in Madrid, a bull from the Salamanca ranch Graciliano Pérez Tabernero, named “Fandanguero”, ended “Gitanillo de Triana”’s life. Knocked over, having fallen on the sand already stained with the bull’s blood, riddled with gorings, crushed and labeled by the doctor ‘the poor bullfighter from Triana’, “Gitanillo de Triana” entered firmly and securely into eternity, retiring to Triana bullfighters’ heaven, where he arrived baggage-free but with his *verónica*, this moment of silence, smooth, extremely show, with body erect, legs in a position to support it, not very open, nor with feet together, his hands low. He died and he forever took with him his *verónica*. Only the master Gines Fernando Cepeda\* after several years would come close in his own *verónica* inspired by Ordoñez, to that *temple* and depth, secure in knowing its inaccessibility.

Also escaping from this harsh world were Rafael y José Vega de los Reyes, Vicente Vega Humanes, and the Curro Puyas (Francisco Vega Serrano y Francisco Moreno Vega).

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<sup>1</sup> Both of these “caves” are small neighborhoods in Triana.

Antonio Montes\*, bullfighter from Triana, a little bit deaf and an altar boy at the Cathedral of Triana, played the role of teacher for aspiring bullfighters in Triana in the early 1900s. He resurrected a way to place one's feet on the ground – those who knew him write – as if they were nailed down, always looking forward to the oncoming charge with amazing calm, inducing the bull to follow the cape comfortably and intelligently, and having the bull exit the pass with dizzying flights of the cape. He was a bullfighter of a good school to be more specific, keeping his feet still, making the bull return and revolve, and he challenged and escaped the bull from very close. His capacity for abstraction at critical times, they say, arose from his deafness. A killing *a volapié* in Mexico of the bull “Matajaca” from Tepeyahualco, led to his death. His burial in Mexico is tragic and symbolic, where an accident with the candles placed near the coffin, while being lit, reduced to the coffin ashes and cremated the corpse.

Triana is a constant creative force and through that force it is possible for us, when we cross the river and are received by the triumphant Juan Belmonte, from the Altozano [a neighborhood in Triana], to meet in the city of yesterday and despite that, have everything seem new, unpredictable and unrepeatable as a first love, because the city is contained in the temperament of its people. It is their passion that makes it great, giving birth to great bullfighters and poets, and enriching those same passions, making it a divine structure with a human face, because Triana is like each flower, in itself, negation of all others.

Belmonte played and ran in his Triana, still a stranger to the eternity that one day which he himself chose, would embrace him forever, absent the love, pain and pleasure, while his jaw, broken into a thousand pieces, hid the secret tragedy of growing old and the anticipation of death.

“To bullfight on a ranch during the day,” Belmonte told his biographer Manuel Chaves Nogales, “we used to swim across the river. We would hide our clothes in the bushes and swim naked. We would stand straight up and bullfight in the pasture of Tablada [a neighborhood in the suburbs of Sevilla on the Triana side of the Guadalquivir River]. It was bullfighting farm-style, with the horizon as the *barrera* [barrier around the bullring]. Standing guard was the young Vega, the wheelbarrow operator, on horseback, with his rifle held outlaw style and wide-brimmed hat, which he liked to wear. He shouted at us as we ran, “over here flamencos, over here!” I wanted to fight bulls like Antonio Montes.”

“At night it was necessary to lead the bull very close and have it follow every move, because if it stopped following the cape it would get lost in the dark of night and” – he would go on saying – “there in the plaza of Altozano we played with the bull and at *acoso y derribo*\*, with the pole that I used for closing my father's shop, harassing and knocking over dogs.”

Being the best, Belmonte became a matador in the taurine university of Triana and from the outset he had that quasi-sacred character that comes with genius. Solitude and solemnity were his natural companions, steeped in art, courage and magnanimity and leading a straight and healthy life, and it is for these reasons that he profoundly impacted all aficionados.

The wonder of Triana, demanding and hypercritical with himself, the best of the best, had an impromptu aristocratic bearing that allowed him to keep company with and hold his own with the most sensitive poets and writers, so much so that Gerardo Diego tells us that after a run he accompanied him to his room, where on the bedside table was the *Discourse on Method* of Descartes. It was only natural and right for a cultivated Trianero.

He was compared to Joselito, who – according to what those who knew him wrote – had a bullfighting of gypsy roots and dancing, and created around him an atmosphere of melancholic joy, of a delicate drunkenness of the senses. Belmonte was the bullfighter of sadness, with his chin down, chest out and leg forward, that moved you to silence, always moving to the opposite horn, his *olé*s hoarse and anguished, are howling and tremulous with deep passion, like *cante jondo* [the most primitive and solemn

form of flamenco song]. Belmonte, with his eloquent silence, brought the third dimension to bullfighting: depth. Grace elevates the solemnity and the heroic gesture of slow movements. Belmonte's *verónicas* are heavy. Gerardo Diego goes as far as to say that he admires Juan Belmonte and Antonio Machado\* in different ways, but with similar intensity. Don Antonio's slow – very slow – and serious verses are like Belmonte's endless cape passes. Everything stops. Nothing stirs except the suffocating fans under the sun.

He was also the best herald of Triana, proud of his roots, his parents, his bullfighting brothers, José and Manuel, of whom he said as a bullfighter, “knows too much for his own good,” and his father's hole-in-the wall shop in the old Triana market.

He carried memories of a neighborhood of tanners and fishermen; of silk workers, engravers, and painters; of bullfighters and tile workers, port workers, carpenters on the riverbank and ship workers' apprentices, memories in which art, with its divine flashes, fills everything and always in the back of his mind, the *ventas*\* of Cara-Ancha and de Camas, his first bullfighting escapades and the Tablada pastures, pools of aromas that open up the nostrils, overwhelming the brain. The bulls dotted here and there, between briny ponds, illuminated by an ashy blue.

Gerardo Diego, before talking about Belmonte, begins by placing him in the setting, Triana:

“Beloved bullfighter in Triana  
facing Sevilla  
Sing to the sultan's wife  
Your *seguidilla*.\*”

“Oh, river of Triana  
dead between dusk and dawn.”

To conclude the oration for the dead Juan Belmonte, for whom he had so much affection, which is both impressive and disturbing:

“Have mercy, Lord, so much glory  
and so much death and such rebellious noise.  
He was a man and no more, alone and naked  
a slave chained to his memory.”

In conclusion, saying:

The whole bullring has opened to the horizon.  
And how he made cape passes and what joy.  
Take pity, Lord, on Juan Belmonte.

Oh bullfighters of Triana, who took the name of their neighborhood around the world, forgotten by many! Francisco Ojeda "The Trianero" who faced bulls toward the end of the 1800s; Manuel and Jose Belmonte; Juan Belmonte Fernandez; Juan Carlos Beca Belmonte; Juan González Jiménez "Trianero"; Angelillo Triana; Francisco Ojeda "Trianero," dead one month following a tremendous goring at the bullring in Puerto Principe in Cuba in 1893; Leoncio García "Triana" in Ignacio Sanchez Mejias's *cuadrilla*; Antonio Roldán "Trianero" born at the beginning of the 1900's; Francisco Mena "Triana" matador, in 1928 ; "Torerito de Triana"; "El Andaluz", an authentic bullfighter, pure and true, whose potential was ruined by an Urquijo bull in Madrid; the Trianero Padilla, who had an angry and violent life that ended with a shot in the head; "El Yoni", whose cape work was the epitome of personality, dignity and grace; "Pacorro de Triana"; "Quinito" and his infinite purity; Manuel Garcia Maera, the struggle between courage and ambition; Paquito Casado, eternal rival of "El Rubio de San Bernardo" [Pepe Luis Vázquez] in the 1950s; José María Sussoni, the epitome of depth and truth; Rafael Astola and his exquisite and graceful cape work; Chaves Antonio

Flores, raised in a family of picadors who soon would become the “third man” with Litri and Aparicio, later to be the shadow and eyes that would guide “El Viti” in his best era. Antonio carried the bulls toward the muleta and forward without crossing or changing terrains, seamlessly for the animal.

Gold and silver fill this district of bullfighters, all with a singular concept of bullfighting and a singular style, based on the purity and perfection of bullfighting, and which has as its backdrop the poetry of tragedy, and as its form, the exaltation of delicate movement, of impressionism and of ornamentation. Triana bullfighting that delves the depths, begun at first by the temperance and aesthetic of rhythmic body movements, as if we go back to the early nineteenth century, with the natural and firm step of the lovers “El Jerezano” and “La Perla” in their *siguirillas*\* and *rumbeñas*\*, or the gypsy-singing of “El Planeta”, the voice of Francisco Ortega “El Fillo” faltering between hoarse and sharp, or the *siguirillas* sung by Maria de las Nieves in old inns and taverns, before the singing went down to the *tablaos*\*.

That bullfighting, based on depth, in the flights of the capote and the soft beat of the muleta, without ever losing the courage and the risk of the feat that always characterized the bullfighters of this land. The bullfighter of Triana navigates between the purity of taurine expressions and the most risky courage, before the dance of death in the plaza, because true bullfighting and the truth of bullfighting, are crystal clear hallmarks of the truth of Triana.

Triana is dark, forever with a sense of purity in all its expressions, it is free from the superfluous but not from the baroque structure, and that is how Emilio Muñoz\*, faithful guardian of Belmonte’s most baroque elements, always stood out for his purity, *temple* and temperament in the service of the purest emotions of bullfighting. Emilio cites unlike anyone with the muleta, keeping it in his left hand and moving it outward, keeping his distance and at the moment the bull takes the muleta, elongates the pass and finishes holding the muleta either high or low.

The history of Triana and its bullfighters remains unfinished like the rest of the bullfighting districts that make up Seville. In the fingers, wrists, arms, waists, hips, legs of all these great men, much of the history of this city is found.

Alongside Triana one must include the master Curro Romero\*, heir to the bullfighting of this neighborhood and so tied to it and its people. The “Pharaoh of Camas” [Curro Romero], during his 41 years of activity, was an unpredictable artist in the ring, grabbing his tiny capote and velvet muleta, moving them with pharaonic majesty and that innate elegance, the poise of a great bullfighter in the plaza, his modesty, his stoic temperance, colored with joy his curious concept of the most pure and authentic Belmonte-style bullfighting. His failure was wiped away by one *quite*, a flash, a proud gesture after finishing a pass; “Tomorrow will be the day”, became everyone’s credo. A kind of communion between the public, bullfighter and bull was created in the plaza, something magical, miraculous, of powerful aesthetic and passionate transmission. An inspired performance from Curro Romero could not be described or explained. It is difficult to categorize his bullfighting, to pigeonhole it: It is not Sevillian, is not gypsy, rather more like Ronda but not entirely. It’s ... very personal, unmistakable, inimitable. Curro Romero and nothing more.

Over the years one gains the perspective needed to classify two other bullfighting geniuses, as are currently José Antonio Morante de la Puebla\*, a testament to grand Sevillian bullfighting combining the angel of San Bernardo and Trianese depth; and Manuel Jesus “El Cid”\*, who went from exile to legend with the best left arm in the country as an example of art and of overcoming.

Every man tends to convert things around him and where he lives into familiar faces. It’s like a lasso invisible to the eye – visible only to the heart – built by the fervor, by passion and by surrender, which sees only what you really love. It is love and fervor that unites them from San Bernardo to Triana, through the Alameda and the small neighborhoods of Seville, forever based in the most concrete realities: family, work, the ring of neighborhoods, that carry the beating hearts of things and men, intertwined with old memories

and hopes that drag through the streets, where every step and every era has meaning, and through which parade continuity, custom and tradition.

I wanted to use the bullfighting memory of my city to reclaim its place and time in the history of bullfighting; and that has been forgotten over the years by a new generation of fans generous with trophies and ignorant of the bullfighting that our plaza has planted like a mirror before many others. We should not forget that we are obligated to maintain the rich heritage our elders have left us, with the sole purpose of fanning the flame of passion that ignites our character, making us unique and different from the rest. Bullfighting fans are called to convey their knowledge through oral tradition with younger friends, from parents to children, to give them the best of an art that seems to alternate between unfamiliarity, a bizarre topic, and extinction, so that now there are hardly *tertulias* left to which bullfighting go.

The *tertulias* that are legacies of those coming before – in **Café Suizo**, **Café Colón** and the **Cervecería España**, all located on Sierpes street with the masters “El Espartero”, Antonio Fuentes, “Minuto”, “El Algabeño”, “Quinito”, and other bull breeders among whom stand out Marqués de Villamarta, Marques de Saltillo, Moreno Santa María, Pablo Romero y Campos Varela, among others – are those in the fifties that occurred daily in **Los Corales** with Rafael “El Gallo” and Belmonte in the **Granja de Garrigós**, sitting on Tetuan street; at the **Café Royal**, later “Café Colón”, of Sierpes street, in the **Punta del Diamante**, next to the Cathedral, in **Cervecería La Española** or in **El Sport** and the **Café Gayango**, later “Brito”, in Tetuan street where, in mid-morning, a group of fans along with the older of “The Gallos”, with his wide-brimmed hat, wide-band cigar and long scarf around his neck, recited sayings and readings with a judgmental air for the history of bullfighting. The last *tertulia*, a little more modern, took place at the **Café Nipal** in Las Delicias passage, around master Luis Fuentes Bejarano. Each of them was some of the best material from which to build a bullfighting fan. The days passed by amid the passionate bullfighting discussions, laughter, shouting, apostrophes, long sentences and jokes. Minutes that turned into hours eaten up by words, pure rhetoric. And everything there stagnant, hovering in the air gave birth to the best aficionados known to this city, those same ones who would know how to describe and distinguish the good from the bad in the great bullfighters and best bulls of our time.

The future of bullfighting is more pessimistic than many believe. We forget a great evil against the world of bullfighting, and in doing so we are our own enemies. Until now the politicians, without strongly supporting bullfighting, tolerated it. Spain was a state outside Europe, Spaniards lived our lives, but now we are part of Europe, there are some very strong anti-taurine movements and politicians are beginning to side with them: therefore, the next few years will be difficult for the *fiesta* in our country. There will be some years of attempting to prohibit the *fiesta*, to limit it as much as possible. It is critical to be fully united and capable to fight for our rights before increasingly powerful and influential adversaries. Finally it will be necessary to win the battle of television, because we are kidding ourselves, and as said by a radio man: if it is not on television, it is as if it does not exist. We are reducing ourselves to mere ghettos in this cycle of crisis that we are now living through.

The art of bullfighting is real as life itself and is, despite the ignorance of many, deeply rooted in the Spanish spirit. Sure, any entrepreneur would like to have plaza filled next Feria de Abril, with its nearly fifteen bullfights, or Las Ventas with double at San Isidro. Yes there is support and enthusiasm, it simply needs to be directed and formed. It is an almost miraculous support, which comes without the media support, because football (American) is what gets publicized by the media. In the bullfights, being an enthusiastic follower or merely a casual spectator of bullfighting events is frowned upon, it is fascist, it is horrible, following bullfighting is almost synonymous with being a cannibal and despite the bad environment that results, all come to witness an afternoon of bullfighting because our audience is very loyal.

Despite many ups and downs and empty threats that bode the worst, bullfighting has managed to remain thanks to the privileged mind of Joselito, a most silent Belmonte, a revolutionary Chicuelo, or some artists like Pepe Luis and Camino. They among others, managed to bring the illusion to almost forgotten

plazas; and their success could do no more than silence those stubborn voices in predicting an end to everything that is ours.

However, we cannot rely on the ability of the fiesta to rise from its ashes on its own. The festival cannot stay stagnant, prey to the monotony that feeds the neglect of those who love it. We cannot and should not blindly rely on that mysterious resurgence of the art of a *figura* in the bullring. We must support bullfighting, encourage fans, not be ashamed to defend our status before complacent politicians, radical nationalists, alarmed outsiders and obtuse environmentalists – when the first and most comprehensive environmentalists, are bull breeders.

The victory in an afternoon of bullfighting is a spark that ignites a miracle, but it is upon us to keep the flame burning. Hopefully next Sunday of Resurrection, the brightness of the suit of lights of a local bullfighter will ignite the passion hidden in the Seville bullring. That treasure that only the best deserve. Hopefully Morante de la Puebla will manage to command the breeze to the rhythm of his smooth and temperate capote!

New Yorkers!!, you here next to the bronze bull of Wall Street represent what cannot die: the rigor and truth in a space as wonderful as the world of the bulls. Rigor and truth that the world of the bulls cry out for, and that is why you are called, along with all those who love bullfights, to resist apathy, the routine, shameful and tampered bulls and star bullfighters and who are not “masters”, the truth, the tragedy of the fiesta, and its brilliance. I invite you to flee cheap imitations and tricks, because our protagonist, as you well know, is none other than the brave bull, with its mouth closed, defiant in the center of the ring, alone in front of the crowd, bloodied and punished, and near a certain death at the hands of his executioner in a tragic love dispute:

Like the bull I was born for mourning  
And for pain, like the bull I am branded  
By a hellish iron in my side  
and as a male, by a fruit in the groin.

Like the bull, everything seems small  
before my enormous heart  
Like the bull I will fight for your love

Like the bull, I become stronger when punished  
My tongue is bathed in my heart  
And in my throat I hold a resounding storm

Like the bull, I follow you and pursue you,  
And you abandon my desire with the sword,  
Like the bull evaded, like the bull

Miguel Hernández

From the Guadalquivir River to the plaza, and from the plaza to the river, run tragedy and passion from a strange source. And in that anxiety of parallel and twin lives so carefully monitored, the soul of the city of Seville comes to possess the graceful and elegant ripples of a great river, and the entire city passes by the river as if by a mirror, all who lived there, the tumultuous beasts of the bullfighting arena, this instinctive terror, this fear of failure, this terror in the encounter, the glory ... Those who were, those who are, and those who will forever come.

Thank you very much.

## **Biography of Ignacio de Cossío y Pérez de Mendoza**

Ignacio de Cossío y Pérez de Mendoza was born in Seville in 1973 and is part of the fourth generation of a family closely linked to the world of bulls and the *fiesta*. He is the nephew of the academic and author of the famous taurine encyclopedia "El Cossío", Jose Maria de Cossío, and of the rejoneador Josechu Perez de Mendoza. He has a degree in Information Science from the University of Wales-Ceade and works as a writer, journalist and taurine critic.

He began at the *Radio Nacional de España* (1992), and worked later as taurine editor in *Agencia de Noticias Colpisa*, *Diario Ya de Madrid*, *Diario de Sevilla*, *La Gaceta Regional de Salamanca*, *Vía Digital*, *Antena 3*, *Tele 5* and *Sevilla Televisión*, as well as the Internet portals *Toros.viadigital.net*, *Burladero.com*, *Toreros.net* and *Diario Directo.com*, among others.



He is currently active as director and presenter of "Los toros en la onda," for the radio broadcasting franchise *Onda Cero Andalucía*, and also works with *Onda Melodía* and *Diario Metro* and writes for digital media outlets *Diariosigloxxi.com* and *Elsemanaldigital.com*.

### **Works**

Standing out among his publications are "Cossío y Los Toros" (1999), "Grandes Faenas del Siglo XX" (2001, translated into French), "Tauromaquia" (2001, translated into English and French), "Flamenco" (2003, translated into English and French) and "El Maestro Cañabate" (2004).

He has participated as a speaker in numerous forums, including the First World Congress of Taurine Journalists held in Medellín (2000), the IV and V Worldwide Congress of Taurine Cities at Vila Franca de Xira (2001) and Piacenza (2002), respectively; the International Congress and Society of the Fiesta de Los Toros in Seville (2001), *Los Encuentros Taurinos* of Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (2001) and in the V cycle of the *Aula de Tauromaquia*, University of San Pablo-CEU in Madrid (2006) .

### **Honors**

In 2000 he gave the *pregón* for the Feria de Logroño as well as in Valverde del Camino, Triana 2002, Almería 2005, Ateneo de Sevilla 2006 and New York 2006. Among his awards are the Cossío National Trophy in 1999 and 2001 from the Royal Taurine Federation of Spain, the 89th Ladder of Success Trophy to the Dynasty Cossío-Taurine Writers (2003) and honorary membership in the New York City Club Taurino (2006).

## NOTES

*Please be aware that the Notes below have been selected for what the translators think will be of interest to the reader and they are not exhaustive. They appear in the order in which the items appeared in the text. Many of the technical terms like names of the different passes come from Luis Nieto's "Términos Taurinos". As for the rest, although all the notes have been researched, often several sources did not agree (different birth years, family relationships, etc.) so if the reader is interested – or confused – he/she should do their own research – and let us know what you find out!*

**The peto** is the protective padding put on the bull starting in 1928. Hemingway makes reference to what many believe to be one of the “causes” of weak bulls: they lose strength pushing into the heavy wall-like peto, and also lose their will to fight when they exert so much effort without making any headway.

**Luis Procuna** was born in Mexico in 1923.

**Utrera** is a town near Sevilla on a branch of the Guadalquivir River, is considered the cradle of the fighting bull, and there are many famous cattle farms in its municipal district.

This group was and is known as the Real Maestranza de Caballería de Sevilla (The Royal Order of the Cavalry of Sevilla). This Real Maestranza built and still owns the plaza de toros in Sevilla, which is called the Maestranza. (There is also the Real Maestranza de Caballería de Ronda which built and owns the plaza de toros in Ronda.) Members of the order are called ‘**maestranteros**’ Being a member of this order is still handed down amongst the male heirs of the aristocracy of Sevilla, and there is a section next to the Royal Box in the plaza reserved for the maestranteras.

**Baratillo** was a small hill in Sevilla located near the Guadalquivir River, and the site of the present plaza de toros, La Maestranza, which is often referred to as the coso (plaza) de Baratillo.

A **montera** is the hat worn by the matador.

**Lance** = cape pass;

**Derechazo** = right-handed pass with the muleta;

**Kikiriki** = a pass at waist height in which the torero pulls the muleta away as soon as the bull tries to catch it and swivels to put himself in front of the bull's opposite eye ;

**Natural** = left-handed pass;

**Puyazo** = is the action of the picador putting the pic in the bull.

**Maestro Tejera** refers to Manuel Pérez Tejera (1888-1971) was for many years the conductor and artistic director of the band in the Maestranza. After his death, his nephew Jose Tristán Martín took over until he retired in 2007 and his son, Jose Manuel Tristan Becerra, now holds this post.

“**15 little Taurine alleyways**” refers to the 15 streets in the fair grounds, all named after famous Sevillian toreros.

**Taconeo** is the rhythmic pattern made by the tapping feet of the flamenco dancer.

**Joaquín Rodríguez Costillares** was born somewhere around 1743-1746 in Sevilla (San Bernardo), and died in 1800.

**The verónica** is the most basic and common pass with the capote;

**Volapie** is the most common way of killing the bull in which the matador jumps into the air to get over the horns and sink the sword into the animal.

**The Romero dynasty** started with Francisco Romero (born 1698). He was followed by his son Juan (born about 1722) and his grandsons Pedro (1754-1839), Gaspar, Antonio and José. Pedro is the famous Pedro Romero, the first to codify toreo (although his grandfather did invent the muleta, and his father invented the sword used to kill the bull, banderillas and the idea of having a cuadrilla). Antonio was killed in Granada in 1802 by the bull Ollero, and Gaspar died in 1773 acting as a banderillero for his father. Their sister married José Cándido (1763-1839).

**“Pepe Hillo”** is José Delgado Guerra. He was born in 1754 in Sevilla (Baratillo) and was killed by the bull Barbudo (of the ganadería of José Gabriel Rodríguez) in Madrid on May 1, 1801. The legend is that Pepe Hill went to see the bulls the night before the fateful corrida, and when one bull approached the group where he was standing, he told the mayoral that this bull was to be his – and that was Barbudo.

**Curro Arjona “Cúchares”** is Francisco Arjona Herrera “Curro Cúchares” who was born in 1818 and died in 1885.

**Curro Guillén** was named Francisco Herrera Rodríguez and he was from another family of toreros. Which continued with his grandson, Curro Cúchares. He was born in 1783 and killed in Ronda in May, 1820 by a bull of the casta Cabrera. Some say the bull was named “Retinto”; some say that it was named “Cabreño – and others say it had no name. All agree that it was of the color retinto (reddish), 7 years old and fairly ugly, lacking the usual Cabrera trapío. This is the only death to have occurred on the plaza of Ronda. Legend has it that Curro was buried in the plaza, and indeed when doing some reforms on the plaza they did find some bones and a cross buried. But no one has been able to prove that they belong to the ill-fated Curro Guillén.

**“Frasuelo”** was named Salvador Sánchez. He was born in Granada in 1842 and died in 1898.

**“Lagartijo”** was named Rafael Molina. He was born in Córdoba in 1851 and died in 1900.

**“Cara-Ancha”** was named José Sánchez del Campo He was born in Algeciras (Cádiz) in 1848 and died in 1925.

**Manuel Domínguez “Desperdicios”** was born in 1816 in Sevilla and died in 1886.

**Antonio Sánchez “El Tato”** was born in Sevilla (San Bernardo) in 1831 and died in 1895.

**Antonio Reverte** was born in Sevilla (Acalá del Rio) in 1870 and died in 1911.

**Antonio Carmona “El Gordito”** was born in Sevilla (San Bernardo) in 1838 and died in 1925.

**“Espantero”** was named Manuel García. He was born in Sevilla in 1865 and killed in the ring in 1894.

*Molinete* = a pass where the muleta is wrapped around the body;

*Ayudado por alto* = a pass whereby the bull is brought up and passes through the muleta at shoulder height;

*Pase de pecho* = passing the bull through the muleta at chest height;

*Cartuchito de pescao* = a left-handed pass invented by Pep Luis Vázquez in which the muleta is held folded in the left hand, and then let go just as the toro reaches the torero;

*Medias lagartijeras* = According to Luis Nieto’s “*Términos Taurinos*”, this is an effective half sword, in the manner of the matador Lagartijo

José (**Pepe**) **Luis Vázquez** Garcés was born in Sevilla (San Bernardo) in 1921. He was called the "Sócrates del toreo" for his knowledge and the "Dios Rubio (Blonde God) de San Bernardo" for his good looks. His brother Manolo Vázquez (see below) was known as the "Brujo (Witch or Sorcerer) de San Bernardo" for his magical inspiration. Both were born in the neighborhood of San Bernardo.

**Manolo Vazquez** Garcés was born in 1930 and took his alternativa in 1951. He retired in 1965, and then came back for three corridas and retired again in 1968. He came back in 1981 to give the alternativa to his nephew, Pepe Luis Vázquez on June 18, the day of Corpus Christi and Manolo went out the Puerta de Principe on shoulders. He repeated going out on shoulders in his last corrida in 1983. The Maestro died in 2005.

**Diego Puerta** Díanz was born in 1941 in Cerro del Aguila (Sevilla) but baptized in San Bernardo. He took his alternativa in 1958 and retired in 1974. His father worked in the San Bernardo slaughterhouse.

**Mount Parnassus** is the mythical home of poetry, literature and learning.

**The Monumental** was a second plaza de toros in Sevilla. It was built by Joselito “El Gallo” and his followers on the periphery of the barrio of San Bernardo. It was inaugurated in June, 1918 and it held 23,000 spectators – 10,000 more than the Maestranza. On May 16, 1920 Joselito was killed in Talavera de la Reina, and the last corrida was held in the Monumental in September of that year. In 1921 it was closed and torn down for reasons of structural instability.

There was **silence in Triana** because **Juan Belmonte** (1892 to 1962, when he committed suicide) was always considered as being from Triana where he had moved when he was a young child. He was actually born on the Calle Feria which is next to the Alameda de Hercules.

**Suerte** = A word that is used in many ways. Here it means a movement.

**Pase de Celeste Imperio** = A pass with the muleta, using both hands to lift the muleta to shoulder height and having the bull pass, from its head to its tail, erect under the muleta. (At right)

**Serpentina** = A cape pass in which the cape zigzags around the body of the torero in a spiral (like a snake) that leads the bull out of the pass.

**Cambio de mano por la espalda** – A right or left-handed pass performed after the torero has changed hands from behind (his back)



“**El Divino Calvo**” or the “**Divine Bald Man**” refers to Rafael Gómez Ortega, brother of Joselito, was known also known as “El Gallo”. Rafael was born in 1882 and died in 1960. His younger brother, José (“Joselito El Gallo”), was born in 1895 and died in the plaza of Talavera de la Reina in 1920. Fernando, the third brother, was a banderillero. Their father, Rafael Gómez Ortega “El Gallo”, was also a matador (1847-1897).

**Calle Sierpes** in Sevilla is the most taurine street in the city and where the cafes were where the toreros hung out.

**Antonio Fuentes y Zurita** was born in Sevilla in 1869 and died in 1938. He was on the cartel on May 24, 1894 in Madrid, alternating with the ill-fated “Espatero” and Carlos Borrero “Zocato”. Fuentes was the matador that ultimately killed the bull Perdigón after it had killed “Espatero”.

**Ignacio Sánchez Mejías** (1891-1934) was married to the sister of the matadors Rafael “El Gallo”, and José ‘Joselito’ (or ‘Gallito’), and the banderillero Fernando.

**The Alameda de Hercules** is a park with Roman statues all around it.

“**Bombita**” was Ricardo Torres Reina. He was born in Sevilla (Tomares) in 1879 and died in 1936. His brothers, Emilio (1874 to 1947) and Manuel (1884 to 1936), were also matadors.

“**Guerrita**” was Rafael Guerra Bejarano. He was born in Córdoba in 1862 and died in 1941. He gave the alternativa to Emilio Torres Reina, who also called himself “Bombita” (like his brother).

**Largas** – Cape passes with one hand in which the torero cites the bulls from in front and finishes the pass by having the bull exit the natural way (the direction in which it is going). Cossío adds the concept of the cape being held at one of its ends so that the pass is done with the cape fully extended.

**Putting them into the suertes** – here meaning setting them up for the next thing that will happen

**Torear en redonda al natural** – Pass in which the muleta is kept in front of the face of the bull who makes a semi-circle around the torero and then the torero changes hands – without stopping and keeping the muleta in front of the bull’s face – so that the bull makes a complete circle around the torero. This can be repeated for two, three, four 360° circles – for as long as the bull will keep doing it. And it can be done on the right or left (natural) side.

**Estoque** = matador’s killing sword

**Volapié and the suerte de recibir** = two ways to kill. *Volapie* is described above; *recibir* is having the bull charge the matador, who waits for the bull and does not move until he places the sword in the animal and then steps out of the way as necessary.

**Banderillas put in al dentro** - From the inside – i.e. with the torero between the barrera and the bull, and with little way to escape if not done perfectly.

**Ignacio Sánchez Mejías** substituted for Domingo Ortega in a corrida in Manzanares on August 11, 1934. He was gored by the bull Granadino from the ranch of Ayala, and died two days later from his wound.

Francisco (**Paco**) **Camino** Sánchez was born in Sevilla (Camas) in 1940. He was known as the “Niño Sabio de Camas” for the logical feeling of his toreo, and the fact that he was so good when he was still so young – like a precocious child.

**Lidiar** = According to Nieto, ‘Deceive the bull while fighting with it and avoid its charges until killing it’ [all] according to the rules of tauromachy. It is important that the toero understands the characteristics of each bull in order to give it the *lidia* that corresponds to it and so that the bull does not learn and permits the man to show off. “

**Chicuelinas de frente** = A chicuelina is a cape pass in which the torero wraps the cape around himself and swivels as the bull passes by. Nieto says “A cape pass executed in front with the arms at chest height and finished off like a *navarra*, although tighter to the body.:

**Estocada**= Thrust of the sword; putting in the sword

José García Rodríguez “**El Algabeno**” was born in Sevilla (Algaba) in 1875, took the alternativa in 1895 and died in 1947. He was known as a great swordsman. His son, José García Carranza “**Algabeno hijo**” was born in Sevilla (Algarba) in 1902, took his alternativa in 1923 and died in 1936 in the Civil War. Another relative, Pedro Carranza “**Algabeno II**” was born in Sevilla in 1885, took his alternativa in 1915 and died in 1951.

**Juan Antonio Ruíz Román “Espartaco”** was born in Sevilla (Camas) in 1962. His father, Antonio Ruíz Román “Espartaco”, and his brother, Francisco José Ruíz Román “Espartaco Chico”, are also matadors. He received the Medalla de Bellas Artes in 2003.

**Manuel Jiménez** Moreno “**Chicuelo**” was born in Triana in 1902. He took his alternativa in 1919, retired in 1951 and died in 1967. He is the inventor of the *chicuelina* pass with the capote. His father, Manuel Jiménez Vera “Chicuelo” (, was also a matador de toros and died when little Manuel was only 5, leaving him an orphan. His son, Rafael Jiménez Castro “Chicuelo” was born in 1937 also a matador who became a banderillero in 1981.

José (**Pepín**) **Martín Vázquez** Bazán was born in Sevilla in 1927, took his alternativa in 1944, and retired in 1953 after being gravely gored in Valdepeñas. He is the son of Francisco Martín Gómez, "Curro Vazquez" (1882-1946), the nephew of Manuel Martín Gómez “Vázquez II”, and cousin of Mario Carrió Bazán – all matadors of toros. Both of his older brothers were also matadors – Manuel (1921) and Rafael (1924-1998).

Manuel (**Manolo**) **González** Cabello was born in Sevilla (barrio de la Puerta Osario) in 1929. He took his alternativa in 1948 and retired in 1961. He became a ganadero and the apoderado for Espartaco . He died in 1987.

“**Cagancho**” was named Joaquín Rodríguez Ortega. He was born in Sevilla (Triana) in 1903 and died in 1984.

“**Gitanillo de Triana**” was named Francisco (Curro) Vega de los Reyes. He was born in Sevilla (Triana) in 1903 and died in 1931 as a result of a wound from the bull “Fandanguero” of Graciliano Perez Tabonero.

“**Tragabuches**” (1780–c.1817) and “**El Lavi**” (1811–1858) are two matadors from Andalucía, both with gypsy blood. “Tragabuches” worked first as a banderillero with the Romero family, and took the alternativa in Salamanca in 1802. In 1814 he caught his wife with a lover, killed the lover and disappeared into the countryside with a gang of bandits. The gang was captured and executed in 1817 but “Tragabuches” was not among them, and he never was seen again.

**Fernando Cepeda** Melo was born in Sevilla (Gines) in 1964, he took the alternativa in San Isidro in 1987 from Rafael de Paula and Jose Maria Manzanares (father), and retired in 2006. His long, slow, harmonious *verónicas* were famous, and he was a beloved torero in Sevilla. He is now the apoderado and artistic director of Miguel Angel Perera.

**Antonio Montes** Vico was born in Sevilla (Triana) in 1876 and died from a goring in Mexico in 1907.

**Acoso y derribo** - Where young bulls are chased and knocked over as a test of bravura.

**Antonio Machado**'s full name was ‘Antonio Cipriano José María y Francisco de Santa Ana Machado y Ruiz’ (1875-1939). As a poet, he was one of the leading figures of the Spanish literary movement known as the Generation of '98.

**Ventas** - Juan Belmonte started by honing his skills with becerros in the *ventas*, which are places where meat, chicken, rabbits, etc. are killed and sold. One of these *ventas* was owned by the then ex matador, Cara Ancha..

A *seguidilla* is an up-tempo folksong. *Siguirilla* (a little or beloved ‘*siguiría*’) and *rumbeña* are flamenco rhythms

A *tablaó* is a bar where flamenco shows are performed for an audience.

**Emilio Muñoz** Vázquez was born in Triana in 1962 and took his alternativa in Valencia, in 1979. He is still occasionally active – mostly in festivals – and is a commentator for Canal Plus along with Manolo Moles and the retired matador, the famous Antoñete.

Francisco (**Curro**) **Romero** López was born in Sevilla (Camas) in about 1933-1935. He took his alternativa in 1959 in Valencia. He was considered one of the greatest artists of his time and remained active until October, 2000 when with no warning he retired.. He has never returned to the ring.

José Antonio Morante Camacho "**Morante de la Puebla**" was born in Sevilla (Puebla del Río) in 1979. He took his alternativa in 1997 in Burgos. He is still active and considered a great artist in the Sevilla style. His career has had ups and downs including a three year hiatus for mental illness.

Manuel Jesús Cid "**El Cid**" was born in Sevilla (**Salteras**) in **1974**. He took his alternativa in 2000 in Madrid. His career got off to a slow start until he began to fight Victorino bulls – for which he seems to have a particular affinity – and the public discovered his great long arms and slow left-handed passes.

## I PREGON TAURINO DE NUEVA YORK - SUMMARY OF TOREROS

### **BARRIO DE SAN BERNARDO**

**(The small borough where cattle used to be killed. Toreros could practice bullfighting with that cattle)**

Costillares

Pepe Hillo

Cuchares

Curro Guillen

Desperdicios

El Tato

El Gordito,

El Espartero

Pepe Luis Vazquez and Manolo Vazquez

Diego Puerta

### **ALAMEDA DE HERCULES**

**(Borough in the city center which takes its name from two Roman columns at its entrance)**

Rafael El Gallo

Antonio Fuentes

Joselito El Gallo

Ignacio Sanchez Mejias :

Paco Camino

Juan Antonio Ruiz "Espartaco"

Manuel Jiménez "Chicuelo"

Pepín Martín Vázquez

Manolo González

### **BARRIO DE TRIANA**

**(Borough on the right bank of the river Guadalquivir well-known for its pottery and gypsies)**

Cagancho

Gitanillo de Triana

Fernando Cepeda

Antonio Montes

Juan Belmonte

Curro Romero

Jose Antonio Morante de la Puebla

Manuel Jesus "El Cid"