



Music with a message!

Tarik & Julia Banzi: Al-Andalus
"Aural gold!"

ARTISTS Touring 2005

TARIK BANZI (Al-Panzi) (*oud, ney, percussion*) was born to one of the old families of Tetouan, Morocco who trace their roots back to Al-Andalus. He grew up immersed in the Andalusian Tarik later lived in Madrid, Spain throughout the 80's & moved in Flamenco, Jazz, and Middle Eastern music circles. Tarik formed the group *Al-Fatihah* with Judeo-Spanish musicologist *Sanchez*, which has been recognized in Spain as the first group of Middle Eastern music. At time Tarik was collaborating and recording with flamenco masters such as *Paco de Lucia, Manolo Sanlucar, Enrique Morente, Jorge Pardo & Carlos Benavent* where Tarik introduced such mainstays the flamenco sound as the *darbuka* (clay or metal drum) and *Udu* (clay pot drum). In the late *Tarik & Julia* formed the group *Amal* together with *Maria Ahmed, Rasgui Boujemaa*. *Tarik &* students *Fain Duenas* and *Vicente Molina* later went on to form the group *Radio Tarifa*. In his musical leanings, Tarik is an accomplished visual artist who completed his Doctoral studies Arts at the Complutense University of Madrid, Spain (Ph.D (a.b.d.)). Tarik is the artistic director, cofounder, and composer of *Al-Andalus*.

JULIA BANZI (*flamenco guitar, viola, percussion*) is a Colorado native who began her flamenco studies in San Francisco. She later relocated to Spain for a decade where she continued to the status quo as one of a very few female flamenco guitarists worldwide. In Andalusia's Granada, Sanlucar de Barameda, and later at Madrid's Amor de Dios studios, Julia has studied with Spain's finest guitarists including *Isidro Muñoz, Manolo Sanlucar, David Serva, Felipe Maya Morales*. She later immersed herself in Classical Arabic & Ladino music & language and Classical Andalusian Music. Julia is currently working on her Doctoral dissertation in Ethnomusicology (a.b.d.) at the University of California at Santa Barbara (U.C.S.B.). Her MA thesis "*Women's Andalusian Orchestras of Tetouan, Morocco*" (02) is available through ProQuest Digital Dissertations. Julia is honored to have been selected as the 2003 *Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar* to Morocco.

NOURDINNE CHEKARA (*violinist/singer*) Chekara was born into one of the most distinguished families of Andalusian music in Morocco famous throughout Morocco as among the most faithful interpreters of Arab-Andalusian music. Nourdinne is a violonist-singer and professor at the *Tetuan Conservatory of Andalusian Music*. Considered a virtuoso violinist "dans la pure tradition de la musique andalouse" (in the pure Andalusian tradition), Nourdinne has been immersed in this tradition throughout his life, performing & recording for many years with his uncle, the 'king of Andalusian music' *Abdessadek Chekara*. Similar to the famed *Abdessadek Chekara*, recognized for his trend setting fusion collaborations with *Enrique Morente* in the late 1970's, it is Nourdinne who is carrying forward the Chekara family tradition through teaching, performance and respectful innovation of Andalusian music. Nourdinne has a particularly smooth vocal and violin style that Tetuan is known for and reflects the importance of those men who have dedicated their lives to the safekeeping and popularization of the precious remains of this oral tradition. Men and women who have passed on the tradition with their voice, heart and soul.

VIRTUDES SANCHEZ (*vocals*) from Conil de la Frontera, Spain. Conil is located in cradle flamenco, southern Andalusia. She is part of a new wave of vocalists that is descending upon Andalusian folk music, ready to defend and to enrich different schools of cante. Her voice her Andalusian heritage, flamenco, canto Lirico Espanol as well as her classical vocal training received later in life at conservatories in Conil, Sevilla and Madrid. Marrying tradition and this young cantora presents varied offerings with a capacity to look outward toward other terrains her musicality and sense of rhythm project a clear intention to maintain Andalusia's vitality marrying tradition and progress with skill and know how.

ADDITIONAL ARTISTS of AL-ANDALUS

RASGUI BOUJEMAA (*ney, vocals, kamanja, percussion*) hails from Marrakech, Morocco, where studied the ney with local masters. He made his first public appearance as flutist with the *Marrakech Orchestra of Modern Music* and went on to play in different groups accompanying national Morocco. Rasgui first joined Tarik & Julia Banzi in Madrid in 1987 and has since gone on in a wide variety of performance settings throughout Spain, France, Canada and the United States

ANA MONTES (*dance*) has been acclaimed as "brilliant and charismatic." She has been dancing she was 9, training in classical ballet and is now known one of the West Coast's foremost female flamenco dancers. Her flamenco studies started in Sevilla where she has studied under *Angelita* and *José Galván*. In Madrid, Ana studied with many of the most well known and respected artists including *Ciro, La Tati, El Güito* and *Merce Esmeralda*. Ana danced professionally in with *Rosa Montoya Bailes Flamencos* and in Spain, Europe, and Mexico where she danced professionally for 7 years. These years include dancing with the *Ballet Español del Camborio*, the *Ballet Español Fernando Romero* and *El Burrero Peña Flamenca* in Madrid. Ana has been performing, producing and teaching from her studio *Flamenco Danzarte* in downtown Seattle since 1991.

RANJANI KRISHNAN (*vocals*) was born in Bombay, India. Ethnically she hails from the Indian state of Tamilnadu and lived many years in Dubai of the United Arab Emirates. Ranjani learned Carnatic music in the classical tradition from the esteemed *Gowri Natarajan* and was her mother, a talented Veena player. Ranjani is a versatile singer who has studied languages ancient *Greek, Hebrew, Spanish, and Arabic* in addition to her native tongue of *Tamil* and the familiar *English* and *Hindi*. Ranjani is the multi-lingual vocalist for *Al-Andalus*.

MARTIN ZARZAR (*percussion*) was born in Lima, Peru, where, after traveling around the much of his youth, he began to study drum-set and hand percussion at age thirteen. His professional music career began at age fifteen in Portland where he met the group *Al Andalus* with whom, traveled, performed, and recorded. In 1996, he won a scholarship to attend *Berklee College* (Boston, MA), from where he now holds a *Magna Cum Laude* Bachelor's Degree in Drum-Performance. He has traveled as a performer to Europe, Canada, South America, and within U.S.A., performing alongside *Simon Shahin, Jamey Haddad, and Pink Martini*, amongst others.

ZAHRA BANZI (*dance*) is the youngest member of al-Andalus and was 'born dancing' Zahra was fortunate to have spent her infancy in the studios of Mary Oslund & Co and begin formal studies at age four as a classical ballet scholarship student at the Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT) and later at Dance Unlimited in Santa Barbara, California. Zahra's professional career began at age 13 when she danced and choreographed for the Santa Barbara Dance Alliance Teen Choreography Showcase. She has since gone on to perform at the Smithsonian Museum, National Building Museum, Ford Center and more. Enrolled at a Arts High school (LACHSA), she is fortunate to study under Lois Hunter (Dance/Theatre), Ka-Ron Lehman, Reggie Brown (lyrical modern), Danashanti Harter (ballet), Beth Hirschhaut-Iguchi (ballet), Don Martin (Horton), Rebecca Newport (ballet), Vera Ninkovic (ballet), Lawrence Rosenberg (ballet) She spends her summers between Tangier, Morocco and at DADA, studio of academy award filmstar, dancer & choreographer Debbie Allen and Master Teacher Adrienne Dellas Thorton of the Debbie Allen Dance Academy (home of the hit television series and reality show *Fame*). Zahra trained under Nina Kolenskinov (Kirov Ballet) Vitaly Artuiskin and Alla Khaniashvili former principal dancers with the Bolshoi Ballet, Stephen Smith and Karen McDonald (modern), Ava Bernstein (hip-hop), Titus Fotso (African), Sarah Anindo Marshall (Dunham) and Janson Samuels Smith (tap).

CHARLIE BISHARAT (*violin*) While you might not recognize the name, you would instantly identify the violin artistry of Charlie Bisharat. His work has graced the albums of such pop Alanis Morissette, The Rolling Stones, Jane's Addiction, and Aerosmith. His diversity can be the works of Jazz and World Music artists Strunz & Farah, Don Grusin, and Oscar Castro-his accomplishments have been featured in scores of soundtracks from *Swordfish, Texas Rangers, Big Steal Little* to on-screen performances of *Austin Powers Gold Member, The Drew Carey Friends*. A Grammy Award-winning performer, Mr. Bisharat has toured the world time and Jazz and New Age groups as varied as Shadowfax, Kitaro, Yanni and John Tesh.

Al-Andalus: Contemporary Andalusian Music Web: www.andalus.com E-mail: music@andalus.com
Tangier, Morocco