

Getting to the bottom of Flamenco soul

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Tuesday, 3 Feb 2015

Euro Weekly News - Spain's largest FREE local newspaper in English

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DUENDE: how dancers feel flamenco has been measured by body temperature variations. (flickr by Grifmo)

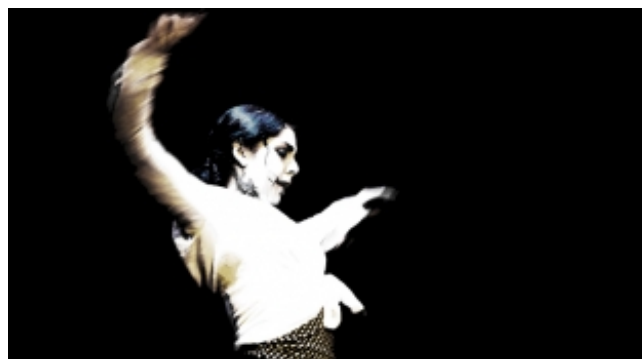
SCIENTISTS have discovered a way to measure flamenco dancers' *duende* by measuring the temperature of their noses and buttocks.

Wikipedia defines duende as loosely meaning having soul, a heightened state of emotion, expression and authenticity.

For the first time ever, investigators at the University of Granada managed to objectively measure duende by adapting a temperature detection technique called thermography to psychological studies.

The scientists from the Mind, Brain and Behaviour Investigation Centre of the university carried out various experiments to find the thermal prints of flamenco duende and reveal which dancers really feel it and which don't.

Ten professional dancers from the Granada Professional Dance Conservatory who have all been dancing for at least 10 years took part in the study.



High tech equipment was used to measure the resting temperature of the dancers, then temperatures of various parts of their bodies while they danced and while they watched videos of others dancing.

Results showed that while dancing and concentrating on feeling it, they reach a state defined as empathic stress, during which the temperature of their noses and buttocks dropped significantly (on average 2.1°C) and the same happened to a lesser degree (an average of 1°C) when they watched others dance.

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