

## Happy Holidays from Flamenco Romántico 2019

We hope all of you are doing well. My big news – I finished my book, *When the Moon Dances – A Memoir of Becoming the Oldest Generation*, on December 2, after returning from a Flamenco Show honoring 100 years of Flamenco in the Bay Area. Freddie was an honoree. Freddie had his CD for sale there, hopefully his first of many.



He has been busy all year digitizing his old audio tapes, so the house has again been filled with his beautiful music. It makes me dance.

We are doing a bathroom remodel – an “age in place” curb-less shower replaces our old tub so I no longer have to climb on a plastic stool to take a shower and Freddie won’t trip. One wall will be filled with a mosaic designed by Freddie, using the old Spanish tiles we rescued 20 years ago in Spain, mixed in with a few others. Attached to the back of our room will be a new walk-in closet, an opulent dream for me. It is now framed and all work may be completed in January.



Again, the year has flown by. Freddie turned 80 in June, and we have been married over 19 years. I turned 75 in October and figure, if I take after my Dad, I may have 25 more years left! My Dad is 100 and doing well. He no longer qualifies for hospice! His wife Peggy is right beside him at 89.

Freddie’s sister Dorothy went to Ventura for a visit last Christmas and stayed. She is now living with her daughter and grandson. Our friend Deborah moved into the loft with her two cats. She is a writer too as well as an old friend of Freddie’s from the Renaissance Faire.

Nick and Michelle still live in the cottage and are doing well with their Chinese Medicine practices. I continue to get acupuncture and Chinese Tuina massage from Nick every week in our living room, by the fire, and love the facial rejuvenation oil that Michelle makes. Martina now lives here in her “tiny house” alone.

**January** – We began interviewing for our bathroom remodel. Still taking weekly writing classes. Deborah moved into our loft.

**February** – I sent out my manuscript to beta readers. After receiving feedback, I had more editing to do! I felt like I would never finish.



**March** – Freddie’s mother Bea’s ashes wait for her memorial which will be February 2020 on her birthday. Freddie has made peace with her death and created an altar for her in our living room.

**April** – My son Elun and Granddaughter Josie visited for a week. We saw my Dad and



Peggy several times and had Passover together at our house. We had fun but missed daughter-in-law Donna.

**May** – Juan Paredes, from Spain, taught an inspiring Flamenco

dance and paella cooking workshop in our studio. I finished taking writing classes

and decided to take a break after over five years. Now I have an extra day each week

and am in the habit of writing. Please see

my blog: [www.MariannaMejia.com](http://www.MariannaMejia.com)



**June** – Big 2-day party for Freddie’s 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday and our 19<sup>th</sup> Wedding anniversary. Freddie’s son Manolo (Mano), Freddie’s brother

Timmie, & sister Dorothy came from far away. Meaningful fun with many old friends and dear relatives.

**July** – Carmen Ledesma from Sevilla, Spain taught a wonderful Flamenco workshop here. She performed at a Fiesta in Oakland afterwards, where Margalit and Shlomo, who had come from Israel to see their daughter and grandson, were able to join us. (Find out more about these old and beloved friends in my book, *When the Moon Dances –A Memoir of Becoming the Oldest Generation*). We had a lot of fun.

The next week we hosted another writing retreat taught by Andy Couturier. Exhausting but enjoyable and productive.

Our good, longtime friend Jim PeQueen died, leaving a hole in our lives.

**August** – Friends from Spain, Juan del Gastor and his wife Luci performed at a Fiesta in Oakland where Freddie also got to spend time with his old friend David Jones Serva who now lives in Spain and happened to be visiting. As we age, our friendships become even more precious.



**September** –My father turned 100. The UCSC Baskin School of Engineering held a very moving function honoring him and his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday which he was unable to attend. But we had a party for him at his home. How lucky we are.



Work finally started on our bathroom remodel.

**October** –The remodel revealed major and startling problems beneath our house. Rats had eaten the sewer line as well as the heater ducts and the electrical wires, and there were live nests in the heater vent. When the disaster was finally cleared, we had all the heater ducts replaced and vents cleaned and then had to replace most of the electrical wiring underneath the house! Now we are safe and probably healthier.



Our Granddaughter Christina’s husband died unexpectedly, leaving much devastation and sorrow.

For my 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, instead of giving a party, Freddie and I took a “staycation” in Capitola –a nice and romantic change.

**November** –Freddie was an honoree in the Flamenco show 100 years of Flamenco in the Bay Area. Carla Ochoa, also an honoree, came out from Miami and had Thanksgiving with us. We are thankful for old friendships deepening.

**December**–I am still teaching three Flamenco dance classes/week, seeing psychotherapy clients, facilitating shamanic drumming journey circles in our yurt, visiting my Dad once a week, and, of course, writing. When I finished my book I felt empty, so I wrote this Holiday Letter. In January I will start my next book. So, this brief respite is an important time to refuel. Meanwhile, Freddie keeps finding more of his tapes, and old music comes alive in our house.



We are grateful to have Martin in our lives. He keeps our paradise functioning and flowing –his creativity coupled with skill, competence, and love.

Happy Holidays from **Flamenco Romántico 2019**



We have visited here with my son Elun and granddaughter Josie, sister Elaine and husband Ken, and Freddie's son Manolo (Mano), Freddie's brother Timmie and wife Joanie, and sister Dorothy. We have not seen Freddie's daughter Maggie and family or his step-daughter Jessamy this year, but they are well.



Gratitude and Love. We welcome another year. Freddie and I wish you much peace, happiness and beauty in this coming year and more. Happy Solstice, Happy Holidays.

Love,

Freddie and Marianna Mejia



