



# Ángel Gitano: The Men of Flamenco



An exhibition of new work by contemporary photographer Ruven Afanador.

*Ángel Gitano* explores and celebrates the world of male gypsy flamenco culture. As a companion to his acclaimed *Mil Besos* publication, *Ángel Gitano* again delves into Afanador's obsession with Spanish folklore, culture, and the artists who have shared this muse –Buñuel, Dalí, Goya, García Lorca, and Almodóvar. Ruven Afanador's powerful, wild, and unrelenting subjects masterfully personify el ángel –the iconic manifestation of the Spanish soul, so perfectly embodied in flamenco.

Ruven Afanador's previous body of work *Mil Besos* (Rizzoli, 2009) captured the fierce beauty and seductive energy of the women of flamenco. *If the women of flamenco introduced me to a lush vision of womanhood –reckless, unafraid, remorseless– it was the men of flamenco who took me into a surreal milieu populated by primal archetypes of fierce egos, larger-than-life gitanos, undaunted and tribal. And it is their younger version –magnificent men of indomitable vitality, sinuous and lissome– who create a luminous modern version of this ancient tradition. Gitano embellished for me the mystery of that world, a visceral force wrenched from a centuries-old wound that transforms song and dance into a profound lament against fate.* (Ruven Afanador, May, 2014, *Ángel Gitano* Afterword)

The bleached white fields and stone walls of Andalusia, outside of Seville, became Afanador's studio. With long hair, black nails, and black rimmed eyes, Afanador's men are primal, beautiful, gritty and impossibly glamorous. Afanador's flamboyant and extravagant Gitano gypsy men are a sharp contrast to the classically trained young male dancers also pictured, who exude youthful passion and eroticism. These men all exist in a stark and surreal landscape of Afanador's

VISUAL ARTS  
LOS ANGELES

Thu, May 07–  
Sat, July 18, 2015

## Venue

Fahey/Klein Gallery, 148 N La Brea Ave,  
Los Angeles, CA 90036

[View map](#)

Phone: 323-934-2250

## Admission

Free and open to the public.

## More information

[Fahey/Klein Gallery](#)

## Credits

Organized by Fahey/Klein Gallery.



own creation, and in this fantastical world, they all dance, clap, and sing together.

The images in *Ángel Gitano* masterfully combine the grittiness of a documentarian, with the grace and inspired creativity of a high fashion photographer. In *Ángel Gitano*, Afanador has created a visual language all his own –a powerful vision that forcefully confronts and reinterprets gender and masculine beauty, that uses shadow and light to reimagine a soulful dance that has evolved over centuries.

Throughout the exhibition, the Fahey/Klein Gallery will be screening Ruven Afanador’s accompanying film, documenting the making of *Ángel Gitano*. Ruven Afanador was born in Colombia and spent his childhood in the city of Bucaramanga. He moved to New York in 1990 where he has achieved an exceptional career photographing icons of contemporary fashion, music, and film. His photographs have been published internationally, and his work has been exhibited and collected worldwide.

Artist reception on Thursday, May 7, from 7 pm to 9 pm.