



Evan Cary

Acoustic Guitarist

Flamenco | Classical | Original

BIOGRAPHY

My name is Evan Cary. I was raised in a small rural town in New Hampshire that is part of what's known as the Upper Valley, a cluster of small towns and villages in both New Hampshire and Vermont that are divided by the Connecticut River. The city of Lebanon, like many small New England towns included in the "UV", contains a rich history deriving from its early colonial settlement and the presence of Dartmouth College. I spent 19 years there before leaving to attend Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio.

My relationship with the guitar began in high school at the suggestion of my high school guidance counselor. I was lacking enough credits to graduate, and was feeling disillusioned with high school, my classes and American culture in general. In addition to the guitar class at school, I began studying with Classical guitarist Ed Eastridge. From the beginning, the guitar captivated and challenged me. In spite of my passion for the instrument, I attended Antioch College as a Creative Writing major minoring in Musical Composition, but found myself spending all my time when I wasn't in class playing the guitar. In 2005, a college friend invited me to come to visit Madrid Spain where I experienced Flamenco for the first time. I had never seen or heard the guitar played that way and I returned from the trip a changed man. I tried to teach myself how to play Flamenco guitar by studying YouTube videos and with other instructions I found online but came to the conclusion that if I wanted to gain any real skill I would need to go to the source. I left Antioch in my Sophomore year, moving to Madrid Spain in 2006 and my Flamenco guitar studies began when I started studying with world-renowned Flamenco guitar teacher Aquilino 'El Entri' Jimenez. From 2006 to 2009 I studied under El Entri at the *Amor de Dios* Flamenco academy, learning to accompany Flamenco song and dance as well as perform solo pieces for the guitar. I admired the work ethics of great guitarists like Paco de Lucia and would often practice six to ten hours a day trying to 'catch up'. When El Entri established his own Flamenco school, the *Cañorroto Academia* in the famed 'Cañorroto' neighborhood, I moved with him and continued to learn side by side with other up and coming Flamenco artists such as Joni Jimenez and El Kilino. In 2010 and 2011, I returned to New England to perform two summer concert tours, playing traditional Flamenco pieces along with my own original compositions.

Many of my fellow Flamenco students have gone on to have successful Flamenco guitar careers but after only studying for a couple of years I found myself becoming disillusioned with

Flamenco and my career as a Flamenco guitarist. The people I study Flamenco with and who have gone on to have those successful Flamenco careers, all began playing Flamenco when they were quite young. Some were as young as five years old when they began. I was in my early 20s which meant that most of my fellow Flamenco students had already been playing for 10 years or more. I wondered when I would be 'good', if ever, at playing these traditional Flamenco pieces. I had two realizations that helped me formulate my decision to begin moving in my own direction. One was that I felt a great need to perform my own music and not that of others. The second was that I am not a Gypsy. And even if I learned all the Flamenco techniques and played them perfectly I would never be able to feel Flamenco music the way the Gypsy, also known as Roma, people do-as part of the cultural history of the life and struggles of the Roma people. As a result, in 2008, I began listening to more Classical music and began composing my own pieces, being greatly influenced by Bach and Beethoven's compositional structure. I felt that Flamenco lacked this more structured approach to composition but I also felt that Classical lacked Flamenco's strong rhythmic base. I decided to create a form of music that had both the rhythmic complexity of Flamenco and the structural integrity of Classical. Thus, pieces such as *'Darkness Kept'* and *'Last Stars'* were born from this desire to fuse the two musical styles, from a series of short poems I had written around the same time, and my lifetime struggle with depression.

*This bitter world, it is tears wept.
What would it be if darkness kept?*

*Even stars must die,
Into their last proud light.*

Since 2012, I have continued to study with El Entri and other Flamenco artists such as Esau Saltos and Victor Puebla Velazquez, performing concerts in Madrid Spain and New England, and I continue to compose my own music. I see music and playing the guitar as a form of meditation that silences all thought and places you in contact with a higher reality. This kind of meditation has been a positive force in helping me to cope with various challenges in my life, my chronic depression, and the negative thoughts that accompany depression. My original compositions, such as *'Formation'*, *'Darkness Kept'* and *'Twinkelus'* are neither Classical or Flamenco. They are only Evan Cary of Lebanon, New Hampshire