

THE MIGUELETE

The “**LLUM DE LES IMATGES**” has become the most outstanding cultural exposition about history ever offered to visitors in the city of Valencia. As an employee of such a successful display, which lays itself in the ancient grounds of the Cathedral, I must express myself in written words my gratitude to the supreme opportunity I have had in the course of my work to deepen myself into the core of the Valencian culture.

In fact, many accounts of my experiences, as my working days go by, might be worthtelling, but would rarely make a great impact on my calendar as the experience I lived on the “Virgin’s day”.

“The Virgin’s day” is an event celebrated to honor the “Virgen de los Desamparados” given the utmost and appreciable care she takes after the helpless people. The religious event, celebrated on a Sunday every year, gathers a remarkable mass and becomes overwhelming as for the peculiar magical way of paying tribute to this Virgin. On that special day, the Virgin is taken out of the Basilica, held high over the massive crowd and moved throughout the streets till she reaches the Cathedral’s main gate. During this move, people feel magnetized by her beauty and deeply worship her in likemanner: powerful words of praise are sung through the air in perpetuity and caresses are lightly given to her, showing the unmeasurable love for her. She is reached out to and admirably touched what effort it requires: Youngsters overwrought reach out to her sacred manto to somehow capture her blessings. Babies are freely turned in and passed hand by hand over the crowd to receive her protection as well.

The day comes to be, not only religiously emotional for the people that follow the event, but also a magnificent occasion to have the ten bells of the “Miguelete’s tower” ring at their sound all over the city. On that day, I seized the opportunity to learn more about the octagonal tower, a 70 m.-tall stony-styled edifice to which the Baroque main entrance is jointly attached. On the top of such a svelte tower, I was introduced to the eleven pendulous bells as being called María, Jaime, Manuel, Andrés, Vicente, Narciso, Pablo, Bárbara, Catalina, Violante, and Úrsula, all of them situated on lateral sides and commanded by the two topmost bells, Miguel and Vicente; altogether doubtless to be ready to echo momentous celebrations of the culture. The group of cooperators that would make possible the announcement of that day, readied out themselves for the strondous race, while Concha, Amparo, and I stood motionless but no least excited and compelled to the experience. We would be able to listen to the powerful echo sound of the bells and examine their rapid motion accordingly. As the blast was commenced, the team would accurately coordinate their efforts to increase efectiveness. Some would cling to cords while others would counterbalance the load of the bells ceaselessly. Stammering vibration would deeply shake off my ears. It made me believe limitation had reached its peak and that I, suddenly, had gotten out of the entire earshot, not being able to sense my hearing one bit. Yet, my vition, intact, could examine the striking scenario: A man’s head was edging round one of the virulent bells. Being awestruck, I thought the man instantly decapitated. It seemed to me he was not on guard enough and that the activity would not reach to a happy end. Of course, It did and, when it finished, I could not help beaming at the brave team and give them a

standing ovation for the accuracy and execution of such an energetic performance.
BRAVO !!!!!

Dedicated to all my co-workers with whom I daily share this experience.

Valencia, 20th, July, 1999

Rachel

