

## Salmaan Taseer

Governor of Punjab and outspoken defender of minority causes



Speaking up for minorities came easy to Salmaan Taseer, the Governor of Punjab who was brutally assassinated by his own bodyguard last Tuesday. Half a century before he took up the cause of Aasia Noreen, a poor Christian woman facing a death sentence for blasphemy that she never committed, Taseer and his childhood friends resolved to protest the death sentence of Jimmy Wilson, a poor African-American.

"It was outrageous that he was going to be hanged for stealing a mere dollar," recalls co-conspirator Tariq Ali, the left-wing writer. Along with a third friend, the teenage subversives mounted a "Free Jimmy Wilson" demonstration to the US Consulate General in Lahore. But halfway there, Ali realised how few of them there were. Shrewdly, Taseer devised a fix. Somehow he swiftly gathered an excitable crowd of street urchins to make up the numbers. "They didn't even know what they were protesting about," says Ali, guffawing at the memory.

The move was typical Taseer. Quick-thinking was a trait that later served him well in business. A passion for loud, defiant political protest saw him take up unpopular causes. And develop a keen sense of humour. In a country where prospects for mobility remain slim, he was a rare example of someone who had risen from a modest background to become one of its most successful businessmen, and later, one of its most notable politicians.

Like Ali, Taseer was born into a prominent Lahore left-wing family. His father, MD Taseer, was a notable progressive poet, who married Christabel George, an English woman. "Christabel and her sister, Alys, came to India in the 1930s to support its struggle for freedom against the British," says Ali. Alys, Salmaan Taseer's aunt, married an even more famous poet, Faiz Ahmed Faiz. After



A passion for defiant political protest: Taseer at Governor House, Lahore in 2009 NIKLAS HALLEN/REX FEATURES

his father died when he was just 10, Faiz bulked large in Taseer's life as a mentor. Without a father, Taseer, his two sisters and their mother, endured strained circumstances.

Christabel couldn't afford to send her 17-year-old son to university, but bought him a one-way ticket to London. During the day he worked odd jobs to support himself and in the evening he studied chartered accountancy. Taseer seized moments to feed his political curiosity. Living with Faiz, exiled in Britain at the time, he encountered left-wing luminaries like Pablo Neruda, the Chilean poet. When the Vietnam War was raging, he marched on to Grosvenor, behind his old friend Ali.

"When I met Hillary Clinton, I told her that during the Vietnam War I used to hurl stones at the US Embassy in London," Taseer told me at our last meeting, just before Christmas at the Islamabad home near which he was slain. "You know what Clinton said? 'I used to do the same'," he said, flashing the broad, mischievous grin that often filled his face. The US Secretary of State had come to meet him at Governor House, the vast colonial-era mansion where he was buried on Wednesday.

Becoming Governor, traditionally a dreary ceremonial post, was an irony for Taseer. As a teenager, he, Ali and others defaced the walls of Lahore's

palatial Governor House with slogans denouncing the military dictatorship of General Ayub Khan. Two decades later, on the orders of General Zia-ul-Haq's governor, Taseer was thrown into the then dictator's dungeons at Lahore Fort for being a leading member of Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party. For several months, he was kept in solitary confinement, often beaten and deprived of sleep.

"To keep track of the days I used to mark the walls each morning, when a tiny bit of sunlight peeped into the cell," he once told me. But the grim experience, he said, vanquished any fear within him. "I recommend the experience to everyone. It's quite the character-

building exercise!" That wryness won him a keen following on Twitter. "A thief stole my credit card a week ago but I didn't report it because I saw he was spending less money than my wife. True!" he once tweeted.

Taseer joined politics after meeting Benazir's father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the former Prime Minister who was toppled in Zia's 1977 coup and hanged two years later. "His youthfulness, his rhetorical powers, his fashionable left-wing views and his fervent Pakistani nationalism all served to captivate me," Taseer wrote in his 1979 biography. Taseer's flamboyant style, the Cuban cigars, slick suits, and outspokenness were plainly inspired by Bhutto. The yellow-tinted glasses, however, some joked, were a tribute to U2's Bono.

After losing the 1993 election, Taseer abandoned politics for many years to focus his energies on building a business empire, with interests in the media, banking and chartered accountancy. The teenage socialist became an ardent capitalist. But while his politics had softened, he never shed his commitment to the rights of minorities. "I am fighting for Jinnah's Pakistan," he would insist, "a liberal and tolerant Pakistan."

As Governor of Punjab, a role he took up in 2008, he was among the first to visit a Christian colony that had been torched by sectarian militants. When the same militants attacked two mosques belonging to the Ahmadi Muslim sect in Lahore, he was savaged by the religious right for expressing solidarity. Supporting Aasia Noreen was only natural for him. Even as the threats mounted and even as his party distanced itself, he remained defiant. After his brutal murder, the fear is that no one will match that bravery again. **OMAR WARAIKH**

*Salmaan Taseer, businessman and politician: born Shimla, Punjab 31 May 1944; married twice (seven children); died Islamabad 4 January 2011.*

Pacheco was always at pains to insist that he did not invent flamenco-fusion, also known as "new flamenco" – rather that he gave what was a delicate musical plant a secure place to flourish. With Nuevos Medios to support them, Ketama's impact on the music scene was huge: in the early 1990s, sales of their LPs ran into the hundreds of thousands and brought a vast new young audience to flamenco. Simultaneously, their fusion with it of different styles – pop, Brazilian music, jazz, reggae and even, improbably, hip-hop and house – gained Spain's most deep-rooted music a new lease of life.

At the same time, thanks to the new tendency, flamenco's previous associ-

ation with a grotesquely caricatured folk tradition, distorted by the Franco regime as part of a clichéd, export-only vision of Spain as the land of bullfighting, religious processions and siestas, withered away. It started to draw more strongly on its rich social roots, particularly amongst the gypsy community.

"Flamenco just used to be heard in parties and on the streets, but suddenly it became more cultural," Pacheco once reflected. "The middle-classes could listen to it without being worried that it would remind them of what a miserable country Spain used to be." In an interview published in *El País* after his death, he added, "It was simple: [we made music with] gypsies



**Friday 7 January 1927**  
The first transatlantic telephone service, between London and New York, began to operate. On the first day of the service 31 calls were made



Anne Francis was best known for playing an intergalactic Miranda in *Forbidden Planet*, the cult sci-fi updating of *The Tempest*, but her work in both film and television was more wide-ranging, including the award-winning role of sexy private detective Honey West.

Born during the Depression, the six-year-old Francis became a child model at the suggestion of a friend of her parents. That led to her being in the chorus in the musical *White Horse Inn* and to a part in the short-lived play *Everywhere I Roam*. After children's radio, she returned to Broadway as an 11-year-old veteran under the name of Anne Bracken, appearing alongside Danny Kaye in Kurt Weill's *Lady in the Dark*.

As a teenager she had a one-year contract with MGM, though it only amounted to bit parts in three films: two musicals, *This Time for Keeps* (1947) and *Summer Holiday* (1948) – her first credit – and, in the same year, the fantasy *Portrait of Jennie*.

She had better luck with United Artists. Given its title and a girl's reform-school setting, *So Young, So Bad* (1950) sounds like schlocky exploitation, but it tried to escape its low-budget, with Paul Henreid as the psychiatrist after whom Francis's teenaged mother lusts.

It earned Francis a contract at 20th Century Fox, where she regularly took the lead. In *Elopement* (1951) she played the daughter of a pushy father, and the following year she played the titular Lydia Bailey in the film based on Kenneth Roberts' romantic novel set in revolutionary Haiti. She held her own against a whirlwind Jimmy Cagney in *A Lion Is in the Streets* (1953), as Flamingo McManamee, a would-be child-bride who tries to oust her rival by tipping her into a pool of alligators.

Her first significant role in a decent film was in *Bad Day at Black Rock* (1955), where she played Liz Wirth, the only woman in the cast and the only person

who listened to Prince. I always said we were the Motown of flamenco, and Ketama, who played the rhythm section to almost everything, were the Booker T & the MG's."

Backed with money from the family of artist Joan Miró ("When Miró drew us the company logo, with two Bic biro, one red and one blue, that was our first big hit," said Pacheco), Nuevos Medios did not just work with flamenco-fusion. Apart from backing big Spanish pop groups of the 1980s like Golpes Bajos, jazz artists such as Charles Benavent and Joan Amarigós or Latin American singer Chavela Vargas, Pacheco's company was also the distributor of legendary labels such as Rough Trade (his big dream, he



Francis and Nielsen in 'Forbidden Planet', a sci-fi take on 'The Tempest'

in town willing to help Spencer Tracy even a little, though she ends up dead.

*Blackboard Jungle* (1955), set in a tough inner-city school filled with sullen, testosterone-driven students and racial divisions, returned to the theme of teenage delinquency. When the recently demobbed new teacher, Glenn Ford, disagrees with the school's slack discipline, one student tries to intimidate his pregnant wife, played by Francis.

1956 brought Francis's signature role in *Forbidden Planet*, a futuristic version of *The Tempest* set on the planet Altair 5. Francis played the cutely-moiled and provocatively mini-skirted Altaira, whose first encounter with anyone other than her father, Dr Morbius, and their robot-servant, Robbie, is a space mis-

sion led by a pre-spoof Leslie Nielsen. The curly, blue-eyed blonde Francis brought a light, innocent sexiness to the part, reinforcing her regular spots in the Hollywood gossip mags – especially in the wake of her first divorce.

Two more significant leads followed, with performances to match. Francis played a war widow in *The Rack* (1956) and, the following year, a woman sentenced to be hanged for the murder of her husband in *The Hired Gun*.

Dissatisfied at MGM, Francis sidestepped into television, but at that time it was harder to maintain a career in both media. The rest of her career was largely in television, embracing many of the major series. Notable credits included *The Twilight Zone* and *Hooked*

the Isle of Wight Festival in 1970. "I had one roll of film and a Rolleiflex, hardly appropriate for sitting in a [photographer's] trench full of people," he once told *El País* newspaper. "But then the Moody Blues walked past, then Jethro Tull, then loads more, and finally I managed to get Hendrix in a perfect pose."

However, his best-known shot remains that of the flamenco star Camarón de la Isla on his breakthrough LP, *La Leyenda del Tiempo* ("The legend of time", 1979), just before he founded Nuevos Medios.

"Mario Pacheco was somebody with vision, someone who pulled off the impossible out of nowhere and managed to make it work," one of flamenco's cur-

(1960), an episode of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, in which – aged 30 – she played a college student who plans to kill Ray Milland's wife and elope with him.

One of her few cinema appearances at this time was in *Girl of the Night* (1960), a strikingly noir-ish film about a prostitute abused by both her madam and her pimp, but who finds respite in psychotherapy. Francis was in analysis herself at the time and brought a deep understanding to the role, which she considered her best.

In an April 1965 episode of *Burke's Law*, Francis played the tough but sexy rival private detective Honey West, imported from G G Fickling's series of mystery novels. By September of that year, Francis was playing Honey in her own series, co-starring John Ericson and Honey's pet ocelot, Bruce. The 30 episodes won Francis a Golden Globe and an Emmy nomination.

In 1968 Francis returned to the cinema as Fanny Brice's friend in *Funny Girl*, but it was an unhappy experience as star Barbra Streisand had so many of Francis's scenes cut. Francis unsuccessfully sued to have her name removed from the credits. More happily that year, she wrote, directed and produced *Gemini Rising*, a film about rodeo.

In 1970 she became the first single person in California to be allowed to adopt a child.

From the 1970s on, Francis appeared in many of the biggest TV series, such as *Dallas*, *Charlie's Angels* and *The Golden Girls*, sometimes in recurring roles. In 1994 she reprised Honey West in a new episode of *Burke's Law*. Her last screen appearance was in a 2004 episode of *Without a Trace*.

**JOHN RILEY**

*Anne Lloyd Francis, actress: born Ossining, New York 16 September 1930; married first 1952 Bamlet Laurence Price Junior (divorced 1955); second 1960 Robert Abelloff (divorced 1964, one daughter); adopted a daughter, 1970; died Santa Barbara, California 2 January 2011.*

rent crop of top young talents, Marina Heredia, told *The Independent*. "Other musical companies have followed in his trail, but Mario Pacheco was the first, a real pioneer."

"No other record company did so much for flamenco as Nuevos Medios," Raimundo Amador, a founding member of Pata Negra, added in *El País*, "or for a people who have been slightly misunderstood. When nobody else wanted us, Mario was the one who realised what we were worth."

**ALASDAIR FOTHERINGHAM**

*Mario Pacheco, record producer and photographer: born Madrid 6 November 1950; died Madrid 26 November 2010.*



### BIRTHDAYS

**Richard Armstrong**, conductor and former music director, Scottish Opera, 68; **Nicholson Baker**, writer, 54; **Dr Tim Black**, founder and former chief executive, Marie Stopes International, 74; **William Peter Blatty**, writer and film-maker, 83; **Alan Butcher**, coach and former England cricketer, 57; **Nicolas Cage**, actor, 47; **David Caruso**, actor, 55; **Nick Clegg MP**, Deputy Prime Minister, 44; **Hunter Davies**, writer and broadcaster, 75; **Philip Dukes**, violist and conductor, 43; **Tony Elliott**, founder and chairman, Time Out Group, 64; **Sir Peter Graham QC**, former First Parliamentary Counsel, 77; **Sir Stuart Hampson**, chairman, The Crown Estate, 64; **Tom Kiernan**, former Ireland and Lions rugby union player, 72; **Ian La Frenais**, writer, screenwriter and producer, 74; **Mark Lamarr**, comedian and broadcaster, 44; **Malcolm MacDonald**, broadcaster, former manager and England footballer, 61; **Maureen MacGlashan**, former ambassador to the Holy See, 73; **Richard Murley**, managing director, N. M. Rothschild & Sons, 54; **The Right Rev John Saxbee**, Bishop of Lincoln, 65; **Baroness Smith of Basildon**, former MP, 52; **Helen Worth**, actress, 60.



**Lamarr: 44**

**DEATHS**  
**HETZEL**: Phyllis. Died peacefully in her sleep on 6 January 2011 in her 93rd year. Much loved and appreciated mother of Susan and grandmother of Jacob, Patrick and Rosamund. A celebration of her life will be held at Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge in the spring.

### GAZETTE NOTICES

The Independent, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5HF  
gazette@independent.co.uk  
**TELEPHONE:** 020 7005 2882  
**FAX:** 020 7005 2399  
There is no charge



**OBITUARIES**  
**TELEPHONE:** 020 7005 2882  
**FAX:** 020 7005 2399  
obituaries@independent.co.uk

## Mario Pacheco

Record producer and founder of the pioneering flamenco label Nuevos Medios



Mario Pacheco was not a musician, but as a record producer and entrepreneur he was one of the most influential figures within the world of flamenco music in the last 30 years.

In the early 1980s Pacheco was the founder of the Nuevos Medios record company, which offered a home to some of the key artists in the new

developing flamenco-fusion movement, like Ketama, Pepe Habichuela, Martirio and Pata Negra.

Nuevos Medios's most iconic record internationally was arguably the album *Songhai*, Ketama's collaboration with folk musician Danny Thompson (a former member of Pentangle who has also played regularly with Richard Thompson) and Malian Kora player Toumani Diabate. The result

was a glorious – and highly innovative – mixture of flamenco and African music, underpinned by Thompson's folk-influenced double-bass playing. Rave reviews for the LP came from as far afield as the *International Herald Tribune*. "It was as if we invented world music," argued Pacheco in an interview a few years back, "without even having to leave our own back yard in Madrid."