

# Juan Siddi

# FLAMENCO

SANTA FE

2016 / 2017 Touring Season





# Juan Siddi

## Flamenco Santa Fe

### History

Indelible evenings. Authentic tradition. Unflinching drama. Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe's immersive experience in the passionate and disciplined world of flamenco is reaching loyal and growing audiences in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and beyond.

Infusing old-world tradition with new attitude, Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe perpetuates the rich heritage of a centuries-old art form. The remarkable ensemble of thirteen flamenco dancers, musicians, and singers is hand selected, with careful curation guided by the distinct aesthetic of artistic director/choreographer, Juan Siddi.

The internationally renowned Siddi, an award-winning dancer, instructor, choreographer and performer, trained in Germany with strong artistic roots in Barcelona and Granada. His ensemble blends top-notch dance artists and musicians from the U.S. or, steeped in authenticity, from Spain, as JSFSF is a key member of a vibrant, global flamenco network.

The troupe dates to 2008 when Santa Fe legend Maria Benitez passed the artistic torch to Siddi. Since then, the company's furious footwork has drilled through annual summer seasons at Santa Fe's Maria Benitez Theatre. The company recently received strong community recognition when Juan Siddi was granted the Mayor's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 2011.

From its base in the American Southwest, the company has spread its wings, touring both nationwide from Atlanta, Wisconsin, Ft. Lauderdale and New York City, and overseas, to Germany and Qatar. JSFSF has been featured in television broadcasts of NBC, Telemundo and Al Jazeera.

Over the years, some of flamenco's biggest names have made guest appearances with JSFSF; singers Jose Cortes from France, Silverio Heredia and Coral de Los Reyes from Spain, pianist Alex Conde from Valencia, as well as dancer Carola Zertuche have performed with the company.

JSFSF musical director Jose Valle Fajardo "Chuscales," a native of Antequera, Spain, grew up in the tradition of the Gypsies as a protégé of Joaquin Fajardo and an ardent admirer of Paco de Lucia. A trained dancer as well as a guitarist, Chuscales collaborated with some of Spain's most outstanding flamenco artists before joining JSFSF, now, for five seasons.

It is with great pride that Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe announced, in January 2014, its joining the management structure of the esteemed Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. By operating under ASFB's established arts umbrella, JSFSF stands to benefit from economies of scale and other business synergies, as well as a simpatico artistic alliance.

PHOTO: MORGAN SMITH



## Greetings from Santa Fe!

It's only been one year since we came under the management umbrella of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, but already this partnership has been successful beyond my wildest dreams. With a newfound capacity for expanded seasons at home in both Santa Fe and Aspen, we are experiencing great momentum.

Under the vigilant guidance of ASFB, I am proud to announce that Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe will make its New York City debut at the legendary Joyce Theater in the spring of 2016. The company will then bring its authentic version of Flamenco culture across the country to the Robert & Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts at UC Davis and even to the Hawaiian Islands.

Steeped in the rich culture of Flamenco, our ensemble of 14 dancers and musicians, many hailing directly from Spain, is comprised of the finest artists of this genre.

I invite you to share the exciting and magical world of Flamenco with your audiences.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juan Siddi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long vertical line extending from the bottom of the "i".

Juan Siddi  
Artistic Director - Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe

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PHOTOS: ROSALE O'CONNOR

# Juan Siddi Flamenco

An exciting new  
partnership with  
Aspen Santa Fe Ballet

by Michael Wade Simpson

Juan Siddi Flamenco won a kind of unofficial genius grant this year. After six years dancing six nights a week at a Santa Fe tablao during high season, he and his company were acquired, basically, by Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. In practical terms, that means just four, count-em, four appearances at the Lentic Performing Arts Center in Santa Fe this year, replacing their customary grind of daily shows all summer for tourists. Plus a tour. That's a major coup and a major lifestyle change for this summer pick-up company of Spanish and American artists.

In artistic terms, a cross-pollination between flamenco and ballet has already begun here, if not in technical terms, at least in theatrical ones. ASFB has already been successful in carving out a niche for itself in the world of regional ballet companies by commissioning new work, and by touring. The look and the choreography of their pieces is often edgy. They have world-class dancers. Their use of scenery, lighting and costumes can be striking.

Siddi's new life on-stage begins with a curtain rising to reveal stark, spotlit figures frozen on a black stage. There is guitar. The dresses begin to move. The color red is as vivid as fresh blood. There is space, there are transitions, there is texture from lighting, and a different sound, as three gypsy singers harmonize, and a band formerly crammed-into the edges of a postage-stamp-sized stage has been allowed to spread-out, to become an orchestra. When five dancers in colas (dresses with long trains) create designs on the vast, black floor, you can appreciate the dance of colors in space. The floor, here, is mic'd in order to pick-up sharpness in the footwork, no longer is the sound a muffled, carpet and curtain-drenched dullness.

Siddi's presentation on the large stage at the Lentic is a magical transformation. Compared to the show at the old tablao, it's like Siddi is Dorothy Gale after the tornado. He just stepped through the doorway that is the next phase of his life, into a technicolor Oz. A tiny, dark room with a low ceiling and cocktail service has been replaced by a palace.

A guest star, Carola Zertuche, based in San Francisco, is back for the summer. Siddi the dancer is clearly comfortable sharing the stage with a venerable artist and friend like Zertuche. Clearly it's not going to be the

Juan show. Their new duet, "Re-Encuentro," a caña, is a dialogue between two dancers, and an interchange with all three singers (Jose Cortes, Coral de los Reyes and Kina Mendez). The dance offers glimpses of Siddi and Zertuche's individual energies, hers earthy and his leonine, and a partnership that is in touch with emotion, that shows gratitude and guts. For all the pain inherent in the tradition of flamenco, there is also comfort on display here, sweat and joy.

Jose "Chuscales" Valle Fajardo, or "Chusco," is also back as Siddi's musical director. Fajardo is a native of Antequera, Spain, but lives year-round in New Mexico. He adds confidence and musical depth to the gathering. His physicality as a player is a partner in the dance. He has a fatherly grounding, sitting cross-legged and conducting with his eyes, and the neck of his guitar. The second guitarist, Alejandro Pais, seems to bring a playful quality to the proceedings, and the two guitarists mesh well together. Pianist Alex Conde brings smooth jazz riffs to his accompaniment. Along with an expressive cellist, Michael Kott, the musical interludes move between traditional guitar and a more swinging, improvisatory sound that may not be for purists. It works at the Lensic because here things are clearly moving away from the classical and heading toward something new. It is the right venue for this kind of experimentation. Along with a couple of ballet directors, Siddi is going to have a chance to play with ideas about form, music and theatricality.

An aspect of AFSB that still hasn't been adopted by Siddi's group, is the abolition of distinctions between soloists and chorus members. For all their swirling, stomping and well-honed group dynamics, Stephanie Narvaez, Ileana Gomez, Eliza Llewellyn, Radha Garcia and Emmy Grimm are still the ensemble. They are younger and less experienced than Siddi and Zertuche, but an argument could be made for pieces without the traditional distinctions between the two classes. What would an even playing field look like—where all the dancers were on the level of Zertuche and Siddi and the solos were passed around like the soccer ball on a championship field? What would it be like to have more men dancing in the group?

These are the provocative questions that come up, for this writer anyway, at this point in a provocative collaboration between two exciting and innovative artistic entities. Siddi is a lucky man to be able to focus on dance, costumes, teaching and choreography. Aspen Santa Fe Ballet seems a perfect partner for this unusual teaming. And Santa Fe is the perfect breeding grounds for it.



# Juan Siddi FLAMENCO SANTA FE

## 2016/2017 TOURING REPERTOIRE

Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe galvanizes global flamenco talent in electrifying and authentic showcases conceived in the company's home base of Santa Fe. Founded in 2008, the company's crowd-pleasing performances immerse aficionados, as well as those newly fascinated by flamenco, in a centuries-old world of song and dance.

Lead dancer and artistic director Juan Siddi's rigorous choreography captures flamenco's rich cultural heritage and infuses it with contemporary flair. Virtuoso musicians and vocalists, many hailing from Spain, heighten the dramatic power. The company has left memorable impressions touring the U.S., Europe and Middle East.

In 2014, Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe joined forces with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet for a shared management structure and enhanced artistic synergies.

Discover Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe.



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

### Angel De La Guarda

Choreography: Juan Siddi and Carola Zertuche  
*Fandangos de Huelva Intro* by Alex Conde, Piano  
Music: Jose "Chuscales" Valle Fajardo  
Lighting: Seah Johnson



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

### Re-Encuentro

Choreography: Juan Siddi and Carola Zertuche  
Music: Jose "Chuscales" Valle Fajardo  
Lighting: Seah Johnson



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

### Nataraj

Lord of Dance - Tientos/Tangos de Granada  
Choreography: Juan Siddi  
Music: Jose "Chuscales" Valle Fajardo  
Lighting: Seah Johnson



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

### Sabor Havana

Havana Flavor - Guajira

Choreography: Juan Siddi

Music: Jose "Chuscales" Valle Fajardo

Lighting: Seah Johnson



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

### Solea

Choreography: Juan Siddi

Music: Jose "Chuscales" Valle Fajardo and Alex Conde, partly based on Erik Satie's *Gymnopedies*

Lighting: Seah Johnson



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

### Fiesta Flamenca

Alegrias de Cadiz

Choreography: Juan Siddi

Music: Jose "Chuscales" Valle Fajardo

Lighting: Seah Johnson



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

### Son

Rumba/Tangos - Fin de Fiesta

Choreography: Juan Siddi

Music: Jose "Chuscales" Valle Fajardo

Lighting: Seah Johnson