



Photo: Eric Salitas

ARTIST BIO

Susana di Palma, respected internationally for her innovative flamenco/theater productions, has spent her career studying all aspects of flamenco. Her unique contributions to the art form are her provocative theater/flamenco works that respond to the contemporary world.

Founding Zorongo Flamenco Dance Theatre in 1985, di Palma balances her love for Spain and flamenco with an urge to create theatrically compelling works addressing social/political concerns and tantalizing the imagination. She has created over twenty full-length theater/flamenco works. They include: *La Virtud Negra*, a flamenco murder mystery commissioned by the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis; *Zorro in the Land of the Golden-Breasted Woodpecker*, her Ojibwa grandmother's boarding school story; and *Lorca's Women*, which earned her a Sage Award for best dance performance in 2016 and Artist of the Year by *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. In 2016, she was commissioned by FlamencoVivo to create PiCa which was presented at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

In 2017 she was awarded a McKnight Choreographers Fellowship and an Artist Initiative Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board.

TOURING REPERTOIRE

Lorca's Women

Choreography: Susana di Palma

Premiere: 2015

This is a unique seventy-minute flamenco dance/theater performance that brings together female characters from the works of Spanish playwright Federico Garcia Lorca. It is humorous, evocative, touching, and highly dramatic. The cast is comprised of nine dancers, two female flamenco vocalists, and two flamenco guitarists.

"The entire show, dedicated to female characters found in the poet/playwright's writings, evokes a spirit of virtuosic creativity"
Caroline Palmer, Dance Critic – *Minneapolis Star Tribune*

Requirements:

- Wood floor
- Microphones for musicians and vocalists
- Slide projector

Los Caprichos

Choreography: Susana di Palma

Premiere: 2015

Based on *The Caprichos* etchings by Francisco Goya, this work reflects, with humor and satire, our contemporary times. This imaginative concert is performed in two styles of percussive dance—tap and flamenco—by ten dancers. Composer Ben Abrahamson performs his original score.

Requirements:

- Wood floor
- Microphone for guitarist

Tra Ti Ti Tran Tran Toro

Script and choreography: Susana di Palma

Recreated: 2017

This work is a flamenco puppet show for children and families. It tells of a Spanish bull whose owner, Carmencita—a glamorous flamenco dancer from Seville—marries Ole, a Minnesota farmer. Torito must come to live on a Minnesota farm. He suffers when other farm animals treat him as a stranger. This adorable story teaches children that all immigrants have a story, art, and songs to sing. There are four dancers (puppeteers), one flamenco guitarist, and one singer.

Requirements: Wood floor

UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS AND PROJECTS



Photo: Tim Rummelhoff

Di Palma is currently working on recreating *Garden of Names* which is about the “*desaparecidos*” (disappeared) in Argentina and other Latin American countries. The piece examines the effects of political repression and political torture. Inspired by Lawrence Thornton’s novel, *Imagining Argentina*, the work is a timely reflection on our current international social/political climate. An international cast of flamenco dancers will be joined by percussion dancer Joe Chvala and his Flying Foot Forum. Juanito Pasqual will compose music for guitar, violin, percussion, and two flamenco singers.

Garden of Names will premiere on April 6th at The Cowles Theater in Minneapolis for seven performances. Speakers from Amnesty International and the Center for Victims of Political Torture will lead discussions of themes explored in the piece.

In the fall of 2018, di Palma will tour nine Minnesota communities presenting her puppet show *Tra Ti Ti Tran Tran Toro* and a new traditional concert *Siempre Flamenco!* Touring with Zorongo will

be gypsy guitarist Jose Valle “Chuscales,” flamenco singer Jose Cortes, and four dancers. The programs will also be presented at Park Square Theater in St. Paul.

Casa is the new work that di Palma intends to begin working on during the summer of 2018. This is a piece on homeless women. It will be developed in 2019 at Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography at Florida State University through her McKnight Fellowship award. This will be a site-specific work presented in St Paul/Minneapolis in late spring 2019.

MCKNIGHT ARTIST FELLOWSHIPS

The McKnight Fellowships for Choreographers awards Minnesota choreographers whose work is of exceptional artistic merit, who have created a substantial body of work over a period of time, and who are at a career stage that is beyond emerging. Three fellows are selected each year to receive a substantial unrestricted cash award, as well as additional support for career and artistic development.

The McKnight Fellowships for Choreographers is a program of The Cowles Center for Dance & the Performing Arts and is funded by the McKnight Foundation. Support for individual artists has been a cornerstone of The McKnight Foundation’s Arts program since it began in 1981. The foundation recognizes that the arts cannot flourish or enhance community life without the ideas, energy, and drive of individual artists, and that artists cannot make these contributions without unfettered creative time. Awards are made in 10 disciplines through nine arts organizations and presenters.

THE COWLES CENTER

The Cowles Center for Dance & the Performing Arts is the flagship institution for dance in Minnesota. Centrally located in Downtown Minneapolis, The Cowles Center includes the 500-seat Goodale Theater, a historic Shubert building and the oldest theater in Downtown; the former Hennepin Center for the Arts, home to 20 leading dance and performing arts organizations; the state-of-the-art Target Education Studio, housing The Cowles Center’s innovative distance learning program; the Illusion Theater; the James Sewell Ballet TEK Box; and the U.S. Bank Atrium. The Cowles Center is a catalyst for the creation, presentation, education, enjoyment, and celebration of dance and the performing arts in the Twin Cities.