



# Cante Gitano: La Susi, José Méndez and Paco Fernández



A special evening featuring two luminaries of today's flamenco, revered Gypsy flamenco singers La Susi and José Méndez along with guitarist Paco Fernández, dancer Lakshmi 'La Chimi' and percussionist Luis de la Tota.

Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Bay Area Flamenco Festival, Festival Flamenco Gitano presents a special concert featuring legendary Gypsy singer La Susi along with José Méndez and guitarist Paco Fernández. They are joined by percussionist Luis de la Tota and dancer Lakshmi 'La Chimi.'

La Susi makes her Bay Area debut with this special concert. Before becoming a major star in the 1980s, she began dancing in her early teens at the tablaos in Madrid with her brother, guitarist Joaquín Amador and his wife, dancer Manuela Carrasco. Highly regarded by the *aficionados* for her baile, she later began singing. When she was only 17, she was discovered by Paco de Lucía who put her in touch with his father Antonio Sánchez, producer of Camarón de la Isla's recordings, and he produced her first album, *La Primavera*. She toured with Camarón and soon became a major figure of the nuevo flamenco scene. La Susi went on to make 12 more records, including her most recent *Agua de Mayo*.

José Méndez was born into the legendary Méndez clan of Gypsy flamenco singers from Jerez de la Frontera, Spain. A direct descendant of La Paquera, he is the grandson of the festero El Pili and a cousin of Bay Area favorite, Kina Méndez. A member of Cristina Hoyo's company for many years, José Méndez has specialized in singing for dancers. He is also an outstanding soloist with a voice that echoes La Paquera.

Paco Fernández was born in Triana, in the heart of one of the most prestigious families in the world of Gypsy flamenco. In his late teens and early 20s, Paco was

MUSIC  
SAN FRANCISCO

Thu, September 10, 2015

## Venue

Brava Theater, 2781 24th St, San Francisco, CA 94110

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## Admission

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## Credits

Organized by the Bay Area Flamenco Festival



part of the renowned group 'La Familia Fernández' along with his parents, Curro Fernández and Pepa Vargas and his siblings, José and Esperanza Fernández. Since then Paco Fernandez has performed with leading figures such as Camarón de la Isla, Chocolate, Farruco, Potito, Duquende, La Susi, Aurora Vargas, Juana Amaya, Joaquín Cortés, La Niña Pastori and many more. Producer, singer, songwriter and guitarist, his first solo album, *Sastipén Tali* featured collaborations by Dorantes, Diego de Morao, Potito, and El Farru as well as his siblings, Esperanza Fernández and José Fernández.

Born in one of the oldest Gypsy neighborhoods of Jerez de La Frontera, El Barrio de Santiago, Luis de la Tota began his career as a percussionist at the age of 8. He takes his artistic name from his grandmother 'La Tota,' who has been an inspiration to him since his infancy. As a percussionist and palmero, Luis tours with flamenco's top artists such as Antonio Del Pipa, Fernando de La Morena, El Capullo, Moraito, Diego Carrasco and Angelita Vargas. As a Flamenco lyricist, his verses (*letras*) have been recorded widely and his work as a percussionist can be heard on many CDs.

Lakshmi 'La Chimi' has lived in Spain since 2002 and has solidly established her career in Sevilla, an essential cradle place of flamenco. In 2011 Lakshmi made history as the first non-Spanish artist to win an award for flamenco dance at the prestigious Concurso de las Minas de La Unión. She was later granted another important award at the Concurso Nacional de Arte Flamenco de Córdoba. Studying with prominent Gypsy artists such as Los Farruco, Angelita Vargas, Juana Amaya, Yolanda Heredia and Concha Vargas, she was given the nickname 'La Chimi' (her own name re-pronounced). In recent years she has had the opportunity to share the stage with such luminaries as Manuel Molina, Remedios Amaya, Jose Mendez, Antonio Moya, La Herminia, Carmen Ledesma, Antonio Rey and La Toná. Though still residing in Sevilla, Spain, Lakshmi visits the U.S. yearly to teach and perform.