



Burning bright

Flamenco pianist and composer Dorantes fuses his traditional roots with an avante garde approach to create his trailblazing music

One of the most inspiring flamenco pianists of our time...

Flamenco pianist and composer Dorantes fuses his traditional roots with an avante garde approach to create his trailblazing music. A multi-award-winning artist, David Peña Dorantes is acclaimed worldwide as one of the most exciting and compelling flamenco pianists and composers around.

The musician has a strong background in this area of music. Born in 1969 in Seville to a prestigious flamenco family boasting a long line of legendary performers, Dorantes absorbed the roots of flamenco at home. He also studied piano at the Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Seville from a very young age. Consequently, he has always searched for a synthesis of traditional flamenco, classical and avant-garde music.

Scrupulous about technique, innovative in the composition and perfect in the execution, Dorantes' approach has led to him becoming an important name in the world of flamenco piano, forging a new path in piano history; a voice nurtured by Spanish flamenco and yet all his own.

Dorantes made his professional stage debut at the age of 22 at The Royal Alcazar with the King and Queen of Spain in attendance. But it wasn't until 1998, when his first musical creation, *Orobroy*, was released, that the artist came to the attention of the public and critics, with purists praising his technique and fans applauding his courageous innovation.

In December 1998 he was invited to the Jazz Festival at Plaza de la Havana to share the bill with artists such as Jack deJohnette, Steve Turre, Roy Hargrove, Jane Bunnett, Michel Camilo, Danilo Pérez and David Sanchez. From this point on, Dorantes was declared "the flamenco of the twenty first century".

Many successful projects followed. In 2008, Dorantes embarked upon a collaboration with the National Orchestra of Tokyo, performing his original work *Sur Sinfónico*, which saw him invited back for the 2009 season. Performances at WOMEX and MIDEM (Cannes - France) were met with extraordinary success, and by February 2008 Dorantes was performing at the ninth USA Flamenco Festival in New York and

Washington – the first artist ever to take flamenco piano to this prestigious event.

In 2010 Dorantes was invited by The Montreal Jazz Festival to inaugurate the Latin section with two concerts; Carlos Saura asked the artist to participate in his latest film, *Flamenco, Flamenco*, and Dorantes was also invited by Caesarea Festival to a prestigious contemporary jazz music event in Israel.

Dorantes has been named as Patron of the Gypsy Culture National Foundation by the Minister of Culture for Spain, a distinction only given to great flamenco musicians. In 2012, Montreal Jazz Festival invited him to close at Canada's Maison symphonique de Montréal, and he was invited to play at 2012 Spoleto Festival USA in the Wells Fargo Jazz Series. In the same year Dorantes also released his third album, the forward-looking *Sin Muros!*, which saw him inventing a new way of composing, combining his flamenco roots with his contemporary jazz background.

As well as a renowned musician and composer, Dorantes has also taken on other roles. He worked as director, producer and arranger for Hon. D. Gabriel Garcia Marquez, using texts from his creation, *Cuando Lebrijano canta, se moja el agua*, winning an award for best production of the biannual period 06-08. As a composer for films and television, Dorantes has contributed music to the film *Más allá del toreo* by Ignacio Sanchez Mejías, as well as for the inaugural concert of the fifth European Film Festival.

Ensuring his music can be heard by many, Dorantes performs at some of the biggest festivals in the world, including Festa Europea Della Musica, Montreal Jazz Festival, Connexions Festival in Barcelona and Bruges Jazz Festival. He is the winner of multiple awards, including most recently the 2012 Girandillo award for the best music for Contrabass (Renaud Garcia-Fons) and the 2014 Joaquín Master of the Order of Performing Arts in Andalusia.

Recent projects have been large scale, exciting works. In 2014 Dorantes was asked by the International Cervantino Festival Mexico to compose a piece of work for the musicians and orchestras of

AWARDS WON

- Demofilo Award "REVELATION ARTIST" 1997
- Flamenco Hoy 1999 for The Best Instrumental Record Of The Year
- Flamenco Hoy 2003 for Best Instrumental Record Of The Year
- Giralddillo Award For Best Soloist 2004
- Giralddillo Award For Best Original Music 2004
- Giralddillo Award For Best Show 2004
- Special Giralddillo Award From The Public 2004
- Spanish National Award Flamenco "THE BEST FLAMENCO DVD" 2004
- Giralddillo For "Magical Moment" in 2006 (with Miguel Poveda And Eva Yerbabuena)
- Demofilo 2008 For The Best Production 2006-2008 for *Cuando Lebrijano Canta, Se Moja El Agua*
- 2009 National Award 'Young Creator'
- Foundation To The Secretariat Gitano, given by the Ministry of Culture
- 2012 Giralddillo Award For The Best Music For Contrabass (Renaud Garcia-Fons)
- 2014 Joaquín Master of the Order of Performing Arts in Andalusia



eight different countries, an event which brought together around 8,000 people.

Dorantes is now recording his new album, a joint project with the Double Bass player Renaud Garcia-Fons. The work, which premiered in Seville with great success, sees Dorantes and Renaud Garcia-Fons, both recognized masters of technical knowledge, find a point of intersection in their performances, with exciting results that are sure to light a fire under flamenco fans across the world.

www.dorantes.es/

WHAT THE CRITICS SAY

"The moment during Dorantes' solo when he tickled the ivories with his left hand while plucking at the grand piano's strings with his right, as though playing the guitar, was an unforgettable instance of musical bliss." JUSTINE BAYOD ESPOZ

"Occasionally, David Peña Dorantes reaches inside the open piano and plucks the strings directly while playing the keyboard. This has become almost a fashion among Jazz pianists, but with David you get the feeling that it is, like him, genuine. He's sincerely trying to draw out as much of the music as he can while having fun. His 'plucking' may also be genuine because he started as a flamenco guitarist before discovering, and converting completely to, the piano for which he has gained international renowned." CHARLESTON TODAY

"Hallelujah ! for Dorantes and Garcia-Fons. The pianist and the double bass player started new and great ways for flamenco music " ABC NEWSPAPER

"Contemporary flamenco and world music enthusiasts have much to rejoice over as, at last, Dorantes announced the release of his third album Sin Muros! The pianist, composer, and arranger has been considered a key figure in the recent developments of the genre since his landmark 1998 debut *Orobroy*." MARIANO PRUNES

"There is no doubt: Dorantes' music is joy and elegance, virtuosity and character ... He is an artist who has given sense to the piano. The sevillean awarded and worldwide recognised pianist has become the greatest exponent of flamenco piano and the creator of a new sound. His music is unmistakable. This new album is already a big success and will consolidate him even more, if that were possible, in being known as one of the best pianists in the world." REVIEWS NEW AGE

"The leader strode onstage and performed "a solas," quickly demonstrating the range of classical and jazz techniques necessary to fully absorb the keyboard approaches of Keith Jarrett and Chick Corea, working under the hood of the piano with his left hand along the way. When the rest of the trio checked in for *Atardecer (Guajiras)*, the 'Spanish Heart' Corea-mode emphatically dominated, with the percussionist gradually revving up his brushes to train-like intensity. If the opening piece had a brooding formal quality, the full trio showed a zestier, folksier bent. The racehorse opening of *Sin Muros ni candados (Bulerias)* seemed to be settling into a Trane-like (or should we say Tyner-like?) *My Favorite Things* obsession when Dorantes suddenly tacked into a calmer midsection with a loping *Autumn Leaves* flavor that vaporized into a solo by the bassist. Dorantes then jump-started the piece back into its opening fury. Pieces that followed all worked mercurially with different tempos, *Barrio Latino* mixing bop with flamenco, *Semblanzas de un río* giving us a restless Jarrett-like impression of a river, and *Caravana de los Zincalis* offering a sonic travelogue, easily the most varied, picturesque, and exciting of them all." PERRY TANNENBAUM, JAZZTIMES