

**TAMARA SAJ, Bailarina**  
ARTIST FOUNDATION  
OF SAN ANTONIO  
Category: Performing Arts  
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## ARTIST STATEMENT

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As a military veteran and spouse, I have always been a newcomer. A way to break into my community has always been to get a feel for what it needs and then try to fill that need. That way, I'm always helping. It's good for everyone: it warms up my abilities to break in, I leave my community better than I found it, and I grow as an artist.

I was not raised in San Antonio, and I am not from here, but having family here I feel a strong sense of belonging and love for this vibrant city. After spending some time here, my understanding is that my community, the San Antonio flamenco population, needs a stronger sense of unity. Great art and great artists have come from here; yet there is an incredible potential for more.

Rather than take on a role as yet another flamenco instructor in San Antonio, I hope to play a role in building bridges. If we support each other, we will all raise the bar of quality in artistic and professional output. Even if serving as a positive example is all I have the power to accomplish, leadership by example is a powerful influence.

As an artist, there are two facts that set me apart from my community in flamenco and Spanish dance:

1. I am formally trained in classical ballet, and I leverage that training to augment and expand on my work in flamenco. My professional focus is performance and outreach, as opposed to instruction. I pursue a balanced approach to my work, respecting and incorporating the old, while exploring and studying the innovative. As a dancer with a formal background in classical ballet, I'm accustomed to focusing on minute but fundamental corrections, thereby improving my technical execution, and eventually, my artistry.
2. My experience as an officer in the USAF and a small business owner has given me the perspective and resources to serve as a positive and constructive force in my community. My work in the military has given me a sense of teamwork and civic duty, as well as the ability to instill that sense in others. My work as a small business owner has given me the perspective to understand the risks and resources required for such an undertaking.

My goal is to take an increasing role as a positive influence in my community here in San Antonio, and I plan to leverage this project as a part of this plan.