

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 8, 2015

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<http://www.mahaiwe.org/press.html>

### **Noche Flamenca Presents *Antigona* at Mahaiwe**

Great Barrington, Mass.— Noche Flamenca will present *Antigona* at the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center on Friday, January 23 at 8:00pm. Hailed by critics for its transcendent and deeply emotional performances, Noche Flamenca is one of the most authentic flamenco companies in the world today, and Soledad Barrio is its star. This new evening-length work based on Sophocles' ancient Greek heroine combines live music, song, and dance, bringing the fiery, expressive nature of flamenco to one of the world's great tragedies. There will be a post-show Q & A with the artists about flamenco and the production.

“We’re delighted to host Soledad Barrio and Noche Flamenca for this ground-breaking new work, and to support artistic director Martín Santangelo as the company develops this piece. We know they look forward to hearing audience feedback after the performance and we are excited to be a part of that process,” said Mahaiwe Executive Director Beryl Jolly.

“The Mahaiwe is a delicious place to perform,” said Noche Flamenca Artistic Director Martín Santangelo. “The theater is so elegant—it’s like a beautiful grand dame. The intimacy of the space is perfect for flamenco and Beryl Jolly and her team make us feel so welcome.”

The idea to create a flamenco interpretation of the text and themes in Sophocles' classic play began when Martín Santangelo encountered the Living Theatre's production of

*Antigone*, and was struck by the battle between an individual, disenfranchised woman, and the authority of the state and its patriarchy. The idea resurfaced in 2010 when Judge Baltazar Garzon was suspended from the Spanish court for his efforts to publicly honor those who fought against Franco, allowing families to bury their relatives previously left in mass graves. This breach of democracy struck Santangelo as similar to the conflict in *Antigone*, confirming his belief that the story is alive and relevant today. At its heart however, the story of *Antigone* resonates with the roots of flamenco, which is based not in any one culture or religion but on the strength of family. Antigone's story is her humanity and her quest to bury her brother regardless of the circumstances.

In collaboration with his wife and principal dancer, Soledad Barrio, who plays the role of Antigona, Santangelo began the development process for *Antigona* in 2012, working with the company in Spain for five weeks over the summer. Since that time, rehearsals and workshops have taken place at the Company's New York City Studio, in San Juan Bautista at El Teatro Campesino, and at the Scottsdale Performing Arts Center. One of the most exciting aspects of this project has been the opportunity to work with artists from outside the dance world who are exemplary in their own fields, including theatre director Lee Breuer and visual artist Mary Frank.

The themes in the work include catharsis, issues of dictatorship, repression, loss, the strength of family, and female empowerment; strong themes not only in Sophocles but also in flamenco, all of which Barrio, in particular, is keenly aware of. Her mother's family lived through the dictatorship of Franco's Spain, surviving desperate hunger and civil war, yet proved themselves to be far stronger than their male counterparts. Barrio grew up with all of this in her blood and as one of the best artists living today, in any genre, is ideally positioned to embody all of this in her performance. Antigone was the first feminine heroine written for the stage. She was not afraid to show her strength, her pain, and her passion, all attributes that are deep at the heart of flamenco.

Formed in 1993, Noche Flamenca regularly tours around the globe. The mission of the company is to create a diverse theatrical body of performance through song, music, and

dance that expresses a rigorous, spell-binding aesthetic in the form of flamenco. It strives to captivate its audiences through its live performances and to evoke in them the vivid and expansive sea of passion and emotion that is flamenco.

Tickets are \$10 to \$50. The Mahaiwe is located at 14 Castle Street in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Box office hours are Wednesday through Saturday from noon to 6:00pm and three hours before show times. For tickets and information, see [www.mahaiwe.org](http://www.mahaiwe.org) or call 413.528.0100.