



# Theatrical Charcuterie

Second annual Santa Fe Theatre Walk

Did you miss New Mexico Actors Lab's Gin Game in May? It was hella sad, but we loved it. | Lynn Roylance

**By Charlotte Jusinski** | September 18, 2018

Last year's inaugural Santa Fe Theatre Walk, organized by the aptly named Theatre Santa Fe, featured 13 local theater companies doing short presentations at seven venues. Some companies reprised shows that had already closed; some previewed shows that were in the wings; others just had fun and played around. About 600 people came last year—and unless you're Indian Market, getting that many Santa Feans in one place at one time is quite a feat.

Theatre Santa Fe is set to do it again this year, but ever bigger. A whopping 20 theater companies present at 10 venues—everything from American classics to new solo acts from local writer-actors to a behavioral existence laboratory (read on to see what that even means). There's collaboration, expansion, experimentation and a bunch of high school students running around in commedia dell'arte masks.

If you're an audience regular, you'll see many familiar faces. If you've never seen local theater, this is a chance to learn what companies are like or preview what's onstage in the next few months. And, if you're a casual attendee who's somewhere between a junkie and a noob, the day is going to be a great mix of comedy, tragedy, weirdos and immense local talent from the most theater folks ever gathered together at one time around here.

Here's a preview of a few random offerings; it's by no means intended to be a best-of, though we do think they all sound great. See the end of the article for a more complete list.

## Almost Adult Productions: Late Reunion

Aaron Leventman, founder of Almost Adult, presents a shortened version of one of his original plays that has hit a few national festivals, but has not yet been performed in Santa Fe.

"It's about two people that supposedly knew each other in high school, but they may or may not actually remember each other, and they're trying to reconnect using identities that may or may not be accurate," Leventman says of *Late Reunion*, a piece inspired by a news story about a person who went to a high school reunion for a school he didn't attend, and how everyone "recognized" him. "A lot of our relationships with people, because of social media, are based on false pretenses about who people actually are ... and it's led to a lot of isolation."

Yikes. Sounds heavy. But he quickly adds: "Oh, and it's a comedy!"

## **Ironweed Productions: Hidden Treasure: A Georgian Immigrant's Story**

Ironweed, best known around town for its hearty, canonical American works by dead white men (recent performances include Arthur Miller and Sam Shepard), departs from that mode to get with the picture, in a way.

"Ironweed's looking to more fully embrace diverse American stories, so this is our first project in that vein," founder Scott Harrison tells SFR of *Hidden Treasure*, a new one-woman show by actress and writer Ketevan Kharshilze Ussery. "We've done several [American Classics], but I don't really want that to be the way that we're seen. So it's a departure, but it's one we're really excited about."

Ussery came from the Republic of Georgia to the Americas and crossed illegally from Mexico into the US in 2000. She was deported in 2007, but managed to enter the country again—legally—in 2011.

"I've known Ketevan for about 12 years now," Harrison says. "She was in a production of *The Vagina Monologues* I did ... back in 2004." At that time, she was working on a one-woman show about her experiences. Once she was back in the country to stay, she approached Harrison.

"She said, 'I'd love to find an actress to do this.' ... I said, 'I'd love to work on this, but only if you'll perform it.'"

Take note: Harrison also performs this weekend in Dale Dunn's *Gun Play*, with Just Say It Theater.

## **New Mexico School for the Arts: Las Fronteras**

Given the recent closure of SFUAD and the high level of skill of the students at Santa Fe's arts high school, the role of NMSA in supplying Santa Fe's theater scene with talented young actors and techies will only increase.

This year, in addition to students bopping around the streets in masks and costumes, NMSA presents an original play by former student Domenica Nieto (who is now in her freshman year at UNM, focusing on Chicano studies). Nieto wrote *Las Fronteras* as her senior project at NMSA, basing the three-person show on the combined experiences of eight Santa Fean teenagers who are either immigrants, or whose parents are immigrants.

"It's their stories of how they've overcome adversity and how they've had to forge their own path," Nieto tells SFR, "because their parents and families aren't able to provide them with the same input and guidance as some other families, because they're all first-generation." All the experiences and occurrences are true. "I added my own flair," Nieto says, "but for the most part, it's just their words and their stories."

Noting the bravery of the teens she interviewed, Nieto says, "These people don't have the power that we do as artists to speak to a wide audience about these problems." To offer their own life experiences to strangers on some future stage was a bold and generous act, and one to which the NMSA students pay deep respect.

## Theatre Grottesco: Action at a Distance

When something absurd happens on Santa Fe's stages, you can generally guess that Theatre Grottesco is behind it. Our very own nationally renowned experimental troupe tackles a theatrical style developed by the Fay Glassman Duo (movement-based theatre ensemble Lisa Fay and Jeff Glassman), and it probably has to be seen to be understood. Well, no—you probably won't understand it even if you see it.

"The actors play various characters at various times in various plays or scenes," Glassman tells SFR. "And they are all onstage in a very small area, 10 feet by 10 feet, and they're all performing in the context of their play, but they're in different plays."

When asked if this may be difficult for viewers to follow, Glassman responds instantly: "Yup."

But then, he laughs. "It's more like a composition of music than it is a composition of drama," he says. The audience "shouldn't look for stories; they should look for what's going on in the moment."

So just go with the flow, folks.

### **Santa Fe Theatre Walk**

1:30-5:30 pm Saturday Sept. 22. \$5 wristband gets you into all events.

Siler-Rufina neighborhood;

visit [theatresantafe.org](http://theatresantafe.org) for more info

## Who's Presenting What:

For a more detailed list of venues and times, visit [theatresantafe.org](http://theatresantafe.org)—or just show up somewhere between 1:30 and 5:30 pm on Saturday Sept. 22

- **Adobe Rose Theatre:** *The Ultimate Christmas Show* (as seen at the Adobe Rose last December, and coming again this December at the same place)
- **Almost Adult Productions:** *Late Reunion* by Aaron Leventman (see above)
- **Blue Raven Theatre:** *Strawberry Jam* by Talia Pura
- **For Giving Productions and Red Thread Santa Fe:** *The Sweetest Swing in Baseball* by Rebecca Gilman (as seen at Studio Center of Santa Fe in July)
- **International Shakespeare Center:** *King Lear* by Shakespeare (currently running at the Adobe Rose Theatre through Sept. 30)
- **Ironweed Productions:** *Hidden Treasure: A Georgian Immigrant's Story* by Ketevan Kharshilze Ussery (see above; upcoming at Teatro Paraguas in March)
- **Julesworks:** *Julesworks Follies Microcosm of Santa Fe's Live (Not Quite) Monthly Variety Show* by the Julesworks ensemble
- **Just Say It Theater:** *Gun Play* by Dale Dunn
- **Labinger Productions:** *Charming Billy* by Jerry Labinger
- **New Mexico Actors Lab:** *The Gin Game* by DL Coburn (as seen at Teatro Paraguas in May) and *A Doll's House, Part 2* by Luca Hanft (upcoming at Teatro Paraguas in May 2019—and, coincidentally, also presented this weekend by Albuquerque's Fusion Theatre Company at the James A Little Theatre; see [fusionnm.org](http://fusionnm.org) for info)
- **New Mexico School for the Arts:** *Las Fronteras* by Domenica Nieto (see above)
- **Oasis Theatre Company:** *The Diaries of Adam and Eve* by Mark Twain
- **Ron Bloomberg Productions:** *Your Move* by Ron Bloomberg
- **Santa Fe Improv:** **Improv games** with Ben Taxy
- **Santa Fe Playhouse:** "The Explaining Room," a short play by Helen Rynaski from *Benchwarmers* (upcoming at the playhouse Sept. 27-Oct. 14)
- **Teatro Paraguas:** *Atacama* by Augusto Federico Amador (currently running at Teatro Paraguas through Sept. 23)
- **Theatre Grottesco:** *Action at a Distance* (see above; upcoming at the Santa Fe Playhouse Oct. 1-10)
- **Upstart Crows of Santa Fe:** Scenes from Shakespeare
- **Z Productions:** *Lion's Tale* by Rosemary Zibart

## Where Things Happen:

*If you just head to the Rufina-Henry Lynch-Calle Marie neighborhood, you'll see signs and crowds; but if you really want to GPS your directions, here are the venues (you can buy a \$5 wristband anywhere, and it gets you in everywhere else):*

- **Adobe Rose Theatre:** 1213 Parkway Drive, Ste. B
- **Cacao Santa Fe:** 3201 Richards Lane, Ste. B
- **Confetti Community Hall:** 3205 Richards Lane, Ste. B
- **Dance Space:** 3208 Richards Lane, Ste. A
- **Iglesia Apostolica:** 3233 Calle Marie, Ste. B
- **Teatro Paraguas and Annex A:** 3205 Calle Marie
- **Santa Fe Improv:** 1213 Mercantile Road, Ste. D
- **Santa Fe Playhouse Speakeasy & Workshop:** 3218 Calle Marie

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