



## Meet the Lotus Festival Artists: Nohelia Sosa & Randy Sanchez from Nohe y Sus Santos

### Can you tell us about yourselves and your band?

*Nohe:* My name is Nohelia Sosa. I'm originally from Honduras. I've been in the United States for 12 years. I am living now in the beautiful city of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

*Randy:* My name is Randy Sanchez. I've lived in the United States all my life. I was born in El Paso, Texas. So, I'm from the border region of the United States. And I've been sort of studying music for the majority of my life now. And Latin music is such a huge influence for me - studying music from the border region, as well as farther down south into Latin American countries and beyond.



Left to right: Randy Sanchez, Justin Bransford, Nohelia Sosa, and Rafael Herrera

*Nohe:* I came here to Santa Fe and I was looking for a band. We have a very good friend in common and he introduced me to Randy - and everything started from there. We clicked. I guess we have the same common ideas about sounds, about music, about creating our own sound. It is amazing, we started playing and now we're *Nohe y Sus Santos*.

### **Can you tell us a little bit about your band?**

*Randy:* We have four pieces in the band. We have Nohe, of course, myself on guitar, Justin Bransford on bass, and right now we have Dennis Javier Jasso playing drums/percussion, too. We try to think outside the box. We were heavily influenced by the music and people we've heard. So, a lot of times we'll cover songs of artists that have influenced us. It's our own interpretation of someone else's piece. We'll play a *cumbia* to start with and maybe add a little funk rhythm to it. Or maybe we'll take a rock song, which we did on our last album with "Come as You Are," and turn it into *cumbia*.

*Nohe:* Everybody individually brings something different and that creates the mix. My influence is more from Mexico - *rancheras*, and Cuba - *son Cubano*. Then Randy's is rock. And Justin, the bass guy - jazz - he's a genius. Then we have Dennis - he comes from more Latin music - *cumbia*. This is the mix of things and that's what I love.

### **What is it like to be a musician today?**

*Randy:* It's been a challenge and it's important we keep to self-motivated. Things are harder these days. There are a lot of new skills we're having to learn these days - like we've had to up our livestream game. We still practice our social-distancing rules, so we have to be very strategic and thoughtful. I think these skills will be useful in the future.

*Nohe:* Be creative! As artists, we have to reinvent ourselves. It is an opportunity to learn.

### **What would you say to children or teenagers who are interested in music?**

*Nohe:* The only thing I can tell you is just to believe in yourself and do whatever you're passionate about. And, of course, you have to keep learning about that passion. Just don't be afraid - show your passions and your art in whatever way. If it's painting, if it's music... I think the best thing is to just be yourself and keep going!

*Randy:* Find something that you're passionate about. We see studies that it increases brain activity and connections - whether it's music or painting, photography. Children and teenagers, they're very curious, so I feel if you're into something, you need to continue pursuing it. And the parents of these kids and teenagers also need to be willing to flow with the encouragement of what their child is trying to pursue. We don't always find our first love right away, so we shouldn't feel discouraged when our kid doesn't continue playing piano, and moves on the flute or perhaps the guitar. Perhaps they'll pick up a paint brush, or camera, or pencil?

***Nohe y Sus Santos will perform on Saturday, September 27, 2020***

***For more information, visit: <https://www.lotusfest.org/schedule/>***