

Women in Texas Music: Stories & Songs

"Lisa Beck, Follow Your Heart"

By Kathleen Hudson



She is getting married! A world of people connected by Facebook know this about Lisa Beck who is soon to marry Art Crawford. I first met Lisa at Pampell's when she played in Steal Hearts with Kathy Bauer. I heard her voice, their harmony, and the questions began. Today, writing this column, we talked more about her life story. After two marriages, she decided to follow her heart and her bliss. She committed to playing music and started by returning to Texas (San Antonio was her hometown) after 20 years in Atlanta, and she picked Bandera. Her first gig was at the Flying L Dude Ranch, and she wonders today how she was hired. "I loved to sing, but I certainly did not play the guitar well at all. After that, I went to songwriters circles at Arkey's where I also met Art Crawford, He introduced me to many new songwriters and musicians."

Her life story includes a family where her mother and aunt sang in an all girls quartet on a radio show that aired right before the Buddy Holley show. She grew up with harmonies all around her house. Now she is not only in the Art and Lisa duet, the Art and Lisa trio with John Inmon, and the Art and Lisa full band, but also the Backyard Betty group with Kathy Bauer. Yes, she loves to sing and play. I caught her one afternoon on a phone call to Alpine. She was playing the Holland Hotel that evening. "I do the booking for us, and this is our Western tour. We will play Las Cruces, Socorro, and Red River. The Lost Love Saloon in Red River is historic, and the owner, Steve, has invited us to have our wedding on his ranch before we do the gigs at his venue. He is known for his support of the traveling musician! Photos of John Inmon, 3 Faces West, and the Lost Gonzo band will be on the walls."

Lisa has been part of my own experience of music in the Hill Country as I recently heard her at 1101 Bistro in Kerrville and listened to her story of the day. "We played two wineries this afternoon, took a short nap in the

car, and headed up here." I watched the sun set from the roof, ate a plate of wonderful calamari, talked with the owner Tomas who also loves the music, and heard great renditions of songs I love (Townes Van Zandt to name one), as well as Art and Lisa originals. Lisa on writing: "Writing is a release for me. We have two CD's and material for two more." I remind her in our conversation how much I love her song "Learning to Breathe Again." And she told me, "And that is our most requested song. Seems many people have had this experience. I wrote this after a divorce, but some people hear it as a song helpful in dealing with death." I suggested the archetypal quality of the sense of being stifled or breathless. Joseph Campbell would understand the appeal of the song. We all have a time when we learned to breathe again. Campbell would also understand her advice to other women: "I say to follow your heart. Don't let others dissuade you from your dreams. The culture did not support me in my dream to sing. I was told not to play football with the boys, and I was told to keep my place and be quiet." Campbell says, "Follow your bliss."

Lisa has played the Texas Heritage Music Coffeehouse at Schreiner to celebrate women's history month in March. We have asked her to gather a women's circle of songwriters for March 2015. She was with us when Susan Gibson came to my class and played the coffeehouse. I hope to get Susan on this gig as well. Lisa is on the road in August, and her husband (now when you read this) Art, is a board member for THMF. He has donated sound for the coffeehouse and September 3 Johnny Nicholas is the featured artist. Join us and say hi to Mr. and Mrs. Crawford! Open mike at 7. Schreiner University Lion's Den. Art and Lisa will also perform at the Heritage Music Day on Sept. 26, 9-1:30. Terri Hendrix and Lloyd Maines will perform a free concert that evening at 7:30.

Meanwhile, let's all follow Lisa's advice and do what our heart says...follow our bliss. Ils sont partis. KH