



# STEPHANIE URBINA JONES: "I'M NOT A PINATA"

BY KATHLEEN HUDSON



"Hi, Y'all. I'm Stephanie Urbina Jones," and the concert begins. This beautiful charismatic songwriter—who was born on the Westside of San Antonio, lives in Nashville, and tours Europe—is a chapter in my book on the women of Texas music. Her story includes a spiritual awakening in San Miguel de Allende and a long road of persistence. Talent is a given, but it is the kind of work a performer is willing to do that often creates success. Stephanie Urbina Jones is willing.

I watched Stephanie at the Texas Heritage Music Foundation community coffeehouse with Patterson Barrett and Florin Sanchez on May 1, as she drew her audience in with her stories and her songs. Her beautiful spirit shines through in all she does. I saw it shining, again, at the Walnut Spring Preserve, playing for the 290texas Series designed by Paul Sumrall and the Texas Heritage Music Foundation.

This time, a select group of supporters sat out under a huge Texas sky, the wide expanse of land dotted with horses surrounding us, and reveled in her magic. Of course, the guitar leads by Patterson and Florin enhanced the experience. A Texas experience where we heard songs in Spanish, stories of her grandfather in "Manuel's Destiny," and advice for women and daughters. Yes, Stephanie engages her audience at many different levels. She is not singing "at" us, she is inviting us to see the world through her eyes. We all said a resounding "yes" that night.

Ahead for Stephanie is a European tour and a trip to Japan for a country music festival and a trip to Switzerland with Augie Meyers and the Texas Tornados. October 4, she will host the Viva Texicana Luckenbach Fiesta. Her audience will be awaiting her vibrant energy with open arms. Her performance history and reputation as an entertainer precede her visit. I remember looking up at the stage at a Willie Nelson picnic to see Stephanie standing eye-to-eye with Willie Nelson and singing both to him and with him.

A natural place for this woman on a con un Corazon abierto. I remember the evenings with Paula Reynolds, Ken and Sherry Wardlow and Hill Top House Concerts, where 75 people gathered for an intimate night of sharing food and music. Stephanie commands the attention of any audience, from house concert to festival. She has played many in Europe, with Montreux as one flower in her vase of many colors.

Her CD, "The Texicana Sessions," includes my favorite, "Revolucion." For years, I have been carrying castanets given to me by another spicy performer who likes to dance, Patricia Vonne. I pull these out to play along with Stephanie on this song, "Vamonos," and "La Reina," a song about her fiery grandmother who told her what to do with her hair. After hearing Stephanie, you will know her family, her history, her struggles and her joys. [www.stephanieurbinajones.com](http://www.stephanieurbinajones.com) give you complete information on her touring schedule. The Texas Heritage Music Foundation was proud to collaborate with her on a Tex/Mex festival in Fredericksburg last September after she was featured on our stage at the Texas Heritage Music Day. I am looking forward to more collaboration! I have many more stories of many more women so stay tuned. Ils sont partis.