



Writing this column in San Miguel de Allende at the annual Literary Festival. Inspired by Mexico and the stories of Luis Urrea, inspired by Gail Sheehy and her story of “daring,” inspired by Joyce Carol Oates, Scott Simon and the founder, Susan Page, I sit outside under a clear Mexican sky and think about Patricia Vonne. Why? Well, I wore her dramatic t-shirt my first day here, receiving lots of questions and comments. I deliberately chose that t-shirt because THMF will showcase her March 2 at the THMF/Schreiner coffeehouse, and we also showcased her at the 290Texas.com series in February, and she is an important chapter in my next book. Good reasons to wear the t-shirt. She sent me my first castanets from Spain, and I know have 4 sets, one I purchased in Granda for myself and one more from her, signed, that I purchased at the 290Texas show. Go ahead and ask “why four?”

Some interesting information about Patricia Vonne Rodriguez. Her heritage is

Spanish with her father’s family going back to San Luis Potosi, close to me right now. Her mothers heritage harkens back to Spain by way of El Paso. Her 6th album is in Spanish, “Viva Bandalero,” and is up for Album of the year in the Austin Chronicle awards. She is also painting and had several show with music and art (and Rosie Flores and Michael Martin) at the Jackson Ranch in December, a place that promotes art in the center of San Antonio.

Her brother, Richard Rodriguez, used her song, “Traeme Paz,” in “Once Upon a Time in Mexico.” She has toured Europe several times, using dance and her castanets to get the audience involved more, inviting them to join in. I once invited her to my English class, where she and her partner, Robert LaRoche, talked about the writing process, music and creativity. She will meet with students again on March 2 at Schreiner. Humble does not adequately describe her generous and open heart. We share a backstage moment at the January tribute to Leonard Cohen by Alejandro Escoveda at ACL in Austin. On one album Patricia records with some of her heroes, including Es-



coveda. Her website is a work of art, including the lyrics to her songs. I am always pleased to see that as I enjoy sharing the writing with my students.

In San Miguel de Allende, I saw with a small Mexican crowd listening to another hero, Sandra Cisneros, reading her well-known short story, "Eleven." Sandra, the woman who wrote the poems entitled LOOSE WOMAN, inspired me in the same way Patricia inspires me. Be true to that inner voice that nudges at times and screams at times. Women who express themselves are my heroes. We all face fear, and some of us move through it and step over it. Gail Sheehy spoke of her new memoir at the San Miguel Literary Conference, DARING. She told us her stories of daring then asked for volunteers to share their stories.

I think of Patricia Vonne and her daring. The fourth of ten children, the first girl, she told me of a family guided by a strong work ethic exhibited by her dad going from door to door selling kitchen utensils. We talked one day in her house, surrounded by the art and culture of Mexico. Her roommate, Rosie Flores, is my next feature and a chapter in my book on the women of Texas music.

My interview with Patricia is archived on my website kathleenhudson.net where many of the shorter interviews live, ones that did not make the print edition. And both Rosie and Patricia are chapters in my current project, Hispanic Heritage in Texas Music: Stories of Texas and Mexico.

Patricia played at Sam's with Del Castillo on Feb. 18. She represents Texas music wherever she performs, bringing seductive Spanish to an Americano rocking style. A darling when on her European tours, she returns to Texas and plays each venue with an international flair. Her world is large, and she once headed to New York to model for a few years. Her experiences are vast with each album representing a level of her own transformation. "Viva Bandolero" is number six. Check her out at www.patriciavonne.com Join us on March 6 in the intimate setting of the Lion's Den at Schreiner University. Buy her album and take her home with you. Its sont partis.

- KH

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