

Interview with Zoli

What was it like growing up in Alabama?

I grew up in Birmingham during the Civil Rights era. This had a profound effect on the energetic signature of my music. The feeling nature of the musical stories I write always reflect a deep feeling tone resonating with my love of people and the musical expressions they projected from culture.

I recall Gov. George Wallace standing on the schoolhouse steps spewing hate, the white robed Klan standing at stoplights below Red Mountain and Vulcan, handing out awful brochures, the white only bathrooms, and all that. Just crazy times. But not enough is recalled of the beauty and love also prevalent in Alabama during that time.

As the world has always been, good and evil walk together on the pathways of life. My cd "Mestizo: Orphan From Heaven" honors the men and women of color who endured those times.

At what time did you realize you wanted to be in music?

I was never NOT in music! Opera filled the house every weekend. My Dad adored it and was a major player in rescuing the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra from closing down. I have a silly old black and white photo of me from 1955, sitting diapered on the floor, seemingly enchanted with the 45 record player in front of me. I was told I had perfect pitch as a child, though I no longer claim that talent.

I took piano lessons from age 9 all through high school. Also at age 9 I convinced my parents to buy me the Silvertone electric 6 string guitar from Sears. The darn thing had a crappy but loud amp in the case. I used to shock the sense out of myself because it was not grounded, and I insisted on playing it outside! During high school I played a Yamaha 6 string acoustic, then moved on to my beloved and preferred 12 strings.

After over 50 years of playing guitar, I confess I choose to focus on what I do best, which is write and use my voice. My gifts lie there, and I honor my band members to play and create their own gifts with guitars. When asked the name of my band, I laughingly say "The Zoli And Band"...me and whomever I am working with at the time.

Besides music, you are also in art. How do the two complement each other to you?

I am blessed to know SO many artists who express through both those mediums. Music is the auditory frequency while art is the visual experience. Many of us also use dance as a moving physical demonstration of creativity. My art is intricate and bursting with color. Perhaps my being born in New Orleans infused me with that gift. I am intimately connected to that city of waters, so much that during Katrina I remained sobbing in front of my TV for a week. The diaspora of music from that tragedy is still incomplete.

What is your songwriting style like?

A gumbo of emotions! I believe all my songs are lined up on the other side awaiting my attention to bringing them into physical reality. My style is to mix up the senses. The songs allow listeners to hear colors, feel sounds, intuit emotions and so on. Very emotional. Most songs come through with lyrics and music intact. A package, if you will. But others take perhaps months of research or pushing me into groups of folks expressing the energies of the unwritten song.

I just don't always know. It is feeling, subjective, heartfelt and compassionate. I have had very few experiences of the things I write about because I write theme songs for frequencies.

Do you have producers to develop the music with you?

Nope. I love to produce my own works. I love and learn so much during whole process of creating and recording, having worked really hard to remain focussed on the clear boundaries required to create in the studio with gifted musicians. I treat everyone with dignity and appreciation, so perhaps that karma has benefited the projects!

You have a spiritual and metaphysical side to you. Does this help your creativity as well?

Oh,absolutely! I earned my M A and PhD in Paranormal Research from The Esoteric Interfaith Seminary, and an M A in Metaphysical Sciences from The University of Metaphysical Sciences since we moved to Montana. The energy here is all air and fire...mind and spirit. I am a trained physical medium and life member of the Theosophical Society. I have been a member/student of the Rosicrucian Order since 1976, and a member of The Traditional Martinist Order. These educational disciplines continue to humble and temper me to remain present and focus on service through my God-given gifts.

My "thing" is the Recovery Movement. I have 30 years on the path of recovery from co-dependency. My creativity in music, art, research and writing is dedicated to clearing the path to healthful, wholesome living. As a metaphysical minister, I am passionate to share my lessons with populations seeking a spiritual focus for life.

Do you perform live often?

No. I feel very comfortable on stage but choose nowadays to focus on my home and amazing husband. We retired to a remote location Montana a while back, so our life has

taken on the flavor of this lifestyle. Would I perform live again? If it were an appropriate venue that would serve the Other, I would consider it.

Your album *Just Livin' The Dream* is a patriotic tribute. Do you have any family members who have served?

I created this project for my husband and those of our armed services and law enforcement family. My husband retired out of JBLM, was CSM at 1st Group, Special Forces Sergeant Major with 10 years as an Operator with the Joint Special Operations Command. He is a highly decorated veteran. I am disallowed from saying any more about that. He spends most of his retired years training SWAT Teams for various laws enforcement shops. Thom is the Montana rep for the Task Force Dagger Foundation. We married 10 years after he retired, so I had a lot to learn about his field of service. The more I learned, the more military events we went to, the more I felt inspired to give back in the only way I know, which was through my creativity.

What has the reception been like for your latest album?

Sometimes I think I may be too old to do this work, lol! At age 65, my focus is certainly not to “make it” or shake my booty in public. I wanted to get this cd out to as many military and law enforcement folks as I could. So far, we are on over 2,000 radio channels globally. I mailed out 800 free copies to folks I intuited could benefit from it. Feedback has been marvelous. I am thrilled that it appears to put a smile on faces who hear it.

What can we expect from you in the future?

Well! We are in the process of recording lots of singles for streaming. I am working with a band in Olympia, Washington this fall. In 2019 we will be recording again in Helena, Montana with many of the musicians from the last cd. The Zoliart Company's art dept., EcoPrimitive Designs, is soon offering my original pieces as well as fine art prints for sale. Before year's end I will complete my Doctorate of Divinity thesis from the Esoteric Theological Seminary. My aspiration and prayer is that folks with intuitive abilities will read it and find common ground with one whose life walk as one “being different” has managed to work through enormous challenges. I am also autistic, whereas those challenges and gifts contribute to the package.