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SANDRA BOUZA

Lyric-Driven Soul with a Roots Rock Edge

Toronto native Sandra Bouza (pronounced Bōh-zah) has a lot to offer through her music and life experience. Having spent a large part of her life in Spain, as well as travelling to far corners of the world, Sandra's worldly vision is evident in her songwriting. Sandra lets her stories breathe in songs that are deeply personal.

Growing up, Bouza would spend five months every other year in Northern Spain, where her father was from and her mother would homeschool her children up in the mountains. As for music, she says, "Mom was the foundation of my musical education. She was always singing and playing guitar and encouraging us to sing. She had a great record collection and constantly had the radio on, drilling us about who was playing and took us to concerts and musicals."

After performing professionally in Canada for almost a decade, Bouza departed for Morocco to perform a series of shows on contract. This was supposed to be a six-week journey but she ended up living in Morocco for three years, performing and fine-tuning her craft.

Bouza has been a prolific songwriter since the beginning of her career. *"I'm proud of my songs. They speak to my story,"* she says. Keen to honour her own songs, Bouza returned to Toronto, and started building her career. Within a year of her return, she won the Toronto Blues Talent Search and came in second in the Toronto Soul Slam. Newly committed to her own music, she then connected with Toronto based producer, Hill Kourkoutis, who produced her 2018 EP 'Three Years' and then her first LP 'Falling Away From Me' released in 2020.

Her new album 'A Sound In the Dark' (September 2023) was inspired during an artist residency at Halls Island. When asked about the process, Bouza said "I went down to the water, late on a beautiful clear night, to go skinny-dipping, and got scared by a sound in the dark and jumped out of the water and back up to the cabin. I was so annoyed that I let that fear take away a really beautiful moment, that I wrote the title track, because I realized how many other moments in my life have been taken by fear. The rest of the album, I realize the more I listen to it, is all about strength. They are all about decisive action, moving through hard things, and breaking through to the other side. I feel like this is an album of empowerment."

Awards & Accolades

• 2020 Semi-Finalist: International Blues Challenge, Memphis TN, representing Toronto, Canada

- 2020 Best Music Video + Best Cinematography for 'Stone Junction', The Davey Awards
- 2020 Featured in the Documentary 'Blues on Beale'
- 2019 Talent Search Winner, Toronto Blues Society
- 2019 Second Place, Annual Toronto Soul Slam
- 2018 CBC's 'Hear & Now' Song of the Week, 'Where Have You Been