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A Conversation With Tish Hinojosa

It's been many years since Nancy and I met Tish Hinojosa as she was performing in the back of Tycoon Flats on St. Mary's Street in San Antonio. We struck up a conversation with her during her break, became friends and moved to Austin about the same time she did. Since that time, many years ago, and many miles ago for Tish, she has released numerous CDs, including her latest, "Our Little Planet," co-produced with her long-time musical associate, Marvin Dykhuis.

*We missed Tish's performance in Uvalde, Texas on her last swing through Texas from Germany, where she now resides. We were on our way to Del Rio, Texas and saw a huge banner draped across the main street announcing her Friday night performance. Our friends, Randy and Sallie from Tyler, Texas, caught the Uvalde performance and were kind enough to buy a CD for us and have Tish sign it. Tish and I spoke by telephone the following week and she agreed to a Q and A for *The Report*. Thank you Tish! [RHL](#).*



TISH HINOJOSA
All Photos by Gunnar Geller

Continued on the next page

ROBERT LEOS: *According to your website, you are in the middle of an extensive trip throughout Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands before making your way back to Texas in late May. What kinds of preparations do you and your band have to make and how far in advance do you set up these engagements?*

TISH HINOJOSA: The engagements are set up six to nine months in advance. The preparations begin then. In the weeks leading to the tour, itineraries are filled in—who, where, what hotels, hospitality, times, etc. My band configuration varies, depending on the budget, how much venues are paying and if I can afford to have side musicians. Then the band and I rehearse before going on the road, especially if we have new songs.

ROBERT LEOS: *Will Marvin Dykhuis be accompanying you on your European performances? How about some of the other guest musicians that played on “Our Little Planet”?*

TISH HINOJOSA: Unfortunately, Marvin Dykhuis is not accompanying me in Europe. He will accompany me at a few Texas dates in June, primarily the Kerrville Folk Festival on June 5 and Gruene Hall on June 6. In Europe, I am accompanied by a musician from Hamburg, who I met a few years ago and who has signed up to back me up on many dates in Europe in the last three years. It is not always affordable to fly Marvin to Europe. Uli Rademacher plays guitar, harmonica, flutes, and backs up on some vocals too.

ROBERT LEOS: *When you perform in Europe or other places outside the U.S., do you tailor your performances differently than you do in the U.S.? In other words, is your selection of songs and the sequencing of the songs different in your European performances?*

TISH HINOJOSA: My European shows differ a little from my U.S. shows. In the U.S., my shows differ from area to area. In Europe, I choose songs that I know they are familiar with from my earlier releases (early 90's). In the U.S., I play a varied mix. In Texas and the southwest, I can lean heavier on cowboy and Mexican and Texas shuffles and swing.



Continued on the next page

ROBERT LEOS: *I have been an admirer of your work and of Marvin's for many years but I was particularly moved by "What Our Hearts Can't Say," from "Our Little Planet." Was this a relatively recent composition or was it one of the songs you wrote when you lived and worked in Nashville? I also have to admit to tearing up when I heard Greg Leisz's work on the pedal steel guitar. That is an absolutely beautiful piece of work.*

TISH HINOJOSA: I am so glad you felt something special with "What Our Hearts Can't Say"! I began the song a couple of years ago, and finished it for this recording. It was mostly all written already, just needed touching up, and a little studio confidence boost.

ROBERT LEOS: *When you lived in Texas, you were quite involved in issues such as bilingual education and the plight of the migrant workers in the U.S. Are there social issues that you have immersed yourself into since moving to Germany? Do you stay in touch with issues such as those or are there other interests that you have developed since then?*

TISH HINOJOSA: About social causes and interests: I am still connected with the ones from the past, through people and requests that I get on www.mundotish.com. However, although I am not "looking" for new causes, I am learning a lot in the area of social interest in my German language classes. It is now required that all new immigrants seeking residence

TISH HINOJOSA Discography

- 2008. **Our Little Planet**, Tish's latest CD, CRS.
- 2006. **Retrospective**, Varese Sarabande.
- 2005. **A Heart Wide Open**, Valley Entertainment.
- 2003. **From Texas for a Christmas Night**, Lone Star Records.
- 2003. **Best of Tish Hinojosa-Live**, Rounder.
- 2000. **Sign of Truth**, Rounder.
- 1997. **The Best of the Sandía: Watermelon 1991-1992**, Rounder.
- 1996. **Soñar del Laberinto**, Spanish version, Warner Bros.
- 1996. **Dreaming From the Labyrinth/Soñar del Laberinto**, Bilingual version, Warner Bros.
- 1996. **Cada Niño/Every Child**, An award-winning children's album, Rounder.
- 1995. **Frontejas**, Rounder.
- 1994. **Destiny's Gate**, Warner Bros.
- 1992. **Culture Swing**, Rounder.
- 1992. **Taos to Tennessee**, Re-release, Watermelon Records.
- 1992. **Memorabilia Navideña**, Watermelon Records.
- 1991. **Aquella Noche**, Watermelon Records.
- 1990. **Memorabilia Navideña**, Self-released cassette.
- 1989. **Homeland**, First major label release, A&M Records.
- 1987. **Taos to Tennessee**, Self-released cassette. Re-released on CD in 1992.

To purchase, visit "Tiendita Tish" at:

<http://www.mundotish.com>

or to permanently stay in Germany take a certain amount of hours of German language classes. Because of this law, my school has

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students from all nations, from all walks of life, not just "language school," intellectual types of people. I am getting to know people from Africa, from Asia, from Afghanistan and Turkey; many working class immigrants being in close contact and learning German together. I am also getting a wonderful cultural education that I would never have gotten in the U.S. I know more about people and about their issues in their countries and, curiously, how America is perceived too.

ROBERT LEOS: Any previews of new projects that you have planned?

TISH HINOJOSA: New projects in the works: one is an unfinished Spanish CD that I hope to complete in the next year, and a second is an ongoing DVD project about my life and my career that I also hope to see released in the next year. Because I am doing much of my own behind-the-scenes work, a little more time and patience is required on my projects.

ROBERT LEOS: *Best wishes for a very successful concert tour. We look forward to seeing you again here in Texas.*

TISH HINOJOSA: Thanks Robert! Hi Nancy! Hope to see y'all at Gruene!



NOTE: *Tish Hinojosa will perform at the Kerrville Folk Festival on June 5, 2009 and at Gruene Hall in Gruene, Texas, on June 6. Check the Kerrville Folk Festival and Gruene Hall websites for more details.*

www.kerrvillefolkfestival.com
www.gruenehall.com

Visit Tish Hinojosa's website, www.mundotish.com, to purchase her music, check her concert schedule, and read more about her career. More information, music, and videos can be found on Tish Hinojosa's page on www.myspace.com/tishhinojosa.

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All photographs of Tish Hinojosa were taken by Gunnar Geller and used with permission. Video credits: "Derechos de el Corazón" was written by Tish Hinojosa. The song is from the CD "Hearts Wide Open," Valley Entertainment Records. The video was filmed by Hector Galán, Galán Productions of Austin, Texas.