

Robyn Ludwick



Biography

Robyn Ludwick's maiden name happens to be Robison, but the fact that her two older brothers are renowned Texas singer-songwriters didn't lure her into following their footsteps. Besides, when she trekked off to the University of Texas at Austin, there wasn't much of a musical path to follow, except perhaps that of her husband, Austin musician John Ludwick. At that time, Bruce and Charlie were not yet household names in Nashville - or even their native Bandera.

"We were all three shacking up with one another in various South Austin rentals, trading shifts working the door at the Continental Club, singing and playing music on our Goodwill couch. I long for those days," Robyn said.

Around the same time Charlie and Bruce started their own bands, sensible Robyn enrolled in the gender-lopsided College of Engineering, which was darned happy to have her, and mapped out a safe, secure career route.

"I wanted to do something where I would be able to support my family because I knew my husband would always be in the arts and he would be the person staying home with the kids," she explained as her family chowed down at a pizza shop. Then she got laid off, just after she turned 30 and had her first child. That trio of intense experiences triggered her latent songwriting gene, which manifested itself in tunes she describes as "tender and tough; Southern poetry with dirt floors and electric guitars."

"It just pretty much poured out at that point. I guess it was time, you know."

It was time. The family moved to Wimberley, outside Austin. "I cashed in my 401k and for about six months we survived on music and laughter oh yeah, and beans." Struggling but happy, she made her own leap into the music business.

Released in 2005, Robyn's first album, *For So Long*, was named a top 10 album of the year by the Austin Chronicle and influential Austin public radio station KUT-FM, and went to No. 1 on the EuroAmericana Music Chart. It earned her a raved-about SXSW 2006 showcase (sponsored by No

Depression, the Americana magazine) and a slot at the 2006 Austin City Limits Music Festival.

The reviews for *For So Long*, produced by former Bad Liver Danny Barnes, were enormously impressive. Husband/Bassist John Ludwick and multi-instrumentalist Mike Hardwick took the lead on this record, while key Austin musicians were featured throughout.

Too Much Desire, another set of soulful originals, is to be released in April 2008. With influences from Jackson Browne to Emmylou Harris, Robyn's voice bears slight comparisons to a young Lucinda Williams or Stevie Nicks and her musical sensibility has been characterized as "sharp, drenched in hardscrabble Southwestern country... beautifully impure, covered in blood, bone and marrow."

Though she may be a late bloomer musically, Ludwick is a Texas girl, which means she was weaned in dancehalls listening to the kinds of songs she now writes (with her female perspective, that is). Songs like "Desire," with its opening stanza:

*I like my whiskey
And I like my men
They take me to heaven
Then I'm alone again*

Or "Monte Carlo," in which she sings:

*Did you fall out of love
When the dark turned to mornin
Did you make all the good girls go bad
Did you lose all your marbles
On that black bull in Pecos
Oh tonite I miss you so bad*

Ludwick's really ready to rock out with "Sweet Marie," her tale of "love and a .45." Displaying another one of her influences, "early Springsteen," she explains Marie was hell-bent on pissing her daddy off, so "she went out for a ride and she never came back." Enticing her like a siren, Marie's soon-to-be-lover sings:

*Hey Babe, see I got a little thing for you
And you know I've been watchin' you too
From the Louisiana bayou
Are you ready to ride?*

But of course, he's a bad boy. Let Ludwick tell you the rest.

Though rooted in her own experiences, her songs are populated with some classic characters - sexy Lolitas, lonely women, hard drinkin' fellas - and often address the struggles of being, and staying, in love. But make no mistake: love does prevail - at least now and then. As in "Big Fall," when she sings to her "luckiest loser:" *I'm a fool to leave/And you're a fool to stay/We've always been crazy in love that way.*

(Perhaps it was her "luckiest loser" - the guy who now plays bass in her band - who discouraged her from using the title she claims he originally inspired: "Men are Babies.")

But Robyn and husband/bassist John "Lunchmeat" Ludwick are in it for the long haul, bolstered by a well-placed family cheering section - one that's always been behind her, but which she kept in the wings while working to prove she could stand on her own. And she did. So now she's ready to hit the gas pedal and really fly because she knows it doesn't matter who she's related to. This time, people are waiting to hear what Robyn Ludwick has to say. And she's ready to give 'em an earful.