

Although by many I have been labeled feminist, I still insist on calling my style feminine. So I am glad today I have a chance to explain my lyrics and the impact of art and music in my life.

Years ago when I was working as an office manager in a Dr.'s office, an attorney called asking me to schedule his client for surgery. After an hour or so, when I called him back with the positive response he happily said : I love the way you handle things Ziba, what is your position there, what do you do? I calmly smiled and said: nothing I am just here to take care of you! He replied: My kind of girl! Someone to take care of me, I love it. I laughed and replied: I hate you and your kind of girl! What happened to those good old men who used to take care of us? He laughed and said: Honey let me tell you something, those men are dead cccc There is no man left to take care of you!

Deep inside I knew and realized long ago that he is right. I managed to accept the end of those good old men and good old days! In fact today, I want to tell you how I felt knowing those days are gone.

For many women at my age group who grew-up in Iran, the idea of us being the family provider was unimaginable. We were dady's little girls who were brought up to get married and have a husband to provide for us and to take care of us. However, Islamic revolution showed us different. Those of us who immigrated to a foreign land, soon realized that we had to work shoulder to shoulder with our husbands, brothers and fathers in order to make a living. We had to get tough, we had to get rough, we had to show our qualities and had to prove ourselves in the new western world. In this new way of life sometimes I found myself going stronger and faster than many men around me. I remember a male friend of mine once told me: As a man I sometimes get intimidated by women like you, because as soon as I think about doing something for you I see that you are going faster than me, in fact many times you are already done with a task while I am still thinking about it. I told him while you are thinking if you are fast enough or man enough for me, I ask myself if I am still a woman and feminine enough to catch your attention. With all honesty, sometimes I am too busy fighting my way up, I forget that, I can still be romantic, sensitiva, not to mention coyness.

Talking to my friends and many other women I found out that I am not the only

one confused and uncertain about my role in the new society and many share my feelings with me.

Therefore, I decided to celebrate my new definition of women by writing and singing about it.

Perhaps in a way I was trying to remind myself as well as my man that I am a woman and I

like to stay a woman. I want him to know that despite all my roughness and toughness which

gets me through life, I like to be held, to be loved and to be cared for. I still enjoy getting

flowers, having candle light dinners and chick to chick dances. For those days that I need a

comforting shoulder to cry on, I want to remind myself as well as my partner, that it is OK to be

fragile and delicate.

I sang about my feelings as a woman, how I want to love and be loved. I talked about my

needs as my rights. Instead of a broken hearted woman begging for my man to come back, I sing to him telling him how to treat me and how to keep me. I wanted to take

pride in my love, because living in 21st century I have no time for sitting home crying till someone comes and loves me back. Let me put it this way, **I don't ask for love I**

demand it because I deserve it. I sing loud and clear about my feelings, hoping to

give strength to other women especially young girls to talk about their feelings without being shy or ashamed. Through music I got encouraged to speak out and speak loud

and not be afraid to share my feelings. Perhaps I can say I opened up first to myself

rather than my audience. I sang about my first love that happened when I was just a kid,

knowing that there is always a first love, the question is whether that love is the last

love. I sang about four seasons of relationship, believing love can change the cold

winter of bitterness to beautiful spring. In another song I told my lover to behave and

treat me right otherwise he is not allowed to touch me again. I told him he makes me

feel like a woman, and I am at my best with him. I shared many feelings through my

songs. I can go on for ever telling you the stories behind every song I made. I like to add that talking freely about my feelings toward my man is not the only subject of my lyrics. I use my voice to sing about my homeland and it's problems, such as women issues, political prisoners, drug addicts, homeless children, prostitution and so on..... I figured as blessed as I am I have to give something back.

As a brief review of my talk I would like to sing two songs for you. First I would like to sing the song entitled "WOMAN" to introduce you to my definition of today's women, the woman who can be a mother, a lover and a friend.

The title of my second song is "WITH YOU AGAIN". This song is dedicated to all the men in the world who love their woman with all her strength, power, bravery and femininity, I am saying:

with you I became myself again

I fell in love with my body and my soul again

with you I blossomed like a flower

with you I became a woman again

Once again it was a pleasure being here. If you like to hear more of my music simply check my website at www.zibashirazi.com and join my mailing list for up-coming concerts and interviews.

Have a pleasant afternoon.

Thank you