**Patricia Inda Scholarship**

Expression through dance, and educating everyone around her, were always a part of Patricia Inda’s life. Until her untimely death in 2015, Patricia was a dancer, an educator, and a mother of four RISD graduates. She is now the namesake of a new scholarship offered by the Reflections Arts Program in RISD.

Patricia’s connection with the arts began early. As a child growing up in Santiago, Chile, one of her first family photographs portrayed her in a colorful Spanish dress, ready to go on stage as a Zarzuela performer. (Zarzuela is a Spanish musical theater form that conveys stories through spoken word, song, and dance). In college, she took the stage several times in Santiago’s Muncipal Theater’s opera performances. (Her favorite was Carmen.) After graduating college with a degree in education, and as a young teacher, she became a modern dance student at Santiago’s Goethe German Institute. When she became a mom, she would take her first son Andrés with her to meetings of followers of George Gurdjieff, where participants engaged in ritualistic dances to achieve enlightenment. When Patricia immigrated with her family from Santiago to teach in New Orleans, Louisiana, one of the family’s first activities was a display of the Cueca for her fellow teachers. (Cueca is Chile’s national dance.) Almost two decades later, as a seasoned teacher at the Hockaday School, she earned a teaching scholarship in Salamanca, Spain, where she relived her childhood and danced Flamenco. And throughout these decades as a teen, college student, teacher and mother, there was scarcely a weekend that did not at some point include dancing, whether with friends or just with her family.

Patricia believed that dancing, and artistic expression through dance, was a way to discover ourselves, to meditate with our entire bodies. And as an educator, she believed that multicultural dancing enhanced her teaching both by expanding her students’ cultural horizons and also expanding teaching beyond rote learning.

A testament to her legacy are her four children. One works in educational policy, another taught legal writing in law school, and a third still teaches private music lessons. And while at RISD, all learned and expressed themselves through the art of dance. Patricia watched Camila dance with her team of Eaglettes; Andrés perform musical theater; Simon perform in orchestra and band; and Jorge play the drums with his band, on a borrowed lawn across the street from RHS, supporting his sister’s student government campaign.

Were she here today, she would be thrilled that you just learned about Zarzuela, the Cueca, Flamenco, Goethe, Gurdjieff, and Carmen. From wherever she is, she is still teaching through dance.