



Kathy and the Kilowatts

With their recent signing to Nola Blue Records and the release of "Premonition of Love" on April 13, 2018, along with the successful 2017 release of "Let's Do This Thing", Kathy Murray and her band, the electrifying Kilowatts, reassert their place in the blues pantheon that helps Austin, TX keep its reputation as the Live Music Capital of the World.

This is far from Murray's first time at the rodeo. For decades she has helped keep a spotlight on the Texas capital's blues scene. She cut her teeth during the golden era of Austin's blues and R&B scene, sharing the stage with the likes of Stevie Ray Vaughan, the Fabulous Thunderbirds and blues godfather W.C. Clark. In addition, she also took her rightful place among a veritable Murderer's Row of formidable Austin blues women, including Marcia Ball, Lou Ann Barton and Angela Strehli. Along with the Kilowatts, she shared the stage with headliners of the caliber of Albert Collins, Bobby "Blue" Bland, Albert King, Koko Taylor and others.

"The first night I saw a live band in Austin, I was 16," Murray told the Austin Chronicle. "David (her brother, guitarist David Murray) was 14 and we snuck into the Armadillo World Headquarters where there was a triple bill of Storm, with Jimmie Vaughan, the Nightcrawlers with Stevie Ray, and Paul Ray & the Cobras. My little teen self was totally blown away!"

Throughout her professional evolution, the blues has been the foundation of Murray's music and songwriting, but she's never been just a one-trick pony. "My sound encompasses the influences of all of Texas' rootsy regional music styles that I've been exposed to throughout my life: blues, swamp pop, rock, zydeco, soul, rockabilly and conjunto," she says.

Born to a service family, Murray moved all over the country before her father settled the family in Austin upon his retirement in 1968. At the time, the city was experiencing the first stirrings of what would become a vibrant live music scene. Murray cut her musical teeth on her older sister's Elvis 45s, later graduating to the blues-tinged country of George Jones and Hank Williams.

But it was experiencing the blues in person, at legendary clubs like Antone's and the Armadillo that was a life-changing experience for Murray. Local talents like Jimmie and Stevie Ray Vaughan and Blues Boy Hubbard and national acts like Freddie King and Muddy Waters found a rabid fan in Murray. At the same time, she took a deep dive into the classic recorded blues canon, devouring records by Magic Sam, Bobby "Blue" Bland, B.B. King, Memphis Minnie and myriad others.

"I began to search high and low for every blues record I could find," she says. "I sometimes think my husband fell in love with my record collection!"

One critic described Murray's soulful, emphatic vocals as "the love child of Jimmy Reed and Wanda Jackson." Another noted that her music "oozes Texas' low-down smooth and sexy blues."

Murray describes herself as "both a big-voiced blues singer and a prolific songwriter with a strong modern voice. I feel I'm taking the blues into the future by writing new songs in the styles that influenced me." Alluding to contemporaries like Bonnie Raitt and Susan Tedeschi, Murray says, "We all have a foundation in common in our passion for blues music, but have stepped out of the box and incorporated aspects of rock, soul and other styles into our music."

The new "Premonition of Love" will join a Kathy & the Kilowatts catalog that also includes "Let's Do This Thing", "Relatively Blue" and "Groovin' With Big D" (dedicated to the late drummer, SRV songwriter and musical mentor, Doyle Bramhall, Sr.). The latter project actually has a long pedigree, dating back to sessions that Murray, along with longtime musical partner (and husband) Bill "Monster" Jones, cut with Bramhall in the 90s.

The songs on the new album range from the Freddie King inspired blues of the title track to the Bo Diddley beat of "Answer Yes". In between there is the prowling blues of "Final Verdict" to the horn-laced "Beggars Can't Be Choosers," so reminiscent of the late Otis Rush and the glory days of Chess Records. The Texas-style shuffle of "I Got This", the funky soul of "Always Fooling Me", and the rabble-rousing rockabilly of "Grow Some" are all testaments to Kathy & the Kilowatts enviable command of an array of rootsy, yet modern genres.

2018 sees not only the release of "Premonition of Love", but also forthcoming tours of the US, Scandinavia and other far-flung destinations. Kathy Murray believes, not without justification, that even after a lifetime onstage and on record, the best days for Kathy & the Kilowatts are still ahead.