

Kathy Murray AND THE Kilowatts



With her new album, *Fully Charged*, released February 18, 2022 on Blue Heart Records, and the successful 2018 release of her critically acclaimed *Premonition of Love*, Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter Kathy Murray and her band the Kilowatts maintain their place in the blues pantheon that helps Austin, TX keep its reputation as the Live Music Capital of the World.

A singer songwriter par excellence, for decades Murray has helped keep a spotlight on the Texas capital's music scene. She cut her teeth during the golden era of Austin's blues and R&B, 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 has 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 teen self was totally blown away!"

Throughout her professional evolution, the blues has been the foundation of Murray's music and songwriting, though she's never been a one-trick pony. "My sound encompasses the influences of all of Texas' rootsy regional music styles that I've been surrounded by throughout my life: blues, swamp pop, rock, zydeco, soul, rockabilly country, and conjunto," she says. Murray is both a big-voiced blues singer and a prolific songwriter with a strong modern perspective. She says, "I strive to take American blues and roots music into the future by writing new songs inspired by the amazing musical styles that influenced me.

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 a myriad of others.

"I began to search high and low for every blues record I could find," she says. "I sometimes think my husband, Bill Jones (Kilowatt guitar player), 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."

Recently, Murray, along with co-songwriters Christoffer "Kid" Andersen, Rick Estrin and Frank Bey, wrote the title cut on Frank Bey's posthumous album, "All My Dues Are Paid". "All My Dues Are Paid" received a Grammy nomination for "Best Traditional Blues Album" in the 63rd Grammy Awards and was nominated at the June 2021 Blues Music Awards for "2020 BMA Song of the Year". Murray has received the 2003 "Songwriter of the Year" award from the Australian Blues Music Awards and two Silver Medals from the 2018 Global Music Awards.

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