

Kim Kelley

In “My Love For You,” a song from Kim Kelley’s forthcoming self-titled CD, her rich alto croons about a relationship that’s “like an open book,” built on such a strong foundation of honesty and faith that nothing can break it down. That unwavering sense of commitment and passion also drives her music, and she delivers that message loud and clear on her latest collection of rollickin’ country blues.

A Napa, Calif. native, Kelley grew up surrounded by music. Her father sang, her brother played drums, and the whole family filled the home with everything from The Eagles, Janis Joplin, and Lynyrd Skynyrd to Johnny Cash, The Judds, and Kenny Rogers. “My brother was in a band, and I’d watch him, and of course the guitar player. I always wanted to sing, but my coaches would have killed me!” A varsity athlete through high school, Kelley competed with and led her school’s softball, basketball and volleyball teams to many victories. She excelled in sports as a teen, but when she entered Napa Valley College, her attention turned to more creative pursuits—singing and playing guitar.

In 1996 Kelley formed the Kim Kelley Band, a soulful country-rock band known for its heartfelt grooves and Kelley’s powerful alto. The six-piece played throughout northern California, recorded a four-song demo, and developed a solid local following before Kelley left the group in 1998. “We just wanted different things musically,” she says. She obviously made a smart move. Her solo work earned her a semi-finalist slot in the annual International Songwriting Competition, as did the annual Colgate Country Showdown, an annual country music talent search that led to prime radio and television exposure for Kelley.

Once firmly establishing herself as a solo artist, Kelley “fell in love with singing again,” and even belted out gospel in the Beth Eden Baptist Church in Oakland, Calif. to experience the joy of singing with the choir. Her honest verses reflect this heart-centered attitude, and draw inspiration from well-known tunesmiths as Jon Rich (Big & Rich), Melissa Etheridge, Kris Kristofferson, and Johnny Cash. “I try to write songs that are a positive tool that can uplift people or help them get through difficult times in their lives,” she says. “Victim No More,” for example, is about a woman who was once abused, but has moved past that experience and feels empowered in her life.

Kelley wrote “For My Heroes,” to show her appreciation for our country’s veterans, including a few she knows well. “My grandfather was a World War II vet, and we have uncles and family friends that fought in the Vietnam War,” she says. “My grandmother even toured with Judy Garland as a roller skater on the USO tour!”

For the last several years, Kelley has brought her spirited country/blues to Veteran’s Homes throughout Northern California, giving her time and talent to those who have risked their lives to serve our country through the years. She also volunteers her time to Operation Mom, a Bay Area-based support group for parents, spouses, and close family and friends of active military personnel in all branches of service. They send letters, food packages, and other necessities to troops overseas, and host regular fundraisers to further their mission.

In addition to these worthy causes, Kelley continues to navigate the Northern California and San Francisco club scene...at least when she’s not launching her own “operation Mom”—raising her young daughter. Adding to her busy schedule, she also plans to record and perform a series of solo acoustic shows. “That’s a piece that people don’t usually get to see of me,” she says of the intimate, singer-songwriter environment. “Playing with a band is fun, but it’s also nice when it’s just me, myself and I.”

Look Kim Kelley’s full-length debut later this year.

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