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Josie Cotton Drops Her Cinematic Music Video For "Ukrainian Cowboy"

DCWS Staff



Pop music thrives on unlikely juxtapositions. But after a half-century of fusions, cross-cultural experiments, and sonic-alchemical explosions, you may have concluded that everything had been covered. Well, Josie Cotton is here to prove otherwise. On “Ukranian Cowboy,” her latest single, she’s matching twangy baritone guitar and a country-inspired melody with the deep-voiced chants and buoyant rhythms of Russian folk music. Cotton’s vocals showcase both her new wave roots and her love for film noir; the melody suggests girl groups, Nancy Sinatra, and the Bolshoi Ballet. As is always true with Josie Cotton, there’s a sense that she’s putting you on – but because she loves her source material to pieces, she really does manage to draw connections between traditions, and show that the distance between East and West isn’t quite as great as advertised.

Fans of Josie Cotton are used to astonishment and audacity. Those who know her only from her singles from the influential soundtrack to the 1982 movie Valley Girl – especially the immortal, impertinent “Johnny, Are You Queer?” – might be surprised to learn precisely how adventurous she’s been in the years since. Convertible Music, her wild, uproarious, and frequently hilarious new wave debut might have been the hit, but Cotton has never stopped pushing buttons, scaling obstacles, and making great pop. From The Hip, her follow-up, was even more outspoken and witty than the first record. Twin '00s albums Movie Disaster Music and Invasion Of The B-Girls explored Cotton’s fascination with vintage b-movies and married the energy and insouciance of punk rock with the alternately dark and playful themes of foreign films and classic exploitation movies.

Cotton’s videos from the B-Girls album and her Pussycat Babylon record took her fans straight to the drive-in; they were letters to film fans from another aficionado, one who was extremely adept at handling cinematic imagery and story telling. The clip for “Ukranian Cowboy” picks up right where she left off. Once again, the costumes and performances are straight from the seamier side of the motion picture industry. The star, who appears in the very first frame in a replica '60s B-movie poster, dresses the part to a T – and she gallops through the rest of the footage, high in the saddle with an electric guitar strapped to her back. But she’s not riding her horse through the Old West. Instead, she encounters Russian dancers, soldiers, titles in Cyrillic, and the domes of the Eastern church. There’s even a bear strumming a balalaika. It all works together brilliantly: an ironic testament to the artist’s impeccable eye for connections and parallels that elude the average cultural observer.

Connect with Josie Cotton: [Website](#)

