

Music News

## JOSIE COTTON honors Elvis in twangy new single/video duet with Kevin Preston of Prima Donna

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Duets with Kevin Preston For Rockabilly-Tinged "Ballad of Elvis Presley"

Featuring Members of Blondie and Stray Cats

Channels Elvis and Priscilla  
In Spaghetti Western-Themed Video



Josie Cotton "Ballad of Elvis Presley"

Link/Embed: <https://youtu.be/vpiLRs-jcY>

"I knew we had something very special." New Wave icon **JOSIE COTTON** says about her new rockabilly-drenched single and video "**Ballad of Elvis Presley**," a gorgeous twang-filled duet with **Kevin Preston** of Los Angeles' acclaimed Wicked Cool Recording artists **Prima Donna**. Released today, **June 21, 2022** via Josie's own label **Kitten Robot Records**, the single and video walk you past the horizon of a more innocent time. This is Elvis country, where *Viva Las Vegas* lives on forever .

"I avoided rockabilly and country music like the plague growing up, probably to annoy my Mom who was the world's biggest Tammy Wynette fan... But when I left Texas to come to LA and met the Paine Brothers, they schooled me in how to write a real song and we started with who else but, yep ,Tammy Wynette," laughs Josie, mentioning the production and songwriting team who helped launch her musical career,

"It was an obvious choice to implore Kevin to be my George Jones in this song. We've collaborated on a lot of projects but never anything like this," Josie muses about the inspired pairing.

Throughout the video Cotton and Preston time-travel their way across a musical terrain, materializing as obsessed Elvis fans and pop ups in a cowboy musical. They sweep the dance floor with a wink and nod to Wanda Jackson and say their goodbyes in the Church of Elvis.

"We all had the feeling we were making a little movie which we shot on location in a place called Pioneertown," she explains. "A lot of western movies were filmed there back in the day. The actors and musicians, the crew ... everyone there wanted to be there. No one wanted it to end."



Josie Cotton and Kevin Preston photo credit: Rio Warner

Tapping well known photographer **Piper Ferguson** (*Placebo, Save Ferris, Miranda Lee Richards*) to direct the video, Josie, cast and crew captured the dusty and arid ambience of the Wild West and maintained a saturated level of *Cowboy Noir*, replete with a saloon, cowgirls, a little white chapel, and the obligatory montage on the high plains. "It was my first time working with a female director," she smiles. "And I adored it."

Originally written for Brian Setzer by Josie's longtime songwriting/producer pal **Larson Paine** (who had written her iconic '80s breakthrough single "Johnny, Are You Queer?"), "Ballad of Elvis Presley" was never officially committed to wax. "Larson had written it backstage while he and Brian were waiting to go on, then calling out the chords as he was singing it" laughs Cotton about the song's genesis. "Brian never recorded it and it kind of sat there for years. I always thought it was the most beautiful song and hoped I could record it one day, but it never felt like the right moment."

As she headed back into the studio to record her new record recently, she unearthed a cassette of the song she thought was lost. "I took it as a sign that if I was ever going to sing that song, it had to be right then," she says. As she put it together, the pieces fell right into place with a special round of musicians to accompany her.

Josie's band for the single included such notables as **Clem Burke** (*Blondie*) on drums, **Lee Rocker** (*Stray Cats*) on upright bass, Lee's longtime guitarist man **Buzz Campbell**, **Marcus Watkins** on lead guitar and **Paul Roessler** (*Screamers, Nina Hagen*) on piano. "When Clem came to play drums on a song on the new record, a rock song, I asked him if he'd ever played rockabilly before because I had this Elvis song," she recalls. "I had no idea that he had made an entire rockabilly album with Wanda Jackson and every song on it was about Elvis. Beyond crazy! If anything, he was overqualified" jokes Cotton. "But he was the real deal... and that's when I knew I had to get Lee Rocker to play upright bass on it."

Josie returned to the forefront of the music world with new music as well on her own record label Kitten Robot, which has released celebrated alternative artists such as the dark and experimental **CrowJane**, **Dark Mark vs. Skeleton Joe** (featuring the late Mark Lanegan and his musical partner Joe Caramah), and **Spagetti & Frank** (featuring Supersuckers' Eddie Spagetti and The Streetwalkin' Cheatahs' Frank Spagetti). Over the last three years, Josie herself has released the singles "**Ukrainian Cowboy**," "**Cold War Spy**," a holiday track "**Every Day Like Christmas**," the album *Everything Is Oh Yeah!*, and remastered and re-released her albums *Invasion of the B-Girls*, *From the Hip*, *Frightened By Nightingales*, *Movie Disaster Music*, her breakthrough debut album *Convertible Music*, and her electro-pop masterpiece *Pussycat Babylon*.

"Ballad of Elvis Presley" is a perfect homage to the Wild West and maybe to the three Western movies Elvis made that no one has ever heard of, but also to The King himself, Elvis Presley. It features **Josie Cotton** (*vocals*), **Kevin Preston** (*vocals*), **Clem Burke** (*drums*), **Lee Rocker** (*upright bass*), **Buzz Campbell** (*electric guitar*), **Marcus Watkins** (*lead guitar*) and **Paul Roessler** (*piano*). It was produced by **Josie Cotton** and **Paul Roessler**. It is released today, **June 21, 2022** via **Kitten Robot Records**.

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