

For Immediate Release

New Album Infuses Classic Country with Jazzy Twist

Singing guitarist Richie Kaye's "Plush Life" delivers a comforting dose of NYC's 52nd Street to the Grand Ole Opry with equal doses of romance and humor



HOUSTON, Texas — Versatile vocalist and guitarist Richie Kaye has come full circle. Having grown up listening to everything from Gilbert and Sullivan and opera, as well as the Rat Pack, Mahavishnu Orchestra, Al Di Meola and Jimmy Page, he also has fond memories of classic country music.

Kaye was mesmerized by magical performances from Glen Campbell and Johnny Cash on their respective TV shows. Then he took a break from music for 20 years before rediscovering some of his roots, recording five albums of originals and covers, and performing as a solo artist and duo act in a largely jazz-standards vein.

Based in Houston, Texas, he became reacquainted with classic country, fell in love with the music and began to understand this form of songwriting. With the new release of his second album in the genre, Kaye has now found enough country comfort that it's literally reflected in the title of his sixth album, "Plush Life," whose musical texture he says feels as comfortable as velour, soft to the touch and even luxurious.

The album, which will be released on May 1, 2022 with 13 original songs penned by Kaye, will be available as a digital download on Bandcamp and shared for radio airplay. It follows his 2018 solo country effort, "Whinin' and Complainin': Classic Nashville Out-of-Love Songs."

"Plush Life" also marks his debut with the New Old-Timers featuring, along with Kaye on guitar and vocals, a host of session musicians. They include Jody Cameron on pedal steel guitar; Sam Kuslan on piano, organ, guitar and vocal harmonies; bassists David Craig and Rankin Peters; drummers Steve Allison and Walter Cross; and Kevin Carter on fiddle.

The songs mirror traditional themes of the classic-country genre – from heartache to hard-luck stories with plenty of binge drinking in between, but Kaye says the album is anything but dreary. It's full of romance, which he laments is in short supply in today's popular music, and humorous novelty songs that fill a fun gap on the radio and in record stores.

"I wanted to create something that had a strong sense of its ancestry so it would smell and taste like the classic country that I love with themes that are similar to what you hear from Nashville and Bakersfield – refreshed and going in a slightly different jazzier direction, but still being respectful to the past," Kaye explains.

On the new album, he sings in the 1950s and '60s style of country crooners Ray Price, Faron Young, Jack Greene and George Jones. Since exceptional jazz guitarists like Barney Kessel continue to influence his playing, the result is a hybrid sound that actually took root more than half a century ago. "There was a time when jazz and country were very much related," according to Kaye. "This was in the late '40s to the late '50s. I like to think maybe I've helped to reunite distant cousins."

Kaye will support "Plush Life" with local and regional club dates, along with private engagements.

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