

Katrina

Katrina & The Waves

www.katrinaweb.com

Born in the U.S., Katrina grew up with the West Coast sound (Fleetwood Mac, Linda Ronstadt, Emmylou Harris, Heart). In 1976 she moved to the UK, where a few years later, Katrina, together with fellow American and future Wave, Vince de la Cruz, formed the band Mama's Cookin'.

As a singer, Katrina was inspired by Motown and girl groups such as The Shangri-Las and The Shirelles. In 1983 Katrina and Vince joined The Waves (a Cambridge based band with ex Soft Boy, Kimberley Rew) and she picked up on some of their musical influences such as Etta James, Velvet Underground and the Stones.

The band became Katrina and the Waves, and in 1983 they recorded an album of original material, at their own expense, which was shopped around various labels and sold at gigs. They were signed by an independent Canadian label – Attic Records and their first album 'Walking on Sunshine' was released just in Canada. Katrina and The Waves toured Canada in 1984 and released a follow up album 'Katrina & The Waves 2'. Katrina and The Waves had their first big break in 1984 when The Bangles covered their song 'Going Down To Liverpool'. This drew attention to the group and led to an international deal with Capitol Records.

The band's first album was re-recorded and remixed. Scott Litt who went on to produce REM and Nirvana, produced 'Walking on Sunshine' – it was his idea to add the drum intro which made it irresistible to radio DJs. The first Capitol album, 'Katrina & The Waves' released in 1985, was a substantial critical and commercial success and 'Walking on Sunshine' was a worldwide hit earning top ten spots around the globe. (No. 8 UK, No.9 US, No.3 Canada, No.4 Australia). Since then, the song has been broadcasted over 2,500,000 times in the U.S. and was the highest played track on radio in the summer of 2008 – 23 years after its release.

Films featuring 'Walking on Sunshine' include:

- *Ask Max* (1986) Disney movie
- *Secret of My Success* (1987) with Michael J Fox
- *Look Who's Talking* (1989) with John Travolta
- *High Fidelity*, (2000) with Jack Black
- *American Psycho* (2000) with Christian Bale
- *Daddy Day Care* (2003) with Eddie Murphy
- *Walking on Sunshine* (2014) musical with Leona Lewis

Katrina and The Waves' song covers:

- Bangles 'Going Down To Liverpool' (1984)
- Dolly Parton 'Walking on Sunshine' (Treasures, 1996)
- Celine Dion 'That's Just The Woman In Me' (2008)
- Glee cast mash up of 'Walking on Sunshine' & Beyonce's 'Halo' (2010)
- 'Walking on Sunshine' featured on *American Idol*, *X Factor* & *The Voice*

Katrina & The Waves were nominated for a Grammy for "Best New Artist" and were constantly touring the US, Canada, Europe, Australia and Japan. Their follow up single, 'Do

'You Want Crying' was a top 40 hit in the US and 'Sun Street' was a UK Top 30 hit in 1986. In 1989 Katrina & The Waves recorded a more rock-orientated album for Capitol subsidiary SBK Records – 'Break of Hearts' which included 'That's the Way' which reached No. 16 in the US charts. The band toured worldwide with artists such as Wham, The Beach Boys, Don Henley, Pointer Sisters, Chaka Khan, The Kinks, Fleetwood Mac, Coolio and Run DMC. 'Walking on Sunshine' was followed by more chart hits – 'Do You Want Crying' and 'Que Te Quiero' in 1985, 'Sun Street' in 1986 and 'That's The Way' in 1989, with performances at Madison Square Garden, The Mall, Washington DC, The Marquee Club and CBGBs where Katrina sang with Joey Ramone.

In 1997 Katrina and the Waves' 'Love Shine A Light' won the Eurovision Song Contest with the largest ever margin, followed by an unprecedented four consecutive appearances on Top Of The Pops and a No. 3 in the UK Charts.

The following year, Katrina and the Waves split up and Katrina pursued an alternative career on radio and TV. She was a BBC TV presenter and BBC Radio 2 DJ – where she presented a three-hour show, five days a week for the next year and a half. This was followed by a stint in musical theatre, where Katrina played the lead role (the songwriter Ellie Greenwich) in *Leader of the Pack*, singing some of the songs that had influenced her as a young singer.

In 2001, Katrina began a solo career, performing live in the UK and in Europe and resumed writing and recording. Her first solo album, 'Katrina Leskanich' was released in 2005. Katrina wrote and produced many of the songs on the album, which includes collaborations with Phil Thornalley, ('Torn') and an acoustic cover of Kirsty MacColl's, 'They Don't Know'.

In 2006, Katrina put together a new band, performing their first gig at The Borderline in London. And in 2007 Katrina covered 'Hitsville UK' on 'The Sandinista! Project' – a new compilation and tribute to The Clash Sandinista! Album. Katrina toured Australia on the Countdown Spectacular tour and Norway with Gylne Tider. Katrina's single 'They Don't Know' was included on the Gylne Tider 2 album which went platinum. The following year, Katrina had a UK club hit in 2008 with a dance version of 'They Don't Know'.

2010 – Katrina celebrated 25th Anniversary of 'Walking on Sunshine' with the release of a new CD, 'THE LIVE ALBUM' and the Glee Cast had a UK Top 10 hit with a mash up of Beyonce's 'Halo' and Katrina & The Waves 'Walking on Sunshine'. The EP 'Spiritualize' was released in May 2011.

Katrina published her first book – *Peggy Lee Loves London: My London Guide* (Metropoodle Press 2013) a photo guide to London. In 2014 Katrina released 'Blisland' her first solo album for 10 years and toured North America for the first time since the 80s with Retro Futura with other 80s artists including Thompson Twin Tom Bailey, Howard Jones and Midge Ure.

2015 – 2016 Katrina continued to tour Europe, South Africa with Rewind, a headlining North American Tour with her NYC band and Australia on the Totally 80s Tour.

2017 – sees the release of two ebooks – *Metropoodle Guide to London & Metropoodle Guide to Cornwall* in March, a new album in June followed by a North American tour in July/August with Retro Futura.