

BettySoo

It's the voice that gets you first.

"BettySoo may well have the most gorgeous voice in Texas ... if not in all contemporary folk – its purity and strength can be downright devastating." – Acoustic Guitar

BettySoo's vocal prowess is a thing of wonder. A world-class instrument of deft phrasing and purity, a voice that knows when to hold back and when to dive in. At her own live shows, taking a verse on stage with friends or singing harmonies in sessions with Austin's finest, BettySoo sings with consummate loveliness and self-assurance. A voice that knows the roots of American music inside and out; coming from a most unexpected place – a diminutive Korean-American with a deceptively girl-next-door demeanor.

Then the performance reels you in.

"Truly remarkable. BettySoo's sharp, often self-deprecating humor skillfully wove the songs together. Her clear, evocative voice and poignant lyrics recall Patty Griffin and Joni Mitchell, and did I mention she's a hell of a guitar player?"

– No Depression, live concert review

Touring the unforgiving circuit of listening rooms, clubs and festivals, BettySoo has mastered the art of performance. A funny anecdote sets up a song of heartbreak and need; a witty rejoinder belies the dark truths that underpin much of her work.

And that's when you notice the songs.

"Beautiful, heart-wrenching songwriting that is also edgy and unwavering." – KUT, Austin

"Exceptionally well written and arranged songs with a confidence that speaks volumes." – Austin American-Statesman

They call it the live music capital of the world. Austin, Texas, is a city where the musical bar is set high. Since exploding on the Austin scene over a decade ago, BettySoo has carved out an enviable niche among the very best the city has to offer.

Here's what BettySoo has been up to:

Debuted two full-band, full-throated songs from hotly-anticipated *China Girl: Songs of David Bowie and David Byrne* at a packed-to-the-rafters memorial for beloved Austin bassist George Reiff with artists like Chris Robinson of the Black Crowes and Patty Griffin.

Wrote, recorded, and toured internationally with Rebecca Loebe and Grace Pettis as buzz-heavy *Nobody's Girl*. The trio released *Waterline* with Lucky Hound Music in Fall 2018., with a new album scheduled for release in 2021.

Recorded harmonies for **Eliza Gilkyson, James McMurtry, Sara Hickman, Akina Adderley, Jaimee Harris, and Charlie Faye & The Fayettees**, among many others.

Brought tears to every eye at a star-studded tribute for mentor **Jimmy LaFave**, with a devastating, stripped-down version of LaFave's "Worn Out American Dream."

Approved mixes for a sparkling country-rock collaboration with songwriter and filmmaker **Gandalf Hennig** (documentaries on Gram Parsons, Merle Haggard) produced by Grammy-winner **Sheldon Gomberg** (Ben Harper, Rickie Lee Jones), with guest appearances by **Benmont Tench** (Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers), **David Steele** (Dwight Yoakam, John Prine), **Pete Thomas** (Elvis Costello), **Taras Prodanuiuk** (Merle Haggard, Richard Thompson), and others.

...and she still managed to find the time to sit in at gigs with friends such as **Michael Fracasso, Bonnie Whitmore, and Jon Dee Graham**.

Since March 2020, she hosts **Nobody's Happy Hour** online weekly, a song-swap/improv combination with special guests ranging from **Bill Kirchen** (Commander Cody & the Lost Planet Airmen) to **Butch Hancock** (The Flatlanders)..

BettySoo is as Texan as they come.

Raised outside Houston by first-generation Korean immigrant parents, educated at UT, she grew up listening to the Great American songbook and country radio. Older sisters led her to the world of singer/songwriters, and nights spent at The Cactus Café and Hole In The Wall turned her on to the legacy of Texas song.

Her 2007 solo disc, *Little Tiny Secrets*, garnered heavy regional airplay; 2009's *Heat Sin Water Sin*, produced by **Gurf Morlix** (Lucinda Williams, Ray Wylie Hubbard), provided building blocks to a national (and international) audience. In 2014, *When We're Gone*, co-produced with cellist **Brian Standefer** (Alejandro Escovedo, Terry Allen) placed her firmly in the first rank of songwriters working today.

She's won the requisite awards: New Folk at Kerrville, Songwriter of the Year at Big Top Chautauqua, The Dave Carter Songwriting Award at Sisters Folk Festival, Mountain Stage's New Song.

She's played the festivals: multiple SXSWs, Kerrville, Calgary and more. **And the radio shows:** E-Town, Mountain Stage, WoodSongs, Bob Harris on BBC2.

Her singing has been heard on *Riverdale* and *Girl Boss*, and her songs formed the musical backbone to Christine Hoang's 2017 play *A Girl Named Sue*, singled out by **Austin360.com** as *"gorgeous, moving ballads comment(ing) on the themes of the scenes they punctuate."*

The future looks auspicious for BettySoo. The *Nobody's Girl* project has recorded a full-length album featuring players like **Charlie Sexton** (Bob Dylan), **J.J. Johnson** (Tedeschi Trucks), **Glenn Fukunaga** (Dixie Chicks), **David Grissom** (Buddy Guy, Allman Brothers, Ringo Starr), and **Michael Ramos** (John Mellencamp, BoDeans), who reprised his role as producer. She joined **Bonnie Whitmore** in support of **James McMurtry** on tour. You'll see her onstage singing harmonies at album release shows for top-tier Texas artists. Music programmers will have an embarrassment of riches to choose from, and listeners will have the opportunity to re-familiarize – or hear for the first time – the extraordinary talent that is BettySoo.

"In her own words, 'I guess Asian-American songwriters aren't that common. At least, not in Texas.' Well, songwriting and singing of this caliber aren't that common anywhere." – No Depression