

Candye Kane Bio

Seven time National Blues Awards Nominee Candye Kane has been called a survivor, a superhero and the toughest girl alive. (All are also titles of her self-penned songs.) Her eleventh CD release, *Sister Vagabond*, was released on August 16, 2011 on Delta Groove Records and was #1 on the Living Blues Charts and on Sirius/XM Radio for two months. Kane is nominated for the BB King Entertainer of the Year Award and Best Contemporary Blues Female for 2012. (www.blues.org) *Sister Vagabond* was self produced by Kane and her noted guitarist Laura Chavez. Many critics say that it is Kane's finest work to date and unanimously agree that it is a worthy successor to their 2010 collaboration, *Superhero*, nominated for Best Contemporary Blues CD along with many other honors.

The jump-blues singer, songwriter from East Los Angeles has nabbed ten San Diego Music Awards, won several songwriting and composition awards, been featured in caricature in *The New Yorker Magazine* and starred in a sold-out stage play about her life, featured at the New York Fringe Festival in 2011. *The Toughest Girl Alive*, directed and staged by San Diego Ballet Director, Javier Velasco, garnered rave reviews at www.nytheatre.com

She's beaten pancreatic cancer in the last three years, raised two sons and has performed worldwide for presidents and movie stars but her path to success was not always glamorous or easy. Born into a dysfunctional blue-collar family, Candye became a mother, a pinup cover girl and a punk-rock, hillbilly blues-belter by the time she was just 21 years old. Ten CDs, six record labels, millions of international road miles and countless awards later, Miss Kane has proven to be a true survivor as she scrambled her way to the top of the roots-music heap, creating a world renowned reputation that has spanned two decades.

A colorful mixture of the traditional and the eclectic, Kane cut her musical teeth in the early '80s onstage with Hollywood musicians and friends Social Distortion, Dwight Yoakam, Dave Alvin, Los Lobos, The Blasters, X, Fear and the Circle Jerks, to name just a few. While raising two sons, this role model for the disenfranchised championed large-sized women, fought for the equal rights of sex workers and the GLBT community and inspired music lovers everywhere. Her fans are a mixture of true outsiders: bikers, blues fans, punk rockers, drag queens, fat girls, queers, burlesque dancers, porn fans, sex workers, rockabilly and swing dancers, gray-haired hippies, sex-positive feminists and everyday folk of all ages.

In 1986, then married to Thomas Yearsley of the Paladins, she was touched by the music of Big Maybelle, Big Mama Thornton, Ruth Brown and more. Her self-released 1991 *Burlesque Swing* caught the ear of Texas impresario Clifford Antone, who signed her to a deal with Antone's Records. Los Lobos' Cesar Rosas and Paladin/Hacienda Brother/Stone River Boy Dave Gonzalez co-produced the first album of the deal, *Home Cookin'*. Picked up by Discovery (later Sire) Records, the Dave Alvin/Derek O'Brien-produced *Diva La Grande* was followed by *Swango* in the height of the swing craze.

Rounder/Bullseye Records signed her in 1995, releasing *The Toughest Girl Alive*, produced by Scott Billington. Four albums followed on the German RUF label, including the Bob Margolin-produced *Guitar'd and Feathered*. She then parted with her current label, Delta Groove, releasing *Superhero* in 2010 and now *Sister Vagabond* in 2011.

Her full-time, 250-days-a-year touring schedule started in 1992 and today, Kane's live shows are the stuff of legend. She honors the bold blues women of the past with both feet firmly planted in the present. She belts, growls, shouts, croons and moans from a lifetime of suffering and overcoming obstacles. She uses music as therapy and often writes and chooses material with positive affirmations that leave the audience feeling healed and exhilarated. In a show that is part humor, part revival meeting and part sexuality celebration, she'll deliver a barrelhouse-tongue-in-

cheek blues tune or a gospel ballad, encouraging audiences to leave behind religious intolerance and claim power over the words in their daily lives. She'll slay the crowd with her balls out rendition of "Whole Lotta Love" or glorify the virtues of zaftig women with "200 Pounds of Fun." She often says she is a "fat black drag queen trapped in a white woman's body" and she dresses the part.

Kane has been included in countless blues and jazz CD anthologies including *Rolling Stone Jazz and Blues Album Guide* and *Musichound: Blues, The Essential Album Guide* and Dan Aykroyd's *30 Essential Women of the Blues*. She appeared on the influential call-to-arms of Southern California roots music, *A Town South of Bakersfield* on Enigma Records, alongside Lucinda Williams and Dwight Yoakam.

In addition to her musical achievements, Kane has become an activist and philanthropist in recent years. Since 2005, she has been active with the charity organization

<http://www.unitedbymusic.org> The project provides performance opportunities, blues history lessons and songwriting instruction to young people with disabilities, encouraging them to write their own blues songs to help them overcome their challenges. In 2008, she appeared in Cape town South Africa for the World Congress for Downs Syndrome and in 2009 Kane appeared in Dublin, Ireland again for the World Congress for Downs Syndrome.

A fighter par excellence, Candye has an authenticity, determination and optimism that keeps her show passionate, honest and irresistible.

"People ask me why I want to work so hard and so much, since I tour 250 days a year. Everyone says I should stay home and relax after my health struggle. But music is my life and neuroendocrine cancer (www.carcinoid.org) is a mostly manageable disease. Although I have cancer again, and will likely struggle with this disease for the rest of my life, I will continue to work as much as I can because I know life is fragile anyway. I would be fine if I died onstage doing what I love like Country Dick Montana or Johnny Guitar Watson. I'm not planning on going anytime soon, but when I do exit this plane, I hope it's making someone else feel inspired by the powerful words in my songs."

www.candyekane.com

www.facebook.com/candyekaneband