

# Kathy Kosins Fills the World With Beauty

By Claire Charlton Photos courtesy of Kathy Kosins

Musician Kathy Kosins perceives the world in wonderful ways most of us can't even imagine.

As a smooth-as-silk jazz vocalist and entertainer with a decades-long international career, Kosins says that when she sings, she sees color. And, as a visionary artist who has been painting modern abstract canvases since 1990, she also says that when she paints, she hears music.

"There's a word for it. Synesthesia. It's a condition, supposedly," says Kosins, who lives in Ferndale. "For me, art and music are one in the same, there's no separation and there never has been." Kosins says one gift inspires the other, simply and gracefully.

A native Detroiter, Kosins grew up close to the biggest names in Motown, soul, R&B and rock as the daughter of Harry Kosins, high-end men's clothier to the famous. "Growing up in the Motown era, music was part of my realm. I was about 19 or 20 when I decided I was going to be a singer," Kosins recalls.

Self-confidence and great timing placed Kosins in the studio of musician and producer Don Was just as he prepared to record his first album. Was hired Kosins to write and sing backing vocals, plus contract a team of vocalists. As a songwriter and musician, Kosins has been busy since that very day.

Currently recording in Detroit and New York, Kosins also plays with her R&B band, the Detroit Memphis Experience. Along the way, her creativity also embraced painting.

"I work smartly and am focused, but I'm doing a lot of different things," Kosins says. "If you spent 24 hours with me, you would see that I have a method to my madness."

Her music and painting often connect, and Kosins coordinates gallery shows to coincide with gigs in a way other single-tasking artists do not. She even paints on stage, capturing brush strokes inspired by music, auctioning off her work live on stage. Proceeds often benefit nonprofit organizations.

"Painting began as a hobby for me, but it's becoming a second career, in the sense that I'm painting from the stage," says Kosins, noting that she also paints custom work on commission and shows her work in galleries across the country.

For Kosins, success is all about working the business 24/7/365, spending hours on the phone with potential bookings across the U.S. and Europe. As a self-employed entrepreneur, Kosins says she is her own best agent, "An agent would never hustle for me as hard as I can hustle for myself," she says.

So what is Kosins' best musical recommendation for romancing the Valentine's Day mood? "'To the Ladies of Cool' is a modern expression of the West Coast cool movement that celebrates four women who were prototypes in jazz in the day: Julie London, Anita O'Day, Chris Connor and June Christy," she says. Find it at [kathykosins.com](http://kathykosins.com), then grab your sweetie, open a bottle of wine, dim the lights and enjoy.

See Kathy Kosins' artwork at Scavolini by Cucina Moda this spring. The show opens early May, with a special event on May 22. 202 E. Maple Ave., Birmingham. 248.792.2285. ♦

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One of Kosins' latest pieces, "Jazz in the Abstract," computer-created and rendered onto canvas.