

Blue Bayou

Written by bluelover

Monday, 02 May 2011 21:30 - Last Updated Tuesday, 17 March 2015 14:14

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"Blue Bayou" is a song written by Roy Orbison and Joe Melson and sung by Orbison.

Roy Kelton Orbison (1936 – 1988) was an American singer-songwriter and musician, well known for his distinctive, powerful voice, complex compositions, and dark emotional ballads. Orbison grew up in Texas and began singing in a rockabilly and country & western band in high school until he was signed by Sun Records in Memphis.



Roy Orbison

His greatest success came with Monument Records in the early to mid 1960s when 22 of his songs placed on the Billboard Top Forty.

Orbison was a natural baritone, but music scholars have suggested that he had a three- or four-octave range. The combination of Orbison's powerful, impassioned voice and complex musical arrangements led many critics to refer to his music as operatic, giving him the sobriquet *"the Caruso of Rock"*

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Playing shows late into the night, and living with his wife and young child in his tiny apartment, he often sought refuge by taking his guitar to his car and writing songs there. Songwriter Joe Melson, who had a passing acquaintance with Orbison, tapped on his car window one day in Texas in 1959 and the two decided to try to write some songs together.

Joe Melson was born in Bonham (1935), northeast Texas. He was reared on a farm until he was sixteen. He studied and played music as a teenager and fronted a rockabilly band called The Cavaliers. Melson recognized the potential in Orbison's voice, encouraging the singer to explore its power through their collaboration for Monument Records.



Joe Melson

They experimented with the doo-wop backup singers arranged by Anita Kerr. Orbison was allowed to use strings on the record, which he enjoyed.

Melson later recalled, *"We stood in the studio, listening to the playbacks and thought it was the most beautiful sound in the world"*. The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock and Roll states that the music Orbison made in Nashville *"brought a new splendor to rock"*,

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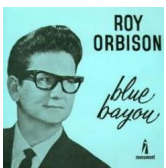
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and the melodramatic effects of his orchestral accompaniment were similar to the music production of Phil Spector.



Blue Bayou by Cynthia Adams

“**Blue Bayou**” was originally released by Orbison as a 45rpm single on the Monument Records label in August 1963 (backed with the rock song "Mean Woman Blues"). It was also recorded by Roy Orbison on his legendary 1963 album **In Dreams**. While it only scored as high as #29 in the US (despite scoring #1 in Ireland and #10 in Norway).



Blue Bayou by Roy Orbison, cover

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Linda Ronstadt took it to far greater fame as her only gold-selling single and her signature song. Linda took the song to #3 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart in late 1977 - as well as #2 Country and #3 Easy Listening. The single was RIAA certified Gold (for sales of over 1 million US copies) in January 1978. "Blue Bayou" was later certified Platinum (for over 2 million copies sold in the United States).



Blue Bayou by Linda Ronstadt, cover

Because of this song, Dickson's Baseball Dictionary records that a "Linda Ronstadt" is a synonym for a fastball, a pitch that *"blew by you."*



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Blue Bayou, lyrics:

I feel so bad I've got a worried mind I'm so lonesome all the time Since I left my baby behind on Blue Bayou Saving nickels, saving dimes, working 'till the sun don't shine Looking forward to happier times on Blue Bayou I'm going back some day come what may to Blue Bayou Where you sleep all day and the catfish play on Blue Bayou All those fishing boats with their sails afloat If I could only see That familiar sunrise through sleepy eyes, how happy I'd be Go to see my baby again And to be with some of my friends Maybe I'd be happy then on Blue Bayou I'm going back some day, gonna stay on Blue Bayou Where the folks are fine and the world is mine on Blue Bayou Oh, that girl of mine by my side the silver moon and the evening tide Oh, some sweet day gonna take away this hurtin' inside I'll never be blue, my dreams come true on Blue Bayou



Blue Bayou by Judy Crowe