

First, she covered Bajaga's hit "Od kada tebe volim" and delighted audiences with her clear voice and unique emotion. Then, a few weeks later, she released another cover on her YouTube channel. This time she went for a complete different genre and covered "Srce" by the legendary Milan Mladenović of EKV. Then she won the hearts of the entire Serbian public.

Her name is Kimberly Townsend. She is a singer/songwriter. There is probably no media outlet in Serbia that has not shared her covers of our songs. But for Kultura 381, she gave her first interview, and at the very beginning, she revealed the secret of how she discovered our music.

How did you discover our music?

My husband Ogi is Serbian, so Serbian music is often streaming through our speakers as we cook, drink coffee, or just hang out.

You made cover songs from two totally different artists: Bajaga (mainstream pop-rock author) and EKV (the band that was well known for an alternative approach to music, lead by the late Milan Mladenović). What is the connection between these two songs that made you make covers?

Such a great question. We listen to a wide variety of musical genres. I like to listen to and sing songs that makes me feel things, that I connect with on an emotional level. EKV and Bajaga's work both really speak to my heart somehow. So I guess that's the connection between the two. A new fan recommended I listen to EKV's Umorna the other day. I had never heard it before. I was nearly in tears as I listened. Something just washes over me when I hear a song like that, it's healing for the soul. For me it's about the words more than the tempo, style, or instrumentation.

Your pronunciation of our various letters (č, ć, ž, đ, lj, nj, and r) was outstanding. Who helped you?

Thank you so much! That's really generous of you! Ogi, and his family and friends have all helped in some way over the years - but it wasn't easy in the beginning, and I still make mistakes all the time. Like for example differentiating č and ć is tricky. They sound so similar to me! The lj and nj were the hardest letters for me to pronounce in the beginning. Still challenging sometimes. I have a goal to be fully fluent one day, but I have a long way to go.

You released your first EP in 2019. Last year we all suffered various lockdowns that froze our artistic activities. Do you have any plans for 2021?

So true. This experience has been unprecedented. I hope you and your family and friends have all been healthy and well. I hear you, it's been a trying time creatively for those who would normally be out and about sharing their work. After releasing my first EP in 2019, I went on tour, so after months of weekly travel, I was looking to create at home for a bit. It's pure coincidence that I planned this yearlong project of filming and recording a cover song every week from my home for the entirety of 2020. I had no idea we would be quarantining and going into lockdown when I planned this project out. Now that that's wrapped up, I'll be

focusing on my original music again. I'm waiting a bit to release the details, but new original music will be coming out starting this summer. I'll be sharing details and pieces of the songs over the next few months via my Instagram (@kimblyy)!

Any plans on some new Serbian covers or collaboration with Serbian musicians?

Yes! I have my next 3 Serbian covers planned out, and anytime someone requests a song I add it to a list of requests to listen through and consider. Sure, would be so cool to collaborate with Serbian musicians, but no plans in the works yet.

You gained many followers and fans from Serbia. Any plans on traveling to our piece of the world?

I'm totally in shock with the response to these covers - my heart is full. Yes, I've been many times! We can't wait to visit again once the pandemic ends and it's safe to travel again. Serbia is our second home, half of our family live there. And I have traveled through a lot of Europe - in terms of the Eastern Europe region specifically, I've also traveled to Hungary and Montenegro. We want to see as much of the world as possible, so can't wait to continue traveling and exploring forever.

Your message to people from my country who were excited with your voice.

Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you for reading the articles, for clicking the videos, for listening. Thank you for being open to listening to a new interpretation of songs so close to your heart. Thank you for liking, commenting, sharing with friends, subscribing. Thank you for your DMs and comments on Instagram, thank you for your emails. I want to respond to every one of you, but as of a few days ago, I truly can't keep up. I'm seeing every message and I'm feeling your love. Thank you with all my heart. Your support fills me with joy.