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Kip Moore: The Cover Story

The singer/songwriter opens up about new music, his current break and how his fans give him peace.



Kip Moore is learning to take life one step at a time. The singer/songwriter has been moving full speed ahead since the release of his debut album *Up All Night* in 2012 with little to no time off. In late 2016, he announced he'd be taking a much needed break from the road. This doesn't mean he'll stop releasing new music though. In fact, it's quite the opposite as his new single "More Girls Like You" drops today (Feb. 10).

Moore co-wrote the soaring power ballad with Steven Olsen, Josh Miller and David Garcia. The radio-friendly track details how he's been "living like a wild ol' mustang out in Montana fields" before he meets the lady of his affections. Now, he's switching his lifestyle and thinking about settling down.

"So God made girls like you make guys like me / Wanna reach for the brightest star, set it on a ring / Put it on your hand, grab a piece of land / And raise a few / More girls like you," he sings in the chorus.

The song came to fruition when Moore began discussing how crazy his life has become since moving from South Georgia to Nashville more than 10 years ago. Since his artist career has taken off he's seen much of the world, and throughout his many travels he has noticed one constant theme: the joy a family brings people, no matter the ethnicity.

"Watching a man with his kids, and especially when they have a little girl, if you watch that complete sense of awe they have for that kid, I paid attention," he tells Sounds Like Nashville over the phone with a slight Southern drawl. "I've seen all different walks of life with that."

While Moore admits that he has never eagerly awaited fatherhood, he is slowly becoming more open to the idea of having his own family one day.

"I've always felt that chapter would be fun, but I've just never chased after it," he says, pausing. "For the first time in my life, from all my travels and everything that I've been doing, I look forward to that chapter. I think it'll be a

blast teaching my little girl how to surf, or my kid to play basketball, or whatever it is, hanging out and living that life.”

The song is a romantic one, in that it details how strongly the main character feels about his significant other.

“He thinks that she’s so incredible that hopefully when we do have kids they turn out just like you,” Moore explains. “I look forward to being so crazy about somebody that you want to have kids that turn out like them.”

“Your soul is pure golden / Must’ve been true love you were grown in / Sent the sun rays to a dark place / On the same day,” he croons.

“More Girls Like You” is the lead single off Moore’s upcoming project. He wrote the song four months ago and says he felt like it was a good way to start the flow of his third album. While he’s tight-lipped about the release, he revealed that he has produced most of the record by himself.

“It’s constantly morphing and taking on different shapes,” he says of the album. “I’m still writing now. I’ve got it finished, but if I write something that I love, which I’ve done a couple times, I’ll bump songs off. I’m pretty much free to do that all the way up until probably May when I have to have it all turned in.”

Fans who have frequented Moore’s VIP performances before his live set every night may have heard a few of the songs, but again, he wouldn’t reveal which tracks. He says he’s played 20 percent of the record live and while he loves playing his new music for fans, he wants it to be a discovery process for when the album is released.

“I’m proud of this. I think that this is the best body of work that I’ve done,” he states confidently. “There’s more soul to this record than any of the other ones. I can’t wait for people to hear what I’ve been doing. When people ask me, ‘What’s the sound?’ I never like to answer that because I like for people to make their own conclusions. I don’t like to draw

conclusions about my own record and tell you what it is. I let you find out.”

Moore says he’s been co-writing with “the usual suspects.” Expect songs penned by Westin Davis, Dan Couch, Luke Dick, Troy Verges, Blair Daly and The Cadillac Three’s Jaren Johnston. The album will be out sometime this summer, depending on how well “More Girls Like You” does at radio. The quicker the song climbs up the charts, the faster the album will be released, he says.

His debut album *Up All Night* saw much success at radio, garnering three No. 1 songs with “Somethin’ ‘Bout a Truck,” “Beer Money” and “Hey Pretty Girl.” With 2015’s *Wild Ones*, radio success was more elusive. Singles like “Young Love” and “Dirt Road” barely cracked the Top 40, eventually not making it on the album, while “I’m to Blame” and “Running for You” reached the Top 25 and Top 15 respectively. While Moore admits radio is a huge component to having a successful career as an artist, he says it’s not the most crucial component.

“I had a lot of success with radio on the first record and not so much with the second. At the same time, the audience has tripled in size over the ‘Wild Ones’ record. It’s hard for me to say that record’s a failure when I saw what it did with our live shows,” he explains. “I know what a big factor radio is, and I know how important it is when they’re on board with your song. It helps a whole lot. It helps people hear that song that might have never had a chance to hear it. You always hope that radio is going to play your song.”

Moore has been open about the depression he suffered between the success of *Up All Night* and the difficulties in releasing *Wild Ones*. He says he has been at peace while recording his forthcoming project, crediting his fans for this newfound tranquility.

“I’m always a very passionate, heated kind of person. I can admit that I’m sensitive to a lot of elements. I feel everything a lot, whether it’s good or bad, I feel it deeply. I think that that’s my genetic makeup, so therefore I’m always

going to battle those stages of darkness at times,” he admits. “At the same time, as far as making music this time around, I’ve had such a sense of peace. The fans have given me a lot of that with ‘Wild Ones’ not being as commercially successful but watching the way they’ve reacted to that record and the way they’ve supported that record, and coming out to the shows.”

Moore’s shows continue to sell out each city he plays while the venues are getting bigger and bigger. He says seeing the support every night has reinforced him to do what he’s been doing, knowing full well that his fans will continue to stand behind him. It was this mentality that he took into the studio when recording his third album.

While his schedule is slowly filling up with dates overseas, summer festivals and a fall headlining tour in support of the new album, there will be someone missing each night on the road. Moore’s longtime guitarist and right-hand man Dave Lapsley has left the band. Learning of his friend’s departure late last year was tough on Moore.

“Losing Dave, to be honest, was heartbreaking for me,” he says pensively. “Dave was the heart and soul of the band. He’s a special human being. We’re all so tight with each other. It’s a brotherhood, from all the crew guys to the players. I struggled with that pretty bad, the minute I got off the road, having to deal with that.”

Moore says Lapsley never wanted to stop playing music with the band, something just came up with his family that required him to relocate to Minneapolis.

“I applaud him for it because I know that it was hard. He wanted to play music with us, but family comes first. We all wish Dave the best,” he adds. “It’s not the last time we play music together. I think Dave will be playing with us again one day. For right now, this is where Dave is going.”

Moore has since found a new guitarist, Dave Nassie, from L.A. who he says is a “salt of the earth kind of person.”

“We’re excited about this next chapter and what element he’s going to bring to the band. He’s as enthused as we are, so we’re all looking forward to it,” he says.

The singer is in good spirits now that he’s had some time off. While he jokes that he wishes he spent his entire trip in Maui instead of splitting additional time between Costa Rica and Utah, he says after a few weeks surfing he does have peace of mind.

“I didn’t write a single song, nor was I itching to. I was completely content with my surroundings and what I was doing. I was just at peace. Maui does an interesting thing to me, surfing in general. I feel like I’m always searching for that peace of mind,” he says with a long pause. “I try to pray for it a lot. I definitely get it in fleeting moments in other aspects of my life, but Maui and surfing, that combination... the minute I walk through that airport in Maui there’s a whole sense of peace that happens with me. My brain finally shuts off.”

This tranquility is carrying into his everyday life as he has accepted that all that really matters is that he’s doing what he loves.

“I used to have so many goals in my head, and I would set a bar for everything that I did. ‘I want to win Record of the Year on this. I want to be selling out arenas doing this.’ I’m not doing that anymore,” he confesses.

“I’ve realized that I have achieved success because I’m getting to play music with my dear friends. I can’t think of a better thing than to be doing what you love each and every single day and living life the way you want to live it and making a living doing it with your closest buds, the people that you want to be around,” he concedes. “That’s a pretty special thing. I’ve come to be content with that and try to do the best I can. I’m not thinking about a million steps ahead now. I think that’s helped me.”