

'King of Queens' theme song now part of television royalty



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"My eyes are getting weary. My back is getting tight. Sitting here in traffic on the Queensboro Bridge tonight..."

It's the song that serenades me each night from the other room as I put my head down on the pillow. It's the theme to "The King of Queens," which my husband watches reruns of each night on TV Land.

The voice behind my nightly serenade is Billy Vera, who recorded the song with his band, The Beaters. Vera didn't write the song — it was written by "Queens" writers/producers Josh Goldsmith and Cathy Yuspa — but it's his touch that makes the song work.

I had the privilege of hearing Vera recall the story behind the theme in a recent phone conversation. He told me the song was brought to him by a friend who was the head of music at Columbia Pictures. Vera's friend was unhappy with the way the "country-ish" song sounded and asked Vera to take a listen.

"I listened to it, and I said, 'Your problem here is the show is about a UPS driver, a real blue collar guy and the song the way you have it sounds like Paul Simon's idea of a country song. It's too intellectual sounding,'" Vera said. "I said, 'You need something that's going to sound more regular guy. Regular blue collar guy.'"

So, Vera convinced his friend to let him use his band to record the song their way. The rest, as they say, is history. The song even earned Vera new fans overseas.

"I started getting messages from Germany and Austria. Apparently, the show was huge over there," Vera said. "And they kept asking, 'When are you going to put out the "King of Queens" theme as a single? It'd be a number one song in Germany.' I said, 'Well it's only 32 seconds long. I don't think we're going to make a single of it.'"

Since my husband is such an avid "Queens" fan, it's not unusual for me to hear Vera's voice four times a

"The King of Queens" reruns air each night on TV Land.

Courtesy of TV Land



night. And that's just fine with Vera.

"I hope they keep playing that show," Vera laughed. "They have to pay me every time they play (the theme)."

"The King of Queens" airs each night on TV Land. Check TV Land listings for exact times.

Of course, Vera and his band are best known for another TV moment from one of my all-time favorite shows, "Family Ties." Their song, "At This Moment," was used prominently in the season four premiere when Alex (Michael J. Fox) fell for Ellen (Tracy Pollan). And that ended up

changing Vera's life and resurrecting a career he thought was over.

You can read more of the story behind "At This Moment" and more about Vera's other television work, including the theme song he pitched from a men's room, on my blog.

"Cause baby all my life I will be drivin' home to you..."

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