

Pretty Bloody Special radio programme

by Jan Dale

My programme, *Southern Style*, commenced in 1997 and moved to PBS FM in 2001.

Its format has remained similar, focusing on Bluegrass with some Old-Time, Western Swing, Cajun and related Blues, but much has happened since then, both for me and for PBS.

At the time I joined Victoria's PBS, the station was broadcasting from St. Kilda and moved to its current premises in Collingwood soon after.

The studios were built by volunteers, the main work being done by PBS presenters, Stuey Hughes, Peter Merrett and Jamie Suppa.

Lots of things were donated by generous listeners.

Many were second hand, including carpets and doors, some of which were from a hospital and still have ward numbers on them!

There was a special fundraiser a couple of years later to help us install air conditioning in the studios.

Soon we were webcasting our radio shows live all over the world and archiving them on the station website so they can be heard anywhere at any time.

The station also broadcasts digitally.

Gradually, extra studios were added including a special band studio.

As well as having musicians playing live-to-air in the studio with me, occasionally I have been able to utilise that band studio along with a qualified sound technician.

Wonderful when the 14 members of the Strzelecki StringBusters came in!



Jan Dale being presented The Mick Geyer Award by Jurgen Schlub, Chair of PBS Board

In 2017, I was surprised and thrilled to be the recipient of The Mick Geyer Award "To recognise outstanding service to PBS and the broader music community".

Then two years later, in 2019, I was the first ever non American to receive a nomination for the International Bluegrass Music Association's "Broadcaster of the Year".

It was so exciting to go to the awards ceremony in North Carolina.

Best of all is the listener support.

It's great when listeners send in lovely text messages while I'm on air.

It makes the work more than worthwhile.

Over all these years, I have hosted some wonderful live-to-air performances of local musicians and also many touring artists from overseas.

The most recent of these being the multi award winning bassist, Missy Raines, and her band.

Having musicians in the studio with me is one of my favourite things and I've really missed that during the Covid lockdown.

Now, after 20 years in Easey

Street, Collingwood, PBS is on the move again as the building has been sold.

This time we're going around the corner to The Collingwood Yards, which is part of the Collingwood Arts Precinct, housing a number of different arts organisations.

Our area will have to be fitted out with new studios and everything else that we will need.

Recently, PBS published a marvellous book celebrating its 40th anniversary.

In it, Molly Meldrum is quoted as saying "I never knew that PBS stood for Progressive Broadcasting Service.

"I thought it stood for Pretty Bloody Special.

"Melbourne is lucky to have it."

I feel privileged to be part of this great community and hope to continue my show for many years to come.

Jan Dale's *Southern Style* can be heard every Tuesday from 1 to 3 pm (Melbourne time) on PBS FM 106.7 and www.pbsfm.org.au and is also archived on the station's website.

Festival News & Reviews



WOMAD 2021

by Jefferson Lee
photos: Derek Tickner

WOMAD this year was brilliantly pulled off, albeit in the shadow of Covid and the threat of cancellation even up to the last moment.

Ominously, the local media announced detection of the deadly virus in the Adelaide CBD water sewerage on the second night of the four night series of sunset concerts.

Fortunately, it did not escalate from a standby warning.

Strict social distancing seating with only dancing in front of allocated seats further

inhibited the normal Adelaide groove.

One big stage, instead of the usual seven in the expansive Botanical Gardens, and the limitation of Australian acts only, meant that only the Midnight Oil Saturday night hits and memories night was fully sold out.

However, the other three nights had a healthy crowd with good vibes everywhere.

We were just glad to have a festival at last!

Opening night began with Welcome to Country in King

Rodney Park, so named after the leading traditional custodian from the 19th early white settlement era.

Music started with Sarah Blasko performing songs off her inaugural release 'As Day Follows Nights', a covid delayed celebration for her marking a decade on from her first steps to national prominence.

Next up was Archie Roach in what was the most emotional moments of the weekend.

His bracket covered just seven tracks off his re-released thirty years on seminal

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'Charcoal Lanes CD.

He talked about the meaning of each track in detail, covering some of the ground of his recent book biography launches, and focusing on his long attachment to Adelaide, the story of Stolen Generations, with a tearful rendition of 'They Took the Children Away' and his relationship with Ruby Hunter, who as a songwriter, provided the last track on 'Charcoal Lanes, called 'Down City Streets'.

The harmonies of Leah Flanagan and Emma Donovan backed up the soft sweet delivery of Archie's voice, where you could often feel the pain of memories echoing over the guitar strums.

Archie kindly acknowledged the long standing support of his other backing musicians in what he proclaimed was his last major public appearance, given his

ongoing health issues.

Not a dry eye in the house during the standing ovation to finish.

After the interval in order to retire to the Cooper's Bar (what else?) and recharge with some Indian curry, the second half of the Friday evening saw singer-songwriter Lior combine for almost an hour with Westlake and the delightful Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in a piece called "Compassion".

Lior's unique voice and universal lyrics sometimes land him the title "kitche" or "Australia's James Blunt".

Tonight though, he could get away with anything.

Even the banality of singing a love song requested by two love birds who were married at Womad a decade before when he had his first gig there. How sweet.

On the Saturday night, the

show opened with a promising hip hop duo called MRLN (Marlin) and his fellow rapper RKM.

Perhaps because it was still before sunset when they kicked off, but let's just say they had a lot of energy and enthusiasm for a warm up act.

These Indigenous guys were from a different generation to me but they impressed with their set.

They certainly engaged well with the crowd and I heard mumbles of "the next Baker Boy" as they exited the stage.

Next up were Vika and Linda who trace their association with Midnight Oil back to the 1980s.

In an Australian artists semi-Covid one stage only WOMAD 2021, with Midnight Oil dominating two nights out of four, the Bull sisters said that their first Oils gig was the anti-Nuke 'Stop the Drop' at the Myer Music Bowl in 1993.



Vika & Linda

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Waxing nostalgic, they claim the Covid lockdown has sped up their new CD which is three years overdue.

Why so slow? "We're Tongan you know".

This night, they were performing some old gospel numbers coupled with songs from the new release. A treat.

They began with 'On my way', then a newie, 'My Heart is in the Wrong Places'.

It jelled with the stage light projection of a huge heart over their heads like a halo.

Linda pumped it out to a great melody:

"Feel like I'm running the wrong race,

Just about to give up the chase..."

The next up was 'Granda's Song's about being embarrassed for being half Tongan in primary school when their visiting Grand Pa picked them up after school in traditional grass clothing and Linda ran in front of him.

This was a native proud redemption song that finished with "....Now time has gone/And I miss you so/ Now that I know/ you guided me/ I walk those steps with you..."

Also off their new album is a track 'Raise Your Hands'.

It was written for them by Casey Chambers.

A strong mandolin presence with harmonic vocals had the crowd in unison hand waving.

Next up was an anecdote about fishing with Paul Kelly on

holidays in the N.T.

They revealed that whenever Paul is carrying his guitar, he is writing songs.

Too much like work for Vika, as Paul pushed Linda and guitar on board, she sat it out.

Hours later, the two came back with 'Down on the Jetty'.

"No royalties for you Vika!" exclaimed Paul. A great song.

During lockdown in Melbourne, Linda came across an 80 year old 'The Memphis Blues Songbook'.

She found a 1929 song about pandemics with honky tonk piano and tambourine.

She mixed it in with a 30 year old Black Sorrows number and came up with 'Never Let Me Go'.

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Next up was a Mark Seymour number, 'When Are You (going to fall for me?).

To finish their bracket was a tribute to Michael Gudinski.

One of his favourites, 'Bridge Over Troubled Waters'.

The end of a stunning session where everyone repeated the axiom, after thirty years, these two have definitely come from the back of the stage to the front.

The Oils came on spectacularly from a darkened suspense filled stage into a sea of lights as Peter Garrett ripped into the opening chorus of "Read About It".

For the die-hard fans who came for the old hits, they weren't disappointed.

'Armistice Day, 'Hercules', and twenty odd favourites were ripped out in a two hour bracket.

A tribute to former guitarist Bones Hilman and a welcome to his replacement in the Oils' line up was warmly received by all, as was the by now obligatory tribute to the late Michael Gudinski that nearly every act indulged the crowd with over the weekend.

Peter Garrett had a specific aim in supporting this truncated Womad.

The 11 minute large screen broadcast of the history clip on Indigenous-White democratic engagement was a lead up to the special Monday night Makarata Treaty night.

Another indication was guests like Leah Flanagan and Melbourne artist Liz Stringer as singers on both the Saturday and Monday Concerts.

Throw in Troy Cassar-Daly and the exceptional Frank Yamma, and Garrett had all the trimmings for his plea to the audience to sign the on-line petition and move the



Archie Roach

causes of Reconciliation and Treaty historically with our First Nation's peoples forward.

The Monday night Oils' performance included all the new tracks written for a special \$20 compilation CD to promote the Makarata idea and campaign.

Fittingly, songs like 'Beds are Burning' and 'Jimmy Sharman's Boxers' and other Indigenous relevant former hits appeared on the Monday Night.

Well done Oils, specifically Peter Garrett, who gave his best pep talks since his ACF and NDP days!

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Angus Watt's Flags

Sunday sunset at Womad began with Woorabinda, central Queensland, "Soul and Blues" sensation, Miisha, who was a feature artist on Triple J Unearthed in July 2019.

She is a singer storyteller who reflects the strong roots drawn from her local community where she began singing in church as a child, grew up listening to her mum's Mariah Carey and Janet Jackson records and based her first recorded song 'Black Privilege' on dispelling the negative stereotypes from the uninformed wider community.

Still in her early twenties, the wider Ingenious music

community has helped her propel forward her own bold ideas for her future music directions which have now pinnacle on the Womad stage.

From an early appearance at NAIDOC week in Sydney, to appearing on stage with a touring Dan Sultan at her home town Woorabinda, to a more recent pre-Covid tour with Baker Boy and Thelma Plum, her amazing talent is going places.

She moved to Melbourne last year to record the CD 'Nyaaringu' which she showcased during her performance.

She finished her set with her latest single 'Hold Strong' which

had the Womad crowd baying for more.

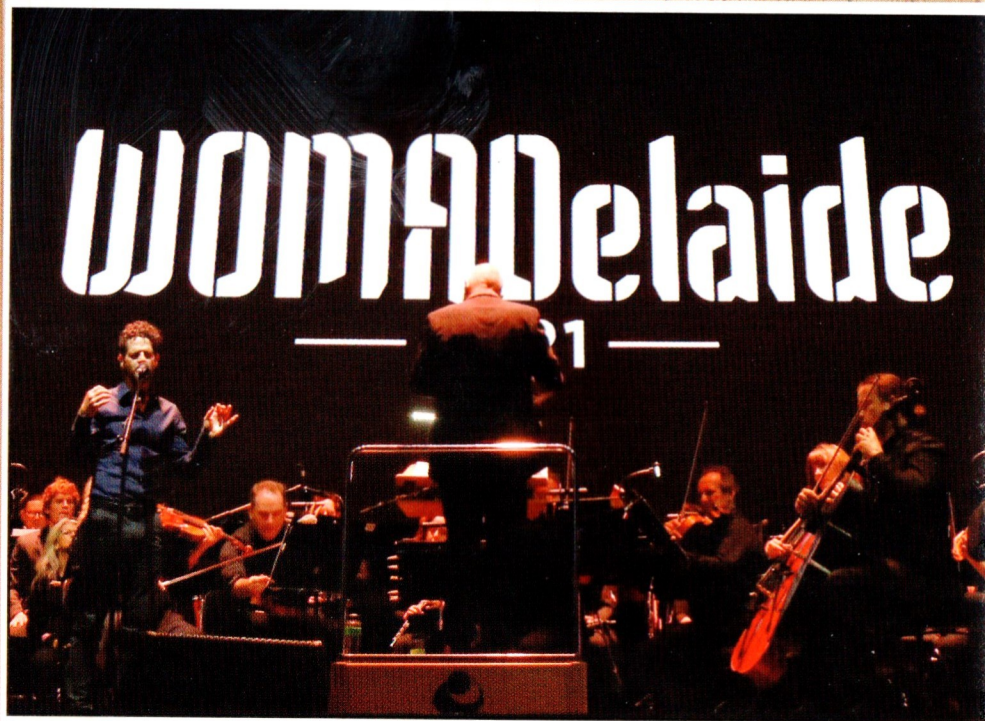
Next up was kaiit.

Kaiit was born in PNG and lives in Melbourne.

This was her third Womad appearance.

She won the best 'R'nB/Soul' Aria Award in 2019 for her "Miss Shiney" release.

After an extended Covid lockdown she was more than ecstatic to be on the big stage again as she bobbed and twirled her familiar hip hop style message to her fans in an over the top outfit and two tone haircut. What a sight!

**Lior & ASO**

With strong brass and percussion inter cutting her vocals, lyrics like "Got so much pressure, that's why this song is stuck on replay...", I could feel more than a tinge of Amy Winehouse's famous 'Rehab' repeated chorus to fade out.

But Kaiit has her own definitive delivery, almost Pacific-Calypso hybrid.

She brought the house down with her own expansive dialogue on "You made me feel like a 'Natural Woman'".

From slow and soft to loud and raucous, she ranged across a scale of emotions that gelled into an exhaustive, but satisfying experience as it ended.

A great crowd communicator.

Described as "smooth and sultry" with comparisons with everyone from Solange to

Lauren Hill, Kaiit has enough raw talent to avoid being more than temporarily pigeon holed anywhere.

Expect more.

After an extensive interval, as Tash Sultana erected her computer banks, loop machine and a dozen or so instruments strategically on stage, we resumed our social distance seating.

As soon as Tash began, the strict rules of dancing only in front of your own seat were partially abandoned as the thrill of her lively tempo took hold on everyone after a series of recorded loops intersected and she added in vocals

No longer the little girl mixing music in the bedroom while daddy sits blissfully unaware in the TV room, something she

sings about, this one woman global phenomenon takes Europe or Woodford or anywhere by storm.

She's added quiet a few pre-arranged sound bursts, both vocal and instrumental backings, since I caught my first live glimpse of her at Mullum Music Festival and then a full frothing set at Woodford.

It almost makes me fearful that her cleverness on technology will eventually reduce her to a one-woman Kraftwerk?

Sure, she does take each instrument easily within her grasp and has great original compositions, but Tash only vocalised on half of her long build up creations.

To me, every time she sang, I heard a wondrous voice, in a different genre.

**Midnight Oil**

One minute it's Donna Summer on Disco, then Dusty Springfield on romantic Rock Ballad, here some Ani de Franco with solo electric guitar, there even a Dolly Parton country rock number, all with Tasha's beautiful seductive voice.

OK, her youthful innovation shows no sign of abating in the short term.

In the long term, let's hope that she does a few side shows called "Tash Unplugged, Just me and My guitar".

There would be a huge audience for even a stripped back event like that I believe.

In the meantime, the Tash

Sultana juggernaut just keeps rolling forward. Simply Brilliant.

The Tesky Brothers and Siberian Tiger both opened for Midnight Oils' Makarrata Concert on the Adelaide holiday Monday.

Siberian Tiger I had never seen before.

For a two piece of mainly keys and guitar vocals they were great.

The Teskys confirmed themselves as perhaps the hottest white boy Blues Band doing black man's music in the Country.

Their technical excellence and spot on vocals had everyone mentally down the Bayou or

sitting in a bar decades back at Clarksdale Mississippi.

They brought the house down with their closer to home cover of INXS song 'Two World's Collide', which I felt came over better than the Hutchence original.

If The Teskeys aren't at their pinnacle yet, they soon will be!

But a word of warning, Australia is still the land of the tall poppies.

The boys might have to tidy up their own backyard back in Melbourne with a freebie after burning a local entrepreneur.

Word travels fast.

Keep it up lads, a great show.



Inaugural Gippsland country music festival has sold out



On March 4, more than a month and a half ahead of the event, the inaugural Gippsland Country Music Festival has sold out.

This is a massive coup for the festival, which sports an enviable country music line-up featuring headliner Lee Kernaghan, as well as Brad Cox, Casey Barnes, Felicity Urquhart, Andrew Swift and The Davidson Brothers to name a few.

The one-day festival also includes whip-cracking demonstrations, line-dancing classes, rides, market stalls and a host of Gippsland food traders to sample from.

Organised by the crew at Red Hill Entertainment, including brothers Aidan and Rhett McLaren who grew up and live in Gippsland.

The Gippsland Country Music Festival was a dream to bring

country music to their home region, a dream that has come to fruition thanks to the support of the local community and surrounding areas.

"After such a challenging 12-months for the live music and events industry, to have people show this level of support for a brand new event is just wonderful," says Aidan.

"To be honest, it has been a highlight of the year for myself and the team.

"So many people work so hard to bring events like this to life and come April 24, there are going to be a whole lot of smiling faces when those acts get up on the Gippsland Country stage.

"I think it is also going to be really special for the artists.

"For many of them, this will be one of, if not the first shows they've played in over a year.

"We feel very lucky and grateful."

Plans are already in place for the 2022 event.

Organisers are keen to make the Gippsland Country Music Festival more than just an event, but an opportunity for music fans to not only experience the region, but also get away for a break.

"We've already started chatting to potential artists for 2022 and are really excited about how the line-up is coming together," says Aidan.

"Without giving away too much, if everything goes to plan, there is going to be a great mix of new and well known acts that I think the audience are going to be really keen to see. More on that later."

The long term goal of the Gippsland Country Music Festival is to put the Gippsland region of Victoria on the country music map.

Already the organisers are seeing great support from music fans from outside of their region and hope this will extend even further in the future.

"Gippsland Country Music Festival is huge for our Gippsland region, both economically and socially," says Aidan.

"Our ticketing data shows that a lot of people are travelling from outside of Gippsland to attend.

"The knock-on effects of this to local business is immense, as many of these people will be

staying overnight in Gippsland and will most likely be exploring some of the other amazing places the region has to offer.

"The event itself also engages many local contractors and businesses that benefit financially.

"For locals, having world class artists performing on your doorstep is pretty special, and the event also provides people a chance to connect with each other and share an enjoyable day out connecting with family and friends of all ages and the local community.

"After the year we've all had I think that's really important and something we're all looking forward to.

"For those from greater Melbourne and outside Gippsland, be prepared to fall in love with Gippsland.

"Chances are, once you've spent some time down here, you'll soon be looking to make the move down permanently," Aidan said.



Katie Noonan announced as the National Folk Festival's Artistic Director

We are thrilled to announce Katie Noonan as our new artistic director.

Katie has had two decades of experience as a musician, producer and record label owner, artistic director and advocate for the arts in Australia, and joins the National Folk Festival (NFF) after four years as Artistic Director at the Queensland Music Festival.

"The National Folk Festival is thrilled that Katie will be leading our artistic vision moving forward.

"We have no doubt that her breadth of experience and unwavering passion for the arts will shape the festival's evolution, helping to grow the National Folk Festivals' reputation as one of the best folk festivals in Australia," said Helen Roben, Managing Director of the National Folk Festival.

"The appointment is a significant one for the National Folk Festival", continues Helen.

"There's a need for the Festival to expand its footprint and bring more people into the folk community.

"Our mission goes beyond simply presenting these folk activities to our audiences.

"We need to start finding ways to make folk appealing and also permanent in the lives of young people", Helen said.

Katie Noonan is widely known nationally and internationally for her excellence in creative programming, through her roles as Music Director of the Commonwealth Games and Artistic Director of the Queensland Music Festival.

She will join the team at the National Folk Festival to deliver the 2022 festival.

In 1967, the NFF was

established in order to create a focal point and meeting place for the exchange of songs, styles and ideas.

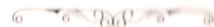
Five decades after this dream was realised, Katie said that she was honoured to be the new caretaker of this vision.

"For me, music is home, it is a safe place where everyone is welcome.

"It is a tool to explore our identity, to ask questions and to better ourselves as humans," Katie said.

"The folk music of today's Australia is a multifaceted multicultural and vibrant tapestry of colours and sounds.

"I look forward to weaving this tapestry into something rich and beautiful with you all, a tapestry that makes us all feel welcome and at home in our Nation's capital."



Dramatic turnaround in the fortunes of Bluesfest



Photo: Tao Jones

On January 19, Bluesfest Director and owner, Peter Noble OAM, released the following statement:

To my friends in the music industry, their families and those who love music.

As we are soon going into our second year of little or no gigs as a result of Covid, let us not forget what we need to do.

Let's support each other, continue to check in and ask how we are doing, be positive that a day is coming when we WILL get back to performing live, safely, and do what we can to be a part of that wonderful day.

We need to remain positive, uphold our industry, where you see negativity in any area, including media, gently remind them that it is through

supporting our industry that we will ALL do better in the end.

Let's not forget that although a large percentage of people have been able to get back to work, the live music industry, along with much of the hospitality and tourism industry, hasn't.

Many of our favourite musicians and event company workers are on the dole and suffering mental health issues.

We need our media to report positively on us, and support the return of live music regularly in their reporting.

Let's push the music media to agitate on our behalf.

We need governments to find money to get us through this time, lots of it.

We need them to Save Our Stages, as has been done in the

US and across Europe, through large grants, tax write offs and investment.

As well we need governments to create a business interruption insurance policy to incentivise event presenters to put on events and be protected in not going to the wall should an outbreak of Covid shut down their businesses at short notice and to protect artists, crew and suppliers to get paid should that occur.

The Federal government did it more than six months ago for the Film Industry to get them back to making movies so why are we still waiting?

If you possibly can, please hold on to your tickets, as concerts and events are re-scheduled again.

Do you know that for each ticket refunded, there is a service charge from the ticket agency of up to \$8?

The show presenters, facing up to two years of no shows are charged for this, after having paid staff to work on the show, bought advertising and paid a deposit to the artist, which will be returned with costs deducted.

This isn't sustainable for our industry and will result in less promoters and less shows, particularly in the indie area.

Our issues haven't gone away, they just aren't being discussed regularly and they aren't being reported.

As our industry endures this marathon of waiting, and in so many cases not being able to wait any longer, businesses are closing and very talented people are leaving our industry.

It's up to us to look out for each other and Live music.

I know many of you are suffering in silence.

However, it's time to raise our voices, we are the Live Arts and we love what we do, and we are a fundamental part of society and it is unjust for government not to support us more than they have financially, simply by extending Job Keeper to those industries that they have regarded not to be able to get back to work without major restrictions.

The Live Music Industry will see many of our fellow workers laid off when Job Keeper ends in March.

How can that be justified on any level?

There is so much for us to do.

Please feel free to share your ideas, as well as my post.

Let's find the way to get back, we can do this and have each other's back at the same time.

On March 10 however, less

than two months later, Bluesfest announced the return of live music at a festival level being Bluesfest 2021 and that it was already 85% sold out with only 3 weeks to go.

Bluesfest Publicist, Gaynor Crawford, said that in 3 weeks more than 65 top aussie artists will gather on our Bluesfest site at the Byron Bay on the north coast of NSW.

"All the team at Bluesfest are equal parts excited and proud that we are the ONLY major festival occurring in Australia, and possibly the world, right now, and with 15,000 daily capacity and performers, it feels like things are back to normal, almost!

"Bluesfest will be a fully onsite camping, multi-day, multi-stage event, undercover in big top circus tents and open-air spectacular that will herald the return of live music at a festival level that Australia has not seen since the summer of 2019/2020," Gaynor said.

"Our ticket sales are breaking records, and we are over 85% sold out.

"The Sunday single day ticket is sold out, and other ticket allocations are almost exhausted.

"Please feel proud that with every ticket purchased, you are helping our beleaguered industry to get back to work and assist in the return of live music," Gaynor said.

Festival Director and owner Peter Noble OAM says: "Today is a most important day in the Bluesfest calendar.

"Today we announce our Bluesfest Playing Schedule.

"It is eagerly awaited each year, but even more so this year as it shows we are all systems go, the load-in is on, WE ARE HAPPENING!!

"It's been a long and difficult

journey from being shut down in March last year to where we are today.

"The mantra has always been WE ARE DOING A BLUESFEST NEXT YEAR, and here we are 3 weeks out and ready to go," Noble said.

"I was particularly humbled to read one particular social media post: 'The fact that Bluesfest Byron Bay is the first post-pandemic music festival of this scale in the world is such an honour and special moment in time for all of us.

'Using your decades of knowledge and experience to tackle this head on makes our small business emotional being able to partake in such a historic moment in time.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you!

'We appreciate your dedication to live music and why we need it so badly in order to recover.'

"When I read that sort of message, I feel like we are doing the right thing.

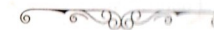
"All the effort, the late nights, the early mornings, the pain and the laughter (yes there was some over the months of lockdown) has been worth it."

"I cannot wait to cut the tape and throw open the Bluesfest gates this year, this is going to be a special and momentous Bluesfest.

"Bring it on!," Noble concluded.

Showcasing an All-Aussie music bill this Easter in Byron Bay, Bluesfest is Australia's most awarded music festival.

From the humble beginnings in 1990 as a four-day event, the festival now takes place over five days at the Byron Events Farm.



Song and Tune competition winners announced



Tasmania's Cygnet Folk Festival held a 2020/21 Song and Tune competition funded by APRA AMCOS and they received 174 entries.

Fifteen finalists, ten songs and five tunes, were handed over for extra voting in The People's Choice Awards.

The Fifteen finalists were (in no particular order):

Songs

- Ruth Hazelton for her song "Shackled" (song for Nudem Durak)
- Michael Fix for his song "Man on the Wire"
- Oliver Northam for his song "If Your Love was Still Mine"
- Sandy Pollard for his song "For

a Moment"

- Karen Law for her song "Wildflower Woman"
- Belle Miners for their song "Cradle to Cave"
- Brian Campeau for his song "Fool"
- Bob McNeil for his song "Fury"
- Kylie Morigan for her song "Stuff" (factories in China)
- Claire Anne Taylor for her Song "Stay Hopeful"

Tunes

- Yyan Ng for his tune "River Islands"
- Paddy Riley for her tune "Fedora's Dilemma"
- Michael Fix for his tune "The Other Side"
- Meredith Beardmore for her tune "Honey's Last Trot"
- Robert Zielinski for his tune "Farewell to the Doherty's"

The festival's four judges were unanimous in their decisions:

Best Song

"Stay Hopeful" by Claire Anne Taylor

Best Tune

"The Other Side" by Michael Fix

Runner up

"Cradle to Cave" by the Belle Miners

Peoples' Choice Song

"Cradle to Cave" by the Belle Miners

Tune

- The tune was jointly won by:
- Paddy Riley for her tune "Fedora's Dilemma" and
 - Meredith Beardmore for her tune "Honey's Last Trot"

Northern Beaches Music Festival deferred to November

On March 6, Paul Robertson, Executive Producer of Sydney's Northern Beaches Music Festival advised booked performers that, sadly, due to Covid restrictions, the Northern Beaches Council has cancelled their April/May booking for the Tramshed Community Arts Centre.

The Centre houses three of their five stages which makes it

essential.

"Despite much effort, we have not been able to find an alternative venue for May," Paul said.

Consequently, the decision has been made to move the festival to November 5-7.

The vaccine rollout schedule is expected to be completed by the end of October so there is a good chance that venue capacity restrictions will be lifted by then.

"We are pleased to invite all those performing artists who

were successfully selected for May to perform at the festival in November," Robertson said.

"The same negotiated agreement we reached with you still applies and indeed the program remains much the same.

"We look forward to a brighter day in November when the Northern Beaches Music Festival makes a triumphant return and shines that "golden light" on music and the performing arts!"

Attention Festival Organisers

Trad&Now is the longest running and only national magazine that regularly includes festival news and a comprehensive festival calendar to enable festival goers and volunteers to locate festivals that they wish to attend anywhere in Australia.

This information is also used by musicians to apply to perform and by stall holders.

We are now looking to expand the Festival Calendar to include a great deal more information and to ensure that the information is kept up to date by having it checked regularly by festival organisers.

By doing this, it is expected that more people will become aware of what festivals are available and what they have to offer to become involved, generally growing festivals and festival attendances around Australia.

If you are a festival or music camp co-ordinator and would like additional information included in the expanded calendar, please complete the form on page 22-23 or on our website at www.duckscrossing.org/tan/Trad_directory.pdf and return it to us, ideally by email to info@tradandnow.com or to the address on page 3, and we will include the information in the next available edition.

Entries in the expanded calendar are completely free but we require someone from each festival listed to be a subscriber to the magazine to ensure that the information is kept up to date.

The entry will remain in the calendar for as long as the subscription remains current and a subscription still only costs \$55 for 11 editions.

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Toongabbie Music Club ... a friendly place

by Allen Davis



The Toongabbie Music Club has functioned since 1983 and has had over 450 members during that period perform music, songs and poetry.

Whilst the Club has met in various locations in Western Sydney, it now meets in the Scouts Hall at 17 Whitehaven Rd Northmead at 7.30pm on 2nd and 4th Fridays each month.

The Hall is located in a beautiful bushland setting and has a warming and welcoming open fire for winter months.

Performers of all levels of talent from beginners to

professional are more than welcome.

The group members sit in a circle and play music, some acoustically and others using amplifiers, suitably quiet for the neighborhood of course.

Instruments include keyboards, guitars, banjos, violins, whistles and others.

Toongabbie Music Club has performed for more than 25 years at Local Council Festivals, Cancer Council, historical houses, a local radio fm station, conservation societies, Christmas carols, Australia Days, retirement homes and other festivals.

On a different note, the Club will occasionally hold non-mandatory Theme Nights.

Past themes have included (among others) body parts, rivers, place names, seasons, colours, grammatically incorrect songs, first names, Bob Dylan, love and weather, while the range of music is almost limitless, it includes folk, rock, jazz, blues, classical, bush and ballads.

**For further information contact:
Allen Davis 0439 831 531 or Email:
allendavisguitar@gmail.com**



Delta Blues merges with sitar ragas

"There's no such thing as genre," says Ajay Srivastav, and that is exactly what you would expect to hear from a multi-instrumentalist, songwriter, and performer whose work crosses so many boundaries.

London born Ajay's laid-back style flows from the banks of the Delta Blues which influenced him as a child, to the ghats of the Ganges, where he learnt ragas from the gurus in his father's hometown of Varanasi.

Blending these influences with spiritual, meditative lyrics, he developed a unique style that transcends traditional musical borders.

As a musician, Ajay has worked with a diverse variety of acts such as Jamiroquai, Gregory Isaacs, Zakir Hussain, Sister India and Bollywood icon, Shah Rukh Khan.

His song-writing skills have been touted by British music legend, Jah Wobble, who has produced two of his forthcoming tracks.

Ajay's passion for music and a global philosophy has taken him on a journey that has seen him work as a touring guitarist, compose for film and musical theatre, write Top 10 hits in India and garner success with his band, Botown.

However, something was missing, and while taking a break from touring, he travelled to Varanasi 'the holy city of India' in search of his truth and his blues.

In his own words, Ajay says "I was really struggling with the



way the world was going and my place in it.

"I started to write about how I felt and whilst I haven't found the answers, I feel like I'm at the beginning of something."

Whilst in India, Ajay started to write what would become the songs for his debut album 'Karmic Blues'.

Though it was on the flight back to London, whilst listening to some old Delta Blues recordings, that he realised he needed to pick up a resonator guitar and slide to fulfil the sound that he wanted to achieve.

Back in London, he started developing his unique style, merging scales, and techniques that he learned from playing the sitar, with Delta Blues' slide playing.

Taking the concept of 'meend' or ornamentation from Indian classical music and using it in a Blues context is one example that you can hear in

songs like 'Between the Cracks' and 'Karmic Blues'.

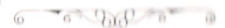
A big believer in working from the 'ground-up', Ajay decided to 'road-test' his songs and sounds along with his tabla player, Vinod Kerai, in a variety of places including London pubs, Libraries, Yoga retreats and festivals.

In the studio, Ajay kept the sound organic with a simple accompaniment of tabla, upright bass, drums and a bit of drone/tambura.

The album 'Karmic Blues' got a great response from the Blues and Roots scene in the UK, with a number 1 spot on the Amazon Blues Charts and reviewers hailing it as 'ground-breaking.'

Karmic Blues by Ajay Srivastav is available on Apple Music, Spotify, Amazon and all major online platforms.

You can find out more about Ajay at his website www.ajayhq.com



Poetry and the written word



COVID cramps our style but WA keeps writing and reciting

by Christine Boulton

Boyup Brook Country Music Festival, the WA Bush Poets and Yarnspinnners main event, was cancelled, so an informal tour incorporating some visits to country clubs was planned.

Of course, the best laid plans can be stymied, and WA Premier, Mark McGowan, our hero, decreed a lock down for the beginning of this tour.

Lucky for us, this didn't last long, so we were able to take to the road again.

The mini tour began on February 15 at Binningup, where a small group of poets performed at the Caravan Park.

They also helped prepare a member's house for sale.

The camaraderie and friendship of the WA Bush Poets means that there is help and support in a variety of ways for

our members.

Friday, February 19, saw a small group head further south for a Bangtail Muster at Keith (Cobber) Lethbridge's bush block at Dinninup.

People kept arriving in swags and vans and our numbers reached about eighteen.

Poets were from Perth, Geraldton, Albany and small country towns in the South-West.

Music and poetry around the circle was plentiful over the next three days.

Bullocky John from Quaalup also dropped in for the morning.

He has only recently sold his bullocks, but many of us remember going to see them in action at his farm.

Then we headed off for coffee at Boyup Brook on Sunday, before making our way to The Greenbushes Folk Picnic, hosted by Green Herring from the Green

Bushes Folk Club.

What a treat!

I arrived early as some of the others went back to find new camp spots at Bill and Meg's farm in Boyup Brook.

The atmosphere was lovely.

Lots of keen arrivals meant music began early under a Queensland Box Tree in Thompson Park.

This small club is hosted by locals, Green Herring.

Two hours of music and poetry followed and I can't think of a nicer way to spend an afternoon.

Unfortunately, when one of the artists started singing, her dingo started wailing and spooked my dog completely.

She shook for the next two hours.

However, this is a story to retell and couldn't mar the overall experience.

Poetry and the written word

March 5 saw our Perth muster back at Wilson, where it will stay until we can return to Bentley Park.

This was a lovely evening although this new Covid venue dictated that numbers were less than usual.

Poetry continues at the many country festivals and several of us hope to go in convoy to the Derby Poet's Breakfast in July.

Folk music in WA

In late February, the WA Folk Federation managed to go ahead with a mini-afternoon festival, Folk on the water, at Hillary's Boat Harbour.

The main stage, The Boardwalk, built up to audiences

of over a hundred, attracting many people in bathers returning from their swim.

Artists included Numguts Bush Band (established in 1983) and Bluegrass Parkway.

For the people favouring more intimate acts, there was the Homegrown Stage featuring performers from the Wanneroo Folk Club.

This club is hosted monthly by the WA Folk Federation.

Little Folk continue to host concerts to raise money for children's cancer research.

Jane and the Rain were their artists for February, and March will feature Nine Mile Hill from Albany.

Both of these house concerts have been held at Peter Stone's The Big Picture Factory.

Peter is a long-time supporter of folk music and the spoken word in WA.

As Jane Comes is moving to Brisbane, Little Folk have also taken over the hosting of her monthly Supper Club.

This club begins with a spoken word segment and is followed by a guest artist or group.

We wish the Kenny's every success with this new venture.

Most of the local folk clubs are running again and the Morris dancers held a four side stand at the Cultural Precinct in late February.

Fairbridge Festival is due to go ahead in April as is the Albany Shanty festival (free) in July.



Numguts Bush Band

Poetry and the written word

**National Advocate Saturday 6 February
1909 p. 2.**

I sat in a suburban train,
There was no seat to spare,
Hermetical seemed each pain,
And rank the foggy air.
A dear old man with kindly face,
With gentle voice and meek,
Moved over from his corner place
And thus began to speak.
'My friends, I trust that none,' he said,
'My hardihood will chide,
If I to save an aching head,
This window open wide.'
His gentle manner seemed to plead,
All granted what he asked,
And soon in the refreshing breeze,
That dear old person basked.
'Fresh air,' he said, 'is life to man,
The heritage of each,'
And this conviction he began
With friendliness to preach.

'The need for purer air,' he moved,
'Is no eccentric whim ;'
Wide open windows he approved,
They meant so much to him.
'Sound health,' he said, 'will be your crown,
Your babes be strong and bright,
If you will only let your windows down,
Especially at night.
Till each alighting said they meant
To follow his advice,
And turned to thank him as they went,
He seemed so kind and nice.
I was the last to rise to go,
And wishing him good-day,
Remarked 'One thing I'd like to know
Are you a doctor, pray ?'
At that he shook the frosty rime
That crowned his honoured head,
And bowing courteously
'I am a burglar, sir,' he said.

-Jessie Pope.

Attention all poets, poets' groups and poets' breakfasts organisers

Trad&Now is the longest running and only national magazine that regularly includes bush poetry news, bush poems and contact information to enable poets and those interested in bush poetry to locate like minded people anywhere in Australia. It does this in poetry news pages regularly set aside for that purpose.

We are now looking to have a bespoke Poets Directory published on the Poetry pages, to include a great deal more information and to ensure that the information is kept up to date by having it checked regularly by organisers.

By doing this, it is expected that more people will become aware of what poetry events and which poets are available and become involved, generally growing the bush poetry movement around Australia.

If you are a poet or run a poetry event and would like your information included in the new expanded directory, please complete the form on page 22-23 or on our website at www.duckscrossing.org/tan/Trad_directory.pdf and return it to us, ideally by email to info@tradandnow.com or to the address on page 3, and we will include the information in the next available edition.

Entries in the new expanded directory are completely free but we require someone from each entry listed to be a subscriber to the magazine to ensure that the information is kept up to date.

The entry will remain in the directory for as long as the subscription remains current and a subscription still only costs \$55 for 11 editions.

Poetry and the written word

**Hilton Spectator and Lachlan River
Advertiser Saturday 30 August 1903, p. 13.**

When the spring-time sun is gettin' hot, and
you're shifftin' gravelly muck.

If you're workin' for the Council, people think
you are in luck.

When you perspire till the dye runs from your
shirt and stains your moles,

What a happy time a navy has a-diggin' blanky
holes.

Those folks who think seven-bob a-day a
workman's paradise

Had better join our gang themselves I'm sure
they'd find it nice,

If you come just leave your Sunday togs and
silver studs at home,

Cos there s nothing wanted here just now but
muscle strength and bone.

Of course we get a quarter twice a day to have
a drink,

But, strike me, when we're working', why we
haven't time to wink.

A-swingin' pick and shovel, spreading sand
and diggin' drains,

Don't want, a lot of science, and it don't want

any brains.

But watch the ganger walkin' up, and then
a-walkin' down,

And then a walkin' back again, then walkin'
roun' an' roun'.

If yon stop and straighten up a bit, to talk to Bill
or Jack,

You'll hear him shout, don't knock off work or
else you'll get the sack.

They may talk about Australia as a paradise for
men,

'Cos we swing the pick and shovel, for eight
hours instead of ten ;

But there's blokes in gov'ment billets who are
drawing heavy screw,

And they play ping-pong and tennis when
there's nothing else to do.

But hurrah for honest toil, my lads, and
conscience good and clear ;

While you've health and strength in body there
is nothing else to fear ;

Though your labour's pretty solid, and your
profit very small,

You're better as a navy, than a cockie after all.

-WANDERER.

A Union Man

I joined the union years ago
I've no cause to regret it
The only friend of the working man
Don't you ever forget it.
I always paid my subs on time
I attended every meeting
I helped in every way I could
If only a friendly greeting.
I served on committees when asked

I did all within my reach
And sometimes when the meeting lagged
I came up with a little speech.
I did honest work for my pay
And am happy now to tell
I joined the union years ago
It has served me long and well.
And when alas the race is run
In which I also ran
Carve this line upon my tomb
I was a Union man.



*Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013).

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Poetry and the written word

The Bagman's Farewell

Tune: A Stalwart Young Lancer

A strapping young bagman lay dying,
His bluey supporting his head,
Around him his mates were all crying,
For a handout of corn beef and bread.
This bagman had jumped many a rattler,
He'd bitten handouts by the score,
Been in the front ranks of the battlers,
But alas he would battle no more.
Wrap me up in my nosebag and blankets,
And bury me deep down below,
And bury me deep down below,
Where the demons and wallopers won't worry
me,
'Cause I'm going where good bagmen go.
He'd ridden the rods through Australia,
Been kicked off every freight too,

He'd learned all the lurks when a "whaler"
He jumped his first freight from Pinaroo.
Now there was young Diver the kid from
Brunswick,
And Time Table Scotty as well,
Box Car Bertie, Philadelphia and Lucky,
To bid that hobo a bagman's farewell.
He hears the A2 pull out for Geraldton,
Or maybe some far northern track,
Be it Tallarook, Cairns or Babinda,
He knows he will never go back.
Now the Demons await him at Rockhampton,
Those coppers await at Yorall,
Those bludgers will wait there for ever
'Cause he's copping the fast freight for Hell.

Notes
From Ron Edwards AUSTRALIAN FOLK SONG Index p. 642.
Central Queensland Herald, 14 November 1935

Our Track!

Author not known

With Apologies to the Timboon Crews,
Have you ever heard the story
Of the little place out back?
It's the Engine-drivers' glory,
And is well known as "Our Track."
There's Jimmy Y. and Norman K.,
There's Jimmy Y. and Norman K.,
And Charley R and Billy A.;
They run the train down every day
On our Track.
What is it makes the cockies stare
And wonder what is in the air
When up the bank the train does tear?
Why, our Track.
What is it makes the boilers prime
And the poor old driver can't keep time?
Where is it that you get the lime?
'Tis our Track
Where is it that we chaps all know
That other drivers could not go
'Cause if they did they'd make a show?
Why, our Track.

Where is it drivers stay for years,
For other Jobs they have no fears,
And when they leave the place shed tears?
Why, our Track.
Where is it that the firemen roar
About the way the drivers bore?
They'll drop their plug some day for sure
On our Track.
What is it makes them burn the coal
That twenty-eight won't fill the hole,
Yet half the way they have to roll?
Why, our Track.
Where is it drivers try to fly,
And the fireman says he'll do or die,
While on the steam he keeps his eye?
It's our Track.
What is it that will always stay,
Though crews may come and go away?
It's there for ever and a day--
Why, our Track.

Notes
From The Footplate 29 July 1921.

In Didj'n'Us

**DAVID BRIDIE'S
WANTOK**
In 2006, David
Bridie founded
the Wantok Musik
Foundation, a not-
for-profit music label
that records, releases and
promotes culturally infused
music from Indigenous
Australia, Melanesia and
Oceania.

Wantok Musik raises the
local and international profile
of Indigenous and world music
groups based in the region,
and provides greater economic
opportunity for artists and long-
term career sustainability.

Here is an edited transcript
of a recent interview, David
Bridie with Hot To Trot podcaster,
Stephen Norwood:

SN: How did you start off
with your interest and support
for First Nations musicians
in Australia and throughout
Melanesia in the Pacific?

DB: Music is an area where
indigenous Australian musicians
and white fellahs tend to
congregate and hear each
other's songs.

Even for me right back in the
early days, I was hearing the

stuff
that
Bart
Willoughby was doing with
No Fixed Address and Mixed
Relations, then there was The
Mills Sisters and acts that were
around in the '80s, obviously
Tiddas, Archie Roach and Yothu
Yindi.

So there was an awareness
and a swapping of songs, since
you saw them at the same
festivals, so there was interest
there.

The best musicians do have
an understanding of the issues
that First Nations are writing
about; they do connect.

There was a band from
Papua New Guinea called
Sanguma, that was formed
out of the Art School in Port
Morseby, and they were artists
from all around PNG who
melded.

There was a bit of Osibisa
and artists like that that had
influenced them, some of those

South American
artists that were
using percussion
instruments and
traditional songs in
different ways.

They toured Australia
in 1980s, so I saw them at
The Venue in Saint Kilda and
I interviewed them, as I had a
program on Triple R at the time,
and so I got them into the studio.

There's a guy who was doing
our visuals for Not Drowning
Waving by the name of Mark
Woods, although sadly he's
departed now.

Mark was born in PNG, and
his father was in the navy at a
place on Manus Island called
Lombrum, which is where the
detainees, the asylum
seekers, were placed for such a
draconian period of time just of
late.

Mark would regale us with
stories about growing up in PNG
and how wonderful and broad
and diverse the music was, and
culture was in general, plus the
number of languages.

All those things combined to
having an interest there, so Not
Drowning Waving (NDW) went up
to Rabaul in 1988.



I'd been there before in 1986, travelling as a tourist, and it was the first country I'd been to outside Australia.

With NDW, I went back in 1988 to record a record at Pacific Gold Studios, so the interest in all those things I've just talked about was just a little bit more.

This is fascinating music, and important for Australia because this is our part of the world, this is where we reside.

I loved collaborating with those (indigenous) musicians as I've met some wonderful people over the years, and I've had so many opportunities that I was pinching myself.

Producing Archie Roach and Christine Anu being a couple of those, plus working with George Telek, the singer from Rabaul in PNG was certainly another one of those.

SN: There's a connection with music and politics obviously, music and revolution and you started off talking about Bart Willoughby, who was a prime mover in that, one of the pioneers, but you've also worked with some of the different people from the West Papuan Freedom Movement.

DB: Well, music and the liberation movement is intertwined in West Papua as they sing for their freedom.

The songs sing about issues that are important to them, and I think you'll find this in a lot of countries where the people have been oppressed.

For the Timorese, the Timor Leste people, it was exactly the same and in fact we did a record on Wantok with some older, ex-resistance fighters singing the songs that they used to sing in the hills, hiding with FRETILIN (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor).

The West Papuans are the same and it's so close to Australia.

It's a movement, like with Timor, that Australia is probably one of the first ports of call, one of the closest nations to get behind it.

There have been some musicians and filmmakers and theatre people who have said that the West Papua issue is rightful, so it's important for Australian artists and politicians and social justice people to be involved with.

SN: You've also worked quite extensively with one of my favourite artists, Frank Yamma.

DB: Yeah, we've done four records with Frank, 'Countryman', 'Uncle', 'Tjukurpa: The Story' and the 'The Kulila Project'.

Frank is quite an amazing Pijantjajara singer who has got a real bite to his lyrics and he's an amazing musician, a great guitarist.

And that's been a wonderful association for Wanton Musik and for myself, producing and sometimes going on tour with Frank, both here and overseas, with some other musicians as well.

SN: I love that he gets into a groove too with his playing.

DB: Oh yeah. He's got a pretty dynamic right hand.

When he plays guitar he shreds well.

Stephen Norwood's Hot To Trot March 2021 Podcast:

<https://www.mixcloud.com/H2Tcmaine/hot-to-trot-march-2021/>

includes the full interview with David Bridie plus several of the tracks that he has recorded and some produced for other artists.

BLEK'n'BLUES

The all-aussie Byron Bluesfest this Easter features a handful of strong performers from our First

Nations.

Kev Carmody, a National Living Treasure, is the elder songman leading the blekbala contingent performing at this year's Bluesfest, as he is one of Australia's pre-eminent singer-songwriters, a wordsmith who is politically active and socially aware.

Kev's honest lyrics throughout his career have seen him regarded as a documenter of history, typifying his Indigenous Australian and Irish heritage.

Kev was born to be a story teller who leans heavily on his life experiences out bush and working as a store man in his youth.

His best-known composition (with Paul Kelly) is 'From Little Things Big Things Grow', based on the story of The Gurindji Strike and its leader, Vincent Lingiari, as part of the struggle for indigenous land rights and reconciliation.

Although Kev began writing songs in the mid 1960's, he did not record his first album until 1987, while he has recently released a remake of 'Cannot Buy My Soul' – the original 2007 seminal album, coupled with new songs featuring deadly new collaborations with some of this country's best artists, including, Alice Skye, Courtney Barnett, Mojo Juju, Birdz, Kate Miller-Heidke, Electric Fields, Kasey Chambers and Jimmy Barnes.

BRIGGS

From the streets of Melbourne to Los Angeles' studios, the man who styles himself as the unofficial Senator Briggs, is fast becoming an advocate for the youth of today and believes that, "Being older doesn't make you an elder."

I first came across his power rap style when he recorded with the late super songman,



David Bridie, Georg Telek, Moab String band

Gurrumul, but he has since broken into TV and publishing.

Debut album 'Homemade Bombs' in 2009, saw Briggs instantly adored by youth nationwide and like his talented Yorta Yorta countrymen and women, he made an indelible mark on our culture.

Briggs' forthcoming EP 'Always Was' includes the singles 'Extra Extra' and 'Go To War' featuring the dulcet tones of Queensland songbird, Thelma Plum.

EMILY WURRAMARA

Emily Wurramara's childhood was a life of sea and close family on Groote Eylandt, where her days were alive with fishing and community.

Emily's mother gave her the impetus to write, telling her stories of "dreams and dolphins that would one day become the seeds of Emily's music".

Her first release was the EP 'Black Smoke' in 2016, which was simple yet sweet, with strong imagery of the land, and she has matured into a seasoned performer travelling the breadth of Australia sharing her tales.

A proud mother, she is continuing the songlines within her community and her family for her young daughter, K'iigari, and spreading her cultural message worldwide.

TROY CASSAR-DALEY

Troy Cassar-Daley is the salt of the earth, a man with pride in this land and the stories of how it has shaped all our lives, and he comes from a long line of storytellers.

He has amassed a vast songbook throughout his thirty years of making music, resulting in ten studio albums that have earned this Bundjalung fella thirty seven Tamworth Golden Guitars, four ARIAs, two APRA Country Song of the Year Awards among many others.

In speaking about an upcoming album, 'The World Today', he says, "These new songs started flowing not long after I lost my father, so I looked at myself in the mirror one morning and asked myself, "what do I have to say?" and "where do I go from here?"

"Then Covid hit and I was like a rudderless ship bouncing in a sea of nothingness and instead of

staying in the darkness that had surrounded me, I found light in making music and telling stories which was my saving grace as a kid and is to this day as an adult.

"Suddenly I had twenty five songs, a new deal with Sony, Australia and some purpose to make new music once again.

"I wrote with old friends played bass and drums on some rough demo songs at home and made a record with Matt Fell, Ted Howard and some incredible musicians that we are all extremely proud of."

VIKA & LINDA

Born in Melbourne of a Tongan mother, these sisters are known for their rich vocal harmonies and gutsy style.

Initially noticed by John Camilleri, recording three classic albums with The Black Sorrows, Vika & Linda Bull have since released six studio albums, two live albums and a chart topping anthology.

Employed as backing vocalist by many singers, they have also collaborated with Paul Kelly, Kasey Chambers and John Farnham, and

well as performing for the Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela and the King of Tonga.

In November 2019, the duo were inducted into the Music Victoria Hall of Fame, and during the COVID-19 pandemic, the duo live streamed a series of singing sessions via Facebook.

In May 2020, the duo confirmed the release of their first greatest hits album, titled 'Akilotoa' which was released on June 12 and debuted at number 1 on the ARIA Charts, becoming their first chart topper.

In June 2020, the duo confirmed they would record their sixth studio album in July, and on July 24, they announced the release of 'Sunday (The Gospel According to Iso)', a gospel album recorded on Sundays during the continuing COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020, which was released in September.

COLOURFUL FLANAGAN

LEAH

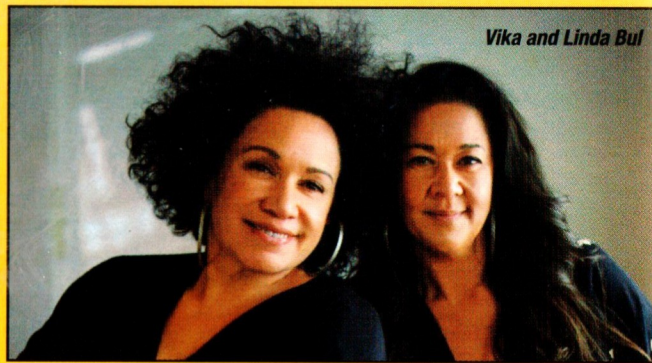
After joining Archie Roach at WOMADelaide last month, Leah Flanagan is hoping that fans will pick up on her third studio album, 'Colour by Number'.

A follow up to Leah's 2016 album 'Saudades', this collection of personal memorabilia shows her maturity as both a musician and a person.

Now a mother, she returned to her hometown of Darwin after almost a decade in Sydney.

The songs on this record are jazz flavoured originals up there with the best of Sade and Norah Jones.

Producer Sarah Belkner's sweetly arranged strings complement Leah's earthy vocals which express the pride of her mix of Italian, Indigenous



Vika and Linda Bul

(Alyawarre) and Irish heritage, and she delves deep into her early musical influences and the cultural communities that have inspired and sustained her.

BAKER BOY & ALICE SKYE FOR SXSW

Baker Boy and Alice Skye are amongst the artists for Sounds Australia's Online SXSW Showcases.

SXSW will be a completely different event for 2021, with the showcases all online and the events occurring at venues all over the world.

Events will take place in suburban and bush backyards across Australia, a Taoist temple, a machine factory and an indoor shrimp fishing spot in Taiwan, a cable car in Norway, a Los Angeles freeway overpass, Abbey Road Studios and the 606 Club in London, the historic Leith Theatre in Scotland, a café-floriculture in Brazil, The Powerstation in New Zealand and Austin hometown favourites Hotel Vegas and Empire Control Room & Garage.

With that, a whole new round of showcasing artists have been announced and Maningrida's Baker Boy is on the list as is The Grampian's grrrl, Alice Skye.

UNCLE ARCHIE'S LIFE STORY

Archie's new memoir 'Tell Me Why' (Simon and Schuster) is an intimate love story in many ways, and although often confronting obstacles in life, his resilience and strength of spirit shines through.

Despite being a stolen child and teenage alcoholic, he considered his foster parents as good people.

Although he became a homeless street kid, he ended up a musical and lyrical genius, social advocate and First Nations leader.

The healing power of music is obvious, and with the late Ruby Hunter, his muse and partner in life, he led the way for young indigenous performers.

However, he feels it took almost a lifetime to find out who he really was.

Currently, Archie is performing a new show sharing stories and songs from his new memoir and companion album.

On the album 'Tell Me Why' (Bloodlines) Archie re-works eleven songs, which have defined his extraordinary career, together with two songs, previously written but never recorded, two songs of early influence and three brand new recordings.

Bluegrass News

by Lindsay...



Interview with Joseph Decosimo

Joseph Decosimo is a banjoist and fiddler from East Tennessee who has won awards at various events such as the National Old Time Banjo Championship and Clifftop Appalachian Stringband Festival.

He is a fan and scholar of traditional mountain music and has taught and provided workshops from East Tennessee State University to Port Townsend to Augusta Heritage

Week.

In 2018, he was an instructor at the Dorrigo Old Time Music School where we were able to have him tell his story about his involvement in traditional music, and this month, we present the first part of that interview.

T&N We have the man who does all the talking, Joseph Decosimo, welcome, thank you for being with us.

JD Thank you for having me.

T&N Joseph, this is your first trip to Australia.

JD Sure is.

T&N With a band of...

JD A quartet, but right now we have been playing the festival here in Dorrigo as a three piece, our fiddler Emily is coming

in a couple of days.

T&N OK, is that an accident or what happened?

JD No, no, she actually conducts a youth orchestra and they had a major performance that they had to prepare for, when we were scheduling, she couldn't make this part, but we came nonetheless.

T&N The music goes on.

JD It does.

T&N And you've got Emily on fiddle and what else?

JD I'm playing banjo, Doug Sharkie plays guitar and Joe Dejanette plays bass.

T&N And he is on his second trip.

JD He sure is.

T&N Tell us about you, you actually have a degree in

ethno-musicology?

JD I have a confession that I'm not sure is suitable for public listening, I think I may be too learned for my own good.

T&N If they catch one of your shows they may find out otherwise.

JD You are right, as soon as I open my mouth it will become apparent (haha), I have a masters degree in folklore and this last summer I finished my PhD in American studies, but I think of myself as an ethno-musicologist, that's the kind of the questions and concerns that I have in my scholarly research and stuff in that field.

T&N You have a great stage presence, we have just seen a lot of comedy on stage which strikes a huge contrast to that, what sounds like would be a stuffy PhD or Masters.

JD That is true, the music to me is full of life and when I take to the stage I want it to be full of life, I want people to have a sense of the joy from where the music came from, I entered this music when I was six.

T&N I was going to ask, how do you get from a six year old to where you are now, a pathway of a couple of decades?

JD Well, I actually really got into this at age twelve, that is when I really got started playing.

I grew up in Chattanooga Tennessee, a little town in south east Tennessee, well not really that little, but it is probably about 250,000 people, but an incredible history of music, in both kind of the white musicians and African American musicians, Bessie Smith, the Empress of the Blues was there.

I got a banjo and had no idea what to do with it and ended up at this little venue called

the Mountain Opry, which was maybe about five miles from my parents' house and after a while I figured out what to do with it, I met some people there who were good players and by the time I was 16, and this goes back to where I was thinking about, you know, making a show, trying to make this music entertaining and full of life, I value that a lot.

T&N What year are we talking about?

JD Well, let's see, I was born in '82, so we're talking about 1998 or so.

T&N In the 80s and 90s you were learning banjo.

JD Yeah, the early 90s I kind of messed around with the banjo, got to hear some incredible musicians kind of right in my backyard, playing some interesting old time banjo styles,

when I started to learn I ended up connecting up with this VHS of Bob Carlin, an old video.

T&N Oh Bob.

JD One and the same.

T&N He has been to Australia too you know.

JD It sounds like he has.

T&N Yes he has and we have been shopping with Bob for guess what?

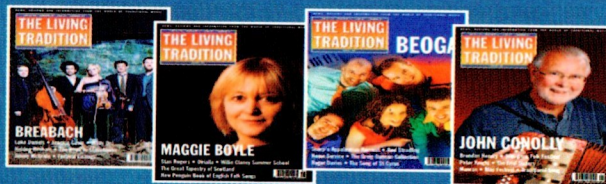
JD What?

T&N Hawaiian shirts.

JD That is not a surprise at all, he is the man with quite the wardrobe and style, but I had a VHS and learnt to play just a little claw-hammer banjo and then I started hanging out at that Friday night Mountain Opry and there was a man named Don Sorrell who played a really fascinating two finger up-picking style, he was trying to do what his father had done.

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Joseph Decosimo old time banjo workshop

And then by the time I was 16 I ended up getting connected with this older fiddler named Charlie Acuff who is cousins with Roy, the King of Country Music, and Charlie, he was in his 80s and he had learnt to play from his grandfather who was also named Charlie Acuff.

And Charlie's father built fiddles, they were interesting fiddles made through a built up mould that had come to the family through a man named Fate Cassidy who was a civil war veteran.

So these interesting old fiddles, and Charlie had all these interesting old tunes that he had learnt from his grandfather, and he was so so welcoming of a banjo player who was absolutely clueless, he brought me in the house, sat me in the living room, his wife Dorothy was sitting in this recliner, the walls were filled

with books and lots of albums, Charlie loved to listen to music.

T&N How did you get there at 16, did you have a bike or drive?

JD In the US, and this is what is funny, I just got my driver's license, they let 16 year olds loose on the interstate highways and I had convinced a friend of mine, a high school buddy, to go up and meet this old fiddler with me.

My friend kind of played guitar, but I was pretty, you know, eat-up with this thing, so my buddy Jay came along and ended up sleeping on the couch, you know like how old people like to keep their house kind of warm, Jay just drifted off into sleep because it was a little toasty in there you know, but we had a really good visit, so I drove up there and spent most of my first visit with Charlie.

I had a little tape recorder

and I just had it running and when I listen back to that tape now, I listen and I hear myself trying to tune my banjo for about 30 minutes and Charlie being as nice and patient as can be and finally we get to some music, but I didn't really know what I was doing.

But I really got to learn a lot about this music by hanging out with him and one of the things I learnt was that he really believed, and I think this is because he grew up, you know in the 1940s, he was playing on the radio in Knoxville and a station called WROL with his brother, they had a little gig there and Charlie was about entertainment and keeping an audience happy and playing good music, but also making sure that they were having fun and so.

..... to be continued

Festival Watch

The cancelation of the 2021 Yarra Junction Fiddler's Convention came as quite a surprise given it's cockroach like resilience in the event of a nuclear winter.

However, despite a vaccine on the horizon, music events are still somewhat touch and go, and here are the details as best as we can put them together at the time of writing.

The Blue Mountains Music Festival NSW, St Albans Folk Festival NSW, Port Fairy Folk Festival VIC, Yackandandah Folk Festival VIC, Nannup Festival WA have all been cancelled.

In place of the National Folk Festival at Exhibition Park Canberra ACT, in 2021,

the committee has organised a two day "Good Folk" series of concerts Apr 3-4 at various venues in downtown Queanbeyan, amongst hotels, motels and other tourist conveniences.

The Northern Beaches Music Festival, Narrabeen, Sydney NSW will move to November and will include the Willing Ponies and Rosie McDonald & Nigel Lever.

Mountaingrass has announced that their planned date is Nov 19-21, 2021.

Other Bluegrass News

Kristy Cox won the 2021 Tamworth Golden Guitar award for Bluegrass recording of the year for her "Finger Picking Good", which was recorded with

Tommy Emmanuel.

The Bluegrass and Traditional Country Music of Australia plans to return to first Saturdays at the Annandale Neighbourhood Centre in inner Sydney, with Covid considerations in place, on Easter Saturday, Apr 3.

Australian Artist Dates

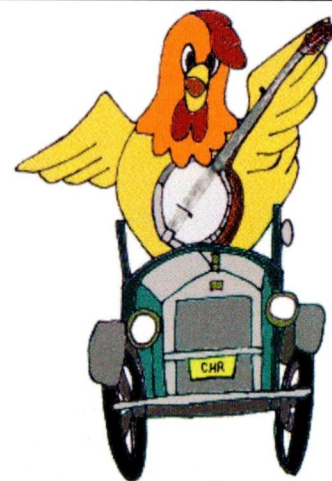
Bluegrass Parkway play the Apr 9-11 Fairbridge Folk Festival WA.

The Davidson Brothers play Apr 10 Mechanics Hall, Murtoa VIC; 24 Gippsland Country Music Festival VIC.

Pete Denahy sings, talks and plays at Apr 6-11 Winton's Way Out West Festival, QLD.



Joseph Decosimo



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Transcription

This month we present just for Joseph Decosimo, a banjo tab from Bob Carlin, Sugar Hill.

Sugar Hill

Tab written by Bob Carlin
Tab set in Finale' 2004 by Dan Levenson

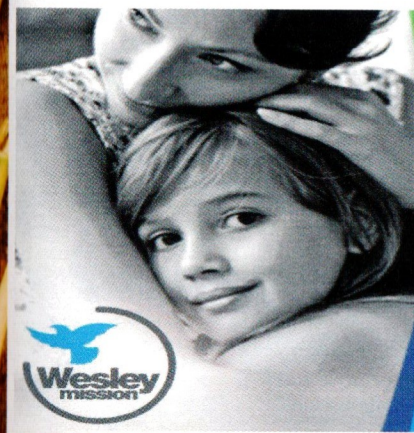
Double C tuning
gCGCD

A part

Tablature for the A part of 'Sugar Hill'. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second system includes first and second endings. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. Techniques like M (middle), P (pick), T (thumb), and SL (slide) are used.

B part

Tablature for the B part of 'Sugar Hill'. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second system includes first and second endings. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Techniques like T/SL (thumb slide), M (middle), P (pick), and SL (slide) are used.



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