



AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN MUSIC AWARDS TO GO AHEAD IN 2021

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Ahead of International Women's Day celebrations next week, **Australian Women in Music Awards (AWMA)** Founding Executive Director & Producer Vicki Gordon has confirmed that AWMA will go ahead with a full two-day program in Brisbane on October 5 and 6, 2021.

AWMA was postponed in 2020 due to COVID-19. The inaugural event in 2018 was a watershed moment for the Australian Music Industry and highlighted the value and achievements of women, leading a major cultural shift, igniting collaboration and establishing national support for diverse female creatives and practitioners.

In just two years AWMA has delivered programs which have positively impacted the sector nationally, driving systemic change and reinforcing AWMA's central tenant to make visible First Nations, multicultural artists, female technicians and music practitioners.

Tina Arena, Deborah Conway, Kate Ceberano, Christine Anu, Katie Noonan, Clare Bowditch, Melinda Schneider, Ngaiire, Isabella Manfredi, Vanessa Amorosi, Orianthi, The Veronicas, Gordi, Monique Brumby, Emma Donovan, MONTAIGNE, Zoe Hauptmann, Emily Wurramara, Sandy Evans, Elena Kats-Chernin AO, Renée Geyer, Kween G, BARKAA, Patricia 'Little Pattie' Amphlett, Margret RoadKnight, Anne Kirkpatrick, Lou Bennett, Cheryl Barker, Joy McKean, Judith Durham AO, and Jenny Morris are among a long list of stellar artists backing AWMA.

Poignantly, AWMA also carries the posthumous endorsement of three of our most cherished and respected pioneering artists, Chrissy Amphlett, Ruby Hunter and Helen Reddy, with kind permission from their families.

Ms Gordon said: *"What we are seeing, perhaps because of the lock-downs combined with the recent accounts of inappropriate behaviour, is an outpouring of creativity, generosity and support from all areas of industry. It is appalling that while AWMA is working to empower women in the music industry, the toxic culture that prevents women from succeeding continues to prevail. AWMA is not only necessary but is authentic and proud to be presenting more awards to unique women in 2021."*

Singer-songwriter and Eurovision contestant MONTAIGNE said: *"I'm relieved to know that AWMA exists and I'm glad to see it forge ahead for another year. A safe space to celebrate the achievements of women in the music industry is so critical. Give me just one space where women make up at least half of the constituents, please and thank you AWMA."*

In recent weeks dozens of personal accounts of bullying and sexual assault within the music industry in Australia and New Zealand have dominated the media.

Ms Gordon said: *"AWMA has consistently been ahead of the pack, insisting that equality, equity and respect is the only way forward to create enduring change. AWMA models diversity and community, the fight for equal opportunity and a safe and sustainable industry. Every new 'disturbing' revelation about the culture of the Australian Music Industry confirms the importance of AWMA and the work we are doing to empower, elevate, celebrate and give voice to women."*

In 2021 Australian female artists continue to be under-represented on radio playlists, in festival line-ups and in production and technical areas; women hold only 28% of senior and strategic roles in key industry organisations and earn far less than their male counterparts; women are significantly less likely to be honoured in the music industry's most prestigious awards and are under-represented in the boardrooms of our peak music industry bodies.

In 2021 AWMA will once again turn the spotlight on women, recognising and including First Nations and multicultural artists and performers, women working in technical, live and studio production, artistry, back stage, on stage, song writing, photography, music journalism, classical music, leadership, humanitarian work and more.

With the support of the Queensland Government, a delegation of First Nations artists and music practitioners from remote and regional communities will travel to Brisbane to attend AWMA.

Queensland Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence Shannon Fentiman said that despite the advancements made, more still needs to be done to address the gender imbalance in the music industry.

“We need to build a culture in the music industry where inclusion and diversity is embraced and fostered – not only as the right thing to do, but because it makes the best business sense,” Ms Fentiman said.

“Because we know if we support women in business, and the more confidence women have in growing their business, the more local jobs are created. Women need to be further acknowledged for their long-standing contribution to music in Australia and I applaud the work of AWMA in addressing this.”

Brisbane City Council's Community, Arts and Nighttime Economy Chair Vicki Howard said it was fantastic for Brisbane to host AWMA and showcase the talent and resilience of women in the music industry.

“Brisbane is home to stellar female talent and we are proud to celebrate their achievements alongside Australia's most renowned women in music, while inspiring and supporting the next wave of female artists,” Cr Howard said.

“I encourage women in Brisbane, however you contribute to our music scene, to head along to the events to take advantage of the networking opportunities and take part in important conversations.”

AWMA 2021 will include a series of forums, keynote address, local artist showcase and networking opportunities at the Calile Hotel (5 October), as well as the coveted Awards ceremony, concert and cocktail function at The Tivoli (6 October).

Among this year's Award highlights, the 2021 AWMA Honour Roll will be announced providing a platform for recognition of exceptional creative pioneers in our sector joining Judith Durham AO (2019) and the late Helen Reddy in (2018). The 2021 AWMA Lifetime Achievement recipient will join the legendary Renée Geyer, Little Pattie, Margret RoadKnight and Joy McKean.

AWMA nominations will open in May with finalists announced in late August 2021.

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womeninmusicawards.com.au



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