

AWMA AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN MUSIC AWARDS 2023

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 29 August, 2023

AWMA PROVIDES A PLATFORM FOR REGIONAL AND REMOTE FEMALE ARTISTS

Australian Women in Music Awards (AWMA) announces the QLD Regional & Remote Women’s Music Program recipients for 2023. Beneficiaries of the program will have the incredible opportunity to experience a stellar two-day music program from 26 - 27 September in Brisbane.

The AWMA Conference program provides eight women of First Nations, Multi-Cultural and non-indigenous participants of varied age and cultural background (in different stages of music industry development, skill set and interest) a career defining two days which will include a series of forums, In-Conversation discussion, First Nations Women’s Music Showcase and networking, culminating in the electric Black Carpet event, Awards Ceremony, Concert and After Party.

The aim of the program is to make the music industry more accessible for artists, musicians and music practitioners who are often disadvantaged by distance and gender.

“It was wonderful to see a high level of responses received from First Nations women, we have so much to contribute to the Australian music industry. Many First Nations women have powerful stories to share through music and culture and this program will provide a life-changing opportunity and experience for the chosen artists and all involved” said **Toni Janke**- First Nations Singer/Songwriter, Consultant Toni Janke Productions.

Now in its fourth year, the AWMA QLD Regional & Remote Women’s Music Program provides a safe and supportive environment for industry connections to develop and thrive, ensuring all participants are nurtured and supported to build authentic relationships to develop real career outcomes in the music industry.

This year’s Ceremony and Concert will be streamed on **ABC iview** on the evening of the **29th of September** and broadcast on **ABC TV** in the afternoon of Saturday 30th of September, making the highly coveted event accessible to regional and remote Australia and the entire nation.

“After careful review and consideration of the highest number of applicants since the program’s inception in 2018, we are excited to congratulate the eight delegates who were selected from across regional Queensland based on a combination of their impressive skill and talent, as well as the potential for the program to contribute significantly to their growth within the music industry” said juror **Roz Pappalardo** (AWMA Regional Liaison, Artistic Director Cultural Services Cairns Regional Council).

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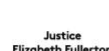
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The participants have been selected based on their current work, their role within the music industry and the impact they are making within their own communities.

“So many of our unsung creatives and artists are spread right across the state in rural, remote, and regional parts of Queensland. “This wonderful event sets the stage to empower and recognise the talented women in our regions and shines a light on those from under-represented backgrounds” said **Shannon Fentiman, MP** (*Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women*).

Minister for the Arts, **Leanne Enoch** said the Queensland Government is committed to supporting increased access to capacity building events and initiatives such as the Australian Women in Music Queensland Regional & Remote Women’s Music Program, delivering on the state’s 10-year Creative Together strategy.

“This program, supported through Arts Queensland’s Queensland Arts Showcase Program, will enable eight recipients from regional and remote Queensland to attend the 2023 AWMA First Nation’s showcase, forums and event.”

“Importantly, this investment will foster greater cultural diversity and inclusivity, support First Nations women, together with culturally diverse and LGBTQIA+ female artists and musicians, no matter where in Queensland they live,” **Minister Enoch** said.

“Queensland has a rich and vibrant music heritage and our government is proud to continue support for the sector, including through new investment of almost \$4million over four years for QMusic’s BIGSOUND” said **Minister Enoch**.

Australian Women in Music Awards & Conference program is proudly supported by the Queensland Government.

QLD REGIONAL & REMOTE RECIPIENTS:

1. GRETA STANLEY

Few songwriters are prepared to be as vulnerably autobiographical as rising Cairns star Greta Stanley – and even fewer possess her gift for evocative storytelling. Stanley’s powerful and distinctive voice is beautifully complemented by the head-turning immediacy of her melodies and her natural charisma as a performer. Following her gorgeous debut album ‘Full Grown’ and two acclaimed EPs, as well as successful collaborations, Stanley’s anticipated sophomore record, ‘Real Love in Real Life’ was released at the end of April 2022 to significant acclaim. Debuting on the AIR 100% independent album charts at #4, it’s an ambitious and captivating artistic statement that is easily her most compelling work to date. The record’s widescreen sound broadens Stanley’s palette, extending on her indie-folk roots to incorporate strong elements of pop, electronic, and cinematic sounds.

Link to work:

https://open.spotify.com/artist/3lkwqHO5vO9jUImJd0N5aC?si=bwmtivaTRtaTNz5A_vb3qA

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2. KIRSTY BURCHILL (KAYBEE)

Kirsty Burchill is from a regional town in Far North Queensland called Mossman. Kirsty has been signing since she was a child however, has been performing since she was 14 years of age. Kirsty learnt the piano for 2 years in high school and self-taught the basics of the guitar. Kirsty has been performing throughout the Douglas Shire industry and Cairns area for the last 9 years and did a stint in Brisbane to pursue her career in Music. Kirsty has only recently come into writing and performing her own music.

3. LEANNE TENNANT

Hailing from Cairns, Australia, LT has earned a reputation as one of Queensland's hardest working independent artists. Her new single ACT YOUR AGE which explores themes of Ageism in the music industry and societal pressures and expectations, is a further glimpse into the sparkling alternative, indie-pop sound she is becoming known for. This is the follow up single to ROLLERCOASTER which in only a few weeks after release landed Spotify global Editorial playlists – Fresh Finds, Fresh Finds Pop, Pop Edge and took out 1st place in this year's ISC and Unsigned Only. She has won 3 x Qld Music Awards, the Carol Lloyd Award, landed syncs on ABC TV, Channel 7, and Spotify, and this year was invited to showcase live for BBC Radio in the UK. Leanne Tennant delves into what it means to be a woman in the music industry, from societal standards to the inherent ageism.

Link to work:

<https://youtu.be/JeMALxcV7No> <https://youtu.be/V0hf6XToRvc>

4. MEGAN SARMARDIN

Megan Sarmardin is a First Nations, singer, musician, creative and arts worker. A self-taught performer, Megan has experience performing in professional productions such as The Sapphires (2011), Country Song (2015), as well as numerous productions with Queensland Music Festival. Megan has experience in writing, co-producing and performing her one woman show, Little Birung, based on the stories of the women in her family, with a tour and community workshops around North Queensland. Megan is the vocalist for the North West Queensland band, BullDust, performing in Mount Isa and outlying communities for events, community balls, festivals and rodeos. As a singer, songwriter and actress, Megan's experience lies in stage performance, composition for theatre, solo and collaborative song writing, musical arrangement for bands, creative mentorship and community arts and engagement.

Link to work:

<https://www.abc.net.au/triplejuneartthed/artist/bulldust/>

5. SHARMAINE DRIEBERG

Born in Port Moresby, PNG, Sharmaine immersed herself in her mother's culture, her extensive family connections, language and music. She is a singer and harmonist for Koahlition Reggae Band (KRB), a multicultural group of 6 musicians living in an around Cairns, North Queensland. She is currently rehearsing with Moses Warusam (of Saibai Island), a local musician as a music duo, Two4Tea, to start playing gigs at our local Brothers Club starting in August.

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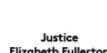
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Link to work:

[facebook.com/merkabamuzik](https://www.facebook.com/merkabamuzik)

6. TALITHA POWER

With inspiration from a mix of folk, country, jazz, indie, pop, and blues, Talitha's wistful interpretations will take you on a dreamy journey into your past. With a delicious jazz undertone, her voice is often described as an angelic sound that gives you the feels. Most recently, Talitha was awarded Mental Health Musician of the Year for QLD by the Mental Health Foundation of Australia. Talitha secured a RADF grant to release her debut EP 'Spilt T' which has gained attention across the globe, with single "I'm Done" topping the AMRAP Regional Charts.

Link to work:

<https://open.spotify.com/artist/2eE5VqJoGaouyPm4kWd4nl?si=qrpwx0EYTT-X97xpaeAlGg>

7. TESSA DEVINE

Tessa is a force to be reckoned with. Her shows will leave you feeling powerful and vulnerable all at the same time. Tessa Devine is an Indie, Pop and Soul looper, music-maker and multi-instrumentalist who has captured the hearts of people all over the world with her incredible voice and mesmerising performances. Making waves in the music industry and breaking boundaries with her unconventional show and recently performing at Sydney World Pride, she is a big advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights and empowerment.

Link to work:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/1kPFu7AbUZ4RGp1hDH6Pn1>

8. YIRGJHILYA LAWRIE

Proud Wuthathi and Mirning Songstress based in Gimuy (so-called Cairns), her family and culture are her strength. Her story is her own and her soothing, soulful voice becomes the instrument for raising the collective consciousness. With the revitalization of the Mirning language with only six fluent speakers currently, Yirgjhilya uses her talent to carry on her culture and language for future generations in a modern way. After performing at shows such as Share the Spirit Festival, The 80th anniversary of the Cummeragunja Walk-Off, St Kilda Festival, Yirramboi Festival, Umi Arts: Big Talk One Fire and the ABC's NAIDOC Special, Yirgjhilya has dedicated her time and energy to be an active role model for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people resulting in her being awarded Victorian Miss NAIDOC in 2019.

Link to work:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tm7OL5MS4w>

AWMA Official Website:

<https://womeninmusicawards.com.au/>

TICKETS NOW ON SALE

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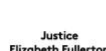
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AWMA is an initiative of the non-profit Charity Cicada International Ltd

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