

AWMA AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN MUSIC AWARDS 2023

FIRST NATIONS WOMEN'S MUSIC PROGRAM

**GLVES • JEM CASSAR-DALEY • KAWEYOVA
KRISTAL WEST • MEGAN SARMARDIN • SUGA CANE MAMAS
BRISCOE SISTERS • THE MERINDAS**

MCs – DIZZY DOOLAN & HOPE ONE

AWMA 2023 First Nations Women's Music Showcase is proudly
supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

First Nations Women's Forum

WELCOME TO COUNTRY – Kaja Kerry Charlton

THE VOICE – The Changing significance of First Nations women's voices in music and the arts

2023 is an historic year for First Nations people with the upcoming referendum to change the Constitution to recognise First Nations people by establishing a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

First Nations women in the music industry have been using their voices for many years to speak up about various issues that affect First Nations people. Panellists share their thoughts about a national Voice, the impact of the referendum on First Nations people, the future of Australia and the ever-evolving and changing significance of First Nations women's voices in music and the arts.

Facilitator • Toni Janke – Singer/Songwriter, Consultant
Toni Janke Productions

Panellists • Nartarsha Bamblett
(Queen Acknowledgements) –
Educator, Dancer and Curator
• Deline Briscoe – Songwoman, Vocalist
with Briscoe Sisters
• Karina Hogan – Journalist @ABC,
Podcast & Documentary Producer

First Nations Music Commission

SISTER YOU ARE A QUEEN

This year, for the first time, AWMA commissioned First Nations artist GLVES to compose the music for the ABC broadcast to be streamed on iView across the nation. The track also forms the stings for the AWMA Ceremony and Concert. SISTER YOU ARE A QUEEN is an all-female production written by Michelle Levings and Maraya Vavasis, produced by Arrowbird, performed by GLVES, and mixed and mastered by Antonia Gauci. Both GLVES and Antonia were AWMA 2022 Finalists in the Emerging Artist and Studio Production categories, respectively.

First Nations Women's Music Showcase

WELCOME TO COUNTRY – Aunty Sandra King

ARTISTS

- GLVES
- Jem Cassar-Daley
- Kristal West
- Kaweyova
- Megan Sarmardin
- Suga Cane Mamas (Georgia Corowa,
Bernice Peeauake & Eilla Appo)
- Briscoe Sisters (Deline Briscoe,
Naurita Briscoe & Merindi Schrieber)
- The Merindas (Kristel Kickett & Candice Lloyd)

A message from our Curator

Our beautiful black sisters are ready to grace the stage with their extraordinary raw talents at the second annual First Nations Women's Music Showcase.

I can't stress enough how important AWMA is. To have a mainstream event for black women to be acknowledged for the powerful music we create and to have a platform like this is vital for the future of First Nations women in this tough industry. I believe the Showcase is a strong step in the right direction.

I have had the pleasure of curating the artists again this year which is a role that I'm very passionate about, and I look forward to seeing many more talented black women in this space. In the future I would love to see the First Nations Women's Music Showcase broadcast on national TV for the whole nation to enjoy, because recognising black excellence is crucial to making positive changes for our mob.

The AWMA team has always included me in every process of the Showcase, I have felt very supported in my leadership role as a Curator and most importantly I have felt valued and appreciated by the whole crew, which is very empowering to say the least.

It makes me so proud to see so many strong black talented women doing their thing, defeating the odds. It's hard enough being black in this country and being a female and black makes us have to work harder to be seen and heard. Our culture is rich and the music is in our blood, we have been singing and dancing for over 60,000 years.

My Aunty Savanna Doolan was one of the very first women to be recognised for her singing talent back in the 1960s – she was a pioneer in this country and known as one of the best blues singers in the industry. My Aunty Savanna never received an award, she was not acknowledged like she should have been. Sadly, Aunty Savanna passed away in 2013 and I will forever continue her legacy the best way I can. It's in my bloodline. I learnt from the best.

Lastly, a huge thank you to Vicki Gordon and Gina Hall for producing a consistent platform that all these amazing female artists deserve.

Many thanks *Dizzy Doolan*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this Country and pay our deep respect for their worldview, connection to Country and healing knowledge.

Queensland Regional & Remote Recipients

With the support of the Queensland Government, AWMA provides eight First Nations, multicultural and non-indigenous women of varied age and cultural background in different stages of music industry development, skill set and interest, a career-defining two days at AWMA.

The aim of the Queensland Regional and Remote Women's Music Program is to make the music industry more accessible for artists, musicians and music practitioners often disadvantaged by distance and gender. This year's program recipients are featured below.

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.

Kirsty Burchill (Kaybee)

Kirsty Burchill is from a regional town in Far North Queensland called Mossman. Kirsty has been singing since she was a child however has been performing since she was 14 years of age.

Kirsty learnt the piano for two years in high school and self-taught the basics of the guitar. Kirsty has been performing throughout the Douglas Shire and Cairns area for the last nine 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.

Sharmaine Drieberg

Born in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, Sharmaine immersed herself in her mother's culture, her extensive family connections, language and music. She is a singer and harmonist for Koalition Reggae Band, a multicultural group of six musicians living in and around Cairns.

She has been performing at a local club with musician Moses Warusam (of Saibai Island) as part of a music duo, Two4Tea.

Leanne Tennant (LT)

Hailing from Cairns, 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 on the Spotify global Editorial playlists Fresh Finds, Fresh Finds Pop, Pop Edge, and took out first place in this year's ISC and Unsigned Only.

She has won three Queensland 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.

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.

Megan will be performing in AWMA 2023 First Nations Women's Music Showcase.

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 Queensland 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.

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.

Yirgihilya 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 revitalisation of the Mirning language with only six fluent speakers currently, Yirgihilya 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 Cumeragunja Walk-Off, St Kilda Festival, Yirramboi Festival, Umi Arts: Big Talk One Fire and the ABC's NAIDOC Special, Yirgihilya 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.

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