
NGV NEWS

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National
Gallery of
Victoria

11 June 2014

Unplugged Live: Portrait of an Artist

Sundays, 6 July – 7 September 2014, 2-3pm

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia | Free entry

"Being involved in Unplugged has given me the opportunity to bring musicians into the surroundings of great Australian art where I can pay my respects to the two art forms of songwriting and visual art in the one space." Jae Laffer



A new music, art and conversation series that brings some of Australia's finest musicians and songwriters into the gallery spaces of the National Gallery of Victoria will be launched this winter. Set amongst the exquisite 19th and 20th Century galleries, musicians and curators will respond to iconic works, exploring the human stories and themes drawn out in the art and in their songs.

Tony Ellwood, Director, NGV said that *Unplugged Live: Portrait of an Artist* is the latest in the NGV's evolving music program.

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“We have worked closely with some of Australia’s most renowned singers and songwriters to create something unique, celebrating the interconnections between music and art. We are particularly pleased that this series will complement the highly successful Friday Night music series that will continue as part of the *Italian Masterpieces* exhibition, with *Unplugged* offering a dedicated focus on Australian art and music in an intimate setting.

Unplugged adds another important dimension to our programming and reinforces our belief that the Gallery is a relevant platform for the celebration and expression of a wide variety of art forms and styles of engagement, with artists on center stage.”

Curated by Jae Laffer of The Panics, *Unplugged Live: Portrait of an Artist* will showcase ten of the country’s best emerging and established musicians and bands over ten weeks. On Sunday afternoons Laffer and NGV Curators will discuss themes and ideas in iconic works in the Gallery’s 19th and 20th Century Australian Art collection, followed by a live and acoustic performance of a handful of songs by the musicians.

Jae Laffer said, “Being involved in *Unplugged* has given me the opportunity to bring musicians into the surroundings of great Australian art where I can pay my respects to the two art forms of songwriting and visual art in the one space.”

“Each week I will lead a discussion of the themes and inspirations behind the songs of a well-loved songwriter, and make comparisons to some of the great Australian visual art on display in the NGV. I want to show that a great song and a great painting are equal and come from a similar place in the heart of an artist,” Laffer said.

Unplugged Live: Portrait of an Artist will be held in the 19th and 20th Century Australian Art galleries on Level 2 at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, Sundays 2-3pm from 6 July to 7 September, entry is free. #ngvunplugged

Friday Nights at Italian Masterpieces is on at NGV International, Friday evenings from 5.30-9.30pm from 27 June to 29 August, admission fees apply. See ngv.vic.gov.au for further details and bookings. #ItalianMasterpieces

The NGV is grateful for the support of Macquarie Group, Principal Partner of *Unplugged Live: Portrait of an Artist*.

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Image caption: Missy Higgins

Event details and musician biographies over page

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Unplugged Live: Portrait of an Artist

Sun 6 Jul - Sun 7 Sep, 2-3pm

Throughout winter the NGV will host a series of music and conversation set amongst the classics of the 19th and 20th Century Australian art galleries. See some of the most iconic works by Australian artists – from Rupert Bunny to John Brack – in a different light as we explore shared themes between art and music and enjoy a short set of live and intimate performances in the gallery spaces.

- **Sun 6 Jul** Bob Evans
- **Sun 13 Jul** New Gods
- **Sun 20 Jul** MT WARNING
- **Sun 27 Jul** Melody Pool
- **Sun 3 Aug** Adalita
- **Sun 10 Aug** Georgia Fair
- **Sun 17 Aug** Glenn Richards
- **Sun 24 Aug** Jae Laffer
- **Sun 31 Aug** Paul Dempsey
- **Sun 7 Sep** Missy Higgins

Cost Free

Venue The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, Level 2

Visit ngv.vic.gov.au for details

Musician biographies:

Bob Evans

Bob Evans is the charming alter-ego and solo project of Australian recording artist Kevin Mitchell, who also fronts alternative rock band Jebediah.

His fourth studio release *Familiar Stranger* was released in early 2013 following on from the beloved 'suburban' trilogy; 'Suburban Kid', 'Suburban Songbook' and most recently, 'Goodnight, Bull Creek!' which earned the artist dual 2009 ARIA Award nominations for Best Male Artist and Best Adult Contemporary Album.

A talented singer/songwriter, Bob Evans achieved the award for Best Male Artist in Rolling Stone Australia's 2007 annual reader poll, was a finalist for 2007's Australian Music Prize, and a strong contender for the lauded J Award in 2006. Bob Evans' second studio release, 'Suburban Songbook', picked up the 2006 ARIA Award for Best Adult Contemporary Album, chalking up Gold accreditation in the process.

New Gods

New Gods began in 2012 and released their first album *Beloved* in 2013. About the desire for love, *Beloved* is available for free at belovedalbum.com. After the intensity of *Beloved*, New Gods moved into the pop and dance music arena.

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MR WARNING

This Australian-based indie outfit are names after Mount Warning – the first area to witness the sunrise each day in Australia. Their musical genre is "Soundtrack/Storytelling."

This intriguing genre nods to frontman Mikey Bee's prolific friendship with American filmmaker, Taylor Steele, who attended a solo show of Bee's before the two delved into undiscovered musical/cinematic territory together.

MT WARNING have been compared to The National and Sigur Ross by The Guardian, UK and of their live performance, The Music said of Mt Warning's frontman, "Mikey Bee's vocals hit the mark with devastating intensity and an infectious energy".

Melody Pool

Melody Pool is a young artist with an old soul. Her debut album, *The Hurting Scene*, sends the listener time-travelling to coffee houses in the late '60s, with songs reminiscent of early Joni Mitchell and Jackson Browne. Crowdfunding enabled Melody, from Kurri Kurri in NSW, to make *The Hurting Scene* in Nashville with producers Jace Everett and Brad Jones.

After releasing the album independently, Melody signed to Mushroom Music Publishing & Liberation Music who re-released *The Hurting Scene* in July 2013. She toured with Californian duo The Milk Carton Kids, who then invited Melody to tour Europe.

Adalita

Released in September 2013 and produced by long-time Magic Dirt collaborator Lindsay Gravina, 'All Day Venus' is an album that rewards intensive listening in much the same way 'Adalita' did. "It's like a movie or book with many chapters," Adalita explains about the carefully considered flow of songs. "On the last record there was a lot of quietude and serenity. This one is cathartic in a different way. It is heavy in places, but I definitely wanted it to be upbeat and danceable too."

The release of Adalita's eponymous debut album in 2011 marked the advent of a remarkable new phase in an already illustrious career. Initially conceived as a humble solo project, laboured over in isolation, the resulting album not only thrilled fans of the artist's former band Magic Dirt, but also introduced her to a younger audience who weren't necessarily aware of the enormous body of work she had accumulated since the early 1990s. The intense mood of Adalita gained extra poignancy with the untimely death of Magic Dirt bassist Dean Turner, who greatly inspired and supported Adalita in stepping out on her own.

The album entered the ARIA Album chart at #23 and went on to win the AIR award for Best Independent Album. Adalita was shortlisted for the Australian Music Prize, while the songwriter was nominated in the Best Female artist category at the 2011 ARIA Awards.

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Georgia Fair

Georgia Fair is Jordan Wilson, vocals and acoustic guitar, and Ben Riley, guitars and harmony vocals. They are Sydney born and raised and are now based in Melbourne. Their new album *Trapped Flame* was released in late 2013 to critical acclaim.

Their acclaimed debut album *All Through Winter* was produced by Bill Reynolds (Band of Horses) in North Carolina, and to record their second album *Trapped Flame* the pair headed to East West Studios in Los Angeles to work with Ted Hutt (Gaslight Anthem, Old Crow Medicine Show, Dropkick Murphys).

Glenn Richards

Glenn Richards is a singer, songwriter, producer and multi-instrumentalist for renowned Australian band Augie March.

Glenn currently resides in Hobart, Tasmania where he operates a small studio which has produced two feature film soundtracks and the latest Augie March long player. Glenn has won many songwriting awards over the journey and has collaborated with many iconic musicians and artists, achieving that rarest of things in popular culture - being both critically and commercially successful with platinum sales co-existing alongside releases through various indie labels in the USA and Europe.

Jae Laffer

Jae Laffer is an ARIA and J Award winning songwriter and frontman for The Panics. In 2013 he released 'When the Iron Glows Red', his first solo album, and has five albums and four EPs recorded with The Panics.

Laffer and The Panics have toured extensively across Australia and the world and are currently working on their sixth studio album.

Paul Dempsey

Few musicians have more than one aspect to their art, and of those that do, not all are willing to risk exchanging the familiar for the unknown. But on his debut solo album Paul Dempsey blazes a remarkable new trail that illuminates his standing as one of Australia's leading songwriters from a whole new perspective.

On *Everything Is True*, the immense guitars and conclusive backbeat that Dempsey has orchestrated over Something For Kate's five acclaimed albums are put aside, succeeded by a striking new palette where a tender voice and expressive acoustic guitar are supplemented by airy rhythms, the expert punctuation of an electric guitar and gently immersive keyboards. This is music where light filters through the gaps, uplifting and eminently melodic.

The results are readily apparent. From the sparkling, propulsive "Bird in a Basement" and the rousing acoustic workout "Fast Friends" to the soaring alt-country ballad "Have You Fallen Out of Love" and the sparse, evocative conclusion "Man of the Moment", *Everything Is True* reveals a hitherto unknown canvas. Equally distinctive is the songwriter's voice, with Dempsey singing in a

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higher register, often reaching a falsetto.

Missy Higgins

Singer/songwriter Missy Higgins has struck a profound chord with Australian music fans with her irresistible melodies, 'arrow through the heart' lyrics and a voice that clearly means it. Missy was thrust into the limelight after she won Triple J unearthed whilst she was still at high school. In 2005, Missy's acclaimed debut LP "The Sound Of White" spent 7 weeks at #1 and became the country's highest selling album of the year. "On A Clear Night" followed in 2007, also debuting at #1 and giving Missy her first American hit with the single "Where I Stood" reaching gold sales stateside. Then after years of touring and seven ARIA Award wins Missy quietly decided to take a break from music.

Missy went off to uni for a while but her love for music eventually lead her back to the studio and in 2011 Missy set up in Nashville to record her first new songs in five years. Those recordings became Missy's third #1 album, "The Ol' Razzle Dazzle", which despite the five year wait, became the most acclaimed work of Missy's extraordinary career. The breakup album with a difference, chronicling the much loved singer's estrangement - and eventual rapprochement - with music making, spent over 3 months in the top 10 after its mid-2012 release and became Missy's first release to make the Billboard Top 100 in America. Missy is currently working on a new album due for release later this year.