

TIMELESS BIOGRAPHIES



JUSTIN JAMES

Since four years of age, the piano has been a major part of Justin's highly creative life. Growing up in a musical household with heaps of classical and jazz influences didn't hurt either. From the lyricism of Chopin, the impressionism of Debussy, the intensity of Rachmaninov to jazz masters such as Bill Evans, Oscar Peterson and George Shearing. Justin brings personality, charm and warmth, along with beautiful rich phrasing and sensitivity to the music every time he performs.

Trained initially in classical piano at the WA Academy of Performing Arts having studied vocals, keyboard and percussion at Perth Modern School as part of the music scholarship program, he began to champion an interest in performing, arranging and composition. His playing and arranging style has been influenced by George Duke, Alan Pasqua and Greg Phillinganes, based in Los Angeles, where he spent time mentored by the late Martin Clarke (Bon Scott) writing and performing. One great memory of his early travels was playing Elton Johns' white Steinway Grand Piano, which was on sale at Sherman Clay Piano Showroom in LA. It was the piano Elton used for his tour of Australia with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Justin has had the pleasure of working with a variety of talented performers such as Marnie Kent (Ginger Blu Collective), Troy Roberts, (James Morrison, Void), Mat Styles (Hip Mo Toast) and Annie Neil. He has had residencies in many of Perth's venues for the past ten years.

As an extension of his love for music, for two decades, Justin worked as a radio announcer/presenter and was fortunate enough to win two awards (Australian Commercial Radio Awards). Having worked for Austereo stations 92.9, Mix 94.5, Triple M, 96fm & 6PR and ABC's national youth network, Triple J. Justin now works part time for 98.5 Sunshine FM. (website) Justin has also written and produced award winning commercials and music for radio and television and was a finalist in the electro category of the Music Oz Challenge after being commissioned to compose a "techno" anthem, which illustrates clearly his diversity.

A former Music Managers Forum member, he is also a full writer member of the Australian Performing Rights Association.

MARNIE KENT

Both local & international audiences have experienced the warm, rich and dynamic sound of vocalist Marnie Kent. Her experience, confidence and stage presence make her an enticing performer. An experienced bandleader, Marnie has been groomed by the best. Working alongside Perth's world class musicians has moulded her unique style and seen her grow into one of Perth's finest Jazz vocalists. Known for her collaborations with Grant Windsor and Freddie Grigson she has become well known for her knack of putting together the best line-ups in town.

Marnie was educated at Perth Modern School studying classical and jazz saxophone for 5 years and went on to study jazz voice at the WA Conservatorium of Music. During her study at The Conservatorium she participated in workshops with international jazz singers Sheila Jordan and Carmen Lundy and studied with local jazz musicians Helen Matthews, Freddie Grigson and Ray Walker. Marnie then relocated to Melbourne to start her first band. For the past 12 years Marnie has played in Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane and the Gold Coast and to international audiences in Singapore, China and Japan.

She has performed at the Kiama Jazz Festival (NSW), Wangaratta International Jazz Festival (VIC), Sanctuary Cove Festival of Jazz (QLD), River Festival (QLD) and Fremantle International Jazz Festival (WA). Marnie Kent has supported concerts featuring Kenny Burrell, Dale Barlow, Paul Grabowsky, Frank Bennett and Grace Knight and has had residencies in many of Perth's venues for the past 10 years.

TROY ROBERTS

Troy Roberts began playing sax at the age of 13 and granted an early entrance into the WA Conservatorium where he won the PJS Encouragement Award 2 years running. Troy also performed in Sydney for the 2000 Olympics and was a regular member of the WA Youth Jazz Orchestra. In 2001 he graduated with a Bachelor of Music (Jazz Performance) degree winning the acclaimed Bob Wyllie Jazz Scholarship, the Melville Toyota Jazz Scholarship and traveled to Mount Gambier, South Australia winning the 2001 James Morrison Jazz Scholarship.

The following year he traveled to the United States to serve the New York music scene and complete an Honors Degree at the University of Miami, studying with Ron Miller, Garry Keller, Whit Sidner, James Moody, Dave Leibman, Frank Foster and performed with names such as Ernesto Simpson, Marc Johnson, Eliane Elias, Silvano Monasterios, and Chuck Bergeron.

Upon returning to Australia in 2003, Troy recorded live at the Sydney Opera House with James Morrison and later toured Europe with James and fellow Perth musicians, Matthew Jodrell, Dain Alderson, Andrew Fisendon, along with Sunil D'Silva (Sri Lanka) and Simon Stockhausen (Germany).