

Sandy Evans Biography 2024

437 words

Dr Sandy Evans OAM

Sandy Evans is an internationally renowned saxophonist, composer music researcher and teacher with a passion for improvisation and new music. She has played with and written for some of the most important groups in Australian jazz since the early 1980s and has toured extensively in Australia, Europe, Canada and Asia. She leads the Sandy Evans Trio and Sextet, and co-led GEST8 and Clarion Fracture Zone. She is a member of Mara!, The Catholics, Ten Part Invention and australYSIS. She regularly collaborates with koto virtuoso Satsuki Odamura. Her group Women and Children First was a ground-breaking ensemble during the 1980s, undertaking an epic seven-month tour by bus around Australia. She has performed with many leading jazz and improvising musicians including Andrea Keller, Paul Grabowsky, Silke Eberhard, Ingrid Jensen, Judy Bailey, Andrew Robson, the Australian Art Orchestra (AAO), Indra Lesmana, Hamed Sadeghi, Freyja Garbett, Chris Cody, Chloe Kim, Brenda Gifford, Chris Fileds, Ben Walsh's Orkestra of the Underground, SNAP, Han Bennink and Terri Lyne Carrington. Sandy performed at the MJC's 40th Anniversary concert at the Melbourne Recital Centre in 2023. She was a featured soloist in Lloyd Swanton's Ambon project. Sandy has a keen interest in Indian classical music. She collaborates regularly with Sarangan Sriranganathan, Bobby Singh, Guru Kaaraikkudi Mani and Sruthi Laya.

Sandy has an extensive composition portfolio. Commissions include new work for the Mara! Big Band; Sky, Let the Rain Fall for Taikoz 20th Anniversary concert; The Drunkards Walk for the Monash Art Ensemble; Bridge of Dreams for the Sirens big band, Hindustani quartet and saxophone soloist; a suite in honour of legendary Australian saxophonist the late Bernie McGann; and the CD *RockPoolMirror* based on photographs by Tall Poppies' Belinda Webster. In 2013, Wesleyan University Press published Sandy's composition Testimony, a major work about the life and music of Charlie Parker with poetry by Yusef Komunyakaa.

She has been awarded an Australia Council Fellowship, a Churchill Fellowship, an OAM, Bell Award For Australian Jazz Musician of The Year 2003, a Young Australian Creative Fellowship, APRA Award for Jazz Composition of the Year and three ARIA Awards. Sandy has a PhD from Macquarie University. Sandy has been a Lecturer in Music at UNSW, Macquarie University and in the Composition and Jazz Units at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She appears in the Australian jazz documentaries *Beyond el Rocco* and *Dr Jazz*.

Sandy is an advocate for gender diversity in jazz. She inaugurated the Jazz Improvisation Course for Young Women run annually by the Sydney Improvised Music Association, and is founding director of the Jann Rutherford Memorial Award, an initiative to support young female jazz musicians.

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For more information about Sandy Evans, visit her website sandyevans.com.au