

Sandy Evans Biography 2024

654 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-leads the Evans/Robson Quartet. She co-led GEST8 and Clarion Fracture Zone. She is a member of Mara!, The Catholics, Ten Part Invention and australYSIS. 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, Indra Lesmana, Hamed Sadeghi, Freyja Garbett, Chris Cody, Chloe Kim, Brenda Gifford, Ben Walsh's Orkestra of the Underground, SNAP, Han Bennink and Terri Lyne Carrington. She was a featured soloist in Lloyd Swanton's *Ambon* project. She performed in the award-winning show, *The Theft of Sita*, touring with the company in Australia, America and Europe.

Sandy has collaborated with koto virtuoso Satsuki Odamura since the early 1990s in numerous projects including Waratah, GEST8 and RockPoolMirror. In 2018 she composed 4 pieces for Satsuki's Koto Transformation project featuring her Koto Ensemble and toured with the ensemble to Singapore and the Philippines.

Sandy has a keen interest in Indian classical music. Her CD *Cosmic Waves*, featuring South Indian mridangam virtuoso Guru Kaaraikkudi Mani and Sruthi Laya, is released in India on Underscore Records. In 2014 Sandy was awarded a PhD from Macquarie University for practice-based research in Carnatic Jazz Intercultural music. Her tribute to Guru Kaaraikkudi Mani *Heart/Rhythm/Love* was premiered at Melbourne Recital Centre with Tripataka and Sai Sarangan in 2018.

Bridge of Dreams, Sandy's collaboration with Shubha Mudgal, Aneesh Pradhan and Sirens Big Band was a hit of the 2019 Sydney festival playing to a full house at City Recital Hall.

She collaborates regularly with Sydney-based Indian musicians Sarangan Sriranganathan and Bobby Singh and released the CD *Kapture*, a tribute to South African freedom fighter Ahmed Kathrada. '...a masterfully performed fusion of jazz and Indian classical musics... the improvisations exemplify the virtuosic energy that is a key resonance between jazz and Indian classical music.' *Cummins 1/6/15*
www.musictrust.com.au

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.

Sandy is an experienced teacher and has taught 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.

Awards and Honours Australian Jazz Bell Awards Hall of Fame, 2019; ART Music Award for Excellence in jazz for RockPoolMirror, 2018; Australia Council Fellowship 2017-2018, Churchill Fellowship 2014, Vice Chancellor's Commendation for Academic Excellence, PhD Macquarie University, 2014 Performance of the Year with the AAO and Sruthi Laya, Art Music Awards 2013, AIR Award for Best Independent Jazz CD 2011, Order of Australia Medal 2010, Bell Award for Australian Jazz Musician of The Year 2003, Young Australian Creative Fellowship 1996, 3 ARIA Awards, APRA Award, 2 Mo Awards.

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