

A festive graphic featuring a central white oval with a black border containing the text 'FESTIVAL OF VOICES'. The oval is surrounded by various colorful circles in shades of orange, pink, and purple, some with patterns like polka dots or stripes. Small white and orange stars are scattered around the circles. The background transitions from a dark purple at the top to a bright orange at the bottom.

FESTIVAL OF VOICES

**OLDER. WISER.
LOUDER.**

4 JULY 2026

THEATRE ROYAL



OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Older. Wiser. Louder. is exactly the kind of evening that reminds me why I love this festival.

There is something quietly radical about a stage full of women sharing not just their voices, but their stories - the songs that have carried them through, the lessons that only time and experience can teach. This show celebrates all of that with honesty, warmth, and no small amount of power.

Tonight's lineup is breathtaking: Casey Donovan, Prof. Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO, Gorgi Coghlan, Xani Kolac, Anna-Lee Robertson, Jean Stafford, Maria Lurighi, the wonderful Hobart Harmony all under the musical direction of the incredible Amanda Hodder.

Together, they bring decades of artistry, courage and hard-won wisdom to the Theatre Royal stage - and I have no doubt you are in for something unforgettable.

A heartfelt thank you to Vicky Jacobs, whose original concept made this evening possible.

I hope it stays with you long after the final note.

Shaun Rennie

Artistic Director, Festival of Voices





OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

CAST

CASEY DONOVAN

At just 16 years old, Casey made history as the youngest winner of Australian Idol globally. Over the past two decades, she has transformed from a shy teenager into an inspiring singer, songwriter, actor, host, author, mentor, and role model. Her resilience and authenticity have earned her a cross-generational fanbase and established her as a symbol of strength, perseverance, and passion. A proud Gumbaynggirr and Dungatti woman, Casey is one of Australia's most versatile entertainers.

Casey's impressive career includes winning two major reality shows—Australian Idol and I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here, the latter raising \$100,000 for the Starlight Children's Foundation. She is a multi-award-winning and nominated artist, with an ARIA #1 single and Triple Platinum certifications, and has headlined her own Mama Cass Tribute concerts and supported Cyndi Lauper on a national tour. Her extensive theatre credits performing to an audience in excess of two million span iconic productions, such as The Sapphires, As You Like It, The Flowerchildren, Opera Yarrabah, RENT, We Will Rock You, Chicago, her acclaimed leading role as Judy Bernly in 9 to 5 The Musical (receiving mid-show standing ovations), & Juliet, Sister Act The Musical, and more recently Kimberly Akimbo, having performed to over two million people in theatres.



On screen, she's captivated audiences through scripted TV roles in Streetsmart (SBS) and How To Stay Married (Network 10), and as a host for the NAIDOC Awards (ABC TV). She co-hosted the insightful SBS series 'What Does Australia Really Think?' and entertained millions as an ambassador for the Coles Supermarkets 'Down Down' campaign. She was also a finalist in Eurovision: Australia Decides and authored the empowering memoir, "Big, Beautiful & Sexy," after making her mark in the plus-size fashion market as an ambassador. Her mindfulness podcast "The Space" has surpassed three million downloads on Nova Entertainment.

Casey released her long-awaited new single 'Shake It' on 30 December 2022 and is a dedicated advocate and ambassador for organisations including RU OK, MMAD, Camp Quality, and is a founding member of the New South Wales Indigenous Chamber of Commerce.



OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

GORGI COGHLAN



Gorgi Coghlan is a rare talent who continually evolves and surprises as she skilfully navigates various roles within the entertainment industry. While she is well-known and respected by Australian audiences for her media broadcasting experience, Gorgi has recently returned to her first love: performing, particularly in singing and acting.

In 2025, Gorgi completed an intensive drama course at the award-winning Howard Fine Acting Studio in Melbourne, in addition to Howard Fine's 4 day Masterclass. The previous year, she appeared in a cameo role alongside Peter Helliar, in Netflix's global hit, *Apple Cider Vinegar*, and is currently performing and touring her show *Songbirds*, which she has written, produced, and directed alongside her best friend of 38 years, Anna-Lee Robertson.

Gorgi's diverse media experience spans news, current affairs, journalism, travel, science, and education, combined with her credentials in musical theatre and professional singing, making her one of the most well-rounded television personalities in the industry—with the most infectious laugh in showbiz!

For eleven years, Gorgi co-hosted Network Ten's Logie Award-winning news and current affairs program *The Project*. Prior to that, she co-hosted the critically acclaimed and much loved morning show *The Circle*. She has recently made the move to radio, filling in as host on ABC Melbourne/Victoria *The Conversation Hour*.

FESTIVALOFVOICES.COM





OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

GORGI COGHLAN CONT.

An accomplished and classically trained singer, Gorgi made a splash on The Masked Singer (Network Ten), where she captivated the nation, reaching the Grand Final as Monster and placing third in the show's first season. Following that success, she held two sold-out solo concerts at Chapel off Chapel in Melbourne and returned to the prestigious Carols by Candlelight at the Myer Music Bowl in 2021.

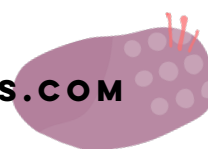
In April 2023, Gorgi debuted her one-woman show, The Motherload, at Chapel off Chapel. Over the years, she has performed at numerous prestigious events and featured on the Spirit of Christmas albums, performed at Channel Nine's Carols by Candlelight four times, and sung at Network Ten's 2020 New Year's Eve concert at Hamer Hall with the Aussie Pops Orchestra.

In musical theatre, Gorgi starred in We Will Rock You, where she was handpicked by Queen band members Brian May and Roger Taylor for the role of "OZ" at the Regent Theatre in Melbourne. She later performed alongside David Campbell in Carousel at the Melbourne Arts Centre.

She has recently made the move to radio, showcasing her versatility filling in as host on ABC Melbourne/Victoria The Conversation Hour, Afternoons and ABC Breakfast.



FESTIVALOFVOICES.COM





OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

ANNA-LEE ROBERTSON

Anna-Lee Robertson is passionate about music that reflects the complexity of human experience. A born communicator with remarkable musical facility and a gift for storytelling, Anna unites her theatrical operatic soprano with an authentic, affectionate and playful narrative that brings music to life for her audience.

Anna's Australian and international theatrical credits include Happy End (Victorian Opera), Mary Poppins (Disney/Cameron Macintosh), The Phantom of the Opera (Cameron Macintosh/Really Useful Group), The Silver Donkey (MTC), The Light in the Piazza (John O' May), Side Show Alley (The Production Company), Virgins etc (York Theatre, New York), Man of La Mancha (GFO/SEL), The Wizard of Oz (GFO/SEL/MACKS) and Annie (GFO/SEL/MACKS).



Her film, television and recording credits are Carols by Candlelight, GMTV London, Good Morning Australia, The Wog Boy, Dracula the Musical, The Hobbit Soundtrack, Mary Poppins and as the voice of Dorothy the Dinosaur for The Wiggles. She has toured Scotland with Fingask Follies, sung with Independent Classics and was the first Australian selected to participate in the International Cabaret Conference at Yale University.

After 3 years of living in the UK, she sang her way back to Australia on board the Queen Mary 2, on its maiden voyage into Sydney Harbour.

A passionate believer in the transformational power of music, Anna was drawn to undertake further studies, completing a Master of Music Therapy in 2012. Motivated by a genuine fascination with the transcendental elements of music making, her Masters' thesis explored the complex nature of articulating key moments of connection during music therapy practise with non-verbal clients.

Anna's long association with the Port Fairy Spring Music Festival has included recent performances with Josh Piterman in All the World's a Stage and as part of the Delectably Divine Divas. Other performances include cabarets and concerts; Sing for your Supper, Thank God I'm a Country Girl, Noel Coward and his Contemporaries, Trial by Jury and the Australian premiere of Paternity, written by co-founder Michael Easton.



OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

ANNA-LEE ROBERTSON CONT.

In 2022, after a professional hiatus to focus on her young family, Anna launched her one woman show *After Birth* at the Port Fairy Spring Music Festival to critical acclaim. It continues to play venues in Regional Victoria and was a part of The Melbourne Recital Centre programme in 2024.

Most recently, Anna joined forces with longtime friend Gorgi Coghlan to create *Songbirds*. Together with Musical Director Kym Dillon, *Songbirds* in concert launched to a sold-out crowd at The Potato Shed in November 2024. Further performances have included *Birds Basement* Melbourne, Ararat Arts Centre and Geelong Arts Centre.

Anna sits on the Port Fairy Spring Music Festival Board. She is passionate about promoting music as a powerful therapeutic and motivational tool and her community engagement has included performances for *Voices for Hospice*, St. Mary's House of Hope, Emmanuel College, Melbourne Seniors, Barwon Health and G21.

Anna holds a Bachelor of Music and a Master of Music Therapy from the University of Melbourne. Born and raised in Port Fairy, she lives in Geelong with her family and is a specialist music tutor and vocal director at Geelong Grammar School.

JEAN STAFFORD

Jean Stafford is an Australian country music icon whose remarkable voice and long-standing contribution have shaped Australia's country music landscape. Born in Latrobe and raised in Meander, she discovered her love of music through a transistor radio tuned to Launceston's 7LA. From these early beginnings, she rose to become one of the nation's most celebrated country performers.

Jean made her first public appearance at age 12 on the *ShowTime* program on TNT-9 Launceston. After developing her craft in local halls and hotels, she won a 7LA talent quest that led to a contract with Hadley Records. Her debut solo album arrived in 1974, with *What Kind of Girl Do You Think I Am* earning her the first of three Golden Guitar awards.





OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

JEAN STAFFORD CONT.

Over her six-decade career, Jean has collected more than 100 awards, including gold and platinum albums and number one singles across Australia, the United States, Europe and New Zealand. In 1989 she was crowned Australia's Queen of Country Music, and she remains internationally recognised as the Golden Voice of Country.

A respected collaborator, Jean has performed alongside artists including Kitty Wells, Smoky Dawson and Jimmy Little, and became a familiar presence on Ray Martin's Midday program during the 1980s. Her influence was honoured in 2008 with her induction into the Country Music Roll of Renown.

MARIA LURIGHI



Maria Lurighi has over 50 years' experience as a singer and musician. Maria's repertoire extends across Opera, Music Theatre, Jazz RnB, Soul and Gospel music.

Maria is in her 26th year of teaching at the Conservatorium of Music and is currently the coordinator for Voice at the Hedberg, for the University of Tasmania. Maria has also been the vocal coach for the Southern Gospel Choir from 1999 – 2024. During her time teaching Maria has been working with young indigenous artists supporting their pathway to UTAS for the past 6 years.

Maria has been a company artist with Bighart having been a part of the music ensemble for Hipbone sticking out at the Melbourne Festival and Blue Angel for Ten days on the island. A strong advocate for Social Justice. Maria is also a champion for improvised works that create sonic atmosphere and context for the composer/ writer. Most recently with Justy Phillips for 'Ringed by Language' and creating welcomes for events at Mona from 2012 -2020.

Maria has performed for Mofo and Dark Mofo festivals, Festival of Voices working on several commissioned works and shows. She has worked as Business Development Manager for Ten Days on the Island from 2004 – 2009. Maria was a past Chair of the Individuals panel for Arts Tasmania and a member of the arts advisory panel for Arts Tasmania. Maria was also a board member for TYO and worked as an assistant to the chair of Abaf Tasmania Peter Althaus.



OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

MARIA LURIGHI CONT.

Maria is a champion for new orchestral works for voice having been the featured artist for new commissions by David Young (Overheard at Inveresk) Constantine Koukios for Olympic Spirit with TSO and Let Freedom Ring by Dr. Andrew Legg. Also, on new works for Brian Ritchie, Leo Schofield and Robyn Archer.

Maria is currently on the board of Ten days on the island and the Lutrawitta Art Orchestra and has been a panel member for the Fullbright Scholarship for the past 3 years. Maria's passion for the development of young people in Tasmania remains at the front of her commitment to her life on the island.

XANI KOLAC

Xani Kolac is a violinist, composer, singer and improviser redefining what the electric violin can do in contemporary and improvised music. With a Master's degree in Music Performance (Improvisation) from the Victorian College of the Arts, Xani has spent over a decade pushing the boundaries of her instrument. Her unique sound is shaped by influences ranging from Jimi Hendrix and Stuff Smith to Kosmiche Musik explorers CAN, to art pop pioneers like Camille and Bjork, alongside her deep roots in jazz and improvisation.



Last year, Xani released two albums: a live improvised recording from The Jazzlab, featuring special guest artists Shannon Bourne (electric guitar) and Angus Radley (electric bass), and Keep Moving an Australian Music Prize-nominated studio album inspired by Krautrock, jazz, and rock that delves into themes of grief, death, family violence, and love. Xani performed at Tallinn Music Week (Estonia), SXSW London, and was Artist in Residence at MONOM Studios in Berlin. She also opened for Hania Rani (Melbourne Recital Centre) and John Cale (City Recital Hall) and brought her highly energetic and acclaimed original show, An Inaccurate History of Electronic Dance Music to the Adelaide Fringe Festival garnering a five-star review.





OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

XANI KOLAC CONT.

In 2026, Xani continues to dive into the possibilities of contemporary and amplified string playing. She has just been named the 2026 Melbourne International Jazz Festival's Take Note Leader – a program addressing under-representation of gender diverse musicians in jazz and improvised music. As part of the program, Xani has been commissioned to compose a new work which will premiere at this year's Melbourne International Jazz Festival.

Recognised for her relentless passion, motivation and a fearless approach to musicianship, Xani has performed at major festivals including the Melbourne International Jazz Festival, RISING, and Classical:NEXT. She was a Finalist in last year's Australian Art Music Awards for Jazz/Improvised Music Performance of the Year and was awarded Best Musician at the 2022 Music Victoria Awards. Her work continues to uncover new possibilities for the electric violin, offering music that connects, provokes, and inspires.

PROF. DEBORAH CHEETHAM FRAILLON AO

Prof. Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO is a Yorta Yorta/ Yuin soprano and composer specialising in chamber, orchestral, choral and operatic settings of First Nations traditional languages and narratives. In an international career spanning 35 years she has championed the voice and visibility of classically trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians through her achievements as a composer, performer and as Artistic Director of the Short Black Opera and Dhungala Children's Choir.



Prof. Cheetham Fraillon's career and achievements have been celebrated with a number of significant awards including: the Don Banks Music Award (2023), Australian Women in Music Lifetime Achievement Award (2022), the JC Williamson Lifetime Achievement Award (2021) the Sir Bernard Heinze Memorial Award for service to music and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of South Australia (2018).

In the 2014 Queen's Birthday Honours List, Prof. Cheetham Fraillon was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO), for distinguished service to the performing arts as an opera singer, composer and artistic director, to the development of Indigenous artists, and to innovation in performance.

In 2021 Prof. Cheetham Fraillon began a five year appointment as First Nations Creative Chair for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and in 2023 was appointed the inaugural Elizabeth Todd Chair of Vocal Studies at The Sydney Conservatorium of Music at the University of Sydney.



OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

HOBART HARMONY



Hobart Harmony is Tasmania's only Sweet Adelines chorus – a vibrant community of women who love the thrill of four-part a cappella. They sing classics and contemporary favourites in the barbershop style, and perform with energy, movement and a touch of sparkle.

Under the musical direction of Jenni Pyefinch, their members come from all walks of life and share the same passion: fun, friendship and ringing chords that lift audiences and each other.

Hobart Harmony is proud to be part of Sweet Adelines Australia – Region 34 of Sweet Adelines International, one of the world's largest women's singing organisations dedicated to elevating singers worldwide through education, performance, and competition in barbershop harmony and a cappella music.

Since their first regional contest in Wollongong (2002), they have returned to the stage regularly – earning Most Improved Chorus (2015 & 2018) and a 3rd-place overall finish in 2025 with a 600+ score that confers Master Director status on their director.

In 2026, Hobart Harmony will celebrate 30 years since their founding and 25 years as a chartered chorus with Sweet Adelines. They continue to perform at festivals, community events and conventions across Tasmania and Australia.





OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

BAND:

MUSICAL DIRECTOR + PIANO -
AMANDA HODDER



DRUMS - **AARON LOVELESS**

BASS - **RHIANNON SALTER**

CELLO - **SOPHIE RADKE**

ELECTRIC VIOLIN - **XANI KOLAC**

ORIGINAL CONCEPT BY VICKY JACOBS

FESTIVALOFVOICES.COM





OLDER. WISER. LOUDER

7.30 PM | SATURDAY 4 JULY
THEATRE ROYAL

HOBART HARMONY MUSICAL DIRECTOR – JENNI PYEFINCH

Helen Barker

Cherry Blaskett

Olivia Bowman

Linda Britts

Kathryn Burdon

Clare Butler

Rowena Clark

Bianca Deans

Zana Ebert

Jenny Ferguson

Cath Fitzgerald

Ainslie Fraser

Donna Gallagher

Deb Graham

Cathy Graney

Tash Greenwood

Kathryn Grey

Rachel Grieve

Shari Hatfield

Mary Heferen-Faulkner

Felicity Jacobs

Katherine Johnston

Yvonne Kerklaan

Kate Lakos

Jan Lovegrove

Chris McShane

Claire Morley

Mary Muir

Jane Norris

Monica Nugent

Esther Ottaway

Liz Paul

Madeline Pidd

Katie Purchas

Dorothy Raymond

Jane Richman

Fiona Ringrose

Lauren Smith

Lou Smith

Madeleine Taylor

Suzie Torok

Kate Vosper

Sonia Weidenbach

Elaine Weston

Bridget Wright



FESTIVAL^{OF} VOICES

OTHER EVENTS YOU MIGHT LIKE!

Xani + Machine

Sun 5 July

• 7.00 pm •

The Barn at Rosny Farm

Songbirds

Sun 5 July

5.00 pm

Ian Potter Recital Hall

Deborah Cheetham Fraillon

Masterclass

Mon 6 July

1.30 pm

Hobart Town Hall

Acknowledgements:

**THEATRE
ROYAL**

SCAN FOR MORE:

