

GROOVE GARDEN

A MAGAZINE BY VERMILION



VERMILIONRECORDS.COM

ISSUE ONE

2023



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The magazine 'Groove Garden' was created on Turrbal and Yuggera country. We pay our respects to the traditional custodians and recognise Elders past, present and emerging. These lands have always been places of teaching, learning and storytelling.



INTRODUCTION

The Vermilion Magazine is being rebranded with a new name, 'Groove Garden' and being transformed into a more industry-standard magazine rather than a student project. A new aesthetic has been established with a more organic collage artistic approach with a touch of absurdism.

It includes interviews with established and upcoming Meanjin (Brisbane) bands, gig reviews, information about the best record stores to purchase vinyl, and must-see music venues. It also explores the glamorous and corrupt side of the music industry.

This magazine offers a new perspective on music with articles being authored by creative writers rather than musicians or those participating directly in the music industry. The aim is to explore a side of music that perhaps in the past has been unseen. Alongside introspective creative pieces, readers can also catch a glimpse of the 2023 Vermilion artists.



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Dublin Rose – Content Creator (Lyric breakdown)

Sofia Cirino – Content Creator (Lyric breakdown)



INTRODUCING THE VERMILION ARTISTS

BY ISA VELASQUEZ



From left to right sitting: Venüs, Dublin Rose, RYN, Sofia
From left to right standing: Jorja B, Laura Forden, Glass Crow
Absent: Maira (Ill)

VENÜS

Strong minded yet introverted, Venüs seems shy before her eyes widen and speech quickens when speaking on something that excites her. Venüs hopes to one day incorporate both her creative loves into greater art, through a combination of music and dance. Often seeking new experiences, and open to what the world has to offer, Venus is an old soul sure to go far.

DUBLIN ROSE

Lively and sweet, Dublin radiates a nurturing sort of love, a beautiful type of kindness that welcomes anyone with open arms. With a thrifted vintage style complimented with florals, she spent time busking and performing for family as a little girl. Playing an array of original music—such as pop, indie, and country—Dublin hopes to establish herself as a well-known touring artist.

GLASS CROW

Shy and elusive, Glass Crow isn't one to actively seek others, preferring the company of guitar strings. A silhouette of intrigue and mystery, this man of the shadows had little to share about himself. What does his art offer? 'It's existential music, for anyone willing.' He values the little things in life and desires to lull his listeners into a deep sleep with his cathartic melodies.

LAURA FORDEN

A warm smile, an introspective mind, a light scattering of freckles; Laura has a sweet tone to her voice and values kindness in others above all else. Recognising this as a chance to begin her dream, she's poised to finally showcase her hidden creativity. With the illusion of a wallflower, a candid conversation full of laughs and reflection is always easy with Laura.

MAIRA

Black waves frame her face with purple highlights just hidden. With a soft speaking voice that turns powerful in song, Maira has always been a creative soul, writing lyrics since age 8. Music is a form of escapism for this artist as she develops her own unique blend of indie-pop/rock. Maira's relatable and unfiltered lyricism meets infectious melodies that will sweep over you when you need them most.

SOFIA CIRINO

Softly spoken, with the demeanour of an exhale, Sofia is gentle with forest green sweaters, writing songs since the age of 10. She seeks the sort of beauty only found in sadness, so often her music stemming from personal and observed struggles. Possessing the quietness of a fairy, with the desire to emulate true emotion in her music, Sofia will be someone to keep your eye on.

JORJA B

From first laying eyes on her, it is impossible to miss her impeccable style. For Jorja B, music became a passion at a young age, writing songs at 12 years old. Despite the usual doubts occasionally creeping in, determination remains her strongest asset; if anyone is going to be a star, it's her. With a unique voice and relatable lyrics that explore themes of heartbreak, love, and self-discovery, Jorja B's music is for everyone.



RYN

RYN often draws inspiration from personal experiences, his music delves into the complexities of relationships and the challenges of growing up. Experimenting with music production software in his teenage years, he quickly developed a talent for creating dynamic and engaging productions which blend electronic sounds with live instrumentation. Ever since, RYN has preferred the work of a producer, polishing songs to their best standard.

RECORD STORES

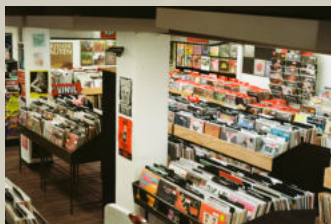
MUST STOP VINYL LOCATIONS

BY LILIAN MARTIN

More people are getting into vinyl collecting and listening than at any other time in the last few decades. But with the uptick in record collecting, how should new enthusiasts go about building their collections? After all, not everyone has older family or loved ones bequeathing them prized Pink Floyd first pressings. With vinyl record prices that can break the bank, where the hell should newbie Brisbane vinyl addicts start?

ROCKING HORSE RECORDS

Queen Street Mall, 245 Albert St, Brisbane City QLD 4000



This is probably the best known of all the record stores in Brisbane. You descend from the busy hubbub of Albert Street, down the stairs, following the feeling—more than the sound—of the store's large, bassy speakers. You are almost immediately greeted by a gorgeous cabinet filled with Beatles rare and collectibles. It's a really lovely space, with the records, CDs, and other goodies laid out in easy access stands.

There's an indie vibe to the place. But Rocking Horse Records comes with a price tag – a steep price tag. I'd gently suggest looking in one of the other stores on this list before buying your favourite album vinyl at a vast cost through Rocking Horse. However, for formats like CDs, I'll always recommend Rocking Horse.

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THE RECORD EXCHANGE

1/65 Adelaide St, Brisbane City QLD 4000



This store is not for the faint-hearted. To enter the store you must ascend a very steep, creaky staircase. Then, you rush past a—frankly suspect looking—massage parlour.

When you enter the store, you are immediately greeted by the teetering piles of treasure – ready to fall on you at any moment. If you are brave enough to face up to this and are patient in your searching, you will find some truly incredible records and other music memorabilia in there.

The store's owner is incredibly knowledgeable, loves to have a long chat, and has the tendency to round down the price on purchase totals on a whim (sometimes). If you want to find something really unique and weird, I recommend this place. But if you are looking for more common, classic records, I'd recommend the next place on this list.

RETRO COLLECTIVE

Level 1 of The Myer Centre, 91 Queen St, Brisbane City QLD 4000



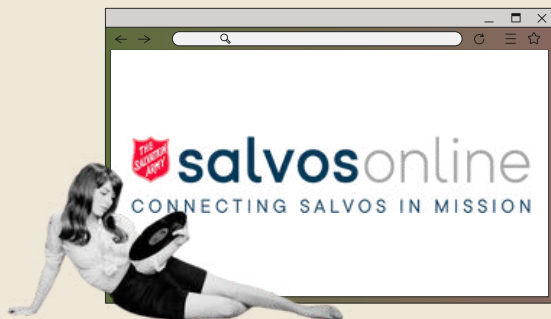
This is my little spot of paradise. The Retro Collective is a pop-up store above the foodcourt level of the Myer Centre.

This store is great for 60s-80s albums, especially pop, funk, well-known classics, and albums by popular artists. The prices in the store are generally much more affordable than at 'The Record Exchange' and Rocking Horse. Most albums there are around \$10-20 and are often no more than \$50.

SALVOS ONLINE

The world wide web.

<https://www.salvosstores.com.au/search?search=records>



Oh the wonderful world of technology! Some people have had absolute shocking experiences with record shopping online, but so far, I have been very lucky. I've stuck with the Salvos online store. There's an interesting range of records on there that's updated on the regular.

The prices are very reasonable—anywhere between \$10 to \$50 for a record, depending on the artist—and the money goes to charity anyway! The records have arrived safely at my local post office, and by and large, completely undamaged in the mail. Salvos packages the records very securely so the discs don't break – but I have found that sometimes the sleeves and corners can get slightly bent, so bear that in mind.





MUSIC AS THERAPY

BY ELLA WITNEY

I was born a third-generational member of the Brisbane Folk Community, into a family of Celtic and old-timey tunes players. My mum, grandparents, and uncles had their own musical reputations among those in the folk community. Listening to that music, I couldn't not want to be a part of it.

I decided I wanted to be just like my mum and play violin too. I came into my Grade 5 lessons full of excitement, though it drained away all too quickly. I quit a year and a half later, leaving with a burning resentment for those who played. I had no friends in the ensemble, and the music we were learning was not the cool stuff you heard at folk festivals. I didn't realise that I had to learn to play the instrument first.

I continued to tell myself that I would pick up the fiddle again and give it another crack. But it soon started to sound like empty promises. I concluded that I was never going to play music; I didn't have the patience for it; I didn't have the time for it. Musicians needed fans and people to listen, though I was never content knowing I'd only ever be one of the supporters.

I wanted to be just like the others in the sessions. I didn't have the background, never did music in high school, and I figured it was too late for me.

Following my high school graduation, my mental health was in a terrible place. So, I was encouraged to learn violin again. What really changed me was the music. It brought me joy; it brought me confidence. I've learnt so much about myself because of it.

I sounded terrible for so long. It wasn't fair that I was comparing myself to the greats—Martin Hayes, Kevin Burke and Liz Carrol—all of whom have been playing for decades at a professional standard. But I persisted because I loved it.

With each playthrough I sounded more confident. I started with the basics, and when I knew a small handful of common tunes, I started sitting in at the sessions. In the beginning, my horrid social anxiety kept me pinned to my seat, instrument stiff in my lap. In the span of several hours, I'd only play one tune—and not very well. I messed up so many times—got halfway through tunes, forgetting the next section despite having played it a million times by myself.

I went from knowing only three simple tunes to now knowing almost fifty. I'm not quite in the hundreds like everyone else is. How they have the storage to remember them all, I don't know. I sometimes go to three sessions a week and attempt the tunes I don't know but have heard a million times over.

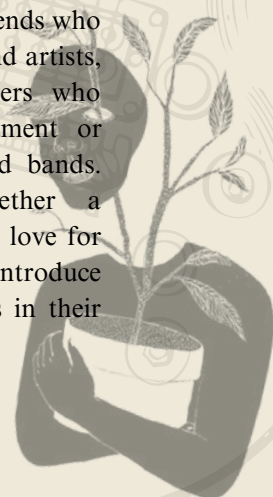
Now I'm in a place in my musical journey where I have successfully embedded myself as a strong performer and critical puzzle piece within the community. And, thanks to the musical community, I've made connections I never would have before. Now I help co-organise one of my favourite festivals I have been volunteering at for years, and have met mentors who have helped me excel in my art to new levels.

I know this is a path I will travel for the rest of my life.

And I know my story is not the only of its kind. There are many others who have found their place in society and as a person thanks to the help of music.

People have often commented on the healing power of music. Music is excellent as personal therapy. It has the capability to heal mind, body and spirit, music reflecting moods through the uses of keys and notes. Songs can be bright with a beat, making people feel happy and energised. Or they can be slower, with lots of minor notes and chords, making the listeners sad.

Music has many abilities: it can bring us closer with friends who like the same genres and artists, people can meet others who play the same instrument or style in orchestras and bands. Concerts bring together a crowd who all share a love for an artist, and festivals introduce listeners to new bands in their favourite genres.



Music is so accessible in our modern world, with our favourite artists a tap away, and music stores holding a variety of affordable instruments. Some households already have instruments floating around. With such a long list of benefits, music is an excellent hobby, regardless of your musical background. I've found myself progress further as a person and excel in many ways I wasn't aware of, and recommend it to everyone who can find the time to incorporate a little music into their life.



UPCOMING MUSIC RELEASES

VENÜS - 30TH OF MAY

LAURA FORDEN - 2ND OF JUNE

GLASS CROW - 9TH OF JUNE

RYN - 26TH OF JUNE

DUBLIN ROSE - 28TH OF JUNE

SOFIA CIRINO - 30TH OF JUNE

CHECK @VERMILION.RECORDS ON INSTAGRAM FOR AN CHANGES



BAR HOPPING:

A UNI STUDENT'S LOST AND FOUND

BY BEA WARREN



The act of studying for hours—eyes crusty and dried up, cramped fingers—is universal. What makes it unique is not what you study, but where you go afterwards.

When I study, I isolate myself. Every Friday at 11am, I sit at this octagonal table in the corner of Z9, and lock eyes with a Word Doc for over six hours. I take a break by dusk, sunshine blurring my vision.

The work never gets finished in time. Either I try to keep studying or cop the 90-minute trip home. Both keep my brain on a spit roast. But there's always that third option, the one my friends are smart enough to avoid. It doesn't roast your brain, it fries it on a high heat, adding brandy to flambé. Uni students are bound to make decisions that leave them in the deep end anyway. It keeps things interesting.

It's time to go drinking. Walking up that hill, I listened to an old playlist, locked in the act of routine. It was a harsh combination of Pop hits from the early 2000s and Aussie Drill rap.

While not as flashy as Bot Bar, the Grove's charm lies in its lack thereof. A balcony that shows off F Block and nothing else; somewhere to play pool while the bartender catches up on lectures. On stage, there was a broke arts student doing her soundcheck.

Dublin Rose went straight into her set, and I tried not to be distracted from my studies. Another acoustic guitar girl with dirty blonde hair, denim jeans, and a sound too commercial for my ears. There was a couple who continued to play pool and a group of older men who stayed outside, ignoring the no smoking sign.

I studied for a while, but the layers to her songs began to unfold as I half-heartedly held my ear to the music. It sounded soft but memorable. Even if her indie-folk foundations were clear, there was this tone in her voice that broke the mundane. She stared at empty couches with a grin until I had the courage to introduce myself to the melody, starting with a 'Handshake'.

I put the laptop away and bought a drink.

And then another.

And another.

Four more.

I admit, I enjoyed the music, even if I was still too scared to say hi afterwards. I walked to the balcony and took in the glow of the evening. That connection didn't so much tug at my heartstrings as it did hand me a warm blanket as a precaution. Dublin had already left by the time I went back in. Grove closed at 6, so I got on a bus to West End. I went to a familiar face, albeit one that still freaks me out.



The Bearded Lady, a bar that rolls out the red carpet to the societal dregs and their overly specific genres. Their abnormal lineups of math rock, new wave emo, post-shoegaze, and industrial post-punk bands is actually very diverse and eclectic if you know what you're talking about. Tonight's band was no-wave, an avant-garde excuse to bully commercialism and lacerate eardrums.



THE BEARDED LADY

My name was on the door, along with a free drink. It was a friend's band. I rattled around my backpack for earplugs, forgetting that I left them in my tote. The barman gave me a spare set. I don't come here often, but enough to be noticed. My friend came out in high-waisted denim shorts and a pullover. Her makeup was rushed but intentional, her music personified. We exchanged small talk before she hopped on stage, tightening the strings of her guitar tenfold.



Werewolves was less a band and more an art show. Artistic intent and layers of nuance howled through the crackling feedback of a rotary phone. Her guitar string snapped before the first song. She was constantly re-tuning throughout. Joe the Drummer threw his sticks across the room and resorted to bongo playing. Their final song had the guitar inching closer and closer to the amp. Everything was screaming in the end. They felt lost, but it was all a part of the performance.

After the set, I wrapped my arms around her and squeezed through the empty space of her sweatshirt. I was so proud, albeit incredibly jarred. She asked if I wanted to stay, but I needed time to readjust. I stumbled through West End until the fluorescent lights of a 711 became the stuttering LEDs of an unspecified 24/7 convenience store.

I was in Fortitude Valley. All I wanted was something Old Fashion. Sunken in an alleyway, below the other bars of higher esteem, I walked into Greaser, ordered my cocktail and caught the last band of the night.

I was too far gone to remember the specifics of Lighthouse Mouse, but the opening notes of 'Gharkey' still echo in my eardrums. I sang along to songs I didn't know. I danced alongside a rhythm I wasn't familiar with.



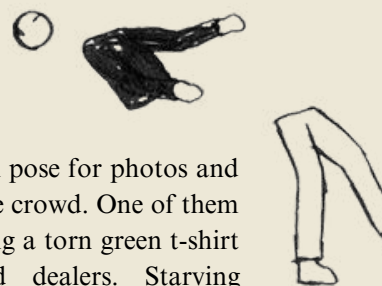
I saw them pose for photos and cater to the crowd. One of them was wearing a torn green t-shirt and speed dealers. Starving artists remind me of my friends, while giving me a new perspective from a stage of equal height. I felt like I could dance underwater.

The DJ gets in after 11. He brought in a suitcase full of knobs and notches, playing the classics, all the songs on my playlist that kept my mind numb. None of the songs left your ears ringing or made your throat coarse. They weren't important enough to.

I tripped over as I walked out into smokers. Some guy found me and picked me up from my knees. He was wearing sunglasses. I didn't know what to say, but I think I really needed it. He commented on my sunken eyes and my unzipped backpack.

'Did you come from uni? You didn't want to go home?'

I zipped my bag back up. 'Just needed something a little different.'





A LYRIC BREAKDOWN

BY SOFIA CIRINO

*sorry did i get too close?
i'm not used to not being alone
you know i didn't eat today
filled myself up with something that could get in the way*

This verse is really just a setup for the whole song's premise of not being able to show affection in a queer relationship, especially when one partner may not be out of the closet. The apology acts as a reflection of insecurities and concerns that they're being too affectionate for the other person. "filled myself up" is a reference to drinking and how girls kissing girls at parties is normal — by being "filled up" with alcohol the character hopes that's enough to make their partner comfortable with that display of affection.

*asking why you couldn't stay
claw marks on the door but i'm not trying to escape
"sorry i just had to go"
mark in the minutes of yours that are mine to hold*

This section brings in the dynamic between the couple more. It reveals how the partner of the narrator's insecurities impact the relationship. The "claw marks" are a metaphor for the opinions and perspectives of others, which can feel unbearable and inescapable. This is represented by marks on the door of a room she's in, where she's "not trying to escape", but rather, others are trying to get in.

WHERE IS THE LIGHT THAT WOULD PLAY ON MY STREET?

BY LILIAN MARTIN



Who wouldn't want to visit an exotic, seaside vista burgeoning with a proud music history, mentioned in a world-wide popular Hollywood movie?

Well, I have just the world-famous, Hollywood-approved place for you. Humpybong.

'Humpybong?' you may ask, incredulous, thinking I am taking the absolute piss out of you.

Humpybong—better known as the suburb of Margate, near Redcliffe—is a 40-minute drive from Brisbane's north. It is on the land of the Gubbi Gubbi and Ningy Ningy people. The name Humpybong is said to be derived from the Aboriginal 'umpi bong' meaning 'dead houses'. While the name of the area has changed, many places around the suburb still bear the name Humpybong – Humpybong State School, Humpybong Esplanade, Humpybong Creek, and even a Humpybong Yacht Club.

This place has a strong and surprising connection to modern music history.

Humpybong claims to be the home of the Bee Gees. Near the centre of the place is Bee Gees Way – an entire street dedicated to the legacy of the Bee Gees.

At the front of Bee Gees Way are slightly bigger than life-size bronze-coloured statues of the trio – Barry, Robin, and Maurice Gibb. You can see the whole Bee Gees story told along the edges of Bee Gees Way. You learn they were born in the United Kingdom, moved as children to Humpybong, and that they soon started performing vocal harmonies in Redcliffe for pocket money. You revisit their 60s pop classics like 'Spicks and Specks' and their 70s disco mega-hit 'Stayin' Alive'. On any busy day, you can see tourists, fans, and locals standing in front of the statues, posing for pictures.

Walls either side of the street are filled with photos, videos, captions, lyrics – there is even a large painted mural of the group.

Okay writer,' you may now ask, 'you have explained this Humpybong place's connection to music, but what about its connection to a Hollywood movie?'

'Alright this is a bit of a stretch, but the connection is there, nonetheless. There's an amusing scene in the 2018 biopic *Bohemian Rhapsody* about Queen and Freddie Mercury, where Brian May—played by Gwilym Lee—says in a strong British voice ringing with disbelief: 'Humpy Bong?'

It's a small moment, right near the beginning of the film.

In the scene, Smile frontman and bassist Tim Staffell abandons Brian May and Roger Taylor to join a band named Humpy Bong. Why does some English folk-rock band have the name of a random suburb outside of Brisbane? Well, one of the other members of Humpy Bong was former Bee Gees drummer, Colin Peterson (who, yes, misspelt the name Humpybong). Humpy Bong only made a handful of recordings in 1970 before disbanding.

The incredible irony of this scene is that Staffell leaving Smile made a vacancy – a vacancy Freddie Mercury soon filled. No one remembers Humpy Bong – everyone remembers Queen. And that concludes my concise musical history of Humpybong, a little place north of Brisbane.



BONSAI BAY

PERFORMING PSYCHEDELIC ROCK SINCE 2020



FIRST ALBUM COMING SEPTEMBER 2023

LISTEN TO CURRENT MUSIC NOW ON SPOTIFY



BONSAI BAY TO DZ DEATHRAYS

CAN THE BOYS MAKE THE LEAP?

BY ISA VELASQUEZ



Brisbane's a fine city for tourists, and a bore for locals. Can anyone really 'make it' here? DZ Deathrays have certainly proven it possible. With DZ having six studio albums and over 10 years of touring experience, I was curious whether other local bands have the potential to go further.

I stumbled upon Bonsai Bay at O'Skulligans. They describe themselves as psychedelic rockers that know how to play a show. Their music was loud and passionate. It made my bones rattle; my eardrums burst. I felt like the anguished teen I was never allowed to be. Frontman Reggie had the hair of Dave Grohl, headbanging so much that it's hard to imagine his neck still attached to his torso. Harry was on rhythm and stayed in-sync with every beat, every chord that Reggie threw at him.

Joel was in his own world. He hit those drums like it was his one true purpose as Kasey danced his way down the neck of his bass, dark hair curled around his temple.

Bonsai's energy fits their music perfectly, their bodies possessed by all the greatest rockstars of the past. This energy persists through and into their recorded songs, having been played on Triple J Unearthed and Triple Js 'Home & Hosed' program. I jumped at the opportunity to interview the band.

What is the process of starting a new song?

Typically, one of the boys would present something new, something they haven't heard before. 'Sometimes it will be a bass line or a guitar riff, normally we just jam on it, see what ideas we come up with, just naturally develop it as we play,' Joel says. They answer questions the same way they write songs, building on top of each other like a Jenga game. It was Harry's turn. 'That one on the EP, [...] Reg almost brought a whole finished song and we just pieced it together, that puzzle, add bits, take bits away, and build the layers'

Now, with the guidance of producer Joel Myles, the band is recording their first album at Hunting Grounds Studio, in Moorooka. Harry continues, "It's been good having that next phase of development, having an outside perspective on the song, just to be able to say like 'Guys this is cool, but what if it didn't go as long?' Reggie continued, "or He'll say 'What if we tried this?' and we kinda go fuck yeah!"

Is there a concept to the album?

'There is a bit of a concept. [It's] loosely based on someone's journey on a night out. We've taken different themes and interpreted them in each song. It's a loose journey. It's not rigorously followed, if that makes sense'

The main themes revolve around chaos and debauchery. We got a song about the pokies, a song about the clubs, a song about the pub, and a song about the regretful walk home. Songs about acid and pre's and that sort of thing.'





Reggie was quick to defend: 'It's a song about being in the park, not acid! We don't do drugs!' The boys laughed as Kasey settled the argument, 'It's not necessarily pro that stuff, it's more commentary on the experience.'

Do you prefer a day in the studio or a night on the stage?

Reggie took the reign on this one. 'I think playing live. If that was all there was to being a musician, that would be great; it's where I want to be all the time.' Kasey has been able to find a healthy balance, claiming, 'they're like two completely different animals to me. The studio aspect is really fun for us. Half the time we're just bullshitting and talking smack, but it's also this cool way for all of us to have input in this project. When it's live it's like you're presenting your final project to everyone.' I was surprised to hear Harry heavily favour the studio, which he says can be 'a lot more pleasant than playing live. It's always fun. If I had to choose whether crafting something, writing and making it sound perfect versus playing live in front of all our adoring fans, it's a tough choice but I think I would have to go with studio.'

Although the dingy bars of Fortitude Valley will always be an influence for Bonsai, they seem more eager than ever to blow past these smaller stages. Reggie joked about moving to Germany, where their music is most popular. "We'll blast some blitzkrieg funk in our songs," he said, chuckling to himself. Harry, however, would prefer to keep working locally in hopes of gaining enough traction to play Australia's largest festivals. 'It was always a dream for us to play Splendour.' Joel hoped to simply live the experience of a musician without empty pockets, while Kasey fell more in line with the potential rather than a concrete outcome. 'It's not that I expect to be playing Splendour in x number of years but it's the potential. We want to chase that.'

Hearing themselves on Triple J was described as 'fucking mind blowing', and 'a huge moment for the band'. There was a unanimous agreement, however, that being played on national radio would not be their greatest achievement. There is still so much Bonsai Bay has to accomplish, and their first play on Triple J would become just one minor dot point on their CV.

While Bonsai Bay is still in the middle of enjoying some of their first national exposure, DZ Deathrays have garnered international acclaim over the course of their fourteen-year career. The band formed in 2008 in Meanjin (Brisbane), with Shane Parsons on guitar/vocals, and Simon Ridley on drums. They're known for their high-energy live performances and their unique blend of punk rock, garage rock, and dance music. Their music has travelled beyond Australia, with the band having toured extensively throughout Europe, North America, and Asia.

I was lucky enough to email the band about their creative process and accumulated success.



We had to work hard on layering and sometimes looping parts in order to build the dynamics in the music, especially for live gigs. However, now that we're able to afford extra band members we don't have those restrictions anymore, which is definitely more freeing.

It's usually the new places we haven't been to before and trying to learn something about the culture of each place we go. Festivals are always great for catching a lot of bands from a region you wouldn't necessarily see anywhere else. I also love when it's a novelty festival too where it's held in a castle or abandoned school sort of thing.

I'm not really sure. I guess it just depends on the mood the writer is in at the time. I suppose all of our influences just get absorbed from our surroundings or from friends and playlist suggestions, then it's distilled down into tasty riffs from Lachlan or Shane. Then we just demo the song until it has something that makes it stand out from the rest of our demos.

It's still pretty surreal to have been awarded those amongst others for something you start with a mate. I guess the only real goals I know of is to just keep it fun, keep it interesting and keep putting out good music we like and doing shows.



MUST SEE MUSIC VENUES

BRISBANE IS THE PLACE TO BE

BY ISA VELASQUEZ

THE ZOO

A mainstay of Brisbane's music scene since it opened its doors in 1992, this iconic live music venue has played host to some of the biggest names in the Australian and international music industry, including Powderfinger, The Living End, and The Whitlams. The Zoo has a reputation for attracting up-and-coming talent as well as established acts, making it a great place to discover new music. There's a great dance floor and the staff is always friendly, creating good vibes throughout the night.

THE TRIFFID

A live music venue located in the suburb of Newstead, just a few kilometres from Brisbane's CBD. This venue is known for its eclectic line up of musicians, ranging from local indie bands to international acts. The Triffid is also famous for its beer garden, which is the perfect spot to relax and enjoy a drink before or after the show.

THE TIVOLI

A beautifully restored art deco theatre that has been hosting live music events since the early 1900s. Even with a capacity of 1,500 people, The Tiv' still gives gigs an intimate atmosphere and has seen performances from some of the biggest names in the music industry, including Lorde, Coldplay, and The Rolling Stones.

BLACK BEAR LODGE

A speak-easy-esque bar on Brunswick Street's pedestrian strip in the heart of Fortitude Valley, known for its excellent acoustics, making it a favourite amongst local musicians. Black Bear Lodge has a range of music genres, across folk/indie/rock, 60s-80s themed nights, and sometimes avant-garde DJs you've never heard anything of that are apparently a big deal. A smaller, aesthetic, and chill venue, there's sure to be something for everyone.

LEFTY'S MUSIC HALL

A Western-themed bar in the heart of Brisbane's CBD. This venue is known for its live music events, hosting a range of music genres, including blues, rockabilly, and country. Lefty's has a unique atmosphere with décor that will transport you to the Wild West.



FILM NEGATIVE



FILM NEGATIVE



FILM NEGATIVE



FILM NEGATIVE



FILM NEGATIVE

FIERCE FEMMES

BY LILIAN MARTIN

Music history and queer history both suffer from the same issue – they often overlook the achievements and impact of women. Almost every time I have looked at an article with a title something like ‘10 classic gay singers’ I am—to say the least—underwhelmed. It’s always the same names I see on the list – Elton John, George Michael, Freddie Mercury, and so on. While these are among some of my favourite singers and queer icons, I find myself wishing there was greater visibility to other incredible, queer musicians. Especially those who are a part of a gender or racial minority. So today, I would love to introduce to you three of my favourite queer, female musicians.

In an era of flower power, folk-rock, and psychedelia, Laura Nyro was an outlier and a quiet, innovative force. Her appearance was gothic, dark, and resembled Morticia Addams more than Nancy Sinatra. Her sound was deeply sorrowful, filled with an eternal longing – it’s the sort of yearning sound that queer people just dig.

Throughout the 60s, Nyro penned many highly regarded tunes (‘Stoney End’ and ‘Wedding Bells Blues’), however you are unlikely to have heard her own versions of the songs. This is because Laura was intensely private and had no desire to live a life of music royalty, instead choosing to spend most of her life away from the spotlight, to focus on songwriting, and family. Her bisexuality was just one more thing she kept private. Her life-partner was painter, Maria Desiderio, but Laura also had an infamous love affair with fellow singer-songwriter Jackson Browne in the early 70s. Laura was outed in her obituary, after an early death at the age of 49 to ovarian cancer.

There are references to bisexuality in her songs. Her 1968 song ‘Emmie’ is often called the first lesbian pop-song.

The narrator sings about her dear friend and possibly her crush, Emmie, and compares her to many beautiful parts of nature:

*You're the natural snow
The unstudied sea
Laura asks her to,
Touch me
Oh wake me
Emily, you ornament the earth
For me*

The song ends with Laura singing passionately, over and over:

*She got the way to move me,
Emmie
She got the way to move me,
yeah*

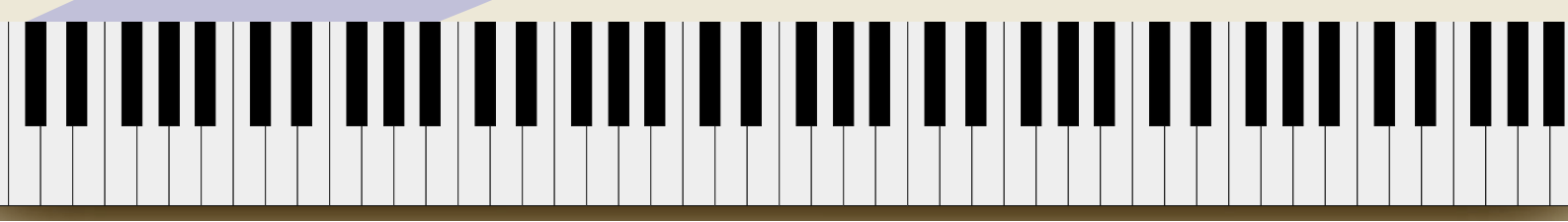
By the end of her career all of Laura’s songs were noticeably missing gendered pronouns and in her 1983 song ‘Mother’s Spiritual’, Laura sings:

*And I like you
I'm not looking
For Miss or Mr Right*

Dusty Springfield is the blue-eyed queen of British soul music with a dazzling soprano voice and dazzling on-stage appearance. Her hair was a large beehive coloured peroxide blonde and her eyes popped out with thick black eyeliner.



LAURA NYRO



Despite the fact her music wasn't politically challenging, Dusty could be a politically contentious person. In her 1964 tour, Dusty became one of the first white musicians to take a public stance against South Africa's oppressive apartheid regime, by blatantly refusing to perform before segregated audiences. She also continuously championed black soul musicians on both sides of the Atlantic, such as on her 1965 television special, 'The Sound of Motown'. In the 70s-80s, she toured the very queer American cabaret circuit. In 1987, Dusty Springfield sang with the Pet Shop Boys (renowned gay icons in their own right) on their popular single 'What Have I Done to Deserve This?'. This collaboration restarted Dusty's career. Dusty Springfield had one more Top 40 single before she passed away in 1999, just before her 60th birthday.

Sadly, Dusty's life was not a happy one. Throughout her life, she struggled and obsessed over her body image, with self-harm, drug, alcohol, and smoking addictions.

Dusty was also in many violent and abusive relationships. In the early 80s, she had such a violent row with one of her partners, her teeth were knocked out and her face was permanently damaged. Her Catholic upbringing also made Dusty struggle to accept her queer sexuality. In the 70s, she said her 'prime ambition' was to fall in love with a man: 'I basically want to be straight ... I go from men to women; I don't give a shit. The catchphrase [sic] is: I can't love a man. Now, that's my hang-up.'

Lesley Gore's voice is probably eerily familiar to many young people who don't even know her name, as her songs are continuously sampled by modern artists. For instance, Melanie Martinez famously samples Lesley's first hit-song 'It's My Party' in 'Pity Party'.

Lesley was a product of the early 60s manufactured teeny bopper era, moulded to be 'the girl-next-door' by music executives seeking to please parents worried about the 'roughness' of rock'n'roll. Her early albums had titles like 'Boys, Boys, Boys', 'That's The Way Boys Are', and 'Girl Talk', and were filled with pop songs about teenage girls and boys falling in and out of love.

The incredible irony of Lesley Gore's career was that she was famous for boy-crazy pop songs while herself, a proud lesbian.

While Lesley only publicly came out in 2005—after hosting a queer PBS program—she said her sexuality had been something of an open secret inside the industry even back in the 60s.



She said 'I really never kept my life private. Those who knew me, those who worked with me, were well aware.' Lesley knew the music industry was 'totally homophobic', but admitted she was fortunate that she experienced no homophobia from her colleagues.

By the late 60s, the music industry's interest in teeny bopper singers waned and Lesley made the move from singer and performer to composer. Lesley co-wrote the song 'My Secret Love' for the film 'Grace of my Heart' (1996). The film follows the story of a fictional lesbian pop singer in the 1960s who must stay closeted to pursue her career. The main character is heavily inspired by Lesley, and even appears on screen sporting a blonde bob-cut just like Lesley's in the 60s.

I covered three incredible women on this list. With Laura, Dusty, and Lesley, I discovered and loved their music first and only later discovered they were all queer. As a young woman-loving queer myself, seeing that others like me have existed and thrived throughout history is inspiring. These women and so many more have been left to the wayside in both queer and music history. I wish others—especially other young queer people—could see this incredible queer diversity in music history.





A LYRIC BREAKDOWN

BY DUBLIN ROSE

Ten Thousand Days

Verse 1

*Looking up at the stars
I know this will be the final time
Water fills my eyes
Seems no one cares as much as me
It's just I've become so happy
And I'm scared it all might fade away
But at least I've got today
At least I've got today*

Chorus

*Because I oh I
Would cross the ocean
To go back to these moments
and repeat in slow motion
I would wait ten thousand days
For you to say
You'd stay*

I came up with this song while standing in the goals of our final soccer game. It was raining that night and we were doing so well that no one was coming down our end. I was thinking about how much I loved my friends, and how upset I was that the season was over. It meant much more to me than just playing soccer.

My team members were all my close friends from high school, and this was our way of keeping in touch. I feared that afterwards we may drift apart and stop seeing each other. I cried at the end of the game yet no one else did hence the line "seems no one cares as much as me".

I guess I really appreciated this moment and wished it could last forever. My favourite line in the song would be "I would cross the ocean to go back to these moments and repeat in slow motion". The experience taught me something important; knowing things will end makes it more special. I went home that night and finished the song. I can't wait for you to hear it!



SKELTONS IN CLOSETS

THE PITFALLS OF PLAYING THE MUSIC

BY ISA VELASQUEZ

*The bands mentioned will remain anonymous, the person interviewed has been renamed for sake of privacy

Although I knew there would be shadows lurking, the Brisbane music scene excited me. It was fingertips gliding over complex riffs, it was voices screaming into microphones, it was people sweating and dancing and being alive. It felt perfect. But perfection doesn't exist. As I had only been exposed to the romantic side, I believed it was time to dive into the abyss. But where would I find this perspective? Who would willingly open Pandora's box?

I met Amelia at The Sound Garden, both slightly oversharing as you do tipsy in a graffitied bathroom.

What were the chances of the universe gifting me a band manager who had experienced the highs and very lows of the Brisbane music scene and wanted to meet to discuss in depth? Surprisingly, a great chance. Her apartment was small but well-loved, with a cat or two purring in hidden corners.

'I don't even know where to begin,' she said.

I noticed she would often come to laugh when nervous.

'The beginning,' I said. 'Let's start at the very beginning.' I pressed the record button.

Things started out strong at first, although they often do before the downfall. 'The guys would jam together and eventually I came along,' Amelia said. 'We took videos and had bongos, and just hung out. It was a good time.' It was clear that they were on a journey, and one they wanted to keep among friends. 'T kept saying he wanted to "Build my friends and build my career" just doing it all together.'

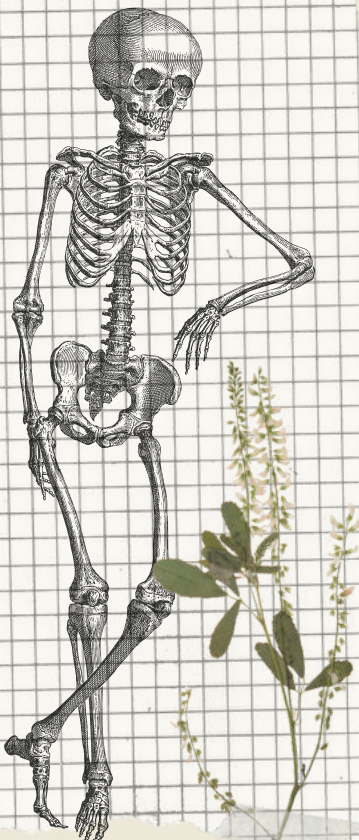
As the band developed, Amelia became their photographer, and gradually insisted on a stronger management role.

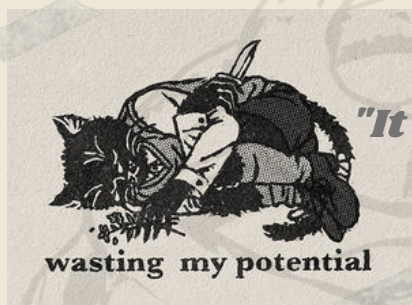
She had seen her friends struggling to oversee the aspects it took to run a successful band: 'I think T even double, or triple booked a gig! I told them, I can be there for you.'

Determined to work at her best standard, Amelia enrolled into an academy to further her knowledge and skills in music management. She arranged meetings to discuss band growth aided by the establishment of merch and remaining relevant with gigs and music releases. However, these priorities were often disregarded which introduced the first issue, lack of honest communication.

'No one would be deadass with me, which didn't make sense,' she said. 'I had never gotten angry or upset with something they had said. There was just a lack of communication, so I was left with my instincts to rely on.' Some conversations or lack thereof would turn to arguments and misunderstandings. 'I felt I was handling everything quite professionally, trying to get them up and running as a business rather than focusing only on the music.'

Shhh... it's a secret





"It was still in my mind this idea

of friends building each other up..."

A clear balance must be found between the expressive outlet and business side. From being solely focused on their music practice, the band shifted to heavily favouring the success and fame of their work.

'They were obsessed with the future, and the success they wanted and didn't have. They became focused more on the future and less on the present with the steps to get there.' This introduced the second issue: forgetting the original goal. How strong can the music become if most time is invested in the business rather than equal attention to the art?

'They wanted professional business advice, so they went to this guy, and he said, "Think of the band as a baby, the name is what matters, not you guys," which to me is very wrong being a creative emotional outlet. The band is a cohort, it's a family.'

When working with friends or family, it is vital to keep professional and personal lives separate. But when you're spending 24/7 with these people, the lines can become blurred.

'L and I suddenly became closer, and I invited him over to meet some of my friends. He came up and he referred to it as "his" band, which I corrected as "our" band. He went on to say that I "helped."'

To be labelled as help seemed shortcoming... considering Amelia was organising gig venues, schedules, promotion, photography, and merch all at the time. Being in a band, wanting success and not receiving it can be stressful, which leads to more pressure placed on already tense relationships. Paranoia and mistrust began to slip into the minds of some.

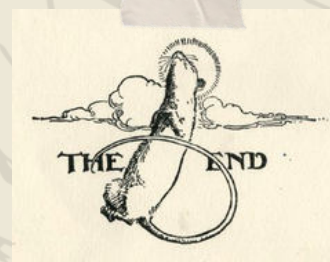
'L thought I would do some evil nefarious shit, take money or control or something but that's not me. I could never do that to someone, especially to people I care about.'

But what was it like managing her current band?

'Working with the band III is way better. These guys can talk about their emotions, they have so much passion for the music, they want to get their music recorded and out there, they confide to me. Every time they play a show, they ask how they did. We sit and they listen to me and my ideas about funding and tours and we just collaborate.'

Despite the waves of hurt that had crashed over too many times, Amelia remains firm with her ethos: 'I want to build up small bands and give them the experience of working with good people and gain the confidence to keep going.'

Forming a band from a group of friends, creating music, and jamming out in a smoke-filled room, a lit joint in one hand, what could go wrong? Well, people you originally thought were reliable are now screwing you over, egos are growing, impatience is looming over, a constant grim reaper. It must be questioned, is embracing the music worth it?



FEMALE REVOLUTIONISTS RETURN

WITH QUEERBAIT BACKING

BY ISA VELASQUEZ

The night of March 3rd was alive with anticipation. Doc Martens shuffled their way into The Tivoli while a group of girls outside compared their heavy-handed eyeliner. A young girl wearing all black—the standard uniform—kicked an old soda can as she walked to the back of the line. I whispered to my friend, ‘You see that? That’s punk.’ She rolled her eyes at me; I had been saying it all night.

Why did “punk” matter? Who were we waiting for?

Two words: Bikini Kill.

If you don’t know who they are, I hate you. That’s not true, but you are lacking in some fundamental music history knowledge.

Bikini Kill is a hardcore-punk band from the 90s that had a pivotal role in shaping the ‘riot grrrl’ genre, due to their provocative political lyrics, confrontational live shows, and in-your-face-attitude. After 25 years of absence, they have finally returned to rile up the women of Australia.

Before we dive into the raging gig, we have to talk about the inspiring support act, Queerbait, a three-piece, trans woman punk band from Meanjin (Brisbane). Ally stayed by the drums with her soft pink cat ears, Eva’s lead guitar drowned in stickers, and June stepped in with bass, her hair a striking green. The Tivoli was the largest venue they had played. One of the members confessed, ‘I’m glad the crowd is in half blackness cause your screams are really intimidating,’ which only led to more screams of excitement. They performed an array of songs, a favourite of mine being, ‘Boys are Dumb, Throw Rocks at Them’. As it just so happens, the song aligns quite well with my own personal beliefs.

Despite what you might expect from a group of battle-jacket wearing weirdos, the punks were mostly polite for the first half of Queerbait’s set. No jostling or wild banging, just slow nods and harmonies that belong in a school choir. Where was the passion? Where was the angst?

The band and I shared some surprise at the lack of fervour, so the girls had to give permission. Told everyone to let loose and headbang to their heart’s content.



QUEERBAIT EXISTING AS SEXY
HOT GIRLS

There was a moment when Queerbait stopped to discuss the recent global deaths of trans women. I remember slowly turning amongst the crowd, taking in faces that leaned in closer as they finally felt heard.

I looked up at the people on the mezzanine as their hands squeezed the balcony. I was part of something that really mattered, even if I was only a listening ear.

Queerbait knew the power of their own words. Words that Bikini Kill would continue to preach as they stepped on stage. The crowd lost all sanity, and their screams deafened my ears. Many years had passed, but they still rocked the same hairstyles they had back then.


PRIORITIES:

1. end the patriarchy
2. fight for trans
3. rights
4. start a band with
5. my girlfriends
6. have slut pride
7. strong self-worth
8. pick up the pill
9. bread
10. milk



**"IF YOU HATE WHAT WE
DO, DO SOMETHING
BETTER BECAUSE YOU
PROBABLY CAN."**

(KATHLEEN HANNA)



Kathleen Hanna sang, Tobi Vail played drums, Billy Karren played guitar, and Kathi Wilcox played bass. Bikini Kill believed that if all girls started bands, the world would change.

Hanna would speak candidly about the band's experience in the 90s, describing how the media would depict them as angry women who didn't know how to play their instruments. They continued this pattern throughout the show, singing passionately before taking a moment to share life experiences.

One moment stood out to me, one that I felt to my core. Hanna described how she became paranoid about herself in relation to the male gaze: 'I was questioning everything. Is this for the male gaze? Am I doing that for the male gaze? How did the male gaze get so in my head? It led to this fucked up thing of perfectionism. It's like a fucking disease. It's terrible'.

I was aware of this "disease" but ignorant that I had possibly become infected.


I always dress and behave differently when in public. Form fitting dresses with belts cinched too tight, heels and short skirts that make me seem taller, fitted pants to bend over in when I "accidentally" drop my pen.

If I move a certain way in this certain dress, you can catch a glimpse of my upper thigh through the slit. It sent me into a spiral. Who am I trying to impress?

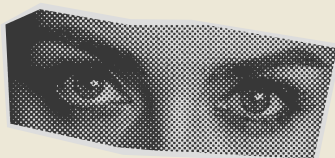
Hearing Hanna speak of her struggles made me feel less alone. It motivated me to finally seek self-acceptance, realising that there is no one way of being.

A quick tidbit of encouragement to their audience and off they'd go, yelling into the microphone about how we're stronger together. They left the stage, and we begged for an encore. 'One more song! One more song!' And as they jumped out from behind the curtains with their most popular single, 'Rebel Girl', Hanna had one last piece of advice before screaming her lungs out.

'If you hate what we do, do something better.'



'I stopped trying to figure out which part was constructed and whatever, and I realised that I am just going to be who I am now and figure it out as I go, because every day you change. Every day you walk into something new.'

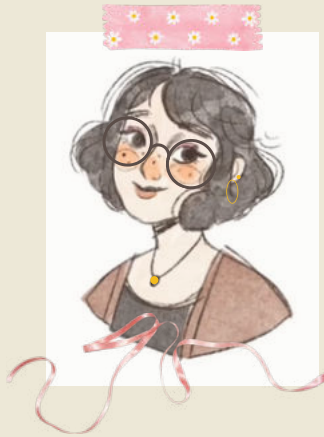




***NEW MUSIC COMING
SOON***

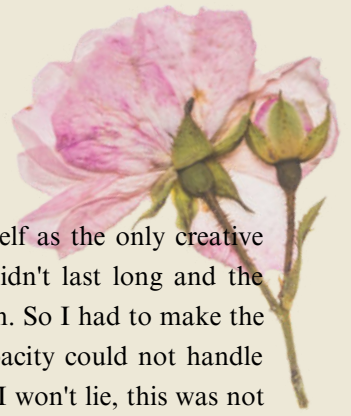
***KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR
RELEASES ON SPOTIFY***

***VENÜS, DUBLIN ROSE, LAURA FORDEN, GLASS CROW,
JORJA B, SOFIA CIRINO, RYN, MAIRA***



THE MAGAZINE CREATOR

ISA VELASQUEZ



Joining the Vermilion project, I was surprised to find myself as the only creative writer. Two weeks later I would have another but they didn't last long and the reasons behind said departure is too long of a story to begin. So I had to make the decision between creating the blog or magazine as my capacity could not handle both. Reading this, you can probably guess which I chose. I won't lie, this was not easy. Creating an entire magazine: most content, design layout, printing and delegating to an initially non-existent team was a struggle. I was lucky enough to have support from the copy editors at the ScratchThat team as well as friends who contributed content.

Without their help, this would have never been possible. Then there was the joint effort between my family and therapist to calm me down from weekly meltdowns and crises. Will I ever do this to myself again? Probably. I am so exhausted, and relieved that this is over, but I did enjoy the process and I'm so proud of what I have achieved. Now, I definitely could continue writing, but I've worked too god damn long on this dumb magazine and so please free me of my suffering and fill up the page with any thoughts or doodles.

Regards,

fill up
the page!

please
i'm
so tired
i'm begging
you

draw
anything
you like!

any thoughts?



GROOVE GARDEN

A MAGAZINE BY VERMILION

ISSUE ONE - 2023