



Inside: a chat with RAG'N'BONE MAN

# 36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BYRON BAY BLUESFEST

A CELEBRATION OF BLUES N'ROOTS MUSIC & BEYOND

## 2025

12 PAGE LIFTOUT!



**THIS EASTER WEEKEND!**  
Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April  
Byron Events Farm, Tyagarah, Byron Bay

# Echo

## Melbourne Ska Orchestra is the BOMB!

It wouldn't be Bluesfest if there wasn't something totally fun on the menu and this year, the Melbourne Ska Orchestra is the delivery boy for that pizza – if you want more than your fare share of good times, head to the MSO end of town!

Having turned 21 last year MSO is now a mature and responsible band, but it doesn't look like they're getting sensible any time soon. Formed in 2003, Melbourne Ska Orchestra is a musical force with a difference, with up to 26 members, and featuring some of Australia's finest musicians. Led by the charismatic Nicky Bomba the orchestra is more than just a band – it's an electrifying live experience.

*The Echo* caught up with Nicky Bomba very late at night and things got silly!

**How many Bluesfest have you guys done?**

Six I reckon. Our first real, proper one was in 2010 or 2009 or something.

**It must be a logistical mission to get you all up here on time and sober. How does that work?**

Lots of medication, meditation and frustration – haha. Actually, everybody in the band understands the beast that it is, and as a result, we all have a bit of a respect and understanding. It's a bit like a soccer team that travels – you just have to be professional about it. We've got a really good team after all these years – still, things pop up, but it's a bit like a family. We've been doing it for so long that when we get together it's just like old friends catching up again

**If it's a beast, does that make you the beast master?**

The beast and beat master. It's like I'm the master of ceremonies in a circus a lot of the time, but there's a lot of beautiful spontaneity that happens in the band, which is why

I love playing. Even though it's a big unit, everybody is on the same page as far as our energy and our connection with an audience. It's really important for us to make that human-musical connection. That really is why we do what we do. We want to elevate the vibe. Make the moment a better moment, and for people to walk away with something that's kind of a bit special.

**Are MSO musicians working musicians outside of the orchestra?**

Pretty much everyone is either professional, playing live in other bands, or teaching, or three of them actually run complete music programs in a couple of different schools. It's a very, very active, energised and creative bunch of people. And then, like at the moment, we're recording a new album, and the hardest thing is what songs to say 'no' to because there's such a body of work that's been presented.

**What's your current ear worm?**

There's a song that I'm doing with the orchestra called 'Spring In My Step'.

**What sort of things are you drawing on for inspiration at the moment?**

Well, the new album is, it's called *The Ballad of*

*Monte Loco*. It's a kind of fictional spaghetti western film that we're writing a soundtrack for. So that's how we're just doing things that are kind of in that world. Being inspired by the concept that we have of this album is a really good writing brief actually, it makes it easier.

**Are you having enough fun?**

I'm always having fun. I think I've tapped into the wonder of life, and how beautiful it is. We all leave this mortal coil at some particular point. So, what do we do? Well, I just get as much joy in as I can.

► Get YOUR dose of joy with Melbourne Ska Orchestra who are playing on Saturday and Sunday.



**In this guide: Full playing schedule, performer highlights + MORE!**

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# Interview with Rag'n'Bone Man

Known to the world as Rag'n'Bone Man, Rory Graham burst onto the music scene in 2016 with his breakthrough hit 'Human', a track that masterfully blended traditional blues with hip hop and introduced listeners to his powerful baritone voice.

The success of 'Human' was monumental, earning Graham widespread acclaim and propelling his debut album of the same name to 4x platinum status in the UK.

Since his debut, Graham has continued to build on his success with high-profile collaborations with artists such as Gorillaz, Logic, Calvin Harris, and Pink, who joined him on the emotive single 'Anywhere Away From Here'.

His latest collaboration is an interview with *The Echo's* entertainment editor which they did last week via Zoom:

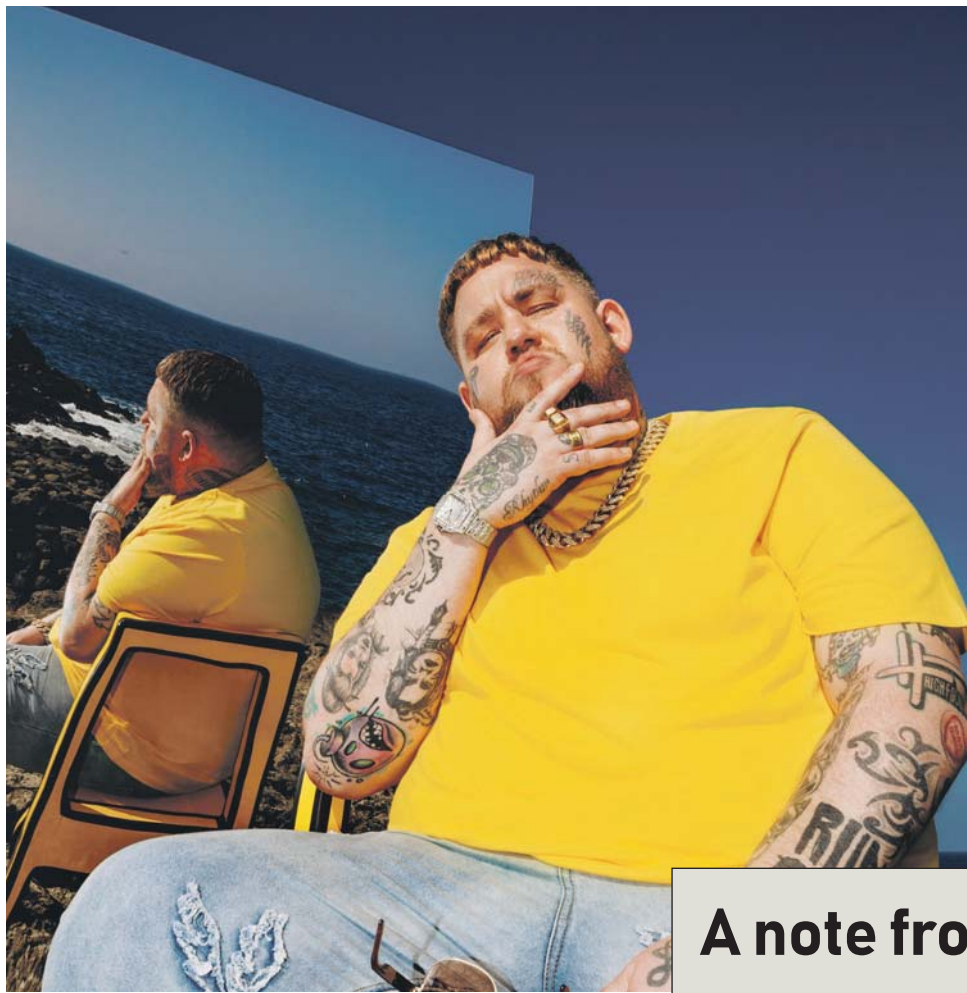
**When I'm a rich and famous rock star, I'm not going to do interviews. It must be awful having to say a lot of things over and over again?**

Well, you know what? I actually quite enjoy it. Apart from there's now and again, ones where it does seem like you are you answering age-old questions – but, you know, it keeps your mind active.

**I can see you are in your music room, where is that and what time is it?**

It is about 8.30am and yep, I am in my studio, in my garden, in Sussex.

**This is your second Bluesfest – what did you like about the last one?**



I think, meeting a lot of artists that have been going there for a long time.

**You're bringing us some new music?**

Yes, a new album – new material to play in the set. Also some of the old songs as well, because, I think you just feel a little bit like you're doing something new and the old songs don't feel kind of so stale anymore. There's kind of a new sound that comes with a new album and I generally try and bring the old songs into that sound a little bit. So we just change the arrangement maybe a little bit so that it feels kind of glued together. It just makes it feel a little bit more exciting.

**What's your current ear worm?**

Do you know what it is?

There's a new Linkin Park song. It's very 2000s kind of emo – it's Linkin Park, but there's just some other melody that is very infectious.

**What sort of things are inspiring your work at the moment?**

I've just started kind of writing stuff in the mind for what I'm going to do next. I think kind of up until now, I've always written very personally, and I've written about my own situations – heart on the sleeve kind of stuff. And when I first started trying to write new songs, I was struggling a little bit to dig deep enough to find those subjects. So I feel like I've been people watching a bit more, listening to other people's situations, and maybe just being a bit nosy and trying to figure out if I can

write from that perspective – sometimes your own life is maybe not inspiring enough. So that's what I'm going for at the moment.

**Are you sick of doing 'Human'? (Personally I love it).**

I go through periods where I think 'Oh God, not that again', but in the next breath, when I play it and I see the reaction live and then I don't feel that anymore. I kind of feel nothing but gratitude, really.

**What's great about Bluesfest?**

Well, I think for me, from someone who has gone to a lot of festivals in my life, particularly in the UK, so many of the festivals here are so sort of based on chart success. Bluesfest is really open to everybody, yeah. And although it's called 'Bluesfest', it's very eclectic. Hopefully I'll get to spend more than one

day, that's always hard when it's a festival that we actually really want to be at, from a fan of music's perspective, you know? Hopefully we'll get to see some people.

**Are you having enough fun?**

Yeah, 100 per cent. I love this as much as I did, if not more, than I did when I first started. I kind of thought I'd get tired of touring, but I just don't, and I just I want to be on the road as much as possible. Obviously, I miss family when I'm away, but being on stage is still the thing that I love the most.

**Are you getting any more ink?**

It's weird you say that because my missus has literally just gone down today to get a new tattoo. I'm a bit jealous.

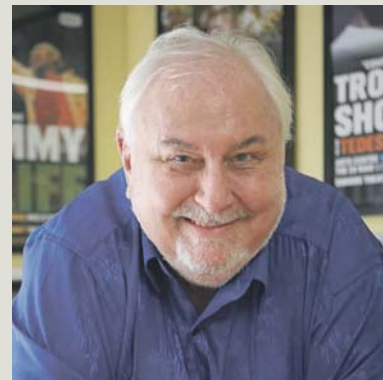
■ See Rag'n'Bone Man and maybe some new ink on Easter Sunday at Bluesfest.

## A note from the Festival Director

As Bluesfest 2025 draws near, the atmosphere feels electric. Whether you've been part of the journey since the early days, or are joining us for the first time, I want to warmly welcome you to this incredible celebration of music, community, and connection.

Now in our 36th year, Bluesfest continues to grow, not just in size, but in spirit. What began as a humble gathering has become a world-renowned event, where artists from across the globe and music lovers from all walks of life come together under the Byron sky.

This year, something truly extraordinary is happening on **Friday**, a guitar and blues masterclass that is unlike anything else in the country. We're proud to host the legendary **Steve Lukather** of Toto, one of the world's most revered guitarists.



**George Thorogood** will bring his *Bad to the Bone* swagger, while **Gary Clark Jr.**, Grammy-winner and modern blues icon, delivers his signature mix of fiery guitar work and soul-stirring vocals.

But it doesn't stop there. We're also welcoming **Tom Morello**, a true

innovator who's reshaped modern rock with every note he plays. Add in rising stars like **Christone 'Kingfish' Ingram** and Australia's own **Taj Farrant**, and Friday becomes an unmissable day for anyone who loves music that moves the soul.

With just days to go, it's time to get festival-ready. Lock in your tickets, plan your journey, and prepare for a truly unforgettable Bluesfest. See you there!

**Peter Noble OAM,**  
Festival Director

## Visiting the Byron Shire with a four-legged friend?

### Here's what you need to know:

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# So many great acts...

Where else to start than at the beginning?  
Read on for many of this year's standout acts.



## OCEAN ALLEY

Following the success of their fourth album, *Low Altitude Living*, Ocean Alley has continued their meteoric rise, selling over 160,000 tickets across Australia, the UK, Europe, North America, and New Zealand in 2023 and 2024 alone. The album debuted at #3 on the ARIA Albums Chart and #5 on the NZ Top 40 Albums Chart. As they continue to expand their devoted following, they are poised to leave an indelible mark on the global music scene for years to come.

*Thursday at Crossroads*

## TONES AND I

Tones And I, an inimitable vocalist, clever lyricist, and inventive producer, has redefined the scope of pop music with her unique and unpredictable anthems. Bursting onto the global stage in 2019 as a busker from the Mornington Peninsula in Australia, she quickly became a sensation with her breakout hit 'Dance Monkey'. With over 12 billion streams and five ARIA Awards to her name Tones And I has solidified her place as a global pop powerhouse.

*Thursday at Crossroads*

## CHRISTONE 'KINGFISH' INGRAM

Grammy-winning guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter Christone 'Kingfish' Ingram has swiftly emerged as the defining blues voice of his generation. Hailing from Clarksdale, Mississippi, Kingfish has taken his electrifying blues sound from local juke joints to stages around the globe.

*Thursday and Friday at Mojo*

## MAOLI

Hailed as Hawaii and Polynesia's No. 1 independent commercial recording artist, Maoli, has captivated audiences worldwide with infectious sound and remarkable talent. Fronted by Glenn Awong, the band formed in 2007 and has since toured extensively across the US, New Zealand, Australia, and the South Pacific, spreading their unique blend of island-inspired music.

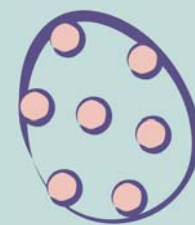
*Thursday and Friday at Crossroads*

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### TOM MORELLO

Grammy-winning, Harvard-educated, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame-inducted artist, songwriter, and activist Tom Morello is living proof of the transformative power of rock'n'roll. Known for his innovative guitar solos and thunderous chords, Morello is a groundbreaking artist both in his solo career and as an original member of the rock bands Rage Against the Machine and Audioslave – two acts responsible for multiple Grammy Awards and a combined 30 million albums sold worldwide.

Thursday and Friday at Mojo

### BUDJERAH

Coodjinburra artist Budjerah's rise over the past two years has been nothing short of meteoric. With two acclaimed EPs and collaborations with artists like Pnau and May-a, he has earned recognition for his soulful voice and dynamic performances. Guided by mentor Matt Corby, Budjerah's evolution as an artist is clear, and his ambition to deliver arena-worthy shows inspired by Usher and Beyoncé is palpable. Armed with his new band and a string of accolades, including APRA and Rolling Stone nominations, Budjerah is ready to cement his place as one of Australia's most exciting performers.

Thursday at Crossroads, Friday at Delta

### HERE COME THE MUMMIES

Here Come the Mummies (HCTM) is a high-energy eight-piece funk-rock band with a twist: they're 5,000-year-old Egyptian mummies with a singular focus on bringing their, 'Terrifying funk from beyond the grave' to life. Their infectious grooves and enigmatic personas have made them a phenomenon across North America, with fans enthralled by their electrifying performances and mysterious backstory. Whether they're reincarnated Grammy-winning studio musicians or cursed souls from ancient Egypt, one thing is certain – HCTM know how to bring the funk.

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## CROSSROADS

21.30 - 23.00 OCEAN ALLEY  
20.00 - 21.00 TONES AND I  
18.30 - 19.30 MAOLI  
17.00 - 18.00 BUD-JERAH  
15.30 - 16.30 VELVET TRIP  
14.45 - 15.00 WELCOME TO COUNTRY

## MOJO

22.00 - 23.00 TOM MORELLO  
20.30 - 21.30 CHRISTONE 'KINGFISH' INGRAM  
19.00 - 20.00 TAJ FARRANT  
17.30 - 18.30 NEAL FRANCIS EXCLUSIVE  
16.00 - 17.00 DON WEST

## DELTA

22.30 - 23.30 HERE COME THE MUMMIES EXCLUSIVE  
21.00 - 22.00 CIMAFUNK EXCLUSIVE  
19.30 - 20.30 MELODY ANGEL EXCLUSIVE  
18.00 - 19.00 NAHKO  
16.30 - 17.30 PIERCE BROTHERS  
15.00 - 16.00 ELECTRIC CADILLAC



### MELODY ANGEL

Melody Angel is a dynamic blues-rock artist, often described as a cross between Tina Turner and Jimi Hendrix. With a voice that channels Turner's soulful power, and guitar skills reminiscent of Hendrix's electric energy, Angel brings a magnetic presence to every stage she graces. Deeply rooted in Chicago's blues legacy as the cousin of blues legend Otis Rush, she infuses her music with both heritage and innovation.

*Playing all four days*

### TAJ FARRANT

Australia's guitar prodigy has captured the attention of music lovers worldwide with his extraordinary talent and captivating performances. Born in 2006, Taj Farrant rose to fame on social media where his impressive covers of popular songs showcased his unique style and technical prowess. Despite his young age, he has already collaborated with several notable artists and earned recognition for his contribution to the music industry. His passion for music and dedication to his craft are evident in every note he plays.

*Thursday, Friday and Sunday*

### ELECTRIC CADILLAC

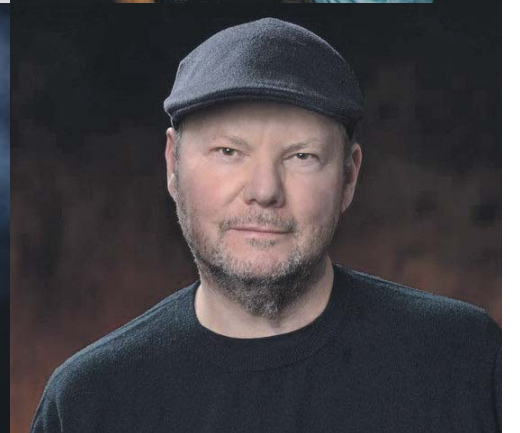
An Indonesian blues-rock band, based in Jakarta, Electric Cadillac's sound has been characterised as a hybrid of blues, Chicago blues mixed with soul, funk and energised rock, combining blues guitar, a powerful voice (you won't forget for your entire life), deep blues and jazz piano groovy basslines and a beat and groove that keeps the whole thing together.

*Thursday at Delta, Saturday at Jambalaya*

### CHRISTOPHER CROSS

Christopher Cross burst onto the music scene in 1980 with his self-titled debut album, making Grammy history by sweeping the big four awards: Record of the Year and Song of the Year for the iconic 'Sailing', Album of the Year, and Best New Artist. Over his four-decade career, Cross has sold over 10 million albums and earned five Grammys, an Oscar, a Golden Globe, and five top-10 singles, solidifying his place among music's elite.

*Friday at Crossroads*





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## TOTO

You only have to hear the name Toto and your brain automatically responds ‘... Rosanna yeh!’ – Toto continues to reach monumental milestones in 2025, cementing their legacy as one of the most enduring and beloved bands in rock history. Toto’s influence extends beyond their own records, as the band’s members have contributed to countless Grammy-winning albums across genres. Together, they continue to captivate audiences worldwide, proving that Toto’s music transcends time and trends.

Friday at Crossroads

## THE STEELE SYNDICATE

Winners of the 2024 Bluesfest Busking Competition, The Steele Syndicate is a funk-rock powerhouse that delivers a live experience like no other – think rock meets horns in an explosive fusion that leaves no room for still feet. With no backing tracks in sight, this Brisbane-based octet showcases world-class musicianship and a relentless onslaught of anthemic funk-rock brilliance. Their genre-bending sound guarantees an unforgettable time.

Friday at Jambalaya

## GEORGE THOROGOOD & THE DESTROYERS

‘That’s all pretty good for the first 50 years,’ says George Thorogood with a laugh. ‘But we keep working harder, digging deeper and playing stronger. Now it’s time to go back out there and do some serious rockin.’ Serious rockin’ will always be what they do best. And for 2025, they will bring the guitar-slinging, amp-blasting, roof-shaking rock party like never before.

Friday at Mojo

## GARY CLARK JR

Anyone who has listened to a Gary Clark Jr album or watched the four-time Grammy Award winner perform live knows that he’s a gifted multi-instrumentalist, songwriter and performer. ‘Blues will always be my foundation,’ says Clark. ‘But that’s just scratching the surface. I’m also a beat maker and an impressionist who likes to do different voices. I’ve always loved theatre and being able to tell a story.’

Friday and Saturday at Mojo

## THE BEARDS

After bidding farewell in 2016 with a massive farewell tour, legendary Australian propaganda rock band The Beards are reuniting exclusively for Bluesfest 2025. Formed in 2005 with a singular mission to ignite a global beard revolution, the South Australian four-piece became a beloved mainstay of the Australian live music scene. Known for their musicianship, signature humour, and interactive live shows, The Beards built a large, devoted following by performing songs about one topic – beards.

Friday and Saturday at Jambalaya

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**CROSSROADS**

22.00 - 23.30 TOTO  
20.30 - 21.30 CHRISTOPHER CROSS  
19.00 - 20.00 MAOLI  
17.30 - 18.30 BRAD COX  
16.00 - 17.00 FANNY LUMSDEN  
14.30 - 15.30 ASH GRUNWALD  
13.00 - 14.00 PIERCE BROTHERS

**MOJO**

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15.30 - 16.30 TAJ FARRANT  
14.00 - 15.00 MARC BROUSSARD  
12.30 - 13.30 MELODY ANGEL EXCLUSIVE

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16.00 - 17.00 NEAL FRANCIS EXCLUSIVE  
14.30 - 15.30 VELVET TRIP  
13.00 - 14.00 ROSHANI

**JAMBALAYA**

22.30 - 23.30 THE CALIFORNIA HONEYDROPS EXCLUSIVE  
21.00 - 22.00 LACHY DOLEY GROUP  
19.30 - 20.30 THE BEARDS  
18.00 - 19.00 NAHKO  
16.30 - 17.30 FOOLS  
15.00 - 16.00 THE MEMPHIS THREE  
13.30 - 14.30 THE STEELE SYNDICATE 2024 BUSKING OVER 18 WINNER  
12.00 - 13.00 THE ROYALS 2024 BUSKING GROMMET WINNER

**ASH GRUNWALD**

Renowned for his electrifying live performances, Ash Grunwald has inspired a generation with his signature blend of blues and roots. Known for his 'surf by day, jam by night' ethos, Grunwald has become a festival favourite, delivering high-energy shows filled with gritty guitars and foot-stomping rhythms. As both troubadour and storyteller, he's captivated audiences across Australia, selling out venues with his dynamic stage presence.

Friday at Crossroads and Saturday at Jambalaya

**ALLISON RUSSELL**

Grammy-winning artist Allison Russell is a masterful storyteller, weaving powerful narratives through her music that resonate deeply with listeners. A self-taught singer, songwriter, poet, activist, and multi-instrumentalist, Russell has redefined modern artistry since the release of her first solo album just three years ago. Her work, from the soul-stirring *Outside Child*, a celebration of survivors' joy, to the expansive and liberating sounds of *The Returner*, has established her as one of the most vital voices in contemporary music. Russell's artistry transcends expectations, affirming her place as a trailblazer in the 21st century.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday



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## XAVIER RUDD

One of the Australian music industry's most enduring talents, Xavier Rudd has spent over 20 years touching lives with his uplifting, socially-conscious music. From his 2002 debut album *To Let*, fans were drawn to his incredible multi-instrumental abilities and his deep commitment to social and environmental activism. Over the years, Xavier's live performances have evolved from full band and trio setups to his current internationally acclaimed one-man band showcase, a complex and immersive experience that highlights his unparalleled artistry.

**Saturday at Crossroads**

## CROWDED HOUSE

For more than four decades, Crowded House leader Neil Finn has been on an evolving, winding journey. Crowded House's mid-eighties hits like 'Don't Dream It's Over' and 'Something So Strong', combined with albums like *Woodface* and *Together Alone*, set the standard for the period's erudite jangle-pop while always pushing the band's art forward.

**Saturday at Crossroads**

## VANCE JOY

Australian singer/songwriter Vance Joy burst onto the global music scene with his 2013 hit 'Riptide', a ukulele-led anthem that quickly became a worldwide classic. Known for his intimate yet anthemic songwriting, Vance Joy has proven himself as a unique and powerful voice in modern music. His songs, a delicate yet celebratory mix of folk and pop, capture the essence of everyday experiences, making them universally relatable and deeply personal for listeners worldwide.

**Saturday at Crossroads**

## THE CAT EMPIRE

Aussie icons The Cat Empire kicked off 2023 with a revitalised lineup, as Felix Riebl and Ollie McGill continued to lead the charge, preserving the vibrant energy and exhilarating musicality that fans know and love. The Cat Empire's electrifying performances have captivated sold-out audiences across Europe, the UK, North America, and Australia. This year, they embarked on a massive 40-date world tour, including a standout set at Glastonbury Festival.

**Saturday at Mojo**

## MISS KANINNA

A proud Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung, Kalkadoon, and Yirendali woman, Miss Kaninna is a Naarm-based (Melbourne) First Nations artist hailing from lutruwita/Tasmania. Bursting onto the scene with her debut single 'Blak Britney' in May 2023, the rapper, singer, and songwriter has quickly become a powerful voice of punk and protest in Australia. Raised on the shores of Bruny Island, Miss Kaninna has been commanding stages from a young age, blending the storytelling traditions of her ancestors with her own experiences as a young Black woman on stolen land.

**Saturday at Mojo and Sunday at Crossroads**

## MELBOURNE SKA ORCHESTRA

Formed in 2003, Melbourne Ska Orchestra is a musical force with a difference, boasting up to 26 members and featuring some of Australia's finest musicians. Led by the charismatic Nicky Bomba (John Butler Trio, Bomba, Bustamento), the orchestra is more than just a band—it's an electrifying live experience.

Known for their explosive and infectious performances, Melbourne Ska Orchestra has wowed audiences worldwide with their dynamic take on ska, seamlessly blending energetic rhythms with show-stopping musicianship.

**Saturday Mojo, Sunday Delta**

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<b>Saturday</b> 10:45AM - 6:00PM	<b>Easter Day</b> 11:00AM - 5:00PM

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## CROSSROADS

21.30 - 23.00 CROWDED HOUSE  
20.00 - 21.00 VANCE JOY  
18.00 - 19.30 XAVIER RUDD  
16.30 - 17.30 RY X  
15.00 - 16.00 ALLISON RUSSELL  
13.30 - 14.30 WILSN  
12.00 - 13.00 CLARENCE BEKKER BAND FEAT ERIC STANG AND FRIENDS

## MOJO

22.00 - 23.00 HERE COME THE MUMMIES EXCLUSIVE  
20.30 - 21.30 THE CAT EMPIRE  
19.00 - 20.00 GARY CLARK JR  
17.30 - 18.30 MELBOURNE SKA ORCHESTRA  
16.00 - 17.00 BJ THE CHICAGO KID  
14.30 - 15.30 MISS KANINNA  
13.00 - 14.00 19-TWENTY

## DELTA

22.30 - 23.30 THE CALIFORNIA HONEYDROPS EXCLUSIVE  
21.00 - 22.00 MARC BROUSSARD  
19.30 - 20.30 C.W. STONEKING  
18.00 - 19.00 HUSSY HICKS  
16.30 - 17.30 FOOLS  
15.00 - 16.00 SWEET TALK  
13.30 - 14.30 THE MEMPHIS THREE

## JAMBALAYA

22.00 - 23.00 THE BEARDS  
20.30 - 21.30 FANNY LUMSDEN  
19.00 - 20.00 ELECTRIC CADILLAC  
17.30 - 18.30 CLARENCE BEKKER BAND  
16.00 - 17.00 ASH GRUNWALD  
14.30 - 15.30 KIM CHURCHILL  
13.00 - 14.00 MELODY ANGEL EXCLUSIVE  
11.30 - 12.30 LOCAL AREA HIGH SCHOOL SHOWCASE

### C.W. STONEKING

C.W. Stoneking is an Australian-American singer, musician, and recording artist known for his genre-blending sound that fuses early 20th century blues, jazz, gospel, and folk influences. Stoneking has earned a devoted international following. His distinctive blend of musical traditions creates a sound entirely his own – his music is a testament to his unique ability to reinterpret and revitalize vintage genres while crafting something new and deeply original.

Saturday at Delta and Sunday at Jambalaya

### WILSN

The Geelong-born Shannon Busch, known to her fans as WILSN, is a powerhouse vocalist whose voice commands attention with its blend of classic soul and contemporary flair. After moving to Melbourne to study jazz at the prestigious VCA she drew inspiration from legendary soul and jazz singers like Billie Holiday, Etta James, and Aretha Franklin. WILSN's music pays homage to these greats while infusing her own personality and modern sensibilities into each track, creating a sound that is both timeless and fresh.

Saturday and Sunday at Crossroads

### KIM CHURCHILL

Hailing from the coastal town of Merimbula, Kim Churchill has made waves as a gifted songwriter and performer, previously crowned Australia's National Youth Folk Artist of the Year and nominated for Roots Act of the Year at the National Live Music Awards.

Saturday at Jambalaya and Sunday at Delta



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### More information

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**CROSSROADS**

22.30 - 23.30 HILLTOP HOODS  
20.45 - 22.00 RAG'N'BONE MAN  
19.15 - 20.15 RODRIGO Y GABRIELA  
17.45 - 18.45 CIMA FUNK EXCLUSIVE  
16.15 - 17.15 MISS KANINNA  
14.45 - 15.45 BJ THE CHICAGO KID  
13.15 - 14.15 WILSN

**MOJO**

21.30 - 22.45 CHAKA KHAN  
19.45 - 21.00 MISSY HIGGINS  
18.15 - 19.15 JOHN BUTLER  
16.45 - 17.45 KASEY CHAMBERS  
15.15 - 16.15 19-TWENTY  
13.45 - 14.45 NEAL FRANCIS EXCLUSIVE  
12.15 - 13.15 ROSHANI

**DELTA**

22.00 - 23.00 MELBOURNE SKA ORCHESTRA  
20.30 - 21.30 HERE COME THE MUMMIES EXCLUSIVE  
19.00 - 20.00 RY X  
17.30 - 18.30 ALLISON RUSSELL  
16.00 - 17.00 THE CALIFORNIA HONEYDROPS EXCLUSIVE  
14.30 - 15.30 HUSSY HICKS  
13.00 - 14.00 KIM CHURCHILL

**JAMBALAYA**

22.30 - 23.30 TAJ FARRANT  
21.00 - 22.00 C.W. STONEKING  
19.30 - 20.30 LACHY DOLEY GROUP  
18.00 - 19.00 MELODY ANGEL EXCLUSIVE  
16.30 - 17.30 SWEET TALK  
15.00 - 16.00 ERIC STANG  
13.30 - 14.30 2025 BUSKING OVER 18 WINNER  
12.00 - 13.00 2025 BUSKING GROMMET WINNER



**HUSSY HICKS**

Hussy Hicks, winners of the 2024 GCMA Live Act of the Year, have spent the last decade captivating audiences with their distinctive fusion of folk, blues, country, and roots. Renowned for their creative drive and boundary-pushing artistry, this Australian powerhouse duo has earned their reputation as festival favorites both at home and abroad. With their innovative sound and magnetic live performances, Hussy Hicks are unstoppable – if you haven't yet hopped on board, now's the perfect time to join the journey.

**Saturday and Sunday at Delta**

**KASEY CHAMBERS**

Kasey Chambers is an Australian country music icon whose distinctive voice, heartfelt lyrics, and world-class performances have made her one of the most popular and acclaimed artists of her generation. Widely credited with bringing Australian country music into the mainstream, Chambers has earned 14 ARIA Awards, 24 CMAA Golden Guitars, and 10 APRA songwriting awards. Known for her authenticity and dedication to her craft, Kasey continues to inspire fans around the world with her timeless music and unwavering passion.

**Sunday at Mojo**

**CHAKA KHAN**

Chaka Khan is a living legend whose music and influence have shaped the soundscape of the past 50 years. Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2023, she has earned ten Grammy Awards and captivated audiences worldwide with her seamless fusion of pop, soul, jazz, gospel, and funk. From her groundbreaking work with Rufus and their hit 'Tell Me Something Good' to her solo classics like 'I'm Every Woman', Chaka's unmatched vocal talent and fearless artistry have cemented her as an icon. Chaka Khan's ability to transcend genres, break barriers, and uplift hearts has made her a timeless figure whose influence only grows stronger with time.

**Sunday at Mojo**

**HILLTOP HOODS**

Hilltop Hoods stormed back in 2023 with their latest single 'Laced Up', following a massive 2022 that saw them perform six sold-out arena shows and release hits 'Show Business' ft Eamon and 'A Whole Day's Night' ft Montaigne and Tom Thum. Making Triple J's Hottest 100 history with the most song entries in the countdown, their tally now stands at 23. With a legacy that includes 1.6 billion streams, ten ARIA Awards, and over 75 platinum accreditations, Hilltop Hoods are a force in Australian music. As they gear up for their next chapter, their influence on hip hop and Australian music remains unrivalled.

**Sunday at Crossroads**

**JOHN BUTLER**

John Butler stands as one of Australia's premier alternative songwriters and storytellers, with a career marked by #1 charting albums, platinum records, and multiple ARIA Awards. Butler's rich catalogue of hits, including iconic tracks like 'Zebra', 'Better Than', and 'Ocean', has cemented his place in the global music scene. Known for his high-energy live performances, Butler has graced some of the world's most iconic stages and festivals, from Glastonbury and Coachella to Fuji Rock and Red Rocks Amphitheatre. Butler continues to evolve with new instrumental and beat-driven albums reminding fans why he remains one of the world's finest singer-songwriters and musicians.

**Sunday at Mojo**

**RODRIGO Y GABRIELA**

Rodrigo y Gabriela, the Grammy-winning guitar duo, have captivated global audiences with their unique blend of classic rock and heavy metal influences. Starting as buskers on Dublin's Grafton Street, they quickly gained recognition for their electrifying live performances and released their debut album *Re-Foc* in 2002. Over the years, they've continued to push musical boundaries with acclaimed albums like *Area 52* (featuring a Cuban orchestra), *9 Dead Alive*, and their Grammy-winning *Mettavolution*.

**Sunday at Crossroads**

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FARMERS MARKET**

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EVERY FRIDAY 7AM-11AM**

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ANOTHER ONE BITES THE CRUST**  
GOOD FRIDAY 7AM-11AM

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SOUND  
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GOOD TIMES WITH  
BLUESFEST  
KEEP THE ARTS  
ALIVE**

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# Interview with Ash Grunwald

Playing two home turf shows on the weekend, Ash Grunwald has inspired a generation with his signature blend of blues and roots. Known for his 'surf by day, jam by night' ethos – also the title of his first book – Grunwald has become a festival favourite, delivering high-energy shows filled with gritty guitars and foot-stomping rhythms. If you're looking for blues at Bluesfest, he's your first stop. Last week Ash spoke to *The Echo* on his return home from a very long tour.

**Ash, how many Bluesfests have you performed at?**

10! This will be number 11.

**What is something memorable about your last show at Bluesfest?**

Well last time, it being my tenth Bluesfest, I recorded an album called *The Bluesfest studio sessions*. That was with my three-piece at the time, those gigs were special. I still think that first one back after Covid was the most special though – owing to the weird laws of the time some people couldn't make their shows at Tyagarah and other people had to sit-in with each other's bands. I got to front Chain for a couple of songs. Then I was playing with Josh Teskey in our duo – AND doing my own band thing. So it was fun!

**Do you have new music for this show?**

Yeah, I've got a new song called 'Glide' I'm doing all the time, and the single before that was called 'Feeling Better', so I'll be doing that too.



**Are you bringing a band this time?**

I'm solo – I've been touring the country doing my one-man band, that's how I started at Bluesfest so I thought it fitting that I end it like that.

**What are you loving about playing music at the moment?**

I've been having the time of my life lately just leaning into the solo thing and trying to perfect my craft through touring extensively.

**What is your current earworm?**

Hahaha, Pete and Bas. Have a listen. They're too 75-year-old pommy geezers who are the best rappers you've ever heard in your life!

**Are you having enough fun?**

I try to keep my froth levels high in life. If they drop, I make dramatic changes.

**Is there anyone you are looking forward to seeing at Bluesfest?**

Rag'n'Bone Man – I'm addicted to his voice and I cover his song 'Human'. But, this lineup will be one to remember.

**I know you were born 'down south' but does Bluesfest feel like a home town show for you?**

Yes it does feel like a home town thing and that's awesome because I'm originally from Melbourne and to play Bluesfest was my dream, because it literally combined not just blues and roots, but also quite bluesy, actual blues, with the whole vibe of Byron Bay and surfing was peaches and cream for me. It was a dream to play the festival. I used to travel up to Byron in the late '90s and loved it, and to think I've ended up playing ten of them and called this area home for the last 16 years, is quite amazing – it's not lost on me and it's something that I really appreciate.

**Do you have any special guests for this show?**

Well, yes, very special – special for me because I am going to get my daughter Sunny up to sing a song with me. A little Bill Withers classic. It represents something really significant to me to have the next generation coming through – as I possibly play my last Bluesfest – it's very special.

■ Ash Grunwald plays Friday and Saturday at Bluesfest.

## Getting to the festival

[www.bluesfest.com.au/getting-to-bluesfest](http://www.bluesfest.com.au/getting-to-bluesfest)

### SHUTTLE BUSES

The following services are correct as of 15 April and are subject to change.

**SUFFOLK PARK, BYRON BAY:** Shuttle buses will run approximately every 40–60 minutes (subject to traffic). Thursday buses start 1pm. Friday, Saturday and Sunday buses start 11am. Buses stop at the Shell Service Station, Suffolk Park; Ingenia Holiday Park, Broken Head Road; Byron Bay Bus Exchange (Butler Street); Belongil Fields. **Return ticket: \$25.**

**MULLUMBIMBY, BRUNSWICK HEADS:** The Thursday shuttle will depart Mullum at 5.15pm. Friday, Saturday and Sunday buses will run from 11am till 12.30am approximately every 40–60 minutes. Buses stop at Stuart Street Newsagency, Mullumbimby; Park Street Bus Zone, Brunswick Heads. **Return ticket: \$25.**

**BILLINUDGEL, OCEAN SHORES, SGB, NB:** The Thursday shuttle will depart Billinudgel at 4pm. Friday, Saturday and Sunday buses will run from 12pm till 3pm approximately every 60 minutes. Buses stop at Billi Bakehouse; Balemo Drive (motel end); Shara Boulevard SDA Church; South Golden Beach Shop; New Brighton Shop, Orana Road top roundabout, Ocean Village Shopping Centre. **Return ticket: \$25.**

**BANGALOW:** The Thursday shuttle will depart at 4.30pm. Friday, Saturday and Sunday buses will run from 12pm till 3pm approximately every 30 minutes. Buses stop at the Station Street Bus Stop. **Return ticket: \$25.**

Services also run north to Kingscliff and Kirra (tickets \$60 return), and south to Lennox Head and Ballina (tickets \$50 return).

### PARKING

The festival car parks, in the north and south of the site are accessible from Tanner Lane and Yarun Road. There is an area set aside for disabled parking. Pre-book parking online as there will be limited facility to purchase on site.

Pre-paid parking will cost \$25 per single day.

3-day parking is \$60 plus fees. 4-day parking is \$80 plus fees.

Tickets are available to purchase via [www.bluesfest.com.au/tickets](http://www.bluesfest.com.au/tickets).

Don't park on the local road network around the Bluesfest site. Council parking rangers will be on patrol throughout the weekend.

### PICK UP AND DROP OFF AREA

The pick-up and drop-off area is at the south gate entrance.



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