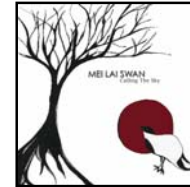


Mei Lai Swan

Biography



The branding 'unique' is bandied about far too often when it comes to musicians and the art they practice – but in the case of cellist and songstress Mei Lai Swan it's entirely appropriate. Originally from Melbourne, she moved to Alice Springs for what was supposed to be a brief stint in the desert and more than two years later has the red dirt stuck under her fingernails and can't seem to leave. Instead she emerged onto the national music scene with her stunning debut EP titled 'The Morning Tree'. With arrangements including full strings, horns and breakbeats, 'it is the lush sound of the cello and her unique captivating voice that make Mei Lai's music so enticing' (Triple J Unearthed). The depth and enchanting quality of her lyrical music is grounded in a love of songwriting, a gift for the unexpected and a keen sense for just being human.

Mei Lai cut her musical teeth as celtic fusion band Lothlorien's violinist and as a session musician with acclaimed Melbourne artists such as Ned Collette, Carl Pannuzzo, and Love Outside Andromeda. She has performed on the international stage with Chamber Made Opera and composes for theatre, circus and film.

With this wealth of experience behind her, in 2006 Mei Lai moved to Alice Springs to escape the big city and delve into community development work with remote Aboriginal communities. In her spare time she started performing as a solo cellist-singer-songwriter and very quickly impressed the locals, supporting Tecoma's Live At The Lane recording and receiving press and radio interviews. She happily secured grants from both the Australia Council and Arts NT to record her debut EP, The Morning Tree.

Released independently in September last year, and accompanied by a national tour that kicked off with a stand-out gig at the Darwin Festival, 'The Morning Tree' has since received airplay, reviews and interviews all around the country and is now being distributed through Vitamin Records.

2008 has seen this busy young lady go from strength to strength. She's won Triple J Unearthed's Top Song competition for the NT, been singled out from the crowd to perform key showcase events and festivals across the country, and been chosen to attend select industry workshops including the JB Seed Management Workshop.

Amongst this she's still found time to head back into the studio to record a brand new single 'Calling The Sky', a gorgeous tune with a few twists and quirks that celebrates the expansiveness of finding one's little heart of joy and setting it free. Now Mei Lai is taking to the road to promote the exclusive iTunes release of this new delight, enchanting folk all over the country from the desert to the city to the sea and back again. And make sure you keep an ear out for her debut album currently in the making. Although that shouldn't be hard – this is one artist we're certain to be hearing a lot more of in the near future.

What others have said:

"With a Tori Amos-meets-Björk feel, the hypnotic music transports you to a melodic heaven."

Jane Armistead (Rave Magazine)

"Here – from seemingly out of nowhere – was a musician that I think has all the confidence, talent and originality to make it as a major artist."

Stuart Buchanan (Fat Planet)

"Absolutely beautiful."

Jacinta Parsons (Triple R)

A "one-of-a-kind multi-skilled iceberg."

Time Off Magazine

"The quality of Mei Lai's work apparent in her song writing and performance has led me to regard her as a true artist."

Amira Pyliotis (aka Tecoma)

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