



Melissa Abigail Western was born in Manchester, England ... the only daughter of a jazz-singing English father and an award-winning Sri Lankan model mother. Over the past ten years she has performed to audience and critical acclaim locally in Brisbane, nationally throughout Australia and internationally in the UK and France, singing, acting and dancing in shows and cabarets, writing and producing new works and singing with a variety of ensembles. In 2010 she released her first debut CD, *Stepping Stone* and gave birth to her first child.

2011 highlights include performing for Premier Anna Bligh's Heroes Ceremony at Suncorp Piazza, performing sold out seasons of *Oh, Lady Be Good* at The Jazz Bar in Edinburgh and *Blind Tiger*, London, critical acclaim and official "Sold Out" status for her show *Baby Loves Singing, Dancing and YOU!* at the Edinburgh Festival. Other performance and venues highlights over the past two years include being hand-picked as the feature performer for former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's Australia Day reception, writing, recording and releasing her first original CD *Stepping Stone*, touring Queensland with Premier Anna Bligh for her Christmas Concerts (2009, 2010 and 2011), UK tour (Lincolnshire/Nottinghamshire), *Lush Life* and *Ella, Marilyn, Marlene and Me* - Edinburgh Fringe Festival, The Jazz Bar - Edinburgh, *Women in Voice* - QPAC, The Vault - Edinburgh Fringe Festival, L'église - Avaux (France), Powerhouse Theatre - Brisbane Cabaret Festival, Brisbane Jazz Club, Speigeltent - Qld Music Festival, Woodford Folk Festival, Valley Jazz Festival, Mackay Entertainment Centre, Adelaide Fringe Festival, The Tivoli, Gold Coast Jazz and Blues Festival, The Basement - Gold Coast Arts Centre, La Boite Theatre, Zen Zen Zo Physical Theatre.

By turns sassy, soulful, smart and sweet, Melissa straddles the worlds of jazz, cabaret and theatre. She's widely considered a 'pocket dynamite' who delights in unleashing her unique style of entertainment onto an eager audience. Her self-penned musical *Ella, Marilyn, Marlene and Me* was an official sell-out at the 2008 and 2007 Edinburgh Fringe Festivals, garnering a five star review from ThreeWeeks "absolutely brilliant... entralling vocal talents wowed the audience" and four stars from The Scotsman "Melissa Western is on fire... it's mainly about the eyes, the face and the voice."

Melissa Western

Melissa Western is a high level corporate entertainer having been booked by many top ranking Government departments statewide and federal. Melissa was chosen to perform with her band as the featured entertainment for Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's Australia Day Reception at the Queensland Art Gallery in January 2010; Melissa has been the feature vocalist for Queensland Premier Anna Bligh's 2010 Hero's Day at Southbank and her Regional Christmas Concert series in 2009, 2010 and 2011; she performed jazzy Australian pop tunes, the National Anthem and feature songs at the 2009 Premier's Queensland Citizenship Ceremony at the Suncorp Piazza in Southbank in 2009; she was the feature vocalist at the Official Australia Day Ceremony in January 2008 performing at Southbank with the Royal Australian Army Band - officials including the Brisbane Lord Mayor, Queensland Governor and State Government ministers. She also performed multiple times for the Queensland State Library, Queensland Art Gallery and Brisbane City Council at various events over the past eight years.

A favourite for corporate balls and awards nights, Melissa can appear with any number of backings, from intimate duo right up to 17-piece big band.

"Western's gorgeous singing voice serves her well" The Australian

"Firstly – thank you so much for being an absolute delight and providing such a beautiful element to the ceremony on Sunday. You were wonderful. The pre-entertainment by the band was just perfect, your National Anthem rendition, Lean on Me! All of it was just perfect for the occasion – and was clearly appreciated by all of the audience as well with their clapping!" Queensland Premier's Events Department

"Western is not only charismatic and engaging, but she has a warmth in her performance that transcends technique and training to create an onstage presence only very rarely seen." Musical Theatre Matters Awards [UK]

"Melissa Western is on fire ... it's mainly about the eyes, the face and the voice." **** (four stars) The Scotsman

"Western is absolutely brilliant... Her aptitude for music is vast and versatile ... Enthralling vocal talents wowed the audience, and had the ladies at the front hollering and bopping along." ***** (five stars) ThreeWeeks magazine [UK]

"Melissa Western is brilliant ... attacking the often difficult musical material with verve, musicality and an unexpected vocal talent ... A sparkling charisma and an exceptional theatrical and vocal talent make Melissa Western a pleasure to watch." Arts Hub Review

"Melissa Western is a sultry singer with an exceptional ability to scat, and her rich, powerful vocals invite the audience to accompany her on her journey." Kylie Pedler, New Adelaide Theatre Guide

"Melissa Western is a cabaret singer of the sultry jazz club variety ... this olive skinned beauty grew up in Queensland, but has honed her skills in London and New York. Her voice is incredible and she just glows on stage." Stephanie Glickman, Australian Stage Online

"We were struck by how talented Melissa Western is, she has star quality, a wonderful singing voice and a great personality. She really connected well with the audience." Village Hall Promoter, West Lindsey, Lincolnshire

"The show was extremely professional and our audience was overwhelmed. The costumes were stunning – fitting the act perfectly. I would truly recommend any village hall to stage their performance – if the possibility ever arises again, our village hall committee would certainly book them again. To quote one elderly gentleman after the show – "It made the hairs stand up on the back of my neck".' Jean Cawthorne, Village Ventures, Nottinghamshire

"Whether it be a smooth ballad, traditional jazz favourite, raunchy Latin number or cool blues, Melissa has the vocal capacity to do justice to each. A brilliant singer and great entertainer." Cheryl Jorgensen, Director, Mackay Entertainment Centre

'An absolute knockout. A wonderful show from beginning to end. Second half the audience was 'spellbound'. You could hear a pin drop. Amazing.' Village Hall Promoter, Bassetlaw, Nottinghamshire

"Melissa Western's show Ella, Marilyn, Marlene & Me was wonderful. Her performance was brilliant. Closing my eyes it was as though those famous divas were actually on stage themselves." Phil Spray, Village Hall Promoter, Lincolnshire

"Western is an appealing performer with a natural rapport with her audience. There's something very sweet and funny about her" The Scotsman