

I Got Rhythm opens Noosa Jazz Festival

by JIM FAGAN

Let trumpets sound, let drums beat, let clarinets cascade their joyful notes—the Noosa Jazz Festival was launched in style at The J Theatre marking the beginning of 10 days of fabulous jazz through to September 7.

Noosa Chorale and the country's top musicians, The Australian Jazz Ensemble, presented their "I Got Rhythm" show to packed houses—even the mezzanine was sold out! — and their enthusiastic audiences made clear that jazz is, to quote Satchmo, "what folks dig the most."

For 31 years now the festival has been attracting leading national and international jazz musicians to Noosa and ten years ago it first teamed up with the Chorale.

The line up for this year's Ensemble was Brett Iggulden (trumpet and sax), Paul Williams (clarinet and sax), Steve Grant (trumpet), Calvert Duffy (drums and washboard), John Reeves (piano and accordion), John Conley (double bass) and Dave Burrows (guitar).

The Chorale performed classics like New York New York, Blue Skies and It Don't Mean a Thing and the Ensemble worked with the singers as though they had practised for years rather than just one night! The inimitable Janet Brewer accompanied the choir's numbers on piano.

It was, however, the soloists and small groups from the choristers that were the stand-out.

I have been reviewing choir concerts for some years now and this was the first time I had heard so many of the Chorale's hidden talent given their chance to shine.

And shine they did. Soprano Lia Marelie played the piano and sang the Gershwin number, Summertime, blending beautifully with the Ensemble.

Jonathan Anstock (aka Leonard Cohen) did bossa nova with The Girl from Ipanema, soprano Belinda Griffiths sang Duke Ellington's Don't get Around Much Any More and soprano Jenny

Jackson brought a dazzling touch of the 1940's with the Johnny Mercer hit "Personality."

Another dazzler was the choreographed performance by Debra Schneider, Fran Wilson and Debbie Boyles of the 1940's Andrews Sisters wartime song Boogie Woogie Bugle Boys of Company B.

They also combined with Susi Fox, Cal Webb and Pamela Turnbull, with Olena Kruta accompanying on piano, making up the ensemble called Ariabella, to sing Orange-Coloured Sky and Mr Sandman.

Kim Kirkman took time out from his conducting and emcee duties to sing Baby it's Cold Outside with soprano Paige Allen.

In a brief chat after the Saturday show an elated Kim said, "I wasn't surprised we had such talent. I just gave them the opportunity and they took it. It was a great show today. The Australian Jazz Ensemble was so strong in supporting the choir."





Kim Kirkman and Paige Allen—Baby It's Cold Outside



Lia Marelie—Summertime



(l to r) John Reeves (piano accordion), Steve Grant (trumpet), Brett Iggulden (trumpet and sax), Paul Williams (sax and clarinet)



John Reeves (piano & accordion), John Conley (double bass)



Calvert Duffy—Drums

**"I Got Rhythm"
Choir
Jazz Ensemble
Soloists**

*Photos:
Ann Milland*



Dave Burrows (guitar)



This photo: Simon Hennessy

Jonathan Anstock—The Girl from Ipanema





Jenny Jackson—"Personality"



Belinda Griffiths—"I Don't Get Around Much any More"



Janet Brewer—piano



Conductor Kim Kirkman—high-kicks in "New York New York"



Olena Kruta—pianist for Ariabella



Ariabella—(l to r) Fran Wilson, Debbie Boyles, Cal Webb, Debra Schneider, Pamela Turnbull, Susi Fox—"Orange Coloured Sky" and "Mr Sandman"



Fran Wilson, Debbie Boyles, Debra Schneider—"Boogie Woogie Bugle Boys from Company B"





Gail Spira and Cherrie Morton



Lorraine and Noel Wood



Carol and Ross Borwick



Adrienne Millbank & Brenda Langmaid



Simon Hennessy and Helen Peel

Audience members
at "I Got Rhythm"
Photos: Ann Milland
Captions: Jo Fagan



Ute Buczynski



Mary Bonshek and Liz Hansen

Ticket sales open soon!

Save the date!

Noosa Chorale PRESENTS

CANTIQUE DE SOËL

CHRISTMAS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

7.00pm, Friday 12 December 2025
2.00pm, Saturday 13 December 2025

Tickets: \$49 Adults | \$30 Children/Students
www.thej.com.au | 07 5329 6560
The J Theatre (60 Noosa Drive, Noosa Junction)

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