

# MISSION SONGS PROJECT

AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL FOLK SONGS



*“profoundly moving...  
the entire collection is sublime”*

*- The Australian newspaper*



## THE PROJECT

**Jessie Lloyd's profoundly moving Mission Songs Project reveals the daily life of Aboriginal people on the missions, settlements and native reserves during the colonisation of Australia. A musical time travel of original compositions from the residents over the generations.**

Mission Songs Project explores the human reality of the 'missions era', where Aboriginal people were forcibly removed from their homelands and moved onto missions. In a time of great distress, these truthful songs are surprisingly filled with optimism and hope, revealing a forgotten story on an unexplored corner of Australian history.

Mission Songs Project faithfully navigates the musical journey of Aboriginal music and connects the traditional with contemporary, revealing the continuation of cultural practice and song traditions into the 21st Century. This is a musical journey through time and place, this is our songlines.



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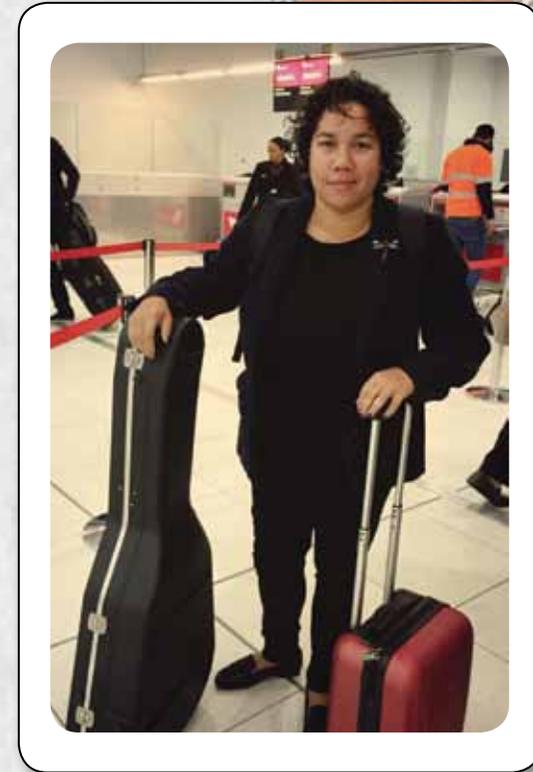
*“In a time of great distress, these truthful songs are surprisingly filled with optimism and hope...”*

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## THE JOURNEY

In 2015 Jessie Lloyd began her journey across Australia looking for old tunes from the missions era. Crossing the continent, she discovered a collection of rare secular songs that provide evidence of cultural resilience and adaptations. Providing a way to explore and understand Australia's unspoken histories through the gentleness of song.

Traveling with her own family's songs from Palm Island Aboriginal Settlement, she visited Indigenous elders and songmen and songwomen. She now continues to travel Australia and the world, sharing historical songs of her people and further exploring the assimilation of Indigenous people from Australia and around the world through.



## PROJECT PATRONS

*'Mission Songs Project presents contemporary folk songs that continue the ancient song lines of this country.'*

*– Archie Roach, Aboriginal Songman*



*'A profoundly important contribution to our nation and music.'*

*– Prof Marcia Langton,  
University of Melbourne*



## THE PERFORMANCE

Presented as an acoustic trio or quartet, Jessie Lloyd takes audiences on a musical journey across Australia. She engages through intimate storytelling, moving harmonies and historical insights. Using humour and truth to share the voices of elders as they would around a warm campfire or kitchen table.

The performance line-up features a rotation of some of Australia's finest Indigenous vocalists. All of whom contribute their own personal family connections and histories in the songs, presenting an authentic narrative of Aboriginal Australia.



# PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

## SHOWS

### AUSTRALIA

Sydney Festival  
Womadelaide  
Woodford Folk Festival  
Byron Bay Blues Fest  
Australian Performing Arts Market

### INTERNATIONAL

Calgary Folk Festival, Canada  
Banff Arts Centre, Canada  
International Folk Alliance, Canada  
Festival de Mayo, Mexico



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*"It has been such an inspiring and rewarding project to be involved in."*  
– The Cat Empire

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## AWARDS



**Australian Women  
Music Awards -  
WINNER for  
Diversity in Music  
Award 2018**

**Indigenous Music  
Awards –  
NOMINEE for  
Best International  
Release 2018**



**State Library of  
Victoria –  
Creative Fellowship  
award 2017**

**National Library of  
Australia –  
Folk Fellowship  
award 2016**



## ABOUT JESSIE LLOYD

A composer, performer and creative entrepreneur, Jessie Lloyd is a cultural practitioner of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music. A vocalist, guitarist, bassist and ukulele player, Jessie earned her qualifications at Abmusic in 2002.

Her mission is to produce, perform and progress Australian Indigenous music through innovative concepts, collaborative projects and cultural practice. She is dedicated to the continuation of song traditions through the presentation of Indigenous music and has extensive experience in Indigenous music business and sector development.



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***“Jessie describes herself as a hunter and gatherer of songs. She believes the mission songs are evidence of continuing tradition – passed down from generation to generation; a new genre of music created in places where people were banned from using their language, and not allowed to practice traditional culture.”***

*- Margy Burn, Assistant Director-General at National Library of Australia*

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## CONTACT

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Website: <https://missionsongsproject.com/>



CD AVAILABLE AT  
<https://missionsongsproject.com/shop/>

Artwork: (c) Joe Geia



*“ Islander rhythms, campfire  
country and defiant humour  
celebrate simple joys.  
Melancholy ballads chart a  
journey of blood, sweat and  
tears... you’ll almost hear  
the kettle boil as a closing  
home recording of the elders  
invites us to sit down with  
these unsung survivors ”*

*- Fairfax Media*