



HIGH ROTATION

**MUSEUM
OF
BRISBANE**

**30 AUGUST 2019 –
19 APRIL 2020**

CUSTARD



Custard, 2011.
Photo: Stephen Booth

Somewhere at a truck stop in mid-west America a car load of Japanese tourists pulled up alongside a tour bus carrying four lads from Brisbane known as Custard.

It's the mid-90s and one of the tourists saunters over to the Custard van and asks matter-of-factly, 'Are you the Beatles?' It's strange, but true ... and that's the kind of effect Custard had on people.

In the middle of the '90s Custard, alongside Regurgitator and Powderfinger, were one third of a mighty trio of bands to change the face of this city.

Evolving out of the ashes of Who's Gerald? and Custard Gun, they became Custard, proper, in 1990. Their debut EP *Rockfish Anna* was released in late 1990 as a fire breathing Elvis impersonator was roped in to give the launch party the imprimatur it deserved. The LP *Buttercup/Bedford* came next and was followed by a flurry of releases including the EP's *Gastanked*, *Brisbane* the single 'Casanova' and the double A-side 'Singlette/Flanellette'.

A high point was the release of their debut major label album *Wahooti Fandango* in 1994. The video for the album's first single, 'Aloha Tambourinist', was the only Custard video to ever be played on *Video Hits*. The clip, set on a beach, featured male models pretending to be the band, while scantily clad women rolled around in the sand. In late 1995 the band released their breakthrough hit 'Apartment' from the *Wiseneimer* album. Reaching No.7 on triple j's Hottest 100, it was the highest ever placing by an Australian band at that time.

Custard's fortunes waxed and waned before they had a commercial cross over with the single 'Girls Like That (Don't Go For Guys Like Us)' which hit No.52 on the ARIA Chart and became their biggest hit.

Core members of the band are David McCormack, Matthew Strong and Paul Medew. Glenn Thompson (of The Go-Betweens) later occupied the drum stool while past members have included James Straker, Shane Brunn, Gavin Herrenberg, Danny Plant and Tom Jackman. Custard 'broke up' in 1999, but have since reformed. They released their latest album *Common Touch* in 2017.

SEAN SENNETT



A politically-charged wordsmith who has been tagged as Australia's "black Bob Dylan," Kev Carmody had a relatively late start to his recording career, releasing his first body of work *Pillars of Society* in his 40s. He made up for lost time with a string of critically-lauded recordings, 'Eulogy (For A Black Person)', 'Bloodlines', 'Images And Illusions' and 'Mirrors', among them.

Born of Aboriginal and Irish heritage, Kev was raised on a cattle station in the Darling Downs. Kids his own age were a rare sight, so the young Kev mostly mingled with stockmen. It was on the land where he learned his gift for storytelling and music.

A late bloomer, Kev enrolled into tertiary studies in his early 30s, later earning a PhD in history at The University of Queensland. While at university, Kev Carmody was exposed to experimental music pioneers John Cage and Karlheinz Stockhausen, and his craft continued to evolve.

Kev was the subject of all-star tribute album, *Cannot Buy My Soul*, a project lovingly driven by Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) Hall of Famer Paul Kelly, with whom he wrote the protest song, 'From Little Things Big Things Grow,' based on the story of The Gurindji Strike led by Vincent Lingiari as part of the struggle for Indigenous land rights and reconciliation. Since its release in the early 1990s, the song has been covered by Joan Baez, The Waifs and many others.

In 2009, Kev was inducted into the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) at a ceremony in Melbourne alongside Little Pattie, John Paul Young, The Dingoes and Mental As Anything. When told of the honour, he laughed, "I must be getting into the Hall of Fame with the lowest record sales in history". Kev's career was celebrated at the 2019 Helpmann Awards in Melbourne, where he received the coveted JC Williamson Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Australian live entertainment and performing arts industry.

LARS BRANDLE

KEV CARMODY



Kev Carmody performing *Cannot Buy My Soul* at Brisbane Riverstage, 2009.
Photo: Stephen Booth.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT BRISBANE ARTISTS INCLUDING CUSTARD AND KEV CARMODY AT MUSEUM OF BRISBANE'S HIGH ROTATION EXHIBITION, ON NOW UNTIL 19 APRIL 2020.



There was the time they ran through the crowds at the Livid festival wearing balaclavas and startling punters by bashing trash can lids in their faces.

There was the time Quan Yeomans and Ben Ely dressed as a giant bunny and a masked wrestler for a DJ set. There was the time they rubbed faces with Michael Hutchence and Savage Garden at the ARIAs when their breakthrough album *Unit* (1997) scooped five awards. Then there was the stint they spent surrounded by glass for *Band in a Bubble* to record *Mish Mash!* (2004), where Ben remembers waking up in his undies to see a class full of schoolgirls taking notes. There was the time they composed an intricately timed soundtrack to the animated film *Akira* to be performed once at the Opera House never to be heard again.

Regurgitator, Rock Show, 2009.
Photo: Stephen Booth.

Regurgitator are the mothers of reinvention. Whatever they do, they'll top it next time. The clue is in their name with their nine albums meshing a mash-up of styles from rock to funk to hip-hop to pop. Since Ben first visited Quan's mum and heard some intriguing music drifting up from the basement below, a friendship was formed. It's a bond based on mature respect and a juvenile sense of humour. The magic trio was completed by drummer Martin Lee and later Peter Kostic.

From recording their first album *Tu-Plang* (1996) in Thailand to their sixth *Love and Paranoia* (2007) in Rio de Janeiro, they've taken their Brisbane underground flavour around the world. Their home away from home is Japan, a country they have visited countless times, culminating in a performance at the Fuji Rock Festival. It was one place that was weirder than they were. Their video for '(The Song Formerly Known As)' documents their antics there. The band has plenty of Brisbane landmarks too, from the Paddington share houses they lived in to the "Dirty Room" warehouse on Ann Street where they recorded *Unit* wrapping up the day before it was demolished to leave only a vending machine standing amongst the rubble. The BMW showroom is there now.

Creators on multiple levels, from costume design to posters, album art and music videos, they took their DIY aesthetic to the main stage. Although they were signed to a major label, they tore down their own metaphorical posters as soon as putting them up with ironic and witty lyrics. They did a lot to get to where they are.

Unstoppably creative, it's a band impossible to get bored in — which is probably why they've lasted 25 years. Now they're appealing to new generations, with their debut kids' record released in 2019, as well as a special anniversary tour. What will they do next?

SALLY BROWNE

SEAN SENNETT



The Grates performing at EKKA, Brisbane Showgrounds, 2010.
Photo: Stephen Booth

REGURGITATOR



One day you're workshopping new tunes in a suburban Queensland garden shed and the next you're dipping your toes in a Los Angeles wading pool and making small talk with Ian Thorpe. Such was the trajectory of The Grates.

The band made their live debut in 2004 as a three piece: Patience Hodgson sang, John Patterson played guitar and Alana Skyring drummed. That first show was the 'red eye' slot at Ric's Bar in Fortitude Valley. Nervous to be playing a 2am gig in mid-January, Ric's soon became the band's second home. A classic DIY outfit, the band embraced MySpace, home recording and the dark art of Photoshop. Initially eschewing traditional avenues, the band would record at home, burn discs, print their artwork and sell a handful of CDs at every gig. When the releases were sold out - they remained sold out!

The single 'Trampoline' saw them picked up by triple j and a national audience soon followed. Even filmmaker John Waters took time to rave about them to Esquire. A series of EPs and singles followed including 'Sukkafish' and 'Science Is Golden'. With the release of their major label debut *Gravity Won't Get You High* the band set the controls for the outside world. '19-20-20' was conceived as a song about the band members' ages, but was written while they were 21-22-22.

Their film clips were a hoot and everything about The Grates felt infectious. Festivals followed, as did shows in Europe and America. Like their first album, their second effort *Teeth Lost, Hearts Won* also entered the ARIA Top 10. Patience became a media darling. She and John became a couple and Alana left to become a chef. The Grates released two more albums, *Secret Rituals* in 2011 and *Dream Team* in 2014.

HEAR AND SEE MORE FROM REGURGITATOR AND OTHER SEMINAL BRISBANE ACTS WHO LED THE CHARGE IN THE 90S AT HIGH ROTATION. AN EXHIBITION EXPLORING THE LAST THREE DECADES OF POPULAR MUSIC IN BRISBANE AT MUSEUM OF BRISBANE.

THE GRATES



Violent Soho performing at Splendour in the Grass, 2014. Photo: Stephen Booth

VIOLENT SOHO

When the history of Brisbane's rock scene is written, Violent Soho will be mentioned in the opening stanza.

A no-nonsense guitar band, the Mansfield four-piece is revered on the live circuit where the four bandmates unleash a ferocious-but-controlled energy. A Violent Soho show is a spectacle of ripped jeans, flannel shirts, headbanging and long hair flying, both on stage and in the audience.

The group, led by Luke Boerdam (vocals, guitar), James Tidswell (guitar), Luke Henery (bass) and Michael Richards (drums), has taken out coveted ARIA Awards, including Best Group and Best Rock Album at the 2016 ceremony.

Formed in 2004, the Brisbane lads caught the ear of their hero, Sonic Youth founder Thurston Moore, who signed the group to his Ecstatic Peace! label ahead of their debut studio album release, *We Don't Belong Here*. In doing so, they made the jump from South East Queensland to a New York label, catching the Australian music business totally off guard. In 2012, Soho signed with I Oh You, a cool-as-you-like label affiliated with Michael Gudinski's independent music powerhouse, Mushroom Group.

As word spreads of their fiery shows, Violent Soho's reputation grows. Their fourth album release *Waco* arrived in March 2016 and entered the national chart at No. 1, eclipsing their previous best, a No. 6 peak for 2013's *Hungry Ghost*.

Violent Soho's songs are typically catchy and raw and they've enjoyed a rock-solid connection with listeners of triple j. In January 2017, the group dominated the youth station's Hottest 100 music poll with five tracks, almost half the tracklist of their entire *Waco* set. Many would argue that Violent Soho is Australia's most popular heavier-edge rock act of its generation.

After taking a post-*Waco* break, Violent Soho are currently recording a new album. There's no word yet on a release date.

LARS BRANDLE



There's something surprising and effortlessly cool about DZ Deathrays, a Brisbane trio who pack a punch that you never see coming. With a sound like a pinch of punk, flicked into a cauldron with a dash of grunge, a smidge of thrash and metal and a good fist of sweaty, take-no-prisoners pub rock, the band mates Shane Parsons, Simon Ridley and new guitarist Lachlan Ewbank never take themselves too seriously, a tough ask considering the decibels they operate at.

DZ Deathrays (pronounced Dee-Zee Deathrays) set the scene with their debut *Bloodstreams*, from 2012. Their second album *Black Rat*, from 2014, went to No. 23 on the chart and collected an ARIA Award for Best Hard Rock Heavy Metal Album.

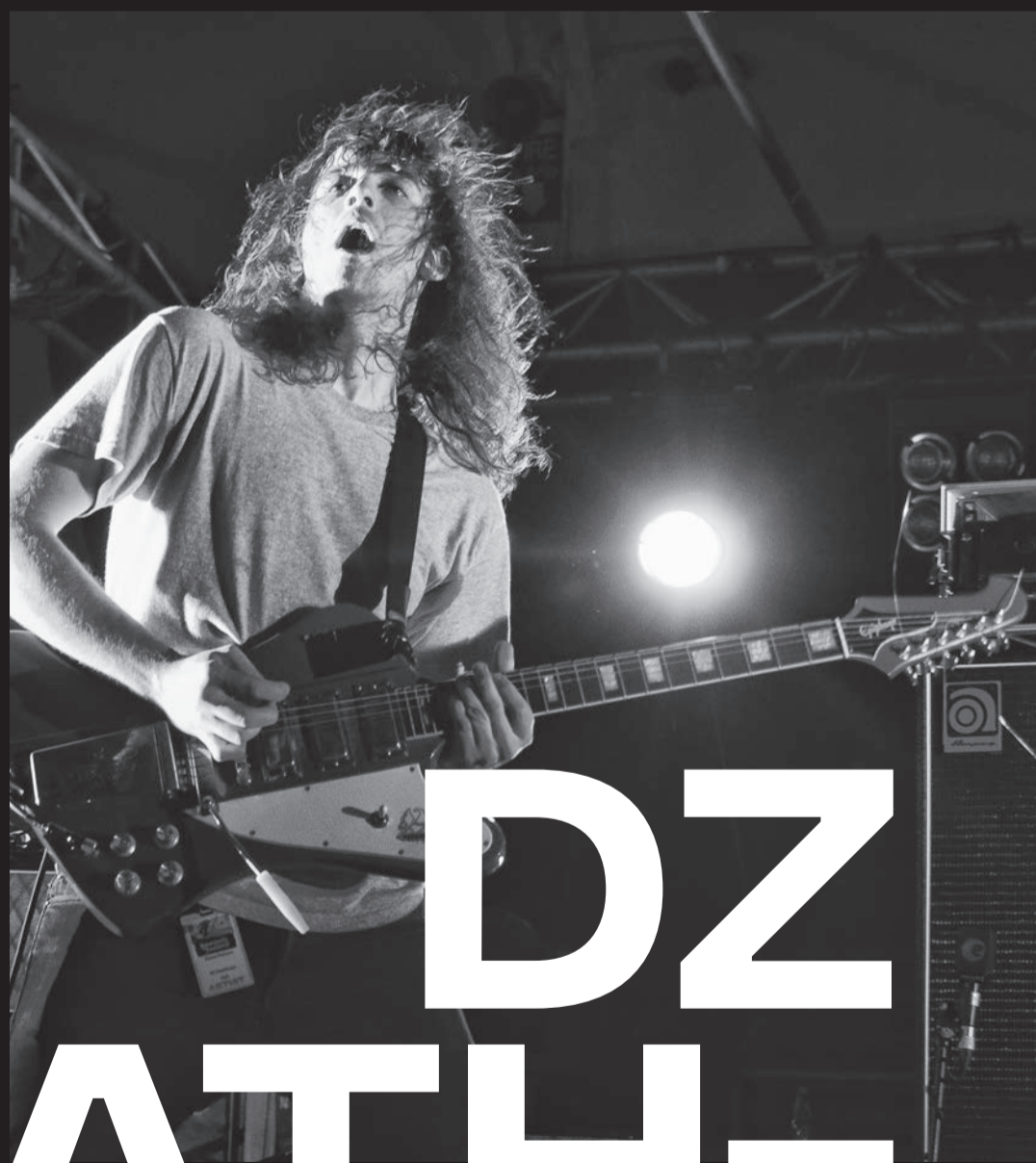
Now signed with I Oh You, the indie label home of fellow Brisbanites Violent Soho, DZ Deathrays saw their 2018 album, *Bloody Lovely*, open and peak at No. 4 on the national chart, a career best. A third ARIA nomination came. And the album produced a candidate for the most unlikely collaboration of them all, with Murray Cook, the red shirted guitarist from The Wiggles, linking up on 'Like People', a track oozing in punk sensibilities. Murray's appearance in the music video is can't-turn-away stuff, and when he joined DZ for their set at Splendour In The Grass 2018 for a cover of AC/DC's 'Highway to Hell', triple j asked, "Is this the most Australian moment of the festival?" Maybe.

2018 was a massive step up for the 'thrash party' band, with a tour of Europe and South Africa, and two treks of their homeland, which saw them playing their biggest headline rooms to date. They also pushed their sound out with 'Front Row Hustle', a collaboration between Trials and Briggs, the multiple-award winning A.B. Original members, and rising rapper Jesswar.

A fourth album, *Positive Rising: Part 1*, is now available in the UK and Europe through a new deal with Alcopop, and in Australia.

LARS BRANDLE

DZ Deathrays at Laneway Festival, Brisbane Showgrounds, 2012. Photo: Stephen Booth



DZ DEATH-RAYS

FOLLOW THE JOURNEY OF MORE MUSICIANS LAUNCHING FROM BRISBANE AT MUSEUM OF BRISBANE'S EXHIBITION, HIGH ROTATION.



Somebody must be watching over

Thelma Plum. Her debut album, *Better in Blak*, has been touched with a little rock 'n' roll magic. The album, which ranges in theme from love to culture, has one song on which two very famous musicians took part. 'Made for You' is a love-song she composed with Paul Kelly. She worked on the track at his St Kilda home. It was a big deal for Thelma, who grew up listening to his records in the Brisbane suburbs of West End and Fairfield.

She brought the song to Paul, which featured the lyric "my body was made for you". By coincidence he had been working on a similar song along the lines of "your body was made for me". They sat down in his music room and finished the song together.

The completed song was recorded in New York, where Thelma worked with producer David Kahne. Thelma was sick one day when they were working on her track. Another famous Paul happened to rock up to the studio to collect an instrument. Paul McCartney heard the sweet sounds of Thelma's vocal drifting down the hall and asked who it was. He volunteered to lay down some guitar parts and so the finished track of 'Made for You' became more than she could have ever dreamed of. The magic moment also marks the first time Paul Kelly and Paul McCartney have contributed to the same track. Thelma was able to thank Paul McCartney in person when she attended his concert in Sydney with her dad. And Paul Kelly too was thrilled at the serendipitous result.

THELMA PLUM



Thelma Plum at BIGSOUND, The Elephant Hotel, 2014.
Photo: Stephen Booth

Better in Blak is an important record for many reasons. As a Gamilaraay woman – Thelma also spent part of her childhood in the town of Delungra, northern NSW – she wears her heart and her culture on her sleeve. The video for the title track, directed by Claudia Sangiorgi Dalimore, features many Aboriginal women who have been personal inspirations to her as well as her two older sisters. It was the first time the three of them (her eldest sister had been adopted) had been in the same room together. The same team worked on her video for 'Clumsy Love', recorded in Melbourne, where Thelma now lives. She still returns to Brisbane often to visit her friends, her old haunts and keep her feet on the ground.

SALLY BROWNE



If she hadn't been there herself, she might not have believed it. Sitting around backstage outside the Speigeltent for the Brisbane Festival were Maz DeVita and the rest of the WAAX crew, shooting the breeze and sharing a bottle of whiskey with none other than Kim Gordon of Sonic Youth. It still remains one of Maz's favourite memories, alongside supporting L7, another band of fearsome females, whose records she had listened to growing up on the Gold Coast.

It's a similar strength — and her own brand of vulnerability — that Maz channels into her own shows and in their six years on the planet WAAX have earned a reputation as one of Australia's best live bands. She's also known for that dichotomy of vulnerability and strength in songwriting and has poured that into the band's debut album *Big Grief* (2019).

Maz spent her teenage years on the Gold Coast, via Adelaide, but it wasn't until she moved to Brisbane at age 20 that she found home. There, while studying art at QCA — she doubles as a graphic designer — she met the people who would form the genesis of the band. Brisbane has many landmarks for WAAX, from the first Taringa share house where they practised downstairs to the rehearsal space in Rocklea that doubled as a karate studio, managed by the man who would become their drummer, Tom Bloomfield. Or the Newstead warehouse where they filmed 'Same Same', directed by local team Creative Clones, which won them a Q Music Award. The band recorded take after take of the deliberately repetitive clip, over a 16 hour day, sitting with ice packs on their heads to stave of the summer heat. Maz remembers quickly ruining her white t-shirt by spilling coffee on it, which meant an emergency trip to the shop to buy more. They've also been spotted in the halls of The Foundry, their former rehearsal space.

Their first proper gig was at Ric's, if you don't count the not so legendary locale of somebody's house in Sunnybank. They played anywhere and everywhere they could get a gig, honing their craft and building up a following. And that they have, strengthening and redoubling through various line-up changes and the contributions of members past and present. Today the emotion of their delivery is matched by the crowds who flock to their shows — a boiling mass of palpable cathartic release as energy flows between band and audience.

When you are a great live band, though, the challenge is capturing that on record. But *Big Grief* features production credits of none other than Bernard Fanning and his musical comrade Nick DiDia working out of their La Cueva studios near Byron Bay. If anyone can do this band justice, it's them. The record features recent single 'I Am', another straight from the heart track, about losing yourself in a relationship. But in all these songs it's a raw, powerful and honest Maz we find, and hopefully, by their relatability, the audience find a little of themselves too.

SALLY BROWNE

WAAX at The Tivoli, 2017.
Photo: Lachlan Douglas



DISCOVER MORE FROM BRISBANE'S LATEST UP AND COMERS AND TAKE A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE AT HIGH ROTATION AT MUSEUM OF BRISBANE.

WAAX

HIGH ROTATION

Hit play, as *High Rotation* takes you on a backstage pass through three epic decades of Brisbane's legendary music scene. From rock icons and indie darlings, to pop stars, experimental groups, and genre-hoppers in between, Museum of Brisbane places heavyweights and rising stars centre stage in this ultimate homage to the luminary artists, managers, writers, producers and label owners who have helped keep Brisbane music spinning strong.

Go on a multi-sonic tour in the Museum, as *High Rotation* takes music lovers down memory lane, while introducing a new generation to our city's up-and-coming talent. Discover and revisit a buzzing set-list of memorable songs, music videos from the archives, photographs, instruments, and souvenirs from 1989 to present-day, from the likes of Pangaea, Keith Urban, Thelma Plum, Savage Garden, Emma Louise, Custard, The Grates and more.

Plus, go behind the scenes as some of Brisbane's finest musicians, bands and industry workers reveal the extraordinary stories that have led to your favourite artists getting their big breaks. Tune into some of the biggest music moments in Brisbane's history and discover the stories of the next wave of local musicians — this is Brisbane unplugged.

Experience *High Rotation* on now until 19 April 2020, at Museum of Brisbane, Level 3, City Hall, King George Square, Brisbane City.

HIGH ROTATION MUSEUM OF BRISBANE

30 August 2019 – 19 April 2020
Adult \$12
Concession \$9
Access All Areas Pass from \$15
Tickets on sale now,
museumofbrisbane.com.au

Visit museumofbrisbane.com.au for more information, or follow @MuseumofBrisbane #MoBHighRotation and like @Museum of Brisbane on Facebook.

EXHIBITION TOURS

Get a backstage pass to the *High Rotation* exhibition, as our team takes you on a tour of Brisbane's vibrant music scene over the past 30 years. From the local underground scene to the dazzling lights of the global stage, find out how esteemed musicians and up-and-coming talent have helped elevate Brisbane's reputation for making catchy, meaningful music.

Every Wednesday during the exhibition 12.30pm
Adult \$12 | Concession/Student \$9
Free for Access All Areas Season Pass holders. Book your tickets:
museumofbrisbane.com.au

HELL FOR LEATHER CUSTOMISATION WORKSHOP WITH PHOEBE PARADISE

It's time to dust off those old leather boots, faux leather handbag, or your Mum's worn-out jacket, and transform them into rockin' garments! Join artist, musician and fashion designer Phoebe Paradise for a leather customisation workshop that epitomises music culture in Brisbane. You'll learn how to make a one-of-a-kind festival look using fabric paints, studs and embellishments.

Sat 16 Nov | 1pm – 5pm | \$40
bookings essential BYO leather/faux leather garment, all other materials provided
Book your tickets:
museumofbrisbane.com.au



Image: Phoebe Sheehy

A ROCK & ROLL WRITERS FESTIVAL

Brisbane's very own A Rock & Roll Writers Festival returns again in 2020 as part of *High Rotation*. Amp yourself up for an immersive weekend of curated conversations at the Museum, as the Festival weaves through the unforgettable music, writing, politics, people and stories of Brisbane music. Perfect for musicians, gig-goers, storytellers, and music writers alike. Stay tuned for program updates and booking details. Visit museumofbrisbane.com.au to register your interest.

A Rock & Roll Writers Festival is co-founded by **Leanne de Souza** and **Joe Woolley** and presented in collaboration with Museum of Brisbane.

1 – 2 Feb 2020 | Ticket information to be announced at museumofbrisbane.com.au



Image courtesy A Rock & Roll Writers Festival.

A SNAPSHOT OF BRISBANE'S POPULAR MUSIC CULTURE FROM 1989-2019

INSIDER'S TOURS

Tune in as people in the music industry reveal the extraordinary stories and ideas behind many of Brisbane's iconic musical moments — in our *High Rotation* Insider's Tours. We've signed up a passionate crew of music journalists and industry stalwarts to share their personal experiences and insights about the Brisbane music industry they helped grow.

Leanne de Souza
Wed 4 Sep | 4pm – 4.45pm
Lars Brandle
Sat 21 Sep 2019 | 11am – 11.45am
Sally Browne
Sat 12 Oct | 11am – 11.45am
Sean Sennett
Sat 2 Nov 2019 | 11am – 11.45am
Sally Browne
Sat 7 Dec 2019 | 11am – 11.45am
Lars Brandle
Sat 11 Jan 2020 | 11am – 11.45am
Leanne de Souza
Sat 8 Feb 2020 | 11am – 11.45am
Sean Sennett
Sat 7 Mar 2020 | 11am – 11.45am

Each tour is unique, so to fully experience this ride down musical memory lane, we recommend buying an Access All Areas Season Pass.
\$18 or free for Access All Areas Season Pass holders. Book your tickets:
museumofbrisbane.com.au

LOW ROTATION LISTENING PARTY

Listen up! We're throwing the ultimate Brisbane music Listening Party series — dedicated to the experimental at heart, the fervently underground and the shamefully overlooked. The Museum has invited some of Brisbane's best music enthusiasts and in-the-know types to curate a playlist of music we probably don't know but definitely should. We kick off the series with a flashback of 90s independent labels selected by **Sean Sennett** (owner and editor of Brisbane's *Time Off* music street press). Music programmers **Ben Eltham** (SOOBIESTA and Straight Out of Brisbane) and **Michelle Brown** (former 4ZZZ Station Manager) will have your ears perked as they revisit the diversity of Brisbane's underground music scenes across psy-trance, electro, experimental, punk and pop. More Listening Parties to be announced.

Sean Sennett Listening Party
Fri 18 Oct | 6pm – 8pm | \$10,
bookings essential
Ben Eltham and Michelle Brown Listening Party
Fri 29 Nov | 6pm – 8pm | \$10,
bookings essential
Book your tickets:
museumofbrisbane.com.au

BRISBANE FANZINE PROJECT WITH JEREMY STAPLES

Zines have long been a staple for underground artists and music fans since the start of punk music. For many, these handmade and photocopied publications symbolise a DIY ethos that embraces creative expression and freedom of thought. In these workshops, zine maker Jeremy Staples will teach you how to create a page-worthy zine with scissors, paper, glue and staples.

Your contribution will be sewn and stapled together with all the other participants pages to create a *High Rotation* zine distributed at the end of the exhibition. This workshop is open to anyone: from musos, artists and crafts makers, to local-gig-goers and fans who want to relive the musical moments of yesteryear.

Sat 23 Nov 2019
Sat 8 Feb 2020
10am – 1pm
\$30, bookings essential. Tickets include a tour of *High Rotation* with Jeremy Staples.
Book your tickets:
museumofbrisbane.com.au



Image: Jeremy Staples, Copier Jam!
Photo: Sabrina Lauriston.



HIGH ROTATION

SEE | HEAR | FEEL
BRISBANE MUSIC

BALL PARK MUSIC | CONFIDENCE MAN | CUSTARD
EMMA LOUISE | FRED LEONE | GEORGE | KATE MILLER-HEIDKE
KEITH URBAN | KEV CARMODY | POWDERFINGER
REGURGITATOR | SAVAGE GARDEN | SCREAMFEEDER
SHEPPARD | THE GRATES | THE JUNGLE GIANTS | THE VERONICAS
THELMA PLUM | VIOLENT SOHO | WAAX | AND MORE

30 AUGUST 2019 – 19 APRIL 2020

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