

THE LADIES NETWORK

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The Ladies Live:

Gussy

- **Words.** Sasanki Tennakoon
- **Photo.** Joseph Brennan

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Applying the word versatile to Gussy is almost an understatement of their breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding – not just about the world of music, but the world at large.

A creator and maker at the helm of most elements of their production, Gussy's background in performance and film come into play in their video clips that are often self-choreographed and directed. The clips accompany music and lyrics that pull at the achy heart strings of moments that those of us who have experienced, might better like to forget but without ever giving us cause to stop listening. Tracks like *Away from Home* and the more recent 2017 release, *Mornings*, lend themselves to repeat listens in a bid to catch the nuances embedded between music and lyric.

We took a virtual five with Gussy ahead of their appearance at The Ladies Live x Vivid this week in Sydney.

For those that may not have heard your music, how would you describe it for them?

Darcy Baylis recently tweeted that I'm a fourth wave Emo artist and that feels pretty accurate. I make pop music that attempts to reflect the unique nostalgia felt by people from my generation for an indeterminate time and place.

I'm very bad at discussing music so I'll have to leave it at that.

You're not just a singer and songwriter, you also produce music and wrote and directed the clip to 'Mornings'. What is your process when creating music – from thought to production – and then deciding which song to make a clip for?

When I write music I attempt to reduce a variety of thoughts and feelings into something simple and uncomplicated, I often hear certain phrases repeated in my head, anxious thoughts that make great pop lyrics because of how singular and desperate they are. I usually have tracks that I've been working on with a chord progression and some drum loops and write over that before fleshing it out or collaborating with other producers to flesh it out as with Strict Face on 'Mornings'. I'm really into film making so the clips are the natural next step which allow me to complete the thought with some kind of documented performance, wearing the clothes and inhabiting the environment that feels like it fits the world of the song.

Have you had any mentors or artists that have had a particular impact on your sound?

I've been lucky enough to work with some really incredible people who I count as mentors, my managers Marcus and Amelia have guided and shaped my music in a very collaborative way and I've gotten a lot out of picking the brains of other musicians like Marcus Whale and my mum who sings Jazz. I think there are a lot of artists who have shaped my sound. That nostalgia I was talking about, which is very rooted in living partially on the Internet, comes from so much intuitive collating, not just from music but from the vast amounts of visual and aural information that we have access to.

Sometimes certain music gets attached to memories – are there any memorable moments in your life that have a soundtrack you could share with us?

I have mentioned this a few times to Callan, an incredible musician based in Melbourne who everyone needs to check out, that she fed all of this music into my life when I was about 15 that kind of forms the basis of my musical life. I have strong reactions when I listen to albums like Roisin Murphy's 'Overpowered', Kate Bush's 'The Red Shoes', Patrick Wolf's 'Lycanthropy' and Lady Gaga's 'The Fame Monster' which all remind me vividly of being 15 and learning all these things about the world and myself.

There's been an ebb and flow to live music venues in Sydney over the past decade – do you think there are enough opportunities for emerging musicians in Sydney at the moment?

I woke up today to a report that Club 77 was raided by police last night and that the headliner they'd booked from Melbourne wasn't allowed in and didn't play their set. I think in light of situations like this one you can acknowledge that there is a strong force that is disrupting the Sydney live music scene's ability to flourish and that this is a major issue. I see so many people working tirelessly to give people access to music in Sydney and succeed in so many cases to do this, but never without a fight or a compromise.

I think there will always be a struggle faced by emerging musicians to get themselves out there, have people listen to their music and book them but this struggle, as does everything, interacts with privilege and the intersections at play which I think should be, and is for many people I know, the focus of all the work being done to create opportunities in music here.

What are you listening to right now?

Sevdalisa, Perfume Genius, Lorde and Mariah Carey are kind of on rotation at the moment.

Catch Gussy play at The Ladies Live x Vivid
June 1st, 7pm – 1 am
Harpoon Harry's
44 Wentworth Avenue, Surry Hills NSW 2010

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