

Mandy Connell Official Press Kit

Bio (*Under 100 words*)

Connell presents a voice of startling honesty, with guitar skills and anecdotes which have her well-loved around the east coast. David Francey calls her one of his "favourite trad voices anywhere" Eric Bogle called her 'deserving'.

She has an ability to weave narrative threads in a way that leaves you feeling you know her. A strong and independent solo artist, Mandy's show comes to life for curated audiences who come to listen. Inspired by travelling musicians and taught by them- Connell performs in a traditional style that thrives on touring and performing for a small room.

Bio (Full)

Not quite a city girl, Connell spent her early years in a small town called Smeaton, and her adolescence in Brunswick East, Melbourne, with frequent visits to festivals and out of the city.

The winner of the 2005 Declan Affley Award and the 2005 Maldon Minstrel Award, Connell plays a handmade guitar by Jack Spira, gifted to her anonymously, and a handmade mandolin by Graham McDonald, on permanent loan from the maker.

Recording her first solo album 'Boxes, Beds & Brooms' with Joseph O'Brien in 2007, Connell went on to record a studio album in the UK in 2009, called Tall Tales & Pretty Colours, released in 2010 during a run of Australian festivals.

In 2012, Connell recruited members for a 5-piece band designed to perform traditional and classic folk ballads. Incorporating Ryan Tews, Rowena Wise, Sally Taylor, and Richard Grace, and later Carmen O'Brien and Claire Johnston, the band recorded a 7-Track self-titled release, recorded and mixed by drummer Ryan Tews. In 2014 the band performed at Port Fairy Folk Festival, among others and in 2016 the Stray Hens finished and released a full album called "The Confluence" featuring an original by Connell, and songs by Karine Polwart, Hugh McDonald, Graeme Moore, and some traditional pieces arranged by the band. The Confluence was recorded by Luke Plumb and mixed by Mattie Foulds (UK). The Hens have sadly called it a day and are no longer performing together, with members having Recording with two other songwriters, Connell also released a collaborative album called 'The Wishing Well' in August 2017, under a group title 'The Maggie Darlings'. The nine-track album was released independently, attracting quite a bit of airplay on community radio, in particular from Denise Hylands on 3RRR's 'Twang'.

In 2017 Connell created, produced and hosted two seasons of a video series called 'An Otherwise Quiet Room', working with a different team of audio and visual engineers for season, and learning three songs for each episode. The videos are available on YouTube, and via a website anotherwisequietroom.com.au. The series features different artists and episodes are each set in a different small business within the region where the season is set.

Several attempts to record a third album of original songs have been made, with work continuing. It is a source of frustration for the artist that her own songs have been more difficult to champion, however continued outside interest has her planning further recording.

Connell continues to perform solo, and with various supporting musicians, presenting her best shows for smaller audiences, festivals and private house concerts, and touring throughout Australia.

Quotes:

"Saw Ms Mandy Connell sing and play at Australia's National Folk Festival. A great talent with a passionate and compelling voice and a total command of her music! Catch her if you can"..[Paul Brady](#)

"One of my favourite trad voices –anywhere!" - [David Francey](#)

"Melbourne folk outfit Stray Hens does much more than pay homage to the great songs from the folk revival of the sixties and seventies. Great tunes and great lyrics are re-packaged in a distinctly Melbourne style, with harmonies and time signatures as fluid as the melodies themselves. Mandy Connell has been building a well deserved reputation for her original songs, which spring from her deep love of the folk tradition, both here and in the UK. She has put together a band of young, energetic musicians who share her passion for good music and a good time". [Derek Guille](#), former ABC Radio presenter.

"Mandy Connell is the latest in a long and distinguished line of talented female musicians to grace the musical scene in Australia. A fine singer and songwriter in her own right, she also has the knack of taking other peoples' songs, and by virtue of her original and unique interpretations making them her own, the mark of a truly gifted performer..." [Eric Bogle](#)

Discography (Available through Bandcamp)

2007 – Boxes, Beds and Brooms

2010 - Tall Tales & Pretty Colours

2014 - Stray Hens

2016 – The Confluence (with the Stray Hens)

2017 – The Wishing Well (with the Maggie Darlings)

2017 – The Yarra Sessions (An Otherwise Quiet Room)

2018 – The Moreland Sessions (An Otherwise Quiet Room)

Projects:

Mandy Connell

Trio, solo or with a full band, Connell's energy on stage is captivating. A performer with a grasp of dynamic range, and a competent vocalist and guitarist, it is ultimately her engagement with the room that makes her a stand-out performer on any line-up. She has a knack for picking the right story at the right time, and her shows are never quite the same twice. Her passion for story shines in her face, with a repertoire of modern, personal songs peppered with references to classic folk, or even traditional ballads

An Otherwise Quiet Room

A video series of duets, AOQR is the brainchild of Mandy Connell, who calls on a dedicated knowledge of the independent music scene to team up and swap songs with a diverse, interesting and recognisable string of songwriters. Each episode is set in a different social space, forging a connection between community, place and art, and features originals by Connell, the Guest, and then cover of another independent artist. In the Yarra Sessions, Sarah Carroll and Connell sang 'Heart Beating' and Brent Parlane covered Frank Jones' famous "My Brown Yarra".

Stray Hens

Inspired by the *Imagined Village*, *Bellowhead*, and Iain MacRae from *The Press Club*, Stray Hens was a 5-piece band designed to perform traditional and classic folk ballads. Incorporating Ryan Tews, Rowena Wise, Sally Taylor, and Richard Grace, and later Carmen O'Brien and Claire Johnston, the band recorded a 7-Track self-titled release, recorded and mixed by drummer Ryan Tews. In 2014 the band performed at Port Fairy Folk Festival, among others and in 2016 the Stray Hens finished and released a full album called "The Confluence" featuring an original by Connell, and songs by Karine Polwart, Hugh McDonald, Graeme Moore, and some traditional pieces arranged by the band. The Confluence was recorded by Luke Plumb and mixed by Mattie Foulds (UK). The Hens have sadly called it a day and are no longer performing together, with members having

The Maggie Darlings

Intended to be a project of a few days, The Maggie is a collaboration between Connell, Layla Fibbins (Sideshow Brides) and Alysia Manceau (as herself). The studio time was expanded and took second place to the three artists other work, however the finished product is something they are all proud of. The trio brought nine songs together for the project, recorded at Thirty Mill Studios in Brunswick and mixed and mastered by Colin Wynn. The album was called 'The Wishing Well' and has attracted some great reviews and consistent airplay on 3RRR's 'Twang'.

Links:

Website: www.mandyconnell.com

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/MandyConnellSongwriter/>

Bandcamp: <https://mandyconnellsongs.bandcamp.com/>