



THE BEAUTY OF THE BOGANS

Marc Ryan knows life can be tragic. He also knows it can be absolutely hilarious. "And most of the time I don't have a clue what I'm doing," he adds.

The man known as The Beautiful Bogan is on a mission and, as the title of his new Fringe show, "Not here to F**k Spiders" suggests, Ryan, pictured, has no time to waste.

He uses his own brand of comedy to spread his message of suicide prevention and courage but, above and beyond everything else, hope.

Drawn from his own experiences - Ryan has a daily battle with depression, PTSD and suicidal thoughts - the show draws from a childhood that was anything but normal (you'll need to see the show to find out more), his family, life in Adelaide's northern suburbs, his own day to day experiences, good and bad ... and his struggles to deal with all of the above.

"Being able to tell these stories, being able to make people laugh, it's saved me," he says.

Ryan first decided to be a stand-up comic when his therapist advised strongly against it, saying it was potentially the most stressful situation someone with a history of mental health issues could place themselves in, and would amplify his vulnerability and suicidal tendencies. "I've never been great about taking advice from counsellors," he says.

Within a week he was out looking for an Open Mic night. He's been doing it ever since and he reckons it saved his life.

He did 30 days straight touring his show *The Beautiful Bogan v The Black Dog*, he's performed at The Fringe, he's worked alongside Wil Anderson, Adam Hills, Dave Hughes and good mate Fiona O'Loughlin.

Now he's worked up a series of special shows for the Adelaide Fringe, which spans the Eyre Peninsula, the Yorke Peninsula and five nights at the Laugh Lounge in Rundle Mall.

Details: adelaidefringe.com.au

TWIST & SHOUT

Adelaide's Rachel Vidoni is preparing to launch a very different Beatles show for the upcoming Fringe Festival

Story MATT DEIGHTON



Adelaide-based musician Rachel Vidoni's latest show, *Come Together: The Beatles Rock Show*, features a clever twist with all the vocals performed by women.

Rachel Vidoni was fronting a Guns N' Roses tribute show, Rocket Queen, when she had something of an epiphany. She could sing the songs just as well, if not a helluva lot better, than most blokes.

"That was the moment when I realised that I didn't have to just sing the girl songs," the Adelaide-based musician says.

This confidence helped when she thought about piecing together a tribute show for a very different band.

Vidoni had always loved The Beatles and was transfixed from an early age with their incredible grasp of melody; the apparently simple arrangements that, on closer inspection, were anything but.

"The thing I liked about The Beatles was that the songs floated between different genres and each album was just vastly different," she says.

"When you watch the documentaries, and you see them in the studio, and they're just a bunch of mates, that did amazing things. And it just reminds me of how I work with my musicians and then we try to have fun and we never take ourselves too seriously, and we get the job done.

"We'd be better off to get it done well, but you know, we also have fun in the interim."

So, with all this in mind, she decided to raise the bar a bit, creating an all-female vocal version of Beatles' classics for the upcoming Adelaide Fringe under the aptly titled *Come Together: The Beatles Rock Show*.

Vidoni will handle all lead vocals with back-up from Emily Isaacs and Kylie Ferreira, while her band of Russell McCormick, Kyle Sambell, Ben Whittington and Lee Nash will hold up the backline.

She's planning on a rocking show, which is presented by her new company The Little Things Productions, but is also excited by the message it sends.

"For me, being a woman in this industry, it's been hard, it's heavily male dominated. And this is definitely putting my foot down and being like, we can do it too," she says.

"That's why I'm producing it and starring in it - doing everything. It's crazy."

Beyond this, the hardest part, she says, was nailing down precisely which songs to play.

"The catalogue is just massive but at the end of the day, I picked songs that were special to me, the ones that I enjoyed listening to and ones that I think can be performed live," she says.

"I didn't want to miss out on the big iconic moments, but again, when you're



writing for 60 minutes, there's only so much you can do.

"So I've picked and plucked bits and pieces and I've made medleys where we're doing seven songs in four minutes.

"So everyone gets a flavour of everything. I changed the setlist so many times my band was starting to get very frustrated - just pick 20 songs and that's it."

And while the songs will be easily recognisable to casual fans and diehards alike, and faithful to the spirit of the Fab Four, don't expect exact replications.

This is the Fringe, after all.

"I took it to the next level," she says.

"The show being performed by a female was untraditional enough, but then I went further and actually rearranged most of the songs, so they're not what you would hear if you put on a Beatles record, or were listening along on the radio.

"We are true to what The Beatles have done and how they've written their songs, but I've kind of put my own twist on them."

On top of that there will be dancers and more than a few bells and whistles.

"I've added a lot of production to the dances as well," she says.

"So it's a bit more visual, a bit more Fringe friendly, rather than just a live band on stage."

She doesn't want to give too much away but is clearly excited about what lies ahead.

Asked what her favourite part is, she says: "My mum asked me the same question. It's between two or three moments in the show.

"I love the opening part because it's just the three female vocalists in a cappella.

"My other favourite part is we do a psychedelic kind of mashup and it just rocks because we've rearranged them, so the songs are a little bit heavier than what The Beatles would play (in the studio), but it would sound like when The Beatles would play them live.

"And then at the very end there will be a medley with (*editor's note: we have deleted the song names here so we don't ruin the surprise*) and that's just where I really get to unleash everything." ■

Details and tickets: adelaidefringe.com.au