

# Catherine Lambert - Biography

Catherine Lambert is a master of crooning the sultry jazz ballad and pouring sweet melody into welcoming souls just beyond the stage or screen.

She's also at home in delivering robust, dynamic energy and lavishing charisma in her regular live shows and recordings where Catherine captures the audience with her own inimitable stamp. Musical theatre and comedy are other areas where Catherine shines, including her various acting experiences on stage and international film but jazz is where she continues to sparkle the brightest.

Catherine Lambert has a wide and varied career in the Australian entertainment industry but it was in the U.S. that she got her start. Coming from a very musical family at seven she started studying piano, which she continues to play and use for composition, but soon moved on to the clarinet which proved a marvellous choice as she took to it with great ease and passion. Given that the education system in America is very concert and marching band based, her mother Margaret, a well-established musician, sought out one of the finest classical clarinet teachers (George Jones) in Princeton New Jersey to further her musical experience. During this time Catherine also pursued classical ballet, gymnastics and all manner of arts and crafts. She was the "kid on the block" that would gather all the other children around to teach them to sing and dance, make their costumes and put on shows regularly.

At fourteen Catherine's family relocated to Adelaide, her mother's home town, where a Special Interest Music Centre Marryatville High School had recently been established to encourage High School level students with musical "gifts" to achieve their potential. Catherine auditioned, was immediately accepted and soon after received the much coveted Elder Conservatorium Scholarship in Clarinet Studies at Adelaide University for three years while completing High School. During this time she also studied Classical Guitar, Classical Voice and was Principal Clarinetist in the Secondary Schools Symphony Orchestra of South Australia.

Soon after leaving High School, she performed as leading soprano in the youth opera *The Two Fiddlers* by acclaimed Scottish composer Perter Maxwell-Davies during the 1980 Adelaide Festival of Arts. She played clarinet in the South Australian State Opera Orchestra and taught clarinet at Prince Alfred College, St. Ignatius College and Scotch College. Living a "double life" Catherine formed her first original alternative band at the same time and started singing with her band VA VA VA at local pubs and clubs.

By 1983 a choice had to be made between the two musical idioms. As is her way, Catherine, not afraid of risks, loaded up her car and band and moved to Sydney where she shone brightly as a dynamic front woman and was soon working five gigs a week with her band while holding down a full time job in retail. Over the next few years she worked in a number of successful bands including Sydney's *The Party Girls* (touring SA, NSW, QLD, and VIC), and Adelaide's extremely successful *Spank You Very Much*. In 1986 her jazz band *The Hep Hounds* recorded a very successful CD and her jazz career has soared since then.

Delving deeper into the jazz vocal, she performed at many jazz festivals throughout Australia (Gold Coast International, York Jazz Festival WA etc) in top jazz and blues bands appearing in many of Australia's premiere venues including The Basement, The Real Ale Café, Soup Plus and the Opera House in Sydney (with legendary guitarist Tommy Emmanuel).

Through jazz she has been featured on stage in numerous singing and acting roles with major highlights being a ground-breaking and critically acclaimed performance with the Australian Dance Theatre (ADT) where she performed Ella Fitzgerald classics on stage while ADT dancers presented choreography designed by Leigh Warren.

Catherine is a well known voice and personality in the South Australian media having been a presenter on *Adelaide Today* on Channel Nine with her segment "Entertainment Adelaide" for four years as well as a breakfast radio announcer for two years on radio station KAFM. She

now does some volunteer announcing on Radio 5MBS, a community station with a very strong jazz following. Catherine has performed on many national Australian television shows including *The Midday Show* (9), *Hey Hey It's Saturday* (9), *Good Morning Australia* (10) and *Jazz As Now* (ABC) and on South Australian television on *Adelaide Today* (9), *Touch Of Elegance* (7) and *AM Adelaide* (7).

As a keen composer with an extremely diverse musical background to call on, Catherine won the major prize (\$15,000) in the Australian Songwriters' Association national contest from a field of 500 entries writing a song for Racing Victoria in 1997. She has also won 8 finalist prizes in the LA based International UNISONG competition over the last ten years and wrote the club song for the Adelaide Thunderbirds Netball team. She has also written several commercials for radio and television.

Catherine has continued to perform with some of the finest Australian and international jazz greats including Don Burrows, James Morrison, and as national support for BB King with Diane Reeves and the Phillip Morris Superband.

In May of 2001 Catherine sang a full season of jazz at the very exclusive New York Bar at the Park Hyatt Tokyo where she was discovered by Sophia Coppola (writer/director) and invited to play a singer/character part in Sophia's second feature film *Lost In Translation* starring Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson. *Lost In Translation* was shot on location in Tokyo in 2002 and was released to rave reviews all over the globe, picking up three Golden Globes, two BAFTAS and one Academy Award.

While her film career has continued to blossom including her 2004 role in the film *Peaches* starring Hugo Weaving and Jacqueline McKenzie, performing, composing and recording jazz is her driving passion.

Catherine and her quartet's sensational jazz album *Back in the Swing* contains fourteen sparkling tracks including seven written by herself and three as performed in the Academy – Award-winning *Lost In Translation*. Her latest release (Feb 2007) is *Soirée Deux*, a collection of stunningly beautiful interpretations of jazz ballads performed with voice and guitar.

While at home in South Australia Catherine performs at numerous corporate functions, private functions, special events (Master's Games, SANFL Grand Finals, Hindmarsh Stadium Soccer finals, Memorial Drive Australian Open), jazz clubs and festivals (in 2006 The Perth International Arts Festival; in 2007 The Melbourne International Women's Jazz Festival and The Mildura Jazz Festival), is an in demand session singer in all styles of music, teaches aspiring newcomers and does as much Charity fundraising work as she can. She is also proud to be an ambassador for the AFL's Adelaide Crows, The Spastic Centre of SA, and performs at all services for the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) Vietnam Veterans' Association. Catherine set the RAR's Regimental Prayer to music for their service to commemorate Kapyong Day on April 24, 2007 and the piece is earmarked for use nationally.

**[www.catherinelambert.com](http://www.catherinelambert.com)**