

## Interview: Brad Cole



**Photo: Brad Cole performing at the 2014 National Songwriting Awards.**

**Brad Cole** is an Independent Australian Country Music artist who has been wowing audiences around Australia since 2009 with his original brand of country music.

Brad was raised in Cowra and Young in western NSW. In his early teens, his family relocated to Port Macquarie on the NSW mid North Coast. Inspired by the song writing and music styles of iconic acts such as The Eagles, Linda Ronstadt, Shania Twain, Little River Band, Keith Urban and Rick Price, Brad made the decision to make music his life, and In 2009 he teamed up with Sydney based VGM Music Management and The Roberts Network, for the independent release his debut album 'Icebreaker' which was recorded and produced by Brisbane's Stuart Stuart (recent credits include the Brisbane hit band, Sheppard).

2009 was a big year for Brad. His debut single, "Hits Me Like Lightning", reached No. 2 around Australia, and held this spot for eleven weeks in the Australian country music charts. In the same year, his second release, "Come Home", debuted at No. 2 in the national Top 30 country radio charts and stayed there for eight weeks.

Brad was certainly making an impact on the country music scene. This led to him winning the Australian Country Music People's Choice Award for Most Promising New Artist, at The 2009 Tamworth Country Music Festival.

Success followed Brad into 2010, where his third single, "Hold Me In Your Arms Tonight", reached No. 3 on national Top 30 country radio charts and stayed there for eight weeks, just behind singles from Keith Urban and Taylor Swift.



**Photo: Brad Cole performing at the 2014 National Songwriting Awards.**

Brad also performed Hold Me In Your Arms Tonight on the popular Australian TV contest, Dancing With The Stars.

In 2010 Brad was announced as an Australian Finalist at the prestigious APRA Songwriter Awards for Most Played Country Work on Australian Radio and TV, with his single, Come Home.

Brad has performed at some of the major music festivals, like the Gympie Muster and Tamworth. He has performed at the Sydney Opera House and Sydney's Hard Rock Café. He has worked in Nashville and at the Calgary Stampede Canada, and for those who attended the 2014 National Songwriting Awards night in 2014, Brad sang the Australia category winning song, "My Outback Heartland", penned by songwriters, Lola Brinton and Trish Roland.

**ASA:** How did you come to meet Lola and Trish and record their song, My Outback Heartland?

**Brad:** Around three years ago I received an email from Lola who introduced herself to me. Prior to this we hadn't met before. Lola told me a bit about herself and her songwriting pursuits. She mentioned that she had co-written a demo with Trish that was inspired by Australia's unique beauty and natural landscapes. The song was titled 'My Outback Heartland'.

Lola and Trish had a very positive belief in the song and had made a decision to take the song to the next level and have the song recorded. Lola mentioned that she was

a fan of my music and asked if I'd be interested in recording vocal on the song. Lola and Trish mentioned there was a certain vocal feel and presence that they were hoping to capture and felt that my style of vocal would be a nice fit for their song. I soon got working on the project. When recording the vocal, I went with a soft melodic approach to help accentuate the descriptive song lyric.

**ASA:** Who were your major influences in your early career in country music?

**Brad:** Growing up, I had a real attraction towards US contemporary country music. In particular country music created in the 70's, 80's by acts like The Eagles, Linda Rodstant, Willie Nelson, Kenny Rogers, Alabama and Glen Campbell.

**ASA:** Who are your major influences today?

**Brad:** Rick Price writes some wonderful organic songs. I rate Rick as one of Australia's top balladeers and an inspiration to me on that front. On the home front in regards to Aussie country music I enjoy The McClymonts and the quality of their works and Beccy Cole and her witty songwriting. Having spent some time writing and performing in Nashville I was impressed and inspired by the songwriting masterminds behind country acts like: Little Big Town, Blake Shelton, Keith Urban and Zac Brown.

**ASA:** Are there any songwriting tips that you could give the up and coming songwriters reading this article?

**Brad:** It takes time to grow as a songwriter and to perhaps find a niche. Don't be afraid to experiment and reshape songs till you find a sound and feel that best conveys the message in the song. Challenge yourself and take the time to try and write an inspiring song or a song that can leave an impression. You often have to dig through a lot of rocks before you get to the diamonds.

**ASA:** You were raised in country NSW and moved to Sydney. Is it difficult to pursue a country music career, being based in Sydney?

**Brad:** For me, Sydney is a base that takes care of certain music related functions. My style of contemporary country music is not only directed towards regional country music audiences but I'm also trying to reach and grow my music into a broader market. So in a way, being in Sydney allows me a chance to build a greater awareness of my music amongst capital city audiences. I still get out of Sydney and travel to regional NSW to perform, write and share stories with the locals. Travelling and performing in regional areas clears my mind which often allows song ideas to develop.

**ASA:** What are your immediate plans and where are you hoping that your music career will take you?

**Brad:** Right now I'm involved in performing in either Sydney or regional NSW. I'm saving my pennies to record new original material for my next album which I hope won't be too far away. Recently, I spent some time in Nashville networking with US songwriters and presenting performances. Whilst there I formed a friendship with Toby Keith's lead guitarist Rich Eckhardt and we ended up recording one of my new

songs which involved various members of Toby's band on the recording which was a real buzz. This song will be included on my new album.

As far as my future, well I think a lot in the music industry has to do with a combination of determination, the right songs, production quality, timing and whether doors can open up that may lead to greater exposure opportunities for you and your music. I have no unrealistic expectations regarding my music. If my music connects, then that's a wonderful reward in itself. Anything else that comes from that is a bonus. I hope that audiences who have been warming towards my works will continue to enjoy my offerings and I'm also able to grow new audiences.



**Photo: Group shot of Brad with ASA Chairman, Denny Burgess (Right).**

**ASA:** Is there anything that you'd like to say to aspiring songwriters?

**Brad:** To date I've been flattered by the encouraging feedback and support my music has been receiving. It's not an easy road if you are trying to build something for yourself in the music industry and it's so gratifying when you start to make some ground.

With this in mind, I say to aspiring songwriters that this is where the Australian Songwriters Association plays a wonderful part allowing your songs a chance to be reviewed by industry, right up to potentially celebrating your songs in front of your peers and industry at the glitzy annual ASA awards night.

## Members News and Information

### 1. 2014 Category Winners' Interviews.

The video of the interviews with the category winners at the 2014 National Songwriting Awards is now up on the ASA Youtube channel at: <https://plus.google.com/u/0/108412603482283592022/posts>.

### 2. Songwriters Meeting Point.

ASA member, **Henry Hamad**, is a lyricist who is looking for someone who would like to add music to his lyrics. If you can help Henry, please contact him on [henry.hamad@gmail.com](mailto:henry.hamad@gmail.com).

### 3. The Australian Country Songwriters Show



**The Australian Country Songwriters Show** is on the radio at 9.00pm on Monday evenings on Today's Country 94.1 on the NSW Central Coast, and over the internet via RSS feed

([www.todayscountry94one.com](http://www.todayscountry94one.com)).

The concept of the show is to provide up-and-coming country, and country-crossover, songwriters with the opportunity for airplay for their songs, on Australia's most popular country music radio station.

The station won the Most Popular Radio Station award at the 2015 People's Choice Awards, held in Tamworth, earlier this year. The station also won the award in 2012 and 2014. The People's Choice Awards are held in conjunction with the Tamworth Country Music Festival each year.

If you'd like your songs considered for airplay, please contact **Alan Gilmour** on [alang@asai.org.au](mailto:alang@asai.org.au) or on [acss@todayscountry94one.com](mailto:acss@todayscountry94one.com).



Please go to Facebook, and "Like" The Australian Country Songwriters Show, and tell your friends.



You can also vote for The Australian Country Songwriters Show (and the station) in the 2016 People's Choice Awards, by going to [www.peopleschoiceawards.com.au](http://www.peopleschoiceawards.com.au), and lodging your vote.

Your vote will help us expand and promote on air services for songwriters.

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For more information, visit the Hal Leonard website at [www.halleonard.com.au](http://www.halleonard.com.au).

### **Maton Guitars**



**Maton** supplies the ASA with a beautiful acoustic guitar each year as the major prize, for the Rudy Brandsma Award at the National Songwriting Awards.

Maton has a huge range of electric guitars, acoustic guitars, bass guitars and ukuleles.

Check out the Maton website at [www.maton.com.au](http://www.maton.com.au) for the best in Australian guitars.

### **Griffith University**



Griffith University, in Southern Queensland, provides a Bachelor of Popular Music degree at its Gold Coast campus.

Students learn about the musical innovation and creativity needed to be successful in a wide range of careers in the popular music industry. Students study contemporary popular music practices and emerging technologies and develop skills in stagecraft, sound engineering and production, and promotion.

For more information, check out [www.griffith.edu.au](http://www.griffith.edu.au).

## The Load Out

With Spring now here, and Summer just around the corner, we thought that we'd show you some more good reasons to take a dip in a swimming pool, especially if you have access to custom made pools for musicians.



## Official Sponsors of the Australian Songwriting Contest

The ASA would like to acknowledge the assistance of all of its sponsors for supporting us in our activities throughout the year. The ASA is a not-for-profit association and could not undertake its activities without the assistance of its valued sponsors.

We would encourage ASA Members to use the services of our sponsors wherever possible.

### The ASA is proudly supported by the following organisations:







## About Us

The Australian Songwriters Association Inc. is a national, not-for-profit, member organization, dedicated to the support of songwriters and their art, by providing avenues for encouragement and education of developing Australian songwriters, and recognition and promotion of our accomplished members.

## Aims of the Association

- To celebrate the art of songwriting;
- To assist and encourage developing Australian songwriters;
- To provide information and general advice to members;
- To create performance opportunities for members;
- To aid the professional development of members;
- To enable members to meet and/or exchange ideas and information
- To facilitate member transition into the established music industry;
- To facilitate delivery of member services at a National, State and Regional level;
- To salute our best songwriters at major industry events such as our National Songwriting Awards Night.

## History of the ASA

The Association was founded in Melbourne VIC in August 1979 by the late Tom Louch (1932-2009) and the late Rudy Brandsma (1944-1983), who saw the need for an organisation that would bring Australian songwriters together.

Today the Association has a vibrant membership Australia-wide and enjoys an established and respected role within the music industry.

The ASA's membership is diverse and embraces and explores all genres of music.

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APRA/ASA Australian Songwriter of the Year 2014:

Rick Hart (VIC)

Rudy Brandsma Award Winner 2014:

Robert McIntosh (NSW)

PPCA Live Performance Award Winner 2014:

The Morrisons (NSW)

### Australian Songwriters Hall of Fame:

2014: Kate Ceberano  
2013: Garth Porter (Sherbet)  
2012: Don Walker (Cold Chisel)  
2011: Steve Kilbey (The Church)  
2010: Richard Clapton  
2009: Ross Wilson (Daddy Cool, Mondo Rock)  
2008: Doc Neeson, John Brewster & Rick Brewster (The Angels)  
2007: Brian Cadd  
2006: Glenn Shorrock, Beeb Birtles & Graeham Goble (LRB)  
2005: Russell Morris  
2004: Harry Vanda, George Young & Stevie Wright (The Easybeats)

### Australian Songwriting Contest Award Winners 2014:

Lola Brinton & Trish Roldan (NSW) (Australia)  
Rick Hart (VIC) (Ballad) (Joint)  
Cill Van Der Velden & Jarrad Grimmond (NSW) (Ballad) (Joint)  
Demi Louise, Joe Killington & Neil Athale (VIC) (Contemporary Pop/Dance)  
Samantha Mooney (QLD) (Country)  
James Daley (NSW) (Folk/Acoustic)  
Manjia Luo (NSW) (Instrumental)  
Michael McGee/Rolf Schnyder (USA/Switzerland) (International)  
Cathy Dobson (VIC) (Lyrics)  
Kathy Prosser (ACT) (Open)  
Johnny Breen (QLD) (Rock/Indie)  
Lori Greco (WA) (Spiritual)  
Kathy Prosser (ACT) (Songs For Children)  
Frank Dixon (VIC) (Youth)

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