

# CARUS

Biography by Greg Arnold

"I am having a beer with Carus in the band room of The East Brunswick Club on a cold Tuesday night in August 06 and the crowd is yelling out for another encore. The audience is remarkably passionate, and remarkably unconcerned about staying up late on a work night...and I think of all the gloomy nay-sayers and bummers who have been lamenting the death of Australian pub rock and make the observation that they have clearly never been to a Carus gig."

Hailing from Fremantle it is easy to mistake Carus as "just another roots act" in the style of The Waifs and The John Butler Trio. He hit the folk-rock highway ten years ago, he plays over two hundred shows every year and he has sold tens of thousands of CDs. He plays the major festivals and has a passionate fan base that any D.I.Y folkie would be proud of.

Yet, in many ways Carus owes more to the OZ pub rock tradition than his rootsy contemporaries. His show is essentially a rock and roll show. While he is a story telling troubadour in the Paul Kelly style, he "goes off" in the adrenaline fuelled manner of The Beasts, The Gurus and The Oils. A lyrical observer of society he may be- but a shoe gazer he ain't.

The tension between the sensitive balladeer and the fold back leaping, nut bag skeg with his guitar behind his head never left my mind during the entire recording process.

While Carus says in the title track- he can fit his life into three boxes and go traveling, he himself is extremely difficult to squeeze into a single box.

I first saw Carus at the Port Fairy Folk Festival in 2001. He was playing a funky reggae mix that had a field of young knitted hat hippies skanking happily, if somewhat incongruously, in the biting southern coast cold. He sang about selling pot to pay the rent. It was a breath of fresh air to the occasionally stiflingly predictable earnestness of such festivals.

Next time I saw him he was playing an acoustic show at Brass Monkey in Cronulla. Once again there were happy hippies, but this time I got the chance to get inside the songs a bit more. There was a great vibe in the room, the sort of vibe I hadn't seen since an early Things of Stone and Wood show. I loved it.

One song jumped out of the pack, a song I have never lost the vibe on: "This time". "This Time" is a torrid documentary of a couple breaking up in technicolour, and it is classic 'heart on sleeve' Carus. Like the protagonists of the song, he holds nothing back. I like seeing a bloke let it all hang out, even if what we see isn't all that pretty. And so does his crowd.

The next day we talked about the possibility of my producing his next album. In our discussions we agreed that what had been missing so far was a cohesive album- "Let's make a good one" we determined...like it's just that easy.



**FOR INTERVIEWS, REVIEW COPIES, GIVEAWAYS OR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT AUSTRALIAN MUSIC BIZ**

Ph: (07) 3854 0945  
Fax: (07) 3854 0734  
Melbourne: Ph: 0418 700 316

Radio & TV: Bianca Lindstrom bianca@musicbiz.com.au  
Press: Laura Donovan laura@musicbiz.com.au (Melbourne Office)  
Internet, Press & Radio Assistant: Ellie Makepeace ellie@musicbiz.com.au

For media releases, biographies, tour dates and high resolution press photos, please visit our website.

[www.musicbiz.com.au](http://www.musicbiz.com.au)

## FAST FACTS

Artist: Carus and the True Believers  
Album: Three Boxes  
Distribution: MGM  
Release Date: May 14  
Hometown: Fremantle  
Website: [www.carus.com.au](http://www.carus.com.au)  
MySpace: [myspace.com/carusthompson](http://myspace.com/carusthompson)



Next time I saw Carus he was playing on a 44 degree day at Luna Park in Sydney, at the diabolically titled “Feel Good” New Year’s Day Festival. He and The True Believers were delivering a great show again, regardless that the weather was driving most bands to take shelter in the rider buckets... and yet again, there was a room full of happy hippies.

The True Believers are a great band to be with Carus. Bedgy’s unbelievable skill set, married to his understated performance style is the perfect foil for Carus’ flamboyance. And Jason is always passionate about the show- he is simply incapable of dialing in a bad performance. They are like The E Street band, quietly and essentially building a platform from which their front guy can have a crack at a somersault.

So now we’ve made the album. It was great fun, but not without its challenges. I was on Carus’ case about writing and singing from day one. And it is always a challenge to convince any band to embrace the art of record making, particularly if that band is a great and successful live act.

But two years later- after countless song writing chats, three separate recording sessions, the disappearance of a bass player and a mixing trip to Nashville, I think we’re there. I believe we’ve made the cohesive album that was missing. It is a singer songwriter record and it is a band record. The performances are there and the songs have been giving the treatment they deserve.

Lyricaly Carus has found his voice. He is the macro-social observer via the micro.

In Downtown a naïve, culturally uncertain romance is betrayed during the Cronulla riots. “The Last Days of Winter” is all aching loss, in a bar- talking shit about bands. In “Crash”, the first single he paints a picture that endures throughout the album. Young people fuck up, young people get it together, young people fuck up again. And as in “Broken Heart,” where he talks of his hometown’s inherently damaged indigenous youth, it is all empathy- not a “tutt-tutt” in sight. In “Thrown” and “Saturday in Singapore” we see the tragic outcomes of a fuck-up too far.

I believe the empathy.

I believe it because the humility of the underpinning spirit seems so at odds with the shirtless charismatic swagger. The contradiction suggests someone who understands fucking up and getting it together and fucking up again- Someone who in “Denmark to Sweden” knows “how to ruin all the good things”.

Maybe that’s why Carus is pulling people to pubs that would otherwise be occupied by tumbleweeds and nostalgists- he’s up there singing and living a pub story, and it’s a crash of the Oz pub tradition onto the neo-roots indie highway.

## ***CHECK OUT CARUS AND THE TRUE BELIEVERS LIVE***

- June 8:** Sound Lounge, Gold Coast QLD
- June 9:** Living Room, Brisbane QLD
- June 10:** Great Northern, Byron Bay NSW
- June 15:** Annandale Hotel, Sydney NSW
- June 17:** Republic Bar, Hobart TAS
- June 22:** Northcote Social Club, Melbourne VIC
- June 23:** Northcote Social Club, Melbourne VIC
- June 24:** Peninsula Lounge, Moorooduc VIC
- June 28:** Mojos Bar, Fremantle WA
- June 30:** Divers Tavern, Broome WA
- July 1:** Divers Tavern, Broome WA
- July 5:** Prince of Wales, Bunbury WA
- July 6:** The Gov, Adelaide SA



**FOR INTERVIEWS, REVIEW COPIES, GIVEAWAYS OR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT AUSTRALIAN MUSIC BIZ**

Ph: (07) 3854 0945  
Fax: (07) 3854 0734  
Melbourne: Ph: 0418 700 316

Radio & TV: Bianca Lindstrom bianca@musicbiz.com.au  
Press: Laura Donovan laura@musicbiz.com.au (Melbourne Office)  
Internet, Press & Radio Assistant: Ellie Makepeace ellie@musicbiz.com.au

For media releases, biographies, tour dates and high resolution press photos, please visit our website.

**www.musicbiz.com.au**