



RUTH HAZLETON - BIOGRAPHY

Steeped in history, folk tradition and unapologetically political, Melbourne-based singer, banjo player, guitarist and songwriter Ruth Hazleton has remained a prominent figure in Australia's folk music scene since she began performing in 1995.

Ruth's music career began as a member of Canberra-based band *Closet Klezmer*, whose vibrant Eastern European dance music quickly led them becoming local cult favourites. It was during this time she also developed an enduring passion for the music of Transylvania, Hungary and traditional musics from around the world.

In 1998, Ruth took to the stage with Kate Burke (*Trouble in the Kitchen*), and the rest, as they say, is history. Two of Australia's most respected and renowned folk musicians; their vocal harmonies, exceptional musicianship and unique interpretations of traditional song have won them national and international acclaim over the years.

[Kate & Ruth](#) have toured Australia and internationally, recorded five studio albums, and performed and recorded with such luminaries as Andy Irvine and Bruce Molsky. They've picked up awards ('ScreenSound Australia Award for Best Folk Album' 2002, 'Lis Johnston Award for Vocal Excellence' 1998), and have been described by *The Australian* as "Why folk music is cool again". The duo's fifth and latest release *Declaration* (2015) was nominated for a genre award at 'The Age Victorian Music Awards', announced as 'Album of The Week' on 'The Daily Planet' *ABC Radio National*, and also on *Blues & Roots Radio* internationally.

Throughout her career, Ruth has also performed American old-time & Americana music (another enduring musical passion); initially with Canberra-based band *The Horses's Leotard* (you did read that right), and later *Dev'lish Mary*.

Among the many acts and musicians Ruth has recorded and performed with are: Andy Irvine (Ireland - *Planxty, Mozaik*), Bruce Molsky (USA - *Mozaik*), Nancy Kerr & *The Sweet Visitor Band* (UK - BBC Folk Singer of the Year 2015), Luke Plumb (*Shooglenifty*), James Fagan, Rens Van der Zalm (Netherlands - *Mozaik*), Donal Lunny (Ireland - *Planxty, Mozaik*), James Keelaghan (Canada), Martyn Wyndham-Read (UK), Fred Smith & Liz Frencham (Australia), Bill Jackson (Australia) and Shane Howard (Australia - Goanna).

In her non-musical life, Ruth Hazleton is a mum, independent folklorist, oral and social historian. Currently employed by The National Library of Australia, she is also an occasional blogger at [The Hidden Culture](#), volunteer for [The Australian Magic Research Project](#), and Reference Committee member for the [Australian Children's Folklore Collection](#) at Museums Victoria. She is also an activist for [Australian Independent Musicians](#) and passionate campaigner for women in the Australian music industry.

QUOTES:

“Whether a traditional song or a song of her own making, Ruth approaches her material with great understanding. Deeply concerned with the political and social, her convictions are intrinsic to the passion behind her music - evident in the strength of her music and her voice”.

~ **Andy Irvine (Ireland)**

“With an easy but refined musicality, it is her deep knowledge of folk music traditions, a historian's eye and a storyteller's heart that makes Ruth Hazleton one of Australia's most exciting artists”.

~ **Lucky Oceans**

“Ruth Hazleton's vast knowledge of folk music tradition saturates her own songs. She is a 'real deal' songwriter”.

~ **Kat Goldman (Canada)**

“Ruth Hazleton is the rarest of artists. A sylvan voice, an experienced player's chops, a deep well of tradition to draw on and the ability to write songs that sound older and more lived in than most contemporary music”.

~ **James Keelaghan (Canada)**

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