

Chris Finnen



2010 Biography



Chris Finnen is a virtuoso guitarist, percussionist and singer with roots in Mississippi Delta Blues, Indian, Celtic and South African music. Fusion of these elements and his personalized approach to playing result in an extensive repertoire of original songs and powerful interpretations of traditional music. Chris has a great passion for the blues and world music and for the value of music within the community.

Born in 1952 in Sussex, England, Chris migrated to Australia in 1967. His father's extensive collection of jazz records and the pop music of the day were his early influences. After moving to Melbourne he was a regular guest on stage with Chain, Billy Thorpe & the Aztecs and other influential musicians of the time.

He has received numerous South Australian and National Guitar awards and in 1995 he was inducted into the SAMIA Hall of Fame.

Chris has played solo concerts at folk festivals throughout Australia including Woodford, Port Fairy and the National Folk Festival. Blues festivals include Bridgetown, Goulburn, Narooma, Gympie Muster, Alice Springs and Lithgow. He has performed at three Frankston guitar festivals.

Between 1988 and 1994 Chris toured throughout Australia with Qawali singer Dyah Singh and with indo fusion group Indian Pacific. A highlight of these tours was performing at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre for the Dalai Lama.

2005 was highlighted by a series of concerts at the Nagoya World Expo with Jeff Lang.

Chris has recorded with and is a member of the Colin Offord's Great Bowing Company, giving concerts at The Clarendon in the Blue Mountains and in Sydney's Eastside Arts and in the Government House Ballroom. These days they have a duo known simply as Finnen & Offord.

Chris has performed and shared the stage with such blues legends as Buddy Guy, Bo Diddley, John Hammond, John Mayall, Roy Buchanan, Eric Burdon, Dave Van Ronk, Keb Mo, Michael Hills Blues Mob, The Holmes Brothers, Sam Carr, the Delta Rhythm Kings and Bob Brozman. He has also played with Australian Blues Greats Matt Taylor's Chain, Dave Hole, Phil Manning, Jeff Lang and singer Margret RoadKnight.

In 2007 Chris featured at the Adelaide 2007 International Guitar Festival as a solo musician, with the Chris Finnen Blues Band and presented guitar workshops based around his diverse influences as presented on his twin DVD set Building Musical Bridges Between Cultures and the Singing Gallery Sessions.

Chris takes great pleasure in teaching and playing with the Adelaide Tutti Ensemble which performed at the 2008 & 2009 Adelaide Fringe Festival.

2009 was a very busy year performing his new solo theatre show Blues and Beyond, playing lead guitar for Rhum Boogie and C Willy Swing, duo shows with roots artist Jay Hoad and sharing stage with many interstate and international touring artists.

After ten great years together the Chris Finnen Blues Band has metamorphosed into the Chris Finnen Clan, with a new line up further expanding his unique approach to the blues with the inclusion of reggae, calypso, Indian and folk music rhythms and influences.

During 2010 Chris is planning interstate tours, the release of 2 new CDs and more Finnen & Offord duo concerts following their recent success in the Brisbane Jazz Club, the Bay Islands and the Music By The Sea festival. They have also received an invitation to tour South Africa for "Awesome Africa" and the National Living Treasures festival.

Chris is the proud father of young Izaak Finnen who is already developing his own musical prowess especially playing the piano.
