

Jay Power

SINGER/
SONGWRITER

At her Cheltenham home studio in a converted church

WORDS KATIE SPAIN PICTURE MARK BRAKE



“I love my house, not just because it's my home with a really big, light space and a warehouse feel. It's also because we've lived a really artistic life here, making music, creating art and sharing the space with friends

1 CAT Notice she's the top priority? That's just the way she likes it. Poppy's got a cool personality and is slightly naughty and I love her company. She's been with me for 13 years but she still acts like an entitled kitten. For me, life is empty without a cat to share it with.

2 BOOKSHELF This was made for me for my birthday a couple of years ago. My husband Tim designed it, welded the frame and created the shelves out of a vintage piece of jarrah from a house we renovated. It's beautiful and it's made with me in mind, which is just so special.

3 RADIOGRAM My Puppa left me his radiogram. He used to play records at the highest volume so it rang out through the home he lived in. The last few records he was listening to are still in it. It's such a precious gift to me and I play something on it nearly every day — Frank Sinatra, James Brown, Nat King Cole and Whitney Houston to name a few.

4 ARETHA FRANKLIN CD *I Never Loved a Man The Way That I Love You* is the first album I ever bought with my own money and still, to this day, it's my favourite. Nobody inspires me like Aretha, with her gut-wrenching delivery and her limitless musical gifts. She moves me like nobody else.

5 MICROPHONE This little beauty arrived just in time to record all of the vocals on my new album *The Missing*. The sound of it is as good as it looks. I've worked hard all my life to develop my voice, so it's lovely to have great tools to work with, especially when they look this chic!



GARDEN PATH
deborah bogle

WITH any luck, by the time you read this, I'll be settled in the shade at Adelaide Writers' Week absorbed in one of the opening weekend sessions. As stimulating as the program promises to be, there'll be plenty of opportunity to gaze in wonder at the living wall stage backdrops that will replace the basket weave of twigs we've enjoyed over the past couple of years. Last weekend, the staff at Trees for Life, who have realised the vision of Writers'

Week director Laura Kroetsch and site designer Bruce McKinven, nursed the more than 4000 South Australian native plants destined for the wall through the heatwave, coming in on their days off to hand-water the 35 species of grasses, succulents, ground covers and climbers. They have been assisted in this work, which began in the middle of last year, by a team of 15 volunteers drawn from the band of voluntary growers, nursery assistants and general helpers who number in their hundreds and form the backbone of this remarkable organisation. Its roots go back to 1981, when Lolo Houbein and her partner Burr Dodd coordinated the visit to Adelaide of Richard St Barbe Baker, a visionary Englishman who had worked to reverse desertification in the Sahara and had travelled the world setting up chapters of his organisation Men of the Trees. An Adelaide branch was established within a fortnight of his visit, and two years later had changed its name

to Trees for Life. Other branches of Men of the Trees took root in other states, and spawned other community-based groups focused on conserving our natural heritage but none is quite like Trees for Life. "It really resonated here in South Australia," Ian Lett told me when I visited the nursery in Brooklyn Park several weeks ago. Ian runs the Trees Program, which provides local indigenous plants at a subsidised rate to farmers and other landholders so that they can revegetate their properties. The service runs at a loss but is subsidised by the services it provides growing plants to order for local government and private landscape projects. It has a member base of 9000 but relies on its volunteer growers to raise and care for the plants at home. "This year we had 800 people in the community growing seedlings but that's way down on what it used to be," Ian said. "We used to have more than 2000." They're hoping that the exposure they'll

gain at Writers' Week, which also relies on a committed band of volunteers, will boost this number. Brett Oakes, the nursery officer who has been in charge of raising the plants for the living walls, will be at Writers' Week today and tomorrow to provide information and advice on growing native plants. "It's quite exciting, to do things more for display," he told me. "We do lots of revegetation projects but they're the stock-standard gum trees, acacia trees and so on, but this gives us an opportunity to show prettier things, things that people don't necessarily identify as native plants." Laura Kroetsch, who has become a passionate gardener since moving to Adelaide, hopes to inspire everyone to plant natives. She's giving Writers' Week audiences the chance to do just that, with the sale of the backdrop plants at the end of the event. I'm always sorry to see another Writers' Week end but I can't wait for the plant sale.