

Gleny Rae Bio

A country girl with an international heart, Gleny Rae believes music can inspire and change lives. "Music is a two way street, equally important to the performer AND the listener."

"We learn so much through music, and I spend most of my time as a music teacher learning from my students!"

A passionate educator, Gleny Rae left the east coast in January 2021 to teach music in Alice Springs and fulfill a calling to work on community with indigenous children. Two years into her Mparntwe (Alice Springs) teaching role, Gleny Rae can be found conducting choirs as afar afield as Tennant Creek, Nyirripi, Papunya and Finke. She relishes the opportunity to work on country with First Nations people and the incredibly passionate educators there.

Gleny Rae is no stranger to the screen, having appeared in the first ground breaking series of *Go Back To Where You Came From* which screened on SBS in 2011. In 2018, she travelled to the USA with her friend and colleague Wanita as part of the award winning music documentary *I'm Wanita*. As Wanita's manager, her roles included organising recording sessions, publicity, liaising with local musicians and assisting with the filming of the documentary, but most importantly taking care of the unpredictable and demanding talent (Wanita)!

Wherever Gleny Rae lives, she becomes deeply embedded in the music community and relishes the opportunity to create new performance opportunities and attract musicians from afar. Since living in Alice Springs, she has performed with King Marong, Alice Springs World Chamber Orchestra, Olive Pink Opera, Warren H Williams, Neil Murray, Xavia's *We Sing*, Stellar Sea's *Is This Desire* and Dina's *Should You Lose Your Belongings*. Gleny Rae is Musical Director of the monthly Pop Up Cabaret gig (On the Wing Productions), organised the Alice Springs World Chamber Orchestra fundraiser at Olive Pink Gardens, and has lured Australian artists to Alice Springs to perform including Jackie Marshall, Shannon Bourne, Mike Martin, Sarah Carroll.

While living in Newcastle (2009 – 2019), Gleny Rae was artistic director of the Karuah Bluegrass Music Festival, creator and director of the Coaltown Strutters Ball, and curated a series of concerts at the *Sunset Studio* for 7 years, attracting both Australian and international artists.

In her teaching career, she has coordinated and conducted a number of large scale concerts in Karratha WA, Newcastle NSW and Alice Springs NT. Most recently, she coached and conducted the Alice Beat combined schools choir featuring 155 students from schools in a 500km radius of Alice Springs.

Her performing career spans from Edinburgh Fringe Festival to American Music Association Showcase in Nashville TN, and most of the folk festivals in Australia including the big three; Woodford, National Folk Festival and Port Fairy Folk Festival. She is regularly asked to run fiddle workshops or run festival choirs, including the Gospel Choir at the 2022 Dorrigo Folk and Bluegrass Festival.

The 2018 album *Diggin' A Hole* was awarded Best Roots Album at the Australian Roots Music Awards in 2018. In 2023, Gleny Rae was awarded a Golden Fiddle Award for Best Fiddler in a Band at the 2023 Tamworth Country Music Festival, and the Australian Folk Music Award for Best Instrumentalist. She also established the Mparntwe String Band Folk Song Collective, a weekly gathering of folk music enthusiasts who wish to improve their skills, connect with other like minded musicians, and develop a shared repertoire of music relevant to people and place on Arrente country. This project culminated with a hugely successful Bush Dance and performance at the 2023 Desert Festival.

Community Projects in Mparntwe/Alice Springs

2022	Facilitated Alice Springs Chamber Orchestra fundraiser concert at Olive Pink Botanic Gardens.
2022	Alice Springs Chamber Orchestra performance with Elena Kats-Chernin at Araluen Performing Arts Centre
2023	Elected as President of the Alice Springs Folk Club Inc.
2023	Established monthly folk sessions at the Watertank Café, to build folk community, support local folk musicians, provide opportunities for emerging folk musicians and provide a platform for touring folk acts.
2023	Establishment of Mparntwe String Band and Folk Song Collective, with Seed funding from Red Hot Arts. Culminated in performance at Desert Festival
2024	Mpartnwe String Band weekly gatherings, creating an inclusive and supportive environment for string instrument players of all levels.
2024	Artistic Director of newly launched Top Half Folk Festival, in new location of Ross River Resort. Festival was an artistic and financial success, with no funding!
2024	Received NT Arts funding for Mparntwe String Band Project, to continue weekly string sessions, facilitate bush dances, and run First Fiddle Club programs – a free workshop targeted at school aged children to allow the opportunity to see, touch and play a violin for the first time.
2025	Facilitator of Alice Springs Chamber Orchestra, with local performances including collaboration with Steiner School students.
2025	Collaboration with Dusty Feet Ballet/Duprada Dance School culminating in performance at Araluen Performing Arts Centre
2025	Facilitator of music program for Beanie Festival
2025	Facilitator of Mparntwe String Band Bushdance as part of Desert Festival
2025	Facilitator Singchronicity Choir (primary and secondary students) tour of Mparntwe/Alice Springs including Old Timers Aged Care Facility, Purple House and Sadadeen Primary.
2026	Facilitator musical performances at State Funeral Ted Egan AO
2026	Artistic Director Top Half Folk Festival at Ross River. Co-collaborator with Liam King on String Dome Project (funded by Festivals Australia) Involving original composition, teaching young local string players and liaising with guest artist Tenzin Choegyal. Premier performance at Top Half Folk Festival 2026.

Discography – performance and production

2026	Momentum	Gleny Rae Virus
2018	Diggin' A Hole	Gleny Rae Virus
2016	Big News in a Small Town (producer)	Kate Oliver
2015	AAA	Gleny Rae Virus
2014	Country Con Queso	The Junes
2012	Whojigadandy	Gleny Rae Virus and her Playboys
2011	12 Golden Greats	The Junes
2010	Beyond Horizontal	Gleny Rae Virus and her Playboys
2007	Highrollin'	Gleny Rae Virus and her Playboys
2005	Thirteen Thongs	Toe Sucking Cowgirls
2002	Flamin' Sheilas	Toe Sucking Cowgirls

Performances include

Americana Music Association Conference, Nashville TN
Blackpot Festival Lafayette Louisiana
Edinburgh Fringe Festival, UK
Harvest Music Festival, Ozark AK
South West Regional Folk Alliance Conference, Austin TX

Dorrigo Folk and Bluegrass Festival
Cobargo Folk Festival
Cygnets Folk Festival
Darwin Festival
Desert Festival
Desert Harmony Festival
Fairbridge FolkWorld Festival
Gumball
Gympie Muster
Illawarra Folk Festival
Nannup Music Festival
National Folk Festival, Canberra
Port Fairy Folk Festival
Tamworth Country Music Festival
Wirrina Bluegrass Festival
WOMAdelaide
Woodford Folk Festival

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