

SONGWRTERS SPEAK

Conversations about creating music

by Debbie Kruger

Re-released on 1 June 2023 by Bouley Bay Books

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www.songwritersspeak.com

“This cathartic thing of songwriting, it’s got to be the most wonderful gift.” — Richard Clapton

“The whole thing with writing and making music is that when I’m in the moment with it I feel like a different person, like what I’m doing is the greatest thing not only that I have done but that has ever been done. It’s this extraordinary feeling.” — Nick Cave

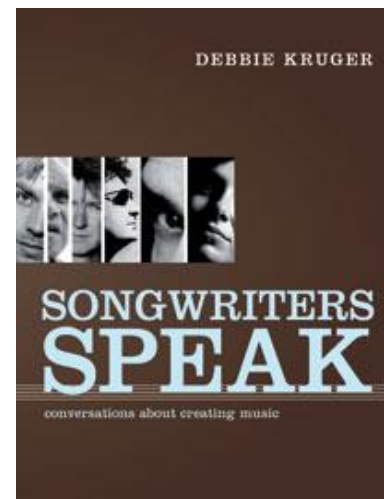
SONGWRTERS SPEAK gives a unique insight into the lives of our best known songwriters. The first collection of in-depth interviews with the creative powerhouses of the Australian music industry, it was critically acclaimed on its release in 2005. The book became a sought-after reference work for other music writers and serious fans wanting to go deep into the stories of how artists worked, thought and felt.

For 15 years, **SONGWRTERS SPEAK** languished out of print, yet still in demand, until Sydney-based boutique publishing label Bouley Bay Books partnered with author Debbie Kruger to bring this “buried treasure” of music writing back into circulation in 2023. In the intervening time, six of the songwriters interviewed have died and the music industry has changed dramatically. As Debbie writes in her new Foreword, the conversations she had for the book “stand as meaningful historical testaments to the times they were conducted and unique perspectives on what came before and what was to come later.”

In **SONGWRTERS SPEAK**, Debbie Kruger interviewed 45 songwriters from Australia and New Zealand whose work in rock, pop and country music has left an indelible imprint on the cultural landscape and whose songs have left an enduring impression on Australia's – and in some cases the world's – psyche. This book gets inside the hearts and minds of some of our greatest musical poets and asks questions about how inspiration is sparked, whether songwriters are born or made, and where, ultimately, songs come from.

In candid face-to-face interviews, these tunesmiths discuss their successful careers, share thoughts on tapping into the creative source and tell the stories behind classic songs including “Friday on My Mind”, “The Real Thing”, “Eagle Rock”, “Khe Sanh”, “Deep Water”, “Hopelessly Devoted To You”, “What’s Love Got To Do With It”, “Down Under”, “Age of Reason”, “Beds Are Burning”, and “Truly Madly Deeply”.

SONGWRTERS SPEAK features conversations with Harry Vanda & George Young, Ross Wilson, John Williamson, Glenn Shorrock, Richard Clapton, Tim Finn, Steve Kipner, Neil Finn, Nick Cave, Christina Amphlett, Paul Kelly, Deborah Conway, Archie Roach, Daniel Johns, Kasey Chambers and many more. Included are key members from legendary bands The Seekers, The Twilights, Masters Apprentices, Axiom, Sherbet, Little River Band, Cold Chisel, Dragon, Sports, Midnight Oil, Mental As Anything, Australian Crawl, Icehouse, INXS, Men At Work, Hunters & Collectors and Savage Garden.



Songwriters interviewed are also the masterminds behind hits for Slim Dusty, John Farnham, Olivia Newton-John, John Paul Young, Cliff Richard, Tina Turner, Chicago, Robert Palmer, Christina Aguilera, Lenny Kravitz and other international performers.

“Full marks have to go to Debbie Kruger... a collection of very good, thoughtful, well researched interviews” — Sydney Morning Herald

“It’s nice for the national estate to have such a book in existence”

— Jim Moginie, Midnight Oil

About the author

Debbie Kruger spent her childhood and teenage years steeped in the popular music of the 1960s and ‘70s. She began her career in the 1980s as a staff writer and reviewer for the international showbiz journal, *Variety*, in its Sydney and London bureaus and has also written for publications around the world including *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Melbourne Weekly*, *The Courier-Mail*, *Vogue Australia*, *Rhythms*, *Time Out London*, *Goldmine* and *Performing Songwriter*. She has conducted dozens of lengthy interviews with entertainment and media identities for the National Film & Sound Archive Oral History Program, and while managing communications for the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA-AMCOS) in the early 2000s, Debbie edited the songwriters’ journal *APrap* and handled publicity for the annual APRA Music Awards. In 2001 she devised and managed the hugely successful publicity campaign for APRA’s Ten Best Australian Songs, which captured the imagination and enthusiasm of music lovers across the country, and prompted her to chronicle stories of the songwriters and their songs in **Songwriters Speak**.

Debbie has published lengthy essays, reviews and photography on her personal music blog, [Debbie Does Music](#), and has appeared on radio, TV and online commenting on music and popular culture, most recently for the Sydney Opera House’s 50th Birthday series [House Vault](#). A walking talking encyclopedia of popular music, Debbie produced and hosted the popular Byron Bay show “Debbie Does Breakfast”, which ran for more than six years, and, as a longtime Byron Bay resident, was proud that **Songwriters Speak** was featured in the Byron Bay Writers Festival upon its original release in 2005.

In addition to her writing, Debbie has had a lengthy career managing communications for entertainment, photography and technology organisations and individuals internationally. She is currently balancing life between Sydney and Los Angeles.

For further information visit

www.songwritersspeak.com

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