

## IAKI BIOGRAPHY

The singer and composer Iaki Vallejo, was born and raised in Colombia. She is currently based in Melbourne, Australia. Her voice is powerful, intense and warm and stands out in her vocal improvisation style and in her interpretative capacity. Iaki incorporates Afro-Colombian music, jazz, soul, salsa, afro-beat, funk, neo-soul and reggae into her compositions. Her inspiration has been the female voices with a strong stage presence.

Iaki started participating in the festivals of Tuluá, her hometown in Colombia, at 12 years old. In 1992 he won the Best Song and Performance Award at the Colombian Festival del Pasillo in Aguadas, Caldas, with a song by composer and tiplista Gustavo Adolfo Rengifo, former director of the Mono Nuñez Festival. She studied singing at the Popular Institute of Culture of Cali and at the Universidad del Valle. Later, in Australia she studied improvisation and jazz singing with the Australian pianist, singer and teacher, Sharmi Russel, and with the Italian master Cosimo Ciccone.

Iaki has traveled the world to expand her artistic vision and find new inspirations. Her international career has been developed in Europe and Australia. In 2000 he moved to Italy to refine her style and it was in Rome, with the Italian pianist Arturo Valiante, who explored jazz and sang with different formations of that genre. In Italy she also developed her innate ability as a painter, studying oil painting and watercolor with private masters, and creating her own works and private art collection. In 2008 she moved to Australia to form her own band for the first time.

Her career as a composer had a defining moment in 2013, when she met the famous Australian composer and drummer David Jones, professor at the 'James Morrison' Music Academy in Mount Gambier. Jones, after listening to her compositions, was convinced of her great potential and proposed the co-production of a couple of songs on her first solo album. Aronde was the first song, a bullerengue of Colombian folklore from which she made her own version, while the second was Margarita, a theme that launched and fully confirmed the talent of Iaki as a composer and allowed her to deploy skillfully in improvisation. "We set out to record and when David Jones began to play marvelously the drums and the Kalimba, an African instrument similar to the marimbula, the magic came: the verses and the melody of Margarita began to flow, it was a perfect harmony".

"Margarita- Absolutely as beautiful as music can get."

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In 2016 she released her first album, 'Iaki Vallejo', which includes the songs Margarita and Aronde, and the rest of the repertoire produced in Colombia by Cristian Villota, renowned producer and arranger of Cali. The debut concert was held at one of the most prestigious jazz clubs in Melbourne, 'The Bennett's Lane'. Iaki has been awarded with important recognitions like the Award to the Best Voice of Melbourne in 2009 and 'The Peace award in 2016, given by the 'International Federation of the Peace of Melbourne'. Some of her most important concerts include:

- Melbourne International Peace Concert, 2016.
- Night Cat. The B.East.
- Kew Court House Theater, Viva Festival and White.
- Night Melbourne.
- White Night Ballarat, Ventana Street Festival, Open Bar and Frankston Library.

Iaki is currently preparing her second album, accompanied by Colombian producer Daniel Gutiérrez, director of the Colombian Jazz Fusion band, Manteca Blue.

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