

## **ALLY Description and band bio**

ALLY is global jazz at its most passionate and innovative with music drawn from Afro-Peruvian, Cuban, Afro-Brazilian and Andalusian traditional rhythms paired with a modern jazz aesthetic and spoken word. The ensemble combines the skills of Peruvian, Brazilian and jazz artists currently living in Sydney. Their aim is to produce spectacular, trailblazing original music that straddles both Latin and jazz soundscapes.

In 2022 ALLY was a featured group at Boom! International Festival of Percussion held in Sydney alongside Cuban-based Caribe, acclaimed Taiko ensemble Taikoz, percussionists Nacho Mena, Fritz Hauser and more. They have opened and closed Sydney International Women's Jazz Festival in 2019 and 2020 to full houses. The group have performed for the Australian Latin-American Business Council and the Peruvian Embassy in celebration of Peruvian composer Chabuca Granda in 2020. During 2021-2022 ALLY toured extensively in southern NSW to venues in Nowra, Shoalhaven, Kiama, Blue Mountains and Wollongong. In 2022 they performed interstate with sell-out shows in Melbourne at Paris Cat, Canberra's Belco Arts and Devonport Jazz Festival. ALLY released their debut album ***Drum Junk*** in July 2022 garnering an ARIA World Music nomination.

Musicians include saxophonist/composer Gai Bryant (Elio Villafranca, Jim McNeely), Peruvian Australian percussionists Giorgio Rojas (Burn the Floor, Ursula Yovich) and Julio Candela (El Orqueston, Felix Valdelomar), sensational trombonist James Greening (Lou Reed, Maria Schneider), pianist Daniel Pliner (Watussi, Monsieur Camembert), bassist Harry Birch (Holopeak, Another Green World) and second-time winner of Australia's National Grand Poetry Slam, Brazilian Australian poet Dai Moret.

Bandcamp link:

<https://ally9.bandcamp.com/album/drum-junk>

Video Links

## **ALLY Drum Junk**

This is one of a couple of dynamic albums masterminded by Sydney bandleader and saxophonist Gai Bryant and her right-hand man, trombonist extraordinaire James Greening, late last year. In some ways a companion work to Caribé's Distant Waters, ALLY's Drum Junk balances hot Afro-Peruvian festejo dance rhythm and Brazilian experimentalism with the coolness of Latinised Thelonious Monk and Mingus compositions, notably 'Goodbye Pork Pie Hat', and the sway of a Northeastern Brazilian maracatu.

The title track emits raw organic energy generated by the lead horns, in conjunction with piano pushes, bass ostinato and a compelling percussion base. The more meditative 'Jelly Bean' features solos from the band's pianist Daniel Pliner and bassist Max Alduca. Elsewhere, quirky harmonies, improvisation and seamless arrangements pervade.  
*review by Tony Hillier, Rhythms Magazine January-February 2023*