

Debra Gussin and Stacy Hogan: 2012 International Category Winners



Photos: Debra Gussin and Stacy Hogan

The International Category is a multi-genre category which was introduced in 2007 to help satisfy the demand from overseas songwriters wishing to enter The Australian Songwriting Contest.

This year's winners are co-writers Debra Gussin from Los Angeles USA and Stacy Hogan from Nashville Tennessee USA with their song Do U Miss The Heat. Debra tells us that all of their songwriting has been done online and that they have never met in person! It seems that the barriers of distance are being constantly broken down by our online world.

Do U Miss The Heat also recently took out first place in the Soft Rock Category of the SongDoor 2013 International Songwriting Competition.

Debra:

"Why don't you become a lawyer?" was the advice given to Debra by her mother. But Debra was interested in setting a different bar. "At 12, I discovered my passion for music. When my mom took me to my first Broadway musical, and my sister took me to my first concert, the music took me to another universe altogether."

Born and raised in New York, Debra earned a dual degree in Television Production and Marketing Management from Syracuse University. This would lead Debra on a career journey through the television and entertainment industries with music always along for the ride.

After working on the Mickey Rourke film Year of the Dragon, Debra landed a job at ABC Wide World of Sports. The compelling drama about the “thrill of victory and the agony of defeat” evoked a sense of storytelling in Debra, revealing a truth and authenticity that would later be infused into the vibrant scenarios in her songs.

Debra continued her television career in Los Angeles, working on numerous programs including the Daytime Emmy Awards, Fox Sports News, Wolfgang Puck and Dr. Phil.

While working on the launch of the National Geographic Channel, Debra’s colleagues introduced her to multi-platinum lyricist Marty Panzer. That life changing moment unexpectedly launched her into the wide world of songwriting.



“I enrolled in Panzer’s Master Class at UCLA Extension, and from that moment, I was hooked.” says Debra.

After winning the Concord Records and Barry Manilow Songwriting Scholarship four times, Debra took a sabbatical from her television career and left the Dr. Phil Show to focus on songwriting full time. She proceeded to win numerous international songwriting competitions including the Grand Prize and Lennon Award in the prestigious John Lennon Songwriting Contest, and was commissioned by the Federal Trade Commission to co-write catchy commercial jingles for AnnualCreditReport.com which

won the CINE Golden Eagle Award for Best Public Service Announcement.

From there, UCLA Extension commissioned her striking anthem This Is Our Time as its official graduation song. The song received its world premiere at Royce Hall in Los Angeles when Erich Bergen performed to a sold-out crowd.

TV placements soon followed, and Debra’s songs have recently been featured in the CW Network’s 90210, NBC’s primetime drama The Event, E! Entertainment’s Courtney & Kim Take New York, SPEED Network’s NASCAR Race Hub and the UK’s It’s Only The Beginning.

Debra is currently the lyricist for TURMOIL, A New Musical and continues to make her mark writing songs with command and vision for the Pop, Dance, Country and Hot AC markets.

“One of the reasons I became a songwriter, and not a lawyer, is that the law is about black and white. Songwriting is about all the shades in between. I like shades.” says Debra.

Stacy:



Stacy Hogan writes, produces and licenses music for major labels, TV shows and film. His tracks have been used for everything from MTV E!, CBS, NFL, Today, Spike TV, UFC Championship, AVON commercials and many more US cable and network television shows. Stacy produces music of all genres for clients and artists around the world.

Stacy and Debra were introduced in 2009 and collaborate online. Interestingly, they have never met in person, although their joint compositions have achieved outstanding success.

Their first collaboration, *I've Already Won*, has appeared in several TV shows, including the NBC Television primetime drama, *The Event*, as well as two episodes of E! Entertainment's *Kourtney & Kim Take New York*.

Another song they were both a part of (with other writers), *U So Mean Nothing To Me*, is going to be released by Warner Music Spain artist, Innocence. The album was produced by Carlos Marin of Il Divo, and is due out in May.

Stacy, from Tennessee, is the lead singer of the band *Lovers & Liars*. *Lovers & Liars* were signed to a major label deal with Universal/Republic in 2009.

Their new EP *Saboteur* has been released in April 2013.