

Iva Davies Biography

The iconic Australian band ICEHOUSE was formed by Iva Davies, the front man and musical creative force who led the band to an amazing 28 platinum records, eight top 10 albums and over thirty top 40 singles.

Iva was born Ivor Arthur Davies on May 22, 1955 in New South Wales, Australia. He adopted the name of "Iva" after there was a misspelling on the label of a single released prior to the formation of FLOWERS/ICEHOUSE. The youngest of three siblings, Iva grew up in a musical household with both parents singing in a local choir.

At only six years old, Iva fell in love with his first of many instruments, the bagpipes. After begging his parents for lessons, Iva had to wait until he was seven before his fingers could stretch over the chanter's holes. He later made the move to the oboe with the help of his first-year music teacher at Epping High. He went on to study oboe and composition at the New South Wales Conservatorium of Music.

It was in July 1975 that Iva's career really began with the release of his first single, "Leading Lady" on the RCA label. But it wasn't until January 1980 that Iva put his name on the map when Flowers, the successful pub band he founded with bassist Keith Welsh, landed a recording contract with Regular Records. In 1980 their debut album, *ICEHOUSE*, made it into the Top Five, becoming the highest-selling debut album in Australia.

ICEHOUSE's success continued with the band embarking upon their first overseas tour and the release of their second album, *Primitive Man*, which surpassed their debut album in sales. It was this album that produced the Australian anthem "Great Southern Land", which made it into the Top Five.

While touring, the band seized various opportunities to stretch their boundaries. Iva travelled to Tokyo in 1984 to write the song "Walking to the Beat" for the Yellow Magic Orchestra star Yukihiro Takahashi. Two months later, Iva returned to Japan to tour as a member of a superband consisting of musicians drawn from all over the world by Takahashi.

ICEHOUSE's success continued with the album *Man of Colours*, which contained the hit singles "Crazy" and "Electric Blue" and brought the band fame in America. This album became the highest local-selling album by an Australian group. Iva and guitarist Bob Kretschmer created the artwork for the cover of *Man of Colours*, using a box of five crayons (which Iva still owns to this day) and a black felt pen to draw a man grasping a bunch of coloured flowers.

Beyond ICEHOUSE Iva still continues to showcase his musical skills for films, ballet, television and special events. In 1985 he and Kretschmer composed the score for the ballet *Boxes* for the Sydney Dance Company, and in 1995 he recorded the score for *Berlin* for the same company. Davies performed the songs live with ICEHOUSE for the entire run of these ballets, which

remain among the most popular the company has ever produced. True commendation for Iva's work came when Graeme Murphy chose to close his 30-year directorship of the Sydney Dance Company with a return season of *Berlin* in 2007.

Davies' piece *The Ghost of Time* was performed by Richard Tognetti and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra as part of the International Millennium Celebrations telecast to over 3.5 billion people worldwide. In 2003, *The Ghost of Time* evolved into a film score Davies co-composed with Tognetti and Christopher Gordon for Peter Weir's *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*. The *Washington Post* called it "an unforgettable score," joining other critics from around the world who praised the work.

ICEHOUSE and Iva Davies have won many awards, including the Countdown Award for Most Popular Male Performer, ARIA awards for Best Album and Highest Selling Album for *Man of Colours*, and an ARIA Award for *The Ghost of Time* in 2000. His song "Circles in the Sky" was chosen as an official Sydney 2000 Olympic theme. Davies' very first film score, for *Razorback*, achieved an APRA Award and an AFI Nomination, and he received additional awards for his recent film score for *The Incredible Journey of Mary Bryant*. ICEHOUSE was inducted in the ARIA Hall of Fame in 2006.

In recent years Iva Davies has maintained a presence in the Australian media with appearances in a variety of music and entertainment venues, TV and radio shows, interviews and featured press articles. 2011 and into 2012 saw Iva and ICEHOUSE headlining several major music festivals in Australia and New Zealand, including Homebake and the Breath of Life Festival. A number of prime-time media appearances followed, including on-air live performances. These coincided with the highly successful release of the ICEHOUSE *White Heat* greatest hits CDs and DVD, which went Gold in just two weeks.

Iva was first made an Australia Day Ambassador in 2001, and every year on Australia Day he travels to a different region of New South Wales, on behalf of the Australia Day Council, to take part in and perform official duties for local Australia Day activities.

In January 2012 Iva Davies was made a Friend of Australia for the "G'Day Australia" campaign in the USA, where he wined and dined with Hollywood stars, music celebrities, and government ministers, and performed a live set which included "Great Southern Land" and "Electric Blue." He can be seen in a number of Tourism Australia videos. For the rest of 2012 and beyond, Iva Davies has hinted at more ICEHOUSE live shows, as well as special value-added re-releases of the large ICEHOUSE discography.

Iva is an ambassador for, and associated with, a number of charities. These include The Salvation Army, The Nordoff-Robbins Foundation, The Special Olympics and Music Assist, to name just a few. He continues to support these groups and use his media profile to bring attention to them, as well as regularly performing at their various functions and events.