

MONICA TRAPAGA

Her Story so far...



Who Is She?

Monica is best known for her work on the Australian series **Play School** but she is also an accomplished jazz singer, actress and author. Her professional career began as the femme fatal front person in the outrageously entertaining 1940's inspired "**Pardon Me Boys**", alongside her brother, notorious ex-punk rocker Ignatius Jones.

At nineteen, with a baby under one arm and a suitcase in the other, Monica stepped into the glamorous world of swing, sin and entertainment. **Pardon Me Boys** was her baptism of fire, a chance to recreate the glamour of a bygone era and learn the ropes as an all round entertainer. For three years **Pardon Me Boys** opened every Hotel and Casino dazzling audiences with their upbeat, witty take on Hot Jazz and Cabaret.

Her Music..

Itchy feet and a genuine love of Jazz lead Trapaga to form **Monica and the Moochers**, releasing two Aria nominated Jazz albums. This was a collection of Monica's dream players and a wild repertoire of dirty swing. Celebrating all her favourite artists Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Anita O'Day, Peggy Lee, Frank Sinatra Louis Jordan, Pearl Bailey and Ray Charles, the Moochers were Sydney's hottest combo of the 90s. They played everywhere and Trapaga was having fun.

Her Children's World..

As if gigging all over the country wasn't enough to keep her busy, Trapaga thought it was a good idea to get a job on ABC's "**Play School**" (she'd just married her tenor saxophone player and her daughter was starting to sing and dance). This was a role she held for more than 10 years. She recorded the theme song of "**Banana's in Pyjamas**" then released five children's videos, and five CDs of her own.

Her first solo video, "**Monica's House**" sold over 165 000 copies. While all this was going on Trapaga snuck out another child, then shortly after was offered the Decorating presenter's role on multi-Logie award-winning lifestyle program **Better Homes and Gardens**, which she filmed for the next six years.

Her TV years..

After 15 years entertaining children by day, and adults by night, she deferred to the dark world of Mickey Mouse and made 325 episodes of **Playhouse Disney** for the Asian Disney Channel, and for Australia's Channel 7. She also worked on many ad campaigns, and was the spokesperson for a string of charity organisations. In 2004 Trapaga made the controversial Kellogg's Cocopops Commercial that offended some over anxious parents and stunned some bored nutritionalists thus halting a twenty five year run on television.

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Her retail & book adventure..

Never one to sit around and mope, whilst running her bespoke Vintage Home-wares store **RECLAIM** in Sydney's Inner West, Trapaga decided it was about time she followed her true passion and set off on her mission to write her first cook book. By now her first child was twenty-one and about to spread her wings and fly the coop, so Monica penned a compendium of all the advice she thought a girl would need in her first kitchen.

"**She's Leaving Home**" marked her foray into writing, drawing on her Spanish/American heritage, with her own collages and amusing whimsical illustrations by Meredith Gaston. It's a handmade, heartfelt collection of tried-and-tested family recipes and stories. That same year she remarried and inherited another 4 children to add to her two. She also wrote and performed a tribute show to Pearl Bailey and Ella Fitzgerald.

Her current highlights..

Riding on her bad girl preschool presenter image, she again wrote and starred in her hilarious one woman show "**Monica goes to Rehab**" celebrating 100 years of her favorite Divas and their Demons. Rehab was the hit of Sydney's 2010 Sydney Fringe Festival, and prompted Monica to step out onto the edge even further and study standup comedy in New York where she graduated with her show "**My Talking Vagina**" at Caroline's on Broadway.

After a year of traveling back and forth to New York Monica has almost finished her second book to be published by Penguin Lantern, and scheduled for release in 2013.

Her story goes on..

For now Monica is enjoying performing with a host of her favourite musos in all sorts of different combos. No longer interested in just the Jazz scene, her shows have become wild and crazy one off events. Whether it's a 17 piece Big Band, a small Jazz quartet, or a wild jump jivin' jamboree with **Christian Power & Lonesome Train**, a night with Monica is guaranteed fun and frivolity.

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