

= Bernard Fanning =

Bernard Fanning ( born 15 August 1969 ) is an Australian musician and singer @-@ songwriter . He is best known as the lead singer and frontman of Australian alternative rock band Powderfinger from its formation in 1989 to its dissolution in 2010 .

Born and raised in Toowong , Brisbane , Fanning was taught the piano by his mother at an early age . At the age of 12 , while attending St Joseph 's College , Gregory Terrace , he began writing music , and upon graduating from St. Joseph 's , moved on to the University of Queensland , where he studied journalism for a short time . He dropped out to pursue a music career , after meeting Ian Haug in an economics class . Fanning joined Haug , John Collins , and Steven Bishop , who had recently formed Powderfinger , and took the role of lead singer . After Bishop left and guitarist Darren Middleton joined , the band released five studio albums in fifteen years and achieved mainstream success in Australia . During Powderfinger 's hiatus in 2005 , Fanning began his solo music career with the studio album *Tea & Sympathy* . Powderfinger then reunited in 2007 and released two more albums before disbanding in late 2010 .

While Powderfinger 's style focuses on alternative rock , Fanning 's solo music is generally described as a mixture of blues and acoustic folk . Fanning plays guitar , piano , keyboards and harmonica , both when performing solo and also with Powderfinger . Often speaking out against Australian political figures , Fanning has donated much of his time to philanthropic causes . He is an advocate for Aboriginal justice in Australia .

= = Early life = =

Fanning was born in Brisbane on 15 August 1969 . He was raised , alongside two brothers and a sister , in the inner Brisbane suburb of Toowong . The death of one of Fanning 's brothers to cancer would be the inspiration for Vulture Street 's " Since You 've Been Gone " . Fanning 's mother began teaching him to play piano as a young child , although his siblings were not interested in music .

Fanning attended St. Joseph 's College , Gregory Terrace and began writing his own music at the age of 15 . Fanning has described these early works as " terrible " , but notes that he enjoyed writing and arranging them . After graduating from St Joseph 's , Fanning entered the University of Queensland to study journalism ; however , he was equally interested in pursuing a music career . He left university at the age of 19 to pursue a music career .

= = Music career = =

= = Powderfinger era ( 1989 ? 2004 ) = = =

Fanning first met Powderfinger guitarist Ian Haug in a University of Queensland economics class in 1989 . At the time of the meeting , Haug had recently formed Powderfinger with high school friends John Collins and Steven Bishop , who would become the band 's foundational bass guitarist and drummer , respectively . Haug was the lead guitarist and lead singer . On discovering Fanning 's singing abilities , Haug replaced himself with Fanning as lead singer and frontman . Haug stated that " It was a big thing to convince the others that we needed a singer . They were like , ' You 're OK , ' and I was like , ' No I 'm not . We can do better than that . ' "

In 1992 , current guitarist Darren Middleton was invited to join Powderfinger by Fanning and Haug , after they were impressed by his work in Brisbane band Pirate . Middleton accepted the offer and became the fifth member , joining Jon Coghill who had replaced Bishop as drummer . The line @-@ up of Fanning , Middleton , Haug , Collins , and Coghill has since remained unchanged .

Throughout the late 1990s , Powderfinger rose to prominence throughout Australia , receiving several accolades and achieving highly successful record and concert ticket sales . As the most vocal and prominent member of the band , the popularity for the group elevated Fanning as a powerful individual in the public view of the Australian music industry . Fanning was called upon by

film @-@ maker Gregor Jordan in 2003 to perform the folk song " Moreton Bay " ( named after the bay of the same name in the Brisbane area ) and his own original composition " Shelter for My Soul " in Jordan 's film Ned Kelly . Fanning then enlisted Jordan to film Powderfinger 's first live DVD , These Days : Live in Concert .

= = = Solo venture ( 2004 ? 2006 ) = = =

On 31 October 2005 , Fanning released his debut solo album entitled Tea & Sympathy . The album debuted at No. 1 on the Australian ARIA Albums chart , and spent 58 weeks in the top 50 . It peaked at No. 11 during its 18 @-@ week stay on the New Zealand albums chart .

Tea & Sympathy comprised songs Fanning had written in his time with Powderfinger , as well as new content written after the band went on hiatus . Most of the writing was done in what Fanning described as a " creative burst " between March and May 2005 . Much of the inspiration for the work on the album came from Fanning 's reaction to the death of his brother in 2002 , and to the ending of a 12 @-@ year relationship with his girlfriend , Philippa Sison . The majority of the album was recorded at Real World Studios with Tchad Blake in June 2005 , except for " Not Finished Just Yet " , " Believe " , " Wash Me Clean " , and " Hope & Validation " , which were recorded at Fanning 's Brisbane home . Fanning was supported by Brisbane musicians Jerry Marotta , Keith Duffy , and John Bedggood , who also formed part of his live band . The album was developed in a relaxed manner , with Fanning stating , " We had a ball putting the songs together . "

Three singles were released from the album . The most successful of these was the lead single , " Wish You Well " , shortly followed by " Songbird " . These releases were only sold as digital download singles . The third single from the album , " Watch Over Me " , was the only to be released as a CD single and achieved minor success on the Australian singles chart . It entered the chart on 9 July 2006 at No. 16 , and spent eight weeks in the top 50 . On 26 January 2006 , " Wish You Well " was voted No. 1 for the Triple J Hottest 100 , 2005 . Following " Watch Over Me " , Fanning digitally released a fourth single " Weekend of Mystery " , which was not officially on the album , except for those who purchased the album from the iTunes Store . Fanning also took home the award for Best Music Video at the 2006 ARIA Awards for the iconic ' Wish You Well ' clip .

On 2 December 2005 , Fanning announced a nationwide Which Way Home Concert Tour , named after the song on the album of the same name . Fanning played seven shows between 25 February and 10 March 2006 , in all of Australia 's major capital cities . He was supported by Perth band The Panics and Brisbane singer Andrew Morris . He followed this with the " Yesterday 's Gone " tour , announced on 11 August 2006 , and concluding with Powderfinger re @-@ uniting and returning to the recording studio ? Fanning later stated that while he enjoyed making Tea & Sympathy , " Powderfinger is my real job " .

= = = Powderfinger return ( 2007 ? 2010 ) = = =

Throughout 2006 , Fanning had hinted towards Powderfinger ceasing their hiatus to release a sixth studio album . Recorded in Los Angeles , Dream Days at the Hotel Existence was released on 2 June 2007 . The title of the album came from a chapter of Brooklyn Follies by Paul Auster , a book that Fanning had read during recording . The album debuted at No. 1 on the Australian ARIA Albums chart .

Powderfinger toured around Australia and New Zealand with Silverchair on the Across the Great Divide tour in 2007 . The tour 's aim was to promote the efforts of Reconciliation Australia to reduce the 17 @-@ year life expectancy gap between Indigenous and Non @-@ Indigenous Australians . Fanning said of the tour , " The idea is to show both bands are behind the idea of reconciliation . "

= = = Return to Solo venture ( 2011 ? present ) = = =

After the disbanding of Powderfinger , Fanning moved to Spain with his family where he began writing and recording demos for his next solo album . In January 2013 Fanning announced on his

website blog that he had been recording the follow up to 2005 's Tea and Sympathy in Los Angeles . In March 2013 he announced via his blog that recording had been completed and he had returned to Australia . The album " Departures " was released on the 7th of June with the first single " Battleships " released on the 22nd of April .

= = Style , technique , and influences = =

Fanning has been described as having a strong vocal range when singing , but has stated that he is not highly confident in his voice . In a 1998 interview , Fanning said , " I don 't think I have the perfect voice or anything " , and stated that delivering the message of the song was more important than " showing off [ his ] chops " . He noted he was not interested in singing for the purpose of singing alone , but rather because he enjoyed getting the purpose of the song across . Fanning has stated : " For me , writing songs comes from anywhere " , drawing inspiration from his experiences .

In his work on Tea & Sympathy , Fanning noted less of a collaborative song style , referring to his inability to play guitar solos as causing different elements to become a focus of the songs . In an interview , he said , " I wasn 't relying on solos to be big features because I simply can 't play them . " Fanning explained that the shorter length of songs was due to him not having " four other people " to back him up when producing independently .

Fanning has stated his favourite band is The Beatles .

= = Political and moral stances = =

Fanning has stated that although political messages may be common throughout his and Powderfinger 's music , it is not the central focus when writing songs : " A balance has to be struck in a lot of ways , in the sense that primarily I 'm a musician . I 'm not a political commentator . So if I write a song that has political content , then hopefully that song is a good enough song to make it onto my record . And if it 's not , then that 's just a song that I 've written . So I don 't think it necessarily needs to be that you 're definitively trying to make a political statement . " He has stated that he has no interest in " doing a ' Peter Garrett ' " , who entered politics after a successful Midnight Oil career .

On 8 July 2007 , Fanning wrote a piece for Adelaide 's Sunday Mail , telling of his recent trip to Uluru . In the piece , he criticised those who climbed the rock , stating that he was " appalled that kids were being taught to disrespect the wishes of Aboriginal people on their own land " . Upon returning from Uluru , Fanning wrote " Black Tears " , which intended to " document a relationship gone wrong " . In his piece , Fanning also criticised the 17 @-@ year life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and non @-@ Aboriginal Australians , and encouraged all to join a conversation on reconciliation .

Fanning takes a left @-@ leaning political stance , although he claims he is not fond of discussing the issue . Rather , he attempts to discuss the issues through his songs ; " I approach writing a song about something like [ Aboriginal affairs ] the same way I would approach writing a song about a relationship , because it 's something that I feel strongly about . " However , he has occasionally stated his views on social and political issues , giving The Dominion Post his stance on Aboriginal affairs in light of the Across the Great Divide tour ;

= = Personal life = =

Fanning has performed numerous philanthropic tasks independently and with Powderfinger . The band played at the 2005 WaveAid concert to raise money for victims of the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake , and the Across the Great Divide tour in 2007 to promote the efforts of Reconciliation Australia . Fanning has contributed to charities including " A Just Australia " and Youngcare Australia , and donates his time to youth detention centres in Brisbane by running songwriting workshops . In an uncharacteristic outburst , Fanning once referred to fellow Australian artist Ben Lee as " a precocious little cunt " , after Lee referred to himself as " the saviour of Australian music " .

. Fanning later apologised for the comment .

Fanning married Andrea Moreno in February 2007 in Brisbane , Australia . Moreno is from Spain , where the two met while Fanning was writing and recording Tea & Sympathy in Europe . This relationship followed a twelve @-@ year union Fanning had had with his previous girlfriend , and it was this break @-@ up ( along with the then @-@ recent death of his older brother ) which influenced much of the lyrical content and sombre atmospheric mood of Tea & Sympathy . Through Moreno , Fanning has learned to speak some of the Spanish language . Fanning and Moreno have performed together while Powderfinger was on hiatus and Fanning was touring as a solo artist .

= = Awards and nominations = =

= = = APRA Awards = = =

The APRA Awards are presented annually from 1982 by the Australasian Performing Right Association ( APRA ) .

= = Discography = =

= = = Studio albums = = =

= = = Singles = = =