

= Doug Anthony All Stars =

The Doug Anthony All Stars (or Doug Anthony Allstars , DAAS , D.A.A.S. or stylised as D ? A ? A ? S) are an Australian musical comedy , alternative rock and vocal group who initially performed together between 1984 and 1994 . The band is an acoustic trio , originally comprising Paul McDermott and Tim Ferguson on main vocals and Richard Fidler on guitar and backing vocals . The 2014 DAAS Live reformation tour features Paul Livingston (aka Flacco) on guitar and vibes .

DAAS are known for their aggressive , provocative style ; their habit of involving audience members and their tendency to attack topical and sometimes controversial issues in their comedy .

DAAS began performing as buskers on the streets of Canberra in 1984 , while they were attending university . After winning the Pick of the Fringe award at the 1986 Adelaide Fringe Festival , the group relocated from Canberra to Melbourne , but it was not until they travelled to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 1987 that they first achieved success . They quickly gained popularity in the United Kingdom , where they made numerous television appearances , but remained virtually unknown in Australia until 1989 when they were made regular performers on the Australian comedy show The Big Gig . These appearances gained them recognition , and they remained a popular feature of the show until 1991 when they left to create their own ABC comedy series , DAAS Kapital .

The group have released four live recordings and one studio album , DAAS Icon , which achieved some independent success in Australia but was briefly banned in Britain . They also released a collection of dark short stories in 1989 , entitled Book , which took a markedly different tone from their comedic stage performances . They also made two live concert videos and one film , The Edinburgh Years . The group split up in 1994 , following a final farewell tour of Australia . Although they reunited in 2003 to perform together at a benefit concert , were interviewed together in 2008 in support of their DVD , and reunited for a one @-@ off show to launch the DAAS Kapital DVD in 2013 , the three ruled out the suggestion of a reunion tour at the time .

In December 2013 , McDermott and Ferguson announced they would be performing " as DAAS " for the group 's 30th anniversary , at the Canberra Comedy Festival in March 2014 , with Paul Livingston performing the role of Fidler . This current line @-@ up has announced subsequent shows in Hobart , Melbourne , Wollongong , Perth , Brisbane and Bendigo , with more dates to follow .

= = Style = =

DAAS employ an aggressive , confrontational style , which author and journalist Geoff Bartlett describes as " [pushing] the boundaries of humour and good taste to their absolute limits " . They frequently delve into topical and taboo subject matter with songs such as " Commies for Christ " and " I Fuck Dogs " . " Long before anyone knew the term , one of our greatest driving forces was to be politically incorrect , " said Ferguson . Each band member developed distinctive onstage characters , with McDermott adopting a nasty , mean persona , while Ferguson played a narcissistic character who was " gorgeous but stupid " . Fidler initially played the straight man , but as the group became more aggressive he developed into a character who was naturally happy and caring but frequently victimised by his fellow band members .

The group drew inspiration from short @-@ lived punk bands like the Fat Sluts , The Lone Reagans and Forbidden Mule , whom Ferguson describes as " like all punk bands ... very fast and furious . " Much of the band 's provocative style emerged from their origins as street performers , where to get people 's attention they resorted to outrageous or theatrical tactics ? the group would sometimes walk into the street and stop traffic to get noticed . " Sometimes we have to do really ugly or horrendous things to get people 's attention , and we 're not afraid to do that . We 'll hit someone if it gets a bit of discourse going , " said McDermott .

Neil Pigot , who did some work with the group , describes their style as " a sort of extension of the Python tradition , but very much in an Australian context . " He says that DAAS were " crucially important " in the development of Australian comedy , directly contributing to the styles of successful

comedy shows such as The D @-@ Generation , Fast Forward and Wogs Out of Work . At the time DAAS emerged , Pigot says , comedy in Australia was dominated by joke @-@ tellers and impersonators . By contrast , DAAS were belligerent and confrontational , frequently attacking topical issues , invading people 's personal space and involving the audience in their act . Mark Trevorrow , who frequently collaborated with the group , described their work as " true genius . " " Their great shows were among the greatest evenings I 've witnessed in my life and their worst shows were among the worst , " he said . " They 'd whip up an audience and appeal to people 's darker side . It was very Dada , what they were doing . And what happens with that is you 're just as often likely to have people who want to kill you as applaud you . " In addition , ABC comedy producer Ted Robinson says that the group played an important role in raising the profile of Australian comedy overseas , particularly in Britain where DAAS were very popular . British comedian Al Murray said of seeing the group at the Edinburgh Festival in 1988 , " they came onstage with the attitude of feral invaders and left it with no taboo untouched . " Describing the All Stars as " an insanely hot act from Oz who sang , cursed , sweated and insulted each other and their audiences with a level of commitment and polish that seemed exotically charged and almost transgressive in the late 80s . "

DAAS were known for continuing to act , or to remain in character , during interviews . Much of this was just banter , but they also had serious messages . DAAS were often criticising the media and part of this was to tell outrageous lies to journalists during interviews and attempt to see them published as fact . In one of the best @-@ known instances of this , the group told British reporters that their namesake , former Australian politician Doug Anthony , was a much @-@ loved Prime Minister of Australia who had been assassinated on 11 November 1975 , by right wing extremists . (In fact , Anthony is a former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia who had led the right @-@ of @-@ center National Party of Australia from 1971 to 1984 .) The lie was printed in The Times , The Guardian and The Independent . This game continued undetected until in 1990 the group told a reporter that they had been cast in Batman and had become great friends with Jack Nicholson , both lies . The story was reported as fact in newspapers around Australia and appeared as a cover story in the TV guide of Melbourne 's Herald Sun before the media realised the hoax .

= = History = =

= = = Early years = = =

Tim Ferguson met Richard Fidler busking on the streets of Canberra in 1984 , while they were both attending university . Ferguson recalls : " Richard was playing the guitar ? something from Cat Stevens ? one day and I walked up to him and we did ' Wild Thing ' . I sang a few lyrics and jumped about like a mad thing . Lo and behold we made a stack of money in ten minutes . " The two began performing together and joined with another friend , Robert Piper , to form the Doug Anthony All Stars . They derived their name from Doug Anthony , a former Country Party leader and Deputy Prime Minister of Australia . According to Fidler , during their earlier gigs in clubs and as street performers , Ferguson was " a bit of an explosive hippie " while Fidler and Piper were more reserved . Robert Piper left the group in 1985 due to other commitments . Piper has gone on to a successful career with the United Nations and is now Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and the humanitarian coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory .

With Piper 's departure , Paul McDermott , who performed at one of DAAS 's regular clubs , was invited to join . He accepted , although he did not like their material , which he considered too sweet . Fidler says McDermott changed the group 's dynamic ; he wrote the majority of their songs and prompted a darker tone . After winning the Pick of the Fringe award at the 1986 Adelaide Fringe Festival , the group relocated from Canberra to Melbourne , where they based themselves with a regular gig at the Prince Patrick Hotel in Collingwood , in an effort to save enough money to travel to the Edinburgh Fringe . Initially DAAS found that Melbourne audiences did not respond to their act and to provoke a reaction they became more aggressive , with McDermott and Ferguson adopting

more abusive personas and often picking on Fidler 's naturally happy but stupid character . They made their first overseas performance at the Edinburgh Fringe in 1987 , to sold out crowds .

= = = Successes = = =

Following their Edinburgh Fringe shows , the group enjoyed considerable success in the United Kingdom , making appearances on numerous BBC comedy shows . In 1988 , the group was nominated for the Perrier Comedy Award for their performances at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe . Fidler says that the British people were more receptive to their act at the time than Australians had been . " The whole thing exploded for us when we got there , it was quite incredible . Within a very short time we were doing national television appearances in front of millions of people and playing these enormous shows , " he says . They played extensively in Canada , Germany , America and Britain , and finished their time in Britain by appearing on the final episode of the successful Friday Night Live . However , despite the acclaim they were receiving overseas , when they returned to Australia at the end of 1988 they remained unknown . Upon arriving in Melbourne , they struggled to gain a following and went back to busking on the streets .

This changed in 1989 when ABC comedy producer Ted Robinson invited them to appear on a new comedy show , The Big Gig . They became a popular feature on the series and appeared in every episode until 1991 . In 1989 the group also released a book entitled Book , which was a collection of dark short stories . Many of the stories had been written several years prior , even before the three had started performing together , and adopted a markedly different tone to their comedic , largely ad libbed live shows . Ferguson said that they had wanted to write something that people could read and enjoy without having seen DAAS perform . Book sold 30 @, @ 000 copies in England within the first two weeks of publication before being banned when DAAS refused to release an edited version of the book or permit a warning sticker on the cover . The issue was taken to court in the same year , where the ban was overturned .

DAAS released their first official album , DAAS Icon , in 1990 . Two of the featured songs , " I Want to Spill the Blood of a Hippy " and " Bottle " , were also released as singles . Icon went on to become the highest selling independent album in Australia , but was banned in the UK due to a reference to the IRA in the song " KRSNA " . This was later overturned by a British court . The group continued to appear weekly on The Big Gig until 1991 when their own series , DAAS Kapital , premiered on the ABC . A futuristic half @-@ hour @-@ long sitcom about the band 's adventures in an underwater history museum , DAAS Kapital ran for two seven @-@ episode seasons between 1991 and 1992 despite a poor critical reaction . From 1992 they became UK @-@ based , returning to Australia for a short time in 1993 to promote Dead & Alive , a live recording of one of their London shows which was released on CD and VHS . They played at the opening of the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and appeared regularly on Britain 's Channel 4 variety show Viva Cabaret .

= = = Break @-@ up and reformation = = =

The group held a final farewell tour of Australia in 1994 , which was recorded and released on CD by ABC Records as DAAS : The Last Concert . The break @-@ up sparked rumours of a falling out among the trio , although all three denied this , stating that it was simply time to move on . Richard Fidler described it as a matter of practicality : Ferguson wanted to return to Australia to be closer to his young family , while McDermott and Fidler wished to continue working in Britain as they felt they had done everything they had wanted to do in Australia .

In June 2010 , Tim Ferguson revealed that the break @-@ up was due in large part to personal health issues . Unknown to the public at the time , Ferguson had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1996 after experiencing symptoms for several years including a few severe episodes while touring in 1993 . The symptoms affected his mobility , causing him to struggle with choreography and physical routines onstage and eventually , he says , " it was clear I couldn 't remain a Doug Anthony Allstar with whatever this was " . Still coming to terms with his diagnosis , Ferguson chose to keep it private , telling few people outside of his close friends and family . " I didn

't want other people to know , " he says . " I didn 't want it to be coming up in conversation with strangers . "

In July 2003 , DAAS reunited for the first time since their break @-@ up to perform at a special gala comedy event called " For Holly " . Dedicated to the memory of Holly Robinson ? a casting director for Home and Away and the daughter of The Big Gig 's Ted Robinson ? who had died of cancer the month before , the concert was a fundraising benefit for research into the disease . At Holly 's request , the three also performed the Hunters & Collectors ' " Throw Your Arms Around Me " , a song they had frequently covered in the group 's later years , at her funeral .

A DAAS DVD entitled The Unlimited Uncollectible Sterling Deluxe Edition , a 2 @-@ disc collection of their performances from the first two seasons of The Big Gig , was released on 6 November 2008 . Ferguson , Fidler and McDermott recorded a commentary track for the DVD and made several media appearances together to promote its release , but the three ruled out the prospect of a reunion tour . " We certainly catch up for barbecues , but not as a comedy group , " McDermott said .

DAAS reunited for a one @-@ off show to launch the DVD of the TV series DAAS Kapital on 13 April 2013 as part of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival .

McDermott , Ferguson and Paul Livingston (performing the role of Fidler) performed " as DAAS " for their 30th anniversary at the Canberra Comedy Festival , held in March 2014 . They have since permanently reformed the band , and are doing an Australia @-@ wide tour . Although Fidler had been advocating for the group to reform for years , his work commitments with ABC Radio prevented him from participating and Livingston again filled his place as the group 's guitarist .

= = = Subsequent work = = =

Initially , McDermott was not interested in further pursuing comedy , which he came to regard as an " aberration " . However , in 1996 he returned to television after being recruited by Ted Robinson to host the satirical news @-@ based quiz show Good News Week . McDermott hosted the show until its cancellation in 2000 and returned to this role when the series was renewed in 2008 . He reunited with Robinson again in 2007 when he was named host of a new ABC variety program , The Sideshow , a show described as a successor to The Big Gig . Although it quickly built a strong cult audience , the show did not rate well and was cancelled after its initial run of 26 episodes .

In addition to his television work , McDermott has continued to be involved in live comedy . He has frequently participated in the Melbourne International Comedy Festival , having often captained one of the two competing teams in the festival 's Great Debate since his first debate appearance in 1994 . At the 2002 festival he not only presented a solo comedy show titled " Comedyoscopy " , but also performed with Cameron Bruce and Mick Moriarty in a music @-@ based comedy trio called GUD . McDermott described GUD as being in a similar vein to DAAS in that it revolved around music , comedy and the inter @-@ relationships between the band members onstage .

Ferguson also continued to pursue a career in television . In 1995 he hosted the Nine Network 's short @-@ lived game show Don 't Forget Your Toothbrush , and after the show 's cancellation Nine kept him on to develop new television pilots . However , the network was not sure how best to use his talents , and Ferguson left to pursue other work . During this time he wrote his first novel , Left , Right and Centre : A Tale Of Greed , Sex And Power , a political satire . His subsequent television credits have included Unreal TV , Big Brother , Funky Squad and Shock Jock , a 2001 cable sitcom which he also wrote and produced . He has also built a strong career as a corporate event performer and is a sessional lecturer at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology , where he teaches Narrative Comedy for the Professional Screenwriting Advanced Diploma and has run short courses on comedy writing since 2008 . In 2010 , he released a guide to comedy writing , The Cheeky Monkey : Writing Narrative Comedy . In 2010 , Ferguson hosted and co @-@ produced WTF ? With Tim Ferguson , a comedy chat show on community television station C31 Melbourne .

After leaving DAAS , Fidler became heavily involved in computers and multimedia . In 1996 he wrote the award @-@ winning CD @-@ ROM Real Wild Child , a history of Australian rock and roll . Fidler also wrote a regular monthly column for internet.au magazine on the digital media world , and

contributed an essay to the Australian Constitutional Convention website [1] . Although he had not initially intended to return to television , he has hosted various TV shows since 1996 , including Race Around the World , Aftershock , Mouthing Off and Vulture ; and spent three years in management as an editor of ABC TV comedy before deciding he " wasn 't cut out to be a manager " . In 2005 Fidler ventured into radio , fronting the 7 ? 10pm shift on ABC Local Radio station 612 ABC Brisbane . Since 2006 , he has hosted the 11 am ? 3pm shift on 612 ABC Brisbane , with the show 's first hour ? known as The Conversation Hour ? also broadcast on 702 ABC Sydney . He currently hosts Conversations with Richard Fidler [2] on ABC 's Radio National . In 2011 , Fidler co @-@ wrote a satirical book on Australian politics titled , Jack the Insider : The Insider 's Guide to Power in Australia , released by Random House Books , New Zealand [3] .

Original and founding member Robert Piper entered into a very successful career with the United Nations , serving in Cambodia , New York , Serbia , and other countries , and later worked for the Clinton Administration .

= = Members = =

Current Members

Tim Ferguson ? vocals (1984 ? 1994 , 2014 ? present)

Paul McDermott ? vocals (1985 ? 1994 , 2014 ? present)

Paul Livingston ? guitar (2014 ? present)

Past Members

Richard Fidler ? guitar , vocals (1984 ? 1994)

Robert Piper ? vocals (1984)

= = = Timeline = = =

= = Discography = =

DAAS Icon (1990)

Dead & Alive (1993)

DAAS Bootleg ? Live in Edinburgh (1994)

The Last Concert (1995)