

# Don McGlashan

## Marvellous Year Bio

Arch Hill Recordings is super excited to announce the release of **Marvellous Year** – the second solo album by one of New Zealand’s most significant musical icons - **Don McGlashan**. The album will be out in New Zealand on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2009.

**Marvellous Year** is the first full release under the name **Don McGlashan and the Seven Sisters** – reflecting a more “band” effort than his first solo album **Warm Hand**. As you will hear, The Seven Sisters are bursting with “*unfailingly musical*” talent, giving the songs real energy, atmosphere and depth. Don’s songwriting and ability to capture melody and the everyday moment is as strong - or even stronger – than ever.

Another reason **Marvellous Year** is so darn good is that both **Don McGlashan** and the band (Chris O’Connor, Maree Thom, John Segovia and Dominic Blaazer) have been on a real musical roll for the last couple of years. The band have played numerous shows, such as to thousands at the Auckland Domain, WOMAD and various theatres, clubs and pubs up and down the country.

As Don says “*I think because I was performing, writing and recording a lot in 2008, I was able to try lots of ideas out - on the band, in the studio, and on audiences - so there’s a lighter, more relaxed feel to some parts of this record. Warm Hand took a fair while because I was trying to find a sound for my solo stuff. I was gradually assembling the band as I recorded. Now the Seven Sisters is established, and we’re used to playing together, so Marvellous Year was able to happen a lot more quickly, naturally, and with less head-scratching. It sounds, to me, more like a bunch of songs written for, and played by, a really good band.*”

As well as the band input, **Marvellous Year** was also a joint effort in the production stakes, with Don working alongside **Sean Donnelly (SJD)**. Don says aside from Sean’s undeniable musical talent and ears, his input was to: “*Challenge me, push me and throw banana skins in my path whenever I got too complacent.*” The album itself was recorded at **Neil Finn’s** Roundhead Studios, mixed brilliantly by **Jordan Stone** and features guest backing vocals from **Neil Finn** and string arrangements by **Victoria Kelly**”

Don recently played sold out solo shows in London, showcases in New York and Vancouver and toured with **Crowded House** - both opening for and playing in the band. This took him through Australia, USA and Europe (including Russia!).

As if that wasn’t keeping him busy enough, in the last year Don has also composed, supervised and recorded two soundtrack albums; the **Toa Fraser** directed **Dean Spanley** (Recorded by New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and featuring Peter O’Toole, Sam Neill and others) and the charming **Show of Hands** (written and directed by Anthony McCarten and featuring performances by the Seven Sisters, Anika Moe and Reb Fountain). The soundtrack CD to **Dean Spanley** is released March 09 on Mana Music and **Show of Hands** was released December 08 on Arch Hill Recordings.

In 2007 Don co-wrote, with Toa Fraser, **The Colossus of Roadies**, “*the story of a sweaty, flatulent rock n roll roadie who finds himself struck down in a freak accident*” and was also recognised as a “Living Legend” by the City Of Auckland. In 2006 Don composed the music to Fraser’s hit movie **No 2** – which spawned the APRA Silver Scroll winning hit “Bathe in the River” - originally sung by **Holly Smith** and beautifully revisited by Don on **Marvellous Year**.

So, reading all this you might well ask, does the title **Marvellous Year** refer to the culmination of the last few marvellous years of music? The answer, in fact, is no; yes they have been marvellous, but the title **Marvellous Year** is borrowed from the **Allen Curnow** poem *The Skeleton of the Great Moe in the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch* and is also is the title of one of the album’s key tracks, a very unique song where you’ll hear about many things, including the Briscoes Lady and the Fire of Hades.

For those who need a little more history, Don was a member of the influential percussion ensemble **From Scratch** from 1979-86, and was drummer and singer with Auckland agit-punk band **Blam Blam Blam** from 1980-82. Together with Harry Sinclair he formed the innovative music/theatre/film act **The Front Lawn** in 1985, and they performed at the Edinburgh Festival in 1988 and 1989, as well as in Europe, the USA, Australia and New Zealand until disbanding in 1990. Don was singer and primary songwriter in **The Mutton Birds** from 1991 to 2002. The group signed to Virgin Records UK in 1995, and were based in London from then until 1999, touring all over the world.