

## **Get Ready to Groove with Melorie Jane: The rising sensational Star of South African Jazz!**

Immerse yourself in the vibrant sounds of Melorie Jane, the award-winning pianist and vocalist revolutionizing the South African jazz scene! With her unique style and infectious energy, Melorie Jane is poised to take the music world by storm.

### **The Latest Release: "Dancing and Laughing (From Vir Elsa)"**

Experience the artistry of Melorie Jane's latest single, a stunning reimagining of her original song "Vir Elsa." This captivating piece features a full sextet arrangement, powerful vocals, and a joyful energy that will leave you breathless.

### **A Journey of Self-Discovery and Collaboration**

Melorie Jane's music is a reflection of her personal journey, rooted in themes of self-discovery, community, and family. Her latest single celebrates the importance of relationships, creativity, and giving back to the community. The music video, shot at Amazink Live in Kayamandi, Stellenbosch showcases Melorie Jane's mother, Elsa van der Klashorst, creating a stunning piece of art that mirrors the song's narrative.

### **A Rising Star in the Jazz Firmament**

Melorie Jane's debut album, "More or Less," earned her two Mzantsi Jazz Awards and critical acclaim. Her innovative approach to Afro-funk jazz has made her a standout in the jazz sector. With performances at prestigious events, including the 2024 Cape Town Jazzathon Festival, Melorie Jane is solidifying her position as a leading voice in South African jazz. Last year she spent three months performing at the New St Regis Hotel in Muscat Oman, Middle East, as their jazz musician at the Stage Bar and also during their high tea. She has also performed at the private function at Presidential inauguration in the Democratic Republic of Congo

### **Join the Melorie Jane Movement!**

Stay up-to-date with Melorie Jane's latest releases, live performances, and behind-the-scenes insights on social media and online streaming platforms.

Website: <https://meloriejane.co.za/>

Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/artist/5NE7Re2uiABrj44sckzUAY?si=vAu1ldBTIaELX8IP02F9Q>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqvhCifHN4WmUM9vYBOgjWw>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/melorie\\_jane/](https://www.instagram.com/melorie_jane/)

X (Twitter): @MelorieJane)

TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@meloriejane>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/melorie-jane-a53247264/>

iTunes: <https://music.apple.com/us/artist/melorie-jane/>

**Next page extra information: Attention Editors**

## **Background information: Melorie Jane**

### **Formative years- music was key**

The South African jazz artist and vocalist was born in Pretoria. Her speciality is the piano. Melorie Jane (full name Melorie Jane de Villiers), from a young age was immersed in music, sports, and academics. Her music career began when she was seven, she joined the local school choir (Lynnwood Primary). She played the piano by ear, before starting formal lessons at age nine. Her early love of the piano was instilled by her father, who supported and nurtured her dreams from the get-go. One of her profound memories is playing piano, with her dad. Growing up in a family which nurtured love of the arts, she visited art galleries, exhibitions, went to the theatre and concerts. Her mother, a visual artist, was equally supportive of her music and her choice to embark on a career in music.

### **Early music influences**

Melorie Jane was drawn to world music from the Putumayo CD collection, songwriters such as Bob Dylan, rock bands Coldplay and Muse and the Buena Vista Social Club. At school (Die Hoërskool Menlopark), she did not play in bands, and she was unfamiliar with jazz as a genre. In terms of the piano, she was exposed to church music, rock, and pop.

### **University studies**

Building on her early music success as a child in the choir and piano, she embarked on university studies and received a bachelor's in music from the University of Pretoria (2015). This was followed with a master's in music performance (2021) from University of Stellenbosch, with majors in jazz composition and performance (piano). It was at The National Arts Festival in Makhanda (formerly known as The Grahamstown Arts Festival), where she was exposed to South African and international jazz. The music department of the university at the time, pivoted around classical piano. Jazz piano as a first instrument was on offer but there was minimal instruction available in other areas of jazz practice. Students were encouraged to craft their own pathways by seeking input from the jazz sector, which Melorie did with passion as she skilled herself in jazz and in particularly jazz in South Africa and in Africa. She cites Phuti Sepuru and Charl du Plessis (University of Pretoria) and Pierre-Henri Wicomb (University of Stellenbosch) as key mentors in her university years. When she encountered the world of jazz, she was smitten by the vibrance and energy and the opportunity to engage audiences in live performance and that crosses over to her albums.

### **Afro-funk jazz**

In 2012, Melorie Jane, established All the More, an afro-funk jazz group which performed at venues in Pretoria, Hard Rock Café Menlyn and Marais Street Acoustics. The group was particularly popular with students and young people.

### **Solo career**

Melorie moved to Franschhoek in 2017, and her solo career germinated. Her debut single 'Till the Morning Comes (2017) and Different View (EP, 2018) captivated audiences and critics. Her career took a meteoric rise in 2021. During the pandemic and lockdowns, she

used the time of isolation to hone her composing skills and voice. The release in 2021 of her acclaimed debut album, *More or Less*, catapulted her into the limelight.

### **Awards and acclaim for debut album, *More or Less***

*More or Less* was nominated in five musical categories, two of which, she won the Best Jazz Album as well as Best Female Jazz Artist at the 2022 Mzantsi Jazz Awards.

In *More or Less*, Melorie grapples with themes such as the process of “finding and expressing one's idea of home, identity and self”. Tracks such as *Mr Tswai* and *Sense of Home* were influenced by South African jazz composers such as Kyle Shepherd, Carlo Mombelli and Bheki Mseleku. Other tracks illustrate the influence of contemporary jazz, for instance *Amina* named after jazz artist Amina Figarova. Each composition has a story which is key to Melorie Jane's creative process.

### **Solo artist performance highlights**

As a solo artist Melorie Jane had the privilege of opening for multi-Grammy Award-winning artist PJ Morton during his Africa Tour (2023) in Whitney April's band. She has performed on stage with iconic South African artists such as Anna Davel, Lana Crowster and the late and great Gloria Bosman, as part of the University of Stellenbosch Big Band. In 2024 Melorie made her first international appearance in the DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo), performing for ministerial dignitaries after the inauguration ceremony of President Felix Tshisekedi.

### **The Melorie Jane Quintet**

The Quintet has been featured on the Expresso Morning Show, PFORE Online Radio (USA) and on Sirius XM Radio Station. This year Melorie Jane Quintet performed at the 2024 Cape Town Jazzathon Festival.

### **Isolation, resilience, and significance**

Melorie's music is diverse in terms of its scope and influences and reverberates across multiple themes such as isolation, resilience, and the significance of community, family, and friendships. Her dedication to her craft is intertwined with gratitude for the influences which have shaped her artistry and journey as a South African Jazz artist. As a young artist she is grateful to her peers, teachers and mentors who have inspired her and continue to inspire her curative output particularly as an innovator and presence in South African jazz, with a personal and distinctive sound.

### **Melorie Jane – discography as a solo artist**

**2017** 'Till the Morning Comes - debut single

**2018** Different View - debut EP

### **Melorie Jane Trio and Quintet – discography**

**2017** – 'Till the Morning Comes - Melorie Jane Trio- featuring Melorie Jane on piano and vocals, Gilbert Sithole (bass) and Thato Tswai on drums.

**2018** – Different View- EP- Melorie Jane Quintet- featuring Melorie Jane on piano and vocals, Gilbert Sithole (bass), Thato Tswai (drums), Lehlohonolo Ntsoko (saxophone) and Nstikelelo Jack Mcwabe (trumpet).

**2021** – New Day - Melorie Jane Trio- featuring Melorie Jane (piano and vocals), Alex Mayers (bass) and Jarryd West (drums).

**2021**- Amina - Melorie Jane Trio- featuring Melorie Jane (piano), Alex Mayers (bass) and Jarryd West (drums).

**2021** More or Less- debut album. Featuring Melorie Jane (piano and voice), Neo Mathebula (trumpet), Jed Petersen (saxophone), Alex Mayers (bass), Lilavan Gangen (drums) and Jarryd West on drums on Amina.

**2024**- Vir Elsa - Melorie Jane Quintet - featuring Melorie Jane (piano), Chadleigh Gowar (bass guitar), Chanté Phillips (drums), Bonga Mosola (trumpet), Danél Dippenaar (alto saxophone)

**2024**- Hold the stars - Melorie Jane Quintet - featuring Melorie Jane (piano and vocals), Chadleigh Gowar (bass guitar), Chanté Phillips (drums), Bonga Mosola (trumpet), Danél Dippenaar (alto saxophone and flute)

**2025**- Dancing and laughing (From Vir Elsa) - Melorie Jane Sextet - Melorie Jane Quintet - featuring Melorie Jane (piano), Chadleigh Gowar (bass guitar), Chanté Phillips (drums), Bonga Mosola (trumpet), Ryan Hendricks (alto saxophone), Ashsmit Malan (electric guitar)

Hashtags #jazzpianist #southafricanjazz #meloriejane

**Issued on behalf of Melorie Jane**

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