



It's hard to believe it's 40 years since the singing sensation released her first album, *Marcia Shines*, cementing her place in the Aussie charts.

Exclusive interview

One constant in Marcia's long and colourful career has been her many glamorous outfits. 'This is one of my favourite dresses from the '70s – it's actually now in the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney!' she says of the delicate silk creation (inset) designed just for her.

Marcia STEPS BACK IN TIME

The music legend takes a trip down memory lane as she opens up her private photo album

She's the queen of Australian pop – the '70s singing sensation whose career spans four decades. From her origins on the stage and small screen to becoming a judge on *Australian Idol*, Marcia Hines is a bona fide triple threat.

And the ARIA Hall Of Fame inductee has no plans to rest on her laurels. Last year, she released a new original album and is now on the road, starring in an international stage show set during the heady days of disco.

'It was a really cool time,' Marcia, 62, reflects. 'Back then, I didn't realise just how cool it was, but now, being in this show, I do – especially when I walk on stage singing these songs that are the soundtrack of peoples' lives. It was a joyous time for us all.'

Revisiting the decade of decadence hasn't been much of

a stretch for the singer, who takes the lead in *Velvet* – a new musical spectacular set in a glamorous nightclub based on Studio 54.

'It's pretty intense – theatre is intense – but it's fantastic because we're being received so well,' she smiles.

Marcia drew on her own experience of the famous hotspot.

'I went once – it was pretty cool!' she says. 'Of course, it wasn't what you knew but who you knew – you had to know someone to get in. I was hanging with some friends from New York and a famous DJ at the time got us in. I remember seeing [Mick Jagger's wife] Bianca, who was beautiful and obviously a regular. It was a real scene.'

Arriving in Australia in 1970 to star in the Aussie production of rock musical *Hair*, Marcia, then 16, encountered Sydney's buzzing nightlife. ▶

Success followed success for the talented singer, who has no plans to slow down.

1981

Now

'I was backstage on a TV show in 1982 where I bumped into Jermaine Jackson (right)! I remember I tried to be as cool as possible, but the look on my face gives it away. I met him again when he was a guest judge on *Australian Idol* and he remembered me, which was really nice.'



'This was in 1978, on my TV show *Marcia Hines Music*. I always had a crush on John Waters. He had the accent, the long hair... it was all happening! We're still



'As you can imagine, this is one of my most treasured photos. It was taken in Melbourne in 1988, after my performance for Princess Diana and Prince Charles. They line you up to meet the royals – you're told where to stand and not to touch or kiss! Diana was the most beautiful woman I've ever seen. We sort of just stared at one another, so much so that Prince Charles cleared his throat!'



Velvet is running in Brisbane until September 26 and in Sydney from October 6. For more details, visit velvettheshow.com.

'This is one of my favourite pictures of Deni and me. She was 13 when this was taken in 1983. We decided to take a special picture of the two of us for my mother as a gift. I styled us both, which is something I enjoy doing.'



'Back then, it was really happening,' she says. 'There was a lot of dancing and we'd go to clubs to find out what the new dance steps were.'

'People like Stevie Wonder, Shirley Bassey and the Four Tops were performing and, after our show, we'd hang with them. We hung out with Stevie Wonder for a couple of weeks. It was fantastic!'

Remaining in Australia, she launched a music career which would see her voted Queen of Pop three years in a row. By 1978, she was Australia's biggest-selling locally recorded female artist.

'I was working so hard, so I was oblivious to my success,' Marcia explains. 'That's the funny thing about fame – you work so hard, you don't really have time to take stock of what's happening to you.'

But, knee-deep in a show set during her musical heyday, Marcia isn't one to reflect on her glory days.

'Life goes on,' she says matter-of-factly. 'I'm very grateful for the life I'm living and I don't dwell on anything.'

'That was one of my mother's biggest sayings: "Marcia, don't dwell", so I don't! Too

much reflection probably means you're not living enough.'

Right now, Marcia says she's looking forward to becoming a grandmother, with her daughter – singer Deni, 45 – trying for a baby, after a miscarriage in 2012.

'I'd spoil them terribly,' Marcia says of her future grandchildren. 'I'd probably feed them lots of sugar and then send them home!'

'They say it's wonderful, being a grandparent, and I think my daughter will be a fine mother.'

Not that there's anything grandmotherly about youthful-looking Marcia. Her beauty secret? 'Genetics!' she giggles.

'I try to stay fit, I eat well and I don't drink or smoke. There's pressure when you're in the public eye to take care of yourself and to look halfway decent, but I believe you look better the older you get.'

Last year, the singer released *Amazing*, her first original album in more than 20 years.

'It was fun, it was real and it was very cathartic,' she says of the album, released shortly after her split with her fourth husband, Dr Christopher Morrissey, following a decade-long marriage.

But Marcia asserts finding love again is still on the cards. 'I'm not dead yet!' she laughs.

However, for now, her role on stage is all-consuming, and she's relishing time alone.

'You have to learn to be by yourself – that's a big lesson in life. You have to learn to like yourself and be able to enjoy your own company,' Marcia says. 'Fame can be a very strange thing, but I wouldn't have it any other way.'

By Paul Ewart

Photos: Lawrence Furzey

Hair and make-up: Cathy Savage. Styling: Rosie McKay. Props: Kathryn Bloom at US Styling and Party Hire Group. Marcia wears: Colette by Colette Hayman, Jadore, Leona Edmiston, Montique, Ole Lynggaard, Peppers Formal Wear, Pierre Winier and Strandhatters.