

On top of the musical world

Imagine getting a letter to say you're off to study at the Royal College of Music in London, **Ron Cerabona** writes

Canberrans will have the opportunity to say au revoir to Canberra jazz ensemble The Sally Greenaway Project when it performs at the Alliance Francaise's Jazz Night on Friday.

Sally Greenaway, 24, is a native Canberran who completed undergraduate studies at the ANU School of Music. She will be moving to London in August to study for a masters degree in film composition at the Royal College of Music in London. She was one of four successful applicants out of more than 200 from around the world.

Having scored a few short films and written advertising jingles locally for the likes of Artsound FM, Greenaway has dipped her toes creatively in this field and is eager to learn more. Among the composers she admires is American Maria Schneider who also writes for big band ("that's a key reason why I like her").

She says, "I particularly like people who are able to write classical music overlapping music with jazz, to adjoin all three."

But it's jazz that will be the focus at the Alliance Francaise concert. Greenaway says the Alliance has been a big supporter of the arts community in Canberra, particularly music – and her group, The Sally Greenaway Project, has been a beneficiary of that largesse.

Founded in 2005 with other School of Music students, the project has been through several combinations of instruments and numerical groupings but is now a sextet with Greenaway on piano and also featuring vocalist Marie Le Brun, violinist Tim Whickam, saxophonist Joe Taylor, pianist Sally Greenaway, bassist Hannah James and drummer Ed Rodrigues.



Canberra's jazz ensemble The Sally Greenaway Project from left, Tim Whickam (violin), Sally Greenaway (band leader/pianist), Ed Rodrigues (drums), Joseph Taylor (saxophones). Missing are singer Marie Le Brun and bassist Hannah James.

When you're a musician in Australia, you have to be able to do everything.

"I started it to perform the pieces I had arranged and composed," Greenaway says.

"Some of the other band members have also composed music but it's generally my stuff . . . I want to learn to write for different kinds of instruments and five other people an opportunity to perform in a band that's an unusual format with unique material."

At the Alliance concert, she says, "Don't expect any bebop."

Instead, there will be some of the most popular pieces from the Project's career, rearranged for its current setting, as well as some

brand new material, which she describes as "very lush and warm and very appealing to the ear".

Among the numbers will be a new arrangement of the Charlie Chaplin song *Smile*, "in 5/4 time rather than a waltz", and a new piece will be *At the Start of the Day*, which starts with the lightest mallet heads on the percussion and builds.

"It's very Piazzolla in style."

Last year, Greenaway won the National Big Band Composition Competition held in Sydney by the Australian Performing Rights Association with her modern big band piece *Falling of Seasons*.

Greenaway says of her style, "I don't write typical swing pieces, much more world-music, European-influenced, Latin American, Middle Eastern and Asian, with the softer, lush tones and harmonies of European music."

"When you're a musician in Australia, you have to be able to do everything."

She writes pop music and dance music for British clubs and says the British have different taste to Australians.

"Australians prefer American sounds – Britney Spears! – while the British prefer different types of beats and harmonies and different types of lyrics."

While this will be the last performance of The Sally Greenaway Project before its namesake departs for England, Greenaway has one more performance planned, "a big fall concert, later, which features all the most popular pieces."

■ The Sally Greenaway Project will perform on Friday at 7pm at the Alliance Francaise, 66 McCaughey Street, Turner. Tickets: \$15 non-members, \$12 members. Drinks and snacks will be available at the bar. Ph: 6247 5027.