

**“It’s easy to write
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Vika and Linda, Renée Geyer, and Archie Roach. Kelly has often written for female characters and singers. The 2002 tribute album, *The Women at the Well: The Songs of Paul Kelly*, features 16 of his compositions interpreted by female singers, such as Vika and Linda, Geyer, Kasey Chambers, Bic Runga, and the Divinyls’ Chrissy Amphlett.

“I’ve always wanted to have a big range as a songwriter,” Kelly says. “My favorite writer is Shakespeare, and he always wrote for multiple voices, so that’s always been an aim of mine. I’m not interested in self-expression or writing about my situation. That never appealed to me. I’m interested in writing from different points of view, someone 20 years older than me or 20 years younger, or a different gender, or in a different situation.”

His ability to write for a woman’s voice spills over to an ability to write for a woman’s ear. When he sang his new song, “Crying Shame,” at the 9:30, he didn’t try to impress a potential lover with a flashy car, gifts of jewelry, or poetry about eternal love. Instead, he offered her the more modest but more likely inducements of Cooper’s Ale, homemade chili, and a stack of vintage R&B LPs.

“For so long, the coin of the singer/songwriter realm has been love gone wrong or love unrequited,” Kelly says. “That’s a very narrow row to hoe. I’ve always liked the way R&B is very frank about love and sex and often celebrated them. It’s easy to write about love gone wrong—it’s much harder to write about good love without sounding smug or sentimental.

“The goal is not to tell my story but to write a good song,” he continues. “I’ll scavenge material from my own life to make a song, but my life serves the song, not the other way around.”

Paul Kelly plays Artscape July 16. For more information, see sidebar this page.

Development (4:30 P.M.) takes you to another place at the **Sun Stage**, while reggae soldier **Steel Pulse (6:30 P.M.)** takes charge after. **Poncho Sanchez (4:45 P.M.)** starts an instant party at the **Value City Stage**, while **Big Bad Voodoo Daddy (6:30 P.M.)** swings so long, farewell, goodbye. And don’t miss the **DJ Culture Stage** today: The two drum ’n’ bass **Yodas in Thunderball (6 P.M.)** play a live set, homegrown house diva **Ultra Naté** is joined by **DJ Spen (4 P.M.)**, and at noon the **Baltimore Afrobeat Society** kicks off the afternoon. Yes, you read that right: **Baltimore Afrobeat Society. Outside. In sunlight.**

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