

Comedian and Actor

MAGDA SZUBANSKI

(1961-)

Magda Szubanski was born in the United Kingdom, and grew up in Melbourne. At university, Magda and her friends staged comedy shows. News of the talented group spread and they were invited to create a show for the ABC. Their sketch show, *The D-Generation*, was hugely popular on TV and on radio.

From there, Magda kept writing and performing comedy. In 1995 Magda teamed with fellow comedians Jane Turner and Gina Riley to write, perform and produce *Big Girl's Blouse*. All-female comedy shows were a rare sight on TV, and this one spawned characters that became international phenomenons.

Jane and Gina created the hit sitcom *Kath & Kim* in 2002. Magda joined them to play Sharon Strzelecki, and her reputation as one of Australia's most loved comedy writers and actors was cemented. Sharon showcased Magda's keen ear for how people speak and think, and her ability to make her underdog characters endearing and relatable.

While Magda spent decades in the public eye, she kept her life private. In 2015 she published her memoir, *Reckoning*. She wrote about the difficult times in her relationship with her parents, her experience of anxiety and depression, her struggle with her weight, and her fears that coming out as gay would make friends, family or audiences turn away from her. Today, Magda is vocal in her support for LGBTQIA+ issues and encourages young people to be hopeful and true to themselves.

Magda, your comic creations have brought laughter to millions of us, and through your honesty and advocacy you are an inspiring voice.

We want to be as funny, accomplished and compassionate as you.

ILLUSTRATION BY JORDYN MCGEACHIN

