

Jade's gene pull

FROM an early age, sounds from the piano inspired Jade Leonard to sing.

The 19-year-old Essendon resident is working on her first CD and will launch her solo career at this year's Melbourne Fringe Festival.

Her talent stems from a musical family – both Leonard's parents are pianists.

Leonard said her mother had followed the business side of music, setting up a music school in Essendon while her father still performed professionally.

Leonard said she was using her mother's business nous to help her launch her career.

"I have had opportunities to go with recording companies in the past but I decided to stay independent," Leonard said.

"Now I am really focused and know what I want to do.

"The next step is to look at a major production and see what nibbles I get from the CD and events such as the Fringe

Festival. "This is pretty much a premier gig.

"For me it's very exciting and I am looking forward to it."

Leonard describes her music as folk-acoustic-pop and admits she doesn't play the piano as well as her parents.

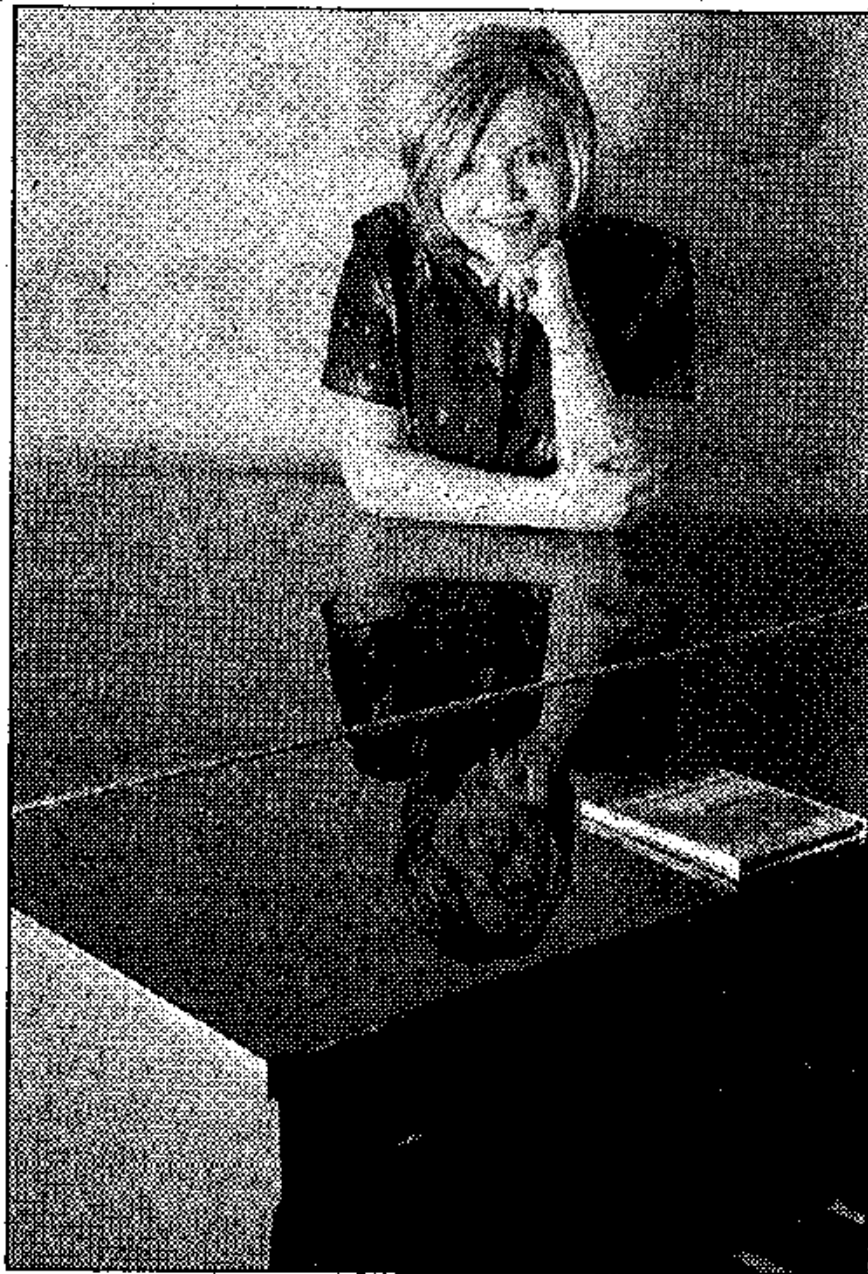
At 14 she wrote her first song and just kept writing, she said.

The appearance at the Fringe Festival will be Leonard's first gig as a solo artist but she has been a vocalist for many other bands.

Leonard is also studying at the Victorian College of the Arts, which she said was the fulfilment of a high school dream.

In May she received a grant from the Melbourne Theatre Company that has helped her produce a promotional CD and funds for her debut CD.

Leonard performs at Bar 44, 44 Lonsdale St, Melbourne, on October 10 at 8.30pm. Entry costs \$10.



On debut: singer Jade Leonard.