



ADELAIDE FESTIVAL

28 FEB - 15 MAR 2020

Resource developed by
Deanne Bullen 2020

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Bungul

A ceremony, a meeting place of dance, song and ritual

EDUCATION RESOURCE

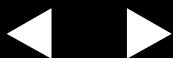


Image: Anna Reece



Bungul

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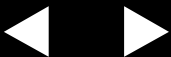
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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Image: Anna Reece



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Show rundown

Bungul is a tribute to an exceptional and unique musician, Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu. Created on country in North East Arnhem Land with the Yunupingu family, *Bungul* is a ceremonial celebration of one of the transcendent albums of our time: Gurrumul's final album, *Djarrimirri (Child of the Rainbow)*. The album was a musical collaboration of contemporary orchestration and traditional Yolngu language and songlines.

Bungul combines the traditional songs, dances and paintings that inspired *Djarrimirri (Child of the Rainbow)*, in a live performance by Yolngu dancers, songmen and the Adelaide Festival Orchestra, directed by Senior Yolngu Don Wininba Ganambarr and Nigel Jamieson.



[Theatre collaboration ensures spirit of Gurrumul lives on](#)

The Australian - 2 November 2019

WARNINGS

Contains haze and smoke effects

SUPPORTED BY

This production has been assisted by the Australian Government's Major Festivals Initiative, managed by the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, in association with the Confederation of Australian International Arts Festivals Inc., commissioned by Perth Festival, Darwin Festival, Adelaide Festival, Melbourne International Arts Festival, Sydney Festival and Brisbane Festival.

This project was initiated by the Yunupingu family and Skinnyfish Music. Produced by Perth Festival and Skinnyfish Music. Supported by Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre - Yirrkala Arts Centre and The Mulka Project. *Djarrimirri (Child of the Rainbow)* produced by Michael Hohnen & Skinnyfish Music with orchestrations by Erkki Veltheim.

Generously supported by Maureen Ritchie and Roger and Helen Salkeld.

[The letter n as in Bungul and Yolngu is the same as the English sound in the word 'singer'.](#)

It is made with the back of the tongue against the roof of the mouth in the velar position. Unlike in English, this sound can also occur at the beginning of words.

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Themes

In his honour, Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu's family add a further cultural and immersive visual dimension to the historic work *Djarimirri (Child of the Rainbow)*. They will be performing the songlines that have forged their identity and every aspect of their existence since the beginning of time.

Bungul represents a majestic union of two disparate worlds. It points to a potential contemporary Australian identity grounded in and drawing upon the extraordinary knowledge, understanding and wisdom of First Nations People.

Production

Style and Conventions

Bungul - A ceremony, a meeting place of dance, song and ritual.

The rich cultural pride of the Yolngu and sharing of their songlines and stories is the gathering bungul, a ceremony of traditional dance.



"The artistic vision for Gurrumul's last album *Djarimirri (Child of the Rainbow)* was to bring traditional Australian music to the mainstream in our societies. We presented the highest forms of musical and artistic expression in both cultures. The classical tradition of an orchestra, (in this instance in a range of styles including minimalist), and the Yolngu song style and yidaki style which is also repetitive.

But the music and album alone only tells a part of a story. Yolngu live in a largely connected world connecting all natural elements of the earth, through dance, painting, song, land and ancestral stories.

The show *Bungul* brings all of those elements together, carefully curated by the Yolngu, with songlines related to land forms related to dances related to painting styles related to musical patterns told through deep poetic language expression to bring us an equal of high art in this country from some of the most precious people who still live here.

Gurrumul's family dance, sing, improvise and direct this insight into a world we should all know a lot more about.

We thank his family for their trust, commitment and homage."

Mark Grose and Michael Hohnen
Skinnyfish Music

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Curriculum Links and Activities

This education resource has been developed with links to the Australian Curriculum. Activities have been created to reflect each of the achievement standards.

SACE Stage 1 and 2 – the resources are created with links and in relation to the subject outlines.

The resource aims to provide teachers with information to help prepare students before attending the performance, as well as structured learning activities for the classroom after viewing the performance.

Australian Curriculum – Music – Year 9 – 10

Analyse a range of music from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their music making, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and consider music in international contexts.

ACAMUR105 – Elaboration

Discuss the influence of music on the development of personal and cultural identity.

Aboriginal Cultural Studies

[The Aboriginal cultural studies curriculum](#) supports young South Australians to understand and celebrate the historical and contemporary contributions, stories, history and culture of Australia's First Nations People.

SACE Stage 1 – Music

Creating Music

CM3 Interpretation of musical works

Responding to Music

RM2 Analysis and discussion of musical works and styles.

SACE Stage 2 – Music

Understanding Music

UM1 Development of knowledge and understanding of musical elements.

Responding to Music

RM2 Analysis and discussion of musical works.



Image: Anna Reece

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Before the Show

Performance literacy and theatre etiquette

Developing knowledge and appreciation of the life and music of Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu:

Gurrumul was Australia's most successful Indigenous musician. He sang with Sting, met the Queen three times, and superstar music producer Quincy Jones called him "one of the most unusual and emotional and musical voices that I've ever heard."

The album, *Djarimirri (Child of the Rainbow)*, was recorded over four years and across many sessions. The album was a labour of love produced by Michael Hohnen (producer at Skinnyfish Music) with orchestral arrangements by Erkki Veltheim. It was released posthumously on 13 April 2018. *Djarimirri* stands as the singer's final gift to the world, one last reminder that his rise to fame was more than deserved.

In 2011 *Rolling Stone* magazine declared **Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu** "Australia's Most Important Voice."

As a whole class students watch:

Gurrumul: the documentary

- [Full length documentary Gurrumul](#) (1hr, 36mins), is available for viewing on SBS OnDemand.
- [The documentary Gurrumul debuted to raves in Berlin](#) – access a trailer and a brief background of the documentary.

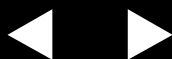
Small group to whole class discussion:

- Students work in small groups then come together to discuss and share their responses to the documentary.

"Geoffrey's songs became famous the world over. People were touched and moved by the beauty of his voice, his own songs and the songs of his mother and grandmother which he sang. But they did not know the really important part of these songs - their meanings. And that is what we seek to do now, as a gift to Geoffrey, as a gift to the world. To tell a little of the meanings that lie behind these songs.

To the Yolngu, our songs, paintings and dances are our books – they tell us where we have come from and where we are going to. They follow the song lines that weave us together. They are our maps, our law books, our title deeds, and our family history. They connect us to the land and to the animals with which we share it and of whom we are a part. They are woven into our hearts."

Don Wininba Ganambarr



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Working in small groups:

Students use the collaborative Jigsaw learning activity to develop knowledge and appreciation of the life and music of Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu. (Jigsaw learning - students sharing and teaching others)

The Jigsaw process is great for developing knowledge and learning of a broad range of information.

Process

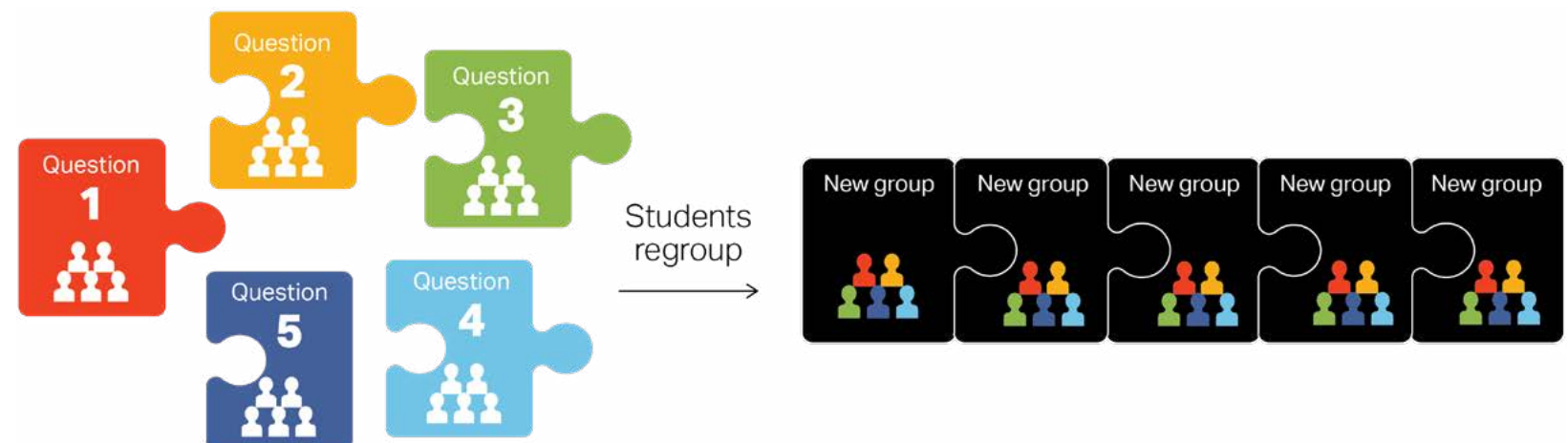
1. Class is split into groups – approximately five in a group.
Class of 25 would be five students in five groups.

2. Each group has a focus question for their research and needs to decide how they are going to collect and share the information, for example:
 - How to explain information
 - What maps, prints of photographs or recordings are required
 - What keywords or definitions will need to be explained?
3. Once each group has completed their research they are ready to re-group to share. One student from each group forms the new groups to share with each other.

Students regroup:

Suggested prompts/questions for group research:

- What were the main influencers of Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu's music?
- Develop a timeline of the music of Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu.
- What is the music of the Yolngu people and why is it important for them to share their story?
- What was Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu's connection to Yolngu?
- What was the significance of Skinnyfish music in the promotion of Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu's music?



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Links to Research

Biographies

- [Skinnyfish music](#) – Gurrumul – An enigma in the Australian music industry
- [Artist biography by Adam Greenberg](#)
- BBC – UK – [Access a brief biography and 19 tracks of Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu's music](#)
- [History on Wikipedia](#)

Gurrumul's music

- [Gurrumul Yunupingu's album is first in Indigenous language to top Australian charts](#) – Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu's final album, released nine months after the acclaimed musician's death, has become the first in an Australian Indigenous language to top music charts in Australia
- [Listen to Djolin](#) – one of the 12 tracks from *Djarimirri (Child of the Rainbow)*
- [History \(I Was Born Blind\)](#) – song
- [ABC News – Award-winning Yunupingu takes music to the world](#). A background story about Gurrumul Yunupingu's music and why he was highly acclaimed as a musician around the world
- [Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu's legacy – why his music didn't stop](#). Sydney Morning Herald – 14 April 2018

Studio Albums

- [Djarimirri \(Child of the Rainbow\)](#) – released 2018
- [The Gospel Album](#) – released 2015
- [Rrakala](#) – released 2011
- [Gurrumul](#) – released 2008

Live Albums

- [Live in Darwin, Australia](#) – released 2010
- [His Life and Music](#) (with Sydney Symphony Orchestra) – released 2013

Obituaries

- [Dr G Yunupingu obituary in The Guardian](#) – July 2017
- [New York Times – Dr G Yunupingu, Australian Aboriginal Singer, Dies at 46](#) – 26 July 2017
- [The portrait of Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu](#), painted by Guy Maestri, hangs in the National Gallery. The painting is oil on linen (frame: 203.0 cm x 172.4 cm, support: 197.5 x 167.0). It won the Archibald Prize in 2009

"Australia has produced very few, if any, popular singers of such extraordinary talent that their voices seem to be a gift from the gods." Bruce Elder, music critic, wrote in his [review of Gurrumul](#).



Image: Anna Reece

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After the Show

Individually students:

- Note down everything they can remember about the performance.

In pairs, students share:

- Their notes with a partner. Students focus on what they have in common or where the differences are.

Writing the review to *Bungul*

Drawing on the conversations from the Jigsaw groups, whole class discussion and watching the documentary *Gurumul* students write a review of *Bungul*.

The Guide for Writing a Music Critique will support students to plan and write their critique of the performance of *Bungul*.

Tips and hints for students when writing their critique:

- Don't forget when you are expressing an opinion you have to back it up. You can't just say it was awesome! Discuss the execution of the moves, the relationship between the dancers and the miniature sets and the filming.
- Describe, don't tell.
- Reread, edit and have someone else read your critique before you print.



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Our Cultural Inheritance

"For two hundred years, Australian society has blocked its ears to the remarkable indigenous cultures that are our inheritance. As the urgency grows daily to find a more sustainable way to live with the fragile land that supports us, it is surely time to take stock and learn from the extraordinary cultures that have always been around us, cultures such as the Yolŋu. It is time to listen.

It has been a humbling and breath-taking experience to walk on country with Don and Gurrumul's family, and to get a glimpse into their profound sense of connection and knowledge of the landscape, plants and animals who are their kin. We hope our work together offers a small window into this exquisite world, and a different way of seeing our lives and our destiny."

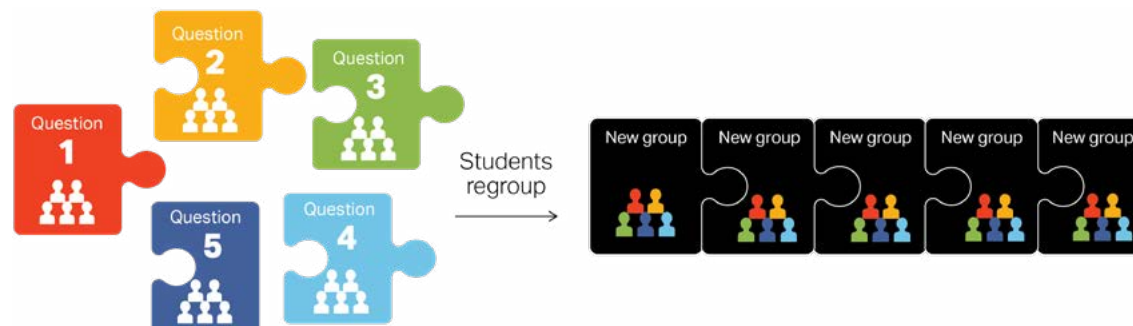
Nigel Jamieson

The United Nations recognised 2019 as the Year of Indigenous Languages, highlighting the importance of maintaining and revitalising Indigenous languages worldwide. In Australia the Arts provides an important conduit for all Australians to connect and learn about our cultural heritage.

To extend and build on the learning students have undertaken about the life and music of Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu they will complete a Jigsaw research activity to look at other Australian Indigenous music and musicians.

Jigsaw groups:

- Students use the same process as before with the Jigsaw they completed before the show. This time they will form their own question for research.
- Students write their open ended question to research.
- The open ended question should be a question that creates learning, insights and prompts deep conversations.



Open ended question
An open ended question is a question that requires a full answer, which uses knowledge and feeling.

Example: Why is music so important to Aboriginal people?

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Writing your *Bungul* Review

Links to assist students to get started with their research

Aboriginal music and dance

[Music and dance are integral to Aboriginal culture, be they in traditional forms or the more contemporary styles of today.](#)

[Protocols for producing Indigenous Australian music from the Australia Council for the Arts](#)

The document provides access to information about:

- What are protocols?
- What is Indigenous music?
- The special nature of Indigenous music.
- Indigenous heritage.
- Current protection of heritage.

National Indigenous Music Awards

[The National Indigenous Music Awards \(NIMAs\)](#) are recognised as one of Australia's most prominent Indigenous music awards and have been celebrating Australian music for 16 years.

The NIMAs showcase the rich musical landscape of Australia and highlights the music coming from all corners of the country. The Awards bring together acts who are yet to make their mark on the world alongside those who have achieved international acclaim, such as Gurrumul & Jessica Mauboy.

[The Music Trust's Music](#) in Australia Knowledge Base is the principal source on Australian music sector facts, figures and issues. It covers the entire music sector including the music industry, music education, and music in the community. The link provided is to the Australian Indigenous music page, which provides information about traditional and contemporary Aboriginal music.

[Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students \(AIATSIS\)](#)

AIATSIS map of Indigenous Australia. The map is an attempt to represent all the language, tribal or nation groups of the Indigenous peoples of Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups were included on the map based on the published resources available between 1988 and 1994 which determine the cultural, language and trade boundaries and relationships between groups.

[Changing Worlds – Kaurna people and other Aboriginal people](#) ask people to learn about Changing Worlds: A South Australian story. The story discusses the last connection with our lands.



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Meet the Company

Music by: Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu, Michael Hohnen & Erkki Velthiem

Directed by: Don Wininba Ganambarr is a senior Yolngu man from Galiwinku and Gurrumul's brother-in-law. Don Wininba is the highest cultural authority for his clan.

Nigel Jamieson is a leading theatre and event director, who has specialised in ceremonies and large scale events around the world. His work has included direction of 'Tin Symphony' for the Sydney Olympic Opening Ceremony, direction of the Closing Ceremony of the 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games, and Artistic Direction of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies for the Melbourne Commonwealth Games (2003-2005).

Creative Producer: Michael Hohnen

Musical Director: Erkki Veltheim (b. 1976 Finland) is an Australian composer, improviser, performer and interdisciplinary artist. He had long-standing collaborations with Gurrumul. Erkki is a recipient of a 2013 Myer Creative Fellowship, and in 2014 was appointed Artistic Associate of Chamber Made Opera. He holds a Master of Arts, for which he researched connections between music and ritual.

Design & Creative Associate: Jacob Nash is a Murri man who grew up in Brisbane. He graduated from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) Design Course in 2005. In 2010, he designed the set for *earth & sky* for Bangarra and received a Green Room Award for Best Design in Dance.

Lighting Design: Mark Howett, born 1963 in Australia, is a director for theatre, dance, opera and film, having started his career initially as a lighting designer. Since 1979, Mark Howett

has worked with many Australian and international theatre, film, dance, and opera companies.

Video Design: Mic Gruchy is a video artist, film and documentary maker whose work spans the fields of theatre, opera, dance, installation, feature film and television. He has been an important figure in the integration of video and digital media artworks into theatre, dance and opera over the last 20 years.

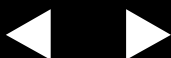
Sound Design: Steve Francis is a composer and sound designer, originally from Adelaide. An opportunity to produce and mix David Page's work on *Alchemy* for the The Australian Ballet in 1997 led to an ongoing collaboration with Bangarra.

Cinematographer: Paul Shakeshaft is an Australian freelance cinematographer specialising in quality tv, content, film and music video production.

First Camera Assistant: Scott Woo

Producer: Anna Reece is an innovative, strategic and dynamic arts leader. Anna has over 15 years' experience spanning the Australian not-for-profit arts and culture sector. An executive producer, programmer and general manager her career focus has sat predominantly within major multi-arts festivals.

Bungul producer Anna Reece has seen a wonderful rapport build between Jamieson and Ganambarr. "Watching them work, listen and respect each other as together they create is something I have found so beautiful and moving," she said. "There is no doubt that Don Wininba is boss. But there is no ego here. Not in Yolngu culture. And not in this show." [The Australian - 2 November 2019.](#)



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[Yolŋu – English – dictionary](#)

PROGRAM NOTES

The Yolŋu world is defined by two opposite sides, Yirritja and Dhuwa, within which individual clans have different identities.

Both halves are required to find balance. For instance, Yolŋu people must marry someone from the opposite half. The whole world is made up of these balanced and specific identities which all have very specific relations with every other thing in the world.

The moon, the north wind, the hammerhead shark, the emu, the Milky Way are Yirritja. The sun, west wind, tiger shark, bustard and Venus are Dhuwa. Whilst in North Arnhem Land everywhere that you go you will be either on Dhuwa or Yirritja land and every Yolŋu person you meet, every native species or plant or animal you see will be one of these identities.

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre

BÄRU

The Bärü manikay celebrates the songline of the Yirritja ancestral crocodile Bärü, beginning his journey in the swamps near Biranybirany, south of Yirrkala, and making his way to the ocean. An important and powerful totem to the Gumatj, the dance captures the crocodiles protecting their nest and their association with fire, which Bärü gifted to the Yolŋu. The fire is represented by the diamond pattern painted on the dancer's chest and in paintings documenting Bärü's ancestral journey. The Bärü paintings featured in the film content were painted on country at Biranybirany by Dhakuwal Yunipirju, and make up a part of the historic bark painting collection 'Saltwater' recording the maritime rights of the Yolŋu.

WÄK

This Dhuwa manikay is about Wäk – the crow and belongs to the Galpu, Gurrumul's mother's clan. Wäk is also the sound of the crow crying, which we hear picked up by the Dhuwa dancers. In this manikay Wäk descends from the heavens towards Djapanjuruana and glides across country. The manikay goes on to tell of his close kinship with Matjkuŋjuwu, the file snake, and the Galpu clan lighting snake. The featured painting is by famous Galpu artist Mithinari Gurruwiwi.

DJÄRIMIRRI

Djärimirri – the olive python or Rainbow Serpent is a powerful Dhuwa totem spirit. The sun shining against the snake's scales forms a prism of light like a rainbow, a significant message about beauty and transience. In this manikay, a mother sings of the birth of her child 'covered by rainbow', fully formed within her womb, of laying the new born child down to be dried by the sun at the sacred place where women give birth, near the termite mound, home to the olive python. The solo dancer represents a young python searching for its mother.

The featured painting is by Djul'djul Gurruwiwi, Mithinari's daughter, whose work frequently depicts the olive python, Djaykurj the filesnake and Guḍurrku the brolga.

GAPU

Gapu means fresh water, which determined Yolŋu's journey across country. This Dhuwa manikay and dance, which belongs to Gurrumul's mother and her Galpu clan, is a celebration of the energy and life giving force of clear running water. The footage was filmed at Guwatjurrumuru west of Yirrkala. The featured painting is by acclaimed artist Malaluba Gumana, depicting the Galpu clan designs of Dhatam, the waterlily, painted on her Homeland of Gäṅgän.



Image: Anna Reece

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GOPURU

Gopuru is a large salt water fish, a little like a blue fin tuna. This Gumatj song celebrates Gopuru, jumping up through the water and feeling the north west breeze, brushing against its gills. Fishing still plays an important part in Yolŋu life – often using the flowering plants or trees to indicate when it is an appropriate time to fish for a particular species

MARAYARR

Marayarr refers both to the masts of the sailing ships of the Makassans from Sulawesi, with whom the Yolŋu have traded and maintained a deep cultural relationship for some five hundred years, and the masts that are carved and then raised at ceremony and funeral sites. The pole represents the strength of Yolŋu culture and the body – the painted top at the very top of the pole representing the brain and knowledge of the person. The Gumatj flag, which flies upon the Marayarr, with its image of ropes and an anchor, again gives testimony to the closeness of cultural ties with the Makassans.

GALIKU

This Yirritja manikay celebrates the calico fabric which the Yolŋu traded with the Makassans, formed into coloured flags indicating different Yolŋu clans. These flags accompany ceremony and are flown at burial sites, in this instance filmed at the site of Gurumul's grave, where the colours denote his cultural connections.

DJOLIN

This manikay celebrates the sounds of the musical instruments "Madhukin" and the "Djolin", a one stringed Makassans instrument played by a Djinjarra (gifted musician). The joyous Gumatj song is used today to celebrate a range of instruments including contemporary electric guitars. The featured painting is by Gumatj clan leader and artist Munggurawuy Yunupingu.



Image: Anna Reece

NJARRPIYA

This song is about a powerful and revered totem in Yolŋu culture – the octopus. The eight limbs of the octopus denote the Yolŋu clans and their close spiritual connections. Njarrpiya also has a strong connection with the north west wind and the Djapana sunset manikay and songline. The performance featured on screen was filmed unrehearsed and as a single take of a young Yirritja dancer's interpretation of the orchestral setting of this song. The featured paintings are by Yirritja artist Shane Dhawa Bukulatjpi and Gumatj artist and ceremonial leader Yumutjin Wunurmurra.

DJILAWURR

This Yirritja song is about the Djilawurr scrub turkey. Its carefully tended nests of sticks and leaves are a ubiquitous site in North East Arnhem land and the Djilawurr is regularly featured at the commencement of ceremony and funerals, and represents the clearing and cleansing of the ground in preparation for ceremony. The dancer's steps exquisitely capture the scratching of the birds as they build their nests and clean the site around them. The featured painting is by the Gumatj artist and ceremonial leader Yumutjin Wunurmurra.

DJÄPANA

Djäpana is a particular sunset, precious to the Yolŋu, involving a glowing red sun slowly dropping into the ocean, viewed here from the Yirritja country of Nawingu, Milarr and Gundjamir. The song is both about ending and renewal, the image of the setting sun, counter-pointed by a dance about a sick person who feels the north west wind revive them.

WULMINDA

This powerful Dhuwa manikay, has many layers of inter-connected meanings. Wulminḁa are dark clouds that form out across the ocean associated with the coming monsoon. The manikay, sings of the darkening clouds, lightning, thunder and loss but also the promise of soft gentle rain. Wulminḁa also references the mind, and all the knowledge of the mother country and clan stored there. The film content features the Guy Maestri's Archibald award winning portrait of Gurumul and a dance, dramatising tiny insects that move up through the earth during ceremony, to finally feel the rays of the sun and North West wind upon them.

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Artwork acknowledgements

Nanydjaka

Artist: Miniyawany (Dhakuwhal) Yunupingu

Biranybirany: Miniyawany Yunupingu (also known as Dhakuwhal).

Courtesy of Australian National Maritime Museum Collection
purchased with the assistance of Stephen Grant of the
GrantPirrie Gallery

Mithinari Gurruwiwi

Courtesy of Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre

Djul'djul

Courtesy of Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre

Malaluba Gumana

Courtesy of Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre

Munggurrawuy Yunupingu

Gift of RM and CH Berndt, Berndt Museum,
The University of Western Australia

Shane Dhawa Bukulatjpi

Courtesy of the artist

Yumutjin Wunungmurra

Courtesy of Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre

Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu

2009 by Guy Maestri

Collection: National Portrait Gallery

Guide for Writing a Music Critique

Opening Paragraph Introduction

When	
What	
Where	
Performance Overview of the performance... include title & composer Briefly describe your initial reaction to the performance.	

Language Features:

- Usually in past tense
- Uses subject-specific language
- Descriptive language
- Third person voice
- Analytical language
- Modality (how certain we are about something)
- Cast and crew referred to by their full names or last name
- In text references (quotes or specific moments)

1st Paragraph - Description of the performance

Provide specific details of the musicians, conductors and other performers - singers, dancers.	
What was the structure of the performance?	
How did the performers relate to each other?	
If relevant refer to previous recordings.	
Keywords: Remember: use musical vocabulary to analyse specific elements of the performance: The commitment of the vocalist to delivering the lyric... The balance/mix of the instruments The tightness of the rhythm section	

2nd Paragraph - Staging

Did the lighting focus or distract?	
Describe the costumes	

3rd Paragraph - Evaluation

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall performance experience• Audience experience	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What made this performance a stand out	

Concluding Paragraph - Summarises the viewers opinion

How did it make you feel? What did you learn?	
What did the performance communicate to you?	
Did the performance create any questions for you?	