



ADELAIDE FESTIVAL

28 FEB - 15 MAR 2020



CONTEMPORARY MUSIC / AUSTRALIA

Bungul

Gurrumul's Mother's Bungul
Gurrumul's Grandmother's Bungul
Gurrumul's Manikay

WORLD PREMIERE SEASON

2 & 3 March 2020
THEBARTON THEATRE

Duration 1hr 30mins, no interval

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 Yolŋu song style and Yidaki style which is also repetitive.

But the music and album alone only tells a part of a story. Yolŋu 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 Yolŋu, 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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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 Djaŋaruruana and glides across country. The Manikay goes on to tell of his close kinship with Matjukŋuwu, 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 Djuŋdju Gurruwiwi, Mithinari's daughter, whose work frequently depicts the olive python, Djaykun the filesnake and Guḍurrku the broлга.

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 Guwatjurumuru, west of Yirrakala. The featured painting is by acclaimed artist Malaluba Gumana, depicting the Galpu clan designs of Dhatam, the waterlily, painted on her Homeland of Gäŋgän.

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 Gurrumul's grave, where the colours denote his cultural connections.

DJOLIŊ

This manikay celebrates the sounds of the musical instruments "Madhukin" and the "Djoliŋ", a one stringed Makassan instrument played by a Djijarra (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 Munggurrawuy Yunupirju.

NARRPIYA

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. NARRPIYA 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 Bukulatjoi and Gumatj artist and ceremonial leader Yumutjin Wunurjmurra.

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 Wunurjmurra.

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.

WULMIŊDA

This powerful Dhuwa manikay, has many layers of inter-connected meanings. Wulmiŋda 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. Wulmiŋda 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 Gurrumul 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.





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

Munggurawuy 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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank and pay our respects to the Yolngu people of North East Arnhem land with whom this work has been created and on whose country this work has been created. We acknowledge the Kaurna People of the Adelaide Plains, the Traditional Owners of the lands upon which the Festival takes place, and we pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present.

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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.

Djarimirri (Child of the Rainbow) the album was produced by Skinnyfish Music and is available on double-vinyl, CD and for downloading or streaming.

Generously supported by Roger Salkeld & Helen Salkeld & Maureen Ritchie



The directors of Bungul discuss Gurrumul and country...

**DON WININBA
GANAMBARR**

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 Yolŋu, 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 songlines 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.

NIGEL JAMIESON

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.



ADELAIDE FESTIVAL AF

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CREDITS

Music by Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu, Erkki Veltheim & Michael Hohnen

Directed by Don Wininba Ganambarr & Nigel Jamieson

Creative Producer Michael Hohnen

Musical Director Erkki Veltheim

Design & Creative Associate Jacob Nash

Cinematographer Paul Shakeshaft

Video design Mic Gruchy

Lighting design Mark Howett

Sound design Steve Francis

Associate Lighting Designer Chloe Ogilvie

Performed by

Yirritja

Phillip Yunupingu, Jamie Yunupingu, David Yunupingu, Robert Burarrwanga, Nebuchdneear (Nebbie) Nalibidj, Nelson Yunupingu

Dhuwa

James Gurruwiwi, Terrence Gurruwiwi

Producer Anna Reece

Producer – Skinnyfish Music Mark Grose

Production Management dplr

Stage Management Erin Daly

Front of House Engineer Guy Smith

Head of Sound & Systems Engineer Cam Elias

Company Manager Mand Markey

First Camera Assistant Scott Wood

ADELAIDE FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

Concertmaster Véronique Serret

Cello soloist Rod McGrath*

Cor anglais Celia Craig

Clarinet & Bass clarinet Samantha Webber

Horn Alex Miller

Trumpet David Khafagi

Trombone Amanda Tillett

Bass Trombone Andrew Ey

Percussion Amanda Grigg, Jamie Adam

Harpichord Aidan Boase, Katrina Reynolds

Violin I Véronique Serret, Belinda Gehlert, Nadia Buck, Liam Pilgrim, Sarah Wozniak, Anna Freer

Violin II Jenny Khafagi, Zsuzsa Leon, Emily Tulloch, Paris Williams, Leah Zweck, Nathan Ellul

Viola Heidi von Bernewitz, Martin Alexander, Natalie Maegraith, Andrew Crothers

Cello Rod McGrath*, Rachel Johnston, Tom Marlin, Sebastian Mansell

Double Bass Sean Renaud, Alana Dawes

*Appears by courtesy of West Australian Symphony orchestra.

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