

**SYDNEY
FESTIVAL**
6-28 JAN 2018



BAMBULA

**PAUL GRABOWSKY AND
THE WILFRED BROTHERS**

PRESENTED BY CITY RECITAL HALL AND SYDNEY FESTIVAL | AUSTRALIA



BAMBULA

PAUL GRABOWSKY AND THE WILFRED BROTHERS

AUSTRALIA

CITY RECITAL HALL
25 JANUARY AT 8PM
65 MINS

CAST

Paul Grabowsky – piano

David Wilfred – yidaki (didjeridu)

Daniel Wilfred – vocal & bilma
(clapsticks)

ABOUT THE WORK

Bambula, like so many words in our rich indigenous languages, means many things. It signifies a ceremonial ground, a sacred site, and the place from which things originate. In the words of Daniel Wilfred, "it is the place where the ancestor's fingers touched the ground".

David and Daniel Wilfred perform ceremony over a wide swathe of S.E. Arnhem Land. The songs they publicly perform, called *manikay*, are portals through space and time, bringing the time of beginnings, that which we call 'Dreamtime', into the here and now.

Over fifteen years, Paul Grabowsky has worked with the Wilfred clan, making the various iterations of *Crossing Roper Bar* with the Australian Art Orchestra, and the award-winning *Nyilipidgi* with the Monash Art Ensemble. These were all performances for ensembles ranging in size from a handful of players to twenty.

Now, with *Bambula*, Grabowsky has reduced the sonic palette down to essentials. The searing, haunting voice of Daniel Wilfred, the masterful *yidaki* playing of David Wilfred, and Grabowsky on the instrument he describes as his 'existential mirror', the piano.

PAUL GRABOWSKY – PIANO

It is difficult to quickly describe Paul Grabowsky's career. He has been a director of some of Australia's most prominent arts festivals, the composer of nearly thirty feature film scores and several works of music theatre, the founder and leader for 19 years of the Australian Art Orchestra, an executive at the ABC, and is currently at Monash University, where he heads up the Academy of Performing Arts. Whether as a composer, teacher, television personality, mentor or advocate for the role of artistic expression as a defining attribute of contemporary life, for him this is all informed by his work as a pianist and composer, particularly in the field of jazz where, according to him, 'the piano never lies'.

His musical journeys have resulted in collaborations with musicians from many countries, not least with the First Nations peoples of Australia, and those journeys continue. Among his many awards are five ARIAs, the Melbourne Prize for Music and an H.C. Coombs Fellowship. In recognition of his achievements he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2014.

DANIEL NGUKKUR BOY WILFRED – VOICE & BILMA (CLAPSTICKS)

Skin name: Wamut

Clan / Language: Wagilak

Born: Nhulunbuy

Daniel is the youngest of the Young Wagilak Group. He is a singer with an exceptional voice who is totally dedicated to the rendition of *manikay*. He studies closely with his Elders, and his teachers include noted song man from Beswick NT, Roy Ashley.

DAVID YIPININY WILFRED – YIDAKI (DIDJERIDU)

Skin name: Burlany

Clan / Language: Ritharrnju

Born: Numbulwar

David is the traditional djungayi (manager) for the *manikay* of the ghost Djuwalpada and the country of Nyilipidgi. David is a Ritharrnju man and his mother was Wagilak.

THE WAGILAK GUDJARRA' / NYILIPIDGI (STONE SPEAR GROUP)

are leaders in the performance of the Wagilak *manikay*, or song series and dance. The Young Wagilak Group is based in Ngukkur, SE Arnhem Land NT, from where they travel to outlying regions to perform their roles in various ceremonial functions

CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Paul Grabowsky and David and Daniel Wilfred would like to thank the Australian Art Orchestra

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