



AUSTRALIAN ART ORCHESTRA/

Hand to Earth

A call to open ears - eluding genre, traversing continents,
and fusing ancient and contemporary



With an emphasis on improvisation, the Australian Art Orchestra (AAO) explores the meeting points between disciplines and cultures, and imagines new musical forms to reflect the energy and diversity of 21st century Australia. The AAO constantly seeks to stretch genres and break down the barriers between disciplines, forms and cultures. It explores the interstices between the avant-garde and the traditional, between art and popular music, between electronic and acoustic approaches, and creates music that traverse the continuum between improvised and notated forms.

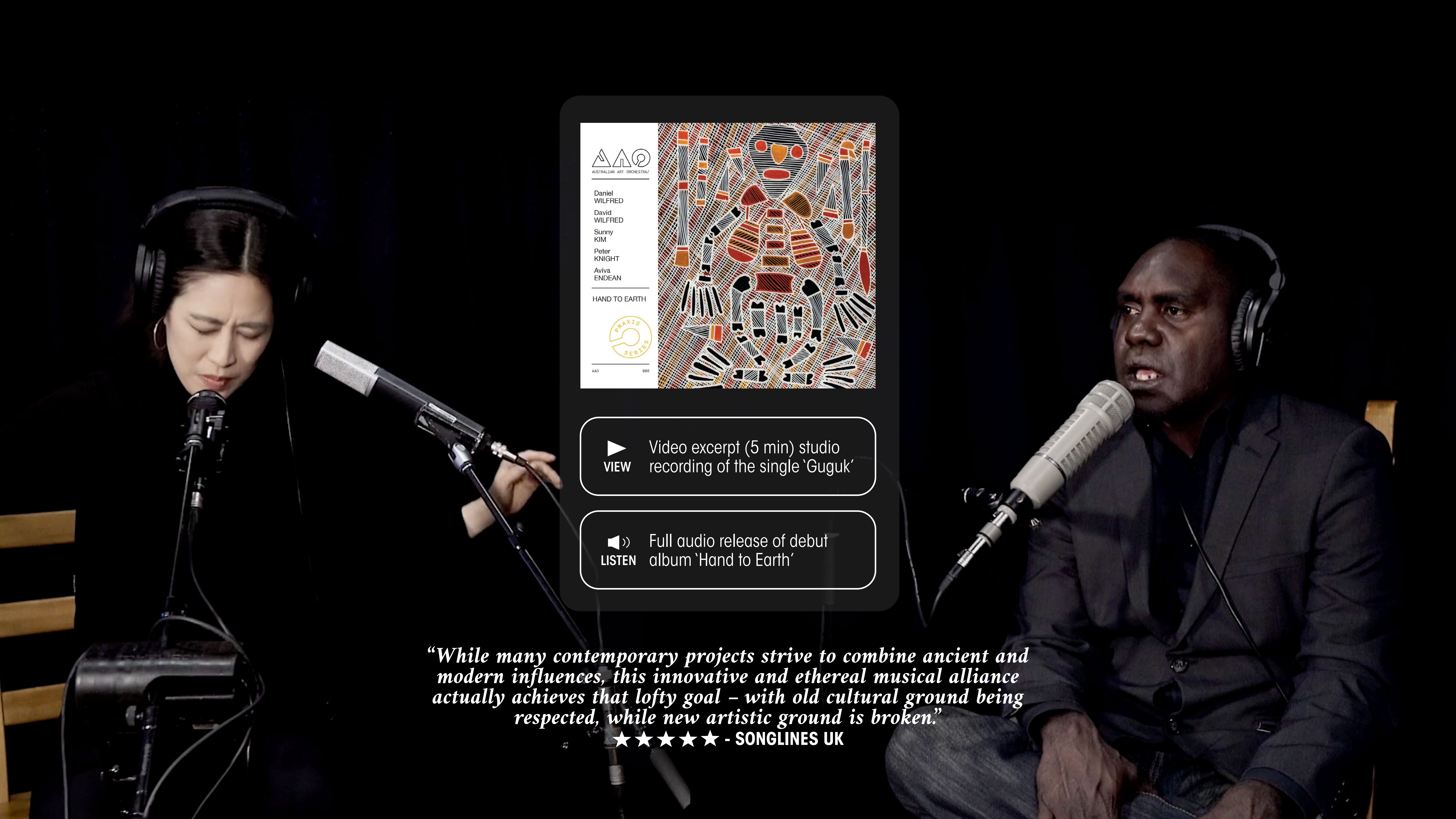
Hand to Earth developed during an Australia Art Orchestra residency in the remote highlands of Tasmania. Yolgnu songman, Daniel Wilfred, and Korean vocalist, Sunny Kim, formed an effortless rapport that spans continents and cultures and yet expresses a deeply human commonality. Their vocal approaches are melded into the electronic atmospheres created by trumpeter and composer, Peter Knight, who draws on the minimalism of Brian Eno and Jon Hassell to create a bed for these beautifully contrasting voices.


Daniel sings in language, and is the keeper of Yolgnu manikay (songs) from North East Arnhem Land that can be traced back for over 40,000 years. His is the oldest continuously practised music tradition in the world Sunny sings in English and Korean, and intones wordless gestures that invoke raw elemental forces. Together they sing of the stars, of fire, and of the cooling rain, against the sounds of Peter Knight's trumpet and electronic crackles.

Hand to Earth expresses something of the here and now in music, and represents contemporary Australia at its best: sophisticated, inclusive, diverse, and forward looking.

“The AAO has flourished in a plethora of configurations as it continuously chips away at the barriers between disciplines and cultures, navigates the path between improvised and notated forms, arriving at music that sounds like something new.”


JAZZWISE UK





AUSTRALIAN ART ORCHESTRA


Daniel WILFRED
David WILFRED
Sunny KIM
Peter KNIGHT
Aviva ENDEAN

HAND TO EARTH


PRAXIS SERIES

AAO 008



 Video excerpt (5 min) studio recording of the single 'Guguk'


VIEW

 Full audio release of debut album 'Hand to Earth'

LISTEN

“While many contemporary projects strive to combine ancient and modern influences, this innovative and ethereal musical alliance actually achieves that lofty goal – with old cultural ground being respected, while new artistic ground is broken.”

★★★★★ - SONGLINES UK



Guguk (Bush Dove) is a yuta manikay (new song) composed by Daniel Wilfred in late 2019, and sung in the Wägilak language.

Daniel had a dream in which he died. He saw two birds flying together, a white bird and a black bird. The black bird, a Dhuwa bird called Guguk, stopped to rest in a beautiful place near running water. All the people gathered together to mourn.

Guguk marraliya - Bush dove crying from his head

yuwen - Preening its wings

ṅäthi malamirr - The whole family crying together

Guguk ṅäthi - Bush dove crying [watching over all those who have died, ie. the family across many generations]

yupununmirr malamirr - The whole family gather together [in this place]

Guguk - Bush dove

gu-lu-lu-lu-lu-lu - [the cry of the dove, like the flowing water he sits beside]

Lyrics by Daniel Wilfred



David Wilfred

David Yipiny Wilfred is a Ritharrŋu man, and the traditional djunggayi (manager) of the manikay (songs) of the country of Nyilipidgi. He lives in Ngukurr, NT and teaches song and dance to the children at the Ngukurr School. Together with his family members Daniel and Benjamin Wilfred, he has been playing with the Australian Art Orchestra for almost 15 years, sharing his songs and culture with people around the world. From 2015, David has been a leading faculty member at the Orchestra's Creative Music Intensive.



Sunny Kim

Korean vocalist Sunny Kim is a music lecturer at the University of Melbourne. She's been a frequent collaborator of the AAO since 2015 and has performed and recorded with many internationally renowned musicians such as Ben Monder, Roswell Rudd, Dave Douglas, Trevor Dunn and Pheeroan Aklaff. Prior to her current position in Melbourne, Sunny held various academic positions in South Korea. Sunny has released four records as a leader and a number of albums in collective projects.



Daniel Wilfred

Daniel Wilfred is a Yolŋgu song man from Ngukurr, South East Arnhem Land (NT), and a ceremonial leader for the Wägilak people, singing manikay and playing bilma at ceremonies. His collaboration with the AAO goes back a decade, performing and touring internationally with the project Crossing Roper Bar, as a contributor to projects The Harkening and Seoul Meets Arnhem Land, and as a faculty member of the AAO's annual Creative Music Intensive. In 2019, Daniel was the recipient of the NT Arts Fellowship.



Peter Knight

Peter Knight is a multidisciplinary musician who has gained wide acclaim for his distinctive approach, which integrates jazz, experimental, and world music traditions. In 2013, he was appointed Artistic Director of the Australian Art Orchestra, which features his compositions on an international stage with recent highlights including Jazzfest Berlin, London Jazz Festival, Jazztopad and Melbourne Festival. Peter also composes for theatre, creates sound installations and has his work regularly featured in other ensemble settings.



Aviva Endean

Aviva Endean is a clarinetist, composer, improviser, curator, sound artist, performance-maker and collaborator. Aviva regularly works across a range of contexts including experimental and improvised music, new chamber music, creating theatre works which are designed to be listened to, and working on cross-disciplinary collaborations. Aviva is a frequent collaborator of the AAO and was the inaugural Associate Artist of the AAO's Pathfinder – Leadership Music Program in 2018/2019.



Watch the interviews with
Daniel, Sunny, Peter and David



“In our performances, you’re going to experience friendship. And you’ll hear us share ancient ideas and stories, but told in a way that’s quite contemporary.”

SUNNY KIM

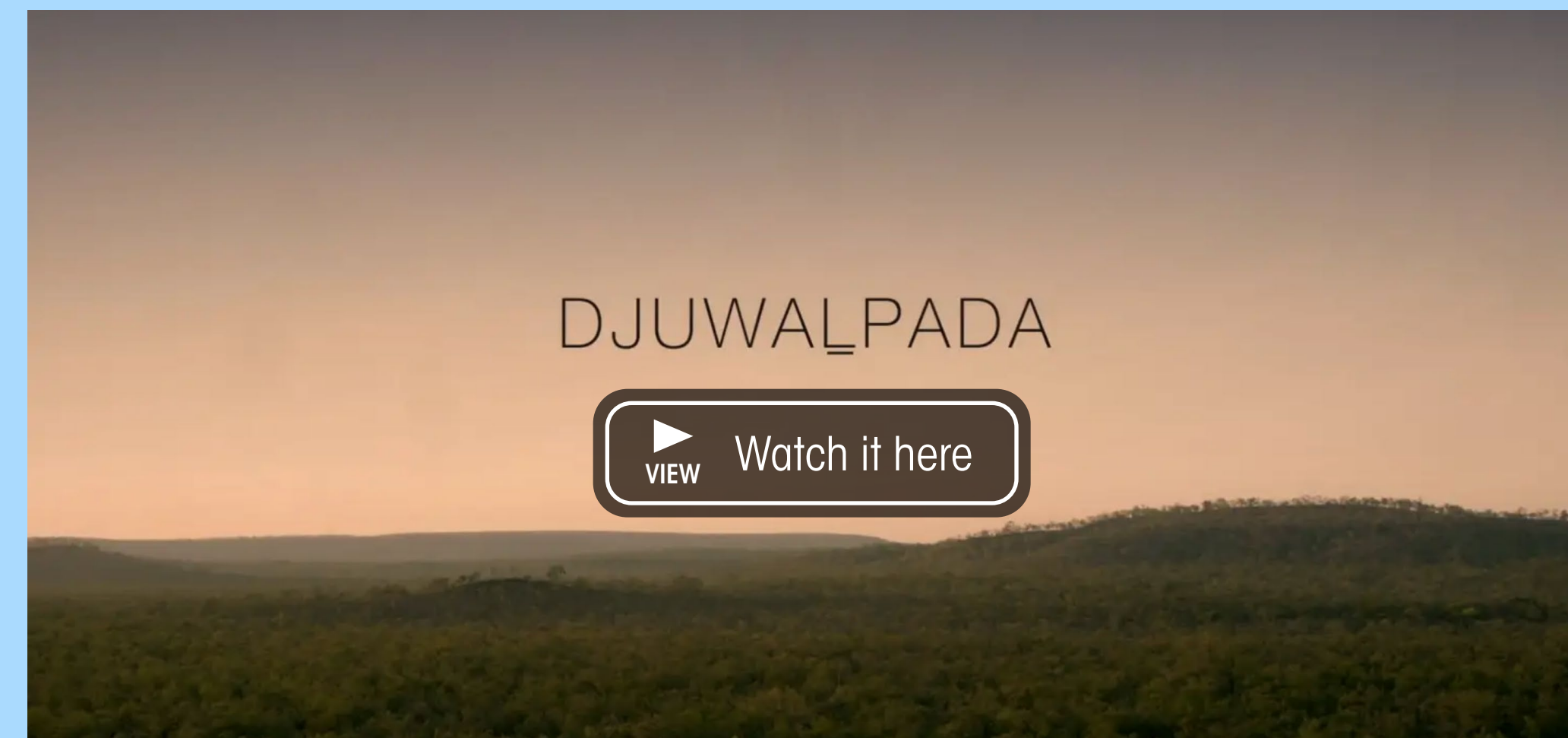




The idea for Hand to Earth was conceived during the Australian Art Orchestra's Creative Music Intensive, held in the starkly beautiful highlands of Tasmania. Each year the Australian Art Orchestra brings together 40 adventurous musicians to learn new approaches to voice, rhythm, and musical interaction - including the extraordinary manikays (songs) of Arnhem Land and musical traditions from Korea.

These approaches to human voice sound very different, but there are many connections: stories, improvisation, a focus on extreme refinement of vocal techniques, and repetitive/hypnotic rhythms.

Daniel Wilfred directed an extraordinary 15-minute film about the experience.



“When art making crosses cultures, when art making bridges things that usually divide us, what you end up with is the essence of human connection.”

PETER KNIGHT

Hand to Earth is quick and easy to bump in, and is able to fit into a wide variety of spaces. Technical requirements are minimal.

PA

- Stereo PA (with subwoofers, system capable of reproducing 30hz to 20khz), providing adequate coverage pattern for venue and sufficient wattage for undistorted reproduction of instruments, electronics and voice
- 5 foldback wedges on separate sends
- Console with graphic EQ on all outputs; system tuned for high gain before feedback (vocal mics, instrument condenser mics)
- Inbuilt or outboard FX rack with reverbs, delays etc

Stage Equipment/Backline:

- Chairs with no armrests (1 per performer)
- Small black-draped table for Electronics Setup approx 700 x 450mm
- 16" Floor Tom on legs

Lighting:

- Tasteful low stage wash throughout - no moving gobos or colour chases

Mics:

- Equivalent substitutions welcome

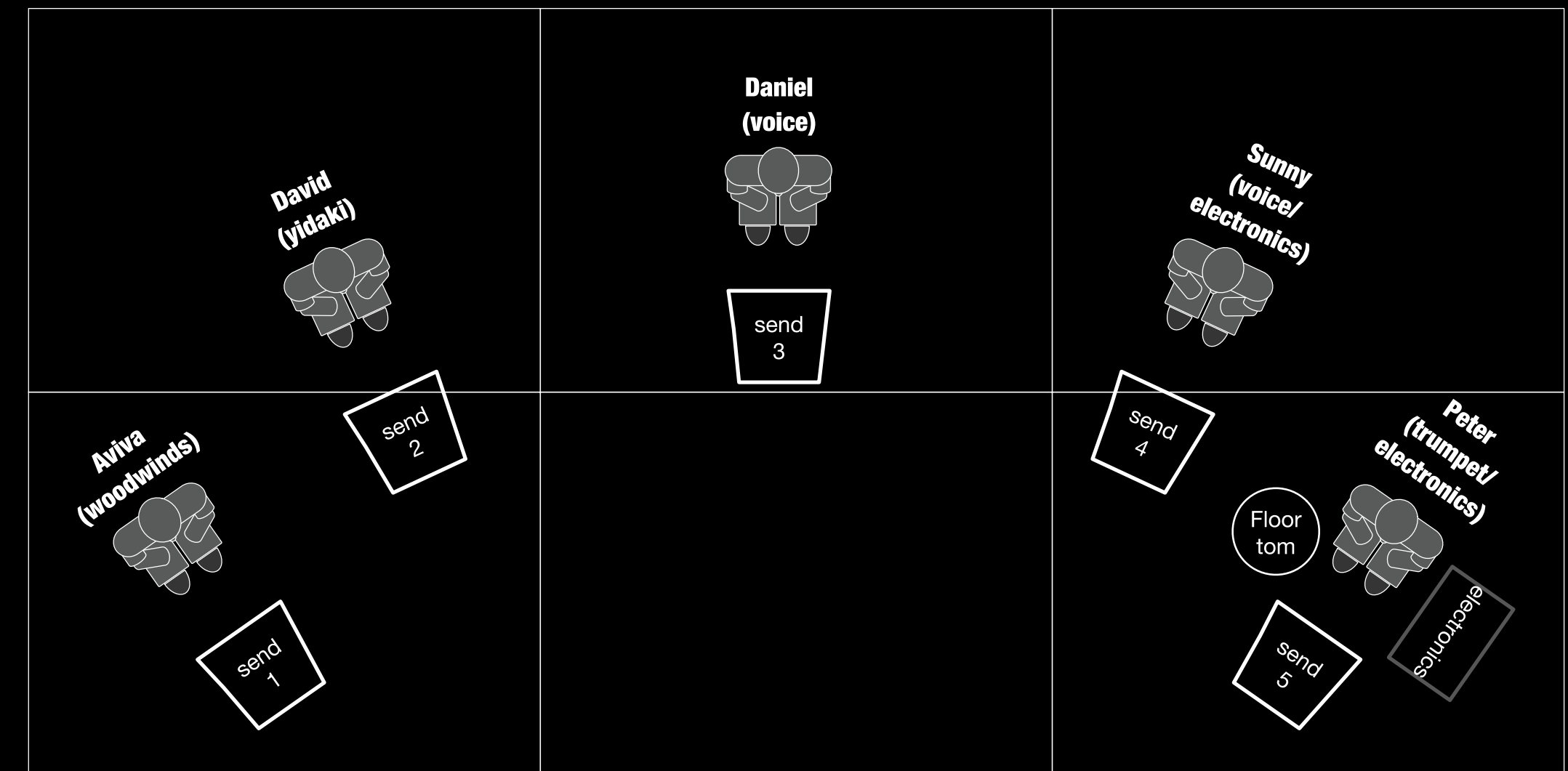
Video (optional):

- Full HD 7000+ Lumens (or power appropriate to venue)
- Projection Screen 16:9 ratio (4.6m diagonal or more)

Touring Party:

- 5 musicians
- 2 crew

7200 x 3600 minimum stage size



Input List and Tech Specs - AAO "Hand To Earth"

Performer	Instrument	Source	Mic/DI	Alternative
David Wilfred	Yidaki	Mic	Shure SM58 (on shot bag)	-
Daniel Wilfred	Voice	Mic	Shure Beta 87A	Shure SM58
Sunny Kim	Voice	Mic	Sennheiser MD431	Shure SM58 w/ switch
		Xfmr isolated split	XLR-F	-
	Electronics	Left Output 1/4"	DI	-
		Right Output 1/4"	DI	-
	Frame Drum	Mic	Shure SM57	-
Aviva Edean	Woodwinds	Hand-level mic	Neumann KM184	AKG C451
		Bell-level mic	Neumann KM184	AKG C451
		Pickup (BCL)	+48v XLR-F	-
		Pickup (Bb Clari)	+48v XLR-F	-
		Flute/other inst p/up	DI	-
Peter Knight	Trumpet	Mic	Beyer M88	EV RE20
	Electronics	Electronics L	KT/Radial DI	DI
		Electronics R	KT/Radial DI	DI
	Floor Tom	Mic	Shure SM57	-
	Speech	Mic	w/less handheld mic	Shure SM58

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their ongoing connection to the land and water. The music of Australia's First Peoples has deeply influenced the evolution of the Australian Art Orchestra, and we extend our respects to their ancestors and elders past, present and emerging.

If you have any questions about touring, budgets, tech specs or marketing, please get in touch with Liz Rogers, Performing Arts Manager at Artback NT, performing@artbacknt.com.au, who will be coordinating the Hand to Earth tour, or AAO Executive Producer Rosemary Willink, rosemary@ao.com.au.

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