

PROJECT REPORT



wantokmusik.org | info@wantokmusik.org

For more than two decades the Wantok Musik Foundation has been building relationships, crucial connections, friendships and trust across the Pacific. Our vision is to bring attention to the richness and vibrancy of our Oceania region through the sharing of music, art and culture.

Over this time we have consolidated our position as a trusted partner. Connecting, developing, and producing innovative cultural expressions that bring together Australia and broader Oceania.

We are an organisation unlike any other in Australia or the Oceania region.

The scope of our work and our impact over the past 21 years is unparalleled.

In a world full of change and challenge, we support and showcase an Oceania that is ancient, diverse, culturally and artistically rich with sounds, colour and stories that are worth preserving.

We start at grassroots, build respect, develop trust and we're always asked back.

We believe we are not just Australians but members of a larger Oceania community.



This overall impact report uses a method of assessment that we believe allows us to truly demonstrate impact beyond solely quantitative and economic measures. Many current frameworks and assessment tools used for measuring arts and cultural engagement utilise quantitative frames and focus.

We find fitting our impact into traditional frameworks can be limiting and flatten the purpose and meaning of arts engagement. A quantitative focused assessment is unable, in many cases, to represent true impacts such as improved connections, wellbeing, knowledge creation and knowledge extension, pride in culture and community, and enhanced understanding of the importance of place.

Further, most evaluations are one-sided -

► **‘What impact did the art have on the audience/viewer/listening?’**

We believe that it is equally important to report on the reverse impact -

► **‘What impact did the creation of the art have on the artist?’**

A strong example of this can be found in the report about Uncle Frank Yamma. Uncle Frank is a Pitjantjatjara man who has been writing songs and performing since he was in his teens. He has lived a storied life, and through his adulthood has relied on his raw talent, musicianship and determination to support his wellbeing.

Uncle Frank sings in his mother tongue and through the support and commitment of the Wantok team we have seen Uncle Frank’s songs - in Pitjantjatjara - taken up by school choirs, used for Tourism Australia campaigns, placed in films and TV and shared in many countries around the world.

Uncle Frank’s powerful voice captivates audiences who walk away emotionally charged and absorbed in the moment.

The impact of witnessing Uncle Frank perform goes beyond the moment of the performance to touch people’s lives and have a lasting influence. We can measure this quantitatively by bums on seats at a live event or CDs sold, but the impact goes beyond measurement.

For Uncle Frank, the team at Wantok are committed to continue to support his career, and to find opportunities to improve Uncle Frank’s income and support his, and his family’s wellbeing.



We model our impact evaluation on the work by Alan Brown and Jennifer Novak-Leonard (2013) and organisationally refer to three pertinent reference questions:

- ▶ **What is the value my organisation brings to the artists and communities we work alongside?**
- ▶ **What is the value my organisation brings that is unique and specific to artists and communities better than anyone else?**
- ▶ **How would our community be impacted if we closed our doors and went away tomorrow?**

We work hard to support our artists and their family and communities, and equally, we are committed to providing an avenue for authentic cultural connections and shared pride in our region.

We know that the sense of connectedness that can emerge from arts experiences both in an individual sense (with regard to self-understanding and identify) and in a community sense (with regard to community pride, including gaining an understanding of people different to yourself) is a sure way to break down barriers and bring us together.

Individual and collective arts experiences are the building blocks upon which the larger outcomes of the arts experiences, such as social cohesion and community connections are founded.

We are proud to share this snapshot of some of our projects and artists and we hope you find value in our work.



MAUBERE TIMOR: SONGS OF HOPE AND RESISTANCE FROM TIMOR LESTE

► The Maubere Timor project aimed to document and share the songs written by members of the resistance known as FALINTIL during foreign occupation in Timor-Leste, from 1975 to 2002. During this difficult and violent period, the Timorese used music as an important form of communication with the outside world. The songs inspired younger generations and the Timorese diaspora to continue the fight for independence. The project was led by Timorese and Australian-Timorese musicians and facilitated by the Wantok Musik Foundation. The project received support from the Prime Minister's Office for Veteran Affairs, Timor Leste.

► PROJECT GOALS:

The principal goals of the project were to preserve the cultural heritage of Timor-Leste, empower the Timorese people, and educate future generations about the country's history and struggle for independence. Additionally, the project aimed to increase international dialogue and connection by raising cultural awareness and encouraging interest in Timor-Leste among Australians and other international communities, thereby contributing to improved inter-regional relations.

► ACTIVITIES:

- Recording of 12 songs by 15 musicians from Timor Leste and Australia
- Production of an album (physical CD and digital)
- Production of a film clip
- Distribution and promotion of the album
- Live performances of the songs

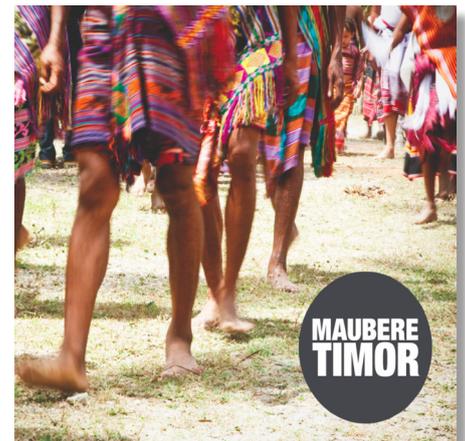
► OUTCOMES:

- Performance of the songs to approximately 7,000 people at large scale events and festivals including Womadelaide, Brunswick Ballroom and Port Fairy Folk Festival
- Over 50,000 views of Maubere Timor Youtube videos
- Album reviews in Sydney Morning Herald, Al Jazeera,
- Radio play on SBS, ABC Radio National, Transglobal Radio Europe, Radio Liberdade, Fidi FM and many community radio stations around Australia
- Coverage on SBS TV, BBC4, and GMN TV on RTTL Timor Leste TV

► IMPACT:

The project's impact is significant in terms of cultural preservation and empowerment. By preserving the songs of national liberation, the project ensures that Timorese cultural heritage is not lost to time. The project also empowers the Timorese people by celebrating their history and culture, which serves to strengthen identity and promote unity and peace.

Secondly, the project strengthened international ties by connecting musicians from Timor Leste with musicians and audiences in Australia and Portugal. The project raised cultural awareness and encouraged interest in Timor-Leste amongst the arts community and cultural consumers in Australia and Portugal. Overall, the project strengthened ties between Australia and Timor-Leste.



STRENGTHENING CULTURAL INDUSTRIES AND CONNECTIONS IN SOLOMON ISLANDS AND THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF BOUGAINVILLE

► SOLOMON ISLANDS, 2023:

Working in conjunction with DFAT and the Australian High Commission, the Wantok Musik Foundation coordinated a ten-day program of concerts and workshops in Solomon Islands, connecting Australia and Oceania through music, dance and art.

► ACTIVITIES:

- Workshops over five days with young people in Honiara on performance, songwriting and music publishing in Honiara and Gizo.
- Development of a music and dance performance with young people from Dreamcast Theatre, Honiara.
- Competition for young musicians to submit original music for a chance to perform at the Wantok Musik Concert.
- The Wantok Musik Concert: a festival event featuring prominent First Nation Australian, Papua New Guinean and Solomon Islander performers, including David Bridie (AUS), Charles Maimarosia (SI), Tjupurru (First Nations Australian), Kaumaakonga (SI), Poppy (PNG) and young people from Dreamcast Theatre.
- Ongoing mentorship of competition winners.



► AUTONOMOUS REGION OF BOUGAINVILLE (AROB), 2022-23:

In partnership with DFAT in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (AROB), the Wantok Musik Foundation coordinated a series of youth music development activities in October 2022 to March 2023.

► ACTIVITIES:

- Two weeks of workshops by First Nation Australian artists Tjupurru and Jake Fabila and acclaimed PNG musician Richard Mogu with six young village-based musicians in Buka, selected for participation through winning the local Voice XPlosion competition. Workshop topics covered included: Cultural ownership and copyright, social media, career paths for cultural music and recording advice.
- Tjupurru, Jake Fabila and Richard Mogu mentored the young people to write and record a song and develop an accompanying video. The song, called Wan Solwara, was written and recorded in Tok Pisin language and English and speaks to themes of unity and coming together to overcome obstacles.
- A concert featuring Voice XPlosion performers and the debut performance of Wan Solwara.
- Creation of accompanying artwork by local artist Simon Gende.
- Release, distribution and promotion of the song 'Wan Solwara' in March 2023.
- NAIDOC Week performances - free community event.
- Film clip shooting at live event.

► PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

- Create links between artists in Australia (particularly First Nations artists), Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.
- Build capacity and music industry knowledge among young Melanesian musicians.
- Encourage language and culture retention by providing high profile concert platforms and demonstrating the value of culturally-infused music and dance.
- Provide examples of cultural events that can be further explored to strengthen cultural tourism in the region.
- Promote unity and connection between groups within Melanesian countries and between Australia and Solomon Islands, PNG and AROB.

► PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- Fifty artists were connected and involved in cultural exchange, including artists from First Nations Australia, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.
- Ninety-six young people were engaged in cultural activities and built skills in songwriting, performance and music industry knowledge (50 in Honiara, 40 in Gizo, 6 in AROB)
- Hundreds of people attended performances that highlighted culturally-infused music and dance and showcased the use of language
- Over 10,000 views of the Wan Solwara video on social media

► KEY PROJECT FEEDBACK:

“Honiara has been through a lot of battles and scars in the past years, from the recent riots to the pandemic... and at times we forgot what it was like to truly have unity and calmness. The Wantok Musik Concert reminded us of a different calmness, one that will last forever. This was not just an entertainment. This was a healing to the soul.”

- journalist Regina Lepping in response to the DFAT Wantok cultural collaboration, Jan 2023.

“The workshops in Gizo and Honiara provided Solomon Islands musicians with the opportunity to learn from the world’s foremost producer of Melanesian music artists, David Bridie and his team. (The concert) was a celebration of music, art and culture as musicians from Australia and Solomon Islands came together to share their unique music the Wantok Musik Concert. A massive thank you to those who made the event possible.”

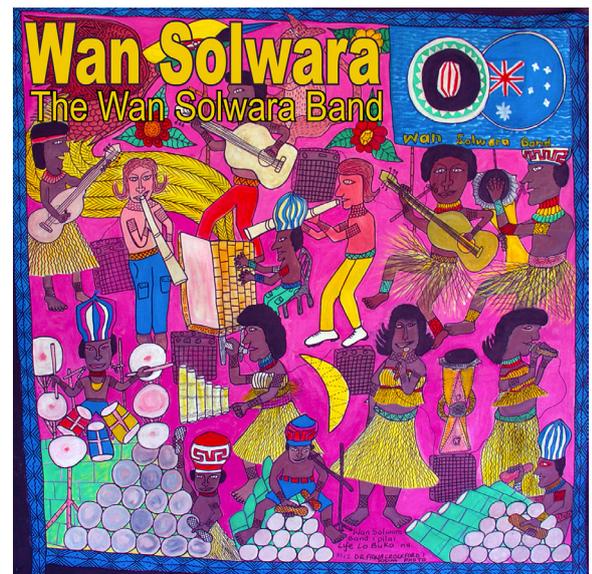
- Australian High Commission, Solomon Islands.

“The Australian High Commission in Port Moresby is pleased to endorse the exceptional cultural diplomacy work undertaken by Wantok Musik in Papua New Guinea (PNG), and its commitment to celebrating the shared connections, cultural heritage and histories between Australia and our close neighbours in the Pacific...The High Commission commends the commitment of Mr Bridie and Wantok Musik to developing the creativity and talent of Australian Indigenous musicians and nurturing young artists across the Indo-Pacific.”

- Dr Anthony Mason, Acting Counsellor, Bougainville and Kokoda Section, Australian High Commission Port Moresby.

“I had goosebumps seeing this video. Beautifully created with a view of traditional dances that sways to beat of the music. Beautiful Bougainville culture exposed in this contemporary music video.”

- One of many examples of positive comments to the Wan Solwara video on social media.



and cultural perspectives at

A BIT NA TA: DOCUMENTING AND SHARING THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE GUNANTUNA PEOPLE, EAST NEW BRITAIN, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The A Bit na Ta project was a 5-year initiative (2015-2020) aimed at documenting and sharing the history and culture of the Gunantuna (Tolai) people of Rabaul, East New Britain, Papua New Guinea (PNG). It highlights the Gunantuna community's capacity to survive the disruptions of the shifting colonial powers, war, volcanic eruptions and independence struggles that marked the century from 1875 to 1975. The project involved historians, artists and musicians from the Gunantuna community and supported by representatives from the arts community from Australia and Port Moresby. The project was conducted in partnership with the Wantok Musik Foundation. It received funding from the Australian Government through the Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and was auspiced by the Queensland Museum of Art.

► OBJECTIVES:

- To document the songs, stories and dances of the Gunantuna people by providing a platform for prominent elders to consolidate their immense knowledge and translate it into a format that is accessible and engaging to audiences within and outside PNG.
- To contribute to the longevity and sense of value around these unique culture expressions by sharing the resulting recordings with young people around PNG.
- To encourage international interest in PNG culture and bolster the country's reputation and position in the region as a cultural leader, thereby contributing to a sense of pride within PNG and taking steps towards positioning the country as a destination of interest for cultural tourism.

► ACTIVITIES:

- Over 200 audio recordings of Gunantuna musicians in 17 villages.
- Interviews with several Gunantuna elders.
- Production, distribution and promotion of a CD of the recorded cultural songs and stories.
- An art installation involving video projections onto soft textured barkcloth and immersive sound pieces.
- A documentary film about the history and culture of the Gunantuna people, told from their own perspective.
- Original compositions for the art installation and documentary film written by George Telek, David Bridie, Gilnata Stringband, Moab Stringband, Sikut Matupit Choir and other local groups.
- Live performances featuring the original songs, video projections and recorded interviews.
- Archiving of footage and audio recordings at PNG National Museum and Arts Gallery and the University of Sydney under the guidance of Steven Gagau and shared publicly on the Rabaul Historical Society Facebook site to ensure they remain available for the people of PNG and the international community into the future.



► KEY PERSONNEL:

► GIDEON KAKABIN (Cultural Historian)

The late Gideon Kakabin, from Nangananga and Vunamurmur villages, was a historian who focused his research on the history and the culture of his people, the Gunantuna of East New Britain.

► GEORGE TELEK (Singer/Songwriter)

A Papuan New Guinean musical icon and international artist, George Telek is known to his legion of fans in Papua New Guinea, has long been at the forefront of the PNG music scene. Telek comes from the village of Raluana, near Rabaul in the Papua New Guinean island province of East New Britain.

► DAVID BRIDIE (Artistic Director)

David Bridie is a multi-award-winning contemporary musician. David rose to prominence in the critically acclaimed band Not Drowning, Waving. One of the world's foremost producers of Melanesian music, David co-established a not-for-profit music label, the Wantok Musik Foundation in 2002.

► LISA HILLI (Visual Artist)

Born in Rabaul, Lisa Hilli is a descendent of the Gunantuna people of Papua New Guinea. Lisa's artistic practice explores ideas surrounding her Papua New Guinean and Australian identity, cultural histories and materiality.

► KEITH DEVERELL (Video Artist)

Keith Deverell is a Melbourne based video artist who also has a professional background in installation design and data visualisation. Keith's video installations have been installed in both the Melbourne Laneways Commission, 2009, and the Melbourne International Arts Festival, 2010.

► NAO ANZAI (Surround Sound)

Born in Japan and now based in Australia, Nao Anzai has since the early 1990s created and installed many surround sound projects. He has worked predominantly for installations with multi projection and multichannel surround sound audio.



a Bit na Ta

**moving image on tapa cloth
Tolai song and soundscape**

George Telek (Musician)
David Bridie (Artistic Director)
The late Gideon ToBeovaira Kakabin (Cultural Historian)

with Lisa Hilli (Visual Artist), Keith Deverell (Video Artist) &
Nao Anzai (Surround Sound)

showing at the PNG National Museum & Art Gallery
From 5 April
Opening hours:
Monday - Saturday: 9am - 3pm
Sunday: 1pm - 3pm

   **CREATIVE VICTORIA**

www.wantokmusik.org | www.museumpng.gov.pg/

▶ **OUTCOMES:**

CD album of cultural songs and stories

- ▶ 5 star review in Songlines Magazine (UK)
- ▶ 4 star review in The Age newspaper
- ▶ Global radio play

▶ **Art installation**

- ▶ Exhibited by Queensland Museum of Art for three months as part of the No. 1 Neighbour Exhibition. ▶ Exhibited at the PNG National Museum and Arts Gallery for three months, with over 6000 people attending
- ▶ Exhibited at Rautenstrauch-Jost Cologne, Germany
- ▶ Exhibited at Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Art, as part of WAWA Art in the contemporary Pacific, for four months
- ▶ Exhibited at Melbourne Museum for four months
- ▶ Review of the exhibition on The Conversation website

▶ **Documentary film**

- ▶ Screened at Pasifica Film Festival
- ▶ Screened for communities in nine villages in East New Britain
- ▶ Copies given to 25 PNG schools to be used a part of cultural education curriculum
- ▶ **Live performance of original music**
- ▶ Commonwealth Games Gold Coast 2018
- ▶ Supporting Midnight Oil
- ▶ Womadelaide 2018
- ▶ Walking with Spirits Festival, Malkgulumbu



▶ **KEY FEEDBACK:**

“A Bit na Ta is history told from the ground up. It is set to local rhythms and perspectives and is deeply affecting.”

- Helen Gardner, The Conversation, 2018.

“The musical highlight of the festival...is the world premiere of Songs from A Bit na Ta... their blend of Tolai tradition and synth/guitar ambience suspends time.”

- Michael Dwyer, The Guardian newspaper review of a live performance of the project at the Walking with Spirits Festival, 2018.

“Watching and listening to A Bit na Ta... you will be transported to Rabaul and will learn about the history, the landscape, the people and the music...it’s an exotic window into another world, that of our closest neighbour.”

- Phil Brown, Sydney Morning Herald.

“This is a beautifully produced and packaged presentation...both artistically and educationally, it’s the epitome of what a successful collaboration ought to be.”

- Songlines Magazine, Issue 125.

WANTOK MUSIK FOUNDATION: EMPOWERING FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS AND COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE POWER OF MUSIC

Wantok Musik Foundation is a dynamic organisation committed to fostering cultural understanding, language expression, and connection to Indigenous culture through the power of music.

The collaborations between Wantok and Emily Wurramara, Frank Yamma, Radical Son (David Leha), Black Rock Band and Kutcha Edwards have had profound impacts that extend beyond music releases.

Through their music and artistic endeavours, these artists have made significant contributions to understanding, language expression, and connection to culture.

The following artists' albums are supported and released on Wantok Musik.

► FRANK YAMMA

Frank Yamma's music is a profound insight into the history, richness and challenges of First Nations Australians.

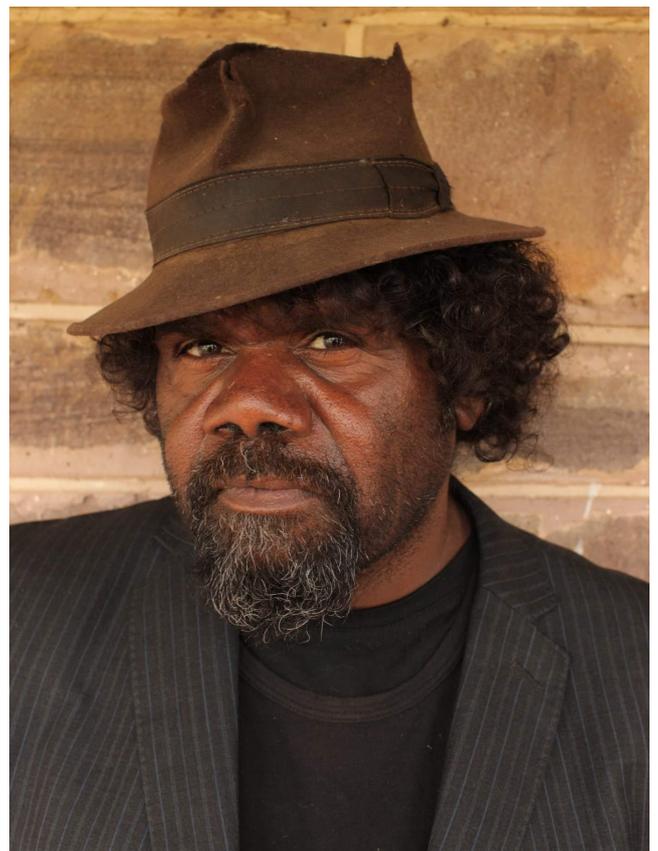
Singing in both English and Pitjantjatjara, Frank actively contributes to the preservation of his heritage, not only captivating audiences worldwide but also having a profound social impact, fostering reconciliation, cross-cultural understanding, and the preservation of indigenous cultures.

By transcending boundaries and embracing cultural diversity, his music becomes a unifying force that celebrates the shared human experience, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of indigenous traditions among a broader audience.

► CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION:

► Frank's performances have played a pivotal role in significant global events promoting reconciliation, including performances at WOMAD London, Canada, Spain, Slovenia, Germany and the Czech Republic as well as a performance at the London's 2012 Cultural Olympiad before the Olympic Games.

► He has been actively involved in South Australia's apology breakfast over the past few years, an event dedicated to commemorating the national apology to the Stolen Generation. Of late, his performances and connection with audiences have reached new levels; standing ovations at the National Folk Festival and incendiary performances at the Desert Festival and Kalkarindji being highlights.





- ▶ Frank collaborated with Midnight Oil on the Makaratta Project, an initiative focused on promoting Indigenous reconciliation and justice. His involvement in this project emphasising his commitment to using music as a platform for social change and raising awareness about important issues.
- ▶ Throughout his career, Frank Yamma has worked with renowned artists such as David Bridie, William Barton, Rob Hirst and Buffy Sainte-Marie, exemplifying his ability to connect and inspire artists from different backgrounds and genres, fostering artistic dialogue and cross-pollination of ideas.
- ▶ Through collaborations with artists from Papua New Guinea, West Papua, and Timor-Leste, Frank has bridged cultural divides with his inclusive approach instrumental in promoting mutual respect and understanding between diverse communities.
- ▶ The Ernabella Choir, comprised of young children, has taken Frank's songs and made them their own. Their performances of his compositions showcase the enduring impact and cultural relevance of his music, even among younger generations. Through the Ernabella Choir, Frank's work continues to inspire and uplift communities, ensuring that his legacy will be carried forward for years to come.

▶ **FILM AND TELEVISION:**

- ▶ Frank's music has found its way into the hearts of audiences through its inclusion in various films and television shows. One of his standout tracks, 'She Cried,' has been featured multiple times.
- ▶ His music was prominently featured on the soundtrack for Amnesty International's Soundtrack for Reconciliation release and the soundtrack for 'Satellite Boy'.
- ▶ He featured prominently in Hettie Perkins journey into the world of Aboriginal art on ABC TV's 'Art and Soul,' television series, playing a vital role in raising awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal art and culture.
- ▶ His music is currently being used as part of Tourism Australia's global marketing campaign.

▶ **AWARD-WINNING DISCOGRAPHY:**

- ▶ Frank Yamma's remarkable discography showcases his immense talent and impact on the music industry. His albums, including 'Playing with Fire' (1999), 'Countryman' (2010), 'Uncle' (2014) and 'Tjukurpa: The Story' (2020) have garnered critical acclaim, international recognition, and prestigious awards.

Notable among these is his collaboration with Piranpa on the album 'Playing with Fire,' which won the Deadly Award for Album Release of the Year in 1999.

- ▶ In 2005, Frank was honored with the Best Original Song Composed for a Feature Film, Telemovie, TV Series, or Mini-Series at the APRA Awards for his song 'Pitjantjara' from 'The Alice.' He also received The 2015 AIR Award for Best Independent Country Album for his album 'Uncle'.
- ▶ His contributions to the music industry, his advocacy for social change, and his ability to connect with diverse communities have solidified his place as a cultural icon and an ambassador for First Nations Australians.

Through his profound and evocative music, Frank Yamma continues to inspire audiences and leave a lasting legacy of cultural understanding and unity.

► **RADICAL SON (DAVID LEHA)**

From the Kamilaroi nation of Australia and the South Pacific nation of Tonga, Radical Son (David Leha) is a powerhouse artist hailing with a mesmerising voice and an undeniable stage presence.

His music takes you on a transformative journey, offering uncompromising visions and thought-provoking lyrics that resonate deep within.

► **CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION:**

Radical Son's music is not only a unique sonic experience but also a cultural contribution of immense significance.

He seamlessly blends hip-hop roots with soulful social statements, providing a unique and authentic voice that reflects his Indigenous heritage.

Through his music, Radical Son sheds light on the struggles, triumphs, and experiences of his community, fostering cultural understanding and bridging gaps between different cultures.



► **IMPACT BEYOND MUSIC RELEASES:**

► Radical Son is deeply committed to a wide range of community and cultural initiatives, actively working towards positive change and empowerment.

► Through his contributions, he uplifts communities, encourages healing, and fosters dialogue and understanding.

► From his involvement in the Gamarada Indigenous Men's Self Healing Program to the Please Help Our Homeless Campaign and the Community Ice Forum, he consistently engages with initiatives that address important social issues.

► He has been involved in the Jimmy Little Foundation as a mentor and MC and was lead artist and cultural guide for the Yanaya Project at the Human Rights Law Centre, an artist-led music and language revitalisation project that uses rhythm and rhyme to create intergenerational connections within families.

► He was actively involved in the Pilbara Creative and Cultural Forum, Community Prophets, and prison workshops with the Archie Roach Foundation, nurturing artistic talent and promoting cultural expression within communities.



► NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS:

Radical Son's dynamic performances have left audiences spellbound at festivals and venues across Australia. From WOMADelaide to the Archie Roach Memorial Concert at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl, his captivating stage presence and emotional delivery resonate deeply with those in attendance. He has headlined sold-out shows and performed at Port Fairy Folk Festival, Brunswick Music Festival, Sydney Festival, Parrtjima and Bluesfest.

Showing his versatility as a performer, he was cast in the Helpmann Award winning stage production of 'The Rabbits' and 'Into the Bloodstream', as well as performing the lead role of Pemulwuy in the stage production of 'I am Eora'.

His film credits include Defining Moments, a six part documentary series produced and screened by NITV that explores the profound experiences defining our life-path.

As Radical Son prepares to release his highly anticipated new album "Bilambiyal (The Learning)," featuring the lead single "Elder," the world eagerly awaits another chapter in his musical journey.

With his unwavering commitment to cultural understanding, community empowerment, and artistry, Radical Son continues to make an indelible impact, leaving an enduring legacy that transcends music.

EMILY WURRAMARA



Emily Wurramara, an award-winning and critically acclaimed Indigenous artist, has made significant contributions to the cultural landscape through her music, advocacy, and community engagement. Hailing from Groote Eylandt in the Northern Territory, Emily's powerful voice and meaningful lyrics have resonated with audiences worldwide, while her commitment to empowering women and preserving language and culture has made a lasting impact.

► CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION:

Emily Wurramara's music serves as a bridge between cultures, showcasing both English and Anindilyakwa languages. Her ability to communicate profound emotions and experiences through her songs has deepened cultural understanding among diverse audiences and she has actively engaged in projects and initiatives that promote cultural preservation and empowerment.

She has and continues to use her platform to advocate for Indigenous rights and address social issues. Working in Papua New Guinea with local musician Mereani Masani, the pair collaborated on the song 'No Moa' (No More), a powerful track calling for an end to violence against women and girls.

Notably, Emily participated in the 'Inspiring Indigenous Women' project, a video produced by the Department of Communications and the Arts Australia to celebrate the International Year

of Indigenous Languages in 2019. She has also collaborated with the Queensland Art Gallery, mentoring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students through the 'Design Tracks' annual residency program.

Furthermore, Emily has supported AWMA Youth, an initiative by the Australian Women in Music Awards aimed at fostering young women in the music industry and inspiring systemic change.

Her involvement in these projects demonstrates her commitment to nurturing the next generation of Indigenous artists and leaders.

► NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCES:

► Emily has released three albums to date 'Black Smoke,' (2016), 'Milyakburra' (2018) and 'Ayarra Emeba (Calm Songs)' (2022).

► She has also collaborated on 'Yuwani' with Mambali Band, 'Laughing Buddha' with Chong Ali, and 'Black Boy' with Flewnt.

► She has also made non-single album appearances with songs like 'Black Boy' on Deadly Hearts (2017) and 'Get Back to the Land' with DRMNGNOW on Deadly Hearts: Walking Together (2020).

► In 2022, she worked with the Wiggles, contributing the song 'Dressing Up' to the album ReWiggled.

► Her standout songs 'Lady Blue' and 'Black Smoke,' have received millions of streams on platforms like Spotify and gained airplay on prominent radio stations.

► She has shared the stage with iconic artists such as Archie Roach, Mavis Staples, and John Farnham and her extensive touring across Australia and international showcases in places like Chicago, New York, and Paris have allowed her to connect with audiences worldwide and spread her message of cultural pride and resilience.

► Other notable performances include Woodford Folk Festival, Bluesfest, TEDX Sydney, GARMA, and Port Fairy Folk Festival and International Folk Alliance showcases in Kansas, Canada, and New Orleans.



► AWARDS:

Emily's contributions to the music industry have been recognised with numerous awards.

She is a six-time winner of the Queensland Music Award, she has won three National Indigenous Music Awards and has been nominated for several ARIA and AIR Awards.

She was nominated for the 2022 Environmental Music Prize and has a pending nomination for this year's award with her song 'Lady Blue' as well as a pending nomination at this year's AIR Awards for best independent Children's Album and

Her album 'Milyakburra' won the Best Independent Blues and Roots Album at the AIR Awards in 2019.

Black Rock Band, led by front man Richie Guymala, has created a powerful platform for advocating cultural understanding and justice through their high energy music. The band are Bininj People from Jabiru in Western Arnhem Land.

Their contributions go beyond the realm of music releases, showcasing their commitment to uplifting their community and fostering cultural pride.

Through a range of notable achievements, awards, and captivating performances, Black Rock Band has become a powerful voice for First Nations people, calling for unity, justice and preservation of their land, language, and culture.

► CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION:

► Richie has emerged as a respected spokesman for his people, appearing in documentaries, television shows, and radio programs across Australia.

► He works to bridge the gap between the two different worlds in which he lives with their most recent album “Identity” serving as a testament to their mission, addressing issues

of racial and climate justice while highlighting the importance of protecting and maintaining Indigenous culture.

► Songs like Red, Black and Yellow with the lyrics, ‘We are one human race, so let’s walk this road together’ are an insight into Richie’s desire to bring harmony through music.



► NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS:

► Their song ‘Modjarrkki’ has been chosen as the soundtrack for the NT Government’s Territory Day promotion in 2023.

► Richie appeared in an episode of Archie Roach’s Kitchen Table Yarns online and as part of the band’s 2022 show at Port Fairy Folk Festival.

► Richie was selected to be part of The Seed Fund future makers workshop and residency in 2020 working with John Butler, Tim Rogers and Kate Ceberano and key industry professionals on a range of issues to better support and understand First Nations artists.

► The band was part of the Cultural Artist in Residency program with the prestigious St Ignatius Riverview College Sydney,

- ▶ Black Rock Band's anthemic song 'Family' was reimagined by school students across the Northern Territory as part of a Government statewide project, dozens of schools submitted entries of students performing the song, substituting different language skin and clan names to match their own communities.
- ▶ They won the Rock category in the 2018 NT Song of the Year Awards and also named finalists in the 2018 National Indigenous Music Awards.
- ▶ 'Identity' received critical acclaim, being named Triple R album of the week in 2020, showcasing their ability to captivate audiences and deliver powerful messages through their music.
- ▶ They received the Best Community Band award at the Barunga Festival in 2017.

▶ PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ Black Rock Band has graced stages across Australia, captivating audiences with their electrifying performances.
- ▶ They performed two years in a row at the Bush Bands Bash in Alice Springs, following up with a month long WA Arts remote communities tour in 2019 with Saltwater Band.
- ▶ Notable festival appearances, including the Mayali Festival, Mahbilil Festival, MONA FOMA Festival in Tasmania, Nannup Music Festival in WA, Woodford Folk Festival, Port Fairy Folk Festival, and Parrtjima, have further elevated their profile and allowed them to connect with diverse audiences.
- ▶ Their performances alongside artists such as Archie Roach, Shane Howard, Yirmal and the Teskey Brothers have demonstrated their versatility and ability to collaborate with renowned musicians.
- ▶ Black Rock Band's involvement in the Guts Tour in 2022 with Bad//Dreems showcased their commitment to engaging remote top-end communities and spreading their message of empowerment and unity.



Kutcha Edwards, a Mutti Mutti man and survivor of the Stolen Generation, has made significant cultural contributions through his music and advocacy work. By sharing his personal experiences and ancestral wisdom, he has fostered cultural understanding and empathy among audiences. His impact extends beyond music releases, as he actively engages in initiatives that promote social justice, environmental awareness, and reconciliation.

► CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION:

Kutcha Edwards uses his music as a medium to bridge gaps between cultures, generations, and spaces.

Through authentic and effective communication, he nurtures understanding and self-knowledge among diverse audiences.

His profound connection to his Aboriginal heritage and his ability to express it through his music promote cultural understanding and reconciliation.

Kutcha's songs and performances shed light on historical and ongoing impacts of colonisation, fostering empathy and promoting cultural appreciation.

► IMPACT BEYOND MUSIC RELEASES:

► Kutcha Edwards' influence goes beyond traditional music releases. He actively engages in various initiatives that amplify marginalised voices and promote social justice.

► Through collaborations with diverse artists and projects like Big Hart Songs for Freedom and the Beyond the Bars Live Prison Radio broadcasts, he empowers disenfranchised communities and gives voice to the voiceless.

► Additionally, his involvement in the creation of songs for peace and environmental awareness demonstrates his commitment to using music as a tool for positive change.



► NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Kutcha Edwards' song 'Singing up Country' became a finalist in the prestigious Environmental Music Prize, showcasing his ability to create music that raises awareness about environmental issues and the importance of land preservation.
- His transformative workshops with Elders choirs at Ulumbarra Theatre empowered incarcerated First Nations people to reclaim their identity, find solace in their heritage, and foster healing through music.
- Kutcha's dedication to creating powerful songs for peace and addressing social issues has inspired listeners to reflect, take action, and contribute to a more harmonious society.
- He has contributed to the Big Hart Songs for Freedom project, amplifying the voices of marginalised individuals and shedding light on their struggles.
- The Beyond the Bars Live Prison Radio broadcasts, which Kutcha has produced and participated in for two decades, have received a Human Rights award for their outstanding work in giving voice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inmates in Victorian prisons.
- He was nominated for the Australian Music Prize and has received four nominations for Music Victoria Awards. His song, 'Singing up Country' is a finalist in this year's Environmental Music Prize.
- Moved by the tragic story of 14-year-old Elijah Doughty, Kutcha collaborated with renowned musiciansto create 'Song for Elijah (Wrap Our Arms Around You)'. This heartfelt tribute provides ongoing financial support to Elijah's family and also raises awareness about the systemic issues impacting Indigenous communities.
- Kutcha created a successful Screen Australia web series 'Kutcha's Koorioke' at Yirramboi Arts Festival 2019, followed up by a second series televised through NITV and SBS on Demand over the summer of 2022/2023. This series celebrates Aboriginal connection to place and the transformative power of songs that have united communities throughout history.
- He has performed at renowned festivals including WOMAD-SA, Port Fairy Festival (where he was named Artist of the Festival in 2022), and BIGSOUND, opening the festival at the Fortitude Music Hall to a standing ovation.
- Kutcha has also delivered keynote addresses for various institutions and conferences, sharing his powerful message of respect, connection, culture, and responsibility, and inspiring hearts and minds.
- He has made significant cultural contributions through his music and advocacy work. His storytelling, performances, and collaborations have fostered cultural understanding, shed light on social issues, and amplified marginalised voices, illustrating his dedication to using music as a tool for social change and reconciliation.

