

MEDIA KIT

GORDON KOANG

FREMANTLE ARTS CENTRE

SUN 16 FEB

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GORDON KOANG

Gordon Koang is a Neur speaker and musician hailing from the Upper Nile region of what is now South Sudan. Accompanied by his cousin Paul Biel, Gordon performs a blend of traditional Neur rhythms and original compositions in English, Arabic, and his native language, Neur.

Having recently arrived in Australia seeking refuge from a country torn by civil war, Gordon and Paul are hoping to raise funds and awareness in an attempt to rejoin the rest of their family and settle safely in Australia. Musicians of a world-class standard, Gordon and Paul have previously toured throughout Europe and North America, performing to sell-out crowds. In August, Gordon and Paul's Australian permanent residency was approved which will allow them to once again travel and perform around the world.

2019 has already been an incredible year for Gordon Koang, seeing sold out Australian shows, lineup announcements for Meredith and Strawberry Fields, as well as recently taking out the Levi's Music Prize at BIGSOUND!

Four months since the release of his first single with the Music in Exile label, and four years since arriving in Melbourne and battling with the everyday struggles of settlement in a foreign country, South Sudanese legend and Melbourne's adopted son Gordon Koang has released his latest offering. 'Stand Up (Clap Your Hands)' is a favourite from Koang's live performances, an invitation to the audience to get up and strut their stuff. He comments on the 'seriousness' of music in his adopted country, asking listeners to 'show us your style, give us your attention', to dance with their loved ones and feel the message of his music; namely - peace, love and unity. The song revolves around the classic line 'I love you, audience', delivered in Gordon's heart winning style.

The track is followed almost immediately by a song of a very different nature, and yet just as inspiring. 'Asylum Seeker' is Gordon's tribute to asylum seekers in Australia - praising their courage and asking them to have patience in the long wait for permanent residency status in Australia. In a message published with the release of this new single, Gordon expresses confidence in the Australian government to help asylum seekers by granting their residency. We hope his message will be heard.

Finally, Gordon's two latest offerings are backed on the B-side by 'South Sudan', an 8-minute epic that demonstrates Gordon's joy at playing with his new band. It's an incredibly upbeat song in the style of Gordon's homeland and sung in his native Neur language. The messages contained within the track are classic Koang style, encouraging peace amongst his people and asking them to remember how to live, laugh and love.

This work was recorded in early 2019 at the Music in Exile studio, a cramped room behind a piano shop in Melbourne, Australia. It was recorded to tape by Stefan Blair and James Mannix. Generous amounts of talent and time were donated by Paul Ceraso and Gordon's cousin and fellow asylum seeker, Paul Biel, who both play on the record. The tracks were then mixed and mastered with the generous help of John Lee at Phaedra Studios, Coburg.

MUSIC IN EXILE

Music in Exile is a not-for-profit initiative aimed at increasing access to resources and building professional networks for asylum seekers and refugees in Australia.

A new initiative, Music in Exile is aimed at creating space for artists working in culturally or linguistically diverse communities in Australia.

GORDON KOANG

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