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## INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED MUSICIANS LEND THEIR TALENTS TO ENDANGERED SPECIES

Internationally renowned pianist Coady Green, composer Dr Jane Hammond and leading musicians are premiering a new musical work celebrating the Regent and Helmeted Honeyeaters on Wednesday 26 May at the Melbourne Recital Centre.

“This new musical work celebrates both Honeyeaters, their plight but also the efforts to secure their future in the wild,” said President of Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater, Professor Alan Clayton.

The concert is a collaboration between the internationally recognised composer, Dr Jane Hammond, writer and former opera singer Theresa Borg, and musicians Coady Green and Justin Kenealy.

Pianist Coady Green is twice recipient of the Geoffrey Parsons International Prize, and a regular performer at major concert halls around the world including Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall and St Martin in the Fields. He will be joined by renowned saxophonist Justin Kenealy. The work will include sounds of the Helmeted Honeyeater recorded in the Yellingbo Reserve. Additional performances are taking place at city venue fortyfivedownstairs, on 15 and 16 July.

“These performances pay homage to the work that the cohort of volunteers involved with the Friends group over more than three decades have achieved along with volunteers working for the future of the Regent Honeyeater,” said Alan.

“It’s been an exciting and unique project to bring the sounds of the some of Australia’s endangered species to life in these new works,” said pianist Coady Green.

“This project has coincided both with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Helmeted Honeyeater being named the State Bird emblem and new research showing that the Regent Honeyeater is losing its song due to such critically low numbers. As musicians and composers, we are privileged to be able to draw attention to the plight of some of Australia’s endangered species, which without a high level of effort are likely to become extinct,” he added.

Once common in Victoria, Helmeted Honeyeaters are now only found in a single location, 661 hectares of land in Yellingbo, about 50 minutes from Melbourne’s CBD.

A decade ago, it was estimated there were only 50 Helmeted Honeyeaters in the wild. Today, thanks to the efforts of the Friends of Helmeted Honeyeater volunteers and a multi-agency recovery team there are around 250 birds in three separate colonies.

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