SOLAR

Technical Rider — Festival Performance

Project: Solar
Format: Acoustic world-fusion duo
Artists: João Lobato and Ivan Mucavel

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QUICK OVERVIEW

INSTRUMENTS

João: sitar · sutar · saz · Persian-tuned acoustic guitar · berimbau · tabla
Ivan: mbira · vocals

João changes instruments during the set; **not all inputs are used simultaneously**.

AUDIO — PREFERRED SETUP

Solar prefers **directional microphones** wherever suitable, preserving a natural acoustic sound while reducing spill and feedback.

Source	Preferred	Alternative
Sitar	Directional mic	Pickup → DI
Tabla	2 directional mics	—
Berimbau	Directional mic	Dynamic mic
Sutar / Saz	Directional mic	Piezo → DI
Mbira	Directional mic	XLR / jack / DI
Persian-tuned guitar	Directional mic	Pickup → DI

Vocal	Directional vocal mic	—

Please provide: suitable directional microphones, quality DI boxes and appropriate microphone stands, including low stands for tabla.

STAGE & MONITORING

Preferred: 5 × 4 m · **Minimum:** 4 × 3 m
2 armless chairs · 2 independent monitor mixes / wedges · professional PA and console

Please allow safe space for multiple instruments. Moderate monitor levels are preferred to minimise feedback.

SOUNDCHECK

Preferred: 45 min · Festival minimum: 25–30 min

Soundcheck should cover microphone positioning, tabla balance, DI/pickup alternatives, monitors, feedback control and instrument changes.

SOUND

Natural · warm · dynamic · acoustic

Solar can adapt the setup to the available professional festival system.

DETAILED SECTIONS

1. Performance Configuration

Solar performs as a compact acoustic ensemble combining string instruments, percussion, mbira and voice.

João Lobato

- Sitar
- Sutar
- Saz
- Persian-tuned acoustic guitar

- Berimbau
- Tabla

Ivan Mucavel

- Mbira
- Vocals

João changes instruments during the performance, so not all inputs are used simultaneously.

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2. Stage Requirements

Minimum clear performance area:

4 m wide × 3 m deep

Preferred:

5 m wide × 4 m deep

Please provide:

- 2 armless chairs
- 1 small low table or stable instrument stand
- Appropriate microphone stands, including low stands for tabla
- 2 stage monitors
- Safe space for João's multiple instruments
- Power access where required for DI/pickup equipment
- Appropriate stage lighting

The stage should be ready and clear before soundcheck so the instruments can be positioned safely.

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3. Stage Layout

Stage left — João

João seated or standing depending on the instrument.

Instruments positioned nearby:

- Sitar
- Sutar
- Saz
- Acoustic guitar
- Berimbau
- Tabla

Adequate safe floor space and/or suitable instrument stands should be available.

Stage right — Ivan

Ivan positioned with:

- Mbira
- Vocal microphone

Monitoring

- **Monitor 1:** João
- **Monitor 2:** Ivan

Moderate monitor levels are preferred because several instruments are acoustic and may be susceptible to feedback.

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4. Audio Approach

Solar's preference is to preserve the **natural acoustic character of the instruments**.

Where practical, we therefore prefer suitable directional microphones for acoustic instruments.

DI connections are also acceptable where stage conditions make microphones more susceptible to feedback or where pickups provide a practical alternative.

Not all listed channels are required simultaneously because João changes instruments during the performance.

The exact configuration can therefore be adapted to the venue, festival stage and available equipment.

5. Preferred Input List

Source	Preferred method	Alternative
Sitar	Directional instrument microphone if suitable	DI from pickup if feedback or stage conditions require
Tabla — dayan	Directional instrument microphone if suitable	—
Tabla — bayan	Directional instrument microphone if suitable	—
Berimbau	Directional instrument microphone if suitable	Standard Shure-style dynamic microphone if feedback is a concern
Sutar	Directional instrument microphone if suitable	Pickup → DI
Saz	Directional instrument microphone if suitable	Pickup → DI
Mbira	Directional instrument microphone if suitable	XLR, jack or DI
Ivan vocal	Directional vocal microphone	—
Persian-tuned acoustic guitar	Directional instrument microphone if suitable	Pickup → DI

Because instruments are changed during the set, some channels may be reused rather than requiring every input to remain active simultaneously.

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6. Microphones and DI

General preference

For live performance, Solar prefers **directional microphones** for acoustic instruments wherever suitable.

This helps:

- preserve the natural sound of the instrument
- reduce spill from other instruments
- improve gain before feedback
- make the setup more practical on festival stages

Highly sensitive omnidirectional or broad-pattern condenser microphones are generally less suitable where stage volume or monitor spill is significant.

Suitable microphones

Professional directional instrument microphones may include appropriate:

- cardioid condenser microphones
- supercardioid microphones
- hypercardioid microphones
- dynamic instrument microphones

Equivalent professional equipment is acceptable.

Vocals

Standard professional directional vocal microphone, for example:

- Shure SM58
- Shure Beta 58A
- Sennheiser e835 / e935
- Equivalent

DI

Please provide quality DI inputs as alternatives where pickups are used.

Examples:

- Radial
- BSS

- Countryman
- Equivalent professional DI

João supplies piezo pickups for the **sutar and saz**.

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7. Tabla

Preferred amplification:

Two directional microphones

- 1 microphone for the dayan
- 1 microphone for the bayan

This provides better control and balance between the two drums.

The microphones should be positioned closely enough to minimise spill while allowing the player comfortable movement.

The tabla should retain its natural dynamics.

Heavy compression is not required.

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8. Sitar

Preferred

One **directional instrument microphone** positioned to capture the natural acoustic character of the sitar.

Alternative

The sitar can use a **pickup → DI** arrangement where:

- feedback is a concern
- stage volume is high
- monitor spill makes microphone amplification impractical
- festival changeover requirements make DI preferable

The festival should ideally have both options available where practical.

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9. Berimbau

Preferred

One directional instrument microphone.

Alternative

If feedback or stage spill is a concern, a standard professional **Shure-style dynamic microphone** can be used.

The aim is a natural sound with sufficient definition of both the string and resonating gourd.

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10. Sutar and Saz

Preferred

A suitable **directional instrument microphone**.

Alternative

Both instruments have piezo pickups supplied by João and can be connected:

Instrument pickup → cable → DI → mixing console

Please provide suitable DI inputs.

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11. Mbira

Preferred

A suitable **directional instrument microphone**.

Alternative

The mbira can also be connected using:

- **XLR**
- **jack connection**
- **DI where required**

For live festival performance, a highly sensitive condenser microphone may not be ideal unless its pickup pattern and positioning provide sufficient rejection of monitors and surrounding stage sound.

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12. Persian-Tuned Acoustic Guitar

Preferred

A suitable **directional instrument microphone**.

Alternative

Depending on stage conditions, the guitar may use:

Pickup → DI

The final method can be agreed during technical advance or soundcheck.

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13. Front of House

A professional PA system appropriate for the venue and audience capacity is required.

The system should provide:

- Clear full-range reproduction
- Good vocal intelligibility
- Natural acoustic instrument reproduction
- Adequate headroom without excessive volume
- Sufficient independent input channels for the agreed configuration
- Appropriate EQ and dynamics processing

- Reverb available for vocals and selected instruments

Solar's overall sound should remain:

natural, warm, dynamic and acoustic

rather than heavily processed.

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14. Monitoring

Minimum:

- 2 independent monitor mixes
- 2 floor wedges

João's monitor

Primarily:

- João's current instrument
- Ivan's vocal
- Mbira as required

Ivan's monitor

Primarily:

- Ivan's vocal
- Mbira
- João's main instrument

Monitor levels should remain moderate, particularly when directional microphones are being used on acoustic instruments.

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15. Soundcheck

Preferred soundcheck:

45 minutes

Minimum for festival situations:

25–30 minutes

The soundcheck should allow time for:

- positioning directional microphones
- checking pickup/DI alternatives
- balancing tabla microphones
- checking sitar amplification
- checking mbira amplification
- balancing monitors
- controlling feedback
- confirming levels for instrument changes

Where possible, a full soundcheck is preferred to a line check only.

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16. Instrument Changes

João changes instruments during the performance.

The audio engineer should therefore keep the relevant microphone and DI channels prepared throughout the set rather than requiring repatching between pieces.

Unused channels may simply be muted between instrument changes.

Because several channels are used sequentially rather than simultaneously, the total number of listed inputs should **not** be interpreted as the number of microphones required at one time.

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17. Lighting

Warm and atmospheric lighting is preferred.

Suitable colours include:

- Warm white

- Amber
- Soft gold
- Deep blue
- Subtle red

Please avoid:

- Constant flashing effects
- Excessive strobes
- Rapid colour changes

The visual atmosphere should complement an intimate acoustic performance.

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18. Backline / Instruments

Unless agreed otherwise, Solar supplies its specialist musical instruments and pickups.

The organiser is requested to provide:

- Chairs
- Microphone stands
- Low microphone stands for tabla
- Appropriate directional microphones
- Vocal microphone
- DI boxes
- PA system
- Monitors
- Mixing console
- Appropriate cabling
- Stage power

Any additional locally supplied equipment should be agreed in advance.

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19. Setup and Changeover

Please allow approximately:

20–30 minutes setup time

in addition to soundcheck where possible.

Extra care should be taken when moving or handling specialist instruments, particularly the sitar and mbira.

Crew should not move Solar's instruments without permission from the musicians.

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20. Technical Advance

Solar is happy to adapt the setup to professional festival systems.

Our preference is:

directional microphones wherever they provide a suitable natural acoustic sound, with DI connections available as alternatives where pickups are available or stage conditions require them.

Please send the following in advance where possible:

- Venue/stage dimensions
- PA specification
- Mixing console specification
- Available microphone list
- Available DI boxes
- Monitor configuration
- Festival changeover schedule

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21. Contact

For technical advance, production coordination and performance enquiries:

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