

QUEENSLAND MUSEUM

25 June 2021 to
25 April 2022

TORRES STRAIT
**ISLAND
FUTURES**

**WHAT LIES AHEAD
FOR ZENADTH KES?**

Teacher Resource and Curriculum Links
Modern History (Year 11 and 12)

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



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Original image: Kantasha Takai

Cultural Warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visitors are advised that this display contains images and accounts of people who have passed away. We also advise that some of the topics discussed could be distressing.

Queensland Museum is committed to helping our audiences understand both past and ongoing experiences of Australian First Nations people and as part of our commitment to truth and reconciliation.

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An Introduction to *Island Futures: What lies ahead for Zenadth Kes*

Torres Strait Islanders' rich and enduring cultures and languages are inextricably linked to the place they call "home". More than just a physical structure, an interconnectedness between people, place and knowledge is their foundation of identity. Now with the threat of rising sea levels, how do Torres Strait Islanders maintain their strong sense of identity and place if home is underwater?

On the 150th anniversary of the Coming of the Light – the introduction of Christianity throughout Torres Strait - *Island Futures: What lies ahead for Zenadth Kes* empowers voices and conversations about Torres Strait Islanders' place and visibility in present-day Australia.

Developed in collaboration with the community, this powerful and vibrant exhibition features more than 200 objects and images interwoven with Islander perspectives and stories. Included are a number of works from well-known artists including cinematographer Murray Lui, visual artists Christopher Bassi and Dylan Mooney, photographer Kantesha Takai, performance maker Margaret Harvey and Jo Ze spArks, and a new commission from world-renowned Erub Arts.

Torres Strait Islanders are one of Australia's First Peoples. From the tip of Cape York, to the borders of Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait) covers an area of 48,000 square kilometres and over 200 islands. For those who live and have connections to the 18 inhabited Islands and two Northern Peninsula Area communities, this is home.

Torres Strait Islander Cultural Leaders in the late 1980s made a move to reclaim the name of the region by creating the acronym "Zenadth Kes". This acronym describes the winds and geography of the Torres Strait Islands and region. Zenadth Kes stands for:

- ZE – Zey (South)
- NA – Naygay (North)
- D – Dagam (Place/Side)
- TH – Thawathaw (Coastline)
- KES – Passage/Channel/Waterway

The exhibition explores five themes:

- Home
- Ancestors
- Old Ways
- New Ways
- New Challenges



Kemus, Erub - Coming of the Light

Home

In Torres Strait Islander culture, home is more than a physical structure: it is about people, place, purpose, and a connection. It is about that feeling you get when you know you're "home". It evolves and changes, just like people do, reflects who a person is at any given time.

As you enter this first space in the exhibition, you will see a room that looks like any other, however, the importance of the objects is not what they are, but what they represent. As a whole, this room is a vessel, embodying a constant awareness of the past, present and future. It is a relational space where the physical, spiritual, cultural and environmental come together in harmony, showcasing Torres Strait Islanders' unique understanding of the world and the future.



Ancestors

This space invites you to stop and take a moment to reflect on where you have come from, and how you honour those who came before you.

In Torres Strait Islander culture, ancestors are a person's connection to village, clan, totems and their Island of origin. They are the voices in the wind, the energy underneath your feet and the whispers from the sea. Not only do they pave the way; they continue to be present. For Torres Strait Islanders, it is in family names, songs and objects. Ancestors are with you every step. Without them, you lose your way.

Old Ways

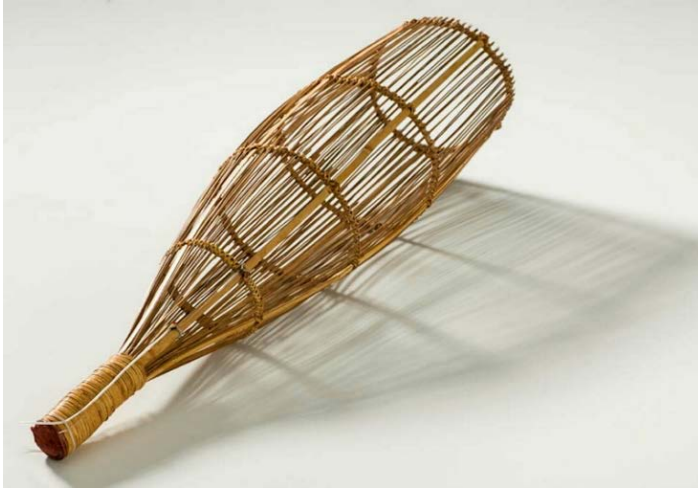
Old Ways are at the core of Torres Strait Islander being. It is a lifelong process of learning and is a presence that is embedded within the soul. Handed down orally through the generations, Old Ways inform cultural identity, family and community responsibilities, as well as understanding and maintaining the surrounding environments. The objects in this space embody the Old Ways within the home, the village and the individual.



New Ways

Torres Strait Islander culture has not remained static. It has adapted to not just survive but to thrive. This change is manifested in the creation of new songs, dances, materials and artistic expression.

However, new creations still acknowledge the Old Ways and maintain important connections to bloodlines and histories for generations of Torres Strait Islanders to come. Without New Ways, Torres Strait Islanders couldn't look forward with a blueprint of hope for the future.



New Challenges

When you leave home, there's an expectation that you can always return. But what if you couldn't? This space explores the harsh realities faced by Zenadth Kes communities as sea levels rise. Some challenges are natural; some are man-made; yet each impacts the other.

Torres Strait Islanders' cultures and languages are inextricably linked to the place they call "home", which is more

than a physical structure or material objects. It is the interconnectedness between people, place and knowledge. How can the people of the Torres Strait maintain a strong sense of identity and place if their island is underwater?

Meet the Curators



Rhianna Patrick – Guest Lead Curator

Rhianna Patrick is a media professional with family connections to the Zagareb (Mer) and Wagadagem (Mabuyag) clans of the Torres Strait. She has over 20 years media experience and has worked across radio, television, news and current affairs. After a long career with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), Rhianna joined IndigenousX, where she is currently developing audio and podcast offerings with support from the Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas. Rhianna has a strong passion for Indigenous controlled media and loves all things audio.

Imelda Miller - Curator, Torres Strait Islander and Pacific Indigenous Studies

Imelda Miller is the Curator, Torres Strait Islander and Pacific Indigenous Studies at the Queensland Museum Network. Imelda works with material culture and archival collections inside and outside of traditional museum environment and spaces to create access to collections for communities of origin. Her collaborative curatorial practice incorporates a combination of cultural practice, community engagement and community-led research and development.



Year 11 - 12 Modern History - Stimulus Questions

These stimulus questions provide a starting point for curriculum-relevant conversations with your students:

1. What is Indigenous Futurism? Find an object or story in the exhibition which reflects this movement.
2. What happened after World War II that impacted upon Torres Strait Islander communities? What effect did this have on cultural practices?
3. When was Christianity introduced to the Torres Strait Islands, and what impacts has it had on its inhabitants' culture? How do the Torres Strait Islander experiences compare to those of Indigenous communities on mainland Australia?
4. What impact did the [Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act](#) have on Torres Strait Island communities?
5. Which countries have held sovereignty over the communities of the Torres Strait? What impact did the Torres Strait Treaty have on the communities in this region?
6. Name a protest or demonstration of free speech that occurred in the 20th century which improved the living conditions of Torres Strait Islanders. Did this civil action provoke long-term legal and societal change?
7. What does the term *terra nullius* mean, and why is it now referred to as "legal fiction"?
8. Why was the 1992 Mabo Decision important to Torres Strait Islanders and a legacy for First Nations peoples?
9. Why is the [Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa Act 2020](#) a significant legislation in Australia's history? Research whether similar examples exist in other countries.
10. What violation of rights did the Torres Strait 8 report to the United Nations in 2020? What impact will the United Nations' decision have on their communities? Will it set a precedent for other communities? State whether you believe the Australian Government is or is not responsible to Torres Strait Island communities on this issue and explain why.
11. Which objects in this exhibition demonstrate the impact of 20th century events and Western culture on Torres Strait communities and cultural practices?
12. In what ways do Torres Strait Islander cultures practise sustainability and protect and care for their environment and home? What obstacles or challenges do these cultures face in continuing these practices?

Year 11 - 12 Modern History – Australian Curriculum Links

UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING THE MODERN WORLD
LEARNING OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand key developments that have helped define the modern world, their causes, the different experiences of individuals and groups, and their short and long term consequences • understand the ideas that both inspired and emerged from these key developments and their significance for the contemporary world • apply key concepts as part of a historical inquiry, including evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, empathy, perspectives and contestability • use historical skills to investigate particular developments of the modern era and the nature of sources; determine the reliability and usefulness of sources and evidence; explore different interpretations and representations; and use a range of evidence to support and communicate an historical argument.
HISTORICAL SKILLS
Chronology, terms and concepts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify links between events to understand the nature and significance of causation, change and continuity over time (ACHMH001) • use historical terms and concepts in appropriate contexts to demonstrate historical knowledge and understanding (ACHMH002)
Historical questions and research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulate, test and modify propositions to historical issues (ACHMH003) • frame questions to guide inquiry and develop a coherent research plan for inquiry (ACHMH004) • identify, locate and organise relevant information from a range of primary and secondary sources (ACHMH005) • practise ethical scholarship when conducting research (ACHMH006)
Analysis and use of sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the origin, purpose and context of historical sources (ACHMH007) • analyse, interpret and synthesise evidence from different types of sources to develop and sustain an historical argument (ACHMH008) • evaluate the reliability, usefulness and contestable nature of sources to develop informed judgements that support a historical argument (ACHMH009)
Perspectives and interpretations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse and account for the different perspectives of individuals and groups in the past (ACHMH010) • evaluate critically different historical interpretations of the past, how they evolved, and how they are shaped by the historian's perspective (ACHMH011)

- evaluate contested views about the past to understand the provisional nature of historical knowledge and to arrive at reasoned and supported conclusions (ACHMH012)

Explanation and communication

- develop texts that integrate appropriate evidence from a range of sources to explain the past and to support and refute arguments (ACHMH013)
- communicate historical understanding by selecting and using text forms appropriate to the purpose and audience (ACHMH014)
- apply appropriate referencing techniques accurately and consistently (ACHMH015)

UNIT 2: MOVEMENTS FOR CHANGE IN THE 20TH CENTURY

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- understand the key features of the movements for change, including the conditions that gave rise to these movements, the motivations and role of individuals and groups, and the short and long term consequences
- understand the significance of these movements, the influence of ideas that were central in their development, and the methods employed
- apply key concepts as part of a historical inquiry, including evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, empathy, perspectives and contestability
- use historical skills to investigate these movements in the modern period; judge the reliability and usefulness of sources and the value of different kinds of evidence; explore different interpretations and representations; and use a range of evidence to support and communicate an historical argument.

HISTORICAL SKILLS

Chronology, terms and concepts

- identify links between events to understand the nature and significance of causation, change and continuity over time (ACHMH047)
- use historical terms and concepts in appropriate contexts to demonstrate historical knowledge and understanding (ACHMH048)

Historical questions and research

- formulate, test and modify propositions to historical issues (ACHMH049)
- frame questions to guide inquiry and develop a coherent research plan for inquiry (ACHMH050)
- identify, locate and organise relevant information from a range of primary and secondary sources (ACHMH051)
- practise ethical scholarship when conducting research (ACHMH052)

Analysis and use of sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the origin, purpose and context of historical sources (ACHMH053) • analyse, interpret and synthesise evidence from different types of sources to develop and sustain an historical argument (ACHMH054) • evaluate the reliability, usefulness and contestable nature of sources to develop informed judgements that support a historical argument (ACHMH055)
Perspectives and interpretations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse and account for the different perspectives of individuals and groups in the past (ACHMH056) • evaluate critically different historical interpretations of the past, how they evolved, and how they are shaped by the historian's perspective (ACHMH057) • evaluate contested views about the past to understand the provisional nature of historical knowledge and to arrive at reasoned and supported conclusions (ACHMH058)
Explanation and communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop texts that integrate appropriate evidence from a range of sources to explain the past and to support and refute arguments (ACHMH059) • communicate historical understanding by selecting and using text forms appropriate to the purpose and audience (ACHMH060) • apply appropriate referencing techniques accurately and consistently (ACHMH061)
HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING
Recognition and rights of Indigenous peoples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of the relationship of indigenous peoples with their land and their response to perceptions of, and feelings about, the arrival of the colonisers (ACHMH070) • The basis on which the colonists claimed sovereignty and imposed control, including conquest, treaty and the doctrine of 'terra nullius'; and the consequences for the legal status and land rights of Indigenous peoples (ACHMH071) • The nature of government policies and their impact on Indigenous peoples, for example protection, assimilation (including the Stolen Generations), and self-determination (ACHMH072) • The role of individuals and groups who supported the movement for Indigenous recognition and rights, including the methods they used and the resistance they encountered (ACHMH073) • The economic, political and social challenges and opportunities Indigenous peoples have faced, including the role of cultural activity in developing awareness in society (ACHMH074) • The achievements of Indigenous peoples at the end of the 20th century, including the right to vote, land rights/native title, and attempt at reconciliation (ACHMH075) • The continued efforts to achieve greater recognition, reconciliation, civil rights, and improvements in education and health (ACHMH076)

Decolonisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conditions in the colony at the start of the 20th century, with specific reference to the living conditions of the colonisers and the colonised, the political structure in, the aspirations of those living under colonisation, and the nature of the economy (ACHMH078) • The emergence of movements for decolonisation, the key groups and individuals that pressed for liberation of the colony, the ideas that influenced them, and their struggle to achieve independence (ACHMH080) • the significance of international movements for change for that supported the decolonisation process, for example the emerging recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples, movements for international peace and cooperation, and the recognition of human rights (ACHMH081) • The outcomes of decolonisation, government, democratic freedoms, economic development, education and health care (ACHMH082)
UNIT 4: THE MODERN WORLD SINCE 1945
LEARNING OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the distinctive features of the modern world that have emerged since World War II and the historical forces that provided their impetus • understand the changes that took place over time, and their significance to the experiences of individuals, groups, nations and the international community • apply key concepts as part of a historical inquiry, including evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, empathy, perspectives and contestability • use historical skills to investigate some distinctive features of the world since 1945; frame questions for research; interpret sources and evidence with a focus on reliability and usefulness; and use evidence to evaluate interpretations and representations, and communicate historical arguments.
HISTORICAL SKILLS
Chronology, terms and concepts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify links between events to understand the nature and significance of causation, change and continuity over time (ACHMH171) • use historical terms and concepts in appropriate contexts to demonstrate historical knowledge and understanding (ACHMH172)
Historical questions and research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulate, test and modify propositions to investigate historical issues (ACHMH173) • frame questions to guide inquiry and develop a coherent research plan for inquiry (ACHMH174) • identify, locate and organise relevant information from a range of primary and secondary sources (ACHMH175) • practise ethical scholarship when conducting research (ACHMH176)

Analysis and use of sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the origin, purpose and context of historical sources (ACHMH177) • analyse, interpret and synthesise evidence from different types of sources to develop and sustain a historical argument (ACHMH178) • evaluate the reliability, usefulness and contestable nature of sources to develop informed judgements that support a historical argument (ACHMH179)
Perspectives and interpretations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse and account for the different perspectives of individuals and groups in the past (ACHMH180) • evaluate critically different historical interpretations of the past, how they evolved, and how they are shaped by the historian’s perspective (ACHMH181) • evaluate contested views about the past to understand the provisional nature of historical knowledge and to arrive at reasoned and supported conclusions (ACHMH182)
Explanation and communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop texts that integrate appropriate evidence from a range of sources to explain the past and to support and refute arguments (ACHMH183) • communicate historical understanding by selecting and using text forms appropriate to the purpose and audience (ACHMH184) • apply appropriate referencing techniques accurately and consistently (ACHMH185)
HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING
Movements of People
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature, extent and global distribution of populations in 1945 and then in 2010 (ACHMH209) • The circumstances in 1945 contributing to mass movement of people, including the impact of World War II on migration from Europe and its impact on Australian migration policies and on movements within the British Commonwealth (ACHMH210) • The consequences of the movement of peoples in the period 1945 – 2010, for example urban migration and labour migration, and the experiences of groups that moved and the implications for Australia, Great Britain and the British Commonwealth (ACHMH214)
CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HISTORIES AND CULTURES
<p>The diverse cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are explored through their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long and continuous strong connections with Country/Place and their economic, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic value of place, including the idea of custodial responsibility. Students examine the influence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples on the environmental characteristics of Australian places, and the different ways in which places are represented.

- experiences before, during and after European colonisation including the nature of contact with other peoples, and their progress towards recognition and equality. In particular, students investigate the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, past and present, including civic movements for change, the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to Australian society, and contemporary issues.
- exploration of how groups express their particular identities, and come to understand how group belonging influences perceptions of others.

The use of primary and secondary sources, including oral histories, gives students opportunities to see events through multiple perspectives, and to empathise and ethically consider the investigation, preservation and conservation of sites of significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.