

QUEENSLAND MUSEUM

25 June 2021 to
25 April 2022

TORRES STRAIT
**ISLAND
FUTURES**

**WHAT LIES AHEAD
FOR ZENADTH KES?**

Teacher Resource and Curriculum Links
History (Year 10)

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



Part of Energy Queensland

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Original image: Kantesha 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.

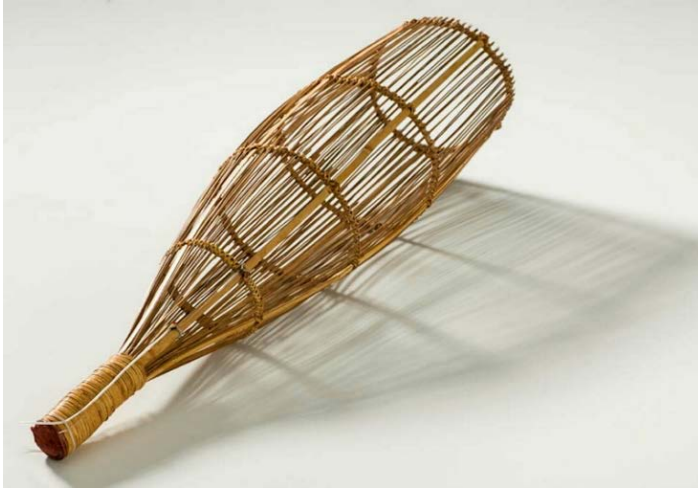


New Ways

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 10 History – Stimulus Questions

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

1. What happened after World War II that impacted upon Torres Strait Islander communities? What effect did this have on cultural practices?
2. When was Christianity introduced to the Torres Strait Islands and what impact has this had on its peoples' culture?
3. What impact did the [*Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act*](#) have on Torres Strait Island communities?
4. 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?
5. Why was the 1992 Mabo Decision important to Torres Strait Islanders and a legacy for First Nations peoples?
6. Why is the [*Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa Act 2020*](#) a significant legislation in Australia's history? Are there similar examples in other countries?
7. 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.
8. Describe the effects climate change could have on Torres Strait Islander cultures and identity.
9. Choose one artwork or object in the exhibition and describe how the materials chosen reflect Torres Strait Islanders' culture, beliefs and understanding of the world.
10. 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 10 History: The Modern World & Australia – Australian Curriculum Links

HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING
Depth Study: Rights and freedoms (1945 – present)
Background to the struggle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples for rights and freedoms before 1965, including the 1938 Day of Mourning and the Stolen Generations (ACDSEH104)
The significance of the following for the civil rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples: 1962 right to vote federally; 1967 Referendum; Reconciliation; Mabo decision; Bringing Them Home Report (the Stolen Generations), the Apology (ACDSEH106)
Methods used by civil rights activists to achieve change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and the role of ONE individual or group in the struggle (ACDSEH134)
The continuing nature of efforts to secure civil rights and freedoms in Australia and throughout the world, such as the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) (ACDSEH143)
Depth Study: The environment movement (1960 – present)
The intensification of environmental effects in the twentieth century as a result of population increase, urbanisation, increasing industrial production and trade (ACDSEH125)
The growth and influence of the environment movement within Australia and overseas, and developments in ideas about the environment including the concept of ‘sustainability’ (ACDSEH126)
Significant events and campaigns that contributed to popular awareness of environmental issues, such as the campaign to prevent the damming of Australia’s Gordon River, the nuclear accident at Chernobyl and the Jabiluka mine controversy in 1998 (ACDSEH127)
Responses of governments, including the Australian Government, and international organisations to environmental threats since the 1960s, including deforestation and climate change (ACDSEH128)
HISTORICAL SKILLS
Chronology, terms and concepts
Use chronological sequencing to demonstrate the relationship between events and developments in different periods and places (ACHHS182)
Use historical terms and concepts (ACHHS183)
Historical questions and research
Identify and select different kinds of questions about the past to inform historical inquiry (ACHHS184)
Evaluate and enhance these questions (ACHHS185)
Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods (ACHHS186)
Analysis and use of sources
Identify the origin, purpose and context of primary and secondary sources (ACHHS187)

Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument (ACHHS188)
Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of primary and secondary sources (ACHHS189)
Perspectives and interpretations
Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (ACHHS190)
Identify and analyse different historical interpretations (including their own) (ACHHS191)
Explanation and communication
Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced (ACHHS192)
Select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies (ACHHS193)
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. <p>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.</p>