

Media Release No. 689

For release 2 December 2015

Gab Titui Cultural Centre shortlisted for Queensland's Gallery and Museum Achievement Award

The Gab Titui Cultural Centre has been named a finalist in the 2015 Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards.

The Awards are presented by Museums and Galleries Queensland to recognise the contribution made by individuals and organisations to the gallery and museum sector.

Gab Titui was nominated for its recent cultural maintenance exhibition, *Evolution: Torres Strait Masks* which documents the history, significance and evolution of the culturally significant mask in the Torres Strait.

Torres Strait Regional Authority Chairperson, Mr Joseph Elu, said the Gab Titui was one of four finalists shortlisted in its category.

"The Gab Titui Cultural Centre is a finalist in the Projects category of the Award, alongside organisations including the Museum of Brisbane," Mr Elu said.

"It is a significant achievement for a small, remote gallery to be recognised alongside one of the most-well known cultural institutions in Queensland."

Evolution: Torres Strait Masks opened at the Gab Titui Cultural Centre on 18 June 2015 and has since attracted over 6,500 visitors.

Mr Elu said the exhibition is a culmination of work undertaken through the TSRA's Culture, Art and Heritage Programme to document the stories, history and culture of Torres Strait Islanders.

"*Evolution: Torres Strait Masks* brings together historical material held by the British Museum and Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge with contemporary artworks by local Torres Strait Islander artists, commissioned specifically for the exhibition," Mr Elu said.

This is the second nomination for Gab Titui Cultural Centre. The Centre won a Gallery and Museum Achievement Award in 2009 for the cultural maintenance exhibitions *Bipotaim: Stories from the Torres Strait* and *Zamiyakal: Torres Strait Dance Machines*. This exhibition has travelled to the National Museum of Australia, the State Library of Queensland and the East-West Centre in Honolulu.

Mr Elu said that the TSRA will be actively seeking opportunities to tour *Evolution: Torres Strait Masks* around the nation. “It is our wish that both Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous communities around the nation can share in this exhibition,” Mr Elu said.

Evolution: Torres Strait Masks is on display now in the Gab Titui Cultural Centre Ephraim Bani Gallery.

A full exhibition catalogue is available to purchase from the Gab Titui Gallery Shop for \$15.60.

ENDS



Caption: National Museum of Australia Director, Dr Mathew Trinca and Mer artist Andrew Passi Snr with his mask *Sor Kobir 2*.



Caption: Contemporary masks on display at Gab Titui as part of the *Evolution: Torres Strait Masks* exhibition (L-R Andrew Passi Snr, *Sor Kobir 1*; Kapua Gutchen Snr, *Wezamarimus*; Kapua Gutchen Snr, *Burrurr*; Andrew Passi Snr, *Sor Kobir 2*; Eddie Nona, *Sesere*; Eddie Nona, *Keris*; Yessie Mosby, *Waru Kraal*).

TSRA Media Contact – Bruce Nelson telephone 0423 403 449