



Australian Government
Torres Strait Regional Authority



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New TSRA Partnership results in *Aiewal* Exhibiton Opening at Gab Titui Cultural Centre
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A new partnership between Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE (TNQIT) and the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) that resulted in a number of artistic skills development workshops on the outer islands is holding their first art exhibition this week.

Twelve workshops were held throughout 2009 on Badu, Boigu, Poruma, Hammond, Mabuiag, Iama, St Pauls, Kubin and Warraber communities, with a total of 180 emerging Torres Strait Artists participating.

The exhibition is called *Aiewal: come, gather* and is being held at Gab Titui Cultural Centre on Thursday Island. *Aiewal*, a Kala Lagaw Ya word, is interpreted as: *more than one person, to come or gather*.

The Chairperson of the TSRA Mr Toshi Kris said today that it is an ongoing commitment of the TSRA to ensure that skills development in the region is emphasised and supported and this is achieved through the TSRA establishing and funding Gab Titui Cultural Centre as well as other various art programs.

“It is with great pleasure that I invite the community to the official opening of *Aiewal* Exhibition on Thursday 11 March 2010 at Gab Titui,” Mr Kris said.

“The outcome of these workshops highlights the extent of artistic talent our local artists possess. Skills development is an important contributing factor in providing economic opportunities for local Indigenous artists, helping to build capacity in our island communities.”

“The project has been extremely successful and it is the ongoing commitment of the TSRA to the region’s arts development and higher learning opportunities for local Indigenous people that is integral to the continuing development of the industry. We look forward to continuing our partnership with TNQIT and the Tagai TAFE Campus,” said Mr Kris.

The joint project was funded through Arts Queensland’s Building Skills and Opportunity Program. The workshops catered not only for artistic skills development in arts practice, but also provided each community with an opportunity to come together, share their cultural knowledge, showcase their talents and learn about other arts training and education opportunities available through TNQIT.

Workshops were delivered by TAFE Art Teacher, Diana Abiad, who came to the project with previous experience working with Indigenous artists.

“The participants had a natural talent for design and a deep cultural awareness that they drew on for inspiration,” said Ms Abiad.

The TSRA’s Arts Development Program has been successful in securing a further \$25,000 from Arts Queensland, enabling the *Aiewal* project to continue in 2010.

The community is invited to *come, gather* and enjoy this exciting collection of artistic works along with cultural performances by the Mer Island Dance Group from 6-8pm. Light refreshments will be provided.

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