

Manggan

gather
gathers
gathering

EDUCATION RESOURCE



Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering is a travelling exhibition in partnership between Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre, the South Australian Museum, and toured by Museums & Galleries Queensland. This exhibition is supported by the Visions regional touring program, an Australian Government program aiming to improve access to cultural material for all Australians. It is supported through the Australian Government's Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program and the Queensland Government; and proudly sponsored by Conrad Gargett, Urban Art Projects and TED.



INDEX

How to use this resource	4
General capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities	6
Glossary of terms	10
About the Exhibition	12
The exhibition artists	
About the community	
Photography and film	
Ceramics	
Weaving	
Activities aligned to the <i>Australian Curriculum</i>	24
Photography and film	
Ceramics	
Weaving	
Displaying artworks	

Some of the activities in this resource refer to the *Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering* exhibition Room Brochure, which is available online at <http://www.magsq.com.au/cms/page.asp?ID=9264>

Front cover image:

Group of 3 Bagu, (from left) Emily Murray, Theresa Beeron, Ninney Murray. Various sizes.

Education Resource prepared by Kerry-Anne Reeves and Andrea Higgins.

Editor: Debra Beattie.

‘About the Exhibition’: Selected text courtesy of Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

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122 Gerler Road, Hendra Qld 4011

P: 07 3059 9740

E: information@magsq.com.au

W: www.magsq.com.au














HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This Education Resource supports the touring exhibition *Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering*.








The contents align with the *Australian Curriculum*, specifically Years 5–6 and Years 7–8. Key Ideas from each of the **Learning Areas** – English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, The Arts, Technologies, Health and Physical Education, Languages – are implemented throughout this Education Resource. Suggested questions and activities integrate one or more of the **General Capabilities** and/or **Cross-Curriculum Priorities**. [See Pages 6–9]

The following Content Descriptions, sourced from the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts – Visual Arts*, have been used to formulate questions and activities in this Education Resource.

Years 5 and 6 Content Descriptions

- Explore ideas and practices used by artists, including practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent different views, beliefs and opinions (ACAVAM114)     
- Develop and apply techniques and processes when making their artworks (ACAVAM115) 
- Plan the display of artworks to enhance their meaning for an audience (ACAVAM116)  
- Explain how visual arts conventions communicate meaning by comparing artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks. (ACAVAR117)     








Years 7 and 8 Content Descriptions

- Experiment with visual arts conventions and techniques, including exploration of techniques used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent a theme, concept or idea in their artwork (ACAVAM118)   
- Develop ways to enhance their intentions as artists through exploration of how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes (ACAVAM199)   
- Develop planning skills for art-making by exploring techniques and processes used by different artists (ACAVAM120) 




Educators of upper primary students and lower secondary students are invited to select and modify the questions and tasks in this Education Resource to provide opportunities for different levels of engagement for both phases of learning. Whether the suggestions are employed before, during or after a visit to the exhibition, is at the discretion of the individual teacher.

ICONS USED IN THIS RESOURCE


GENERAL CAPABILITIES

-  literacy
-  numeracy
-  information and communication technology capability
-  creative and critical thinking
-  personal and social capability
-  ethical understanding
-  intercultural understanding











CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

-  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures
-  Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
-  Sustainability











TEACHERS' HELP

-  This Helping Hand icon will appear when notes or answers are deemed to assist educators.











PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM – ACTIVITIES: PAGE 25

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES	GENERAL CAPABILITIES							CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES		
										
	LITERACY	NUMERACY	ICT CAPABILITY	CREATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING	PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY	ETHICAL UNDERSTANDING	INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING	ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HISTORIES AND CULTURES	ASIA AND AUSTRALIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH ASIA	SUSTAINABILITY
1	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
13	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
14	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
15	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
16	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓











CERAMICS – ACTIVITIES: PAGE 27

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES	GENERAL CAPABILITIES							CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES		
										
	LITERACY	NUMERACY	ICT CAPABILITY	CREATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING	PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY	ETHICAL UNDERSTANDING	INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING	ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HISTORIES AND CULTURES	ASIA AND AUSTRALIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH ASIA	SUSTAINABILITY
1	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
2	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		
3	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
4	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
5	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
6	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
7	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
9	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
10	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
11	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
12	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
13	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
14	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
15	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
16	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				
17	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				
18	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
19	✓	✓		✓	✓					
20	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓
21	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		
22	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
23	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
24	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		
25	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
26	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
27	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
28	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		
29	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

WEAVING – ACTIVITIES: PAGE 30

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES	GENERAL CAPABILITIES							CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES		
										
	LITERACY	NUMERACY	ICT CAPABILITY	CREATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING	PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY	ETHICAL UNDERSTANDING	INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING	ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HISTORIES AND CULTURES	ASIA AND AUSTRALIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH ASIA	SUSTAINABILITY
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
2	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
5	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
10	✓	✓		✓	✓					
11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
13	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓
14	✓	✓		✓	✓					
15	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		
16	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
17	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			
18	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
19	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
20	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
21	✓			✓	✓					
22	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					

DISPLAYING ARTWORKS – ACTIVITIES: PAGE 33

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES	GENERAL CAPABILITIES							CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES		
										
	LITERACY	NUMERACY	ICT CAPABILITY	CREATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING	PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY	ETHICAL UNDERSTANDING	INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING	ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HISTORIES AND CULTURES	ASIA AND AUSTRALIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH ASIA	SUSTAINABILITY
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
3	✓	✓		✓	✓					
4	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
5	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

GLOSSARY

WORD	MEANING
Bagu	A traditional fire-making implement (body). The Bagu form was founded in the shape of a man, and a spirit design was created with traditional clays. The ochre colours are magera (yellow), gunggu (red), gaba (white) and jillan (black charcoal usually applied with wallaby blood). Bagu is normally made from the boogadilla (milky pine tree).
Jiman	A traditional fire-making implement (stick), which becomes a tool when used with the Bagu. Jiman is made from one of two woody plants – one is jiman, the other is mudja (wild guava), and they usually grow on a creek bank.
Jawun	A traditional distinctive two-cornered or bicornual basket made from Lawyer cane and used to carry babies, bush foods and tools; catching fish; and processing food.
Mindi	A traditional grass basket historically used to carry message sticks.
Burrajingal	A square-based Lawyer cane basket.
Wungarr	A traditional Lawyer cane trap used to trap freshwater eels in a creek.
Gundala	A traditional coil basket made from Lawyer cane.
Message stick (Muwaga)	Aboriginal people, when visiting another tribe, carried a message stick (Muwaga) marked with incisions to tell a story which was elaborated by the person who carried the message. Similar to a passport, the stick enabled the visitor to travel on the other tribe's land.
Ochre	Ochre is a type of coloured clay collected by Aboriginal people for use in body painting and rock art, and for decorating wooden tools. Ochres are most commonly white, red and yellow oxides.
FNQ	Far North Queensland, or Tropical North Queensland, is the northernmost part of the state of Queensland, Australia. Starting in the east at the Cassoway Coast, it incorporates the Torres Strait area and the Gulf Country region.
Material culture	Objects with cultural, historical and social significance to a society or community.

WORD	MEANING
Lawyer cane	Classification: Family – <i>Arecaceae</i> ; Botanical Name – <i>Calamus australis</i> Mart A slender vine with a stem diameter of no more than 2 cm. The vine stem is mostly smooth and glassy in texture. It is endemic to Queensland and can be found in many different environments.
Country	‘Country’ is a term with specific significance to Aboriginal Australians. It conceptualises how people understand their society, culture and sense of self in relationship to a particular area of land. Kinship relationships, linguistic dialects and social and cultural rights and restrictions are determined by the inherited knowledge incorporated in one’s country.
Traditional Owners	An Aborigine who is a member of a local descent group having certain rights and responsibilities in relation to a tract of land or area of sea.
Elders	Highly respected Aboriginal people held in esteem by their communities for their wisdom, cultural knowledge and community service. They are responsible for making decisions within the community.
Anthropomorphic	“Anthropomorphism” is a noun denoting the attribution of human characteristics or behaviour to non-human entities. “Anthropomorphic” is the adjective meaning having human characteristics.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering exhibition was developed as a partnership between the Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre, Queensland, and the South Australian Museum (SAM), Adelaide, presenting Aboriginal rainforest art and culture from the Girringun region of Far North Queensland (FNQ), cultural material from the SAM collections and new work created by Aboriginal artists responding to the past in the present.

The exhibition includes 2 films, 10 photographs, weaving (bicornual baskets – Jawun, Mindi, Wungarr and traditional forms made with contemporary materials), and ceramics (Bagu fire-making tools and basket forms) by 19 internationally renowned artists from the Girringun area, together with artefacts (Bagu, baskets, fish poison) from the South Australian Museum collection.

Connection to country and traditional culture is at the core of this exhibition, which is aimed at growing awareness of arts practice unique to this group of Aboriginal people in the wet and dry tropics region of FNQ.

THE EXHIBITION ARTISTS

Daniel Beeron
George Beeron
Maureen Beeron
Theresa Beeron
Nancy Cowan
Nephi Denham
Sandra Escott
Tonya Grant
Judith Henry
Clarence Kinjun
Doris Kinjun
Abe Muriata
Alison Murray
Debra Murray
Emily Murray
John Murray
Ninney Murray
Sally Murray
Eileen Tep

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

The Girringun Aboriginal Corporation represents nine tribal groups in FNQ – the Nywaigi, Gugu Badhun, Warrgamay, Warungnu, Bandjin, Girramay, Gulnay, Jirrbal and Djiru people. This area extends roughly south from El Arish to Rollingstone, south west to the Clarke River, north to the Mission Beach area, west to Ravenshoe and east to include Hinchinbrook and the Family Group Islands.

This is a region of spectacular landscapes incorporating vast areas of pristine rainforest canopy and wet/dry sclerophyll forests stretching to the coast and sections of the Great Barrier Reef. Reaching upwards out of the lush rainforest are impressive mountain ranges and stunning rock formations. The region features countless rivers, streams, waterfalls, gorges and dense wetlands with mangrove eco systems and well-watered open savannah plains in the rainforest shadow of the Great Dividing Range.

MAP OF THE GIRRINGUN REGION



PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM

FEATURED ARTIST: Debra Murray



Girramay Traditional Owner, arts worker and artist, Debra Murray is an emerging filmmaker and photographer. Debra is motivated by her close connection to country and family and capturing the changes and impact that western methods of agriculture has had on her local area. Debra is passionate about spending time looking after her country with its unique landscape.

The exhibition features two films directed and filmed by Debra, *Manggan – gather, gathers, gathered* and *Bagu with Jiman* as well as ten large-scale aerial landscape photographs of the remnants of her rainforest country. Debra worked closely with filmmaker Jan Cattoni (Tropic Productions) to source and gather the images and material necessary to create these works. Debra was mentored through the process of editing to create these new stories – a personal response to an important location with direct relevance to both the past and the present for the artist.

Firstly, Debra conducted numerous field trips to discuss the project with participants. She then returned to record aural histories, and capture footage of community members working on farms and the land.

Debra recognised that the unique landscape of FNQ was an important character in its own right.

“I worked on both the documentaries for this exhibition, Manggan – gather, gathers, gathered, and Bagu with Jiman. I took photographs too. The best thing for me working on this project was being able to hear about the past from my Elders, learning about how they lived before. It was very different then.

We were bought up with cars and trucks but their mode of transport was going on foot, walking about. They didn’t care how long it took to get to where they were going. They camped along the road if they had to. They got there in the end.

I liked being able to share what I do, when I'm not being an artist, in the film Manggan. I was brought up on a farm. I grew up there and it was always something I wanted to do. In the documentary Manggan, people can see what I get to do. I work out on country. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else but on country. I was able to learn how to make a film working with Jan Cattoni and I would like to do more filming with tractors and working on country."

Debra Murray, 2018

Images, page 14:

Left: Debra Murray. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

Right: Debra Murray, *Murray Valley Landscape 7*, 2015. Digital photograph using archival inks, 77 x 111.8 cm. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

CERAMICS

THE TRADITIONAL BAGU STORY

The Bagu story and subsequent material culture have been central to FNQ community life for countless generations as a fire-making implement. Traditionally, the firesticks were made up of two parts, the Bagu (body) and Jiman (sticks).

The Bagu form was founded in the shape of a man, and a spirit design was created with traditional clays. The ochre colours are magera (yellow), gunggu (red), gaba (white) and jillan (black charcoal usually applied with wallaby blood). Bagu is normally made from the boogadilla (milky pine tree).

The Bagu object has its own creation myth. The form and imagery of the Bagu with Jiman artwork has its origins in the sky. Bagu is an anthropomorphic representation of the fire creation spirit Jiggabunah, who would throw the Jiman (firesticks) across the sky and a trail of fire would follow, displayed in the night sky as shooting stars.

The Bagu were carried from place to place as the camps were moved. During the wet season, in particular, the Bagu was an essential tool because fire was integral to survival, and the high volume rainfall meant that damp conditions could easily render firewood and tinder useless. Women were excluded from handling the Bagu which was traditionally the responsibility of one selected male from within the community who was tasked with the preservation of a constantly smouldering source of flame and heat. The keeper of the fire would not allow the flame to extinguish or there would be trouble, particularly in the wet season when it was difficult to find dry tinder.

“We were not allowed to put our finger in the holes of the Bagu. I’m not sure why. Maybe it was a way to keep the fire pure.”

Doris Kinjun, Gulnay Traditional Owner

Fire was a very important part of daily life for previous generations. It was used for cooking, warmth, making traditional weapons, preserving and for ceremonies. It also provided a central point for social interaction and activities.

“The Bagu’s realm is a place where matter and spirit are one; where earth, water, fire and air provide life giving elements, and an individual’s spirit is nourished and preserved through a connection to country, culture and the spirit world that transcends white man’s history, laws and recorded time.”

‘Taba Naba’ catalogue, 2016

THE CONTEMPORARY BAGU STORY

In 2008 at the Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre, a group of Traditional Owners from the area gathered at a meeting with the new centre manager Valerie Keenan to discuss the future. Already known for their unique weaving, employing materials harvested from the rainforest, a decision was made by the group

to develop the Bagu into a contemporary sculptural form. Respectfully avoiding employing wood as the key material because of cultural protocols, the contemporary Girringun artists, initially in collaboration with local ceramics tutor Meredith Moreau, began making new sculptures with direct reference to the traditional Bagu form.

Contemporary Girringun artists continue to develop new ways of creating their Bagu sculpture. While ceramic with glaze or ochres continues to dominate as the leading material, more recently they have created Bagu using a variety of recycled materials (including plastic off-cuts, ghostnetting, packaging materials, banana twine, metal and electrical wire) or cast fibreglass. Changing materials facilitated a rethinking of size and scale. Rescaling of the Bagu has created impressive and, in some cases, monumental contemporary sculptures.

While the contemporary Bagu can be made from any material that the artist identifies as suitable to work with, a number of the artists continue to embellish/adorn their Bagu by painting them with traditional patterns which, for Traditional Owners, are a form of identity and quite specific to different areas of the rainforest country. There are strict protocols involved in the use of the designs and they cannot be used by anyone who doesn't have the permission to do so.

FEATURED ARTISTS: Emily Murray and Nephi Denham

Emily Murray



Emily Murray identifies as a Girramay and Jirrbal Traditional Owner of the Davidson Creek area. Emily draws inspiration from traditional stories, calendar events in the lives of plants and animals, and places where she lives and camps. With her strong connection to place and heritage, she works across a number of mediums including weaving, painting and ceramics. Her unique Bagu are sought after by galleries and collectors.

"I like to be an artist. Always have been. Working with people. Hearing everything that's going to happen. It's always a pleasure to see my work on a wall in a gallery. I like to give anything a go – I like doing all different things. I'm a happy person and I like to enjoy life and I want my paintings to be happy – for people to be happy when they look at them. I like people to enjoy my work."

Emily Murray, 2018

Nephi Denham



Nephi Denham is a Girramay Traditional Owner of the North Murray Area and is a speaker of language. Nephi is one of the emerging artists from the Girringun area and has a sophisticated grasp of form and line. His work reflects his Aboriginal heritage, traditional stories and the environment in which he lives.

“Doing art is a part of who I am. It has allowed me to learn and to gain knowledge and cultural understanding. Younger people often ask me about what I do and I pass on my knowledge when I can. It makes me feel good to see my work when it is finished. We don’t use dots here and I stay with painting patterns like diamonds and lines to show my culture. I like working with ceramics – it is different to making traditional tools, and easy to work with.”

Nephi Denham, 2017

Images, page 17:

Left: Emily Murray. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

Right: Emily Murray, *Bagu*. Ceramic with string. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

Images, page 18:

Left: Nephi Denham with *Bagu*. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

Right: Nephi Denham, *Bagu*, 2016. Ceramic, 41 x 15 x 3.5 cm. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

WEAVING

JAWUN

Woven baskets have traditionally been created and used by Indigenous communities around Queensland. They vary in weaving techniques, fibres and surface adornment. In the rainforest, weaving was done by both men and women and a range of unique styles was developed.

A Jawun is a traditional, distinctive two-cornered or bicornual basket woven from Lawyer cane sourced in the FNQ rainforest. These baskets are unique forms and are exclusively found in the FNQ area. The word “Jawun” is the local language word for this basket. Other Traditional Owner Groups would have alternative words to describe their baskets.

Traditionally the Jawun had many practical and ceremonial uses. A Jawun was utilised by the owner for a variety of purposes including: to carry babies, bush foods, and tools; catching fish; leaching toxins from poisonous plants; and mortuary purposes. They were also valuable objects that could be traded between communities.

Harvesting the Lawyer cane which grows wild in the region is the first step towards making these meticulously handwoven baskets. The artisan will then remove the hard-outer layer by stripping the tough prickly surface of the Lawyer cane away, revealing a smoother central stalk. This stalk is then carefully split into finer strands that are malleable enough to weave and knot. Numerous lengths of split Lawyer cane are bound together to create the unique crescent shape base of the Jawun. Two long strands of Lawyer cane are then attached and used to work the body of the form upwards. To strengthen the basket further, rings of cane are added to the interior of the basket form. The two handles of the basket are usually made from a thicker section of Lawyer cane and are of varying lengths, one longer and one much shorter. Both handles are attached to the mouth area of the basket. The shorter Jawun handle allows the owner to carry the basket by hand. The Jawun could also be carried by its owner, by wearing the longer handle around the forehead area, allowing the body of the basket to hang down the wearer’s back.

FEATURED ARTISTS: Abe Muriata and Ninney Murray

Abe Muriata



Abe Muriata is a Girramay Traditional Owner from the Cardwell Range area. He is a nationally acknowledged weaver of the finely crafted, intricately constructed, bicornual baskets, Jawun, which are unique to the FNQ rainforest people. More recently, inspired by the traditional basket form, Abe has actively explored various techniques and materials to create his contemporary artworks.

Abe, a self-taught weaver, remembers watching his grandmother weaving Lawyer cane and other rainforest materials when he was a child. He is also inspired by the precision and meticulousness of craftsmanship displayed in the artefacts and Jawun created by his ancestors. Men were principal weavers in the old days and Abe has been inspired to follow this tradition of excellence. Recently, Abe has been able to access and study these important material cultural objects at a number of Australian museums.

Abe creates different manifestations of Jawun by employing alternative materials like ceramics, locally-sourced recycled materials and non-traditional weaving materials.

Abe is also known for his traditional rainforest shields painted with traditional ochres and designs. These shields were once used for sorting out disputes and for ceremonial purposes.

More recently Abe has become a key spokesperson for his community on the subject of 'Fake Art Harms Culture'. This campaign, spearheaded by the Indigenous Art Code and supported by various artists and communities Australia-wide, is designed to make people aware that there is an overabundance of unauthentic Aboriginal product being sold under the guise of the genuine article.

"The exhibition gives an insight into the rainforest culture of Northern Australia. I am a Girramay man, an artist and a weaver. I make Jawun, the bicornual basket. My work is a culmination of ten years' learning and it has essentially been a re-learning of a nearly lost craft.

One of my Jawun is included in this show. Beside the really beautiful Jawun which has been loaned from the South Australian Museum, my Jawun pales in comparison. Honed by thousands of years of craftsmanship, the old basket embodies the perfection of skill at the hand of the maker who learned their knowledge as a kind of apprenticeship. These baskets are not easy to make and great skill is required to achieve such perfection. Despite its beauty of form and appearance, the use of the Jawun was not hindered from being used for menial tasks such as carrying heavy burdens or being exposed to the elements. Used in a traditional manner, the Jawun had a life expectancy of some two to three years. The one we see in this exhibition is over a hundred years old."

Abe Muriata, 2018

Images, page 19:

Left: Abe Muriata. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

Right: Abe Muriata, *Jawun*, 2016. Lawyer cane, 81 x 39 x 26 cm. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

Ninney Murray



Ninney Murray identifies herself as a Girramay and Jirrbal Traditional Owner of the Davidson Creek area and is an Elder of her people.

Ninney is an expert and senior weaver of all the traditional basket types created by the Girramay and Jirrbal people. Taught by her Aunty, traditional forms created by Ninney include the Jawun, Burrajingal, Gundala, Mindi baskets and Wungarr. Ninney also creates traditional eel traps, Wungarr, used to trap fresh water eels in the creek. Today Ninney continues to pass her weaving skills and traditional knowledge on to her people through weaving workshops. She is also a respected ceramic artist.

Additionally, Ninney has recently started painting and is an emerging painter whose work captures the stories of the old people, her connection to country and the environments of her childhood. Her work provides a visual expression of culture.

“I went down to South Australia to see the old baskets and objects at the South Australian Museum. The Jawun I saw there was special. It could have been made by one of my Aunties. Especially I think it could have been made by someone like Theresa Beeron’s Grandmother. I grew up with them until they went to Palm Island. They were taken away from Warrami (Murray Upper area near Tully) and taken over there to Palm Island. I was the only one to escape that day they went. I saw the truck coming. I went across the river and stayed with Chloe. She was my mother’s step-sister. I ran all the way through the scrub. They wanted to take the family from the school at Murray Upper too. But my dad, Jack Murray, he was working at Warrami then and the Cowan family said ‘NO’. So we got to stay there.”

Ninney Murray, 2018

Images, page 21:

Left: Ninney Murray. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

Right: Ninney Murray, *Bunyaydinyu Bagu*, 2011. Ceramic with Lawyer cane, 53 x 17 x 7.5 cm. Courtesy Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

VISITING THE GALLERY

When you book your Gallery visit, you could ask if the Gallery Director, Staff person or Volunteer might answer some questions about the *Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering* exhibition or provide an exhibition tour.

PROTOCOL SUPPORT

To ensure that teachers and students are working with Indigenous communities and Indigenous knowledge appropriately, please visit:

Queensland Government – Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority
<https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/k-12-policies/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-perspectives>

Indigenous Art Code
<https://indigenousartcode.org/>

Artists in the Black, Arts Law Australia
<https://www.aitb.com.au/>

Copyright Agency of Australia
<https://www.copyright.com.au/>

Other sites to visit:

University of Queensland – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit
<http://www.indigenousstudies.edu.au/>

State Library of Queensland
http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/64599/SLQ_-_Protocols_for_Indigenous_Collections.pdf

Queensland Government – Indigenous Education
<http://indigenous.education.qld.gov.au/eatsips/classroom-ethos/Pages/protocols.aspx>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library, Information and Resource Network
<http://atsilrn.aiatsis.gov.au/protocols.php>

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
<https://aiatsis.gov.au/>

TEACHERS' HELP

Websites:

- <http://art.girringun.com.au/>
- <https://collections.museumvictoria.com.au/items/232536>
- <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/311217>
- <https://nga.gov.au/Exhibition/Tactility/Detail.cfm?IRN=16903>
- <https://suzanneoconnellgallery.com/ta-ba-naba/>
- <https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/video/754558019906/our-stories-bagu-with-jiman>
- http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/encounters/encounters_films/videos/making_bagu_in_the_rainforest
- <https://blog.qagoma.qld.gov.au/another-art-history/>
- <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/review/aboriginal-people-of-the-north-revive-old-craft-of-bagu-figures/news-story/cd4360985675ca8a351f9496e0e96a4?sv=a55c246fb88cb23886d725e8675ce334>
- <https://ciaf.com.au/>
- www.ernabellaarts.com.au
- www.erubarts.com.au
- www.art.girringun.com.au
- www.hermannsburgpotters.com.au
- www.tiwidesigns.com

Printed:

- D Burnett, *Story Place, Indigenous Art of Cape York and the Rainforest* (exhibition catalogue), Queensland Art Gallery, South Brisbane, Queensland, 2003.
- M Beeron and N Murray, *Wabu Jananyu: Cultural Plant Use by the Girringun Aboriginal Corporation*, Cardwell, Queensland, 2013. (Cultural plant use).
- G Henry, *Girroo Gurrll – The First Surveyor*, W.R. Smith & Paterson, Brisbane, Queensland, 1967.
- *Aboriginal Tools of the Rainforest*, compiled by H Pedley with Aboriginal people of Jumbun, Townville, Queensland, 1985 (circa).
- *Tayenebe: Tasmanian Aboriginal women's fibre work* (exhibition catalogue), Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania, 2009.
- Barnard T, 'The North-East: Contemporary Basket Making in Queensland', *Woven Forms* Exhibition Catalogue, Object Gallery, Sydney, 2005, pp.28-33 (weaving).

Research Bibliography:

- <http://keys.trin.org.au/key-server/data/oeof0504-0103-430d-8004-060d07080d04/media/Html/index.html> (Lawyer cane)
- University of Queensland Art Museum, *Our Way: Contemporary Aboriginal Art from Lockhart River* Education Resource Kit – Teachers' Notes, 2007 (glossary notes)
- <http://www.indigenoustudies.edu.au/>
- <https://aiatsis.gov.au/>
- [https://iaca.com.au/sites/default/files/pdf/Kinship%20Catalogue%20\(Final\).pdf](https://iaca.com.au/sites/default/files/pdf/Kinship%20Catalogue%20(Final).pdf)
- <https://australianmuseum.net.au/glossary-indigenous-australia-terms> (glossary notes)
- <http://www.dictionary.com/> (glossary)
- www.qm.qld.gov.au/~t/media/Documents/Learning.../fact-sheet-bags-baskets.pdf (weaving)

ACTIVITIES

Some of the activities in this resource refer to the exhibition
Room Brochure, which is available online at
<http://www.magsq.com.au/cms/page.asp?ID=9264>

Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre and Museums & Galleries Queensland
invite teachers and students to email activities, artworks, or other
responses to the exhibition or to this Education Resource to
E: exhibitions@magsq.com.au

PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM

1. **Identify two interpretations of the term “point of view”. Use each in a sentence to demonstrate your understanding.**



The term can be defined as a way of thinking about something, but also about the position from which something or someone is observed. In this Education Resource, both interpretations have been utilised.

2. **Research similarities and differences between the following: aerial view, bird’s-eye view, side view, front view, plan view, street view.**
3. **How might an aerial photograph be obtained?**



Answers may include: from an aeroplane, helicopter, drone or crane.

4. **How might these occupations use aerial photography: solar panel installer, real estate agent, environmental scientist, State Emergency Service administrator, law enforcement officer, commercial advertiser, film-maker, cartographer?**



Solar panel installers use aerial photographs of a customer’s residence to determine where to locate the panels for maximum sun exposure. Real estate agents employ aerial views to mark out land boundaries and/or local landmarks to prospective buyers. ‘Before and after’ photographs can be compared to enhance environmental studies of a specific area. Aerial views enable State Emergency Service officers to locate lost hikers. Law enforcement officers use aerial photography during surveillance of allegedly illicit plant growth on private properties. Commercial advertisers and film-makers are well-known for sweeping views taken from above. Aerial photography assists greatly in map-making.

5. **Identify additional uses for aerial photography. Compete against others in your group to name the most uses in less than five minutes.**
6. **Offer a hypothesis regarding Debra Murray’s artistic intention with the exhibited photographs. Record your answer and share with your group, then research to discover if the artist’s actual motivation matches your thoughts.**



Refer to ‘Featured Artist: Debra Murray’ on pages 14–15.

7. **Imagine yourself as an advocate for Debra Murray’s concerns about the effects that agriculture has on the natural landscape. What would you say in a submission to the Queensland Government to persuade them to review land use in the Giringun region? You should incorporate strongly-persuasive language.**

8. Design a poster or brochure to raise public awareness regarding loss of natural rainforest/ forest in a specific area of Australia.
9. If you have access to aerial photographs of your school, your home or a favourite place, draw a plan view sketch based upon an aerial view of the location.
10. Re-create one of Debra Murray's photographs using alternate media (e.g. collage materials, papier-mâché, modelling clay.) Decide first whether to alter or retain the same scale.
11. Photograph both the top and side views of at least six objects; for example: a cup on a saucer; a model car; a triangular prism. Give the photographs to a partner as a matching challenge.
12. Draw the top-view silhouettes of four objects; for example: a rowing boat; a crocodile; someone wearing a sombrero whilst riding a bicycle! Post the silhouettes on a display board in your home or classroom for others to guess the object.
13. Draw a household object [for example: dining table; electric toaster; table lamp] from a bird's-eye view and then from a side view. What might a "worm's-eye view" be? Illustrate your chosen object from a "worm's-eye view".
14. Use a website such as Google Earth to explore at least three areas within the Girringun region as an aerial view and, where possible, a street view. Discuss the features of each area with a partner, then write a brief description of the areas you have viewed. Alternatively, you could use a favourite location.
15. As a result of classroom discussions, your research and/or personal travels, identify a similar landscape to the above within Australia.
16. Compose at least six questions you might ask in an interview with Debra Murray. For example, you may like to consider asking about choice of subject matter, the skills and techniques employed, time taken to complete the artworks and/or connection to place.

CERAMICS

PLEASE NOTE:

Bagu are culturally significant in the Girringun region. It is considered culturally inappropriate for non-Girringun people to reproduce Bagu in any way. Please do not instruct your students to photograph, sketch, sculpt, print or carve Bagu.

1. Use a dictionary to find a meaning for the word Bagu. What did you discover? What does this result suggest to you?



“Bagu” is a word from a regional Queensland Indigenous language, therefore does not appear in most dictionaries. NOTE: The words “Bagu” and “Jiman” are both singular and plural.

2. Locate and read the definition of Bagu in the glossary of the exhibition Room Brochure.
3. Put forward your theory on how Bagu were traditionally employed as fire-making implements. What did the people do with them? What do others in your group think?
4. Read about Bagu and Jiman at www.art.girringun.com.au. Write two questions you might ask of the Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre Staff as a result of your reading.
5. Bagu is an anthropomorphic representation of the fire creation spirit Jiggabunah. What is meant by “anthropomorphic”?



“Anthropomorphism” is a noun denoting the attribution of human characteristics or behaviour to non-human entities. “Anthropomorphic” is the adjective meaning having human characteristics.

6. Research why fire-making was traditionally important to the Girringun peoples. How was it used? List or illustrate at least five practical and positive uses for fire in traditional and/or modern Australia.



Suggestions may include: warmth; cooking; controlled burning of land for ease of travel and hunting or to promote seed germination and growth; smoking bees from a hive; illumination; straightening spear shafts; preparing logs for dugout canoes; to repel mosquitoes; for ceremonies.

7. Fire was usually kept alight using a special piece of wood which was carried between camp sites. Hypothesise what might happen if the fire went out.

8. Look up ‘*Alstonia scholaris*’ (A.K.A. milky pine or boogadilla) to discover its attributes. Is it native to Australia?



The milky pine is an evergreen rainforest tree, native to many tropical regions including South-East Asia and Australasia.

9. Why do you think milky pine was the chosen material for many traditional, and some contemporary, Bagu?



The milky pine, or boogadilla, was probably readily available in the Girringun region. As it is a soft wood, it is most likely a suitable medium for carving.

10. Traditionally, milky pine has medicinal uses. Research the remedies associated with specific parts of the plant.

11. Make local observations. You may have a milky pine in your streetscape! Photograph any examples that you locate.

12. Why have the majority of artists in this exhibition utilised non-traditional materials for their Bagu?



To respectfully observe cultural sensitivities associated with representation of the fire creation spirit, Jiggabunah.

13. Use the table below to sort the following sculptural mediums: playdough, terracotta clay, mud, builders’ putty, modelling clay, wet sand, paper pulp.

MAN-MADE MATERIALS	NATURAL MATERIALS

14. Investigate the characteristics which make a clay soil.




Answers can cover a wide range of topics such as: structure, particle size, organic content, density, difficulty for plant roots to take hold, and a tendency to hold water.

15. What are the properties of clay? Why is it a popular sculpting material?



Responses may include: shrinkage when dried (air or firing), cohesion, plasticity, fineness of grain, hardness when dried.

16. Share your understanding of “ceramics” with your group. Where might you find more information about ceramics?

17. Determine the meaning of each of the following ceramic-related terms: earthenware, glaze, porcelain, slip, stoneware, terracotta. Create a definition for each, in your own words. Share with your group.
 18. Explore various raw samples of clay, e.g. earthenware, porcelain, stoneware, terracotta. Compare the colours, smells, textures.
 19. Describe the attributes of wet clay, dried clay and fired clay.
 20. Handle an unfired clay object and a glazed ceramic object. Compare attributes such as mass, fragility, texture, degree of permanence, colour, surface temperature, functionality.
 21. Describe one of Sandra Escott's artworks. Include comments about visual elements (for example: line, shape, tone, colour, pattern, texture, form).
 22. Compare the different firing techniques used by artists George Beeron Senior and Judith Henry.
 23. How does the function of contemporary Bagu artwork differ from traditional Bagu?
-  The ceramic Bagu in this exhibition are not used as fire-making implements. They were created as artworks, designed to be shared with an audience.
24. Note the colours of the Bagu in the exhibition. Which colours dominate? Propose a reason why these colours recur in the artworks.
 25. From where is ochre obtained? Use a preferred research tool to find your answer.
 26. Collect natural ochre from your local area. Alternatively, use powdered paints in natural colours or crush sticks of blackboard chalk. Use the ochres to create a pattern or motif representing something that is important to you. For example, use a repeated motif to signify a favourite recreational activity or create a pattern using the colours of your local sporting team.
Note: A 'cyclone' motif appears in some of Tonya Grant's artwork. Surmise why she may have chosen this motif.
 27. Which artwork do you like best? Explain your choice to the group.
 28. Try to imagine 'Bagu' by artist Judith Henry as a pocket-sized object or John Murray's 2013 'Bagu' as a floor-to-ceiling artwork. How might the size of an individual artwork impact upon its audience? Discuss with your group.
 29. Artist John Murray lives at Murray Upper. Investigate to see if there is a connection between his name and place.

WEAVING

1. The Jawun in this exhibition have common attributes. Describe them orally or record them in a list.
2. Refer to the glossary in the exhibition Room Brochure to find the word matching this definition: "A traditional grass basket historically used to carry message sticks".
3. In the language of the Girringun region, Jawun are 'bicornual' baskets. To what does the prefix 'bi-' refer? [Clue: Think about biceps, bicycle, bilingual, binary, binocular, bisect.]



The prefix 'bi-' refers to two. The Latin derivation refers to something which occurs twice in a time period, e.g. biweekly, or every two years, e.g. biannually, or as having two parts, e.g. bilateral. Bicornual refers to the two 'horns' on the Jawun.

4. Identify the materials used by Daniel Beeron in this exhibition. You may need to read the labels on his artworks. What do you believe to be the artist's intention with his contemporary Jawun? What might you, as an artist, create with these materials? Record your ideas.
5. Many of the artists share the same surname. Investigate possible family connections.
6. Complete a Venn diagram to compare and contrast one of the historical artefacts from the South Australian Museum with one of the contemporary baskets in this exhibition.
7. 'Wungarr', by artist Eileen Tep, is an eel trap. It mimics the long, slender shape of an eel. Design a trap for a puffer fish or a jellyfish! Record your ideas in a bulleted list or create a labelled diagram. Identify the required attributes for your trap.
8. Collect natural fibres from your local area; for example: banana stem, coir (coconut fibre), corn silk, flax, animal fleece, iris leaves, jute, kapok, mat-rush (*Iomandra longifolia*), raw cotton, pineapple-leaf silk, raw silk fibres. Ask a friend to help you test the strength of each fibre. Each person should grasp an end and wrap it around a finger. Then pull away from the other person to stretch the fibre. Present your findings to your class via an oral presentation, an information table or a storyboard.
9. Select natural fibres to use for string-making. Research online for techniques. After you have made your string, record your results in the following table to be displayed in the classroom:

STUDENTS' NAMES	FIBRE	LENGTH OF STRING

10. Which fibre made the strongest string? The longest string?
11. Design a fibre carry-basket for one bird's egg. Consider the characteristics necessary to keep the egg safe. Present your design as a pencil sketch, a list of instructions, a computer graphic design or a finished artwork.
12. Exhibition artist Ninney Murray tells a story of connection with the traditional baskets from the South Australian Museum collection (refer to page 21). Speculate about how Ninney Murray might have identified the weaving as originating in the Girringun region.



Weaving materials, designs, colours, shapes and techniques vary between cultural groups. Using these attributes as a guide, it is often possible to connect baskets to the community in which they were made.

13. Artist Abe Muriata taught himself to weave after watching his grandmother when he was still a child. As an adult, he studied artefacts around the world to advance his art. Do you have a specific skill taught to you by a family member or that was self-taught? Tell your group how that skill was nurtured.
14. Are the baskets in the exhibition 2D (two-dimensional) or 3D (three-dimensional)? Discuss the differences with your class.
15. Name the three dimensions present in all 3D objects.
16. Locate information about the philosopher who founded a school of mathematics (circa 300 B.C.) and wrote about the concept of 3D.



The “father of geometry”, as he was widely known, was the Alexandrian Greek philosopher Euclid.

17. Calculate how many years it is since Euclid postulated a third dimension in his textbook “Euclidean Elements”.



Euclid formalised the concept of three dimensions 2,317 years ago (dating back from 2018).

18. How would you create a 4D (four-dimensional) basket? Write a procedure to inform others. Alternatively, create a digital presentation to your class.
19. The concept of four-dimensional space inspired many visual artists in the first half of the twentieth century. Identify these artists through research.



Cubists, Surrealists, Futurists and abstract artists used the ideas associated with 4D space to advance their art.

20. Emily Murray is exhibiting her artwork 'Mindi', created from plastic-coated wire. Why might she have chosen plastic-coated wire rather than traditional fibres? Suggest alternate materials for this artwork and explain the reasons for your choices.



Suggestions about the artist's choice of materials may include: to make a statement; wire was easier to work with than fibres; had access to plastic-coated wire; the plastic gives a colour contrast to fibre; recycling.

21. Discuss the merits, or lack of, for each of the following as basket-weaving materials: sisal rope, barbed wire, plastic strapping (used around packages), hair ribbon, bungee cord, kitchen string, human hair.
22. Visualise a basket or vessel of your own creation. First decide upon its function. Make a group presentation of your vision as a two-, three- or four-dimensional display. Identify the materials you used and the techniques you employed.

DISPLAYING ARTWORKS

1. If you were the curator for this exhibition, how might you display the artworks? Draw a plan of the space you are visiting and rework the placement of artworks as you deem most appropriate. Talk through your decisions with your group.
2. Search online to see how other galleries have displayed artworks by some of the exhibition artists.
3. Reflect on the use of sight lines in the displays. Does sight line influence how you respond to artworks? Explain your answer.
4. Which of the artworks in this exhibition draws your attention as you enter the gallery space? List the top three and make a note beside each one to support your selection.
5. The ceramic Bagu and the fibre Jawun touring with this exhibition are very fragile. Consider how the artworks in this touring exhibition are packaged and transported.



Students may wish to ask Gallery Staff to speak about how the artworks are handled and transported safely and respectfully.