

Lei it on opens at Cairns Art Gallery

Cairns Art Gallery | 24 June – 27 August 2017 | Free



Lei it on, a collection of contemporary lei and body adornment made by communities in the Torres Strait Islands will be on display at Cairns Art Gallery (CAG), opening 24 June.

Exploring the lei as an inherent symbol of identity and cultural meaning, this co-curated CAG and National Gallery of Victoria exhibition will present over forty unique artworks.

From large scale sculptural lei to intimate and delicate wearable pieces, the works have been created by Torres Strait Islander communities in workshops run by CAG and the NGV on Thursday Island, Saibai Island, Erub (Darnley Island), Mer (Murray Island), Mua (Moa Island) and Badu in early 2017.

Supported by the Gab Titui Cultural Centre, the workshops focused on creative expression, building meaningful connections with Torres Strait Islander communities and supporting artists in the creation of lei and body adornment for the NGV and CAG permanent collections.

'The NGV is delighted to be working with CAG and several Torres Strait Island artist communities to support this ambitious collaborative exhibition. Through art making activities, this project has seen a vital exchange of knowledge between artists and curators, creating a deeper understanding of shared culture and identity', said Tony Ellwood, Director, NGV.

The artists incorporated both customary and contemporary materials including shells, feathers, seeds and plant fibre through to found and recycled objects, promoting cultural identity, contemporary making, collaboration and creative expression.

The exhibition coincides with Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 13-16 July.

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MEDIA CONTACTS

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Image caption:

Segar Passi, Helen Dick, Garee Kaigey, Mary Kaigey, Rita Lui, Beverley Mabo, Helen Mabo, Delina Noah

Messiah Luzab Lera Kaubo Arsir (The whole island of Mer, making things, making lei) 2017, canvas, acrylic paint, thread, synthetic wadding, silk linen, shell, plastic, silver sheet, enamel paint, copper sheet, copper tube, acrylic felt, nylon cord, coral, kulap seed, wongai seed, steel coated wire 170 x 107 x 12 cm (variable)

Courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria

Photo: Michael Marzik