

## Resource Guide

# The Arts— Music

The information and resources contained in this guide provide a platform for teachers and educators to consider how to effectively embed important ideas around reconciliation, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions, within the specific subject/learning area of [The Arts- Music](#). Please note that this guide is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, and that teaching staff are encouraged to consult with their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, and [critically evaluate resources](#), in engaging with the resources contained in the guide.

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*Please be aware this guide may contain references to names and works of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that are now deceased. External links may also include names and images of those who are now deceased.*

## Background and Introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music

*“Music is not what I do, it is who I am. My songs may be contemporary but they are more than 40,000 years old. They come through me from my ancestors and my people... and they tell our stories.”* – Kutcha Edwards, Mutti Mutti Singer/Songwriter

It is important to appreciate that, while this guide predominantly focuses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, perspectives and music conventions since European colonisation, music has been an integral part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures for thousands of years, and continues to play an active and important part in cultural life to this day. It is also worth pointing out that, while the subject/learning areas of The Arts— and the guides that the Narragunnawali team have built around these— have been separated into distinct Music, Dance, Drama, Media and Visual Arts categories, traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music is ultimately tied to a strong and simultaneous use of cross-arts frameworks and features such as dance, drama and storytelling.

Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music has often been transmitted in the form of a corroboree—a ceremonial amalgamation of song, dance and visual symbols or stimuli to provide a dramatic representation of, and to pass on information about, the Dreaming. In this way, and akin to traditional belief systems, so too has this musical custom tended to embrace an intricate human, geographic and spiritual interrelationship.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music has long involved the important narration of Songlines— traditional musical stories which serve as an Aboriginal “voice map” of Country, describing important journeys made during the Dreaming. [Traditional sound instruments](#) such as the Yidaki (originating in Arnhem Land and now used widely across Australia – often called didgeridoos), drums in the Torres Strait, or clapsticks may also contribute to the soundscape according to cultural convention.

It is important to point out that there can be great diversity in the forms or features of traditional music practice. Words such as ‘corroboree’ are very generic, indeed coined by Europeans in an attempt to imitate a term from just one Aboriginal language of NSW. There is in fact no single musical structure, style or story, with significant diversity both between and within distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander linguistic-cultural groups.

Questions of custodianship, authority and authenticity are important to consider when it comes to the teaching, practice and transmission of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music. It is also important to appreciate distinct protocols around participation in, or attendance at, musical performances—these can depend on whether or not a particular musical piece/performance is more public and informal, or indeed more sacred and ritualised in nature. They can also be dependent on whether or not there are any culturally informed age or gender restrictions surrounding the musical piece/performance concerned.

Acknowledging the historical and continued significance of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music is a pivotal precursor to researching and reflecting on how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, perspectives and music conventions have entered into, or have been represented in, more contemporary ‘Western’ music domains. The following pages of this guide will provide a platform for Music teachers to effectively engage with the latter in particular.

## Timeline of Key Dates in the Contemporary History of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music

This timeline chronologically lists some of the key dates in the more recent history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music and/or in regard to the relationship between music and reconciliation more generally.

- **60,000+ years ago:**
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia have maintained longstanding conventions and conceptualisations pertaining to music for tens of thousands of years.
- **1953:**
  - *Tribal Music of Australia*, performed by Aboriginal Australians from the Yirrkala district and recorded by AP Elkin, was released as the first commercially available recordings of Australian Aboriginal music.
- **1960s:**
  - Aboriginal girl band, *The Sapphires*, was formed and were talent-spotted to perform soul music numbers for Australian troops in Vietnam. All four founding members of the group—Naomi Mayers, Beverly Briggs, Laurel Robinson and Lois Peeler— have since gone on to have successful careers outside of music.
- **1962:**
  - Jazz and blues singer, Georgia Lee, releases *Georgia Lee Sings the Blues Down Under*, the second album to be released by an Australian woman and was the first Australian album recorded in stereo.
- **1963:**
  - Jimmy Little was the first Aboriginal person to have a number one hit in Australia with his song *Royal Telephone*. This feat was achieved four years before Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were considered an official part of the population.
- **1983:**
  - The Warumpi Band released [Jailanguru Pakarnu \('Out from Jail'\)](#), the first rock song recorded and released in an Aboriginal language (Luritja).
- **1986:**
  - Midnight Oil spent several months on the Blackfella/Whitefella tour of outback Australia with Aboriginal music groups Warumpi Band and Gondwanaland, playing to remote Aboriginal communities and seeing firsthand the seriousness of the issues experienced in these communities since colonialism.
- **1987:**
  - Coloured Stone was the first Aboriginal band to win an ARIA Award.
- **1992:**
  - *Treaty*, by Yothu Yindi, was the first song in an Aboriginal language (Gumatj) to gain extensive radio airplay in Australia. Written by Yothu Yindi band members in collaboration with Paul Kelly and Peter Garrett, the song was a massive global hit in 1992.

- **1993:**
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music radio program, [Deadly Sounds](#), began. As well as featuring established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music artists, it helped to uncover new talent by giving up-and-coming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians the opportunity to have their music heard—building their musical capacity as a result of being a national radio program.
- **1995:**
  - The inaugural [Deadly Awards](#) (commonly known as ‘The Deadlys’) were held to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievement in music, sport, entertainment and community. The Deadlys became an annual celebration up until 2014.
- **1997:**
  - World’s first Aboriginal Music TV program was broadcasted by the Central Australian Aboriginal television station, *Imparja*, as part of a joint venture with CAAMA. Over six episodes, 38 live performances by Aboriginal bands and singers were broadcasted, including footage of Yothu Yindi and the Warumpi Band at a historic Land Rights concert in Darwin and Alice Springs the previous year.
- **2000:**
  - [Buried Country](#) first published.
- **2004:**
  - Inaugural NT Indigenous Music Awards (now National Indigenous Music Awards) held at the Darwin Festival Club.
- **2007:**
  - Powderfinger and Silverchair announced a unique partnership with Reconciliation Australia around their concert tour [Across the Divide](#). The historic *Across the Divide* tour promoted a new conversation to the Australian community about reconciliation.
- **2011:**
  - Australia’s first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander opera, *Pecan Summer* by Deborah Cheetham, received a fifteen-minute standing ovation when premiered in Mooroopna, Victoria.
- **2014:**
  - October marked the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Solid Rock*, with a special concert at Uluru led by singer/songwriter Shane Howard. *Solid Rock* was one of the first songs to broach the subject of the injustice that Aboriginal people had suffered in Australia and impacted powerfully on an entire generation.
- **2016:**
  - *Songlines – The Living Narrative of Our Nation* was announced as the 2016 NAIDOC Week theme.
- **2017:**
  - Baker Boy (Danzal Baker) released [Cloud 9](#), the first original rap to be recorded in an Yolŋu Matha.
- **2018:**
  - Jessica Mauboy represented Australia at the Eurovision Song Contest.

## Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music and Musicians

The table below lists a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians— singers, songwriters and instrumentalists— and gives just some examples of their public works, particularly those with reconciliation-related themes. You may wish to carry out further research about these musicians and their work, and see if you can identify any that have come from your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

| Name of Musician(s)                      | Musical Genre                                 | Example(s) of Musical Works with Reconciliation-related Themes  | Summary of Key Themes or Issues Explored   |
|--|---|---|--|
| <a href="#">Archie Roach</a>             | Acoustic, Country, Folk Rock, Australian Rock | <a href="#">Took the Children Away</a><br><br><a href="#">From Paradise</a><br><br><a href="#">Get Back to the Land</a><br><br><a href="#">A Child Was Born Here</a><br><br><a href="#">It's Not Too Late</a> | <p>A song which tells the story of the Stolen Generations from a personal perspective, telling of the incredible pain and long-lasting impacts of colonial policies of forcibly removing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.</p> <p>A song which echoes the importance of connecting to kin and Country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the impact of colonial policies of dispossession and separation.</p> <p>A song about the importance of (re)connecting with Country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>A reminder of the need to respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people born on these lands.</p> <p>A prayer to a shared humanity, a call for understanding amongst generations to come.</p> |
| <a href="#">Baker Boy</a>                | Rap, Hip Hop                                  | <a href="#">Cloud 9</a>   | The first original rap to be recorded and released in Yolŋu Matha.   |
| <a href="#">AB Original</a>              | Hip Hop, Rap                                  | <a href="#">January 26</a>  | A track created by hip hop duo A.B. Original (made up of Briggs and Trials) in collaboration with Dan Sultan to contribute to the conversation around questioning why we continue to celebrate Australia Day on January 26 <sup>th</sup> when that dates marks the beginning of so much suffering for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.   |
| Adam Briggs (' <a href="#">Briggs</a> ') | Hip Hop, Rap                                  | <a href="#">The Children Came Back</a>  | A sequel to Archie Roach's 'Took the Children Away,' this song also features Gurrumul and Dewayne Everettsmith and   |

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|                                |                            |   | commemorates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians who have triumphed despite the Australian Government's oppressive, assimilationist policies such as the forced removal of children from their families.  |
| <a href="#">Blekbala Mujik</a> | Pop, Rock, Dance, Reggae   | <a href="#">Walking Together</a>  | A song which acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors have walked the lands of Australia for thousands of years and that, although these lands always will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Country, it is important for non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to positively 'walk' and journey together in our postcolonial context in the spirit of reconciliation.   |
| <a href="#">Bobby McLeod</a>   | Country                    | <a href="#">Wayward Dreams</a><br><br><a href="#">The Resurrection</a>  | A song which tells of the freedoms of precolonial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life, and which laments the impacts of colonisation on the lives of Australia's First Peoples.<br><br>A song about resilience and healing.  |
| <a href="#">Christine Anu</a>  | Pop                        | <a href="#">My Island Home</a><br><br><a href="#">Celebrate</a>   | A cover of the song originally performed by the Warumpi band, which expresses the important and ongoing connection between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Country to which they and their cultures are tied.<br><br>A song about celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories, histories and cultures.  |
| <a href="#">Coloured Stone</a> | Rock, Ska, Reggae and Funk | <a href="#">Island of Greed</a><br><br><a href="#">No More Boomerang</a><br><br><a href="#">Black Boy</a><br><br><a href="#">Human Love</a> | A song which warns against materialising Country, and which promotes values of caring and sharing over greed.<br><br>A song which points out the threats to cultural continuation that have come with colonial 'civilisation.'<br><br>With lines such as "Black boy... the colour of your skin is your pride and joy," this song included somewhat revolutionary sentiments for the early 1980s, promoting pride, rather than 'shame,' in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and identities.<br><br>A song which promotes reconciliation-related values such as humanity and unity. |
| <a href="#">Dan Sultan</a>     | Alternative Rock           | <a href="#">No More Explanations</a>  | A punchy song which confronts superficial or racialised stereotyping, taking aim at those   |



|   |                                |   |  |
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|   |                                |   | who have considered Dan's skin colour before his music merit.  |
| <a href="#">David Williams</a>              | Didgeridoo                     |   |  |
| <a href="#">Djal Gurruwiwi</a>              | Didgeridoo                     |   |  |
| <a href="#">Frank Yamma</a>                 | Indigenous Roots (World Music) | <a href="#">Make More Spear</a><br><br><a href="#">Inside</a> | A song which reminisces on Aboriginal life prior to British colonisation, and which captures the imperative to hold onto Country and cultural traditions.<br><br>A song describing symbolic or literal imprisonment, highlighting the need for freedom.  |
| <a href="#">Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu</a> | Folk, World Music              | <a href="#">Gurrumul History (I was Born Blind)</a>           | A bilingual (English/Yolgnu) song which tells of Gurrumul's personal history, and expresses the importance of unity and solidarity.  |
| <a href="#">Gowrie Boys</a>                 | Rap, Hip Hop                   | <a href="#">Tomorrow's Heroes</a>                             | Teaming up with singer Jamie Lee Wilson, <i>Tomorrow's Heroes</i> was created by the Gowrie Boys from St Teresa's College in Abergowrie, Queensland, as a moving 'rap for reconciliation,' with key themes and messages around the value of reconciliation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians alike.   |
| <a href="#">Jessica Mauboy</a>              | Pop, R&B                       | <a href="#">Everyone</a><br><br><a href="#">Home to Me</a>    | The official theme song for the 2010 Summer Youth Olympics, which Jessica Mauboy was among five artists to sing. The song promotes not just national but international unity, and encourages recognition and celebration of all nations' successes and potential.<br><br>Original song from the TV series, <i>The Secret Daughter</i> , which captures the value of having a sense of belonging. |
| <a href="#">Jimmy Chi</a>                   | Musical Theatre                | <a href="#">Nothing I Would Rather Be</a>                     | Written by Jimmy Chi and collaborators as part of the musical <i>Bran Nue Day</i> , this song expresses the pride in being an Aboriginal Australian, all the while drawing on satirical humour to confront colonial 'wrongs' committed against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians throughout history.   |
| <a href="#">Jimmy Little</a>                | Country                        | <a href="#">Yorta Yorta Man</a>                               | A song about Jimmy Little's personal narrative as a Yorta Yorta man, pointing to the importance of remembering and recognising one's heritage, Country, and cultural background.   |

|                                  |   |   |  |
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| <a href="#">Kev Carmody</a>      | Acoustic, Country, Folk Rock, Australian Rock | <a href="#">Cannot Buy My Soul</a><br><br><a href="#">Thou Shalt Not Steal</a><br><br><a href="#">From Little Things Big Things Grow</a><br><br><a href="#">This Land Is Mine</a> | <p>A song which calls for humanity, and which expresses the strength and spirit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, despite more than two hundred years of colonial injustices and exploitation.</p> <p>A song which points to the hypocrisy of British colonisers who brought Christianity (including the Commandment that prohibits theft) to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and yet who took the land that Australia's First peoples had inhabited for tens and thousands of years prior.</p> <p>Written in collaboration with non-Indigenous artist Paul Kelly, this tells the story of Vincent Lingiari, a Gurindji stockman who, in 1966, initiated a strike in response to the poor working conditions faced by Gurindji workers, on the Wave Hill Cattle Station. This strike lasted 8 years, and has widely become known as the 'Wave Hill Walk-Off'.</p> <p>Written in collaboration with non-Indigenous artist Paul Kelly for the film <i>One Night the Moon</i>, this song contrasts Aboriginal and non-Indigenous perspectives by exploring the different ways in which an Aboriginal tracker and a non-Indigenous farmer relate to the land.</p> |
| <a href="#">Kutcha Edwards</a>   | Reggae, Rock                                  | <a href="#">Is This What We Deserve?</a><br><br><a href="#">Scars</a>   | <p>A song which critically questions the fairness and deservedness of colonial 'wrongs' carried out against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, reflecting the need for historical acceptance to address these wrongs into the future.</p> <p>A song which tells of the pain and intergenerational scars inflicted on Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by colonial injustices, and which calls for all Australians to walk together in telling the truth about our nation's history.</p>   |
| <a href="#">No Fixed Address</a> | Reggae, Rock                                  | <a href="#">We Have Survived</a>  | <p>A song about the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultures in the face of colonial influences and injustices.</p>  |
| <a href="#">Pigram Brothers</a>  | Country, Folk                                 | <a href="#">Wrong World</a><br><br><a href="#">Thirsty People</a>   | <p>A song which could be interpreted as expressing the challenge of being caught between two 'worlds,' or of not feeling 100% 'right' or assured about one's sense of belonging to the 'world' in which they find themselves in.</p>   |



|                                   |               |  |   |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|--|---|
|                                   |               |  | A song addressing some of the intergenerational traumas and effects, including alcoholism, associated with colonial influences and injustices.  |
| <a href="#">Seaman Dan</a>        | Folk, Jazz    | <a href="#">TI Blues</a>   | A song expressing the importance of belonging to, and (re)connecting with, Country.   |
| <a href="#">Troy Cassar-Daley</a> | Country       | <a href="#">My Gumbaynggirr Skies</a>  | A Tribute to Troy Cassar-Daley's Gumbaynggirr people and Country, echoing the important connection between kin, culture and Country.  |
| <a href="#">Warumpi Band</a>      | Country, Rock | <a href="#">Blackfella/Whitefella</a>  | A song drawing attention to issues of racism and encouraging harmony and cooperation by all people, no matter their cultural background.  |
| <a href="#">William Barton</a>    | Didgeridoo    |  |   |
| <a href="#">Yothu Yindi</a>       | Rock          | <a href="#">Treaty</a><br><br><a href="#">Tribal Voice</a><br><br><a href="#">Freedom</a><br><br><a href="#">Our Generation</a><br><br><a href="#">Timeless Land</a> | <p>Written in collaboration with Paul Kelly and Midnight Oil, this song was the first in an Aboriginal language (Gumatj) to gain extensive radio airplay, and calls for the government to honour Prime Minister Bob Hawke's promise of a treaty between the government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>A song which promotes the importance of standing up for one's rights, and listening to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices.</p> <p>An upbeat call to work together towards understanding, freedom and positive change.</p> <p>A message of hope and humanity, calling for a strong future of freedom.</p> <p>A song about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' timeless connection to Country, and to the stories that come from Country.</p> |

## Works by non-Indigenous Musicians with Reconciliation-related Themes

The table below lists a number of non-Indigenous musicians—singers, songwriters and instrumentalists— and gives just some examples of their public works, particularly those with reconciliation-related themes. Some of these works may also involve creative collaboration between non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians. You may wish to carry out further research about these musicians and their work, and see if you can identify any others to meaningfully introduce in your classroom.

| Name of Musician(s)            | Musical Genre | Example(s) of Musical Works with Reconciliation-related Themes                              | Key Themes or Issues Explored   |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---|---|
| <a href="#">Goanna</a>         | Folk Rock     | <a href="#">Solid Rock</a>  | A land rights anthem which describes the significance and timelessness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to Country, and which points to the injustice and injuriousness of colonial efforts to dispossess our First Peoples of their traditional lands.   |
| <a href="#">Kerry Fletcher</a> |               | <a href="#">Sorry Song</a>  | Written in 1998 on behalf of all Australians whose hearts ache when thinking of the pain experienced by children and families of the Stolen Generations. A new verse and chorus was added ten years later to reflect the overwhelming community response since the Federal Government made the historic National Apology to the Stolen Generations on February 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2008.   |
| <a href="#">Midnight Oil</a>   | Rock          | <a href="#">Beds are Burning</a>  | A protest song in support of giving traditional Australian lands back to the Pintupi people, who were among the very last people to come in from the desert.  |
| <a href="#">Paul Kelly</a>     | Rock          | <a href="#">Special Treatment</a><br><br><a href="#">From Little Things Big Things Grow</a> | Despite being a non-Indigenous man, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have said that Paul Kelly has a unique ability to sensitively and accurately portray some of the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Paul Kelly wrote the song <i>Special Treatment</i> as a response to claims by Western Australian pastoralists and politicians that Aboriginal people received special treatment.<br><br>Written in collaboration with Aboriginal artist Kev Carmody, this tells the story of Vincent Lingiari, a Gurindji stockman who, in 1966, initiated a strike in response to the poor working conditions faced by Gurindji workers, on the Wave Hill Cattle Station. This strike |

|   |                  |                                   |  |
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|   |                  | <a href="#">This Land Is Mine</a> | <p>lasted 8 years, and has widely become known as the 'Wave Hill Walk-Off'.</p> <p>Written in collaboration with Aboriginal artist Kev Carmody for the film <i>One Night the Moon</i>, this song contrasts Aboriginal and non-Indigenous perspectives by exploring the different ways in which an Aboriginal tracker and a non-Indigenous farmer relate to the land.</p> |
| <a href="#">Powderfinger</a>  | Alternative Rock | <a href="#">Like a Dog</a>        | A song written about the Howard Government's poor treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the time, with the film clip starring Aboriginal boxer Anthony Mundine.  |
| <a href="#">Redgum</a>  | Folk-rock        | <a href="#">Water and Stone</a>   | A song recognising the life and strength of Pemulwuy, an Aboriginal man noted for his resistance to British occupation of the Sydney area.   |
| Spinifex Gum, featuring <a href="#">Felix Riebl</a> ( <a href="#">The Cat Empire</a> ) and Marliya singers ( <a href="#">Gondwana Indigenous Children's Choir</a> ) |                  | <a href="#">Ms Dhu</a>            | A song which tells the story of Aboriginal woman Ms Dhu's death in custody at South Hedland police station.  |
| <a href="#">Ted Egan</a>  | Folk             | <a href="#">Gurindji Blues</a>    | Recorded together with Galarrwuy Yunupingu, this song critiques the exploitative wages and poor working conditions endured by Gurindji workers on the Wave Hill Cattle Station. These conditions led to the 'Wave Hill Walk-Off,' a milestone strike movement initiated by Gurindji stockman, Vincent Lingiari.  |
| <a href="#">The Herd</a>  | Hip Hop          | <a href="#">77%</a>               | A song which draws attention to the issue of racism in Australia, not only in terms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of racism, but also experiences of racism more broadly. The line "77% of Aussies are racist" is a lyrical reference to 2001 Australian survey results regarding the Federal Government's response to the Tampa affair.          |

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Companies/Institutions

The following list includes several Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music companies/institutions that are either active today, or have played a very active role in the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music in Australia. Note that some of the listed companies/institutions may not be exclusively Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focused, owned or governed, but nevertheless offer relevant projects around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music. While dance, drama and visual arts are often important features of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music arts, please see The Arts— Dance, The Arts— Drama and The Arts—Visual Arts resource guides for more dance, music or visual arts-specific organisational lists. On a related note, you may find that, in your local area, it is actually your local Art Centre<sup>1</sup>, Language<sup>2</sup>/Culture Centre, or another community organisation that acts as the main host for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music arts events.

- [ABMUSIC](#)
- [Black Arm Band](#) (closed 2017 after more than a decade in operation)
- [CAAMA Music](#)
- [Desert Pea Media \(Song Nation Project\)](#)
- [Goolarri Media \(Music Department\)](#)
- [Indigenous Community Television \(Our Music\)](#)
- [IndigiTUBE](#)
- [Indigenous Hip Hop Projects](#)
- [MusicNSW \(Whichway program\)](#)
- [Nabarlek partnership/Manmoyi Music](#)
- [National Indigenous Radio Service](#)
- [Northern Territory Music School \(Indigenous Music Education Program\)](#)
- [NG Media \(Music\)](#)
- [QMusic \(in collaboration with Virgin Australia\) Home Artists initiative](#)
- [Skinnyfish Music](#)
- [Winanjikari Music Centre](#)

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Centres, please see the Visual Arts resource guide.

<sup>2</sup> For a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Centres, please see the Languages resource guide

## Celebratory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Events

The list below features examples of past and/or present Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music festivals or celebratory events.

- [Barunga Festival](#)
- [Boomerang Festival](#)
- [Bush Bands Bash](#)
- [Clancestry](#)
- [Garma Festival](#)
- [Homeground](#)
- [National Indigenous Music Awards](#)
- [Sing Loud! for reconciliation](#)
- [Stompen Ground](#)
- [VIPA Awards \(Music Category\)](#)
- [Yabun Festival](#)

For more information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander festivals/celebrations pertaining to The Arts more broadly, you may also like to visit:

- <https://www.australia.com/en/things-to-do/aboriginal-australia.html>
- <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-arts/>
- <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-arts/national-indigenous-arts-awards/>
- <http://www.indigenous.gov.au/news-and-media/events>

## Other Online Guides/Reference Materials

- ABC (2016) *Indigenous Opera Stars*, <http://www.abc.net.au/btn/story/s4487800.htm>
- ABC Education (2010) *Tiwi music: keeping an ancient culture alive*, <http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/1647173/tiwi-music-keeping-an-ancient-culture-alive>  
(see also this ABC Behind the News version: <http://www.abc.net.au/btn/story/s2893591.htm>)
- Australia Council for the Arts (2007) *Protocols for producing Indigenous Australian Music (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*, [http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/symphony/extension/richtext\\_redactor/getfile/?name=8d8f0324581a5b06f6b9fe916f498072.pdf](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/symphony/extension/richtext_redactor/getfile/?name=8d8f0324581a5b06f6b9fe916f498072.pdf)
- Australia Council for the Arts (2007) *Protocols for producing Indigenous Australian performing arts (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*, [http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/symphony/extension/richtext\\_redactor/getfile/?name=42f208904890560b1eb1194724637ee6.pdf](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/symphony/extension/richtext_redactor/getfile/?name=42f208904890560b1eb1194724637ee6.pdf)
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (2017) *Music*, <http://aiatsis.gov.au/collections/collections-online/digitised-collections/musical-connections-alice-boyle/music>
- Blackfella Films (2008) *The Black Book Directory*, <http://www.theblackbook.org.au/directory.asp>
- Blackfella Films (2008) *The Black Book Library*, <http://www.theblackbook.org.au/library.asp>
- Cultural Ministers Council (2008) *Indigenous Contemporary Music Plan: Towards a stronger Indigenous contemporary music sector*, <https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1761f/indigenous-contemporary-music-action-plan.pdf>
- National Film and Sound Archive (2008) *The Songlines*, NFSA, <http://dl.nfsa.gov.au/module/1566/>
- Australia Council for the Arts (2010) *Song Cycles*, [http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/research/song\\_cycles\\_full\\_report-54325c76d2cb8.pdf](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/research/song_cycles_full_report-54325c76d2cb8.pdf)
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- Australian Music Centre (2016) *Indigenous Australian Music*, <http://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/guides/indigenous-music>
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## Reflective Questions for Music Staff and Students

- How have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures influenced Australian music, and what active role do these histories and cultures play today?
- Research and describe some of the similarities and differences between the music traditions of two or more distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander linguistic-cultural groups. What do the similarities suggest about some of the shared elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures? What do the differences suggest about the diversity of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures?
- What is the relationship between music and storytelling? How can music pieces/performances be involved in the telling and re-telling of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures?
- What are some of the similarities and differences between non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music conventions? What are some of the ways in which these conventions have or can work together in interesting and important ways?
- Can Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, perspectives and musical styles be adequately or appropriately represented by non-Indigenous Australians? How and/or why?
- How might questions of ownership, authority and authenticity be important when considering the adoption or adaptation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music conventions within 'Western' music arts?
- Choose to research an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander musician. What is the importance of his or her contributions to music arts, either at the local or (inter)national scale?
- What is the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music, dance, media, dramatic and/or visual arts? Why are these relationships important? How are they similar or different to non-Indigenous cross-arts collaboration, either in style or in purpose?
- Where possible, organise an excursion to a public Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music performance. What messages did you receive from this performance, and how did it make you feel? How was it similar or different to non-Indigenous music performances that you have attended?
- How might your school or early learning service contribute to the celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music?
- How can embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures into the study and practice of Music help to foster reconciliation?