

QPAC CELEBRATES 25 YEARS SINCE MABO DECISION

The Mabo Oration returns to Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) on **28 August 2017** to celebrate and pay tribute to Koiki “Eddie” Mabo with an expanded format and line-up of prominent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and native title experts.

This year marks 25 years since the landmark High Court decision which legally recognised Indigenous people had a special relationship with the land that existed prior to colonisation.

As a result of the High Court ruling, the proposition known as Terra Nullius was struck down and Eddie Mabo became an icon in the struggle for recognition and land rights by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. He died shortly before the High Court handed down its verdict.

In acknowledgement of the significant anniversary, the 2017 *Mabo Oration* will be a panel discussion hosted by **Stan Grant** and featuring a mix of previous orators and new voices including **Dr Jackie Huggins AM FAHA, Dr Bryan Keon-Cohen AM QC, Dr Dawn Casey PSM FAHA, Professor Tom Calma AO, Jayde Geia** and **Vonda Malone**.

The biennial *Mabo Oration* was established by Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland (ADCQ) and QPAC in 2005 to contribute to a national conversation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Premier and Arts Minister Anastacia Palaszczuk said the Queensland Government recognised the incredible legacy of Eddie Mabo, an exceptional and inspiring Queenslanders who changed the course of history.

“This year we pay special tribute to the leadership and vision of Eddie Mabo 25 years after the High Court of Australia’s historic decision recognising the Meriam People of the Torres Strait as having native title over part of their traditional land,” the Premier said.

“*The Mabo Oration* is a wonderful initiative of the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland and QPAC, and I congratulate them on paying tribute to the work of Eddie Mabo and providing a forum to discuss our progress towards Indigenous recognition, human rights and reconciliation.”

The inaugural Oration was given by Noel Pearson and since then leaders from divergent fields have delivered on subjects ranging from the legal protection of cultural knowledge to meeting the contemporary challenges of social justice.

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ADCQ Commissioner Kevin Cocks AM said Eddie Mabo had been committed to the idea of conversation with his community and family, and with the academic community.

“It is fitting this anniversary presentation of *The Mabo Oration* moves to a conversation format. Not only is it a rare opportunity for public conversation of this kind but it also honours Eddie’s crusading spirit as well as his achievements,” said Commissioner Cocks.

QPAC Chief Executive John Kotzas said *The Mabo Oration* was an important part of the Centre’s program and role as place for public conversation and dialogue.

“I look forward to this year’s event, to hearing from a range of voices that will no doubt challenge us about what comes next for Australia as a nation in relation to native title and Indigenous affairs,” Mr Kotzas said.

The Mabo Oration is proudly supported by the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Queensland Government.

-ENDS-

Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland and QPAC present
The Mabo Oration

WHEN: 28 August 2017, 6pm
WHERE: Playhouse, QPAC, Cultural Precinct, South Bank, Brisbane
TICKETS: Refer to qpac.com.au for current pricing
BOOKINGS: qpac.com.au/event/mabo_oration_17 or 136 246

For further information, images or interviews please contact:

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The Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) is located within Queensland’s vibrant cultural precinct at South Bank, Brisbane. The Centre is focused on creating a world where the performing arts matter to everyone. Welcoming around 1.3 million visitors and presenting over 1200 performances annually the QPAC experience extends beyond the theatre with a range of unique spaces to eat, drink, and enjoy free live entertainment. Visit www.qpac.com.au to learn more about Queensland’s Centre for live performance and the range of exciting events and initiatives on offer year round. To come a little closer to QPAC find out more about QPAC Membership [here](#).