

# GAIL MABO

Artist, Performer, Choreographer,  
Cultural Consultant & Speaker



The middle daughter of Eddie 'Koiki' Mabo and Bonita Mabo, Gail was born and raised in Townsville, Queensland. With the family originally from Mer (Murray Island) in the Torres Strait, Eddie 'Koiki' Mabo was the political activist and land rights campaigner whose crusade famously resulted in the Mabo Decision being handed down in the High Court on 3rd June 1992.

One of seven children with three adopted siblings, Gail is the middle child. Upon leaving high school, she joined the Aboriginal & Islander Dance Theatre and has since appeared in short films and plays including Jack Davis' **No Sugar** and Jimmy Chi's **Bran Nue Dae**. In 2008 Gail joined the board of the **National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association** (NAISA) and has since taken an active role in the development of the school with new facilities opening this year. Gail has also recently been appointed to the advisory board of **Black Arm Band**.

In 2011 Gail choreographed and directed a 20-minute performance piece entitled **Koiki**, which was performed by the students of NAISDA at a special showcase at the Riverside Theatre, Parramatta. Most recently Gail acted as a Cultural Consultant to Blackfella Films during the production of the highly anticipated film **MABO** starring Jimi Bani as Eddie 'Koiki' Mabo and Deborah Mailman as Bonita. The film received its world premiere at Gala Screening as part of the Sydney Film Festival in June, before airing on ABC TV to critical acclaim. Directed by Rachel Perkins the film marked the 20th anniversary of the historic High Court decision.

A celebrated artist, Gail's work is part of the Ngapa Kai Kai (Waterfood) Collection in the National Gallery Touring Collection and the Queensland Arts Council Land & Sea Touring Collection.

*"My father inspired me to dance, and encouraged me to share our culture with all Australians. He is my role model. Through his strength and determination he taught me to be a stronger person, and to stand up for what I believe in."* **Gail Mabo**

# WELCOME TO DREAMTIME TRACKS!

Come and experience first hand the rich culture and history of North Queensland's Indigenous people.

We are rainforest people, saltwater people, freshwater people, woodland people, island people and wetland people extending south from the Bowen region, west to the ranges around Charters Towers, and north from Townsville and Magnetic Island to the offshore islands of the Palm Group and Hinchinbrook Island and the rainforest mountains leading to the tablelands south of Cairns.

We retain cultural knowledge of all the features of this landscape including waterholes and waterfalls, islands and coral reefs, rivers and wetlands, mountains and flood plains.

We maintain kinship ties to each other but we also value new relationships based on shared experiences of dispossession.

We are proud of our culture, and committed to passing on our knowledge as the custodians of our country.

## GUBBAL – Creation Story

By Walter Palm Island

Told to Walter Palm Island by his father.

The story begins when Gubbal the Rainbow Serpent travelled and as he did he created the Herbert River area. Then Gubbal went on to make the Hinchinbrook Channel then over to create the Greater Palm Island's which we know today. Then Gubbal rested at Palm Island in a great pool up in the mountains in a deep water hole called Bamboo Creek. As he was lying at the bottom of the waterhole, the children would swim and play in the water hole. One day Gubbal saw a beautiful girl swimming at the water hole and he decided to take her. When the other kids left the pool they found the girl was missing.

Then Gubbal snuck away over the ranges and went to the back of Palm Island and then to Barbara Bay where he made Barbara

Island and Carpet Snake Creek. Next he shaped and moulded the outer island of the Palm Island group.

Then he came to rest on Magnetic Island where he swallowed the girl still alive so he could rest. Back at Bamboo Creek they were looking for the very pretty girl and remembered seeing a snake. Her old father started looking for his daughter, following Gubbal's tracks to Barbara Bay and then to Barbara Island and the outer islands.

The old men met Gubbal and then told Gubbal to give the girl back to the old father.

Gubbal was afraid of the father. Gubbal said "don't kill me please" and then the father said "I won't kill you I just want my daughter back."

The father had his boys with him and sent them to get a clever man to get Gubbal to get the daughter out of his stomach.

When Gubbal gave the daughter up she was covered in slime. So the clever man summoned the green ants and before that he had to smoke her body to get the evil spirit out of her body. So the clever man freed her and got the green ants to clean off her.

The father took the girl back to Palm Island to Bamboo Creek. The little daughter was still sick and so she had to rest.

The mother was getting wood to make a fire to warm her body.

But the father told the mother "you are making too much noise" and the father didn't want too much noise because his daughter was still sick.

Bamboo Creek was the resting place of the daughter and Bamboo Creek is a healing place because the daughter is still sleeping.

That is why we always use the green ants to heal us when we are sick.

"Nagai" "Ay you Welcome"