

Mundingburra State School

Baidam Look to the Stars

Torres Strait Islander culture is closely linked to the stars. They inform Islander laws, customs and practices that are recorded and handed down in the form of story, song, dance, ceremony and artefacts. Torres Strait Islander people are seafarers. The sky connects them to how they live their lives. For many years, they have navigated by stars traveling among islands and they use their own constellations to direct their living practises.

Our artwork represents the shark constellation Baidam which is made up of seven bright stars in the Big Dipper, which is part of the constellation Ursa Major, also known as the Greater Bear. From July to August, Baidam appears in the North sky sitting horizontal over Papua New Guinea. This indicates the best time to plant young banana, sugarcane and casava. It is also the mating season for sharks, a warning to be vigilant in the sea. Lunar phases of the moon inform the best times to fish.

Our artwork is made up of three spheres; the sky, the sea and the land. Our headpiece represents the sky featuring the seven stars of the constellation Baidam. The sash represents the clear reflection of the stars on the sea showing what it looks like when the wind drops, it also features fish, a shark's regular meal.

The Baidam sculpture sits at waist height cruising in the sea representing all the people of the islands of the islands of the Torres Strait as sharks are found throughout. The colour of the land is represented in the zazi (dancing skirt). The model carries in his left hand the sprouting vegetables that are ready to plant around this time.

Baidam Look to the Stars 2025

Grayson BAKER, Chantyliah CASTORS-BARRY, Royaul CHATFIELD, Jaalah GRAUNER, Sahara HAYWARD, Amelia HENRY, Saphia HOLDEN, Eden LUI, Eric MABO, Samuel MAIRU (Model), Christine MOSBY, Deja SIULAI, Maliq TAPIM, Daniel WATERTON, Shannah WILLIAMS, Zaniah WOSOMO, Zanauius WOSOMO, Zskaylah WOSOMO.

Wool, raffia, palm leaf, feathers, clay, paper mâché, wire.



