

**MEDIA RELEASE****4 June 2021**

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# Music and design inspires next generation of Indigenous youth

'Heal Country' is this year's theme for upcoming NAIDOC Week celebrations (4-11 July); so we caught up with Indigenous community leader and SAE Creative Media Institute student, Michael Weir. Michael, who is a proud Aboriginal man from the Wiradjuri nation shares how he's making a positive impact in the lives of Indigenous youth. From sharing Indigenous history through his clothing label, Sacred Era, to running hip-hop workshops for Indigenous youth; we explore how Michael is using his creative industries skills to honour his heritage and inspire the next generation of Indigenous creatives.

Hi Michael, can you tell us about Sacred Era?

It's an Aboriginal owned and operated fashion label that exists to strengthen the pride in Indigenous youth, and change the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture are viewed.

It's an idea I had a long time ago where I wanted to sell t-shirts to raise money for hip-hop workshops. I thought setting up a social enterprise is a much smarter way to generate funds than having to apply for grants all the time.

The brand and the designs, like the 'Black ANZAC', is about educating people and making them aware of the Indigenous culture and how we got to where we are today.

How's it been going?

The brand began in 2013, but in 2019 is when it really kicked off when I started a crowdfunding campaign. I raised over \$40,000 to develop new designs and pay my friends, who had been helping me out for free. I had no budget to promote the campaign, so it was all done through word of mouth.



ANIMATION

AUDIO  
& MUSICCREATIVE  
INDUSTRIES

DESIGN



FILM



GAMES

WEB &  
MOBILE

Wow, that's incredible! I understand all your profits are used to run hip-hop workshops. Why are these so important?

For a number of reasons. Firstly, it's just a vehicle to get young Indigenous people to talk. I have a background in Indigenous leadership, and I believe everybody deserves the chance to chase their dreams. I remember, when I was younger, being stuck in a hole and not knowing any artists from my background who made hip-hop music - these workshops are for those people.

And now you're studying for a Bachelor of Songwriting and Music Production at SAE Byron Bay?

There's so much to enjoy about studying at SAE, like the expert advice you get from the lecturers everyday. The studios are incredible, and it's an exciting place where everyone's got a creative mindset. They're following their passions and their dreams, so it's got a really nice vibe to it.

When I go out into the community, you get some younger people that are a bit shy, but they love playing on an MPC making beats. So, I'd love to do some music production workshops in the future, once I finish my degree.

From a funding perspective, saying I have a degree in songwriting and music production from SAE gives me a lot of credibility.

What do you enjoy about making music?

Lyrical writing is a great way to express yourself and get things off your chest, and to also have a voice. There are not many ways Indigenous people can have a voice, but with music we can.

What are your plans for the future?

I'd like to continue to write songs and perhaps start an Indigenous label. I'd love to help any aspiring artists who need a platform. Eventually, I'd like to think I'll end up back in education teaching - maybe at SAE!

***SAE is the place for creators and innovators; the leaders in creative media education across seven disciplines – animation, audio and music, creative industries, design, film, games, web and mobile. Find out more at [sae.edu.au](http://sae.edu.au)***

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**For more information:**

Barry de Silva, National Communications Manager

Phone: 0468 304 636

Email: [b.desilva@sae.edu](mailto:b.desilva@sae.edu)

**Imagery:**

(L to R) Michael and actress, Brooke Satchwell; Michael wearing the Black ANZAC tee



## About SAE

*SAE Creative Media Institute is the place for creatives and innovators. Since 1976 we've been the leaders in creative media education across animation, audio, creative industries, design, film, games, web and mobile. Every year, we support more than 10,000 students globally to develop the skills and experience needed to carve successful careers. Students enjoy access to the latest technology and are taught by industry-experienced faculty, while putting their skills to the test in small class environments. Our graduates become part of a highly-respected global community of creatives that's been around for over 40 years. We pride ourselves on being technically explorative, transformative and brave through our range of creative media programs, from short courses and professional training through to bachelor and postgraduate degrees. In Australia, our programs are delivered at campuses in Sydney, Brisbane, Byron Bay, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide. SAE is a part of Navitas Pty Ltd. More information about SAE is available at [sae.edu.au](http://sae.edu.au).*

## About Navitas

*Navitas is a proud Australian company that pioneered an innovative university partnership model of education in Perth in 1994. Its entities have delivered education programs across the country since 1976. Further information about Navitas Pty Ltd is available at [navitas.com](http://navitas.com).*

