Cultural ties Built To Last

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CAIRNS State High School is home to some hip-hop stars of the future with a handful of indigenous students this week releasing an original song and music video. Delivered with the help of industry professionals and mentors, Built to Last was released to radio stations on Thursday thanks to the Smugglers of Light Foundation’s Song Nation project.

The crew spent three days creating, recording and filming the music video at the school before it hit the airwaves and YouTube for participants and their communities to listen to and watch the final product. Littiah Billy, from the group of students known as Cairns Murri Crew, said she felt privileged to have the opportunity to contribute to the creative project. "Social media and music have a great influence on people. Keeping our cultural connection strong with indigenous youth is paramount,” she said.

Fellow group member Denzel Kennedy said, “It’s pretty cool and a really good way to represent my people and our culture.”

The lyrics were a collaborative effort from the students and professional crew, and they portray Cairns’ attractive features including “sunshine, blue sea, tight rhymes and dope beats”.

But they also note “it wasn’t always paradise” for local indigenous people who they say have become resilient due to lack of freedom and opportunities in years past.