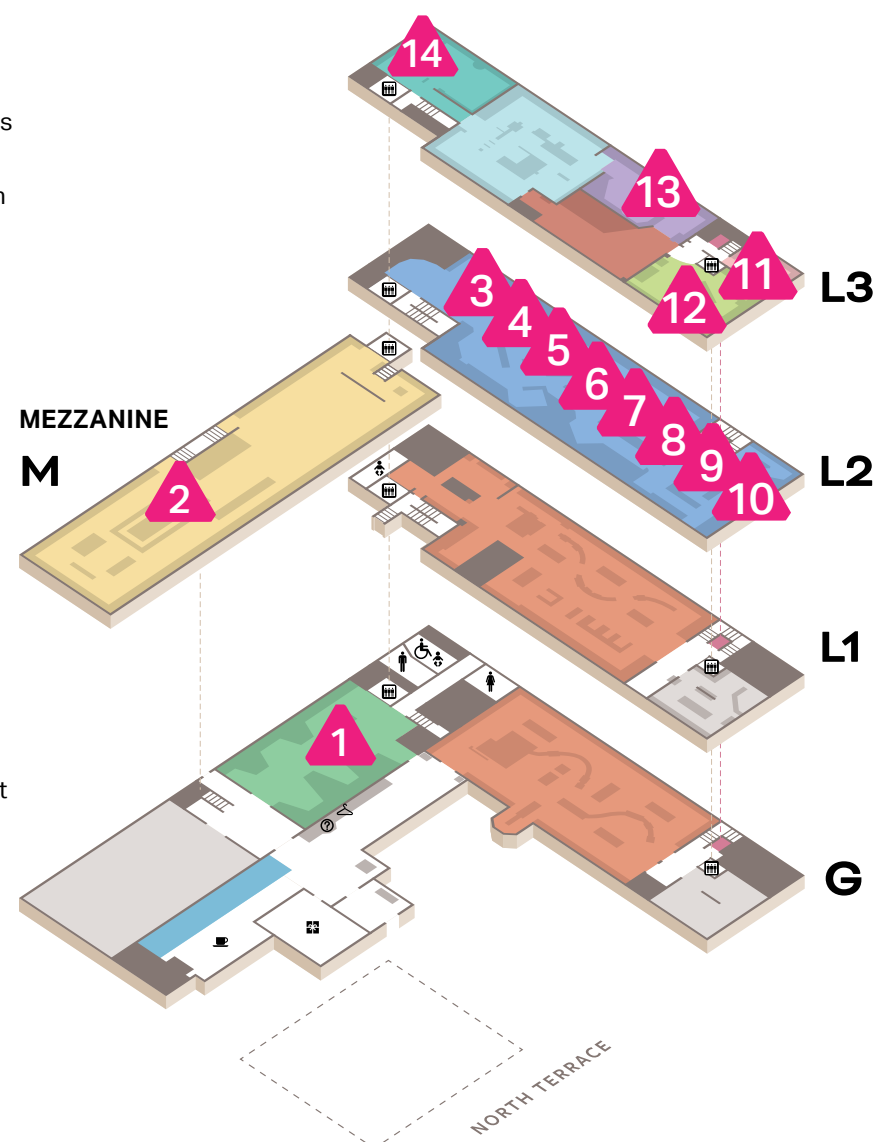


Use the map to follow the trail through the Museum.
Stickers can be found near each of the objects.

1. **Indian elephant** | World Mammals Gallery, Ground floor
2. **Greenstone hei tiki** | Pacific Cultures Gallery, Mezzanine
3. **Skeleton chimera** | South Australian Biodiversity Gallery, level 2
4. **Rainbow lorikeet** | South Australian Biodiversity Gallery, level 2
5. **Butterflies** | South Australian Biodiversity Gallery, level 2
6. **Cockroaches** | South Australian Biodiversity Gallery, level 2
7. **Magpie** | South Australian Biodiversity Gallery, level 2
8. **Octopus** | South Australian Biodiversity Gallery, level 2
9. **Rainbow cale** | South Australian Biodiversity Gallery, level 2
10. **Decorator crab** | South Australian Biodiversity Gallery, level 2
11. **Rosetta Stone cast** | Ancient Egypt Gallery, level 3
12. **Opals** | Minerals and Meteorites Gallery, level 3
13. **Minerals by colour** | Minerals and Meteorites Gallery, level 3
14. **Ripple wall** | Ediacaran Fossils Gallery, level 3



IT'S IN OUR NATURE

A QUEER TRAIL OF THE MUSEUM

The South Australian Museum's mission is to inspire in ALL people wonder and curiosity about life on Earth. We aim to be a modern, visitor-focused museum that uses our collections to create and share new knowledge. In doing so, we recognise that there are a multitude of stories, information, perspectives and experiences not always present in our galleries and displays.

It's in our Nature is the first LGBTQIA+ trail for a natural history museum in Australia. The trail is written and curated by LGBTQIA+ South Australians in their voices and from their perspectives. Following the success of our 2020 trail, we have added new voices with more highlights around the galleries.

We invite you to explore the South Australian Museum to discover stories of love, desire and identity found in our world-class collections. We are committed to making Australia's natural and cultural heritage accessible, engaging and fun for everyone.

IT'S IN OUR NATURE PODCAST

Our contributors have generously participated in a podcast about *It's in our Nature*. They share personal stories and insights into parts of the South Australian Museum that delight and resonate with them as LGBTQIA+ people. Scan the QR code to hear them offer a new lens for you to view the Museum through.



1. INDIAN ELEPHANT

World Mammals Gallery

Growing up in an Anglo-Christian culture one learnt biblical tales: animals in Noah’s Ark were male-female couples just like our parents; monogamous and ‘designed’ to reproduce. But nature is far more diverse. Take the mighty elephant. Females usually live in matriarchal herds of up to 50 led by an older female with no permanent adult males. Males often form male-only herds of 7–15; some will be loners. Breeding males associate temporarily with female herds, mate with several and don’t participate in rearing the young. Mothers often leave their young in the herd’s ‘nursery groups’. And intimacy isn’t just for procreation. There’s a great deal of affectionate behaviour between males with ‘kissing’ and mounting. Females masturbate each other with their trunks and mount. Ah yes, there’s much diversity in nature!

Will Sergeant, gay politics activist and creator of Dr Gertrude Glossip PhD (Formal Drapery) Curtain University

2. GREENSTONE HEI TIKI

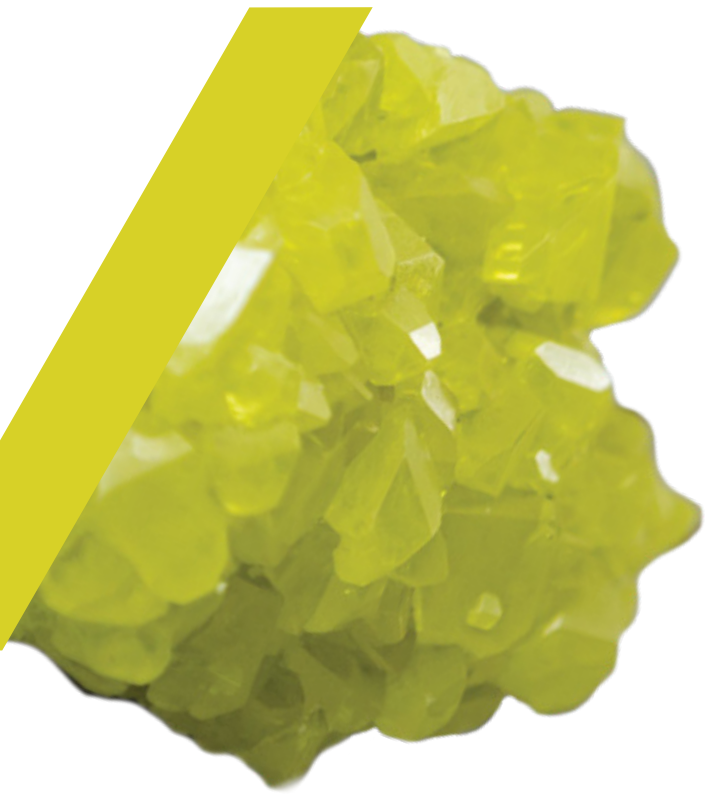
Pacific Cultures Gallery

The Polynesian cultures of the Pacific have a long-recorded history of Trans identity and acceptance.

As a Trans-Woman of Pakeha (European) Aotearoa (New Zealand) heritage the Pacific Cultures Gallery is a special place. It houses cultural treasures of the Māori people on whose traditional lands I grew up and also reminds me that some of my earliest awareness of my Trans identity is associated with the drag shows of the whakawāhine of Wellington in the 1960s.

The hei tiki as a traditional taonga has different connotations in different times and locations often being reinterpreted and sometimes explained as the representation of the first man even though early hei tiki are often carved in female form.

Jenny Scott, Archivist



3. SKELETON CHIMERA

South Australian Biodiversity Gallery

A chimera is essentially a being that’s made of DNA from two or more individuals. The chimera in the Biodiversity Gallery is a fabulous beast that shows the incredible diversity and similarity in vertebrate skeletons.

As a gay man in a heteronormative society I feel like a metaphorical chimera, presenting a different individual as I feel safe or appropriate. I am gay and proud, however with every new person I meet a judgement call must be made whether I out myself to a stranger or allow them to make assumptions about me as a conservatively dressed middle-aged man. Sometimes it’s just easier to let someone assume I have a wife and kids at home than to watch them squirm with embarrassment or discomfort by telling them my “wife” is a hot bloke with a beard.

Tim Gilchrist, Manager Exhibitions & Galleries, SA Museum and Co-founder, *Happenstance Distillery*

4. RAINBOW LORIKEET

South Australian Biodiversity Gallery

The rainbow has become synonymous with the LGBTIQ+ community as a symbol of pride, diversity and peace. The symbolism of the rainbow and the plumage of one of Australia’s most recognisable native birds, the Rainbow Lorikeet, which is known to be same-sex attracted, is also powerful affirmation of transformation and the transcendence of negativity and crossing boundaries.

The connection of the rainbow with the LGBTIQ+ community started with artist Gilbert Baker, an American Gay activist and Harvey Milk, another influential Gay leader, in 1974. Working together they created a rainbow flag that was first flown at the 1978 San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade to represent pride.

Fast-forward to more recent years and the rainbow continues to be used to represent the LGBTIQ+ community, The Rainbow Lorikeet featured in the graphic design for Feast, Adelaide’s LGBTIQ+ Queer Arts and Cultural Festival, in 2000.

Rainbow Lorikeets evoke a sense of happiness and peace when seen in the wild, the same feeling the rainbow creates for the LGBTIQ+ community now and for many years to come.

James Landseer, Adelaide Economic Development Agency

5. BUTTERFLIES

South Australian Biodiversity Gallery

Not discounting the diversities of butterflies, diverse representations of the butterfly entwine human cultures. Maybe people’s imagination is stimulated by the four-stage life cycle of butterflies, which includes a metamorphosis that matures the insect with a newfound ability to fly, with rather spectacular wings of various colours and patterns. We celebrate human life through the metaphor of the butterfly.

For queer people, ‘coming out’ can be a transformative experience that is likened to the metamorphosis of butterflies. When people ‘come out’ they contribute to human diversity and make it easier for others to be their authentic selves without fear.

The material of butterfly bodies and the poised shapes they make, mimic their environment and become immersed in their surroundings. Conversely, other butterflies contrast spectacularly with their background.

Literally to survive, and also to be able to participate in human cultural life, many non-heterosexual and gender diverse people have had to camouflage their appearance and behaviour against the background of an overwhelmingly rigid hetero-centric society. This remains true for many societies throughout the world where people live precariously in fear.

Troy-Anthony Baylis, artist and cultural historian



6. COCKROACHES

South Australian Biodiversity Gallery

Why would someone feel a kinship with an insect as lowly as a cockroach? We tend to see these animals as universally disgusting or carriers of disease, but this couldn’t be further from the truth; less than 1% of their species worldwide are pests. The remainder are as diverse as can be: those with opalescent blues, others that mimic ladybugs with vibrant reds, and some with gorgeous emerald greens that look like they’re made of metal. Cockroaches perform crucial ecosystem services in deserts, scrubland, rainforests—you name it!—and range from caring single mothers to whole colonies with their own specialised architectural skills. As a lesbian, I feel a close affinity to (unfortunately) maligned animals such as these. Lesbianism is a unique and beautiful experience that exists outside of heteropatriarchal norms, and we often experience womanhood differently to our heterosexual counterparts as a result. Throughout our history this has manifested as a broad spectrum of gender non-compliant expressions and roles, with a focus on not only loving other women but also the diverse and expansive experiences of womanhood therein. Insects have a similarly hidden diversity. The next time you see a cockroach in your home, consider their beautiful and helpful cousins: the group has far richer and deeper history than you might think.

Perry Beasley-Hall, Entomologist and evolutionary biologist, The University of Adelaide



7. MAGPIE

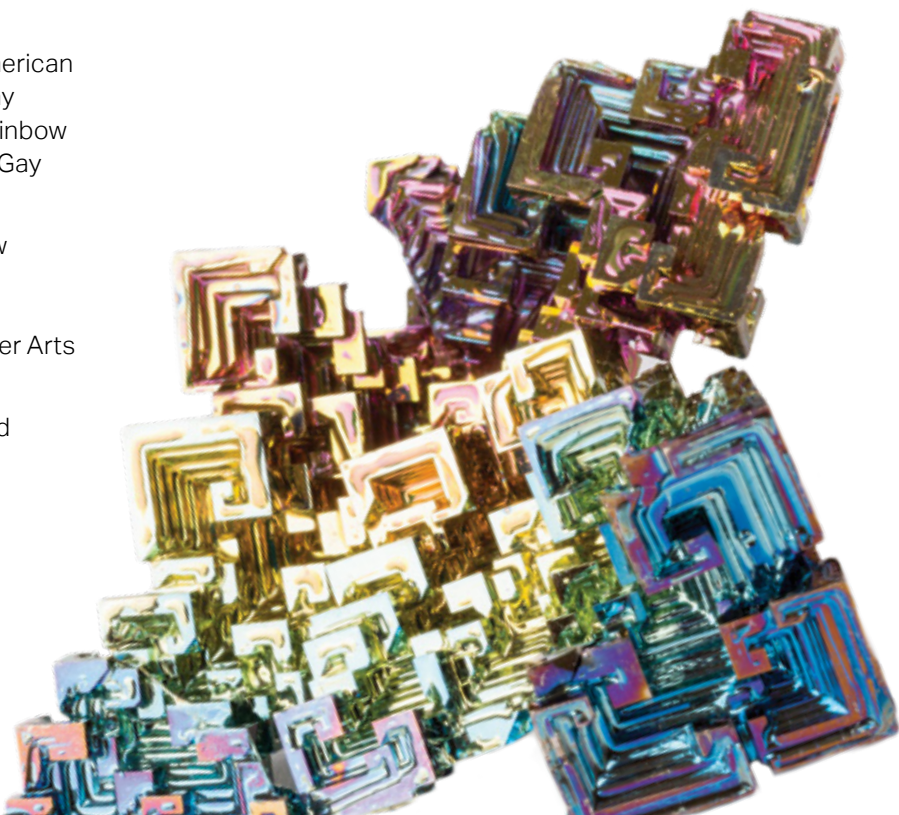
South Australian Biodiversity Gallery

To me, nothing sounds like home so much as a magpie’s song. Known for their incredible memories and their affinity for the odd swoop and shiny object, these songbirds remind of many of those I love in our community – fiercely loyal, loud, protective, sometimes misunderstood, and with an occasional dislike for lycra-clad cyclists.

Growing up in a small town and figuring out my identity as a lesbian frequently left me feeling isolated. Magpies were my unlikely friends in these moments – friendships formed in the exchange of crumbs and a pretty leaf or two. As a new South Australian, hearing their quintessential fluty tones in my first seasons here made me feel at home again.

These wonderful creatures bring those worlds together for me: the lonely teenager, and the happy, thriving lesbian, surrounded by a vibrant community of queer people in her new home.

Jasmine Castellano, Academic Support Librarian, University of Adelaide



8. OCTOPUS

South Australian Biodiversity Gallery

Octopuses change their colour in order to blend into their surroundings. They use their changing colours to send messages – to attract a potential partner or to evade danger.

I think most LGBTI people have at times felt the need to change our presentation in order to blend in or to stay safe. While we often talk about the concept of coming out as a single process, in reality it involves disclosures in lots of different social contexts.

There is much more acceptance of difference these days, but society is still heteronormative and many people still fear the consequences of coming out. For instance, a new report, *Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace* found that 61 per cent of LGBTI employees are closeted in Australian workplaces. There is clearly much more work that needs to be done to ensure that workplaces and public spaces in general are more accepting and inclusive. No one should feel pressure to deny part of their identity, or to change their presentation in order to fit in or to stay safe.

Robert Simms MLC, Greens Member of the Legislative Council

9. RAINBOW CALE

South Australian Biodiversity Gallery

Being queer is far more common than most people realise, with all manner of life-forms that shatter the arbitrary binaries of sex, sexuality, and gender. By society’s standards Rainbow Cale are incredibly queer, being both sexually progressive, and transitioning their sex and gender as they grow. The shift from female to male in these fish is accompanied by changes in outwards appearance, from an outfit of camo colouration to one of neon technicolour.

For many LGBTQIA+ people, being our authentic queer selves means navigating and challenging the expectations of ‘queerness’, the perceptions of standing out as queer too much, too little or in the wrong ways. The natural world however demonstrates the normality of individualism and the uniqueness across the rainbow community.

For the Rainbow Cale, distinctive colouration across individuals led to its misidentification as a new species on at least 7 occasions. However, its queerness is shared with at least 20 other species of South Australian Wrasse. For many species, including humans, queerness is far from being an unnatural abnormality, but rather an integral part of life.

Brad Martin, PhD student, Flinders University

10. DECORATOR CRAB

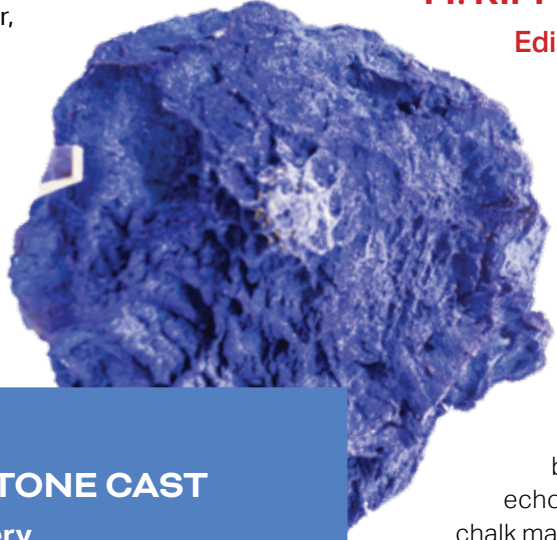
South Australian Biodiversity Gallery

For me, the Decorator Crab is the personification of camp. Its style – far from being simply functional – is frivolous, flamboyant, fabulous, fake. Adorning themselves with jewel-coloured fronds, shells, coral, noxious sponges, and stinging sea anemones, decorator crabs are the drag queens of the deep.

Since the term’s emergence in the first decade of the twentieth-century, camp has been associated with effeminacy, and homosexuality, and with figures like Oscar Wilde. While originally used as a slur, camp was quickly reclaimed by (some) gay men who referred to themselves as camp and revelled in camping it up.

This campy crab’s love of artifice, ornamentation, and exaggerated gestures, like that of its queer human kin, calls into question the assumed naturalness of nature and hints at the performative character of gender and other aspects of identity.

Nikki Sullivan, queer scholar, curator and writer



DID YOU KNOW?

11. ROSETTA STONE CAST

Ancient Egypt Gallery

The Rosetta Stone is best known for its crucial role in giving us the key to deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphs but it also has a little-known queer connection.

William John Bankes (1786–1855) was a charming and rich Egyptologist and art collector who first posited the idea that all of the texts on the stone might say the same thing and correctly surmised that a recurring cartouche represented a royal name. He travelled extensively and gathered an important collection of Egyptian antiquities at his estate, Kingston Lacy.

In 1841 Bankes was convicted of homosexuality, a criminal offence at the time, and was forced to flee England. He lived in exile overseas for the remainder of his life. Even in exile and until his death in Venice, he continued to collect and decorate his beloved estate, shipping his purchases to England.

Photos by Denis Smith



12. OPALS

Opal Fossil Gallery

I’ve always been fascinated by rainbows. I’ve stopped to photograph them as the sun peaks out after a rain shower. I’ve admired them as sun shines through an empty beer glass. And more recently, I wore them frequently during the movement for marriage equality, a moment in time which made marriage to my beautiful wife possible, and legal, in Australia. The brilliant colours of the rainbow flag, a recognised symbol of both pride and of peace, are often reflected in the magnificent hues of iridescent opals.

The first time I saw an opal was on a family driving holiday from Adelaide to Alice Springs, as a young child. Now, more than 30 years later, I still cherish a small liquid-filled tube of magnificent rainbows on shiny white stones in a jewellery box with other special keepsakes; a memory from an adventure now long in the past. For me, rainbows carry so many special meanings; of the extraordinary beauty of nature, of evidence that there is hope beyond rainy days, and of a world that is kinder, and more inclusive.

Dr Hannah Brown, Scientist and Communicator

13. MINERALS BY COLOUR

Minerals and Meteorites Gallery

Minerals have an atomic arrangement. The chemical elements that make up a mineral are arranged in a particular structure – for example, halite (salt) grows in a cube structure. The sodium and chloride atoms repeatedly arrange themselves at an atomic level in a cube, and therefore, salt crystals will grow in cubes that are visible to the naked eye. Salt can also form around objects, or inside rocks, like many minerals. When salt grows on the outside of an abandoned ram skull in the middle of the desert, it forms a layer around the ram’s skull but that layer is still made up of cubes.

Aside from delighting in the many rainbow colours of the Minerals Gallery, you can also have a close look at the shapes, and see how they repeatedly express their own atomic structure. When they find themselves in rocks and crevices, twisting to conform to the shape they are given, they are still themselves, and they are still shaped in their own way. This is how I feel as a queer person; it is an inherent internal structure that no matter where I end up, I tend to grow into my own shape.

Meg Riley, artist and access consultant

14. RIPPLE WALL

Ediacaran Fossils Gallery

This slab of rock tells us an extraordinary amount. The scientists who work to understand its layers of meaning have helped us know more about our world over an almost inconceivable amount of time. Like all of us, it is many things, a layered object. Its many identities are the product of its experiences over its long life. It is a mineral, but it is many animals. It is a rock from Adnyamathanha country, the dry inland of South Australia, but it is a seabed, layered with ripples that echo the beaches of Adelaide. Note the tiny chalk markings here and there. Like all of us, it wears tiny reminders of its interactions with people over time. I am a woman, and a feminist, and part of the LGBTIA+ community. I’m a mother, and a queer parent. I work with historic collections, and I work with data and technology. I wear my identities proudly, but I am sometimes reminded in interactions with strangers and acquaintances that not all of them are obvious. Occasionally I need to correct others’ assumptions about me or my family, an experience most LGBTIA+ people experience regularly, but I wouldn’t exchange any of it for a simpler life. I am lucky to have the rich life that these layered experiences and identities inform.

Alexis Tindall, Manager, Digital Innovation, University of Adelaide Library



MINERALS BY COLOUR

