



## SCOTT RANKIN WINS 2018 TASMANIAN AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR

We are thrilled to announce that **Big hART's** co-founder, CEO and Creative Director **Scott Rankin** has just won the **2018 Tasmanian Australian of the Year** at the **Australian of the Year Awards** in Hobart.

At a special event for the state awards in Hobart today, Scott Rankin took out the top award for the state in this prestigious honourable award. "It's an honour to stand beside the other candidates - an ex chief magistrate, a community builder, and an educator - these are all forms of advocating for new narrative and inclusion in our communities" said Scott Rankin. "This is a win for all of us and for a better, stronger Tasmanian society."

In Scott Rankin's acceptance speech today, he highlighted the importance of cultural rights for all members of our country, "Cultural rights is about the right to have a place in our culture, the right to be seen and heard, and part of the narration that determines the future of the nation."

"It's about inclusivity, and everyone having the right to thrive, not just the lucky like me and those who enough privilege. That's worth being Australian of the Year for, to be able to drive change, build our community and tell the stories that are unseen and unheard", said Scott Rankin.

Big hART would like to congratulate all finalists and winners, who are all such inspiring voices working for change in Tasmania. Scott Rankin will now contend for the national honour, which will be announced on Australia Day 2018.

Motivated by the closure of the Burnie Paper Mill 25 years ago, in 1992 Scott Rankin embarked on an innovative experiment to explore new ways of dealing with disadvantage. The theatre director and playwright established Big hART, a charity which uses the arts to bring about social justice. As the company's CEO and Creative Director, Scott leads a passionate team to tell Australia's most invisible stories, working with over 50 communities in regional, remote and urban Australia. No tale is too tough to tell: domestic violence, incarceration, addiction, homelessness, or intergenerational injustice faced by Indigenous Australians. A multi award-winning writer and director in his own right, Scott's works have featured many times in major international and national arts festivals with films screening on ABC, SBS and at film festivals around the country. His acclaimed production *Namatjira*, for example, celebrates the legacy of one of Australia's best loved artists. But Big hART remains Scott's greatest legacy and selfless contribution to the arts and society.

This year has been a big year for Big hART. In 2017 Big hART celebrates 25 years of being Australia's leading arts and social justice organisation, telling Australia's most invisible stories. 2017 also saw the huge achievement of justice finally brought to the *Namatjira* family, after 8 years of Big hART campaigning with the *Namatjira* family for copyright to return to the family after decades of injustice. Big hART also won the 2017 Telstra Tasmanian Business of the Year and 2017 Telstra Charity of the Year and is also currently a finalist in the national Human Rights Awards, from the Australian Human Rights Commission.

A registered charity, Big hART has worked alongside over 8000 individuals in urban, rural, regional and remote Australia with a threefold focus of making art, building community and driving change.

If you'd like to learn more about Big hART or are interested in supporting our work, go to our website: [www.bighart.org.au](http://www.bighart.org.au) Or follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram



All Media Enquiries to Big hART Media and Communications Manager Bettina Richter

E: [bettina@bighart.org](mailto:bettina@bighart.org)

M: 0414 441 860

W: [bighart.org](http://bighart.org)