



NAMATJIRA PROJECT OPENS AT CINEMAS IN SEPTEMBER

One family. Five Generations. Fighting for justice.

This is a story that can change the way in which the country thinks about itself.

Producer Sophia Marinos

The film that broke people's hearts at Melbourne International Film Festival and is bringing a nation to rise is coming to cinemas nationally from **September 7** for a limited season.

Namatjira Project, an extraordinary feature documentary made by the Namatjira family with **Big hART** follows Albert Namatjira's family on a fight for justice, from Aranda country to Buckingham Palace. Directed by Sera Davies, produced by Sophia Marinos, starring Trevor Jamieson, and distributed by Umbrella Entertainment, Namatjira Project is being described by early audiences as a 'game-changer', 'moving', 'triumphant', 'layered and compelling', a film which follows 'a community seeking self-determination against enormous obstacles'.

Albert Namatjira is one of the most revered icons of Australia's art scene, considered by many as the father of Australia's contemporary Aboriginal art movement, and is now also thought to be the first contemporary dot painter.

Namatjira Project follows the Namatjira family's plight to regain the copyright which was unwittingly sold by the NT government in 1983 to a private art dealer for just \$8500. The Namatjira family's quest brings them to team up with Australia's leading arts and social change organisation – Big hART - to tour a theatre production about Albert's life, raising awareness, calling for support, and for a return of the copyright. Big hART is invited to stage the show in London and they use this opportunity to generate international pressure. Queen Elizabeth invites the Namatjiras to Buckingham Palace, and UK media pick up the story of this famous family's struggle. In Australia, despite valiant efforts, the silence is deafening and the Namatjiras return home powerless.

Until his death in 1959, Albert Namatjira supported up to 600 members of his family and community on the proceeds of his artwork. Yet Albert Namatjira was a man caught between cultures – paraded as a great Australian, whilst treated with contempt. The first Indigenous person to be made a citizen by the Australian Government, he was widely celebrated but in 1957 imprisoned for something he didn't do, and in 1959 died a broken man.

These days Albert's family and community struggle to survive in Ntaria (Hermannsburg) in the Northern Territory. 54% live in overcrowded conditions, 56% subsist on income support and 11% will be displaced and admitted to hospital with chronic illness caused by poor environmental health, and students achieve below the national minimum standard in literacy and numeracy.

Namatjira's copyright would have expired on the 50th anniversary of his death in 2009. But now, unless something changes, due to the Aus-US Free Trade Agreement, Legend Press's ownership of all of Albert Namatjira's copyright will not expire till 2029. Alongside the film Big hART and the Namatjira family also established earlier this year the **Namatjira Legacy Trust**. In August 2017, the Namatjira Legacy Trust retained prominent law firm Arnold Bloch Leibler to recover the copyright in the lifetime artistic works of Albert Namatjira.



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To launch the film in each state will be social impact screenings, involving post screening discussions and Q&As - raising greater awareness of the issues and activating audiences to support the Trust and copyright campaign. On Tuesday 5 Sept **Cinema Nova** in Melbourne will feature special guest Archie Roach; on Wed 6 Sept in Sydney at **Chauvel Cinema**, high profile Aboriginal art curator, critic and writer Djon Mundine OAM will feature; and on the 7 Sept at **New Farm Cinemas** GOMA Curator of Indigenous Art Bruce McLean will speak. There will also be special Q&A events in Canberra on 12 Sept and Alice Springs on 14 Sept with further details to be announced shortly.

The Namatjira Project is an initiative of the Namatjira family alongside Big hART to ensure Albert Namatjira's community and the remarkable traditions of the Western Desert watercolour movement thrive into the future. In 2017, Big hART celebrates 25 years, working in over 50 communities, alongside over 8000 individuals in urban, rural, regional and remote Australia and has won over 45 awards.

Namatjira Project Cinema Release - Limited Season from September 7:

VIC:	Cinema Nova, The Kino Cinemas, Cameo Cinemas, Classic Cinema.
NSW:	Chauvel Cinema Sydney, The Kinema Narooma
ACT:	Palace Electric Cinema, Canberra
QLD:	New Farm Cinemas & Palace Centro, Brisbane
NT:	Alice Springs Cinema (from 14 Sept)
TAS:	State Cinema Hobart Special Cinema Event (16 Sept)
SA:	Adelaide Film Festival (14 Oct)

More dates to follow. Keep up with the latest news at <http://www.namatjiradocumentary.org>

Follow us on Facebook @namatjira or lend your voice to the campaign **#justice4namatjira**



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