



HISTORIC RESOLUTION FOR NAMATJIRA COPYRIGHT CAMPAIGN

Campaigning Arts Organisation **Big hART** together with the **Namatjira Family**, the **Namatjira Legacy Trust** and law firm **Arnold Bloch Leibler** are thrilled to announce that after an 8 year fight for justice, the copyright to Albert Namatjira's works has finally been returned to the Namatjira family.

The Namatjira Legacy Trust entered into a Deed on Friday October 13 with **Legend Press Pty Ltd** and **Dick Smith AC**. Pursuant to the Deed, Legend Press has assigned to the Namatjira Legacy Trust the copyright in Albert Namatjira's iconic works and a \$250,000 donation has been made to the Namatjira Legacy Trust.

"After a long battle we are happy to get the copyright back. For our future, for our children's future and for our grandkids, and all our families" said Gloria Pannka, Grand-Daughter of Albert Namatjira, "A very big thank you on behalf of the Namatjira families to Big hART. Without your help and the help of the lawyers we wouldn't have got it back."

Sophia Marinos, Chair of the Namatjira Legacy Trust and Producer of Big hART's Namatjira Project "We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Dick Smith for his significant contribution in facilitating this historic resolution. We would also like to acknowledge the key role Arnold Bloch Leibler has played pro bono, in getting this campaign to where it is today. This is a great moment for the country, and will go a long way to ensure the legacy of Albert Namatjira will thrive into the future."

"This is a big win for Big hART, as we have worked with the family and community for 8 years to pursue their quest for justice, so we are absolutely delighted that the Namatjira family have now regained ownership of the copyright", said Scott Rankin, Big hART CEO and Creative Director, "Big hART would like to give a huge vote of thanks to Dick Smith and the lawyers at ABL, and also publicly thank Legend Press in stepping up in this very positive, non-adversarial way."

Mark Leibler, Senior Partner at Arnold Bloch Leibler, described the vesting of the copyright with senior members of the Namatjira family as "an important, tangible demonstration of Indigenous recognition that will ensure the legacy of Albert Namatjira enriches future generations of Australians."

Mr Leibler said the firm had offered to advise the Namatjira Legacy Trust in relation to the recovery of the copyright to "help right past wrongs that had devastating ongoing impact."

"IP specialist Zaven Mardirossian and lawyer Gabriel Sakkal, alongside Public Interest and Native Title partner Peter Seidel, have employed their unparalleled legal expertise and their deep commitment to help achieve this historic outcome."

The Namatjira Legacy Trust is a charitable foundation managed by four direct descendants of Albert Namatjira alongside independent Trustees, with additional members drawn from the broader, extended Namatjira family. The Trust has been established to protect and preserve the interests of the Namatjira family and to benefit the Hermannsburg community – enabling the sustainability of the remarkable traditions of the Western Desert watercolour movement and supporting the health, welfare, education and sustainability of Albert Namatjira's families and community into the future. The Namatjira Legacy Trust feel there is still more needed to be done to redress decades of injustice, and will continue to lobby for the Namatjira family and the Hermannsburg community.



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NAMATJIRA
LEGACY TRUST



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Albert Namatjira is recognised as one of Australia's most revered artists, and considered by many as the father of Australia's contemporary Aboriginal art movement. The copyright to Namatjira's works were sold by the NT government in 1983 to Legend Press for just \$8500, which has meant that Namatjira's family have earned no money from copyright or royalties from reproductions of Albert Namatjira's works since 1983.

Big hART was invited into the Hermmansburg community by the Namatjira family over 8 years ago to help bring about change and renewal. Highlights of Big hART's work with the community include producing the internationally acclaimed theatre show 'Namatjira' which toured nationally and to the UK to an audience of 50,000, and went on to win 4 awards including a Helpmann, Sydney Theatre Award and Arts Hub Award. Big hART also facilitated for the Namatjira family a private meeting with the Queen at Buckingham Palace and facilitated over 23 contemporary watercolour exhibitions, produced a CD, webcasts, and an iPad painting APP, 28 conference presentations in Australia and overseas, and delivered over 1700 workshops, working with 995 Indigenous community participants.

This year Big hART and the Namatjira family together established the independent **Namatjira Legacy Trust** which was launched at the National Museum of Australia in March 2017, and in August released the acclaimed feature documentary Namatjira Project which premiered at Melbourne International Film Festival and has screened in cinemas nationally around the country. 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.

Big hART's campaign for justice for the Namatjira family has also been supported by many institutions, art galleries, partners and funders in Australia and overseas, and without their support, the outcome today would not have been possible.

In closing Sophia Marinos said, "We'd like to thank the Iltja Ntjarra Many Hands Art Centre, Belvoir St. Theatre for giving us our first public platform, and all the 31 theatres who staged the show around Australia and in the UK. We would like to acknowledge the Queen's recognition of this important family and thank all the funders, partners and experts in the field who have worked with us and the Namatjira family, and have believed in the project and the campaign enough to keep it going. Thank you to all the journalists who have spoken out in support and more recently to all the galleries and institutions who have raised their voice to support the issue, the cinemas who have screened our film, and finally a huge thank you to the whole team of Arnold Bloch Leibler and the directors of the Namatjira Legacy Trust. Each step along the way has opened the door to the next."