

# OPEN LETTER

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, PERFORMERS,  
FILMMAKERS AND WRITERS OPPOSE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION  
RECOMMENDATIONS ON COPYRIGHT IN AUSTRALIA.

We the undersigned unanimously reject the Productivity Commission’s Recommendations on copyright in Australia. The recommendations to change copyright protections will harm the ability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander film and television makers, writers, artists, musicians and journalists to tell Indigenous stories and make a living.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and creators have a right to receive fair payment for their work. The changes to Australian copyright laws being pushed by the Productivity Commission, large organisations and big technology companies will greatly diminish these protections.

**This is not just unfair, it is a threat to the artistic mob and means it may be even harder to make a living for the next generation of artists.**

Our kids should be able to grow up inspired by artists like Albert Namatjira and Emily Kame Kngwarreye, listening to music from artists like Dan Sultan and Jessica Mauboy and watching movies like *Bran Nue Dae* and *Samson and Delilah* and TV shows like *Black Comedy* and *Basically Black* and reading books like *Shake a Leg* and *My Place*.

Ownership, responsibility and control by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of their cultural heritage is paramount. The suggested changes will have a detrimental impact on the stories, imagery, knowledge and heritage which is embodied in our story-telling and artistic works. Ownership is also a way of economic empowerment for those artists who earn money from selling, reselling and reproducing their works.

We call on the Australian Government and parliament to rule out these proposed changes from the Productivity Commission.

## SIGNED

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|--|---|--|
| Vernon Ah Kee (Artist)                         | Beck Cole (Director and Screenwriter)             | Hunter Page-Lochard (Actor)  |
| Jada Alberts (Actor, Writer, Director)         | Brenda Croft (Curator, Academic)                  | Bruce Pascoe (Writer, Teacher, Historian)  |
| Dave Arden (Musician)                          | Julie Dowling (Artist)                            | Sandra Phillips (Academic, Chair of the First Nations Australia Writers’ Network (FNAWN) and Chair of the Advisory Board of the Centre for Indigenous Story) |
| Bronwyn Bancroft (Artist, Illustrator, Author) | Leah Flanagan (Singer, Songwriter)                | Leah Purcell (Actor, Director, Writer)   |
| Bibi Barba (Artist)                            | Julie Gough (Artist, Writer and Curator)          | Kim Scott (Novelist, Writer)   |
| William Barton (Performer, Composer)           | Aroha Groves (Artist, Designer)                   | Shari Sebbens (Actor)  |
| Larissa Behrendt (Filmmaker, Academic)         | Anita Heiss (Author, Presenter and Commentator)   | Bjorn Stewart (Actor, Writer)  |
| Richard Bell (Artist)                          | Rarriwuy Hicks (Actor)                            | Dan Sultan (Singer, Songwriter)  |
| Kevin Bennett (Musician)                       | Terri Janke (Copyright Lawyer)                    | Jared Thomas (Author, Playwright, Poet, Academic)  |
| Rachel Bin Salleh (Publisher)                  | Melissa Lucashenko (Writer)                       | Gina Williams (Singer, Songwriter)   |
| Mervyn Bishop (Filmmaker)                      | Jessica Mauboy (Singer, songwriter, Actress)      | Tara June Winch (Writer)   |
| Wayne Blair (Filmmaker, Director, Actor)       | Rachael Maza (Artistic Director, Actor, Narrator) | Jason Wing (Artist)  |
| Brendon Boney (Singer, Songwriter)             | Philip McLaren (Author, Academic)                 |  |
| Adam Briggs (Musician, Writer and Actor)       | Sally Morgan (Author, Dramatist)                  |  |
| Troy Cassar-Daley (Musician)                   |   |  |

## ORGANISATIONS

**AACHWA** (peak body for Aboriginal art centres across Western Australia) • **BlakDance** (national industry body for contemporary Indigenous dance) • **Boomalli** (Aboriginal artists co-operative representing 50 artists) • **Desart** (representing over 40 central Australian Aboriginal art centres) • **Indigenous Art Centre Alliance** (representing 13 arts centres across far north Queensland) • **Koori Heritage Trust** • **Mooghlin Performing Arts Incorporated**

# KEEP CREATORS CREATING

Go to [copyright.com.au/fair-use/indigenous](http://copyright.com.au/fair-use/indigenous) for more details.  
Join the conversation using #freeisnotfair #respectcreators.