

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
IndigenousAffairs.reps@aph.gov.au

Delvene Cockatoo-Collins
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3 November, 2017

Submission to the Parliamentary inquiry into the growing presence of inauthentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'style' art and craft products and merchandise for sale across Australia.

Question 1 - How does Fake Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art effect you and your community? Why is it important to do something about this?

It denies the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists. The right to tell our story and present our stories and images the way that is culturally right. Having completed one of my University placements at Dreamtime Cultural Centre in Rockhampton, working and creating craft for Queensland Aboriginal Creations in Brisbane during Uni, at Gavala Aboriginal Cultural Centre in Sydney, on the South Australian Aboriginal Tourism Strategy, attending CIAF as an independent artist and now in my studio creating my work, I am very much aware of the impacts that having our art presented in the way that is right. It makes me feel proud to know artists who's work i've sold or when a person buys my work. I see the reaction of people when they know they are buying directly from the artists and/or the origin of the artwork. When we are denied this, it is upsets me and deprives us all of the right. Financially we are worse off when someone chooses to buy an artwork made overseas but made to look like it is created by an Aboriginal artist. It is important to do this for all involved - to protect the artists and to inform the buyers.

Question 2 - Should the Federal Government change the laws relating to Fake Art? What changes do you suggest?

Yes the Federal Government should make new laws that protect the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts. It deserves it own stand alone laws. Separately another law to stop the import and sale of fake arts.

Question 3 - What can we do to better promote and support the creation of authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts?

1. Create opportunities like Artists hubs where Artists can easily access and work in a collaborative space and to share resources. One way that I work is to use the local pottery club\'s kiln. It has assisted in my work being produced in a much shorter time frame than how I previously worked. Without facilities & resources, it is difficult to create. Barriers must be removed in order for art to be created and then support offered to reach a marketplace.
 2. To create positions - like Arts Administrators/facilitators regionally so that artists have direct support locally and regionally (like the NSW system - could be implemented all over the country).
 3. Create more opportunities like CIAF and other platforms such as the Gift Fairs. As a group of artists and suppliers of the NSW Tourism Operators Association, we attended one of the Reed Gift Fairs. The volume of imported gifts fair outweighed any locally made products. It was also an expensive exercise.
- The idea of additional platforms like artists co-op\'s or CIAF or Gift Fairs, is that buyers know they will be able to purchase an artwork made by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Artist. The same goes for any major Art Gallery or Museum retail store.

Question 4 - What else can we do as a community to stop Fake Art?

Online campaigns supported by community workshops / gatherings such as the \'Fake Art Harms Culture\' Campaign would assist in furthering this message. Knowing the history of the authenticity label and how it did not work, that a regular presence online as well as a national approach to dealing with fake art (starting with a change of law - that can enforce change).

Question 5 - Would you like to add anything else?

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