



## **Bikes for Bush Foundation**

### **A joint art/sport initiative by Art Equity & Pegasus Racing**



A jubilant Mt Liebig boy trials a Bikes for Bush BMX in preparation for the September delivery of the bikes.



A future beneficiary of Bikes for Bush in Mt Liebig

[www.bikesforbush.com.au](http://www.bikesforbush.com.au)

### **Media kit**

Media interviews and images:

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Art and sport meld in perfect partnership for a greater Indigenous cause with the groundbreaking Bikes for Bush Foundation to be launched by Rugby League legend Steve Renouf.

Spearheaded by Pegasus Racing and Art Equity, 'Bikes for Bush' draws on the talents of Australia's most acclaimed Indigenous artists, Wentja Napaltjarri, Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa (Mrs Bennett) and Yannima Tommy Watson amongst others, who have painted bicycles for a grand auction and charity night on 1 October in Melbourne. At this time the eyes of the world will be on the finest international cyclists at the UCI Road World Championships in Geelong.

With a target of raising in excess of \$100,000 on the evening from the auctioning of the remarkable bikes, monies will go towards the supply of BMX bikes for children in Australia's remotest Indigenous communities. The Bikes for Bush Foundation officially launches on Tuesday 24 August at 6pm at Art Equity in Sydney.



"A healthy lifestyle is fundamental in the prevention of the onset of certain diseases, not to mention the freedom and plain fun that comes from riding a bike," says Chris White, Managing Director of Pegasus Racing. "We want to encourage healthy activity and promote the extraordinary, natural athletic ability of Australia's Indigenous children."

The Australian public will get the opportunity to view these beautifully painted ride ready racing bikes, at various venues around Australia up until the auction date of 1 October.

Internationally renowned artists from the Western Desert art movement, **Wentja Napaltjarri, Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa (Mrs Bennett) and Yannima Tommy Watson** are the first Indigenous artists to have donated their time and highly acclaimed skills to turn these state-of-the-art bicycles into collectable artworks. The artists - some of the last of the great nomadic desert people - have provided this unique opportunity for riders and art collectors alike. Their bikes will be painted with imagery portraying the unique dreaming of the artists and their intimate connection to the landscape.

"Art plays such an important role in Indigenous culture – in communicating stories, and keeping the history and teachings alive through generations," explains Ralph Hobbs, Art Director, Art Equity.

"The link between art and such a life-affirming activity as cycling felt like an obvious combination to us. And to engage such incredible Indigenous artists as Wentja, Mrs Bennett and Tommy Watson in the project was instrumental in making **Bikes for Bush** relevant and successful. The artists were really excited about what this means for the kids in their communities."

"The bikes are also 'ride-ready' so the recipient of the painted bike can decide to have the most unique bike in the peloton or a remarkable objet d'art to hang on a wall," adds Hobbs.

The first community to receive the bikes will be **Mt Liebig**, a small township 325 kms west of Alice Springs, close to the heart of the region where the modern Desert art movement began. The **Bikes for Bush Foundation** has worked in association with the community art centre, **Watiyawanu Artists of Amunturrngu**, the school and aged care, to facilitate this **first installment of 30 bikes to children of the community in September**.

"This is a long term project. We see **Bikes for Bush** rolling out across other remote Indigenous communities," says Ralph Hobbs.

“We started with the Mt Liebig community because of our existing relationship with the people. We have simple goals that are streamlined and achievable.

“We are two like-minded organisations getting together with the support of corporate Australia to make a positive difference to kids in the bush.” Hobbs explains. “We have already got a commitment from a number of organisations willing to support the foundation directly, and we will be approaching many more.”

Cycling is one of the true world sports and Indigenous art is the natural window to Australian culture. It is an art movement that has captured the imagination of the world. By pairing the two, **Bikes for Bush** has the power to connect remote Indigenous communities with a broader international-conscience and make a real, lasting difference to the relevance of one of the oldest continuing cultures of the world.

“**Bikes for Bush** is a genuine partnership between the Australian art, sport and corporate communities and Indigenous Australia,” says Brett Godfrey, ex-CEO of Virgin Blue. “Without the support of each community, this wouldn’t be happening. It’s about building a community, following a vision, and doing something that can have a positive effect for the next generation. We all know that prevention is better than cure.”

Chris White concludes, “While our vision is to primarily encourage healthy and happier communities, who knows, we might even see a young Indigenous cyclist on the Champs-Élysées one day.”

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## Bikes for Bush

[www.bikesforbush.com.au](http://www.bikesforbush.com.au)

Bikes for Bush **Foundation Launch:** Tuesday 24 August, 6pm  
Art Equity, Level 6 Barrack House 16-20 Barrack St Sydney, (02) 9262 6660  
**Wentja Napaltjarri will be present at the launch.**

**Grand Auction: Friday 1 October**  
**during the UCI Road World Championships, Melbourne.**



Getting started: Pegasus Managing Director Chris White helps a young Mt Liebig boy on a Bikes for Bush BMX

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## ART EQUITY

Art Equity is an Australian company delivering art advisory and innovative investment solutions to collectors and investors in Australia and abroad. Our combination of art expertise and education, structured investments and passion offers unprecedented opportunities for clients to build wealth and personal enrichment from Australian art. Our clients include art lovers, private and corporate collectors and astute investors who integrate art into their broader investment portfolios. We also have advisor relationships with leading financial institutions throughout Australia and Asia.

Reputation and trust is at the core of Art Equity's relationships with artists, suppliers, partners and most importantly, our clients. Art Equity is positioned well to guide the process of acquisition and help build portfolios of important Australian art.

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## PEGASUS RACING

Pegasus Racing Pty Ltd and is an international cycling team, predominately made up of Australia's most talented cyclists. Sponsored by *Fly V Australia*, the team is supported by a leadership group of experienced riders and management. Among the 15 riders on the UCI continental squad there are 10 Australians, two South Africans and one rider each from Canada, Italy and the United States giving us an Australian flavour but an international representation.

The team has the current Australian Criterium Champion, 10 riders who have represented their country at Commonwealth Games, Olympics and World Championships level. We also have three former national champions on the road and track and one current and one former track World Record holder and champion. 2009 saw *Fly V australia* Pro Cycling Team debut in style with a total of 94 race wins across Australia and the USA.

[www.pegasusracing.com.au](http://www.pegasusracing.com.au)

## Artists Participating in 'Bikes for Bush'

### Wentja Napaltjarri



Born: circa 1945, Language: Luritja/Pintupi. Country: West of Kintore

Wentja Napaltjarri was born circa 1945, in the bush near Ilpilli, an outstation halfway between Kintore and Mt Liebig. It was here that her father, Shorty Lungkata Tjungurrayi, was born. Shorty was one of the original founders of the Western Desert art movement.

Together, father and daughter hunted bandicoot, goanna and echidna and dug for Macu (witchety grubs). These animals now form part of Wendja's Tjukurrpa (Dreaming) - handed down to her by her father. 'Water Dreaming' and 'Blue Tongue Lizard Dreaming' also form part of Wentja's Tjukurrpa.

Forced to leave their lands after the arrival of the Europeans, the family journeyed east over the spinifex

and sandhills – an incredible distance – to reach the ration depot at Haasts Bluff. Along the way they had contact with some of the most influential members of the community, who had been at Papunya when it was first established; Nosepeg Tjupurrula being one.

Whilst at Haasts Bluff, Wentja met her husband, Ginger Tjakamarra, also the son of a famous artist, Makinti Napanangka. The couple eventually moved to Papunya, where Wentja started painting as her father's apprentice. Wentja is a highly talented artist with an accomplished and distinctive style. Her early training with her father helped develop her most important works, particularly the story of two goannas mating and going into a hole, inherited directly from Shorty.

Wentja's early system of interconnecting concentric circles and dotted bands has been now replaced by mesmerising fields of tonal colours. Her paintings are less geometric and display a key motif – in most cases a large roundel, which represents an important rock hole where her family regularly camped. Surrounding the rockhole is a charged energy field of intricate dots – the soft dotting technique being characteristic of many Mount Liebig artists. While she works, Wentja sings about the rock hole, and the songs and music are incorporated into her paintings.

Wentja's works have been highly sought for the past decade, included in such major collections as the Kerry Stokes and Thomas Vroom Collections, the National Aboriginal Art and Culture Institute in Adelaide, and many State gallery and university collections.

Wentja's work has been included in leading Australian and International exhibitions, including Masterpieces from the Western Desert, held in London in 2008. Wentja was a finalist in the Telstra National and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award from 2001-2004 and again from 2006-2008.



## Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa (Mrs Bennett)



Born: circa 1935

Birthsite: Yumari North, Docker River, W.A.

Language: Pintupi/Pitjantatjarra-Ngaatjatjarra

Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa (aka Mrs. Bennett) is an important artist represented in the collections of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Artbank Sydney, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, National Gallery of Victoria, and corporate and private collections in Australia and around the world.

Mrs Bennett was married to the late John John Tjapangati Bennett (a Pintupi speaker from Mukulurru, also north of Docker River). She was a participant in the Kintore-Haasts Bluff collaborative canvas project in 1994. This resulted in an exhibition

titled 'Minyma Tjukurrpa' held at the Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute in 1995. Other exhibitions of her works include 'Twenty-five Years and Beyond' (1999) and 'Australia Perspecta' (1999).

Nyurapayia favours the use of strong contrasts using blacks and pale yellows/creams set in relief against a red ground. Her designs are based on the stories relating to women's ceremony and often depict the gathering of traditional bush foods and the rituals that are connected with their preparation. The depictions of the sand dune country and surrounding rocky outcrops bear a relationship to the designs used for body painting during the ceremonial dance referred to as 'inma'.

Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa was named among the top 50 of Australia's Most Collectable Artists in *Australian Art Collector*, issue 15, January – March, 2001.

## Yannima Tommy Watson



Born c.1935

Anamaraptji, west of Irrunytju, WA

Language group: Pitjantjatjara

Tommy Watson has come to prominence in the Australian art market in last five years and is regarded by many as the greatest living Australian Indigenous artist. Tommy was raised in a traditional lifestyle before contact with western culture. In his experiences at Papunya in the 1970s, he witnessed the first significant painters of the Aboriginal art movement produce works rich in iconography and traditional stories.

Tommy's own paintings do not present the same imagery which he feels is 'sacred', rather, he chooses a form of abstraction which has been likened to the works of great modernist artists such as Kandinsky, Matisse and Rothko. His use of colour is paramount in relating the feeling of his country and Tommy often sings as he paints the stories; the result being works of great vibrancy and immense visual power.

Tommy has only produced limited numbers of large scale paintings which are keenly sought. This controlled output combined with his extraordinary ability has seen near stratospheric prices achieved for his works in such a short time span.

A finalist of the Telstra Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards in 2002, 2003 & 2008 and held in all major public collections in Australia, plus a permanent presence at the Musee du Quai Branly in Paris, Tommy Watson's name is mentioned in the same breath as the iconic artists of the Indigenous movement - Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Emily Kame Kngwarreye and Rover Thomas.