

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT MUST HALT THE DESTRUCTION OF ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST ARTWORKS

- AN OPEN LETTER FROM ARTISTS AROUND THE WORLD -

To the Australian Environment Minister

By the end of summer, you will decide whether to protect one of Australia and the world's most important artworks, or allow its ongoing destruction for decades from additional acid gas pollution from the North West Shelf gas export terminal.

In addition to its spiritual importance to the traditional custodians, the World Heritage nominated Murujuga rock art on the Burrup Peninsula in Western Australia is one of the most important and spectacular artworks in the world. At over 40,000 years old, it is at least twice as ancient as the Lascaux cave paintings in France, and eight times as ancient as the pyramids in Egypt, and Stonehenge. It is also a continuous living artwork produced over forty millennia, recording the artists' vision of everything from prehistoric megafauna to the arrival of Europeans.

These artworks have survived an ice age but it's taken industrial gas export activities just 40 years to put them in danger.

Since the arrival of the gas industry, acid gas emissions have corroded these priceless exquisite images and thousands of petroglyphs have been removed and destroyed. Now the Australian Government is considering approving a further 50 years of gas exports and pollution from the largest gas project in Australia, the North West Shelf gas export terminal. Other countries like France, the UK and Egypt would never allow this to happen to their cultural heritage.

As artists we condemn the damage done to these priceless artworks.

We call on the Environment Minister to reject another 50 years of pollution and damage to one of Australia and the world's most important cultural heritage sites by the North West Shelf gas export terminal.

Thomas Keneally AO

Internationally best-selling author. Booker Prize winner, author of 'Schindler's List'

Sir Antony Gormley OBE RA

Internationally acclaimed sculptor, collections of Tate Gallery, Victoria & Albert Museum, Uffizi, Hermitage, National Gallery of Australia, National Museum of Modern Art Tokyo, British Museum, Centre Georges Pompidou

Jimmy Barnes

Iconic Australian rock singer and author

Peter Carey AO

Major Australian author. Two-time Booker Prize winner. Based in New York

Tracey Moffatt AO

Internationally renowned artist, represented Australia in 57th Venice Biennale

Tim Winton AO

One of Australia's most popular and acclaimed authors. Four-time Miles Franklin Award winner. Named a Living Treasure by the National Trust of Australia.

Robert MacFarlane

Leading international author, environmental campaigner and academic. Winner Guardian First Book Award, E. M. Forster Award, Somerset Maugham Award, Dolman Prize

Will Self

Internationally renowned UK author, journalist, political commentator and broadcaster. Winner Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize

Tim Flannery FAA

One of Australia's pre-eminent scientists and an international best-selling author. Australian of the year, 2007. Winner NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Eureka Prize, Australian Humanist of the Year, Lannan Literary Awards

Lindy Lee AO

Major Australian painter and sculptor. 'Ouroboros' commissioned by National Gallery of Australia

Ben Quilty

Leading Australian artist, former official War Artist, winner Archibald Prize and Doug Moran National Portrait Prize

Amit Chaudhuri

Indian-born UK based internationally best-selling author. Winner Betty Trask Award, Commonwealth Writers' Prize, James Tait Black Memorial Prize

Robyn Davidson OAM

Prominent author and explorer. Best known for best-selling 'Tracks'

Di Morrissey AM

Internationally renowned best-selling Australian author and environmental activist. Australian Book Industry Awards (ABIA) Hall of Fame

Kate Grenville AO

One of Australia's leading authors, winner Orange Prize and Commonwealth Writers' Prize. Author of 'Lilian's Story', 'The Secret River', 'The Lieutenant'

Rodney Hall AM

One of Australia's leading authors. Twice-winner of The Miles Franklin Award

Patricia Piccinini

Leading international artist. Represented Australia at the 50th Venice Biennale

Alex Miller

Major Australian novelist. Twice winner of the Miles Franklin Award, winner New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards, Commonwealth Writers Prize, Melbourne Prize for Literature and Christina Stead Prize.

Charles Bernstein

Internationally renowned American poet. Winner Bollingen Prize, Münster Prize, Janus Panonius Prize, Roy Harvey Pearce/Archive for New Poetry Prize, Guggenheim NEA

Michelle de Kretser

Internationally acclaimed author, two-time winner Miles Franklin Award and three-time winner Christina Stead Prize for Fiction

John Kinsella

Internationally renowned WA-based poet, novelist, critic, essayist and activist. Winner Prime Minister's Literary Award for poetry, Christopher Brennan Award and Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Poetry

Nigel Westlake

Renowned Australian composer. Film credits 'Babe' and 'Babe: Pig in the City', 'Paper Planes', 'Miss Potter', 'Children of the Revolution'. Winner ARIA Awards, 15 APRA awards, APRA Distinguished Services to Australian Screen Award, the Albert H. Maggs Composition Award. Two-time winner of the Paul Lowin Orchestral Prize

Tony Birch FAHA

Prominent Australian author, winner Patrick White Award, one of Australia's leading Aboriginal writers and activists

Jean Francois Milou

Internationally renowned museum architect, buildings include: National Gallery of Singapore, Musée des Tumulus de Bougon France, the Cite de la Mer in Cherbourg Normandy, National Automobile Museum in Mulhouse and Carreau du Temple Paris

Drusilla Modjeska

Prominent author, three-time winner NSW Premier's Literary Award and Douglas Stewart Prize. Author of 'Stravinsky's Lunch'

David Noonan

Internationally renowned London-based Australian artist. Collections of The Museum of Modern Art, NY, Guggenheim Museum, NY, National Gallery of Australia

Nam Le

Critically acclaimed Vietnamese-born Australian author. Winner Dylan Thomas Prize, Pushcart Prize and PEN/ Malamud Award and Melbourne Prize for Literature

Raimond Gaita PhD FAHA

Internationally renowned philosopher and author - best known for 'Romulus, My Father'

Charlotte Wood AM

Acclaimed Australian novelist. Winner Stella Prize. 'Stone Yard Devotional' shortlisted for The Booker Prize

Callum Morton

Internationally renowned artist. Australian representative at the 52nd Venice Biennale

Simon Dow

Renowned dancer. Former Artistic Director of Milwaukee Ballet and West Australian Ballet and Associate Artistic Director for Washington Ballet

John Wolsley

Renowned Australian artist. Five-time winner Art Gallery of NSW Trustees' Watercolour Prize, five-time winner Alice Prize. Collected by major Australian art museums

Ceridwen Dovey

Internationally renowned South African and Australian author and social anthropologist. Winner Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship, Readings Prize for New Australian Fiction, Bragg UNSW Press Prize for Science Writing and Eureka Prize for Long-Form Science Journalism

Laura Jean McKay

Internationally renowned author, winner Arthur C. Clarke Award, Aurealis Award and Victorian Prize for Literature

Judy Watson

Internationally renowned Australian Waanyi artist. Represented Australia at the 47th Venice Biennale. Collected by Tate Modern, London, and in major Australian art museums

Fiona Hall AO

Internationally renowned artist, photographer and sculptor. Represented Australia in the 56th Venice Biennale

Jacob Polley

Leading international poet. Winner T.S. Eliot Prize, Somerset Maugham Award, Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize, Forward Poetry Prize

Professor Clare Wright OAM

Professor of History, Professor of Public Engagement, La Trobe University

John Young AM

Internationally renowned artists. Exhibited in Guggenheim Museum, New York, and collected by the M+ Museum, Hong Kong, and major Australian art museums

John A. Scott

Influential Australian poet and novelist. Twice winner Victorian Premier's Literary Award. Winner C. J. Dennis Prize, Peter Porter Poetry Prize

Anna Funder

Internationally renowned Australian author. Author of 'Stasiland', 'All that I Am' and 'Wifedom'. Winner Miles Franklin Award and Samuel Johnson Prize

Shane Howard AM

Renowned Australian musician, formerly lead singer of Goanna, best known for the iconic hit single 'Solid Rock'. Successful solo career. Awarded a Fellowship by Australia Council acknowledging his contribution to Australian music

John Butler

Prominent Australian-American musician, singer, songwriter and environmental activist. Winner ARIA award for 'Best Male Artist' in 2004

Claire G Coleman

Renowned Wirimin-Noongar-Australian writer and poet. Winner Queensland Literary Award

Tony Clark

Leading Australian artist. Winner John McCaughey Memorial Art Prize, NGV

Gregory Burgess

Leading Australian architect. Winner The Melbourne Prize and National Award for Enduring Architecture.

Penny Olsen AM (Hon Prof, ANU)

Renowned ornithologist and author. Winner Whitley Award Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales

D Harding

Internationally renowned Brisbane-based artist of the Bidjara, Ghungalu, and Garingbal peoples. Collected by Art Institute of Chicago; MCA/Tate Modern, London

Tim Rogers

Prominent Australian musician and actor, lead singer of You Am I, with successful solo career. Winner ARIA Award for Best Male Artist

Bonita Ely

Internationally renowned Australian artist. Collected by Tate Modern London and the Museum of Modern Art New York

Prudence Flint

Internationally renowned artist, winner Len Fox Painting Award, Portia Geach Memorial Award, Doug Moran National Portrait Prize

Louise Weaver

Major Australian artist. Collected by The British Museum and major Australian art museums

Richard Bell

Prominent Australian artist, member of the Kamilaroi, Kooma, Jiman and Gurang Gurang communities. Represented in major Australian art museums

Megan Cope

Leading Australian Aboriginal artist from the Quandamooka people of Stradbroke Island/Minjerribah. Winner Western Australian Indigenous Art Award

Graeme Drendel

Prominent Australian artist, winner Doug Moran National Portrait Prize and Sulman Prize

Gail Jones

Critically acclaimed Australian author. Winner Barbara Ramsden Award Book of the Year, Queensland Premier's Book Awards

Vicki Varvaressos

Renowned Australian artist. Collected by National Gallery of Australia, National Gallery of Victoria, and Art Gallery of NSW

Wendy Stavrianos

Renowned Australian artist. Collected by National Gallery of Australia, National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of Western Australia, and Heide Museum of Modern Art

Sasha Grishin AM FAHA

Leading Australian academic and art writer. Author of 'Australian Art: A history'. Formerly Sir William Dobell Professor of Art History and Head of Art History at ANU Canberra

Ashley Crawford PhD

Renowned cultural critic, author, essayist, arts journalist and curator. Author of 'Wimmera: The Work of Philip Hunter', 'The Work of Howard Arkley', Contributor to The Age, The Australian, Guardian, Financial Review, Sydney Morning Herald, Australian Art Collector, Art Monthly.

John McDonald

One of Australia's leading art critics. Weekly columns in the Sydney Morning Herald, Australian Financial Review, The Nightly, and 'Everything the art world doesn't want you to know'

John Hughes PhD

Prominent independent documentarian and film director. His work has been screened at ICA London, ARC Art Museum Paris, ACMI Melbourne, Biennale of Sydney, Ewing Gallery, University of Queensland Art Museum. Director of 'Trespass' documentary on Murujuga

Holly Rankin

Renowned Australian singer songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and producer. Performs as Jack River

eX De Medici

Renowned Australian artist. Official War Artist, Solomon Islands, 2009. Awarded the Australian Print Workshop Colle Print Trust Fellowship. Artist Fellow at CSIRO, 2000-08. Collected by National Gallery of Australia and major Australian art museums

Amanda Johnson

Renowned Australian poet, novelist and artist. Winner Peter Porter Poetry Prize, Michel Wesley Wright Prize, Griffith University-Josephine Ulrick Poetry Prize

Warraba Weatherall

Prominent Australian and Kamilaroi artist, researcher, and curator. Solo exhibition at Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney. Collected by National Gallery of Victoria and Queensland Art Gallery

The Honourable Dr Ted Egan AO

Iconic Australian songwriter, musician, author and public servant. Lifetime Achievement Award by The Country Music Awards of Australia

Ali Cobby Eckermann

Renowned poet and Yankunytjatjara woman. Winner International Windham-Campbell Literature Prize, two-time winner New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards Book of the Year, Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry, and Indigenous Writers' Prize

Matthew Johnson

Prominent Australian artist, represented in Australian and international collections. Winner Faber Castell Prize for Drawing

Josie Alec

Kuruma -Marthadunera woman and traditional custodian, artist and singer songwriter

Rona Green

Prominent Australian artist. Collected by National Gallery of Australia

Raelene Cooper

Marthadunera woman and traditional custodian of Murujuga and artist. Founder of Save Our Songlines

Andrew Taylor

Prominent Australian artist. Represented in major Australian and international collections

Melinda Harper

Leading Australian abstract painter, represented in major collections including National Gallery of Victoria and Art Gallery of NSW

Sharlene Allsopp

Acclaimed novelist and poet. Born in Bundjalung Country into the Olive mob. She is the University of Queensland's 2021 Ford Memorial Poet

Peter Cooley

Prominent Australian painter and ceramicist. Collected by The British Museum and represented in major Australian art museums

Karen Viggers

Internationally bestselling Australian author. Author of 'The Lightkeeper's Wife.'

Yvette Coppersmith

Prominent Australian Artist. Winner Archibald Prize

Favel Parret

Critically acclaimed Australian novelist. Winner, Dobbie Literary Prize and Newcomer of the Year at the Australian Book Industry Awards

Andrea Goldsmith

Leading Australian author best known for 'The Prosperous Thief'. Winner Best Writing Award in the Melbourne Prize for Literature

Geoffrey Ricardo

Prominent artist, printmaker and sculptor represented in major public collections in Australia

Michael Vale

Prominent Australian artist, winner Hutchins Australian Contemporary Art Prize

Phillip Nikolayev PhD

Prominent American poet and translator. Winner Verse Prize

Ryan Presley PhD

Renowned Indigenous Australian artist, represented by major Australian art museums

Robert Andrew

Prominent Indigenous Australian artist, descendant of the Yawuru people. Collected by major Australian art museums

Mahalia Barnes

Acclaimed Australian singer-songwriter. Mahalia Barnes and the Soul Mates

Anne Wallace

Prominent Australian artist. Awarded The Gordan Samstag International Visual Art Scholarship. Winner Slade School of Fine Art Melville Nettleship Prize for Figure Drawing. Collected by major Australian art museums

Jon Kudelka

Leading Australian political cartoonist. Winner Stanley Award and two Walkley Awards

Jennifer Higgie

Distinguished Australian novelist, screenwriter, art critic and former editor of London-based arts magazine Frieze

John Gollings AM

Renowned Australian architectural photographer, twice awarded the President's Award by the Australian Institute of Architecture

Fran Keaney and Tom Russo

Prominent Australian musicians with internationally successful Melbourne band Rolling Blackouts Coastal Fever

Robert Kenny

Acclaimed poet and historian. Winner 2008 Prime Minister's Prize for Australian History and the Victorian Premier's History prize

Lily Eather

Prominent artist and Mandandanji woman. Member of proppaNOW collective, Winner Jane Lombard Prize for Art and Social Justice, New York

Jenny Rogerson

Prominent Australian artist. Winner Portia Geach Memorial Award and Percival Portrait Painting Prize

Judith Hugo OAM

Co-convenor, Friends of Australian Rock Art Inc. formed 2006 to protect Murujuga's ancient rock art. Previously Curator of Central TAPE Art Collection, Perth 1991 - 2020. Awarded OAM for services to the Arts

Susan Swain

Architect, artist and Co-convenor, Friends of Australian Rock Art

Trace Balla

Prominent Australian Children's author and illustrator. Winner Readings Children's Book Prize and Wilderness Society Picture Book Award

Suzanne Ogge

Anthropologist, leading specialist in international tangible and intangible heritage

Janet Holmes à Court AC

Add your name to the open letter: >

