

As an Aboriginal Artist and in the arts industry for over 25 years, I have dealt with the Fake art industry for most of them, I work in the souvenir industry mainly, graphic design second and this has affected me the most.

The Fake Industry has cost Indigenous artists a huge amount of lost income, taking from them and their families and the community overall. These places have no regard for the cultural impact they have and a total disregard for cultural appropriation just to make money. Tourists and Art buyers generally don't have an idea of what they are buying, they think it is real because the labelling is confusing or they speak/read very little English. And let's face it, people are ticking the 'box' these days and doing cultural artwork without any idea of what the artwork means or respect to others, both Artists or Elders.

You see fake art pop up on websites, Facebook ads, and Instagram Ads trying to make a quick buck off the culture. These places are majority made and designed in Vietnam and China. Also, Artists now from other countries paint Aboriginal Art and it is sold as Aboriginal Art.

Stock images are being sold as Aboriginal Art and beings sold to Australian Businesses as an 'Australian Government trusted and approved supplier of promotional products and merchandise'. For example, as I write this submission indigenepromotions.com.au is selling stock images from Adode as Aboriginal & Indigenous Gifts with the Work Naidoc on them. How is this not classed as Fake Art?

I deal with my artwork being stolen every day not only by internet pirates but by other Indigenous artists also. My artwork was stolen by a souvenir company and I sent a cease-and-desist letter via ArtsLaw, 90% of the time I deal with it myself. I have had to learn copyright law very quickly to do this. I have had my artwork stolen and put on Helmets for Supercars, Trophies, Products, clothing, and heaps more. I send 100's of takedowns a week now to websites like Amazon, Wish, Aliexpress, Zazzle, Redbubble plus heaps more.

I have a massive list of websites, A collection of Artists that have stolen my artwork, and countless messages of threats and people saying they have never seen my artwork before when their artwork is a 90% match to mine.

I have talked extensively about the fake art industry via newspapers and at QLD parliament. My main issue besides fake art is Copyright. Here are some steps you need to take into consideration:

Step one: I think they should just ban the importation of Aboriginal style Hand Painting artwork. This will stop a huge number of imported items from places like Indonesia. This will include artists that do templates for them to paint and send back over here and claim it as hand painted by the Artist. This is morally and culturally wrong on many levels.

Step two: No organisation should ever ask for full copyright of any indigenous Artwork. This is something that Reconciliation Australia should be involved in. By selling full copyright this means that the organisation owns all rights to that painting/design including the stories and symbols, everything within the artwork. Only the Artist should own those rights from a culturally perspective.

I am happy to talk more about this but this message is a brief example of my thoughts.

Thank you

Stephen Hogarth