



MEDIA RELEASE -- MESSAGE WITH A HEART FOR VALENTINE'S DAY (14th February 2023)

Valentine's Day marks the Creative Team's start of our "Journey to the Heart" for the year, encouraging all Australians to listen to their heart, culminating in a series of uplifting possibilities for everyday Australians on 26 October each year.

On this special Valentine's Day, we feature Australia's "Wrap with Love" - <https://www.wrapwithlove.org> charity, which provides knitted squares made into blankets, which then reach many thousands in need across our nation, our world. [Heart Connections Issue 3](#) (PDF)

Heart Connections, launched 26 October 2022, showcases groups whose ideas, activities and efforts unite and inspire who we are as a nation - our communities, individual Australians - along with the release of the powerful song "Heart of Australia", which speaks to the essence of our lands and peoples. In 2023 we aim to generate awareness and public support for the individuals and groups featured in *Heart Connections*.

Heart Connections issues:

- "Ngaran Ngaran Cultural Awareness" - <https://ngaranaboriginalculture.com>
Features Dwayne Bannon-Harrison founder of Ngaran Ngaran Cultural Awareness programs – a Yuin-Ngarrigu man with connections to the Yorta-Yorta, Dja Dja Warrung, Watchabolic and Gunai language groups, who offers powerful experiences of indigenous food, ceremony and more, 'connecting up people to ancient wifi'. [Heart Connections Issue 1](#) (PDF)
- "Orange Sky" <https://orangesky.org.au>
Nic Marchesi, a former a camera operator and editor for the ABC and Seven Network who, along with Lucas Patchett hatched the idea to throw two washing machines and dryers in the back of an old van in Brisbane to offer free laundry services to those in need, and now operates in 25 locations nationwide with over 3,000 volunteers. [Heart Connections Issue 2](#) (PDF)

About Heart Connections -- Nurturing Our Present & Emerging Custodians

Heart Connections showcases people whose efforts help lead the way to better communities, a better nation. The vision is to bring together Australia's rich and diverse peoples of all ages and cultures, to celebrate all that's good in our lands, *and to respect and honour this country's unique Indigenous history and custodianship, our nation's diversity.*

Indigenous Peoples & Multicultural Country

It's good to remember Australia is home to Earth's oldest living continuous culture, with more than 250 Indigenous languages and 800 dialects. Our successful multicultural nation is the most ethnically diverse country ever, with 26% of Australians born overseas and 49% having at least one parent born overseas, along with 100 religions and 300 ethnic groups in our cultural melting pot. *Sitting aside this is the Dream Time: Aboriginal cultural and spiritual identity, that sees the world's creation as a continuing story that never ends. Our Indigenous people do not put humans on a level higher than Nature – a crucial message for the entire planet and environment at this time.*

The "Heart of Australia" song was written by Anatole Kononewsky and multi-platinum award-winning producers Adrian Hannan & Barbara Hannan, expresses the beauty of the open, welcoming spirit of its people, paying tribute to the beating heart of the country. *"The song gives voice to what we truly love about each other and these lands -- to celebrate all that's good in this world,"* says Anatole Kononewsky.

The Heart of Australia team worked closely with Yorta Yorta man, Tiriki Onus on the mission and vision of the project. As Senior Lecturer in Indigenous Arts & Culture at the Victorian College of the Arts and Head of the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development Tiriki's advice, his ongoing support has been invaluable.

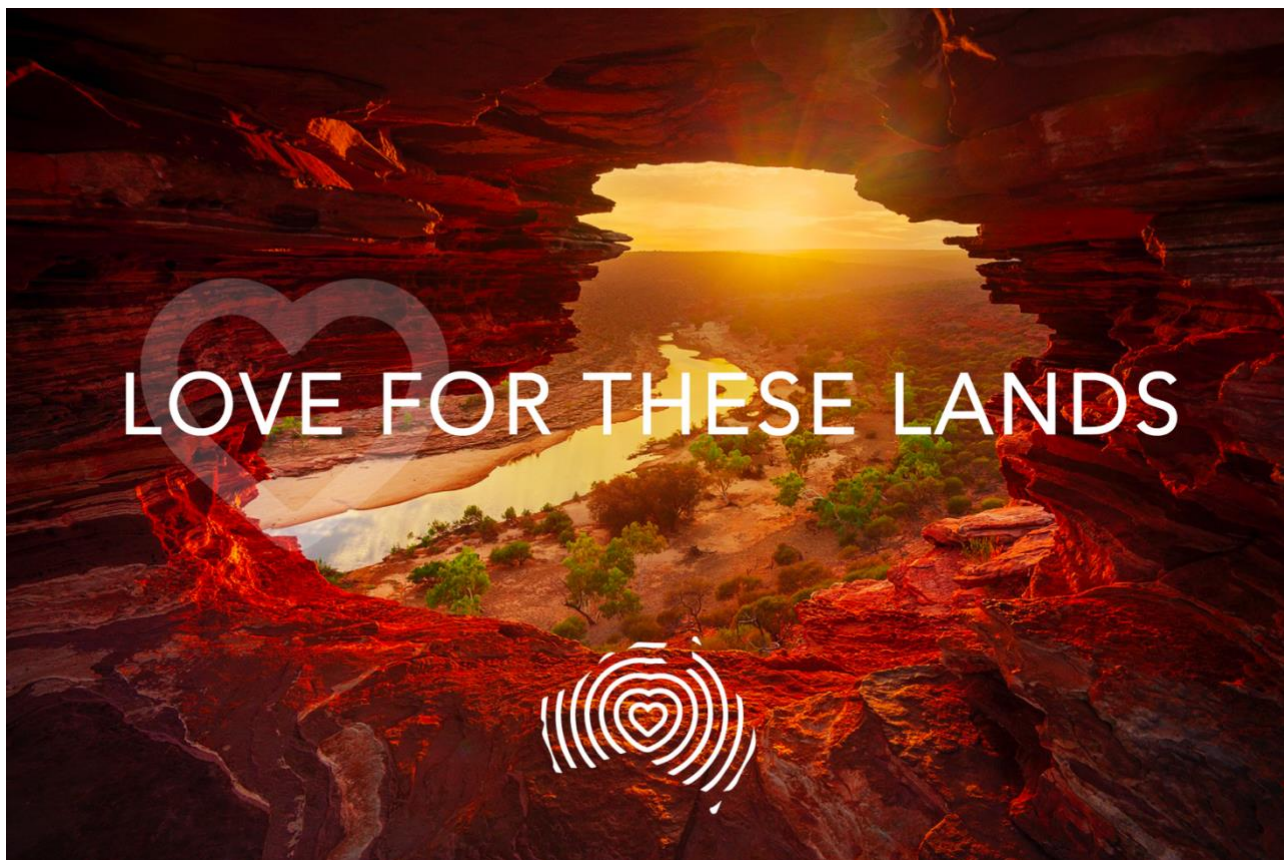
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For media enquiries, interview contact Bronny Lane, Publicist bronwen@littlettrain.com.au / 0413 221 252

For more information visit <https://www.heartofaustraliaday.com>

Heart Connections: <https://www.heartofaustraliaday.com/heart-connections/>

“Heart of Australia” Song: <https://www.heartofaustraliaday.com/listen-to-the-heart/>



We respectfully acknowledge the First Nations peoples of these lands, we now all call home. The ingenuity, strength and diversity of Indigenous cultures enriches us all and we aspire to walk together, as a community, honouring the deep and profound foundations that they have laid for us.



Thank you to Glen Barry for the Beautiful, Evocative, Creative Imagery of the Heart of Australia (26 October).