

# ATTACHMENT

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Andrew Georgalla

**From:** Australian Human Rights Commission <webfeedback@humanrights.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday 10 June 2014 12:25 PM  
**To:** New Complaints  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Complaint Form

Submitted on Tuesday, June 10, 2014 12:24pm  
Submitted by anonymous user 118.209.240.229  
Submitted values are:

--Part A - Your details (the complainant)--

Title: Mr

First name: Demetrios

Last name: Vakras

Address: 35 Hardiman Street

Suburb: Kensington

State/Territory: VIC

Postcode: 3031

Email: vakras@iamsurreal.com

Phone (after hours): 03 [REDACTED]

Phone (business hours): [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Fax:

TTY:

Do you require assistance to participate in the complaint process? No

Are you making this complaint on behalf of someone else (the aggrieved person)? No

Do you have a legal representative or advocate? No

--Part B Who is the complaint about?--

Individual/Organisation: Individual

Title:

First name: Robert

Last name: Cripps

Address: 132 Little Lonsdale Street

Suburb: Melbourne

State/Territory: VIC

Postcode: 3000

Email:

Phone (business hours): 03) 9654 9292

Phone (after hours) 03) 9654 9292

Mobile:

Fax:

What is their relationship to you or the aggrieved person?  
provider of goods and services: art gallery owner of gallery for hire

Do you want to add another respondent? No

--Part C What are you complaining about?--

I am complaining because I believe: (Please select at least one

reason below):

I have been discriminated against because of my race / colour

I have been discriminated against because of my ethnic / national origin

What is your race/colour? My "race" is Greek

What is your ethnic / national origin? Born in Australia to Greek parents

When did the alleged event(s) happen? The event occurred in June 2009

Reason(s) for delay: The discriminatory actions were claimed to have been done for a completely different reason in 2009

Recently (March 2014) I was told that the discriminatory actions were actually due to my racial/cultural origins.

What happened?

In an art exhibition I held of my work in 2009, the gallery director, Robert Cripps, decided to place disclaimers throughout the exhibition space, and repeatedly misrepresented our (mine, and my co-exhibitor's) art orally. He altered the terms of entry to the exhibition for myself and my co-exhibitor, and made it impossible for us to enter the gallery during the time of our exhibition. At that time he gave us several reasons for his posting of disclaimers and his actions.

Recently the explanation for his placement of disclaimers was on the following accusation made against me; that there were some parts of the exhibition that included words in Greek. These words such as Πυθία (Pythia, 'the python', the oracle of Delphi), the Μέδουσα (Medusa) featured in the titles of my paintings and in accompanying explanations. In addition was my signature written in Greek lettering. Since 1988 I have been signing my paintings in Greek lettering.

Apparently what was written, it was claimed, could have conveyed a meaning that Cripps would be unaware of and that this meaning which he could not understand due to the script, might, in some way, make him liable. It was then claimed that after his asking me to render the words into the "English alphabet" (sic) (even though the Greek parts with the exclusion of my signature already included Latin equivalents) that I refused, becoming agitated due to my "Greek nationalism"

Apparently, to be of non-Anglo inheritance, and to MANIFEST that inheritance in any way is a demonstration of one's racial "nationalism" Obviously this trumps my rights in the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, S.9. Any non-Anglo who believes they have rights under S. 9 is simply advocating their "nationalism"

It is evident that it would have been acceptable to write about Greek mythological entities and use the Greek lettering only if I was Anglo as that would not, and could not, have conveyed some sinister meaning that would have necessitated the disclaimers. If an Anglo had included Greek under similar circumstance they would not have required disclaimers, only I due to my Greek background made such an inclusion necessary because of my "nationalism"

However as I am of Greek inheritance, my use of Greek in my own art exhibition, meant that to include any Greek lettering carried with it a sinister purpose, for only a "nationalist" would openly manifest their racial inheritance, and I had to suffer the consequences.

I want to convey my disgust. I, in no way, had any say in being born of the racial inheritance I have, or to even be born in this despicably racist country that would support such racist accusations being made against me and my art, and it is reprehensible that such prejudice and bigotry is permissible.

Australian art is already racist, and so to encounter this in the Australian art scene should not have been unexpected (Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd, Russel Drysdale, David Boyd, are a celebration of Anglo-Australian nationalism, hence their success in this nation).

The exhibition was titled "Humanist Transhumanist", and was held at the since closed Guildford Lane Gallery (GLG). The exhibition ran from 17/6/2009-5/7/2009. The material objected to can be found in the publication of the same name (ISBN 978-0-646-52188-6).

I was made aware of the "nationalist" claim on or about the last week of March 2014.

The Gallery director, Robert Cripps, whose claim this is, now runs another venture, "Ruby's Music Room" and can be contacted at:

132 Little Lonsdale St, Melbourne VIC 3000  
(03) 9654 9292

Note, this art that Cripps objected to had been submitted for a grant application to the Australia Council: "My art is surrealist... Born in Australia I am of Greek parentage. I am putting into visual form the symbology of my own ancestral inheritance which I have reinterpreted." (Australian Council application made in March 2009)

Please check this box if you intend to email the Commission supporting information.. Yes

--Part D Other information--

How do you think the complaint could be resolved? This gallery owner is a racist and caused me (and my co-exhibitor who is not Greek) a huge financial loss by his actions. We want him prosecuted for breaching S. 9, and desire to be compensated for his actions which caused us loss.

Have you complained about this to another organisation? No

Were you referred to us by another organisation? No

The results of this submission may be viewed at: