



the
Lowitja
INSTITUTE
Australia's National Institute
for Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Research

*Incorporating the Cooperative Research Centre
for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health*

MEDIA RELEASE

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COMEDY STARS ASK MELBOURNE: “IS RACISM THE NEW BLACK?”

They're used to finding humour in awkward situations now comedy stars Charlie Pickering, Libbi Gorr and Meshel Laurie will shine their lights on the painful subject of racism in Australia.

The trio will join acclaimed Melbourne playwright, scriptwriter, musician, actor and director Richard Frankland in “Is Racism the New Black?”, a comedy event being run by the Lowitja Institute in Melbourne this month.

Addressing the theme of racism in Australia, the comedy panel event aims to start a conversation about racism by using humour to break through barriers.

All four panelists are passionate about the subject and believe humour can help us talk about uncomfortable and painful subjects, allowing us to heal.

Richard has won numerous awards and accolades for his work in the arts and Indigenous affairs and was a finalist for the Human Rights Medal in the 2013 Australian Human Rights Commission Awards for his 30-year commitment to Indigenous issues through film, theatre, music and community capacity building.

The Lowitja Institute comedy event wraps up a week-long awareness program that includes a national health conference and the biennial Congress Lowitja 2014.

Australia's national institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research, the institute is the only research organisation in Australia solely focused on the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Named in honour of former Australian of the Year Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC, CBE, DSG, the institute brings together world-leading researchers, policy makers and experts in cutting-edge service delivery, enabling collaborative health research that will make a real difference to people's lives.

The board has a majority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership and comprises highly skilled and experienced professionals from health, education, indigenous and community sectors.

“Talking about racism will ensure that there is a voice that provides an alternative thinking, those who have experienced racism will no longer feel alone and bring to the fore ways to change our society for the better,” the institute's chief executive officer, Lyn Brodie, said.

“It will find new ways to address racism and promote diversity within Australia.”

“Is Racism the New Black?” is being produced by Jason Tamiru from Melbourne's Malthouse Theatre.

It will be held at Storey Hall, RMIT, on Thursday March 20 from 7.30pm. Tickets are \$20 and available at the door or online at <http://www.lowitja.org.au/comedy>

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