

## Julian Burnside AO QC

Named 'Australian Living National Treasure'

### Biography



After completing a Bachelor of Economics and a Bachelor of Laws at Monash University, Mr Julian Burnside AO QC (BEC 1972, LLB 1973) became a barrister. He joined the Bar in 1976 and took silk in 1989.

Mr Burnside acted for the Ok Tedi natives against BHP, for Alan Bond in fraud trials, for Rose Porteous in numerous actions against Gina Rinehart, and for the Maritime Union of Australia in the 1998 waterfront dispute against Patrick Stevedores.

He was the Senior Counsel assisting the Australian Broadcasting Authority in the 'Cash for Comment' inquiry and was senior counsel for Liberty Victoria in the Tampa litigation. While specialising in commercial litigation, Mr Burnside has acted pro bono in many human rights cases, in particular concerning the treatment of refugees.

Mr Burnside is also passionately involved in the arts. He collects contemporary paintings, photographs and sculptures and regularly commissions music. He is Chair of Fortyfive Downstairs and Chair of the Mietta Foundation.

Mr Burnside has written a range of successful publications including *On Privilege* (Melbourne University Publishing 2009), a children's book *Matilda and the Dragon* (Allen & Unwin), and *Wordwatching- Field Notes from an Amateur Philologist* (Scribe 2004). He also compiled a book of letters written by asylum seekers held in Australia's detention centres, *From Nothing to Zero* (Lonely Planet 2003).

In 2004 Mr Burnside received a Monash University Distinguished Alumni Award and was elected a Living National Treasure. In 2009 he received an Officer of the Order of Australia for service as a human rights advocate, and for his services to the arts and the law.

