

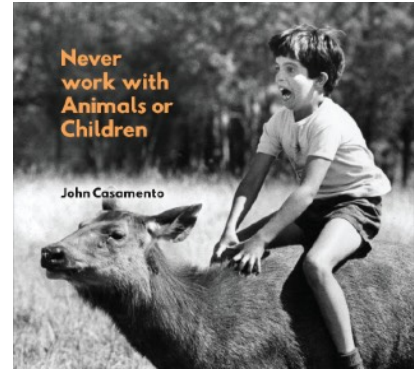
MEDIA RELEASE

NEVER WORK WITH ANIMALS OR CHILDREN

JOHN CASAMENTO

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Whimsical book raising funds for children with half a heart



There's a well-known saying that many professional photographers have adopted as a golden rule: "Never work with children or animals". Veteran press photographer John Casamento has spent five decades breaking that rule. Now in his 80's, John has compiled a book of some of his best photos from assignments with animals and children to raise funds for children with heart defects. The book is aptly titled: '**Never work with Animals or Children**'.

When John's grandson Noah was born with cardiac abnormalities, including a missing ventricle (or heart pumping chamber), his life was seriously at risk. Over the next few years, Noah would undergo multiple open-heart surgeries at The Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

At the age of four, he underwent a special operation called the 'Fontan procedure' — a lifesaving medical technique that involves restructuring the heart to function more efficiently using only one ventricle. The Fontan procedure is frequently saving the lives of babies born with severely malformed hearts.

Noah's heart surgeon Prof Yves d'Udekem describes the sick babies as being “born with half a heart”. Prof d'Udekem founded the [Australian and New Zealand Fontan Registry](#) at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute. This is a research initiative that follows the health and development of children treated for serious heart defects detected after birth. **The Fontan Registry needs to raise \$200,000 to continue its research, so it can continue to improve treatment options and the long-term health of its patients.**

The Fontan Registry's motto is: “a whole life with half a heart”. Without the Fontan Procedure, many ‘heart babies’ would lead severely disabled lives or would not survive at all. This surgery allows babies and children to have as normal a life as possible.

John wanted to show his appreciation of his grandson Noah being able to lead a normal life by donating the proceeds of this book '**Never work with Animals or Children**' to the Fontan Registry.



ABOUT JOHN CASAMENTO

John Casamento's photo-journalistic career began in Melbourne in 1955 with The Sun News-Pictorial (which later became the Herald Sun). For the next five decades, thousands of his photographs graced front pages and illustrated many newspapers and magazines.

John's award-winning photojournalism earned him many accolades including Australian Press Photographer of the Year, Australian Sports Picture of the Year and Most Popular Picture in the World Press Photo Contest exhibition. He has engaged in many assignments across Australia and overseas.

As a respected elder and senior photographer, John's decades of experience and continuing contributions are cherished and invaluable.

EMAIL ENQUIRIES info@casamento.com.au

OR CONTACT PETER CASAMENTO 0419 104 244

www.johncasamento.com

www.facebook.com/neverworkwithanimalsorchildren

www.instagram.com/neverworkwithanimals