

Face Painting with Bill Leak

Dur: 6 X 30'

A six-part series which will take viewers on an amazing journey as renowned cartoonist and portrait painter Bill Leak paints six well known Australians.

As with any portrait, the first thing an artist must do is find the soul of the subject. Face Painting follows Bill through this process of discovery each week as he attempts to find the real person he's about to commit to canvas. The one thing they all have in common... they are no longer with us.

The six Australians Bill will paint are Pro Hart, June Salter, Bon Scott, Charlie Perkins, Tilly Devine and Boy Charlton.



Most people know Bill Leak as one of Australia's leading satirists via his day job as The Australian daily editorial cartoonist. But he is also a highly respected portrait painter, who equally divides his time between ridiculing his subjects mercilessly in his cartoons and immortalising them in oils.

He has been a finalist in the Archibald Prize on 12 occasions and his portraits are included in the collections of the State Library of NSW, Parliament House, Canberra and the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra

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Episodic Synopses

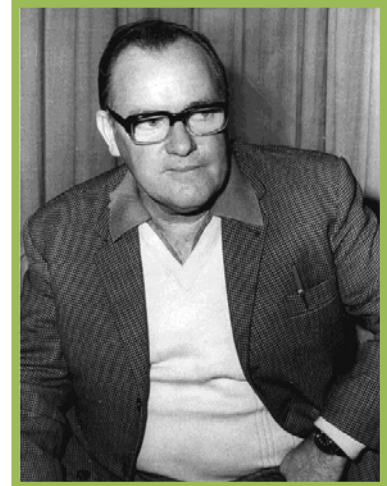
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Pro Hart

Kevin Charles "Pro" (short for 'Professor') Hart was one of Australia's most prolific artists. And it didn't matter that he wasn't embraced by the establishment, because his work would be admired far and wide anyway.

Looking more at home down a mine than in an artist's studio was just one of the countless eccentricities of Pro. Despite his often unconventional approach to art, he was very much a conservative man who loved to believe in conspiracy theories. He was also a devout Christian and held firm views on the way life was meant to be lived.

Understanding these aspects of Pro the person is essential to capturing his true image. To put us in the picture we'll talk with his wife and son, his lifelong artist mate, and also the ordinary folk who revered him in his treasured hometown of Broken Hill.



June Salter

Actress June Salter was born in 1932 and spent her childhood playing on the beaches of Sans Souci (Sydney). Adolescence was difficult because she'd inherited the "Salter nose and ears" and was convinced she'd never have a boyfriend. The only school subject June excelled at was drama - becoming leading lady in all productions. The rest as they say is history. A lifelong smoker, June lost her battle with cancer in 2001, fighting right until the end.

Will Bill be able to capture the real June in a way that sums up her childhood, career and character? Only her son John Meillon Jr., pal Gwen Friend, and show business mates Stuart Wagstaff, Bruce Venables and Carol Raye can give Bill that answer. Given June was a master at assuming other people's personas, June's portrait is sure to be a hard one for Bill to get right.



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Bon Scott

The saying, “live hard and fast and die a good looking corpse” could have been penned for Bon Scott. This was a maxim he lived to the maximum.

But the first front man of the phenomenally successful hard rock band AC/DC was somewhat of a contradiction, because behind the rock and roll persona was in fact a true sentimental softie who loved nothing more than making people laugh and simply having fun.

Many images exist of Bon Scott in his on-stage guise, but very few capture the real man. We speak to a renowned rock photographer, his ex-wife to better understand who he really was, his rock mates and his massive fan club to understand the enduring appeal of the legendary persona. The resulting portrait will probably be a controversial depiction, especially given the idolatry of Bon that still exists 27 years after his death.



Dr. Charles Perkins AO

Dr. Charles Perkins AO is widely regarded as one of the most influential Indigenous leaders in Australian history. Born in 1936, he spent his early childhood on a mission in Alice Springs. At the age of 10, he was sent to a private boys' school in Adelaide to get an education. Charlie's childhood experiences no doubt shaped his combative and at times controversial personality.

The first Aboriginal Australian to ever graduate from university, he led the Freedom Rides in the 1960's, and played a big part winning the Aboriginal right to vote at the 1967 Referendum. The first Aboriginal to head a federal government department in the 1970's, he dedicated the rest of his life to fighting the cause. His outspokenness earned him many enemies, but also many admirers.



Amongst those Bill meets in this highly emotional episode is life-long friend Gordon Briscoe, former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, and businessman John Singleton. Charlie Perkins sadly passed away in 2000 after a lifetime of fighting kidney disease.

Face Painting with **Bin Peak**

Tilly Devine

Tilly Devine is listed by the Australian War Memorial as one of Australia's fifty most influential people during wartime in Australia.

The list contains leaders, heroes and rogues. Given Tilly was a brothel madam and gangster in Sydney's inner-suburbs, there are no prizes for guessing which category she made the list for.

We will use police mug-shots and newspaper articles as the references to create a portrait of this very colourful lady. Her great niece will fill in the personal profile, her biographer the facts and places she frequented, whilst artist Camilla Connolly who has painted a Tilly Devine series, will share her experience of a parallel life to Tilly's as a former Kings Cross working girl.

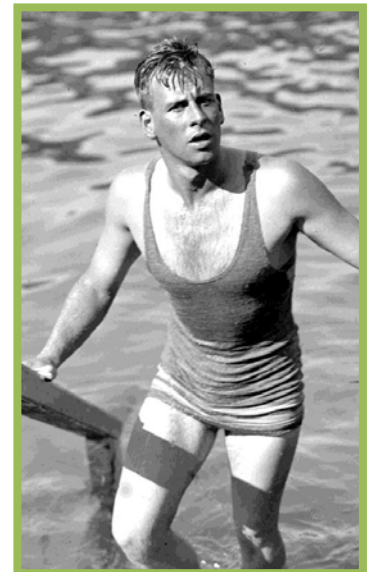


Andrew 'Boy' Charlton

In the summer of 1924, at the age of 16, Andrew Charlton raced and comprehensively beat the then swimming world champion Arne Borg at Sydney's Domain Baths. A young country finally had a world sporting hero to call their own – a 'boy' wonder of the pool.

But as suddenly he had arrived at the peak of world swimming, embarrassed by the adulation, he turned his back on fame and possible fortune to become a jackeroo and realise his dream of being a man of the land.

Through family interviews, historic Newsreel footage and the intimate findings of his biographer, we will uncover the soul of this extraordinary but simple man to paint a portrait that reflects his superhuman physique, yet humble inner self.



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