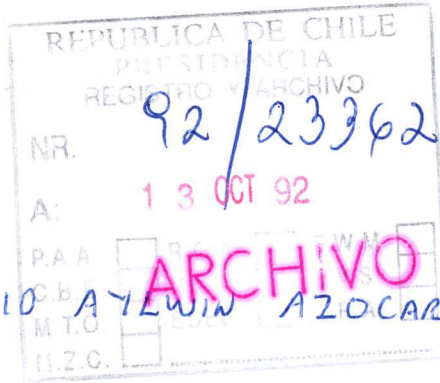


1st October 1992



Martin Shaw
PO Box 207
Waverley
NSW 2024
AUSTRALIA

TO SENOR PATRICIO AYLWIN AZOCAR

Dear President,

I am writing to you with a very unusual but simple request which will help my project enhance its prospects of being exhibited in your country as well as other countries. The project is based on a painting called "Three Well Known Australians". The project began in 1983 within Australia and is now extending to other countries.

To simplify the project, the audience is required to guess 'The Three Well Known Australians' in the painting and write their attempts at guessing into an entry book. The entry books are collated into year-books: a new year-book for each region of Australia. The painting is a catalyst or symbol for people to write down any names, images or impressions of Australians. The year-books would create a fascinating collection of views and opinions from different regions of Australia and from other countries. The project is intended to last for many generations.

The simplest request is to write to me with your attempts at guess (or capture the spirit) of the 'Three Well Known Australians' on the enclosed sticker. It could be a serious or amusing reply, all it requires is imagination on your part.

Some written replies include from our Prime Minister and Opposition Leader:

John Hewson	L-R	Jack Lang, Slim Dusty, Reg Livermore
Paul Keating	L-R	The Australian Worker, The Artist, The Spectator

By gathering well known international politician's attempts at guessing like yourself, this will go a long way to ensuring the painting and the year-books will eventually tour regions of the world - for many generations. Your 'guesses' and any comments will help the project obtain media publicity and enable me to obtain art gallery venues in your country as well as in other countries.

Since 1976 I've had one-man art exhibitions in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide including a 1983 tour of NSW regional art galleries.

I hope you find my project fascinating reading and respond, it all helps.

Yours sincerely,

M.J. Shaw

N.B. The painting is currently touring Perth in Western Australia.

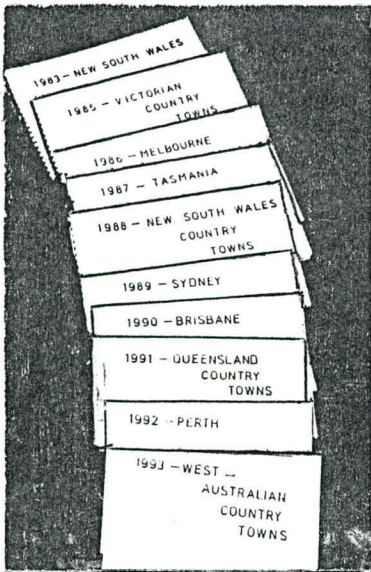


TOURING FOREVER



for information about project and your sticker enclose self-stamp address envelope and Aust/US \$1.00 or similar value to Mr Shaw P.O. box 207, Waverley 2024, Aust.

THREE PORTRAITS OF THREE WELL KNOWN AUSTRALIANS



yearbook entries. 'touring forever'

The painting has already been on display in art galleries, libraries, and theatres in the following localities and places.

- 1983 - Albury, Canberra, Sydney, Muswellbrook, Tamworth, Lismore.
- 1985 - Goulburn, Geelong, Hamilton, Mildura,
- 1986 - Melbourne
- 1987 - Burie, Devonport, Launceston
- 1988 - Albury, Griffith, Orange, Lake Macquarie
- 1989 - Sydney
- 1990 - Brisbane
- 1991 - Bribie Island, Toowoomba, Noosa, Bundaberg, Mackay, Townsville
- 1992 - Perth

Below is the list of people who have been given the opportunity to open the project or to attend an opening. Their names have been recorded in the year books by ordinary Australians as possibilities for the "Three Well Known Australians".

Some of the names are currently International celebrities, some National figures, while others are well known in regional areas or specific fields. Which of these names will be remembered by future generations and continue to be recorded into the year books? How will the future view those 'forgotten' well known Australians listed below? How will their society be different to ours, and be reflected by the changing nature of the year books?

WHAT NAMES WILL CITIZENS WRITE DOWN

A collection of handwritten names, each with a color-coded label (Blue, Green, Red, or Purple) indicating their status. The names are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some overlapping. A large pink 'WELCOME' stamp is visible in the center.

Blue Person: Robyn Archer	Green Person: Darrel Sommers	Blue Person: Bert Newton	Red Person: Mary Worsley	Green Person: SAWY-ANN ATKINSON
Red Person: Charles Parkin	Green Person: Bob Brown	Green Person: GRAEME MURPHY	Blue Person: Doug Anthony	Red Person: Neville Wiles
Green Person: NEDDY HAMMAS	Blue Person: Margaret Fahey	Green Person: Reg Kinnane	Red Person: Jesse Ferenc	Red Person: Jammie Linn
Blue Person: Jack Thompson	Green Person: SUSAN RENEW	Blue Person: DONALD HORNE	Green Person: Barry Humphries	Blue Person: Andrew Reed
Red Person: John Symptom	Blue Person: FRED NIKE	Blue Person: Richard Carleton	Red Person: NOLAN GALLAGHER	Red Person: RAY MARTIN
Blue Person: ANGRY ANDERSON	Blue Person: John Bjelke Peterson	Red Person: Harry Butler	Green Person: Maggie Tabberer	Green Person: MAL FRASER
Green Person: LUNG BROADWILL	Green Person: Pure Action	Green Person: JACK HUNDY	Red Person: Dawn Fraser	Red Person: JOHN HOWARD
Green Person: BRIAN BARRY	Red Person: David Gullful	Blue Person: DAWN FRASER	Green Person: MANNING CLARK	Green Person: RON BARASSI
Blue Person: ALAN BOND	Green Person: Bruce Ruxton	Red Person: tony Barber	Green Person: JOHN HOWARD	Red Person: It a Buttrose
Blue Person: BRUCE RUXTON	Blue Person: Rodney Rude	Blue Person: JENNY KEE	Green Person: SIR PETER ABLES	Red Person: BILL HAYDEN
Red Person: Wally Lewis	Green Person: DON LADMAN	Blue Person: DANA FISHER	Green Person: PAUL KEATING	Green Person: LAURIE LAWRENCE
Green Person: Moll Meldrum	Blue Person: Kerry Ricker	Blue Person: Brea Whitely	Green Person: GORD SUTHERLAND	Green Person: ALAN BORDER
Blue Person: Jimmy Barnes	Blue Person: Bob Hawke	Blue Person: Mal Meninga	Blue Person: PHILIP MORTON	Green Person: PETER GARRETT
				Red Person: TED KNOPFS
				Red Person: PAUL HOGAN

Martin wants to answer an eternal query about his art

ONE boring Saturday afternoon in Melbourne artist Martin Shaw created what he hopes will become an important social document.

His painting, *Three Portraits of Three Well Known Australians* features three sexless, featureless (and one headless) figures, plus a dog, Pea, the artist's pet.

This, Shaw says is a catalyst for enabling society to see itself and its changing images and values.

"It is the first collective document initiated by the arts whereby 'the person in the street' can contribute and see a society slowly changing," he said.

By RACHAEL LOOS

lian Nat share.

Each per their name address a identity of The answer ticians an sports peop Some answer though woman lgo for 10 min ing that th Jim Brigg of The Norr

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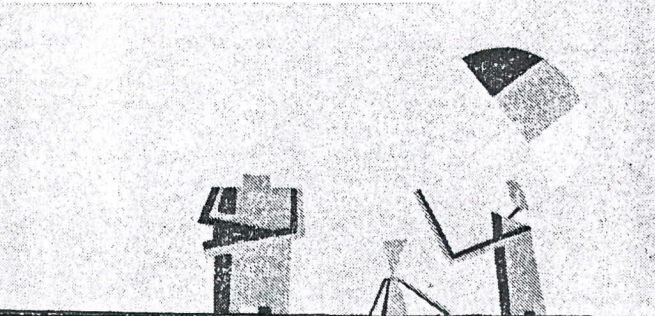
write yourself into history.

Three well-known Austral-

Burnie Art Gallery is presently showing the enigmatic Portrait of Three Well Known Australians by Sydney artist Martin Shaw. Unsigned and undated, the painting shows three figures which although featureless, nevertheless suggest distinct characters. The painting, says Shaw, is really a catalyst for enabling a society to see itself and its changing images and values (well known Australians in this case). Shaw completed the painting in 1983 with the intention of getting the man in the street to participate for the first time in two-dimensional art by having them identify the figures. Members of the community are invited to study the painting and record their identification at the gallery. Portrait of Three Famous Australians has already toured parts of Australia and it is hoped may eventually reach overseas. The painting will remain at the Burnie Art Gallery until November 6.

Burnie art gallery Martin Shaw's portrait of three famous australians is on display at the Burnie Regional Art Gallery until November 6. Visitors are recording the identities of three figures in a painting by the Sydney artist. The artist believes that the selection of names for the figures in the community may be analysed to reveal their differing assumptions, perceptions and attitudes.

What's it mean?



Painting for changing time frames

'AUSTRALIAN' 19-2-88

By DAVID LESER

SET three abstruse figures - one carrying an umbrella - against a tawny background and call them respectively Blue Person, Red Person and Green Person.

Throw in Pea, the Orange Dog. Then ask Australians of all types over a period of 10, 20, 50 or 100 years which well known Australians are represented by these images.

Ask them, too, for their ages, occupations and addresses and, according to artist Martin Shaw, you have an important historical document.

Shaw created *Three Portraits of Three Well Known Australians* three years ago with the intention of getting "the man in the street" to participate for the first time in two-dimensional art.

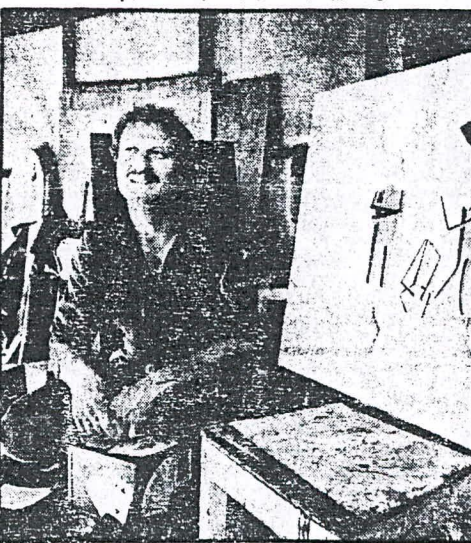
It was his hope then that the painting would serve as a kind of reflecting door on the changing images and values of Australian society.

In 1983, for example, students, secretaries and shop assistants from Canberra selected such notable as Gough Whitlam, Bob Hawke, Sidney Nolan or Stan Papayanos, a milk bar attendant, as the three Australians represented in Shaw's painting.

Their selections have been entered in year-books that will eventually be housed in various art galleries around the country.

One respondent, Mr David Combe, former secretary of the ALP and now trade commissioner in Vancouver, was asked three years ago to decide who the figures represented.

Mr Combe, who gave his occupation as unemployed but then crossed it out and replaced it with "royal commission attendant", thought the Blue Person was Malcolm Fraser, the Red Person, Justice Hope and the Green Person, Justice Hope's "tipstaff".



Artist Martin Shaw with his *Three Portraits of Three Well Known Australians* will tour the world - Picture: GEOFF BEATY

people fifty years from now recall the names of Gough Whitlam or Bob Hawke? Who then, might the figures represent fifty years from now?

"As these year-books develop," said Mr Shaw yesterday, "people will choose an image that will capture the spirit of the times."

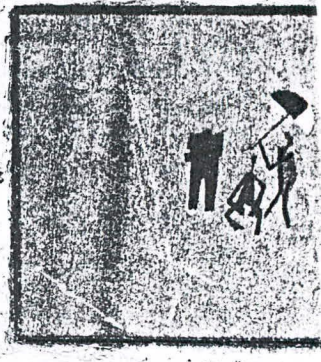
"They will choose different people; they will have different occupations and they will reflect a different Australia than the one today."

"Take any 20-year-old who attempts to guess the stylised figures now. In 20 years time, that person will be 40 and may have a young family. The children will read the thoughts."

Each viewer is asked to give their name, age, sex, occupation, address and their three suggestions. Some people see cricketers like Allan Border and Denis Lillie, others see television personalities, rock stars and politicians. A boy of six saw the first figure as "Humphrey Bear" and the second as "the Homper Room lady", but couldn't think of who the third person might be. Someone else thought one of the people could be an "Aussie on holiday in England". The suggestions vary greatly according to age and some are quite funny. Others are ridiculous like the shop assistant who thought the red figure in the middle was "Peter Garrett. Occupation: No brains and no hair". The idea is certainly unusual, Martin Shaw, who is a man more of pictures than words, has written down what his concept is in a letter addressed to gallery owners who might like to hang the work. He hopes to put the comple-

BULLETIN 5-11-95

Who are they? It may be years before the artist reveals their names



If you're anywhere near Mildura, Vic, and time hangs heavy, if the future, even the present, yawns cavernously, it might be an idea to nip in to town to see the painting - singular - by Martin Shaw. In 1983 Shaw, a Sydney acrylic-fancier, put three vague figures - one headless, two representing the Stick Insect School, one with umbrella - on a yellow background and began touring bush galleries, asking people to guess who. The answers, on big sheets which, Shaw says, are sought by the National Library, Canberra, have included names such as Gough Whitlam, Manning Clark, Bill Hayden, Tamie Fraser, Henry Lawson, Greg Chappell, Ginger Meggs, Mick Young, Joan Sutherland, Charles Perkins, Maggie Tabberer, Sonia McMahon, Diana Fisher and Bob Hawk (sic). Shaw knows the answers but won't let on because (a) he has vet-

Guess who's a sexless, featureless Aussie hero

By SUSAN BREDOW

MARTIN Shaw, artist, plans to make art history. He has painted a picture he named *Three Portraits of Three Well Known Australians* and hopes to use it to record a continuous, national, sociological study of Australians.

Three Portraits is an acrylic 96cm by 66cm featuring three sexless, featureless figures - and a dog. The big blue person does not have a head. The dog is Pea, the artist's pet.

But that is as much as we are told. Shaw says he is gather-

ing invaluable information for future analyses of our population by asking people to guess the identity of the three well-known characters.

He visualises that in many (and maybe more) years to come the information will be invaluable to historians and says he has already gained approval from historians at the Australian National University.

Each viewer is asked to give their name, age, sex, occupation, address and their three suggestions. Some people see cricketers like Allan Border and Denis Lillie, others see television personalities, rock stars and politicians. A boy of six saw the first figure as "Humphrey Bear" and the second as "the Homper Room lady", but couldn't think of who the third person might be. Someone else thought one of the people could be an "Aussie on holiday in England".

The suggestions vary greatly according to age and some are quite funny. Others are ridiculous like the shop assistant who thought the red figure in the middle was "Peter Garrett. Occupation: No brains and no hair".

The idea is certainly unusual, Martin Shaw, who is a man more of pictures than words, has written down what his concept is in a letter addressed to gallery owners who might like to hang the work. He hopes to put the comple-



Shaw's *Three Portraits of*

document initiated by the art: whereby the man in the street can contribute and see his society slowly changing its values," he says. "Say in about 400 years time people will look back at what others thought of their society."

He painted the picture in 1982 and it will be the only portrait he ever paints. "I've never done a portrait before and I feel I can't do another one after. It's like icing on the top. Do you know of any other artist who's on the verge of painting more faces than me?"

Shaw does do other art works though. He calls these volume paintings, series of



Burnie Art Gallery receptionist Chris Neal with the painting *Portrait of Three Well Known Australians* by Sydney artist Martin Shaw. Visitors are invited to identify the characters.

PICTURE OFFERS GUESSING GAME

NEWS

MAIL - BUNDABERG - 7-8-91

Portrait guesses keep on coming



MR Martin Shaw with the painting that has kept people guessing.

NED Kelly and Susan Renouf are among hundreds of guesses at the identity of an abstract portrait that it is Bundaberg this month.

Only one person knows who the portraits represent, and Sydney artist Mr Martin Shaw was giving little away during his short visit to Bundaberg on Monday.

Since the simplistic painting of the three well-known Australians was created in 1981, the painting has sparked intrigue throughout Australia.

Each person depicted in the painting is sexless, with one also headless.

People who have recorded their guesses have made suggestions ranging from amusing to pertinent.

But the essence of the unusual painting was not in naming the portraits' identities correctly, Mr Shaw said.

"These people are symbols, and this painting is a mirror of the changing images and values of society," he said.

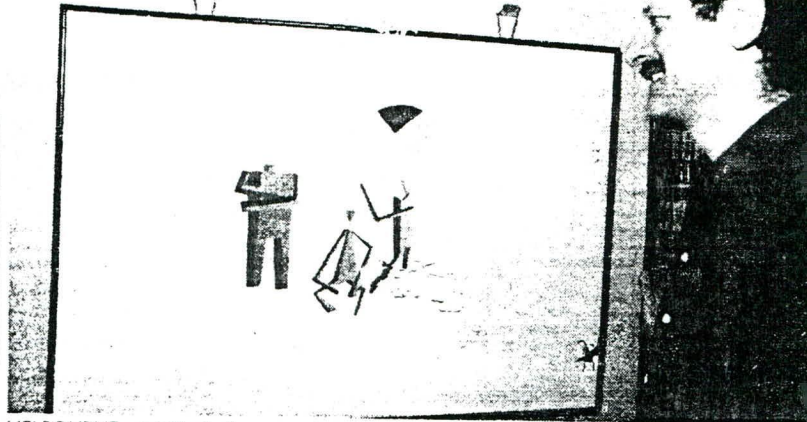
"I want the painting to last forever, and it will be interesting to see how it evolves in 20 to 30 years."

Mr Shaw said some people had chosen famous Australians who had a brief period of popularity.

"But others have picked people who will endure the test of time, like Ned Kelly," he said.

An example of one person's suggestion is: "Bob Hawke. He's lost his head and is about to lose his job too."

The single painting will be at the Bundaberg Art Gallery for a month, and people can record their names, addresses and guesses on a special regional Queensland book.



MELBOURNE artist Martin Shaw gets viewers to name the three famous Australians in his picture but their identity will not be revealed.

CHOOSING three famous Australians from more than 200 years of Australian history is a daunting task.

And when the only clue to their identities is three featureless figures on canvas the task is even harder.

Ten years ago Melbourne artist Martin Shaw painted *Three Portraits of Three Well Known Australians* — three abstract characters pictured with the artist's dog — and invited Australians to name them.

Since that time thousands of Australians, including Nick Greiner, Bruce Ruxton, Tony Barber and Richard Carlton, have tried to guess

who they portray.

But Mr Shaw, who was in Mackay yesterday to exhibit the work at the Mackay City Library, said the identity of the three figures would go with him to his grave.

He said the work, which had toured the country since 1983, was intended to reflect the changing images and values of Australian society and the yearbooks in which hundreds of Australians had recorded their guesses would be an important historical document.

"The painting is a catalyst for a sociological document of Australia-

lians see themselves and their society over a period of time," Mr Shaw said.

"Some people will be remembered for generations and this will be reflected by the names being recorded in the yearbooks long after their deaths.

"Then again there are people I never even heard of recorded."

The painting will be in the Mackay City Library for the next four weeks and Mr Shaw invited people to view the painting and record their guesses of the three well known Australians.

COONABRA MAIL 28-8-90

Briefs

ing for immortality can see Sydney artist Martin Shaw's abstract example of "participatory art".

Shaw, 36, has been touring his painting, *Three Portraits of Three Well-known Australians*, since 1983, asking people around the country to record their guesses of who the three stylised figures represent.

The most popular guesses were sportsmen, television stars and politicians — with Prime Minister Bob Hawke dominating the answers.

Three Portraits of Three Well-known Australians will be exhibited at the Redcliffe Entertainment Centre until September 29 and will tour regional Queensland next year.

REDCLIFF HERALD 5-9-90

ARTIST Martin Shaw's painting *Three Portraits of Three Well-known Australians* is on

display at the Redcliffe Entertainment Centre until September 29.

The painting, an acrylic 96cm by 66cm, features three sexless, featureless figures and is accompanied by a year book.

Viewers are encouraged to register ideas about the identity of the figures.

Ph. 283 0306.

BRISBANE SUN MAIL 2-9-90

YOU think this gig has been on the road for ever? It's planned to be. Artist Martin Shaw has drawn *Three Portraits of Three Well-known Australians* for us to guess until eternity who they might be. You get to pen your name into a guessing book for posterity and we are unaware whether he will ever let on who they are. The painting is on display at the Redcliff Entertainment Centre until the end of September.

BRISBANE SUN 14-8-90

WHAT'S ON AND WHERE

Secret sure to be kept

ARTIST Martin Shaw has a secret — but don't bother asking what it is, because he has sworn to take it to the grave.

Only Shaw knows the real identities of the abstract figures in his painting *Portraits of Three Famous Australians*.

And he's touring Australia inviting other people to have a guess.

The work has been exhibited in Victoria and New South Wales and thousands of people have recorded their guesses in special year books.

This week he is bringing it to the gallery at

By BRETT DEBRITZ

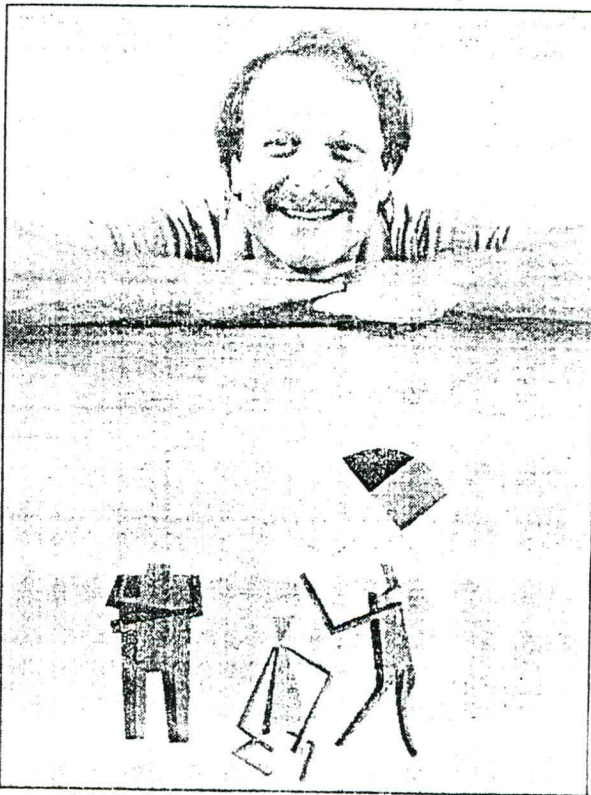
the Redcliffe Entertainment Centre to let Queenslanders have a go.

So far the guesses include dancer Sir Robert Helpmann, boxer Joe Bugner and politicians Gough Whitlam, Russ Hinze and Joh Bjelke-Petersen.

"It'll be interesting to see over the years which names will pass the test of time and which ones will be forgotten," Shaw said.

"In that sense, it's a sociological document."

Shaw had the idea for the project in 1981. "I was in Melbourne and I was sitting in a park on a boring Saturday afternoon and I did a couple of drawings."



Artist Martin Shaw — painting holds a secret he will never tell.

THREE PORTRAITS OF THREE WELL KNOWN AUSTRALIANS

"Three Portraits of Three Well Known Australians" is a project based on two identical paintings that involves public participation.

One painting is exhibited in regions of Australia, the other painting to be displayed in other countries. The touring project is intended to last for many generations.

Put simply, the audience is asked to guess or interpret "The Three Well Known Australians" in the painting and express these opinions in writing into an entry book along with their own names, ages, occupations and addresses. The inclusion of personal details will give a portrait of the audience as well. These entry books are then to be collated into yearbooks. One yearbook for each region of Australia and a yearbook for each other country.

The Aim and Purpose

The two paintings are catalysts or symbols for people to write down any names, images, or impressions of Australians. The yearbooks would create a fascinating collection of views and opinions by Australians and audiences from other countries.

Some people will be remembered for generations, and this will be reflected by the names being recorded in the yearbooks long after their deaths. Others will have a brief moment of being 'well known' and their names will be recorded for a short time span. As these yearbooks grow, the audience will choose images or people that capture the spirit of the times.

Given time, the impressions recorded by Australian and overseas audiences will reveal regional differences and similarities.

Occupations/opinions are included in the entries in case there are two or more well known Australians with the same name.

Itinerary and Regions

The idea originated in Melbourne during August 1982. The painting was done two months later in Sydney. In 1983 the painting was part of my touring exhibition of art galleries in New South Wales. In 1984 the idea was extended for the painting to tour continuously around Australia. In early 1985 a second identical painting was introduced to eventually tour other countries.

The regions in Australia on a population and administration basis are: 1985 - Victorian country towns, 1986 - Melbourne, 1987 - Tasmania, 1988 - N.S.W. country towns, 1989 - Sydney, 1990 - Brisbane, 1991 - Queensland country towns, 1992 - Perth, 1993 - Western Australian/South Australian country towns, 1994 - Adelaide, and Victorian country towns again in 1995, 2005, 2015, etc. The regions outside Australia are: 1. similar societies, (U.K., N.Z., North America), 2. South America, 3. Europe, 4. Africa, 5. Asia.

The painting in the first ten years of its touring cycle has already been on display in art galleries, libraries, and theatres in the following localities and places.

1983	-	Albury, Canberra, Sydney, Muswellbrook, Tamworth, Lismore
1985	-	Goulburn, Geelong, Hamilton, Mildura
1986	-	Melbourne
1987	-	Burnie, Devonport, Launceston
1988	-	Albury, Griffith, Orange, Lake Macquarie
1989	-	Sydney
1990	-	Brisbane
1991	-	Bribie Island, Toowoomba, Noosa, Bundaberg, Mackay, Townsville
1992	-	Perth
1993	-	Albany, Bunbury, Narrogin, Port Pirie, Berri, Renmark, Loxton, Waikerie
1994	-	Adelaide
1995	-	The ten year cycle restarts again in Victorian country towns

Advantages of Australia

Australia is ideally suited for this continuous social documentation. It is one of the world's newest societies, its images, values, and traditions are just being formed. Australia is an easily recognisable society. English is a major international language. Australia's stoic society has encouraged political and social stability.

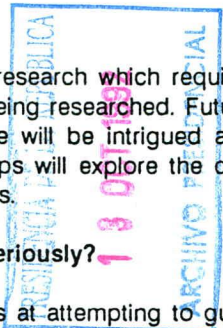
SOME POINTS TO CONSIDER

1. Who are the "Three Well Known Australians" in the painting?

Unfortunately that is the key to the success of the project, I can't tell anyone. There are people after you who think they know the "Three Well Known Australians". Perhaps someone from the next generation will accurately record the correct "Three Well Known Australians".

2. How did the yearbooks evolve?

I was working part-time in market research which requires asking people their 'ages' 'occupations' and other information, depending on the product being researched. Future generations will be able to trace the recorded information by family forebearers. The audience will be intrigued at the recorded guesses by friends and leading 'personalities'. Analysts and statisticians perhaps will explore the different/similar responses recorded by people of different ages, sex, occupations and nationalities.



3. Will the public take the painting seriously?

Some people had serious intentions at attempting to guess the "Three Well Known Australians", but you might find their guesses in the yearbooks amusing. Perhaps some people had recorded amusing interpretations but you might think they were serious guesses.

4. People from other countries will find the Australian names meaningless

Sixty years from now, even Australians reading 1990's yearbooks will find it difficult to know of ten well known Australians of the 1990s. A good example - P. Collier, B. Stevens, S. Argyle, F. Smith, R. Butler, A. Ogilvie - almost every Australian born after 1940 would not associate those names with six state premiers of the 1930s.

It will be interesting to read through the yearbooks to see how people from other countries 'see' well known Australians. New Zealanders might 'see' rugby union footballers as well known Australians, a minor football code in Australia, but New Zealand's national sport. Many Asians might choose the announcers of Radio Australia.

5. Knowledge of Australia is very limited overseas

This project is not intended to appeal to national jingoism. Other societies may not know much about Australia now, but that may change in 100 years. Some societies of the future may know more about Australia than now. This will be reflected by greater variety to Australian names and images recorded into the yearbooks than previously. The reverse may occur if some future societies know less about Australians than now. What new 'occupations' will be recorded into the yearbooks?

6. The project is too abstract for some people from other countries to understand

The painting is really a symbol to encourage people to write down any images or impressions they have about Australians.

7. Many people cannot read or write

The supervisor or attendant could write in the yearbooks, details on behalf of people who cannot write. The replies might include "Where's Australia?". This is still a valuable piece of information.

8. What are your other "portrait paintings" like?

This is my first attempt at portrait painting and my last. There are people I've never met, seen or heard of, written into the yearbooks as possibilities for the Three Well Known Australians.

Pea, The Black and White Dog

For a touch of lightheartedness 'Pea' the Black and White Dog was added to the painting. Family pets play an important part in Australian society. Australians have the highest percentage of home ownership combined with the biggest backyards in the world; but the pets never seem to enter the pages of history books - until Pea came along.

SOME GUESSES FROM THE PUBLIC

DATE	NAME	AGE	OCCUPATION	STREET ADDRESS	SUBURB OR TOWN	STATE OR COUNTRY	Red Person Their Occupation or Opinion	Red Person Their Occupation or Opinion	Green Person Their Occupation or Opinion
	SALLY BALL	19 FEMALE F	STUDENT	BETA ST	ADELAIDE	SA	HENRY LAWSON WRITER	GINGER MECCS CARTOON CHARACTER	A BONDI BEACH LIFESAVER - AT THEIR OWN RISK