

Transurban

# Canal to Creek

TRANSURBAN PUBLIC ART PROGRAM



VISUAL ARTS & DESIGN  
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

# BRAD ROBSON

## THE GOLDEN AGE | STAGE 5 WORKSHEET

Brad Robson's mural, *The Golden Age*, presents a nostalgic celebration of three Australian motorcycle champions. Painted on the walls of the iconic Procycles motorcycle store in St Peters, Robson's portraits celebrate the history and legacy of the local community.



Brad Robson, *The Golden Age*

## CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION

**VOCABULARY** - nostalgia, memory, history, impermanence, mural, expressive portraiture, distortion, commission, community art program, collaboration

## PRACTICE

- In ***The Golden Age***, Robson has used his material practice to communicate ideas about the subjects of his portraits and to evoke particular responses from the audience. Looking closely at the artwork, use the table below to make connections between how Robson has made the artwork and the concepts it reflects.

*“...instead of just a big, perfected, realistic portrait...[the owner of Procycles] wanted something a bit more broken and aged and that had character.” - Brad Robson, artist*

<b>Material Practice</b> Consider aspects such as the artist’s use of materials, techniques, style, colour and scale	<b>Concepts communicated</b> Concept keywords: joy, celebration, nostalgia, history, impermanence, memory

- Use your ideas from the table above to write a short response to the following question:

**How does Robson’s material practice reflect ideas about the subjects of his mural, *The Golden Age*?**

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## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK – WORLD/AUDIENCE

3. Unlike his studio practice, Brad Robson’s work as a street artist relies on commissions or opportunities to create murals on public sites. Discuss the question below with a peer or in a small group. Document your thoughts in the space below.

**What are some of the limitations and freedoms of working as a street artist?**

4. Like other artworks in the Canal to Creek Public Art Program, *The Golden Age* has been created with the intention of engaging the audience with their local community and its environment. With this purpose in mind, use the following question as the basis for an extended response. Consider brainstorming your ideas as a class before beginning your response.

**In what ways does the role and value of public art differ to that of artworks found in museums or galleries? Refer to *The Golden Age* and another public artwork of your choice to support your response.**

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## ARTMAKING TASK

### Making a mural

Brad Robson's mural, *The Golden Age*, makes visible the connection between a significant chapter in Australian motorcycling history and the Procycles shop. The portraits pay tribute to the legacy of the riders and acknowledge the role of local community members in building their careers. Plan a mural that pays tribute to an individual or a group of significance to your school's site.

1. Research and brainstorm possible subjects for your collaborative mural. You might consider:
  - An influential retired teacher or member of staff
  - A former student or students who have impacted the community
  - A figure related to the history of the school's site
2. Once you have chosen a subject, choose a wall on the school site that you could use for your proposed mural. Consider the size of the wall, its visibility and the kinds of activities carried out around it.
3. Begin to plan your mural by sketching, researching and documenting ideas in your Visual Arts Diary. Collect photographs of the subject/s of your portrait/s as a reference. As you plan, consider the following questions as a guide:
  - Will the mural only feature portraits or will it also include other elements, such as symbolic imagery and text?
  - Will you use an expressive style like Brad Robson or a more realistic style?
  - What materials will you use to create the final artwork proposal? (e.g. markers, coloured pencils, paint, digital tools)
4. Start to work on your final artwork for proposal, beginning with the creation of drafts in your Visual Arts Diary. This is a scaled-down version of what you imagine your wall mural would look like (consider working on an A3-A2 sized surface).
5. When you have completed your final artwork, write a proposal that explains your concept, choice of location and the impact you hope your mural would have on the school community.