

On the Farm

Meet the artist

William Robinson is an Australian artist. He was born in Brisbane in 1936. He creates artwork about his life including the places he has lived, his wife Shirley and their children and animals.

Before he became a full-time artist in 1989, he was an art teacher at university and a farmer, with goats, cows, chickens and lots of other animals. He has won major art prizes and his artworks are shown by galleries all around the world. There is a gallery named in his honour, the William Robinson Gallery, at QUT Gardens Point Campus, which is dedicated to exhibiting his artwork.



This is a self portrait of the artist William (Bill) Robinson with Josephine the cow.

WILLIAM ROBINSON, *William with Josephine* 2004, colour lithograph, printer: Franck Bordaé, QUT Art Collection. Gift of the artist under the Cultural Gifts Program, 2008.

HOW BILL MAKES ART

Artists all have different ways of working.

For Bill, he often starts with a sketch that is based on what he observes around him, what he remembers, and what he imagines! A sketch is a rough drawing often done quickly to capture important information or an idea.

He then uses his sketches to create artworks through drawing, painting, sculpting or printmaking.

He wants to create artworks that express not just what something looks like but how it makes him feel.

What Bill thinks about his animals

“When you keep animals, you form a connection of care with them ... All have their own personalities ... they’re all different, just like children are different and we are different. They have their own temperaments.”¹

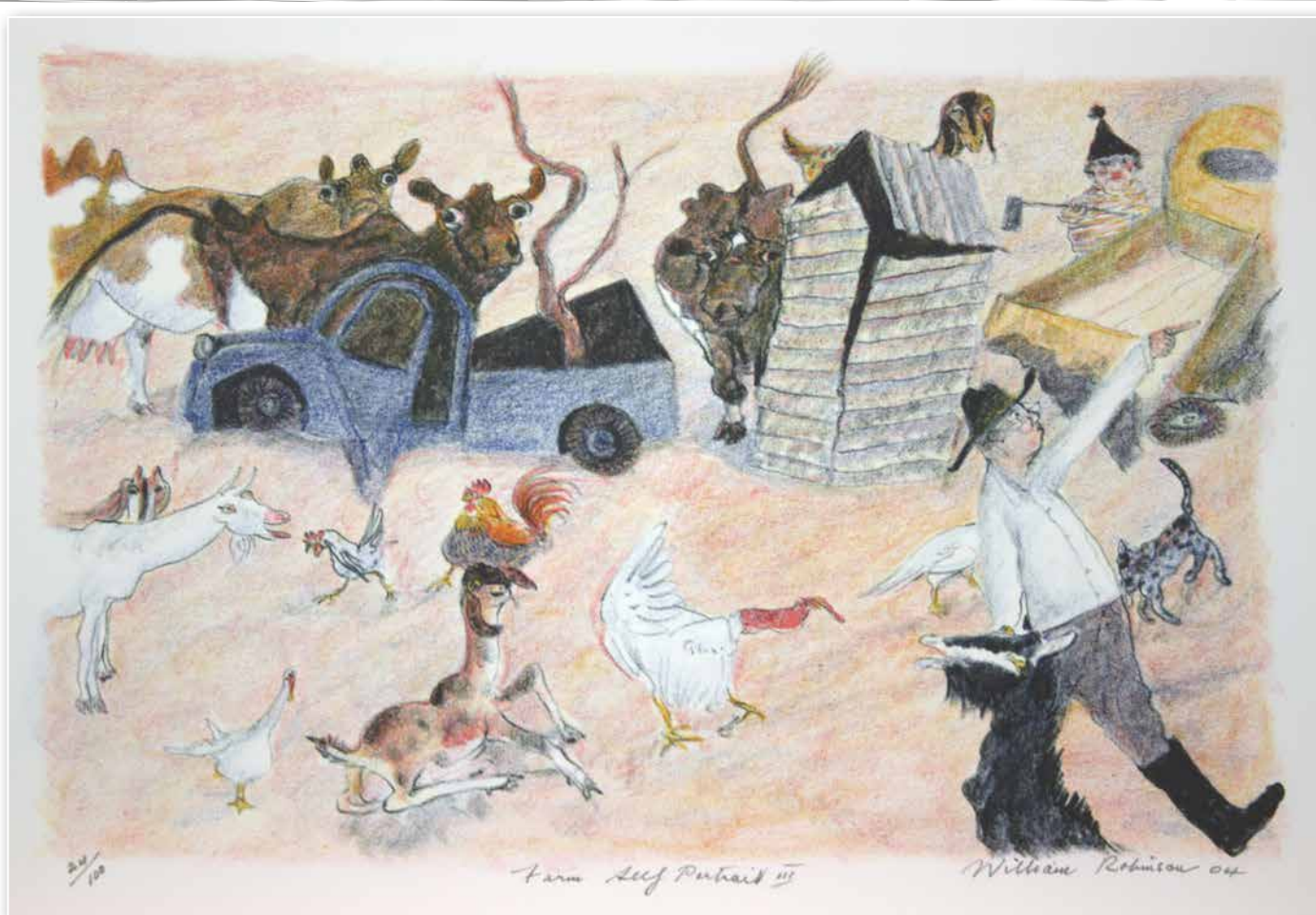
1. William Robinson: *The farmyards* [Exhibition catalogue]. (2013). Brisbane: William Robinson Gallery, Queensland University of Technology, p. 17.

Let's look at **ART!**

During the 1970s and 80s, Bill and Shirley lived on farms and they kept animals such as chickens, cows and goats.

In this artwork, Bill shows the animals as having lots of personality, and the farm as a chaotic place full of life and activity. His artwork is like a caricature, which is a picture that exaggerates some characteristics to create a comical effect. Exaggerating means to make larger or to change or distort in some way.

What animals do you spot below? For Bill and Shirley, their animals are like members of their family.



William ROBINSON, *Farm self portrait III* 2004, colour lithograph, printer: Franck Bordas. QUT Art Collection, Gift of the artist under the Cultural Gifts Program, 2008.

Can you see Bill and Shirley? Describe what you think is happening in the scene above:

Let's make ART!



CREATE

Make your own farmyard scene!

Draw a farmyard scene that shows a funny story of your own; this can be made up or a memory. Try exaggerating particular parts of you or your animals. Maybe the chickens have really big wings because they are trying to learn how to fly (properly)! Or maybe the pigs have extra floppy ears because they're listening out for breakfast.

No printer? No worries! You can use any piece of blank paper or a page in your notebook to do this activity.

Create what you see, what you remember, and what you imagine!



LOOK

Look closely at the artwork for inspiration, what features has Bill exaggerated?



REMEMBER

Have you ever visited or lived on a farm or met farmyard animals? What sights, sounds, smells or feelings do you remember?



IMAGINE

What does your dream farm look like? What personalities do your animals have and what are they doing? Add some imaginary elements to your artwork.



#QUTArtAnywhere

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