

# In the Garden

## 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.

*Bill's favourite time to paint his garden*

"I am concentrating more and more on the garden... The garden only comes really alive to me in spring and summer, when the jacaranda tree first starts to bloom and then, after that, a partly overlapping big poinciana tree."<sup>1</sup>



**This is a self portrait of the artist William (Bill) Robinson with his wife Shirley surrounded by trees and birds**

William ROBINSON, *William and Shirley with crimson rosellas* 1984, pencil.  
QUT Art Collection. Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by William Robinson, 2009.

Let's look at  
**ART!**

## 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.



William ROBINSON, *The garden* 2013, oil on linen, triptych.  
QUT Art Collection. Purchased through the William Robinson Art Collection Fund and partial donation by Philip Bacon, 2014.

**Bill often depicts his backyard in his artworks, and he experiences a profound feeling of refuge and beauty in nature.**

This is a painting of Bill and Shirley's garden, spread across three canvases that sit side by side (called a 'triptych').

What part of the garden do you look at first? Do your eyes follow the garden path? In this artwork, Bill has skewed and stretched the perspective of his garden to reveal multiple viewpoints to us. Where do you think Bill is viewing his garden from? He is looking out and down from his verandah.

**Which plants do you recognise?**

---

---

---

# Let's make ART!



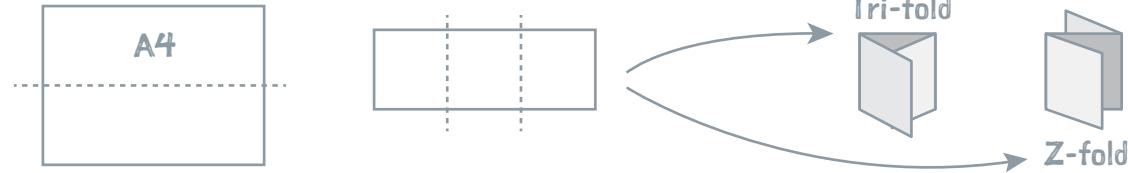
## CREATE

Make your own garden in an artist book, using materials you find in nature. On each section, create a garden scene that connects together. Experiment with different colours, patterns, sizes and textures.

**PREPARE YOUR ARTIST BOOK:** cut an A4 sheet in half lengthways, then fold the paper into three even sections, like Bill's painting. You can make a tri-fold or z-fold.

**PREPARE YOUR MATERIALS:** Use materials you find in nature with art materials you have available.

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



## LOOK

Look around your garden, or images of gardens. Which plants and objects interest you the most? Are there lots of shadows? Can you see any insects wriggling or hovering? Are there any birds in the trees or flying overhead?

---

---

---



## REMEMBER

Have you ever planted something yourself? Has it grown?

---

---

---



## IMAGINE

What would your dream garden look like? Would you have a pond with some fish? Or maybe a treehouse? Add some imaginary elements to your artwork.

---

---

---

## EXTRA IDEAS!

- Paint leaves and stamp them onto your page
- Use twigs or grass as paint brushes
- Rub dirt into your paper
- Glue in petals, leaves and feathers
- Trace the shape of interesting plants
- Press your paper against a textured surface like bark or a leaf and do a rubbing over the paper with the side of a pencil, pastel or charcoal to create an impression of the surface