

In the Rainforest

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, his wife Shirley and a bush turkey in the rainforest.



William ROBINSON, *Turkey weather* 1984, gouache. Private collection, Brisbane.

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 the rainforest where he lived

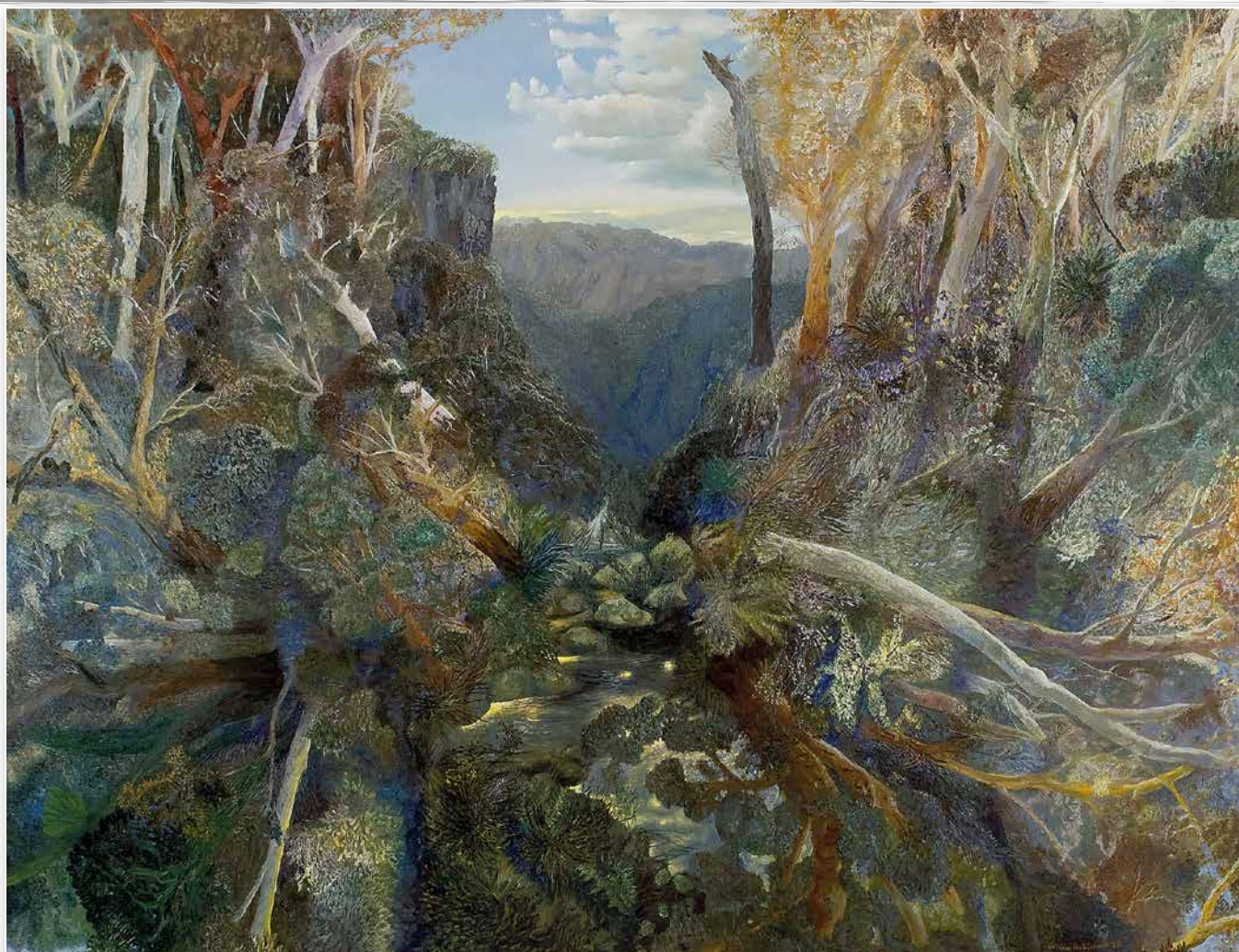
“There are certain places that have a special power to make you feel the soul of the earth... and this is one.”¹

1. Hawley, J. (1994, August 20). William Robinson's mature perspective. *The Age*, p. 33.

Let's look at **ART!**

Rainforests are a part of the natural Australian landscape, and are a subject that Bill is well-known for painting. Bill has lived and spent a lot of time closely observing the rainforests of South East Queensland including Beechmont and Springbrook. For Bill, the rainforest makes him feel a spiritual connection with nature and the cosmos, and he is inspired by the beauty of this place.

In this artwork, which way are the trees standing? Can you see glimpses of the sky behind the trees in the bottom of the painting, as well as the top? In this landscape Bill uses multi-point perspective, which means we are looking at different angles – up, down and around – all at the same time. His use of perspective creates the sensation of being completely surrounded by nature.



William ROBINSON, *Tallanbanna with cloud front* 1998, oil on canvas. QUT Art Collection. Gift of the artist under the Cultural Gifts Program, 2005.

What feelings do you experience in this work? How do you think Bill feels about this place?

Let's make ART!



CREATE

Create your own landscape scene!

Visit a natural landscape, like a rainforest, a park or your garden. Look closely at the landscape and do quick sketches to help you remember the details that are important to you. Now go to a different space, and re-create the landscape you were looking at! Make your artwork using any art materials. Show how you feel about this place through how you make your work and what you include.



LOOK

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

View the landscape as a whole, and look at elements that are far away and very close. What is your eye drawn to?



REMEMBER

What parts of this landscape do you want to remember? Focus on doing quick sketches of these details and make notes. Your notes could include the colours, the weather, the time of day or your experience.



IMAGINE

The details that you don't remember are just as important as the details you do. For Bill, this is where his imagination can take over, and something exciting and surprising can appear. What imaginary elements can you add to your landscape?

How Bill uses his imagination to create artworks

"The actual place itself and nature are the triggering device. The work is completed in the memory. I find that if memory lacks absolute accuracy it allows something else to occur in a painting – perhaps something fresh and unpredictable."²

2. Robinson, W., & Klepac, L. (2001). *William Robinson: Paintings 1987-2000*. Roseville, N.S.W: Beagle Press, p. 132.

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QUT William Robinson
Gallery

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