

The Art of Australia

How Art Shaped A Country

Presented by Edmund Capon



ARTS & MUSIC 3 x 60' HD



ABC
Australian Broadcasting Corporation
Commercial

The Art of Australia

Hosted by former director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Edmund Capon, **THE ART OF AUSTRALIA** is the epic story of Australian art, from the colonial period to the present day. Edmund goes on a quest to understand how art has helped shape Australia. The series interweaves the story of British, European and Indigenous art traditions and how they have reflected Australia's culture over 200 years.

Strangers in a strange land

The first episode, *Strangers in a Strange Land*, tells the story of how Europeans first saw the new land and its people. Convict and colonial artists painted a land ripe for colonisation. They idealised Indigenous people before artists from the Romantic school began to favour majestic panoramic landscapes. They made the landscape look beautiful, but they also made it look European. Only after the 1880s did a home grown school of impressionist painters capture the essence of what Australia really looked like. Their art helped forge the country's identity.

Coming of age

Episode two, *Coming of Age*, covers the period between World War I and the 1960s. This was the era in which Australian art came of age. War and the reaction to it played a significant role. After the second World War a more radical vision saw Australian art grace the international stage. Artists were inspired by Australian icons, like Ned Kelly, and by travelling to the remote outback to encounter Aboriginal Australia.

Beyond Australia

In the final episode, *Beyond Australia*, Edmund tells the story of how Indigenous art and modern abstract art combined to push Australian art forward. During the 70s Australian art was restricted by conservative forces within. When Australian artists returned from Europe and America with new ideas, the cultural landscape become a battlefield. Then came Papunya, a remote Indigenous community where a revolutionary art movement was born, attracting international acclaim, and helping Australian art take its place on the world stage.



ABOVE (L-R): *Distant view of Sydney*, Joseph Lycett, 1824, Views in Australia courtesy SLNSW • *Shearing the Rams*, Tom Roberts, 1890 courtesy NGV • Broken Hill, NSW • *The Trial*, Sydney Nolan, 1947, courtesy NGA • *Bride Running Away*, Arthur Boyd, 1957 courtesy Bundanon Trust • *Bondi Beachobatics*, George Caddy, 1937 courtesy Paul Caddy • Bottom Left: *Interceptor Surf Sequence*, 2009 © Shaun Gladwell, Courtesy the artist & Anna Schwartz Gallery • Edmund Capon in front of Archibald Prize 2013 Finalist *Hugo*, Del Kathryn Barton
OVERLEAF: *Australian beach pattern*, Charles Meere, 1940, courtesy AGNSW

