



BENDIGO  
ART GALLERY

**Ben Quilty**  
Secondary – Painting texture



## Year Levels

7-10

## Learning objectives

- Develop a knowledge of art terminology in art elements and art principles
- Learn about portrait proportions and distortion and apply these to a self-portrait with a difference
- Explore how many contemporary artists raise issues about the history of art and unrecognised historical moments

## Research and discuss

You can view images of portraits created by Ben Quilty from the links below at his commercial gallery's website:

<https://tolarnogalleries.com/artists/ben-quilty/17/>

<https://tolarnogalleries.com/artists/ben-quilty/18/>

<https://tolarnogalleries.com/artists/ben-quilty/19/>

<https://tolarnogalleries.com/artists/ben-quilty/28/>

Then watch these videos of Ben Quilty explaining the proportions of a portrait:

[Ben Quilty and daughter Livvy: portrait proportions](#)

[NSW Department of Education: Ben Quilty](#) jump to 16 minutes to see Ben discussing portrait proportions

View Ben Quilty's [Education Resource](#) and this short [video](#) explaining how he made his portrait Self Portrait Smashed.

## Create

Materials:

- A4 or A3 white drawing paper such as cartridge or a pre-prepared canvas
  - Graphite pencils
  - Acrylic paint in various colours
  - Palette knives or plastic disposable knives
  - If possible, cake extruding tools such as an icing knife
  - Palette or flat piece of plastic e.g. ice cream container lid
  - Freestanding mirror
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- Use the proportion guide to sketch out a portrait of your own face using pencil. Be prepared to spend some time achieving this, especially if it is your first time
  - Now consider one part of the portrait to really exaggerate. Think about what you wish to express about yourself. Look at how Ben has added unrealistic subjects to his face to create a disturbing effect. What would you like to show about yourself?
  - Once ready, choose a colour scheme from your acrylic paints. mix colours to achieve at least 5 different tones. Consider whether you want to use flesh tones or make it expressionistic or [Fauvist](#) in style. This page shows how Quilty uses colour in an expressionistic way whilst also using flesh tones
  - Now look again in the mirror and start to mix colours and paint, paying attention to the light and dark tones. Be prepared to have several attempts at your portrait. Quilty spends many hours producing many portraits before he is satisfied with what he has achieved
  - If you are at home, you may have a willing sitter to make things easier

*Front cover and page 2 image:*

Ben Quilty  
Australia, 1973  
*Kuta Rorschach No.2*  
2013  
oil on canvas  
220 x 520cm  
Bendigo Art Gallery, R H S Abbott Bequest Fund 2014.  
Reproduced courtesy the artist and Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne.