

ARTS

Cover story

Heroes leave their mark on

Min Delaney reports on the inspiration that drives the work of Sunshine Coast artist David Hart

MOST people would expect footprints and tyre marks to ruin a painting.

But not if that painting was the creative genius of Sunshine Coast artist David Hart.

Hart was approached by Telstra to paint a mural for the 2012 London Olympic Games to launch the company's Hero Message campaign.

Australia's golden girl of the track Cathy Freeman and swimming great Geoff Huegill put their first drops of paint on Hart's canvases in Sydney at Customs House during the Summer Olympics.

Hart said the paintings had to be created using sporting equipment, which had been challenging.

"We got Geoff to ride a bike across the painting and Cathy walked across with her running shoes," he said.

The painting was completed in his studio.

He said inspiration had come from the large areas of exploded paint that covered the artwork and from this, a new style was born.

"Afterwards, I discovered these great ways of being able to paint," he



GEOFF HUEGILL: The Aussie swimming great pedalled his way into the art world. PHOTO: MICHAEL SOHN

said. "They were such good ideas and such good effects that I said, 'Wow. I have inspiration for a whole new series.'"

Called Inspiration, the series is made up of limited numbers of Hart's original paintings which have been reproduced by a high-resolution scan on to canvas.

The technology allows these works to last as long as the originals.

Hart said that within the limited numbers of reproductions, about 10% of those would be embellished to create new "originals".

"I'm almost painting an original

painting on top of the reproduction," he said.

All these new works will carry the Hart signature.

He said the process would allow more art lovers to afford original pieces.

Hart said much experimentation had gone into the Inspiration series and he found the process exciting.

"I have pushed the boundaries to create different effects," he said.

"There's a myriad of ways to apply paint to a canvas but it's finding those ways that work and then to put them into a style to make them



CATHY FREEMAN: The retired athlete still managed to leave her mark on the 2012 London Games through David Hart's art. PHOTO: AAP

something special.

"They just look amazing.

"I wanted to create an illusion of an original so people can have something hanging and people would say, 'Wow. Is that an original?'

and they can't tell."

Experimentation is what his legendary father, Pro Hart, was known for.

"I used to love the things that he'd do when no one was watching - like

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canvas in London Games



ON SHOW: David Hart is pictured in front of one of his Inspirational paintings in his new exhibit at his Mooloolaba gallery.

PHOTO: IAIN CURRY



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experiment with things," Hart said.
 "Some of them were a complete disaster and quite funny.
 "He painted a lot at night out the side of his shed and he had these floodlights with moths and things flying

around."
 Hart said his father would squirt paint on to his palette and would get a large cake decorator's knife and put it on the edge of his palette.
 "He'd flick it on to the painting and it

would miss and go on to his foot," Hart laughed.
 "But I used to love just watching him try new stuff because you know every now and then, he'd hit the nail on the head and often it would be turned into

a new style.
 "So that's probably the biggest influence for me.
 "I love seeing concepts become reality.
 "It's awesome."