



A U S T R A L I A N C I V I C T R U S T
2019 People's Choice

Nomination for Regional Award Coonalpyn Silo Art

Erin Jones, Regional Reporter, said in *The Advertiser* “already the tiny rural town of Coonalpyn is showing signs of rejuvenation and community pride”. Internationally renowned artist Guido van Helten, sponsored by Viterra Australia, Coorong District Council and local businesses, created five portraits of children at play on the town’s 30m-high Viterra grain silos.

Council chief executive Vincent Cammell said “the impact of this has gone further than we could’ve ever hoped for. It’s really changed the fabric of the town and brought them together in a way I don’t think has happened in a long time. The town has struggled for more than 30 years, now look at it”.

ABC News described it in March 2017 as Australia’s largest mural, with one in three motorists stopping each minute along Dukes Highway to photograph it.

Two new businesses have opened since, with another planned, but one of the greatest community outcomes for this project is the impact on the town’s 200 residents, especially the children featured in the spray-painted mural.

The mother of Ciara Johnson, 9, one five primary school students chosen as subjects by van Helten to symbolise the town’s future, said “her confidence has gone through the roof. She is normally very shy but it has brought her confidence out tenfold, it’s been nothing but positive”.

The mural is one of six projects in the council’s \$100,000 *Creating Coonalpyn* initiative, which aims to bring a sense of pride and activity back to the community.



📷 Ciara Johnson, Reef Gregor, Blake Thompson, Kiarah Leske and Macey Jacobs in front of their paintings on the 30-metre high Coonalpyn silo mural by artist Guido van Helten. Picture: Matt Turner