

Over the summer of 2015, muralist Guido van Helten spent his days (and the occasional night) hand painting a cluster of silos in a remote industrial district in Brim, southern Australia. As you stand in front of the silos in the scorching summer heat, with the 30-meter (98-foot) pillars creating huge columns of shadow on the floor, making an artwork out of these imposing structures strikes you as a daunting project. But van Helten welcomed the challenge and managed to paint the entirety of the mural, part of the Silo Art Trail, in just five weeks..

The Brim mural depicts a group of four male and female farmers in conversation, reflecting the pride and strength of the centuries-old farming community of Victoria. The silos are from a 1939 GrainCorp factory, and their austere industrial architecture is the perfect backdrop to this art, which celebrates the tenacity of Australian rural agricultural communities in the face of industrialization. Since it opened to the public in 2016, the work has garnered a community of its own. Thousands of art lovers make the journey to see this and other silos on the trail, painted by artists including Geoffrey Carran, Kitt Bennett, and Sam Bates, re-establishing a sense of identity in this remote part of Australia.

