

Fred Negro Biography:

Frederick John Negro was born to Father Fred Negro and Mother Winifred Negro in 1959 and grew up in Richmond where he discovered his love of drawing. By the time he was in Primary School he had created his first cartoon called 'The Man with no Head'. In 1975 he discovered his love of music and moved to the beachside suburb of St Kilda where the underground Melbourne Punk scene was just about to explode!

In 1979 Fred's first band The Editions were formed, when drummer Fred Negro was having his hair cut at his flat in St Kilda. The band was a regular at St Kilda music venues such as the Prince of Wales Hotel (POW), The Ballroom and Bananas.

Fred became infamous early in the band's history for trashing his drum kit at the end of each set and spitting over the singer's head into the audience. This was however problematic for some of the other band members!

Fred, who is also a graphic artist, did all the artwork for the band's handbills under the title 'Living Dead Grafix'. His illustrations and cartooning style became an integral part of The Editions imaging and merchandising.

In 1983 Fred went on to form the now iconic Punk band I Spit on your Gravy, who became one of the most well-loved, if not notorious, bands in St Kilda, playing regularly at venues such as the Ballroom, The Grosvenor Hotel the St Kilda Inn, the Esplanade Hotel (The Espy) and the POW.

Also, in 1983 Fred Negro began doing the handbill graphics for St Kilda venue 'The Venue' at the request of band booker Joe Gaultieri.

In 1985 Fred became the cleaner at the Espy as well as being the in-house artist – this lasted for around 10 years. During this time, he was doing artwork for almost every venue in St Kilda - POW, Espy, Venue, Grosvenor, St Kilda Inn, and The Ballroom.

From around 1981 – 83 Fred also created artwork for 3PBS FM – 'Waves Magazine', both the covers and inside graphics. He also did artwork for 3RRR FM in the mid-90s.

Fred started his now infamous 'Pub Strip' in 1989 with street magazine Inpress, which changed its name to The Music Magazine in 2006. Over a 17-year period, Fred drew over 1400 Pub strips. The Pub Strip currently lives on in the Munster Times Fanzine. The video below is an intimate look into the world of Fred Negro's infamous 'Pub Strip' which was published in Inpress Magazine / The Music between the years 1989 - 2016.

In 2017 Fred had a major exhibition at St Kilda gallery BRIGHTSPACE titled [St Kilda's Alright - The Fred Negro Experience](#). The exhibition and surrounding events were a showcase of Fred's original artwork including acrylic paintings, drawings, pub strips, music history and more. Both exhibitions were hugely successful and helped to establish Fred as a legitimate visual artist and painter and not be seen as merely a cartoonist or illustrator.

Over the years Fred has painted several murals at St Kilda venues including The Espy, Prince of Wales Hotel, Pint on Punt, Lost on Barkly and Surabuya Johnny's. Fred has also created artwork and illustrations for books, newspaper and magazine publications, wine labels, festivals and exhibitions.

Fred continues to have pop up exhibitions at venues in St Kilda as well as sell his artwork online.

Book Reviews: In 2015 Fred began writing/drawing book reviews for online editorial Melbourne. Arts. Fashion. His reviews are unique in the fact that they are a blend of handwritten and illustrated reviews, delighting publishers, authors and the public alike.

After the site closed down Fred continued to write reviews and publishing them on social media sites Facebook and Twitter. To date he has done more than 100 reviews for authors such as Marlon James, Miriam Sved, Bleddyn Butcher, Abigail Ulman, Anson Cameron, Helen Garner, Omar Musa, Elizabeth Harrower, Liam Pieper and Kate Holden to name but a few.

St Kilda Murals:

- 1994 - Fred Negro and Sydney Artist Paul Fraser did a mural at the Espy public bar consisting of St Kilda locals and the history of the venue.
- 2000 - Fred and fellow St Kilda musician and artist Steve Pictor did a mural in the Espy lounge bar consisting of St Kilda locals which is based on a famous photo of the Espy back in the 1890s with people in top hats.
- 2013 - Fred and Steve did a mural at the POW Hotel as well as the boards around the beer garden.
- 2014 - Fred and Steve did a mural at the Pint on Punt Hotel, upstairs in the backpackers section – tourist sights, backpackers etc
- 2016 - Fred did a mural at Lost on Barkly showcasing the St Kilda locals as well as Surabuya Johnny's – History of St Kilda Rock and Roll venues

Events:

- 1984 - Red Faces – Highest score ever (Gravybillies)
- Mid 90s - ABC – Sunday Arts program
- 2016 - The Man Behind the Band: Fred Negro - Melbourne Music Week, State Library of Victoria

Awards:

- 2014 – Safety Pin Award for contribution towards the Melbourne Punk scene (Punk Journey: St Kilda + Beyond)
- 2016 – Award for contribution to awareness for Hep C (Hepatitis Victoria)

Publications and Exhibitions:

- 1985 - A kids book titled 'Platypus Yarn' – Dynamo House
- 1985 – A bookmark series titled 'The Rime of Ancient Mariner' – Dynamo House
- 1988 - Truth Newspaper, People Magazine
- 1989 - Picture Magazine, Inside Football
- 1989 – current – Pub Strip – Inpress Magazine / The Music
- 1991 – Wine label for The Really Good Wine Company
- 1995 – a Book titled 'Food Poisoning in the Home' - Dynamo House
- 1996 - current Hepatitis Victoria – 'Good Liver Magazine'
- Mid 90s – Exhibition with Paul Fraser at Tolarno Restaurant, St Kilda
- 1998 – Group exhibition – Helen Gorey Gallery
- 1999 - 2002 Poster artwork for Jackson Street Festival, St Kilda
- 2003 – St Kilda Park Primary School wine label
- 2005 – 'Plastered: the poster art of Australian popular music' - Murray Walding and Nick Vukovic
- 2010 – Skins'n'Sharps exhibition – Kustom Lane Gallery
- 2016 – current – 'Frootlop City' – St Kilda News
- 2016 – St Kilda's Alright exhibition at Pumpkin Lane Gallery, St Kilda

- 2017 – St Kilda's Alright – The Fred Negro Experience – exhibition at BRIGHTSPACE, St Kilda
- 2017 – Published 'Piranhas in Love' – 100-page graphic novel created with Elizabeth Reale
- 'Down Underground Comix – a history of Australian Underground cartoonists' – Penguin Books