

Louis Kahan

Bio

Louis Kahan (1905-2002), Australian artist born in Vienna who won the Archibald Prize in 1962 with a portrait of Patrick White. Given the Order of Australia in 1993. He has never received any formal art training.

He travelled from Vienna to Paris when he was 20. He enlisted in the French Foreign Legion in 1939 and was sent to North Africa as a war artist. He had an exhibition at Oran in 1942. He was a voluntary artist for the Red Cross between 1943 and 1945. During this time photography was not permitted of soldiers, so his paintings were some of the only record at the time and were sometimes sent back to families for reassurance. He returned to Paris after the war, and then travelled across the United States before he arrived in Perth.

He moved to Melbourne in 1950. He made many portraits of Australian and other celebrities, including Geoffrey Blainey, Judy Cassab, Manning Clark, Arthur Boyd, Dame Joan Sutherland, Yehudi Menuhin, Luciano Pavarotti.

Excerpt from "Wikipedia", August 2010