

News

Painting picture of Somerton Man

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A PROFESSOR who has dedicated 15 years to decoding one of Australia's biggest mysteries hopes a new portrait of the victim could crack the case.

The image, commissioned by [University of Adelaide's](#) Professor **Derek Abbott**, reconstructs the living face of the man found dead on an Adelaide beach nearly 65 years ago: The Somerton Man.

By constructing a clearer picture of the man in life, Prof Abbott hopes researchers can learn more about his death.

He has created 3D scans, written lists of commonly reported inaccuracies, and constructed a detailed timeline of the investigation. The body of the unknown man was found by a sea wall at Somerton Beach on December 1, 1948.

Two months later, a pathologist re-examining the body found a small pocket. Inside, rolled tightly and ripped from a book, was the printed phrase "tamam shud".

But the book – with its missing back page – had a secret. Visible only under ultraviolet light, police found what looked like a code, which has never been deciphered.

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