

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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From left, Simon Gilby shares sculpting tips with Louise Carre (Cecil Andrews SHS) and Rachel Ramsey (Lake Joondalup Baptist College).



GILBY SCULPTS A winning *Syndicate*

JENNIFER HENDERSON

BRINGING the humanity back into art is sculpture Simon Gilby's aim as he takes teachers through precise details to set the foundations for an imaginary world.

His exhibition *Syndicate* is touring with company Art on the Move and inspired teachers in Western Australia to request a professional development session with the sculpture master.

At a workshop hosted by Art Education WA at Wesley College, Gilby passed on his expertise with the human form and challenged teachers to open their minds to new art philosophies.

"I was trying to take it back to the fundamental principles of observa-

tional enquiry," Gilby says. "[People can] really have prejudiced ideas of what they think they're seeing, but when you take it down to very precise measurements, you'll work out a much clearer idea of what a figure is actually like and actually doing. So, it was quite academic and I think at least half of the teachers there found it a bit challenging."

Teachers made callipers to measure a life model then reduced the measurements by a third making an exact miniature replica modified by their own artistic vision. Gilby believes the basics of observation in drawing and sculpture are sometimes overlooked in the classroom in favour of quick fix results from students.

The artist gave teachers tips on cre-

ating a sense of play with their students and how to get them excited about their work as a way of opening up their imagination and improving their skills.

"Even the most rudimentary idea, if you enthuse a kid about it and talk about what comes from that initial idea, it just blossoms into incredible ideas," he says.

There were both intense and fun moments during the workshop, organiser and Art Education WA president Yvonne Weise says. "Teachers were inspired by the rigour of the technical aspects Simon showed us about sculpting the human form. It was quite a technical approach; they came out with quite individual results."

SIMON GILBY CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Tell a story; ask each of the students to imagine themselves as one of the characters. Ask students to write a page about who they are in the story and fill it in with their own experience. Now get them to draw a picture of that person. You can then work on making that person three dimensional. "If you ask them to make a drawing of a person without the story first, then the person is a bubble and it's all hollow and there's no one to fill it in. Whereas if they write the story the detail shows."

ASSOCIATION FOCUS

Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations

The AFMLTA is the national peak body representing the language teaching profession in Australia. Founded in 1962, it continues to provide a significant national voice and representation on curriculum and policy matters.

Membership is through the eight state and territory modern language teacher associations, with total membership for 2009 at 2735. The AFMLTA is managed by an elected executive and conducts business via teleconferences, email discussions and at the AGM, or national assembly, held in July. There is a biennial conference which the states/territories take turns in hosting. The 2011 conference will be in Darwin, NT.

The AFMLTA publishes *Babel*, the only scholarly journal for languages education in Australia, which enjoys a B-ranking in the Australian Research Council's Excellence in Research for Australia ranked list.

The AFMLTA has taken a lead role in significant national projects, including the development of the *Professional standards for accomplished teaching of languages and cultures*.

The existence of the AFMLTA's professional standards has led to the development of a suite of professional learning activities for teachers.

AFMLTA President
Lesley Harbon

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