

# MOSMAN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

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## PRESS RELEASE

Date:	1 May 2012
Subject:	Simon Gilby's life sized figures emerge at Mosman Art Gallery
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### *The Syndicate by Simon Gilby* Mosman Art Gallery 19 May – 8 July

"Though some of the imagery tends towards the darkly gothic, the overall exhibition intends to express a hopeful yet conflicted humanity."  
Simon Gilby, 2009.

The sculptures in *The Syndicate* were produced by Western Australian artist Simon Gilby. They been touring the country with their final destination being the Mosman Art Gallery. This installation comprises ten life-sized sculptures, each based around the human form. Whilst the installation needs to be viewed as a whole, each sculpture works as an individual entity.

The sculptures are principally made from etched, welded and forged steel, combined with other incidental materials. Initially the forms were created from casts of people known to the artist, but as they progressed, they morphed into psychological portraits of imagined protagonists. Through his created forms, Gilby questions what it is to be human and poses questions about where we are headed as a society.

As life-sized works, we are invited to read them more personally and empathetically as they are based on our own form. The surface embellishments and manipulations, however, encourage the viewer to look more deeply into each work and question aspects of the contained self and its relationship with society. In making these works, Gilby was influenced by many forms of figurative sculpture throughout history.



The figures' primarily closed steel forms have had a variety of text, image and decoration applied to their surfaces, influenced by ritual scarring, tattooing, labelling and psychological imprinting. Gilby intended that these contained forms, together with their scarred, didactic surfaces, would represent the nature of humanity as lived inside our bodies, interacting with the outside world. Though they appear monumental as in civic statuary, they are monuments to unknown protagonists in the viewers' personal narratives.

The Syndicate Project was conceived during a conversation between artist Simon Gilby, and businessman and collector of the artist's work, Ron Wise. The artist, who at the time was teaching part-time at the University of Western Australia and working on



**Please note all information is correct at time of release**

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small-scale gallery works, was asked by Ron what he would like to do next artistically if he had no limits on his studio time or material costs. *The Syndicate* exhibition is the result. Simon Gilby's previous exhibitions were primarily of small-scale sculptures, but he had an increasing desire to scale the works up for an installation of life-sized figures that would work as a group of intersecting characters. Wise proposed that a group of patrons with an interest in Gilby's work, each contribute funds enabling the artist to make ten individual life-sized works which together would form the installation. The members of this syndicate were to have no artistic input into the project, and at the project's conclusion, each sculpture would be assigned to each member of the syndicate. The management of the Syndicate Project was primarily taken up by the prominent Western Australian art collector, Lloyd Horn.

**The exhibition will be opened on Friday 18 May at 6.30pm by Professor Anita Taylor, Director and CEO of the National Art School .**

#### **Public Program**

**Simon Gilby artist talk**

**Sunday 20 May**

**2.00pm. Free**

Meet Simon Gilby as he guides visitors through his intriguing, beautiful and disturbing life sized figures. Simon Gilby is a mid-career Western Australian artist. He is also a passionate educator, having taught sculpture and participated in artist-in-residence placements at schools and colleges throughout WA.

Bookings: [www.trybooking.com/24496](http://www.trybooking.com/24496)

Images: The artist, Simon Gilby with some of the sculptures in *The Syndicate*

Photograph: Ashley de Prazer

Simon Gilby: *Finalist*

welded steel, brazed steel filigree, cast pewter, cast resin, winterstone, cement, finishes figure 165 x 80 cm, whale skeleton

The national tour of this exhibition is managed by ART ON THE MOVE.

This exhibition is supported by Visions of Australia, an Australian Government program supporting touring exhibitions by providing funding assistance for the development and touring of Australian cultural material across Australia.

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