

Government of Western Australia

PERCENT FOR ART SCHEME

AUBIN GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL





School Stories

The inclusion of Aubin Grove Primary School in the Western Australian Government's Percent for Art Scheme was embraced with enthusiasm by those involved in planning the new school. Artist and sculptor Judith Forrest was commissioned to design the artworks.

Judith proposed a suite of art works entitled School Stories which would be both aspirational and optimistic in nature. There are three artworks, two figurative sculptures and one three dimensional, wall - based work. These are intended to communicate directly with children, to spark their imagination, invite inquiry and evoke wonder. Entitled simply School Stories the artworks are anything but simple. The artist hints at the fundamentally important values and issues they address: *Sharing and caring and being our best.*

Together, these art works provide a wonderful introduction for children to sculpture and the long established traditions of art-making. They are intended to have a positive and subtle influence on the visual and conceptual development of children. As their creator has commented:

These artworks have been designed to be colourful and appealing, but the primary purpose of my work is to intrigue and interest students, rather than simply decorate a space. - Judith Forrest, 2011



Each work uses different visual strategies to communicate a social message about positive social interaction, the value of human diversity, social inclusion and respect for people and the environment. In this sense, the artworks are deceptively simple but address profound questions about human interactions, needs and the realisation of potential.

The first art work to greet students is Looking After Each Other, a series of cast, indented faces set into a wall, which play with illusion and movement. The faces, all of children with varying emotions are friendly and appear to 'follow' the young viewers as they pass by. These works are highly tactile. They are designed and sculpted in such a way, as to encourage children to touch and explore their indentations, experience their material texture and importantly, to encourage interaction and play. Each face is neutral in colour and is framed in cheerful, soft, 'sorbet like' pastel colours - pistachio, apricot, spearmint blue and lemon.

Flying High is a tall figurative sculpture of a boy who leaps out, not to catch a ball as one first thinks, but the world. Located near the library, it is the most site-specific and aspirational of the three artworks to be created. It's symbolism is designed to be understood by young children, as well as older students and visitors to the school. We can all achieve something, if we only reach out and grasp what the world has to offer.

The Vitri-panelled, decal printed plinth on which this figure stands, makes direct reference to the local environment. Birds, plants and planes will strike a cord of recognition with children, given the school's proximity to Jandakot Airport and nearby Swan coastal bush land. A blue sky

swirls around and over plinth and figure, allowing it to visually merge with the actual sky or indeed contrast, according to local weather patterns.

On the far side of the library is Talking is More Fun a substantial bronze sculpture of two girls each with a dove, (local to the area), perched on their head. The girls have their backs to each other (this invites enquiry) and the doves, which are facing each other, are communicating energetically. The message seems simple-talking is more fun and the peaceful doves know it. The colourful plinth on which the figures stand, is a comic book of fun and discovery as students engage with this work at a range of different levels. The dark patina of the bronze emphasises the positive and negative spaces around the work and capitalises on the play of light on the surrounding pavement.

School Stories offer the children of Aubin Grove Primary School a vivid, rich and thoughtful point of entry into the world of art.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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 Title: School Stories
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