The middle ages invades Gumeracha

Some of the action from the Medieval Fair held in Gumeracha

Gumeracha went back in time over the weekend for the running of the tenth annual Medieval Fair at Federation Park. With jousting battles, Vikings, blacksmiths, craft stalls and local food stalls, the event had a lot to offer. Event Coordinator Michel Gray said the fair was fantastic, attracting a much bigger crowd than expected.

"Saturday in particular was a huge success with around 10,000 people walking through the gates – this is almost double what we usually see," she said.

"The jousting was once again a highlight of the weekend with a grandstand set up for viewing.

"There was also Vikings groups playing the traditional sport of Kalinga which was a lot of fun to watch.

"It just gets bigger and better every year."

First prize for 'Tension'

Sohhie Maher with her coloured thread work 'Tension'

by Alannah James

In took almost a year for Mount Barker's Sophie Maher to twist 3,000 metres of coloured thread around 11,369 nails for her year 12 SACE artwork.

The mixed media piece entitled 'Tension' was awarded first prize last week in the 2016 SA Community Award at the SACE Art Show after receiving the most votes from students, teachers, families and members of the broader South Australian community.

Inspired by the raw emotion and feeling seen in Jill Greenberg's photographs, Sophie set out to capture the emotion of dealing with trauma of child abuse.

"Child abuse is an important issue for me as I have firsthand experience of trauma of growing up with hidden abuse," Sophie said.

Using her brother as her subject, Sophie entwined coloured thread around nails to create a layered image, using a mixture of pinks and purples to create skin tones.

"The style of my work creates an ideal viewing point where the boy looks clear and proportionate; this outlined area resembles the distance that is required for a child to feel safe around an abuser," Sophie said. "Being viewed from closer, less ideal areas form a distorted image reflecting how the brain feels when confronted unexpectedly."

Sophie hopes 'Tension' will send a message to abuse victims regardless of the type of abuse they may suffer from.

"As a sexual abuse survivor I know that damage isn't always as visible as a bruise but if people start to talk about abuse and educate one of the largest targets about abuse then I hope one day to live in a world where telling your story and reaching out for help is not frowned upon by some people or seen as inappropriate," Sophie said.

Sophie also submitted a video in her SACE submission showing the many hours of work that went into the final product.

"The accompanying video displaying creation of the piece was because I wanted to express the amount of effort a child has to go to to hide their emotions," Sophie said.

"I also wanted to display that sometimes the struggle shows through which is portrayed through the subtle bruising and sores located around the mouth and eye."

Sophie and four other St Francis de Sales year 12 Art and Design students had their work exhibited at the SACE Art Show at the Light Square Gallery, Adelaide College of the Arts.

"Winning the SACE Art Show People's Choice award first prize was really unexpected and I am so excited to know how much people appreciate my work and the meanings I have behind it," Sophie said.

"Art is different for everyone who experiences it and I am so glad to have had the opportunity to have so many people look at mine."

Sophie received $500 for first prize and her work 'Tension' will be displayed at the Credit Union SA head office for a year.

Fun show has a risky ending

The guys and the girls in The Full Monty

The Hills Musical Company continues to entertain audiences with their performance of *The Full Monty* at the Stirling Community Theatre. Crowds have flocked to this risky and humorous play with a number of sold out performances in its first week.

Based on the book by Terence McNally, this adult musical follows the story of a group of unemployed men who overcome their pride and struggles to form their very own strip act.

Michelle Nightingale from the Hills Musical Company is incredibly happy with the turnout so far and said everyone has had a lot of fun.

"It has been really great so far, the crowds are loving it and we already have a few more sold out shows," she said. "It's a really fun, feel good show that everyone can enjoy."

The Full Monty will be performed until May 14. Tickets can be booked online at *www.hillsmusical.org.au/tickets* or by calling 0466 118 153.

Short plays wowing audiences

Kerry Docking, Jacqui Maynard, Heather Bean, Gillian Aitchison in The Actor's Nightmare

Strathalbyn Players continue to wow audiences in their Sweet Bites Short Play Festival this month at the Strathalbyn Chapel Theatre.

The six short, entertaining and funny performances range in length from six to 20 minutes and each cover a different theme including chocoholism, murder and love. Tabitha Lewis from Strathalbyn Players is very happy with the turnout so far and said everyone is really enjoying themselves.

"The plays so far have been excellent and we have received great feedback from all of our audiences," she said.

"Bookings are filling up fast and audiences continue to get bigger at every show.

"Each play is very different and equally entertaining – there is something for everyone."

Performances will continue to run until May 21. Tickets can be booked online at *www.trybooking.com/LBGL* or by calling 0438 847 329.

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