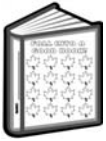




AIM: To look at the Big hART and Scott Rankin's process in composing performance texts.

Big hArt has worked with many different communities around Australia in the production of new works for theatre, film, television and more. Big hArt aims to empower these communities by helping them to tell their stories. They also work to bring about social change by encouraging governments to consider these stories when making policy decisions.



Visit Big hArt's website www.bighart.org

List examples of Big hArt projects.



Research the processes Big hArt use to compose new theatre works.

Watch excerpts from the ABC documentary *900 Neighbours*.



<http://aso.gov.au/titles/documentaries/900-neighbours/clip1/>

Discuss:

1. How does Big hArt help people to tell their stories?
2. What communities have they worked with?
3. What types of issues do their projects tackle?
4. How do they use these stories to develop a performance?

Conduct a Big hArt style workshop or documentary with students at your school.



Focus on an issue that is relevant to your school community, such as intercultural understanding, or peer relationships.

Encourage students to share their experiences of the issue with you and record their stories.



Use some of these stories to devise a series of short scenes.

Experiment with ways you can communicate the stories beyond realism, by using object transformation and non-verbal language.

Interview excerpt with playwright Scott Rankin.

ANGELA CAMERON: Are there any strange that ways you get inspiration?

SCOTT RANKIN: Tragically for the neighbours I sometimes play the guitar and I might write songs for things and, you know, watching trashy late-night television I find very useful – having one too many coffees.

ANGELA CAMERON: So you steal ideas from late-night television?

SCOTT RANKIN: Look, yes. I mean. It's usually about creating a few hours of space each day with some creativity for myself around it beside from the actual writing.

Discuss:

1. What do you think Scott Rankin means when he says he needs 'a few hours of space each day' to write?
2. When do you need space away from others?
3. How do you create space for yourself?
4. How do you get your inspiration for creative ideas?
5. What does the term 'writer's block' mean?
6. Make a list of strategies to solve writer's block.



Research your favourite writer and find out how they get their inspiration to write.

Report your findings back to the class.

Discuss different writers' processes. What are some of the common ideas?





T. S. Eliot is often misquoted as having said, “Good artists borrow, great artists steal.” What he actually wrote was:

One of the surest tests [of the superiority or inferiority of a poet] is the way in which a poet borrows. Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make it into something better, or at least something different. The good poet welds his theft into a whole of feeling which is unique, utterly different than that from which it is torn; the bad poet throws it into something which has no cohesion.

Eliot, T.S., “Philip Massinger,” *The Sacred Wood*, New York: Bartleby.com, 2000.

Cited on <http://nancyprager.wordpress.com/2007/05/08/good-poets-borrow-great-poets-steal/>

Discuss:

1. What do you understand this quote to mean in regard to Big hART, Scott Rankin, devised performance or community theatre?

“

Performance, the imagined and enacted world of human beings, is one of the primary ways children learn about life – about actions and consequences, about customs and beliefs, about others and themselves. ”

Windmill Teacher Notes, Arts Education Program 2009.