

Students watch a Carolina artist at work at Mint

Museum offering 'Contemporary, Cool and Collected' display

BY STEVE LYTTLE
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They didn't actually watch the artist design his work, but about 20 Charlotte middle-schoolers got the next best thing last week.

They watched artist Hoss Haley assemble one of his works at the Mint Museum of Art.

Haley, an Asheville-based sculptor, had an audience of students from Trinity Episcopal School while he worked with two others to assemble "Toric Arch," a metal piece on display at the Mint through December. It is part of the museum's "Contemporary, Cool and Collected" display.

"This was too great an opportunity to pass up," said Jen Rankey, art teacher at Trinity Episcopal. "These students are in a class called 'Exploration of N.C. Crafts,' and this gives us a chance to see an N.C. artist at work."

Haley took several breaks from the job of assembling three large saddle-shaped metal

pieces, each about 7 feet long, and talked with students about what he was doing.

"This is a hyperbolic paraboloid," he said of the pieces. "So that's your vocabulary word for the day. Or maybe you can remember it as Pringles."

Rankey said the field trip showed her students a different side of art.

"Mr. Haley doesn't fit the stereotypical appearance of an artist," she said. "He's a big, strong guy moving big pieces of metal around."

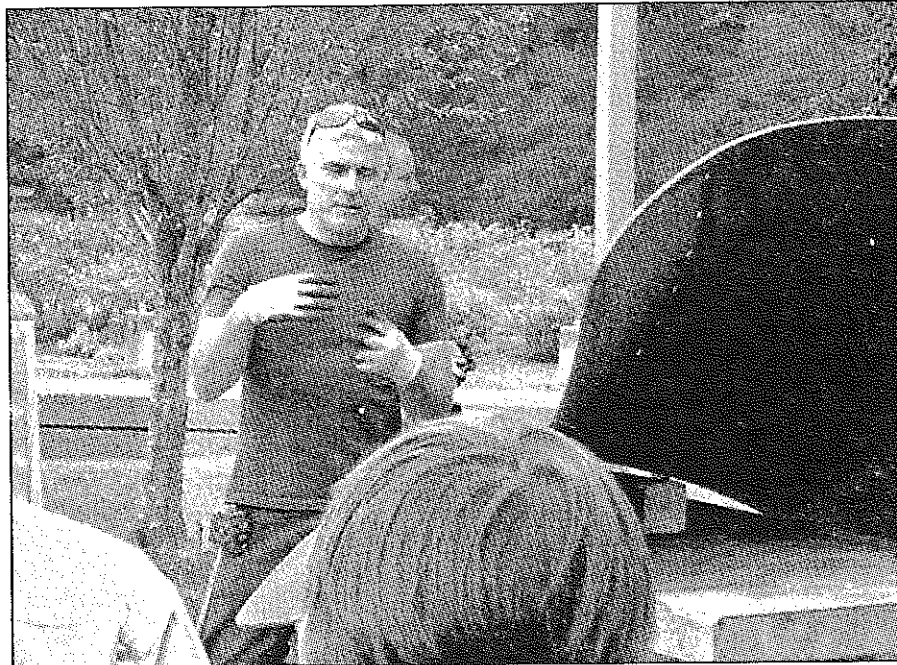
"Toric Arch" was commissioned by a Charlotte couple and will move to the owners' home after it hangs at the Mint Museum, said museum curator Carla Hanzal.

"It's unusual for it to work out this way, that a group of students can watch an artist at work like this," Hanzal said.

Students said they enjoyed their up-close experience.

"It's cool to meet the artist and actually talk with him," said Meredith Miller, 14, an eighth-grader.

"There's more construction than I realized," added Molly Mercer, 13, also an eighth-grader. "It's amazing that they are able to carry those heavy pieces without dropping them."



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Asheville-based artist Hoss Haley talks to students from Trinity Episcopal School about what inspired the metal sculpture "Toric Arch." The piece will be on display at the Mint Museum of Art through December.



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