



# Battery-charged message to crow about

MICHELLE PAINE

It is not unusual for passers-by to hop right into the battery cages designed by hen-admirer Shane Dalglish.

At times, seven people crouch in one cage, but putting themselves in a battery hen's perch is just what Mr Dalglish wants people to do.

The trio behind the provocative installation *Human Battery Cage* won a grant from animal welfare group Voiceless to tour Australia.

Mr Dalglish, Heather Blyth, of Brisbane, and Drew Fryer, of Sydney, began their tour last month.

"I had the idea to do an artistic work presented in a semi-realistic way showing the conditions hens are kept in," said Mr Dalglish, a computer programmer, photographer and occasional artist.

"What prompted me was an attitude some people have against chickens. They're beautiful little creatures.

"I wanted something approachable that showed life for hens in a way that didn't make people shy away."

To be more realistic he would have had to lower the cage roof, but backyard trials proved it was unbearable.

Wherever the trio has travelled, they've had mainly positive comments and they hope to meet renowned Tasmanian hen activist Pam Clarke.

At Sydney's Bondi Beach, they auctioned the chance to spend 30 minutes in the cage with model Imogen Bailey.

"Sometimes people just want to get in," Mr Dalglish said. "Some of our strongest supporters are older people



**ON THEIR PERCH:** The creative installation *Human Battery Cage* has the captive participation of, from left, Drew Fryer of Sydney, Brisbane pair Shane Dalglish and Heather Blyth, and Tasmanian campaigners William Parsell, of Sandy Bay, Michael Shrapnell, of West Hobart, and Sue Quarimby, of Longley.  
Picture: RAOUL KOCHANOWSKI

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who remember having chickens in the back yard that they saw as pets."

The three don't eat eggs because they can't feel sure

the hens were treated right.

Ms Blyth said Tasmania's Primary Industries Minister David Llewellyn had written to her about the state's high

rate of free-range egg consumption.

Devonport has already given the group a welcome reception and tomorrow the *Human Battery Cage* visits Launceston's Civic Square.

On Saturday and Sunday it will be at the Salamanca lawns and, on Wednesday, it will be in Franklin Square.

Details are on the internet at [humanbattery cage.com](http://humanbattery cage.com).

Members of the group Against Animal Cruelty Tasmania, which has an ongoing campaign against battery egg farming, have done cage duty.

"It's fantastic to get national exposure," group member Sue Quarimby said.

Reports last year that up to 200,000 factory-farmed eggs a day were passed off as being free-range prompted calls for an inquiry.