



There's mortar Gemma than meets the eye

GOSNELLS bricklayer Gemma Blakemore has defied the odds by shining brightly in a male dominated industry.

The 29-year-old is one of only 12 people nationwide chosen to go to Sydney this month for Think Brick Australia's inaugural Brick Masterclass.

Ms Blakemore said she looked forward to the training program as a fun opportunity to further develop her skills in her craft and to help contribute to the future of the industry.

Ms Blakemore is second-in-charge with a subcontractor that does mainly upmarket brickwork designs for homes

in areas such as Cottesloe and Swanbourne.

Not only is Ms Blakemore a rarity in that she is a female in an almost male-exclusive trade, but she also started her career later than most, at age 23 after finishing a degree in fine arts and studying teaching

She said her art background helped influence her bricklaying work today.

She was drawn to the art of brickwork known as uptight brickwork for its complex, fine and intricate patterning.

Her strong work ethic and attitude and passion for learning new skills has enabled

her to lead a bricklaying team.

"I am incredibly excited that I was chosen to do this program. I hope to do Gosnells proud and bring back what I've learnt to help shape the next generation of Aussie bricklayers," she said.

The Brick Masterclass is being held in Sydney from February 24 to 28. It is a five-day intensive live-in program for the finalists.

On completion of the course, participants will graduate at an event attended by the media, leading members of the brick industry and representatives from the Government.



Here's mud in your eye: brickie Gemma Blakemore. Picture: Robin Kornet