

The subversive satire of Alan Clements' Spiritually Incorrect

by Brock Noyes

First encountered Alan Clements' work in *Yoga Journal* which excerpted his classic book, *Instinct For Freedom*, and reviewed his one man show, "Spiritually Incorrect."

Generally I read spiritual tracts for their tranquility, but Alan's book was high-voltage; stripped free of clutter, it was raw, wise, and profound. He compassionately refused to lead the reader to safety; I loved it, bought nine copies, and gave eight away.

One of the great scenes from the book is when Alan (pictured) is deported from Burma by the military regime, for his strident calls for freedom and for being an all-round rebel with a cause. Given a one-way ticket to anywhere in Asia, and with no cash, Clements chooses Calcutta and lives on the streets as a Buddhist monk.

With his radical propensity for action, it is no surprise that Clements would walk away from his career as a leading Buddhist meditation teacher, and re-invent himself five times over; as author, human rights activist, screen writer, war correspondent, and now, a revolutionary satirist described as "the most spiritually astute humorist in America today".

What is astonishing is that Alan's live performance is as brilliant as his book. It is an

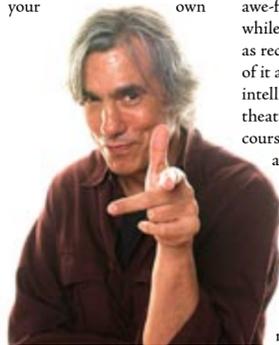
edgy and hilarious look into the human condition. He deconstructs with surgical skill and wit the pantheon of contemporary sacred spiritual and political cows. In so doing, he takes no prisoners, and even offers himself up to the firing squad.

His ninety-minute show is a thrill ride that careens down a hall of mirrors (reflecting your own

shadow) and then surfaces as a multi-dimensional deity laughing through the tears. It's serious (and funny) comedy of the best kind—textured, intelligent, and unapologetically irreverent.

Call it comedy that ignites conscience, or humour that empowers humanness, delivered with the anguish of a broken heart howling about propaganda and the awe-full world of paradox; while offering up laughter as redemption. At the heart of it all is compassion. It's intelligent, philosophical theatre at its finest, and of course, highly entertaining as well.

"Spiritually Incorrect" is remarkable art—radical, real, uncensored. Join the revolution. Help free minds. Spread the word – "not to be missed."



Alan Clements, existential hipster, former Buddhist monk, war correspondent, author, activist and humorist ends his 10th Australian national tour, Saturday night, March 28th at 8pm at the Byron Bay Community and Cultural Centre, premiering his new one-man show, "Spiritually Incorrect Two – In Defence of Being Human."

Clements' shows are benefits to raise awareness of Aung San Suu Kyi—Burma's imprisoned Nobel peace laureate. To buy tickets online for Saturday nights show, go to www.ChrisHooper.com.au or in person at the Byron Bay Community Centre box office, or by phone on 6685-6807. Visit Alan Clements' website at AlanClements.com



Cabaret night in Jiggi

Whatever's happening, make sure you don't miss *Fly by Night: A Starlight Cabaret*, on Saturday 21st March at the Jiggi Hall.

This the launching pad of the long awaited second EP release from Melania Jack, an eclectic mix of sounds from PJ Harvey-esque rock to Massive attack-ish produced beats.

Melania's purging lyrics and guitar are supported an all-star band including Tracy Stephens (Marshal and the Fro) on bass, Rachel Heaton on strings, Julz Parker (Hussy Hicks) on tasty electric guitar and Patty Bom (Bertha Control) on beats and bits. Don't miss this.

The cabaret on the bill will feature Polytoxic's Fez Fa'anana and Mark Windmill: "queer circus on purpose." Polytoxic is an independent



Brisbane-based dance company that mixes theatre, comedy, circus and dance, fusing traditional Pacific, contemporary and street style moves, cheeky characters and gorgeous costumes.

Add in Fashion by Brett Quinlan's "Sharpie"; DJ's

Dudd, Krishna Bear and Rime; and roving performances, and it will definitely be an event to remember.

Tickets are \$15/12, doors open 8pm for a 9pm start. For table bookings and more information, contact www.myspace.com/melaniajack



After recording three albums, and performing with artists from Powderfinger to Paul Capsis, Sydney's 'spiritual ratbags' are heading for a rare North Coast gig.

There have been dramatic changes in the two years since this internationally award-winning 32-voice a cappella choir last visited here.

Following the retirement of founder and musical director, Tony Backhouse after 20 years, Dynes Austin has been elevated to Musical Director from Assistant MD, and the choir is

now flourishing, singing old and new repertoire.

As John Shand said in the SMH, "You'd have to be burning in hell not to feel a tingle at the back of the neck, when this strong gospel-infused choir lets their voices and souls rip."

Be a witness to the joy and emotional richness of the gospel tradition on Sunday 15th March at the Mullumbimby Civic Hall. Doors open 7.15pm, showtime 8pm. Refreshments by Open Table. Tickets are \$20/ \$12 for under 18's / kids 6 and under free. Tickets at the door only.



Romantic impressionist

Sho Wakejima's exhibition, "The Portraiture of Organic Life" will be opening on Thursday 26th March at 6.30pm at the Goanna Bakery & Café, 171 Keen St, Lismore.

Nibbles and soft drinks will be supplied and you can BYO alcohol.

The exhibition will consist of oil paintings and photograph, showing the artist's impression of his life experience on organic farms and pursuing a sustainable lifestyle, in portrait

format. He believes that nature is the only artist in perfection. After all, all our inspiration and energy belong to the planet.

"When we lose touch with nature and start destroying the ecosystem, it is the beginning of self-destruction. It is time for all of us to realise what we are made of physically and meta-physically, and act on it," Sho said.

The exhibition will run until 18th April.

Concert of Dance



Nimbin's own 16th Annual Concert of Dance is coming up again on Saturday 21st of March, from 7.30pm, celebrating and showcasing some of the many dance and movement styles of the region.

It will be an evening of scintillating entertainment at the Nimbin Town Hall, featuring The Nomad Bellydancers, Tap Bitches, Thai dancer Ib, Can-Can, Thai Chi with Daniel, Hip-Hop, Phillipino dancers, Tribal With Delight, Circle Dance and more. For a fabulous night of Dance and performance and a chance to see some of our own



homegrown talent, this is a night to put in your calendar. All proceeds go to The Nimbin Dance Studio to improve facilities and equipment, to support the dancers of our community, who donate their dance skills for community fundraising.

It is a cheap night of entertainment for all ages, with refreshments available. \$12 entry, \$10 concession, with a special price of \$25 for families.



LillyPilly by the Creek – Felt artwork by Barbara Mills. On show in the Exhibition "The Road to Nimbin" until 29th March at the Blue Knob Gallery, 719 Blue Knob Road, Lillian Rock. Open Thursday to Sunday, 10am to 4pm, phone 6689-7449.



Languid Lucie Thorne

Black Across The Field is the new album from Lucie Thorne, who has earned her place as one of the most striking lyricists and voices of the recent indie rock and roots scenes.

Brimming with her intricate guitar work, Thorne's fifth album combines spacious, gritty rock n roll with startlingly original dark-folk, creating an album that is set to be one of the stand-out releases of 2009.

Lucie Thorne, 32, grew up in Northern Tasmania, and after relocating to Melbourne for several years, she is now based in the tiny locality of

Bimbaya (pop: 4) on the edge of the Bega Valley on the NSW south coast.

It's here in an old wooden cottage by the Tantawangalo Creek that Lucie writes and records, and tends a garden, when she's not on tour.

Thorne's songs distill the poetic from the everyday, and are compelling in their intimacy and authenticity.

Backed by drummer Hamish Stuart and bass player Dave Symes, and with guests Chris Abrahams on piano, and Stephen Magnusson on guitars, it's definitely worth a listen. Check www.luciethorne.com

Calling all musicians - young and old

The Australian Instrumental Convention is being held over Easter in Grafton and applications are now open. The Convention will offer a feast of musical experiences such as concerts, workshops, masterclasses, choral activities and much more. Music students of all ages and experience are invited to apply to attend, as well as teachers and other professional musicians.

Organiser Melissa Philp has a passion for 'bringing quality musical events to the country' and has been conducting workshops, adjudicating and performing in rural Australia for many years. Melissa was the organizer of the 2005 Australian Flute Convention and this experience moved her to try and create an event with a broader scope and with a particular slant towards country students and teachers.

'Some areas are so isolated and it's great to have an event that allows people to come together and share ideas', she said. The Convention will feature some of the leading teachers and performers in not only Australia but also the world, including Andy Firth (clarinet and sax), Janet Webb and Jocelyn Fazzone (flute and piano), Mark Eager (brass specialist and conductor



from the UK), Brendan Joyce (violin), Brendan Torbay (vocal tutor and judge from Channel 7's 'Battle of the Choirs'), and many more. There will be a technology room running throughout the Convention with workshops and tutorials from Binary Designs. Delegates are able to perform in various ensembles if they wish – these include an orchestra, a big band, a choir and small chamber ensembles.

Scholarships are available for musicians in need of financial assistance from the Nimbin area. There is also an ensemble competition for groups of all different sizes – including choirs. So if you play an instrument, sing or simply have a love of good music, register now for the Australian Instrumental Convention. Log onto www.melissaphilp.com or contact Melissa Philp on 02 6643-1888. This is an event not to be missed!

Nimbin Hotel & Backpackers
53 Cullen Street, Nimbin
Phone 6689-1246

March Gig Guide

Friday 6th **Greenlife**
Friday 13th **The Re-Mains**
Friday 20th **Manifest + AntiBodies**
Sunday 22nd **Essie + friends 2-5pm**
Thursday 26th **George Scott**
Friday 27th **CBD Dub Project**
– Friday gigs start 7.30pm –

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Nimbin Bowlo

Sibley Street Nimbin, phone 6689-1250

What's On in March?

- **St Patrick's Day at the Bowlo** Tuesday 17th March – Be entertained from 2pm by an Irish music session, presented by the Tumble Folk Orchestra.
- **Friday night raffles**
- **Sunday Social Bowls** from 9.30am

See you at the Bowlo

- Air-conditioned lounge, bar and dining room
- Courtesy Bus

ASIAN STAR Restaurant
• Lunch & dinner Tuesday - Sunday

Sphinx Rock Cafe

March:

- 8th – Andrea Soler
- 15th – Rasayana
- 22nd – Kevin James + Peacebrother
- 29th – Murray Kyle & Friends

April 5th – The Orange Tree

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