



Benny in Woodstock

by Benny Zable

August 7th, Friday afternoon, I took a bus from New York City to Woodstock, and hitchhiked to the Tibetan Monastery and what is referred to as the Hippy Chapel on Overlook Mountain, I missed the sunset service and so on a clear full moon night I slept under the stars in this most sacred place.

On August 8th, Saturday morning, after a session of yoga and meditation, I hitched on down the mountain to join in with the Woodstock 40th anniversary International Walk for World Peace.

We walked through the Woodstock village from the intersections bridge road end at SR 212 and SR 375 along Mill Hill Road with the flags of all nations. Two children in the front of the procession carried the Rainbow Peace Dove flag with the Rainbow Earth Heart Aboriginal Australia flag. Significantly a Chinese contingent carried a MAY PEACE PREVAIL ON EARTH banner written in Chinese. We walked to up to the Comeau Field where we formed a circle around the World Peace Prayer Society peace pole, in front of a large MAY PEACE PREVAIL ON EARTH banner that was installed next to the stage.

We performed the World Peace Prayer ceremony of all nations where the names of the nations represented in the flags are called out and brought into the circle and placed in wooden hand crafted racks around the

Peace Pole. This ceremony began with an introductory speech followed by a Native American blessing ceremony equivalent to our own Welcome to Country. It differs in that the Chief Seattle statement to the American Congress warned of environmental destruction because of man's greed.

Throughout the day's proceedings, local artist Ronnye Jai set up a 100 foot canvas and co-ordinate a communal "PAINT OUT". Following the World Peace Prayer ceremonies, guest speakers, special musical guests with Indigenous music from around the world continued throughout the day. I introduced myself on stage as the Nimbin Australia sister to Woodstock ambassador and read out a copy of the letter which I co-created with Peter Wise, the current president of the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce.

After the event I met up with Shelli Lipton working at the Woodstock Chamber of Commerce information center. We discussed when and where to launch the Rainbow Dreaming exhibition in Woodstock. This will now take place on 11th October at the Woodstock Museum to follow on from a great deal of the 40th anniversary celebrations so as to give it a special focus we think.

I bussed back to New York city to continue designing the site for the 21st anniversary ECOFEST, to be held on 4th October in Central Park, this day being St Francis Day.



Back to the Garden

The 40th Anniversary of Woodstock was celebrated with ceremony, pomp and passion at Durrumbul Hall on Sat 15th August.

The evening began with Mandala and Gina leading an earth-honouring circle.

Then the Rainbow Drum Circle carried the message of peace and goodwill from the heart of the rainbow region to the green hills of Woodstock. A statement from Benny Zable, Nimbin's ambassador now in Woodstock, was read out: "The Woodstock 40th anniversary is taking place at the crossroads of history. The mainstream wakes up to the reality of a collapsing ecosystem brought on by its own doings. With every end there is a new beginning. The Rainbow Dreaming exhibition is a Rainbow Bridge, a way to love and peace, a world of earthly stewardship. Let us celebrate and dance the dream into reality with each other and with the world."

And celebrate and dance they did, regaled by some of the region's best musicians and performers who served up a smorgasbord of Irish, Flamenco, Gypsy, Roots Reggae, Bellydance and Inspirational music. The peace flags of the Rainbow Chai Tent, Jerry Cooke's mandalas, Squiffy Vision's light show and Adam Pippin's sound provided a magnificent setting for the magic to unfold. The Goddess was dancing that night, with all the gopis of the region!

The event was also a focus for community opposition to the Repco Rally Australia. The No Rally Group spoke about the desecration of the green caldera by the rally and issued a call to people of the region to act to protect

this biodiversity hot spot. Further information and details are available on the No Rally group website www.norallygroup.org or by phoning 0438-357-452.

Organisers would like to thank all those who helped with this event, especially the artists and volunteer team. Over \$1600 was collected towards helping Rainbow Dreaming on its Woodstock/USA tour (see www.rainbowdreaming.org). Co-curator of the exhibit, Harsha Prabhu, said, "We are now able to pay for the Woodstock exhibit. For this, we have to thank the good folk of the rainbow region who supported this project. We still have additional set-up costs with other venues, as our dream is to showcase this exhibit as a stand-alone spiral inside a geodesic dome. So we're still looking for corporate sponsors to help with these costs. We have shown, with community support, we can do anything we set our heart to."

Organisers would also like to apologise to Durrumbul Hall neighbours, as the music carried into the wee hours. Said Harsha, "In our defence, it was a trifection of a night: the Assumption of the Virgin Mary; Krishna's birthday; and the Woodstock 40th anniversary, bringing everyone together to celebrate the power of community. On the positive side: no traffic gridlock, mud slides or bad (brown) acid. We OD'ed on Peace and Love and Music instead!"

And the word is: all things hippie and green are alive and flourishing in the rainbow region, thanks to the sustainability movement that's flowered in them there green hills and valleys.



Artists Collective



Review by Stephen Wright

I would never use a word like "painterly" to describe someone's art. Apart from the fact that it makes you sound like a fatuous old windbag in need of a good clout round the ear, it is also probably a really meaningless term. But what I can and will say about the Artists Collective Exhibition at the Nimbin Regional Gallery, is that the work on show there is by many people who seriously have their act together when it comes to using paint.

The Artists Collective Exhibition has been on show

since 21st August, and is composed of work by Rodney Sharpe, Roslyn Parry, Gilbert Laurie, Burri Jerome, Tricia Dalmas and Elspeth Jones. And possibly one or two others, but tags had fallen off things and it was a bit hard to locate who was what with where. But neat tags don't make interesting art.

The work of the Artists Collective is actually hung pretty nicely, and Rodney Sharpe's Country Energy floors you as soon as you walk in, like having a bucket of cold water chucked in your face. If I had three grand it would be on my wall right now. Which is not to say that I wouldn't grab half-a-dozen pieces either, but Rodney's is sited to king-hit you as you blink coming inside out of the glare of the sun.

The Artists Collective work is very powerful, and nearly

mythic in its effect. 'Mythic' is another word that can sound as fatuous as a Prime Minister's speech, but what I'm trying to say is there is very little about the AC exhibit that isn't authentic, beautifully executed and unadorned. There is nothing twice or possessed of pseudo-whimsy, and nothing pretentiously trying to be something else.

Afterwards, I was thinking about the work of Arthur Boyd, William Robinson, Ian Fairweather and that ilk, and wondering if a lot of these painters weren't really just painters of the bush - that is, if you've lived in the bush, their work might speak to you differently than if you reside in the inner city. I think when I said 'mythic' before, I also meant 'raw' - in the way that rural life can be raw (and mythic) - and the way that some art, like that of the Artists Collective, speaks from unconscious to unconscious, that is from what you dream, to what I dream.

The AC's work is beautiful, frankly, and extremely diverse. Get down to the Regional Gallery, and sit on the floor, and look at the stuff on the walls. It is mining a vein in Australian art discourse that has probably been half-forgotten by the gallery owners, critics and other weirdos who determine what good art is, and what we should and shouldn't see.



Lisa Gair ceramics

Lisa Gair's latest brilliant body of work is on exhibition in Nimbin Artists Gallery. These works are Lisa's ceramic sculptures, inspired by Lewis Carroll's 'Alice in Wonderland'.

As people enter the gallery and catch sight of them, they break into smiles and are excited to see these pieces. They are nothing like Tennell's illustrations, but could certainly

enhance a new edition of the work.

Visit soon to enjoy Lisa's work, amongst the rest of the great work in the current exhibition, as they're likely to go home with buyers soon!



Art, Food and Music

A new feature at Blue Knob Hall Gallery is Occasional Sunday lunchtime music - with local violinist, Julie Metcalfe - sometimes with additional musicians.

Performance details will be available from BKHG (02 6689-7449) on the Saturday.

The current exhibition of work by local printmakers, Print! runs until 27th September. The cafe is highly recommended, too.

Blue Knob Hall Gallery & Cafe is open Thursday to Sunday, 10am - 4pm at 719 Blue Knob Road, Lillian Rock, phone 02 6689-7449.



The Sphinx Rock Cafe Art Project

This project has been flourishing for nearly two years now.

It began from a discussion between Sharon Squire (part owner of the cafe with John) and Jack Freeman (local artist/Dome builder), about covering some of the newly laid concrete slab with some local artwork.

That was back in September 07, and it started with Marty (many hands creation) and Jack collaborating on a water dragon in front of the stage, to give the Sunday Session revellers something more aesthetic to dance on!

Since then, eight other artists have left their creative mark on the surface, (including John and Sharon's 6 year old Jed, who bravely chipped in with a couple of dolphins).

Now the whole floor-space is covered with the region's cosmic-earthly flair. So head down to Mt Burrell and take a walk through the colourful wonderland of the Sphinx Rock Cafe's outdoor eating area.



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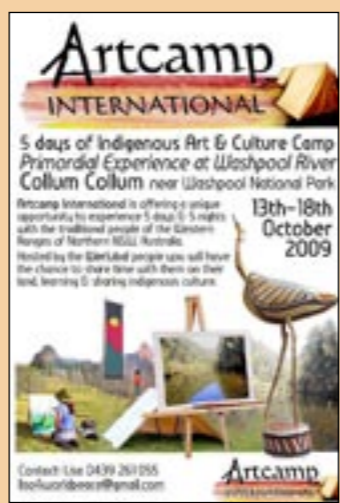
Artemaking in harmony with natural world

Artcamp at Collum Collum 13th - 18th October 2009 presents a real primordial experience!

Your hosts are the Werhclub People the original custodians of the Washpool region, in northern NSW.

Artcamp International is a 5-day indigenous culture and artcamp, sharing traditional language, story telling, painting, sculpture, hunter gathering skills, bush tucker medicine, music, dance and performance.

Artcamp will be situated at Collum Collum, on 7000 hectares of traditional land with 7km of river frontage, near the Washpool World Heritage National Park.



Gunyaah (shelter) making - as well as fish traps, claps sticks and canoe making.

Camping is next to the creek with a well-equipped bush kitchen. Children (Jarjum) under 15 attend free and must be supervised by an adult at all times. Dogs and pets are not invited, and the event is drug and alcohol free.

Cost for the inclusive camp is \$550 per adult. Please contact Lisa on 0439-261-055 or email Lisa4worldpeace@gmail.com.

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