

BLACK ROCK GAZETTE

THE NAKED TRUTH SINCE 1992

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Art Vandals ANDROS STURGEON

C.C. Clark is a big Frida Kahlo fan. Her art installation, Casa Azul, located in center camp, is a walk-through that is a tribute to Kahlo and her work put together with the aid of other artists.

"It took a year of planning and eight months of my life to do this piece," she said, voice quivering and hoarse, tears starting to run down her cheeks. "That's why I can't believe this happened."

In the sleepy hours of 2 a.m. to 4 a.m. on Tuesday, someone wrote the words "Free it up" on one of the walls of her project. "I didn't bring any touch-up paint because I didn't think anyone would deface my art, and I doubt that anyone will have terracotta brown paint on the playa."

C.C. is one of several artists that have had their art defaced this year. Rico Thunder, chief executive of Costco Soulmate Trading Outlet, awoke Wednesday to find the six-foot red-and-white Costco sign gone. This was after it had been slashed in half by someone two days earlier.

"The two incidents are unrelated," said Thunder. "I think the sign was slashed by some ironically impaired person who thought this was something to do with corporate sponsorship. Someone over at Tent Repair Camp was nice enough to fix it. The person who stole the sign realized they made a mistake and returned it. We put them to work for us as an indentured servant so they can understand the magic of this whole thing."

Not everyone has been humble enough to pay their debt. Jane and Izzy of Stoke and Poke's Game-A-Lot found a couple at 2 a.m. Wednesday pulling the tires out of the ground to which their giant see-saw was chained.

"It's obviously chained here for a reason," said Izzy. "They pulled the tires out of the ground and were riding the see-saw. When I came out they mumbled an apology and went off. It's going to take us a few hours to put it all back together."

"We now have to have someone here in shifts," said Jane "which is a bummer because it ruins the experience of the person who has to stay here, and it adds an element of mistrust to the citizens of Black Rock when we have to watch everyone."

"It happens every year," said Ranger Beavis. "In a crowd like this, you will have 5 percent who are assholes. This year it seems to be more like 7.5 percent. We've had a few incidents of art vandalism this year. But it's more mischievous than malicious. People get drunk and think they are being cute by being childish and goofing around. Usually the yahoos come at the end of the week. But now they seem to be staying longer. We don't like that at all."

Under the "Free it up" scrawl C.C. has put her own sign that says: "Thanks to the tagger who wrote on my art and destroyed eight months of work. You don't belong here and you made me cry. The artist."

"It's too bad," she said. "In a place like this, you think people would be more respectful of other people's things. Now I have to keep someone here at all times to keep an eye on it. It's just one more thing that makes you feel less safe and less free."



cradle



playstation



temple of wisdom



chapel



coliseum

Artworks of the Seven Ages (from top left): The Cradle by Deidre Franceaux and Jann Nunn; The Playground - Cycleside Bike Carnival by Jericho Reese and the Bike Rodeo; The Chapel - The Plastic Chapel by Finley Fryer, The Wedding Cake by William Lai; The Coliseum - The Arena by Peri Pfeninger; The Temple of Wisdom by Bernie; The Maze by Todd Dworman, Charles Trapolin and the Maze People; The Mausoleum - The Temple of Tears by David Best and Jack Haye.

A-Mazed JAMIE O'BEIRNE

This year's Maze is so big that volunteers were given small maps to use during construction. It will kick your ass, too. Some folks get to the raised platform and discover they missed half the maze, including the coolest rooms.

On Tuesday, out of frustration, someone climbed up an exit pole to the final platform. There was a serious bombardment of "boos" and cries of "cheater." Burners were pissed. It was an intense break in Burning Man etiquette, as bad as riding in a undecorated golf cart.

"There are several rooms, but I'm not telling how many," said art curator Charles Trapolin, a.k.a. Dragonfly, who designed the exterior mural.

"It's good to get lost," said Mistress Eva Destruction of the Temple of Atonement, who completed the maze after circulating back to the entrance. "You discover more about yourself when in that state of confusion. You meet guides when you most need them."

"Life is about decisions. Sometimes, we make the same decisions and go in circles. That happens here," said creator Charles Dworman, a.k.a. Maze Man. I wanted to give something back that was fun, interactive and devilish in a little way," he said.

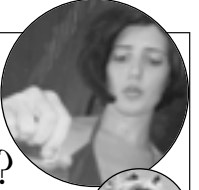
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THE SEVEN AGES OF MAN

photos by WeeGee

CEO's HAIR WATCH

Oh, MY! What is THAT on Your Head?



YOU'VE GOT THE RETRO FLIP, SWEETIE, BUT YOU AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' ON THE PLAYA NUGGETS.



Gifts: Small-Scale Art:

ALLEGRA FORTUNATI

It has been said that you can judge the quality of a man's love not by his grand gestures, but in the small things that he does. In many ways, gifts that participants make or bring are a gauge, and a more intimate expression of their love of the Burning Man community; they are of equal importance to the large-scale installations out on the playa. Each has their own special meaning, and The Artery, headquarters of the Burning Man Art Team, is determined to capture that meaning for an archive they are currently establishing.

Already the Artery has collected artifacts such as stickers, matchbooks, silk-screened panties, rings, lapel pins, medallions and Kidsville suckers, just to name a few. They are looking for is more of your love.

The Artery's feeling is that gifts communicate in ways that words cannot. The late Geman artist, Joseph Beuys, knew this and created small works he called "multiples" which he thought of as parts of himself that he gave to others, thereby staying in touch.

By distributing gifts, participants too are giving away a little of themselves to others, creating a connection between individuals and, ultimately, a community. And, by wearing, displaying, or just accepting others' gifts, Burners are "staying in touch" with other community members, possibly for years to come. The gifts might be a catalyst for discussion or a way just to keep the image of its creator (or an idea) in front of the viewer's mind.

Share the joy of your gifts with the community and bring some of that love to The Artery.

Participants may take a couple of examples of their gifts to The Artery in Center Camp (behind the Center Cafe) daily between 9:00 am and 7:00 pm. A form needs to be filled out about the gift, including name of giver, a description of the gift and its meaning. The Artery staff will take the gifts as well as playa business/trading cards, photos, stickers, videos, recorded radio broadcasts and many more Burning Man related artifacts and transport them back to the Burning Man offices where they will be catalogued. Post-playa, they can be contacted to arrange archiving at tracingleaves@yahoo.com.

Interactive Art GIACOMO GASPERINI

Interactive art abounds on the playa, from simple exchanges to deep collaborative opportunities.

Jim Corpi's immersive "Latex Vacuum Bed" is like being wrapped inside a giant wad of chewing gum. You lie naked in a large latex bag, breathing through a small hole as Jim turns on an old vacuum cleaner. Form-fitting latex envelops you as you float and dance. A must experience. Operating evenings out of a mobile unit near Latex Camp on the Esplanade at 8:00.



Jim Corpi Sucks Lulu into a Latex World

LaGrange

LaGrange

LaGrange

LaGrange

LaGrange

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LaGrange



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On the other end of the scale are projects waiting for the right collaborators to take them to another level. Laser geniuses cast beams across the Coliseum marking out a wide array of virtual rooms. A space is born—how will it come to life? The only limit is your imagination. On the Promenade, in front of The Man.



Sweet Playa Surprises

Summer School

Burning Man is a unique opportunity. For some it's an opportunity to entertain or amuse; for others it is a chance to share something important with thousands of people. For John Winters, a university professor from Los Gatos, California, Burning Man is a perfect opportunity to teach. "Traditional institutional learning monopolizes the concept of learning," he says, "What better place to launch some of the innovative new ideas of the Medicine Planet Center than at Burning Man?"

Medicine Planet Center, located at 7:30 and Infant, is an innovative theme camp that explores a new concept in education that involves regular people teaching subjects they are passionate about to any and all who wish to learn. There are currently 34 different classes being taught by 14 different instructors from 10-5 each day, with the classes ranging in size from 3-14 people. You can learn: how to juggle; mix up a batch of your own Burning Man Balm with clinical herbalist Lynda Emashowski; or learn the basics and the history of the Ukulele from enthusiast Josh Klein. Other classes available include papermaking, Poi spinning, Geometry, Ethnobotany, and Photography.

You do not have to register if you wish to attend a class, simply read the Burning Man Events Guide for class listings and show up at the camp itself. Anyone wishing to start their own class (previous teaching experience not required) can contact John Winters at the Medicine Planet Center. Winters offers this final thought about the theme camp: "When you teach something to others...your class becomes a gift that can be passed on indefinitely."



Freckles

Body art by Mother Nature herself: Life in Black Rock City coaxes freckles out of even the most porcelain playazens.

Ultraviolet radiation from sunlight is the agent, and there is plenty of it on the playa (Freckles will not form on skin that has not been exposed to the sun). Melanin-producing cells in those who have freckle genes -- mostly redheads and blonds -- get excited by the ultraviolet attention.

Love and protect your skin! Those melanin kisses are often accompanied by a damaging sunburn.

Seniors on the Playa

DORIS S. MADDEN

As you wander around, do you ever wonder why people over 50 (you're a senior at 50 because then you can join AARP - ask someone else what AARP stands for :o) come to Burning Man? Is it the same reason people younger than 50 come? Here is what this reporter found.

One pair of seniors (ages 69 and 78) came out of curiosity - it's a new adventure to be explored. They loved the artful costuming. The woman is from Luxembourg and is used to European art festivals where nudity is more accepted than in the United States. They plan on seeing the mud wrestling, the Requiem and other musical programs here besides their favorite "people watching". Their children think them brave to come, and want them to enjoy life to the fullest. They looked like they were.

Mac is a golfer who doesn't feel the playa is where he could do his best driving, but he came to observe in anticipation of bringing his grandchildren in the future. He is from Forestville, California, which has much different weather and scenery. In a colorful sarong, he definitely is a participant.

Ed was drawn here by his children and is enjoying it for the second time. He hasn't succumbed to the dress of the playa (he likes to travel light since he flew from Ohio to San Francisco and picked up a motor home). I told him where to get some costumes and with some encouragement, perhaps he will loosen up a little and try something. Although, a tee shirt and shorts is sort of a costume at Burning Man :o). He loves art for art's sake. He doesn't think of himself as a senior (and he really doesn't look like one).

John came from Mill Valley, California with his children's approval, although they didn't think he would like the drinking and drugging. He looked fine when I interviewed him (he's very handsome) in his white cattan-like costume. He hadn't been here very long and was not yet over the culture shock, but I'm sure he is going to fit in just fine. He said it was no big deal!

Clint is here for the third time and said it is just as crazy as the last two times. He's from Utah and came in an RV because it is more comfortable. He's been people watching and particularly loves the Art cars, plus the many imaginative campsites. He's volunteering this year. Both his peers and children approve of his coming to BM.

Jeremy is here for the first time, brought by his children. He really likes the ambiance here, noting it is not pretentious like much of the rest of the world outside the playa. He is 64, loving it, and wants to come back until he's 90.

Bob is 77 and it's his first time to the Burn with his friend, Marv. He had no idea what to expect - his children know he's here, but his wife thinks he's fishing. His children felt that since he missed Woodstock, he should experience this. He is a bit overwhelmed, yet looking forward to returning next year. He likes desert country with its beautiful mornings and sunsets. He participated in a wedding yesterday as a bridesmaid, a little different than his off playa life.

Marvin thinks it's great that everyone's shoes are the same color. He's here for the second time and finds the atmosphere very healing. Both of his children will be here today. One of his favorite things at Burning Man is the huge rock on the playa - the enormously heavy stepping pyramid. Don't get too near his bike because he has a farting chicken which rides on the back and it might scare you. He is in possession of a green card, a passport, and is waiting to see the naked lady on the trampoline who does back flips.

Now you know why some oldies (sorry, seniors) come to Black Rock City.



THE WILD WILD WEST

DEATHSTORK

What is the Wild West? It's America's Old Testament, a myth to twist with each retelling. Over 100 years ago, when an immigrant trail crossed the playa, life was far more Blood Meridian than Bonanza.

The survival of those early immigrants was far more perilous than ours, but like Black Rock City residents, they were a conquering cross section of dreamers. Western Fetishists abound on the playa, perpetrating their own bizarre takes on the collective consciousness of the Wild, Wild West.

Dismal, Nevada, is a hardscrabbled, half-dead mining town at 7:15 and Infant. Fred Rinne, mad orator for The Electronic Parlour Tricksters, says Dismal ain't revisionist history, it's a cantankerous acknowledgement of the West's bloody past. Their sculptors and kinesisists have fashioned a 100 percent recycled, country-goth anti-Mecca of bones and brimstone. But good news: The Railway is finally coming to Dismal. Join them for an Insolent Game of Reverence at 9:30pm Thursday, 1,500 feet from the Man towards 9:00.

You may have seen The Laughing Stock kicking up dust and causing havoc on their motorized horses. Allied with the Post Office, they're out to bring lawlessness and wild west spirit back to the playa. Shoot 'em up and you might get a wooden nickel, redeemable for a free horsey ride. Scarla Molehair, Buckwheat Wildberry, Hooters Shootin' Annie and Skuf Redburn also give rides for fan mail sent to their teepee at 9:00 and Lover.



Keep your trigger finger ready for the Naughty Cowgirl Ranch. Fifteen hot women on hobby horses are rustling up new members, coralling hot boys for branding, and pulling gunpoint panty raids. They're all wanted - you'll see the posters. You could be hog-tied and forced to lick Fireweed's sheriff badge pasties. Judge Jackson (the legendary

Edie Babe) was dry-gulched up country.

Sheriff Dave, of Spaghetti Western Camp, knows all about mutating the Western Myth. On Thursday, from 5 to 7pm, they're serving up a vegetarian spaghetti dinner to the Spaghetti Western soundtracks of Ennio Morricone. The saloon opens after dinner, and multiple TVs will be showing the legendary, shot-in-Italy Westerns of Sergio Leone, starting "Squint" Eastwood as The Man with No Name.

Want a serenade? Go to the Asian Princess Ranch at 7:40 and Lover at sunset. Sit inside the white picket fence and let saucy princess Jennifer give you a personal, heart-wrenching Karaoke performance. Patsy Cline would approve, God rest her soul.

Numbering 60, BRC veterans The Space Cowboys have joined forces with The Space Lounge. Here lies the glamorous future of the W.W. West. Join them in full glam for a high tech hoedown, where E Pluribus Unimog will start a stampede of visuals and gut rumbling sound. It goes off Friday after 10, out on the playa past 2:00 and Oblivion.



Black Madonnas/Spinning Angels

GIACOMO GASPERINI

Graceful arching wings catch the wind and spin, vividly sparking in the sun. The Black Madonnas, situated just before the Cradle, mark the first step in your journey through the Seven Ages. Four giant figures evoke a goddess cult traceable to that of Isis, surviving for centuries in France, Italy, Switzerland and the Romani (Gypsy) culture.

Annie Hallatt first created art for the playa in 1994, when Larry Harvey asked her to make giant puppets of "urban totem images" (rat, racoon, pigeon, cockroach.). The next year she built 10-foot solar-powered, fluid-spouting breasts. She later designed puppets for each of Pepe Ozan's operas.

This is Annie's first wind-powered sculpture. Dedicated to the late Mimi Farina, whose last words were "spin until the sky twirls open," it includes ancillary turntables where participants may spin themselves. A ceremony Friday at 7:30pm will feature medieval chant, throat singing and puppets.

Mandala The first sculpture, birth, holds a spinning,

metallic lotus flower. The second, childhood, has a larger, whirling bicycle wheel. Love comes next, in the form of a winged sphinx whose heart is a motorcycle gas tank. Next, a "third eye" resembling a disco ball looks back at the viewer, representing enlightenment. Finally, death awaits at the end of the line - a flaming metal chrysanthemum, a symbol of death in Japan.

"It's got a kind of Buddhist meets Mexico City feel to it," Giles says.

From the wind-chime chamber, the viewer can see the spinning wheels of the other structures. The effect is mesmerizing, especially at night, when black light and fire bring the whole piece to life.

There's an element of "natural chaos" to the piece, Giles says, especially with the hundreds of wind chimes. "It's set up for accident - a natural accident. It's a natural symphony."

"There are different aspects of self," she says, "but there is a core." With "Mandala," "you're looking metaphorically at the stages of the development of self."

Giles started welding in high school, and studied art history and theory at Rice. She first heard of Burning Man when she was working on art cars in Houston a few years ago. She is the first woman to hold the keyhole art spot on the playa.

"It's a challenge to make something that

can relate both the destructive and creative elements of women," she says. Both sexes have masculine and feminine aspects to their selves. Even welding, long considered a masculine endeavor, can enable a creative expression for women and men alike. "I'm weaving with the metal. When you heat it up, it goes wherever you want it to go."

Giles welded last year's "Ribcage/Birdcage," a 17-foot metal ribcage designed with Philip Bonham. "Ribcage/Birdcage" invited Burners to swing inside the towering chest cavity like a bird. She says her pieces always hold a "secret" inside. The secret of "Ribcage" was that "you are the heart of Burning Man." Viewers of "Mandala" will have to find its secrets for themselves.

A-Mazed The maze, located directly behind The Man, is filled with artwork and messages. They don't reveal any maze secrets, but do they keep away that queasy sense of entrapment only a 7,000 foot, life-sized maze will induce. "For fast acting relief, try slowing down," one message reads. Another piece, a work about forgiveness, has pictures of contemporary figures ranging from Timothy McVeigh to Jerry Springer to Ralph Nader.

"Different parts of the maze have different personalities," Maze Man said. "I made it through last year inebriated and blindfolded," said Garret Dworman, Mazeman's younger brother. "I intend to do it again this year."

"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."

- Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

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