



10-Sep-2010

Page: 9

General News

By: Ktima Heathcote

Market: Tennant NT

Circulation: 1500

Type: Regional

Size: 620.01 sq.cms

Frequency: ----F--

Festival proves a magical experience

By KTIMA HEATHCOTE

MAGIC was in the air in Tennant Creek over the weekend as the 21st Desert Harmony Festival came to a spectacular close.

From the mesmerising performance of the Red Flag Dancers at DanceSite to the show-stopping fiery finale of Psy-cus Circus there were many moments during the nine-day festival which took the crowd's breath away.

Pouring rain cut the annual street parade on Friday afternoon short but it didn't fail to dampen the spirits of those who took part. Around 18 floats entered with locals pulling out all the stops to ensure passersby enjoyed the spectacle.

Earlier on in the day, townsfolk got a whiff that something special was going to happen when a giant papier-mache serpent, black with white geometric shapes and fiery red eyes, snaked its way (with the aid of a few helpers) down the main street to the Civic Hall for the Youth Performance.

And what a show that was with more than 300 locals, visitors and country men and women pouring into the hall

for a night of fun, laughter, dance and a thought-provoking play called The Birds of Tennant Creek, written and directed by Brisbane playwright Shaun Charles together with local youth.

A play of epic proportions there was a flood, the aforementioned gigantic snake, a figure of menace and a beer truck with special appearances by BRA's versatile boss Alan Murn and the Youth Arts Manager Kate Lee.

In the lead-up to the Youth Performance the lively Kate worked tirelessly with crews from Beyond Empathy, The Song Room, the Australian Theatre for Young People and Griffith University to ensure everything went smoothly as they prepared schoolchildren from Tennant Creek High School, the Primary School and Ali Curung.

Over the weeks there were a few tears and the odd tantrum but in the spirit of harmony all of the youth groups rallied together to put on an entertaining and heart-felt show.

"Despite the chaos of the move from the changing weather, the evening was an incredible success. The hall was packed and the kids didn't miss a beat - everyone performed brilliantly,"

10-Sep-2010

Page: 9

General News

By: Ktima Heathcote

Market: Tennant NT

Circulation: 1500

Type: Regional

Size: 620.01 sq.cms

Frequency: ----F--



said Kate.

Throughout the evening hearty sustenance was provided by Priscilla from Nyinkka Nyunyu with plates of Chilli Con Carne, Tuna Mornay and a Pasta special.

On the Saturday, events continued with the Barkly Artists Marketplace and the official launch of Barkly Yarns, a collaborative installation of fibre works by Indigenous artists who have never worked with this medium before.

Adelaide artists Sandy Elverd and Tis Milner-Nichols worked with artists from communities of Epenarra, Mungkarta, Mangalawurru, Canteen Creek, Julalikari Arts & Craft and Ali Curung.

Sandy said before the launch that the artists really took to the weaving, producing the most colourful and exquisite pieces from larger-than-life birds and outline figures to smaller-sized dogs and a colourful mural of coiled mats.

"The Barkly artists really explored what's unique in this region to create their own expression from what's around and weaved all of this into various sculptures," she said.

Continued on page 10.

10-Sep-2010

Page: 9

General News

By: Ktima Heathcote

Market: Tennant NT

Circulation: 1500

Type: Regional

Size: 620.01 sq.cms

Frequency: ----F--



Festival proves a magical experience

From page 9.

Indigenous Publishing House IAD Press, in conjunction with the NT Writers' Centre, also launched their anthology of Northern Territory Indigenous writings, called *This country anytime anywhere*, where some amazing writers gave readings at Nyinkka Nyunyu cafe.

Ali Cobby Eckermann enthralled the gathering of 80-plus with her poems *Grade One Primary* and *I Tell You True* as did Gloria Daylight, Rosemary Plummer, David Curtis, Valerie Nakamarra Nelson, Maureen O'Keefe, Lynette Nalyirri Lewis and Hans Katakarija with their inspiring and emotional words.

Afterwards there was an open microphone poetry reading where more talent including Lionel Fogarty of Queensland and writers from the Barkly such as Milly Napangardi James, Judy Nakkamarra Nixon, Adrian McNamara, Irena Kolbald and Joel

Vandermeulen kept the audience so spellbound they weren't interested in nibbles.

The action didn't stop there with DanceSite being shown in Tennant for the first time on Saturday evening, giving Barkly dancers and elders the chance to host this showcase of traditional Indigenous dance.

From the subtle movements of the Warumungu Kartti dancers to the more boisterous Mara Dancers from Borrooloola, the 2000-strong crowd agreed with the MC, Gerry McCarthy MLA, that they were indeed witnessing the revival of ceremonial dance and the importance of cultural maintenance.

Other dance groups at the event, presented by Artback NT: Arts Development and Touring, included Jarra Jarra Dancers (Walpiri) from Ali Curung performing the Jarra Jarra - Yaki Bush Plum Story, the Simpson Desert Dancers (Arnernte) from Alice Springs performing Ampulyerre



● Different dance groups set foot on the sandy stage for DanceSite 2010.