

Dragon Tales

Garbage In, Fire, Art Out

BY ROCKSTAR

The hottest spot on the playa isn't DJ Trilo's dance floor or your secondary's panties or even your own upper lip at high noon, but inside the blue-roaring bowels of a dragon that eats aluminum cans and excretes art. The climate within sculptor Dan Macchiarini's Dragon Forge reaches a mindbending, flesh-crisping 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit; hot enough to turn Blatz beer cans into art. An imposing resident of the Promenade, Danny Mac's Dragon makes a terminal statement about the default world's mass-consumption culture.

"Black Rock City produces tremendous amounts of trash, most of which people haul out of here personally," grins the grizzled, bearlike North Beach sculptor. "The idea was to turn it into art and use that to impact conscienceness--even out here--about recycling. We do a lot of consuming here. So in the process of playing hard we can also produce things and transform waste into art." The means became a rolling serpent over 20 feet high that snorts an impressive bolt of flame from its jaws. Black with brass-tipped scales, the beast is an

elegant compromise from Danny's original vision.

"The original idea was that I thought I was going to be able to smelt thousands of cans. Without a more sophisticated forge than this, that wouldn't be possible. But, this is way more important, because it promotes the idea of recycling. Secondly, the sculpture itself is a piece of kinetic art, itself made out of mostly recycled materials. Sixty percent of the smelter came from stuff people were throwing away. The trailer, the 55-gallon drum, the blowers I use in smelting, even the flamethrower effects this year, I use propane containers people threw away. We took 'em back



and made sure they weren't condemned and could still hold gas safely and reconditioned those. Even the improvements we've made over the years come from recycled materials.

The molten aluminum from the dragon is poured into molds to make sculptures, each representing a different aspect of this year's theme of Hope and Fear. Each piece uses two to three hundred cans. "There's a lot of educational art out there," Macchiarini allowed, "but I wanted to make this one dramatic and beautiful."

The beast is certainly that, rising out of the playa floor like a fantasy creature off the cover of a 1960s Lin Carter paperback cast in metal. The head and tail form an arrogant arc, the belly wallowing as if bloated with luckless St. Georges. The whole piece suggests heaviness and power and a brief afterlife as friccasee.

The Dragon is parked along the 6:00 Promenade, with Macchiarini giving smelting exhibitions on Wednesday and Saturday at sundown.



Playa Serendipity

BY TONY TOHONO

We all have dreams, we all have nightmares, we all have hopes and we all have fears. No matter how well we plan for the worst while striving to attain the best there is always the unexpected. The kind of luck so bad we wouldn't wish it on our worst enemy. The kind of trouble we reserve for our darkest fears. And on the other end of the spectrum, there's serendipity.

Serendipity is the faculty or phenomenon of finding the agreeable things not sought for. Perhaps it's only the mood, but in Black Rock City it seems that there is a much higher concentration of serendipity than in the default world. We have all experienced it and I believe it is one of the reasons we all return. Ask anyone here and in short order you will be trading stories of such gratifying coincidences.

Serendipity can be as simple as happening upon something you absolutely love but would never expect to find in such an unforgiving environment. You might be dressed in solid pink feeling like an outcast about to give up when a pink double decker bus filled with a cadre of pink-clad patrons rides up and swarms about you as if you are the missing link. It may be something as simple as a smile that stays with you to the end of the week.

That situation or that smile may just be the catalyst that starts of an entire series of serendipitous events. So while you are happening upon such pleasant finds don't forget to pass it along to the next person you come across. Something to keep in mind in Black Rock City: expect the unexpected. It's out there and it will find you.



Donald Ducks On the Waddle

BY CITIZEN X

The First Annual Shirtcocking Procession began its studiously casual progress at 1:00 sharp on Tuesday at Center Camp. About 30 only half-clad men and women took part, and we grabbed two typical male specimens ("Peyote" from Seattle/Mexico, and "JonBenet" from the People's Republic of Santa Monica) out of the line of march for some questions.

Why shirtcock? Apparently this is a fashion tradition as old as Burning Man itself, with variations over time. For example, this year the rule is to wear dark socks and footwear in addition to the usual brightly-colored shirt (and nothing in between). The shirt has a practical value as well as making a fashion statement—the sun strikes hard on bare shoulders, while normally one's willie lurks safely in the shade.

Not everyone agrees with the "Donald Duck look," as shirtcocking is regarded by many on the Playa as a major fashion faux pas, inviting some form of intervention or correction. A madman with a Pants Cannon ambushed Peyote and JonBenet outside the BRC Post Office, and the Pantzooka has become a minor Playa



legend, but the two marchers report more praise than taunts on the street. For that matter they don't feel the term "shirtcocker" itself is derogatory.

This is Peyote's third burn and JonBenet's fifth. They told us they usually go completely nude, but chose to join the Shirtcocking Procession as an aesthetic gesture for more imagination in costumery, citing in particular the growing number of newbies who limit their dressing up to a straw hat and a blinky light. Peyote even remarked how shirtcocking can be an allusion to this year's theme: below the waist one is naked and vulnerable, exposed to public shame yet flaunting a symbol of a primal force; and above the waist a bright shirt evokes hope for a sunny future.



Hezbollah Attacks DPW

BY THE BAD HIPPIY

Last week members of the Department of Public Works and various early entry teams in Black Rock City were decimated by a small outbreak of an unknown pathogen. Affectionately dubbed "the Hezbollah Virus," symptoms primarily included the simultaneous and violent expulsion of both diarrhea and vomit—which presumably made the porta potty urinals more useful than ever.

Rumors have mentioned dysentery, although the exact cause of the outbreak

has not been identified. According to Action Girl of Media Mecca, the problem has been contained by stepping up sanitary measures and encouraging everyone to wash their hands.

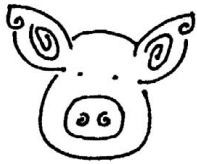
So remember, use hand sanitizer regularly, exercise caution when handling food, and take care not to contaminate your water supply. Otherwise, your Playa experience may entail spending most of your time frantically searching for the crap shacks.



Black Rock City Population	Wednesday	Rise (Hope)	Set (Fear)
23,172 as of 4p.m. Tuesday.	Twilight	05:52	20:04
	Sun	06:21	19:35
	Moon	12:07	22:00

Wednesday, August 30

Sharing your birthday today is Warren Buffet, investor. Buffett emphasized the nonproductive aspect of gold in 1998 at Harvard: "It gets dug out of the ground in Africa or someplace. Then we melt it down, dig another hole, bury it again and pay people to stand around guarding it. It has no utility. Anyone watching from Mars would be scratching their head."



I like pigs. Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals.

—Sir Winston Churchill

Black Rock Beacon

Brainteasers
By Smaze



People love to eat it,
Only cook it through.
Read it somewhere in this verse.
Know it now, do you?

Answer to Tuesday's puzzle: The missing number is 4. If you map 2,1,3,15,14, 9,19,7,15,15 to the alphabet, you get baconisgoo. 4 maps to "d" completing the phrase "bacon is good." And it is! Have some!

Fire in the Belly

BY DURGY

Near 8:30 and the Esplanade, you will find the Fire in the Belly art installation. It consists of two pagodas—one for hope and the other for fear—flanking an effigy of a pregnant woman wearing a mask of joy. Sometime during Black Rock City the 13-foot tall mother figure will miscarry, and the mask of joy will be removed. It will all burn. However, when Glimmer, the artist behind Fire in the Belly, first posted her art concept on tribe.net she did not realize the conflict she would face.

Her concept was to create a place of mourning for lost children. "It is a cathartic ritual sculpture," declared Glimmer. The Pagoda of Hope represents a nursery. Glimmer said it portrays "mom-type fantasies for a successful pregnancy." The Pagoda of Fear represents the "Los Angelitos Medical Center," a doctor's waiting room. "Every time you go to the doctor's [during pregnancy] you become a hypochondriac. Doctors are only there because stuff goes wrong some time."

This week, you are invited to write messages on the whitewashed pagodas or offer tokens on altars to acknowledge hopes and fears. Performance is encouraged. Protest is not.

After the Fire in the Belly project was announced, pro choicers and pro lifers had long online discussions mostly trying to project their politics onto the art installation. Glimmer was careful to point out that her work is not a political statement. It is there for the "opportunity to release pain." Glimmer mentioned the emotional saddening effect of the loss of any child for whatever reason. She did add that the installation was "more for

mourning, and not for people comfortable with the loss of children."

Glimmer said the inspirations for her project included personal loss, loss from friends and family, and the loss experienced by hundreds of women in Black Rock City. She also mentioned that her structures were built using Playatech technology (www.playatech.com). This includes slotted plywood joining on the pagodas, the slots or the spine on the mother, and the "no nail" construction.

Playatech first appeared in Black Rock City in 2005, a spoof company with a real, if virtual, product line. Playatech offers simple plans for making Playa furniture out of plywood sheets that are cut into the various constituent parts and held together by a series of slots. Burners who download the handwritten plans were asked to make contributions to the Black Rock Arts Foundation or Borg2.

The Beacon contacted Playatech's founder,

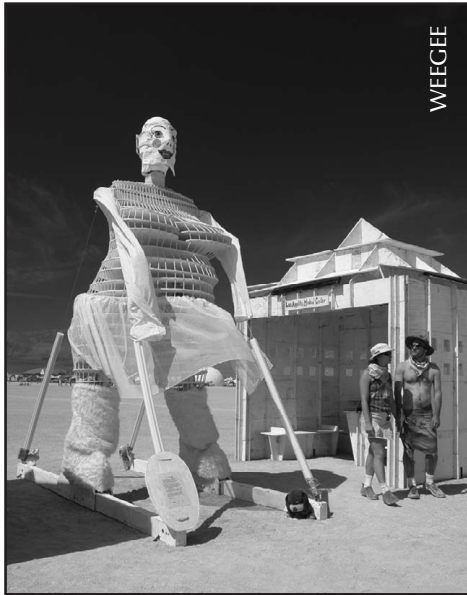
Sunshine, to find out about its new products for Black Rock City 2006, and get his view on

Fire in the Belly. Apparently there will be no new "rapidly deployable lifestyles" products this year. Sunshine blamed the dearth of new product on distractions caused by the Fire in the Belly art project.

"Of course they're using Playatech technology!" Sunshine stated. When asked, Sunshine stated that Playatech had received no royalty payment for the use of its construction techniques. "This is heading for a playa suit," declared Sunshine. "I want this case heard in a kangaroo court, or at least in a petting zoo."

When we caught up with Glimmer for reaction, she vowed to "fight hard and furious for her right to use Playatech." Her early defenses are that some

of the woman was made from Russian birch not just plywood, that all Playatech's website "payment" buttons took "buyers" to donations to the Black Rock Arts Foundation, and technicalities in California Community Property law. "I just want to be judged by a jury of my peers," stated Glimmer. She added, "Basically, people in tutus."



WEEGEE

Fear & Hope

Yes, I have a ticket," Vitale said. He was amused at his first attempt to speak English. Such a dead language, he thought. He had also been careful to slow his speech to the measured cadence of the person asking the question. It took an eternity for the being in the jeep to respond.

"Remember," he could hear his mission commander say "They do not know what a nano-cyborg is. They've never seen one, never touched one, have no idea how to communicate with one. You have to use audible speech in modulated tones at 180 words per minute—no more."

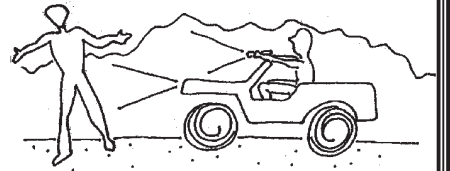
How did they ever get anything done? He wondered. And why do I have to go back and visit these knuckle draggers?

He knew why. It was his turn. Simple as that. The expense of the missions was enormous—it took all kinds of power to open the warp—yet if history could be changed just a little, much of the suffering that would come later could be alleviated. So they tried.

"May I see it please?"

Vitale reached in the front pocket of his clothes and found a small piece of cardboard with multicolored bands and whorls. "Burning Man 2006, Hope and Fear" it said.

How primitive. Yet attractive in an aboriginal way.



THEATRÉMUSE

"Okay then. What are you doing way out here? You're really not supposed to be wandering this far out, want a ride back?" Vitale nodded and climbed in.

The fellow driving the jeep had a bandana covering his nose and mouth, round aviator goggles and long hair that made him look like he had just fled a gas attack.

"Can't be too careful out here. Lots of folks try to sneak in. I don't know why. Where's your camp?"

"My camp?"

"Yeah, where are you staying?"

"I don't remember." Vitale now knew he should have paid more attention in the briefings but he decided that he could dredge up what he needed at the appropriate time. Somehow that information was not currently available to him. He kept seeing his internal monitors reporting 'ERROR 1301 page fault.'

"Don't remember? Are you okay? Have you taken some bad drugs?"

"No, I just got here."

"Just got here and don't remember where you are staying? Who'd you come with?"

"Some friends."

"Oh that's beautiful, I'll bet you don't remember their names or where they are camped."

"Sorry."

"Egads, listen I'll drop you at one end of the Esplanade. From there you are on your own."

He saw giant blue sparks and electrical voltage jumping in the air. Are they trying to communicate? He wondered. If so he didn't understand the language, and it was all over the broadcast spectrum. How crude? He thought. He then realized it was just a large Tesla coil and with his directional antenna aimed toward the huge blue sparks he picked up the sounds of people chanting, "Mega-Volt, Mega-Volt."

Continued on Thursday.

Howeird's Positively Playa

The most popular pastime in inclement weather is of course TRIP POKER. It is exactly like Texas Hold 'em, except instead of chips, the winner gets to ingest all the hallucinogens left in the pot, takes off and then tries to remember his or her own name.

Another popular game, for two to 12 people, if you are on the Grid or have a genny is EGG SURVIVOR. You will need to borrow (important that) a microwave oven and a carton of eggs from Buttfuck Camp next door. Each player initials his or her egg, they are placed in the micro (the eggs not the players) and start is pressed.

Immediately upon hearing an explosion, press STOP, then check to see whose egg just detonated. That person is thrown

out of the game and play continues when START is depressed (wouldn't you be if people poked you all day?)

Yada, yada, yada. The sole surviving egg wins a million Playa bucks. The owner of the egg gets nothing: this is a gifting society and you should never expect anything in return.

Speaking of gifting, I would like to gift the Press Club premises. This funky shack measures 12' x 12' in its fully erect state and is an airy 11 feet high. If you sweet talk me, I will throw in the Karaoke machine,

which together with a sticky carpet from the spilled drinks, are the two essential ingredients of any Press Club of repute, according to Manchester Confidential webzine publisher, Mark Garner.

Editor's note: he's serious about the shack.



The Shack, under construction.

MITCH

LISTINGS

Wednesday

10A.M. Black Rock Beacon meeting.

It's yellow journalism at its finest. We're looking for people to write, edit, produce, and distribute the Beacon. Skilled or unskilled, we have a job for you—and probably a side of bacon too. We're at the 11:30 position in the 9:00 Plaza.

Public Notice

Stopped in Schurz? The Beacon wants to talk to Burners who feel they were unfairly stopped or arrested after the event while driving south on U.S. 95.

Subject to space limitations, the Black Rock Beacon lists Black Rock City events that were not contained in the materials handed out at the Gate. Bring submissions to our world headquarters at 11:30 in the 9:00 Plaza. Those requesting listings must provide a piece of real-world identification that shows a current address; drivers license preferred.



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