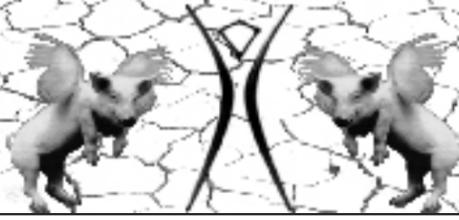




BLACK ROCK BEACON



SPECIATION EDITION SATURDAY WWW.BLACKROCKBEACON.ORG 5:30 EVOLUTION (NEAR CENTER CAMP) VOLUME V, NUMBER V. SEPTEMBER 5, 2009

'Brain Drop' Is Aiming for Your Head

By Mitch

Most of the world's surface and most of you is water. Life on Earth has evolved in and around water, and practically nothing can survive without it. Yet, while it's everywhere, it isn't always drinkable and water crises are breaking out in many places.

Kate Raudenbush would like you to think about that in the parched environs of Black Rock City. The New York-based artist brought "Brain Drop" to the Playa this year, a sculpture-cum-discussion space that is meant to get you thinking about a vital resource. "I build art because I love art," she said, "but I also build art to bring awareness."

"Brain Drop" is a 17-foot-tall, 10-foot-wide metal filigreed sculpture meant to facilitate discussion and to put water on your mind. In the shape of a water drop, it is made out of laser-cut steel, the same material that Raudenbush used for last year's "Altered State," the installation that looked like the U.S. Capitol building from afar but up close resolved into a fanciful birdcage. The steel is a fraction of an inch thick, and Raudenbush uses it as if she were making three-dimensional drawings. "The drawing and the laser cutting," she said, "allow me to make a lyrical surface that lets through light and air and gives a quality of lightness to a several-thousand-pound sculpture."

This year's effort uses water motifs inspired by Japanese textiles and Pacific Rim tattoos to make its point. During the day, it throws a shadow that sends these images out onto the Playa. At night, internal light-emitting diodes cast the waveforms in all directions, making the sculpture a mere drop in an ocean.

Water issues are nothing new, but modern society demands an increasing amount for agriculture and manufacturing, as well as drinking. Raudenbush pointed to a recent newspaper photo of "an entire field of mud, which was basically the remains of the dried-up Euphrates river. This cradle of civilization is now drying up. The symbolism couldn't be more horrifying." Turkey has been damming the Tigris and Euphrates rivers for irrigation and power-generation purposes to the detriment of Iraq and Syria.

Closer to home, Raudenbush is fracking mad about fracking, which is shorthand for hydraulic



Photo by New Orleans Mike

fracturing — a way of enhancing the recovery of oil and gas. New York State has significant deposits of natural gas that could be extracted this way but the "hydraulic" in "hydraulic fracturing" means water is injected into and then recovered from gas wells.

This gas, however, is located in shale formations near the reservoir system, and Raudenbush fears contamination. "We can get energy from another source, we can't get water from another source," she said.

Parachute Plunge

By Mary Jane

Shortly before 2 p.m. Friday, a parachutist came down hard on the Playa.

A witness said he landed on a reserve chute; hit the ground with his feet but appeared to have lost consciousness temporarily. Medical services responded quickly, other witnesses said.

Law-enforcement personnel, confused by the empty chute, searched the vicinity of 9:00 and Adapt for another victim.

Not-for-Profit Still Option for Bmorg

By Mitch

Not so fast on the not-for-profit option. The Burning Man organization is still trying to convert from a limited liability corporation to a not-for-profit, Andie Grace, communications manager for Black Rock City LLC told the Black Rock Beacon on Friday.

Larry Harvey, the Burning Man founder, said at a news conference on Wednesday that Black Rock City LLC, the corporate entity that runs Burning Man, did not have sufficient funds to change itself to not-for-profit status at the time the LLC was formed. Grace, also known as Action Girl, said the current issue was not poverty but the difficulty in crafting a charitable organization whose main function is to stage an annual event.

A charitable foundation requires "a remote board" that oversees its operations but does not draw salaries. As the Bmorg is currently run, the directors of the corporation are generally executives as well, and finding a legal way to split the roles is a thorny issue. The organization, Grace added, is still trying to find a way to do so.

On a separate legal matter, Grace said the organization was considering ways to ease concerns about its copyright policy. Black Rock citizens currently are required to assign copyrights to their photographs from the event to the Bmorg if the pictures are used in improper ways.

There has been criticism of this policy since it disenfranchises photographers who have done nothing wrong. Burners are permitted to show photographs from the event to their acquaintances, which can include posting them on social networks or the Internet. Photos posted on the Internet are susceptible to misappropriation by third parties who could use same for unauthorized commercial purposes or in ways that invade the privacy of Burners pictured. Grace said that the copyright law affords the easiest way for the organization to combat such theft.

One solution considered, a limited or temporary assignment of copyright, solely to combat misappropriation of photograph, is an avenue the organization might pursue, Grace said.

Burners With Solar Flair

By Deb Prothero

Burners with a solar project either for the electrical needs of their camp or for an art project are encouraged to visit the Culture Labs' Black Rock Solar team beside First Camp. Culture Labs, the outreach component of the Burning Man organization is composed of the Regional Network, Burners without Borders (BwB) and Black Rock Solar (BRS) as well as the Black Rock Arts Foundation (BRAAF). Mark the playa map to illustrate the project you brought to share and find out how others are taking the 10 Burning Man principles to the wide, wide world.

Theme camp creation from minimal resources and volunteer labor is one of the miracles of Burning Man. Beginning in 2005, participants responded to Hurricane Katrina. Volunteers, donated equipment, and rudimentary



arrangements allowed burners in Pearlington, Mississippi to accomplish feats no for-profit corporation or government agency could match. Other projects followed in Peru (August 2007 earthquake) and Fernley, Nevada (January 2008 levee break). Now, many civic projects all around the world keep BwB busy. Taking the volunteerism philosophy out to show the world how to get things done has proved the value of the Petri dish. Donations to Burners without Borders can be made through BRAAF.

Green Man, the 2007 theme, inspired donations of solar panels for Center Camp, the Man complex, and several art pieces. Tom Price, then Green Man manager and now Executive Director of Black Rock Solar (BRS), recognized that "being informed by the gift economy and motivated by the anxiety of the climate change crisis" meant

gifting the panels locally would be of powerful assistance to the Gerlach School, recipient over the years of proceeds from ice sales.

Aided by volunteers, staff, students and cash donations of \$12,000 from 250 burners as far away as Finland, the Lovelock school now has 22kW of power for the bus facility and 50kW for the school, saving the job of one teacher's aide or approximately \$300,000 over the 25 year life of the panels at current utility rates.

Price said "with this proven track record of creating real lasting investments," BRS is now ready to seek "real resources in the form of more donations to propel American's largest not-for-profit construction company" into the forefront of solar installations for not-for-profits, school boards, etc. in Nevada, California, Texas and Michigan.

The next solar projects include the Bishop Manogue High School in Reno, the Food Bank of Northern Nevada in Fernley, and continued work with the Pyramid Lake Band at the high school, the museum and a medical clinic in Nixon. The next big idea may already be incubating on the playa!

Howeird's Positively Playa !

Day Five: The Temple is providing a magnificent send-off for our dearly departed again this year. Vaya con Playa, mates. Life is short. So is this column. Peace.

BLACK ROCK BEACON

Black Rock Beacon Mega Event Mega Cache

Cache: MadDash

Location: N 40.46.390 W 119.13.981

Cache: TetherBall Anyone?

Location: N 40.46.180 W 119.13.564



Publication Notice

Is this goodbye? We hope not. A generous benefactor has proposed financing the sixth issue of the Black Rock Beacon this year, following our printing press disaster. If we can swing it (anybody want to drive to Reno?), we'll have a post-Burn issue on Sunday. Otherwise, we'll see you next year, and you'll have to check our website, www.blackrockbeacon.org, for the final chapter of the Evolution. But you were going to check anyway, right?

Never Forget Rock n' Roll

By Adam K.

It is hard to find Rock n' Roll on the Playa. Yes, there are incredible sound systems and tight musicians playing solo or in packs but the traditional concert structure is discouraged because of the spectator environment it creates.

There are, however a few precious gems, some bubbles of anarchistic, guitar-driven fury. They appear sporadically and without warning, but there is an interaction, an exchange, and a cathartic release. Danced out and spaced blinking wanderers abound, but there are some who prefer to stamp their feet and pump their fists. Some are about to rock.

It was my mission to seek out the rock scene on the Playa and give it a voice in print. Outside Center Camp, underneath the white crane at around 1:30 Wednesday morning, the Ferocious Few, a blues-driven alt-country rock outfit from San Francisco, gave the Playa a renegade performance. With just a drummer playing on a two-piece set and a singer on acoustic-electric guitar, they delivered much-needed Rock n' Roll juices.

They've been playing shows together for six years. Their next gig is in San Jose, and it is going to pay for their Burning Man tickets. At Black Rock City, they were scheduled to perform at Center Camp at 2 a.m., but before that they decided to set up their battery-powered amps underneath the crane and just let loose. Francisco Fernandez, the singer-guitarist, railed into the mike in a raspy, distorted, country-tinged drawl. The drummer, Daniel Aguilar, slammed his snare with a tambourine, creating a rich-timbered percussion with just two drums.

As they were playing, two men began to climb the spotlight frame overhead. Francisco and Daniel were not fazed, barely distracted.

The energy around this event was completely different from that at other sound installations. Rock is a rebellion, an admission of negativity, and an overcoming.

"Burning Man needs rock n' roll," Francisco said. The Ferocious Few wants to inspire other bands to bring their art to the Playa, and they speculated that the argument against spectating — as it applies to music — is based on jealousy. 🐾



Photo by New Orleans Mike

Leave Gnome Alone

By Krisalis

"The gnomes are the intelligent designers! And they are pissed with us!" says Peter Youngmeister. "As a result they have been de-evolving us for the last 50 years."

Youngmeister is one of the four members of Team Gnome, friends from San Francisco. After a recent forest encounter with a wise and powerful gnome — who revealed that the ancient race is in fact the invisible power behind the human genome (or gee-gnome) — they have vowed to redeem humanity at Black Rock City.

Their approach? To install on the Playa a shiny, five-foot-high metal likeness of General Gnomious the Great.

During the day, the depiction of the garden-variety gnome, lovingly cast by Team Gnome from aluminum, surrounded by a white picket fence, and "protected by a flamboyance of pink plastic flamingos" (the gnome's "longtime companion") remains mostly lethargic under the hot sun, the artists said, shaking only occasionally if approached too closely by lowly humans.

But when the sun goes down, Gnomious awakens and will express his anger whenever provoked (or, say, exactly three times a night) by violently shaking, expelling steam, and ultimately shooting multicolored, methanol-fueled fire high 50 to 65 feet above the Playa.

Is that anger and steam and fire dangerous, for Burners if not for gnomes? Well, yes, says Youngmeister. "Fire is, of course, dangerous. We are no fools. We truly have taken great care to make the effects in the 'Gee-Gnome Project' as safe as possible."

They have the chops to pull it off. Two of the team members, Rosa Anna DeFilippis and Caroline Miller, are longtime leaders of the Flaming Lotus Girls, a San Francisco-based crew of mostly lady artists who've been working in metal and fire since 2000, creating works for Burning Man and elsewhere that "blaze in sizes from 2 inches to 150-plus feet." The remaining member, sculptor John DeVenezia, has also worked with the Lotus Girls and was responsible for creating the Gnomious's likeness.

The Burners, who have made "many a serious project together," ultimately wanted to make something this year they could "play with more and slave over less," said Youngmeister. In addition to appeasing the gnomes with orange, green, blue, pink, and whitish-purple flames, Team Gnome hopes to bring "child-like joy to people on the Playa."

"We have already found that the mere idea of this piece makes people happy," he says. "People just like gnomes." 🐾

Driver Wanted

Help Anna and Julie see America after the event. They have an RV and two months to travel about, and they need someone with a clean valid driver's license who is smart, witty, fine with evolving plans and who is keen to please to come on their road trip. Interviews held on no particular schedule at Homebrew for a Homebrew Camp located at Evolution and 6:00 in Center Camp. Not an EOE.

Errata

In Wednesday's announcement of the 2010 Metropolis theme a mention of the lack of a dystopian aspect ala 2006's Future theme was misattributed. The Metropolis theme should work great as long as the LLC does something to stem the tide of the growing unicorn problem.

Almanac

By Igneouss



Saturday 9/5

Sunrise: 6:32 am

Sunset: 7:23 pm

Moonrise: 7:38 pm

Moonset: 8:37 am (Sun)

Sunday 9/6

Sunrise: 6:32 am

Sunset: 7:22 pm

Moonrise: 8:03 pm

Moonset: 9:42 am (Mon)

Letter to the Editor: Playa Brain

by Laughing John

Don't tell my Mother, but the Playa has Cell Reception

I just called my wife from my tent.

Horoscope

by Citizen X



Sagittarius (Nov 22–Dec 21)

Slurred speech is like garlic: not necessarily a bother, if both of you have it.

Capricorn (Dec 22–Jan 19)

Watch out! That big metal tippy thing might try to take advantage of you in the worst way.

This is my 12th consecutive year on the Playa, and one quality of my week away from consensus reality that I cherish is the absolute absence of cell phone reception. To be unreachable is to be liberated from problems, crises and responsibilities that others think are important enough to interrupt my week off. In the going-to-the-playa crunch, there are inevitably details in one's work and life that don't get addressed. My attitude has been, "Fuck it. There is nothing I can do about it now." When else do we have such freedom?

A few years ago, playa nerds started setting up wireless routers and it became possible to reach the world via email or, presumably, Skype. Since I live in email hell the rest of the year, I protected my playa experience with the excuse that my laptop was not compatible with playa dust. That worked for awhile.

When the rumor of cell phone signals in Black

Rock City reached by camp, I turned on my iPhone and after a couple of minutes of searching AT&T appeared with four bars. Four fucking bars!

Not really believing it, I called my wife (an eight burn veteran on hiatus) and chatted with her about the weather on the playa, and some future travel plan arrangements, and other details of our lives. With that phone call, an era of playa experience.

Fuck it. Nothing I can do about it now.

Well, actually, there is something. Something that many of us burners are not very good at. It is called setting boundaries. The Burning Man community is evolving from an adolescent period where our boundaries with consensus reality were determined by nature and technology (or lack thereof).

We are entering a more mature state of complete integration with what my friend Douglass calls the "fifth dimension" 🐾



Illustration by Theatremuse

Evolution

By Rick-Boy

"You built from atoms things that look like human beings?" said the astonished prosecutor.

"That's correct. I build everything from carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and other atoms. I couldn't get the brain right in those models. So when your sheriff said they were like dumb turkeys he was right. A newer model I've been working on has a better brain. It's is nearly there, but it has trouble handling stress."

"My God, man, what have you done?" blurted Hobbins.

"I've responded to a need in the marketplace, a need for organ parts. People are willing to pay. It's all legal," said McCready calmly.

"You are a monster," yelled Hobbins. His face turned purple, spit flew from his mouth and hit McCready's cheek causing him to flinch. The finch became a kind of writhing, and McCready's body began to convulse, spasming in choppy uncontrolled movements.

Sheriff Stoner, who had been sitting behind the prosecutor's table jumped to his feet; pointed at the witness stand and yelled, "That's the way those things acted out at the ranch!"

The courtroom exploded in noise and confusion as McCready writhed on the witness stand. He banged his head on the rail in front of him. When he raised his head it was bloody. The room fell silent.

McCready began to speak. He seemed unaware of his injury. "I ... I ... I've done nothing wrong. I am...am pure, as I was created. You are the m-m-monsters with your enhancements and your implants. Not...not...not me."

Sunday: What happens next. 🐾

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SEMI-LEGAL MUMBO JUMBO

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