

Issue #1, 2007 **BMCA Inc**, GPO Box 2429, Darwin NT 0801
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I.W.D. Celebration

A hugely successful collaboration, the 2007 International Women's Day Markets and Celebrations, took place at Brown's Mart Theatre on Saturday, March 10. The afternoon was organised by the 'Women United for Peace Committee' and BMCA's Multicultural Arts Officer, Mary Anne Butler, with assistance from Brown's Mart staff. Approximately 500 people enjoyed a diverse entertainment program and attended various information stalls from service and cultural organisations. These stalls were hosted by many volunteers, creating a lovely community feel.

All who participated in IWD at Brown's Mart had fun – we were sorry we couldn't spend more time in the entertainment room! Congratulations on a great day with a very lovely, warm, womanly vibe. Sue Brownlee, Exec. Director, YWCA Darwin.

Entertainment included cultural dances, singing and percussion. Headliners Leah Flanagan and Shellie Morris wowed the punters while Marion Scrymgour and Barbara McCarthy delivered speeches addressing women's development issues.

This community-friendly event had an extremely positive tone throughout the day, leading to an overwhelming response from people to be involved in 2008 International Women's Day Markets and Celebrations.

[We] did want to congratulate you guys on hosting a great day. The stalls seemed to work well, and

from what I was able to see inside was very good and very earthy. The overall diversity of the stalls and content made it a rich celebration for International Women's Day... thanks for having us, we had a great time.

James Cox, Fair Go – Fair Trade, Make Poverty History

In This Issue

- I.W.D. Celebration 1
- Fist Full Launch 2
- Re-Invention 2
- A.G.M. & Board 3
- Fringe Preview 4
- BM Calendar 4
- Membership Update 5
- Who's Who at BMCA 5
- Nomination form 6

One of many entertainment highlights was Manunda Terrace Primary School students performing alongside drummer Anne Harkin, who had been working with these students for four weeks prior to the gig conducting sessions in African drumming. This was a very dynamic process and performance, with the kids – guided by Anne – turning in an amazing performance.



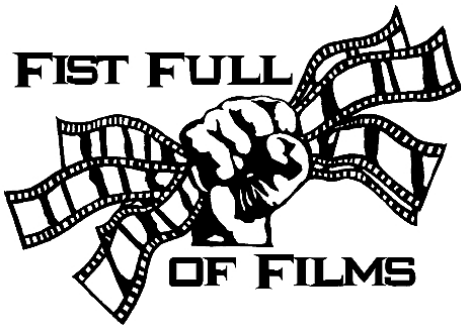
Shellie Morris and the African singers power up

Another emotionally-charged act was the performance by singer Shellie Morris and several African women. BMCA developed a strong working relationship with the Melaleuca Refugee Centre and engaged Shellie to facilitate two women-focussed songwriting workshops at Melaleuca. Shellie recorded the outcomes of the workshops and the songs were performed live at IWD Celebration.

Overall the IWD Celebration was a fantastic, free community event which offered top class entertainment, fun children's activities including face painting, basket weaving and balloon games. Sincere thanks go to the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Darwin City Council for extra funding to stage workshops, to the Women United for Peace Committee for organisational prowess, and to Brown's Mart staff for their assistance.

...it was a wonderful day – our members who attended thought that it was very worthwhile... Mary Pocock, President, Zonta Club of Darwin

Importantly, from our perspective I want to highlight the impact the music workshops with Shellie Morris and the African women have had in relation to building relationships between Indigenous and African people. In addition, the workshops have had a tremendous effect in building confidence and self-esteem. Melaleuca Refugee Centre



2007

FFF07 kicks off on April 13, with the launch of the short film competition's FFOFFO (Fist Full of Films Featured Object), formerly known as the keyword. All the usual media organs will provide details of this year's competition (God, I mean Rupert Murdoch, willing), having attended a massive media launch at the Deckchair Cinema the day before.

This year's producer, Sean Kavanagh, has some experience to draw on in his endeavour to raise the Fist to new heights – he ran the project from 2002 to 2004, presiding over some truly glorious years. This year he'll reinvent and rejuvenate the dormant workshop program as the Screen Skills Series (too bad if you've got a lisp), which opens on 14 April and continues with a session every fortnight until mid June. Topics covered include Intro to Short Film-making, Music Videos, Soundtracking Your Short Film, Doing a Doco and more to be confirmed.

Other exciting developments include FFF screenings in the Darwin Festival for the first time, new categories for films shot on mobile phones ('Fone Flix') and interstate entrants ('Out There'). FFF07 will also boast an improved and expanded web presence, with a completely overhauled website and YouTube and MySpace accounts. Cool, huh?

So, dear members, why not wipe the mould off your handycam and make a film yourself this year? Deadline for entries is still over three months away and there are plenty of opportunities to brush up your skills in the meantime. (see www.fistfulloffilms.com.au for details on all of the above)

during his address to the launch:

We will be working closely with the Trustees of Brown's Mart to enhance the venue so it becomes the best small venue for multi-arts activities in Darwin. We will continue to promote Brown's Mart as the centrepiece of an arts and

heritage precinct in the City that will be one of the highlights of the Darwin of the future.

We will continue working with communities we've worked with before; but we will also be working more and more locally with communities in Darwin's suburbs and neighbourhoods, fostering arts and cultural practice at the frontline, at the coalface, at the grassroots, wherever communities are.



The Hon Marion Scrymgour, Minister for the Arts, addresses the Re-Invention launch at BMCA

Re-Invention

The 2007 Program of Brown's Mart Community Arts (BMCA) was officially launched by the Hon Marion Scrymgour MLA, Minister for the Arts, on 23 February, at Brown's Mart Theatre. The launch celebrated BMCA's significant contributions to arts development in Darwin over three decades, including the incubation of arts organisations such as Corrugated Iron Youth Arts and Tracks.

The launch also sought to present BMCA's bold plans for reinventing itself through new directions and corresponding new priorities and ways of working. This year's focus will be on rebuilding BMCA through the utilisation of its traditional strengths as well as new directions. Bong Ramilo, BMCA Executive Officer, mentioned these directions and priorities

We will promoting creative uses of popular and contemporary technologies along with tried and true ways of working. So we'll be creatively blogging, podcasting, you-tubing, and more.

And we will be asking everyone in Darwin to join us as members, to help direct Brown's Mart into the future, and to help make Darwin a place where art is everywhere and where art never stops.



Capoeira beat at the launch

Board Membership

A new Board of Management will be elected at BMCA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 27th April. All members who are current (or financial) 21 days before the AGM are eligible for election to the Board. The Board governs BMCA mainly through the setting of policies and through the performance of its other obligations under the Northern Territory's Associations Act.

Although the BMCA Board is a hands-off Board (i.e. Staff execute its decisions, and Board members are expected to concentrate on policy formulation), expert advice and guidance in specialist areas from Board members are appreciated. Thus, members who have knowhow in community arts and development, and in other areas of specialisation (e.g. finance, law, business, trades, the environment) are encouraged to nominate. Please use the nomination form at the back of this newsletter or ask for one from the BMCA office.

Grassroots Arts Development

BMCA will foster grassroots arts development vigorously; this lies at the core of BMCA's reinvention. BMCA's Business Plan 2006-2008 (available from web site) states that "stakeholders who felt clear about BMCA's role, including staff, Board and Trustees, define it as being about 'grass roots' arts development."

The notion and practice of grassroots arts development, however, continues to be debated within BMCA. This debate will be ongoing, in the same way that the debates on notions of "community," "community arts," and "community cultural development" continue.

BMCA welcomes contributions to the debate, particularly suggestions on how grassroots arts development can be realised in the Darwin region.

Brown's Mart Venue Management

Venue bookings are strong for most of the Dry season and currently only a few periods of several days each remain available between April and August. Frequent enquiries for the venue for functions and other commercial events are occurring as well as local regular community and arts groups booking their seasons for the year.

Software applications are currently being trialled to streamline the venue booking and management systems.

Reuben Hopkins, Neil McKnight and James Dunlevie have joined the team as Technicians on a casual basis and volunteers have been assisting front-of-house operations. Volunteers and more casual staff interested in these areas are welcome to apply to assist.

Much maintenance has been performed on the building with new air-conditioning being installed in the Administration offices, the security system upgraded and some sound equipment replaced. The courtyard room was recently cleaned up and space has been freed up with the intention of making this a usable space for arts activity.

Brown's Mart to host Certificate course in Live Production, Theatre and Events

BMCA in conjunction with Darwin Entertainment Centre and the Cultural, Recreation and Tourism Training Advisory Council will host an accredited training course in theatre technical production including lighting, audio and staging. Details of the course's commencement date and a call for expressions of interest will be announced very soon.



Tunas Mekar Balinese dance group grace the floor at the IWD Celebration event



27 JUNE - 15 JULY 2007

The 2007 Darwin Fringe

is a curated festival, with gradual changes being introduced in line with Brown's Mart Community Arts' policies and the current funding climate. The presentations are selected according to a number of criteria and conditions. These include: quality, freshness of concept/originality, whether the act is in line with the "grass roots" creative cultural development principles promoted by Browns Mart Community Arts, as well as economic and logistical considerations.

Fun of course has not been banished, and the Fringe will swing into action with a "Street Party" in Smith St outside Brown's Mart Theatre on June 28th followed by a major concert event the following evening in Civic Park.

The multicultural program continues with 'Diversity' on the final day of the Fringe and continues to focus on a number of African based events such as the Arts and Soccer fair at Malak Oval, a celebration of Sudanese Hair Styles and further exposures of the brand new singing group with Shellie Morris and a number of African girls currently featured on the BMCA web-site.

Multijam, a somewhat post-modern concert event with a possible 'prologue' installation in the courtyard of Brown's Mart, introduces the type of developmental event that is to become the hallmark of initiatives to be undertaken by BMCA in this area.

Many musical events in smaller venues are to remain so as to continue to encourage our many singer/songwriters. The sessions to be spear-headed by a sunset harbour cruise with some of Darwin's best chanteuses and a MC comic on July 8th.

The Indigenous program is also being maintained and grown this year in collaboration with NAIDOC week. Revisiting last year's successful Darran Darra exhibition by Darwin's Indigenous artists, it opens on 8th July, this time in a larger exhibition space. The popular Fig Jam concert featuring bands ranging from the legendary "Sunrize" band to "Pott Street" will take place on Friday July 13th in Civic Park, with the Larrakia Women's Conference being held in Brown's Mart the previous afternoon.

Feature shows tailored for children include "Ka Ka" for 1-6 year olds which will tour suburban libraries, as well as workshops and a show of West African shadow puppetry to be presented as matinee theatre in Brown's Mart. An adult theatre offering of a brace of short new works presented by Damien Pree, Sean Kavanagh and Emil will also play at Brown's Mart.

The visual Arts program is being expanded. Starting with a revamped collaboration with Gallery Sometime in the shop windows of the CBD, we will also feature installations by some of Darwin's leading artists, a members' show at DVAA and a New Media projections initiative curated by Zeb Olsen.

Programming of the Fringe is not complete at this time and you are still invited to submit **expressions of interest to participate** in the 2007 festival. Entries will be considered up to the end of the first week of May! **Registration forms** are available on www.darwinfringe.com.au

Volunteers can also find a registration form on the site.

*As an early notification for 2008, the Darwin Fringe will look favourably on **project initiatives** that are developed in **collaboration** with Brown's Mart Community Arts. You are welcome to come and **discuss your ideas** and can contact us through email: cam@brownsmart.com.au*

BM Theatre Calendar

Fri 30 March, 8:30pm

Hip Hop vs Hard Rock

- Tickets \$5 at the door, interval at 9.30pm, finishes 10.30pm. Bar open but not serving alcohol. Organised by Potter's House Christian Centre.

Sat 14 April, 2-5:00pm

Fist Full of Films - Panel of Galahs

- Tips on competing in FFOF. Free, no booking necessary.

Mon 16 - Thu 19 April, 7:30pm

A Real Absurd Epic by Missing Link Theatre Company.

- A theatrical journey through major 20th century modernist traditions. Tickets \$15/\$12 at the door.

Sat 21 April, 2-8:00pm

The Landing (a Youth Week event)

- Workshops in film-making, badge making, 'zine production and hands-on science followed by concert with The Weathermen and Test Theory. Free, no booking necessary.

25 April - 6 May, 7.30pm exc Sun 5pm

'Not Like Beckett' by Darwin Theatre Company

- A solo play in 1 act by Michael Watts about a philosophical rabbit. Tickets \$26.5/\$21.5/\$19.5 groups 8+. Bookings through DEC, 89803333.

5.30pm Fri 27 April

BMCA Anual General Meeting

- All members welcome

Membership

Thank you to all our new members, and of course our renewing members who have supported Brown's Mart for a number of years. Although our discount membership offer comes to a close at the end of March, standard memberships are available throughout the year. We still firmly believe that membership of BMCA is good value for \$30. Brown's Mart needs a broad and energetic membership base to keep the organisation in shape for the challenges of the present and the opportunities of the future. If you are a current or prospective member, your input is most welcome.

The range of discounts and offers available to Brown's Mart members has been revised. Old agreements have been renewed revised or simply cut. The following discounts are available to Brown's Mart Community Arts members upon presentation of a current membership card:

Reciprocal – BMCA members are considered to have access to member discounts

- NT Writers' Centre

Discounts – tickets, workshops, other events

- CMAX cinemas Palmerston
- DTC - workshops (where concessions are available)
 - members priced tickets to DTC shows for BMCA member and one guest
- Rocktown – up to 20% discount, not on sale items or software and computer-related goods
- Jackson's Art Supplies – 10% discount, not on sale or nett priced items
- Darwin Entertainment Centre – concession-priced tickets where available

Membership at concession rates

- Deckchair Cinema / Darwin Film Society
- 24hr Art
- Darwin Visual Arts Association
- Music NT

Brown's Mart gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the following sponsors who provide valuable in-kind support. A big thank you to Harvey Distributors and Lloyd English.

Don't forget the

Annual General Meeting

of

Brown's Mart Community Arts Inc.

at Brown's Mart Theatre

5:30 pm on 27 April 2007.

ALL FINANCIAL MEMBERS ARE INVITED

Who's Who At BMCA

Bong Ramilo is BMCA's Executive Officer. He has worked for more than 20 years in community arts mainly as theatre worker, musician, writer and organiser. He came to Darwin in 1992 to collaborate on a play about the Cubillo family, and stayed on. An Australia Council Fellow in 2000-2002 in new technologies and community cultural development, he then worked in computer-related fields from 2002 until becoming EO in December 2006.

Andrish Saint Clare has practised professional arts as actor, musician and dramaturge in Australia and as far afield as Morocco and South America. In recent years he collaborated with Indigenous communities in the Top End, resulting in noted stage productions at major festivals. Andrish has also been a producer, writer and administrator in various arts bodies and received an Australia Council fellowship in 2004. He held an Asialink residency guiding contemporary re-interpretation of traditional forms of Balinese performance and puppetry. Andrish is Community Arts Manager and Fringe Festival producer at BMCA.

John Carson is BM Venue Manager. He has a background of production, technical and management roles in a number of arts venues in Australia and New Zealand such as NZ's national museum and gallery Te Papa Tongarewa, Sydney Opera House and in Darwin, the Museum and Art Gallery of NT. He has done some lighting and stage design and is experienced as a body paint and temporary tattoo artist.

Mary Anne Butler is the Multicultural Arts Officer at Browns Mart. She can assist with grant advice and advocacy related to Multicultural Arts projects, and can also assist to a degree with project management. Her creative background lies in creative writing, theatre and film.

Sean Kavanagh is Fist Full of Films Producer/Project Officer again this year, having previously held the position 2002-2004. He writes and makes short films, regularly appears as an actor in plays with Darwin Theatre Company and Knock 'Em Down Theatre Company and has worked as a tutor, writer and director with Corrugated Iron Youth Arts. He also manages to find time to work in the film and television industry and parent two beautiful children, in collaboration with his lovely wife Catherine. He is thrilled to be back for the reinvention of BMCA.

Emslie Sawyer has been the Admin Officer since May 2006. She has also worked on the 2006 Fringe as the Volunteer Coordinator. Emslie is in her final year of a Bachelor of Education Secondary. She believes in Harry Potter, complimentary drinks, weekends and top of the range stationery.