

CALL MY BLUFF 'ART OF THE WILD'

2006, toured 2007



Project Description

Artists from the Meander Valley collaborated to celebrate connection to the land, identity and belonging, by focusing on the region's iconic Quamby Bluff.

Host Organisation

Arts Deloraine in partnership with Tasmanian Regional Arts

Funding sources

Tasmanian Community Fund
Meander Valley Council
Tasmanian Regional Arts

Outcomes

Performance/exhibition June 22 – July 1 2006. Visual Arts exhibited at the White House Museum, Westbury. Regional tour of selected artworks. DVD and catalogue Partnerships developed. Improved understanding of Indigenous history & communal celebration of 'place'.

Highlights

So many!

Project workers

Kim Clark (Artistic Director)

Keywords

Multi Artform, Meander Valley, General Population

Project Contact

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In the Meander Valley, locals refer to Quamby Bluff with affection ... 'Quamby has snow on his shoulders today' or 'Quamby's looking moody today'. Initially, 20 artists got together to discuss the idea of a project focussing on the mountain ... the next day saw them climb Quamby for inspiration. By the time funding was secured and timelines established, the number of artists was 35, with the project growing as big as the mountain itself.

The aim of the project was to bring together professional artists, non-professional artists and the community, to explore and celebrate their relationship to the land – past, present and future – with Quamby ever present.

Artworks included paintings, sculptures in wood, paper, glass and metal, photography, films. Performances varied from songs, dance, music pieces, comedy and poetry, with many instances of cross collaboration. 38 local actors, dancers, musicians and stage crew formed a production company to present the performing artworks. Artists and performers alike professed to making an extra effort, knowing their peers were part of the audience.

Around 600 people attended the exhibition/performances, at the Little Theatre in Deloraine. Call My Bluff was awarded the Meander Valley Council's Community Event of the Year, with excerpts performed as part of Australia Day celebrations. An important aim of this project was

to explore the indigenous history of the area. Two indigenous painters gave their perspective. The involvement of custodian Hank Horton and elder Uncle Vivian Beaton in a Welcome to Country ceremony, was an opportunity to respectfully recognise their ancient connection to the land. Indeed they said they really appreciated the way their mountain and their people were portrayed and investigated, it had been done respectfully and sensitively.

"Why I think it hit the mark was because it enabled people to be unified on at least one thing, and appreciate the value of beauty ... the mountain is beautiful"

(Kim Clark)

Kim believes the treatment of aborigines by white settlers is something the community has yet to fully come to terms with -

"the idea that a war was fought on the soil within sight of Quamby Bluff, we all think that we've never had a war in Tasmania, but we have".

"Folklore has it that the word 'quamby' is aboriginal for 'mercy', and that aborigines would call out for mercy in this way; this was after a tribal chief, named Quamby, had been killed by settlers.

However, Call My Bluff has seen strong connections made with the Aboriginal community in the area and it is hoped that healing can continue with a similar project, focusing on the River."

Image:

Detail of 'Call My Bluff' Exhibition catalogue cover
Quamby Bluff Logo ~ the late Phil McDoughal

