

Friday, September 28, 2012

Global issues inspire art

AJN STAFF

ARTIST Yvonne Levenston likes to tackle global environmental issues through her art.

The fragility of global ecosystems, consumerism and the human footprint are tackled in her artwork, which ranges from acrylic and mixed media paintings to linocut prints and lithographs.

More than 30 of her artworks are on display in the *We Used to be People* exhibition at the Sydney Children's Hospital in Randwick until November 30.

"Drawing is an essential part of my art through my practice of print-making, painting and sculpture. I enjoy pushing the boundaries of traditional techniques to achieve a unique and individual narrative," explains Levenston.

The exhibition is organised by the National Art School and a percentage of sales goes towards the Children's Hospital Foundation.

The *We Used to be People* exhibition is at the FONAS Art Space, Sydney Children's Hospital, Level 0, High Street entrance, Randwick until November 30.



Yvonne Levenston with some of her artwork in the *We Used to be People* exhibition.

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and unaware. We live in this incalculable city and country in this most wonderful time for us while around the world is famine, poverty, warfare, unemployment and devastation. We respond to these plagues of tzedakah as we are obligated to respond to these plagues. We can also acknowledge all of our sins. Our great prophet Amos, thousands of years ago, mentioned us: "Yeshurun was as fat", meaning that as the material prosperity and affluence increased, they became selfish and greedy. He suggested another way of thinking: "If you are satisfied with your lot, you are satisfied with your fate." By reciting the words of gratitude, we become grateful for our bounty with which we have created our world."



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Chasky Gawenda (right) with Husky.

Husky nominated for leading music award

POPULAR group Husky, led by singer Chasky Gawenda, has been nominated in the Breakthrough Independent Artist of the Year category in the Jagermeister Independent Music Awards to be announced on October 16 at Revolt in Kensington, Melbourne.

Now in its seventh year, the Independent Music Awards will be presented by the Australian Independent Record Labels Association to celebrate the best and brightest in Australian independent music.

Last month Husky and other rising stars of the Australian music industry

performed at Summerstage, a mini-festival in New York's Central Park, to promote Australian musical talent in the competitive US market.

Hair salon secrets are out in the open

FOR years, Bondi hairdresser Sasha Plyuschaev heard plenty of stories from her clients as she went about her work.

From personal dramas to romance, clients were eager to share their problems and stories with Plyuschaev while visiting Sasha's Hair in Bondi Road, Bondi.

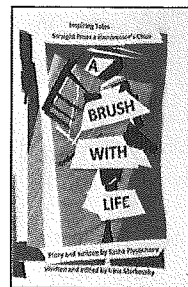
Plyuschaev realised that there was a wealth of material for a book and teamed up with Irina Markovsky - a longstanding client at the salon - to pen *A Brush with Life*.

Plyuschaev says that names have

been changed to protect her clients.

Plyuschaev was born in Ukraine and became a hairdresser after leaving school. She migrated to Australia with her family in 1994 and settled in Sydney, later opening her own hair salon, Sasha's Hair.

A Brush with Life can be ordered at www.brushwithlife.net or from online booksellers.



Group art exhibition

AN exhibition of paintings, drawings and sculptures by eight emerging artists opened this week at the Global Gallery, Paddington.

The exhibition, *Fingerprints*, features the work of Alethea Deane, Dianne Gerlach, Debra Huggins, Graham Wackett, Aileen Westbrook, Antonia Mrljak, Jan Garben and Adrienne Hunt.

Many of the artworks focus on the legacy of people and nature.

The *Fingerprints* exhibition is at Global Gallery, 5 Comber Street, Paddington until October 7. Enquiries: www.globalgallery.com.au.

Switched on

MICHAEL BENJAMIN



Welcome to Jew York

I TOOK my first trip to New York last month. I found it to be a sprawling city, filled with the smell of hot dogs and horse droppings, where traffic lights are ignored and your beliefs are accepted without question. However, your clothes are judged with a sharp look of disapproval if they are a season old.

You can start your day viewing world-famous art, spend the afternoon shopping at never-ending department stores and end your evening watching an actor perform as a deformed phantom on stage.

I managed to tick off all the trademark New York sites - Empire State Building, Statue of Liberty, David Letterman taping, Central Park and the Met.

Of course, being in New York, where you have the world's second-largest Jewish population, you can't help but stumble upon a Jewish experience on a daily basis.

My first Jew York moment was quite far removed from anything that I learnt from 13 years at a Jewish day school.

In the middle of Times Square I witnessed seven very large African-American men from a supposed Israelite school wearing leather ceremonial garb adorned with giant Stars of David.

They were preaching about the 12 tribes of Israel, which they loudly screamed consisted of Africans, Haitians and West Indians, among others.

After a few minutes of hearing them preach I started to tune out and they faded in with the rest of the Times Square breathing attractions, such as the guy taking photos as Batman or the woman dressed as the Statue of Liberty.

I later learnt that they have been criticised as being a "Black Supremacy group", who have had their videos continuously pulled off YouTube.

A few days later, I saw the word "Jew" on the jumpers of a group of people. Being in the warm subway

waiting for a delayed train, I decided to burn some time by approaching them to see what they were about.

As I got closer I could see their jumpers properly, and the slogan read: "Can you be Jewish and still believe in Jesus?" I turned around and walked away, but it took all my willpower to resist the urge to go up to them and answer, "No."

At the old immigration processing centre on Ellis Island, I saw the persecution that various minorities endured.

When I saw a photo of an eatery that had a sign that read "No Japs allowed", I had to read the accompanying blurb to realise that they weren't talking about Jewish American Princesses.

With the urge to eat some Jewish food, I headed to the landmark Carnegie Deli for a chicken and matzah ball soup.

The next day I witnessed a group of young religious Jews on a holiday program at the Natural History Museum trying to read and learn about the scientific origins of the Earth and the Big Bang, before being rushed through the section by their minders.

With the urge to eat some Jewish food, I headed to the landmark Carnegie Deli for a chicken and matzah ball soup. America's obsession with over-excessiveness in food consumption met with classic Jewish-styled delicatessen food and produced a family-sized bowl of soup with matzah balls the size of tennis balls.

It's believed that one in four New Yorkers is Jewish, though it seems from my experiences there that everyone has a vastly different belief what that actually means!