

Soul Works – “The Life of Bryan”

August 2006



The King of Fools

I have often said that I need to maintain a degree of naivety so that I dare to dream the impossible. As strange as it may sound, God seems to like using the weird, wacky and unexpected. Sounds like it fits my kind

of job description! “God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things and the things that are not – to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before Him.”

1 Corinthians 1:27–29

Brave Heart

After sleeping on the streets for two and a half months last year in order to experience the life of a homeless man as well as other driven things, my friend and Elim co-worker Sano, started calling me Brave Heart and sometimes even Brave Haab, depending on the day or mood in the air. He always said it with a big smile that slowly changed into a sober face, as he would then take a strong-grip brotherhood grasp of my shoulder in order to encourage me in my day as I tried to go beyond myself and the securities of this

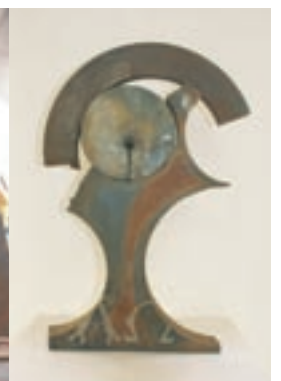
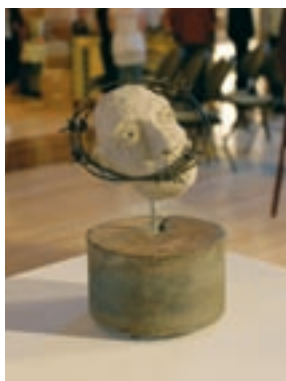
place called familiar. William Wallace was a fighter for freedom, and truly, I feel as though I am in a similar fight. My most furious enemy seems to be myself and the often not so subtle war over the hope of my soul along side the distractions of many good things standing in the way of the best. Every man must die... But not every man really lives.

There is Life

During my projects in Canada this spring, I ran into my Uncle Marty on the home farm a few times and for some reason I noticed his belt buckle which he has consistently worn for at least the last 25 years or so. It has this retro looking design on it, and so curiosity got the better of me as I asked what it meant. Picking it up during his traveling of Israel as a young man, the buckle’s design is a Hebrew text meaning: “There is Life”. Hmmm ... that is cool! ... I’ve got to remember



that I thought ... and so, not having the camera handy, I asked him if I could do a pencil rubbing of the textured surface. Laying his belt out on the table he smiled as I scribbled back and forth across the scrap paper laying clumsily on the surface of his very well worn buckle, polished by his days of working hard. Now that I look back at that moment, it strikes me to realize how we all are searching for real life and life in a fullness ... even your elders, role models, and heroes. Isn’t it tragically awesome, how much potential is contained within our free will to choose life or to choose that which is restricted, decaying and or temporary?



Freedom House

It is interesting to write here as this theme of freedom comes up time and again. My mom had a dream years ago that there would one day be a purple house on our property which was set up to help restore broken lives and this is now finally becoming a reality. Last fall, the Scars Freedom House opened its doors for the first time as a drug rehabilitation center for men and is enjoying incredible fruit of peace. This is truly a pleasure to experience as new hope is sparked in the eyes of those guys. The cows have been sold and now one of the farm's goals is to raise up men! Isn't that awesome?



Soul Works Foundation exists partially thanks to this initiative. My first public interactive artistic experience happened out of the invitation to develop a public awareness campaign and fundraising concept for SCARS (Shelter with Counseling, Alcohol and Rehabilitation Services). After that very colorful experience, I began to understand just how effective art can be as a medium for social justice and knew that I didn't want to keep this for myself. We as creative people are meant to work as an inspired community ready to effectively and

relevantly invest our talents in this global village. Here is an example of the SCARS Sculpture. Trust me, if I got started on this story it would take up a whole book... so I will spare you that for now!



Guest Artist Canada

For the months of May and June I worked on two different projects, which in the end came together as a Gala fundraiser for charities of my hometown Fort St. John (about 16 hours north of Vancouver... not quite as far as the igloos!). After enjoying an intense creative experience in our gallery last year, my friend and colleague, James Bishop, decided to initiate a similar project with Epic Ministries in Calgary.

In order to try a test phase he invited me as a guest artist to help ground a similar Studio Gallery Aspire custom cut to their needs. We worked out of an old church building that has been converted into a multi-purpose space sponsored by Boardwalk (one of the real-estate giants in Calgary). Having the goal of offering creative and socially sensitive workshops within the framework of this inner-city project, we set up an open studio and invited the public to participate. During the week, other teams of volunteers invested their time and money to help feed underprivileged people and offer programs for single moms and their children. Given free hand to use the space as we saw fit, management actually hoped we would redecorate a bit, because the former interior design concept consisted of enough plastic flowers, plants, and trees to reforest your local K-mart, not to mention 3 dried up 'ready made' fountains which made the whole package eligible for the kitschy book of world records!





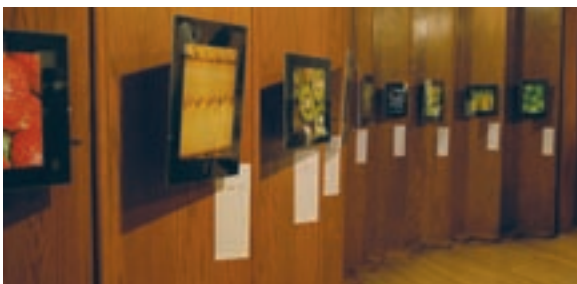
The Fruits of the Spirit

Choosing a theme for my time in Canada, I really was hoping for a creative process that had its inspiration built on a trust worthy source. Knowing that creativity comes from our creator, I wanted to refer to this reality of needing God’s Spirit visible in our work. When we are tapped into this source, there will be fruit. “The Fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23). To illustrate this need for fruit, I imagined a very organic plan of creating environments where explorations using our various senses could take place. For this to happen I was glad to not be a loner and was able to work along side many artists and their own specific ideas to compliment our process.

classes for the weekends with instructors in everything from painting, sculpture, dance, songwriting, and photography. Another goal that Jim and I had for that month was to bring together a collection of the resulting work for an Artist Benefit Gala and fundraiser which would, in turn, send a mission team of artists up to Fort St. John to perform a second Gala event and fundraiser there.

Standing on end

To understand the dynamics of this situation you will have to understand that the space was like I said, an old church building, which included all the pews, altar, crucifix and such ... It was a bit of a strange feeling as I considered how to use the space most effectively for such an event. First off, even when they were all pushed together, the pews filled nearly 40 % of the space. There was talk of throwing them out and getting foldable chairs but then a funny, twisted, idea all of a sudden came to me. Let’s make pew trees and stand them on end! Hmmm, sounds almost sacrilegious. Well, there weren’t too many other options open to us so we gave it a try and I couldn’t help but smile, as the space took on an unexpected warm and inviting character of its own. With all the pews on end and lined up side by side, we created these long corrugated curving walls, which asymmetrically flowed through the space of tall wooden archways. Everyone who walked into the room for the first time was forced to stop and catch their breath, question if what they were seeing was real as they stood in the middle of a our forest of vertical pews. The walls also doubled as practical showing sur-



Galas

This theme of fruit was woven into most of the workshops as we operated an open studio time during the week and registered



faces to hang a ton of the two-dimensional work that had been created. I can truly say that this was, without a doubt, a one of a kind gallery layout!

Multimedia

Looking back, the two months seem to blur together as one. It was like being in more than one place at the same time. Planning for the content of the Calgary Artist Gala, we were hoping for a wide range of media to illustrate our theme. And a wide range is what we got! Food-art hors-d'œuvres, a bar set up with specialty mixed virgin cocktails, 3 concert cuts from various Bands and vocal artists, poetry reading, a dance performance with penetrating wind and challenging lifts, video animation with live fire breathing and a visual arts exhibition and auction which included over 70 pieces of painting, photography and sculpture.



Not enough Words

To describe what type of potential was released in the lives of the people I worked with in Canada is frustrating on one side because it just doesn't fit

it on these pages. Once again I am well over the limit of what I should be packing into this four-page newsletter! For the first week or so in Calgary I used my time to work on the advertising campaign for the following Gala in Fort St. John. Given the name "Carefest" I designed this heart as a logo to show this idea of caring for the community with a vibrant and open heart full of love for the broken. To get the news out, Jim suggested that we make a billboard series to provoke the curiosity of the community into considering the source of these extraordinary fruit in the weeks before Carefest. So off to

work we went, cutting out a massive template to send up as a package with detailed instructions to FSJ where the guys from the Freedom House then painted eight massive billboards. After they had fulfilled their advertising purpose, we collected them all to put together as a colorful stage design for the big performance Gala.

Eat the Word

Another idea that has been in the back of my mind for a few years now was the idea of making edible Word. All too often words go in one ear and out the other, so I considered how we could internalize this more consciously. Andrea was a most helpful assistant with this project and it simply wouldn't have been possible had she not done all the sourcing and collecting of the materials we needed (thanks for that J). We ordered a special canon printer that would accept the edible ink cartridges and edible paper and then we were in business. For the multimedia photography workshop I did portrait work with a video beamer projecting onto the models faces. Taking a wide range of fruit we got one after the next to pose with the fruit as we captured their mouths eating apples, pears and strawberries as I projected words of the fruit of the spirit right onto their faces. These images were then formatted to print on the edible paper, which we then mount directly on the dried fruit strips. After the series of prototypes were complete, Mecky, who came over to Canada in order to be a part of Carefest, headed up a FSJ team of volunteers to produce around 2000 individual edible Fruits of the Spirit strips! Enough to feed a small army!

Remember the wind

Wind has always been an intriguing phenomenon that I like to incorporate into my work to symbolize the source of power in this invisible walk of faith. In order to provide a unique and lasting memory attached to the theme of Carefest, I pushed for one more little refreshing element. Wind that you can feel and take home with you could make things a little more fun to remember, I thought, and so I got my mom to order a few hundred of these mini hand held propellers and make up Fruits of the Spirit stickers to mount on the



blades. So, if you were say, a little low on peace or patience all you would have to do is turn on this little handy dandy fan and let the wind blow. So simple. Too bad the solutions are not all contained with in the imagery of these pro-pellers themselves. They simply attempt to provoke and convict the viewer of the need to dig deeper into, and through, the associations. That, of course is totally dependant on how far each person wants to go. I especially like to see mixes of generations, cultures and classes being able to connect with my work, such as when a child and a great grandpa can both smile and ponder an artistic expression that embraces and reflects something unique and personally relevant to them both. Bono from U2 once said, "being successful is not nearly as hard as being relevant." I agree.

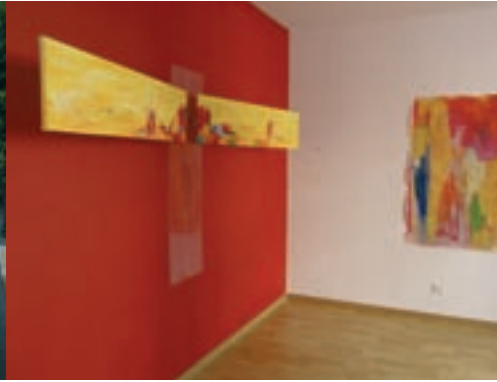
Unity

Over 1,100 people came out for Carefest this year and many were surprised and even shocked at the intensity of all that had been invested. The SCARS board had the goal of bringing the community and churches together... and this turned out to be no simple task. With the divisions evident among the various churches we tried our best to accommodate people where they were at, while still providing a provocative platform to pursue



this simple lifestyle that wants to bear more Fruits of the Spirit. After nearly choking on politics, I am happy to say that we didn't give up and instead of letting frustrations get us down, we maintained course. Having done our best really paid off. As the ice broke, we were stormed by handfuls of people from all over the community who said they would like to be on board for next year and genuinely also wanted to nurture these seeds planted. Patience, patience, patience. Jim and the crew from Calgary are also excited about the potential for next year and we specifically hope to see more local artists coming on board. With a little mentoring, I hope that they will be able to catch the vision here and take on 2007 with new color and excitement.





Seeds of History planted

After returning from Canada, I was welcomed back to reality, so to speak. Having invested in many projects during the last year, our finances, which are dependant on charitable donations, just didn't cover the size of our initiatives. So now this has required me to go back to the construction sites where I am working hard in order to re-stabilize our account situation and plan our next steps as a little foundation with big dreams. The process of the last year has been exciting and, in my opinion, even priceless in its capacity to invest, as seeds for history have been planted. More than once however, I have had to be honest with an uncertainty of how far I am supposed to go with this all. Those times are short though, and now I am even more convinced that we are called to give our best and accept our lot in life. I feel honored and content to pay the price. Despite wanting to look back and question, I choose to "forget what is behind and strain toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus"(Philippians 3:14). And it is for this reason that I continue my pursuit of relevance in my work without becoming dependant on the fleeting success of a momentary reward.

Renate Gross

Life in Aspire was also very active during my months away. Renate Gross and her big show of body prints back in May this has left its mark on more than one level. Her warm approach and massive, full body prints spread by word of mouth rather quickly and her work is now being asked for in further Swiss locations. It is exciting to see our artists excel and receive blessings through their experience here in Aspire... some of it is just good, old-fashioned hard work, but increasingly we are enjoying an ever-expanding circle of other people who want to see the arts redeemed and alive. This has led them to invite and invest in the work of our artists, which, in turn, can enrich the culture of their communities.

Cornelia Patschorke

During the months of June and July we had the pleasure of having another artist out of Germany as our guest in Aspire. Cornelia chose the theme "Begegnung" (translated "meeting point") and invited our studio guests to create points where a variety of colors could meet on the canvas as well as in their own personal process. She especially got along well with the Calios Community House (WG) of women run by Elim. Special thanks to you girls for making her feel so welcome. During her two months here, she really found a home away from home and now back in Munich she fights with the thought of wanting to move to Basel. She will still be here in a way though as Soul Works is in the process of creating a book to document her experience in Aspire. Hopefully I can follow through on my promise for some original poetry to compliment her work... :-)



Soul Works Gala BBQ

As a thank-you to our helpers for the Gala in February we finally got the chance to get together for a barbeque, water fight, dizzy race, and off road (nearly impossible) croquet game in the middle of July. There was no shortage of fun, action or food for all who made it out. For anyone who couldn't make it or somehow fell through the cracks of our invitation list, I want to apologize and let you know that your investment was much appreciated. Hopefully we will have the pleasure of working with you all next year again. :-)

Angels and Monsters

The most recent project in Aspire is that of Daniela Stojic. As a constructing and per-

forming artist who also desires a similar richness, maturity and release from the chains in their process and life as artists. Early in August we had a vision retreat for Soul Works. One clear goal for us is in the area of developing community. We have a dream of creating space to work together in an artist community, sharing studio space and workshops where a dynamic and contagious flux of creativity can be caught, encouraged and passed on. My vision with Soul Works has more to do with a state of heart than any other type of structure, theory or debate of style.

Share our gifts

I believe that if we come together with pure hearts, which are open to the leading of the Holy Spirit while desiring to share our gifts with love for the people around us, then God will allow true aesthetic and beauty to be expressed and made visible to the world. This type of creativity will transform and give life.

And now as I pass on these blessings that I have been given, I hope that you are also encouraged and inspired to live out the dreams of your heart. Greetings to you all from the whole Soul Works Team.

Your dreaming artist,



Bryan

forming artist she will be leading people through various possibilities as to how form or action could help to expose and define both the negative and positive characteristics that we carry around with us. Between August and October you can have the opportunity to experience her quirks and quarks as she describes herself as a "schräger Vögel" (translated "a crooked bird"). She will be in process – why don't you join her? Check out the webpage for more info: www.soulworks.ch.

My fight for freedom as an artist is complex and is not only a fight for myself, but for a



PS: Partnering with Epic Ministries

In the process of working together this spring, it became more and more clear that our creative ministries could be more effective if we shared some internal organization / know how in support of our common vision for the arts and social justice. For all of you living in Canada, and interested in supporting my creative work, there is now good news. Soul Works has now officially partnered with Epic Ministries out of Calgary, which allows tax-deductible receipts to be issued for funds sent through this Canadian Registered Charitable Organization.

Make checks out to:

Epic Ministries
240 15 Ave SW
Calgary, AB
T2R 0P7

IMPORTANT: DO NOT make a specific memo of Soul Works Foundation on the check.

Include a separate note to specify your support to either:

- Soul Works Foundation (General)
- Bryan Haab (Personal Wage)

If you would like to support our work on a monthly basis and/or would like to arrange automated monthly Bank donations, please contact us.

Contact: www.soulworks.ch

Bryan Haab
Bodenackerstr. 21
4410 Liestal
+41 61 921 55 66
+41 79 395 29 83
bryan@soulworks.ch

Soul Works Foundation Office
Schulgartenstrasse 4
4410 Liestal
+41 61 921 01 89
+41 79 378 99 58
info@soulworks.ch

Bank Details:
Soul Works Foundation
Basellandschaftliche Kantonalbank
4410 Liestal
KN: 162.111.734.58 769

