

“First Dog on the Moon” Art Exhibition: A must see, and it ends on Saturday 28th January.

Yesterday, I decided on the hot Sunday morning to pretend I was overseas and holidaying and do what one does on holidays and go for adventures. So I jumped on my trusty tram and headed into town, aiming to find the “First Dog on the Moon” exhibition on at the Platform: Public Contemporary Art Space, in the De graves Street Subway (I didn’t even know we had subways) in the centre of our fair city. “First Dog...” creator Andrew Marlton keeps himself well hidden on the Web but here is the link to his exhibition: <http://blogs.crikey.com.au/firstblog/2011/11/08/upcoming-first-dog-on-the-moon-actual-official-exhibition/> . He is also a die- hard Bulldogs boy, and is heartbroken and avoiding footy and hopes and dreams for the moment.

Only problem was, this exhibition was closed on a Sunday. (Note to self – check these things out on websites BEFORE heading into town.) But I wasn’t deterred; I was in ADVENTURE mode and so stood in the hot street watching thousands head towards the Tennis and so many, many people in town, shopping, touring, hanging. It was good and busy and lively.

So I did the next best thing. Last year Vic Maskell alerted us to the new Sound Art Installation in Victoria Park, and it was written about and responded to on the Almanac site (a number of Alamanacers were mentioned as contributors, including this here Saints supporter). So I checked my trusty iPhone where I Googled Victoria Park, worked out where I was going, and went. The people running around exercising didn’t know where it was located, the lady with the dog didn’t know, but I turned around and saw the Sherrin Stand, walked along the outside and found it. It’s very unobtrusive; you have to find the right pedestrian walkway (the second one) to actually activate the noise machines. The big one along the wall is all the footy crowd noises, and the speaker above had people talking. It was a hot day. At least it was a cool, shaded underpass. I needed a chair to sit there and really get into it, but I stayed 20 minutes or so, having to keep walking to keep the sounds going. Next time I definitely will bring my fold up chair and wave my arms for movement. My only complaint was that with the background footy noises, it was harder to hear the people speaking. Maybe I do need to get that hearing check-up I keep forgetting organise. I love to hear peoples stories and got to hear a few, old players, supporters, commentators. I’d made contact by email with the artist Duke D’Albada when Vic Maskell posted the information, to see what they would have used from a Saints supporter, but he has so many hours of tapes/recordings that they are randomly played and even if I threatened to sit there for a week, I may not have been any wiser to what bit they used. So I enjoyed the very creative idea, and wondered whether I needed to hassle the Saints to make Moorabbin into an art space. It is on the “to-do” list when I go to fix up my footy seats this week.

It was funny being in a ground I attended 40 years ago as an enemy supporter. I took photos to prove I actually went into Collingwood heartland. I liked the way it’s been opened up into a park for locals to use, they have painted the former entrance that now stands alone, they have fixed up the stands so it isn’t an eye sore. It’s a lovely space and it seemed well used, with a constant flow of visitors. I did not get PTSD for being in Pieland, so that was OK. It was actually very pleasant...but you didn’t read that.

So being just ever so obsessive, I went from Sandringham to the city TODAY to see the First Dog Exhibition. I’d had a morning appointment (they were Collingwood and Hawks supporters and got an Almanac as a Christmas thankyou gift), left my car at the Station, and jumped on a train this time.

(In two days, I used a taxi, tram, train and bus, I LOVE Melbourne). The Sandringham train, often reserved for getting from Elsternwick Station to Ethiad or the MCG was today taking me to Platform 11. Staff directed me to the very end and down the stairs, turned right (there is no other way from Platform 11) and after going through the turnstiles and out of the station, I was there.

It is an interesting art space; glassed in cases held copies of cartoons, knitted figures, Paper Mache figurines and cardboard cut outs of First Dogs characters. He is very funny. I loved his Doggies football dressed with arms and legs and his work is very daggy. Not only that, my beloved sister Denise (and another Doggies tragic who first alerted me to First Dogs Doggie cartoons, dilemmas, political and football rants), the one who helps her technology illiterate sister do stuff, had downloaded a podcast of the artist talking about each of the windows, so I got to hear and see how his mind twisted and turned. I was there nearly 2 hours, my one suggestion is to make it lower so short arses like me can read the work without getting a crook neck! There was seating, so that was a plus.

The first display cabinet had all the thankyou's and acknowledgements : Louise Lovett did all the paper Mache' , Fiona Mowalt knitted Mr Rabbit and Potoroolawyer and the Knitted Dalek, Emily On the Moon knitted Mousie, Kathleen did the Doglet the crocheted dog. There were 13 windows and I looked at them all. It is open Weekdays 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 9-5 Saturday and is on until the 28th of January and is soooo worth a squiz.

Once finished, I noticed I'd been walking over some street chalk art (talk about fabulous observational skills) and I took photos of them too. I went out the end of the subway and found a cool and tasty meal at a restaurant, ate and drank and watched all the pedestrians in this little laneway as they contemplated where to eat and where to go next. Busy busy Melbourne.

For more information on the art space, www.platform.org.au

Go see it, it's a blast, but don't go Sundays.

BTW: note the photo of the Star Wars characters outside the Town Hall for the Lego Exhibition. No relation to sport but culturally significant nevertheless!

Yvette Wroby

23rd January 2012