

Marathons and the off season of footy

As Year 12 requirements of motherhood come towards a screeching finale (for last child), and footy seasons trade period brings the adjustment of losing Brendon G, the shortening of time for Ahmed Saads run up and watching clips of Rooney and Catherines' pre-wedding joyfulness on the Saints Website, life continues to be both entertaining and busy. There is soccer/football with the Victory finally getting a win. There are the preparations for a summer of cricket. There's too much horseracing on SEN so I have turned to music and art.

I will start with music. Some of us old buggers will remember Rodriguez and his wonderful music in the 70's, I still have the 33" of Cold Fact sitting in my meagre collection. It was the first album I played when I finally invested in my own turn table last year. It was one of the few albums I ever bought, one of the few artists that moved me to purchase and to keep over time. So my young adult and footy mate Rina told me I had to go see "Searching for Sugar Man" at the Palace Cinema and having done so, I ask you all, young and old, to go see this movie. It is one of the most moving documentaries and one of the best stories I have heard and seen for years. If you loved his music in your youth, it is a must. For all other lovers of cinema and stories and music, it is a must. If you are passionate about anything, are driven by obsession, obsession of anything, it is a must. It is a true story of two mens' obsession with this music and the journey it takes them on, and it is brilliant. It is political and artistic and a statement and picture of a time and a place, of a South Africa and apartheid, and of an immense amount of love. The Soundtrack combines music from Rodriguez's two albums, in surround sound in the cinema, I cried and smiled throughout. Some of the reviews say: "A hugely entertaining, emotionally touching and musically revelatory experience" and "stunning" and "an extraordinary journey." Enough said.

But before I saw this movie yesterday, I had my portrait painted by Anna Minardo as part of the Marathon Art Sittings where all the proceeds of her painting for the next month go towards the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute. Anna has devoted one month between October and November 2012 painting (hopefully) 200 portraits for the Institute. A 30 x 40 cm painting which is one sitting costs \$360. The paintings will all hang at a showing in December and then be collected by all the sitters. The bigger the canvasses, the more sittings needed, the higher the costs, as can be expected.

As stated in her flyer, Anna Minardo was commissioned by the Vatican City to paint a portrait of Pope John Paul II in 1999, she was a finalist in the Archibald Portrait Prize in 2008 and she has done a magnificent portrait of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch. She has a copy of this up in her studio in Prahran

Anna is one of the six artists who inhabit the Windsor Right Angle Studio at the Rear 12A Chapel Street, Windsor. To book session times, visit <http://www.trybooking.com/BYFC>. It is worth the investment as a gift to yourself or to a loved one. And to join in an extraordinary project for a good cause.

Back to Saturday morning, when my turn came. I'd been told of this event by a fellow Monday night Life Drawing artist and fellow member of the Glen Eira Artists Society. As synchronicity would have it, I have often sat in the car park at the rear of the medical building next door and have seen an

artist I recognise from somewhere come in and out of the building, but suddenly, I get a reason to go in and have a look. And last week, while in the car park, I went in to introduce myself and see what the set-up is. I love walking into other artists' studios, especially ones with the talent and calibre of Anna Mindara. Her studio is full of her portraits in paint and her work in ceramics and all her tools of trade. Colours. Smells. Canvasses prepared for this project. The art space was inviting, the artist happy to be introduced and welcoming when I asked whether my friends/fellow artists could come and observe her process. She very generously allowed this to happen, so I have now got the experience documented in photographs. We interviewed her beforehand on Saturday, casually really but it will go in our newsletter.

On our Tuesday group, I sometimes paint the models and watch them as they sit so we can paint. Being a model is so much more difficult than it looks, and it looks difficult. To sit still and be looked at, arranged, and studied is disconcerting but strangely exhilarating. I had two requests of my own of the artist. One, that I be seated in a way that I look up so my triple chin isn't the main feature, and that she paint me with my Saints coloured reading glasses propped on my nose, as is my want. She obliged with both, and in 50 minutes captured my essence. I was sitting there staring straight at her, feeling so innately happy and alive, watching my friends faces as they saw the development of the art which I couldn't see, or more often, watching Annas' face as she scrutinised mine. I fell in love with her a little as she took my lines and colours and expressions and added her own senses and experience and unbelievable talent, to make her rendering of my face and my personality. And we all think she nailed it.

My new Almanac friend Phantom from Tassie marvels that I always seem to find that little St.Kilda magic when I shop. My glasses, I painted. They were black and white zebra striped, and I added the red, in enamel, and again, with my unique obsessive style, they are a permanent fixture on my happy face. But more than my happy St.Kilda shopping experience, I find that every now and again I can live a few days as if I am travelling overseas, seize the day and the moment and the experience. Saturday was that for me. The portrait between 12-1, lunch with my friends in Chapel Street, and then when motherhood obligations were finished at 3.30, I took myself off to watch a movie on my own like I did in France. I had the Rodriguez experience. Again, flooded with happiness and contentment, I met a very old friend and her mother, the friend who I began to watch the Saints with when we were 12. A friend who I shared Rodriguez and Leonard Cohen and Bruce Springstein with over many years. They were off to see Woody Allens new movie. Once they departed, I checked with the daughter, was not needed, and completed my perfect day with another quick movie and spent the next 90 minutes with Woody Allens in Rome, Italy. I laughed a lot here too, and my friend and her mother laughed at me when they spotted me after the film had ended.

What a combination of unique and transforming experiences on a Saturday. And I worried at what I would do with myself when the season was over, when my youngest finished school. There was no need to worry about that if Saturday was any indication.

Yvette Wroby

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