



“DIDJINOZ 2008 Winter Edition – AUSTRALIAN MUSIC FESTIVAL”

Locations: [Forlimpopoli - North of Italy](#)

When: [28-29 of November 2008](#)

Report by: [Jack Azzarà](#)

On November 28th 2008 was held the first winter edition of the Didjinoz Festival.

Although an abridged version of the summer festival, the event nevertheless proved a warrant for the Italian didgeridoo scene.

The festival took place in the small but cosy Teatro Verdi, within the ancient citadel of the town of Forlimpopoli, where the summer festival is usually held.

The task of opening the event - and the audience's eyes - was given to photographer Alice Poli, who had prepared a nice and extremely interesting exhibition titled 'BUNGU - Traditional Dances of the Northern Territory Aboriginals'.

On display were photographs taken during the August 2008 GARMA Festival <http://www.garma.telstra.com> (Gulkula - Arnhem Land, Australia).

The shots showed the Aboriginals intent on dancing, playing the Yidaki, on their everyday activities or simply hanging out.

One of the photographs that most captured my attention was the one showing a dancing Djalu Gurruwiwi. Some photos on display at the exhibition can be viewed at http://www.photoalice.com/home/index.php?option=com_expose&Itemid=27 → Reportage → Australia

Next was a nice and amusing presentation of the book 'La Baia della Luna', by Fabrizio Perdichizzi, a.k.a. Winki.

Then began the musical part of the event.

First on stage were Gondwana Italia, a band formed by:
Fiorino Fiorini - didgeridoo, vietnamese jew's harp, loop station
Antonio Coatti - conch shells, MIDI conch shell, trombone, loop station
Christian Ravaglioli - oboe, duduk, synth

Describing Gondwana's music is quite difficult, since it ranged from an unrhythmic ambient to a definitely groovy one.

Altogether it was a sweet-sounding music, but with a few harsh moments, particularly during the didgeridoo solos.

On a couple of tunes, Fiorino employed basic NEAL playing techniques.

The interplay of the three musicians and their instruments was undoubtedly interesting, even though at times it seemed a little frayed.

Sometimes, if I tried to listen to the three instruments *separately*, the single performances sounded really outstanding. But, when I got back concentrating on the overall performance, the sound





blend resulted less than perfect, as if something, now and then, got stuck. As above stated, I had this feeling only during the performance of some tunes; as a whole, Gondwana's set was solid, flowing and definitely enjoyable.

Next on stage was Dubrasko Lapaine, a.k.a. Dudo, whose set was, undoubtedly, not only the best of the whole event, but also one of the best of all the festival's editions I attended.

His performance was extremely powerful, accurate and, above all, *intense*: very seldom I had seen a didgeplayer blend so nicely with his didgeridoo - so much, actually, that man and instrument seemed *one thing*.

In all fairness, I don't know how much marketing-wise and studied Dudo's stage act may be (after knowing him personally, very little, I think). Anyway, his mere presence, his beard, the way he moves on stage and plays his didgeridoo leave you breathless, and he looks really impressive - almost an oracle, I dare say.

The kind of show proposed by Dudo was my favourite one, that is 'Didgeridoo Solo'; nevertheless, as Dudo himself (and Ondrej Smeykal) state, if played in a certain way a didgeridoo can become a whole orchestra.

During his 40-minutes long performance the Croatian musician played two tracks included in his 'From The Depths Of The Disconscious' cd and seven previously unreleased tunes, which will be part of his forthcoming new cd.

Before the festival, I had had the chance to listen to some of Dudo's tracks taken from several sources (his site, the 'Yidaki Compilation' cd, MySpace et al.), and I was surprised in finding out how much better the live renditions of those tracks did sound. Maybe this was partially due to the relatively poor sound quality of the tracks available on the web. But, most of all, I think this was due to the huge progress Dudo made since the release of his first cd in 2007.

Dudo plays didgeridoos he himself built. As many of you maybe already know, their main peculiarity is their being very long, from 2 up to 10 metres. The longest didgeridoo he played on this particular occasion was 5.3 metres (18 foot approx.), and its sound seemed to come from the depths of an abyss. Listening to it coming out of the theatre's PA, I had the same feeling I had hearing the roar of the Balrog of Morgoth when it comes out of the deep mines of Moria in J.R.R. Tolkien's 'Lord Of The Rings' .

You may find further information about his deep-instruments at

<http://www.lapaine.com/experimentalni-en.php>

No wonder that at the end of Dudo's set the audience gave him a well-deserved standing ovation!

Last on stage were Triad, a long-standing band usually formed by Walter 'Tanni' Mandelli on didgeridoo, Gennaro Scarpato on drums and Ezio Salfa on bass guitar, who on this occasion was replaced by Giorgio 'Sorry-I-Couldn't-Take-Note-Of-Your-Surname'.

Triad mostly played tunes taken from their latest cd, a nice album containing music both refined and easily enjoyable by music listeners at large and not only by didgeridoo enthusiasts - music you can dance to. Actually, Triad's great potential is best expressed in those places where people have room enough to move and dance.

Anyway, I would like to express my strictly personal (of course, being this a review, everything I stated so far is obviously personal) opinion about a couple of issues.





For sure Tanni is a good didgeplayer, one of the Italian pioneers of this instrument (I think he's been playing it at least since the early 90's); nevertheless, I believe his playing is overabundant with barks and vocal shrieks. Of course, every player has his own style: personally, I'm not too fond of the barking technique, but I believe that, should Tanni put a limit to his shrieking, his playing would benefit by this.

The second thing I want to say regards Triad, but not only them. Just on this occasion I found out that Triad have a fan club, and a person that follows them on tour and takes care of their merchandising (cds, gadgets et al.) and of applications for their fan club membership. I mean, generally speaking I can't find anything wrong in having a fan club or selling your band's T-shirts at concerts. But, at the cost of seeming naively romantic (or romantically naive, if you will), I wouldn't like to see the didgeridoo scene and related events being 'invaded' by merchandising and stuff like that. Putting up a stall at concerts and selling your cds, or distributing information material about you is ok with me; but, if possible, I would like to see all the rest (fan clubs, gadgets et al.) being left out of the didgeridoo scene.

After all, Triad had in the past (and surely will have in the future) other places and occasions to fully promote themselves and their music.

On November 29th Dudo held a workshop within one of the embattled towers of the citadel. Sad to say, as it often happens in the didgeridoo scene the workshop was sparsely attended. Dudo expounded on the 'Parallel Playing' technique and creating rhythm patterns based upon Balkan music. But the real added value of this workshop was its human side, that is Dudo himself, who proved to be not only a superb didgeplayer but also a man of great personality.

As stated above, Didjinoz never leaves you disappointed, and I'm sure the 200 people in attendance (even though on November 28th most of Italy was under a snowfall!) were fully satisfied.

This said, there's nothing else to do but eagerly wait for July 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th, when, hopefully, the summer version of the festival will be resurrected, with the possible participation of Djalù Gurruwiwi.

A didge-goodbye
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