



“DIDJINOZ 2005 – AUSTRALIAN MUSIC FESTIVAL”

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

When: [22-23-24 of July 2005](#)

Report by: [Jack Azzarà \(primarily published in Italian on the 'Yidaki News' paper magazine\)](#)

Your first love is never forgotten...

Although three years are gone since then, I decided to write a report of the 2005 edition of the Didjinoz Festival (I began writing articles about the didgeridoo scene in 2006) because, so far, it was the best festival I ever attended. Also, I hope to support it: the 2008 summer edition was cancelled due to a lack of funds.

Thinking back to the 2005 edition, I can't really think about a single fault in it.

The organization was very good, all acts were top-notch, the didgeridoos on sale were excellent and there was a record attendance.

Sad to say, the two subsequent editions weren't as successful as this one. Probably because the 2005 edition was attended by many veteran didgeplayers: suffice it to say that as many as forty people attended the two workshops for advanced players held by Mark Atkins.

In the light of what I wrote so far and about the two subsequent editions, I think it comes out that the alchemy created by this festival literally enchanted me.

All three editions of the Didjinoz Festival were held in the 600-years old citadel (originally called Salvaterra) of the little town of Forlimpopoli - a nice place where, by the way, food is extremely good (try the 'Fra Diavolo' restaurant, close to the train station).

Workshops were held in a holidays farm. The farm serves natural food and has a swimming pool. During the festival, access to the swimming pool is free on Friday and Saturday.

The holidays farm is on the outskirts of the hill country village of Bertinoro, an excellent location under every possible point of view: food is good and inexpensive, and the surrounding landscape is wonderful.

All the shows of the 2005 edition were excellent. But, two in particular were really unique. The first one was the White Cockatoos' set. The White Cockatoos are a group of Aboriginal musicians, who play and sing in the traditional West Arnhem Land (WAL) style called 'Kunborrk'. They held the audience spellbound with their music, their songs, their dances and their being really nice people.

They also had a stand, where they sold traditional WAL didgeridoos called 'mago'. During a workshop, I had the chance to play Darryl Dikarna Brown's red mago.





I must admit that I've never played an instrument with so beautiful a sound, nor so rich in overtones. When I played the fundamental, it seemed to me that three didgeridoos were playing at once!

The other show that really astonished me was Mark Atkin's one. Mr. Atkins is a well-known player in Italy. He plays here almost every year, but in 2005 his set was really outstanding - one of those shows, I mean, that can enthral didgeridoo enthusiasts and casual listeners alike.

My opinion is corroborated by two factors. The first is the high number of people who attended both his workshops.

The second is the positive reaction of a famous musician attending the festival.

He had told me that, after listening to Atkin's CDs, he had thought he was 'a bit of a muddler'.

Thinking back to the musician's words, I think his opinion might have stemmed from the fact that the recording quality of many Atkin's CDs is not so good. I mean, it's not a question of him being a 'muddler': simply, it is his sound (on record, at least) that's muddled! Anyway, I believe that Mark Atkins is an artist that is best appreciated live, thanks not only to his superb musicianship but also to his charismatic, pleasant and - why not? - *massive* presence.

Talking about the workshops, besides the above-mentioned ones, I'll mention those held by Darryl Dikarna Brown, who expounded on the basics of the Kunborrk traditional style, and by Andrea Ferroni - this one for beginners.

My wish is to see the Didjinoz Festival 'resurrect' in 2009: by the way, rumour has it that Djalù and his family might be present - the first time ever in Italy. As far as I'm concerned, I would be extremely happy to see Djalù and his clan here in Italy. But, in all fairness, if only the Didjinoz Festival could be held again, a two-day edition with medium-level acts would be more than enough for me.

I take the chance to give the festival's organizers some food for thought.

I think it might be useful to define the festival's programme a couple of months before its opening, in order to better promote it.

If possible, the festival should be held during the last weekend in June or the first in July (after July 10th many didgplayers, particularly those who have a family, are already on holiday).

Finally, a little stage should be set up where the workshops are held. This would give the players the chance to perform, compare styles and exchange opinions and tips.

Actually, the lack of an 'open stage' in all of its three editions is perhaps the only fault of the Didjinoz Festival.

Upon closing, two important notes.

First of all, I would like to remind that I wrote this report three years after the event. Thus, should I have forgotten a few details, please forgive me.





Then, I would like to report this incident.

A colleague of mine, a woman who knows nothing about didgeridoos and Australian music, read my reports.

Noting the enthusiasm and excitement that literally oozed from them, she asked me, half-jokingly, if I was sponsored by the festival's organizers or by Forlimpopoli's town council.

Of course I'm not! Just think that, so far, I still haven't received the free festival T-shirt I asked for.

Nevertheless, I sincerely hope to write a report of the Didjinoz Festival's 2009 edition, even though I won't receive any free T-shirt. This because, as I wrote above, your first love is never forgotten...

I'm eagerly waiting for Didjinoz 2009!

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