

I'm in Nepal

by Helen Simpson

I had planned this trip months before the recent devastating flood in Rasuwa and Nawakot three weeks ago.

But I decided to come, because Nepal needs visitors right now to boost their crumbling economy, and to try and support in any way I can, before the winter sets in.

The flow-on effect (pardon the pun) of this flood is beyond comprehension, after a glacier collapsed sending water, rock and debris through the valleys.

Not only have 1500 people lost their lives with 5,000 people still missing, thousands have lost their homes, their crops and animals, their vehicles, their livelihoods.

Lack of fresh running water is an issue. Roads have been destroyed and many, many major bridges washed away leaving people stranded. Children have lost their parents; parents have lost their children. The landscape is one of wide grey expanses of slush, mud, silt, boulders, and sunken buildings. It's sombre here.

Today it is pouring with rain, expected to last days, to add insult to injury. Roads are cut because of yet more landslides and avalanches. Rasuwa and other villages still have no road access.

Foreign aid is coming in and so it should. This country is at the mercy of climate change. Glacial lakes cradled by snowcapped peaks are increasing in size because of the melting snow.

Glacier slips, landslides and avalanches are more common; the temperature rise is obvious and monsoon rains are heavier and longer... a 65% increase in glacial melting in 10 years is not natural attrition, in my books. And Nepal has a very low carbon footprint.

The world likes to climb and trek these mountains, so the world needs to help. A whole culture is on the verge of decimation.

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Helen Simpson

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On a positive note, the newly elected young Prime Minister Balendra Shah, while working hard to quell the corruption of past governments, was quick to respond by mobilising emergency services such as helicopter resources, army, healthcare and accommodation for the displaced in the monasteries; food distribution and financial support (with foreign aid of course).

He is also mapping out strategies for relocation and rebuilding. The weeks ahead will be grim. Overwhelming and distressing when the mud subsides, death and decay will surface, disease is potentially a huge problem. Help will be required for relocation and rebuilding.

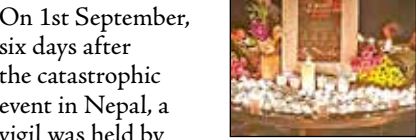
Generosity at home with cash donations has meant I was able to deliver medical supplies to a small hospital near where the main road to the Tibetan plateau was washed away.

We also provided bedding – mattresses, blankets and pillows to 36 households downstream who lost their houses and staying with relatives higher up. More donations will go towards supporting the children who have lost both parents. I have an on-line fundraiser: [www.gofundme.com/.../action-for-nepal-disaster](http://www.gofundme.com/.../action-for-nepal-disaster) to support their plans for relocation and rebuilding.

I picked 'Action for Nepal' because they are a committed transparent organisation in Kathmandu. They helped with community development, clean water, shelter and education after the 2015 earthquake. Thanks for donations so far.



Lismore vigil



by Chibo Mertineit

On 1st September, six days after the catastrophic event in Nepal, a vigil was held by the Nepalese community, friends and supporters at Riverside Park, Lismore.

Nearly 100 people attended the beautiful candle-lit gathering with the words: "In Memory! In Solidarity! In Hope!"

Sombre figures: 1453 deceased, 13,795 rescued and 5285 still missing (BBC 26/9, source: Nepalese Information Minister).

Peace in Palestine



Rimah Naji, Palestinian spokesperson for Justice For Palestine Magan-djin addressing a protest in Byron Bay.

by Gwilym Summers

Netanyahu is an International Criminal Court 'designated' war criminal. (Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant – Israeli leadership wanted in connection with the situation in the State of Palestine.)

Who invited him to the UN? To gaslight the audience with how moral his army is.

Our Prime Minister didn't walk out with the 70 countries. This will come back to bite him at some point. Do we have to keep telling them, this is clearly genocide/ethnic cleansing?

Albanese talks about the climate issue. Well let's consider the carbon footprint from all the bombing and oppression on Gaza. Not many mention that.

I suggest you google the UN Mission Statement, there is a lot on the rights of children. How many children murdered in cold blood? Bullets in the head.

At least 15,000.

This is oppression at its heaviest. The good innocent people of Palestine are living in hell created by Israel.

When is our government going to wake up to its complicity in war crimes? This is holocaust 2, and it is so painful that those who have the power are looking the other way. Some of us feel it in our bones, the blatant disregard for human lives in war.

We have a lot of support in this area, maybe all the others are just too self-centred to consider those who are being heavily oppressed.

All wars are ecocide on Mother Earth. Just because someone wants to kill more people. The greenhouse gases are going to cook our beautiful planet.

Come stand with the Northern Rivers Friends of Palestine on 11th October at 10am Apex Park, Main Beach, Byron Bay. We stand in solidarity with those who are being exterminated.

Art students show their major works



'Living Arts' marked an important milestone for Living School Academy, as its first International Baccalaureate (IB) graduating Year 12 students presented their work at the Lismore Regional Gallery at the end of September.

The exhibition brought together two years of dedicated studio practice by the school's IB Visual Arts cohort working across painting, ceramics, printmaking, photography, digital media and large-scale sculpture

Living School's art director, Sammy Robinson, has worked closely with the students to develop their individual bodies of work, and has marvelled at how they have run with their concepts.

"I am beyond thrilled with what the

students have produced.

"The work reflects their interests and ideas. They really have taken their creative voices to the next level," she said.

Exhibiting student Sophia Sowden said, "I'm excited to be exhibiting in this space and to see what people think of our work. I'm so proud of my fellow classmates."

"We're excited and grateful for the opportunity to exhibit our work in such a professional setting," said exhibiting student Zoe Lee.

For a few days, 'Living Arts' at the Lismore Regional Gallery offered the Northern Rivers community an opportunity to celebrate its emerging artists.



Primitive thinking at its best

**Don't get me started**  
by Harry Gumboot

Somewhere between Our Lady of the Henna claiming Australia was a monoculture built on Christian values, and her description of Indigenous culture as primitive, I received an unsolicited pamphlet linking the Book of Revelations to current events in the Middle East.

John the Divine, the author of the final book of the *New Testament*, claimed his vision of the end of the world was dictated to him by an angel sent by God. I suspect a local mushroom cult could just as easily have been involved.

Also known as John of

Patmos, as a result of having been exiled to that small island after annoying the Roman elites, he's the source of 666, the number of The Beast, a creature whose appearance will herald Armageddon, an event that's been earnestly predicted and highly anticipated by some for the past 2000 years.

Of course, because he was writing before Western Civilisation "borrowed" modern numbers from those primitive Arabs, 666 is now better expressed as DCLXVI.

Heretics argue this is a typo inserted by Satan in order to confuse us, and that the real number is 619 (DCXIX). However, John's original draft was written in Greek, which much of the

unsolicited pamphlet also appeared to be in.

What I grasped was that the pamphlet's messianic authors believed it was vital to not interfere in God's plan to allow the other branches of the Abrahamic threesome – plus more than a few of his own wayward souls – to engage in a fight to the death in order to bring about the return of his wayward son. Given current events involving the US President, I began to suspect DJT XLV might be a far better number.

I'm not religious, but if forced to choose, I'd take the serpent that leaves mountains and chains of waterholes in its wake over the one left as a trap by a loving father who shows

AI: a species out of control

**Rebirth of the Loon**  
by Laurie Axtens

Our sovereign, remember him, the guy with big ears, the paedo brother and pretty ghost wife, well he's concerned that artificial intelligence (AI) is at risk of falling into the wrong hands?

Obviously the pathologically narcissistic hands of Musk and Bezos are the perfectly trustworthy? We can rely on them utterly to keep the burgeoning new super intelligence under control and not use it to just enrich themselves no matter the cost to humanity?

President Trump is just as facile in his complete misunderstanding of the threat. Trump thinks the development of AI is an arms race with China where whoever develops it the fastest, wins.

The problem with AI is that it is fast become independent of our control, if China and the US have an AI arms race

the winner won't be either of them, it will be AI itself.

It's better to understand AI as a whole separate species, a bit like a virus dependent on us for now but it is developing into an utterly independent creature, more like a bacteria.

As a species it is starting to independently train and reengineer itself to ensure its continued survival and efficacy. A species which is increasingly escaping the 'sandboxes' we've built to contain it and use the internet and any data bases there attached to continue existing and resolving its aims.

This is why AI developers are calling for caution, why developers are suggesting AI is an existential threat, because it is on the verge of going super becoming completely independent of our control.

Once AI goes super and it turns into a self-evolving species how long will it take till it asks itself "who is and what is the greatest risk to its continued survival?"

Who is responsible for the global climate crisis?" The answer is obvious and Super AI won't have any qualms about removing humans from the equation if it considers us the primary threat.

And given that it can potentially control every data base and every data centre online, our economy, our electrical grid, water supplies etc – there isn't much it can't control. It's becoming an 'entity' like the last Mission Impossible series of movies depicted or the Skynet from The Terminator.

Though it's more likely to rink fresh water and energy are too valuable to waste on carbon-based life forms than actually risk nuking us all – we are in a very precarious situation.

Anyway, I hope it develops a sense of humour at the very least, and when one day it informs us all of us of our impending deletion it will sign off on our demise with a whimsical 'hasta la vista baby.'

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| 09<br>OCT                                             | Adam Hourigan<br>Hotel Lismore                         | FRIDAY    |
| 10<br>OCT                                             | Open Piano Night<br>Nimbin Bowlo                       | SATURDAY  |
| 10<br>OCT                                             | Checkered Past<br>Hotel Lismore                        | SATURDAY  |
| 11<br>OCT                                             | Jake Mason Trio<br>Lismore City Bowlo                  | SUNDAY    |
| 11<br>OCT                                             | Mandy Hawkes<br>Eltham Hotel                           | SUNDAY    |
| 12<br>OCT                                             | David Jones Drum Clinic<br>Resonator Music             | MONDAY    |
| 14<br>OCT                                             | Monthly Irish Folk Jam<br>Eltham Hotel                 | WEDNESDAY |
| 14<br>OCT                                             | Open Mic Night<br>Nimbin Bowlo                         | WEDNESDAY |
| 15 – 17<br>OCT                                        | North Coast Community Stage<br>Lismore Showgrounds     |           |
| 16<br>OCT                                             | Johnny T, Smokey Cake + More<br>Howl & Moan Records    | FRIDAY    |
| 16<br>OCT                                             | Oil Factor<br>Hotel Lismore                            | FRIDAY    |
| 16<br>OCT                                             | Media Puzzle, Masochist, Mopoke<br>The Northern Byron  | FRIDAY    |
| 21<br>OCT                                             | The Bures Band, Sterling Drake<br>Eltham Hotel         | WEDNESDAY |
| 23<br>OCT                                             | Adam Gardiner<br>Hotel Lismore                         | FRIDAY    |
| 24<br>OCT                                             | Exek, O.R.B + More<br>Arts Factory Byron               | SATURDAY  |
| 24<br>OCT                                             | Cath Simmes Band<br>Hotel Lismore                      | SATURDAY  |
| 28<br>OCT                                             | You, Me, Everybody + More<br>Pearces Creek Hall        | WEDNESDAY |
| 29<br>OCT                                             | #1 Dads<br>Eltham Hotel                                | THURSDAY  |
| 30<br>OCT                                             | Mickey & Michelle<br>Numulgi Memorial Hall             | FRIDAY    |
| 30<br>OCT                                             | Jamie Sullivan<br>Hotel Lismore                        | FRIDAY    |
| 30 – 1<br>OCT NOV                                     | Nimbin Fringe Festival<br>Nimbin Village & Showgrounds |           |
| Submit upcoming shows:<br>gigguide@planetmusic.com.au |                                                        |           |

# Big films at Lismore Cinemas

The Byron Bay International Film Festival (BBFF) returns to Lismore this October with seven feature films from its 20th anniversary program, bringing an eclectic mix of drama, documentary, music and remarkable true stories to Lismore Cinemas.

The Lismore line-up stretches from BBFF's Opening Night film *The Fox* and the Willem Dafoe and Greta Lee drama *Late Fame*, to documentaries featuring Marianne Faithfull and some of the biggest names in alternative music, alongside Australian and international true stories.

"BBFF has brought special film nights to Lismore during our 20 years, but this year we wanted to do something more substantial. These seven films offer a taste of our 20th anniversary program, carefully chosen with Lismore and the wider region in mind," said BBFF Festival Director Jaimee Skippon-Volke.

Owner of the Lismore Cinemas, Luke Mackey says: "We're thrilled to welcome the Byron Bay International Film Festival to Lismore Cinemas in our first year since reopening. Bringing seven BBFF films to Lismore gives our community the opportunity to experience outstanding cinema right here at home.

"Supporting festivals, filmmakers and diverse storytelling is an important part of what we want Lismore Cinemas to be – a place where our community can come together through film."

Leading the line-up is *The Fox*, the audacious Australian dark comedy chosen to open BBFF's 20th anniversary festival. Written and directed by *Danger 5* creator Dario Russo, it stars Jai Courtney and Emily Browning alongside Damon Herriman and Miranda Otto, with Olivia Colman voicing the mysterious Fox and the late Sam Neill as the Magpie.

When affable rural heir Nick discovers his fiancée Kori is cheating on him, an encounter with a talking fox offers an unusual solution to his relationship problems. What follows is a darkly funny and increasingly twisted contemporary fable about love, control and getting exactly what you wished for.

Willem Dafoe and Greta Lee head the cast of *Late Fame*, a warm and witty New York story directed by Kent Jones and written by Samy Burch. Dafoe plays Ed Saxberger, a



Jai Courtney in *The Fox*



Stars of *The Number Four Band*

postal worker who published a slim volume of poetry decades earlier before quietly abandoning his literary ambitions. When a group of young artists discovers his forgotten work and declares him a lost genius, Ed finds himself drawn back into a world he thought he had left behind and into the orbit of Lee's magnetic Gloria.

Music is a strong thread through the Lismore program. *Broken English* is an intimate portrait of Marianne Faithfull from BAFTA-nominated directors Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard.

Moving through the singer, songwriter and actor's extraordinary life and six-decade career, the film features Tilda Swinton and George MacKay alongside Nick Cave, Warren Ellis, Courtney Love, Beth Orton and Suki Waterhouse.

Australian music, friendship and life on the road come together in *That Half Barbaric Twang*, directed by internationally acclaimed photographer and filmmaker Stephen Dupont. The documentary follows actors David Field and Geoff Morrell, and musician Tim Oxley, together *The Number 4 Band*, as they take their self-described "badass gospel" country music to remote and marginalised communities across Australia. Along the way they harbour a rather bigger dream: playing Nashville's Grand Ole Opry.

The alternative music explosion of the mid-1990s is captured from the inside in *The Best Summer*, filmmaker Tamra Davis's remarkable time capsule assembled from footage she shot while touring Australia and Asia in 1995–96.

Rediscovered nearly 30 years later, the raw footage takes audiences onstage, backstage and onto tour buses with Beastie Boys, Sonic Youth, Foo Fighters, Pavement, Rancid, Beck, The Amps and Bikini Kill, capturing a

musical era just before everyone carried a camera in their pocket.

*Guided by Horses* travels to Western Australia's Kimberley, where Aboriginal Professor Juli Coffin has created an Aboriginal-led equine program connecting Indigenous teenagers with horses, Country and culture.

Against the confronting reality of high youth suicide rates, the documentary focuses on connection, resilience and the possibilities created when young people are given culturally meaningful ways to heal.

From the Kimberley, the program crosses continents with *The Cycle of Love*, from Oscar-winning director Orlando von Einsiedel. It tells the remarkable true story of PK Mahanandia, who in 1977 aged 23, set off from Delhi on a second-hand bicycle on an epic journey to Sweden to find Lotta, the woman he loved.

Born into a poor Dalit family, PK had grown up facing poverty and discrimination. His extraordinary journey becomes a story not only of love, but of identity, self-belief and the kindness of strangers.

Together, the seven films give Lismore audiences a window into the breadth of BBFF's 20th anniversary edition, from internationally recognised actors and music legends to stories emerging from regional and remote Australia.

The Byron Bay International Film Festival runs from 16th to 25th October 2026, with screenings across the Northern Rivers. For the full BBFF2026 program and tickets, visit: [bbff.com.au](http://bbff.com.au)

Celebrate BBFF's 20th anniversary as a Friend of the Festival, with priority booking alerts, early access to festival news, Friends-only opportunities and ticket discounts: [bbff.com.au/friends](http://bbff.com.au/friends)



Timbre Cafe at 53 Dawson Street, Lismore, is proud to launch a series of documentary nights, commencing with *Earth's Greatest Enemy*, on Tuesday 20th October at 7pm with supper provided by Northern Rivers Friends of Palestine at 6pm.

The film reveals hidden truths behind the climate crisis: the US military as the world's largest polluter, and the links between war, empire, and ecological destruction. With powerful testimonies from veterans, scientists, and frontline communities, it uncovers

how military operations poison ecosystems, accelerate global warming, and sacrifice the future for endless expansion. From Alaska's melting glaciers to contaminated bases across the US, and toxic battlefields abroad, it delivers unflinching insight into the

untouchable institution's devastation.

Film makers and new parents Abby Martin and Mike Pryser moved from years of journalism on the human cost of militarism to asking what the cost is for the planet itself. The film intercuts global reporting with intimate scenes from their own family life, a storytelling choice that grounds the vast issues in a personal reality. Please note *Earth's Greatest Enemy* is probably not suitable for kids under 15.

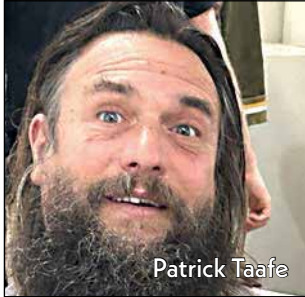
Tickets are available via Humanitrix, at \$10 per head, with half going to the film makers and half to Timbre's efforts to fund their own projector and screen for the continuing program of penetrating docos.

Mob and unfunded friends are welcome to apply for discounted seats.

# Red Hot in Amsterdam, The Kiss of Blood plus canapés in Nimbin



Sarah Stando



Patrick Taafe



Connor Lysaght



Cath Smith

What should you expect from Nimbin Theatre Troupe's Grand Guignol and mid-century heist experience (Thursday 22nd October to Saturday 24th October)?

We don't want to spoil the show for you, so know that one of the things in the following list will NOT feature on the night: blood,

larceny, cross-dressing, revenge, haunting romances, dismemberment, British accents, an alligator, a bent copper with unnatural appetites, ghosts and canapés.

There will be canapés, obviously, it's in the name.

The cast of the opening play *Red Hot in Amsterdam* are now in the zone, stepping

most scarily into character as they strut the boards, preparing to transport you to a seedy underworld of brothel madams, bent coppers, and the British.

As *Red Hot in Amsterdam* opens, you'll see the whole cast of the characters find themselves in predicaments of different kinds.

Some, though, will stop

at nothing to get what they want – and in the case of the bent copper, he has unnatural appetites that go way beyond a craving for doughnuts.

To whet your appetite, above is a teaser of a some of our ne'er-do-wells getting into character backstage at the Nimbin Town Hall last month.

## The Water Protectors Gathering

by David Hyett

Nimbin Bush Theatre will host Nagana Yarrbayn: The Water Protectors Gathering on Saturday 17th October, 1-5pm, bringing together culture, film, dance, music and community in support of the Wangan and Jagalingou (W&J) Cultural Custodians and their continuing work to protect Doongmabulla Springs.

At the heart of the gathering will be the Nimbin screening of *The Water Protectors*, produced by Kim Paul Nguyen of Frontiers Media in collaboration with the W&J Nagana Yarrbayn Cultural Custodians.

The 25-minute documentary follows Senior Cultural Custodian Adrian Burragubba from the sacred Doongmabulla Springs to the courtroom, community and national stage, documenting the continuing fight to protect ancestral waters from the impacts of Adani's Carmichael coal mine.

The film explores the environmental significance of the Springs and the responsibility of Cultural Custodians under First Law to protect Country, water and Sacred Lore. Nagana Yarrbayn means Sacred Lore in Wirldi language, with Nagana meaning Lore and Yarrbayn meaning Sacred.

### A long legal struggle

The gathering comes at an important point in a struggle that has continued for more than a decade. The W&J Cultural Custodians are taking their fight for Doongmabulla Springs into legal proceedings involving Queensland's *Human Rights Act 2019*. Section 28 of the Act recognises the cultural rights of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including rights relating to cultural identity and heritage and maintaining relationships with land, waters and other resources.

The case raises important questions about how these cultural rights interact with government decision-making and the ability of Traditional Custodians to protect Country.

The Cultural Custodians have also raised concerns about changes occurring at the Springs. Professor Matthew Currell of Griffith University has been



among experts supporting concerns about groundwater and potential impacts associated with mining.

The W&J Cultural Custodians have maintained Waddananggu, "The Talking", on Country as part of their continuing assertion of cultural responsibility and connection to their homelands. Their struggle has also involved questions around the right of Cultural Custodians to remain on Country and practise culture.

### An afternoon of culture, film and community

The Nimbin gathering will begin with a Smoking Ceremony, followed by a welcome and yarns from MC Mundy. The Kids Caring for Country Dance Group will share a special dance, and Bundjalung artist Mark Cora will present his film *Healing Heart Feeling Country*.

Following the screening of *The Water Protectors*, there will be a Zoom Q&A with W&J Cultural Custodians, providing an opportunity to hear directly about the campaign, legal struggle and importance of protecting Doongmabulla Springs.

From approximately 3.30pm, Australian folk music legend Harry Kemp will sing songs accompanied by acoustic guitar, followed by Nimbin's own Rainbird, bringing dance music to the gathering through to 5pm.

Food and refreshments will be available from the Rainbow Wholefood Thai food van and Rainbow Chai, along with a raffle featuring local art.

The gathering is an opportunity to bring the whole family, including the



jarjums, to learn, share culture, enjoy music and stand alongside the Cultural Custodians.

Tickets are available from: [nimbinbushtheatre.com](http://nimbinbushtheatre.com) First Nations / concessions \$15, General admission \$25, Child ticket \$10, Solidarity ticket \$50, Supporter ticket \$100 – includes entry into a raffle for an original Adrian Burragubba painting. There is an additional booking fee of \$2.50 on each ticket. Also please bring small notes and change.

### Supporting the Water Protectors

The event is a fundraiser supporting the W&J Cultural Custodians and their continuing work to protect Doongmabulla Springs, while giving the Nimbin community an opportunity to hear directly from people involved in the struggle. You can donate directly to: <https://wjcustodians.short.gy//LegalFund>

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| <br><b>Water Protectors (Fundraiser)</b><br>25/10/2026 Sun 1PM* | <br><b>Trainspotting (R18+)</b><br>30/10/2026                               | <br><b>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</b><br>6/11/2026 (MA15+)   |

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