

THE APOCALYPSE TIMES

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TO BE OR NOT TO BE

Exploring Veganism as a sustainable option?



Lesleigh Harnwell from Vegan SA Breaking ground and redefining my impression of veganism

Veganism –A word describing a choice made by persons who do not consume, use or eat any animal products. The word according to google results brought back that ‘vegan’ means ‘of the star system Vega’, with all that myth and legend lends itself to, for your interpretation. My interest is merely to have a conversation with someone who has chosen that route and find out what considerations there are in making a lifestyle choice like this.

Lesleigh Harnwell is who came into my sphere of influence and I asked her the questions I had.

My first impression of Lesleigh was luckily free of any subconscious prejudice as I had no idea she was vegan until after we had shared the morning together and to paint you a picture, she is a petite brunette with shiny healthy hair and a gentle disposition. She wore a t-shirt that carried the anarchists mark of philosophy, one I feel very close to in the broadness of such a philosophy. She appeared level headed and engaging, I can’t say there was anything about her that was anything but - ‘cool’.

(cont.page2)

JOHANNESBURG - The stray natives are an up and coming South African band made up of a long time rock influenced band of friends. I recently saw their new video and was thrilled by the quality of the music and entirely captivated by the visual!! Incredibly entertaining. I reeled them in for an interview to see what else lurked behind the twisted lense.

Free wheeling down the last stretch of highway approaching the offramp on my way home, summing up the interview with the Stray Natives, I have to say I was thrilled with my luck at having the opportunity to get the first interview ever with these guys. Remembering 16 years back and how important music was, I have missed the excitement of music blowing my mind and the Stray Natives show some serious potential – cutting edge, rock romantic, masterfully played, recorded and all together moving – and being a sucker for a tune that can move me on the dance floor, they scored - if for nothing else but having me want to dance in my chair given there wasn’t a dance floor in sight.

In their small studio in Westdene, we crammed in and around the shared microphone to record the interview. Hearing them talk about their influences, it was clear that they were well schooled musically, from being the Jimi Hendricks, Zepelin, Doors fans as teenage hooligans to Jack White as a current influence in their now more ‘mature’ years. I could see what it was in their music I liked so much. There was much debate as to whether the track ‘By the stream’ sounded like it had a direct influence but it comes down to a simple but punchy riff complimented by 16 years of working together musically for Trevor Lewies and Alistair Crouch. I think it isn’t so much a direct influence as it is a finely tuned ear for what made ‘the greats’ great in guitar rich genre as well as a very deep connection as friends. (cont.page2)

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The song 'By the Stream' I was told, is a song they had written years ago that matured only recently into the rif it owns now. Putting a song together, they said, amounts to a collection of parts recorded and kept from ongoing jam sessions (and some drinks to stay loose and creative), then catching the quality and bringing it to it's best.

The lyrics were Trevor's doing, but, as with the music, the depth seems to echo a long history together. Do they have any other tracks, I asked, and found it was like opening a box of chocolates - 'Serial Sheila' - my favourite, a stylized take on the killing of a prostitute, was incredibly moving and as Trev two stepped and mimed the lyrics while we listened, I was captivated right through and amused and entertained completely! I imagine them playing live will be incredible but it would have to be a venue to suite their swank.

The super guitaring is Alistair, Chevy on base guitar and Trevor does vocals and looks like whatever he wants to do - there was even a mention of bad tamborine skills. Although between them they credited each other in a generous show of spontaneous compliments. Trev laying it on Chevy's brilliant base lines, Alistair's ear for goose flesh melodies and then back to Trevor's disarming lack of inhibition (take that ad lib, I could be embellishing! I felt I was in the presence of greatness regardless of who was to blame!). They also revealed an inclination that their drummer was something of a grand luck with a reputation preceding him - though given he was not here it was noted that even he got his share of respect.

Will they be doing any gigs yet? No. The Stray Natives aren't in any rush to stardom or fools for the fantasies of a teenage band. When you hear it, and love it - you'll want it and when you want it so bad, they'll give it to you, and when they do - it'll be huge. As a band, they manage themselves well enough and are not in search of management to take them to another level. I got the overall impression that they know exactly what they are doing.

You can find them on a number of artist networks and judge for yourself.

The Stray Natives are: Trevor Lewies, Alistair Crouch, Chevy Borchowsky and Marius Oosthuizen (freshly squeezed from the pool of appreciative muso's)

You can find them on the interweb by going to these sites: Facebook, Metacafe, DailyMotion, MusicTV, YouTube, ReverbNation.

Written by Vivienne Brown

Calamity Jane

Dear Calamity Jane

I have this problem where I find myself asking perilously under-qualified people for advice. What's your advice?

*Yours desperately,
Hope Toodye*

Dear Hope Toodye

*Never underestimate perilously under-qualified people - and never expect anything from notably qualified people either. That's the thing about humans, you can learn the biggest lessons in success from dumbest assholes...I might be just that asshole to you- but if you get advice that moves you then don't shoot the messenger. If you write to me I'll tell you what i think - take it or leave it.
So do you have any real problems for us me to chew?*

Write to Calamity jane for some otherwise advise to take with a pinch of salt for a LAF!!

mail me calamityjane456@gmail.com

www.bpm.co.za

**You have
absolutely no idea
what's
coming!!**

(cont.from Page 1) Interviewer: My attitude, even if sometimes frowned upon, is survivalist – to be able to do whatever I'd be called on to do to choose life and well being, and I pray the need for some of those doings never arise. Don't get me wrong, I avoid conflict with measurable effect, but can never know what I may have to face. That said, I practice permaculture and as a meat eater intend keeping chickens and rabbits as a meat source, so I can be responsible for what I eat and the conditions they grow in. My only rule is that what I do must not remove me from my community. Stigma or not, separating myself denies me influence. What can you say about your community's reaction to your choice, and how you've had to deal with perception?

Lesleigh: "I think it was hard because my Mom didn't know much about it and what I would eat. The general feeling was a query of why I would do this to myself. People don't mind helping you with things that you have no control over but when you voluntarily do something they perceive as an inconvenience, there is not much empathy. That being said, despite strained, and in some cases, broken relationships, I have encountered and connected with a whole community of people who are like minded and share the same opinion. So for me, being vegan did not remove me from my community, it took me to my community.

Becoming vegan is a spiritual path which you take. Suddenly it stopped being about my favourite dish or where I'd get my protein from. I became aware of my surroundings, where food came from and how it affected me. Beyond that, I could measure the benefits of a varied plant based diet and it's been smooth sailing from there on.

Interviewer: If there was some sort of breakdown on earth that could be likened to an 'apocalypse', and serious food shortages left you with no choice but, say, a deserted store of biltong (in an exaggerated post apocalyptic devastation point of view), how would you deal with that?

Lesleigh: "Post apocalyptic times could have a devastating effect on a lot of people's beliefs or principals, it all depends on how it goes down. You could be starving and stumble across a fresh human corpse, would you eat that?"

Ideally we would want to have some land, some water and growing food. If I'm stuck in the city, I'd imagine dehydration would get me before I stumble across a barn of biltong, that in itself is a nightmare – never mind the apocalypse!

Interviewer: I do have a sense of the crude nature of these questions, and I mean no insult. I am a meat eater, and care enough about the welfare of the animals in my sphere of influence to include them in my sustainability plan. To avoid judgement though, we need to have open dialog, something that common misconceptions stand in the way of. What are the common misconceptions about veganism, the debate about meat eating and the options to change?

Lesleigh: "I would say the 2 most common misconceptions are firstly, that you will not get enough protein and that you will feel weak and lack energy and, secondly, that people are carnivores and are meant to eat meat.

The benefits of a varied vegan diet including protein rich foods like pulses, seeds, nuts and greens like seaweed, broccoli, spinach Kale, and whole grains, apart from a clear conscience, is good health and energy. Evidence shows there is no need for a meat diet anymore, that in fact it is seriously causing damage to us and our environment.

Lesleigh provided a great deal of information for me to research and made some phenomenal claims to the evidence that research has provided. The journey of discovery is definitely intriguing and seems to offer attractive gain if I can steer clear of the emotionally political angles...I've never been one for organised mass conversion tactics. Ignorance is any decision's worst enemy. For more information for your own interest, Lesleigh can be found on the vegan SA website. When I asked Lesleigh what people should consider if they wanted to become vegan, this is what she said:

Lesleigh: "About a year ago I was told that the most 'in-thing' was to be Black, Gay, a Vegan and Buddhist, which got me thinking about how adaptable to change humans can allow themselves to be, and how a 'fad' can influence masses into change. With the right resources, going vegan is a matter of adjusting tastes. (cont.page4)

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If you compare it to overseas travel, getting used to the food is a part of the experience, not a reason to rush back home, but this choice leaves you with a clearer conscience, great health and a general feeling of well being.

Interviewer: What would the future look like, or the apocalypse for that matter, if we as a species, we stopped using all animal products?

Lesleigh: I believe everything is connected, so if communities started considering what they eat, and what is happening in their environment, I believe people will start acting more like communities in an effort to care for what is theirs. The governments that we elect protect corporate interests dependent on our continued consumption of what they offer us. There is a need for people to join together as communities and stop being lead by people who have no conscious consideration of our rights.

The pinnacle of conscious activism, Veganism! ...a remedy for the imminent apocalypse?? I never thought of it that way!

To get the full un-edited version of the interview, please apply to viv@bpm.co.za and visit vegansa.co.za for anything else you want to know from those who make themselves available to address any perceptions, questions or comments. My sincerest thanks to Lesleigh for putting herself on the line to have this conversation with me, and to share it here, in the ApTimes!

Interviewed by Vivienne Brown

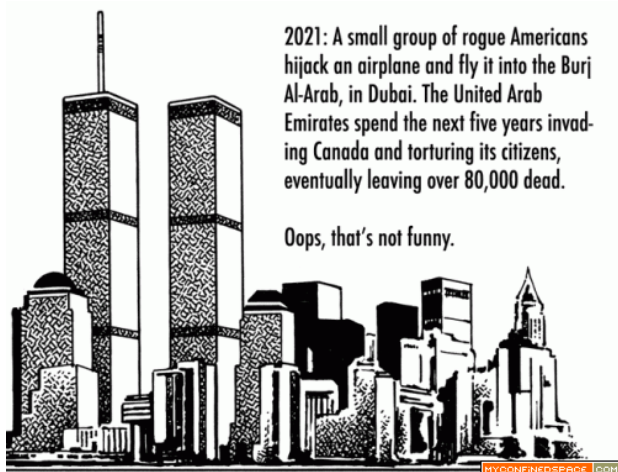
HAVE YOU SEEN THESE MOVIES??

For no other reason than to review current media, here is my review on the movies that I recommend as worthwhile viewing.

'9' - A short taken up by Tim Burton and made large like only the silver screen could make it, a post apocalyptic movie that respectfully captures the fantasy of an apocalypse that I can relate to - one with some redemption! No matter how bad things get, it will be fine if we pull our selves together and fix things up. LOL!! I give it an 8 out of 10.

'The Age of Stupid' - starring Pete Postlethwaite, is a dramatic look at what our day and age looks like and asks why we didn't save ourselves when we had the chance. Pete plays the role of a old man looking back at footage archived in a post apocalyptic tower. In it's entirety, the disc has so many amazing, amusing and thought provoking short videos. Try disregarding the apocalypse after watching this - I dare you! I rate it 6 out of 10.

Check out www.imdb.com for useful mainstream movie info or The Unblinking Eye for less mainstream informative shows with public viewing with our fellow Jo'burg community!



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