



Vista DJ gets signed

Channel Surfer to spin for San Francisco based label Frequency 8

By Christina Chomut
christina@tnews.net

Finding a niche where electronic dance music is recognized as an art was a difficult task for Vista native Chris Herrera.

The DJ has fought an uphill battle for the past four years, building his portfolio with hundreds of tracks and dozens of recorded demos. Through ambition and perseverance, Herrera, performing as DJ Channel Surfer, has finally broken into the industry with the help of San Francisco based label Frequency 8.

Founded in 1995 by Michael Robins, aka DJ MARS, Frequency 8 is an umbrella for the Northern California production agency that promotes and tours local, national and international DJs.

"We use frequencies to gather like-minded people," Robins said. "Frequency pioneered trance music in the U.S. and so many of the people that were raised on our music are now making our music. It is really cool."

As well as being an independent artist, Herrera is a co-founder of the local multi-faceted production company, Fire Tribe Entertainment, which has electronic dance music events throughout North County and Southern California. Working with seven North County DJs and four fire dancers, the entertainment group has been promoting the electronic music industry locally for years. The entertainment group's most recent show was on April 22 at The Blvd in San Marcos.

Herrera plans to continue his involvement with Fire Tribe Entertainment while emphasizing his main focus on his independent work under his new label.

"I believe one of the main reasons that MARS wanted me to



Chris Herrera

DJ B2 >

LIFESTYLE



Billy Watson

WHAT
Billy Watson and the International Silver String Submarine Band

WHERE
Schulman Auditorium, Carlsbad Library, 1775 Dove Lane

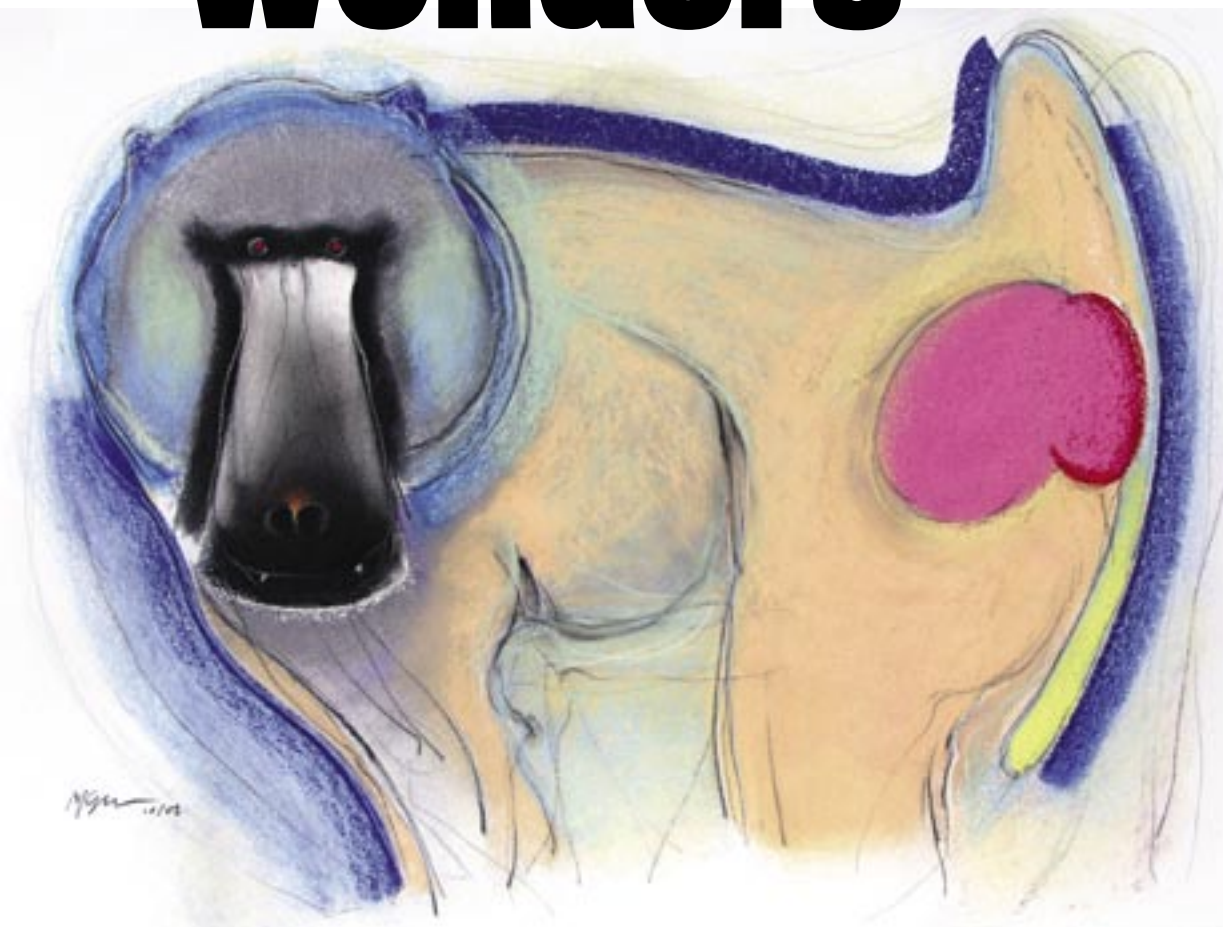
WHEN
2 p.m. Sunday

COST
\$5 donation to benefit Friends of Carlsbad Library

CONTACT
(760) 602-2012

Wild wonders

Show has diverse creations from North County artists



Michael Gross

"Baboon" by Michael Gross of Oceanside.

By Kehau Cerizo | kehau@tnews.net

The Wildlife Art Exhibition is teeming with North County and San Diego artists.

Starting today at the San Diego Natural History Museum, the selected local artist show will feature almost 100 pieces from 60 artists. More than 20 of the participating artists reside in North County.

And this exhibition is wild with creativity. Mediums featured in the show include oil, steel, watercolor, silk, aluminum, wood, bronze, pastel, gemstones, photography and pencil.

"The diversity makes a difference," said Dennis Paul Batt, Carlsbad artist and exhibit organizer. "This is all quality work here. It shows the range of talent and the experience of the artists."

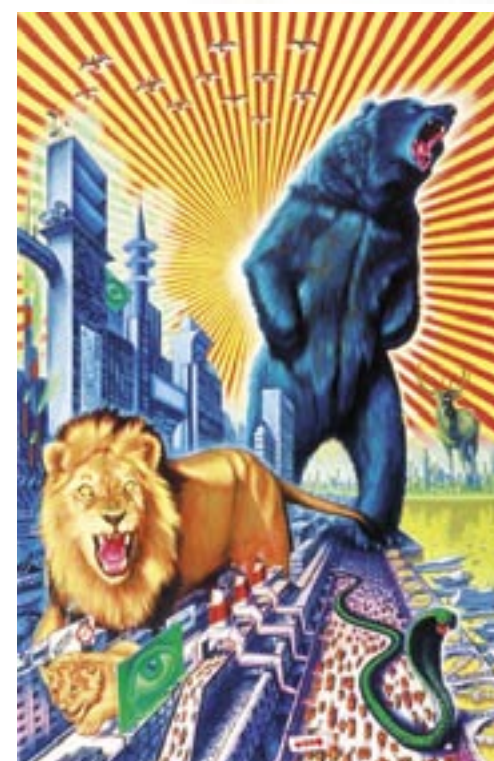
The Wildlife Art Exhibition is something that Batt said will have something for everyone. Batt, executive director of the Museum Artists Foundation (MAF), Gamini Ratnavira, a world-renowned wildlife artist from Fallbrook, and Michael Hager, museum executive director, shared a common vision for the exhibition and worked together to make it happen.

As the first of its kind at the museum and one of the largest West Coast wildlife shows, the overall exhibit features art with a wildlife theme, not necessarily from wildlife artists.

Michael Gross, a Carlsbad artist who works with the Oceanside Museum of Art, submitted his work titled "Baboon." The pastel painting is part of an Africa series Gross created after trips to Africa.

"One of the things that happens to you [after visiting Africa] is you understand the full cycle of life," he said. "Everything is intertwined — birth and life, predator and prey. It's right in front of you, all day all the time, living in natural harmony. Africa really represents the essence of life."

The Wildlife Art Exhibition has two sections. The first part, which opens today, will have selected



San Diego Natural History Museum

"We Live Here Too" by Jen Trute of Carlsbad.



San Diego Natural History Museum

"Crow Parenting" by Gerrit Greve of Cardiff.

Billy Watson's madcap blues

Oceanside musician to celebrate CD's release in Carlsbad

By Joel D. Amos | joel@tnews.net

Billy Watson is an eclectic individual. The Oceanside resident explores the lighter side of the traditionally serious blues genre. Watson sat down to discuss his "Numero Cinco" CD release party, which is being held at Carlsbad's Schulman Auditorium at 2 p.m. Sunday.

Q What are your expectations for the CD release event?

A Normally I play bars — not exactly the ideal places to perform music. What's cool about this gig is everybody is sitting down in an auditorium setting.

Q You sure seem to cull musicians from all corners of San Diego. How do you secure these artists?

A With almost 30 people involved in the band, I rotate guys who are available for the particular gig. Some of these guys play all over the world and just happen to live here. The guys I use are world class musicians.

Q How did you discover the blues?

A I had always played the harmonica. Growing up back East, I ran with people who didn't really know much about blues music. But there were a lot of blues musicians out here thriving. I moved here and started sitting in on open-mic nights. That was the beginning of my career.

Q Did you think when you started out you would be sitting here today discussing a CD release party?

A Oh my, no. It's hard to believe this is our fifth CD. I've been to Europe, played everywhere here in town and it has been sheer luck. It wasn't even a thought out plan. I went to school for art for crying out loud.

Q What do you think you bring to the blues?

A I'm not the ultimate blues man. I'm not trying to act like something I'm not. I'm a white guy from New Jersey. It's hard to remain original in that genre. But it can be done.

Q What are you hoping people take away from the CD release performance?

A I hope people dig the sound we've made on this CD. It is different from our others. I want them to see something they'll never forget. I want people to get turned on to a different approach to blues.

Q Do you wear a Ronald Reagan mask on stage?

A I put on masks and do interpretive dances — it's kind of strange. It's not the usual blues band thing. We realize the world doesn't revolve around our music. The older blues musicians like Howling Wolf, they were funny people. They didn't sing blues music to get more bummed out. They sang to get those feelings out. It's great music to get out your frustrations in life.

Reach reporter Joel D. Amos at 760.752.6761.

> Restaurant



Churchill's offers new spin on British roots.

B2

> Dog show



Covering Vista event can get hairy.

B3

> New Movies



"European Gigolo," screens in North County.

B3

> Coming Saturday



North County sites are worth a visit.



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Art B2 >

Churchill's Pub and Grille is traditional, surprising

REVIEW

Restaurant features English and Irish specialties

By Eileen Sondak
Special to Today's Local News

If dishes the likes of bangers and mash, cottage pie, Scotch egg, steak and Guinness stew, Irish nachos and sausage rolls get your juices going, check out Churchill's — a pub and restaurant that takes its English-Irish roots seriously. Churchill's took over the

Churchill's Pub and Grille
887 W. San Marcos Blvd.,
San Marcos (760) 471-8773

Camelot Inn about two-and-a-half years ago — and the new owner, Joe McCann, completely remodeled the restaurant and pub. Fortunately, the place still retains its English flavor, with old-fashioned wooden booths, stained glass fixtures and accessories and other mementos of merry old England.

There's an authentic pub area on one side (with a full-service bar and games) and a quaint dining room on the other. Alfresco dining is available on the outdoor patio, which is walled off for privacy.

The menu abounds with English and Irish specialties, but it also offers a few surpris-



Norm Sondak

Jo and George Karris of San Marcos dine at Churchill's Pub and Grille on San Marcos Blvd.

es, such as Santa Fe chicken egg rolls (\$5.95) and chicken Tikka Masala (\$10.95), an Indian dish served with a mild curry sauce and Basmati rice.

Churchill's features U.S. favorites, such as half-pound burgers with cheese (\$6.95), turkey club sandwiches (\$7.95), chicken Caesar and Cobb salads (\$8.95 and \$9.95 respectively) and shrimp salad (\$9.95).

Nevertheless, it's the English and Irish specialties that make this San Marcos eatery unique. If you're tired of typical nachos and French fries, start your meal with a dish of Irish nachos (\$7.95). This clever appetizer (which can be shared by two to four people) is made with chipped fried potatoes smothered in melted cheddar cheese and chunks of bacon and topped off with a healthy dollop of sour cream. The restaurant covers all bases by offering salsa, ketchup, vinegar and mustard with the dish.

Another traditional starter on the menu is the Scotch egg (\$4.95

for a hard-boiled egg wrapped in sausage). The restaurant also features two sausage rolls baked in pastry for \$5.95.

You can get typical fish and chips for \$11.95, or opt for a smaller portion of halibut and chips (\$7.95).

We tried the cottage pie (\$9.95) — an English classic made with seasoned ground beef, peas, carrots and onions topped with mashed potatoes and cheese. Like all the entrees, it was too much for one person, so ask for a doggie bag.

The Irish corned beef dinner (\$10.95) is simmered (according to tradition) in Guinness and served with mash and peas or a dish of coleslaw.

Even the desserts are authentic, including sponge cake flavored with molasses and fruit (\$6.95). Churchill's serves it with custard on top and warns that the dessert is meant to serve two.

Churchill's has a bread and butter pudding for \$5.95, served with banana nut custard. For the more timid diner, there's always vanilla ice cream with your choice of syrup (\$1.95).

If you never tried typical English or Irish fare, Churchill's is the place to get acquainted with this hearty cuisine.

Reach freelance reporter Eileen Sondak at nsondak@gmail.com.

Art >From B1

local artists' work on display in the second-floor atrium until Jan. 1. The second part starts Oct. 1 as the fourth-floor atrium opens with a curated, regional wildlife art show. Work on the fourth floor will be for sale and on display until Jan. 1.

Also, "Wild Weekends of Art" features invited artists from around the country filling the museum's atrium with artwork for sale. The events are scheduled for Oct. 1 to 2 and Nov. 26 to 27.

The Wildlife Art Exhibition benefits the Balboa Park mu-

seum, which is dedicated to "interpreting the natural world through research, education and exhibits," and the MAF, a fundraising arm for artists and the arts community.

Duke Windsor, museum designer for traveling exhibits, said the show is a good time for the public to be introduced to the art world while showcasing talent in San Diego County.

"This is a great opportunity for wildlife artists," he said. "[Where] wildlife has been considered more an illustration, the work here is superb. ... It is above par."

Reach reporter Kehau Cerizo at 760.752.6749.



San Diego Natural History Museum

"Turtle Tryst" by Lola Juris of Oceanside.

DJ >From B1

DJ for Frequency 8 is not because I teach music for a living or for the fact that I have been in bands my whole life," Herrera said. "I think it is because I create and write all my own tracks, mix my own music to my own sets, and share the same mentality and mission as those that share the label's name."

He may be right. "The reason I wanted Channel Surfer was because I liked what he was creating and mixing," MARS said. "He was raised on our sounds and had the same mentality as many of our artists. I am looking to develop new and upcoming artists who are passionate about the sound of music — cyber trance — and so it worked out really well."

Herrera describes his DJ name, Channel Surfer, as "clever" with "little social implications about art or music."

The artist discovered his moniker in 1997, before becoming a DJ, when he read an article in Rolling Stone magazine about musician Beck.

"[Beck's] album, 'Odelay,' was the Grammy winner for

More information

Frequency 8:
www.frequency8.com
DJ Channel Surfer:
www.channelsurfer.net

Album of the Year, and I remember him describing his music as 'channel surfing' because there are lots of cuts, edits, twists and turns in the structure of his music," Herrera said. "I thought to myself, 'If I was ever a DJ, my DJ name would be Channel Surfer,' and here we are."

Herrera recently toured through Seattle, Wash., playing house, progressive, hard trance, break beats, happy hard-core and more. The artist was well received throughout the tour, according to DJ MARS.

"Moving up in the electronic music world, especially as a DJ, is one of the hardest things you can do," Herrera said. That's part of why I feel so lucky and grateful for this opportunity to expose my work."

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, Frequency 8 will be ending its tour with a homecoming show tonight in San Francisco.

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