

**THE LED ZEPPELIN WORLD TOUR EXHIBITION
LISMORE REGIONAL GALLERY
4 APRIL TO 19 MAY 2007
TOURING INTERNATIONALLY
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40 Photographs by Ted Harvey of Led Zeppelin's 1972 Sydney concert and artists' responses to Led Zeppelin.

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The Led Zeppelin World Tour Exhibition is a project by Ted Harvey's RockPhotoAid curated by Lismore Regional Gallery. RockPhotoAid seeks to help disadvantaged Brazilian children and proudly supports Compassion Australia and its Brazilian partners.

ARTISTS

TED HARVEY PHOTOGRAPHER

ADAM CULLEN

BEN QUILTY

GEOFF HARVEY

LUCILLE MARTIN

CRAIG WADDELL

JANICE RAYNOR

REG MOMBASSA

IN SUPPORT OF

Rock Photo Aid 
Helping Children in Poverty

**THE
LED ZEPPELIN
WORLD TOUR
EXHIBITION**



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DOING IT THE ZEPPELIN WAY
by STEVEN ALDERTON, CURATOR

Hey, hey, mama, said the way you move, gonna make you sweat, gonna make you groove
from Black Dog (Jones/ Page/ Plant)

"I heard Stairway to Heaven and my life changed. Rock music has a lot more to say than the music of the previous generation". (Northern NSW fan reliving the 1972 concert)

When Led Zeppelin walked out onto stage on a warm Sydney afternoon in February 1972 Ted Harvey was in the front row armed with camera and intent. Ted had just driven around the back of the stage, and fronted between 30 odd thousand people and a stage of lonely instruments.

The day before the concert, Ted's good mate George spent the day building a ladder. He didn't queue for a day like many to buy their \$4 ticket, Dave had other plans for entry. That morning he took his home-made ladder to the

side brick wall of the Showgrounds with a view to scaling it. Some people were brazenly walking down the street carrying ladders. Others were scurrying through holes in the fence and when George got there he found 3 other ladders leaning on the fence. One of them was far superior to his, so he discarded his lumpy version and used the better one to join the crowd. Mad Dave borrowed a stewards white overcoat and started directing traffic into the restricted parking area next to the stage. The first person that was fortunate enough to take advantage of Dave's unofficial duties was a young Michael Chugg.

Once inside, Dave, George, Chuggy, Geoff Harvey, Janice Raynor, Ted Harvey and 28,000 other official attendees were quietly anticipating a life changing cultural phenomena. As far as a shift in popular culture and society goes, Led Zeppelin truly left their mark that day. Be it the harrowing vocals of Robert Plant, the maniacal drumming of Bonzo or the trance inducing layering of rhythmic sounds. Led Zeppelin have left their mark on the generation that attended the concert and equally with generations that

have followed. From Wolfmother the band to Ben Quilty the visual artist, there are many associations and references to Led Zeppelin in contemporary pop culture.

This exhibition spans the ages and will always have currency to those who have been touched. Be it on a Sunday afternoon in 1972 at the Sydney Showgrounds, the 2007 Byron Bay East Coast Blues and Roots Festival, or in a garage in Mullumbimby, there is an enduring legacy of music, freedom, creativity and identity offered to the world by Led Zeppelin.

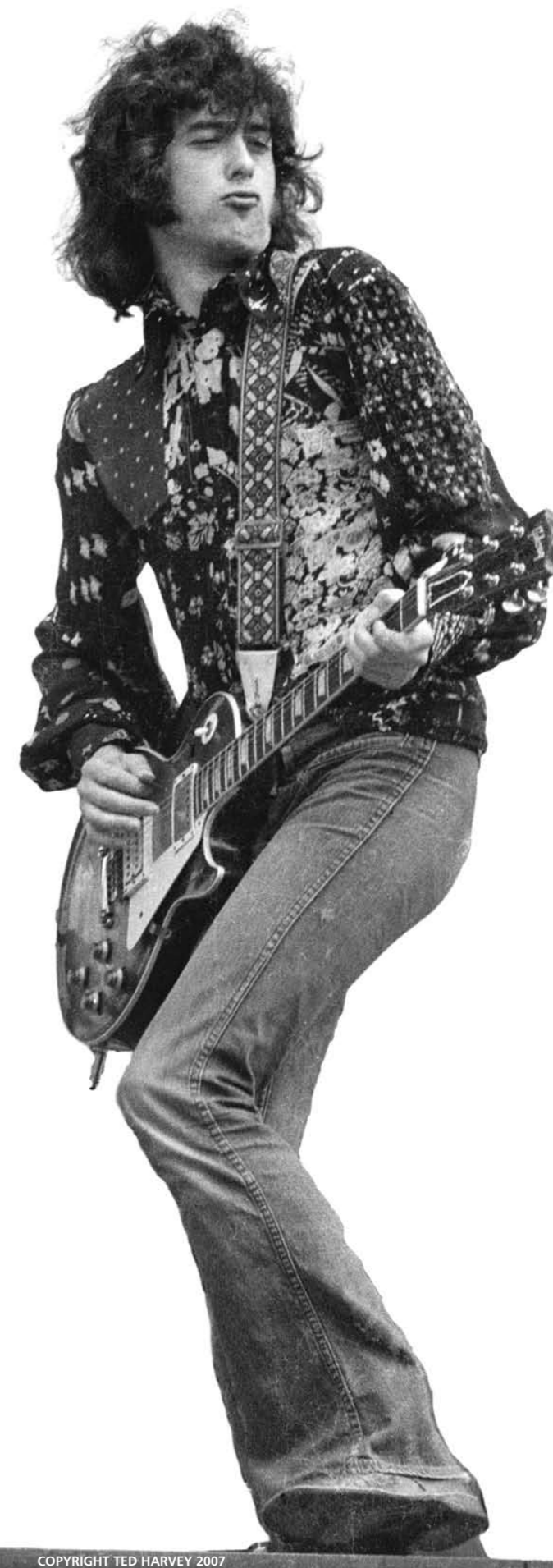
The exhibition includes over 40 black and white images of the concert by Ted Harvey and responses by leading Australian artists; Adam Cullen, Ben Quilty, Lucille Martin, Geoff Harvey, Craig Waddell, Janice Raynor and Reg Mombassa. Some of these artists were at the concert, some wanted to be at the concert, and the others have been influenced by the band generations after the concert. To see life size freezes of Robert Plant, Jimmy Page, John Paul Jones and Bonzo from 35 years ago is a chilling and inspiring moment.

CRAIG WADDELL has a connection with Led Zeppelin and his own youth – the boys from the 'burbs, riding high on adrenalin. Youthful, free, exploring masculinity, breaking rules and having fun. 'The Wings of Darkness' offered a flight of freedom, a passageway out of the darkness associated with confinement and conventions. For young people growing up in western Sydney, Zeppelin blasted light and shade into the adolescent years of confusion.

"In the back of Rob's Toyota wagon we drove around looking for good times, bad times and anything in between. Johnno stood tall on Fra Denar's desk in German classes, smashing out air guitar to 'Stairway to Heaven'. We looked for a flight zone out of the boredom of rules and regulations. 'Stairway to Heaven', blasted out of stereos in 'bong houses', everybody unashamedly stoned, speechless but flying high," said Craig.

"Boys who grew wings to fly to a mystical heaven, removing themselves from life's uncertainties. Zeppelin – at last the sense of release; the Wings of Darkness set free, no longer bound by adults telling us what to do, when to do it, and more importantly how to do it."

"Betty got his P plates and we flew up the Gosford highway, in his old man's souped up V8 Commodore. Zeppelin screamed so loud from the speakers, I thought they were going to combust. Betty hit the infamous wind tunnel that led to the suspension bridge. A boy in search of manhood,





possessed, his foot hit the accelerator hard. The V8 started to shake. No relenting, he had grown his wings and darkness was now left in his wake."

Boys from the 'burbs, bush boys desperate to impress. Testosterone levels rising – these were the days of new-found independence.

"Zeppelin lifted the darkness of the working week: blurry eyed, slurred speech and sloppy kisses. We all shed our wings, sometimes soaring to great heights. The melancholic tunes left us floating above the tedium of our reality. The pied piper called us to join him and we did, in walks a lady we all know, under these lights she stole the show."

BEN QUILTY, 'Self Portrait Dead, (Over the Hills and Far Away)' is a portrait made with fine art tradition in mind, but the drug, sex and rock and roll mind-set of contemporary culture in focus.

Ben attended Sydney College of the Arts from 1992. Walter Benjamin had just written 'Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'. Quilty watched and listened as Painting died and with joint in hand and Led Zep blaring he joined with the myriad of other emerging painters across the Western

world, who have since brought about painting as an artform's resurrection.

From Led Zeppelin's Houses of the Holy album, 'Over the Hills and Far Away' stands as a haunting anthem for a lost generation and Quilty's portrait explores the broken rites of passage of a young man. The image is from a photograph the artist took of himself drunken and semi-conscious after a big night out. 'Over the Hills and Far Away' is the one song he would take to a desert island and perhaps the image is also about the end of his time on that same island.

GEOFF HARVEY's work, 'Bingo sings black dog for Ted Zeppelin' is a whimsical found object sculptural piece Geoff made in response to Ted's time-arresting photos. The photos were taken in a time when being young was the only experience they knew. Listening to Led Zeppelin was the coolest thing you could possibly do.

"For me the photos of the band represented everything that was great about being of that generation. We were truly liberated by Zeppelin music, we were nothing like our parents generation, and we looked so different to them with our long flowing hair and hippie beads," said Geoff.



For the length of his art career ADAM CULLEN has been the bad boy of rock. He has played up to it, but beyond the public persona there is an artist at work of considerable skill and sensitivity with an innate understanding of popular culture. There is a real blunt sense of honesty in his work that almost beats you with a stick. Yet beyond the bravado, there is many layers of meaning in Adam's work.

Led Zeppelin were always looking for new influences and sparks to spawn new ideas and ways of thinking. "The very thing Zeppelin was about was that there were absolutely no limits. We all had ideas, and we'd use everything we came across, whether it was folk, country music, blues, Indian, Arabic", said John Paul Jones. Similarly, Cullen scans the cultural horizon looking to feed on fresh new influences like Antipodean cliches (kangaroos are a favourite), Japanese manga, relationships and his Irish heritage. His work is strong, powerful, angry and yet balanced with humour. In the end, Cullen's work is universal, readable from any standpoint.

REG MOMBASSA is a visual artist, graphic designer and musician - a real renaissance man. Some of his paintings and his designs for Mambo can be seen as a form of anti-social realism. Reg has spent 30 years in the forefront of

Australian popular culture. He has played guitar for Mental As Anything, designed images for Mambo shirts and held numerous exhibitions. His tee shirts defined a generation of youth in the eighties and nineties. Like Led Zeppelin, wearing a tee shirt with an artwork of Reg Mombassa on it was a statement, it said who you are. As much as Led Zeppelin is more than a tee shirt, by wearing a Led Zeppelin shirt you identified with the band and promoted your spiritual allegiances for all to see. Like Led Zeppelin, Reg Mombassa paintings have an almost mystical power that seem to conjure up primal passions.

Reg formed the iconic Australian pop band Mental As Anything in 1976. "We were an art student band, we had that in common so we had our creative tensions and squabbles, but we seemed to be tolerant enough to get on quite well and plus we had that shared background, I think. It was like being in a slave ship in a way in those tour buses with the little racks and bunks. I mean, I probably shouldn't say that, I'm sure a slave ship is a lot more unpleasant than a tour bus, but it was that kind of claustrophobic atmosphere. You're kind of protected and looked after, it's like being a child really."



JANICE RAYNOR said she was thrilled to learn that Ted Harvey had photographically documented the 1972 Led Zeppelin Sydney concert, as this musical event symbolised a turning point in her life's journey. For her the concert represented independence, youthful spirit, adventure, fun and rock and roll. The concert was on the day before she started studying at Sydney University, which was also the day she moved to Sydney to live.

"Led Zeppelin's Sydney concert seemed like a soundtrack to a colourful, celebration of life, where I could indulge three of my passions; music, dance and all that long hair! The audience was energised by the epic quality of compositions like, The Immigrant Song, and Stairway to Heaven. Ted's photos capture that mythical Celtic essence and Bluesy emotion that the band portrayed so well through Page's

acoustic and electric strings, and Plant's primal vocals, driven by Jones and Bonham rhythms," said Janice.

To LUCILLE MARTIN music was a balance to her conservative education in a Catholic Ladies College. Her introduction to the music of Led Zeppelin was a heady mix of passion and rock; stirring the hormones. "I rocked and sometimes rolled along to 'Whole Lotta love' in the 70's as a point of rebellion while studying for my HSC."

"In the years that followed, growing up on the coastal city of Perth, Western Australia, my girlfriends and I would meet the guys from the neighbouring colleges driving around in their noisy VW's (Voxwagon Stationwagons) from suburb to suburb coasting for waves. We were apprentice surfer chicks. Crammed eight to a car, girls sitting on the boys laps,



arms slung around each others shoulders, a 'Stairway to Heaven' cassette tape blaring out from every window, all of us singing our lungs out." said Lucille.

"We all knew the words were a promise to our future. We had been liberated from the generation of the 60's, no wars to fight, just the expansion of freedom and a whole lifetime ahead of us. Those two songs were the only ones I knew, but Led Zeppelin, were poets to us, musical fortune tellers, experimenting with life and sharing their wisdom."

Lucille's artwork simply honours the words to 'Stairway to Heaven', and explores Plant & Page's communion with nature. She is most concerned with how to support nature whilst we grapple with Climate Change. 'Stairway to Heaven' was the definitive cycle of birth, life and death – all

things to all people, a lot like the Band. Why? Because, 'it makes me wonder.'



SYDNEY AND ZEPPELIN

by GLENN A. BAKER
February 2007

There are moments in all our young lives when a piece of music comes at us with such galvanising force that, for a moment, it seems to erase everything that went before. That's what happened to a certain 17 year old in 1969 who managed to get hold of a shattering debut album by a new British band bearing a black and white cover image of an exploding airship. Even though Cream, the Jimi Hendrix Experience, Traffic, Vanilla Fudge, Jefferson Airplane, (Peter Green's) Fleetwood Mac, the Jeff Beck Group and even the Crazy World of Arthur Brown had been sending my senses spinning for a couple of years, songs like Communication Breakdown, Good Times, Bad Times and Dazed & Confused were so sonically startling that they seemed to redefine the very possibilities of rock.

Even though they had come about as the New Yardbirds, seeking to build upon an established chart franchise, these guys were a tribe apart. "We were never part of the pop scene" guitarist Jimmy Page recently commented.

"It was never what Led Zeppelin was supposed to be about. Our thing was playing live. We actually shunned commercialism." So much so that, at least in the U.K. where they had some control over such matters, there was no such thing as a Led Zeppelin single. Even where such things did find their way to the market, their tour de force, the one song that has come to define the band's peerless reach and grasp, was not a hit. It didn't need to be – Stairway To Heaven is the best-known album track of all time.

As Rolling Stone once observed: "It wasn't just Led Zeppelin's thunderous volume, sledgehammer beat and edge-of-mayhem arrangements that made it the most influential and successful of the heavy metal pioneers, it was their finesse." And as another journal of record has marvelled: "Their legendary, epic live sets - often lasting more than three hours - were wildly magical experiences which traversed exceptional musical territory; sonic journeys which were truly cathartic experiences for the band and audience alike." For this was a band not prepared to just reproduce their studio sound on the road - they used the concert stage as a palette and a canvas.

Though they were firmly rooted in the gutsy, gravelly blues-rock tradition that was throwing up Joe Cocker, Rod Stewart and Ian Gillan, it could have gone another way entirely. "The trouble was," Page once revealed, "I could play a lot of different styles but I really didn't know what to do. Sometimes I wanted to do a hard rock thing. At others, a Pentangle thing." [They being a very British folk outfit]. With his quiet bass playing mate John Paul Jones, Page was a premier London sessionman of long-standing, having provided indelible breaks on tracks by the Kinks and Them, among others. In fact, the pair had first discussed forming a group while working together on sessions for Donovan's Hurdy Gurdy Man. The group, when it did form, would provide the backing on a P.J. Proby album before anything much else.

Certainly Jimmy was riffing away rapaciously in the Yardbirds, shouldering the full lead load after Beck's departure, but he was well aware that "the record buying public seemed to have lost interest in us, as we kept having personnel changes."

What tipped Jimmy toward the unbridled thunder that would be Led Zeppelin was hearing the phenomenally-throated Robert Plant, who had began his career rise in Birmingham outfits The Crawling King Snakes, Band of Joy and Hobbstweedle. The original choice for singer was one Terry 'Superlungs' Reid but as he was contractually unavailable he unselfishly recommended Plant. Just as



unavailable was the first choice as drummer, one B.J. Wilson, who wasn't of a mind to leave Procol Harum.

Plant let it be known he would only come on board with John Bonham, perhaps the hardest hitting and hardest living rock drummer of all. Bonzo had begun playing at age 5 and his path to Zeppelin took him through such bands as Terry Webb & the Spiders, the Blue Star Trio, the Senators and, fatefully the aforementioned Crawling King Snakes and Band of Joy.

When a few other things fell into place – a band name proposed by the Who's maniacal drummer Keith Moon, a series of go-for-broke American dates arranged by determined manager Peter Grant, a contract with Atlantic records accompanied by a sizeable advance, and a dispensation to allow Jimmy to produce the band – the album that would shift the world a bit off its axis was ready to do its job. Writer Colin Larkin once described it as "the definitive statement of British blues-rock but Page's meticulous production showed a grasp of basic pop dynamics, resulting in a clarity redolent of 50s' rock'n'roll. His staggering dexterity was matched by Plant's expressive,

beseeking voice, a combination that flourished on Led Zeppelin II."

And on each album that followed. Though for a band that so changed the face of rock, they were only intact for a relatively brief span - a dozen years, during which they gave us nine studio album releases and a live film soundtrack. Total sales well exceed a hundred million.

Led Zeppelin, like the Beatles, only made it down under once and Ted Harvey, thankfully, was there with his cameras. One of the unsung heroes of Australian rock photography – Ted was active during the golden concert epoch of the 70s, artfully aiming his lenses at not only Led Zep but Pink Floyd, Jethro Tull and Cat Stevens.

Displaying admirable chutzpah Ted not only rolled up backstage at Sydney Showground on 27 February 1972 in his van with a generic press pass, looking for all the world as if he belonged no place else, and shot the whole show, he then went around to the Sebel Town House the next day to show the players what he'd captured. They received him warmly; Robert Plant was particularly impressed and the two went wandering around Kings Cross (where the singer had to be dissuaded from removing a car's hood ornament in a laneway).

What Harvey was able to train his cameras on was a band at the height of their cock-rock glory – thrusting, edgy, almost menacing. Jeans as tight as the rhythm section, hair and fretting fingers flying. Film coverage included in a 2003 DVD release show them in particularly ferocious form before an eager crowd of around 30,000. Curiously, Robert Plant also filmed parts of the crowd at this concert, and this footage, featured a fleeting glimpse of a young, camera-wielding Harvey has turned up on the DVD. Jimmy had been on the lower continent before – with the Yardbirds in 1967, memorably clad in purple velvet and playing his guitar with a violin bow – but the others had not. Perhaps, even after four smash albums (two of them number one in the U.S. for a total of 11 weeks) and relentless, draining touring in the top half of the world, they wanted to impress, they wanted to conquer. Though the shows were long and diverse, with acoustic passages, they seemed to be less about Middle Earthism, mythology and folk flourishes than the roar of their current top ten hit Black Dog and the soon-to-surge Rock And Roll. Even acknowledging the 1971 Deep Purple outdoor shows it was as high octane as anything that had been witnessed in the city (the Mick Taylor-era Rolling Stones tour being a year away).

Australia, like America, escaped the singles embargo. In fact

a revolution of sorts could be said to have taken place in January 1970 when the cataclysmic *Whole Lotta Love* with its industrial white noise interlude (the result of Page and engineer Eddie Kramer "twiddling every knob known to man") and its unprecedented use of 'backward echo' (with the echo of Plant's lines heard before he sings them) went to number one down under, pretty much shattering any notions of what could or could not be played on pop radio. With an album charting pattern similar to the U.S. and hits to boot, Australia was as devoted a territory as any other on the planet.

"It was just fantastic, it was a raw rock concert, really exciting and a huge privilege to be a part of," recalled Ted

Harvey in 2005. "I was pleased with my shots. They were well balanced, good exposures, and they really captured the time, the people, and an era which has gone, replaced by a digital age and the remastering of everybody's voice."

Because of a pay dispute with a magazine, the photographs were never published. They ended up forgotten about in a drawer and eventually mislaid, for more than thirty three years. "A friend of mine kept telling me he wanted to see the Led Zeppelin photos so I had a big search but just couldn't find them" Ted explains. "One day I was having a spring clean-out taking stuff to the tip and I came across my original negatives, I was quite shocked."

He selected a hundred, carefully cleaned and restored them, then displayed the results, to assist a charity, on a one-night-only basis, in a gallery in the northern New South Wales town of Lismore. On the night it seemed as if half the tightly jammed crowd had actually been there in 1972 to witness the legendary band live. There was an acute awareness of not only of how rare and precious was the portfolio but how blessed was the fortune that it had not been lost forever.

These were artefacts of an evolving era as innocent as it was audacious; captured moments of a music and an environment nowhere near as sophisticated as it probably thought it was but definitely, as Ted now sees it, "A very inspirational time for a lot of people."



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IMAGES: IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

TED HARVEY, *Robert Plant Sydney Concert 1972* digital print;

BEN QUILTY

Self Portrait Smashed, Over the Hills and Far Away 2007

Oil and aerosol on linen. Courtesy of the artist, Grantpirrie Gallery Sydney and Jan Murphy Gallery Brisbane

TED HARVEY, *Jimmy Page Sydney Concert 1972*, digital print;

ADAM CULLEN

Male Grooming 1 & 2 2001

Acrylic on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Kaliman Gallery

JANICE RAYNOR

Robert Plant 2006

Ceramic. Collection Clare Petre

CRAIG WADDELL

Wings of Darkness 2007

Oil and wax on canvas. Courtesy of the artist

LUCILLE MARTIN

Inside the Words of Stairway to Heaven 2007

Textile and thread. Courtesy of the artist

REG MOMBASSA

Man Plays Guitar 2007

Mixed media on paper. Courtesy Watters Gallery Sydney

GEOFF HARVEY

Bingo Sings "Black Dog" for Ted Zeppelin 2007

Wood and found objects. Courtesy Robin Gibson Gallery Sydney

TED HARVEY, *Crowd Shot at 5 o'clock Sydney Concert 1972* digital print

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