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THE UTHANDO PROJECT *Newsletter*

AUGUST 2011 NEWSLETTER

Dear Dollmakers and Uthando Friends,

This newsletter will be brief, but intense, so polish your spectacles and sit back for the spectacular!

It will appear to be very Western Australian focussed, but the effects may resound across many countries.

As always, always, thank you to each dollmaker of all ages who have made dolls for the children of KwaZulu-Natal. We have posted many bags of dolls (thanks to our freight sponsors) to The Africa Centre, Lifeline, the Sizabantwana group of Primary Schools, dlalanathi and are accumulating many full bags ready for shipment to TREE in September.

PERTH WILL HOST THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING OCTOBER 2011.

Uthando Project has been accepted as one of the participants in the People's Space in the Orchard in front of the Art Gallery from Wed 26th October through to Saturday 29th. This gives splendid opportunity to show that dolls may benefit children of all backgrounds, just as making the dolls benefits dollmakers of all cultures. We will create, within a marquee, an exhibition proudly displaying multicultural Australia engaged in making dolls which emotionally support the children, their carers and communities of KwaZulu-Natal.

The exhibition will be called "100 Dolls, Countless Hearts".

During the past months, 20 Mini Team leaders have each been "managing" 5 other dollmakers in making dolls which reflect their own cultural backgrounds and represent our major doll patterns, eg our Uthando Classic Sewn doll on our poster and website. These dolls will form the Exhibition and be featured in a stunning book with the same title.

Natalija Brunovs, who was the film maker for our "Goodness and Happiness" DVD, is the designer of the book, bringing to it her elegant graphics, sensitivity and photographic skills. Sales of this book will provide funds for our partner NGO dlalanathi in Pietermaritzburg. Interviews with the dollmakers about their childhood experiences will reinforce our understanding of our common humanity.

Each of our partner NGO's in KwaZulu-Natal will contribute pictures and descriptions of their work with children and communities. This means the book will give the real background for Uthando's purpose. It will be a book of practical patterns. It will inspire others with the precious childhood stories of dollmakers born in Australia and all over the world.

MULTICULTURAL DOLLMAKING WORKSHOPS

With the generous support of the arts, family and community development departments of the City of Melville, the City of Stirling, the City of Swan and Roebourne Prison, Uthando has deepened its involvement with Aboriginal women and girls and with migrant and refugee women from all around the world. The interactions and results are extremely valuable. Many of the participants have introduced similar dollmaking for their own

purposes and time will tell of dollmaking and the expressive uses of dolls taking root in other countries.

There are quite a few things to communicate with you about this CHOGM event.

What follows here is a genuine invitation to any of our dollmakers, especially those who have come to Australia as migrants or refugees, and who would like to contribute their doll for the selection process for the book and exhibition, to personally contact Georgia Efford 08 9293 2363 or email georgia1@iinet.net.au. Time is pressing with a doll receipt deadline of August 20th but don't let that stop you.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AT THE CHOGM MARQUEE

Dressing the Uthando dolls ready for packing for Africa gives everyone fun and the feeling of connectedness with the child who will receive it. We will need at least 400 "naked" dolls ready by October 20th. Pauline Marlborough and Marg Alcock seem to have limitless energy in cutting out hundreds of dolls' bodies. They will continue to prepare the dolls up to the "sewing around the outside" stage.

Would you like to stuff 20 dolls, knit, knot or plait hair and embroider or applique the faces? Everything can be supplied. Or you might like to make a swag of doll skirts, shirts, tops, dresses, shoulder bags, pants etc ready for dressing. Waist sizes 17 - 19cms. There is a need for simple rectangles of soft, non fray cloth to make doll wraps with. Bright knit fabric and cotton material, haberdashery, beads, etc are all needed to make up hundreds of \$5 kits.

If you can help, please reply to Georgia as per details above.

TAKING THE "100 DOLLS, COUNTLESS HEARTS" EXHIBITION FURTHER IN 2012.

To give you just a taste of what is in store for 2012, this exhibition will provide the background accompaniment to a series of dollmaking workshops around Perth and in the country.

In April it will travel to **CapeTown, South Africa** for the 13th World Congress of the World Association for Infant Mental Health. (One of the dolls is a twinkly, crinkly Nelson Mandela looking forward to the trip). Finally, but vitally, the children of KZN will have some pretty remarkable dolls to play with.

We hope that this newsletter has been brief, but spectacular for you. Much more has been happening not mentioned. What more can one say? Thank you to all who make Uthando Project the inspiration that it is at many levels,

Love, Georgia Efford and the Friday Mob.

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