

Friends for Life

Heath Bergersen & Andrew Thomas



Indigenous people all over the world have a very strong and common bond often having experienced similar struggles and hardships. Indigenous people have strong ties to the land and express their culture through dance, song and music.

Heath Bergersen attended the International Indigenous Business and Entrepreneurship Conference held in Albuquerque, New Mexico in June 2006 where he performed, by invitation, at the two banquet nights of the conference.

He was also invited to perform at the Arts Alliance Gallery in Albuquerque where, after performing solo on the didgeridoo, he was joined by Andrew Thomas, Navajo Nation Flute Player and together they delighted the audience with the coming together of their two cultures.

The evening showed just how musically connected different Indigenous musicians can be giving to the world a different and exciting musical experience.

Andrew was invited to Australia in March 2007 to record with Heath their wonderful music for a CD titled "Friends for Life". The two week collaboration cemented their musical bond and firm friendship. Heath and Andrew also delighted a select audience with a magical performance under the stars in a beautiful backyard setting.

The CD is now available and plans are underway for touring nationally and internationally in 2008/9. The tour will be an example of cultural solidarity and be an entertainment treat as well.

Although planning is in the early stages initial feedback from Germany and New Zealand is very positive. Contact Jiriki Management if you are interested in having this unique performance at your festival or event.

Project Management

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HEATH BERGERSEN ACTOR, MUSICIAN

Heath Bergersen has been playing the didgeridoo for 15 years and has become renowned for his artistry and skill with the instrument. Although Heath is also an actor of some renown and has been very successful in that field, his first love has always been music and the didgeridoo.

Heath is an excellent didgeridoo player and often participates in commercials and documentaries. He has played the didgeridoo for the "Yabu Band" and the "Alice Haines Band". Heath is a fine musician and slips easily into a band's style whenever a didgeridoo is asked for. Heath produced his first commercial CD titled "Travelling Friends" with guest artists Trevor Jamieson on guitar and Derek Nannup on didgeridoo.

Heath attended the International Indigenous Business and Entrepreneur's Conference (IIBEC) in June 2006 at the Sandia Resort and Casino, Albuquerque New Mexico where he performed on several occasions and with other Indigenous musicians. Heath struck a particular rapport and friendship with a Navajo Indian flute player Andrew Thomas. The music they made together was very exciting and moving to hear. Heath and Andrew have become very close friends and a CD of them performing together is now available.

In 2004 Heath and three other Indigenous actors spent ten weeks in London performing in Thomas Keneally's play "Bullie's House" where Heath played the lead role of Bullie. Prior to returning home from London Heath was invited to play didgeridoo at the Frankfurt Hotel in Germany where he delighted the audience with his charm and talent.

Heath performs and conducts workshops in schools and for other organisations and is much sort after for his friendly and giving nature. Currently he is working part time at the Belmont Youth Centre and plans to take a TAFE course next semester for Youth Workers.

Heath has performed in numerous theatre productions throughout Australia and has played major roles in four television productions and played minor and major roles in three movies.

Heath has a charm, talent and spirit that affects everyone who hears him perform, whether it is on the international stage or in the intimacy of a friend's home.

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ANDREW THOMAS NAVAJO NATION FLUTE PLAYER

Andrew Thomas is a contemporary Dineh (Navajo Nation) flute player. He gives thanks to his extended family: Haltsooí Diné'e (maternal)—Meadow People Clan, Bit'ahníí (paternal)—Folded Arms Clan, Kin Yaa'áanii (maternal grandparents)—Towering House Clan, and Tsé Nahabilnii (paternal grandparents)—Over Hanging Rock Clan. He was born and raised in Rock Spring Chapter near Gallup, New Mexico. He is self-taught, and plays music composed from the heart. He has chosen the flute's voice to express his way of life, heritage and culture.

The flute provided him the opportunity to create the music and narration for a video documentary about male Navajo weavers entitled *Men Who Weave*. He feels fortunate that his music has allowed him to travel widely, both nationally and internationally. He has performed all over the United States, including the Indian Summer Festival in Milwaukee, the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, and 5 years at the American Indian Powwow Gathering in Hawaii. He has performed in Mexico, South Korea, and throughout Europe, including the Ethnographic Museum in Sweden where he had a story published in the book, [They Call Us "Indians"](#). He was also the first Native American artist to play at the World Performing Arts Festival in Lahore. He was honored to perform for the president of Pakistan, as well.

His first venture into recording has resulted in a CD titled *Changing Woman's Blessings*, with plans for a follow-up CD. Through his music and his life, he is an activist in preserving Native ways, creating awareness of the need for communication across cultures, and protecting all human rights. In this way, he strives to give back to the community. He most enjoys connecting with people of all cultures and sharing the musical language of the flute.

He recently returned from a performance in the Inca ruins of Machu Picchu, Peru. Andrew played at the ancient Inca ruins against a breath-taking backdrop of early sunrise over mountain jungles.

In June 2006 Andrew met Heath Bergersen, Indigenous Australian, at the International Indigenous Business and Entrepreneur's Conference (IIBEC) held in his home town of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Andrew and Heath developed a strong friendship and musical bond which resulted in several joint performances. The resultant artistry of joining the flute and didgeridoo together had audiences captivated.

Andrew visited Heath in Perth, Western Australia in March 2007 and together they collaborated on producing a CD of their awe-inspiring music. The *Friends for Life* CD is now available.

Andrew and Heath are available for touring—see project management for details.

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