

# My Somerset Life

## A diary by Brian Snellgrove

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# **Our first snow!!! – a good interview – the birth of a new arts centre**

## **A cold start to the day**



We awoke this morning to an unnaturally white ceiling in our bedroom, a reflection of the snow upon the garden. I can't remember the last time it snowed in Midsomer Norton. It must have been about three years ago.

## **An interview where everything is right**

I am just now listening to an interview with Pam Gregory who is one of the relatively few astrologers that I listen to with rapt attention not only because she is a skilled technician but also because she thinks far wider in universal terms, political terms, ethical terms, historical terms. If you are even mildly interested in astrology you might listen to her interview with Emilio Ortiz.

I am sick and tired of most interview programs because often

the interviewer is so full of their own ego and agenda that the guest better stick to the prejudices and understandings of the interviewer otherwise he will be cut short and interrupted. I find on the media that if for all five people are gathered together on the news desk it becomes a shouting competition and I cannot follow it. I am watching a **video of an interview** between Emilio Ortiz and Pam Gregory (astrologer)



Emilio is as close to the ideal interviewer as I can think of given the subject matter. He is obviously at peace with himself, is joyful, and most of all he understands the subject matter. He is informed by what Pam is saying but he is not threatened and his buttons have not been pushed. We are long beyond the stage 'you don't believe in all this astrology nonsense do you?'

Emilio is considering all the facts as they are put forward in a pragmatic fashion, lets her finish her point and then move on to the next point or asks a question to elucidate more information. The interview lasts 1:23:29 but I'm quite happy to watch it in stages and drink in each of her profound statements. As you may know I see hundreds of documents each day to put in my covid website but I don't get a chance to read them all period I read the first paragraph or so to make sure that to standard but then it gets entered as a data item and onto the next.

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## Day one of a new artistic venture



Today we had a very rare privilege, that of attending the formative day of a new arts and crafts center for children and artists. It was advertised as being in Waterloo Road, the same road as Radstock Museum, but it was in fact behind the Museum and there was no signage so we had to follow our noses. It was advertised as a 'have a look and tell us what you think and what you would like to see'. The venue was the Old Print House, on the Old Bath Road, Radstock, a building on three floors with a remarkably large basement about the same size as the other floors combined.



We squeezed in and found the place full of parents with children enthusiastically playing away. On the first floor we found that there were two artists who had been given residency to do what they liked. On the third floor there was just desk space which could be turned to just about anything . A very nice young girl was serving tea and coffee and very proud to be of service. There were little bits of cake and biscuits around. What I appreciated most was the atmosphere, it was formative, buzzing, innocent, loads of opportunities.



Upstairs there was a young lady who had just been given a six-month residency and was just setting up her little corner

section. She was obviously skilled and told us that her flat was very small and she did not have room for her artistic materials. See the photographs above. She is obviously very creative.

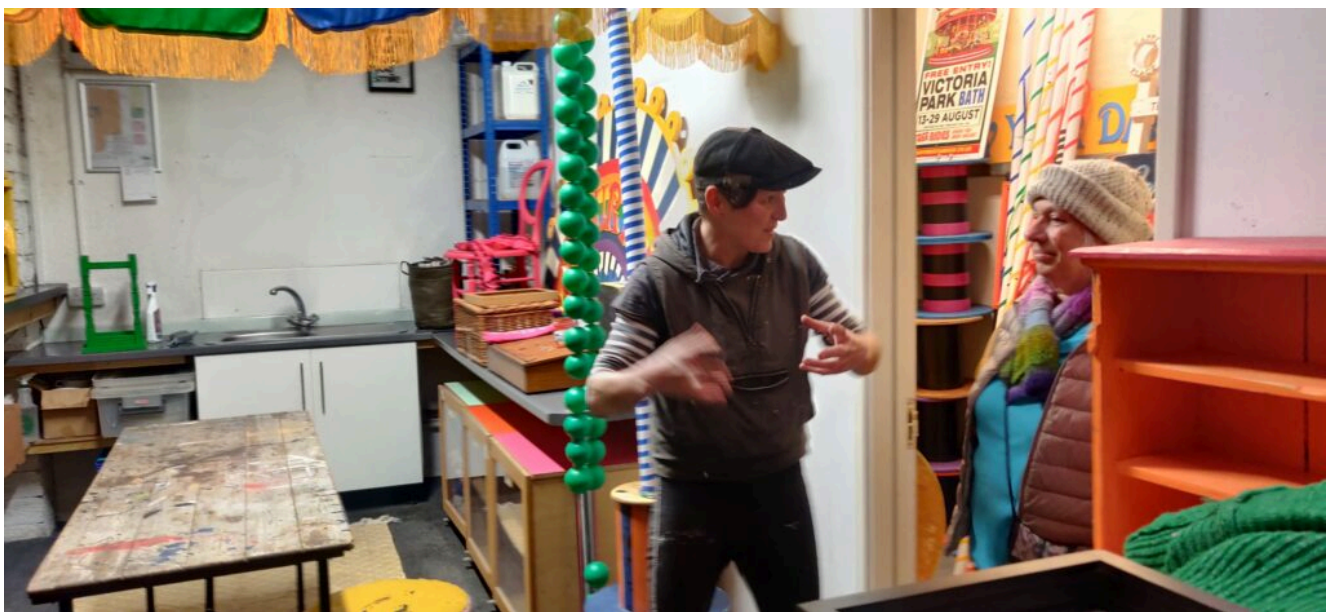
Downstairs there was a sign that said 'no entry'. That was an added incentive for me to go in and see the forbidden fruit. It turned out to be a basement which we found to be huge. We met someone called ViK, who was an artist who after 10 years bringing up children decided to return to the world of art and entertainment and encouraging children in the world of creativity.



No it was not a keep fit gym but a print works



A small sample of her props



Vik has enough creativity to last her, and all the people she comes into contact with, for life.

Vik was obviously blessed and inspired in her work and said that there had been a demand to set up structures that inspired children to play and be creative. It was aptly called the 'Colour Town Project'. This would be shown at various fairs and festivals in the summer and indeed she told us that she had already been fully booked for July and August. Children do not have to be told what to do, just to be given the initial stimulus.

If ever there was a person who was blessed by the universe for her motives it was Vik. You see her above talking to Françoise. I discussed the importance of her work, offering an alternative to people staring at TV and mobile screens, she says all her work is by word of mouth. She says children come forward instinctively especially when they see something in the process of construction and not so tidy and organized that you don't dare touch it. If we had more people like her (and indeed the organizers) the world would be a better place.

This place was exactly the opposite of the ossified and crumbling government that we have to suffer from not to mention the numerous institutions. It must kill the soul to work in such an environment when you know it is driven entirely by profit and the lust for power. In this place, the opposite applies. It is for the mental and emotional welfare of people, particularly children, for whom this has been conceived, an environment where their creativity can thrive.



I know there are plans for the forecourt area. It is a great moment for the human creative impulse if what you SEE is a scruffy and abandoned landscape but you super-impose your 3D vision of what could be. It must be the same for architects and planners.

Left – Ruby Sant, Co-Director. If anyone wants to know more about this creative grass roots organisation centred in the Bristol/Bath area visit their web site [www.lostrobot.org](http://www.lostrobot.org)





Outside the building I saw the most tawdry and weather-worn mouse I had ever seen; once it must have been beautiful.

## **My generic letter to the organizers of any new venture**

During the visit I was asked to give my opinion on how things should go. I reproduce this in public form because it is what I would say to anyone about any development in any place and at any time

You asked me for views and opinions on how I see the project developing. At the start of life, when the sperm meets the egg, the detail of the development has already been catalyzed and hopefully steered in the right direction. It is up to the memes and thought forms of the universe but also to our free will. You have already mimicked this birth process in coming together, # you as the seed, # the visitors as the egg, # the environment – (the print works in this case), as the womb..

The people who came today are not necessarily very keen on filling in forms or writing emails. The way to do it is to **listen to what people say** and allow the to nudge you one way or the other. People are inspired and they do not know it but you can be sure that at this early stage you have received

enough clues for knowing what priorities to give. If you sit down and think what people have said to you in passing, and what made an impact on you, that is an indication of the way you should go.

You have to make yourself an empty vessel, forget what you feel people should want, and just listen. Creativity is partly a doing thing but it is more a listening thing. The invisible and universal matrix that is related to something will have already spoken to you so let the creative process go ahead without worrying about what people might think. Wherever you start it will only constitute a practice run and the experience of the participants will steer it.

Your first and most vital purpose is to build up a mailing list. People who show an interest will not necessarily look at a website or pop in from time to time and ask you how you were doing. This is mainly due to the many demands on people's attention. If you have a visitor's book or something like that you need to harvest email addresses as a matter of priority. You can then give people feedback from time to time about where you are, what the 'feeling of the meeting' is, and if and when you would like people's help and support. I know that mailing lists do not seem to be the first priority with all this new energy around but the people who came to your meeting will have been the keen ones and you do not want to lose them. It is more professional to let them know by email than by chasing them up on the phone.

If you think there's going to be any problem with finance then face it rather than put your head in the sand and discover that you can't pay your rent or some other expenses period now that you have had a first meeting which was obviously successful, you need to contact those who might be strategically useful to you in financial terms. It may be that hammering on a door is not in your nature but you have to do it otherwise you will be beaten by others who are more demanding. I realized that community is an intangible product

so to speak but without a sense of community how behavior and sense of belonging will degrade and you will see behaviour types occurring which are not concomitant with a sense of community.

It is very important not to get out of step with other people in the team. Hairline cracks can split and organization far more effectively than an obvious disagreement and by the time the problem is recognized, the damage has been done and it is too late. I hope you safeguard each other as would members of the same family because when all said and done it is the family spirit that needs to prevail.

Do not worry about competition. Every group has a unique vibration and it can never be copied and the like of your group has never existed before in the history of the world. The aims of the group may be similar but the uniqueness of the participants, the area, the timing, the customers, the facilities the mores make it unique. Everyone, particularly those who do not fit in, has a unique contribution to make so do not be frightened by difference. When people want to speak, let them do so in an unfettered way even though what they say is tainted with anger or frustration.



Allow them to let off steam and have the courtesy to listen, and in the course of their speaking they may well make progress because unless you tell someone what you think you don't really know. I admit that the process can be untidy. Only machines are tidy and in my view you want to achieve the antithesis of this, the resurgence of the human being in all its unique glory, then this is the way to

go.

Don't worry about mistakes. That's all part of learning.

Thought – do children make ‘mistakes’ when playing?

No, they learn how to do things better!!!

I hope that helps

Brian

—-VIDEO LIBRARY—-

Deep Conversation with Emilio Ortiz with Pam Gregory

## **My Somerset Life by Brian Snellgrove**

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