

## **We Create A Rainbow**

### **RAVE: IT IS AN EVENT THAT IS THE BASIS OF A VERY INFLUENTIAL NEW YOUTH MOVEMENT.**

These 'rave' events have been happening in major cities and the surrounding countryside all over the Western World; including Regina. On a basic level a rave is a large gathering of open-minded people who dance to a form of music that is labeled 'techno'. These people share an experience over many hours in ways that are outside of established social institutions. "These people" refers to anybody who likes to dance: You, Me, They. It's a dance party - that's it! They do not meet to get drunk, not to pick each other up, not to show off; just dance! It's a non-exclusive, non-clique cross-over counter-culture. Hippies, punks, hip hoppers, skaters, clubbers, goths, alternative kids - everyone meets in the arena of the dance space. People unite in a syncopation of flashing lights and booming rhythmic base; dancing into a trance. As in a tribal and/or ancient ritual where people would dance for hours around the fire and under the stars to the constant beat of drummers.

It is known that when lights flicker and flash in certain colors and patterns, it can induce an altered state. This can be compared to Raped Eye Movement, which causes us to dream. Similarly, sound wave frequencies can affect us physically and emotionally in unexpected ways. Most techno music has a frequency of 120 -170 beats per minute. Therefore when one dances to that rhythm all night, one will definitely release chemicals from the brain such as endorphins. It is this environment of acceptance, syncopated heartbeats, and ecstatic state of dance-trance that generates so much positive energy and sense of personal freedom. It is what many ravers will call "the vibe".

This "vibe" or acute awareness of unity and strong appreciation for music is connecting many people around the world and is progressing popular culture in unimaginable ways.

The community that develops out of a rave scene acknowledge the positive potential and seek meaningful and creative ways to direct that energy. In February this year a rave was held in Saskatoon to raise money for HIV/AIDS Research. In December last year a huge rave called Global Rhythm Festival was in San Francisco. Here, International D.J.'s got the crowds dancing and techno groups performed amongst psychedelic video projections with concert style sound systems and a multi-cultural bazaar. Part of the proceeds from this event went to several organizations including: the Rainforest Action Network, Greenpeace and UNICEF.

In England a 'notorious' mobile group of spontaneous rave organizers who called themselves the 'Spiral Tribe', would have parties in various London squats and on

common land on the British countryside. Through their parties, they found an alliance with and supported the homeless, travelers and Romani Gypsies. Not to mention like-minded urban ravers who for many, were seeing the countryside for the first time. The Spiral Tribe once squatted in a mansion next door to Cliff Richard and held parties and events every weekend for London's urban youth. Last summer they organized a rave/festival in the Gloucestershire countryside that brought together 20.-30,000 people. The group has attracted a lot of attention from daily newspapers and TV which provide the Spiral Tribe ample opportunities to make strong statements about issues such as homelessness and land rights. The youth of today are very intelligent and technologically sophisticated. This new generation has grown-up with computers, hyper-information systems and a global awareness of the increasing problems throughout the world. They are the future adults of an extremely insecure world. Our youth can only see a failing economy, multiple injustices, political strife, religious intolerance and environmental disaster. Rave culture is a reaction to a failing society.

They are creating their own society as a result. Rave culture has accumulated all of the creative aspects of past counter-cultures: the unity and peace of hippy idealism; the expressionism and energy of the punks; the DJ techniques and sense of community of hip hop culture. When this is combined with the democratization of computer technology for production and communication and an entrepreneurial spirit from the '80's; great things can happen. In the UK various young musicians have produced rave hits in their bedroom studios with a sampler and a sequencer. Organizers create huge raves that generate loads of money for beneficial causes. Desk Top Publishers create new underground magazines and on-line computer networks have been established for enhanced communication. People have made successful careers from D.J.'ing. Independent record labels have started up. This is followed by the opening of record shops as most of the best music is released on 12" vinyl only. Clothing designers open shops to sell the style that goes with the parties. Eventually restaurants and bars open to support the scene and suddenly a previously rundown neighborhood can become trendy.

It has become a self-generating counter-culture with large underground global networks. Support and interest has come from pop cultural experts like '60's guru Timothy Leary, who gave lectures about raves. Ex-Roxy Music keyboardist, Brian Eno, gave a lecture in England last summer about the new artist as a meta-author. This is someone who takes many art works and organizes them into a new collective piece: editor, curator, DJ.

The healing powers of the dance and the shamanistic qualities of trance have attracted influence and interest from spiritual seekers and progressive psychologists such as Terrence McKenna. Some of these spiritual influences and political concerns of groups like the Spiral Tribe that have drawn many young ravers to an awareness of North American Indian culture. The similarities are very distinct. The ravers of today recognize that the current system that has dominated for several centuries is foreign to them. This same system is destroying the planet. Ravers recognize the healing and spiritual powers of dance; the cleansing of the sweat; the power of the drum; and the strength of community. It is not uncommon to smell sage or sweetgrass at a rave/festival; or to hear a sample of First Nation singing or drumming in a song; or to see a drumming circle at a

party; or see people living in tipis at a festival/rave. You can rest assured that any festival raver visiting the prairies from Europe would jump at the chance of directly experiencing First Nation culture through pow wows, sweat lodges or traditional ceremonies.

The rave scene on the prairies is young but if we all contribute to a movement of positivity, unity and awareness then tremendous potential will develop. There is a strong cultural and spiritual awakening happening around us. New doors are opening for a new generation of youth who can break away from constraints of the cultural indoctrination of several decades.

A very old and wise culture and spirituality has been here all along to lead us into a positive future. New technologies and information networks could help to fuel a scene generated by Indian youth and their friends who are all on the vibe.

Let's all unite and get busy. Get on a computer and communicate on the web, make some amazing techno or ambient music, create a magazine, but most of all let's all dance together in the circle of life. Everybody is a free-spirit on the dance floor (and in life for that matter). Red, yellow, black, brown and white, old, young, gay, straight, celibate, men, women. When all of these colours hit the light, we create a RAINBOW.

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