

CLYDE CASEY BIO

Greetings one & all. I'm Clyde Casey and the following is a brief bio of my Earth voyage thus far. . . Four years after doing a stint in the Air Force (I was under the first draft lottery in 1970). I began connecting with the energy of Street Theater during the Mardi Gras of '78 in New Orleans. When I arrived from Memphis in 1977 I had no knowledge of what went on down here, except for the fact that there was good music and that there was always a need for bartenders. I had been bartending at the Hilton and Vapors Club in Memphis and read the classifieds from a Times Picayune paper bought at the World News, which showed so many clubs that sought after good mixologists. The first place I poked my head in, I asked if they needed any help. They said "no" but asked me if I had ever used a router. I said "no" and they asked if I wanted to learn. I said "sure" and they took me to their garage and asked me if I could carve several names into Redwood. I did my best, they liked what they saw and the next thing you know I'm managing a Router Carved sign shop, called Woody's Woodpecker on Bourbon St. (in the back of a store called Disco Stop, near the Blue Angel club.) I carved signs there for around 9 months leading into the Mardi Gras of '78. The week prior to Fat Tuesday I had purchased a wooden log drum from Bob Hook at the French Market, which I kept in my apartment at Bourbon & Iberville. When Mardi Gras started kicking in full swing, I realized that I wanted to make a connection with this new experience. I put a shoulder strap on the drum and took it to the street playing a log drum solo of - Inagadadavida. Within minutes a connection was made and as I walked and played, the people followed. What surprised me was that everyone was putting dollar bills in my shirt, pants and drum! Wow, from that moment on I had been introduced to another profession that I didn't know existed - street theatre (also called Busking). The next day I went to Werleins Music on Canal and bought a cowbell and woodblock. At a thrift store, I purchased a world globe, mannequin's hand, and a telephone receiver (for the audience to hold for pictures). I began playing drums when I was 13 and always did magic and impromptu performing in school, so entering the world of street performing was a match meant to be. I gave this first rig the name 'The Musical Necklace' and over the years built approximately 20 or so necklaces each one getting heavier until my last one in 2004 which weighed around 75lbs. In 1979 I was written up in New Orleans magazine and was paid to be in a movie with Mickey Rooney called 'The Dark Side of Love'. I did a walk thru playing The Musical Necklace. There was a police strike preceding the Mardi Gras of '79 and it looked as if it was going to be cancelled for the first time. I remember being filmed while strolling and playing in Jackson Square and oddly enough, wound up on the Walter Cronkite news, since the story of the day was the possible cancellation of Mardi Gras. I was introduced to the street theatre circuit, which stretches from Key West to Venice Beach, California. In 1980 I had a four-wheeled bicycle car, called a Quadcycle, that I added my Musical Necklace to. I was able to pedal and play and with a sign on the back "yes, I accept rides" I pushed, pedaled and got rides from pickups and rigs from Key West, back to New Orleans, to Memphis, St. Louis, Kansas and into Boulder, CO. A six month journey, with many stories and positive influences. From there, I wound up in Venice Beach, CA. and eventually back to New Orleans. My first 'tour' and introduction to the world of Busking. Over the years I would pop in and out of New Orleans, performing in Memphis, Los Angeles and New York. In Los Angeles in the mid to later '80s I became involved with a live Avant Garde theatre in downtown Los Angeles called The Wallenboyd Theatre directed by Scott Kelman. I was connected with them for a couple of years and subsequently created a character I called 'The Avant Guardian. When the theatre was about to close around '88, I rented an old Arco gas station that was across from the Wallenboyd Theatre, and called the place 'Another Planet'. I carved signs, set up a piano for anyone to play, provided chess boards, built a poetry stage and planted sculptures and various art around the former gas station. Downtown Los Angeles is the home of many missions and feeds many of the homeless. The cardboard shanty towns are numerous with many of the residents wandering the streets in search of something to do. The piano and chess became an immediate magnet with many of the homeless stopping in to play music and chess, recite poetry on a small stage, read in the micro library I provided, as well as coffee for ten cents. I kept Another Planet revolving 48hrs. day, 8 days a week. People donated various items including a VCR and TV, which led to showing movies

every sunset with 'Koyannisqatsi' shown first every evening. This 'cultural communication center' garnered a lot of press interest until it's demise in middle '89 due to a fire. No one was hurt, but a lot was lost. The cultural affairs department (with Al Nodal) offered other locations for me to continue but nothing panned out. In the interim, I began to do a Public Access TV show I - called 'Dart Meditation' - "To become the Dart and Not the board", a comedy based around a game of darts. Around this time I received a letter invitation to speak at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York about Art and The Street. I was flown to New York, given excellent accommodations, and immediately fell in Love with The Big Apple. On returning to Los Angeles, I packed my bags, drove with my friend, Flame Simon, and relocated. Within a very short period of time I began building a rig on wheels that I called 'The Synergistic Sonic Sensor Shuttle'. The arts district, SOHO, and I connected very well which led to a regular gig performing in front of a place called Mano-a-Mano on Broadway near Prince St. I was paid well, plus tips and was approached by many in the Press - which included great articles in the New Yorker and New York magazines among other news media. The Kentucky Center for the Arts contacted me and asked me to perform on the Lonesome Pine Special for a show called 'The One Man Band Extravaganza'. They paid me \$1,200, and put me up in wonderful hotel. This 1991 show was picked up by PBS and shown across the country during the mid-90s. I did the performance, returned to New York and became aware that DisneyWorld and the New York State Fair were interested in talking to me. Around this same time, my parents were considering a major change of scenery, moving from Memphis to Colorado. I dropped everything I was doing in New York and left to help them close my Dad's locksmith business and residence to embark to the mountains. I put New York on the backburner and focused on being with them, thinking that perhaps I could juggle helping them and perhaps, perform in Boulder on occasion. I adapted to the Colorado environment for awhile, did some chainsaw carving, made backwards clocks, cut out full size silhouettes and performed on occasion in Grand Junction. My parents lost their house to foreclosure sometime around '98 and moved back to Memphis. I stayed for awhile but in the back of my mind wanted to return to New Orleans. I did so in 2000/2001 and continued to perform with another version of The Musical Necklace which I later placed on wheels. During this return to New Orleans I started to do photography at Old Time Photo on St. Ann in the French Quarter. I didn't perform much during this period, except for special occasions. I was paid \$300 to perform on a TV show called 'Going to California', and not long after that a new version of the 'Sensor Shuttle' began to form. I found a great studio, a full size garage in the Marigny (9th. Ward) in July 2005, the perfect place to begin my mobile musical sculptures which would later become MicroFloats. Just about the time I was just settling in, a wild woman named Katrina (and the second wind - Rita) came roaring into town and changed the life and landscape for everyone. I had moved in there just one month before all that chaos happened. I was inside of the garage when the winds began to kick up and held on for dear life. I lost half of the tin roof and a lot of my belongings including instruments. During both Katrina and Rita I was an intentional holdout, preferring to stay and ride out everything that went on during that historical time. The first Mardi Gras after the storms I built several micro floats for the Slidell parade and began to settle in and rebuild the garage studio, which I named - The 6th. Dimension of Imagination. On Lundi Gras, (the Monday before Fat Tuesday) we had a Great! Drum Circle on Frenchmen St. at Decatur. Everyone was celebrating the First Mardi Gras after Katrina. This was such a Special moment for the locals - for the vitality of New Orleans to continue to make a resurgence - a phoenix out of the ashes sort of celebration - until - the Police on horseback and cars appeared and demanded the drumming and partying to Cease. This was the Monday night (Lundi Gras) before Mardi Gras Day (Fat Tuesday). Traditionally the Lundi Gras party goes on until Sunrise and the sunshine of thousands of bright, shiny, funny, and unique costumes fill the streets beginning at bright sunlight of that Special day. The Police were adamant and became sidetracked to someone shooting off fireworks. The jam session at that time was stopped but when the police became sidetracked I was approached by some pretty girls who asked if I could start it back up. Tempted and seduced, I started a low rumble on the timpani, then someone else played on a conga, and then a cowbell and - - - - *poof* the Blue Suited Welcome Wagon Patrol demanded "We TOLD you to STOP

drumming!" and Adamantly put handcuffs on me while I protested and the crowd booed and hissed. So. . .on Mardi Gras Day, while everyone was a woopin, yellin' and having a grand ol' time, I was sittin' in the Belly of the Beast wearing an Orange Jump Suit and eating Beets! Beats me why anyone would like Beets?! The Sensor Shuttle I was playing that night eventually evolved to another mobile musical sculpture that was more interactive with the audience. I began to turn the drums outward so that the access to the drumheads and other sounds were easy for the Audience Jamboree to really take foothold. The year 2006 gave birth to the 6th Synergistic Sonic Sensor Shuttle that engaged everyone with a magical rhythm exchange that transcended the average drum circle. That particular rig connected with Frenchmen St. a number of times that year for various events and holidays. When Mardi Gras 2007 rolled around I had a large metal cage (that looks like a shark cage or could've been used to carry luggage at the airport). This structure became what is now known as the Cozmic Drum Cage of Interplanetary Rhythm. The entire performance is called 'Paranormal Percussion with You & Me and the Audience Jamboree'. Drumsticks and mallets are made available for anyone to jam along, as well as a Trumpet, Clarinet, & Two Accordians. That same year, 2007, also gave birth to an art form that I've resurrected from my past and that is Bending Forks and making them into Bracelets. I was written up in the CUE section of Gambit in Oct.'07 as The ForkMeister. All forks are engraved inside with my name, the year, 'Forkin' A, as well as highlighting Tramontina, Brazil - the company I get basic forks from. I have them in a number of stores and have been staying busy enough to say that it's my Bread & Butter way of making a living. The sales of the Fork bracelets, napkin ring holders, key rings, and bookmarks will also help support this tour. Musical Spoons will be available soon, also engraved and signed. This Voyage of the Cozmic Drum Cage has a lot of potential to evolve into a gathering of multiple hundreds or thousands of people simultaneously connecting through percussion, melodic bells, wind instruments etc. as well as having movies shown in the background. The overall visual would be Oversize Chess, a Telescope, Juggling Pins, Limbo, and Art Easels with Canvas available for anyone to paint while the rhythms are played. One gives an Energy to Receive an Energy and when the tools to Connect are placed for use by the local and global neighborhood, Paranormal events can become a Reality. The Avant Guardian Clyde Casey