

Sea Notes

July 08, 2008

Swap-o-Rama-Rama (by Alexa)



So I spent Earth Day weekend knee-deep in used clothes! Why you ask? Because we were holding a Swap O Rama Rama at the Coyote Point Museum! What's that? What's a Swap O Rama Rama? (I'll bet this is feeling a bit like a strange vocabulary test, huh?!).

Swap O Rama Ramas (www.swaporamarama.org) are part of an international network of events created by the brilliant Wendy Tremayne in 2005 and protected under a Creative Commons License available at (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>).

At a Swap, people bring a bag of used clothes and then they swap those clothes for other used clothes. Then with help of talented designers and artists, they transform those clothes into unique and creative recycled fashions. Earlier this year two incredible friends, Elena and Abby, and I decided to plan a Swap O Rama Rama and other activities to help raise money for Coyote Point Museum, a museum that does incredible work teaching kids how to care for the planet.

Our Swap O Rama Rama was very similar to a traditional one, except it was geared more towards youth. It was held on Saturday, April 19th, at Coyote Point Museum as a part of their big Earth celebration. And, because the event was geared to youth, we wanted to make sure everyone had the help they needed to transform their used clothes into wearable art.

Boy, did the creative community come through! About 50 people volunteered their expertise and time including clothes designers, knitters, jewelry designers, silk screeners, fabric embellishment artists, and organizers extraordinaire. Then, after we posted on Freecycle and Craigslist, people donated the supplies that was needed for the Swap O Rama Rama. We were given donations including sewing machines (thanks to Ray's Sewing Center of San Jose), sewing notions and supplies, and jewelry-making, knitting, silkscreening, and iron-on supplies. So when we opened our doors we had clothing designers at seven sewing stations, plus handsewing, knitting, silkscreening, embroidery, iron-on and jewelry-making workshops. And good thing we did - because lots of people came with their bags of used clothes, many staying the entire day, and some making entirely new outfits. And the fun didn't stop there. After the Swap O Rama Rama we held a fashion show so people could show off their creations. Everybody looked great walking down the runway but my favorite outfit was an incredible little dress made out of a green lace top and a dark brown embellished skirt. Judges considered the entries and awarded prizes which included supplies from the event that we recycled into prizes! Most importantly everyone had a great experience doing creative recycling.

We really wanted people to see how much fun reusing is and how cool the things that you create can be. So we also collected recycled, upcycled, and repurposed donations from around the world and auctioned them off at a Green Auction. There; was a purse made of recycled jeans from Finland, a serving platter made of street signs from the US, altered couture from Canada, and many, many more items. My favorite was a stuffed Asiatic Mouflon, (that's a sort of mountain goat) made out of recycled upholstery fabric! Wendy explains that when you go to a Swap O Rama Rama you reuse rather than buy new and create rather than consume. So next time you are cleaning out your closet, ask

yourself; do I want these clothes and accessories; to go into a landfill, or can they get used by someone else or can I use them again myself?

Above all else, remember the three Rs and one C; Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Create!

Posted by Alexa Stefanko on July 08, 2008 at 12:25 PM in [Alexa](#) | [Permalink](#)

[Technorati Tags: Alexa, Swaporama](#)

[Digg This](#) | [Save to del.icio.us](#)


TrackBack

TrackBack URL for this entry:

<http://www.typepad.com/t/trackback/2295712/29985504>

Listed below are links to weblogs that reference [Swap-o-Rama-Rama \(by Alexa\)](#):

Comments

 You can follow this conversation by subscribing to the [comment feed](#) for this post.