

Flocking to Faerieworld

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FAERIEWORLD - Sylver B'lake is getting in touch with his "inner elf."

The 27-year-old man from Fayetteville, Ark., dressed in what appears to be some sort of futuristic Robin Hood costume, is aiming a chunk of finely carved eucalyptus branch dead smack at the chest of Koe Jacsmi of Seattle.

The 16-year-old girl in the extremely flared brown pants with the orange tiger stripes is taking it all in, absorbing every sound B'lake can blow through his didgeridoo.

"It energized my chakras very much," said Jacsmi, 16. "When he did it on my head, my crown chakra just went off."

B'lake and Jacsmi had never met before Sunday, when they came across one another at the Faerieworlds Festival that wrapped up its two-day run at Secret House Vineyards in Veneta. They were just two of several thousand costumed folk who came to experience an event that's been held somewhere in the West for five of the last six years, and for the second straight year here in Lane County.

Emilio Miller-Lopez of Eugene, co-founder of the event along with his wife, Kelly Miller-Lopez, said festivalgoers from 42 states and six countries purchased tickets for the event online.

"There's something for everyone," said Kelly Miller-Lopez, who moved to Eugene from Arizona - where the first two Faerieworld festivals were held in Prescott and Sedona - with her husband in 2004. "And we've put a lot of attention into making sure that's true."



Nacoa Blossom of Nevada, donning beads, flowers and faerie ears, fits right in during the Faerieworlds Festival over the weekend in Veneta.

WAYNE EASTBURN
The Register-Guard

Robert Gould, president of Imaginosis, a Los Angeles-based transmedia arts company that specializes in working with artists of fantasy-based productions, has worked with the Miller-Lopezes to produce all five of the festivals.

"The one thing that's always been amazing about these shows is that we don't tell anyone to come in costume," said Gould, who was wearing a black T-shirt with the words "World of Froud" and a black kilt. "That's one of the biggest surprises we have. People really want to be in this world."

One of the big draws at this year's festival was husband-and-wife team Brian and Wendy Froud, internationally best-selling artists, authors and film designers whose work is the artistic inspiration for the festival. Brian Froud worked with the late Jim Henson of The Muppets on the fantasy feature films "The Dark Crystal" and "Labyrinth," and Wendy Froud worked as a sculptor and puppet builder for Henson.

Jacsmi had both artists autograph her skin just below the collarbone. "You can be yourself and no one will judge you," Jacsmi said of why she loves the festival. "That's why you come to any festival."

But this one has "faeries all around," she said. "You don't get to see that all the time."

So true.

And you don't see grown men walking around with Hobbit sticks every day. Or other men with twig-thin legs, wearing skin-tight tights, and dancing like, well, faeries with foliage stapled on their backs.

Or a woman laying in cool mud, blending in so well with the troll sculptures in the "Mud Faery Sculpture Garden" that you have to strain to see that she's there.

Nor do you usually see three generations of women walking around with purple wings.

"Faeries are kind of her thing," said Sonja Ingeroi of her mother, Sandra

Romero. The Roseburg mother and daughter came Sunday with Ingeroi's 8-year-old daughter, Ursula Evans, whose face was painted green with purplish-blue markings.

"I've always liked faeries," said Romero, "because they're magic and their world is incredible. So opposite of the one we live in every day."

Ursula, who has taken in multiple viewings of "Labyrinth," the 1986 film that starred the Froud's son, Toby Froud, as the baby kidnapped by the "King of the Goblins" (David Bowie), took a break by reading a "Betty & Veronica" comic book on a blanket. But she likes faeries better, she said.

"They're pretty much the same as my grandma," she said of Romero. "I like everything that flies."