

# Mesa Music Festival 2015

AZ Rider



This was an inaugural event, created by Motor Media. Not specifically motorcycle related, but two of our Advertisers..... Downtown Mesa Association & HoggDoggs / HogWear were involved. We had no idea what to expect, but the idea of a music festival sounded quite promising to us, so we spent some time there during the day Saturday November 14. There were more than a dozen stages within the three block area between Country Club & Center on Main Street in Mesa. The main stage was on McDonald, which was closed off for foot traffic only between Main & 1st Avenue. Saturday's weather was perfect for being outdoors and strolling the area.

Some performance venues were quite small, inside businesses. Other performers were set up out on the street. It made for musical chaos at times, as we would sometimes be hearing two, three, or more bands at once. But it was good chaos {:o)

Offering a variety spanning all the way from death metal to folk music, there were reportedly some 200 bands in the line up. Some performers were Arizonans, while others traveled from Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, & Washington. Canada was also represented. No doubt the artist who hailed from the furthest out was 'Ukulele Hiro' ~ listing home base as Osaka Japan.

In addition to the numerous street vendors, many of the Main Street shops & galleries were open. It was a great opportunity for these musicians and for the small business owners along Main. There are some really neat shops there with unique offerings you'll never find at the big corporate stores.

The inclusion of a car show at the Il

Vinaio stage {Main & Country Club} was another draw for us. Unfortunately, the cars weren't there when we were. BUT some very talented musicians were.

While listening to the music near the main stage, you could watch Aerosol Artists at work; creating their murals with rattle cans on 4'x8' sheets of wood. We also got to watch artist Jesse Perry working on a mural on the side of the Surf & Ski building. The finished piece is shown below. The mobile murals are currently on display on the corners of Main and Macdonald. Their final home is still being determined. The goal is for them to be outdoors where everyone can enjoy them. The Sliver Lot\*, at 219 W Main, is being considered.

Critique..... The bands should be assigned venues based upon the location's true ability to represent them well. Bruce & I lunched at a small restaurant where some bluegrass music was playing while we were ordering. By the time our food arrived & we'd gotten part-way thru the meal, the rock band that was perform-

formances were Saturday & Sunday, the 14 & 15th. Friday was a welcoming party for the performers, with professional seminars & such. We picked up numerous comments about that bit of confusion.... as people were on Main St Friday night, disappointed & frustrated, looking for the show. *Bummer!*

Music started at around noon both days. On Saturday, most venues had their last band going on anytime between 9-11pm. A fireworks display topped off the evening. On Sunday, everything wrapped up by about 7pm. Even though there was rain on Sunday, the shops still had performances going on indoors ~ warm & dry.

Cori Garcia, with the Downtown Mesa Association, shared this comment, "The Downtown Mesa Association worked closely with the Mesa Music Fest producers and downtown business owners to make the inaugural event a huge success! With over 200 bands participating each day, thousands of people flocked to Main Street to participate in the fun. The downtown businesses were super happy with the turnout and we cannot wait to work together to produce an even bigger event next year!"

There was so much positive feedback from people ... regarding the event overall, the performers, and how they're looking forward to next year. As mentioned earlier, this was the first-time around for this Festival. There are rough spots to smooth out, but this gathering has SO much potential! We, too, hope that the event will return next year!

Thank you, Cori, for your help with this report.

Betsy

Photo caption, from Downtown Mesa, AZ on FB: The first of four murals in the Surf & Ski Custom Screenprinting alley is completed!



These murals pay homage to the lost neon signs that were once famous to Mesa. Jesse Perry did an amazing job on this one, can't wait to see the rest!

ing next was too loud for such a small enclosed area. A go-box & simple relocation to one of the many park benches along Main allowed us to finish lunch & hear the band for their actual talent.

Meeting & visiting with fellow festival fans Jerry & Karen was an additional perk of our 'picnic'.

The Music Festival program was nice to have. It included a map highlighting the venues & a detailed play schedule for the bands. Adding an indicator of what TYPE of music the performers offer would be a useful update. Also, the promotions we saw gave the dates as November 13-15... whereas the actual per-



\*For those who are unfamiliar, the Sliver Lot is a vacant lot where 'Free Movies on Main' takes place every 2nd Friday, starting

at 7pm. This December 11, there will be a free showing of the Polar Express. BYO chairs & blankets ☺ Popcorn is provided. Food can be ordered in from several of the local restaurants. This is one of many activities that the Downtown Mesa Association is involved with to encourage support of the Main Street area.