

VASUDHAIVA RIDE

- Projects for PEACE, SUSTAINABLE LIVING and COMMUNITY WELLBEING -



The three year journey of an Indian waste-upcycling artist and a Canadian community organizer, working alongside communities through direct, grassroots action. Kumar Prashant and Ben Reid-Howells have led award winning projects in sustainable building, skills-trainings and social bridge-building, in order to demonstrate the power of community-led direct action to bring about positive change.

In May 2019, Prashant and Ben arrived to the UK, where they will be based until mid July, carrying out final project-work and events.

We call our journey the **Vasudhaiva Ride**, inspired by the Sanskrit phrase Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which means **the whole world is one family**. Our work is locally rooted and globally connected. We travel by motorcycle. We are entirely community supported.

Below is an introduction to our work: our projects, areas of work, media links and past events.

Yours in One world, One family,
-Prashant Kumar, Ben Reid-Howells and the team.

CONTACT US

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OUR PROJECTS SO FAR

Since setting out from Khubavali Village on January 2017, Prashant and Ben have ridden more than 50,000km, across fourteen states of India, Nepal, the Tibetan Plateau, the Gobi Desert, Central Asia and the Caucasus to the Aegean island of Lesvos, and across Europe to the UK.

Their projects have included teacher-training programs, the construction of hybrid self-reliant housing, a skills-training centre for resilient livelihoods, upcycled playgrounds, work with women's shelters, artist residencies and work alongside asylum seekers. They are not an NGO, but two young people working towards a more united world with global community support.

#VasudhaivaRide: FB | IG | YouTube

OUR PROJECTS SO FAR

THE BOMBAY PROJECT

Accessible Education in Jijamata Nagar slum community. January 2017.

Workshops with students on peace and sustainable practices. Teacher training program to assist EDUCO NGO in their work to transition an inner-city public school to socially relevant teaching methods to empower the at-risk youth of Jijamata Nagar.

THE PUSHKAR PROJECT

Redefining Affordable Housing in rural Rajasthan. February 2017.

Creating a model home to redefine affordable housing in rural India. Working with waste and natural materials we revived sustainable building techniques infused with upcycling design and created a model home for twelve people within a budget of USD 1,500\$. We hosted regional and global volunteers and employed local workers. This project was awarded the Hildur Jackson Award for regenerative solutions through the Global Ecovillage Network.



The Pushkar Project: one week into construction, using recycled bricks, glass bottles and reclaimed waste.



The Pushkar Project: model for affordable housing. Our first project made with the help of local villagers and a large team of volunteers!

THE BIHAR PROJECT

Self-reliant Housing and a future Centre for Resilient Livelihood. April 2017 - March 2018.

Bihar, N. India, faces issues of poverty, unsustainable development and severe vulnerability to climate change. Over the course of eleven months, we created a prototype for self-reliant, resilient housing and sustainable development, and the basis for a skills training centre for resilient livelihood that Prashant Kumar will run to deliver trainings to local workers to become social entrepreneurs, bringing employment and sustainable economic development to Bihar.



The Bihar Project outcome! A model for resilient design and a future training centre that Prashant will run upon his return to Bihar after we finish the ride. PC: Ilia Carfora

THE NEPAL PROJECT

A Playground from Waste in rural Nepal. March - April 2018.

Construction of an upcycled playground at Kagati village elementary school and training with local women's groups in upcycling products to achieve economic independence. Train-the-trainer program with Nepali NGO's working to bring education to Nepal's marginalized communities.



Prashant leading an upcycling workshop with a woman's group in the Nepal Project.



The upcycled playground we built with the community of Kagati Village, whose school was damaged by Nepal's 2015 earthquake: made entirely from waste materials.

THE KYRGYZSTAN PROJECT SERIES

Capacity Building in rural Kyrgyzstan. June - September 2018.

Organisational trainings, social entrepreneurship trainings and arts collaborations alongside farmers, craftswomen, local community leaders and NGOs and the national Artists Union of the Kyrgyz Republic to strengthen local initiatives working to create sustainable employment in rural areas that preserve Kyrgyz culture and environment.

THE UZBEKISTAN PROJECT

Resourcing Uzbek Women's Shelters. October 2018.

Uzbekistan only has two women's shelters that offer comprehensive services and long-term safe homes and community to women who have gone through domestic abuse. We are connecting these two teams with international and regional volunteers with the skills they need to continue and grow their work.

THE LESVOS PROJECT

Stoves in Refugee Camps. November 2018 - February 2019.

Millions of refugees have fled situations of violence, poverty and oppression to live in limbo in refugee camps in Mediterranean Europe where they are faced with inhumane realities and barriers to a free life. We worked alongside asylum seekers from West Africa, Afghanistan, Syria and beyond to create 300 stoves to warm families without heating in the Olive Grove Refugee over-flow camp.



THE SCOTLAND PROJECT

Building Capacity of Community Led Change. June - July 2019.

East Glasgow contains some of the UK's poorest areas with a life expectancy years below that of West Glasgow. We are working alongside local community development groups, offering our skills to carry out trainings, community work projects and other collaborations.

PREVIOUS EVENTS

- **Resilient Design, Social Change and Climate Justice.** Three Day Seminar. BIT Architectural College, Patna, Bihar. India. September, 2017.
- **Environment Sustainability and Societies Lecture Series.** Keynote Speaker, Graduate Showcase: College of Sustainability. Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada. K'jipuktuk, Mi'kmaq Territory. November, 2017.
- **Reflective Education as a Force for Peace. Student and Teacher Trainings.** Mahindra United World College of India. Pune, India. October, 2017.
- **Building Resilient Futures from Waste.** The Natural Homes Conference 2018. Prague, Czech Republic. March, 2018.
- **Building Peace, Community and Resilient Designs.** TEDx Jacobs University. TED.com. March, 2018.

PRESS

- **The Guardian. UK.**
<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/apr/17/playgrounds-of-rubbish-can-upcycling-help-kathmandu-defeat-trash>
- **The Times. UK.**
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ben-reid-howells-and-prashant-kumar-two-men-and-a-dog-s-motorbike-journey-from-india-to-scotland-rlp0glffc>
- **The Economic Times. India.**
<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/magazines/travel/soul-riders-from-india-to-scotland-on-bikes-and-on-a-mission/articleshow/58554886.cms>

AREAS OF WORK

1. COMMUNITY & ORGANISATIONAL TRAININGS

- Organisational Frameworks: Clarifying Vision, Mission, Means, Programs, and thus, - Articulating team/organisational priorities; creating timelines;
- Mapping of community issues and resources; Multi stakeholder analysis;
- Avoiding burnout; maintaining long-term vision
- Methods of collaboration
- Open Space Technology sessions: tool for problem solving, ideation.
- Facilitation 101: team dynamics; group stages; conflict management; effective communication - practices for team/ community building
- Intercultural communication

2. LEARNING & EDUCATION

- Holistic curriculum development
- Project based learning / service-based learning / values-based learning - intercultural programming, teaching
- Creating active learners

3. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE DVPT. & HARD SKILLS TRAINING

- Using upcycled waste materials--e.g. scrap metal / wood / plastics--which can be applied to: - create infrastructure: gardens, outdoor play/learning-spaces / community spaces
- Develop trades-skills (welding, carpentry, etc) through artistic applications of same materials - thus building capacity for economic development: earning from waste materials converted through upcycling into high-value functional +/- artistic products

4. RESILIENT DESIGN

- Hybridized, affordable construction methods with natural +/- upcycled +/- conventional materials - self-reliant design: locally sourced materials and design; urban gardening; water recycling; integrated systems

5. SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Making a business plan: theory of change, theory of action - product design, marketing, sales

6. ART

- Artistic process, concept, application in community context, etc
- Designing artists residencies, connections for international residencies - art as activism / service

WHAT DRIVES US

In this series of projects we work alongside local communities to become more resilient, engage wider society in these collaborations for positive change; and share stories globally to inspire and enable people around the world to engage in global issues on local levels.

HOW WE FUND OUR WORK

While our work has grown significantly in scale, we remain an entirely community-funded endeavour. Our three pillars of support are: international crowd-funding, relentless cost-cutting and our own skills and resources.

Join the global collective of the Vasudhaiva Ride.

The Vasudhaiva Ride is a callout for engagement, locally and globally. Contact us to connect.
> vasudhaivaride@gmail.com



Kumar Prashant and Ben Reid-Howells. PC: Arianna Bathala.

IMAGES OF OUR JOURNEY AND PROJECTS SO FAR.



Ecosystems game at Sai Baba Path school, Bombay. Ben leads activity to teach environmental stewardship by enacting the interconnected webs of ecology that surround us even in an urban environment.



Community programs for underprivileged youth in Pune, Maharashtra. Picking greens for our lunch! PC: Rajesh Kapoor.



Community sessions at the Bihar Project for local youth. These sessions brought together for the first time families from middle class and slum communities. This session led by Ruchi: Indian volunteer. PC: Zen Paintal.



Crossing Tibet: Prashant's first snow in an ice storm and the strength of Tibetan culture despite the oppression of the Chinese Regime. PC: Kumar Prashant.



Buddy the Dog: Prashant's rescued dog who travelled with us 14,000km across India, keeping us safe as we slept on the roadside between projects. PC: Bhushan Deshmukh



Traditional Tibetan Buddhism still practiced in Lhasa, Tibet's holy spiritual and political capital, now under strict Chinese military rule. A humbling part of our journey across the Tibetan Plateau.



The upcycled playground we built with the community of Kagati Village, whose school was damaged by Nepal's 2015 earthquake: made entirely from waste materials.



Victor Jean, team mate from France leading an ecotourism training with Community Based Tourism leaders of rural Kyrgyzstan in our Kyrgyzstan Project Series to build the resilience of rural communities.



Bright Beam Women's Shelter, Uzbekistan, where we are now sending skilled international volunteers to help the shelter develop their programs and outreach.



Writeup: Welders Mohammadreza, Afghanistan, and Jonas Nassa, Burkina Faso, work side by side in the mountain workshop of a local Lesbian farmer, making the last of the stoves to heat the tents of families living in the Olive Grove overflow camp.



Write-up: The playground made from waste metal, built by the same team of welders of our stove project. This is the only public play-space in the Olive Grove overflow camp.

