

FARRELL RUPPERT

I find myself on a porch in North Carolina drinking coffee with Peter Ross. I came south from Maine a week ago to help a few friends with a large forging project about 150 miles east, friends whom I had met at another school in the Carolina Mountains called Penland.

I have never been to this part of the world, and the dogwoods are in full bloom and the towering oaks keep the porch cool. It's refreshing to find friends so far away from my home, with common interests and outlooks on life. The conversation shifts from blacksmithing to New Zealand and my recent trips there. I have been invited back this coming winter due to my friendship with Graeme Priddle. Graeme encouraged me to come visit the first time in 2002, when I met him at a collaborative event held in Canada called Emma Lake. These collaborative events are filled with endless energy and a supernatural desire to create.

This is an energy I share with many others, including Michael Hosaluk, whom I met at Haystack and who introduced me to this way of creating. At a 'Collab', makers fuse ideas and skills to come to conclusions that would never have been possible through an individual's effort. The artist's ego gets lost at these events, in fact a good collaboration can cure an individual of this affliction.

Artist without the letter 'I' becomes 'Art St'. For me Haystack has been that street with many different avenues leading off into all directions. Haystack has led me to the makers I have just mentioned and countless others who have influenced me.