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Corner Brook's The Lyric Cranium

Wendy Rose

4-6 minutes

The unassuming brick building, located on Curling Street, just outside Corner Brook on the province's west coast, is not what it seems – much like its contents.

The Lyric Cranium, an anagram of the building's previous occupant, The Murray Clinic, is everything a weirdo could dream of.

The little shop of horrors has attracted nearly 300 visitors in its short life span – since 2013. The owner/operator and guru of grotesque, David Morrish, runs the place by appointment only.





Not everything is what it seems – while many skulls are real, others are artistic interpretations or recreations.

This summer is the last year to take in all that the Lyric Cranium has to offer, as the now retired Visual Arts professor at Grenfell University is retiring to the mainland. Finding myself on the west coast for just a couple of days, I was eager to visit the soon-to-be vacant venue.

A curiosities/oddities museum of sorts, the small but impressively stocked spot offers up-close and personal interactions with the occult and bizarre. Skulls, assorted bones, jars of internal organs, old medical supplies and taxidermied animals line the walls, which are adorned with post-mortem photography.





A full human skeleton rests eternally in a large glass case, with various human skulls lurking in the background.

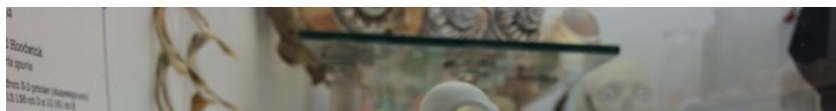
A miniature funeral procession takes place across from a real human skeleton, while a nearby wall is home to mummified cat, ironically named Fluffy – one the Lyric Cranium's biggest attractions. Every available surface is filled with amusing and intriguing objects – some found, some bought and some handmade by the owner himself.



A miniature funeral procession, with media present – doubt they'll get any answers to their questions, though.

How does one come into possession of all these abnormal artifacts? In short – become an hoarder with an artistic flair and an interest in oddities.

“I just had all these things stashed away, things I used in photographs. I pulled them out recently, two and a half years ago, and kept buying and adding to it, basically to build an immersive still-life,” Morrish explained.





Half and half – this rat couldn't decide on its own rate of decomposition.

"I make art from this, photographing it, with intentions of drawing, painting and doing some video work with it," he said, beckoning to the weird wonders surrounding us. "It's a space I use as inspiration."

The museum is divided into three sections – "natural history, death/memento mori, and junk and garbage that I pick up," he laughed. His favourite piece in his collection, though it varies week to week, is a small skull, from a muntjac deer. With small horns and large fangs, the skull could pass for a dragon's head.



One of Morrish's personal favourites from The Lyric Cranium is this skull, from a muntjac deer. It reminds him of dragons.

Asked where he finds this stuff, Morrish smiled before stating, "eBay is my friend." The collector also buys while travelling – taxidermied mice from San Francisco, dry preserved bats from

Indonesia, etc., etc. Some objects are found at home in Corner Brook, particularly on bulk garbage day, he laughed, pointing out a large whale vertebrae that was left abandoned on the sidewalk.



Every available surface in The Lyric Cranium is covered with oddities, all with their own strange backstories.

The vertebrae, like all of strange stuff encompassing our group, found new life at Morrish's Lyric Cranium – being adored, explored and photographed by not only weirdos like me, but anyone and everyone with an interest in the otherworldly and bizarre.

This summer is your last chance to check out The Lyric Cranium – email dmorrish@grenfell.mun.ca to set up a viewing. Happy lurking!



Not so strange – a collector above all, Morrish showcases anything in which he finds beauty, such as shells and sea glass found here on the

island.



This eerie broken doll invokes memories of Cannibal Corpse's creepy tune, Hammer Smashed Face.





A visit to The Lyric Cranium will leave you with a full new appreciation for modern medicine – this brace appears to be child-sized.



This baby ure, a now extinct type of cattle, lives on forever in Morrish's vast collection.



The man, the owner, the artist, the legend – David Morrish is a wealth of knowledge. His brain is worth picking. Morrish is pictured cuddling his stuffed skunk.