

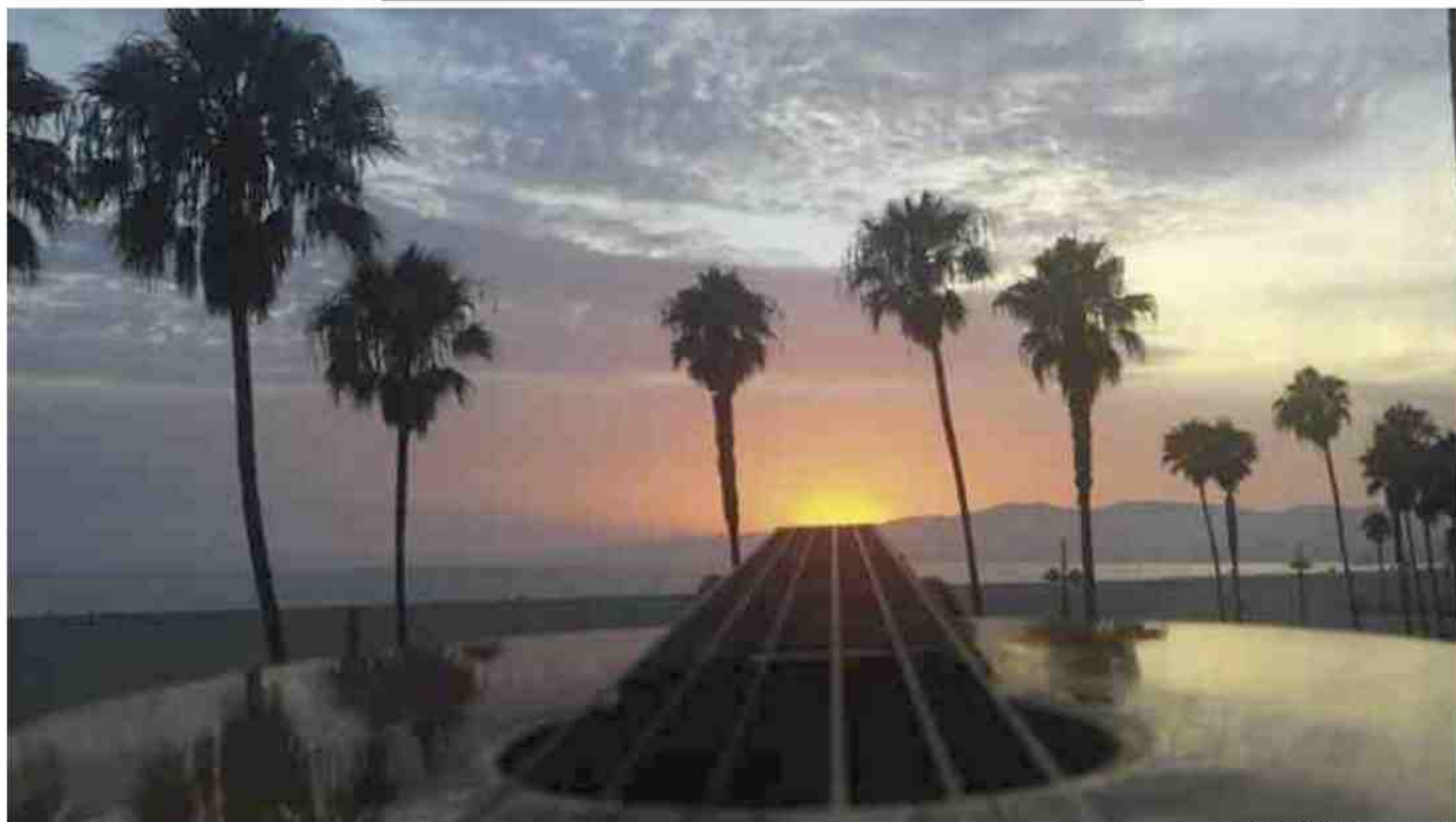
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FREE VENICE SINCE 1968 BEACHHEAD

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August
2014
#394



Above: Guitar in the sunset
Photo: Michael Jost

It Struck!

By Greta Cobar

A rare lightning storm hit Venice on Sunday, July 27, killing one person and injuring 13 others. Nicholas Patrick Fagnano (November 23, 1993 - July 27, 2014) was getting ready to start attending USC, his dream school, in two weeks.

"He worked hard these past two years and was so excited to start at USC," his father, Jay Fagnano, told the Beachhead. He didn't get into USC right out of high school, and attended Santa Barbara City College for two years. "He just went downtown to finalize where he was gonna live and from there just came to the beach, two weeks before college, with his high school friends. They really liked going to the beach, and this was their go-to spot," his father told the Beachhead.

"Nick on was on the volleyball courts, and before heading home he told his friends: 'let me just get in the water and rinse the sand off me' – he just went in for one minute. After it happened there was such pandemonium, his friends couldn't find him," his father said.

"They found him fifty feet out, about thirty minutes later. Two lifeguards found him and did everything they could. Then they took him to the Marina hospital. It was lightning that killed him," his father went on to say.

I met his parents, Mary and Jay Fagnano, on the Venice pier at a small family memorial held for Nick. Locals, friends and family members brought written words, pictures and flowers to the entrance to the pier, in what has become a make-shift memorial for Nick. He is survived by his parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. Nick has no siblings. A scholarship fund for an undergraduate transfer student to USC has been established in Nick's name.

Vern L. Williams can be found fishing at the end of the Venice pier on most days, and July 27 was no different. He was sitting right next to the light pole at the very end of the pier as "clouds came over us and stopped in the middle of the circle," he told the Beachhead. "It started raining, and then Boom! Everybody ducked down and then they all left the pier. I said I'm not going nowhere – I've been on this pier thirty to forty years of my life, fishing. I was the only one left on the pier," Williams told the Beachhead.

"The lightning hit the pole, I saw it when it hit, I saw light circle the pole – good thing I didn't touch the pole. I would've been dead. I saw the light ricochet off the pole. It was really scary. I started shivering and then it started raining," Williams said.

Will Venice Become A City of Strangers?

By Bruce Meade

Looked for a place to live in Venice lately? Then you know rents are astronomical for even the smallest spaces. Big demand, small supply.

A supply that is dwindling even further as landlords convert long-term rental units to short-term (under 30 days), which happens to be illegal in a residential zone. But since when does the law matter when Big Money is involved?

Advocates of affordable housing decry the loss of units, which squeezes the rental market even tighter. Advocates of the "sharing economy" decry the loss of a chance to make a buck, or save a buck, as the case may be. Here are some of the players in the short-term rental game:

Online Brokers such as AirBnB, etc.: they take their percentage from each side of the transaction and look the other way when things go south. Just another multi-million dollar industry. Tenants, be aware: if you sub-rent your place online your landlord can evict you. Most lease agreements have provisions against sub-renting, sub-leasing and against having guests over for more than a week or two. If you are a landlord, be even more aware: it is a zoning code violation to run a hotel in a residential area. Building and Safety is currently zoning in on these code violations with big fines.

The Los Angeles Short Term Rental Alliance (LA-STRA) is a recently formed group of landlords alarmed by the fact that some cities, like New York and New Orleans, have already banned short-term rentals. They want to make sure Venice remains a gravy bowl of profit. They want less stringent rules and oversight on short-term rentals. If they have their way, affordable housing in Venice will be harder to find than a pay phone.

Keep Neighborhoods First is a grass-roots Venice organization set up to educate and inform the public about the onslaught of short-term rentals in Venice. Go to their website, neighborhoodsfirst.com, to learn more about getting involved in this looming economic issue. The Venice Neighborhood Council is currently thinking about addressing the issue: get involved by attending meetings and taking a stand.

And a final thought: just because something is profitable does not make it right. Without affordable housing, Venice can say good-bye to whatever diversity is left here. Short-term rentals, left unchecked, may turn Venice into a city of strangers.

I'm Not Pledging That!

By Deborah LaShever

Now at our VNC meetings we begin with the Pledge of Allegiance. Interesting. It has been a while since I have had to think about standing for it. Or not. After some reflection, I find I still feel the same as I did in the sixties. This is not a poem. It is a pledge. That means in order to repeat it – with hand over heart no less – I should believe it on a very deep level. A pledge is my word. And I take that seriously. This tends to offend some people.

What do the words really mean? Have you thought about it? Are they true and applicable in our country today? Do most people believe we are one nation under God? What does the Republic actually mean? Does it still stand for something? What? Are we really indivisible? Is there truly Justice and Liberty for all? Just who and what am I pledging allegiance to really? The military industrial complex? Corporate personhood? Who are these people running the country? They do not resemble anyone who is doing the Will of the People that I can savvy and isn't that, after all, what the Republic stands for?

Don't mean to offend....but....hmmmm....I should say these words that do not apply to any reality....why? I should pledge myself to untruth because....? I should drink the Kool Aid? Or at least publicly pretend to so not to offend some distant, hardly looked at sense of generalized red white and blue clad patriotism? Nope. Sorry.

Yes, I will stand while people pledge their allegiance, even though I know most have never thought about the meaning of the words. I will face the American flag out of some sort of weird respect for people who still like to lap up that artificially colored, artificially flavored beverage. But the words I do speak – loudly and with conviction – are, "with liberty and justice for all." I do this just in case someone is actually listening. I speak this fine phrase with the full force of my conviction. For it is this phrase that for me epitomizes what this nation has indeed stood for and what made us great once upon a time and what – if anything – will save us. I speak these words to draw attention to the fact that it is not happening at all – and that it should.

It is inauthentic for me to do anything else. This country is not what we say we stand for. Again, sorry if I offend anyone but if I do not stand for truth I do not stand for anything. I pledge my allegiance to that.



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The FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD is published monthly by the Beachhead Collective as a vehicle for the people of Venice to communicate their ideas and opinions to the community at large. The Beachhead encourages anyone to submit news stories, articles, letters, photos, poetry or graphics of interest to the Venice community.

The staff reserves the right to make all decisions collectively on material published. There is no editor on the Beachhead. The printing is financed by ads, sustainers and donations. The articles, poetry and art work express the opinions of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Beachhead Collective.

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The Beachhead is printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink.



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Dear Beachhead,

Mary Getlein's July piece (*Bonin Walks From Meeting*) is insightful and indicative of how Mr. Bonin approaches the Venice neighborhood and governance in general.

The freshman council member doesn't allow for any serious exchange with residents and the "Venice Life" meeting held on June 18 was another example of that flawed policy.

When first elected to the council Mr. Bonin was a speaker at a monthly meeting of the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) and took no questions.

When a Venice Town Hall was held in response to the senseless auto death of an Italian tourist on her honeymoon, Bonin lectured residents on his vision of Venice, and promptly left again after his prepared remarks and no interaction with the hundreds in attendance.

It seems to be the policy of the 11th District council member that unless the environment is controlled, an honest discussion or the ability to ask questions is non-existent.

In dealings with his staff, emails are rarely if ever returned – especially if you disagree with their public policy positions or inaction as witnessed for over a year as it applies to the current condition of the Venice bike path and knolls that separate it from the pedestrian walk.

Building consensus and reaching out to residents in a diversified community such as Venice takes thoughtful leadership from the head, and not the back of the line.

Sincerely,
Nick Antonicello

Dear Beachhead,

I play drums for Phylte Risk (<http://VeniceLion.com>). I am primarily a Jazz drummer. I play at a low volume that accompanies acoustic pianos and other Jazz and quiet amplified music groups. I enjoy drumming for Al Robinson, who leads the group, and is a great guitar player, who plays through a small battery operated amp.

Our group alternates performances with other acts in front of On the Waterfront restaurant on Ocean Front Walk just north of Rose. The police came by as a loud guitar player was performing, and they shut him down. I told the officers that we had encouraged him, we encourage all performers who come out to play, and do not appreciate the police who come by and say all kinds of contradictory things, and that amplified sound is ok as long as it's kept to a reasonable level.

So our group began to play at our lower level. The policeman came up to our guitar player who leads the group and was able to have a normal conversation with him as we played, and told him to turn it down. So we did. The police officer and the guitar player were able to converse and I could even hear what they were talking about sitting at the drums while we were playing. The officers told us to play even lower and when we did they then told us to shut down. We did comply. I was angry. They have no right to shut us down, we know the legal decibel level and know the police were being unreasonable. The crowd and the patrons where chanting over and over "let them play". So this is when at some distance away from where we were set up I went up to the officers and asked for their contact information, because I wanted to make a complaint against them. They told me they would not give me this information unless I gave them my driver's license. Well I told them I didn't want to give them my license and they again repeated the same story that they wouldn't give me their info unless I gave them my license. So like an idiot I gave them my license. I thought they were telling the truth. I waited and waited and thought they were writing down the information I had asked for and waited and waited and they gave me a ticket.

A ticket for 115.02 LAMC: Amplified Sound: Engaging in the installation, use, or operation of any loudspeaker or sound amplifying equipment in a fixed or movable position;.....

Amplified sound is legal on the boardwalk no matter what the police say.

I've lived on the OFW since 1992 and there are many horror stories from many musicians who have been abused, lied to and threatened by the police. Venice has been a circus, loud, noisy since its beginning. Anyone who says they came to Venice for peace and quiet is a bold face liar.

Randy Saludes

Thanks for your generous donations!

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Dear Beachhead,

The wonderful DVD, "The Cook," (Milestone film & video, 2003) starring Roscoe Arbuckle and Harold Lloyd, deserves the attention of Venice. It is a real gem!

The disc includes countless, amazing historic scenes shot right here in old Venice, and Ocean Park!

The first film on the disc, *The Cook*, long believed lost, was restored when additional missing footage was found in Norway. With incredible sight gags, juggling food, and wild slapstick comedy, this picture includes amazing footage of a chase on the old Crystal Pier, or perhaps early Ocean Park Pier, with its rickety roller-coaster, in Santa Monica, just south of Pico Blvd. In the background appears what is now the Casa del Mar Hotel, and the whole beachfront to the south, with many rides and buildings under construction. Some of this footage may be misidentified on the disc's liner notes as the Pike, yet may be recognized as old Santa Monica in 1917.

Surprisingly, this movie includes what may have been the 20th century's first filmed wardrobe malfunction: high up on the rollercoaster overlooking the Pacific, a frightened cashier, played by Alice Lake, turns to face her pursuer (Al St. John as *The Toughest Guy*), when her see-through bodice slips slightly, and she reveals a bit more than just her acting talents.

(See if you notice *The Toughest Guy* leering – while actually the actor seems to be clinging for his life to a flimsy guardrail!)

The entire beachfront scene from Santa Monica Pier to Ocean Park Pier, Lick Pier, and Venice Pier ("Admission: 10¢") are the backdrop for at least two of the hilarious early films on this disc. Shot in 1917, as well as in 1920, using a single stationary camera, (just months before the pier being destroyed by fires), these pictures present our whole early beachfront scene, ready to be explored as if through a time machine.

The later, very funny film, "Number Please," starring Harold Lloyd, gets comedic (and some racially stereotypic) play from the newfangled telephone, but the action soon brings us to the pleasure piers.

Everything there sure looks like a lot of fun, demonstrating how many fascinating and curious attractions the beachfront had going in 1920. In fact, these pleasure piers play their own big role in this picture, since all that festivity emphasizes the irony of Lloyd's forlorn look, as a lover who has lost again, now lonely in the crowd.

The Merry-Go-Round has a great part in this movie too, as Keaton runs in frantic circles to rescue his girl's small dog, one who is also an incredible scene-stealer (and purse-stealer,) while we watch the dog's point of view from a camera placed on the turning carousel.

It may well be noticed that attitudes toward the treatment of animals in film have changed over the last century, though Keaton and this poor hardworking dog will likely still make us laugh out loud.

At the close of the film, a vignette focuses on his sad gaze, then widens out to show Buster Keaton gloomily chugging off on the little Kinney-Marquez Railroad that took happy vacationers on Venice beachside pleasure tours.

Explore more, and tell what you discover!
Yours for all time,

Alan Rodman

I can be reached at (310) 927-2959, if needed.

Correction: The "320 Sunset Update – It's Your Venice, Have Your Say" article published on page 2 of the July issue was written by Roxanne Brown. Her name was omitted.

VENICE STORIES

SHOGO KUBO



1959 - 2014

One of the legendary Zephyr skateboard team died suddenly in June while out paddle boarding in Hawaii. **Shogo** and the **Z-Boys revolutionized skateboarding** in the 70's, infusing the sport with contemporary surfing styles.



The team's **outsider** status and radical style inspired a **new** generation of skaters, changing the sport **forever**.

DOGTOWN AND Z BOYS



A FILM ABOUT THE BIRTH OF THE NOW

A gathering was organized for July 19th at the Venice Pier to **remember** the fallen hero.



Z-Boys, surfers, **friends** and **family** gathered in a circle for a solemn moment by the sea. Jim 'Red Dog' Muir began the ceremony speaking **heartfelt** words about his friend, Jeff Ho and the Z-Boys **honored** Shogo's memory and Hosoi's fond **stories** brought **tears** to the eyes of the onlookers.



Red Dog handed out leis and flowers to carry out to the end of the pier.



The **crowd** walked out over the water as the surfers **paddled** out...



...forming a **ring** at the end of the pier. They spoke words of **reverence** and remembrance for **Shogo**. The sky began to sprinkle a few light drops of rain onto the calm water...



Bundles of flowers were **tossed** from the pier and **floated** into the ring...



The surfers gathered **together** and **splashed** the water for Shogo's skater spirit.



...and **together** they caught waves and **surf**ed to shore...



SHRED ON SHOGO KUBO



JASON HILL 2014

Z Budapest: Feminist Witch Who Fights Back

By Krista Schwimmer

The history of Venice is full of rebels, revolutionaries, dreamers, and even witches. One such witch is Zsuzsanna, or Z Budapest. Some Venetians may remember her for her shop, "The Feminist Wicca" on 442 Lincoln Boulevard. Others, for her arrest and trial for the simple act of fortunetelling there.

In 1970, along with other volunteer women at the Crenshaw Women's Center, Z Budapest "moved to the beach because we couldn't take the air anymore. That was a great move because there California could kiss me. The sea breezes, the good smells, more relaxed people, less traffic. There was a lot of blessing there for me. A little Hungarian who made it all the way to the edge of the world." During this time, Z says, Venice was full of lesbians, many riding motor bikes "because parking was always a premium and motor bikes were easier to park."

She first lived on Brooks, across from Gold's Gym, but moved out to Rose because of the street noise at night. In the early '70's, she opened a store. Her ad in the Beachhead read: "detailed tarot readings, occult supplies, magical jewels, and books and herbs." Her first supporters were the black women from the area. They knew exactly what kind of occult supplies they wanted. They particularly approved of Budapest's oils, as she did not cut them with alcohol. One of Budapest's favorite oils is Rosa Ava, or, White Rose. This scent was also Susan B. Anthony's favorite because it was discreet. According to Z, White Rose, "makes everyone stand back and develop a little respect for you."

While living in Venice, Z commuted back to Crenshaw every Wednesday, the day women came for abortions. She had a job as an abortion counselor before it was legal. Once, Z recalls, a woman came for an abortion to the clinic with her six children. She was fighting not to have a seventh. Her husband was a Catholic and would not use a rubber. Z believes that patriarchy uses the natural bond a mother has with her child against her. "You don't have to put any more chains on (a woman). Her heart keeps her there." As a result, many women cannot walk away from abusive relationships because there is a child involved.

Z was not, however, arrested for her work as an abortion counselor; rather, she was arrested for the violation of municipal code 43.30. This code made fortune telling illegal with one exception: it was permitted if part of a recognized religion's practices.

On February 10, 1975, the fateful day arrived. The cops had been routinely busting psychics and astrologers alphabetically. They had reached the letter Z. A female, undercover cop, named Rosalie Kimberlin, made an appointment to have a reading with Budapest at "The Feminist Wicca". When Z stepped into her store for the appointment, she was met with a horrific stench: a cat had mysteriously gotten in and left a pile of shit right under the chair she normally sat on during her card readings. Although Z felt this was an omen — after all, she didn't even have a cat — Rosalie pleaded with her, saying it was her only day off, that she had heard feminists were so reliable. Upon hearing the word, 'reliability', Z caved, calling this "the feminist card." So, they opened the store windows and Z read the undercover cop's cards.

Z recalls that the reading was succinct and accurate. Z told Rosalie that "she has an occupation that has to do with bondage — the Devil card, you know. Voluntary bondage that she could get out of if she wanted to but she was there for some payoff." She told her that her daughter would be accepted at a Vet school in Florida, and other detailed things that came to pass. At the end of the reading, the undercover cop left, sending in two plain clothes policemen. They wanted to handcuff Budapest, something that pushed her buttons as a Hungarian refugee. In Hungary, arrest could mean going to Siberia. So, she told the cops that whoever first touched her would receive four months worth of nightmares. Nobody touched her. They even opened the door for her. At the station, she called the feminist lawyer, Marge Buckley, who came and bailed her out.

The trial went on for four days. Her judge, Michael Sauer, was an active Catholic who took communion before work. Her lawyer told Z that to

change the law, Z would have to actually lose the trial so that they could appeal. Z said, "Ok, I'll go the long way, the hard way, and give me something to drink right away." During that time, Z remembers, you could actually get a good bottle of Portuguese or Span-

ish wine for just 99 cents!

At the end of the trial, Z was indeed found guilty. Then, a nine year battle began. She obtained pro bono legal work with the help of women finishing law school who would cut their teeth on her case. Fittingly, it was Chief Justice Rose Bird of the California Supreme Court who finally threw it out. Chief Justice Bird was the first woman appointed as both a justice and chief justice of the California Supreme Court. Her decision set a precedent that is still used across the country where similar laws still exist. When Z won, the only congratulations she received was a clipping from the LA times, sent by the last lawyer who worked on her case. Z said that she didn't mind. Still, every time Z sees people reading tarot on the sidewalk, she says, "I'm just smiling and thinking, little do they know that every penny they make is because Z Budapest fought back." The ruling, however, was critical for another reason. Because the Supreme Court repealed the guilty verdict as unconstitutional and in violation of the Freedom of Religion Act, Wicca found its first legal foothold.

Before the fight was over, Z moved to Oakland, California where she lives today. She said she stopped reading tarot for a while. "My mind is not just on that. My mind is on history. I am very much interested in the evolution of my species." This love of history and women led Z to accomplish many other things. She founded the first feminist, women-only coven called Susan B. Anthony #1; she created a year long feature, "Every day is a Holiday," on KPFA radio where she found daily holidays often feminine in nature. She wrote 10 books, all centered around women's spirituality, starting in 1975 with, "The Feminist Book of Lights and Shadows," later republished as the beloved book, "The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries." Other titles include, "Grandmother Time," "Grandmother Moon," and "Summoning the Fates."

Right now, Z Budapest is preparing for her upcoming Goddess Festival in Northern California from September 5th through 7th. Z first established this festival in 1980 as part of the Women's Spirituality Movement which she founded. This year, Z is asking participants to download photos of all the Republicans who cast votes against feeding children and other bad things. Why? Because she plans to lead them in "an ancient little hex. We're going to pee on those pictures." Then, they will toss them in a bonfire and send it back to the universe. "This is so instinctive," Z states, "women peeing on what they want to get rid of. It's being done in Russia on Putin's face."



Above: Z Budapest in her Venice store

Z wants women today to reconstitute the consciousness raising groups, like the Red Tent movement. She also wants each woman to find women role models from history. "Who are the women that you respect now, from the past, who are just dust now, but their ideas and what they achieved, you are using. You are living off them." Then, says Z, "you pay it forward by putting your energy into fighting and maintaining woman's rights."

Z Budapest has done just that. From defeating a municipal code in California that did not allow women to seek each others counsel through card readings to igniting a woman's spirituality movement world wide, Z Budapest is a feminist witch who continues to fight back where ever she goes — a witch armed with knowledge, laughter, many "blessed be's", and a hex now and again.

For more information on Z Budapest:
www.zbudapest.com

For more information on the Goddess Festival:
www.goddess-festival.com

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KIM'S MARKET and 320 SUNSET UPDATES

By Roxanne Brown

Kim's Market's new owners Alicia Searle and partner, architect Steve Vitalich, and LUPC Chair Robin Rudisill held an Owner Outreach Meeting at the Oakwood Community Center on July 14, 2014.

They requested use of the community center, because Kim's Market could not hold the crowd of 50 plus. Yet, the proposal for Kim's is to have a restaurant, selling on-site and off-site liquor, serving 60+ patrons. This does not include people lining up for take-out, people waiting to be seated, and employees.

The Venice residents who came to this meeting, concluded and clearly stated that they do not think this proposed change of use to a restaurant serves the community. Only one person spoke in support of the restaurant.

Kim's Market is located at the juncture of Venice, Ocean and Mildred (across from the Venice Library and Farmers' Market, along with a coastal access route), making this an already congested area with narrow streets and little parking. Kim's will have some tables seating patrons on the sidewalk (at this busy intersection).

Residents at the meeting stated that there have been several bike accidents at this location. An elderly woman told the group that a truck hit her as she attempted to cross Ocean Avenue to get to Kim's.

Kim's owners say they will provide seven parking spaces, though they have none on-site, and want to have valet service, which would further cause backups and congestion. Where will their delivery trucks go?

Kim's Market's plan sounds similar to 320 Sunset's plan. It seems that Gjelina's Owner, Fran Camaj, is backtracking and trying to piece meal a plan together. He applied for and was permitted a bakery. Now Camaj wants to go backwards and change 320 Sunset from its original use (prior to his bakery, it was an office of 6 artists) to a restaurant serving 85 patrons, 30 employees, 30 getting take out, plus people eating on milk crates in the parking lot and people waiting in line to be seated. What happened to the bakery?

Like Kim's, 320 Sunset is on a narrow street at the juncture of Sunset, 3rd Street, and the alley between Vernon and Sunset (with Gold's Gym and Google nearby, along with a coastal access route).

320 Sunset's parking lot will be receiving deliveries and have patrons eating on milk crates with a day-time attendant and a few cars parked there. Cars and people eating on crates – doesn't sound healthy, safe, neighborhood-friendly or legal.

Camaj has applied for an on and off-site liquor license for 320 Sunset. Why does a bakery need a liquor license? Can a liquor license be issued to a bakery?

There is evidence that Camaj's Gjelina's restaurant on Abbott Kinney has not been a good neighbor (see the July Beachhead along with other media coverage, code violations, seating over capacity, noise com-

plaints, improprieties with parking). Why would the city allow this restaurant at 320 Sunset, knowing the owner's track record and that he will most likely bring this same set of problems to another neighborhood?

There are so many similarities in these two projects, which will negatively impact Venice. Here are 8 major community concerns:

1. Abutting residents' homes (12-13 feet in 320's case – less than that at Kim's) with adverse impact on the community's quality of life.
2. Zoning: 320 Sunset is zoned M1-1 (light manufacturing). M1-1 is where our endangered species – Venice artists – work. There is a shortage of M1-1 zoning for our artists. Kim's is zoned commercial. A commercial appraiser at the outreach meeting was adamant that Kim's location is completely inappropriate for a restaurant.
3. Restaurants (providing little to no parking) increase pedestrian and vehicular traffic, further reducing parking and increasing traffic in these already congested areas – 3 streets converging, narrow streets.
4. Hinder coastal access.
5. Liquor licenses (on-site and off-site sales) increase patronage. Liquor tends to increase patrons' speaking volume and bad behavior, and impairs driving/walking/biking abilities. 320 and Kim's have outdoor patios, where this loud volume will echo throughout the residential neighborhoods.
6. Late night hours: 320 Sunset hours: 6 a.m. to 1 a.m. – with prep and clean up before and after, and baking operations – that's pretty much 24/7. Kim's hours: 7 a.m. – 12 a.m. Outdoor patio: 7 a.m. – 10 p.m. Sunday – Thursday, and 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, with prep and cleanup before and after.
7. Drought: Water usage – Restaurant: Versus bakery? Versus market?
8. Little to no Venice Community Support.

8. Little to no Venice Community Support.

In both cases, it seems the same strategy was used – a type of clandestine bait and switch: neighbors were led to believe one thing – a market, a bakery – when it seems that all along restaurants with on-site and off-site liquor licenses were the actual goals.

Neighbors are OK with a market at Kim's location and a bakery at 320 Sunset. A market and bakery serve the needs of the community. Neighbors oppose both proposals for restaurants (with on and off-site liquor licenses, and late night hours) at these preposterous locations.

It's not only the developers who have the community up in arms, City Hall and the regulatory agencies are being complicit. The owners can't do anything unless the city and its regulatory agencies allow it. In our view, they're not fulfilling their obligations to the residents, not monitoring Venice, not doing their job.

Where's the Coastal Commission? Where's the Zoning Administrator? Where's Building and Safety? Where's Alcohol and Beverage Control (ABC)? Where's Councilman Mike Bonin? Where's Mayor Eric Garcetti?


It's time to push the pause button! It's time to do the right thing!

A neighborhood organization is the easiest and most effective way to have your voice heard. Each voice gets louder and bigger in the context of a group. If you wish to be heard regarding these two projects, join Concerned Neighbors of 320 Sunset (CNS); please email us at concernedneighborvenice@gmail.com.



Above: Kim's Market, at 600 to 604 Mildred Ave. A new restaurant at this location would probably involve installing windows on the wall with the beautiful, historical mural of Venice – the owners would have the right to destroy the mural if they wish.

Photo: Greta Cobar



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Venice Artist Stephanie Visser... Still Standing and Thriving in the Venice Art Community

By Tina Lynch

Artist Stephanie Visser has submerged herself in the Venice Art World. Her studio is located in a shared artist warehouse on Vernon, which keeps her involved in the Venice arts community. "I find Venice an exciting and vibrant place to work," said Visser. "I love the exposure to other artists and am inspired by what they are doing which often feeds my own process in a way I would never experience elsewhere."

She has been involved in the Venice Art Block since it was first created in 2013. Visser has participated in three of the Art Block events and plans to be a part of the next one.

"I was pleased with the last event," said Visser. "It was very well attended. It brought out people that were really interested in the art and wanted to chat and understand what motivated the artists and how they actually did the work. It's a lot of work and very tiring to be there and participate for a whole day event, so when people seem invested in the process and enjoy the day, it makes it worth while."

Visser also keeps her studio open for the Venice Art Walk. She continues, "It's such a well known event that it brings out tons of people and it's a mixed crowd bringing a diverse group together all in the name of art and doing something good for the community."

In 2013, Visser had to deal with her own "life obstacle." She was told she had cancer. "Absolutely the worst word one can ever hear," said Visser. "I dodged a bullet. Non-metastatic. Complete cure with surgery...final outcome...still to come. Last surgery, number 6, scheduled August 7."


Through that life experience, Visser's new work has become different from her previous paintings. She explained how she learned about each emotion. "Anger... is ultimately based on fear...that small inner voice that whispers that somehow we are responsible for where we are...what did I do to have this happen in my life...am I somehow at fault?...then we use anger to cover it up. Happiness...something you might think would be very easy was a very difficult painting to do...a lot of stuff underneath the surface...finally at the end, covering the hurt, pain, guilt, sadness, fear....making a choice to be happy despite the stuff underneath."

Visser's paintings are on view at FABstudio, (2001 Main St., SM) Friday, August 1st - September 25th. (424) 744-8156; <http://fabstudiola.com/> <http://stephanievisser.com/>

Right: Stephanie Visser at work



Above and Left: 8th Annual Venice Community BBQ and Potluck, August 2. Thanks to the Venice Neighborhood Council and Fire Station #63.
Photos: Greta Cobar



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SAVE THE DATE!

Maureen Cotter's
show will be at Beyond Baroque in Venice.
Aug. 30th., Doors open at 7pm for preparty, show at 8pm.
\$15.00 at the door.



All Aboard the Tram

By Marty Liboff

When Abbot Kinney opened his Venice of America in 1905, he had a small steam train running around the canals. On the Venice Ocean Front there were wicker basket trams that were pushed from behind by people power. (A good idea for today?).

By 1920 the trams were electric battery powered. They ran from Windward Ave. and the Venice Pier, to the Ocean Park Pier, and then to the Santa Monica Pier, and back. Believe it or not, when I was a kid, the Ocean Front Walk continued straight to the Santa Monica Pier with shops, homes and hotels just like in Venice.

In 1923, the Venice Tram Company was formed. By the 1930s, the trams had 4 cylinder, Ford model A engines and canopy tops. There were also similar 4 cylinder, Chevy engines. The seats faced toward the ocean or shops plus a back seat.

In 1958, the Ocean Park Pier was transformed into Pacific Ocean Park, or P.O.P. It was an amazing ocean-themed Disneyland. (This is another great story.) The old trams were spruced up and painted blue, and cute sea-horses were attached to the fronts. On the back was an ad for P.O.P. During the early days of P.O.P., the 18 tram fleet carried 20,000 people a day!

The old engines kept rolling for over 40 years. They never went very fast, especially in later years. Sometimes they would even stop if there were too many people on board. It was a nickel early on, then a dime. My pal Hank reminded me that for a while you had to pay an extra dime to go all the way to the Santa Monica Pier.

When I was little, my mom would take me on the tram to Windward ave. There were all kinds of shops there: grocery store, drugstore, clothing shops, notions and a bar. She would do some shopping and then we would ride the tram back home to Ocean Park. The conductor would stop for us by our house. I loved riding the tram, watching the walk go by with people and sites and with the ocean breeze blowing through my hair. It was wonderful sunny days...

Most of us poor kids in Ocean Park and Venice would wait until the tram slowed or stopped and then we'd hop on the back and sneak on. Back in the 1950s, a dime could buy us kids a comic book, a Coke in a bottle, or even two Hershey chocolate almond bars. We wouldn't want to spend our precious dime on the tram if we could sneak on for free. A couple times we got caught and the conductor stopped and kicked us off. I remember him yelling at us! Sometimes the conductor saw us but let us poor kids ride anyway. Some of the early skateboarders in the neighborhood would grab the back and be towed along the beachfront. Real cool! Sometimes the conductor would yell at them! It was great fun...

As I remember, they had a big garage on Brooks and the Speedway, behind where the Cafe Venicia is today. They were kept there and tinkered on. There were 18 trams, and 16 before they stopped running. They were always tuning up those antique engines. It was an amazing shop with strange tools and lifts and things going on.

After P.O.P. opened, Santa

Monica began its Ocean Park Redevelopment Project and tore down most of Ocean Park. A couple years later, L.A. began condemning the old Abbot Kinney buildings around Windward and other old buildings around the beach. The beach became blighted. Then P.O.P. closed in Oct. 1967. P.O.P. soon became a crazy, scary ghost town. There was no reason to take the tram and no place to go. The few buildings left on Windward just had a couple seedy bars. Ocean Park was gutted. The heart of old Ocean Park was Pier Ave., with shops of all kinds, and it was torn down. Many of us locals had been kicked out and our homes demolished. We were some of the tram ridership. I remember watching the old torn up trams sadly chugging along the boardwalk with rarely any riders.

In September 1970, after one of many fires on the closed P.O.P. pier, the trams stopped running without any fanfare. The manager, Robert Bestor, a relative of the original owner, said that "Revenue was way down since P.O.P. closed. Our revenue doesn't even cover the cost of our insurance. The beach is in a state of decay. Vandals have cut up the seats and canvas tops. Some neighborhood kids jump on to ride for free. Some kids even throw rocks at us and dent the trams!" He also blamed TV: "TV hurt business also. People don't go to piers and ballrooms anymore. They stay home and watch TV."

In the next few months, there was some discussion by the L.A. City Council whether to save the trams in the hope that the beachfront would improve. Some councilmen wanted the Parks and Recreation, or Transportation departments, to take over the trams, but in the end they decided to end the franchise.

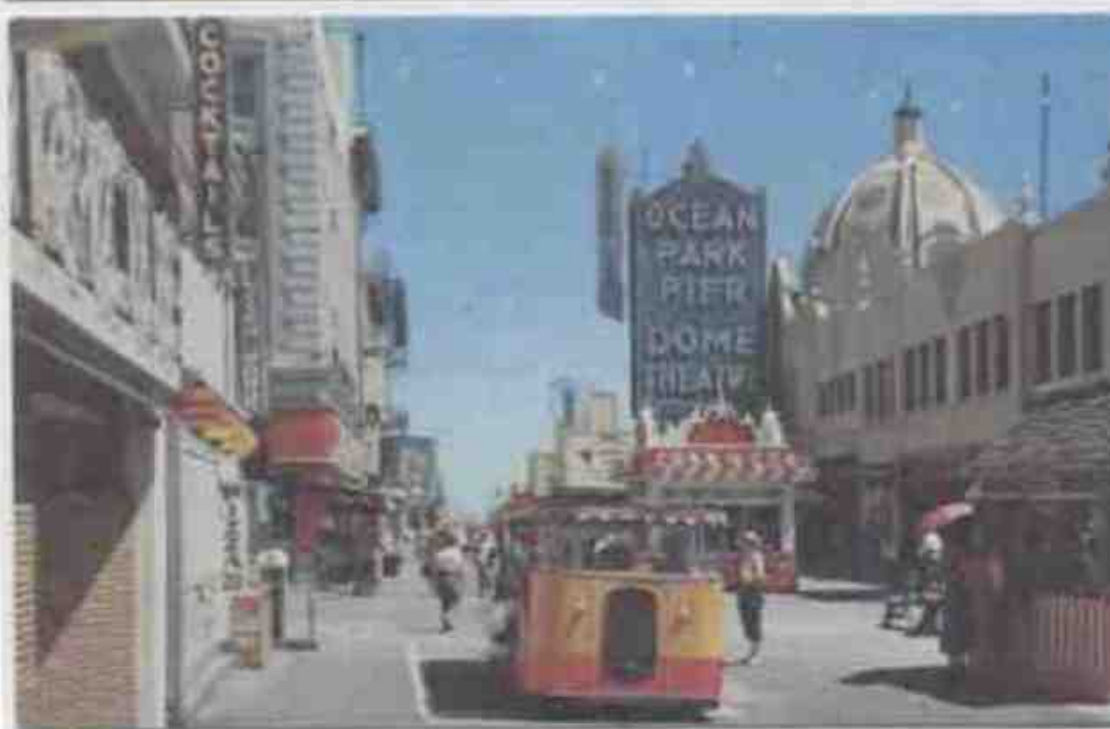
After nearly 48 years and over 10 million riders, the Venice Tram Company disappeared. There had been trams on the Ocean Front since the beginning of Abbot Kinney's amazing Venice of America, over 65 years before the last run. Now, only a handful of us old timers even remember the tram.

(For more history read 'Venice California: Coney Island of the Pacific' by Jeffrey Stanton)

Damn Where's that Venice Tram!

Hot damn Madame
Let's ride the Venice Tram.
For only a Dime
We'll have a great Time.
From Windward to the Santa Monica Pier
I'm gonna kiss my Dear.
We can eat green eggs and Ham
On the Venice Tram.
It's fun at the pier in Venice
Eatin' pizza & Coke with Ice.
We'll ride the roller coaster at P.O.P.
Then swim in the Sea.
Off to Santa Monica Pier we Zoom
To dance at the La Monica Ballroom.
Then back again to Windward
Where the conductor yells, "All Aboard!"
Hot damn Madame
Let's ride the Venice Tram!

— Marty Liboff



Left: The Venice Tram through the years: Top postcard: Man-powered push roller chairs, 1905 to 1910; Second and third postcards: Electric trams, 1910 to early 1930s; Bottom postcard: The tram from the 1930s to when it stopped in 1970.

RIP: Carol Pomerantz

12/07/1933 – 6/10/2014



HANDS

(To Carol Pomerantz, A Child of Flowers)

When My husband and I visited Carol in the hospital before she passed, she took our hands between her own and caressing them, shared with us the secrets of her hands.

Hands see
Faces in flowers, dreams in sunshine
Every day

Hands shape
Strangers into friends
One touch at a time

Hands dance, unafraid
Lose the self
Then find an old child inside
Claim it new

Hands sing
Softly so everyone can hear
A song of peace

Hands rock babies
From darkness
Into morning, aglow with light

Hands fold into prayers
We can forgive ourselves
What we cannot undo

Hands light candles
So bright they flame
Into memory

Hands are for loving
Like children who play
And dance and sing
Be happy, this is our holiness
Our gift to the world

– mina

Carol Pomerantz

I still look for your sunshine smile
On the Venice Ocean Front...
Carole sang her carols
And drew lovely pictures
Of birds, fairies and angels
Now you are an angel with rainbow wings...
Carole, you were the light of Venice –
Always a smile and a happy word
Even when you were sick
Pushing your walker
To the Levine Center
You still had a laugh
A song and a hello to all the babies...
Your healing touch
To the young & old
Even to my pooch...
An old but young soul
Still wearing your hippie beads
And colorful hippie clothes
Like when you sang and danced
In the 60s and 70s...
Old flower child
Filled with love
And kindness for all...
Gentle soul –
Love pouring out from you
Like the sun warming up the Venice Walk
Even on a freezing winter day...
Another old burning flame extinguished
Like another blazing sunset
On Venice beach...
The beachfront is much colder
With your passing –
Please beam some of your love and warmth
Down on us from above...

– Marty Liboff

Pictured above, L to R: Carol Pomerantz, Fay Conn and Pauline "Sunshine" Slome, on OFW

Two paintings above and left: By Carol Pomerantz



Surfing the Breakwater

head high Furrow
of Ancient Comet Ice
Leaps Broken Bootlegged dreams
Neon Mermaid takes off
Behind the Peak
Dolphins carve
the inside section
Learners Laughter
Symphonies the Shore Break
while outside
A half Blind con Man
is Sucked into

NOW

By a hollow hissing arc
A blue altar
A blank canvas
A wave

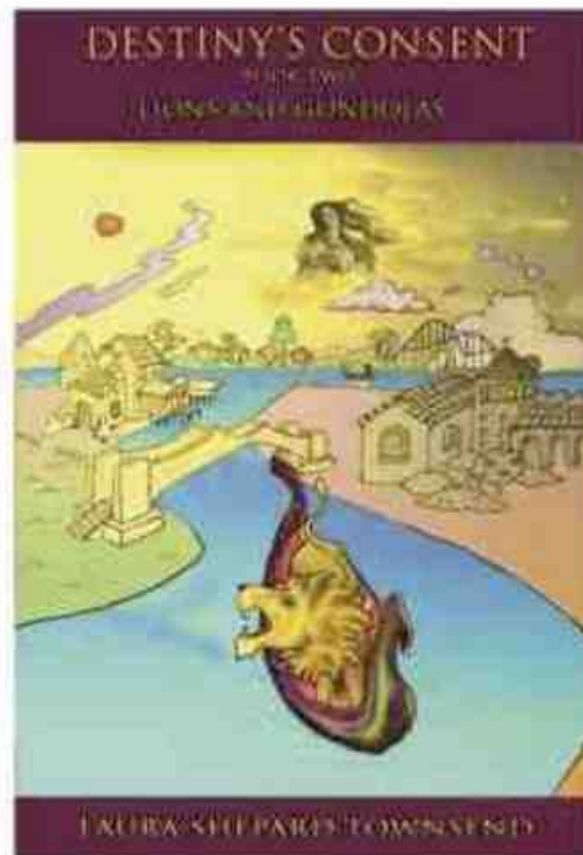
– B. Meade

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THERE ARE NEVER ENOUGH RAVENS IN A POEM

(For Pegarty)

The moon
If it could
Would be a
Raven
Many stars
Strive to be Ravens
Lightning is the slow
Raven
Most Ravens have been seduced
By the blind
The Mother of us all is
The uncarved Raven
I write, always
With a Raven's quill
Between my fingers
There are never enough
Ravens in a poem

– Philomene Long

LOVE, YOU ARE GREEN AND DARK

Love,
You are green and dark
The field I walked as a child
Slowly, slowly the snow
My favorite word was
Far, far
And the stars
How I had to close my eyes
Before they came too close
And the snow
You are
Green
Like snow
And far
Love, love
In our solitude
Even the sun will abandon us
Put off the naming of things
We'll do it together

– Philomene Long

Free Venice Beachhead • August 2014 • 9

YOU BRING ME APPLE TREES, FLOWERING APPLE TREES

you bring me apple trees, flowering apple trees
all the lost best poems of Sappho
new life at the core of the flame
happy deaths in a sea of milk
my pockets are a poet's pockets
that is to say, nearly empty
please accept what I bring you tonight:
a cold quart of Coors
(one dollar twenty-two cents)
this limping, feeble poem
my whole heart

– John Thomas

To My Unknown Friend

I was walking across the 99 ¢ parking lot
in Mar Vista, when some guy shouts out:
“You're the Best Poet in Venice!” and I
look up, & he's looking right at me
Oh Thanks! I say,
totally bewildered and looking around for
other Venice poets he might be addressing
instead of me –

but no it was me –
I was so surprised and happy
I felt like saying
Thanks man, because I was thinking of
hanging it up –
you know, days pile up, hot and sweaty
and no poems come to mind
no inspiration or subject matter –
except two more of my friends have died
so . . .

it made the morning a special one
then he said: They feed my spirit –
your poems feed my spirit
and that was really cool –
'cause if I can feed your spirit
I figure my job is done.
so keep on telling poets they're good –
'cause it keeps you wanting to write poems
that feed your spirit
Thanks, Israel! (his name)

– Mary Getlein

03:44 Wednesday, July 30th, 2014, Adullam I have a Beachhead. Tacked up on
my wall. September of O'Seven. I recall. My own dear mate had passed. End of
July. Then to learn of another casualty. A tough job. Being a poet. Wear and
tear. Sometimes to feel that there's nobody there. Beneath the full moon.
Windward. August came. Learned of your passing. Dear Saint Philomene. Was
sleeping in my van. The beach was near. Recall the homeless ghosts. The
sidewalks share. Did you pay visitation? Come to see? With John and Stuart, come
to call on me? As I was parked on Windward? As the fall Was waiting in the
wings? And would you tell? Roger Houston, post-beat romantic

GOD TOOK A PHOTOGRAPH

In August 1945, God took a photograph
And when He did, it made a flash
That lit the Asian sky
80,000 people posed when God took His photograph
They never had the time to smile
No time to say goodbye

How do you find words to define
When something so horribly divine has happened
That caused the world to change?
The Pacific war was raging on
80,000 people gone
At first, they were not missed, isn't that strange?

But God wasn't satisfied when the picture was developed
He decided to take another
And this time get it right
Again, He chose the "Rising Sun", He took three days to focus
Another flash that scorched the earth
What is such a picture worth?

And when news had spread, the world stood still
America imposed its will
And, one by one, the soldiers did disarm
Was this in God's master plan
And did it have to be Japan?
Must the cost of peace be paid with so much harm?

I wonder what God did with them, His pretty little photographs
Does He keep them in a scrapbook
Or are they framed above His throne?
Does He pull them from His wallet to show to all the angels
Or does He look at them and shed a tear
At night when He's alone?

Words and music by Rus McCoy © 2001
From the musical "MANZANAR: Story of an American Family"
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www.manzanarthemusical.com

Commemorating Hiroshima Day, August 6

This Paper
Is A Poem

Perhaps Now

By Hillary Kaye

My life dances around me
turning circles, performing feats
of Magic.
Star dust
some of us already star dust
covering the earth
with so much love denied
so much lost opportunity
perhaps it was only to know you
and you
perhaps to share
some burning inspiration
some light into the darkness
perhaps to kiss just this one shoulder
to move one being
to appreciate this formation of clouds
to know God as fire
to know peace as movement
to surrender
one last time to hope.

7TH PHILOMENIAN

Presents:

Aug. 17
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Doors open at 7pm



Charles Bukowski, John Thomas, Philomene Long

Bukowski In The Bathtub

Return with us to the days when a Buk was a damn good poet, not a missile.

Celebrate the fantastic story and poetry of the dynamic poetry duo, Philomene Long, Poet Laureate of Venice and her husband, John Thomas, who Buk called, "the best unread poet in America."

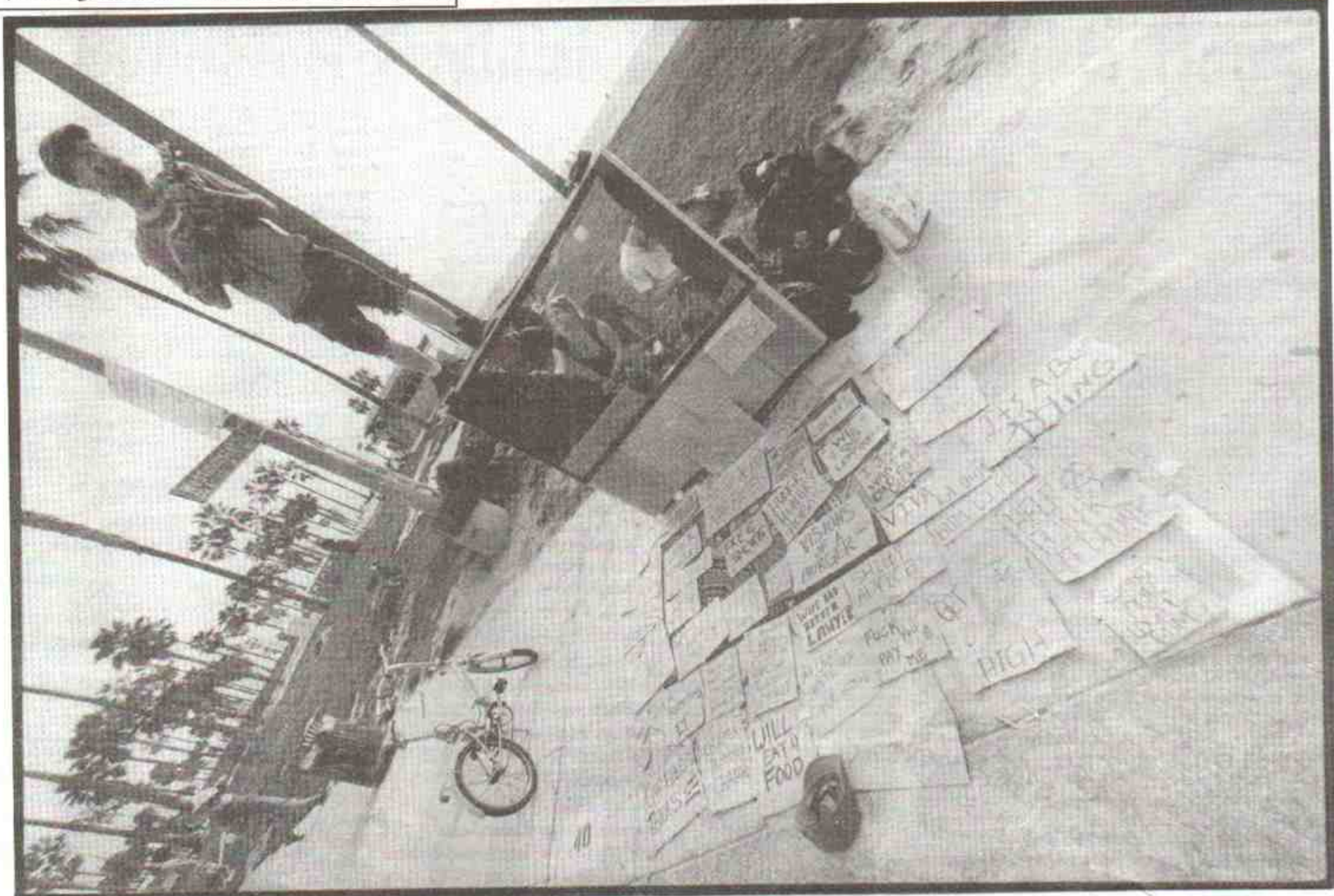
Celebrate more with the unknown story of Charles "Hank" Bukowski, as told by his friends, John and Philomene.

Join us for this further exploration of the man, the poet, the book (*Bukowski in the Bathtub*) by a host of other Venetians and poets of renown.

Kicks will be provided by San Francisco Poets Jack and Adelle Foley, as well as by locals including Linda Albertano, Mariana Dietl, Michael C. Ford, Pegarty Long, Harry E. Northrup, Holly Prado, and Jim Smith. Music by Brad Kay and Suzy Williams. Film by Mary Kerr and Elaine Trotter.

Thanks to *Bukowski in The Bathtub* editor Pegarty Long (Philomene's twin sister) who will make books available. Wine and snacks.

FREE, as always. Consider a donation to Beyond Baroque. The Philomenian is an annual event dedicated to the late Philomene Long and all things of the Poem. Happy Birthday, Buk (Aug. 16).



How Far We Have Come

By Mark Lipman

The recent events and conflict in Gaza have caused great stress and polarization around the world. Although the best in the great majority of us has risen to the top in protests for peace across the globe; the worst in a few, blinded by the ideology of racism and hatred for "the other", has held near exclusive sway in all the corporate-controlled, mainstream media, with a fundamentalist, reactionary demonization of all things Palestinian.

Let me say this with as much clarity as possible. What we are facing today is not a question of choosing sides between Israel and Palestine, but rather a basic question of, and a crisis within, our own humanity; of who we are, of what we have become in our very souls.

When I hear religious leaders, politicians, news-actors and their puppet followers, degrading the human worth of an entire population, calling for more and more violence, justifying genocide and the killing of children, in order to suit their ideological and political ends, literally admitting to and embracing the word "fascism", for the joy of bloodlust and surge of power they feel for being on the wielding side of the artillery shells, a deep rage and disgust boils in my heart.

Facing such cruelty, I willingly choose atheism over all of your vengeful, spiteful, hateful gods, all

killing in the name of ... in the shame of the poison that has filled too many souls, excusing atrocities and applauding murder as greatness.

Yes, I choose a side, not based upon religion, or nationality, but founded in truth and a common decency for all life. I stand as much with the Palestinians and their struggle for justice, as I do with the refugee children sitting at the U.S. border, and with all those who stand up against the politics of apartheid, against the manipulating governments of fear, distrust and hate.

If you ask me why Israel and its supporters are on the wrong side, it is because they are the military occupiers. The aggressor has no "right" to claim defense.

Listen to what is being said, listen to the words dripping off the oppressor's tongue, mimicking the drool of blood that falls from the vulture's beak, and ask yourself how far have we come from the Germany of the 1930's, when the same evil was spoken, in the very same way, in the very same words, about another race, another culture?

What we see today has nothing to do with the teachings of any religious scripture and everything to do with racism and greed, with the concentration of wealth into the hands of a few elite, who consider themselves the gods, the master race, while the rest of us - all of us - whether Muslim, Jew or gentile, the mat on which to wipe their feet.

ONE LOVE

The world is in a mess
Our survival is a guess.
Madmen & fanatics
Causing worldwide panics.
Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus
All kinds of coo coos.
Each say we are right
Believe us or we'll fight.
Capitalism, socialism, communism
All sorts of schism.
Hard lined Republicans & Democrats
Closed minded little brats.
Beware demagogues taking away freedom
They think the people are dumb.
Political religions are just as wrong
So I sing love in my song.
So much hate, hate, hate
Let's pray its not too late.
Its such a wonderful world we live in
Don't ya remember killing is a sin.
One love, one heart, one humanity
Please stop this murdering insanity.
Stop war & open your heart
Kindness & compassion are a start.
Love & forgiveness are the way
Only love will save the day.

- Marty Liboff, July 2014

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 Zen Robbi, Jah Faith and The Hashishans,
 Ya Harissa Bellydance Theater, Greg Douglass Band
 with Special Guest Barry "The Fish" Melton,
 Roots Collective and Samba Da Mudanca**

**Artists: art by sky, Audrey McNamara, Ra Ra SuperStar,
 Brian Mylius & Paula Celzo Author: Steve Bevilacqua**

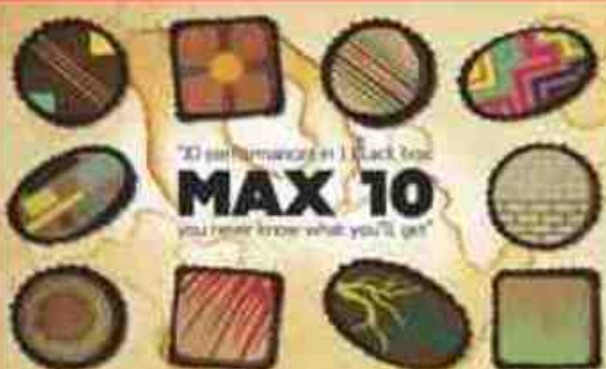


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The Electric Lodge is a laboratory for artists and environmentalists. We engage our community through the visual and performing arts, innovative classes, programs and seminars, providing experiential contexts and opportunities for dialogue. The Electric Lodge is a torch bearer in the effort to stimulate public understanding and support for the creation of a sustainable worldwide eco-system.



AUGUST 4TH - 7:30 PM

THIS MONTHS FEATURED ARTISTS:

Courtney Seiberling, Cat Museum, Avila Santo
Brenda Varda, Walking Theater Group
Ellen Burr, Vincent Master Jam Cash
Urban Opera, Improv Dance Company
JW dancepilates

AUGUST 1ST - 9:00 PM

THIS MONTHS FEATURED ARTISTS:

Tanya Alexander, April Hava Shenkman,
Garretson & Gorodetsky



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