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FREE VENICE SINCE 1968 BEACHHEAD

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February 2021 #462

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East Venice Neighborhood Association and the First Baptist Church of Venice

By Jon Wolff

Dr. Naomi Nightingale addressed the monthly Zoom meeting of the East Venice Neighborhood Association (EVNA) on Thursday night, January 21, 2021. Dr. Nightingale is a Venice activist and a founding member of the activist group Save Venice, which has been fighting for over three years to save the First Baptist Church of Venice. The First Baptist Church of Venice is an historic African-American church located in the heart of Venice. It is currently at risk of being gutted and put to "adaptive re-use" by private developers.

Dr. Nightingale delivered a detailed presentation of the African-American History of Venice. She spoke of the African-American part of Venice, which consisted of the neighborhoods relegated to Black families. There was a time when African-Americans were not allowed to live east of Lincoln Boulevard. In the 1960 census, there was one African-American living east of Lincoln. By 2000, there were no more than two hundred.

African-American History in Venice started in the early 1900s. Arthur Reese and Irving Tabor are the most familiar names, and they are the pioneers of the Venice Community. Arthur Reese was the first Black person to live and work in Venice. He came from New Orleans, Louisiana and he worked for Abbot Kinney. He was a talented designer and decorator. The papier-mache heads and the Mardi Gras themes that we see in early photos of Venice are the creations of Arthur Reese. He decorated the ballrooms on the beach and established the party atmosphere of Venice.

Mr. Reese sent for his cousin, Irving Tabor to help with the work. They were both ambitious young men, and they brought their families with them. The Tabor home on Westminster Avenue has since received historic designation. More families came from the Southern states, and built and settled in the area. They are still here in Venice.

African-Americans were able to purchase homes in Venice in the early 1920s, but at higher interest rates. And they were segregated. They left the South and its issues of racial prejudice but found many of the same issues here in the West. The boundaries for them in Venice were Lincoln Boulevard on the eastern side, Main Street on the western side, Rose Avenue on the northern end, and Venice Boulevard on the southern end.

When Arthur Reese and Irving Tabor came, it was only forty-two years since the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed by Abraham Lincoln. The people who came to Venice were previously enslaved or were the children of individuals who were enslaved. They came from a life of being discriminated against and being forced to live in unequal conditions. Nevertheless, the West Coast appeared to be a better place.

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FIRE ON THE OCEAN FRONT by Marty Liboff

There was a huge fire on the Venice Ocean Front Walk at the north corner of Park Ave. in the early morning of Jan. 13. The fire gutted the 69 year old building. The ruins were quickly demolished and removed. Now it is completely gone.

When I was much younger it was a Jewish synagogue. The outside had some Jewishly decorated

LAFD Photo by Harry Garvin - Creative Commons Licensed windows and it was painted a gaudy maroon color. My pal Gordon sent me a photo of the synagogue and wonderful old house next to it. We were not religious but my mom would sometimes buy tickets for a lunch there and I would go. It had a large hall and a few offices in front. Although we didn't attend their regular services we were treated very well since my mom was well known as the 'bakery lady' who ran the Jewish style bakery in the Cadillac

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ARE YOU HUNGRY? FREE FOOD AT VENICE BEACH

(times and places occasionally change)

- *Hope for the Hearts of the Homeless- Pam & Joel and friends. Thur. & Sun. around 9am. Coffee, pastries, sandwiches. north Ocean Front Walk near Ozone Ave.
- *You Matter with Michael and friends- Tue. & Thur. Around 11am. Hotdogs, burgers, fruit, snacks. north Ocean Front Walk near Ozone Ave. also Sat. around 8:30am near Windward Ave.
- *Oasis Network Inc. with Dan & friends- various groceries, bread, fruit, vegetables. Sat. & Sun. around 9am. Ocean Front Walk by Dudley Ave.
- *Venice Equity Alliance- fruit & vegetables. Wed. 12:45pm. 132 Brooks Ave.
- *St. Joseph Center- their clients, To-Go Meals. M-F 9:30am-12pm. 663 Rose Ave. Also weekly food if you register at (310)396-6468 ext.313

:(These organizations all need your donations and help): THANKS




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every Wednesday at 12:45pm
 at
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from the
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todos los miércoles a las 12:45pm
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de la
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To submit material, include your name and telephone number. Anonymous material will not be printed, but your name will be withheld on request. No payment is made for material used.

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LETTERS

Hi all

I'm sure you've heard about the Siphlow/Harris Building fire It's being blamed for being started, by the city of LA Fire Department, on the homeless:

--who camped next to the building;

And from a cooking, heating --or careless smoking fire. And it appears they've made this "determination" based on "exploded spray-paint cans"

Found in the debris of burned homeless tents.

So I'm wondering if a professional investigator could be found to donate some time to review the city's "cause of fire" evidence: Along with the MOUNTAIN of evidence:

--Of recent City, LAPD and Fire Department negligence and negligent enforcement:

Or lack of safety concern for the Venice homeless --who like 27,000 other LA homeless -- have been denied safe tent camping and vehicle camping;

--in this city's ongoing affordable housing and homelessness crisis....

And as --despite city denials of their rights, these emergency accommodations WILL continue to be their ONLY immediate, reasonable, alternative THROUGHOUT LA:

For AT LEAST another decade.

And FINALLY -- do, therefore --deserve reasonable accommodation, safety-guidance, protection full civil liberties, privacy and support for these EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATIONS in EVERY part of Los Angeles, under both "IN RE: Echorn" and "Martin v Boise;"

To prevent this intentional, willful, LAPD and City negligence, and oppression --from taking any more lives and destroying any more property of the unhoused

--or housed.

Or leading --to imminent, massive, civil rights violating sweeps of the unhoused from Venice, Venice Beach and the Venice Boardwalk Park.

And the Los Angeles City's portion --of the protected, "California Coastal Zone".....at any time now.

Sincerely,

David Busch/Lilly

<https://allcampingstuff.com/best-tent-heater/>

*you know
you're
from Venice
if/when..*

... you remember Honky Hoagie's..

This flyer is from the July 1975 issue of Venice Beachhead.



JUSTICE FOR MAURICE



Maurice Brown Jr. was recently sentenced and will be serving 9 years in prison.

During his arraignment we learned that Maurice was attempting suicide by cop by committing some robberies, but not all of the ones that the DA was accusing him of, because of his Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and depression. He never wanted to hurt anyone; he just wanted to end his own pain.

We want to thank the communities of Venice, Santa Monica, Culver City and Marina del Rey for their support.

We'd also like to thank Bob's Market, Treats, Rose Cafe, Win-dow Restaurant, Salt and Straw, Save Venice, our lawyer Matthew Lombard and all the volunteers for their support as well as the officer who would like to remain anonymous who fought for the DA to be fair to Maurice. It means so much to us.

If you would like to write Maurice, email his mom at zekaiaismith@gmail.com and she will email you his address.

She is still seeking to raise \$5000 to cover what she owes to Maurice's lawyer. Any amount helps. Thank you so much.

TO DONATE

GoFundMe - gofundme.com/f/we-fight-for-maurice
PayPal - paypal.me/fightformaurice

Venmo - @Zekaia-Smith

Cash App - \$fightformaurice

To learn more about his case: fightformaurice.org

To volunteer email - zekaiaismith@gmail.com

DEFEND



VNC Elections Start Soon!

Please consider running for a board seat. Check in at DefendVenice.org for more info

VENICE

The restricted covenant requirement in Venice made Venice the first intentional Black Community on the West Coast. Because Black people were relegated to this particular area, they opened their own businesses within the area. Although they lived and thrived, they still had to deal with the Ku Klux Klan. Newspapers of the time reported KKK activity in Los Angeles. The mayor and police chief of Redondo Beach, as well as many prominent city employees, businessmen, and bankers in Redondo Beach, El Segundo, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Ocean Park, and Venice were Klansmen. Well into the 1960s, there was still segregation, discrimination, and racism in Venice.

In 1910, African-Americans were not permitted to attend religious services at White churches, so they created their own places for religious gatherings. The first Black church in Venice was established in a barn on 4th Avenue and San Juan Avenue.

Dr. Nightingale outlined the history of the First Baptist Church of Venice. She said that the first building of the First Baptist Church of Venice was built on Westminster Avenue and 7th Avenue. Lumber was provided by the wife of Abbot Kinney. It was built by the hands of the people in the Venice Community. W.E.B. Du Bois and Adam Clayton Powell Sr. attended services there.

The present building of the First Baptist Church of Venice was built with money that came from members of the congregation who gave their deeds as collateral for the loan. It's a two-story building with seventeen classrooms inside. The Reverend E.L. Holmes celebrated the founding of the new church, with a ceremony, by leading the congregation from the old building to the doors of the new church. The neon sign that stands above the church shows that Venice is still alive and well. The First Baptist Church of Venice represents the members, the spirituality, the values, the history, and the character of the Community. It has the same significance to the people that are here in

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Scoring Bamlanivimab

By Lisa Robins

This is the true story of how my brother and I scored Bamlanivimab monoclonal anti-body therapy for our mom when she got Covid19. It wasn't easy. We're convinced it saved her life.

Midday on December 30th, I got a call from Melrose Gardens(MG), the assisted living facility in Hollywood, where our 93 year old mom, Kitty, currently resides. She had tested positive. This was no surprise- there had been a vicious outbreak in the facility. Since the beginning of the pandemic, my brother and I feared that if Kitty caught the virus it would be a death sentence; she's a longtime cigarette smoker (still smokes 7 per day), has low-grade emphysema, hypertension, and is, let's face it, a bit overweight. My brother, Rick, is a psychology professor at UC Davis. His friend, who's the Chair of Emergency Medicine at the UC Davis Medical School, warned our mom's at extremely high risk of complications and STRONGLY recommends that she begin monoclonal antibody treatment immediately (e.g., bamlanivimab, casirivimab plus imdevimab). I had only vaguely heard of it, but on November 9, 2020, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to make Bamlanivimab available for the treatment of nonhospitalized patients with mild to moderate COVID-19 who are at high risk for progressing to severe disease and/or hospitalization. A monoclonal antibody is a lab-produced molecule that acts as substitute antibodies. It can restore, enhance or mimic the immune system's attack on cells. It focuses on just one or two types of antibodies at a time, and may block the entry of Covid19 cells into the host's cells. Bamlanivimab is one dose given through a vein for at least one hour. You should be monitored for an hour post infusion. According to the FDA, the known and potential benefits outweigh the known and potential risks for the drug.

My brother instructs the MG doctor (Dr L) "My understanding is that there is ample supply. So the only issue is having someone give it to my mom. ..It's administered by IV, but does not require hospitalization" The Executive Director of MG, (D), responds, "It's against the rules to have an IV-she'd need to go elsewhere." Dr L's response, "We are starting a cocktail that we have been using for asymptomatic patients. Vitamin d and c, zinc, Pepcid,

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FIRE on OFW - continued from page 1

Hotel at Dudley Ave.

Sometimes when we came for lunch they had some religious talk and I found it boring especially when they spoke in Hebrew which was all Greek to me. They made me wear a beanie or yarmulke. When I was a kid there was a great TV puppet show called Beanie and Cecil. It later became a cartoon show but the cartoons were not as good as the puppets. Beanie wore a beanie with a propeller on top and when he spun it he could fly. Unfortunately the yarmulke beanies had no propellers and you couldn't fly. We also attended a wedding and some other events there. My old pal Hank got married there.

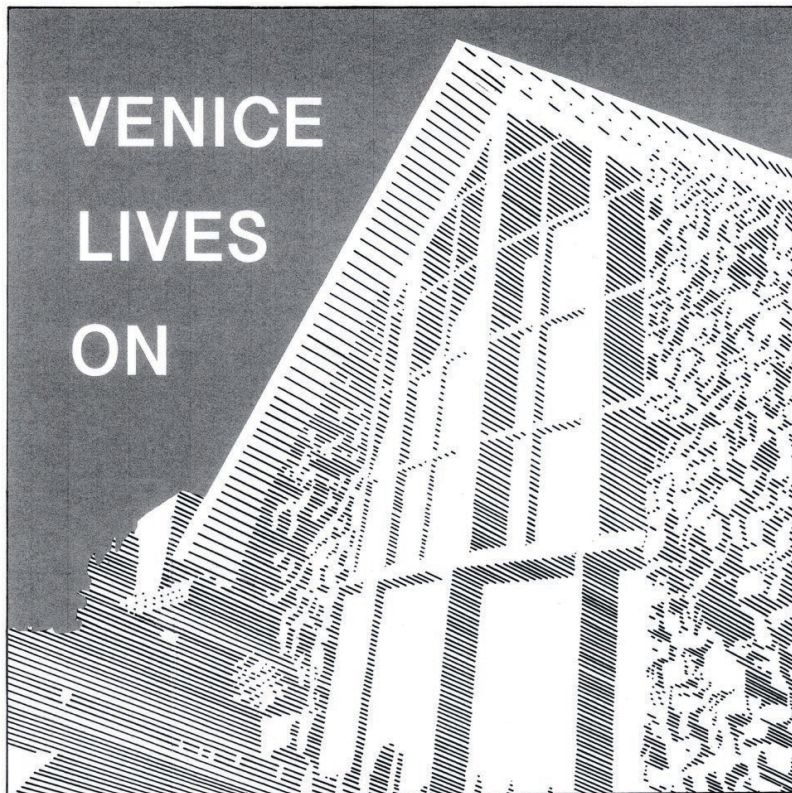
The beach front in Venice and Ocean Park had many thousands of Jews living and working there from the 1940s through the 1970s and the synagogue was full of members. In the late 1950s the city of Santa Monica dreamed of making another Miami Beach or Honolulu with the beach lined with expensive high rises. They began their Ocean Park Redevelopment Project and evicted everyone through eminent domain. The entire mostly Jewish neighborhood was demolished from the north border of Venice to Ocean Park Blvd. They wanted to continue to Pico Blvd. but that is another story. Then in the early 1960s the city of LA began condemning many of the beautiful, old Abbot Kinney era buildings to try and gentrify the area. They claimed they were earthquake unsafe although there had never been any problem during the quakes. Many Jews were forced to move. Over the years many more died or moved to rest homes. Most of the younger Jews wanted to live in newer communities and moved to the Fairfax area or the valley. The membership at the synagogue dwindled and it closed.

It was converted into an office building. The religious windows were changed and later the color. For many years it had some lawyers there. In recent years it has been vacant. There was a rumor that it was a pot grow house for a while.

In recent years the little street at Park Ave. and the beach has been a homeless tent city. Neighbors hated it. Many said they were afraid to walk up the street. Then there was the recent fire. The news media blamed the houseless living there. Many locals say it was suspicious and say it may have been started by some angry neighbors to get rid of the homeless camp or even the owners of the building. The property owners would've had to go through a long process to demolish the building with city permits and an O.K. from the Coastal Commission. There also could have been some opposition since it may have been considered a historic, old synagogue and some people may have protested as they are doing to save the First Baptist Church of Venice.

People I talked to who watched the fire said it was strange the building could have caught fire from the houseless since the outside of the building is stucco and what was there to catch fire? Also they said the fire department seemed to keep putting the fire out and then it would explode again in flames. If it were vacant and empty as they claim then what was combusting inside?

The building is gone and we may never know what really happened. It is easy for people and the news to blame the houseless for so much trouble when often they are the victims. Now the old synagogue is only a memory of a couple old farts like me... marty



Venice today as it did when it opened.

The church was sold in 2017 [by the late Horace Allen], and the Community has been fighting to preserve and save it ever since. It continues to be a battle. The church was bought by Jay Penske, of Penske Racing and Rolling Stone Magazine. This church IS the history of the Venice Community but Penske wanted to change the church into his personal residence. This is not only sacrilegious, but also completely out of mass, scale, and character with the surrounding neighborhood. It's situated in the midst of the African-American Community. The church property consists of seven lots: four on the side where the church building stands and three across the street. The new owners wanted to change three lots into their personal compound but did not say what they wanted to do with the others. By law, all seven lots are tied and none of the lots can be untied for anything separate and individual to be built on any one of the other lots.

The Save Venice group is currently re-applying for historic designation for the First Baptist Church of Venice. Los Angeles City Councilmember Mike Bonin has presented a motion to the City Council to ask that the historic designation for the church be re-considered. The first application had been denied because there wasn't sufficient information in the application about the work that the church did in the 1970s.

Churches are a bedrock of the Community. Bishop E.L. Holmes was an exceptional man. He was a principal and educator. He was an African-American man in a Community that was still experiencing racism and White privilege. Yet he belonged to the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, and the Boys and Girls Club. He served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Venice for forty-five years before he passed away in 1999. The intersection at Westminster and 7th was named Bishop E.L. Holmes Square by the City Council, and a sign was installed on the corner.

Dr. Nightingale described the deficiencies in the historic record of Venice and the efforts of Save Venice to correct those deficiencies. The entire Venice Community is of historic importance. But Survey L.A. did a survey of historic areas in Los Angeles and somehow Venice was not included. Despite the abundance of information in the survey detailing the rich history of the Black neighborhood in Venice known as Oakwood, no area of Venice was designated as eligible. Of the two Venice History books at the library, neither speak to African-American contributions, historical significance, culture, or businesses. Here is a whole Community in Venice of professionals, blue collar workers, and homeowners who were able to keep their homes from being torn down by developers and investors. How was this Community missed in a survey designed and funded to designate historic eligibility?

Dr. Nightingale explained that Save Venice will go before the California Coastal Commission to fight for the preservation of the First Baptist Church of Venice, but that there are challenges from organizations that don't support Save Venice. The Venice Neighborhood Council and the Venice Chamber of Commerce are organizations that deem African-American History unimportant. They would bulldoze it, along with the buildings that are coming down and being replaced with two-story, concrete, glass-front buildings.

Sixth generation families are still living here

THE POWER of a SHOWER

marty liboff

Being houseless has many problems and troubles. One problem is where to shower and get clean. Many houseless when they stink and look like the missing link they go and wash in the bathroom sink. I even see some people washing and wiping their butts at the hand sanitizers on the Ocean Front Walk! Every Thursday morning a wonderful group called, "The Power of a Shower" comes to Venice Beach with a shower trailer. They offer free showers with soap, shampoo and even a new pair of socks. After a nice shower and shampoo the houseless have a new, clean start for the day. I have seen a couple houseless pals looking like dog shit and coming out looking like a beautiful, new person. Sometimes they also give haircuts and offer hair coloring. When available they even have some clean clothes for free.

Our city wastes gazillions of bucks supposedly for the houseless yet practically nothing actually goes to helping anyone except the bureaucracy. Several groups at Venice Beach help feed and care for the houseless without any government funds. "The Power of a Shower" only gets donations and much of their money comes out of their own pockets. This organization was founded by Rachel Sunday. Her relatives Aaron and Xandy help her out along with other volunteers.

If you are in need of a shower, "The Power of a Shower" is by the bathrooms on the north end of Venice Beach by Ozone Ave. They usually begin at around 8:15a.m. and go until around 12:15p.m. They can have a lot of people wanting to shower so try and get there early to get on the waiting list. Look for the bubbles coming out of their bubble machine.

in the Venice Community. And gentrification is here also. Dr. Nightingale said that the Venice African-American Community is not fighting against progress. They are fighting against the loss of identity and the contributions that were built in this Community. She asked how we can come to a common ground of mutual respect, not only for what was, but for where we go together. Other buildings such as the Tabor home, the Monday Women's Center, and the home that Abbot Kinney left to Arthur Reese are all historic buildings here in Venice. San Juan Avenue and Westminster Avenue are areas that were the core of the African-American settlement here.

Dr. Nightingale made it clear that African-Americans built Venice. They intend to continue to preserve Venice and to live here, and to demand recognition of their contributions and those that their ancestors built with their blood, sweat, and tears. The First Baptist Church of Venice stands for all of that.

Dr. Nightingale said that she interviews people about the church. She asks them their thoughts about the church not being here anymore. They find it incomprehensible. Their grandparents built the church. The baptisms, funerals, and weddings that occurred here are inextricably part of who they are. To see the church ground into nothingness or made into something else would take away a significant part of their lives. And that would be unimaginable.

For more information go to: savevenice.ca

Write letters to: Ken Bernstein at the Office of Historic Resources, L.A. Department of City Planning

Write letters to: Mike Bonin, L.A. City Council District 11

Save Venice is in the process of forming a 501(c)(3) in the State of California.

Bamlanivimab - continued from page 3

(Vitamins?!) If she develops any we can consider oral antibiotics and steroids. Further treatment would need to happen in the hospital." Rick counters, "She has mild symptom (fatigue and decreased appetite) ... Antiviral treatments are only effective BEFORE a patient develops moderate-severe symptoms." I add to the urgency, it should be "administered as soon as possible after positive results ... within 10 days of symptom onset." Dr. L wrongly says, "These drugs need to be given in the hospital." Rick counters, "According to the FDA webpage, "Bamlanivimab is not authorized for patients who are hospitalized due to COVID-19 or require oxygen therapy due to COVID-19...the antiviral drugs are explicitly NOT given to hospitalized COVID patients". We try to ascertain whether a single infusion would be permitted at MG-you'd think they'd allow a potentially life-saving treatment in these extenuating circumstances. Neither Dr. D nor Dr. L respond.

Scoring Bamlanivimab for our mom consisted of two steps- find it, and get it administered. Simple, right? HA! The following 3 days were like a slapstick horror show. Every single aspect of our quest had been difficult. We learn some hospitals have Bamlanivimab but won't give it to outpatients, and wouldn't admit her since she wasn't symptomatic. We need an "infusion center". Cedars Ambulatory Infusion Center has it, but a doctor with admitting privileges needs to prescribe. We consider getting our mom a new doctor, but that would take too long. Our preference is to have it administered in Kitty's room at MG. But would MG lose their license? Dr. L's associate, Dr. M, who seems intrigued if not knowledgeable about our desired course of action, informs us that an IV liter of fluid can be legally be injected. We're on. I'm concerned about the impending holiday. The MG Home Health Agency who would provide the nurse practitioner to administer the infusion, assures us they're available 24/7. But they can't fill the prescription. Only hospitals seem to have it. But if you're already hospitalized for Covid19 it's too late for the treatment. It seems you can only get it if you happen to be in the hospital, and test positive.

I call the Bamlanivimab manufacturer, Lilly. Closed until Monday. Then the CDC emergency line. They say call the Ca. State Dept. of Health, who tells me it's available at some long term care facilities (not MG), who are supplied by local CVS "Depot Stores". I call our local CVS. They've never heard of it. Call their headquarters (somewhere in the Midwest) and speak to a supervisor. Dead end. I call the Public Health Dept. of the County of L.A. Someone reads me the same info I had read on the internet-she suggests going more local. <https://covid19.ca.gov/treatment-for-covid-19> shows the drug seems to be available, but it's nearly impossible to obtain. I speak to the Info and Resource Center for Public Health- meant to connect people to resources-somehow get to the nurse triage line. They sent me back to the Ca. Dept. of Public Health. Each of these calls has the normal menu of options designed to drive you insane and wait times which gives me time to do my laundry and wash the dishes. Rick learns there are 5 pharmacies in the LA area that have Bamlanivimab but only one is open. Med-Plus Pharmacy in Covina. We're on our way!!

Now we need to deal with paperwork. We start on New Year's Eve at 6:58pm. We'll need the Dr.'s order and release, patient consent form, and facility release. Meanwhile, our cousin, who is a Dr. in Vegas, plants doubts. He tells us it's very expensive and Medicare only pays if she's in the hospital. (Although the drug is expensive, the government is currently giving it for free). That the efficacy is antidotal. (There was a randomized controlled trial.) He thought the emergency approval was based on severely ill patients and wondered why everyone isn't giving it? (It's not supposed to be standard treatment but given our mom's risk of mortality it seemed like a good bet. Almost a million doses had been given in hospitals and perhaps the reason it's not being used as much as it should is simply lack of leadership on the distribution chain). He's con-

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CHEE WAH WAH FOR PRESIDENT!

by Marty Liboff

Many years ago John Haag the founder of the Beachhead ran for President. Now our pal Pat Rafael has declared his candidacy for our local House seat. They have inspired our own Beachhead mascot, Chee Wah Wah Seagull to throw his tail feathers into the race for President. Chee Wah Wah Seagull has been flying on our BEACHHEAD banner for many years. I interviewed him for our paper.

Me: "Why have you decided to run for President?"

Chee Wah Wah Seagull: "Everyone says you have to be a bird brain to run for office so I am well qualified."

Me: "What party will you run for?"

Chee: "My own party, the Seagull Poop Party. We seagulls fly around the beach and poop on both Democrats and Republicans alike. My saying is, Give them the bird!"

Me: "But why would anyone vote for someone called a seagull?"

Chee: "We're called seagulls because we fly around the sea. If we flew around a bay we'd be called bagels. Plus I am an egg head and also have a big pecker, ah I mean beak."

Me: "Are you on the Left wing or Right wing?"

Chee: "I'm more of the whole bird. If you only are left wing or right wing you can't fly."

Me: "Are you a Communist or a Capitalist?"

Chee: "When you're a Communist you have 2 chickens and eggs and the Communists take your chickens and eggs and give you back the chicken bones and egg shells and you starve. If you're a Socialist with 2 chickens and eggs the Socialists take one chicken and half your eggs then tax and control the other chicken and eggs until you go broke and starve. If you're a Capitalist and you have 2 chickens and eggs you sell one chicken and buy a rooster then raise chickens and eggs and get a bank loan to expand but the big corporations run you out of business and the bank takes your chickens and eggs and you starve. In every system we poor people always get chicken plucked and there is always dirty tricks and 'fowl' play."

Me: "Should we impeach Trump?"

Chee: "An peach is O.K. I would rather have an apple or an nectarine. I think Donald is impeared."

Me: "What about the Black Lives Matter Movement?"

Chee: "You know we white seagulls are superior to those dumb black pigeons."

Me: "But I hear multicolor parrots and black crows are smarter than seagulls and they can even learn to

talk."

Chee: "I'm sure they make more sense than those squawking Republicans do. So let them run for President."

Me: "Hasn't our country always had a problem with racism?"

Chee: "Eggactly. White people and Black people have screwed up this country so bad that White people should all go back to Europe and Black people go back to Africa and we should let the Indians buy it back for the \$20 in beads we bought it for."

Me: "What do you think should be done about the pandemic?"

Chee: "Those panda bears are so damn cute that they get all the attention while we seagulls are ignored."

Me: "No, I mean all the people getting corona?"

Chee: "I think we should forget Corona and only drink good old American beers like Bud and Coors."

Me: "I'm talking about the Covid virus."

Chee: "When we birds are sick we go to see a ducktor and get tweetments."

Me: "Should we get our shots for the Corona?"

Chee: "A shot of Corona beer is nice but I'd rather get a shot of vodka or whiskey"

Me: "Why do you think this pandemic keeps making people run out and hoard toilet paper?"

Chee: "It is because Americans are full of shit! Their brains are stuck firmly up their butts! We are a nation of ass holes!"

Me: "Do you like Trump or Biden?"

Chee: "Both of them are senile old geezers who should only be President of their old age home checkers club. You are supposed to retire at 65 yet we have two almost 80 year old, geriatric, old rotten eggs for President!"

Me: "Trump doesn't believe in global warming. What do you think?"

Chee: "Global warming is real. It comes from the hot air from Trump's BIG mouth!"

Me: "Who do you want for your Vice President?"

Chee: "Someone with lots of vices!"

Me: "Do you have anyone in mind?"

Chee: "Maybe a minority and Black candidate like Daffy Duck or a Hispanic like Speedy Gonzales. I'd love to run with Minnie Mouse. She is a woman, Black and sexy! WOW!!"

Me: "But I hear Daffy Duck can't fly well and he is quite coo coo?"

Chee: "Yes, he may quack up! But he works cheep for a box of quackers and a cup of cawfee. Did ya get the yolk?"

Me: "Do you believe in gun control?"

Chee: "The Constitution gives us the right to bear arms. I think we should also have the right to bare legs and feet too. Let sexy gals bare their tits!"

I think we should give everyone even little babies in their cribs a machine gun and it will keep the population down. We could have saved our country billions of dollars on the election and just had Trump and Biden shoot it out like in the old, wild, wild west... DRAW- BANG! BANG! And the one who is still standing is President of the USA.

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Also in LA you need a big gun to protect yourself from wild lions, elephants and crocodiles. You need to be ready in case a hippo or a charging rhino chases you at Venice Beach.

We must protect our right to murder each other. We respect your right to disagree and if you don't agree we'll shoot you!"

Me: "Are you a Conservative or a Liberal?"

Chee: "I'm conservative with ketchup on my burgers but liberal on my French fries."

Me: "There are so many homeless. What solutions do you have?"

Chee: "Every bird needs a nest. When I fly over the USA there is so much empty land where we can build houseless birds nests."

Me: "There are so many out of work and broke. How can we help all these jobless, poor people?"

Chee: "We can print lots of money and give everyone a gazillion bucks."

Me: "But if you give everyone a gazillion dollars then a banana would cost a million dollars and a pizza would cost a billion bucks."

Chee: "I'm on a sea food diet. I see food and eat it! For a billion bucks I want anchovies and shrimp on my pizza."

Me: "What do you think about the National bird being the bald eagle?"

Chee: "They should give that bald eagle some Rogaine! Americans have killed off almost all the bald eagles but there are still plenty of us seagulls and pigeons. I should be your National bird brain. Or maybe El Pollo Loco. Everyone loves barbeque chicken!"

Me: "How will you finance and advertise your campaign?"

Chee: "I'm cheep, cheep, cheep so I will be tweetting on Twitter. Otherwise I will just wing it."

Me: "They say the early bird catches the worm."

Chee: "Yucko! Just thinking of eating a worm makes me barf! The early bird catches the lasagna."

Me: "What do you think of this paper the Free Venice Beachhead?"

Chee: "If you are out of toilet paper it has nice soft texture. It is also great for the bottom of your parakeet cage. Also, I have been their mascot for 50 years yet did they ever even buy me a hot dog or a taco or something! They are beach heads and could have at least given me a joint! But they're the only paper that hasn't sold their souls to the real estate and corporate dollar. They try to help local causes and sometimes even have articles about us birds. So please donate to the Beachhead some bread, bird seed, scratch or as the chickens say a buck, buck, buck."

Me: "How do you see our future?"

Chee: "Humans and birds are in eggstraordinary times. Our world is troubled and we need to join together like love birds and solve our problems. Remember, birds of a feather fluck together."

Me: "Do you think you can win the next election?"

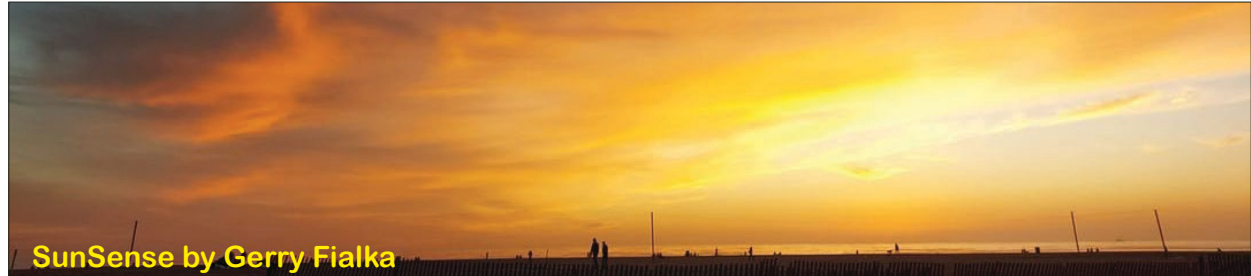
Chee: "Any plain, little, everyday American can become President as long as they have a trillion dollars to blow, get the backing of big corporations, the mob, a Party's National Committee of crooks, Putin, the Chinese, the Vatican, Israel, TV, radio, Face book, Tic Tock, Instagram, Twitter, and are champion liars and bullshitters and have gigantic egos. If we could elect a fat, big mouthed, bankrupt, lousy reality TV host, bad egg like Trump then any idiot can get elected!"

Anyway, I'm not worried about winning the election, I want to win the erection with my cute, seagull chick girlfriend... CHEE WAH WAH whoopee!!!"

Me: "Good luck in your Presidential erection, ah I mean election."



"Captain Venice vs. The Monsters" by Jon Wolff. See this new mural at Gre



The sunsets at the Venice Boardwalk are the best for many of us. It makes supercalifragilisticexpialidocious sense to stare into the golden bliss. Sharing this ritual, with a group of friends, is the ultimate mystery solver.

So often, the spectrum of vermilions, crimsons, and yellows are exquisite and iridescent. The cosmic commonness of colors galore leads to surprises, like the green dot. Also called the "green flash," this meteorological optical phenomenon sometimes occurs transiently around sunset or sunrise, and lasts for no more than two seconds. "Here today, gone later today," as David Lee Roth quips.

"I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." - Isaac Newton.

"Any true poet can spare a few lines for twilight, waxing lyrical the most beautiful time of day and working those transitory, moody metaphors for all they're worth. As Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) pointed out, twilight 'is not without loveliness, though perhaps its chief use is to illustrate quotations from the poets.' Then again, maybe poetry's chief use is to inspire us to watch the sun go down. . . . John Keats (1795-1821) used twilight as a metaphor for poetry itself, explaining that for the reader a good poem should 'like the Sun come natural to him - shine over him and set soberly although in magnificence leaving him in the Luxury of the twilight.'" - Jessica Kerwin Jenkins, Encyclopedia Of The Exquisite.

Maybe we can probe "the physics of sunset," as Jane Vandenburgh has proposed. We can be engulfed in the "music of sunsets," as scored by the art and science of Jimi Hendrix, whose "Third Stone from the Sun" pondered:

"Strange beautiful grass of green,
With your majestic silver seas
Your mysterious mountains I wish to see closer ..."

Venice activist Beth Allyn is all about "seeing closer." I am forever grateful to her for capturing on

her cellphone a performance of my band Black Shoe Polish at John Mooney Glass Art Gallery on May 5, 2018. See it on YouTube: as "Mystery Duck Call" featuring my wife, Suzy Williams.

Beth has gathered friends for years to celebrate Venice sunsets. I asked her if she has maternal feelings, and she responded "more like dominatrix tendencies." Recently, her sunset gatherings have convened at Navy and the Boardwalk. One rule: "Don't block the view."

Beth introduced me to the esteemed Venice artist, James Farran, who joins in often. My article in the December 2020 Beachhead issue had photos of the Boardwalk installation art piece called "Venice Cemetery," without a credit for the artist. I am now happy to credit James Farran as the maker, and include his photo of this artwork during a Venice sunset.

Some say that photos of sunsets are over-rated, and maybe even kitschy. Noted curmudgeon, Eric Ahlberg, and one of the publishers of this very newspaper, claims that an ironic view of sentimentality towards sunset photography can wake people out of their somnambulism. "HoMey HipHop Hit the HealthFood . . . Fortified with Irony." I ponder how one may flip this cliché into an archetype?

In a hallmark-card-world, this attitude evokes Marshall McLuhan. He met a woman with her baby in a baby carriage. He bent over and said, "What a lovely child you have." She said, "Well, that's nothing, you should see its photograph!"

Seeing a "live" Venice sunset conjures words by Nelson Schwartz, who walked the Boardwalk for over 4 decades in radical political T-shirts spouting naked poetry. His expressive words in my film, The Brother Side of the Wake, applies to the sunset ritual: "It's a fantasy beyond reality." Nelson passed recently, and we'll miss his puckish probes and outrageous proclamations.

David Quadrini, while a beloved Venice local, had earned national renown, first as a painter, then by launching the careers of a generation of artists from his Angstrom Gallery in his hometown of Dallas, Texas. His view apartment overlooking Ocean Front

Walk near Westminster served as a sundown oasis for visiting artists and a perch from which he took sunset photos every evening for a decade, roughly 2003-2012.

Navy and the Boardwalk, our current sunset hang-out, is significant in Venice history. The infamous Cheetah Club was located on a pier near this intersection. The biker-rock club hosted every famous rock act in the 60's and 70's. Alice Cooper was the house band there, and they would often sing these lyrics:

"Sun arise, she come every mornin'
Sun arise, ever-y ever-y ever-y ever-y
She drive away the darkness everyday, Hey! (3x)
Bringin' back the warmth to the ground."

Sunsets may be metaphors for poets, but never the less, we Venetians love and adore the real thing.

Reflect on Annette Wynne's poem "Twilight":
"Sunsets welcome sleep,
The first glad breath of day is clear;
The sky is very soft and near;
The noon is glorious with light;
And afternoon is bright;
But I love twilight best, it seems,
When all the air is drenched with dreams,
And up against the sunset bar,
One small dream changes to a star."

In Venice, "everybody is a star," as Sly Stone sings our mantra in his funky ("fun-is-the-key") anthem. Sunsets can illustrate quotations from poets, whose verses can inspire us to watch the sun go down. Sunsets can be metaphors for poetry itself. So thusly, I call out all Venice poets to submit their sunset-inspired poems to the Venice Beachhead. And join us every evening (masked and social distanced, of course) for our twilight funnery.

11th Poetry of Venice Photography

See photos by Todd, Bruce, Dave, Margaret, Ned & Gerry = <https://poetryofvenice.shutterfly.com/pictures>

Click on "Pictures and Video" at <https://poetryofvenice.shutterfly.com/>





at Western Steak and Hoogie at 1720 Lincoln Blvd. Photo by Eric Ahlberg.



Above: The Vargas Cafe'...former gypsy cafe' on Main street in (stupid) clown building. Done in ball point pen on site by Alain J. Leroy

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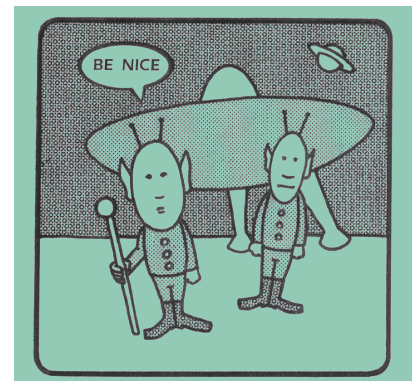
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Review of Gerry Fialka's STRANGE QUESTIONS: Experimental Film as Conversation

by Ron Birnbach

If you're one of the few Venetians who don't know him, Venice's own Gerry Fialka is an artist, writer, and para-media ecologist who lectures on experimental film, avant-garde art, and subversive social media at NYU, MIT, USC, UCLA and Cal Arts. The Los Angeles Times has called him "the multi-media renaissance man". Now Fialka has produced a new book, *Strange Questions: Experimental Film as Conversation* (LaughTears Press), in which he interviews notable figures in avant-garde cinema who offer insights into moving image art -- its creative processes, formative influences, and hidden psychic effects. The book is available on Amazon, and at only one bookstore, Angel City Books on Pier Avenue in Venice.

I found the book to be a very entertaining and revealing read, chockfull of brilliant insights from some of the best minds in experimental film, and Fialka's questions are usually quite intriguing and often provocative. In fact, Lynne Sachs, one of those interviewed in the book, says "Fialka is a damn good interviewer. His questions are sometimes so precise it tickles and sometimes so grand that one feels on the edge of a new spiritual awareness." Gerry himself says "I emulate McLuhan's mission to discover new questions and new metaphors via conversations. I put out the book to hear the reactions of the readers to the interviewee's philosophies."

All in all, there are (a lucky?) thirteen interviewees, as follows: CHICK STRAND was a pioneer in hybridizing the avant-garde with an alluring ethnographic approach, and helped form the Canyon Cinema Collective in Berkeley.

LYNNE SACHS is best known for her multi-layered experimental documentaries, installations, and web projects exploring the relationship between personal observations and broader historical experiences, as well as her work with Chris Marker, her husband Mark Street, and the Berrigan Brothers. Her new film *Film About A Father Who* is set for a nationwide virtual cinema release on Jan. 15th.

GEORGE MANUPELLI was a filmmaker and Univ. of Michigan teacher who founded the Ann Arbor Film Festival.

JAY ROSENBLATT is an internationally recognized independent filmmaker and former therapist whose work explores our emotional and psychological cores.

TOM GUNNING is a Univ. of Chicago film scholar who works on problems of film style and interpretation, film history, and film culture, and who with Andre Gaudreault originated the influential theory of the "Cinema of Attractions".

MARTHA COLBURN is best-known for her punk-influenced collage-style animation films which fuse pop culture and political imagery.

ROBERT NELSON was a Canyon Cinema member and American Underground figure of the 1960's and 1970's who made European-style avant-garde shorts.

NINA MENKES, another Venice local, has been called "one of the most provocative artists in film today" by the Los Angeles Times. Nina has shown widely in major international film festivals and has won numerous awards, and she teaches at Cal Arts. Her new feature *#MeToo* documentary *Brainwashed* exposes common cinematic techniques that disempower women and girls.

LARRY GOTTHEIM is a self-taught filmmaker who started the influential cinema department at Binghamton Univ. and whose early films were often single continuous shots of landscape subjects.

GENE YOUNGBLOOD, who wrote for the L.A. Free Press, is a media arts theorist and film scholar whose book *Expanded Cinema* is 50 years young and still ahead of its time. He was one of the first

theorists to consider video as an art form.

EVAN MEANEY is an artist and researcher whose work explores liminalities and glitches. He is the go-to artist when it comes to video games, the internet, and experimental moving image art.

MIKE HOOLBOOM is a founding member of the Pleasure Dome Screening Collective and a major figure in Canadian, avant-garde, and queer cinema.

THEO ANTHONY is a writer, photographer, and filmmaker, who was named one of *Filmmaker Magazine's* "25 New Faces of Independent Film" in 2015, and who is reinventing Werner Herzog and Chris Marker for the 21st century.

Just to whet your appetite, here are some of my favorite quotes and words of wisdom from some of the interviews in the book:

CHICK STRAND says when she taught film at a small college, she would tell her students "Get a trade. Be a plumber if you're going to do film as art. [Experimental film] is a crazy person's community." She also says "When I'm doing my work, I never think about it in terms of 'What am I saying?' or 'Is this art?' or 'What's my philosophy?' What amazes me [is that] when people write about my work, they don't get it. [They] make associations I never thought of." And she says "I don't feel obligated to make a social statement or a political statement or any philosophical anything in my work."

LYNNE SACHS: "Film, art, and music are amazing, but they all take a secondary place equally to me to the direct human interaction. Almost all of my films deal with the playful, compulsive relationship I have to memory. I make films about people who are trying to resurrect things in relationship to their memory." She thinks art satisfies some of the same desires and fears of emptiness that religion does. "Every film -- not every filmmaker -- has to have its own language," she says. "That's what makes it experimental to me. I actually think that experimental films are storytelling, but they're just redefining the word 'storytelling'".

GENE YOUNGBLOOD says "I devoted my life to proposing and describing other models of living that would make Western Civilization obsolete." But he also thinks "The big problem with humankind is that we are not the people we have been waiting for. We do not have the radical will that's going to be necessary to change things at the root." In his own work, he feels he needs a big audience because he's trying to change the world, but one should never compromise to get that audience. "Entertainment gives us what we want; Art gives us what we didn't know we want," he says. "In the world of art, there has to be mystery. If you explain everything, it isn't art."

Venice's own NINA MENKES tells Fialka she goes by her feelings pretty much on everything and is very emotionally centered. "I'm in the camp where the unconscious is stronger than the conscious," she says. "[I feel] the best way to change the world is to work on yourself." She explains that the films she makes are photographing something that you don't just see if you go to Whole Foods. "They're trying to bring to life the dream world or the psychic realm or an inner truth that you don't see if you just walk down the street." Menkes says she never compromises. "People want this experience of forgetting themselves or not going deeper into themselves. I don't get that because I don't want it." And she says this about achieving success as an artist: "I don't think any artist who makes it on any level can make it without this overwhelming need that's so powerful because it's kind of impossible to do what we do. It's too hard."

These are just a few tidbits from the book. I highly recommend it for all film buffs, especially experimental film buffs. And if you're thinking at all about studying or working in independent or experimental film, this book is a must-read. But as Chick Strand advised, don't forget to get a trade.



Water resiliency and sustainability

by Andrea León-Grossmann, Climate Action Director - Azul

When California and the nation adopt a policy to conserve 30% of their land, coastlines, and seas by 2030, known as the 30x30 policy, few people make the connection to their water bills or sustainable jobs. By proposing nature-based solutions that protect biodiversity, we not only protect the environment, but also the resources we need such as drinking water.

California currently uses 19% of its electricity and 30% of natural gas to pump, treat, and distribute water. This means lots of emissions and hard costs, especially transporting water from Northern California through the Tehachapi Mountains to Southern California. That's why it is important to maximize for local water supplies. One of the proposals has been ocean desalination, but the fact is that it costs even more. Desalination consumes more energy than importing water from the north, it kills millions of marine organisms every day and contributes to climate change. The Poseidon's proposed plant in Huntington Beach would also privatize water, raise water rates, and erode the human right to water according to a UCLA study.

Desalination only produces a fraction of the water at a much higher cost and risk compared to the water supply we source from local groundwater while we can eliminate waste by increasing efficiency and plugging leaky pipes. Poseidon's Carlsbad plant has been riddled with problems, it had to shut down for weeks last April due to an algal bloom and has been fined for dumping more brine into the ocean than it was supposed to. The desalted water produced there, keeps going up in price and is the most expensive water in San Diego County at \$2,800 an acre-foot. Poseidon is now trying to get the permit for Huntington Beach before possibly moving on to El Segundo to start the process to try to build another plant and sell water to West Basin.

Although Poseidon is a company owned by multi-billion Canadian asset management firm Brookfield, they prefer to build their boondoggles with public money. Poseidon has secured a \$585 million forgivable WIFIA EPA loan from the Trump administration, it has applied for a \$400 million Metropolitan Water District subsidy and a \$1.1 billion CPCFA taxpayer supported bond allocation that usually goes to build affordable housing. Missing out on the CPCFA bond allocation could also mean missing out on an additional \$880 million federal subsidy, as the federal government has subsidies of \$0.80 on the dollar for certain affordable housing projects. The question Poseidon has not answered is why they need \$2.1 billion in public money to build a \$1.4 billion plant.

According to a recent report by the State Water Board, 1.6 million families are indebted with water bills equivalent to a debt of \$1 billion. Among the most affected communities is Los Angeles with more than 150,000 families who owe more than \$1,000 in water bills. Dozens of water agencies run the risk of going bankrupt if no action is taken on the matter.

We should now decide whether we can improve circumstances for all or make them even worse. It's time to choose whether to invest money in solutions like capturing winter rain with projects to replenish groundwater and aquifers, fix leaks, or we can give our limited capital to a private company to generate revenue for Wall Street investors and contribute to the inequity we already have.

Investments in stormwater capture and efficiency create local jobs and more jobs than a desalination plant. These projects give short-, medium- and long-term benefits without contributing to the climate crisis and above all, they are easy on families' pocketbooks. We should also consider that water demand in Southern California is at its lowest levels in 40 years and stored water supplies are at the highest levels.

Governor Newsom must follow his own advice and push sustainable water proposals to secure our human right to water rather than privatize it with desalination projects like Poseidon.

Seven Poems During Trump

By Majid Naficy

One- Truth and Falsehood

I read in Egyptian papyrus
That Truth and Falsehood were brothers.
One day Truth borrowed Falsehood's dagger
But lost it by misfortune.
Falsehood took the case to court,
Claimed the dagger was irreplaceable
And asked the judge in return
To blind Truth and order him
To become the doorkeeper of Falsehood's house.

Today, too, a false little man
Has blinded Truth
By his repetitious denial of facts
And made him the doorkeeper of his house
And stopped journalists and scientists
Who are the gatekeepers of the house of Truth
From questioning and researching.

If you believe in Truth
Cleanse the house from Falsehood
And, as the child of Truth in the Egyptian legend,
Rise to seek justice for Truth
Until his eyes shine again.

January 31, 2017

Two- Let America Become America Again

The America that I knew
Opened her arms to me
And placed me next to her children.

I had fled my homeland
Where my wife was executed.
A peshmerga took me to Turkey
A lawyer to France
And a sponsor to America.
Thus I became a citizen of this country.

But today, Those who separated
Infants from their mothers
At the Mexican border
Want to remove my citizenship.

No! This is not the America that I knew
The America where French Protestants
And English Catholics migrated,
The America where German Jews
Soviet defectors
And non-European refugees took refuge.

Let America become America again*
Return infants to asylum seekers
And embrace all of her children equally.

July 11, 2018

* "Let America be America again" Langston Hughes

Three- The Night Michelle Danced with Barack

Do you remember that night,
The night Michelle danced with Barack?
All people danced with them,
I, too, with my ex-wife
In front of a giant TV
In a nightclub on the corner.

Do you remember that night,
The night Michelle danced with Barack?
I let go of cynicism
Became an active citizen
And shouted with the others:
"Yes! We can."

Do you remember that night,
The night Michelle danced with Barack?
No one knew that soon
Slaveholders would rise from graves
And spread fear and despair
With their guns and God.

Do you remember that night,
The night Michelle danced with Barack?
That night will return again
Malia will dance with Sasha
And my son Azad with his ex-girlfriend
And America will find another Lincoln.

July 26, 2018

Four- This House Stinks

This house is not yours.

Go back to your concrete tower
With its golden toilet!

The one who will replace you
Must be the leading light of this nation
Not like you, the head of criminals.

It is not long
Until the Mississippi River
Joins the Colorado
And washes off your four-year filth
Thoroughly from this house.*

Rise, oh American Hercules
Who live in the hearts of
Every informed woman and man.
Rise! Rise!
This house stinks!

May 22, 2020

* An allusion to Hercules' washing-off the Augean stables.

Five- Worm

You are that apple worm which overnight
Grew into a bloodthirsty dragon
Like Hafvad's worm in the "Ardashir Chronicles".*
It nested in the minds of people
Drawing them to its cult.

No sorrow if in our time
Another Ardashir does not rise
To pour molten lead in your mouth
And call the people to open your castle
By setting a smoking fire on the roof.

No! This time, Instead of a hero,
The people themselves one by one
Will mail their ballots
To bring you down from your seat
And return you to your swamp.

October 15, 2020

* Ardashir I founded the Sasanian Dynasty in Iran in 224 A. D. He slew Hafvad's worm before crowning himself king of kings >>>

Six- Tonight I Think of Trump

Tonight I think of Trump
Who sits in the White House alone
Thinking of his defeat.

He is not the Shah
Who fled the Revolution
And never returned home.

He is not the Fuhrer
Who, in his bunker in Berlin,
Put a bullet in his head.

He is an outgoing president
Who must pick up the phone
And congratulate his rival.

May the Goddess of Liberty
Give him courage to do this
So that tolerance
Replaces hatred
And America becomes America again.

November 6, 2020

Seven- Endpoint

I am that bullet
Which Hitler put in his head
At his hideout.

I am that blood clot
Which took Stalin into a coma
In his bedroom.

I am that termite
Which gnawed away Solomon's cane
Until his standing corpse fell*.

I am that endpoint
No matter if the tyrants
Call themselves eternal.

January 2, 2021

* The Quran 34:14. The Bible does not have this narrative.

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Who's Deus?

by alan rodman 12/13/2020

Planet passes planet touching
in our twilight autumn sky
gaze on them to wonderment
once in my lifetime

Zeus became Rome's Jupiter
the lightning bolt
the eagle
the oak his signs

He is Jove
King of Gods
Lucetius
the Light Bringer

He is Sky Father
each day is his jewel
Djous-Patēr of the sky
son of timeless Saturn

Sired by that wise planet,
The Old King of yore:
Saturn slowest wheeling
ruler of detours and delay

Saturn in
the origin garden
lord of our planting
and sowing

the Knower reaps
eating seed children
Saturn returned us
to turning the earth

Saturnalia all week long
orgiastic celebration
inviting the rebirth
of sunlight

reawakened remembered
a golden age
from long gone days
when we all lived as one
freedom on that day, slaves
reversed roles gave orders
to masters, and masters
waited on slaves

people gave candles for light
or pottery figurines of angels
drank together
and sang

a Fool presided over
the whole festival
The False King of Misrule,
the Saturnalicus Princeps

only fools soon
cast aside
welcoming our Sun
the true star

A jewel
an angel
a journey
our Deity

Jove is witness to our oath,
a sacred trust destroying lies
root of good government
and justice

Jehovah, He is Our Father
He is One and the same
Indra King of the Gods
Ruler of Heaven

He is at once almighty Indra
the God who disturbs
monks as they meditate
foreseeing this possibility:

a self realized woman or man
must grow to become
as powerful
as He

Author of lightning thunder rains or rivers
father of Arjuna
Indra destroys all deceiving forces
giving us rains and sunshine

He is the great Jailbreaker,
Smasher of walls, the Wave Washer,
Agitator of Oceans, the One
Who is milking all the cloud-cows

Jupiter throws His bolts
for our rude awakening
As Saturn gladdens
tonight they reunite

the hue of one true jewel
is yours each dawn,
the youth of your every
diurnal journey.

guided by eagles,
protected by lightning,
supplied with all you'll need,
go forth anew.

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with
Raquel Baker
7:30 PM
FREE**

A community writing workshop in which participants are asked to bring 2-3 pages of fiction to read and receive feedback. Facilitated by Raquel Baker via Zoom. Registration required.



**Wednesday Night
Poetry Workshop
with
Beth Ruscio
8:00 PM
FREE**

The West Coast's longest-running free poetry workshop welcomes new and seasoned poets to share new work and provide feedback. Please be prepared to share one poem.

Go to www.beyondbaroque.org
for registration information

LAUGHTEARS

Established 1953

Laughtears.com
pfsuzy@aol.com

Some Venice Film Festival Films you can watch on YouTube anytime:

Mark Steven Shepherd's "Venice of America" (just the trailer, only on Vimeo) <https://vimeo.com/467168001>

Sonny Zorro <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVtJvisQDX0>

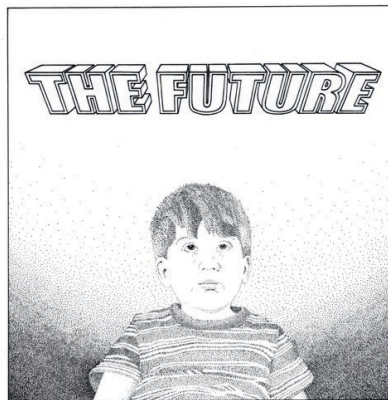
Charlie Chaplin Kid Auto Race <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2K3A1S5ak>

Venice Ralph Trailer (Fialka/Elliott) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msnvtmTL-2WQ>

Young Mr Jazz https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkLvY0gi_Mk - Ocean Park pier in Venice in 1919 with Harold Lloyd

More info on SPONTO GALLERY
<http://laughtears.com/ItCameFromVenice2014.html>

http://laughtears.com/sponto_lives.html



The Pandemic Blues
by marty liboff

I'm singin the pandemic blues
everything stinks in the news.

The virus has ravaged LA
over 300 die every day.

The hospitals are filled
another loved one killed.

Can't pay the rent

I may soon be livin in a tent.

Lost my job

the White House attacked by a mob.

My unemployment check is running out
our future is in doubt.

Don't have food for the children
what a mess we're in.

The virus seems to get worse
another one in the back of a hearse.

All the news about covid
everyday thousands dead.

Dumb asses still won't wear a mask
they're fools & jerks and don't ask.

My wonderful cousin got covid and died
our whole family cried.

My business went broke
can't even afford a burger & a Coke.

Can't visit family or a friend
it feels like the end.

Everything closed & nowhere to go
depression & feelin low.

Sick & tired of staying indoors
watching dumb TV about stupid bores.

The kids don't go to school
they're going nuts & I'm losing my cool.

Our economy may never recover
a new world we discover.

Republicans & Democrats can't get along
they do everything wrong.

Millions on unemployment
and a stupid, worthless government.

Everyday a new covid mutation
evading the inoculation.

Hoarding toilet paper so I can't even shit
is the world ending and this is it?!

It's taking forever to get the vaccine
keep wearing a mask & stay clean.

With the vaccine there's hope
so cheer up & don't mope.

So try and stay happy & give up sorrow
let's be hopeful for a better tomorrow...

HOMES NOT HOTELS

Join the Westside Local of the LA Tenants Union
for a demonstration against the proposed Venice
Place Hotel on Saturday, February 13th at
1:00pm.



People need HOMES, not hotels.

This project is across the street from Westminster Elementary School, and will intensify gentrification.

Venice for the people, not international investors and tourists!

Meet on California Ave. outside Oakwood
Rec Center. at 1:00pm. From there we will
go to Abbot Kinney.



6th Annual Venice Black History Celebration

SUNDAY FEB 21ST, 2021
Time and Program: TBA
Virtual Gathering • more info: savevenice.me

cerned she's already making her own antibodies and there might be an adverse reaction having someone else's plasma- might evoke a cytokine storm (that's plasma therapy- this treatment helps prevent cytokine storms.) I suspect many doctors aren't understanding exactly what the treatment is, don't trust it, and therefore haven't been prescribing it. However, as my brother kept pointing out, the really rich people like Trump use it....An elite treatment??

Friday, January 1st. New Year's Day- It appears NO ONE is available, but thankfully Jian, "provider support" for Dr. L, calls me back. I hear chickens in the background- I have no idea where she is, but she remains available for the duration. Apparently the needed release from MG had been sent to Dr.L-but she can't access it. However, she has good news. Dr. M's associate, Dr. LZ, will prescribe at Cedars!!! But hours later, the pharmacy refuses to fill the prescription. Back to Covina.

10:11am Rick works on the paperwork. We just need Dr. M to send all the releases we've gathered to the pharmacy. And we still need a signature from MG.

4:30 pm The D assures us "they're on it".

Flynn, the pharmacist, says, "When the last signatures are acquired. We will then need the patient face sheet". Argh, more paperwork!

6:36 pm Still no signature from MG. Am I driving to Covina tonight? Can't schedule the nurse until we know when we'll have the Bamlanivimab.

8pm Still waiting for paperwork- The drug run will be the following morning.

Now we need to book the nurse practitioner. Home Health Care tells me there's no one available to administer the infusion until Monday, (while her baby coos in the BG.) I remind her I was told they were available 24/7. Voila! Someone's available after all. We schedule her for the following morning. She wants to know if all the supplies for the IV will be included.

9:07pm Flynn directs the pickup, "Access via the back parking lot, ring the buzzer to inform them you are picking up an IV order. The driver should have an ice chest/igloo for transport. The IV will have the rate of infusion. Typically we would not be providing supplies as it typically is handled in a skilled setting. We can provide the tubing and Dial-a-flow rate. There is no cost for the drug itself. The ancillary supplies I will charge on what is supplied."

11:03pm MG has still not sent the paperwork.

6:33 am January 2nd Flynn tells what's needed for the IV and emphasizes the need to follow the instructions.

7:11 am Paperwork still not complete.

7:52am D says, "Faxed all papers to pharmacy". A bunch of blank pages had been sent- Flynn thinks they were loaded upside down. Try again.

8:48am Flynn finally writes, "You can pick up now".

I set out on my mission. On the way a flurry of phone calls... The nurse has no equipment. Rick coordinates with Flynn to buy all materials needed to administer the infusion. Flynn reminds us we'll need a prescription for epinephrine. Where is our doctor??

9:30am- I find myself on a deserted street in Covina

I arrive at the back door to the pharmacy- the place I hope will save my mom's life

I let them know I've arrived and wait in the parking lot.

10:30am I get the goods, put it in the cooler, and hightail it to MG. Halfway there I get a frantic call-Flynn forgot the IV pole. I pull off the freeway landing outside the men's jail in downtown LA. Should I head back to Covina? MG assures us they have one. I resume my quest. Meanwhile, D warns if anything happens they'll need to call 911. I'm hoping we're not killing our mom with her cure.

11:30am Melrose Gardens-I meet the nurse prac-

itioner and hand over the cooler. She looks very professional and assures me she's read all the instructions. I hover around the area for an hour to be sure everything goes without a hitch. There is one, of course. She can't find the IV pole. She improvises, and administers the Bamlanivimab to Kitty.

We thank our pharmacist, Flynn, who replies, "It was my pleasure to assist you and your sister in seeking and obtaining the specialized treatment for your mother. Many times the only advocate is your family."

Sunday, January 3rd- we finally hear from Dr L's office, "I am sorry to hear that there has been a delay in treatment for your mother. I am including Dr. M and his Care Team in this email for prompt follow up tomorrow morning." Rick calls it the "Please don't sue us email".

Monday, January 4th at 5:50pm Dr. L. finally checks in. By then it's a moot point.

Kitty began to recover immediately. Within a few days her appetite begins to return and she finally answers our calls.

Jan 10th we respond to our Care Team, "The Monoclonal Antibody treatment, Bamlanivimab, was administered on January 2nd to our mom, Betty Robins. We didn't want to wait until we heard back from you because the efficacy of the treatment depends on early administration. We're grateful to Jian, who remained available during the holiday and tried to help. Nevertheless, she was unable to locate a way for us to get the medication, or obtain paperwork we needed. It was an extremely arduous process to make this potentially lifesaving treatment available for our mom. We spent approximately 30 hours each researching and orchestrating its administration in a domain we know little about. Every step of the way was difficult due to miscommunication, lack of knowledge, and slow responses to our queries.

We outlined our concerns about the delay in notifying us of our mom's positive test result, their lack of knowledge of the treatment and how to get it, difficulties in coordinating signatures and paperwork, lack of coordination of communication between Home Health Care and the pharmacy.

We offered to share information about obtaining and administering Bamlanivimab, but there was no follow up from the care team except this, "We appreciate your partnership in coordinating care for your Mom. There are many treatments that have received FDA approval for emergency use. Unfortunately, many are not readily available in the outpatient setting, including monoclonal antibody. We are glad that she was able to receive this treatment despite the logistical challenges. And we hope that she continues to improve." I replied, "Perhaps if more doctors advocated for the treatment it would be easier to access."

In an appearance on CNBC on Dec. 15, HHS Secretary Alex Azar lamented a surprising surplus of the medications, partly because "people are waiting too long to seek out the treatments." Such delays, he warned, meant that, for some patients, "it may be too late in order to get the benefit of these antibody treatments that beat back the spread of the virus."

"Months after Trump emphatically credited an experimental antibody therapy for his quick recovery from covid and even as drugmakers ramp up supplies, only a trickle of the product has found its way into regular people. While hundreds of thousands of vials sit unused, sick patients who, research indicates, could benefit from early treatment — available for free — have largely been fending for themselves.... So far...only about 30% of the available doses have been administered to patients, federal Dept. of Health and Human Services officials said." <https://khn.org/news/article/patients-fend-for-themselves-to-access-highly-touted-covid-antibody-treatments/>

Med-Plus Pharmacy Covina, Ca. 626-966-1200 Flynn Lew-pharmacist. Tell him Rick and Lisa sent you. He'll hook you up.

24th and Pacific

by Josh "Bagel" Klassman



Ike the dog, Venice CA, 1988, Photo- Josh "Bagel" Klassman

In 1988 I lived with Jayme "VISION" / "Crazy J" Burtis, his dog Ike, also for a little while our friend Matt lived with us and slept in a closet, and of course the endless amounts of people that crashed on our floor. It was common place to see people such as RISK, DASH, TAME, SEVERE, FUN-CRIME, VANE,

DOC (RIP), and many other graffiti artists working on their craft in Jayme's room, aka the living room.

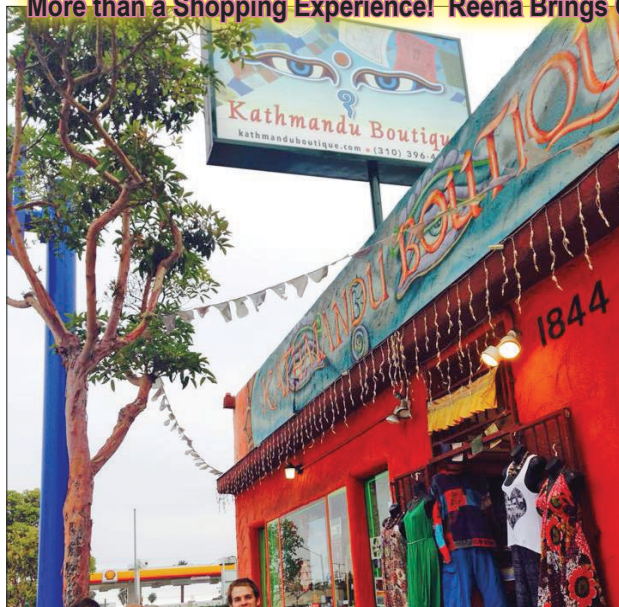
After wild nights of idiotic "I am 18 hear me roar" lunacy, Jayme and I both hungover and half drunk would stumble down to the Venice Jetty which happened to be in front of where we lived, to surf the spot that once was, that was in it's final days of true existence. We would brutalize ourselves by surfing foggy drizzly June gloom mornings and getting under sea level closed out barrels that would slam us and grind us into the sand. We loved it, true glutens for punishment. But for as invincible as we thought we were, the abuse reminded us that we were only human. Side note, this was a few years before Jayme got sober and turned his life around for the better.

We drove the neighbors bat shit crazy every day and night in some way. We always lost our keys, so we just started to leave the window in the kitchen open just enough to squeeze through it. But before squeezing through the window we had to get on top of a trash can, pull ourselves up with our fingers holding onto a 2 inch ledge and with the other hand grab the windowsill, because of course we lived on the 2nd floor. The fact that we didn't break any bones doing this was a miracle within itself.

Jayme's brother Colly (RIP) and our other friend Joff "found" a pizza that was in an unattended delivery vehicle on their walk over to our pad. When they opened the box it was all jalapeños (Instant Karma). We took all the jalapeños off, and left a huge mound of them on the box in Jayme's room. We left our apartment to go get into some late teen / young adult dumb shit somewhere in some way, and when we got home all of the jalapeños were gone. Ike had eaten them all. The poor dog had the runs for three days and destroyed the carpet in Jayme's room. I laughed one of the hardest I ever had in my life when I heard Jayme scream through the wall "FUCKING IKE!" after he did more damage to the carpet late one night.

Fast forward to 33 years later and Jayme and I were taking on the phone the other day about how if some kids are up all night making noise that we don't get mad about it being the older neighbors now, we understand that we were once those kids. Honor amongst thieves as they say.

Meet Reena: Community-Focused Entrepreneur and Spiritual Activist Welcome to Kathmandu Boutique: More than a Shopping Experience! Reena Brings Culture, Community and Awareness to the Westside



by Enyaj Pitchford

Next time you're racing down Lincoln Blvd to Santa Monica, check out that orange building on the west side just past Pico, 1844 Lincoln Blvd. The lovely Reena Gauchan settled her Kathmandu Boutique and cultural hotspot here over 15 years ago. As a single mother of a young son with no support from the father, she was determined to make a life here for herself and her son.

Reena was born in a town bordering Nepal and India. Her village is called Tukuche, NW of Kathmandu the capital of Nepal. She was one of about 300 people who lived there. She had always loved people and witnessing the styles and art of Nepal and India gave her a great interest in fashion. When she came to the States, it was hard to find these items affordably. That gave her the idea to bring these items and sell them to the market. "I had to go to the festivals, street fairs, farmer's markets and did a lot of pop-up shows four days a week for a straight six years of nonstop work. Since I did not have money, a friend helped me with the merchandise that he brought and I sold it on consignment. That's how I got my business started."

She first arrived in the US, in Michigan for her degree in physical therapy. She wanted to fill a need in her own country that lacked skilled workers to address physical disabilities. In Nepal, at that time, there was a big shortage of doctors, therapists, and no place for treating Cerebral Palsy patients. They were not even visible in the community because it was looked at as a curse, bad karma for a past misdeed. There was no government assistance, no clinics or resources, or education for them, Reena recounts. She formed a non-profit foundation with a few others called "Self Help Group" for Cerebral Palsy-Nepal. The goal was to get the children therapy, and vocational training while removing the negative stigma around them through education. "Now we have the whole com-

munity supporting us, and have treated thousands of children, given them vocational training and speech through mechanical devices like the ones in the West," Reena says happily. Her co-founders built a center that has been recognized and awarded as one of the first non-profit Cerebral Palsy centers in the whole country of Nepal.

She had worked in her field for a few years in New Jersey, before visiting her cousins in Los Angeles. But when she came to the Westside, she felt like she was home, and knew this was where she belonged. Lucky for us all, she followed through with that instinct.

The Kathmandu Boutique offers some of the most exquisite shopping on the Westside. It is no secret to the Burning Man, Coachella, and Yoga Festival crowd. Showcasing a blend of Tibetan, Nepalese, Indian jewelry, dresses, shawls, and everyday wearable clothing for men, women, and children. There are beautiful, woolen blankets, wall hangings, tapestries, deity posters; a variety of musical instruments, like tongue drums, tabla, flutes, singing bowls, meditation chimes. Not to be missed are the scented candles, incenses of all kinds along with crystals, books, and meditation pillows. This place offers a plethora of items and gifts for the peace-seeking, wellness wanting hipster, spiritual seeker, and more. She sells these items not so much for religious purposes but as she says "knowing the traditions and customs they represent and how they can be used in our daily lives." Reena feels these symbols "offer wisdom, opportunity to increase love, kindness, joy, knowledge, compassion, caring, protecting, manifesting, creating, passion, healing, and happiness. They help create an atmosphere of being present, so one feels moved to love all living beings. It gives us a moment to forget, our busy, crazy materialist life. By carrying one of these symbols, we might be able to remind ourselves to be a better person." Well, I can only say 'Amen, Ahau, I' Chaim, and Namaste' to that!

(You can fill in your own expression of joy here.)

Reena should get the award for one of the hardest working business owners on the planet. While working 120 percent to keep her business rolling she never lost sight of her original intention: to serve the disabled of Nepal. She wielded a local community from the yoga scene of talented musicians and kirtan bands and began giving mini-festivals at her shop for up to 200 people. Besides the music and space to listen and dance, there was the most mouth-watering Nepalese food, even stacks of momos, their delightful dumplings all made by hand by Reena, her sister, and her mother. Eventually, she requested everyone bring their own plates, cups, and utensils to have a zero-waste affair. She reduced the garbage from ten to twelve trash bags down to one. Reena says that "like-minded souls come together for a good time, eat delicious ethnic Nepalese food. Some get married, most of them are collaborating in businesses and building amazing friendships" Much of the proceeds are donated to serve the Cerebral Palsy Center in Nepal.

But it has been difficult during COVID to even keep her own business intact and she sometimes feels very badly that she cannot do more for the Cerebral Palsy Center. She tells of how she would not have survived if not for her community of family and friends who remember her place and tell others about it. "I am always trying to bring our community together, treating everyone like a family instead of customers, creating a safe place where we can do healing circles, workshops, have tea, read tarot and community gatherings" She adds, "Everyone who enters the store can afford to buy something special and leave with a smile" Thank you, Reena, for your great work! https://www.instagram.com/kathmandu_boutique/

<https://www.facebook.com/kathmanduboutique/>
<http://www.kathmanduboutique.com>