

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

Letters P2  
Gjusta/Gjelina P3  
Google Fiddles on Net Neutrality P4  
Bird Totems of Venice:  
The American Coot P6  
Christmas Tree Massacre  
at Bird Sanctuary P7  
Venice Stories P8  
Poetry P9  
Harry Drinkwater Remembered P10  
12 Annual Venice Film Fest P11



January  
2015  
#399

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# Happy New Year Venice!

By Eric Ahlberg

Fellow Venetians you have passed the perihelion and have successfully entered the next years' orbit. Massive forces are at work spinning you, flying you around our most holy Sun. Our daily presence is crafting our future from our inner fires. I think we have a lot of things to be happy about, unless you are really depressed, in which case there are also a whole lot of terribly depressing things going on. Is Venice dead? Don't be silly. Venice is always dying and being reborn, just like everywhere else. Yet the present day artist refuses to die. We seek to restrain the market forces which would drive out the last poor person to further the ground rent extraction, the title privilege of ownership.

Let us bathe in the glorious lights of our ancestors and fill ourselves with the strong positive love we want to manifest, our golden vision, our vestments we wear inside our humility, while pirouetting naked atop a Shrine skateboard at Sunset on Ocean Front Walk. We also present as the superhero, saving the world from evil which will kill us all, while learning from the anti-hero that we can have our faults, but we will still save the world. We present absence, those days when you are not feeling up to it, those weeks, months, and years in entropy, chillin, hanging, no ambition, no future, blitzed, black-holed. We are the compromise between who we want to be and who we have become.

People with a lot of money seem to be vacuuming up a lot of Venice property at seriously inflating values. Jan 2012 \$887K, Jan 2014, \$1.3M, that's a 46% increase over two years. This catches the attention of the pure financial guys. It's a good place to park your money. This is a no brainer investment for anyone using nearly free money from the Fed. 0% Mortgage Delinquency in Venice means the property sharks have already cleared out the weak property owners. Rent Nov 2013 \$3730 Nov 2014 \$4640. 24% in one year.

Abbot Kinney Boulevard was called "LA's Douchiest Neighborhood" in the LA Weekly. This year saw the departure of Carol Tantau from her wonderful store on Abbot Kinney. We are seeing a new wave of evictions from the lovely art studios on Sunset. There has been much concern about Airbnb rentals in all Venice neighborhoods. The City of Los Angeles' Building & Safety Code Enforcement has been threatening to fine owners or other sub-lessors if they do not discontinue the use of their homes as "short-term rental" units.

Sometimes we weigh difficult ideas, like that Art is exploited by the Evil Rich, to look cool. Specifically, Venice's reputation as an "Artists' Community" is used as marketing to inflate real estate and rents, driving out the artists. This is a trope of our civilization, and has its own literary genre. My Art Dealer friends sell to...the owners of Walmart, and other superrich. This is a hard conclusion for an Artist like yourself, but even more for the Cultural Anthropologist whose job it is to catalog these things. Sure commodification and mass reproduction have reduced the value of cultural messaging,

— Continued on page 5



Painting by Audrey McNamara-Garcia, sign text added by Eric Ahlberg.

## Google Fiddles While Net Neutrality Burns

By Anthony Castillo

The battle to maintain a free and open internet is coming to a head. A decision on Net Neutrality will be made in the coming weeks by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on whether to keep things as they are now or to create a tiered, fast lane/slow lane internet. What is Net Neutrality and why should we all care?

We have a neutral internet at the moment. We are all able to look at any web site we choose, and based on the speed of our internet connection all content arrives at the same rate. But if Verizon, AT&T, Comcast and a few other mega communications corporations get their way that will all change. The corporate model that they prefer would create fast lanes for the big companies that could afford to pay for these fast lanes, and slow lanes for those who could not afford to do so. Example, say you want to go online to look at past issues of the Free Venice Beachhead and the LA Times. As it stands now you can do both with no difference between the two. But if Net Neutrality is rolled back, you would be able to access the LA Times because they could afford to pay Verizon, or AT&T for faster streaming. But the Beachhead, well we struggle just to produce the paper each month, so our stream might become agonizingly slow, and it gets worse. The users of the internet will have to pay more for what they want to see on the web as well. Say you watch sports, movies, internet TV shows, online seminars, or porn for that matter, on the web

and you want it to stream the way you're used to, well you're going to have to pay for it to do so or else it will stream at dial up speed if you don't. Think of cable TV and you will have an idea of what the internet would look like. Without a neutral internet, internet service providers (ISPs) will make profits on content coming and going. In other words Net Neutrality is the principal policy that prevents ISPs from giving special treatment to some websites at the expense of others.

President Obama finally spoke out in favor of Net Neutrality in no uncertain terms earlier in December when he urged the FCC to re-classify the internet under the 1934 Title II provision which would treat broadband companies as a "telecommunications service" instead of as an "information service" and as a common carrier like a public utility. A phone company can't charge you different rates based on the content of your phone conversations. And the water and power company can't charge you different rates based on what you're using electricity or water for. The internet should be treated in a similar manner, regardless of what you do on the internet. Former cable company lobbyist and FCC chairman, Tom Wheeler wants to rollback Net Neutrality, but after President Obama's statements has had to back-pedal just a bit from this position. The President should have never appointed such a cable company shill in the first place, but I digress. The FCC received 3.9 million comments during its public comment period. More than it has on any other topic. Over 90% were in favor of Net Neutrality. You would think

--continued on Page 4

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Anthony Castillo, Greta Cobar, Don Geagan, Mary Getlein, Ronald McKinley, Krista Schwimmer, Alice Stek, Eric Ahlberg.

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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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Families and the Department of Children and Family Services

Dear Beachhead,

I am writing in response to “An Unnamed Writer on the Beachhead,” November 2014 issue, who wrote an article concerning the plight of a family with whom she is friends. She focuses her moral outrage on the Draconian methods used by Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to “kidnap” these children from their mother. While my heart goes out to the children involved, I’d like to offer a larger, but perhaps less popular perspective on child welfare.

I’ve spent most of my adult life teaching teenagers under every circumstance imaginable, including as a volunteer writing teacher working with incarcerated minors in Los Angeles. I want to make it clear up front that I do not and have never worked for any government agency, including DCFS. However, many of my incarcerated students are in that system, some their entire lives. In case after case, their removal from biological parents or other so-called guardians was really for their own protection. “Unnamed Writer” mentions that her friend’s daughter, “a victim of domestic abuse”, left her baby in the care of a drunken, abusive boyfriend. This was her choice, knowing full well what he was capable of. When her son’s school wanted to speak with her about the fact the boy was cutting himself, she didn’t make the school interview. Then her children were removed from the home – as they should have been. Until she can demonstrate parental responsibility, like the choice of a kind and loving partner and showing some concern for her son’s emotional state, her children are at risk. Unless there’s a trusted relative or friend to take those children in, DCFS must step in.

While it may seem heavy-handed to whisk children away from their homes, DCFS does not do this merely to make money, as “Unnamed Writer” suggests. I agree that it isn’t a perfect system. Cases of severe abuse have gone unchecked, and children have been harmed, even killed. I’ve worked with a very small number of indifferent social workers, but by and large, they are professionals with big hearts and boundless patience. One social worker specializing in runaways works tirelessly to locate and provide safe haven for her kids. She worries about them when their own parents are too high, drunk, or otherwise unable to care for them. DCFS social workers are also horribly understaffed and over-worked; they are required to keep tabs on far too many abused and neglected children who, if they make it into their teen years, become increasingly at risk for substance abuse, sexual trafficking, rape, pregnancy, gang involvement, and mental illness. The “mass incarceration of little kids” which “Unnamed Writer” accuses DCFS of is just plain inflammatory. I have students in juvenile hall who, without this agency’s involvement, would have no money for clothes, food, educational testing, birthday celebrations, or a roof over their heads. If neighbors, pediatricians, teachers, and other adults who live around or with children don’t report suspected child abuse, how can anyone realistically just blame social workers for the occasional abuse and deaths of children? When people refuse to get involved in cases of suspected child endangerment or abuse, we are all diminished. We are all connected.

While a few hours a week allotted for monitored visits with young children is not nearly long enough, it’s better than no contact at all. Young mothers without the resources to look after their children, in abusive relationships, fighting addiction, or the allure of gang life all need our compassion and our support, but certainly not any more than their children. People complain about juvenile criminals, and indeed Los Angeles is home to tens of thousands of gang members. However, are those complaining willing to do anything to change the horrendous circumstances under which children are presumably educated, housed, and cared for? The city also has a shameful problem with sexually trafficked minors. These are girls in our fair city as young as 10 and 11 abducted from bus benches or en route to school, forcibly hooked on drugs, and put out onto the streets by their traffickers. Some may have already been removed from their homes, others should have been and weren’t for whatever reason. Some simply fell through the cracks of a society too distracted by social media, pop culture trivia, and its own woes to care.

It is just untrue that the individuals who work for DCFS have “no training in child development or how to talk to a child.” The basic requirement to become a social worker is a Bachelor’s degree in social work, sometimes a Master’s, some facility with a second

Thanks for your generous donations!

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- Emily Winters

language, certification, internships, and so on. The agency does not “steal” children. They are working against a tidal wave of social problems so overwhelming it’s a miracle that any one of them lasts more than a year in that profession.

I would urge “Unnamed Writer” to spend a day volunteering in a battered women’s shelter or in a shelter for homeless teens. Or go on-line to such sites as Saving Innocence, Girls & Gangs, InsideOut Writers, or Alliance for Children’s Rights and educate herself about the larger issues of child abuse. It’s never just one “evil” governmental organization’s fault, never just the Probation Department or even LAPD’s “fault” for why children are removed from their homes and separated from their parents. Entering with guns drawn into a home with just women and children is undoubtedly excessive. To be fair, police don’t always know what kind of danger they’re walking into. I understand “Unknown Writer’s” anger – but it is largely misdirected. DCFS doesn’t just “kidnap” children. That’s absurd. One student of mine – in and out of incarceration for unknown crimes– struggled to regain custody of her baby, and DCFS, as well as her own attorney and mother, did all they could for over a year to facilitate that, but at 16 she just wasn’t ready to be a mother. The foster mom was poised to adopt her son, a much better option, at least in this case.

“Unnamed Writer” is correct that states offer social agencies financial incentives for adopting children, when they need to do a much better job at family reunification. And yes, there are far more children of color in the foster care and juvenile justice system than there are white and Asian children. We are a racist society, and not even the youngest American child of color can escape that insidious poison.

There are no easy solutions, and unfortunately children get caught in the middle as adults continue to mud sling and shirk personal and collective responsibility. In an ideal world, both parents should raise their children. But more importantly, they should be with those adults who unconditionally love and care for them, regardless of biological ties, skin color, or sexual orientation.

Criminal behavior usually bears a direct correlation to how criminals were treated in their early years. How can we demand civilized behavior (which must include compassion for the Other), when we don’t model it ourselves? This is an awful lot to swallow if you’re on the firing end of a gun held by a juvenile offender. A proper sex education, access to birth control, decent neonatal care, and parenting classes go much farther to stem the abuse of children than raging against a struggling government agency. I know it probably feels better to react with moral outrage and strike out at the nearest and easiest target. Truly understanding the complexities involved in child welfare, juvenile justice, and family dynamics requires patience and a desire for the truth, regardless of whether it supports your assumptions or not. There isn’t just one truth here, including my own.

Who has the presence of mind to connect the dots between an unstable home life, absent, addicted, or violent parents/guardians, and the shuffling game of where next to place minors no one really wants? Imagine growing up with that hanging over your head. Imagine devoting your life to trying to help track and find a caring home for these children.

- Nika Cavat

Venice resident for 22 years  
Research sites:  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/fostercare/inside/roberts.html>  
<http://www.collegesanddegrees.com/programs/social-work/education>

Families and the Department of Children and Family Services: “Unnamed Writer” responds:

In defense of the victim, in this case and many cases:

– Continued on page 5



# BINS ARE IN AT GJUSTA

THEATER OF THE ABSURD

– By Roxanne Brown

**THE SCENES:**

320 SUNSET - GJUSTA

Architect/Representative: Stephen Vitalich

Former Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) Case Manager: Jim Murez,  
Current LUPC case manager Mark Kleiman

Owner: Fran Camaj, Owns Gjelina, GTA, Gjusta and 1301 & 1305 Abbot Kinney  
Zoning Administrator (ZA): Maya Zaitzevsky – Currently awaiting decision

600 MILDRED – KIM’S MARKET

Architect: Stephen Vitalich

Former LUPC Case Manager: Jim Murez,

Current LUPC Case Manager: Kathleen Rawson

Owner: Alicia Searle

Zoning: No Hearing to date

259 HAMPTON - SAUCE

Architect: Stephen Vitalich

LUPC Case Manager: None – case never went through LUPC or VNC

Owner: Richard J. Gottlieb, Dune Investments LLC

Zoning Administrator: Linn Wyatt, Chief Zoning Administrator signed off on project

Zoning Appeal: January 7<sup>th</sup> in West LA

**THE DIRECTORS** - MAYOR ERIC GARCETTI’s Administration and CITY COUNCILMAN MIKE BONIN

**THE PLOT** - All three of these projects are proposing change of use to restaurants with late night hours serving liquor to patrons; most will be seated outdoors (where sound is not contained). These projects are as close as 3 feet from some residents’ homes and 12 feet six inches from some other residences. Sound travels farther and wider at night. Why? Google it.

**LIQUOR LICENSES** - Alcohol and Beverage Control (ABC) states: “ABC will not license a new retail location within 100 feet of a residence unless the applicant can establish that the operation of the proposed premises will not interfere with the quiet enjoyment of the property by residents. (Section 23789 and Rule 61.4)” [https://www.abc.ca.gov/questions/licenses\\_faq.html](https://www.abc.ca.gov/questions/licenses_faq.html) see Q18. LAPD’s Captain Brian Johnson testified at Gjusta’s ZA hearing that ABC allows 5 liquor licenses in Gjusta’s tract area. That tract currently has 14. Add Gjusta, and it’s 15.

**BUILDING & SAFETY** - Sauce at 259 Hampton does not have a permit for restaurant and tables and chairs outside. Yet, they have been operating as a sit-down restaurant for 4 years with no penalty. Gjusta has a permit for a bakery/bakery equipment/no seating/no eating– inside or in the parking lot. Yet, prior to opening, Camaj built a full restaurant with commercial kitchen equipment, opened in October and began encouraging people to sit and eat.

At Gjusta’s ZA Hearing on November 13<sup>th</sup>, Building and Safety’s representative, Avi Sargsyan, confirmed the above. Knowing this, Camaj went back to 320 and didn’t change a thing. Camaj was cited by Building and Safety at the end of December with an order to comply within 30 days. Since the citation, he hasn’t changed a thing.

Waiting for Camaj to comply is like “Waiting for Godot.” In seven years at Gjelina, he has flouted laws, codes, rules, and regulations with no penalty.

**PROPERTY GANGSTERS**- One resident testifying at 320’s Zoning hearing accused some owners of being “property gangsters.” They do what they want to with their property, blatantly disregarding laws and facing no penalty.

**MAXIMIZE PROFITS** - Why are these projects going into residential neighborhoods? Could it be that the cost is less than going on Abbot Kinney, Rose, or Main – which have properties for lease?

At GTA and Gjelina, we see patrons sitting and eating on milk crates in an adjacent alley, on the sidewalk and in the street. Camaj told neighbors (at his owner outreach, VNC, and LUPC meetings) he would do the same at Gjusta. It appears he will do this at 1301 Abbot Kinney as well, since the inside is limited in size, but there’s a very big rooftop parking lot.

Just think how much more money you make without paying for a permit, without building an enclosed space, no cost for tables and chairs – just a milk crate.

Charge \$16 for a brisket sandwich, two sides at \$10, add an \$8 dessert, and a \$4 small black coffee – lunch for two – on milk crates in a dusty parking lot - with tax and tip - \$80 - \$100.

Gjusta’s patrons are convinced this is “cool” while Camaj seems to be laughing all the way to the bank.

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**- Gjusta’s first health department report came out. They found flies on meat and bread and asked workers to dispose of it, which they did. They found equipment not sterilized at recommended temperatures. This is public record. Anyone can obtain it.

**YELP** also records this with less detail. Google Gjusta Yelp, go to the upper right corner and click on Health Report. You will find several notations– including “standard not met” for unadulterated food and vermin-proofing. Yet, Gjusta got an “A” with those observations and with patrons eating in a dirty, dusty parking lot.

**CHEERS or JEERS** Do you want to support this? If not, vote with your dollars – dine at restaurants that are responsible neighbors. Each dollar spent at Gjusta, Gjelina, GTA and Sauce seems to be funding a very bad neighbor policy.

People may say I don’t want to be involved in the politics – I like the food. Do you know that with every bite of food and every dollar spent at 320 Sunset and 259 Hampton (600 Mildred is on pause), it appears you are emboldening those who: Flout the law, put up a restaurant serving liquor with late night hours next door to residents’ and their children’s bedroom windows. Chase Venice artists out – all artists at 334 SUNSET have been evicted

**WATCH THE VIDEO – DISCERN FACT FROM FICTION**

Gjusta’s Owner Outreach Meeting: <http://youtu.be/fpiUiG0BIsk>

Gjusta’s ZA HEARING: - Zack Galifianakis has a cameo appearance

Part 1: [http://youtu.be/8rY7c5Mk\\_v8](http://youtu.be/8rY7c5Mk_v8)

Part 2: [http://youtu.be/K\\_FFSh02Zi4](http://youtu.be/K_FFSh02Zi4)

Part 3: <http://youtu.be/gwq6lviSiR0>

**ATTEND 259 HAMPTON (SAUCE) HEARING**

West LA Planning Commission Appeal Hearing

Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at 4.30 p.m.

Henry Medina West LA Parking Enforcement Facility

2nd floor, Roll Call Room

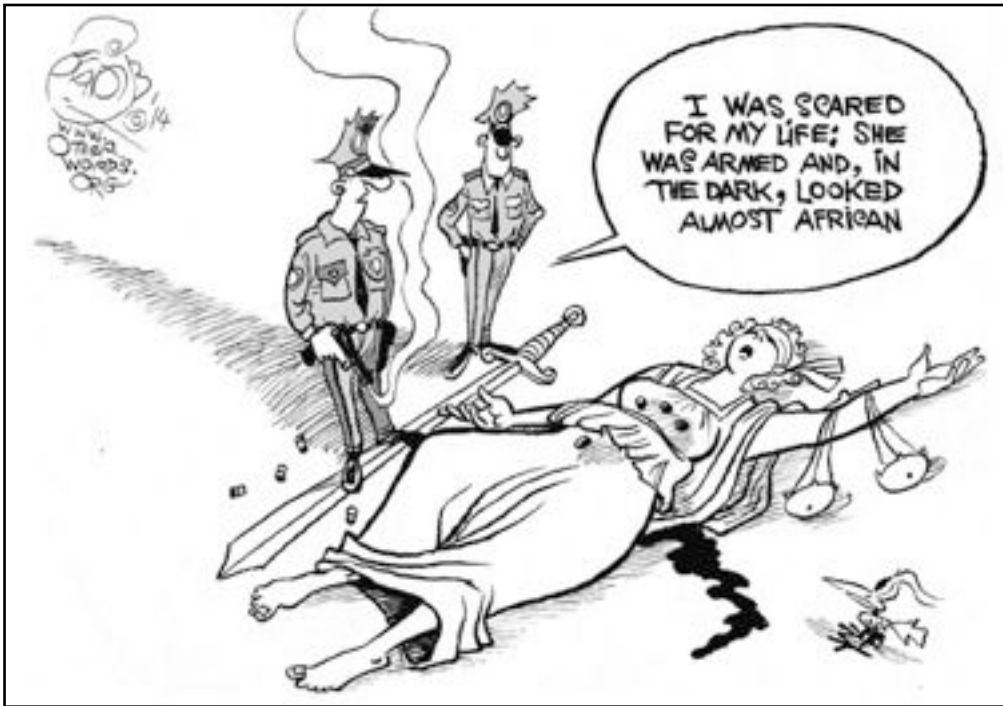
11214 West Exposition Blvd

Los Angeles, CA, 90064

Applicant: Richard J Gottlieb, Dunes Development LLC

Representative: Stephen Vitalich

**THE ENDING?** - It seems Mayor Garcetti and Councilman Bonin support these “property gangsters” rather than tax paying, voting citizens in residential communities. Councilman Bonin is nowhere to be seen. Neighborhood associations have asked to meet with him and he refuses. Far from improving our communities, Mayor Garcetti and Councilman Bonin seem to be destroying Los Angeles neighborhoods one block at a time.



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Google Fiddles - continued from page 1

this fight would be easy, but lobbyists and campaign contributions trump the public's voice almost every time when it comes to decisions made in Washington DC.

The scales could be easily tipped in favor of Net Neutrality if the biggest internet company, Google, would speak up on behalf of a free and open internet as it did in 2010. But instead Google is sitting on the sidelines, more content to gentrify Venice than weigh in on Net Neutrality. Why is this so? There are several theories being talked about ranging from how Google itself wants to one day soon be a broadband provider of some note with the introduction of Google Fiber. Then there is the Republican faction within Google such as former Republican Congresswoman, Susan Molinari, who is the head of Google's Washington DC public relations operations. Rank and file Google employees have urged the company to take a strong stand in favor of Net Neutrality in its campus meetings, but with no results. Then there is the 2010 fight where Google did stand up for Net Neutrality and came out looking less than stellar after it caved to Verizon on the important decision to exempt wireless carriers from Net Neutrality rules. Allies in the fight saw this as a sellout, while taking a stand at all alienated Republicans on Capital Hill. Yet when it came to the 2012 fight over the unpopular anti-privacy legislation (SOPA/PIPA), Google bucked both political parties to help kill those pending bills. Then there is that "Google is now big enough to play both sides and still win" theory. Who needs ideals when your company is big enough to cut a check to whomever you need to? Of course the irony in this thinking is that without Net Neutrality companies like Google and its acquired You Tube would probably not have been able to emerge in the first place.

While all these theories make credible points there may well be a more insidious reason why Google is sitting this one out. In his new book "When Google Met Wikileaks" Julian Assange reveals a side of Google not widely discussed. In June of 2011 at the Ecuadorean embassy in London where Assange has been in asylum, Google chairman Eric Schmidt and three other Google heads paid the Wikileaks founder, Assange a visit. The pretext for the visit and interview of Assange by Schmidt and company was for a book that Schmidt and Google Ideas head Jared Cohen were researching. What Assange learned about Google was frightening. Assange learned that Google has a revolving door with the US State Department.

In fact Google Ideas acts as an in-house State Department actively meeting behind the scenes to broker deals with heads of state and expand its global influence. To paraphrase Assange, Google's position being pushed from its most senior executive level to US officials is that the state or a state body should determine what should and should not be published. This is a philosophy that runs counter to the very idea of Net Neutrality. Google's business model is to collect as much data as possible on as many people as possible to create predictable profiles to target advertising. And now with the advent of Google Glass, not only will it be collecting data but now it will be capturing all the images the user sees. With the NSA and FBI interfacing all of the data stored on all of its users, Google has become a proxy arm of the national security state. So why should Google care about a silly little idea like Net Neutrality when in its Orwellian nightmare cyber world they win no matter what? They should care because we care!

Call Google and tell them to get off their collective asses and join Netflix and others in the fight to save Net Neutrality. Visit the Electronic Frontier Foundation website [eff.org](http://eff.org) or [SumOfUs.org](http://SumOfUs.org) and get involved. Check out the interview with Julian Assange on RT's Going Underground program Season 3. It's on You Tube and you can Google it. Better yet, buy the book so you can really learn what Google is really all about. It goes much further than just changing the face of Venice.



Can you direct me to the beach, specifically, the polar bear swim?



## “Art Tiles at Venice Beach: A Graphic History: 1904 – 2001” Noel Osherooff, Tami Smith and the Venice Arts Council (Helicon Nine Edition)

The reproduction of these handmade art tiles, designed by local artists in book form is meant to retain the concept and creative ideas of Venice in perpetuity.

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All proceeds support the preservation of these tiles and the benches that house them



Do you think people consciously pick a guy that will beat them up, wreck their lives, destroy their property, terrorize their families? do you really believe that?  
If so, you are blaming the victim.

Those social workers have no hearts, they are cold, arrogant women who sup at the government's trough. They lap up their money while judging and condemn-ing the people they are supposed to help.

You tell me to go volunteer somewhere and I will learn more about this problem. Excuse me, I have lived this experience. I was with a man who beat me, followed me around Venice so he could beat me some more. Stole my kid & disappeared with her. Why did this happen to me and not someone else? You would have to go back to my upbringing - I was terrorized by a rage-filled father who got drunk and verbally and physically abused me and everyone else of the family.

This was a guy who was well-respected in the art world and no one really knew what was happening - "behind closed doors". So I split. I finally got the idea to get the fuck out of Virginia and ended up here, in Venice, CA, 1971. I was twenty years old.

So you've spent 22 years in Venice? I'm sorry - but there is no requirement for length of time of living in Venice for any special wisdom.

You think you've got the answer to domestic vio-lence? 40 years ago - there were no shelters for women and children. It was the 70's & Venice was pretty wide open - everybody was doing drugs, having children, getting evicted, had problems with drugs and alcohol, etc., etc. -

It was extremely difficult to get into a rehab. It was not how it is now - rehabs are a real money-maker now. Insurance companies pay for rehabs and you can stay there really long times, in some cases. They are saving lives. Back in the 1970's, people quit using drugs because they died. People would drag people's dead bodies out into the alley, so no one would get arrested. It was a grim, toxic, scary dangerous place - to live with a drunk , a junkie, or a speed-freak. The drugs came first - little girls were put out on the street by opportunistic bastards who would beat them if they came back with no money.

Wow, it's really great you know enough about me, the "unnamed writer" to offer me advice. I lived this lifestyle, and I came back from the dead. I went to A.A., C.A., & N.A. And I met one of the best friends of my life in N.A. I choose to remain anonymous be-cause I am in the middle of this - and it's not over yet, until she gets the kids back.

I lost my daughter 40 years ago. My social worker told me it would take 5 to 8 years to get her back. I said, "OK, I'm putting her up for adoption." The social worker told me I couldn't do that. But I did. And that was that. I was not going to watch from the sidelines, as the social workers and the foster care system de-stroyed my daughter. She went to a really good house-hold and I have never regretted it.

You, in your casual cruelty, saying that some little children end up damaged, beat-up or killed - you say that with such casualness - how can you live with yourself and express such cruelty?

I would really like to know.

You, educated woman - has this ever happened to you? You don't know what terror is until some drunk-out-of-his-mind bastard is beating you & no one helps. Back in the 70's, if a man's name was on the lease, you could not legally kick him out. You (the woman) would have to get up (in the middle of the night) gather you & your kids clothes together and sneak out of there.

It's a fucking nightmare and you: are you a mother? Because if you're not, I don't really want to hear from you. You have made all your judgments on the victim, and you base it on all the bull-shit that this society has drilled into your head . . .

Women always say: "why didn't you leave?" If you have nowhere to go to, where are you going to go? Do you want to be homeless with your kids? I did that. That's how I lost her.

My kid did great. She landed in a loving family who saw her and fell in love with her. I did not do so well - I continued on, for years living a dangerous and scary life. I was on the streets of Venice, from 1978 to 1984. In 1984 my brother Karl came out here and got an apartment with me. I stayed in that apartment for 26 years. I had the kindest woman in the world as my landlady, Mormie Jamerison.

Did I miss my daughter? Yes, always. But I gave her the best gift I could ever give someone: a kind, loving home. I got to talk to her a couple times on the phone and she sends me Christmas cards every year. Most people never get to talk to or see their children again.

It hurt so much I had to drown it with alcohol. I really didn't care if I lived or died. Then I finally got clean and called my brother up and he said he would help me and he did. I started writing poetry in 2006. And I do oil pastels, which makes me really happy. It is never too late to start over. This whole case is just a bump in the road, and we will get over this.

- Unnamed Writer

# Happy New Year Venice!

Continued from page 1

but the need for Art is the most basic need for com-munication, you know what you like because it talks to you.

There are many worrisome things going on. We are drowning in messaging. We are being lied to all the time. Life takes visa, things go better with coke, torture works. I find it particularly disturbing that 59% are said to support torture to get intelligence. Look how terrible a nice word like intelligence has become.

Between the serial gunplay dramas and video games, many people are fantasy vigilantes. Blessed magic warrior or damned forsaken rogue, your kill-ings are justified because you are fighting evil and eviler. Where are the engaging Peace and Commu-nism games? Is this a terrible basic psychic need to destroy, a useful and entertaining release of aggres-sion, or a commercial exploitation of the urge to vio-lence? When can I roleplay as a Reichian-Tantric Sex Therapist in an Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game?

Your Internet is trying to turn into TV, with 5 intrusive commercials before content. It's the slime coming out of your internet.

Your Government is taking it in the ass from the Corporate Oligarchy. All the cuts in taxes and cuts in social and infrastructure spending are degrading the commons of America, and the world. The two party oligarchy degrades programs that help people and programs that help build strong communities, and keeps feeding the Military Corporations. Because terrorism, my ass. While you were owning the flag online, these greedy asses have owned your govern-ment.

Your governments regularly send troops (cops/ guards/army/swat) into neighborhoods to harass poor people. Witness the Boardwalk Sweeps, and the Cops being used to harass Oakwood community members, to get them evicted.This is Broken Win-dow policing. If they see poor people living in poor conditions, the police harass them until they move away. Phyllis calls them lying demons, to their face.

How can we possibly integrate this conspicuous destruction. The phoney historicism of the architec-ture and interior decor reflects the dishonesty of the people within. Like neighborhood council members who talk incessantly for their own pleasure, and they never listen. If you don't like one thing, complain about its opposite as well. Of course there are certain types of building which aren't designed to last. They must be rebuilt to accommodate changing patterns of consumption.

Will Venice always be traffic and parking hell? You can't talk about traffic mediation, while the county is defoliating for density in the Marina. It has been suggested many a time that we just secede from this city or state. Then we could ban the cars, tear out the streets, and go extreme green. How long will it take until you are hollering "I'm not going to take it anymore!"?

Oh stately pleasure dome Venice you are a target for urban renewal. Global corporations are replacing nation states as holders of power. We now embrace the first stages of the automation of mind, language and emotions ... the architecture of bio-financial power. Power, in fact, is no longer political or mili-tary. It is based more and more on the penetration of techno-linguistic automatisms into the sphere of lan-guage.

What can we ask of the future year? Everything. Our global heads are wired together, and we can wit-ness almost anything, anywhere, anytime. What should we ask of the evil "Don't be evil." Google? Should they provide free public shared self-driving cars and funding for preservationist art studios?

Some Venetians with the means are buying up lots to keep them basically as they are. We ask our anti-humanistic citizens to lay off the homeless. There are tens of thousands of homeless out on our streets every night in the greater LA area. Do some-thing for them, don't criminalize them.

We mostly live amazing beautiful sunshiny lives here. Share the love. Seas of change are upon us. We live the dream, seeking futures, for our repast.



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# Bird Totems of Venice: The American Coot

By Krista Schwimmer

Winter is one of my favorite times to walk along the beach or to hang out on the Venice Pier. The light that reflects back from the ocean waters is often so dream like that I find myself wanting only to spend more and more time simply gazing, an ancient sooth-sayer scanning water for prophecy. The rewards are often great: seals, dolphins, and even a whale now and then swim by, breaking through the hypnotizing waters to snatch my soul momentarily. Birds, too, are part of this parade of paradise. One such bird, though more commonly spotted along the canals and wetlands, is the American Coot.

There is no mistaking these short winged birds with their bobbing heads. Their white, frontal shields contrast well with their black plumage, making them easy to spot from a distance. The saying, "as bald as a coot," comes from this particular characteristic. Often found with ducks, but classed in a different family and order, coots forage by diving to the bottom of ponds, marshes, coastal bays and inlets, as well as by grazing on the land near the shore. They are even known to steal from other diving birds!

Recently, however, I discovered another interesting physical characteristic of the American Coot. I was walking along the canals, south of Washington Boulevard, when I spotted a group of coots, known as a covert. As one of them walked up to the shore, I noticed its surprising legs and feet. From leg to toe, they were pea green in color. The feet were partially webbed with separated toes, known as fissipalmate feet. On top of it, they seemed disproportionately large. The lobed toes help the bird to run, as well as forage on the top of vegetation in the marshes. Their feet also are made to withstand higher temperatures than a webbed version.

There are eleven known species of coot, many residing in South America. They are omnivorous, eating primarily plant material but also small animals and eggs. Although they lay 8 to 10 pinkish eggs spotted with brown, they may only raise two of them. One of the coot's more disturbing behaviors is around brooding. If a hatch-ling is found in a coot's nest that is from a different coot, the parent will violently kill this baby bird, a phenomenon called brood parasitism. Oddly, coots will do this only to other coots, and not other bird species.

When working with any bird as a totem, there are different ways to decipher the meaning. First, look at the known behavior of the bird. For instance, in the case of the coot, one of its characteristics is to dive to the bottom and forage. Water often symbolizes feelings. So, if you see the coot diving under the water, it can mean it is good for you to take the time to explore your feelings. Another valuable way to work with any totem is to explore the ancient tales and mythologies associated with the creature. In the case of the coot, there is a wonderful Ojibwa legend that Valerie Connors recounts called "Waynaboozhoo and the Great Flood."

In this tale, the creator sends a great flood to purify the earth because men and women had lost respect for one another. A lone man named Waynaboozhoo survives. He builds a raft and shares it with other animals.

The water, however, does not recede on its own. So, Waynaboozhoo asks first a loon, then a beaver to dive deeply to fetch mud from the Old World. Neither succeed. A coot named Aajigade manages to retrieve a small lump of mud, but dies as a result. Luckily, Waynaboozhoo brings Aajigade back to life. Out of this mud, the New World is created, then placed on the back of Mikinaak, the snapping turtle. At one point in the story, the other animals laugh when they discover that Aajigade thinks he is going to save the day. The coot, however, pays no heed to their mockery. This reminds us that serving a greater cause in life can give us great faith and determination. Never let anyone underestimate your abilities!

Becoming kin to a bird, however, means understanding not only the bird itself, but its habitat, its prey, and even its predators. For instance, in the case of the coot, studying fox, coyote, skunk, crow, owl, eagle, alligator or gull can give you meaningful insights. Look especially at any predator that naturally appears in your life alongside the appearance of coot.

Kinship implies a give and take. A really fun way to give back to all birds is to participate in the next "Great Backyard Bird Count" (GBBC) from February 13 - 16, 2015. Hatched in 1998 by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the GBBC is the "first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time". In 2014, the count included 135 countries. 17.7 million birds from 4,296 species were counted then. Our hero, the American Coot, showed up #8 in the "10 most numerous birds in 2014" with a count of 454,169. To participate, simply go to their website, [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org), register, and download the instructions.


Like many birds, the coot is unfairly judged. Take, for instance, the phrase, "old coot." The New Partridge Dictionary of Slang defines a coot as "a harmless simpleton, especially an old one." The more I have studied and lived with birds, the more I find that no matter the species, they all have intelligence. More likely than not, those hunters in Louisiana, California, Florida, Wisconsin, and Minnesota that kill these birds for sport are the true simpletons. How else can one explain the wanton killing of innocent creatures?

So, next time someone calls you a "crazy old coot," don't let it get you down. In a world where police get away with murder, and developers push out the elderly, the time is long overdue to consider just what constitutes intelligence anyway.

Sources: [www.10000birds.com](http://www.10000birds.com); [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org); [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org); [www.bioweb.uwlax.edu/bio203/2010/spohnhol\\_cait/facts.htm](http://www.bioweb.uwlax.edu/bio203/2010/spohnhol_cait/facts.htm); [www.uwosh.edu/coehs/cmagproject/ethnomath/legend/legend9.htm](http://www.uwosh.edu/coehs/cmagproject/ethnomath/legend/legend9.htm)



All photos by: Krista Schwimmer



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# The Christmas Massacre of Trees ~ 2014 ~ Oxford



All photos by Jonathan Coffin



Monarch Butterflies Discovered Roosting , LA County Didn't Care.



By Marcia Hanscom

Most people in Los Angeles remember the huge public outcry in December, 2012, when the US Army Corps of Engineers decided to bulldoze a portion of the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve in order to “restore” it. LA City Councilmembers expressed outrage, as did CA Senator Fran Pavley; and the LA Regional Water Quality Control Board brought out its regulatory knives.

December seems to be a good time for agency bureaucrats to carry out such unpopular plans. This time, in 2014, it was the Los Angeles County Dept. of Public Works, and this time it was Oxford Lagoon, a beloved bird sanctuary, appreciated by neighboring Venetians walking or cycling by on the Marvin Braude bikepath.

Oxford Lagoon was one of the few natural features remaining when more than ½ of the historical Ballona Wetlands was dug up in order to build Marina del Rey. Oxford was designated by the LA County Supervisors in 1963 as a “Bird Conservation Area,” in an era before environmental laws required mitigation and as a nod to local Audubon groups that decried the destruction of the Ballona bird haven. This designation has never been rescinded, even though Public Works bureaucrats insist on calling it a “basin” – looking at every landscape feature in L.A. for its utilitarian, engineering function, and ignoring any natural or ecological values.

A few years ago, LA County Supervisor Don Knabe, in his quest to “polish the jewels” of private developments on our public lands of the marina, decided that the renewal of Oxford Lagoon was important. However, citizens, local democratic club leaders and environmental groups like Ballona Institute, Sierra Club, and Grassroots Coalition learned only in early December that this meant more than 650 trees would be chopped down and killed, and they were horrified.

Oxford Lagoon is a roosting and feeding site for numerous resident water birds, like the Black-crowned Night Heron, Snowy Egret and Great Egret and also for migratory and wintering birds, like the White-crowned Sparrow, Osprey and Belted Kingfisher. The lagoon is especially important as habitat for juvenile waterbirds as they explore safe shelter near their original nesting sites. Many of the trees slated for destruction have been important for these birds in terms of roosting and hunting for food.

Activists mobilized and, as a result of numerous phone calls and email messages to all five County Supervisors and newly elected representatives, CA Senator Ben Allen and Assemblymember Autumn Burke, local Democratic Club leader and new Marina City Club resident Kathryn Campbell, organized stakeholders to meet with Dept. of Public Works officials and Steve Napolitano, Knabe’s field deputy for the marina.

While the meetings did result in one Deputy Director of the agency agreeing to call the area Oxford Lagoon instead of Oxford Basin, not much else was accomplished in the two marathon meetings that activists were summoned to in Alhambra at the DPW headquarters.

One important fact learned in the meetings was that the contract for the largest part of the project has not yet been approved by the Board of Supervisors. This means that the treeless soils will be left bare, subject to erosion in the rainy season, and new plants for a theme-park, manicured fake restoration will be planted during the summer - which is the worst time to plant southern California-adapted native plants (if the Supervisors approved the contract).

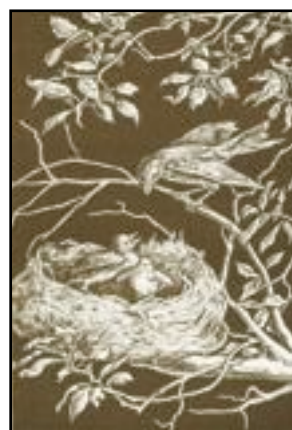
In between the two meetings, about 50 trees were already clear-cut, yet the activists did their own due diligence in seeking professional recommendations from restoration ecologist, Dr. Margot Griswold and from biologist Robert “Roy” van de Hoek. An alternative phased-approach to restoration, which would mean that new trees would be planted while only a few were removed at a time, was rejected, ostensibly because of deadlines for project completion (March, 2016) and grant requirements. It became clear that the tree killing would continue with no relief in sight for the birds.

As of December 31, the LADPW’s scheduled date for completion of tree removal, most of the trees have been eliminated. Residents of the Marina Peninsula (represented by County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl) and other adjacent Venice neighborhoods (represented by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas) have expressed shock and disgust at witnessing this project moving forward, seemingly only with Don Knabe having a say in what would go on at this sensitive wetland ecosystem.

Robert van de Hoek, a wildlife biologist and restoration ecologist with the Ballona Institute, has been researching, monitoring and studying the Monarch Butterfly in Los Angeles and beyond, being particularly interested in the “assists” being given to this declining species from local residents growing Milkweed in Venice, Mar Vista, Playa del Rey, Westchester and Del Rey.

When Ballona naturalist Jonathan Coffin sent a photo of a couple of Monarchs roosting on Eucalyptus at Oxford Lagoon, van de Hoek rushed over and, began dedicated morning and late afternoon observation watches, as the butterflies would warm up from the sun, leave to find nectar in the area and then return to their roosts to rest together, where scientists think they congregate in order to keep warm during the cold winter nights. The California coast, being warmer than inland areas in the winter because of proximity to the ocean, is an important winter roosting area when tall, suitable trees are in areas shielded from high winds.

Van de Hoek counted enough butterflies each time to be able to verify to state wildlife officials that the Oxford Lagoon site is an important new winter roost site for this imperiled species. It was announced this month the US Interior Dept. is considering listing Monarchs on the federal endangered species list. Unfortunately, on December 29<sup>th</sup>, after numerous appeals were made to wildlife officials and county bureaucrats, the county contractors decided to chop down the two most important trees to the Monarch Butterfly. Activist Patricia McPherson, observing in the rain, said the sky lit up with orange wings when the largest of the two trees was felled.



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# VENICE STORIES

## William Attaway

### Painter and Sculptor

The sculpture I have here on the boardwalk from 2000 is called "Dreams Come True" – I started designing it in '95.



I came from the Caribbean and used to surf this beach every day. It had the same freedom and wildness... Venice just has that *edge* to it.



I found a **studio** here when I was about seventeen, eighteen with my friend **Brian Sheller** and we opened it up.



I used to come down to the boardwalk and back then it was a **different place**.



At **night** you would come down and there would be a **trash can on fire** with a couple of bums, or a **gang** coming through...



No one messed with anyone, y'know? The beach was **open**. And at night it was **quiet**, and it was just **cool**.



One night I came down and let's just say I was "Owsleyized" – ha ha! I was talking to these guys and I said "I'm going to be a famous artist!"



They were laughing, and I said "I'm going to **build a sculpture** right on the **boardwalk**, right down **there!**" and I was trippin' my ass off – ha ha!



Flip to **20 years later** and I'm doing this 25 foot ceramic piece here that's about **5000 pounds of clay** made on a pottery wheel, with **25,000 pounds of concrete**.



Kenny and myself, we installed it here bucket by bucket, hand by hand, and it took **one solid year of work** here on the site.



It taught me **creative visualization**. My mother always told me – "you're going to **move to America**, you're going to have a **big studio** you're going to be **successful**..."



You can make **something from nothing** here. That's what Venice is **all about**, that's what **Abbot Kinney** did when he first came here...



The **Indians before him** came down here and watched the **whales** come through, and this was a **sacred area** ... and in a strange way it **still is**.



I bring my kids down here now and they call it "Poppa's Park."



That's the **magic** of Venice – dreams really do come true!





A Visit

By Mary Getlein

do you think:  
jesus christ would refuse a visit?  
1. a visit for a mother, who's been told she's no good  
a visit for a mother - who just wants to hold  
her child and smell her delicious smell  
to hold her child & count the seconds, till she has to leave.  
2. do you think jesus christ would refuse a visit?  
a visit to a lonely guy, wasting away in prison?  
put there because they slapped an answer on the  
question of guilt - yeah, he did it -  
he's Black, uneducated, no lawyer, no advice  
took the first deal they gave him  
after keeping him awake for 2-3 days & nights?  
do you think jesus christ would refuse a visit?  
3. do you think jesus christ would refuse a visit?  
a visit to an old and lonely person  
who can barely see, or hear, or taste anything?  
who wants only to complain  
when her daughter calls, she gets overwhelmed with guilt & hangs up  
The old folks living out the rest of their days  
in isolation -  
don't know how to make friends anymore  
they have a group they can go to, a senior place  
but don't want to take that first step  
out of isolation and into a circle of friends  
we all need friends -  
the liar and the cheat  
the liar and the media clown  
the liar and the one who believes his own P.R. work  
the man or woman who turns their back on one in need  
you - who won't see the homeless, the hungry, the scared  
won't see the "throw-away" youth that had to leave  
because there was no choice?  
getting beat up every day, sexually molested or raped  
who never felt wanted or needed or loved  
who believed their lies, any lie  
to talk themselves into staying  
only to be brutalized some more . . .  
would jesus christ refuse a visit?  
No, he would open up his heart chakra &  
take them all in -  
The Kingdom of Heaven is NOW. Now in this moment.  
the homeless on the street  
every day & every night, people living out their days  
on Thanksgiving Day they can eat -  
many loving people bring food & sometimes clothes to the homeless  
but they are cold and hungry all the other days  
What about those days?  
The rich move in for their ocean views  
and what they really get to see are the homeless  
stacked up like firewood, against their huge heavy doors.  
They have to leave their mansions by the back door  
so many homeless have taken up residence on the front door  
hoping for a glimpse of their good life  
hoping someone sees them as a person -  
a moment of recognition -  
"This is me, mother-fucker!"  
"I'm alive out here & I'm losing my mind  
and there is no way out of here -"  
do you think jesus christ would refuse a visit?  
would he be alarmed at what he saw right in front  
of him - a man, a woman, a child  
being refused a visit, from humanity.



Photo below by: Roger Houston



14:41 Monday, December 22nd, 2014, Adullam

By Roger Houston, post-beat romantic

..... You're right around the corner.  
Januaire. You're sure to flex your muscles. One to dare. To enter. Roaring.  
Rattling your cage. You're here before the ink dries on the page. Dear January.  
Bringing a new year. And lots of rain and snow. A deluge. Here. It's in your  
nature. So predictable. It's senseless to resist you. Hear the call. The slow  
parade of months. Let us prepare. To welcome you. Professing that we care. But  
should your sojourn turn into a siege. I hope that you won't escalate and rage.  
Well. Do your worst. In truth. Don't really care. We're waiting for you. Darling  
Januaire ..... Happy New Year!

The Blind Waltz

By Miles Krumpak

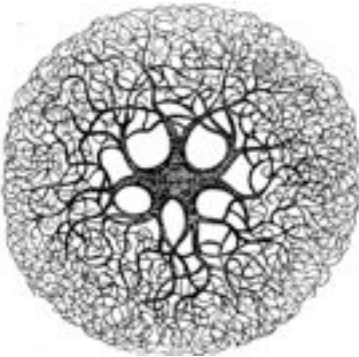
This is how the poor dance, the blind, the deaf  
the dumb. The ones who sit on top of newspapers  
and sleep under them too.  
Why change clothes, why get up, why sit down  
why play the blues, if you've never heard them in all your life.  
And there he was on the steps  
a metallic coffee jar taped to the top of the guitar  
see through pink sunglasses. to cover but show  
eyes that never have seen.  
Casual he played but a tremendous amount of sound came out  
and they say that in the absense of a sense or two  
the others they become stronger.  
I stopped to listen, behind a church pillar  
where he could not see me. But a street dog  
he had become and he could sense my presence  
with the presence of his animal instincts.  
He played the latin blues, I think it had an A min  
and a C and an F, and perhaps a B7  
or something like that, and after each chord  
was a gentle melody that crawled up the neck  
and told the story of life in Costa Rica  
living on a farm riding horses, plowing fields  
all by touch because touch is what's real.  
That is what the streets are missing: the touch, the feel  
there is plenty of noise, some taxi driver somewhere  
is shouting "mister! mister!" and then saying the wrong price  
another one is honking his horn  
at the bus trying to squeeze through a very small space  
while somewhere out there lightning is in the distance.  
There are lots of colors, variants of green  
but also bright oranges and yellows  
that painters try to imitate with their brushes.  
And here is this man, unknown with his grey cap on  
that says San Francisco and shows the lines where sweat reached  
on hot humid days, and he has what everyman wants  
for when one hears his music, one knows  
exactly where it comes from, exactly what he wants to say  
that he is from the earth and now lives on the street  
that he knows better than anyone what happens there  
that he need no newspaper, no radio, no cell phone  
that he is the city and that is why his coffee jar  
never gets filled.  
Starving, deaf, dumb, blind, in good spirits  
in good health, and otherworldly sense to feel  
just what is going on, in San Jose  
in Costa Rica  
in America  
in the world.

This Paper  
Is A Poem

Yo Saturnalia! (the original Christmas)

By Jim Smith

At the bottom of the year  
we are soaked with fear  
  
of economic loss throughout the land  
and no leaders who will take a stand  
  
The days dwindle away  
And night comes to stay  
  
Then festive Saturnalia arrives  
and the social world comes alive  
  
Yes, it's true, this land is now quite a fright  
But a new year is being born this very night  
  
The Sun - and days of revels - are coming again  
in our happy land where love is not a sin  
  
A toast to a new year of kindness and peace in faraway lands  
And all across our fair city, to the poor, a helping hand.  
  
Citizens of the World, let's end the strife  
and enjoy another year of light and life



Not Responsible

By Alan Lewis Rodman

Not Responsible  
Not responsible for lost or  
stolen Oracles.  
Rider assumes all risk  
or benefit  
of any unforeseen eventuality  
due to weather,  
serendipity or  
Act of God, whichever  
comes first.  
No addition or subtraction  
can be made  
to or from the  
incomparable perfection of  
who you truly are.



Fancisco Goya, The Sleep of Reason  
Produces Monsters, - 1797

The American Dream Scheme

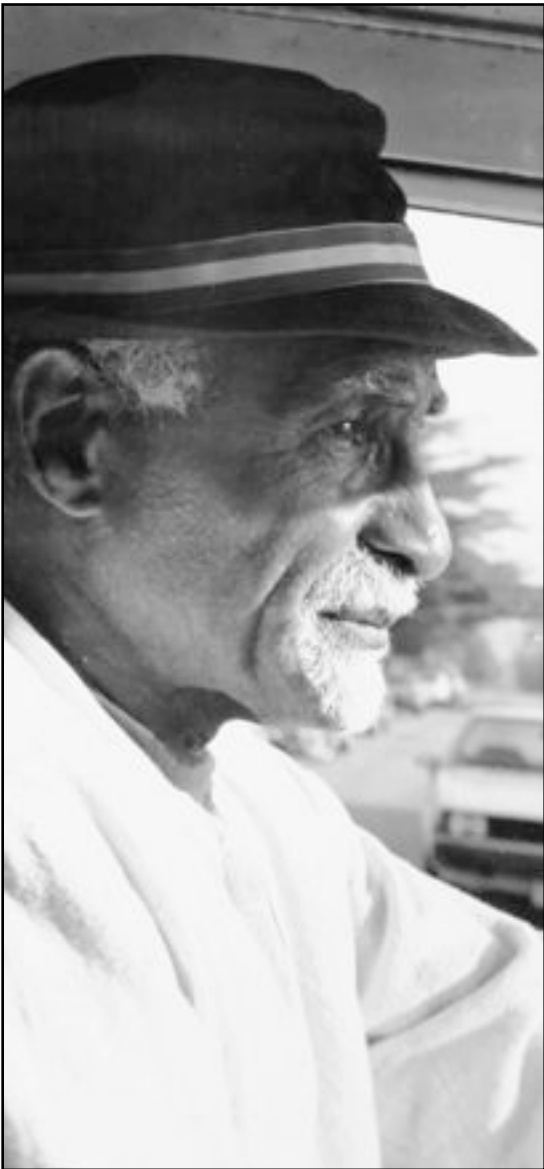
By Marty Liboff D.2014

The rich get richer  
The poor get poorer  
The middle class  
Get it up the ass!  
The system is stacked against you  
Ya gotta slave till you're black & blue.  
Ya have to fuck for a buck  
The poor have no luck.  
Yet the buck flies away  
The capitalist dollar won't stay.  
Your kids are naked and need food  
While your boss & the banks are just rude.  
All your money just to survive  
Doesn't matter how much you strive.  
We're brain washed by movies & TV  
You starve while the rich travel & ski.  
The American Dream  
Is just an evil scheme  
To keep ya slavin so others get rich  
Ain't it a bitch!  
The rich hate food stamps & welfare  
They call it a commie scare.  
The media continue the corporate lie  
While the poor & homeless die.  
Money, money everywhere  
Yet all ya can do is stare, it ain't fair.  
Corporations get all the dough  
While the homeless have no where to go.  
The police & army to keep the masses down  
They pay them well to protect the iniquity in town.  
More & bigger jails for the have nots  
While in crumby schools your kid rots.  
Giant mansions, jets & a yacht  
You're judged by what ya got.  
The rich say pick yourself up by the bootstrap  
While they cruise all over the map, it's all crap!  
They say a rich man's heaven is a poor man's, hell  
The rich spoil the earth & make it smell.  
Work, worktill ya die  
While your children cry.  
The rich only want tax breaks  
While they drink fine wine, lobster & steaks.  
They claim this is a free country  
But you're only free ifya have money ...  
The rich get richer  
The poor get poorer  
The middle class  
Get it up the ass!





# Harry Drinkwater Remembered



Harry Drinkwater was my friend and part of my life for almost 40 years. He was a total inspiration to me because he knew how to live his life to the fullest. He remained young at heart and was dancing and partying with friends into his nineties. He always had a reason to get up in the morning because he had his life's work, his legacy of photography to work on. I enjoyed his company and had many enlightening conversations with him about astrology or philosophy. I always used to make cookies for him and he loved them. He will be missed by all who knew him.

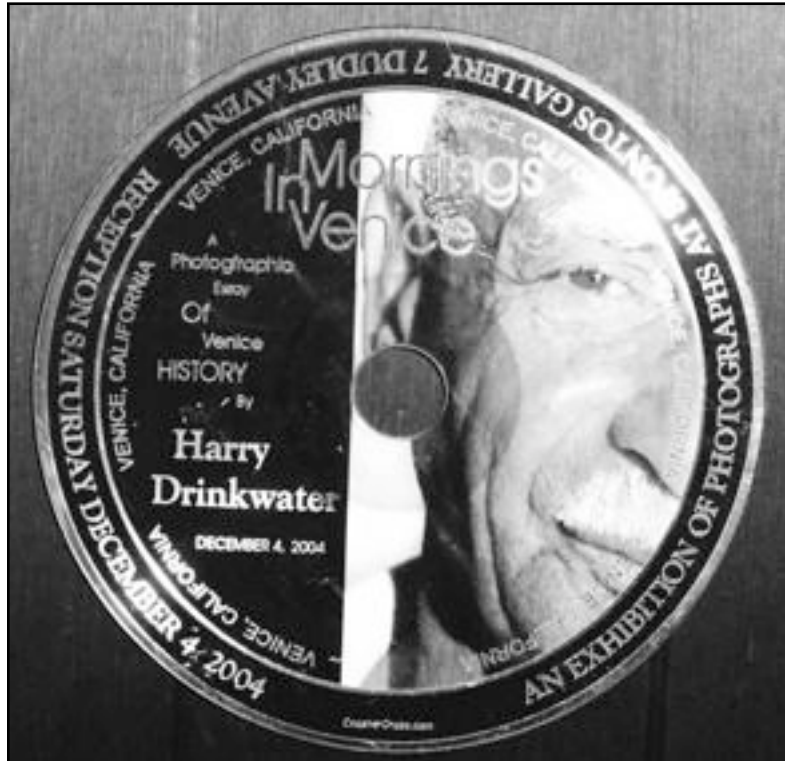
- Nancy Reimold

"One, two, three, four. One two three four" he patiently whispered gently in my ear as he lead me around the dance floor. A row of women waited for a turn as a party raged on around us. Mr. Harry Drinkwater was the charmer of Venice and an integral part of every dance party. I even remember women circling him and chanting "Harry, Harry!" as he reached out for the next dance partner.

My husband, KPFC DJ Derek Rath, and I met Harry in 1981 when he came to our dance parties at our photo studio in the Venice Place on what was known then as West Washington Blvd. If he did not charm you with a dance he would with his historical photography. Harry's famous line-- which he used on all women who asked him how he was doing---was always said with a sweet smile--"Better now!". I will so sadly miss Harry and our parties will not be the same.

- Sylvia Rath

In the year 1959, fifty-five years ago, I met Harry Drinkwater when I was a young thespian at LA City College. On Santa Monica Blvd., near the College, was the Xanadu Coffee House, where all of the "cool" people hung out. Many actors, painters and an assortment of other artists were always



Photos on this page by Margaret Molloy, except CD

there sharing stories. When I first met Harry Drinkwater, and his camera, I assumed he must be a descendant from some North American indigenous group. I later discovered he had grown up in the wine country, the grape growing region with all of the vineyards in Napa, north of San Francisco. In 1919 when Harry was born, that area was almost devoid of African Americans.

As an 18 yr.old, having grown up in South Central Los Angeles and never having spent much time in Hollywood, I was wide-eyed and open to new experiences. I was so flattered when Harry asked me to model for him and introduced me to many other photographers. I later learned there were times when he did not have film in his camera. We laughed because so many artists were attempting to make an impression. Working with Harry was effortless because he allowed me to be comfortable, and encouraged me to take charge of my work. One of the most revered memories was that he was never inappropriate. I felt safe when we worked. In 1963, I met and married my present husband of fifty-one years, and Harry became a part of our extended family. He took numerous photos of our family and came and stayed with us when we lived near Yosemite and visited us for several weeks in December 2012 here on Maui.

One of the things he and I had in common was our love for dance. In Venice, there used to be the Taurus Tavern, with Sam Taylor singing. We danced until our feet were barely able to support us. Many times our clothes were wet with perspiration. Some of those times, our children and other younger people joined in. Those memories cannot be duplicated. Dancing was a release from the week trivia and other challenges. Dancing was our salvation. When there was racial disharmony, anti-war sentiments, environmental disputes, our way was to briefly escape through dance.

Harry was instrumental in the development of our underground classic feature musical drama **LIVING THE BLUES** with Blues Hall of Famer Sam Taylor, who was a friend of Harry. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxOmEqo-Wk> Now available on GooglePlay: <https://earthspirit.pivotsare.com/>

As long as I knew Harry, he was always planning for a show. Was he perfect? Of course not. Who is? He was, however, a gentle soul, always working on an upcoming project, a Getty sponsored Culver City Gallery exhibited his last show and a photograph book was published in the Group Show. At the end of our conversation, I would say "I love you, Harry." His reply was "EASY."

- Galyn Gorg

Harry Drinkwater was a warm hearted man with a sweet smile. He photographed some of my first baby photos. There were times when we danced and partied with the entire family on many occasions. What a blast we had. "How you doing, Harry D.?" After a while, he would look at you, or hear your voice on the phone, his response was, "Better Now." Love you, Harry D.

These comments are just a brief sketch of Harry Drinkwater. Enjoy the photographs. Harry, wherever you have traveled to in your new assignment, we will just say, "HEY DUDE."

- Regina Barton





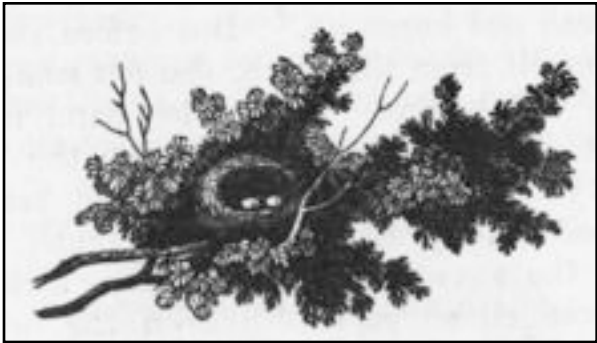
# The 12th Annual

SUN Jan 25, 7-10pm - The 12th Annual VENICE FILM FEST at Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd Venice 90291 310-822-3006. Colorful history of films made in Venice California, and celebration of the otherworldly happenings at the legendary Venice West Gallery (birthplace of the Beats), aka Sponto Gallery with live performances. Experience the essence of Spontofication Rituals in art, music, poetry and the freedom of creativity. With...

- Jeffrey Stanton's (author of Venice California - Coney Island of the Pacific) talk and rare film clips.
  - Two special films by documentary filmmaker and Venice resident, Mark Steven Shepherd: VENICE-DAY AND NIGHT (2013, 14 minutes) World premiere of Shepherd's poetic insider look at Venice with majestic Time Lapse of local beauty. He takes an unique look inside the 2010 Art House, a "Banksy" inspired refuge where Venice artists could paint, create, dance and sing inside a condemned building on Abbot Kinney, and the Venice Centennial 100th birthday party, with low riders, bikers, and Treeman. It climaxes at night on the Venice Circle, where the fire breathing group, The Mutators close the party.
  - STREET LIFE (1981, 28 minutes) with SWAMI X and Butch Mudbone. Tim Corvin's Venice Beach -1985 (1985-2014, 45 minutes) colorfully documents the spirit of the Venice Boardwalk with Jingles, Daisy, Limpopo, Peter Demian and more fascinating time travel in our metamagical community.
  - Ultra rare trailer for VENICE RALPH documentary, the most iconic wino-philosopher ever to prance the Venice Boardwalk.
  - Plus- Live Music by the Boardwalk's Maestro Alan Robinson. Free, donations appreciated. 7pm
- ALSO - Sat, Feb 7, 2-6pm - 5th annual POETRY OF VENICE PHOTOGRAPHY - Beyond Baroque 681 Venice Blvd. Free Panel discussion 4-6pm: Opening for PHOTO SHOW in Gallery and Lobby, Paramedia ecologist Gerry Fialka hosts a panel discussion of award-winning Venice photographers, who explore landscapes of the human psyche and push pictorial representation beyond! With KRISTY CAMPBELL, MARGARET MOLLOY, DAVE HEALEY, DANIEL BEAMAN and LARRY BROWNSTEIN & more. Laughtears.com Free, donations appreciated. LAUGHTEARS.com, 310-306-7330 -

## California Coastal Commission meeting

Time: January 7th to 9th, starting 9 am each day  
Location: Santa Monica Civic Center, East Wing, 1855 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401  
To see the agenda, go to:  
<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/mtgcurr.html>  
Public Comment will be in the mornings at 9 am, as well as the end of the day (which on Friday will be around 1 pm.)  
Also, according to the CCC's website, there will be a "COMMISSION FIELD TRIP. At the end of the Commission meeting, the Commission will take a bus and walking tour of the Venice area on Friday, January 9. The field trip will commence from the parking lot of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, 1855 Main Street, Santa Monica. Members of the public are invited to attend by following in their private vehicles and joining the Commission at designated stops. A detailed itinerary will be available at a later date. For more information, please call the Commission's South Coast District office in Long Beach at (562) 590-5071."



Ojai Properties

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# BEYOND BAROQUE

## Calendar for January

9 January, Friday - 8:00 PM  
JAMES CUSHING PUBLICATION READING  
JAMES CUSHING is an "unrepentant surrealist" (Sarah Maclay), a familiar in the L.A. poetry scene since the late 1970's, and former San Luis Obispo Poet Laureate. His new book, The Magicians' Union is out now from Cahuenga Press.

10 January, Saturday - 4:00 PM  
GALLERY OPENING - JURI KOLL GROUP  
The work of George Koll (1941-2013) - hilarious, controversial, insightful drawings and writings - will be shown for the first time in public at the Mike Kelley Gallery at Beyond Baroque beginning on January 10, 2015. George Koll lived an alternative life in the underground of San Francisco, and his writings and art are testimony to his life. He survived, - sometimes thrived - under the radar and longer than most, if not all, of his friends and contemporaries of the Beat Generation, the 60s, 70s and beyond. Free, but donations always appreciated.

10 January, Saturday - 8:00 PM  
POETRY IN MOTION SPECIAL  
Since 1988, Eve Brandstein presents an eclectic array of writers from the literary and Hollywood communities. This season, Poetry In Motion will feature special events and solo performances. Check out her website [evebrandsteinpoetryinmotion.com](http://evebrandsteinpoetryinmotion.com) and Facebook page for more information.  
Special General Admission - Advanced tickets \$15 on Eventbrite; \$20 at the door; \$10 Students/Seniors; Members \$8.

11 January, Sunday - 2:00 PM  
SOAP BOX OPEN READING  
This is your home. Bring your words. The mic is yours. Sign ups begin at 1:45 PM. There is a seven-minute limit. This month's feature: FERNANDO CASTRO. Hosted by JESSICA WILSON. Suggested donation \$5.

16 January, Friday - 8:00 PM  
JUMP START STORIES: NANCY AGABIAN & FRIENDS  
NANCY AGABIAN, former Beyond Baroque artist-in-residence (1994-1999), reads with members of her current online creative nonfiction/autobiographical fiction writing workshop, Jump Start Your Writing.

17 January, Saturday - 8:00 PM  
STEINBECK CALLING  
A celebration of Steinbeck's works with readings and music, including: Pastures of Heaven, Cannery Row, Travels with Charley, Of Mice and Men & Grapes of Wrath. Performers include LEE BOEK, ERIC VOLLMER and ROSS ALTMAN on guitar.

18 January, Sunday - 5:00 PM  
HITCHED  
This quarterly series couples established poets and writers with their emerging counterparts as a way of celebrating accomplishments, welcoming new voices, and broadening community. Hosted by XOCHITL-JULISA BERMEJO. \$5 Suggested Donation. In the Mike Kelley Gallery.

18 January, Sunday - 6:00 PM  
KATIA MORAES: BRAZILIAN LANGUAGE LOUNGE  
KATIA MORAES sews together pieces of her life's inspirational puzzle: Brazilian music, poetry, theatre, dance, and visual art.  
Special guests: guitarist MITCHELL LONG and poet PETER LOWNDS. Suggested donation \$5.

18 January, Sunday - 7:00 PM  
WRITERS' ROUND  
MENDE SMITH hosts established and emerging writers in a writers roundtable meet talk show format.

25 January, Sunday - 2:00 PM  
THE NEBRASKA GIRL OPEN READING  
In the Mike Kelley Gallery  
Open reading with features hosted by WYATT UNDERWOOD and MELISSA ALVARADO. This month's feature: TBA. Five-minute limit, sign ups at 1:45 PM. Suggested donation \$5.

25 January, Sunday - 2:00 PM  
LA POESIA SALON  
In the Bookstore  
A salon style meet up of Spanish language and bilingual poets sharing their work. Bring poems and a snack or drink to share.  
Hosted by ANTONIETA VILLAMIL. Suggested donation \$5.

## Community Locations

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd. 310-821-1769, [fovl.org](http://fovl.org)
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 310-822-3006, [www.beyondbaroque.org](http://www.beyondbaroque.org)
- Burton Chace Park. 13650 Mindanao Way. Marina del Rey.
- Danny's Deli, 23 Windward Ave. 310-566-5610, [dannysvenice.com](http://dannysvenice.com)
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave. 310-306-1854, [electriclodge.org](http://electriclodge.org)
- G2 Gallery, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd. 310-452-2842, [theg2gallery.com](http://theg2gallery.com)
- Hal's Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd. 310-396-3105, [halsbarandgrill.com](http://halsbarandgrill.com)
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 Venice Blvd, 310-822-8392, [pacificresidenttheatre.com](http://pacificresidenttheatre.com)
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 310-822-9560 x15, [sparcmurals.org](http://sparcmurals.org)
- Vera Davis Center, 610 California Ave. 310-305-1865
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (enter auditorium from Westminster Ave) 310-606-2015

30 January, Friday - 8:00 PM  
DAVID STARKEY: SANTA BARBARA POET LAUREATE  
DAVID STARKEY, a former Santa Barbara Poet Laureate, will read from his latest collection, Like a Soprano, an episode-by-episode re-visioning of The Sopranos TV series.

31 January, Saturday - 8:00 PM  
LAUREL ANN BOGEN, PHIL TAGGART & LYNNE THOMPSON  
LA native, LAUREL ANN BOGEN is an award-winning poet and teacher whose work has been published in over 100 literary magazines and anthologies. For this evening, and in honor of the twentieth anniversary of the original event at Beyond Baroque, she will be collaborating with visual artist ANYA LIFFEY who will interpret her poetry on canvas.  
PHIL TAGGART's latest book, Rick Sings, is published by Brandenburg Press. Rick Sings focus and muse is Taggart's younger brother who suffers from schizophrenia. The reading will incorporate a video created for the book.  
LYNNE THOMPSON's most recent collection of poetry, Start With A Small Guitar, was published by What Books Press in October, 2013. Her first, Beg No Pardon, won the Perugia Press Book Award as well as the Great Lakes Colleges Association's New Writer's Award.



Wholesale and Retail by Thomas Nast, 1870





Above: The Future is Peace      Image and text courtesy of the Center for the Study of Political Graphics [www.politicalgraphics.org](http://www.politicalgraphics.org)  
El Futuro es la Paz by Asela Pérez  
Comisión Permanente, Offset, 1978, Havana, Cuba  
XI Festival Mundial De La Juventud Y Los Estudiantes, 33422