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THE BATTLE OF LINCOLN PLACE BOOK EVENT AT BEYOND BAROQUE

By Jon Wolff

Beyond Baroque and “Where Has All the (Affordable) Housing Gone?” hosted a book reading on Saturday, May 27 for author Dennis Hathaway. His new book, The Battle of Lincoln Place chronicles the saga of the tenants of the Lincoln Place Apartments in Venice, and their fight to remain in their homes. Beyond Baroque Program Coordinator Ivan Salinas introduced the event. Housing rights activist Judy Branfman presented the speakers. Ms. Branfman has been leading “Where Has All the (Affordable) Housing Gone”, which is a community-based art project with workshops at Beyond Baroque, that examines the loss of affordable housing in Venice because of policies like the Ellis Act and the loss of rent control. She thanked Dennis Hathaway for writing this important book.

Dennis Hathaway was born on a farm in Iowa. He has worked as a newspaper reporter, construction worker, and building contractor. He was a director of low-income housing rehabilitation, and he worked with Youth Build at Venice Community Housing. Mr. Hathaway ran a non-profit group to fight billboards and visual blight. He has published a book of his poetry, he has a website of his blog posts, and he lives in Venice with his wife Laura Silagi.

Dennis Hathaway began the presentation by reading the book’s first chapter entitled, “Locked Out”. This chapter describes a chilling account of the Lincoln Place tenants seeing L.A. County Sheriff’s patrol cars pulling up in front of their buildings one morning in December 2005. Sheriff’s deputies knocked sharply on the doors, yelling for the tenants to open up. It was eviction day. Everyone had five minutes to gather whatever belongings they could and leave their apartments. Deputies filmed the action, and a maintenance man was on hand to change the locks. The tenants had paid their rent on time, but now they felt as though they themselves were just trash that was being thrown out.

The Lincoln Place evictions were the largest single day lockout in the history of Los Angeles. Corporate developer Aimco removed sixty-five adults and twenty-one children from their homes in one sweeping action, in order to demolish the buildings.

Dennis Hathaway then introduced a short film by Laura Silagi and David Ewing about the evictions entitled, “Evictions in Venice at Lincoln Place”. The film is a documentary that records the experiences of the Lincoln Place tenants and their fight to stay in their homes. It shows the multi-racial community of this garden style apartment complex in Venice. Many of the tenants grew up here. Seniors had lived here for thirty to forty years. And now they were being forced out of their homes so that the developers could drastically increase the rents. The film showed the solidarity of the tenants in their struggle against big money and government neglect. “Evictions in Venice at Lincoln Place” can be seen for free on YouTube.

After the film, there was a panel discussion moderated by attorney, activist, and researcher John Raphling. Dennis Hathaway was joined by Sheila Bernard and Amanda Seward. Ms. Bernard served as the president of the Lincoln Place Tenants Association for almost twenty five years. Ms. Seward is the attorney who represented the tenants.

John Raphling: In George Orwell’s 1984, one of the leaders of the party said, “Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.” Right now, in this time we’re living, and probably all through the past, we’re living in a real battle over our history. And that’s going to determine where we go and what kind of future we have. So this book tells the history that might otherwise have been forgotten. You can drive by Lincoln Place and not know the battle that

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Inside Starving

by insidestarving@gmail.com

When Mayor Karen Bass announced the Inside Safe initiative, she committed to working with community-based organizations and unhoused constituents. She has reneged on this promise, ignoring multiple requests for meetings. Serious problems with the program persist, including poor conditions at motels and a lack of basic resources like food and mental healthcare.

The Mayor refuses to provide any transparency about the program’s structure and how money is being spent. Now she wants an additional \$250,000,000 for the program. On Monday, we will present a series of demands to improve Inside Safe and ask that Karen Bass fulfill her commitment to work in good faith with unhoused participants and community organizations on this program.

Thanks to everyone who was able to join us on Monday, May 8th at 6th and Fairfax for the #Inside-Starving press conference. This was an opportunity for unhoused neighbors to share their stories and voice concerns about "Inside Safe." As expressed by the twelve people who spoke out on Monday, Inside Safe is turning out for many to be another program for disappearing and warehousing our fellow Angelenos without the basic resources, humanity or permanent housing they need.

#InsideStarving response to Mayor Bass' claim that the Inside Safe Program is "voluntary"

Update on meeting with Mayor Bass: We sent six emails to Mayor Bass requesting a meeting and finally received a response from her staff on Wednesday, May 10th. We're working on scheduling a listen-in with people who want to participate.

Update on Orlando & San Vicente Inside Safe operation: We monitored this operation at the encampment location and the motel where most residents were placed. Already, the operation is failing to meet many basic demands, including:

#1: The operation was not voluntary. Residents were not told about the sweep until the day before or given sufficient information to make an informed decision.

#3: Residents were not given details about the program in writing, including the location of the motel, duration of the stay, services provided, and date when permanent housing will be offered.

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VENICE CHURCH UPDATE

By Jon Wolff

The First Baptist Church of Venice was recently purchased by the Community Corporation of Santa Monica (CCSM), in collaboration with Original Save Venice (OSV). OSV will be involved from top to bottom with the plans to restore the church fully, and to build low income and very low income housing on the lots. OSV will work with CCSM every step of the way in the process of selecting the architect and the architectural designs.

On Sunday, May 7, representatives from Community Corporation of Santa Monica and Original Save Venice held a community meeting in the parking lot of the First Baptist Church of Venice. CCSM Executive Director Tara Barauskas spoke about CCSM's mission of "improving lives in neighborhoods", and of their commitment to serving families and seniors. She said that CCSM bought the property to make affordable housing but also to preserve the church. CCSM serves people who have low paying jobs. CCSM makes housing more diverse and inclusive, and have been doing so already in Santa Monica. They plan to build sixty affordable units on this property in three years time. And the church will remain a church. CCSM will select residents from a lottery, but they will work with the community to ensure the "right of return" for displaced members of the community.

Original Save Venice Spokesperson Dr. Naomi Nightingale spoke about the history of the First Baptist Church of Venice and about OSV's struggle to save it. She told of the church's beginnings in the Venice Black Community over a century ago, and how the land for the church was donated by Arthur Reese. She described the work of Pastor E.L. Holmes whose congregation put up the deeds to their homes to build the church building. Pastor Holmes served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Venice for forty-five years. After Pastor Holmes' and Mrs. Holmes' passing, the church was headed by one Horace Allen who sold the church in 2017 to millionaire magazine publisher Jay Penske. Penske and his wife intended to gut the church and turn it into their own private mega-mansion.

In late 2017, Venice Activist Laddie Williams began sitting on the front steps of the church, where she was joined by Dr. Naomi Nightingale. They began a protest of the sale of this sacred space. Soon, more Venetians met with them on these steps every

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

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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

Dear Ms. Newell,

I am writing today to report further harassment at 667 Brooks Ave., in effect ignoring the “anti-harassment ordinance letter” that was sent a few weeks ago. While the landlords are being mandated to finally repair things in our house, they are using this opportunity to personally enter the premises. Every single time the repairmen come into the house, and while the gentlemen are working, the landlords lurk about our rooms, take videos, and snap hundreds of pictures of everything we own, in each room. They stay in the house as if I’m not even present, and pretend as if it is their right to circle the entirety of our home over + over, staying as long as they like. When I asked them to stop filming and taking photographs, they said that they “had to for the housing department”. Clearly a lie. I have told the male owner of the property, the husband, several times, that I am entirely uncomfortable with him being present, as he has been extremely angry at times, and screamed in my face several times about how he is the owner and he can do whatever he wants. He has physically intimidated me from coming into the gate of the property, and when we are alone, he stares at me without speaking, glaring. He asks my husband how things are going on a regular basis, like things are ok between them.

I am well aware that your Anti-Harassment letter has no teeth whatsoever, but I am really curious as to what consequences these people are ever going to face for being allowed to harass us during this entire process. We have been living in the house while they have done the “repair work”, that is beyond parody how shoddy it is. She has steadfastly refused to offer alternative housing or to prorate the rent, while we live in a semi-construction site. Because the department has been fighting amongst itself about whether this work is requiring a permit or not, we have been sleeping in the bedroom where they are rebuilding a wall that they had to tear down because of mold.

We are presently waiting to hear from our eviction analyst, Evan Smoller, yet again, this time as to whether we will receive the year extension for the Ellis Act that they are now employing to be rid of us. Even though we’ve already been deemed protected tenants through my partner's Type1 Diabetes and his massive-impact accident 3 years ago, we have had to jump through several hoops- including sharing medical files and very personal anecdotes on how we are affected by his conditions. I feel so incredibly let down by the city of Los Angeles, and I truly wonder how this is not just another aspect of the harassment that we have suffered by these people coming here from Singapore to own a piece of America, and extract every dollar from it. Our rent protections were, in the end, easily destroyed & thrown in the trash, just like the folks in LA who aren’t able to pay more than \$5k / mo. on housing. I’d ask why the LAHD doesn’t enlist the City Attorney’s office to stop these types of criminal behaviors from running rampant, but I suspect there’s zero chance of even an answer on that front. What a absolute disgrace this has been to witness, and I feel shame for having believed that LA was a real progressive city, upon arriving in 1999. Now I look in horror, knowing there are 10’s of thousands of people facing a massive eviction wave, for the benefit only of the ultra-wealthy. Good luck with your future, my former beloved city!! No more artists, playwrights, creators, dreamers—i.e. CULTURE.

Sincerely,
MB Boissonnault
ARTIST

May 10, 2023

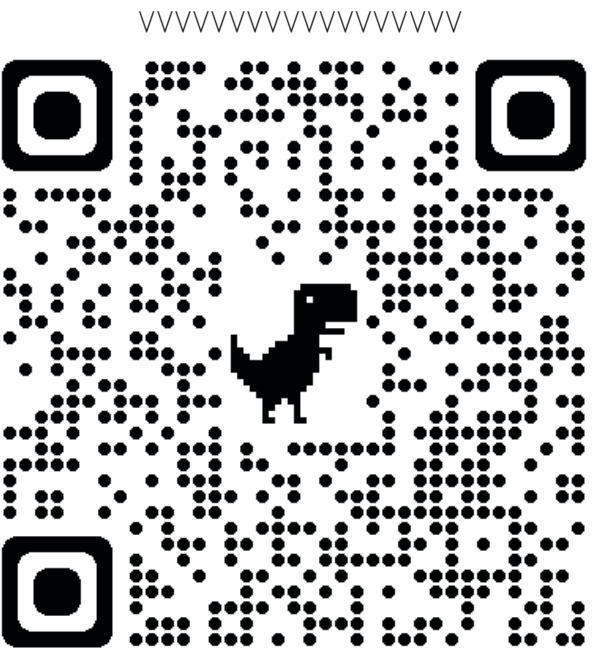
Dear Council District 5,

We are the Jasmine Community, a group of residents living on Jasmine Ave in Los Angeles. Yes, we are unhoused, and many of us have been waiting on unfulfilled promises of permanent housing for years, with a promise of housing that was to be fulfilled in November 2022, but has yet to be opened. We have been told by service providers with the city to stay in this location or risk losing access to these housing opportunities, however, on May 18th CD5 has threatened to forcibly displace us without meeting any of our basic needs. This displacement will harm us, especially since nobody has anything to offer us. We did not go out on our own to find opportunities because we were told we were getting housing, and we were told not to move because the service providers said if they can’t find us on the day the housing is ready, we will lose our spots. Forcing us to move on May 18th makes no sense. We are humbly asking for your help in our situation to get housing.

We’ve been working with these corporations—LAHSA, SJC, PATH—and they’ve given us dates and said things would happen and then they don’t come through. We’re all on lists, but none of our options are open: Sunburnst, Safe Parking, the tent camp on Jefferson. We were planning to have a home to celebrate Thanksgiving, then Christmas, then Spring, and yet Sunburnst and Safe Parking still are not open, so why are you making us move? For years, politicians and city workers have promised us housing with programs like Project Roomkey, A Bridge Home Shelter, Section 8, among others. These failed programs come and go, and yet we remain. We remain unhoused, and we continue to be harassed by LAPD and Culver City PD. We are often not safe due to your failures because we are never listened to. We have even been told that the LAPD will build warrants to be able to arrest us and run our serial numbers on our vehicles. They come in uniform and in plain clothes. They do this because when you criminalize us with 56.11 (which displaced us from our original spot by Smart and Final) and 41.18, the police have even more power to harass, intimidate, and threaten us, catch and release us, and hold guns to our heads. We also continue to live with the failure of this city to address the real needs of people living outside. We are not service-resistant, we are service-experienced, and our collective experience is that these programs have not led to housing, let alone jobs, healthcare, or any other wraparound services that have been promised. We have been desperately trying to work with city organizations to gain access to permanent housing, but things keep getting postponed, and the housing is never ready. Many of us are forced to cycle through trauma as a result. On Saturday, May 6th, our friend Jesse lost his life waiting for this housing. These failed programs kill, and displacement will hurt us even more. We want housekeys, not handcuffs.

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TRUE STORY OF THE UNHOUSED DISPLACEMENT

By Jon Wolff

Westside news outlets have praised L.A. City Councilmember Traci Park for her recent actions to clear encampments of unhoused people in and around Venice. The local press has disregarded the harsh tactics that were used to carry out these actions because they felt that the end results justified the methods. They have congratulated Councilmember Park for removing many unhoused persons from the streets and placing them in safe housing. But the true story is far different.

In a recent conversation with a man who has worked closely with the Venice unhoused community for a number of years, the Beachhead learned the facts of the results. His testimony is the subject of this article and his name is withheld by request.

The people in the area around 3rd Avenue and Hampton Avenue were displaced under sudden and harsh circumstances. The police forced them out of their tents in the pouring rain. Their possessions were seized and their tents were trashed. It is alleged here that this displacement came at the request of Google and Gold's Gym, and that St. Joseph's Center received \$500 for each person they removed from the tents.

The people were promised that if they gave up their tents and their personal property they would receive safe shelter in a motel in Inglewood. Park's office dealt directly with the motel without the certification of the Health Department. The people found the motel rooms to have mold, roaches, and bed bugs. Ceilings were falling in. The doors to the rooms were not secured, and St. Joseph's staff would often enter the rooms uninvited.

The people did not receive toilet paper. They had no food, and the gift cards for local markets never came. Many of the people had medical issues, but no medical aid was available. The organization Common Ground passed out syringes, but no doctors were called to attend to the the sick and suffering.

The people were daily harassed by sheriff's deputies. And although the motel catered to Inglewood's prostitutes, pimps, and drug dealers, the sheriff's deputies would ignore them and instead go into the rooms of the displaced people.



—above, collapsed ceiling and moldy vents in motel rooms, —

After much disappointment and broken promises of stable housing, the people preferred to go back to their tents in Venice. And many have. They felt that the tents were safer and cleaner than the motel.

The man whose testimony inspired this article is currently making safety checks on the people. He is a native of Venice and he has rapport with the people. His experience working with them when they were on 3rd Avenue proved more effective than anything the Councilmember's office could provide.

For years, Venice has had a tradition of caring for the unhoused in the community. The successes that local Venice advocates achieved with the unhoused on 3rd Avenue should have been the example that the City could follow. But Traci Park thought she knew better. Now we're starting over again.

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Venice Church Update – continued from page 1

Sunday, and rallies and events were staged there. The community came together to form a group to save the First Baptist Church of Venice.

The Original Save Venice group fought the desecration of the church on every front. They lost their appeals to the West L.A. Planning Commission. They were repeatedly blocked by the Venice Neighborhood Council. They got no support from the City of L.A. But finally, with the help of L.A. City Councilmember Mike Bonin, OSV was able to secure a historical designation for the church and all of its seven lots. Their perseverance proved successful, and they won a great battle in the fight to save the First Baptist Church of Venice.

After five-and-a-half years of struggle, OSV scored a victory for Venice that many naysayers said was impossible. Original Save Venice overcame all obstacles and endured all setbacks. They outlasted all adversaries. And they will go on to win more victories for the glory of Venice in the years to come.

Inside Starving– continued from page 1

#4: The motel placement is not located within five miles of the participant's encampment.

#8: Adequate food was not provided at any step in the process thus far, including at the Inside Safe operation. Once placed in motels, people were not provided with food OR enough money to access nourishing meals themselves.

#9: As of yet, residents at the motel and those who chose to stay behind have not been offered any wraparound care or mental health services.

#10: The city is fencing in and shutting down the space to those left behind.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

www.insidestarving.com

Resources for Tenants Needing Information and Help

StayhousedLA

- <https://www.stayhousedla.org/>
(workshops, connection to attorneys)

Westside Local of the LA Tenants Union

- <https://latenantsunion.org/en/locals/#Westside>

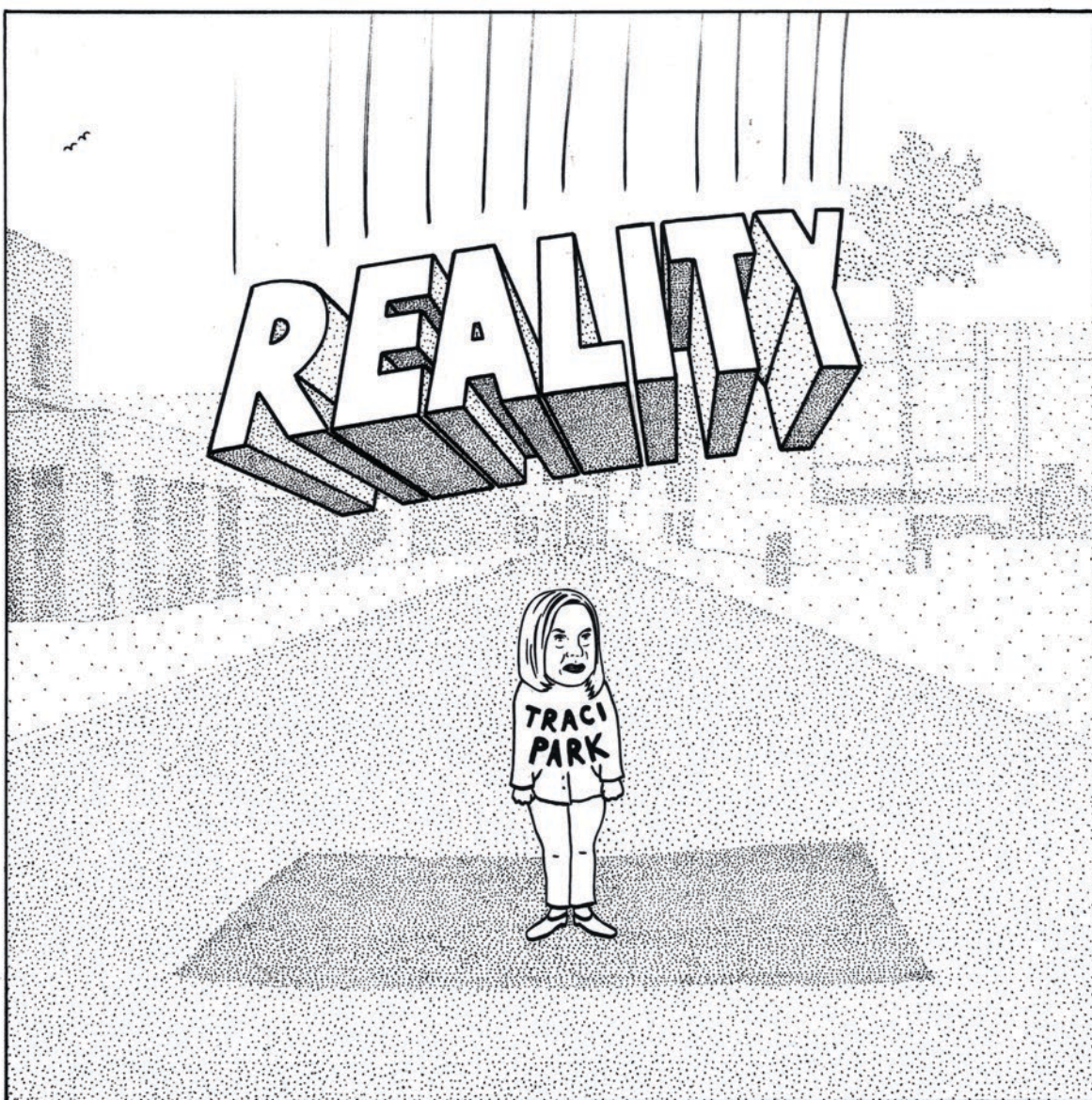
Meets 6:30pm at Reese Tabor Oakwood Park – 1st and 3rd Wednesdays)

Eviction Defense Network

- <https://edn.la/services/>
(online training videos, workshops, attorneys)

Coalition for Economic Survival

- <https://www.cesinaction.org/tenants-rights-clinic>
(workshops, advocacy)



A Tale of Two Open Mics

The Unurban Coffee House has proved a resilient cultural institution even in the wake of The Great Lockdown of two years ago. It was the first place that really charmed me when I moved to Santa Monica in 2008, because it was one of the few places near me where culture happened. By that I mean not just the endless progression of trends and marketing campaigns that dominate mass media, but the exchange of ideas and the making of art. The place had a spirit that drew intelligent and creative people in their leisure time. The intellectual knights-errant of the working class jousted with ideas, broke bread, and arranged to quest together through the artistic fairylands of Santa Monica, conjuring beauty by way of poetry and song. That was nearly two decades ago, and somehow the Unurban still stands, besieged by competitive coffee-mongers. It is beginning to thrive once again because it provides the one thing that the competition has no interest in—and you have likely guessed what that is already: art and good company

After their recent reopening, the owner, Pam Stollings, asked me to host a poetry open mic and I happily obliged. It was the old poetry show at Unurban after all, the Velvet Guerilla Cabaret—which still gathers every second Thursday of the month on Zoom—that sparked my interest in poetry and prose writing. It is nearly a year now since I started Unurban’s new poetry open mic show, The Sunless Sea. I have been gathering talent from anywhere I could. Some of our regulars are veterans of the Velvet Guerilla, others are fresh young poets, musicians, and comics from near and far. We embrace a broad definition of poetry and are open to all media and genres and we welcome talent from anywhere. I have even started a poetry sharing community under our banner on Facebook and post video clips of our performers there and on Instagram—with their consent of course—in order to connect with artists from abroad. In the interest of fair play, and to promote the arts in general as well as the Unurban, we make a point of facilitating collaboration between artists and promoting them, their projects, and their own events. It is in this spirit that I would like to promote an up-and-coming poet, Jonathan Santa Maria.

Jonathan is a former MMA competitor and current martial arts instructor, who specializes in a unique style of Gothic slam-poetry, influenced by Dante Alighieri and Edgar Allan Poe, along with a host of contemporary and folk sources. These include family ghost stories, Latinx folklore, creepy pastas, tales of alien abductions, and the like. His is a raw, often erotic, style, which thrives on stage. He has attended The Sunless Sea twice now, once a month or so after it began, when we were still struggling to rally a regular audience, and once this last March. Each time he has put on a wonderful show, evoking rich colors and deep passions with his elegant appearance and silken recitation over a steady flow of cello music.

He has written three books so far: *When the Light Does not Shine*, *Shade of Fear*, and *Eternity*, his latest publication. With each new book he gathers a few of his poetical colleagues, most affiliated with CLI—an independent online literary program that facilitates its students’ publishing original work via allied small presses—and together they host an event at the Sage Restaurant and Lounge in Whittier, called Gothic Poetry Night. I attended the last of these events, Gothic Poetry Night 2, and as a devotee of the Gothic genre, I was awed and inspired by the quality of the performing poets, the variety of styles of poetry presented, and the size of the audience gathered there.

Therefore I, as the host of The Sunless Sea, strongly advise fans of poetry and/or Gothic-genre art to attend the next installment of the series, Gothic Poetry Night 3. It will be a great opportunity not only to enjoy some very good art, but also to support guest poets to The Sunless Sea. This will, in turn, nurture ongoing artistic cross-pollination between the west and east sides of LA and broaden opportunities for local poets to expand their audi-

GOODBYE VENICE MURALS

Recently some of our most famous and beautiful Venice Beach murals have been defaced with graffiti! The mural “Endangered Species” by Emily Winters at Park Ave. has been completely covered with spray paint lettering. The Van Gogh take by Rip Cronk called, “A Homage to a Starry Night” at Wave Crest Ave. had to be white washed all along the bottom because of graffiti.

Close by Starry Night, the pot smoking shark mural by “Muck Rock” Jules Muck was recently boarded over because of tagging. Another Muck Rock mural at Westminster Ave. with Charlie Chaplin, Clara Bow and Abbot Kinney is literally defaced. Poor Charlie has a black eye patch like a pirate and Kinney has some writing on his face.

Some months ago the old drink Coca Cola mural at Brooks Ave. made famous by photos of the Doors was ruined by taggers even though it was behind a fence!

They are targeting murals to ruin. Right next to these murals there are plenty of blank walls on nearby buildings. The blank walls are untouched and the wonderful murals have been spray painted over with graffiti! This is a sad loss for our community. People from the world over have come to our beach to see and take photos of these iconic works of art. The mural Endangered Species was not only beautiful but had great thought provoking meaning.

Also the amazing mural that was on the Israel Levin Center is gone because of the building’s demolition. All the history of our beach and the murals is being rapidly lost. Rip Cronk painted Starry Night way back in 1990 and Endangered Species was painted in 1989. Sparc’s Mural Rescue Team is supposed to try and restore the Endangered Species mural soon. It had a protective coating but it will be expensive to even try and clean it if they can. They say they will try and repaint the bottom of Starry Night. It had been repainted already a few years ago after it was tagged.

Yes, I know you graffiti artists out there think your lettering is art, but why ruin other artist’s work when you have plenty of blank buildings nearby to do your art?!!! Do your art but please leave our murals alone. MOISHE SMECKLE



Above :“Ode to a Starry Night” by Rip Cronk, recently repainted by him. He repaints his murals after they get tagged or graffitied. He has been doing this since 1979 when he first painted his “Venice on the Half Shell”. Artist self-repair of their public works is the best, but not all Mural artists have his kind of vitality and patrons to help with the repair work.



Above: Emily Winters “Endangered Species Mural” with heavy graffiti and tagging. SPARC would come over, clean and repair the mural, but after the fire at OFW and Park Ave, the adjacent area was fenced off for demolition and building a new building. Emily is in her 80s now and making all the arrangements for repair are very demanding. Getting funding, managing the repair contractor, getting work permits, meeting with the property owner, securing contracts. The Jaya Collective Mural, shown below, is located at Dell and South Venice. It also needs extensive repairs as it is peeling off the wall. The wall needs fixing.



ence and readers across Los Angeles City. Tickets are \$20 and the doors open at 7:00pm for Gothic Poetry Night 3.

Whether you can make it to Gothic Poetry Night 3 or not, however, consider coming to The Sunless Sea at The Unurban Coffee House for free. The Sunless Sea performs every Tuesday at 7:30pm, and all we ask is that performers buy a drink, or contribute a negotiable \$5 donation at the register, to support the venue. We are especially interested in making the Unurban Coffee House a hub for collaboration and networking between artists, and we welcome everyone to join us.

—DeForest Wright

Concrete to Saltwater



Brian Averill CONCRETE TO SALTWATER Book Review by Marty Liboff

Brian Averill is our new President of the Venice Neighborhood Council. Many don't know he is an excellent photographer and surfing and skateboarding enthusiast. Brian has lived here by the beach for 21 years. During much of that time he has tried to capture images of skateboarders and surfers in his 2019 book, CONCRETE TO SALTWATER. His book is a beautiful celebration of the sea and sun with surfers and skateboarders. Most of his photos are by our skatepark near Windward Ave. and the seas by Venice.

I grew up here by the beach and remember all our local Dogtown surfers and skateboarders. In the morning they surfed the 'saltwater' and in the afternoon they took their surfing techniques to the 'cement' and shaped the sport of skateboarding. Back in the day there were no skateparks like we have near Windward Ave. They invented the art of skateboarding in empty swimming pools or any walls or driveways they found. Brian shows our history of local skateboarding is still happening here at our beach. He documents the new age of skateboarding at our skatepark.

Brian captures the action at our skatepark and in the nearby ocean in a collection of colorful photos. If you surf or skateboard I'm sure you will recognize some of the stars in his book. He shows the twist and turns of skateboarding and surfing in an amazing array of forms and color. In many of his photos the gorgeous sunlight and clouds frame his pictures. We wish Brian good luck as our new VNC President and with his pretty new book.

You can find CONCRETE TO SALTWATER it is at local bookstores like Small World Books on the Ocean Front Walk.

Jasmine Community – continued from page 2
We understand that this is an emergency. We live with the danger and harassment and fight for survival every day. But moving to 3801 Keystone, the location that CD5 is pressuring our community to move to, will not fix any of the existing problems. This will, in fact, introduce many new problems and exacerbate existing ones, so what is the point? Nothing is being offered besides more pain, stress, and suffering for our community. Moving our RVs will lead to a rat race of having to move every day. During the hours of 2AM-6AM, where are we supposed to go? We can't get up early and find a new place every day. This is not possible for us, financially or physically. Even those of us whose RVs run would go broke having to move every 72 hours.

Give us funding to move to a location where we can be, don't tow us to a junkyard and a demolition site. Until there is somewhere for us to be, and until you can help us move in a humane manner, we should not be moved. If we can't afford housing here, where many of us have grown up, at least we have carved out a life and a community for ourselves.

It does not have to be this way.

We are human beings deserving and worthy of care, dignity and respect. We know what we need. Listen to us. Talk to us. Learn from us. We want a

chance at housing, and we need time. We don't want to be harassed or forced to move to a location that does not work for us. Nothing About Us Without Us.

The Jasmine Community would like to propose alternate solutions:

Do not force us to move without our housing options being open. We want to move to housing, not to another site that is even more dangerous to us.

Do not tow our vehicles. This would harm us more than you know.

Help us work to store our items, but don't do it all in one day. We need time just like anyone else who has to move.

We want written agreements. We have been lied to and tricked and ignored for so long. If you say you're going to do something, it has to show.

Do not continue to displace us and make LAPD's harassment of us even more dangerous.

Give us time and treat us like human beings.

We don't need anymore studies, we need housing. Please work with us, not against us.

Signed,
The Jasmine Community



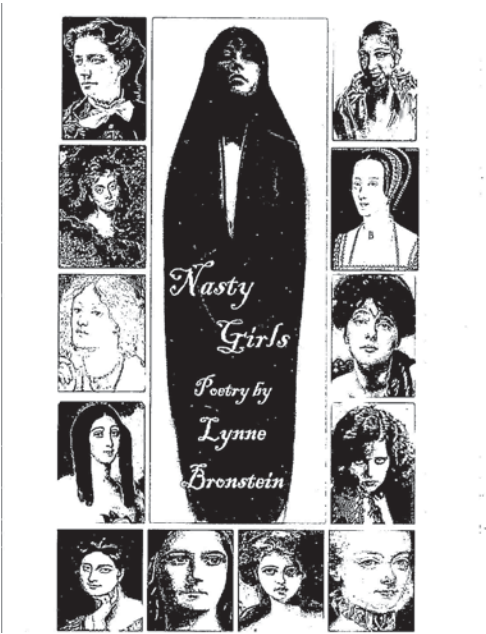
Lynne Bronstein's "Nasty Girls"

– Review by Suzy Williams
My fellow Beachheaders:
Clarion call! A new book of poetry has come from our midst: "Nasty Girls" by ex-collective member Lynne Bronstein. Briefly, about Lynne: Her poetry has been read on NPR and she has been published by "Caffeine", "The Art of Being Human" and "Playgirl", and much more, besides our own venerable rag. She now lives in San Fernando Valley with two other poets.

Sooo, her new deluxe chapbook is all about those wild women who made history, some who weren't very nice. She explains their plights and their foibles with a brisk, irreverent command of poetic language. Ladies like Josephine Baker: "When I heard there were plans / for a movie of my life/ I said no one could play me/ For to have a life like mine/ who would have the courage?" Marie Antoinette: "I may be the property of my king/ But this property is condemned. / This ideology/ Is twisted/ To suit the hatred of the ones who are hated/ And down comes the hate on both sides/ Like the blades of a two-edged/ Guillotine". Clara Bow: "Even after my crazy mother held a knife to my throat/ I wasn't going to let anyone stop me/ Overworked, underpaid, / Accused of stealing other women's husbands/ and taken to court/I got plain worn out/ I needed an asylum in which I could rest/ The It Girl /Had finally had it with being It."

There were gals I needed to look up: Lizzie Siddal, (a Pre-Raphaelite model), Caroline Norton, (an English author and social reformer in the mid-1800's) and Peggy O'Neil Eaton (scandalous woman of "The Petticoat Affair, who brought down John Calhoun in the 1830s) I love it when someone writes about things I need to look up!. Twenty-two "Nasty Girls" in all, you will be more educated, as well as quite entertained having read this.

Congratulations to Lynne! "Nasty Girls" is a success.
You may purchase a copy at Beyond Baroque. Or, email Lynne at: tanyasare@earthlink.net



The Story is Not Over by Gerry Fialka

INTRODUCTION - Let us pry? Will my following quasar quackery needle your luminous galactic nuclei? Ahoy Matey. Navigate the three C's (seas): curiosity, compassion, collaboration (wise words from Karen Gedney MD "Dr G).



On June 16, we celebrate Bloomsday, the day in which James Joyce's masterpiece of modernism takes place. In this 1922 novel, one reads, "In the midst of death we are in life. . . Seems a sort of a joke. Read your own obituary notice; they say you live longer. Gives you second wind. New lease of life." Rev up your radical doubt and scrutinize.

CHAPTER ONE - NEVER-ENDING: How do we Venetians write our story? Compose another chapter? How does writing shape our behavior? What forms the continuum? Eternity? What form do we use: printed word, spoken word, or electronic word? Is it really never-ending?

"Story is by derivation a short history, and by development a narrative designed to interest and please" is The Century Dictionary's definition.

I wonder. What is the difference between people's addiction to reading the newspaper everyday and people looking at their social media everyday? Different form, same content? I wonder how many Venetians consume this very newspaper in its hard copy or on-line version? And why do I keep asking these questions? Does anyone real care?

On a recent podcast, I asked Jason Keehn, "is storytelling innate or invented by humans?" He responded, "Humans are invented by storytelling." David Mitchell quips, "The human world is made of stories, not people. The people the stories use to tell themselves are not to be blamed." Randy Pausch said, "Do not tell people how to live their lives. Just tell them stories. And they will figure out how those stories apply to them." Joan Didion writes, "We tell ourselves stories in order to live."

CHAPTER TWO- REJOYCE : What does death have to do with our story?

The experimental filmmaker Hollis Frampton said that "Narrative is born among the animal necessities of the spirit because we are waiting to die." The French newspaper, La Poste, reviewed the first Lumiere Cinematographe film screening on December 30, 1895: "When these gadgets are in the hands of the public, when anyone can photograph the ones who are dear to them, not just in their motionless form, but with movement, action, familiar gestures and the words out of their mouths, then death will no longer be absolute, final."

Does the story end when we die? Can the transitions be different? What about this idea: What happens to you after you die, is whatever you think happens to you? Can we evoke transformation via story? "James Joyce invested his realist stories with symbolic significance, uniquely combining the directness of prose and the suggestiveness of poetry. To the author's mind, this unique combination gave his stories a transformative potential. . . . The Canterbury Tales does not establish a unity of time and place the same way Dubliners does. In addition to the craft of his stories, then, Joyce's main legacy in the history of the short story has been to find a way to stitch individual stories together in ways that produce a complex

yet complete vision." - Sparknotes.com

Almost no one reads James Joyce, but "The Dead" ranks as one of his best known short stories in his collection called Dubliners. Ex-Venetian Angelica Houston starred in her Dad's film version. The directness of this short story feels unlike Joyce, unlike any kind Irish person, in its blunt confrontations. A lead character, Gabriel, gets hassled by a guest at a family dance, and she questions his desire to bicycle Europe. She insists that Gabriel should stay home and bicycle through his own country. A less blunt sample of suggestiveness covers the end of this short story, as snow falls like a general blanket of quiet death all over Ireland.

We have read James Joyce for 28 years together as a group in Venice (McLuhan-FINNEGANS WAKE Reading Club, Laughtears.com and now we have a ULYSSES reading group too). Join us to expand the tapestry. How can we forge a complex and complete vision of Venice if it is ever changing? Let us weave the tales of our tribe in directness and suggestiveness. Hearz what sum poets did . . .

Fin Agains Wake
(condensed from 628 pages)
by Darryl Bailey
The arising and passing of finite forms,
again and again,
is only formless flowing,
like ripples in a river,
the river Life-y.
But we all dwell in Doubling Town,
mentally dividing, and sub-dividing,
this one great spirit,
a simple flow,
into fantasies of sturm and drang,
and mausoleums of willing done,
when all the while,
it's merely fin agains waking,
along
a riverrun.

Who Killed James Joyce? by Patrick Kavanagh
Who killed James Joyce?
I, said the commentator,
I killed James Joyce
For my graduation.
What weapon was used
To slay mighty Ulysses?
The weapon that was used
Was a Harvard thesis.
How did you bury Joyce?
In a broadcast Symposium.
That's how we buried Joyce
To a tuneful encomium.
Who carried the coffin out?
Six Dublin codgers
Led into Langham Place
By W. R. Rodgers.
Who said the burial prayers? –
Please do not hurt me –
Joyce was no Protestant,
Surely not Bertie?
Who killed Finnegan?
I, said a Yale-man,
I was the man who made
The corpse for the wake man.
And did you get high marks,
The Ph.D.?
I got the B.Litt.
And my master's degree.

Did you get money
For your Joycean knowledge?
I got a scholarship
To Trinity College.
I made the pilgrimage
In the Bloomsday swelter
From the Martello Tower
To the cabby's shelter.

CHAPTER THREE - DEATHLINE/LOVELINE:
Wyndham Lewis nailed it, "The artist is always engaged in writing a detailed history of the future because he is the only person aware of the nature of the present." Then in 1973, agitprop artist Joseph Beuys said every human is an artist. He elaborated, "Only art is capable of dismantling the repressive effects of a senile social system that continues to totter along the deathline: to dismantle in order to build A SOCIAL ORGANISM AS A WORK OF ART. This most modern art discipline – Social Sculpture/Social Architecture – will only reach fruition when every living person becomes a creator, a sculptor, or architect of the social organism."

We are a social organism. We are the creators. We are love.



I feel Robert McKee's words really resonant with our story in Venice: "If you understand your story, you'll be able to say it's about the change from 'this' to 'that,' . . . Poverty to riches. Justice to injustice. It's one master arching event. Endings matter most. . . . The story's ultimate event is the writer's ultimate task. Being and becoming. Permanence and change. The struggle between keeping who you are and changing who you are. It is possible to have both, if you love in the fullest possible way. If you love, you can have both."

Love is the story of Venice, California. The story of our journey can encompass paradise and purgatory and the unknown. "In Paradise there are no stories, because there are no journeys. It's loss and regret and misery and yearning that drive the story forward, along its twisted road." - Margaret Atwood.

Our stories can celebrate the human experience, time, and place. We can offer up questions, imagery, and emotions that bear a powerful relevance to our present day. Is there a new drama of being and perception? Is perception reality?



"Reality is nothing but a collective hunch." - Jane Wagner & Lily Tomlin.

"Reality is not always probable, or likely. But if you're writing a story, you have to make it as plausible as you can, because if not, the reader's imagination will reject it." - Jorge Luis Borges.

Astonish us. How do we make the reader an active part of the story? Transfiguration? "But that's another story." - Rudyard Kipling.



CHAPTER FIVE - NEWS THAT KNOWS:

Pioneer interviewer Elliot Mintz recently wrote: "It is with a heavy heart that I share with you the sad news that Roy Tuckman passed on Wednesday April 19, 2023 at 4 am. He was 84. For the last 47 years, Roy hosted a nightly 'spoken arts' radio show over KPFK-Pacifica-90.7FM in Los Angeles, called 'Something's Happening.' He was his own engineer, producer, curator and telephone operator, and may have been on the radio continuously more than any broadcaster in Americaor anywhere. I made my last visit with him in 2018. Absorb the purity of his spirit. He was not afraid. He may have been the best friend radio ever had. I will never forget Roy Tuckman. Watch this interview <https://youtu.be/QuCVHbSmKyI> on youtube entitled 'Elliot Mintz and Roy Tuckman, part 10 of 10' "

Roy is and will always be a major influence on me. I am grateful to him. He aired an interview I produced of Walter Bowart, author of the ground-breaking book, "Operation Mind Control." Roy played a rare Marshall McLuhan interview "Speaking Freely with Edwin Newman" from 1971, as well as many hours of mind-bending audio, including Alan Watts, Dave Emory, Eben Rey and Terence McKenna, who called Roy a "bon vivant, countercultural figure, informational ferret of our time."

Thanks to Roy for airing many sonic solutions.



CHAPTER SIX: NOT GOODBYE, YET

From: Daniel Ellsberg To: undisclosed-recipients
3/01/2023

Dear friends and supporters,

I have difficult news to impart. On February 17, without much warning, I was diagnosed with inoperable pancreatic cancer on the basis of a CT scan and an MRI. (As is usual with pancreatic cancer--which has no early symptoms--it was found while looking for something else, relatively minor). I'm sorry to report to you that my doctors have given me three to six months to live. Of course, they emphasize that everyone's case is individual; it might be more, or less.

I have chosen not to do chemotherapy (which offers no promise) and I have assurance of great hospice care when needed. Please know: right now, I am not in any physical pain, and in fact, after my hip replacement surgery in late 2021, I feel better physically than I have in years! Moreover, my cardiologist has given me license to abandon my salt-free diet of the last six years. This has improved my quality of life dramatically: the pleasure of eating my former favorite foods!

And my energy level is high. Since my diagnosis, I've done several interviews and webinars on Ukraine, nuclear weapons, and first amendment issues, and I have two more scheduled this week.

As I just told my son Robert: he's long known (as my editor) that I work better under a deadline. It turns out that I live better under a deadline!

I feel lucky and grateful that I've had a wonderful life far beyond the proverbial three-score years and ten. (I'll be ninety-two on April 7th.) I feel the very same way about having a few months more to enjoy life with my wife and family, and in which to continue to pursue the urgent goal of working with others to avert nuclear war in Ukraine or Taiwan (or anywhere else).

When I copied the Pentagon Papers in 1969, I had every reason to think I would be spending the rest of my life behind bars. It was a fate I would gladly have accepted if it meant hastening the end of the Vietnam War, unlikely as that seemed (and was). Yet in the end, that action—in ways I could not have foreseen, due to Nixon's illegal responses—did have an impact on shortening the war. In addition, thanks to Nixon's crimes, I was spared the imprisonment I expected, and I was able to spend the last fifty years with Patricia and my family, and with you, my friends.

What's more, I was able to devote those years to doing everything I could think of to alert the world to the perils of nuclear war and wrongful interventions: lobbying, lecturing, writing and joining with others in acts of protest and non-violent resistance.

I wish I could report greater success for our efforts. As I write, "modernization" of nuclear weapons is ongoing in all nine states that possess them (the US most of all). Russia is making monstrous threats to initiate nuclear war to maintain its control over Crimea and the Donbas--like the dozens of equally illegitimate first-use threats that the US government has made in the past to maintain its military presence in South Korea, Taiwan, South Vietnam, and (with the complicity of every member state then in NATO) West Berlin. The current risk of nuclear war, over Ukraine, is as great as the world has ever seen.

China and India are alone in declaring no-first-use policies. Leadership in the US, Russia, other nuclear weapons states, NATO and other US allies have yet to recognize that such threats of initiating nuclear war--let alone the plans, deployments and exercises meant to make them credible and more ready to be carried out--are and always have been immoral and insane: under any circumstances, for any reasons, by anyone or anywhere.

It is long past time--but not too late!--for the world's publics at last to challenge and resist the willed moral blindness of their past and current leaders. I will continue, as long as I'm able, to help these efforts. There's tons more to say about Ukraine and nuclear policy, of course, and you'll be hearing from me as long as I'm here.

As I look back on the last sixty years of my life, I think there is no greater cause to which I could have dedicated my efforts. For the last forty years we have known that nuclear war between the US and Russia would mean nuclear winter: more than a hundred million tons of smoke and soot from firestorms in cities set ablaze by either side, striking either first or second, would be lofted into the stratosphere where it would not rain out and would envelope the globe within days. That pall would block up to 70% of sunlight for years, destroying all harvests worldwide and causing death by starvation for most of the humans and other vertebrates on earth.

So far as I can find out, this scientific near-consensus has had virtually no effect on the Pentagon's nuclear war plans or US/NATO (or Russian) nuclear threats. (In a like case of disastrous willful denial by many officials, corporations and other Americans, scientists have known for over three decades that the catastrophic climate change now underway--mainly but not only from burning fossil fuels--is fully comparable to US-Russian nuclear war as another existential risk.)

I'm happy to know that millions of people--including all those friends and comrades to whom I address this message!--have the wisdom, the dedication and

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the moral courage to carry on with these causes, and to work unceasingly for the survival of our planet and its creatures.

I'm enormously grateful to have had the privilege of knowing and working with such people, past and present. That's among the most treasured aspects of my very privileged and very lucky life. I want to thank you all for the love and support you have given me in so many ways. Your dedication, courage, and determination to act have inspired and sustained my own efforts.

My wish for you is that at the end of your days you will feel as much joy and gratitude as I do now.

Love, Dan

PS: I will enjoy reading any message you send me to this email, though I may or may not be able to respond to every message or call. I prefer email to calls, and in general I am avoiding personal visits, from concern about covid. Please know that I hold you in my heart.



CHAPTER SEVEN - EVEN SLEVEN: Study storyteller supreme, Preston Sturges. His films lampoon screwball comedy. "Sturges was a fan of false fronts. He believed that how someone presented himself—his actions, his appearance, whatever name he chose on a given day—was as revelatory as any 'true self' within. He was not a director who sought to probe the depths of humanity. The exquisite irony of being alive, he thought, was that, despite our genuine desires, we still had to walk around in the meat suits of our bodies, trying to get by. There was an essential tension between who we believed we were and the person others saw, and this tension lent life its absurdity, its richness, and its potential for surprise." - Rachel Syme, NYorker 4-10-23.

The new book "CRAIG BALDWIN: AVANT TO LIVE!" documents the work of acclaimed filmmaker and curator Baldwin, an inspiring and influential figure in contemporary media arts. I am honored that it includes an essay by me. On May 28, I read it at the book launch event at the Roxie Theater in San Fran. Over the years, Baldwin appeared at events I produced at Midnight Special Bookstore and Sponto Gallery. My interview with Craig in Flipside magazine was entitled "Create Something Unexpected." Surprise. Story. The exuberance of being can stimulate surprise in our story. This hole essay reminds me of the joke we told as kids. When passing by a cemetery in a car, we quip, "People are dying to get in there."

Upcoming Laughtears.com -

July 15 - Suzy & Brad THE LIT SHOW 16th annual celebration of song and literature at Beyond Baroque

July 28 - Stormin' Norman & Suzy 50th anniversary show in the Berkshires, Massachusetts

Aug 29 - Suzy Williams, Michael Jost at The Trip

Oct 22 - Mark Cantor Jazz Films at Beyond Baroque

Nov 12 - PXL THIS Film Festival 33rd annual Toy Camera - Electronic Folk Art

On the Booksellers' Street of Baghdad

By Majid Naficy – March 19, 2007

Written after the March 5, 2007· blast on the booksellers' street named for Mutanabbi, the great Arab poet (915-65)

I saw Mutanabbi returning from Persia.
He had heard the sound of Tigris, by the Kor River
Calling him back to Baghdad.
On his way, he had given his sword
To the Qarmati rebels in Gonaveh
Because he knew that from then on
He would have no friend but the pen.

He had told himself:
"I, Mutanabbi, poet, prophet and swordsman
Moved into the desert from Kufa
With the bedouins of Qarmati revolt
Looking for the secret of brotherhood.
I went to Aleppo with Prince Sayf of Hamdan
To stand against the Frank crusaders
And traveled to Persia with King Azod of Daylaman
To spread the seed of Arabic poetry.
Now I want to return to Iraq
Only to look from the bridge of Baghdad
At the fishermen in their nutshell boats
Who are gently rowing on the Tigris River.
I want to see the gnostic Mandaean in their white towels
Making ablution in the shallow waters
While looking at the North star,
And from the diners on Abu-Nuwas St.
I want to buy lentil soup and Masqoof fish
Barbecued on pomegranate sticks.
How happy it is to walk around
Near the reeds by the river
And watch the kisses of a young couple
From behind a palm tree,
How happy it is to sit by the old harpist
And listen to the story of the Tigris River
Rushing from Mountains to the Persian Gulf,
How happy it is going to the Turkish bath
Before muezzin calls to prayer
And surrender one's body to the caressing fingers,
Cotton washcloth and bubbling soap
And when taking dry towels
Ask the receptionist for a glass of ice water,
Then in a happy mood
Going to the House of Wisdom
And seeing the dazzles of joy
In the eyes of the youth."

Mutanabbi told himself:
"I am becoming a child again
Enchanted with playing words".
Looking down from the bridge of Baghdad
Mutanabbi saw nothing but blood
Running constantly in the Tigris River.
Fishermen were hunting the dead,
Farmers planting human bones,
Mothers giving birth to headless babies
Behind bushes and sand domes,
The beheaded running in the shallow waters
And the water-sellers shouted in the alleys:
"Fresh blood! fresh blood!"

On the booksellers' Row, a red fog
Had covered the sky and the earth.
Muhammad, the binder, was looking in the ruins
For the cut-off head of his brother.
Father of Hussein, the hummus-pedlar,
Was talking to one of his son's shoes.
Shatri, the book-seller, was shedding tears
Running behind the half-burnt leaves of poetry
In the alleys on the east-side of the Tigris River.
He was humming one of Mutanabbi's couplets:
"Even the blind can see the letters
And the deaf hear the sound of my poetry."

Mutanabbi stood.
His robe clung to his skin
And his headdress was wet with blood.
He asked himself:
"People or Books?
Books or people?"
Should he put down the pen
And take the sword again?
The Tigris did not answer.
It was running fast
Like an arrow shot from a bow.



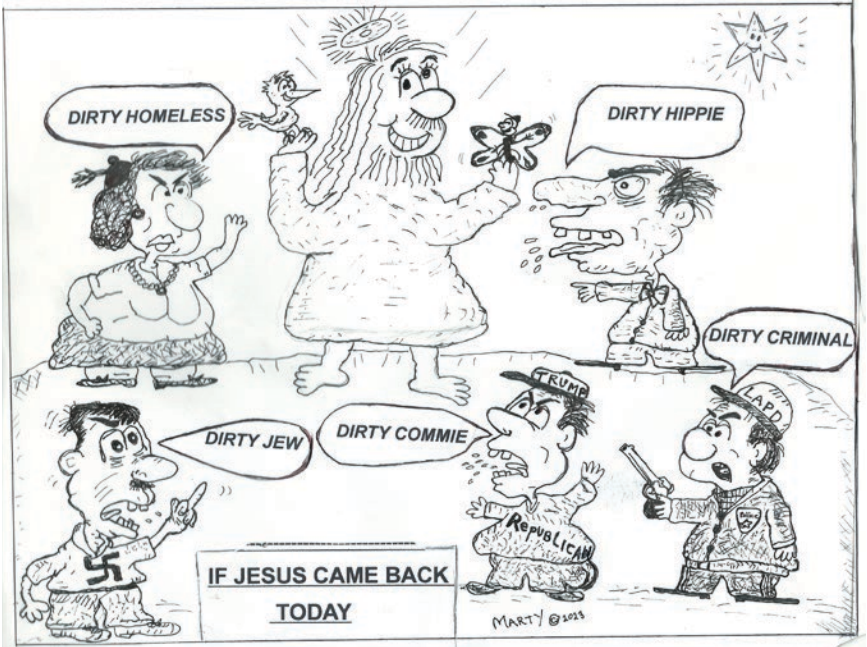
Death fence...
Placed across the front yard
Demo the history
The quant
The right sized home
The space that holds
Memories
and sweet whispers
in the sounds
Of frames settling
to rest
from tears, laughter,
and music filling the rooms
The senses delight
of food prepared
sitting and dining
alone or together
Delicious life
Hot baths
and remember
sand hit the wood floors
Forgetting to shake your
Shoes & cuffed up pants
Free Breezes thru
Open windows
Blessed medicine
the beach
provides...

Home will be dead
in a short minute
to satisfy and feed
the virus
Greed
There is no honor...

- Lydia Ponce

THE SEA (c)- marty liboff
By the ocean I feel free
I love the sea, the sea, the sea.
Walking by the seaside
with my honey by my side.
I never find it dull
to watch a flying pelican or seagull.
The ocean takes away my strife
renews my love of life.
Our ancient ancestors crawled onto land
so today I still love the sea & sand.
From the waters we were born
yet nature we fear and scorn.
All life came out of water
yet marine life we slaughter.
We dump our waste into the sea
oil, pesticide, garbage, shit & pee.
We were once ancient fish
now they're only a tasty dish.
Swimming in the ocean blue
we connect to what is true.
We are part of nature
we ruin it and destroy our future.
I never find it a bore
to be by our beautiful shore.
So when I'm dead & done
just throw me in the ocean...

THE RAINBOW
marty liboff (sung with Over the Rainbow)
Judy sang somewhere over the rainbow
I've been lookin for a rainbow too
lookin for my pot of gold
but I'm lost without a clue.
I was lost in a tornado
tossed about abused and blue
by wicked witches & monkey men
tryin to find out what's true.
I was lookin for the Yellow Brick Road
searchin for answers
from phony wizards & wise men-
tryin to understand myself
and find meaning in life.
Along the winding road
I met tin people without hearts
scarecrows without brains
and cowardly lions with loud roars.
But as the good witch said
you always had the power
you just had to learn it for yourself.
You can find yourself and home
whenever you want
ya don't have to wander and roam.
Wizards, teachers & scientists
don't have the answers
you already have the answers
if you look inside yourself.
It's not somewhere over the rainbow
you are the rainbow
we're all rainbows
that glow-
we're all love & rainbows
and you already know.
Somewhere over the rainbow
way up high
there's a land that I've heard of
once in a lullaby...





The Community Prayer and Gospel Festival in Reese-Tabor Oakwood Park on Saturday, April 29 was organized by Gail Shipp of Venice. Featured speakers included Sherwood Fleming and Zekaia Smith who recited their poems at the event.

My Condolence and Tribute to the Mr. George Floyd Family

Written by Sherwood Fleming, Love Forever

By Sherwood Fleming
86 Years Old
Born at Hillhouse, Mississippi 1936

There are people's names and thangs that are near and dear.
Some of the same things happenin' now happened in the days of yesteryear.

Mr. George Floyd died with his mother on his mind.
The George Floyds of history, up and down through time.

But by his own account, Mr. George Floyd died with his mother on his mind.

When Mr. George Floyd was cryin' and callin' out to his mother, his voice wasn't shamed.
For neither was his voice in vain.

But some way some how she heard her son when he was cryin' callin' out her name,

"Mama! Mama! I love you, mama." "I can't breathe!"
"Please, please, I can't breathe!"

Mr. George Floyd begged and pleaded for his life,
Every breath of the way, until he passed away.

Nine minutes, twenty-nine seconds.
That was the sad end of Mr. George Floyd's day.

Derek Chauvin is a racist hater, not a motivator,
That quickly caused death to Mr. George Floyd's self.

What Derek Chauvin did to Mr. George Floyd was a death effect,
'Cause he never took his knee off Mr. George Floyd's neck.

Those other officers that were there, they are guilty too.
'Cause each of them did what they chose to do.

Mr. George Floyd, we're not sayin' good bye.
We're not sayin' we won't cry.

We love you. We'll see you on high.
And we'll meet you at your mansion in the sky.

Love. Love. Love. Peace, love, and understanding.
And God's love to the world.

Psalm 24:1 "The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof;
The world, and they that dwell therein."

We got "Just us", but we didn't get "Justice".
We got A victory, but we didn't get THE victory.

But, oh what a miracle, and a mighty mighty God we serve.
We love you, Mr. George Floyd. And God loves us all.

And God loves us all.
And God loves us all.



COMMUNITY

By Zekaia Smith

Community looks like coming together.
Taking care of our youth and supporting their en-
deavors,

Community looks like taking care of our elders while
giving them respect,
Let's not hear the words last time I Checked,

Community looks like taking our youth by the hand,
As you show them a better way to stand,

Community looks like all of us locking hands,
To fight for what's ours which is our Venice land,

Community looks like making a change,
While we fight and support all of our homes tied
down in Chains.

June Gloom

By Majid Naficy

June is the cloudiest month:
At midnight, in Santa Monica,
It puts a velvet blanket over the city
And at dawn
It hangs a curtain of fog
In front of the sunshine.
I like June's sorrow
And prefer the ambiguity of clouds
To the directness of the sun.

Let a hand
Silence alarm clocks
So that workaholics
Can stay in bed a moment longer.
But poets and the homeless
Emerge from their hideouts
Under the overcast sky
And walk the coastal path
In two opposite directions:
One toward the sea
To find new poems
And the other toward town
To find their breakfast.



Majid Naficy reading at Beyond Baroque, May, 2023

Jitterbug 2
I recall the 'Speedway';
A few steps from the
ocean front in Venice, CA.
Not much more than
an alley now, where
Moshe and Eddie had
an upstairs two bedroom
for about thirty-nine
bucks a month.
Old man Appleman lived
in the basement apartment
full of dusty steamer trunks,
shrunken heads, and tall tales.
This was post-Beat, pre-hippie
era in Venice.
Saint Kerouac was conservative in
politics and slow in suicide.
Allen G. paving new roads to come.
Raydoff and aunt Mary had a place
down there, where Raydoff would
die in '64, still supporting the 'party'.
A world of dial telephones, two-
dollar dinners, and dime colas.
I remember real musclemen,
dance hall blondes, zoot-suiters,
wrestlers, and hucksters in
seersucker and skimmers,
all still jiving to World War 2 swing.
Identity theft was a purse snatch
or a pick-pocket. Very rare.
Even the winos were better dressed.
Years later, this was space where
I smoked "fat ones" with Rastas,
was escorted out of a Hare
Krishna festival for "drunken
Blasphemy", (to hear them tell it),
and hallucinated bridges and pondered
eternity on the cold night sand.
Even with decaying memory,
certain things still stand out.

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Visions of Venice

On a rooftop,
Brooks and the
Speedway
Uniform of the
decade; torn
jeans, long hair
Summer

Smoking fine
black Hashish,
quaffing icy
beer from
foreign lands.
Girls look small
from up here,
but join us anyway.

Carrying a large
bag of laundry
yet to be done,
and looking older up
close, they flop cross-
legged onto the roof.
Hippie girls extending
their practices into
these early
nineteen-seventies.

They sing the
song of both eras,
indulging in the spoils.

Natural selection?

The darker it gets,
the better we get
to know each other.
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Battle of Lincoln Place— continued from page 1

went on, and the heroes in that battle. And the villains of the story, and the politicians who mouthed some words and failed to stand up. Reading in today’s newspaper we had the story of Barrington Plaza which read like a chapter out of Dennis’s book. The same things that are going on, the same mass eviction, the same use of the Ellis Act, the same getting around rent stabilization is happening today. Understanding this history and learning the lessons from it is of critical importance. It’s a really important book. It sounds like a lot of you have lived the history of it. Sheila, you moved in in the mid/late 80s. What did you see there? What attracted you to Lincoln Place? And then, from there can you go and talk about what was your vision of a tenant-owned Lincoln Place?

Sheila Bernard: When I was looking for a place to live, I had some background in food cooperatives. And I had already developed the understanding that if we don’t have an economic democracy, our political democracy is just too fragile to withstand the predations of those who will just take more and more and more. I had an understanding of cooperatives, and I drove by Lincoln Place and said to myself, “The people living in that place would be members of a cooperative.” Because it’s not fancy. It’s not exactly uniform, but it’s uniform enough that these are folks who can understand the simplicity of doing a thing together in a big way. That was what went through my mind. And sure enough, and this battle ensuing, that was how the people felt. We were trying to do more than play defense. Because it’s not enough to play defense. You have to play offense. And how else can renters play offense except to own the place. So we developed the slogan which you saw in all the newsletters that Ingrid [Mueller] over and over again posted and delivered to people. Every newsletter and even in the windows of people’s houses we put this slogan. And that slogan was: Let’s Own It. Which meant to the people, we’re doing more than playing defense here. We want to control our destinies. That was the lifeblood of the movement. We were going to own that as a cooperative.

John Raphling: Amanda, can you explain a little bit about the historical value of the buildings themselves at Lincoln Place Apartments, and how they fit into the Venice of the 50s, 60s, 70s, and into the 80s?

Amanda Seward: They’re a little bit apart from the Venice that people normally think of. It’s east of Lincoln [Boulevard]. We’ve always had a separate identity versus the west of Lincoln. And it’s huge. There’s no complex bigger in Venice, certainly. It was done in a garden city style movement that was founded in England to address the pollution of the cities at the time. The idea was that you would build out in the suburbs of England at the time. But you would build communities of maybe 25,000, and there would be a core center. You could grow your own agriculture in the area. There would be shops near. There would be theater. So it would be a combination of the things that we enjoy in urban city living. And also clean air and a new way of forming households. That idea translated to a lot of housing. People were looking at that in the U.S., especially after World War II, when there was this need for massive housing. They borrowed a lot of those ideas, and Lincoln Place represents the kind of evolution of that idea as applied to conditions in the U.S. and in California, post World War II. It’s a prime example of that. There’s no better example of that in this city. It represents a lot of things historically. It was financed under a federal government plan that really tried to address this need for housing. And they did it in a big way. It represents that history. Lincoln Place is the largest complex built under that program in California. It represents that. It represents this architectural interest in the garden city movement. It represented mid-century design. This idea that you would build simply but elegantly with simple forms. You’d move the buildings around to look a little bit different, so you’d know where your place was. It was built lower scale so that you would have a relationship with your neighbors. And it wouldn’t become too sterile, which is what you get when you have high-rise places sometimes, when people don’t know each other. Each unit was built beautifully, designed by Ralph Vaughn who not only was interested in Modernism, had been involved in the housing policy in Washington, D.C. Whose father had been an architect who had run with those people who were important in Roosevelt’s time. He knew that history. It was a design that was to be built for the common

person. It was built to give them style and elegance and a feeling of being home. Landscaping around, but not as much landscaping as they might have had in England after World War I. But enough to create a park-like atmosphere in post-World War II L.A. It had all these elements. I think only one wall meets another apartment, so you had privacy. You had the ocean breeze. Someone thinking about the breeze that came through, so you didn’t really need air conditioning. Somebody who was thinking about the way you live, and a lot of built-ins. So to live simply, you can clean the place simply. You can even clean the windows, and give the place a family atmosphere. That was the idea I think beautifully executed at Lincoln Place. That’s why I think it’s important for that middle income person and the family person. That’s who it was really built for.

John Raphling: Sheila, if you’re hearing all that, can you connect that to your experience living there? Did it achieve all of those?

Sheila Bernard: Yeah. It was like that. People who lived there did not want to leave there. It captured you. But one thing I want to add to what Amanda said about the garden city movement. One element of the garden city movement was social ownership. It was intended that these buildings that were built in Europe and in the United States... The movement itself actually articulated that. And that’s why I want to say something else about this concept of social ownership. We have been giving away public funds to the private sector for decades. I mean trillions of dollars probably by now, in funding that has gone to the private sector. Because we subsidize the building of the housing, and then after a certain number of years, there’s no longer any requirements placed on the private builder that partnered with the government. And they can raise the rents as high as they want. They can evict people. They can stop accepting Section 8 certificates. We’re giving our housing money away. I want to mention, that a couple of weeks ago in the New York Times Magazine there was an article about the City of Vienna in Austria. They do not have an affordable housing problem in Vienna. The reason is, they own the housing. Vienna owns that housing and they don’t just have poor people living in the housing. It’s all income levels. It’s all kinds of people living in that housing. Rental housing is a respected and honored part of their culture in their city. And we really could emulate that. So if you haven’t seen that, look up Vienna. Yes, it was New York Times Magazine. They’re keeping the amount of your paycheck that you pay towards rent really low. They have a solution that we need to emulate in this country if we’ll just stop being so afraid of the term “social ownership”. We have such a cultural fear, maybe Not the people in this room. I have a feeling that people don’t feel that way. But I think a lot of the people who are not in this room do feel very afraid of the word “Socialism” or “social ownership”. And I believe that social ownership of housing is the only way we’re going to get out of the crisis that we’re in.

John Raphling: The owners of the building had endless money. They had political connections. They had high-priced lawyers. They had, in many ways, the law itself on their side. They had this deep-seated ideological belief, in this country, that values property rights over human rights. What did the tenants have?

Sheila Bernhard: Well, we had Ingrid and Abby and Steven, and there may be some other Lincoln Place folks here. And we had Amanda who saved our bacon; she saved our bacon totally. Had it not been for the ability to pivot from the affordable housing battle to the preservation battle I don’t think those buildings would be standing today. The sixty or so folks who managed to return to Lincoln Place, and some of whom are still living there today, and the financial settlement that other tenants received... None of that would have been possible without the preservation battle that Amanda spearheaded. She could not be bullied out of protecting that housing. And Laura Burns, who is not here today but whose name we really need to mention, who was a research assistant on this, she really discovered Ralph Vaughn the architect. She says that it’s not just the four walls, it’s the dignity that the design gave the people. We had the people, we had the architecture, we had the community. And we had the will to fight. And today, in our country, we’ve got to have the will to fight. Things are very serious up there. We can’t give up organizing. We can’t give up the idea that a group of people, a small group of people, with a clear idea and the will to fight can make an enormous

difference out there. Everybody in this room has probably been part of a thing like that. Don’t ever stop, don’t ever stop.

Amanda Seward: I’d like to say a word about that as well. What Lincoln Place had was basically everything they [Aimco] had. We had P.R. people. We had a P.R. team that were professional P.R. people at some point in their history. Or wanted to be, so wanted to do it and could think of their own ideas and carry them out. We had photographers that took beautiful pictures. We had Laura Silagi and Preacher [David Ewing] doing this film that brought tears to people’s eyes every time they saw it. We had lobbyists. You had [Councilman Bill] Rosendahl, and you could talk to him. We had political connections that we were using. We had writers. We had fundraisers, who do this for a living, would organize a fundraising event for us. We didn’t have money, but we had expertise in various areas that you need for a campaign like this. We had people that were willing to dedicate themselves to it. We had a community that was supportive of it, a broad range of people. We had a lot. I always felt like it was almost pre-ordained. The exposure you had. The feelings you had about something. The motivation you had about something. Everything worked out the way it should work out. I worked at Hanna-Barbera, at one point, for a person who was a marketing genius. He brought the MTV campaign, “Give me my MTV.” He came up with one of the things: You have to define yourself as the first in the field, whatever it is. One of the marketing rules. And you had to come up with slogans. It was really my suggestion through him that every press release, everything we do, we’re going to tag it with “The Largest Lockout in a Single Day in L.A. History”. Who wants that associated with them? We used it every place we went. It was effective in the sense that it defined who the bad guy was. We didn’t have to do too much more of an explanation. And what’s the justification for that? I think we just had a lot. And in the end, it takes a lot. It takes a team of people, but we had a better team. Their people would drop off. They would fire a person who didn’t get the results. They went through law firm after law firm after law firm. We had one law firm. We had several lawyers too. We had John Murdock, who was a planning lawyer. We had Elena Popp, who was an eviction lawyer. We had Jan Book, who lived at Lincoln Place, who had been an accountant and a lawyer, and renewed her bar license to get involved. And organized the Latin families, made sure that they were included and knew what was going on. We had a lot of people doing a lot of different things. We had parties to keep up the morale. We had musicians playing. We had spouses who were supportive and families who were supportive. We just had a lot too. I would match our team up with theirs any day. And I think that’s why we won.

John Raphling: Dennis, any thoughts on the match-up between you and the good guys, and the bad guys? The underfunded and the largest corporate landlord in America?

Dennis Hathaway: Well, it was a classic David versus Goliath. It really was. I read all the court transcripts, what these attorneys were saying. But I think the most disturbing, appalling, outrageous thing on the part of the landlord was just their treatment of people. I’ll just give one example. This is in the book. A woman named Laura Ponce who lived in a building. It was a twenty-six unit building. They were gutting the building. She didn’t want to move. She had a chronic illness. She lived on a fixed income. She had no place to move. And they went ahead and started renovating this building while she was still living there. Actually gutting it, tearing off the roof, sandblasting. I think she was in her late fifties. This was the billion dollar company that owned something like 3,000 apartment buildings all over the United States. I still get angry about that. I think it’s outrageous. It came through, as I was researching and writing, that these people were willing to stand up to that. I don’t know how much Sheila wants to talk about it, but she was sued by the landlord.

Sheila Bernard: We had yard sales. They did not want us to have yard sales. So one time we were going to have a yard sale and they came along. And I told everybody, “Hey, go home. Let’s just do an exemplar out here. One yard sale.” So I had it out there and they sued me for having a yard sale. At the time, the lawyer that I had got sick and didn’t meet the deadlines. They succeeded in suing me. It was a long time I was paying them off.

continued on page 12

CALENDAR
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6/8 Adi x Kaya Reading
Thursday, June 8, 7:30 PM PDT
In person at Beyond Baroque
ADI Magazine and Kaya Press present an evening of new works from contributors to ADI Magazine's Inaugural volume Omens. Readings by K-Ming Chang, Ruxandra Guidi, Cynthia Dewi Oka, Taz Ahmed, Mahtem Shiferraw, Jason Magabo Perez. MC'ed by D'Lo.

6/10 "What is Power" from The School of Public Life by the late Fred Dewey
Saturday, June 10, 11:00 AM -2:00 PM PDT
In person at Beyond Baroque
This reading is the third of a series of Table Reading sessions hosted at Beyond Baroque, which Dewey directed for over twelve years, as part of the Fred Rogers Dewey Legacy Project (FRDLP). Historically, these sessions presented texts from the work of Hannah Arendt, but the FRDLP is celebrating Dewey's work by reviving this series with one of his own texts: "What Is Power," the last chapter of his book The School of Public Life. This project involves participants reading aloud around a table and interpreting the text as each pulls meaning from it. The activity is a public interpretation of ideas, read together without "expertise," but with mind and heart. Following Dewey's commitment to her work, this series will include readings of Hannah Arendt as we move through the months. We will follow Fred's model for the Working Group, which entails that we, a group of interested individuals, will engage with a text with no prior knowledge of it. So, there is no need to read anything ahead of time—the text will be passed out at the table. Just come, sit, and read with us.

6/10 Fine Arts Film Festival
Saturday, June 10
In person at Beyond Baroque
The Venice Institute of Contemporary Art (ViCA) is proud to present the 10th Annual Fine Arts Film Festival (FAFF), on June 10 in person at Beyond Baroque and June 15-22 streaming on Vimeo. FAFF—the world's largest art film festival—will present over 40 films from across the globe.

6/14 Jerome Rothenberg & Charles Bernstein: On Global Post-Holocaust Poetics inside Anselm Kiefer's "Exodus"
Wednesday, June 14, 6:30 PM PDT
Gagosian at Marciano Art Foundation
4357 Wilshire Boulevard Los Angeles, CA 90010
Join Gagosian and Beyond Baroque for an evening with poets Jerome Rothenberg and Charles Bernstein inside Anselm Kiefer's exhibition Exodus at Gagosian at Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles. Two of the most consequential figures in radical poetics over the past half century, Rothenberg and Bernstein will explore some of the themes that occupy Kiefer—Jewish mysticism, the poetry of Paul Celan, and the formulation of a global poetics in response to the Holocaust—in a conversation and readings of their poetry. The event will include a reception and the opportunity to view the exhibit.

6/16 The Unwrinkled Ear: Franck Vigroux & Antoine Schmitt, & Marlo de Lara
Friday, June 16, 8:00 PM PDT
In person at Beyond Baroque
Franck Vigroux and Antoine Schmidt's Cascades is an audiovisual concert inspired by the symbol of waterfalls, here represented by streams of pixels whose movements are shifting like liquid and fire. Musically, they take the same inspiration and actively improvise with electronics to connect the ever-changing ecology of sensation to the immutability of change itself. A continuum of mediums to spring, trickle, and wash over the audience.

6/17 L.A. Book Launch: Now You Are A Missing Person by Susan Hayden
Saturday, June 17, 7:00 PM PDT
In person at Beyond Baroque
Susan Hayden's lyrical memoir, Now You Are a Missing Person (June 2023, Moon Tide Press), explores how love, grief, and the disappearing landscape of the San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles shaped her life through a collection of stories and poems. Hayden is best known for her award-winning monthly literary series, Library Girl, which has given a platform and a home to a diverse community of writers and musicians since 2009. With her debut book, she moves front and center.

6/22 Sun & Moon Press Authors: Then and Now
Thursday, June 22, 2:00 PM PDT
In person at Beyond Baroque
Beyond Baroque presents an evening of fiction and poetry readings with former Sun & Moon Press-published authors. Rebecca Goodman, Wendy Walker, Stacey Levine, and Martin Nakell will be reading new and selected works.

6/23 L.A. Book Launch: Faunalia
Friday, June 23, 8:00 PM PDT
In person at Beyond Baroque
From Alice Fulmer comes a collection of poems lushly vulnerable and soul-shakingly sensual. As with the best magical realism, her poems reveal just past arid city streets a sudden swell of verdant life.

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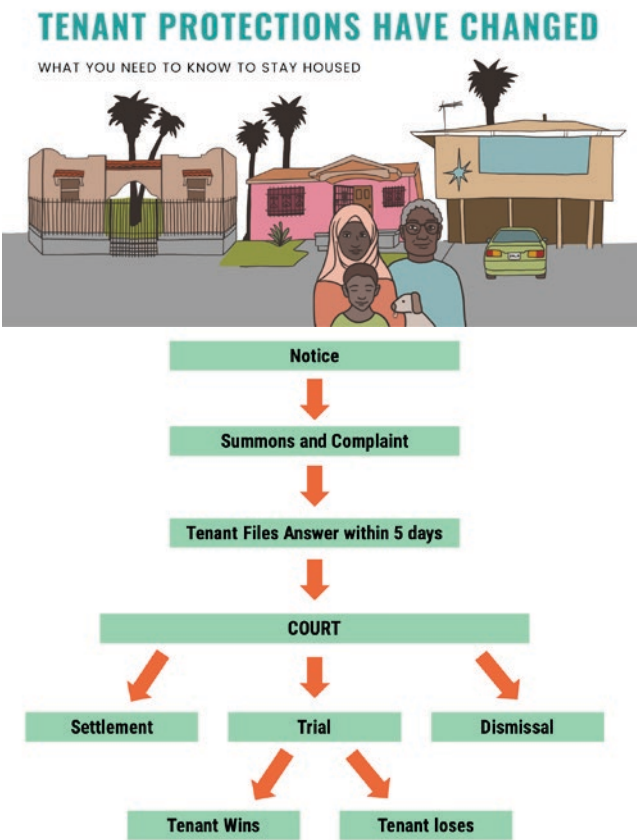
- *Hope for the Hearts of the Homeless- Pam & Joel and friends. Coffee, pastries, snacks. Thursday & Sunday around 9:45 am. On the Ocean Front Walk near Ozone Ave.
- *You Matter- Michael's picnic with friends. Tue. & Thur. around 11 am. North border of Venice on the Ocean Front Walk near Ozone Ave.
- *Oasis Network Inc. with Dan & friends- various groceries, bread, fruit, vegetables. Sat. & Sun. around 9am. Ocean Front Walk by Dudley Ave.
- *Venice Equity Alliance- Bread, fruit, & vegetables. Wed. 12:45pm. 132 Brooks Ave.
- *St. Joseph Center- their clients, to-gomeals. Mon. 10-11:50, Tues. & Thurs. 12-2:50. 204 Hampton Dr.. Also weekly food if you register at (310)396-6468 ext.313
- * St. Mark Church Free Food Pantry
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940 Coeur d'Alene Ave, Venice 90291 (entrance Garfield Av) Vegetables, fruits and other food items. No registration needed. Drive-thru and walk-in options. Call St. Mark Parish at 310-821-5058 or email us at loavesandfishes@stmarkvenice.com
- * Venice Family Clinic - Free bag of fruits and vegetables. Every 3rd Wed. of the month. 10 AM to 12 PM. 589 Rose Ct.

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https://www.tripsantamonica.com/calendar
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Tuesday 6/27 8:00 Natalie Jacobs (Bossa)
Mondays, Open Mike

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Open Mic Fridays 7:00
The Sunless Sea Poetry and Spoken Word Open Mic Show Tuesdays 7:30

The Bar Center At The Beach
CLASS LIST:

- Mondays – 10 AM Fit and Fun with Shifra
1:30 PM Arthritis Foundation Exercise with Phyllis
- Tuesdays – 1 PM Dance with Noa
- Wednesday – 10 AM Yoga with Allyn
11 AM Art, Puzzles & Games with Noa
1:30 PM Arthritis Foundation Exercise with Phyllis
- Thursdays – 11 AM Therapeutic Movement with Jenny
- Fridays – 9:15 AM Movement & Dance with Noa
10 AM Fit and Fun with Shifra
11:15 AM Shabbat Gathering
It is at 201 Ocean Front Walk, Venice.



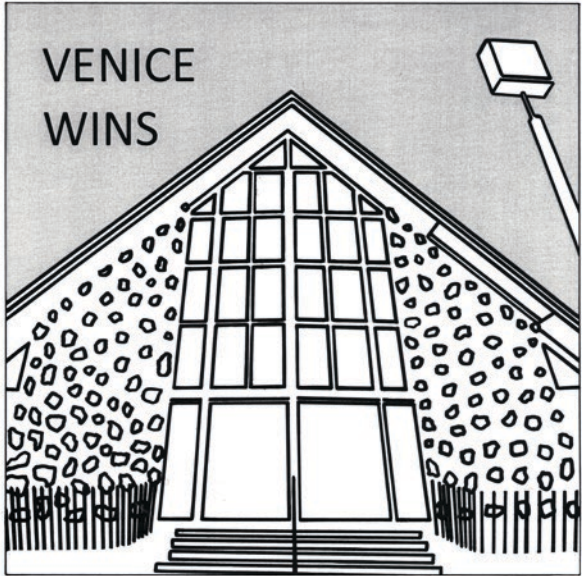
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Battle of Lincoln Place— continued from page 10

That’s what you do. It doesn’t matter; it washes off you. Because the bigger triumph of being able to have people prevail in a situation like that... Everything else just washes off you.

John Raphling: The book is infuriating and inspiring at the same time. Amanda, can you talk about the strategy around the historical preservation aspect, how that fit in with organizing for the affordability and for keeping the tenants in Lincoln Place?

Amanda Seward: The landlord was evicting the tenants under the Ellis Act. The Ellis Act is a state law that basically says that a city government cannot force an owner to stay in the rental business. They can permanently leave the rental business under the Ellis Act. That has been interpreted by the courts to mean that even if it’s a corporation that does apartment buildings all over the city and has ten others, they can get rid of one and go out of the rental business property by property. That’s what the owner here was doing. When I first got involved, it really was the architecture. Even Sheila and I had little fights about that sometimes, because Sheila looked at it like this is a commune. It’s uniform. There’s nothing special about these buildings. I walked into it not knowing the tenants at all. I didn’t know anybody at Lincoln Place at the time. It was only from the preservation side. Me and my husband were involved in the Los Angeles Conservancy, the Modern Committee that is into mid-century places. A person that lived at Lincoln Place was the head of the L.A. Modern Committee of the L.A. Conservancy. And he asked in a meeting whether there were volunteers who would help with a nomination of Lincoln Place. Me and my husband had just been going on the tours mostly. We hadn’t really done any work, so to speak. But we decided, “Oh, why don’t we help out. We live near Lincoln Place. We’re into mid-century. We can do it. We can figure it out and we can help.” They looked at us a little skeptical because they didn’t really know us. But there was a tenant who was supposed to have all this history. And that was Laura Burns. I contacted her. She was suspicious. Everybody was suspicious, like, “Who is this? Is she a spy for the owner? Never heard of her before.” It was that kind of attitude. But slowly we got to know each other. She had all this research. We worked on that. We got all of that going. I slowly got more involved in the tenants. But that was not my initial interest. It was to do this designation and just get out of it, just get rid of it. Basically, write it out, do the research. Fortunately, the research was done through Laura Burns. She had just so much information, and getting it out of her... I think we had to go to Kinko’s together and make copies together because she didn’t want to let it out of her sight. And she didn’t know who this was. Finally, we got going on it and we worked well together like sisters actually. She was a wealth of information and she went through every detail. Really, all I had to do was read what she gave me. I was really only interested in that and didn’t really want to mingle too much in the tenant issues for a number of reasons timewise. I didn’t want the preservation issue to look like a strategy to keep the buildings. Because they always say that. “They don’t really think those buildings are historic. They just want to keep their low-cost housing. It has nothing to do with historic. Look at her. She’s representing the tenants.” That’s why I didn’t want to have that label. I was trying to stay away from you guys a little bit. But I would explain to people, “Look these buildings can save you. So you’d better start loving them and never talk about them looking like the project or anything else. You need to try to find a way. We’re going to go through the history of it to try to find a way to appreciate it. And if you’re interested in history, if you’re an intelligent person, if you’re interested in architecture, Lincoln Place tells a story that is an important story to tell. So even if it’s not your thing, your design, you have to recognize the history of it.” That’s what we were pumping and talking about. There were architects who lived at Lincoln Place. There were landscape people who lived at Lincoln Place. People who volunteered to help me put it in a more architectural language when I describe the buildings, so I learned a lot about it in that way. My husband was very helpful. He knows how to read details of maps and plans, and helped me and tutored me in it. He would read everything that I wrote. Laura and I would go back and forth on things. But strategywise it was a perfect thing to do. Because if the buildings had to stay... They’re historic. What is a corporation going to do, saying they’re permanently going out of the rental business? They can’t redevelop it. Because it’s historic. You can’t tear

the buildings down. Anything you do is going to have to be consistent or compatible with the buildings that are already there. So what are you going to do with it? You’re just saying you’re going out of the rental business. You’re not an individual owner who’s just going to let this property just sit. You’ve got to bring the profits to your investors. You’re not letting it sit and you can’t tear it down if it’s historic. So what do you want to do with it? That’s basically what the judge said to them finally after a lot of battles with them. But the seniors and disabled got to stay longer. I started representing them, expanding a little bit more. By that point, Lincoln Place was designated. They sued me as well. The owner did. We were past all that. So I started representing the seniors and disabled who were there, because the Ellis Act gives them longer to find a relocation or to move. That was a key to defeating the Ellis Act. The judge had made a preliminary ruling against us, saying that under the Ellis Act you can’t challenge your motivations or whatever. Well, yes you can if you raise a legitimate argument against it. They can’t tear it down. If they don’t tear it down, it’s under rent control. The tenants get to stay. And whatever redevelopment happens they’ve got to keep these buildings, even if they can change them to some extent. The judge finally said, “Yeah, what are you going to do with the buildings?” I remember that. She shifted all of a sudden. And it was good. We’re getting somewhere. Then they were arrogant: “We don’t have to have a reason or tell you what we’re going to do with the buildings. We have the right, under the Ellis Act, to say we are going out of the rental business. And if we say it, we get to redevelop the property the way we want. All we have to do is say we’re going permanently out of the rental business.” And the judge said, “I don’t think so. I think that’s a jury question to decide who they believe and what you really want to do with the property.” That was a win for us. Because if we had a trial... Meanwhile, the tenants are still in the buildings. The seniors and disabled who are still there are still in their units. And Aimco doesn’t want a jury trial on this. What are you going to do? All the seniors and disabled come in the courtroom and you know you’re going to take away their homes. There’s just no no way. So they just kept prolonging it and continuing and continuing. And I was happy to continue it because I didn’t know whether we were going to win or not ultimately. I didn’t know a lot about landlord/tenant law. I had to catch up and read and get tutored myself from people or other lawyers. That’s how it worked. And that’s why the historic designation was important for the tenants, whether or not they were going to like the architecture or understand it.

John Raphling: Sheila, we just talked a little bit about the legal side of it. Can you talk a little bit about some of the challenges with organizing within the building and getting people, people within the building and in the surrounding community? And maybe maybe even talk about some of the people that were pulling against you, within the building and the surrounding community.

Sheila Bernard: At the time, I did not know what a spreadsheet was but Ingrid did. It was very important in the technology of organizing that place. The buildings were set up in blocks so that you had entryways of four people. We were able to set up a spreadsheet where we could keep track of all the people. And we knocked on those doors over and over and over again, every single door. We had building representatives. A building that would have a dozen to two dozen units in it might have a representative who would be responsible for helping keep those folks in contact. It’s very much reaching everyone. Out of the 795 households, we had the support of about 550 to 600 of those households. People who believed in what we were trying to do, some of whom would get on a bus and go to City Hall, or they’d come to a demonstration or they would come to a steering committee meeting to help distribute flyers. And then there was a small group of folks, maybe about a dozen people, who really drank the Kool-Aid, who really believed that the landlord was going to help them get a better place than what they had now and would actually be on their side and was doing the right thing. And these buildings are old and they’re decrepit. We need to be rebuilding. There was about a dozen folks who took that line, and were taken to places on buses by the landlord, taken to City Hall. They had their tags; we had our tags. But I think it’s very important to know that there is a technology to organizing, and it’s very much tied to knowing your people. Meeting them over and over, knowing what they want, knowing what they need, knowing what their aspirations are. And the aspiration to own their housing but not have to buy

housing that was out of their reach economically or physically. The possibility of being the owner of a cooperative unit. We have someone here today. We have Lois Arkin here today who’s the founder of L.A. Eco Village. At Eco Village they have a cooperative there where people who are renters are members of an organization that owns the housing. Even as renters they have a stake. And the people have that aspiration. I think anyone in this country would join in that aspiration. I think that the technology of knowing everybody and connecting to that aspiration of the people... That’s the basis of the organizing. And you’re always going to have some opponents. Even at the very end of the battle we ended up in a kind of factional fight with a group of our own folks who broke off and wanted a better settlement than what we were able to get. There were about 180 households in the settlement. There were nine families in the break-off group that wanted a better settlement, and they actually got a slightly better settlement by being able to hold things up and sort of be the fly in the ointment. But in terms of John’s question, organizing is an art and it’s a science. There was a time in Camarillo where my husband and I live now where I was hoping to knock on every door in Camarillo and get neighborhoods organized like this. It was delusions of grandeur. I should never have attempted it in the first place. But I went to somebody in the Ventura County Democratic Party and explained what I was trying to do. And he said, “No. Don’t do that. Nobody wants to know what their neighbor’s politics are. You’re going to disrupt neighborhoods. You’re going to have people fighting each other. You don’t want to go door to door and do all that.” I’ve thought about that for years and I really still disagree with the guy. I still believe that by us knowing our neighbors, where you work, where you shop, wherever you show up over and over again... The restaurant you go to, the barber shop... There’s always a way to connect to people and to organize around some issue with people whose face you see, whose hand you shake... You hug somebody, you have personal contact with... it’s not all Twitter and Facebook and the internet. We cannot rely on those spaces to organize for us. We’ve got to organize in the flesh.

John Raphling: Dennis, can you talk about placing the struggle for Lincoln Place in the context of the changes that we’ve seen in Venice over the past thirty to forty years?

Dennis Hathaway: I’ve lived in Venice for forty-five years. I have a thing about neighborhoods. You can tell what’s going on in the neighborhood by the cars on the street. If you go someplace and there are a bunch of inexpensive cars, maybe some big old American cars, you know you’re in more of a working class kind of neighborhood. And that’s how Lincoln Place was when my wife and I moved there. If you walk through there now, what do you see? You see Teslas. Tesla has become the iconic automobile of Venice now. Lincoln Place is there. There were some buildings torn down. They were replaced. The buildings that were built were supposed to be replicas of the old buildings, which they’re really not. Everything’s there, kind of like it was. But it’s totally different. It’s kind of a microcosm of Venice. There has always been a struggle. There are working class people. Poor people have lived in Venice. They can’t anymore. This is the change that has come. Through the efforts of Amanda and Sheila and Ingrid and a bunch of other people Lincoln Place was preserved. But nobody’s done that in Venice. Venice has become street after street of little bungalows torn down and replaced with McMansions. To use a 60s word, the “vibe” has changed in Venice. Part of the settlement was that the buildings had to go back under rent control. It will become more affordable over time. If there are people who live there a long time, they will be paying low market rents. And somebody’s going to come along. Aimco is going to try to pull some levers. Or they’re going to try to sell it to somebody else. They’re going to try to do something about that. And they’re going to say, “Lincoln Place is going to become an outlier in this affluent community.”

Sheila Bernard: And then we’ll just start all over ain. We’ll do it again.

8 minute video about the LP evictions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UngEHGXIHb0>

Stream of the reading/discussion: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwexNkdyj30>

And <http://bit.ly/WhereHasTheAffordableHousing-Gone>