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THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VENICE AND THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MURAL

By Jon Wolff

On Saturday, February 20, the Save Venice group assembled a gathering in front of the First Baptist Church of Venice to commemorate the new Black Lives Matter mural at E.L. Holmes Square in the Heart of Venice. The placement of these giant words in the middle of the road on Westminster Avenue and 7th Avenue marks a major victory for Save Venice in their fight to preserve the historical African-American church. The First Baptist Church of Venice is a symbol of a century of Black History and Culture in Venice. The fraudulent sale of the church building in 2017 was a direct attack on the Venice Black Community by the forces of gentrification. Save Venice has fought for over three years to reclaim this sacred site for Venice.

During last year's summer of protests all across the nation, Venice had its own mass protest rally on the steps of the First Baptist Church of Venice. It was then that Save Venice members Laddie Williams and Dr. Naomi Nightingale made a proposal to have the City of L.A. paint the words "BLACK LIVES MATTER" right there on the street by the church. After meeting with representatives of L.A. City Councilmember Mike Bonin, they were able to get the proposal approved by the L.A. City Council. The work was completed on Wednesday, February

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ARE YOU HUNGRY? FREE FOOD AT VENICE BEACH

(times and places occasionally change)

***Hope for the Hearts of the Homeless-** Pam & Joel and friends. Thur. & Sun. around 9am. Coffee, pastries, sandwiches. north Ocean Front Walk near Ozone Ave.

***You Matter with Michael and friends-** Tue. & Thur. Around 11am. Hotdogs, burgers, fruit, snacks. north Ocean Front Walk near Ozone Ave. also Sat. around 8:30am near Windward Ave.

***Oasis Network Inc.** with Dan & friends- various groceries, bread, fruit, vegetables. Sat. & Sun. around 9am. Ocean Front Walk by Dudley Ave.

***Venice Equity Alliance-** fruit & vegetables. Wed. 12:45pm. 132 Brooks Ave.

***St. Joseph Center-** their clients, To-Go Meals. M-F 9:30am-12pm. 663 Rose Ave. Also weekly food if you register at (310)396-6468 ext.313

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Every Saturday from 11am to 1pm
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

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

DEMYSIFYING THE VNC

Why You Should Run!

By Mike Bravo

As a former board member of the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) and being in constant engagement with it since 2014, I always find it amusing how VNC members portray the council and how the public perceives it as some type of prestigious and powerful entity. Intentionally convoluted processes, procedures, and pedantry just reinforce that misconception. These illusions of grandeur need to be deflated and demystified for sure. This was the initial purpose of this piece I've been sitting on but I'm expanding on it to encourage equity conscious people to run in the 2021 VNC Elections whose process started earlier this month.



Let me start by stressing that no person or institution is the source of your power. Your genuine, heart led action and voice is the true power. Please know that. My experience is that the VNC has mostly been unhelpful (and often directly harmful) to Black, Indigenous, and working class people in Venice in general. All the strides that Save Venice has made to protect our community have been via our own creative and persistent means—outside of the VNC. So most definitely, you can still effectively advocate for your cause outside of the VNC (and possibly be more effective). That being said, I still think the VNC can be an important and useful venue to have a seat at and participate in.

Here are some key points I want to demystify about the VNC:

Venice is not a city. It is a neighborhood under the City of Los Angeles (CoLA) and CoLA is a city within the County of Los Angeles. Santa Monica is a city, Culver City is a city, Inglewood is a city, but Venice is not (not since 1926 anyway.) There are many cities within the County of Los Angeles but CoLA is the largest. You'd be surprised how many people don't know this. This often leads people to think that the Venice Neighborhood Council is "the city council." Thus giving it an inflated sense of importance. While yes, having a degree of importance, there's a gross misconception of the power and prestige it holds and which I will touch on later. So for a quick recap: Venice is a neighborhood under the City of Los Angeles, City of Los Angeles is a city under the County of Los Angeles, and the

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HOMES NOT HOTELS

-- Westside Local of LA Tenants Union Opposes The Venice Place Luxury Hotel Project.

by Jacob Woocher and Abby Coleman

The forces of capitalism and colonialism have been wiping out communities in Southern California for hundreds of years, and this process hasn't stopped for COVID-19. We in the Westside Local of the LA Tenants Union see the Venice Place Project, a luxury hotel being proposed for Abbot Kinney Blvd, as just the latest example of this history.

We stand in firm support of the community and labor organizations opposed to this hotel, which is the exact opposite of what Venice needs.

We demand HOMES, NOT HOTELS. We demand that a hotel not be located across the street from Westminster Elementary School. We demand that the City Council work with the Black community of Oakwood to save the First Baptist Church. We demand that the City Council seize hotels for social housing, not approve new hotels.

We demand a city that caters to what its poor residents need, rather than what developers, investors, and international tourists want.

We held a protest on the afternoon of Saturday, February 13 to demonstrate our opposition and our demands.

This project began as the Abbott Kinney Hotel in 2014. It's been ping-ponged between the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC), the Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM), the West LA Area Planning Commission (WLA APC), and LA City Council. It's been approved six times, and successfully appealed four times by an alliance of POWER, UNITE HERE, and a resident who lives on the block that would be consumed by the hotel. Opposition has recently grown, too, from families who don't want a hotel across the street from the local public school.

Recently, the project was given an official go-ahead by City Council, so UNITE HERE is suing the city, saying this project violates the Mello Act, a law designed to protect affordable housing in the coastal zone. (There's also an important history of how the City of LA has dragged its feet on the Mello Act, and has used it to take power away from another body that may be more protective of affordable housing.)

The Venice Place Project would consume an entire block and 8 lots. Colonial and property-owner-dominated institutions like the Venice Neighborhood Council and the WLA APC are doing all they can to push this project through.

This project would put up a huge wall between Abbott Kinney and the Oakwood neighborhood -- the historically Black neighborhood that has been harmed by red-lining, gentrification, gang injunctions, and racist actions by the city and by developers. So we stopped at the Oakwood Church to pay respects to the ongoing fight to preserve this part of Venice history. We also stopped at Wurstküche restaurant, where wiener kings Tyler Wilson and Joseph Pitruzelli evicted Patricia Sánchez and her family using the racist Ellis Act.

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

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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**

Good evening,

I just caught the last 5 minutes of tonight's LUPC meeting and am thoroughly disgusted. I've been meaning to address this for a while but I want to make it clear that the way some of you men treat and address Alix and other women on the Board is unacceptable. In tonight's case specifically Jim Murez, but Robert Thibodeau on numerous occasions has threatened women online as well as in public. Of course he behaves like this when no men are around. It has also been noted by Women meeting attendees that some of you men on LUPC, have exhibited rude and bullying type behavior toward Alix and other women. I understand most of you have allegiance to real estate/gentrification interests but even with that factored in you men are out of pocket.

Perhaps you guys are just getting too comfortable hiding behind that camera as well as not being held accountable for all your conflicts of interest and other unethical shenanigans? It's not always going to be that way though and it's never too late to act with integrity.

Venice politics is already overdue for a reckoning and paradigm shift. You can be a part of that progress, or you can be under it.

If this ugly behavior toward the women continues please count on a personal follow up conversation.

Thank you.

Mike Bravo

Lydia Ponce replied

Thank you Miguel- its toxic, its white fragility, its so many things that I wrote a letter over the summer. The men cradle each other and allow this behavior. The only people to speak against this are the ones not financially benefiting from the wheeling and dealing with their gentrification moves. This conflict of interest LUPC needs to get shut down with mass media and an investigation.... who is to say it isn't happening already.

its never too late to evolve.

Lydia

Dear Beachhead Staff:

Thank you for mailing me the February 2021 issue of The Beachhead. I particularly enjoyed reading the articles by Marty Liboff and Jon Wolff regarding the Black community of Venice and its historical significance.

In one of those articles it says that in the local Venice public library there are only two books on Venice History.

What a pity! Venice has such a very rich history. I know that for a fact. I've researched it of 50 years. Believe me I can prove it to you.

But first: I can tell you that the most voluminous archive that exists for the entire history of your Venice is to be found at the Main Research Library California State University, Long Beach Ca. There, in Special Collections, is what they the librarians call: 'The Venice Collection'. It contains almost all of the materials I collected over this period of 50 years. The Venice Collection librarian should be

able to show you 'an inventory' of the collection. It is large and multi dimensional. These materials are open to the public to be reviewed on site.. However they cannot be checked out of the library and they are not available to the public except at the Venice Collection. For more information and to make an appointment contact the librarian in charge at CSULB.

Second: The final two books of my three book set: 'Materials for the History of Venice California, 1850-1939' should arrive in Los Angeles in April this year. Each book is about 1,500 pages; it is illuminated and has some black and white photos although it is mostly just what you want.....facts,

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

...the Drum Circle was your hang.



Dearest Beachhead

To Gerry Fialka and SunSense (Feb 2021 issue)

Did you forget to give some high praise and respect to our very own Sunset Serenade King – Peter “Street Smart” Demian? He has been Venice's own Sunset King for many decades and forever in our hearts!

In fact, on Valentines Day 1985 – Peter played his Sunset Serenade for my wedding to hippie John Corcoran in the exact spot you now invite us all: Sharing this ritual, with a group of friends, is the ultimate mystery solver.”

Our Wedding invitation went something like this.

To All

‘Come to our Wedding at Sunset

Here on the beach we all love

Peter will play, at the end of the day –

As Venus and Mars shine above! ...

Come as you are – bring us luck please

Minister Mike's Coming too (Michael Ben Edwards)

He'll make us legal (“More Venice than Vatican”)

You'll make us proud...

We love you – Tina and John

P.S. We served Gunther's Cheezecake and cheap champagne! The “tiered cake” was decorated by my brother, Fred, who was a baker and decorator then at the Beverly Hills Hotel! Harry Perry was there too!

The cops looked away that day – what a beautiful magical sight!

Love, Tina Catalina Corcoran

facts, slices of life, and sort of.... 'the way it was way back when'. And each chapter has an epilogue that brings the reader right up to the present. Imagine That !

Apropos: Dr. Nightingale, Wolff, Liboff, and the

East Venice Neighborhood Assoc: You might let those of your members who are interested in this subject know that there is an entire volume in Book #4 on: 'Blacks in The Venice Community'....and it also brings the reader up to the present with an epilogue. It will give all of you a really fast start in writing up a monographic on this subject.

Please acknowledge me in your grant proposals and publications.

Arnold Springer: Professor, History Emeritus

President: Ulan Bator Foundation, Venice Ca.



BLM & FBCV – continued from page 1

17, with Mr. Bonin present to officiate.

The Saturday gathering served as a ceremony to introduce the new mural, and to recognize the hard work of Save Venice. It was also an occasion to celebrate the birthday of Venice Elder Jataun Valentine. Ms. Valentine is an original Venetian who traces her lineage to Irving Tabor, one of the founding Black pioneers of Venice.

The diverse crowd of attendees concluded the event by standing in formation around the mural to give testimonies about Venice and about the significance of the mural. People spoke of the love of Venice. They spoke of their gratitude for divine protection. They talked about the importance of perseverance and of the work yet to be done. There were lifelong Venetians and members of the congregation of the First Baptist Church of Venice who looked forward to the restoration of the History of the Venice Black Community. And there were relatives of those who had built the building itself. Laddie Williams finished the day with the declaration that "Venice is blessed because we're still here."

For more information go to: savevenice.ca

The NEW BAR

Construction of the new Bar Center on the Venice, Ocean Front Walk is finally done. Don't expect to go to the new Bar for a beer because it is not a bar but a Jewish Community Center. It was formally the Israel Levin Senior Center before the Jewish Federation decided to build a new building and turn it into a community center. It is now going to be for people of all ages. It is called the Bar because the Bar family had donated money for the construction. We seniors are supposed to have use of the front room for our lunches again but it may still take some time before we come back. When we return I will write a longer review. marty

Joan Del Monte passed away recently. She wrote for the Beachhead in the 1980's, here's something she wrote, for us to remember her by.

Propeller - reprinted from the April 1986 Beachhead by Joan Del Monte

"Somebody had dumped some abandoned circus wagons in one of the canals." Ray Bradbury stopped. The audience at the Venice Library overflowed on every chair, the floor, the tables, the librarian's desk. "You've got to save that kind of image when you see it, put it in your subconscious and just let it stew until you need a metaphor. It took me 20 years, but I knew I'd use it someday, and then it is in Death is a Lonely Business".

Well I was tempted to tell him about the propellers; I knew he'd love them. The propeller began appearing on the telephone poles in Venice about 2 years ago, made of wood, 2 feet long, beautifully balanced so that they turned freely in the early fall winds. They were placed at a 10 foot height, apparently to elude would-be-collectors. Some telephone poles, like the bridge at Howland and Dell, got 2 propellers, although nobody explained why these poles were especially favored. There are no names on the propellers; there are no names near them, and nobody I spoke to can remember seeing one being put up so no questions could be asked.

I don't really want to know what they are. There's probably a mundane explanation, whereas the answers I get as I walk around asking have been prime, really whacko Venice, I have been told that they were anemometers for airborne extraterrestrials. I have been told that they are an experimental by the DWP to discourage squirrels from running on the wires. My favorite explanation was that they are the master's thesis of an extremely thin art student. Nobody's ever seen one being put up because he's thin enough for the telephone to hide him.

Now there's news. Somebody told me this week he's been seen some downtown in Central Los Angeles.

Bradbury would be delighted. They're working their way inland.

Leslie Aguilar Recieves Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant

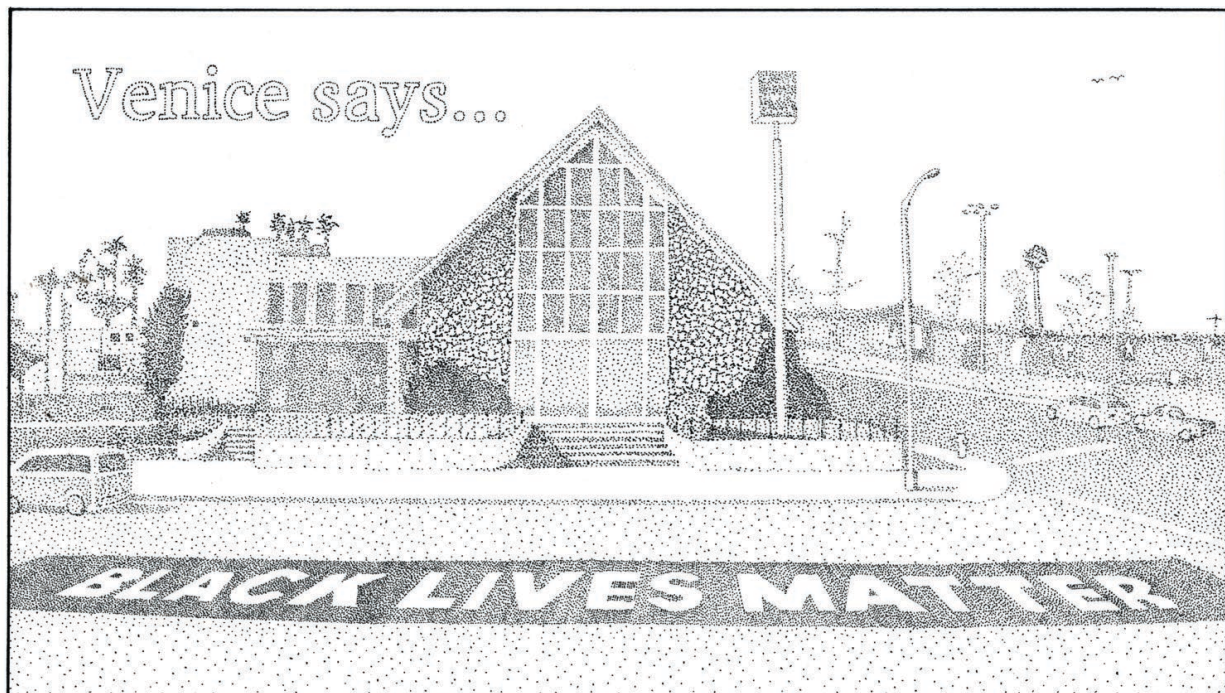
Photo Below: VJAMM Committee members receiving a Certificate of Congressional Recognition from U. S. Congressman Ted Lieu's representative, Daisy Paniagua-Urbe, 2018



In December, 2020, the Manzanar Committee and the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee announced Leslie Aguilar of Los Angeles, a recent graduate of UCLA, as the inaugural recipient of the Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant. The grant will provide a stipend for Leslie, who will be working with the Manzanar Committee to help organize the 52nd Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage, to be held virtually on Saturday, April 24, 2021.

"I feel honored and excited to be given the opportunity to work alongside passionate individuals for this amazing event," said Leslie, when the Manzanar Committee contacted her with the news. The Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant commemorates and pays tribute to the late Arnold Maeda, who at 15 years of age, found himself and his parents forcibly removed from Santa Monica, by Executive Order 9066 signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942. The Maeda family spent over three years in what would become the War Relocation Authority Camp at Manzanar, incarcerated without due process in violation of their Constitutional rights. Maeda became a founding and inspiring member of the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee in 2010, along with other former Manzanar internees, and the Venice artists

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Butterflies and Zebras and Moonbeams

by Gerry Fialka

*Well, she's walking, through the clouds
With a circus mind that's running wild
Butterflies and Zebras,
and Moonbeams and fairy tales.
That's all she ever thinks about.*

Riding with the wind. - Jimi Hendrix, Little Wing

I heard these lyrics from musicians on the Boardwalk recently. This rainbow of lyricism reminds me how lucky we are.

Ah, Venice! Where one might hear Mary Jane singing gloriously out loud at 7am in the Canals, free as a bird. I did. Wow! She truly celebrates the musical magic of our dear Beach town in her art, theatre, history books and videos. Thank you MJ. Her presence evokes Jimi Hendrix, who hung out in Venice. His enchanting lyrics resonant with MJ, and all the astounding Venice music-makers.

According to Venice historian Marty Liboff, Frank Zappa and Mothers played The Cheetah Club (near Navy and the Boardwalk) on June 28, 29, 30, 1968. They paraded out of the old biker club right onto the Boardwalk ala "second-lining," the quintessential New Orleans dance party art form. The fanfare flourishes. Venetian Bruce Langhorne, of Bob Dylan fame, lead Boardwalk music parades every week right after Katrina to help people in need. Jessica Long and Johann Stein have carried on the Fat Tuesday N'awlins spirit for years, and we all truly missed them this year.

One of my favorite Boardwalk music moments can be seen on YouTube. Search "Magic Sticks" and "Sean O'Brien." Sean was the lead singer of "The Cripples," who tells his life story in this engaging film by Bruce Meade and Z Weyand. In one scene, Sean is running on the Boardwalk with the aid of two crutches. It seems impossible, but he does not fall. Pure punk rock. His tenacity and courage is inspiration for everyone.



Sean's perseverance evokes the words of William Parker, the free jazz musician and poet in the New York Times 2-9-21: "Cosmic funk will save the world. When you play music in this world, you're actually stepping into another world. No matter what's happening with you, whether you owe 10 months' rent, or you're dealing with some kind of mental anxiety or hardship, the music takes over and you step into the tone world."

He elaborated with an analogy in which sound is water. "When it vibrates, it turns into steam and changes properties and appearance. When it changes, you step into another place, and in there there's a vision of a corridor of light. You walk down the corridor, and at the end there's a door. Behind that door are the secrets of life. Every time you play music, you're able to open that door and take one of the secrets of life out and keep that. When the music stops, it isn't the music that actually stops — you stop. The music continues on. So, you play music again, and you play it again, and each time you get a glimpse of what's beautiful. No matter where you are, no matter what's happening, you look up and you'll see a beautiful sky. I've never seen an ugly sky. It's just ringing with hope and joy. That's our teacher. Musicians are philosophers. They're scientists, thinkers, multidimensional people. This community has a wealth of stories that could help people."

The musicians on the Boardwalk help people. These

folks are healers. One of the exceptional forces, Alan Robinson, has lead the collective "Phlyte Risk 420" for over a decade in front of the Waterfront, just north of Rose Ave. Al is truly a shining star, who goes way beyond being a stellar cross between Fats Waller and Herbie Hancock, and Wes Montgomery and Jimi Hendrix. But it is Al's uniqueness that shimmers in supreme sound on both keys and guitar. His dedication to fiery soul-rock-fusion is infectious. Al's phrasing is timeless and distinctive. That's why he played with Dr. Dre, members of Earth, Wind & Fire, Lakeside and Tony Maiden of Rufus. Here's to you, Mr. Robinson! Bravisimo . . . and mo . . . and mo.

Al Robinson attracts some of the finest players in Venice. Here is an incomplete list of some of his collaborators. I apologize to those who did not make this list. In the future, please talk to me, and I'll follow with more articles on Boardwalk musicians.

Al has collaborated with many, including:

Steve-O - rock solid funk bass, drummer and good person

Benny - guitar hero with heartfelt chops up the ying-yang.

Greg Sanford - lead singer and guitarist, who was one of the first singers in Motley Crue,

Soldier - master congas and percussion,

and a slew of funky drummers including Lorenzo (Berklee grad), Jah Lion, Mike Steel, D Rock, Wes, Jacob . . . it's endless.

Vinnie "Enzo" DiGaetano has been on the Boardwalk forever, painting and playing bad ass bass with everyone. His clown paintings are an institution in the intensive care ward of Dwight Frye and beyond. Catch him with Neal, guitar monster with master tone. Vinnie has played with Joey California, who energetically combines Zak Wylde-ness with Jimi's dynamism.

Words cannot express the transcendent mystery of music. Yet, both William Parker and Jimi Hendrix have words that get close to amplifying the thrills of song; that mama heartbeat, that melodic murmur, that jubilant jingle. Close your eyes and hum along.

Hendrix's "Butterflies and Zebras" conjures adoration of colorful rainbows and multi-culturalism. In closing, I'd love to do more than a "slight return" to Jimi's words, which resound and affirm the Boardwalk's seescapes: "Pretty soon I believe people will have to rely on music to get some kind of peace of mind, or satisfaction, or direction, actually. More so than politics, the big ego scene. You know it's an art of words... Meaning nothing. Therefore you will have to get an earthier substance, like music or the arts. . . . We want our sound to go into the soul of the audience, and see if it can awaken some little thing in their minds. . . . You've got to have a purpose in life. But I'm not here to talk, I'm here to play."

Play on, Brothers and Sisters.

Preeminent multi-instrumentalist Kahlil Sabbagh recently played two hours of Frank Zappa songs on his marimba on the Boardwalk. Zappa's manifesto appeared in the song Packard Goose from Joe's Garage. The following seven lines can be a clarion call for all of us to ride like a musicians into the dawn . . . going to the Boardwalk soon. So walk through the clouds, with a circus mind running wild, dream of notes that would irritate music executives, ride with the Butterflies and Zebras and Moonbeams, and then . . . all we will ever think about is . . .

"Information is not knowledge.

Knowledge is not wisdom.

Wisdom is not truth.

Truth is not beauty.

Beauty is not love.

Love is not music.

Music is THE BEST." - Frank Zappa, Packard Goose

Now, turn that walk into a musical parade through the clouds, in a semi-catatonic state, and synesthesially dream your own fairytales of Venice Boardwalk seascapes

I welcome your feedback & feedforward - Laughtears. com Please tune in to Radiovenice.tv on Sunday TBA at 4:20 for Frank Zappa Celebration with Kahlil Sabbagh, Gerry Fialka, Tyler Bartram and Zach Tabori.

Ditch Day with Dad by Josh "Bagel" Klassman



Kid surfing: Josh "Bagel" Klassman

Photo: Peter Brown Venice CA, 1984

One morning in 1984 during Winter time my dad (RIP) and I went down to the Venice Break Water to check the waves before school and it was really good and really empty. It was a beautiful text book Southern California sunny day, the wind was a slight warm Santa Anna, the perfect wind. It was hot outside but the water was freezing cold. I was still 13 years old about 6 months away from turning 14. My dad saw how good it was and said, "Do you want to just fuck off school today and surf all day?" I thought "Is this a trick question, of course I want to fuck off school all day and surf". Talk about the ultimate Hall Pass. So I tell him, "Yes".

I run home, get suited up, grab my board and run back down to the Northside of the Venice Break Water. The only people on the beach were my dad, John Hands, and Peter Brown. Peter was on the beach taking photos of the waves. There was no one out, I had it to myself for hours.

Peter was a member of Sea Shepard, and used to call the Green Peace people pussies when he compared the Sea Shepherd tactics to the Green Peace ones. He would hang out with Big Steve who was this really cool nice ex pro wrestler that went by the name "The California Terminator", they hung out in their cars at the Venice lot all day long and just shoot the shit. Steve surfed as well.

Peter took this shot of me. It was the second surf shot that anyone ever took of me. I still can't believe that no one was out that day. This was when I was still naive, before I ever had any nicknames (I had more than one until Bagel finally stuck for life), this was before I was mad at the world, before I thrived off of being violent, before all the craziness that was ahead of me began. All of that got kick started a year later. But the one thing that I've always had in my life, that I always turned to when things were bad, and I needed to clear my head, is surfing. The ocean is my church, surfing is spiritual religion, my therapy. When life's bullshit starts to pile up a mile high, I just go surf and it all fades away.

actual rant by a nut in Venice—



County of Los Angeles is under the jurisdiction of the State of California.

The VNC is an advisory board— Simple as that. Neighborhood councils in L.A. don't make policy. There is no "Venice City Council" that makes authoritative decisions on development, policing, building codes, or housing. Los Angeles City Council does that. However, VNC can sometimes influence policies that can be made at the city council level. Even if the VNC passes a motion it does not necessarily mean the City or local district Council Person will use it. In fact, it is quite common that they won't acknowledge it unless it falls in line with their pet projects. To which they or other gentrification type agents will proclaim "The neighborhood council who represents the community voted for it ..blah blah blah." OR, it is common for councilpersons to co-opt a motion or ideas and act like they created it. Like when Mitch O'Farrell co-opted my Indigenous People's Day idea to the City and acted like it was his idea.

VNC has 21 Board Members who ultimately vote on the final (advisory) motions that will be sent to the Councilperson, City, and/or relevant city departments and agencies. There are 2 sections to the Board. 1) The 7 Executive seats: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Outreach, Communications, Land Use and Planning; and 2) 14 At-Large Community Officers who are general representatives and don't hold a specific function and extra responsibility like any of the executive seats. (note: Neighborhood council formats can vary by neighborhood)

VNC has Committees— YOU can join these committees even if you're not on the Board. These committees deliberate and discuss motions before they get voted on by the VNC Board. Committees such as "Homeless Committee" or Outreach Committee are two examples of a committee you can join. The Land Use and Planning Committee is probably the most important and requires a lil more land use policy knowledge but that's nothing a little experience and studying can't take care of.

Anyone can submit motions to the VNC or any of its committees. — You don't have to be a board or committee member to do so. Originally you could create a motion and just submit it to the board and for the most part they would accept it. However, now it is common for them to make you go through a committee first. That is not set in stone tho and can be changed. So let's say if you wanted to make a motion to encourage the city to plant more trees on your block or encourage policies for racial justice you could submit that and they'd send you to the "Tree Committee or something lol. But yea, that's how it works.

VNC has never really been Diverse or Inclusive— minus a few good board members throughout the past two boards that have dominated the past 5 years (2016-2021) the VNC has been egregiously homogeneous and pretty racist. Even when I was on the board from 2014-2016 and the people were a lot more human and reasonable there was still a serious lack of diversity. Of course, there are socio-historic dynamics to why White folks dominate these spaces and why most BIPOC don't feel inclined to participate in these neighborhood council spaces but that is for another piece. We need to hold everyone accountable for making this a truly inclusive setting.

"Venice Town Council" and GRVNC— were the precursors to the current Venice Neighborhood Council model. Venice Town Council (VTC) was active in the 70s through the early 90s until around the time Councilmember Ruth Galanter took office. The inclusive spirited GRVNC (Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council) started in 2002. According to many, the GRVNC and the neighborhood council system being implemented throughout Los Angeles City neighborhoods then was largely a response to the active secession movements challenging the City of Los Angeles at that time. But mostly due to some city interference, the GRVNC was phased out in 2006 and replaced with this current model and bylaws they have now. From there on the inclusivity

dynamic for Black, Brown and Organic Venetians has dwindled drastically if not totally non-existent.

WHY YOU SHOULD RUN FOR A VNC SEAT THIS ELECTION

venice neighborhood council election

As mentioned earlier the VNC is a helpful venue to occupy but it is hell homogenized, gentrification agent, real estate sector dominated. There is NO true diversity there. Don't let the puppets fool you.

WE NEED SOLID, DIVERSE, EQUITY & RACIAL JUSTICE CONSCIOUS BOARD MEMBERS!

If you're already running or thinking about running and you care about diversity, or you're a supporter of racial, economic, or housing justice, and want to give more than lip service, please check in with us. If you attended any rallies or demonstrations after the police murdered George Floyd, please check in with us. Going along with the status quo, inequity flow of the Venice Neighborhood Council as its been operating for some time is not the way to go. People often say "you can't stop change" but let's BE that real change for the neighborhood and for our society in general.

Being a VNC Board Member is Not Hard

Being a board member is not hard! It's more of a time commitment than anything. If you're a person that is genuinely dedicated to principles of equity and inclusivity you might have a challenging time processing the disheartening reality of Venice politics. Acknowledging the beast that is the City of Los Angeles or the inundation of systemic inequity reinforcing behaviors of both liberal and conservative gentry in this community might be the most difficult thing. It's only a hard job if you're a dishonest, non-transparent, pro-gentrification slimeball that has to account for all the lies you put out there. Remember this is a community advisory board. Do you have a voice, an opinion, and about 15-18 hours of time spread out during the month you can sacrifice? Yes? —You're good to go. — Run!

Of course if you feel so inspired you may put in more hours and do as much as you like. Know that the Executive seat positions will require more time commitment than the At-Large seats but if your cool with that then that's cool. But the most important thing is that you represent the community with integrity and don't feel pressured to appease the white power structure status quo.

Some might make it seem as if you need some exalted status or special skills but you don't. When I was on the board there was gentry that tried to shame me for not knowing particular terms or acronyms but that's just elitist bullshit. Sure there's a slight learning curve for learning the procedures and protocols and you might need to study some topics a little but you're a good person as any to be on the board. You want to make educated decisions but that's nothing that a Google search and/or a brief talk with some of your fellow community members can't handle.

Think you can get 50 people who either live, work, or own property in Venice to vote for you? Yes? —Run.

If my over anxious dorky ass can do it, you can too.

So, now that you've decided to run..

Here are some quick things to know about this VNC Election

Voting is different this year as there will be no in-person voting due to Covid precautions

Voting will be done my mail ballots and possibly a drop box

Ballots need to be requested and mailed back. (requesting ballots starts April 9th and returning by beginning of June [will get exact date later])

VNC Candidate filing entries started February 6th and end March 23rd.

Anyone who lives, works, or owns property in

5 • March 2021 • FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD

VJAMM Grant Awarded - continued from page 3 and activists who had been lobbying for a permanent memorial to the Japanese American experience since after September 11, 2001. On April 27, 2017, the VJAMM Committee dedicated the nine-and-a-half-foot tall obelisk of solid black granite before a crowd of over 200 people on the northwest corner of Venice and Lincoln Boulevards. At this intersection, some 1,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from Venice, Santa Monica, and Malibu had gathered in April, 1942 with only what they could carry, for the bumpy bus ride to Owens Valley in Inyo County where they would find their assigned barracks at Manzanar.

Leslie grew up in Los Angeles, where she had lived until her family moved two years ago to Bakersfield, California. Her parents, originally from Guatemala and Mexico, met in Los Angeles where they raised Leslie, and her sister, Leonela. Leslie attended Los Angeles Academy Middle School and Hollywood High School, where she enjoyed her history classes the most. According to her winning essay, Leslie was thirteen years old when she participated in a field trip to Manzanar National Historic Site with middle school teacher, Darrell Warren.

"I remember the long bus ride and the mountain range in the background," she said. "I remember seeing all the family pictures. I especially remember seeing children my age at the time, and thinking about how they felt. I remember seeing the inside of the barracks as well, and thinking how crowded it must have been to hold multiple families inside one barrack."

"I think that, for the first time, history felt so real, and not simply an event that I read in a book. It was also the first time that I learned something new about World War II and the impact it had on minority communities in the United States."

In Leslie's application essay, she wrote, "Ten year later, I am reading about Arnold Maeda's life, and his story resembles one of the many stories I read about, that day I went to Manzanar [for the first time]. Arnold's efforts to memorialize an intersection [at] Venice and Lincoln Boulevards, where many Japanese American families were awaiting the unknown, is a reminder to many of us that it has not been just a long time since that tragic time period. Arnold's "commitment to social justice" has inspired Leslie to work with the Manzanar Committee on the Manzanar Pilgrimage. His "involvement with the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument feels like a call to action to me as a future educator to be more involved in preserving history and ensuring the impact of Executive Order 9066 is not forgotten."

At UCLA, Leslie majored in Chicana/o Studies and minored in Digital Humanities. She researched and analyzed "the life, history, and culture of Mexican-origin people within the U. S., as well as of other Latina/Latino and indigenous populations in the Americas." One of her most significant experiences involved "expanding Central American Studies at UCLA. Los Angeles is home to some of the largest Central American communities in the United States, so it was important to advocate for more scholarship and courses." Along with "many dynamic students, professors, and community members," Leslie "put together a Central American Studies Symposium at UCLA. I also created and taught my very own class on Central Americans

continued on page 9

Venice can run and vote

A note for the At-Large seats: the top 14 vote getters will be elected

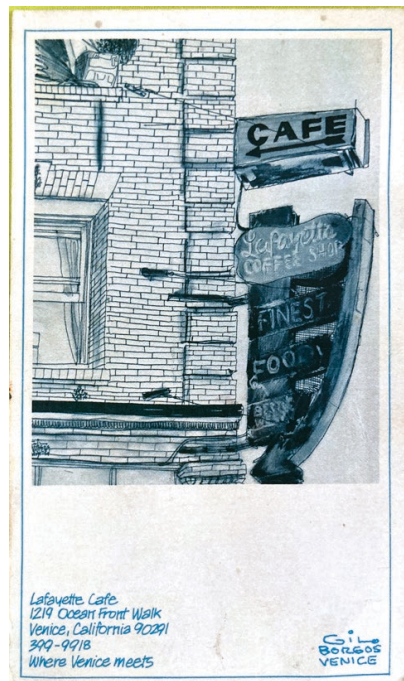
additional VNC Election info..

VNC Website: <https://www.venicenc.org/elections-2021.php>

VNC Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/VeniceNC>

And of course please feel free to contact me for any input or questions.

miguel@bravo1.la



Reflections from the former Lafayette Cafe

by Enyaj Pitchford

Long time ago in the bygone era of the 70's, before bike paths and roller skaters, when hippies were prolific on the streets and artists were everywhere because of the great weather and low rents, Venice was the king of the scene. One of the best places that fostered their vision was the Lafayette Cafe', located on the corner of Ocean Front Walk and Westminster.

It all started in 1968 when Arturo Garcia, then father of four kids, was offered to take over his friends failing cafe' business. He let him get it without any money and trusted him to build it up and pay him later. Well, all is history now because the Lafayette Cafe became the cornerstone of the hip scene for the next 16 years, until closing its doors in 1984.

Arturo is from Puebla, Mexico, and was excited to have his own business, but like all new ventures, starting out is a lot of work. At first, having such a strong work ethic and wanting to make it a success he got there at 6 am every morning, opened the doors at 8 am and stayed open until 10 pm. Having only himself, two waitresses and a dishwasher, he found no one could keep up with him and eventually his workers just stopped showing up. Then, he changed his hours from 8 am - 4pm. Little by little, with his wife's help and his little children running all around the store, he began to change the menu, adding his eggs ranchero and things to 'spice things up, and people began to show up. Soon his wife could go home and stay with the kids and come just for fun. Eventually, he expanded the space where he went from serving up to 46 people to 70. Business was good, the community was happy, the jukebox, which he still has, would play the Rolling Stones, Beatles, Beach Boys, Jackson Five and all the good music of the era for a mere 25 cents a pop! All day long the sounds of the times were pouring into the streets, setting a festive tone while serving good homemade meals in a vibrant atmosphere. This place became home to many artists, writers, musicians

continued on page 9





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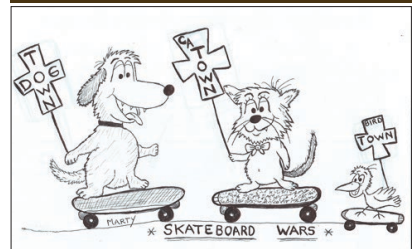
To receive free legal assistance please contact
cwlc@cwlc.org or (323) 951-1041
to schedule your reservation.

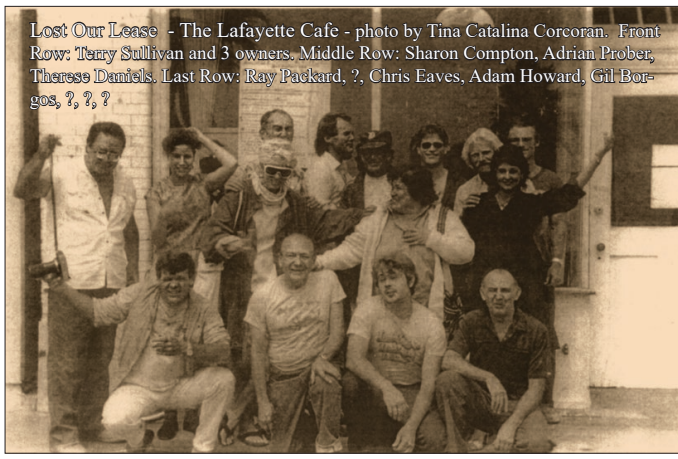




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Three years later – How are the boardwalk commercial properties doing?



Market Street, once a thriving street with art galleries, artists-in-residence, restaurant, and vintage store
Snachat illegally occupied more than 60% of the properties - most are empty



Ed Pearl - photos by Gary Leonard

"If you're terrified of offending everybody, you usually say nothing. I never did that from the beginning. I'm not gonna do that now." - Ed Pearl

By Eric Ahlberg and Carol Wells

ED PEARL had his first taste of producing folk music concerts as a student at UCLA in 1954 when he helped produce a Pete Seeger concert on campus. An avid guitar player, he studied with Bess Lomax Hawes -- the daughter of John and sister of Alan Lomax, America's greatest music collectors. Bess was the female member of the "Almanac Singers", with Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Butch Hawes, et al. After various career jaunts, as a guitar teacher, bus driver, messenger, a gun shill at the LA County Fair, a playground director and a mathematics analyst at Edwards Air Force Base, in 1957, he and Kate Hughes began the process that led to the Ash Grove. Together, they produced their first, real concert - a sold-out flamenco extravaganza and then in the next months, two more sold-out concerts, visited four coffeehouses and then they were asked to book two nightclubs. Envisioning a different atmosphere, with financing from fellow music-lover and Standard Brands Paints VP Sid Greenberg, Ed embarked on a search for a locale for a club of his own. With friends and relatives contributing funds and cheap labor, the lease was signed and the site was converted into the Ash Grove.

The Ash Grove opened on Friday, July 11th, 1958 and for the next 15 years hundreds of notable artists, reflecting a variety of folk styles, blues, bluegrass, gospel and traditional work songs, appeared on its stage: Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Big Mama Thornton, Lightnin' Hopkins, Johnny Cash, Doc Watson, the Byrds, Taj Mahal, Ravi Shankar, The Chambers Brothers, Rambling Jack Elliott, Sleepy John Estes, Pete Seeger, to name a few. Ed produced shows at the Ash Grove until November 1973, when the disaster of the third arson fire in four years closed the club. Next Ed raised funds for LA's People's College of Law, on whose behalf, he organized a series of very successful concerts along the West Coast, from Seattle to San Diego, with Phil Ochs, Holly Near and Mimi Farina, among others.

For five years, on behalf of LAGLAS (the Los Angeles Group for Latin America Society) Ed produced concerts of Chilean groups Quilapayun, Inti-Ilimani, Los Parra and others, in addition to Mercedes Sosa of Mexico, Daniel Viglietti of Uruguay, Roy Brown of Puerto Rico and several other superb, progressive musicians.

Other notable productions include; 1976 a People's Bi-Centennial, The Venice/SPARC show of 1980, The 1985 KPFF Winter-fest, Art Against Apartheid Show of 1987-8, The 1984 LA Olympics Reception, the PCL shows-Gil Scott-Heron, et al, The Ash Grove Wilbert 30th Anniversary show of 1988, with David Crosby and the Byrds, Willie Dixon, et al; the final Mime Troupe show; and The Ash Grove on the Santa Monica Pier. In 2008, "The Ash Grove 50th



Ed Pearl with Phil Alvin and Dave Alvin.



Claudia Lennear presents Ed Pearl with an Honorary Proclamation from the City of Los Angeles.

Anniversary" was celebrated at UCLA! Ash Grove alumni who shared their appreciation for the anniversary celebration included Ry Cooder, Taj Mahal, along with the likes of John Hammond, Barbara Dane, Bernie Pearl, The Freedom Singers, Michelle Shocked and numerous others. But the real star was the memory of a place in which so much music, so many ideas, and so many attitudes had the opportunity to come to full fruition.

Many artists have Ed Pearl to thank for helping their careers along. He's known and worked with just about everyone. - from <http://www.far-west.org/best.html> .

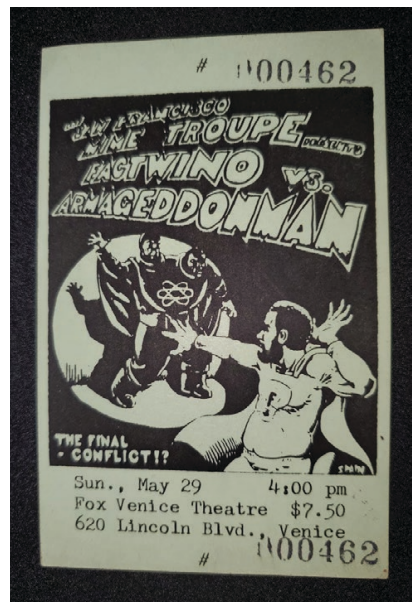
Ed Pearl lived in Venice from 1974 to 1990, and 1992 to 1994. He was very active in local politics, including the Venice Town Council and the early Peace and Freedom Party Voter registration drives. Ed was not a Venice provincial, he worked with activist organizations globally. He recently lived in Echo Park.

Ed Pearl wrote articles for the Venice Beachhead, and he is still cited by many Venice activists and artists as a big influence on the direction of their art and politics. Ed was part of a Venice political discussion group with a strong lesbian feminist influence, at Rick Davidson's House with Steve Clare, Barbara Avedon, Bob Wells, Larry Abrams, Arianna Manoff. Ed brought the idea of an event around Joanne Little to the 'group' meeting, at Rick's or where Susan was living before moving in with Steve Clare. It had immediate and fierce acceptance, spread like wildfire through the Black, Lesbian, Gay and progressive communities, the Town Council, Israel Levin Ctr., and by word of mouth, the Beachhead. It was a phenomenal success, packing Oakwood Park, behind the Center, had speakers and music from throughout the community, was the first time in memory that everybody was together, and, I believe, remains the only such time. Magnificent, and memorable.

Ed produced the San Francisco Mime Troupe's version of Brecht's The Mother, at the Fox Venice Theatre, for 3 sold out nights, and with Jane Fonda and Lee Strassberg in attendance. Ed also showcased John Cohen's films on Peruvian Indigenous peoples struggles, at the Fox Venice. Suzanne Thompson cites Ed as teaching her about concert production, in producing Hands Across America, and to incorporate all aspects of culture into politics. Carol Wells has worked with Ed on many cultural projects, as well as support for the Center for Political Graphics. You may have seen me around Venice being a Sound System for Art and Community and Politics.



An ASH GROVE Production.



photos in this column by Phil Melnick.

I would not be this person if not for Ed Pearl.

In 1982 Ed, with Cheri Gaulke of the Women's Graphic Center, and various Venice people like Osah Harmon, Mary Lou Johnson, Ed Ferrer, Dan McNay and Eric Ahlberg produced on two large Anti-Nuclear "Artists for Survival" events. The first was in a parking structure downtown near Al's Bar, where we built a stage and The Chamber Brothers performed, with art, installations, and performance. The next year we held a similar festival in Pasadena where Charlie Hayden's Liberation Orchestra with Milcho Leviev performed.

In 2008 we produced a sold-out 2 nights at Royce Hall for the Ash Grove 50th Anniversary Concert, and I saw a lot of Ed's friends from Venice there.

We salute Ed's contributions to the culture of the world.

and performers. For Arturo, his customers were his extended family and he loved serving them.

Auturo recounts how there were all kinds of people coming through his doors "Wonderful, friendly, artistic people, it was like a second home for them." He spoke of how sometimes girls would come in topless back then. "That's when you could tell right away by their reaction who was from Venice and who was an outsider", he said with a hearty laugh. He remembers artists coming in regularly, laying their week's work out on the floor and in a friendly, witty way competing to decide who did better work than the other. One African American local would carry a big cross all day and sing opera so beautifully, Auturo would call him Caruso. "Rain of shine, Caruso would sing", his son recalls. The place was full of dancers, writers, storytellers and poets; for those who remember, Uncle Bill, he would play music at the pagoda on the boardwalk down the way all day and come in and out for food and drink. The famous local Bil Borges would get his sketches prepared there. There were regulars, like my friend I called "Well Done" because everyday he would order a burger and when asked how he liked it he'd say "well done". Gregory Hines was a regular, as were many lawyers and business people and many poor people too. They all mingled and no one was treated better than the other. They were all Venetians following a dream in their heart. "It was a beautiful time. It was the best time of my life," says Auturo reminiscing.

Over the years, Auturo's children worked with him. He taught them every aspect of the business, from cleaning the toilets to preparing and serving the food. "My kids would come in on weekends, when it got particularly busy. Two of them worked on Sunday and the other two on Saturday and then they would alternate the schedule every weekend, so no one felt they were missing out on anything." Anyway, the action they were seeking was happening within the walls of their father's cafe', so they had no complaints. Back then, the only other cafe was

a German guy, who cooked really good food on the other end of the boardwalk and the Rose cafe'.

He spoke of a Tram that would run along the Venice boardwalk between Venice, Ocean Park and Santa Monica. A quick internet search led me to a postcard of that amazing site that no one ever told me about. His son said he remembers just hoping on the back as a kid when it was moving to get to his dad's place to work. Auturo also spoke of the huge crowds that would spill into his cafe' when the Krishna's had their yearly "Festival of the Chariots" early August, with real elephants pulling the chariots. All those years, he remembers "walking down the boardwalk and being greeted by big smiles and hellos from hundreds of people everyday coming back from work. Now when I go, I am just a tourist like everyone else."

Auturo has his good memories. He often wonders what happened to Ruby, his hard working waitress. He reminisces that "Venice was a fun, but often tough crowd, but nothing was ever too much that Ruby couldn't handle it. When things got heated at work she'd tell me 'you take care of the cook, and I'll take care of the waitresses because only a woman knows how to handle a woman.' and how right she was!"

As always, the rising rents along with the new earthquake retrofitting laws made the costs of running the low cost cafe' prohibitive. The great cultural episode got buried in the hearts of those fortunate to have been there. Now, the height of the most Venice cafe experiences is spending 25\$ on a mediocre sandwich with an aphorism attached or a wait in line with people glued to the screen of their phone for their specialty coffee brew. The rents of Silicon Beach have replaced the home and warmth and originality that Venice once had for everyone who sought it and replaced it with investment properties and a population trying to prove itself while tackling indecent rent hikes.

VJAMM Grant Awarded - continued from page 5

during my time there." Thanks to everyone's efforts, "the Chicana/o Studies Department at UCLA was renamed [as] the Department of Chicana/o Studies and Central American Studies."

Leslie says she looks "forward to getting my teaching credential and an MA [in Education] soon. She envisions herself "teaching social studies courses such as U. S. History and/or Ethnic Studies at the high school level, because she thinks "that history is so important to understand our present. Especially in this time of uncertainty, we have seen so much about how race, class, gender, etc. impact our daily lives. I think that students are also trying to understand and navigate so many of the recent events that have [just] happened."

Leslie will be bringing her impressive technical skills to the Manzanar Committee, which include "data visualization, such as presentations, creating websites, and of course any research that has to be done." With her event planning skills, Leslie can also "do things like scheduling and figuring out logistics in regards to contacting speakers for the [Manzanar Pilgrimage] event."

In Leslie's essay, she closes with this: "Having the opportunity to work with the Manzanar Committee . . . will allow me to engage more with Arnold Maeda's vision, [that everyone remembers and no one forgets what happened to persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II]. I believe that the first-hand experiences of researching various materials, and working alongside other committee individuals would give me a more in-depth understanding of what Arnold Maeda's family went through. I also believe I can apply the lessons I learn from this unique learning experience in my future . . . curriculum. Most importantly, I would be able to assist in creating a space, such as the Virtual Manzanar Pilgrimage, where stories like Arnold's will be highlighted and made accessible for the general public."



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UPCOMING EVENTS

A Tribute to Ralph Angel

Sunday March 14, 2021, 12:00 PM PST

Beyond Baroque, Mary Angel, David St. John, and Jim Natal present a celebration of the life of Ralph Angel—poet, teacher, mentor, and an inspiration to all who knew him or read his work. Join us on Sunday, March 14th at 12:00 p.m. pdt for a free special virtual program, featuring reminiscences and readings of Ralph's poetry by colleagues, friends, and former students.

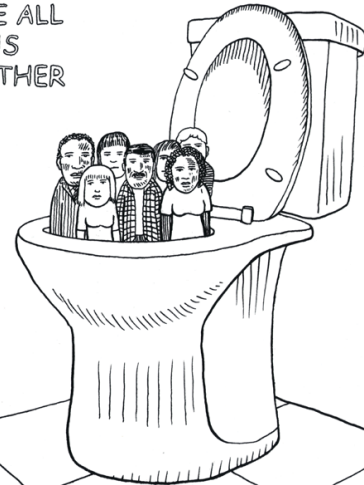
Ralph once said, "Poetry is the language for which we have no language." We hope you can join us in finding the language to honor him.

Readings and remembrances by: Andrea Beltran, Molly Bendall, Elena Karina Byrne, Gillian Conoley, Mark Cox, Jody Gladding, Stella Hayes, Rick Jackson, Sarah Maclay, Holaday Mason, Ata Moharrerri, Jim Natal, Mary Ruefle, David St. John, Arthur Vogelsang, Jonathan Wells, Jan Wesley, Sholeh Wolpe.

Held online via Zoom. Free registration required. Audiences will be sent a link for the event after registering.



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 Because
 Everyone is
 Subservient
 to them...
 They kill
 with a smile.

Their tears are worth more than
 Black, Indigenous & People of Color's lives...

Lydia Ponce

LIFE NEVER COMES EASY by marty liboff

Life never comes easy-
 Sometimes the world is against me
 people don't understand, care or see.
 The one you love never wants you
 the job you wanted never came true.
 Everything you desire
 all soon expire.
 All the dreams you had
 all went bad.
 Even your best friend
 was dead in the end.
 The gal you loved so much
 desired another's kisses and touch.
 I wanted a mansion with swimming pools
 and gold, diamonds and jewels.
 Trips to London, Paris & Rome
 a beautiful wife, kids and a nice home.
 I tried to live a healthy life
 eat well, don't smoke or drink and no strife.
 But we still get sick and ill
 doctors giving you every kind of pill.
 You may be feeling great today
 a car accident and in a hospital you lay.
 All that money you tried to save
 you couldn't take it to your grave.
 Death is always nearby
 any moment we could say bye, bye & die.
 We never know our death's date
 we never know what's our fate.
 Try and be happy & sing & dance
 give kindness, love & romance.
 Life never comes easy-



Lyric for youth by alan rodman

When fair full moons
 of all our frolic
 have far outflung
 assure young ones
 what delighted eyes
 were drunken in
 after the nights
 have shimmered unsung
 retell as well your harms
 or those wrongs of old
 violent is the toll not told
 silent the bell not rung
 for any love to feed you
 or break on through
 needs songs ring fully true
 trustful children follow near
 may we bring hope
 but far less fear
 make our music clear
 may our echo resound
 let our offering be profound
 live in this day like a lyric
 of how we long to be then
 lay a hearty breakfast down
 we stand around
 on hallowed ground
 this soil fertile in tomorrow
 the future must be sung
 among the hungry
 angry young.

Billie Holiday by Majid Naficy

Oh Billie, I dance with you.
 Holding your waist with my hand
 I circle around on tiptoe.
 Your playful rhythm leaks into my veins
 And the salt of your skin sinks into my blood.
 The sea is far but I hear its sound
 The sea is big but fits in my body.
 Let us cast off our shoes
 And step on its sandy carpet.
 Little waves grab our feet
 and draw us toward green waters.

Oh Billie, I dance with you
 Holding the hem of your long skirt
 I walk gently on the skin of the sea.
 A wandering wind wraps around our bodies
 And an albatross opens its wings on our shoulders.

There, across the sea is the land of my childhood
 With fragile trees that like the tips of your fingers
 Are now growing all over my skin.
 The sea is borderless but beats in my heart
 The earth is vast but fits into my skull.
 Tonight no border can separate you from me.
 But... suddenly my hand lets go of the radio antenna.
 The blues singer begins to whine.
 Ah, my dance partner is not imaginary!
 I hold her waist as before.
 Her velvet voice rises again
 And takes me back to the nightly dance.

February 28, 2001

THINGS WILL GET BETTER by marty liboff

We believe things will get better
 gonna send ya a love letter.
 We believe our pain will go away
 we're getting better every day.
 We will survive
 we want to stay alive.
 In Hell we've been through
 but try not to be blue.
 I may be kicked to the ground
 I just play my favorite music sound.
 You may get kicked to the floor
 get up and try some more.
 Life can't keep ya down
 so smile & laugh and don't frown.
 Don't give up on your dreams
 we are star stuff & light beams.
 We've all been through tough times
 try new roads, new songs, new rhymes.
 It's time to stand up strong & tall
 let's dance & sing and have a ball.
 Free your mind & reach up high
 fly to the stars and try, try, try.
 We believe things will get better...

11 • March 2021 • FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD

A Brunch of Liberals by Mark Lipman

Look at you all,
 what a brunch of liberals
 acting all hoity-toity
 in your Chucky T's and pearls
 rocking those aviators
 while licking an ice cream cone
 searching for an aphorism
 to soften the sound of kids in cages
 so now we've got minors in camps
 if only there were a parliamentarian to blame
 to deflect the people's attention
 from noticing that nothing will fundamentally
 change
 that immediately meant whenever
 whatever we need to say
 cut to Fauci
 I forget what the priority is for today
 of course you can't provoke a war with Iran
 without first going through Syria
 so maybe we can just drop a few bombs
 to rile up hysteria, to make them forget
 about ever receiving a living wage
 that'd be the patriotic thing to do after all
 and you can't have a war without soldiers
 so screw forgiving student debt
 we need you in uniform
 and thank you for your service
 as we deport your parents
 and let you wind up homeless
 but we do it with smiles and rainbows
 hell, we'll even paint you a mural
 you're still gonna get screwed
 but we make you feel good about it
 or at least make ourselves feel good about it
 as we pretend to care for the sake of appearances
 after all, who ever said we wanted to win in 22
 all we've ever only wanted was an excuse
 to keep everything just the way it is
 to run out the clock
 while we feed at the troth
 of broken promises and dreams
 cos behind closed doors we're all buddies
 it's just a brunch of fun and games
 and if it ever really gets too bad
 well hell, we can always just blame the windmills

Sunset Song by Tina Catalina Next door to the Cadillac Hotel

So . . .
 I got me a VIEW
 I think about you ---
 When I look at Catalina,
 And, I see Malibu ---
 I see you, too,
 Somewhere, out there ---
 Before me . . .

Laughing, Talking,
 Jumping, Jogging!
 Swimming, Sunning,
 Surfing, Funning!
 Rocking, Rolling,
 Riding and a'Strolling
 Along ---
 Hear "My Song" . . .
 Sunrise, Sunset
 "Full Moon, Malibu Set!"
 Dolphins Leaping
 Red Skies Deepen!
 Starlight, Starbright,
 Venus and Mars "Nite Life"
 Shine on Down --- Tonight ---
 What a sight!

So . . .
 I got me a VIEW
 I think about you ---
 When I look at Catalina,
 And, I see Malibu ---
 I see you, too,
 Somewhere, out there ---
 Before me . . .

By Greta Cobar

March 29 would have been the 60th birthday of Solomon Turner, the Snake Man who adorned the space between the flagpoles at the end of Windward with his beautiful body and his wise words.

His untimely death occurred on August 17, 2019 at Burton Chace Park while waiting for the Leela James concert to start. The September 2019 issue of the Beachhead (<https://bit.ly/3kQ72X8>) was dedicated to his life, but no details of his death were known at that time.

The coroner's office called his daughter Jasmine Turner with the horrific news on August 20th at 4am. A week later, when Jasmine came to Los Angeles, she and I went to the Marina del Rey Sheriff's Station to talk with the Sheriffs who were present when Solomon collapsed at Burton Chace Park. The person at the desk looked up the incident and told us that the shift of the two Sheriffs who were involved starts in a couple of hours, and we should just return later to talk with them.

With a few hours to waste, we went to Burton Chace Park. The women in the park office knew of the incident, but were not giving us any information. Until one of them in passing stated that Solomon was being escorted out of the park when he collapsed. That was the first we heard of that, even though Jasmine had called the park several times asking for information, and I had gone to the park and talked to those same women a week prior.

Back to the police station, we were told that the Sheriffs in question were no longer coming to work on that day. There were no answers to our questions, and we were directed to go next door, to Beaches and Harbors, and ask for a report. We filed a written request for the report, and also for the video footage from the cameras inside the park.

A report was emailed to us a few days later. Concerning the video footage, it stated "no records found." Additionally, it stated that Eitan Bazaz, owner and president of David Shield Security, was patrolling Burton Chace Park with officer Solbjoerg "Sola" Engstroem on August 19. At 5:50pm the two of them were approached by an African American woman who was complaining about Solomon burning incense in the park. According to the report, Joan Hernandez, LA County Beaches and Harbor manager, also requested that the incense be put out. Bazaz and a sheriff whose name was not provided in the report approached Solomon and asked him to put out the incense. A verbal altercation ensued between Solomon and the authorities, and Solomon decided to leave instead of complying with their commands.

Eitan Bazaz wrote in the report:

"The individual was very agitated and appeared to be verbally overreacting, but he cooperated without any use of force or violence. He started to pick up his personal belongings as it looked like he meant to leave. At this time, as he cooperated security officer Sola and I walked away towards the main stage. Shortly after, the same African American female that called my attention the first time, tapped my shoulder and stated that the same individual we dealt with earlier passed out and is on the ground. We rushed to the guy and found him lying on the back with his

head touching the chain link fence. He appeared to be non-responsive. There was no obvious trauma or blood in surrounding area."

Solbjoerg "Sola" Engstroem wrote in the report:

"I knelt down and tried to get in touch with him, saying hello, and gave him a slight slap on his cheek. I spilled some water in his face from bottle of water I held, tried to get him to respond. He had no reaction. I checked, and I could see his breast was moving and he was breathing. I checked for pulse on his wrist left arm which he did have pulse. At this time, my manager called EMT on his radio, they were very close, approximately 45 yards from us. I took his right arm, pulled him over on his left side, and lied his right hand under his left cheek to allow free airways. He was breathing, but still no response. The EMT arrived after about 90 seconds, and took over the situation."

Someone called 911, and firemen from Fire Station 110 in Marina del Rey shortly took over from the EMT. Jasmine and I went over to the fire station to talk with them. Coincidentally the firemen who responded to the call were on shift, and they told us that when they arrived at the park they

knew he was dead, but did not want to interfere with the concert ambiance by stating that fact. They told us that they continued trying to resuscitate him with CPR while they transported him to the UCLA Medical Center in Santa Monica, where he was pronounced dead on arrival at 6:47pm.

The coroner's office performed an autopsy and named cardiac arrest as cause of death. The autopsy report states that there were no injuries to his body and no drugs, but his arteries had 90 percent blockage. He had complained of heart pain before, but procrastinated seeing a doctor.

Losing Solomon in what might have felt like the millionth unfriendly encounter with the cops, after a lifetime of racial and spiritual discrimination, was a very painful experience. Because we couldn't bring him back, Jasmine and I decided to stop investigating. Even though the autopsy shows that he had blockage in his arteries, the fact is that the anger brought about by the cops caused him to undergo cardiac arrest at that particular time.

He just wanted to bless the park with the native custom of burning incense.

On March 29, let's light something in his honor. May he rest in peace, love and power. He is truly missed.

