

inside

Letters - 2, 3 & 4
The Neighborly Council - 3
Evictions/licenses for artists? - 4
Renters' Rights - 5
Interview with Francisco Letelier - 6-7
Declare our Independence? - 8
Poetry - 9
The Learning Garden - 10
Calendar - 11
Venice B-Day Poster - 12

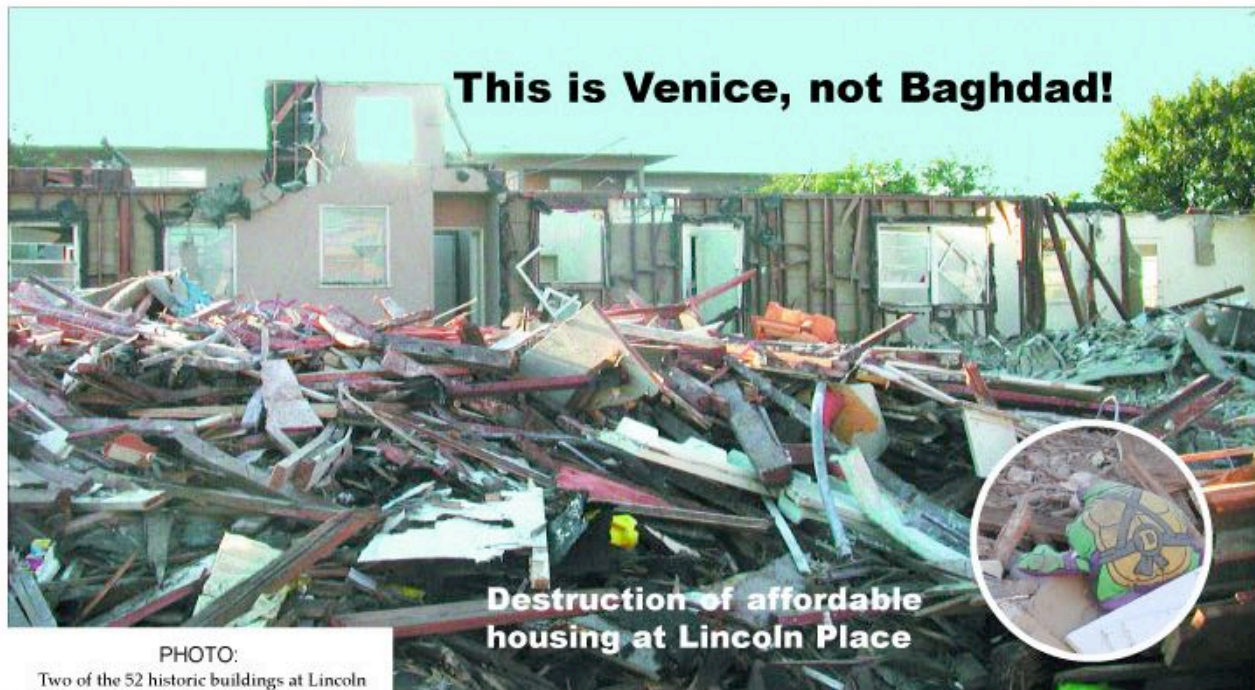
FREE VENICE SINCE 1968 BEACHHEAD

**Lincoln Center
Derailed**
—see below

May 2003

ISSUE NO. 263 • P.O. BOX 644, VENICE, CALIFORNIA 90294 • www.freevenice.org • Beachhead@freevenice.org

PHONES: 396-0811 or 399-8685



This is Venice, not Baghdad!

**Destruction of affordable
housing at Lincoln Place**

PHOTO:

Two of the 52 historic buildings at Lincoln Place have been reduced to rubble.

The owner of Lincoln Place had permits to demolish these buildings before the State of California Office of Historic Preservation found Lincoln Place to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on February 7, 2003. Tenants at Lincoln Place did not know that demolition permits could be challenged.

When tenants sought a restraining order to stop the demolition, the judge would not grant the order because the tenants had not exhausted their administrative remedies. A hard lesson learned: everything can be challenged; everything can be appealed; and nothing in the law or the administrative codes should be taken for granted.

Tenants are suing to save the remaining 50 buildings at Lincoln Place.



Artist's rendition of Lincoln Center

PEOPLE WIN! Lincoln Center project not approved

By Jim Smith

Two buildings, the size of giant cruise ships, will probably not be permanently moored on Lincoln Blvd. after a community uprising against them, April 22.

More than 200 people turned out to oppose the mega-development proposed for "Lincoln

Center," the area that Ralph's, Rite Aid, Ross and the old Warehouse building now occupy.

Only one person in the large room at the Boys and Girls Club spoke for the project. That was Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council (GRVNC) Vice President Greg Fitchett. He also voted against the motion not to approve the development. All other Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) members voted for the motion that rejected the project.

This was a huge victory for Venice. In earlier meetings, it appeared that some of the LUPC members were leaning toward approval. Letters, emails and the big turnout of Venetians insured that the project would not be approved. Most of the credit should go to the newly formed Venice Community Coalition, a group of Penmar-area

—continued on page 4

The histories, the mysteries

Venice Birthday Celebration!!!

Some sources say Venice was founded in 1904. Others vehemently state 1905 or 1908.

Like its namesake, the exact date is shrouded in the wetlands of history.

It has been traditional to set the date on July 4th—and why not?

Venice has been the womb of independent thought since its inception. Ask five Venetians their opinions and you're likely to get seven replies. From HARE KRISHNAS to Harry Kirshner from world-renowned artists to maintenance workers, Venice has been the Peoples' Beach.

So we the duly constituted self-proclaimed Official Centennial July 4th Venice Birthday Celebration Committee invite all independent spirits, politicians, creative and noncreative individuals, committees, and organizations who want to initiate and participate in the festivities to join us in planning the readings, plays, songs, paintings, histories, and parades.

The committee has arbitrarily picked the Centennial Celebration to be July 4, 2005. We are revving up early — this July 4, 2003 sing, dance, etc., even if you can't. Lack of ability has never inhibited true Venetians from expressing themselves.

Explore the history, the mystery of Venice, that special quality that entrances the residents.

Everyone is invited to participate to make a great special Venice event. Come as your favorite Venetian historical figure! Political artistic etc., or your favorite historical or contemporary figure, nearly all points of view welcomed—no sexism, racism, religion or sexual orientation baiting allowed — be your own float — organize a pooch posse!

Show 'em what funk is all about.

Viva Venice! Viva the history, the mysteries of Venice!

Attend a planning meeting: 396-0811.

Join us!

— Carol Fondiller

Community Congress and Nominating Meeting

1-4 pm, Saturday, May 31
Vera Davis McClendon Center
610 California Ave. Venice
310-280-3411

<http://home.attbi.com/~venicecandidates>

PROGRESSIVE GRASSROOTS CANDIDATES

This gathering is for everyone who supports affordable housing, development that benefits Venetians and creates a more livable Venice.



BEACHHEAD COLLECTIVE:

A Clover, Pano Douvos, Fast Eddie, Carol Fondiller, Peggy Lee Kennedy, Screaming Mimi, Vessy Mink, Calvin Moss, Lydia Poncé, Jim Smith, Alice Stek, Suzy Williams

The FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD is published monthly by the Beachhead Collective as a vehicle for the people of Venice to communicate their ideas and opinions to the community at large.

The Beachhead encourages anyone to submit news stories, articles, letters, photos, poetry or graphics of interest to the Venice community. The staff reserves the right to make all decisions collectively on material published. There is no editor on the Beachhead. The printing is financed by ads and donations. The articles, poetry and art work express the opinions of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Beachhead Collective.

To submit material, include your name and telephone number. Anonymous material will not be printed, but your name will be withheld on request. If return of material is desired, a stamped self-addressed envelope is required. No payment is made for material used. Mail to: P.O. Box 644, Venice, CA 90294. Web: <www.freevenice.org>. Email: <Beachhead@freevenice.org>. Copyright 2003

Our Mission Statement

Oh Holy Shit

The Thought Police are rising

It is the Time

for the Beachhead's rebirth

Now is the Time to get your thoughts

together

If you care whether you have a thought of any worth.

Thoughts left of Center

Homeowner or Renter

Put your Head where your Pen* is

Send it to us use your wits

and if we like it

We'll print or plagiarize it

or tear it into

teeny tiny

bits

— by the Slumgoddess

*Pen: Antique Term for Word Processor or Computer

Beachhead Sustainers

Richard Abcarian	Marvin Klotz
Eric Ahlberg	Larry Layne
Linda Albertano	Drew McSherry
Chuck Bloomquist	Vreni Merriam
Phil Chamberlin	Susan Millman
Steve Clare	Alessandra Montagna
Tina Coreoran	Olga Palo
Larry Frank	Sherman J. Pearl
Ruth Galanter	Mike Suhd
Don Geagan	Suzanne Thompson
John Gibson	Emily Winters

**Become A
Beachhead
Sustainer**

Recent back issues of the Free Venice Beachhead are on-line at www.freevenice.org

LETTERS

— send letters to: Beachhead
POB 644
Venice 90294
Email: Beachhead@freevenice.org

Dear Beachhead,

Beware of your jokes about your paper and its aging hippies selling out to Rupert Murdoch. They could come true. Back in 1977 when I was working at the Village Voice, east coast sanctuary of aging hippies, Rupert Murdoch was only at the beginning of his US rampages. The Voice had been founded in the late 50s, and at the start of the 70s, just before I got there, two of its founders, Dan Wolfe and Ed Fancher, had sold the Voice to the late Carter Burden for what was then regarded as the vast sum of \$3 million. There was much grumbling that Dan and Ed didn't share their windfall with long term Voice editors and writers. Then, I think it was in '77, the Wolf and Fancher era came to an end when Clay Felker of New York magazine took over for \$15 million.

Then, lo and behold Murdoch who at that time owned (in the US) only the National Star and a newspaper in Texas bagged both New York magazine and the Voice for, I think, \$45 million, though at this distance I'm a little hazy on the numbers. Beachhead take note! Murdoch promised Jack Newfield and me he'd make no changes and then, later the same day, fired the editor, Marianne Partridge. Jack and I had to go back uptown and threaten a strike unless he reversed his move, which he did. Marianne was allowed to stay on another year. Murdoch hated the Voice because if he had imposed his repulsive views it would have destroyed a valuable property which he finally sold to Leonard Stern, a New Jersey dog biscuit prince for many, many more millions. Who knows, Murdoch could bring out his checkbook, buy you out, and then pump up the Beachhead, waiting for the Voice's west coast property, LA Weekly, to try and protect its market by buying him out and closing Beachhead down. Come to think of it, isn't that the sort of trick the Feds just nailed the Voice and New Times for trying to do? Watch out, Beachhead, it's a jungle out there!

Best,

Alexander Cockburn,

Petrolia, Humboldt county, California North Coast (visiting Venice).

(When not reading the Beachhead, Alexander Cockburn edits CounterPunch magazine. www.counterpunch.org * 800-840 3683 * CounterPunch, PO BOX 228, Petrolia, CA 95558)

Dear Beachhead (by voicemail),

It's real nice that the Beachhead has the money behind it, but Rupert Murdoch - it says right here - owns Fox, the New York Post and other publications. (sigh) Fox News Network. . . they all lie. . . the media lies. So that's scary to me. Real scary.

The Beachhead responds

Alright, already! It was a joke. An April Fools Joke! We apologize for the emotional trauma we caused our loyal readers. We couldn't sell the Beachhead, even if we wanted to. It doesn't belong to us. The Free Venice Beachhead belongs to the people of Venice. The current members of the collective are but the latest of hundreds of Venetians who have been the custodians of the traditions of our community for the past 35 years. And that's no joke!

Contrary to the belief of the letter writer above, the Beachhead is not well fixed for money. We survive on your donations. If you want to see the Beachhead continue, please become a \$100 a year sustainer (partial payment accepted) like the people listed directly to the left. We are a volunteer collective but our printer insists on getting paid.

Dear Beachhead,

I grew up in a Venice with chickens running in the yards and kids playing in the streets but recently left Venice in search of affordable, beach adjacent, housing. My wife and I found a house in San Pedro and it, the neighborhood, reminds me of the Venice I once knew. The Venice I miss. For I shan't miss Julia Roberts and Robert Downey Jr.'s Venice. That Venice is faced with some real problems the solutions of which won't be pleasing to people like me who long for the Venice of yesteryear.

So what happens, what is one left to do, give up? Sometimes I think - despite common Oprah logic - that the answer to that question is an unequivocal "Yes". Venice will never again be what it was and now that sister Cindy has been installed as our new developer-in-chief, (and sometime representative), I don't think affordable housing, (i.e. affordable with the minimum wage), is anywhere on the horizon.

The Manhattanization and Redondoization of Venice has taken on a speed that defies gravity itself. So traveling, Venice flies ass over tea kettle ever deeper into the abyss of racial and financial segregation, of discrimination and affluence, of BMW's, dog parks and cafe lattes, "spinning" classes and the stench of superiority.

It's sickening I know. I was baptized in Venice, raised in Venice, wanted to raise my children and die in Venice. Yet, I am satisfied with the realization that there is no stopping the drunken lout of targeted prosperity from trampling over the very things that once made Venice great, ask Mr. Dunne.

I will forever remember Venice as it was and hold in high regard those who are trying with every breath to keep alive the feeble pulse within the dying body of old Venice. It is with sorrow and some regret, that I pass it on to the foolish and arrogant, the greedy and self-possessed, the Hollywood set. May they forever be condemned, (and may God have mercy on their beleaguered souls) to knowing they have killed her,

my sweet Lady Venice.

V#13 por vida.

F.E. Bloomquist

Response from Sheila Bernard

Dear Emigrant--

It is too early to lament. In other words, reports of Venice's demise are premature. Take for example Lincoln Place. We are now engaged in a lawsuit against the City of Los Angeles to save the remaining 760 units of historic affordable housing. We have been protecting our neighborhood for fifteen years, at enormous cost in volunteer time and local donations. And we aren't going anywhere. The owner managed to demolish 2 of our 52 buildings, but we are protecting the remaining 50 buildings with unshakable determination. Watch the Beachhead for the story as it continues to unfold.

Although I understand your need for a stable home and your discouragement about some recent events in Venice, I urge you not to be a stranger. You have a new City Council rep where you live now, and you have a lot to share with her about what is happening with Mr. Dunne, with Lincoln Place, and with affordable housing all over Venice and Los Angeles. And if you have the resources (or friends with resources), please remember us with desperately-needed donations to our legal fund (LPTA, P.O.Box 1312, Venice 90294) and the funds of other organizations which work steadfastly day after day, year after year, to help our community evolve in a direction we can all be proud of.

You can take the Venetian out of Venice, but you can't take Venice out of the Venetian. Maybe we ought to send a warning to San Pedro!

Sheila

The excellent new mural on Kim's Food Market that was featured on last month's front page was painted by Jaryk Lee.

On Criticism by DeDe to the Beachhead

Lately I have received several phone calls decrying criticism in the Beachhead. Criticism, passionate or dispassionate, personal or impersonal, is indispensable in a free society. It is the proof that a free society exists.

Periodicals that try to be impartial end up being kind of blah. I was fortunate to be able to live in Spain at a time when there were newspapers on the left, newspapers on the right, and *El Pais*, which I regarded as the establishment record. There I learned that you can't always be sure that the left is totally left or the right is totally right.

Here's an example from Spain: remember Iran-Contra? When the U.S. was secretly shipping armaments to Iran, transshipping took place at a port in northern Spain before proceeding. A right wing periodical based in La Coruña exposed the event, the left wing periodicals denied it, and *El Pais* investigated. Here is a right wing rag exposing a right wing maneuver, the left wing concealing it, and *El Pais* ducking.

It occurred to me, in that time, in that place, that the right wing international cabal was not working. Ditto for the left wing international cabal. It meant that all politics is local. The right wing in Spain was more interested in using the story to criticize the government in Madrid than in supporting a right wing international movement. There are some who claim, but for that story published in Spain, the Iran-Contra investigation may never have taken place. Most important is that the story got out.

That's what the Beachhead can do. I want to remind everyone that it was only the Beachhead that gave me space to tell how city employees lied to me about plans for the Marina Bypass, an extension of the Route 90 Freeway that would have destroyed Venice. So, if some article in the Beachhead rips me apart, I will write a letter in response and get my name in the paper twice. It could even make me a heroine of the right. Let me think about it.

This reminds me of the time, thirty years ago, when I read a scathing review of a meeting of the old Venice Town Council in the latest issue of a local weekly. A large part of the diatribe consisted of a description of the personal appearance of the un-named chairperson leading the council and a particularly vicious stab at the chair's manner of conducting the meeting. Since I had chaired the meeting of the Town Council a few days before, I felt this was totally uncalled for, inaccurate, and directed at me. While I stewed and stormed, my husband read the article and then told me that he thought it didn't sound very much like me. Of course, I responded, that was the problem, it was all lies.

I enjoyed my anger for a while until a friend called to ask if I had read, in the latest issue, the great article about how Goldie Glitter had chaired a Town Council meeting that took place several months before. Hearing it that way made my emotions mix and re-mix. I had to make the journey from fury at being in print to sorrow at not being the one picked to write about. Along the way I also had to explain how I had identified myself with the description of Goldie. This was specially funny to some of my friends. Now I am past all that. I need a reputation. So, please throw a few bricks my way, spell my name correctly, and have a nice day.

DeDe Audet

Note: Some readers may not know that Goldie is currently featured in a documentary "The Cockettes."



The Neighborly Council

By Carol Fondiller

I am blessed. I don't get e-mail. I have friends who indulge, and who were only too happy to let me know that I was the subject nay, the STAR of a recent e-mail.

I understand that it was implied that I questioned David Moring's and Barbara Gibson's integrity in my article in the April Free Venice Beachhead.

David Moring has been stalwart in his continuing support of low-income housing in the community. I served with him on the Venice Planning Advisory Committee.

I disagreed with him on his decision regarding the proposed Lincoln Center project.

I believe that the Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood (GRVNC) Land Use and Planning Committee could demand less density, width, height and mass, and that more than the bare minimum requirement of "affordable" housing could be included.

Though I disagree with him on this issue, I count him as a friend and someone I admire.

I hope he still counts me as a friend. I have never met Barbara Gibson, also a member of GRVNC, and I agree with her concerns about the effect this would have on the neighborhood.

In addition, I think that if Lincoln Center were approved, it would set a precedent, encouraging mega-development not only on Lincoln Boulevard but on other main drags in the Venice area thus destroying what "unique charm" is left of Venice.

I believe most of the Planning Committee of GRVNC voted for the project as well as more lumbering elephantine art bunkers.

The chair of the GRVNC planning committee was thankful that the consolidation of more than three lots in the Canals was stopped. This was accomplished by the now moribund Venice Community Planning Advisory Committee, and the efforts of the Venice Town Council, and other tired old anti-progress elements in the community.

I was among those who were against lot consolidation, even though it could have meant more low-income housing in the canal area. I opposed it because I felt that lot consolidation would have ruined the "charm and uniqueness" of the Canals.

Little did I realize that the swollen versions of Beach Cottages, mansion sized Mediterranean villas built on handkerchief sized lots would have the same effect.

However, we did prevent turning the canals into a gated community with the waterways dredged deep enough for motorized craft, paid for by the taxpayers of Los Angeles, to keep the taxpayers of Los Angeles out of the Canals.

It seems to me that the GRVNC has left out important constituencies and ignores their input, while rolling over for large speculators, developers who have their own Vision of Venice.

Mr. Dunne, 88 years old and resident of Venice for nearly half a century, cannot claim a hardship exemption against the developers who want him out of their profiteering plans.

Mr. Dunne's plight resonates with me because I have had similar experiences in being uprooted, and I have friends who have been forced to leave their homes in the name of progress after paying the mortgage (via their rents) many times over.

Hardship exemption, solicitous regard for the neighborhood did not seem to affect the speed by which some developments were approved by the GRVNC Planning Committee while a nondecision has left Mr. Dunne to languish with potentially fatal results.

Perhaps that's part of the grand strategy. I don't think so, but the result might be the same. The priorities of the GRVNC Planning Committee seem a bit skewed. My suggestion that the initials of the GRVNC stand for Graft Ripoff Venice Neighborhoods Cabal was a bit intemperate.

The way the majority of the GRVNC board has acted perhaps it would be more fitting for the initials to stand for Groveling Ripout Venice Neighborhood Cravens.

I had a friend who had a watch dog.

The dog watched as my friend's home was burgled happily munching on the doggie biscuit thrown to him by the thieves.

\$2 Million Condos on the Boardwalk?

Here comes another huge project. This time on Ocean Front Walk at Thornton Ave. If built, the condo building would obscure the view of the famous Thornton Towers, where renowned dancer Isadora Duncan once lived.

The public comment phase for this project ends May 12. Call L.A. Planning Dept., 213-978-1332 for more information.

These are proposed Ocean Front Walk buildings with their entrances on Thornton Avenue. The setback should be exactly lined up with the existing buildings on Thornton.

The builders should not use a very, very old building at the south-east corner of Thornton Ave. and Speedway. As a setback example it is 5 ft. forward of all other buildings on the block. Also it is a very, very old apartment building with no parking. And someday it might have to be torn down. Because of earthquake damage etc. (I gave a photograph of how the Thornton Tower building protrudes to the committee of the public hearing on February 19, 2003.)

On Ocean Front Walk, all newer buildings and new construction have their setbacks exactly lined up with the buildings on the Avenues. There are no exceptions. Thornton Ave. should be the same. Also the plan and architectural drawings for the proposed buildings which Ken Ayenoff of N.S.B. Associates and Architect Michael Falonis presented at the public hearing at the February hearing showed semi-enclosed balconies on Thornton Ave, which are a full story high, and would also protrude on the Thornton Ave. setback. The setback of Thornton Ave. should be: North-side 25'6" & South-side 28'10".

The setback is not only important to the residents of Thornton Ave., but also important for the community of Venice. Because we do not want it to be a precedent for future buildings on Ocean Front Walk.

There is a city storm drain, which runs under Thornton Avenue, a walk street. There are very big pipe ends on the beach lined up with the life-guard stations. There are signs on both sides of the pipe exit, "Toxic, do not get within 200 ft. of pipe." This storm drain often stinks of crude oil and chemicals. The clean out (man hole) for this storm drain is on Thornton Ave., between Ocean Front Walk and Speedway. (Right between the two new proposed buildings.) When the city needs to clean out the clogged storm drain pipe, which happens when beach sand clogs it up, they pump it out at Thornton Ave. and Speedway. The builders should be responsible for putting a purification system on this storm drain, between their two new proposed projects, like the one put on the storm drain in Santa Monica.

Finally, the builders of the proposed projects want to have underground parking. One lot was tested for water level. The test results were water level 14 ft. deep. That means they will hit sea water at 14 ft.

Is this a good condition??? Please help!

- Joyce M. Haskell

...AND LETTERS

An eviction worthy of conviction

I am writing on behalf of Laura L. Ponce, who was evicted from Lincoln Place Apartments, in Venice, December 3, 2001. I do not feel that Mrs. Ponce's eviction from her home of fourteen years was either legal nor moral. In legal documents processed by the Los Angeles Housing Department "the intent to evict" and provided to Superior Court, for the eviction proceeding, Mr. Bisno blatantly misrepresented the number of days 1012 Frederick Street would be uninhabitable for completion of work of a primary nature.

In these and other documents, Mr Bisno promised and assured Mrs. Ponce and the City of Los Angeles, that when the rehabilitation was completed, Lincoln Place would again be her home.

The eviction was always described as only temporary with the rehabilitation requiring her absence for between 59 and 120 days, where the unit would supposedly be uninhabitable. To date, the rehabilitation of 1012 Frederick #3 has not been completed, nor was there a permit to do so since November of 2001, when Mrs. Ponce was still in residence. Mrs. Ponce should be allowed to return to Lincoln Place and have any apartment she wants.

She was unnecessarily tortured for months with no water, no gas, no electricity, a leaking roof during rain, unfinished walls and a makeshift spray paint booth in her hallway. She bravely endured this while suffering from Lupus and other personal tragedies of breast cancer diagnosis and surgery. She is entitled to a harassment-free environment in her own "home" at Lincoln Place Apartments. — Barbara Eisenberg

A ringing endorsement for the Beachhead

"My suggestion would be for each and every one of you Watchdawg Readers to go down to the beach or your local coffee house and pick up a copy of the (Beachhead). . . and read it from cover to cover." — Rick Feibusch, editor of the email newsletter, the Watchdawg

From Cindy Miscikowski's newsletter:

Licenses for artists and free speakers?

Venice Boardwalk- There are a number of things happening in the area in order to make for a cleaner, safer Venice Boardwalk, which serves over 250,000 people per week. Chrysalis, a non-profit agency that provides employment services is going to be providing extra litter pickup and maintenance of the Boardwalk during the busy months between May and September. This service will be in addition to the work that is already being done by the Department of Recreation and Parks. An Outdoor Dining Permit system will be implemented for the restaurants on Ocean Front Walk, which will control the service of alcohol and the amount of space that each restaurant is able to use for outdoor dining. Finally, I will be amending the Ordinance that governs the artists and free speech area on the Boardwalk, to implement a permit system, such as they have in San Francisco, which will regulate space and noise levels.

Councilmember Miscikowski can be reached at 213-485-3811 • 200 N. Spring Street, #415 Los Angeles 90012 • miscikow@c11.ci.la.ca.us

Albert Dunne versus the City Council

On April, 16, 2002, the same day they honored veterans for the contributions they have made to this country, the Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously to evict 88 year old Albert Dunne, a WWII purple-heart recipient who has lived in his Venice apartment for 46 years. Mr. Dunne is the victim of a Council and housing department that believe that his landlords, who own six buildings in Venice, will suffer such "extreme hardship" that they have no choice but to evict a senior citizen on a fixed income from his rent-controlled apartment.

The Los Angeles Rent Stabilization Ordinance lists 12 reasons that an owner can evict a tenant. Reason 9 includes demolition and major rehabilitation of the unit. Due to concerns about the gentrification effects of the major rehabilitation provision the council adopted a moratorium on such evictions last summer after housing advocates provided examples of landlord abuse of the provision. Rather than make legitimate improvements to their properties, many landlords use the provision to evict long-term, low rent-paying tenants and circumvent the Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

The City Council hired a consultant, David Paul Rosen & Associates, to study the issue and make recommendations. With the help of an advisory committee that included participation from both landlords and community based organizations that represent tenant interests, the consultant made several recommendations including prohibiting evictions. Those recommendations included:

- Prohibit major rehabilitation evictions; eliminate the provision from the rent stabilization ordinance. • If the work the owner wants to do renders a unit uninhabitable, the owner should relocate the tenants temporarily. • Compensate landlords for upgrading their units by allowing them to increase rents to pay for the work, up to 10% for 2 years. • Provide permanent relocation assistance if moving twice is a hardship on the tenant.

The Department then proposed granting three "extreme hardship" exemptions to owners that claimed to have relied on the major rehabilitation provision to their detriment. No criteria had been developed for such exemptions. LAHD created their own criteria that considered only the amount of money and time a landlord had spent. Mr. Dunne's hardships were not taken into account by LAHD, nor was the severe lack of affordable housing available in Venice.

Mr. Dunne is a partially-disabled senior living on fixed income and paying low rent. He has lived in his home over 46 years and lives with his daughter who is his care-giver. Evicting Mr.

Dunne will cause serious health consequences. It will be impossible to find another unit within his community that he can afford.

Mr. Dunne was not even provided with an opportunity to plead his case in front of Council. Councilmember Miscikowski's office agreed to arrange for a negotiation session between Mr. Dunne and the owners. If the negotiations failed, the matter was supposed to go back to the Housing Committee of the City Council. Without any notice to either Mr. Dunne or his attorneys, the issue was placed on the City Council's consent calendar. This denied Mr. Dunne the right to be heard before council. It also violated other due process provisions.

Mr. Dunne's attorneys have written a demand letter to the City Attorney's office asking that the City Council follow the law and the process they themselves established and take the matter back to the Housing Committee. If the City Council does not re-consider it's decision, they plan to sue the City on Mr. Dunne's behalf for abuse of discretion and lack of due process.

In the meantime, progressive candidates of the Neighborhood Council have been unable to get their colleagues to put the issue on a Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council agenda so that it can be discussed and so that the neighborhood council can weigh in. They claim that they cannot consider the issue because they have not heard from the owner. The owner has had opportunities to present his case to GRVNC. An open hearing would allow the owner to come to GRVNC and present his side of the story. What are the neighborhood council and the council office afraid of that they won't allow a public dialogue on the issue.

According to Miscikowski's aide, Alex Ponder, the councilmember supported the hardship exempt for Dunne's landlord because it had filed prior to the moratorium going into effect. While the current landlord, Todd Flournoy, was not the owner of record when the filing took place, Ponder said he believed Flournoy was one of a group who owned the building. He later became the sole owner. Michael Sant, who is attempting to develop the Abbot Kinney / San Juan corner (see Dec. 2002 Beachhead), was another co-owner.

Miscikowski was concerned that the owner would tear down the property, thereby removing it from the rent-control ordinance, if the hardship exemption was not granted.

Dunne's eviction, if it happens, would be the result of one of only two hardship exemptions to be granted in the entire 11th District, which includes Venice.

Lincoln Center —continued from page one

neighbors, who walked their streets and got commitments from people to come to the meeting.

It became obvious as soon as the meeting began that the project could only be approved over the objections of our united community.

Suddenly, it seemed that no one had ever actually been in favor of the development after all. His aide denied that Los Angeles Mayor Hahn was supporting the project, saying a letter from the Mayor backing the development had been issued without him having seen it.

Kristen Montet, a staff member in Cindy Miscikowski's office told the Beachhead that the Councilmember had not taken a position on the project prior to the April 22 LUPC meeting. In the wake of the meeting, Montet said, "we oppose the project as proposed. However, we do think an appropriately designed pedestrian friendly mixed use project would be fitting for that site."

This is probably not the end of the develop-

ment scheme. It still has to be rejected by the GRVNC Board on May 28, and by the L.A. Planning Dept. if the developers push it that far.

The developers had come to the LUPC to get support for changes in zoning, transitional height limits (set backs) and mini-mall regulations. The L.A. City Council planning committee (PLUM) is already helping them get relief from mini-mall regulations. It approved a change that would exempt "maxi-mall" projects like this one from the 40-foot height limit. The ordinance is now being reviewed by the City Attorney.

Opponents of this and similar projects need to begin thinking how they can create an atmosphere in Venice where developers will have to begin catering to the desires of the community instead of trying to run roughshod over it.

Extending the coastal commission boundaries to include all of Venice — as some legislatures originally envisioned — might be another option to stop projects like this, once and for all.

Part of the crowd that came out April 22 to oppose the Lincoln Center Development



Toward a philosophy of renter rights

By Sheila Bernard

The battle over Lincoln Place has raged for 15 years. A group of tenants with few resources and no staff have battled a heavily-financed owner and his team of experienced, high-priced attorneys. We have been fairly successful, evidenced by the fact that we have 50 of our 52 buildings still standing with excellent prospects of saving most of historic Lincoln Place for its residents and for posterity.

What makes a community rear up on its hind legs like that? Is it simply our desire, as the landlord alleges, to save our rent-controlled apartments and take unfair advantage of a property owner? No. It is much more than that. Yes, we want to stay in our homes. But we are also part of a larger historical trend.

Renters' rights is the last frontier in the evolution of American society toward equal rights for all. At the beginning, all land was controlled by a small minority of white male property owners. Now all land is controlled by a somewhat larger minority of property owners, which includes women and people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Of course, there are income, ethnic, gender, and age factors which place some property owners closer to renters in terms of how much power they have. In addition, there are many property owners who agree that renters' rights are important to jobs/housing balance, stability of neighborhoods, and other indicators of the quality of urban life. But in spite of the fact that the majority of people are either renters or in sympathy with renters' rights, the law favors property owners in some very troubling ways, greatly out of proportion to their numbers in the total population. This power disparity does serious damage to the civil rights of renters.

A renter does not have the right in California to contract for a permanent home. State law gives an owner the right to "go out of the rental business" by demolishing rental housing, and in so doing to destroy entire neighborhoods without regard to the circumstances of the people who will be displaced by such an action. Although it is widely known that displacing a person of advanced age from a long-time residence can cause risk to the senior's health, including risk to life, California law holds the right to land speculation higher than the right to life of the senior tenant. Our law is definitely selective in its protection of life, if not liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The law is also selective in its protection of the right to property. A tenant has a leasehold on the residence he or she rents. A leasehold is a form of property ownership. The tenant is said to be "in possession" of the premises with the right to quiet enjoyment. Landlords who evict tenants are said to "regain possession." Many local jurisdictions have chosen to protect the leasehold and bring it somewhat closer in value to other forms of property ownership. However, these attempts have usually been struck down in higher courts. The City of Los Angeles, with 60% renters and a serious housing crisis, has trouble stopping property owners from destroying affordable housing, even when inhabited by senior citizens, because of mixed messages in the laws of the state of California, as interpreted by the courts.

For example, cities have the right to approve or deny subdivisions. (A subdivision is permission to divide a parcel of land into smaller pieces, so that the pieces can be sold off to different individuals.) A state law called the Subdivision Map Act says that a city must deny a subdivision that conflicts with any element of the city's general plan, including the housing element. (A city's housing element describes how a city intends to have an adequate supply of housing for its population at all income levels.)

When the City of Los Angeles denied the owner of Lincoln Place, a subdivision, to demolish the apartments and build condos, citing the City's housing element, the owner successfully sued the City under the Ellis Act, another state law which says a city cannot stop an owner of

property from "going out of the rental business" by demolishing rental units. Although the Ellis Act states that it does not intend to interfere with local jurisdictions' powers relative to land use, the Ellis Act does exactly that, stopping a democratic entity (the city) from protecting hundreds of its senior citizens at Lincoln Place against the harmful economic decisions of a single individual property owner. The seniors' right to life is not on a par with the property owner's right to become more wealthy through land speculation, using no-fault evictions.

The no-fault eviction might even be seen as a violation of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. Senior tenants inhabit property peacefully, providing stable and secure income to the property owner. When the owner sells the property, he or she is selling a community, including both buildings and people, for some of whom moving can be an insurmountable hardship. The people are responsible for a great deal of the value of the community. That value, and those tenants, are sold to the next property owner for the purpose of increasing wealth. Such a sale often results in displacement of people away from their neighbors and their extended family. These people have been bought and sold and their value exploited, and since displacement poses a risk to life, these people have been expended.

Of course, theoretically, these tenants could have moved from their apartments at any time, and were not subjected to physical violence or overt dehumanization. So their servitude to the property owner can certainly not be compared to the involuntary servitude imposed for 400 years upon our country's black population, the people for whom the 14th Amendment was written. However, in the evolution from a slave-holding society to a society of equal protection under the law for everyone, we can see the applicability of the 14th amendment, which says that involuntary servitude is illegal. When a tenant contracts for a home and lives there into old age, the tenant is in servitude to the landlord, but the servitude is voluntary. However, at the point where the landlord moves to evict the tenant, depriving the tenant of his or her home and possibly the tenant's very life, the servitude has become involuntary. Can any other contract in this society be unilaterally terminated in an analogous way, against the life-and-death interests of one party to the contract?

While these ideas are discussed in relation to senior citizens, it is important that renters' rights be seen as applying to all renters. At what age and at what degree of frailty does it pose a threat to a person's life to be forced from one's home? Can seniors be isolated from their neighbors, including singles who assist senior neighbors with groceries, etc., and families with children who benefit from interacting with senior neighbors? Although seniors are among the most deeply affected by the disparity of rights between renters and property owners, it would be counter-productive to attempt to protect seniors separately from everyone else.

If this reasoning about renters' rights were to inform the law, land speculation would become limited in its ability to produce wealth. People who are in the business of owning and managing rental housing would be entitled to the fruits of their labors, but when they sell their rental property, it would be disclosed to potential buyers that tenants have the right to remain in their homes. With such disclosure, coupled with laws preventing harassment of tenants, older buildings which required rehabilitation would probably not



Lincoln Place

change hands in speculative ways. Rather, such buildings as they aged would in many cases come under the control of non-profit organizations which secure permanently affordable housing for protected groups in the population, including the old, the young, and others without the capacity to own property. This would be roughly analogous to regulation and/or ownership of water, utilities, energy, and education in the interest of the public.

Another consequence of this proposed elevation of the power of the leasehold would be an increase in the number and variety of forms of ownership of property in common. We already have condos and cooperatives, both forms of social ownership and management of multi-family property. There are other forms as well on the continuum between public and private ownership, which provide residents varying degrees of control over the property in which they live, dependent only on residents' capacity and willingness to manage the property responsibly and competently together, with varying degrees of participation and control by outsiders such as neighbors, mortgage holders, and public officials. These forms of ownership, besides building the capacity of tenants to manage their own residences in common, would increase the public participation of vast numbers of renters who presently believe that our society no longer belongs to them, and that their votes are worthless.

In a healthy family and a healthy society, it is understood that we are all in this leaky vessel together. At present, property owners can be heard to say, "Affordable housing is not my problem. I can do what I please with my property, and society as a whole will have to bear the burden of the loss of affordable housing." A healthy society would respond to such a property owner like this: "You are one of us. We need your help, as we need everyone's help, in solving this housing crisis. Your right to greater wealth must not interfere with the right of a tenant to a long life in a permanent home."



Lincoln Place



By Suzanne Thompson

Born in Santiago, Chile, his family left Chile in the wake of the military overthrow of the democratically elected Salvador Allende government. His father, Orlando, was assassinated by a car bomb in Washington, D.C., in 1976. Francisco and his brother José, along with Chilean painter René Castro, formed "Brigada Orlando Letelier," painting murals in 12 American cities and traveling to Nicaragua in 1980 to paint five more as part of a national literacy campaign. Now based in Venice with his wife Karen Pace, sons Matías 11 and Salvador 13 months old, Letelier has worked on public art works, performances, installations, public relations, and exhibitions in the United States and internationally. He writes, teaches, and lectures, and has worked with people of all ages creating collective and individual works, such as portable murals, banners, flags, books, medicine wheels, and earth mounds. In spring 1998, he traveled to Belfast, Ireland, to paint a mural of reconciliation with Protestant and Catholic community groups. He is currently an exhibition "Lights Among Shadows" to open his summer in Washington DC.

I first heard of Francisco through Greg Landau, when I asked him to do the art work for a program cover. A very dear friend of mine and wonderful photographer, Mary Ann Delamater, was hit by a truck on Main Street and did not have health insurance. Jackson Browne, whom Francisco had done album covers for, and I knew through my Central American solidarity days, had agreed to perform a benefit concert for Mary Ann.

Ever since then I've been interested in finding out more about Francisco and his work.

Suzanne: Besides being a muralist, you are also a performing artist and a poet and an educator, and...What am I leaving out?

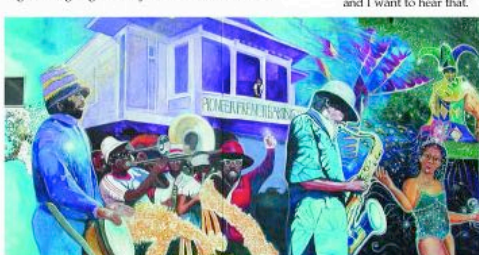
Francisco: Human being at-large, culturally engaged. Things take a different route many times when you are kind of, just involved organically with groups of people. You are sort of called upon to fill a particular role. Which, I have always sort of done, in a willing and natural way. I think it has to do with my early political education. In Chile, I was a member of the Socialist youth and there was a lot of emphasis on taking rounds and leadership. You know, different people act as a leader - today it's your turn.

Suzanne: How old were you?

Francisco: I started in the Chile Socialist Party as a youth; I'm not a member of the party anymore, when I was around 13, with the youth group. That was after the coup, in Chile in 1973. Returning to the United States, my brother José, who lived in a territory of Chile, but now he lives on Easter Island. He and I started a muralist brigade with young Chilean exiled youth. Since we were all very young kids working with older artists.

Suzanne: Is that the Brigada Orlando Letelier named after your dad?

Francisco: Yes. So it sort of came from that it would fall to us sometimes to be spokes people, other times to be doing the work on the wall, other times to be doing organizational things or logistical things. For example, I remember during a period when a lot of solidarity for Nicaragua was going on and you were in involved and



Mancato, and you were involved with a community of people bring groups. I would do a little bit of art work but most of the time I was driving these guys around. I would offer to do it and do it. I would drive them around. I have given myself room to write. I really finally came out of the closet as a writer about 5 or 6 years ago when I finally took all of this stuff that I had and put it into a book. And said, "Okay, I guess I write."

Suzanne: And, which book was that?

Francisco: Well, this is a self-published book. There are thousands of them around, circulating. And you know the other thing is that I'm not in a poet's community. Poet's have a very close knit community, especially here in Venice.

Suzanne: Your art is not necessarily playing to packed houses. You are making a living on your art? Right?

Francisco: Yes.

Suzanne: But your poetry, or writing or your performances are something you don't have to rely on.

Francisco: I've made a little bit of money over the years writing. I've gotten a little bit of support in order to do it. The way I make my living is as a visual artist. Although, I'm the art director for a magazine called El Andar which is a national, bi-lingual, Latino magazine.

Suzanne: Which takes me to your mural on Rose Avenue. It seems to me that you had a lot of community involvement in that project. Is that your first mural in Venice? You have others?

Francisco: I have a couple murals in Venice. One is on Machado Street, off Lincoln Boulevard. There's a taco stand that people stand out on the corner. I forget the name. Then there is this little street called Machado. There are these garden apartments on the left hand side called Machado Court Apartments. Some of the smallest apartments you could ever see. It is an environmental mural. It shows native species and animals of the Santa Monica Mountains. It was a mural in direct response to the people that lived there. They are mostly people from Mexico and other places. It was commissioned by the owner of the building. It is called Ambrosia.

Suzanne: And where is the other mural?

Francisco: The other mural is a mural that I finished concurrently with Becoming the Circle. That is at Phoenix High School. Which is the continuation high school behind Venice High School. It is a continuation high school for kids who have had trouble or who haven't been able to get through high school in conventional ways. It is a small school on a street called Zarja. It was all done with high school students last spring. It's called "Phoenix Rising." It's not just a kid's mural. I'm mentioning them all the way along. So I do a lot of the painting.

Suzanne: Do you do the design? Or, do they do the design?

Francisco: They do the design. I tweaked the design for them. I work the design and make it a little bit better. But basically, they are the art directors. It's not just about painting. It's about coming up with an idea, addressing issues that pertain to the community and the people involved with creating the mural. For them to feel free to imagine, to be creative and not worry about production.

Suzanne: I think the Pioneer Bakery story is a wonderful story and I want to hear that.

Francisco: About the mural at the Pioneer Bakery. I already had it in me that I was going to paint a mural. Somewhere in Venice. Somewhere in Oakwood. I wanted to paint a mural in Oakwood on 6th Avenue. Now I've moved to Brooks Avenue. But it had been a really long time. These are the challenges for an organization like SPARC... Judy Baca is one of my cul-

tural heroes. What we are talking about in community is human interaction, friendships. It is your daily life with people in your community. If you're a community member that gets along with lots of different people, you have friends, you have people you love, you know this kid since they were two and you've known that person.

I was looking for a wall. Then I saw that SPARC was going through another funding cycle. So I wrote to them and said you know I want to apply for your funding cycle. I don't have a particular site but I really want to paint a mural in Venice. In Oakwood. Because I feel that this is really the community that is undergoing the transformations that we talk about. They're the people that are the living subjects of history. Los Angeles has this reputation as a mural mecca. SPARC has helped create this mural mecca by commissioning all these murals for several years. The Venice Boardwalk is known for all its murals. And there are no murals in the Oakwood Community.

I approached Pioneer Bakery. They did not commission the mural. I just came in and said, "Can I use your wall?" I got some funding. I imagined that the mural will cost more because they had very little money at SPARC but I had enough money to start this project. And they said okay. Great! Since my idea for the mural was to actually paint portraits of a lot of people that lived in Venice - this really diverse group of people who lived in the community - who I felt were protagonists and leaders in their own kind of sub circles in community. It was automatically a community project because it was basically bringing all these different people together into one place.

Suzanne: Did you do it alone? The design?

Francisco: Yes. I did all the design. We really ran into some classic Venice situations. SPARC requires that you have public, community meetings during the design of the mural to have community input. So we called for a community meeting at Pioneer Bakery.



Suzanne: What did you do?

Francisco: We put up flyers all over Venice but mostly more towards the surrounding community; it was down on this side of Abbot Kinney, up along Rose, across Lincoln. So they put up these flyers. I come to the meeting. And guess what kind of people do you think showed up to a meeting like that? It's at 5pm on a Wednesday. So, that pretty much leaves out a lot of working people. There is a link missing. The majority of community activism is engaged in confrontation and adversarial situations. Which of course it is. A lot of community activism is about "Hi. What's your name?" "Where do you live?" "Oh, I live over here." "Oh, so nice to meet you." What goals we create in common? What common ground do we have? So it was amazing because I had the initial designs for the mural and basically this room of people who I had never seen or met before, trashed all the designs.

Suzanne: How many people were in the meeting?

Francisco: Maybe 15 people. A few of my friends. They came, pre-disposed to say "Why is something happening in my community without my power?" So we are determined to come in and not let it happen because anything that happens is bad. We live in a world where everything is bad. I know a lot of people.

So if I go to a community meeting in Venice and I

see a lot of people who are professional meeting goers but they are not involved in the community. I don't see them at the drum circle. I never saw them hanging out somewhere at a coffee shop just being one of us. I've never seen them. I say, well I've lived here for 15 years I must have run into you somewhere. And did we catch our eyes? Did you look at me with some acceptance? So I was feeling like there must be some way to win these people over to make them see that I'm not their enemy. I'm really a community artist. You must have me confused with someone else.

One discussion that occurred was that one part of the mural had a portrait of a young African American man, based on a photograph of one of these kids. I've worked with a lot of kids that have been involved with gangs, all over LACounty. Kids that have been incarcerated and it was based on a portrait of a kid who had gone through this whole experience of being locked up, being in gangs, committing crimes and somehow managed to pull himself together, finish high school and go on to college.

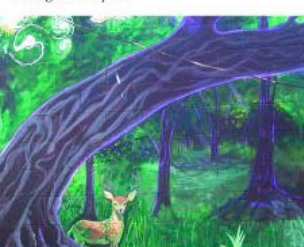
This portrait was just my way of acknowledging that I live on the corner of 6th and Brooks Avenue in a place where over the years I've seen dozens of children get shot. Dozens of children get shot. You know it is very different to live in another place in Venice then to live right on the corner of 6th and Brooks where you see the crack come in and out. Attitudes are very different about the police, about what needs to be done, about racial harassment - about many things. I myself have been stepped by the police and put up against the wall and harassed before. Nevertheless, I welcome the police presence in my neighborhood because I have children and I have seen children die. My neighbors have died. I've seen kids die on the street. Children are killing themselves on the streets. So in my mural I thought it would be immoral to create a community mural without acknowledging the fact that dozens of children have died right in front of my house. There are no monuments. There is no mention of them. We need to leave a place where people can carry the pain and the memories of violence in their neighborhoods onto the wall. And, we are going to find an appropriate way of doing that. We are searching for that. That is what this project is about. It is about searching for common ground.

Suzanne: Getting back to the Pioneer Bakery mural. What is in it?

Francisco: During one of the first meetings, one of the oldest members of the family from the Pioneer Bakery when we were coming up with ideas for the mural, said that he remembered that Rose used to be a really hot street. It was like the entrance to Venice, like the whole area. We used to have this parade here. Every year. One of my earliest memories was sitting on the balcony of this building. This is the same building. Just the facade got stucco covered.

Suzanne: Did you know that Arthur Reese was brought to Venice from New Orleans by Abbot Kinney? I've read some books on the history of Venice and Kinney's chauffeur was this black man, Arthur Reese who was very, very talented. He made these huge paper Mache Mardi Gras types of figures. He used real fruit, grapes to decorate the arches on Windward during Mardi Gras. At the end of the festivities, people were invited to enjoy the fruit or take it home.

Francisco: It was great. You know, I wasn't in anyway adverse to the idea of integrating the Pioneer Bakery into the mural. I found that to be the perfect image to start the mural with. So I said, let's create a mural that has you on the balcony and the building as it was and that way we also show a little bit of the architectural legacy. The changing nature of what our place looks like. All very subtle but powerful. Here are three generations of families that lived here. This is beautiful. I love that. Where can we find a site? The idea was let's show a parade and have locals be in the parade. So then it will turn into panels of different people doing these things in different places in Venice. So that is how the whole mural got developed.



Suzanne:

So, we didn't really talk about money. Public money for art, for murals.

Francisco:

I came age of an artist during the Reagan/Bush era. And so, the mantra that was given to me by my mentors, teachers and the social world was there is no money for art.

There's no money for art. There's no money for art. From then, to here, 20 years later or whatever, they are telling me, "They're talking the money away." But I thought there was no money? So guess what? I grew up and learned to be an artist with no money for art. And, I've been doing art this whole time with no money for it. I know there are some people who are losing their fellowships. Some people who have the time. I'm always working really hard to survive and to pay the rent. They've had the time to be able to create the space in their life for two months where they could actually apply for this grant. Oh, there is some money coming up. The deadline is in October and I don't have time... you know it's like fucking insane. Who has time to do that? I have to get up and go to work. So I realized, especially after the Pioneer Bakery. I had been waiting to get the funding from somebody else, that project would never have occurred. A politics and the cultural politics and the multi-diversity blah...blah...blah... or the whole thing. I just choose to bypass it and go start to the heart. It just takes my body working on the wall.

Paint is pretty cheap. I can start it. I will create some momentum through the power of what human beings can do. Keep talking to one another. The old grassroots way. That's the way I'll do my projects for now. Maybe someday, I'll get some enormous funding from things because I'm getting better. You know, like its Thursday night. There's a deadline. I'm just going to do it. Everyone leave me alone. The kids won't eat. Everyone in their spaces for forty-eight hours. I can pump it out and crank it out. I manage to do that sometimes.

Suzanne: So then, how do these murals stay preserved?

Francisco: If they are community murals, the community will take care of them.

The other thing about public art is that the state and cities don't have mechanisms to which the population, or the electoral public, or the community can articulate their ideas about being people in the world. You know, they build this big enormous sky scraper right here and in no way does it talk about people. But you have to for this for your little thing over here. It's all too crazy for me at this point. It just doesn't make sense. It is wrong. Something is wrong there. I feel like on one hand it is tragic that perhaps the city of Los Angeles will not be commissioning any more murals, at least through SPARC. I do think that it is a wonderful opportunity for SPARC to create murals in a different way, instead of being dependent on city funding and in that particular way they were depending on city funding. If your funding comes from one source and you do things in only one way you become ghettoized. Your audience starts becoming smaller and smaller. I don't really have clear answers for everything. But, I am so grateful that I'm not completely encumbered by the bureaucracies that exist in this city in terms of cultural activities.

Suzanne: And you brutally lost your father. Do you work in Chile?

Francisco:

I was just in Chile. We had an amazing thing happening in Chile right now. The present government, which is a socialist government, has decided that all the Chilean Diaspora, which is around a million individuals that left Chile, now number about 2 million or more Chileans living outside and abroad, they've decided to call us the 14th region.

So we are another state. So, now for example I can receive health care. I can apply for public arts money as a Chilean. And, soon, perhaps I'll vote. Chile is on the forefront of countries and nations imagining the idea of a nation completing surpassing national geographic borders.

So now my Chileanness isn't any greater or less because I live outside or inside. It is about what is inside of me. Let's say there were around 800,000 uniformed people that time in the country. Then, think about all their families and their children, we are talking about a third of the population in a small enough country still to image that we had the power to create a new way of life. You really start seeing



the us and them. You understand to create a new society; you really better start shaking hands with a lot of people.

Suzanne:

I was reading your press release for the Pioneer Bakery mural and you said you were not interested in whether Pinochet goes to jail or not. It is more important to you that there is justice and people know the truth. A friend of mine disagrees with that. He feels that Pinochet is a criminal and he should be in jail.

Francisco:

I'm not saying the Pinochet shouldn't go to jail and I wouldn't fight the good fight for him to go to jail. It is more in response to what creates justice. Because the whole idea is to create justice. It's not about revenge.

Suzanne:

So, what should we do with him? Pinochet. The truth is coming out and your family worked very hard for that to happen.

Francisco:

Other people involved in Pinochet's regime can be put on trial. We can create, for example an international library. We've created the archives of memory which are akin to the kind of work the tolerance museums have done all over the country which is to rescuing all the information from these years. Also, creating mechanisms that allow people to have more healing.

Along with getting funded for commissioning murals, SPARC was also funded to maintain a mural inventory and restoration program. That's been rustled away from SPARC. The thing is murals also need to be maintained. Public art needs to be maintained and there is nothing uglier than a mural in disrepair. Especially, when it is a big, enormous mural. All the murals are covered with graffiti and where there is no mechanism to which we can repair the murals. The whole deal about a mural is that it perseveres and lasts through time. We do all this stuff to make sure that it lasts and we use the right materials.

I do think that there are a lot more crucial problems right now. I'm not going to be sitting around saying that "you should be restoring murals" when there's hundreds of homeless on the street, when there's kids being shot on the streets, and there is still crack running up and down ruining people's lives in Oakwood. I think that the priorities are wrong. So, public art needs to be community art. Art that somehow, supposedly has its root in actual community.

Community is capable of bringing up the funds and taking care of these things. The community is capable and we have to give ourselves that power. We have to acknowledge that we have the power to do that.

This is only a fraction of the Letelier interview. The complete interview can be read on www.freevenice.org

All photos are from the Pioneer Bakery mural, except the center, bottom one with a deer. It is from the Machado Avenue mural.



On The Eve Of A Declaration of Independence

By Jim Smith

In the Course of Human Events, it has become necessary for Venetians to band together for the protection of their way of life and the security of their home -steads, and to assume among the Communities of the Earth, the equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and Humanity entitle them. We therefore announce and declare the existence of the City of Venice. . .

Note the destruction shown on the front page of part of Venice's largest single affordable housing complex. Then consider the monstrosity that builders from Massachusetts want to erect at California and Lincoln. Add to that the humble, but affordable rentals, that are being torn down all over Venice, so that big, ugly boxes can go up in their places. Change and progress that serves people's needs is good. But what we are experiencing is change for the sake of greater profits for a few. This is bad, and should be opposed.

To a lot of Venetians who are just hanging on by their fingernails, this is not just an intellectual survey of the changing housing market. Lots of people in this community are mad and frustrated - not by change - but by negative changes in their neighborhoods.

These days, it's not too difficult to go out and get 20, 50, 100 people or more in a neighborhood to sign a petition or letters against a big development that is going to do nothing to improve their quality of life. But what we're learning is that none of the powers-that-be give a damn about our concerns. Not our council person, not L.A.'s planning commission and not most of the people on the neighborhood council.

Last month, Beachhead writer Carol Fondiller blasted the neighborhood council for its inaction, particularly over the case of 88-year-old Albert Dunne who is facing eviction so that the landlord can redevelop and make a few more bucks. The reaction of some of those in the line of fire was immediate and caustic. However, in none of the response was there any mention of soon-to-be-homeless Albert Dunne.

In their defense, it should be noted that the neighborhood council system is not designed to empower L.A.'s communities but to pacify them. The system was devised in an attempt to head off moves toward secession. In this they were not successful. Three parts of L.A. filed for secession, two got it on the ballot and it took millions to defeat it citywide. The neighborhood councils were never given authority over development, as some wanted. Instead, they can make recommendations. All this is not to say that our neighborhood council has no future. It does mean that there are some high hurdles to overcome if it is to stand up for the wishes of Venetians instead of being a lapdog for Mayor Hahn.

While some of the current GRVNC officials are quite content to be an arm of L.A. instead of a muscle for Venice, I don't believe that it is because they are corrupt. Instead, most of those in question settled in Venice during the 90s and have no connection to the history of struggle that Venice went through in the preceding several decades. They don't understand that Venice is a real community sans chain stores and high rises because of the bulldog-like fight that a great many Venetians put up for a long, long time. They are ahistorical, rather than corrupt. There are, indeed, some GRVNC representatives - those elected on the Progressive Grassroots Candidates slate - who are working hard to save Venice and protect the 73 percent of Venetians who are renters. Alas, they are in the minority on the council.

It hasn't always been like this. Our second Golden Age of self-rule began in 1973 when our L.A. council member, Pat Russell, thought it would be a nice exercise in democracy - and at the same time win some votes - to create a town council in Venice. Little did she know...

In the beginning, there were a number of neighborhood councils - central Venice, the canals, Oakwood, etc., feeding into a town council for all of Venice. It was assumed that this body would nicely recommend non-controversial concerns - filling potholes, trimming trees, etc. - to Russell. This being Venice, it didn't quite work out that way (see Archives story on the Venice

Town Council, elsewhere on this page).

The Town Council began taking on developers, opposed a freeway, disagreed with Russell, and more or less made a nuisance of itself downtown, while thrilling ordinary Venetians. Russell promptly dis-owned the Town Council, which morphed into a participatory town hall structure, unlike anything seen before or since in Venice or L.A. PBS even did a nationwide TV broadcast of a meeting of the Town Council. After a number of years of holding developers and gentrifiers at bay (even though it had no official standing), the Town Council withered away. Home rule - of a sort - was lost to Venice for the second time. Of course, the first Golden Age of self-rule was when the legendary



city of Venice flourished under our Doge, Abbot Kinney. After he died, L.A. saw its chance to coerce Venice into being annexed in 1927.

Now, in the early years of the 21st century, Venice is at a crossroads. The next few years will determine if it is to continue to be the only spot on the coast where poor people of every color can live and where an island of arts and creativity apart from the homogenization of late capitalism can flourish.

The reason so many Venetians are frustrated and angry is that the vultures are circling and there is no defense against them. The power brokers of Los Angeles have proven convincingly that they will wield whatever resources are needed to prevent any disaffected community from breaking away. They will undoubtedly be successful at this until and unless the law is changed that allows the whole city to vote on the fate of a seceding community.

It is an axiom of political struggle that when the law is with you, you go through the legal process. When the law is against you, you use other tactics. Martin Luther King's civil disobedience and non-violent struggle for civil rights is a case in point for the latter strategy.

If the law is against us what can we do? Let us simply declare our independence. It worked for the American colonists. They didn't have an election where the entire British Isles voted on their independence. They simply drew up a declaration of independence and got an active majority of colonists to support it.

"remaining a part of the city of L.A. would have its benefits, but only if we have a real voice of our own."

We don't want to fight a war over this, so how would it work? Well first, we declare the rebirth of the City of Venice. We hold monthly town hall meetings, we elect a city council to implement the will of the people of Venice between town hall meetings, we print up letterhead, and begin taking action on important issues to the community. It would be nice if Beyond Baroque would let us use the old Venice City Hall, just as the Town Council did in the 70s and 80s.

Since we don't have legal authority, we would work with every existing power - the L.A. city government, the neighborhood council, the state legislature, etc. But we would vigorously stand up for the rights and interests of Venetians. We could lobby, and unlike the GRVNC, we could sue to block development projects. In time, the City of Venice would become recognized as the de facto government of our community. In some ways, remaining a part of the city of L.A. would have its benefits, but only if we have a real voice of our own.

Yes, we can create a third Golden Age in Venice. We can encourage development that benefits us, and we can deny development schemes dreamed up just to line someone's pockets. We can make Venice a delightful place for people to live, even if they don't have a financial portfolio.

What would it take for us to create our City of Venice? Probably about 100 Venetians walking their streets, getting others active and enlisting at least the passive support of most of their neighbors. After that, it would get easy. Who knows? We might even get on PBS again!

ARCHIVES

From the Free Venice Beachhead,
June 1977 - Issue #90

Venice Town Council

In March 1973, the people of Venice elected our first Town Council. Supposed to be an advisory body to City Councilwoman Pat Russell. Our first official act was to drop the word "advisory" - the Venice Town Council became the voice of the people of Venice in our own right. In the past four years the Town Council has taken a definite stand against irresponsible development in Venice that harms our low and moderate income renters and homeowners.

We stopped a major highway designed to cut Venice in half, and we prevented the city from turning the Canals into a wealthy exclusive yacht harbor. The Venice Town Council is one of the leading tax reform groups in Southern California - our delegates just got back from Sacramento where they testified at hearings on tax reform and rent reform legislation.

We successfully fought to get a crossing guard at Westminster School, and we have been involved in dozens of other local issues.

Do you have an idea, a complaint, a problem, or a project that involves your community? Come to the Venice Town Council - we meet the first Wednesday of every month, 7:30 p.m., at the Venice City Hall, 680 Venice Blvd. (by the fire station). Every resident of Venice is a full voting member.

Our next meeting is Wednesday, June 1st. On the agenda is a discussion of school desegregation in L.A., including a 15 minute film strip; a pro-and con discussion of street musicians and police on Ocean Front Walk, planning for neighborhood meetings; and reports from our Coastal Commission and police committees - plus whatever issues you bring! Everyone welcome.

NOTICE: The strategy committee of the Venice Town Council, in an effort to gain more participation from the community, is changing its meeting time and place. Each month it will meet in a different neighborhood of Venice with the idea of getting input from that area for the following month's council meeting. The June meeting will be Saturday, June 11 at the Pavilion in North Beach at 4 to 6 p.m. The question of music vs. noise on the Ocean Front Walk will be the main item.

By Bill Fleeman

u sat hunkered down
 next to my garage garret
 wall, under the overhang
 under a poncho out of the
 rain, waiting in the dark.
 i arrived late from the cafe,
 my mind lost in a poem.
 suddenly u stood up,
 spread yr arms like
 vampire wings, making
 a tent of the poncho, &
 showed yr face.
 all i saw was yr teeth!
 i stifled a fear-scream.
 u laughed madly, said
 "i got no place tonight
 can i sleep on yr floor?"
 "no!" i yelled. "you can't
 stay here."
 i watched you walk away
 specter-like in the drizzle
 dark & wished i'd said yes
 instead of no:
 till bob chatterton told me
 u'd hanged yrself in
 somebody else's garage.

World Stage Jam

By Rex Butters

some seasoned players
 mostly young
 their saxes slung in hour hand angles
 lightning rods bringing the sound to ground
 wait at electrified attention
 to play with the small stage untuned piano
 eyes unfocused listen
 learn
 blow their hearts out a horn
 break the chains of Sonny and Trane
 reinvent the language a phrase at a time
 bite the reed to the the rubber
 breathe warm life into cold brass
 alchemy
 then back benched bathed in offstage light
 pensive patience
 prays to find
 salvation in a song

from the Venice poems

By Stuart Perkoff

yet some houses are looked to as
 anchors
 to swing from & with them, their
 validity

in venice, in a time
 as any time can be

here they come
 down the beach
 two by two
 three by three
 down the beach
 they come
 carrying flutes & drums
 saxaphones
 pot
 wine
 poems

open arms & faces
 twisted
 needs &
 needs &
 loves

to swing
 the house & anchor
 foundationless
 tottering on the hill

SPEAK OUT!

Lawrence Ferlinghetti

And a vast paranoia sweeps across the land
 And America turns the attack on its Twin
 Towers
 Into the beginning of the Third World War
 The war with the Third World

And the terrorists in Washington
 Are shipping out the young men
 To the killing fields again

And no one speaks

And they are rousting out
 All the ones with turbans
 And they are flushing out
 All the strange immigrants

And they are shipping all the young men
 To the killing fields again

And no one speaks

And when they come to round up
 All the great writers and poets and painters
 The National Endowment of the Arts of
 Complacency
 Will not speak

While all the young men
 Will be killing all the young men
 In the killing fields again

So now is the time for you to speak
 All you lovers of liberty
 All you lovers of the pursuit of happiness
 All you lovers and sleepers
 Deep in your private dream
 Now is the time for you to speak
 O silent majority
 Before they come for you!

Ferlinghetti



FIDELITY EDUCATIONAL PRESS

5964 S. Vermont Avenue • Los Angeles, CA 90044

ONEIL M. CANNON

A Union Label Printer



Office (323) 778-1432 Fax (323) 778-1917

**LEAFLETS - NEWSLETTERS
RUSH ORDERS!**

From your Camera Ready Copy

Email: FidelityPress@earthlink.net

By appointment: Office Hours Mon - Fri 11am - 3pm

LEAFLET PRICES ARE NEGOTIABLE FOR PEACE MOVEMENT MEMBERS

**JUST
TANTAU**An eclectic assortment
of jewelry and gifts, since 1982.1353 Abbot Kinney Blvd. - Venice, CA 90291
phone: 310-392-4646Owner: Carol Tantau
tantau@2cowherd.netServices For Battered Women
And Their Children24 hour hotline (310) 264-6644
Business (310) 264-6646

FREE Support Groups/Child Care

Join your neighbors and friends
on the 1st of every month in**Car-free Venice****One day a month
Make Venice - and the planet -
a better place to live****Don't drive on the 1st
Walk, bike, skate, take the bus****If you have a bike, join us for a
short ride around Venice at 6 pm at
the Venice Circle, Main & Windward**Endorsed by Car-free Venice, Free Venice Beachhead,
GRVNC Conservation Comm. & Venice P&F
beachhead@freevenice.org • www.freevenice.org*No war for oil, No global warming,
No pollution, A more livable city***THE FUTURE OF VENICE IS UP**

FUTURE OF VENICE IS UP TO ALL OF US!

TO ALL OF US! • THE FUTURE OF VENICE

**Community
Meeting**
to nominate progressive candidates
for the Grass Roots Venice
Neighborhood Council1 - 4pm, Saturday, May 31
Vera Davis McClendon Center
610 California Ave.**Sponsored by
Progressive Grassroots Candidates**- If you support affordable housing and development projects only if they
benefit our community, please participate in this important meeting -**PROPOSED AGENDA:**

- Review of our platform
- Selection of nominees
- Campaigning and getting out the vote

More information:310-260-5411
VeniceCandidates@aol.com
<http://www.4881.com/venicecandidates>**Who are Progressive Grassroots Candidates?**PGC is the state of California's first P&F
district, since 2001. As the first, we are the only district
with a platform of affordable housing, green transportation alternatives, a
climate environmental, support for the arts and local businesses and
support for early child development programs that help women use
affordable housing options.
This time we are looking for people who share this commitment
to help us choose the best state of candidates for election to
the neighborhood council in June.**A Garden Grows in Venice****The Learning Garden Story:
Putting the Pieces Together**

By Emily Snider

The story of The Learning Garden, from its
vision and inception to the continual progress
being made, demonstrates a unique collaboration
and convergence of resources in today's
Southern California urban environment.The garden is located in Venice, CA on
approximately 60,000 square feet of the Venice
High School Campus—a plot of land once envi-
sioned as an operating nursery and then later
neglected due to funding shortages. Though
parts of the land have been used for high school
horticulture classes more recently, the years of
abandonment and underutilization of the space
essentially left a large eyesore for the community.Enter Julie Mann, local homeopath and
mother of two Venice High students. After hear-
ing a lecture in 2001 by acupuncturist, herbalist
and author David Crow on creating grassroots
natural medicinal systems, she sought approval
from the high school to use the land for an edu-
cational organic medicine and food garden.Crow presented the idea to students and the
board at Yo San University for Traditional
Chinese Medicine who were eager to start their
own Chinese medicinal herb garden. The prox-
imity (a few blocks away) captured Yo San's
interest and The Learning Garden was on its way
to becoming a reality.

But creating a garden, particularly a collabo-

rative garden, is a complex process. The group
must not only have an idea of what they want to
plant, but where and how—they must agree on
the principles governing the design and the
design itself.Now enter Stephen Gates, a young land-
scape designer studied in Permaculture, envi-
ronmental ethics and earth building as taught by
Nader Kahili at the Cal-Earth Institute in
Hesperia, California. Based on permaculture and
sustainability principles, Gates' primary concern
when designing for this urban environment was
to use as many on-site materials as possible for
construction while establishing a mode of plant
production requiring minimal natural resources.After three design proposals in the summer
of 2001, the involved parties agreed on the site
plan that includes raised beds made out of broken
concrete, a sunken classroom, a pond and
waterfall, an amphitheater, student farm plots, a
raised platform for tai-chi, and a food forest
around the perimeter. The existing greenhouse,
lath house and tool shed remain in the design
scheme and will eventually be refurbished.Following a large community-based garden
clean-up day in November, 2001 and a ground
breaking ceremony in March, 2002, grant money
allowed for work to begin.Over the past year the pond and waterfall
have been renovated and the sunken classroom,
raised beds and Tai Chi platform have been built
by young artisans and volunteers from Venice
High School, Yo San University and the commu-
nity. Using seeds donated by High Falls gardensin New York, Yo San students have been germi-
nating important Chinese medicinals and trans-
planting them to the raised beds. Yo San
University Botany and Herbolgy classes have
been held in the sunken classroom and weekly
Tai Chi is practiced on the raised platform.While the garden exudes a general sense of
tranquility, being situated on the corner of two
busy streets—Walgrove Ave. and Venice Blvd.,
has made filtering noise and car exhaust a pri-
ority for the second phase of work. An already
existing chainlink fence around the perimeter
will soon become a show of honeysuckle, pas-
sion fruit, codonopsis, wild yams and sweet
peas.In addition to thousands of flowers, vegeta-
bles and herbs, Garden Master and Yo San
University Botany Professor David King has
overseen the planting of hundreds of fragrant
sweet peas around the perimeter in time for The
Learning Garden May Day Event to be held on
Saturday, May 3rd from 10am-4pm in celebra-
tion of spring. Live music, Tai Chi demon-
strations, food, plants, gardening and Traditional
Chinese Medicine books will abound.The Learning Garden is a project with multi-
ple layers and a variety of textures, but in the
end, like anything good, it is simple—requiring
only a willingness to recognize what we have
available and put the pieces together.If you are interested in making a donation,
volunteering your time or renting The Learning
Garden space for your events, please contact
David King at 310-722-3656.

POETRY

Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd.

FREE WORKSHOPS & READINGS

Since 1969, Beyond Baroque has provided a free workshop program and gathering place for writers to develop their voice, find support, and build new communities. Bring copies of your work.

- **MONDAY NIGHT FICTION** - 8 pm
Workshop focuses on short stories, stories, and novels. With Steve Pitkin and Matthew Bykovs.
- **TUESDAY NIGHT CREATIVE NON-FICTION** - 8 pm
Bring works of creative non-fiction, memoir, and prose. Led by Cindy Bailey and Wayman Barnes.
- **WEDNESDAY NIGHT POETRY** - 8 pm
The West Coast's longest running, free workshop and a legendary gathering of poets.
- **THURSDAY NIGHT POETRY** - 8 pm
First and last Thursdays of the month. Bring poems you're thinking about (yours or other poets'); with Jenny Factor and Jessica Goodheart.
- **THURSDAY ALT.SCREENPLAY** - 8 pm
Documentary, narrative, art film scripts, actor readings. Non-commercial only. Moderated by Peter Coogan.
- Every Sunday Night, 7:00 PM Open-Mic Poetry at Abbot's Habit, 1401 Abbot Kinney Blvd.

COMMUNITY

- Tuesdays 5 pm - **Food Not Bombs** Palisades Park at Ocean and Arizona Ave in Santa Monica - FREE Vegetarian meal
- Sundays 11 am **Food Not Bombs** Cafe on the Beach - Hot Breakfast 'neath the pagodas at Rose Ave. Volunteers, call 310 892-8799 or email: venice-santamonica@fastmail.fm
- May 1 and June 1 **CAR FREE DAY** - all day - make Venice a better place to live by parking those cars! **Meet 6 pm with your bike at the Venice Circle** (Main & Windward) for a short group ride around the empty streets of Venice.
- May 3 - 10am-5pm - **Venice Garden Tour** - The Ninth Annual Tour benefitting the Las Doradas Children's Center and Learning Center. For more information, call James Haydu: 577-6668 \$50.00
- May 10 **Carnevale** - All day! West end of Windward Ave. 396-2803 - www.carnevale.us

GRVNC (Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council) Meetings: ALL OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

- April 30 - 7pm - Spring Town Hall Gathering. Pennmar Park, 1341 Lake St.
- May 12 - 7pm - Executive Committee - Venice High Cafeteria.
- May 19 - 7pm - Land Use and Planning Committee - Boys and Girls Club - 2232 Lincoln Blvd.
- May 28 - 7pm Board Meeting at Venice High Cafeteria. Lincoln Center will be considered.
- May 31 - 1-4 pm - Community meeting to nominate progressive candidates for the Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council - At the Vera Davis McClendon Center - 610 California Ave. Sponsored by Progressive Grass Roots Candidates. For more information: 280-3411.

Organizations

- Abbot Kinney Library - 501 S. Venice Blvd. 821-1769.
- Boys and Girls Club - 2232 Lincoln Blvd. 390-4477.
- Beyond Baroque - 681 Venice Blvd. - www.beyondbaroque.org
- Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council - www.grassrootsvenice.org - 281-1943.
- LAFCO (L.A. film coop) 660 Venice Blvd. 574-4733
- St Joseph's Center - Rose & 4th - 396-6468
- Venice Arts Mecca - 610 California Ave. 578-1745.
- Venice Community Housing Corporation - 399-4100 or www.vchcorp.org, 720 Rose Ave. Venice.
- Venice Family Clinic - 604 Rose Ave. 392-8636.
- Venice Health Center - 905 Venice Blvd. 392-8636.
- Venice Historical Society - POB 12844, Venice 90295 or www.veniceofamerica.org
- Venice-Ocean Park Food Co-Op. - 839 Brooks Ave.
- Venice Peace & Freedom Party - 399-2215 - vpfp@freevenice.org.
- Venice Skills Center - 611 5th Ave. 392-4153.
- Vera Davis McClendon Center - 610 California Ave. - 305-1865.

Community Events



FILM

- May 7 - 8 pm - 7 Dudley Cinema- **Lenny Bruce: Swear To Tell The Truth**. Robert Weide's documentary is a powerful story about much more than just a comic. It is about the way that society treats non-conformists who threaten established values, the need to be vigilant about constitutional rights. Special guest Swami X.
- May 21 - 8 pm - 7 Dudley Cinema- **Classroom Propaganda**. Film historian **Jerry Beck**, of CartoonResearch.com, will screen rare 16mm prints of vintage 50's educational films.
- May 28 - 8pm - 7 Dudley Cinema- **Paul Krassner LIVE!** Sponto Gallery, 7 Dudley Ave, Venice, CA 310 399 2078. <www.81x.com/7dudley/cinema>, also contact Gerry Fialka at 306-7330.
- May 24 - 8pm **Indie Surf Film Fest** - LAFCO, 660 Venice Blvd. After party featuring **Shana Fire & The Lovesick Lunatics @ 9:30pm**.

THEATRE

Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 Venice Blvd.
BIG LOVE - By Charles L. Mee, (thru Feb. 3)
Friday & Saturday 8 PM - Sunday 3 PM
Call Box Office at 310 822 8392

- May 1st, 2nd @ 8pm. Also May 4th @ 4pm and 7:30 pm. "Once in A Lifetime" by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman. Silverscreen wit collides with behind the scenes lunacy in this classic, screwball spoof of Hollywood Studios and the American gift for self invention. \$10-\$42.

POLITICAL

- May 3 - 7:30-9:30pm An evening concert of political satire, sweet harmonies and community, featuring national touring artists, **Charlie King & Karen Brandow** joined by **The Prince Myshkins Duo**. At the Dorrel home of Frank, Jane and Emily. 3967 Shedd Terrace, Culver City. 310-838-8131. \$10. Dessert served.
- May 17 - 11am. **Venice Peace & Freedom Party** meeting. 533 Rialto. 310-399-2215.
- Every Wednesday, 6:30 PM - Homeless issues - **Side by Side**. Community group on homeless issues for beach area. The Ken Edwards Center in Santa Monica.
- Every Sunday, 2 PM - **Venice Peace Movement** march and rally - No new war, End mass detentions and attacks on our civil liberties - March starts at Rose & the Boardwalk, followed by an open-mic rally. On Feb. 16th (70th Peace March), the Radical Cheerleaders will grace us with their political cheers.

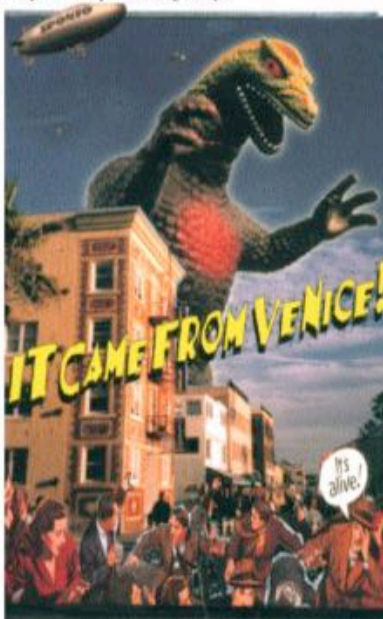


readings

- May 5 - 6pm - **Marshall McLuhan-Finnegans Wake Club** meets at Sponto's, 7 Dudley Ave. 306-7330.
- Sunday nights 6:30 PM Open Mic at Abbot's Habit Coffee House.
- May 10 - 7pm, **5th Annual Poetry Fest** celebrating the 105th birthday of The Church at Ocean Park. Featuring **Mary Ann Barnard and Joe Buckley**. 235 Hill St. in Santa Monica. Admission is by donation of 10¢ of anything! Nobody will be turned away for lack of funds. Refreshments included. Info 310 452-7953

ART

- May 3 - 7-11pm - Opening Reception. **"It Came From Venice"** an exhibition of new work by Venice artists **Doran Marold, Frank Lane and Bruce Meade**. Sponto Gallery, 7 Dudley Ave. 399-2078. May 16 - 6-9pm Closing Party.



MUSIC

- Mondays **Open Mic Night** - LAFCO, 660 Venice Blvd. Features a special artist every other Monday. 310 574-4733 - www.lafco.tv
- Wednesdays - 7-11 PM - Come hang with the **V-Rock girls** at the Venice Bistro, 323 Ocean Front Walk.
- Thursdays & Fridays AM Mommy and Me Dance classes for Toddlers w/ Instructor **Natasha Maidoff** The Electric Lodge 1416 Electric Ave 358-6769
- Sundays @ **The Unurban Coffee House** 2-5 PM **Brad Kay**- Entertainer at the piano-Hot Jazz, Blues, Ragtime and Hilarious songs. 3301 W. Pico Blvd, Santa Monica (310) 315-0058.
- May 7 - 7-8pm **Ahab Live** - LAFCO, 660 Venice Blvd. The music will be spearheaded by local diva Vessy Mink; however additional musicians are needed. This new installment will be aired on PBS. Any questions concerning music, please call Vessy - 310 574-4733. If there are any questions concerning Ahab, please contact him at ahabtv@dslextrime.com
- May 13 - The Temple Bar - 9pm - **Grace & Vessy** - 10pm - **Nova Blue**. 1026 Wilshire Blvd. Santa Monica
- May 17 - 8:30pm - **The Smiling Minks** - Genghis Cohen, 740 N. Fairfax. 323-653-0640 - 310 306-7330. The Smiling Minks are **Suzy Williams, Moira Smiley and Vessy Mink**. \$10

Send Calendar Listings

- by the 20th of the month -
to Beachhead@freevenice.org
or P.O. Box 644, Venice 90294



4TH OF JULY

SPONSORED BY

Free Venice
Beachhead
—others welcome—

PARADE

Venice's
98th
Birthday

310-396-0811 • Parade@freevenice.org

Original poster design by Brian McKinney • Photo by DeDe Audet