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Stobo's 100th Venice Music Box

By Lisa Robins

"I am a Micro Stage with a lot of Macro Magic. I travel far and wide, with the help of That Guy (my assistant), to bring performers of all kinds, and kind performer watchers together in whatever space we can all fit together in (just about anywhere)."

Music Box Micro Stage, created by the one and only Billy Stobo, celebrated its 100th show on Friday, August 27th on the sand in Venice. Live music with supremely talented local musicians, outside, free, with an eclectic audience of locals and lucky travelers cheering, dancing—doing whatever we wanna do...what could be better? Isn't this why we moved to Venice?

I became a Music Box devotee near the tail end of the lockdown, (last March), right after my first Pfizer shot. Stir crazy from being isolated for so long, yet socially rested, I ventured out to Windward, in front of a dark and empty Townhouse, across the street from our old haunt, Surfside. It felt like a ghost town, except for a gaggle of Venetians gathered around the "Box", which resembles an old-fashioned phone booth with just enough room for one talented musician to fit inside. Other musicians fanned out before them. I saw (and even hugged!) friends who had been in hiding from Covid. We ate up the incredible music which ranged from balladeers to indie punk. MusicBox was my pearl of the pandemic.

I had the good fortune to interview the multi talented Billy Stobo, who created the Music Box Micro Stage scene during the depths of the Covid lockdown. Billy can sing and play anything! I've seen him sing Scottish ballads, punk, rock—I've heard him play the guitar, the drums and probably much more. In addition to being an unbelievably talented artist, he's one hell of a producer.

Is this Friday really your 100th show??? "Yes, how odd is that? 100 shows in Venice. It's magical and fortuitous."

Billy's lived all over California—born in Redondo Beach, attended high school in the Bay area. But his whole family came from Scotland. He has "A slew of brothers and sisters ... 5, but who knows? Dad's a merchant marine". He's a

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SAVE VENICE WINS HISTORIC DESIGNATION FOR THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VENICE

By Jon Wolff

After four years of struggle to save the First Baptist Church of Venice, the Venice activist group Save Venice won a major victory in L.A. City Hall on September 29, 2021. This historical African-American church in the heart of Venice has been at the center of the Save Venice group's efforts to push back against the forces of gentrification since 2017, when it was sold fraudulently to billionaire media mogul Jay Penske. Penske had planned to repurpose the church into his own private mega-mansion but the community of Venice organized and resisted.

Save Venice applied to the City Planning Department's Office of Historic Resources for historical-cultural monument (HCM) designation for the church in 2018 but that application was denied. An HCM application was resubmitted by L.A. City Councilmember Mike Bonin in 2020 with assistance from Save Venice, and was then recommended for designation by the Cultural Heritage Commission and the Planning and Land Use Management committee. On Wednesday, September 29, 2021, the full L.A. City Council unanimously approved the designation.

This victory is a significant step in reclaiming the church for the community. The First Baptist Church of Venice has stood for generations as a symbol of Black History in Venice. Councilmember Mike Bonin expressed this accurately when he said, "Not only do Black Lives Matter but Black History Matters too."

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MIKE BONIN

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(times and places occasionally change)

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

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

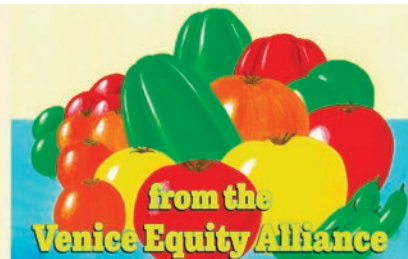
***Venice Equity Alliance-** fruit & vegetables. Wed. 12:45pm. 132 Brooks Ave.

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

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

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

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, sustainers 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. No payment is made for material used.

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Cornerstone Theater Company is hosting a small, participatory theatrical collaboration with the Venice community taking place on October 30 and November 20 at Oakwood Park.

VENICE STORYTELLERS is the latest version of a program Cornerstone has been experimenting with since 2007, when we were commissioned by The Music Center to create a two-day program that would bring community members together to share stories on a chosen theme, then participate in staged readings of short plays inspired by those stories. The Storytellers model is a fast, fun and flexible way to welcome community members into artistic process without the longer time commitment of a full production.

VENICE STORYTELLERS is supported in part by the California Arts Council, a state agency. (Learn more at www.arts.ca.gov.) Cornerstone proposed a Storytellers program to CAC that would build on the success of Ghost Town, Juliette Carrillo’s big beautiful play about Venice that we presented at Oakwood Rec Center in 2016. After a few COVID-related postponements, we’re excited that this program will be Cornerstone’s return to in-person community programming.

The Venice Heritage Museum Foundation and STP Foundation/Venice Art Walls are partner organizations for this project and other local folks are generously advising.

VENICE STORYTELLERS brings together Venice community members and a team of Cornerstone artists in conversation about the neighborhood. Over two Saturdays we’ll share stories and perspectives to make some art together that grows from themes of HISTORY, HOME and ART.

Venice community members who’d like to participate should see CornerstoneTheater.org for more information and directions to sign up, or call 1-800-578-1335. Space for participation is limited. Deadline to sign up is October 22, 2021. First-time and/or reticent performers welcome! No theater experience is necessary.

Others who are interested should stop by Oakwood Park on November 20 at 2:00pm to see a staged reading of three new short, Venice plays. More info at CornerstoneTheater.org



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

...your kids grew up here.

Venice America – Part Two
~ Culture Heals ~



With filmmaker Stan Mitchell...interview by Enyaj Pitchford

In my last article, I focused on the social conditions that led to what was called “The War” by locals, and the dissemination of the community of “Ghost Town” aka Oakwood.



One needs to understand the root causes of the racial tensions between the Latino and Black community, who, as was previously discussed, had played in the sandbox together and played on the same football team in high school. One needs to open your eyes and ears and mostly your hearts and minds, to the cultural conditions that made the climate ripe for a race war. Mr. Mitchell is extremely articulate on these matters He testifies that “Race, connotes a competition, which yields to white supremacy The Latino and African Americans were both oppressed, which created low self-esteem and want of power. Their lack of power created resentment of one another’s power. There was a lack of culture: fathers working long hours, fathers in jail. Young boys looking for guidance, and wind up joining a gang as their family. They equate being strong and making money, with power. Images of power they see in the media or the streets, they equate with manhood.

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Venice America — continued from page 2

These boys' leaders were a boy close to their age who is tougher, louder, and has a more authoritative presence. This gives them an example of a man. Girls, cars, money...he's the man!" I take a moment to catch my breath. He further explained how for a while the media created the image of the poor black boy, whose mama's on crack, whose daddy's in jail, and who is abandoned. But later on, this cute little boy grows up, with all that hurt and pain inside him, still insecure, but now he's big and buff on the football team and he's 6'4" and suddenly, he's scary. So everyone is scared of him or trying to suppress him because of their own fears, and this boy is still only 13 and he's totally confused as to what's coming at him and his inner fears turn into a brewing rage and self condemnation.. Stan says "I'd wager the guys who make you want to fear them are just hiding the fear that they have inside. The big secret is that the boogie man has fears too. Politics is being shrewd... when you're less sophisticated you engage in power tricks. Money, muscle, killers..".

Stan then adds "And that is why Venice America's motto is Culture Heals. If the youth have positive role models; a happy father who works and feels good about what he does and what he earns; not stepfathers and mother's boyfriends who don't feel bonded to them. Boys seek guidance and time from their fathers." But daddy is nowhere to be found in most of these cases. Then, where is the right of passage for these men? Outside of the military and kill or be killed, where does a young boy learn about his inner strength, his responsibilities to himself, his family, his society.? What happens when the elders, who are supposed to steer the youth, instead of fear the youth? These are the signs of a society on the decline.

Yet, this was a period he was compelled to record; a period he lived through. A period where even he admits to carrying a gun when he needed to get groceries and leave his family huddled indoors because he knew he needed to be back with his boys. Ultimately, from the despair of humanity rises its antithesis. "Culture Heals" explores the balm that soothed the scorch of the pavement, the constant scarring of the streets. Culture, which stems from the word "cult" to till, or essentially, to, turn. I witnessed the Culture that rose from '95-99, and it was truly a period of Healing. It was a time when there was a rare opening between worlds and the creative types who were 'hip', who weren't coming to take over, but to do their art and hopefully heal things. Nobody makes it easy on Free Spirits anywhere, so the Hood was a place of culture because of the affordable rents, in a home with a yard, And a lot of babies were born from many a couple, and many were of multi-racial, multicultural parents of divergent socioeconomic groups. But everyone was hooked on having a creative existence and engaging creatively within the community. And though there were crack sales going on outside your fence, for hours a day, that danger kept away the undefeatable danger, which is exorbitant rents and instead of homes, "income properties" and instead of a house with land for a garden, it's "prime real estate. Those who cultivated the opportunity to make the neighborhood integrated and more peaceful, all got swept away by people who never lived here, or just vacation here, or just make money here, and all kinds that monetize, standardize, and destroy a culture. Everything just stagnates under the almighty dollar sign, that lost its golden standard.

It's easy to demonize the developers, but the landlords wouldn't rent to African Americans coming in. They looked forward to 'white' faces popping up because that inevitably will ensure their real estate values go up. They are not concerned with healing their neighborhood but making a quick buck. Stan himself had a hard time renting in his own neighborhood. His wife would find a place, and then when she came back with him, the moment they saw him

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Laddie Williams and Tony Vera - photos by Margaret Molloy

Historic Designation — continued from page 1

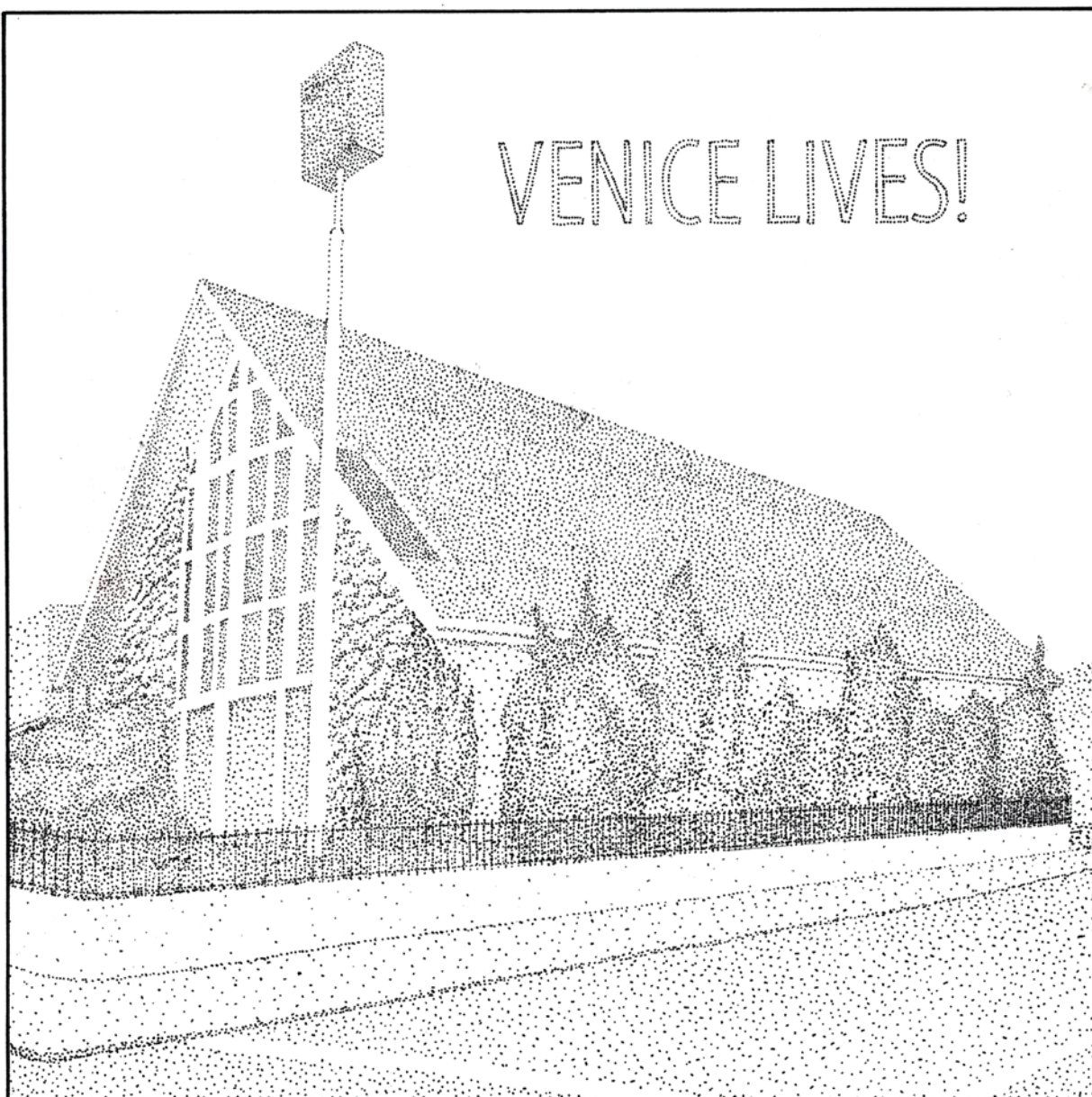
Save Venice faced powerful opposition, but they persevered against the odds and prevailed. In a celebratory gathering in front of the church after the City Council vote, they declared, "Venice Lives!"

Save Venice recognizes the hard work and dedication of all the volunteers who have fought for the church: Jataun Valentine, Laddie



Dr. Naomi Nightingale and Santa Monica activist Robbie Williams

Williams, Dr. Naomi Nightingale, Margaret Molloy, Lydia Ponce, Ingrid Mueller, Eileen Archibald, Ed Ferrer, Jay Jolliffe, Pam Anderson, Sara Mahir, Carmen Fanali, Carol Powell, David Johnson, Rev. Oscar Rhone, Wil Stern, Jake Greene, Kim Ford, Ivy Beach, Adolfo Alzuphar, Soni Lloyd, Keli Arslancan, Esteban Pulido, Andi Anderegg, Beth Allyn, Loly Garcia, Ian the People of California, and Jon Wolff.



Venice Music Box — continued from page 1
bit older than he looks (or acts) When I asked how old, he replied, “I was at the Summer Of Love”.

Where’d you learn how to play and sing like that? “Drums came first.” His Dad was a snare drummer in military Pipe Bands in the Royal Air Force...in kilts! Billy had sticks around as a kid, but lacked formal training as a musician. Although he had a musician father and grandmother (on the other side), Billy doesn’t even read music. He started playing for real in his late teens/early 20’s. He’d been a jock, (played baseball and soccer)—had a toe injury, got bored. A friend in a band said “Hey, I heard you sing.” He figured out how to play guitar. Would sit in his room and play songs. “Then the Rock and Roll got on me like a stink”. He finally had own band and made some records.

Did you perform a lot of gigs before Music Box??

Billy’s band, Golden Buddha, has been around since 1989. Earth Day 1990 at LMU was their first show. They mostly booked themselves- traveled in Europe in the 90’s for eight months per year by getting a major gig to get themselves over there—other gigs would follow. Billy was in other bands, including his own underground band, Stobo Band, in the early 2000’s. They booked pivotal gigs in Europe like the Montrose Jazz Fest, which led to other festivals, and big shows in the US, including Burning Man and Lalapalooza. It “Imploded when our drummer stopped living.” He refocused on Golden Buddha.

Billy had met Michael Jost in the early 2000’s through a mutual admiration for each other’s bands. They were involved musically and as friends. When the Stobo Band disbanded under tragic circumstances, Jost “gave support in hard times.” Billy considers himself Radio Venice’s “Biggest supporter”. Although he lived in Venice in the early 2000’s for a couple years, he was previously more involved in the Silverlake/Hollywood scenes. He considers Michael the “Kingpin” of whatever musical scene is going on in Venice, beyond just being a musician hosting Radio Venice. Billy respects and admires Jost’s persistence, and wants to be sure to credit him with what he’s doing now.

Throughout the 90’s and beginning of 2000’s Billy was a touring and traveling musician. He shifted from “night crawler/musician” to something more reliable to support his daughter, who’s now 13 and lives with her mom. I asked, “Is your daughter into music?” Billy responds, she’s “Talented -gifted ..I think she’s gonna rule the world someday...willed herself into learning Chinese-reading writing and speaking...maybe a lawyer someday”.

Billy’s trade is a finish carpenter—although didn’t necessarily set out to do that. He currently works for a custom home builder supervising construction.

How’d you come up with the idea of Music Box? “It was originally built as a tool cabinet to hold bips and baps (carpenter lingo)...That’s interesting,” he noted after building it, “I can stand in this thing”. He noticed the acoustics while tapping his toe, “Sounds really great!”. Then he noticed his guitar fit in the Box. Ideas flowed. It spilled into becoming a personal performance stage.

It was a beautiful day in Venice, the day after Christmas, Boxing Day. “Scots celebrate that” Billy teaches me. After being exposed to the Venice music scene through Michael Jost, Billy thought, “Wouldn’t it be funny to bring Music Box to Venice for Boxing Day?” (He’s usually governed by things that make you laugh). He wheeled the Box onto the Boardwalk with a simple amp and no lights, and became a street musician. His Music Box sign became the nom de plume along with a separate sign which said Venice. At his first “Venice Music Box”- he didn’t even put hat

out. People would walk by, hover...it became a photo op - \$5 to take their pic in box- \$5 more they could hold his guitar. Others noticed.... Billy realized, “There’s something magical about this box”. It begins connecting to observers by how it’s framed- He has a philosophy about framing everything. “Literally and figuratively... it made all the difference between playing the Boardwalk with and without the Box-that ‘s what drives people to come ...”

After decades of being a traveling musician with no protection from a music label or manager, Billy needed to be self reliant, creative...courageous. His day job is to fix things- and utilizing his “Fairly creative nature” the lighting and presentation aspect of the Music Box evolved. The Box is equipped with 2 powered speakers and a mixing board. The monitor speaker is powered by 2 batteries. Billy schleps the MusicBox MicroStage to wherever the show is that night -sets it up, and breaks it down at the end of the night. Getting the Box off of the sand is a logistical adventure. “Thankfully i put wheels on it.” All the gears unload into the Box, which gets wheeled then strapped onto his trailer on the back of his truck or jeep. It’s, “Very very labor intensive- what’s keeping it unique is that no one is stupid enough to do the work it takes- it’s a good 1- 2 hours of labor... “When the box is on its back it has doors.. due to the nature of how late it is- after drinking and facing the long drive home (he currently lives in Burbank)...Can put sleeping bags in - lay down close the door like a coffin and sleep inside the box”. Neighbors might think he’s homeless when they see his Box on the trailer on Saturday morning, and hear Billy snoring.

What kind of permits have you pulled? “No permits”.

How do you keep the cops from shutting it down? “Initially there weren’t that many people. When Music Box started- Pandemic wise- in front of the Bordello on Westminster- there were 10-20 people-wasn’t any big thing as long as neighbors weren’t complaining...” When it got bigger it moved over to Windward...Wasn’t really loud-not too many people- cops were cool...it grew slowly- never any problems...cops were used to it,” and Billy stayed on top of it as it was growing. When it got really big, Billy, “Didn’t hesitate- went up to them and said this is my name-this is what we’re doing...keeping everyone safe, etc.. It became haven for whatever....Sent quite a few cops over one night- supervisor came - shoulder shrug and they left.” Billy believes the police, “Appreciated that I was straight up with them- acknowledged them, thanked them for letting us be here- was respectful.”

Have you had any bad experiences with cops/locals/others? The Box had moved to Westminster one Friday...in front of Zelda’s cafe with the intention of bringing customers for their late hours. “Let’s make a little scene here with some music.” One neighbor complained. I happened to be there was there that night, and tried to reason with the cops, but unlike previous Music Box events, they were threatening, and ended up shutting the music down. The neighbor who complained came down and tried to talk to Billy who “read them riot act about being neighborly- everyone else is fine- everyone in the neighborhood”. “It’s so loud” they whined. “Friday night in Venice..Boo hoo.” Billy wanted them to know their complicity in shutting it down. I couldn’t agree more. “After businesses started opening up we got chased off the streets.” Billy moved the scene down to the sand. Even better in my book! However, at the end of Billy’s Westminster Beach days - the police became unfriendly- unaccommodating-told him if they come back out to the park they’ll tix and confiscate the box.

Have your personal gigs increased? —“No not really...Decreased- just playing at Music Box... turning down lots of shows”. Billy gets satisfaction from Music Box, usually playing first when no one is there. “Come early!” he urges. I’ve seen him close shows as well, with everything from

soulful ballads to rock and roll. His record label-forktonguerecords.com feature his versatility. When he started playing solo -he had to break up his music into individual pockets to sell...All the different acts on the label are him. Check it out, it’s amazing! Golden Buddha, Spiel (Michael Jost), Brother Billy (country), Campbell Antrim (Scottish), and more.

I’ve noticed him filming many of the acts. Are you making a movie out of all of the wonderful performances you’ve hosted? “YES!!! A docu-series—long documentary- Venice as the home base...About the travelogue of the Music Box... need a pitch reel to get funding - big lofty goal-tricky while working a day job...have confidence it can go that far and beyond..Illusions and delusions of touring Europe and beyond...Creating community ...All this music stuff is just a primer for all the movies I’m gonna make...”.

How can we help you get paid for all of your efforts?

Billy does private parties once a month or so-brings the Box performs himself mostly-

But he cares much more to be able to bring this to people, to gain support (spread by word of mouth), raise his profile; to be “Hero for the night”. Billy could have easily have had a Venmo account with a sticker on the box to request tips, but he tells me he’s not doing it for financial gain. “Gives me a platform to play my music..I get paid much more than counting tip[s...corruptive nature of counting tips...” He has a bigger plan, galvanizing the Music Box Micro Stage logo as a brand, to make it a show with a budget, and needs real investment- a support system. He has “Lots of irons in the furnace” He does, however, encourage tipping the bands!

When I asked Billy what local artists has he enjoyed working with, he replied, “I’m absolutely flabbergasted how consistently cool and talented all the artists who came through the Music Box.” He had issues with only three. (My calculation is 100 shows, at least 3 musical acts per show- sure, some are repeats...but that’s a lot of musicians!!). Some are stars wanting to support the Box. Some are enthusiastic artists Billy wanted to give a boost..The attitude of everyone, “Exceptional ...grateful ...gracious”. He noted that some artists deserve success- “Prepared - at the level they could step off into stardom”. I’ve seen so many great artists! A few of my personal faves: any of the many bands Billy’s in, Harlan’s Truck Box, Moon in the Milk. Peter Demian, Lizz Vega, Brothers. and Stanley Behrens. Our Diva Divine, Suzy Williams, often graces is the stage. And Michael Jost is the Music Box resident angel- lending his support both musically and otherwise.

Do you know how grateful the music lovin’ folks of Venice are for your unmatched contribution to the pandemic’s virtual destruction of the live music scene in Los Angeles? “I have a good idea...Everyone’s really expressive.” Music Box helped the community stay connected and bond, “Because of the metaphor- framed almost like a beacon- reliable and predictable”. And the community stepped up when his work truck was robbed at one of the shows. Pro car thieves who “knew what they were doing- took every tool”. Billy blamed himself. “Parked in part of the hood i shouldn’t - had it happen before...” He wanted to just let it go....take responsibility. But the MB community donated via a GoFundMe campaign, “Throwing the love blanket ...Manifesting love... It helped.”

Billy took a hiatus this September to work on other projects. Well deserved after a year straight of shows every week, sometimes twice a week.

Will you continue the beloved Music Box Micro Stage?

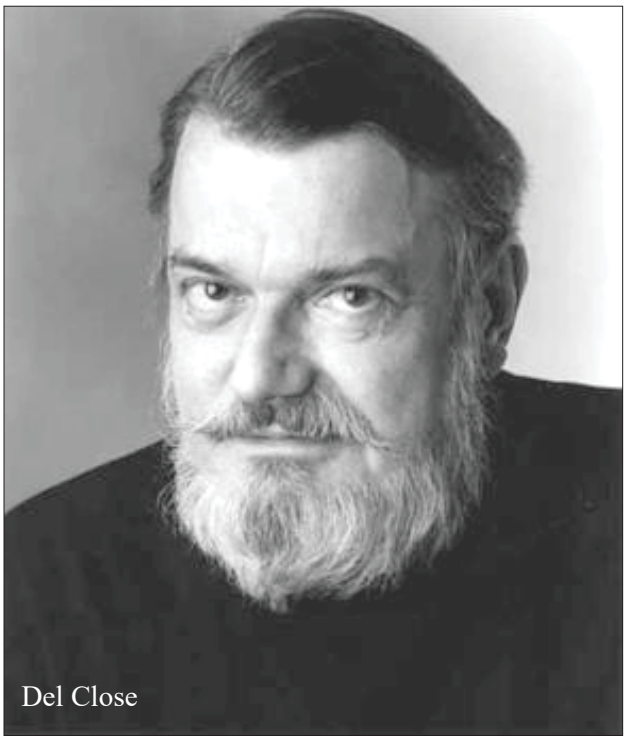
He has one show planned for October 8th at Pour Vida on Lincoln, and is toying with the idea of once a month instead of once a week. Billy tells me that now that things are open he’s feeling need

V.I.P. as VIP by Gerry Fialka



Venice Improv Percepts render Very Important People. And versa vice. Whenever I travel through Venice, I run into people, and the improv begins. We engage in the paradoxical exuberance of being through language, running the gamut from spoken word, gestures, dance, song, poetry, jokes and beyond. I could be talking with one of Linda Ronstadt's best friends (who is also a labor activist), then a street performer who is moving the groove, then a Renaissance painting expert, then a prominent photographer, then an everyday person, then an angel, then a bugger, and all this time know I am so lucky to be strolling through Heaven on Earth.

I saw Treeman as I was thinking about this essay at the vortex of the multi-verse (Rose and the Boardwalk). He asked about the new BeachHead issue. I said, "You have ESP." He responded, "Tree-S-P." TranscenDance of the soul. One encounter can be with a friend sweeping the Boardwalk for free, then the next person has the job cleaning up the Boardwalk. Or, as the Sponto mantra goes, "How much are we not paying you, double that!" We revolutionize diversity.



Are we trying to get more control over our spontaneity? What is irreverent? What is essential? What evokes extemporaneousness? What adds to our pleasures? Go with the flow?

A new movie touches on ad-libbing. For Madmen Only: The Stories of Del Close is directed by Heather Ross. Reviewer Brian Tallerico writes, "Comedy started to shift to something more ambitious and progressive than it was before Del Close came along. He taught people simple rules like be present in the scene, don't go for cheap jokes, make unlikely choices, be intelligent, etc. These might sound obvious to generations raised on the talent shaped by Del Close, but it wasn't a couple generations ago. He really rewrote the rulebook, blending his fearless anarchy into a new art form. He was one of the first people to assert that improvisational comedy wasn't an element of other things but an actual art form of its own."

Sounds like Venice to me.

Comedy guru Del Close can teach us a lot. He started his career with Mike Nichols and Elaine

May. He trained most of the SNL original cast, and almost everyone from Bill Murray to Tina Fey. Robin Williams called it the "Church of Del." Close emerged as a personification of the creative impulse itself.

This engaging new documentary is a story full of life and the challenges of interacting with others. Del Close taught how to work improv as a way to "treat each other like poets and geniuses." Much like



our efforts in Venice, when you encounter another person, treat them like a star. Funkify Sly Stone: "Everybody is a star." We can make the world a funnier and funner place.

In the GQ Magazine (8-17-15) profile of Stephen Colbert, Venice resident Jeff Michalski is praised. Jeff has been a vibrant participant in our discussion groups for years. He appears in the experimental Venice documentary The Brother Side of the Wake. Jeff currently teaches improv at the Fanatic Salon in Culver City.

To quote the GQ article by Joel Lovell: Colbert met Del Close, the legendary improv teacher and mentor and champion of the idea that improvisational comedy, when performed purely, was in fact high expressive art.

“I went, ‘I don't know what this is, but I have to do it,’ ” he said. “I have to get up onstage and perform extemporaneously with other people.” He was part of the same Second City class that included Amy Sedaris and Paul Dinello and Chris Farley. “Our first night professionally onstage,” Colbert said, the longtime Second City director Jeff Michalski told them that the most important lesson he could pass on to them was this: “You have to learn to love the bomb.”

“It took me a long time to really understand what that meant,” Colbert said. “It wasn't ‘Don't worry, you'll get it next time.’ It wasn't ‘Laugh it off.’ No, it means what it says. You gotta learn to love when you're failing.... The embracing of that, the discomfort of failing in front of an audience, leads you to penetrate through the fear that blinds you. Fear is the mind killer.”

Jeff is an amazing teacher, and knows the history of improv's background with Viola Spolin and Neva Boyd. His comprehensive awareness of play and engagement applies to this theme of embracing others. No matter who they are, we can enjoy their beauty and the emotional power of connecting in commonality. And if one fails, life always rises from the ashes.

James Joyce stressed redemption in Finnegans Wake. Our laughtears become the ocean in which our dreams flow.

Don't be afraid to be friendly. Invert fear into stimulation. Turn a breakdown into a break through. Flip a rejection into a redirection. Have the courage to fail when you encounter other people in Venice. If ya fails, brush yourself off and start all over again. Reach out and start a conversation. "Jump back and kiss yourself" - James Brown. Be bold! Expand it to "very very important persons" V.V.I.P.

Another recent film touched me deeply, the ALI documentary by Ken Burns. I am proud to say that one of the producers is my friend, Stephanie



Jenkins. When George Plimpton asked Ali, "What would you like people to think about you when you've gone?" Muhammad Ali (born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr.) responded, "I'd like for them to say he took a few cups of love, he took one tablespoon of patience, teaspoon of generosity, one pint of kindness. He took one quart of laughter, one pinch of concern, and then, he mix willingness with happiness, he added lots of faith, and he stirred it up well, then he spreads it over his span of a lifetime, and he served it to each and every deserving person he met."

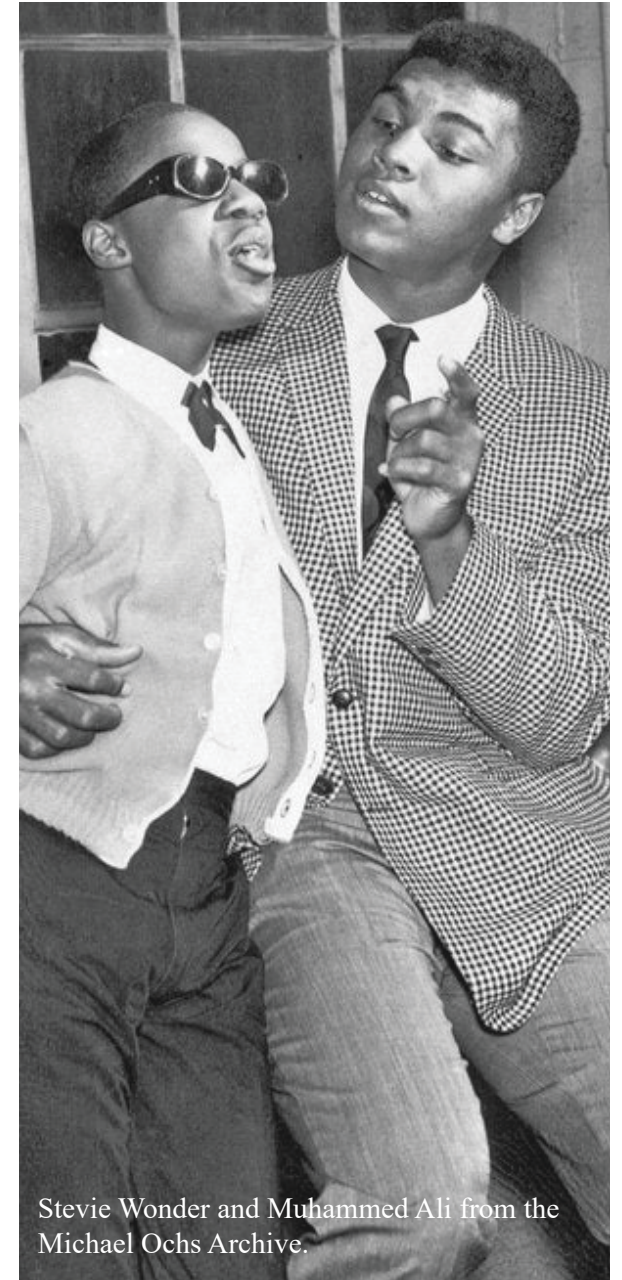
Everybody deserves a smile. Everyone is a VIP. Spread love Venice Improvisers.

I welcome your input. Gerry Fialka Laughtears.com Join us Sunday, Nov 14 at 7pm for the Venice-based PXL THIS Toy Camera Film Festival - our 31st year, live on YouTube. Lo-Fi Hi-Jinx. Electronic Folk Art.

1= Every SUNDAY in Santa Monica from 2-6ish, fun in the sun = free JAZZ concert on grassy park 2 blocks south of Ocean Park on Barnard Way (at the corner of very small street= Sea Colony Drive) = next to Basketball courts in front of 16th floor condos - very close to the Ocean. <https://www.bill-toddmusic.com/>

2= Every Sunday in Santa Monica from 3 - 5 free BLUES at <https://www.ashlandhill.com/> 2807 Main St, Santa Monica, CA 90405 - outside in their parking lot <https://www.facebook.com/darrylcarrieremusic/> <https://www.celsosalim.com/celsoanddarryl>

3= Every Saturday in Venice on the Boardwalk at Dudley from apprx 1:30 - 4:30 free Soul&RnB&-Funk <https://www.facebook.com/ThePhysixxs/>



Stevie Wonder and Muhammed Ali from the Michael Ochs Archive.



Merle Rebeca Anderegg-Pulido

We are thrilled to share that Merle Rebeca Anderegg-Pulido was born on August 24th at 3:36pm with a full head of dark spiky hair and newborn blue-grey eyes that stare, a fighting spirit, hilarious personality, and an undercurrent of utter calm.

Merle joined us here despite everything, in fact because of everything, against the oppressor, for radicality and justice.

Merle joined us here when we drove to the hospital with a broken taillight, broken headlight, and expired plates, and we did not get pulled over by the police, arrested by the police, or shot by the police, because wrongly of the color of our skins.

Merle joined us here through the healthcare system, its technologies, and pages-long roster of specialists, worked for her, wrongly though not for every child.

Merle joined us here when cooking a meal at home did not seem possible and we did not fear where our next meal would come from, as someone else is always cooking for others and wrongly not for their own family.

Merle joined us when we did not pay the rent that should have been cancelled and a class of people were ready to stand in solidarity to say: We protect each other.

Merle joined us here when all the systems did fail us and it was the community, our neighbors, and relatives that stepped in to hold us up. She came home to Venice.

Merle joined us here, we hope, to come fiercely at us when we slack.

But we aren't fools and we cannot own a child's mind.

As Kahlil Gibran tells us, parents may give children our love but not our thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. Instead parents are the bows from which children as living arrows are sent forth. Go Merle and don't stop.

Parenting Groups

Well Baby Center
12316 Venice Blvd.
Mar Vista, CA 90066
310.402.2229 ext 105
www.wellbabycenter.org



Emily Winters goes to court to testify in the prosecution of tagger FATSO for tagging her mural at Park and Ocean Front Walk.

Emily was called to court to give testimony in the prosecution of a tagger who tagged her Endangered Species Mural at Park and Ocean Front Walk.

There was a second plaintiff, whose business office was allegedly tagged by FATSO. The tagging was always “FATSO” in a recognizable if barely legible style. FATSO allegedly attacked the workers that the second plaintiff had hired to paint over the

continued on page 10



Venice Community Housing Jazz Festival was Fabulous.



Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Becky Dennison, Gerry Fialka, Suzy Williams, Maxine Waters, Camille Cordovar, Genevieve Cordova, Emily Winters, Mike Bonin. Photos by Sheri Determan

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Venice America — continued from page 3

they'd say the place was already rented. Many times a tenant would pose as the manager to keep him from renting at their building. We were lucky, that his wife, the lovely Shirene Zahedhi had known an African American landlord that owned three small cottages on Broadway, and Stan and Shirene and their kids took the rear, I was in the middle with my first baby and another multiracial friend of theirs with their first child took the front home. We had a lot of baby time and music in between our daily hustle in those days. Grew food and planted trees in the yard as Shirene had formed a tree-planting of 99 fruit trees that needed to be planted where your neighbors could share the fruit. It was an amazing time.

Although Stan Mitchel focuses on his personal journey as an introduction to the film, the film is far more than that. It is an anthology of a rare time. When rents were low and artists had a thriving community. Where rich patrons and the local middle class engaged with the artists and the average person valued something unique and original. Then the rule on the boardwalk was that you had to make it by hand and be working on something there and then. It was set up to be a cultural exchange, and it was very successful at drawing crowds. This was a unique time where the Universal Energies converged in Venice and the Gods smiled down on the Creativity and Innovation going on. There was a purpose because you could work hard developing your talent, produce something, and sell it. You could work hard enough that you could rent a place with another fellow artist and set up a base. That is an amazing phenomenon that is the furthest from reality in the Venice of today. And the Silicon Beach crowd has little idea of how much it lost and how much is missing from their current cultural tide trying desperately to get into a groove. Venice developed an original sound, an original beat, an original jam and it was coloring the whole of the city. It flourished throughout the Ocean Front Walk through the Drum Circle. It was not simply a four-beat drone but a spaceship ascending into the cosmos with a thirteen-layered syncopated beat that played the drummer and danced the dancer into a Revelatory Trance of Expansion and Liberation. It was less about the leader and more about the collective. And it was powerful. And yes, it was full of ego and thievery and trickster hustlers, as is any collective endeavor. And it was deliberately destroyed by petty power and control and quick cash in real estate schemes. And it destroyed the chance



for future generations to experience that energy. You can feel it at festivals sometimes, but it is planned and coordinated and costs money and time in travel expenses. This was right here, free and spontaneous. This was true Liberation and Healing. The Collective was bigger than any single person or force and it blew your mind for free and for the better. I never had any desire to travel anywhere in those days, as everything and everybody was in Venice. There was no need to see another culture; I just had to walk ten feet to find a whole other experience. It was the greatest and most successful genuinely American experience anywhere, and only a remnant of it remains. All competing to monetize what's left of it.

And yet, there are still those drawn by the history of Venice, the weather, the ocean, and they come to create a life out of the little they have, hoping for a chance. It's a beautiful thing when one spots that energy. Culture Heals is the essence of this film and the lesson of being a Venetian; never forget the Wheel of Culture!

Stan's Venice America while being full of free spirits of all walks of life; some from the streets and self-taught, some from the halls of Ivy League Universities; some famous celebrities, but all were equally part of the community of Venice, spinning out from the hood of Ghost Town, and walking along the Venice Ocean Front Walk and vibing in that mysterious drum circle. This historic star-studded powerhouse film is not to be missed. You'll be hearing from

Lisa Bonet, the legendary Gregory Hines, Jackson Brown, Tricky the DJ, Gary Dourdan, a few cameos of Don Cheadle, and Machete. But they are just some of the local free spirits who once called Venice America their home.

7 • October 2021 • FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD
Dancers at the Venice Car Show Fundraiser for the Venice Mexican American Traquero Monument
Photos by Brian Averill



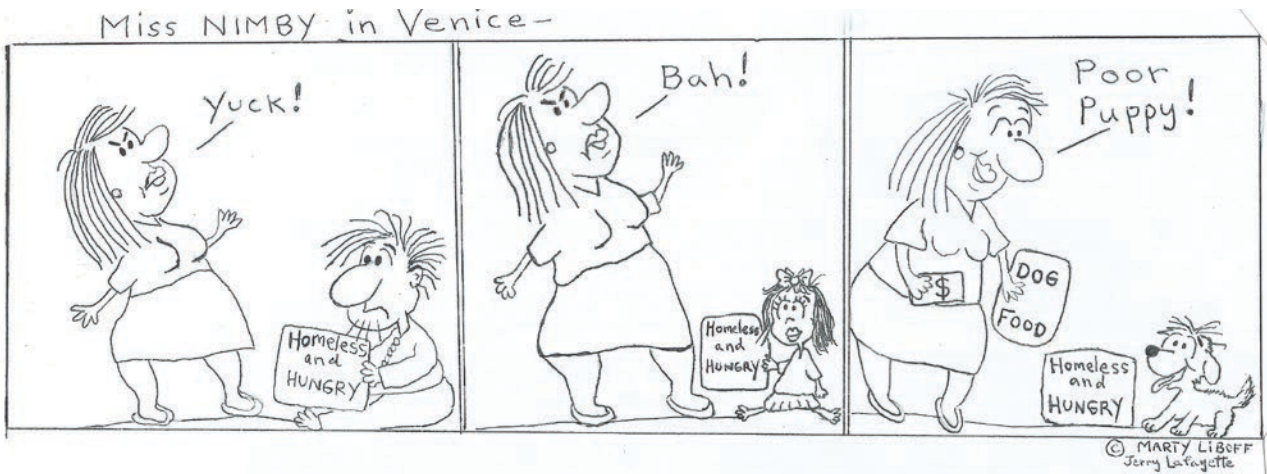
It’s Marty-Palooza Time!

I LEFT MY HEART IN VENICE BEACH
(sung to, 'I Left My Heart in San Francisco')
marty liboff

The loneliness of San Francisco
seems somehow sad & too gay.
The weather is too hot or cold in New York
so I'll just visit some day.
In Vegas I lost all my money
and it was far too hot & sunny.
So I'm going home to my city by the bay...
I left my heart in Venice Beach
high on pot, it calls to me.
To be where little expensive bars
drunk I climb halfway to the stars.
The morning fog may chill the air
I don't care.
My love waits there in Venice Beach
above the dirty
and polluted sea.
When I come home to you Venice Beach
Your golden sun will shine for me...

I left my heart in Venice Beach
where the Doors, sing to me.
To be where vendors line the walk
and homeless and billionaires talk.
Watching sexy gals in bikinis
and seagulls flyin over palm trees
I love to stare, I don't care.
My love waits there in Venice Beach
with bikes, skateboards & surfers in the sea.
When I cum home to you Venice Beach
I'll have fun in the sun for me...

NEPTUNE'S KINGDOM -marty liboff-
America from sea to shitty sea
filled with human shit & pee.
Our ancestors crawled from the sea onto earth
the ancient oceans gave us birth.
We've turned our life giving ocean
into a filthy garbage bin.
Neptune's Kingdom has become a toilet
dumping all kinds of crap into it.
When you go swimming at the beach
better wash off with lots of bleach.
The glistening, diamond waves wave
we dump chemicals and turn it into a grave.
The waves roar and hiss
we are poisoning the whales and fish.
Polluting the seas is a sin
killing off the fish and plankton.
We kill all the plankton and sea weed
that make the oxygen we need.
Fools think the oceans so big
miles fucked by a leaking ship or oil rig.
Gigantic nets kill everything in the sea
so all that's left is our waste & pee.
We are drowning the world in pollution
we need all our science to find a solution.
Stop dumping chemicals and pesticide
that's how many sea animals died.
Recycle all our plastic waste
fish and turtles think it's food to taste.
More money for modern sewage plants
money for clean environment grants.
Instead of dumping garbage & oil by the ton
build clean ships sailing without pollution.
Stop over fishing
love for Mother Earth we must sing.
A seahorse and turtle are poisoned and dies
the living soul of the Earth cries.
Our relatives are the fish, whales and seals
octopus, dolphins, crabs and eels.
Eco systems are complex and wonderful
let's all keep them clean and beautiful.
If we don't love Neptune's Kingdom
then we humans are stupid and dumb.
So when we take our kids to the beach
it is care for the seas we must teach.
Into this Life we are hurled
we are the guardians of our world.



OUR TENT WILL BE SOMEWHERE
(sung to SOMEWHERE from West Side Story)
by- marty liboff & Jerry Lafayette- 2021

Sometime...Someday...Somewhere...
There's a place for us
Somewhere a place for us
Peace and quiet and open air
waits for us somewhere-
There's a place for us
but not on Venice beach
This time they've kicked our tents
off the beach
Sometime... Somewhere...
Someone will care-
Somewhere we'll find a new way of living
We'll find a way NIMBYS & cops
will become forgiving
Sometime there will be
compassion, understanding & love...
Sometime, Someday-
There's a place for us
A time and place for us
Take my hand and I'll take you there
Take my hand and we'll put our tent there
Sometime... Someday... Somewhere.....

BIRDS AT VENICE BEACH -marty liboff
Seagulls flyin by the Venice shore
they got no money but they ain't poor.
Seagulls love to eat fish
or pizza or any kind of tasty dish.
Seagulls yell caw caw
it's hard to tell which one's their ma & pa.
Seagulls fly around
they poop on your head or the ground.
Pigeons are called beach rats
they don't wear hats or spats and sing scats.
Pigeons eat bread, cookies & chips
they like crumbs and avocado dips.
Pigeons can be kind of dumb
they even swallow bubble gum.
Pigeons walk around and say coo coo
they'll eat lots & then go poo poo.
Sparrows are very small
they say cheep cheep when they call.
Sparrows are very fast
they're so tiny a loaf of bread will last.
Sparrows are cute & adorable
but a hungry cat is trouble.
Sparrows nest in a tree
I see them poop but not pee.
Pelicans fly together over the sea
they don't live in a tree.
Pelicans have huge beaks
their beaks are so big they look like freaks.
Pelicans can stuff in tons of fish
that they think are delish.
Pelicans into the ocean they dive
like sushi their fish is raw & even alive.
Venice beach has many birds
just watch out for falling turds.

LOVE
(a Toot's style reggae song) Marty Liboff
Freedom, Freedom, Freedom
is what we want
Love, Love, Love
is what we need
let your soul be freed-
So many in jail
unable to get bail.
Racism, bigotry, hate
gotta change before it's too late.

War, War, War
what's it for
only death & gore.
Change, Change, Change
may be uncomfortable & strange.
Time, Time, Time
goes by so fast
nuthin will last.
Change with the Time
sing this song
stop doin wrong
write a poem & rhyme.
Love, Love, Love
is sent from above.
Put Love in your soul & heart
it's Time we start.
Kindness, compassion & charity
is such a rarity
and Love, Love, Love
is what we need.
Love, Love, Love...

USA -MOISHE FORTZ-
USA, USA, USA,
we need to pray for you this day.
What a mess we're in
hate, racism, poverty, sin.
Half a percent has half the wealth
while so many homeless in bad health.
Mary & Joseph were homeless as JC was born
yet the homeless we hate & scorn.
Police shoot & beat poor & minorities
their mothers cry in the cities.
Millions of guns sold for a thrill
then nuts shoot & kill.
Money is our god
yet robbing & cheating we think odd?
The rich only want more & more
America has become a whore.
We force other counties to our will
then print more money to pay the bill.
We've more people in jail than anywhere
because our news and TV try and scare.
Trillions spent on our military
the military industry laughs with glee.
Pollution from industry & cars
our land full of chemicals & tars.
We pave over every tree
so the air stinks in the city.
Republicans & Democrats hate each other
they've forgotten to love one another.
America, land of the free
from sea to shiny sea full of shit & pee.
What will be we don't know
great wonders or atomic bombs will blow.
We need a new revolution of awareness
love, compassion & caring to end the mess.
Our hearts filled with understanding & empathy
love, respect & sympathy.
Love everyone like our children
move ahead and not be stuck in what has been.
It is a new time a new day
only love will point the right way.

DREAMS marty liboff
Haunted by my Dreams
my soul cries and screams.
Terrors in the night
bring out every fear and fright.
The Dead return
in Heaven or in Hell I burn.
My dead mother comes upstairs
my dead aunt cooks and cares.
My long gone dad watchin TV (continued next page)

my dear dead cousin I see.
Me & my dead friend chasing gals
or hangin with long lost pals.
Can't find my car, my classroom, my home
in a crazy dream world I roam.
Monsters and Martians chase
I'm in a dangerous car race.
Swimming or crashed in a boat
desperately trying to stay afloat.
Riding my bike down a hill & can't stop
being chased by an angry cop.
Someone shoots me in the chest
I'm being buried & laid to rest.
My girlfriend leaves me for another
the Dead & old friends are with us forever.
Sometimes I eat a big feast
then attacked by a giant beast.
My dear mom & dad still give advice
the girl I loved cold as ice.
Sexy girls want to have sex
then I'm eaten by a Tyrannosaurus Rex.
I'm lost and can't find my Way
so sometimes I'm afraid to hit the hay.
Dreams are nice, depressing, sweet & scary
shows us us our fears and what to be wary.
Our soul is open and bare
when we awaken dreams fly up in the air.
When the sun rises most of us forget
afraid to search our id and fret.
Our dreams can influence our Life
our subconscious giving peace or strife.
It is good to face our fears
all the sorrows, horrors and tears.
Remember your Terrors in the Night
so maybe we can heal our pain & fright.
Haunted by my Dreams
my soul cries and screams.

THE DANCE OF LIFE Marty Liboff
(to dancing Cathy)
Spread your Love
from above.
It is yours.
It is mine.
I want to make you mine
with a song & a rhyme
Dance around
to the music sound.
Hear the beat
move your feet.
Dance for we only have the moment
then our Time is spent.
In the Beginning was a sound
and the Universe was found.
Then was the Word
and from then on music was heard.
Dance, dance, dance right now
doesn't matter if you know how.
God bless your Soul
Life takes its toll.
Save your Soul
with Rock & Roll.
You may have nuthin at all
with music we can still have a ball.
Life is a dance and song
sing & dance and nothing can go wrong.
Love is in the air
your love is so precious and rare.
The sun shines and today is ours
with beautiful music our love soars.
Dance around
to the music sound.
Hear the beat
move your feet.
And dance, dance, dance...

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2021 marty liboff
It's a new year
say goodbye 2020 & shed a tear.
Sing out 2020 is done
rejoice with love in 2021.
2020 so many Covid patients died
friends and relatives cried.
It's a new Time
a new song, a new rhyme.
A new President we hope is good
we pray he does what he should.
Our world has so many troubles

pollution, floods, drought & volcanoes bubbles.
Diseases spread and kills
unemployment and people can't pay their bills.
Nationalism, communism, capitalism, socialism
wars over every schism.
Republicans and Democrats can't get along
they should hug and smoke a bong.
Religious & racial strife and hate
for humanity is it too late?
We say goodbye to last year
so many problems and so much fear.
But 2020 wasn't all lame
our Dodgers and Lakers won the game.
The old year comes to an end
pray for the blessings God will send.
A promise of a brighter tomorrow
with happiness and less sorrow.
It's a new year and let's pray
our world finds love this new day...
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

LA DE DIE marty liboff
(sung to a fast klezmer beat)
Die de die die die de die die
la de die die la de die die
I'm gonna die
die de die die de die die de die die
you're gonna die
die de die die de do die de do die
we're all gonna die
we're all gonna die
la de die die la de die die
in a car crash
die de die die dum de die die
from a heart attack
la de die die la de die die
cancer
die de die die la de die die
shot by crooks, cops and nuts
die de die die die de do die
in a war
die de do die dum de do die
Someday we'll all be dead
dead de do die die de do die
any moment we may die
dum de do die dum de do die
so ya might as well be happy
la de die la de die die die
I'm gonna die
dum de do die dum de do die
you're gonna die
die de die die dum de do die
we're all gonna die
la de die la de do dum die die die..

VENICE WOMAN marty liboff
(as sung to the Doors, 'L.A. Woman')
Well, I just got into Venice about an hour ago,
Took a look around, see which way the joints blow
Where the rich girls in their Venice condos.
Are you a yuppy little lady in the City of Uptight?
Or just another lost angel? City of Night, City of
Light,
City of Blight, City of Fright, woo, cum on!
Venice woman, L.A. woman, Venice woman, Sun-
days afternoon,Venice woman, Fundays afternoon,
Venice woman, Sundaze afternoon. Drive through
your sub burps into your blues, sucking your brews,
yeah, into your news, Jews, dues, into your zoos,
ohhh yeah!

I see your chicken is burnin. Chicken tacos and
salsa hot like fire. If they say I never loved them,
you know they are a fryer liar. Drivin down your
Fleaways. Windward alleys roam. Cops in cars. Rip
off bars. Never saw a woman so alone, so stoned,
yeah, so needin a loan, on the street called Ozone.
Motel money. Drug madness. Let's change the rude
from bad to madness. Mr. Mojo risin, Mr. Ho Ho
risin, Mr. Mo Woe risin, Mr. Mo Smoe risin, Got
to keep surprisin, Mr. Assho risin, Mr. Mo Foe
risin, Mr. Mo Flow risin, Gotta Mo Jello raisin, Mr
Hello risin, I gotta keep on ridin, hidin, hidin, ridin,
skateboard ridin, gone bike ridin, Well, ridin, ridin, I
gotta woah, ohhh yeah! Ohhh yeah!

Well, I got into Venice about an hour ago,
Took a look around, pee and see which way the farts

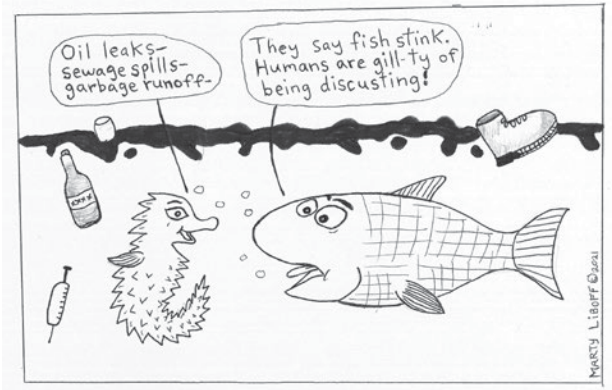
9 • October 2021 • FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD
blow
Where the hippie girls in their Venice bungalows.
Are you a lucky little lady in the City of Spite?
Or just another lost angel? City of Night, City of
Slight, City of Blight, City of Fright. Woah yeah!
Ohhh yeah!
L.A. woman, Venice woman, Venice woman, you're
my woman, L.A. woman, Venice woman, cum on!

CALIFORNIA SCREAMIN marty liboff
(as sung to 'California Dreamin')
All the pot leaves are growin
and in L.A. you're gonna pay
I've been on the Ocean Front Walk
by Venice Bay
I'm not sane or the norm
cause I'm goin to L.A.
California dreamin
on a winter's day.

Stopped in a bar
then I passed out along the way
Well, I got down to pee
and drunk I lost my way
you know the cops like to hold
they know in jail you're gonna stay
California screamin
on such a crazy day.

All the dog & pigeon poops are brown
and I don't want to stay
I've been on the Ocean Front Walk
by Venice Bay
the rents were so high
I couldn't afford to stay
California schemin
and I say Oy Vay!
California screamin
on such a winter's day
California dreamin
on a winter's day...

SHE LOVES ME, SHE LOVES ME NOT
Marty liboff
She loves me, she loves me not
but other guys get her more hot.
She thinks I'm a bore
she loves these other dudes more.
Jack Daniels is cool and refreshing
gets her sexy and undressing.
With Ron Bacardi
she likes to party.
Sexy pirate Captain Morgan
makes her crazy and far gone.
Latin lovers Don Julio & Jose Cuervo
makes her barfo.
With Johnnie Walker
she becomes a big talker.
Just regular guys Bud and Miller
gets her turned on and thrill her.
Smooth Jim Beam
is her greatest dream.
Samuel Adams is her best pal
makes her a wild gal.
I'm not her number one
these other guys give her more fun.
She loves me but I'm way down on her list
makes me sad and pissed.
She loves me, she loves me not
I tried and gave it all I got.
I'm just a stupid pawn
in her drunken con
and maybe it's time to move on.
She loves me, she loves me not
her brain is pickled and has started to rot.
She loves me, she loves me not...





2022 ARNOLD MAEDA MANZANAR PILGRIMAGE GRANT AVAILABLE FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS, DUE JANUARY 7, 2022

by Phyllis Hayashibara

The Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument (VJAMM) Committee and the Manzanar Committee announce the Second Annual Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant for 2022. Maeda, who passed on September 10, 2020, at the age of 94, inspired the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee on which he served as a charter member. Arnold proved to be a willing and articulate public speaker, and invaluable fundraiser. The VJAMM Committee dedicated the VJAMM on April 27, 2017, on the northwest corner of Venice and Lincoln Boulevards, in Venice, California. This marks the spot where some 1,000 persons of Japanese ancestry forcibly removed from Venice, Santa Monica, and Malibu, lined up with only what they could carry, for their day-long bus ride to the American concentration camp at Manzanar. Maeda remembered that day in his quote engraved on the monument:

“Instead of being worried about where we were going, I was obsessed with the fact that I had parted with my constant companion, my pet dog, Boy. For a fifteen-year old, that was unforgettably traumatic.”

Despite that trauma of being forcibly uprooted from Santa Monica, and his family’s losing their home and nursery business, Arnold distinguished himself at Manzanar. He participated in music and drama productions, lifted weights, worked as a kitchen helper and a hospital orderly, and became President of his Senior class of 1944 at Manzanar High School. After World War II ended, Arnold began to volunteer with the Manzanar Reunion Committee, the Santa Monica Nikkei Hall, and in 2010, with the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee. Applicants will get to know Arnold Maeda by finding his many interviews and articles online, and will describe his life and legacy in an essay, short story, or poem.

Applicants will address three or more areas of reflection: who Maeda was and how he became a role model for the Japanese American community; how Maeda’s legacy has influenced the applicant; how the applicant will apply the lessons learned from Maeda to his/her life today; how Maeda’s life in the American concentration camp at Manzanar compares/contrasts with the student’s life today; how collaboration and service to others have affected the applicant’s life; how and why working with the Manzanar Committee on the 2022 Manzanar Pilgrimage will help the applicant better understand Maeda’s life and legacy.

The two recipients of the 2022 Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant will each receive a stipend of \$500 to pay for their attendance at planning meetings and for their participation in the Manzanar Pilgrimage weekend of April 29 – May 1, 2022 (to help with the expenses of transportation, lodging, and food). Deadline for application submissions: January 7, 2022; all applicants will

Mural Tagging Case — continued from page 6
tagging, and FATSO would allegedly aggressively repaint his tag whenever it was removed or painted over.

Background information about Emily’s mural, and SPARC’s repair and protection process, may be found further down.

Emily Winters:

This hearing about restitution came about because the Park Ave. residents encouraged me to make a police report, which I did and asked for restitution.

The county prosecutor sent me a limo, the driver was late, but I had been there before when it was postponed. When I went to the courthouse at LAX, it’s very hard to find your way around there, I had my walker and it was all very empty, only the people who were necessary for this hearing were present, and we all wore masks. I got there late at 8:30am but I knew they weren’t going to start right away, and we didn’t get in until 12:30.

At the hearing the defense was contentious. The Deputy DA took over the case when the DA was late, and she was very protective of me. I would say, “I don’t understand your question.” and she would say to the judge, “The question is unclear.” So I felt pretty good. It’s scary, everybody is looking at you and there is this contention about are you real or not. I think I did very well, I just told the truth, and I said “Yes, there was other graffiti.” We talked about how much money, and I said, “Seven Thousand Dollars that was donated by the community, and it is not my money”. I emphasized that several times, I had to repeat myself several times to the defense, because she didn’t seem to hear, she said somebody else gave her this case, so she was not well versed with the facts.

The Judge was good. She kept asking me to repeat that we had a fiscal sponsor, Venice Community Housing, and the money should go to them for the Venice Arts Council’s Endangered Art Fund. The Judge asked me to explain what each organization is and what they do.

I don’t know what the outcome will be, they just said “Thank you very much.”

I wanted to ask Mr. Mansfield why he tagged my mural, he was sitting reading a book, he was

be notified of the judging results by the end of January, 2022.

To read Leslie Aguilar’s winning essay for the 2021 AM MP Grant, please go to https://mcusercontent.com/bb2c5682efc993074662c30eb/files/3249d6ee-5269-40fd-9567-c680fe1ce69f/AguilarLeslie_Annual_Arnold_Maeda_Grant_.01.pdf Download the Information Packet and Application Form at www.venicejamm.org or <https://manzanarcommittee.org>. Questions may be sent to: am-grant@manzanarcommittee.org

Brian Tadashi Maeda and Arnold Tadao Maeda

obviously anti-everything about the proceedings. Allegedly FATSO is not a ghetto boy, he is from a wealthy family.

Once the testimony was heard, Emily and the second plaintiff left.

The restitution asked for is 7,000 for mural repair, and \$11,000 for the business owner’s tagging removal.

The outcome of the hearing would be posted later.

If the plaintiff is unable to pay, the LA City Restitution fund may be able to pay.

Emily Winters’ iconic mural on the Venice Beach Boardwalk at Ocean Front Walk and Park Ave, ‘Endangered Species’ will be restored next week by SPARC’s Mural Rescue team with support from the Venice Arts Council Endangered Art Fund, local Park Place residences, and the W. S. Scharff Foundation. Muralist and activist Emily Winters painted the mural in 1989-1990 with support from SPARC’s Neighborhood Pride Program. The restoration will repair areas of the work that have been heavily tagged with graffiti. The mural is protected by MuralShield™, a coating that protects public artworks from vandalization and UV damage, which allows for graffiti to be removed without harming the mural underneath.

‘Endangered Species’ depicts how the misuse of technology can harm both the environment and the quality of life for Venice Beach residents. The mural expresses the struggles of the working class, the elderly, and those experiencing homelessness in Venice during a period where the cost of living was rising quickly due to development projects. These issues of displacement and gentrification are still pressing today in Venice Beach and throughout Los Angeles.

Emily Winters co-founded the Venice Arts Council with Suzanne Thompson. She is originally from Illinois, where she received her BFA in drawing and painting at the Art Institute of Chicago. She moved to Southern California in 1963 where she studied with master billboard artist Mario Rueda. The restoration will be supervised by Emily Winters, Genevieve Cordova, Suzanne Thompson, and the SPARC Mural Rescue Team. SPARC carried out a similar restoration of ‘Endangered Species’ with Emily Winters in 2014 with support from the Venice Arts Council Endangered Art Fund.

Music Box — continued from page 4
to pull back-give clubs space to revive their thing-get back on their feet. The Music Box will continue, but not in same capacity (unless we quarantine again). He’s committed to supply music to keep everyone sane.

At the 100th show we partied like it was 1999! Suzy Williams and Michael Jost were a spiritual experience. Every artist wowed the crowd. The grateful audience was a mix of old and young—a rainbow of hungry Venetians out for a good time. It was a fitting climax. I can’t describe how grateful I am to Billy. Being an artist myself, I know what it takes to find a venue to express yourself, and here he’s done it himself, and helped others as well—a true Venice hero!

Billy has been single handedly responsible for keeping the flame burning.

Thank you Billy!! And thank you Music Box!!

I look forward to the next 100 shows!!

To find each week’s location and artists- Music Box Micro Stage on Facebook.

To connect with Billy- stobo@forktonguerecords.com

to watch videos of previous shows - Music Box Micro Stage on YouTube

To experience the range of Billy’s talent- forktonguerecords.com

Remembering Fred Dewey

By Majid Naficy

Today when I received the upcoming-events email from Beyond Baroque Literary Center, I found out that Fred Dewey had passed away. They will have a remembrance for him on Saturday October 22 at 4 pm at Beyond Baroque, Venice. I visited his page in Wikipedia and read that he had died on June 2 2021. According to his obituary in Los Angeles Times it was due to prostate cancer.

Fred was the executive-director of Beyond Baroque from 1996 to 2010. I lived in Venice Beach from 1984 to 1991 and started going to its Wednesday poetry workshop in 1987. Beyond Baroque Books published my first collection of poetry in English, called “Muddy Shoes” in 1999. Fred Dewey wrote a foreword to my book: “...The poetry of “Muddy Shoes” is born of great suffering yet affirms deep dignity and respect for that wider experience of the world, brought here through danger and carved out of solitude and reflection....“ When the City of Venice wanted to remodel Boardwalk and engrave some fragments of poetry in public space, Fred as the executive-director of Beyond Baroque had a role to select these fragments including a stanza from my poem “Ah, Los Angeles” on the intersection of Boardwalk and Brooks. He included me in many poetry readings in Beyond Baroque and other places. Once he came to pick me up with his clunker for a poetry reading at Occidental College. We were late and when we got to the college he took my hand and we ran for ten minutes to get to the auditorium. This poetry reading was part of a movement to revive Los Angeles River, and that’s how a stanza of my poem “The Secret of the River” was etched on an artwork on a bench in Riverfront, Studio City. On March 20, 1998, in celebration of Persian New Year, I hosted a poetry reading at Beyond Baroque with the support of Fred Dewey in which five Los Angeles-based Iranian poets read their poems both in Persian and English. When in February 2001 Louise Steinman wrote a feature story in LA Weekly about my life and poetry, Fred came to my house with a bottle of vodka to celebrate our achievements and he seemed to enjoy rice, chicken and brussels sprouts that I had made for dinner. That night he told me that he saw himself as Lawrence Ferlinghetti, the owner of City Lights bookshop and me as Allen Ginsberg, the poet. I told him that I was fortunate to see Ginsberg six months before his death in LACMA in which he sang William Blake’s “The Tyger” with his friend.

When the Cultural Department of the City of Santa Monica ran a contest for residency in Annenberg Beach House, a letter of recommendation from Fred Dewey dated September 30, 2009 played a role in the outcome: “I believe Majid Naficy is applying to you for a residency. I think he would be a fantastic asset to your program. I have published Majid in the imprint I began, Beyond Baroque Books, in our magazine, and believe him to be one of the more astonishing writers here in Los Angeles. He certainly deserves further recognition, and I believe he is at a perfect moment in his life to make use of this award. His work is timely, and combines a worldly experience with lyricism, drawing on his Persian heritage and infusing the work with a cultural spirit and poetics that Americans sorely need. I know of no writer like Majid, and sincerely hope that you will award this most deserving poet this tremendous opportunity. He is a great and beautiful writer.”

In 2010 Fred came to one of my events at Annenberg Beach House in which my son, Azad, performed his raps and I read my poems. That was the last time I saw him in person, but he kept sending me his inspiring feedback after reading my poems in Iroon.com and other sites. He was sometimes difficult but always good-hearted and generous. I miss him.

October 8, 2021

this paper is a poem

In Spite of Corona

By Majid Naficy

Roofers bang on shingles
Painters climb ladders
And movers carry furniture.
Wherever I go
I see people who
Renew their houses
In spite of Corona.

I am not a prophet of despair
And smile at them.
I have survived a failed revolution
With thousands of executions
And now this pandemic!

September 29, 2021

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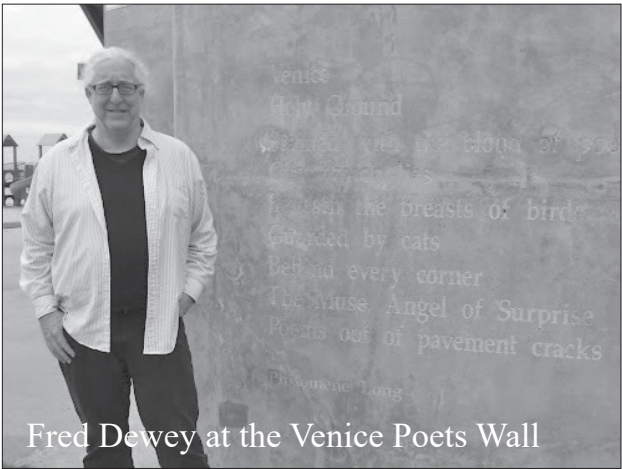
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Fred Dewey at the Venice Poets Wall

VENICE WINDWARD PLAZA POET'S WALL

Venice
Holy Ground
Stained with the blood of poets
City which lies
Beneath the breasts of birds
Guarded by cats
Behind every corner
The Muse, Angel of Surprise
Poems out of pavement cracks

--Philomene Long



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¿TIENES MIEDO DEL DESALOJO?



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THE VENICE WEST

A New Venice Live Music Venue That Celebrates The Old Venice - by CJ Gronner



Hi Venice! It's been a while! I'm still handling family affairs in Minneapolis, but when I heard there was a new cool live music venue opening this month in Venice, I had to get the scoop. The Venice West is set to open for business this October 8th with a live show featuring Matt Costa. Venice has needed more live music venues for ages, and The Venice West is bringing that to Lincoln Boulevard in the space that was previously The Witz End.

My friend (and former fellow Venice Neptune Queen!), Kaycee Smith, is the Director of Marketing and Community Outreach for The Venice West, so you know there are going to be locals up in there, and you know there's going to be good music. In the first week open alone they've got the aforementioned Costa, then back to back shows with The Samples (10/9) and The Wailers (10/10)! That's a pretty stacked opening week, Dude. The team behind The Venice West is pretty stacked as well. Co-owners Rob Lissner and Allen Sanford are also the team behind the Beach Life Festival in Redondo Beach that is one of the best festivals I've ever covered, right there in the sunshine on the sand next to the Pacific. Sanford also owns Saint Rocke in Hermosa Beach, where we've all seen many a great gig, so you know The Venice West is going to be a real good time. Looking ahead, I see The English Beat, The Untouchables/Brobots, Donovan Frankenreiter ... seriously, this is gonna be good, Venice.

I spoke to Lissner and Smith about the venue, as, frankly, I really wanted to be sure that it wasn't going to be a situation where douchey gentrifiers think they can come in and claim Venice, and piggyback on to the coattails of the cool that was established here long before they came. Well, I can assure you that Lissner and Company are being extremely thoughtful and respectful about Venice and its history, and stressed to me repeatedly that they want this spot to be for the entire community, where all feel welcome ... and you might even learn something about Venice you didn't know about before.

Lissner has been doing his Venice research in the four years since he bought the space, deep diving into the era that saw The Venice West Café (in the old Sponto Gallery space) thriving with all the Beat poets, artists, and musicians of the day in the scene that was Venice West. He really wanted to pay tribute to that history and all the supercoolness that came out of that key moment in Venice time, and as permits and neighborhood hearings, Coastal Commission appeals, and Covid and all that kept pushing the opening, he had the time to be very thorough in his research. He has been in talks with Venice historian, Gerry Fialka, to create an evening of Venice



history. We talked about getting Beyond Baroque involved and hosting Poetry nights at The Venice West. They also very much want to get kids from Venice Arts, Venice High, School of Rock, the Boys and Girls Club, whoever might have a need, to use the space for performance or rehearsals during the daytime. He's over-paying on Ebay for old photos and posters to adorn the walls, and is particularly proud of an original Earl Newman he scored. As he should be.

I was happy to hear that they are putting an emphasis on hiring locals, both as staff and entertainment. GM Carl Roberts ("Rever-and Carl") has been on the scene for ages, and their talent booker, Adam Spriggs, has a solid history of getting the good national



acts for his projects like the KAABOO Festival, as well as booking local favorites like Christopher Hawley and Tom Freund, who are already on The Venice West's calendar.

They're going for a supper club feel, with tables and dining from 5-8 pm, and then the tables will be moved aside for show time. Diego Balan is heading up the food program, and from what I'm hearing about the pre-opening tastings, the food at The Venice West is going to be bomb. Who doesn't love dinner and a show? Though Lissner and Sanford could have opened their venue anywhere, it was very important to Lissner that it be in Venice, where he has lived for the past two decades. Anyone who was present for The Stronghold days knows how fun that was, and Lissner is going for some of those kind of vibes to return.

"To me, Venice has always been art, culture, and eccentricity based, and I've seen some of that fade in recent years. I really think music can help bring some of that back. I want people to know that Venice history, while being cool and respectful to it," explained Lissner, in a statement that I can fully endorse. The Venice West looks to be a place where the community can always find great music, good vibes, and tasty eats. Smith envisions it being the spot where you can say, "Hey, let's hit The Venice West - I don't know who's playing, but you know it's going to be good." A real Venice hang ... for REAL Venice. I can't wait.

The Venice West

1717 Lincoln Boulevard (at Superba)

Venice, CA 90291

www.TheVeniceWest.com

Photos courtesy of Kaycee Smith and Paul Gronner.

