

FREE VENICE

SINCE 1968

BEACHHEAD

CHEE WAW WAW
DEC 2006 #303

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Let's Get Together And Feel All Right by Frank Strasser

One miserably hot August afternoon I struggled to complete a painting of the Venice Canals. I'd painted an eclectic cast of quirky characters in trendy homes, but still I wanted a central image to capture the elusive spirit of this Bohemian haven. It was a typically hectic, sizzling hot Summer Sunday, with the usual hordes flocking to the coolest spot on the blue planet, or at least LA. I often resent the insane mob of tourists who invade our seaside space for a few intrusive hours only to vanish, leaving greasy plastic fast food residue in their wake. But on this particular day one of them in particular proved a blessing. Frustrated, I was about to sign my canvas and call it quits, when a car cruised past on Pacific Avenue blasting One Love. Inspired, I set out to capture the beautiful simplicity of Bob Marley's ballad in paint in the image depicted above. So like da mon sez: "Let's get together and feel all right" this holiday season!!! Feel free to view more of my original paintings at: www.frankstrasser.com

The War Grinds On
U.S. Dead 2884 - 62 in Nov. 2006
U.S. Wounded 21778 - 767 in Nov.
Iraqi Security and Civilian Deaths 1757 in Nov.
Iraqis dead due to this war 48979 to 60000

AN IMMOVEABLE FEAST

Late Breaking Lincoln Place News Page 3

John O'Kane

It's Sunday in Venice, California. The South Beach Café mid-morning. I catch a glimpse of faces familiar but distorted through the tobacco haze, some mumbling their first greetings on what promises to be another day in paradise at land's edge.

Leon's en-tranced by the breakfast special, as if the random meeting of cajun fries, sourdough muffins and splats of sunnyside-up give him the bare outlines of the Buddha, the angles joined in a sublime cessation of self-versus-things...

Chloe gives us a freeze frame of tie-dyed ecstasy as she blows by on her skateboard, doing a quick boomerang. She enters the field of trance for a brief moment before cracking the Buddha...

Sabine is distracted by Chloe's entrance but quickly turns to her right as George ambles toward her table. They met on the Boardwalk in the heat of the first big Vietnam War protest, marrying in the nude at daybreak weeks later on the pier, parenting their share of memories now dispersed in the shadows of corporate America...

As they fantasize renewing vows, Zack breaks the plane. He cycles the tables flagging a dogeared, coffee-splattered badge of Howl, eyeballing Sabine's yellow ribbon. He's euphoric about reading his new work at the Bistro, his destination a few doors down. He sits briefly at Van's table, still edgy from the yellow glow, then jerks out onto the Boardwalk, shadowing us with celestial advice while rushing to take in the sun's full stream...

Van tunes his guitar with nicotine nerves, gulping his imported double-latte for fuel as a few early-arriving tourists carefully tiptoe between tables protecting their croissants. He claims to be the missing Door, performing occasionally with the early group in the ramshackle hide-aways around Westminster Ave. He's been collecting royalties on his 15 minutes of fame, jamming at the Town House and other revival roosts, riffing about all those chicks...

One sits along the north side of the café in the shadows glued to the overheated conversation at the tarot table across the Boardwalk. Marci whetted her appetite for the collective in one of Venice's first biker gangs during the 60s, finding her niche in various communes over the

Continued on page 6



BEACHHEAD COLLECTIVE:
Karl Abrams, Rex Butters, C.V. Beck, Carol Fondiller, Don Gaegan, Yolanda Miranda, Jim Smith, Erica Snowlake, Judith Martin-Straw, Alice Stek

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.

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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
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or tear it into
teeny tiny
bits
— by the Slumgoddess

*Pen: Antique Term for Word Processor or Computer

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Solomon's in Town to Stay

by erica snowlake

bad boys bad boys watcha gonna do?
watcha do when they come for you?

Karl told me he saw William Lee Turner, a.k.a. Solomon, the Snake Man, being forcefully arrested last Saturday night by a cottillon of cops under the American flag by the post office. He heard Solomon calling passersby to witness for him, to remember yet another injustice in our daily bread. I was concerned, Solomon, like his namesake, is one of the wisest and most peaceful of Kings, his positive spirit and will to stand up and represent righteousness is what's keeping Venice alive. Hey, he's in the Lonely Planet's Guide to California as being a main attraction of the Beach. He's currently enduring being actively targeted and ongoing blatant harassment from the Venice lapd.

Beachhead: when did you first honor Venice with your presence!?

Solomon: going on 17 years now. I grew up in Watts, as a kid I dreamed of living at the beach. I went through the Maxine Waters entrepreneurial program. I began selling political t-shirts in Venice, (currently banned), mostly of Martin Luther King, Bob Marley, and Nelson Mandela. Our #1 selling t-shirt said Love Sees No Color, Racism Hurts Everyone. This was in the Reagan-Cocaine Era, pre-Rodney King. Even then we were swarmed by cops, shutting us down after we spent years building a business. I turned to taking photographs of human and cultural significance for the next years. My present show was conceived in 2001 after finding my first snake washed ashore by the rocks between Surfers and Venice Beach. Soon after a Haitian historian visiting Venice told me he had found the mate of my snake at a garage sale! Sure enough, they were identical, except the scales of the first had been smoothed by the sea. They both had Made in China 1989 on their bellies. Oddly 1989 was the Year of the Snake, as well as 2001.

Beachhead: Halo, myself, and Solomon share a gaze of the building formerly housing Benway Records. It is adorned with twining snakes in the shape of the caduceus. What do the snakes mean to you, Solomon? (the snakes fooled me into believing they were real the first time I saw them!)

Solomon: symbols of miracles and justice. Healing. Cobras are especially sacred to the Hindu Lord Shiva. I like the powerful living surrealism of statues as triggering a hieroglyphic response in the human psyche.

Beachhead: Solomon performs adept yogic postures atop a ladder clad simply in a loincloth. As tourists will attest, the observance of one gracefully engaged in balance and symmetry is breathtakingly beautiful and inspiring.

Solomon: Money coming in covers basic costs of my food for the day. Photos go around the world, affirming Venice's rep as a free expression paradise. I play guitar and flute as well as balance on basketballs and tricycles. Betty of Betty and Eldon White, (famous Boardwalk entertainers), gave me the idea of performing semi-naked. "You'll make more



Yogi Solomon, Powers of the Most High (with confiscated ladder and eucalyptus staff).



From Venice, California, A Centennial Commemorative in Postcards, 1905 - 2005 by Delores Hanney



dough", she said! I'm good on a ladder after helping my uncle with painting jobs the past twenty years.

Beachhead: You Rock! Let's get to the impetus of the current sitch in Venice.

Solomon: Since the Lottery went into effect nearly two years ago, the suppression of locals artists and vendors has become epidemic. The general idea is to keep us mired in fines and court appearances to the extent we are incapacitated to work or even feed ourselves. It has been my Destiny to overcome limiting social and poverty issues all my Life. My family descended from Oklahoma and Louisiana plantations, Baptists who believe God is Love. My mother and aunts have died from heart and kidney failures, my own daughter contracted spinal meningitis at one month old. I am dedicated to finding the healing solutions we all need to become one people.

Beachhead: one people rising out from under oppression!

Solomon: here are folders containing ten incidents where I've been ticketed or received warrants. I am being particularly singled out by Offrs. Putnam and Curtis. They are attempting to traumatize me and break my LifeSpirit. Beachhead: Describe some of their tactics. Solomon: They stake me out, constantly citing me tickets for riding my unicycle, stop me in mid-show in front of big crowds to do so. They follow me to my van, which I've been parking in the same spot for 13 years, wait til I go inside, then proceed to arrest me on the charge of sleeping in my van. I've paid over \$1,000 in impound fees in the past year. Putnam once even deliberately pushed my van over into the red line just to get it impounded. They show up with no warning, trump up a charge, and send me to jail. The other day I am riding bicycles on the bike path with my girlfriend Greta when we pulled off to chat with Ibrahim. Within minutes Putnam and Curtis ticket me for riding on the boardwalk, which I didn't do, (and tons of people do all the time). Greta asks why she didn't receive a ticket and they promptly wrote her one. Then in the process of handing over my license, Putnam threatens me with a charge of assault on supposedly cutting his finger with

DITTO THE DEMOS?

John O'Kane

The demos are back but what's their comeback plan this time? If they'd shown some savvy in 2000 and demanded a real recount of Florida, they wouldn't need one. The prospect of a Gore-Lieberman regime looks mighty tantalizing from hindsight, but wait a minute! Would 9/11 have remade it into a version of what we have now? Of course 9/11 might not have happened in the first place with an administration pushing the multilateralism of the Clinton years. The arrogance of the new Bush administration toward other nations fueled an already volatile international situation where victims of our aggression were returning blows against the empire, as Chalmers Johnson has shown. Bin Laden after all had been our ally against the Soviets in Afghanistan, turning to dastardly deeds only after being snubbed. But then the Clinton team was not exactly practicing group therapy in the 90s when its loose canons were bombing pharmaceutical plants and killing innocent civilians.

The idea that the demos are more different than the repubs is an attractive one. But when 9/11 did happen, they did little to brake the pathological militarization. Deluded by false intelligence like everyone else. Yet had they got religion earlier 150,000 Iraqi civilians might still be alive!

The demos and repubs are mostly a team and it's hard to see recent events at the polls as much more than a family feud. If the demos had captured the big house in 2000, and 9/11 didn't happen, the same ole disastrous neoliberal policies would likely have been perpetrated on the populace; bad globalization, with the unfree-trading multinational conglomerates having their way with us, would likely have been the order of the day; military budgets for defending us against the post-Cold War rash of new enemies (one of Clinton's first gestures!) would likely have remained at their epidemic levels; the corporate purchase of all candidates would likely not have given way to real campaign finance reform; the anti-anti-trust movement begun in the 80s, and what allows the merger-gobbling corporate order to continue its attack against the lower orders and spike inequality, would likely have gone on as usual.

Sure, the givebacks to the richly-endowed would likely not have been as extreme. But the demos just don't represent the masses out there who refuse to participate in the system. The numbers who didn't vote in this election tell a much more relevant story. The demos' managed centrism in the past has served to block what's truly needed, the emergence of a third party system like what all other advanced industrial nations have where voter turnout is nearly universal. A party that speaks for the excluded will never emerge in the current winner-take-all system. America's love affair with lotteries reflects more than desperation by the destitute. And such a change is hardly in the interests of either party. But this is what is necessary for the Peace and Freedom Party and others to emerge and help balance the democratic scales.

So if the demos are really serious, forget bipartisan cooperation. They should start sending administration perps to The Hague, give their corporate endowments back while sponsoring short and commercial-free elections in the months to come, and make the rebate-rentiers repair the budget!



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Photos by Rex Butters



In late **breaking news** today, December 4, 2006, Judge Collins, Department B, Santa Monica Court, has decided that the **remaining tenants of Lincoln Place are going to have a trial** and it is now scheduled for January 8, 2007 at 8:30 AM.

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JAYA MURAL MOTION, VNC BOARD MEETING

The following are some highlights of the November 21st, meeting of the Venice Neighborhood Council. One item on the agenda was a motion to rescind the approval of funds for the restoration of the JAYA mural, approved a month before. This motion had been brought by C.J. Cole, treasurer, along with yet another resignation. Apparently, this last resignation is going to stick, unlike the other 3 or 4 prior ones. There were overly-effusive expressions of regret from the board along with one friendly "boo" from one of the previous board members. This "boo" was entirely misinterpreted by Ms. Cole and resulted in this person blaming the audience for it and another overly-dramatic outburst stating that "You are the worst people in the WORLD!!!"

Later, the motion to rescind was taken up, along with a motion by Joe Murphy to "lay it on the table". This later motion passed and the issue is now settled permanently.

Phil Raider mentioned casually and quickly and quietly that no longer are they going to print the names or positions taken in the minutes. If you want to know who voted for what, why and so on, you will have to consult the recordings made of these actions. I am not sure this is legal according to the world of DONE.

Elections were held for the Land Use and Planning Committee and the following persons were elected to this board: Robert Aronson – attorney, developer of "recycled" apartments and former member of the Venice Community Planning Advisory Committee, Laini Herrera – senior environmental planner with experience with California Environmental Quality Act issues and public participation in planning meetings, James Murez – former Planning Advisory Committee member that contributed to Venice's land use plan and Specific Plan development, Susan Papadakis – licensed architect and continuing member of the LUPC, Jed Pauker – new to community activism in Venice, he's a computer consultant to a large design firm and participates in the Walk Streets Association, Maury Ruano – a post-graduate architect, developer, and member of Venice Community Housing Corporation's board and Housing Development Committee, Ruthie Seroussi – attorney and director of the Fair Housing Institute, Arnold Springer – former history professor, Arnold was on the North Beach Planning Task Force and represented the old Venice Town Council before the city council and planning commission on area development issues. These persons still must be ratified by the community at a future date.

History of The JAYA Mural

Designed and painted in 1975 by Emily Winters in collaboration with many other artists and community members, the Jaya mural is named from the Sanskrit word for non-violent revolution, peace and victory. It was whitewashed in 1981 but saved by the community and later restored and re-dedicated in 1997. The community recently continued its struggle to preserve the Jaya Mural by successfully securing partial funding from the Venice Neighborhood Council. Today, the Jaya Mural needs graffiti removed, surface repaired and anti-graffiti and preservation coating applications.

Thank you for helping us save Venice murals! www.veniceartscouncil.org



Venice Arts Council serves as a forum for community input on public art, promotes projects that include resident artists and their work, and gives collaborative support to local arts organizations. On May 2, 2006, the Venice Arts Council voted to approve the establishment of the 'Endangered Art Fund' dedicated to preservation of public art works in Venice such as murals, sculptures, and related art works in the public realm. The fund supports the preservation, restoration, and protection of these works of concern to the community and neighborhoods. Preliminary funds will be used to repair and remove the graffiti on the Jaya and Endangered Species murals by Emily Winters, and the Venice Poetry Wall and related shower walls created by Beyond Baroque.



Above: The Jaya Mural with graffiti, photo by Emily Winters. Below are the neighborhood volunteers cleaning off paint that was used to paint out the Jaya Mural.



WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE MURALS OF LOS ANGELES?

Are you appalled by the loss of the legacy of murals in Los Angeles? We need a solid commitment by our city and its citizens to preserve these artworks and help SPARC continue its work to produce, preserve and restore the art form that Los Angeles is known for. Write to the Mayor of Los Angeles and ask him to reinstitute support for this important art form by supporting the funding of SPARC's citywide mural program once again.

For 30 years SPARC has been at the forefront of producing and preserving murals for the City of Los Angeles. Currently, we are facing the loss of Los Angeles' legacy of murals as one mural tagged by youth, after the other is whitewashed by private businesses or simply neglected. We are in one of the most destructive times in mural history in Los Angeles, but whitewashing or tagging of murals is only symbolic of the larger problem of city policies that denigrate the art form. After 15 years of producing and preserving the murals for the city, in 2002 all mural contracts to SPARC were cut by the city, and we are now seeing the aftermath of such a decision that disregarded these works now.



Mural territory has always been off limits for most taggers this is changing. A generation of youth has lost respect for the murals as they have not been educated as to their importance nor have they taken their place as team members hired to work on them. City policy makes marking on the mural the privileged place to tag as the blank wall along side the mural will be cleaned immediately and the mural will not. Hence hit the mural your tag will stay up longer as millions are spent to preserve not art but blank walls.

SPARC has always been a graffiti artist friendly organization, working to provide alternative venues for artistic expression. Those currently tagging for the most part are very different from those who do spray can murals and probably are younger. Therefore, SPARC is proposing a program that works directly with this new generation of taggers, by producing and preserving murals, we can begin to re-dedicate, re-educate and re-energize the LA mural movement and have LA take back its title as the "Mural Capital of the World" now held by the City of Philadelphia which invests 4 million dollars annually in their mural program, making it the friendliest climate for muralism in the country.

Judith F. Baca - Founder/Artistic Director
Debra J.T. Padilla - Executive Director



Change, change and more change, but there's still a stalemate on some central issue- (Could it be the War?) It's really time to decide if we fish or cut bait. (I'm voting to let the bait go-) With lucky Jupiter moving into Sagittarius, (along with a number of other heavenly bodies) religion, philosophy and dreams all get a push in a positive direction.

It's great month to get an early start on the New Year's Resolutions. It only takes six weeks to establish a new habit, so by the time you usually

give up and give in, you'll already be declaring victory. Thinking about our favorite planet, Earth, makes for happier holidays for everyone, so make your gifts tickets, coupons and invitations instead of knick-knacks and boxes and wrapping paper- (Did you realize the American Waste Stream goes up 25% every Christmas? 1/4 more garbage, lots of it red and green wrapping paper) So think about presents that don't take up more space on the shelf. Come to think of it, a very traditional holiday gift is food. It's always the right size, shape and color, and most of us enjoy it every day.

Aries-Kindness and boldness are both qualities you will be bringing out this month. Take a big chance on getting yourself where you want to be, and be gentle to those around you, who may be alarmed at your sudden surge forward.

Taurus- The strength of you "bullishness" can serve you well this month if you remember to keep your temper under control. And stay away from china shops. Shopping online is probably ideal.

Gemini- Your forward momentum may be slowing a bit, but if you keep moving in the right direction, you'll soon be where you want to be. It's not how fast you get there, it's how you feel when you arrive. Book a red-eye and sleep your way home. Cancer- Authority does not seem to be smiling at you-beware of lawsuits, or laws, or suits. Try to keep yourself under the radar, and you'll get more accomplished with less hassle. And throw a coin at the bell-ringers, just for good luck.

Leo- Your love of material possessions could make holiday shopping a drag. If you use the "one for them and one for me" approach, you might max out both your credit and your storage space. Take a tip from the general forecast and get some tickets to a show you can all enjoy, and all will be merry and bright.

Virgo- Holiday pressures are always harder on perfectionists. Focus on the small things- the perfect plate of cookies, the perfect sprig of mistletoe, and let the rest of it just be what it is.

Libra- The realization of one of your biggest hopes could arrive in the mail or on your doorstep, but savor the victory in private. Gloating is not a group activity for a holiday bash, particularly an office party.

Scorpio- While courage is still required, success is almost certain. Keep your nose to the grindstone and know that all your efforts are moving you closer to the goal, and it will be even better than you thought it would be when you get there.

Sagittarius- Your life is about to burst into blossom. So many good things are wanting to happen to you, it might feel like standing in a shower of kisses and congratu-

Continued on page 8

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next decade or so before joining a high desert exurb of bibles and gun-racks virtually gutted in the fires of 1999. She's been living with a sister in town and recently started frequenting the hare krishna center over on Rose Ave... She looks up as Alex brushes her table, dropping leaflets about some meeting next week at a motel near Lincoln and Navy, raving about Malatesta and joining the Black Bloc at next month's anti-war demo in Hollywood. Leon stirs from his adjacent table, as if insulted, spraying the source with a rap of caffeine vapor and coffee-ground projectiles left from the final gulp of his late morning upper, leaving him voided of words. Alex returns a blank stare and jerks left to exit as he hands a leaflet to Malcolm, just piercing the café's southern edge with his new teen trophy...

Malcolm spies the verbal drift thumbs down, pulling his package away from the eruption. Teethed on Alan Watts in the memory gaps between 50s and 60s, he mastered the mute of past and future, finding the whole in strokes of orgiastic holiness. When the buttons, herb, capsules, crystals or any other substances he could score no longer swelled his visions in the 80s, he exchanged them to stake the future, making peace with the NOW by getting high on property inflation.

He bolts as Sarah arrives. A survivor of the mid-60s battles to free Venice from all sorts of institutional harassment, she begins prepping her day's shoot to document the homeless, some still stirring in their roosts along the wall abutting the Boardwalk's western edge where they've staked claim to one of this continent's last real plots of the American Dream...

The South Beach Café sits on the south side of Rose Ave and the Boardwalk at the northern edge of town, a few short blocks from the Santa Monica border and endless development up the coast. To the south swells the bazaar of offerings to tourists and beachgoers, the tattoo parlors, pizza slice vendors, tarot palmers, incense innovators, bodybuilders, t-shirt stands, jugglers, mystical healers and logo-hawkers of every stripe. It stretches all the way to the Washington Blvd. boundary with Marina del Rey. This line is also an extension of the one pier surviving all the changes since founder Abbot Kinney's fantasies about Venice Italy were consummated in 1905.

To the east for a block, sometimes two or more, are idyllic walkway streets running almost seamlessly south to the Circle, the town center and mouth of the original city, forming a solid barrier from there to the southern border. The area just east of this southern bloc of walkways is where the few remaining canals languish. And to the west a wavy sheen of reflective surfaces, green, gray, blue, golden brown, turquoise, peach, whatever the hue of daylight parsed through wind and clouds.

The café repels post-card fables. When the sages and chroniclers of the future look back at this moment from their tracks toward infinity they'll likely miss it. The South Beach will never compete with Abbot's Adriatic adornments, the palatial Doges-replicas, coffee-table snapshots of the umbrella-caped and sun-weary leisure set from the pre-Depression years, or the original canal city's aria-singing gondoliers. And certainly not the goatees and sandals raving and jutting Bird's discs in and around all those famed 50s cafes like the Venice West. It's this café that begs immediate comparison to the South Beach. They're even located on the same square block. The Venice West Café,

established in the late 50s at 7 Dudley Ave, was the original Beat coffeehouse that drew folks from many places and persuasions to experiment with alternative values and lifestyles. It was the first in a network of hotspots for poetry readings and good talk, eventually mushrooming into a manifesto-friendly cauldron as the political 60s arrived. They haven't fared well over the years, however, constantly threatened with closure from various citizens concerned that the activity would draw too many unmentionables. Not to mention the LAPD. John Haag, proprietor of the Venice West Café from the early 60s until its demise in 1966, quipped recently that officers started spending so much time in and around the Café during these years that it was becoming an unofficial precinct. The My Lai of closures was the Gas House at Market and the Boardwalk, dozed in October 1962 after only a few years in business.

Actually it was overzoned in a fit of revenge by community vigilant, destroyed ahead of schedule and while still occupied by squatting bohos, an October revolutionary surprise indeed that seemed intent on hollowing out the spiritual foundations of this site. Carol Fondiller, resident since 1958 and current member of the Beachhead, Venice's alternative monthly paper, bore witness to this event.

The most recent major atrocity was the Lafayette Café at Westminster and the Boardwalk, a beacon for long-time residents in their prime of belief the community might live on in some other way. But it also went before its time, becoming a food court in the mid-80s, converted with a whimpering pen stroke like many others since. No bang necessary in this new world order.

What perhaps irks folks so about these cafes is their open invite to all who don't want to spend, only talk and consort with known cadres. And this can only lead to bad things. As security forces lying in wait at all the global demos against unfree trade know so well, one of the sure ways to victory is to prevent protestors from amassing together in the first place, refuse them the chance to mingle and share experiences. Once allowed, a power greater than the sum of the individual bodies might emerge. The best course of action is to keep folks behind closed doors in the first place, make sure the open conversational range never exists. It's all about fences and barriers, learning to feel free in secluding yourself from the fray. Two of the more striking changes in Venice are the appearance of more and more fences around properties, and the arrival of cafes of smiling uniforms hawking logoed tee-shirts and mugs to market segments dripping with exclusive degrees of conversation and cash. They somehow boost each other. As more and more arrivals perform plastic surgery on their neighborhoods and shoo street life off to others, space shrinks for renewing public creativity. It's being filled with dog walks profuse with the smell of sea-breeze doo-doo and the chatter of networking from many wired-up oblivious on their jogs.

And so free spirits, if they can even afford to remain here, are increasingly without means to speak and act. They pop up at the South Beach and other similar places like landless peasants seeking their stake in a vanishing country. The South Beach is not pretty and it caters to residents few want to face these days. They span the spectrum from the temporary homeless and marginally housed and others so bent on survival they can barely focus the facades,

to those doing just fine who experience fits of clarity about our new world order. Many of these even have the best credentials.

Like Gerry Fialka. He runs the 7 Dudley Cinema at Sponto Gallery, site of the former Venice West Café, a venue for experimental media and especially the Venice historical links to it. A creatively organic intellectual in the true sense of the phrase, he's a virtual encyclopedia of information about McLuhan, avantgarde art and anarchist politics, the kind Venice is known for that seeds community empowerment at the expense of central authority. He attracts the constituency of actors in art and politics that give this city its persistent vitality and brings many to the café on his coattails, those who may not know which party is in power, or even who Ernest Hemingway is, but when the crosswinds are right can spout a reasonable facsimile in the finest tongues.

This is important because there are few pure-bred apostles of any alternative creed that hang here. They're mostly mixed-blood members of shifting groups with visions that might overlap it on any given Sunday. They're joined by a smattering of purists, drop-ins for the most part who unfortunately don't make this scene too often, the famed few or a somewhat larger number who relish their lives underground. They don't add much to the beauty of the place either, at least from the vantage of outside observers.

This mix of amateurs and professionals gives the café its special quality that won't likely be duplicated in the foreseeable future. Even the other cafes in the area with similar clientele, the Café Collage near the Circle, Groundworks on Rose and 7th, or Abbot's Habit at California Ave and Abbot Kinney Blvd., lack the same cross-over pizzazz. The name itself pitches bohemian karma and invites instant comparisons to San Francisco's North Beach.

The sandwich of customers on this day is fairly typical. All have some investment in either the actual legacy of alternative Venice, or its potent idea. Like so many workers in our post-industrial world they're mostly part-timers, lacking the ability and means to be full-fledged partisans. So it's not by choice. Though being forced to manage in the margins with minimal resources controlled by others has blurred choices and made fits of nostalgia routine. But the café's days are likely numbered since it depends on these residents, and fates both natural and artificial are in the process of disappearing them. Not a pretty sight to ponder. It continues to offer a sort of sanctuary to them, a space to form bonds the surrounding circus dissolves. But for how much longer?

If you suspect your story is not likely to make it onto a postcard that finds its way into all the right places down through the ages, then why not print up your own? When I dropped in for breakfast last week, right next to the free papers on the counter were stacks of postcards for posterity. Mementos for satisfied customers to pass around when they get back to Butte. They might even end up in a pyramid that mushrooms across the land and captures the souls of the next great generation of dropouts lying in wait for the right moment. And these cards are done up real professional by a New York company to boot, max custom media. I asked the grandfatherly founder of this family-owned concern, Papa Joe, why he went to all the bother. He just shrugged:

"We have to keep up...the times are always changin...if we don't then we'll be..."

"...keep up with what?"

Just then someone shrieked by on skates. It was so shrill that Ralph, whom you could virtually hot-foot any ole time without ruffling his grin, grabbed his ears and started to dance around us in a figure-eight and shield us from intrusion. Reading between the lines of Papa Joe's elliptical remarks, and digesting morsels of gossip at breakfast, it seems business has fallen off pretty steeply since 9/11. Perhaps George Bush's advice to get spending and exorcise our demons hasn't made it to one of the states that nearly exorcised him. Many up-and-comers do think it smells too bad. And more and more down-and-outers claim the espresso steam, what little of it there is to date, makes them nervous. More than ample incentive for Papa Joe to get market savvy. He of all folks appears to know that when the dollar-push comes to shove we find out who owns the voting franchise: those latted with dispersible bucks! But he must wonder if going after this power bloc won't lead to what appears inevitable these days, the arrival of another franchise to fill in the cluster.

The postcard might solve this dilemma. It images a devoted downgrade to habitats Starbucks wantonly violates. It shows the owner reclining on a see-through bubble lounger in the middle of the café. And that's it! None of the folks who frequent the establishment, or even those whom you would think he wants to attract, the new market segments, if indeed the times have changed. No attempt to take advantage of the pool of commercial aasdfsfgutryutyjauctors making the Abbot Kinney Blvd. scene and spruce up the story. He wouldn't even have to sell out.

Yet how could this café be espressoed to code and stay loyal to those who got him here? A perusal of the postcard prompts a possible answer. The background is wall-to-wall soft-drink cases that visualize one of the most significant challenges facing our nation today: Coke or Pepsi? Even the few bottles of water they contain are pronounceable. The menu does include "French Burgers" and "Italian Coffee," a few sauced-up-croissanted patty melts and a choice of either espresso or café au lait to relieve the monotony of the endless dripping gallons of brown liquid. No serial of caffeine delights!

It's hard to imagine these familiar staples getting an erotic makeover in the minds of subliminal seducers. In fact as the picture makes very clear, the café has not yet converted to plastic sodas like the convenience marts. It still sells the cheaper canned variety, perhaps trying to keep the American penchant for bargains alive, or refusing to give in to the new practice of patriotic inflation. Those plastic sodas are double the price but deliver barely more juice. Of course plastic is an oil byproduct! Marvelous idea, a postcard that refuses to inflate the surrounding world to lure customers into the what-you-see-is-what-you-get nature of this one. Papa Joe's reclining pose on the bubble-lounger suggests someone deep in thought and oblivious to the camera. He probably knows that once you make eye contact with it all bets are off. The eyes can be windows to the soul but the lens only muddles up the look and sends us soulful copy instead? This image will not attract folks who thrive on glitzy appearances.

He could be "The Thinker," that outdoor sculpture of Balzac smack in the middle of the left bank made popular flesh here on the western bank of civilization. A kind of 21st century

market correction. Things were way too serious anyway back when those Parisian artists and intellectuals were getting professional by hopping from café to café. Did Hem catch a strain of self-abuse he could never shirk from trying to seed his rep among equals, and just take the big sleep in Ketchum? His sober takes actually seeped into the genes. In the 90s, just up the beach in Santa Monica, his granddaughter succumbed. It can't happen here. It's all carefree and fun. Relax and let the good times roll and your head-crises will be as alien as Kant's language.

On the left bank Alice B. Toklas was just the other half of an item, her contributions overshadowed by Gertrude Stein's creative notoriety. On our bank she got full-billing in one of the most notorious movies ever made in Venice: "I Love You, Alice B. Toklas," the 1968 pop-surreal satire of the hip-versus-square worlds with Peter Sellers. A few of the scenes were actually filmed near the café. Art for those whose ironic bent boomerangs back to the tell-it-like-it-is mode.

So what you see in this postcard is likely what you'll get. The messages are clear. We don't want lap-top leers and other tourists of the trade who come with the slick images. We don't want to gentrify. We would love to have some of that cash the up-and-comers appear to be passing around. We're after all good Americans in search of a buck. We admit that when you get the ad bug you're usually a couple phone calls away from the exterminator (actually, they've recently had their share of service interruptions!). But we'd prefer the carriers convert to the family first and then become legit slummers. Come on back all you patriots who've faded into the new world order. Lets stay the course together for...

Hopefully a few more years. Yet Papa Joe has to feel the increasingly-intense wrecking-ball vibes throughout the community he passionately supports. And he's certainly no slouch when it comes to Venice's history. There's an enlarged panoramic photo from 1926 on the door of this very space. We see the Lick Pier and the Boardwalk's wealth of architectural gems in the background, with a dense mass of overdressed pleasure-seekers crouched under hats and umbrellas in the foreground marked by the Rose Ave street sign. A clever reminder about the pretty past that might snag wayward tourists, but also mental nourishment for those who refuse to slip into a timeless amusement vacuum. If Starbucks moves in, will they add snips of the vintage South Beach to their postcard rack?

...The weekend invaders begin swarming past the South Beach as most locals slip away into another Sunday's business. Visitors from the valleys, inland empires and inner cities all over the metropolplex are herded together with vacationers from nearly everywhere else. Most plug into the reverie of distraction along the continent's last walkway, bemused and sated consumers trolling for kicks, barely noticing the pockets of street theater or art works garnishing the Boardwalk's west side. The rest give it their best gloss.

All are equal under the wafting smell of pizza slices, body odor and burning incense, alloy of boom-boxed demos and head-pounding muzak, glut of alluring sights contorted by splashes of mid-day sun, and the ecstasy of knowing they're being seen with others like themselves. They drool the spread of self-satisfied pleasure, as clear and confident that's all there is as the digitized logos embroidering

them.

Tanned fanny-pack #1 erupts from the crowd fixed on the table vacated next to Leon. Before sitting down she pulls out a handy-wipe from one of her bags and gives the furniture a thorough fumigation, while fanny-pack #2 in tow snakes through the congesting customers, taking a seat only after scoping the periphery. As #1 juts up to go order, the edge of her pack catches Leon's styrofoam cup, sending the few ounces of brown liquid onto the pisces predictions he'd been savoring. The expected apology not forthcoming he turns to #2 as #1 makes a bee-line toward the counter. #2, beside himself, grunts: "Go get a job!" Leon sheepishly gets up to leave, knocking over their Evian bottle. He speeds up his exit-pace to avoid further conflict.

Sabine, ready to exit the gathering mayhem, joins the Peace and Freedom Party-sponsored anti-war march flowing along the boardwalk from Ozone. This is provoking a refrain of put-downs from many merchants along the west side, that "the war's over, idiots. Go home!" As the paraders begin tossing back the taunts, the conflict Leon left behind shows signs of spreading like wildfire into some serious political underbrush. I leave just in time to miss the volley of pizza slice parts, making my way to the Cadillac Hotel a half-block south where a woman with a perfect accent asks:

"Excuse me love. Could you direct me to the nearest Starbucks?"



FEAST, n. A festival. A religious celebration usually signalized by gluttony and drunkenness, frequently in honor of some holy person distinguished for abstemiousness. In the Roman Catholic Church feasts are "movable" and "immovable," but the celebrants are uniformly immovable until they are full. In their earliest development these entertainments took the form of feasts for the dead; such were held by the Greeks, under the name Nemeseia, by the Aztecs and Peruvians, as in modern times they are popular with the Chinese; though it is believed that the ancient dead, like the modern, were light eaters. Among the many feasts of the Romans was the Novemdiale, which was held, according to Livy, whenever stones fell from heaven.
- Ambrose Bierce, The Devil's Dictionary

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my license.

Beachhead: What's their deal?

Solomon: Putnam's ex-military desert storm. I'm convinced he's racially and sexually harassing me. The other day him and Curtis followed me three times around Windward Circle.

Beachhead: Please describe the latest incident Saturday night.

Solomon: I pass the Coffee Bean, Offrs. Putnam and Curtis are there with two others. Putnam calls out he can ticket me for riding my unicycle. I decide to walk to La Fiesta for a bite. Out of the corner of my eye I see three cop cars circling like sharks around me. As I pass the post office, they convene, cars lights flashing, shouting to put my hands up, citing outstanding warrants - misdemeanor junk I can't currently afford to pay. They're pointing a laser scope beam at my heart, cuff me hissing Don't Resist. As they twist my arms, I'm stumbling. It takes everything I have to remain calm, another trauma, another bogus charge, my freedom and my night taken away.

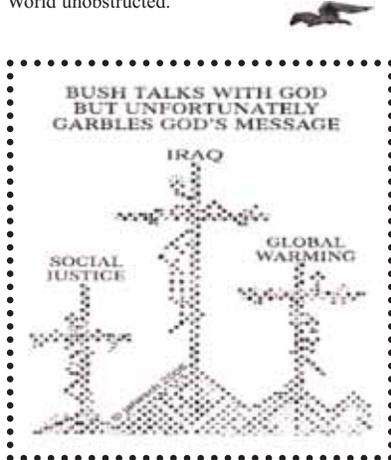
Beachhead: You need a good lawyer to file a suit in your behalf, to stop this insanity. We urge everyone reading this to call the LAPD Culver City to demand the end to this persecution.

Solomon: I've had eight neighbors speak on my behalf against the impounding of my vehicle. I've gone to the LA City Council meetings to speak to the City Attorney. I've filed complaints with the LAPD.

Beachhead: Besides these renegade cops, (probably the same ones that persecuted the artist Lush and drove him from the Boardwalk), what's behind all this bullshit?

Solomon: We, the people's, rights to exercise our Democracy. We, the peoples, right to self-preservation and the pursuit of happiness. Crazy cops, gentrification, eminent domain. We, the people of Venice, are the Last Frontier, the last holdout of free expression in the U.S. We have the right to challenge the Law, I, for One, will be vigilant. Too many people are having their lives and livelihood's shattered, the Boardwalk needs to flame the fragrant incense it has Lost. If you see someone's rights being violated, you are just as guilty as the aggressor if you do not intervene.

Beachhead: Thanks so much Solomon! We ask the Most High to relieve you of these obstacles so you may continue to spread your Healing Powers to the World unobstructed.



Astrological Cooking p.5

lations. Happy holidays? Easy for you to say! Say it loud, say it proud.

Capricorn-Take the holidays to take a breather, a brief pause to reconnect and refresh yourself. Your hard work is going to pay off, but you don't want to be too tired or too ill to enjoy your triumph. Know that the good news is coming and put your feet up for a bit.

Who sees you when you're sleeping?

Aquarius- the beginning of a journey, an enterprise, and adventure? There's a big beginning waiting for your green light and when you go, it's going to be great.

Pisces- Bring yourself into balance. If it's the holidays, or the job, or the relationship, whatever is throwing too much pressure at you, just take a moment to reset your boundaries and then relax into the space that you need to be comfortable.

December is Sagittarius-

And while Sagittarius is a fun and freedom loving kind of friend, the sign is not noted for being terribly talented in the kitchen. Unless you have a Taurus, Capricorn or Cancer rising, there's probably not a lot of cooking that you love, short of opening a box of crackers and unwrapping a lovely piece of cheese. And as honest, logical and candid as you are, you probably don't try to present yourself as fabulous chef. You are loved for who you are, and there's no worries about who you are not. But if you are one of those Sagittarians who enjoys the kitchen, you are just as dedicated and determined as you are in the office or the bedroom. Sagittarius has a strong belief that things should be a certain way, and all else is error. Of course, you also hold yourself to higher standards than you ask of anyone around you, so if some carefree Leo or unconcerned Libra is going to eat that non-organic fruit, it is just none of your concern. The sign of Sag rules the liver, hips and thighs, so odds are good that you are very aware of how much you're eating and drinking, and where it all ends up. What you need most are the green things- spinach, beet greens, collard greens, to bump up your iron and b-vitamin levels, and clear out that sensitive liver. And treat yourself to some of your favorite herbal teas for your birthday, as you often feel a chill. There's nothing like a big hot pot steaming with something fragrant to warm up a Sagittarius, body and soul. Of course, holidays happen, and something easy to serve to the revelers is always welcome. If you are the type that enjoys the kitchen, here's a classic holiday recipe easier than pie-

Sagittarius Noodle Kugel (If you don't know from kugel, call it a pudding)

1/2 cup raisins, covered in sherry or rum for 2 hours to "plump"

one 12 oz. Package of wide noodles, cooked as per directions

6 tablespoons of butter (3/4 of a cube), melted and poured into a 9x 13 pyrex baking dish.

Drain noodles and toss with butter in a baking dish- In a separate bowl, mix together-

4 eggs

2 cups sour cream

1/2 cup milk

1 tsp vanilla

1/2 tsp salt

3/4 cup sugar

Pour mixture over noodles. Drain raisins and add to the mix, tossing gently. Top with sugar and/or cinnamon. Toss into the oven and bake for one hour. (this can be turned into a savory dish by leaving out sugar, raisins and vanilla, and using sautéed onions, red peppers and leeks with some dill.)

Serves 8-10 as a side dish, makes a great brunch entrée, is wonderful for dessert, can be cut into squares for a snack, and holds up well in the fridge for about a week. You'll have eaten it all before that.

Not a cooking Sagittarius? I'll bet you are very concerned with your appearance and your health. Here's an easy mix that you can keep to yourself or share with friends-

Sagittarius Skin Softener

6 oz. Peanut oil

2 oz. almond oil

2 oz. rose water

1 Tablespoon pure lanolin (such as Lansinoh cream)

3-5 drops of your favorite perfume

Mix all ingredients together in a large jar with a secure lid, and then shake like a martini until the lanolin is blended. Delightful face, neck, and body lotion. Give yourself 10-15 minutes for the skin to absorb it all, and glow like a goddess for the rest of the day.

Happy Holidays to Each and Everyone!! New Moon on the 20th, Solstice on the 21st and the best New Year in Decades on the 31st!!

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Tent City News

- C.V. Beck

Tent City is located at the southwest corner of California Avenue and Frederick Street, Venice, California (sometimes called Squirrel Square, that is behind the Ross parking lot)...We still maintain although we have reduced our hours to 10-4 pm, Wednesdays and Saturdays because of the winter darkness. What's new over here, you might be asking? Well, let me tell you that we are now awaiting a Santa Monica court hearing date of Monday, December 4, 2006 2pm, at which event we will find out if AIMCO's motion to reconsider our right to have a trial will fly or if we will, at long last, have a trial date set, possibly for January, 2007. Hold your breath! I know we are.

We continue feeding the squirrels peanuts mostly from the "99" (unsalted) and have some tasty assorted morsels for whoever comes by. We tell jokes and dish and have a good old time, socializing and being supportive of one another in a truly neighborly way. People continue to come by to hear the latest or just to hang out, act "normal" for a little while and try to relax. As we head into winter, if it is raining, we will not be here, according to our usual sensible plan.

On Wednesday, November 15, there was a large police presence around California Streets, including the Ralph's/Ross/Lincoln Place areas, with a police helicopter flying around most of the day. I assumed it was a preholiday traffic "putsch" but as it turned out later, it was a drug bust in the Oakwood neighborhood.

On Saturday, November 18, we had a gaggle of people coming by, or driving around, some were friendly, some were not. For example, at 11:00 AM a small dark bluegreen-ish pickup truck with two occupants, came by and drove around the Frederick/Doreen circle, the first time, shouting, "Go home and clean your house!", the second time, this driver, with black framed Buddy Holly type of glasses, also shouted again, "Go home and clean your house!". I responded appropriately with a spirited, feminist "Eff off!" both times. We debated this very odd (to us at least) occurrence all afternoon...as to what it might mean. But what we thought it meant was something on the order of either "keep 'em barefoot and pregnant", or "kinder, kuche, kirche"...the very orthodox feminine role...right?

On another occasion, a pushed-out--of-Lincoln Place-former-resident, a single mom, came by and told me after she had moved out of Lincoln Place, she has had to move twice already and her rent is going to go up majorly again at the beginning of the New Year. A woman with a camera walked around Lincoln Place for a while and came up to chat, saying that she lived on Brooks and wanted to know what was going on here. She apparently knew nothing about our struggle but was very tuned into the traffic problems we now have on the "western edge" due to the extreme hyper/overdevelopment, insufficient green factors and overly sufficient greed factors. There is a man who is painting pictures of the Lincoln Place complex with an easel on the sidewalk, this has been going on for several months now.

Odd things continue to happen. About a month or so ago, a white tandem truck came by and went to Elk Grove Circle, then shortly returned back to Lincoln Boulevard. I had a



report later that same day from a resident when he went to see what they were doing, they told the security that "the company" had sent them and that the 2 large piles of earth they dropped in the roadway of the circle, . . . were "for the spring garden"!! !

There is a rumor I have heard that the Cafe 50's lease is up soon and people are worried that either there may not be a new lease or that it might be too expensive...

Why I Do This.

by Douglas Eisenstark L.Ac.
evicted Tenant of Lincoln Place, Venice, CA.
Sept 10, 2006

It's been a year since the LA County Sheriffs evicted me from my Lincoln Place apartment in Venice. Since then I've gone to weekly Sunday meetings, sat outside in the rain at our Tent City, spoken at the City Council, painted signs, written articles, organized vigils and generally spent around 15 hours a week working on this issue. I presented a photograph show is largely an abstract view of the anger and outrage, not just of my eviction, but of the forces of so-called development. You could say I'm obsessed. I fear some of my friends, especially those outside of Venice, think I am really, really obsessed. And I sometimes ask myself, why do I do this?

First, I really want to come back. The architects of Lincoln Place consciously designed "luxury living" for the low and moderate income renter. You would have had to live at Lincoln Place to know that they are very, very special. Many of us tried to find comparable housing and reported back that we couldn't find "anything as nice". In fact, we won't - because Lincoln Place was designed in a style that is regarded around the world as a standard for community living. That is, 2 story apartments around garden spaces. In one of our video pieces someone says, "This is a place you can live." It is a simple statement that resonates deeply with me. Lincoln Place isn't a box apartment, a place you live in till you move on. I felt like I could live there forever.

As an artist and now an acupuncture teacher, I've known for a while that the only housing I can afford is "affordable". That is another reason that I continue to protest this situation. By wiping out a community, 800 apartments, over 3000 tenants, someone has determined that our existence is

irrelevant. They have said that we don't deserve anything other than something "not as nice". I admit it- I am personally offended and hurt. What if someone said to you, "Your house is too good. You don't deserve it. You must leave."? The architects speak to us, lower and moderate income renters, through their art... these buildings... and they tell us that we matter.

800 apartments, thousands of people have been displaced. There is affordable housing in Los Angeles but it is being torn down at an enormous cost to not just renters but to all tax payers in this City. And this is a third reason I continue to fight. An outside corporation has come into this community and has attempted to destroy it. They are simply doing what they do. They change neighborhoods with no regard to the people who live there. There is no community in their equation, only profit. I don't think I need to say more about this.

At one point in the last year there was talk about "people not buildings". Meaning that newer, taller, denser apartments would be just as good as what we have now. People who said this weren't living in Lincoln Place. They wouldn't know that Lincoln Place defines a way of life, a community, more than simply apartments. Yes, I want to return and I want to see that no one else faces this injustice.

AIMCO BUYING HARLEM, NEW YORK

Date: Fri, 17 Nov 2006 12:09:23 -0800

In a news brief from Aimco on November 15, 2006 they announced they are acquiring rights to 1,597 apartments/commercial/retail stores. The area under discussion is from West 111th Street to West 160th Streets, around Columbia University, Harlem Hospital, etc. The full purchase price is given as \$278.6 million. Chief Investment Officer, Harry Alcock comments, "Aimco seeks to participate in the Harlem Renaissance through this significant transaction..."

Douglas Eisenstark salutes the Beachhead for its coverage of the Lincoln Place crisis.

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2007

by Hillary Kaye

the new year is about to come
we bring it in with tears and guns
we bring it in with joy and hope
we bring it in with towering ghosts.

the new year does it start out fresh?
while others die at our bequest?

I wish I had a brighter song
To inspire us to right the wrongs
Round and round
and round again
I wish there was a way we knew
To make the new year really new

A VENICE CHRISTMAS CAROL

by Charles Dickens and Jack Neworth
Dec. 1853 Dec. 2006

Few knew Caldwell B. Screwge, Venice's biggest landlord, was the great-great-great-grandson of Ebenezer Scrooge, though if one looked closely you could see the resemblance. Caldwell owned a real estate office on Lincoln which endeavoured in foreclosures. Even though the fates of finance had smiled so radiantly upon him, Screwge's icy personality never thawed. (Unless one of his rent controlled apartments became vacant and went to fair market price.) So it was not surprising when he was invited by his nephew for Christmas dinner, Screwge barked, "Bah humbug, who needs the cholesterol."

Let any man explain how that night Screwge, having his key in the security alarm of his tri-level in the canals, saw not the alarm, but the face of his deceased partner, Marley whom Screwge had "screwged" many times. "Hey, Marley, buddy boy!" Screwge said nervously. "It must have been a mistake in escrow. I'll have the girl Fedex you a new check?" The Ghost responded solemnly, "Tomorrow you will be haunted by a Spirit when the bell tolls one." "My clocks don't toll", Screwge stammered, "they're digital." But alas, the Ghost was gone.

At one the following afternoon Screwge was pacing in front of his flat screen hi-def. The Cowboys weren't covering the spread and Screwge blamed it on Tony Romo's dating Jessica Simpson. The Ghost of Christmas Past appeared and suddenly the tv went off. "Hey, it's the 4th quarter!" Screwge complained. But the Ghost didn't respond for in a blink of an eye the two were in the neighborhood of Screwge's childhood off Abott Kinney. But instead of it being 2006 it was 1949. At first it was nostalgic. But then a melancholy came over Screwge when he saw For Sale signs on quaint cottages that would become million dollar properties. "If only I had bought the whole damn block" he muttered ruefully.

Later than night Screwge was watching the Money Channel when the tv suddenly turned off by the Ghost of Christmas Present with a mere snap of his fingers. "What's the big idea?" Screwge barked. But again he got no answer as the two were whisked silently inside one of Screwge's rent controlled apartments in Oakwood. It was, the home of clerk Bob Ratchet. Despite a leaky roof, and broken windows, the family was gathered around the

the first stone by Rex Butters

snarling like dogs,
"YOU'RE HYPOCRITES!"
the bullhorn christians bellow
trying to suppress
the Venice krishna fest
people lazily
trying to enjoy
a Sunday in the park
scramble away
from hate spewing preachers

krishnas surround christians
jump and laugh
like monkeys
banging drums and cymbals
chanting
scowling
hard hearted
christians carry fear and anger placards
slink away
from the colorful tents
free feast
gentle music
happy flower festooned people
that offend them so

festive dinner table. When talk turned to Screwge, Tiny Slim, the lead rapper in "Maimed Mayhem," glanced at the roof. "Word, I oughta whack that dawg upside his head with my crutch." But Ratchet said, "On Christmas we wish well to all in this world, even Screwge." And toast they did, but only after Tiny called Bob a Tom.

At dawn. On Christmas morning Screwge arose from slumber to see the third Spirit who was shrouded in a black garment and was himself black. "My wallet's on the dresser, just don't hurt me," Screwged said trembling. "You stereotypin' fool, I'm the Ghost of Christmas Future, I ain't here to jack you." Suddenly Screwge found himself at Woodlawn Cemetery on 14th & Pico in Santa Monica. He was horrified to see the half crumbled marker of Caldwell B. Screwge with the epitaph,, "What good does his money do him now?"

Screwge pleaded with the Ghost, "Is there any wiggle room in all of this? Hey, I've got a condo in the Marina I snapped up in foreclosure. How's about I give you a quit claim?!" To the foreboding silence Screwge began to shake. "All right I will honor Christmas in my heart. I'll stand in lines at the mall, I'll go to boring parties and make pointless chit-chat, , but please assure me I yet may change these shadows." But the Ghost was gone and Screwge was back in his bed, a changed man.

And it came to pass that Screwge did all he promised and more. To Tiny Slim and "Maimed Mayhem" he became a second father, and tour promoter, but managed to take 15% off the top. To Ratchet, Screwge became the model employer giving him a raise to a nickel above minimum wage. And he finally fixed the leaky roof and broken windows and didn't raise the rent,, though the thought crossed his mind. And to his Venice neighbors, Screwge stopped being a greedy, douchebag and was nice to everyone, which at times was a bit nauseating. Finally, it was said of Screwge by one and all, that he knew how to keep Christmas well. And he didn't do a bad job with Chanukah either.

FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD * December 2006 * 10

WET FOOTPRINTS OVER TRACTOR TREADS

by Hal Bogotch

I bought new tires for my car.
First thing I did, I drove down
to Venice Beach. Tires. Shoes
for the car. I hate those analogies
that machines are like people,
or people are like machines.
What does a machine know of the ocean,
the sparkle of sunlight in the shallows,
a bird with a long beak
pecking into the moist sand,
then retreating from the surf.

I have never been like a machine, cold
and blind, not feeling the north wind
on my skin, not caring about myself
or anything or anybody, not knowing love
or food or sex or poetry.

The merchants in Venice feel pain
if you kick them, feel aches in their ears
and in their lungs from the bulldozers,
earthmoving trucks, ignorant machines
that try to keep the ocean from washing
the merchants away.

A person who runs a machine for a living
is not a machine, but is married to one.
Has to live with its flaws, its noise,
its mess. Has to suffer when it breaks
down. Can only get a divorce with approval
from the State. Must show just cause.
Grounds for divorce might be an injury
at the hands of the machine. But machines
dont have hands, goddammit. I have hands
that were injured hitting the keys of a computer,
wounded trying to tell the machines what to do.
What to do. I dont want my life linked
to machines any more.

I take off my shoes, my socks, roll up the bottoms
of my jeans into cuffs, sling my canvas bag
over my shoulder and walk, the incomprehensible
immensity of the sea barely getting my feet
wet,
finally coming up to my ankles.



Get Activated Online

There are photos of the events in Oaxaca at www.sparcmurals.org. What is so credible about Jane Harman? at bloggingheadstv.com. CODEPINK meets in Venice www.codepink4peace.org



HIP HAPPENINGS

beyond baroque Poetry Readings
681 Venice Bl. 310-822-3006

8 December, Friday - 7:30 PM
 2006 BEYOND BAROQUE Mag: TRUTH Etc.

In a time of government by lies, can poets, writers, and artists reconnect us to truth? TRUTH Etc is a selection of essays, poems, artworks, and stories from local, national, and international writers and artists, edited with an essay by FRED DEWEY. From So-Cal: MAJID NAFICY, WANDA COLEMAN, LINDA ALBERTANO, MARGIE WALLER, ERIC PRIESTLEY, PAUL SAWYER (reading DANIEL BERRIGAN), PHILOMENE LONG (& reading JOHN THOMAS), DAVID LLOYD, SAMI CHETRIT, SIMONE FORTI, JEANNETTE CLOUGH, JUDITH TAYLOR, SESSHU FOSTER, CHARLENE GEISLER, AMELIE FRANK, WILL ALEXANDER, visual artists ANNETTE SUGDEN, LUCAS REINER, GENEVIEVE YUE, and more. Come to the event and GET FREE HOLIDAY COPIES FOR YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS.

9 December, Saturday - 4 PM, 7 PM
 75th BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE: JEROME ROTHENBERG and DAVID ANTIN with SPECIAL GUESTS—Panel on "Friendship" 4 PM, Readings 7 PM
 BB celebrates Southern California's two prolific and groundbreaking poetry/text polymaths, their 75th birthdays and 50 years of friendship. FOR FINAL DETAILS & LIST OF PERFORMERS, CHECK: www.beyondbaroque.org

14 December, Thursday - 7 PM
 POETS BEYOND THE HALF SHELL HOSTS THE HOSTS
 Join us for the first in a series of readings featuring the unsung heroes of the So-Cal poetry scene, venue hosts, including: RAFAEL F.J. ALVARADO, THERESA ANTONIA, LARRY COLKER, MIFANWY KAISER and RICK LUPERT. No Open. Hosted by Carlye Archibeque and Richard Modiano.

17 December, Sunday - 7 PM



Elves spotted on Main Street

POETS BEYOND THE HALF SHELL – LA POETRY PUBLISHERS
 Celebrate LA poetry publishers small and large, new and old, analogue and digital: AMELIE FRANK (Sacred Beverage Press), MICHAEL C FORD (Hotel), KATE GALE (Red Hen Press), SA GRIFFIN (Rose of Sharon Press) and MARIE LECRIVAIN (poeticdiversity.com). Open reading sign up at 6:30, 2-poem/3-minute limit. Hosted by Carlye Archibeque and Richard Modiano.

7 DUDLEY CINEMA

shows the following films at SPONTO Gallery, 7 Dudley Ave, Venice, 310-306-7330, free admission, 8:00pm, www.81x.com/7dudley/cinema Come early - seating is limited & pre-shows

WED, Dec 6. SADAA E ZAN (Voices of Women) ('03, 70m) Renee Bergan's intimate look at the contemporary challenges facing the women in Afghanistan offers an astonishingly unselfish view of post-Taliban life. The award winning film is composed of testimonials from women and girls who describe firsthand what it was like to live in fear for over five years, stripped of all rights and denied any access to education or meaningful work. Despite the consequences, many engaged in daring efforts to provide medical care and underground schools for women and children. Bergan, who will be present for discussion, captures the resilient spirit of these women as they bravely emerge from the rubble of tyranny and oppression, determined to reach freedom. Plus: THE TRIBE ('05, 17m) Tiffany Shlain uses the Barbie doll's Jewish inventor Ruth Handler as a jumping-off point to tell two seemingly disparate histories (Jewish culture and Ken's plastic girlfriend) that nevertheless converge in unexpected ways. 6:30- Bluesmama Joy Rippel, 7:30- Venice's own sexy seasonal songbirds The Off Their Jingle Bell Rockers

WED, Dec 13. BALLOONHAT ('05, 88m) A.G.Vermouth emotionally documents balloon twister Addi Somekh and photographer Charlie Eckert's journey across the world, revealing not only the travails of a grassroots art project, but also America's changing status on the world stage. Each new culture embraces their balloon art, from Rio's beaches to the rubble of Sarajevo. "Vermouth's skillful telling of Somekh and Eckert's unique story through the most gorgeous images will put a lasting smile on the face of all who see it." -Film Exposed. 7pm preshow: Somekh will demonstrate wild balloon twisting & play far-out funky music on the balloon bass with his band UNPOPABLE.

MLK Rally, photos and collage by Eric Ahlberg



*FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD * December 2006 * 11*

SAT, Dec 16. CIRCLE OF COLOR winter solstice art & music show from 5-10pm

Contact: Gerry Fialka 310-306-7330
 pfsuzy@aol.com
 & Pam Stollings 310-315-0056 unurban.com

DOCUMENTAL

shows films at the Unurban Coffeehouse, 3301 Pico Blvd, Santa Monica, CA, 90404, 310-315-0056, free admission from 6-10pm on Mondays (once a month on the second or third Monday)

Monday, Dec 11 - WOMEN FILMMAKERS - 7pm: THE LANDFILL ('05, 55m) Sharon Farrell's touching portrait of Sarah, Dancer and John Paul, three Bay Area homeless people, and their struggles with power and choice. 8:30pm: HEARTS CRACKED OPEN ('04, 57m) Betsy Kalin's empowering journey of sexual healing and self-discovery with women who are living in a daily orgasmic state of being - inside the world of lesbian Tantra with Annie Sprinkle. Kalin will demo Tantra techniques. Both filmmakers will be present for discussion. More films from 6-7pm.





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EBT Welcome

1425 OCEAN FRONT WALK
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 LARRY PARKER
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 310 806-8486

We Love the Venice Graffiti Pit - Collage by Eric Ahlberg From Photos by Cameron Gray www.flickr.com/photos/camgray

