

Venice Loses Its Poet Laureate – Philomene Long, RIP

Philomene Long has died. She was the poet laureate of Venice, not just by action of the city council, but by the consent of Venetians. She was also known as the Queen of Bohemia.

Philomene died in her apartment, in her beloved Ellison at Paloma and Speedway, on August 21. Her death was a shock to her many friends who knew she was excitedly working on a novel, promoting Beyond Baroque and fashioning poems to protect the spirit of Venice from intruders.

Philomene was the last notable Beat generation poet to live in Venice. She was the companion of Stuart Z. Perkoff and, later, wife of John Thomas, two of the most renowned poets of Venice. Philomene was known and admired worldwide. Her death is a loss not just to her sister, family and friends, but to all of Venice.

She was author of numerous books, including *The Queen of Bohemia* (Lummox Press), *American Zen Bones* (Beyond Baroque Books), and with John Thomas, *The Book of Sleep* (Momentum Press), *The Ghosts of Venice West* and *Bukowski in the Bathtub* (Raven Press). Her *Memoirs of a Nun on Fire* appears in *The Outlaw Bible of America Poetry* (Thunders' Mouth Press). She was also a filmmaker. Her works include *The Beats: An Existential Comedy*, with Allen Ginsburg and *The California Missions* with Martin Sheen.

Before coming to Venice, Philomene had been a Catholic nun for five years. After that, she studied Zen with Maezumi Roshi for 21 years, until his death in 1995. Her book, *American Zen Bones*, is about this experience.

Her last published work "Philomene Long's Contest for Beachhead Readers," in the August issue of the Free Venice Beachhead, delved into Buddhism, pop culture and comments by contemporaries Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Patti Smith, Stuart Perkoff and John Thomas. She also included quotes from Buddha, Jesus Christ and Mary, all of whom would have enjoyed her company.

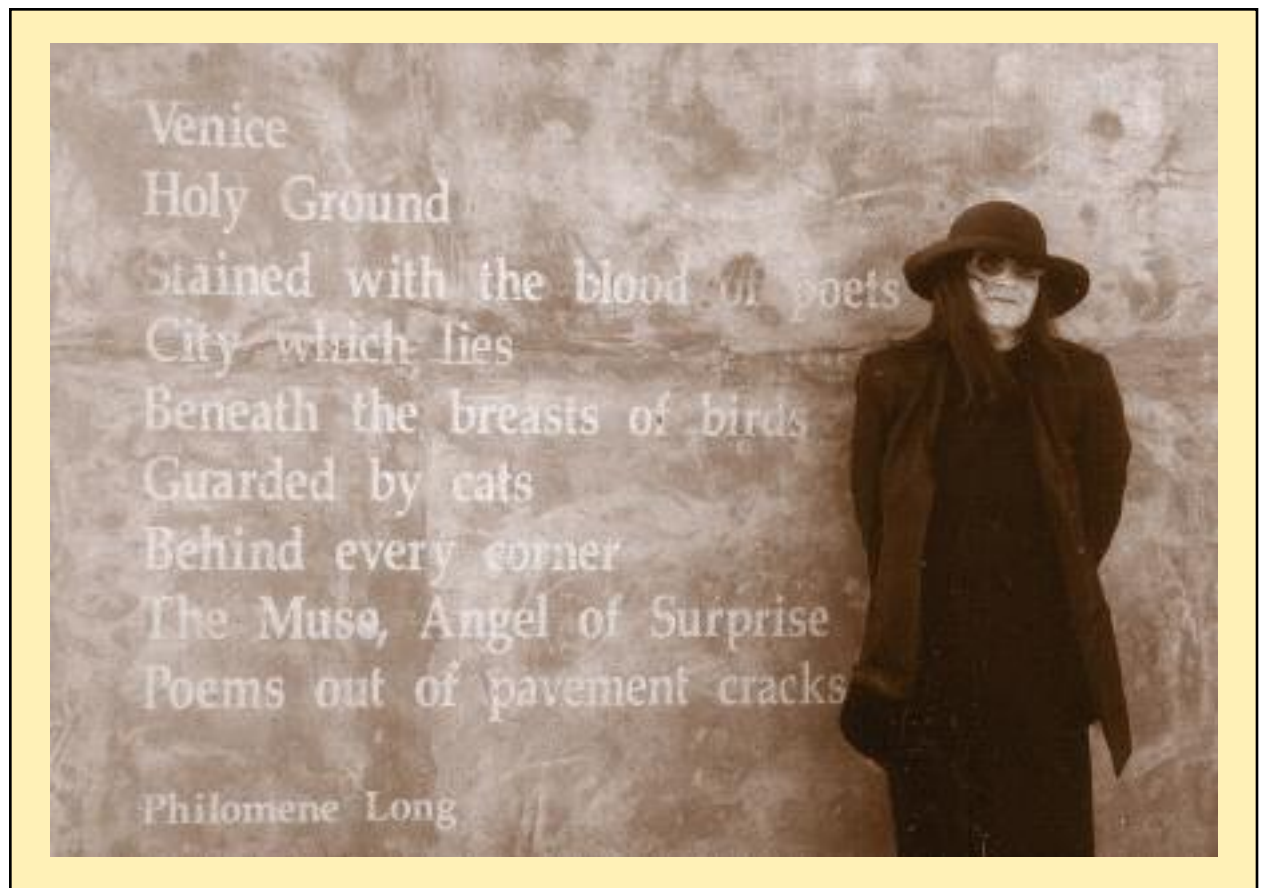
In addition to her writing, Philomene had been working to ensure the long-term survival of Beyond Baroque, the literary and arts center housed in Venice's old city hall.

In her final months, Philomene – an avid Beachhead reader – became excited about taking a more active role in the paper. Her future plans included selecting a monthly poem for our poetry page by one of the great Venice Beat poets, along with an explanatory note, from her unique perspective, about the poet and the poem. She intended to start with the entire poems whose excerpts appear on the Poetry Wall in Windward Plaza.

Her other project was to create, or recreate, a genre of "poems with power," in her words, "poems poised to storm from the beachhead for the soul of Venice (in my mind, America's last bastion for its freedoms)."

The Beachhead will do its best to keep Philomene Long's memory and work alive. Our Collective joins her family, many friends and readers in mourning her loss.

–The Beachhead Collective



Philomene Long in front of her poem that is inscribed on the Poetry Wall in Windward Plaza.

Photo by Pegarty Long



It's a great blow when a community like Venice loses a great poet or artist. But as a central figure in the Beat Generation, Philomene Long's impact and legacy will continue and grow. Clockwise, from top left: Philomene with Allen Ginsberg; with John Thomas and Jack Hirschman; with Timothy Leary; with Stewart Z. Perkoff.

CASUALTIES IN IRAQ
U.S. 3,732 Dead – 92 this month
U.S. Wounded 27,506 – 553 this month
Iraqi Dead: 655,000+
 Source: antiwar.com, Lancet Medical Journal
 Cost: \$456+ Billion - Source: costofwar.com



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Medical Marijuana

Dear Beachhead,

Recently the media has been covering the latest round of DEA "busts" of Los Angeles Medical Marijuana Caregiver clubs. Although Medical Marijuana is legal in California, the DEA continues in its attempts to override this decision made by the people of California in 1996. These attempts will ultimately be decided in the courtroom. Political and financial issues are driving this turf war. Unfortunately, those who lose in this battle are the legitimate qualified patients who find the greatest benefit in the use of this medicine. I'd like to leave the political situation aside and take a look at the issue as a medical one, from the perspective of a physician.

As a Board-Certified Internist, a physician licensed to practice in the State of California, I believe Medical Marijuana is a powerful yet extremely safe medication. Anything that interferes with patients getting the best possible medication compromises care and is a violation of the "Doctor Patient Privilege." After thirty years of practice and serving two decades as a Clinical Instructor of Medicine at a prestigious University Hospital, I believe I am qualified to decide whether a given patient might benefit from Medical Marijuana. Whether suffering with cancer, AIDS, depression, anxiety, nausea, or chronic pain, all patients should have the option of discussing their symptoms and treatment plan with a physician. If this plan includes Medical Marijuana as determined by the Patient/Physician partnership AND is legal, (as it has been since 1996 in California), any qualified "Care Giver" should be permitted to dispense the medication to this physician-verified patient. Most people don't know that Marijuana is far safer than both Aspirin and Tylenol. It has highly predictable effects and has no known lethal dose. The "Therapeutic Ratio," (benefits to side effects), is the highest of any known medication. There are also predictable side effects as no medication is without side effects.

Various strains of Marijuana have very different physiological and psychoactive effects. If a patient medicates with an activating form, he might become over-stimulated. If a patient medicates with a sedating strain, she may become sleepy. Knowing how to take a medication is always critical and the same applies to Medical Marijuana. The great news is that all strains of Marijuana can be effective, safe, and non-addicting when taken as directed by a knowledgeable physician. Marijuana is, in fact, a "medicine," and should not be used without adequate professional advice.

Remember, Marijuana is a "restricted" drug for political reasons - not for medical safety or efficacy issues. The current California Medical Marijuana System is emerging as a significant force in alternative care for patients who have not been helped by traditional methods. Many individuals have dedicated their lives to this end. Without these pioneers risking incarceration to help patients who truly benefit, we would be light years behind. Although Marijuana has been used medicinally for thousands of years, it was not until recently physicians and patients learned the myriad strains of the plant have entirely different actions and therefore, diverse applications. Many Marijuana strains are mind activating and are used for conditions such as depression and ADD/ADHD.

Other strains can be as sedating as sleep medications. With the assistance of a medical doctor, various strains can be used for specific patient needs. For example: SATIVA STRAINS: The THC molecule in these Marijuana strains have been genetically altered over many years. They have stimulant, activating, focusing and anti-depressant activity. An individual medicated with a Sativa strain can achieve an increased level of focus, alertness, mood elevation and creativity. I have many patients who have unsuccessfully tried numerous other medications for mood disorders who currently use Sativa Marijuana strains to alleviate their depression. These patients do not look or act "stoned."

Contrary to popular belief, with a properly determined dosage they function at or above their usual functioning levels. INDICA STRAINS: These strains have very different biological effects than the Sativas. Indicas are sedating, calming, and muscle relaxing. These are the strains best used for pain, anxiety, and insomnia. The patient, however, may look and feel "stoned." These can be used at bedtime or during an acute migraine headache or acute back spasm. Even with the sedating Indicas, if the dosage is correct, this medicine can achieve its desired effect without the patient experiencing undesired psycho-physiological side effects. On the "street," most Marijuana strains are never identified. I recently saw a Breast Cancer patient on chemotherapy who was told by her well-meaning chemotherapy nurse to go "try Hollywood Blvd...." to obtain Marijuana to treat her nausea, weight loss, and pain symptoms. Not only is it unsafe and unsavory, the patient may have no idea whether she is purchasing a stimulant or relaxant. These are major issues when it comes to proper treatment.

Who would deprive an AIDS patient with a wasting syndrome a medication proven to revive his appetite? Who would persecute a cancer center for allowing their patients a Medical Marijuana Recommendation giving them access to a gentle and non-toxic medicine to address their appetites, nausea,



Thoughts on the future

Dear Beachhead,

Be awake, Be aware, Be alive. This all will change, and not by some magic force, rather the people will reach that all feared breaking point and react, I think the challenge is going to be finding a way to take that energy and putting it into effective means (as in not watching major cities simply descend into rioting.)

I see a revolution of sorts coming from all sides and political spectrums and even a-political spectrums. I see people whom would normally not even associate in the same room working together to achieve a specific end by a specific means. The question that leaves me wondering greatly is "After the fall, and the inevitable civil war for power ensues, and the multiple factions that once worked together are now ripping each others throats out to be the "new kings and queens of this republic, Would the American populace not beg for a police state that would in effect end up being more brutal than the one that currently exists? Would the sheep without direction, comfort, or the ability to be complacent beg for some ultra brutal force to "restore order?"

We must have a vision and a direction to implement, otherwise we are inherently doomed to repeat history.

Empire rises>Empire falls through foreign or domestic means>Empire is restored in a similar if not more extreme manner by those same people who advocated the fall.

We cannot go from being the oppressed to being the oppressors, this cannot be sustained in any realistic manner.

The challenge has been set, how long will the masses wait to answer the call? We cannot afford to wait for someone else to do it, each and every one of us must do what needs to be done. We cannot say, "X person will come along and create a movement of massive proportions." We need to stop waiting for some Saviour, we can save ourselves if we choose to. We must make that choice, we must take that leap onto the road less traveled.

Hope and truth are great and powerful weapons that we all possess. No human or weapon can take your hope, no human or weapon can alter what is known to be truth. The power players have greatly underestimated the sheer power of the human spirit, no matter how bad things get, things will come full circle. We are alive in quite possibly the most interesting and horrific period in American history.

We must learn to take care of one another, all we have is each other. We must learn to live and survive autonomously with one another with no help from those outside of our autonomous communities.

The old ways are becoming new again, these destructive ways that the human race has adopted must be forgotten again.

We must end the simple chatter of these ideas and start making the dream a reality. There is no better place than here and no better time than now. The future is ours if we choose to shape it. Our reality can change quicker than many would like to accept. We can be if we choose to be, the greatest generation of all. The future is unwritten, grab a pen.

-Nick Napolitano

Another View of the Ocean Front

Dear Beachhead,

The boardwalk is humming again. The craftspeople are working away. The visitors are striding along to see what comes next. Business is brisk. The police are smiling at the vendors. Everyone is content since the city officials are holed up in their offices thinking up ways to fix the ordinance of March 2006 that lead to dismay and a lackluster beachfront.

There is so much to do by the city. There are the dirty rest rooms to keep clean and the boardwalk to steam for the spots and dirt that mar the beauty of the beach. There are vendors that take up two spaces and a few, just a few who sell commercial goods. All this is the city's job to regulate and repair.

The job of the boardwalk sellers is to serve the public and see to it that the visitors go away with a feeling of good will. The one thing that the city has done well is the lottery that insures diversity simply by chance. Any attempt of the city to regulate the makeup of vending will certainly spoil the excitement and charm of arts, crafts, performances and fortune telling strung together like 200 beads that don't match and encouraged by the public from all over the world.

Annette Robinson

depression, mental anxiety and pain? What is seemingly immoral is the fact that people who could most benefit from Medical Marijuana have no idea that it is even an option - a safe, effective, and legal option in the State of California. This needs to be remedied.
-Dr. Allan Frankel and the Green Bridge Medical Team



Say No to Permit Parking in Venice

Dear Beachhead,
This letter is sent in the hopes of informing people about the organized hate directed toward poor and homeless people in Venice. It is also a special request asking people to do something about it: to act with a simple email, fax, letter, or phone call.

This may sound a little odd, but I am asking you to PLEASE write the Coastal Commission a note - in your own words - asking them NOT to allow permit parking west of Lincoln Blvd. (see contact information, below) This request is an attempt to offset the efforts waged against homeless people by the Venice Neighborhood Council and others.

The Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC), for a short while, was more diverse and progressive. It had committees for affordable housing, poverty and homelessness, and it had people serving who were concerned about these issues as they relate to those suffering with the lowest "quality of life" here in Venice.

The city of Los Angeles invalidated an election using a feeble challenge and this more diverse and progressive Venice Neighborhood Council lost its ability to meet with a quorum. The city then organized a new election committee consisting of those who worked to remove the more diverse and progressive council and there's that bit of Venice history - in brief.

Now the VNC has an on-line petition against homeless people and it has an on-line form to report people living in vehicles to the City Attorney's office - listed right on the front page of its web site. No forms or links were found there to help people report violence or criminal activity committed by the housed people in Venice.

The VNC is not very progressive on poverty issues now, to say the least. It has a committee that has been organizing to get rid of poor people living in vehicles by creating Overnight Parking Districts (OPD). This is a permit parking system with rules and restrictions. There are charges for permits, renewals, and separate guest pass permits. It allows only so-called "residents" with matching car registrations to get the "resident" permit. It is implemented by small areas or blocks and it restricts parking in the middle of the night. This is a relatively new Los Angeles municipal law, which came from Venice property owners and Los Angeles Councilman, Bill Rosendahl, District 11.

The Coastal Commission recently denied this OPD permit parking system for the area west of Lincoln Blvd. This area is under their coastal jurisdiction. The Coastal Commission previously stated 'beach access' as a reason for denying permit parking.

A few "residents," and even the council office, might pretend that the permit parking is not mainly about getting rid of poor people who are forced to live in vehicles. But a Rosendahl aide, Mark Antonio Grant, did admit at the August VNC meeting that the homeless issue is a "hot button" for permit parking.

Some of their alternative statements have been:

- The beach is closed between 10pm and 7am anyway, BUT these hours come from the county (which is contracted to manage the beach). It is my understanding that the Coastal Commission may not agree with the county on this issue for many reasons.
- People are storing cars on streets, BUT there is a 72-hour City law and easy access to a special number to call and get these vehicles cited and towed if they are not moved.
- The City is allowing parking requirement exemptions to businesses and the residents suffer when the businesses take away the residential parking. This is a problem, BUT when the City allows businesses to pay a relatively small fee so that they can get out of complying with the parking requirements, it is a separate issue.

Please also note that there is quite a bit restricted parking in Venice already: 2-hour parking signs, no-parking signs for nighttime hours, city or county-owned lots that cost money or have no overnight parking, and residential parking given away to businesses by granting variances. The many 2-hour parking, and the no-overnight parking, street signs have been initiated by anti-homeless movements in Venice that are supported by the city and paid for using our tax money.

Since the Coastal Commission denied the OPD permit system, there appears to be a VNC movement to send documentation of so-called criminal activity associated with the homeless to the Coastal Commission to help their case.

The whole concept of creating permit parking, street sign restrictions, or municipal codes specifically to get rid of homeless people from an area - essentially criminalizes the people with the lowest "quality of life" in Los Angeles. In 2005 the homeless count was

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RV's - a nightmare for some a dream for others

By Della Franco

What is up with Venetians these days? It seems as if the spirit of this community is being broken down little by little just like the affordable housing and the free speech zone it really seems like it is all just being bulldozed away.

The latest crap bringing me down is residents wanting to get rid of RV's, camper vans, anything that looks like one could live out of it. Well for many people owning a RV is a small slice of heaven in this crazy world. For many people it is their only choice. They simply cannot afford to rent, lease or buy anymore. Or anywhere.

It is a shame, actually it is a sin that it is illegal to live in them in Venice. And I thought that was one of our rights as Americans - The pursuit to happiness. The great American dream. Well, for some it is to own a house on wheels.

Venice Beach should embrace that. But it doesn't. It opposes it. And residents and right wingers are pleading with the City to help them eliminate a persons right to live and sleep where they want.

So now what we have is a bunch of paranoid people sending mass emails and holding meetings calling on home owners to protect their neighborhoods. Letters telling people to take note of license plate numbers, to follow the movements of vehicles parked in their street. Become spies and report your fellow man. But don't get too close. It is dangerous the newsletters say. Call the cops and be very careful. Don't get too close. I mean COME ON VENETIANS - Stop all the hating, stop blaming the homeless. Let's work together and all live in harmony. What happened to LOVE thy NEIGHBOR? Or does that only apply if they live in a house?

Rich home owners are going insane. They really believe that people who live in their vehicles are all rapists perverts drug dealers dirty dirty people.

The trash in the streets, they claim, are from people who live in their cars. Definitely not the thousands of tourists visiting Venice every day. No - all those paper plates from pizza slices, and all the empty coffee cups from expensive double lattes they all come from the poor people living in camper vans. But these home owners are insisting it is so So - So send them away! Don't allow them into our city! Beg permission from the Coastal Commission and block them from entering Venice Beach and our streets forever!

The city wants evidence of unsanitary conditions. Residents ridiculously blaming all the piss on the street on the homeless. Sure there are people who piss on the street. But so does your cute little dog. And yours And yours And yours more times than any homeless person. But there is no call for a law against dogs peeing outside. BUT - maybe if there were toilet facilities open 24 hours. Maybe if there was more public facilities for the amount of people in Venice there wouldn't be so much pissing in the streets.

And as for the drug dealers. I doubt that they are all buying RV'S and Volkswagen vans to sell their crack cocaine. They are hidden away in the million dollar houses overlooking the view in Malibu and Marina del Rey. I really wonder how many times the police have been called to break up a raging party coming from a camper van or to tell the person in the RV to turn down their base. That is coming from your freakin' house. From the apartment building having a bloc party. The noise till 4am is the drunk laughter coming from Apt 2.

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Surviving After the Crash

By Jim Smith

Is Wall Street headed toward a depression-sized crash? If so, how will we be able to survive?

These questions are on the minds of millions of Americans, and not just a few over-extended Venetians.

But first, if you have your nest egg, 401(k) or other much needed wad of money invested in stocks, here is a word of advice: SELL!

If you sell before the market tumbles, you won't lose a thing. If the crisis passes, you can always reinvest as if nothing happened. But if you wait until half the value of your stocks is gone, you're screwed. It might mean that you have to work another few years before retiring, or that you'll have to live more frugally for the rest of your life. Such is the fate of many people every time there is even a modest downturn in the stock market, let alone a crash.

For many homeless people, the depression struck long ago. In 1929, millions of Americans suddenly found themselves homeless. "Hoovervilles," named after the hapless president, sprang up around every city. Will we soon see "Bushvilles?" Probably not, given the aggressiveness of modern-day police forces. Unless the crash assumes overwhelming proportions, its victims will likely be scattered throughout cities, without even a cardboard shack to call home. (A note to those haughty and heartless homeowners of Venice who are working to drive the homeless out of Venice: next year at this time, it might be you walking the streets, or living in your car. Where do you think the homeless came from in the first place?)

Both pro-capitalist and anti-capitalist economists know that boom and bust cycles are a natural part of the economy. Since WWII, the government has been moderately successful in limiting the severity of the crashes to the margins of society. This has been accomplished by manipulating the money supply, the interest rate, government investment (mainly in the military) and by providing a safety net for the victims. During both the Clinton and Bush2 regimes, the safety net has been eroded, both intentionally (by Clinton's destruction of welfare), and by neglect (such as the low federal minimum wage, SSI and social security payments, and lack of Section 8 housing). Because of the weakened safety net, any downturn will cause more human suffering than it would have 20 years ago.

Why is a crash a possibility today?

Economists can no more predict the exact timing of an economic crash that seismologists can predict the timing of an earthquake. But both know that we live and work on shaky ground. It's only a matter of time.

Many economists marvel that the economy has staggered on so long without a crash. The underpinnings of a strong U.S. economy were removed when globalization became a force in the late 1970s. The

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Call for Venice Artists to work with teens

Indoor mural for Oakwood Recreation Center Teen Room
Budget to be determined
Deadline: Oct. 1, 2007

for RFQ form
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GOLDEN ETERNITY

*Poems are the world asleep
where death cannot reside*

March 10, 2002:

On the eve Jack Kerouac's Birthday (March 11), Philomene reads aloud to John from Kerouac's Scriptures of Golden Eternity. This is their last conversation at THE ELLISON in Venice, California. John Thomas passed away on Good Friday, March 29 at 2:56 pm.

Philomene:

We became gods together, John
Not saints, not buddhas, but gods
And they can be cantankerous
The old Greek gods,
the Muse: cantankerous

John:

I never wanted to be either one
a buddha or a saint

Philomene:

We became poets

John:

That's right

Philomene:

And that's better than all of them

John:

Of course

John:

And must you be a buddha to experience
Jack Kerouac's Golden Eternity, or a saint?

Philomene:

I never was

John:

And Golden Eternity, if you were a buddha,
would be nothing
It would not be conscious awareness of self as being

Philomene:

You're saying that doesn't die after your body
dies?

John:

I once wrote a little poem:
*I know that my body will die
I know that my mind will die
I know that my soul will die
But not me.*

Philomene:

Nor the poems - they won't die

John:

It's taken for granted the poems won't die
Don't even have to think about that
They'd be harder to get rid of than crab grass

Philomene:

Yes

John:

And we're not dying
We're all there is
and we're going to live forever

Philomene:

Can I bring Golden Eternity with me?

John:

Which, if it's Jack Kerouac's Golden Eternity,
is the color of beer or muscatel
Yes, just as long as it doesn't fill the house

Philomene:

Dear, it IS the house

John:

Then you don't have to bring it with you
it's already there So what's your problem?

Philomene:

No problem - The end
Whatever, wherever it is
it's Golden Eternity

for Philomene from David Amram

I just received the sad news of Philomene's passing.

Just last March 16, we did a program together at Beyond Baroque.

When she asked to me to accompany her when she read some of her wonderful poetry, I got the same indescribable feeling that I did in 1956 when I first backed up Jack Kerouac when he was reading.

She had a special magical quality and spirit that filled the room, and we all went out afterwards to celebrate our spontaneous collaboration. (You don't need to rehearse with someone like Philomene. She and her poetry and the way she reads are on such a high level that you can't help but know what to do. Her poetry, and the way she read it, was already perfect music. All you could do was to try to enhance it a tiny bit.)

We talked about the Venice of the early 1960s and how, even with all the changes in the past 45 years, there was a special magical quality that remained.

And of all our dear friends from those glory days who are now on the other side.

She shared with us that night precious gems of her amazing life story (in a series of stories that were a crash course in a half a century of American cultural history).

She understood that part of the obligation of artists, when they get older, is to pass on to younger visionaries and dreamers the same encouragement and ideals and values of hard work, sharing, respect for all people and joy of living every precious second, which we received from our elders a half a century ago.

She talked about her devotion to the church and Buddhism and how they were related, and how the spiritual path was the only road to be on, as all of us traveled that road of life.

And with all her sweetness and kindness, she never forgot how to laugh!

Not only Venice, but the whole world was a better place when she graced us with her presence.

Now, we have not only the memory of her, but her timeless poetry to fill the hearts of today's young people and future generations with hope and energy.

She was the embodiment of what Kerouac always told me that he hoped that he and our generation would be remembered for when we were no longer around.

Pursuing a pure selfless path and being beatific to others. Philomene was the embodiment of these ideals.

She was part of Venice as much as Venice was a part of her.

Please share some of her poetry with your friends.

And tell them when they are walking down the beach that if they listen carefully, they will hear her voice.

*Sister Marie Philomene
(taken during her 5 years in a convent)
Photo by Dan Mitchell*



Twins: Pegarty and Philomene Long at their birthday party, Aug. 17, 2007.

BE STILL AND KNOW

after Harry Zen Stanton & Peter McCarthy

**One must have
a mind
which perceives
the slowness
of light
the crushing weight
of time
to know
the velocity
of darkness
the lightness
of all
that is not
and the
nothing
that is.**

-Philomene Long - 2006

VENICE

Meet the Candidates!

Candidate Forum:
Westminster Elementary
1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd
Thursday, Sept. 6
6 PM

Who will represent our community?

Vote for 21 Council Seats!

Election Day:
Venice High School
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10 AM to 5 PM

Your vote tells City Hall you care about local issues.

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For More Information: www.VeniceNC.org
or call 310-606-2015 or elections@grvnc.org

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

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Practicing in Venice and Santa Monica since 1996.





Philomene Long and poet-husband John Thomas
Photo by Pegarty Long

Journey of the Ring

By Nancy McCulloch

I arrived in Venice in 1960 and found a three bedroom house on Rose Ave (\$135/month), half a block from the beach.

Soon after, I met Stuart Perkoff and we became good friends. In the late 60s, I moved to the canals. Being a jeweler, I would show Stuart my latest creations. He fell in love with a ring band and I gave it to him. It was a turquoise ring with red matrixes (lines) running through it. From that point on he wore it.

One day he brought Philomene over and we connected immediately, sharing good times and wonderful conversations. I joined her Yoga class at Anita Alexander of the Temple of Man. Anita was a great teacher.

When Stuart got sick, while I was visiting him in the hospital, he said he needed me to make the ring smaller because he had lost too much weight. When I looked at it, the matrixes had turned to white. Not a good sign, but I fixed the ring and soon after, Stuart died. Philomene was with him and gave me a moment to moment experience of his passing, through our tears, as only she could.

Stuart gave the ring to Philomene. Within a month, the turquoise has turned green again and the matrices had gone from white to light green.

What incredible, magical, live energy our Philomene had.

Philomene's son Patrick told me the ring has turned brown since she died.

We will miss her dearly. She wowed us. But I am comforted knowing she will be connecting with John and Stuart and Anita and Baza Alexander, and the list goes on and on.

Nancy McCulloch, Jim Smith, Philomene Long at Venice Fest, June 23, 2007
Photo by Jeff Leahey.



Bill Rosendahl and Philomene Long

Photo by Pegarty Long

To Philomene, my last letter to you from this cold earth

By Fred Dewey

To live one's life according to the Muse, that so-jealous creature, strictly, by one's passions, in utter commitment to one's vows, of poverty, of love, of poetry, to suffer for these vows, to reject materialism and even ambition, to be single-minded and devout to the point of great tempestuous reversals...

You were strong, a life force, a cosmos, a universe, you energized every living thing you touched, every place you went, to the point even of your own exhaustion. You were never exhausted.

You gave everything, sought everything deep, you denied things to yourself and yet you lived for all of us, for all in your life, you lived a dozen lives for each of us, you lived and endured a thousand lives.

You alone had the energy, the will, the love to do this, the force of imagination, the incredible power of one human imagination.

In the last weeks and months, you were happy, I think. We read Aeschylus together, passionately, you went swimming in the ocean for the first time in 18 years, we watched shooting stars on Saddle Peak Ridge, only four days before you left, to join them in the firmament.

Not so long ago, we spent eleven hours circling around, going at it, working an idea again and again: is the secret that poetry mimics essence? We agreed it is not the same as essence, but that it approaches it, seeks it, yearns for it, tries again and again to capture it.

Philomene, the one thing we forgot that night was the poet. You were committed to poetry even at the expense of the poet, at the expense of yourself. You were our example, our shining star, our crucible, our life, you were our essence.

This is all, finally anyone can do on earth, it is even a duty: to be who you are regardless of the cost. You reminded us why this is so, and why what matters is between us, and why one life alone matters so terribly much.

You were not merely a light, you were the burning, the burning, and light comes from this, the burning that creates warmth and new life in a cruel and cold and selfish world. You felt that cruelty more than almost any of us, that brutality that America reserves for those who love, who dare to live life on their own terms. You lived your life on your own terms, and you paid the price. Now we too must pay the price.

And you returned to us, returned to life, to feel, to know--to poetry, to love. You will remain here, burning, burning, snatched for one brief glorious moment to live among us, to burn hot in the house of poetry, hot in the house of our lives, my love, my friend, my companion, my fighter.

Missing Philomene

*I am no longer afraid
Of this poem
From which
I will never return
—Philomene Long*

By Jim Smith

Philomene Long died later in the day. We had talked on the phone that fateful Tuesday and I had told her that I wouldn't be able to meet her for coffee or a drink. Her cough - which she said was bronchitis - sounded better than it had even the day before. I commended her on getting better but urged her not to overdo it, just yet.

She was in a typical good mood. After lamenting the wearing away of the poetry walls at Windward, we laughed about how the Egyptians and Babylonians could make stone tablets that lasted thousands of years, while ours were barely visible after a mere 10 years. I've never known anyone to laugh as much as Philomene. While I'm no expert, she seemed like a Zen Master to me. Being in her radiant presence made it inconceivable to think that death was lurking nearby. As San Francisco poet Jack Foley said, "You want me to describe Philomene? How does one describe the sun?"

I had known of Philomene for many years, and had occasional superficial interaction with her. But on June 23, at the dedication of the Venice sign on Windward, we spent several hours together at Danny's Deli, laughing and enjoying each other's company. From then, until the end, we talked, emailed and/or visited each other nearly every day. At first, I had trepidation that I could maintain a conversation with such an advanced being. She soon put me at ease. "I am the most humble person in Venice," she said impossibly. She also let me know in passing that she had read much of what I had written in the Beachhead over the years. "You know, you should write another article about how to survive in Venice if you're poor," she advised. But that was two years ago, I thought to myself. How does she remember this stuff? Well, how can I refuse? See "Surviving" on page three.

Each conversation with Philomene was like a roller coaster ride, with every twist and turn becoming an invitation for a squeal of delight from her. The few half-way intelligent things I managed to say were immediately scribbled on the pad of paper she always carried. I doubted that such furious writing could be read even by its author, until the following day when she would repeat nearly verbatim the substance of those wandering and joyful conversations.

Philomene never complained about anything, not even the constant coughing she endured in her last week. Every inconvenience was merely another opportunity for laughter or a poem. Incredible, I thought, if only the whole world felt and reacted this way! While she didn't complain, she couldn't hide the hole in her heart from the loss of John Thomas, her husband and other self. That day at Danny's Deli, amid the laughter, she told me how sad she was that John was painted on the restaurant wall, but she wasn't with him. She didn't care about being on the wall, she just wanted to be with John, even in a painting. Her poem, *America*, reprinted on page nine is about what's happening in this country today, but it is also about John who died in jail because the guards would not get him medical attention for his heart condition. It says,

*America
You are dying
Lying on a floor in a jail cell
Gasping for air
Calling out for yourself*

Often when John would pop into her consciousness, she would look far away, as if seeing him down the ocean front, or around the block. She never said she saw him, but once she did have a vision, she told me, of the Muse, the Lady, that many Venice poets write about. She told me that she was on the beach one day when she

—continued on page 10

THE LINCOLN PLACE BRIEFCASE

By Sheila Bernard

This briefcase, packed with the many legal battles of the last 20 years, has always been pretty heavy to lug around, but September 2007 promises to be a particularly heavy month.

To put September in context, first a word about August:

Lincoln Place tenants won another victory. The California 2nd Court of Appeals ruled in the Lincoln Place tenants' favor in *Marlin v AIMCO*, reinstating the case which a lower court judge had thrown out as a SLAPP suit.

The Marlins had requested the court to render an opinion (provide "declaratory relief") on whether AIMCO was entitled to evict the tenants under the Ellis Act. Marlins believed the evictions were illegal, since AIMCO had gotten a redevelopment plan approved by the city, which promised there would be no evictions from the property.

Using an increasingly common landlord tactic, AIMCO filed a motion to strike the case, alleging that the Marlins request to the court was a "Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation," or SLAPP. In other words, they claimed the Marlins had violated AIMCO's first amendment right of petition or free speech. The lower court had ruled in AIMCO's favor, dismissing the Marlins' suit.

The appellate court ruled emphatically that the Marlins' request was not a SLAPP. The Marlins were entitled to question the validity of the evictions.

This ruling could be a very important to tenants statewide, removing these anti-SLAPP motions from landlords' legal arsenal. It is especially significant that the Court of Appeals has decided to publish their opinion, after receiving numerous requests to do so, including a request from the California Attorney General's office.

The Marlins' case now goes back to the trial court where it will be heard on its merits. According to attorney Jan Book, we do not know when this will happen. The tenants' other appellate case, *Mueller v AIMCO* and City of LA, addresses the issues in the Marlin case and also asks the court to rule on how the Ellis Act interacts with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), since the conditions of approval of the redevelopment agreement for Lincoln Place are CEQA conditions which AIMCO is violating. If the court rules on the CEQA case first, the questions posed by Marlin will be answered.

At present, LPTA has (1) twelve eviction cases pending jury trial in Malibu Superior Court, with the next status conference set for October 2; (2) thirty-seven eviction appeals pending in the appellate department of the superior court, (3) *Marlin v AIMCO* being remanded back to the trial court, and (4) the CEQA case, fully briefed and scheduled for oral argument before the Court of Appeals, the same panel which just ruled in the Marlins' favor, on Friday, September 7, at 300 South Spring Street in downtown Los Angeles.

For the many Venetians who believe that American society is still subject to the rule of law, the ongoing battles of the Lincoln Place Tenants Association represent our best effort to bring justice to the majority of Angelinos, who happen to be renters.



Jan Book and Amanda Seward

Heroes of Lincoln Place Celebrate 20 Years of their Tenant Association

The photos show only a few of the hundreds of tenants and members of the Venice community who have stood up for the rights to decent and affordable housing during the past 20 years.



Erin Grayson and Sara Sakuma



Sheila Bernard and Tomarah Thomas



Carol Beck and Angie Bray



Gloria Morales, Rosemarie Murphy and Lucy Siam

Lincoln Place tenants supporter Councilmember Bill Rosendahl with the president of Lincoln Place Tenants Association, Sheila Bernard



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Life in a Venice Commune: the Good, the Bad, the Ugly, and the Ethereally Transcendent

by erica snowlake

Honey, the dog with the long eyelashes, is on lend to us for a while. She's a greyhound/lab with the grace of a lithe blonde deer. Unconditional Love! Great timing! Someone I can sneak out with for my nightly long walks and petty flower thievery. My new best friend doesn't complain about the rent owing, the sink piled up with dishes, or the super loud d.j. backbeats. She does, however, nip someone at a party on the weekend. Sometimes even a dog needs to be alone.

The fountains stopped. Crisis. A portent. It metaphysically symbolizes our flow of energy, all ten of us, times as many friends, hangers on and people who won't leave any given day/night/24/7. The fountain spout held a giant blue kyanite crystal dispelling negative energy which Matt took back when he moved his bus to the Malibu Hills. It also houses jade and bamboo plants, and our three or so pet snails. Snaley, the biggest one Halo's christened, triples in size in one month, madly chomping Leaf Cuisine take home offerings, mmmmm, slimed iridescent collard greens.

Our fearless leader in anarcho-dom Jeff hosts a pirate birthday party for his friend pirate Scotty. A sweet and decidedly unsober bash still going strong when I wake up. Not without its drama, like everything else around here, to wit spiritual counselor Tobin's in the parking lot consoling a convulsively wailing pirate Ivy, cascading black mascara and shrieking sobs of "I broke the toilet", and in a tribal punk fit of rage/dj control issues didn't she just absolutely demolish the toilet. Now a troop is mobilizing an early morning run to Redondo Beach to pick up a free toilet found on Craig's list.

Speaking of toilets, there's one living in an airstream in the parking lot. One certain renowned Toylit, of fake husband and wife performance art duo Toylit and Log, veterans refugee squatters of the Topanga Rodeo Grounds and authors of *The Children's Guide to Astral Projection*, among other whimsical tomes. Toylit is solely and gleefully responsible for the parking lot's multi-colored glitter veneer, a by-product of many large lovingly stroked canvases he seemingly manifests overnight, sparkle-sized portraits of Ganesh, Kali, Horus, and an emaciated Iggy Pop, all bound for a show at the Black Cat Gallery. Dig it! Being around fellow kooky artists/intergalactic aliens is so inspiring!!!

I invite my homeless friend Snake, (Beachhead Interview June 2006), over for a few days as it's his birthday July 4th and we, (along with the whole delusional country) are having a bash, but get nothing but flak from my fellow residents. Seems he's acting strangely, reportedly drinking Natalia's bongwater and doing some kind of pistol-whip dance shooting straight from the nipples that's generally FPO, freaking people out. We congregate on the roof with cocktails to watch the fireworks go off in 360 degrees, then spend a couple hours in hot rousing and cursing pursuit of Snake. I receive considerable tongue lashings.

My head itches, fleas, or a communal side-effect of not getting much, if any, uninterrupted sleep. Tonight Coz's UFO/room is vibrating with an eclectic mix of djs/GHB, i awake to the sound of a group orgasm?!, a hip-hop woman from the Bronx stomping mad capoeira booty while jungle catcalling to the thumping music, enough to wake the living dead, repeatedly, (me), repeat, "it's only a dream".....

A quick pilgrimage to Rainbow Acres up the street, and in-house chef Halo spends three hours preparing one of the greatest vegan meals on earth. All is devoured within three minutes flat, peeps happily purring between bong hits, and I hope to hell he got some! Dessert is a frozen puffed amaranth/cacao concoction, straight from heaven and the farmer's market in Tepic, Nayarit.

Beautiful people, freaks. Another party, to raise the five grand a month rent, of which we're always short, naturally. It takes a lot of dough and energy to keep this crazy junk/pirate ship afloat as an artist/musician/dj paradise/mecca, featuring an international array of truly amazing divas with incredible, mind-blowing talents, yad-dayadda, no hay mucho dinero. Each party is fantastically unique, rolling till dawn and rivaling the best all-night dancing faerie balls on the other side of any dimensional portal. The parking lot/lounge/Burning Man camp glistens with twinkling revelers storytelling and ukulele strumming round a tiny urban two-by-four fire in a metal grill. Sigh.



The Commune's Bubbling Zen Fountain

Everyone's entheogenic journeys are expanding off gracefully. Josh's conch shell trumpeting juxtaposes the thunder of the early morning trucks rolling into Costco, palms trees swaying and the first bird trills of the day.

There's demons living in the drainpipes, (a side-effect of communal emotions?). No sooner is this verified by our house psychics/shaman, the shower backs up allowing the pipe below to burst and all manner of holy water breaks loose upon our unsuspecting roommates. Plus the gas gets shut off due to some leak in the front room. So no hot water, no showers, no cooking, and yucky evil poltergeists on a rampage over our dirty reeking bodies. Plus! the putrid smell of vomit, which appears projectile delivered on the kitchen wall after the last party, (Snake?), and will not disappear, no matter how many people wash it trying to find the source, it in fact intensifies and saturates the entire building in nauseating waves.....

We're all ecstatic imbibing Ripley's white sapote/lime smoothies, courtesy Dimas and I picking the tantalizing fruit goodness from neighbor Tina's tree her dad planted from seed sixty years ago.

DJ's delusious Carly and elven Stefan are trading off mixing tunes while Alana performs Supreme Hula Hoop moves synchronized with Tobin's kaleidoscope infinity wall backdrop visuals. It doesn't get much better than these moments of extraordinary group Cre8tivity, Aaron playing vocal hangman from the communal stripper pole, my krisna flute devotion, Halo's healing didgiridooing, Ardas kirtaning to Jeff's Inside Out Upside Down guitar mantra, Josey's psychobilly meets Phantom of the Opera guitar droning to Allen's tasty drumming, all conspiring to deliver a sound never before heard or imagined, propelling this freaking Mothership Spaceship Earth into Higher Evolution, a black hole, and/or the gap between all thoughts, (the Gunnungigap, I believe its called).

The Colonel's visiting, and once again, against all logic with random intent, inspires disension and controversy to foment. Seems our (fired) ninja computer hacker genius simply cannot provide enough crack for the entire household so spirits hiss-elf away cackling, leaving us a tray of gooey cinnamon buns and forms to fill out to join the Marina del Ray Crips. Just Kidding! Another classic joker dropping by to keep it fresh. Oh no, now he's moving in.....

A week before the Burning Man mirage the parking lot's humming with glammed up art cars, a giant San Pedro cactus vibrating phosphorescent green for it's erection/ejaculation on the Playa, bicycle's growing fur, and people already getting fuzzy.....

.....And Finally, A Few More Communal Nuggets of Fun: (lest we forget and scatter to the wind, I know, let's turn it into a TV show.....!)

- Great conversations = gnarly arguments!
- Travi, Benny and Shacham rock the house!
- Jonathan donates a dehydrator for taking care of Honey.
- Angel Melissa and her daughter Elise keep us in riddles, stitches, and fleur de lis. Communes need kids!!!
- Michelangelo fixes the fountain for free! Abundance bubbles over again!
- Geoff kindly funds Nathan's sidewalk flower operation so he may follow his heart's dream to return to Thailand, even though he takes off with the money and leaves lots of carnations.
- 5 shopping carts of empties equals thirty dollars.
- A giant carrot cake and multiple zucchinis appear magically on the kitchen counter, a medical marijuana dispensary's sprouting in the foyer.....and who's sleeping with who again?

All is well, well, all is..... to be continued.....



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Philomene Long Contest Winners

Thank you Alan Rodman and Cary Shulman for your winning entries. We realize that offering you a prize would be considered an insult. Enjoy!

From Alan Rodman:

Position, know thy self. - Misquoted by Alan Rodman

PHILOMENE LONG'S CONTEST FOR BEACHHEAD READERS

Please send your answers to the Beachhead, PO Box 2, Venice CA 90294, or just keep them to yourself.

Up A Mountain - Down a Beer

SUGGESTION:
Beatitude contestants should memorize the following words by the immortal John Thomas: "Don't get hung up on anything, stand above, piss on and be free." Then be prepared to repeat them when asked. *Dma, and done.*

QUESTIONS:

- Would you ever enter a bathing suit contest? *It may enter me*
(If the answer is "Yes" the contestant is automatically eliminated from the contest) *A: Not yes.*
- a. Show me how to act cool. *POSE AS A NORGE* or get some bongos
b. Show me how to be cool. *Refrain from touching the container.*
- Elucidate the difference in 25 words or less.
The distinction between being and acting is self-reference: All phenomena arise out of this dichotomy. Only real beauty is
- Can you reply "NO" without speaking, shaking head, etc. to the following question: "Do you agree to throw yourself before the altar of Mollock (see Allen Ginsberg's poem)?" *unselfconscious*
Know. (see Alan Rodman's poem.) Seeing beyond your eyes
- Show me Beatitude. *Be attitude.*
- Explain how living the Beatitudes leads to the state of beatitude? *Be at it, dude.*
When you are fully absorbed in beauty, you disappear, and it's fun.
- Are the following statements true or false? *Yes.*
 - Be the saint on your block. -Allen Ginsberg - *ok i will, if you do too*
 - It is because I am Beat, that is, I believe in beatitude... Who knows, but that the universe is not one vast sea of compassion actually, the veritable holy honey, beneath all this show of personality and cruelty? -Jack Kerouac *a sticky situation: is not all one?*
 - He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts and has exalted the humble. -Mary *UP WITH PEOPLE!*
 - Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. -Jesus Christ *WWJD?*
 - Power to the people. -Patti Smith - John Lennon
 - Work out your salvation with diligence. -Buddha *work out! WALK N!*
 - Walk close to the earth. Sing close to the body. -Stuart Perkoff *Nothing needs doing now*
 - There is no road. We take it. -Philomene Long *WEAR AIR - GROW HAIR*
 - Go naked. Take nothing. -John Thomas

UNSELF-CONSCIOUSNESS
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*Q: What am I?
A: Chopped Liver!*

P.S. = 42

Sighed, lovingly - Alan Rodman

From Cary Shulman:

This is very funny. -Philomene

- Would you ever enter a bathing suit contest?
Now that Bert Parks is dead it's highly unlikely.
- Show me how to act cool.
Pretend to be in the know.
- Show me how to be cool.
Know that there is no knowing.
- Elucidate the difference in 25 words or less.
It's the difference between never living and dying before you die.
- Can you reply "No" without speaking or shaking your head to the following question:
"Do you agree to throw yourself before the altar of Mollock (see Allen Ginsberg's poem)
His altar has been altered and is now a Mammonarium.
- Show me Beatitude
Arroz es arroz es arroz.
- Explain how living the Beatitudes leads to the state of beatitude.
I assume you're talking about the Northern part of the state of beatitude. It's easy you find the on ramp to the Innerstate and it's straight on from there.
- Are the following statements true or false?
 - "Be the saint on your block." -Allen Ginsberg
I don't know if you've noticed but the blocks in this neighborhood are too expensive for saints.
 - "It is because I am Beat, that is I believe in beatitude... Who knows, but that the universe is not one vast sea of compassion actually the veritable holy honey, beneath all this show of personality and cruelty." -Jack Kerouac
Jack was always big on monism.
 - "He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts and exalted the humble." -Mary
I think there's a little more scattering left to do.
 - "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." -Jesus Christ
Around here they need all the help they can get.
 - "Power to the people." -Patti Smith
Not since the Tennessee Valley Authority and rural electrification.
 - "Work out your salvation with diligence." -Buddha
Work out your diligence with salvation.
 - "Walk close to the earth. Sing close to the body." -Stuart Perkoff
"And dance as if no one was watching"
 - "There is no road. We take it." -Philomene Long
The no road taken.. Robert Frost is doing a headstand.
 - "Go naked. Take nothing." -John Thomas
"I've got plenty of nothing and nothing is plenty for me." Nothing is really something. The Hindus and Buddhists have made extensive religions out of it and there's still plenty of nothing left for all.

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Free Venice Beachhead



Abbot Kinney Boulevard Festival All Day - Sunday, Sept. 30

Venice will take to the streets to celebrate its 101 years of community at the 22nd annual Abbot Kinney Festival. Abbot Kinney Blvd will be closed to traffic from Main St. to Venice Blvd to accommodate two stages of live music, dancers and performance artists, a spectacular children's court, three food areas, a Spirit Garden, Art Pavilion and over 300 vendors featuring original, handcrafted goods. Poster by Earl

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Se habla Español

AMERICA

(her last poem)

By Philomene Long

America
The light from your Statue of Liberty
Is being blown out
And your ears are so deafened by lies
You can barely hear yourself

America
You were young for two hundred years
So very young with
"The Blessings of Liberty to ourselves
And our Posterity" and "We, the People"
"Yearning to breathe free"
Beginning, always beginning
Your power, now being smothered
By the age-old will to power for a few

America
Your sense of truth and justice
Is being snuffed by those
Claiming truth and justice
Sending "The poor, the wretched" to prison
Often to "cruel and unusual punishment"
By ones who themselves should be jailed

America
You are dying
Lying on a floor in a jail cell
Gasping for air
Calling out for yourself

America
We are America
We are calling for ourselves
When things fall apart
Our center does hold

America
America hears you
We will begin again

Is it possible to imagine a smiling tidal wave bearing flow-
ers and a guitar?
And rushing into a room to give them to you?
Is it possible to imagine Philomene
Who imagined herself so beautifully?
Is it possible to imagine
The love she bore to her husband John
So that his death was only the slightest interruption of their
conversations?
Death, pooh!
"I do tend to fill up a room," she said.
What happens really is that the room suddenly feels cold.
Whatever happened to the sun? it asks. Will it ever return?
it asks.
And then it sees Philomene
So it wraps itself around her, curls up at her feet like a kit-
ten, covers her like a cloak
It becomes a MUCH livelier room,
Offers witticisms, flirts with everyone, quotes Rumi (its
favorite poet).
Philomene could make a room talk
But she also listened
Is this not the first lesson in compassion?
What waves of intellect come from Philomene when she
speaks
What flowers of poetry
What echoes of music as from instruments.
There are no smiling tidal waves bearing flowers and gui-
tars.
Everyone knows that.
But there was Philomene

There was Philomene

-Jack Foley

It is not the end but the becoming
It is not the beginning but the becoming
It is the becoming the becoming the becoming
The seed sprays the scent
the scent the mystery
the mystery the unraveling
the unraveling the unraveling
It is the seed unraveling
the dissolve
the cut
the pruning
the opening flesh flower
seed inside seed
womb within womb
becoming becoming becoming
the joy is becoming
the joy is becoming
It is coming it is coming
the becoming is joy
the becoming is joy
the seed. the opening, the scent, the spray
the mystery raveling, unraveling in the joy of the
becoming.

-Philomene Long

They are already ghosts
John and Philomene
As they pass
Along the Boardwalk
Where ghosts and poets overlap
As they pass, the gulls
Ghosting above their shadows
Everything's haunting everything
Already ghosts
John and Philomene
Under the ghostly lampposts
Of Venice West
Their cadence
The breath of sleep
At rest
Lost at the edge of America
Already ghosts
And each poem
Already a farewell
Everything's haunting everything
The sea is the ghost of the world

-Philomene Long

goodbye little nun

black unseasonable skies
over Venice
gray grief rain streaked
oppressive humidity
overwhelming yin
gulls cry
no dolphins leap
has no one cued the ravens?
palomas reel
flock and search
thunder monks rumble chant
dorje tongues flash
a bell rings the empty sky

the boardwalk boasts more ghosts
lurking near disappeared benches
the restless walking
ancestors/artists/hermits
poets/people
uncanonized
haloed, nonetheless
their ritual march
imparts our blessings
our village
our elders
someday
real estate erased

goodbye, little nun
gone for the strong coffee
of Venice West's Summerlands location
drinks it black with Stuart and John
a bibliographical Boudica
wielding Manjushri's flaming sword
in the beginning was the Word
daughter of poetry
daughter of fire
daughter of Brigid
Goddess and Saint

we never met
I read to her once
an inept jester before a moody
brooding queen
another time
we sat opposite table ends
too noisy at Danny's
in the old St. Mark's
today
mother ocean pounds funeral drums
and Mannanan parts the veil

-Rex Butters

Dear Philomene, you got me thinking of poems as
pistols....

Manifesto of Al-Cadence

We will no longer accept your war,
your TV, your goddamn rents

We would rather live in huts on the beach
than be herded into your condo reservations

Fuck your electricity, curse your cars
We'll piss in the sea like fish

We'll regress one hundred years, 1,000 years
for what is time, when freedom is at stake?

We will wield our pens, our brushes, our words
until your pillage is nothing but a song of legend

Set this poem on fire
and hurl it at the invader

-Jim Smith

For Philomene

Years passing her and her sister on the beach
wondering
and later in passing sharing a poem
at a tribute to John Thomas
in passing
and later inspired to hear her reading
and telling her i loved her fucking poem
and her signing her fucking red book for me the color
of
red
blood
and thinking on what kept us apart
in passing
when i knew i loved her and tried to be her friend.
after the deluge
after the rain
after the second coming of age
could we meet on the same ground
"Everything that rises must converge"

so we find ourselves
together
on a path
though narrow
well lit by her words
and presence

-Hillary Kaye

Sadness with joyful understanding -
loss with blissful transformation
my dear friend Philomene Long
passed away night before last.

A sudden event - just a breath away,
but then it always does comes suddenly -
however long it takes.

In loving memories time -
namasté


-Hammond Guthrie

For Philomene: Muse of Venice West in sad/glad memory

It was just like you
to leave that way,
same as you left the
convent unannounced--
and why?
to run barefoot across
Venice Beach
to feel the ocean
tickle your toes.
I know.

Peace,
Love,
Bill Fleeman

P
O
E
T
R
Y



GREENBRIDGE
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Allan I Frankel, MD
C.E.O.

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Marina Del Rey, CA 90292
GreenBridgeMed.com

Tel: (310) 821-9600
Fax: (310) 496-0150
allan@greenbridgemed.com



Say No to Permit Parking –continued from page 3

91,000. These are disabled people, war veterans, aging people not eligible for social security, working people unable to pay rent, and families.

Criminalizing these people is not humane, it is not cost effective, and it is not a solution to the homeless problem.

The time and money it takes to implement or lobby for these laws could be MUCH BETTER SPENT creating more affordable housing (not just a few token bits in big expensive developments), protecting any lower income housing left standing, and getting people more services - as opposed to the limited services forced on poor people (by using punitive methods) that help create "chronically" homeless statistics (42-percent of the 2005 homeless count was considered "chronically" homeless). Stop and ask yourself why the LA County Jail is still the largest mental health facility in the county.

I have heard politicians say that there is no political will to get more affordable housing or services. The people lobbying them are the ones who want the court system and law enforcement to remove the people living with the lowest "quality of life" out of communities suffering from heavy gentrification, such as Venice.

Please send an email or a letter to the Coastal Commission people I have listed here **asking them not to allow permit parking west of Lincoln**. This is nothing but an effort to eliminate poor and homeless people from the area.

Please consider sending emails to our city council, Assembly members, Senators and Congress people to lobby for transitional housing connected to services, more [real] affordable housing, and to stop the insane use of law enforcement to criminalize those living with less privilege than the property owners.

Peter M. Douglas, Executive Director
Coastal Commissioner Steve Blank
Coastal Commissioner Dr. William A. Burke
California Coastal Commission
45 Fremont St. #2000, San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 904-5200 • Fax (415) 904-5400

Jack Ainsworth, Deputy Director, Los Angeles County, California Coastal Commission
200 Ocean Gate, 10th Floor, Long Beach, 90802
(562) 590-5071 • FAX (562) 590-5084

Bill Rosendahl, Los Angeles Councilman Dist. 11
Mike Bonnin, Chief of Staff (mike.bonin@lacity.org)
City Hall Office: 213-473-7011
200 N. Spring Street, Rm 415, L.A. 90012
councilman.rosendahl@lacity.org

–Peggy Lee Kennedy

**Celebrate
Labor Day
Be Part of the Largest
Labor March and Rally
on the West Coast**

**Monday, Sept. 3
10 am
in Wilmington**

**Participate in the March
or just come for the Picnic
in Banning Park**

RVs –continued from page 3

And as for Perverts – well they unfortunately are everywhere. Look at your priest or local school teacher. They are probably the ones you should be protecting your kids from. Like that guy masturbating on the beach the other day while my kid ran naked. He probably lives next door to you – yes, you, in your nice clean apartment building. Not in the bright peace sign painted camper parked outside. Perverts and drug addicts are everywhere. That is the nature of any city. Cleaning them up is an on-going project that should involve the community. Singling out RV owners and people who chose a different lifestyle is only the road to further segregation and separation between the people who all make up Venice.

Homelessness is not a sin. For many their only reality. Many beautiful and kind people live out of their vehicles, who are true artists and peaceful activists. Rent is too fucking high in Venice. People are being driven out. The ones who have made Venice the unique community that it is. What an irony. To live in a place because of its diversity and free quality, only to then try to destroy it because you don't like the look of the car parked outside your house.

The city's request for people to become spies on people living in the cars, to watch them and document their activity is an infringement of privacy. We all fight for parking spaces. Everyone who lives in Venice. Blame the developers for the lack of space. They are replacing affordable housing with their greed for 5 Star Hotels. Blame the real estate agents, the big money makers who block the streets with their concrete and bulldozers. There are many open spaces that could be used for additional parking. The are solutions out there to the so called problem. Hating and blaming only starts wars.

I heard about some RV owners that started a community garden. In a vacant lot they planted flowers and tomato bushes. They use recycled water to water an unwanted site. A site that home owners and renters just walk by and ignore.

People have the right to make their lives the way they dream it to be. For some it is without a landlord, without the pressure of walls surrounding them. We as Venetians should not question that, should not persecute that. We should support it. Let's all share. One world.

Missing Philomene

–continued from page five

looked out at the water, and saw our Lady of Poetry, gliding across it. The vision was powerful and effective. As a result, with the guidance of the Muse, she quickly wrote the poem that appears on page nine. In retrospect, I think it could express her feeling about death - and life. It begins:

*It is not the end but the becoming
It is not the beginning but the becoming
It is the becoming the becoming the becoming*

Philomene was distressed at the changes she saw in Venice. She felt that the Venice of poets and artists was being displaced by the Venice of developers and high rollers. We talked about the turmoil in Venice in the 1960s, when some poets including John Haag and Rick Davidson had taken a path toward becoming more overtly political, while others including Philomene had not. I suggested to her that it was, at last, time to heal that rift. She responded with a smile, "Yes, but you and I are the only ones left." She knew it wasn't quite true, and over the next few days became excited about enlisting poetry to fight to save our little city, which she compared to those of the classical Greeks. She talked about the ancient Irish poets who would take the field between two armies, before a battle could begin, and would hurl invective, spells and curses - really just poems - at the other side. The old poets must have had an impact since the custom continued among the Kelts for centuries.

She wrote to me on August 13: "To let you know (in between coughs) it is my intention to submit for next issue not a suggestion or a question, but a declaration. As Poet Laureate of Venice, California and on behalf of the Muse – I am declaring war -- Her poems poised to storm from the beachhead for the soul of Venice (in my mind, America's last bastion for its freedoms)."

Out of this was to be born a new poetry. Verses with the power of a sword, or a bomb. This was Philomene's project during her last few days on Earth.

I wrote back to her: "Dear Philomene, you got me thinking of poems as pistols.... Here is the Manifesto of Al-Cadence." (reprinted on page 9)



Schwarzenegger Shows No Concern For the Homeless

Last week our movie-star governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has shown the power of his mean-spirited line-item veto on the California 2007-08 State Budget. It was a promise to his many Senate Republican allies to get the budget passed. Believe it or not, he has used his dictatorial authority to cut \$55 million and thereby effectively destroy a highly acclaimed program called the "Integrated Services for Homeless Adults with Serious Mental Illness."

Of course, he has generously given a \$45 million tax break for people he can relate to-- yacht and private plane owners.

Unfortunately, Arnold just can't relate as well to people whom he has never met. These folks are the over 4500 homeless and mentally ill people who, up until now, were able to regularly receive psychiatric treatment, job counseling and permanent housing under this short-lived progressive program.

The Department of Mental Health is, understandably, outraged at this unconscionable cut. The program was one of their greatest success stories. Starting now, these defenseless people will lose everything. –Karl Abrams

**Venice Arts Council
Fall Feast**

4-7pm, Sunday, Sept. 23
Beyond Baroque Backyard
Potluck - Come to the Table



For more information visit
www.veniceartscouncil.org

While my poem-making powers were puny compared to hers, she was always generous, and replied: "And you were ready. You aimed. And FIRED!!!!!!!!!!!! A most beatitudinous fire!"

The Beatitudes and beatitude were concepts of the highest regard to Philomene. They permeated her sense of being and her world view. The Beatitudes are part of Jesus Christ's Sermon on the Mount, and are Christian prescriptions for leading a good life, although they are differently interpreted by everyone from the Pope to Philomene. They begin, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Beatitude (without the s) undoubtedly stems from the Beatitudes but this concept, popularized by Jack Kerouac, is not overtly religious. Kerouac explained it thusly, "Beat doesn't mean tired, or bushed, so much as it means beato, the Italian for beatific: to be in a state of beatitude, like Saint Francis, trying to love all life, trying to be utterly sincere with everyone, practicing endurance, kindness, cultivating joy of heart..."

Philomene was the personification of beatitude. In last month's Beachhead, Philomene presented a beatitude contest that, by posing questions and mental exercises, attempted to introduce readers to the concept that is so fundamental to Venice's Beat Generation. (see some of the contest responses elsewhere in this issue).

I called Philomene the following day, Wednesday. Neither she, nor her answering machine, picked up. Same story on Thursday. When Fred Dewey, of Beyond Baroque, called to say he had bad news, I knew what it was before he told me. It was impossible, but it was true. Philomene, our great poet and inspiration, was gone.

What happened to Philomene? Aside from a nasty cough, which she seemed to be getting over, she appeared to be the picture of health. She looked 10 or 20 years younger than she was. Later, people mentioned her high blood pressure as a possible cause. Well, maybe. I feel robbed of a close friend whose great mind and personality I had only begun to know. And, without Philomene, Venice is the one with a hole in its heart.

Surviving After the Crash

—continued from page 3

industrial base of the world economy began shifting from the U.S. and advanced industrialized countries to the third world. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), that Clinton and Gore campaigned so hard for was the final kiss goodbye to American industry, and a kiss hello to millions of displaced Mexican workers and farmers who could no longer survive under U.S. industrial domination.

Meanwhile, Americans began selling financial goods and services to each other, and called it production. In reality, it was a house of cards. It's also been called "casino capitalism," where speculation rules - for a while.

Union membership has been in free fall since the 1970s, and with it, decent pay, benefits and pensions.

The immediate cause for concern is the default by many homeowners who have been sold sub-prime adjustable-rate loans. When their monthly mortgage payment skyrocketed, many borrowers could not afford it any longer. Others have been able to squeeze out their mortgage payment by defaulting on credit cards and other loans, or by avoiding the mall. As a result, every business from Wal-Mart to our local stores is feeling the pinch. And chances are the crunch is just beginning. The mortgage crisis may well turn into a classic under-consumption crisis that will idle production lines around the world.

Personal survival in a world gone mad

In a way, the coming calamity is one of our own making. We should have done more to resist NAFTA and the WTO (World Trade Organization), when they were converting good union jobs into \$1 a day sweatshop work in South America and Asia. We should have done more to help third-world countries bring their standard of living up to our conditions, instead of waiting until we were headed down to their conditions. Now that the crisis is nearly upon us, we can learn much from the way that people survive around the world on almost nothing.

First off, we'll all have less personal space in which to live. You can keep your home if you convert that den into another bedroom and get a roommate. Working couples can still afford a roomy house, if you invite some of your closes friends to live with you. If a three-bedroom house rents for the outrageous price of \$3,000 a month, it'll only be \$500 a month if it's occupied by six people all paying their share. At least you won't be out in the street, and you may learn to enjoy other people's company!

Less personal space means that we need more public space. In Venice, we are fortunate to have a huge park on our doorstep - the Pacific Ocean. In addition, we need to insist that the city help us convert vacant lots (many of which are city-owned) into community gardens. Even private lots are a possibility for a garden if the city will assume liability.

If you make housing and food your top priorities, you may have to sell that \$50,000-plus Hummer, BMW, Mercedes, or other rolling palace. If you are able to get any money out of your car, spend some of it on a Zebra electric car, a bicycle, a bus pass and a new pair of walking shoes. Not only will you become healthier, you might become happier now that you don't have to drive in gridlocked traffic. You probably won't have to worry about getting to a job, anyway.

Other ways to survive on almost nothing - a typical Venice lifestyle - include getting rid of that expensive satellite or cable subscription, check out the Venice thrift stores and 99 cent store, cut down on movie going (rent DVDs instead), and do more positive and interactive things with your life. Create a theater group and put on plays for the neighborhood, organize block parties and get to know the neighbors, plan a weekly pot luck dinner with your closest friends, carpool, get involved in making Venice a more livable community for people of all incomes.

For more on living a Venice lifestyle, check out "You don't have to be rich to live in Venice," at <www.freevenice.org/Beachhead/Aug2005/Beachhead-Aug_2005.pdf> go to page 5.



Even Karl Marx reads the Beachhead! (But you knew that already) Jerry Levy presented his one-man play, *Marx in Soho*, written by Howard Zinn to a standing room only crowd, Aug. 3, at the Venice United Methodist Church auditorium. The event was sponsored by Food Not Bombs.

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- **Write – Submit articles, poems, letters, drawings, etc.**
- **Shoot – Send us photos you've taken of Venice news, art, etc.**

You can reach us at:
Beachhead, PO Box 2, Venice 90294
310-396-0811 • 310-399-8685
Beachhead@freevenice.org
www.freevenice.org

Labor Day Weekend LABOR OF LOVE Yard Sale, Potluck Picnic and Jam Session

Sunday, September 2
10 am to 3 pm
Penmar Avenue
between 1521 and 1601
Penmar

Proceeds benefit Lincoln Place Tenants Association



Astrological Cookery for September

The forecast - This next month has a lot of emotion flowing, but Venus is in an unusual retrograde, so be aware of how it's flowing for you- Maybe now is the perfect moment to write a love sonnet to an ocean, or pour out your anger in a poison pen letter to burn in a private ritual. Whatever emotion is calling you, return the call. You will get a surprisingly deep and satisfying response.

Aries - This is either the end of the chapter, or the end of the book. Only you will know how to tell. Perhaps this wasn't the kind of reading you were in the mood for, anyway- what you pick up next will move you in a better direction.

Taurus - It's not really your style, but giving yourself an actual break (day off, night out, that sort of thing) will be more helpful in getting you ahead than anything else you do.

Gemini - The pull of the material world may be getting to be stronger than gravity. Give yourself a chance to soak up a little spiritual refreshment, and you'll benefit from a big change in perspective.

Cancer - It may feel as if you are surrounded, but there are ways to transcend. Some of these obnoxious barriers may turn into interesting lessons if you can see if from above, instead of inside.

Leo - Friends are helpful, and victory may be in sight. What ever challenges you've had to struggle with recently have reminded you that your winning charm is the way to get others to help you win. Thank you notes, congratulatory dinners, or just a big party are in order.

Virgo - A new job, an unexpected trip, or fresh friendly faces- something creative and unexpected is in the works, and it will change some of the things you have come to take for granted.

Libra - A big fresh breath of freedom. Now is the time to do something you have been looking forward to for a long time. Give yourself the green light, and take a chance.

Scorpio - The Universe is trying to be generous with you. Please take the time to notice these gifts and make it a point to accept them graciously. Handle this one right, and there's lots more coming your way.

Sagittarius - It seems despite your many recent triumphs, strife and heartache are getting too much of your attention. Allow yourself to count your blessings, and let the sad feelings fade into the distance. You have too much good stuff going on to stay blue.

Capricorn - After what must feel like months of swimming through glue, there's some easy forward motion in a major area. If it's a career change or a new relationship, know that it's time to watch those green shoots come into flower.

Aquarius - You can walk into the next month whistling. It's a time of solid strength and easy advances. Just don't let your idealism insist on perfection. Savor the moment, just as it is.

Pisces - There may be some major shake-ups in the works, just don't let yourself get rattled. You may not land on your feet, but you will be able to pick yourself up again, and survey a new landscape. Whether it's paradise or purgatory is your call.



Saturday, Sept. 1

- 2:30 pm - **Poet's Spirit**, open mic w/dj, all ages, all styles, One Love, The Learning Garden beharmony@yahoo.com
- 6 - 10pm - **Summer Love Fest** - Benefit for Reach for the Top shelter - SPARC



Sunday, Sept. 2

- 8-11pm - **Onaji Murray** - great jazz vibes, Hal's Bar and Grill

Labor Day

Monday, Sept. 3

- 10am - **Labor Event** - March begins at Broad & E St., Wilmington, followed by picnic at Banning Park. Free food, speakers.

Wednesday, Sept. 5

- 7pm - **Land Use** and Planning Committee of the Venice Neighborhood Council - Westminster Auditorium, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. The Ray Hotel will be on the agenda.
- 7pm - **The People's Advocate: The Life & Times Of Charles R. Garry** ('07, 60m) Hrag Yedalian (in person) inspired documentary on Black Panthers attorney Garry, who's remembered as "the defender of the despised." Reporter Zero ('06, 25m) documentary film about journalist Randy Shilts' groundbreaking AIDS reporting. Plus 6:30 live music: GWP - Greg Cruz, Peter & West Parker's soulful blues & country. Sponto

Thursday, Sept. 6

- 6pm - Venice Neighborhood Council **Candidate Forum**, Westminster Aud., 606-2015.

Friday, Sept. 7

- 6-10 pm - **First Fridays** on Abbot Kinney Blvd. - Stores open late.
- Friday-Saturday - **Green Screen Film Festival**, first annual environmental film festival. Electric Lodge.

Saturday, Sept. 8

- 9am-3pm - **Back To School Sale**. includes paperbacks, hard cover, both fiction and non-fiction, childrens, videos and more. All proceeds from the sale benefit the Venice library directly.

Sunday, Sept. 9

- 8-11pm - Saxophonist **Louis Taylor** funk'd with Kool & the Gang, the Watts 103rd St Rhythm Band, and the Gap Band, to name a few - Hal's Bar and Grill, no cover.

Monday, Sept. 10

- **Peace Press Posters** - Exhibition was produced by Eric Ahlberg, Carol Wells, Irene Wolt, Bob Zaugh and The Center for the Study of Political Graphic, SPARC
- 9-12 Cal Bennett, too funky to be smooth, Hal's Bar and Grill, no cover

Tuesday, Sept. 11

- **General Strike** - a national call to action, from citizens to other citizens. It is not about a single issue. It is not an anti-war protest, a civil rights protest, an election fraud protest, torture, surveillance, corporate media, the 9/11 coverup, or the environment. This strike is about all these issues and more. No school. No work. Buy nothing. www.strike911.org

Saturday, Sept. 15

- 7pm - Jazz Funk Fest w/Black Shoe Polish, Freddy Ginns & Zebra Party, and Eric Ahlberg & the Vampors. Sponto.

Sunday, Sept. 16

- 11am-5pm - 15th annual **Venice Music Festival** and Jazz at Palms Court, Champagne Brunch, 733-743 Palms Blvd. 399-4100 x106 (see ad below)
- 10am-5pm - **Venice Neighborhood Council Election**, Venice High, for more info 606-2015
- 8am-11pm - **Greg Poree**, busy guitarist/composer/arranger, Hal's Bar and Grill, no cover.

Monday, Sept. 17

- 9-12pm - guitarist **Thom Rotella** keeps it cool at Hal's, no cover

Wednesday, Sept. 19

- 4:30pm - **Ray Hotel Hearing** - at the West L.A. Area Planning Commission - Parking Enforcement Facility, 11214 W. Exposition Blvd. - 2nd Floor (at Sepulveda)
- 7pm **Benny Zenga Films**: The Winking Circle ('06, 50m), SKI BOYS ('06, 9m) and new shorts. Sponto

Sunday, Sept. 23

- 8-11pm - **Quentin Dennard**, legendary Motown/jazz/r&b drummer, Hal's Bar and Grill.

Monday, Sept. 24

- 8pm - **Suzy Williams** and Her Solid Senders - Temple Bar, 1026 Wilshire Blvd. 393-7833
- 9-12pm - **Phil Upchurch** - Hal's Bar and Grill.

Tuesday, Sept. 25

- 6pm - **FREE CPR Training** class w/certificate at SM Airport-reservations and questions Dr. Bernard Harris - 393-7758

Send Calendar listings to
Calendar@freevenice.org

If you can afford an ad, please buy one!

Sunday, Sept. 30

- 10am - 6pm - **Abbot Kinney Blvd. Festival** - too big, too crowded, and everyone you know will be there. Look for the Beachhead booth!

Location Guide

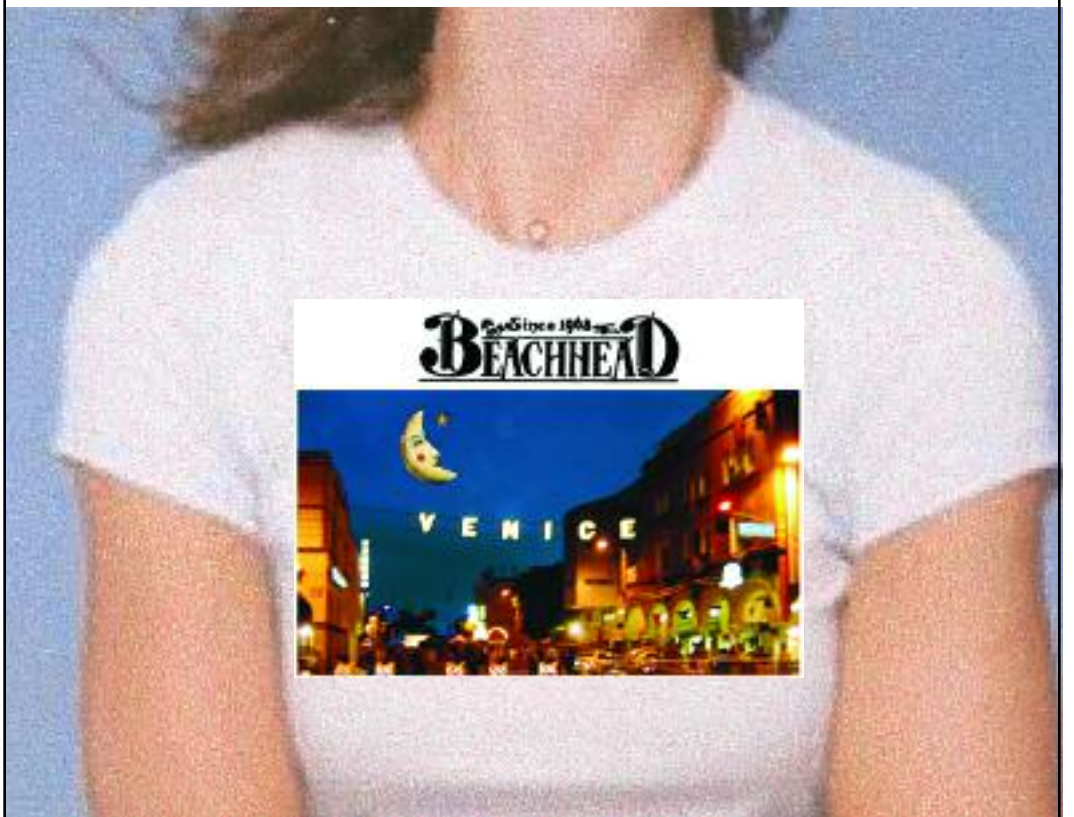
- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd, 821-1769
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 822-3006
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave, 306-1854, max10@electriclodge.org
- Hal's Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd., 396-3105 - www.halsbarandgrill.com
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 Venice Blvd. 822-8392 - www.pacificresidenttheatre.com
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 822.9560 x 15.
- Sponto Gallery, 7 Dudley Ave, Free, 306-7330, pfsuzy@aol.com
- The Learning Garden, 13000 Venice Blvd.
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. 310-606-2015

Ongoing Events

- **The Hasty Heart** at Pacific Resident Theatre - Running 8 pm Thursdays through Saturdays and 3 pm on Sundays, thru Oct. 14 - 703 Venice Blvd. Tickets: \$20-\$25- call 822-8392
- Every Tuesday 10:30 am - **Toddler Storytime!** - Abbot Kinney Library.
- Every Friday 5 pm - **Peace and Justice Vigil** at the Venice Circle, Main St. and Windward Ave.



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