

friday / saturday · 2/3 september 2005 · issue 28

miss clear

Black Rock City's alternative newspaper



DANCE BURN REVOLUTION

***The fiery history of Black Rock City's
vibrant dance music scene***

No poetry, ever
(haiku doesn't
count)

*piss
clear*

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2/3 september 2005
issue 28
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Jennifer Steele is a
Burner, a fire dancer,
and a porn star –
jennifersteele.com

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Adrian Roberts

The Year of Over-Compensation

What a week this has been. Sometimes, I wonder **Why** I even do this. And every year around this time, after four days of being covered in playa dust, I wonder if I'll be coming back next year.

Seriously. Unlike many Burners, it's not like I need to come out to Black Rock City **just** so I can "be the real me" or some shit like that. I'm already doing that in my Real Life – throwing a nightclub, DJing, hosting parties, singing in a band – not to mention my part-time job working at a San Francisco gay newspaper. The **last** thing I should want to do is come out to some makeshift city in the god-forsaken Black Rock Desert just to ... **work at another newspaper?** What am I, fucking crazy? **Apparently.**

What I *really* need is a vacation – and not the sort of working vacation that I've had this past week. Granted, there have been a lot really **good** moments – mostly involving me sitting around camp with a cocktail in my hand, hanging out with my **oft-neglected** friends. But right now, as I write this on the laptop in our RV, wondering if this will even make it into print due to all our technical dilemmas this past week, I have to **admit**: I'm getting just a little sick of the **Big Fucking Camping Trip**.

A nasty streak of responsibility

Yup, after 13 years of attending Burning Man – with 11 of them spent publishing this newspaper – I think I might finally be starting to **burn out**. I kinda **wish** I had taken the year off.

But as much as I needed a break from playa publishing, I unfortunately **suffer** from a nasty streak of responsibility. Ever since I found out last spring that the *Black Rock Gazette* was out of business, I found myself **stuck** with an even greater sense of **obligation** to the community. I suppose I *had* to keep publishing this **stupid newspaper**.

And why do I feel such an inexplicable need to give Black Rock City citizens something to read, anyway? Like, **who the hell even reads out here?** I know you're just gonna shove this paper in your bag, along with all your other "playa gifts," and you probably won't actually even read this until you've gotten home. So why **bother?**

I guess it's because I always need to have a **project**. And if I didn't, then I'd have no **reason** to be here right now.

And believe it or not, despite everything I've just written, I really *do* like being here. Really.

Shout-out to Paradise Post Printing!

Besides, I had to show the newbies who are camping with us a good time. And I had to **jump through hoops** to woo a new printer to come out here with us. I gotta give **major props** to **Paradise Post Printing**, my new print guys from Sacramento. They have definitely Black Rock'ed out with their cock out, and it's been **great** to have them on board. Believe me, it's not **easy** convincing your printer to drag an old press out to the playa with them, just so they can print up 30,000 copies of your stupid Burning Man vanity project. Visit them at their theme camp, **House Of Amazing Xerox**, and bring them some booze! Or better yet, drop by the *Piss Clear* offices at 6:00 Center Camp, and **bring us some booze!** Trust me, after putting this **final** issue of the year together, I *need* a drink!

Getting your picture taken with Larry Harvey is the Black Rock City equivalent as getting your picture taken with Mickey at Disneyland!



adrian's rant

of bright white fluorescent tubes at night – especially if I can interact with them. So I'm glad the *Alien Semaphore* is back. Easy cheesy, just the way I like my art!

But probably my **favorite** thing of all is **Uber Man**, over in Gigsville – where YOU are the Man! I can't believe they built something so tall, right in the middle of the city. Fucking brilliant! Although apparently, they never really cleared it with the BMorg "**art Gestapo**," so it's been a bit of a problem for them. Whatever. I mean, isn't that the **true spirit** of Burning Man? Isn't playa artwork all about playful "**one-upmanship**" and "you're not going to believe we actually **did this**"? It sure **seems** that way this year!

Shut up and dance!

It's been the same way with the so-called "rave camps" too. Every year, I'm totally impressed with the **immense** amounts of shit these people bring out to the playa, just to provide a space for people to dance. They're such a **staple** of Black Rock City nightlife, that we Burners often take for granted that these huge, **elaborate** sound systems are just going to spring up out of the playa, not realizing the immense amount of effort it takes to get them here.

Over the years, we've profiled many different aspects of Black Rock City culture. But we've never really gone **in depth** about the **city's vibrant dance culture** – that is until **now**. Maybe it's because over the past few years, I've become a DJ myself. With my partner, the **Mysterious D**, I throw the **monthly mash-up club Bootie** – and we know how hard it is to orchestrate a party back in San Francisco. I can only imagine the **logistical clusterfuck** it must be to do it out here!

And while we might not always be into the style of music that gets played – trance and tribal are **tired** and predictable Burning Man musical clichés – we appreciate the fact that they're there **every night**. They're an integral part of our city's culture, and they **deserve** not only our love, but our column inches – so we hope you enjoy this issue's history lesson on the Black Rock City **dance scene**.

See you out on the playa!

Adrian

Art Curator – or Art Obstructor?

by MALDEROR

So this column is moving on in years, and it's really getting harder and **harder** to come up with Big Topics to complain about that have any relevance. I mean, I really feel like we've done some good work here. *Piss Clear's* mockery of the DPW led to some major restructuring in that deeply-flawed organization, and now they're not such a **bunch** of self-important jackasses. Some of them are even kinda fun to hang out with. (Hey DPW folk, drop



malderor's rant

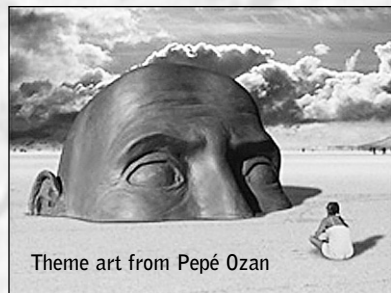
on by for another round of breakfast beer-bongs. You know where to find me.)

My rant about Stupid Playa Names may not have had **global impact**, but at least in my own camp, it led to fewer newbies claiming they wished to be called "Sparklebutt Fairyfart" or whatever. And there hasn't been one of Pepé's ass-awful operas **blighting** the playa in several years – and I would like to think that we had **something** to do with that.

And that thing you're warming your hands around? The campfire? Guess who has been campaigning for the return of fire to "Burning" Man since they **out-lawed** camp fires way back in

1997? Just because some moron in the BMorg set Center Camp on fire with his tiki torches, the rest of us have to **suffer** in chilled silence? And one wonders whether it was any great loss to **burn down Center Camp** anyway? C'mon, give the guy a medal already.

Anyway, I feel like maybe, in some small way, we've made a Difference here. **Except** that our useless "Art Curator" is still in office, and still



Theme art from Pepé Ozan

slavishly worshipping at the Altar of the Almighty Theme.

I mean, for god's sake, can't we let the artists **do their own thing** without a (non-elected) Art Curation Committee? Who appointed an "Art Curator" for this event, anyway? Do you or **any** of your campmates feel like your experience has been enriched by the benevolent hand of some "Art Curator", one working in **thrill** to The Theme? Do you feel like the "Psyche" based art projects are the best work out here? Or do you feel like the "Art Curator" should have a **beer-bong** and let the artists get on with their craft?

Really, did you get your art project shot down or placed in Bumfuck Nowhere because it wasn't sufficiently 'theme-based'? Did you (like us) have to 'invent' a way to make your Giant Slingshot (or whatever) somehow relate to this "Psyche" **nonsense**? Did you have to paint 'brains' on the side of your art piece to try to make it seem

Psyche-based? Or do you feel like your artwork was judged by some **self-important bureaucrats** who stood in the way of the creation of your art?

Before we had themes, before we had an "Art Curator," you know what we did? We made some **COOL SHIT**. We made some things we thought other people would find 'neat'. We made a **lot** of art without a lot of interference. But the "Art Curators" nowadays decide who gets playa placement, **who gets arts grants**, and what is, or more likely, is **NOT** considered "theme-related art". These people have become some of the most powerful figures in the BMorg, directing the **flavor** of the entire event. Wouldn't you like to have at least some sort of say in their election? Shouldn't Black Rock City have the same sort of democratic representation you might find in modern day Baghdad?

Come on, **the theme this year sucks worse** than any theme since that crappy Shakespeare one. Do we really need to use "The Psyche" as the filter that decides what art we see and experience?

Our "Art Curator" has become an "Art Obstructor." It's time for the theme to be **downgraded** in importance, or left by the wayside completely. And it's time for the Art Curators to step down and find something constructive to do with their time. Maybe they should try **working** on an art project, instead of standing in the way of people who are trying to create their own.



LadyBee:
Art Obstructor?

burns everywhere you burn.
XM2go.
SATELLITE RADIO

TAZO
Calm
IT BURNS with TEA

Gifting is not an economy!

by **STICKERGUY PETE**



So what the fuck is this "gift economy" all about anyway? Who came up with this idea and why has the BMorg been ramming it down our throats for the past few years?

last rant

Back in the Good Ole Days™ of Burning Man, barter was the word – it worked, and it was fun! The motto and guiding principle of Black Rock City (the last time I checked) is "no spectators." A barter economy obliged people to participate, and to interact, in a real, human way.

Gifting is not an economy. It permits people to galavant around town, expecting free drinks and free food from those who serve it, in return for some useless piece of shit from their bag of trinkets. This sounds more like a hippie fairy tale than an economy.

Think about it – gifting is consumerism at it's worst! Worse than capitalism and money, where at least you *know* that the cold hard cash you receive is worth something to you, unlike a fucking BM2005 glowstick necklace. Well, at least I'll find another chump to dump it on in exchange for a beer – but this is one sad State of affairs. Some of my fondest memories from Back in The Day™ are of cruising around town during the day with various

objects of value, haggling for liquor to serve in our bar that night. Or of hanging out at Bartertown, which was like a thrift store auction house.

The real injustice of this so-called gift economy is that it's a breach of our freedom and independence to be who we want to be. Because apart from acts of violence, theft, and the like, which are simply Not Cool, everyone here is free to be as nice or not-as-nice as they please. After all, the vast majority of us possess at least one middle finger which can easily be raised in the general direction of those who deserve it.

Personally, I'm usually a pretty nice guy, so at my bar, I'm likely to give you a drink even if you're empty-handed – so long as you promise to stop back later, or tomorrow, and bring me something. About half the people do, and that gives me a second chance to meet my new friends. What the fuck is wrong with that?

Here's a novel idea, kids: want to drink for free at my bar? BRING BOOZE. That way, I don't have to pay for and haul so much liquor, and then dump so many pathetic trinkets in the Fernley landfill on my way back home to Reno. And again, since I'm a nice guy, you could even get a drink for a good joke, or by doing a stupid trick. A gift is a gift – in the barter economy, everyone is still free to give gifts, of course – but let's not pretend that it's part of an economy.

Burning Man is more than a great party or an arts festival – it's also an experiment in community. So I would like to declare the "gift economy" experiment an utter failure. Back to barter! Or does anyone have a better idea?

daily haiku

I'm an artist, man
Really, I made that
thing, there
With my own money

– Jeff

Grand artscapes to view
Demands enormous
effort
Get ass out of camp

– Funk 'N' Wagnalls

As far as I see
Dried lake bed,
barren mountain
Much fun to be had

No dogs are allowed
Mosquitoes don't
live here at all
Fuck the animals!

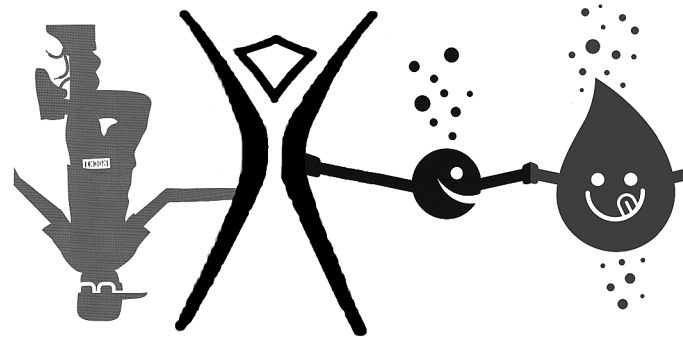
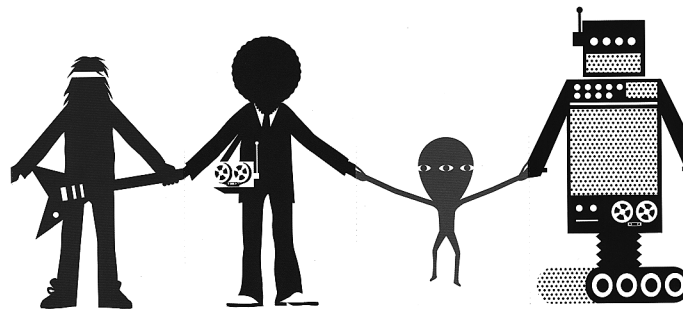
– J-Bolt

My eleventh year
Of publishing
Piss Clear here
Why do I do this?

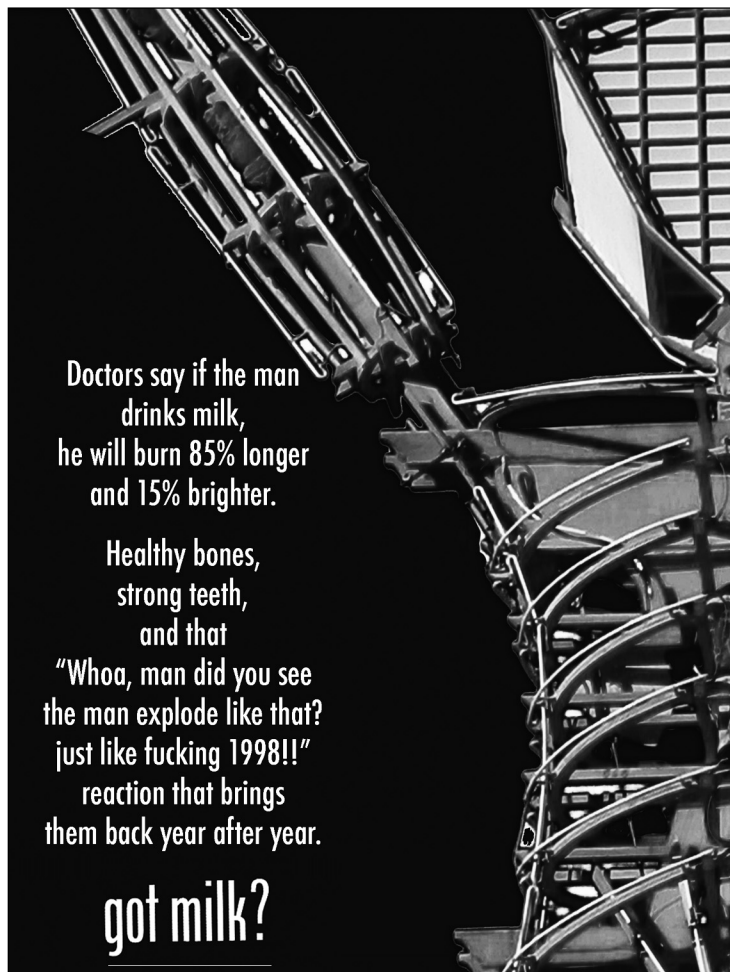
– Adrian Roberts

Once this meant so much
Burning this, that,
moments, then
Moment was over

– Gavin Heck



ONEIFY



Doctors say if the man
drinks milk,
he will burn 85% longer
and 15% brighter.

Healthy bones,
strong teeth,
and that

"Whoa, man did you see
the man explode like that?
just like fucking 1998!!"
reaction that brings
them back year after year.

got milk?