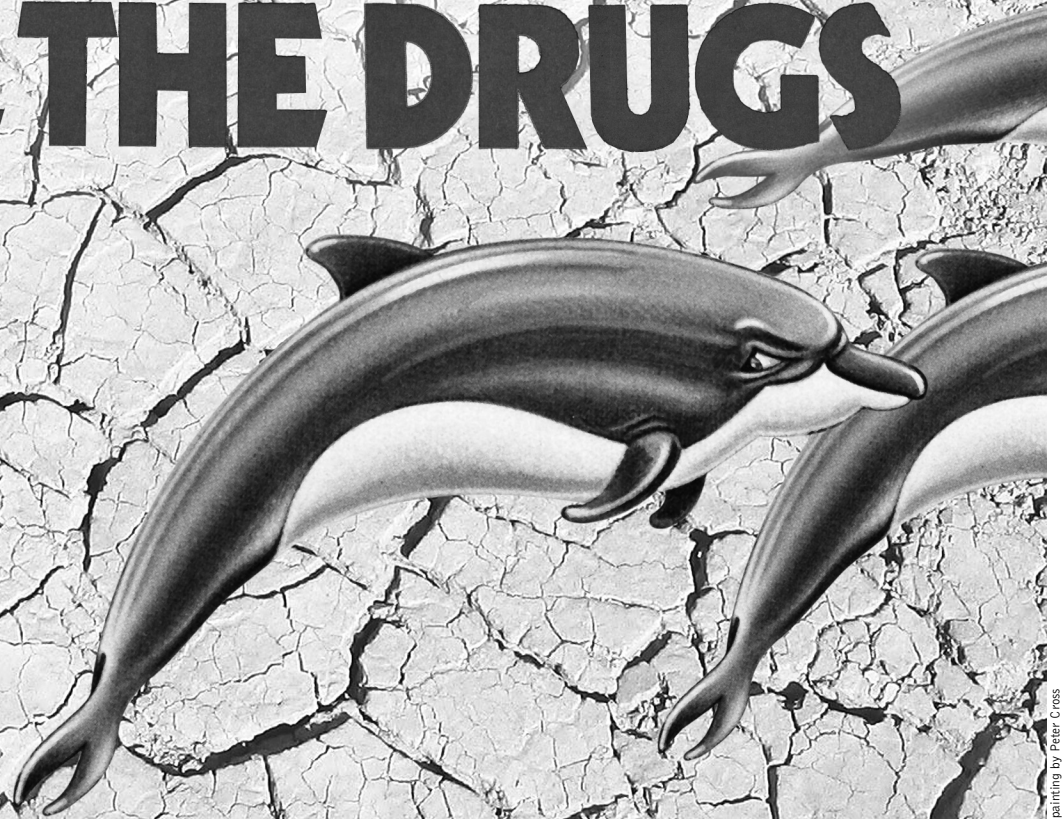


friday / saturday
31 august / 1 sept 2007
issue 34

miss
clear

**SO LONG,
AND THANKS
FOR
ALL THE DRUGS**

**Black Rock City's
favorite alternative
newspaper**



dolphin painting by Peter Cross

Burning Man's
former snarky
reality check

*piss
 clear*

friday / saturday
31 aug / 1 sept 2007
issue 34
version 13.3

Evolution &
Esplanade,
Black Rock City,
Nevada

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On the cover:
I had that cover idea
long before I knew I
was actually going to
do a final issue.

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Adrian Roberts

All bitched out

by ADRIAN ROBERTS

Well, this is it. My last editorial in the last issue ever of *Piss Clear*. Damn, it's been fun! First off, I want to thank everyone for reading my little ol' Burning Man newspaper over the past 13 years. When I first started this thing back in 1995 as a sort of Snarky survival guide to Black Rock City (with a circulation of exactly 200 issues), I never imagined it would evolve into the venerable playa institution it has since become.

I'll be back

But now it's time to **move on**. However, that doesn't mean I'm not coming back to Burning Man. All week, people have been asking me if this is my last year. Let me be clear – while this is definitely my last year doing *Piss Clear*, it is probably **not my last year** in Black Rock City.

Although who knows? Now that I don't have a commitment to BRC publishing, perhaps I can try something so many of my fellow Burners have already done: **Take A Year Off**.

Burning Bootie

Or maybe not. Having a project is what **keeps** many people coming back to the **playa**, and I've already moved on to my next Black Rock City venture. You see, back in the real world, I DJ and throw a **monthly party** called **Bootie**, which my partner, the **Mysterious D**, and I started four years ago. It was the **first all-mashup bootleg party** in the U.S., and it's now the biggest club of its kind in the world. We have monthly club nights in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Paris and, **YES ... even Black Rock City!**

Last night was our second Bootie BRC party at Fandango, and it was just as much fun as last year, with myself, Mysterious D, Malderor, and Axel spinning mashups all night long. If you missed it – or would like to join us **again** – we'll be doing it again tonight – **Friday** – out on the **Esplanade** at Outpost Autosub, with guest DJ Moldover. If you want to dance to something **other** than stereotypical trance and techno, stop by 8:00 & Esplanade to get a taste of our mashed-up, bootlegged, bastard pop creations – and just like the Bootie parties back home, we'll have some free mashup Bootie CDs that we'll be "gifting."

Fighting "The Man"

Over the years, *Piss Clear* has evolved to function more and more like a **real** alternative newspaper in a **real** community – "fighting City Hall," so to speak. Think about how **any** alternative newspaper in any city tends to be **critical** of the local government, and you can see how our **editorial stance** as developed over the years.

Certainly, the BRC LLC has given us **plenty** of material to work with. Hell, it still **irks** me that they – and most Burners, in fact – refer to the **company** as "the Org." As in, "organization." As in, erroneously implying "non-profit organization."

Look, people – when BRC asks for volunteers, it's **not the same** as when the Red Cross or the local AIDS hospice asks for volunteers. This is a **for-profit** company asking for free labor. That LLC stands for "limited liability corporation." Why do people keep **forgetting** that?

Believe me, I can understand the confusion – you've got to admit, it's hard to find any other for-profit company that actually solicits volunteers. But hey, Burning Man is wacky that way!

But with the ticket prices being so **expensive**, why do they still need so many volunteers?

Look, I also run and **manage** an event whose main source of income is ticket sales (and no matter how **much** they want to greenwash it like they're saving the planet, they're still basically just throwing a big party here.) To me, it seems like **smarter** business to keep the production expenses down rather than try to save money by relying on **flaky** volunteers.

If Burning Man didn't cost so much to produce, the BRC LLC wouldn't need to **beg** for volunteers so much. And I have a sneaky feeling that there are a lot of **unnecessary** expenditures in producing this party. Sure, we need porta-potties and

medical services. But is all the rest of this shit **really** necessary? Does there need to be a café? Does the Man really need to be as fucking **elaborate** as it is? Sure, it's impressive – but I smell a big **Waste** of money. Maybe it's time to **dial it down** and get back to basics.

Because the goodwill that the BRC LLC has created in its staff over the years is slowly but surely **eroding**. I've **yet** to talk to an ex-BRC employee who had anything **good** to say about the way the Burning Man bureaucracy runs. Back in the early years, I used to regret that I **never** got involved with the Burning Man Project (that's what it was called back then) by helping out or volunteering. Now, I'm so **glad** I never did, because otherwise I would have been sucked in and spat out like so many other **jaded** ex-Burners.

I've heard **nothing** but horror stories from people who felt they were taken advantage of by "the Org" and ended up quitting, feeling **burnt out** – people who got involved for a few years, and left **bitter**. The BRC LLC should try to compensate people better for their hard work and effort, and start building back some of that **goodwill**.

Then again, come to think of it, they don't really **have** to. It seems there's **never** a shortage of first- and second-year zealots, all glassy-eyed and eager, ready to work for free! **Suckers!**

And with that said, I've got to admit ... I'm feeling all **bitched out!** Seriously. But despite what some people might think, **being critical** of the community I'm a part of **isn't** really being **"bitchy."** Debate and dialogue and fostering communication are **good things**. And being critical of Burning Man isn't a **bad thing** – and to think otherwise makes us sound like a **cult**, not a **community**.

Obligatory name-drops and shout-outs

We are now nearing the end of my last rant, as well as the end of the week. So **now** might be a good time to get in one last plug. If all goes according to **plan**, I hope to compile all 13 years – that's 34 issues – of *Piss Clear* into a **book**, to be published sometime next year ... you know, in all my **free** time. In other words, don't hold me to it. But it **IS** in the works.

Oh, and one last thing, and I can't believe I haven't said this yet – **drink enough water so that you piss clear!** That's always been our number one survival tip for the



Eric!

Black Rock Desert and I would be doing you readers a disservice if I didn't shout that out at least **once** – after all, it's how we got the name for this newspaper!

Finally, I would like to thank my **awesome** staff this year, especially **Eric ShutterSlut**, who edited **every-**thing in these pages long before I ever even looked at it! And thanks to the Mysterious D, who spent **many** a night alone while I **slaved** away, all hopped up on Adderall and Rock Star, laying out this newspaper. I'm kinda looking forward to never having to **increase** the **font size** of randomly selected words and phrases **ever again!**

I could not have asked for a better camp this year – "**Piss Queer!**" You all helped make this one of my best years ever at Burning Man – and seeing as that this is my 15th year, that's saying a **lot!**

Goodnight Black Rock City. Adrian has left the, um ... RV.

But I will **still** see you out on the playa.



A+D at Bootie BRC

adrian's rant

Adrian

“Burning Man sucks, don’t go”

by MALDEROR

I want to let you in on something I’ve been saying for years: “Burning Man sucks, don’t go.” It might be **hard** to imagine, **NOW** that Burning Man is a \$10 million-a-year enterprise (according to *Business 2.0*) but there was a **time** when we were never sure if Burning Man was going to continue from year to year. Each year **might** have been the last, and anybody who didn’t attend might have missed out on this rather unique experience.

Back then I was one of those **annoying**

“Burners” who went around

telling anybody who would listen about this awesome party I’d found out in the **desert**. You could drive motorcycles and shoot guns and blow shit up and drink beer for three solid days! (Can you **imagine?**) I was mildly successful, and managed to get a few of my friends to come out, who got a few of *their* friends to come out, and **soon** there were a few hundred people in our camp.

And we had a **great fucking time**.

But then something shifted. People read that article in *Wired*, and started to think they **knew** what Burning Man was **all about**. A weird little **backlash** started, especially in the Bay Area, with people who were (justifiably) **sick of hearing** about this little party, er, I mean, “arts festival.” People got all **cranky** about it.



malderor's rant

I remember being in the Toronado like it was **yesterday**. (The Toronado is a bar in San Francisco’s Lower Haight.) Somebody had written on the men’s room wall, **apropos of nothing**, “Burning Man is a bunch of rich mama’s boys.” (A remark I might make myself nowadays, but in 1995, it seemed like a personal slight.) I whipped out my trusty Sharpie and wrote beneath it: “**Burning Man sucks, don’t go.**”

Suddenly it was **clear** to me. I no longer had to convince anybody to come to this wild party in the desert. In fact, since there were now thousands trundling in with RVs all week long, the event might even carry on without my cheerleading. I realized it was pointless to keep banging **ON** about it. People could either come here and **enjoy** it, or stay at home with their preconceived notions, and wallow in their disdain. My blathering wasn’t going to change anybody’s mind, and it was a hell of a lot **easier** to go, “You know what, you’re right. Burning Man totally **sucks** and it’s “sold out.” You should **probably** stay home.”

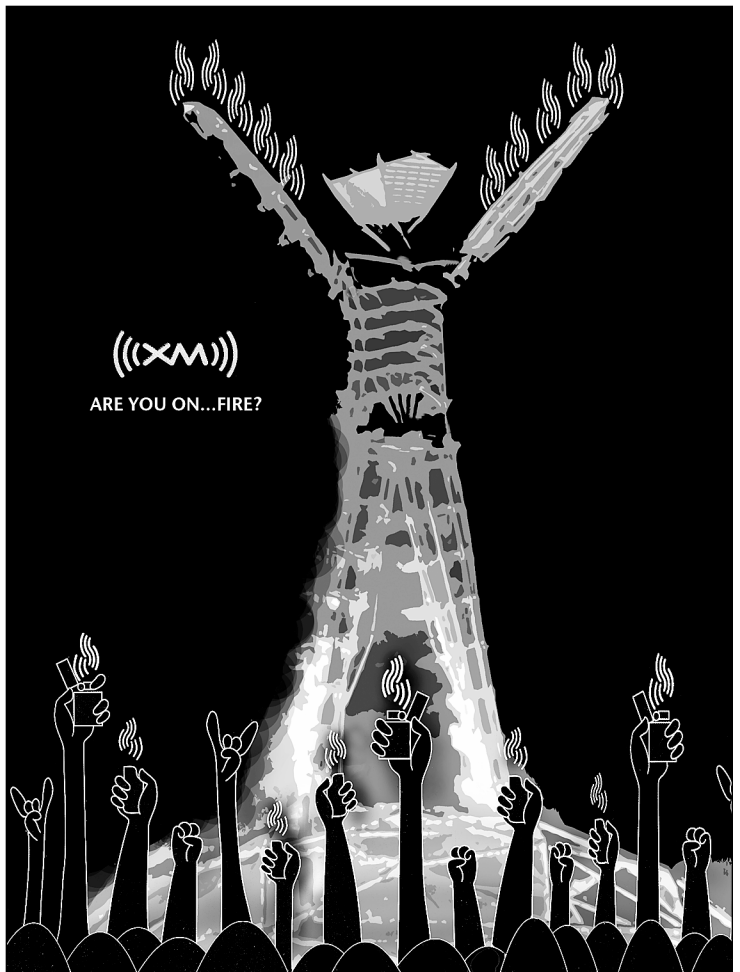
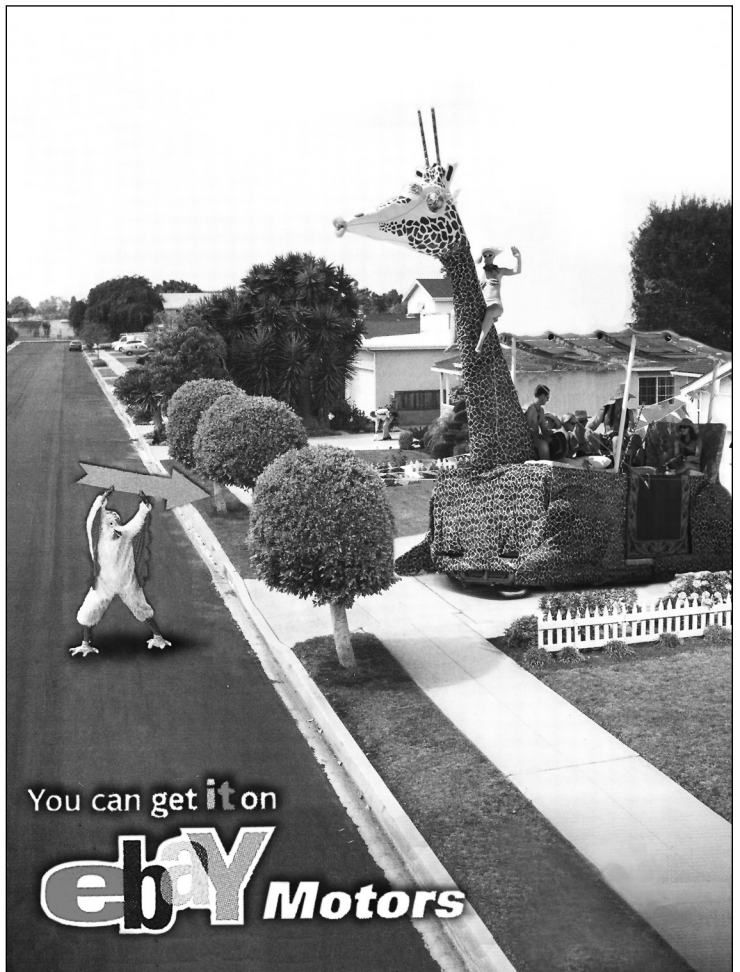
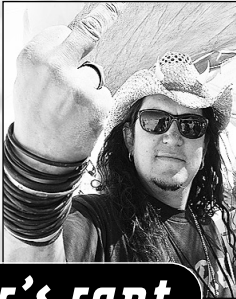
This was **tremendously** liberating.

If people think they might not like Burning Man, they probably **won’t**. If somebody **hates** dust, dirt, camping, and the chance that they might wake up with a smelly hippie passed out in front of their tent, **maybe BRC** is not for them. **And that’s okay**. Despite my own enjoyment of this **Big Fucking Camping Trip**, it’s perfectly acceptable for other people **not** to dig it.

It’s become my standard reply now when people ask me about the event — “Burning Man sucks, don’t go.” I mean, it **does** suck, in **SO** many ways. It’s hot, cold, dusty, rainy, it takes a lot of effort, and you could end up **hating** your friends afterward. Burning Man sucks! I **figure** that anybody who’d actually be dissuaded by such a response isn’t really going to kick ass in a blinding dust storm.

But it could also be the **most fun** you can have on the planet this particular week of the year. (And trust me, if I could find something **more** fun, I’d do it.) But we don’t need to keep **telling** people about it, do we? Let’s tell them how much it **sucks**, and maybe a few of them will listen up and stay home.

I’d like to thank *Piss Clear* for giving me a soapbox all these years. I may have pissed off a few folks over time, and I apologize to any of you humorless fucks who might have taken these little rants personally. It was all worth it last year when two guys stopped me in the street and said that they’d taken to repeating something I’d written like a mantra, all week long. The quote? “Dude... fuck you.” I think that says it all. Please stop by Fandango a beer, and let’s have some fun out here these last two days.



Turn off yr techno

by **SIR LOIN**

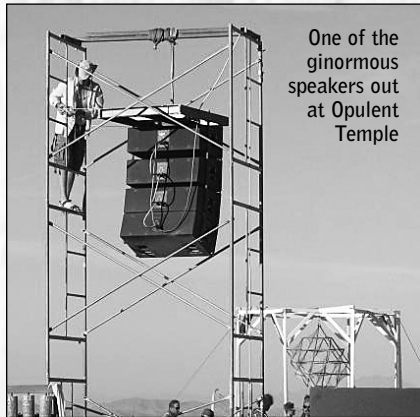
Admit it, there's something wild about firm bodies bouncing off each other to the **beat** of loud techno music. It stirs the soul more than the lust of an untapped **SEX** fetish. Real animal attraction stuff – I love it! And, I love the playa sound gardens too. Some **SERIOUSLY** cool **SHIT**, year after year. It



sir loin's rant

reminds me of the good ol' days. A rebellious time of taboos and tattoos, temptations and libations. Those were great days. **Too bad those days are over!**

Yes, my little pretties, they're over, and trying to recreate the mood at 5 AM with your techno music **blasting** as you sit curled up in a **lump** watching the night sky lighten is just fucking **rude**. If you're going to expose my air space to your music taste please consider my enjoyment over your own, especially at five in the morning, you son-of-a-bitch! Or **better**



One of the ginormous speakers out at Opulent Temple

yet, go grieve over your long lost life with a private iPod moment. Just please, turn off that fucked-up-shit. I **can't** find my earplugs and I'm trying to get some sleep!

In the '60s and '70s, the music actually **supported** the anti-establishment movement. It **activated** a whole generation. People held hands, swayed to the music and sang along to the sappy folk shit, until it was time to go **fuck** each others brains out. Forty years later, techno music's achieved much of the same end result, but without

any discernable message or social effect. Techno has not been a **catalyst** for **change** the way other music has been in the past. Techno's like the musical version of "Deal Or No Deal", the game show without a skill. And that home-brewed techno shit is the **worst**. It's music, without the song. Hell, half the time I can't tell if the fucking CD is **skipping**.

Techno **served** its purpose. It was the soundtrack to a hip new subculture. But, what the fuck were we listening to? I mean, do we **hate** corporate America so much that we would **silence** our own voice? Where's the romance, where are the metaphors? Have we **lost** our ability to articulate our **feelings** through song? Have we lost our musicians to high school budget cuts? Are we selling ourselves **short** by listening to a seamless track with no beginning, middle or end?

If you want to make a statement, try playing Peter Tosh's "Legalize It" or some other **recycled** anthem that supports your cause, 'cause your friend, the hacker, and his basement hobby bullshit is irritating me to death. The time is ripe for a new musical revolution! This one's all **bark** and no bite – it's sounding anonymous, stale, and lazy. It was born out of a hopeless age of entitlement, alienation and self-doubt. It's music without a message.

Give me something new, something edgy, something meaningful. Do it in the **true** Burner style. Burn the old shit and reinvent. **Do it** and I'll come visit your camp at 5 AM and watch the fucking sunrise. Otherwise, I'm tired of this shit, so please **turn it down**. It's five-in-the-fucking-morning.

haiku

Playa consumption
Staying at home
is greener
Come help burn
my couch

Streams of light
through dust
Surround human
silhouettes
Black curves and
white lines

Burning Man saké
Pairs nicely
with playa dust
Sakénoma time

– **Sir Loin**

Snark hard to conjure
BRC without *Piss Clear*?
Tears make playa mud

A column of dust
Thirty feet high
spins alone
In the dust-free air

It's *Piss Clear*'s
swan song
Still in complete denial
Burning Man's finished

– **Funk 'n' Wagnall**

– **Ben Guaraldi**

– **Orange Peel Moses**

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BRC

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