



PAPER MEN SMOLDER AS BURNING MAN'S PAST IS PRESENT

By Starving Writer

BURNING MAN has come of age. If he would just get down off of his pedestal, you could buy him a drink to celebrate his 21st annual event.

But while the Man is all grown

equals, and, if you believe some of the court filings, perhaps not even that.

Whatever the truth of the matter, Harvey owns 45% of Paper Man, along with Black Rock City LLC Director Michael Mikel, who also has a 45% stake, and John Law, who holds

growth, and ultimate success.

Burning Man began in 1986 when Larry Harvey and his friend Jerry James brought a wooden stick figure to Baker Beach in San Francisco and burned it. According to Law's suit, this was not an entirely new idea.

trip to Nevada. The Nevada Burn was successful, although Law claims Harvey "did not participate at all other than to arrive at the event as a spectator after it was completely set up."

The event continued and grew in Nevada. Law described himself as "the technical and logistical leader," while Mikel was the de facto accountant or controller, and Harvey was the artistic director. The three formed a partnership and registered the "Burning Man" service mark.

In his blog, Law says Harvey agreed to formalize the trio's relationship in 1994. The reason was so that if Burning Man were ever to become profitable, Mikel and Law would gain some compensation as organizers after years of contributing time and money to the event.

Citing philosophical differences with Harvey, Law decided in 1996 to withdraw from the festival. Law, Harvey and Mikel dissolved the partnership and created the jointly owned Paper Man to license the "Burning Man" mark. Paper Man charged Black Rock City a licensing fee that covered Paper Man's minimal costs.

In 2004, according to Mikel's demand for arbitration, Black Rock City repudiated the license agreement and stopped paying the fee. Acting on behalf of Paper Man, Harvey granted Black Rock City a license that Mikel described as "grossly one-sided" in favor of Black Rock City.

In his lawsuit, Law is ultimately seeking to transfer the marks for Burning Man, Decompression, Black Rock City, Flambé Lounge and the Burning Man logo either to the public domain or to a de facto partnership composed of himself, Harvey and Mikel. He also seeks money damages for the unauthorized use of the trademarks, for fraud and breach of fiduciary duty, breach of contract, conversion and negligence.

Harvey said at a news conference earlier this week that he was confident that he was on firm ground but has not commented on the lawsuit because he wants to avoid creating a "hateful" discussion.

On Sept. 13, District Court Judge William Alsup will hear the defendants' motions to dismiss some of Law's 16 claims.



Now There's A New Man In Town

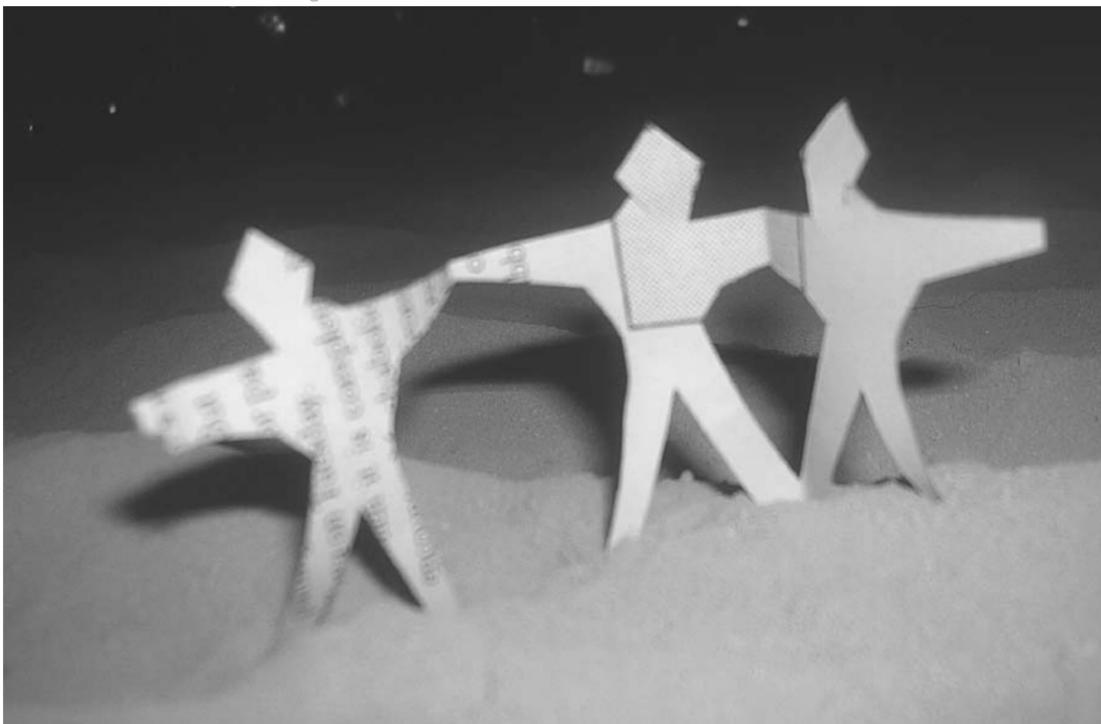
by Mary Jane

ACRANE lifted the headless form of the reconstructed Man into place just before noon Thursday. Onlookers hooted with delight as four men in utility buckets bolted his feet to the tree trunk base.

Volunteer labor, a well thought out contingency plan, and a remarkable *esprit de corps* deserve credit for the quick recovery from the early Tuesday arson that damaged the original 2007 Man, according to Just George, a Department of Public Works staffer. The Man is almost completely new. A few ribs from the first Green Man and a bit of neon in the eyes are the sole "phoenix elements" according to members of the construction crew.

A couple of hours passed and the Man's stick neck was still bare. "Who will give the Man head?" howls a passing bike rider. The exhausted crew had taken a break before attempting the delicate feat of placing the head. With whiteout conditions prevailing through the afternoon, it took until Thursday night for the Man to return in full vigor.

It just seemed like a bonus for Michelangelo, who was playing his didgeridoo in the lovely overcast weather of the early afternoon and watching the construction. "I got out here late and I still get to see the Man be raised. It's like *deja vu*," he says. "Burning Man times two, a burning, Burning Man." 



Francis Wenderlich

up, three of his figurative parents are squabbling like children over his future.

The dispute, being played out in the California legal system, is over ownership of the trademark of the Burning Man name. It might seem like an obscure point of law, but the Burning Man name may well be the most valuable asset connected with the event.

You might be surprised to learn that Burning Man, the name, is owned by Paper Man, a limited liability corporation. Paper Man licenses the name to another limited liability corporation, Black Rock City LLC, which produces the event.

The existence of Paper Man points to an early Burning Man organizational structure in which Larry Harvey, widely acknowledged as the event's founder and the chairman of Black Rock City LLC, was at best first among

the remaining 10%.

Law this year sued his Paper Man co-owners, seeking a court order to either put the Burning Man name in the public domain, meaning anybody could use it, or to transfer the trademark to a de facto partnership of himself, Harvey and Mikel.

No longer involved with the event, except through his Paper Man stake, Law initially owned a third of that corporation, with Harvey and Mikel each owning one-third shares.

Law filed his suit after Mikel initiated a separate action to expel Harvey from Paper Man for breach of fiduciary duty. Mikel claimed that Harvey has ridden roughshod over Paper Man, to the benefit of Black Rock City LLC.

In his blog, Law described himself, Harvey and Mikel as "three old white guys" who "all hate each other's guts."

Marian Goodell, the Black Rock City Communications director, more diplomatically described the lawsuit as a "legal disagreement between people who've known each other a long time."

Harvey, Law and Mikel were instrumental in the event's evolution,

Artists had been building and burning sculptures at parties on Baker Beach for years, and Harvey had previously attended some of these.

Harvey and James repeated the Burn the following year. In 1988, James met Law and asked him and the Cacophony Society, with which Law was associated, to help build the Man. Cacophony is a group of free-spirited thrill seekers that was created in 1986 and that looked for unconventional adventures, such as trips to remote places. In 1989, Law, Mikel and other members helped with the event, Law's suit claims.

What is likely to be a crucial point is Law's contention that it was the Cacophony Society that came up with the name "Burning Man." His suit claims that the term was coined in a 1989 Cacophony newsletter.

Law claims he and the Cacophony Society also played a critical role in moving the event to the Desert. Harvey was "completely defeated and dejected" when police blocked the 1990 Burn in San Francisco, but Law says he suggested burning the Man at an already-planned Cacophony

Black Rock City population: 41,562 as of noon Thursday.

Suicide

An unidentified Black Rock citizen died, apparently by hanging himself about 7 a.m. Wednesday morning in the front corner tent used as a gymnasium by the camp and healing community, Comfort & Joy. Camp members found a man hanging from rope he brought and rigged. As of Thursday evening, Pershing County Sheriff deputies were unable to identify him.

The death was the fourth known to have occurred within the Black Rock City limits.—Technomad



Black Rock Beacon

DOUBLE DACTYL by Maggie

Paraffin pyroffin
Some guy the Arsonist
Ziplined his way into
Burning the Man

Dusty and Puzzled the
Burners are waiting to
Anticlimactically
Scorch him again



We're taking a day off!

The Black Rock Beacon will not publish on Saturday so that we can go see Burning Man. We'll be back Sunday with our last paper of 2007. Happy Burning.

Crude Awakening

by Deb Prothero (firefighter)

ONE OF this year's most striking artworks is Crude Awakening, a massive Playa sculpture comprising eight gigantic human figures and one oil derrick. The installation was created by Karen Cusolito and Dan Das Mann in collaboration with Black Rock FX, Pyrokinetics, Nate Smith, Mark Perez and Monkey Boy.

The towering humanoids represent the various religions of the world and the geographic areas affected by the violence of the worship of oil. These sculptures capture an earnest reverence for the object, the Reverend Oil Derrick. At night, Pyrokinetics takes over to animate the figures as they bow to Big Oil with gestures enhanced by participant-activated fire effects.

Each sculpture weighs 6 tons and is more than 30 feet tall. Burners are familiar with previous sculptures by Das Mann and Cusolito made of welded scrap metal materials, which are surprisingly capable of expression.

Be on the receiving end of that



TAYMAR

reverence yourself by climbing the tower. Participants on the ground interacting with the sculptures will cause them to bow to the Burners on the platform.

Dan Das Mann explains the motivation for the project as capturing

the "socially relevant and the spiritual aspects of an idea while simplifying the visual to convey complex ideas to a wider audience."

The project combines the sculptures with performance art. All week long has been the first of three acts, the reverence to the oil derrick, which ends Friday afternoon. Act 2 will be a fire show at 10 p.m. on Friday, including the largest fire cannon ever and a performance by the band The Mutaytor. Act 3 will welcome the new day with a 10 p.m. Saturday performance that promises to reveal the secret of the future.

Plan to see this sculpture in its entirety before Friday night and be on time for the big show at 10 p.m.. Air raid sirens will call us to the crisis and the smoke generator from a battleship will pour forth a malevolent cloud. The Reverend Oil Derrick will be lit up with a fire display like none seen on the playa in many a year. The largest fire cannon will bring down the Reverend Oil Derrick.

"Crude Awakening" is on the open Playa at Habitat and 1:00. 

Waiting for the band to come

by Rockstar

The midnight hour came, went, but still no Mutaytor. This being the Tsunami Stage at 4:30 and Esplanade and not the Sunset Strip, there was little concern. The minutes dragged by in quarter-hour chunks, with a group of leather-lunged fratboys setting up a chant of "Holy-Fucking-Shit!" They quit after a half-dozen rounds, gnatlike attention spans exhausted.

I chatted up some lovelies out in the dusty street, including the charming Iris, who'd followed the desert-disco circus known as The Mutaytor from its Playa origins and recalled the Flying Elvis of 2004 with awe. The crowd grew restless, but finally Buck Downs, resplendent in dreads and gunfighter's moustache, led a streamlined version of the troupe through a distracted, occasionally forceful romp of familiar material. The dancers, led by the altogether eatable Roo, shook it as only Playa ladies do in public, but the show held the most interest with the newer, darker, classic rock-tinged material off the group's upcoming "Shouting Theater in a Crowded Fire" album.

"I swear to God we know what we're doing up here," Buck chortled before the troupe hiccupped its way through "Drop the Laundry." He promised a fireworks display of Brobdignagian proportions at the Crude Awakening show on Friday night. With that, the Playa's very own house band slammed through the encore, bringing a wildly careening set to a clattering finish.

Events

Saturday. Noon. Wings over the Man

Hoot, Black Rock City's airport commander, tells us that there will be a special aerial performance over the Man at noon Saturday. Twelve aircraft will fly in formation in the shape of the Man. Watch the skies!

The Winner

The Black Rock Beacon is pleased to announce that Paul Brady of Portland, Ore., has won our second annual Bacon of the Month Club raffle. Paul, if you're in Black Rock City, come by our camp at the 9:00 Plaza to pick up your prize; otherwise we'll mail it to you. Thanks to everybody who helped make the Black Rock Beacon a reality in 2007.



Oh! Dear! Playa Chicken

Tammy from Seattle asks: Every year I hear about famous celebrities who come to Burning Man. Who's here this year and where can I go to meet them?

The Playa Chicken responds: I hate humans. It's bad enough that you stomp around my home with your blobby, featherless excuses for bodies, but making me endure your inane cultural quirks for an entire week makes my beak burn from bile erupting from the depths of my gizzard. You come to the Playa to make a "political statement" and to "challenge the establishment" and then you spend the whole time whining to me about how your campmate wore your ugly Holey Soles without asking permission. Or in your case, Twerpy Tammy, asking about where to spot celebrities. Please. Kill. Me. Now.

I honestly can't figure out why you humans consider some among you to be worthy of stalking and gawking. From where I sit, you are all equally contemptible and only worthy of being stalked to the nearest ATM so I can grab your cash, peck your eyes out and be on my merry little way. But though I don't consider any of you to be better than the next, I have learned to not bother stalking anyone who smells of patchouli as they never have any money to steal... plus, nine times out of 10 they'll just lead you to a drum circle.

Since I'm in an unusually generous mood, Tammy, I will tell you a celebrity story from a few years back. It was the year I signed the deal to bring MTV to the event, so I often found myself in the company of Carson Daly. Let me tell you something, that guy is a pathetic pasty-skinned lightweight who can't even hold his own against a dust-encrusted bird. He and I were slamming 'em back in his RV and I gotta admit, he can put away quite a few Coors Lights. But less than 30 seconds after I pulled out the bottle of absinthe, he's naked and projectile vomiting all over the giant Blink 182 poster he keeps above his bed.

Granted, most of my evenings tend to include someone naked and engaging in projectile vomiting, but this one was special. I think it might have been the satisfying - albeit puke-covered - look he had on his face as he drifted off to sleep while dry-humping a Shakira CD case.

In case you didn't catch that, Tammy, I'm telling you that you can find celebrities in RVs, and the majority of them leave their doors unlocked. I think you can figure out what to do from this point.

Puzzle answers

Oops. Thursday's puzzle, Heartless Haicue, contained the clue we planned to give you today. The answer, of course, is BEER.

The answer to Wednesday's limerick, was, of course, BACON.

I Asked Dr. Hal

by Citizen X

There are important Burners out there who are not part of "official" Burning Man structure. One of them is Hal Robins of San Francisco, someone you may not know about but should.

As a self-described art bum, he has an impressive resume as a principal member of the Church of the SubGenius, a parody of religion religion; cartoonist and comic book artist for the Church and the alternative comics press; video game voice talent; film and television actor; performance artist; and inspired comedian on both the weekly Church radio broadcast and the "Ask Dr. Hal" show. Hal Robins is a true showman treading on the fringes of reason.

Before hitting the Playa, I e-mailed Dr. Hal some impertinent questions. Here are his cogent replies:

Q. Tell us about your early involvement with Burning Man. When was your first Burn? How did you hear about it? What made you decide to go?

A. Mypal Puzzling Evidence, a.k.a. Doug Wellman, of the Church of the SubGenius, with whom I've done the KPFA radio show for the last 25 years, introduced me to Larry and the gang around 1995. I believe my first Burn was in '96, when we'd made HELCO infomercials to prefigure the devilish goings on out on the Playa. I also impersonated/channeled the lost archangel Satan himself that year at the fundraiser at SOMARTS,

sitting atop the Ziggurat in full Devil drag. As for why I went, it seemed the thing to do.

Q. What keeps you coming back to Burning Man?

A. The prospect of serving by performing has always been the engine to carry me there. And I've always had a couple of shows to do. This year I'll be doing radio with assistant and colleague KrOB, a poetry performance in Center Camp Cafe, two appearances (at least) on the Neverwas Stage at the invitation and instigation of Pittsburgh, Pa.'s own Phat Mandee, and of course my own specialty, the Fashion Show in the Cafe on Saturday, the day of the Burn. This annual event, which I host, has been going on every year but the very first one at the Man; Annie Coulter has been in charge but this year will bow out for the very first time, taking a sabbatical.

Q. What do you do or see while you're on the Playa?

A. I see what I can, though acknowledging it's unlikely I'll get to catch everything. I'm often too busy doing shows to take a leisurely peregrination around the great circle just for the sake of sightseeing. As for doing as opposed to seeing, in addition to planned performances I sometimes happen on to other venues; one should be adaptable. For example, encountering Davy Normal's crew in 2000 (I think) I became part of his stage show The Secrets of Uranus, which I

count as one of my all-time highlights in the desert.

Q. Where do you think Burning Man is going - as an event, a movement, a phenomenon?

A. As British author [Stephen] Baxter sees it, [in his 2000 novel *Manifold Time*], the Man still Burns future decades from now. He sets the event in the American landscape as a permanent feature, a manifestation of some shades of U.S. national spirit.

I would say that the best side of America is the one which tolerates and incubates Burning Man. The negative or polar opposite has its representation in those forces which eternally work against the Man's existence, trying to ban the event permanently.

The freedom of the country, epitomized classically by the American West, finds vigorous expression in Burning Man. Those who don't understand this are also incapable of comprehending true liberty, and chronically unable to experience anything like it themselves.

Q. Thank you, Dr. Hal.

For more information on The Ask Dr. Hal show, see askdrhal.com/. The show is broadcast on Wednesday nights from 10 p.m. to midnight on Pirate Cat Radio 87.9 FM, and podcast on www.piratecatradio.com/playlist.php. 

Perpetrators of The Black Rock Beacon...

Mitchell Martin, managing editor. **Michael Durgavich**, major general counsel and director of foreign intelligence. **Francis Wenderlich**, graphics editor and co-camp manager. **Ali Baba**, co-camp manager and volunteer coordinator. **Angie Zmijewski**, production goddess. **Rod Allen** and **Rev. Pete**, trendy design. **John Lam**, news editor. **Larry Breed**, chef copy editor. **Edge**, webmaster. **Armado**, goddess of the underworld and circulation manager. **Howard Jones**, LNT manager and missing track wrangler. **WeeGee**, minister of photography. **Brian Train** and **Lianne McClarty**, superior dupers. **Saint Everything**.

Editors: Ali Baba, Rod Allen. **Writers:** Nod Miller, Ron Garmon, Rod Allen, David Peterman, Deb Prothero, R.J. Thomas. **Photographers:** Richard Gilmore, John Lam. **Illustrations:** Diana Acosta. **Distribution:** Biff, the Paper Boy.

Semi-Legal Mumbo Jumbo

Copyright © 2007 The Black Rock Beacon, a not-for-profit corporation organized under the laws of the state of Washington and located at 32657 9th PL S, Federal Way, Wash., 98003, some rights reserved. You are free to copy, distribute, display, and perform the information and images contained herein, to make derivative works, and to make commercial use of this work under the following conditions: You must attribute the work to the Black Rock Beacon and, if you alter, transform, or build upon our material, you may distribute the resulting work only under a license identical to this one. These conditions may be waived if you obtain permission from The Black Rock Beacon. For more information, visit our website at www.blackrockbeacon.org