

A BOOK ABOUT A LANDFILL . . .

...that just happens to be the last urban wilderness
on the San Francisco Bay

We are pleased to announce an upcoming publication of exceptional photography, rich text, and assorted ephemera that celebrates the Albany Landfill, a finger of overgrown rubble poking a mile out into the waters of San Francisco Bay.

Off-Leash Art, Off-Leash Dogs, and the Battle for the Soul of the Albany Landfill will capture in words and pictures the rude beauty of this improbable ecosystem and the extraordinary public art that it nourishes. This book will chronicle the artists, hobos, vagabonds, dog walkers, bird watchers, cops, bureaucrats, and outlaws who have struggled over the future of this piece of land.

This book will not avoid the controversy that swirls around the landfill. It will be frankly partisan, a contribution to the battle to keep the space as a successful experiment in self-regulating bio-cultural diversity.

The story of the landfill is the story of a dump transformed into a place where plants, birds, dogs, and humans coexist amid a calligraphy of twisted metal debris and monumental slabs of concrete that thrust up through the vegetation like the ruins of a failed civilization. It is the story of the many lives that have been lived on the landfill:

- * the homeless who hid amid the brambles and the bushes and built shelters with million-dollar views,
- * the dog lovers who have fought to keep the landfill a place where their companions can run off-leash, and
- * the artists who have produced, out of materials found on the landfill, some of the most extraordinary public art to be found anywhere in the country.

The art of the landfill comes and goes. Some—notably Mad Mark's Castle—was produced by the homeless. Some of the best was done by a group of four artists who lived elsewhere but came to paint on the weekends. They called themselves “SNIFF” and painted on concrete blocks and the decking of a floating dock that washed onto shore. Their work is raucous, erotic, and brilliant. They painted like inmates escaped from an asylum singing in four-part harmony.



The future of the Albany Landfill is uncertain.



The Albany Landfill is slated to become a state park—safe and unsurprising—and if the planners win, the art will be removed, the dogs leashed, the non-native plants uprooted. But against the vision of the park planners a fierce resistance has mobilized, and for now the landfill still offers a modicum of freedom to artists, dog lovers, and all those who crave a temporary escape from the predictability of a packaged urban environment.

Whatever the outcome of the struggle, this book will be a permanent record of the landfill's beauty, the many lives it has touched, and the magnificent art it has nourished and inspired. The book will be a powerful argument for preserving the landfill as it is—an experiment in self-regulating anarchy, a museum without walls, guards, or curators.

To make this book and its outreach and publicity possible we need to raise \$30,000. Whatever you contribute, the support will help preserve the Albany Landfill's legacy and the influence it has had over the years. All contributions to Heyday Institute are tax deductible. Donations of \$250 or more will be acknowledged in the final publication.



Osha Neumann (author) is an artist and civil rights lawyer. He was introduced to the landfill by one of his clients, Jimbow the Hobo, who lived at the landfill. Osha worked alongside the SNIFF artists, creating monumental sculptures from styrofoam and driftwood, and he has written numerous articles about the landfill, its art, and the continuing struggle to shape its future.

Jill Posener (photographer) is an internationally acclaimed documentary photographer and author whose work has been widely published in Europe and North America. Her portraits of authors June Jordan, Susie Bright, and Dorothy Allison have been used extensively as cover art for their books. Jill's activist brand of photography led to the publication of two books of political graffiti—*Spray It Loud* (1982) and *Louder Than Words* (1986)—and a book of lesbian erotica, co-edited with Susie Bright: *Nothing But the Girl* (1996). Jill also produced a 2002 calendar of SNIFF artwork.

Heyday Books is an independent press specializing in books that foster an understanding of history, literature, art, the environment, social issues, and culture.

Their commitment is to enhance California's rich cultural heritage by providing a platform for writers, poets, artists, scholars, and storytellers who help keep this rich legacy alive.

Heyday Books is a project of Heyday Institute, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.





Thank you in advance for your support.

Tax-deductible donations toward the publication of *Off-Leash Art*, *Off-Leash Dogs*,
and *the Battle for the Soul of the Albany Landfill* should be sent to:

Albany Landfill Book
c/o Heyday Institute
P.O. Box 9145
Berkeley, CA 94709

Please make checks payable to Heyday Institute.
Donors of \$250 and above will be acknowledged in the book.

For more information, contact Jill Posener at (510) 845-4649 or Jillfoto@aol.com
or call Osha Neumann at (510) 644-2429.

