

**Sidewalk Society – by hakim bellamy**

*For the City Of Albuquerque Public Art Program 35th Anniversary and Urban Enhancement  
Trust Fund 30th Anniversary*

We are a sidewalk society

now, deadbolted in

inside four walls of insecurity

lack of community

and lack of street

we were never meant

to be a sit down society

we were born to be the art

of an elevated heartbeat

we were born to be seen

like the splatter of blood, sweat and tear

the artist wears on her dungarees

and his sleeves

the things we visit

touch

and touch us

will be forever present in our memory

ever longer than anything

we've only ever seen on a screen

JUST ASK THE ALIENS!

because from a million miles away

Albuquerque's Wikipedia page is text heavy and woefully underwhelming

so when they welcome themselves to a closer look

Public Art will be the cover of our book

and when Armageddon is at the push of a button

you want every single color inside you on the cover if they're gonna judge you

when they will annihilate everything that looks the same

if the aliens returned today?

they'd obviously choose here

our state flower is the Aluminum Yucca

and we've been trying to send them Rays of Communication  
for more than 30 years

but they no habla New Mex-español  
and Public Art is the only way to see the shared peace

of our souls

so when we no longer call this space home  
these pieces will be the only story told

first, they'll set their sights on the Center of the City  
somewhere between the Centennial and 1912  
the Solar Arc will mark their radar  
and Angelitos de Caridad will act as a lighthouse as well

their Journada will be seeking the Cultural Crossroads of the Americas  
just like Oñate

but they will be high technologists with a better map  
aiming for the globe between Musical Theater Southwest and the Fish  
they won't be confused by old and new Route 66,  
you can bet your right foot about that

but when they finally land  
beneath the Waterfall of the New Moon  
under the Nob Hill Gateway  
central lit up like a neon landing strip  
they will find us most interesting

1st Star past the Taco Bell  
the logical place to land  
as at Forms Waiting for Word from Other Worlds  
and what they find

will remind them of something

how we Bridge Blues  
and an Asteroid Sequence 2

The Floating Mesa

our arroyo of light  
that turns Bear Canyon into a constellation at night  
they would see how trippy it is  
to see themselves in our Triptych  
and they'd take a trip

but after a few lightyears on the road

they'd wanna freshen up

they would observe

the elaborate nature of our signposts

that help rain find river

they will know there was once water here

Milky Starfish smoking gun

it will be obvious by the fossils

evidence left by Spike & Alberta's ancestors

tipped off by Los Altos Skateparkers arcing Mountain Waves

ask the Bird Girl searching for water

if they can borrow her eyeglasses

finally oasis

full sprint into the River of Life to bathe...

...and Ow! that hurt!

they will finally find us

a fluidity of life

in their wildest Dreams & Nightmares

at the end of OUR Journey

of Inter & Broken Weaves

finally a Fountain of Peace

and riot

a pool of Alphabet Soup

waterfalling into a puddle of poetry on the plaza

they will finally see us

teach the eyes and touch the spirit

they will finally see us

somewhere between studio and construction

beautifying this ugly

and putting orange cones around the parts of us we want to forget

like César Chávez

when he died with an art book in his fist

they will finally smell us

like dinner time

and Broadway farmworkers coming in from the field

smell us like an airplane

coming out of the armpit of what they call,

"The Lady Liberty of Meso-America"

at the McDonald's across from the McDonald's

at Yale University's UNM Park

at University of New Mexico's Yale Park

they will finally *hear this*

Living Memorial

because we are nothing more than family lines in this linear park

raised a barely teenage mural

on the Convention Center wall

Matachines & Malinche

purity and everything that is beautiful in this world

we've solemnly sworn

to make our city a landmark

they will do more than finally find us

they can not miss us, here

where the porcupine moon

rises and sets itself on the West Mesa

they will be Cruising San Mateo

once,

twice,

three times an alien

disturbed

at the new ice age or climate catastrophe

that petrified the Humminbird, Toad and Dragonfly...

and, particularly the Coyote with the Woman Inside

pleasantly surprised

that the cats have evolved to three-piece suits

and polite conversation on park benches

familiar,

with the Giant Red Snake

and the life-sized video game in front of Cibola High

that reminds them of cousins and house pets,

respectively

giddy,

at the site of an Elvis Impersonator

and the ribbon in the sky at the Sunport

because radio waves only get longer in a vacuum

and the King and Stevie

been bouncing back and forth off black holes since

the Big Band



and in the end

they will check the Bird of Time Sundial

*cause Daylight Savings doesn't exactly "do it" for the rest of the universe*

jack the Positive Energy of New Mexico sculpture

that is a perfect fit for the broken Fahrvergnügen on their ship

*hard to find a mechanic that works on exports in this part of the galaxy,*

*if ya know what I mean?*

and they will turn the Tri-centennial towers into a slingshot

In order to David and Goliath their spacecraft outta here...

Leaving our legacy in tact for future incarnations...

Well,

minus Tony Dellaflora,

Don Quixote's Suitcase

and a piece of Elizabeth Naranjo Pottery that they took as "souvenirs"

Only,

photographic memory of Presbyterian and Catholic churches

Madonna of the Trail and Guadalupe  
as holy sisters of facial recognition

dreams of Water and the Memory of Sky Bear

they will leave us alone  
in our backbreaking pursuit to Heal our Garden

with a talking Mona Lisa of Gordon Church  
reminding Albuquerque

to speak for herself

define *her* "identity

beyond constructing streets, buildings, and parks."

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