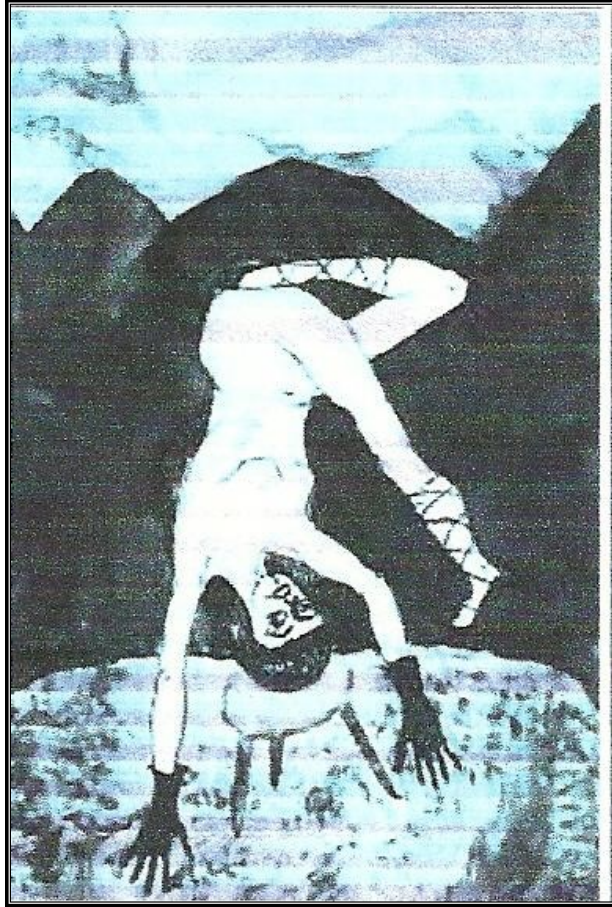


HOMELESS IN PARADISE

October 10-16, 2019

Public Enemy Number One - Part 6



IS MASS EXTINCTION THE ULTIMATE FORM OF HOMELESSNESS?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

PROVIDING abstract art for this short series was done intentionally. (If I use my own art, imperfect as it is, no one could sue me.)

By creating thumbnail sketches of paintings that I never finalized on canvas (because Dad wouldn't allow them inside our house), I was exercising my youthful freedom of 1st Amendment right of expression. It's exemplified in this old painting and new triple haiku.

*picture mother earth
struggling now to sustain life
after being raped
if she can't cool down
global warming's dire effects
might make all homeless
where would earth be then
after man has come and gone
could life start again*

Why was Dad so negative? Because the pictures weren't postwar scenes of sheep grazing in golden meadows, or angelic beings gazing down on humans cavorting like sylvan goats?

Or, because I couldn't believe his childhood's savior could save us from messes we created for ourselves?

Only we could do that, it seemed. And so I painted metaphors of personal coming-of-age angst, as if I were Mother Earth, and it scared him.

That was then and this is now.

PORTRAITS OF SOCIAL MESSES OF THEIR TIMES

Today, Mother Earth herself is threatened. Peter Mayer, Unitarian Universalist songwriter, calls the planet my generation knew as Mother Earth "Our Blue Boat Home."

Can my vanishing generation, which inherited tending the world now that man had the A-Bomb, be blamed for the confusing, mind-boggling, staggeringly terrifying prospect we faced as maturing Caretakers of Earth? And what about our successors and the homelessness they're inheriting?

As the chaos in our nation's capital now reveals, the threat of mass homelessness is, indeed, hovering like a dark angel over our country. Tomorrow's generations will also inherit the fallout of global warming, if they survive.

If you were confused by the illustrations and some of the series' content, congratulations, as that was my intention because we need to think this through while we still can.

What is the worst scenario Public Enemy Number One evokes as a possibility?

At first glimpse, it is homelessness, not just in our backyards but everywhere across the nation.

At its ultimate end, however, homelessness means no longer having a planet capable of housing us.

Are we facing mass extinction, as a growing worldwide movement known as Extinction Rebellion believes could happen?

Introducing Extinction Rebellion

Extinction Rebellion is an international, non-violent, grassroots movement aimed to mobilize people to make demands on governments to stop the deliberate and unjust destruction of life on earth.

Messages imparted by Extinction Rebellion include:

- Take action to slow our runaway climate.
- We are headed for crop failures and mass starvation in 10-20 years or less.
- The world and all its people are in great danger.

According to Extinction Rebellion, "Worldwide scientists, activists, philosophers and youths are urging you to rise up in active resistance against ecological and societal annihilation."

Reasons given for inviting every reader of this column to join the rebellion are summed up in this line:

"The world and all its people are in great danger."

Extinction Rebellion suggests, "Stand up with your passion, your courage, your knowledge, your joy, your power and rebel for life!"

How exactly can this be achieved? One suggestion by Extinction Rebellion is:

"Consider that non-violent civil disobedience may be the one way to create change." No disobedient acts are listed on the group's flyer.

Another act people can take is, "Recognize that the U.S. military is the biggest user of fossil fuels."

And, “We must divest from the war economy if we are to slow global warming.”

Declaring that “This is an Emergency,” Extinction Rebellion states:

- Our climate is collapsing
- We must act now
- There is no other option

Want to know more? Visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extinction_Rebellion.

Extinction Rebellion Monterey County meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday each month, 6-8 p.m., at 601 Madison St., Monterey, email XRmontereyCA@protonmail.com.

Mother Earth And Earth Mothers

Meanwhile, homelessness is lurking in our own backyards here on the Monterey Peninsula and, metaphorically, remains Public Enemy Number One for our otherwise paradisaical, far-too-expensive-for-many, way of life.

Estimates from the 2019 Homeless Census & Survey show that 35 percent of the 2,422 homeless population of the entire Monterey County are females, which totals only 692 homeless women.

Wrong if you count those who double, triple and quadruple up in living quarters far too small to accommodate four and five people to a room in a single-family-residence with two or three bedrooms.

Wrong if you count homeless students and foster care children.

Less iffy is the fact the majority of Americans are one or two paychecks away from homelessness, which number includes children, men and women, the neediest group called herein the abstract-and-metaphorical Mother Earth Sisterhood.

Does this mean there is no hope for future generations?

Not at all.

Each generation inherits from its predecessors the care, maintenance and continuity of the earth as they inherit it.

I feel that should the ultimate Global Warming disaster occur and humankind goes the way of the dinosaurs, a wise and benevolent force—call it what suits you—will recycle this wondrous world and a new garden will spring forth, and it will be Good.

I like that concept and feel that, were he here today, Dad could live with it, too.

Here is Peter Mayer’s “Blue Boat Home”

<http://www.songlyrics.com/peter-mayer/blue-boat-home-lyrics/>

Blue Boat Home (excerpt)

*Though below me, I feel no motion
Standing on these mountains and plains
Far away from the rolling ocean
Still my dry land heart can say
I’ve been sailing all my life now
Never harbor or port have I known
The wide universe is the ocean I travel
And the earth is my blue boat home. . .*

Next week will begin a new series “In Our Own Backyards” which explores what’s being done on the Monterey Peninsula to hold Public Enemy Number One at bay.

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This column appears weekly in Cedar Street Times at www.cedarstreettimes.com .

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