

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Feeling Alive in Los Angeles

Chiwan Choi · Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013

Hardest thing to do—get refocused after the success of a huge event.

But things must get done! Books aren't going to edit, layout, print, proof, reprint and publish themselves. Stupid books.

So on that note, here are a few things that absolutely have to get done, like yesterday. A couple of [Writ Large Press](#) books and two events that [DT•LAB](#) is sponsoring.

### HOW THE DAWN BREAKS IN THE WEST



Judeth has started designing one of two books we have scheduled for release before the year is over. It's the debut novel by an author based in San Clemente, [Linda M. Pyle](#). It's a historical novel titled *How the Dawn Breaks in the West*. It takes place right at the end of the Civil War, about a group of people who have come all the way to California to escape the chaos.

I fell in love with the book some years back when she approached me about helping her with a manuscript. I hadn't even started teaching my workshops yet. It didn't have a focus yet, but it was an early draft and as Linda and I talked, we both started seeing what the book was really about. It was about grief and our inability to move on from it.

It's absolutely gorgeous writing. Each time I read it, I stop even thinking about the story. I get lost in the prose. Beautiful beautiful.

The cover painting is by Marc Harris.

### I AM ALIVE IN LOS ANGELES REMIXED

On Sunday, we watched and listened as Mike the Poet Sonksen got up on stage and performed a couple of poems at Jazz Spoken Here, an afternoon jazz jam session that [DT•LAB](#) presented at The Last Bookstore.



I have known Mike for a long, long time and have watched him perform countless times. But on Sunday, with an incredible group of musicians backing him, it was the best I've ever seen Mike. It literally brought tears to Judeth's eyes.

The remix of his now legendary book, *I Am Alive in Los Angeles*, has been a tentpole project for us and we now have to put the finishing touches on it to release it before the end of the year as we have planned.

Time is getting tight. Art hasn't been created. Editing hasn't been finished. Layout is far from beginning.

We're worried, but we can pull this off. And when we do, it's going to be huge. Mike's fans will love it. He will find new readers. And we will all get a glimpse in the book of an artist in growth, in transition to his next stage.

### Non-WLP Events Sponsored by DT•LAB

One of our objectives with DT•LAB is to help create and promote events for writers and artists who we like and who are looking for help with venue or partners who can help get the word out.

The first two of these:

**Totally Radical Muslims.** I met Tanzila Ahmed at [Tuesday Night Cafe](#) a few weeks back. She approached me after the event that night and asked if we'd consider working with Totally Radical Muslims in the release of the second volume of their zine, *Karbala*. I agreed on the spot. TRM is a group of Oakland based Muslims who started the zine to confront, share, name and re-imagine experiences of islamophobia through writing and art. The date for this is October 11th. Final details to come.

The other is a long time LA poet, Dennis Cruz. His new poetry collection, *Moth Wing Tea*, came out a couple of months ago, but it hasn't received a proper book release party. Dennis is under the radar in many ways, but those who have been fortunate enough to read his first collection, the hard to find *No One: Poems 2009*, we know his name belongs in the conversation whenever we discuss LA poetry.

We haven't finalized the date for Dennis's event yet because we hit an unexpected snag with what we'd originally planned. We're dealing with some issues with live music performances and need to figure something out. We'll keep you posted when we know for sure.

Ok. That's it for now. I must sleep, or at least pretend I can sleep.

Oh, one last thing. Got our first check for all the DT•LAB sales. Without sharing numbers, we are happy. I think this is going to work out.

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