

Cultural Daily

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Rickey the Pirate,RIP

Alexis Rhone Fancher · Thursday, June 19th, 2014

Rickey “The Pirate” Taylor died yesterday, and downtown L.A. mourns. A fixture of the Historic Core for decades, he did odd jobs around the neighborhood, hung out at the DNO, sold glossy photos of himself in his trademark pirate hat to tourists, and posed for anyone willing to slip him a buck. He lived on the street until 2009, when he finally found housing through Project 50.

The last time I saw him on Spring Street, about a month ago, Rickey looked a little weary. Still, he posed for my camera, gave me an “arrgh!” upon request. Then he put out his hand for payment. “I sure like money,” he said. When I gave him a five, Rickey held my hand just a little too long. “I like the ladies, too,” he grinned.

When his good friend, the artist, Robert Vargas, recently immortalized Rickey “The Pirate,” painting his likeness on a terminal box on Spring St. at 6th, did he know that portrait would soon become a shrine? Tonight Rickey’s portrait is covered in flowers. Candles have been lit in his memory. A huge floral spray, from “Your DNO Family,” stands almost six feet high at its side. Rickey would have liked that.



Photos of Rickey the Pirate and his memorial by Alexis Rhone Fancher

This entry was posted on Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 9:12 am and is filed under [Photography](#), [Lifestyle](#), [Visual Art](#)

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