

The Venice Afterburn 2019 was the biggest and most successful year so far. It was also a year of big progress and changes.

One more time sanctioned an official Burning Man Regional Event, and facilitated by our Regional Contact Diana Ionescu, the event took place on the first weekend on November, (Nov 1st-3rd) instead of the end of September as previous years. This was decided in agreement with the Burning Man Regional Board for a number of reasons and was well received by artists and attendees.

We estimated about 3000 people over the course of the 3 days, with a 'soft open' on Friday evening, with a live music stage, and Saturday and Sunday being the busiest days with a full house of art installations, interactive offerings and electronic music.

The 3 days were overall very successful.

We think that moving the dates a little bit later made it possible for a lot more artists to participate with their Burning Man projects, being more settled and able than when the event was immediately after Burning Man.

A small grant offered by the Los Angeles League of Arts, that paid for partial reimbursement of the artists's expenses, was also very helpful. For these reasons, this year the art participation was the greatest and biggest yet. We were very pleased to have 'Slonik', the giant inflatable elephant of 75' tall; and pieces by Scott Froschauer, Denis Nicole, Swig Miller, Lauren Kild, Richard Wilks, and the beloved 'Koroloco' by Emily Nicolosi and Ian Robinson. Many new art cars, such as the 'Wet Pussy' (a giant tub with cat features), the Bee car, and our old favorites such as Vibeapple, Torch the Dragon and Shenanigan Wagon.

The main stage was rocking. After a disastrous cancellation of the 'Tree of giving' art car, that we had booked for main stage, the Boogaloo Art Car came in rescue and managed to become our main stage with less than 2 days notice.

This year, the Venice Afterburn was produced for the first time by the newly formed non profit 501c3 Dogtown Artists United, with board members Daniela Ardizzone, Andrew Heom, Jeremy Bregman and Eduardo Manilla, and assisted by Sunny Bak. By creating our own non profit, we were able to truly dedicate ourselves to fulfill the Burning Man 10 principles and to solidify the cultural direction of the event, which is a decommodified, non profit arts and music gathering, open to the public and with free entrance.

However, this year we introduced a door charge on the busiest days of the event, Saturday Nov 1st and Sunday Nov 2nd, between 7pm and 9pm.

This was decided for a couple reasons. First of all, we felt the necessity to increase security after dark: being the event public, it also calls for an ill-intentioned crowd especially at night. Establishing a door charge of \$20 after 7pm, and no new entries past 9pm, was decided in order to discourage the ill-intentioned.

The second reason was to encourage attendees to arrive early and enjoy the whole day experience, trying to discourage the last minute random attendees and the 'pre-gamers' that come for an hour or two before heading to other LA parties (the Venice Afterburn ends at 10pm each day). We advertised the door charge as much as we could in press-releases and social media. After an initial confusion and surprise, the door charge was overall well received.

As far as public safety, we had some issues with locals not accepting the cover charge and jumping the fence. We realize that for the next year's event, we have to address added security personnel and a better working fence.

For the 2020 edition, we will have to deal with some issues that have arisen. The LAPD and the Park Manager have put a complaint of public drinking and smoking (smoking, of any kind, is forbidden throughout the whole venue area).

The Park manager has warned us that for next year, if we want to keep the event in that location, we will have to take the necessary measurements to avoid public drinking and smoking. We are willing to have an open dialogue with LAPD and discuss what options we have.

We probably will have to enforce an all-day bag check at the event entrances, and put up several non smoking signs. We will need a large number of security personnel in order to execute this.

The Park Manager has also briefed us that the permits will run a lot higher, because of the liability they might incur in due to possible public drinking.

Therefore we anticipate that next year's event will cost between 6,000 and 8,000 more than 2019. Fundraising of around 20K is necessary for the Venice Afterburn 2020 to happen.

See you next year!