

Letter From the Editor

I've been thinking about Jonathan Gold. It's hard not to these days, with the L.A. food critic's unanticipated death and recent birthday—let alone the countless tributes coming over airwaves or appearing in seemingly every publication. It is poignant (to say the least) to see the effects that one writer could have on his city. Gold's adventurous and playful spirit became a collective blueprint for how we might—in this bedlam city—coexist in a spirit of openness and exploration under the connective language of food. That through a luxurious description of late-night potato taco (that “smooth unctuous substance that oozes...with the deliberate grace of molten lava”¹), we might come to better understand each other.

The model that Gold followed—reaching beyond his own confines into unknown cuisines and small pockets of the city on a quest for surprising experiences and new people—provides an archetype for how we might maintain diversity amidst an overwhelming push towards sameness, as capitalism and gentrification threaten to overtake our Los Angeles neighborhoods.

This issue, Catherine Wagley proposes how we might challenge the institution of real estate development by collaborating with artists and their neighbors to propose other models—how can we work together to strive towards affordability in our city's real estate and protect diversity in our communities? In celebration of the spirit of collaboration, Matt Stromberg

takes a closer look at Norm Laich, a professional sign painter who has fabricated endless works for other artists over his career. For Laich, the art world isn't about money or careerism, but rather the simple enchantment of working in concert with others to birth new ideas. For our *Made in L.A. 2018* coverage, we asked three writers to provide their take on the biennial, presenting a range of reflections on the exhibition (to champion a multiplicity of viewpoints). This issue we also begin the 2nd volume of the year-long project, “Exquisite L.A.,” a photo series that exposes the diverse links between individual artists and portrays art-making as a communal effort.

As a publication that aims to build connections within the city of Los Angeles through art discourse, we have big shoes to fill. As we venture into our fourth year, we are buoyed by the support of our community of readers, and remain committed to using art criticism (as Gold wielded an oxtail soup) to bridge connections with our neighbors in celebration of our diverse city. A multiplicity of viewpoints is vital to nurturing that diversity, as Gold so aptly modeled.

Lindsay Preston Zappas
Founder Editor-in-Chief

1. Jonathan Gold, “Jonathan Gold recommends: 13 great tacos in Southern California,” *LA Times*, May 5, 2013, <http://www.latimes.com/food/dailydish/la-dd-jonathan-gold-great-tacos-story.html>.