



City of
OAKLAND
California

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News from: Oakland Public Library

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 22, 2011

Oakland Public Library Event Examines the Art and Culture of Burning Man

Oakland, CA – Just what is Burning Man all about? The Oakland Public Library has asked local experts to shed some light on the subject that has Bay Area roots and draws so heavily on our local creativity and radical idealism. On Sunday, August 7, from 2 to 4 p.m., the Main Library, at 125 14th Street, presents **From Bay to Playa: The Art, Music, and Culture of Burning Man**, with author Steven Jones and a panel of organizers and artists. The event will take place in the Bradley Walters Community Room.

Each summer, tens of thousands of people gather in Nevada's Black Rock Desert (also known as "the playa") to create Black Rock City, a temporary metropolis dedicated to community, art, self-expression, and self-reliance. They depart one week later, having left no trace whatsoever.

Burning Man began 25 years ago as a small, spontaneous gathering on San Francisco's Baker Beach, which culminated with the burning of an 8-foot wooden man. Five years later, the wooden man had grown to 40 feet and was torched in the Nevada desert. And while Burning Man has come to attract people from all around the world, Bay Area artists – including many from Oakland – continue to exert a profound influence on the Burning Man event.

Recently Steven Jones published a book about this experience; he will give a brief discussion about his inspiration for writing *The Tribes of Burning Man: How an Experimental City in the Desert is Shaping the New American Counterculture*.

Following Jones' presentation, a panel including others who are involved in the Burning Man community will give their perspectives. To date the panel includes: **Karen Cusolito** of American Steel, who creates fantastic, huge, fiery sculptures; **Syd Gris** of Opulent Temple; **Jessica Hobbs**, one of the designers behind the Temple of Flux; **Marian Goodell**, Board Member for Burning Man Foundation; and **Michael Snook** who founded NIMBY in April of 2004 and helps those participating in Burning Man.

Be prepared to experience a bit of that community as a panel discusses this huge effort that attracts people from all over the world sharing a brief span of time that features a different theme each year.

For additional information, please contact Christine Saed or Rebekah Eppley at the Oakland Public Library, 510-238-3138.

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