

Thank you Henry Mancini
for all the neon Boulevards
and all the city streets
of all the cities
and the jazz and the poetry
of the downtowns
and the uptowns
for Sunset Boulevard in the rain
Hollywood Boulevard at twilight
and Wilshire Boulevard at dawn
for the Pacific Coast Highway
Union Station
and the view from Mulholland Drive
both sides
the San Fernando Valley
and Los Angeles
for Jazz gliding it's way
down translucent highways
at one in the morning
through the steam
of car headlights
in the pouring rain
for making me feel clean
when I was dirty
and for the fantasy
that my life
was somehow better
than it was
and for the romance
when there wasn't any

And for crazy but surprisingly
smooth hung over mornings
when an all-nighter
should have been painful
Thank you
for the lengthy warm
Santa Ana summer afternoons
over looking a city
from a dingy apartment
with only the view
and you to save me...
Thank you Henry Manicini
for those
ephemeral evenings
draped across
Hollywood at midnight
like a ghost town
timeless, glamorous and still
for the exquisite
and the calm
and for the clean
and regal lift of elegance
onto a stairway of stars
leading to a luxurious and illustrious world
where nothing earthly
can touch me...
Thank you.

THANK YOU HENRY MANCINI

IRIS BERRY

Iris Berry has been called a lot of things but one of the best is "A punk rock James Elroy in fishnets." One of the true and original progenitors of the L.A. punk scene. A native Angelino, her lifetime spent in the City of Angels has resulted in over two decades worth of astonishing literary contributions. Berry's writing has been widely anthologized. In The Outlaw Bible of American Poetry she appears along side the likes of Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac and William S. Burroughs. Internationally known, her wit and often dark, factual accuracy and empathy for her subjects has brought critical acclaim as well as a huge fan base. Berry is the Author of four books including "The Underground Guide To Los Angeles," co-authored with writing partner Pleasant Gehman. No stranger to the microphone, Berry co-founded the Ringling Sisters with Pleasant Gehman. The rock 'n' roll spoken word troupe toured extensively and recorded with legendary producer Lou Adler. Iris also fronted, sang and wrote songs for LA combos The Lame Flames, Pink Sabbath, the Flesheaters and The Dickies. Berry, not only a fixture but also a chronicler of LA's extensive underground scene. From bartending at after hour speakeasies, to stints in rehab, from working within the "legit" entertainment industry (Paramount, CBS) to strutting around a Mexican wrestling ring in showgirl feathers; authoring the sex column titled; "Forbidden Fruit," to starring in a number of Independent films, best known for her performance in the Classic "Border Radio," directed by Alison Anders, and can be seen starring in the newly released Beth Dewey film "Killhouse." Berry has pretty much done it all, and writes her experiences with wit, grace and deadly precision. Berry is currently completing a book on the notorious Hollywood haunt, The Tropicana Motel, titled, "Tales From The Tropicana," and recently co-produced a series of burlesque and comedy variety shows with comic and activist Margaret Cho called The Sensuous Woman, all proceeds for charity. In March of 2009, Iris received her second certificate of merit and achievement from the City of Los Angeles for her contribution as a Los Angeles writer and Historian, and for the charity work she has done, producing large scale fundraising events to benefit organizations such as The American Red Cross, Habitat For Humanity, Hollygrove Orphanage, Aids Project Los Angeles, Amnesty International and Rock the Vote, as well as many women's shelters and organizations devoted to homeless youth and runaways. For the past seven years, she has served as a member on the Board of Directors for Beyond Baroque Literary Arts Center. With her prolific creative output, devoted work ethic, and passionate artistic integrity and social awareness, Iris has been an inspiration to generations of writers and artists of Los Angeles.

