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LG'S SOARING AMBITIONS ARE SHY OF CASH AND SAPPED BY CALAMITY

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SAN FRANCISCO — When a bank closed an account in late January in the East Bay, all of LG's remaining hopes and dreams instantly vanished.



LG Explusion?

District. "I'm so fucking sick of living with crackheads and tweekers. Enough with *Fellini*, I want my *MTV*."

But more than calling into question his artistic program's future, the catastrophe also provided a vivid warning to other gifted artists tempted to reach for grand ambitions in Art on budgets already stretched thin by rising unemployment, ineptitude and militaristic charades.

Distinguished cultural critics and social scientists call such art dreams vanity projects for stupid artists. Still they struggle to feed themselves. But for

LG and his few supporters, like those from New York to Waikiki, he describes his steadily expanding Art effort as a commercial, artistic and strategic necessity, as well as a matter of national prestige. "I hate all this pussy Euro-trash, LA fucking 60's retro-trash, and all that neo-new media bullshit. That's art for pussy's and wimp-ass fart grant writers. I'll leave that shit for all those Yale and MIT mama's boys supported by fucking month-long *Art for Eunuchs* residency programs in fucking bum-fuck Mississippi. Fuck that shit. That fucking shit ain't going fucking nowhere except to the fucking *Eli Broad Collection!*"

More than 40 years ago, California arts program, based in this liberal city, was born as part of an effort by a fringe group of Beat artist to create a new, albeit funky, "West Coast Art." But while successive governments and Midwest establishments have embraced that vision, the artists have failed to match ambition with money.

Recently, at memorial services here for a few dead and nearly-dead great Beat artists (Wally Hedrick, Sam Tchakalian, Jess, Bruce Conner, et al.), LG wept copiously and vowed that he would still be the first great young artist of the West coast by 2006. "Don't you fucking worry motherfuckers. Instead, you should bank on it! I *really* mean that: all you lame-ass motherfuckers get off your fat ass-wallets,

LG'S SOARING AMBITIONS, con't.

get to *Linc Art* on Market street and buy my fucking shit!"

But while he promised a \$35,000 indemnity and college scholarships to the barely-legal aged daughters of his former colleagues, his proposed budget falls far short of the tens of millions of dollars that art experts say is needed to rebuild his finances and reach his goal. "God fucking dammit, my fucking accountants really piss me off! They say that I am fucking broke. Fuck no I say. No fucking way, I tell them. I'm not fucking broke, you stupid ass motherfuckers -- you got it all fucking backwards! I'm fucking rich, filthy fucking rich with ideas! ITS MY FUCKING NON-AUDIENCE THAT IS FUCKING BANKRUPT!"

This kind of tight-fisted, foul-mouthed approach, say art critics like the San Jose Watercolor Society of America — borrowing from the title of a Nabokov novel — made the January fiscal calamity the "Terror of the Situation."

Similar views were expressed during a four-month investigation by The New York Times that included interviews with former LG interns, publicists and trustees of the artist.

Taken as a whole, their accounts portrayed a dangerously underfunded genius that forced viewers to rely on speculative art and questionable theories, and had little public accountability under an unclear and divided chain of command. A nationally-funded

arts investigative panel has yet to issue its own report.

"The artist didn't have the money, yet he didn't have the humility to admit that and say he should stop," said Carl Fiacco, a life-long supporter of the artist and the president of LG's fan club. "Instead, LG's creative juices just squeezed and squeezed, pressing the artist to go ahead even when he knew proper working and business conditions didn't exist." "I was royally fucked," the artist said.

Museum officials hope and pray that LG's artistic program will not be abandoned. But independent experts and analysts are calling for a complete artistic overhaul and have expressed surprise that a major accident had not happened before the January 22 disaster.

If all goes well, LG's supporters say there is even the chance of a MacArthur genius grant or some rich Napa chick to lift his finances and set him free. That would save LG the time it would otherwise take to sell his art and help restore the prestige of his art program.

"He is determined to persist," Dr. Carley, the artist's mom, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said. Asked where the money would come from, she shrugged. "Well, that's always my little LG's problem, I wanted him to become a hack university administrator -- that's where the real fucking money is," she said.