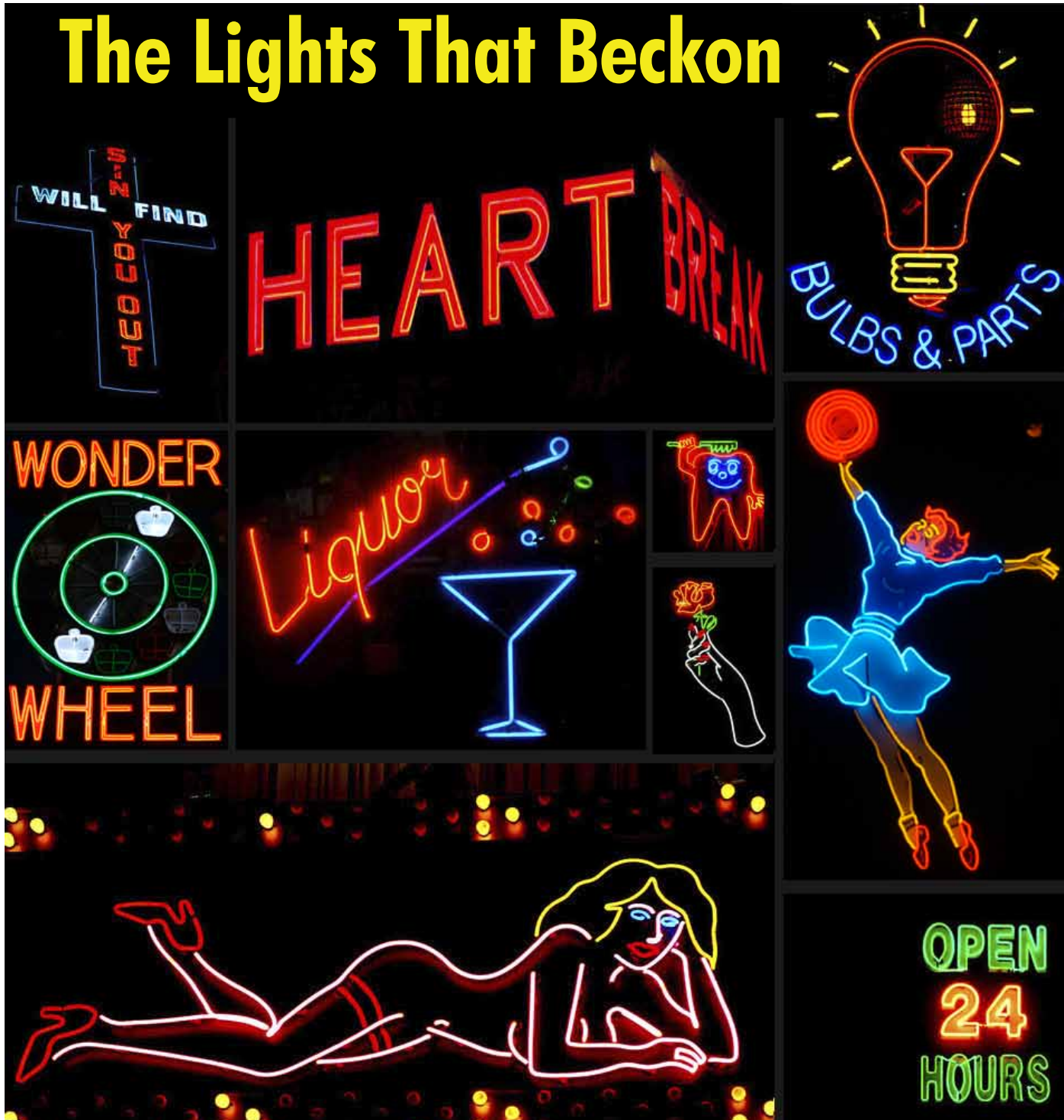


The Lights That Beckon



the City

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by JOHN LELAND

At the start of a promising new year — and let's face it, they're all promising — how much of the city really cares about you? You think steel cares? Steel is cold. Glass? Glass will cut you. Neon cares. Neon wants you to come inside where it's warm. It promises everything that lures people to New York: temptation and salvation, sustenance and health, romance and prophecy. On Broadway, where they used to say the neon lights were bright, flashier new technologies have taken over. But despite the march of LED and video displays, neon soldiers on. Just like the city.

Winter is the best time for viewing neon in New York, because in summer, stores often close for the day during twilight, the photographer **KIRSTEN HIVELY** said. A year ago, she began Project Neon!, an online gallery with an iPhone app, to document the luminous works.

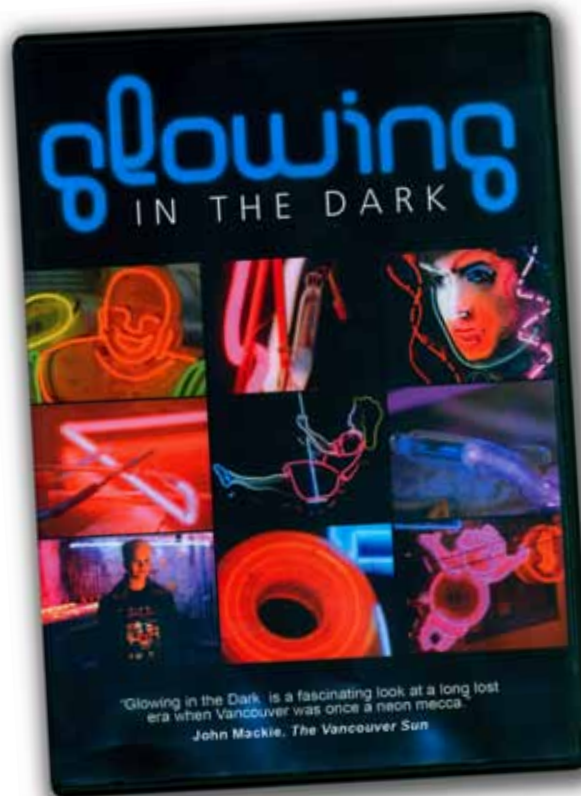
Link to Kirstin Hively's Neon Project:
<http://www.kickstarter.com/blog/creator-q-a-kirsten-hively-of-project-neon>

Link to Observer article:
<http://www.smartmoviemaking.com/neon-100-years-of-the-greatest-light-show-on-earth/>

Whenever the existence of neon is threatened as it is now, someone comes along to reverse the trend. In the late 1970s, Rudy Stern published *Let There Be Neon*. It was the first book to document the history of neon which was developed in Paris in 1910; the book was published by Abrams which had worldwide distribution. The creation of the Museum of Neon Art in Los Angeles

in 1981 also contributed to a new renaissance for the medium.

Thirty years later, as neon is once again being maligned by LED lobbyists and city planners, architect Kirstin Hively has picked up the torch by documenting the neon signs of New York City. Stories on her efforts have appeared in *The Observer*, *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times*.—L.L.



NEON WORKSHOP JAN. 21

Lili Lakich Studio will kick off *The Spring Neon Workshop* with a reunion of previous Workshop students and new students with a screening of the film "Glowing in the Dark" (1997), a 48-minute film that examines neon from its beginnings in Paris in 1923 to the profusion of light that bathed North American cities in the 1950s, the decline and destruction of the form in the 1960s and 70s to the current exposition of neon as a medium of artists and designers.

The film celebrates the movement, power and raw exuberance of the "electronic pen" through demonstrations of how it is made, a montage of notable neon installations and commentary from a colorful array of enthusiasts including Lili Lakich, neon artist and founder of the Museum of Neon

Art in Los Angeles; William Volkersz, an artist who brought neon indoors with his exhibition "Domestic Neon," and Alan Hess, architect, critic and author of *Viva Las Vegas*. They are joined by Vancouver's John Atkin, heritage advocate and expert on the history of neon in Vancouver; Bill Warren, a Vancouver entrepreneur responsible for creating some of the biggest and most controversial signs in the city; and members of the rock band 54-40, who saved and restored one of Vancouver's more famous pieces of neon, the *Smilin' Buddha Cabaret* sign.

NEON LOVERS are invited to join us on Saturday, January 21st from 2-5 pm. The film will screen at 3 pm.

Link to Neon Workshop: http://www.Lakich.com/neon%20workshop%20pages/neon_workshop2.htm

House Keeps the Light Bulbs On

by LILI LAKICH

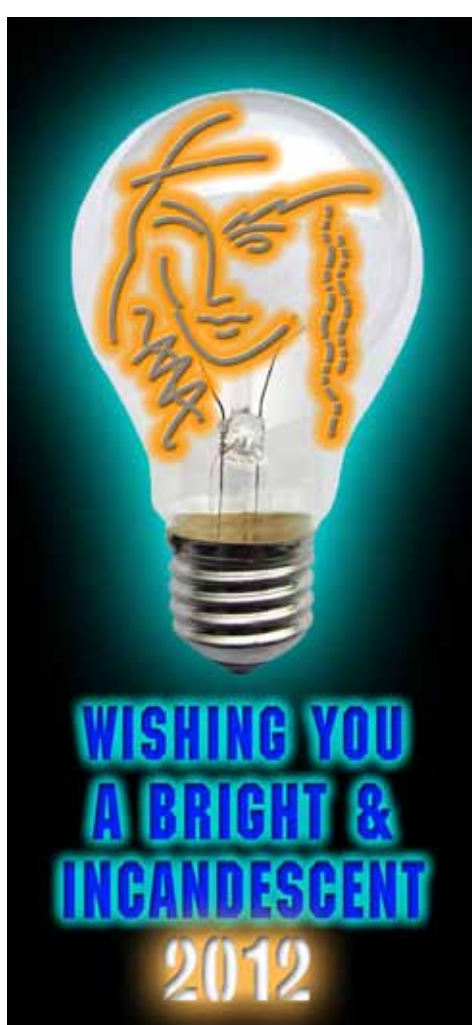
WHILE I DON'T USUALLY AGREE with anything the Republicans propose, I do agree that the government has no business banning incandescent bulbs.

In 2007, President George W. Bush signed legislation that would phase out incandescent bulbs over three years, starting Jan. 1, 2012, with the banning of the 100-watt bulb. California has already implemented the new standard. (You can't buy a 100-watt bulb in California.)

The recent \$915-billion spending bill approved by the Republican-controlled House of Representatives included a provision that would block enforcement of new energy-efficient rules for light bulbs, letting incandescent bulbs stay around at least until the end of the federal fiscal year which ends September 30th.

Critics of the new standards have cited the spiral fluorescent bulbs which cost more, are manufactured in China, contain mercury and lose 30% of their brightness in the first few weeks.

Congressional Republicans have portrayed the new regulations as a federal attempt to limit consumer choice—something that should occur in the marketplace.



In 2011, Texas enacted legislation seeking to get around the federal law by declaring that incandescent bulbs—if made and sold only in Texas—do not involve interstate commerce and therefore are not subject to federal regulations. "It restores the freedom, at least temporarily, for you to choose the light bulbs you want to illuminate your home," says Rep. Joe L. Barton of Texas.

"I can't believe it," said Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), who supports the new rules. She said the Republicans who pushed to block enforcement have become deniers... deniers of the fact that the climate is warming."

Rep. Ted Poe (R-Texas), an outspoken critic of the rules, recently declared that "since the federal government has taken the power to choose away from Americans," consumers have been "flocking to their local Wal-Marts to hoard the last of the incandescent bulbs."

Who knew that the "Party of Nope" would say "YES" to incandescent bulbs, even as it was their president who was the one to approve the repressive legislation.

A THREAT TO THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

by LILI LAKICH

ON MONDAY, JAN. 8th, POPE BENEDICT said that gay marriage was one of several threats to the traditional family that undermined "the future of humanity itself".

He told diplomats from nearly 180 countries that the education of children needed proper "settings" and that "pride of place goes to the family, based on the marriage of a man and a woman."

"This is not a simple social convention, but rather the fundamental cell of every society. Consequently, policies which undermine the family threaten human dignity and the future of humanity itself," he said.

The Vatican and Catholic officials around the world have protested against moves to legalise gay marriage in Europe and other developed parts of the world.

One leading opponent of gay marriage in the United States is New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan, whom the pope will elevate to cardinal next month.

Dolan fought against gay marriage before it became legal in New York state last June, and in September he sent a letter to President Barack Obama criticising his administration's decision not to support a federal ban on gay marriage.

In that letter Dolan, who holds the powerful post of president of the U.S. Bishops Conference, said such a policy could "precipitate a national conflict between church and state of enormous proportions."

The Roman Catholic Church, which has 1.3 billion members worldwide, teaches that while homosexual tendencies are not sinful, homosexual acts are, and that children should grow up in a traditional family with a mother and a father.



PRAY THE GAY AWAY (2011) by Lili Lakich takes its inspiration from Michele Bachmann and her husband's suburban Minneapolis clinic "where you can pray away the gay." In Lakich's sculpture, the "A" flashes so that the message can also be read as "Pray the Gay Way."

Gay marriage is legal in a number of European countries, including Spain and the Netherlands, and in five U.S. states plus Washington, D.C.

IN NEW HAMPSHIRE ON Friday, Jan. 6th, Republican presidential hopeful Rick Santorum said that an incarcerated heterosexual father who had abandoned his family was a more desirable father than a same-sex couple raising a child.

I myself gave up on religion when, after relocating to San Francisco from New York in 1968, I stayed briefly with the family of the Serbian Orthodox Priest of San Francisco (my second cousin was married to him) and listened to him regularly proclaim around the dinner table that homosexuals should be put in camps.