

# OMNIVISUM

literary magazine



who we are

## another reflection in another pair of eyes

Written by Jack Snyder

Ignore the smog.  
You have to use your imagination to see here.  
Peel the skyline like an orange, notice how  
everything glimmers with just the right light from far enough  
away.  
I think that's why we call it "Tinseltown", with  
so much wave and uncertainty, so much jazz and hip hop, so  
much'  
Give 'em the old razzle-dazzle'—  
    what else glitters and dances so with little mass or volume?  
No matter anyway, I've been sipping desert skies recently.  
Been devouring whole mountains, been setting my eye  
up north to the Sierra Nevadas (and I'm cleaning my plate of a  
job),  
been—  
been hungering for substance, not  
the drizzle of winter rains or lingering plague  
of joblessness. Not the density of greed or intoxication  
of possibility. Something with the inevitability of smog,  
  
and I know you've heard of the smog:  
blankets of traffic, a storm of crime and the  
leech of drugs. Holes in the veins and pockets of

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jack Snyder  
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spends his days miles-  
deep in the San  
Gabriel Mountains  
finding inspiration in  
its staggering  
panoramas.

my city reminds us of the ways we are hungry.  
The only beauty to be found is hidden on the thick, red line,  
sometimes a fault and other times an accident, but  
most times moaning. Smashed, ground, and littered  
dreams stuffed in bottles, sentinels of the sidewalks and monument  
to the dreamers, stand quiet with remorse.  
how did we get here?  
Coyotes with their briefcases and cackles—  
I hear them, I see them, and their rotting remains in tents  
and police reports  
—running the town.  
I see the drag of Miss Cigarette most days, and I hear sirens the others, but the rest I hear  
the anxious sounds of a city who's soaked up too much blood  
to drink in the rain. I realize  
this is why  
we are drowning.

But somewhere,  
there is a  
brick wall, or a storage container  
that's treated as a canvas by  
some boys not yet old enough to drive. It's  
their way of saying, "You don't control me, I will fly beyond this stretch of desert." And not to brag,  
but  
I can feel the pulse, strong and steady, underneath  
all this grime. I see  
(a hurting skyline—poverty framed by downtown framed by Old Baldy—but one  
with spite and ambition and life)  
the sun rising, the clouds burning off, and that honey-golden,  
smoldering dawn touching every  
snake and self-styled outlaw, all the mange, and graffiti  
plastered across broken hearts, broken spirits.  
For one moment, the smog has  
evaporated.  
Time stands still, glinting in dew drops or tears, and all  
the pieces of glass from ground and fractured stars.

