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## Come join the fun at Club Flotsam

By Michelle Mills, Staff Writer

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Songwriters Polly Klemmer of Arcadia and Kate O'Neal of Culver City had been collaborators, performing as a duo and with their band Out of Town for years, but that wasn't enough. They wanted a regular monthly gig.

"One day we realized that it might fun to produce a monthly variety show featuring our band plus others. We approached Mr. T's Bowl and they liked the idea, so we hold Club Flotsam there," O'Neal said.

Since January, on the last Thursday of the month, Mr. T's Bowl in Highland Park turns in to Club Flotsam, a quirky spot for an evening of vaudeville-styled entertainment with an "in your living room" feel.

"We've had everything from comics to jugglers and ventriloquists and we're trying to open it to filmmakers, maybe have them bring in a 10-minute short film, performance artists and of course the bands. It all surrounds the actual bands that play and in between the other acts we do," Klemmer said.

The women also perform comedic skits and do an interview segment with the audience members as the part of Flotsamville residents. To

top it off, there's an ongoing free raffle for "Jetsam" prizes.

O'Neal has sung since she was a child and has a degree in music. Klemmer began playing guitar at age 12 and was writing music by her teens. She has studied music at Long Beach City College, Cal State Northridge and a clutch of specialized music schools.

The two of them have had some of their songs performed in films, most currently in "Lady Magdalene's," directed by J. Neil Schulman and starring Nichelle Nichols of "Star Trek" fame.

"Polly and I have taken a number of fun trips in the desert and old western ghost towns, composing songs as we go. We each contribute to each song, sometimes with one of us coming up with a tune, or writing lyrics to hand to the other person to complete," O'Neal said.

"We have started songs based on topics like celebrities, mistakes of our mothers, people we've met on trips. We usually create two songs simultaneously, since we give ourselves the same assignment and then trade to complete the song," O'Neal said.

Most of their music makes the stage via their band Out of Town. Klemmer plays piano/keyboard, O'Neal offers percussion and the group is rounded out by Jim Wright on Warr guitar and Jim Miller on drums. Their tunes range from pokes at middle age to the tragic tale of a person who fell off a cliff in Yosemite.

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"We are in the process of writing a Club Flotsam theme song. We have a little dance routine we do, so we want to have some music for it. But the songs we're doing now are songs we've written on our desert trips. We were really inspired by the landscape. They're the darker side of looking at life with a humorous bent," Klemmer said.

This month Out of Town will be joined at Club Flotsam by Seeing Thingz, Hearts of Gold and Renfield. Comic Ave Quihuis is also slated to perform and there will be other surprises.

Other upcoming shows will include more skits, a belly dancing act and more bands.

"Mr. T's has been nice to let us work out the bugs in the show and develop it. Our ultimate goal is to turn it into a cable show," Klemmer said.

Club Flotsam is always seeking new acts. The women suggest it is best for interested entertainers to attend a show with their package and talk with them directly, otherwise you can visit [www.myspace.com/outoftownoot](http://www.myspace.com/outoftownoot) for more information.

"It's such a great vibe there at Mr. T's. It's a really fun place for people to come check out anything new. It's not just four bands that get to play, you get to see a real variety show.

"And we want to encourage not just musicians, but artists to check us out because we might want to have some art there. We're looking for anything interesting and we're trying to create a

little community of artists and musicians who come together once a month," Klemmer said.

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## Club Flotsam

9 p.m. Thursday

Mr. T's Bowl, 5621 1/2 N. Figueroa, Highland Park

Free

(323) 256-7561

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