

*boom*—a loud deep sound with much resonance

. . . as of a distant cannon or

an earthquake

a rapid advance in prices

or a sudden bound of activity in any business

truth and the consequences that follow from it, as when

one “lowers the boom”

the effective launching of anything upon public attention

an impetus given to any movement or enterprise

a long beam from which a microphone is suspended

to capture conversations in a crowd

a spar run out to extend a ship’s sail

a pole set up to mark the course

of the deep water

the cry of the bittern

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The 2012 election has come and gone, but its effects will likely resonate for a long time to come. President Obama won California by twenty points, without even campaigning here. For the first time in decades, voters approved a general tax increase. Proposition 30's passage ensures education funding that will at least staunch the bleeding of the public universities. Democrats seized supermajorities in both houses of the state legislature, and they also added four more seats to their total of the state's congressional delegation. California has more representatives than any other state, and 70% of them are now Democrats.

Among the many striking facts about this series of developments is that if the electorate had consisted only of the state's white, non-Hispanic voters, the outcome would have been radically different. Proposition 30 may well have failed, in which case \$6 billion would have been cut from the state's grade schools, high schools, and universities. President Obama would have lost the state by eight points.

Why this did not happen is owed entirely to the state's ethnic and minority voters. Forty percent of ballots were cast by people of color. And their stance on issues proved remarkably different from white voters. Obama lost California's white vote by eight points. He won the state's Latinos by 45 points, and Asian-Americans by almost 60. In general, the state's white voters are evenly split on efforts to increase government services; Latinos, Asian-Americans, and African-Americans are overwhelmingly supportive. Where white voters were evenly divided on Proposition 30, ethnic voters endorsed it by some 20 points (providing the measure its entire margin of victory).

California's dazzling kaleidoscope of peoples has asserted a new political community whose impact will become clear only with the passage of time. But its cultural components—those complementary colors that align to produce a brilliant light—those we can see now. Maybe from where you are sitting. And certainly in the pages of this issue of *Boom*.

It's visible in places that pulse with the energy of difference. Like the streets of North Hollywood, where nighttime communities form and dissolve through the dance style and occupation tactic known as krumping. Like the social media space of Hidden Los Angeles, where tens of thousands of Angelenos create and contest a shared history you'll not find on a tourist map. Like the trash-collecting, art-making creatives in the Bay Area who transformed mudflats into open-air galleries. And extending to the banks of the always elusive LA River, where the thing to expect is the unexpected.

Yet it is visible, too, in the places we might rather not look, places that make visible our state's history of exclusion and violence—so often directed against minorities. And here, as well, *Boom's* authors offer up illuminating points of view. Like the discovery of “hanging trees,” natural markers of vigilante justice more ubiquitous in the landscape than you might imagine. And the contemplation of former internment-site Tule Lake's contested meanings and uncomfortable legacies for Japanese-Americans and local residents.

So it appears that the vast social entity that is our state has assembled some new kind of machine out of remnants of the old. What it is, and how it works, and whether it will break down (or re-assemble) are fascinating questions. What does it mean? That, too, remains to be seen. But when the sun rose the day after the election, it illuminated a landscape we have been anticipating for a good long time.

*Louis Warren*  
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