



Land Legs - Ocean Installation -  
(for Hav'a Lava Flow on Airwaves, 110 Records)

Late September... I unassumingly took a dive into the grey Atlantic. Froze my floundering ass off. This is Coney Island unfortunately. I said, "Take me to the ocean, I need a photo in the sea." You see, my image was the Pacific, turquoise-blue, Hawaiian style. I'm clearer near blue-green water and hot for sun-baked local color. But this is 5 or 6 thousand miles later, so I said, "Coney Island? Island? O.K."

June... Little New York woman rode out of big city, Hawaii bound. I didn't walk. I rarely walked. It's been bicycle, mass-transit city style, then truck ride, airplane, hitch-hike. I never much figured on my land legs for getting me around. Then I was on Oahu, swimming a lot — familiar in that fluid, fluid in that medium — enjoying twisting, floating upside down, without gravity to down me. And I was asked to go to the Big

Island and Kauai. Kahuna, Hawaiian High-priestess friend said, "Go talk to Pele and tell us what she said." (Pele: Hawaiian Goddess of Fire, of volcanoes.) So I headed for Volcano, Hawaii, armed with new and strengthened tools, and I found myself talking to the hiking trails, walking alone for hours through nothing but old lava flows. I hiked through Kilauea Iki and Kilauea craters to Halemaumau crater, and around Mauna Ulu, (Newest U.S. mountain, formed from Pele's 1974 eruption), and Mauna Loa, active stem-venting hot spot of a mountain was drawing my attention. So with sneakers and a minimum of clumsy gear, I started the 18 and a half mile. And as the weight of my scant food supply sank from shoulders to belly, I started half-running my way up that mountain, volcanically propelled.

Hiking alone is fantastic — constant motion, rhythm set in motion, balance and lightness required, moving with the ground over lava. Movement not arbitrary, the terrain dictating the nature of each step, asking for each step to be careful, not to disturb anything on the way. I want to feel the floor, my soles extended two feet beyond the surface line — resigned to be walking through, like wings are on the instep and the soarings down-home base line.

Red hill cabin was my resting spot for the first night. Late afternoon I saw Red Hill ahead. I said, "Oh shit, I hope that's not a mirage. I slept in the cabin, woke for sunrise, and started toward the summit, 11.3 miles further, altitude 13,250 ft. Stayed one night and hiked back to Red Hill. Couldn't leave. Full moon and sunsets blazed so fiercely, I almost screamed. I heard things I hadn't heard before. Spent hours checking out, eyes closed, looking out. On that high spot, I crouched low, sitting lots, keeping my seat close to volcanic ground me, to Pele — volcanic activity, taking it in rectally, anal charge — now I understand. And my bowels moved so fine that week despite total starch desperation diet. And I felt a surge from such space, and clearness, the altitude rising, my attitude rising. And I finally understood why people head for the mountains. I stayed for days. Didn't much want to come down. No more food. Too cold to fast. Had to climb down. Headed for Kauai, north shore, to "secret beach", for time alone, swimming, sun-bathing nude, getting drained by that relentless sun, spending hours crawling in the sand, eyes peeled, picking many tiny tiny perfect amazing minute sand-dollars, the size of a small pimple.