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Center of the
Social Universe
A local's favorite spot

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At It Again

The ever-inventive
Maurice Kanbar

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THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ JANUARY 2012



Los Dedos (The Fingers) photographed by Tom Bergin

From Fillmore to Punta del Este

BY TOM BERGIN

Life flies by so fast.

It has been almost 10 years since I sold Tom Bergin Goldsmith on Fillmore Street to Eric Trabert. I miss the customers —

many of whom became friends. I miss the neighbors who popped in to say hello as they passed by on their daily routines — especially people like Rose, who shared her family recipe for Italian gravy, and Bruce, who often brought his latest baked goods for us to try. And of course I miss the ones who came by to keep me informed about the ups and downs of the neighborhood.

I feel honored to have shared in many happy moments as a jewelry designer on Fillmore Street for nine years, and for eight years before that at Union Street Goldsmith, whether it was working with customers to design a wedding ring, resetting a sentimental gemstone or finding a special keepsake. I miss the jewelry business and have fond memories of being involved with the Fillmore Merchants Association — which involved, among other things,

climbing up the trees along Fillmore Street like a monkey to wrap them with Christmas lights.

After working hard for so many years, I thought I would just kick back. But life has brought me new adventures. Now I live between San Francisco and Montevideo, Uruguay. I'm in Uruguay because it is the childhood home of my partner of five years, who I met right in front of my house in San Francisco.

Going back and forth to Uruguay the last few years has turned into something of an endless summer. The shortest day of the year in the U.S., December 21, is the longest day of the year in Uruguay and the first day of summer. So while I sometimes miss being in retail at Christmas time, it is fun to spend Christmas near the beach and watch the water drain down the sink in the opposite direction.

In Uruguay, life is quiet. I enjoy doing travel and portrait photography and posting the photos on my Facebook page, Thomas Bergin Photography. The photograph above is part of a series I took in Punta del Este.

I don't know what is around the next bend, but for now I'll keep my seat belt fastened and enjoy the ride. My wish is that we all have a new year filled with good health and a happy journey.

Nos vemos amigos. I'll be seeing you around.



FROM FILLMORE TO HARVARD

Neighborhood residents Nanette Bisher and Amy Bernstein reluctantly traded Dungeness crab for lobster when they moved in the fall to Boston, where Bernstein is now editor of the *Harvard Business Review*.

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Please consider contributing \$30 to help the New Fillmore continue to deliver the news of the neighborhood this year. Or contribute \$100 (or more, if you're able) and become a sponsor. Your support will help us continue to bring the neighborhood together by distributing the paper door-to-door every month to all 20,000 local homes and businesses.

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WRITERS & PHOTOGRAPHERS

We welcome new voices this year with the ability to tell interesting stories about faces and places in the neighborhood. Email ideas to editors@newfillmore.com.

THE NEW FILLMORE

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NEEDED



A three-flat Victorian on Golden Gate was badly damaged.

FIRE AT ALAMO SQUARE

A FIVE-ALARM FIRE broke out on December 22 at Golden Gate Avenue and Pierce Street. Several buildings were affected and 60 people lost their homes. The Alamo Square Neighborhood Association set up a collection fund to aid victims of the fire, which is accepting cash or items on a wishlist. Most recently the list included:

- Mezuzah - Jewish artifact that's placed at the front door
- Men's shaving bag
- Cutting board
- Alarm clock
- Pants 38x30 - blue jeans (easy fit or straight leg)
- Light windbreaker/jacket
- Mattress/box spring
- Iron
- Laptop
- Gift card for clothes
- Coolware
- Mac laptop
- Bicycle
- Individual garage for car and storage — will rent
- Hair clipper and beard trimmer
- Food processor
- Women's shoes size 7 1/2

Go to alamosq.org to make a donation or to see the updated wishlist. Items are being collected at the Missionary Temple Church at 1445 Golden Gate. Email gus.hernandez@alamosq.org to coordinate pick-up or drop-off of donations. The wishlist is being updated as requests and donations are received.

THE NEW FILLMORE

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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Fillmore Center, Safeway Pull the Plug on Benefit District

By CARINA WOUDEBERG

LOYD TRAMMELL — whose position as president of the Fillmore Community Benefit District ended when the group was defunded in mid-December — walked the blocks of Fillmore south of Geary on a recent morning and took note of the changes he was seeing in the neighborhood.

The sidewalk was littered with plastic bags and other trash. Here and there were clumps of cigarette butts and piles of leaves.

"This used to look spotless," Trammell said. "Up until November, all this was spotless."

The community benefit district was created in 2006 amid optimism that better days were ahead for the area with the imminent opening of Yoshi's Jazz Club, the Fillmore Heritage Center and several new restaurants. With city support and a "yes" vote from the area's property owners, the CBD was poised to help clean up the neighborhood and promote its new attractions.

The special property tax brought in annual funding of about \$300,000. A board of directors made up of property owners, local residents and businesspeople took responsibility for using the funds to pay for cleaning, marketing and security.

Initially there was considerable infighting among businesspeople and local residents. But most board members said the organization had made a positive difference in an area still struggling to move past the devastation of redevelopment in the 1960s.

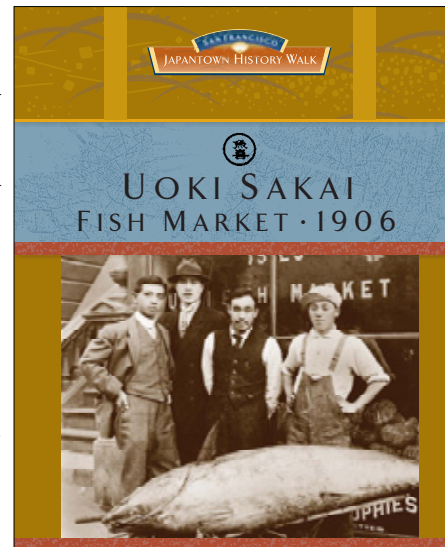
In mid-December the CBD was up for renewal and many of the 300 property owners in the district supported it. But the votes were weighted based on the size of each owner's property. Representatives from two major properties — the Fillmore Center and Safeway — were against it, and renewal was defeated by 66 percent to 34 percent.

"The weight of their no vote basically killed it," said Todd Claytor, a CBD board member and chairman of its renewal committee. It is the only one of a dozen similar benefit districts in the city that has been discontinued.

Claytor noted that Paul Hyams, the Fillmore Center manager who was formerly president of the CBD, actively supported renewal for a time and even worked to build support among other property owners.

"For us to have this happen at the eleventh hour," Claytor said of Hyams' change of heart, "it gutted us, it just gutted us."

Hyams refused to discuss his opposition



Kiraichi Sakai arrived in San Francisco in the 1890s. He worked as a cook and sold fish door-to-door from a horse and buggy. After the 1906 earthquake he opened a combined grocery, fish market and ship chandery on Geary Street. The store's name Uoki comes from his "fish and happiness," one of the *Uoki* in Kiraichi's name. As Nihonmachi grew, the store moved to Post Street. Sakai's customers relied on him for hard-to-find specialties and staples of the Japanese diet: fifty-pound bags of Japanese rice varieties, *daikon* (a long white radish), *hobochi* (Japanese pumpkin), *gobo* (burdock), and impossibly fresh fish—to be served raw as *sashimi*, simmered in a warming seafood nabe (stew), or grilled as *shigoyi* or *teriyaki*. As Japanese Americans were sent to internment camps in 1942, the Sakai family moved all of their possessions, including their truck, into the store and boarded up the front, hoping for the best. Returning from internment in Topaz, Utah in 1945, they were among the fortunate few whose store and possessions were intact. They quickly reopened, providing Japanese foods rich with memories and tradition as well as new items reflecting change and adaptation resulting from the Japanese American experience.

Japantown loses a landmark
New Year's Eve was a sad day in Japantown, with Uoki Sakai closing its family-owned market at 1656 Post Street after 105 years. It was one of Japantown's oldest businesses — started soon after the 1906 earthquake — along with Benkyodo and Soko Hardware, which are also owned by venerable Japantown families. Robert Sakai, the third-generation owner of the market, said he will retire.

to the group he led for four of its five years, deferring to his corporate bosses at Larimar, a property management company in Chicago, and Prudential Real Estate, which is a major investor in the 1,100 apartment complex.
A spokesman for Prudential said in a statement the firm's leaders "remain committed to the continued success and vibrancy of the Fillmore District for the benefit of our investors and the community."
Chuck Smith, the first resident of the

Fillmore Heritage Center condos and the original president of its homeowners association, expressed his concerns to Prudential when it looked as if the renewal might not go through and urged the owners of the Fillmore Center to change their minds.

"I hope you will reconsider," he wrote. "You could make a big difference for the worse here. We've come a long way. Let's not go back."

Smith received an email response from Prudential's Todd Thakar.

"Our vote is not a vote against the Fillmore neighborhood," Thakar wrote, "but rather a vote of 'no faith' in the ability of the community benefit district to carry out its charge."

Thakar said "the basic governance of the CBD has proven problematic," but gave no details. He said the Fillmore Center would "take up the slack in sidewalk cleaning" and continue to support other activities and improvements in the neighborhood.

A spokesperson from Safeway declined to comment for this story but told the *Examiner* the district had "ethical issues."

Board members acknowledged there had been challenges with the CBD, and for a time they were working without an executive director.

"Lack of an executive director was definitely a hardship," Claytor said, although he maintained that was an internal issue that didn't interfere with actually getting the work done.

"We've come so far along, and for the most part we've been seeing progress," added Monetta White, who served on the CBD board and owns the restaurant 1300 on Fillmore. "Why anyone would not support this is beyond me."

Kaz Kajimura, owner of Yoshi's jazz club and restaurant — the major engine of the area's turnaround in recent years — also served on the CBD board. He said there was growing activity and far more people in the jazz district in recent years.

"A lot of that has to do with the benefit district work," he told the *Examiner*. "Now we are back at square one. It's terrible."

Trammell, who is head of the West Bay Conference Center, insisted that progress in the neighborhood would continue, even without funding for the activities of the CBD.

"We have had to galvanize to make certain we continue to thrive despite the irresponsibility of these two corporate entities," he said, referring to Safeway and the Fillmore Center.

Trammell said he is looking into securing funding through Mayor Ed Lee's proposals for micro financing.

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CRIME WATCH

Battery With Serious Injuries

Pine and Gough Streets

November 24, 3:58 p.m.

Officers received a 911 call that a man who was beating a woman. The witness, a neighbor, told officers the man was "going crazy." When officers arrived, they found a woman bleeding from her forehead and face, which was severely swollen. Officers learned the man had been beating the woman for an hour. He stated that he believed she had taken \$200 from him. The woman told officers he had punched her repeatedly on her head and in her face and chest. When she fell to the ground, he kicked her and continued to punch her. She struggled to get away, but the man continued to viciously attack her. Officers took the assailant into custody, and the woman was taken by ambulance to the hospital. She suffered five fractured ribs, a fractured wrist, a bruise to her eye and lacerations on her face and inside her mouth. The man was booked at county jail.

Narcotics

Eddy Street and Van Ness Avenue

November 25, 4:57 a.m.

Officers on patrol saw a vehicle parked in a fire zone. They pulled up behind the car and saw it was occupied. The driver told them he was "waiting for a friend." Officers learned he was on parole for possession of cocaine. When he got out of the vehicle and began walking toward the sidewalk, the officers could see that he had something in his mouth. They questioned him about this and he spit out two packages of suspected cocaine. Officers took custody of the driver and seized the suspicious material. Inside the vehicle, they found drug paraphernalia. The car was towed and the driver was booked at county jail for possession of narcotics.

Theft From Vehicle

Geary Boulevard and O'Farrell Street

December 4, 11:01 p.m.

Officers responded to a call about an auto burglary. When they arrived, a building security guard told them he had been watching his surveillance camera when he saw a man walk up to the front door of the building with a tool in his hand and appear pick the lock, then continue on to the building's garage. The security guard found him there standing beside a parked car, reaching into the vehicle's front window. The guard shouted for the man to stop, but he turned and fled. A second security guard arrived, and the two guards held the man down. He begged them several times not to call the police. When officers took custody of the man, they discovered he was on active parole for burglary. He was booked at county jail.

Outstanding Warrant

California and Buchanan Streets

December 7, 8:45 p.m.

Officers received a call concerning a trespasser and located the man on the third floor of an apartment building. They asked him if he lived there or knew anyone who did. The man answered "no" to both questions, then stated he had come back to the building with a woman he met in the park. The officers asked him which apartment he had come from. He indicated a door. But when an officer knocked on it, the resident stated that he did not know the man. A computer check showed the suspect had an outstanding warrant for a sex-related offense. Officers noted that the suspect's zipper was down.

They took him into custody and walked him downstairs. As the officers and suspect approached the front door, the man pulled away from them, shouting, "I just want to go home!" He rammed his body into the officers, then dropped to the ground, kicking and screaming. The officers called for additional units to help restrain him. The suspect was booked at county jail.

Theft

Webster and O'Farrell Streets

December 12, 10:50 a.m.

Security guards at Safeway saw a man enter the store carrying his own bags. While they monitored him, he put several liquor bottles into them, then walked past the registers making no attempt to pay. Security detained him in the parking lot and called the police. When the officers searched him they discovered he was carrying a woman's purse, which he said he was holding for a friend. Officers later determined that the man had stolen the purse before shoplifting. He was transported to Northern Station.

Battery

Bush and Gough Streets

December 19, 2:51 p.m.

Officers responding to a call about a fight in progress detained the two individuals involved. One man had a bloody nose; both men had blood on their clothing. The injured man informed the officers he had come into work on his day off to pick up some of his belongings. His boss, who was in the lobby, approached him and accused him of stealing. The man told officers his boss had accused him of stealing in the past, but he had ignored the accusations. This time he yelled back and an argument erupted. The altercation became physical when his boss punched him in the nose. The man refused medical attention, but wanted to press charges against his boss. The officers cited the assailant for battery, then released him.

RETAIL REPORT



Vasilios Kiriiris welcomes design fans to Zinc Details, his showroom at 1905 Fillmore.

Zinc Details has turned 20. How did it all begin? I was fresh out of the College of Environmental Design at the University of California at Berkeley and simply had an idea and some very strong feelings. At the university, Wendy Nishimura and I had developed an understanding and shared a passion for the modern classics of furniture design. In travels to Europe and Japan, we came face to face with new styles hatched from traditional forms. And naturally, we began to form strong relationships with young artisans and designers in the San Francisco Bay Area who were creating excitement with simply styled, highly functional and innovative pieces.

What led you to put your architectural education to use in a retail design store? It takes a long time for architecture to actually be realized and influence a person's life. Retail design is a lot more immediate. You can touch people on an everyday level. Personally, we love to collect, admire and interact with beautifully designed products and the store is a reflection of our vision and taste. Having the knowledge of history of architecture and art is also a great reference when dealing with modern design products. All products designed today have references to the past. We can appreciate all the thought process put in to develop the products. And even when creating a display, we can visualize space relations to the products better.

Were you always focused on modern design — and didn't that put you 10 years ahead of the curve? From the beginning, the idea was to offer home and office furnishings that had integrity and lasting value. Pieces were selected not because they seemed trendy, but because they had the potential to be contemporary classics, things that carried the clan of treasured modern design — the best of Scandinavian, Italian, Japanese and American ideas.

Now mid-century modern is all the rage. You told us so? Historically, in the '50s and '60s, new appreciation for home design developed and was popularized all across America. It's no surprise that now mid-century design is back in style and ever more popular because many people are already familiar with the style from when they were young.

What led you to locate on Fillmore Street? Our first store was on Post Street — well into the Tenderloin, to be exact. It was a tiny 200 square foot space, and then

this freakish accident happened: a huge gas explosion right across from the store. We lost a lot of merchandise and that was the wake up call to look for a larger and safer space. Also, at that time we were invited to create a "shop within a store" at the Macy's Union Square location. Because of the wider exposure, we attained a larger audience and they wanted to see a larger selection from us.

In 1994, the store moved from Post Street to its present location at 1905

Fillmore Street. The move to Fillmore brought Zinc into one of the most popular shopping streets in San Francisco, with vastly increased foot traffic and an additional 1,000 square feet of showroom space. In the enlarged Zinc Details, we were able to increase the product range to include work from both national and international talent and to expand the in-house product line.

And then you doubled down on

Still Modern After All These Years

Zinc Details owner is an architect who prefers retail

Fillmore by expanding next door into the Big Pagoda space. Correct. In 2003, we took over the retail space next door, more than doubling our retail space, allowing us to add further lines of internationally known furniture such as Knoll, Kartell, Herman Miller.

And then you doubled down again and opened a second store around the corner on California Street, just when other home design stores were closing. What were you thinking? We went through many shifts in our business during the past 20 years. In 2001, manufacturing was changing and the major production was moving overseas, so we had to decide to focus on retail or wholesale business. That's when we opened our second location on Fourth Street in Berkeley.

Again our business was shifting and we wanted to create a space that was mainly a furniture showroom. We had the opportunity to obtain the 2410 California location at that time and it made sense for us to have two stores closer to each other than across the bay, so we closed the Berkeley store.

But after opening the California Street location, we found that many of our customers didn't want to make a trip to visit two stores, even though we were only two blocks apart. And after acquiring many designers and architect clients through the California Street location, we decided to shift our business once again to focus on furniture. So last summer we closed our California Street location and packed and moved everything back to our original 1905 Fillmore Street location.

Now we can offer a great furniture collection and home accessories at one location, but with more curated visitors. Our customers enjoy the convenience of one-stop shopping and it's much better for me as owner to be in one location and to get to know everyone who comes through the door.

What's special about Fillmore?

It's a unique neighborhood with small, independent stores and restaurants. Having a neighborhood store allows for closer ties with customers, many of whom live, work and shop in the area. In fact, I'd say 60 percent of our clients are from the neighborhood, 25 percent are from the rest of the city, 10 percent from the Bay Area and 5 percent are visitors.

Any plans for the new year?

We're planning to have design movie night, do-it-yourself classes and design discussion panels.

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Unisex Fragrances Mixed on the Spot at a New Perfumerie

Le Labo now open on Fillmore

FRESH PERFUME is the best," proclaims Meg Christensen, manager of Le Labo, the scent emporium that opened during the holidays at 2238 Fillmore Street.

The spare shop has no perfume in stock, but will mix one of its 12 fragrances on the spot while the customer waits. Costs range from \$58 for a 15-milliliter portion — best for newcomers who want to try a scent on for size — to \$700 for a 500-milliliter grand size.

The most popular offering so far is Santal 33. The 33 signifies the number of ingredients that go into the mix, with the end result said to be conjure up the "sensual universality" of the Marlboro man — or rather the Marlboro person, given that all Le Labo scents are deemed to be unisex.

"Great fragrances don't have a gender," says Christensen, noting that some of the scents are also produced in lotions and long-lasting silicone-based balms.

The shop also carries a limited home collection of room sprays and candles. And a couple of scents of eco-friendly detergents are also offered, mostly for use on delicate handwashes. All products are vegan, and while synthetics are sometimes used, they are also derived from nature.

The founders of Le Labo — Frenchmen Fabrice Penot and Edouard Roschi — named their company of hand-mixed scents Le Labo, or "the lab," as a rebellion against traditional perfumeries. They are striving to reinvent everything from the mode of manufacturing



"Our fragrances were designed by the best noses in the world," says Meg Christensen, manager of the new Le Labo store at 2238 Fillmore.

through the packaging that contains the final product.

"They're not big on signage, branding or advertising," explains Christensen. "There are no photos of beautiful people posing to sell the perfume. They want it to speak for itself."

Indeed, beyond a small sign proclaiming "Perfume yourself responsibly," there are few clues to what lies within in the gutted and refurbished storefront. The shop's entrance has been reconfigured to open directly onto the street, eliminating the former occu-

pany, the gift shop Aumakua, which was stocked chock-a-block with jewelry, wall hangings, table ornaments, buddhas, toys, cards, statues and more — the new shop is spare. A few bottles are set on a few sparse shelves, with several eyedroppers and glass stir sticks nearby. Sinks, metal carts and a gleaming refrigerator are contained within the space refurbished with natural wood floors and walls made of brick and pressed tin. The centerpiece is a box called an olfactory that holds small bottles of scents, numbered from 1 to 40.

"Most people have been drawn in by the store's design," Christensen says. "They walk around unsure at first. Then they start smelling and they fall in love." Browsers and buyers are encouraged to spray the bottled offerings on paper wands, then sniff. She says the new neighbors are naturals.

"In San Francisco, people are more careful. They take the time to think about things," she says. "People come in and spray, then walk around and really feel the scents. That would be our suggestion, but people do it here anyway."

Christensen says Le Labo's products are best used right away, rather than stored and saved.

"Fresh perfume is the opposite of wine, which becomes more dynamic and more complex as it ages," she says. "In perfume, the top notes or the lightest molecules start to falter with time. The oils start oxidizing with the alcohol."

Unlike some other manufacturers, Le Labo cautions against wearing more than one scent at a time. "Our fragrances were designed by the best noses in the world," says Christensen. "Layering is not recommended."

Fillmore Street is the fifth boutique for Le Labo, which opened its flagship store in New York in 2006, followed by shops in Los Angeles, Tokyo and London. The line is also available at Barney's.

Each of the cities with a Le Labo boutique has a scent exclusively offered there. L.A.'s Muse 25, for example, is described as "white, angelic, very musky and aldehydic." San Francisco's signature scent is not yet available.

"Great scents are not on a schedule," says Christensen.

More Casual Dining Options Arrive With the New Year

PROVING ONCE AGAIN that more casual eateries are gaining in popularity in the neighborhood, a number of new restaurants have opened just in time for the new year.

Among them are spots helmed by two husband-and-wife teams with impeccable pedigrees:

• **ROOSTERTAIL** — a new restaurant specializing in free-range chicken cooked on a rotisserie spit — is now open for lunch and dinner at 1963 Sutter Street, formerly the longtime home of Cafe Kati. With its snappy logo and slightly naughty name, Roostertail is the brainchild of Gerard Darian, formerly of Bix, and Tracy Green, formerly of Chapeau. They met while working at Wolfgang Puck's Postrio.

The menu is heavy on free-range chicken and wings, but also offers beef brisket and pulled pork sandwiches and a number of chopped salads. The space has been totally revamped and now sports a modern, airy feeling with an open kitchen, walnut tables and a black granite counter with red stools. A patio out back will open soon.

• **STATE BIRD PROVISIONS** — the first of three restaurants to open in the old Century Theater building at 1529 Fillmore in the jazz district — brings a new concept and provides a new home for former Rubicon chefs Stuart Briozzo and Nicole Kraskinski. A number of staffers from Rubicon, their far more formal Financial District mainstay, have joined them.

The concept focuses mostly on small plates offered on carts and trays. It's named for California's state bird, which stars in Briozzo's signature crispy spiced quail dish. The restaurant opened on New Year's Eve and serves dinner every night except Tuesday.

The space next door at 1527 Fillmore later this year will become the home of HAPA, from Nopa veteran Richie Nakano, who will keep his Hapa Ramen stand at the Ferry Building.

Still to be announced: plans for the even more ambitious restaurant coming to 1525 Fillmore. Across the street at 1552 Fillmore, HOLY DOG has opened as primarily a carry-out shop, with a few counter seats in the window, offering sausages, hamburgers and wings. It's open daily from 11 a.m. to midnight and until 2 a.m. on weekends.

Farther north at 2298 Fillmore, the shuttered former home of LONG BAR, comes word that Albert Rainer — who first transformed the space into Fillmore Grill nearly a decade ago and still controls the master lease — will return with a new restaurant. Rainer and his brother Klaus operate the wildly successful Leopold's Austrian restaurant and beerfest at Polk and Union.

Amid all the new arrivals at the end of the year came a significant departure when Elizabeth Falkner called it quits at CITIZEN CAKE. Barely a year after moving to 2125 Fillmore and then struggling through several changes in concept, Citizen Cake closed. No word yet on a successor.



New arrivals in the neighborhood (clockwise from bottom left): State Bird Provisions, Roostertail Rotisserie and Holy Dog. Departed: Elizabeth Falkner and Citizen Cake.



Amy

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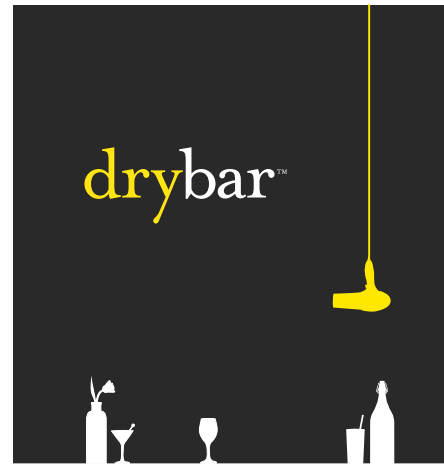


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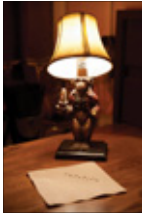
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SIX BLOCKS of SEPARATION

Solstice is the center
of the social universe



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIEL BAWAYAN

LIKE MANY RESIDENTS and the great Tony Bennett, I left my heart in San Francisco. But I think it's fair to say I left my liver at Solstice lounge. I first discovered the restaurant and bar eight years ago when I moved to the neighborhood. Solstice had just opened at 2801 California, at the corner of Divisadero, in the spot formerly home to Rasselas Jazz Club. We were both new kids on the block, and we liked each other immediately. I quickly became a fan of the friendly bar staff and their classic cocktails. And it was nice to have a neighborhood joint where I could hang out with old friends and meet new ones.

Best of all, it was stumbling distance from my apartment.

The culinary brainchild of owners Leslie Shirah and Matt Sturm — who also own Fly Bars at 762 Divisadero and 1085 Sutter — Solstice offers guests a Bohemian oasis on Upper Divisadero, or what residents like to call the Upper Diversion. The sultry interior boasts several cozy booths, palm trees and an inviting long dark wooden bar. Funky artwork adorns the walls and a lounge, sunken off the main room, that accommodates private parties of up to 40 people. Unlike most spots, there's no room rental or reservation fee — just a food and beverage minimum.

On any given night, Solstice offers patrons a tantalizing array of stiff cocktails and small plates paired with people-watching and amusing conversational sound

bytes. You'll overhear everything from cheesy pick-up lines to girlfriends dishing about their lousy boyfriends. The restaurant's menu won't necessarily give Gary Danko or Michael Mina a run for their money, but the compact kitchen serves reliable pub grub that always hits the spot. Menu favorites include the gorgonzola mac and cheese, Kobe beef sliders, ahi tuna tartare and tempura battered fish tacos. I'm personally partial to the prosciutto-wrapped chicken medallions and prosciutto pizzetta. The food, all priced under \$20, is great for sharing with friends or perfect for the hungry bachelor too lazy to cook for himself.

Solstice was one of the first places to offer half price bottles of wine on Mondays before every restaurant and



The sultry interior of Solstice, at the corner of California and Divisadero, boasts palm trees, several cozy booths and an inviting long dark wooden bar with a monkey lamp.



its mother copied the idea. The wine promo is still a hit, attracting a number of young singles on their first dates. In fact, sometimes the bar looks a lot like an ad for match.com.

It would be easy to dismiss this place as just another Pacific Heights hang out — and, in fact, it does attract its share of investment banker types in button-down shirts and aspiring Stepford wives in tube tops. However, unlike the Marina, these patrons drink and dine harmoniously next to Mission hipsters sporting colorful tattoos and facial piercings.

Solstice is also a haven for members of the restaurant and bar industry. When the clock ticks past 10 p.m., bartenders and servers from Tatakai to Spruce arrive for a nightcap and to dish about their customer experiences. The go-to drink tends to be a shot or more of Fernet Branca — a bitter Italian liqueur and digestif that's like a bastard cousin of Jagermeister. Chances are if you order a shot of Fernet, the bartender will join you.

Over the years, Solstice has continued to be the epicenter of my social universe. It's where my friends and I still choose to meet and catch up. Having grown up in Marin, it never ceases to amaze me how many of my childhood mates live within a six-block radius. Sure, we

love to try other bars and restaurants around town, but as we get older and our jobs and lives expend more of our time and energy, we have a greater appreciation for convenience and comfort — and Solstice fits the bill.

Solstice has been the setting for many seminal moments of my 20s and 30s. I have met new friends and old friends there. I've had first and last dates there. I've celebrated birthdays and New Year's there. I've toasted my triumphs and I've drowned my sorrows there.

Sometimes Solstice feels like the set of the sitcom that is my life — similar to *Al's in Happy Days*, the Central Perk in *Friends* or the bar in *Cheers*. Each episode features a colorful cast of characters: regular bar flies, kooky neighbors, potential love interests — and sometimes special guest stars.

On Solstice's one-year anniversary, I presented the owners with a monkey lamp that looks like a *Phantom of the Opera* prop. The lamp was a white elephant gift I won at a holiday party. While I loved the idea of a monkey dressed in a suit and holding two candles with a lampshade on its head in my living room, my roommate wasn't a big fan. So rather than toss this primate illumiary into the trash, I gave it to Solstice, where it

still resides. One of the monkey's hands is now missing, due to wear and tear, but he still stands tall at the end of the bar where he blends in with the bar's dark jungle-like interior.

When I was in my 20s, I wondered why people in their 30s or older were hanging out at this place. Shouldn't these old fogies be at home working on crossword puzzles or watching *Murder, She Wrote*? Alas, I'm now in my mid-30s, and I wonder if the younger kids are thinking the same thing about me.

One thing I can say is that people of all ages are welcome at Solstice. The bartenders and servers — an eclectic mix of artists, musicians, actors and dreamers — never fail to greet you with a smile, remember your name or favorite drink and make you feel like your patronage is appreciated. At the end of the day, isn't that why you go to your neighborhood bar? It's not just for great drinks and food — it's for a welcoming vibe and a sense of community.

It's been eight years now since Solstice and I first met. And it's a relationship I will continue to cherish for years to come — probably until the day I retire to the suburbs, where I'll be sitting in my rocking chair rooting for Angela Lansbury in reruns on television.

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The Sky's Not the Limit

Serial entrepreneur and man about the neighborhood Maurice Kanbar is back with a new vodka

By CHRIS BARNETT

MAURICE KANBAR is sitting in the cluttered, comfortable living room of his Pacific Heights apartment clipping Safeway coupons.

That seems rather odd for an 80-year-old entrepreneur, property investor and filmmaker-philanthropist who's no doubt a billionaire plus. But then he also zips around town on a Vespa lookalike motor scooter because he hates to waste time trolling for parking places. And he eats lunch at the same restaurant practically every day when he's in town: Perry's on Union Street.

Kanbar is a man in motion — an obsessive, compulsive inventor with a near Midas touch who dreams up many of his ideas in his own kitchen. Then he gives his brainstorm a clever name, an eye-grabbing package and pitches them like a canny barker. No MBA marketing mumbo-jumbo or Silicon Valley techno-babble. Just plain English. A prime example is D-Fuzz-It, a gadget expressly designed to remove fuzz balls from sweaters.

But many San Franciscans who enjoy elbow-bending know that Kanbar's greatest triumph by far among his 35 or so patented creations is Sky vodka, the first of its breed born, bred and branded in the city. A lifelong martini lover, Kanbar had his bones in the booze business in 1992 when he debuted the smooth vodka he developed by distilling alcohol, grain and water four times and filtering it through charcoal and cardboard three times to remove the particulates that give vodka its bite, burn or headache.

Now when seasoned distillers launch a new spirit,

they usually deploy an army of market researchers, hire a pricey "naming" company, a platoon of ad staffers, publicists and fetching young things to give away cocktails at trendy bars. Then the distillers — indeed any company selling something new to consumers — stage focus groups to capture consumer feedback, sift the data and roll the dice, hoping to come up with a distinctive brand.

Not Kanbar. He found quizzing strangers in a sterile room with a tape recorder running more "hocusocus" than focus; he went with his gut.

When he was considering launching his spirit, Russian-sounding Smirnoff was the top selling American-made vodka and had been for decades. It sold for \$9 to \$10 but its cachet had waned. Imports like Absolut (Swedish) and Stolichnaya (authentically Russian) were invading the U.S. and bombarding the younger vodka fans, who longed for hipness with clever ads and a \$15 price tag. In the vodka derby then, it was Plymouth vs. BMW.

Kanbar says he got in the race with his uber-smooth vodka priced at \$12.99, halfway between old reliable Smirnoff and the rising tide of foreign-made vodkas. But price alone wasn't going to grab attention. And while he had taste going for him, his entry had no style.

"Originally, Maurice wanted go with a clear, see-through bottle — like every vodka brand — but he knew it would be lost in the emerging cluster of vodkas in better bars," recalls Eli Bishop, a brand manager who has worked for Kanbar since the early 90s. "Then he found a package designer in Wales who perfected

a cobalt blue bottle and solved that problem."

Says Kanbar: "With a blue bottle, I wanted to call it Sky but, no surprise, someone already had the name. So I just added another Y."

Sky's success — today, it's the second best selling American-made vodka — is another story for another time. In 2004, Kanbar sold the company in two chunks to Italy's Gruppo Campari for somewhere between \$450 million to \$500 million and a multi-year noncompete clause.

"I made a mistake in pricing Sky a little less than Absolut and a little more than Smirnoff," he says. "I should have priced it above Absolut. I would have made a lot more money. But then I make mistakes."

Kanbar hasn't spent the last seven years just clipping coupons. He's been in his kitchen tinkering, tasting and tracking the explosive growth of the global vodka market. As it happens, he could choose from eight kitchens; he not only owns his full-floor apartment, he bought the entire eight-story building at 1901 Jackson, using it as a combination private residence, lab and think tank for his company and occasionally as a bunkhouse to keep an assortment of film friends and others nearby.

Today, with his noncompete clause expired, Kanbar is back in the vodka game full force. His latest libational venture is called Blue Angel, a new entry in the "ultra premium" category where his competitors are fetching upwards of \$75 for vodka in bottles that look like pieces of art. However, entering 2012, the arena is filled with hundreds of brawny gladiators and boutique brands from



Kanbar with Gov. Jerry Brown and former mayor Willie Brown, his new vodka and his eight-story compound at Jackson and Laguna.

around the world, including a half-dozen or so other "made in San Francisco" vodkas.

Despite the competition, Anthony Dias Blue, who runs the annual San Francisco World Spirits Competition and is editor-in-chief of *The Tasting Panel* magazine, is betting on Kanbar's distilling artistry and marketing savvy to give Blue Angel lift-off. "Maurice is one of the most interesting, inventive people I've ever met," he says. "The first time I met him for lunch, he arrived on his scooter wearing some cockamamie vest he invented that had a million pockets," recalls Blue.

Kanbar admits he isn't really launching Blue Angel; it's a relaunch. The brand's first promotional ascent a year ago didn't attain any real altitude and he shoulders the blame. "People didn't like the original bottle or the price: \$28," he says. "If someone was going to plunk down 28 bucks, they'd buy Grey Goose or something they knew."

He recalls the first Blue Angel bottle was frosted (like Goose, Bevedere and Chopin) and festooned with clouds, a halo and equipped with a short neck. Another blunder. "We had production problems with that bottle so we changed to a clear, thinner version that has sort of a retro feel," Kanbar says. He also plays the nostalgia card. "We show it on a stage, in the spotlight, playing on its San Francisco heritage."

What's more, as part of the relaunch he dropped the price from \$28 to \$19.95 and offers a \$3 coupon downloadable from blueangelvodka.com that cuts the cost even more. Spirits expert Andy Blue contends that if Kanbar "maintains the quality Blue Angel had when it was much more expensive, it will do very well."

But first Kanbar has to get the Angel off the shelf and in a



■ BIZ WIZ

A half century of ideas and generosity

Among the inventions, investments and substantial gifts of Maurice Kanbar over the years:

At 21, he dreamed up D-Fuzz-It, a "comb" to remove fuzzballs from sweaters. At 26, he created a nylon fiber to compete with giant DuPont Corporation, sold his company 14 months later and could have retired for life but didn't. Then there's Soo-Foo, a pound of natural brown rice, grains and lentils with 5 grams of protein per serving available today in health food stores. His Vermeer Dutch chocolate cream liqueur competes against Godiva liqueur. Other products include Tangos puzzle game, the Safeglide hypodermic needle protector, a cryogenic cataract remover and ZIP Notes, which are sticky notes on a roll.

He has written hefty checks to benefit a number of major institutions in the neighborhood, including the Kanbar Cardiac Center at California Pacific Medical Center, the Kanbar Hall theater at the Jewish Community Center and a headquarters for the San Francisco Girls Chorus.

A lifelong movie buff, he is a major supporter of the San Francisco International Film Festival and Film Society, along with KOED's ImageMakers series of indie films. The Brooklyn-born Kanbar funded the Kanbar Institute of Film, Television and New Media at New York University. He is credited with creating New York's first multiplex theatre and established Kanbar Entertainment, which produced an animated film called *Woodwalk* that topped \$100 million in global sales. And he has other films in the pipeline.

Kanbar has stumbled, too. He and longtime New York investment banker Paul Henry Kaufman bought a slew of vintage buildings in downtown Tulsa and were planning to convert them to live-work lofts, galleries and shops and turn the city into a "magnet for the arts," says oktalk.com, which reported that Kanbar pumped \$100 million into Tulsa real estate. The partnership and friendship soured and they ended up suing each other.

Meantime, Kanbar has penned his memoir, *Secrets From an Inventor's Notebook*, which, no surprise, was produced by his own publishing company, Council Oaks Books. But his life and times are taking a backseat to his current passion, introducing the Bay Area Martini to the Bay Area and eventually to the world. "Barkape, I'd like mine very dry, straight up with two Dirty Sue olives." Yep, Maurice Kanbar is now getting into the garnish game. — CHRIS BARNETT

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LOCAL ANGLE



"Self-Portrait with a Fur Hat," 1972

In her early years, part of the Fillmore scene

Joan Brown's involvement with the art scene along Fillmore Street began with exhibitions, while she was still an art student, first at the Six Gallery, at 3119 Fillmore, then at the Spatsa Gallery, on Filbert Street near Fillmore.

In 1958, Brown and her husband Bill Brown moved into the apartment building at 2322 Fillmore, where their next-door neighbors were the painters Wally Hedrick and Jay DeFeo. Famous as some of them are today, San Francisco artists of the 1950s had little hope of being exhibited by major galleries or museums. Bruce Conner once said that the art of that time was not made to last because nobody needed it to last. Brown herself has said, "It was important for that day, for that week, or for that moment."

The seeming lack of any path to success encouraged a deliberate hostility to the art market and its institutions. Life at 2322 Fillmore was characterized by heavy drinking, resourceful parties and the view that making artwork was something like a meditative exercise, to be enjoyed in the present with little thought for the future.

Joan Brown had come a long way from her Catholic high school days. After a time, however, the hard partying became oppressive; quiet and privacy began to look good. In 1959, she separated from Bill Brown and moved to North Beach to live with the artist Manuel Neri, who became her second husband.

— JEROME TARSHIS

A gathering of rebels

Joan Brown's paintings are also featured in "Momentum of a Movement," a new exhibition opening January 6 at Hackett-Mill Gallery at 201 Post Street. For more information, visit hackettmill.com



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ART

A Journal of a Woman's Life — in Paint

By JEROME TARSHIS

JOAN BROWN (1938-1990) may have thought of herself as an unclassifiable artist.

The survey of her paintings now at the San Jose Museum of Art positions her as one who portrayed women's lives, beginning with her own. Curators need to say something, but it's an idea that hardly narrows things down. A woman is called upon to play many parts — and Brown tells us that she enjoyed most of them.

Joan Brown (nee Beatty) was born in San Francisco and received a Catholic education through high school. Her teachers seemed to offer her a choice between becoming a nun or becoming a 1950s wife and mother. By sheer chance, she saw an ad for the California School of Fine Arts, now the San Francisco Art Institute, visited its campus, saw people with beards and sandals, and thought an entirely different world had been opened to her.

As a child, she had played with paper dolls, putting different costumes on a single figure, and as a teenager she had copied photographs of glamorous movie actresses. When she applied to art school, the drawings of actresses were enough to secure her admission. They were girlish rather than feminist, but they prefigured much of her career, which was dedicated to making a body of work that was a journal of a woman's life far more than it was a product offered for sale.

For a time Brown considered herself the least qualified of art students and thought of dropping out until one of her teachers, Elmer Bischoff, changed her sense of what she could do. Bischoff told her she didn't need to master academic drawing — that experience would teach her what she needed to know. And as for what to paint, a cup of coffee in her studio was a perfectly legitimate subject for art.

She became enormously successful. The paintings of her student years, much admired at school, brought her to the attention of an outstanding gallery in New York, where she sold a painting to the Museum of Modern Art in her early twenties. In San Francisco at that time, being a woman artist was no great handicap; in lifetime career terms, both Brown and her next-door neighbor on Fillmore Street, Jay DeFeo, outstripped their artist husbands, Bill Brown and Wally Hedrick.

Brown was notable for getting paint on herself; she seemed almost eager to look like



Joan Brown's "Self-Portrait" from 1977. She refused to be only one thing or another.

Both Joan Brown and her next-door neighbor on Fillmore Street, Jay DeFeo, outstripped their artist husbands.

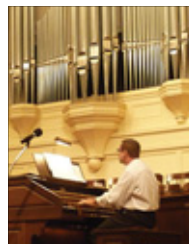
a mess. But she also enjoyed being pretty and dressing up, and the show includes a painting in which she and her third husband, Gordon Cook, are on their way to a performance of the San Francisco Opera.

One of the most teasing works in the show, a summation of clichés about women and women artists but also an example of her refusal to be only one thing or only another, is "Self-Portrait" (1977). In it, Brown sits in her studio, painting a still life of a flower, and instead of wearing a paint-stained artist's smock, she is wearing a handsome dress and high-heeled shoes and looks as if she has dressed for a party.

Her paintings tell us that she could embrace the most varied possibilities: she could be physically strong, as a long-distance swimmer; she could be a painter; she could be a wife or mother or lover; by the 1980s, she could be a spiritual seeker in India. For her, at least, there was never any contradiction between looking terrific in high heels and being a serious, successful, and, if one wants to use the adjective, feminist painter.

"This Kind of Bird Flies Backward: Paintings by Joan Brown" continues at the San Jose Museum of Art through March 11. For more information, visit sjmusart.org.

CHAMBER MUSIC



From pipe organ to the piano

Charles Worth — the organist at Calvary Presbyterian Church since 1992 who commands one of the largest pipe organs in California, with more than 5,200 pipes in 110 ranks — is also a virtuoso on piano and a respected vocal coach.

This month he shifts over to piano to present a concert of chamber music on Friday, January 20, at 8 p.m. at the church, located at the corner of Fillmore and Jackson. Included on the program is music by Bach, Beethoven and Brahms.

Worth has toured internationally as an accompanist with renowned singers and with the Calvary choir. He has also been pianist for the San Francisco Symphony Chorus and accompanied *Plumy Jack*, the opera by Gordon Getty, at Carnegie Hall.

For more information on the chamber music concert on January 20, which benefits Habitat for Humanity, call 346-3832 or visit calvarypresbyterian.org.

MUSIC

Fillmore Loses an Original Jazz Voice

Bohemian Knuckleboogie frontman Michael Pitrie: big man with a tiny trumpet

By ANTHONY TORRES

MICHAEL "Coffee Picasso" Pitrie, a true original local jazz talent and music scene treasure, died of a heart attack on December 18, leaving friends and admirers stunned at the sudden departure of the Bohemian Knuckleboogie lead man. He was 44.

I came by the news when I walked into Rasselas Jazz Club the following Tuesday night, knowing that Coffee and the band held court there on Tuesdays. I noticed the horn player was playing a sax, and just assumed it was Pitrie and that he must have picked up a new sax. Just then, the drummer gestured with a flick of his head to check out a framed image, statement and small candle on the piano. The objects constituted a small shrine announcing Pitrie's unexpected passing.

I can still vividly remember that first sighting of Coffee and Bohemian Knuckleboogie a couple of years ago at Sheba Piano Lounge — the sound offering a unique blend of New Orleans jazz, soul and blues. It was difficult not to notice Mike Pitrie, a larger than life black man, blowing a tiny pocket trumpet with an electric guitar draped over his torso. He sang with a style and voice that was incredibly hip and uniquely his own.

After that, I saw the band on numerous occasions — both at Sheba and Rasselas — and am still reflecting on Pitrie and grappling with the nuances and peculiarities of his interpretations of



Celebrating a life

Rasselas Jazz Club at 1534 Fillmore will host a celebration of the life of Michael Pitrie (above) on Tuesday, January 17, from 7 to 11 p.m., featuring a who's who of local musicians.

jazz and popular standards, which, while seeming simple, disguised an underlying complexity and sophistication.

Defining his sound, Pitrie said: "It's from the gulf. Its roots are from the fever swamps of Port Arthur in the Lone Star State where I started honking my horn as a kid, when I wasn't thinking about pirates."

A man of few words, he always

maintained a kind of cool aloofness, an elusiveness that skirted definitive answers to questions he thought might constrict the full depth and range of free associative responses that the music might be capable of conjuring.

However, Pitrie always cited as the reason for his interest and relocation from the south to the Fillmore Jazz District "a traveling uncle who told me about the blues and jazz clubs of the Fillmore District in SF back in the day when cats from all over got down."

That interest, and the scene itself, is what led him to make the Fillmore the band's home base.

Alternating between Sheba and Rasselas — along with other venues in the broader Bay Area jazz circuit — Pitrie and Bohemian Knuckleboogie were mainstays that helped anchor the Fillmore's jazz scene. Pitrie spoke both to his commitment to carrying on the historical tradition of jazz in the Fillmore and to the viability and legitimacy of the jazz district as a living cultural phenomenon that nurtures a range of great musical spirits.

"The Sunday Mike passed was one of the most difficult I have experienced in years. He played here on Sundays. He never missed and was always on time," says Netsanet Alemayehu, who owns the Sheba Piano Lounge. "One day he asked how I was doing and I said, 'I am really tired.' He said, 'Don't worry, just listen to the music, it will make you feel better.'"

I live in Noe Valley, not in 94114.

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NEIGHBORHOOD HOME SALES

Single Family Homes	BR	BA	PK	Sq ft	Days	Date	Asking	Sale
1825 Webster	3	2	2		42	12/1/11	1,295,000	1,285,000
2319 Webster	3	2	0		35	12/1/11	1,295,000	1,350,000
1973 Filbert	3	2	2	1741	20	11/29/11	1,550,000	1,460,000
1948 Sutter	4	3.5	1	2980	21	12/8/11	2,195,000	2,245,000
2373 Filbert	3	3.5	1	2919	62	12/6/11	2,595,000	2,560,000
101 Maple	3	4.5	2		43	11/17/11	3,199,000	3,100,000
2310 Washington	5	4.5	2		36	11/17/11	4,250,000	4,175,000
2666 Broadway	5	5.5	2		73	11/17/11	4,995,000	4,700,000
2550 Green	5	5	2	5888	7	11/28/11	9,500,000	9,500,000

Condos / Co-ops / TICs / Lofts	BR	BA	PK	Sq ft	Days	Date	Asking	Sale
1906 Laguna #303	0	1	0	473	104	11/29/11	299,000	300,000
1450 Post #501	1	1	1	724	52	12/9/11	380,000	374,000
2077 Jackson #304	1	1	1	750	518	11/23/11	449,000	389,000
2701 Van Ness #111	1	1	1	788	282	12/7/11	455,000	455,000
1552 Green #F	1	1	1		4	11/30/11	475,000	460,000
2839 Pierce #1	1	1	1	720	174	12/14/11	536,900	528,000
2060 Sutter #304	1	1	1	105		11/23/11	575,000	555,000
2185 Bush #209	2	1	1		52	12/6/11	599,000	590,000
2360 Union #6	2	1	1	198		11/17/11	679,000	660,000
3117 Buchanan	2	1	1		35	11/30/11	815,000	805,000
1600 Webster #304	2	2	1		68	11/29/11	895,000	850,000
1600 Webster #112	2	2	2	1419	67	12/2/11	895,000	888,000
2261 Bush #12	3	2.5	1	1674	69	11/30/11	990,000	990,000
1923 Filbert	2	1	1		90	12/8/11	1,089,000	1,040,000
3563 Sacramento	3	2	1		155	12/2/11	1,049,000	1,049,000
1925 Filbert	2	1	1		90	12/8/11	1,099,000	1,050,000
2201 Sacramento #303	2	2	1	1611	69	12/9/11	1,099,000	1,085,000
2929 Broderick	2	1.5	1		51	12/17/11	1,125,000	1,125,000
1914 Filbert #B	3	2.5	1	1756	78	11/29/11	1,295,000	1,197,500
2324 Pine	3	2	1	1838	19	11/29/11	1,349,000	1,275,000
3439 Sacramento #301	3	2	2	2052	73	11/23/11	1,575,000	1,550,000
2673 Filbert	2	1.5	1		33	11/22/11	1,450,000	1,577,000
1910 Broadway #1E	3	3.5	1	2623	131	12/15/11	2,500,000	2,316,758

An exceptional year for mansions, with more available



Last year was an exceptional year for mansion sales, with 15 homes selling for more than \$5 million. And we still have a handsome selection of high-end offerings available, including eight mansions listed over \$10 million and nine more listed between \$5 million and \$10 million.

Among them: The still-under-construction new limestone home at 2845 Broadway has been listed at \$38.5 million, reduced from its previous asking price of \$65 million. It was withdrawn in January 2010 after nearly four years on the market. The elegant Heilmann mansion designed by Julius Kraft at 2020 Jackson has been impeccably renovated, including solar panels, and is still available for \$20 million. At 2808 Broadway, the 1927 home designed by Willis Polk is listed at \$25 million, and offers a prime position for America's Cup viewing from the pentroom. The completely restored home at 2701 Broadway, offered at \$28.5 million, has a basketball court and unobstructed views. Two blocks west, towering over the heart of the Gold Coast and listed at \$45 million is 2901 Broadway (above), the stately mansion with a private tennis court that's been on the market more than four years.

NEW LISTINGS: More than 3,500 square feet of newly remodeled luxury is available at 1521 Baker, a family home with a garden and an in-law unit. The condo market ranges from unit 6 at 1545 Buchanan for \$399,000 to an updated unit at 2825 Laguna for \$1.5 million. A surprising amount of activity has continued even through the typically slow holiday season.

— Data and commentary provided by MARIA MARCHETTI at Sotheby's International Realty. Contact her at maria@mariamarchetti.com or call 699-8008.



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FIRST PERSON




By AMY BERNSTEIN

WHEN we started telling friends that we were planning to move from the Fillmore to Boston, we could count on getting one of two responses: an incredulous "Why?" or "Boston's great. It's a lot like San Francisco."

My partner Nanette Bisher and I were moving because I had just landed a dream job. We'd always sworn we'd never leave San Francisco. After years of hopscoching across the country for work, we found our way to the Bay Area in 1999 and for 12 years we were happy — Nanette as the art director first of the *Examiner* and then the *Chronicle*, me as an editor at several business magazines. But the new job — as editor of the *Harvard Business Review*, where I'd get the opportunity to build on the success of a storied publication — was too good to turn down. And it was in Boston.

So we reluctantly agreed to give ourselves three years. In that time, we figure, we'll either fall in love with Boston or we'll come back home.

And by home, we mean our place at Bush and Fillmore, because nowhere we've ever lived has felt so much like home. We love our apartment in the Amelia. But home is much more than our condo. It's our daily visit with Gary at Barry for Pets, where he'll ply our Corgis, Harry and Sadie, with treats and sit for a few minutes to discuss our beloved Giants. Home is our daily visit to the Fillmore Bakeshop, where I'd take way too long deciding which cookie to buy, mostly so I could spend a little more time with Elena and Doug, the daughter-father owners. Home is Alta Plaza and Mollie Stone's, Osaka and Woodhouse Fish Co. The great people and frames at Invision. And home is the neighbors who became dear friends — our family, really.

Leaving was not easy. "Why?" indeed.

I got to Boston first; Nanette drove across the country with Harry and Sadie. During my first months in Boston, That's pretty great.

We're starting to warm up to the place. I'm not sure when we'll stop checking the weather in San Francisco, noting that when it's 35 here, it's 53 back there — a cruel numeric trick. But I do know that we'll never find San Francisco in Boston. And that's okay. I think we'll learn to like Boston when we understand it better and can enjoy it on its own terms — lobster rolls, traditional pizza, historic sites around every corner.

It will take time.

Leaving One Home, Still Searching for Another

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FILLMORE SAN FRANCISCO

Not many cities can boast a vibrant section of town that is upscale but approachable, fashionable but not elitist, comfortable without being boring. San Francisco's Fillmore is all these — and, best of all, it's not striving to be original. It just is. — *Gourmet magazine*

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2425 California 885-3313

Mureta's Antiques
2418 Fillmore 922-5652

Narumi Japanese Antiques
1902 Fillmore 346-8629

Thomas Reynolds Gallery
2291 Pine 441-4093

Walter Adams Framing
20198 Fillmore 922-6811

CLOTHING & SHOES

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2226 Fillmore 877-328-4538

Betsy Johnson
2121 Fillmore 776-0669

Black Fleece
2223 Fillmore 931-2203

Blu
2259 Fillmore 776-0643

Cielo
2225 Fillmore 776-0641

Clary Sage Organics
2241 Fillmore 672-7320

Crosswalk Shoes
2122 Fillmore 921-0292

De Novo
2413 California 563-5937

Eileen Fisher
2216 Fillmore 346-2133

Elizabeth Charles
2056 Fillmore 440-2100

Erica Tanov
2408 Fillmore 674-1228

Gimme Shoes
2358 Fillmore 441-3040

Heidi Says
2426 Fillmore 749-0655

Heidi Says Casual
2416 Fillmore 499-1144

Heidi Says Shoes
2105 Fillmore 409-6850

Hello
2226 Bush 888-601-0117

Her
2053 Fillmore 923-9628

Hlaska
2033 Fillmore 440-1999

James Perse
2028 Fillmore 885 0300

Jigsaw
2121 Fillmore 931-5520

Lilich
2029 Fillmore 913-7600

Linu
2237 Fillmore 567-9500

Marc by Marc Jacobs
2142 Fillmore 447-8940

Margaret O'Leary
2400 Fillmore 771-9982

Metro 200
2116 Fillmore 776-5652

Mio
2035 Fillmore 931-5620

Mudpie
2185 Fillmore 771-9262

Mrs. Dewson's Hats
2052 Fillmore 346-1600

Muse Ten
1820 Fillmore 922-6873

Paolo Shoes
2000 Fillmore 885-5701

Peruvian Connection
2326 Fillmore 513-1559

Ralph Lauren
2040 Fillmore 440-6536

ruti
2119 Fillmore 441-4412

sunhee moon
1833 Fillmore 928-1800

Toujours
2484 Sacramento 346-3988

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Blooming Floral Design
2120 Sutter 749-1533

Cottage Industry
2328 Fillmore 885-0326

Filmore Florist
1890 Fillmore 929-5200

In Water
2132 Fillmore 359-1232

L'Occitane
2207 Fillmore 563-6600

Nest
2200 Fillmore 292-6199

Paper Source
1925 Fillmore 409-7710

Papyrus
2109 Fillmore 474-1171

HOME & GARDEN

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1928 Fillmore 625-2800

Design Within Reach
1913 Fillmore 567-1236

Duxiana
1803 Fillmore 673-7134

Jonathan Adler
2133 Fillmore 563-9500

Studio D
2184 Sutter 346-9694

Timeless Treasures
2176 Sutter 775-8366

Zinc Details
1905 Fillmore 776-2100

JEWELRY

Alexis Bittar
1942 Fillmore 567-5113

Eric Trabert Goldsmith
2450 Fillmore 567-8887

Gallery of Jewels
2115 Fillmore 771-5099

Hi Ho Silver
1904 Fillmore 771-4446

NEWS & BOOKS

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2195 Fillmore 567-8027

Juley News
2453 Fillmore 441-3051

Marcus Books
1712 Fillmore 346-4222

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1901 Fillmore 775-8885

Goodwill Industries
1699 Fillmore 441-2159

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2436 Fillmore 563-3123

Seconds to Go
2252 Fillmore 563-7806

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2310 Fillmore 650-615-4700

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2404 California 567-5888

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2130 Fillmore 922-9402

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