

NEWS

*Mrs. Dewson
in Hollywood*

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FIRST PERSON

*Fillmore's still
got soul, oh yeah*

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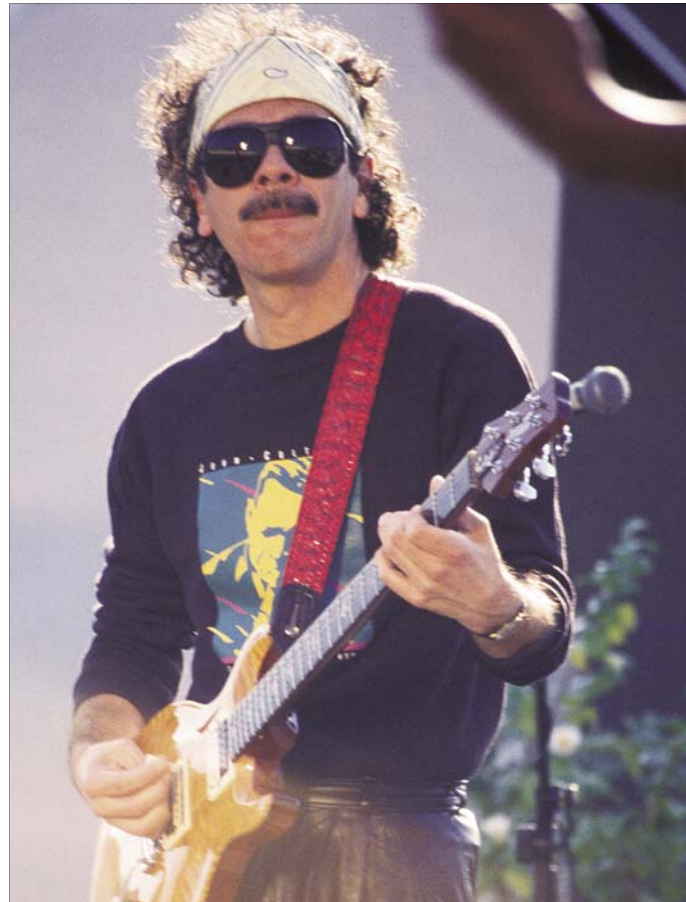
FILM

*Black film fest
is turning 10*

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New **FILLMORE**

SAN FRANCISCO ■ JUNE 2008



Photograph by
MARK BRADY

Santana's back on Fillmore

Fillmore has always had a claim on guitarist Carlos Santana, and not only because of his many appearances at the Fillmore Auditorium. For a number of years his studio was on Fillmore next door to the Clay Theater. Now he's back as part of the first special exhibition at the Fillmore Heritage Center. "A Tribute to Miles Davis and Carlos Santana" opened May 23 and continues through July 31. It includes fine art and memorabilia, including items from Santana's personal collection. Photographs, paintings and sculpture are included in the show, and many are for sale. The man himself stopped by for a preview during his appearance May 20 and 21 up the street at the Fillmore Auditorium. It's all at the Lush Life Gallery at 1320 Fillmore Street, next door to Yoshi's. For more information, call 255-7745 or visit www.jazzheritagecenter.org.

Tight Economy Makes Crime a Growing Issue

Fillmore merchants
report an increase in
shoplifting and scams

BY DONNA GILLESPIE

FILLMORE merchants are feeling the double-barreled effects of an ailing economy, suffering from both a downturn in sales and an upswing in crime. Merchants have scheduled a special meeting with police and security advisers on June 5 to share information and explore ways of combating shoplifting and other problems.

A number of local businesses have reported recent incidents.

From Vivande Porta Via at 2125 Fillmore comes the tale of a scam. Retail manager Kirk Adams says three people entered the restaurant last month and took a table near the window. After their server brought them bread — and before they ordered their meal — they called Adams over to the table to complain there was a clump of hair in the bread.

"It was not hair," Adams reports. "It wouldn't pass a DNA test. It looked like twine."

Despite their complaint, the three proceeded to order entrees, which they ate.

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ALYN JOHNSON

THE ROSES OF ROSE COURT

When Sister Ann Providence came back to the convent near St. Dominic's Church after her parents died, she brought a rose bush from their garden in Ukiah. Now it grows among many other roses in a hidden garden shared by the sisters and the residents of the Rose Court apartments.

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St. Dominic's Catholic Church



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FORUM

Drew School: Pro and Con

TO THE EDITORS:

Your article on the Drew School ["Victorian Gives Way for School's Expansion," March] provided a valuable introduction to our efforts to create long-needed space for performing arts, assemblies and faculty.

Drew has been a fixture at the corner of Broderick and California Streets for more than a century. It is important that residents know that Drew is committed to designs that will fit delicately, artfully and beautifully within the neighborhood.

With this in mind, the new three-story venue adjacent to our school will increase neighborhood "greening," with its architecture, outdoor plantings and trees. A "living roof" and an external "living wall" will be unique green features, designed by Rana Creek and by the inventor of the vertical garden, Patrick Blanc. The project also will be among the first high school buildings in the Bay Area to attain LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold Certification, which rates the sustainable features of buildings.

In the coming months, we look forward to talking more with residents about this small but very important project.

SAM CUDEBACK
 HEAD OF SCHOOL, DREW SCHOOL

TO SUPERVISOR ROSS MIRKARIMI:

We are strongly against the expansion of Drew School at California and Broderick. The school's expansion requires the demolition of a perfectly viable Victorian building of three housing units. They have silenced the existing tenants by buying them out. The tenants are not allowed to disclose their agreements with Drew School or discuss their situation with neighborhood groups.

What are you going to do about this issue? Are you so heartened by the greenness of the school's plan that you can't see what their expansion is doing to our neighborhood? The city loses out on the property taxes when Drew School turns 1831-35 Broderick Street into a school. The city will lose three decent large housing units in an historic Victorian building when Drew School demolishes 1831-35 Broderick Street. The character of our residential neighborhood will be further compromised with the expansion of Drew School.

About 10 years ago, when Drew School embarked on its expansion plans, it was an institution that did not believe in working with the neighbors. At that time, the Lower Pacific Heights Neighborhood Association had to demand that Drew School come to our meeting to disclose their construction plans. In fact, their attorney was hostile to us at this meeting, as if we were just stupid neighbors.



A three-flat Victorian (left) is to be demolished to allow Drew School to expand.

I remember at these meetings their headmaster Sam Cuddeback stating that they had factored in an increase of their student body over the years and that the new facility would be adequate. He also stated that the school was not going to expand further into the neighborhood and that it would not take over housing.

We admire your concern for issues along Divisadero and the lower portions of District 5 south of Geary. But as a resident of District 5 north of Geary, we need your help too. We have the crime, the homelessness, the graffiti, housing and traffic problems here too. We are District 5 residents who voted for you to be our supervisor.

This expansion of Drew School needs to stop and we hope you give this issue more than lip service and tacit approval.

CALVIN LAU, CHARLES BUSH,
 JAN BOLAFFI, HOWARD ASH

TO THE EDITORS:

I am sorry that Ralph Lauren has been allowed to come onto Fillmore Street. ["Agreement Paves the Way for Ralph Lauren," May.] It is one more way of making us like every other block in San Francisco and the world. The rents go up. Local small businesses can't afford to stay here. It's a downward spiral. And they have a store on Union Street! We should not have let this happen no matter what they promised to pay into the community, which is how I assume they got a unanimous vote in. It's awful.

Secondly, I am sad to see the Langley's are moving. ["News Editor Don Langley Retiring," May.] Don and Judy Langley have been essential to so much necessary activism in this neighborhood. I do not have time to do the valuable work they did, but I sure appreciated it. They will be sorely missed.

LUCY GRAY

THE NEW FILLMORE

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Archive of recent issues: www.NewFillmore.com
 Your comments and letters about the neighborhood are welcome there, too.

Graffiti Artists Mar the Street With Their Tags

City offers rewards, but property owners are liable

A FRESH RASH of graffiti has appeared in recent weeks, defacing everything from stoplights to signs and building facades — even the many rows of newspaper racks that line Fillmore Street.

The wave of vandalism has prompted city officials to renew efforts to crack down on "taggers," who commonly make their mark with spray paint. New initiatives offer rewards for those who help convict the culprits and free paint to clean it up.

The graffiti rewards fund will pay \$250 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the vandals. You must file a police report to qualify for a reward.

To report graffiti vandalism in progress, call 911. To report graffiti vandalism that has already occurred, call the police non-emergency number, 553-0123. Last year, police made 238 arrests for graffiti — nearly 100 more than during the previous year.

City officials estimate it costs more than \$22 million each year to remove graffiti from public property. The city's Department of Public Works offers training and free paint and supplies to volunteers who want to help paint over or remove graffiti from public property in their neighborhood.

On private property, the owners are responsible for removing graffiti and can be fined if they don't.

To be eligible for a reward, the person who reports the vandalism must also fill out an application — within 90 days of the conviction — detailing the graffiti's look and location and the date it was observed. Applications are available by calling 311, or online at www.sfgov.org/dpw. They are also available at police stations, the Department of Public Works in Room 348 of City Hall or the district attorney's office at 850 Bryant Street.

While police encourage the public to report neighborhood graffiti sightings, and they can do so anonymously, only those who agree to disclose their names, cooperate with law enforcement and testify as a witness are eligible to collect the rewards.

For more information on the graffiti programs, call Merle Goldstone at the Department of Public Works at 641-2625.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



Actress Halle Berry (left) was among those honoring Fillmore's Ruth Dewson.

'A Force of Nature'

Flozelle Woodmore free; Ruth Dewson honored

FILLMORE MILLINER Ruth Garland Dewson took a stroll down the red carpet in the heart of Hollywood on April 27 when she was honored for her ceaseless — and ultimately successful — efforts to free a woman imprisoned for more than two decades.

On an evening of Tinseltown glitter in the grand ballroom of the Beverly Hills Hotel, Dewson was honored by the Jenesse Center, an organization that helps women and children hurt by domestic violence.

Earlier this year, Dewson rallied public and political opinion to persuade Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to grant parole to Flozelle Woodmore, a 39-year-old woman she'd never met who had spent more than half of her life in jail for killing an abusive boyfriend when she was 18. Woodmore

had repeatedly been denied parole until Dewson took up her cause.

In presenting the award, state Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas — an ally in the fight to free Flozelle Woodmore — called Dewson "a change maker, a one-woman show and a force of nature."

"People said to me, 'You didn't know Flozelle, how could you help her?'" Dewson told a sold-out audience that included actress Halle Berry, talk show host Jay Leno and singer Jennifer Hudson, as well as a contingent from the Fillmore. "I said to them: I know her and you know her. You see her in the eyes of your children and your grandchildren."

Dewson, the proprietor of Mrs. Dewson's Hats on Fillmore, also heads the Western Addition Foundation for Girls.

Park Safety Prompts Talks With Police

Lafayette Park neighbors share concerns, seek help

By DONNA GILLESPIE

NEIGHBORS already alarmed by the upswing in robberies and car break-ins near Lafayette Park went on high alert after a jogger was accosted there recently. About 20 concerned residents met in Northern Station's community room on May 19 to discuss park safety with Captain Al Casciato and others.

Most of the residents had recently experienced — or thwarted — a burglary.

"I'm now authorized to send officers into the park between 4 and 6 a.m.," Casciato said. "And we have posted signs in the park so we can begin citing people." The signs state that the park is closed between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. "Now, anyone sleeping or loitering in the park will be cited and ejected," he said.

Casciato encouraged residents living near the park to become organized and aware, and suggested that they coordinate their efforts with SAFE — Safety Awareness for Everyone — a nonprofit organization that helps people set up neighborhood crime watch programs.

"Car break-ins have become epidemic in this city," Casciato said, "as have strong-arm robberies between the hours of 1 and 4 a.m. As the economy becomes worse, crime gets worse."

Cindy Brandon, executive director of SAFE, explained that one of her group's tactics is to teach neighbors how to set up a communications tree among neighbors, usually those living on both sides of the street on a single block.

"We help you organize neighbors on your block, usually with four to five meetings," Brandon said. "And we will provide you with training and invite the police to attend your groups."

Casciato discussed situations that should alert neighbors to possible safety issues. He particularly warned residents to be on the lookout for unfamiliar vans, which are often used to store burglary tools, and can be a sign that a car burglar has set up operations in the area.

"If you spot something unusual and suspicious, always make a report," he told the

TO PAGE 6 ■

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CRIME WATCH

Aggravated Assault on a Police Officer Franklin and Clay Streets

April 8, 7:30 a.m.

Officers on patrol observed a subject riding his bicycle on the sidewalk. They attempted to stop him and advise him that this was a violation of the traffic code. The man ignored them, pulling away from the officers as they attempted to detain him. During the hand-to-hand combat that ensued, one officer suffered a contusion around her left eye and lacerations to the bridge of her nose. The other officer sustained scrapes to his knuckles, shin and knee. More units arrived at the scene and took the suspect into custody. He was booked at Northern Station.

Robbery With a Weapon Fillmore and Washington Streets

April 27, 3 a.m.

Officers received a call concerning a robbery. The caller told officers that she was standing on the corner waiting for a cab when she was approached by two suspects. One pulled out a gun and told her to give him her purse. Fearing for her life, she complied. The suspects then ran off. They were described as Hispanic males, 25 to 30 years old, approximately 5'7" tall, weighing 130 to 160 lbs. One was wearing a maroon hooded sweatshirt and black track pants. The other was wearing a navy blue hooded sweatshirt and dark track pants.

Assault With Caustic Chemicals Gough and Turk Streets

April 27, 11:30 a.m.

Officers were dispatched to a gas station after a caller reported that a subject had doused him with lighter fluid and threatened to set him on fire. The caller identified the suspect, who was walking away from

the scene. The caller explained that the two had argued, but when he attempted to end the argument and walk away, the suspect became aggressive and followed him. The suspect then sprayed him with a bottle of lighter fluid and said, "You ruined my day by waking me up. Now I'm gonna ruin yours by lighting you on fire. I'm gonna burn you and kill you." The man managed to get away and called the police. The suspect was placed under arrest and booked at Northern Station.

Homicide With a Gun Geary and Laguna Streets

May 3, 10 p.m.

Officers received a report of a shooting. When they arrived, they found a man lying on the ground, bleeding from his mouth and face. It appeared that he had been shot in the left side of his back. Medics arrived on the scene to treat the man, but they were unable to revive him. Homicide inspectors are still investigating the case.

Burglary, Possession of Counterfeit Notes Webster and Laguna Streets

May 4, 9:15 a.m.

Officers were called to the Safeway store regarding a theft. The store's security guards had the suspect in custody when they arrived. The guards told the officers that the suspect took several bottles of alcohol from the shelves and put them into a duffel bag. Then he walked out of the store, making no attempt to pay. While searching the suspect, officers observed that he had one hand balled into a fist. He was clutching a dozen \$20 bills. Officers examined the bills and observed that all had the same serial number. The suspect was arrested for theft, and also faces federal charges for possession of counterfeit bills.

■ MILESTONE

Mio's turning 22, so take 22% off

As Mio, the classy contemporary women's clothing store at 2035 Fillmore, turns 22, owner Miyo Ota divulges the key to the shop's longevity: "It's personalized, friendly service," she says. "And I always felt we have to be honest with the customers and not push."

She also gives credit to the assisted staff at Mio. "Here's a good skirt. I thought of you when it came in," says one staffer to a customer browsing the racks during the 22 percent off anniversary sale, which continues through June 7.

"And we have this cute little top that goes great with that," says another to a customer trying on a skirt with an asymmetrical hem.

It's not only the customers who



get soothed. "You might be interested in this. It's got good articles in it," Ota says to a gentleman waiting in a chair, his patience wearing thin while his wife decides which sweater to buy.

"Basically, I'm buying for the customer who's my age. We've all grown up together," Ota says.

Ota says that last year she pondered the possibility of offering only a single label, which would cut down on buying trips. "But then we would lose all the people who want the variety this store offers," she says. "I'll be here as long as my knees hold out."

RETAIL REPORT

After a Delay, New Market Will Open

Despite corporate ties, LTH not a chain store, Planning Dept. decides

WITH construction of its sleek new store at 1919 Fillmore completed and ready to open, LTH Market had its building permit suspended and a stop-work order issued last month while it was investigated for a possible violation of San Francisco's formula retail ordinance limiting chain stores in the city.

"It would appear that LTH Market is a store that will be operated as a part of the Link Theory Holdings group of retail stores, which include dozens of retail stores across the country," wrote senior planner David Lindsay. "The Planning Department requests that LTH Market not commence its retail operation at 1919 Fillmore."

When applying for building permits earlier this year, LTH Market said it was a one-of-a-kind store, despite the fact that its corporate parent also owns the Helmut Lang and one Helmut Lang outlet store, plus 19 Theory stores and 14 Theory outlet stores selling clothes from the label Theory only," Crane wrote. "LTH Market will represent the work of designers that are not sold in these stores, in addition to some clothing from these brands." She said less than 50 percent of the merchandise in the store would be from any single brand.

Crane noted the differences in LTH Market and Polo Ralph Lauren — which "owns about 200 stores nationally and only sells their own product" — and whose Fillmore Street store was approved in April.



The minimalist LTH Market (right) will stand out among its Victorian neighbors.

allowed the store to proceed with its plans to open.

"I determine that LTH Market is not a formula retail use," Badiner wrote. "Although LTH Market has an affiliation with Link Theory Holdings, you indicate that the Fillmore Street store is... a stand-alone business with its own legal entity and that it is a unique store with a concept and mix of brands that does not exist in any other store."

In responding to the Planning Department's queries, Crane acknowledged there were gray areas in the chain store ordinance, but insisted the Fillmore store was created "in good faith" with a different name, corporate structure and mix of products.



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assembled neighbors. "It gives us a picture of what's going on."

Casciato also encouraged residents to be proactive in other ways. "There are buildings where burglars don't come. A 'target hardened' building would be avoided," he said, explaining that such buildings commonly have safeguards, such as security cameras and crime lights — as well as residents who are alert and organized.

He described one case in which a man in a jogging outfit approached a resident emerging from a large apartment building. The jogger claimed that he was new to the building, and had lost his key. The resident let him in the building. The man then broke into two cars in the building's garage.

In most robberies, Casciato said, there is some connection between victim and suspect. A burglar might be a relative or friend of a friend of someone who has worked in the building. "Burglaries are often committed by someone who knows you," Casciato said. "You don't know them."

Lafayette Park Safety Explored

HOW TO STAY SAFE IN THE PARK

- Watch your timing. Don't go into the park when it's closed. Avoid walking, running or cycling in the park at night.
- Stay on the paths. Avoid secluded areas.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Look and listen for any suspicious activity. Keep your distance from strangers.
- Always carry identification. If you must carry money or a credit card, take only what is necessary and keep it out of sight.
- Bring a friend. There's safety in numbers.

Casciato also noted that some individuals fit a "victim profile" — for example, a person who is experiencing trauma such as emotional stress from the break-up of a relationship which can make him or her seem more vulnerable and more likely to become a victim.

And sometimes it's simply a matter of body language. "Someone with their head down, and not paying attention, someone who is distracted and upset," he said, is the most attractive target for potential thieves, who will usually avoid someone who is more alert — and who might be able to identify them later.

"If you're paying attention," Casciato said, "they won't choose you."

One neighbor voiced his concern about the increase in drug activity in Lafayette Park, noting that needles have been found in the children's sandboxes.

"I've made a request to the district attorney's office to create drug-free zones in the park," SAFE's Brandon said, "so penalties can be increased."

Shoplifting, Scams Are on the Rise on Fillmore

FROM PAGE ONE

When it was time to pay, the man who spoke for the three — Adams reports he had a strong French accent — told the waiter, "I've taken pictures of this. If we don't get our entrees for free, I'm putting this on Yelp."

Yelp is a popular website on which people rate and review restaurants and other services and businesses.

After consulting with the owners, "I told the server to comp them," Adams reports. He felt he had little choice. Only one member of the party ever spoke — the man with the French accent, who was, Adams recalls, about 6'1", with short, light brown hair and a light stubble. He was "nicely dressed, in blue jeans and white button-down shirt."

Adams described the accomplices as "an Asian woman wearing colorful clothes, and a man who was flamboyantly gay. I'm gay myself — my gaydar went off."

Another report comes from Miyo Ota, owner of Mio at 2035 Fillmore. Her surveillance camera recorded an image of two elderly Russian women purloining a painted one-of-a-kind scarf. Ota says she has encountered the pair before.

"They don't take a lot," she says. "They take small things for themselves. They ap-



Suspected shoplifters were caught in the act by a security camera at Mio, the women's boutique at 2035 Fillmore. Owner Miyo Ota is offering a reward for help in identifying and prosecuting these two women.

pear grandmotherly, so you don't suspect them." She says they have also been caught taking bed sheets at Shabby Chic.

Ota says she is determined to fight back. She has invested in a security system that records evidence that can be used in court. And she has distributed pictures of suspected shoplifters to other merchants on the street. "We all have to arm ourselves and find ways to prevent this," she says.

"It's an issue," says Simone Derayeh, owner of Limu at 2237 Fillmore, who has taken steps to prevent shoplifting during the two years she has been on the street.

"I've installed cameras and alarm sys-

tems — they're proven to help," she says. "My cameras cover the entire store. I've trained my staff to be alert. And I've installed an announcer so they know when someone enters the store."

Derayeh adds: "People get desensitized to petty crime. The number one problem is lack of reporting. Always make a report, even if it's graffiti. Every time I had an incident, I made a police report."

Massimo Lavino, owner of Via Veneto at 2244 Fillmore, recently had an unexpected visitor in the middle of the night.

He lives above his restaurant. When Via Veneto's alarm sounded at 2 in the morn-

ing, he rushed to the back of his apartment and opened a window that looks out onto the patio. He saw a stranger garbed in a hooded sweatshirt.

"He was standing right outside — with my cash register in his hands," Lavino reports. The ever-voluble Lavino shouted at the man and scared him off.

"He was surprised when I saw him. He probably didn't expect me to be there," says Lavino, who then called the police.

"They were fast," he says. "They came in five minutes." The burglar got away with the cash register, but Lavino says that fortunately only a small amount of change was inside.

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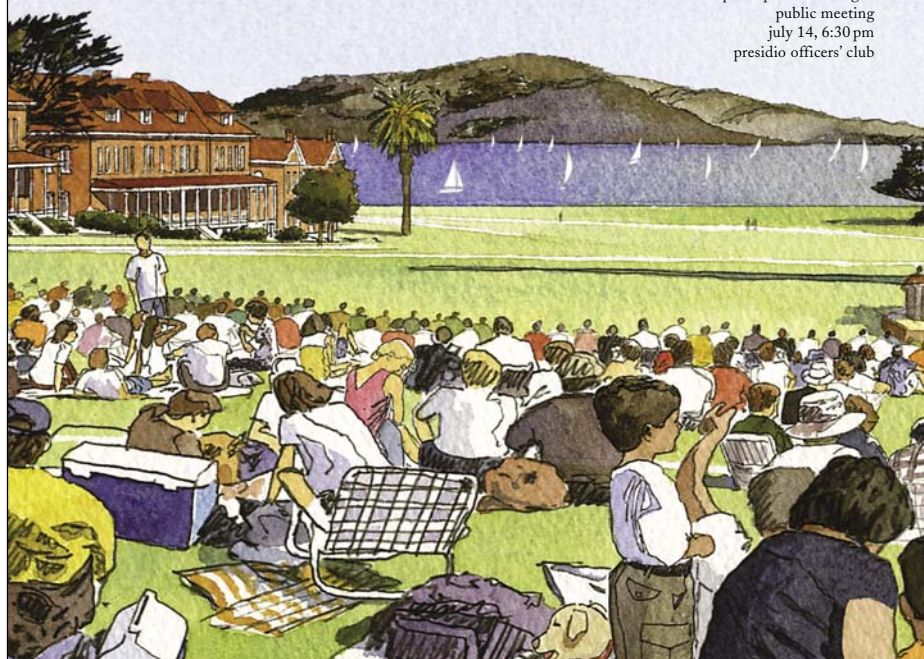
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Loving the 'Mo

Go searching for soul in the Fillmore and you'll still find it

By KATHY EVANS

WHEN I moved to San Francisco two years ago, I was drawn to the lower Fillmore. I knew I could always walk up the street for the goods — the good chocolate gelato, the good baguettes, the Italian shoes with sexy ankle straps.

But I wanted the brassy and the clashy and the bold. I wasn't after the goods. I wanted the soul.

And the old Fillmore has it, even though for years there has been, sadly, an exodus of businesses owned by African Americans. I wanted a bit of the past, now legendary, the one that exists beneath the streets where the names of the great ones are imprinted and paraded in the grit and the brick.

Etta James lived in the Fillmore. Johnny Mathis grew up in the Fillmore. Malcom X spoke at the Fillmore Auditorium. Cal Tjader, Miles Davis, the great John Coltrane, Earl Watkins, Dexter Gordon, Carl Perkins, Charles Mingus, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughn, Chet Baker, the classy Duke Ellington — all played, visited or lived at one time in the Fillmore, along with many others who made music crawl around on all fours behind the doors of the small night clubs and bars — the most famous, of course, Bop City, with Jimbo as host.



Capturing the Fillmore on film

Centrifugation of the Fillmore is the topic of a documentary-in-progress that will be screened during the San Francisco Black Film Festival this month. "Fillmo'," directed by Nijla Mumin, will be shown on Sunday, June 8, at 2 p.m. at Yoshi's.

The music that grew up in the Fillmore began to fade in the late 50s. Then came redevelopment. That, too, remains part of the history of this area. But the soul is still here. You just have to find it, and it often starts where the

gentrification stops. What I like about the lower Fillmore is its urban, shall we say, ecology — its unique food and panoply of people from all over the planet.

I live at the Fillmore Center, part of

that controversial redevelopment plan, and you'd think you were at the United Nations. My neighbors down the hall are from Russia. They bring me, without the benefit of a common language, matzah/mitzvah, and huge chocolate bars from Trader Joes. Tito, across the hall, is from Mexico, and he knows the best Vietnamese places in the Tenderloin. Matt, displaying piercings, studs, silver rings and tattoos, is from Orange County, but that's foreign enough — he's the whiz kid from the Art Institute who troubleshoots my computer. A man from France lives down the hall; the couple around the corner is from Korea. Upstairs is the turbaned man from India; he always holds the door for me.

EARLY ON Saturday mornings on O'Farrell Street, trucks from Sonoma, Modesto and Watsonville pull in and unload their big beautiful vegetables on our street. Wooden crates tumble out full of the season's yield: peaches, apricots, plums and apples; sweet potatoes, lettuces, leafy red beets and peppers in gold and red.

The musicians roll out of bed on Saturdays, too, as the fog slips over the hill and onto the streets. With a little coffee in their bodies, the warmup begins — fingers on the bass strings

thrummin' and hands runnin' up and down the keyboard. One player, still hung over from last night's gig, stands at the center and blows the sax until all of the instruments are talking sweetly to each other. The music enters the air and we look down from our apartment windows onto the array of colors and humanity.

It's simple and lovely, and it humanizes our street corner on a slow Saturday morning. I think it's the best farmers market in the city because of the jazz and the black old-timers tapping out the rhythm with their feet and their canes. How great that it will now operate year-round.

We tip the band with strawberries. They play *Blackbird Singing in the Dead of Night*. They jam, we eat. Then a little *Sunshine and Rain*.

THERE'S MUSIC at the Boom Boom Room where Vinyl, my favorite local band, plays. At the Fillmore Auditorium, lines snake around the block for the headline performers who pull up and park their deluxe buses.

One of my favorite places in the lower Fillmore right now is the Sheba Lounge, managed and owned by sisters Netsanet and Israel Alemayehu. Both were born in Harar, Ethiopia, and educated in the South Bay, with degrees in hospitality and cuisine. They moved over from Berkeley, where Netsanet ran the Sheba on Telegraph Avenue. These two women could tempt Solomon with food, drink, music and their beauty.

Their neighborly enterprise at 1419 Fillmore is graced with their presence and their warmth, and also with the soft wash of North African colors on the walls and small candles on the tables. Sit on a cushioned sofa in front

of the fireplace on a chilly night and have roasted lamb dipped into a spicy Sambussa, or scoop the Ethiopian chips into lentils or a thick hummus. Sip your cocktail slowly. Stay a while. On weekends someone plays live music on the shiny black piano, sometimes the famous Ricardo Scales, a first class act from the glory days of the Redwood Room. The music sifts out onto the sidewalk up the street into the dark. Locals wander down from Russells with music and martinis on their lips.

ON SUNDAY, if you're looking for a church, there are plenty in the Fillmore with choirs that rock and sing heavenward. But unique to them all is the St. John Coltrane Church, the African Orthodox church located next to the community center at Fillmore and Eddy. At 11:45 you're with the good bishop, Franco King, and an eclectic crowd of 30 or so.

Here the music is the sermon, and even the preacher plays freestyle. No lips touch the communion cup, only the reed. A beautiful woman plays the bass, the drummer grins, the electric piano leaves the floor. The choir may consist of only one family, but oh can they sing. Panels in metallic red and gold fall the length of the walls with satin images of a black Jesus in a white robe holding his hand out like a Buddha.

And of course there is an image of John Coltrane to be praised, the musical genius who, as the story goes, converted to God after coming down from on high. One recent Sunday morning there were at least six saxophone players in the room calling John Coltrane back from the dead.

Is there still soul in the Fillmore? I'll say.



No go for either jazz group

Neither of the groups vying for the right to develop the long-empty Muni substation at Fillmore and Turk (above) will get the prize. "Neither group had the resources to do it properly," said the Redevelopment Agency's Gaynell McCurn. One team, led by longtime Fillmore resident Leola King, included the St. John Coltrane African Orthodox Church. The other, a music program for at-risk youth called Our Conservatory, was led by Neil Trana. "Neither side was happy with this," McCurn said. "They were upset." Redevelopment Agency leaders are now pondering their options, and may recommend the agency renovate the space and then seek a tenant.

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Juicy News: A Cookbook Is Reborn

Conversation at the local newsstand leads to an online adventure

WHEN NEIGHBORHOOD writer Arthur Bloomfield's memoir cookbook, *The Gastronomical Tourist*, came out a few years ago, Alice Waters, the doyenne of California cuisine, proclaimed it "utterly engaging." Mark Mitchell wrote in the *New Fillmore*: "Very few cookbooks are as much fun just to sit down and read as this one."

Despite positive reviews and a reasonable number of copies sold at Brower Books on Fillmore, the book never got the wide exposure Bloomfield had envisioned. His publisher went bust just as the book was about to be distributed to bookstores.

Now, five years later, enter the neighborhood connection and the age of the Internet.

On his occasional visits to Juicy News, the newsstand at Fillmore and Jackson, Bloomfield struck up a friendship with Kat Parrick, a sometimes clerk at the shop and a web designer who lives nearby.

Together they have created thegastronomicaltourist.com, an electronic edition of the original book, including its 250 recipes and memories of eating adventures at home and abroad — plus additional material and dozens of photographs and illustrations. There's also a blog that allows Bloomfield to continue to write about his love of food and travel.

Bloomfield is clearly delighted his work is finally available to anyone with a computer, and he's excited, if a little bemused, about the added bells and whistles made possible by the Internet.

"I doodled first drafts of this book onto paper napkins at that inimitable think tank, the Royal Ground coffee house, at the corner of Fillmore and California," Bloomfield chuckles. That was after his typewriter broke and before he got a computer.

"I used to feel I was living in the 19th century," he says. "Now suddenly I've taken a jump to the 21st. I was late to get online, but now I love Googling."

Bloomfield is also the author, with his late wife Anne, of *Gables & Fables: A Portrait of San Francisco's Pacific Heights*.



■ EXCERPT

Chicken Saute a la Jackson Fillmore

By ARTHUR BLOOMFIELD

CHICKEN SAUTE with Balsamic Vinegar, Garlic and Tomato is a variant on a dish served at Jackson Fillmore, a noisy San Francisco trattoria suitable for use in *Moonstruck*. How lucky for us to live two blocks from this foodie's moonbeam.

Eating at the counter here, the epiphany level is high. Six platters of antipasti — tousled smoky red peppers, soft charred muffins of eggplant and so on — sit at attention on a display shelf, ready for ordering. Our enthusiastic waiter, brisk in apron-over-jeans, brings crisp fat toasts topped with tomato, onion and garlic. A neighbor meanwhile attends to a mélange of prawns, mushrooms and an enticing cream-tossed sauce we must command on our next visit.

And the padrone, some Godfather's nephew it seems, strides toward the kitchen with a worried look, as if the roof of his culinary excellence might fall in. But worry not, neither the gastronomy nor the dancing vibrations of this trattoria will fail: The place runs like a skilled fantasist's clockwork, style and abundance and imagination all about.

Now I'm on the way to my favorite

coffee house/sidewalk cafe in my neighborhood — not one of the big chain coffee houses! — because I have my usual afternoon date to scribble on paper napkins.

Yes, the cocoa is lovely; those Moroccan fellows make the best this side of Cazenave in Bayonne, and you can order it in English, French or Arabic. But it's this inscribing on napkins that matters: A book has to be conceived somehow. Well, the regulars are at the next tables, maintaining their privacy and observing mine. It's study hall, of course, with medical and dental schools not far off; I suppose I might learn some anatomy if I listened carefully. But the confessions of lovers are more interesting.

Then there's the distinguished looking woman who works so assiduously on Greek. When she has fellow students of Plato at her side, I call her group the Spanakopita Brigade.

Meanwhile, on Fillmore Street, everything is as yesterday or tomorrow: One's likely to run into Fred the Mahler-loving bookseller with the marvelous muscles, macho Dino the Greek will be eyeing the girls outside his pizzeria, the pleasant beggar will be saying "Greetings!" in a bright C major. I will cringe at the dental school security officer armed like

Organic produce — and flowers, too

"We're year-round now!" enthuses flower vendor Abel Castro (left) to his parcel of loyal returning customers as the Fillmore Farmers Market gears up for the high season of summer. "I'm so excited. We really need year-round markets," Castro says. "We have flowers throughout the year — and we hope people will come out and support us."

Castro has been affiliated with Fernandes Flower Growers since the family-owned business began 12 years ago — affiliated in the truest sense, since his in-laws own the business. The Fernandes family operates 10 acres of greenhouses and 10 acres of land in Watsonville, and supplies flowers for farmers markets throughout northern California — 24 in summer, 8 year-round.

"That'll be \$7," says Castro, wrapping an armload of irises in newspaper.

"For all those \$7? That doesn't seem like enough," says his customer. "I'll be back next week."

The Fillmore Farmers Market, at Fillmore and O'Farrell Streets — featuring live jazz and organic produce — is open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

a task force for an invasion by Buck Rogers and his Naughty Martians bent on stealing a drill or two, and I will pity the distracted lady at another coffee house who spends her day bumming cigarettes.

But I'll rejoice in meeting sassy Mrs. Dewson, who sells fedoras to the mayor; I'll discuss the state of the world with Phil, the mellow maestro of pots-pans-nuts-bolts as he waters the plants outside the hardware store; I'll happily line up at the French bakery that magnetizes to its door every French-speaking person in the next nine counties, and seems to enlarge its repertoire of tarts-croissants-briches-baguettes-batards every day and even makes a gâteau Basque.

And I'll kibitz with the jolly butcher from Puglia who sells me sausages and lamb and seems to have sprung from a 1935 Hollywood musical and doesn't mind my flamboyant fractured Italian; and I might run into an elegant friend with a zesty poodle who announces in quietly imperial tones, "I'm taking you to lunch at Galette."

I will, in short, enjoy my Upper Fillmore.

— from *thegastronomicaltourist.com*, which contains the complete recipe for *Chicken Saute with Balsamic Vinegar, Garlic and Tomato*.



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This Month at Yoshi's, the Musical Legacy of Africa



A Tony as Glinda the Good Witch and a Grammy for *Dear Ella* — Dee Dee Bridgewater can sing.

By ANTHONY TORRES

THIS MONTH, Yoshi's will feature music that draws heavily on legacies of the African musical diaspora in contemporary jazz.

While there are bigger names coming to Yoshi's new home at 1330 Fillmore in June, the musical thread that runs through three shows — Orchestra Baobab, Dee Dee Bridgewater and the Chicago Afrobeat Project — demonstrates Yoshi's commitment to presenting a range of interconnected musical genres.

First up on June 5 and 6 is **ORCHESTRA BAOBAB**, a group that may be unfamiliar to many. Formed in 1970, the band hails from Dakar, Senegal, one of the world's great port cities and a locality historically exposed to an array of cultural influences — African, European, Latin American and Islamic. Considered one of the most innovative musical ensembles around, their music is a conflation of Senegalese, Afro-Cuban and Portuguese influences, mixing rumba, highlife, calypso, reggae and rhythm and blues.

Orchestra Baobab's blending of multiple musical languages demonstrates the range of cultural spaces they traverse and speaks to a world so intertwined that the local and global are sometimes inseparable.

DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER is coming into Yoshi's June 17 and 18 to perform selections from *Red Earth: A Malian Journey*, her Grammy-nominated CD that resulted from her search for her African ancestry, which she traced to Mali, in west Africa. The show will feature Bridgewater's vocal and musical traditions, anchored in American jazz and blues, and presented in collaboration with Malian musicians playing traditional African instruments.

Over the years, Bridgewater sang with the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra as lead vocalist, performed with jazz greats Sonny Rollins, Dizzy

Gillespie, Dexter Gordon and Max Roach, and performed on Broadway in the musical *The Wiz*, for which she won a Tony Award as best actress for her role as Glinda the Good Witch. Her tribute album, *Dear Ella*, won the 1998 Grammy Award in 1998 as Best Jazz Vocal Album. This lady can sing.

Her show at Yoshi's will feature Africa-inspired themes performed by pianist Edsel Gomez, bassist Ira Coleman and percussionist Minino Garay — plus Malian musicians Mamadou Cherif Soumano on kora, Yacouba Sissoko on tamani and ngoni and vocalists Mamani Keita and Kabine Kouyate.

One more thing: If you haven't heard a kora — a 21-stringed harp made from a gourd — you really should.

■
Appearing June 30 is the **CHICAGO AFROBEAT PROJECT**, a group nominated twice as Best African Artists at the Chicago Music Awards, which is huge recognition in the music world.

The group's stated mission is "breathing the intensity of Chicago's rich music scene into the infectious sounds of Afrobeat." Afrobeat is largely associated with its godfather, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, the Nigerian musician and social activist who was inspired by the grooves of James Brown to blend African, jazz, funk and rhythm and blues as a means of social protest.

The leading characteristic of Afrobeat is its incredibly hard-driving African grooves, with hypnotic syncopated rhythms that create trance-like musical waves. It has a tendency to routinely pack the dance floors, and Yoshi's dance floor will be open for the band's San Francisco appearance — which could very easily turn into an out of control dance party.

These shows bear witness that musical hybrids can be a means of expanding artistic practices for greater intercultural communication and a vehicle for bringing people together.

HIGHLIGHTS

A global view of the black experience

The 10th annual San Francisco Black Film Festival opens Wednesday, June 4, with the screening of "Shoot the Messenger," an irreverent film from Nigerian-born British filmmaker Ngozi Onwurah about a teacher who loses his job — and his way — when a group of students lies about his use of authority in the classroom.



The United States premiere of the African Academy Award winner "Do You Believe in Magic?" tells the tale of two young boys from South Africa in a Las Vegas magic competition. "Don't Hate Strippers: Fight The Government" (above) is a documentary about male exotic dancers fighting a strip club law. Other highlights include "Nobody Knows the Untold Story of the Black Mormons" (below) and "Fillmore," a look at redevelopment and gentrification in the Western Addition. The full schedule is posted at www.sfbff.org.



FILM

Black Film Fest Turning 10

By AVE MONTAGUE

SOON AFTER I launched my public relations firm 20 years ago, with a creaky computer, a bulging Rolodex and the grand sum of \$200, I plunged into doing publicity for Oakland's Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame. Later on I helped launch amvideos.com, an archive of African American film. As the website began to blossom, so did my interest in film, particularly the genres born of the black experience.

There was an abundance of ethnic Bay Area festivals at that time, but none that allowed emerging black filmmakers to present their work. This sad fact, combined with the demise of the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, sparked my desire to develop a local film festival that dispelled negative stereotypes and presented positive images of African Americans.

As project director for the 1998 Juneteenth Festival, which marks the day the slaves were freed, I decided to present a film series as part of the annual event. And so the San Francisco Black Film Festival was born. That first year, the festival was a one-day local event at the Kabuki Theater that played to an audience of a few hundred and barely caused a blip on the radar of the film industry.

This month, from June 4 to 15, the San Francisco Black Film Festival celebrates its 10th anniversary.



From June 4 to 15, founder-director Ave Montague will present the 10th San Francisco Black Film Festival.

It's now a 10-day cultural celebration drawing international attention and thousands of attendees. In just a decade, the festival has evolved into a respected cinematic forum that attracts a vibrant mix of veteran filmmakers, emerging artists, celebrities, critics and film fans. It draws a tremendous amount of community support from local merchants, particularly those in the Fillmore.

Presenting an array of work from Africa, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Europe and the United States, the festival has been a driving force to integrate the work of independent black directors into the mainstream, illuminating the range, depth and diversity of the African American experience.

Marking its milestone status, the theme of this year's festival is "10 Years, 10 Days, Almost 100 Films." Many of the screenings and special events will take place in the neighborhood. Opening night festivities on June 4 are at the Sundance Kabuki Cinemas, with a party afterward at Russells on Fillmore. Events are also scheduled, among other places, at Yoshi's, 1300 on Fillmore and the African American Art and Cultural Complex.

A complete schedule of screenings, panels, parties and other events is online at www.sfbff.org. Or call the festival hotline at 771-9271.

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GARDENS

The Roses of Rose Court

IN THE SPRINGTIME, a few weeks after the cherry trees blossom and the air turns fragrant with rosemary, the roses of Rose Court begin to bloom.

There are roses of many colors and kinds, some brought from the altar of nearby St. Dominic's Church. They've been given a chance to live on in the garden hidden behind the apartments and convents at Pine and Pierce. It is an oasis of flowers and trees and birds and bees nurtured by Sister Cathryn deBack, the manager of Rose Court.

"Somehow, magically, some of them make it in the out-of-doors," she says. "I personally wanted something lower maintenance. But someone said, 'Wouldn't it be nice to have roses?' It has been a great challenge to me."

In the center of the garden stands a chapel, open to the residents and the nuns as a contemplative space. Growing all around it are plants offered up by the sisters and the residents — and for a few weeks in the late spring, the sweet smell of roses.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ALVIN JOHNSON

NEIGHBORHOOD HOME SALES

Single Family Homes	BR	BA	PK	Sq Ft	Date	Asking \$	Sale \$
2247 Webster St	3	1.5	2		22-Apr	1,850,000	1,905,000
2511 Octavia St	3	2.5	1	2450	1-May	2,400,000	Not Disclosed
2944 Scott St	5	2	2	3650	23-Apr	2,995,000	3,200,000
1900 Green St	3	2.5	3		29-Apr	3,495,000	Not Disclosed
2411 Green St	3	2.5	2		28-Apr	3,000,000	3,500,000
2939 Divisadero St	3	3.5	2		16-Apr	3,850,000	Not Disclosed
3474 Clay St	4	3.5	1		25-Apr	4,000,000	4,000,000
2221 Baker St	5	4	2	4224	24-Apr	3,795,000	4,200,000
3647 Washington St	5	4.5	2		22-Apr	3,595,000	4,505,000
3855 Jackson St	5	5	2		6-May	5,995,000	5,900,000
2828 Divisadero St	5	5.5	2		13-May	7,500,000	Not Disclosed

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2727 Jackson St #A	1	1		809	8-May	549,000	530,000
2925 California St	1	1	1		30-Apr	519,000	531,000
2701 Van Ness Ave	1	1		894	25-Apr	569,000	560,000
2556 Gough St	1	1	1		16-Apr	699,000	688,000
2347 Union St #4	1	1	1		22-Apr	749,000	750,000
2971 California St #4	2	1	1	1048	2-May	775,000	775,000
1945 Washington St	2	2	1		14-May	819,000	800,000
1835 Franklin St #601	2	2	1	1550	21-Apr	815,000	800,000
1856 Franklin St #2	3	2	1		30-Apr	859,000	865,000
3130 Washington St	3	2	1	1695	6-May	915,000	915,000
1880 Jackson St #605	1	2	1		8-May	995,000	1,125,000
20509 Divisadero St	3	2.5	2	1691	9-May	1,195,000	1,215,000
3318 California St #2	3	3	1		30-Apr	1,280,000	1,222,000
1998 Broadway #605	2	2.5	1	1390	30-Apr	1,249,000	1,270,000
1880 Jackson St #601	2	2	1	1752	6-May	1,550,000	1,710,000
2785 Jackson St #1	3	2	1		16-Apr	1,850,000	1,800,000
1501 Greenwich St #503	3	2.5	2	1469	23-Apr	2,049,000	1,940,000
3008 Sacramento St	4	3	2		2-May	2,075,000	Not Disclosed
250 Laurel St #202	3	2	1		25-Apr	1,749,000	2,210,000
2955 Pacific Ave	3	2	1		23-Apr	2,995,000	Not Disclosed
1911-B Vallejo St	3	3.5	2		15-May	3,300,000	3,300,000
1901 Jackson St	5	4.5	6	5333	2-May	3,790,000	3,375,000



In a month, 11 homes close over \$3 million

We are coming off an exceptionally busy period, with 33 closings in the past 30 days. The high end has been particularly active, with 11 homes closing over \$3 million.

- 2828 Divisadero (below) was on the market just four days before going into contract, closing 10 days later at a confidential price assumed to be near the asking price of \$7.5 million.
- 3647 Washington received several offers after a brief marketing period and sold nearly \$1 million over the asking price.
- 2939 Divisadero also received several offers and, while the selling price was not disclosed, it is said to be substantially over the \$3.85 million asking price.



SOME NEW LISTINGS have received quite a bit of attention, and three of them are located near neighborhood parks:

■ The historic St. Regis Cooperative Apartments at 1925 Gough (above) project directly into Lafayette Park. Unit 32, with 5 bedrooms and 4 1/2 baths, came onto the market at the end of April and, while the spacious unit was in need of some serious updating, it was priced to sell at just under \$2.3 million. The property received heavy interest and was in contract with a very strong bid — said to be over the asking price — just nine days later. It should be closing in mid-June.

■ 2737 Clay is a large 5 bedroom, 4 bath Eastlake Victorian home on Alta Plaza Park. Listed at \$3.4 million, it has received considerable attention since hitting the

market in mid-May and will likely be in contract soon.

■ One Locust — a 4 bedroom, 4 bath home on the Presidio wall — was quietly marketed and then listed at \$5.6 million in mid-May. There were multiple offers immediately after the brokers tour and the property is rumored to be in contract substantially over the asking price.

— Data and commentary provided by JOHN FITZGERALD, a co-owner of the Byzantium Brokerage and an agent at Pacific Union. Contact him at jfitzgerald@pacunion.com or call 345-3034.

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