New vs. old
in Japantown

PAGE 3



FOOD & WINE

At the market,

tomatoes and figs



Green Street,
as in money

PAGE 15

New FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO
SEPTEMBER 2008











Picture This

Budding young photographers train their eyes on the neighborhood

Story and more photographs | PAGES 8 & 9







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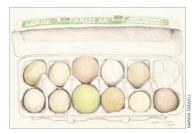
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LOCALS



The Egg Man Has Fans

nearly 40 years as manager of Fillmore Hardware, was feeling the love after he was profiled on the front page of the August New Fillmore

"It was amazing," he says. "So many people had such nice things

His egg business got a boost, too, when word got out that he still returns to the hardware store on Friday afternoons to deliver eggs to his longtime customers. There were more would-be buyers than his backyard henhouse can handle.

He also got gifts - at least one. Marion Seawell, an artist



Phil Dean: a good egg.

she says. "He even wrote a book about chickens, and I did the drawing for the dust jacket. She also drew a carton of multicolored eggs her friend gave her.

many years before

retiring to Marin

County, saw the story

chickens and a rooster

distinguished history

professor — who was

crazy about chickens,

"I had a friend - a

and decided to give

Phil a drawing of

she did years ago.

"I got over my egg period," she says, "but I read the article and enjoyed it so much I wanted him to have the drawing."

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

In Japantown, Old Customs Meet New Condo Owners

HILE wandering through the haze of sizzling teriyaki burgers and listening to the pounding of Taiko drums at the Nihonmachi Street Fair last month, you might have been asked to sign a petition supporting the event, or seen people wearing stickers that said, "Save Our Festivals."

A local developer and the head of a new condo association had threatened to shut down the Japantown street fair.

"The streets and sidewalks are usually filthy, especially around that appalling mall," complained David Zisser, president of 1600 Webster's homeowners' association, in an email to the fair's organizers. Zisser and John McInerney, who developed the condos, asked fair organizers to steam clean the sidewalk in front of their complex - or else "this association will file a protest with the city when you seek a permit for next year's street fair," Zisser wrote.

The residents of 1600 Webster are subjected to "a series of look-alike fairs with the same purveyors of schlocky souvenirs, mediocre food stands and exhibitors who have absolutely no relationship to the community," Zisser said.

Grace Horikiri, co-chair of this year's Nihonmachi fair, told Zisser and McInerney that "due to budgetary constraints." steam cleaning the sidewalk in front of their building was not possible. But she assured them fair workers would promptly sweep the street afterwards.

"If the street is soiled," she said, "we do go out there and physically scrub the area."



"Our Japantown community festivals are being threatened. First it was us, then our homes and businesses, our property. Next our festivals?"

- PAUL OSAKI, Japanese Cultural and Community Center

McInerney's response was blunt. "Grace: This is real simple. You want to put on an event; you take responsibility. In this instance, you make a mess, you clean it up," he wrote. "If we have to clean up afterwards, we will not only oppose the event next year, we will look to small claims court to reimburse us for cleanup costs."

He concluded, "It is not a negotiation." "Everyone's more than willing to work this out," said Paul Osaki, executive director of the Japanese Cultural and Commu-

rude. Of course we want the neighborhood to be safe and clean. They feel they have more concern about the cleanliness of Japantown than we do."

McInerney has complained about street fairs in the past, Osaki said. "First it was parking. Then noise. Now it's cleanup issues," he said. "They chose to move into this neighborhood. They should have been well aware these festivals were going on."

He added, "Why should we change our historic community for them? Some out of the blue." nity Center. "It's their tone. They're being people inherently feel they can come into a

neighborhood and their surroundings must

So Osaki helped launch a petition drive, invoking the specter of the internment of the Japanese community during World

"Our Japantown community festivals are being threatened," he wrote in a let-ter to the community, "We can never take things for granted. First it was us, then our homes and businesses, our property. Next

The petitioners collected 2,800 signatures during the two days of the fair and won the support of a number of politicians.

"This has got a lot of people concerned," Osaki said. "This community knows all too

Zisser acknowledged after the festival that the streets were cleaned satisfactorily this year. He added, however, "I'm the one who cleaned the signs off the street lamps and the signs on strings. I just went out and

Both Zisser and McInerney say they don't have a problem with Japantown fairs in general.

"Paul [Osaki] and Grace [Horikiri] have lied to this community about what this is about," Zisser said. "We have a good relationship with the Cherry Blossom Fes-

But the Nihonmachi fair is another story, they say

"Last year there was food and grease on the sidewalk," said McInerney. "The barbecue was spilling over. Then this letter comes

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New Condos, Old Customs in Japantown

Zisser agreed. "We were stunned they would plan an event and not clean up," he said, "We're subjected to three fairs in six months. They're an imposition on businesses and neighbors. Why must the Cherry Blossom Festival have two weekends? And how do you differentiate these fairs from the Asian heritage fair?"

In fact, the Redevelopment Agency's owner participation agreement with the builders of 1600 Webster states that the streets fronting the complex will be blocked off "not more than four days a year" for the Japantown fairs. Osaki said that was an error on the part of the Redevelopment

"The Cherry Blossom Festival alone is four days long," taking place in April over two weekends Osaki said "Who wrote this owner participation agreement? Why four days? The Nihonmachi Street Fair has been going on for 35 years."

"I could care less if the fair has been around for 35 years," Zisser said. "We believe in taking care of this neighborhood. We take care of our property. We pay a lot to the city in taxes. This building is full of workers who pull the cart and not ride the cart. We have a standard in this building."

Located at the corner of Post Street, 1600 Webster is a four-story contemporary building housing 48 condominiums, plus retail space on the street level. The development was opposed by many in the Japanese



popular local performers, including the West Coast Lion Dance Troupe.

community. In 2003, Japantown Bowl was razed to make room for the building, despite a community campaign to save the bowling alley. Then, in 2005, the Redevelopment Agency agreed to lease the prime space on the ground floor to Starbucks. After local businesses objected and the Japantown Task Force collected 4,000 signatures. the deal with Starbucks was called off.

"They speak of that horrible bowling alley as if it were a cultural icon," Zisser said. And he doesn't like the teriyaki burgers, either which he tried at the fair "It was a dried out thing," he said. "Horrible.

"We're told we're interlopers," he said. "My grandparents lived here. [My grandfather] had a tailor shop on Bush. It was a heavily lewish neighborhood then. Now a good number of the businesses are Korean, not Japanese. New people are always coming in. We are all San Franciscans.

First a Solicitor, Then Burglars

into a flat on California Street near Broderick at around 11 p.m. Laguna and O'Farrell Streets July 17, 11:30 p.m. A neighbor saw them leaving with a laptop, briefcase and other property.

The night before the burglary, a man had ome to the neighbor's door claiming to be raising funds for Barack Obama's presidential campaign. The solicitor was described as being in his late 20s or early 30s, polite and official, and equipped with Obama flyers and a clipboard with what looked liked checks clamped to it. There have been reports of similar faux solicitors canvassing other neighborhoods.

Six additional homes in the neighborhood were reportedly robbed, all with a similar modus operandi. All the robberies were "smash and grabs" — the perpetrators broke in after the door-to-door visit and grabbed what they could. Police speculate they had a driver parked nearby

Local law enforcement officers say it is a standard ploy for gang members to case out a home before a robbery. They send a decoy to see if doors are locked, to check out the contents and to find out if any people - or dogs — are in the residence.

"Any time there's an election, you have to be careful," says Captain Al Casciato of Northern Station, "Thieves will use your enthusiasm for the candidate to distract you. If you're not expecting anyone, don't

Casciato advises calling the police if you doubt the legitimacy of solicitors who come to your home.

Workers at Obama headquarters say the campaign has sent no one door-to-door to

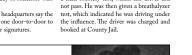
Officers attempted to stop a vehicle for a traffic violation, but the driver sped off. Officers chased the vehicle. At O'Farrell and Laguna, the two occupants of the car abandoned their vehicle and started to run. Officers found one gun tossed down at the scene. The officers pursued the suspects on foot and caught them. One suspect, who said he was from Oakland, had a gun in his pants pocket. The two men were arrested and booked at Central Station.

Aggressive Panhandling Van Ness Avenue and Pine Streets August 1

Officers arrested three men who were panhandling aggressively along the median of Van Ness Avenue. The panhandlers were flagging down cars as they drove by or approaching drivers as they stopped for a red light. All of the men had previous arrests the same violation

Driving Under the Influence Laguna and Eddy Streets August 15, 1 a.m.

Officers posted at Laguna and Eddy witnessed a driver committing a traffic violation. They pulled the driver over The man's speech was slurred, his eyes were bloodshot and there was an odor of alcohol on his breath. The officers conducted a field sobriety test, which the driver did booked at County Jail.







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bonds in any amount, to take over

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No Accountability

Right now, bonds for initiatives of this kind must first be approved by the people. But starting in Section 9.107 of Proposition H, the language of the measure itself makes clear what the Board is trying to hide: "...no voter approval shall be required with respect to revenue bonds" [issued to finance the takeover of utility facilities].

It Will Cost Billions

According to the independent financial analysis prepared by the City Controller: "There are several possible methods for costing the purchase or construction of power facilities and estimates range widely. Under any method, the amounts are certainly substantial-likely in the billions of dollars..." Initial estimates put the cost of a takeover of just the PG&E electric system at more than \$4 billion

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4 NEW FILLMORE September 2008



Best bar for a booty call

■ LOCAL FAVORITE

The weeklies are out with their annual summertime "best of the city" picks, and one neighborhood ioint - Solstice, at 2801 California Street — gets a coveted award among the young and single set: best bar for a booty call. Says the Bay Guardian:

"Smooth-talking, heavy-handed bartenders and a packed house of good-looking, hormonal twentyand thirtysomethings boozing it up in muted, raucous style are part of what make Solstice a classic among booty call bars. If you've already got a FWB, this place will get you in the mood - and do it in style. And if you're simply looking for a bed buddy, you'll have your pick of young execs with flushed cheeks, loosened ties and skirts deliberately pushed up high-thigh. The menu's got classy down-home bar food like Kobe beef sliders with sweet potato fries or gongonzola mac 'n' cheese so you can satisfy any 'not before you buy me dinner' roadblocks. Add in that happy hour starts at 5 p.m. and food is available until midnight (that's seven hours to score), and you're looking at pretty good odds. Speaking of looking good, everyone does after a bottle of wine, so take advantage of Monday's half-off

Cereal Isn't Just for Breakfast Anymore

UBILI, a sleek new shop that opened in recent months at 1515 Fillmore, just south of Geary, offers its customers an unlikely combo: yogurt and cereal.

Andy Choi, the founder and general manager — and a self-confessed dessert fiend - says he came up with the idea to offer the two as a healthy treat.

Jubili may be the first snack shop of its kind, but it's probably not the last. Choi is already thinking about a second store in the Marina or the Castro, then on to Hawaii and Hong Kong.

Jubili offers a private label of frozen yogurt and sorbet imported from Italy and served with a wide variety of toppings. One of the most popular items is "my parfait," a serving of low-fat vanilla yogurt, two fruit toppings and granola. Smoothies and specialty teas are also available.

Jubili's cereal bar boasts a buffet of various cereals, including Lucky Charms, Fruity Pebbles and the most popular, Cap'n Crunch, with a side of milk or soymilk. The cereals are whole grain, but Choi says it's the nostalgia that beckons to buyers.

"I definitely like to focus on the fun novelty cereals, the childhood idea," he says. "But we also offer more serious cereals such as Raisin Bran." Breakfast eaters make up about 20 percent of Jubili's business, he says, and the rest are all-day snackers.

At 24, Choi is already a veteran eneur, with seven businesses under his belt — including Andy's Cafe, an ice market for the childhood favorite. Various cream and coffee shop in downtown Oak- cereals were already offered as toppings for

At Jubili, you can have Cap'n Crunch anytime from the new cereal bar



"Life is short, so have dessert first - and cereal at night," says Jubili owner Andy Choi

land, which he sold three years ago after a

After selling the shop, he went traveling in Asia in search of his next business venture. When he tasted an Italian-style frozen yogurt served in Japan and Korea, it started him on his path to Jubili.

"The taste was entirely different from traditional American style soft serve," he says. "It had a very simple, light texture and a clean finish." He decided to import the vogurt into the United States.

Choi added cereal to his business plan when research showed a potentially strong

the frozen yogurt and sorbet. He decided to make them a primary menu item to cater to the increasing foot traffic in the Fillmore Jazz District.

He sought help from his alma mater. UC Davis, pitching the idea of developing a complete business plan as a final project in an introductory marketing management

"I gathered a group of young students who believed in the concept and laid out the preliminary ideas," says Choi, who adds he was most impressed by the food science majors on the team. The result was a detailed business plan for a new business now a reality on Fillmore Street

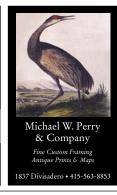
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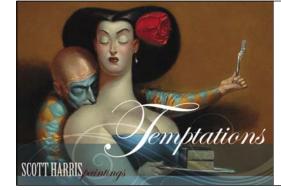


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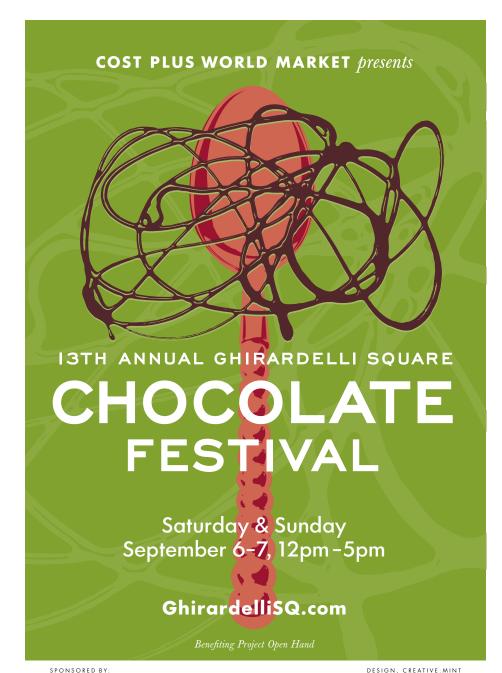
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Seeing the Light

Teaching kids photography - and learning from them, too

By Barbara Kate Repa

ATHI O'LEARY worked as a molecular biologist for 20 years before trading her microscope for a camera. Now she's a respected portrait photographer, and she recently opened a studio on California Street, just off Fillmore.

That's especially good news for neighborhood kids, since one of O'Leary's specialties is teaching digital photography to young people ages 7 to 14.
"I know the joy of photography. I love to see the

look on the kids' faces when they get it, too," she says. "They puff out and get all excited when they see they've taken a really good photo."

A typical class has eight or nine students, usually with twice as many girls as boys. Many of her students have taken the class more than once - one of them six times. Another has become a professional photographer.

O'Leary says the students give and take criticism well, which can be an important part of the class



dynamics. "Lots of times they'll go against everything I've taught them," she says, "Then I'll look at their pictures and say, 'Oh yeah - they're right.' '

Among O'Leary's proudest teaching moments have been the times she's helped her students particularly the harder-to-get-to boys — find ways to express themselves artistically. "I've had parents say, You just channeled his energy. I didn't think it could be done,' "she says.

A recent group of students, all preteen girls, were led to the class by their mothers, who had searched online for activities to fill the summer months. "I seem to be one of the only photography teachers who specializes in teaching kids," says O'Leary. "Not just anyone is willing to take in 7-year-olds."

O'Leary teaches her students there are two different parts to photography: first hunting for the image, or "window shopping," then assessing what you have and deciding how to manipulate it.

"You learn a lot about what you can crop," she says. "But with pictures of people, it's often just the luck of the moment. The trick with portraits is to bring out something that makes them seem like themselves."

O'Leary also hosts studio parties, recently with nine 10-year-old boys and a birthday cake in the shape of a castle. She gives a mini-lesson, then turns the revelers loose behind the camera, later printing their shots to take home. She gives private lessons to adults, too, mostly helping demystify digital cameras.

The young photographers in this summer's class captured the neighborhood on film, particularly scenes that struck them as Fillmore icons: the 22 bus as it passes the jazz banners on Fillmore; view upon interesting view of the teacups in the window of Mureta's Antiques; various dogs tied outside Peet's while their owners temporarily abandon them ■ 'BE THE BOSS'

Advice from some of the budding young photographers in Kathi O'Leary's classes:

"Look for a while before you shoot. You should think about whether the picture looks good before you take it."

"Be the boss. Move stuff out of the way. If you see a Frito wrapper on the ground, move it."

"Try to hold the camera steady." "Frame the picture correctly. Put the main thing off-center."

"If you're shooting a portrait, try to get the shot when the person's not smiling. "Make the background out of focus.

"Pay attention to the light." "Work with reflections you see — like from water, mirrors and glass."

"Make people look comfortable, Try cracking a joke."

"Look for a natural look on a person's face — not too smiley, not too posed. It should almost look like someone is calling the person's name."

"Remember: You can always crop it."

for double lattes. And a neighborhood rarity: an unexpired parking meter.

There were everyday street scenes recorded with fresh eyes: a single slender hand on a mannequin in Margaret O'Leary's window - the student hoping for extra credit with this one, perhaps, since the shop bears the teacher's last name. Then there's a bird's eye view of a table on Chouquet's terrace, its slats catching the sunshine in an abstract pattern, and a fire escape above HeidiSays, captured looking straight

As part of the class, they also posed classmates for portraits in natural light. And they made an outing to the Japanese Tea Garden in Golden Gate Park to shoot nature, capturing close-ups of flower buds and a patient squirrel they named Carl.

"They learn that cameras can do more than eyes can," says O'Leary. "In the tea garden, you can stick a camera inside a flower - and come out with a picture

Says portrait photographer Kathi O'Leary, "Not just anyone is willing to take in 7 vear-olds.

that looks a lot like a Georgia O'Keefe painting."

When the students pose for one another for portrait shots in the studio, O'Leary relies on a timetested trick she's learned — spinning them on a stool, which helps relax the subject, encourages spontaneity and gives the photographer a moment to prepare before taking the shot.

On a recent afternoon, the summer classmates gathered around a large computer screen and critiqued the photos from their last shoot. The criticism comes quickly and honestly.

"That one's great. She actually looks like she's laughing."

the whole frame.

"No good. Too serious. It looks like she's saying 'You're "I have the biggest hair in history. And there it fills up

"I'd like that one in black and white, but not in color."

"Oooh, That's one mom will like," says O'Leary of a final portrait. "You look so thoughtful."

"I was thrilled to get a studio in this neighborhood," says O'Leary, who has lived nearby for 30 years. "It's where I get my hair cut, where I do my banking — and close to Dino's, where I get my pizza." She applauds her landlord, Vasilio Kiniris, who owns the building housing O'Leary's studio above his Zinc Details Design Store. "He said, 'You want to each kids right here in this space? Yes!' Most people didn't want to take on the risk."

At last, O'Leary says, she's doing what she was meant to do: teaching kids to make portraits. "When I was a kid myself, I'd set up a card table and a bunch of chairs and make my friends sit in them while I pretended to be the teacher. And I loved to draw nortraits." she says. "Maybe there's a lesson in this: Pay attention to what kids do when they're six."



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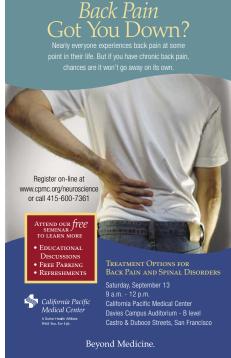
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■ AT THE MARKET | RICK O'CONNELL

It's Not Too Late for Early Girls

OST Saturday mornings I take a short walk down Fillmore and find myself in the middle of good things to eat. The Fillmore Farmers Market fills the morning with good possibilities for delicious weekend menus, at the same time providing entertainment by a group of mellow jazz musicians.

First I check out all the stalls to see what's available. Because the farms are all within driving distance, I can find the makings for menus that fit the season.

How do the tomatoes look and which variety is best this week? Which berries are the sweetest? Are there still summertime peaches and plums?

Fat brown turkey figs are looking especially good now. I'll serve them in a salad, split in half and sprinkled with balsamic vinegar and some chopped walnuts on a bed of little lettuces — along with some blue teleme cheese from the cheesemakers who've recently joined the weekly lineup at the market.



The vegetable vendors offer cauliflower just the right size, along with purple eggplant and peppers sweet and hot, their blazing bright colors promising delicious

There are piles of corn, Swiss chard, Asian greens, pea shoots, squash blossoms, Romano beans and haricots vert, all waiting to be presented in delicious dishes for weekend friends and weekday suppers. A favorite stop for me is the Rhodes Family Farm

stand. This is my tomato stop, usually manned by Justine Vinnar. As Justine takes care of sales, he enthusiastically chats with customers about what's rine this week. including Early Girls, heirlooms and Goliaths. Early Girls have long been a favorite of mine. This is a small tomato, sweet but balanced with just the right amount of acid to bring out the perfume and flavor. I use them for everything - soup, sauce and salad.

This Saturday, owner Phil Rhodes is holding court.

Chef Rick O'Connell takes in the bounty at the Fillmore Farmers Market, which is open Saturday mornings from 9 to 1 at Fillmore and O'Farrell.

Phil says his family has farmed in Visalia for 30 years They've been selling at farmers markets for more than 14 years. He says Fillmore is one of the strongest markets for his family's farm. And now that the market will be operating year around, he says they'll be able to bring in later varieties of tomatoes such as Shady Ladies and Estivas.

By Gary Carr

nave of Grace Cathedral.

She went to see the Very Reverend Alan

Jones, dean of Grace Cathedral, who had

encouraged her earlier project. "I thought,

'Who do I go to when I want to do some

fantastic new thing?' - someone who

knows I'll pull it off," Gray says. "I had a

With his blessings, she pursued her pas-

sion for Vertigo and began to look back at

the history of both the film and its legend-

ary director. During her research, she came

across a screen test in which Hitchcock asks

a young actress provocative questions about

her sex life. She started wondering about

Hitchcock's own personal life. She found that his wife, Alma Reville, had written

many of his early films and that she was

fact, that she sometimes made the brilliant

Hitchcock feel a bit insecure.

history with Alan Jones."

I fill my bag with Early Girls and can't wait to saute them with a little garlic and olive oil, and maybe a splash of white wine. Cook in an open pan for only about 10 minutes, and I have a fresh sauce. Add salt and pepper and a few red pepper flakes, if you like a

At the Olive Oil Company nearby I've picked up some lemon pepper fettuccine. You can find other pastas and ravioli as well, along with sauces and spreads, if you aren't in the mood to make your own.

I will roast some some eggplant and peppers and serve the vegetables surrounding the pasta, which I'll toss with my Early Girl sauce. I prefer to taste only the sauce and pasta together and not mix in a lot of ingredients.

Bennett Valley Bakery will provide me with a loaf of olive bread for my fig and cheese salad.

On the way out, I pick up some peaches and berries for a compote, and I'm done with my shopping until

But what's the rush? I will take a coffee across the street to listen to a little jazz and write my menu to be sure I have all I need.

Oh yes! I forgot the flowers. I circle back to pick up some dahlias and sunflowers.

Now it's time to cook

Rick O'Connell, author of 365 Easy Italian Recipes, is a culinary consultant and a hotanical artist.

TILLMORE photographer Lucy Gray presented her first public are project a decade ago in the soaring Gothic This month she returns to the cathedral to unveil her newest creation. In To Kill For, she imagines in words and images what might happen if Alfred Hitchcock decided in the afterlife to remake Vertigo, one of his classics and perhaps the quintessential San Francisco film, which premiered 50 years "The cathedral seemed perfect for an event set in the afterlife," she says. "I thought of it as a great place to project photographs onto the architecture.

'Vertigo' Comes Alive

A local's new play conjures Hitchcock's afterlife

require more than images - it had to be written. And so the photographer turned playwright and started a script that would come To Kill For, which will debut this

an essential creative force in much of his Gray is a longtime resident of the neighborhood who lives near Alta Plaza Park. work, including Vertigo. One biographer suggested that Reville was so important, in While she has been active as a writer and a film aficionado — most recently creating an online production called "Lucy Talks To tell the story, Gray decided, would Movies," for which she interviewed, pho-

tographed and wrote about people making movies — she has established her artistic reputation primarily as a photographer.

In her first project at Grace Cathedral in 1998, "Naming the Homeless," she paid 28 homeless people to be photographed where they liked to hang out. Then, with the help of local clothing designers, she made over her subjects as fashion models and photographed them again. At least eight of them got jobs as a result of the project.

In 2006 she created "Big Tilda," a play in mind."

series of four-story images of the actress Tilda Swinton that were projected onto San Francisco's City Hall.

For the Vertigo project, she first considered creating more "Big Tilda"-like montages and projecting them onto various landscapes - perhaps the salt ponds in the bay, so they would be visible to fliers landing at the San Francisco airport, or maybe at the Legion of Honor, which features prominently in the film. By the time museum curators decided against the idea, she had shifted her enthusiasm to the script she was writing to go along with the images.

"The better the play got, the less interested I was in the projections," Gray says. "I was concerned they would take attention away from the play."

She sought advice from the veteran actor and director Joy Carlin, an acquaintance. Carlin liked the idea so much she signed on as director. With her guidance, Gray - "a born playwright," says Carlin — turned the 20-minute piece into a fulllength production.

"First she directed me," Gray says, "and now she's directing the play."

To Kill For will be staged as part of the 2008 San Francisco Fringe Festival at Grace Cathedral, atop Nob Hill, on September 5, 8 and 9 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$9. More information is available at www.tokillfor.net.

Gray's photographs of "Vertigo stair-cases" and locations featured in the film will still be a part of the production, but in a different way than she first imagined.

"I'm not finished with photography," she says. "Of course, I also have another

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On Fridays, Sheba Has Piano Magic

By Anthony Torres

HERE'S something special about the Sheba
Piano Lounge.
To a certain extent it's because of the

To a certain extent it's because of the location at the intersection of what could be called lower Pacific Heights and the upper Western Addition. It's just south of Geary at 1419 Fillioner. Maybe it's the look of the space, or the interesting mix of people that frequent it. Or maybe it's the bartenders, who are friendly and easy going, or just the ambiance and the vibe, which is casual and cool.

While Sheba has music nightly, the schedule isn't particularly set. So I recently decided to go hear pianist Ricardo Scales, a local jazz fixture whose presence is assured on Friday nights.

Walking in and sitting at the bar, I was immediately reminded of how much I like the space and of the range of musical possibilities you find there, depending on who's playing, Scales began by playing an exquisite version of the pop standard "Red Salis in the Sunset" that was so elegant and beautiful it was instantly enrapturing. He then segued into Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata," which was just incredible, and caused me to reflect on Duke Ellington's statement that jazz is black classical music.

The thing about Scales is that his virtuosity is so acute that until he actually plays classical music, you forget why it is that he plays the way he does, with



Pianist Ricardo Scales offers support for Duke Ellington's theory that jazz is black classical music.

such technical fluidity that he can take jazz in sundry

After Beethoven he broke into George and Ira Gershwin's "Summertime" from Porgy and Bess, which they wrote as the American musical equivalent of opera—and which in my mind was a direct allusion to the relationship between jazz and classical music.

After "Summertime" he went into "Malaguena," a love song written by Ernesto Lecuona, a Cuban. It seemed to be a means of articulating that jazz music has the uncanny ability to move across boundaries through a range of influences and styles.

It surely was not a coincidence that he then immediately went into "Spanish Harlem," written by Jerry Leiber and Phil Spector and made famous by Ben E. King. Here it served to allude to Spanish

historical influences and the Puerto Rican presence in New York.

At this point, the music seemed more suited for a concert hall than a restaurant and bar where people are chatting, ordering drinks, having dinner and watching the Olympics on television.

Then, almost as a way of keeping people anchored in the present, and completely appropriate to the situation, he began to play a wonderful bluesy version of "As Time Goes By," the song largely associated with the movie Casabhanca.

My respect for Scales and his music has increased tremendously over the last several years — not because he is necessarily a better player now than in the past; he has always been great. It's just that now he seems to be playing with greater maturity and restraint. These days he seems less compelled to play at unrelenting breakneck speed, and thus his playing comes across as more tastfell and intelligent.

Perhaps his compulsion to overwhelm his audiences on occasion can be attributed to the fact that when Scales was 19 years old, an accident paralyzed his left hand, severing the nerves of three fingers and partially deforming his hand. Told by physical therapists and physicians that his dream of being a pianist — at which he had worked and studied since the age of five — was over, Scales devised his own therapy. He painstakingly used his right hand to re-teach his left hand to work the piano keys, concentrating on regaining dexterity and motion. When he was told he should give up — that he could make better use of his time if he found a job as a house painter - Scales redoubled his self-devised therapy sessions. Eventually diligence and perseverance paid off. He regained the use of his left hand, which now has strength and dexterity equal to his right hand.

Maybe that's why Ricardo Scales is such a burner and plays with such force and passion. He has paid his dues and earned the right to play the blues, or anything else he wants to play.

And he does it every Friday night at the Sheba Piano Lounge on Fillmore.



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SECRET SPOTS









'Our Lady of the Parking Lot'

Neighborhood lore says the bulldozer operators couldn't bear to push down the grotto in the school's courtyard when St. Rose Academy was demolished after the 1989 earthquake. So they carefully left it standing — and it's still there, lovingly tended amid a grove of cherry trees, right in the center of the parking lot behind St. Dominic's Church, It is a remnant of another time, covered with gnarly vines, a place of guiet contemplation officially dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes. But to locals it has become "Our Lady of the Parking Lot."

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NEIGHBORHOOD HOME SALES

Single Family Homes	BR	BA	PK	Sq ft	Date	Asking \$	Sale \$
242 Presidio Ave	3	2.5	1		22-Jul	2,450,000	Not Disclosed
2416 Gough St	6	3.5	2	3435	18-Jul	3,025,000	3,025,000
3965 Washington St	4	2.5	3	3080	17-Jul	3,995,000	Not Disclosed
3481 Washington St	5	3.5	2	3950	31-Jul	3,995,000	3,995,000
Condo /Co-op /TIC /Lofts							
2939 Webster St #A	1	1			21-Jul	399,000	410,000
2415 Van Ness Ave	1	1	1	558	28-Jul	469,900	490,000
2145 California St #4	1	1	1	1204	30-Jul	699,000	680,000
3045 Jackson St #502	1	1		1351	22-Jul	735,000	740,000
2971 California St #2	2	1	1	1075	15-Jul	749,000	743,000
2140 Scott St	2	1	1	1190	25-Jul	975,000	960,000
2145 Franklin St #1	2	2	1	1700	31-Jul	1,085,000	1,040,000
2201 Sacramento St #501	2	2	1	1498	7-Aug	1,245,000	1,200,000
1770 Pacific Ave #402	2	2	1	1693	31-Jul	1,219,000	1,219,000
1835 Franklin St #1602	2	2	1	1500	1-Aug	1,290,000	1,248,000
2539 Clay St #2	2	2	1		21-Jul	1,379,000	1,350,000
3029 California St	3	2	1	1782	31-Jul	1,295,000	1,400,000
3934 Clay St	4	2.5	1	2254	11-Jul	2,100,000	2,225,000
2000 Washington St #A	3	3.5	3	4339	5-Aug	6,250,000	Not Disclosed

For \$24.5 million, a home not yet built

As expected, sales have been slow in August. Typically we see an increase in new listings after Labor Day, which normally translates into increased sales later in September and October.

Among recent sales, 242 Presidio Avenue finally found a new owner after more than 80 days on the market. The property was originally listed at almost \$2.6 million and has now closed at an undisclosed price. Another lonely property was 2939 Webster, which was on the market for more than 160 days before closing at the end of July. The TIC unit had been in contract, but was withdrawn from the market and then relisted at a new price in May. It sold above the reduced asking price in July.

NEW LISTINGS: A cozy 1,600 sq. ft. single family home recently came on the market at 1868 Greenwich. At \$1.5 million, it's well priced — and it's set back on a large lot and zoned RH-2, so there might be the potential to develop

Looking for the opposite of cozy? Then look no farther than the 2100 block of Green, where two listings have popped up in recent weeks. At 2151 Green is a stately and very vertical Edwardian. Priced just under \$11 million, it has 6,800 sq. ft. and boasts great views from the Golden Gate Bridge to Alcatraz. If that's not enough home for you, just look next door at 2157 Green. This home is not even built yet, but the eye-popping listing price of \$24.5 million buys the construction — promised in 18 months — of a 13,500 sq. ft. single family home that includes six bedrooms, panoramic views and a rooftop swimming pool. Check www.2157Green.com for details.

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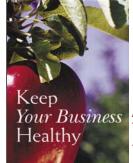


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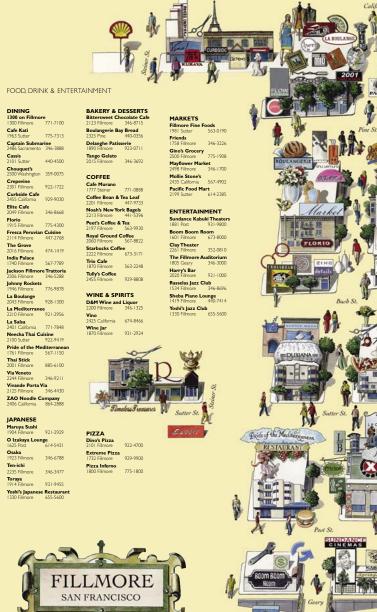
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