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plays the Vogue

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place with a past

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THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ FEBRUARY 2010



Drawn by the muse

Painting by
KRISTEN VAN DIGGELEN

Looking for inspiration, artist Kristen van Diggelen wandered into the Cottage Industry shop on Fillmore Street a few months ago. She found herself drawn to a marionette sitting lifelessly on a back shelf in the store. It would become the subject of a major painting — and a deepening connection to another artist who lived and worked in the same building, where she created a legendary painting some art historians consider one of the most important American paintings of the 20th century. **STORY** | PAGE 6

Parking May Get Easier on Fillmore

Sensors installed
to direct drivers
to available spaces

DESPITE REPORTS that parking was banned on stretches of Fillmore in early February because a movie was being filmed starring Brad Pitt — or maybe it was Matt Damon — it turned out that something even bigger was in the works: easier parking.

Or so they promise.

City crews began installing sensors on the street at every parking meter, part of an ambitious program designed to electronically signal drivers to available parking spaces with new meters that accept credit cards. Already installed on the street lights are transmitters that send transit officials data from the sensors and meters on Fillmore and side streets from Jackson to McAllister. New meters will be installed in the coming weeks, and the system is expected to be in operation in the spring.

Fillmore and Japantown are among several areas of the city designated as pilot projects to test the program.

"The data will allow us to better manage parking," said Jason True, a Metropolitan Transit Authority spokesman, "and make it easier to find parking and to pay for it."

It may also make it more expensive. Rates at meters and city garages will be adjusted to discourage parking in more congested areas — such as Fillmore Street.



Parking on Fillmore was banned as sensors were installed, part of a system intended to help drivers find empty spots.

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Appointments must be made in advance by calling (415) 925-6558.

Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums. Learn more about pediatric services at the Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry at <http://dental.pacific.edu/h238.html>

*NOT: All children must have a parent or legal guardian accompany them to the screening.



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THE FILLMORE PROJECT

www.newfillmore.wordpress.com



AT THE BEGINNING of last year we invited your suggestions and assistance in finding new ways to bring together the people who live in — and love — this great neighborhood we call home.

Many of you responded — some with an interest in writing or taking photographs for the *New Fillmore*, others with expertise in expanding the conversation online, still others with subscriptions or financial contributions.

Now, with your help, we're pleased to announce a new hybrid neighborhood blog and website to increase our connectedness in this new year. That's the web address above — or you can get there from

www.newfillmore.com. In addition to links to other local websites of interest, there's an archive of some of the more enduring stories from the three years we've been publishing the *New Fillmore* — including just about everybody's favorite when James Moore retired from the express line at Mollie Stone's.

We'll continue to deliver the newspaper to your home on the first weekend of every month at no charge, and now we'll update the local news during the month and offer links of local interest, too. That will also make it easier for you to offer comments and contributions. We hope this will encourage an ongoing and expanding neighborhood consciousness and conversation, eventually with separate blogs exploring mutual interests. If you have ideas, let us know.

We also invite to the party:

■ **WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS.** There's incredible talent in this neighborhood. We continue to welcome writers and photographers with something to say and the ability to say it in an interesting way. Let us hear from you.

■ **ADVERTISERS AND SUBSCRIBERS.** We welcome — gratefully — announcements from local businesses who realize some of their very best customers live nearby. Even though the paper and blog/site are free, many readers have offered a \$30 per year subscription, or contributions of \$100 or more. If you're pleased with what we're doing, we'd be happy to hear from you, too.

This neighborhood — our small town in the big city — brings together a wonderful mix of people. We look forward to knowing more of you this year.

BARBARA KATE REPA and THOMAS R. REYNOLDS

■ CORRECTIONS

In Fran Moreland Johns' fine article about the retiring pastor of Calvary Presbyterian Church ("A Pastor Finds His Church in the City," January 2010) there was one factual error that should be corrected. The article states: "In 1978, the church called Deborah Wright as associate pastor — the first woman pastor in San Francisco."

In fact, the first woman pastor in San Francisco was Glenda Hope, now the director of Network Ministries in the Tenderloin. Glenda was ordained in 1969 at Old First Presbyterian Church and served as associate pastor there from

1969 to 1972, when she founded Network Ministries to serve the Tenderloin neighborhood.

PAMELA SEBASTIAN

In the article on That Man May See in your January issue, you referred to me as Nettie Fedor. Please note that my correct name is Netta Fedor. I would very much appreciate your printing the accurate spelling of my name in the next edition.

NETTA F. FEDOR
Development Associate for
Individual Gifts
That Man May See Inc.

THE NEW FILLMORE

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Connecting the neighborhood

Every month, 20,000 copies of the *New Fillmore* are delivered to homes and businesses in the Fillmore, Pacific Heights and Japantown. We focus solely on people and issues in the neighborhood and invite your contributions.

Join the conversation: www.newfillmore.wordpress.com

We welcome your comments and letters about our small town in the big city.

IN THE NEWS

In Haiti, a Local Doctor Offers Help

Neighborhood physician Eduardo Dolhun joined a team in Haiti treating earthquake victims. He described the scene in a dispatch from the front on January 19.

WE LOCATED one of the hardest hit sites in Port-au-Prince, known by the local lay and medical community to clearly be in urgent need of medical help. The site was located approximately 30 minutes by truck from our compound.

Our medical team was composed of two American board-certified physicians, one Army-trained medic, four firefighters, a Jesuit brother and one translator. Another two community-based translators later made themselves available and proved crucial in our effort to triage the more than 220 patients we were to see today.

We followed a typically sinuous path to the park-turned-community open shelter. Along the way we witnessed the expected collapsed buildings, smelled the wafts of the decomposing bodies and saw the to and fro of traffic, some rescue and security vehicles, most local.

Camp was set up quickly, making use of a plastic folding table and a wooden picnic table, with chairs set about them to expedite patient evaluation. A separate site was set up for medications and supplies.

Our Jesuit brother and the interpreter, taking advantage of the novelty of our arrival, were easily able to capture the attention of the locals, asking them to bring to us those who most needed medical attention. Within a matter of minutes we were presented with a



Dr. Eduardo P. Dolhun: challenged and moved.

wide assortment of severe illnesses, all of them traumatic and now nearly six days old.

The first patient was a 78-year-old woman who had gotten her hand crushed by a fallen concrete slab in her kitchen while preparing dinner for her children and grandchildren. She was calm and patient as we slowly removed the gauze that had not been changed for five days. The dried blood and puss had fused the dressing in a patchy assortment of wet and dry areas, with bubbles percolating up from the wet areas, indicating anaerobic bacterial infection, which can cause gangrene. One is able to diagnose this type of infection with the nose: It has a distinctive and unforgettable odor.

As we methodically unwrapped and gently cut away the bandage, we had time to get to know her and also to prepare her for the probability that she would likely lose her hand, adding to the loss of her five fingers.

We saw several other patients requiring amputations this first day. The other major injuries were broken and fractured bones, many of them arms, legs and ankles. The team was able to make dozens and dozens of improvised splints.

Our efforts were focused on triaging — separating the patients by the severity of the trauma or illness — and either providing definitive treatment or referring them to the appropriate medical facility.

By the early afternoon, we had a working knowledge of the appropriate referral sources, including a local hospital that was performing surgeries, and a local doctor, Carlo, a very pleasant and bright doctor who had done his best in the days prior to our arrival. Like most of Port-au-Prince, he had simply been overwhelmed.

Perhaps the most urgent case was a man in his mid-20s who had a ceiling fall on him. He was pulled out of his house three days after the earthquake. This fit and muscular man had an acute abdomen that required surgery. Without surgery most patients die, usually within hours or days. Based on his anguished screams of pain and his increasingly rapid and shallow breathing, it was clear he likely would not make it through the night with what we suspected was continuous bleeding from his ruptured spleen.

By the end of the day we had secured four pickups or trucks by simply asking the locals driving up and down the mountainside for help. The cooperation between our team and the impromptu community team was crucial in evacuating four people to a local hospital, two with pelvic fractures, one with a femur fracture and the gentleman with the acute abdomen.

We were challenged, left exhausted and utterly moved by the support, humanity and civility of the local Haitians.

It is a privilege to be here.

**FAT TUESDAY
IN THE FILLMORE**
FEBRUARY 16, 2010

WHAT: Fat Tuesday Comes to the Fillmore! Fillmore Street restaurants and clubs are joining their jazz brethrens in New Orleans to celebrate Fat Tuesday with live music including **Black Quarterback**, **Bohemian Knuckle Boogie**, **Steve Snelling** and **Bobbie Webb** at six Fillmore District venues, along with free mardi gras beads, signature carnival libations and great food including **jambalaya**, **gumbo**, **fried catfish**, **fried oysters**, **shrimp & grits** at a host of Fillmore restaurants. The event will celebrate The Fillmore's contribution to San Francisco's jazz heritage when jazz and blues clubs once lined the streets.

WHEN:
TUESDAY,
FEBRUARY 16, 2010
(FAT TUESDAY)
5:30PM UNTIL
MIDNIGHT

WHERE:
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CRIME WATCH

Trespassing Van Ness Avenue and Pine Street December 29, 12:05 p.m.

Officers responded to a call from the Chevron station. They spoke to the manager, who stated that a man was panhandling customers. The suspect had taken a service station squeegee and was wiping car windows, asking drivers for money. The manager signed a citizen's arrest form. Officers took custody of the man, then cited and released him at Northern Station.

Auto Burglary Washington and Gough Streets January 2, 11:52 p.m.

An officer on patrol heard a vehicle's alarm system go off. He located a parked BMW with its headlights flashing and alarm sounding. As the officer approached the car, the man saw him and jumped out, then bolted into Lafayette Park. The officer gave chase; soon a second officer joined him. Eventually they managed to flush the man out of the park, but the chase continued. They finally caught the man as he was attempting to hide behind a car on Clay Street. When he was ordered out from behind the car, he said by way of explanation: "I had to pee." He then wished the officers Happy New Year and tried to walk away. He was arrested and charged with the car break-in. Officers found a considerable amount of auto glass in his pockets. The man was on parole for the same offense.

Felony Theft Geary Boulevard and Webster Street January 3, 11:52 p.m.

Officers were dispatched to the Safeway store to pick up a shoplifter. A woman had taken a bottle of liquor and several cartons of ice cream. She walked past open registers, making no attempt to pay. When officers searched her, they found 16 rocks of cocaine in her pockets. The woman, who had several felony theft warrants for the same offense, stated that she had come from her home in Hayward to commit the crime here.

Missing Person California and Franklin Streets January 7, 8:15 p.m.

A woman called to report that her husband was missing. She stated that there had been financial issues. Because she made the report on a Friday, the inspector assigned to the case could not begin investigating until the following Monday. The woman called the police again on Saturday, increasingly concerned that her husband had not returned. The officer who took the call exceeded his regular duties and began looking into the disappearance. He obtained credit card information from the woman and determined that one card had last been used at a hotel. The officer responded to the hotel; there, he found the missing husband safe. The officer took the man home and reunited him with his wife and child.

Battery of a Police Officer Van Ness Avenue and Sutter Street January 10, 12:57 a.m.

Officers who were monitoring the crowd outside of the Regency Center saw an intoxicated man stumbling into traffic; he narrowly missed being struck by a car. When two officers attempted to help the man to safety, he punched them. Other officers came to their aid and the suspect was taken into custody, then brought to a facility so he could "sleep it off." He was later released for striking the officers, then released. Neither officer was seriously injured.

Stolen Vehicle Turk and Franklin Streets January 10, 2:05 p.m.

A woman whose car had been stolen

spotted it being driven around the neighborhood. She called the police. The officers who responded located the 1999 Toyota 4Runner as its driver pulled out of a parking spot. When the officers stopped the car, they noticed that the passenger-side wing window was broken. The driver claimed she was taking the car for a test drive, and was considering buying it for a friend for \$200. The keys in the ignition did not belong to the car's owner. The suspect was transported to Northern Station.

Possession of Burglary Tools Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell Street January 16, 2:53 a.m.

Officers on patrol saw a man riding a bike on the sidewalk. They stopped him and determined that he was on parole, which made him subject to a search. In his pockets they found several hypodermic needles and numerous tools commonly used for breaking into cars. The suspect was riding a grey Marin Kentfield bicycle, which officers suspected was not his own. They made a phone call to his parole officer, who placed a hold on him, which means he will most likely go back to prison to complete his sentence.

Auto Burglary Geary Boulevard and Boswell Street January 20, 8:55 p.m.

Officers received a report that a man had just broken into a car. The suspect had fled by the time police arrived. Two additional officers who responded stopped a man several blocks away who matched the description the first officers had given. The man's hand was bleeding from a fresh cut. Blood was also found inside the damaged car. The witness was brought to the scene and he identified the man. The witness stated he had seen the suspect pull up his fist and smash the window of the parked car, then climb inside. The suspect was arrested and taken to Northern Station.

Felony Vandalism Fillmore and Sacramento Streets January 21, 10:03 p.m.

Officers received a report of vandalism to a Muni bus. The suspect was unaware that a plainclothes officer was present, observing him as he wrote with a Sharpie pen, covering the advertisements on the outside of a bus. The suspect then jumped into the bus and fled the scene. Officers stopped the bus, arrested the suspect and charged him with a felony since the total damages exceeded \$400.

Auto Burglary Geary Boulevard and Gough Street January 22, 12:15 a.m.

Officers in plainclothes were driving along Franklin Street when they observed a person looking into cars. The officers followed the man because they suspected he intended to commit a crime. The man continued to walk down the street, peering into cars and trying door handles. Eventually one officer saw him break into a car parked on Geary Boulevard. Officers took the man into custody and he was booked for a felony. He was on probation for driving a stolen auto.

Burglary Bush and Steiner Streets January 26, 12:14 p.m.

Officers were called to St. Dominic's Church because a man had entered the church and attempted to break into a donation box. When officers arrived, they found a man who had been asked to leave many times in the past because he had not come to worship. St. Mary's Cathedral currently has a restraining order on him for past acts of vandalism. The suspect was arrested and charged with a felony.



Mini film festival at Jazz Heritage Center

As part of its new jazz and film initiative, the Jazz Heritage Center in the Fillmore Jazz District will present a three-day film festival February 5 to 7 led by jazz film historian Hal Miller. Miller — who is also percussionist in Carlos Santana's band — will present rare footage from his extensive collection of many of the most revered and significant musicians in the history of jazz.

Miller has helped make jazz history accessible as associate producer of the Jazz Icons video series and a principal contributor to the Ken Burns public television series on jazz. This will be his first presentation to a San Francisco audience.

During February, the center will also host twice-weekly film screenings on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. Vintage jazz film posters will be exhibited in the lobby of Yoshi's.

Details about the film festival and other events are available at www.jazzheritagecenter.org or by calling 377-4565.

■ Q&A | RUTHE STEIN

Film Fest Without Subtitles at the Vogue

'Mostly British' brings foreign films in English to revived neighborhood theater

FROM FEBRUARY 4 to 11, the Mostly British Film Festival comes to the Vogue Theater on Sacramento Street. It's the brainchild of longtime *Chronicle* movie writer and editor Ruthe Stein.

What's this new film festival coming to the neighborhood this month?

It's the Mostly British Film Festival, showing 32 films from the U.K., Ireland, Australia and South Africa. We jokingly call it a Foreign Film Festival For People Who Don't Like Subtitles. This festival comes at a great time because so many wonderful movies from these countries can no longer secure American distribution. That means the festival may be the only chance to see such terrific movies as "London River," a tearjerker starring Brenda Blethyn as the mother of a missing daughter, which opens the festival and "Bali-Bo," a political thriller from Australia starring Anthony LaPaglia. We will also present the Northern California premiere of the much-lauded "Red Riding Trilogy." Film scholar David Thomson, who lives in the neighborhood, will introduce the films.

How did it come to be at the Vogue?

Because it is operated by my friends Alfonso Felder and Jack Bair. They saved the Vogue from extinction two years ago by forming the San Francisco Neighborhood Theater Foundation, which bought the place. Alfie and Jack share my love of cinema and I told them if I ever had time



In a city with a film festival for every subculture, the Vogue on Sacramento Street brings the one that was missing. Full program details: www.mostlybritish.org.

How do you describe your involvement in the festival?

Funny you should ask. I don't have an official title. People who pick worthy films for a festival are called a programmer or a

curator. I like programmer — it's less fussy.

How did the first one go last year?

If you mean artistically, it was a big hit. We showed the intense but wonderful art film "Hunger" before it opened in San Francisco. Financially we broke even — a major accomplishment for a fledgling festival with no sponsors except Blue Angel, who were our angels by supplying vodka. They're back again this year along with Thomas Pink, the upscale British clothier, who's throwing our opening night party. You've been to a few film festivals in your day. What makes this one special?

I regularly attend Sundance and Toronto — and of course all the major festivals in the Bay Area. I would say Mostly British is more intimate. The lobby at the Vogue offers the possibility for festival goers to exchange thoughts on what they have seen. There are terrific restaurants in the area where they can continue the conversation. Plus Jack, Alfie and I will be at a lot of the screenings. Come up and talk to us.

What's in it for the neighborhood?

A bonding of the local community. People can meet fellow film lovers in the neighborhood. It will bring business to restaurants and cafes. We hope people in the neighborhood will see what a swell movie house the Vogue is and return for regular bookings.

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FEBRUARY 9, 2010

Institute on Aging
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An Artist Finds a Muse and a Legend

She now paints where 'The Rose' was created

By KRISTEN VAN DIGGELLEN

I AM AN ARTIST — an oil painter — who moved to San Francisco just over three years ago and began scouring shops, flea markets and friends' houses to find the perfect arrangement of objects for a series of macabre paintings forming in my mind.

Stumbling upon the enchanted Cottage Industry store at 2328 Fillmore, I found in the back of the dimly lit shop, nestled in a musty corner, a sizable antique marionette splayed across a shelf — tangled in its cords, legs twisted, gold shoes dangling, its tilted face peering out curiously.

Claudio Barone, the owner, gave permission to photograph the marionette and other captivating almost-creatures in the shop. I took hundreds of photographs that day, then thousands more in the following weeks in many different places, even venturing into the wilderness seeking inspiration for my paintings.

Sifting through the amassed material, I was repeatedly struck by the image of the marionette — eventually realizing this mute, entangled object in its hopeless state was just the right voice. For the next few months I worked on a series of paintings, the largest titled *Self-Portrait as Marionette Playing Dead Bird* — an eight-foot tall lavishly clad marionette surrounded by foliage, resting its fleshy human hand discreetly in its awkward puppet lap.

Months later, while again trudging up Fillmore, I bumped into Claudio, reintroduced myself and handed him an announcement for an upcoming solo show featuring the paintings inspired by the figurines in his shop.

We struck up a conversation about art, and he asked whether I had heard of the artist Jay DeFeo. The question made me laugh, not only because any West Coast artist with a solid background in art history should know about DeFeo as an important American artist — a legend, really — but also because I have been personally intrigued by her life and work



A salon where history was made

On November 9, 1965 (left) a crew from Bekins removed Jay DeFeo's landmark painting, "The Rose," through an opening sawed into the front wall of her studio and moved it, ultimately, to the Whitney Museum in New York. Now the downstairs space at 2326 Fillmore is home to another artist, Kristen van Diggelen (above, with one of her paintings), who on February 10 will host the first Cottage Industry painting salon.

since first learning of the Beat generation.

About five years ago, I saw Bruce Conner's film, *The White Rose*, chronicling the removal in 1965 of Jay DeFeo's painting *The Rose* from her apartment on Fillmore Street. This lyrical documentary, with its ghostly light, dark silhouettes and soundtrack from Miles Davis's *Sketches of Spain*, was profoundly moving.

I grew even more connected to DeFeo's story and Conner's film while working as an intern that fall at the Santa Monica Museum of Art, where "Semina Culture," featuring the story of artist Wallace Berman and friends — all West Coast visual artists of the Beat era — was on exhibition. Every workday I walked past two of DeFeo's paintings, as well as the paint-covered stool that sat in front of *The Rose* in her San Francisco apartment, the same one featured in Conner's film.

That stool seemed an eerie reminder of the premature end to DeFeo's career and her death, two tragedies linked directly to the lead poisoning she acquired during her years of painting *The Rose*.

As Claudio and I discussed DeFeo that day, he suddenly pointed to the apartment above his shop.

"She lived right there," he said. "You can see where they repaired the wall after they moved the painting out."

A quick check at the Art Institute's library confirmed it was really the place — 2322 Fillmore Street. I marveled at having been pulled to paint the marionette, clueless that one of America's most famous paintings was created just a few feet above by an artist whose story I knew intimately.

Now we've grown even closer. Claudio

recently invited me to set up my studio in the vacant space next door to Cottage Industry, formerly home to the Aneu Skin Center, until it is leased — a Cottage Industry artist in residency of sorts, directly underneath DeFeo's apartment. Now, oftentimes when painting there, I look up at the ceiling in amazement, imagining DeFeo laboring over *The Rose* — and the wild and infamous Christmas parties she and her husband Wally Hedrick would throw each year when their apartment was the center of a circle of accomplished and inventive artists, many of whom became well known and respected.

I remain confounded and amazed about ending up here. Is it coincidence — the inexplicable workings of an invisible power, the aura of a special place with a vibrant past — or just plain luck?

STREET TALK



That angel's not so fat

Any minute now *Fat Angel* — a new cafe and wine bar — will open in the Fillmore Jazz District behind Starbucks at 1740 O'Farrell. And every single thing about this place looks promising.

"Fat Angel's mission is to become the Fillmore's benchmark in food, service, price and atmosphere," say the owners, who live nearby and have made the neighborhood part of their business plan.

They've got a honey of a golden angel (above) out front as their mascot, rescued and repurposed — like much of the interior — from a previous life in another part of town.

Vivande now Citizen Cake

When she walked into Peet's for coffee in mid-January, Elizabeth Falkner of *Citizen Cake* was greeted with applause by the regulars. The news that she'll take the Cake from Hayes Valley to Vivande's space on Fillmore came only two weeks after Vivande closed.

"It's just a really sweet spot," says Falkner. "I've always loved how vibrant Fillmore Street is." She hopes to open in mid-March for lunch and dinner — and dessert.

FOOD & WINE

Back Where They Belong

Jeff Banker and Lori Baker knew the place they wanted — and now they have it

JEFF BANKER moved to San Francisco on December 31, 1997, ringing in a new year and a new life as the chef he always knew he would become. He found a job at Postrio, Wolfgang Puck's Union Square hot spot, and an apartment on Bush Street, not far from a popular neighborhood restaurant called the Meeting House.

"It was really close to my house," he says. "I used to walk by that place all the time, and something drew me to go in and ask for a job. I wanted to work in a small restaurant again."

By then he had been at Postrio for two and a half years, but still he was a little surprised to be hired as the Meeting House chef de cuisine. Soon he realized that's because the partners were splitting up. "It was a big, weird mess," he says.

He'd married pastry chef Lori Baker, another Postrio alum, and she'd come to love the Meeting House space as well. But they let it go and moved on to work in some of San Francisco's favorite restaurants — Bix, Bizou, Fifth Floor, Eos and Home, plus stints in Paris and Italy and travels in Asia.

"We were both obsessed with food," Banker says. "The whole time we knew we wanted to open our own restaurant. We always had a really clear-cut vision. We were just looking for the right place."



Baker & Banker's black and gold dining room manages to be glamorous and homey all at once.

And then one day he saw on Craigslist that Quince — the successor to the Meeting House — was moving and that the space at 1701 Octavia was available.

They scrambled to make it happen, and on December 1 Baker & Banker opened in the space of their dreams.

"It's fate," Banker says. "That's what it is."

On a recent Saturday evening, the black and gold dining room was still humming at

11 p.m. They served a record 120 diners, some lured by a glowing review the day before by critic Patricia Untermyer, who cooed, "Everything works. It's just plain fun to eat here."

"Our vision was to create a neighborhood place," says Banker. "We always wanted a restaurant where people with sophisticated palates could go on a normal night of the week — not just for a special occasion."

TO PAGE 8

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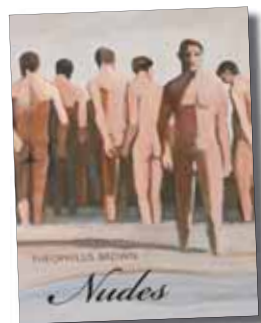
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On the winter menu: vegetable tempura with a spicy dip (above), roasted turnips with bacon and greens (left) — plus desserts with homemade ice cream.

Still to Come: a Bakery on Bush



FROM PAGE 7

The menu is small and made up of fresh local ingredients they buy directly from farmers and other suppliers they've cultivated during the last decade. Starters range from \$9 to \$13 and include grilled calamari, smoked trout and a winter vegetable tempura with a magnificent shiso leaf on top. Entrees, from \$19 to \$27, include seared black bass with Thai shellfish risotto, coriander-crusted ahi and bacon-wrapped pork tenderloin.

The flavors are big and the accents and side dishes are exacting — short rub stuffed twice-baked potato, anyone? — but you may forget all about them when the desserts arrive. Lori the Baker lives up to her name. There's sticky toffee pudding, pink peppercorn shortbread and huckleberry-stuffed doughnut holes with a side of Meyer lemon curd. And a XXX dark chocolate layer cake that lives up its name, too. All desserts are \$8.

When the permits come through, the desserts and house-made breads will be available for take-out through a side entrance on Bush Street. The city has tentatively set a hearing this month on their request to operate a bakery during daytime hours.

"The concept is not a full-service bakery," Banker says. "The idea is that people will walk into a working kitchen and buy the kind of fresh-baked bread they had the night before." Or the chocolate cake.

If the bakery can help cover the overhead, then the restaurant stands a better chance of being profitable, Banker says. And the expansive kitchen — which is twice the size of the dining room — provides the possibility of catering, too.

Unlike Quince, Baker & Banker vows to remain accessible to locals. The seats are not reserved at a small new wine bar — which offers more than a dozen wines by the glass and an ecologically correct wine list from small producers around the world. They hope to accommodate 10 to 20 walk-ins per night, with the wine bar and new benches out front making it more comfortable to wait for a table.

"We'll figure out how we can continue to be a neighborhood place once it takes off," Banker says. "The intimacy of what we've created and where we're located — I really do think it's a special spot."

Banker is the voluble one, yet Baker's name is first on the marquee. That's partly because of the focus on the baking. But, he adds, "In this economy, we didn't want to mention the banker first."



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By CHRIS BARNETT

IT'S A SIMPLE Victorian storefront at Octavia and Bush, but the building housing Baker & Banker has a notorious past. No, a vengeful chef didn't poison his dallying wife's unsuspecting swain. Nor was it a proper Prohibition tearoom with a bathtub gin mill hidden downstairs in the basement.

And never has there been a bone of contention about the caliber of the cooking, even though this has been the home of seven restaurants over the years.

Vintage San Franciscans will remember the spot as Robert Restaurant Francis during the 70s and 80s — a small and stylish place with a popular appetizer not listed on the menu. One day the cops busted through the front door — without reservations — just as one of Robert's kingpins disappeared out the back door, much to the disappointment of patrons who favored his cocaine-to-go-go.

The architecturally unremarkable Victorian was built in 1882 as an apothecary shop where medicines were hand-ground by mortar and pestle; Octavia Street Apothecary and Laundry was a longtime tenant. Three apartments were built over the store — the landlord still lives in one of them.

More fascinating — although tough to prove — is that the building was once used as a storeroom by Mary Ellen Pleasant, who owned what was said to be a boarding house across Bush Street that also did a brisk business as a brothel. Pleasant, who billed herself as a "slave born to a Voodoo priestess," made madam-turned-mayor of Sausalito Sally Stanford a choirgirl by comparison.

A committed abolitionist and slick self-promoter, Pleasant grabbed headlines as San Francisco's first "black entrepreneur," and was also pilloried in the press as "Mammy Pleasant" — an appellation she abhorred, but it stuck. She became a financial angel to John Brown on the Underground Railroad and pluckily desegregated the city's horse-drawn streetcars. Pleasant was said to lure young bookers off the Barbary Coast and set them up as hostesses in elegant dining clubs for gentlemen she established in boarding houses she owned. She wooed young Scottish banker Thomas Bell and amassed a \$30 million fortune in the late 1880s from financial tips gleaned by her ladies from the wealthy gents they served and serviced. It's coincidental — or prophetic — that a banker and his partner were playing the prominent with lavish meals in virtually the same spot more than a century ago.



The husband and wife team behind Baker & Banker now have bragging rights to the storefront at 1701 Octavia.

A Place With a Past

With this address come lots of good stories, some possibly true

"Excuse me, but is this a cafeteria?" a server moseyed over, less than enthused. By then, so were we.

When Michael's died, La Fiametta moved in and served Italian food for nearly a decade, checking out just before dot-com

White linen, hardwood floors, candles, plants, a visual return to the building's 1880s roots — and rave reviews — powered the place through the triple whammy of the dot-com collapse, the 2001 market crash and the recession before this one. Karlinsky turned off the stoves in 2004 after an almost nine-year high-profile run, then partnered with Peter Snyderman and Stephen Katten to take the reins of the venerable Elite Cafe on Fillmore. Now she runs an inventive, casual eatery called Sweet Jo's in the Jewish Community Center on California Street.

Michael Tusk upped the room's reputation as a hideaway for excellent food when he opened Quince in 2005 and dazzled the critics and foodies. But before long, he wanted a bigger, fancier location for his Michelin star. Quince moved downtown last year to 470 Pacific, where Myrth lived large until its quixotic owner and serial restaurateur Tom Duffy died.

And now Quince has handed the baton to the well-seasoned husband and wife team of Lori Baker and Jeff Banker, who've clearly opted for style and sophistication. But they've also promised to make it a warm place that will welcome the locals — and, with a little luck, stir up a few stories of its own.

Among others, Mammy Pleasant is said to have done business here.

mania hit the city and the stock market started skyrocketing.

It was in 1996 that 1701 Octavia became a hotspot for foodies when chef Joanna Karlinsky and her business partner John Bryant Snell took it over and created the Meeting House.

"It was a time when restaurant designers were running wild — remember Cypress Club? — with wild colors, diamond-studded ceilings, leather banquettes," Karlinsky recalls. "We saw it as a place for simple, seasonal, classic American cuisine, a Quaker meeting house, with Shaker decor."

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A Chocolate Chip Off the Old Block

Mother, daughter bring cookies to jazz district

By Tessa Williams

WHEN Bumzy's Chocolate Chip Cookies opens on Fillmore and O'Farrell in the coming weeks, the neighborhood will get to sample a recipe that's been baked and savored by three generations of cookie lovers.

Sheila Harris-Young's mother taught her to bake when she was growing up in Washington, D.C., and she remembers first making cookies for an orphanage her Girl Scout troop would visit. When she became a mother herself, she passed the cookie recipe and her baking talents on to her daughter, Toni Young, whose childhood nickname was Bumzy. Four years ago, after decades of feeding their family and friends, they began selling their cookies online. They've made an enterprise out of baking — bound by family ties and service to the community.

"There's a need for an excellent gourmet cookie in this town," says Harris-Young. She and her daughter hope to fill it with Bumzy's. They'll offer five kinds of cookies — three variations on chocolate chip, plus



"We're a team."

— TONI YOUNG (right) with her mother Sheila Harris-Young

oatmeal raisin and sugar cookies. They'll also offer cold milk to wash them down — along with a chocolate chip ice cream sandwich made with homemade ice cream. They make their products by hand, from scratch, using quality ingredients.

"We're a team," says Young. "It's not just the cookies. It's the Bumzy's experience."

Mother and daughter say they bring more than just a new business and a new product to the Fillmore Jazz District. Customers will also get an independent, family-owned business whose owners are invested in serving the community.

"You could not have told me that after all these years I'd be selling those cookies I made for the orphanage," Harris-Young says.

Her love of baking hasn't changed since childhood, and neither has her instinct to serve the community — something she practiced during nearly three decades as an intensive care nurse and inculcated in her daughter as well.

Together the two volunteer on Wednesdays and Thursdays at the Lima Center at St. Dominic's Church, which offers the homeless refuge and a hot shower. Harris-Young will begin holding weekly classes this month at St. Dominic's as part of "Rise Up Ministries International," a spiritual life coaching program she designed. And every Friday, she works at the donation center at St. Anthony's Foundation.

Neither plans to cut back on their volunteer commitments once their new busi-

ness gets up and running. "We'll always find the time," says Young. "Volunteering is a priority."

This month, they've helped organize a Black History Month celebration at St. Dominic's, which will take place on February 27. Featuring music and speakers from the neighborhood, the event will be a way to reflect on the rich history of the African-American community in the Fillmore. Both mother and daughter say this history — and the residents who have lived in the neighborhood since its days as a bastion of black-owned businesses — are a large part of what makes this the right place for their business.

"Everyone here has a story," says Young. "I try always to make time to stop and listen."

Young-Harris says it's a powerful thing to see her daughter at the helm of their new baking venture. "My mother — who was a wonderful baker — taught me, and it's so sentimental for me to be teaching Toni," she said. While Toni and her brother Taron were growing up, family time often came in the kitchen, where cookies were made, batter was consumed and laughs were freely shared. "It's moments like that that are really priceless," Young said about her memories of baking as a child. "I try to bring that into the cookies."

The new business owners are well aware they're opening in a tough climate. And their handmade confections carry a price: a dozen cookies cost \$24.95 online. They're confident, though, the simple deliciousness of their product will carry the day.

"The chocolate chip craze is going to be on," said Harris-Young. "We want everyone to experience it. Don't deny yourself."



A farewell tribute

Vivande's Carlo and Lisa Middione — who closed their restaurant at the end of last year after 29 years on Fillmore Street — will be honored by the Fillmore Merchants Association at a farewell party on February 17 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Hotel Kabuki in Japantown. If you wish to attend, email fillmoremerchants@gmail.com.

■ FIRST PERSON | CARLO MIDDIONE

How Vivande Came to Fillmore — and Our Great Discovery

WHEN MY WIFE Lisa and I decided in 1981 to open Vivande as a European takeaway with food, pantry items and a small cafe, we scoured neighborhoods to find the right feel.

Laurel Village was great, rents reasonable, lots of free parking — but no storage space. In all, not bad. But what we wanted to do simply did not fit. West Portal was a maybe. Chestnut Street: uh, uh. Union: not for us. And so forth.

One day while driving around we spotted a long, narrow building on Fillmore that had been most recently used as a campaign office — who knows for whom; in the end aren't all campaigns the same? — and before that, a rug cleaning store. We found the landlord and looked at the space, which was so dark we had to use flashlights. It was a quirky layout, deep, only 19 feet wide at the widest place. But it spoke to us.

We grappled with the terms the landlord pushed on us. We bargained back and forth, each trying to do the right thing for the other, but warily watching our butts. Finally, we struck a deal and agreed on our almighty rent: \$1 a square foot.

We knew the look and feel we wanted and set about constructing the place. We had architects who were wonderful, thoughtful folks, and who agreed that less was more. And that's just what we did: less.

One unfortunate incident led to a great addition to our project. A workman rammed a wheelbarrow into the plaster wall, knocking out a piece bigger than a pie plate. At first I was angry. Then I calmed down and we decided to fix the damage, which meant making the hole bigger before repairs could commence. We kept finding more brick as we went along, and finally we started tearing out the plaster to see what we had. It turned out the entire north wall was brick — old, irregular brick, with a trough chipped out where a gas or water line once ran. We love our brick wall, and no designer or craftsman could have made such a look on purpose.

At a Final Auction, Timeless Treasures

ON JANUARY 21 at 9 a.m., Vivande opened its doors to the public for the first time since the restaurant abruptly closed after dinner on New Year's Eve. At 11, an auctioneer began selling the furnishings and equipment.

Most of the two dozen people milling around seemed to be dealers in used restaurant supplies, although there were a few neighbors, too. Back in the kitchen was owner Carlo Middione, keeping his chin up as he faced the dismantling of the authentically Italian and widely beloved restaurant he had created, still full of his usual good cheer.

He'd heard that Elizabeth Falkner's Citizen Cake would take over Vivande's space, and he was pleased by the prospect. He'd encouraged her to offer take-out, and was happy she'd reacted favorably. "If it works out, I intend to take full credit," he said with an impish smile.

He had a story to tell about nearly everything he'd accumulated during 29 years in business.



Over his shoulder was a cello, lot number 107. It was a prop at a party he catered honoring the great cellist Yo-Yo Ma. He'd baked 800 sugar cookies shaped like cellos — which he decided must have strings piped on. "Not one string, but four," he recalled, shaking his head. "After about 100, I wondered, 'Whose idea was this anyway?'"

There was a huge whisk leaning against the brick wall. "That's a damn good whisk," Carlo said. It came from Paolo's at Montgomery and Bush and was used for stirring a huge pot of polenta. A neighbor mused: "Now we won't have anyone who likes to 'stir shit the Sicilian way,' as Carlo always said."

Three hours later nearly everything had sold. Some of the choicest items — including the big whisk and the lighted cake sign in the front window — went to Joan O'Connor, proprietor of Timeless Treasures on Sutter Street, who said she will offer them for sale in her shop.

During the following weeks the remaining items — and still more unearthed in the basement — were sold to the restaurant's many fans who kept coming by to say farewell. There were baskets aplenty, and empty wooden wine crates, and various office furnishings — even the occasional souvenir with the Vivande logo emblazoned on it.

On January 31 — the final day — everything left was carted off and trucked away. Lisa and Carlo Middione sat at a folding card table in what had been the dessert station eating a final lunch of Dino's pizza, topped off with cupcakes and cookies sent over from Citizen Cake.

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PHOTOGRAPHY



Images from the neighborhood — a sculpture in Japantown (above), the Clay Theater (below) and Victorians on California Street (left) — are among many details of the city included in Daniel O'Connor's new perpetual calendar.



It's All in the Details

A perpetual photographer creates a perpetual calendar alive with images of the city

PHOTOGRAPHS AND TEXT
BY DANIEL O'CONNOR

WHEN MY FAMILY came from Iowa to San Francisco in 1948, it was nighttime when we crossed the Bay Bridge into the city aboard a Greyhound bus. The bridge was bigger than anything I had ever seen, and I was stunned into silence by the beauty of the city lights reflecting in the waters of San Francisco Bay.

Since then I have lived in several areas of the city, moved to New England for a while, then returned 20 years ago to settle into the home I share with my wife and our two cats in the neighborhood.

One of the ways I've stayed connected to the city has been to take long walks around various neighborhoods with my camera, capturing images of things that intrigue me. Rather than focus on the great panoramas, I notice and am touched by the details that enhance the skyscrapers, bungalows, banks, cafes, parks and other elements of the city.

Close to home, I pay attention to the evidence of the

many cultures and traditions in the Fillmore: the head of a woman over the Clay Theater, the neon sign on the Fillmore Auditorium, a large colorful fan sculpture welcoming visitors to Japantown, the exquisite facades of exuberant Victorians. Each evokes the spirit of designers, builders and craftspeople at work over the last century or more.

When I realized that I had walked through pretty much every neighborhood many times and had many hundreds of images in my collection, I wanted to share them and invite others to appreciate this most photogenic city. The result is a new calendar I've titled, *San Francisco: It's All in the Details*.

I took the photos featured in it over many months and designed the format last spring in response to a suggestion from my wife, who wanted a calendar to sell in her neighborhood store. It's a perpetual calendar — meaning the specific year and days of the week are not noted, making it a timeless repository for birthdays, anniversaries and other meaningful dates to be remembered and honored year after year.

Most of the photos feature details from streets and

buildings throughout the city — gates, cornices, stained glass windows, pediments and ceilings. Looking for architectural details and images is a great treat for me. Many of them tell a story, allow me to revisit times gone by and to admire again the stunning new possibilities that grace this city that, just a bit more than a century ago, survived destruction and impassioned rebuilding.

I retired last summer after working for many years in the Tenderloin and now have the time to carry my camera wherever I go and capture images that continue to deepen my love of this beautiful place. Of course it's impossible to put all of this into one calendar. But I hope that calling attention to some of these treasures will entice others to look for the details that are there to surprise, amuse, even scold — but above all, to inspire and draw careful attention to the many ways people have created the images that wait for us to pay attention, right here in our own front yards.

The perpetual calendar, San Francisco: It's All in the Details, is available at Timeless Treasures, 2176 Sutter Street, or by calling 776-4001.



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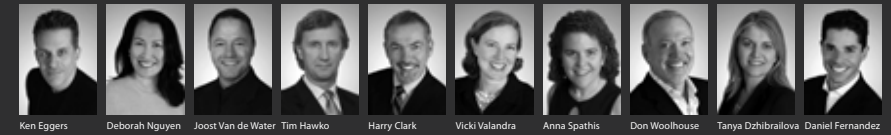
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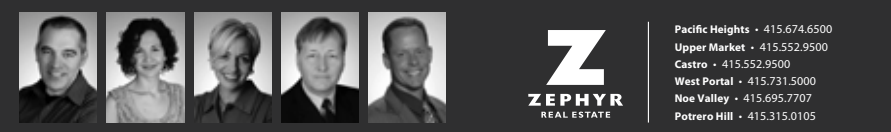
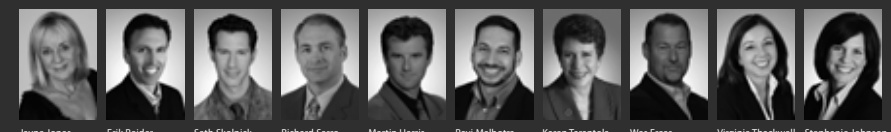
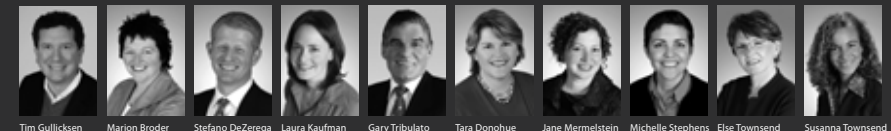


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2062 Green St	1	1	1		1/12/10	599,000	592,000
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3878 Sacramento St	2	1	0	1334	12/31/09	899,000	838,000
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2351 Green St	2	2.5	1	1730	12/16/09	1,325,000	1,310,000
2845 Union St	3	2	1	2168	12/17/09	1,950,000	1,800,000
2030 Broadway #4	2	2	1		12/29/09	1,950,000	1,850,000



Listed at \$14 million, the brick home at 2849 Pacific (center) sold for a confidential price — which is no longer allowed for homes on the multiple listing service.

Prices stabilize — and now must be disclosed

AS EXPECTED, there was a substantial slowdown in sales through the holiday period, with only 15 closings the past month, down from 39 closings the previous month. With data now available for all of 2009, it's a good time to look back and see how the market evolved during a tumultuous year.

By almost all measures, the local housing market ended up in much better shape than it started. Early in the year there was still a tremendous amount of uncertainty about the economy, which translated to a dismal housing market. The year finished much stronger, as government intervention and low interest rates helped inject new life into the market.

During the first quarter of 2009, there were only 36 total transactions — but by the fourth quarter of the year that number had risen to 114, almost on par with the 120 transactions in the fourth quarter of 2007. The number of listed properties in contract went from an anemic 19 percent in the first quarter to a more respectable 35 percent in the fourth quarter. The one statistic that does not appear to be in line with the market recovery is the median sales price, which went from \$940,000 to \$898,250 in 2009 — far from the "pre-crash" median of \$1.185 million at the end of 2007. I don't foresee a return to those levels anytime soon. Still, prices now appear to have stabilized, with even a bit of an uptick.

NO MORE CONFIDENTIAL SALES: There is a major change for the new year in the multiple listing service: Confidential sales are longer allowed. The only drawback is that the new rule takes away all the fun of guessing the price of those high-end home sales.

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



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The Franciscan manzanita was moved on January 27 to a new and more protected location.

Extinct No More

A Franciscan manzanita, last seen in 1942,
is transplanted to a safe place in the Presidio

The plant was then lifted by crane onto a flatbed truck and driven to its new, more isolated home in the Presidio, where a second crane lowered it into the ground.

Before the plant was moved its fruits and seeds were collected and dozens of cuttings were harvested and distributed to a half-dozen nurseries and botanical gardens. Already some of those cuttings have begun to sprout roots. A large, sprawling shrub, the manzanita also had several stems leaning on the ground that

had begun to sprout roots. Some of those stems were also cut and taken to nurseries.

The ultimate goal is to reintroduce the manzanita into the wild in a variety of locations to help ensure its survival.

"We have a chance to rewrite the last page of a million-year-old story and to keep this story alive," says Gluesenkamp, who adds, "It's really an amazing success story."

"It's an incredible find, like Christmas

morning when you're five," says Mark Frey, an ecologist with the Presidio Trust. "For decades everyone has thought this plant was gone and the chance of finding it again was virtually non-existent. As part of our restoration efforts we scour that area all the time — and yet there it was, right in the middle of the corridor."

The Franciscan manzanita was last seen in the city for which it was named in 1942, at the Laurel Hill cemetery, near what is now the University of San Francisco campus. But for a limited number of plants growing in botanical gardens, the species was believed to have been lost to the wild when the cemetery was bulldozed to make way for commercial and residential development.

The discovery was "a huge surprise," says Michael Chasse, a natural resources specialist with the National Park Service who helps monitor and manage rare plants in the Presidio — and who has studied the Franciscan manzanita extensively. "Not only because it was thought to be extinct in the wild, but there was no previous record of the plant in the Presidio."

"It's a good reminder that these less developed parts of San Francisco are reservoirs of natural history," says Frey.

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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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