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How to Become an Ambassador

From the Tower of Power to the heart of Hungary

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Architect to the Stars

Paul Revere Williams design on Divisadero

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THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ OCTOBER 2015

COMING HOME



PAUL MOORE

Pascal Rigo is returning to his original boulangerie at 2325 Pine Street, where he launched his rocket ride to riches and made his pastries available nationwide.

Pascal Rigo's Boulangerie Is Reborn

THE \$100 MILLION MAN IS COMING HOME. Pascal Rigo will reopen his original Pine Street boulangerie in early October, barely two weeks after it was shuttered by Starbucks, which in 2012 bought the maison mere and the 22 La Boulange cafes that grew from it. In the coming weeks he will also reopen five of the cafes, including the prime locations on Fillmore and Union.

For Rigo, it is a homecoming that rarely happens — a return to the place it began 17 years ago when he built his dream bakery and lived with his family above the shop.

“NOUS VOULONS DU PAIN” — “WE WANT SOME BREAD,” he recalled his young daughters saying one morning after he brought a basket of fresh breakfast pastries upstairs. Perhaps the craving was genetic.

“For as long as I can remember, I loved fresh bread,” he said. “I just had this thing about it — the flavor, the smell, the texture. I was just fixated on bread. And not only bread. I was crazy about the bakery, too.”

His enthusiasm proved contagious. The neighborhood

embraced the blue-eyed Frenchman in short pants and the meeting place his bakery soon became.

“From the beginning crowds spilled out the door,” noted local writer Carol Field, author of numerous books on bread baking. “In no time the bakery became a neighborhood institution.”

Soon he added two restaurants nearby on Fillmore. Chez Nous and La Galette quickly became local favorites that also attracted fans from farther afield, and more restaurants followed. Eventually Rigo honed his strategy, closed his various restaurants and, with investors, began opening a consistent and colorful line of La Boulange cafes in key locations throughout San Francisco and beyond.

“For someone who thinks of himself as a baker at heart, Pascal acts like an entrepreneur,” wrote Carol Field, “an impassioned idea-man who can’t stop adding to the repertory.”

Starbucks came calling. They wanted Rigo’s magic and were willing to pay \$100 million for it. His handful of cafes always seemed incidental to getting La Boulange pastries

in thousands of Starbucks coffee shops. The boulangerie suffered, and locals complained, but food sales increased significantly at Starbucks outlets and corporate profits soared.

■ WHEN RIGO ANNOUNCED IN JUNE HE WAS LEAVING, Starbucks promptly said it would close the all 23 locations. Fans cried foul, but Rigo declared the Starbucks venture a success.

“We achieved what we wanted to achieve,” he told the *Chronicle*, “which was to have La Boulange in 12,000 stores.”

Almost immediately came cries for Rigo to take back the bakery and the cafes. It seemed a preposterous idea. Starbucks surely wouldn’t allow the competition, and Rigo had no reason to start over.

Except that he is a baker at heart. And the opportunity to return to the place of first love so rarely comes along.

“I just want to focus and bake,” Rigo told the *Chronicle*, “and make sure we go back to what we love.”

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Support for Friday Nights at the de Young is provided by Hanson Bridgett, the Koret Foundation, and the Wells Fargo Foundation. During Friday Nights, funding from The Hearst Foundations makes possible free general admission to the permanent collection galleries.

A discounted \$15 ticket is required to visit the special exhibition galleries. Fees apply for dining and cocktails.

Photo by Robbie Swerney

LOCAL HISTORY



A cable car at the bottom of the counterbalance at Fillmore and Green in 1915.

SAN FRANCISCO CABLE CAR MUSEUM

The Fillmore Counterbalance

PEOPLE WALKING UP the creaked wooden board sidewalks on Fillmore Street in the early 1890s were treated to an unusual sight: the construction of a new cable counterbalance system on the two blocks of Fillmore between Green and Broadway. As the uphill car descended, it pulled the downhill car up the steep grade, which in turn helped brake the downhill car.

Both the general public and many transit professionals scoffed at the idea.

"You may rest assured that the theory is sound and the system will work," proclaimed W.H. Lynch, superintendent of the Market Street Railway Co.

History proved him correct. The system worked for 46 years — from August 1895 until April 1941.

The United Railroads counterbalance

was a key element in taking the crowds to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915.

"A trip on the counterbalance was hair-raising," Laura Ackley writes in her history of the fair, *San Francisco's Jewel City*. Helen Eells, who was 11 years old in 1915, recounted a ride: "The people would be all standing straight, and they started over the hill. And then everybody was smashed to the bottom of the streetcar, of course, going down, with all on top of each other. Then we straightened out again, and everybody straightened themselves up, trying to pretend they'd never been off balance and lost their dignity. That's how we got to the fair."

■ "THE UNIQUE FILLMORE CABLE CAR SYSTEM" will be the topic of a talk at 7 p.m. on October 13 at 455 Golden Gate Avenue. For more information, visit sfhistory.org.

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Published on the first weekend of each month. Deadline: 20th of prior month
Subscriptions by mail are available for \$30 per year. Please send a check.

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 thank you for your support and encouragement and welcome your ideas and suggestions.



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■ STREET TALK

The Gap's new line coming to Fillmore

The influx of fashion retailers to Fillmore Street continues. Among the newest brands with eyes on Fillmore is **INTERMIX**, a group of 42 boutiques acquired by Gap Inc. in 2012.

Intermix describes itself as "a multi-brand women's fashion retailer" that favors locations on neighborhood streets — such as 2223 Fillmore, now the home of Brooks Brothers' **BLACK FLEECE**, which Intermix hopes to replace next year.

TURN THE PAIGE: A few doors north at 2237 Fillmore, the women's boutique **UMU** has closed and will be succeeded by **PAIGE DENIM**. It's a high-flying brand already available in stores across the country that's now beginning to open its own shops. Fillmore will be the seventh.

MORE MAKEUP: If it's not fashion, it's cosmetics. A new company, **SPACE NK**, plans to bring its curated selection of beauty and wellness products from around the world to 2000 Fillmore, currently home of **PAOLO SHOES**. Space NK is holding a meeting to introduce itself to the neighbors on October 6 at 6 p.m. at Congregation Sherith Israel at 2266 California Street.

PAINT 'N' SIP: The Planning Commission has given the go-ahead to **PINOT'S PALETTE**, which bills itself as "America's fastest-growing franchise," at 1981 Sutter, formerly a deli and grocery. At its 130 existing or planned locations around the country, customers come together for an evening to create a painting while they drink wine.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Conversation with a Cop

CRIME IS UP. Here's one veteran police lieutenant's take on what's happening.



By CHRIS BARNETT

LT. ED DEL CARLO, all 6 feet 6 inches of him, rises up out of his chair in a gritty windowless office inside the fortress-like Northern Station on Fillmore Street and extends a welcoming hand the size of a catcher's mitt. In his other hand are 32 police reports from the day before. The 25-year veteran of the San Francisco Police Department doesn't try to whitewash the situation: Crime is mushrooming citywide — and it's worse in the Fillmore.

"The big growth trend is property crime. But no longer is it only drug dealing addicts who break into cars to steal a laptop, a smart phone, an iPad or any electronic device they can fence within minutes at 7th and Market," he says. "We're seeing more sophisticated, more violent criminals who're coming in from the East Bay, Sacramento, the Central Valley and the Peninsula because they know if they get arrested, chances are they won't do any jail or prison time."

The neighborhood crime surge is affecting both residents and retailers, and crimi-

nals are more brazen. This year, thieves drove a stolen car through the front glass door of the Marc Jacobs fashion boutique at Fillmore and Sacramento around 4 a.m., looted its merchandise and were gone in an estimated five minutes. And twice this year, the glass door of the MAC makeup shop on Fillmore near Pine was shattered in the

"The big growth trend is property crime."

— LT. ED DEL CARLO
San Francisco Police Dept.

early morning hours and the shelves were cleaned of expensive skin creams. In the summer, thieves smashed the glass front door of Dino and Santino's restaurant at Fillmore and California and carted off the cash register.

"Organized retail theft is the new term for shoplifting," says Del Carlo. "It's not just one person slyly slipping a single item

into a pocket or a purse. In this crime spike, we're seeing younger, tougher gang members and copycats wearing backpacks entering a store, grabbing whatever they can and running."

Street criminals no longer just have a specialty — robbing a home when the occupants are gone, or cracking a car window with a spark plug and scooping up anything left in plain sight. "If guys who are on their way to commit auto burglaries see an opportunity to rob someone, they'll rob them," says Del Carlo, who heads a special investigations team of six sergeants. "Auto burglars traditionally were unarmed, but in the last few years, more are carrying weapons."

He emphasizes that most thieves aren't novices. "They can get into apartment garages and into storage facilities and take bicycles and anything of value that can be resold," he says. "There is a lot of new construction in San Francisco, and construction sites have spaces set aside for bicycles. Thieves break in."

TO PAGE 5 ►

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Takes income from homeowners and renters, costs millions in lost taxes

NO on I: Places Moratorium on Housing Construction in the Mission
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Vote YES on H and NO on G

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Geary BRT Project Update!

Notice of Availability for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report and Public Comment Meeting

The Geary Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project proposes to improve bus service and enhance street conditions along the Geary corridor between Downtown and the Outer Richmond. The Geary BRT Project has achieved an important milestone with the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR). The Draft EIS/EIR is available for public review and comment from **October 2 – November 16, 2015.**

Public Comment Meeting
 Thursday, November 5, 2015, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
 St. Francis Hall in the St. Mary's Cathedral
 1111 Gough Street, San Francisco

For special accommodations or language assistance, please call 415-593-1655 at least 72 hours in advance.
For more information, including how to submit comments and where to view the Draft EIS/EIR,
 visit www.gearybrt.org, email gearybrt@sfcta.org, or call 311.



CRIME WATCH

Attempted Robbery
Sutter and Lyon Streets
August 28, 6:25 a.m.

A car pulled up alongside a man who was standing by the side of the street waiting for a ride. A stranger jumped out and approached the man. He heard others inside the car encouraging the passenger who had gotten out, shouting: "Get it! Get it!" Realizing he was about to be robbed, he fled, with the would-be robber in pursuit. Eventually he managed to outpace the suspect, who returned to his car and left. Later all passengers of the car were arrested in the Mission District.

Shoplifting, Robbery
Masonic Avenue and Geary Boulevard
September 1, 8:55 p.m.

A Target employee saw a man leaving the store carrying several items for which he had not paid. The employee approached the man, who punched him in the face, breaking his nose. Additional employees intervened and detained the suspect until the police arrived. The suspect was placed under arrest. Because he had used force during the theft, what would have been a misdemeanor shoplifting charge became a felony robbery case.

Aggravated Assault with Knife
Fillmore and O'Farrell Streets
September 3, 2:20 a.m.

Two men who knew each other got into an argument about events in their past. One man threatened to kill the other, then took a hammer and smashed the windshield of the other man's car. He then grabbed a knife and chased the other man down the street. Witnesses called the police, who detained both men. After interviewing several witnesses and considering the evidence, police transported the suspect who wielded the hammer and the knife to Northern Station, where he was booked.

Hit and Run Resulting in Death of a Dog
California and Lyon Streets
September 4, 2:26 p.m.

A woman was chasing her dog down the sidewalk when the animal suddenly ran into the street and was struck and killed by a car. The driver stopped briefly, but then sped off. The woman called the police. They informed her that, although the driver would probably not have been found at fault for the accident, it is still a violation to leave the scene. Police have no suspects at this time.

Graffiti
Geary Boulevard and Masonic Avenue
September 7, 2:47 a.m.

An officer on patrol saw a man writing on the wall of a business with a large permanent marker. On seeing the uniformed officer approach, the man said, "I'm an artist." He had written "I'm a good bad boy" in several places on the wall. The suspect, a 36-year-old man, was cited for vandalism.

Outstanding Warrant
California Street and Presidio Avenue
September 19, 7:15 p.m.


Officers received a call concerning an individual who was creating a disturbance on a Muni bus. They detained the man and noted he was wearing a hospital wristband with a different name than the one he had given them. The suspect insisted the wristband belonged to a friend. The officers entered the name on the wristband into their database and learned there was an outstanding warrant against the man for false imprisonment. He was arrested.



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'Organized Retail Theft' Is the New Term for Shoplifting

► FROM PAGE 3

Crooks are aware that residents may be more cautious about leaving valuables visible in cars, but tourists, particularly foreigners and out of towners, are easier prey. The Palace of Fine Arts is a hotbed of auto burglaries, Del Carlo says. Visitors park, take photos, then come back to their rental cars and find the trunk has been popped and their luggage stolen. His message: Do not keep anything valuable in a car in any neighborhood in San Francisco.

Some crime reports involve unimaginable loss. Del Carlo says a businessman-tourist from Vietnam recently reported that his \$35,000 Vertu smartphone was stolen from the backseat of his rental car; the phone was sitting in plain sight. A Union Street resident packed his car with two \$3,000 bicycles and \$1,200 in electronic gear on a Friday night before a getaway weekend in Lake Tahoe; he was cleaned out sometime during the night.

But a growing number of crimes these days are not planned to snag upscale goods. Del Carlo says police are finding "more and more severely mentally ill people roaming our streets — not just on Market Street — who are responsible for some of the unprovoked attacks."

Local police personnel are hard-pressed to meet the increasing challenges. For starters, Northern Station now has more territory to protect, Del Carlo points out; the station's western boundary was recently expanded from Steiner to Divisadero Street. Overall, SFPD's sworn officers total 2,178 citywide today, compared with 1,940 officers in 2008, but a spokesperson says the department is still understaffed due to attri-

CRIME IS GOING UP						
	CITYWIDE			NORTHERN DISTRICT		
	2014	2015	Difference	2014	2015	Difference
VIOLENT CRIMES						
Homicide	23	28	+22%	2	5	+150%
Rape	222	223	+0%	33	17	-48%
Robbery	1,842	2,124	+15%	203	238	+17%
Aggravated Assault	1,549	1,608	+4%	152	169	+11%
TOTAL	3,636	3,938	+10	390	429	+10%
PROPERTY CRIMES						
Burglary	3,210	3,069	-4%	507	454	+10%
Auto Theft	3,786	4,298	+14%	430	517	+20%
Theft from Vehicle	9,757	14,187	+45%	1,623	2,784	+72%
Arson	128	176	+38%	15	27	+80%
Other Theft	10,035	10,937	+9%	1,333	1,716	+29%
TOTAL	26,916	32,667	+21	3,908	5,498	+10%

Source: Northern Station

Through July 2015

tion. During this year and next, five police academy classes should put 300 more cops on the streets. Until then, Northern, like other stations citywide, is short officers.

But Del Carlo isn't making excuses, explaining that much depends on the circumstances. "Generally, the way it works is a first-time auto burglar gets three years of probation. That means we can search the person, his vehicle or his home without a search warrant for a period of three years," he says. "But there are no absolutes. A first offender's probation can be extended or he could be arraigned and go to jail."

Typically, though, Del Carlo says prop-

erty crime offenders need multiple arrests — four or five — before they go to jail.

He echoes what other cops have complained about: that the passage of Proposition 47 last November has handicapped their crime fighting. The proposition downgraded numerous property crimes and drug possession charges from felonies to misdemeanors. Del Carlo maintains the act has backfired on the city and its residents. Before, if the value of a stolen item was \$400 or more, the burglary was treated as a felony. After Prop 47 passed, the value of the stolen goods or the drugs has to be at least \$950 for a felony arrest. The auto bur-

glar arrested with someone else's iPad, laptop or smart phone in hand will be charged with a misdemeanor and isn't likely to see the inside of a cell.

For all the furor over Prop 47, the local jail population so far has remained about the same. According to the Sheriff's Department, which runs the three county jails — two on Bryant Street and one in San Bruno — the inmate count on September 25 was 1,235. A year earlier, it was 1,273. A year before that, in 2013, it was 1,288.

Still, time in local jails doesn't come easily. "If we catch someone committing a home burglary and there is good evidence — like a clear video or some other corroborating evidence — the D.A. may file on them, and they may do six months or get time served," says Del Carlo. "Juries in San Francisco send a very small margin of offenders to state prison. Yet if the same violent crime was committed in Daly City or in San Mateo County, the guy would go to state prison."

His advice: San Franciscans have to get involved in their own protection by paying attention, being alert and calling the SFPD when something looks suspicious. "We can't arrest our way out of this problem," he says. "But I believe people want to help us, particularly if they have been a victim or know someone who has had a horrific loss."

Lt. Ed Del Carlo was transferred last month from Northern Station to Taraval Station, where he continues to head a special investigations team. Lt. Jenn Jackson, who headed patrol at Northern Station, has replaced him.



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CURATED SHOPPING FOR MODERN LIVING



A new find for cookie monsters

"I always read the monthly issue of the New Fillmore," writes Bay Galvez, a Pacific Avenue resident. "My favorite section is the Food & Wine page."

Then came a suggestion. "I was wondering why a new cookie bakeshop has not been discovered and featured on the Food & Wine page. The name of this shop is CookieLove, owned by Erika Olson, at 1488 Pine Street, near Polk Street."

Enclosed was a card listing CookieLove's offerings, priced at \$2.50 each, including such unusual flavors as Peanut Butter Cup (above), Lavender White Chocolate, Milk Chocolate Blueberry, Potato Chip Pecan and Ginger Spice. See them all at cookie lovesf.com.

"I have checked the five cookies I bought and ate," wrote Galvez. "They are lightly sweetened and delicious. I hope you will feature this new cookie shop."

■ GOT A FAVORITE SPOT? Share it with your neighbors. Email us at editors@newfillmore.com.

'Noble Rot' Comes to the Neighborhood

By MARK FANTINO

A FEW MONTHS AGO, I dined at a restaurant with a wine list that always excites me, its scope far reaching and moderately priced. I noticed written on a chalkboard behind the bar an offering of 2005 Château d'Yquem Premier Cru Supérieur by the ounce. I leapt at the chance. It had been 24 years since my first taste.

I was rewarded with the intense perfume in the nose of honeysuckle, orange blossoms and burnt sugar; the radiant color — Château d'Yquem seems to shine from a light within; the dreamlike flutterings of seducing flavors, the balanced acidity, the heavenly long finish.

Without doubt, it was \$25 well spent.

I am the wine buyer at the neighborhood restaurant Chouquets, at Washington and Fillmore, and I mustered the courage to suggest purchasing a few bottles to the owner, Mickael Azoulay. He loved the idea, and we've been pouring it since, often pairing it with our foie gras, but also just by itself. I usually stand by and watch, bottle still in hand, as diners take their first sips. The dazzled looks on their faces say it all.

My first encounter with Château d'Yquem occurred at the tail end of the rather dizzying two-year program at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, in early autumn of 1992. The vintage used for our educational purposes was the now legendary 1983, then only nine years in the bottle. My first memory was its shimmering golden complexion; though now, nearly 25 years later,



Chouquets is now offering Sauternes from Château d'Yquem for \$25 an ounce.

if you are lucky enough to find a 1983, its hue will have transmuted into a gloriously rich caramelized amber.

We tasted the 1983 compared with other lesser Sauternes and alongside some wonderful Trockenbeerenauslese. It was love at first taste. The Château d'Yquem soared above the rest in texture and mouthfeel. To say it "robed" the palate is somehow not enough; instead it "undressed" the taste buds. Never thick or syrupy, a Château d'Yquem is lacy and delicate, yet supple and rich. But its most remarkable quality is the harmony of flavor.

Château d'Yquem is a Sauternes, but different on every level from others. "Luscious wine" was the term used to describe

Château d'Yquem in previous centuries. Now it is referred to as dessert wine, or even sweet wine, which carries with it too many unfortunate associations.

What makes Château d'Yquem so fanatically sought and in a category by itself is the presence of *botrytis cinerea*, or "noble rot." For this to happen, the summer needs to be hot enough for the grapes to ripen early, before the autumn rains arrive. *Botrytis cinerea*, a fungus, attacks the grapes, covering them completely with an ashen powder that dehydrates and concentrates their rich fruit sugars into a moldy pulp. Noble rot also contributes to the flavor of the wine. It's expensive to produce because an entire harvest can be left to wither and die waiting for the right conditions. Château d'Yquem waits with high anxiety to begin its harvest. There are many years that there is nothing to pick.

Another impressive quality of a Château d'Yquem is longevity; I have yet to hear about one too old to drink. In the late 1980s, there was a tasting of the 1784 vintage, one of the 250 bottles of d'Yquem purchased by Thomas Jefferson. The wine was by then a warm mahogany, almost as dark as Coca-Cola, and ranks third on a list of 10 of the most expensive bottles of wine in the world. Celebrated wine-master Michael Broadbent's notes on that bottle consist of 11 small words: "The wine was perfect in every sense: color, bouquet and taste." Thomas Jefferson was more glowing in his appraisal when he bought it, proclaiming d'Yquem "France's best white wine."

THINK CURRENT & AUTHENTIC

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CLAUDIA VOLPI throws down a friendly ultimatum: “I challenge you to find an Italian who doesn’t own a pair of Superga shoes.”

And she’s hoping the sporty “People’s Shoes of Italy” will soon become common footfare for Fillmore residents as well, now that the doors to her new boutique are open at 2326 Fillmore Street.

The shoes — slip-ons, tie classics and hi-tops for women, men and children — look fresh and modern. But in fact, their origins hark back to 1911, when an entrepreneur in Torino, Italy, Walter Martiny, had the idea of using vulcanized rubber to make waterproof boots, revolutionizing footwear for the agricultural workers there. In later years, the shoes evolved to become tennis wear with carefully crafted cushioning and support — and then fashion statements when leather, wool and silk and thicker soles and wedge heels were incorporated into the designs.

Volpi says she has worn and loved Superga shoes since she was a little girl, and she has the evidence to prove it: a picture of a slightly tattered red pair she wore back in the day, later worn by each of her three children.

“They’re comfortable, stylish and affordable, so you can easily own more than one pair,” she says. Children’s shoes range from \$40 to \$55; adult sizes from \$65 for the classic tie version in a single color to \$200 for those in special collections, such as last year’s collaboration with Rodarte.

Volpi moved here grudgingly from New York City five years ago for her Italian-born husband’s work. There she had a flourishing career as a marketing and banking execu-



Superga is a perfect fit for the city’s casually elegant vibe, says shop owner Claudia Volpi.

Gaga for Superga

New shop offers classic casual Italian shoes

tive — and the dream of making her favorite Superga shoes more easily available in America.

“Whenever I wore them in New York,” she says, “people would stop me and ask: ‘Where did you get those shoes?’”

But first she joined the board of her son’s Italian school, with the goal of expanding it beyond a small preschool. That goal is

accomplished, with San Francisco’s Italian International School now boasting 220 elementary students.

“Working on that school project really allowed me to put my roots down here,” she says. “And now I know I’m in a place I want to be for the rest of my life.”

Now that her youngest is 5, Volpi felt ready to pursue her dream of opening a

Superga boutique, offering year-round footwear she says is a perfect fit for San Francisco’s “casually elegant” fashion vibe.

Then she found the perfect spot — vacated last year by clothes purveyor Peruvian Connection, which had lovingly restored the inside and brought it up to code. She and her family had rented a house nearby when they first relocated to San Francisco, and Volpi fell in love with the neighborhood.

“I always wanted to be on Fillmore, because it’s a place where locals shop — and live,” she says. “I always loved that within a few blocks I could get lunch, have my nails done, shop, make copies and do my banking. I could have gone to Union Square, but those are not the customers I want to serve.”

There is only one other Superga boutique in the U.S., in New York City.

“As we’ve been preparing the store, one thing that’s already been so incredibly uplifting is that so many people have stopped by the window every day, some just signaling their support, some pointing to their feet, showing they already wear Supergas,” says Volpi.

“My concept is that this will be a family store where folks will just want to come in and see what’s new, or to stop by and talk on their way to or from school,” she says. To that end, she plans to set up a children’s play space equipped with coloring books and toys and a station equipped with an espresso maker and biscotti for the more mature shoppers.

“We’re Italian,” she says. “We feed people.”

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PHOTO: GREGORY BERTOLINI

By Eleni Kounalakis

THE *San Francisco Chronicle* once described our midrise San Francisco apartment building as the "Tower of Power." Of the 12 families in the building, three, including mine, were very active in national politics. The biggest power was a founder of the Esprit clothing company, Susie Tompkins Buell, who lived with her husband on the top floor. After we moved in, I told Susie that any time she wanted to expand one of her standard high-dollar, 30-person sit-down dinners to include a lower-dollar cocktail party, I was in. And so our progressive-progressive parties were born. Susie's fund-raising infrastructure managed everything for the San Francisco events. My own base was mainly Sacramento and the

■ BOOK EXCERPT

construction industry. But our combination had chemistry. The parties were fun and exciting, and people flocked to the events. We hosted dozens of fund-raisers for Democratic candidates and progressive causes. Twice in 2006, our guest of honor was a rising star in the Democratic Party: Illinois senator Barack Obama.

But from the very beginning, Susie and I were both strong supporters of Bill and Hillary Clinton. Coincidentally, Susie first met President Clinton in the early 90s at a fund-raiser my father and Phil Angelides threw for him in Sacramento. A plaque on the wall of the clubhouse in our Laguna West project notes that then-Governor Bill Clinton inaugurated its opening.

Susie and I were overjoyed to join forces for Hillary's presidential campaign. But I greatly admired and respected Barack Obama, who called me many times to ask if I would switch over and work for his campaign. I made it clear that I was devoted to Hillary's candidacy, but I assured Senator Obama that he would never hear a negative word from me and that when the primary was over, I would back the winner with all my might. In a December 24, 2006, article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, I commented that my dream ticket would have Hillary at the top and that "I would love to see Barack Obama as the vice presidential candidate."

We all know what happened next. After a grueling and competitive race, Senator Obama emerged as the Democratic candidate. Inside I was crushed. But true to my word,

How to Become an Ambassador

A local finds another way to join the political fray

I snapped into gear to help. Two days after Hillary ended her campaign, I told *USA Today* that one dream was over, but now there was a new dream, and we needed to move quickly to win back the White House for the Democrats. Senator Obama called me right away and asked me to serve as a member of his national finance council. I said yes, of course, and worked hard to encourage my Hillary-supporting friends to help him win. At the convention in Denver, in what was a bittersweet moment for me, I cast my delegate vote for Senator Obama.

THE DAY BEFORE the inauguration, I visited Nancy Pelosi in the Speaker's office in the Capitol. Nancy had mentored, trained and guided me since I was a 20-something staffer for the California Democratic Party. I had been in her office several times during the previous two years. But it was still a thrill to visit the historic rooms,

which had been occupied by some of our country's greatest leaders — and I firmly believe that Nancy is one of them. Now, as we sat down, she asked if I still wanted to become an ambassador.

My heart skipped a beat. If I did, she said, she would recommend me to the president. I couldn't help but respond, "Nancy, are you sure that I'm qualified to do this?" We both knew that I didn't doubt my capabilities in management and leadership. I was regularly recognized as an important leader in the Sacramento community — as a successful businesswoman and influential community activist. It had been nearly 10 years since I first told her, along with Hillary Clinton and Dianne Feinstein, that I wanted to serve my country as an ambassador. During that time I involved myself in several important international efforts, as part of the Greek American community, as a member of the California World Trade Commission and as a trustee of the World Council of Religions for Peace. But even after all of that, it still seemed somewhat incongruous to me that a Sacramento land developer could become a U.S. ambassador.

She smiled. "Eleni, I've known many people who have served as ambassadors. Some of them do not come with vast diplomatic experience. What they bring is an outside perspective, business savvy and leadership skills. But let me just say, even in a crowded field of talented people, Eleni, you stand out." As if she recognized the kind of self-doubt that was all too common in even the most qualified women, she grabbed my hand, the one with my wedding ring. Leaning in close, she said, "Never forget, you are like this golden ring."

Nancy always had a mother's faith in my abilities. I promised myself that no matter what happened with the ambassadorship, I would never let her down.

A few weeks later, at the end of February 2009, I received a phone call from Hillary Clinton, who was just weeks into her new job as secretary of state under President Obama.

"Eleni, I am calling because the president has authorized me to ask if you would serve as his ambassador to Singapore."

Because I'd been so passionately involved in Hillary's presidential campaign, this was not the scenario that



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At left, Eleni and Markos Kounalakis host then-Senator Barack Obama in their apartment at 2500 Steiner. Above, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton swears her in.

either of us had envisioned. But clearly she had moved on and was ready to serve our country. So was I.

I BEGAN TO WONDER why it was taking so long for the White House to make its announcement. Whenever I asked this question, I was told to sit tight, that it was coming. Finally, in late July 2009, as I was playing golf with Markos at the Presidio Golf Course in San Francisco, the White House called.

It was a lower-level staffer calling to tell me that Singapore was a "nonstarter."

"But I'm preparing for confirmation," I said, dumbfounded. "The government of Singapore has already sent a cable approving me!"

He went on to say that he could offer me one of four other European countries, including Hungary.

I managed to hide my distress until the call was over.

For six months, since Hillary's call at the start of the year, I'd worried every day that my nomination would be derailed. I was exhausted, and my hair had begun to fall out in clumps. Now I turned to Markos on the ninth hole of the golf course.

"We're not going to Singapore. It's gone," I tearfully told him. "We will have to start the process all over again, from the beginning. Markos, are we sure we still want to do this?"

Markos gave me a look that made it clear how ridiculous I sounded. He leaned on his driver, smiling. "Eleni, they've offered us Budapest. That would be amazing!"

Markos was delighted at the prospect of returning to the place where he'd covered historic events, but I was disappointed beyond belief not to get the Singapore post, and I didn't give up right away. I appealed to Nancy Pelosi to see if there was any way to get the White House to change its mind. As we sat on the sofa in her Pacific Heights living room, looking out over San Francisco Bay, I remembered all the times I'd sat in the same spot, listening to Nancy as she shared with me her own journey of overcoming challenges to become the highest-ranking woman in the history of the United States. Now here she was, Speaker of the House of Representatives, wearing her bedroom slippers, giving me counsel. Yet if I was expecting much sympathy, I was mistaken.

"Dear, you'll be going to an important post in Europe,"

she pointed out. "Most people would consider this a step up." We talked for an hour, but the conclusion was the same. These things happen with the White House. It is an unpredictable process, and they are known to change their minds.

I walked down the street from Nancy's house to my apartment and packed up my boxes of information about Singapore, along with my name tag from charm school with the Lion City's flag. Over the following days, I said my goodbyes to everyone at East Asian and Pacific Affairs and made my way over to the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. I stripped off the brown paper wrapper I'd used to cover the outside of Lee Kuan Yew's book to conceal my impending appointment and transferred it to a volume about Hungarian history that I'd found in a San Francisco bookstore.

I was going to Hungary.

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Enforcement	In July, The City opened a new office to enforce and administer the law	Allows neighbors to sue each other over perceived violations regardless of The City's findings

¹Airbnb Analysis – Prop. F, 7/11/15



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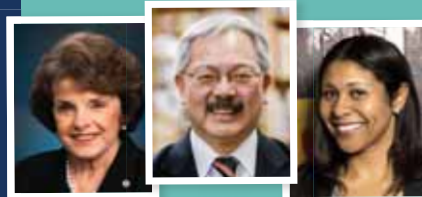


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ARCHITECT TO THE STARS

Pioneering Paul Revere Williams worked mostly in Hollywood, and once on Divisadero

By BRIDGET MALEY

THE HOUSE AT 2555 Divisadero was designed by an "important, neglected California designer," the Planning Department's Citywide Historic Building Survey in 1976 noted. That architect, Paul Revere Williams, has since been rediscovered.

Williams, one of the few African-American architects working in California in the decades before World War II, is now well known, thanks to the perseverance and publications of his granddaughter, Karen E. Hudson. Her books lovingly tell the story of this remarkably talented and pioneering architect. A key designer of the Hollywood Regency style, Williams was a master at slenderizing and refining Classical forms and motifs, creating a Modern version of shapes and features extracted from traditional architecture.

Often referred to as "the architect to the stars," Williams designed many Hollywood and Beverly Hills mansions, as well



Paul Revere Williams in 1923 became the first black member of the American Institute of Architects.

as some iconic Southern California buildings such as the Golden State Mutual Insurance Company — the largest black-owned insurance company west of the Mississippi — and the Music Corporation of America headquarters and the Saks Fifth Avenue store, both in Beverly Hills. He also made important renovations to two luxury hotels: the Beverly Hills and the Ambassador, which has since been demolished.

While Williams' work in Northern California was limited to a few commissions, he partnered with his clients at 2555 Divisadero to create a Hollywood Regency style house set amidst the much more traditional Colonial Revival houses atop Pacific Heights.

Williams, a native of Los Angeles, attended the University of Southern California. He worked briefly for John C. Austin, a Los Angeles architect who designed the Griffith Observatory, before opening his own office in the early 1920s. The first



The Hollywood Regency style house at 2555 Divisadero is one of the few commissions designed by Paul Revere Williams in Northern California.

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African-American member of the American Institute of Architects (in 1923), Williams was also appointed to the Los Angeles Planning Commission, serving from 1920 to 1923. An architect with exceptional marketing and drafting skills, he soon had a repertoire of clients composed of many Hollywood A-listers — including Frank Sinatra, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, Tyrone Power, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson and Barbara Stanwyck. Williams also designed a home for Charles Correll, a white comedian who, ironically, played a black man on the 1930s radio serial *Amos ‘n’ Andy*.

In 1939, the year he completed the house at 2555 Divisadero Street, *Life* magazine wrote that Williams was “perhaps the most successful Negro artist in the U.S.” Several years earlier, in the July 1937 edition of *American Magazine*, Williams wrote a highly personal account of his professional life titled “I Am a Negro.” He observed:

Virtually everything pertaining to my professional life, during those early years, was influenced by my need to offset race prejudice, by my effort to force white people to consider me as an individual rather than as a member of a race. Occasionally I encountered irreconcilables who simply refused to give me a hearing but, on the whole, I have been treated with an amazing fairness.

Williams spent hours learning to draw upside-down so he could sit across the table from prospective clients, rather than risk making them uncomfortable by sitting beside them.

It is unclear how Williams met the San Francisco dentist Leon Cuenin and his wife, Lillian. Williams designed their house at the top of Divisadero with the same commitment to detail that he applied in all of his projects.

With a distinctly vertical orientation at the front facade, the tall, slender, divided light windows form the focal point of the Divisadero Street elevation. Thin, fluted pilasters, capped with a simple capital, span both the upper stories and engage the roof. The delicate iron railings of the balconettes give the building its Hollywood Regency character. The lower story

window has a gentle curve that further accentuates the railings. The stylized, Greek-inspired urns on the lower balcony railings are particularly clever. A simple, gabled roof covers a composition of classically inspired forms that has some Palladian influences.

The interior of the house features one of Williams’ signature elements: a curved staircase that ascends from the dramatic foyer to the top floor, capped with a brilliant skylight.

The Cuenins enjoyed entertaining and the house was soon host to many social events and parties. About 10 years after it was completed, the house was featured in an April 1950 house tour, “San Francisco Old and New,” which benefited the Bay Area Vassar Club. Other Modern houses on the tour included a Joe Escherich house at 3085 Pacific and, according to a *Chronicle* article highlighting the tour, Herb Caen’s “newly decorated Chinese Modern bachelor apartment” at 290 Lombard Street on Telegraph Hill. The Cuenins’ house was described in the same *Chronicle* profile as the “background for a priceless collection of authentic Regency furniture and objets d’art as well as their French impressionistic paintings.”

The Divisadero Street house served as the backdrop for the whirlwind courtship and marriage of the Cuenins’ only daughter, Diane, to a French beau, Regis Tardieu, the Marquis de Meleissey. The Cuenins hosted a wedding party for the much-feted couple at their home in February 1952. However, by November 1953, the *Chronicle* reported that the two had split, noting: “the news of the definite break in the matrimonial bonds comes as a surprise.” Diane subsequently married George Otis Lammers, an insurance executive, and her parents again hosted a small party in their home to celebrate the occasion.


Cuenin died in 1972 and the house eventually sold to Gardner Mein and his wife, Elaine, known as Lani. Gardner Mein founded the *Nob Hill Gazette* and was an ardent preservationist who played a key role in rescuing the Palace of Fine Arts.



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Typical of Williams’ designs, 2555 Divisadero features a curved staircase, pictured in *Architect & Engineer* in 1940.



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2484 Bush St	3	2	1	1,570	15	9/11/2015	1,400,000	1,700,000
2245 Franklin St	2	2	1	1,243	11	9/7/2015	1,248,000	1,700,000
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Underpriced home fetches a big premium

Demand for real estate in San Francisco's most desirable neighborhoods remains at a fever pitch, with one recent buyer going more than the extra mile — or million — to seal a deal for a big-ticket home that probably should have been priced higher.



A spacious, four-bedroom home at 3621 Washington Street (left) that sold in early September originally hit the market priced just under \$5 million. While that's a big number, the average sales price for a single-family home in Presidio Heights during the last year was \$6.67 million.

Here's an even bigger number: \$7.5 million. That was the selling price for 3621 Washington — nearly 50 percent more than the original listing price. And that's not even the largest premium paid for a home in Presidio Heights this year. Just

a block away, 3475 Jackson Street sold for 54.5 percent more than its original listing price in March.

In my opinion, the Washington Street home was priced too low given its prime location, fine architecture, large lot and potential for future appreciation. Knowledgeable agents expected the property would generate multiple offers, and that's exactly what happened.

— Data and commentary provided by PATRICK BARBER, president of Pacific Union. Contact him at patrick.barber@pacunion.com or call 415-345-3001.

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Mayor Ed Lee.

Working for the Fillmore
and all of San Francisco.

As our Mayor, Ed Lee got it done.

He cut unemployment rates
and invested in our neighborhood
commercial districts.

Now he's working every day to
keep San Francisco a place where
everyone belongs.



**PLEASE JOIN SUPERVISOR LONDON BREED
AND LT. GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM IN
SUPPORTING MAYOR LEE'S RE-ELECTION.**



MAYOR LEE IS ALSO SUPPORTED BY:

Elected Officials:

Governor Jerry Brown
Senator Dianne Feinstein
House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi
Congresswoman Jackie Speier
Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom
Attorney General Kamala Harris
Controller Betty Yee
Board of Equalization Member Fiona Ma
Assemblymember David Chiu
Assemblymember Phil Ting
District Attorney George Gascon
Treasurer José Cisneros
Assessor-Recorder Carmen Chu
Board of Supervisors President London Breed
Supervisor Julie Christensen
Supervisor Malia Cohen
Supervisor Mark Farrell

Supervisor Jane Kim

Supervisor Katy Tang
Supervisor Norman Yee
Supervisor Scott Wiener
California Democratic Party Chair John Burton

Unions:

International Federation of Professional and
Technical Engineers Local 21
Laborers Local 261
Municipal Executives Association
Police Officers Association
San Francisco Building and Construction Trades
Service Employees International Union Local 87
Teamster Joint Council 7
UA Local 38, Plumbers & Pipefitters
United Educators of San Francisco
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 648

Political Clubs and Organizations:

Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club
Asian Pacific Democratic Club
District 5 Democratic Club
FDR Democratic Club
Mission Democratic Club
Raoul Wallenberg Jewish Democratic Club
San Francisco Democratic County Central
Committee
San Francisco Young Democrats
SF Moderates
SF Tech Dems
SFSU College Democrats
Westside Chinese Democratic Club
Willie B. Kennedy Democratic Club



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