

# THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ AUGUST 2016



Nate Thurmond and his Silver Shadow were familiar sights in the neighborhood when he owned a restaurant on Fillmore Street.

## Big Nate: a Good Neighbor

BY MARK J. MITCHELL

SPORTS FANS MOURNED the death of Nate Thurmond, one of the greatest basketball players of all time, who died on July 16 at the age of 74. He was the first player ever to score a quadruple-double in the history of the game and the only player to have his number retired by both the Cleveland Cavaliers and the Golden State Warriors.

He will be remembered as an immortal of the game, and many San Franciscans will also think of him as the man behind Big Nate’s Barbecue for 20 years. Those of us with deep roots in the Fillmore have other memories. Back in the 1970s — when Pacific Heights started strictly on the north side of California Street and everything south was still the Western Addition — Nate the Great roamed our little corner of San Francisco.





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### FROM THE ARCHIVES



Apartments at 2000 Post under construction in 1986, looking east.

#### ■ 30 YEARS AGO

##### Winterland gone, 2000 Post rising

The second major apartment complex to be built in San Francisco in the last 10 years, a four-story building with over 300 apartments, is going up right now in most of the block from Steiner to Pierce and Sutter to Post, on the site of the old Winterland dance hall. Applications are already being taken for the first 92 units, 52 of which will be ready for occupancy in August and 40 in September, 1986.

■ **MIO OPENS:** Kozo's fashion boutique expands to a second location and shop owner Miyo Ota exclaims: "Tell everyone that finally, finally we have a space!" And what a space. Look for party excitement involving Kozo, Mio and the new Harry's Bar. They'll sponsor a block party for neighbors and clients this summer with music, food and fashion.

■ **BACK AT THE BROWN BAG:** Yvonne Ramirez, the mainstay clerk at Brown Bag until she took a fall from her window last March that doctors thought initially would kill her, is now putting in Thursday afternoons at the store again. It's great to see her back.

#### ■ 20 YEARS AGO

##### Competing bids to renovate synagogue

The Redevelopment Agency commissioners heard presentations from two competing bidders for developing two adjacent lots the agency owns at the corner of Bush and Laguna, one of which has the dilapidated Bush Street synagogue. The agency sweetened the pot, offering the lots for \$1 each instead of the \$400,000 they had asked originally for the synagogue.

■ **FOOD & WINE:** Ed Schwartz writes: "If your taste buds are tired of the same old, same old, I have the answer to your wishes and here it is, faster than you can say Adnan Abusharkh. He is a friendly restaurateur — from Jerusalem no less — who has established a place of business at Sutter and Fillmore called Pride of the Mediterranean. . . . Cafe Kati just gets better and better. . . . At The Meetinghouse, superb American dishes taken to the heights of good taste."

#### ■ 10 YEARS AGO

##### No more snow on Fillmore hill

Last year it snowed in the neighborhood on the hottest day of the year — and 15,000 people showed up to watch world-class skiers jump down the Fillmore hill. The ski jump is back, but this year it won't be on Fillmore. And it won't be free. Organizers have announced that the extreme event will move to AT&T Park.

## THE NEW FILLMORE

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##### Connecting the neighborhood

Every month, 20,000 copies of the New Fillmore circulate 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

Work finally starting on the Elite Cafe

After months of sitting empty, its iconic neon sign gone dark, the venerable ELITE CAFE is finally stirring.

“Big visual changes, but still very much in spirit with the restaurant,” says new owner Andy Chun, who has promised the Art Deco period piece will be maintained and refreshed. “We are mainly doing cosmetic work — paint, finishes, new lighting fixtures — and furniture.”

Chun says the New Orleans flavor of the menu will continue when the restaurant reopens. “August is a big month for us,” he says. “Everything has been ordered and we are putting everything together. We’re hoping to be open in mid-September.”

■  
**HEIDI SAYS:** “My lease was up and I had to decide if I wanted to dedicate more time to my business or to my family — and when I put it that way, it became a simple decision.” So Heidi Sabelhaus Myers — who for a time had three women’s fashion shops on Fillmore — closed **HEIDI SAYS SHOES** at 2105 Fillmore at the end of July and has consolidated operations at the original **HEIDI SAYS** at 2426 Fillmore.

The ex-shoe shop will become a new home for **ATELIER COLOGNE**, a *parfumerie* with boutiques in Paris, New York and Hong Kong.

■  
**DOWN ON UNION STREET:** “Clearly our neighborhood is in transition and has been for some time now,” writes Eleanor Carpenter, longtime president of the Union Street Association. “Astronomical increases in rents are forcing out small businesses, and property owners don’t seem to care. Retail locations remain empty. I have requested a meeting with the property owners to see if this trend can be modified or reversed.”

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



CANOPY



Canopy's workspace upstairs at 2193 Fillmore will feature designer furnishings in the communal areas (left) and private offices (right).

A Stylish Office Close to Home

Designer Yves Behar’s team is creating a new co-working space above Peet’s

A NEW SHARED “forward-thinking workspace” with refined aesthetics and upscale amenities is in the works in a long-vacant upstairs space at Fillmore and Sacramento.

Expected to open in September, Canopy will offer shared tables, a personal desk or a private office in an airy space with communal areas and conference rooms for a price: \$650 to \$4,000 per month.

The concept of “workspaces located in the heart of where people live” is the brainchild of industrial designer Yves Behar, developer Amir Mortazavi and investor Steve Mohebi, all of whom live nearby.

“Canopy was born from a desire to have a place near our homes where we could work and be inspired,” said Behar. “Our goal is to bring great people together in a



JUSTIN BUELL

Locals: Steve Mohebi, Yves Behar and Amir Mortazavi in their new space.

mature work environment that stimulates great ideas that design can amplify.”

Many of Behar’s own designs will be featured, including his modern office furniture for Herman Miller, his Juicero Press

juicer and Sodastream sparkling water. Jane on Fillmore will do the catering, and there will be Sight Glass coffee and Pique tea.

While Fillmore is the first Canopy location, the founders hope to expand the concept to other locations throughout the country and eventually around the world.

“Pacific Heights — and specifically Fillmore Street — was the perfect place to prototype the Canopy concept,” Behar told *Forbes*, “because the demand just wasn’t being met.”

Mortazavi pointed to the many desirable aspects of living in Pacific Heights and to Fillmore’s restaurants and boutiques.

“We never really need to leave the neighborhood, except to work,” he said. “Canopy fulfills the missing piece of having a perfect living situation.”

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## CRIME WATCH

### Burglary of Vehicle Divisadero and Lombard June 1, 9:35 p.m.

Plainclothes units were conducting a surveillance operation, hoping to stem the rise of car burglaries in the area, when they saw a black Chevy sedan occupied by two men enter the Walgreens parking lot. The passenger emerged and used his cellphone flashlight to peer into a car parked in the lot. The driver moved his car to face the exit of the lot, then got out and broke the parked car's window.

The men then removed two bags from the car. The officers took both men into custody. A search of the suspects' vehicle revealed a window punch, two black backpacks and a pair of gloves.

The owner of the burglarized vehicle confirmed the backpacks belonged to him. The driver of the suspects' car had a suspended license, so his vehicle was towed. A computer check revealed both suspects were on probation for auto burglary. The men were transported to county jail.

### Possession of Firearm, Methamphetamine Franklin and Ellis June 2, 11:37 p.m.

Officers spotted a Chevy Blazer with broken brake lights and conducted a traffic stop. The driver told the officers: "You can take my car. I don't have a license." The police told the driver to get out of the vehicle, and as he complied, they saw a plastic baggie of methamphetamine on the driver's seat. While conducting an arrest search, they found a small handgun in the driver's pocket and a baggie of marijuana in the center console. The vehicle was towed and the suspect was transported to Northern Station.

### Theft From Building California and Buchanan June 4, 5:25 p.m.

A witness called 911 after seeing a man climb onto the porch of a house and take a box. Responding officers located a man who matched the description and detained him. He was carrying a box containing a dress valued at \$2,516.80. He stated that he found the box near a house down the street. Officers contacted the homeowner, who told them she had ordered the dress online and was waiting for it to arrive. Police took custody of the suspect and transported him to Northern Station. A computer check revealed the suspect was on probation; he was then taken to county jail.

### Robbery Van Ness and Grove June 22, 11:45 p.m.

Officers on patrol received a dispatch about a robbery that had occurred in the Taraval district. The suspects were two

black males — one wearing a gray hooded sweatshirt, the other a checkered shirt. Both were carrying firearms. They had stolen a woman's cellphone and purse, and officers were able to track their location through her stolen phone. Officers spotted a tan vehicle on Van Ness near Grove; the driver and passenger were black males and one wore a checkered shirt.

Officers called for more units. They saw a third suspect, a woman, in the back seat. They conducted a felony stop and ordered all three out of the vehicle. The woman informed the officers that her 10-month-old baby was in a car seat in the back. Officers asked the woman who had been robbed to ping her phone again; police heard an answering ping coming from inside the car. The stolen phone was wrapped in a blanket underneath the baby's car seat. Officers searched the vehicle and found an air gun in the glove box. Taraval officers took over the investigation and transported the suspects to their station.

### Robbery With Force California and Spruce June 30, 11:12 a.m.

A woman was walking down the street with her wallet tucked under her arm when a man brushed up against her. He attempted to take her wallet, but she fought back. He tried a second time, but once again she pushed him off. The man yelled obscenities at her and fled eastbound on California Street. The woman called the police, but responding officers were unable to locate the suspect. He is a black male with black hair, about 6'2" tall, weighing 190 lbs. The investigation is ongoing.

### Possession of Prohibited Weapon, Marijuana Possession for Sale Bush and Broderick July 5, 1:48 p.m.

Officers stopped a suspicious vehicle. When they spoke with the driver, they noted that he had a bowl of marijuana placed between his legs. Brass knuckles, a prohibited weapon, lay beside him on the passenger seat of the car. The driver told the officers he was on probation with a search condition. Officers searched the vehicle and found edible marijuana products, liquid THC and a large quantity of cash. The suspect was arrested and booked for violation of probation, possession of marijuana for sale and possession of a prohibited weapon.

### Possession of Heroin for Sale Geary and Collins July 6, 11:08 p.m.

An officer on patrol saw a man washing his car at the car wash at Geary and Collins, a place known as an active site for narcotics sales at night. The officer approached the suspect, who identified himself as the

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vehicle’s owner, stated that he was on probation for a felony and had a search condition. The officer found heroin in his pants pocket and additional narcotics inside the vehicle. He was arrested and booked on felony charges.

**Outstanding Warrant  
Willow and Franklin  
July 10, 1:10 p.m.**

Officers on patrol saw a man lying on the sidewalk. Between the hours of 7 a.m. and 11 p.m., this is a violation of the civil sidewalks ordinance. They detained him, conducted a records check and discovered he had a warrant for his arrest for burglary. The suspect was transported to Northern Station.

**Indecent Exposure  
Chestnut and Webster  
July 12, 9:20 a.m.**

A man walking in the park called 911 after he spotted a man masturbating in full view of several families with children. When the police arrived, they saw that the man’s pants were unbuttoned and his penis was exposed. They told him to button up his pants and stand up. He refused to comply.

The officers then grabbed the man’s arms, forced him to stand up and placed him in handcuffs. He resisted them, tensing up his arms and refusing to walk forward. Another unit arrived and transported the suspect to Northern Station. The witness signed a citizen’s arrest form and the suspect was booked at county jail.

**Battery  
Golden Gate and Van Ness  
July 13, 5:50 p.m.**

A woman on the median strip of Van

Ness holding two cardboard signs shouted to another woman crossing the street, “I’m gonna come and get you!” The pedestrian continued walking. The woman with the signs darted through traffic, threading her way between cars to catch up to the woman trying to walk away, while shouting, “You don’t even know me! You don’t know who I am!” Then she struck the woman in the face with the cardboard, causing a bloody nose. The suspect ran back to the median strip and continued to solicit for money.

The woman who had been assaulted called 911. When officers arrived, she pointed out the suspect and signed a citizen’s arrest form, refusing medical attention. The officers cited the woman on the median strip for battery.

**Carjacking with Bodily Force  
Fillmore and Pine  
July 14, 10:45 a.m.**

A woman parked at Fillmore and Pine was starting her car when a man walked up to her driver’s side door and tried to open it. She shouted at him to stop, but he ignored her. The man finally got the door open, then started struggling to pull the woman out of the driver’s seat. She grabbed his arm, trying to push him away, but he continued forcing his way in. Her shouts caught the attention of three bystanders, who ran over and grabbed the man, then threw him to the ground and held him down until the police arrived.

Officers arrived and took the suspect into custody. The woman suffered abrasions and bruises to her arm and was treated by medics at the scene. The suspect was transported to Northern Station. A computer check revealed he was on probation. He was then transported to county jail.

■ FIRST PERSON | VICTORIA DUNHAM

Maybe I loved my car too much?

I whined most of the day — well, at least from 9 a.m. on, when my downstairs neighbor called and said: “I have bad news. You know that loud crash you heard last night?”

I had heard a big crash at around 3 a.m., then a car alarm going off — typical Bush Street sounds. But then the downstairs door opened and closed, which was only slightly odd because Uncle Andy was here and I knew he heard the same sound that woke me up — and being the car guy he is, it would not be out of the realm of possibility that he might go out to investigate things, even though it was 3 in the morning.

But it wasn’t just any car the jerk hit. It was my car. After sideswiping the car parked behind me, the driver hit the back of my car dead-on without braking. Andy figures he was going around 40 to 50 miles an hour.

So there he is, backing up in his crippled brand new BMW — dealer plates still on — when Andy came out. The guy then tears down the street with Andy tailing him in his car; Andy was parked right outside the house and jumped in his car to follow the guy. Andy calls 911 and gives chase to the new BMW with one blown-out front tire, which is leaving a trail of rubber and billowing smoke, two blocks up to Laguna then up to Sacramento and down two blocks. All the while Andy has the cops on the phone, giving them a blow-by-blow of where he is and where the guy is — almost losing him a few times, but he stays on him. Finally the guy pulls over, parks his car and walks away.

Andy is still on the phone with the cops and still following him in his car. The guy finally cuts down an alley and disappears before the cops can get there. But Andy has a really good description of him.

Meanwhile, back on Bush Street, my car has been totaled. I call my insurance company and take the car to the body shop. The guy there does not even walk out of his office — just takes one look at the back and says, “No way.”

I whine some more. We talked about whether the BMW was stolen. Andy points out that if it were stolen, the guy would have just jumped out after hitting my car and hit the bricks. But he didn’t.

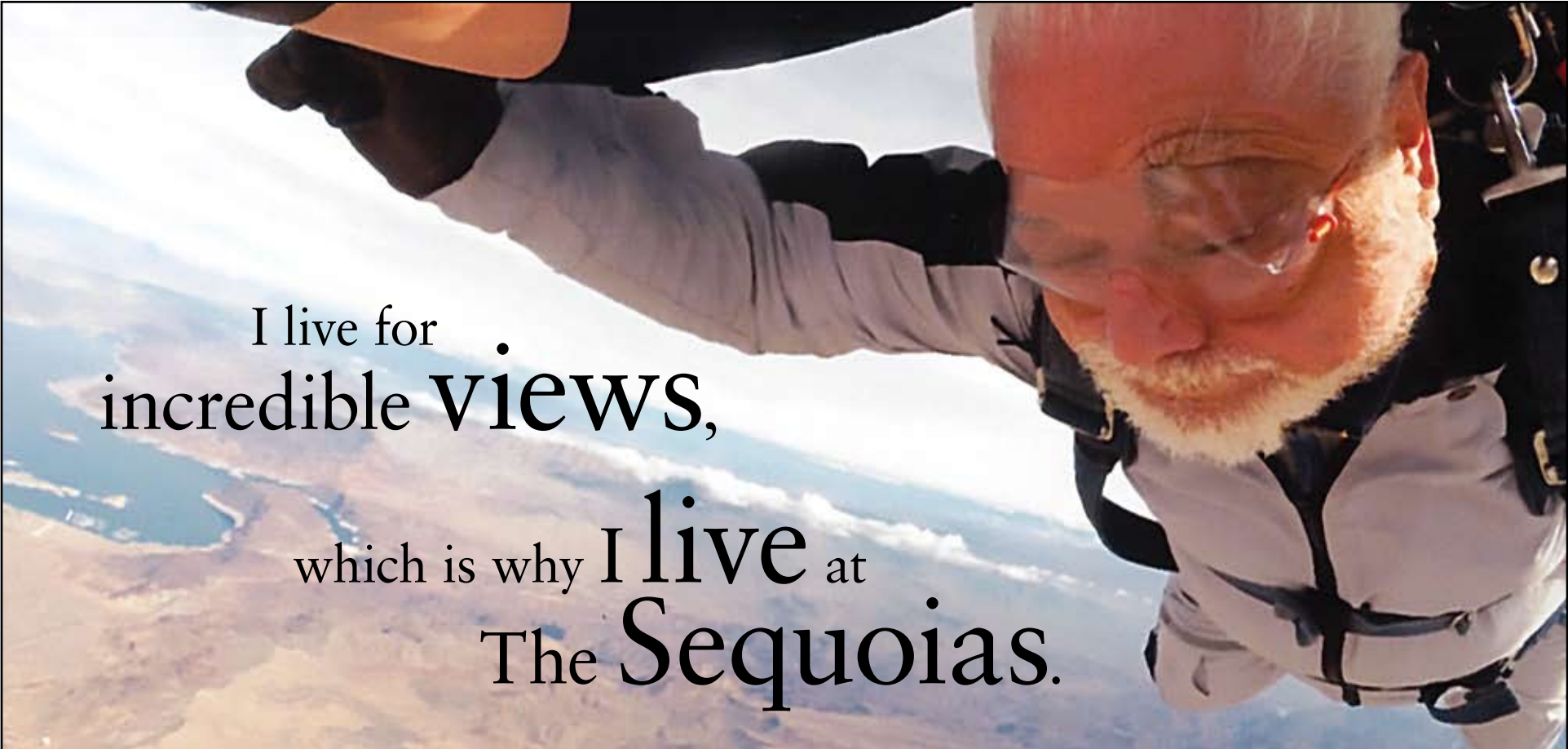
Then I stopped whining and just got pissed. I called the cops, but could not get a police report for three or four days. So I decided to go to the BMW dealership to see if they’d had a car stolen. Andy came with me. Andy had taken a picture of the front of the car, but not the back — what was he thinking? One of the guys at the dealership pointed out a parking tag in the front window, but it was too blurry to read. They also mentioned that it is an \$85,000 car. We stopped at a second auto shop and they also said no way.

So now I’m thinking: I have the report, the cops have his car, Andy can ID him and he spent just spent \$85,000 on a car. Hit and run. No charges. My car is totaled. Is there a new Mercedes in my future?

In the meantime, I can still drive my car, because even with a completely crumpled rear end, the crash did not affect the tires. My neighbor pried open the trunk and reconnected the right rear light, so I am legal, kind of.

I loved my car. Maybe I loved my car too much. It fit like a glove, a perfect pair of jeans. I was going to have my car forever and ever. Not anymore. But Uncle Andy is my hero.


— VICTORIA DUNHAM is the proprietor of Hi-Ho Silver at 1904 Fillmore.



Harry used to go to great lengths for an extraordinary view. Now at The Sequoias, they’re right out his living room window. He also enjoys city convenience, delicious meals, and freedom from mundane chores! Day in and day out, he feels “on top of the world.” Wouldn’t you like to feel that way, too? Call Alison at (415) 351-7900 to find out how.



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By Lisa Baird

FOR NEARLY a year, I've been deeply embedded in the Fillmore. I'm part of a six-person team of graduate design students at California College of the Arts working on a social impact project.

CCA's master of design program is focused on interaction design. A large component of the degree involves designing an interactive project to improve "community resilience" in the Western Addition — the neighborhood's ability to handle change. For the past 11 months, we've been researching, talking to people and collecting stories up and down Fillmore Street.

Through conversation with longtime community business people — Zinc Details owner Vas Kiniris, Progress Cleaners owner Sammy Yip, Miyako owners Tom and Teresa Bennett, and others — we hit upon what we think is something important: *Community is about gathering places, and small businesses are the gathering places for a community.*

It seems the health of the Fillmore community and the health of its small businesses have always gone hand-in-hand. That was true after the 1906 earthquake, when Fillmore Street became the city's main business thoroughfare. It was true when the Fillmore was primarily a Jewish neighborhood in the early 20th century, and later when Japantown was established nearby. It was surely true during the Harlem of the West era, and in the mid-80s when upper Fillmore began experiencing a renaissance.

In interviews, Vas Kiniris, Sammy Yip and Teresa Bennett all affirmed that small local shops are for gathering, forging rela-



Design students leading a tour through the lobby of the now-shuttered Yoshi's jazz club.

and laugh, and listen to their stories." As my fellow students and I have learned, that kind of community cohesion — the give-and-take between a small business and its patrons — is under threat in the Fillmore.

"We've watched a lot of the businesses not make it," Bennett says. "It's sad when a business doesn't make it. When they don't, it's almost like a death."

By providing a place for neighbors to come together, small businesses help people forge relationships. This insight helped us frame our design challenge more clearly: *How might we support small, local businesses in their role as community gathering places? How might we strengthen those businesses that remain?*

# discoverfillmore.com

Grad students designing a local interactive project

tionships and connecting. Kiniris, Yip and Bennett are all children of shop owners themselves and remember well the lessons learned from their parents.

"I was taught customer service from a young age," says Kiniris, who has been running Zinc Details, now at 1633 Fillmore, for more than 25 years. "That's where I really learned the sense of community that a store provides to the neighbors."

Yip, whose parents opened Progress Cleaners at 1555 Fillmore 41 years ago, describes the inter-generational role his shop plays in the neighborhood: "A lot

of the people who come in here are local neighbors. Some have been here for 10 years, some even for 30 years. Some of them recommend us to their friends or family, so they bring their children here, and their children grow up and are continuing customers."

Bennett cites person-to-person interaction to explain Miyako's place in the community over the last 23 years. "I think a large part of our success can be attributed to the way we interact with people and the way we treat people," she says. "Especially my dad. He loves to talk,

It's this mindset that led us to create a prototype of a free interactive walking tour of Fillmore Street, bringing rich stories to the ears of local residents and visitors — and additional visitors to local shops.

Called Discover Fillmore, the tour highlights establishments on Fillmore between Post and Eddy. We held a series of guided tours and now plan to design a free audio tour that anyone will be able to download from discoverfillmore.com for a self-guided stroll. Ultimately, we hope the audio tour will become the sound content for an interactive mobile app.

Reviews have been good, both from people on the tours and from businesses reporting better foot traffic. We are only part way through the project, but we are feeling confident that this could be the start of something good and real. Maybe the Fillmore can reclaim its community resilience, if not its storied past.



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# Discovering the Divine in Wine

Scopo Divino, a classy new wine bar, opens

By FAITH WHEELER

THE LATEST wine bar to pop a cork in the neighborhood is Scopo Divino, a cozy bar and restaurant that has taken over the Food Inc. space at 2800 California, near the corner of Divisadero. Owner Tim Schuyler Hayman, a first-time restaurateur and career newspaper ad man — with nearly 20 years at the *SF Weekly* and the *Chronicle* — explains his vision for the new neighborhood spot.

**How did you come up with the idea of changing your career and opening a wine bar?**

I have always been interested in small business and I had a lifelong dream to run one myself. I discovered wine at age 4 when my father put a big glass of burgundy in front of me and told me to smell it. It was love at first whiff. Tasted terrible,

but I discovered flavor later.

I grew up in Sonoma and Marin so I have childhood memories of going on tasting tours with my parents in Glen Ellen. The feel, the damp wood smell, the musty cellars — they all bring back my fondest memories.

As I got older, I would frequent wine bars in the Bay Area and knew I could do better: take a tasting room concept from the wine country and bring it to the city.

**Was that the inspiration for the design?**

Yes. We set out to create a relaxed wine country feel with designer Daryle Baldwin of Bausman & Co. The Tuscan red walls create a living room effect, alongside the custom-built alder wood bar and bar stools made by Bausman. Tapestry lounge chairs and sofas clad in old world fabrics like an Italian cut velvet and a Belgian kite chenille add a homey touch. The wallpapered pow-

der room also reads more like a residence than a restaurant.

**And the response so far?**

I have found that people are looking for a place that is cozy. I've watched customers come into bars and they first take the most comfortable corner, they next look for the best overstuffed chair, and so it goes. I was not going to have metal chairs and cement floors. Comfort is key. We have lots of cozy corners and comfortable nooks and people seem to love it. They are also shocked by the breadth of our food program.

**What makes Scopo Divino different?**

Some wine bars have good wine without good service; some offer good service but not good food. Our aim is to do it all. We spent eight or nine months tasting multiple vendors and hundreds of wines to curate our list. And then we were lucky



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to find our chef, Mark Cina, who had past experience working under Corey Lee at Monsieur Benjamin and Benu.

We have more than 1,000 bottles of wine and offer 36 wines by the glass, choosing the signature varietals by region. We have terrific Zinfandel from Oakville, Gruner Vetliner from Austria, Barbera from Italy. We believe the expressions of the wines are best as signatures from the original heritage.

The heart of the program is Burgundy — a forever favorite of mine. Wines are available by glass or bottle and tastes of some of these wines are accessible using the Coravin system.

We are proud to offer labels from all around the world that will blow people's minds.

**Do you offer any flights?**

At the moment we have three flights: "A Taste of France," featuring a Provencal Rose, Sancerre and Viognier; "A Taste of Italy" and a "Wine Therapy Session," aka the Bartender's Choice.

**You speak of wine therapy, and it says "wine therapist" on your business card.**

**What do you mean by that?**

Well, Scopo Divino translates to "divine purpose." And we believe the purpose of wine is as a mood enhancer or mood changer. We almost named the bar, "Wine Therapy." We look to discover how people are feeling when they come in and pair their emotion to the wine accordingly.

**So if I walk in in a bad mood, what would you serve me?**

First I would gauge if you'd prefer a white or red. If you said white, I'd probably move you to something bubbly. It's hard not to improve your mood with a Lambrusco Italian-style sparkling wine. It's usually red

and sweet, but ours is blush and a little dry, beautiful by the glass and just \$11.

**What If I said I had a fabulous day?**

Then I'd take you straight to champagne. I love the whole emotion of champagne. Another factor is if you are alone or with a group. Or if you really want to celebrate, then I'd show you our library list of harder-to-find wine. *Brut Blanc de Blanc* from Jura, produced by Francois Montand, is one of my favorites at \$9 a glass.

**What about the food?**

Our food program really surprises people since they don't expect great food coming out of a little neighborhood wine bar. We offer a grazing menu and our chef has taken our bar bites to another level: sophisticated plates that are really well matched with wines.

Some standouts include the Lobster Cavatelli, Mushroom Stuffed Quail on a Bed of Gnocchi, Cauliflower a la Plancha and a Bavette Steak. We turn out so much food in this tiny kitchen. And everything is small and to share so the prices don't break the bank.

**Any plans to open for lunch?**

Yes. Currently we're open for dinner Wednesday through Saturday from 5:30 to 10:30 p.m. Soon we'll add lunch Wednesday through Friday. And brunch is coming for Saturdays and Sundays.

**So what are your wishes for this place?**

I truly want to provide people an extension to their living rooms. When you think about all of the small apartments in the city and people paying really high rent, it's time they had a neighborhood gathering place — a place to unwind and feel comfortable. People say this place feels like home, and that's exactly what I want.

**■ AT THE MARKET**

**A new face on Saturday mornings**

There's a friendly new face behind the artfully arranged array of squash, tomatoes, onions, carrots, beans and other produce at the Fillmore Farmers Market on Saturday mornings at Fillmore and O'Farrell.

It's Marsha Habib, founder of Oya Organics (below), who started by farming a one-acre satellite garden a few years ago with low-income Latino farmers in San Jose. It was there that she met her partner, in life and Oya, and made the

commitment to buy a tractor. She now leases and farms 15 acres of land in Hollister while dreaming of owning her own farm some day.

Habib explains that the name Oya was purposefully chosen. In Japanese it stands for "nurturing"; in Spanish it means "big pot." And it's also an Afro-Brazilian diety who represents storm, weather and transitions. That echoes Habib's personal growth she describes as "a big transition from growing up in the suburbs."

Driven by a passion for urban social justice and bitten by the farming bug, she at first assumed that local farmers markets were the most natural outlet for a small farmer committed to good organic food.

"But believe it or not, it's hard to get into

farmers markets," Habib says. Her foray in was arranged through a colleague now at the Pacific Coast Farmers Market Association she had known from working together in AmeriCorps.

That connection introduced her to market manager Tom Nichol, a beloved fixture and motivator at the Fillmore Farmers Market who died in May 2015 at the age of 63. Nichol got her into her first farmers market in San Jose, then another in Belmont.

But after her second weekend at the Fillmore Farmers Market in late July, she proclaimed it the friendliest. "I can't tell you the number of people who walk up and say: 'I'm so glad you're here.' It's a warm welcome," Habib says. "And I'm so grateful to Tom. I don't know if we'd be farming today if not for him."



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# Big Nate a Familiar Face in the Fillmore

► FROM PAGE ONE

After retiring from professional basketball in 1977, Nate lured a talented soul food chef named Ollie from her own restaurant and got her to work for him in his restaurant at 2020 Fillmore, now the home of Harry's Bar.

It was called Nate Thurmond's... The Beginning, a soul food eatery and a neighborhood bar. The name indicated that while Nate's life on the court might be over, his new life was just beginning. With his cousin Bobby managing the bar and Ollie in the kitchen, it was a neighborhood hangout. It's where you went after work for a beer — and stayed for dinner if you wanted something a cut above what was then Uncle Vito's Pizza, now Dino and Santino's, on the northwest corner of Fillmore and California. It's where I was taken after my first shift at Bi-Rite Liquors, then located on the southeast corner of that prime intersection.

You would see Nate around the neighborhood, although he was never one to be the man in front. He wanted the food to be the attraction, not the sports star, a philosophy he kept up through the years after he started Big Nate's down on Folsom Street.

Nate was 6 feet 11 inches tall, with ebony skin, graceful moves and a brilliant smile. He was always charming and approachable. Fillmore folks, at least, weren't hounding him for autographs. He'd chat with you on the corner, or in Grand Central Market, where he was sometimes shopping because of a no-show delivery truck.

As a pro ball player, Nate was smart enough to have his contract structured to delay the payout



*Nate Thurmond's The Beginning was a soul food restaurant at 2020 Fillmore, now the home of Harry's Bar.*

until he was 45, so he could have a life after sports.

"For me, Nate was the best defender ever to play the game," noted his lawyer, former mayor and assembly speaker Willie Brown, in his Sunday *Chronicle* column. "He also knew how to take advice, both on the court and with his contracts."

Brown, who got his start in the Fillmore, remembered: "He was the first player to have his million-dollar contract paid out like an annuity, over several years. The only things Nate wanted up front were a Rolls-Royce, a penthouse, a full wardrobe and \$7,500 a month in spending money. Everything else kicked in when he turned 45, setting him up for life."

Nate's car was a thing of beauty, and he knew it. He also knew it was big enough even for his long form. That Silver Shadow was sleek and shiny, with the license plate

reading "Nate 42." It dressed up the neighborhood. The car was always impeccably polished and shone in the fog and the sunshine both. When parking officers went to give him a ticket for overstaying his welcome at a meter, people would try to convince them it should be spared as a matter of civic beautification. It never worked, but it tells you how fond all of us were of that car and of Nate.

I remember Nate being snappily dressed and maintained at all times — not flashy, but if he wore jeans, they had a crease. He would get his nails done at Ruth Dewson's The Nail Gallery, which she operated on Fillmore before she branched out into hats. Ruth would always make sure Nate sat in the window for all to see.

You got to see Nate around the Fillmore fairly often. Poet Ronald Hobbs, who ran Spectrum Exotic Birds, remembers seeing Nate shooting hoops with the kids on the St. Dominic's Church playground. Ron couldn't resist getting onto the court, just so he could say for the rest of his life that he'd played basketball with Nate Thurmond.

The Beginning stayed with us for eight years. Then Nate moved on. The old space became Lynaugh's for a few years, then Harry's.

Thurmond started Big Nate's Barbecue when he noticed that people were delivering pizza all over town, but no one was delivering barbecue. He told the *Los Angeles Times*: "Barbecue, if it's good, you can eat it at room temperature. That's not true about a pizza. So we said, 'Hey, we can deliver barbecue.' That's how it got started." He kept his barbecue joint going for 20 years before selling it in 2010. It was one of the great treats during the last days at Candlestick Park, where Nate maintained a stand.

Nate Thurmond was a great athlete and a gracious man. He will be remembered as such. But some of us will thrill to the memory of just running into him while shopping, or stepping out of his beautiful car, or just shooting hoops with the kids on the school yard. We will remember him, fondly, as our good neighbor.

*Mark J. Mitchell's latest book of poetry, Lent 1999, is available from Leaf Garden Press and through Amazon.*

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# At 90, a Photographer Finds Appreciation

DAVID JOHNSON first came to San Francisco courtesy of the Navy as he shipped out during World War II. When he got back home to Florida, he knew he couldn't stay.

"I wanted to get the hell out of the South," he says. "No more back of the bus for me."

He saw a notice in *Popular Photography* magazine in 1946 that Ansel Adams was beginning a first-of-its-kind photography program at the California School of Fine Arts, now the San Francisco Art Institute. "I knew nothing of Ansel Adams," he says. "But I knew the school was in San Francisco, and that was good enough for me." So he wrote to Adams and asked to attend.

"I told him I was a Negro," he says. "I didn't want to come all that way and find I wasn't welcome." Adams replied that race was irrelevant and invited Johnson to stay at his house on the edge of Seacliff until he found a place to live.

He would find a home and a calling in the Fillmore. He photographed the heyday of the jazz era, determined to depict the people in the neighborhood with dignity and respect. His life took many twists and turns. Decades later, in 1999, his Fillmore photographs were sought out when a public television documentary and a book on the Harlem of the West were in the works.

That launched a late-in-life renaissance for Johnson, with many exhibitions of his photographs, a memoir and another documentary, this one about him. The Bancroft Library in Berkeley has recently acquired what it calls his "historically significant archive." On August 6, he celebrates his 90th birthday.

These excerpts from his autobiography tell his story of finding a lifelong home in the Fillmore.

By DAVID JOHNSON

I STAY AT Ansel Adams' home for two months before I seek housing in the black community of San Francisco. I start out looking by asking the first colored man I see, "Where do the black people live in this city?"

The man looks at me as if I have just descended from Mars, and after blinking his eyes a few times says, "Son, catch the B car line, get off at Fillmore and Geary, and you will see so many black folks, you will be comfortable."

Following his advice, I take the streetcar to the center of the Fillmore neighborhood. I get off at Fillmore and Geary, and there I begin walking the path that will define the rest of my life.

On a side street near Bush Street, I find a little storefront church. Churches always seem to be the best way for me to make the best choices in my life. The pastor is inside, cleaning the pews — because he is also the janitor.

"Evening, sir. My name is David Johnson."

"Well, hello son, pleased to meet you. I am Pastor Williams. Welcome to the house of the Lord."



David Johnson in 1952.

"Glad to be here. I recently arrived in San Francisco, and I'm looking for a place to live. Would you happen to know of anywhere I could rent a room? I don't need much space."

"Now, this here is something! The Lord do work in mysterious ways. My wife and I were just talking this morning about renting out the extra bedroom we have in our big old house. You see, there is just the two of us."

Pastor Williams, a talker, rents me the room before I can say another word. And the rent is an affordable \$5 a week. I live with Rev. Williams and his wife for several months. The elderly pastor becomes my first model in the lesson of doing portrait studies. It is 1946, and my life is on a roll. I am in photography school, and I have my own place to live.

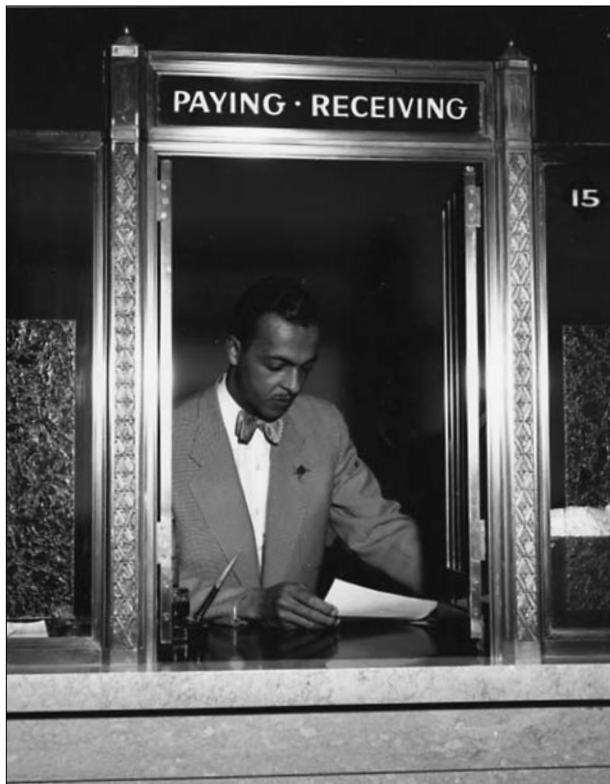
I share my proofs of the minister with photographer and instructor Minor White, who objects to them and insists I do better. "David, I know that most of these photography techniques are new to you. However, there is more to taking a good picture than just using your camera to point and click the shutter." Minor is hovering over me in the darkroom, pointing out angles of my pictures and making suggestions.

"I am not sure I know what you mean." Minor does not realize what an intimidating presence he is to me. I feel annoyed with myself because I have failed to please him with my work.

At Minor's persistence, I learn to print really well, using the black and white to gauge exactly the grays and mimicking Ansel's quality, approaching clean whites, blacks and greys in my own prints.

I work in the darkroom alongside Ansel Adams as he produces very large black and white landscape murals. As I watch him working, we have a conversation about print quality as he applies some developer to a print. I say laughingly, "I thought you were a purist" (meaning showing the photograph just as it was taken). Ansel chuckles and says, "Yes, but I am not an absolute purist."

I know nothing about nature and I am not interested



Bank of America Teller, Fillmore Street, 1950



Johnson's Studio, Divisadero Street, 1950



Melrose Record Shop, Fillmore Street, 1950

in still life. So my mentors tell me to take photographs of the things and people I see that interest me. One day, I take my camera, light meter and tripod and climb a building scaffold. Setting up my equipment about four stories up, perching precariously on an unstable landing, I take a photograph that will, 50 years later, become an historical San Francisco street scene. Set in black and white, looking down Post and Fillmore Streets, the photograph sets in time the 22-Fillmore streetcar, vintage automobiles, people crossing the street and the future Fillmore Auditorium.

I find work in the Mt. Zion Hospital in the doctors' dining room. This proves to be a life-changing event. I met my future wife, Lucy Mae Ellis, when she came to work at Mt. Zion Hospital in 1948. The following Sunday, we discovered that we were going to the same church.

Lucy and I dated for about a year. I proposed to her, and she surprised me by saying "yes." I graduated from the California School of Fine Arts with the class of 1949. I knew I would not be able to support a wife working at Mt. Zion Hospital and taking a few photographs here and there, so I went to work at the post office.

Lucy and I are married January 21, 1950, at a small Baptist church. We have a modest reception in the Madame C.J. Walker home on Bush Street with friends, and we spend our one-night honeymoon at the Booker T. Washington Hotel on Turk Street.

Stable, quiet Lucy is the inspiration that pushes me to follow my dream of opening a photography studio. She is a fan of a radio show by "Horse Trader Ed," a used car dealer, sponsored by Ben Sweetland. Sweetland's programs focus on positive thinking and accomplishing your aspirations. He offers a scholarship for his "Ben Sweetland workshop," and Lucy says to me, "You should attend this workshop." I do, and I take Mr. Sweetland very seriously when he speaks about visualizing dreams. I desperately want my own photography studio.

I look for a place for my studio and find a storefront at 1818 Divisadero Street adjacent to a shoe repair shop owned by a man named Soranan. In the front of the store is a large space, and in back are three rooms large enough for a bedroom, a living room and a kitchen. The bonus is a small space I can use for a darkroom. Mr. Soranan rents us this space for \$75 a month. With Lucy's strong support, we remodel the store into a professional photography studio. My dream business, Johnson Photography Studio, becomes a reality.

No way can I support a family taking pictures. I have to keep my day job at the post office. To keep up my photography interests, I establish a business exchange contract with the *Sun Reporter* newspaper.

The *Sun Reporter* assignments give me access to photograph important San Francisco community leaders like Congressman Philip Burton, future supervisor Terry Francois and Rev. Hamilton T. Boswell.

This is how I begin to photograph many of the men and women who are to become notable figures in the American historical milieu. I continue to take pictures of life in the Fillmore. The jazz scene with the visiting musicians at the Primalon Ballroom, the Booker T. Washington Hotel, the Texas Playhouse the New Orleans Swing Club and the Flamingo Club are my favorite places to capture the nightlife of the city. I take my twin-lens reflex film camera and photograph the musicians and singers as they perform. In the '40s and '50s, the Fillmore District was the hot spot in San Francisco where entertainers came to "jam."

*Excerpted from A Dream Begun So Long Ago: The Story of David Johnson.*



# At the Kabuki, an Unorthodox Look at Success

By ANDREA CHASE

AT ONE POINT in Mike Birbiglia’s **DON’T THINK TWICE**, a film that just opened at the Kabuki, a character opines that your 20s are for hope and your 30s are for realizing how dumb that hope was. Yet this finely observed tragi-comedy of art, commerce and finding happiness takes a more compassionate view of its characters: an improv group having the next phase of their lives more or less forced upon them.

Birbiglia takes an unorthodox look at success with people learning, to their surprise, that it doesn’t necessarily bring happiness. In fact, as it applies to a close-knit improv group, The Commune, the member who grabs the brass ring is perhaps even more unhappy than the friends who are genuinely trying to be supportive. A whole new set of pressures intrudes that is even more pernicious than the group losing its theater space to a Trump construction project, the frail health of one member’s father or the group’s leader Miles, played by Birbiglia, reassessing a dating strategy that may have been holding him back.

The toughest struggle is that of the group’s lovebirds Sarah and Jack (Gillian Armstrong and Keegan-Michael Key). Their attempts to regain balance after a seismic shift is all the more moving because their genuine feelings for each other are never in doubt. The bravado of jokes that only the best of friends can make at a time of tragedy — as well as the subtly growing distance between the group and the one who is moving on — play out with fumbling insecurity and a wicked sense of humor. When the emotional dam finally breaks, it’s almost a relief.



Armstrong and Key are revelations, but don’t overlook a gem of a supporting cast: Chris Gethard as a little dark cloud who pushes hummus as his day job, Kate Micucci as a neurotic waif with a graphic novel that refuses to resolve itself, Tammi Sagher kvetching defensively about jobs she doesn’t need and Birbiglia as a character who is sideswiped by a new beginning even as everything he has is taken from him.

The metaphor of the rules of improv as rules for life never devolve into preciousness, and neither do the uncomfortable situations that clear the way for these characters, even as they clear their minds.

What comes across is writer-director Birbiglia’s firm belief that improv comedy can get to the truth in a way nothing else can. “In the movie we say ‘Has anyone had a hard day?’ as our prompt for our improv to the audience,” he says. “Why don’t we try to find the pain in the audience, and then we’ll try to turn the pain into comedy,

affirming the theory that comedy is tragedy plus time.”

Dreams and reality also clash in **LITTLE MEN**, slated to open this month at the neighborhood’s Clay Theatre. It’s a finely observed, beautifully acted film about friendship, letting go and growing up from a 13-year-old’s point of view. That would be Jake Jardine (Theo Taplitz), an introspective young man with dreams of being an artist who moves with this family from Manhattan to Brooklyn when his father (Greg Kinnear) inherits an apartment and a storefront there.

The store’s tenant, Leonor (Pauline Garcia), and Jake’s parents become embroiled in a lease dispute, but not before Jake and Leonor’s son, Tony (Michael Barbieri), become fast friends for whom issues of money, class and culture don’t apply. When the parents reach an impasse and the dispute turns bitter, the young men attempt to take control of a situation over which, ultimately, they have no power. Gentrification has never had a more visceral examination.

Money and power also figure in **EQUITY**, a suspenseful film slated to open later this month at the Kabuki about money, ambition and what both do to ethics. Anna Gunn (*Breaking Bad*) stars as Naomi Bishop, a senior investment banker with her eye on a promotion and an unfortunate incident in her recent past that threatens it. Her last hope is a high-tech IPO that will make or break her. And in that high-stakes world, competence is less important than perception, and relationships — personal and professional — are less about goals or intimacy than about the psychological warfare that provokes paranoia.

The filmmakers deliberately sought most funding from female sources, and according to co-producer and co-star Sarah Megan Thomas, that made all the difference. “You’re empowered to tell stories about complex women, and never does the conversation come up: Are these characters likeable?” she says. “You’re allowed to have flaws. It’s much more freeing.”

*Neighborhood resident Andrea Chase writes about film at [killermoviereviews.com](http://killermoviereviews.com).*

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# ONE TWIN WITHOUT THE OTHER

BY BRIDGET MALEY

SOMETHING appears to be missing from the house at 1969 California Street.

Indeed, the other half of the intended complex was never built. Originally conceived to have a twin to the west, the half arch that would have accessed a center drive between the two houses terminates mid-air and crashes into a mismatching building next door.

Constructed for Joseph and Constance Tobin on a lot given to them by Mrs. Tobin's father, Michael de Young, the house was designed by Willis Polk, one of the Bay Area's most respected architects in his day. Polk's shingled houses of the 1890s inspired a signature architectural style that became known as the First Bay Tradition. Contemporaries Bernard Maybeck, Ernest Coxhead, A. C. Schweinfurth and Julia Morgan also helped establish this aesthetic. Leaving the highly decorative Victorian-era behind, these innovative architects shaped the residential development around the Bay Area.

Polk's house for the Tobins, with its Tudor inspired elements, was a departure from California Street's distinguished Victorian-era grand mansions, such as the home of Michael and Katherine de Young, Constance Tobin's parents, which was constructed in the early 1880s between Gough and Octavia Streets. Michael de Young, along with his brother Charles, founded the *San Francisco Chronicle*; its original form was a four-page publication called *The Daily Dramatic Chronicle*. The de Young house was a true Victorian pile by architects Benjamin McDougal and Sons and was featured in the 1878 publication *Artistic Homes of California*. This block of California Street was also home to M. J. Brandenstein, a coffee roaster and owner of the highly successful MJB Coffee. Polk's somewhat stark, minimally decorated house would have seemed strikingly modern adjacent to these earlier residences.

In 1911, when his health was beginning to fail, de Young purchased the two lots adjacent to his own residence for each of his daughters, Helen and Constance, both of whom had married and built homes on the Peninsula. His wife Katherine succumbed to cancer in 1913 and the couple's only son, Charley, also died that year. These family tragedies prompted de Young's daughters to reconsider his earlier offer to build them houses adjacent to the family's California Street mansion. The house for Constance was completed in 1915, but the house for Helen was never built. The de Young mansion met the wrecking ball in the 1940s, but not before portions of *The Thin Man*



SHAYNE WATSON

The Tudor house at 1969 California Street was intended to be half of a pair of houses for two sisters. The other half was never built.

(1936), starring William Powell and Myrna Loy, were filmed there.

Polk's house for the Tobins included a steeply pitched, slate-clad roof with projecting stuccoed chimneys topped with decorative copper chimney pots. There is also copper coping along the roof edge. A large, two-story bay window with tall arched casement windows and small panes of leaded glass dominates the eastern side of the front facade. Neo Gothic-inspired decorative panels cap the bay window at the first and second story. The half arch leading into the side passage is recessed, and molded bands form the arch. The understated front door to the east of the half arch has a lion's head above. The exterior of the house has seen little change and, miraculously, has never been painted; Polk intended the stucco to remain unpainted to more closely resemble stone and to match the lamp posts along California Street associated with the de Young mansion.

Joseph Tobin was a member of the family that founded the Hibernia Bank; he served as the chairman of its board for many years. He was born in San Francisco in 1878 and attended East Coast schools, including Yale Law School. He married Constance

de Young in 1908 and they continued a tradition of philanthropy established by both families. The Tobins lived on the Peninsula for a number of years, then in the house on California Street from its completion in 1915 until 1927, when they moved permanently back to a Peninsula home.

Gualtiero Bartalini purchased the house from the Tobins in the 1940s. Bartalini was an opera singer and a colorful character who operated the house as a rooming house for artists and performers. He was also known for hosting lively parties; the *Chronicle* reported on May 19, 1946, that he had entertained over a hundred guests at his California Street home. Later, in 1961, a Sunday magazine article in the *Chronicle* featured photographs of Bartalini, noted as a "witty raconteur," and his eccentrically decorated house. His 1981 publication, *Opera Psychotherapy: A Delightfully Witty Treatment of Eighteen of the World's Most Popular Operas*, is considered relevant today. Bartalini lived in the house until his death in 1994.

A few years ago, the first floor of this storied house at 1969 California Street was converted into a gallery for Anthony Meier Fine Arts.



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3196 Pacific Ave	6	4	1	4,615	28	6/22/2016	7,950,000	6,750,000
2635 Broadway	4	4	2	3,060	107	6/30/2016	8,250,000	7,900,000
2600 Lyon St	5	5	2	6,195	55	7/8/2016	10,900,000	9,625,088
101 Maple St	5	5	2	5,825	54	6/30/2016	10,995,000	9,998,000
2610 Scott St	4	3	5	4,656	17	7/8/2016	9,750,000	10,000,000
3800 Washington St	14	11	5	20,516	442	7/14/2016	17,995,000	15,750,000

Condos / Co-ops / TICs / Lofts

1450 Post St #1006	1	1	1	544	27	6/17/2016	250,000	260,000
2701 Van Ness Ave #403	0	1	0	551	52	6/28/2016	585,000	575,000
1760 Pacific Ave #1A	0	1	0	713	54	6/30/2016	395,000	606,000
2601 Post St #4	1	1	1	n/a	50	7/1/2016	599,000	660,000
2701 Van Ness Ave #702	1	1	1	793	25	7/1/2016	949,000	935,000
1600 Webster St #408	1	1	1	852	6	6/30/2016	875,000	940,000
1818 Broadway #306	1	1	1	930	39	6/30/2016	949,000	1,050,000
1800 Washington St #611	2	2	1	1,058	23	7/1/2016	1,198,000	1,150,000
1650 Broadway #205	1	1	1	816	68	6/28/2016	1,150,000	1,150,000
1800 Washington St #811	2	2	1	1,058	11	7/1/2016	1,095,000	1,200,000
2920 Buchanan St #1	2	2	1	n/a	124	7/7/2016	1,588,000	1,400,000
1650 Broadway #204	2	2	1	1,087	87	6/28/2016	1,410,000	1,410,000
1650 Broadway #304	2	2	1	1,090	126	6/28/2016	1,460,000	1,460,000
2205 Sacramento St #303	2	1	2	1,582	28	7/6/2016	1,550,000	1,495,000
1753 Lyon St	2	1	1	1,397	11	6/24/2016	1,395,000	1,508,000
3079 California St	3	2	1	n/a	22	6/21/2016	1,495,000	1,575,000
1650 Broadway #604	2	2	1	1,061	1	6/22/2016	1,610,000	1,610,000
2627 Clay St	3	2	1	1,925	19	6/22/2016	1,800,000	1,800,000
1835 Franklin St #401	2	2	1	1,613	44	6/21/2016	1,795,000	1,850,000
2169 Green St #1	2	2	1	1,550	12	6/23/2016	1,695,000	1,900,000
1841 Webster St	3	2	1	1,925	11	6/28/2016	1,949,000	1,975,000
2930 Washington St	3	2	2	2,042	18	7/8/2016	1,995,000	2,375,000
1650 Broadway #301	3	2	1	1,488	1	6/22/2016	2,395,000	2,395,000
1650 Broadway	3	2	1	1,587	1	6/22/2016	2,600,000	2,600,000
2457 Buchanan St	3	2	2	1,950	18	6/21/2016	2,695,000	2,820,000




'Petit Trianon' sells for a petite price

The recent sale of the mansion known as the Petit Trianon in Presidio Heights highlights the importance of realistic pricing and proper maintenance, while another sale just a block away underscores that today's high-end San Francisco homebuyers gravitate toward modern architecture.

In mid-July, the 14-bedroom, 20,000-square-foot French chateau replica at **3800 WASHINGTON STREET** (above) sold for \$15,750,000 in a foreclosure sale — 12 percent less than the listing price. It took 442 days to find a buyer. Designated as a national historic landmark, the home sits on three lots totaling almost 29,000 square feet in one of San Francisco's most desirable neighborhoods.

However, the grand home had not been staged to showcase its livability, its exterior and grounds were in disrepair, a squatter had taken over the guest house and skateboarders made the marble steps their personal park — all of which substantially reduced the home's curb appeal. Additionally, the property had been overpriced in multiple sale attempts over the past few years. Despite the long marketing time, arranging tours proved difficult. And at least one offer higher than the final sale price was not accepted.

Compare that sale with neighboring **101 MAPLE STREET** (below), which fetched just under \$10 million at the end of June. That five-bedroom home sits on a single lot about one-tenth of the size of its neighbor and sold in a relatively speedy 54 days. The Maple Street property resonated with home shoppers due to its sleek, contemporary design and open floor plan, which are favored by many of today's younger San Francisco homebuyers.



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

14 NEW FILLMORE August 2016



By JACK M. DAIRIKI

IN HIROSHIMA CITY’s Atomic Peace Park, there is a poem carved into a rock that states: *“Please rest in peace, for this error shall never be repeated.”* It is a pledge to all living people of the world to protect all of humanity.

I witnessed the holocaust three and a half miles from the atomic bomb detonation point.

I traveled to Hiroshima, Japan, in August 1941 with my father on a summer vacation to visit my ailing grandfather. Unfortunately, we were stranded there in September of that year. Finding no passage to return to Sacramento, my father and I were separated from my mother and four siblings, who were interned in the camps at Tule Lake, California; Jerome and Rowher, Arkansas; and, finally, Amache, Colorado.

My classmates and I were conscripted to work for the Japanese war effort at Toyo Factory. I was a 14-year-old student. We worked there from January 1945 until the atomic bomb was dropped on August 6. On that fateful day, because of air bombing raids, my commuter train to the Toyo Factory was delayed by 15 minutes. That delay saved me and my classmates from being in Hiroshima City. We were taking roll call at 08:15 when the bomb was detonated.

We noticed three B-29 bombers



Jack Dairiki with the painting he made in 1950 of Hiroshima 30 seconds after the explosion.

# The Smell of Death

He was in Hiroshima on August 6, 1945,  
when the atomic bomb was dropped

traveling toward Hiroshima. It was shortly after that sighting that we experienced the horrific explosion of the first atomic bomb. First, there was a blinding flash and a horrific blast of wind that took out 99 percent of the Toyo Factory windows. I felt my body being lifted by this wind. When I opened

my eyes, I was in the midst of dust and smoke and could not see my hands. Then I heard a fellow student run toward the bomb shelter a few hundred yards away; the entrance was at a higher elevation. Perhaps 30 seconds had elapsed. I looked back at Hiroshima and saw the monstrous fire column rising thousands

of feet into the air. The whole city was on fire, covered in smoke and fire with no buildings to be seen.

An hour later we peeked out from the cave shelter and witnessed the first victim: a young woman walking with her arms extended, her ragged clothes hanging from her arms and her hair burned off. She was looking straight ahead and walked like a ghost. We noticed as she came closer that it was not burned clothes, but her skin, hanging from her arms.

We were instructed to return home if we were able to walk. I boarded a ghost train with the paint burned off and windows shattered. Inside the train were many injured people asking for medical aid. I could not help them, so I dismounted the train to walk home, a distance of 10 miles. My grandmother welcomed me — she was scanning the horizon for my return. The house was not damaged, except that all the sliding doors were down but unbroken.

There were 55 hospitals, 200 doctors and 2,000 nurses in Hiroshima City before the bombing. What remained were three hospitals, 20 doctors and 170 nurses to help the wounded. There were 80,000 people who died near me in the city.

I can never forget the image nor the smell of death.

*Jack Dairiki, a retired architect, lives in the Sequoias on Geary Boulevard.*



# THE FUTURE OF THE PAST

## MUMMIES AND MEDICINE

Ancient Egypt meets modern medicine in this exhibition that makes use of state-of-the-art scientific techniques to explore two of the Fine Arts Museums’ mummies. An interdisciplinary team of scientists, Egyptologists, physicians, and museum curators and conservators presents new information about how these embalmed individuals lived, died, and were prepared for eternity.

MAY 14, 2016—AUGUST 26, 2018

Legion of Honor  
LINCOLN PARK

Image: Coffin of Irethorrou (detail), Egyptian, Akhmim, ca. 500 BC. Wood with polychrome. FAMSF, Gift of First Federal Trust Company (from the Estate of Jeremiah Lynch), 42895



