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THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ DECEMBER 2019



Into the Sunset

This is the final issue.

“END OF THE LINE” | PAGE 2

DICKIE SPRITZER

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FROM THE EDITORS



David Ish handing over the stewardship of the *New Fillmore* to Barbara Kate Repa and Thomas Reynolds in 2006.

END *of the* LINE

THIS IS THE FINAL ISSUE of the *New Fillmore*. It’s been a constant in an ever-changing neighborhood since founding editor and publisher David Ish sent forth the first issue in May 1986. The name was a bit of a joke, since the neighborhood had been forever reinventing itself — after the 1906 earthquake, when Fillmore became the city’s Main Street for a time, then again during World War II, and in the 1960s, when the Fillmore Auditorium provided the soundtrack for the Summer of Love.

The *New Fillmore* came along in the mid-80s as another new era was stirring. The gentrification of upper Fillmore into a commercial destination began with the launch of the beautiful home store Fillamento and the opening of Vivande Porta Via and the Elite Cafe, all in 1981. Fillmore Street began to come alive again, and people even ventured south of California Street, where redevelopment had laid waste. Interesting new one-of-a-kind shops and restaurants opened, but enough characters and flavor from the past remained to keep things colorful. That’s when we came to the neighborhood, just as the *New Fillmore* and the new Fillmore were aborning. We took over the paper on its 20th anniversary, in 2006, when David Ish retired to Thailand. We were recovering lawyers looking for a new cause, and he knew we were also writers and editors, among other things, who had come to love living in the neighborhood.

Already newspapers were in decline. But we thought it might be rewarding to tell the stories of an evolving small town in the big city with a rich history and a strong sense of community. It has been fun. This is a neighborhood of real writers and other creative people, and many of you have contributed your ideas and talents. We’ve gotten a great response and much encouragement from our readers and advertisers. Ginny Lindsay has been the punctilious production editor of the paper since the first issue, and our eagle-eyed proofreader, Donna Gillespie, and crack columnist Chris Barnett have been with us all of our journey.

The trends that have moved marketing from newspapers to other platforms all point in the same direction, and this little free monthly newspaper is no longer sustainable. So we leave you with the collection of stories and photographs we published last year, *Our Town: Best of the New Fillmore*. It includes some of our “shiniest nuggets,” as one critic wrote, and benefits Browser Books. Our website, newfillmore.com, will live on, too, with its archive of back issues and articles, photographs and videos.

But the *New Fillmore* newspaper is no more, like the New Fillmore Hotel and the New Fillmore Theater. Long live the new Fillmore!

BARBARA KATE REPA & THOMAS R. REYNOLDS

THE NEW FILLMORE

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Connecting the neighborhood

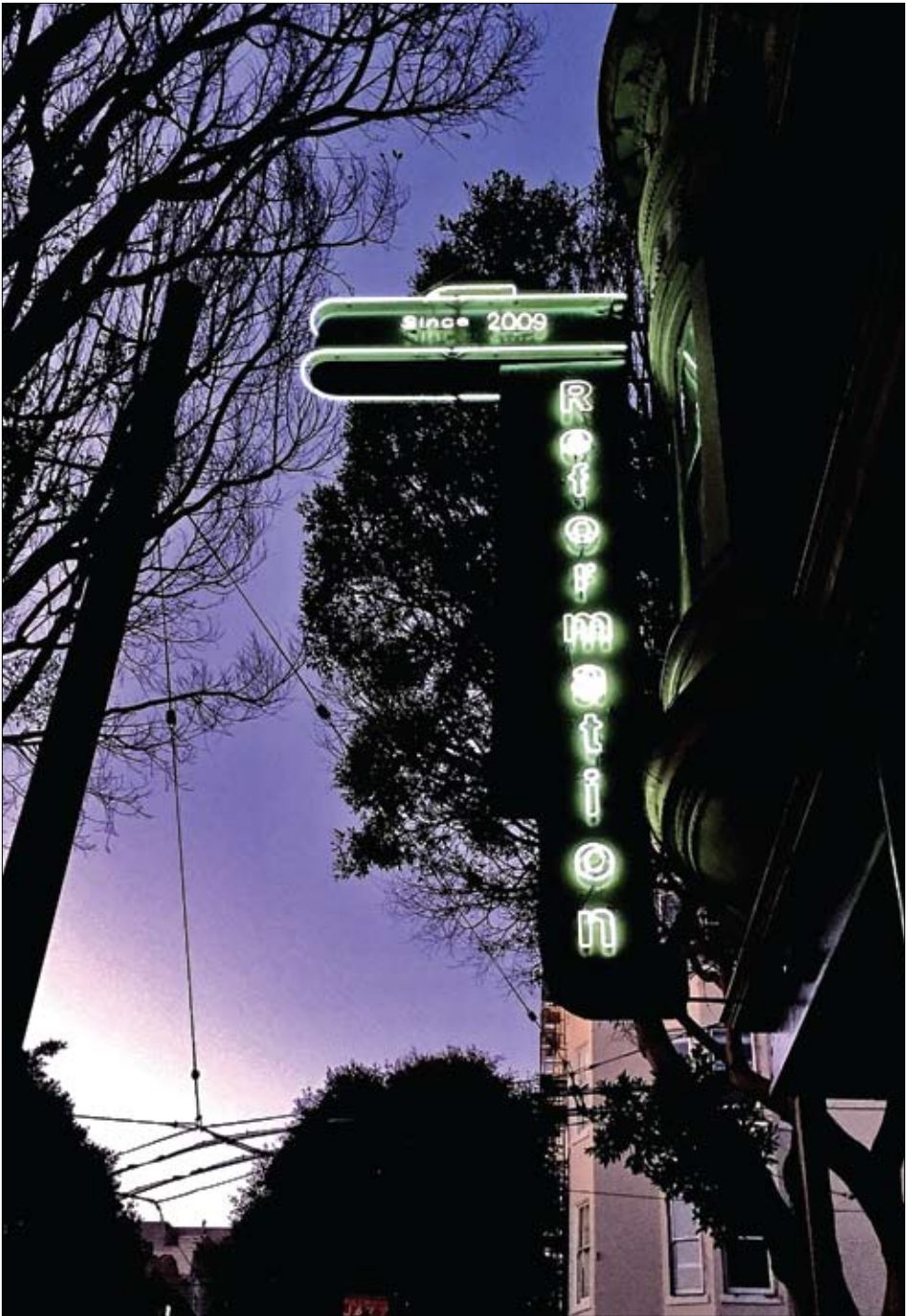
Every month since 1986, 20,000 copies of the New Fillmore have circulated to homes and businesses in the Fillmore, Pacific Heights and Japantown. We thank you for your support and welcome your ideas and suggestions.



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YouTube



The Past Is Present

THE SIGNAGE ON one block of Fillmore Street, between Jackson and Washington, tells a lot about how the street has changed over the years.

On the corner of Washington Street, the vintage neon sign that for decades heralded Belmont Florist has been repurposed a few times, first for Kiehl's, then for Curve. It now declares, appropriately enough, Reformation.

Farther up the street the sign for the late and sometimes lamented S.F. Boot and Shoe Repair shop remains — now fittingly a shoe store. Rothy's, with shoes made of recycled water bottles, usually has a line out front angling to get in. Its bright, warm light fairly glows in the early morning fog.

The northwest corner of Jackson and Fillmore has a long coffee legacy. There was Spinelli's for many years, then Tully's and now Blue Bottle. The exterior fairly sparkles after a fine renovation of the black and white tile on the storefront. For years it was a Shumate's Drug Store, and the family name in tile still graces the entrance.

There are a few signs that haven't changed, at least in quite some time. Down the street, the marquee at the venerable Clay Theatre, built in 1910, still lights the night. At Sacramento the neon sign for D&M Wines and Liquor, around since 1935, burns as bright as ever.

Another block down, just south of California, is the grandest of all the Fillmore signs gone dark at the shuttered Elite Cafe. Earlier the same sign announced the Asia Cafe, and before that the Lincoln Grill. Soon it's likely to get a new name once again.

— TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHS BY BARBARA WYETH

ST. DOMINIC'S CATHOLIC CHURCH



St. Dominic's warmly invites you to celebrate the Seasons of Advent & Christmas with us...

Weekday Daily Masses: 6:30 & 8:00 am and 5:30 pm

Morning Prayer: 7:15 am (*weekdays*); 8:00 am (*Saturday*)

Evening Prayer: 5:00 pm (*daily*)

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - First Fridays

Afternoon Adoration: 2:00 – 4:30 pm

Evening Adoration: 8:00 – 12:00 Midnight (*Sign-up required*)

Weekend Sunday Masses:

5:30 pm (*Vigil, Saturday evening*), 7:30 am (*Quiet*), 9:30 am (*Family*),

11:30 am (*Solemn*) 1:30 pm (*St. Jude Pilgrim Mass in Spanish*),

5:30 pm (*Contemporary music*), 9:00 pm (*Candlelight*)

Come Join Our Celebrations!

Monday, December 16

“Messiah” A (*mostly*) Baroque Christmas Concert

7:30 pm, St. Dominic's *Schola cantorum*,
Soloists & Festival Orchestra

Tuesday, December 17

Advent Reconciliation Services

12:00 – 1:00 pm & 7:30 – 8:30 pm
(*Individual confessions available*)

Thursday, December 19

Parish Christmas Party & Cookie Exchange

6:30 pm, Parish Hall

Tuesday, December 24

Christmas Eve

4:00 & 6:00 pm (*Christmas Vigil Masses*)
11:15 pm: (*Carol service followed by...*)
Mass at Midnight: (*Solemn Mass with Choral music, strings & brass*)
No confessions today

Wednesday, December 25

Christmas Day

8:30 am (*Parish Mass with Carols*)
11:00 am (*Solemn Mass with Choral music, strings & brass*)
No confessions today

Sunday, December 29

Solemnity of the Holy Family

5:30 pm Vigil (*Saturday, December 28*)
7:30 am (*Quiet*), 9:30 am (*Family*), 11:30 am (*Solemn*),
1:30 pm (*in Spanish*), 5:30 pm (*Contemporary music*), 9:00 pm (*Candlelight*)
Our regular weekend Mass schedule

Tuesday, December 31

New Year's Eve

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

5:30 pm Vigil Mass
10:30 pm (*New Year's Eve Prayer Service*)
11:30 pm Vigil Mass

Wednesday, January 1, 2020

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

New Year's Day

9:30 am (*One Parish Mass today*)

Sunday, January 5, 2020 Solemnity

of the Epiphany of the Lord 5:30 pm Vigil

(*Saturday, January 4*)
7:30 am (*Quiet*), 9:30 am (*Family*), 11:30 am (*Solemn*),
1:30 pm (*in Spanish*), 5:30 pm (*Contemporary music*), 9:00 pm (*Candlelight*)
Our regular weekend Mass schedule

Hot Prowl
Buchanan and Waller
October 14, 3 a.m.

A man awakened to find that an unknown individual had entered his home through an unlocked door. The intruder stole a phone, a tool kit and a skateboard. The resident called the police, who currently have no suspects.

Armed Robbery
Franklin and Linden
October 29, 8:10 p.m.

A man was held up at gunpoint and robbed of his phone and laptop. The robber, described as a male between 20 and 25 years of age, fled on foot. No arrest has been made.

Shots Fired
Buchanan and Grove
October 31, 12:56 a.m.

Police responded to their ShotSpotter gunshot detection device, which indicated shots had been fired at Grove and Buchanan Streets. They heard no reports of injuries or damages. The officers found spent casings at the scene, but no witnesses; they were unable to locate any individuals who had been involved in the incident.

Battery
Franklin and Eddy
November 1, 5:12 a.m.

A man saw an individual outside his residence pulling on a standpipe connected with the building. He shouted for the man to stop, but he refused, then punched the resident three times in the face. The man who had been assaulted sustained an injury to his left eye. The suspect then fled.

The resident called the police, providing officers with his assailant’s description, along with video surveillance footage of the incident. No arrest has been made.

Marijuana for Sale, Traffic Violation
Stanyan and McAllister
November 4, 11:05 a.m.

Officers in a patrol car spotted a vehicle with tinted windows and conducted a traffic stop. A heavy smell of marijuana poured from the vehicle when the driver opened the door. Officers learned he was driving with a suspended license. The driver gave them permission to search his car, and the officers located large quantities of marijuana, as well as many small baggies, a scale and money. The large amount of the drug indicated possession for sale. The suspect was arrested and booked.

Robbery, Elder Abuse
O’Farrell and Steiner
November 8, 9:32 a.m.

An elderly woman and her daughter became involved in a heated argument. The woman was increasingly alarmed as her daughter became more and more enraged. She attempted to call 911, but her daughter came after her and she stashed the phone in her pocket.

The two struggled over the phone. The younger woman shoved her mother against the refrigerator, which brought the elderly woman to her knees. She then abandoned her phone and retreated to a bathroom, where she attempted to call 911 from a different phone. Once she managed

The Good Samaritan

A FEW WEEKS AGO, on Veterans Day, my family and I were shooting our holiday photos near the corner of Jackson and Pierce, at the top of Alta Plaza Park. In the midst of trying to corral twin 3-year-olds and a hyperactive puppy, I stuck my purse in a nearby bush to free my hands and made a mental note to grab it when we left.

Half an hour, hundreds of photos and dozens of bribes later, in my eagerness to hustle everyone back into the car to get home in time for dinner, I forgot all about my bag.

As soon as we pulled into the driveway, I realized my mistake. We raced back to the corner, with its terrific view, but my bag was nowhere to be found — nor my phone, my keys or my wallet. I started having panicked visions of canceling credit cards, changing our locks and waiting in long lines at the DMV.

We went back home. I found — amazingly, miraculously — that my bag had already been returned. Someone found it in the bushes, looked at the address on my driver’s license and dropped it off at my house.

I don’t know why this simple act of kindness touched me so much, but it did. Sometimes I think living in a city can make you feel anonymous. It becomes easier to turn a blind eye and walk past the problem, whether it’s garbage littering the sidewalk, a homeless person in need or a harried mom’s bag accidentally left in a bush. This experience reminded me what it means to be a neighbor.

To my mystery good Samaritan: If you are reading this, thank you for going above and beyond for a total stranger.

— ROSE SHATTUCK

to complete the call, she came out of the bathroom. Her daughter then rushed past her to rip the phone cord from the wall.

Officers arrived before the younger woman could cause her mother further injury. The officers had difficulty placing the woman’s daughter in handcuffs, but eventually succeeded. She was arrested for robbery and elder abuse.

Assault on a Police Officer
Post and Buchanan
November 8, 3:07 p.m.

An off-duty officer recognized a wanted man who had been identified from surveillance video. He had been involved in a scuffle with police two weeks earlier in which a crowd of intoxicated individuals had thrown broken bottles and small explosive devices at the officers. One officer suffered a concussion and temporary hearing loss from the blasts.

The officer notified dispatch and asked them to send uniformed officers to the scene. On arrival, the officers determined that the suspect was the man who had previously thrown a lit explosive device at officers. They placed him under arrest.

Bicyclist Struck By Driver
Webster and Fulton
November 8, 5:55 p.m.

A bicyclist on a rideshare bike was struck by a driver and left with life-threatening injuries. The driver remained at the scene and cooperated with the officers. The case remains under investigation, and no arrests have been made.

Suspicious Death
Clement and 34th
November 9, 2:19 p.m.

Golfers discovered the lifeless body of an infant on the Lincoln Park Golf Course. The baby appeared to have been stillborn, and police stated the baby was “probably abandoned.” Investigators have not found the infant’s mother, and the baby has not been identified by the medical examiner’s office. Anyone who has more information is asked to call the police at 415-575-4444.

Theft, Possession of Stolen Property
Octavia and Union
November 13, 4:40 p.m.

A man parked his car directly in front of his place of work. Later, he looked from a window and saw a man on a bicycle stop beside his car, along with another unknown individual. The man watched while the suspect broke a window and proceeded to pull possessions out of his vehicle.

After running outside, the man shouted to people walking nearby, who attempted to catch the suspects. He then chased one of the suspects who was fleeing on a bike, caught up to him and pushed him off the bicycle. Another witness helped the man restrain the suspect until the police arrived. Officers found the two citizens still holding the man down; the suspect was taken into custody.

Vehicle Burglary
Geary and 21st
November 13, 7:34 p.m.

Officers spotted a car matching the description of a vehicle involved in an auto burglary. They followed the car as it entered a parking lot. Two men exited the car and began examining the interiors of parked vehicles, using a flashlight. A third suspect remained in the car.

A car alarm went off. One suspect was climbing into the rear of a parked car; the second was preparing to enter another car. They saw the officers and fled on foot.

The officer at the wheel of the patrol car parked in front of the suspects’ vehicle to prevent them from escaping. The man behind the wheel then rammed the patrol car and drove off. After a short pursuit, officers apprehended the two men who had fled on foot. Both were arrested for burglary and resisting arrest. The driver of the getaway car is still at large.

Robbery, Evading Officer
Divisadero and Hayes
November 15, 8:08 a.m.

Witnesses saw a man jump into an idling car and heard a woman scream. She chased the vehicle for a time, and was nearly hit as the suspect sped off.

A cab driver set out after the car and kept dispatch updated about its location. As the car raced down Guerrero Street, officers attempted to conduct a traffic stop, but the vehicle ran a red light and got away. At the intersection of 20th and Capp Streets, the fleeing suspect was involved in a traffic collision and officers detained him.

The police interviewed the woman who had been robbed, who stated that the man had snatched her cell phone out of her hands, then jumped into the idling car and fled. As she chased the car, she managed to open its door and reach inside in an attempt to recover her phone. But as the vehicle continued to speed away, her leg was injured. She stated that there was at least one other occupant of the vehicle. However, only one suspect was inside when the police stopped the car.



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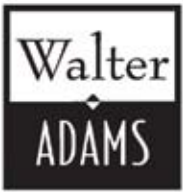
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San Francisco, CA
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Embarcadero
3 Embarcadero Center
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BY CHRIS BARNETT

THE HOT NEW California-inspired Mediterranean restaurant at Fillmore and Pine, **NOOSH**, rocketed off the launch pad in February and soared to great heights, only to explode the week before Thanksgiving when the money partner suddenly announced he was firing and suing his two highly lauded chef partners.

CEO **JOHN LITZ** on November 21 locked out the chefs and staff and posted a sign on Noosh's front door saying the restaurant was "cooking up something new" and would be "closed for a couple of days." By early December, he was still trying to re-open, now with a new "culinary advisor" — prominent pastry chef Emily Luchetti.

Chefs **SAYAT AND LAURA OZYILMAZ**, the husband and wife team who have cooked in five of the world's top 50 restaurants and were christened "rising stars" by the *Chronicle* in September, declared themselves "devastated to have been separated from their fans, customers and the family they have built with the employee team at Noosh."

In a 25-page lawsuit filed the day before, Litz alleged a laundry list of grievances against the Ozyilmazes, including misappropriation of funds, breach of oral contract and fraud. Laura called the allegations "ridiculous." Sayat said: "We deny everything. None of it is true."

The lawsuit suggests that Litz and the Ozyilmazes never reached agreement on the terms of their 50-50 partnership. Noosh was an almost instant success when it opened in February, with lines day and night out the door and down Pine Street. But friction among the partners was apparent from the beginning and, by April, police officers were called after a contentious meeting and a police report was filed.

Litz then disappeared from the restaurant. Some of his high-tech innovations were dialed back, including requiring diners to swipe their credit cards upon entering. In the lawsuit, Litz alleged his partners "have actively sought to make the restaurant unmanageable, while forcing [Litz] to remove himself from the premises."



John Litz (left) and Sayat and Laura Ozyilmaz in happier days.

What Went Wrong at Noosh?

The Ozyilmazes said Litz "has not been at the restaurant since May."

In the lawsuit, Litz alleges the Ozyilmazes initially had "verbally assured [Litz] they had no problems" with the agreements he had proposed, but "had no intention to sign or abide by the terms" of any agreements "that did not give them effective control of the restaurant business and relegate [Litz] to a largely passive role."

The partners can't even agree on who came up with the name. Litz says he planned to call the restaurant Noosh long before he met the chefs. Sayat says the restaurant is named after his grandmother.

Left in the lurch were Noosh's 75 employees. Amid uncertainty about whether they would be paid during the closure, many gathered on the sidewalk outside the restaurant the day after they were locked out and

seemed to be firmly on the side of the Ozyilmazes.

"I didn't see it coming at all," said Ricardo Romero, a server. "We had a really caring, loving, tight team. What John did is not the right way to do things." Added bartender Alex Vlausu: "It was a shock. We had a top-notch team."

General manager Sean O'Hair, now on leave, told EaterSF the Ozyilmazes were responsible for Noosh's success. "These people are lightning in a bottle, and it breaks my fucking heart to see someone do this to them," he said. "It's just patently unfair."

Despite the allegations of mismanagement and misbehavior in his lawsuit, Litz acknowledged the restaurant's success in a brief statement on December 2.

"In the short time Noosh has been open, the support we have received from the community is truly heartfelt and magical," he wrote. "We are honored to have become part of the social fabric of the community here on Fillmore."

He insisted the restaurant will continue without its star chefs. "Moving forward, we are taking proper time to build an exceptionally strong management team. Noosh is excited to open our doors as soon as possible and continue to serve the community."

CRUELTY TO ANIMAL LOVERS: The **SFSPCA** — Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals — has lately been somewhat cruel to animal fanciers at its 2343 Fillmore Street outpost, formerly **PETS UNLIMITED**.

First it shut down its second story adoption center where dog and cat lovers could cuddle furry friends and get acquainted before taking a pet home. A staffer says they didn't have enough foot traffic to keep the adoption center open. Now animals looking for a new home are brought over to Fillmore Street once a week from the city's Animal Care & Control center.

The latest cut: The 24-hour emergency vet care has now been trimmed back to 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

Local animal lovers are wondering if real estate values in the neighborhood might ultimately lead the SPCA to consolidate everything at its headquarters in the Mission.



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UMOJA (UNITY): To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race

Thursday, December 26th

12pm: City Hall, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl, Rotunda
2pm: Museum Of The African Diaspora, 685 Mission Street @ 3rd
7pm: Westbay Conference Center, 1290 Fillmore @ Eddy

KUJICHAGULIA (SELF-DETERMINATION): To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves

Friday, December 27th

1pm: Western Addition Family Resource Center/Hamilton Rec, 1900 Geary @ Steiner
4pm: OMI Family Resource Center/Minnie & Lovie Rec, 650 Capitol Ave
6pm: Bayview YMCA/Rafiki Wellness Coalition, 1601 Lane

UJIMA (COLLECTIVE WORK AND RESPONSIBILITY): To build and maintain our community together and make our brother's and sister's problems our problems and solve them together

Saturday, December 28th

1pm: Boys & Girls Club, 380 Fulton @ Gough
3pm: Booker T Community, 800 Presidio @ Sutter
6pm: African Arts & Culture Complex, 762 Fulton @ Webster

UJAMAA (COOPERATIVE ECONOMICS): To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together

Sunday, December 29th

10am: Bethel AME Church, 916 Laguna St @ Golden Gate
1pm: SF Main Library, 100 Larkins
4pm: Third Baptist Church, 1399 McAlister @ Pierce
7pm: St. Phillip Baptist Church, 745 Velasco Ave

NIA (PURPOSE): To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness

Monday, December 30th

1pm: Dr. George Davis Senior Center, 1753 Carroll Ave
3pm: Fellowship Manor, 1208 Golden Gate @ Webster
6pm: The Success Center/Geoffrey's Inner Circle, 410 14th Street, Oakland

KUUMBA (CREATIVITY): To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it

Tuesday, December 31st

1pm: Western Addition Senior Center/MoMagic, 1390 Turk @ Fillmore

IMANI (FAITH): To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle

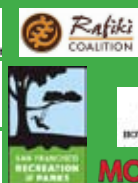
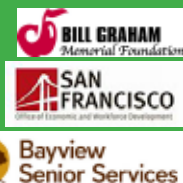
Wednesday, January 1st

6pm: St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, 2097 Turk @ Lyons



RSVP: www.Eventbrite.com

For more information, contact
Adrian Williams
awilliamsassoc@yahoo.com
415-424-2980





Five Favorite Vegan Treats

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEERU RAVI

I'M A LONDONER who's recently moved to the neighborhood for a year. In addition to better weather and gorgeous natural surroundings, San Francisco came with the promise of lots of delicious plant-based foods — heaven for a vegan like me.

In recent years, the vegan food scene in London has burgeoned, and I was keen to find out the vibe in San Francisco, arguably the birthplace of the conscious food movement. So the main focus of my year here — apart from work, of course — is to eat my way through the vegan food offered across the city.

My first priority was to explore the local options. Here's a roundup of my top five local vegan eats — so far.

1. Rainbow salad and vegan romesco flatbread at Jane, 2123 Fillmore Street

Jane was one of the first places I tried on Fillmore. I love the cozy, inviting cafe and the gorgeous display of baked goods. A favorite item on the menu is the rainbow salad. With juicy tomatoes, fresh spinach, creamy homemade hummus, marinated dino kale and a tangy tahini lime sauce, it's a powerhouse of nutrients and a very colorful bowl of goodness. I love crunching through the veggies and scooping up the hummus with a couple of slices of toasted Jane sourdough bread. Jane the Bakery at 1881 Geary also has a delicious vegan romesco flatbread topped with salty olives, roasted zucchini and a spicy romesco sauce.

2. Vegan doughnuts at Vegan Picnic, 1977 Union Street

I adore living near the water, especially the breathtaking view from the top of the hill near Fillmore and Broadway. My favorite Saturday morning activity is walking down to Union Street and picking up some delicious doughnuts at Vegan Picnic. Their maple flavor, soft and sweet, has a light crunch from the sugar topping. The shop also offers delicious brownies, croissants and a decadent chocolate cake. For something savory, I like the tubs of vegan macaroni and cheese with crunchy celery and bits of vegan bacon. While there, you can also pick up lots of other vegan snacks, including Vegan Rob's probiotic cauliflower puffs and Uncreamery vegan cheese — a nut-based local San Francisco cheese that is delicious with pesto, avocado and sourdough bread — as well as Cocomels, which are vegan coconut milk caramels.

3. Greens scramble and toast with coconut butter at Wildseed, 2000 Union Street

Union Street also has another exciting new plant-based restaurant: Wildseed. It offers an innovative brunch menu ranging from chickpea frittatas to carrot lox tartines to banana fritters. My favorite is the greens scramble with a side of toast and coconut butter. The scramble is made with Just Egg, which has a remarkably similar color, taste and texture to real egg, and the greens scramble is filled with arugula and broccolini and topped with lots of fresh, tangy lime juice. The coconut butter that comes with the toast is creamy and melts



just like real butter. For another “meatier” brunch option, try the fall vegetable omelet, which is filled with mushrooms and veggies and comes with a side of crispy fingerling potatoes and spicy sauce.

4. Freckled mint Tcho-colate chip ice cream at Salt & Straw, 2201 Fillmore Street

I've never been much of an ice cream person; London was never warm enough to

cultivate an ice cream habit. But the warm summer here and the close proximity of Salt & Straw has made me a convert. My favorite is the Freckled Mint Tcho-colate Chip made with local Tcho chocolate. Vegan and non-vegan friends alike agree it is delicious and tastes just like “normal” ice cream. My non-vegan fiancé says it's even better. The sugar cones are also vegan — but not the waffle cones — and the vegan



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Dandelion Chocolate Hazelnut Cookies & Cream ice cream is a great second option for a split scoop.

5. Abe’s vegan chocolate chip muffins at Mollie Stone’s, 2435 California Street

Good vegan muffins are difficult to find, so I was thrilled to stumble upon Abe’s vegan chocolate chip muffins at Mollie Stone’s. In fact, there’s an entire section of vegan baked goods at the store, including vegan blueberry muffins and brownie chocolate cookies. Abe’s chocolate chip muffins are moist, perfectly sweet and have a very generous helping of chocolate chips. They’re a favorite afternoon snack to munch on with a hot cup of chai tea.



There’s no need to compromise on taste or quality.

Vegan food has improved beyond recognition in recent years, so there’s no need to compromise on taste or quality. *The Economist* reports that going vegan for two-thirds of one’s meals could cut an individual’s annual, food-related carbon emissions by 60 percent. So there’s more incentive than ever to try vegan alternatives.

With movements such as Veganuary becoming more widespread, January has become a popular month for trying more vegan food.

If you haven’t already, why not give these local options a try?

Neeru Ravi has a vegan and yoga food blog at turmericyoga.wordpress.com.



LIVE JAZZ NIGHTLY

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■ NEW NEIGHBOR



Opa Cafe has transformed the corner store at Post and Broderick into a popular deli.

Good Food & Good Cheer

BY FRAN MORELAND JOHNS

“IT’S IN MY soul,” says Opa Cafe owner Jiries Wahba. “I love food. I like to make people happy, to bring people together.”

And with Opa Cafe — the cheerful, quickly popular deli-restaurant at 2401 Post at Broderick — he recently launched his second food business as the logical expression of his gregarious soul.

Wahba was 17 when he left his home in Bethlehem in 1999, coming alone to this country and leaving his then-girlfriend Leila Rishmawi behind. Within six years, he had finished his education at the College of San Mateo, returned home just long enough to marry Leila, and saved enough money working in area restaurants to open Handy Deli at 1815 Irving Street.

“It had been a popular Jewish deli in the ’60s,” Wahba says. “I wanted to bring that back.” He says Handy Deli now boasts “the best sandwiches in San Francisco.” Ingredients are key. “We only use Acme bread, sea salt, extra virgin olive oil,” he says.

At Opa Cafe, Wahba plans to expand that same tradition of good food and good cheer into what some might see as a challenging location. Though the space was remodeled earlier by the building owner, it had been a more typical corner store with quick-stop food and drink options behind heavy iron gates.

Today, plate glass walls artfully made secure with decorative ironwork let in light and invite passing views, and sidewalk tables are often occupied.

Inside, customers frequently include staff and visitors from nearby Kaiser and UCSF hospitals, along with neighborhood regulars. The space has a uniquely San Francisco international feel. Wahba speaks Arabic as well as fluent English,

and the fast-moving cooks carry on simultaneous conversations in various languages with customers and each other.

Jiries and Leila now have two sons: Costa, 14, and Camille, 8, and daughter Colleen, 3. Colleen’s name is in honor of a close friend who happens to be Irish, her multinationally inclined father explains. During the week, Leila gets the children off to school and preschool, and now runs Handy Deli, while Jiries is in charge of Opa Cafe. On Sundays, both restaurants are closed and the family attends St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church.

From behind its white tile and stainless steel counter, Opa offers a varied breakfast menu with burritos, burgers and wraps drawing on the cuisine of Wahba’s native land: falafel, chicken or lamb shawarma, gyro-tzatziki. There are also sandwiches, salads, kebabs and combinations. For the health-conscious, Opa’s crew can whip up a variety of smoothies. In addition to the sidewalk tables, three wooden tables offer inside seating. And Opa offers catering for events large and small.

But the big business — and lines can be expected at mealtimes — appears to be with the take-out customers. On a recent Monday at lunchtime there was a constant, though not oppressive, line as customers picked up orders and left.

“Every day,” said one woman dressed in hospital-issue blue. “I come every day I’m on duty. This is the best food I can get around here.”

“It’s a protein smoothie,” said another of her order. “I don’t have a lot of time for sit-down meals, and I try to get the nutrition I need.”

While they were waiting at the cash register or placing their orders, many of the customers greeted the staff and one another by name. The mood seemed to bear out Wahba’s goals. “Opa means cheerful,” he says. “Happiness.”

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■ FIRST PERSON

Inside the Palace Cafe

FOR DECADES local residents have walked down the block of Fillmore between Bush and Sutter and wondered about the sign hanging out over the sidewalk: Palace Cafe, it says, above a bright red Dr Pepper logo.

The cafe has been closed at least 30 years. For many of those years the sign was mostly obscured by the overgrown ficus trees that lined the block. After the trees came down, the question came more frequently: "What's up with the Palace Cafe?" It was said to be set up just as it was when it was last open for business back in the 1970s. But nobody seemed to know for sure.

Then one recent Saturday morning, while walking up the street from the Fillmore Farmers Market, a neighbor noticed the door to the long-shuttered cafe ajar. He knocked while pushing it open. Inside he met Dr. Jan Dickey, one of the grandchildren of the couple who bought the building back in the 1940s when they were part of the wave of black migration from the South. Some of their descendants still live in the flats upstairs.

Dickey had come over from his home in the East Bay to the building where he grew up to finally start clearing out the cafe. He said his family had decided, with encouragement from the city's new crackdown on vacant storefronts, they should empty the space and offer it for rent, perhaps as an office or a shop. They wanted to honor his grandfather, he said, and his grandmother, who willed — and prayed — the building into the family's fold as its home in the heart of the Fillmore.

"May I take photos?" the visitor asked. Here they are, a glimpse of the old Fillmore, untouched by time.

— THOMAS REYNOLDS





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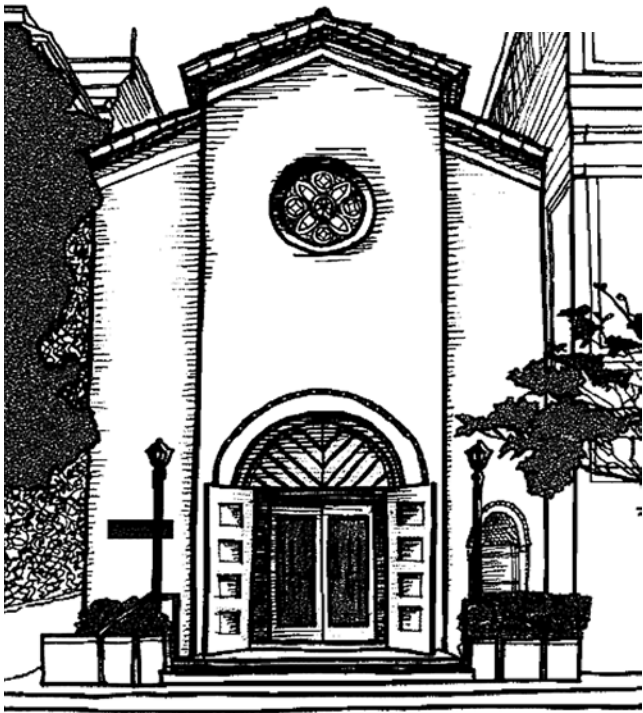
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Finding the Poetry in the Fillmore

By MARK J. MITCHELL

I ARRIVED in the neighborhood in September 1978, following the woman I’m still lucky enough to love. I had dreams of being a San Francisco poet.

We moved into the Preston Apartments above what is now Santino’s Vino, but was Uncle Vito’s in those days. I was fresh out of UC Santa Cruz with not-quite-a-degree in aesthetic studies and creative writing, with an emphasis on poetry. So I needed a job. I’d been unemployed a week and the rent was due. I decided to head downtown to apply at a new Walden Books that was about to open. But on the way I stopped in at Bi Rite Liquors, on the other corner of Fillmore and California, and asked if they needed any help. I was working there by the end of the day.

For the next 30-plus years, I worked in the liquor business, consulting on wine, beer and whiskey, first at Bi Rite, and after it folded at D&M Wines and Spirits a block farther up.

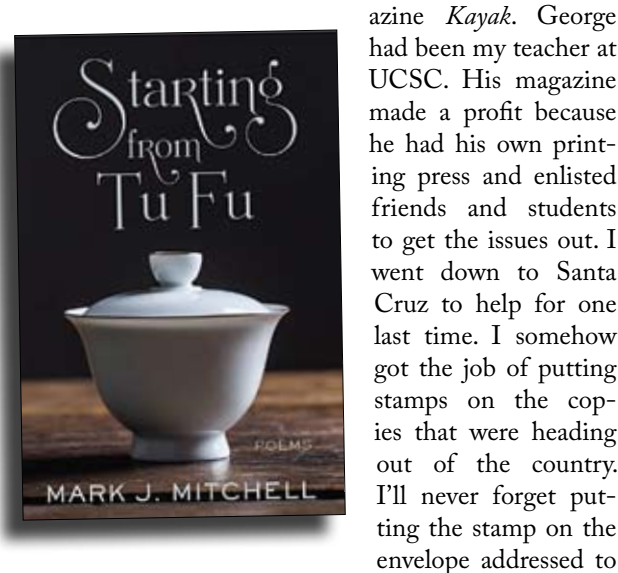
The neighborhood was a different place then. There were fewer boutiques and more places where the folks who lived around us shopped. It might have been a little rougher around the edges. Certainly it was more colorful. People would come in and chat around the candy rack at Bi Rite or around the bubbly at D&M. We could exchange news about the neighborhood and talk about the criminally high rents.

I was privileged to become a member of the neighborhood, working where I lived, at street level. I got to know people, including the Fillmore’s other poet, the lively and talented Ronald Hobbs, who co-owned Spectrum Imports, aka the bird store. Ronald is more of a free verse, Beat sort of poet than I am. I lean toward the formal. If you stumble upon a copy of his *Songs for Fillmore Street*, grab it.

All these years I have remained a poet. It’s a life sen-

tence. The first poem I recall writing here was called “Liquor Clerk’s Carol” and I wrote it in December 1978 about the retail scene. I showed it to my co-workers, whose only comment was: “You were high when you wrote that, right?” (I wasn’t.) That’s what it’s like to be poet. People tend not to understand what you do — or worse, think it’s a hobby.

Shortly after I arrived on Fillmore Street, a poem I wrote was published in George Hitchcock’s seminal mag-



azine *Kayak*. George had been my teacher at UCSC. His magazine made a profit because he had his own printing press and enlisted friends and students to get the issues out. I went down to Santa Cruz to help for one last time. I somehow got the job of putting stamps on the copies that were heading out of the country. I’ll never forget putting the stamp on the envelope addressed to

Octavio Paz. I thought at the time that I would never have a prouder moment.

The *New Fillmore* was founded in 1986 by David Ish, who was a poet as well. He published poetry in the paper, including a lot of my work. Folks would stop me to comment on what they’d read. One of the greatest hits was called “Fillmore Sutra,” about a neighborhood character named Gloria, who frequently asked for a quarter near the donut shop at Fillmore and California.

Some locals still mention that poem to me.

All these years, I’ve kept at it — writing, and publishing a little bit here and there. As the computer and internet age came, I was able to get more work out. But it wasn’t until after the Great Recession in 2008 ended my Fillmore career that my first chapbook was published. This made me very sad, because I didn’t have the home base in the neighborhood to share that accomplishment. My new co-workers didn’t know how long I’d worked for that.

Since then, a few of my novels have been published, plus a few more chapbooks and a full-length collection of poetry. I’m very proud of my new book just out this month, *Starting From Tu Fu*, which is made up of various formal poems.

In the 40-plus years I’ve lived here, our Fillmore has changed, just as the city has changed. Some of us have stayed around and can talk about the old days. We fondly remember Leon’s Barbecue, Fillmore Hardware, the Donut Hole and pre-Starbucks coffee.

Back when David Ish ran this paper, he would throw a party as each issue came out. He called them his “fooled ’em again” parties. I think I went to all of them.

At one, I was hanging out on the back porch with the smokers, chatting with Linda Lewis, the wife of Fillmore resident and saxophone maestro Sonny Lewis. We were talking about poems, and she mentioned a poem of mine that David had printed about a year before. It was a love poem about the joys of domesticity. She told me she had taped it over her sink. Right then, I had a new proudest moment as a poet.

The publication this month of *Starting From Tu Fu* is another.

Neighborhood poet Mark Mitchell’s new book of poems is available through encirclepub.com.

A Murder in Pacific Heights

By SUSAN MCCORMICK

THE FIRST BOOK in a planned San Francisco Cozy Murder Mystery series, *The Fog Ladies* features a group of spunky older women and one overworked, overtired, overstressed medical intern who live in an elegant apartment building in San Francisco — and then the older ladies start to die.

The story is set in Pacific Heights in a building similar to the one I lived in years ago, minus the dying ladies. The neighborhood is as much a character in the story as the Fog Ladies themselves — with its beautiful 1920s and ’30s apartment buildings, nearby shopping streets, hills, views and pruned trees in winter.

Cozy murder mysteries have no violence “on screen” and are character-driven, usually within an enclosed space confining all the characters, so the killer is among them. Think of the train in Agatha Chris-

tie’s *Murder on the Orient Express*, or that country estate where the unwitting go for the weekend.

In the Pacific Heights apartment building where I lived on Broadway, tenants of all ages lived together: single people, young families with babies, middle-aged couples, older women. I quickly realized the building might be the right setting for a series of murders, with a killer afoot and nowhere to hide.

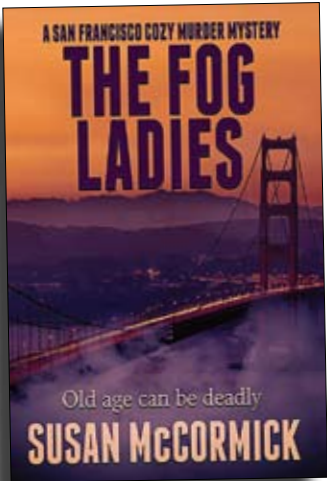
In *The Fog Ladies*, Mrs. Bridge falls off a stool while cleaning bugs out of her kitchen light. Mrs. Talwin slips on bubbles in the bath and drowns. One of the other tenants, medical intern Sarah James, has no time for sleuthing. Her elderly neighbors have nothing but time. Sarah assumes the deaths are the natural consequence of growing old. The Fog Ladies assume murder.

The name “Fog Ladies” popped into my head as I thought about the older female characters and their special bond of friend-

ship. When I lived in San Francisco, we all heard the same words on the radio nearly every day: “Early morning fog burning off by midday.” So young Sarah in the book believes you can count on the ladies just like you can count on the early morning fog.

Pacific Heights’ fine old apartment buildings provide the perfect setting for a cozy murder mystery. Apartment living, where tenants may have known each other and each other’s secrets for years, is rife for a whodunit. Add fog and foghorns, earthquakes and aftershocks, bay views and rooftop decks with tenuous railings, and you have the ideal neighborhood for a mystery.

Susan McCormick, a doctor now living in Seattle, also wrote Granny Can’t Remember Me, a children’s picture book about Alzheimer’s disease. Her new novel is available through thewildrosepress.com.



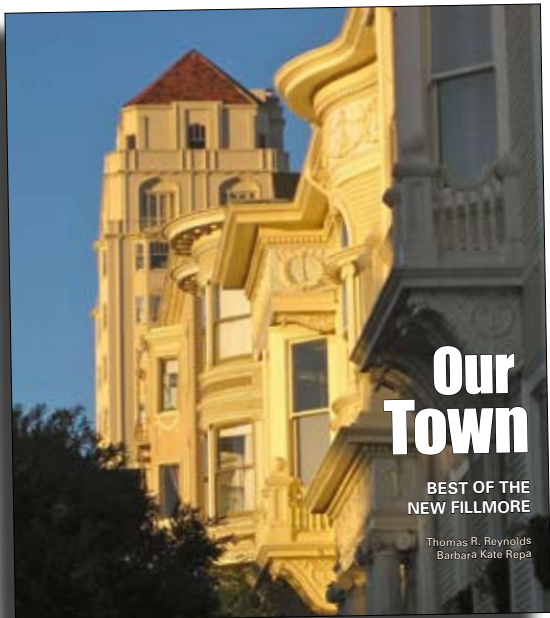
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Things Happen in a Bird Store

By RONALD HOBBS

FOR THE BETTER part of 23 years I found myself running a bird store at 2011 Fillmore Street. It was a small storefront, the space inside narrow and deep — maybe 16 feet wide by 70 deep, about 1,200 square feet in all.

Imagine, simply, this place with cages running along the walls, some pegboards and a few shelves for books. It is not exactly beautiful, not a “birdie boutique.” The walls are stark white. There are some paintings and second-rate bird prints tacked up here and there in frames the parrots have already chewed on. It’s a livestock store, a close space, and there are odors of musky grain and the occasional scent of mouse and, over that, the Clorox I swabbed each day upon the floor.

It’s noisy here, too. The finches, the caca-tuas, the papa-gayos, aratingas — 200, maybe 300 birds at any given time. Life making noise; life making stink. Life! And add into that life the people who came, not the dime-a-dozen lookie-loos, but those who came not to judge but to see.

I had a business partner, in the sloppiest sense of the word, which led to my eventual undoing, but that’s only a footnote. Perhaps without that unfortunate time, I would never have recognized these encounters for what they were. Many wonderful and surprising things happened there.

“I Have a Message”

In January of 1979 I was standing in front of the bird shop having my morning coffee when a man, a passerby, nobody I had ever seen before nor have laid eyes on since, stops about two feet in front of me and says, “I have a message for you from Sri Ramakrishna.” As if the caffeine were not enough, his remark added to the jolt.

I looked at the man. He was well dressed, pressed pants, good shoes. There were no kinks or tics that I could see, so I nodded permission to speak.

What he spoke was troubling because, in fact, it concerned matters current to questions I had been puzzling over. His words carried content and direction that seemed quite plausible. When he finished, I nodded again and we shook hands. He left without my having said a word.

I finished my coffee as I ruminated on what he had said. But what had seemed poignant a moment before was evaporating quickly; by the time I tossed my styrofoam cup into the trash bin, I didn’t remember a word of it. Of course, it had to be bullshit. Sri Ramakrishna, indeed! And still...

The only acquaintance I had who might make some sense of this odd event was Dave Horowitz, a Brooklyn-born Jew who had become known as Shanti in the ’60s. He’d become some kind of theosophist or yogi.

I telephoned Shanti and he suggested that I speak to his guru, Jaji-Jaji. Next day I pick up Shanti and we drive over to meet Jaji-Jaji at the Lotus Temple of Instant Bliss in San Rafael.

The guru was as improbable as I found Shanti to be. As best as I could tell, he had found his niche in selling aluminum siding for the soul. After the introductions, the Namastes, and after posing my question, I had no choice but to let Jaji-Jaji run on.

And he did run on. Samsaras were interspersed with karmas and divine chakras ad nauseum. When I finally sensed that he was running out of material, I spoke again.

“Precisely!” He responded. “That’s what I was saying all along! You are that free! Sing, my child, fly!”

Driving back over the bridge to San Francisco, Shanti said, “Did you notice how he had us wrapped around his little finger? That dude is so intrinsically cool that even you were frozen by his presence. It is called Lila, a divine game. You’ll see what I mean some day.”



PHOTOGRAPHS OF RONALD HOBBS AT
SPECTRUM EXOTIC BIRDS BY LUCY GRAY

Changing lanes to get around a stalled Subaru, I thought to myself, “Oh Jesus, please don’t let that happen!”

A Taste for Birds and Bud

Mr. Takahashi was a painter of birds, specifically herons. Although we had no herons, he would sometimes come with his little notepad and sketch the birds on their perches; mostly, he sketched feet. His English was poor but effective. “Feet very difficult to get just so,” he would say.

Sometimes he would bring a tray of Japanese pastries, which he shared with me. “Birds belong to both earth and to sky,” he once remarked, “not just any creature.”

It turned out that Mr. Takahashi also had a taste for Budweiser. One day he invited me to his gallery, a small place — maybe 500 square feet — home to a collection of ceramic figurines and plates, Samurai helmets and swords, and paintings of herons. We sat on the floor drinking 16-ounce Buds from a six-pack he had stashed behind a framed Paul Jacoulet. “Interesting man, Jacoulet,” Mr. Takahashi said. “He painted himself in ‘honorable white,’ like a geisha. But he knew everything — piano, mathematics, color. His father was a diplomat. I knew them during the war.”

In the months to come, I visited my friend’s gallery as often as I could. Dutifully, I brought six-packs of 16-ounce Buds. Mr. Takahashi, it also turned out, was a credentialed kendo master whose star pupil was an actor named Toshiro Mifune. I asked a lot of questions and the old man was patient. He walked me through Satsuma vases, Noritaki plates and Kutani cats. In a very short time I could spot knock-offs and fakes at 20 paces — although it was nothing I had ever craved to know.

And then one afternoon, on a crowded shelf in a corner of the gallery, I noticed an especially ugly cup. It was misshapen and the glaze was globby and irregular. “Takahashi-san, what is this grotesque thing?” I asked him.

“Ah, you have finally seen it!”

“Seen what?”

“The cup. The cup is Takahashi’s soul.”

His reply produced one of the most annoying feelings that ever penetrated me. I’m not sure why. It caught me off guard. I thought it was a cheap shot, a throwaway line, but it lodged there anyway.

I opened another beer. Takahashi was drunk and I was pacing him to the wire. It was November, and rains were pounding on the roof. The curtains were flying into the room. Raindrops blew in and landed on the faces of the maidens in the Jacoulet where they streamed down like tears.

“Maybe, Iechi (I spoke his first name), you will teach me kendo someday; maybe I could be the next Toshiro Mifune!”

He laughed, “No, Ron-san, you are Mr. America: a real Mr. America, a shit kicker; that’s who you are. Don’t try to spoil it. Yes, I can teach many things, but for now, you are Takahashi’s beer-drinking pupil.”

Forever Amber

“Young man! Young man, dammit! I said, young man!” And then there was the whacking of a cane upon the floor. I turned from my chores and at the door I saw an ancient man and an ancient woman.

“We want to buy a parakeet! I’m 101 years old; we don’t have much time! Please pay attention!”

His name was Sidney, Sidney Amber. “We live at the Broadmoor.”

He won my attention, he won it all and everything I ever wished to do in this life at this moment was to attend him. Everything else evaporated. The situation was so unexpected and delightful that I all but melted into a puddle.

To choose from, there was a green one with the white wings or the chesty blue one with the perfectly spotted necklace or the pink-eyed albino.

The Ambers would show up in their DeSoto cab a couple of times a month to buy birdseed or a \$2 toy. I always opened a folding chair for them, but neither one ever chose to sit in it. We would talk about anything. They were both talking machines and they had a contagious humor about them.

Once we were talking about thoroughbred horses, so I went off on one of my gambling stories. I did not know that Mr. Amber had gotten dangerously frisky with the ponies when he was younger. It had cost him a house and serious amounts of money.

Mrs. Amber squeezed and shook my wrist. “Listen here, Ron. You’ll find a lot more horse’s asses at a race track than you will find horses! Right Sidney?”

Mr. Amber passed away in 1995 at the age of 109. One of the DeSoto cabbies stopped in to tell me. The next day in the papers his obituaries seemed to be every place from Los Angeles to New York. There was a video cassette someone gave me of Mr. Amber on the *Tonight Show*.

The columnist Herb Caen recounted his first visit with Sidney at the Broadmoor. A weary old man bent over a walking stick greeted him at the door, shuffled a few pitiful steps, then turned and threw his cane on the bed. “Ah! Fooled you, didn’t I!”

By Pamela Feinsilber

AT ONLY 25, opera singer and neighborhood resident Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen has already had a head-spinning career.

Cohen graduated from Princeton in 2015. Just two years later, he was one of 12 artists to join S.F. Opera’s prestigious two-year, performance-oriented Adler Fellowship Program, which is what brought him to San Francisco.

He made his S.F. Opera debut this summer in a major supporting role in Handel’s *Orlando*. By then, he’d already held the limelight in an important tryout for future stars: the Metropolitan Opera’s National Council Auditions Grand Finals, in March 2017. *New York Times* critic Zachary Woolfe saw several good singers onstage, but “only one complete artist,” noting that Cohen “stood clearly apart from the pack.” He was one of six winners.

Cohen is a countertenor. Singing above the vocal terrain of a tenor, he and the other 50-some quality countertenors working today perform music written in the 17th and 18th centuries for castrati — men castrated before puberty so their voices would remain high. After the practice was banned, much of that music lay dormant for a couple of centuries. When Baroque music made a comeback, the high, pure, sonorous countertenor tradition was born.

Among its most lauded practitioners, Cohen will be performing here early this month in two programs: “The Future Is Now,” his final Adler Fellows concert, with the S.F. Opera orchestra, at Herbst Theatre on December 6; and as a soloist in Handel’s *Messiah*, with the S.F. Symphony, at Davies Hall on December 13 and 14.

What made you become a countertenor?

I was in the Brooklyn Youth Chorus. I peaked at 13, singing backup for Elton John at a sold-out concert at Madison Square Garden. We sang behind Billy Joel and James Taylor, too. As a kid, you don’t really know who these people are or what it means. We also sang great classical stuff at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center.

What happened when your voice changed?



Countertenor Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen at Glaze on Fillmore.

An Opera Star on the Fast Track

We were doing all these cool engagements, and I really liked singing in this choir, so I kept trying to sing in the falsetto. I learned as I went along. It wasn’t until college that I had any inkling of a musical career.

When you look back over the last few years, what are the highlights?

What stands out most to me is the up-and-down journey at first. I applied to some graduate programs in vocal performance, and for some fellowships, and I got into the finals but was not accepted anywhere. I spent 2016

and ’17 working as an SAT tutor to pay the bills while I honed my skills. To think how wildly things have changed is just extraordinary for me. The Met Opera competition changed my life overnight.

This month you’re performing in two programs here.

In many ways, the Adler Fellows concert is the most accessible way to get a taste of classical music. Each fellow sings two arias or duets, showcasing music we love to sing. It’s amazingly varied. I’ll be singing some Handel and some contemporary stuff.

And in the *Messiah*, you’ll be singing the alto part in place of the usual mezzo-soprano.

In Handel’s lifetime, that part was sung by countertenors and mezzo-sopranos. It is probably one of the most performed pieces in the world. There’s a reason for that — the experience of hearing these beautiful choruses and symphonic work, the amazing arias.

Where do you see yourself in 20 years?

Countertenors have a different sort of lifespan. Even with tenors, you have the light lyric tenor who sings through his 40s or early 50s; and the heldentenors, with bigger, more dramatic voices. They peak in their 40s and 50s. I’m on the front-loaded end of the spectrum, so I feel all the more lucky to have this all rolling at such a young age.

Do you plan to stay in San Francisco?

Abby, my girlfriend, moved here this summer, and if we can afford it, we would love to stay. The main attractions are nature and the weather, and the people, who are very warm and welcoming. And the food. I could spend five hours talking about food. It’s my third great passion.

What’s the second?

Politics. I was originally a policy major, at Woodrow Wilson School of Public Policy. I might like to come back to that after about 50. I could see myself making a run for office. Maybe I’ll run for the Board of Supervisors one day.

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Looking east from Lafayette Square toward Russian Hill and Nob Hill after the 1906 earthquake. Below, a crowd gathered in the park to watch the fire, and the view down Washington Street.



Three Houses on Lafayette Square

They survived the 1906 earthquake and fire

By BRIDGET MALEY

A SERIES OF photographs taken during and just after the 1906 earthquake and fire reveals a sense of the fear and dread that neighborhood residents must have felt at the time. The fire, which crossed to the west side of Van Ness Avenue between Sutter and Clay Streets, was halted by the U.S. Army's defensive dynamiting, which included purposefully destroying some of the city's most elaborate mansions.

The photographs illustrate just how the marching fire must have raised the alarm near Lafayette Square. The images, all in the collection of the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, and taken by either Frank or Gregory Padilla, capture the images of three houses along Gough Street north of Clay. The Padillas apparently had a studio on Washington Street, but not much is known about the family of photographers.

When the earthquake hit, there were only three houses facing the square on the block of Gough Street between Washington and Clay. One image, looking east down Washington Street, shows a mish-mash of fencing and billboard advertising at the corner of Washington and Gough. A portion of the three houses peek out from behind the park's hilly terrain. While all three dwellings survived the earthquake, only two remain; the third was replaced in 1912.

The house at 2000 Gough Street, set

on a prominent corner lot across from one of the city's crown jewel parks, embodies the elements of a Stick-Eastlake style cottage and carries a rather rural feel. Built in 1885 by Michael P. Jones, the house was a wedding present for Jones's son Webster and his new wife, Beulah Hobbs Jones. It was designed by William Frederick Smith, a Boston-born architect who practiced in California from 1877 to about 1910.

Architectural historian Anne Bloomfield once wrote of this Smith-designed house that "pseudo-structural 'sticks' and other verticals divide the surface into a symphony of rectangles and there are two Queen Anne bits as well, the round bay windows, fish scale shingles and a complex roof, all well harmonized."

After a few short years of marriage, Beulah caused quite a scandal by leaving Webster Jones for Vladimir Artsimovitch, a Russian count, who had been the consul general in San Francisco. The Jones's divorce was colorfully detailed in the city's newspapers. By the time of the earthquake, the home had been sold to German-born Ludwig Schwabacher, manager of the Crown Paper Co. Schwabacher, who had married Carrie Fleishhacker, a sister of Mortimer Fleishhacker, died in the house in January 1912, and ownership passed to his son James.

Constructed in 1889 and designed by the prolific architect Walter J. Mathews, the Belden-Buck house at 2004-2010 Gough Street has an asymmetrical composition typical of its Queen Anne style. It



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Looking down Clay Street as fire consumed the city in 1906.

was commissioned by Charles A. Belden, of the stove and metal firm W. W. Montague & Co., who was later president of the Watsonville Water and Light Co.

The house has highly decorative exterior surface ornament including various shingles, turrets, a moon gate and floral plaster relief panels. Originally, there were multiple brick chimneys, but several toppled in the 1906 earthquake. The conical turret on this house can be picked out in the images chronicling the unfolding disaster.

The third Gough Street house visible in the 1906 photographs was the home of Marsten Manson, a civil engineer,

whose career included a stint from 1908 to 1912 as San Francisco’s city engineer. Manson’s papers, also at the Bancroft Library, include correspondence with city parks designer William Hammond Hall, as well as much information on the city’s water supply and the creation of the Hetch Hetchy dam. Spring Valley Water tap records indicate both Manson and Michael P. Jones applied for water permits on the same day, June 24, 1885, indicating that their houses may have shared either a builder or the architect, William F. Smith.

The remarkable images taken from Lafayette Square during those fateful

days in April of 1906 provide a glimpse of events as they were happening. If you look closely, you can see either the Schwabachers themselves or their visitors mounting the stairs to the front door of the house at 2000 Gough Street. Also visible is a house with a series of steeply pitched roofs, which was the precursor to the apartment building that still remains within Lafayette Park.

The photographers captured spectators watching the fire consume the city. The images hold the event frozen in time with a backdrop of what the blocks around the square would have looked like as it all unfolded.

■ ICON



Frank Lloyd Wright tiles created here

ARCHITECT AARON GREEN, who lived in a neighborhood apartment overlooking Lafayette Park for many years, helped Frank Lloyd Wright establish a San Francisco office in 1951 at 319 Grant Avenue.

Green’s mother-in-law, Jeannette Pauson Haber, lived at 2510 Jackson Street, on Alta Plaza Park, with her sister, Rose Pauson, who was a former client of Wright’s. In 1940 she had built the Pauson House in Arizona, which had been destroyed by fire in 1943.

Rose was a painter, and Jeannette a ceramicist. When Wright decided to create red tiles, inscribed with his initials, to be affixed to a select number of his buildings, he asked Jeannette to fabricate them. Wright provided a drawing of what he wanted; Jeannette formed the tiles; Aaron Green inscribed the initials — FLLW — into each one; and Jeannette produced the “Taliesin red” glazed surface that Wright specified.

Among the Bay Area buildings that Wright designated as worthy of bearing the tiles were the V.C. Morris shop on Maiden Lane — his only building in San Francisco and a precursor to the circular Guggenheim Museum in New York — and the Marin County Civic Center, which was completed by Aaron Green after Wright’s death.

— *From Frank Lloyd Wright and San Francisco, by Paul V. Turner, published by Yale University Press.*

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1807 Greenwich St	3	3	2	2,708	50	10/28/19	3,550,000	3,500,000
1914 Webster St	4	3	1	3,158	42	11/12/19	3,700,000	3,625,000
2323 Greenwich St	4	5	2	3,007	61	11/8/19	4,395,000	4,235,000
2345 Divisadero St	5	8	1	3,935	82	10/17/19	6,080,000	5,347,000
50 Arguello Blvd	5	5	6	n/a	38	11/12/19	6,500,000	6,000,000
2290 Green St	5	5	2	4,198	0	10/16/19	6,500,000	6,500,000
3933 Clay St	5	5	3	5,110	3	11/6/19	6,200,000	6,700,000
2767 Clay St	5	4	2	4,510	49	11/5/19	7,800,000	7,800,000
3460 Clay St	6	5	1	5,230	10	11/4/19	8,650,000	9,100,000

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1950 Gough St #107	0	1	0	600	33	11/13/19	599,000	605,000
1800 Washington St #1800	1	1	1	745	28	11/12/19	949,000	900,000
1855 Sacramento St #11	2	1	1	1,109	19	10/31/19	1,099,888	1,060,000
2117 Bush St #A	1	1	1	850	12	10/30/19	950,000	1,080,000
112 Arguello Blvd #4	2	1	1	823	7	11/1/19	999,000	1,100,000
1950 Gough St #102	1	1	1	900	13	11/6/19	899,000	1,108,000
2060 Union St #5	2	1	1	765	12	10/18/19	995,000	1,200,000
1998 Pacific Ave #203	2	2	1	1,075	21	11/7/19	1,180,000	1,215,000
1853 Filbert St	2	2	1	1,048	33	11/5/19	1,248,000	1,300,000
2785 Union St	2	1	0	1,266	14	11/4/19	995,000	1,300,000
2200 Pacific Ave #9E	1	2	1	1,323	7	10/17/19	1,195,000	1,340,000
2400 Webster St #1	2	2	1	1,089	9	10/21/19	1,195,000	1,375,000
3295 Clay St #5	2	1	1	1,132	35	11/1/19	1,295,000	1,390,000
2571 Post St	2	2	1	1,334	42	10/21/19	1,450,000	1,410,000
3110 California St #3A	3	2	1	1,308	12	11/12/19	1,395,000	1,420,000
1737 Sutter St #B	2	3	1	1,500	39	11/4/19	1,450,000	1,425,000
2744 Bush St	2	2	1	1,266	11	11/6/19	1,295,000	1,482,000
2090 Pacific Ave #505	1	1	1	n/a	11	11/1/19	1,549,000	1,600,000
1998 Broadway #1607	2	2	1	1,030	38	10/24/19	1,695,000	1,660,000
1501 Filbert St #PH7C	2	2	1	1,040	37	10/25/19	1,695,000	1,675,000
1753 Lyon St	3	2	1	1,397	13	10/22/19	1,495,000	1,690,000
1650 Broadway #504	2	2	2	1,053	5	10/18/19	1,685,000	1,732,500
2865 Clay St #3	2	2	1	n/a	27	11/4/19	1,495,000	1,765,000
2243 Franklin St	2	2	1	1,463	82	10/21/19	1,895,000	1,855,000
3351 Clay St #3	3	2	2	n/a	65	10/22/19	1,949,000	1,885,000
2794 Filbert St	2	2	2	1,608	10	11/5/19	1,895,000	2,100,000
3037 California St	4	2	1	2,540	27	10/16/19	2,095,000	2,140,000
2673 Filbert St	2	2	1	1,221	9	11/12/19	1,795,000	2,200,000
2239 Webster St	3	2	1	1,964	26	11/8/19	2,399,000	2,399,000
2172 Pacific Ave #1	3	3	2	2,280	9	10/29/19	2,600,000	2,500,000
2138 Vallejo St	4	3	2	3,605	31	10/16/19	2,995,000	2,995,000
3953 Washington St	4	3	1	3,111	8	10/29/19	3,995,000	4,100,000
2190 Broadway #4W	3	3	1	3,200	10	11/8/19	4,300,000	4,350,000



When developers have the edge

A LARGE, DESIRABLE and expensive home a block from the Presidio recently sold for less than asking price to a development company, underscoring the advantages developers sometimes have over individual buyers.

The five-bedroom residence at 50 Arguello Boulevard (above) sold for \$6 million in mid-November, \$500,000 less than its list price. On the market for just over a month, the home sits on a spacious lot, gets plenty of light and includes a back yard and deck for relaxing or entertaining guests.

While the home attracted attention from local homebuyers and is solidly built, it needs significant work — particularly in the basement and the detached garage — to reach its full potential and value. Extensive renovations can exert pressure on buyers’ time and bank accounts, so the home seemed a better fit for a developer than someone searching for a property in move-in-ready condition.

Real estate development companies can purchase building materials at wholesale prices and have reliable construction teams on call, so the buyer of 50 Arguello should be able to renovate the home within the relatively short span of 18 months or so. That would certainly be a more expensive and challenging job for a buyer who planned to live in the home.

— Data and commentary provided by PATRICK BARBER at Compass Real Estate. Contact him at patrick.barber@compass.com or call 415-345-3001.

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Shaban Shakoori is a real estate salesperson licensed by the state of California affiliated with Compass. Compass is a real estate broker licensed by the state of California and abides by equal housing opportunity laws. Shaban does not practice law.

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