Enraged Stalker Makes the News

By George Capsis

Late in the evening of Wednesday, August 14, we received an email from a 53-year-old woman who had been punched in the face by a bare-chested African American man, at approximately 8:40 p.m. while walking her dog on 14th Street, between 7th and 8th Avenues. Her complaint was that the six officers who responded to the 911 calls made by witnesses to the attack were unsympathetic and abrupt, refusing to take a report of the incident or a description of the assailant from the several eyewitnesses to the attack, who advised the responding officers that the woman who had been punched in the face by a bare-chested African American man, at approximately 8:40 p.m. while walking her dog on 14th Street, between 7th and 8th Avenues. Her complaint was that the six officers who responded to the 911 calls made by witnesses to the attack were unsympathetic and abrupt, refusing to take a report of the incident or a description of the assailant from the several eyewitnesses to the attack, who advised the responding officers that the

AIDS Prophylactic Touted as Cure

By George Capsis

One of the newest members of the West-View family is Kambiz Shekdar whose business card offers he is a Ph.D. and as such worked at the Rockefeller Institute on an invention which then evolved into the creation of the Research Foundation to Cure AIDS of which Kambiz is the President. His foundation paid the sum of $1 for all of the rights to the invention in order to develop and share a not-for-profit cure for AIDS. Kambiz is insisting on offering in his article a number of ads to illustrate how this drug is being touted as a cure—all for AIDS (just pop it in your mouth like candy). Kambiz sees his column this month as “the head of an octopus.” Subsequent issues will tackle its tentacles.

Senior Shares for the Village

By Hannah Reimann

According to the Institute on Aging, the number of seniors across the country will grow by more than 40 million, doubling between 2015 and 2050 and the population older than 85 will come close to tripling. By 2030, more than 28 states will witness a fifth of their populations being older than 65.

The fastest growing age group of elders is 85+. In 2010 the number had grown to 5.5 million from 100,000 in 1900. By 2050, the number of people age 85+ will reach 19 million, 5% of the total population. Of the older adults living outside nursing homes in 2010, nearly one-third lived alone.

There are many more staggering statistics and all point to the same concern: As a society we need to implement solutions before the conditions catch up with all of us and cripple families financially. The workforce to help seniors needs to be refashioned.

Senior Shares for the Village continued on page 5

%22Dangerous Ads%22

Facebook is placing pharmaceutical ads targeting vulnerable populations, raising important questions.

SEE PAGE 3

%22Smalls Jazz Club%22

After 25 years, a local jazz institution is not merely surviving—it’s thriving!

SEE PAGE 28

%229/11 Memorial Concert%22

Schiller Institute NYC Chorus at St. Veronica Cultural Center
Sunday, September 8 at 4:00 pm
Praise for WestView Contributors

Re: August WestView News:
Keith Michael is always amazing and he outdid even himself with the August article on the tenn—the information, the photography, the prose! Also enjoyed new contributor Annunziata Gianzaro on olive oil; hope for more from her. Keep it up all.
—Barbara Chaour

Shakespeare and Company

I love Caroline Benveniste’s column. This is a question for her. What ever happened to the Shakespeare and Company bookstore that was supposed to open at 450 Sixth Avenue, in the old Jefferson Market space?
—Christine Tralongo

Christine,
Thanks for writing to us. I was also wondering what had happened. I just called the Lexington Avenue branch of Shakespeare and Company, and someone there told me that things had been delayed, but that they expected to be opening in the old Jefferson Market space in January or February 2020.
—Caroline Benveniste

Bike LANes

Interesting stuff in the August issue of WestView News. The letter from Bill Puliano on the bike lanes on 12th and 13th Streets was especially well informed and balanced. We need him as a writer for WestView. The simplistic DOT/MTA view on bus speeds instead of total trip duration and comfort ignores what travelers must endure, long walks to and from the unsheltered stops, long waits at the stops for buses bunched in pairs, buses passing us by while we have to purchase the ridiculous paper tickets before boarding. DOT also uses simplistic origin/destination traffic projections, again ignoring the fact that it creates congestion by parking limitations which force car owners to continually cruise the streets simply looking for free parking spaces for cars they rarely use to travel in the city. Mr. Puliano is right. The fewer spaces, the fewer cruising cars.
—Barry Benepe

Friendly Ideas for Hudson River Park

Dear editors,
The August article (Why) Build a Full-Size Field on Gansevoort Park? about the excellent public presentation July 24 of Hudson River Park’s plans for the Gansevoort Peninsula, noted that several key issues are yet unresolved. Since it may be several more weeks before we hear of the next stage of planning, I offer these friendly suggestions for consideration.

* Resiliency. I believe, is still a huge concern, since a “Sandy-type” flood surge would ruin this beautiful park. Just as the city has decided to build up the playing fields at the East River Greenway, why not slope up the edges to a height that gives the park a better chance of surviving?

* The case for the U-14 regulation field, given in public testimony, was overwhelmingly urgent. Depending on the placement of the U-14, perhaps the ‘pine grove’ could be elongated as a buffer to hide the fencing from the street, the Promenade might be relocated to the north side, and the “River Gym” could be moved south adjacent to the sand area?

* On the south side where the sandlot is shown, some of stone rip-rap slopes could be replaced with broad steps, some wood, some stone, like the landscape consultant masterfully did at Chicago’s Navy Pier, to give a more direct connection from sand to water?

* Comments we heard about the artificial turf fields being “a field covered in plastic”, “a plastic park”, “ugly”, etc., might be resolved by the city Parks Department’s newly developed artificial turf, made entirely of plant-based sources, producing a better, more ‘natural-feeling’ paving that’s not plastic, and more ecological too.

I look forward to the next step toward this vital community amenity.
—Brian Pape

WestViews

Correspondence, Commentary, Corrections

New Monthly Series in WestView

of the US. Having been elevated to the presidency in 1861, he made his peace with the Northern people who lived or worked in our neighborhood during those years, unsung and mostly forgotten, their “contributions of immense importance” (Garrett’s own words) to the defeat of fascism, and how their accomplishments provide a road map for a way out of the mess we’re in.
—Catherine Recland

Correction

I’m sure you’re aware of it by now but you were a full four (4) years off when you mentioned Lincoln’s assassination in “1861.” It was, of course, April 1865, at the start of Lincoln’s 2nd term.
Sorry about poor Hamlin, too!
—Marc Wallace

Yes, of course you are right and I apologize to you and all readers for this error. How it happened I do not know, as I, like you, am well aware of the date of Lincoln’s assassination. I offer only this explanation: Johnson could not have been elevated to the presidency in 1861 as he was not then the vice president, so the assassination quite obviously occurred after Johnson’s inauguration as VP in March 1865. As for Hamlin, my understanding is that he was not too much bent out of shape by losing the vice presidency; the office then as now was not powerful or a useful step (up, down or sideways) for a US Senator like Hamlin. He was quite happy to return to Maine and, ultimately, to be twice more elected to the US Senate. I am grateful for your comments. I will do better in the future if there is an appetite for more of these Maine-based stories.
—Tom Lamia
“Wild West” Ad Culture on Facebook Targets Youth

In a first of its kind, Facebook has been co-opted to advertise a pharmaceutical drug. Like Russian influence on the U.S. election, the use of social media targeted at vulnerable populations raises important questions.

By Kambiz Shekdar, Ph.D.

The drug, Truvada®, is an AIDS medication, but its online advertising isn’t targeted to AIDS patients. An entirely new drug market of teens and young adults with no history of HIV/AIDS is being created. The premise boils down to using the drug to replace condoms.

Gilead Sciences, Inc. manufactures Truvada. The company is not placing these ads, however it pays hundreds of millions to cash-starved LGBT and AIDS organizations that do. These organizations are followed by young gay men and trans youth, and inner city, homeless and runaway youth.

The ads on Facebook and the Facebook company Instagram bypass U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Federal Trade Commission, and Federal Communications Commission rules and regulations for ethical marketing of prescription drugs. The examples pictured here market Truvada interchangeably using its brand name, shape, color or medical use, referred to as pre-exposure prophylaxis, or “PrEP.”

New groups, websites and internet memes with more sexually explicit—and enticing—ads such as TrustPrEP.org, @PrEP4Love, @PrEPPig and #TruvadaWhore also sprang up, some of which have since been taken down.

The Instagram handle @PrEPPoganda also documents the physical rollout of the advertising as it was plastered in New York City’s subways and gay neighborhoods.

What young gay man—or that matter what man, gay or not, young or old—wouldn’t prefer to have sex without condoms and without the fear of catching AIDS? Hearing this message from their own peers and not from some pharmaceutical company, what gay man wouldn’t want to jump in and join the responsible fun? And they did, posting it to their own accounts (see WestviewNews.org online).

Even if Truvada proves to be the miracle drug that single-handedly rids gay men and the world of the AIDS plague, direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription drugs on Facebook deserves a second look. First, we must prepare for any possible fallout if things don’t work out as advertised. Second, we must determine who may be held accountable should something go wrong.

One recent case study found that HIV in six percent of people living with HIV/AIDS (in this case in and around Seattle, Washington) has “high-level resistance” to Truvada (See “The Problem with Trump’s Pledge to End HIV” published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology at https://undark.org/2019/02/21/trump-pledge-to-end-hiv/). Despite not knowing where else and to what extent Truvada’s usage would only provide partial protection, the new drug regimen was nonetheless blasted at full volume across the gay world.

Pumping healthy gay men full of powerful AIDS medications has indeed lowered HIV infection rates. In addition, next-generation drugs for PrEP may address any growing drug resistance. Unfortunately, the PrEP paradigm might also shackle generations of gay men to the increasingly powerful and obligatory drugs, just to have sex. Rolling out a powerful drug campaign prior to complete scientific and medical consideration may have been a Schnapsidee.

Misleading advertising by opioid manufacturers has been linked to the rise of the opioid epidemic, just as alluring advertising played a role in millions of tobacco-related cancer deaths. In the age of Facebook, misleading and alluring advertising is no less destructive. While Gilead may not have placed these Facebook ads, if there are #TruvadaWhores, who’s the pimp?

The author is a biologist, a biotech inventor, a gay man and the President of Research Foundation to Cure AIDS FreeFromAIDS.org
Schiller Institute NYC Chorus presents

9/11 MEMORIAL CONCERT

Sunday, Sept. 8, 2019, 4:00 - 6:00 PM
St. Veronica Creative Cultural Center
149 Christopher St., New York, NY

Beethoven
Sonata no. 17, ‘The Tempest’
Johannes Brahms
Nänie
Franz Schubert
Mass in G
J.S. Bach
Jesu, meine Freude
selection of African-American Spirituals

“Even a song of lament on the lips of the beloved is glorious...”
from Friedrich Schiller’s Nänie

Tickets $20, $40, $100.
Call 347-657-3704.
Discounts for students, seniors, groups & early ticket purchases/ complimentary tickets for 9/11 First Responders.

Beethoven Sonata no. 17, ‘The Tempest’
Johannes Brahms Nänie
Franz Schubert Mass in G
J.S. Bach Jesu, meine Freude
selection of African-American Spirituals


Seniors over 65 admitted free as guests of WestView News. Seating on first come, first seated basis.
Stalker continued from page 1

assailant was still on 14th Street.

On Friday, August 23 we learned by
phone of another female victim, aged 84,
who was hit near 8th Street and Green-
wich Avenue around 8:30 pm. She called
911 who arrived promptly and took her
to the 6th precinct on 10th Street where
she was treated well and brought to the North-
well urgent care facility on 13th Street and
7th Avenue for examination and treatment.

Earlier that Wednesday, Dusty Berke
witnessed the attacker on the number one
subway train in a state of intense rage with
clenched fists.

Early on Friday, August 24, we received
an email from the Daily News asking if we
had any information. Around noon the same
day, WABC met Dusty in front of 69
Charles and asked for the name and tele-
phone number of victim two (Dusty had
the information but complied with the re-
quest and now what do you want me to do?!
"What do you want me to do?!!" The witnesses responded: "Go
and yelled at me. "What do you want me to

This was devastatingly upsetting to me
and had his description. Then the guy
came back and started yelling "Go ahead.
Call the police. I will be right here." He was
wearing red pants, was bare chested and was
a black male. I didn’t see him, but several eye
witnesses did. Two witnesses called 911. Six
officers responded. They stood in the road-
way, hands on their hips and yelled at us.

Witnesses are trying to tell the officers the
description and location of the assailant, and
the cops have no interest at all. They asked if
I wanted an ambulance. I said I didn’t know.
The young officer put his hands on his hips
and yelled at me. "What do you want me to
do for you?!!" The witnesses responded: "Go
look for the guy. Take his description." The
cops refused and drove away.

This was devastatingly upsetting to me
and those around me. The cops did not take
the assailant’s description and did not give me
their cards or anything. All six of them
left together without taking down one word
of information. I got home and called the
6th precinct and asked to speak to a sergeant.
I waited on hold for ten minutes. Finally, a
cadet named Muyin got on the phone and
said "Maam, so you refused medical atten-
tion and now what do you want me to do?!!"

This psycho is now walking around and
the cops didn’t take his description or at-
tempt to follow him (he was right at the
corner, according to witnesses) What are
you guys doing to keep us safe?!

Thanks for anything you can do to help
me and my neighbors.

Best regards,
Bernadette Dono

Senior Share continued from page 1

Citizens, Elderhelp in San Diego, Califor-
nia, and numerous other organizations and
businesses have track records of helping se-
niors to find younger roommates in organi-
ized and legitimate ways. Visiting Angels,
a national home care service, offers profes-
sional services for those at home. When a
higher level of care is needed, a home-share
companion’s responsibilities are usually sup-
pplemented with someone who can bathe,
assist in dressing and other personal care.

There are horror stories about seniors
who have lost property, been misled by cor-
rupt eldercare lawyers, those who have en-
listed the help of younger people, subjecting
them to inadequate conditions including
non-working toilets and mouse-infested
apartments that haven’t been renovated in
decades. Some companions and home
health aides exploit their patients by stealing
from them and taking advantage of them.
Some elders abuse their relatives or live-in
help. In spite of these problems, progress
must be made for everyone as the popula-
tion of seniors grows. The sooner we set up
multiple structures that help and protect
people, the more stable our futures will be.

WestView would like to appeal to its
readers, again, in an effort to start a small
outreach program for those in need of care
and those in need of housing to create a lo-
cal Senior Share housing project, learning
from successful models we know about.

If needed, we will make the effort to
partner with a known organization to le-
grandize the application and enrollment
process and to save time.

We could start by pairing one qualified
applicant with a senior who needs part-
time help and companionship. WestView
will hold two meetings, on separate days,
one for seniors and one for companions, to
discuss ideas with those interested.

Thank you to all the people who wrote
to seniorshare2018@gmail.com and who
have expressed interest in a home sharing
program. We will be in touch with you,
again. This email address remains active for
contingent possibilities, host elders and any
family members or friends who would like
to participate or inquire.

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New West Village Exclusives
708 Greenwich Street
Massive Combination Loft
$3,690,000 at approx 2500sqft.

165 Perry Street Loft
$925k

UNION SQUARE PARK COMMUNITY COALITION PRESENTS:

Drawing in Union Square

with Jon Rettich, local artist
Second Sunday of each month,
July through September, 1–4 pm
SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 8
FROM 1–4 PM

Bring your own sketch materials
(In a pinch we’ll have some
supplies you can use.)
Bring a stool for your convenience
or use park benches.
Bring water to hydrate.
ALL LEVELS WELCOME.
FREE TO ALL.
Location: Gandhi Statue
For more information call:
212-613-6235

Thanks for anything you can do to help
me and my neighbors.

Best regards,
Bernadette Dono
Rebirth of a Jewel:

Eero Saarinen’s Landmark TWA Terminal Has Been
Restored as the Centerpiece of a New Hotel at JFK

By Eric Uhlfelder

It’s not easy finding your way in.

The AirTrain appears to let you off close. But it’s a long walk before you can figure your way into the Terminal’s iconic access tubes. Parking doesn’t get you any closer, unless you’re willing to walk down an in-bound car ramp and cross access roads.

But however you make your way into the reborn TWA Terminal (formerly known as the TWA Flight Center), it’s well worth the effort because this extraordinary structure—for me the most exciting example of modern architecture—succeeds not just because of what you will see, but in what it recalls.

For coach travelers, flight is a punishing experience—a cattle call from the moment you step into most terminals, queuing to check in, passing through security, then the splendor of gate waiting, until you’re funneled into your 21-inch wide seat.

Entering into the spacious TWA Terminal is like walking into a museum. No. It’s like walking into a painting; wherever you look is extraordinary composition of form, light, and color.

When TWA commissioned Eero Saarinen, the Finnish sculptor and architect, to create its flagship international terminal at JFK, he redefined the experience of air travel. Saarinen offered travelers a place as spectacular as any destination to which they may have been heading.

“The terminal was laid out not only to provide passengers with a smooth flow of travel between arriving at the building and boarding their planes,” wrote the venerable architect and author Robert A.M. Stern, “but to dramatically elevate that journey to a rite of passage; travelers would become part of the drama of flight itself.” And when it designated the Terminal landmark status in 1994, the Landmark Preservation Commission, recalled 1962 “as the year New York City lost Pennsylvania Station and gained the TWA Terminal . . . two buildings, with their different ways of enclosing space for waiting and departing, (which) were both exceptional achievements in architecture.”

Since TWA failed in 2001, the Terminal has laid largely dormant, until it was transformed into the centerpiece of Kennedy’s first onsite, 512-room hotel and conference center. Developed by MCR/Morse Development with restoration and design led by the esteemed architecture firm Beyer Blinder Belle, the hotel will enjoy its formal opening this September. Partner and Director of Historic Preservation at BBB, Richard Southwick, says leading the architectural effort to preserve and restore the terminal “has been a highlight of my career.”

“The new hotel and conference space are broken into two distinct curved wings to reduce mass, that emphasizes the symmetry of the Terminal, and provides a benign backdrop to the landmark without competing with Saarinen’s design.

Success of this $265 million project will depend on a unique business plan. There will be guests who stay to make morning flights easier and to deal with long connection waits and flight delays. Some will stay because of the unique destination, offering remarkable vistas of flight, not just from rooms facing the runways (silenced by 4 1/2-inch plate-glass windows), but from a cool rooftop pool and bar, and access to a refurbished classic Lockheed Constellation propeller plane turned very cool lounge.

The extraordinary space will also cash in from hosting special events—from fashion week catwalks, weddings, to feature film sets. (Remember Leonardo de Caprio in Catch Me If You Can.)

But the developer is betting the house it can redefine the New York conference event, allowing attendees flying in from all over the country and world to avoid schlepping into Manhattan and instead enjoying this unique setting, embellished throughout with pieces of nostalgia.

And as for finding an easier way into TWA, by next year visitors will be treated to a new formal pedestrian entranceway from the AirTrain and the parking garage, offering a majestic view of Saarinen’s soaring masterpiece.

My First Flight from the TWA Terminal

“Form follows function” was coined by architect Louis H. Sullivan in 1896 and remains the most followed architectural design dictum going, suggesting that nearly all architecture, even today, should be created as some type of box.

That is until 1962 when architect Eero Saarinen designed the TWA terminal at Kennedy as giant wings taking flight and I asked myself as I approached it, “is this functional or just design indulgence?” until I stepped inside and found the outstretched arms of the ticket booths that momentarily engaged me only to release me into a giant sweeping bridge to my plane—nice.

—George Capvis

By Eric Uhlfelder

WestView News September 2019

www.westviewnews.org

Clockwise From Left To Right:

THE MAIN ENTRANCE IN TWA.

THE RETRO WELCOMING CREW.

SAARINEN’S SIGNATURE "CHILI PEPPER RED" CARPET, a motif throughout the Terminal, is recreated in the two tubes that used to link the terminal to the gates; now connecting the hotel to the adjacent JetBlue terminal.

THE REMARKABLE SCULPTURAL QUALITY OF SAARINEN’S DESIGN.

Photos by Eric Uhlfelder.
Modernism lives in Tribeca.

A collaboration of design visionaries.

One Eleven Murray Street
1 TO 5 BEDROOM CONDOMINIUM RESIDENCES
A PARTNERSHIP OF FISHER BROTHERS, WITKOFF AND NEW VALLEY
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View From My 91st Floor Window

By Karin Batten

In 2001 I had just moved to the Westbeth artist housing community, in the West Village, two months prior to the 9/11 attack. On the day of 9/11 the primaries for mayor were going on. I had just changed my district in New York City so I was re-registering to vote. I had a large amount of paperwork to fill out and the process was very slow, which in the end actually saved my life. I was given a grant from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Center to paint for six months on the 91st floor of Tower One (the north tower). When I finally finished voting I walked out of Westbeth to go to my art studio at the World Trade Center and I saw a man looking up at the sky, froze.

zen. I heard sirens and I asked him what was wrong. He replied with “They’re at it again.” I had quickly realized that he was referencing the terrorist attack to explode a truck in a basement garage in 1993. I was supposed to meet an artist friend from Scotland. She was also painting with me in my studio at the Twin Towers and we had the day to paint. But at the moment all I could think about was my son, Justin, who was in middle school at I.S. 89 which is directly across the west side highway from Tower Two. I was worried that the tower might fall to the side, so I ran as fast as I could to get to my son. I saw a mother with her two children and said, “You got them out of there already?” she replied, “Yes you must run down there. They are keeping the children in the cafeteria—it’s insane.” I sprinted faster. The police who had already fenced off the area stopped me at Chambers Street and would not let me go any farther. Finally one of the officers told me that the National Guard were on their way to evacuate the children and that I should wait right here. In the time I waited for my son I took photos of the scene unfolding around me. Shortly after I arrived, a teacher brought my son’s class to me. The teacher was a friend of mine and had told me that my son’s class had watched the plane hit the North Tower. I took the children and walked about 500 feet. We turned around at the perfect moment to watch a tower collapse in on itself. I had brought my son’s class to Westbeth and the children stayed with me until I could contact their parents. I found out later that my friend from Scotland, who also worked in Tower Two, had run down from the 91st floor all the way to the lobby. When she arrived in the lobby she was met with firemen, destruction, and debris. The only thing you could hear was them yelling “run, run, run for your life.” Our lives were spared that day and we are both deeply grateful but will never be the same.

What is the 14th Street Fight Really All About?

By Arthur Z. Schwartz

From screaming headlines to picketers chanting on West 12th Street, the real issues about the West 14th Street Busway Plan, and the fight against it, are quite simple. The first is a question of community input into City planning. Despite the vitriolic assertions that the fight against the 14th Street Busway and the ban on 14th Street auto and small truck traffic is the work of a “group of rich West Village landowners” with no concern for those who use bus transit, it is actually one of the broadest community fights I have witnessed in my almost 30 years of community activism.

Our communities, Greenwich Village and Chelsea, are the great places they are because 60 years ago Jane Jacobs led a fight against another DOT Commissioner, Robert Moses, who wanted to run a highway down 5th Avenue. Jane believed in community-based planning. In her classic book about city planning, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, she said: “We shall have something solid to chew on if we think of City neighborhoods as mundane organs of self-government. Our failures with city neighborhoods are, ultimately, failures in localized self-government. And our successes are successes at localized self-government…”

MULTIPLE ISSUES COME TO A HEAD IN THE 14TH STREET FIGHT: Artur Schwartz, (above, right) is witnessing one of the broadest community fights in his almost 30 years of activism. Photo courtesy of Arthur Schwartz. There exists no inconceivably energetic and all wise “They” to take over and substitute for localized self-management. Then she addressed the difficulty in standing up to City Hall: “It is not easy for uncredentialed people to stand up to the credentialed, even when the so-called expertise is grounded in ignorance and folly.”

On the afternoon of August 9th, when the Appellate Division granted an 11th hour stay on the 14th Street plan, I received dozens of emails from long-time Village and Chelsea activists saying that they were getting an inkling of how wonderful it must have been when Jane Jacobs beat Robert Moses. People were giddy. We little guys had beaten, for now, big bad City Hall and our current community-unfriendly Commissioner, Polly Trottenberg, and her staunch ally, Mayor de Blasio. It was a statement about how the needs of a local community can sometimes win out against the horrific “planning” at City Hall. That was issue number 1.

Issue number 2 is not about anyone fighting for their right to drive a car up and down 14th Street, or even about parking spaces. It is about City Planning which is not really City Planning. Genuine City Planning should look for ways to solve problems, not for ways to just move problems from one block to another. Back in 1991, when I was part of a group called Bring Back Our Park (BBOP), a group of parents and residents seeking to reclaim Bleecker Playground and Abingdon Square Park from drug dealers and an actual homeless encampment (yes, you newcomers, we had people sleeping with tents and mattresses in the Bleecker Park sitting area), we were challenged, by those who lived north and south of us don’t just push your problem to our parks at Jackson Square and JJ Walker Park. So we came up with a plan. We raised money and hired social workers, drug counselors, and formerly homeless outreach workers, to spend time among the homeless and the ill and get them off the street. And we worked with the 6th Precinct to ID the drug dealers who sat amongst the homeless to keep them ensnared. In the end, instead of pushing the problem elsewhere we addressed it, in our own local way.

The City’s plan for 14th Street, which is ostensibly to increase the speed of a bus ride from 14th Street and 3rd Avenue to Abingdon Square by 2 minutes (yes, all this fuss is about shaving 2 minutes off the commute) is not a plan to eliminate cars. As I show below, continued on page 9
14th Street continued from page 8

it is a plan to shift congestion from 14th Street to 12th, 13th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th Streets. Poor planning by the City, all of which occurred under de Blasio and Trottenberg, has seen 100,000 For Hire Vehicles licensed to do business in Manhattan below 96th Street, cruising our streets all day long looking for customers. That's not 100,000 drivers making one trip into the City; it is cars circling for 8-10 hours in the same general area. True urban planning to address slow buses on 14th Street (which the DOT identified as a “next step” problem project back in 2011) would be a plan to sharply reduce the number of For Hire Vehicles on our streets. Congestion pricing may be a step, but more could be done, like barring these vehicles from cruising without a passenger down any street south of 59th Street.

Finally, there are the real numbers. Those who live on 12th and 13th Streets in the Village know that traffic has intensified over the last year or so, since various bottlenecks on 14th Street were addressed (like banning left turns). Every morning one can find large tractor trailers, FedEx Trucks, UPS Trucks, and other large commercial vehicles clogging 12th and 13th Streets, particularly between 7th and 6th Avenues. As a result of the litigation, the Department of Transportation gave us numbers, both in 2018 and in 2019 which we charted to see the impact of one way roll by. And then there will be small drivers making one trip into the City; it is cars circling for 8-10 hours in the same general area. True urban planning to address slow buses on 14th Street (which the DOT identified as a “next step” problem project back in 2011) would be a plan to sharply reduce the number of For Hire Vehicles on our streets. Congestion pricing may be a step, but more could be done, like barring these vehicles from cruising without a passenger down any street south of 59th Street.

These numbers are astounding. On my street, 12th Street, we will see 332 cars per hour roll by. And then there will be small trucks and vans, and large trucks. 12th Street will become a highway. The same will occur on every street north to 20th Street. This traffic is what, in the end, this fight is about! And various commentators who say that another 150 cars per hour is no big deal are true climate change deniers. The consequences of Polly’s Folly on 14th Street is not worth the extra minute cut off the cross 14th Street bus ride.

Arthur Schwartz is the Greenwich Village Male Democratic District Leader, and counsel to the 18 block associations who have sued over the 14th Street Plan.

For 13th Street, in 2018, DOT said that post-Busway there would be 377 cars between 8am and 9am. In 2019 they say the number post-Busway will be 408.

For 15th Street, in 2018, DOT said that post-Busway there would be 178 cars between 8am and 9am. In 2019 they say the number post-Busway will be 257.

For 16th Street, in 2018, DOT said that post-Busway there would be 197 cars between 8am and 9am. In 2019 they say the number post Busway will be 295.

If we compare the 2018 “existing” number with the 2019 “post-Busway” number, the increase in traffic on the “side streets” is appalling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street</th>
<th>2018 Existing</th>
<th>2019 Busway</th>
<th>Increase</th>
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16th Street

<table>
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<th>Street</th>
<th>2018 Existing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
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<td>340</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>13th</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, there are the real numbers. Those who live on 12th and 13th Streets in the Village know that traffic has intensified over the last year or so, since various bottlenecks on 14th Street were addressed (like banning left turns). Every morning one can find large tractor trailers, FedEx Trucks, UPS Trucks, and other large commercial vehicles clogging 12th and 13th Streets, particularly between 7th and 6th Avenues. As a result of the litigation, the Department of Transportation gave us numbers, both in 2018 and in 2019 which we charted to see the impact of closing 14th Street to through traffic.

- In 2018 DOT said that 12th Street had 172 cars from 8am to 9am. In 2019, DOT says that number is 195.
- In 2018 DOT said that 15th Street had 132 cars from 8am to 9am. In 2019, DOT says that number is 178.
- In 2018 DOT said that on 16th Street, from 8am to 9am there were 157 cars; in 2019 they say that the base number is 204.
- The pattern holds true for the post-Busway impact numbers:
  - For 12th Street, in 2018, DOT said there would be 294 cars between 8am and 9am post-Busway. In 2019 they say the number post-Busway will be 332.
Seventy-Six Eighth Avenue Development Revealed

By Brian J. Pape, AIA, Architecture Editor

The busy southeast corner of Eighth Avenue and West 14th Street will get a substantial improvement over the previous two-story “taxpayer.” Surprisingly, the 120-foot-wide building has shrunk two floors and 7,000 square feet from earlier designs submitted by Gene Kaufman Architects, P.C. (GKA).

Seventy-six Eighth Avenue, in this rendering posted onsite, will contain just 30,000 square feet of commercial space, both office space above and ground-floor retail. Since this location is so transit-accessible, with the A, C, E and L subways’ 14th Street stops there, and the 1-2-3 station just one avenue east, the building’s 10-story size seems limited relative to the location’s potential. Being a few blocks east of the Meatpacking District, and abutting the Greenwich Village Historic District northern boundary, the allowable floor area ratio (FAR) for this 14th Street corridor must have frustrated GKA and Sang Lee, the developer, since wide city streets usually get more generous FAR.

Nevertheless, the new design reflects the industrial aspects of the neighborhood, respect for the street wall (no recess), and the lively retail pedestrian activity. The distinguished exterior features dark metallic cross-bracing over some of the windows on the northern elevation and on the smaller western facade. A setback at the sixth-floor ceiling creates a terrace before continuing the facade treatment up to the 10th floor, and there’s a rooftop terrace framing the glass railings at the perimeters. The roof seems to match the neighbor’s height behind, including various bulkheads for mechanical, elevator and stairs.

GKA was founded in 1986 in New York City. When Charles Gwathmey died in 2007, Robert Siegel, FAIA, must have looked for a way to continue without his partner. The Great Recession of 2008-2010 soon created a dark time for many architects struggling to find clients; many firms closed. Kaufman, as a reliable developers’ architect, had the means to buy into the prestigious firm, so in 2011 Gene Kaufman and Gwathmey Siegel Architects joined forces, creating Gwathmey Siegel Kaufman & Associates Architects (GSKA), with Kaufman as a principal and with GSKA as an affiliate firm to GKA. The mergees brought professional colleagues as strange bedfellows at the time, but the strategy seems logical. The GKA website focuses on the hotel and multifamily blocks it is known for, while the GSKA website features more glamorous buildings from across the nation. Some of the GSKA projects are from the founding of Gwathmey Siegel Architects in 1968, such as the addition to Frank Lloyd Wright’s Guggenheim Museum on Fifth Avenue, the Astor Place Condo tower and many palatial homes in New York and California.

We have gotten so used to seeing GKA-designed hotels and apartments as “background” buildings, though sometimes standing much taller than their neighbors, that this project’s effort seems to be a step above those, and perhaps we can expect more interesting designs from GKA for future projects.

Brian J. Pape is a LEED-AP “Green” Architect consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, and is Co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee.

Current Events Café is Back at Jefferson Market Library

By Nancy Aravecz

Jefferson Market Library’s political discussion group, Current Events Café, has resumed its monthly meetings in the branch’s newly reopened space. The popular program, which meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:00 p.m., was on a brief hiatus during the library’s temporary closing this past spring. A part of the New York Public Library’s Community Conversations series, Current Events Café invites West Villagers to come together to exercise their rights to free speech while talking about politics and the news in a safe, moderated environment—with snacks! The meeting always begins with members suggesting which topics in the national or local news they would like to discuss, and then selecting a topic democratically by voting. The moderator then sets the ground rules, to keep the conversation civil, and invites members to speak their minds on the issue at hand. These lively and informative conversations typically last an hour and a half, and may cover one or many subjects of interest to Villagers. The conversations are free and open to the public.

The first Current Events Café discussion of 2019 was held on August 13th. The twelve participants came prepared with a laundry list of topics in the news they were anxious to discuss, ranging from local issues like the empty storefronts in Greenwich Village to national news like gun violence and the immigrant crisis at the southern border. The room was quite lively during a discussion of the vast field of candidates hoping to win the Democratic presidential primary election, during which participants weighed the weaknesses and strengths of the national figures.

Perspectives on these matters were animated and ideologically varied. Besides being diverse in points of view, the attendees of the program were also diverse in age, race, and gender, which added a great deal of depth to the conversation. Though the vast majority of community conversation participants are local to the Greenwich Village area, one was a tourist from Italy eager to hear authentic perspectives of New Yorkers and share her experience of the political climate at home and abroad. The goals of the Current Events Café are to foster an open and respectful environment for self-expression, encourage participants to think out loud, and help people “unplug” from the constant and sometimes overwhelming stream of online and cable news content.

Current Events Café will continue through the end of 2019. Upcoming sessions are scheduled for September 10th, October 8th, November 12th, and December 10th in the Willa Cather Community Room on the first floor of the library. No registration is necessary, and refreshments will be served.

Nancy Aravecz is the Senior Adult Librarian at the Jefferson Market Library.
Notes From Away
Deja Vu
By Tom Lamia

Margaret Chase Smith was a US Senator from Maine whose life and political career offer proof of the power of independent thinking and the courage to act on it, even in the face of demands for loyalty to party doctrine. Just a few words of background should be enough to make the point for Republicans and Democrats alike, both now frozen in immobility by their separate paths toward constitutional democracy.

In my California youth, Senator Smith was a curiosity—a somewhat exotic compound name associated with a state whose existence to me was only conjecture. Then came 1964 and the Republican effort to escape near-total irrelevancy by nominating for president a candidate who could not only represent a form of Republicanism favorable to a majority of voters, but also one who could overcome the national mood of suspicion over the Kennedy assassination and sympathy toward the newly inaugurated president and Democratic nominee, Lyndon Johnson. Among the candidates were Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton, New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater—two eastern establishment moderates and a western maverick conservative. There were others who remained in the running as the party’s convention opened in San Francisco that July, among them the two-term senator from Maine, Margaret Chase Smith. What did she represent and what was she doing seeking the highest position in the land?

By her own admission, Senator Smith had no money and no illusions (no woman had ever been nominated by a major party), but she had vowed to stay in to the end. As she put it, “When people keep telling you, you can’t do a thing, you kind of like to try.” She lost every primary, although she did get 25 percent of the vote in Illinois. At the convention, she placed fifth in the first ballot, which tallied enough votes for Goldwater to nominate him. When all other candidates stepped aside so that the Goldwater nomination could be unanimous, she declined. Still, she campaigned for Goldwater.

In the Senate, to which she was elected in 1948 after serving four terms in the House, a short speech she gave on the Senate floor in 1950 led to her becoming known as the conscience of the Republican party. Fellow Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy had been finding communists everywhere and was purging any Senator who disagreed with him. Senator Smith expected the Democrats to follow the example of the first woman senator from Maine and speak out in defiance of Trump’s scorched-earth harangues and have the courage to stand up to him. So far she has not.

Margaret Chase Smith in 1943 at age 48. She lived to be 97, the oldest living former U.S. Senator then and now.
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A GRAY CATBIRD in its chosen seat. Photo by Keith Michael.

By Keith Michael


Presumably, that’s how the Gray Catbird got its name.

At some point in ornithological history when the omnipotent Bird Naming Caucus convened on a backyard summer porch, someone derided, “Oh, you’re ranting about that bird braying like a cat? I just call it that damn gray cat bird.” Done.

About the size of a Robin but slimmer and with a more expressive tail, the Catbird is one of the common birds that nest in the West Village. By September, their kids are already fledged, so the parents can indulge in a brief staycation before it’s time to fly south for the winter.

Once again, I’m in Hudson River Park on a Sunday afternoon and, once again, Millie sniffed at my offer for a fair-weather walk to the park in preference for a nap at home, and rolled over to face the wall. What’s to be said to a corgi who has made up her mind?

Frankly, the first that I remember thinking anything about a Catbird was after reading James Thurber’s inimitable story from a dog-eared anthology in high school. His whimsical “The Catbird Seat” tale, not of the perfect position “like a batter with three balls and no strikes on him.” Thurber attributes the expression’s popularity on him. Thurber attributes the expression’s popularity to the 1930s baseball announcer Walter “Red” Barber. I don’t know anything about baseball, much less about the banter of its radio announcers, and I really don’t know why a Catbird should get any better house seats than, say, a Mockingbird, Cardinal, Blue Jay, or Robin. All have excellent vocal chops. I might write an entire article about the merits of each chanteuse. The Catbird is a mimic like the Mockingbird, though as I like to say, “It doesn’t do it as well.” The Catbird may have a shorter attention span, as it tends to sing its mimic phrases only once, once after the other like run-on sentences, whereas the Mockingbird repeats each of its imitations several times before turning to the next page in its songbook. The Catbird does have one attribute that bestrs the Mockingbird: it does have its namesake cat-like meowing to call its own. Curiously, the Catbird’s singing venue is frequently an inside-a-bush soundstage rather than the highest, most visible perch chosen by most compulsive songsters. Perhaps that box seat, coyly hidden, is, in fact, the catbird seat.

Today, sans Millie in the park, I can wander near the trees and bushes lining the lawns, rather than strictly hugging the railing of the promenade scanning for aquatic birds. Cicadas are shaking their summer maracas, butterflies are having a good year (several Monarchs, Tiger and Black Swallowtails, and Red Admirals flutter by), a dragonfly helicopters overhead then dashes away to fend off a competitor hovering palpably, and Barn Swallows start to swoop by me as I scare up a bug smorgasbord just by walking through the grass.

At last, deep in a yew bush (with its end-of-summer red berries and filigree of spider webs), I hear the Catbird’s musical, slightly hoarse, rambling chortling squawking whistling aria, and finally, its characteristic meew meew meew. After phishing (a birders’ sound I embarrassingly make to entice some curious birds out to investigate a cheeky intruder), right on cue, the Catbird pops up with its flashing black eyes and jaunty black cap. It snaps its tail open and closed like a Flamenco dancer’s fan.

Satisfied that my lame phishing is hardly a threat, the Catbird disappears again to its obscure perch. Perhaps it’s time for me to “disappear” too—back home to see if Millie has been “tearing up the pea patch” in my absence. Unlikely.

Visit keithmichaelnyc.com for the latest schedule of New York City WILD! urban-adventures-in-nature outings throughout the five boroughs and visit his Instagram @ newyorkcitywild for photos from around NYC.
Renovating 35 Perry Street: Thomas Merton Lived Here

By Brian J. Pape, AIA

American Trappist monk, writer, theologian, mystic, poet, social activist and scholar of comparative religion, Thomas Merton wrote more than 70 books, mostly on spirituality, social justice and a quiet pacifism. Merton developed his faith while living in New York City, not often thought to be conducive to spirituality.

Merton was born on January 31st, 1915, in Paris, France, to Owen, his New Zealand-born father, and Ruth Jenkins, his American-born mother, both artists who met at a Paris painting school. It was an artistic family one might call "cultural Christians." His father was seldom at home, his mother died of cancer when he was six, and he spent years alone at boarding schools except for a few years when he stayed with his maternal grandparents in Douglaston, Queens, New York. When Merton’s father died in 1931, his father’s physician became his legal guardian and provided for his education.

From 1933, classmates at Cambridge University in England recalled that Merton was adrift, became isolated there, drank to excess, frequented pubs instead of studying and indulged in sexual license, some calling him a womanizer. He transferred to Columbia University in New York, and graduated in 1938.

While he studied for his doctorate in English at Columbia, he moved to a second-floor room in the boarding house at 35 Perry Street, where he lived a Bohemian lifestyle and attended Mass at nearby St. Joseph's Church on Sixth Avenue at Waverly Place, the oldest Catholic church edifice in Manhattan.

Soon after graduation, Merton asked to be accepted into the Corpus Christi Catholic Church at 529 West 121st Street, and was baptized there. Merton approached the Franciscan priests about becoming one, but once he realized that he had fathered a child out of wedlock (while at Cambridge), they rejected him. Heartbroken, Merton applied for a job teaching English at St. Bonaventure University, the Franciscan school established in 1858 in the Allegheny foothills. It was at St. Bonaventure that he determined to become a Trappist monk, the most ascetic Roman Catholic monastic order, and on May 26th, 1949, he was ordained to the priesthood, was given the name Father Louis, and started his ministry from the Trappist monastery in Kentucky. He died in Bangkok, Thailand, on December 10th, 1968, the victim of an accidental electrocution.

Thirty-five Perry Street is a narrow Italianate row house that today seems very different from its two neighbors to the west, #37 and #39. Those buildings were remodeled by their owners, but #35 was actually the prototype of all three, which had identical roof cornices forming a continuous roofline, built in 1855 for Henry Coghill, who was in the wool business. Its entrance stoop is just three steps up from sidewalk level, but a pair of tall parlor doors for the floor above, behind a full-width cast-iron balcony, makes a classical statement, little changed from the original facade.

In 2015, ownership of the four-story, seven-unit rental changed in a $6m sale, and permits were filed for alteration work. According to a September 2016 New York Daily News, the homeowner was tagged by city Department of Buildings officials trying to hide an excavation in his backyard, potentially weakening the foundations according to Buildings Commissioner Rick Chandler. Later, work continued under the Charles Perry LLC name, and continues today. The front door and balcony were replaced and window flower boxes added; the brownstone stoop will be restored. Although located in the Greenwich Village Historic District, a search of Landmarks Preservation Commission and Community Board 2 historic websites found no work applications. While some units are occupied, Ienco stated that he is working with city officials to clear any and all violations before he finishes the project.

Ienco intends to have a historic plaque affixed to the building to commemorate Merton’s residency there.

Brian J. Pape is a LEED-AP “Green” Architect consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, and is Co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee.

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You may also subscribe online by visiting westviewnews.org and clicking SUBSCRIBE.
This month saw only one opening, a couple of closings and a couple of moves, with much of the activity centered around Asian spots. As usual, the fall will bring some anticipated openings.

OMAKASE ROOM BY MAASER
321 Bleecker Street between Christopher and Grove Streets

A new omakase spot has opened on Bleecker Street where French nautical-inspired clothing store St. James used to be. Omakase Room by Maaser offers the Edomae style of sushi which includes charcoal grilling and smoking, as well as konbu jime which is fish that is salted and cured in konbu seaweed. There are two menus available, a 12 piece $75 menu and a 17 piece $115 menu. According to the website, the chefs, Chunyu Chen and Peter Lin, source their fish from Tokyo’s Sakasu fish market, and the fish is flown in three times a week.

Closed/Closing
One of my favorite omakase spots is closing: Neta (61 West 8th Street between 6th Avenue and Macdougal Street), which opened about 7 years ago will be shutting its doors in early September. It opened with two sushi chefs from Masa (who then went on to open their own restaurant, Shu-ko). Even after those chefs left, the food continued to be delicious and innovative, and I am sorry to see it go. An email sent to all patrons promises “We’ll be in touch very soon with news about what’s coming next!” Over on Greenwich Avenue, noodle and dim sum spot Niu Noodle House (15 Greenwich Avenue between Christopher and West 10th Streets) is closing.

Coming Soon
Two WestView readers alerted us that Café Kitsuné – Paris will be coming to 550 Hudson where Le Pain Quotidien used to be. Maison Kitsuné is a French clothing brand with a fox logo (Kitsuné is the Japanese word for fox, and in Japan they are often portrayed as magical creatures) and extremely high prices (think $150 t-shirts). They have a store at 248 Lafayette Street, but this new store will feature, in addition to the clothing, a café, and a selection of tableware and accessories. This is the first Café Kitsuné in the United States – the others are in Paris, Tokyo and Seoul. Chef Simone Tong opened Little Tong Noodle Shop in the East Village years ago where she serves mixian rice noodles from Yunnan Province in China. This fall she will open Silver Apricot at 20 Cornelia Street in the space that housed Home Restaurant for many years. Unlike Little Tog Noodle Shop, the food here will not be traditional Chinese food. Rather, she will experiment with her own flavor of Chinese American food (including homemade cheese, bread and charcuterie). The restaurant made the nationwide list of “The Biggest Fall Restaurant Openings of 2019” in Food & Wine magazine. Simone Tong was quoted in a recent issue of Edible Manhattan: “From Silver Apricot, we will share with New Yorkers and visitors alike what it means to us to be Chinese-American today. We will bring to life the Chinese-American identity and culture by building on time-honored techniques, driven by local products available to us in the Tri-State area.” Vivi Bubble Tea is coming to the long-empty Potatopia space (378 6th Avenue between Waverly Place and 8th Street) which is strange because a Vivi Bubble Tea recently closed nearby on 8th Street near 6th Avenue (that space is now a tattoo parlor).

Moving/Other
The Li-Lac Chocolate flagship is moving this fall from its current location at 40th Avenue (at Jane Street) to 75 Greenwich Avenue (at 11th Street) where the Roasting Plant used to be. One of my favorite pastry shops has moved south and east: Bosie Tea Parlor which had a small shop and tea parlor for nine years at 10 Morton Street (between Bleecker Street and 7th Avenue South) has moved to a much larger location at 506 LaGuardia Place (between Bleecker and Houston Streets). I enjoyed Bosie’s delicious afternoon tea and delicate French pastries, particularly the Paris Brest. The new spot has Jeanne Jordan as executive chef (she was chef de cuisine at Mas Farmhouse) and an expanded menu of French food. There is also a full bar. There was a sign on the door of the Gourmet Garage space (117 7th Avenue South between West 4th Street and West 10th Street) asking for neighbors to attend a meeting at Pieces Bar to discuss plans for the space to become Pieces Playhouse. Pieces Bar has performances showcasing drag talent.

We need your help! Please email us with any additional sightings at wvnewsinout@gmail.com

Photo by Darielle Smolian.
A View from the Kitchen

By Isa Covo

...the days grow short when you reach September...
...and the leaves turn to gold...

Those words are from a beautiful song, with music by Kurt Weil and lyrics by Maxwell Anderson; it is a little sad too, as it focuses on aging. Time seems to be galloping after a certain age, even though some days feel endless.

Yes, yes, dears, September is here. I hope you all had vacations, (and pleasant ones) not spoiled by the air carriers, the lost reservations, and the weather.

Did you know that September is the seventh month and that the months following it until the end of the year are just as inaccurately denominated? Well perhaps you do, but I'll explain anyway: it is because the year originally began in March, and when "they" decided to change it to January, they did not bother to change the rest. Start counting and you'll see.

It has been hot—very hot—in New York, but not as bad as in Europe. One day I learned that the temperatures in Paris were hotter than those in Phoenix, and closer to those of the Emirates.

September can be a great month, with welcome cooler temperatures, some nice bright days, and the start of the striking changing colors of the trees. From my windows I can see a lot of trees, along the streets, in the backyards, and in some of the small parks dotting the Village. September is the time that I leave my kitchen and take a tour of some of those parks. You all know Washington Square of course, and the AIDS Memorial, as well as Christopher Park with its famous statues, including that of General Sheridan, le beau sabreur, but there are at least fifteen more and it is possible that I have missed some.

JEFFERSON MARKET GARDEN:
Located at 14 Greenwich Avenue, it is, to my mind, the most beautiful garden in the Village. It is built on the site of the Jefferson Market, which was razed in 1873 to make way for the Gothic structure that was a courthouse, now the Jefferson Market Library. The garden is on the site of the former Women's House of Detention (1932-1971). When the prison was demolished in 1974 the land was transferred to the New York City Department of Parks which in turn entrusted it to the Jefferson Market Garden Committee, Inc., a neighborhood group that helped create the garden and continues to raise funds and care for it. It is a quiet place that seems remote from the two busy avenues that front it. It is never mobbed, and visitors can walk leisurely on its pathways, rest, or read on its well-placed benches.

SHERIDAN SQUARE VIEWING GARDEN:
When going to the Christopher Street subway station, the nearby bank, or Gristedes, you pass by this charming little slice of nature built on a triangle bound by West 4th Street, Washington Place, and Barrow Street. Originally this triangle was a concrete traffic safety island; but in 1981 a group of Villagers created the Sheridan Square Triangle Association, and with the help of various city agencies they received assistance and an initial grant. In 1982 the triangle was landscaped and planted, and in 1989 it became part of the Department of Parks and Recreation—thus ensuring its continuation as a garden. It is lovingly cared for by a devoted group of volunteers who offer viewers a charming piece of nature.

GOLDEN SWAN GARDEN:
Located on 6th Avenue and West 4th Street, it is a small garden, not as tended as some of the other gardens in the vicinity. But the site has a fascinating and colorful history. A tavern called the Golden Swan Café (also known as Hell Hole by its patrons) once existed there and was frequented by various characters, artists, writers, actors and even the homeless. Eugene O'Neal, a frequent patron, found inspiration for his play The Iceman Cometh from the setting and characters at the Golden Swan. On Google there are a number of links to articles that have information and pictures relating to this notorious dive and the goings-on in the southern Village.

SECRET GARDEN AT SAINT LUKE IN THE FIELDS:
Tucked in a small corner in the West Village, this delightful little garden on Hudson and Barrow Streets gives the impression that a piece of the countryside was once in the area. It is meticulously cared for and the trees and flowers planted there were especially chosen to attract birds and butterflies, which they do. I never saw so many birds in such a small space. The public is welcome and I saw small groups gathered on the benches set around the garden; but the plants are arranged in such a way that the benches remain out of sight unless you come almost upon them. If you need some rest from the buzz of the city, this is the place to find it.

PIER 46 HUDSON RIVER GREENWAY:
If you walk towards the Hudson River Park on a hot day, you will gradually experience a different climate; there are soft breezes, the temperature falls, there are trees, and artificial turf creates a park-like atmosphere—and people take advantage of it, although it is not very crowded. Some do yoga, some have picnics, some just lie in the sun. Runners use the asphalt paths. It is a pleasant place with expanded views of New Jersey across the river. Nevertheless, I did not find it restful.

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NYU Development on Mercer Street Rises

By Brian J. Pape, AIA

New York University’s (NYU) scope of development for their enlarged Greenwich Village campus includes razing the Jerome S. Coles Sports Center at 20–40 East Houston Street and constructing a massive 750,000-square-foot complex bordered by Houston Street, Mercer Street and Bleecker Street, located directly to the east of I. M. Pei’s University Village complex, called Silver Towers, with its courtyard concrete Pablo Picasso centerpiece.

The total project is designed by the architecture firms Davis Brody Bond and KieranTimberlake. Renderings and permit filings describe two towers above a five-story podium base structure comprised of new sports center and performing arts facilities and a landscaped public plaza. Steel superstructure members can now be seen rising above the surrounding construction fencing. The 588,000-square-foot towers will house students and faculty, dining space and some offices. A landscaped terrace for students and faculty members will sit atop the five-story podium base, adding communal greenery. A 23-story tower will rise at the corner of Houston Street and Mercer Street and the shorter tower is situated along Mercer Street.

The sports center amenities will include a six-lane indoor swimming pool, a running track, four basketball courts, a wrestling room, multiple squash courts and fitness rooms. Performing arts facilities will include a 556-person theater with balcony and mezzanine seating and an orchestra pit. Classrooms, studios, multiple theater rooms, practice rooms, rehearsal rooms and a cafe round out the accommodations, which will have an address of 181 Mercer Street.

Completion is still more than two years away.

Brian J. Pape is a LEED-AP “Green” Architect consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, and is Co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee.

St. John’s Resurrects Its Lost Fence

By Brian J. Pape, AIA

Pastor Mark Erson, of St. John’s Lutheran Church at 81 Christopher Street, wrote to let us know that “after 21 years of being behind an 8-foot fence, we have restored a good portion of the [church’s] original fence” in front of the main church entry.

It seems that 21 years ago, the folks at the church decided they needed more protection from street rowdies who dominated New York City during its nittier-grittier days; they took down the old shorter iron fence and replaced it with an eight-foot-tall spiked iron fence, without city Landmarks Preservation Commission’s (LPC) permission.

As an example of how LPC works in a Historic District, if you put up a big fence without permission or permits, it’s considered illegal. Even if it was something that might’ve been approved but you didn’t get the prior approval, it’s considered illegal and the commission will look for owners, like the church, to legalize the work by submitting for approval.

“Now 21 years later, the church has gotten the LPC approvals, not just to legalize the previous fence, but also to move forward on replacing it with the antique fence and for the rest of the fence to match eventually,” Pastor Erson proudly proclaimed. The church will need to raise money in order to get the rest of the fence replicated and installed. The Architectural Iron Company of Milford, Pennsylvania, which specializes in fine metalwork and matching wrought iron and other metal pieces, and has many examples of their work throughout NYC, will be responsible for the new matching fencework.

For Pastor Mark, as he signs his messages on their website, http://stjohnsnyc.org, this action is more than just restoring an artifact from the church’s history. Pastor Erson added, “The church’s leadership has strived to be a more open community center for many residents, whether the diverse community of faith, or community neighbors.” Just as NYC has changed from an atmosphere pervaded with fear of robbery, vandalism and injury to one of a more welcoming and safe environment, now the church wants to express its inclusive activities by restoring a friendlier, less-fortress-like face to the street.

Villagers may already know of past years of concerts and art performances sponsored by the church and open to the public, or the community meeting space offered to non-profit groups. I remember a wonderful night there when Pete Seeger and Theodore Bikel gave an intimate concert.

A series of performances will continue Oct. 3–19, when the Theater at St. John’s will present the Carlo Annoni-award-winning play, Marc in Venice, written and directed by Mark Erson, the pastor of the church.

Brian J. Pape is a LEED-AP “Green” Architect consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, and is Co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee.
Maggie B’s Quick Clicks

NOT ALL OF US LEAVE TOWN IN AUGUST. MANY OF US APPRECIATE THE CHANCE TO RELAX AND ENJOY PEACEFUL PLEASURES.

VISITORS COME TO EXPLORE

AND SOME PEOPLE FIND THERE’S STILL WORK TO BE DONE.

All photos by Maggie Berkvist.

VISITORS COME TO EXPLORE

AND SOME PEOPLE FIND THERE’S STILL WORK TO BE DONE.

All photos by Maggie Berkvist.

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Is the Bubble About to Burst?

By James Henry

Where do bubbles come from anyway?

With storm clouds looming over the economy, evidence of over-heated, over-inflated markets is accumulating. Many analysts believe we are on the edge of a bubble that’s about to deflate. Having lived through these booms and busts before should make us step back and ask—where do these bubbles come from? Clearly not all entrepreneurs are successful all the time but why is it that periodically, all of a sudden, they all go bankrupt?

Who or what is behind this economic mystery variously labeled the economic cycle, the business cycle, the trade cycle, booms and busts, bonanzas followed by bankruptcies?

The answer to this question lies at the heart of how our banking and monetary system works. In the past, people used all varieties of things as money, but typically goldsmiths, for safekeeping, who gave the economy and society, replacing the church, monarchies, and aristocracy. That’s wonderful and all—but what about the

mystery that new money is spent, prices and materials prices rise and we have a boom on our hands. As prices begin to rise, entrepreneurs calculate that they can make some serious profits in booming industries. But at some point prices outstrip what the market is willing to pay, and the bubble bursts. So, you may ask?!?! The answer is as follows.

When banks loan out someone’s checking account deposit to another client to buy a house, or car, etc., both parties think they have use of that same money. As more money is created, prices rise. Eventually, banks become bankers and began issuing more IOUs than actual money deposited. This practice, legalized by the monarchs of Europe (in return for lots of loans of course) can be termed the fractional reserve banking system. It’s called this because when you deposit money in a bank, it only keeps a fraction on hand and loans the rest out; the interest on the loans is their profit.

Over time, banks became the masters of the economy and society, replacing the

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SET TO CONSIDER PLAN TO CLOSE BETH ISRAEL

By Penny Mintz

On July 22, 2019, Mt. Sinai submitted an application to the State Department of Health for a certificate of need (CON) to build a 70-bed hospital on Second Avenue between 13th and 14th Street. If the plan is approved, the Beth Israel Hospital building on First Avenue and 1st Street will be closed. Beth Israel is certified to operate 774 beds, of which between 250 and 300 are occupied every day by medical and surgical patients. Those 250-300 actively used beds will be replaced with 70.

The public first learned of this plan in May of 2016, when three nurses first leaked it to The Villager. Since then, despite concerns that have been voiced by individuals, community groups, and every locally elected official, nothing in Mt. Sinai’s plan has changed other than the timing of the closure. They have been deaf to all community concerns.

Mt. Sinai has consistently asserted that one of the primary reasons for the closure is “a rapidly declining inpatient census” at Beth Israel. But census numbers can be easily manipulated. According to the three Beth Israel nurses quoted in The Villager, after Mt. Sinai took over Beth Israel, busy units stopped hiring sufficient staff, particularly doctors, to serve the existing demand. Doctors’ salaries were cut, which caused doctors to leave, particularly in general medicine and the surgical O.R. When doctors leave, patients are diverted to the doctors’ new hospitals. So it may be that, to a significant extent, the census decline is the result Mt. Sinai’s decisions and actions, not a diminution in the need for hospital services.

In a letter to Mt. Sinai in July, 2016, all 17 of the city, state, and federal elected officials representing lower Manhattan asked Mt. Sinai for data to support the claimed census decline. They wanted to know how the decline compared to other hospitals in Manhattan. They asked how many patients could be shifted to ambulatory care and to other Mt. Sinai facilities if the current 295 medical/surgical beds in use are transitioned to a 70-bed facility. No studies were conducted to answer these questions.

Mt. Sinai also asserted in 2016 — and reasserted in its recent CON – that Beth Israel is losing over $100 million a year. As we know from President Trump’s financial statements, these numbers can easily be manipulated. Mt. Sinai’s figures need to be substantiated with an independent audit.

Elected officials and community members have repeatedly asked these questions, as well as life-and-death questions about the sufficiency of health care accessible to downtown residents.

At a public forum in April, 2017, Mt. Sinai’s Jeremy Boal faced angry and concerned residents and elected officials when he presented the plan to replace Beth Israel with a 70-bed facility. The community and its elected officials wanted an independent assessment of community needs, and they wanted Mt. Sinai to be responsive to those needs. Boal said that there was no time to conduct an assessment. So, they were determined to go forward no matter how much pain the plan might cause.

The Villager extolling the plan that raised working people might be able to work.

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Last Licks
By Roberta Curley

Eating ice cream is like breathing. It jumpstarts day and night. I mourn summer’s end. It often spells doom for free flowing ice cream.

Licking each novel flavor keeps me from obsessing over my jewelry stash.

Jewelry may be heavy but it’s not fattening. It is said: “a thing of beauty is a joy forever.”

Ice cream is gorgeous for about ten minutes. Plain old bits of mint chip slathered with syrup laden crushed walnuts drizzled by marshmallow goop gets messy… like life does.

I dress up my funky ice cream with gooey toppings galore, but glittery platinum and diamonds wow J.Q. Public as I step out my door.

Photo by Roberta Curley.

Bubble continued from page 18

ket can bear and eventually we have a bust on our hands. The house of cards falls and depression sets in. Governments, egged on by banks, rush to plug the holes with more (you guessed it) borrowed money for, guess who, the banks—and nothing improves.

Business cycles wreak havoc on the price system, make it hard for entrepreneurs to forecast their probability of success, and inhibit regular people’s ability to save for the future. To truly put an end to these cycles of crisis, distorted prices (which only rise of course) and economic chaos, we must fundamentally reform the banking system. Money must return to a means of exchange, not a parasitic means to an end.
PRESENTS:

FRONT AND CENTER

9/11 GRAND JURY INVESTIGATION

Saturday
Date: 9/7/2019
Time: 3:00-7:00 p.m.

Place: All Souls, A Unitarian Universalist Congregation,
1157 Lexington Ave, NY, NY 10075
At 80th street and Lexington Avenue (take 6 train to 77th street)

***Event will also be live streamed by No Lies Radio, noliesradio.org

Welcome and Introduction by
David Meiswinkle, President/Executive Director of the Lawyers’ Committee for 9/11 Inquiry.
Importance of the Grand Jury 3:00 p.m.

Speakers:

• Fire Commissioner Chris Gioia, Franklin Square-Munson Fire Department, Historic Resolution
  Supporting Grand Jury Investigation 3:15

• Roll call of all firefighters and first responders killed in NYC on 9/11, bagpipes, drums will be played. 3:25

  • Richard Gage, President, Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, (in person)
  • Ansgar Schneider, Physicist and Mathematician, DDR (via SKYPE from Germany)
  Scholars Demolish NIST World Trade Center Reports -3,000 Architects and Engineers Demand New
  Investigation- Examine Explosive Evidence 4:00

• Mick Harrison, Litigation Director of Lawyers’ Committee for 9/11 Inquiry, Legal 9/11
  strategy of Lawyers’ Committee now and going forward 4:35

  TEN MINUTE BREAK AT 5:00 p.m.

• William Binney, NSA Whistle Blower, Constitutional violations, 9/11 could have been prevented. 5:10
  • Bob McIlvaine, father of 9/11 victim Bobby McIlvaine 5:35
  • Gary Null, talk radio host and author, Who do you believe? 5:45

• Mark Crispin Miller, Professor of Media Studies NYU and author, Intelligence strategy
  utilized to undermine legitimate criticism 6:10
  • Rachel Hughes, First Responder at Ground Zero (via SKYPE) 6:35

**Question and Answer session time permitting, 6:45 p.m.

Suggested Donation: $20.00 at Door.
  (bring a snack and something to drink)
**Then & Now:**

**Seventh Avenue South/200 West 11th Street**

By Brian J. Pape, AIA, Architecture Editor

**THEN:** This site, addressed 192 Seventh Avenue South in the 1940 tax photo, was on a formerly thoroughfare below West 12th Street cut a swath through the established neighborhood, leaving odd walls, yards and slivers of lot sizes, like this one just south of St. Vincent’s Hospital. Complicating the intersection of West 11th Street and a two-way Greenwich Avenue, Seventh Avenue continues through, creating a six-cornered mess. Many of these leftover corners were turned into gas stations and parking lots as the advent of private automobiles overwhelmed the streets of New York. In this case, the void was filled with a one-story “taxpayer” for a cigar store and liquor store, which structure remained until 2017 when the New York economy made it feasible to erect a larger structure. The townhouses seen here on 11th Street, one with a whitewashed party wall, remain today, but trees were added later to the barren curbsides. Photo credit: NYC Department of Records.

**NOW:** In October of 2017, WestView News reported the start of a new mixed-use building at 200 West 11th Street, in the Greenwich Village Historic District, replacing a one-story commercial structure. Architects SRA Architecture & Engineering and Higgins Quasebarth & Partners had their designs approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission in October of 2014. That’s a long and expensive gestation period in anyone’s book.

The Jackson Group LLC, a privately owned investment company whose website strangely does not credit the architects, recently began leasing apartments there. Originally called “4-story” because the corner is four stories, residents quickly corrected that misslabeling: the backside abutting existing properties on this trapezoidal corner lot is actually five stories tall, plus bulkheads for stairs and elevator.

The final plan consists of two full-floor, two-bedroom, two-bathroom units, one with a small private terrace; and a three-bedroom, three-bathroom duplex penthouse with a large private roof deck. Each home incorporates minimalist kitchen and living spaces, large bathrooms with custom finishes, and some floor-to-ceiling windows, especially facing Seventh Avenue.

All are described as “tough-luxe” designs, otherwise known as “industrial chic,” leaving some rough finishes exposed. Interiors by Ovadia Design Group strive to meld both the grit and glamour of this neighborhood. Residents will have a key-locked elevator with private access to each unit and a “virtual doorman” access from the 200 West 11th Street entry.

The key architectural features that won over the Landmarks review boards were the abundant red brick used to tie in to neighboring building materials, and the composition of balanced openings aligned from floor to floor. On the wide avenue, openings reflect the commercial strip; as the facade turns the corner on to the quieter 11th Street side, brick walls dominate with smaller windows and brick sills that refer to the adjacent townhouses. Even a large gable skylight topping the west end honors the studio skylights that dot the townhouses nearby. A simplified palette of materials mellows the overall effect of the street views.

The 2000-square-foot retail space featuring storefront glazing has been leased to Fantasy World LLC, which previously had a store nearby. Soon the sidewalks will be cleared for the heavy pedestrian traffic that enlivens this area just south of the new St. Vincent’s Triangle Park. Photo by B. Pape.

Brian J. Pape is a LEED-AP “Green” Architect consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, and is Co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee.

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**A September Ritual**

By Gordon Hughes

Just like the swallows that return to Capistrano, New Yorkers return to the West Village at the same time every September. As I was sitting outside on one of the benches at Cafe Panino Mucho Giusto having my usual cup of joe (with some skim milk) on an early September morning, I took note of a New York/West Village ritual. It was the returning of summer travelers. Yes, those New Yorkers and West Villagers who are returning to the city from their summer retreats. They come in all shapes, sizes, demographics and family sizes. They are coming from the Hamptons, the Berkshires, Dutchess County, the Jersey Shore, the Poconos, and even some from the South of France. Now—I have a pretty good view of a number of streets from my roost at Panino Mucho and I get to see a lot of cars unloading: Ubers, big black cars, and even yellow taxis.

Most people are sunburned, some are suffering from poison ivy, and some are contemplating divorce. Most couples are fighting about something like what they “left behind” at the Airbnb; rented house, resort, hotel, yurt—well you get the picture. This, for the most part, is small time stuff; except for the couple who were missing their child. Yikes! (She was hiding in the front seat with the driver so that worked out okay.) Perhaps you read my story about perambulators? Well, that is a major unloading issue. I am so thankful I didn’t witness the loading of those two contraptions on the plane or the Uber.

Those folks visiting the Adirondacks are hysterical. Their tents are not neatly packed. Their hiking boots, all six pairs in assorted sizes, are falling out of their backpacks along with their hiking sticks which are cluttering to the sidewalk. All the while the dog thinks — this is great sport and is running down Hudson Street with a mouthful of plaid shirts.

These scenes play out early in the morning during about a two- week period in mid-September. Many of these folks are friends of mine and we all enjoy our normal routine at the cafe. But now I get to see the pictures and hear the stories of just how peaceful it was wherever they were. Thank goodness for the pics or I don’t think they would remember any of it!

Welcome home, and feel for me as I go down summer memory lane.

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**Long Island Fire Commissioners Call For 9/11 Review**

For the first time ever, an elected government body in the United States has stated that it is “beyond any doubt” that explosives—and not just plane impacts and fires alone—were responsible for destroying the three World Trade Center towers on Sept. 11, 2001.

Fire commissioners from the Franklin Square and Munson Fire District, located just outside of Queens, have unanimously passed a resolution calling for a new investigation into all aspects of the 9/11 event and expressing their support for the conclusions contained in a grand jury petition filed with the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York by the Lawyers’ Committee for 9/11 Inquiry.

The fire district resolution concludes by resolving that the district’s Board of Fire Commissioners “fully supports a comprehensive federal grand jury investigation and prosecution of every crime related to the attacks of September 11...”

— Craig McKee
Health, Wellness & Beauty

By Hannah Reimann

Several stores in the West Village cater to shoppers like me who prefer to avoid toxic ingredients, to know what they’re putting on their skin and into their bodies, to be safe from contaminants, carcinogens and to protect their health.

Since products in these stores tend to have a high price point, I started slowly to make sure each was worth the investment of time and money. I have no regrets and have thrown away all of my old makeup, skincare and shampoo, replacing them with clean products.

I’ve added personal reflections about each of these excellent stores preceded by quotes from their websites. Please visit them yourself to evaluate and enjoy what they have to offer, guided by each store’s informed and educated staff.

BONBERI
384 Bleecker Street on the corner of Perry Street

From the eponymous blog: “A curated guide to food and well-being.”

This pop-up convenience corner store offers fresh juices, smoothies, salads, grain bowls, daily soup, snacks and wellness-inspired homeware, clean beauty and skincare products. I stop in for kombucha on tap and delicious, meaty coconut water when I need to recharge with a healthy drink on busy days. They have a beautiful, small selection of health and beauty products that changes with the seasons, from Dr. Bronner’s soap to body brushes, Rodin face oils, Tata Harper glosses and more.

www.bonberi.com/bleecker/

CAP BEAUTY
238 West 10th Street between Bleecker and Hudson Streets

“Beauty is Wellness. Wellness is Beauty”

A fun and beautiful, well-stocked store that carries reputable brands such as Kjaer Weis, RMS, Tata Harper, Dr. Alkaitis and many more, as well as teas, powders, medicines at Cap Grocery, located in the same store. Great customer service.

www.capbeauty.com

FOLLAIN
92 Greenwich Ave near West 12th Street

“No one should have to compromise their health for beauty.”

Founded in 2013 with stores in five US cities, Follain has been a fount of knowledge and guidance for me in my quest for clean cosmetics. Before Intelligent Nutrients closed its Fifth Avenue and West 8th Street Flagship store, one manager told me about Follain. Follain carries carefully selected products that meet their strict criteria including their own line of under $30 bestsellers.

follain.com

THE ORGANIC PHARMACY
353 Bleecker Street between West 10th and Charles Streets

“Science, quality and dosage means serious results.”

This trailblazer opened in London in 2002 by its founder, Margo Marrone, a pharmacist who specializes in medicinal herbs who later became a homeopath. She was shocked to find poisonous pesticides used in our food, questionable ingredients used in cosmetics and was moved to create The Organic Pharmacy. It sells only its own brand, and has worldwide distribution and stores. There are more skincare products than makeup here, all very high quality.

www.theorganicpharmacy.com

SISLEY PARIS BOUTIQUE
343 Bleecker Street between Christopher and West 10th Streets

“Makeup that takes care of your skin.”

What’s a woman to do when her all-natural makeup doesn’t last long enough for a photo shoot or isn’t seen from afar while working on a stage show? Sisley has been my savior while I’ve searched for makeup good for my skin to wear professionally on stage and for jobs and events that require photography. The products are science-based with plant ingredients that contain some chemicals.


“Science, quality and dosage means serious results.”

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www.theorganicpharmacy.com

Basil Weathers
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A resident of the Village since 1979, Basil is thoroughly knowledgeable about Village pipes and plumbing problems, and is available 24/7 to fix sudden flooding, frozen pipes, restaurant boilers, and any other plumbing issue that may occur. A cheerful and hard-working local businessman, Basil will always give you a fair and honest price for your job.

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Serving the West Village for 11 Years
Millenary Moche Nights at the Hendricks

By Gy Mirano

When Peruvian artist Julio Granados was last in Lima he received a call from New York confirming he had been selected to paint a mural in the heart of Manhattan. The honor had been a long time coming and well-deserved. It is a joy to view his work—which is lyrical, lighthearted, and full of well-defined beauty and perfection. He is also a superb, inventive craftsman and graphic designer. The commission to paint a mural at the latest hotel introduced by the Fortuna Realty Group (Hotel Hendricks, 25 West 38th Street) was a thrill, and a dream project as it allowed for creative freedom.

Julio was a child living in the scenic mountains of Perú in Mantaro when he saw his grandmother, an embroidery teacher, deftly working with multi-colored threads. Inspired by her, and the pristine nature around him, he started to draw on a natural impulse. It was then that he felt his calling. He had talent, and then some. As an artist, graphic designer, illustrator, and creative thinker, the task of creating a concept and executing a mural was an interesting challenge for Julio: a larger canvas, weather challenges, and the fast-approaching opening day were all considerations. Coming back to New York was also a chance to excel and to create a special homage to Latin American culture in the heart of an American city known for its iconic and massive beauty. And that is what he did.

The request from Hotel Hendricks was simple but daunting: to paint two murals with a Peruvian theme. That was it. No details. No specifics (except for a precise color palette.) Why Perú? This was not explained either. Perhaps it was the power of the Peruvian mystique at work, along with a blank canvas and a good idea—a mural with a Peruvian theme; Julio ran with it. In the process he discovered that painting murals was a great medium which offered expansiveness for his work. One hot June afternoon, as Julio worked on the murals, I stopped by to observe him at work. He greeted me wearing a fetching hat decorated with furry tiny cat’s faces. Forever the rock star! After recovering from such a whimsical and bewitching hat (I wanted one!) my attention was drawn again to the hotel, where one could feel the buzz and excitement of a new project coming to life. Attentive staff took us up in elevators still filled with construction materials.

It had been raining tropical rains, then sun, then rain again. The artist had been hard at work under the moods of the smoldering New York summer, sitting, standing, perchéd on a tall ladder, crouching on the floor, zeroing in on each detail. He hand-painted, with great precision and speed, one firm stroke after another as images and details emerged. Copper, blue, gold, and white took over my senses. Julio knew that the mystic Moche designs, full of symbolisms, would propel him and inspire him toward a new vision. His festive, brilliant and energetic designs now accompany the spectacular views at the rooftop bar where giant hand-blown glass chandeliers and his Moche-themed murals stand resplendent amidst the lush greenery, water fountains, and twinkles from the Empire State Building.


Gy Mirano is a New York actress, voice-over artist, and arts advocate. Go to https://www.instagram.com/gymirano/
Karen's Quirky Style

By Karen Rempel, Fashion Editor

“Karen’s Quirky Style” is all about expressing my inner joie de vivre through color and fun combinations of clothing and accessories from different sources and time periods. I love walking down the street and seeing people’s faces light up with delight at the unexpected sight before their eyes. (Namely, moi. Haha.) The outfit I’m wearing this month brought quite a few smiles, and made me feel moments of connection with fellow New Yorkers as I walked along Christopher Street. Even these statues seemed to come alive!

I fell in love with this green and pink plaid dress with the ruffly skirt a few summers ago when I was working at Krystyna’s Place on Cornelia Street. Krystyna was away on vacation and I was covering the store for her, including dressing the windows and photographing clothes to put on Etsy. I fell sway to my own marketing efforts as I looked closely at the clothes to write their descriptions. I ended up buying numerous dresses when Krystyna returned. I was literally her best customer that summer! Ah well, my closet is the happier for it, with vintage gems like this ’50s dress, possibly homemade, with beautiful details like lace over the seams on the interior of the dress. I’ve never regretted this purchase.

The Nicole Lee handbag was an unexpected commemoration of moving to New York. I first saw the handbag at the Montreal airport when I traveled there for my immigration interview. Montreal is the only Canadian city where the US Citizenship and Immigration Services holds green card interviews. The handbag caught my eye, but I resisted the urge to go closer. Then, a few weeks later as I was actually emigrating, at the Vancouver International Airport point of entry, there was the handbag again! I looked closer and saw there were images of the Statue of Liberty, yellow cabs, Broadway, and the US flag. It was meant to be. I had to have it as a memento of one of the most important days of my life, emigrating to New York. It remains my favorite handbag, and this month it so happens that my hair is the same shade as that of the woman on the purse. Resolution!

For more stories, style notes, and fun photos, see karensquirkystyle.com and connect @karensquirkystyle.

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Style on the Street: Cool as Watermelon

By Karen Rempel | Fashion Editor

Last month we looked at how the men handle the heat in the city, so this month it’s the women’s turn. Here are three unique takes on New York summer fashion—with fab black footwear.

**FLARE** (photo left): Daniela Diletto and her son Luca pause on their stoop on the way to her birthday dinner in the Meatpacking District. Daniela is an art director and graphic designer for clothing companies and other clients. She’s rockin’ her classic silk print dress with black booties and socks with a hidden detail—pink soles!

**FLAIR** (photo center): Carol Yost is one of our dearly loved contributors, well-known for her quirky style, using texture and color to create living art on her body. Her popcorn blouse is irresistibly touchable, and her skirt brings a complementary color palette and bigger ruffled texture, with the translucent purplish teardrop earrings tying both pieces together.

**DEBONAIR** (photo right): Carol Shapiro is ready for a summer shower with black fold-up brolly and cool black sneaks, but what really makes this outfit pop is the red lace-up blouse and striped pants. Instant eye appeal.

All photos by Karen Rempel.
The Creative Genius of Diana Broussard

By Karen Rempel | Fashion Editor

Diana Broussard is a creative force of nature. She’s a true pioneer in fashion design, from Calvin Klein’s eponymous underwear for women to the latest in wearable tech—exclusive, sleek handbags with customizable video displays. She has worked with some of the biggest names in the business, including Dior and Gucci, and started her own line in 2004, yet she is as modest as a shopgirl and serves customers personally in her store on Christopher Street.

Diana’s mission is empowering women. She likes the personal connection of meeting her customers and having the opportunity to dress women. She says, “My goal is to make women feel powerful by looking good and helping them with their potential, to look modern and cool. Today it’s important to have your own point of view.”

Diana’s jewelry is carried in stores in Paris, London, Moscow, and Japan. Her famous colorful chain-link Nate necklace was a breakaway success. She explains, “These are power statement necklaces. Put it on and you’re dressed. It’s bold, but it’s not bling. It’s now carried at MoMA and MoMA Japan and that’s been really fun.”

Her new jewelry collection just arrived in Dallas, Texas, sewing her own clothes, playing flute, and studying the stars through a telescope in the backyard. Her physicist father designed microchips for NASA. When he suffered a stroke, she canceled her Juilliard plans and got a degree in textile chemistry locally. But New York still called to her; she moved here and got a degree in fashion design at Fashion Institute of Technology.

Soon she got a job at Calvin Klein. She thought she was going to design ready-to-wear for him, but he wanted her to design underwear and sleepwear. Diana said she’d never designed underwear, but CK said, “I don’t care, I want your taste, so bring your fashion sense to the lingerie.” She dove in. “I designed transparent ones and the classic logo waistband that Kate Moss and Christy Turlington wore. We started doing all these sleepwear separates, which nobody had done before.” After two years, CK sent her to Italy for shoe training, and then she did some jewelry for him. “He made me this multifunctional designer.”

Diana “got poached” by Dior in Paris, and then she worked for Gucci. Returning to NYC, she began freelancing while she started her own brand. By 2004 her shoes were in Neiman’s and Bergdorf’s. She opened a shop on Christopher Street in 2007, and started making chain necklaces that coordinated with the shoes. She showed her jewelry in Paris, and everybody wanted it. Diana said, “It took over my business!”

Diana loves her boutique, and her customers have become friends, drawn by her welcoming presence and her desire to uplift others.

Diana Broussard, 19C Christopher Street, New York, NY 10014, 646 336 6365. boutiqeu@dianabroussard.com. IG: @dianabroussard
Magic Time! Art & Ephemera of the Caffe Cino

By Robert Heide

Following on the heels of my last article entitled ‘The Legendary Caffe Cino Designated a NYC Landmark’ for the August 2019 edition of WestView News along came an invite to attend a dual exhibition at the ClampArt Gallery at 247 West 29th Street. Opening night was August 15 and the exhibit of particular interest to myself was “Magic Time! Art & Ephemera of the Caffe Cino”—alongside this Cino show was another exhibit called “Sex Crimes” which focuses on the ideal male body in terms of physique and sexuality—both exhibits running concurrently until September 28.

Joe Cino operated his Caffe Cino, a storefront at 31 Cornelia Street from 1958 to 1967 when he died from self-inflicted knife wounds. The Caffe was operated for another year by Charles Stanley, Michael Smith and Wolfgang Zuckerman but due to police harassment and licensing problems closed permanently in 1968 after ten incredible years where many new playwrights such as Lanford Wilson, Sam Shepard, John Guare, Robert Patrick, Jeff Weiss, Jean Claude van Itallie and others had their early plays performed. On one wall of the gallery are original posters and flyers from those early Off-Off Broadway beginnings. Yes, in terms of Off-Off the Cino has been cited as the first of the coffee-house theaters to emerge in the 1960s. John Vaccaro, the actor, director and force behind the Theater of the Ridiculous that focused primarily on absurdist plays referred to the Cino as, not only the first of its kind, but called it “the cradle of gay theater.”

My own play Moon was one of the last plays performed at the Cino in 1968. It had premiered before Joe’s death in 1967 two years before the actual moon landing; Joe also produced my play The Bed in 1965. Both of these plays are represented in flyers on the wall in the exhibition along with the masterwork Monuments by Diame Di Prima about the suicidal death in 1964 of Judson Church dancer Freddie Herko who did a ballet leap out a fifth floor window at 5 Cornelia Street down the block from the Caffe Cino. Other play flyers in the exhibit include The Madness of Lady Bright by Lanford Wilson (later a Pulitzer Prize winner) starring Neil Flanagan, Tom Eyen’s Why Hannah’s Shirt Won’t Stay Down starring the sexy Steve Davis and flame-haired Helen Hanft, a flyer from a Harry Koutoukas play and a program from Paul Fosters’ Cino production of Baillie. When The Bed, featuring the actors Jim Jennings and Larry Burns was first performed at the Cino, two FBI agents showed up to possibly shut the play down; but since there was no hanky-panky, the two left in a funk. Eleanor Lester, at the time a Village Voice critic, gave the play a rave review. Later in the New York Times Sunday Magazine in a more comprehensive article describing the whole Off Off Broadway scene she wrote about the play again—“In The Bed Heide brings two singularly appropriate characters literally lying in the bed of their dissolution. Two men on a bed when ‘sex is dead and ‘God is dead’ is what the play is about. Here is the ultimate hang-up, psychologically and metaphorically, and the playwright focuses hard on the essence of the matter. The playwright clearly establishes that what we are witnessing here is the anguish of existence.” Following Lester’s Times piece, Off Off Broadway came of age, and everything “underground” opened up with a new kind of super realism very different from the naturalism of Broadway.

This Cino exhibit was organized by Ward 5B and co-curated by Magie Dominic who is also the curator of a collection of Cino memorabilia at the Lincoln Center Performing Arts branch of the New York Public Library and Greg Ellis and features larger collage-artworks by Dominic and Kenny Burgess, both of whom worked at the Cino, Cino photos and posters also on display are of Bernadette Peters, whose first starring musical was in Dames at Sea which was directed by Robert Dahdah who also directed The Bed, and original black and white photos from 1961 of Dahdah and his companion actress, Mary Boylan recall the Cino’s early years. At one end of the ClampArt Gallery is an amazing artifact—a 10 x 12’ white gown, stitched together by Dominic over a period of twenty years from countless pieces of white, lace-like fabric sent to her from all over the world from hundreds of people in the name of ‘peace and stillness’ which seems to watch over the room in a mysterious ghost-like way. The guests who arrived, including myself and John Gilman, at the opening party included director Ralph Lewis from the leading New York site specific company Peculiar Works Project founded by Lewis, Barry Rowell, and Katharine Porter, one of the original Tom O’Horgan La Mama acting troupe members Marilyn Joan Roberts, the brilliant comic-romanzette actor Augusto Machado who showed up in his Fu Manchu beard, Primary Stages Oral History Project director Sally Plass, and the Harris sisters Mary Lou and Eloise, from the Off Off Broadway Harris performance family which included Michael Walter Harris, an original member of the cast of Hair and George ‘Hibiscus’ Harris who founded the famed group The Cockettes.

Also on exhibit is the scintillating ‘Sex Crimes,’ which features vintage male physique magazines, original layout boards, male nude black and white and color photographs and drawings, all with flagrantly gay underground themes when gay men were subject to arrest just by being perceived of as homosexuals by a homophobic world which included policemen and detectives out to make an arrest as what occurred in the 1969 Stonewall riots. Included here are photos by Bruce of Los Angeles, Edward Wallworth, a protégé of famed photographer Edward Steichen, George Platt Lynes, James Bidgood (Pink Narcissus,) and particularly rare ephemera and art from underground gay wildman-filmmaker Jack Smith (Note: He was arrested and thrown in jail for his most famous film Flaming Creatures.) The theme throughout here is the ‘sexual outlaw’ and both shows at the ClampArt Gallery on 29th Street flowed seamlessly together.

Robert Heide expounds further on the Off Off Broadway explosion, including the Caffe Cino, in a dozen new essays in his latest book Robert Heide 25 Plays available at Amazon.

Puppet Master Penny Jones: 90 Years Young

By Stanley Wlodyka

“Toby!” the gaggle of toddlers scream, some incessantly and with all their might pointing at the puppet stage, where the head of the master of ceremonies. Dressed as the pied piper in a frock packed by patches, the actor turns too little too late: Toby disappears in a whirl of black fur, retreating behind the curtain with his plundered plumage. The children sitting on the floor in front of the set roar with laughter, and from behind the velvet curtain, Penny Jones can’t help but to laugh along with them—silently of course.

Penny and Toby have been in business together for a very long time. Since the 1970s, the Penny Jones Puppet Company has been a mainstay of children’s theater in New York City. Given that Penny sometimes handles several puppets at a time, switching seamlessly between voices and characterizations, rushing back and forth putting on live performances, it may come as a surprise to find out she is turning 90 years old in September. Along with staying physically active and therefore not allowing the aches and pains of aging to set in, she credits her exposure to children with her longevity.

What makes youth young? “They’re interested in everything. They’re curious about everything. They can be amazed and marvel at things and they are continually accomplishing things and that gives them a feeling of joy, when they manage to do something they’ve been trying to do,” Penny says.

Penny Jones has enriched the lives of children for nearly 50 years, inspiring them to step into the shoes of everyone from the three little pigs to the big bad wolf. Photo courtesy of The Penny Jones Puppet Company.

continued on page 29
St. John’s in the Village
Enjoy these arts events in the fully-heated, air-conditioned, and ADA accessible St John’s (corner of W. 11th Street and Waverly Place). All concerts have an allocation of tickets free to seniors, but booking is essential.
(admin@stjvny.org or 212 243 6192)
All bookings and reservations through stjvny.org

Tuesday, September 3—7:00 PM (Gallery)
GALLERY OPENING: VILLAGE BY VILLAGERS
Water colors and oil paintings of scenes and streetscapes of Greenwich Village by local artists Simon Carr and Joan Goodman.
This Opening Reception runs from 7pm to 9pm on Tuesday, September 3. Registration is essential. Gallery opening hours thereafter are 10am to 3pm Mondays, Tuesdays, & Wednesdays (subject to occasional change). The Gallery is also the venue for many receptions following concerts in St John’s Church, and paintings may be viewed and purchased on those occasions also. The exhibition runs until the end of September.

Wednesday, September 4—7:00 PM
GREENWICH VILLAGE CHAMBER SINGERS AUDITIONS
We are interested in experienced singers with good sight-reading skills. Please feel free to contact us if you are not sure of your level. Auditions are brief and relative-ly informal and include testing of sight-reading, pitch, and rhythm. At present, we are looking for singers in all voice parts.
To arrange an audition send an email to info@gvsingers.org or call 646.543.9605.

Thursday, September 5—6:30/7:00 PM
Theater
NOVENAS FOR A LOST HOSPITAL
The story of the rise and fall of St Vincent’s Hospital and its place in the NYC cholaera and AIDS epidemics of the 19th and 20th centuries. Runs until 13 October, every evening except Tuesdays.

Friday, September 6—6:30/7:00 PM
Theater
NOVENAS FOR A LOST HOSPITAL
The story of the rise and fall of St Vincent’s Hospital and its place in the NYC cholaera and AIDS epidemics of the 19th and 20th centuries. Runs until 13 October, every evening except Tuesdays.

Saturday, September 7—6:30/7:00 PM
Theater
NOVENAS FOR A LOST HOSPITAL
The story of the rise and fall of St Vincent’s Hospital and its place in the NYC cholaera and AIDS epidemics of the 19th and 20th centuries. Runs until 13 October, every evening except Tuesdays.

Saturday, September 7—8:00 PM
CONCERT FOR BRAZILIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY
Ordem, Progresso, Musica: the International Brazilian Opera Company presents Brazilian music classics: piano repertoire by Italian pianist Chantal Balestri, vocal repertoire with selections from the award-winning opera Tamandua sung by Flavia Dacie and Camila Vergasta, and Brazilian jazz and Bossa Nova. Followed by a reception of Brazilian drinks and foods in Revelation Gallery.

Sunday, September 8—3:00 PM
CONCERT: TED YODER/ HAMMERED DULCIMER
It’s impossible to imagine that one man and two hammers can sound like an entire rock band or a whole symphony orchestra all in one. Ted Yoder is a national champion and sure virtuoso labeled “the Bela Fleck of the hammered dulcimer”.

Tuesday, September 10—7:00 PM
Gallery
SINGER-SONGWRITER EVENING
A truly Greenwich Village evening of song and verse in which local artists share their talent with one another and with you. Cabaret-style seating. Space is limited. Early booking is advised. BYO wine (no spirits, no beer). $10

Wednesday, September 11—6:15 PM
SERVICE: REQUIEM FOR VICTIMS OF 9/11

Thursday, September 12—7:30 PM
CONCERT: LYRA VOCAL ENSEMBLE
Russian folk and religious music.

Friday, September 13—7:30 PM
CONCERT: CHARLOTTE MUNDY/ AMIR FARAD

Saturday, September 14—7:30 PM
CONCERT: GUITAR & SOPRANO

Sunday, September 15—3:00 PM
CONCERT: THE LOST KEYS
The Lost Keys are back at St. John’s in the Village and they are ready to wrap up summer in the best way—with a Sip N’ Sing! TLK will once again be performing their greatest hits along with debuting some new songs, followed by a wine reception where you can chat and get to know the performers.

Thursday, September 19—7:30 PM
TWO SOLO BACH CANATATAS
Cantata 51 (Jauchzet Gott) & Ich Habe Genug with Amber Evans, Brian Wehrle, and the Strathmere Ensemble. $20/$10 & free to seniors

Saturday, September 21—7:00 PM
CONCERT: Pavel Nersessian & Katrin Bulke
St John’s in the Village, GetClassical, and the Foundation For The Revival Of Classical Culture celebrate their initial collaboration in organizing school visits by great performers, with this season kick off concert. The Russian master pianist and charismatic German soprano join forces with a gorgeous selection of songs and arias. Pavel Nersessian (piano) & Katrin Bulke (soprano) present Mozart, Schubert, Bellini, and Verdi.

Tuesday, September 24—7:00 PM
Gallery
CONCERT: ILYA POLETAEV
A concert pianist, as well as a prominent exponent of the harpsichord and fortepiano, Ilya Poletaev comes to us from Canada.
Program
J.S. Bach: Partita no. 2 in C minor
Robert Schumann: Intermezzi op. 4
Nikolai Medtner (1881-1950):
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Robert Schumann: Intermezzi op. 4
Nikolai Medtner (1881-1950):
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Saturday, September 21—7:00 PM
CONCERT: KEITH MILKIE
Keith Milkie presents Schirmer’s Library of Musical Classics, 24 Italian Songs and Arias of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, a classical collection of baroque and antique arias and ariettas. Keith is excited to share these beautiful, many unheard, classical hits in hopes that fellow students may learn from them and audience members may enjoy their life. Tickets $20 on the door.

Visit stjvny.org for booking information
Smalls Jazz Club—
25 Years of Bringing Up the Jazzcats

By Karen Rempel

Smalls Jazz Club, in the cellar at 183 West 10th Street, makes an incalculable contribution to jazz music every day, incubating hundreds of talented young jazzcats since its inception in 1994. Owner and jazz pianist Spike Wilner tells us a bit about the history of the club as Smalls celebrates surviving and thriving for a quarter century in The Village.

Spike has been a professional musician since the age of 18, and has recorded five albums, including the 2018 Spike Wilner Quartet release, Odalisque. A new father, his touring is curtailed a bit, but Spike plays at least twice a week at Smalls or its harmon-ic sister club, Mezzrow, a few steps away across Seventh Avenue.

Spike recalls that Mitch Borden opened Smalls in 1994. Mitch created an environment that was an open space for musicians to hang out. He charged a small fee at the door. There was no liquor license, people brought beer, and it was a college-age hang for Spike’s generation of musicians, who were all in their early 20s. Spike said, “He gave them all a home. A lot of these guys became very famous, major voices of our generation. But it was also a place for older jazz musicians, old bebop guys, some of them alcoholics and addicts. They would stay and sleep. It was kind of a wild spot and just dirty, a dive, a lot going on, people had their own keys, people would live there. It went 24/7, couldn’t exist now with the current environment of regulations.”

Spike performed there weekly and became very close friends with Mitch. Then there was 9/11. Suddenly the city changed and the old-school Bohemian philosophy didn’t work anymore.

Smalls was in danger of dying like disco, and it did close in 2002 for about a year and a half. Then a restaurateur bought it and got a liquor license, with Mitch brought in to manage the club. After a while the new owner wanted to bring young players back to Smalls and even had the temerity to sit at the piano once at 4 a.m. I’ve gone there with older, established jazz musician friends after their sets at other clubs, and I’ve met young musicians who flew from Europe or Japan and even had the temerity to sit at the piano once at 4 a.m. I’ve gone there with older, established jazz musician friends after their sets at other clubs, and I’ve met young musicians who flew from Europe or Japan and came straight to Smalls without even checking their bags. The vibe feels like a volcanic eruption of new jazz life, cheered on by crowds of boisterous jazzheads.

Spike agrees. “Any evening you’re down there, you're going to see something unusual, the music, the people who are there, the celebrities. Come after midnight, that’s when the magic happens.”

I’ve spent many a jazz-soaked evening at Smalls, have rung in a few New Years there, and even had the temerity to sit at the piano once at 4 a.m. I’ve gone there with older, established jazz musician friends after their sets at other clubs, and I’ve met young musicians who flew from Europe or Japan and came straight to Smalls without even checking their bags. The vibe feels like a volcanic eruption of new jazz life, cheered on by crowds of boisterous jazzheads.

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Jazz Spawning Ground

Here’s a tiny shortlist of the many cats who came up in the New York jazz scene in the 1990s and got their start at Smalls:

- Pianist, arranger, and composer Brad Mehldau
- Saxophonist Joshua Redman
- Guitarist Peter Bernstein
- Guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel
- Bassist, composer, and bandleader Omer Avital
- Drummer Lawrence “Lo” Leathers

Remembering Lo Leathers

A regular player at Smalls, drummer Lawrence “Lo” Leathers was tragically killed in the Bronx in early June. Smalls has mounted a banner behind the drum kit in memoriam to Lo. Alan Gardner, a patron of the club and friend of Spike’s, recalls Lo lording over the late night scene at Smalls:

Lawrence came to New York and he cut his teeth a lot. He was at Juilliard and left. At Smalls they have late night jams for young jazz acts, and Lawrence was one of those jazz guys at one point, drumming with anybody and everybody. Aaron Diehl is a real piece. A piano player, immensely talented, brilliant guy, he’s got a great band and Paul Sikvie plays bass for him. The singer Cécile McLorin Salvant just won DownBeat’s 2019 Jazz Artist of the Year and Female Vocalist of the Year; she’s won two Grammy awards. Aaron’s trio backed her. So Aaron, Paul, and Lawrence won Grammys. After Lawrence hit it, he was getting all the gigs. Lawrence was a peripatetic kind of guy, he had stuff in France for about a year, but he would bring young players back to Smalls to share that opportunity that he had with people that he saw had talent. He lorded it over the late night, he was very close to Spike and a lot of the people there. They all knew Lawrence, it’s a horrible loss.

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A Night Out with Noel Coward, Steve Ross and KT Sullivan

By Robert Heide

The great New York singer Steve Ross—dubbed the “Crown Prince of New York Cabaret”—with the dynamic, amazing KT Sullivan—the artistic director of the Mabel Mercer Foundation—appeared in the past month of August in a show devised and written by Barry Day entitled Love, Noel—The Songs and Letters of Noel Coward. The program for this Irish Repertory cabaret show lists Mr. Ross simply as MAN and KT as WOMAN and the moment this duo appears on stage the magic begins. Barry Day is the literary advisor to the Noel Coward estate and he has published more than a dozen books on Coward as well as Oscar Wilde, Dorothy Parker, P. G. Wodehouse, Johnny Mercer and even Raymond Chandler. His editing for Love, Noel is one of course based on selections from the collected letters of Coward, and twenty-two Coward songs including all time standards like If Love Were All, Someday I'll Find You, I'll See You Again, World Weary, and I'll Follow My Secret Heart. Fun oddities include Why Do the Wrong People Travel? and Mrs. Worthington which includes in its lyric “Don’t put your daughter on the stage Mrs. Worthington—she’s a bit of an ugly duckling—please! On my knees—don’t put your daughter on the stage.”

All the letters from Noel or from his friends are elegantly read and the songs are sung either by The Man or The Woman or both of them together. At one point in this delightful evening of song and lively patter between the two they join in singing the plaintive lyrics of the painful tune Mad About the Boy. A rare recording of Noel Coward singing the song caused somewhat of a scandal back in the day in ‘Merrie Olde’ England. To hear a man singing to a young gentleman offended some. Today a gay man singing Mad About the Boy with longing and yearning might not seem odd at all as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion—it must be time to get on with it. Some of the lyrics include “Lord knows I’m not a school girl in the flurry of her first affair,” and “this odd diversity of misery and joy,” and “on the silver screen he melts my heart away in every single scene” and finally “I’m going quite insane and yet it’s plain I’m mad about the boy.” I am noting as I write this that I have in my collection of CD’s an album entitled Can’t Help Lovin’ That Man. The selections feature famous crooners who sing standard love songs to men. Bing Crosby recorded a song called Gay Love, and another originally sung by Mae West is The Right Kind of Man. Other titles are He’s So Unusual, The Man I Love, He’s My Secret Passion and Hold Your Man. The producer of this unusual compact disc compiled a series of 78 rpm recordings for Columbia Records on several CDs and put them out under a banner head entitled Art Deco.

It should be added here that KT Sullivan does marvelous imitations of Noel Coward’s special ‘lady’ friends such as Gertrude Lawrence and Gertrude Lawrence who joined him in several plays with music. Love, Noel was brilliantly directed by Charlotte Moore who is also the artistic director of the Irish Rep and has won many distinguished awards during her theater career. As for Steve Ross and KT Sullivan, both of them are cherished treasures in the world of cabaret. Both appear often at Birdland and in past years have worked at famous night clubs such as the famed Oak Room at the Algonquin Hotel where Ross held court for fifteen years. After this great evening at the Love, Noel show at the Irish Rep John Gilman and I went out for a drink to talk theater with Steve Ross whom I have considered a friend and colleague for decades. We mentioned to him that at an all male New Year’s Eve party given by Richard Barr and Edward Albice in Greenwich Village that we met Sir Noel Coward and the famed actor Sir John Gielgud sitting together on a fancy upholstered French divan. Noel Coward, who was born in 1899 and died at his home in Jamaica in 1973, was often called ‘The Master’ because of his many talents as a playwright, composer, lyricist, actor, and director. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1970.

Steve Ross will be on stage again at the Mabel Mercer Foundation’s Cabaret Convention on the evening of October 29 in Heart and Soul—the songs of Frank Loesser.

Playwright Robert Heide’s latest publication is Robert Heide 25 Plays available at Amazon.

Puppet Master continued from page 26

Penny certainly doesn’t try to achieve praise and recognition for what she does, but so far this year has heaped honors upon Penny and her troupe. In April, she was crowned an Icon of Westbeth Artists Housing, a government subsidized affordable housing complex with more than 380 units, reserved exclusively for artists and their families in the West Village, where rents top $4000 for a one-bedroom apartment. Since 1970, Westbeth has been home to important artists, and, before that, during the building’s past life as the headquarters of Bell Laboratories, was home to important scientific and technological achievements—such as the radar, laser, microwave, an early prototype of the television, sound for film, and nobel-prize winning research.

During her Icon acceptance speech, Penny recalled how Westbeth became a lifeline for her when, even in the 1990’s, New York real estate began climbing to unaffordable levels. She was priced out of her studio apartment in Soho, and if an apartment at Westbeth hadn’t opened up, she would have had to return to her childhood home of Minnesota. Alas, just a few months after giving the Westbeth Icon speech, she would have to return to Minnesota, anyway, to accept another award, this time from the Puppeteers of America.

She was especially pleased to receive this award because it was for educational puppetry, a subgroup that she feels is often underappreciated if not altogether forgotten. It’s not as sexy as what comic Jeff Dunham does on his nationwide tour. It’s not as cool as what puppeteer howard ashman used to do. It’s not as sexy as what comic Jeff Dunham does on his nationwide stand-up tours with Walter, his acerbic, sharp-tongued, straight, white, CIS-gender male, senior-citizen puppet. However, she feels that using puppetry for learning and development is important now more than ever.

“I think the best thing in the world is the parent and the child walking down the street hand in hand, and the parent pointing out the potholes, the this, the that, the flowers blooming, the noise making, the everything, and having a little chat with the child, so that it’s a wonderful togetherness as they are going down the street,” Penny posits. “Instead, the child is in a stroller, not getting exercise, he’s just looking there and the caregiver (the parent or the hired hand) is probably looking at a device and not relating to the child. The child is isolated, all by himself, alone in a world that is not being explained to him, not being shared with him.”

If neglect isn’t bad enough, wait till the child joins the vicious cycle. “Naturally he wants whatever that thing is the parent is talking into and looking at. If he’s given something like that, it means the two of them are in their separate solipsistic worlds. They’re not relating; this is an educational opportunity completely thrown out the window, a togetherness that is not happening. It’s just awful. He’s not going to have a warm relationship with either a person or with the world. It’s ghastly and it’s going to be deadly for the next generation.”

And so she marches on, steadfast in her determination to enrich children’s lives by providing the most beneficial experiences possible, while still delighting them to no end. More often than not, given that the bulk of her audiences are around six years of age and under, Penny’s productions are usually the very first theatrical experience any of them have ever had. Naturally, she hopes they’ll catch the bug and go on seeking more live entertainment experiences and beyond! Audiences have a chance to channel their inspiration into the puppet making workshops that follow each of her performances, which range from classic fables and fairy tales (Little Red Riding Hood, Chicken Little, and The Sorcerer’s Apprentice) to experimental and abstract stories of Penny’s own invention (What Music Looks Like).

Kids, young and old, are invited to celebrate Penny’s 90th birthday on Sunday, September 15, when the new repertory season begins with interactive performances of an original work inspired by her travels in Italy: Pippi and the Pop-Up Dragon. You can catch an 11 am or a 2:30 pm show, and can count on performances each 3rd and 4th Sunday of every month in the Westbeth Community Room (155 Bank Street). Tickets are $10.

For more information, please visit: www.PennyPuppets.org
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