



City Retirees: Say No To Medicare “Disadvantage”

BY SUSAN HERZOG



ON JANUARY 10TH, MORE THAN 50 NYC MUNICIPAL RETIREES endured the bitter cold to demonstrate outside of New York City Council offices at 250 Broadway. Photo courtesy of Joe Maniscalco, WorkBites News.

On January 10, more than 50 NYC municipal retirees endured the bitter cold to demonstrate outside of New York City Council offices at 250 Broadway. Another group of retirees met inside with Council Member Erik Bottcher.

The retirees were demanding that Bottcher join the sponsors of a bill that would amend the NYC Administrative Code to protect health care benefits that city retirees have enjoyed for more than 50 years. Bottcher had supported a similar resolution last year. However, the vote was blocked by Council Speaker Adrienne Adams. The group asked Bottcher to get off the fence and support this year’s similar bill, Intro 1096-2024. It was introduced by Council Member Christopher Marte and has the support of Council Members Robert F. Holden, Linda

Lee, Vickie Paladino, Kristy Marmorato, Inna Vernikov, and Joann Ariola.

Why do the supporters say an amendment is necessary? While campaigning for office, Mayor Eric Adams said that forcing NYC retirees off traditional Medicare and on to a for-profit Medicare Advantage plan would be a “bait and switch” for retiree health benefits. Now, he himself has switched and is trying to force all NYC retirees on to a Medicare Advantage plan. Adopting Int 1096-2024 would put a stop to these attempts to reduce retiree health care.

The proposed amendment to NYC Administrative Code section 12-126, called “Protecting the vested health insurance coverage and contributions of retired employees of the City of New York,” would guarantee that “the city must offer Medicare-eligible retire-

es and their Medicare-eligible dependents at least one Medigap plan with benefits equivalent to or better than those available to city retirees and their dependents as of December 31, 2021.”

Right now, most Medicare-eligible NYC retirees are covered by traditional Medicare with a supplemental insurance plan, paid for by the city. In 2014, the largest municipal unions made a deal with the city. In exchange for raises for active members they would sacrifice retiree health benefits and thus reduce health care costs to the city. The easiest way to achieve significant “savings” was for the city to stop paying for the Medicare supplement. They would do that by forcing retirees from traditional Medicare to private for-profit Medicare “Advantage” insurance. These

continued on page 2

Building Supers Meet With Deputy DSNY Commissioner Joshua Goodman

BY DOMINICK ROMEO

For a year and a half, my group of building superintendents (NYCBuildingSupers.com) requested meetings with Jessica Tisch, former sanitation commissioner, and Joshua Goodman, the Deputy Commissioner/Public Affairs Officer for the Department of Sanitation. Finally, Joshua met me for coffee three weeks ago. It has been a long road to get here.

In April of 2022, the Department of Sanitation of New York [DSNY] created a new ordinance that forced building superintendents, like me, to toss out our building’s trash after 8 p.m. This is allegedly to combat our city’s rat problem – or at least that’s what the city’s massive PR campaign, “Let’s Send These Rats Packing,” led us to believe.

Building “supers” and porters had been bringing the trash to the curb at 4 p.m. because our working hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., just like everyone else’s. We are contracted to be in our buildings during those hours to tackle our daily tasks, which include meeting with vendors, like plumbers, electricians, contractors, and elevator

continued on page 3



GRAFFITI-COVERED DESIGNER TRASH CANS littered all over New York City sidewalks. Photo by Dominick Romeo.

Acts of Art

SEE PAGE 13

Movie Review:
A Complete Unknown

SEE PAGE 25

February
Events

SEE PAGE 26

SUPPORT
VILLAGE VIEW

Donate or Advertise
at villageview.nyc

P3 Ordered to Leave Pier 40 by July 15

BY ARTHUR SCHWARTZ

Back in 1997, six years before Hudson River Park first opened, the Greenwich Village Little League (GVLL) and the Downtown United Soccer Club, large youth sports organizations in the Village, proposed to then Governor Pataki that they be allowed to construct a ballfield in the middle of Pier 40. The governor agreed but months later word came out that this 16 acre pier was going to be leased entirely to a parking lot operator. A lawsuit ensued (I was the lead lawyer) alleging breach of contract, and violation of the State Environmental Quality Review Act. We got a Temporary Restraining Order the night before the lease was to take effect (signed in a judge's kitchen). Then Governor Pataki personally intervened and we settled in late 1997.

Part of what we settled for was a field on the roof (financed by the state), an indoor soccer space, and another indoor space to be used for classes, batting cages, etc. The settlement placed control of the space to the Pier Park and Playground Association (P3), a newly created not-for-profit. For 25 years P3 provided a half-million dollars of annual programming for hundreds of children including a low-cost summer sports camp. That space became even more valuable when the courtyard in the center of the Pier was converted into ballfields and directly connected to the playing fields in 2005 (after another lawsuit).

That indoor program, the camp, and that space, are now threatened with termination. If the Hudson River Park Trust (Trust) has its way, P3 will no longer have a permit for the indoor space on the south side of the field. Both GVLL and Downtown Little League (DLL) are petitioning the Trust to keep the organization in place, but P3 has been told it must vacate by July 15.

In a letter to the sports groups, the Trust said that while it values youth baseball and all the league does for kids, it "had to make the extremely difficult decision to terminate the longstanding permit...We made this de-



OPENING DAY AT PIER 40. Photo courtesy of Greenwich Village Little League.



INSIDE THE P3 TRAINING FACILITY AT PIER 40. Photo courtesy of P3.

termination based upon significant permit violations related to unauthorized construction at Pier 40 that now must be repaired for safety. Please know that this decision was not made lightly."

In response to an inquiry by the Tribeca Citizen, the Trust declined to elaborate on the nature of the unauthorized construction other than to say it was significant enough that they could not responsibly ignore it. P3

has denied doing any inappropriate or unauthorized construction in the space, which it has improved continuously since 1998.

P3 will be able to use the Pier 40 fields this summer and beyond for its camps and other programs, since the permitting for the fields is a separate process. They also continue to hold a permit to use that indoor space exclusively, but they pay rent or fees for its use. GVLL and Gothams, the citywide travel baseball team, run their operations out of the space. DLL (which serves Tribeca, FIDI, and Battery Park City) also uses the indoor space for coaching and practice.

"The P3 facility along the south side of Pier 40 has functioned as home-base for GVLL," the league's president wrote to parents, noting that she will be urging the Trust to reconsider. "It is where managers go to pickup and drop-off equipment. It is where we train coaching staff on safety, hold manager meetings and organize try-outs. It is where our kids attend hitting, pitching, catching and fielding clinics after school and during off-seasons." Shutting down the P3 facility would also cause serious damage to the Little League program and the broader downtown baseball and softball community.

The future of the space has not been determined, but Trust President Noreen Doyle said that they will not seek a commercial use there in the future, but rather something that will serve the community and likely youth sports. "We are committed to listening to our community about how this space can continue to serve the youth sports community that is such an integral part of both Pier 40 and Hudson River Park overall," she wrote to GVLL. "We will be working with Community Board 2, our Advisory Council, and league leadership on the best way to begin that conversation...We certainly recognize the incredible and unique value that the indoor space at Pier 40 has provided to our baseball and softball communities over the years."

City Retirees *continued from page 1*

companies make huge profits by delaying and denying care ordered by a patient's doctor. Additionally, in 2021, the city imposed new, onerous co-pays that ill, elderly, retirees on small pensions cannot afford.

A small group of municipal retirees, led by retired NY Fire Department EMS worker Marianne Pizzitola, hired a lawyer and sued the city. They have since organized tens of thousands of retirees to join them. So far, they have won unanimous decisions in eight courts with 13 judges. The city tried to circumvent the court decisions by pressuring the City Council to amend 12-126 to allow it to pay less for retiree health care. Thousands of emails and hundreds of testimonies from retirees stopped that. The city keeps appeal-

ing and is still fighting the retirees in the NYS highest appellate court.

Passing the amendment would relieve the retirees of years of profound anxiety and the many thousands of dollars they are paying to fight the city to preserve their promised health care.

Marianne Pizzitola, president of the NYC Organization of Public Service Retirees, who attended the meeting, said, "Erik... is just not ready to sign on ...and we are going to continue doing what we have to do to educate the council members, and all of their constituents that this should be a common-sense issue. You protect retirees. You protect your municipal workers. You protect Medicare. We should not have to keep coming out here

in the cold, in the wet, in the summer, to protect a federal health benefit. And the public officials who are in this building should not have ...a second thought in protecting it."

Dr. Cheryl Kunis described the plight of her patients who suffer because of Medicare Advantage delays and denials, and explained how it also harms the physicians who are struggling to get their patients the care they need.

Colette Swietnicki, a retired midwife from North Central Bronx Hospital told a reporter, "We cannot have only Medicaid "disadvantage" plans because they only work if you are not sick, and seniors tend to get sick. These plans are a big disadvantage, and they shouldn't even be allowed to use the Medicare name. Bottcher should support us. We

are his community and we have a lot of seniors in his district."

Richard Pollak, a retired professor, said, "Mr. Bottcher is totally remiss in not supporting legislation that will guarantee results that we are contractually entitled to. We took contracts that were lower in salary but better in benefits, and were told that these benefits would carry over into our retirement. Bottcher is caving into pressures and not protecting his constituents as he has promised to do."

Bottcher's office has not yet responded to a request for a comment.

Susan Herzog is a retired teacher and long-time Villager.

Supers *continued from page 1*

repair personnel who also work from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Under the new rule, we are forced to go back to work after 8 p.m. to take out the trash.

Joshua arrived with a two-inch manila folder in hand. He seemed to be on a mission to tell us the things he felt we didn't know. I interrupted him immediately by saying, "Josh, I'm fully aware of DSNY's future plans. I've been working on this for two years. You need to hear what WE have to say for a change." Joshua asked if he could finish and we both agreed.

"Is this, OK?" Joshua asked, showing us a picture of black trash bags piled on the sidewalk. Ah, yes, trash shaming. A familiar tactic that's now used to shame the public into complying. We see this often on DSNY's social media accounts – they think this is so funny. City agencies are forcing supers and porters to miss dinner with their families and friends so we can take out the trash. It's a real knee-slapper.

Of course, we don't want to see piles of trash either, but where are we supposed to store all these extra trash containers in our small NYC basements? We do not have alleyways, or garages, and we only have three regular garbage pickups per week and one pickup for recycling, glass, metal, paper, and now composting.

"When my friends come into town, they are appalled that we are leaving bags of garbage on our sidewalks for pick up the next day," Josh said. "Paris has been using containerization for years now." This is a favorite line used by DSNY, claiming that places like Paris and Amsterdam use containers for their trash days too.

What they have been telling us isn't exactly true. Paris indeed has been using containers for over 20 years, but DSNY fails to mention that Paris has daily regular trash collections and three collections a week for recycling. Similarly, Venezuela has more pickup days than NYC!

After explaining this to Josh, I highlighted Amsterdam's trash collections program. Each resident is assigned a trash center location to dispose of their trash in a marked, anchored down trash bin, and their trash is stored underground. The sanitation department picks up the entire bin from underground, using a



8:00 PM TRASH TAKE-OUT TIME continues to ruin Building Superintendents' lives who are now working 12 to 14 hours a day. All photos by Dominick Romeo.

crane attached to their trucks.

Why can't NYC have a program like that? With lightning speed, Josh pulls out a map with a vague depiction of our city's underground infrastructure. He claims that we don't have space for underground containerization and that most agencies never mapped out their pipeline locations.

Amsterdam, which is 349 years older than our city, had the same problems when burying their trash in underground containers. That's why the containers are scattered in different locations.

I said, "Why don't you give us more trash pickup days like Paris and Venezuela? This is killing us, Josh!" He replied, "This doesn't sound like you have a problem with DSNY, this sounds like a problem with your management companies, not hiring enough staff."

I tried to explain, "No, Josh, our problem is DSNY, telling supers that we need to go back to work past 8 p.m., and not realizing that most buildings in NYC can't afford an extra person at roughly \$36,000 a year, because most buildings are living on the margins of financial ruin because of countless regulations, taxes and penalties, so this mandate falls onto us."

But he didn't seem to get it and didn't seem to care. His mind was set on the success of his vision of NYC's trash future, even if this went against logic or the culture of our city and its history. Like DSNY's new three-piece, two-hinge designer trash cans that are starting to appear at each corner.

In April 2024 Council Member Erik Bottcher and former Sanitation Commissioner Jessica Tisch revealed their new trash bins. They were billed as rat-proof because the holes within the main container are smaller. Why they didn't just make the wire mesh holes for the original green metal cans smaller, is beyond me. Anyway, Josh confirmed that new design for those corner trash cans had been left on a shelf for five years.

Well, it should have remained on a shelf. I doubt these containers will be around in five years. They are all falling apart, I told Josh. He rapidly pulled out his smartphone and replied, "I just added you to my calendar and I will make sure to call you in five years to see if you were right."

I will be looking forward to Joshua Goodman's call on January 9, 2030.

Where do I find THE Village View?

PLEASE VISIT THESE LOCAL BUSINESSES FOR COPIES OF THE PAPER

Caffe Reggio
Center for Architecture
Cinema Village
Ferdie Homey Italian Cuisine
Golden Wok
Greenwich Village Animal Hospital
Hector's Cafe
Hudson Park Library
Integral Yoga Institute
Jefferson Market Library

Kettle of Fish
La Lanterna di Vittorio Restaurant
Lenox Health Greenwich Village
Lilac-The Chocolate Store
Mercer Street Books
Player's Theater
Temperance Bar
The Red Lion
Village Revival Records
Washington Square Hotel

ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE villageview.nyc



SCAN ME

Village Blueprints

BUILDING THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S FUTURE
BY BRIAN J PAPE, AIA, LEED-AP

Garage Conversions Abound in Greenwich Village

332 West 11th Street Garage Conversion Update

In a bizarre twist of fate for a former parking garage in the West Village, the marketing for the vacant structure at 332 West 11th Street promotes one thing — its potential use as a mega-mansion. For months now, the websites of *Streeteasy*, *Zillow* or *Compass* don't reveal a sales price (rather unusual), nor floorplans (not unusual for a speculative development), yet the emphasis on single-family rather than multi-family use is a surprise.

But when you download a flyer from Avison Young you see the asking price of \$45 million, along with a few staged renderings and these “features” of a conversion.

“One of the last mega-mansion opportunities in the Greenwich Village Historic District, with 30,000 SF floor area in the heart of the West Village, ripe for Townhouse or Condominium conversion. Featuring 50 feet of frontage on West 11th Street, 13 foot high ceilings on the Ground Floor, six stories, including an English Basement with two curb cuts, one going to the cellar and one to the ground level, with four Tesla chargers and two universal plug-in chargers. A potential investor or developer could remove seven feet from the rear of the building to create a backyard and generate even more interior light, it has unparalleled and protected views and a backyard of southern exposure.”

The R-6 zoning can remain for the new use.

For history, we find that this structure was built in 1905 by architect Thomas H. Styles for the Foster Scott Ice Company, replacing two townhouses. It has been used as a car garage since then. On December 21, 2020, Thomas Walker purchased the property from Jack Jakub, for a price of \$26 million. The garage has a lot size of 50 ft x 102.42 ft. and total floor square footage of 24,837 which puts the sale price at \$1,046 per square foot of floor. The transaction also involved a loan amount of \$16.7 million provided by First Republic Bank. As is customary, the basement was probably not included in the above square footage. The annual real estate property tax is calculated at over \$250,000.

The proposed project scope presented by architect Weddle Gilmore of Black Rock Studio and approved by the LPC in 2022 was an adaptive re-use converting the existing commercial garage to partial commercial garage and residential apartments, as follows:

- Conversion of existing five story garage to residential including interior alterations
- Front (North) facade restoration/preservation including cornices and windows



CONVERTING THE 332 WEST 11TH STREET BUILDING to residential involves adding a penthouse, since this design has been approved by LPC in 2022. Credit: LPC



THE 332 WEST 11TH STREET GARAGE is on the market for \$45 million, yet in an unfinished state, marketed as a mega-mansion of 30,000 SF. Construction has begun. Credit: LPC.

- Front (North) facade 5th floor window configuration alterations
- Storefront/ground floor (North) modification
- Removal of rear portion of building to create rear yard
- New rear (South) facade
- Re-fenestrate side facades (East & West)
- 6th floor and penthouse addition
- Updated mechanicals, elevators, egress stairs and bulkheads (there is a vehicle elevator behind the new garage door at the right side)

It would be hard to justify the jump from \$26 million to \$45 million with no construction work included. The recent site activity may explain some of the change. Posted on the barriers around the sidewalk are notices of construction permits by Titanium Construction Services and the rendering of the front facade, much as in the LPC presentation. The notices detail that work on floors 1-5 and the cellar and roof includes “modification to existing structural... reinforcement of existing foundation, column footings and flooring joists throughout.” The owner is 332 W11 Holding, LLC, with completion

anticipated for winter of 2026. A workman on the site confirmed that they were clearing out the old garage.

So now that real construction work has started here, there is only a short window of opportunity for a new buyer to change from the mega-mansion promoted to the multi-family option, since the plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and egress layouts will all have to be finalized before any of that gets installed (builders are now avoiding putting vulnerable electrical equipment in basements).

Perhaps more will be revealed soon?

The Minetta Garage Conversion



THE MINETTA GARAGE SIGNAGE will be restored on the Third Street side along with the brickwork and window openings. The rooftop additions will be very visible from the street, despite the setbacks. *Image Credits: Morris Adjmi Architects.*

The Minetta Garage is the popular name for a structure located at 122-128 West 3rd Street (directly across from the Blue Note) and at 12-14 Minetta Lane. A conversion plan was presented by Patrick Milner, representing his family-owned parking group, with their consultants, Morris Adjmi Architects and Higgins Quasebarth & Partners, LLC.

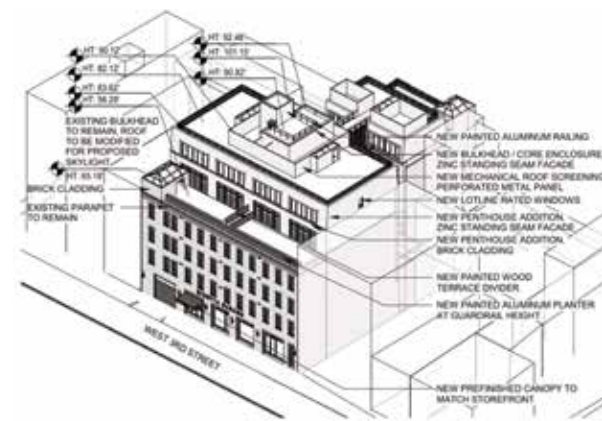
For years now, even before the pandemic of 2020, plans were presented to the community groups for a mixed use,

commercial and cultural and community space conversion. This resolution has come to be expected though, for high-end residential.

The owner team has worked hard to preserve the look and feel of the old streetscape. The Third Street part of the garage was originally built ca. 1895 as a boarding stable for horses and carriages. The building on Minetta was built ca. 1904, connecting to the Third Street building floors. At that time, from 1878-1938, the route of the Sixth Avenue Elevated train turned east on Third Street over to and running south on West Broadway (now LaGuardia Place). When the Sixth Avenue train was routed underground, beneath the extended Sixth Avenue, the El was dismantled in 1939.

The original Third Street window openings will be preserved with new historic-styled windows within restored brick walls. The pattern of large garage door openings will be modified to keep the look even when new storefronts or lobbies are added. Over on Minetta, the openings have been changed over the years and the brick is painted, but steel lintels over two garage door openings have been retained and will be restored. Along with new window openings to match the size of original windows, it was suggested that the natural brick façade be restored as well. A 20' wide courtyard will be opened between the two sides in order to meet light and air requirements for the residences (not visible from the street).

The biggest challenge comes when the rooftop additions become very obviously visible from the street, and that new construction is styled in harsh contrast to the historic fab-



THIS ISOMETRIC DRAWING OF THE PROPOSED CONVERSION TO RESIDENCES, viewed from Sixth Avenue looking southeast, highlights the height and visibility from around the neighborhood. Historic guidelines require that additions or changes be only "minimally visible" or historically compatible.

ric around it. Since the additions are two stories high plus bulkheads on Third Street, and one story plus bulkheads on Minetta, even with setbacks, there is no hiding them. The architects' plans show large groups of windows totally out of scale with the historic patterns and sizes, and it calls attention to the discrepancy of material handling for the rooftops. The advisory group suggested that studying the window patterns and considering the traditional materials might allow the rooftop additions to be as large as they are proposed, because as presented, it did not meet low visibility criteria.

Stay tuned for further developments.

738 Greenwich Street Garage Conversion



LOOKING AT THIS RENDERING of 738 Greenwich Street, the seven-unit residential building shows restored facade brick, modified ground-floor door and window openings, and a one-story rooftop addition with terraces. Most of the white painted "ghost signs" remain. *Image credits LSS Architects.*

In October 2022, Leroy Street Studios architects (LSS) presented a startling plan to convert a four-story parking garage into a multi-unit residential building, with the intention to restore the front façade brick, modify ground-floor door and window openings and remove a portion of the rear of the building to provide light and air. Plans also call to add a one-story rooftop addition with terraces, plus necessary mechanicals and bulkheads. There will be excavation to expand the existing cellar. It was a startling plan because there is seldom this level of restraint for such a high-end development.

The website New York *YIMBY* describes the proposed building will have seven residences, with the average unit scope of 5,448 square feet. The 79-foot-tall development



BY CARVING OUT A 30' REAR YARD space from the parking garage, balconies can be added to some of the units at 738 Greenwich Street, while keeping the street side close to original appearance for the 7-unit residential building.

will yield 39,520 square feet, with 38,137 square feet designated for residential space and 1,383 square feet for commercial space and three enclosed parking spaces. By carving out a 30' rear yard space, balconies can be added to some of the units, while keeping the street side close to original appearance.

The Wall Street Journal reported that the developer had already gotten three units under contract in early 2024, perhaps two years before anyone can move in. The units sold for \$55 million, \$32 million and \$22 million.

Donnchadh Malone of Alf Naman Development is listed as the owner behind the applications, having purchased the site from the West Village Houses co-op in 2022, for \$64 million. Permits for a partial demolition were obtained this Spring 2024, and *Village View* observed the barricading for asbestos removal in the Fall.

Ismael Leyva Architects (ILA) is listed as the architect of



A 'BIRD'S-EYE' VIEW RENDERING of 738 Greenwich Street, looking west along Perry Street, shows the designed one-story rooftop addition stepped back from the street wall with terraces. Necessary mechanicals and bulkheads cover the roof.

record. (Since neither LSS nor ILA have any renderings on their websites at this time, images are from the public hearing). Higgins Quasebarth & Partners LLC serves as the historic consultants.

Per the 1969 Greenwich Village Historic District Report, this garage was designed by George G. Miller and built in 1930 for the Greenwich Street Corporation. This four-story concrete-based structure garage also served the neighborhood as required parking for the West Village House complex until recent years. The treatment of the base, differentiating it from the rest of the building by painting it white, and the rather carefully organized block and serif lettered signs, express the desire on the part of the owner to achieve a dignified appearance for this utilitarian structure.

A 2026 completion date has been estimated, if they don't run into the delays that so many other nearby high-end developments have experienced.

JAMES BALDWIN CENTENNIAL

Village Preservation and The New School Installation Honors James Baldwin

Village Preservation, in partnership with The New School, sponsored a 15' high installation celebrating the centennial of the birth of renowned writer and activist James Baldwin. This commemorative display, being showcased in the window at 70 Fifth Avenue (at 13th Street), reflects on Baldwin's profound legacy and impact on American literature and civil rights. The display is running through February.

The installation, commissioned by Village Preservation and designed by Penny Hardy of PSNewYork, captures Baldwin's enduring spirit and his commitment to

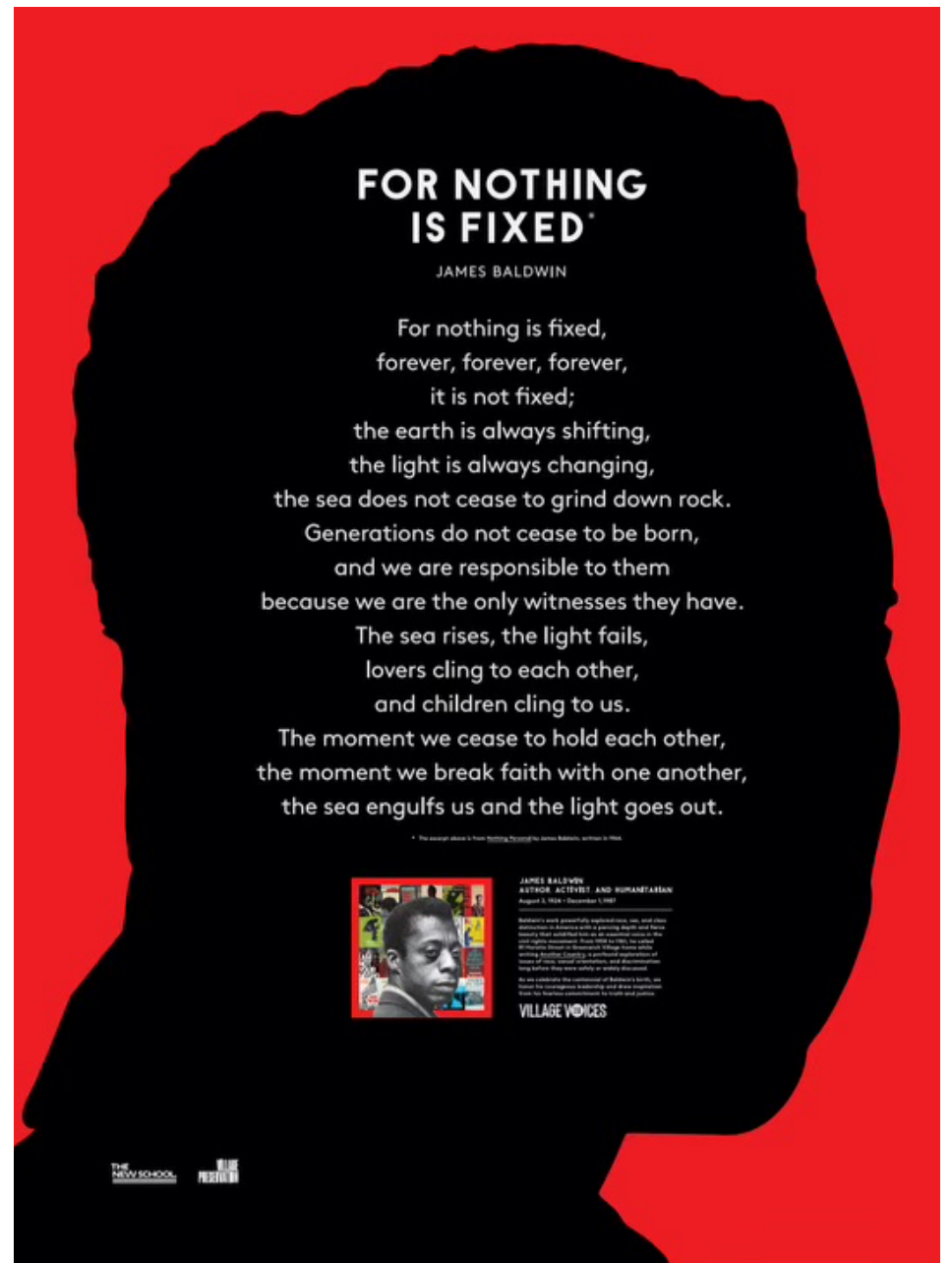
social justice, equality, and the exploration of identity.

"James Baldwin was a voice for the voiceless and a champion for truth," said Andrew Berman, executive director of Village Preservation. "This installation not only honors his extraordinary contributions but also serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggles for justice and equality. Baldwin was a Greenwich Village resident for several years while he wrote some of his most searing work. We were thrilled to partner with The New School to bring this interactive commemoration to life."

WRITE FOR THE VILLAGE VIEW

This is **YOUR** neighborhood and **YOUR** news. Please contribute!

Direct all submissions to articlesforvillageview@gmail.com



Did Trump Win, or Did the Democrats Lose?

BY ALEC PRUCHNICKI

If you snooze you lose.

The "sweeping" Trump victory isn't as sweeping as the mainstream media makes out. A two million vote margin out of 152 million votes is pretty thin, but distributed throughout the country, and with the help of the Electoral College, a marginal victory can be amplified into what looks like a landslide. Let's look at these presidential elections in context.

2016 Clinton-66 million, Trump-63 million
2020 Biden-81 million, Trump-74 million
2024 Harris-75 million, Trump-77 million

The Electoral College handing the election to Trump in 2016 despite the popular vote is well known. But what happened in 2020? It was a year of disasters. Covid was at its peak, vaccines weren't available, and nobody knew when it would be controlled. Both the stock market and GDP had taken a dip and nobody knew if it would get worse. The events brought out the vote in both parties and compared to 2016, 11 million more voters picked Trump, but 15 million more Democratic voters came out and elected Biden.

By 2024, after four years of campaigning, starting right after the 2020 election, Trump brought out only three million more voters but six million Democratic voters didn't show up. Why not?

Disasters might bring out votes but prosperity sometimes produces complacency. After eight years of prosperity during the Clinton administration, not enough Democrats came out for Al Gore. After eight years of prosperity during the Obama administration, not enough Democrats came out for Hillary. After a relatively prosperous four years under Biden, not enough came out for Harris. That's the simplest explanation, but there might be more.

Polls before and after the election gave the fear of inflation as the main reason. But the economy was otherwise thriving with record low unemployment and stock markets, and pay increases. Did the price of eggs really trump (pun intended) these other considerations even among the low information voters? What the polls didn't show was the incidence of race and misogyny in the voters. Let's say 95% of Trump voters

had no racial feelings against Harris and 95% didn't worry about her being a woman, that gives 10% of voters who did have one of these prejudices and 10% of 77 million is almost 8 million voters, easily enough to put Trump over the top. And, that's assuming only 5% of voters in each category of prejudice which I just don't believe. After years of catering to male and white supremacy I think the Republican party had more than enough prejudice to win the election. Also, you need not be a wild white supremacist or a macho misogynist to feel enough unease about a Black woman to tip the balance in your voting. I don't know how my belief will be verified or disproven but I hope someone finds a way of doing it.

There was one other factor in this election. Trump started campaigning right after the 2020 election. Nonsense lies about how the 2020 election was rigged were enough to keep the MAGA faithful loyal but what about the swing voters? For all four years Trump kept claiming that immigration, immigrant crime, and a terrible economy (the price of eggs!) were destroying the country. These

were as much lies as the big lie of a rigged election but they were hammered away consistently for four years, with most of the Republican party and Fox News joining in. Even the most uninvolved voter couldn't help but hear this constant dishonest drum beat. Against this, Harris had to disabuse the lies, tell the truth, and get the voters to believe her instead of Trump. Four years of consistent lies carry a lot of weight compared to three months of the truth.

Does this mean we can never have a woman, especially a Black one, run for president? Keep in mind that Obama, the first Black president, was elected because Republican policies had led to the great recession of 2008 and to Obama's 10 million vote margin when the voters rightly blamed Republican economic failures. The last five typical recessions have occurred under Republican presidents and so there is a good chance that this will recur when you have a monumentally dumb one in the White House for the next four years. The pendulum will swing, but it's a shame we will all have to suffer before it does.

Update on City's Proposal to Demolish Tony Dapolito Recreation Center

BY VILLAGE PRESERVATION

After much delay, a promised update from the city regarding their proposal to demolish the landmarked Tony Dapolito Recreation Center at Carmine and Clarkson Streets is now scheduled for Wednesday, February 5 at 6:30 pm at Community Board 2. Though promised before the end of 2024, the city is now returning to the public and Community Board 2 to provide further information about their plans for the center and their rationale for seeking demolition rather than restoration of the beloved, historic building. This follows overwhelming turnout opposing demolition plans at the last Community Board 2 hearing (which the city refused to attend), and the board passing a resolution

calling for restoration rather than razing of the structure.

The city cannot demolish this city, state, and nationally landmarked building without going through several public approval processes. They have allowed the building to deteriorate and failed to undertake necessary repairs over the last five years and now, using specious arguments, claim it would be too expensive or too impractical to repair the building. If allowed to demolish the center, the city won't say what they would seek to replace it with, but we suspect they would seek to construct an oversized tower as they are proposing for "Gansevoort Square." Village Preservation has opposed this plan

from the beginning, and engaged other preservation organizations from across the city and state to also oppose it.

We don't know what the city will say at the February 5 meeting, but we strongly urge you to sign up to attend and speak strongly in opposition to demolition and in support of the Tony Dapolito Center being repaired and reopened.

PLEASE ATTEND + TESTIFY!

Wednesday, February 5
Visit villagepreservation.org
to sign up



THE TONY DAPOLITO RECREATION CENTER IN 1940 (top), and closed today after years of neglect and lack of repairs. *Photos courtesy of Village Preservation.*

Nostalgia

BY TOM LAMIA

In mid-January a devastating and unprecedented event occurred in the Los Angeles suburb where I was born and raised. The television press was on the scene in Pacific Palisades from Tuesday, January 7. Panic-stricken residents scrambled to find exit routes from their homes in the rugged hills, canyons and bluffs that give the area its name. Sunset Boulevard is its central artery, unlike its role in Hollywood, Beverly Hills and Westwood to the east, where it divides elite neighborhoods from commuters and celebrity seekers. In the Palisades, it is the only efficient way in or out.

In the first hours of the fire emergency, Sunset became an immovable trap for escapees. There was panic and desperation as the roadway became clogged with traffic, making it impossible to move in any direction. To stay in place meant facing life-threatening dangers. Blocked cars carrying families and possessions were being abandoned for a chance of survival on foot. A massive bulldozer appeared on the scene and began pushing cars from the roadway. The only way out had become a cul-de-sac.

The news people seemed intimately familiar with the immense scale of what was happening. They were finding it hard to believe, or accept, that a prosperous part of Los Angeles was on the edge of disaster. Generational landmarks were gone or threatened. Evacuations were underway. There was a surreal character to the narration, alternately "unprecedented" and "unimaginable." The destruction was underway before our eyes.

I was born and spent my first 18 years in a house on the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Fiske Street in the "alphabet" street district of Pacific Palisades, an old, even historical, part of Los Angeles, though a small and modest part of the west side.

In my day, the 1940s and '50s, vacant lots



INFERNO ERUPTS. *Photo by Tom Lamia.*

covered half of our neighborhood. Across Sunset, dry-farmed lima bean fields made use of vacant land. There was a war on. Japanese submarines were thought to be lying offshore. Residents were faculty, administrators or groundskeepers at UCLA, then a new UC campus, or crew at Douglas Aircraft in Santa Monica. There was no park or movie theater. Vacant lots were our playgrounds and entertainment. That is the mental image that stayed with me after I left for college in 1957. It is what I pictured as lying before the fire as it swept through the town a few weeks ago.

While the intervening years were shaping my life, they were also transforming my old neighborhood. It was now a cosmopolitan residential haven, chock-a-block with swimming pools, tennis courts, restaurants and a commercial center.

This is not a surprise. Time marches on. Still, I do regret the transformation. Others who were there with me in the 1950s also miss what cannot be replaced. I hear from them. The loss of a childhood home, even

after a gap of 50 years, is deeply felt.

Los Angeles in 1940 was a population magnet. Adventurous young movers and shakers with access to capital brought cutting edge industries to LA: motion pictures, oil, aviation, farming, defense. The arcadian climate of Southern California and empty spaces beckoned. World War II was an accelerant.

In the 1920s the town went bankrupt. It was resuscitated by the Santa Monica Land and Water Company. A wildfire in late 1930, designated as "Potrero 42" in the historical record, consumed more than 20,000 acres of the old town, moving through the alphabet streets up to Peace Hill, where a large cross stood; a symbol of the town's religious origins. That cross survived Potrero 42. It can still be seen today in the surviving landscape. As a child, I remember hearing the stories of that 1930 fire, told and retold by neighbors. The alphabet street grid was the anchor for revival once. It could be again. Rebuilding will require capital, political leadership and good fortune on a grand scale.

These qualities, in even greater measure, are needed today to pull us back from the edge of government collapse. The disaster that has infected our politics and our constitutional system is undeniable. Both parties want immediate and radical change, but can agree on little. There is fear, confusion, hopelessness and extreme demands heard from every corner. Our political relations are as woebegone as Southern California's immediate future at this moment.

Nostalgia for my youth in the Pacific Palisades is rivalled by nostalgia for the politics of that time. Truman (1945-1953) and Eisenhower (1953-1961) were devoted to good government and honest electioneering. Truman, a Democrat, replaced Henry Wallace, a problematic left-leaning vice president in 1945, and became president a few weeks later when FDR died. He was elected to a full term in 1948. Though relatively unknown before becoming president, he is now regarded as one of the most successful to hold the office. He was modest, honest and true to the country and the Constitution. Not a radical; not an egotist; not a liar.

Dwight Eisenhower, a Republican was a war hero. The presidency was his reward for having saved the nation as Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in WWII. Eisenhower was respected, underestimated and virtuous. He shocked many in 1960 by denying any U.S. connection to Gary Francis Powers and the U-2 spy plane. The president lied!! Not a radical, not an egotist or casual liar. It was a different world then, run by different breeds of men. As different as the Pacific Palisades is now from what I remember it being when I was growing up there.

We can never go home again, but with luck and hard work we can bring back respectability to our country and its government. I would like to return to that day when a president was expected to be truthful when talking to the people. Jimmy Carter, elected in 1976, said he would never lie to the people. He never did. That is what we should expect from all who hold the office.

The Village View

Published by Village View Media, Inc.,
a tax exempt 501c3 corporation.
Contributions can be mailed to us at
225 Broadway Suite 1902
New York, NY 10007.
Please consider contributing to
support this paper at villageview.nyc

FOUNDERS

Maggie Berkvist, Barry Benepe,
Brian Pape, Joy Pape, Roger Paradiso,
Kim Plosia, Arthur Z. Schwartz,
Darielle Smolian, Liza Whiting

SENIOR EDITOR

Arthur Schwartz

MANAGING EDITOR

Kim Plosia

TRAFFIC MANAGER

Liza Whiting

PHOTO EDITOR

Darielle Smolian

CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER

Bob Cooley

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Brian Pape, Joy Pape,
Anthony Paradiso, Roger Paradiso,
Natasha Lancaster

CONTRIBUTORS

Nicole Cerniello
Duane Scott Cerny
Bob Cooley
Kelly Craig
Phyllis Eckhaus
Lotus Belle-Glover
Lionelle Hamanaka
Michael Jacobsohn
Keith Michael
Natasha Lancaster
Lynn Pacifico
Brian J. Pape
Joy Pape
Anthony Paradiso
Roger Paradiso
Alec Pruchnicki
Kim Plosia
Kaju Roberto
Ede Rothaus
Arthur Z. Schwartz
Susan Silver

**Village View is a Founding Member of
the Empire State Local News Coalition.**

We attempt to publish all letters
received, including those with which we
disagree. The opinions submitted to
The Village View do not necessarily reflect
the views of the publisher or editors. The
Village View welcomes all correspondence,
comments, and corrections.

This newspaper is a grass roots effort,
proudly created by residents of Greenwich
Village. A true community effort!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Elizabeth Street Garden

Dear Brian J Pape,

I have enjoyed and learned from your essays in the *Village View* for years. In the September 2024 issue you talked about the Elisabeth St. Garden (officially deeded 'recreational space') and the proposed destruction of it. My first thought was a free association — the destruction of giant religious effigies on a cliffside in the Near East. Boom boom boom — gone forever and civilization's loss. Ordinary structures can go up and down without a problem to our humanity but not places with meaning created by sweat and heart as the Garden was and still is.

I think of Robert Moses' plan to cut a super highway down 5th Ave through the heart of the Village to smooth out traffic, which would have destroyed Greenwich Village as we know it. Witness the destruction and loss caused by his smashing of a Bronx expressway through rich and vital ethnic neighborhoods.

So I am grateful to you for reporting on this impasse. The Elizabeth St Garden has a soul and is one of the many jewels that make New York the unique and wonderful city we love and the whole world wants to be part of. The amount of housing gained by destroying this tiny treasure is CRUMBS to the city's need.

So lets save it and be grateful for its existence. It reminds me of another garden in my past — St. John's Church, whose pastor used to vacation in Europe and bring back statuary which he scattered amongst the ivy of what was for a while a community-enjoyed garden.

On another note I am so glad the *Village View* continues. We have so many Village periodicals sprouting up currently, whose real source seems to be elsewhere and whose writers can't be reached.

—Penny Jones, Westbeth (another treasure)

Open Letter and Challenge

Brian Pape doesn't know what a crime is, or who is guilty of it (*Village View*, December 2024 "What is a crime?") but he didn't hesitate in using that word to imply that altering an unofficial community garden like the Elizabeth Street Garden (ESG) should be considered a crime. (*Village View*, Sept 2024, "Is It a Crime to Destroy Recreation Space"). Let me clarify this. If people who want to alter the ESG for housing might be, metaphorically, committing a crime in his opinion, than those who want to preserve it at the expense of needed housing are also, metaphorically, committing a crime. People are more important than plants. ESG NIMBY opponents didn't cause homelessness, but their opposition to new housing is helping to perpetuate it.

As for the rhetoric he uses, altering a garden is not "destroying" it, and 120 apartments are not a "few" for those people who will be living there, and a garden is not an "established necessity" if there are 400,000 square feet of open space within walking distance. And permanent housing is needed, not just "more shelters" or new SRO lodgings which have been discussed for years but are still just a proposal.

Here is my challenge. If the Haven Green Housing ever gets built on Elizabeth Street it will have about 16,000 square feet of rooftop space. To an experienced architect like Mr. Pape, this can be a blank canvas on which to build a rooftop patio, or green roof, or solar roof, or whatever. Please do it. Show us what can be done. It's not impossible. We can have both open space, even if some of it is on a rooftop, and housing on this site. If the inner architect is still alive in Mr. Pape let it be creative and not just reporting on what other people are doing.

For years, in both *Westview News* and *Village View*, Mr. Pape has written articles about the history of New York and the changes that have occurred. He has written analysis of new projects going up that is more detailed and sophisticated than anything you see in the *New York Times*. I have enjoyed these articles immensely. They show that change is often an

improvement. That's why it is so disappointing to me to see that at the ESG he, and many others, believe change is somehow catastrophic. Design a rooftop for Haven Green already.

—Alec Pruchnicki

Dressing City Dogs for the Cold

I want to add a note of caution on whether or not dogs should wear coats in cold weather. Recently, when I was cold, despite wearing a jacket with two layers of wool underneath, I noticed a few dogs who were also shivering. People think that because dogs have fur, they will automatically be warm while outside. and while that is true for dogs who live outside, our pampered indoor pets are acclimated to warm NYC apartment living, spending most of their time indoors. If it is chilly out for humans, unless a dog has thick fur and is used to spending time outdoors in the cold, it is chilly outside for dogs too.

Dog activist and innovator, Robin Kovary, who the run for small dogs in Washington Square Park is named after and who innovated hospital dog therapy programs, once told me that when we put on a jacket, we should also put a jacket on our dog. While this is true for dogs with short thin coats like pit bulls, this is especially true for small, young, elderly and frail dogs.

Fur, fat and muscle help keep a dog's vital organs from freezing as hypothermia can be fatal. Dogs that are not well insulated, especially small, young, elderly or frail dogs, have very little flesh protecting their vital organs and have more difficulty retaining body heat. They get thoroughly cold quickly and need to be dressed warmly in cold weather.

For my dogs, I like a wool sweater with a belly covering warm waterproof windbreaker over it. I keep two sets as the coats get wet and having a second set of clothing allows the wet pieces to dry in between uses and I do not need to put wet clothing on my dog in the cold New York winter. In very cold and/or windy weather, if you cannot keep your vulnerable dogs inside (pad trained), dress them warmly and only keep them outdoors for very short times.

For a normal healthy dog, frostbite can occur in as little as 15 minutes. If while out your dog begins acting sluggish, confused, or begins hard shivering, get to warmth right away and call your vet. Also call your vet if there is blistering, red, or swollen skin, or if your dog doesn't warm up after being indoors.

When there is a lot of salt on the ground, I rinse my dogs' feet in slightly warm water after coming in and then dry their feet with a towel. My dogs don't like this at first but they get used to it or they must wear booties.

Depending on how cold it is and the windchill factor, particularly along the river and especially on the Gansevoort Peninsula, which extends out into the water and has an especially cold damp wind, exposure can be dangerous. If you are dressing warmly, think about your pooch and dress them warmly too.

—Lynn Pacifico

History of Street Names

I write to add a further complexity to the complicated history of street names recited in Brian Pape's article *West Fourth and Charles Street* in the December issue. From the development of the brownstones on the north side of Charles Street in the mid 1860's until 1936, the north side of Charles Street between West Fourth and Bleecker was named Van Nest Place, in honor of Abraham Van Nest, the last owner of the Peter Warren mansion which had occupied the block. The change to both sides of the street having the name Charles Street was made at the request of residents by reason of confusion with Van Nest Avenue in the Bronx. A shadow of this history remains in that the odd numbers added to the north side in 1936 do not synch with the even numbers on the south side, to the continuing confusion of Uber drivers, delivery people, and the like.

—George A. Davidson



SEND A GOURMET CHOCOLATE HEART

Chocolate Hearts, Truffles, Champagne Bottles, Gift Boxes, & More!



Heart Talk



63-pc Chocolate Heart



210-pc. Giant Chocolate Valentine Heart



41-pc Heart of Truffles



10-pc Chocolate Heart



Choose from 140+ Gifts Online!

MANHATTAN'S OLDEST CHOCOLATE HOUSE

WEST VILLAGE 75 Greenwich Ave.	GREENWICH VILLAGE 162 Bleecker Street	GRAND CENTRAL 43rd & Lexington	BROOKLYN 68 35th Street	CHELSEA MARKET 75 Ninth Avenue	HUDSON YARDS 10th Ave. & 31st St.
--	---	--	-----------------------------------	--	---

Order Online [Li-LacChocolates.com](https://www.Li-LacChocolates.com)



EDITORIAL

The LOCAL Act: A Win-Win for Main Streets and Local Newsrooms

Small businesses are the heartbeat of our communities. They are the corner stores, family-owned restaurants, and local service providers that fuel our neighborhoods, create jobs, and drive economic growth. Yet, these vital businesses often face significant challenges in reaching new customers and growing their operations in an increasingly competitive economy.

With the official introduction in the state legislature of the Lift Our Communities, Advertise Locally (LOCAL) Act, small businesses across New York might gain a powerful new tool next year to help sustain their success and maximize the reach of their marketing dollars. Sponsored by Senator Monica Martinez and Assemblymember Jen Lunsford, this state legislation would establish a tax credit for small businesses that advertise in local media outlets – from print and digital to television and radio. By making advertising more affordable, the LOCAL Act will empower small businesses to reach

their target audiences while also supporting the essential work of the very same local media outlets that provide our communities with local journalism.

The LOCAL Act focuses on supporting minority-, woman- and veteran-owned businesses, as well as any business with 10 or fewer employees. For many of these entrepreneurs, the ability to advertise affordably in trusted, community-driven platforms like local newspapers will be a game-changer. Local media outlets are well positioned to connect businesses with their neighbors – customers who are eager to shop locally and uplift their communities.

This legislation couldn't come at a better time. Small businesses are still navigating the economic aftershocks of the pandemic, inflationary pressures, and competition from large corporations with massive marketing budgets. The LOCAL Act helps level the playing field, giving your favorite mom-and-pop store a way to increase visibility without sac-

rificing their scarce financial resources.

When our small businesses thrive, so do our communities. Small businesses employ your neighbors, sponsor your kid's little league team, and provide a convenient destination for a night out with your spouse. Small businesses are not only economic drivers, but also cornerstones of community identity.

The benefits of the LOCAL Act extend beyond businesses. Local media outlets, too, are vital to communities, because they produce the journalism that keeps people informed about school board meetings and neighborhood crime to church bake sales and the most recent newlyweds – and everything in between. Unfortunately, declining advertising revenues have jeopardized the financial sustainability of many of these local media outlets, and small newsrooms have been shuttering across the state. By encouraging small businesses to advertise in local media outlets, the LOCAL Act helps

these outlets continue their essential work of championing their communities.

This dual benefit – supporting both small businesses and local journalism – has already garnered strong support from business groups, community leaders, and the 200+ local newspapers comprising the Empire State Local News Coalition – including *The Village View*. It's a win-win solution that strengthens the backbone of our local economy while fostering a unified, informed citizenry.

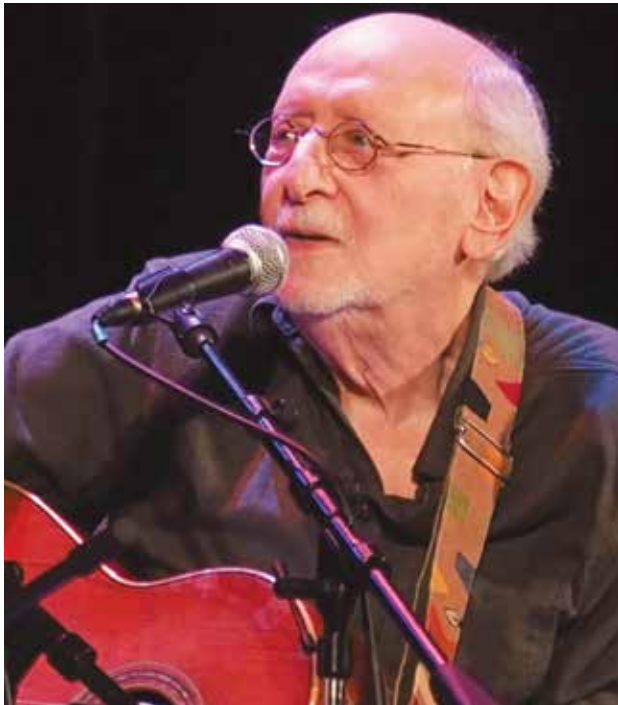
The LOCAL Act marks a bold step forward in tackling the interconnected challenges our communities are facing today. By working together to implement and embrace this program, we can build stronger businesses, sustain vital journalism, and ensure the prosperity of communities across New York for years to come.

We support this smart legislation. Tell your elected leaders in Albany to include the LOCAL Act in the final FY26 state budget.

In Peter Yarrow's Legacy, an Uneasy Blend of Jewish Values and Personal Transgressions

THE FOLKSINGING PETER OF PETER, PAUL AND MARY HAS DIED AT 86

BY BENJAMIN IVRY



PETER YARROW, above. Photo courtesy of Peter, Paul and Mary Facebook page.

The American Jewish singer songwriter Peter Yarrow, who died January 7 at age 86, exemplified the paradoxes of assimilating in the world of pop music. Although he was never bar mitzvahed, following a secular upbringing, he wrote and performed with his group Peter, Paul, and Mary the popular Hanukkah song “*Light One Candle*” as a pacifist response to the 1982 Lebanon War.

Closer to an earnest Broadway, or off-Broadway, number than a true folk melody in its allusion to the Books of the Maccabees, the tune represents the ambiguous rapport of PP&M, as Yarrow termed the trio, to traditional music. Formed, or according to some music mavens, “manufactured,” in 1961 by impresario Albert Grossman, a Jewish Simon Cowell of his day, PP&M’s creation involved auditioning and rejecting highly individual folkies like Dave Van Ronk and Carolyn Hester who went on to accomplished, if more niche, careers.

But as early as a May 1964 feature in *The Saturday Evening Post*, Yarrow was impatiently dismissing complaints from purists about their low-key, sanitized versions of more rough-hewn songs by Bob Dylan and others. Yarrow insisted to the *Post*: “We’re not authentic” and so it would be “hypocritical” to attempt to sing in any style other than their own. Deliberately adopting what Yarrow called a “casual” tone of understatement, PP&M sought to “affirm” rather than “protest.”

Influenced by the Weavers, an older, 50% Jewish quartet, the pop cool of Yarrow (PP&M’s sole Jew) was unlike the former ensemble that hewed closer to hardscrabble musical origins. The Weavers stirringly performed music by the Black singer Huddie Ledbetter (Lead Belly) rather than Dylan’s more distanced filterings of Piedmont blues as championed by PP&M.

PP&M were constant presences at Civil Rights protests, and famously at the March on Washington (1963) sang Dylan’s “*Blowin’ in the Wind*” in an attempt to normalize, homogenize, and even tranquilize with their cool pop sound the crowd that had gathered to ban racial inequities and segregation. They were followed on that occasion by the impassioned

tones of Martin Luther King Jr.’s *I Have a Dream* speech from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

The group’s longevity was ascribed by Yarrow in a 2002 issue of the *Atlanta Jewish Times* as due to their actions as “the Tikkun Olam trio.” A degree of chutzpah was also at work, as when PP&M intoned the Irish American activist Anne Feeney’s anthem for civil disobedience, “*Have You Been to Jail for Justice?*” when they knew that Yarrow had been incarcerated under different circumstances.

As he discussed in the *Baltimore Jewish Times* in April 2006 and elsewhere, Yarrow was arrested and convicted in 1970 for what were termed “immoral and improper liberties” with a 14-year-old girl who visited his hotel room after a concert. He served three months in jail and 11 years later he petitioned for, and was granted, a presidential pardon by Jimmy Carter.

In his petition to Carter, Yarrow wrote that he wished to demonstrate to his own children “that society has forgiven their father” and “their daddy did something very wrong [but] their daddy has also done much for society to help eliminate want and inequality where he saw it.”

In this context, further chutzpah might be seen in his decision to accept a 2018 Lifesaver Award from ELEM Youth in Distress in Israel, an organization that helps “troubled youth in Israel, including homeless and those suffering from substance abuse, delinquency, prostitution and suicidal tendencies.” Yarrow had campaigned strenuously against school bullying, motivated, as he frequently asserted, by Yiddishkeit.

His estranged father (the family name was originally Yaroshevitz) was a cofounder of Radio Free Europe, among other CIA links, whereas Yarrow’s stepfather, Harold Wisebrode, was executive director of Manhattan’s Central Synagogue.

The sense of tzedakah possibly gained from an older generation was linked to music, starting when as an 8-year-old he was taken by his mother to hear the Jewish violinist Isaac Stern perform. He tried lessons with the wife of Mischa Mischakoff, one of Arturo Toscanini’s concertmasters at the NBC Symphony, as explained in an April 2024 interview. Eventu-

ally Yarrow abandoned the fiddle for the less stressful guitar.

In the same chat, Yarrow claimed to have been motivated as a youth by Leonard Bernstein Young People’s Concerts, which only began in 1958, when Yarrow was already an adult. More certain early inspirations derived from the Austrian Jewish folk singer Theodore Bikel, whom Yarrow referred to as “like the Jewish Pete Seeger.” An early brush with antisemitism occurred during his first year at Cornell University, as he recalled to *Jewish Journal* in 2004; in the student dormitory, someone called Yarrow a “dirty Jew” and punched him “hard in the face.”

The *Saturday Evening Post* described his appearance in 1964 as “Talmudic.” But in 2009 he told another journalist that for him, Jewishness meant “to live according to justice, and that’s a burden.” It was necessary to “form our own set of morality and values, and live by them.” Clearly this was a lifelong preoccupation of Yarrow’s, as he reflected in 2017, stating that he wanted to be remembered “as a person with feet of clay.” Apologizing for his actions that went against his “ethical standards” (although apparently never directly expressing regret to any victims in any published interviews) Yarrow sought to leave an example “as a person who worked to make things better.”

A longtime resident of New York’s Upper West Side, after a visit to Israel during the First Intifada, Yarrow began to attend High Holiday services at the Manhattan Romemu and B’nai Jeshurun congregations, without formally joining any synagogue. There he may have reflected on the Book of Daniel 2:33, in which the eponymous hero interpreted King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, as confusing as any pop music career trajectory. In the Bible, a statue’s feet of clay and iron symbolize a future kingdom which would be strong as iron and weak as clay.

How Peter Yarrow’s tuneful contributions and personal transgressions, iron and clay, will be weighed and remembered is now up to posterity.

Reprinted by permission of *The Forward*



PETER, PAUL & MARY at the 1964 March on Washington. Courtesy of Voices of the Civil Rights Movement.

The Night of the Arch Conspirators

— JANUARY 23 1917 —

BY THE WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK CONSERVANCY

On a chilly night, January 23, 1917, a group of Village Bohemians turned the Washington Square Arch into an unlikely stage for creativity, camaraderie, and quiet rebellion. Led by poet Gertrude Drick, an eclectic group of artists and actors—including painters John Sloan and Marcel Duchamp, along with Provincetown Playhouse performers Russell Mann, Betty Turner, and Charles Ellis—embarked on a whimsical yet pointed escapade.

Finding their way into the Arch's interior, the "Arch Conspirators," as they styled themselves, ascended the spiral staircase to its summit. There, high above the streets of Greenwich Village, they transformed the space into their temporary domain. Blankets were spread, Chinese lanterns hung, and red balloons tied to the parapet swayed gently in the night breeze. The group sipped tea, shot off cap pistols, and engaged in spirited conversation until dawn broke over the city. Their gathering culminated with a bold proclamation: a "Free and Independent Greenwich Village."

Thanks to the etching of painter and conspirator John Sloan, this remarkable night has been preserved in vivid detail. Sloan's artwork, titled *Arch Conspirators*, captures not just the revelry but the essence of a Village that thrived on self-expression and defiance of convention. Over a century later, this audacious event remains a symbol of the creativity and spirit that defined Greenwich Village during its Bohemian heyday.

While climbing the Arch will draw less admiration today (and certainly a stern chat with park officials), the passage of time allows us to see the Conspirators' actions through a romanticized lens. Their evening

was not merely an exercise in merriment; it was a peaceful protest. Against the backdrop of a nation teetering on the edge of entering World War I, the Arch Conspirators used their elevated perch to voice opposition to the increasingly militant direction of U.S. foreign policy.

The Conspirators' impromptu fête was emblematic of the cultural renaissance that was sweeping through the Washington Square neighborhood in the early 20th century. By 1917, Greenwich Village had become a magnet for artists, writers, and intellectuals from across the country. The Square buzzed with the energy of a burgeoning Bohemian community that championed causes ranging from labor rights to pacifism to women's suffrage.

Washington Square Park, with its iconic Arch and open expanse, was the heartbeat of this neighborhood—a meeting place for wealthy families, immigrant communities, and the avant-garde. It was here that ideas flowed freely, alliances formed, and movements gained momentum. The Arch Conspirators' gathering wasn't just an isolated act of rebellion; it was a reflection of the park's role as a sanctuary for free expression and creative exploration.

Today, 108 years later, Washington Square Park continues to bring people together. While picnics (and protests) should remain firmly on the ground, the spirit of the Arch Conspirators lives on. The park remains a space where ideas are exchanged, creativity flourishes, and diverse communities intersect—just as it was on that fateful January night in 1917.



SNOWBALL FIGHT AT WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK several years ago. Photo by Bob Cooley.



CONSPIRATORS JOHN SLOAN (L) AND MARCEL DUCHAMP (R)

ADVERTISE IN THE VILLAGE VIEW!

Please contact us at
917-656-5682
to discuss your local
advertising opportunities.

Please direct all
correspondence to
articlesforvillageview@
gmail.com

The Congestion Pricing Cure No One Asked For

BY ROGER PARADISO



EXHIBIT A. This truck got stuck and blocked all but one lane of traffic. For 20 minutes there were no police or enforcement people in sight. Are they stuck in traffic too? Photos by Anthony Paradiso.

I have to thank the Governor and the New York State Legislature for their brazen courage in coming up with a vehicle tax for congestion. I call it the Mucinex-D Tax — for that stuffy, achy feeling of yet another tax.

May I present my thoughts on all this Madame Governor?

I want a sign placed at every artery saying “No Cars.” I also love the “No Parking” signs.

Instead, EZ Pass was installed, costing millions of dollars, to facilitate digital money collection. Why not have the cops and traffic folks writing tickets like the old days? Think

of the money you would make. And bring on the city marshals and the threat of towing.

I passed an Uber-like car which did not move and screwed up traffic. What is my point? Maybe there’s another way. Another dream of a Modern Manhattan.

No cars, I concede. Allow taxis and Ubers. Give residents a voucher for one car. For trucks larger than 20 feet, only allow deliveries between 8 pm to 6 am. Pay the drivers double time.

Ban bikes, electric bikes, and scooters. Why would you risk anyone’s life riding a

bike in midtown or downtown? Let’s have designated bike zones around parks and quiet areas from 14th Street to the Battery.

Have you ever thought of light rail? Even Newark’s got that going. How about small buses to take disabled and elderly people to their destinations in midtown? All this should be free. And safe. Come on Manhattan. Get into the 21st century.

Now, to the real reason for the congestion pricing aka tax. It is to fundraise for the MTA to spend our money like drunken sailors. I don’t mean to insult sailors. Surely, the MTA has demonstrated a remarkable legacy as a money eater. There is never a moment when the MTA is not building or repairing something in this huge network of late 19th century mass transit. It’s the ultimate money pit!

Let’s blow it up figuratively. Let’s do a cost benefit analysis and really rethink if we need all those subway lines. Can we shut some down?

Turn the stations into public shelters. During bad weather, people can walk underground to their destinations. Many cold weather cities do this. And we can make underground malls full of mom-and-pop stores that will be given favorable leases so they don’t fall victim to the high rent calamity. People will shop there if we make it safe. It will increase earnings for the city.

Can we take the good subway lines and clean them up? Can we add elevators to every stop? And how about a police officer on

every train and at every station?

How about making the subways and buses free—like many other cities around the world. Here we have people jump the gates. So, it is free for them, isn’t it?

We pay fares to help the MTA in their impossible task of running the largest subway system in the world. Let’s break it down to a more manageable system augmented by pollution free light rail, buses, shuttle buses and maybe a monorail direct to our two airports. Residents can move around the city on modern, clean, and fossil free transportation.

Yeah right, how you gonna pay for this? Real easy. Charge every skyscraper extra tax for the congestion problem caused by over building. Tax them, not the cars and trucks trying to do business in NYC. Lower the number of future skyscrapers! They block the sun, and create foot and road traffic stressing the infrastructure.

Get money from the federal Infrastructure Act. This includes competitive grants for metropolitan areas to advance innovative, integrated, and multimodal solutions to congestion. Check out this link:

• *Infrastructure package: Here’s what’s in it* | CNN Politics
[cnn.com/2021/07/28/politics/infrastructure-bill-explained/index.html](https://www.cnn.com/2021/07/28/politics/infrastructure-bill-explained/index.html)

Excuse me, I gotta move my car to the alternate side of the street. And take my Mucinex-D to get rid of the pollution.



EXHIBIT B. This is the way Madame Hochul would like cars to behave. But cars just wanna have fun too. Photo by Roger Paradiso.

Acts of Art: Uptown Exhibit Revisits Pioneering Downtown Gallery

BY PHYLLIS ECKHAUS



AFRODESIA AT THREE (1970's) by Dindga McCannon. Acrylic-concanvas, 35x24in. ©Dindga MxcCannon. Courtesy of the artist and Fridman Gallery, New York.

“Every movement in American art” started in Greenwich Village, Nigel Jackson asserted.

So in 1969, when the Chelsea-based Black painter launched Acts of Art — a pioneering commercial gallery created by and for Black artists in downtown Manhattan — he and his artist wife Patricia Grey, did so not in Harlem, but in the Village.

“It’s better for an educational setting,” he declared.

Acts of Art in Greenwich Village—at the Hunter College Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Gallery through March 22nd—pays homage to Jackson’s six year efforts with a small gem of an exhibit, visually and emotionally compelling.

It features powerful work from 14 Black artists who exhibited at the gallery, artists both known and lesser known.

These works pack a punch, cumulatively conveying the uphill battle talented artists of color continue to confront.

Take the two works by Dindga McCannon. *Pat is Pregnant* (1977) blew me away—in this vivid paint and mixed media, collage-like work, a relaxed and very pregnant Black woman lounges, eyes closed and cigarette in hand, on a throne-like deep green upholstered chair. It must be a hot night as her brief swath of a bright orange dress is hitched up around her hips and belly. She is surrounded by lush plants and symbols of nature. A glimpse of a huge silver moon in a cobalt sky, echoing her own spheric shape, is visible in the window above her.

The Pat of the picture is McCannon’s friend, photographer Pat Davis, and it’s no surprise to learn they were close collaborators in the first Black women’s professional arts collective, *Where We At*, which McCannon co-founded. The portrait’s intimacy, affection, and unflinching embrace of female experience thrilled me.

And I was moved by *Afrodesia at Three* (1979), McCannon’s portrait of her daughter as a dignified autonomous

tiny person—albeit one decked out in fabulous blue Afrocentric patterned headwrap and togs. McCannon actually owned an East Village store named after her daughter—the Afrodesia Mod Shop—from 1967 to 1970, where the artist sold clothes of her own design, made from African and African-inspired prints. Afrodesia, standing on a platform, is set against a bold almost abstract background featuring a huge silver moon in front of a navy sky and shadowy fuchsia landscape—she appears almost as a small deity.

Other works are equally evocative.

There is Ann Tanksley’s dreamy and surreal *Retribution* (1974), with a bearded Black Jonah swimming within the belly of a whale, the whites of his wide eyes as bright as the whalebone beneath him.

There are Frank Wimberley’s two untitled collages from 1971 and 1977, each composed of layers of roughly torn colored papers and paint. They have the depth, richness, and improvisational quality of jazz—which he performed while a student at Howard University in 1945, and about which he remained passionate. Miles Davis was a fan of Wimberley’s work, collecting his collage, sculpture and pottery.

There is Lois Mailou Jones’ multimedia painting, *Veve Vodou III* (1963), which can be appreciated for its vibrant color and composition—and as well as for Jones’ deep scholarly dive into Vodou. Jones curated a 1974 exhibit at Acts of Art, *Caribbean and Afro-American Women Artists*. Trained in the 1930s, Jones hoped the Haitian culture and art that inspired her and informed her artistic identity would do the same for a younger generation of Black artists.

That passion for excavating and sharing Black history also illuminates Reginald Gammon’s *Bon Bon Buddies* (1973), a vividly fluorescent painting, updating a 1900-era publicity photo of Bert Williams and George Walker, the first Black recording artists in the United States, and the first to star in a full-length Broadway musical written and performed by Black creators. The luminous top-hatted pair are proud, posh and at ease in the world.

There are three exceptional works by Benny Andrews. *In-mate* (1964) is a wrenching stark collage of a prisoner whose face is obscured by the large sharp edged cup his hands are holding up against it, in desperate unsated hunger. *Corner Man* (1970) and *Mother of the World* (1970) are pen and ink drawings that conjure—with exquisite economy and empathetic respect—a street corner speaker and a worn, deeply-dignified matron.

Other artists in this meticulously curated show are James Denmark, Harlan Jackson, Nigel Jackson, Ben Jones, Enid Richardson Moore, Ademola Olugebefola, Lloyd Toone, and



VEVE VODOU III (1963) by Lois Mailou Jones. Oil on canvas, 37×453/4 in. ©Lois Mailou Jones Pierre-Noël Trust. Courtesy of Lois Mailou Jones Pierre-Noël Trust, Howard University Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Hale Woodruff. Each work is thoughtfully explicated and placed in context.

Indeed, the exhibit is a triumph of archival research, as Acts of Art left no records and was only occasionally covered by mainstream, arts, and Black media.

A timeline of the gallery’s lifespan takes up much of the exhibit. Featuring exhibit posters and quotes from artists and critics, it documents both Acts of Arts’ influence and constant struggle for recognition and respect.

Begun in a small storefront at 31 Bedford Street, in 1971 the gallery moved to a larger space at 15 Charles Street. 1971 was a banner year for Acts of Art. That was the year the Black Emergency Cultural Coalition, a group of Black artist/activists protesting their exclusion from top museums, targeted the Whitney. The Whitney held its controversial *Contemporary Black Artists in America* exhibition—and Acts of Art simultaneously hosted the *Rebuttal to Whitney Museum* exhibition, showcasing artists the Whitney had ignored. Comparing the two shows, Nigel Jackson declared, “I’m showing the real stuff and they’re showing a watered down standard.”

In 1971, the gallery also hosted the first exhibition of *Where We At*, the pioneering Black women artists collective.

The venue’s commitment to Black artists extended beyond the visual, hosting evenings with musicians such as Hugh Masakela and poets such as Sonia Sanchez and Bruce Wright, the latter best known as a judge who was an outspoken critic of racism in the criminal justice system.

The exhibit is accompanied by a full-color catalogue, which includes essays on each of Acts of Art’s major exhibitions.



ARGENIS APOLINARIO HUNTER Acts of Art Installs. Photo courtesy of Hunter College Art Galleries.

Sweet Meets

BY KEITH MICHAEL

Don a second sweater. Double wrap my scarf. Zip the down vest. Snap my coat. Hat. Gloves. Let's go!

I'm still a little surprised when people ask me, "Really? You go out birding in the winter? Aren't you cold?" I guess it might be counterintuitive, but winter is a GREAT time to look for birds. When it's cold you can put on more layers to get toasty, whereas when it's hot in summer, you're just hot. Many bird species only show up in the winter. To see them you have to go out.

Let's take a brisk walk around the neighborhood with eyes and ears open. Right out of my front door on Perry Street, I get three birdy voice messages. High overhead, out of view, I catch the distinct croak of a passing Raven. Visually, a Common Crow and a Raven might be similar big, black birds, but the difference between the Raven's basso, throaty CRONK and the Common Crow's forthright CAW CAW CAW is definitive for even the most tone-deaf observers. Down the block, a Blue Jay calls out its familiar JAY JAY JAY alarm which is either a warning that there's a troublesome hawk in the neighborhood or that they themselves are the "trouble" to watch out for. Much closer, somewhere right above my head — oh, there they are — one, two, three complaining Tufted Titmice are scavenging the Callery Pear tree for any remaining frozen fruits. These little gray birds with their jaunty "tufted" peaked caps are a jolt of wide-eyed wintry cheerfulness, though their constant whines, whistles, and clicks seem to profess grumpy dispositions.

I next head down Charles Lane—always a quiet interlude to contemplate the cobblestones, the inmates of the old Newgate State Prison, the estate of Charles Christopher Amos, the lane's former names as Bayard Place and Pig Alley, as well as its fame as the shortest, narrowest street in Manhattan. Like today, there's usually a House Sparrow party in the shrubbery. They do know how to have a good time.

Crossing West Street into Hudson River Park, during the lull with cars stopped at the light, I hear a faint "mewing." Looking up into the Honey Locust bosque, I finally make out the indistinct outline of a foraging Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. The camouflage of this creeping woodpecker is always confounding. The white and black lines down its back blend perfectly with the striations in the tree bark. Don't even bother to look for a yellow belly. In winter light, you're lucky to see the smattering of red on its head.

Heading north there's a congregation of Canada Geese doing pro bono winter landscaping work trimming and fertilizing the grass. There are too many geese to be just the locals, so these are likely geese for whom NYC is "south for the winter."

A few White-throated Sparrows are scratching through the borders. This is one of the best-named birds: a sparrow with a white throat. Make. Every. Word. Tell. They are only here for the winter, so enjoy them, especially if they are singing their "Oh sweet Canada, Canada, Canada" refrain. Up ahead, a brief flurry of gray and white belies a small group of Dark-eyed Juncos. More winter birds, these seem to be confections of snow and ice itself, and ever on the move with their trills, twitters, and flicks of their white tail feathers.

Crossing to the promenade railing, bobbing on the Hudson are a smattering of ducks. I joke with my friends about not saying, "Oh, it's just a duck." Each duck thinks that they are a very fine duck. We should think so too. Indeed, this "smattering" boasts a few finely-mottled brown duck hens with their iridescent, green-headed male Mallard suitors trying to edge out competitors. There's a handsome duo of Black Ducks who have already paired up, and, delightfully, a square-dance of Gadwalls. In their nuptial plumage, Gadwalls are the height of sartorial splendor with their scallops, chevrons, dots, plumes, and that fetching, jet black rump. This is the frenzy of the dating season. Is it getting hot out here? Today, there's not a Loon plying the pile field but there's a black-necked, Double-crested Cormorant bobbing up—this time without a catch. Try again.

Up on the rafters of David Hammons' "Day's End" are the usual sprinkling of gulls: a few suitably named Ring-billed Gulls, two robust gray-winged Herring Gulls, and a sole Great Black-backed Gull waiting to wreak havoc wherever he can. I'm always on the lookout here for American Kestrels and Peregrine Falcons (yes, I've seen them loitering and even dining) but lately, I'm hoping to see a Bald Eagle. Keep your eyes open and off your phone screen!

With raptors on my mind, I scan the roof edges across West Street. As if conjuring an apparition, on a water tower finial sits a young Red-tailed Hawk looking anxiously (my interpretation) for its next meal. Young Red-tails still haven't grown into their namesake tail coloring and their first winter on their own is the ultimate hazing to achieve adulthood. Godspeed.

Returning down Washington Street, one tree looks like it's still harboring leftover Christmas tree ornaments. The fluctuating temperatures have frozen, then perfectly thawed, the ornamental cherries, and American Robins are feasting. It's really like the "Thirteenth Day of Christmas!"

This was certainly a sweet afternoon meeting and greeting the bounty of winter birds adorning the West Village.



SWEETMEATS. An American Robin feasts on the winter seasonal berries. Photo by Keith Michael.

VISIT US ONLINE AT VILLAGEVIEW.NYC

Cucina Alba is Like the Best Food in Italy, for a Price

BY CHURCHILL STONE

THE PINT-SIZED PALATE



A KID'S TAKE ON NYC FOOD

One evening my dad announced that the family was going out to dinner with my parents' friend and her six year old daughter. My dad told me this place might be fancy.

We arrived near the High Line. The restaurant was on the first floor of a tall building where all the windows are supposed to look like lanterns. They do not. The main room has long silver strings with rhinestones on them, big plants, and all the furniture and drapes looked very nice and warm. But that wasn't where we sat.

They put us outside, but it wasn't like being outside because the area was covered by clear plastic, so it felt as though we were eating inside. It was a chilly night, and the plas-

tic cover kept out the cold air; and there were heaters, so it was warm. When you're with a kid, they never put you at the nice tables.

Our friend told me, "I've spent all my summers in Italy, for ten years, and this is the best Italian restaurant I've ever been to."

Then she ordered a bottle of red wine that was a year older than I am. The adults said it was really good. I tasted the "Barolo," and it tasted horrible! In the end, we got "Shirley Temples." They tasted a lot like lemonade with ginger ale. But they were pink.

Our friend ordered focaccia bread. The first second I put it in my mouth I told my dad, "This is the best bread I've ever had!" OMG, it was so delicious. Even my ten month old baby brother, Ulysses, wolfed down pieces of focaccia.

Charlemagne ordered a pasta which they made just for her, with only tomato sauce. She said her pasta was even better than the one my father makes. Cooking a tomato pasta for Charlemagne (and a special butter pasta for our friend) says that this restaurant is kid-friendly.

I had a pasta called Cacio Pepe which was rich and creamy with butter, oil, cheese, and very peppery. I loved it. Charlemagne ate her entire plate of pasta — I just barely finished mine with a lot of help from my parents.

My parents' friend told me that Cucina Alba makes a special pizza — but only on Mondays, and we went on a Friday. By the way, alba means "dawn" or "sunrise," so the name is actually Kitchen Sunrise, even though they are never open then.



ORRECHIETE ARRABBIATA, "Angry Ears" costs \$66! Photo by Katrina Robinson.

My dad mentioned that the plates were always hot (even when no food was on them). He said most restaurants don't do this anymore. And we had four servers — they all helped us which you definitely need with two six year olds!

My parents had Calabrian tuna tartare, kind of like sushi, and Orecchiette Arrabbiata which means "Angry Ears." It was just a large spicy tomato pasta with burrata cheese on top. They liked it a lot. But it was \$66 which my father said was expensive, even if it was for two people!

My parents also loved the lasagna, but it had no tomato sauce or any tomato at all so my sister and I did not even try it.

Then, we got the custard cake for my sister's birthday which was warm and gooey. It was a bit grown up; pretty good, but not my ideal dessert. Next came three gelatos — raspberry, hazelnut, and brown sugar, the one I liked most. It looked like chocolate but tasted more like sweet vanilla which is my favorite flavor.

By the end of the night, I knew that this place was probably one of the best Italian restaurants I had ever been to, and trust me, I am hard to bargain with, so that just proves that the food did all the bargaining.

I knew this was a once in a lifetime experience, but most of all I knew that ... this place was fancy!

Cucina Alba, Lantern House, 511 W. 18th St.
Rating: ★★☆☆ (3 1/2 stars)



KEITH MICHAEL SPINS TALES and presents the Annual Bird of the Year awards to a group of dedicated (and chilly) birders and Villagers who braved the Hudson River morning air. You can read more of Keith's birding stories here monthly in the *Village View*. Photo by Bob Cooley.

VILLAGE TRIVIA

What is the Most Colorful Building in the Village?



GREENWICH VILLAGE HAS MANY BEAUTIFUL BUILDINGS, and some are quite ornately detailed, but what would you say is the most colorful building. We are excluding the painted murals or advertising signs, as interesting as they may be, like the murals on 14th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues, above. Here's my nomination. Text and photos: Brian J. Pape, AIA. See page 25 for further information.



For Your Viewing Pleasure: Turn Off Your Television

BY DUANE SCOTT CERNY



Photo courtesy of Duane Scott Cerny.

Since the president has settled into his regular routine of setting fires across the globe with his flame throwing verbiage, it's time to settle back and enjoy something completely different. Turn off the television. Turn off your cell phone. It's time to experience life to the fullest. For your consideration, I offer these alternative viewing pleasures:

VISIT A DMV. But you don't need your driving or fishing license renewed? Even better. On a good day the DMV sees more drama than a head splitting debate between the Desperate House Husbands, Steve Bannon vs. Elon Trump. (As they both still have their hair, there's plenty of pulling, perhaps some of them plugs.) Don't take a number, instead, just take a seat and watch the world explode before your eyes in twenty-plus different languages. My favorite incidents occur between short-tempered women and DMV clerks who've just returned from detox and/or just had their fingernails re-glittered.

RIDE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION. I particularly like to watch the public on crowded buses, as there are inevitably crazy people to see and argument enriching fights to witness. Last

week, I saw two older women, both of a similar sizable girth, fight over whose behind was sliding over into the other's seat. At the height of the disagreement (neither one would move), the first woman shouted, "You're too fat to sit here!" The second woman, aghast at the comment, turned to her and said, "Well, you're no Marilyn Monroe yourself!" It was better than a White House briefing.

WATCH YOUR CLOSED-CIRCUIT SECURITY CHANNEL. I know I said to turn off the television, but any building's closed circuit security channel isn't television, it's a real-life telenovela. I also know what you're thinking: I'm not spying on my neighbors' DoorDash dietary passions. Following the comings and goings in your building can provide hours of suspense, intrigue, and inexplicable scenes that will keep you glued to your intercom. Yes, you will see your neighbors, but you'll also get a chance to see their friends, lovers, tricks, tradesmen, and various individuals arriving for assorted sordid assignments. It's *Manhattan SVU: Special Voyeur's Unit*.

VISIT A DOG PARK. Nothing is more relaxing than a visit to a dog park, unless you're a cat or one of those tiny canines you can also wear as an accessorized brooch. Watching countless pooches chasing each other about, barking at nothing, sniffing each other's butts, then marking most anything nearby is exceptionally satisfying. You can also see most of this same behavior down at the New York Stock Exchange but with more testosterone and stronger urine streams. I blame most of this aberrant human behavior on the nearby 200-plus Starbucks locations. Speaking of which...

LURK AT A FAVORITE COFFEE HOUSE.

Inevitably you will witness disputes between overworked baristas and entitled 20/30-somethings who insist their almond milk must come from a cruelty-free almond farm. If you visit often enough you'll start to recognize the caffeinated regulars—try to catch screen grab glimpses of their glowing laptops. If you're curious why Hollywood doesn't make better films, some of the blame starts right here at Café Oy Vey with a screenplay draft of *Billy's Most Excellent Colonoscopy*.

AND VISIT A DISPENSARY. Have you noticed the newest dispensaries now have all the charm of a satellite Chase bank? Bluntly, before you can say "pass me the blunt," these two entities will morph into one. Stand politely in a cue, moving slowly toward the sole budtender/bank clerk they've wrangled into working today, reviewing in your mind what you want to order. "Yes, I'd like to cash this check. Can you give me the Indica Popcorn and the rest in twenties. I might need to do a line of coke later."

WALK THROUGH UNFAMILIAR NEIGHBORHOODS. "But Duane, what about my safety?" Trust me, it's less destructive to your mind than watching cable news. You can run from a mugger but not from the misinformation spewing from your own television set. No, get out there and walk around some sketchy blocks of Gotham. Breathe in the street trash, both human and otherwise; fill your lungs with the inevitable smell of marijuana that wafts through most of lower Manhattan. If you get a contact high, even better. If not, I know a guy. Just keeping walking.

VISIT A POST OFFICE. You have no package to mail? Even better. They don't need any more packages that can't be tracked like D.B. Cooper's frequent flyer points log. Yes, I've written about the post office before (See: *April: A Showering of Fools*) as it's one of my favorite places to witness the inexplicable package transit requirements demanded by an overly optimistic public. Now, don't get in line. Stand at the counter with the outdated forms and inkless pens. Grab one of each and pretend that you care. Then, prick up your ears and listen to the interactions between disgruntled postal clerks and those unwilling to ship FedEx. My most recent voyeur-heard incident:
Clerk: "What's in the box?"
Customer: "A chicken."
Clerk: "Is it dead?"
Customer, violently shaking the box: "It is now!"
Clerk: "You can't ship uncooked poultry!"
Customer: "That's okay. I'll use my air fryer. What time do you close?"

As we all well know, there is no "real" reality television, only real life. And nothing is as unscripted, unbalanced, unreal, unwell, and yet so oddly satisfying as real life. Now get out there and lurk!

Duane Scott Cerny takes the blame for most everything in his monthly satirical column, It's All My Fault. Best-selling author of Selling Dead People's Things and Vintage Confidential, he is the co-owner of Chicago's Broadway Antique Market and is a guest favorite among better podcasters. Contact him at E-ThanklessGreetings@yahoo.com.



VILLAGE REVIVAL RECORDS
197 BLEECKER ST
NEW YORK, NY

MENTION THIS AD AND GET 20% OFF

Open **NEW** Hours
M-F 3pm-4am
S-S 12pm-4am

Good Times!



Est. 1950

\$5 Beers
Darts
Pinball

kettleoffishnyc.com
59 Christopher Street, NYC (near 7th Avenue)
212-414-2278



Homey Italian Cuisine

Try our Monday thru Thursday three-course prix fixe menu \$38.75 per guest and Sunday Supper Family Style Menu for two guests includes a bottle of house wine for \$68. (tax and gratuities additional)

(646) 476-6464 • 15 7th Ave South at Leroy Street
ferdiny.com

GOLDEN WOKS

159 CHRISTOPHER STREET
Near Greenwich Street

212-463-8182
Fast Free Delivery

Open Monday - Saturday 11am-10:30pm - Sunday 12pm-10:30pm

The Best Chinese Take-out in New York City

'Twas the Day of the Virus

BY SUSAN M. SILVER

The upcoming fifth anniversary of the official start of the COVID pandemic prompts us to reflect on the fall and rise of the ever-resilient Big Apple. This parody poem is a verbal snapshot of New York City during the eerie early days of the cataclysm, shortly after the close of schools and non-essential businesses.

'Twas the Day of the Virus, and in Gotham throughout
Few creatures were stirring, few bikes were about.
Shoppers descended on TJ and Whole
To score sockeye salmon and toilet paper rolls.

The streets near abandoned, per Gov. Andrew,
Taxis and cars were lamentably few.
Yet despite the Corona and the fear it did bring
Daffodils, oblivious, embraced the sweet spring.

Goodbye, mocha lattes and avocado toast
The scene did seem scripted by Rod Serling's ghost.
Goodbye, fashion shopping and trips to the gym
To linger near strangers was going out on a limb.

Families cloistered themselves from the terror
Sanitizing surfaces to avoid costly error.
In kitchens now doubling as makeshift workplaces
They came to know each other, beneath their faces.

The strange silence brought reflection and singular peace
This war will soon wane, and on life a new lease:
May jealousy end, may pettiness cease

May compassion and love, all encompassing,
All powerful, the ultimate bridge
Between us, at last be fully released.



SEVILLA
RESTAURANT AND BAR

AUTHENTIC SPANISH CUISINE
62 Charles Street and West 4th Street
NYC, New York 10014

212 • 929 • 3189 | 646 • 329 • 5158
www.sevillarestaurantandbar.com

Est. 1936



MCF
Rare Wine, Ltd.

249 West 13th Street
T: 212.255.8870
Now Open Mondays

VILLAGE PET PAGES

BY JOY AND BRIAN PAPE

Betty



LITTLE BETTY THE CAT on her Big City stroll on Pier 45! Photos by Morgan.

We meet many of the Village pets (mostly dogs) you read about while out and about—but it's not so easy to meet cats. So, on a cold day we were excited to meet Morgan and her lovely cat, Betty, on Pier 45 looking over the Hudson River.

IS THIS YOUR FIRST CAT?

I've had a few family cats but I consider Betty my first pet. I knew a cat was the most practical companion for me living in the city. We are alike in so many ways, I really believe she was made for me - like my offspring, LOL!

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE BETTY?

Like so many others, I have an allergy to cat dander. I needed to be as sure as possible that the animal I was bringing into my life would not affect my own health or impact others visiting with us. I researched hypoallergenic, or at least lower allergenic breeds, and landed on a Siberian cat. They are substantially sized, gorgeous, and very smart.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NAME BETTY?

I learned that there were 'golden' coats of cats. I thought they were the most beautiful looking animals. I used to live in South Africa, and they have such a similar coloration to African lions. This had me reminiscing on my many visits to the bush, and memories from that chapter of my life. I knew I wanted a golden girl. When I found her, it felt appropriate to name her Betty, after the iconic golden girl, Betty White!

WHERE DID YOU GET BETTY?

While I am an avid supporter of adopt-

ing animals and know how many shelters are in need, the animals that are born in a breeding environment are also in need of a forever home. I had lots of trouble finding a trusted breeder. Many will cross-breed their animals, breeding an allergenic litter and scamming pet parents. I finally found Betty through a trusted Siberian breeder in Bethlehem, Connecticut. It was love at first sight!

I picked up Betty when she was two months old and weighed 1.8 lbs. She is now 9 lbs. Female Siberian cats can weigh up to 13 lbs. and typically continue to grow until they are 5 years old. Betty had her first birthday on February 2 and is a true Aquarius.

WHERE IS HER FAVORITE PLACE TO GO?

Betty loves to explore anywhere she hasn't been before! She loves to watch birds or squirrels or hunt down flies in the grass. We are usually on the West Side Highway's Christopher St. Pier, but I take her to different locations along the highway to keep her enrichment high.

WHAT DOES BETTY LIKE TO DO MOST?

Betty loves to lead the way! I allow her to explore as she wants. She loves watching birds, often mimicking their calls and hoping they will give her some attention. When we are at home, Betty loves to patrol the floors and halls of my apartment building. She loves to observe and is very friendly with our neighbors both humans and dogs alike! She is also a big fan of hide-and-seek. We trade-off who hides and will spook each other when we finally find each other - it's so fun!

WHAT ARE BETTY'S FAVORITE FOODS AND TOYS?

Betty is a huge fan of squeeze treats. I try to stick to brands made with natural ingredients and no fillers. She is simple when it comes to toys, her favorite right now is a cat dancer. She enjoys hunting down the rolled cardboard pieces while I scurry it around my apartment.

DOES SHE GET ALONG WITH OTHER CATS?

Betty has not had the pleasure of playing with other cats but she gets along great with dogs, kids and other humans. Once I have a larger apartment, I will absolutely find a sibling for Betty.

IS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT BETTY THAT ANNOYS YOU?

I wish she cuddled with me every time I wanted her to. We do have scheduled morning cuddles, which I look forward to every day!

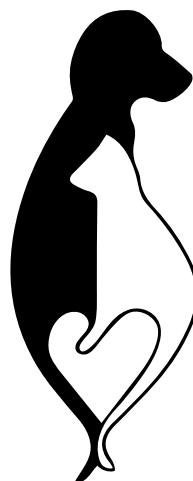
If you'd like to keep up with Betty you can find her on instagram @bettyboba.kitty



BETTY LOVES TO HANG OUT at cafes and restaurants!



LOTS OF THE PARK SIGNAGE mentions no dogs allowed, so the rules don't apply to Betty!



GREENWICH VILLAGE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

504 Hudson Street | 212-691-1100
M-F 8am-5:30pm | www.gvah.com

“A terrific practice with excellent vets and great staff! Friendly, kind and compassionate.”

- Susan F, client

Local Eco-Art Initiative Celebrates Manhattan's Oldest Tree

BY ANTHONY J. PARADISO



A DETAILED DRAWING of the English Elm in Washington Square Park.

ing to sell something but we're not and nobody can quite believe that it's absolutely free. Donations are welcome but we never ask."

Throughout her long career, Jones has worked on many large-scale, site-specific collaborative projects in New York City. She worked on *Oculus*, a constellation of mosaics of New Yorkers' eyes commissioned by the MTA in 1999. It is on permanent display at the World Trade / Chambers Street / Park Place subway stations. Jones also worked on *Mnemonics*, an art installation for Stuyvesant High School, composed of 400+ glass blocks containing artifacts from the history of the city, the school and the world. Jones and collaborative partner Andrew Ginzel created *Metronome* known today as the 'Climate Clock' at Union Square. They were also part of the 'Dream Team' for the master plan of the Hudson River Park.

A main theme behind Jones' work is the celebration of nature. That is why she was the perfect person to lead *Tree Wonder*. She



ON AVERAGE MORE THAN 200 PEOPLE STOP to observe the tree and more than 50 to draw. People can be seen here looking up at the English Elm and drawing what they observe. Photo by Kristin Jones.

"Tree Wonder Washington Square Park" is an eco-art initiative that aims to bring forth the wonder of nature through a study that celebrates the ecology of the area. The area is the northwest corner of Washington Square Park where an English Elm tree has stood for more than 300 years.

The tree is the subject of an initiative created by local visual artist, Kristin Jones and urban forester Georgia Silvera Seamans, director of Washington Square Park Eco Projects and founder of Local Nature Lab. The two have collaborated on hosting public drawing sessions at the base of the English Elm every Sunday in the Spring and Fall for the past three years. Since the beginning, thousands of park visitors or passersby have stopped to look up at the tree, wonder and draw.

Each session is led by an artist who, according to Washington Square Park Eco Projects, "shares drawing techniques with participants or inspires them with prompts to draw from." The sessions have become popular as *Tree Wonder's* fact sheet says, "on average, more than 200 people stop to observe the tree and more than 50 stop to draw." Jones and her team members can be identified by the aprons they wear which have a silhouette of the English Elm on them. The initiative has been run by volunteers to this point. For the past year Madison Markham has joined *Tree Wonder* as the project manager and artists receive an honorarium to lead the sessions. Donations are welcome and can be made here.

Jones said, "People are a little suspicious of us because we have these beautiful aprons with the tree silhouette on them and we offer notebooks and pencils. People think we're try-



SUPPORTERS, AS WELL AS THE FOUNDERS of Tree Wonder Washington Square Park stand together at the base of the English Elm. From Left to Right: Georgia Silvera Seamans, Helen Thurston, Madison Markham, Kristin Jones, Janice Flud.

discussed why she wanted to get involved. "Tree Wonder is inspired by the sheer pleasure of discovering something that you may have walked by thousands of times but have never actually noticed. The sessions are almost like meditations – people will sit, some stay to drink coffee, draw, and even write poems for the whole hour and a half. The gist of the initiative is that we rarely observe nature in the city. We live in a human-centric world. It is important to pay attention to

nature and take responsibility for our precious planet."

Jones' interest in the iconic English Elm goes deeper than hosting drawing sessions. She is working with a team of scientists and artists to create an artistic and educational augmented reality experience that visualizes the complex natural systems of iconic urban trees and their interrelationship with their immediate physical environment. The larger project entitled *BEHOLD: Trees, A Visual*

Exploration is the genesis of a global model that will engage humans at the foot of trees around the world.

"I think of the tree as a key to understanding Nature," she said. "The English Elm is so iconic and so visible there in the park's northwest corner. This tree can be the model tree for a live, biological digital climate/weather station where we could actually read and better understand the environment in real time, in the past and the future. Instead of seeing the weather data on our smart phones transmitted by the weather station in Central Park, we could actually visualize the live data and see what's happening at the foot of trees around the world through augmented reality."

Jones summarized why the drawing sessions can benefit people who are just passing through. "At the root of our ecological crisis is the notion that humans are separate from Nature. Nature is the most intelligent form. I believe in the intelligence of Nature and we humans have a lot to learn from Nature. Our planet would be a much better place if we stopped and took the time to better understand Nature."

The drawing sessions are advertised on the NYC Parks Department website, the Washington Square Park Eco Projects website, *Tree Wonder's* social media and newsletter, at neighborhood community and educational centers and in local newspapers like the *Village View*. The sessions are held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Sunday in the Spring and Fall.

So, remember, when Spring comes, stop by the Northwest corner of Washington Square Park, say hello to the people in the aprons, and look up!

CHARACTERS OF THE VILLAGE

Doris Diether — “Queen of Washington Square Park”

BY JOY AND BRIAN PAPE AND FRIENDS

Doris Diether was a friend to so many of us in the Village. We always remember her on her birthday, January 10. This year we received an email from Hellen and Harvey Osgood, also Characters of The Village, who wrote, “we’re thinking of Doris and we wanted to share this day with you both. You loved Doris as we did and we know that you hold her in your hearts as we do.”

Doris is, and will always be, our enduring “Character of the Village.” One could argue that Greenwich Village saved Doris from a “boring” suburban life, but in truth, it was Doris who saved Greenwich Village. She saved it by preventing a highway from cutting through Washington Square Park. She saved it from unscrupulous landlords, developers, and realtors who wanted to tear down our historic architecture. And she saved the music in the Park which helps define our Village.

The “Character of Greenwich Village” was shaped by Doris and will undoubtedly continue to be defined by her for many years to come. Throughout her life in Greenwich Village, Doris fostered a culture of support and cooperation among residents, Park enthusiasts, artists, musicians and those who advocate for justice and fairness in our community. Doris worked with many other activists, most notably Jane Jacobs and Ruth E. Wittenberg, in monumental battles against power brokers like Robert Moses, to save the Village. Doris will forever be remembered for her integrity, her courage, her deep responsibility to Greenwich Village, and her impeccable sense of style—along with her thoughtful tradition of sending greeting cards with recipes to hundreds of friends for holidays, birthdays, and other special times.

It could be said that Doris’ character was more evident in her actions than anyone else’s. Her values, the way she treated others (humans and animals), and her life experiences undoubtedly played a key role in shaping our understanding of a “Character of the Village.”

Born in Queens on January 10, 1929, Do-



DORIS IN THE PARK WITH LITTLE DORIS, a marionette created by Ricky Syers. A video is available to see them in action. Submitted by: Hellen and Harvey Osgood

ris spent nearly all of her 93 years in New York City. As a child, she and her parents briefly relocated to Massachusetts. However, as a teenager, she found suburban life lonely and “too boring,” prompting her return to NYC, where she settled in Greenwich Village and remained for the rest of her life.

In 2021, Doris passed away peacefully at her home of 63 years on Waverly Place with her beloved cats by her side.

It was in Greenwich Village where Doris forged her most cherished relationships and fully realized the start of her “civic career.” She met and married her husband Jack in

Washington Square Park and Judson Memorial Church. Jack passed away in Greenwich Village in 1987.

Over the years, the birds and squirrels adopted her, and she adopted many cats. The squirrels would come up to her walker and wait for peanuts from her hand. Even more remarkably, a certain pigeon, among many that had been given person names by Doris, would spot her walking, land on her walker bars, greet her with a coo, and wait for a treat.

Those who frequently visited the Park, both in person and later on social media, became familiar with Doris’ kind demeanor and warm smile. She would greet many regulars by name, or with a warm smile and a wave. The maintenance staff, musicians, and even buskers, all watched out for Doris’ safety. They reached out to her when they felt their rights as tenants, artists, and humans were at risk, or when they needed guidance on how to advocate for themselves. She was on a first-name basis with all the elected officials responsible for this part of New York, all the way up to the state offices. She was on the board of the Washington Square Music Festival and Save the Village. She wrote for our local newspapers.

Doris notably remains the longest serving community board member in the history of the City of New York (and always will be, considering the new term limits), dedicating over 50 years as a member of Greenwich Village’s Community Board 2, where she tirelessly advocated for the rights, needs, and well-being of its residents.

We called her the “Queen of Washington Square Park.” Here’s to the blessed memory of Doris Diether.

Watch and Learn more at:

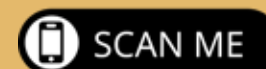
“Doris D” by Ricky Syers
youtube.com/watch?v=RmnOoVVHUMY

Ricky & Doris: An Unconventional Friendship in New York City. With Puppets! – By AARP
youtube.com/wastch?v=38CPg9OS510

PLEASE DONATE

TO KEEP VILLAGE VIEW PUBLISHING

Village View is an important voice of and for our community, continuing generations of local journalism. Village View only survives because of our volunteer writing staff, underpaid professionals — and because we get donations. Village View Media, Inc is a 501 (c) (3) IRS certified charity, and donations are fully tax deductible. You can donate by going to villageview.nyc and clicking DONATE. Or use the QR Code to the right. Best choice, make a repeating donation!



ROLLING THE DICE ON CONNECTION

How the NYC Backgammon Club is Revitalizing a Timeless Game

BY REMINGTON DAVENPORT

If someone had told me as a middle-schooler, hunched over a backgammon board with six of my best friends, that this game would shape my life's trajectory, I might have laughed. Yet today, in the heart of New York City, I lead a vibrant community of backgammon enthusiasts who are breathing new life into one of the world's oldest games. In fact, I am the founder of the NYC Backgammon Club.

I grew up playing backgammon at home, captivated by the game's unique blend of strategy, skill, and chance. After moving to New York City, I began attending local backgammon events. What struck me immediately was not just the lack of events but also the lack of diversity in attendees. Few women, and even fewer young people, were present. It became clear that the backgammon scene in NYC was ripe for a shake-up—and I was determined to lead the charge.

In April 2023, the NYC Backgammon Club was launched with a modest gathering of seven players. Today, that small group has grown into a thriving community of 5,200 New Yorkers on the mailing list. The club is more than a place to play backgammon; it's a hub for connection, a melting pot of personalities, ages, and backgrounds united by a shared love for the game.

The club's events take place in iconic venues across Manhattan and Brooklyn. These aren't just tournaments; they're social experiences designed to welcome everyone—from seasoned players to complete beginners. The NYC Backgammon Club has hosted every-

thing from casual game nights to structured leagues, including its first-ever backgammon league season, which wrapped up in December 2024. With social events as well as more serious weekly competitions, the club offers something for everyone.

Why backgammon? The answer is simple: backgammon is timeless. With origins tracing back over 5,000 years, it has endured through centuries and across cultures. Yet, it remains as dynamic and engaging as ever. In a city that moves at lightning speed, backgammon offers a rare opportunity to pause, connect, and engage in a battle of wits.

But for all its history, the game faces challenges in modern times. Its popularity has waned compared to games like chess, which have seen a renaissance thanks to streaming platforms and pop culture. This is where the NYC Backgammon Club steps in. Its mission is to make backgammon accessible, exciting, and relevant for a new generation. By leveraging social media, hosting interactive events, and fostering partnerships, the club aims to elevate the game's profile. Creating pathways for women and young adults to join the backgammon community are core objectives because inclusive spaces can empower and inspire.

Looking ahead, 2025 is set to be a landmark year for the NYC Backgammon Club. Plans include expanding events, launching educational initiatives, and building new programs. The club is also exploring sponsorship opportunities to enhance its offerings and bring backgammon to even more people across the city. The dream is to make NYC a global hub for backgammon, where players of all levels feel at home.

Ultimately, the NYC Backgammon Club is about more than rolling dice and moving checkers. It's about building a community in the truest sense of the word. In a city as vast and fast-paced as New York, finding meaningful connections can be challenging. Yet, around a backgammon board, barriers dissolve, and strangers become friends.

Whether someone is a seasoned backgammon pro, hasn't played since childhood, or is curious to try it for the first time, the club welcomes them to join. The NYC Backgammon Club is an invitation to step back in time, strategize the next move, and, most importantly, connect with the people around them.

Why not roll the dice? It might just lead to a new favorite pastime—and a community to match.

For more information about the NYC Backgammon Club, including upcoming events and how to get involved, visit the website www.nycbackgammon.club or follow on social media @nycbackgammonclub.



Pape Joins Art By Architects Show



BRIAN JOHN PAPE WILL BE DISPLAYING HIS ART at the fifth annual Art by Architects showcase on February 28.

Art by Architects, in its fifth exhibit at the Center for Architecture will show work from architects, professors, interior designers and students of architecture from the New York metro area. The exhibit, which will take place from Feb 28 to March 5, will celebrate the creative processes from cross-disciplinary areas within the field of architecture. Brian John Pape, a founder of the *Village View*, will be displaying his art for the first time at the showing.

Beyond the opportunity to share creations with the community, the show will raise income from the sale of select artworks and reception tickets to benefit the Center for Architecture's Annual Education Fund. The fund supports K-12 programs, subsidized fees to partner schools, and scholarships for the design education programming. This nurtures an understanding and appreciation for architecture and inspires the next generation of designers.

The showcase will open on Friday, February 28 at 4 pm with a reception from 6 pm to 8 pm to welcome guests and artists for a time of sharing and networking. There will be a \$20 entry fee to the reception in support of the Center for Architecture Annual Education Fund. Artists featured in the show and students with a valid student ID are free.

The Center for Architecture Schedule:

Friday, February 28

4 pm: Open to the public
6–8 pm: Reception (\$20)

Saturday, March 1

11 am–4 pm: Open to the public

Monday, March 2

9 am–5 pm: Open to the public

The Center for Architecture is located one block south of Washington Square Park at 536 LaGuardia Place.

TRIVIA FROM PAGE 16

Greenwich Village has many beautiful buildings, and some are quite ornately detailed, but the office building shown at 154 West 14th Street at the corner of Seventh Avenue South is the most colorful building, above, that we have found. Listed as a Landmark site, designed by Architect Herman Lee Meader in 1912-13, it is arranged in a tripartite base-shaft-capital composition with large window areas. This building is a striking and unusual example of a large loft building partly clad in terra cotta on the three-story base, on the spandrels between the white-brick piers of the midsection, and on the upper portion. It is also a fairly early example of the use of boldly polychromatic glazed terra cotta (in hues of white, beige, mustard, cobalt blue, celadon, and green) in New York City. Do you have other suggestions of your favorites? Photo by Brian J. Pape, AIA.



JOY IN THE MOMENT

Don't Worry Until YOUR Health Care Provider Tells You to Worry

BY JOY PAPE, FNP-C

The easy availability of so much 'health' information can often lead to trouble. Meaning it can lead to a lot of worry and fear, including self-diagnosing something that is most likely incorrect.

Often the patient gets laboratory, imaging or other test results before the Health Care Provider (HCP) gets them and has the chance to look at and evaluate them.

Here's some wisdom to share with you to help you if this happens to you.

- Remind yourself that when you get results your HCP may not have even seen them and had the chance to evaluate them.
- Do not go online to try to figure it out yourself. Doing so may give you false information or information you don't understand which can cause you to worry even more.

A wise physician told me, "You may re-

ceive the results before I do. Please give me time to review and I'll get back to you with what you need to know and do." These words have helped me personally and taught me to teach others the same.

If you are concerned about a result, give your HCP some time to review the information. If you haven't heard in a few days to a week, reach out and ask. If there is something urgent in the report, your HCP will most likely get that result and reach out to you right away.

Remember, worry is often related to the future, not the "now." Rather than fear and worry about something you don't know about. To have some peace and joy in the moment, remind yourself not to worry unless your health care provider tells you to worry.

Joy Pape is a Board-Certified Family Nurse Practitioner.

MLK Meets Inauguration Day Concert



CHRIS OWENS (above), producer, performer and songwriter. Photo courtesy of Peoples' Voice Café and Chris Owens.

BY ROGER PARADISO

On January 18, the Peoples Voice Café and producer Chris Owens presented a concert honoring Martin Luther King at the Judson Memorial Church. Chris premiered his newest musical work, *Difficult Days*, two days before King's birthday and the inauguration of President Trump.

"PVC marks the MLK holiday every year," he explained, "but every year there is a different flavor as we ask what Dr. King would say about where we are today and how his legacy could or will impact the choices that each of us makes going forward."

"In 2024, I presented a concert built around my own compositions – complete with a musical ensemble and small choir. This year is different. As we grapple with the reality and implications of last November's national election, I felt it was important for many voices to define how we celebrate this important holiday. Our society and the world at large is confused, fearful and fractured. This combination leads to social infections."

"I went with the very diversity so many people attack. It is hard work to bring people together and heal, but we must do it ... and let it begin with music and Dr. King's legacy."

Most of his songs reflect his interest in social justice. Titles include *If A Woman Had Made The World*, *Man O'War* and *Save The Children*. During the 1980s, Chris pursued a music career without commercial success.

In 1990, he married Sandra Dixon and they had two sons. Over the years, music became a casual hobby. The family's lives changed forever when cancer took Sandra's life in 2019. Months later, COVID disrupted the world

and especially independent artists.

"I turned to music to cope with my feelings, Chris said. "I wrote *My Tower*, *George Floyd* and *Orange Blues* in 2020 and released them commercially using the stage name "Chris Oledude."

In 2021, Chris retired from the Brooklyn District Attorney's office and rearranged his priorities to take care of his sons and his music career. But the world and the music business had changed. Despite increasing access to material for consumers, music streaming had decimated revenue for songwriters and performers.

Like many other indie artists Chris had trouble cutting through the noise created by marketing and promotional mega dollars for major stars and companies. "Streaming is a disaster for all creatives," he said. "If the economics are going to improve, folks in each industry need to take more collective action to change the marketplace. Artists like Taylor Swift have the star power to dictate music business terms. Most of us do not!"

Chris reflected further. "I admit I am labeled as an independent artist who is aging out and social-media-challenged. But I continue creating because, at this point in my life, it's really about getting good music with important messages out in the world. You don't get rich on social justice songs."

"I am now enjoying critical success as an award-winning music video producer, and I have plans to release two albums by the summer."

For more information on Chris "Oledude" Owens, go to <https://oledudesongs.com/>



Serving the West Village for over 55 years, Integral Yoga Institute of New York is a nonprofit dedicated to the teachings of Sri Swami Satchidananda, promoting an easeful body, peaceful mind and useful life. We offer mindful, no-pressure yoga classes for all ages and abilities, and encourage interfaith harmony.

· yoga classes · yoga workshops · yoga training



Located in Greenwich Village • iyiny.org
227 West 13th Street (between 7th and 8th avenues)

MENTION THIS AD AND GET \$2 OFF YOUR FIRST CLASS

Yotam Silberstein, Israeli-Born Leading Jazz Guitarist, Performs at Zinc Bar

BY KAJU ROBERTO



ACCLAIMED ISRAELI-BORN WORLD MUSIC GUITAR MASTER Yotam Silberstein (L) performs at Zinc Bar with his Trio, Alexander Claffey (bass) and Mark Whitfield Jr. (drums) on January 13th. Photo by Kaju Roberto.

The Yotam Silberstein Trio performed two deeply immersive sets at Zinc Bar in Greenwich Village on January 13. Three men emerged from behind the stark Art Deco backdrop and walked onto Zinc Bar's new well-illuminated stage. Musically, they are one of the most gifted and eclectic trios in jazz today, led by one of the leading world jazz guitarists of his generation, Yotam Silberstein.

The Tel-Aviv born guitar sensation had an amazing lineup, with the destructively awesome Alexander Claffey, a.k.a "The Claffinator" on double bass, and the great Mark Whitfield Jr. on drums.

ZINC'S ANNOUNCER VOWED TO "BURN HIS GUITARS"

The Zinc Bar announcer half-jokingly introduced the trio by saying when he first saw Silberstein play he immediately went home and "burned all of his guitars" knowing he would never be able to attain that level in a lifetime. His comment came as no surprise, as Silberstein had taken 5th Place in Downbeat Magazine's 2024 Critics Choice Awards for Outstanding Rising Guitar Talents. When they opened their first set with the 50's classic *They Say It's Wonderful*, I was struck by the beautiful clean tones coming from Silberstein's semi-hollow body guitar and small amp.

CROSS CULTURAL JOURNEY IN CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

Between sets, these wonderful musicians guided their audiences on an evocative cross-cultural journey of a contemporary jazz world music lineage, emanating culturally rich timbres and sounds from the Middle East, North Africa, Brazil, and Argentina, emphasizing the idioms of jazz,

choro, samba, tango, bebop and blues with a characteristic fire, passion, and intimacy. The legendary James Moody "discovered" Silberstein in 2005 at a young age while attending a jazz workshop. He returned telling everyone about "this young Israeli kid who plays like an old man." Soon thereafter, Moody would recruit Silberstein to play on some of his recordings.

PLAYING STYLE

To simply say that Silberstein is a highly skilled improviser would be painting an incomplete picture. His diverse musical folklore highlighting a deep global thrust from South America, North Africa, and the Middle East were highly evident in his spellbinding improvisations throughout the night.

When playing solos on his beautiful grey Bird's Maple Benedetto guitar, Silberstein fluttered like a bumblebee with wild flourishes of incredible speed, while utilizing a soft touch. Throughout the evening, his articulate phrasing of melodically flowing lines characteristically incorporated quick slurs, dissonant double stops of wide intervals, abruptly broken up by rich chord melodies. Beneath these flowing solos, the "Claffinator" agilely walked, then galloped pulsating angular lines up and down the neck of his gigantic double bass, while Whitfield kept up the fast swing. A great example of this was Silberstein's arrangement of Duke Ellington's *In a Sentimental Mood*. Later, he dedicated one of his original swinging jazz blues compositions to the late great guitarist Russell Malone, who passed away suddenly this summer. This unnamed composition featured some of Silberstein's best inside/outside soloing. He followed this with a beautiful original ballad.

During the second set, Silberstein dem-

onstrated more of his World Music influences, beginning with Brazilian bossa nova, followed by Francisco by the great composer Toninho Horta. His joyful interpretations and gripping finesse of these tunes were accentuated and highlighted by Whitfield drum solos.

My favorite was a quizzical and intriguing Arabesque introduction that segued into this beautifully elegant Moroccan tango, replete with juicy lines that morphed into deep exploratory fluttering jazz improvisations masterfully played by Silberstein and Claffey. There was a beautiful improvisational melodic interplay between Silberstein, Whitfield, and Claffey throughout the tune in a call-response fashion. It was gorgeous yet arresting.

Silberstein has worked in bands with some of the greatest figures in jazz including George Coleman, Charles McPherson, Jimmy Heath, James Moody and Roy Hargrove. The Yotam Silberstein Trio has toured all

over the world in the most prestigious festivals and venues including the Tokyo, Umbria and North Sea Jazz Festivals.

His earlier releases include *Future Memories* ("catches you by the heart and never lets go" — *JazzTimes*), *The Village* (41/2 stars, *DownBeat*), *the Brazil*, *Resonance* and *Next Page*, which feature musicians on the order of Paquito D'Rivera, Toninho Horta, Roy Hargrove and Christian McBride.

Silberstein's new record *Standards* with John Patitucci, Billy Heart, and George Coleman is out now released on JoJo Records.

Definitely check out the Yotam Silberstein Trio when they are next in town.

<https://yotammusic.com/concerts/>

Kaju Roberto is an accomplished musician, singer/songwriter, journalist, and an award-winning producer. He is the artist Rad Jet on Spotify.

v i r a & f r i e n d s

presents

Pleasant Ache a concert/cabaret



contralto Vira Slywotzky
&
pianist David Sytkowski
with
guest coloratura soprano
Brooke Schooley

Saturday, February 22 at 2 pm

Saint John's in the Village

218 W 11th St, New York, NY 10014

scan for tickets and



more information

tickets \$20
all fees included



email
hello@viraandfriends.org
with questions

Vira & Friends is a non-profit corporation under the auspices of the Ukrainian American Educational Center of Boston, a 501(c)(3).

John Scofield: Living Legend of Jazz Guitar's Epic Performance at the Blue Note

BY KAJU ROBERTO

John Scofield, has been a living legend and an iconoclast of jazz guitar for over 50 years. No doubt, I would easily place John in the all-time Top 5 in jazz, if not Top 4.

Affectionately known as "Sco" to his admirers and fans, his work includes studio recordings and live performances with Miles Davis, George Duke, Herbie Hancock, Steve Swallow, Scary Goldings, Gov't Mule, and a host of other luminaries and world renowned orchestras. John has left his indelible stamp playing so masterfully across so many different genres that are not only totally epic, but it would take two lifetimes to cover his career in-depth.

John is a great guy and I'm proud to say he was my former guitar teacher decades ago. However, that is as close musically as we will ever be. I became so excited when I heard he was slated for a Thanksgiving residency at the Blue Note from last November 27 to December 1.

"SCO'S" BLUE NOTE SHOW

When I watched "Sco" perform at the Blue Note with the John Scofield Quartet, consisting of long-time stalwart Bill Stewart on drums, Vincent Archer on bass, and the incredible Nicholas Payton on trumpet, I became instantly convinced. At 73, the great John Scofield isn't losing any of his edge. If anything, he is picking up a renewed steam!

It was my greatest thrill going backstage after the show, and having the rarest chance to meet again and become reacquainted with the legend himself, my former mentor, for the first time in over 40 years.

JOHN SCOFIELD CAN'T BE COPIED

Many great jazz musicians and historians agree. John is one of the most creative jazz improvisers of all-time, a true artist and "Ultimate Chameleon" of music. His natural nuanced style rooted in blues, folk, and jazz has a "Sco" feel that is simply uncopyable. Take for instance John's guitar solo in Thelonius Monk's *Rhythm-A-Ning*, where he improvised in his fabulous signature angular bebop playing style. It was at times atonal yet delicious, peppy, jumpy, and full of energy.

Something that brought great joy to me during that wonderful performance was listening to John's arrangement and improvised solo during *Airegin* composed by the great Sonny Rollins. After this classic's quite complex opening rhythmic pattern, its fast-swinging solo section was irresistible. John's genius in creating lines working with silences falling within odd places in the measure is uncanny.

That guitar solo was so nuanced and delightfully quirky as ever! John's phrasing was unexpected, with "inside/outside" playing bebop mixed with country blues.



LEGENDARY JAZZ GUITARIST John Scofield (center) performed his Thanksgiving residency from November 26 through December 1 at the Blue Note in Greenwich Village with his amazing quartet L to R: Nicholas Payton (trumpet), Vincent Archer (bass), and Bill Stewart (drums). Photo by Kaju Roberto.

Once again, the way he uses space in between the notes he plays is magical — a trait he claims he learned from Miles Davis. John was Miles' guitarist from 1982-1985 during his late fertile "pop star" period, but during that time they recorded three amazing albums, *Star People*, *Decoy*, and *You're Under Arrest*.

A JAZZ ARTIST WHOSE HEART IS IN THE BLUES

John grew up during the early '60s listening, learning, and loving the early blues, folk music, The Beatles, and rock 'n' roll! Undoubtedly, growing up listening to such a confluence of diverse musical styles shaped the great player in a radical way.

Born in 1951, he began playing guitar at the age of 11, the perfect age to witness a "perfect storm" of cultural music icons — namely the real original "Beatlemania" with the Beatles debut American performance on the Ed Sullivan show, the folk blues movement and '60s rock scene, e.g. Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Albert King, the Grateful Dead and Jimi Hendrix. Falling in this "sweet spot" as a 13-year old greatly influenced John's affinity toward folk, blues, and rock — which would ultimately become a constant repeating undercurrent within his later bebop and jazz playing he is most noted for.

During one leg of a tour, John could be playing Sonny Rollins in New York, then playing with an elegant European orchestra, then during the final American leg, playing Grateful Dead music mixed with jazz! Few great musicians in any genre have ever conquered a world of diverse sonic landscapes while bringing great joy to others like "Sco" has!

In 2020 John had a concert with the Danish Radio Big Band Orchestra in Denmark where this large fantastic orchestra performed several beautiful arrangements of his compositions. John played his accompanying solos and rhythmic cadences. I've never seen a conductor and an orchestra so joyous in playing another artist's works. Particularly memorable was how the front line reacted at the end of *Boogie Stupid* where John played this ending quasi-Celtic classical hybrid picking cadence, which had the main chairs in the orchestra "beaming" with joy at him. And the Japanese conductor Miho Hazama was simply beside herself.

John Scofield is like a fine wine or bourbon. He is truly one of the greats that gets even better with age. Next time this legend is in your town, RUN out and get tickets fast. Witnessing his live performance should be on every true music lover's Bucket List.

Max Ostro:

An Astonishing Russian Musician Who Deserves your Attention



THREE PERIODS OF THE ASTONISHING young guitar shredder Max Ostro. Photo by Kaju Roberto.

Inside the Washington Square Diner, I had the pleasure to virtually meet and have an amazing You Tube interview with the Russian phenomenon guitarist Max Ostro. Simply put, he is one of the best guitarists in the world, and he has developed a new fusion-style to shred-

ding (a style of playing superfast melodic guitar lines) that must be seen to be believed. Max plays his guitar so fast, clean and effortlessly, that his hands glide across the fingerboard with perfect precision as if they were on ice skates!

continued on page 25

johnscofield.com/tour

Exploring Dylan's Enigmatic Journey

A Review of *A Complete Unknown* and *Dont Look Back*

BY MICHAEL JACOBSON



A COMPLETE UNKNOWN movie poster.

Recently, I saw *A Complete Unknown* at the AMC multiplex theater on 19th Street and Broadway. The matinee ticket price of \$13 was welcoming, and it was a joy to watch the film in their spacious theater.

I enjoyed the two-hour and 20-minute film that flashes back to the early 1960s. The three-act narrative sketches the first five years of Bob Dylan's career, both on and off the concert stage. Act One takes place in 1960 when Dylan arrives in New York City from Minnesota. He soon meets Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger who recognize his musical ingenuity. Albert Grossman becomes his manager and secures him a recording contract. Initially, Columbia Records insists that Dylan record mostly cover tunes, which stifles his early LPs.

Act Two unleashes an avalanche of Dylan's original recordings. Timothée Chalamet, who portrays Dylan, does a marvelous job performing these songs throughout the movie, with his looks and mannerisms convincingly capturing Dylan's essence. The film also explores Dylan's challenging love affairs. His taxing romances are on display, initially with Sylvie Russo who is a fictionalized character based on Suze Rotolo, Dylan's real-life girlfriend in the early 1960s. Sylvie was a significant influence on his early songwriting career. Then there's Joan Baez, portrayed by

Monica Barbaro, depicted as both Dylan's business partner and lover. His lack of candor leads to an on-and-off relationship with Sylvie whose rejection perplexes Dylan throughout the movie. Baez's involvement with Dylan is marked by his rising fame.

Act Three focuses on Dylan's revolt against the traditional folk music scene. He and Sylvie motorcycle to the 1965 Newport Folk Festival. After being lauded by Pete Seeger for years, Dylan does the unthinkable: insisting on electrifying his sound. He is labeled "Judas" by an audience member. Sylvie confronts Dylan with her continued unhappiness and abandons him at the festival. His initial acoustic performance with Baez highlights the disconnect between them. Billed as the final act at the festival, Dylan and his backup electric band perform *Maggie's Farm*, an anthem that rejects the established folk music scene. The performance leads to a near-riot. The concluding shot shows Dylan motorcycling solo towards an uncharted horizon. The film's title, *A Complete Unknown*, reflects Dylan's desire to avoid categorization and remain enigmatic, like a rolling stone.

Where *A Complete Unknown* takes creative liberty with Dylan's first five years in New York City, resulting with some of his life fudged and embellished, the 1967 D.A. Pennebaker documentary *Dont Look Back* is an unvarnished recoding of

Dylan's 1965 concert tour of Britain. I saw this documentary when it opened at the Bleecker Street Cinema. Unfortunately, the art house cinema closed in the 1990s. You can now view this revealing documentary on the Criterion streaming channel.

In the 1960s, Pennebaker was at the forefront of using portable 16mm film cameras and sound equipment, practicing *cinéma vérité*. Albert Grossman, Dylan's manager, approached him about documenting Dylan's 1965 tour of Britain. The film starts with a memorable title sequence featuring Dylan holding cue cards in an alley, accompanied by Allen Ginsberg and Bob Neuwirth. The documentary presents a confident and sometimes arrogant portrait of Dylan, showcasing his performances and interactions with fans, journalists, and fellow musicians like Joan Baez and Donovan. The tour highlighted Dylan's Beatles-like fame, with cheering crowds of young supporters throughout.

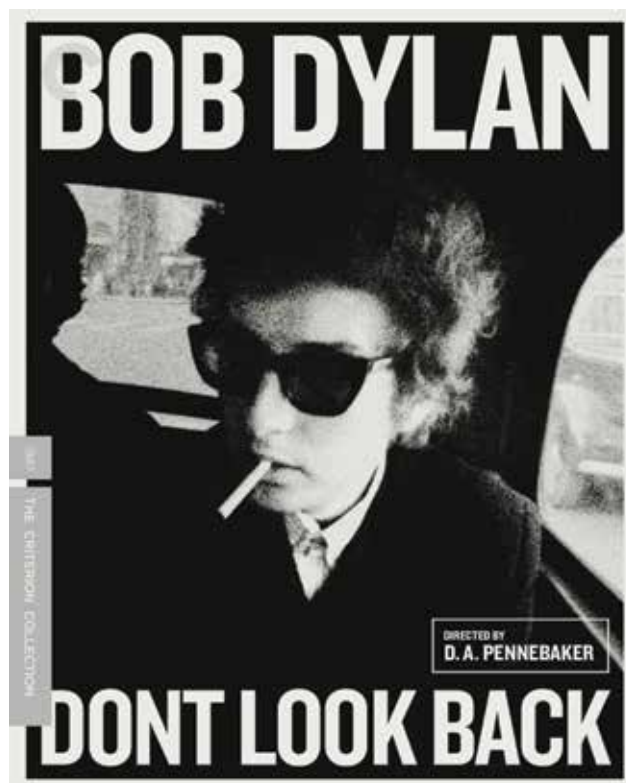
The documentary features several of Dylan's iconic songs, including *Subterranean Homesick Blues*, *The Times They Are A-Changin'*, and *It's All Over Now, Baby Blue*. The concert performances are brief, and Baez and Donovan have limited screen time.

The depiction of Dylan is not always flattering. There are sequences where he faces reporters with disdain, answering their queries evasively. One lengthy sequence pits Dylan against a British journalist who is overwhelmed by the musician's confrontational and conspiratorial attitude towards the media. Baez, who at that time had more stardom, is portrayed as a background figure. Dylan's refusal to share the stage with her on the tour contributed to their breakup.

A Complete Unknown takes some artistic liberties for dramatic effect. Director James Mangold adapted the film from Elijah Wald's 2015 book *Dylan Goes Electric!*. Mangold met with Dylan to discuss aspects of the biopic, allowing Dylan to share his version of events and introduce younger audiences to his music. The film had a substantial budget, estimated at \$50-70 million, and I suspect a considerable amount was spent on licensing Dylan's music.

As a viewer who is not an expert on Dylan and his music, I learned a lot about his career from *A Complete Unknown*. The film showcases Dylan's iconic early compositions, features superb performances from the lead and supporting actors, and Mangold's depiction of 1960s New York adds to its enjoyment. No matter what film I watched, I can not help but marvel at how Dylan insists on being an unabashed renegade.

Michael Jacobson is an independent New York filmmaker. His recently completed a documentary on the Cornelia Street Cafe, which will premiere in the first week of April at the New Plaza Cinema. He also curates a bi-monthly screening of short films by New York filmmakers at New Plaza Cinema.



DONT LOOK BACK movie poster.

Ostro *continued from page 24*

THE MAN FROM LAKE BAIKAL

Max hails from the unforgiving yet beautiful city of Irkutsk, a city of 600,000 near the shores of Lake Baikal, the world's deepest lake, and known for its art and environment to harden its inhabitants with temperatures year-round ranging from -35 C to + 35 C.

This 20-year old, who was a prodigy at 13, has made a big name for himself among

elite players, and has captivated online audiences worldwide on social media with his mind-blowing technique, a profound sense of musicality, and an astonishing never-ending barrage of improvised creative ideas that immediately flow from his brain to his fingers, thus transferring such ideas into incredible music.

Max is a young giant of the guitar world who certainly deserves to be a household name among the world's top stringed elites,

alongside Guthrie Govan, Matteo Mancuso, Bumblefoot, and a small list of other incredible guitar talents. Unfortunately opportunities to gain his deserved recognition are very limited compared to others living elsewhere.

ROCKETING MAX TO NAMM 2026

Max is hoping to soon obtain his Global Talent Visa, a document he will to gain passage to America so he can debut his prodigious

talent at the largest music merchandisers trade show in the world — the National Association of Music Merchants — or NAMM 2026. The show unites the entire global music industry for one spectacular week of exhibits, education and networking.

Watch this illuminating interview and join Max Ostro's free Discord if you want to be continually amazed by his music and help this young rare talent reach his goal to showcase at NAMM 2026!

February 2025

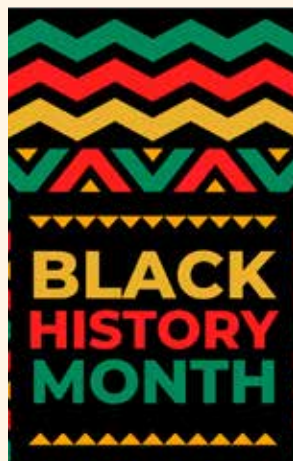
EVENTS

in and
around the
West
Village

ACKNOWLEDGING NYC HISTORY OF SLAVERY: EXPLORING CHURCH ARCHIVES
Wednesday, February 12, 6:00 PM
The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York
12 West 12th Street
Pre-registration Required
villagepreservation.org

A panel discussion

The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York City, founded in 1716 on Wall Street, moved in 1846 to its current location on Fifth Avenue and 12th Street. Over the congregation's long history, several accounts of its early period have been written, but none have mentioned the congregation's intersection with slavery and the slave trade. As several major universities and religious institutions have recently researched their histories related to slavery, a small group of First Church members were inspired to write a report on the congregation's connection to the institution during the 18th and 19th centuries. The result is the report, *Old First and Slavery*. Completed in 2022, it covers the period of the church's founding through the end of the Civil War. This panel discussion will include members who collaborated on the report and who will present and discuss the archival resources and research methodology used during the drafting process.



THE NEW BROWNIES' BOOK: A Love Letter to Black Families
Wednesday, February 26, 6:00 PM
Virtual, Pre-registration Required
villagepreservation.org

In the 1920s, scholar, author, and activist W. E. B. Du Bois started a magazine for children. Calling it *The Brownies' Book: A Monthly Magazine for Children of the Sun*, it was the first magazine aimed specifically at Black youth. It was published right here in our neighborhood at 70 Fifth Avenue, a building that Village Preservation successfully advocated to have landmarked to recognize its incredible importance in Black, civil rights, and NYC history. In his role as editor-in-chief, Du Bois reached out to the era's most celebrated Black creatives—writers, artists, poets, songwriters—and asked them to contribute their “best work” to *The Brownies' Book* “so that Black children will know that they are thought about and LOVED.” Among its contributors was Langston Hughes, whose first published poems appeared in *The Brownies' Book*. A century later, author, educator, and Du Bois scholar Dr. Karida L. Brown and award-winning artist and children's book creator Charly Palmer revived and expanded upon the *Brownies' Book* legacy and showcase new art and writing for children from today's brilliant Black creators. This presentation is designed to reflect, celebrate, and inspire a new generation of children and families.

Spaces are extremely limited! All our classes are free and open to the public.

Proust Center-JML Staff for 2025
 Alex Klameth: Group Facilitator
 Monika Zaleska: Teacher in Residence
 Ina Ko: Coordinator of Korean Proustians
 Sara Depczenski: Director

Steering Committee
 Nancy Ertag-Brand, Marianne Geiger, Sharon Girard, Ina Ko, Madeleine Lebwohl, Edith Penty, Sylvie Richards, Ernest H Rubinstein, and Marina Stefan.
 proustcenternewyorkjml@gmail.com

READ MARCEL PROUST'S SWANN IN LOVE ON ZOOM

Monika Zaleska, Proust Center-JML Teacher in Residence, will offer the second half of “Swann's Way” in four sessions
6:00-7:30 PM
February 25: Swann in Love pp. 215-278
March 25: Swann in Love pp. 279-342
April 29: Swann in Love pp. 343-435
May 27: Place Names pp. 436-484

REGISTER

nypl.org/events/programs/2025/02/25/read-marcel-prousts-swann-love-zoom

THEATER**SUMO**

The Public Theater
425 Lafayette Street (at Astor Place)
New York Premiere

Entrenched in an elite sumo training facility in Tokyo, six men practice, eat, love, play, and ultimately fight. Step into the sacred world of sumo wrestling, with the New York premiere of Lisa Sanaye Dring's mesmerizing new drama, SUMO. Akio arrives as an angry, ambitious 18-year-old with a lot to learn. Expecting validation, dominance, and fame, and desperate to move up the ranks, he slams headlong into his fellow wrestlers. With sponsorship money at stake, their bodies on the line, and their futures at risk, the wrestlers struggle to carve themselves—and one another—into the men they dream of being.

A KNOCK ON THE ROOF

Through February 16
New York Theatre Workshop
79 East 4th Street
Between Bowery and 2nd Avenue
tickets@nytw.org

Set the timer. The everyday existence of a mother during a sweltering summer vacation: prepare meals, pack the bag, run the drill, repeat. With a dry wit and the determination of an Olympian, Mariam meticulously practices for the run of her life—the dreaded knock on the roof. Written and performed by Khawla Ibraheem, this unforgettable new play about obsession, survival and everyday life in Gaza is developed and directed by NYTW Usual Suspect and Obie Award winner Oliver Butler (What the Constitution Means to Me).

GIL SCOTT-HERON BLUESOLOGY

February 3 - 23
SoHo Playhouse
15 Vandam Street
sohoplayhouse.com/upcoming-events

Gil Scott-Heron Bluesology is a theatrical reinterpretation celebrating the legacy of Gil Scott-Heron, covering his influential work from 1970 to 2010. The production features skilled spoken word artists who breathe new life into his powerful and enduring words. Adding a personal touch to this tribute, his daughter Gia Scott-Heron shares stories and memories. It's a chance to experience the spirit of Gil Scott-Heron's work in a vibrant and moving performance.

BOMBOLONE FEST

February 8, 10 AM - 4 PM
Essex Market
88 Essex St
bombolonefest.com

**A free bombolone festival is returning to NY - Italian donuts for all!**

New Yorkers fell in love with bombolone—Italian donuts filled with custard, chocolate or marmalade—at the first-of-its-kind Bombolone Festival. The extravaganza is offering 500 free passes this year and, once those are sold out, you can opt for \$5 or \$10 tickets instead. Attendees will indulge in an abundance of bombolone but they will also get to experience live competitions among professionals delivering their very own versions of the pastry. A panel of chefs, journalists, food authors and content creators will be judging the competition, which will afford the winner a \$1,000 cash prize and the coveted Bombolone Fest Award.

27th Chinatown Annual Lunar New Year Parade & Festival

Sunday, February 16
Parade Start
1:00 PM
Chinatown
Festival & Booths
11:30 AM - 3:30 PM
(Bayard St between Mulberry and Mott)



HAPPY YEAR OF THE
SNAKE

ART

**MAKE WAY FOR BERTHE WEILL:
ART DEALER OF THE PARISIAN
AVANT-GARDE**
Through March 1
NYU's Grey Art Museum
18 Cooper Square
greyartmuseum.nyu.edu

This exhibit surveys the groundbreaking career of the first woman modern art dealer. Berthe Weill (1865–1951) championed many fledgling masters of modern art early on—such as Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, and Amedeo Modigliani—as well as numerous others who did not achieve wide acclaim. Yet her role in early 20th century modernism has been omitted from most historical accounts.

**SCNY 141ST ANNUAL MEMBERS
EXHIBITION**

Part I Through February 14
Part II February 18 – March 14
Salmagundi Club
47 Fifth Avenue @ 12th Street
salmagundi.org

Over the years, the Salmagundi Club has been well-known for providing its artist members with important exhibition opportunities. The Annual members exhibition showcases its club members' finest works of art in all media. Their illustrious membership includes both nationally-recognized award winners as well as emerging talent.



The Randy Andys Vintage Valentine's Day Show

Thursday, February 13, 7 PM
Pangea Bar and Supper Club
178 Second Ave

Tickets: cur8.com/18134/project/129049

Whether you are looking to celebrate Valentine's Day or Gal-entine's Day, The Randy Andys' innovative takes on modern pop songs through a retro lens will have you swooning for more. Join them for a night full of love, swing, and sisterhood, as they brilliantly fuse the timeless vocal stylings of The Andrews Sisters with the iconic pop hits of Beyonce, Mariah Carey, Madonna, and more! Come see what *Broadway World* hails as "musically stunning and comedically brilliant."

DANCE

FLORENTINA HOLZINGER: TANZ
February 14 - 15
NYU Skirball
566 LaGuardia Place
skirball.org

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

Prepare to experience a contemporary masterpiece that defies conventions and reimagines the art of movement. Florentina Holzinger's TANZ is a breathtaking fusion of classical ballet, raw physicality, and high-octane performance. Featuring an all-female cast of eleven performers ages thirty to over eighty from various dance backgrounds, and set against a backdrop of theatrical spectacle, TANZ delves deep into the limits of the human body, exploring themes of strength, vulnerability, and the relentless pursuit of perfection.

**AKRAM KHAN "GIGENIS:
The Generation of the Earth"**
Wed Feb 12 - Sun Feb 16
Joyce Theater
175 Eighth Avenue
joyce.org

Acclaimed choreographer Akram Khan has developed a distinct voice as an advocate of cross-cultural encounters through his own lineage of classical Indian Kathak and contemporary dance. In his latest work, GIGENIS: The generation of the Earth, Khan shares the stage with a distinguished ensemble of classical Indian dance artists. Khan invokes memories across time and place to celebrate these artists' collective love of dance.



World Premiere, New York City
January 27-April 30
Center for Jewish History
15 West 16th Street
(between 5th and 6th Avenues)
annefrankexhibit.org/visit

**Opened International Holocaust
Remembrance Day**

For the first time in history, the Anne Frank House will present a pioneering experience outside of Amsterdam to immerse visitors in a full-scale recreation of the Annex, where Anne Frank, her parents and sister, and four other Jewish inhabitants spent two years hiding to evade Nazi capture.

On International Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27, the 80th commemoration of the liberation of Auschwitz was marked by the opening of *Anne Frank The Exhibition* in New York. This exhibit includes a first-of-its-kind, full-scale recreation of Anne Frank's hiding place. Moving through the exhibition, visitors will be able to immerse themselves in the context that shaped Anne's life—from her early years in Frankfurt, Germany through the rise of the Nazi regime and the family's move to Amsterdam, where Anne lived for eight years until her arrest and deportation to Westerbork, a large transit camp in the Netherlands, then to Auschwitz-Birkenau, a concentration camp and killing center in Nazi-occupied Poland, and eventually to her death at Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany when she was 15 years old.



The New York City exhibition will occupy over 7,500 square feet of gallery space in the heart of Union Square. This marks the first time dozens of artifacts will be seen in the United States — many have never been seen in public.

CINEMA

TALES FROM THE NEW YORKER
Friday, February 21 – Thursday, March 6
Film Forum
209 West Houston St. west of 6th Ave.
filmforum.org

A celebration of The New Yorker's first century, spotlighting movies inspired by fiction and reporting from its pages, and by the acclaimed writers who helped define its distinctive voice and style. Kicks off on the 100th anniversary of the magazine's debut issue (February 21, 1925), with the opening night screening introduced by New Yorker editor David Remnick. Select screenings will feature introductions by New Yorker writers and editors. Films include *In Cold Blood*, *Meet Me In St. Louis*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *The Unbearable Lightness Of Being*, *The Hours*, *My Sister Eileen*, *Burning*, *The Prime*

Of Miss Jean Brodie, *Pal Joey*, *Bigger Than Life*, *The Swimmer*, *The Red Badge Of Courage*, *Citizen Kane*, and more.

**OSCAR NOMINATED SHORTS 2025:
ANIMATION AND LIVE-ACTION**
Opens Friday, February 14
IFC Center
323 6th Avenue
ifccenter.com/films/oscar-nominated-short-2025-animation

Get a leg up on your Oscar pool by catching all the short film nominees up for this year's Academy Awards. This popular annual showcase presents the complete lineup of animated, live-action and documentary short contenders, playing on the big screen for a limited time only. Program details available after the nominations are announced on January 23.



8 Questions Sellers Should Ask Brokers..... Before they Hire One!

COMPASS

The difference between a successful sale and a stressful one starts with selecting an agent you can trust.



Price and commission are important considerations. But, is that all?

1. What is your marketing strategy? What steps will you take so I receive the maximum market exposure, hence the maximum price?
2. What is your valuation and pricing strategy for my property? How will you help me price my property so I get the top dollar for it and do not leave money on the table? But in the same time we do not scare most of the buyers away.
3. How will you protect me from the risks of sale not closing with buyers with mortgage contingency in the sales contract?
4. How will you protect me from losing all buyers in the multiple bids situation?
5. Is now the best time to place my property on the market? Why? If not, when is it and why?
6. Please explain in detail the difference in the range and quality of services I should expect from you and your firm? And how is that different if I hire a discount broker?
7. Why do you think you are the best person for this assignment?
8. Is there anything else I should be asking you?



Compass is a licensed real estate broker, licensed to do business as Compass RE in Delaware, Idaho, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Tennessee, Compass Realty Group in Kansas and Missouri, Compass Carolinas, LLC in South Carolina, and Compass Real Estate in New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, Washington, DC., Idaho and Wyoming and abides by Equal Housing Opportunity laws.



Kelly Craig
Lic. Assoc. R.E. Broker
M: 917.656.5682
kelly.craig@compass.com