

A City Betrayed: Beth Israel Hospital Shuttered After 135 Years



Photo credit: VIN News.

At noon, on Wednesday April 9, after 135 years serving the diverse community of Lower Manhattan, Mt. Sinai Hospital System prevailed in its eight-year long effort to close Beth Israel Hospital. Through two major legal battles, the pandemic (which was followed by a promise to “expand the hospital”), the last functioning part of the hospital, its emergency room, shut its doors.

Who should we blame? First villain — Governor Kathy Hochul, who could have kept it open, who openly blessed the closure, and whose lawyers fought for the closure in court. Second — Brendan Carr, the greedy \$10 million per year CEO of Mt. Sinai Health System, who is drooling over the property, worth \$1.2 billion as a piece of real estate, and who refused, for the last 18 months, to negotiate with community representatives.

New Hospital Opens on Site of Former St. Vincent's Medical Center

BY ETHAN GERINGER-SAMETH

What was once a satellite campus of the Upper East Side's Lenox Hill Hospital, known as Lenox Health Greenwich Village, will now be a fully-functioning cardiac and stroke center called Northwell Greenwich Village Hospital, officials announced Monday. The announcement follows the addition of a cardiac catheterization lab and inpatient beds, allowing the hospital to receive and admit heart attack patients and others from its freestanding emergency room.

The opening represents the first time a hospital has occupied a site on Manhattan's lower west side since St. Vincent's closed at the same location in 2010, part of wave of hospital closures and consolidation within larger health systems. The extension site, which opened in 2014, has offered a 24/7 emergency department and ambulatory surgery, but had to redirect cardiac and other emergencies when they arrived. The hospital is now one of few in

continued on page 2



A NEWLY EQUIPPED HOSPITAL is opening on the site of the former St. Vincent's Medical Center in Greenwich Village. Photo credit: Buck Ennis.

Barry Benepe
Visionary Dies at 96

SEE PAGE 3

Can Artists Survive
In New York?

SEE PAGE 21

May Events

SEE PAGE 26

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Hospital *continued from page 1*

the area that will be able to receive cardiac emergencies and admit patients since Mount Sinai Beth Israel closed earlier this month.

The expansion added 16,000 square feet to the facility and cost Northwell Health \$32 million, \$5 million less than previously estimated. Prior to the transformation, the facility had two inpatient beds. The expansion adds six new beds for inpatient admissions, bringing the total to eight, approximately 80% of whom are expected to come through the emergency department, said spokeswoman Margarita Oksenkruug.

The addition also includes cath lab and

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electrophysiology services, used in the treatment of heart disease, which will be available for emergency and elective procedures.

The facility was recently certified to take stroke patients but still cannot accept traumas by ambulance, leaving the nearest trauma center Bellevue Hospital Center, a public hospital close to two miles away.

The new offerings add to the facility's existing imaging, orthopedic and gastroenterology services.

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Honking Complaints Plunge 69% Inside Congestion Zone

In the first two months of the Manhattan vehicle tolls that Trump wants to nix, gripes over blasting horns sunk when compared to 2024.

BY JOSE MARTINEZ AND MIA HOLLIE, ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN *THE CITY*, MARCH 11, 2025



BEFORE. Courtesy of NYC DOT.

Honking-mad motorists are laying off the horn in the core of Manhattan since the January launch of congestion pricing, data reveals — with New Yorkers' beefs about blaring horns plummeting nearly 70% from the same time last year.

An analysis by *THE CITY* of available 311 data from ZIP codes south of 60th Street reflects a vast quality-of-life gain from the vehicle-tolling program that President Donald Trump wanted to terminate by March 21.

"Before, it was too much, there was honking of horns without reason," said Syed Ali, 49, who works daily inside a halal food cart at Park Avenue South and East 32nd Street. "Now, it's better for everybody."

Between the January 5 start of congestion pricing and Thursday, March 6, the city's 311 portal registered just 67 complaints about

honking inside the so-called congestion relief zone.

That's a steep 69% decline from the same period in 2024, when ticked-off New Yorkers in the ZIP codes below 60th Street complained 219 times about honking, according to 311 data.

For all of last year, there were 1,605 complaints about vehicles honking within the ZIP codes in the congestion relief zone.

"One more reason to love congestion relief — less honking," Juliette Michaelson, the MTA's deputy chief of policy and external relations, said in a statement. "Turns out it is, in fact, possible to make Manhattan a little more peaceful."

In addition, between January 5 and March 4, the two Department of Environmental Protection noise cameras south of



AFTER. Courtesy of NYC DOT.

60th Street didn't issue a single horn-honking summons, according to numbers provided by the city agency. In contrast, those two cameras issued 27 summonses for excessive horn blowing during the same time period last year.

The cameras are part of DEP's network of detection devices meant to turn down the volume on loud vehicles and music. They come equipped with meters activated by noise that tops 85 decibels.

"Traffic is less by a lot, you see it, you feel it," said Tai Lee, who has worked at a newsstand at the intersection of Canal and Centre streets since 1976. "But the noise, it's terrible, it's no good when people hit their horns intentionally."

The 311 numbers about blasting horns also offer more granular insights into how

the new tolls are upending the very New York impulse to lay on the horn, which the city's noise code prohibits unless a motor-vehicle operator is in immediate danger.

"Less congestion means less noise," said Jaqi Cohen, director of climate and equity policy for Tri-State Transportation Campaign. "But I think horn honking is also a symptom of people's frustration behind the wheel, so it probably speaks to the fact that people have easier commutes now."

The drop-off in frustrated motorists blasting their horns has been especially evident on the streets within ZIP code 10019. Extending west to the Hudson River from Fifth Avenue at the southern edge of Central Park, it drew 11 noise complaints since January 5 — down from 47 during the same stretch in 2024.

Barry Allen Benepe, Farmers Market Creator, Dies at 96

BY JEN BENEPE

Barry Allen Benepe died peacefully at his home in Saugerties, NY, on April 23, 2025—just 29 days shy of his 97th birthday. Many members of his family had come to see him for his last hours on an earth that he loved so much for its bounty of beautiful fruits and vegetables, architecture, cycling and art.

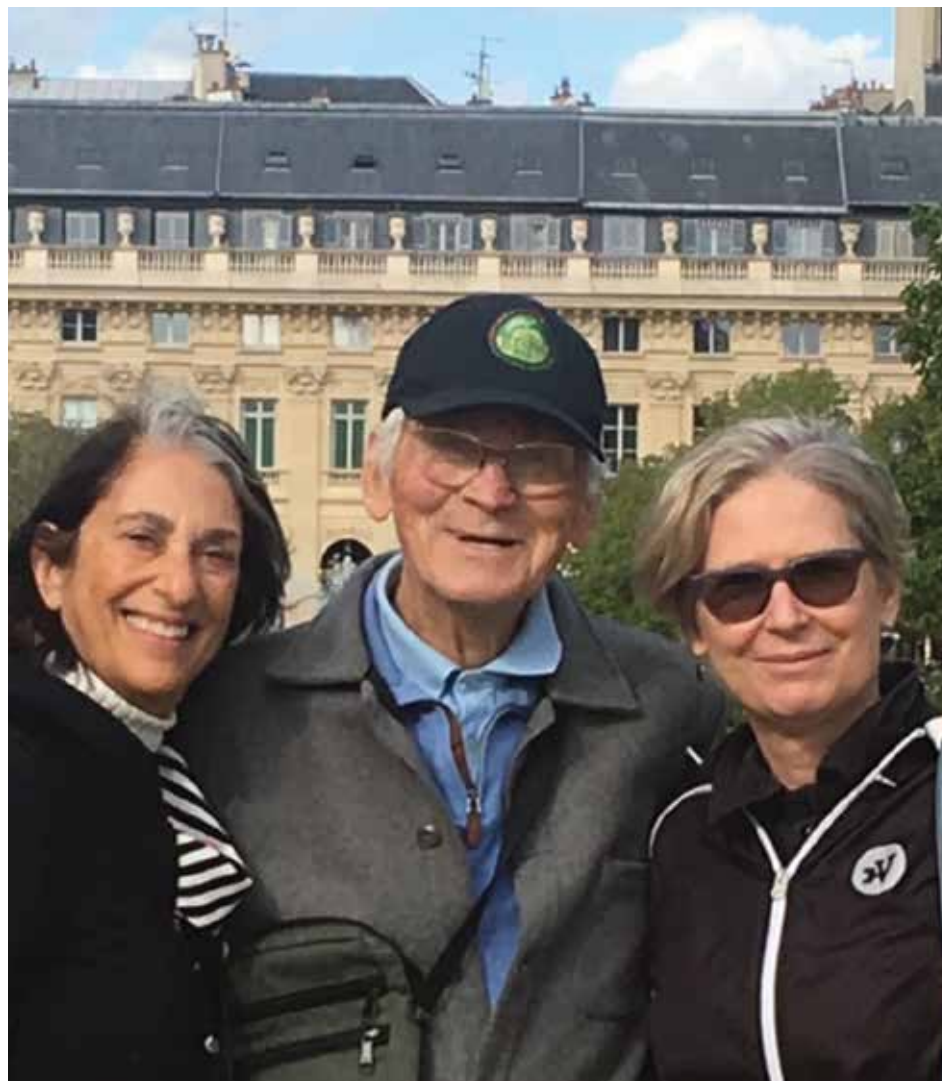
Barry loved Saugerties where he and his wife Judith have spent their summers for 41 years. Though he was bed-bound, Barry was to see the explosive blooms of spring, the daffodils, narcissus, crocuses, forsythia, magnolia, pear, and apple blossoms that surround their property on Van Vliet Road. Through the open windows he listened to the endless repeats of the resident Red Cardinal and Carolina Wren. Barry also enjoyed the help of many people from the community, numerous visits from family and friends who came to shower their love for him, and the help of Zoe Rowan who has been a rock for the family for years.

Barry was trained as an architect and graduated from Williams College, the Cooper Union and MIT but he will be remembered for pioneering in his quietly passionate way, the creation of Greenmarket farmers markets in New York City. As a young man, he spent his summers at his family's 200-acre farm Melody Manor, in Princess Anne, MD., where they raised animals, and grew produce. He chose not to join Leacock and Co., the family linen import business, to be a planner and architect, for which his father Robert Benepe never quite forgave him.

Living in New York City he soon yearned for the simple pleasures of farm life, and managed to bring the country to the city in the co-creation of Greenmarket with Bob Lewis. The idea was simple: bring local produce to the nearest city so you could savor the taste of freshly picked apples, pears, raspberries, asparagus, tomatoes and so much more—from local farmers. He also wanted to help preserve small farmers and their land, as they were rapidly being bankrupted by large agrobusiness, while land developers were scooping up farm properties.

The first Greenmarket on East 59th Street was well attended by the public in 1976, and Barry's five young children Adrian, Jennifer, Andrew, Callum and Simon helped in the new market. But local supermarkets saw the fresh produce brought in directly by the farmer as a threat, and stacked the local community board with anti-market members who dismantled the 59th St. market.

With grants from the J.M. Kaplan Fund and help from Marian Sulzberger Heiskell, a founder of Council on the Environment of NYC, (now GrowNYC), Barry and Bob opened a market at Union Square, at the time a dying public space, with surrounding retailers going bankrupt, and drug deal-



BARRY BENEPE (center), with wife Judith Spektor (left) and daughter Jen Benepe (right). Photo courtesy of Jen Benepe, taken by Rosemary Guzman.



BARRY MANAGED TO BRING THE COUNTRY TO THE CITY in the co-creation of Greenmarket with Bob Lewis. The idea was simple: bring local produce to the nearest city so you could savor the taste or freshly picked fruits and vegetables from local farmers.

ers occupying the park 24/7. He had great supporters, including Lys McLaughlin of GrowNYC and many others who saw his vision. Over the years, the Union Square Greenmarket became the largest, most successful market of 45 plus in New York City. It also was the focal point for the amazing retail revival of the surrounding area.

The market management was non-profit, which meant that the profits went to the

farmers, not to Greenmarket, and Barry existed on a modest salary. This fit his Luddite notion of plain and simple living, while giving back to the world important things—such as the exquisite taste of a fresh tomato that has been allowed to ripen on the vine instead of being packaged un-ripened into a refrigerated train car to travel for more than 24 hours from places like Florida, California and Mexico. It also put a strain on support-

ing his children which he had through two marriages, the first to Jagna Wojcicka, an urban anthropologist and the second to Morag Clyne, an artist. Everyone adjusted to the life of romantic idealism, and his children all went on to do their own extraordinary work, while embracing his love for movement, art, and public service.

Barry was also an untiring advocate for human-pedaled bicycles, and managed with the help of many friends and advocates, to lay down their bikes in front of traffic and force the city to close the roads to cars in Central Park on Sundays. But biking to work one day he had his own brush with death when he was struck by a truck running a red light. He never biked to work again. On June 26, 2018, however, he was surrounded by cheering advocates among them Gale Brewer, a friend and then Manhattan Borough President, when Central Park was finally closed once and for all, to cars, on all days.

Barry had a third unspoken “marriage of a kind” with the sculptor and artist Mary Frank, who now lives with her husband Leo Treitler in New York City and Woodstock.

Then in 1984 Barry met Judith Spektor, a passionate NYC public servant who headed the agency serving the homeless in the Koch Administration. In 1988 Judith handed the footloose and fancy-free Barry an ultimatum and they were married at the National Arts Club in Manhattan. Since then, they have spent a wonderful 41 years together, co-opening with others the Saugerties Farmers Market, growing their magnificent garden, and adding artistic touches to their 100-year-old plus farmhouse (though in Luddite fashion still existing with only one bathroom). They also traveled frequently to Paris, where they would listen to music floating up from the street, shop at the local farmers markets, eat stinky French cheese, hobnob with local friends and family, and truly enjoy the pace and beauty of France.

During the summers, Barry and Judith co-created with Rickie and Jimmy Tamayo, and Nancy Campbell, the first Saugerties Farmers market which has been held every summer Saturday.

Barry is survived by Judith, all of his aforementioned mischievous children, grandchildren Alex, Erik, Ian, Miles, and Tyler, great grandchild, James, and former wife Morag Benepe. Memorials will be held in Saugerties, NY and New York City.

Greenmarket and Saugerties Farmers Market will continue to thrive under their current leadership. In lieu of flowers please send your tax-deductible contributions to either Greenmarket or the Saugerties Farmers Market, PO Box 164, Saugerties, NY 12477.

You can also read the obituary about Barry in the *New York Times*.

Affordable Housing?

Bill Designed to Give New Leverage to Tenants and Nonprofit Housing Groups Moves Forward

BY PHYLLIS ECKHAUS



APRIL 11 RALLY ON THE STEPS OF CITY HALL, above, urging the city council to move ahead with the Community Land Act (CLA). Photo credit: New Economy Project.

“Whose land? Our land!” shouted a boisterous crowd of tenant leaders and organizers, as they rallied on the steps of City Hall on April 11, urging the city council to move ahead with the Community Land Act (CLA). This package of bills is designed to promote deeply affordable housing by giving nonprofit groups, community land trusts and tenants first dibs on up-for-sale multi-family buildings and city-owned land.

Will Spisak, senior program associate with The New Economy Project, explained to *The Village View*, “We have an affordable housing crisis, driven by real estate speculation. And so much of what passes for ‘affordable housing’ today, built by for-profit real estate developers, is way too pricey for everyday working New Yorkers.” He described the CLA as the most promising way ahead, “Truly affordable housing,” requires going “beyond market-driven, band-aid solutions.”

He also reported “great news”—the day after the rally, the previously-stalled CLA was finally scheduled for a June hearing before the city council housing committee. This is the prerequisite to the full council voting on the CLA in the fall, making passage possible before a newly elected council takes office in 2026.

A majority of the current council is on record as supporting the CLA, and Spisak expressed hope there may even be a two-thirds majority, which could override a potential veto by the mayor.

WIDESPREAD SUPPORT

At the rally, lead sponsor Council Member Carlina Rivera noted that corporations own 89 percent of New York City rental housing and “we want to level the playing field” by making sure real estate properties are treated as “more than commodities.... we want to ensure we stop losing our neighbors... and protect the city’s diversity.”

Council Member Shaun Abreu, a former tenants’ rights lawyer who was once “a kid from uptown getting evicted from his home,” said, “I’m here to tell you the Community Land Act is possible.” He noted a plentitude of potential properties: “In Manhattan alone, we have 243 abandoned buildings, 267 empty lots, and 179 parking lots, most of which are empty or underused.”

“Private developers are focused on making money,” Council Member Lincoln Resler observed, declaring that, left to themselves, private developers “are never going to develop truly affordable housing.” Resler, a lead CLA sponsor, characterized the Act as a way to harvest “the lowest of low-hanging fruit” by ensuring that “public land, when redeveloped, is going to create a 100 percent permanently affordable housing.”

He condemned current plans in his district, where the Metropolitan Transit Authority seeks to turn “the largest publicly-owned land in all of Greenpoint into 80 percent luxury housing. When public land is being redeveloped, it better damn be for public good.”

Nicholas Latimer, a Hell’s Kitchen tenant leader at 438/440 West 45th Street, described years of landlord abuse, including no heat or hot water, vandalized mailboxes and unhoused people sleeping in the lobby. He recounted how tenants organized an 18 month rent strike, after which their landlord—twice named the city’s worst—lost the two buildings to foreclosure, and tenants secured 100 percent abatement on back rent.

With these buildings now up for sale, Latimer spoke out against “greedy landlords and overzealous developers [trying] to force us out of our homes to make way for luxury housing.” He asserted tenants’ rights to bid on their own buildings: “To those landlords and developers, we say we can maintain our homes better than they can. We have invested more than just money. We have invested our lives.”

A PACKAGE WITH POTENTIAL

The CLA legislative package includes the Community Opportunity to Purchase Act (COPA), which would give community land trusts and other nonprofits a first right to purchase multifamily buildings when landlords sell. The Public Land for Public Good Act would require the city to prioritize community land trusts and other nonprofits in the disposition of public land while Resolution 374 calls on New York State to enact the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act, a bill facilitating tenant purchase of up-for-sale buildings.

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are community-controlled nonprofit organizations that steward land for the public good. In New York City, about 20 CLTs are working to combat displacement, develop and preserve deeply affordable housing, and advance neighborhood-led development.

In the East Village, there are two CLTs organized by the Cooper Square Committee. The Cooper Square Committee Community Land Trust, founded 30 years ago, helps steward some 400 housing units for low and extremely-low income families.

The CLA has immediate relevance to the Village, observed Valerio Orselli, executive director of the This Land Is Ours Community Land Trust, the newer CLT organized by the Cooper Square Committee. He noted that there’s a prized East 5th Street police parking lot that his group wants to turn into low-income housing for seniors and people with disabilities—and that this opportunity could be lost without the CLA. Despite strong community and community board support for the land trust’s plan, the city wants to solicit proposals from private developers.

Other cities have passed laws similar to the CLA. Since 2020 the San Francisco version has preserved 230 affordable homes and 13 commercial spaces for local businesses. It has also established transparency in the real estate market, making it easier to organize tenants, fight speculation, and hold landlords accountable.

Catching Up With Outdoor Dining

BY BRIAN J. PAPE, AIA, LEED-AP

Over a year ago, the new permanent city rules for outdoor dining were hammered out with the hospitality industry lobbyists. Since then, the community has worked with restaurateurs and barkeeps to comply with the rules. For the past year, the Department of Transportation has notified everyone about the simplified rules. They provided clear illustrations of what is allowed, and even organized a marketplace where proprietors can purchase a standard set up kit. There have been special details to work out for each unique location, but overall, the rules are uniform and have been uniformly applied.

In a neighborhood that has the highest density of bars and restaurants in the entire city, on top of the smallest streets and sidewalks, it was not an easy fit. But what could make this situation even worse? Operators who ignore or openly flaunt the rules.

In the new 2025 dining out season, with warming temperatures, we have documented the operators with sidewalk café seating that violate the clear standards.

No sidewalk seating may have any attachment or support of structures resting on the sidewalks.

Set-ups must be light and portable for cleaning every night. A barrier must be set-up around the seating area to avoid tables and chairs from “migrating” into the reserved pedestrian pathway. That means no wait-service from outside the barricades that interferes with pedestrian flow, and no “host stations” on the sidewalk.

The area along the curb in the “amenity zone” may never have seating or obstacles installed there.

As we go to press, we show examples of structures that do not comply with the rules. Some have been recently built; some have been kept in operation before the new rules were finalized. This hurts everyone. Even law-abiding operators are penalized by the scofflaws who “steal” patrons from those who comply with the rules. When *Village View* sees those situations, we ask our readers to do their part to protect our neighborhood. Please call 311 to file complaints (don’t confront the operators or wait staff!).



LUPE'S at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Watts Street refuses to remove their improper structures on the sidewalk. Note the signboard in the “amenity zone” where it doesn’t belong.



FATOUSHA RESTAURANT at the corner of Seventh Avenue South at Commerce Street has improper structures on the sidewalk as well as plastic sheathing and garish advertisements.



JUDY Z'S at the corner of Seventh Avenue South and Carmine Street refuses to remove the improper structures on the sidewalk many months after they were required to take them down. Note the shed beyond the corner where it doesn’t belong. A huge business bus seems permanently parked on Carmine Street.



LA BONBONNIERE at 28 Eighth Avenue refuses to remove their improper structures on the sidewalk. The entire storefront has a makeshift roof with posts over the sidewalk where it doesn’t belong.



SVETA at 64 Carmine Street has improper structures on the sidewalk including an illegal roof.



CODINO at 62 Carmine Street has improper structures on the sidewalk. Note the tables and chairs where they don’t belong.



LE PETIT VILLAGE on Seventh Avenue South at Perry Street promised to be a better operator than the one before it (Baby Brasa). Yet, we see no delineating barriers and the seating extends beyond their storefront, in front of the neighbor property.



CUCINA CARLINA at 455 Hudson Street has improperly placed a table and chairs on the “amenity zone” of the sidewalk. Note an umbrella in the “amenity zone” and another that extends beyond the café seating.



JEFFREY'S at the corner of Waverly Place and Christopher Street has repeatedly placed tables and chairs out in the “amenity zone.” They don’t leave a proper pedestrian path on the sidewalk.



FIDDLESTICKS on 56 Greenwich Avenue has no delineating barriers, and the seating improperly extends beyond their storefront, in front of the neighbor property, and into the “amenity zone.”



DADDIES at 450 Hudson Street crowds the sidewalk on both sides, with no delineating barriers, and the seating extends beyond their storefront, in front of the neighbor property.



OFRENDIA on 113 Eighth Avenue South has no delineating barriers, and the seating extends beyond their storefront, in front of the neighbor property, and into the “amenity zone.”



AD HOC Perhaps the most egregious crowding is shown here on Christopher Street near Gay Street where the Ad Hoc seating is improperly placed in the “amenity zone,” and extends beyond their storefront, in front of the neighbor property. Pedestrians are forced into the street.

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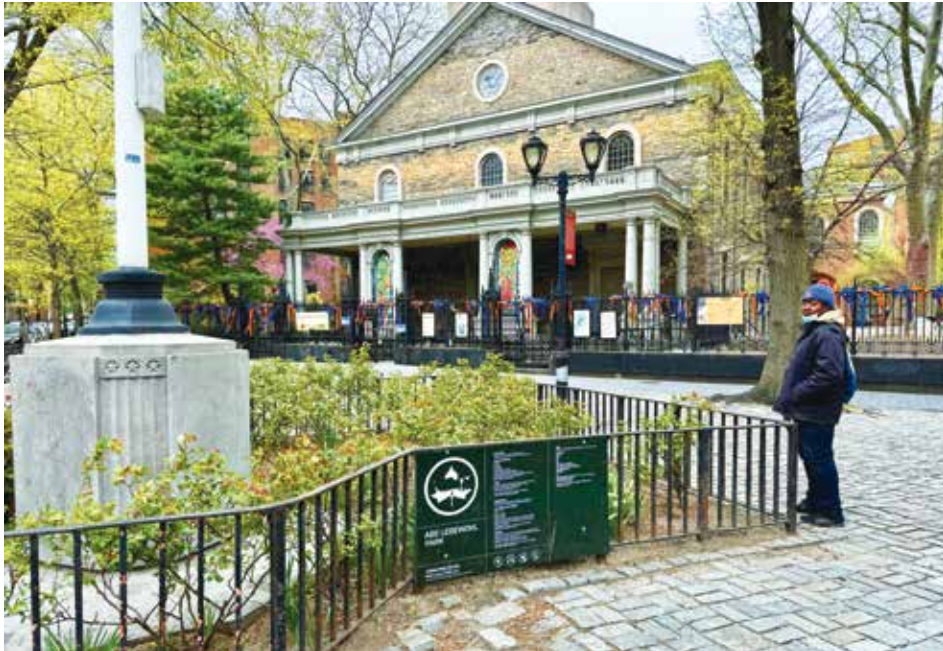
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THE HONOR OF CO-NAMED STREETS

Abe Lebewohl Park

People have been honored here in New York with co-naming of streets or places for them. Look for the special green signs below the other street signs and check out nycstreets.info/honorstreet



THE ABE LEBEWOHL PARK is the co-name for the present St. Mark's Park at the corner of East 10th St. and Second Ave. St. Mark's Church is in the background. The large tree on the right used to be at the curb of Stuyvesant Street, a diagonal lane that was part of Manhattan's original colonial layout. When combined with Astor Place, it ran diagonally from Broadway to the eastern edge of Stuyvesant's farm or bowery, until the 1811 street grid was superimposed over most of Manhattan above Houston Street. The block of Stuyvesant Street east of East 10th Street was already well developed in 1811, so it was spared. However, the street created a triangular space in front of the church, which no longer fit the grid pattern, so it was made into a park. *Photo credit: Brian J. Pape, AIA.*

The Honoree is Abe Lebewohl (1931-1996), born in Ukraine, who came to the US (Williamsburg, with his parents and brother) in 1950 after surviving World War II and years in a displaced-persons camp. In 1954, after working at a Coney Island deli, he opened a delicatessen at Second Avenue and 10th Street. He later moved to the Lower East Side and was unofficially called the "Mayor of Second Avenue." In 1958, Abe married the love of his life, Eleanor, and they had two daughters, Sharon and Felicia.

Known for both his generosity and good food, Abe's 2nd Avenue Deli attracted the rich and the poor, the unknown and the famous. It was patronized by actors and patrons of the Yiddish Theatre in its waning days, and later become a popular East Village dining spot. Muhammad Ali, Joe DiMaggio, Mel Brooks, Jerry Seinfeld, Jon Stewart, Joan Rivers, Molly Picon and Fyvush Finkel were among his customers. The eatery is still famous for its pastrami sandwiches and matzoh ball soup.

Abe's brother Jack said, "We provide livelihoods for numerous people (employees). We provide food for our customers who also get a certain spiritual enrichment by eating in the restaurant."

Abe had a gregarious and altruistic nature. If a homeless person on the street was hungry, Abe made sure they ate. Once, a new employee needed money so he and his wife could afford to adopt their child. Abe's daughter Sharon said, "Without hesitation, Dad gave his employee the money and never

asked for a penny back. The guy said to my father, 'I don't think I'll ever be able to give you this money back,' and Dad said, 'You'll give it back to me by being a good father.'"

Tom Birchard, who ran Veselka, the nearby Ukrainian restaurant, said, "Abe was a role model in many ways. He used to say, 'The more successful businesses around me, the better for me. It brings people to the neighborhood. It's good for all of us.' It was Abe's mentorship and guidance that helped Veselka succeed. He was always generous with his time and his advice with me."

On March 4, 1996, just before 9 a.m., Abe drove to NatWest Bank located six blocks from the deli. Police say Abe was sitting in his van before entering the bank when he was shot three times. The \$12,000 that he was going to deposit was taken, as well as his wallet. "His funeral was one of the most memorable, impactful funerals I've ever been to," Birchard said. "It was literally a turn-away crowd."

Abe's family has continued running his business, now in the hands of Jack's sons, Josh and Jeremy. Thirty years later, the case is still unsolved and his family is still seeking answers. "I know that the detectives feel personally connected to this. I know that even today they're working on it," said Sharon.

Anyone with information on the murder of Abe Lebewohl is asked to call NYPD Crime Stoppers at 1-800-577-TIPS or visit crimestoppers.nypdonline.org.

Sources include: *Inside Edition*

JUNE PRIMARY PREVIEW PART 3

We Have a Hot Comptroller Race

BY ARTHUR SCHWARTZ

The NYC Comptroller's Office is probably the second most important elected position in the city. The comptroller is responsible for overseeing the city's finances and acting as a check on other city officials.

In more detail, the comptroller's responsibilities include:

- Conducting performance and financial audits of all city agencies;
- Serving as a fiduciary to the city's five public pension funds totaling approximately \$285 billion in assets, as of February 2025;
- Providing comprehensive oversight of the city's budget and fiscal condition;
- Reviewing city contracts for integrity, accountability and fiscal compliance;
- Resolving claims both on behalf of and against the city;
- Ensuring transparency and accountability in setting prevailing wage and vigorously enforcing prevailing wage and living wage laws; and
- Promoting policies that enhance city government's commitment to efficiency, integrity and performance for all New Yorkers.

The comptroller leads a staff of about 800 employees—including accountants, attorneys, economists, engineers, IT professionals, budget, financial and investment analysts, claim specialists and researchers, and administrative support staff.

Interestingly, few comptrollers have been accountants, and only one, Abe Beame in 1974, ever went on to become mayor.

In the June 23rd Democratic Primary there are two candidates: Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President, and Justin Brannan, a City Council Member from South Brooklyn.

MARK LEVINE

Mark D. Levine has been Borough President of Manhattan since 2022. Previously, he served as member of the New York City Council from 2014 to 2021, where he represented the 7th District covering the Manhattan neighborhoods of Morning-side Heights, West Harlem, Washington Heights and part of the Upper West Side.

Levine grew up in Columbia, Maryland. He majored in physics at Haverford College and the University of Seville, Spain. He received a Masters in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 1995.

Levine taught bilingual math and science at Junior High School 149 in the South Bronx from 1991 to 1993. He was a Teach For America corps member in the program's early years.

In 1994 he founded Neighborhood Trust Federal Credit Union, a cooperatively-owned financial institution serving



MARK LEVINE.

low-income families in the Washington Heights section of Northern Manhattan.

In 2007 Levine was elected Democratic District Leader in the 71st Assembly District, Part A, representing parts of Hamilton Heights/West Harlem and Washington Heights. He won the election for the NYC Council in November 2013 and served two terms.

During his first term he served as chair of the City Council's Parks Committee, chair of the Council's Jewish Caucus, and co-chair of the Council's Affordable Housing Preservation Taskforce. Levine was lead sponsor of legislation passed in 2017 which established a right to counsel for low-income tenants facing eviction in housing court, making New York City the first place in the nation to grant such a right.

In his second term Levine served as chair of the City Council's Health Committee where he gained wide attention during the 2020 coronavirus pandemic.

MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

In 2021 Levine won an eight-way race in the Democratic Primary in the race for borough president, and took office on January 1, 2022. His accomplishments include The Million More Trees plan, which will expand the urban canopy, especially in chronically underplanted neighborhoods, the Manhattan Small Business Booster Loans program, which has provided \$2 million in interest-free loans to local entrepreneurs suffering from the pandemic; and the Campaign to Curb Congestion, which advocates for the implementation of two-way, variable congestion pricing, reforming e-commerce and deliveries, and expanding cycling infrastructure, especially through a dedicated

continued on page 7

Comptroller *continued from page 6*

bike lane on the West Side Highway.

Levine has been endorsed by Congressmen Jerry Nadler, Dan Goldman and Adriano Espaillat, along with State Sen. Brad Hoylman-Sigal, and Assembly Members Harvey Epstein and Tony Simone, plus Village Independent Democrats.



JUSTIN BRANNAN, the politician.

JUSTIN BRANNAN

Justin Lee Brannan is a politician and musician. A Democrat, he is the current New York City Council Member for the 47th District, based in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. A former musician, he was a founding member of the New York City hardcore bands Indecision and Most Precious Blood.

Brannan attended Xaverian High School in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. He studied journalism and mass media at Fordham University and College of Staten Island. Brannan is an outspoken vegetarian and animal welfare advocate. He lives with his wife and two greyhounds. After touring as a punk rock musician (see below) he



JUSTIN BRANNAN, the musician.

went to work at Bear Stearns working his way up as a clerk in their wealth management division, and working as a financier in the venture capital space raising money for start-up alternative energy companies based in Silicon Valley. Brannan later worked as a fundraising consultant for a number of non-profit humanitarian organizations in New York City.

After he left Bear Stearns he became director of communications and legislative affairs for New York City Council Member Vincent Gentile. Brannan and his wife opened a fine art school for children in Bay Ridge called The Art Room. Brannan also works closely with the 9/11 Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation commemorating the heroes of 9/11 and Building for America's Bravest, a program that constructs Smart Homes for military members returning home with devastating injuries.

Before entering politics, Justin Brannan was a hardcore punk guitarist for the bands Indecision from 1993 to 2000 and Most Precious Blood from 2000 onwards. The bands' messages focused on social justice, human rights, environmentalism, relationships, individuality, vegetarianism, and espousing straight-edge views against drugs, alcohol and promiscuous sex. Indecision is widely known for their song *Hallowed be Thy Name*.

In 2017, Brannan was first elected to the City Council from a crowded field of 10 candidates to represent southwest Brooklyn. In the City Council Brannan has served as finance chair, negotiating budgets for the last five years with the mayor.

His website says: "As Finance Chair, he fought to protect and expand the programs New Yorkers rely on most. When the Mayor proposed cruel cuts to libraries, early childhood education, cultural institutions, and after-school programs, Justin said, 'Hell no!' and won."

"Now, as a candidate for New York City Comptroller, Justin is ready to take his fight for working families citywide. He's committed to using the power of the Comptroller's office to tackle affordability because he knows working families aren't just struggling – they're leaving. So every dollar of our \$115 billion budget should go toward making life more livable."

"Justin is committed to fighting for a universal child care system, so no parent has to choose between paying rent and affording quality childcare."

"Justin pledges to develop a dedicated NYC Workers Housing Plan to create truly affordable housing options for city employees – teachers, nurses, sanitation workers, first responders, and all those who work hard to keep this city running."

Brannan has been endorsed by Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, the Working Families Party, Village Reform Democrats, Chelsea Reform Democrats, Transport Workers Union and Local 32BJ Building Service Workers.

IT'S ALL MY FAULT

Let Them Eat Tariffs

BY DUANE SCOTT CERNY



Yes, for the average man it's all too much to keep up with, absorb, accept, believe. Every day countless government agencies are dismantled by DOGE, thousands of government employees fired, then some re-hired, placing us all in a state of a perpetual mulligan.

The White House has twice asserted that Alexander Hamilton was a big fan of tariffs. Though a questionable claim at best, I'm certain Lin-Manuel Miranda could turn this into a quippy cipher rhyme slam. However, since he's presently unavailable, I'll give it a whirl...

"I can't explain the U.S. not being its best. It's a pistol, blindly fine with MAGA but a blur to all else, the pulse of America falling as markets falter, a helter-skelter hip hopping dream when Easter lays an egg, and its yellow-bellied yolk drops a joke. We dissed Kamala for a lame old dude, a guy so crude his oil buddies cringed, but hey, the money keeps pouring in, their pockets locking you out... And this is what happens when a somehow neglected, barely elected sheriff comes to town, the wrath of misguided tariffs taking us down to a bottom we saw coming if we'd only turned around."

That the Trump administration quotes or misquotes the dead is troubling enough. Republicans may fear the voting dead, but they have no problem resurrecting their support, even if a tariff séance is required.

These passing days are a fast-moving river of lies, misinformation and perhaps even a massive Republican burp of insider trading troubles. And though Donald Trump never met a lie he couldn't lie about, we still must cast our hook out and pull in the truth wherever possible. Here's another catch.

On April 3, Trump posted on his *Truth Social* platform: "This is why Warren Buffett just said Trump is making the best economic moves he's seen in over 50 years." Ninety-four-year-old Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway fame quickly retorted: "All such reports are false."

And that's the problem with misquoting the living: They always have something to say.

It is now common knowledge that Jared Kushner hired tariff-addicted Peter Navarro only by seeing the title of his highly questionable Amazon book, *Death by China*. And no, it isn't about dinnerware. Navarro's tariff source was an individual by the name of Ron Vara who turned out to be both a fictional economist invented by Navarro and an anagram. So, \$11 trillion evaporated by

the fever dream of an aborted Wordle.

Yes, an anagram. I am reminded of Mia Farrow's scene in *Rosemary's Baby* when the scrabble letters "Steven Marcato" are rearranged to spell "Roman Castevet," thus fulfilling the prophesy of yet another book, *All of Them Witches*. But I digress.

I've finally come to understand the Trump presidency by embracing the prophetic lyrics of Sam Cooke: "Don't know much about history. Don't know much biology. Don't know much about science book. Don't know much about the French I took."

History. Biology. Science. Turns out Sam Cooke was a poetical Nostradamus, echoing the positions of the Trump administration like a seer with a catalog to all future tariffs. Or better still, an Amazon without a rainforest.

As for the French, much like a quatrain open to interpretation, the only French quotation most Americans know is "Let them eat cake." I doubt Marie Antoinette consulted the palace baker before coining that phrase, and though half baked, the masses did not resist without a rising of the lower crust. Apropos of her near final words, most of the world knows what happened next. And it wasn't a free pass day at The Louvre.

As we all struggle to balance the lies proffered from both the living and the dead, the president plays golf. Like a lot. While global markets collapsed, Trump played with the Saudis at Mar-a-Lago, moving into the finals of what may be the end of the world as we know it. Apparently, he's very excited as he advances through his golfing challengers like falling Republican midterms. It's a par none.

Perhaps sportswriter Rick Reilly summed up this situation best in his book: *Commander in Cheat: How Golf Explains Trump*. Apparently, Trump moves his balls so often, he doesn't even need to turn his head and cough. Seriously. He is famous for lying about the lie he just claimed. He and his balls are a continually moving target to his competitors. And if Stormy Daniels received \$130,000 to keep the Trump liaison private, I can only imagine how much his caddy is taking in.

There are few, if any, parallels to this histrionically historic moment in time, and even fewer phrases that have encapsulated what the F happened.

Let them eat tariffs? Let them eat golf balls? Nero fiddled whilst Donald golfed? Or perhaps, sadly: "The victor will never be asked if he told the truth." Adolph Hitler, *Letters and Notes*.

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 fearless podcasters. Contact him at E-ThanklessGreetings@yahoo.com

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Village. A true community effort!

LETTERS to the EDITOR

Congestion Pricing

In an article from the April 2024 edition, Aadvika Gupta notes that data backs up a driver's claim that traffic into the city is worse after congestion pricing. While it is true that the data tracker mentioned (congestion-pricing-tracker.com) does show a post-pricing bump for the specific route mentioned at that specific time of day, this is a bit of a cherry-picked example. That route shows a strong benefit later in the day, and many other bridge and tunnel routes show benefits even during the morning commute. No policy will be perfect for everyone, but when reporting on the victims of congestion pricing, it is important to weigh it against the, potentially much larger, group of people who benefit (and that is to say nothing of the MTA riders, who are also absent from the article).

Grace Lindsay

Assistant Professor, Psychology & Data Science
New York University

Drugs in Greenwich Village

I've just read Mia Isacson's article in the March 2025 issue of *The Village View*, "Is It Me or Do We Have a Drug Issue in Greenwich Village?"

I was born a few decades ago living in the 6th Ave. neighborhood Ms. Isacson singles out. And I can say, it seems to me the issue might be her!

Greenwich Village does not have a drug issue; it has an affordability and gentrification issue. In that process it has lost its heart, its intelligence, and the creative energy. Despite my

age — day or night — I now feel safer than ever both on 6th Ave. and in our neighborhood parks. Before the gentrification of Soho — when there were many more homeless human beings in our streets — very few of them were "dangerous." Indeed, it's possible that there may be more gentrifiers using drugs — out of our sight — in the hip restaurants and office toilets of Wall Street investment firms and "billionaires' row" uptown.

I recommend a wonderful anthropological study, *Side-walk* by Mitchell Duneier (1999) in which many of those street dwellers tell their own stories.

Newcomers to The Village seem to forget that until the late 1980s Greenwich Village was a scruffy, very affordable neighborhood which had been attracting writers, dancers, painters, musicians, since the 1920s. Until the end of the 90s, rent was so cheap that many artists could afford to live in Soho's large lofts and in the many tenement apartments that cram the streets from the Hudson River to the East River.

It is true, that before the scourge of gentrification, there were many more homeless people in those streets. But that only makes clear that we need more affordable housing, more good public schools, more work for families of all incomes, and access to healthy food. These are the necessities that make a neighborhood safe for everyone. Even artists.

Although Greenwich Village is now safer than it was when artists could afford to live here, I'm sad to say, Greenwich Village will never again be the vibrant community that made NYC the creative mecca of America. Now, it belongs to the transient population of NYU students and to the very rich

continued on page 9

The Importance of Non-Profit Local Media in This Era

BY ARTHUR SCHWARTZ

We have entered a really scary era in American history.

Before the 2024 election Donald Trump sued lots of media companies about how they covered him, and rarely, if ever, won. In one case his lawyers were assessed sanctions for bringing a frivolous lawsuit against Hillary Clinton, and Judge Middlebrooks stated: "Mr. Trump is a prolific and sophisticated litigant who is repeatedly using the courts to seek revenge on political adversaries. He is the mastermind of strategic abuse of the judicial process, and he cannot be seen as a litigant blindly following the advice of a lawyer. He knew full well the impact of his actions." Middlebrooks wrote, "As such, I find that sanctions should be imposed upon Mr. Trump and his lead counsel, Ms. Habba."

Now that prolific litigator is president, and he is wielding power in a way that no president ever has. He signs executive orders barring law firms from federal buildings. He had barred the *Associated Press* from even appearing in the White House. Lawsuits that ABC and CNN deemed frivolous a year ago were settled with millions going to Trump "charities." He even sued a pollster who said he would lose to Kamala Harris in Iowa. As a private citizen, Trump was involved in more than 4,000 lawsuits. Now he is directing his Attorney General, who praises Trump in every other sentence when she speaks, to do the same, using the power of the US Attorney's office. Jeff Bezos has taken control of the *Washington Post* editorial page, which he had promised not to go near. Paul Krugman and Charles Blow left the *NY Times*, complaining about censorship. Trump has demanded a say in university curricula, and the professors they hire. Material people write is being

studied by "Homeland Security." So far, his targets have been foreign nationals, even those who are permanent residents with green cards, who have been arrested on the street and detained in Louisiana. One day soon, it may be a US citizen, accused of "assisting a foreign enemy," by publishing something the government did, or something Trump said. The McCarthy period saw much of the same — it could happen again.

As a result, much of the media, but not all, has cowered. But *Village View* will not. We are the voice of a vibrant community, which may be scared, but which is raising its voice. We need your help to survive. All our writers and contributors work for free. But we have paid staff, and printing 12,000 copies of our paper costs money. We would like to distribute more, and expand past 3rd Avenue, the boundary of distribution now. We would like to have events. Ads help. If you know a business that advertises, ask them. There is a bill pending in Albany which will give a tax **credit** to advertisers in local papers like ours. If you can donate, please do. We have a QR Code in the paper, or you can send a check to us at 225 Broadway Suite 1902, NY, NY 10007. And if you have something to say, write something. Send it to editor@villageview.nyc.

We will survive the next 4 years — **IF WE STAND TOGETHER** and keep our voices up. The American people are already rebelling. Even if the Democratic Party is in disarray Trumpy candidates aren't doing very well. Most Americans don't like to see tens of thousands fired, health care slashed, and a president dancing cheek to cheek with Putin. Let *Village View* be your voice.

Character

BY TOM LAMIA

What does President Trump's character tell us of his prospects for his success and ours? His high energy and loose regard for truth are problematic to his governance. He is capable of charm at a high level. Both friends and enemies, in business and politics, have noted this part of his character with approval. He speaks from his core, needing no script, and says what he thinks. That, too, is often praised. But there is danger in it.

He is a storyteller who warms to his story as he tells it, making it better and bigger, skirting the truth when necessary for effect. The press has described this style as a "firehose of falsehoods" that seek to "flood the zone," leaving no room for others. He is not the first to do this. These are techniques well-known in political messaging, but he is a master at it. He is the source of most of his stories, speaking as one who has seen or heard the event firsthand. Remember: on 9/11 he saw Muslims celebrating in New Jersey on his TV. What he says can be preposterous, but he is out front with it. Any challenge will have to deal with his "firsthand" account. The result (and intent) is to send the opposition off on a search to disprove his story while he launches yet another false message. Occasionally the lie will be so palpable and immediate that the political objective boomerangs. He ignores the ensuing debate and never admits error, leaving it open for those who want to believe. Meanwhile, the competition exhausts itself seeking evidence to disprove his lies. Remember: Obama was born in Kenya. Not good character.

Candidate Trump tried and failed to change the 2020 vote count by first going to the courts and state legislatures, and then on January 6, 2021, to mob justice. He remains convinced, without evidence, that he won the 2020 election. His assurance is based on nothing more than his professed incredulity that he could have lost. Now he has won the 2024 election, but still refuses to concede that he lost in 2020. His mantra is to deny everything and never admit error. Is this his narcissism or simply bad form? It is not good character in either case, but the voting public has not held him to account, so it is a winning formula.

The Justice Department was in the process of following the law and convicting him of numerous serious felonies during his time out of office. He escaped by winning the election. But is he feeling absolved and grateful? No. He is hell bent on using his presidential power against anyone who had a role in his prosecutions or who served him with insufficient servility. Abuse of office includes not only using it for corrupt personal gain, but also using it for corrupt vindictive punishment. They are cuts from the same piece of cloth. Both reflect bad character.

Donald Trump was lawfully elected twice. He was also impeached twice, indicted for several state and federal crimes and found li-

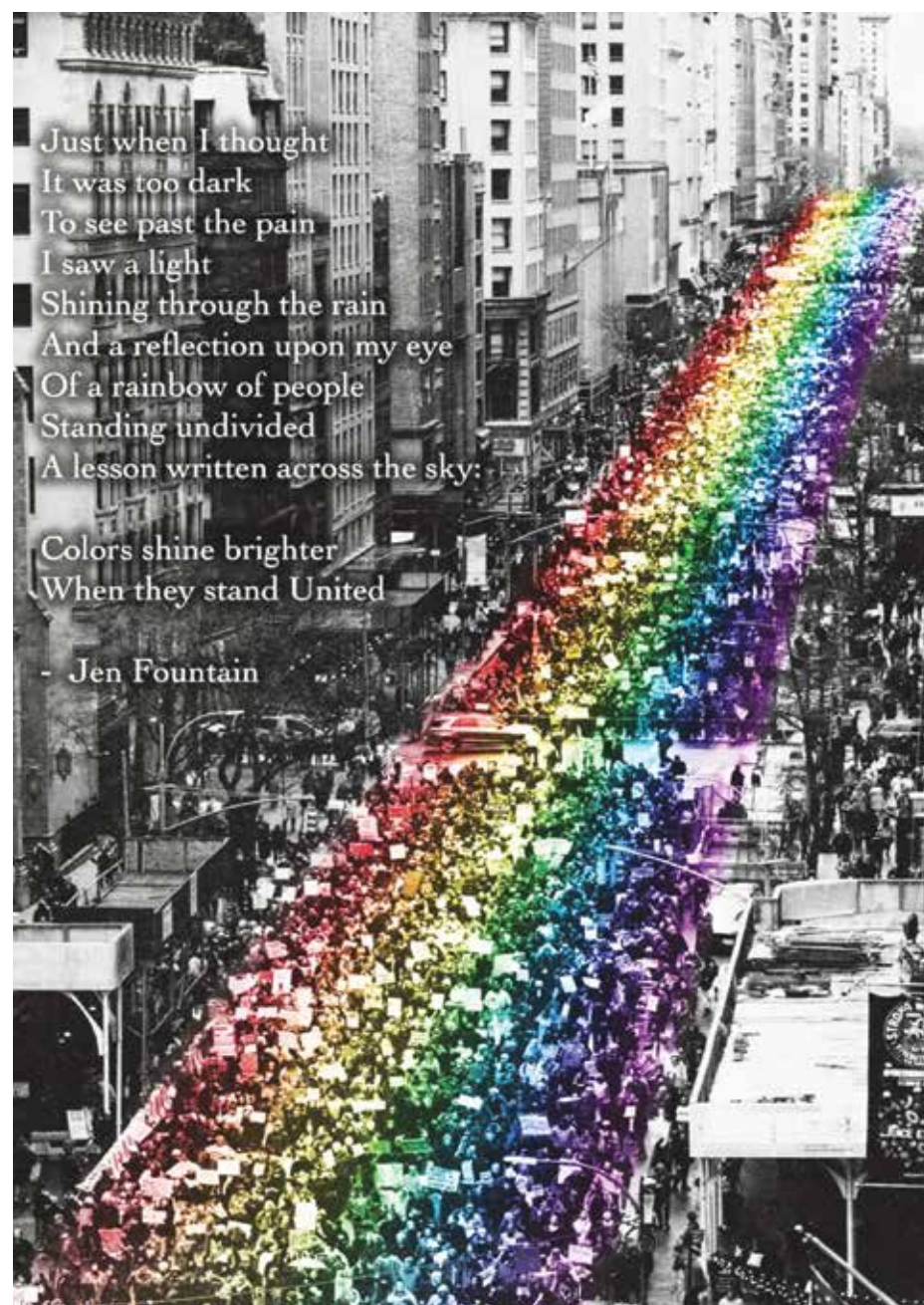
able for civil fraud against the State of New York and civilly liable for defaming a woman who accused him of rape. He was convicted by a unanimous jury on 34 felony fraud counts. That conviction still stands despite an unconditional discharge sentence as any other sentence would encroach on his ability to serve as president. Not a testament to high moral character.

Our system faces a further challenge now that the Supreme Court has ruled that presidents are immune from prosecution for their official acts. The dissenting justices concluded that the result puts presidents above the law. He agrees, offering words of apparent gratitude to the Chief Justice in the ceremonial hand shaking following the State of the Union address. He appears to have a personal rabbit's foot that offsets his character failings.

Many of his post-election actions have been contrary to his campaign statements. Suddenly we switch sides in the Ukraine war, convert Putin to best friend, undertake the Project 2025 plan (that he knew nothing about), hosting dictator Orban at Mar-a-Lago with praise as a leadership example, using Elon Musk's money as a threat to primary wobbly congressional Republicans, and giving plenary power to Musk to restructure the federal work force. What comes next?

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution gives Congress, not the president, the power to tax and spend, including imposing tariffs. He waives Congress aside by declaring an emergency, directing the government to spend, not spend, claw back, freeze, reduce, eliminate or limit spending regardless of Congress's budget appropriations. He uses tariffs as a principal foreign and domestic policy tool with no input from a Republican Congress that fears him more than they fear their voters. He says it's okay because we have an emergency. The only emergency is his blatant power grab from a supine Congress. The final arbiter on this will be the Supreme Court. Its immunity decision suggests cause for concern.

In the Federalist Papers, James Madison wrote that the proposed constitution did not provide a specific solution for every possible threat to the nation. It was not to be a cure-all. Its design of a republican form, with checks and balances, would protect us from ourselves as well as from our enemies. As Madison well understood, the safety of the country will always stand on or near the precipice of a slippery slope. The tolerances between the freedom and justice and a domino progression to anarchy is finely drawn. The three branches of government each has an essential place and limits. To assume that conflicts will settle themselves without further input from the people would be naïve. The founders are not with us today, but they did understand the problem we now face. We must use their plan, our Constitution, to get through it. It will take character.



APRIL 5 HANDS OFF RALLY. Image courtesy of luna.lingua.

Letters continued from page 8

who have transformed the vibrant streets of Soho into a boring, expensive shopping mall for tourists and celebrities. The whole country is impoverished by that banality.

Kate Herskovitch

Cuomo

In a disturbing move, some political, religious, and union leaders announced their support for Andrew Cuomo for Mayor. Having these leaders side with a confessed sexual harasser, is deplorable. He admitted as much and resigned, but is now reneging on that confession to run for mayor, countering his victims into submission. His scandals cost taxpayers millions in court and settlement fees.

During Cuomo's tenure NYS rents rose by 33%. In NYC 50% of tenants became rent burdened - spiking homelessness while enriching real estate developers. He underfunded NYC schools, then ignored a Court's order to provide the \$2 billion owed. When he resigned that debt had increased to \$4 billion - placing NYS shamefully at #48 in the US with the biggest gap between rich and poor districts.

He created the disastrous Tier 6 - treating new hires as second class citizens - in-

creasing service years, contributions, and penalties, while decreasing benefits. This caused mounting vacancies and the inability to attract new workers to replace Tier 4 retirees.

This self-professed "car guy" syphoned \$465 million from the MTA, while subways fell further into disrepair. He refused to refund, instead proposing using \$216 million to create a light and music show at NYC bridges.

But the most unforgivable was his order placing Covid patients in nursing homes - exposing residents to the virus and leading to 15,000 deaths. He's now accused of lying to Congress, with this case referred to the DOJ for prosecution. Do we want another mayor beholden to Trump for a pardon for his misdeeds?

Although a Queens native, he's only shown contempt for our city. The suffering inflicted in his years as governor is unforgivable. Please DO NOT RANK this immensely corrupt, self-serving, and most possibly criminal politician in the upcoming primaries. NYC CAN and MUST do better than this!

Rebeca Pagan-Rodriguez

Novogratz Place Sells 114 Waverly Place

BY BRIAN J PAPE, AIA, LEED-AP



114 WAVERLY PLACE STREET FRONT. Credit: Brian J. Pape, AIA.

Celeste Martin, a former actress and dancer and the eccentric “Queen” of the Village, died in December 2018 at 98 years old by some reports. She lived in her home at 114 Waverly Place or in other nearby apartments even before 1985 when she inherited eight buildings from her father. She had loved sharing the hot pink painted townhouse with her artist friends, often at no rent charge.

Robert and Courtney Novogratz bought the townhouse from the estate in 2020 for \$8.5 million. They began renovating the four-story, 6,800 square foot home, known as “Novogratz Place,” housing their family and interior furnishings firm. The Novogratzes have flipped several homes, including the one on 400 West Street near Charles Street several years ago.

The Waverly home was originally one of nine rowhouses built in 1826, then radically changed in 1920, getting Italian styling, an English basement stoop, Art Nouveau round-arched windows, and an earthy color scheme for owner Murray P. Bewley. Martin changed that to hot pink, but the Landmarks Preservation Commission wanted a more historic yellow for Novogratzes’ 2022 finishing work, and the warm yellow glows like a sunflower. With the curtains pulled back the sparkling chandeliers inside the parlor floor spill light onto the street.

In the 3/9/25 real estate section of the *New York Times*, Vivian Marino reported that the townhouse was sold for \$20.8 million to an anonymous buyer. We wish the iconic home well.

“No More 24!” Home Care Workers Demand Protection from Wage Theft and Abuse

BY PHYLLIS ECKHAUS

May Day and workers’ rights have been entwined since the late 19th century campaign for an eight-hour work day. This year, workers and allies plan a huge May Day rally at New York City Hall to condemn a labor abuse so Dickensian it’s hard to imagine it exists in our time—the 24-hour shifts that present-day New York City home care attendants are forced to work, often several days at a stretch.

Adding insult to injury, because current law requires meal breaks and five hours of rest, home attendants enduring 24-hour shifts are paid only for 13 hours of work, unless they formally challenge the theft of their wages. A City Council bill has stalled because Council Speaker Adrienne Adams has thus far refused to schedule a hearing, which is a prerequisite to a vote. The bill titled “No More 24!”, Introduction No. 615, would amend the city code to limit maximum hours for home care aides.

CONSTANT VIGILANCE

Lai Yee Chan—a retired home care worker who’d been responsible for a bed-bound client with Alzheimer’s—told *The Village View* through an interpreter how she’d had to be constantly vigilant, throughout her 24-hours-a-day shifts, which she was forced to work straight, three to five days at a time.

Chan had to turn her patient every two hours to prevent bed sores. And she had to be on red alert to her patient’s potential breathing problems and once called 911 to get her hospitalized. It was clear the hospital had not matched Chan’s vigilance because her patient came home with bed sores.

After eight years as an always-on-the-alert home care attendant, forced to work days and nights on end, Chan still has ongoing insomnia. She also grieves the toll on her life and family. “I couldn’t spend time with my children and watch them grow up. My husband had to quit his job to watch the children.”

“NO MORE 24!” BILL

District 1 Council Member Christopher Marte, who first introduced a version of “No More 24!” in 2022, noted that tens of thousands of workers—overwhelmingly immigrant women of color—are affected, and that the work, which includes lifting patients, is exhausting and injury-prone. Home care attendants “have to be super-focused,” putting enormous “stress on... mind and body.” He condemned the home care industry and insurance companies for

treating home attendants as servants.

It’s an issue Marte takes personally. His mother worked consecutive 24-hour shifts as a home care attendant. “Seeing her leave and not come back for two days really put a strain on [our] family.” He added, “We’ve talked to a lot of home attendants who’ve gotten divorced or have been unable to see their kid graduate from school or celebrate their birthdays.”

NEW SUPPORT FROM LOCAL 1199

Marte observed there was a lengthy City Council hearing more than a year and a half ago on his original bill, which was then opposed by Local 1199, the health care workers’ union. That bill capped work hours to 35 a week. He said the bill has since been amended to allow limited additional weekly hours, typically with advance notice and written consent from the home care worker, and that 1199 has dropped its opposition.

Marte countered bill opponents who contend “we don’t have the money to do this,” noting that New York City is the only place in the state allowing 24-hour shifts. “When you look at other parts of the state... it’s something that can definitely be done.” He underscored how current law promotes abuse and profiteering, pointing to the over 100 thousand city home care attendants who have sued for back pay.

As for those who claim the bill exceeds the city’s authority to regulate work hours, Marte explained that the bill was carefully drafted to modify the New York City Fair Workweek Act, which protects fast food and retail workers, and which has already survived court challenge.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Touting wide support for the bill, which includes Republican co-sponsors, Marte believes the measure would pass if only it could be scheduled for a new hearing and subsequent vote.

Last spring, home care workers staged a five-day hunger strike outside City Hall, attempting—unsuccessfully—to get a vote on the previous bill.

Chan blames Speaker Adams for single-handedly blocking “No More 24!” “She is a dictator,” Chan declared, “colluding with the insurance companies and the Chinese-American Planning Council,” (a major employer of city home care attendants).

With a mix of fury and wry humor, she expressed hope that “perhaps the president will read this article and investigate her.”

NO LIST OF THE GREAT TREES OF GREENWICH VILLAGE would be complete without the weeping willow at the Sasaki Garden, which sits between the Washington Square Village slabs. This tree bears brutal winters with grace and bursts forth in spring with fine but hardy leaves on its lithe limbs, arms of dozens of dancers. For residents and the community at large, it serves as a touchstone of resilient beauty. Photo credit: Susan M. Silver.



CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE

Jaana Rehnstrom, M.D. Women's Rights Advocate

BY JOY PAPE, BRIAN J. PAPE, AIA, AND KRISTIINE OJA

We interviewed Dr. Rehnstrom and her long-time associate Kristiine Oja, at the doctor's home on Morton Street.

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF.

I grew up in Finland and studied medicine at the University of Helsinki. From an early age, I've been passionate about human rights—something that really took root during my student years when I joined the Finnish section of Amnesty International. That's how I met my husband in 1978—a fellow activist and professor at CUNY. I moved to New York in 1982, specialized in Obstetrics and Gynecology at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital, married in 1983 and built a life here while raising our two children. Along the way, I also completed a Master's in Public Health at Columbia University. In 2002, I started the Finland Center Foundation, a volunteer organization for expat Finns which operated in various rented spaces in town.

After retiring from my medical career in 2015 to spend more time with my husband, I still wanted to do something meaningful. That's when I launched the Kota Alliance, an organization born out of my earlier work with the Finland Center Foundation. Kota brought together my passions for women's empowerment and human rights, especially for marginalized women. We officed at the Centre for Social Innovation, a co-working space in Chelsea, that went under in 2020 due to COVID. This led to re-locating the organization to Harlem in 2022 where we wanted to do something good after the devastation caused by the pandemic.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO THE VILLAGE?

My husband rented the ground floor of our Morton Street home in 1965, and a year later bought the upper floors with some partners. I've lived here since 1982, raising our kids while also spending summers in Finland at our cabin in the archipelago. I've lived here longer than I ever lived in Finland—so this truly feels like home.

WHAT DOES THE VILLAGE MEAN TO YOU?

Even though much of our activism was global, everyone needs a place to feel grounded, and the Village has done that for me. It reminds me a bit of Finland—the human scale of the buildings, the quiet charm, the connection to nature. The garden plot means a great deal to me. Finns are close to nature, so waking up in the morning and seeing the



DR. REHNSTROM'S TOWNHOUSE is not actually on Morton Street. It is tucked away in the courtyard of the block, where the door opens onto the garden front yard, an unusual feature in the city. Photo by Brian J. Pape, AIA.

The Kota Alliance— A Global Hub for Gender Equity

Kota Alliance empowers marginalized women and girls through advocacy, arts & culture, and health & wellness. Based in West Harlem, Kota connects local action with global gender equity efforts.

- This is a collaborative space for women entrepreneurs and organizations advancing gender equality.
- Programs include free weekly yoga, intergenerational healing and education for girls/gender non-conforming teens and families, book launches, and more.
- All programs are run in partnership with community organizations.
- "Kota" means a teepee-like structure in the Sami language of Lapland—symbolizing shelter and gathering.
- Kota Nest offers women-only short-term lodging, welcoming all who identify as women, and providing a safe, empowering environment.
- Learn more at <https://www.kota-alliance.org>

trees and flowers from my window makes all the difference. It was also a great place to raise our children who attended Grace Church School. One now lives in Brooklyn and the other in the Hudson Valley.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING IN THE VILLAGE?

I love walking in Hudson River Park with my Nordic walking poles—it's a great workout and keeps my arms and wrists in shape, too. It's a nod to skiing back home, even if there's no snow. I've learned to laugh off the curious looks!

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE RESTAURANTS OR SHOPS IN THE VILLAGE?

Rafele, Snack Taverna, The Clam, Merriweather. McNulty's for tea and coffee; Health and Harmony for good food. Golden Rule Wine & Liquor.

HOW DID THE PANDEMIC AFFECT YOU?

I lost my husband in 2019, and I'm thankful he passed at home and didn't have to go through the isolation of the pandemic. That time also inspired me to move Kota Alliance to Harlem. I felt an urgency to be more present in a community that was deeply impacted and needed rebuilding and hope.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR PASSIONS.

I've been an activist my entire life, and as a physician, I treated women from all walks of life—including refugees who had endured unimaginable trauma like Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. I was part of the Asylum Network of Physicians for Human Rights, where I worked closely with female asylum seekers. Throughout my volunteer work with various Non-Government Organizations, I saw the fragmentation and lack of resources that held many women-led initiatives back. That's why I created Kota Alliance—to bring people together and create a collaborative space focused on empowerment and healing.

We spent time listening to what the community needed, especially single mothers and marginalized women. That led us to focus on arts & culture and health & wellness. Art, in particular, is a powerful tool for mental health and self-expression.

And if you or your guests ever need a place to stay in the city, check out the Kota Nest at St. Nicholas Place. The house has a history as a guest home for people visiting 5th Avenue residents—and we're carrying on that tradition. It's cozy, affordable, and just a 45-minute subway ride away on the A or D lines.

Forced Retirement Isn't That Bad, Is It?

BY ALEC PRUCHNICKI, MD

Wednesday March 26 was probably the last day of my medical career, which started in 1990. Retirement was forced on me by the medical group I was affiliated with when they replaced me with a person who could give them the productivity they wanted. It doesn't take much to see that the problem of one little person doesn't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world (I love stealing lines from old Humphrey Bogart movies), but here are the details that explain my situation and a lot about how medicine is practiced today in the United States.

My practice was in a Medicaid supported, non-profit, community run assisted living facility in Manhattan, called Vista on 5th Avenue. The patients I saw were old, 90% were on Medicaid, and all had some medical problems or another. I had been there since 2003 and had affiliations with St. Vincent's Hospital, St. Luke's Hospital, Mount Sinai, one private practice that billed per office visit, and one managed care organization. My final affiliation was with a group called Visiting Docs (aka Visiting Services d/b/a Visiting Docs) which is a private group billing Medicare and Medicaid by the visit.

My patients were old, mostly poor, and sick. Often, I would spend a lot of time listening to their detailed history and multiple medical complaints. Usually, I would see few patients, maybe five or six a day, besides interacting with the staff, some drug plans for prior authorizations, and an occasional managed care insurance company. My first five affiliations never gave me a problem about my low number of office visits because various subsidies kept the practice going. But Visiting Docs had no such subsidies and only survived by billing Medicare and Medicaid, both of which reimburse doctor visits poorly.

I was able to increase my office visits to about 10 a day, but they were requesting 20-25 visits a day like many internal medicine practices. A long-detailed visit of 30-45 minutes would have roughly the same reimbursement as a 15-minute visit, so if I could replace a 30 minute with two 15-minute visits I would bring in twice the income. I tried to change my style of interacting with my patients but could seldom get my encounters up past 15 or so a day. This wasn't enough. I don't know if my practice was in the red or in the black, but I know it wasn't enough to keep my sponsoring organization happy. They eventually replaced me with another physician who they hope can have the productivity they want.

What does this mean to people when they interact with a physician? When patients switched to me as their primary physician, the most common reason was that their previous doctors were just too rushed. Sometimes a simple visit for a healthy patient could be done in 15 minutes and sometimes it just wasn't satisfactory to the person. I'm sure many people reading this may have had similar experiences. This is the way medicine is practiced in many settings with low primary care funding being the root cause of the assembly line pace of medical office visits. If you find that your doctor is asking you to come back for another office visit for any reason instead of taking care of all your issues at one time, this might be the reason.

I wish the new doctor well and hope he can keep my former patients satisfied with the care while keeping the practice solvent. After 22 years at this location, I want to make it succeed and provide good care for my former patients. Meanwhile, I'm trying to figure out what to do with my time now that I have a lot of it. I'm thinking of more writing, maybe a few books, maybe on social media, whatever. Fortunately, I've stashed enough away in my 401K pensions that the stock market is keeping my own finances solvent. Wait, what...the stock market?!

Eye to Eye

BY KEITH MICHAEL



THE WIDE-EYED CURIOSITY of two Great Horned Owlets. Photo by Keith Michael.

"Track 17 is ready for passenger boarding."

I can't tell you where I'm headed, but I'm hoping to see some Great Horned Owlets! In April and May, I'm usually chasing migrating warblers passing through on their way north from their winter vacations in South America. However, this spring I've spent a fair amount of time galivanting north, south, east, and west to set my peepers on those elusive denizens of the night: owls.

What is the magnetism of owls? Maybe it's the invisibility of their nocturnal lives, or their mournful (or scary) hooting in the middle of the night. Maybe it's their nearly silent flight or how downright difficult it is to actually see them at any time. Perhaps it's their plush toy roundness. Frankly, though, I think what sums up owls' allure is their piercing, forward-facing eyes.

Most birds' eyes are on the sides of their heads. Being lower on the food chain, this configuration gives birds nearly 360-degree vision to help them evade becoming a meal. True, raptors' and other hunting birds' eyes have migrated more toward the fronts of their heads. Binocular vision helps them focus on snaring dinner. But an owl's eyes face directly forward like ours. But unlike ours, their eyes are much larger, are tubes, not globes, and don't move in their sockets. To look to the side, an owl has to swivel its head. You can't get a "side-eye" from an owl. This means that their gaze looks hauntingly right at you, and unnervingly, seemingly right through you. When an owl looks at you, you seem to have their full attention. Our self-centeredness loves that.

Just in the past several weeks I've had the good fortune, after walking a goodly number of miles, of seeing 13 Great Horned Owls, three Eastern Screech Owls, and two Barn Owls. I've gone out looking for so many more—unsuccessfully. Confession: my obsession has led me to New Jersey, Long Island, Westchester, and all five boroughs. NJ Transit, the LIRR, Metro-North, and the MTA are my friends. Of course, I'm always hoping to happen upon an owl in the West Village, but after two decades of searching, my neighborhood list remains owl-less. According to the ethics of responsible birding, the locations of daytime owl roosts are to be kept secret so that owls are not disturbed while they're trying to catch some shut-eye. However, people are notoriously inept at keeping secrets, so the word does trickle out.

My personal prize is watching an owl nest with owlets.

For me, owlets are in the upper echelon of competitive cuteness along with penguins, corgi puppies, and Piping Plover chicks. Owlets are fluffy, have a surfeit of both feist and awkwardness, are both helpless and resilient, and they have huge eyes. Great Horned Owls, our largest local owls, build or refurbish stick nests high in trees, redecorate large tree cavities or broken off trunks, or occasionally, squat in man-made structures. Diminutive Screech Owls repurpose old woodpecker holes or other tree cavities. The monkey-faced Barn Owls have developed a proclivity for man-made housing; barns suit them perfectly due to their proximity to self-plenishing larders.

An owl nest in the wild is my favorite. Frequently, an NYC-environs nest becomes known and going there is like jostling for runway seating during Fashion Week. One intimidating camera rig after another elbows in for the prime real estate with the twig-free view. But recently, I've had the unprecedented luxury (for me) of having had not just one or two, but three Great Horned Owl nests all to myself. I could stay put, or wander around looking for a different angle—all at a respectful distance, of course—or ramble for other birds while waiting for something to "happen" in the nest. Watching a toddler sleeping has, perhaps, limited appeal, but one never knows what to expect when observing owlets on the verge of fledging. Yes, they might conk out into a nap, but there also might be a wrestling match with their sibling in a cavity getting smaller by the hour. Stretching those new-fangled wings takes dexterity but, more likely than not, it's a pageant of adorable clumsiness. Mom or Dad might suddenly drop in with a freshly caught snack or leftover from yesterday. Oh, and for additional entertainment, there's always the search for Mom or Dad themselves in a nearby tree—keeping watch if protective interference is needed, but really, just trying to snooze in preparation for the long night ahead of "bringing home the bacon" to this clamorous gang.

By the time you read this, the young'uns I've been watching will likely have left their nests. Don't worry. It will be several months before they're completely on their own. Over time, Mom and Dad will be "fresh-directing" less and less, forcing the kids to practice catching free range meals on their own.

I do hope that all goes well for them and that I'll be able to see them again next season.

Shrubbiest Parks Can Help Migratory Birds

BY GEORGIA SILVERA SEAMANS

Spring brings more than showers and flowers. Birds arrive in New York in the hundreds and thousands starting in April. They don't pack lunch for their flights. When these neotropical birds stopover in the city, they have to make do with whatever resources are available in our savanna-like urban landscapes. One of the best ways to help birds is to make our parks function more like native forests.

A temperate forest is composed of several layers: canopy, mid-story, understory, and forest floor. The mid-story canopy layer is composed of shrubs and small trees. These small trees are either short-statured tree species or young individuals of large-statured trees. In New York, our forests' mid-story canopy layers are composed of native shrubs and small trees like Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*), Pinxter Azalea (*Rhododendron periclymenoides*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier* spp.), and Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*). Notably, tree and shrub regeneration is not allowed to progress in the city's thousands of acres of landscaped parks. This management regime further hinders the formation of a native mid-story.

One third of bird species in the U.S. are in decline across all habitats according to the

2025 State of Birds Report. Millions of birds migrate through the city each year with some stopping over and even breeding in all boroughs. Refueling and nesting sites are primarily located in areas of the city with more intact forest layers. Many New York City parks don't even feature a mid-story layer of vegetation. The dominant layers are a ground cover of lawn grass, ornamental annuals, and introduced perennials and a canopy layer. In other parks, there are shrubs and small trees, but they're mostly non-native species. Many birds rely on the spatial niche provided by a native mid-story layer. We could help birds by expanding this layer. Native plants provide food for adult birds and chicks. Native fruit is more nutritious than the fruits of introduced plant species.

Additionally, forest fruits can be a cultural resource. Fruit picking, gleanings, and foraging are important practices in Afro-descendant communities. After the Civil War, southern legislatures passed criminal trespass laws to deter African Americans from foraging on previously accessible land. Here in New York City, a 1740 "slave code" enacted by the Common Council prohibited Black New Yorkers from selling their own produce including fruits. But a growing number of

Afro-descendent people are once again connecting with our urban forests.

While adult birds are omnivorous, chicks are insectivorous. Insects like caterpillars are the main component of their diet. Caterpillars have evolutionary relationships with native plants. In the absence of these plants, caterpillar populations decline. Without sufficient caterpillar populations, breeding bird reproduction is compromised. Doug Tallamy, professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware, notes that a clutch of Carolina Chickadee chicks requires up to 9,000 caterpillars for successful development. Desiree Narango, a conservation biologist, and her colleagues have identified that having more than 70% of native plants in a residential yard is a crucial threshold, below which a breeding pair might not be able to replace themselves.

Shrubs and small trees are also nesting sites. Introduced plant species provide sub-optimal nesting structure. Research shows that birds experience more nest predation when they locate their nests in introduced species. Moreover, research shows that future nesting site re-occupation is reduced when birds experience reproductive failure.

Finally, birds provide what are known as

"invisible" ecosystem services such as pollination, seed dispersal, and predation on harmful insects including disease vectors.

One of the joys of spending time with wild birds is listening to the diversifying chorus of songs and seeing the bevy of colorful plumage as migratory birds arrive in the city. Tuning into bird song on spring days is like a spa treatment for your brain. Noticing all the field marks—cheek patches, eyelines, caps, rumps, and tails—is directed attention, yet it is not fatiguing work. It is a restorative experience.

Our parks can be transformed into more robust havens for birds. Add clusters of native shrubs and small trees to capital projects. Call it a mid-layer retrofit. Each time a small tree or shrub needs to be replaced in a landscaped park, choose a native species alternative. Let's ensure we can hear the songs of the birds who have migrated here for millennia (and that New Yorkers have more opportunities to experience biodiversity).

Georgia Silvera Seamans has managed street tree planting contracts and community forestry programs. She teaches environmental studies at two universities in NYC.

Let's Make a Deal

BY SIGGY RAIBLE

Remember the 1960s TV show *Let's Make A Deal*? (Boy am I dating myself!) Well, CBS recently brought it back. Not to be outdone, our president, the author of *The Art of the Deal*, is proffering a whole slew of deals to law firms, universities, immigrants and foreign countries.

Let's see the deals he's offered to prominent law firms in the form of executive orders. Why don't we look at the two law firms who took the offers? Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison agreed, among other things, to provide \$40 million in pro bono legal services for issues the president champions. In exchange the White House would lift its order banning Paul, Weiss entry into government buildings and reinstate security clearances, thus allowing the law firm to continue to reap revenues which in 2024 totaled \$2.63 billion.

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, not as nimble as Paul, Weiss, agreed to provide \$100 million towards pro bono work for administration-approved issues as well as other terms similar to those Paul, Weiss agreed to.

Other executive orders/memos/letters offered universities the opportunity to avail themselves of the federal funding provided in prior years if only they would agree to revisit their DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) programs, revise their Middle Eastern

programs, and up their security to "protect" students and faculty against antisemitism. New York's Columbia University, buckling under the administration's pressure, hopes the \$400 million in federal funding will continue; funds which support cutting edge scientific and technological research.

Deals can be made with foreign governments like the one El Salvador made with the Trump administration. El Salvador has agreed to accept and imprison 200 or so alleged criminal (mostly) Nicaraguan gang members in exchange for six million American dollars to cover the room and board of these supposed gang members. None of these prisoners were afforded due process, the right to confront their accusers (in this case, the US government). Trump is even considering sending American citizens he euphemistically calls "home grown criminals" who have committed "heinous crimes" to the same prison in El Salvador. (It is said that the facility, CECOT, can hold up to 40,000 to 50,000 individuals under inhuman conditions.) I wonder what price President Bukele, the self-styled "cool dictator," would accept to conclude this deal.

And how about the offer President Trump extended to Ukrainian President Zelensky? Since Zelensky doesn't hold the cards to make a deal, he should just agree to sign

over the country's rights to mineral, oil and other natural resources. After all, since Russia's unprovoked attack of Ukraine in 2022, the US supplied billions of dollars of materials. And what did it get in return?

Trump is the promoter of our present tax policy which imposes a tariff on almost all imported products. As of this writing and after a week of on again/off again tariffs, he has settled (for now) on imposing an across-the-board tax of 10% on almost all our trading partners, friends and foes alike. (Excluding Russia, of course.) Additionally, a 25% tariff has been placed on imported autos, auto parts, steel and aluminum. The exception to the rule is China, a major manufacturing nation and competitor—where the tariffs total 145%. Trump has even placed tariffs on islands not inhabited by humans. On one such island I hear the penguins are pretty upset. If our trading partners want to reduce their tariffs, they are invited by the administration to call and make an appointment to discuss more favorable trade terms.

The administration has given varying reasons for these tariffs among them: to bring back manufacturing jobs; to lower the US trade deficit; to bring back manufacturing for security reasons; and Trump's favorite argument: other nations are taking advantage of us, i.e., we're being ripped off.

Most economists believe that these taxes/tariffs will eventually be passed along to consumers in that prices for most imported products will increase. And some economists speculate that even the price of products "made in America" could rise. That means, wait for it, since we are all consumers, we will be paying these tariffs. If that's the case, who is being ripped off? Is this a good deal?

Because of the government's chaotic roll out of this tariff policy, the stock markets around the world have reacted unfavorably as has the bond market here in America. Businesses, large and small, unsure of what the president's final plan will be, are unsure of how to plan for the future ... whether, to turn a phrase, to invest or not to invest. The uncertainty leads to loss of trust. And trust is what we rely on. When trust is eroded, a compact between any two parties is frayed. Our pact with other nations is sorely being tested. Nations are put off by the US' aggressive shifting tax policies. Not to mention its threat to take back the Panama Canal, make Canada the 51st state and to annex Greenland.

Are these deals good for Americans? Immigrants? Our nation? The world? Penguins?

Are these even deals or are they "offers you can't refuse" proffered by a wannabe strongman?

Village Blueprints

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

140 Jane and Moribund Projects See New Life Signs

It takes deep pockets to develop new properties in NYC. Just ask the several firms that started new developments in recent years. Project construction begins with demolition of any site impediments, like old buildings or underground equipment or utilities. Sometimes, a hole in the ground remains for years due to lack of funds, or more progress is made before construction is halted.

We have witnessed several of these paused projects on the far west side of Manhattan. Back in September of 2021, Matthew Abreu



140 JANE STREET is the site of an 11-story residential building designed for the West Street corner. This new rendering view is looking southeast from the Hudson River Park at Jane Street. Credit: LSS.

of Aurora Capital Associates filed for permits as the owner of what was then labeled as 134 Jane Street, according to YIMBY website. They employed BSKS Architects with Leroy Street Studio as the design architect for the 120-foot-tall, 105,804 square foot structure. The site is at the tangled convergence of 10th Avenue, Lincoln Highway, and West Street. This is the only area where West Street is a local-only street in front of the Jane Hotel. By the time construction started on the 15 condominium unit building, it had been re-branded as 140 Jane. But then the excavation work seemed to stop cold with partially completed foundation walls and bracing.

New design renderings depict a base of wide arches framing the retail frontage and entrance to a motor court. The bulk of the exterior is composed of light-gray stone framing an expansive grid of floor-to-ceiling windows, and the main northern elevation along Jane Street incorporates numerous angled surfaces, adding depth to the design. A setback at the eighth floor is shown topped with a landscaped terrace. Another terrace is visible atop the roof parapet surrounding a tall mechanical bulkhead clad in the same material as the rest of the façade. The site is expected to be completed in 2026.



ERECTED IN 2023, this temporary mock-up room for the residential building at 140 Jane Street is on an empty lot on the West Street corner, allowing testing for thermal and moisture performance of the materials assembly. It also gives us a preview of a part of the exterior appearance. This view is looking east from the Hudson River Park at West 12th Street. Credit: Brian J. Pape, AIA.



FOUNDATION WORK HAS PICKED UP at 140 Jane Street, according to YIMBY. Below-grade work has gradually resumed recently, after excavation and pilings were stopped at the site in 2024. Banks of yellow cylindrical struts have been in place between the foundation walls to brace the perimeter construction. Note the backhoe digging out between the struts, still in place despite concrete foundation walls poured in 2023. This view is looking east from West Street. Credit: Brian J. Pape, AIA.

Despite the slow progress, the developer announced that already one-third of the units are sold. Penthouse 10 is a five bedroom, six bath, 5,511 square foot unit marketed at \$41 million. Unit 2N has four bedrooms and 4.5 baths and just went into contract for almost \$20 million.



CONSTRUCTION HAS RESUMED at 550 West 21st Street, according to YIMBY. Above-grade work has continued recently, after construction was stopped at the site in 2023. Grade-level floors have been in place between the foundation walls to brace the perimeter construction poured. This view is looking east from West Street. Credit: Brian J. Pape, AIA.

According to the *Real Deal*, the developer Legion Investment Group acquired the stalled property at 550 West 21st Street for \$87 million last year and can build a mixed-use project measuring up to 172,000 square feet, hoping to add another 11,000 square feet to the scope in exchange for a \$7.8 million donation to the West Chelsea Affordable Housing Fund. The structure will yield 75 condominiums.

Casco Development had acquired the property for \$50 million in 2014 and planned to construct a nearly 200,000 square foot building with a projected \$539 million sell-out. They completed the ground floor slab for a planned 20-story condominium building, but the project went into bankruptcy.

The nearly 0.5-acre project site is located at the corner of West Street and the Hudson River Greenway. According to YIMBY and site postings, anticipated completion is scheduled for July 2027. An architect has yet to be announced.

And as another example of stalled projects along West Street, exterior work resumed at 76 11th Avenue in Chelsea in 2023, as The Witkoff Group purchased the property for \$900 million at a foreclosure sale, and partnered with Access Industries and Monroe Capital to complete the stalled project. Steve Witkoff renamed the 26-story and 36-story mixed-use towers as One High Line.

Ziel Feldman and Nir Meir of HFZ Capital Group acquired the full-block site between 17th and 18th Street, and 10th and 11th Avenue for \$870 million from Edison Properties in May 2015, one of the highest prices ever paid in Manhattan for a development site. With 800,000 square feet of air rights,

it worked out to over \$1,100 per buildable square foot. HFZ expected the development to cost over \$1.9 billion (\$1,700 per square foot). It was formerly known as The XI. Designed by Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) with Woods Bagot as architect of record, the 900,000 square foot complex yields 236 condominium units, 137 hotel rooms, 85,000 square feet of retail space, and a public plaza. Construction for the project began in September 2016 with pilings driven for the foundations of the towers. Construction halted in 2021 due to foreclosure.



THIS 2021 VIEW OF ONE HIGH LINE is looking west from The High Line Park. It was stalled in a partially-complete state for many months when the developer went bankrupt. Credit: Brian J. Pape, AIA.

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VILLAGE VIEW TRIVIA

Where is the General Sheridan Statue Located?

BY BRIAN J. PAPE, AIA



Photo by Brian J. Pape, AIA.

The Village has a number of odd triangular public spaces, recently satirized in a *Saturday Night Live* skit because they are called Squares. Naming these peculiar spaces can be tricky, because we don't want to name something for someone alive who might mess up and create shame for the city. But then, sometimes history's viewpoint may change with the times, and war heroes become more like other lesser humans.

Here in the Village, we have a larger-than-life bronze statue of General Philip Sheridan by sculptor Joseph P. Pollia, completed in 1936. General Sheridan, who died on August

5, 1888, was considered a hero at the time, especially in the North. General Sheridan was appointed by Ulysses S. Grant as commander of the Army of the Shenandoah, where he defeated Confederate troops. Sheridan further gained fame when his tactics helped to force General Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox. He was instrumental in the official designation of Yellowstone as a National Park and, in 1888, his career reached its apex when he was appointed General of the Army by President Cleveland.

Trivia question: Where is the Sheridan statue located? Answer on page 21.

JOY IN THE MOMENT

Think You Can't Say No? Think Again!

BY JOY PAPE, FNP-C, CDCES

Do you ever find yourself agreeing to do something you may not really want to do? Do you think you have a problem saying "no"? Truth is, you say "yes" and "no" many times a day. For example, when you choose what to wear, you are saying "yes" to those clothes and "no" to all the others. So, it's not true that you can't say "no." You need to be aware of who and what you want to say "yes" or "no" to.

Let's say you want to be more active. You make a plan to take 20 minutes to move your body. But then someone asks you to do something else. You blurt out, "yes!" before you think about what you planned for yourself. What happened? You did say "no!" You said "yes" to that person's request and "no" to you. This often happens when it comes to taking care of our health because the body, mind and spirit are connected.

For example, you have a pain in some part of your body. You have been advised of the types of activity that can help relieve your pain. Then, you say "yes" to someone who asks you to do something when you planned to do your healing activity. You have said "yes" to that other person and "no" to you and your pain relief.

You want to lose some weight. Someone offers you a food that you know won't help you reach your goal, but you end up eating it so you don't hurt that person's feelings. You

have said "yes" to that person, and "no" to you and your goal.

There are a lot of examples where we end up saying "yes" to other people rather than ourselves. How can you change this? First, by being aware of how often you say "no" to you, and "yes" to others. Know you don't need to give an answer right away. You can always say, "Let me think about it and I'll get back with you." It's good to give a time when you will do so.

If you should decide to say "no," say "no." You do not owe anyone an explanation. A simple yes or no will do. You may think this seems selfish, but there is nothing wrong with being selfish in a positive way. Remind yourself that taking care of you can mean you can then be more helpful to others.

Please give this some thought and practice. Make your life an exclamation and not an explanation! It can help you have more Joy in the Moment.

Joy Pape, FNP-CDCES, CFCN is a board-certified nurse practitioner who believes in and practices holistic health and healing. She is a board-certified diabetes care and education specialist, and foot care nurse. She practices at the Comprehensive Weight Control Center at Weill Cornell Medicine and New York Presbyterian. She also has a private practice located in the West Village.



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THE PINT SIZED PALATE — A KID’S TAKE ON NEW YORK FOOD

When You Want a Taste of Sicily

BY CHURCHILL STONE

FICUZZA • 121 SEVENTH AVENUE

Ficuzza, a Sicilian restaurant, is located right next to its Italian sister--a pastry shop named Realmuto. The owner, Francesco Realmuto, who is very nice, is Sicilian. He named the restaurant after his favorite village near Palermo.

We sat down for a Sunday dinner before five o’clock, and the tables were almost full and people were also eating at the bar. While I looked at the menu, they brought us Sicilian focaccia which is a mini slice of pizza, for free. It had marinara sauce, tomatoes, and grilled scallions. My sister loved it and she is the pickiest eater.

The menu included a pasta with sardines and raisins, Fusilli alla Trapanese, and another pasta with fried eggplant and ricotta, Rigatoni alla Norma. But those were not for me. Instead, we ordered my favorite pasta, Linguine alla Vongole (clams). We also ordered meatballs and a Caesar salad. The meatballs were amazing with lots of tomato sauce, yum. You could also dip the toasted bread from the Caesar salad into the tomato (“al sugo”) sauce, double yum.

On Saturday nights, my family has a tradition of making Linguine alla Vongole. Because this is my favorite food (aside from su-



SLURPING Linguine alle Vongole, my favorite pasta. Photos courtesy of Webster Stone.

shi of course!) my dad makes it pretty well. So I know a little about this dish and I have even helped to make it.

At Ficuzza, the clams were small which I know are best for the dish, and the linguine was perfect, not too al dente, and not too soft. The sauce (everyone’s favorite part) was very lemony and thick which is perfetto, as the Italians say. They chopped the parsley so much that it was like thousands of the tiniest green speckles everywhere. This was a very simple pasta which is the way they make it in Sicily. My little sister was so happy slurping linguine with me.

The one part that could have been better would be the “sea” quality — the pasta should have tasted a little more like the sea. But that’s a hard thing to do.

They make the Caesar salad with the center of a Romaine lettuce so you get the whole leaf with some nice creamy dressing. I had never tried a Caesar salad before and I honestly think I will have it again. Oh, by the way, Caesar salad is not even Italian. It was invented in Mexico by a guy whose name was Caesar (not by the ancient Roman Caesar who got stabbed on my birthday, March 15).

Ficuzza has Sicilian pizzas too. They have Strucola with prosciutto, Quattro Formaggi (four cheeses), Diavola (spicy salami), and of course Margherita and Marinara. We did not try the pizza but the table next to us had two different pizzas and they looked excellent.

The desserts on the menu were too adult for me and my sister. But that was not a problem because after dinner, we just walked over to the Realmuto (desert/pastry) side of the room, where we had gelato (ice cream was invented in Sicily). They also have tiny lemon tarts, cheesecake, profiteroles, eclairs, and so many cakes. The dessert side is much bigger than the restaurant with lots of chefs in their high white hats!

Both Ficuzza and Realmuto are molto buono (very good!). Ficuzza serves lunch and dinner (Tues.-Fri.) as well as brunch and dinner on the weekends.



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VILLAGE PET PAGES

BY JOY PAPE, FNP-C, CDCES, BRIAN PAPE AND NICOLE CERNIELLO, DVM

Senior Pets



LOLA IN HER YOUNGER YEARS at Pier 45. Photos courtesy: Norman, Lola's owner.

We've known Lola for about 10 years. We often see her walking on the Hudson River Greenway and have noticed changes over the decade. Her owner, Norman, told us, "Lola will be 13 in November. She developed obesity and a kidney problem. We saw a veterinarian, received treatment, and now she's in very good health so far. Like all animals when they get older, they don't hear very well and walk very slowly. That's Lola now, but she is still my companion and I love her with all my soul."

In humans, there isn't a particular age when one is considered a senior or old. But what about pets? The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) reminds us that age is not a disease and they have some great information related to senior cats and dogs. Below, we provide excerpts from the AVMA website.

WHEN DOES A PET BECOME A SENIOR?

Cats are generally considered a "senior" after 10 years of age.

Dogs don't have a universal age of seniority because of their wider variety of size. Larger breeds tend to have shorter life spans than smaller breeds.

WHAT DO SENIOR PETS NEED TO STAY HAPPY AND HEALTHY FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE?

No matter how well cared for, senior pets may require more frequent visits to the veterinarian as well as possible changes in their diet and home environment.

WHAT HEALTH PROBLEMS AND CHANGES ARE COMMON IN SENIOR PETS?

It's easy to spot the outward signs of aging

such as graying haircoat and slower pace, but it's important to remember a pet's body is also changing on the inside.

Changes in activity can be a warning sign of underlying disease, such as arthritis. There may be other reasons for these causes too.

Cancer is the cause of death in almost half of dogs and about a third of cats over 10 years old. Other common health diseases include the heart, kidney or urinary tract, liver, diabetes, joint or bone arthritis, overweight or obesity, vision or hearing loss.

Behavioral changes can be the first signs of age changes due to discomfort or pain, worsening sight or hearing, and cognitive dysfunction related to a type of brain impairment. If you notice behavior changes, these may be warning signs of disease you should discuss with your veterinarian.

Advances in veterinary medicine have made it easier to diagnose and treat age related diseases. Once the cause is found, your veterinarian can recommend the most effective treatment.

your home as your pet gets older. Ideally a new pet should be introduced when your senior pet is still active and can move away if a "time-out" is needed. Senior pets need to know they have a quiet, secure place where they can walk away and rest, undisturbed in comfort.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE?

The decision to euthanize a pet can be the most difficult yet kindest decision a pet owner make. Sometimes it's obviously the best thing to do for your pet. Other times it can be hard to know when your pet's quality of life is suffering. Although euthanasia is a personal decision, your veterinarian can help walk you through any questions or concerns you have, including an honest evaluation of your pet's quality of life.

Adapted from and learn more at: The American Veterinary Association-Caring for senior cats and dogs.



LOLA NOW at 13 years of age at home.

HOW DOES WEIGHT AFFECT SENIOR PETS?

Excess weight can have a major effect on a senior pet's health. Obesity is linked to arthritis, difficulty breathing, insulin resistance or diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, skin problems, cancer and other diseases.

Sudden weight loss often means something is wrong, especially in cats. Common causes are hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid gland), cancer, diabetes, and kidney issues are common causes.

If you notice changes in your pet's weight, especially sudden changes, do contact your veterinarian.

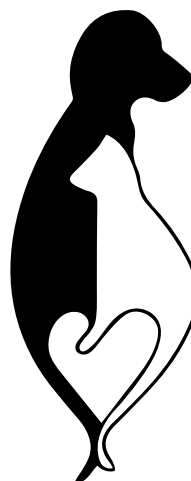
SHOULD NEW PETS BE BROUGHT INTO A HOME WITH A SENIOR PET?

It may be tempting to bring a new pet into

Tips for You and Your Senior Pets

Nicole Cerniello, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), Medical Director of Greenwich Village Animal Hospital, shares these tips for you and your senior pet

- I recommend increasing wellness visits to every six months for senior pets, even if they seem healthy and happy. This allows us to pick up subtle changes on physical exams and potentially catch problems much sooner making them easier to manage. This is especially important for cats who are excellent at hiding any discomfort or changes they may be experiencing.
- Make a list of questions for your vet. Sometimes senior pets (or any age animal) can have many changes or concerns going on at the same time. It can be easy to forget a concern that can easily be addressed all at once. Oftentimes these concerns, which may feel unrelated, can be related too.
- A substantial number of dogs will have osteoarthritis by age eight, even if you do not see the signs. Slowing down, decreased jumping on and off furniture, and wanting to go for shorter walks are commonly overlooked signs. Have floors with traction or place yoga mats on slippery floors to help them rise to stand or walk more easily. If you have a large dog I recommend lifting its food bowl.



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FILM REVIEW

Sabbath Queen's Bold Spiritual Journey

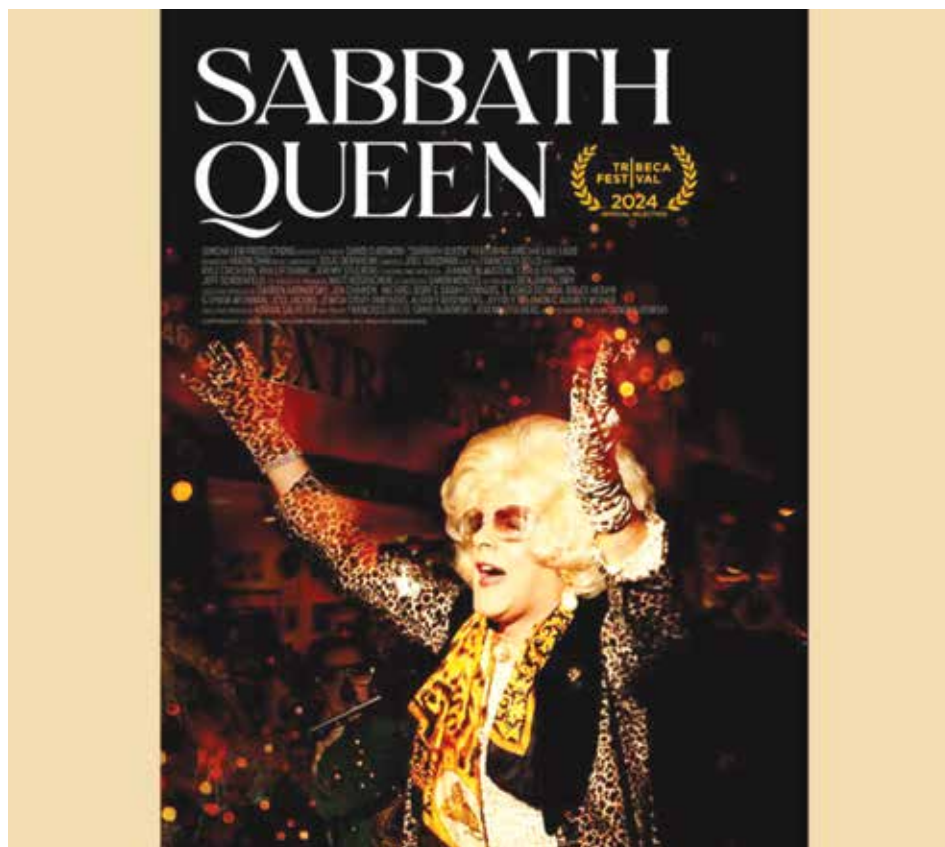
BY MICHAEL JACOBSON

I recently attended a screening of *Sabbath Queen* at the DCTV Firehouse Cinema in Lower Manhattan, a premier venue for independent documentaries in the New York metropolitan area. *Sabbath Queen* is a feature-length documentary directed and produced by Sandi Simcha DuBowski, acclaimed for his earlier work *Trembling Before G-d*. That groundbreaking 2001 film explored the lives of gay and lesbian Orthodox Jews struggling to reconcile their sexual orientation with the prohibitions of Jewish law.

With *Sabbath Queen*, DuBowski returns to the insular world of Orthodox Judaism, chronicling the extraordinary, often conflicted life of Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie. Amichai is a descendant of 38 generations of Orthodox rabbis, including chief rabbis of Israel. Before filming began, DuBowski spent five years building trust with Amichai. The film follows Amichai before his ordination, capturing him as a drag queen, a queer father, and the founder of Lab/Shul—a progressive, inclusive, and experimental pop-up congregation in New York City.

At 105 minutes, the film is a substantial undertaking, but DuBowski masterfully sustains the narrative, continually revealing new challenges for Amichai to confront. In the latter part of the film, we witness Amichai—who had long critiqued and operated outside traditional Jewish frameworks—make the unexpected decision to pursue rabbinical ordination at the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York. For Amichai, this step was about gaining legitimacy and effecting change from within the system.

After years of study and eventual ordination, Rabbi Amichai faces a profound dilemma: how to officiate marriages that include unions between Jews and non-Jews, a practice not permitted by the Jewish Theological Seminary. The film does not shy away from the difficulty of this choice, offering viewers a candid look at the personal and institu-



SABBATH QUEEN poster.

tional challenges faced by those seeking to expand the boundaries of tradition.

Another challenge for DuBowski, as for all documentarians, was determining whose voice would guide the narrative. Initially, DuBowski attempted to narrate the story himself, but after nine months, he realized this approach was ineffective. The film ultimately finds its voice through extensive interviews with Rabbi Amichai and his brother Benny, an Orthodox rabbi in Jerusalem. Benny serves as both a critic and a supporter of Amichai's unconventional spiritual journey, highlighting the tension between tradition and innovation within Judaism. His presence offers a compelling counterpoint to Amichai's quest for religious transformation.

To create this remarkable profile, DuBowski

ki filmed 1,800 hours of footage over 21 years, gathered more than 1,000 hours of archival material, and spent six years editing the documentary. As a documentarian myself, I am in awe of DuBowski's unwavering commitment to telling this story. His dedication is nothing short of heroic, and the result is a film that is both intimate and expansive in its exploration of faith, identity, and change.

Filmmaker DuBowski's job is far from over. After spending more than two decades documenting Rabbi Amichai's remarkable journey, he now faces the monumental task of sharing his film with the public. *Sabbath Queen* premiered at last year's Tribeca Film Festival and has since garnered numerous screenings and awards from around the world. The film is currently in theatrical

release in the U.S. and Canada. At the box office, the film has made some money, but it will likely be a long time before it recoups the costs of production—a common challenge for documentaries. Hopefully, more money can be garnered through a lucrative streaming deal. Another source of income for documentarians is organizational screenings, where filmmakers sometimes serve as guest speakers for sizable fees.

WHY MAKE A DOCUMENTARY?

It is estimated that between 800 and 1,500 documentary films are produced annually in the United States. Box office data shows that the number of documentary films released theatrically in the U.S. fluctuates, with 81 released in 2022. Placing highly on the festival circuit, unfortunately, guarantees little. For example, at the Sundance Film Festival—a major gateway for documentary distribution—only about 1.9% of submitted feature documentaries are selected. Selection at a prestigious festival is often a prerequisite for securing lucrative distribution deals, but the vast majority of documentaries never reach this stage.

With such daunting statistics, the question becomes: why make a documentary? For many filmmakers, the answer is passion. There is a unique thrill in working on a film that allows you to express yourself, and the dream of being recognized for your work persists. Sadly, I have witnessed several filmmaker friends take a break from the daunting task of making films. Hopefully, the sun will shine soon, and there will be a more fertile ground for producing our passion projects.

Michael Jacobson is an independent New York filmmaker. His recently completed "The Cornelia Street Cafe In Exile" documentary has been screening successfully at New Plaza Cinema. He also curates a bi-monthly screening of short films by New York filmmakers at New Plaza Cinema.

Coming Soon: Tribeca Festival 2025

BY MICHAEL JACOBSON

On a brisk day in early spring, I arrived at the office of the Tribeca Festival, where I had the opportunity to learn more about this year's event from Cara Cusumano, the festival director and vice president of programming. Cusumano has been involved with the festival since 2008 and has played a key role in shaping its vision.

Last year, the film festival received a record-breaking 13,000 submissions from around the world, including roughly 8,000 short films. Only a fraction of these made it to the festival's red carpet. Cusumano explained that Tribeca's open call policy welcomes filmmakers worldwide and every entry undergoes a rigorous qualifying process. The festival is dedicated to discovering new talent, particularly those with limited exposure, and continues to champion diverse and underrepresented voices. Cusumano, who participated in this year's feature film selection, described the thrill of dis-



covering a first-time filmmaker who has never been on the festival circuit.

I look forward to reporting from this year's festival next month and highlighting some of the standout short films and feature-length documentaries that have been selected. Short films, in particular, have become a favorite among Tribeca audiences. In response, the festival will dedicate an entire cinema to showcasing short films, providing a unique platform for emerging storytellers.

Our downtown neighborhoods have a long tradition of embracing the arts and sustaining countless working artists. We are fortunate to have the Tribeca Festival shine a global spotlight on our creative community. This year's festival runs from June 4-15.

Find out more at: tribecafilm.com

Legendary Bassist Stanley Clarke

Performs at City Winery

BY KAJU ROBERTO

By 1974, Stanley Clarke, the renowned virtuoso and ground-breaking bass player and composer, had essentially invented a new way to approach playing the electric bass as a lead instrument, and in the process brought the now ubiquitous bass “slapping technique” into uncharted territory.

Clarke, the recipient of five Grammy Awards — three as a solo artist, one with the Stanley Clarke Band, and one with Return to Forever, performed an electrifying and inspired show at City Winery in the West Village on April 11. For most of the night, he played an upright double bass, occasionally switching to his classic Alembic electric bass, most notably for a masterful rendition of Charles Mingus’ *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*.

Clarke is one of the few musicians in history to have equally and unequivocally mastered both the upright double bass and electric bass. Now at 73 years old, Clarke shows zero signs of slowing down and he is arguably playing better than ever.

On the bandstand that night with Clarke were three young great musicians, or as Clarke quoted Wayne Shorter, “these are the new people.” Playing the trumpet was Wallace Rooney, Jr. On piano and keyboards was Julius Rodriguez. On drums was the fantastic Miles Martin.

BUILDING HIS PROMINENCE ON BASS GUITAR

Giving the bass guitar a prominence it previously lacked in jazz music, Clarke was the first jazz-fusion bassist to headline tours, to sell out shows worldwide and to have recordings reach gold status.

This all started when Clarke was 12 years old, growing up in Philadelphia. His mother sang opera around the house, belonged to a church choir, and encouraged him to study music. By this age, he stood over six feet tall, and his hands were too long for violin and accordion, the first instruments he tried to play. However in the corner collecting dust, was an acoustic upright bass that he would try on for size — and history was on its way to being made.

He took double bass lessons at the Settlement School of Music in Philadelphia, studying classical bass under Eligio Rossi. As a teenager, he picked up the electric bass guitar so that he could perform at parties and impress the girls.

Clarke eventually attended the Philadelphia Musical Academy, and moved to New York City in 1971. He gained work with many well-known jazz bands early in his career. Before recording his first solo album in 1973, Clarke would work as a sideman with Joe Henderson and Pharoah Sanders, and with Tony Williams Lifetime Experience, Stan Getz, Dexter Gordon, and Art



LEGENDARY BASSIST STANLEY CLARKE gave his fans an outstanding performance at City Winery in the West Village on April 11. Image by Kaju Roberto.

Blakey, followed by Gil Evans, Mel Lewis, and Horace Silver.

HIS DEFINING 70S BAND: RETURN TO FOREVER

Clarke met keyboardist Chick Corea in 1972 during his stint in the Stan Getz band. Prior to his meeting with Corea, Clarke’s prime

aspiration was to become the first Black musician in the Philadelphia Orchestra. However, by 1972 this backing band was so good, Corea and Clarke formed a partnership to create their own band—a band that would make history. They separated from Getz and Return to Forever was born.

The first edition of Return to Forever per-

formed primarily Latin-influenced music. Their first album, titled *Return to Forever*, was recorded for ECM Records in 1972. The second album, *Light as a Feather* (1973), was released by Polydor and included Corea’s most recognized piece, the song *Spain*.

Through 1976, the band made a radical change in musical direction from their albums *Hymn of the Seventh Galaxy*, *Where Have I Known You Before*, *No Mystery*, and *Romantic Warrior*. The band made history by becoming one of the first jazz fusion bands, playing a mixture of rock and jazz. This is where Clarke developed his legendary lead playing style and signature sound, now playing all electric bass on Alembic, experimenting with novel effects for the time, such as distorted tones and flange sounds.

Concurrently with the *Romantic Warrior* album (his last with RTF) in 1976, Clarke also recorded and released his most widely acclaimed solo album, *School Days*.

STANLEY CLARKE’S LEGACY

Larry Graham is generally recognized as the first bassist to use this slapping technique on recordings with Sly and the Family Stone in 1967. This technique became the archetype of modern funk. However, Graham played one riff usually with an open E, which he would only slightly modify.

By 1974, Stanley Clarke applied this funk technique to more complex musical forms such as jazz and fusion, with his band Return to Forever as the major catalyst. He then forged a new prominent lead-playing style on the bass, much like an electric guitarist would play, while still holding down the rhythm. Listen to Clarke’s masterful album *School Days*, and you will hear the dominance of the bass guitar in both roles.

This was almost unheard of in 1976, with the only other example being his contemporary Jaco Pastorius, the other historic jazz fusion bass player who would break new ground. However, unlike Pastorius whose light would shine ever so brightly until his brutal slaying by a club bouncer in 1987, Clarke has enjoyed a long eclectic six decade career to this present date. His skills as a composer for films, TV, as well as his indomitable bass playing in his many recordings and live tours, with a plethora of world renowned musicians make him an undisputable legend.

Check out Stanley Clarke tour dates with his band of great musicians coming to a city near you. <https://stanleyclarke.com>



STANLEY CLARKE. Image by Kaju Roberto.

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

Panelists Ponder: “Can Artists Survive in New York City?”

BY PHYLLIS ECKHAUS

When the world lets you down and gets you down, how much do you try to change the world and how much do you try to change yourself?

That dilemma was the unexpected undercurrent of “‘Arts for Living,’ Can Artists Survive in New York City?,” an April 9th symposium sponsored by the Henry Street Settlement and held at their Abrons Art Center. In a far-ranging discussion that zig-zagged from the visionary to the purely practical, panelists offered passionate aspirations for a better world and Zen-ish strategies for coping with the existential troubles New York City-based artists face today.

The discussion began with contradiction. Valentina Di Liscia, the moderator and news editor of *Hyperallergic*, asked, “Are artists actually leaving New York City in significant numbers or are they staying?”

“Yes and yes,” Maura Cuffie-Peterson, director of strategic initiatives at Creatives Rebuild New York, responded. “Yes, artists are leaving New York City and New York state because of affordability and yes, artists are staying...because they can’t afford to leave.” Reporting on her organization’s 2022 survey of 13,000 New York artists, she described the results as “pretty yikes.” Sixty percent of respondents had a median household income of \$25,000 or less, and two-thirds had no emergency savings. “When you drill down into important demographics like race, it gets even worse,” she noted. “Only one in five Black artists has enough cash to cover emergencies.”

Ashley Ferro-Murray, program director for the arts at the Doris Duke Foundation, echoed that portrait of profound unmet need. Among the grant programs she oversees is one that has previously provided six performing artists a year with individual grants of up to \$550,000. She reported that in the absence of a social safety net, “what we find is that artists need these unrestricted funds to cover housing costs, pay off debt, [pay] for surgery that’s been put off, start that emergency fund, think about retirement for the very first time, [or perhaps] invest in elder and child care.”



MAURA CUFFIE-PETERSON, director of strategic initiatives at Creatives Rebuild New York, participates as a panelist. Photo credit: Jeremy Weine.

That revelation, she said, has led the foundation to ask “what does thriving look like for artists?”—and to think about things ranging from guaranteed income to protections for gig workers “because we know so many artists wear multiple hats, and are gig workers in this economy.” Moderator Di Liscia responded half-jokingly, “What I hear you saying is that we have to take down capitalism.”

A GUARANTEED INCOME?

And indeed, Cuffie-Peterson segued from her bleak data to a decidedly non-capitalist dream for the future. She and her organization are passionate advocates for guaranteed basic income, having administered a three-year, \$125 million initiative providing “no strings attached monthly payments for 18 months” to 2,400 New York state artists, selected from among 22,000 who applied.

The program took place during a time when there were about 130 guaranteed income pilots of various kinds nationwide. “This is where I get on my soapbox,” Cuffie-Peterson declared. “It’s deceptively simple—

if people need money, give them money, period. People are actually trustworthy to address their needs on their own terms....If you don’t want to trust me, the research is out there.” She added “to all my philanthropy friends, we can do it on a bigger scale. Let’s go for it!” Cuffie-Peterson expressed hope that government would then take the lead from philanthropy to scale up even further.

She urged the audience to connect with the New York State Cash Alliance, “a coalition of dozens of really important grassroots organizations fighting for a guaranteed income across the state....We’re doing big things with the Cash Alliance because coalition is how we move forward. I recognize we’re in a scary time, when we think about ‘should the government be doing this?’ but we also have to be fighting at every forefront, right?”

CHALLENGES FOR THE WORKING ARTIST

Panelists underscored the economic vulnerability that still exists when an artist’s visibility is perceived as “success.” Cuffie-Peterson told of giving a guaranteed income award to a twice Grammy-nominated artist

whom she had to contact via her daughter because her phone had been cut off.

Panelist and performing artist Nile Harris noted widespread ignorance of what it costs to mount a performance. “Artists are like small businesses” especially in the performing arts “where these numbers start looking really fancy to people. They’re like, ‘Oh, didn’t you get that \$40,000 grant?’ I’m like, ‘Girl, I had to pay ten people for three months of labor.’”

REFRAMING SUCCESS

Asked how he makes it as “an actual living artist here in New York City,” Harris jokingly answered “credit card debt, Goodwill and roommates,” then more seriously acknowledged survival strategies—among them, “multiple streams of income,” including his ongoing work as a nonprofit administrator.

Harris emphasized the importance of doing his non-artist work “in places that appreciate and value” that he’s an artist so he doesn’t feel like he’s living a “Hannah Montana double life” and receives “flexibility and compassion, love and understanding.” He also noted the importance of attitude, a “humble understanding” that his artistic practice was “a vocation” that was never going to be “a profit-earning endeavor. And that’s what’s so fun about the experimental arts, that freedom because it’s not tied to commercial investment.”

So how do artists establish their value? Cuffie-Peterson enthusiastically recommended a free online resource and platform, “Artists U” (like University) that is “pretty profound....It’s a sort of meditation to walk through, like what does ‘enough’ meant to me as an artist?”

The symposium also featured sociologist and CUNY professor Sharon Zukin and Anne del Castillo, the senior policy advisor for creative sector strategy at the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. They both spoke to the paucity of affordable housing and work space for artists, among other issues.

The full discussion is available on video at Henry Street’s YouTube channel.

TRIVIA ANSWER FROM PAGE 16 Where is the General Sheridan statue located?

A *New York Times* article from 1896, announced the decision by the Aldermanic Committee on Land, Places, and Public Parks to officially name a strip of land Sheridan Square. This is the small triangle encompassed by Washington Place,

West 4th Street, and Barrow Street, but not quite reaching Seventh Avenue South. Sheridan Square is one of those names that Villagers and New Yorkers know because it’s a subway stop (since 1918), and there are a couple of large apartment buildings with that address. During most of the twentieth century, Sheridan Square served as a traffic-safe-

ty island. In 1982 the area went from a paved triangle to a lovely viewing garden. This project came about when a group of Sheridan Square neighbors, the Sheridan Square Triangle Association, convinced the Parks Department to turn this plot of land into a garden.

But they didn’t get the Sheridan statue, which had been erected instead at the

nearby Christopher Park (encompassed by Christopher Street, West 4th Street and Grove Street) in 1936, creating an ever-confusing mix-up of the two areas. The question we might ask is, “Why didn’t they choose to erect the statue in Sheridan Square instead?” Perhaps it was too much work to fix up the “Square” in that Depression time?

RECORD STORE DAY

Record Runner on Jones

BY ANTHONY PARADISO

On the 17th bi-annual Record Store Day on April 12, 2025, people came from far and wide to celebrate the indie record store and look for exclusive titles that had just been released. They stopped at Record Runner where there were lines stretching around the block when the store opened at 11 a.m.

These record-seekers included Alex, a Canadian immigrant who was looking for "a very specific" and rare record for his friend. Alex, who lives in Hell's Kitchen, said, "The Chvrches anniversary album—it's going to be difficult to find, there's only 2,500 copies. I don't know how realistic it will be. I was at Rough Trade at Rockefeller Center earlier and there was a huge line. I went to a few others too." Record Runner ended up having the *Churches Every Open Eye 10th Anniversary Special Edition* album and Alex left the store a happy camper.

John Pita, owner of Record Runner described what's it like when there are certain rare titles that are in demand. "Every Record Store Day, there's always one item, maybe two, that people keep walking in, asking 'Do you have this?'"

This year there were six that were in the highest demand according to Pita: *Wicked: The Soundtrack*, Gracie Abrams' *Live from Radio City Music Hall*, Post Malone's *Tribute to Nirvana*, Taylor Swift's *Fortnight 7*, John & Yoko, The Plastic Ono Band, *Elephant's Memory's Power To The People - Live at the One-To-One Concert, New York City, 1972* and Charli XCX's *Number 1 Angel*.

Pita also rattled off some of the most popular artists for this year including Classic Rock stuff, Beatles-related stuff, the Doors and older 80s stuff like Duran Duran. He also sold a lot of David Bowie, the Cure, Prince, and Talking Heads.

While it was smooth sailing when it came to selling David Bowie in 2025, Pita explained how difficult it has become



RECORD RUNNER ON JONES ST. Photo by Anthony Paradiso.

for a small store like his to make sure they have enough of certain in-demand titles. "Two years ago I got 20 copies of a Taylor Swift title. So Record Store Day contacted me and said, 'you have too many copies.' I said, 'what do you mean I have too many copies? Look, we're known because Cornelia Street, where Taylor Swift used to live, is around the corner, so I'm gonna get a lot of Taylor Swift requests.' They said, 'we don't care. So, we want you to send five copies here and five copies to this other store.' I thought about it and said 'look, I will do what you ask me to do but I want you to guarantee me that if I walk into Rough Trade, or Newbury Comics, or Amoeba that they're only going to have five copies.' And what did they do? They said to keep them because they

allow the bigger stores to get as many copies as they want."

Pita reminisced about the old days when how many of a certain title each store got was up to the distributor. "It never used to be like this. It used to be up to the distributor which I thought was always the best deal. Because, let's say there's a Madonna title, and the distributor knows this is a big Madonna store—we have tons of Madonna—so my distributor would give a little extra Madonna to John. This other store, called Generation, is more of a metal store, so they got a little extra of whatever metal title because that's their preference. So, the distributor who deals with us every single day, knows us better but once Record Store Day got involved, things changed a little."

Pita recalls Record Store Day starting slowly but quickly building into a monumental event. "I remember thinking you have Pizza Day and Ice Cream Day. I was like 'Record Store Day, who's going to care about that?' And the first couple [of Record Store Days], people came in but I didn't find it to be anything special. Then the third one, suddenly you saw people really excited about it. The thing about that time was there was a new U2 record that everybody wanted. I ordered a whole bunch and didn't get any, so I had friends go buy the U2 record. From that point on, Record Store Day became bigger and bigger every year and then these last few years have been crazy."

That U2 record was *Wide Awake in Europe* which was re-released on the Black Friday Record Store Day in November of 2010. Pita remembers ordering a lot of that record but not receiving any because they were in such high demand. Ever since then, Record Store Day has grown to become a big deal and thanks to independent record stores like Record Runner on Jones Street, it will continue to be for years to come.

Village Revival Records on Bleecker

BY ROGER PARADISO

I went to see my friend Jamal at the Village Revival Records store. It was a miserably cold, wet day and I was afraid Record Store Day would be a wipe out. But when I turned the corner, I saw a line going around the block, leading up to Jamal's store.

Record Store Day became a marketing tool to help record stores that were losing business to Spotify, iTunes, and other internet stores. RD, as it is called, occurs twice a year and big things happen on this day. Bands put out new vinyl releases, stores mark down vinyl and other collectible music, and musicians pop into stores to sign albums and speak to their fans. It is a unique way for merchants, bands, and fans to get together. It is, after, all a day to celebrate music.

Amanda, a smiling young lady standing on line said, "It's the first RD in my life. I'm looking for Mark Bolan T Rex B Side, David Bowie Live, Bruce Springsteen, and the Killers Live in Europe." I asked her when she started collecting vinyl because she looked like she came of age when CDs were the thing. "I started collecting vinyl when I was 12 or 13," she said. "My grandmother had a record player and she played her old vinyl records. Now, I use my grandmother's record player."

Kai, another young lady braving the weather, came from Hoboken with a friend looking for a special record. She told me, "Gracie Abrams released a vinyl of her concert at Radio City. We went to the concert. It's pretty sentimental. We're both very big music lovers. One person we know has a record player and we go to his place to play our vinyl collection." I



VILLAGE REVIVAL RECORDS ON BLEECKER ST. Photo by Roger Paradiso.

thanked Kai for coming out in the rain. And I wondered if anyone owned a record player or just borrowed them? That's for another time.

I peeked into the store and saw Jamal with lots of people around him. I figured he would be swamped so I called him a few days later when things quieted down. He said he had been a little concerned about the bad weather but it was a great turnout.

Record Day is good PR for the store, Jamal told me, but he doesn't make much money. "If I order 40 of each of the available 400 titles it could cost me \$16,000—an average of 40 bucks each," Jamal said. "I also have to promote the event and have extra workers and security. At the end of the day, I have a markup of about 5% for everything I sell after expenses."

He went on to say, "The big sellers were Gracie Abrams 2 *Color Vinyl*. The teenagers love it. I sell it for 32 bucks. On eBay it sells for 250 bucks — but the distributors won't let us sell it for that price. I can't price gouge like others do because it is not right. Also, everyone wants *Wicked*. I only had two copies of my own so I gave them away. There were also lots of requests for Air, a UK band, as well as Pink Floyd's *Gilmour and Waters*, Springsteen, and The Killers."

Jamal wrapped up saying, "I've been doing Record Day since it started in 2008. I love it because the customers are happy and I enjoy speaking to them. It's like a party for me and the customers and I buy the food and drink. It is not the small amount of money I make, it's fun and I will do it again."

Esperanza Spalding Takes Us on a Sublime Musical Journey at the Blue Note

BY KAJU ROBERTO



ESPERANZA SPALDING, the Grammy Award Winning Artist who is a renowned bassist, vocalist and composer performs her magic at the Blue Note Jazz Club in Greenwich Village during her two-week residency from February 18 thru March 2. Photo by Kaju Roberto.

The Esperanza Spalding residency at the famous Blue Note Jazz Club on New York City's West 3rd Street in Greenwich Village from February 18 thru March 2 was full of unexpected surprises and the musicianship was off the charts.

Esperanza is a once-in-a-generational musical genius, a rare talent who may be the most overall musically gifted artist in jazz. No one can play bass — whether upright or electric bass — so skillfully while singing so beautifully and simultaneously as she can. There is no one who can independently play the bass on the beat while singing “behind the beat” with such incredible skill, feeling, and finesse. For almost two decades, no one has matched Esperanza in this unique category.

Throughout her two week residency, she would invite a Who's Who of amazing musicians from different generations to join her on stage both from the old guard and the new: from the legendary tenor saxophonist Joe Lovano, as well as one of today's young emerging voices in jazz, Rico Jones.

During the night we attended she called up the great pianist and composer Fred Hersch to join her on stage for two classic songs, Gershwin & Gershwin's wonderful jazz standard *But Not For Me*, and Hersch's own crooner *My Wish (Valentine)*. During the former, Spalding without her bass put on a jazz vocal improvisation masterclass, “inventing” strangely serpentine and delightfully witty lyrics on the fly for over 80 percent of the song in full flight, as the fully packed house audience watched amazed.

Spalding performed an eight song one

hour and ten minute set as musically diverse and skillful as you will ever see. The vocal and instrumental performances of such highly difficult pieces was so subtly yet seamlessly executed that few non-musicians would take notice. Fortunately several gorgeous songs from her diverse catalog and Esperanza's charisma itself can take any casual music fan to new heights.

ESPERANZA'S BROAD MUSICAL REPERTOIRE

From Brazilian ballads to old crooners, to dissonant jazz, Spalding covered a wide variety of World Music from her diverse album discography.

Ever the lover of Brazilian music, right-off the bat she started with her opening song, from her 2008 album *Esperanza*, the brilliantly relaxing and breezy *Ponta de Areia* where she effortlessly plays upright bass while bellowing longing calls entirely in Portuguese. This gorgeous moving composition was a collaboration with the great Milton Nascimento, a magical musical partnership forged early on that would yield many other outstanding songs to this day.

Spalding then immediately segued into her own lilting upbeat composition called *Strive Grease*, telling the audience when they feel low, they can always rejuvenate their soul through movement of the hips. That *Strive Grease* is the special “stuff” that exists in everyone of us — all in the hips!

One thing I must mention: throughout the entire set both in between (and even during) songs, Esperanza immersed herself in exu-

berant and engaging dialogue with her audience. She really knows how to tell a story!

By her 3rd song, Esperanza was ready to throw in more esoteric material, such as the brilliantly weird *Dancing the Animal* about animals and smartphones, followed by the even more brilliantly cacophonous *Our Reunion*, an original collaboration borne from a five-hour studio recording session where she composed the lyrics while tired with the song's music composer and guitarist Matt Stevens.

Our Reunion is an absolute masterpiece, and I imagine one of the most difficult pieces to perform. Esperanza executed amazing counterpoint upright bass with offbeat rhythms while singing perfectly dissonant notes over them. Her incredible performance while navigating within these diametrically opposed spaces was spellbinding.

TIME TO TAKE A BREAK

Naturally after such intensity, she needed a well-deserved break. That's when she called up the great Fred Hersch on piano to accompany her on the aforementioned fifth and sixth songs *But Not For Me* and *My Wish (Valentine)*. These tunes appeared to be highly impromptu selections, as she initially chided while onstage with Hersch “What songs do you wanna play Fred?” letting the audience in on the secret. What audacity and confidence!

THE BIG FINALE: ENDING THE NIGHT WITH EXUBERANT DEFIANCE

As sassy and fun as those Hersch songs were, you know Esperanza had to go out with a ma-

jor statement. An ultimate Big Bang!

Her seventh song was Esperanza's own soulful jazzy 2012 classic *Black Gold*, a timeless work with lyrics that proudly celebrates her African heritage. Matt Stevens on a droning electric guitar gave this soulful tune just enough of a backyard country feel to add to its splendid soulfulness. As usual Esperanza's vocals and bass playing were immaculate.

To end the night, Spalding fittingly performed Wayne Shorter's enigmatic jazz odyssey *Endangered Species*. This is a song that I once had seen her perform so brilliantly only as a vocalist during a major award ceremony.

However this species was entirely a different “animal” from that award show. With Esperanza brilliantly playing her 5-string electric bass continuously for ten minutes while singing such difficult weaving melodies so beautifully was simply unbelievable to watch.

Her bass playing reminded me of Jaco Pastorius. There is an overwhelming consensus among high level musicians of all genres that the late Jaco was the greatest innovator there ever was on the instrument. Hence, this was a stunning virtuosic performance both on electric bass and on vocals.

Wherever and whenever there happens to be a chance she will be performing with her band in your area, if you love soulful jazz, World Music, and appreciate brilliant musicianship, an Esperanza Spalding concert should definitely be on any true music lover's bucket list.

Your Guide to the 2025 Season in Washington Square Park

BY GRACE HARMON

Spring is here and Washington Square Park is buzzing back to life. As the trees leaf out and the fountain bubbles up, our 2025 calendar is overflowing with free public programming designed to delight, inspire, and bring the community together. Whether you're seeking early-morning movement, a colorful afternoon activity, or an evening of unexpected cultural discovery, you'll find something to love in the heart of the city.

This year's offerings include everything from art workshops to music classes, hands-on volunteering to surprise performances. Thanks to the Washington Square Park Conservancy's long-standing commitment to local arts and culture, the season also brings a rich array of community-produced concerts, dance, theater, and more.

Here's a look at what to expect over the next few months.

MORNINGS: PEACEFUL, PLAYFUL, AND PURPOSEFUL

There's something special about mornings in Washington Square Park. The air is cooler, the light is softer, and the sounds of the city feel a little more gentle. It's the perfect backdrop for a mid-week yoga session, offered every Wednesday and Friday, or for our Tuesday Adult & Senior Movement class in Garibaldi Plaza, which welcomes everyone to start the day with joyful, low-impact activity.

For little ones, Tuesday morning storytime under the trees is back, hosted in partnership with the Hudson Park Library. For those looking to give back, our second Saturday Community Clean Ups are returning. It's a great way to kick off a feel-good weekend with a bit of light volunteering and neighborhood pride.

AFTERNOONS: ACTIVE, ARTISTIC, AND ALWAYS INTERESTING

As the sun climbs, the park comes alive with

sound and color. Stroll through in the early afternoon and you'll find an entire world of drop-in activities. Learn the fine art of pétanque (think French bocce) with La Boule New Yorkaise on Mondays and Wednesdays. Stop by Street Lab's open-air studio on the first Tuesday of the month, where rotating hands-on art activities invite spontaneous creativity. Or explore your artistic side with our visual arts workshops in Scrabble Plaza, happening every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Kids can get in on the fun too, with weekly visits to the playground by Miss Debbie on Wednesdays and the Portable Museum Project on Thursdays.

New this year, the third Thursday of the month will offer an afternoon volunteering opportunity for those who want to help out while the sun is still high.

EVENINGS: UNEXPECTED, UNFORGETTABLE, AND FULL OF ENERGY

When the workday ends and the sun begins to dip behind the buildings, Washington Square Park transforms. Golden light filters through the trees, musicians begin to tune up, and people linger a little longer on the benches. This is when the park's cultural programming shines brightest.

Each Tuesday, the Museum of Interesting Things rolls in with vintage film reels, oddball inventions, and other surprises. On Wednesdays, get ready to dance as Mi Salsa Dura NY returns with the most joyful salsa party in town. Thursday nights are for jumping, with the Double Dutch Aunties teaching you the ropes, old-school New York style.

CULTURAL CALENDAR:

A SEASON FULL OF PERFORMANCES

For the last 10 years, the Washington Square Park Conservancy has supported local community organizations that host free cultural programming in the park, starting out as a

small fund to bring much needed resources to legacy events and growing into a robust grant program that not only supports old favorites, but encourages an ever-evolving roster of cultural offerings. This year, the Conservancy is proudly supporting 17 organizations with a total of \$25,000 in grant funding, bringing a wide variety of programming to the park throughout the spring, summer and fall. Washington Square Park isn't one thing, it's a dizzying kaleidoscope of sound and movement and action. We're proud to support these local organizations who add so much to the fabric of our beloved park.

APRIL

- Kaleidoscope by Multiculture Center Folk Dance Club: Traditional folk dances from around the world.

MAY

- Oscar's Music Day from Show Brain: A concert of four local bands.
- Groove from eGALitarian Brass: Classical, jazz, and Latin music with a groove-forward twist.
- Vain Combat by Douglas Dunn + Dancers: A striking modern dance performance.
- Tradition Reimagined from Feraba African Rhythm Tap: Percussion, rhythm, and movement with the Balafon Quartet.

JUNE

- Washington Square Music Festival from the Washington Square Association Music Fund: A beloved classical series.
- Piazzolla100 from Nuevo Tango Arts: A tango performance and open-level class.
- 16MM Film Festival from the Museum of Interesting Things: Rare reels and prohibition-era jazz.

JULY

- The Carpet Series by Pigeonwing Dance:

Contemporary ballet in unexpected places.

- Manhattan Summer Winds: A community wind ensemble in concert.
- Explore India by The India Center: Traditional Indian folk arts on full display.

AUGUST

- Home Sweet Home OR: A Life in New York by Theater for the New City: A live theater production set in the city we call home.

SEPTEMBER

- Tree Wonder WSP: Outdoor drawing beneath Manhattan's oldest tree.
- Echoes of Arrival from the Museum of Chinese in America: A dance performance exploring the immigrant experience.
- Bringing it All Back Home to Washington Square by The Village Trip: A rootsy musical concert in the folk tradition.
- PAPERS by In Parenthesis: An immersive outdoor theater experience exploring refugee narratives.
- Washington Square Park Folk Festival from Living Traditions: A weekend celebration of folk music and community.

DON'T MISS A MOMENT

The full season schedule can be found at washingtonsqpark.org/events. Free weekly programming starts May 6th, so mark your calendar, join our email list, and start planning your days and nights in Washington Square Park.

Whether you're tossing a pétanque ball, dancing to live salsa, sketching under a tree, or just soaking up the energy, the 2025 season promises something for everyone. We can't wait to see you there.

Grace Harman is the community relations director for the Washington Square Park Conservancy.

Pete Seeger: A Birthday Tribute

BY ROGER PARADISO

Pete Seeger was born on May 3, 1919 in the Lower East Side of New York City and lived in the Village for many years. There is an event on May 3 to celebrate his 105th birthday at the Advent Lutheran Church, 2504 Broadway at 93rd Street. You can attend in person or watch the link after the live streamed concert at Peoples' Voice Cafe.

In the middle of his career Seeger was blacklisted by Senator Joseph McCarthy. But like a true independent artist he was relentless in his pursuit to have his music heard. He never stopped singing his songs of hope outside the commercial outlets. Seeger found a way, by championing festivals like the Newport Folk Festival and by climbing aboard the Sloop Clearwater advocating for the cleanup of the Hudson River.

Many artists sang his songs, not only because of their powerful messages, but because royalties were one of his only means to a living wage.



PETE SEEGER sings at President Obama's 2009 Inauguration.

My personal remembrance is the folk music program he produced on a public UHF station in Newark, New Jersey. He did 39 shows in 1965–66 on WNJU-TV /Channel 47 (you can find them on YouTube). Because he was blacklisted, he and a friend had to finance the show themselves. Some of the performers included Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, Judy Collins and Johnny Cash.

When they tried to silence his voice, Seeger didn't let it happen. His voice is still being heard through his songs. Give a listen to some of my favorites: *We Shall Overcome*, *Good-night Irene*, *If I had a Hammer*, *Where Have all the Flowers Gone*, *Turn! Turn! Turn!* and *John Henry*. What are some of your favorites?

PeteSeegerMusic.com

Art in the Library with Teaching Artist Jennifer Prevatt

BY CORINNE NEARY



FOR FIVE WEEKS, 15 adult patrons learned the basics of creating 3-dimensional paper artwork, and began creating the pieces to be displayed in "The Little Underground Gallery." Photo by Jennifer Prevatt.

Regular visitors to the Jefferson Market Library will know that we often display work from local artists in our basement gallery space, dubbed "The Little Underground Gallery." This month, we are particularly excited about what we have on display, as the exhibit combines some of our favorite things: the work of our patrons, and the culmination of one of our free classes: Spring Art Studio: Paper Relief Sculpture Workshop.

For five weeks, 15 adult patrons learned the basics of creating 3-dimensional paper artwork, and began creating the pieces to be displayed in our gallery. Working with teaching artist Jennifer Prevatt, they are excited to share their work with our visitors during the month of May. The work will be on display beginning with a gallery opening on May 3 at 3 p.m. and will remain up until the end of the month.

For a little more insight into the work produced in the class, we sat down with Jennifer Prevatt to ask a few questions. Some readers may remember the installation Jennifer created in our basement last Spring, when she turned our gallery wall into a giant paper cloud! This kind of large scale, sculpted paper art is a specialty of hers, one that she's using to inspire our Spring Art Studio participants.

WE'RE SO HAPPY TO HAVE YOU LEADING THIS SPRING'S ART STUDIO COURSE. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING AS AN ARTIST?

My first exhibition was in 2004 with the Harlem Open Artist Studio Tour. I've been exhibiting regularly since then, showing my work internationally and working as a children's book illustrator since 2016.

CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR WORK?

I have a background in scientific illustration and fine art. Drawing is central to my practice, but in recent years I have been experimenting with large scale installation work. I also work in animation and sculpture, always using paper as the primary material for its dichotomous nature of being both resilient and vulnerable.

HOW HAS LEADING A CLASS AT THE LIBRARY BEEN DIFFERENT THAN OTHER VENUES?

I've been a teaching artist since 2010, working with all ages. I love working with the local community in the West Village. There is a real sense of curiosity from the students that's amplified within the library environment; everyone is really supportive of one another.

WHAT HAVE THE STUDENTS BEEN WORKING ON IN CLASS, AND WHAT CAN PEOPLE EXPECT TO SEE WHEN THEY VISIT THE SHOW?

Students are learning how to transform paper into a 3-dimensional form in the style of a relief sculpture. The result is a variety of unique perspectives spanning representational to abstract works.

Please come by the Little Underground Gallery during May to check out the artwork created by your neighbors! And stay tuned for a very exciting exhibit going up in June, highlighting vintage Gay magazines from the 1950s-70s!

PROUST CENTER UPDATE

William C. Carter's final volume of Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained* will be published in May. After waiting 12 years, the Proust Center is looking forward to reading Carter's fully annotated *Time Regained*.

Powers of Adjustment — The Great Gatsby

BY EVE MATHESON

Becoming aware of the 100 year publication anniversary of *The Great Gatsby*, I thought it might be time to read it again. I am no longer in possession of my high school copy. I do recall being forced back then to spend an awful lot of time thinking about and talking about the green light.

For the sake of this review, I am going to do what your high school teachers tell you to do when you're learning to write an essay: write as though your audience has already read the book. I always thought that was a bit presumptuous and it very well may be—except for *Gatsby*.

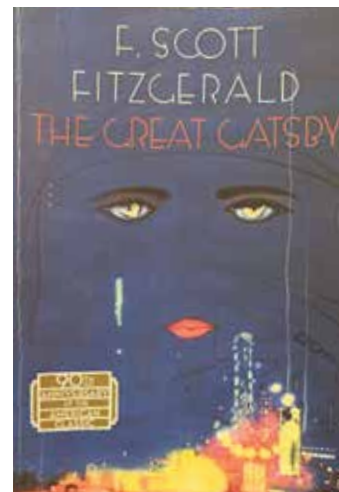
On my second reading, which I completed over the course of one evening and the next morning, the green light was there, shining alluringly, and then meaninglessly, but there was also so much there that I had completely forgotten about. For one thing, Fitzgerald's brilliant pacing.

I was shocked to discover that the valley of ashes and T.J. Eckleburg and poor Mrs. Wilson are introduced in chapter two! That awful apartment party scene where Tom breaks her nose and where we get the first taste of Nick Carraway's...shall we say imperfect narration... happens in chapter two! After the second bottle of whiskey is produced out of the confusion, Nick tells us that he wanted to leave, "but each time [he] tried to go, [he] became entangled in some wild, strident argument which pulled [him] back, as if with ropes, into [his] chair."

It's the type of excuse that a man needs when he's somewhere he really shouldn't be, witnessing things he really shouldn't. It's what comes next that's most important though, when he says, "I was within and without, simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life." By the end of the summer, the enchantment will have dissipated, with only one man escaping unscathed: Nick himself.

When I was a teenager, I wasn't interested in all the unsavoriness. All the reality that the novel accuses its glittering characters of first producing and then ignoring—well, I wanted to ignore it too. I was drawn in by the romance of *Gatsby*. The smile, the mansion, the parties. Then the embarrassment and unreasoning and all-consuming joy at being reunited with his Daisy. His Daisy, who of course, doesn't exist, but who, as a teenage girl, I also wanted so badly to exist. I think vividly of tea at Nick Carraway's in the pouring rain.

Though I was told to pay attention to the unsavoriness—the carelessness—I preferred the romance, the nostalgia, the past.



I'm prone to it. I didn't like Tom, didn't really like Daisy, either, but the romance of *Gatsby* was enough distraction. I was only interested in them insofar as they tortured *Gatsby*. I was probably willfully missing the point.

On this second reading, what stood out most when considering the carelessness I could no longer ignore, was Nick's own carelessness. This is not revolutionary. Who could forget Jordan's ruthless put

down: "I thought you were rather an honest, straightforward person. I thought it was your secret pride." And she's right. She's right that it's his secret pride—in his own words, it's the "cardinal virtue" he suspects himself of. She's also right that he's not a straightforward person, not at all.

That lack of straightforwardness captivated me, really dominated the novel for me. A little more than halfway through, when Daisy and Tom show up to one of *Gatsby*'s parties for the first time, Nick feels an unpleasantness and oppressiveness in the air that he's never felt before. Having grown accustomed to the West Egg scene, it's unsettling to observe it through Daisy's East Egg eyes. He observes that "it is invariably saddening to look through new eyes at things upon which you have expended your own powers of adjustment," and when I read that, something clicked into place.

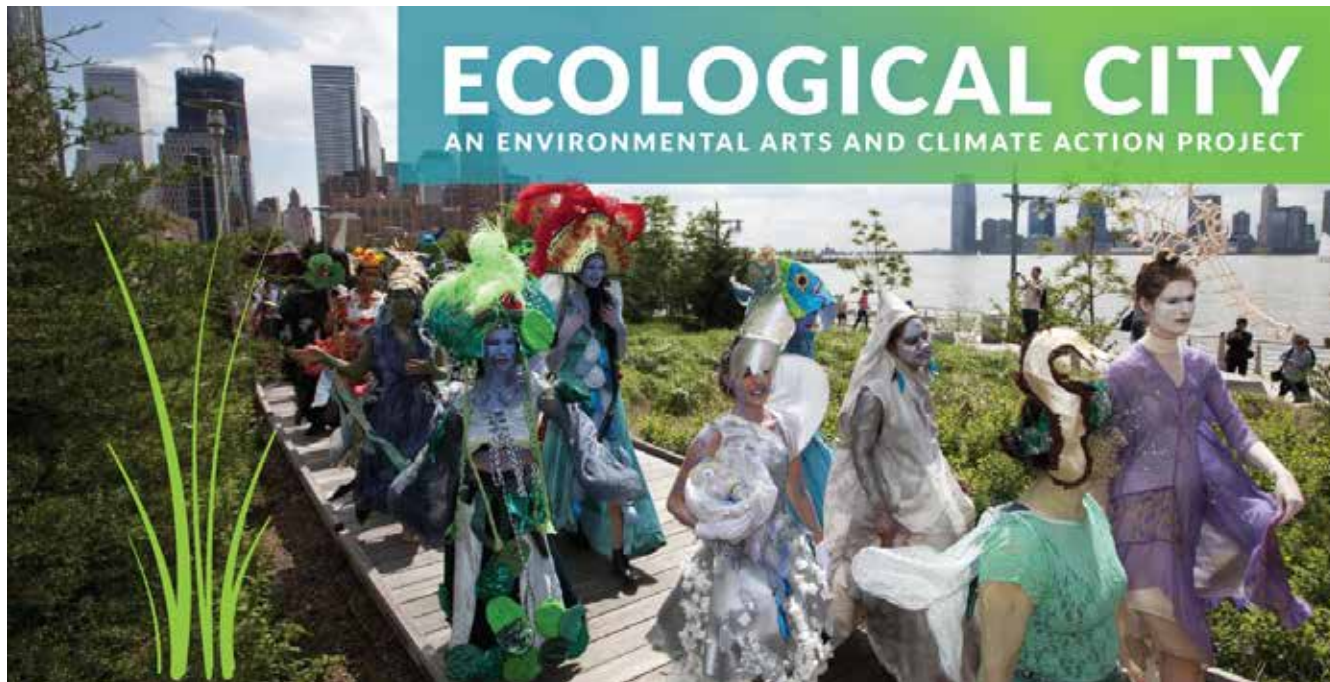
The whole novel is an exercise in Nick's powers of adjustment. The whole scene and every character are adjusted by him. As the reader, you end up doing cartwheels trying to figure out which way is up. Nick is telling the story, but even as he includes Jordan's incisive diagnosis of his dishonesty, he can't fully own it. On the first page, he announces himself as a man who reserves all judgements, but throughout the novel he judges. Tom is arrogant, Daisy is insincere, Jordan is dishonest (pot, kettle). His account is artful, so it almost slips by you, but he doesn't know himself. Either that, or he does know himself, but he doesn't want you to know him.

He wants to escape, and he does. After *Gatsby* becomes a non-problem by dying, Nick can love him unabashedly, bury him and escape back west to "the Carraway house in a city where dwellings are still called through decades by a family's name." He claims he had to leave because the East was "distorted beyond his eyes' power of correction," but even that's not true at all. His powers of correction may be shaken, but they are strong enough. The book we hold is proof enough of that.

May 2025

EVENTS

in and
around the
West
Village



PROCESSION FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

Saturday, May 10 (Rain Date May 11)
11 AM - 5 PM
Start 11 AM at Earth Celebrations
Sixth Street Community Center
638 E. 6th Street (btw. Aves B & C)
Lower East Side
earthcelebrations.com

The theatrical pageant, co-created by the Lower East Side community, artists, gardeners and residents, features a spectacular procession of visual art, giant puppet and costumes with 21 site performances of dance, music, theater and poetry, exploring climate solution initiatives throughout the community gardens, neighborhood and waterfront on the Lower East Side of New York City.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - Sign up to wear a spectacular climate solution costume, assist with visuals, puppets and as marshals – an unforgettable experience exploring an urban ecological wonderland. Visit earthcelebrations.com for information.

GREEK JEWISH FESTIVAL

Sunday, May 11
12:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Kehila Kedosha Janina
Synagogue and Museum
280 Broome Street
GreekJewishFestival.com
FREE - no ticket needed!

Celebrate the unique heritage of the Jews of Greece with live music, dancing, delicious food, & much more! Experience a feast for the senses including authentic kosher Greek foods and homemade Greek pastries, traditional dance performances with live Greek and Sephardic music, an outdoor marketplace full of vendors, arts and educational activities for kids, Sephardic cooking demonstrations, and much more! The packed performance schedule includes thrilling music and dance performances that are guaranteed to get you up on your feet and joining the dance circle!



CLASSES



TREE WONDER'S DRAWING SESSIONS

May 4, 18 and 25
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Northwest corner of
Washington Square Park
FREE!

Tree Wonder is a community eco-art initiative that invites the public to stop, look up, wonder, and draw, at the foot of Manhattan's oldest tree.

HOMEMADE PASTA CLASS

May 6 and May 22
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM
Abigail's Kitchen
85 MacDougal St.
abigailskitchennyc.com

Learn to make fresh pasta from scratch in this hands-on class.

MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH

May 11
11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Abigail's Kitchen
85 MacDougal St.
abigailskitchennyc.com

Celebrate your Mom today by learning to cook a delicious brunch menu with her! Our menu will be Scrambled Eggs with Smoked Salmon, Creme Fraiche and Caviar, Poached Eggs with Hollandaise, Red Flannel Hash, and Crepes with Chocolate & Ice Cream.





MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND
Clothing, Housewares, Books, Jewelry,
Furniture, Collectibles, and much more!
Bargains Galore & Affordable Art
May 9, 10, 11 • 11 AM – 5 PM
\$10 Bag Sale May 17
Westbeth Basement, 55 Bethune St.



ART

CERAMICS NOW
May 8 – June 13
Jane Hartsook Gallery, Greenwich House
16 Jones Street
greenwichhouse.org
Featuring works by Daniel Barragán, Car-
son Culp, Kristy Moreno, and Gina Tibbott.

SOHO ARTS NETWORK (SAN)
DOWNTOWN CULTURE WALK
Saturday, May 10
11:00 am - 5:00 pm
Grey Art Museum, 18 Cooper Square
sohoarts.org/downtown-culture-walk
NYU's Grey Art Museum is participating in
the Downtown Culture Walk, a self-guided
walking tour presented by the SoHo Arts
Network (SAN) that highlights non-profit
art spaces in downtown neighborhoods.
The Grey will have open hours from 11
am–5 pm.

EXPLORING TWIN QUASAR:
A CONVERSATION ON ART, SCIENCE,
AND VIRTUAL WORLDS
The Whitney Museum of American Art
Thursday, May 22, 12–1 PM
Free with registration
whitney.org/exhibitions/twin-quasar
Join artist Ashley Zelinskie and curator Chris-
tiane Paul for a conversation set in the virtual
world of Twin Quasar, a digital work that was
commissioned by the Whitney. Twin Quasar
is a virtual reality artwork that combines ele-
ments of science and art history.



LIVE PODCASTS
Two quintessentially Downtown evenings
with two people who make New York City
our kind of town, whatever's going on else-
where. Live Interviews in collaboration with
Person Place Thing podcast.

JAMIE BERNSTEIN IN CONVERSATION
WITH RANDY COHEN
May 21, 7:00 - 9:00 PM
Greenwich House Music School
46 Barrow Street
thevillagetrip.com

JANIS SIEGEL IN CONVERSATION
WITH RANDY COHEN
May 29, 6:00 PM
La Lanterna di Vittorio
129 MacDougal Street
thevillagetrip.com

AUTHOR TALK

WITH DAVID BROWNE: TALKIN'
GREENWICH VILLAGE: THE HEADY
RISE AND SLOW FALL OF AMERICA'S
BOHEMIAN MUSIC CAPITAL
May 15, 6 - 7 PM
Hudson Park Library
66 Leroy Street
David Browne, senior writer at *Rolling*
Stone and music historian, will discuss
and read from his latest book, *Talkin'*
Greenwich Village: The Heady Rise
and Slow Fall of America's Bohemian
Music Capital. Called a "captivating
ode to a storied chapter of pop culture
history" by *Publishers Weekly*, Browne's
book chronicles the heyday of the Vil-
lage's music community and the way it
nurtured folk, jazz and rock musicians—
while fighting for its survival all the way.
Learn what happened before and after
A Complete Unknown!

MUSIC

PETE SEEGER: A BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE
Benefit Concert for WBAI and PVC
May 3, 8:00 PM
In-Person & Livestream
For this show only -
Advent Lutheran Church
2504 Broadway at 93rd Street
peoplesvoicecafe.org
Featuring: Reverend Billy and the Stop
Shopping Choir, Judy Gorman & Mario
Cancel-Bigay, with Barry Kornhauser
and Robin Burdulis, The NYC Metro Rag-
ing Grannies, Bracha Lieberman with
Chris Lang.

A GARDEN CONCERT:
MUSIC & NATURE IN HARMONY
Sunday, May 25, 3:00 PM
St. John in the Village
224 Waverly Place
stjvny.org/arts-upcoming
An open-air concert in the beautiful gar-
den of St. John in the Village. Experience
a one-of-a-kind concert featuring the Ka-
tarina String Quartet, the current Juilliard
Graduate Resident Quartet, and pianist
Yang Liu. This magical performance
will showcase Joseph Haydn's String
Quartet Op. 50, No. 2, Judith's Weir String
Quartet No. 2 "The Spaniard", and Robert
Schumann's Piano Quintet, set against
the backdrop of spring blossoms.



Saturday, May 10
2:00 - 4:30 PM
Church of the Ascension
Fifth Ave. & Tenth Street
The Church of the Ascension invites you
to celebrate our recently restored tower!
Come daydream with us and learn ways
you can support our historic landmark
at the heart of Greenwich Village. We
will gather in the garden with refreshing
snacks, a chance to hear your ideas for
the future of our garden, and tours of the
church (inside). Family, friends, and all are
welcome!
For information, to volunteer, or to RSVP,
please contact Zach Hennessey at zhen-
nessey@gmail.com

GREENWICH VILLAGE CHAMBER
SINGERS — EIN DEUTSCHES REQUIEM
May 9, 8:00 PM
Church of St. Luke in the Fields
487 Hudson Street
gvcsingers.org
A performance of Brahms' Requiem
with piano accompaniment.

UNCHARTED CONCERT SERIES AT
GREENWICH HOUSE MUSIC SCHOOL
Thursdays at 8 pm
May 1: Bryan Vargas
May 8: Excelsis Percussion
May 15: Jaime Lozano
46 Barrow Street
greenwichhouse.org
Uncharted is a concert series that
encourages artists to take risks and
work out new or existing material, col-
laborations, and projects for an intimate
concert experience. In keeping with
Greenwich House Music School's artist
advocacy work, 100% of ticket and mer-
chandise sales go directly to artists.

THEATER

CREDITORS!
May 10 - Jun 18
Minetta Lane Theater
18 Minetta Lane
audiblexminetta.com
A Tale Of Manipulation
Starring Tony Award-winning Liev Schreiber,
Creditors is a fractious tale, neatly assem-
bled by the slippery threads of manipula-
tion. Written by the Swedish playwright
August Strindberg in 1888, the production is
noted as one of the writer's most powerful
and mature works.

GODDESS
Through June 8
The Public Theater
425 Lafayette Street (at Astor Place)
publictheater.org/productions/
season/2425/goddess
A vibrant musical blending African rhythms
with a tale of love and redemption.

Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney at 150: Plaque Unveiling

Monday, May 12, 6:00 pm
New York Studio School
Pre-registration required
villagepreservation.org/event/gertrude-
vanderbilt-whitney-plaque-unveiling
Join Village Preservation for the ceremo-
nial unveiling of a plaque honoring Gertrude
Vanderbilt Whitney and the 150th anniversary
of her birth at the site where she had her art
studio and founded the first museum devoted
to contemporary American art, the Whitney
Museum of American Art. Hear about her
remarkable impact in the arts world as an art-
ist, collector, and patron. Village Preservation's
plaque program has honored and marked the
homes of local figures from Jane Jacobs to
James Baldwin; Allen Ginsberg to Charles Mingus; Frances Perkins to Frank Stella; and Martha Graham to Lorraine Hansberry,
as well as historically significant sites such as the former NAACP headquarters, the Fillmore East, and Julius' Bar.



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.



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