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Next Issue
March 14

The InTowner

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Historic Art Deco Bldg. to Get \$2 Mil for Rehab; Part of DC's Black Life

By Anthony L. Harvey

Among the many Black History Month celebrations in Washington was the February 1st interpretive tour of the DC Recorder of Deeds' Art Deco building at 515 D Street, NW, located on the northwest corner of what was to be the 1930s-planned Municipal Buildings Square. The building is now slated for a \$2 million restoration.



photo—Alexander M. Padro (© 2001 All Rights Reserved). Maxine Seelbinder, Benjamin Banneker and the District of Columbia (Detail); oil on canvas, 94" x 66" (1943).

Conducted by Alexander Padro, a Shaw neighborhood ANC commissioner and the co-chair of the Art Deco/Art Moderne Municipal Buildings Task Force of the DC Preservation League, he shares primary responsibility with Ward 1 Councilmember Jim Graham in effort to rescue this historic structure from being lost to the city's on-going program for the privatization of the historic public building stock in downtown.

In addition to this building being a recognized a treasure trove of art deco/art moderne architectural and design detailing, replete with its collection of historic murals depicting African-American contributions to the country's history, since 1881 the Office of the Recorder of Deeds has provided employment opportunity for out-

Cont., DEEDS, p. 4

Logan Circle Survey Surprises Liquor Foes; Neighbors Not Alarmed

By Terry Lane

The results of a survey on liquor-selling establishments in Logan Circle surprised many who have been following developments in the neighborhood. Supporters of more nightlife said the results show residents of Logan Circle have more interest in nightlife than their local politicians. However, the results also appear to reflect the balance between bars and retail stores that Ward 2 Councilmember Jack Evans has advocated.



View looking south on 14th Street toward Church Street showing the sidewalk café space that will be occupied by The Saint come the warm weather.

The greatest response came from older residents in and around Logan Circle, yet the survey still showed support for more alcohol-serving establishments, particularly restaurants. The survey was conducted by a task force established with the support of the Logan Circle Community Association (LCCA) and the area's Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC), which made a grant to the task force of \$500 toward its \$1,100 cost.

Supporters of nightlife hailed the results as a "coup" for residents who want a vibrant social scene in Logan Circle. They said a vocal minority of "NIMBYites" has pressured city leaders to crack down on establishments, particularly late night dance clubs. "This is an amazing bunch of data from a survey created by an anti-nightlife crowd," said Frederick Harwood of the Committee for a Living DC.

Although slightly less than half the respondent (47 percent) are opposed to more nightclubs, the results showed there was clear support for neighborhood bars and restaurants. In addition, there was enthusiastic support for sidewalk cafés and other outdoor eating establishments, the results showed.

Helen Kramer, ANC chairwoman, said the results would likely be used to formulate a series of guidelines for liquor license applicants in the Logan Circle area. The guidelines would be a starting point in negotiations on voluntary agreements with prospective license holders. Voluntary agreements are used by ANCs to place additional rules on liquor license holders

Cont., LOGAN, p. 9

Neighbors Accuse 911 of Failure to Respond Until Too Late for Fire Dept. to Save Structure and Possibly Life of Occupant



5:30 a.m., January 15, 2003. Fire starts in the English basement of this house directly across 21st Street from The Phillips Collection and by the time fire companies arrived the entire structure was engulfed, one resident seriously injured from jumping out of third floor, another resident so seriously burned that he died a few days later.

The fire was so massive that it seriously damaged the top floors of the adjacent houses and if the house in back had not been outfitted with glass block windows rather than standard glass, the flames would have burst through into that house, according to the homeowner's account to *The InTowner*.

Cont., FIRE, p. 8



photos—Michael K. Wilkinson—The InTowner

WHAT'S INSIDE

Community News	3
Neighborhood Vignette	5
Neighborhood Theater	6
DC Then and Now	7
ABC Board Actions	10-11
Scenes from the Past	12
Dining/Food	13-15
DC JCC Art Exhibit	16
At the Museums	17-18
Classifieds	19
Service Directory	20
Real Estate	21-24

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*The Committee for a Living DC
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From the Publisher's Desk...

By P.L. Wolff

IF 100,000 NEW PEOPLE MOVE INTO DC WILL THEY BE SAFE?

Last month in this space, inspired by the mayor's clarion call to make DC a place that 10,000 new people per year for the next five years will want to move into, we questioned if it would be as appealing as he would like to believe. Our focus was directed mainly at police services (or seeming lack thereof) and wondered if this, alone, wouldn't be enough of a discouragement.

Well, here it is only five weeks later, and now we are even more troubled about not only the police department but of a whole panoply of public safety issues.

Two events since mid-January, in particular, make us reluctant to urge our friends from the 'burbs to take a chance on living in DC. The first was that horrendous fire at 1617-21st Street, briefly described on our front page and its aftermath revealed by photographs. While we wouldn't ever say don't move here because houses can burn up and people inside can die, when we think about this one and learn that our public safety system was virtually asleep at the switch and not available to respond because the 911 center was 75 percent understaffed, leaving only one operator to be the first line of defense for a sleeping population of half-a-million souls, then we have to say that's too scary for words.

It also smacks of criminal negligence on the part of the managers responsible for permitting this to be the case. They say they don't have the personnel. Our response is that they should do whatever it takes to fill slots with managers until they have found workers who can be reassigned until new people are hired and trained. And, if the reason they are short-staffed is because the pay stinks, then persons responsible for decisions as to levels of pay need to be held to account. We don't really care what all the excuses might be, there are no valid excuses when it comes to performing one of the single most critical roles of government—protecting the citizens.

And, speaking of protecting citizens, while the mayor refuses to believe the veracity of the report of one of the house fire victims about the parked squad car officer who rolled up his window and drove away when he was frantically approached for help, there appears to be corroboration of this report, and instead of denouncing it, the mayor ought to show real concern and not call people liars. We are told the whole incident may have been caught on film by a Phillips Collection security camera, and while the police apparently didn't seem to think about acquiring that, to the credit of the museum's officials, they made a copy for police use.

But it's not just the apparent lack of real caring about what happens to citizens on the streets or in their homes that bothers so much, but now we have new concerns about real civil defense from terrorists and agents of foreign powers who seek to do harm to our country. While city government can't assume the role of the military or other branches of the federal government, it certainly can do a far better job in preparing citizens to deal with war.

To date there seems to have been only talk about planning for escape routes out of the city, other than for the half-dozen main avenues publicly identified (although no clues offered as to how to get to those routes from various neighborhoods not immediately abutting those roadways; nor is there any guidance for the thousands of residents who don't have access to private cars or how will the infirm get evacuated, etc., etc.). Point is, we've heard nothing. This newspaper, for example has never been sent any advisories to share with the public from any agency that deals with planning and responding to such events. Oh, we did just receive a press release from the Public Schools central administration informing us of a photo-op to view "school emergency provisions" so as to be able to assure our readers that there are stockpiles of food, water and emergency equipment throughout the school system. We guess that should make some of us feel better.

But what would be much more useful from the city would be to implement suggestions which have already been offered at some public meetings and even reported in this newspaper, that the ANC's throughout the city serve as key neighborhood coordinating entities that would be able to effectively manage block captain efforts by which all residents might coalesce into teams to aid each other in case of emergency. As Dupont Circle ANC Commissioner Bob Meehan has suggested, just knowing which immediate neighbors have ladders and shovels and first aid kits and cell phones, who is home in the daytime, who has what kind of vehicle at the ready, who might be identified to assist neighbors who are infirm or bedridden—all those small details could make the difference between life and death.

But there needs to be assistance with coordination and distribution of key information and even certain kinds of supplies, and only the city can do this. But so far there is no evidence that our city government is up to the task. Lately, about all we've heard is the police chief admitting it will be chaos. Come to think of it, where has the mayor been? Has he already left for a bunker in West Virginia? We may just decide to follow him. □

▶ NEXT ISSUE—MARCH 14 ◀

DISPLAY ADVERTISING SPACE
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FRIDAY, MARCH 7

Classifieds Deadline: Friday, March 7

(See classifieds section for information about procedures)

News, Events & Letters Deadline: Friday, March 7

NOTE: Publication date always second Friday of month.

AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

The editor welcomes the receipt of information about community happenings, such as church-sponsored events, neighborhood and block association activities, public meetings dealing with neighborhood issues, and other events of a non-commercial nature. These may be emailed to us at newsroom@intowner.com, or sent by regular mail but not by fax.

Because we are a neighborhood newspaper and not a city-wide or regional publication, we restrict our reporting to that about news and activities occurring within the specific neighborhoods we serve—Adams Morgan, Mt. Pleasant, Columbia Heights, Dupont, Scott, Thomas & Logan Circles, Mt. Vernon Square/Pennsylvania Quarter, Shaw, U Street, Sheridan/Kalorama & the eastern side of Woodley Park/Zoo.

Special Note: We have implemented restrictions regarding Postal Service mail. Only envelopes from government agencies, recognized civic groups and other organizations, or mail from individuals in envelopes bearing verifiable return addresses that include sender's full name will be opened; any other postal or hand-delivered mail will be either returned to sender or destroyed.

Notices of selected events received after the first Friday of the month deadline may be included during the ensuing publication period in this Community News section of our website, <http://www.intowner.com>—be sure to visit it during the ensuing weeks.

• Sun., Feb. 16 (5pm) The weekly series of CONCERTS at The Phillips Collection (21st & Q Sts.) continues with a recital to be presented by pianist Andre von Frasnkievicz in a program t include Chopin's Scherzo No. 1, Liszt's "Berceuse" and "Mephisto" Waltz No. 1, Debussy's "L'isle Joyeuse," and Mussorgsky's *Pitures at an Exhibition*. And, on Sun., Mar. 2, also at 5pm, bass-baritone Thomas Beveridge and pianist Edward Newman will perform Franz Schubert's entire *Die Winterreise*. \$7.50 for adults, \$4 for seniors & students, includes museum admission also. For more info, call 387-2151

• Tue., Feb. 18 (6pm): David A. Catania, Councilmember At-Large and Chairman of the city council's Committee on Public Services is currently holding a series of ANC OVERSIGHT HEARINGS. ANC leaders of two wards are being

scheduled to appear at one of four hearing sessions for the purpose of assisting the committee "to establish the operation, goals and issues of the ANCs" and to be informed about "the most pressing community concerns for each of the ANCs."

This night will be the turn of the leaders of Ward 2's ANC's to appear, while those from Ward 4 will be heard on Thu., Feb. 27, also starting at 6pm. (Ward 1's ANCs had their turn on Feb. 11, prior to this issue's press date.) The hearings are being held in the Council Chambers at the Wilson Building (1350 Pa. Ave.).

Chairman Catania has as his goal with what is now an annual exercise by the committee, "to identify and help correct any operating or financial reporting deficiencies." The committee's advisory further informs the public as follows:

"Hearings in previous years established that while the vast majority of the ANCs were operating smoothly, several were in

violation of District law and regulations. Since first conducting these oversight hearings, the operation of the ANCs have greatly improved. Additionally, the hearings have provided an opportunity for ANCs to voice their concerns to the Council and comment on the state of the District. Questionnaires sent out by the Committee on Public Services to the ANCs for the hearing included questions regarding meeting records, bylaws, major goals, and the most pressing neighborhood problems." For more info, call 724.7772.

• Tue., Feb. 18 (6:30-8:30pm): The Design Committee of the 14th and U Street Initiative will hold its next working MEETING at the Thurgood Marshall Center (1816-12th St.), and on Mon., Feb. 24, the Membership Development Committee will also be holding a working meeting. The committees have developed their permanent schedule and regular meeting dates (Design, third Tuesday of each month; Membership, fourth Monday) and their chairpersons say that meetings will begin promptly at the designated start time. The Promotions Committee, which met on Tue., Feb. 4 (and will meet again on Mar. 4) has set its regular monthly meeting for 7-9pm on the first Tuesday, and the Economic Restructuring Committee, which met on Feb. 11 (and will meet again on Mar 11) has set its regular meeting for 6:30-8:30pm—the same time as the Design and Membership Committees—but on the second Tuesday.

The organizers of the Initiative report that it "is rapidly moving forward with implementation of a comprehensive commercial revitalization strategy for the 14th & U Street Commercial corridors." Further, according to their announcement, "The committees have all met at

least twice now and there have been over 150 volunteers participating in the ongoing development of the work plans. All the committees have broken into working sub-committees that are identifying the projects that each committee will undertake over the next 18 months. This process has also identified several short term goals, objectives and events [which] the . . . Initiative is promoting, sponsoring or supporting."

As we have previously reported, the idea for this came about as a result of a "Main Street" program grant awarded in 2002. The program's principal goal is to enlist the participation of a wide range of neighborhood "stakeholders" who will help develop a "vision" of what the 14th & U Streets commercial corridors will become and how the Main Street program will help make it happen. For more info, call 550-0769 or email info@14thandU.org, or visit www.14thandU.org.

• Thu., Feb. 20 (12:15-12:45pm): The no-charge, half-hour weekly lunchtime CONCERTS at the National City Christian Church on Thomas Circle continue inside this beautiful John Russell Pope-designed elegant and classically soaring sanctuary with a program by organist Giorgio Parolini of the Civica Scuola di Musica, Milan, Italy, who will perform on the church's magnificent 141-rank, 7592-pipe Möeller organ, widely hailed for its glorious sound, from sublime to powerful.

Continuing weekly Thursday lunchtime recitals will feature baritone Christopher DeVage of National City (27th); organist Nigel Groome of Beckenham Parish Church, Bromley, England (Mar. 6); and mezzo-soprano Terri Erchul Malone also of National City (Mar. 13). For more info,

Cont., COMMUNITY, p. 5

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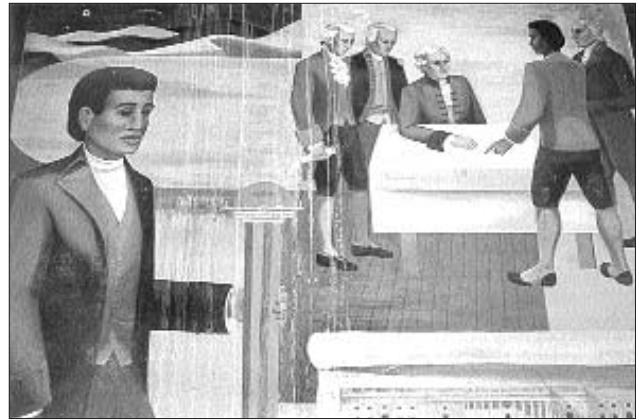
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photo—Alexander M. Padro (© 2001 All Rights Reserved).
Maxine Seelbinder, Benjamin Banneker and the District of Columbia (Expanded Detail); oil on canvas, 94" x 66" (1943).

DEEDS

From p. 1

standing African-American civil servants. Padro's February 1st tour, which this writer attended along with a large and attentive group, provided a lively commentary replete with historical anecdotes, as he recounted the building's construction history in between 1940 and 1942. Championed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt after being proposed to FDR by a far-sighted DC Recorder of Deeds, William J. Thompkins, the building was constructed for a total cost of \$450,000. At that time, the Recorder of Deeds had been paying, Padro further recounted, \$240,000 per year in rent.

And the Recorder of Deeds Building is indeed a treasure. Its ornate lobby is paneled in softly colorful travertine marble bordered by brass striping and plaster molding.

The floor is terrazzo marble, the ceiling was once sky blue, and the fittings, door and sign frames, utility boxes, were all once polished brass. The large, handsome windows allowed a maximum of natural light to be reflected off the waxed and polished marble floors, ceilings, and walls. Years of neglect, together with brown paint on the brass, and dull, off-white paint over the sky blue ceiling, however, have dramatically diminished the entrance lobby's brilliance. Happily, Padro asserted, it's all imminently restorable.

Several of the historic lobby murals are also badly in need of restoration, especially those located in the two front vestibules. These, together with five other murals, were painted by seven artists selected from over 350 entries in a national competition held in the early 1940s by the Section of Fine Arts of the federal Public Buildings Administration.

With an overall theme of "The Contribution of the Negro to the American Nation," the individual subjects for the seven murals were chosen by Recorder of Deeds Thompkins, who, when appointed by FDR in the 1930s was the 15th in a line of succession of African-American Recorders named by U.S. Presidents, beginning in 1881 when Frederick Douglass was appointed by President James A. Garfield.

These seven murals and their subjects include:

- *Benjamin Banneker and the District of Columbia*, by Maxine Seelbinder, complete with a modernist border depicting Banneker's surveying and building tools, his books and papers, and his remarkable

reconstruction of L'Enfant's plan for the District of Columbia;

- William Edouard Scott's interpretation of Frederick Douglass successfully appealing to President Lincoln for the enlistment of black combat troops in the Union Army;

- *Crispus Attacks—First Patriot Killed in Boston Massacre, March 6, 1770*, by Hershel Levit;

- *Battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815*, by Ethel Magafan, showing black slaves building fortifications under the direction of General Andrew Jackson;

- *Martyr Schweig's Courageous Act of Cyrus Tiffany in Battle of Lake Erie, September 13, 1813*, depicting the saving of the life of Admiral Oliver H. Perry;

- Depiction of the death of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw at the battle of Fort Wagner, dying in the arms of his 54th Massachusetts Regiment of black soldiers, by Carlos Lopez; and

- Austin Mecklem's rendering of Commander Robert E. Perry with Matthew A. Henson planting the American flag at the North Pole on April 6, 1909.

Other paintings in the lobby and elsewhere in the building include oil portraits of 12 of the African-American Recorders of Deeds, including Douglass, Thompkins, and former US Senator Blanche K. Bruce. Sculptures in the lobby include a stunning bronze relief medallion of FDR by noted African-American artist Selma Burk, and an unusually sensitive, bare-chested statue of "young Abraham Lincoln" by James Lee Hansen.

Planning for the complete renovation and restoration of this jewel of an historic building—one designed by the well-known architect of the 1930s and 1940s, Nathan C. Wyeth—is in a very early stage, Padro stated, and no details on phases or completion dates are yet available.

Given that this project will be dependant on the actual availability of previously announced restoration funds, Ward 1 Councilmember Jim Graham on February 5 confirmed to *The InTowner* that he had secured the funds in the District's current budget, and that the appropriated \$2 million was now "in place" to begin the renovation and restoration of the building, including its interior and its irreplaceable art works. □

COMMUNITY

From p. 3

call 232-0323, email Music@NationalCityCC.org, or visit www.nationalcitychristian.org.

• Thu., Feb. 20 (6-8:30pm): The folks over in Cardozo-Shaw are not the only ones thinking "Main Street"; so also in Adams Morgan! This just in from the organizers announcing the **AdamsMorgan MainStreet Group** hosting of its Ward 1 APPLICATION WORKSHOP:

"Adams Morgan just missed selection in 2002 and is in the process of reapplying in 2003. DC Main Streets Workshop is offered by "re-Store DC" and Deputy Mayor Eric Price. Workshop centers on community-based commercial revitalization and application under the national Main Street Four-Point approach of Organization, Design, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring."

The session will be held at the First Church of Christ, Scientist (1770 Euclid St., opposite Unity Park on Col. Rd.; enter by side door on Champlain St.). For more info, email Chris Bender at chris.bender@dc.gov or Lisa Duperier at AMMainStreet@aol.com.

• Thu., Feb. 20 (7pm): The regular monthly MEETING of the **Kalorama Citizens Association (KCA)**, at Goodwill Baptist Church (1862 Kalorama Rd.), is expected to feature an appearance by DC

Police Chief Charles Ramsey to join in a discussion of concerns about neighborhood crime. KCA President Mike Gould anticipates an even bigger turnout than last month's standing-room only crowd, which also focused on crime issues.

• Sat., Feb. 22 (5pm): The Geriatric Day Care Center of the **Downtown Cluster of Congregations** will be again celebrating BLACK HISTORY MONTH with its annual presentation of playwright Jeff Stetson's original work, *The Meeting*, based on the lives of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. The \$20 general admission performance will be staged at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church (1313 N.Y. Ave.). Discount tickets will be available for seniors and students. For tickets, call 347-7527.

The performance will feature acclaimed historical impersonator Kevin McIlvaine as Malcolm X and award-winning Greg Alan Williams (*The Sopranos*, *The West Wing*, *Boston Public*, *The District*).

The Geriatric Day Care Center serves functionally impaired, at-risk senior residents of DC by providing them with comprehensive therapeutic care and support services that help them remain in their homes and the community. For more info, call 202-347-7527.

• Fri. & Sat., Feb. 21 & 22 (8pm); Sun., Feb. 23 (2:30): These will be the final performances in the run of **The Foundry**

Cont., COMMUNITY, p. 8

Special Architectural Exhibit

Sunday, Sun., Feb. 23 will be the closing day for the eye-opening EXHIBIT of 40 images of Helsinki, Finland's newest contemporary buildings, captured on film by architectural photographer Jussi Tiainen. Marvel at our city misses out on—with a few exceptions, such as the **Embassy of Finland** (3301 Mass. Ave.), where the exhibit is showing. Considered one of the best-designed cities of the world, Finland's capital, according to the Embassy's spokespeople, has a city government that "plays a major role in the development and the creation of an overall 'look' of Helsinki through competitions and urban planning." The exhibit is free of charge and open to the public from 11am-4pm seven days a week. For those who choose not to hop a convenient Metrobus or take a stroll out the avenue beyond Sheridan Circle, there is ample street parking. For more info, call 298-5800.



Photos by Jussi Tiainen

Neighborhood Vignette



photo—Michael K. Wilkinson

St. Matthew Overcoming Church of God, 2100 block, 14th Street, NW.

Photographer Michael K. Wilkinson: "One of the unnoticed landmarks lost along 14th Street in the past few years. Storefront churches are woven into the fabric of many of the city's most downtrodden urban landscapes, but are rapidly disappearing as redevelopment creeps farther and farther into the neighborhoods.

"Part of our periodic series of photographs documenting changes along 14th Street. See this month's Around Our Community section for information about an upcoming show (March 7th) at the PASS Gallery featuring original, hand-printed images from this series.

"Neighborhood Vignette wants to hear about the most significant change on your block, or around the corner from you, or in your neighborhood during 2002. Which building has been bought and renovated, making a real difference on your block? Write us a letter for inclusion in the Community Forum section, telling us how the building was before, what problems it presented to your neighborhood, and how its renovation has improved your life. Thank you."



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last issue
on our
website:

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NEIGHBORHOOD THEATER

By Anthony L. Harvey

**Anton Chekhov's "The Seagull" Presented by
 Stanislavsky Theater Studio through Feb. 23
 at the Church Street Theater, 1742 Church St., NW**

The *Seagull*, Anton Chekhov's first major success as a playwright and the dramatic work that launched the success of the Moscow Art Theatre in 1898, has opened the Stanislavsky Theater Studio's fifth Washington season with a solid and beguiling production that is well staged, beautifully costumed and lighted, and admirably acted, with the play's key roles of actress mother Arkadina and avant garde playwright son Konstantin both portrayed with bravura performances by Caroline McGee as Arkadina and Jonathan Leveck as Konstantin.



A scene from *The Seagull*.

And, Masha, played by Irina Koval, continues its reverberations as I remember the sound and intonation of her marvelous voice, and the movements and physical interpretations that spoke multitudes with great concision and brevity as she performed her character's important supporting role.

In a taut and lively presentation, director Andrei Malaev-Babel (who plays well the important part of Trigorin) engages his company of actors, including himself, in the demanding and delightful task of dramatizing a timeless, turn of the 19th century "comedy in four acts" for a 21st century's audience's renewed appreciation. Chekhov's subtlety of *The Seagull* as a comedy reflects his conviction, in the words of his biographer and translator David Magarshack, "that its characters do not possess any of the heroic attributes of tragedy. They are merely figures in the 'human comedy.'"

And much of this comedy is consumed with intersecting vortexes of love and lust, where one finds the object of one of Chekhov's character's desire possessing an even more desperate desire for the love and affection of an entirely different character. Chekhov writes of a dying provincial society where a strong-willed, sophisticated actress (Arkadina) prevails throughout the play's four acts in the face of flagrant and public betrayal by her lover (the famous novelist Trigorin) who seduces her estranged son's beautiful intended, the aspiring actress Nina whose wicked step-mother has engineered her disinheritance by a lust-besotted, wealthy landowner father. And the beautiful daughter of Arkadina's brother Pyotr's estate manager, Masha, is madly in love with Konstantin (who ignores her) and marries an impoverished rural school teacher hoping for forgetfulness. A medical doctor, surnamed Dorn—Chekhov himself was a successful and beloved "country doctor"—rounds out play's major characters. In a strangely subversive characterization by Joe Mills, Dorn swaggers (and looks like) Pushkin before his fatal duel.

In his droll and profoundly understated manner, Chekhov very early summed up *The Seagull* as "a comedy, three women, six men, four acts, rural scenery, much talk of literature, little action, five bushels of love." In fact, a little bit of everything (in terms of human relations and extreme human behavior) happens—murderous flight, an actual suicide, multiple betrayals, lots of self-deceit, and all dramatized in a rich and resonant set of strong (some even strident) voices. Chekhov's spare language is the language of human understanding, be it spoken by Yakov, the peasant carpenter who builds the scaffolding-like stage set

for Konstantin's absurd, symbolist drama, or by the worldly wise and widely traveled novelist Trigorin (who, it is said, is not Tolstoy or Turgenev!), Konstantin's play's abortive performance on this hastily erected rural stage set is the crucible in which his reach is publicly demonstrated to outstrip the capabilities of his grasp; Konstantin is, of course, still a very young man!

And, at times startling, at times soothing, Chekhov's ideas wait in and out of different characters' spoken parts—sometimes the Doctor, sometimes the novelist, even, at times, the naïve and overly earnest young playwright, Chekhov, like Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky and so many other modern masters, is never a single authorial voice.

The Stanislavsky's set is both old-fashioned and eloquently modern, especially in its poignant homage to Chekhov in the form of a framed portrait hung stage left high above the action of the play. As in all its productions, some stage furniture plays parts as well, and pregnant with violence from its first mention is the construction and presence of Yakov's wooden stage set. Another of Chekhov's Yakovs builds coffins; In his deft short story—"Rothschilds' Fiddle"—Yakov builds coffins, "making them all of one size, taking himself as model.

Prize-winning set and costume designer Alexander Okun is joined in *The Seagull* by the strong and subtle lighting design of Colin K. Bills, whose mesmerizing design for the company's production last summer of *Hamlet* was unforgettable, as was that entire performance. (See, "Neighborhood Theater," *InTowner*, June 2002, page 18.) And it is with our thanks that we note the patronage of the Russian Federation's Ambassador to the United States Yuri V. Ushakov, whose support has made possible this production of one of Russian theater's true masterpieces in this adaptation by the company's writer-in-residence Rolan Reed that is both seamless and fluid. □

Through Sunday, February 23. Sat. curtain, 8 pm; Sun. curtain, 2 pm. Call box office for tickets, 265-3748. For more information, visit www.sts-online.org.

Our City of Washington Changes, Yet Doesn't Change

Then & Now: Washington, D.C.
 By Paul Kelsey Williams & T. Luke Young
 Arcadia Publishing, 96 pp, paper, \$19.99

Reviewed by Michael Kugelman

One sometimes hears the observation that Washington offers so much more than monuments, memorials, and imposing federal government buildings. To many District residents, the remark is simply a statement of the obvious: after all, once-maligned and dilapidated neighborhoods in the U Street corridor, Adams Morgan, and Logan Circle have in recent years been revitalized and infused the city with character and vibrancy. To others, however, this reality may not be as clear. Arcadia Publishing's latest pictorial history of the District, *Then & Now: Washington, D.C.*, does its best to illuminate the city's realities, past and present. In admirable fashion, Paul K. Williams and T. Luke Young visually capture the city's people, neighborhoods, parks, and buildings in a broad, holistic manner.

The intention of Williams—a local historian, the proprietor of an historic preservation firm, the researcher and writer of this newspaper's "Scenes from the Past" feature and a major Arcadia contributor, and Young, an architectural historian and photographer—is simple: contrast past images of the city with present ones, and

showcase what has remained the same. "We only seek to capture scenes of the past and contrast them with what we see today . . . primarily to recognize that the nature of cities results in environments that while vastly different are at the same time similar places our grandparents once knew," they state in the Introduction.

The duo stresses its strong belief in the vitality of the District's myriad neighborhoods reinforce the center, not the other way around," they write. Downtown areas, they add, are important, yet should be understood in "the context of the dynamic neighborhoods that both surround [them] and are increasingly intertwined within." This mindset accounts for the book's preponderance of photographs spotlighting neighborhood images. While snapshots of iconic structures such as the Pentagon, the National Cathedral, and the Lincoln Memorial also abound, it is the neighborhood images which are more prevalent.

Williams and Young divide the book into five chapters: "People and Entertainment," "Commercial Activities,"

Cont., BOOK, p. 21



photo—Washingtoniana Division, Martin Luther King, Jr. Library.

Unidentified gentlemen enjoying each other's company in the late 19th century.



photo—co-author T. Luke Young.

Neighbors seated at bar (l-r: Brad Young, co-author Paul Williams, David Perruzza), being served by bar manager Matt Henry, enjoying each other's company in late 2002.

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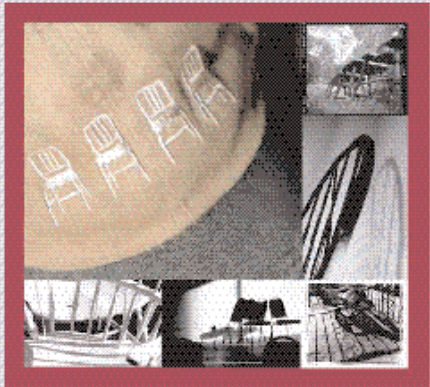
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8	\$45,630

For households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,620 for each additional member. Guidelines are subject to change annually. Income eligibility must be certified by the DC Energy Office.

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COMMUNITY

From p. 5

Players' production of *The Curate Shakespeare As You Like It*. Don Nigro's hilarious underground classic in which the Curate leads an inept troupe of actors attempting to perform *As You Like It* with hilarious consequences. The lead actor has departed for a career as a professional wrestler and the leading lady has gone insane. With the Curate's encouragement and support, the remaining six actors struggle to perform more than 30 roles resulting in disaster and riotous laughter. Performances at Foundry United Methodist Church (16th & P Sts.). Tickets, \$12. Call 332-3454.

• Fri., Feb 28 (6-10pm): **Mary's Center for Maternal & Child Care** in Adams Morgan (1711 Kalorama Rd.) will be holding a reception for its third annual Kalorama Emerging ARTISTS' FAIR. During the course of the evening's fun at the Center (just 2 blocks east of 18th Street in the heart of the Reed-Cooke neighborhood) you will be able to view and purchase the work being shown by the participating artists. And, if you can't get by Friday evening, the Fair will continue the following day, Sat., Mar. 1, 10am-5pm, when there will also be activities for the children. No charge for admission on either day. For more info, call 483-8319, ext. 306.

• Fri., Mar. 7 (6-8pm): Elizabeth Vail's "Old and New" paintings show opens with a RECEPTION to meet the artist at **Foundry Gallery** (9 Hillyer Ct.; enter via alley behind The Phillips Collection). And, on Sun., Mar. 16, (1:30-2:30pm) the artist will present a gallery talk about her work. Show closes Mar. 30; gallery hours, Wed.-Sat., 11am-5pm; Sun., 1-5pm. For more info, call 387-0203.

• Fri., Mar. 7 (7-10pm): "STREET DC," a group PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW will be opening with a reception to meet the photographers at the **PASS (Painting and Sculpture Studio) Gallery** (Rear, 1619 S St., enter via alley off 17th St. bet. S & Swann Sts.). Featured will be work of six local photographers: Jim Dadey, Vance Lessard, Rogelio Maxwell, Christophe Poulenc, Jake Watling and Michael K. Wilkinson (whose "Neighborhood Vignette" feature and other contributions appear in this newspaper each month). Through March 29. For more info, call

Richard Siegman at 745-0796.

• Sat., Mar. 8 (1:30pm): **The Society of the Cincinnati** once again opens up its historic headquarters and museum, the grand palace-like Anderson House (2118 Mass. Ave.) for another presentation in its 2002-'03 CONCERT series. Featured will be pianist James Nalley, who will perform, among other selections, Ives' Sonata No. 1, Mozart's Variations on "La belle Françoise," and Liszt's Ballade No. 1. The program is free of charge and seating in the Great Hall is on a first-come, first-served basis. For more info, call 785-2040, ext 498.

The spring schedule will continue with pianist Frederic Chiu on Mar. 22, an engagement by the Washington Arts Trio on Apr. 12, pianist John Gardecki on May 25, and conclude with a performance by the Air Force Chamber Players in late June (date to be announced).

• Sat., Mar. 8 (5-7pm): **Sisterspace and Books Gallery** (1515 U St.) will host an RECEPTION & ARTIST TALK to mark the opening of a special exhibit, "Matters of the he(A)rt." Here, the work of artists Colette Cullors, Jacqueline Mari, Keisha Scarville, Shannon Washington, and Suné Woods explore the space between vulnerability and cathartic release, each artist drawing on their own experience as raw material to create art that is both highly personal and political. In helping us understand the underlying approach to this exhibit, which will open on Mar. 1 and remain on view through Mar. 30, Curator Takema Robinson explains: "Fridha Kahlo, Clarissa Sligh, Emma Amos, Carrie Mae Weems, Adrian Piper, Howardina Pindell, Faith Ringold, Nikki Lee. Women of Color Artists have created autoportraits as a means of discussing a range of issues as stifling as sexism, as intimate as sexuality, as complex as racism and as fantastical as growing up a girl."

The bookstore and gallery are open Wed.-Sat., 10am-7pm; Sun., Noon-5pm; closed Mon. & Tue. For more info, call 332-3433.

• Fri., Mar. 14 (6-8:30pm): "Life is Too Serious," Marcial Coppel's show of paintings and drawings will be on view during the RECEPTION too meet the artist at **TOUCHSTONE GALLERY** (406-7th St.). Show closes Apr. 6; gallery hours, Wed.-Fri., 11am-5pm; Sat. & Sun., Noon-5pm. For more info, call 347-2787, email info@touchstonegallery.com, or visit www.TouchstoneGallery.com. □



photos—Michael K. Wilkinson—The InTowner

FIRE

From p. 1

Residents and neighbors all reported inability to get either get response when

calling 911 or were placed on hold for several minutes. Later investigation revealed that the 911 section responsible for taking fire calls was staffed by only one operator instead of the required four. □

LOGAN

From p. 1

that are sometimes outside the scope of city liquor laws. They are often used to shape the character of a neighborhood's nightlife.

Survey respondents seemed to support an eclectic mix of shops, restaurants and bars, so long as the parking and trash problems of hotspots like Adams Morgan and Georgetown are avoided.

The survey, which drew 117 responses from the 1,200 mailed, even included questions where respondents could describe how they believed Logan Circle should develop. Only nine percent of replies came from those 30 years or younger. A third were over 50 years old. The results were presented to the ANC on February 5 at its monthly meeting.

The responses showed that many supported "lively or active street life"; that residents want to avoid fast-food establishments and other chain stores, instead favoring unique shops and small, ethnically diverse affordable restaurants. And, while many said public drunkenness was a problem, it still ranked below crime and trash as top priorities, the survey revealed.

About 68 percent of respondents indicated support of some form of bar or tavern in their neighborhood. Of those, 64 percent prefer that the establishment be a "neighborhood gathering place," another 50 percent want a "sit-down lounge," and 20 percent reported they would support a "large, 'meet somebody' bar."

Sidewalk restaurants drew the biggest support in the survey, with 81 percent responding they would like restaurants with outdoor dining. Four of five respondents want more restaurants, but only 38 percent are in favor allowing restaurants to have dancing; 44 percent responded that there shouldn't be any dancing and 17 percent are unsure.

With fewer than half of the respondents opposing nightclubs outright, supporters say the survey's results do not reveal the strong opposition that was believed to exist. In fact, they point to the 31 percent of respondents who are in favor, along the 19 percent who checked off "not sure."

Many survey respondents expressed concerns about parking. Nearly 57 percent agreed that eating or drinking establishments with permitted occupancy of more than 75 should offer off-street parking, which could be in the form of a garage or valet parking.

Most thought there were just enough liquor stores, with 48 percent believing the balance is now "just right." But, 33 percent are now too many liquor stores in and around Logan Circle, while seven percent feel there are not enough. Also, 68 percent believe liquor stores shouldn't be able to sell single bottles or cans of beer.

Kramer said she was a little surprised by the survey results, particularly because of the controversy that surrounded Diversité. She said many residents complained that the club, which is no longer open, attracted too many loud revelers in the early hours of the morning.

Kramer said the results seemed to show that while people favored neighborhood establishments, they appeared to want to avoid large nightclubs that would attract people from all over the region.

Development of Logan Circle has become controversial and Evans is in the middle. "I hope that Councilman Jack Evans is listening," said Michael Romanello, a member of the newly-formed South Logan Business Owners and Residents Organization, which supports more nightlife. "His efforts to prevent dancing and stifle nightlife in the District put him at odds with an awful lot of Ward



View of sidewalk patio in front of Caribou Coffee, recently opened at the corner of 14th Street and Rhode Island Avenue.

Photo—Michael K. Wilkinson—The InTowner

2 voters."

Evans stresses the balance needed as Logan Circle develops. There will be some bars and restaurants coming, he said, but there should also be hardware and shoe stores. "People say I'm against fun. I love fun," Evans said. "But when there's this tension, there has to be a bad guy."

Evans said now is an important time for development in Logan Circle, particularly 14th Street, as about a third of storefronts are vacant. Since liquor establishments always are more profitable for the property holder, neighborhoods have the tendency to become strips of bars and nightclubs if left unchecked, he told The InTowner.

Other neighborhood leaders also spoke of the need for balance. Frank Mobilio, LCCA's president, said he supports reasonable limits on development and was pleased by the results, saying they were consistent with the opinions he's heard from residents: "Everyone I talk to wants responsible development and establishments, places that treat their patrons and neighbors with equal respect."

ANC Commissioner Jim Brandon said he also was surprised by the results, particularly the desire for more sidewalk cafés, which would put more alcohol on the street. "For years the mossbacks in our area have been telling me they didn't want 14th Street to be like 17th Street," Brandon said. "I took that to mean they did not want to have sidewalk cafés, drug stores, eyewear stores, hardware stores, cobblers, grocery stores and clothing stores as found on 17th Street."

Some have expressed concern that the survey wasn't scientific and that results don't necessarily reflect the community's view. The DC Nightlife Coalition's website posted an article about the survey that described it as "scientifically flawed."

Tim Hillard, who chaired the ad hoc committee that conducted the survey, said he was surprised that the same people who are complaining about the survey method are hailing the results. "They attack the entire survey as flawed, yet they go on to trumpet those parts of the survey they agree with. They can't have it both ways here," he said.

Kramer said the survey is simply an effort to reach out to the community and get views from those who normally don't attend ANC meetings. "We're not the Gallup poll," Kramer said. "It's difficult for us to find out what residents think. This survey helps us to do that."

The survey was sent out by a commercial mailer, Kramer said, responding to questions about how widely the survey was distributed. Of the approximately 3,600 registered voters in the Logan Circle area, one in every three was mailed the survey, with 10 percent responding.

Notwithstanding the numbers mailed out, Brandon questioned why the survey was sent between Thanksgiving and Christmas, and with only 15 days to reply. He also wondered if there were adequate codings so as to avoid duplication of responses which could skew the results.

Hillard, who is president of the Rhode Island Avenue West Association, said a more uniform voluntary agreement process would help clear up confusion over what type of licenses are suitable for new establishments. He further believes that voluntary agreements have been good tools for balancing the rights of both businesses and residents.

In negotiating a voluntary agreement with a lounge that will soon open on P Street, Kramer said the ANC included language designed to discourage the establishment from becoming a dance club by requiring that its management not offer live music or have promotions specifically designed to draw dancers. Further, management will have to arrange for customer parking at a local hotel garage. □

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Alcoholic Beverage Control Board

Decisions Entered, January 8, 15, 22 & 29, 2003

Special Regulatory Notice

• The Board, on January 29, further extended the comment period until February 28 on its proposed rulemaking to implement the provisions of DC Law 13-298, the Title 25, DC Code "Enactment and Related Amendments Act of 2001." The comment period had been previously extended until January 30.

Adams Morgan

• Approved "Cooperative Agreement," dated 12/16/02, between ANC 1C & the Kalorama Citizens Ass'n. and Class CR (restaurant) licensee Anzu, LLC, t/a Anzu (2436 18th St.), by which licensee agreed to the following stipulations: (1) that seating capacity will not exceed 80 persons on the first floor and 72 persons on the second floor; (2) the establishment will not operate a sidewalk café; (3) not to promote or participate in "pub crawls" or tours or any similar event; and (4) to encourage employees and patrons to be considerate of neighboring residents at all times.

• Denied the renewal application of Class CT (tavern) licensee TYDKA, Inc., t/a Cassava Café (2411 18th St.), by order dated 1/15/03, in response to protests filed in early 2002 by ANC 1B and the Kalorama Citizens Ass'n. on the grounds that the establishment had negative impact on the "peace, order, and quiet" of the neighborhood. Testimony by the MPD confirmed various police reports applicable to the establishment. The Board's order found that protesters had "sufficiently demonstrated a connection between the operations of the establishment . . . and a concurrent adverse affect on peace, order, and quiet in the neighborhood."

• Accepted an Offer in Compromise and Settlement that imposed the following conditions upon Class CR licensee Tekiha Abebe, t/a Leight Café (2308 18th St.): (1) a \$2,500 fine due within 30 days; (2) a 15-day suspension, pursuant to which the establishment's ABC license to be suspended between 3/4 and 3/6, with the remaining 12 days stayed for one year; (3) TIP's training for all employees within 90 days, with verification submitted to the Board; and (4) an ABC Manager on duty at all times.

• Extended for a period of 60 days the safekeeping period of the Class CR license held by India 2000, L.L.C., t/a Pasta In (1847 Col. Rd.) to allow applicant additional time to remodel the establishment and to change its concept and trade name from "Pasta In" to "Mantis."

Cardozo-Shaw

• Approved the request for a Stipulated Class CR License for Sophia & Solomon Venture, Inc., t/a Roha Restaurant Lounge (1212 U St.), following receipt of written notice of support from ANC 1B.

Columbia Heights

• Approved a new Class CR license for El Amigo, Inc., t/a El Amigo Restaurant (3612 14th St.), pursuant to which hours of operation will be Mon.-Sun., 8am-1am, with the hours of alcoholic beverage service not to commence until 11am; the menu will feature Latin-American cuisine; there will be a juke-box but no dancing.

Dupont North

• Approved a new Class CR license for Begra Partners, L.L.C., t/a Azul (1753 Conn. Ave.), pursuant to which hours of operation will be Mon.-Thu., 11am-2am; Fri., 11am-3am; Sat., 10am-3am & Sun., 10am-12mid.; live entertainment will be limited to a 4-piece Bossa Nova band during Sat. & Sun. brunch, with background music only played during all other days & hours of operation.

Also approved "Cooperative Agreement," dated 1/7/03, between ANC 2B & Michael Maggio of the Kalorama Court Condominium, et al. and applicant by which licensee agreed to the following stipulations: (1) that un-amplified background music may be played during the establishment's hours of operation; (2) un-amplified live, acoustical music may be performed on Sat. from 12noon to 5pm and on Sun. from 1 to 4pm; (3) there will be no dancing or disc jockeys; (4) there will be no live music performed during funerals at churches in the neighborhood upon notification by the churches that funerals will occur; (5) to provide valet parking on Fri. & Sat. nights at a private garage; (6) entrance to the sidewalk café will be from inside of the premises only, that its capacity will be limited to 36 seats, utilizing tables with a maximum of four persons, and will close and be cleared of customers by 10pm.

• Granted the joint request of ANC 1C (Adams Morgan) and ANC 2B (Dupont Circle) to substitute ANC 2B for ANC 1C as the protestant in opposition to the renewal application of Class CR licensee Lauriol Plaza, Inc., t/a Lauriol Plaza (1835 18th St.) for the reason that Ward 1 and 2 redistricting had caused the establishment's premises to be within the jurisdiction of the Dupont Circle ANC.

Alcoholic Beverage Control Board Decisions Entered, January 8, 15, 22 & 29, 2003

Continued From p. 10

• Approved "Cooperative Agreement," dated 1/4/03, between ANC 2B and Class CT licensee Visions, LP, t/a **Visions Cinema Bistro Lounge** (1929 Fla. Ave.), by which agreed to the following stipulations: (1) that hours of operation of the summer garden (technical designation of an outdoor café not actually located on public space) will be Mon.-Thu., 7am-11pm; Fri. & Sat., 7am-12mid; Sun., 9am-11pm; (2) that the summer garden will be occupied by no more than 25 patrons and that no one standing will be served food or drinks; (3) that patrons may bring food and beverages from inside; (4) to limit the number of "special events" to 12 annually; (5) to monitor the lining up of patrons so that the entrances of adjacent buildings are not blocked; and (6) to continue to facilitate the availability of off-street parking for patrons.

Logan Circle

• Approved the issuance of a stipulated Class CR license to Answers Now, L.L.C., t/a **Sparky's Expresso Café** (1720 14th St.), following receipt of a letter of support from ANC 2F, informing the Board that both the ANC and the Logan Circle Community Ass'n. had entered into a "Voluntary Agreement" applicant.

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Gallery K
Georgetown Optical
Haircut 200
Hair Cutury
Harlow Hair Design
Historical Society of Washington
Imperial Valet
Jones Troyer Gallery
Kathleen Ewing Gallery
Kulturas Used Books & LPs
Lambda Rising Bookstore
La Tomate Restaurant
Larry's Cookies
Luna Grill & Diner
Mac Dee Quality Cleaners
Marty's Deli
Moto Photo
Mr. Egan's Restaurant
Nation'sBank
Olsson's Books & Records
Outlook
Pines of Florence
Pleasure Place
Phantasmagora
Riggs Bank, Dupont Branch
Riggs Bank, Universal Branch
Ritz Camera
Regency Cleaners
The Big Hunt Restaurant
The Burro
Timberlake's Restaurant
Toast & Strawberries
Touchstone Gallery
Schiffley Pharmacy
Universal News Stand
Universal North Building
Washington Sports Club
Washington Video Sales
Wrap Works
Xando Coffee & Bar, R St.
Yando Coffee & Bar, 19th St.</p> <p>DUPONT CIRCLE - M ST. AREA
Bacchus Restaurant
Bell Liquor & Wine Shoppe
Borders Books & Records
Candy Hardware
Dupont Photographers
Grafitti
Gulzar Shop
Kemp Mill Records
Mac Dee Quality Cleaners
Summer School Museum & Archives
Tabard Inn
The Wine Specialist
Washington Sports Club
YMCA</p> <p>DUPONT CIRCLE - P STREET
Bagels, Etc.
Blue Plate Restaurant
Capitol Video Sales
Church of the Pilgrims
Cafe Luna
DC Cafe
Deco Cabana Restaurant & Club
District Hardware
Dupont Veterinary Clinic
Deco Cabana
Fairfax Market
Fireplace, The
Frame Express
Gallery Liquors
Naturally Yours
P Street Bagels
Soho Tea & Coffee
Sophie's Cuisine
The Third Day</p> <p>DUPONT CIRCLE - 17TH ST. AREA
Street box, 17th & Corcoran Sts.
Adams National Bank</p> | <p>Angie's New Leaf
Annie's Paramount Steak House
Arts Shoe Repair
Berose Liquors
Body Rays
Ben Moll Liquors
Cafe Luna
Cari Winers
Carlyle Suites Hotel
Casa Pina Spanish Store
Cat in the Bag
Club Chaos Bar & Restaurant
Cobalt
Community Church of the Disciples
Cyber Cafe
District ServStar Hardware
Dupont Custom Cleaners
Dupont Optical
Dupont Italian Kitchen
Elle of 17th Street Carryout
Embassy Row Cleaners
First Baptist Church
Foundry United Methodist Church
Fox & Hounds Lounge
Gallery 2000
Javi House
JR's Bar & Grill
Lammis Women's Books & More
La Frontera Cantina
Luna Books
Lillie's Art Deco Bar & Lounge
McDonald's
Palmer's Coffee & Bistro
Peppers Restaurant
Resources for the Future
Safeway
Samson's Vitamins & Herbs
Skewers Restaurant
Splatoon
Swan House
Swift Cleaners
Sol Restaurant & Patio Cafe
Tapeheadz Video
Townhouse Tavern
Treasures
Trio Pizza & Subs
Trio Restaurant
Universal Gear
Washub Laundromat
Washington Video Sales
Women's Comprehensive Health</p> <p>SCOTT CIRCLE - 16th ST
Street box, Rhode Is. & 17th
Brenton Guest House
Embassy Inn
First Baptist Church
Fit Physique
Foundry United Methodist Church
Green Door
Jewish Community Center
Windsor Inn</p> <p>U STREET AREA
Street box, 13th & U Sts.
15th & U Market
Atticus Books
Augustana Lutheran Church
Avanti Realty
Basics Cafe
Boris's Chili Bowl
City Market
Cappis
Egber's Liquor
Franklin National Bank
Freedom Market
Fleming-Morgan Access Center
Golden Days Antiques
Goodwood Antique Furniture
Holsale Cleaners
Islander Restaurant
Jin's Cleaners
Julio's Rooftop Pizza
Millennium Decorative Arts
New Hampshire Market
Polly's Cafe
Republic Gardens
Reeves Municipal Center
Results—The Gym
Rite Aid
St. Augustine's Catholic Church
SisterSpace & Books
State of the Union Bar & Restaurant
Stetson's Bar & Restaurant
The Bar
Third District Police Hdqrs.
U-topia Bar & Grill
Washington Blade</p> <p>LOGAN CIRCLE - 14TH ST. - SHAW
1409 Playbill Cafe
Ace Electrical Supply
Ace Hardware
Alberto's Pizza
Ascension & St. Agnes Church</p> | <p>Barrel House Liquors
Capitol Super Market
Crew Club
Diverse
Elizabeth Taylor Medical Center
Green Lantern Bar
Lofton's Tailor Shoppe
Lucy's Realty
Metropolitan Community Church
Modem Liquors
Morrison-Clark Inn
National City Christian Church
Ridgeway Carryout
Ruff & Ready Furnishings
Say On Liquors
Seven-Eleven
Studio Theatre
Swan Dry Cleaners
The Fitness Company
at Green Court
Watha T. Daniel Library
Weimans Liquor
Whitman-Walker Clinic
Woolly Mammoth Theatre</p> <p>ADAMS MORGAN - 18TH STREET
Street box, Col. Rd. & 18th St.
18th & U Duplex Diner
18th Street Cafe
ASL Business & Mailing Services
Adams Morgan Spaghetti Garden
Brass Knob Architectural Antiques
Cafe Lautrec
California Liquors
Caravan Grill
Casava Cafe
DC Arts Center
Dupont Center Market
El Tamarindo Restaurant
Flying Saucer Diner
Francis Beatty Salon
Franklyn's Coffeehouse Cafe
Good Food Store
Great Choice Convenience Store
Home Food Store
Idle Times Books
Inside Scoop Ice Cream
J & O Auto Parts
Jolt 'N Bolt Coffee and Tea House
Larry's Lounge
Lion's Den Restaurant
La Fourchette French Cafe
Malik's Warehouse
McDonald's
Mediterranean Blue Restaurant
Markato Market
Millstone Gallery
Muscle Beach DC
Montego Bay Cafe
New Columbia Station
New Image Hair Salon
New Orleans Cafe
Orient Foods
Picture Frame Factory
Pizza Movers
Quang Dong Restaurant
Red Sea Restaurant
Sandy's Flowers
Shake Your Booty!
Skynear & Company
Sheba Cafe
Tyst Coffee House
Weichert Real Estate
Willard Cleaners</p> <p>ADAMS MORGAN - COLUMBIA RD.
Alan Lock & Key Service
Aivignone Freres
Churreria Madrid Restaurant
City Bikes
Citibank
Comet Liquor
Crestar Bank
El Rincon Espanol Restaurant
Gary Taylor's Fine Art
Kalamora Guest House
Las Plastics II Restaurant
Manuquan Bros. Carpets
Mary's Center for Maternal & Child Care
Metro Food Market
Mr. Henry's Restaurant
Nation'sBank
Potter's House Restaurant
Proteus Bicycles & Fitness
Riggs National Bank
Safeway
So's Your Mom
Zodiac Record Shop</p> <p>ADAMS MORGAN - LANIER HEIGHTS.
Kogbow Bakery
Mama Ayesha's Restaurant
Mattie Grocery</p> | <p>Miss Pixie's Furnishings & Whatnot
Rosa's Dry Cleaners
Trio's Pizza & Subs</p> <p>ADAMS MORGAN - REED-COOKIE
City Paper
Corner Cleaners
Habitay Pottery
Kalamora Doll
Meridian International Center
WFW-FM</p> <p>COLUMBIA HEIGHTS
Latin-American Youth Center
Nob Hill Bar & Restaurant</p> <p>MOUNT PLEASANT STREET
Argyle Convenience Store
Brown Street Market
Bubbler Laundry
Hayden's Restaurant
Heller's Bakery
Habitat Real Estate
Mt. Pleasant Pharmacy
Nation'sBank
Public Library Branch
Sportsman's Wine & Liquor</p> <p>KALORAMA HEIGHTS
Brian Logan Real Estate</p> <p>WOODLEY - 200
Artistic Shoe
Baskin-Robbins Ice Cream
Book Market
Cathedral Pharmacy
Cathedral Liquors
Debonair Cleaners
El Tamarindo Restaurant
Gallerie L'Enfant
Long & Foster Realtors
Marbatten Market
Murphy's Pub
Nation'sBank
Pettito's Restaurant
Sherry's Liquors
Video Corner
Washington Federal S & L
Washington Park Gourmet
Zoo Bar</p> <p>CLEVELAND PARK - CONN. AVE.
Artisan Lamp Co.
Aroma Company Bar & Lounge
Bella Roma Restaurant
Brookville Super Market
Brother Sewing Machine Co.
Bylois Deli
Cleveland Park Valet
Gold's Gym
Ireland's Four Provinces
Nanny O'Brien's
National Shoe Rebuilders
Nation'sBank
Palais du Choccolat
Public Library Branch
Seven-Eleven
Shawn & Charles Salon
Uptown Bakery
Uptown Cleaners
Uptown Travel Center
Uptown Cafe
Wing Masters Grill</p> <p>CLEVELAND PARK - VAN NESS
Street box, Metro exit, east side
Andrews Hairstylist
Calvert Woodley Liquors
Diplomat Antiques
Espresso Cafe
Nation's Bank
Riggs Bank
Van Ness Liquors</p> <p>WASHINGTON CIRCLE
GWU Marvin Center
Pennsylvania House Suites
Public Library West End Branch
Tony's Flowers Plus
Tower Records Video</p> <p>DOWNTOWN - PENN. QUARTER
A V Ristorante
Adams National Bank
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Central Liquor Store
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Fado Irish Pub
Go-Lo's Restaurant
Isabella Restaurant
Martin Luther King, Jr. Library
Ososon's Books & Records
The Rock Sports Bar & Restaurant
Woodward Building
YWCA</p> |
|--|---|---|---|

*Includes 89 apartment buildings in the InTowner's reader service area.

Scenes from the Past...

Washington, DC residents are fortunate to have original building permits for most of the structures in this city built after 1877, when they were first required, but sadly, the vast majority of the accompanying drawings to these records were destroyed by the city government in the 1960s. It is always a rare occasion to obtain a detailed artist's or architect's rendering of a planned residential development, such as that here of the row of houses located on R Street between 20th and 21st Streets, NW. They were built following issuance of a building permit on June 17, 1886, and remain to this day.

The permit listed Brainard H. Warner as owner of the lots and builder of the eleven houses that were to be constructed between 2006 and 2028 R Street at a cost of \$77,000 or approximately \$7,000 each; a substantial sum for the time. He listed architect W.F. Weber from Baltimore as responsible for the design of the houses, which were to be constructed of brick, marble, and brownstone atop a concrete foundation.

At the time of his application to build the houses, Warner listed his address as 2100 Massachusetts Avenue. It was a house that he had built himself just two years earlier, in 1884. He would remain at that address throughout his building and finance career in the city, overseeing the construction of more than 1,000 houses through his business, the B.H. Warner & Co.



Warner had been born in Great Bend (now Halstead), Pennsylvania, in 1847, and had served in the Army until accepting an appointment at the U.S. Treasury in 1866. Upon his 1872 graduation from the Columbian School of Law (which later became part of The George Washington University), he joined the real estate firm of Joshua Whitney & Co. He later succeeded the owner following his death,

This image of Brainard Warner, at left, was reproduced in John Proctor's *Washington Past & Present* (1930). image from book—courtesy, Kelsey & Assoc. private collection.



This rare pen and ink drawing, above, of the row of houses in the 2000 block of R Street, showing the 21st Street corner at the right, appeared on the cover of the October 1887 *Real Estate Review*. drawing—courtesy, Kelsey & Assoc. private collection.

At right, Copy of the June, 1886 building permit for the Warner row houses.



document—courtesy, National Archives

and constructed the Warner building in 1876, signaling the beginning of a rather substantial, yet undocumented, construction career.

Warner was eventually involved in a large variety of business-related enterprises, including the founding of the Columbian National Bank in 1887, president of the Washington Board of Trade, and member of the Committee of 100. John Proctor wrote in his five-volume *Washington Past and Present* (1930), "Many of our finest statues, buildings and parks stand as monuments of his unceasing energy and devotion to the national capitol."

Warner, himself, published the *Real Estate Review* in Washington for an unknown number of years. The illustration of the homes along R Street seen here was included on the cover of Volume IX, Number 8, dated October 1887. The caption under the detailed drawing of the elegant houses read, "Block of stone front buildings, just being completed, on the corner of 21st and R Street, N.W." The eight-page publication, recently purchased on an on-line auction site, featured condensed real estate stories from around the country, a variety of advertisements from local contractors and suppliers, and an enormous classified listing section with hundreds of lots for sale, houses for rent, and houses for sale in all quadrants of the city, apparently all owned by the B.H. Warner company itself.

In fact, it seems Warner retained and rented at least some of the houses in his 2100 block of R Street development. The 1900 census reveals that the house at 2011 was rented to Marcellus Bailey and his wife, daughter, and niece who were tended to by three servants. Private secretary Charles Moore rented the house at 2013 R that year, with the house at 2015 R Street owned by John Head. Russian-born William Ferson rented the house at 2010 R Street in 1900, and had come to this country just a year earlier, in 1899, along with his wife and four children.

Brainard Warner continued in the real estate business until 1902, when several of his eight children and former business partners took over the operation. Warner himself died in 1916. The *Washington Star* reported upon his death that Warner "was one of the most forceful factors for the



photo—Paul K. Williams—The InTowner

The 1891 *City Directory* advertisement for the B.H. Brainard Company.

Cont., SCENES, p. 13

RESERVATIONS RECOMMENDED

By Alexandra Greeley*

INDIQUE Indicating India

By now, you are probably familiar with such food words as samosa, kulfi, rogan josh and chutney. And you can quickly pinpoint India as their culinary source. But don't think that Indian food has become something of a cliché around town. Under the guidance of such masters as Heritage India, Bombay Palace and Bombay Club restaurants, we've come to expect something exemplary and food fit for the Maharajah from local tandoori ovens.

Joining these ranks—or at least, almost there—is the new Indique (“Unique Indian Flavors”), a dressy stepchild of the suburbs’ Bombay Bistro restaurants (Rockville and Fairfax). Sleek and contemporary and with walls almost bare of the usual Indian trappings, this two-story Cleveland Park newcomer sets the scene with minimal décor that nonetheless echoes India, and it places its glassed-in tandoori ovens in the main entranceway—a subtle reminder to people as they walk in that whatever else they’ve come for, they really have come to feast.

With measured courtesy, the maitre d’ leads you upstairs to the dining room—and you’ll quickly appreciate how much work the waiters take on, for they must

scurry up and downstairs loaded with full or empty trays, depending on which direction they’re headed. Surprisingly, the upstairs really holds relatively few tables, for the designer has carved out a central “well” in the floor space opening onto the area below. This design, plus the multiple windows, give the room a sense of airiness, but it also cuts down on seating.

It’s now Sunday early afternoon, and surprisingly, considering the hour, the dining room is a busy place. Word gets around quickly in town, and when the word is “good,” foodies can expect a crowd. But besides the stair-climbing, it’s hard to figure out why service lags slightly. Considering that the lunch menu is very abbreviated, it seems the kitchen staff might have extra time on its hands.

Starting with the “First Taste” section, a tapas-like assortment, presumably meant for sharing, this contains at least one familiar dish: the chaat papri, a snack offering of potatoes, chick peas, and bread crisps and, usually, a drizzle of sweet tamarind sauce and yogurt. But the Gujarati specialty of steamed lentil cakes, or dhokla, beckoned. Unremarkable—actually, I thought these were made of rice—they don’t rank as a

Cont., DINING, p. 15

SCENES

From p. 12

advancement of Washington . . . gifted with a remarkable faculty for organizing public movements . . . at the same time an unusual capacity for leadership.”

In 1924, the Warner mansion at 2100

Massachusetts Avenue was razed and replaced by an apartment building that later became the Fairfax Hotel, located on the corner today, although now under a different name.

—Paul Kelsey Williams
Historic Preservation Specialist
Kelsey & Associates, Washington, DC

CORRECTION

In this space last month we featured a short history of the William H. Thyson house at the corner of 7th and P Streets, NW, later to become the Salvation Army’s “colored men’s club.” One of the photographs used was misidentified. The caption accompanying that photograph, a view of a building on the southwest corner of 7th and P Streets reduced to total rubble, was mis-identified as the “ruins of the Thyson House. . . .”



Washingtoniana Division, MLK, Jr., Library.

The Thyson House ruins were, in fact, at the corner diagonally opposite, as seen in the photograph reproduced here, taken only hours following its destruction. In the picture which we did run (and which can be seen by accessing the pdf file archive of back issues at www.intowner.com and scrolling to page 12 of the January 2003 issue), the National Guardsman shown standing by the Kennedy Playground fence (which is still there) is looking directly north across P Street at the remains of Thyson House, by then no longer still smoldering.

—Editor

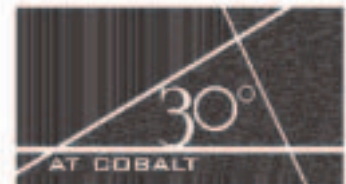
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Food in the 'Hood

By Joel Denker

HIDDEN PUNCH: CUMIN'S UNTOLD STORY

The writer, a former Peace Corp volunteer in Africa many years ago, is the author of "Capital Flavors: Exploring Washington's Ethnic Restaurants" (1988, Seven Locks Press), which evolved from his series in this newspaper over a decade ago, known then as "The Ethnic Bazaar."

Queries, comments, suggestions can be sent to denker@starpower.net.

The potatoes in the buffet tray were flecked with brown seeds. At Jolt 'N Bolt, the 18th Street coffee house, *also jeera*, the peppery side dish, was decorated with coriander leaves. It was one of an array of Indian *masalas* and curries (*masalas* are a thicker stew than curries)—eggplant, spinach, meatball, tofu—that are offered throughout the day at the café.

I was obsessed with the brownish seeds, which were roasted cumin, a spice I knew little about. They were indispensable to Indian food, a critical component of the *garam* (hot) *masala*, the spice blend used in so many dishes. Curries were incomplete without their assistance. Mexican dishes and Tex-Mex inventions like chili depended on the fragrance. The tiny seed was at once powerful and almost invisible. "If you don't know what it is, you'll miss it," Jolt 'N Bolt's proprietor Farooq Munir noted. Yet, without its potent aroma, many a culinary creation would be weakened. Farooq adds, "It peeps up the food taste."

I did not realize that cumin was a flowering plant in the same family, *umbelliferae*, as dill, fennel, coriander, parsley, and anise, among others. They have in common an umbrella-shaped cluster of blossoms atop a tall stalk. Cumin, which bears white or rose-colored flowers, packs its aroma in its seeds, which are actually fruits. Cumin's robust smell comes from the intense oils in the seeds.

Where did this flavor enhancer originate? Most scholars agree that it is a Mediterranean native, unlike spices such as ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and cardamom, which were grown in the East. Probably first grown along the banks of the Nile, it was one of the spices used to scent the mummies of Egyptian royalty. A late Roman cookbook calls for "fairly generous cumin" to inject zip into a sauce of pepper, mint, honey, vinegar, bay leaf, and other seasonings for cooking oysters and shellfish. The recipe came from the Egyptian city of Alexandria.

For readers of the Bible, cumin was more than a spice. It was a crop that sprang from the soil. After harvesting, dried plants were "beaten out with rods," says a verse in Isaiah. Presumably threshing was done to extract the seeds.

The Greeks and Romans, who were actively engaged in the spice trade, were impressed with cumin. The Greek writer Theophrastus marveled at its abundant growth: "Cumin has the most fruits of any plants." But, he cautioned, "when people are sowing it, they must curse and slander it if they want it to be healthy and prolific." One can only imagine what demon the naturalist believed lurked in its seed.

The Romans looked at the plant with awe. The naturalist Pliny praised cumin for its taste: "Of all the seasonings which gratify a fastidious taste, cumin is the most agreeable." The Romans spiced up their

bread by spreading it with a paste made from cumin. Its scent was so intense, many believed, that cumin could speed up conception if smelled during sex.

It was as much a medicine and cosmetic as it was food for the ancients. The Romans regarded it as a *digestif* that could soothe the stomach. It could also, they believed, induce a pallor in the face, a curious property that was highly valued. Students, according to Pliny, would apply a cumin-based oil to their skin to make their teachers believe they were working feverishly.

Both Greeks and Romans considered cumin a symbol of greed. A person who would "divide a cumin seed," scholar John Ayto explains, was demonstrably selfish. The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius was nicknamed "Cumin" because of his avaricious nature.

From the Mediterranean, cumin traveled eastward. It was adopted by the Persians, who perked up their rice with it. Their warriors probably transplanted cumin to India, whose people embraced it enthusiastically. *Jeera*, the Hindi name of the spice, is related to the Persian *zeera*. Both words, botanist George Watt suggests, allude to cumin's digestive benefits.

Cumin's trek continued. Moorish invaders from North Africa, it is assumed, introduced the spice to Spain. Spain, in turn, diffused the fragrance in its colonies in the Americas. Latin dishes like black bean soup and tamales are invigorated with the spice. Cowboys in the America Southwest picked it wild to use in chili.

It is in India that *jeera*'s gifts were most heavily exploited. After talking with Kiraukumae B. Kamble, an Indian chef who lives in Washington, I realized that his homeland drew no distinction between cumin as food and as curative agent. "Food is medicine," the Bombay native, who was chef to India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi for 10 years, exclaimed. Cumin is a tonic for the eyes and stomach and, curiously for the tongue, the chef expounded, "If you're sick and have no appetite, put *jeera* powder on your tongue. Your tongue is now fresh." A mixture of garlic, onion, ginger, and *jeera* can "make you strong."

I listened raptly as the chef spun out some recipes for this, one of his favorite flavorings. For two portions of cumin potatoes, he told me, put a little oil in a pan and fry cumin seeds for five or six minutes until they reach a brown color. Meanwhile, boil three potatoes. When they are boiled, add potatoes to the frying pan. Sprinkle a little salt and turmeric on them and fry the potatoes, with the cumin seeds, for six or seven minutes. Finally, sprinkle with coriander leaves and serve.

To make *dahlia jeera*, a cumin yogurt, the chef says you should first roast two tea-

Cont., FOOD, p. 15

Where to Find It

... in Adams Morgan, at either Jolt 'N Bolt (1918 18th St.; tel., 232-0077) or the Ethiopian grocery Addisu Gebeya (2202 18th St.; tel., 986-6013) which is also a good source for varied spices, including cumin seeds.

DINING

From p. 13

taste thrill, but certainly are satisfyingly filling. Of special interest, however, is the accompanying tray of three seasonings: a superb hot-sour mango chutney, a coriander seasoning, and a sweet tamarind sauce.

As for luncheon entrées, "Are these all?" I naively asked the waiter. Your choices are limited to seven dishes, which include a kebab, a fish curry, two vegetarian dishes, and a lamb curry called Lamb Niligiri Korma. A mild dish with puréed spinach stirred with cubed lamb, this stirs up little excitement compared to its firebrand cousin, lamb vindaloo, which here pays proper homage to the chili-vinegar components that distinguish a Goan vindaloo. Indeed, on any follow-up visit I would not hesitate to sidestep the lunchtime lamb in favor of the saffron Malai Chicken or Tamilnad Fish Curry.

All entrée dishes, served in small portions in arty ceramic bowls, come with a salad or soup, rice, dal and bread. The soup—at least on this occasion, a truly tart South Indian rasam-style liquid—will probably be Indian-style, as salads are not much of an Indian thing. Patrons are not

given the option to order other breads, but must be satisfied with a pie-wedge slice of tandoori naan, not enough really to get you through the meal.

As for desserts, the list includes an East-Meets-West mix of rice pudding, mango-cheese flan, and the Bombay favorite, Shreekanth. But little here sounds tempting enough to leap off the diet bandwagon.

Perhaps in the end, Indique really shines at night, when the menu is far more extensive, and gives patrons the chance to order larger portions and assorted breads and accompaniments. If you are familiar with either Bombay Bistro restaurant, you'll probably welcome its newest effort in DC. If not, you'll find Indique offers a contemporary twist on the familiar Subcontinent theme.

Indique, 3512-14 Conn. Ave.; tel., 244-6600. Hours: Lunch, 12noon-3pm, daily; Dinner, 5:30-10:30pm, Sun.-Thu., to 11pm, Fri. & Sat. Dinner entrée price range: \$12-\$19.

*Alexandra Greeley is a food writer, editor and restaurant reviewer. She has authored books published by Simon & Schuster, Doubleday, and Macmillan. Other credits include food editor of Vegetarian Times, restaurant reviews and food articles for The Washington Post and The Washington Times, as well as former food editor/writer for the South China Morning Post in Hong Kong.

FOOD

From p. 14

spoons of cumin seeds in a very hot frying pan until they are dark brown. Put them on a plate. When they are cool enough, he suggests taking your hand and crushing the seeds into a powder. He recommends this as the most "natural" method. Then add the powder to a bowl of 16 ounces of

yogurt, mix well, and add a pinch of salt. Sprinkle coriander leaves on top and enjoy.

This is just a sampling of cumin flavors. There is also cumin rice, a cumin-infused drink, and many more dishes to please your taste buds—"cumin everything," as chef Kamble puts it. □

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In a strong and ambitious, understated small art exhibition at the DC Jewish Community Center's Ann Loeb Bronfman Gallery entitled "Archetype/Anonymous: Biblical Women in Contemporary Art," Curator Laura Kruger of the Hebrew Union College in New York advances the thesis that:

"Biblical women are frequently unnamed, suggesting their powerlessness and lack of importance, the status of the ultimate outsider. Artists are examining the reinterpretation of the characteristics of ancient times. Do we extend our compassion to Sarah who waited 100 years for a child, or to Hagar, evicted and discarded? Lilit, the legendary first wife of Adam, created simultaneously with him and believing herself to be his equal in everything, is rejected by Adam and punished by God for leaving Eden. Modern feminists have reconstituted Lilit into a positive symbol of women's equality. Does this lead to the re-evaluation of the other dubious women, Lot's wife, Jezebel, Potiphar's wife?"

Using recent works of 19 contemporary artists in illustration of these and other re-interpretive ideas, images, and questions, Curator Kruger provokes the viewer into a re-thinking of the issues raised by the named women (and issues) presented—at least for those whose stories are familiar. And since the sources for these stories range from the Tenach (the Old Testament), Midrashim, drashas, and "legends of the Bible" from all sorts of other sources in Jewish, Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox formal and informal canons—the universe of knowledge (and ignorance) is endless!

Whatever, many of the exhibition's conventional, conceptual, and contrarian art works have a challenging beauty that serves as their own rewards to viewers willing to be challenged. For example, Ruth Weisberg's masterful and deeply humanistic mixed-media drawing, *Wellspring (Leah)* from 1992 is alone well worth a visit. And Archie Rank's wonderful (and edgy) cartoon-like



Archie Rank, "Hagar," 1992.

primitive paintings with their comic strip captions present visual two-edged swords—at first glance a surface humor and then after reflection, deeply disturbing. His *Hagar*, also from 1992, asks: "What's wrong Hagar? Don't worry, God has heard the boy's voice." (Genesis 3:22.) *David and Bathsheba* (1992) asks, "Isn't that Bathsheba, Elian's daughter and Uriah the Hittite's wife, David?" And the tales get darker with, for example, Carol Hamoy's pair of golden shoes, titled *Jezebel/Queen of Israel* (1993), containing this catalogue note: "Jezebel, queen of Judea, was so evil that when she died her people threw her body over the city wall rather than bury her. Dogs came and ate all of her body except for her feet. She had danced at weddings and this is considered a mitzvah." Facing Jezebel's shoes on the opposite exhibition wall is Suzanne Benton's 1980 gilded bronze on steel, Greek-like *Mask of Vashti*, Esther's predecessor as Queen of Persia who is best known for refusing to dance when ordered to by King Xerxes (her husband and master).

Darker still are Avner Moriah's haunting pastels of *Tamar's Incest* and *Dinah's Rape*, both painted in 2001. Dinah's story is the 34th chapter of the Book of Genesis, a tale of deceptive simplicity and astounding horror. In addition, somehow Jackie Kennedy makes it into this show with Julie Dermansky's *Lot's Wife*, a work reminiscent of a Joseph Cornell box. Other fine work includes Judy Chicago's terrific studies for embroidered matzah covers from *Women of Valor, the Female Side of Pesach* (1999).

A free exhibition brochure is available in the gallery. In addition, a full series of interdisciplinary public programs, including gallery talks, a workshop, dance performance and films is planned in conjunction with the exhibition. Highlights will feature a linoleum block printing workshop led by Joyce Ellen Weinstein. Notable speaking events include an interview with Ruth Weisberg by the local organizers of the show on March 13, at 7 pm and a gallery talk and tour by exhibition curator Laura Kruger on April 2, also at 7 pm. Both of these events will be free to the public.

—Anthony L. Harvey



Joyce Ellen Weinstein, "Miriam," 2002.



Ayanna Friedman, "Hanah and Shmuel," 2001.

At The Museums

By David Barrows* and Anthony L. Harvey**

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“Thomas Gainsborough, 1727-1788” continues its tour direct from the Tate in London, adding 15 works here, capturing the spirit of the English people in association with their land. We often sense the artist’s tenderness getting stronger and more articulate as we get past the first two galleries, the show being chronologically arranged across eight rooms. Gainsborough’s most potent works mix landscape with personality to present a theme or concept, whether the perennial DC favorite, *Mrs. Richard Brinsley Sheridan*, or a Red Coat young officer looking vulnerable, or the image of *Shepherd Boys with Dogs Fighting* with fully bared teeth.

We are struck by the two shepherd boys’ witless fascination with cruelty, yet struck by their pure and innocent appearance, contradictions in contrast with the dogs’ avid enjoyment of their own combat.

While the first room is best brushed past, it does hold a self-portrait that should be compared because of the facial angle and focus with the self-portrait in the last room. As opposed to the portraits of Sir Joshua Reynolds (Gainsborough’s contemporary rival and head of the Royal Academy), Gainsborough’s subjects appear comfortable, often stepping out of their real life. We see the ballerina Giovanna Baccelli waltzing in from the fields, seeming joyful to see us; her smiling eyes are upon us. A married, well-established couple like the Halletts seem a bit formal and reserved, but noticing us as they stroll.

In addition to the often relaxed poses, the National Gallery’s senior curator of American and British paintings, Frank Kelly, also speaks of Gainsborough’s striking use of color, especially of how light and color relate to subjects in their landscape. He speaks of the use of a “silvery light playing as visual echo to their clothing,” and of rhythms created by billowing clouds, patches of light and dark. Kelly also points to two



Thomas Gainsborough, “Mrs. Richard Brinsley Sheridan,” c. 1785-1787.



Thomas Gainsborough, “The Watering Place,” c. 1774-1777.

strong Dutch influences, the landscape painter Ruisdael and Van Dyke, the portraitist known for his cloth. Whether some of Gainsborough’s landscapes are inventions, they are still based on scraps of memory and the twigs and moss of his studio. His rendering of silk is sensual.

From the fur and teeth of his dogs and cats, the bark and leaves of the trees, to the shimmering silks, and fine hair of some of his sitters, the textures are palpable. So, too, are many of his sitters’ personalities, as with the portrait of his wife in late middle age or the *Officer of the Fourth Regiment* and even the portrait of his dogs depicted in *Tristram and Fox*, appearing as man’s friend at their best.

What label do we give this painter? They say he is innovative. Is it the believability of his people, their natural poses, his landscapes, (though these are largely invented, still they are quite convincing)? Gainsborough has created a realistic romanticism, one that is recognizable. His people are comfortable, in harmony with a world of ancient trees, majestic skies, sparkling streams; their eyes alive with thought. His working people are driving sheep or going to market in an Eden of changing colors. Some of his subjects are accomplished. Many are struggling but content like peasants going to market in the morning and as they return in the evening. Like the *Cottage Girl with Dog and Pitcher*, life has not fooled them, but they well recognize its beauty. They are figures in a civilization becoming aware of itself through the writings of Godwin and Wolstonecraft, Burke and Berkeley, Thomas Gray and Thomas Chatterton.

Ironically, although well over 80 percent of today’s British oppose war with Iraq, this exhibition is sponsored by General Dynamics, weapons contractors for the U.K. and U.S. And, although Gainsborough painted the young soldier we see here, we see that the ambivalence of the youth is keen, his eyes are that of a dreamer, his pose too relaxed to be that of a sharpshooter. Indeed, the entire exhibition encircles a tenderness palpable in material, swirl of light and cloud, and thoughtful personalities.

Silken garments catch the wind through the trees, complexions are often fresh and clear, sensitivity pervades detail. An aura of a self-aware peace permeates the show. Through May 11.

—David Barrows

Cont., MUSEUMS, p. 18



Thomas Gainsborough, “Cottage Girl with Dog and Pitcher,” 1785.

MUSEUMS

From p. 17

The ideas and emotions visually transformed by the creative genius of Edouard Vuillard—amidst the light-deprived, long gray winter days of Parisian apartment and studio life into explosive bursts of color, pattern, and provocative compositions—



Edouard Vuillard, "Embroidering by the Window (The Tapestry)," 1895-1896.

presents a range of artistic creations by a single artist that simply astounds! Here are displayed kaleidoscopic paintings of highly decorative and lusciously colored album suites and folding screen sets and the boldly simplified compositions of portraits of friends and lovers.

The National Gallery of Art is currently hosting this magisterial world premiere, (first ever) retrospective exhibition of the work this protean artist to be held anywhere in North America. And equally important to an understanding of the magnitude of Vuillard's achievement—to say nothing of the beauty and humanistic reverberances of his work—is the catalogue accompanying the exhibition; it contains a major re-interpretation of the artist and his art.

Organized by the show's chief curator, French scholar Guy Cogeval, Director of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and author of the forthcoming *Vuillard: Critical Catalogue of Paintings and Pastels*, Cogeval suggests that Vuillard's work, while remaining sensual, is more conceptual than the work of the Nabi painters with whom he is frequently associated. "Vuillard believed that a painting must be the expression of an idea, rather than simply a beautiful object," states Cogeval. "So many people think of Vuillard as a painter of simple domestic scenes, and it is true that most of his paintings reflect aspects of his private life. Yet the works are far from simple. They are, rather, deeply thoughtful, complex meditations." And indeed, Vuillard's paintings, pastels, panels and screen sets, all contain fascinating ideas and expressions. Like Walt Whitman's prose works, they contain multitudes!

Handsomely installed in the Gallery's West Building, the exhibition encompasses over 230 works reflecting the full range of creations over Vuillard's long and productive career. As noted by the Gallery's director, Rusty Powell, during the press briefing, "Vuillard's work straddles two centuries: He was a major post-impressionist in the 1890s, as well as a participant in the renewal of decorative art before and after 1900. Vuillard was one of the central figures of "Les Nabis," a group of Parisian avant-garde artists whose members includ-



Edouard Vuillard, "Lucy Hessel seated in the salon of La Terrasse, in Vasouy," 1904.

ed Pierre Bonnard and Felix Vallotton."

During the Nabi period Vuillard produced some of his best-known work—provocative paintings of middle-class interiors and contributions to avant-garde theater through his set designs and paintings and his theater program drawings and graphic designs. Continuing from 1900 until his death in 1940, Vuillard experimented increasingly with abstraction and powerful color and expanded his range in natural light, landscape, and portraiture.

The glowing luminosity of color and richness of patterns in Vuillard's paintings are wonderfully balanced in the installation with his deeply focused urban "landscapes with people" captured by his innovative folding screen series. The Gallery's own five-panel series for *Miss Marguerite*

Chapin: Place Vintimille never looked grander than it does in this presentation. And Vuillard's painterly depictions of his sister, mother, grandmother, lovers, and patrons, have never been more engaging. The tenderness with which Vuillard immortalizes the intensity of his deep and life-long friendships, especially with his fellow painter and brother-in-law Kerr Xavier Roussel and with the actor and fellow "theatre libre" co-founder Aurelien Lugne-Poe, is very moving. Still further intriguing are Vuillard's drawings, set designs, theater programs, and illustrative graphics reflecting Ibsen, Strindberg, and Maeterlinck's dramatic ideas, and Vuillard's own rich use of ambiguous symbolism.

This exhibition is one that requires several visits, ones that are enthralling, informing, and savoring! The monumental exhibition catalogue is a treasure, and the splendid color-illustrated and very informative, free brochure written by Lynn Kellmanson Matheny of the Gallery staff is yet another example of the Gallery's world model for free art exhibition brochures and pamphlets. Through April 20.

Vital contributions to the success of this exhibition were also made by the indemnity from the federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities and a grant from Airbus, whose President and CEO of Airbus North America, Henri Courpron, sparkingly observed at the press briefing, "The timing of this exhibition fittingly coincides with the centennial year of the birth of our industry. While Vuillard was helping establish the foundation of the artistic revolution of the 20th century, the Wright brothers and their remarkable first flight at Kitty Hawk set in motion a new century of progress in aviation."

—Anthony L. Harvey



Edouard Vuillard, "Design for a Program for the Théâtre-Libre," c. 1891.

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**Anthony L. Harvey is a collector of contemporary art, with an emphasis on Washington artists. He is a founding member of the Washington Review of the Arts. For many years he was the staff person in the United States Senate responsible for arts and Library of Congress oversight by the Senate's Rules and Administration Committee and the House and Senate's Joint Committee on the Library.

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BOOK

From p. 7

"Institutional Roles," "Parks and Recreation," and "Residential Life." Each chapter commences with several sentences of introductory text, followed by photographs and accompanying captions. One of the book's major strengths is its image placement. A page typically has two pictures, both revealing the same building, street, or area, though from different eras. Eyeballing the images side-by-side produces a particularly strong contrast—more pronounced than if one were obliged to flip forward several pages to find a companion image. For example, the authors feature a 1955 photograph of three family members posing in front of the Lincoln Memorial. Beneath it is a snapshot of a modern-day family affecting the same pose. Lincoln's likeness is captured in the 21st century exactly as it appeared almost 50 years earlier (it is a statue, after all). Yet one also notes the marked contrasts in each family—clothes, girth, even facial expression (the man in the present-day photo smirks, while the man in the 1955 shot strikes a more era-appropriate, tight smile.) Equally enjoyable is the 1894 shot of Warwick's Café downtown contrasted with a present day snapshot of JR's Bar & Grill at 17th and Church Streets. The former features bowler-hat clad men standing stiffly at the bar, while the latter has some young men (including co-author Williams) lounging on bar stools in shorts and sneakers. At the same time, one is struck by the similarities of each establishment: the alcohol tidily arranged behind the bartender; the configuration of the stools along the bar; the ceiling lights.

Naturally, image contrast is particularly powerful in a context of familiarity. For this reviewer, a long-time resident of Dupont Circle, the dual images of the park inside the Circle (one circa. 1900, the other present-day) proved to be especially memorable. Viewing the central marble fountain's predecessor—a statue of Admiral Du Pont—in the older photograph, which is particularly surreal given the fountain's long-standing presence at the park's center. Similarly, observing a current image of the familiar corner of Wisconsin Avenue and O St.—with its omnipresent cars, cyclists and stoplights—grows even more instructive when one turns to the shot of the same street corner in the 1890s—this time replete with horse cars and trolley tracks.

Though the book is a visual history, the caption text should not be underestimated. It is appropriately concise and informative. The writing style maintains enough flexibility to morph from the acerbic (the authors recount the lamentable fate of the Alexander "Boss" Shepherd statue, which was moved from its prominent perch in front of the District Building on Pennsylvania Avenue to the Blue Plains waste water treatment plant in Southeast "where it now sits between two temporary buildings and sadly hosts a Weber Grill at its base") to the technical (captions are frequently peppered with references to jargon such as "brutalist," "neo-traditional stylistic," and "concrete and sterile").

Significantly, both the photos and text captions have high educational value. By reading this book, DC residents and non-residents alike will learn much about the city. This reviewer reacted with surprise upon seeing a photograph of a gas station attendant pumping a car and the caption's text informing that some District gas stations have full service; he has rarely happened upon full service gas stations outside of his native New Jersey. Readers may also be surprised to learn about and see Orville Wright's 1908 flight at Fort Myer, just across the river in Arlington. Trivia buffs will also not be disappointed: Who knew that "the elegant front door" once found under the arch of the John Hay House (since replaced by the Hay-Adams Hotel) was later removed and transferred to a new home on Woodland Drive, NW. The reader can view the door attached to both structures.

Then & Now spotlights it all: The ordinary, ranging from outhouses to evictions (it is a testament to the authors' creativity that they think to include past and present images of evicted items strewn outside homes). Also, gas stations. Readers will learn how these once boasted the same architectural beauty as their surroundings (as Williams and Young point out with a fantastic 1920s shot of a sprawling, lovely estate-like gas station in Northwest). The authors also accord significant attention to the city's recent corporatization and sprawl. One poignant page includes an old snapshot of an idyllic, leafy country road, Bladensburg Road, contrasted with a current view of the street near New York Avenue, where highways and strip shopping malls now reign supreme. These areas "have been gobbled up by suburban sprawl," the authors lament.

Finally, and perhaps most important of all, the book succeeds in shattering some of the city's stereotypes. The authors respond to the reductive perception of Anacostia as a monolithic slum by featuring a beautiful present-day Anacostia street corner, complete with large homes, manicured lawns, and towering trees. Many observers could mistake it for Spring Valley. This area of Anacostia with its "lush and quiet communities" might "surprise other DC residents with an obscured vision of the area," the authors note wryly.

Williams and Young have produced a winner. They provide such a diverse arrangement of photographs that the result is overwhelmingly enlightening; even those purporting to have seen it all will surely come across something here which they have not seen before. The photographs are high quality and reveal little blurring or fuzziness. The authors include pictures not only from their own collections but also from the Library of Congress, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, and the Historical Society of Washington (among other sources)—a compilation even more eclectic than that of Williams' last Arcadia venture, *Images of America: Greater U Street*. Finally, the editorial errors which marred that book are thankfully nowhere to be found in this one. It is recommended with no reservations. □



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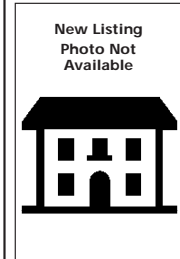
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