Contemporary Chinese photography critiques urbanization, globalization

MOPA’s innovative ‘Out of the Shadows’ exhibit focuses on three decades of development in China

KENDERA SITTON | Uptown News

The water is silky, the mountain glacial in Shi Guorui’s photo “The Yangtze River 7-8 May 2013.” Over two days in 2013, he used a camera obscura to shoot the scene which a Western audience might interpret as serene or natural. Shi explained in a phone interview that a Chinese audience would see something much different. He took the photo right after the completion of the Three Gorges Dam, the largest power station in the world, so everything in the photo is man-made, the river unnaturally high.

Sanctuaries close doors amid crisis

KENDERA SITTON | Uptown News

For faith communities home to more than 250 people, there was a clear mandate last weekend: they could not meet, according to San Diego County. For those falling below that number, they had a more difficult decision: shut down at a time when people need their community’s support the most or risk the potential of congregants spreading the virus to each other.

Community planning groups in limbo with elections canceled

KENDERA SITTON | Uptown News

The delay of primaries in other states has garnered headlines, but San Diego has had its own election troubles because of the coronavirus pandemic as well. Both Uptown Planners and North Park Planners have had to cancel elections scheduled for March 12 and March 17, respectively.

When the seriousness of the coronavirus was still not reflected in government policies, the groups had to decide on their own how to move forward. The elections subcommittee for Uptown Planners went through several ideas of how to vote while maintaining social distancing. At first, they got rid of the candidate statements in one big, enclosed space and canceled all agenda items for the meeting other than the election. They settled on a system that had everyone waiting in a long, spaced-out line around the block on a rainy day with only a few people brought into the Joyce Beers building at a time. They finally canceled the entire election on the morning of March 12, when Governor Gavin Newsom requested gatherings of over 250 people not to meet.

“I had been looking for city and county guidance on this all week and everyone seems to be scrambling to come up with their own guidelines since the federal government doesn’t seem to have any guidelines that make any sense,” Steve Cline, elections subcommittee chair, explained on March 12. “We just reached a point where it just seemed like the risks far outweighed the need to get this done today.”

A deciding factor for Cline and the Uptown Planners chair, Soheil
While not as critical as the weeks leading up to the primary, the weeks afterward are still an important part of the prolonged elections in the U.S. Politicians would normally spend this time fundraising and meet-and-greets to keep momentum leading up to the initial vote. The top two candidates in crowded fields would also try to widen their coalition now that the field has narrowed. However, the coronavirus pandemic has virtually suspended several campaigns while others pivot strategy to follow public health guidelines.

Chair of the San Diego County Democratic Party said the party is looking at ways to hold remote meetings and adapting voter contact to “organizing can continue without putting anyone at risk.” Senator Toni Atkins is almost guaranteed to win in the general election, but she would normally be spending this time fundraising for other candidates. According to her campaign manager, she did not have any local events scheduled this week or next, but any upcoming events will likely be postponed.

Nora Vargas, a candidate for the County Board of Supervisors District 1, also announced her campaign would postpone all events and activities in light of the pandemic. She also launched a bilingual online resource to answer people’s questions on her social media pages.

Brian Maryott, a Republican candidate in the 49th Congressional District, announced on Monday, March 16, that he will be holding virtual town halls each Wednesday on Facebook at 6:30 p.m. until the crisis ends.

Democrat candidate in the 50th District, Ammar Campa-Najjar, said his campaign office was closed while staff worked remotely on March 13. At the time, he said he would not host events for more than 15 people and volunteer appreciation parties would be postponed. While the restrictions on events have changed, he offered to help field questions from the community as CA-50 has no representation while Rep. Duncan Hunter awaits sentencing.

For politicians already holding public office like City Council members Chris Ward, Barbara Bry, Assembly member Todd Gloria and City Council President Georgette Gomez, there is little time to campaign for higher office while triaging this crisis.

In the smaller campaigns for City Council District 3, focus has also shifted. In an email, frontrunner Stephen Whitburn explained, “The biggest impact has been the cancellation of events and meetings we had planned to attend. I go to as many community functions as possible to chat with people and get their thoughts... Hopefully, this won’t last very long, and things will get back to normal. In the meantime, it’s still busy. Our website lists my cell phone number, and people have been reaching out about various neighborhood issues. I’ve also been reading up on how other cities have handled some of the problems we’re dealing with. So, there’s plenty to do, but I look forward to the community meetings resuming and seeing everyone again.”

Toni Duran, who made it through the primary by beating out Chris Olsen, said in an email, “We don’t want to put volunteers or voters at risk, so now isn’t the time for face-to-face campaigning. My campaign is less important than the health and welfare of our entire community. People can still donate or sign up for later volunteer opportunities. However, I will personally be volunteering my time with nonprofits who are still providing critical services, in a responsible and safe way, to our vulnerable populations, and I encourage others to do the same.”

Later, she announced on Twitter that one of the organizations she will be volunteering at Mama’s Kitchen, a nonprofit which brings meals to sick people. Since they typically rely on retirees who are self-quarantining, the organization put out an urgent call for volunteers.

For many voters, electoral politics are far from the most important story right now, and rightly so. The campaigns that succeed in November will be the ones that recapture the public’s attention after the pandemic ends.

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com.

Uptown Briefs
SERVING SENIORS DELIVERS MEALS TO ANY SENIOR

Serving Seniors has announced the temporary closure of all 15 of its congregate dining sites throughout San Diego County effective immediately. The nonprofit organization has rapidly transitioned to delivered meals for all clients to continue meeting the needs of the thousands of low-income and homeless seniors who rely on meals as a primary source of nutrition to survive.

To support the large number of homeless seniors who visit the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center – the organization’s flagship dining site located in Downtown San Diego on Fourth Avenue – Serving Seniors’ staff are offering pre-packaged to-go meals and transitioning clients to meal delivery options. To-go meals will also be available at all other dining congregate sites until all clients can be fully transitioned to meal delivery service.

The transition is critical in light of California Governor Gavin Newsom’s mandate that all people over the age of 65 should stay home and self-quarantine. Free meals from Serving Seniors are available to anyone aged 60 or over, regardless of income. If you are a senior in need, or know of a senior in need, you can sign up to receive meals by calling 619 235-6572 and selecting option one, or reaching out via email at meals@serving seniors.org. While recipients have the option of making a donation for the meals, nobody is turned away if they do not have the means to do so.

“It is our utmost priority to keep everyone associated with Serving Seniors healthy and safe, while also ensuring that
BE SAFE
KNOW HOW TO WEATHER A STORM

BEFORE A STORM:
• Prepare an evacuation kit that includes hygiene items, clothes, bedding and medication.
• Monitor weather conditions on TV, radio or internet.
• Evacuate when advised by authorities or if you are in a flood prone area.

DURING A STORM:
• Don’t touch any downed power lines and report them immediately to 911 or SDG&E.
• If using a portable generator, make sure you know how to operate it safely.
• Avoid making unnecessary trips and let others know where you are going.

AFTER A STORM:
• Contact SDG&E or a licensed professional to relight your appliances and pilot lights.
• Avoid using electrical equipment in wet areas.
• Use flashlights instead of lanterns, matches or candles.

Get more tips at sdge.com/safety

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Community members of Little Saigon passed out egg rolls and ribbons for good fortunes.

BE SAFE KNOW HOW TO WEATHER A STORM

The Urban Land Institute hosted its third annual bus tour of El Cajon Boulevard to show off recent efforts to activate underused urban space on the important corridor and to show where developments will soon be added. In two rented MTS buses, nearly 100 architects, developers, engineers, and community activists visited sites along the boulevard, including Little Saigon, Hoover High School, Fair@44, an empty lot by the Interstate 15 bridge, and the BLVD Court.

Affordable housing will soon come to lots that have been vacant since 1983 when the I-15 freeway divided the community in half. Meanwhile, Fair@44 and BLVD Court have transformed empty pavements into places of gathering and commerce. BLVD Court is a new addition to the activated sites and was added after the success seen at Fair@44. Fair@44 has a new taco truck, bright paint on the asphalt, shade and seating. BLVD Court brought together vendors so people could stop by to purchase beer and support local artists. Little Saigon has used street art to preserve the unique character of the immigrant enclave. Hoover High School’s construction is nearing completion, with a hopeful April finish.

Some of the original City Heights community members, whose activism was sparked after more than 2,000 homes were torn out to make way for I-15 decades ago, were in attendance. They helped form the ideas for kiosks along the bridge above I-15 and that the bridge needed to be strong enough for housing to be built on its ends. Forty years later, those ideas are finally coming to fruition with development along the bridge deck.

An important addition this year was the turn-only lane, which has made the road more pedestrian- and bike-friendly, and brings in hundreds of more riders compared to last year. The plans to add density, improve safety and activate new public spaces are part of Blvd 20/20—a vision of El Cajon Boulevard for the next decade.

Properties along the boulevard have seen a spurt of recent investment. Since the first economic development tour in November 2014, property sales have topped $467 million along the El Cajon Boulevard corridor, with more than $163 million in 2019 alone, according to the Boulevard BIA.

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com.

San Diego Uptown News
March 20–April 2, 2020
sdnews.com

BE SAFE KNOW HOW TO WEATHER A STORM

Penelope Smith greeted people to the tour inside Tiger! Tiger! (Photos by Kendra Sitton)

The tour ended at BLVD Court where there were pop-up vendors and a bar.

El Cajon Boulevard tour highlights transit, development

KENDRA SITTON | UPTOWN NEWS

The tour ended at BLVD Court where there were pop-up vendors and a bar.
Coronavirus is nothing like we’ve ever seen and requires a response like we’ve never seen.

Mission Hills couple strike racist covenant from house deed as part of centennial

I’ve enjoyed living in four different Mission Hills homes over the past 20 years. Meandering past so many well-kept, historic homes is a cherished benefit of our neighborhood. So, as the cenennial of our 1920s craftsman bungalow approached, Kyona and I wanted to celebrate its history and contribute to its preservation as a very special home. Security guard and our home is historically accurate colors, repaired the original iron spot brick fireplace, fixed the seated, commissioned beveled glass, the original stained glass, and reproduced two handcrafted Westport Plank chairs for our covered porch.

But in reviewing the title to our home, we also uncovered a grant deed recorded in 1912 from the Mission Hills Company. That grant deed included a restrictive covenant that “runs with the land” upon which our home was built and provides that “no part of the premises hereby conveyed shall be conveyed, transferred or demised to any person other than the White or Caucasian race.” This racist re-

Kendra Davis is an award-winning author, and attorney (kendradas.com). Kyona is an Ayurvedic health counselor and yoga therapist (ky-veda.com).
How businesses can prepare for COVID-19 setbacks

**FROM PAGE 2**

**NEWS BRIEFS**

we meet the needs of our se - nior clients who need us now more than ever,” said Serving Seniors CEO Paul Downey. “We are working diligently to provide meals to as many se - niors as possible, and we will do so in the months and come. When you’re a brand-new client, or a long-time client, we will be able to get you the nutritious meals you need.”

The mission of Serving Seniors is made possible through the generous contribu - tions of the community. Now, more than ever, Serving Seniors is relying on donations to con - tinue providing resources to vulnerable seniors throughout the county. To learn more on how you can help, or to make a donation, please visit servingse - niors.org today.

**FEEDING SAN DIEGO SETS UP EMERGENCY FOOD BANKS**

Feeding San Diego hosted a press conference earlier to - day, Tuesday, March 17, to an - nounce additional emergency food distributions to help meet the increased need throughout San Diego County. Amid the progression of the novel coro - navirus, Feeding San Diego is maintaining its operations and striving to minimize dis - traction to health-care ser - vices while implementing new methods of food distribu - tion, including drive-thru and drop-and-go models to ensure appropriate social distancing. Community events, programs and partner sites have re - sulted in significant gaps in food assistance, which Feeding San Diego is monitoring closely and launching additional food dis - tributions based on community needs and the specific needs of some populations.

**SAN DIEGO BLOOD BANK ISSUES URGENT PLEA FOR DONATIONS**

School closures and work - from-home policies have result - ed in canceled blood drives. San Diego Blood Bank collects more than half of its blood supply on mobilebloods. An additional strain on the blood supply is ex - pected in the coming weeks. See all coronavirus-related travel and exposure deferrals.

“The U.S. is on the verge of a crisis. We have a global health crisis that’s all over the news. But it’s much bigger than that. It’s creating a job crisis, a people crisis, and a health crisis,” said Keith Maddox, executive secretary-treasurer of San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council.

A blood donation food distribu - tion will be held at Central at the Labor Council at SDCCU Stadium, 9449 Friars Road in the Northeast Lot on March 21 at 10 a.m. Listings of avail - able emergency distributions will be updated daily and pub - lished at feedingsandiego.org/ coronavirus.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING BALLOT MEASURE MOVES FORWARD**

San Diego City Council Rules Committees recommend - ed changes to the draft ballot language for the “Homes for San Diegans” bond measure, the next step before putting the initiative on the November 2020 ballot. Homes for San Diegans pro - poses a $900 million housing fund for the construction of up to 7,500 homes for families and individuals who lack secure housing, including veterans, families, seniors, transition - al-aged youth, and people living with disabilities. This measure would also allow San Diego to gain its fair share of state and federal matching funds.

Following today’s vote, the Rules Committee directed the City Attorney’s Office to con - duct a necessary legal anal - ysis and draft general obliga - tion bond measure language, considering the input received from the community members and the public.

Lots of San Diego companies suddenly have women on their boards

San Diego Review found more than a dozen San Diego companies have added a woman to their board of di - rectors within the last year fol - lowing the COVID-19 outbreak, which requires publicly held companies based in California to have at least one woman on their boards. The law’s first set of requirements kicked in Jan. 1. Less than a year ago, San Diego still had more than 20 companies with no women on their boards. More of those company boards have since brought on a woman. The San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council’s of - fice released a new statewide report on companies’ progress complying with SB 826. But the report isn’t necessarily a great window into how many compa - nies actually have a woman on their board of directors; rather, it simply documents companies that have filed a 2019 Corporate Disclosure Statement, which includes a question about their board makeup. Only 130 of 653 companies filed a statement, and of those, only 282 reported themselves as in compliance with the law. But many companies that actually do have at least one woman on their board appear to have not filled out the form. San Diego-based Qualcomm and Jack 830 of 653 companies filed a statement, and of those, only 282 reported themselves as in compliance with the law. But many companies that actually do have at least one woman on their board appear to have not filled out the form. San Diego-based Qualcomm and Jack of 653 companies filed a statement, and of those, only 282 reported themselves as in compliance with the law. But many companies that actually do have at least one woman on their board appear to have not filled out the form. San Diego-based Qualcomm and Jack 830 of 653 companies filed a statement, and of those, only 282 reported themselves as in compliance with the law. But many companies that actually do have at least one woman on their board appear to have not filled out the form. San Diego-based Qualcomm and Jack 830 of 653 companies filed a statement, and of those, only 282 reported themselves as in compliance with the law. But many companies that actually do have at least one woman on their board appear to have not filled out the form. San Diego-based Qualcomm and Jack 830 of 653 companies filed a statement, and of those, only 282 reported themselves as in compliance with the law. But many companies that actually do have at least one woman on their board appear to have not filled out the form. San Diego-based Qualcomm and Jack 830 of 653 companies filed a statement, and of those, only 282 reported themselves as in compliance with the law. But many companies that actually do have at least one woman on their board appear to have not filled out the form. San Diego-based Qualcomm and Jack
FOOD AND DRINK

The Flame’s original signage was rehung this week on the Egyptian-revival building in Hillcrest that was once home to San Diego’s longest-running lesbian bar. The sign’s return signals the hopeful debut of a jazz club in the coming months.

Owner and developer James Nichols recently annexed the circa-1945 building with several apartment units and spent $3,000 restoring the dramatic 18-foot neon sign. He is reportedly in advanced talks over lessee with 1281 Kensington for an agreement is struck.

The historic structure also operated decades ago as a steak and cocktail establishment known as The Garden of Allah. 3780 Park Blvd.

The recent state and city mandates that currently prohibit restaurants from conducting dine-in service due to the global pandemic crisis have resulted in take-out and delivery-only options at a number of popular establishments. We combed through the neighborhoods of Uptown and found places cooking up certain dishes we all cherish, especially while socially distancing ourselves for a while. Consider our picks below when you’ve grown tired of the things in your freezer.

Chocolates and savory dishes from Eclipse Chocolate Bar & Bistro in South Park are available for pickup, curbside delivery, and home delivery through UberEats, GrubHub and Postmates. Owner Will Gustwiler says, “We’ll still be operating as a retail artisan food shop,” referring to his full inventory of chocolate bars, drinking chocolate and bistro fare. 2145 Fern St., 619-578-2984, eclipsechocolate.com.

Things like pancakes, omelets and turkey meatloaf hash from Breakfast Republic are a click away. Enjoying a full steak dinner with dessert doesn’t have to end in these restricting times. Nearly the entire supper menu at Rare Society in University Heights is available for pickup or curbside delivery between 5 and 8 p.m. daily. The food can be ordered through toast.com or through Rare Society’s website. 4130 Park Blvd., 619-501-4440, raresociety.sd.com.

Over in Mission Hills, consumers can saunter into the bakery at Cardellino anytime between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. to purchase house-made breads, Danishes, muffins, croissants and more. In addition, Cardellino’s savory menu is available for takeout. Highlights include oven-roasted broccoli, rigatoni Bolognese, crafty pizzas and more. 4033 Goldfinch St., 619-600-5311, cardellinobakery.com.

Nothing spells comfort like a hot pot pie from Pop Pie Co. in University Heights. The eatery is selling its full assortment of sweet and savory flavors such as key lime, apple crumble, pork with chilies, steak and ale, and more. Orders for curbside delivery can be placed by phone or through Pop Pie’s app. 4404 Park Blvd., 619-501-4440, poppieco.com.

Takeout business at Ponce’s Mexican Restaurant in Kensington has been brisk as the long-established restaurant continues cooking up signature favorites such as chicken tortilla soup, shrimp ranchera burritos, pork verde, assorted tacos and enchiladas and more. Place orders by phone or through Door Dash. 4050 Adams Ave., 619-282-4413, poncesrestaurant.com.

Nearthly packaged three-course meals brought to your vehicle curbside are in the offering at Et Voila French Bistro. Customers choose an appetizer, main entrée and dessert for a cost of $30 per person. (Yes, the restaurant’s wildly famous mushroom ravioli is among the main-course options.) The menu is posted online, and same-day orders can be picked up between 5 and 8 p.m. 3015 Adams Ave., 619-209-7759, etvoilabistro.com.

Daddy’s Hot Dogs in Hillcrest doesn’t have to close a dining room because it never had one. The walk-up window is the perfect alternative to grabbing a wiener at the Costco food courts, which lately are more chaotic than ever. The all-beef hot dog selection extends to about 10 different styles. 1281 University Ave., daddyshotdogs.com.

— Frank Sabatini Jr can be reached at fsabatini@san.rr.com.

Soothe your soul with a steak pie and com from Pop Pie Co. (By Frank Sabatini Jr.)

A bounty of sweet and savory foods are available for takeout at Eclipse Chocolate Bar & Bistro. (Courtesy photo)

Spicy sesame ramen from Tajima (By Frank Sabatini Jr.)

A piece of history returns to Park Boulevard. (Katalyst PR)
Squeeze, wait and flip

Restaurant Review
Frank Sabatini Jr.

Please refer to your news sources to check the rapidly changing guidelines and mandates regarding dining out, per the CDC as well as city, state and federal branches of government. As of printing, takeout, delivery, drive-thru, and curbside pick-up are the only options.

Before dismissing the notion of making your own pancakes at North Park’s hottest new breakfast joint, just hear me out as to why you should partake in it at some point (once the quarantine is over).

For starters, the “flip your own” approach at Flap Your Jacks is optional. No judgment is passed if you decide to spare your lazy little hands the task of applying batter to your table’s built-in griddle and then giving your spatula a twist of the wrist.

Yes, a full menu and gleaming new kitchen are in place—driven by a professional chef—should you prefer ordering something by a professional chef—should you prefer ordering something extraordinary lemon soufflé pancakes, which you should do or—incredibly crispy on the outside. Indeed, making flapjacks at home can be troublesome and messy. But you won’t face those pitfalls here.

The clumsiness of making them is removed by a spacious non-stick griddle positioned only feet away from your chest and in easy arm’s reach. You cook while comfortably sitting, just as you would when enjoying Korean barbecue or meat fondu.

Assorted batters such as buttermilk, red velvet and chocolate are placed at your table in squeeze bottles. The batters dispense cleanly and precisely enough to create fun and easy shapes should you feel so inspired.

Customers at the table next to us crafted what looked like a forest scene, framed exquisitely by the rectangular edges of their griddle. Our waiter said such batter artworks aren’t uncommon, citing others who have nailed down the images of Cookie Monster, various animals, and even a beach image replete with palm trees and ocean waves.

We stuck to traditional disks. And so did with childlike excitement. Not a single irregular-shaped hotcake in our production line. Each was cooked perfectly despite getting carried away a few times in conversation. That’s because the griddles are set at a medium-heat level, which means the pancakes don’t cook as fast as you’d expect—but they also don’t burn easily.

The batter flavors we chose were buttermilk, banana bread and peanut butter. All are made in-house and tasted excellent. There are also numerous “mix-ins” and toppings and house-made syrups to choose from. The mealy peanut butter chips I tried added richness. My companion reveled in fresh blueberries he added to his buttermilk beauties. And if you’re a fan of fruit-flavored syrups, the raspberry option is exceptional because it isn’t cloying like the imitation stuff.

Owner Marc Wornovitzky and his brother, Ilian, sunk $2 million into the two-level space, which sat empty for some years before coming to life earlier this month. They created an inviting, modern motif that includes fun décor and shiny ventilation hoods over the tables. The siblings also run four Jersey Mike’s franchises in South Bay and a couple of sushi places in their native Mexico City.

Chef Sergio Howland is also from Mexico City. He’s a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America. His culinary talents are profoundly evident in other dishes we tried, such as a croque madame sandwich oozing with Gruyere cheese, bechamel sauce and lean ham. The accompanying slab of hash browns were super—indeed crispy on the outside, fluffy on the inside. His red chilaquiles are marvellous, too. We opted for the addition of grilled chicken (boneless, skinless breast meat), which sat atop a bowl of tortilla chips semi-soaked in spicy salsa. Those gave way to layers of refried black beans, crema, queso fresco, and fresh cilantro.

My companion’s “smokey Benedict” featured smoked salmon on toasted croissants with a pair of eggs on top. The star of the dish was the lemon hollandaise sauce draping the eggs. It was extraordinarily silky and composed—testimony to Howland’s training at a prestigious chef school.

Flap Your Jacks offers cocktails from a full bar. Drinks such as the North Park julep and assorted bloody marys are the perfect complements to other menu items such as a mushroom scramble, “holy mole” enchiladas, and poblano pepper tamales.

Several brunch items like grilled asparagus with prosciutto, burgers, and steak fries are available from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. But for novelty’s sake, and regardless of whatever else you order, try your hands at flipping.

— Frank Sabatini Jr. is the author of ‘Secret San Diego’ (ECW Press) and began his local writing career more than two decades ago as a staffer for the former San Diego Tribune. You can reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.

Flap Your Jacks
3020 University Ave. (North Park)
619-539-7242, flapyourjacks.com
Prices: Specialty waffles, pancakes and French toast, $10 to $12; “flip your own pancakes,” starts at $8; egg dishes, $11.50 to $15; Mexican breakfasts, $12.50 to $14; light fare, $8.95 to $13.50; daily brunch plates (starting at 11 a.m.), $10.95 to $18.75

A croque madame sandwich with hash browns
Semi-soaked in spicy salsa. Those gave way to layers of refried black beans, crema, queso fresco, and fresh cilantro.

Smoked salmon eggs Benedict

Lemon souffle pancakes with berries

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2900 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego, CA 92104
Nakhshab, was that Uptown is home to a large population of people over the age of 65 who are most at risk of getting the coronavirus. The confusion of the week leading up to the election also points to the unclear legal position community planning groups (CPGs) will need to be able to continue until after this crisis is over.

Cline said Uptown was planning for 600 to 700 people to vote in the election, compared to less than 500 in the last election. This was largely due to canvassing and promotion from Rise Uptown, as well as the less organized countermovement it inspired.

“It’s very different from the primaries where there’s like 40% turnout. So, a lot of people from San Diego know about the election, but for this very localized and very specialized election, you need to gather people to come out. I know I’ve reached out to dozens and dozens of people in the area to say, ‘Hey, come out and vote for us and this election.’ It’s hard to get everything printed and volunteers coordinated for support that night,” explained Oscar Taveras, a candidate endorsed by Rise Uptown. He spent much of March 12 contacting the people he had reached out to and let them know the election was off. Whenever a new election is held, that months-long effort could be difficult to reorganize.

“Also in all, the reception to this action has been quite in spite of the tension from the various factions, so I’m hopeful that everyone can get along and cooperate and recognize that this was in the best interest of the community,” Cline said. He said he received a few emails “out of left field” claiming the cancelation was to rig the March 13 letter to CPGs was sent. Instead, it was up to each CPG to decide. With elections expected to bring hundreds of people, the county order to limit events anticipating more than 250 people was a clear mandate against the March 12 Uptown Planners election. For a regularly scheduled meeting that brings in less than 50 people, what is regularly scheduled meeting that brings in hundreds of people, the City Attorney Mara Elliott halted.

Under current rules, the advisory role of CPG groups will not be able to continue until after this crisis is over.
Renewed hope for a new district

Powers Plumbing doing business in Mission Hills since 1923

Like a fine wine, some things age well with time.

Take Powers Plumbing for example, founded by Luther Powers in 1914, a mainstay at 1705 W. Lewis St. in Mission Hills since 1923.

According to president, general manager and owner Janet O’Dea, Powers started his career in Los Angeles and moved to San Diego, likely in response to the building boom.

His first office was on Eighth Street in Downtown San Diego and then soon after moved to Mission Hills, she said. “In 1923, he had the building built, that we still occupy, by Master Builder Martin V. Mulhern.”

The historic building is owned by his granddaughter, she said. The business celebrated its 100th year in 2014 with a variety of events attended by city officials and locals.

And even though they have been in business since 1914 and times have changed, Powers has been able to sustain for several reasons, O’Dea noted.

“The business passed on to Luther’s son Calvin and his other brothers also worked for the business. It changed hands when Calvin retired and two business- men owned the business for a while,” she said. “Jack Dietrick ran our shop and the other partner ran a shop called R.E. Reiling, in University Heights.

“Eventually, that partnership split up and each stayed put with Powers Plumbing surviving. After the Korean War, veteran Phil Stull started work here. One of his first jobs was to plumbl Holy Cross Cemetery. He was on that job for a few years but after that was finished, became an expert with service and repair and remodel work,” she said.

Today’s biz

In 2007, O’Dea said she needed her own toilet fixed, and was a Powers customer. “I noticed that the plumber changed out the toilet lever; the one we had was made of porcelain and was stamped with the word ‘Press.’ I wanted to get it back and Phil told me it was on his desk,” she recalled.

“Apparently, he was going to call me about this to get it back to me. One thing led to another and I ended up working here part-time, started taking plumbing courses and learning the business from Phil and eventually purchasing the business from him.”

Phil told me that when he was just starting out, Calvin Powers would come over and shoot the breeze with him in our back room. Phil has been my connection to the original family and that has a lot of meaning for me and my husband Allen, who also works here now part-time.”

So, what makes Powers different than its competitors? They are “old house experts.” “We live and work in a historic district in San Diego and we have a repair mindset and a quality mindset. It keeps good items working for their entire lifecycle and keeps items out of the landfill,” O’Dea added.

Historic digs

The Powers building itself is a historic building and it was included as a contributor to the Fort Stockton Trolley Line Historic District, she said.

“We have a plumbing museum in our front window. It shows the real brawn that plumbers had as they transformed our nation with modern plumbing systems by using hand drills for example. If you think back to 1914 when Mission Hills was being built, the plumbing systems were still very new, indoor plumbing was marvelous and we take it all for granted now. But in those early days, the old houses had a privy in the back.”

“The plumbing industry, that we are a part of, has had a tremendous impact on the success of the human race and it is also very taken for granted until — the day when you have no hot water when you are ready for your shower,” she continued. “It reminds me to be grateful every day for the advantages for our sanitary systems.”

Powers Plumbing remains a place where people can still get what they need and a smile, too.

“Our neighbors are nice, our shop is friendly, we are always busy and people drop in to see us, which is so nice,” O’Dea said. “We get a lot of candy, cookies, fruits, avocados and nice notes from our clients throughout the year and especially during the holidays. We feel that we are an asset to the community and feel appreciated for it.”

— Jill Diamond is a local freelance reporter with a penchant for history.
“In the process of building this dam and blocking the river, in effect, over a million people had to be relocated from their home. More than 1,000 famous villages and locations were flooded. Over 300 cultural sites and relic locations were also completely flooded in the process. It’s making a very subtle gesture,” said the show’s curator Tiffany Wai-Ying Beres, while translating for Shi.

Shi used a pinhole camera to capture the scene which renders the landscape ghostly, with pitch black sky and bright white mountain, since all negative light is translated as positive in the black-and-white photograph. The pinhole camera is an ancient method of photography used by Aristotle to study eclipses and in China in fifth century B.C.

For each photograph Shi takes using the camera obscura, he builds a tent with a tiny hole in the fabric on one end and a giant piece of photographic paper on the other. He stays in the tent for days as the paper is exposed to the light. This method also means any movement is lost and the finished product only contains permanent features of the landscape.

Shi turned to the method because it slows time.

“It’s an experience of capturing time more than anything. It’s also an affirmation of his existence in a certain place at a certain time. So that is very appealing to him,” Beres translated. She felt that quick photos on phones made people spectators to their environment where this method forced him to engage with it. Sitting in the tent waiting for the exposure has become a meditative practice for him.

In the second photo featured in the “Out of the Shadows” exhibit, Shi captured the construction of the CCTV tower in Beijing in the lead up to the 2008 Olympics. The tower was built in record time as China quickly developed ahead of the games. The structure is unique because of the strange skyscraper connecting two towers at an acute angle. Shi’s photo shows the tower with crumpled edges while it is still under construction. Freeways are vacant and streets empty of people because of the long exposure time. Cars and buses and people were there at one point but moved too quickly to have an impact. The modern terrain is empty save for the buildings themselves.

Another featured artist, Yang Yongliang, has his own critiques of urbanization and globalization in the show. His virtual reality video “Nine Dragons” puts the viewer in the perspective of a historical dragon traveling through the postmodern world.

While international audiences may just see dragons as a symbol of East Asia and even young Chinese audiences have flattened the meaning of dragons to just be representative of good fortune. Yang explained through a translator that dragons used to be water gods that protected ecology. In the video he created based on a painting from 11th-century artist Chen Rong also titled “Nine Dragons,” the dragons leave the clouds and travel to the ocean where they see the urbanization featured in many of Yang’s works.

“Globalization, urbanization is always a concern that he puts into his work. That’s a global issue that we face as human beings all together. We can provide as Asian artists a perspective from our specific cultural backgrounds. We wanted to introduce that very specific point of view to tell a story that should be interesting to a broader audience and specific to San Diego,” translated Yang’s assistant.

Yang got his start using layers of photographs to create entrancing landscapes of contemporary China. Since he pivoted to video and later VR technology, he has built on the anti-urbanization themes of his earlier work. One of the reasons he switched to VR is because in art school he learned the Chinese philosophy that landscape paintings were meant to be immersive and viewers were supposed to “mind travel” and imagine themselves in them. VR is an immersive space. Yang also hopes the new platform will preserve the best of traditional art and introduce it to younger generations.

The VR video and the photographs will be on display at the Museum of Photographic Arts until September due to the COVID-19 crisis, the museum is currently closed to the public until the end of March or further notice. While pinhole cameras trace back to ancient China, modern photography was introduced to China from Europe just a century ago. Artists quickly took photography and created an art form unique to the rest of the world that remains different to this day.

“Every artist in the show has, in some way, transformed the art of photography or moving images and they’re applying different kinds of aesthetics, and different kinds of processes than what where we’re used to when we think about traditional photography,” Beres said. “Anyone who goes to see the show will see photography like they’ve never seen it before.”

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com.

PHOTOGRAPHY
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The Museum of Photographic Arts, 1888 San Diego Ave., is currently closed to the public (due to the COVID-19 crisis, the museum is closed until the end of March or further notice). While pinhole cameras trace back to ancient China, modern photography was introduced to China from Europe just a century ago. Artists quickly took photography and created an art form unique to the rest of the world that remains different to this day.

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HARBORVIEW SENIOR ASSISTED LIVING

San Diego Uptown News
March 20-April 2, 2020

ARTS


Yang Yongliang, still from “Nine Dragons,” 2018, virtual reality video; 10 min. (Photo courtesy of Yang Yongliang)
Some churches that initially said they would stay open regardless of encouragement, seniors, immuno-compromised, and vulnerable people to remain at home and ending the practice of communion reversed course. The rapidly shifting situation meant many places that intended to stay open on Wednesday, were dissolving in-person services by Friday. A handful stayed open, including University Christian Church (UCC). St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, and Ohr Shalom Synagogue. With the ban shrinking down to 10-person gatherings, many buildings have shut their doors for the time since a major wildfire or another catastrophe — or even for heavily religious people, this may be the first time they have had to spend an extended period of time away from their communities, marking a significant tradition to them and possibly augmenting them into thrusting them into another emotional isolation.

“We’ve spent all this time advocating for digital media, and I’ve just written my dissertation on digital media, and yet, I think that something is absolutely lost when you’re not able to be in physical community with each other,” said Rev. Caleb Lines of UCC.

With important religious holidays like Shabat and Easter looming, the grief of the lost holidays like Shabat and Easter may be the first time they have had to cope with the loss of community for many people, the experience of church is about connection. And the height of that, especially in the context of many people socially isolating, that they might need that connection more than ever. But I think that’s actually where we need held leadership to step in and say, “No, this is the right thing to do. This is a Christian thing,” said Colom.

Asbestos exposure in industrial, manufacturing jobs, or military service can have six feet of space between them. Many religious San Diegans, they must go digital to remain at home and ending life-threatening situation. Call 1-866-795-3684 or email cancer@breakinginjurynews.com. $30 billion is set aside for asbestos victims with cancer. Validable settlement monies may not require filing a lawsuit.