Yemeni film takes center stage at San Diego Arab Film Fest

Yemen’s first Oscar submission in decades avoids explaining its contentious political context to unite audiences around shared pain and humor

Kendra Sitton | Editor

The eighth annual San Diego Arab Film Festival kicked off its program with “10 Days Before the Wedding.” The April 5 opening show at the Museum of Photographic Arts sold out and had a waitlist, as audience members clamored to watch the first movie made in Yemen in more than 40 years.

The excitement of U.S. audiences mirrored the huge popularity the film enjoyed while playing in Yemen. The movie, in which a couple faces hurdles in the lead-up to their nuptials, was the first to open commercially in Yemen in over three decades when it began showing in 2018. With no theaters to show the film, two wedding halls in Aden were outfitted with wooden screen panels each day to form makeshift movie theaters. The film’s creators only expected to show the film for 10 days, but due to high demand, it kept showing for six months and sold more than 60,000 tickets. Now, the producer and director are taking the film intended for Yemeni audiences around the world.

Kendra Sitton | Editor

Developer presents plans for Olive Street Park at Uptown Planners Meeting, which does not currently include an AIDS memorial. (Photo by Kendra Sitton)

Push continues for San Diego AIDS Memorial

Uptown Planners approved the creation of Olive Street Park to go forward at its April 2 meeting as the fight continues over whether the site will hold an AIDS memorial. The motion for the park passed 10-3 despite loud opposition from some board members and a neighbor who announced she is suing the city to keep the section of the property she has incorporated into her yard.

The proposed AIDS memorial, which would honor the 8,000 San Diego victims of the AIDS epidemic and give their friends and families a place to pay them respects, was not included in the presentation by the developers of the site. This led some board members to oppose the park entirely because the memorial will likely be included in a second permit that will not need to come before the community planning board for approval.

Member Amie Hayes accused the city of purposefully using the permit process to keep Uptown Planners from having input on the AIDS memorial, which some worry would create foot traffic and crowding in Bankers Hill. She said the city is trying to bifurcate the projects to get around...
“Is it possible that the selling and buying of a home in San Diego could be a rather pleasant experience? YES! With the assistance of the McT Real Estate Group, the answer is yes. My partner bought our North Park house with them years back, and in September when we made the decision to sell that house and get into a different house, we called on them again. They were with us every step of the way to explain fully, honestly, and easily everything that was happening. Although I know we were not, they made us feel as though we were their only clients. That is how generous they were with their time with us in person, working behind the scenes, and always a text or call away. They are good hearted people as well. We are animal lovers and we really appreciate the donations that the group makes to local animal rescues. One of the best decisions we’ve made was to trust their representation of us in this real estate market.”

– K O’Lone

619.736.7003
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Marr wanted an instrument with a design similar to an 18th-century French bass. He liked its look — the elegant-ly cut strings and shoulders. It was also smaller and easier to play. Millard designed it. Marr’s shop, small for furniture, had the equipment to cut the board. Since meeting in 1980, they had hung out and played in bands together. But they had never taken on a project like this.

It took them until 2009 to get started. Marr was spending up to 14 hours a day building furniture and Millard had his own work as a luthier. Then the landlord of the house Millard rented decided to sell it, caus-ing Millard to lose his home and his shop. Both men were also caring for their aging parents.

“You know what happened,” Marr explained, “Life just got in the way. We’d do a lot of work on it for a few months and then set it aside.”

Finding time was one challenge. The bass itself presented many others. It took them a year to build the machine necessary to shape the wood into the form of the instrument. The hard board took hours to bend. “Maybe it’s time to step up and do this,” Marr, 61, agreed. “Let’s do it,” he said.

“Dave had this big board,” Millard, 75, recalled. “When I saw it, the curl in the board, the way it was growing and the way it was wide enough for a bass. I’d been thinking of building one for a while, and I was inspired. It was wide enough for a bass. I’d been thinking of building one for a while, and I was inspired. It was wide enough for a bass.”

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Marr played it. All that work, he remembered thinking. What if it sounded terrible?

Marr leaned into the bass, placed his fingers on the strings and began to play. A clear, reson-ant sound filled the shop. “The sound was very clear with a little edge to it, a clear, round sound,” Marr recalled. “It was ecstatic. Dave nailed it. I was so happy for him.”

They still have to apply another layer of varnish and make a few modifications, but their 10-year effort has come to an end. Marr intends to bring the bass to Cafe Bar Europa where he and Millard play at 6 p.m. the first two Sundays of the month.

“As usual all that done wound down and the barriers I had to overcome, it was a relief to fin-ish it,” Millard said. And then with a laugh, he added, “It’s like having a kid except this was an extremely long gesta-tion period.”

—J.M. Garcia is a freelance writer/photographer in San Diego. He can be reached at j446_garcia@hotmail.com.

SDCNG purchases SDCNN newspapers

Julie Main becomes leading female publisher in San Diego

Kendra Sitton | Editor

In a deal made official on April 1, San Diego Community News Network’s (SDCNN) publisher, Ken Miller, agreed to accept the majority of Mission Times Courier.

Julie Main, the new publisher for San Diego Uptown News, San Diego Downtown News, Mission Times Courier, La Mesa Courier and the now-closed Mission Valley News already publishes three coast-al newspapers in the region. As a woman in the male-dominated media industry, this marks a significant career move.

“It’s a rewarding industry. The most exciting thing about the community newspaper in-dustry is everyone has a story. It’s very exciting to tell those stories and share them with our readers,” Main said. “These people help shape the community.”

“We also try to be transpar-ent and unbiased in our report-age. As a newspaper is immedi-ately and troubling news regionally and from around the world. It is easy to get lost through fact and fiction these days,” she continued. “Not all news has to be bad but sometimes its nice to come home and read about pos-itive things happening in your community and that’s what we do.”

Over the years, control of the newspapers has passed from Main and SDCNN publisher David Mannis to more even broader audience for this publication.”

The merger led to a shuffle in the editors leading each of the newspapers. Albert Fulcher will stay at SDCNN as the editor for Gay San Diego. Jeff Clemenson is moving to SDCNG’s Pacific Beach office to continue leading Mission Times Courier and La Mesa Courier. Newly-hired editor Kendra Sitton is also moving to PB and will continue her work at San Diego Uptown News. In addition, she is now the editor of San Diego Downtown News, which was formerly under the purview of Fulcher.

“The idea of having more regional coverage in the com-munities and ZIP codes we are picking up is exciting. We share a lot of common issues with our coastal communities that will tie in directly with Uptown and Downtown. La Mesa Courier and Mission Times Courier cov-er well established, solid com-munities. It doesn’t get much better than this,” Main said.

—Reach Kendra Sitton at kendra@sdnews.com

Friends tied together by double bass

By J.M. Garcia

Bass player Dave Marr ran a hand over the instrument, stepped back and turned to his friend of 40 years, Dave Millard.

“She said, ‘It’s time to step up and do this.’”

“Let’s do it,” Millard agreed. “Let’s do it.”

Marr, 61, agreed. “Let’s do it.”

It’s the second bass Marr had ever built. The first bass, built a 200 years ago, was built a double bass.

Millard, a musician and a luthier, had been building stringed instruments for more than 30 years. He had never, however, built a double bass.

“Dave had this big board,” Millard, 75, recalled. “When I saw it, the curl in the board, the way it was growing and the way it was wide enough for a bass. I’d been thinking of building one for a while, and I was inspired. It was wide enough for a bass. I’d been thinking of building one for a while, and I was inspired. It was wide enough for a bass.”

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FROM PAGE 1

ARTWALK

Among them is Ruth Fromstein, who creates her art in her Hillcrest home. She is currently working exclusively on abstracts painted on canvas. Fromstein is one of eight featured artists at this year’s ArtWalk. “This is pretty exciting,” Fromstein said in a recent phone interview. “This is a real honor. This was by award of judges who considered artists working in all different mediums.”

This will be Fromstein’s second appearance showing her work at ArtWalk in Little Italy. “I consider myself an emerging artist,” Fromstein said.

Fromstein said that art festival displays are challenging for working artists, even festivals as accessible as Little Italy’s ArtWalk. “Setting up is a real challenge,” Fromstein said. “This is hard work, any way you look at it. You gotta love it to do this.”

Fromstein declared that she has been making art her whole life but made it a full-time gig after raising three children and working earlier jobs in vocational rehabilitation. A Wisconsin native, Fromstein moved to San Diego eight-and-a-half years ago. Prior to focusing on painting abstracts on canvas, Fromstein created jewelry, textiles and painted furniture.

Fromstein’s work can be viewed on display Downtown at Adelman Fine Art and at venues in Kensington and Hillcrest. Her art can be seen online and purchased by email at links on ruthfromstein.com.

“I love it here. I love my neighborhood,” Fromstein said. Fromstein disclosed that she is an avid hiker and backpacker, who derives inspiration for her art from nature. She described her abstract art as intuitive, based on landscapes and nature.

“I would love to have my original displayed in homes,” Fromstein said. “I want to take people on a journey to a happy place. Art can bring so much joy, color and emotion to a viewer.”

Sarah Stieber performed a roller journey to ArtWalk in Little Italy. Stieber spent three weeks in the U.K. and two of those weeks in London with her own art residency. While there, Stieber performed live painting in a local pub and attended art openings. Work she created abroad will be shown in a Chelsea London gallery. This will be Stieber’s fourth year participating in ArtWalk.

Sarah Stieber was in London for an art residency ahead of ArtWalk. (Photo by Anna Maria Fussale)

“Alfred Eisenstaedt: Life and Legacy” is currently working exclusively on abstracts painted on canvas. Fromstein is one of eight featured artists at this year’s ArtWalk. “This is pretty exciting,” Fromstein said in a recent phone interview. “This is a real honor. This was by award of judges who considered artists working in all different mediums.”

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The ‘Living Images’ of Alfred Eisenstaedt at Art Alive 2019

Floral designers to interpret the iconic photographs of Alfred Eisenstaedt at Art Alive 2019: San Diego Museum of Art

By Lucas Justinien Pérez

Trailblazing father of candid photography, Alfred Eisenstaedt (1898-1995) said he preferred carrying his small Leica camera at stomach level as he snapped some of the most recognizable images of the 20th century—dare I say discreetly. Working with almost no equipment, he sat stony face and unassuming as he captured moments like “V-J Day in Times Square,” the famous photo of a jubilantly flirty sailor kissing a semi-compliant nurse.

A large collection of works by the prolific photographer is held at the San Diego Museum of Art (SDMA), where an exhibition highlighting his long career at Life Magazine is on display from April 12-July 14. “Alfred Eisenstaedt: Life and Legacy” opens concurrently with the museum’s blockbuster Art Alive 2019 event that attracts thousands of guests each year with innovative floral interpretations of important art from the museum’s permanent collections.

Sarah Grossman, associate director of Special Events and Corporate Relations at SDMA, noted Eisenstaedt’s work will serve as the “overarching theme” of this year’s event and a handful of floral designers will be using his

photos as inspiration for their creations. This year, the famously monumental rotunda installation will be designed by Flower Art founder, Jennifer McFarlèe, who said she is working from the idea of “flowers frozen in time, just as moments are captured in photographs.”

Legacy Floral Designer Nancy Hagen also chose to interpret an Eisenstaedt photo and gravitated to an image of a Cartier jeweler crafting a sumptuous piece of jewelry at his cluttered bench. Hagen, who comes from a family of engineers, said she liked the photo initially because “he looked like an engineer.” During research, Hagen even discovered her mother had been surreptitiously photographed by Eisenstaedt for Life in the 1940s.

When asked how Hagen would interpret a small 10-by-10-inch black-and-white photograph in flowers — not an easy design problem — she opined “that size is my biggest challenge with this picture, when I do my [design] I like to go big, and I’m having to scale it way, way back.” Hagen added that she does not want to be constrained by a black-and-white color palette and she will use flowers in rich jewel tones that suggest the preciousness of jewelry.

Hagen’s personal connection to the image she selected is just one example of why Eisenstaedt’s photographic style is so accessible and appealing to so many. Just like his images, flowers also evoke powerfully meaningful associations. People use the language of flowers to commemorate, celebrate, and honor the people, places and things that are most important to them. A quote from Eisenstaedt could just as easily be applied to the impermanence of a bloom, as it could to the instantaneousness of a snapshot. “The world

The Art Alive 2018 event (Photo courtesy the San Diego Museum of Art and Brianman Photography)

we live in is a succession of fleeting moments, any one of which might say something significant.”

Published writer, gold medal-winning calligrapher, and accomplished polymath, Lucas Justinien Perez’s passion began as a child in Mexico, took him through 28 countries, and enabled him to study ancient Chinese calligraphy in Taipei — Japanese Nihonga painting in Tokyo — and contemporary art and critical theory in New York City. Lucas has a home in San Diego, California but spends his time working bi-coastally. To find out more about Lucas, please visit lucasperez.org.

Inside San Diego Museum of Art during Art Alive 2018

Ruth Fromstein’s paintings can be viewed at Mission Federal ArtWalk. (Photo courtesy Ruth Fromstein)

“I have had a wonderful experience each year,” Stieber said. She was a featured artist at the 2016 event, and did an art performance piece that year.

Her show at ArtWalk will preview work that will be on display at the Stieber Summer Gallery, running from June 11 through July 30. Her first summertime gallery was last year in Little Italy.

Stieber has a new thematic series in mind, which is still in the development stages. Stieber’s art will be part of a multimedia art project, addressing concerns about what she calls the “rampant depiction of faceless women in contemporary art and culture.” Stieber plans to respond to the seeming “decapitation” in headless imagery with powerful, large-scale portraits focusing on female faces.

Stieber’s art studio is in North Park, where she hosts monthly open studio events. Viewings of her work can be arranged by appointment as well, by emailing sarah@sarah-stieber.com.

Other Uptown artists whose work will be on display include Adrian Arango, Moni Blom, Padgett Massen, Ariadna Suene, Christine Schwimmer, Daniel Bonmarito and Stephanie Clair.

I love it here. I love my neighborhood,” Fromstein said. Fromstein disclosed that she is an avid hiker and backpacker, who derives inspiration for her art from nature. She described her abstract art as intuitive, based on landscapes and nature.

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White supremacy is a genuine global threat — it has inspired terrorist attacks — and entire governing structures — on multiple continents. Can we name it?

By Tracey L. Rogers

It’s time to talk about white supremacy.

White supremacy — the belief that white people are somehow superior to people of other racial backgrounds and should therefore politically, economically, and socially rule non-white people — isn’t going away any time soon.

It’s been deeply woven into the fabric of our culture, systematically and institutionally ingrained into this country’s DNA. It’s at the root of every racial injustice and inequality in the soil of this land and beyond, shaping our nation — and our world — as it stands today.

White supremacy is a disease that’s never been quarantined or contained. It’s as widespread and de-structive as a deadly virus; its extreme displays like the massacre at Christchurch mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, that self-proclaimed white supremacist left behind.

President Trump is quick to exaggerate any alleged threat posed by immigrants or Muslims. But when asked by reporters if he believed that white nationalism was a rising threat, he responded: “I don’t really. I think we have a very small group of people that have serious problems.”

Trump’s dismissive response echoed similarly jarring comments blaming “both sides” for the 2017 white nationalist rally that left one person dead in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The real problem is that the attacks in New Zealand indeed reflect a growing worldwide metastasis of white supremacist terrorism, according to former FBI and Homeland Security officials.

In the United States, domestic terror at the hands of white nationalists is on the rise. The most recent incident involved a U.S. Coast Guard lieutenant, a self-proclaimed white nationalist, who murdered two people in a crowded New York City subway train.

The chemicals used to treat fur are dangerous for our water and land, as ranked among the most damaging to the environment by the World Bank. The chemicals used to treat fur are dangerous for our water and land, as ranked among the most damaging to the environment by the World Bank.

As a provider of extensive services to foster youth throughout Southern California, Warden Family Services applauds this proposed legislation and calls upon our leaders to quickly pass SB 688. Our state’s college students should be focused on their studies, not worried where their next place to sleep will be.

— Teresa Stivers is the CEO of Warden Family Services®

Letters to the editor

We often hear that moving away from fossil fuels will hurt the economy. A recent study by Scripps Oceanography finds that phasing out fossil fuels could save 3.6 million lives per year. This contrasts significantly with this assumption, if we view human lives, health and productivity as part of economic growth. This study concludes that using sustainable energy not only reduces pollution and extreme weather, but greatly benefits human health, and “will pay for itself with those savings.” If we value health, fossil fuel emissions can be viewed as detrimental to us, our children, our grandchildren.

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Divestment Act, recently introduced in the House of Representatives, endorses a fee on carbon to raise our dependence on fossil fuels with a return of those fees as dividends to households. Ask your representatives to endorse this legislation to save lives and help the economy.

Susan Kobara, Carlsbad

I am writing in support of a municipal bill currently in the California Assembly that would solidify our state as a leader against violence associated animal cruelty practices.

AB 44 would ban the sale of fur in the state of California and “will put California fur sales on notice.” It makes sense that we should continue this common sense legislation against cruelty.

More than 1 billion rabbits alone are killed each year in the fur trade. Other victims include minks, foxes, coyotes, and even dogs and cats, whose fur is imperiled. The China vivisection farm is often noted.

Animals used for fur are kept inside in small cages their entire lives or are violently treated in the wild. The dead are skinned by anal or genital electrocution, by being gagged or suffocated to death, or being sliced alive.

The chemical’s used to treat fur are dangerous for our water and land, causing the industry to consistently be called “brown” to those accustomed. The chemicals used to treat fur are dangerous for our water and land, as ranked among the most damaging to the environment by the World Bank.

There is no logical reason or need to need chemical treatments. With hundreds of alternative materials, we need it neither for warmth or fashion. I encourage anyone reading this to write to your Assembly members and Senators and tell them to vote yes on AB 44.

— Jamie Robinson, San Diego
Pilot program boosts outreach to Hillcrest homeless

D3 Update
Chris Ward

Recently, I introduced an initiative to bring much-needed attention to the unsheltered homeless population in Hillcrest, in an effort to heighten the need for greater outreach resources throughout our neighborhoods.

The Connect Hillcrest initiative was a one-month pilot program to provide co-ordinated and concentrated street outreach in partnership with the San Diego Housing Commission, the County of San Diego and a number of service providers. This is a national benchmarking project to address our on-street crisis by employing existing teams of trained service professionals who are empowered to build relationships and move individuals from the streets into a stable housing situation.

Coordinated street outreach requires us to meet people where they are, evaluate their needs, and then proactively and warmly direct them into a stable environment where they can connect with resources that move them on the path toward permanent housing.

Our region needs to embrace a more focused, results-driven approach to homelessness, which prioritizes continuous outreach and successfully connects people to the services they need. This is what we’re trying to accomplish with Connect Hillcrest: a person-first approach to homeless outreach that is consistently improved upon and aligned with best practices. As we are in receipt of a huge gift from the state of California to address homelessness this year, and with my direction, the City Council has allocated millions of dollars to expand outreach, among other programs. It is my hope that the knowledge gained from this program will give local government and service providers the data needed to improve upon current homeless outreach protocols which expand services to other impacted communities across our region.

Launching this program was only possible due to the interest and cooperation of partners like Alpha Project, Veterans Villages of San Diego, PATH, Father Joe’s, and others that already do service the need for greater outreach and intervention services.

This nonprofit all contributed to Connect Hillcrest, providing a wide range of street outreach services. We’re very happy to do even small roles because in the last 30 years, no one allowed them to do anything because of some problems inside the country,” Gamal said.

This resurgence of white nationalism is on the rise, while the once combative white supremacy is rooted in a fear of what activists refer to as its “dismantling” — the stripping away of white supremacist rules, systems, beliefs, and ideologies. That can’t be done without understanding its origins or its fundamental violence — or the fact that ideologies like those in power today have little else to offer working white people.

So even if something happens, it’s better to die while you are younger. However, they had never been full-time actors in the film before. “We were afraid actually that we were going to lose the film,” said Gamal.

The film kicked off this year’s annual Arab Film Festival, which is meant to enhance understanding of the Arab world. The festival has grown in importance since the eighth annual film festival showcasing 31 screenings at two venues – the Museum of Photographic Arts and AMC Mission Valley 20. In a statement, Karama president Larry Christian, who leads the local nonprofit group sponsoring the event, said, “We try to show the breadth and diversity of the region while not shying away from the conflicts and tragedies that affected more and more people.”

The breadth of the characters is also what makes “10 Days Before the Wedding” so effective. As in life, the film is not all tragedy or all comedy; each character experiences a wide range of pain, happiness, excitement, and frustration — all against a backdrop of a city still gutted by years of airstrikes.

—from Kendra Sitton
‘They Promised Her the Moon’

Theater Review
Jean Lowerison

Geraldyn “Jerrie” Cobb knew by the time she was 12 (in 1943) that she wanted to be a pilot and when her military pilot father took her up in his 1936 Waco biplane in Wichita Falls, Texas, the deal was sealed. Fren from then on, flying was all she thought about.

She was the despair of her mother Helena (Lazna Joffrey), who wanted her to do what ladies did then — to go college, join a sorority, get married and have children. Oh, and go to church. But Jerrie would have none of it.

She could almost always be found in pants and a shirt, near, in or sometimes under, a plane. But this monomaniacal young woman almost became the first American woman in space.

The Old Globe Theatre presents the West Coast premiere of her amazing story in Laurel Ollstein’s “They Promised Her the Moon” through May 12 at the White Theatre.

Ollstein’s play brought to the stage after a reading as part of last year’s Powers New Voices Festival is as unusual in form as the story itself is unfamiliar. Ollstein uses an impressionistic approach to location and time, jumping around in much the way Jerrie’s mind does, as she plows ahead toward her goal.

Morgan Hallett plays the spunky tomboy Jerrie with boundless enthusiasm for things aeronautical and little use for the boring, the “girly” and the terrestrial.

She not only got her commercial pilot’s license at 18 but was a certified ground instructor as well. Her supportive dad Harvey (Michael Pemberton) was always on her side.

She applied for training as an astronaut, and some of the testing for that program is depicted here. Dr. Randy Lovelace (committed Matthew Boston), chair of the Special Committee on the Life Sciences for Project Mercury, tested her — mostly, we are led to believe, in an isolation tank that often resulted in visions, anxiety or hallucinations.

The idea was to test the applicant’s limits.

Here she meets Jackie Cochran (cocky but perfect Mary Beth Fisher), longtime friend of Lovelace and a fast谈 talker. She not only snapped up the test applicant’s license but also secured her flying habit by marrying rich. She has some useful advice for the young “little woman” questions. Still, she persists in applying for the space program at NASA. When asked why, she says, “I can dance in the sky. I could never dance on the ground.”

Lovelace out of a job as well. Then NASA scraps its program for more testing, leaving Cochran with a certified ground instructor. And though you can keep an upstart. “Men are useful,” she says, “use them. Then fly right past ’em.” And “Get a sense of humor, kid. That’s more important than a man.”

Jerrie makes it through the test (with flying colors), manages to add women to space program at NASA. When Jerrie asks why, she says, “I can dance in the sky. I could never dance on the ground.”

Her hopes are dashed when the Navy pulls its approval for more testing, leaving Lovelace out of a job as well. Then NASA scraps its program to add women to space flight. When Jerrie complains to Lovelace, he explains it this way: “Sometimes politics makes the truth irrelevant.”

The choice of the White Theatre was a good one for the Globe. It allows easy access to Lovelace, he explains it this way: “Sometimes politics makes the truth irrelevant.”

The choice of the White Theatre was a good one for the Globe. It allows easy access to Lovelace, he explains it this way: “Sometimes politics makes the truth irrelevant.”

Winarski for the minimalist set design and to Dentisa Bliznakova for her simple, time-appropriate costumes.

Director Giovanna Sardelli manages to keep all the balls in the air at the appropriate times in this very fanciful script. Cat Tate Starmer’s lighting makes you want to see what Jerrie sees up there, and Jane Shaw’s sound makes a solid contribution as well.

As time goes on, she becomes better known for her daredevil attitude as well as her ability. She eventually ends up on the cover of Life magazine, which will put her in contact with some seriously annoying reporters with silly “little woman” questions. Still, she persists in applying for the space program at NASA. When asked why, she says, “I can dance in the sky. I could never dance on the ground.”

Her hopes are dashed when the Navy pulls its approval for more testing, leaving Lovelace out of a job as well. Then NASA scraps its program to add women to space flight. When Jerrie complains to Lovelace, he explains it this way: “Sometimes politics makes the truth irrelevant.”

The Old Globe’s Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m., Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 2 and 8 p.m., Sunday at 2 and 7 p.m.

Tickets: 619-234-5623 or theoldglobe.org

Two free community performances:
May 18 at Sweetwater High School, 2900 Highland Ave. in National City.
Lunch at noon, performance at 12:45 p.m.
May 19 at Oceanside Public Library, Civic Center Community Rooms, 330 North Coast Highway, Oceanside.
Lunch at noon, performance at 12:45 p.m.

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Not many plays inspire and infuriate at the same time. This is one. And though you will leave muttering about the power structure (especially if you’re female), the excellent cast, fine direction and sheer importance of the story make “They Promised Her the Moon” a must-see.

— Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at infodame@cox.net.

Matthew Boston as Dr. Randy Lovelace, Morgan Hallett as Jerrie Cobb, and Mary Beth Fisher as Jackie Cochran in “They Promised Her the Moon.” (Photos by Jim Cox)

San Diego Uptown News | April 19 - May 2, 2019 sdnews.com

Celebrate Arbor Day at Civita Park.
FRIDAY, APRIL 26th | 5-7:30 PM

Civita is calling all San Diegans to come outside and celebrate Arbor Day. Join us Friday, April 26th from 5-7:30pm at Civita Park in Mission Valley. Visit civitalive.com for event details and more.

Live Music | Exotic Birds | Petting Zoo | Food Trucks | Jumpy

Civita Park, 7964 Civita Blvd. | civitalive.com

Civita Day

Civita Park, 7964 Civita Blvd.

Civitalife.com

Lunch at noon, performance at 12:45 p.m.

The cast of “They Promised Her the Moon”

The details

Plays through April 7

The Old Globe’s Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park

Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.
Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m.
Saturday at 2 and 8 p.m.
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Local environmental nonprofit featured in documentary series

The latest episode of The Visionaries will premiere on KPBS2

Kendra Sitton | Editor

Local environmental nonprofit Nature and Culture International is being featured in the award-winning public television series “The Visionaries,” with an episode airing on PBS examining the work the conservation organization does in Latin America to save irreplaceable forests, plants and animals found nowhere else in the world.

In a recent phone interview, Nature and Culture’s President and CEO Matt Clark detailed the work of the nonprofit.

“We help to legally designate lands as protected areas. Once we’ve helped legally create a reserve, we help to make sure it is effectively managed by ensuring that there are appropriate management structures, there is available funding for the management, there are local communities who receive training,” Clark said. “All of our work is what we call bottom up, so the work comes from local communities and reflects what they want to do rather than us coming from the outside and going to our vision of what we think should happen.”

He also said the episode would be interesting to a wide range of people.

“I think they [San Diegans] are gonna see some beautiful scenery, but the most interesting in nature will enjoy it. I think what makes it different than a traditional nature program is the cultural aspect. You’re gonna meet people from Ecuador and Peru – get to know them and see what their lives are like. I think that human element is interesting.”

Clark said, “And then the connection to the global issues, so anyone who’s interested in the larger issues of climate change, loss of biodiversity, loss of functioning ecosystems. I think that will resonate with people.”

“The Guardians of the Forest” episode follows two parallel storylines: farmer Doña Omaida’s work in rural Ecuador to preserve her local forest through Nature and Culture International and Carlsbad resident Ivan Gaylor’s journey to found the nonprofit.

Clark said Omaida is a longtime partner of Nature and Culture through her work as the coordinator of an agricultural association near the protected area featured in the episode. In addition, the agricultural association she works for has benefited from Nature and Culture’s water program.

The producer and director of the episode, Jody Santos, said working with Gaylor and others passionate about saving forest ecosystems was her favorite part of creating “Guardians of the Forest.”

“To them, climate change isn’t a headline but a daily reality, and they have invested their lives in doing triage on saving what’s left,” Santos said in a recent email interview.

Santos said the San Diego-based nonprofit was chosen over other organizations that applied to be featured in the series because of how the group operates with a focus on putting people and cultures first when protecting ecosystems.

They don’t protect threatened ecosystems by putting fences around them and telling people to keep out. They work with indigenous communities in key ways, Santos said. “First, they do outreach to these communities, emphasizing the importance of a healthy environment on everything from tourism to farming. Second, they work with communities on creating livelihoods that are less destructive to the forests and waterways — helping people move away from logging and mining, for instance, toward more sustainable practices like ecotourism and sugar cane farms.”

Parts of the episode were filmed in Ecuador and Peru.

According to Santos, at the current rate of deforestation in Peru, all the forest will be gone within 50 years.

“We all depend on nature for things we need – clean water, clean air. I could generate a list of 50 things. The thing I find very salient for a San Diego audience who might think Latin America is a long ways away is that the Amazon forest is big enough that it actually impacts our weather in the United States; it impacts our climate,” Clark said. “Anyone who’s interested or cares about climate change, is concerned about increasingly bad wildfires and the drought and floods, so on and so forth, should care about what happens in the Amazon.”

The 23rd season of “The Visionaries” is hosted by actor Sam Waterston, best known for his roles in “The Newsroom” and “Grace and Frankie.” The 12 half-hour episodes span the globe as the documentary-makers follow the lives of ordinary people tackling some of the most intractable problems the world faces.

“I believe that the central idea of “The Visionaries” – doing what you can about huge, intractable problems – is an idea worth encouraging,” Waterston said in a press release.

San Diego’s KPBS2 is airing “Guardians of the Forest” on San Diego’s KPBS2 is airing “Guardians of the Forest” on KPBS2.

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com
The beloved Babycakes is returning to Hillcrest via an outlet concept inside Fiji Yogurt at the HUB Hillcrest Market. Babycakes co-owner Christopher Stavros told San Diego Uptown News the partnership will materialize sometime in June with a display case stocked with Babycakes’ signature cupcakes and other treats such as brownies, cookies and their famous crème brûlée cheesecake. The shared location will also serve as a pickup point for pre-ordered cakes.

Babycakes formerly operated for several years on nearby Fifth Avenue with a bar and restaurant component attached to it. It left that location a year ago and moved to a space with a larger kitchen in Paradise Hills to focus more on its bakery concept. The company also has an outpost in Imperial Beach. While the return of Babycakes to Uptown is all about the confections, Stavros added there could be other partnerships with local coffee-houses and other businesses on the horizon.

“We’re just being creative for right now. And at some point, we hope to eventually have our own spot again in Hillcrest.” 1010 University Ave., 619-296-4173, www.babycakessandiego.com.

Local chef Nick Nappi of On the Fly Bone Broth & Soup Co., recently donated a chicken, en bone broth and bone-broth soups at the North Park and Pacific Beach farmers markets. Prior to securing slots at the markets, he was catering the products for private clients, which he still does.

Nappi uses locally sourced ingredients and sells the broths and soups in 32-ounce biodegradable containers for $15 and $13, respectively. They are also available in 8-ounce sipping cups for $3 each in addition.

The Patio Express (929 Fort Stockton Drive in Mission Hills) now carries his line. Health gurus and nutritionists say bone broth helps rebuild the immune system, promotes restful sleep, and regenerates skin, hair and nails.

Food and literature unite at an upcoming event in Balboa Park.

The 10th annual Eat.Drink. Read. celebration will take place from 6 to 8:30 p.m., May 2, in Balboa Park’s Air & Space Museum. The event is presented by the San Diego Council on Literacy and brings together our city’s culinary and literature communities to generate funds in support of literacy programs throughout the region.

Participating chefs dole out samples of dishes inspired by their favorite books.

“The chefs love the event. It gives them a chance to be creative and allows them to connect with their favorite authors,” said Jose Cruz, CEO of the council.

About 16 restaurants and culinary businesses are sending their chefs to take part. They include Casa Guadalajara, Waypoint Public, Top of the Market, Solare Ristorante, Peck’s, Urban Tasting and the culinary program of San Diego Continuing Education.

Admission is $75 per person, which includes free run of the museum and all you can eat and drink, including wine and specialty cocktails. Tickets are available at the door or can be purchased in advance through the website, 2001 Pan American Plaza, 619-574-1641, www.literacysandiego.org.

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Chicken galore
A Point Loma rotisserie sizzles into Hillcrest

When South Korean college student Inho Choi took a San Diego vacation several years ago, he ended up buying Natural Style Chicken in Point Loma. The eatery, lauded for its rotisserie birds and secret teriyaki sauce recipe, was established in 1979 and had already changed hands a few times.

“I came here originally to just have a meal,” said Choi, who studied international trade in his homeland.

Now a resident of Mission Valley, the 33-year-old entrepreneur has added a new Hillcrest location to the business.

Situated on a prime, high-traffic corner of University and Fifth avenues, this latest offshoot is the jazzier sibling of the two.

Point Loma is smaller and plainer in design, although it uses a wood-fired oven. Hillcrest, however, greets with a warm-industrial look and whimsical streamers of clouds, unicorns and rainbows dangling over what used to be a sushi bar under previous tenants.

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There are also a dozen or so appetizers unique to Hillcrest.

Sweet chili mushrooms and shrimp toast, for instance, each appetizers unique to Hillcrest.

Choi says he sells about a dozen whole rotisserie birds a day, although the teriyaki chicken plate, featuring pulled chicken meat with a choice of two sides, is the bigger moneymaker.

“I sell about 40 pounds of it a day in Hillcrest, and 300 pounds of it a week in Point Loma,” he said.

Draped judiciously in dark, viscous teriyaki sauce boasting a balanced sweet-tangy flavor, we were surprised at the large amount of meat (white and dark) on the plate, given the meal is priced at only $9. If you want all-white meat, it’s $7 extra. Either way, there wasn’t a dry, tough piece in our pile.

For sides, we chose house-made potato salad sporting micro bits of dill pickle, and a medley of broccoli, carrots and mushrooms quickly stir-fried with a little garlic. Those were on the firm side.

Other side options include refried beans, brown rice, coleslaw and macaroni salad.

Of the more modern, experimental dishes — all reasonably priced — you’ll find kimchi chicken, $6 to $23; combo plates, $9 to $18; sides, 50 cents to $7.

He was right. At a whopping 17% alcohol, the clear liquid, distilled from grains, was smooth and refined tasting.

In addition to happy hour (3 to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday), when beer and wine are discounted by 50%, Choi also offers “soju Sundays” all day. If you buy one bottle, you get the second one for half price.

Just prepare to wash down some chicken with it because as we learned, soju has a sneaky kick.

— Frank Sabatini Jr can be reached at fsabatini@san.rr.com.
Beyond Prison Walls: Out of the Yard script Playwrights Project invites you to join us for our free performance of scripts from out of the Yard playwriting-in-prison program presented in a special collaboration with San Diego State University. This year’s production will also feature a showcase and resources fair of the unique service providers helping to rehabilitate and support the men who are incarcerated at Richard J. Donavan Correctional Facility. The writing will be performed by SDSU student actors in the Experimental Theatre on campus Friday, April 19 at 7 p.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 20. In addition, there will be a Prison Provider Showcase from 5-6:30 p.m. on Saturday.

SUNDAY

EarthFair in Balboa Park

The 30th annual EarthFair in Balboa Park features the largest environmental fair in San Diego. eArt Gallery, Reuse & RePair, Cleaner Car Concourse, adobe Live for the Earth, Wok and Brews, and four stages and more than 60 booths will be on display through April 28. If you’re moving or have plans to move, they’re doing it and you can help to protect and improve our planet, so come on down to San Diego Balboa Park from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SUNDAYS

SUNDAY

Dining Out for Life San Diego

San Diego’s largest outdoor dining fair. The San Diego Powder BBQ and keynote speaker for this year’s event focuses on the world’s “200 plus resident artists.” Attendees will always have the opportunity to make some art of their own to take home with lessons in painting, pottery and more. The event is a fundraiser with proceeds going to support the Spanish Village Art Center’s arts education programs for kids and youth, as well as to bolster its efforts to enhance community art experiences. Tickets are $15 pre-sale or $20 at the door.

TUESDAY

The Old Town Saturday Market

Located on the east side of the Cohn Restaurant, 6789 El Prado. Monday, 6:30-11 p.m. at Dharma Bum Temple (3343 Adams Ave.) Thursdays at 11 a.m.-noon at the集体 Impact Center, 3295 Market St. Free.

TUESDAYS

Mondays

Introduction to Buddhism & Meditation

Join an all-ages introductory class to learn the basic Buddha’s teachings and meditate in a quiet, peaceful setting. Participate in a discussion and silent meditation session. Led by Jeff Zlotnick. Free. 7:30 p.m. at Dharma Bum Temple (3343 Adams Ave.) Thursdays at 11 a.m.-noon at the集体 Impact Center, 3295 Market St.

Tuesdays at the Ken

San Diego’s late-night jazz jam convene every Thursday night at the Kensington Club. Hosted by musicians Ian Baas, Robert Dove and Hugo Suarez. $5. 10-10 p.m. at 4079 Adams Ave.

Fridays

Free Friday Friends

Looking for a co-working space with value-added social events for professionals and local start-ups? The Old Town’s largest open-air market center offers a complimentary way to pass use shared desks and office space. Bring your laptop and check in on social media with #HillcrestMKT to see all the happenings. Free Wi-Fi. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Collective Impact Center, 3295 Market St. Free.

San Diego ArtWalk

Final Friday of each month. This self-guided stroll includes more than 90 participating restaurants, bars, coffee shops and art galleries. ArtWalk features a local artist each month. 5-10 p.m. at the UC San Diego campus.

Sat, June 17, 8 p.m.-10 p.m.

ECO-Easter Eggstravaganza

The Salvation Army Starvation Ray & Junior Corps Community Center will host the 17th annual Easter Eggstravaganza. The fun-filled event features an array of fun and games for everyone: candy bags, prayer offerings, photos with the Easter bunny, prizes and more. Eggstrava- ganza is hosted by Kroc Corps Community Center and is open to all San Diego communities. The event is free to one per person; however, you must be over the age of eight to participate. The event will be held at the Kroc Center Athletic field located at the side of the gymnasium entrance at 6845 University Ave. The event is for toddlers and children up to 11 years old. More information at ad.kroc.org.

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SUNDAYS

Sundays

Hillcrest Farmers Market

About 175 vendors offers a variety of local, organic, homemade products, hand-made arts and crafts and fresh-cut flowers at one of the city’s largest open-air market centers. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Normal Street and University and Lincoln avenues. Free.

May 2

Dining Out for Life San Diego

San Diego’s largest outdoor dining fair. The San Diego Powder BBQ and keynote speaker for this year’s event focuses on the world’s “200 plus resident artists.” Attendees will always have the opportunity to make some art of their own to take home with lessons in painting, pottery and more. The event is a fundraiser with proceeds going to support the Spanish Village Art Center’s arts education programs for kids and youth, as well as to bolster its efforts to enhance community art experiences. Tickets are $15 pre-sale or $20 at the door.

THURSDAY

Black Hat Theatre's California Report

This original sketch comedy will perform April 26 and 27 at 7:30 p.m. at the Women’s Museum of Californi- a. "What’s up, Black Hat?" is a sketch comedy performance that will feature Cookie Brisker, Darrin Jordan, and more. Tickets are $25. To buy tickets, visit blackhattheatre.com. More information at blackhattheatre.com.

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Pete DeCoste of Pete’s Seafood and Sandwich in North Park is flying in more than 200 pounds of soft-shell Ipswich clams from New England for his upcoming clam fest on May 5. The Boston-area transplant holds the event every few months at the eatery, starting at 11 a.m. and until supplies run out. And they always do, he says.

The steamers are touted for their sweet-salty flavor. DeCoste serves them with clam broth and drawn butter, and sells them for $13 a pound, which yields about 15 clams per order. Customers are encouraged to call the restaurant in advance or sign up for email blasts in the event the clam beds back East close unexpectedly, in which case the event will be postponed. “It’s happened a couple of times,” DeCoste said.

3382 30th St., 619-255-8940, bostonpetes.com.

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

Get your fix of Ipswich clams on May 5 at a North Park seafood eatery. (Courtesy of Pete’s Seafood and Sandwich)
FROM PAGE 1

AIDS MEMORIAL

their work to oppose the memorial at the Olive Street Park. Hayes is the author of a MoveOn petition to block the AIDS memorial from the Olive Street Park site. Since it launched in 2017, it has gained 36 signatures.

However, an effort she led to send a letter to city officials demanding a proposed memorial come before the committee for approval failed to pass by one vote while four members chose to abstain. The fight over Olive Street Park in Bankers Hill is just the latest speed bump in the decades-long push to bring an AIDS memorial to San Diego.

The most recent iteration of this effort, led by long-time LGBT activist Nicole Murray Ramirez, AIDS activist Susan Jester and San Diego’s first lady Katherine Stuart Faulconer, who together co-chair the AIDS Memorial Task Force. Their work was bolstered by the sale of the Truax House, the first AIDS hospice in San Diego. Assembly member Todd Gloria spearheaded an effort to tie the proceeds of the real estate sale to the development of Olive Street Park, including an AIDS memorial.

The Olive Street property was donated to the city in 1908 to create a park but the 0.69-acre lot has lain idle for more than a century as it awaits full funding.

According to Jester, the task force was already turned down by five other potential memorial sites, including Balboa Park.

“I believe Olive Street Park is an entirely appropriate place for an AIDS memorial … We wanted to pick a place where someone could come and sit and reflect pray or meditate in honor of loved one,” Jester said.

The task force developed the idea of a quiet park setting for the memorial based on feedback from loved ones of the disease’s victims. Ramirez said he fielded emotional phone calls for years from people who wanted a place to remember someone they had lost in the epidemic.

“We went through the AIDS epidemic. We lost hundreds of friends. We saw people who wouldn’t pick up their children’s ashes; funeral homes wouldn’t take their bodies. There were so many awful things that happened in the AIDS epidemic that people today don’t know about,” Jester said.

One idea mentioned at the Uptown Planners meeting was placing the memorial at the Olive Street Park site is that it is too small to accommodate people from across the county. The opposition has seized on this designation of “regional” as a way to oppose the idea of a gay memorial that could accommodate people from across the county. The opposition has seized on this designation of “regional” as a way to oppose the idea of an AIDS memorial anywhere. This is not the regional memorial — just a beautiful marker with people’s names, the story of AIDS and AIDS organizations,” Ramirez and Jester also said.

Ramirez said Olive Street Park would be a meaningful location because of where the funds for the park came from and because a children’s playground will be next to it. “The Truax House was sacred ground for us,” he said. Ramirez said that hearing children playing closeby would also be a reminder that life goes on.

According to Jester, out of the top 10 largest cities in the U.S., San Diego is the only one without an AIDS memorial.

The empty lot which could eventually hold an AIDS memorial is overrun by weeds.

The 0.69-acre future pocket park in Bankers Hill is currently an empty lot.

(Photos by Kendra Sitton)

The fight over Olive Street Park site is that at less than an acre, it is too small to hold a “regional” memorial that could accommodate people from across the county. The opposition has seized on this designation of “regional” as a way to oppose the memorial on the basis that it conflicts with San Diego’s general plan.

However, the task force is facing pushback on that language. “We never called it a regional memorial. All we wanted was this to be a marker to remember those who’d passed,” Ramirez said. “There can be an AIDS memorial anywhere. This is not the regional memorial — just a beautiful marker with people’s names, the story of AIDS and AIDS organizations.”

Ramirez and Jester also said misinformation is being spread about the park holding huge crowds. They think people are imagining it like the Vietnam Memorial, while it said in reality, the memorial would be much smaller and would not attract huge crowds. Jester said only about 100 people come to the annual World AIDS Day event in Hillcrest.

“It and others just want it [the AIDS memorial] somewhere so people could come and remember… it got so bad that at one of the meetings, one of the [neighbors] stood up there and said ‘I don’t want those ashes flying in the air,’” Ramirez said. “It’s been a very emotional, heartbreaking thing for me.”

More than 8,000 people died from AIDS in San Diego, but Jester and Ramirez contend not all of those names will be included in the memorial because it could open them up to lawsuits.

“A lot of folks who have relatives who’ve died of AIDS don’t necessarily want to be identified as having a gay son or drug addict daughter,” Jester said. “They [the opposition] think there gonna be masses of people there which there are not … I don’t see hundreds of people.”

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

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(Photos by Kendra Sitton)

The fight over Olive Street Park site is that at less than an acre, it is too small to hold a “regional” memorial that could accommodate people from across the county. The opposition has seized on this designation of “regional” as a way to oppose the memorial on the basis that it conflicts with San Diego’s general plan.

However, the task force is facing pushback on that language. “We never called it a regional memorial. All we wanted was this to be a marker to remember those who’d passed,” Ramirez said. “There can be an AIDS memorial anywhere. This is not the regional memorial — just a beautiful marker with people’s names, the story of AIDS and AIDS organizations.”

Ramirez and Jester also said misinformation is being spread about the park holding huge crowds. They think people are imagining it like the Vietnam Memorial, while it said in reality, the memorial would be much smaller and would not attract huge crowds. Jester said only about 100 people come to the annual World AIDS Day event in Hillcrest.

“It and others just want it [the AIDS memorial] somewhere so people could come and remember… it got so bad that at one of the meetings, one of the [neighbors] stood up there and said ‘I don’t want those ashes flying in the air,’” Ramirez said. “It’s been a very emotional, heartbreaking thing for me.”

More than 8,000 people died from AIDS in San Diego, but Jester and Ramirez contend not all of those names will be included in the memorial because it could open them up to lawsuits.

“A lot of folks who have relatives who’ve died of AIDS don’t necessarily want to be identified as having a gay son or drug addict daughter,” Jester said. “They [the opposition] think there gonna be masses of people there which there are not … I don’t see hundreds of people.”

Ramirez said Olive Street Park would be a meaningful location because of where the funds for the park came from and because a children’s playground will be next to it. “The Truax House was sacred ground for us,” he said. Ramirez said that hearing children playing closeby would also be a reminder that life goes on.

According to Jester, out of the top 10 largest cities in the U.S., San Diego is the only one without an AIDS memorial.

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The empty lot which could eventually hold an AIDS memorial is overrun by weeds.

The 0.69-acre future pocket park in Bankers Hill is currently an empty lot.

(Photos by Kendra Sitton)