

Temple Beautiful

It's a far gone lullaby sung many years ago

Sunday, December 2, 2012

Theatre 1839 (Temple Beautiful), 1839 Geary Blvd., San Francisco, CA



February 26, 1930, Photo property of S.F. Library

The former site of the synagogue for Temple Beth Israel, an early Jewish congregation in San Francisco, founded around 1860, which began constructing its fifth building at 1839 Geary in 1905, although its completion was interrupted by the April 1906 earthquake.

Next to the synagogue was the Scottish Rites (Masonic) Temple Building, known as the Alfred Pike Memorial Temple, at 1859 Geary, which dated back to the 19th century.

A remarkable photo exists from right after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, showing a damaged Beth Israel synagogue and the equally damaged Masonic Temple, with an empty lot where the future Fillmore would be built a few years later.

Although there were a number of different addresses on the block, these three buildings were the main structures on the block until the 1980s.(1)

On March 16-17, 1967, the building was used for a Benefit for The Church Of The Good Earth along with the People's Prison Symposium. John Sinclair was one of many speakers.

A brief article in the May 3, 1969 edition of Music Industry trade magazine Billboard notes that Bill Graham sold the Geary Temple next to his old Fillmore Auditorium to Western Addition Youth Group, Inc., a self-help for ghetto teenagers for \$166,000, although another bidder was willing to pay \$175,000.

By that time, Graham had moved from the Fillmore to the Fillmore West, a dozen blocks and a mile and half away. In any case, the Billboard notice shows that Graham owned the Geary Temple, and that accounts for the abrupt absence of any shows at the Geary Temple from 1966 onwards.(2)

Temple Beth Israel was on the move as well, as its Congregation merged with another Congregation, becoming Congregation Beth Israel-Judea in 1969. The Congregation moved to 625 Brotherhood Way in San Francisco, where it remains today.

The Temple at 1839 Geary seems to have been temporarily used for other functions.[1]

"In 1972 the Temple was leased by a generous Polish refugee, Janos Kovak, who quit his job as a Bank of America executive to establish a music hall, art gallery and community center: it went by the name H.O.G. (House of God). I was one of about a dozen who worked to prepare the place, later ran the sound system with the assistance of Prairie Prince, a talented drummer with the Tubes; he also air brushed fine infinite space wall murals in the entry and up the Florentine marble stairs.

We rehearsed, partied and did showcasing of groups including Sylvester of The Cockettes and later on disco fame, his backup singers the Pointer Sisters, the Doobie Brothers (they were just a beer bar band from the Peninsula), Lamb, which later split into Huey Lewis and the News and Elvis Costello's first recording group, some terrific jazz, and others just a blur now. The HOG never opened, although we came close getting the word just hours before opening with Norman Greenbaum, a group called One from a commune in the Upper Haight and the headline: John Lee Hooker featuring Little John Hooker on Hammond Organ. When the police closed us down for lack of permit we talked to Reverend Jones next door about moving the show to his place (The People's Temple); he seemed interested but got cold feet when the police spoke to his people. The old Fillmore next door was then headquarters for the local Black Muslims, their fine bakery on street level, the meeting room upstairs. Hilgard Stenberg ran the stage, we were paid occasionally, the Cockettes hung out, we all saw the possibilities and we got to run a HOG tab up the street at Minnie's Can Do. Seemed a time of transition for all involved. Janos Kovak opened a fine bar on Haight Street shortly afterward of the Temple. "[9]

Although the venue had "festival seating" for the most part, probably different than its synagogue functions, the elegant ceilings and decorations were intact, and it was not only a beautiful building but beautiful sounding as well.(1)



Right next door, however, was the converted Alfred Pike Memorial Scottish Rites Temple, which by this time was the headquarters of Jim Jones's infamous Peoples Temple. Jones and his followers left for Jonestown, Guyana and their tragic mass suicide took place on November 18, 1978. While Theatre 1839 was not directly connected to those events, it did add to the strange mojo of the block.

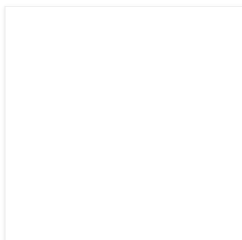
Temple Beautiful

Theatre 1839 did arise as a performance venue, however, known as Temple Beautiful in early 1979 and hosting a number of punk rock shows. The Clash played their first SF performance (2nd US show) there as an underground show advertised purely through graffiti.

Why did the building stop being used for music after about 1980?

New Wave A Go Go

Not sure if this was the name of the venue or they may have just called it "1839 Geary" when the punks took over.



Labels

- A-A (1)
- A-Venues (30)
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- C-Venues (60)
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- F-Venue (2)
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- L-Venues (16)
- M-Venues (34)
- N-Venues (12)
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1839 Geary

Duquette Pavilion

In the late 1980s, while driving down Geary Street in San Francisco, designer Tony Duquette discovered an abandoned and vandalized synagogue. He immediately purchased the building. After thoroughly remodeling and updating the structure (located on Geary near Fillmore where the post office now stands), Tony began creating a new exhibition named the Canticle of the Sun of Saint Francis of Assisi, after the patron saint of San Francisco.



The building itself was historic, and what Tony did with it architecturally was equally historic.



Before restoration



After restoration

When he found the building it was missing all of its windows, and the first order of business was to seal it up beautifully. Using his favorite material, cast resin, he created amazing inverted conch-shell windows in the two towers and replaced the original stained-glass main window with a creation made from Plexiglas, resin, golf balls, sliced plastic drinking glasses, plastic salad servers from Pic 'n Save, and all manner of everyday items, which he found beautiful in their repetition.



click Wolf's tophat!



Are you experienced?...go ahead then, click the orange cupcake!



click on Jerry's other middle finger



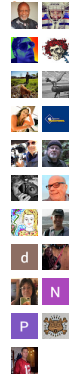
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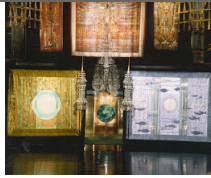
Abonnés (40)



S'abonner

Groove Me

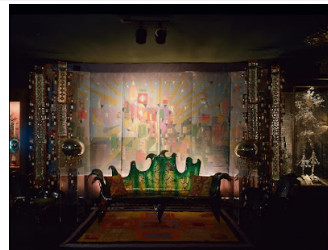




The main floor of the synagogue would be home to the exhibition. Tony and his volunteer workers created beautiful fabric mosaic tapestries representing the teachings of St. Francis.

An 18th century figure of St. Francis was positioned at the center of the old altar, surrounded by a flock of Rajputani clay birds — perched in dead tree branches — to which he preached a sermon. Giant faux malachite urns from an 18th century Austrian palace graced the sides of the stage, and behind those were the amazing 15-foot-tall gold-leaf Baroque trees that Tony had prominently displayed for years in his Los Angeles studio.

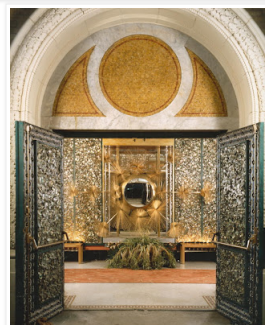
Above all of this was a giant copper sunburst made from the destroyed and discarded pipes of the building's original pipe organ. All around the 90-by-90-foot room (and nearing the top of its 40-foot ceilings) ran a horseshoe balcony. It was on this balcony that Tony positioned his army of 28-foot-tall angels, with the 18-foot-tall Madonna in her pavilion holding court at the back. This entire ensemble was artfully hidden by a theatrical scrim, but when the lighting illuminated them from behind, the tableaux appeared and disappeared, to amazing effect.

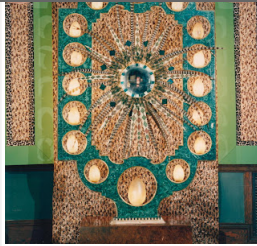


Under the balcony Tony positioned various sculptures, furniture groupings and works of art.

For this celebratory environment Tony asked his friend Herb Alpert to compose the music. Charlton Heston recited a new poem by Ray Bradbury, and the whole place was set to computerized lighting.

In the basement Tony set up several party rooms and various gallery spaces.





The biggest of these galleries held an exhibition of his wife Beegle's paintings. The exhibition, like Tony's other exhibitions, was a brilliant popular success.



Tony Duquette with his goddaughter Liza Minnelli at the Opening of the Duquette Pavilion, April 24, 1987. (5)

A tribute to St. Francis of Assisi

By **ROBERT A. MASULLO**
San Francisco News Service

SAN FRANCISCO — The spiritual nature of the building at 1839 Geary Blvd. is not exactly new. It was a synagogue — the home of Congregation Beth Israel — for more than half a century.

Today it houses a one-of-a-kind tribute to St. Francis of Assisi (c. 1181-1226), the holy man who reformed Christianity 300 years before the Reformation, who was declared a saint by the Roman Catholic Church within two years of his death, and who, to this day, profoundly influenced the spiritual life of millions.

The building, now known as the Duquette Pavilion, is no longer a house of worship. No longer, either, is it owned by a religious denomination. However, a visitor plunked down in the middle of its main hall might think otherwise.

Altars and icons are all about. Imposing angels line the upper walls. Religious-sounding music wafts through the open spaces. To the visitor, it could be a cathedral.

But let him look a little closer, and he will notice that while there are many Christian symbols so are there symbols of Islam, Buddhism, other contemporary faiths and even religious artifacts of ancient civilizations.

The Star of David, an integral part of the building in its original use, fits smoothly into the spiritual mosaic. Like the saint it honors, the spiritual appeal of this exhibit transcends sectarian bounds.

Tony Duquette, who designed the tribute, wouldn't have it any other way. A world-class artist, Duquette describes what he created (with the financial and physical help of hundreds) as a "celebrational environment" — part free-form art; part museum exhibit; part poetry; part music; part theatrical scenic design; part sound-and-light show. More than most art, one must experience it to appreciate it.

A similar tribute, honoring Los Angeles' bicentennial (in 1981), called "Our Lady Queen of the Angels" was designed by Duquette. Parts of it, including eight large angels, have been incorporated into "The Canticle of the Sun of St. Francis of Assisi," as the San Francisco tribute is called.

"The Canticle of the Sun" takes up all of the second floor, occupying the space that had been the synagogue's sanctuary and adjacent halls. The main physical focus of the room is a sunburst (made of pipes left over from the synagogue's organ) and an altar with a statue of St. Francis surrounded by birds (symbolizing one of his fa-

mous sermons to the animals, which he considered brothers and sisters in God's love).

Although one can stay in the second-floor room as long as one wishes, there is a 20-minute presentation that is constantly repeated. During the presentation, lights alternately brighten and dim, highlighting first one feature, then another, then several together, then all together. An incredible speaker system booms out music and sound effects composed and recorded for Duquette by Herb Alpert and Michel Colombier.

For a fraction of the 20 minutes the voice of Charlton Heston is heard reading a poem by Ray Bradbury, which like St. Francis' "Canticle of the Sun," dwells on the presence of love and God (seeing both as one) in the universe.

Regardless of one's faith, or even if one has no faith at all, "The Canticle of the Sun" cannot fail to affect. It is a brilliant, beautiful and unusual labor of love.

"The Canticle of the Sun of St. Francis of Assisi," in the Duquette Pavilion, 1839 Geary Blvd., San Francisco, is open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays. Admission is \$4 general; \$2 students and senior citizens; free for children under 12.

Modesto Bee, August 27, 1988

Unfortunately, after being open only a brief time, the entire building — and all of its contents, including the majority of Tony's personal collections and original works of art — burned February 16, 1989 as the result of an electrical fire. (4)

Art pavilion burns

SAN FRANCISCO — A privately owned art pavilion was badly damaged in a five-alarm fire that burned out of control for more than two hours Thursday night, fire officials said. The Duquette Pavilion of St. Francis at 1839 Geary St. suffered extensive damage in the blaze, which sent flames leaping dozens of feet into the air from the building's top floors, said Fire Chief Fred Postel. There was no dollar estimate on the damage. The adjacent old Peoples Temple, operated during the 70s by the Rev. Jim Jones, suffered extensive water damage but was not burned in the blaze. The pavilion, owned by San Francisco artist Tony Duquette, holds a spectacular collection of art and has been featured in magazines throughout the world, including Time. The fire was contained about 11:30 p.m., but control was not expected until about 1 a.m. There were no immediate reports of injuries, but hundreds of people were evacuated from a sold-out concert by the blues group Neville Brothers at the Fillmore West auditorium, adjacent to the pavilion.

Modesto Bee, February 17, 1989

S.F. FIRE DESTROYS MUSEUM EMPTIES NEARBY CONCERT HALL

A San Francisco museum burned Thursday night, forcing the evacuation of neighbors and thousands of rock fans who were in the nearby Fillmore Auditorium. The fire at the Duquette Pavilion of St. Francis, a converted synagogue at 1839 Geary Blvd., quickly went to five alarms after it was reported at 9:19 p.m. Nearby buildings, including the Fillmore and the old Peoples Temple, were threatened but apparently undamaged. Some 140 firefighters and two dozen engines responded. (2)

The Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989 damaged the Fillmore Auditorium, Temple Beautiful (1839) and the former People's Temple (1859), and all the buildings were damaged by fire. The Fillmore was fully refurbished, but the two other buildings were torn down.



After some time as vacant lots, the 1839 and 1859 Geary addresses are combined as a U.S. Post Office.

Fall 1967 Grateful Dead (rehearsals)

"That fall [of '67] the synagogue next door to the Fillmore closed, and the Dead rented it as a rehearsal hall."⁽⁵⁾

1/12/77 Jerry Garcia Band

1/13/77 Jerry Garcia Band

7/29/77 Jerry Garcia Band

Bob Marley was at the Greek Theater and Willie Nelson was at the Circle Star Theater on this night.

7/30/77 Jerry Garcia Band

8/10/79 Reconstruction (Temple Beautiful)

1.) Arnold, Cory, July 29-30, 1977: Theatre 1839, 1839 Geary Blvd, San Francisco, CA Jerry Garcia Band, 2009-11-18, Lost Live Dead, <http://lostlivedead.blogspot.com/2009/11/july-29-30-1977-theatre-1839-1839-geary.html>

2.) San Jose Mercury News (CA), 1989-02-17.

3.) Arnold, Cory, 1859 Geary Blvd, San Francisco: The Geary Temple 1966-68, Lost Live Dead, 2009-11-17, <http://rockprotopography101.blogspot.com/2009/11/1859-geary-blvd-san-francisco-geary.html>

4.) Goodman, Wendy and Wilkinson, Hulton, 2008-11, <http://newfillmore.wordpress.com/2008/11/06/from-tony-duquette-a-magical-space/>

5.) McNulty, Dennis, Long Strange Trip, pg. 228

Posted by Jerry's Brokendown Palaces at 8:00AM



Labels: T-Venues

30 comments:

Anonymous April 15, 2015 at 8:12AM

In '72 the Temple was leased by a generous Polish refugee who quit his job as a Band of America executive to establish a music hall, art gallery and community center. It went by the name H.O.G. (House of Good). I was one of about a dozen who worked to prepare the place, later ran the sound system with the assistance of Prairie Prince a talented drummer with the Tubes "white punks on dope"; he also air brushed fine infinite space wall murals in entry and up the Florentine marble stairs.

We rehearsed, partied and did showcasing of groups including Sylvester of Cockettes and later on disco fame, his backup singers the Pointer Sisters, the Dobbie Brothers (they were just a bear band from the Peninsula), Lamb which later split into Huey Lewis and the News and Elvis Costello's first recording group, some terrific jazz and others just a blur now. The HOG never opened, although we came close getting the word just hours before opening with Norman Greenbaum "Spirit in the Sky; from Petaluma, a group called One from a commune in the Upper Haight and headliner: John Lee Hooker featuring Little John Hooker on Hammond Organ. When the police closed us down for lack of permit we talked to Rev Jones next door about moving the show to his place (The People's Temple), he seemed interested but got cold feet when the police spoke to his people. The old Fillmore next door then was headquarters for the local Black Muslims, their fine bakery on street level, the meeting room upstairs. Hilgard Sternberg ran the stage, we were paid occasionally, the Cockettes hung out, we all saw the possibilities and we got to run a HOG tab up the street at Minnie's Can Do. Seemed a time of transition for all involved. More info if interested, Dennis in Ohio

Reply

▼ Replies

Mark Greenspun January 28, 2016 at 2:25AM

Dear Dennis, It certainly has been a long time since The House of Good. I'm Sorry but I do not remember you. I was the sound man and booking agent for Janos from the get go until we closed after three years in operation. The operation worked as follows; Gene McCord and I would scour the clubs in town looking for good bands to book. We would ask them if they were interested in playing a "Big" venue, with two other bands. We would guarantee them 15% of the door. The best three shows were 1- The Annual Miss-Deameanor Contest with the Cockettes, 2- The Tubes, in their first show under the name The Tubes (Formerly "The Beans"), and 3-John Lee Hooker.

The complement of people who ran the club were as follows; Janos Kovacs, Frank Chordas, Gene McCord, and Betty (Frank's girlfriend) and me, Mark Greenspun. There were only 8 of us. I do not remember you. Who are you? and. Do you know who I am? I spent every Friday and Saturday Night at the Synagogue for the entire three years we were in operation. You say your name is Dennis, Dennis what? The sound system at the House of Good was completely built by me from scratch. I was a base reflex Altec A7 15" cabinet for lows, a "sweet 16" array for the midrange and a JBL sectoral horn for the high end. I built the sweet 16 cabinets myself. My mixer was an Altec. I had three power amps, one for the A7's one 400 watter for the midrange array and another for the high end sectoral horn. I also often doubled on Follow Spot. I mixed the John Lee Hooker show, The Tubes Show and The John Lee Hooker Show. Another notable show was John Handy and the Tabla player Shankar Gosh. Equalizing the sound system for the Shankar Gosh show was very difficult because Shankar was an audio perfectionist. Please let me know who you are.

You seem to have a lot of facts from the time. I am writing a book about it, and am concerned that I do not remember you. I do not want to leave you out of the book.

Mark
Mark Greenspun
mark@intercoms.net
415-333-4056

Unknown December 6, 2018 at 11:44AM

Wow!!! My name isn't important...
Thank you all for your shares about the history of the Temple. Born and raised in the FILLMORE, 1965 TO Present day.
My brother went to BEN FRANKLYN JR. HIGH SCH. I am 4yrs. younger than he...and in Elementary school: ROOFTOP.
He came home cryin to my mom, that his friend went with temple. Yrs. Later i came to understand what acoutally had happen to his friend. While bringing up my own memories around that tragic time. I was on the Swim Team at HAMILTON REC. CENTER 1975- 1980. I WALKED PASSED LINES OF PEOPLE AT THE TEMPLE EVERYDAY, AFTER SWIM PRACTICE. TRYIN TO CATCH THE BAKERY (MENTION IN ONES REPLY) BEFORE IT CLOSED.
The recent Tribute here in the FILLMORE did the same as well.
Thank you all for yours memories and shares. The posters sound like dreams documentation of r past. History is real! If the "SUNREPORTER" COULD BE ACTIVE TODAY?!!
WOULD BE NICE...AS WELL!!

Reply

Anonymous April 15, 2015 at 9:04AM

This follow up today's earlier comment by me: the generous man who pulled off HOG was Janos Kovack (sp?). I understand he opened a fine bar on Haight Street shortly afterword of the Temple. I first met him on the day I bought a '62 Chevy on the Mendocino Coast and discovered it had carrots growing out of the back bumper; this at Kate Cowen's cabin in Philo where I was staying for a bit while picking grapes in Anderson Valley. Hilgard, myself and an art student named Sandy who had picked me up earlier that year in the midwest while I was hitchhiking back to S.F.; we three ran into Janos in line for the nickel admission to Midnight Movies at the Mitchell Brothers theater on a midnight Saturday. Janos told his friends, "that's the guy who had carrots growing out of the back of his car". The three of became involved with the HOG dream the next day. Those were different times. Dennis in Ohio

Reply

Jerry's Brokendown Palaces April 15, 2015 at 9:55AM

Dennis,
Thank you for filling in that time frame. Feel free to email me at slipnut01@gmail.com.

Reply

Fate Music April 15, 2015 at 6:58 PM

Yes, I love the recollections. Please keep 'em coming!

Reply

Anonymous April 27, 2015 at 2:55 PM

could not believe anyone could be so ignorant - either for me, or what Temple Beaman was all about. I have boxes of the posters that never got distributed, that I have had in storage since then.

Reply

▼ Replies



Unknown December 23, 2016 at 8:29AM

Anonymous .

Would you be willing to part with one of those posters .?

Thanks

Deborah
Missidoru@gmail.com

Reply



Jerry's Brokendown Palaces April 27, 2015 at 3:28 PM

Thanks Anonymous! Any chance you have posters from

Jerry Garcia Band

1/12/77

1/13/77

7/29/77

7/30/77

or Reconstruction 8/10/79?

Please email me at slpnut01@gmail.com

Reply

Anonymous April 28, 2015 at 7:57AM

Again referring to early 70's, I mistakenly recalled Janos Kovacs as Polish; he was, and I hope still is, Hungarian. Also, to leave an impression that disco inspired music was being practiced when we rehearsed Sylvester and the Pointer Sisters - this era predated that thumping fancy posing time; Sylvester worked most diligently on a James Taylor song about fire and rain and his guitarist had just left the Steve Miller band, who in turn had left off the blues entirely for commercial clutter. The Pointer Sisters often came just on their own to work on funky songs like Lambert, Hendricks and Ross's "Cloudburst" and a song they were making up about crossing the Bay Bridge in their old Volvo, they having just recently left their father's church (no secular singing, no dancing) and wow their cool and funky Goodwill throwback clothes that worked on their forms so well; just prior to this they had been the backup voices with Dave Mason at Winterland just across the way. Both those songs mentioned made it to their first album, an uneven collection, but one that showed off their vocal range and wide sensibilities. I followed Anita around like a drooling puppy; the girls paid myself and Hilgard a bottle each for our time (he got Southern Comfort, I a bottle of Johnny Walker). They were hot and were not yet commercial.

If we had known the Dead had practiced there that would have been too much, especially in the days Piggan was still the organ anchor of the outfit.

Again, Dennis in Ohio.

Reply



Jeff Lohmann June 29, 2015 at 6:06 PM

You might find this original poster related to this address interesting:
http://www.ebay.com/itm/1967-Haight-Ashbury-Intercultural-Event-handbill-Black-White-panthers-/111210044259?pt=LH_DefaultDomain_0&hash=item19e4a29b63

Reply



Jerry's Brokendown Palaces June 29, 2015 at 7:00 PM

Jeff, Thank you for that new information. I've added it to the Encyclopedia.

Reply

Mark Greenspun January 28, 2016 at 3:05AM

I spent 5 years at the Synagogue "Temple Beth Israel Judea", "1839 Geary", "The House of Good", "Temple Beautiful", "The Wickett Museum of Exotica" roughly from 1969 til 1974. I lived there as my house for two years (1972 and 1973). I ran a club there called "The House of Good" with Jasnos Kovacs, Eugene McCord, and Frank Chordas in 1969,70 and 71. Other people involved were Frank's girlfriend Betty and their friend Van. Also Jackie Ponewash often helped Gene and I book acts. When I lived there I was living with a gentleman named John Wickett. We called our "Persian Palace", "The Wickett Museum of Exotica". Our neighbor next door was Jim Jones, a preacher who was notorious for phony "faith healings", stealing peoples money and ultimately murdering his congregation. Whenever I spoke with Jim Jones, I could not shake the image of a "Used Car Salesman". I thought he was an idiot and could not understand why the Mayor and Supervisors liked him. He was an utterly phony man. Anyway, our place was a super cool. In 1973 Steve Wonder held a private party at our "House". He had just finished his concert at Winterland, doing "Superstition" and heard about our "Super Cool Party House, 1839 Geary, just two blocks away from Winterland, and had to book it for the after party. That was the best party we ever had there. Or was it the 300 people sex orgy, or the 200 people one? Yes, at "The Wickett Museum of Exotica" we held some of the largest modern day sex orgies, every weekend. But that is a story in and of itself. While the Black Muslim Church was having their meetings on one side of us and Jim Jones's was "preaching" on the other side, we were all naked in the building in the middle having group sex with each other. What a scene it was and this blog is not big enough for the whole story, so I am working on a book. Mark Greenspun
mark@intercoms.net

Reply

Mark Greenspun January 28, 2016 at 3:56AM

Hey, Dennis, I forgot Hilgard. Yes, he was stage manager. Hilgard had a great accent. I think it was Polish, but it was a pleasure hearing him talk. It wasn't the words he used it was the tone and accents in his words that were so intriguing. After we went belly up as "The House of Good", Hilgard became a Cable Car Operator, and later was Supervisor. Janos passed away, Frank Chordas is somewhere in the East Bay, he was a Carpenter. He did all the construction like staging at the HOG. A guy named Paul Rat often helped us with shows. Do you remember him? I have done searches for Gene McCord, but no luck finding him. He had an amazing collection of Classical Music and his apartment on Dolores St. was filled wall to wall with classical records. I was going to try to get a hold of Hilgard Sternberg next. But with Janos gone, a reunion party would not be the same. Janos had a great accent too. His father was filthy rich. He owned Saxe Realty at the time. When our Synagogue on Brotherhood Way, "Temple Judea", absorbed the congregation at 1839 Geary "Beth-Israel", Rabbi Morris de-sanctified the Temple. Janos had a great idea, to make the synagogue a rock concert hall and give Bill Graham a run for his money. His father put up the \$5,000 needed to install panic exit doors and secure a dance permit and building occupancy permit.

We ran shows for 3 years, every Friday and Saturday Night.

We would stay open til 3AM, we served no booze; we had no permit for that. We never made any money. Typical shows would be about 400 to 600 people paying \$2-3 to get in. John Lee, The Tubes, The Cockettes, those shows were around \$10. A typical night with three bands taking 15% each, and proceeds around \$1,000. That left about \$500 for Janos and the rest of us, most of it going to the PG&E bill and Rent. I think we were only paying \$1,250 a month to Temple Beth Israel Judea. Still it left only \$20 to \$30 for each of us. Needless to say the job was mostly "volunteer". The sound system were things I had in my garage at the time. The only thing we splurged on was rental of a follow spot, for the bigger shows. \$60 a night, that was a big expense. I did not have one of those in my closet. I did have a 16 MM film projector and reels of cartoons, laurel and hardy shorts, and Charlie Chaplin comedy routines. I would project these at most of the shows. Dennis, send me a link to your facebook page so I can remember who you are. The only person named Dennis we were intimately connected with at the time was Dennis Perron. Are you Dennis Perron?

And if you are Dennis Perron, how are you buddy?

I first met you when you ran the Big Top and the Island Restaurant.

Mark Greenspun

Reply

Anonymous February 12, 2016 at 10:27AM

Dennis from Ohio: Just saw your posts and reawakened my dusty memory. You were the sound man. I over spoke, you showed me initially how to turn the dials and Prairie Prince was nearby often enough for assist. My abilities were in my ears only. I knew, and know, nothing about sound equipment Dennis McCarthy is my name, I had hair long enough when I began at HOG that when I got it trimmed the hairdresser took off one and a half feet of split ends. Hilgard and I knew each other from Anderson Valley in Mendocino where we both worked with emotionally disturbed children. I worked alot with Frank removing peev seating, painting some of the lower rooms and manual tasks. The times I used the sound you had set up (were you formerly with a big sound company? a McCune or McClure; I'm remember a "M" word, anyway...) it was the Pointer Sisters rehearsals I think, and maybe only that during mid week that I used your equipment. I don't remember a band backing them, maybe it was just a keyboard... Some other mistakes I made in describing HOG were: Huey Lewis was with a group called Clover, not Lamb, both are wussy Marin County names. When it went down with Jim Jones next door I remember standing back from the conversation about possibly moving the venue there and wondering how you, and all of us who were upright, could do all that moving in a matter of hours. John Handy I recall listening to from front center right and get this: years later, early 90's, I was working in Oakland at a art deco hotel, Lake Merritt, when John Handy walked through the kitchen on his way to dining room stage where he was going to play for a really fine black focus group and I mentioned the HOG show decades before and he told me he was visiting India in the 80's walking through street crowd in New Delhi when Shankar Gosh called his name and they got together and spoke warmly of that night at HOG. Another potential recall: when I left S.F. it was with about \$25 and an unclear destination either North or South Tahoe to grab a paying job, had a flat on my trip, bought a recap tire for 12 bucks and slept in my car for about a week before getting work. When I had enough money to pay off my only debt at that time, a water bed of \$15, I stopped in at HOG and there was a really enthusiastic guy who was often there, he had undergone, while I was gone, his first hormone and surgical steps to womanhood, he still had his beard and he wore a see thru net top and was sitting on Janos' desk just happy to show his progress - was this Dennis Perron you mentioned? Also, Hilgard accent, he was from Brazil, his father a world renown geologist, the

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Tim October 18, 2016 at 9:38AM

What about the fantastic two nights of Hot Tuna? Those shows were pretty notable yet I see nothing about them here.

[Reply](#)

Jerry's Brokendown Palaces December 23, 2016 at 9:29AM

Please post what you know about the Hot Tuna shows. I was not aware of them.

[Reply](#)

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ecce homo October 1, 2017 at 8:50AM

The Double Dose album was famously recorded at Temple 1839. It contains (viny) one side of Jorma acoustic opening for his own band then three sides of Tuna electric. There are some standout performances including Sunrise Dance with the Devil and Can't Be Satisfied. Evidently there was a lot of overdubbing of vocals later on, but it one of the best documents from the "Metal Years". The cd release has a set of interviews with three major band members.

Footnote: As a former Jewish synagogue, this might be of interest to others of the faith. There are 613 mitzvot in the Jewish tradition (tarya'g). Lo and Behold 613x3=1839!! Also the year BU where I work was founded! Coincidence? You decide!

[Reply](#)

Anonymous March 21, 2017 at 12:59 PM

5/14/77 - I remember going to see Johnny Winter open for Muddy Waters at Temple Beautiful. The show was broadcast on KSAN, or, at least the Muddy Waters portion. You can hear it the show on youtube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjFBoMBY6I>

[Reply](#)

Blogger July 8, 2017 at 10:23AM

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Blogger August 9, 2017 at 12:05PM

This comment has been removed by a blog administrator.

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Blogger December 2, 2017 at 1:05AM

This comment has been removed by a blog administrator.

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Unknown August 19, 2018 at 9:28AM

I was in the SF music scene in the late 70s and early 80s and remember that when the late "Paul Raif" put on the word-of-mouth Clash show at the Temple, he promoted it as a community benefit — which was the deciding factor in the Clash going along with it. Years later, Strummer said that none of the money went anywhere else but up the promoters' noses.

[Reply](#)

Fate Music February 23, 2019 at 6:52 PM

It was being called the New Wave A Go Go in 1979, per ads and such in the Examiner.

[Reply](#)

Unknown April 7, 2019 at 4:37 PM

I was a housemate of John's (Janos) in 1970-71ish. Four of us in an old house on San Bruno Ave. in Potrero Hill. John and I stayed friends until 1976. I remember him showing up at my house in Oakland with two of the pews from HOG which I had to make room for in my dining room. I also remember a rather awkward live telephone interview on KSAN with him and Bill Graham in 1971(?)

The two most memorable stories I remember from this period were 1) the graphic account of what went on in the cabinet that had held the synagogue's torah scroll (we all considered ourselves sexually and spiritually liberated in those days) and 2) the time Frank was hanging a banner from the roof of the building and a bottle of A-200 crab lice treatment fell from his shirt pocket and crashed through the rear window of the Black Muslim minister's limo parked on the street in front. Good times.

[Reply](#)

Psallfack June 8, 2019 at 11:50AM

Hot Tuna's double dose album was recorded live at theater 1839

[Reply](#)

Carlos & Star October 31, 2020 at 1:35AM

Thanks for this history and great photos. We were allowed to build a new stage and present several shows in 1977 when we called it Theatre 1839. Muddy Waters with John Hammond opening, The Jerry Garcia Band, Hot Tuna featuring Jorma Kaukonen

Posters and other links to the epoch:
<https://www.canetserver.com/concerts/index.htm>

- Carlos & Star

[Reply](#)

MESS December 24, 2020 at 8:45 PM

I was at one of the Hot Tuna Shows - what a great venue... I remember Jack was late and Jorma did a acoustic set while we waited for him, then after he showed up they did the electric set...It was awesome!

[Reply](#)

Unknown January 10, 2021 at 5:37 PM

Jorma just commented on this theater and recording Double Dose last night 1/9/21 during his Quarantine Concert #34 from his Fur Peace Ranch. It's on the Ranch's YouTube channel.

[Reply](#)

Anonymous January 2, 2023 at 11:19AM

I am the Dennis who reported here in mid 2000's about the House of Good and Mark G could not recall me, which I can understand, I was pretty quiet. Anyway: two things: Hilgard Sternberg isn't Polish, but sounds that way when he talks. His father was not a geologist; he was a world's famous geographer and the Amazon River was his specialty; he was a professor at U.C. Berkeley and with his last name I suspect he may have been German prior to South America; maybe that is why Hilgard's accent is so strong. I'm just guessing now.

Anyhow I saw Anita Pointer passed away this past weekend and I revived HOG memory. I tried to e mail Mark G, but it didn't take; I think he was planning to do a book about this time. I'm in Ohio after 30 years in S.F. and Mendocino (Petal) and easily reconnected to HOG life
Dennis McCarthy cdjmcCarthy@earthlink.net

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