



# MARIN ARTS

MAGAZINE

JUL / AUG 2019

## PUSH / PULL / POUR

Nellie King Solomon's  
ZENPOP Paintings

## CFI EDUCATION

The Stories of  
Our Youth

SAUSALITO  
ART FESTIVAL

Dimensions of Art

[marinarts.org](http://marinarts.org)

# artworksdowntown

the place where artists + community connect

## HAVEN'T BEEN TO ART WORKS DOWNTOWN? ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME?

Art Works Downtown  
is celebrating it's  
23rd year as Marin's  
community art center  
— the place where  
art and community  
connect.

Visit us today!



- 2nd Friday Art Walk every month, year 'round
- Provocative and cutting edge exhibitions
- In-house residency program
- Subsidized skills-building classes for artists

- Artist studios
- Arts-based programs and forums for the local community
- Affordable housing
- Free senior art making workshops every month

California

Cultural

District

Downtown San Rafael

Arts District



**1337 Fourth Street, San Rafael, CA 94901**  
**[www.artworksdowntown.org](http://www.artworksdowntown.org)**



FEATURES

**6** **Push / Pull / Pour**  
Nellie King Solomon's  
ZENPOP paintings  
Drew Heitzler

**10** **CFI Education**  
The Stories of Our Youth  
Bruce Burtch

**14** **Dimensions in art**  
Sausalito Art Festival  
Judith M. Wilson

**18** **Distant Realities right here**  
Bente Mirow

**23** **Beneath the Surface**  
Brain Copeland steps on the  
stage  
Judith M. Wilson

**26** **Greener Pastures**  
Daisy Carlson

**30** **Pianist Paul Smith Enjoys  
Creating Music for the  
Community**  
Lily O'Brien

DEPARTMENTS

Contributors ..... 4  
How We Met ..... 29  
Windi and Eric Sneary

Cover photo: Seiji Ishiguro

## CONTRIBUTORS



**Bruce Burtch**, called the “Father of Cause Marketing,” Bruce is an internationally respected cross-

sector partnership and cause marketing expert. For over 40 years, Bruce has provided workshops, training and created partnerships between the for-profit, nonprofit, education and government sectors which ignited their economic and social environmental impact, while focusing on creating a greater good.

**Daisy Carlson** lived and worked in Italy as a leather goods designer for over 20 years, she has since focused her attention on how to address climate change with healthy lifestyle choices. Carlson sees low-carbon adaptation as a design opportunity that is evolving the system to be more attractive, more inclusive and more restorative.



**Noah Griffin** is a former weekly syndicated columnist for the *San Francisco Examiner* and a

winner of the prestigious Eugene Block Award for excellence in journalism. He has been published in the *Boston Globe* and *San Francisco Magazine*. He currently writes a monthly column for the *Marin IJ* and is the Founder of The Cole Porter Society.

**Drew Heitzler** is an artist and filmmaker who has exhibited at Blum & Poe and teaches at California College of the Arts. He lives in Venice California.

**Megan Loretz** graduated from UC Santa Cruz with a B.A. in Film and Digital Media and a minor in psychology. She currently works as the Director of Programs at the Community Media Center of Marin. Recently, Megan won an award at the UN Women’s Film Festival for her feature documentary, *Bridging Emcees*.



**Bente Mirow** has been a professional freelance writer for more than 30 years. Somewhere in time she went

back to school and backed up her profession with a Master’s Degree in creative writing and art history. Most recently, she has built her own publishing platform from where she shares life skills messages: [www.InnerWeather.com](http://www.InnerWeather.com). Locally, she is better known as the Store Manager of RileyStreet Art Supply in San Rafael, where she has roamed for 10 years.



**Lily O’Brien** is a Bay Area writer whose articles have appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Marin Independent*

*Journal*, the *Pacific Sun*, the *San Francisco Classical Voice* and *Strings Magazine*. Passionate about music and the arts, she

has performed as a folk, jazz and classical singer, and currently sings with the Marin Symphony Chorus.

**Mary Rentzel** is a filmmaker based in Sonoma County, CA. She attended New York University and graduated with a BFA in Film in 2013. She is currently a Digital Media Producer at the Community Media Center of Marin.



**Ed Schwartz** began his career in wine promotion at New York’s “21” Club. As his interests in wine grew, he moved

West to be closer to the grapes. Ed has written more than 500 published articles on wine, food and travel. Mostly recently, Ed was the wine editor for *The Nob Hill Gazette*.



**Judith M. Wilson** is a feature writer who enjoys telling a wide variety of stories reflecting life in the North

Bay, from art to agriculture to the mysteries of sparkling wine. She is a regular contributor to *NorthBay Biz*, and her work has appeared in *North Bay Woman* and *Marin Independent Journal's* special sections. She also writes theater reviews for [telli.com](http://telli.com). Previously, she worked as a newspaper reporter and editor in the educational book publishing industry.

# MARIN ARTS

MAGAZINE

## EDITORIAL

### Founder/Editor

Meredith Griffin

meredithgriffin2019@gmail.com

### Publisher

MarinArts

arts@marinarts.org

### Marketing & Development Director

Kathie Gaines

kgaines@marinarts.org

### Editor-At-Large

Noah Griffin

Noah@thecoleportersociety.org

### Editorial Contributors

Lily O'Brien

Bruce Burtch

Daisy Carlson

Noah Griffin

Leslie Lakes

Bente Mirow

Mary Rentzel

Ed Schwartz

Judith M. Wilson

## ART

### Art Director

Phaedra Strecher

Phaedra.Strecher@gmail.com

### Cover Design

Peter Rodgers

## ADVERTISING

arts@marinarts.org



Meredith Griffin, Founder/Editor

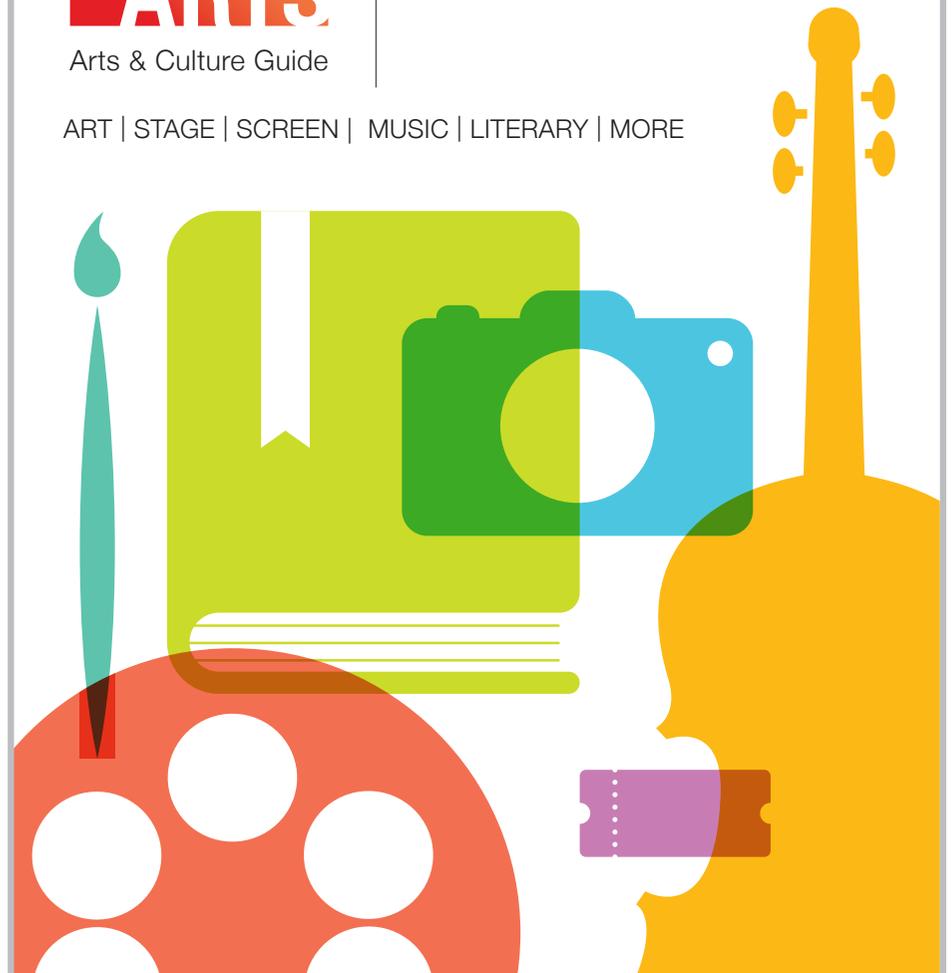
# MARIN ARTS

Arts & Culture Guide

NEW!

## ARTES LATINX

ART | STAGE | SCREEN | MUSIC | LITERARY | MORE



FREE! Join MarinArts today! Visit [marinarts.org](http://marinarts.org)

# Push / Pull / Pour

## Nellie King Solomon's ZENPOP paintings

By Drew Heitzler



**N**ellie King Solomon lives and works in Sausalito. At least she does for now. Los Angeles is calling this daughter of the Bay and her bags are packed. But before she goes, this Sausalito painter and Bolinas Patch-rat (i.e., surfer) is exhibiting her most recent ZENPOP paintings in San Rafael at Art Works Downtown.

The body shifts as the wave lifts. Too much weight on the tail and the energy slides right under. Too much on the nose and she's diving for pearls. Balance is the key. Two more paddles, back arched, legs lifted in a pose impossible to the inexperienced. Now she's moving, sliding with the laminar flow. Push with the arms. Pull the legs under. Pour the weight into the energy of the wave. As the nose lifts over the lip the body relaxes. And falls. Pull it

around and push. Pull it around and push. Gravity pulls. She pushes. The wave energy pours. This is how one rides entropy. This is how the rigid becomes mechanism. A planer tool bisecting the energy of the body and the energy of the orbiting earth. The body directs the fluidity of nature's law. As far as it will go

The structure of fluid is an animating force. Body, earth and ocean all subject to its flow. Our architecture is no match for it. Our human pursuits valid only when the physics of fluid find respect. Why do the roads of the Mayans remain while our freeways pock with holes? Ask the Mayans how they feel about rivers, and oceans, and rain. We may do our best to direct the course of the fluid but ultimately



*Hot Hopes*, 2019, 3' 6" x 7'. Gesso and acrylic on canvas. Photo by John White.

the fluid finds its own way. Even in its plastic state, the force of flow moves. This is the law of the hydrodynamic and this is the central conceit of Nellie King Solomon's ZENPOP paintings.

ZENPOP, a curatorial term developed by curator Marialidia Marcotulli to describe a certain cultural dynamic in today's contemporary art practice, was taken up by Nellie in this series of new abstractions in which paint is poured pushed and pulled. The energy of the fluid directed, manipulated, and surrendered to, in degrees of certainty and restraint. The effect carries the vibe of surf but not the aesthetic. There is more going on here than simply that.

In one group of large scale square canvases, the tell-tale line of architectural rendering emerges from the ground of sealed but otherwise unpainted cotton duck. In a second series of canvases, the flow is left unchecked by the precision of draftsmanship. Here, gravity is left to do its thing, poured pigment directed only by shifts in the angle of the stretched canvas's vertical lean until the properties of the polymer freeze the flow. This juxtaposition of technique tempts the mind to explore the subtleties of action and the choices made. We feel these choices and the questions that preceded them. How much should she insist? How much should she let go? What is the difference between a line pulled with pencil and an edge pushed with paint? Why should one precede the other? Or vice versa.

With these questions in mind, it is interesting to observe that



*In Hot Pursuit*, 2016, 7' x 7'. Acrylic paint, soda ash, crystalina, pencil, and matte medium on canvas. Photo by John White.

these two series of paintings are informed by an earlier body of work from 2016 in which the hand reigns supreme. In these earlier paintings, a vertical line of pigmented acrylic binder is repeated across an expanse of canvas, the stops and wavers of the pulled brush emphasized in each recurring line until relatively straight becomes emphatically ridged and curved. The quirks of the wrist and elbow are indexed and then re-presented here in order to form a hieroglyph of arm energy. This energy is amplified in the later and larger canvases that find their resonance in an epistemology of the hand and arm set against the ontology of the planted foot and the muscled torso in a process that joins the movement of the body

with the effects of the custom-shaped planer tool that surfs the laminar flow of acrylic on canvas. The artist is all in with this work because the scale demands it. The human energy required to manipulate the picture plane and transform the fluid into the plastic is embedded in the surface of this work. The painting becomes a trace of its own making. This is a big formal gesture in an age that has mostly lost its gestures to the banality of the swipe.

There is history in these paintings. In *Reclaiming My Time*, we find the influence of Gutai. In *Tower of Song*, we glimpse Mono-Ha. *Northbound I-80 Three-Story High Gorilla Slowly Deflates on Used Car* boldly flaunts the style of late-60's American abstraction.



*SOS*, 2016, 7' x 7'. Acrylic, soda ash, chrysalina, pencil, and matte medium on canvas. Photo by John White.

Of course any work that so fully embraces process as formal devise will find itself in the company of these seminal movements and the straight faced appropriation of these styles speaks to the contemporary spirit of this work. A spirit in which everything is up for grabs, every style a tool, every gesture ripe for repetition. In this sense the work is narrative, but narrative written as multi-lingual device.

"The medium is the massage" as Marshall McLuhan phrased it, a clever pun on his own "the medium is the message" detoured now by the deconstructive nature of translation. Certainly, style is massaged in this work as much as the paint is pushed, pulled, and

poured until it finds its proper place within the languages of abstraction.

History is not limited in this work to the art historical. A family history is present here as well. Nellie has long assisted her mother, (graphic designer well-known for her graphics and signage at Sea Ranch), with her large scale supergraphics. It should be noted that in a lovely form of role reversal, Nellie's mother here assists by designing the announcement and poster for her daughter's exhibition.

The family is felt, especially in the largest paintings such as *SOS*, *Her Silence*, and *Thanks for the Mammaries*, where a graphic style of bright, hard-edged, uncial

characters dissolve into a freedom of flow. The line of architectural rendering and design works as a kind of structural under-girding in these paintings, lending an insistence of form to the anarchic color, a bit of authority set against the entropy. We learn from our parents whether we like it or not. It seeps in, just as our energy and flow finds its way into our own children's nature.

How to direct that flow is the problem that faces us all. How do we move within the energy of the universe in order to move within the energy of ourselves? Most of all, this is the question that Nellie King Solomon's ZENPOP paintings ask. This is their push, pull, and pour.

---

*Learn more about Nellie at [NellieKingSolomon.com](http://NellieKingSolomon.com).*



*Tarmac*, 2018, 7' x 3' 6". Gesso on canvas. Photo by John White.



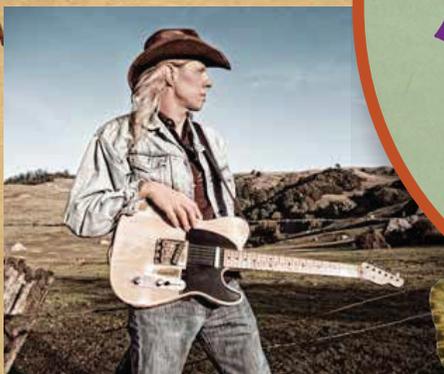
**JULY 13** *New California Soul*

**Midtown Social**



*Afro Cuban* **JULY 20**  
**Ricardo Lemvo & Makina Loca**

27<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
**SUMMER NIGHTS**  
OUTDOORS UNDER THE STARS



**JULY 27** *Americana Blues Rock*

**Danny Click & the Hell Yeahs**



*Latin Big Band* **AUGUST 3**

**Pacific Mambo Orchestra**

LIVE MUSIC \* DINNER \* COCKTAILS \* DANCING \* KIDZONE



**MARINJCC.ORG/SUMMERNIGHTS**

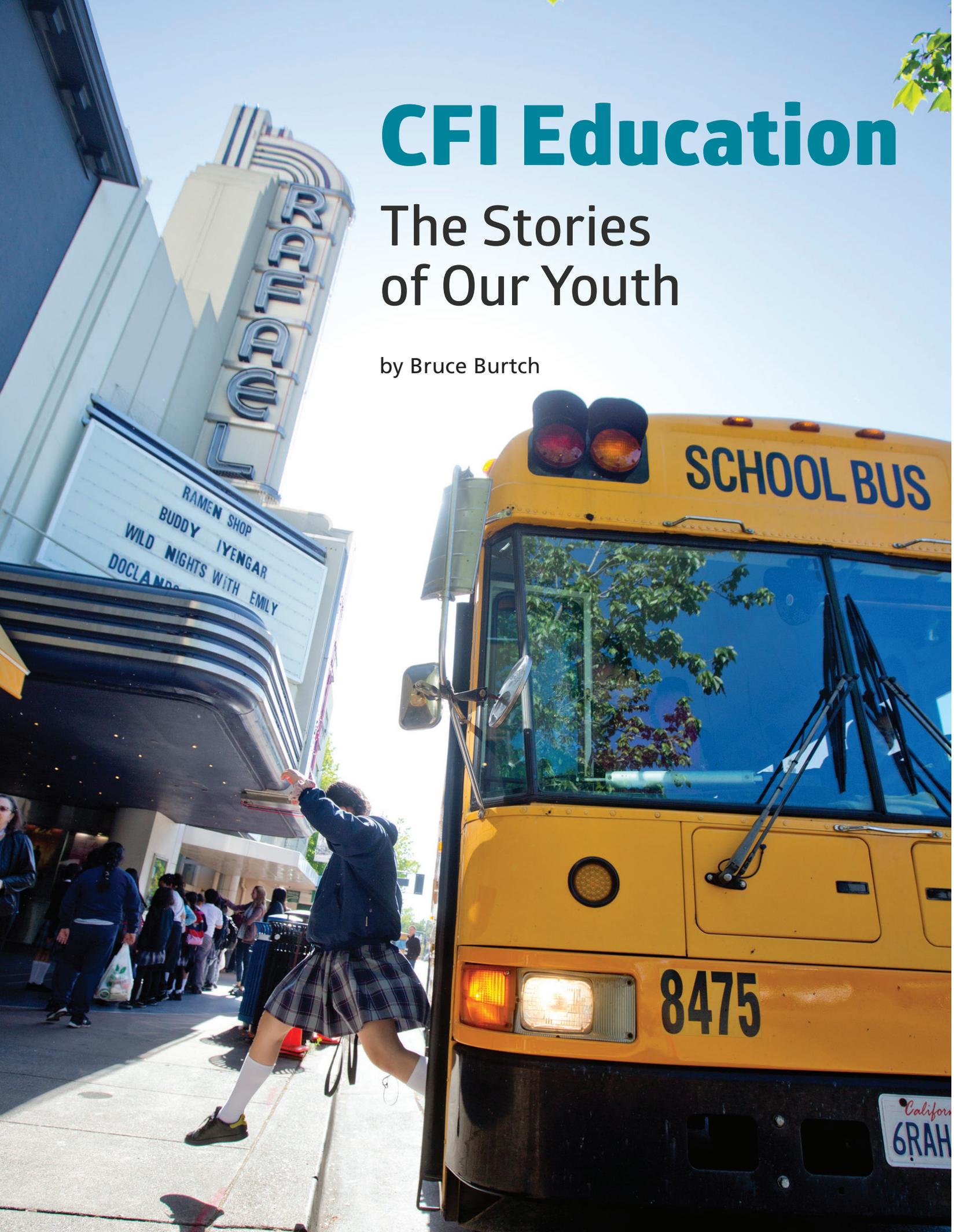
\* KIDS 17 AND UNDER FREE! \* DOORS 6:15 \* CONCERTS 7

THE OSHER MARIN JCC • 200 NORTH SAN PEDRO ROAD, SAN RAFAEL

# CFI Education

## The Stories of Our Youth

by Bruce Burtch



**T**oday's youth are inundated with every conceivable form of media - both a blessing and a curse. Thus, it is increasingly important for youth to understand the influence that media has on them.

CFI Education, the highly-successful educational program of the California Film Institute, has as its mission to use film as an educational resource. Joanne Parsont, director of education, stated, "Everything we do has an underpinning of media literacy. Using film, we show our youth the world they live in, and also themselves." She continued, "It is important that youth understand the media of film and the craft of film, so they can dissect and critically analyze what they're watching."

Since 1986 CFI Education has worked hand-in-hand with approximately 200 Bay Area schools and community groups, reaching as many as 8,000 young people per year and hundreds of educators, adults and families. The two primary focuses of their program are: Exhibition, where youth watch a lot of films and talk about film; and Production, where youth learn how to create film.

One popular program, *My Place/My Story*, is a digital storytelling workshop which provides the opportunity for teens to create their own personal short films. Beginning with understanding the importance of storytelling, they then move into learning basic filmmaking skills. As the program is named, students write and record their personal video narratives about their lives and experiences. The students' films



*My Place My Story by Tommy Lau*

are shown at the Smith Rafael Film Center to family and friends, completing the circle from idea creation to public presentation.

*My Place/My Story* was designed for underserved students who don't have access to media programs or the resources to make media on their own. All CFI Education programs are free, with the exception of our

Summerfilm workshops. Full or partial scholarships are offered to those workshops for underserved youth.

Reaching into underserved communities and schools is a high priority, according to Shakira Refos, Education Outreach Manager. "It is not productive to just bring white filmmakers, white producers, and white



*Vincent Academy Oakland by Tommy Lau*



*EYF by Tommy Lau*

talent into a classroom full of kids of color because they don't see themselves reflected in these people and these films. We try to make sure that the kids see themselves reflected in the people in the films we bring into the classroom. "

Because of its reputation and unique approach, CFI Education has been able to enter into classrooms all across the Bay Area. During the Mill Valley Film Festival and DOCLANDS, CFI's more recent documentary festival, there are many available resources, because filmmakers, actors and others come to the area to screen their films and have conversations.



*My Place My Story by Tommy Lau*

“Our fourth-grade students viewed the film *Kifaru*, a film about the world’s last male northern white rhino,” stated Kayla Haines, a teacher at Vincent Academy in West Oakland. “The students were so excited to meet the director, producer and two rhino caretakers. Following the film, students wrote essays reacting to the film.”

CFI Education is starting to do specialized programs at the Rafael Theater to create a community conversation around different issues. Joanne explained, “We have a Teen Wellness Program that we do in partnership with the Tam Union High School District and their wellness center. This program is really powerful because we have a theater full of teens and their parents talking together about teen wellness. And we reach out to attract partnerships and funding related to that subject. We make ticket sales from that event and we split the proceeds with the nonprofit partner.”



*MVFF The Hate U Give by Tommy Lau*

At the last Mill Valley Film Festival, CFI Education did an event with 19-year-old actor Amandla Stenberg and “*The Hate U Give*”, a film about a young girl who witnesses a close friend of hers get shot by the police. “We screened the film with Amandla and 400 students in the Rafael Theater,” explained Shakira. “Diverse students came from six different schools. It was really powerful because the students really resonated with the story. It was also powerful for the older

white audience that was sitting behind the students to see the reaction to the film and to this talk by these students of color. How empowering it was for the students to be able to get up and engage with Amandla about the story of the film.”

“I first came across CFI during a week-long summer film camp. The people I met were incredibly positive and helpful and I could tell it was an extremely supportive group of people”, stated 18-year old Will Noyce. “That year I submitted a short film of mine to the Mill Valley Film Festival and was shocked by the support I was given by my CFI mentors. It is truly a unique experience to have people so connected that are willing to help you out. ”

The way media is in our culture today, everyone is consuming and many are creating media. And though not every youth needs to be a filmmaker, they do need to analyze and understand the impact of media.

*More information, visit [cfieducation.cafilm.org](http://cfieducation.cafilm.org) and to view a promo reel go to [youtu.be/hYe822EgeXc](https://youtu.be/hYe822EgeXc)*

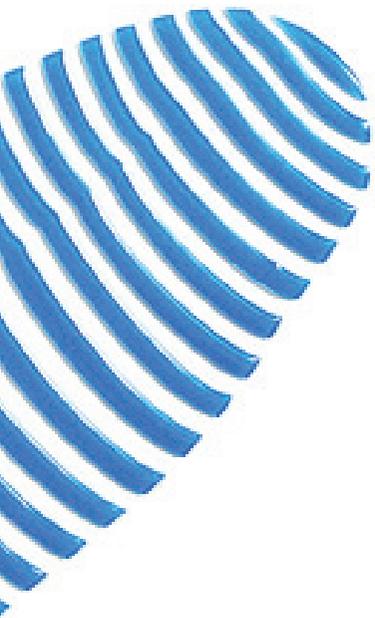


*My Place My Story by Melanie Nichols*



# Dimensions in art

By: Judith M. Wilson



**T**he Sausalito Art Festival has some surprises in store for art lovers. When the gates open on Labor Day weekend, visitors will find a reinvented event, with a sculpture garden at the entrance, high-tech art activities, a novel approach to wine and some festival favorites with a fresh look. It's all part of a creative vision that aims to make the annual event innovative, relevant and fun.

## Appearance

"Visually, it's going to look different," says executive director Louis Briones, a former member of the Board of Trustees of the Sausalito Art Festival Foundation with a background in marketing. He took over leadership of the festival in January 2019, and "We're rebranding it," he reports. That means eye-catching graphics in the lead-up to the event and a festival that will be more artistic, vibrant and artistic-looking.

"It's an art festival, and that's always going to be its roots," says Briones, but music, food and wine are also major components. "It's almost like three festivals

going on under the Sausalito Art Festival umbrella," he explains. At its heart, the festival is a community event and a giant local fundraiser that in some way touches every organization in the city—police and fire departments, schools and the library among them. Nonprofits operate the food booths, and they rent space from the festival, provide the labor and equipment, sell food and keep the profit. For a streamlined look this year, the festival will dispense with the tents of years past in favor of a configuration more like a food pavilion. In addition, the wine bars will have themes that put the focus on specific wines, so, for example, one will offer a taste of Italy, another a Napa Valley wine experience, and one distributor will serve several Rosés. "We're trying to heighten the experience," says Briones. Live music on three stages will also have a common thread each day. Sat., Aug 31, will be a Tribute to Tribute Bands; Sept. 1, will be Super Sunday; and Sept. 2, will be Magical Monday. Among the weekend's performers are Caravanserai, Blue Traveler and ZZ Ward.



## *Blues Traveler*

### **Creativity**

Art, as always, will be at the forefront, and it will be more contemporary than in the past, reflecting the taste of a hip, young jury. As testament to the festival's enduring popularity with artists, applications increased by 17 percent, and to whittle down the number, the jury ranked the artists, who come from 41 states and 12 countries,

and chose 260 in a variety of media. One of the goals is to appeal to a younger crowd, and the number of paintings will increase in response to requests for more two-dimensional art.

In addition, an Art Tech Pavilion will feature virtual and augmented reality exhibits and give festival-goers an opportunity to try out creative technology to produce works

of their own. "It came from the need to attract a younger tech-oriented group to the festival. If you look at trends, there's a lot happening with technology," says Briones. With a desire to add a new dimension to the festival, he began exploring ways to include technology and experiential art and found Skadaddle Media, a Mill Valley company on the cutting edge

of virtual and augmented reality. It will produce and curate Immersive Creative Technology programming. He also approached the Academy of Art University, where students had collaborated to create a traveling virtual reality experience using historic images by American icon Norman Rockwell. They agreed to make it available for the festival, and then XR Marin, a regional training center in Novato that provides training in virtual reality, augmented reality and 360-degree video to high school students and adults, also agreed to participate. Among the tools they'll offer is Tilt Brush by Google, which allows one to paint virtually, without the traditional canvas, brushes and paint. Artists will demonstrate how to use it, and the public will be able to try it as well. "We're expecting the Art Tech Pavilion to be a pretty good draw," says Briones. In yet another innovation, Los Angeles artist Nancy Baker Cahill will place virtual art based on GPS coordinates in the air above the Sausalito Art Festival, and viewers will be able to see it by using an app on their phones. "It's going to be cool," says Briones.

The Sausalito Art Festival is now in its 67th year, and with vision and community spirit as its drivers, it continues to evolve. Fans will find a lot of good reasons to head to the Sausalito waterfront on Labor Day weekend.



*Daphne Covington*



*ZZ Ward*



*Consciousness - the Goal of the Soul*

**distant realities**

# right here

by Bente Mirow

Is there a connection between those gifted in the arts and being spiritually tuned in? Some studies have shown that individuals skilled in the arts can decipher sounds and language recorded as gibberish where others less so equipped towards the arts cannot. This has led to theories of connections between those more inclined towards creative expressions to be or become easier attuned to vibrations beyond our shared accepted reality.

Many believe with no inklings of doubt in what others would call supernatural or soft-brained nonsense, i.e. spirits, past lives, synchronicity, signs, guides, etc.

One such artist is Patricia Windom from Larkspur. Trained as a counselor and helping clients daily across the planet in places like Dubai, South Africa, France, China, Florida or Tennessee, her focus is past lives from where she finds solutions to her clients' problems.

A question like "why do I have cancer?" carries a heavy responsibility to provide an answer for. Windom explains that she gets information from the client's higher self in the form of a bunch of jumbled pictures



*Ecstasy*



Cool Shot

that she somehow has to put together.

Also an artist since a young age, Windom's art has developed gradually over the years from learning the various art forms to mastering oil paint, pastels, drawing, etc., and was until fairly recently a hobby on the side. that provided enjoyment and feelings of accomplishment.

But when her husband of 40 years, William Windom (yes, that William Windom), died 6 years

ago, things started to change a little. Windom's professional work and her art have started to merge, pulling together to a larger picture, so to speak.

Extraordinarily good at what she does, it appears, she describes herself as someone who knows a little bit about a lot of things, but is a master of none, which she thinks is why she can do what she does.

Like she says, "I will not be Rembrandt, but what people can get from what I give as an artist is the benefit of all those years counseling and being a spiritual medium."

She now feels compelled to execute metaphysical paintings. Those paintings start with a theme and a title. She then asks: "what is the visual of this concept?" and images will occur to her, not unlike the way they do during her counseling work.

Consider these:

*Karma – the Journey to Freedom*

*Illusion - the Nature of Reality*

*Consciousness - The Goal of the Soul,*

*Choice – the Rule of the Universe.*

Windom's path to the metaphysical connection was as unusual as both her general path, her approach and her goals.

A dancer both on and off Broadway in her youth, she came to know many famous people. At the age of 20 she accidentally met someone 15 years her elder and world famous, who soon proceeded to propose to her. She had hesitations and declined,

but nevertheless fell madly in love with this man and spent a couple of years as his girl friend. Neither a short nor an easy story, he moved on and married someone equally as famous as he, while Windom's love endured even after marrying someone else herself. He died only a few years later, and Windom was devastated. Soon Windom found herself in a car accident, in which she both broke her neck and had a near death experience. She wanted to cross over, but was sent back with the message that this old lover of hers would be teaching her what she is in this life to do. Windom says he helps her with her clients.

The art she seems to execute with ease, a clear vision driving the brush on her surface – never just a bland old canvas, but always in some way unique. She tries to break barriers and make people see and think.

Should you chose one of her pieces for your living room, you would most likely never finish looking at. Her paintings are beyond stories and narratives, beyond suggestions of something mystical, but painted pictures of layers and layers of meaning and spiritual processing. *Karma* literally has you interact with the procession of the lives

***The art she seems to execute with ease, a clear vision driving the brush on her surface – never just a bland old canvas, but always in some way unique. She tries to break barriers and make people see and think.***

of someone who goes from a lower state to a higher through five life times. *Illusion of Reality*, a long and narrow canvas, illustrates that both the natural world and the man-made world are illusions, something created by us on a daily basis, and with a magician waving a cloth between the two realities. It is spellbinding. You stand there, you have questions, and you want to find people who want to talk about these things.

Windom's paintings are the antidote to the meadow with the cows above the fireplace. If you are looking for conversation starters, you will get what you bargained for.

But for others, it is the painting in the private part of the house that quietly reminds them of what they think to be true.

Whether we all have psychic abilities or some are more prone to them than others, and whether underlying activities and practices enhances and promote the possibility or not - we may still not know for a while. What we do know is that Marin County calls many flavorful, talented and spiritually inclined people.

It leaves me pondering, as humble and unassuming as Windom is, who never talks about what she does, just how little we can even begin to imagine the lives of the people we just crossed in the street. Consensus reality is the bare minimum of what we all can agree on as "real," but what each of us find to be real outside of those parameters ought to humble all of us to learn of - rather than judge or assume - that ours is more real than theirs, as is so common.

Perhaps we can even heal a little on our shared physical plane.

A Windom painting may have the power to stir someone into a new level of thinking about "reality." And that is exactly what Windom wants.



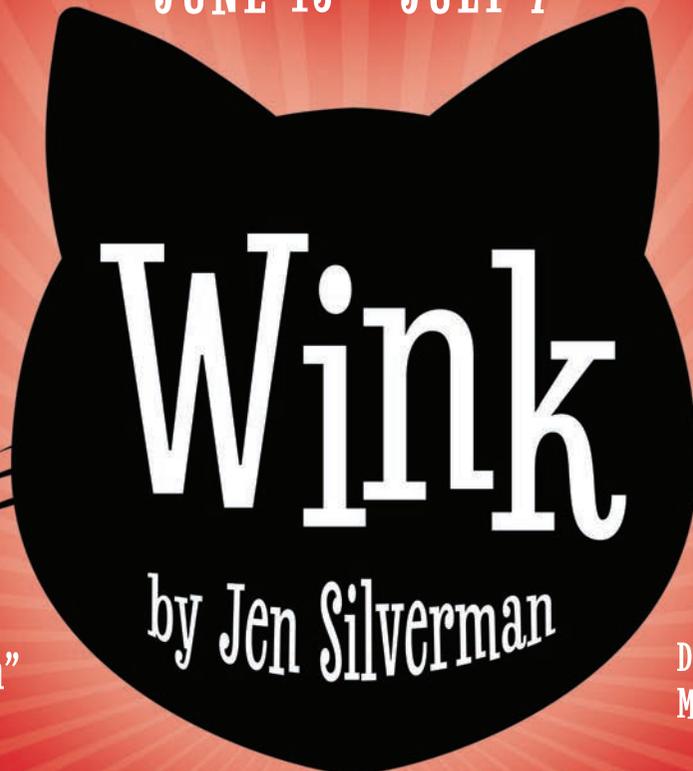
*Illusion - the Nature of Reality*

JUNE 13 - JULY 7

“Silverman’s work is funny, form-breaking and feminist”

— AMERICAN THEATRE

WORLD PREMIERE



“An emerging talent to be reckoned with”

— LOS ANGELES TIMES

Directed by Mike Donahue



MARIN THEATRE COMPANY

MARINTHEATRE.ORG | 397 MILLER AVE, MILL VALLEY | 415.388.5208

A Certified Green Business



24 Bellam Blvd  
San Rafael, CA 94901  
415-454-1983

[www.bellamstorage.com](http://www.bellamstorage.com)

Award Winning Self Storage  
Best Value  
Best Quality  
Visit Our Store  
Come by for a Tour

Boxes & Packing Supplies  
Best Selection  
Best Service  
Order by Phone or Online  
Ask About Free Delivery



# Beneath the Surface

by Judith M. Wilson

**W**hen Brian Copeland steps onto the stage at the Marin Center in August, he'll have a purpose. He loves to make people laugh, but underlying the comedy is a more serious intent. His show with Charlie Varon is *The Great American Sh\*t Show*, and it's political, so it's designed to prod people to consider the issues. "It's not about changing anyone's mind," he says. "I'm

trying to get people to think about things."

As an actor, comedian, radio talk-show host, playwright and author, Copeland is mindful as well as versatile. His first one-man show, in 2004, was *Not a Genuine Black Man*, and in it, he shares his experiences growing up in San Leandro as one of the rare African Americans residents, when it was one of the most

racist cities in the country. It generates laughs, but is also serious and heartfelt, and while his memories are personal, the show attracts a variety of people. Among them: African Americans who identify with his story, white people who want to understand racism and individuals considered different in their own communities—perhaps Jews or Latinos—who



photo by Susan Rutberg



Brian Copeland with Krypto.  
Photo by Carolyn Copeland  
McKinney

experienced similar incidents. He took the show to Los Angeles and then across the country, and it attracted unexpected attention, leading to his being invited to speak during the national Fair Housing conference in Washington, DC, during the Obama administration.

Although Copeland appears to effortlessly weave contemporary issues into his comedy routines, his career started primarily with laughs. When Tommy T, who had been his CYO baseball coach, opened Tommy T's Comedy Club, Copeland inquired about an open mic night. He was 18 and naïve, but had a fake ID, and when Tommy asked him to fill in for a performer who was unable to make a gig, he said

yes. "The audience laughed, and I was hooked," he recalls. Next, he began doing opening acts for big-name celebrities. "Smokey Robinson is the most fun I've had in show business," he says. Among the high points was touring with Robinson and Gladys Knight and performing at Constitution Hall. He was excited and nervous, and he'd bought a new shirt but discovered it needed cufflinks. He explained the problem to Robinson, who lent him a pair with diamonds. "I'm standing in Constitution Hall. It works, and they're laughing, and I'm wearing Smokey's cufflinks," he says. And he remembers thinking, "This is surreal."

Copeland stopped touring with other acts in 2004 to concentrate on *Not a Genuine Black Man*, and other projects followed its success. One that he finds especially meaningful is *The Waiting Period*, a play about depression. He suffers bouts of debilitating depression as a result of PTSD stemming from traumatic experiences in his youth, and sometimes he finds it difficult to even get out of bed. Performing and his dog, however, motivate him to keep going, and *The Waiting Period* is a way to help others. "The reason I do it is to encourage other people to come forward," he says, pointing out that the stigma attached to depression prevents people who are struggling to admit it. The silence forces them to internalize it, often until it's too late. He does two free shows a month at The Marsh in San Francisco, and

he's heard stories from people who've sought help after seeing it. "That's what makes it worthwhile," he says.

Copeland's newest play is *Grandma and Me*, and it's also personal. "My mother died when I was 14, and my grandmother raised five of us in the 1980s," he explains. Then he was a single parent to his own three children. It opens in the fall at The Marsh, a 100-seat theater on Valencia Street, where all his shows, which are in collaboration with David Ford, start. Meanwhile, he's getting ready for *The Great American Sh\*t Show*. "Charlie and I call it our accidental hit," he says, explaining that it started when he did a 15-minute monolog as a favor for a friend. Charlie was in the audience laughing, and they decided to expand it into a full show, with just three weeks to prepare. It got a standing ovation at the opening, and they've done it more than a dozen times since, always selling out. Their plan is to develop several pieces they can alternate, so people can see the show more than once. Campaigning for the 2020 election is already underway, so they'll have lots of fodder. And with wit and wisdom, Copeland is sure to make the most of it.



photo by Phyllis Christopher

# Greener Pastures

by Daisy Carlson

I revisit the opening of John Steinbeck's book, *East of Eden* about once a year, to reaffirm all that I know and love about nature in California. "*East of Eden*," turns out to be just south of San Francisco, high atop a ridge of the Gabilan Mountain Range in Monterey and San Benito County. This year without turning a page, Steinbeck's poetic account came to life on a visit to a conservation ranch project in May. After turning off the highway we wound our way through rolling pastures, vibrant with native blooms that I imagine inspired Steinbeck to write "I remember my childhood names for grasses and secret flowers. I remember what trees and season smelled like." The twenty-five-minute drive up to the ranch had views of California's central coast as poetically narrative now as they were then. The Gabilan Cattle Ranch sits on top of a ridge overlooking the Salinas Valley and as Steinbeck described are "light gay mountains full of sun and loveliness and a kind of invitation, so that you wanted to climb into their warm foothills almost as you want to climb into the lap of a beloved mother."

John Steinbeck opened his novel, "*East of Eden*," with these very pastures in mind. Pastures that are punctuated with wise old oaks that are keeping watch over human progress, and here they are not disappointed. A cordial redwing blackbird came to greet us at the top of the hill, just outside the gates of the Gabilan Cattle Company homestead and escorted us thru to the historic barns. I step out of the car and the air is filled with the smell of sunshine on warm hills.

Back in 2008, The Reeves-Baldocchi-Boyle family, who have had this ranch for four generations, began a partnership with The Nature Conservancy and later Point Blue Conservation Science. Together, over the last 13 years, they have studied, regenerated and documented exciting changes to this expansive 11,000-acre ranch. Pastures are now teeming with a diversity of life resembling what I imagine is close to the original splendor that Steinbeck loved and wrote about so eloquently. The hillsides of purple Lupin, sunshine yellow Mules Ears, and pink Mallow flowers are restored and

restorative on so many levels. The plants are so alive here that I wonder to myself if the Owl's Clover evolved to have all those faces so that it could enjoy a 360-degree view of these beautiful meadows. Evolution has had a lot of time to adapt and come along, so why not a clover that can see. In the past one hundred years, meadows like these have often lost some of their evolutionary balance that comes with equal parts beauty and function. Human activities and industrialized farming practices have interrupted balanced systems that have evolved over millions of years. Nature's intelligence has been interrupted and biodiversity has dwindled and soils have been degraded by overgrazing and industrial farming practices. The youthful exuberance of human intelligence that did not have a 360-degree view on the millions of years that it took to evolve these systems made some brusque, and often very damaging decisions.

Pastures can support a tremendous amount of crucial biodiversity and have a mighty potential to absorb and store

significant amounts of carbon dioxide in the prairie grasses deep root and microbial systems. Overgrazing depletes biodiversity both above and below the ground and destroys carbon-rich soils. It has taken time for humans to understand the negative impacts of this. Cattle, on the other hand, have always been more than happy to move on to greener pastures. They know that the most nutrition in the grass is found only in the juicy top fifty percent where it tastes good. They naturally just nibble the top and leave the rest as they move across the land. Cattle 'migrating' the way the ancient herds did and leaving pastures to rest is part of a balanced carbon cycle. The cloven hooves of the herds break up the earth's crust and press the seeds to an optimal depth for regrowth, add a bit of manure and voila, you have set your pasture to grow new grasses and sustain themselves without nitrogen fertilizers that strip the roots and cause a toxic runoff. These pasture soils can store up to five times more carbon dioxide than the plants on the surface. Rotational grazing practices emulate the migration cycles of the ancient herds of elk and buffalo that once roamed these wild lands and begins to bring the land and animal relationship back into balance.

The Gabilan Ranch rotates their cattle onto fresh pasture, before they are overgrazed, which allows the grasses to continue to provide rich habitat while restoring the earth's natural carbon cycle. This, in turn, strengthens the grasslands ability to grow back without disturbing the deep root system and makes the soil

more drought tolerant. With rotational grazing practices, the cattle are eating more nutritious food and are less prone to disease, and the roots stay long and strong and full of sequestered carbon dioxide. The grass readily grows back in about forty days. When overgrazed pastures cannot recover and the carbon storage capacity is compromised by the shortened root structures and diminished microbial systems characteristic of overgrazed pastures. Why is that so important? Up to thirty percent of the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere could be stored in healthy pastures and soil. The longer and stronger those roots are the more carbon can be stored in them and their microbial communities, which also allows the soil to hold more water. For every one percent of additional carbon dioxide in the soil, you retain about ten percent more water, that is significant in drought-prone areas like California. Healthy soils are crucial to climate restoration and carbon sequestration as well as to our capacity to produce nutritious food and provide habitat.

Industrial farming and ranching have disturbed this natural balance and the result is a carbon-intensive ranching cycle that produces a lot of greenhouse gases and beef that has half of the nutritional value that it had a century ago. These industrial farming systems are so unhealthy that all the animals require antibiotics, and hormones as well as nitrogen fertilized grains that have severely damaged ecosystems. Choosing grass-fed beef that comes from local producers, will not only taste

better and be more nutritious it is considered a viable method to sequester excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Industrially farmed meat, on the other hand, has a carbon footprint of about a tank of gas for every six ounces, talk about a guilty pleasure. Choosing local grass-fed meats are considered healthier for you and the land because they reduce your exposure to antibiotics, hormones, and unhealthy fertilizers.

At the Gabilan Ranch and also at Stemple Creek Ranch in Marin, the full majesty of California's spectacular biodiversity has returned through their application of conservation ranching practices and rotational grazing. These intergenerational family ranchers are providing an important legacy by partnering with organizations like The Nature Conservancy, Point Blue Conservation Science and MALT (Marin Agricultural Land Trust). The generations of families left to steward these large ranches are producing food, stewarding habitats and facilitating significant carbon sequestration to protect us from the ravages of climate change.

The co-benefits to the rancher, land, birds, plants, insects, and beast are incredible. This form of regenerative ranching protects the essential "microbiome" of the soil that is packed with carbon-rich beneficial bacteria and mycelium. Pollinators buzzing about the wild array of spectral colors and blooms also benefit. Local coyotes can now live at peace with the cattle herds. They are often found among the grazing herds as the cattle

flush out small prey that coyotes prefer. Local coyotes benefit the grazing livestock by running off the transient coyotes that might otherwise endanger the herd. Bobcats and Mountain Lions have also struck a balance as they are not a threat when smaller prey is more abundant. Restored lands like these allow scientists to witness nature's tendency toward balance and coexistence as a benefit. We have lost many of those benefits in modern farming practices that prefer to tame nature rather than coexist with her and understand her evolutionary intelligence. Farmers have often been taught to battle with things that have now been found to be very beneficial to our health and the very systems that can improve our farming economics if managed correctly.

There is a new, not to be missed film, *The Biggest Little Farm*, directed by John Chester. This film follows John and his wife Molly Chester over eight years as they restored a 200-acre farm forty miles north of Los Angeles. Their commitment to using natural systems to regenerate soil and restore balance to farming practices was repeatedly challenged. After what is characteristic of a great narrative arc their farm has become resilient to climate change and is healthier and more abundant.

Information on healthy soils has often been muddied by industrial land use practices. Organizations like Point Blue Conservation Science with their sustaining working lands initiative has brought new life to the public's interest in soils and their capacity to store carbon

dioxide and revitalize biodiversity for healthier pastures. Climate-smart ranching has a vast array of co-benefits only one of which is healthy soils. With over half of California's land being privately owned and much of that for agricultural use, the science behind these co-benefits is essential to support the many communities of people and other species dependent on that land. Clarifying these co-benefits will help farmers understand and integrate conservation practices for mutual benefits to them and the planet.

To build this working knowledge, partnerships have been made with scientists, farmers, ranchers, and policymakers to study and share information on soil management. These partnerships build a future for working lands that can rise to the challenges of restorative practices including enhanced carbon sequestration which is a top priority for the global health of all systems. Our society's homework assignment is to reduce our carbon emissions to 80 % below 1990 levels by 2050, to keep atmospheric warming below 2 degrees Centigrade. A healthy atmosphere needs healthy soil and a robust carbon cycle is high up on the menu of adaptation strategies to achieve that goal. Climate-smart conservation can have a wide array of co-benefits including making agricultural land more resilient to the climate challenges that lay ahead. State funding has been made available to farmers interested in conservation farming practices. Organizations like Point Blue Conservation Science have been helping these

farmers collect and share data to meet the grant requirements. California's Climate program gathers the funds to pay for these grants from California Industries who are charged for their carbon pollution.

CoolHive.com is also helping to restore soils with carbon offset projects that have a cascade of benefits for biodiversity and economic development. Did you know that the average American household emits 20-30 tons of Carbon Dioxide a year? We can sequester that amount into greener pasture projects. Many verified carbon offsets projects cost only \$15 per ton. That is a deal when you consider that an expansive report from NATURE in 2018 estimated that each ton of excess Carbon Dioxide left in the atmosphere will do more than \$417 of damage to infrastructure and economies globally. We currently have a trillion excess tons out there. The carbon footprint of three average round trip flights in the US emit 10 tons of carbon dioxide directly into the atmosphere? The average automobile emits 5 tons of carbon dioxide. We want to balance that carbon debt lingering in the atmosphere with healthy pasture projects that can sustain and produce healthier food and more biodiversity. Our goal at Cool Hive is to use nature and soil to sequester the carbon of 10,000 households by Christmas. Projects that protect populations from the ravages of climate change and drought.

---

To find out more about how you can help us sequester carbon dioxide emissions with greener pastures visit <https://fourpastures.com/> or <https://coolhive.com/>.

# How We Met

## Never say never

Windi and Eric Snearly

I should know because I used to. "I am never going to meet 'the one', a nice guy." "I will never fall in love" "I will never get married again." "I would never move for a guy." I will never give my heart up again."

Maybe it was the universe's way of telling me there are biggest forces at play. Or maybe it was those times I prayed to my lovely grandmother, no longer with us but who helped raised me and knows my heart inside and out, and asked for someone like her to come into my life and provide that missing piece. Maybe it was just meant to be. Whatever it was, I no longer begin sentences with "I never..."

Our story began when I moved to San Francisco from Southern California. We had met at work (it's not always bad) and worked together on a few projects, but something was different and exciting when we met for drinks to catch up. I was nervous after not dating for awhile, but the magic was there. We talked for hours, shared life stories, dreams, and a passion for living life to the fullest. Being from the Bay Area, Eric was excited to share the beauty of Northern California with me, along with his many hobbies and history with Windi in her new home. We quickly bonded over shared perspectives and a deep love of music and wine.

One night in a cafe, after only weeks of dating, we made a pinky promise- yes, a pinky promise at 40 something years old, to commit our lives together. We

moved into Eric's SF flat to start our new journey and many firsts together. Eric took me on my first motorcycle ride and I think I may have even opened my eyes.! Much to my surprise, I took Eric to his first spa appointment, which quickly became a new hobby. And of course we got to be truly in love for the first time. We continued to grow our family of fur babies, currently a rescue Bernese Mountain dog and a sassy Himalayan cat. After many trips North for golf, bike rides, and warmer weather, we decided to move to Marin, which started another fantastic chapter for us. We bought the perfect home to allow for our family and friends to visit, and brought us closer to this gorgeous backdrop, delicious food and wine, music and cultural events, hiking, biking, spas, and opportunities to support amazing charitable organizations in the area. All of this was made better by our love for each other.

One night on the drive back from a relaxing weekend in Bodega Bay, we decided to stop in Nick's Cove for a casual dinner. Our fun and lively server suggested we should check out the boat house for one last glass of wine and the sunset. He was absolutely right - it was breathtaking! As it was later and getting cold, we happen to be the only people there. As we gazed onto the water and heard the sound of music from the jukebox and the crackle from the fireplace, Eric knelt down on his knee and reminisced on our life and love for each other. He asked the best question EVER, "Will you marry



me?" Absolutely stunned and excited, I quickly said yes!

Our wedding was perfect - an engagement party that disguised the real deal! Our dear friend was running a fabulous restaurant in downtown San Rafael, and loved the idea of a surprise wedding. We invited 80 of our closest friends and family gathered to celebrate our engagement with us. Once everyone arrived, we toasted them for being there and remarked how important there were in our joint life together. With that, we shared we were getting married... right then and there! There were screams of happiness, bets being paid off, and lots of tears as we hosted an amazing party with vows overseen by another dear friend. Of course the best part was officially becoming WE, Windi & Eric, in front of our family and friends.

We're happy to say on June 14th, we will be celebrating 5 years of marriage. To this day, we still debate who loves who more. I know he wins, but don't tell him I said that. Favorite song: Fade Into You by Mazzy Star



# Pianist Paul Smith Enjoys Creating Music for the Community

by Lily O'Brien



**F**or more than 40 years, pianist Paul Smith has been steadily enriching Marin County (and beyond) with music in a multiplicity of methods, styles and venues. He was a fulltime faculty member at College of Marin (COM) for more than 35 years, the music director of the Mountain Play for 27 years, has performed as a soloist with the Marin Symphony, and has been the piano accompanist for many notable choirs and soloists. And he does all of this very quietly—and humbly. One of his newest collaborations is with Marin Shakespeare Company, which is putting on their first-ever musical, *Spamalot*, with Smith as the musical director. Performances begin at the end of July.

“I was amazed at the level of talent that showed up at the auditions for *Spamalot*,” said Smith as we chatted at a cafe in Novato. “These people could sing, and they could dance, and they could also read Shakespeare well. I was very impressed with the turnout.”

As musical director, Smith oversees the entire musical side of the play, which includes working with the singers, playing piano, and conducting a small orchestra. “We have a great cast and it’s going to be a very good production,” said Smith. “It’s a zany Monty Python show but it’s got a heart and it really goes somewhere—there is something very comforting about this show.”

Smith was born in Fort Worth, Texas and grew up in a “very cultured, intellectual, urban environment.” He began playing

piano at age three, and in high school he discovered his knack for conducting musicals. At age 17, he decided to pursue music professionally, and went to London to study at the Royal College of Music. He followed that up with a master’s degree at Dominican College in San Rafael, and decided to stay in Marin.

“What I wanted to do was the standard piano repertoire, modern music, and then find these interesting overlooked composers and moments in music,” said Smith, “which is what I still do.” Although he competed in and won a number of national and international piano competitions, he came to realize what a difficult like that might be. So when he was offered a fulltime faculty position at College of Marin (COM), he took it, explaining that working for a community college resonated with his philosophy—what he called the European model, which focuses more on serving your community. “I think it’s honorable. You do music in your community, and I like to think it’s at a high standard,” said Smith. “I’m proud to have taught at the College of Marin. It’s a unique institution, and we have turned out students that went on to do good things in the world.”

Currently an emeritus faculty member at COM, Smith continues to present free concerts throughout Marin as the artistic director of the Music from Marin Chamber Players, which he founded. He is also the artistic director of Contemporary Opera Marin, (which he also founded around 20 years ago), and fondly calls “my funny little opera

company.” They have performed at venues throughout Marin as well as in London, where they have premiered works by many European and female British composers. He recently wrote his own short opera for them, “Aurora,” about a flying saucer crash in Texas in 1897, based on newspaper stories about UFO sightings, to be performed at various venues in Marin in June.

Smith currently divides his time between San Rafael and Gulfport, Florida, and is busier than ever on both coasts. He still does recitals, is a piano accompanist for various groups, including the Marin Symphony Chorus and Marin Oratorio, he directs musicals, and will be touring his opera company in London. Next year he is planning to present a Beethoven program locally, as well as in Texas, Florida and London, that will include obscure compositions. It will be “Beethoven you’ve never heard or versions of known Beethoven you’ve never heard,” said Smith, including a concerto for piano and string quartet, and chamber music versions of some of the great symphonies.

Smith is enjoying a more flexible schedule, which allows him to be more of a “musical citizen of the world” and travel to and perform in other places. But most importantly, he is still passionate about what he does. “I still try to do music that is exciting,” said Smith. “I’m doing things that are important to me, and that I think there is an audience for. I’m doing what I want to do, and I am having a good time.”

Labor Day  
Weekend

# Join Us At The Bay Area's Biggest Celebration of Artistry

The Sausalito Art Festival brings world-class art, music and wine together on the Sausalito waterfront for a Festival like none other. Experience 260 fine artists from around the world and three days of live music on two stages. Enjoy beverages from some of the best wine and spirits makers in the country, and for the first time at the Festival, check out the intersection of art and technology at our Art Tech Pavilion.

## Sausalito **ART** Festival

Tickets at [SausalitoArtFestival.org](http://SausalitoArtFestival.org)

