

OVERVIEW

Fall / Winter 2023 - ISSUE 66



The Artistry Among Us

Creators in Franklin Hills

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Alison Wallace



"One does not have to be a visual artist to utilize creative potential. Creativity can be an act of living, a way of life, and a formula for doing the right thing."
- Noah Purifoy

I am of the opinion that a life surrounded by artists is the best type of life to live. It is a primary reason I continue to live in Los Angeles, where ideas and talent are valued.

Living in Franklin Hills is a privilege. Since moving here, discovering and getting to know so many residents involved with creative endeavors has been a joy. I am grateful to call many of them my friends.

Talking with others comes naturally to me. Creating does not. Creating great art requires

copious amounts of talent, discipline and passion. The process is often a solitary and sometimes painful endeavor.

Yet, even with limited talent, we can apply creativity to everyday life. As Noah Purifoy writes in the quote above, living creatively can serve as the backdrop for doing the right thing and opening yourself up to new possibilities and opportunities.

Our cover artist, Shepard Fairey, personifies this thinking. Fairey often takes the *mural* high ground through his art. He frequently creates and donates artwork in order to promote awareness and show support for a multitude of causes. He also enjoys a good (or even bad) play on words, so that pun's for you, Shepard.

I am deeply appreciative of the neighbors that shared their time and talents to put this issue together. Selfishly, I enjoyed hearing their perspectives, discovering more about their worlds and expanding my own. From learning about The Proust Questionnaire from the Lesleys, to peeking behind the garage doors of nearby artists, to watching career newsperson Scott Altus distill decades of Hollywood creative experiences into one coherent and succinct article, I found myself once again humbled by the scope of talent that lives right down the street.

I hope you enjoy reading these articles as much as my wonderful co-editors Karen and Jessica and I did curating and editing them. Cheers!



About the Cover Artist Shepard Fairey

by Alison Wallace

Shepard Fairey, one of the best known and most influential street artists of our time, lives amongst us in Franklin Hills. His art shifts between the realms of fine, commercial, street and political. Fairey's work is included in the collections at The Smithsonian; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Museum of Modern Art in New York City; the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.; the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond; and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Those who spend time with Shepard find him to be incredibly smart, funny and entertaining. He and his amazing wife, Amanda, have an impressive tolerance for their neighbors' seasonal décor and holiday cookie contests.

We are grateful for their generosity in sharing his artwork for the cover of this publication.

**Illustration courtesy of Shepard Fairey/Obeygiant.com*



SAMMYE COWAN-COWIE

In addition, Fairey is known for his OBEY clothing line, along with activist and humanitarian concerns.



SHEPARD FAIREY AT WORK ON THE LOCAL "MAKE ART NOT WAR" MURAL BY BALLER ART WARE

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About The Overview

The Overview is a semi-annual publication created and distributed by volunteer residents, neighbors, friends, and supporters of the Franklin Hills Residents Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

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Bridging Hearts and Community

by James Longoretta

Nestled amidst the tree-lined avenues of Los Feliz's Franklin Hills stands an architectural gem that not only spans the physical gap between two sides but also bridges the hearts of the community surrounding it. The Shakespeare Bridge, an elegant relic of another era, is more than just a concrete structure; it's a symbol of neighborly pride and unity.

Built in 1926, the Shakespeare Bridge owes its name to the Elizabethan-style architecture that graces its design. It was the brainchild of a visionary, civil engineer J.C. Wright, who sought to create a bridge that not only connected the neighborhood but also elevated its aesthetic appeal.

Over the decades, the Shakespeare Bridge has played a role far beyond its utilitarian function. It's become a central hub where neighbors converge, stories are shared, photos are taken and a sense of belonging is fostered. It earned its place on the National Register of Historic Places on April 17th, 1974, and its preservation is a testament to the pride that the community takes in its history.

Throughout the year, the bridge serves as a backdrop for various community events and gatherings. The FHRA has been decorating

the bridge for seasonal holidays since 1998. The summer brings rainbow flags for Pride, Juneteenth flags to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved people in the U.S., American flags for Memorial Day, Flag Day, and the Fourth of July, then fall harvest, Halloween, and the winter holidays.

In an era where divisiveness can often dominate the headlines, the Shakespeare Bridge stands as a symbol of unity. When the Pride flags were repeatedly vandalized this past June, neighbors and friends donated time, money and resources to keep the flags flying.

The preservation of the Shakespeare Bridge is not just a matter of maintaining a historic structure; it's about safeguarding the heart and soul of a neighborhood. It's a tribute to the visionaries who built it, the generations who have cherished it, and the residents who continue to make it a symbol of neighborly pride.

As long as this elegant structure spans across the gully, it will continue to bridge the hearts of those who call the Franklin Hills home.



JUNE ON THE BRIDGE

JESSICA LUEBKE



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FHRA's Annual Spring Fling and Block Parties: A Celebration of Community and Giving

by Rick LaRocca

Each year the FHRA hosts two much-anticipated events: the Spring Fling and Annual Meeting, and the Halloween Block Party. We invite all our wonderful neighbors to join us for a day of festivities, fun, and philanthropy. These aren't just parties; they're opportunities to strengthen our neighborhood bonds and contribute to our caring community.

What to Expect:

The Spring Fling and Block Party are held once in the Spring and once in Autumn. Here's a sneak peek of what's in store:

Delicious Food: Satisfy your taste buds with a variety of treats donated by the FHRA and local vendors.

Live Music: Tap your feet to the beats of talented local musicians and get ready to get your groove on to some great tunes!

Games and Activities: Bring the whole family for an array of activities for all ages. From face painting and bounce house fun for the littles, to a wine grotto for the adults, it's a day of non-stop entertainment.

Community Showcase: Learn about the history of the Franklin Hills, as well as current initiatives. With visits from local police, fire, and representatives, get timely information on emergency preparedness and neighborhood updates.



FRANKLINHILLS.ORG

Chance to give back: Our events always include an opportunity to donate to the Los Feliz Bridge Housing or other important causes.

In the Spirit of Giving:

The Franklin Hills Residents Association is not just about having a good time, it's about making a positive impact in our community.

(continued on page 13)

About the FHRA

Mission Statement: The FHRA promotes a sense of community by bringing neighbors together to help create a safe and vibrant neighborhood for all!

Purpose: This Association is organized and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This Association is a nonprofit public benefit corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person. It is organized under the Nonprofit Public Benefit Law for public purposes.

Objective: The specific purpose of this Association is to improve the community and the quality of life and promote the common good and general welfare of the people in the Franklin Hills neighborhood.



VOLUNTEERS SONNY AND TIMMY HELPING TO SUPERVISE THE BOUNCE HOUSE

📷: DAVID McDONALD

CRAFTS TABLE AT THE HALLOWEEN BLOCK PARTY

📷: RICK LARocca

Senon Williams on Creativity

by "The Michaels"

A Los Angeles native, Senon Williams was raised in the Miracle Mile district, and has been a Franklin Hills resident since 1997.

He is a visual artist, and a founding member and bassist for the internationally acclaimed band Dengue Fever. Founded in 2001, they combine Cambodian psychedelic rock music from the 60s and 70s with influences from each individual member's musical and cultural experiences.

Senon was creatively inclined from a very early age, initially expressing himself through drumming.

"It was just basically about having something to beat on. I loved the feeling of hitting this instrument and creating sound. It was very much an emotional outlet at that age in my life and continues to be."

"I don't think I performed live until I was about 16. My first gig was at Al's Bar, which was a legendary dive downtown. The funny thing is that I played a mic'd power drill. And someone else played power saw. We backed up a poet. So, my first performance wasn't really music, it was more like a performance art piece or noise." He has always been immersed in art and has evolved greatly since then. Senon began working seriously in visual art in 2016.

"Most of my friends are musicians or visual artists. I

always made art, but I never really focused on it because I was always busy with the band making records. I always knew that there was gonna be a serious shift in my life."

"When I create my paintings, I create them so anybody can look at them, and hopefully feel something, or at least question something or create a genesis of some new thought that they hadn't had before looking at my work. I think the simple act of reading or viewing art is creative. Everyone is creative but I think to create something yourself is a practice."

For Senon, creativity is also a family affair, something he weaves into his home life as well.

"I personally believe the greatest gift you can give your child is happiness, and experience. Part of my happiness is playing music and part of the experience is him [son Cypress] experiencing me playing music."

And Senon's future aspirations?

"Something on a large scale, public art, like something in a metro station or the side of a building."

Dengue Fever's new album, *Ting Mong*, was released in September 2023 and is available on all major streaming platforms. Large portions of the album and many of their hits over the years were recorded or mixed in Senon's home recording studio on Camero Ave in Franklin Hills. When not creating art, Senon can be found throwing neighborhood parties and co-hosting Camero Avenue's annual 4th of July Block Party, manning a mean smoker grill.

You can explore more at www.senonwilliams.com and denguefevermusic.com

Neighborhood Contacts

City of LA Contacts	
City Services	
	📞 311
	✉️ 311@lacity.org
Hours M-F	7am-7pm
Hours Sat - Sun	8:30 am-4:45 pm
Animal Services	📞 (888) 452-7381
Dead Animal Pickup (Sanitation)	extension 2
Lost Animals	extension 2
Barking Dogs	extension 3
Building & Safety Violations	📞 (213) 473-3231
Parking Enforcement (DOT)	📞 (213) 485-4184
Council District 4	
	📞 (213) 473-7004
Councilmember Nithya Raman (CD4)	✉️ contactCD4@lacity.org
	📞 (213) 473-2311
Field Deputy	📞 (213) 645 7721
Jennifer Hull	✉️ jennifer.hull@lacity.org
Graffiti Removal	📞 311
Homeless Services	📞 211
LA County Info Line	📞 211
Mayor Karen Bass, City of Los Angeles	
Mayor Helpdesk	✉️ mayor.helpdesk@lacity.org
Central Area Representative	📞 311
Serapia Kim	✉️ serapia.kim@lacity.org
Neighborhood Prosecutor	📞 (213) 978-2230 or (323) 561-3403
Gabrielle Taylor	✉️ gabrielle.taylor@lacity.org

Utilities	
Dig Alert (call before digging)	📞 811
LADWP	📞 1-800-DIAL-DWP (1-800-342-5397)
SoCalGas (inc. leak reporting)	📞 1-800-427-2200
Sanitation	
Trash Bin Replacement	📞 (800) 773-2489x1
Bulky Item Removal	📞 (800) 773-2489x1

Community Contacts	
FHRA	📞 (323) 908-6078 ✉️ FHRA@franklinhills.org
LAUSD	
LAUSD School Police	📞 (213) 625-6631
Marshall High School - Main#	📞 (323) 671-1400
King Middle School - Main#	📞 (323) 644-6700
Los Feliz Public Library	📞 (323) 913-4710
Lycée International de Los Angeles (LILA)	📞 (323) 665-4526 ✉️ losfeliz@lilaschool.com
Prospect Studios	
Janet Campus, Production Services	📞 (323) 671-4022
Prospect Studio Security Shift Leader	📞 (323) 203-5201
David Ortiz	📞 (323) 671-5973
Security Operations Program Manager	

Emergency Services	
LAFD	
Fire Department: Emergency	📞 911
Non-Emergency	📞 (213) 485-6185
Fire Station 35: 1601 Hillhurst	📞 (213) 485-6235
Fire Station 56: 2759 Rowena	📞 (213) 485-6256
Poison Control	📞 (800) 222-1222
LAPD	
Police Department, Emergency	📞 911
Police Department, Northeast Division	📞 (323) 561-3211
	📞 (213) 793-0763
Sr. Lead Officer Jose Ramirez	✉️ 39570@lapd.online
	📞 (213) 793-0762
Sr. Lead Officer Antonio Hernandez	✉️ 39878@lapd.online
	📞 (877) ASK-LAPD or (877) 275-5273
Non-Emergency	📞 (323) 561-3335
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Art Store Creatives

by Steve Meek

At the base of the Franklin Hills on Tracy Street, *Baller Hardware* has a long history of supporting the arts, and it's staffed with talented creatives.

Artist Carol Ann Blanding celebrated 24 years at Baller in October. She spent part of her childhood at the top of Franklin Avenue. Carol moved to the Hawaii with her family in 1976, and perhaps that's when the "magic" began. With the Hawaiian islands as a backdrop, fueled by the antics and inspiration of her growing children, Carol created characters in the form of monkeys, lizards, frogs, and skeletons. Almost any of her paintings could inspire an animated cartoon.

Upon returning to the mainland, she served as the art store manager for Baller while continuing to paint. Her fun, whimsical characters made up of colorful dots on canvas were featured at the Los Angeles Contemporary Museum of Art in 2004, and Carol has been singled out as an emerging artist in *Art Business News* and *Art World Magazine*.

"My paintings are happy. I like to make people smile," Carol said. She has exhibited at the Glaxa Gallery, Bacchus Gallery, Vida, and The Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery to name a few. To view Carol's work, visit FineArtAmerica.com and search *Carol Ann Blanding*.

Co-worker and fellow artist, Shannon Hurley, is also a songwriter and musician gaining traction in Hollywood. Shannon collaborates with trance DJs and has been championed by major industry heavyweights Armin Van Buuren and Paul Oakenfold.

She writes and produces songs under her own name, as well as Lovers & Poets, a chill pop project à la Air, Morcheeba, or Zero 7, with her husband and bass player Ben Eisen. Their songs have been placed on *The Young and the Restless*, *90210*,



BEN EISEN & SHANNON HURLEY



CAROL BLANDING

Scorpion, and *American Idol*. Shannon is working on a music video to accompany her newly-released solo single "Empty World" featuring guitarist Fuzzbee Morse (who has worked with Sting, Bono, Lou Reed) and Phil Jones who played drums on Tom Petty's *Full Moon Fever*.

With regard to the neighborhood, Shannon said, "Ben and I are avid walkers and love the Franklin stairs. It's a very inspiring view from the top and makes for a creative day always."

Shannon's solo music and art can be found at shannonhurley.com

Lovers & Poets music can be heard at loversandpoets.com

You'll find artists and creatives on both sides of the counter at Baller Art Ware, and an artistic energy which is palpable. They love creatives; they love their community. All forms of art are some form of love.



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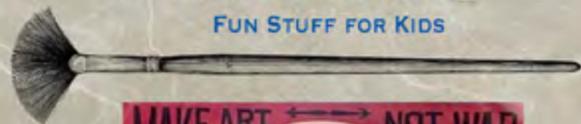
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Hollywood in Franklin Hills

The Franklin Hills neighborhood has a long history with Hollywood. Countless films and TV shows have shot scenes here taking advantage of our views, eclectic architecture, and easy proximity to the studios.

But for one local resident, it's more than just a great location. Production Designer and Art Director Clint Wallace does his best work at home, right here in Franklin Hills. "It is the most brilliant place to work. There's a reason why Walt Disney used to live here, and so many studios started around here."



HOLLYWOOD PRODUCTION DESIGNER, CLINT WALLACE
📷: NICK OSTLUND

You've seen Clint's artistry for years in some of Hollywood's biggest blockbusters like *Top Gun Maverick*, *Spiderman No Way Home*, and *Pirates of the Caribbean—Dead Man's Chest*. Paramount Pictures, Walt Disney Studios, Warner Brothers, Columbia Pictures, and Twentieth Century Fox have all benefited from his award-winning talents. And don't forget about Marvel Studios where he helped create the worlds of Captain America, Dr. Strange, and Black Widow.

But how did someone with a double major in math and art from the University of Puget Sound, and a master's degree in architecture from UCLA, break into the film industry? "I never wanted to go into the movie business. Architecture was my passion," said Clint. "But a friend of mine in the late 90s asked me to come work with him on a movie starring Eddie Murphy. It was called *Pluto Nash* and though the film was terrible, it was an eye-opening experience. I was able to connect with some amazingly talented people. Those connections eventually made it possible for me to work on much larger projects like *Pirates of the Caribbean*."

After living and working in Southern California for many years, what finally brought Clint, his wife Alison, and their two sons to Franklin Hills? "I was hired to work on a Paul Rudd movie *I Love You, Man*. After scouting locations, we found a house at the corner of Franklin and St George. It was a great house, and I thought wow, this is a cool neighborhood."

by Scott Altus



THE *I LOVE YOU, MAN* HOUSE THAT INSPIRED CLINT WALLACE TO MOVE TO FRANKLIN HILLS.

📷: © MOVIE-LOCATIONS.COM



TOM CRUISE IN *TOP GUN: MAVERICK*, FOR WHICH WALLACE WAS THE SUPERVISING ART DIRECTOR.

📷: THE GUARDIAN, FILM COMPANY HANDOUT



WALLACE WAS ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR FOR *PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 & 3*

📷: © DISNEY STUDIOS

In addition to award-winning architecture projects and co-owning a craft spirits distillery in Seattle, what's next on the horizon for the talented Mr. Wallace? "I have a film project we're planning on shooting in Italy soon where I'll serve as writer, producer, and production designer." And in 2024, *Red Sonja* which Clint worked on as Production Designer last year in Bulgaria, should be coming to a theater near you.

So, the next time you're swept away to another time and place through the magic of cinema, pay attention to those credits at the end of your favorite movie. You just might catch the name of Clint Wallace, one of Franklin Hills' most creative neighbors.



About the Author

by Karen Altus



FRANKLIN HILLS VIEW AS SEEN ON LARGE MONITOR ARRAY ON KTLA NEWS SET.



SHOOTING THE VIEW LOOKING NORTH TOWARD GLENDALE WITH CANON DSLR CAMERA AND A ZHIYUN GIMBAL

Franklin Hills Views in the News

When he's not writing articles for the FH Overview, Scott Altus is the Director of Creative Services at KTLA 5 TV. As project manager for the station's news set re-design, Scott shot footage from his home on Lyric Avenue to be used as background video, displayed on large HD studio monitors. That Franklin Hills view can now be seen almost every day behind the anchors of KTLA 5 News. Tune in and check it out.



SCOTT ALTUS

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Writers Row

by Cynthia Bach

It's a small strip of houses where Franklin Avenue turns into Mayview and ends at Clayton. Franklin Hills has always attracted the Hollywood crowd of creatives, whether an intentional act or a collective conscience. After all, since 1920, Franklin Hills has been the "old Hollywood" guard. Although there are many talented screenwriters in Franklin Hills, I've highlighted the writers in the strip we call "Writers Row."

Becky Johnston is an American screenwriter known for *House of Gucci* (2021), featuring Lady Gaga; *Seven Years in Tibet*, (1997), featuring Brad Pitt; and *The Prince of Tides*, written with Pat Conroy (1991), featuring Barbara Streisand. Becky first bought her house in Franklin Hills in 1987. The cottage style retreat was perfect for writing and inspiration: the peaceful seclusion, beautiful lush grounds, and views.

Jonathan Ames is an American author and screenwriter born in New York City. Jonathan graduated from Princeton University in 1987 with a degree in English. He has a Master of Fine Arts degree in fiction from Columbia University, where he has been an infrequent faculty member. He is the creator of *Bored to Death* (HBO) and *Blunt Talk* (STARZ). Two of his novels were adapted into films; *You Were Never Really Here* (2017), starring Joaquin Phoenix, and *The Extra Man* (2010), starring Kevin Kline.

Dawn DeNoon is an American screenwriter and executive producer for *Law and Order Special Victims Unit*. She was one of the first writers for *Law and Order SVU* from 1999-2011 and wrote 42 episodes over 12 years. In 2002 DeNoon received the Edgar Allen Poe Award for mystery writers.

DeNoon bought her house in 2003, a Spanish Mediterranean. One of the things that made Dawn fall in love with Franklin Hills was the charming Shakespeare Bridge, built in 1927. "Maybe it was my love of English literature," she states.

Mike Steere is an author, journalist, producer, and investigative screenwriter, producing numerous documentaries for The Tennis Channel (FOX, ESPN). Mike's investigative magazine feature, *In God's Eyes*, about crime in the pristine wilds of American National Parks, is now the basis of a television series. Mike and his family bought their Spanish style bungalow in Franklin Hills in 1999. They love the European feel, the quiet, and the beautiful views of the area.

Writer's Row. How it became a street lined with famous screenwriters is by chance serendipitous. Or is it?



JONATHAN AMES WITH HIS DOG FEZZIK IN THE HOLLYWOOD HILLS

📷: ANNE THORNTON



MIKE STEERE HEAD SHOT

📷: MIKE STEERE



BECKY JOHNSTON ENJOYING A DAY AT MALIBU BEACH WITH HER DOGS WOLFIE AND WALLY

📷: MARIYASH JOHNSTON



DAWN DENOON IN HER YARD IN FRANKLIN HILLS WITH HER DOG STRUDEL

📷: DAWN DENOON



FHRA PAST AND PRESENT BOARD MEMBERS, 2023 SPRING FLING/ANNUAL MEETING.
 BACK ROW: PAT HADNAGY, MICHAEL WILSON, JESSICA LUEBKE, ADAM WEISMAN, KAREN ALTUS, RICK LAROCCA.
 FRONT ROW: MARY FRANCES SMITH-REYNOLDS, ALISON WALLACE, DAVE MCDONALD, CINDY SOLOVEI

We encourage our neighbors to consider donating to the FHRA during the Spring Fling and Block Party, or anytime! Your contributions will support our events as well as various initiatives, including:

- Cleaning our historic stairways
- Decorating the Shakespeare Bridge
- Maintaining the Franklin median garden and the Norm Harriton community garden
- Building relationships with district, city and regional officials
- Supporting local schools, the library and other neighborhood councils

How to Donate:

Donating to FHRA is easy! Visit our donation booth at the Spring Fling and Block Party or become a member and donate online through our website: www.franklinhills.org/join.

Join Us and Make a Difference:

The FHRA's Annual Spring Fling and Block Parties are not just events, they are celebrations of our community's spirit. Come, enjoy the festivities, and consider helping us make our neighborhood an even better place to live. We can't wait to see you there!

Use our QR Code to Join or Donate!



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Fashion Forward in Franklin Hills

by Michael Wilson

There is so much creativity in the Franklin Hills, but did you know it's also a center for fabulous fashion? Two world-class clothing designers are inspired by and live right here in our neighborhood.

CAALO

Chelsea Claridge is a fashion designer who lives and works across the street from me. She and her partner, Jordan Moussalli, moved here from New York in the summer of 2022.

Chelsea is originally from Vancouver, Canada and from a young age dreamt of being a fashion designer. She studied design and was then recruited by Lululemon, where she worked for a few years before taking a leap to New York, where she designed for global fashion brands for over a decade.

Growing up in Vancouver (and surviving New York winters!) inspired her to create an outerwear brand that was both functionally warm, but also chic and timeless. From this, CAALO was born in 2019.

Fusing luxury with functionality, Chelsea created a modern collection of transformable, trans-seasonal pieces that are expertly crafted from the highest quality, luxury materials. They are ethically and sustainably manufactured, and CAALO has showcased at NY & Paris Fashion Week.

Looking for a change and wanting to be closer to nature, she and Jordan chose the west coast. Being New Yorkers, and loving being surrounded by creative people, they fell in love with the Franklin Hills.

Chelsea has lots of exciting things in the works for CAALO. Follow her journey on Instagram [@caalostudio](https://www.instagram.com/caalostudio)



CAALO DESIGN

CAALO



CHELSEA CLARIDGE

CAALO



JENNIFER WAGNER

📷: JARRET BATTISTI

Une Forme

On the opposite side of the Franklin Hills is Jennifer Wagner, a clothing designer who lives on Lyric with her husband and son. From Sheffield, Pennsylvania, a tiny town in the Allegheny National Forest, Jennifer first studied architecture and art history at Penn State, and then moved to LA to study interiors at FIDM.

After working with Boffi in both LA and NYC, she started her own design business while partnering with LA developer GroundUP. In 2018, after her son was born, she took a step back from design and turned to sewing, another passion of hers since she was a young adult.

After realizing what fast fashion was doing to the earth, she took steps to make her brand, Une Forme, as eco-conscious as possible. With reclaimed and natural fabrics and non-toxic dyes, the pieces are made to order, so there is less waste in landfills, and it allows for more size inclusivity. They are also handmade in-house – right here in Franklin Hills!

Une Forme apparel is minimal and timeless, with pieces that serve as blank canvases for each person to interpret and personalize, while offering comfort and function for every day.

Jennifer loves living in Franklin Hills with her family, walking the neighborhood, and having mini block parties with her neighbors.

See her work at:
www.uneforme.com
Instagram [@une_forme](https://www.instagram.com/une_forme)



UNEFORME

📷: SILVIA FRIGERIO



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Music Is Life

In this Franklin Hills Home

by Mary Frances Smith-Reynolds

“If you can extend your arm, you can touch a piano in our house!”

That is only a slight exaggeration in the Franklin Hills home of musician-spouses Linnea Powell and Noah Meites. (There are, in fact, five keyboards in their home.)

Linnea was explaining why their 2 1/2-year-old daughter Zoe sings as much as she talks. She has been raised, Linnea said, to know that, “music isn’t divorced from life. It is part of life.”

Linnea and Noah have lived in their 1938 Franklin Hills home for 6 1/2 years, attracted by the creative energy they feel in this neighborhood. “And these people are working...it’s not just for show,” Linnea added.

Noah is originally from Chicago. Linnea was born and raised in Santa Cruz. The couple met in the music department at U.C. Santa Cruz. Noah was a graduate student studying contemporary music composition and Linnea was an undergraduate music student and viola player.

“We met because I played a piece of yours,” Linnea reminded Noah.

“She was a big superstar, a big deal undergrad,” bragged Noah. He had selected Linnea’s string quartet to perform his piece.

Noah explained that Linnea is an “expert interpreter.”

“Sometimes she understands better than I do what I’m doing. She’s my best composition teacher.”

Linnea laughed and returned the kudos, saying that Noah understands the technical side better than she does, and often helps her out. She recalled the pandemic as a time when his technical knowledge and skills helped her with working and recording at home.



NOAH MEITES AND LINNEA POWELL IN THEIR FRANKLIN HILLS STUDIO.

📷: MARY FRANCE SMITH-REYNOLDS

The couple has converted their garage to a studio, what Linnea described as, “a sweet little space in the Franklin Hills.” It is a place to record, teach, and practice alone and with other musicians. Noah, who teaches music theory, composition, and other subjects at UCLA and at the Colburn School in its college conservatory, taught all of his classes from this space during the pandemic. The detached room, set back from the street, with acoustic panels and comfortable furniture, feels both professional and cozy.

Los Angeles was the logical place for the couple to move following a time in Amsterdam where Noah did postdoctoral work with the late Dutch composer Louis Andriessen.

Linnea said there is so much “living, breathing energy in our field here.” She went on, “In LA, I can be doing recording sessions for film and TV, and playing with bands, musical

artists, and traveling Broadway shows.” She added, “You can go from playing Mozart to working with Dr. Dre in two days.”

Linnea’s busy musical life of performing and recording also includes being part of a large collective called Wild Up, as well as a violin/viola twosome called Aperture Duo.

In addition to teaching, Noah is currently composing a piece of music for Piano Spheres, a concert organization. He is also working on an album of contemporary concert music, tentatively scheduled to be released in spring or summer of 2024.

And Zoe? Chances are good that she’ll continue to follow her parents’ lead, making music in the Franklin Hills for years to come.



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WHAT GOES ON BEHIND OUR GARAGE DOORS?

by Shawn Sites

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Parking cars in garages? So old school. In Franklin Hills, you never know what you're going to find when a garage door is raised... but you can be sure it involves something cool and colorful. Keep your eyes out for these accomplished artists the next time you're out for a walk, and stop to say hi and admire their creations.



Door #1

Furniture? Check. Upholstery fabrics and drapes? Ditto. Wallpaper? *Bien sûr!* Lighting fixtures and the walls themselves? Need you ask? If it can be found in a house -- or IS a house -- it's likely that Claire Katherine ("CK") Reed has designed a bright and vivid version of it from her Lyric Ave. garage.

While her talents extend far beyond the walls of a home, CK's Franklin Hills home base has been central to her success. After moving from NYC to LA nine years ago, she was driving around looking at homes for rent and was drawn to the area.

"I just thought this was the most gorgeous neighborhood. I could sense the rich creative history," she recalled.

CK graduated from Savannah College of Art and Design with a BFA in Fibers and began her career designing textiles for the fashion and interior design industries. She's since expanded her talents across many platforms such as wallpaper, packaging, logo and website design, as well as lighting fixtures and set design for commercials and film.

She also paints murals, including one of the Sunset Strip across from Chateau Marmont, and one for Soho House in DTLA. Her unique illustration style has earned her commissions from various iconic L.A. restaurants and a hotel group with properties around California's wine country.

"Having my studio be so close to my home is crucial," she explained. "It's one of the main reasons I love living here so much. The convenience allows me to get much more work done. And having Baller Art Ware two blocks away is a wonderful perk!"

Franklin Hills neighbors are welcome to visit. Contact CK via her website if you'd like to be invited to her occasional tours / open studio events.

www.ckreed.com/

www.instagram.com/c.k_reed/

BACKGROUND & INSET: FROM HER BACKYARD GARAGE STUDIO, CK REED BREATHES NEW LIFE INTO FOUND FURNITURE PIECES WITH BRIGHTLY-COLORED PAINTED BOTANICAL MOTIFS.



© SHAWN SITES

Behind Garage Doors Door #2

Though few of us want to recall our COVID-19 lockdown time, few -- if any -- of us were as productive during that period as artist Jim Matthews. Drawing on the wood whittling he first developed as a 5-year-old, and a lifetime as a world-renowned master jeweler, Jim spent that time transforming the garage of his 1927 Spanish-style home into a fantastic gallery of radiantly-colored artworks.

The project was informed by Jim's travels in Mexico, and many of the pieces begin with items sourced during his frequent visits to thrift stores. In a genius move for a gallery in a confined space, Jim built some assemblages on top of rolling carts so they can be viewed from all sides and easily moved.

"It's an art project in constant motion and one I'm very proud of," Jim explained.

The garage art gallery is at once bursting with beauty and exquisitely organized. His art supplies are at arm's reach in colorful and specifically-labeled boxes and jars. In a brilliant feat of spatial visualization, the car can still be parked inside.



AS DESIGNER-FABRICATORS OF LUXURY JEWELRY FOR ROYALTY AND CELEBRITIES, JIM MATTHEWS AND CYNTHIA BACH ARE UNIQUE COLLABORATORS IN THEIR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIVES. CYNTHIA'S REQUEST FOR JIM TO ORGANIZE THE GARAGE WAS THE SPARK THAT BEGAN THE GARAGE ART PROJECT.

PHOTO: GIO COLLAZO

The native Texan and his wife, noted jewelry designer Cynthia Bach, moved to Los Angeles after Jim was recruited by Van Cleef and Arpels to be director of design and fabrication for its Beverly Hills store. They moved to the Franklin Hills two decades ago, drawn by the old historic Spanish-style houses, which they felt had more character than those on the West side. Their home was one of the first three houses on the hill when the Shakespeare Bridge was built.

"It's serene and peaceful living in Franklin Hills," Jim explained. "Being surrounded by cypress trees and beautiful views of the San Gabriel Mountains fuels our creativity and inspiration.

"What's more, the castle in the horizon at Forest Lawn reminds me of the South of France," he added. "It's not like living in the city at all."

Lucky for us, Jim does choose to live here, and continues to make his Franklin Hills neighbors smile with his cheeky, clever, and abundant creativity. Even his Instagram handle reflects that; it's the Kerguelen (Desolation) Island in the Indian Ocean spelled backward!

www.instagram.com/nelugrek/



JIM MATTHEWS STANDS NEAR THE "ENCHANTED FOREST," ONE OF SEVERAL DAZZLING DISPLAYS IN HIS GARAGE GALLERY.

PHOTO: SHAY SITES

Door #3

From their garage studio and living room on Franklin, Jiun and Melissa Chiang help create memories that last a lifetime. They work with hardwoods and metals like copper and steel to create small jewelry dishes and custom ring boxes used for marriage proposals.



MELISSA AND JIUN CHIANG SOUNDPROOFED THEIR GARAGE STUDIO AND THANK THEIR NEIGHBORS FOR PUTTING UP WITH THE OCCASIONAL NOISE THEIR TOOLS MAKE!

“Sometimes customers will contact us after they’ve used our boxes and it’s rewarding to hear how integral the boxes were to a very significant moment in their lives,” Jiun shared.

The couple has lived on Franklin for nearly a decade, drawn by the amazing views and access to amenities in the area. Running their online Wanderweg Shop also gives their lives balance.

“Working for ourselves in our own home gives us the freedom to create our own schedule,” Melissa explained. “We can run errands and bike in the nearby mountains during the day when traffic isn’t as bad, and finish up our work at night.”

Check out the couple’s site to learn more about the inspiration for their company’s name:

www.wanderwegshop.com

www.etsy.com/market/wanderweg



Behind Garage Doors

Door #4



KATE IS MOST PROUD OF HER "HAUTE COUTURE" BOWLS, CREATED WITH A PROPRIETARY PAPER-PORCELAIN CLAY THAT HAS TAKEN YEARS OF EXPERIMENTATION TO PERFECT.

Global inspirations converge in the Melbourne Avenue garage of British-born ceramist Kate Vereker. Her open garage door invites curious walkers to watch as she creates singular art pieces, as well as small batch work for luxury brands.

Beyond designing, shaping and firing her work, though, she creates from a more fundamental level, experimenting with bespoke mixes of porcelain and glazes and various firing times and temperatures. She's even adapted dental tools to better realize her vision.

"A kiln is like a friend," she explained. "You have to get to know it."

A condiment tray in a Tokyo sushi restaurant changed the course of Kate's career. The owner noticed that she was smitten with a shabby, "wabi sabi"-style piece at the table. He shuffled into the kitchen and returned with an expensive art book that included work by groundbreaking artist Lucie Rie, a Jewish-Austrian woman working during WW II. Kate had discovered her hero.

After returning to Amsterdam, she found the book in a library, studied Lucie's style and enrolled at Central Saint Martins in London to study ceramics.

She continues to be fascinated by Japanese culture and incorporates kintsugi into selected works. That art -- of repairing broken objects with gold or precious metals -- is a metaphor for embracing the idea that you won't realize your full potential until you've gone through tough times, and that imperfections and scars can result in something more beautiful and valuable.

Kate, husband Jason and daughter Lottie have lived in the Franklin Hills for more than two years.

"When we were going to move here from Italy, I thought the desert plants would be uninspiring, but how wrong I was," she admitted. "I love the cornucopia of plants here," she added. "So sculptural and bold."



SOME OF KATE'S RECENT WORKS FEATURE SILHOUETTES OF FOLIAGE -- LIKE BIRDS OF PARADISE -- THAT SHE ENCOUNTERS ON HER DAILY RUNS IN THE FRANKLIN HILLS.

www.katevereker.com

www.instagram.com/katevereker_ceramics/



Door #5



TRINE CHURCHILL LOVES THE LIGHT IN HER LYRIC AVE. GARAGE STUDIO. THE PAINTING IN THE BACKGROUND IS AN IMAGE OF A BEACHSIDE SOLSTICE FESTIVAL IN HER NATIVE DENMARK.

The OG creatives of Franklin Hills were of course Walt and Roy Disney, who lived on Lyric Ave. from 1927-1932. The street continues to nurture extraordinary artists like Trine Churchill, who has lived next door to the Disney homes for more than a decade.

A native of Denmark whose father was a cartoonist, Trine is a graduate of Otis College of Art & Design. Her primary medium is painting on canvas, but the multi-talented artist also works on paper, and in ceramics and bronze.

“I’ve lived here since 2011, when my now-husband Spencer emptied a drawer in his dresser and handed me a key to his house – and a Garmin GPS -- so I could always find my way here,” she explained.

When the pandemic hit, Trine moved her studio home to the garage, and loves working just a flight of stairs away from home.

“I simply end up with more hours of studio time,” she said. “Also, I’ve enjoyed getting to know my neighbors better. It’s rewarding to connect with people who might stop and say hello because they’re curious about what I’m working on.”

www.trinechurchill.com

[@trinechurchillart](https://www.instagram.com/trinechurchillart)

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Visually Connecting in Franklin Hills: Meeting Octavia Klein

by Jenny Brandt and Mike Roey

Having our children born in the 2000s meant we've always had a camera of some sort at the ready to capture everything. That said, our now-older children make fun of the fact that we have no professional family photos (yes, we do know that if we did have professional family photos already taken, they'd make fun of that too). Fortunately for them, at the FHRA Spring Fling, we won one of the raffle prizes of a professional family portrait session donated by Franklin Hills photographer Octavia Klein.

This wasn't a JC Penney Studio Session but a well thought out and slightly improvisational, sweet time at the Bette Davis Picnic Area in Griffith Park. Right away we could tell this wasn't going to be like the awkward photo sessions of my youth. Octavia already had an idea of where the light was best, and she moved us around the park to mix up the vistas and play with the sunset. She never talked down to us or patronized us; she steered us but took our ideas as well and we all worked together (yes, I know she did all the work, but she made us feel part of the team, too). She was efficient, stylish, and most of all, very cool. Octavia definitely fits into the Franklin Hills vibe.

With a background in fashion styling which started with her studies at FIDM and inspired by the beauty of a Big Sur sunset, Octavia's thirst for more artistic independence drove her to look beyond fashion for a career path. She got into the Santa Monica College Photography Program and from there, her true passion in food and product photography flourished. She is currently working with Jeff Vespa Pictures, Dorsia, and Surface Magazine creating and producing photo and video content for Michelin Star restaurants in LA, SF, NY, Miami, and London. And during the various holiday seasons, you'll run into her at the park doing family photo sessions, portraits, and the occasional headshot. Octavia's photos have been exhibited at the *Architecture + Design Museum* in LA and featured in the American Photographic Artists "Off the Clock" curated exhibition. Octavia Klein is another example of why Franklin Hills is such a cool place to live.

She currently lives on Lyric Avenue with her husband Tom and their daughter Zoa. You can reach Octavia and see more of her work at: www.octaviaklein.com



FAMILY PORTRAIT BY OCTAVIA KLEIN AT BETTE DAVIS PARK

 OCTAVIA KLEIN

PHOTOGRAPHER OCTAVIA KLEIN IN HER FH HOME STUDIO  THE RANGE PHOTOGRAPHY

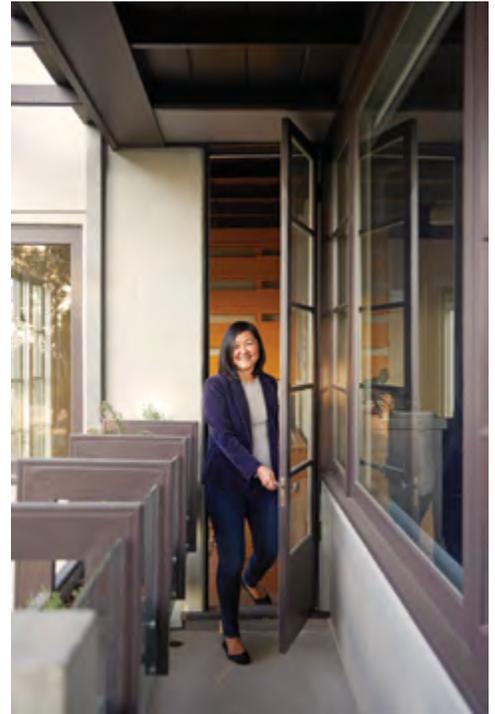
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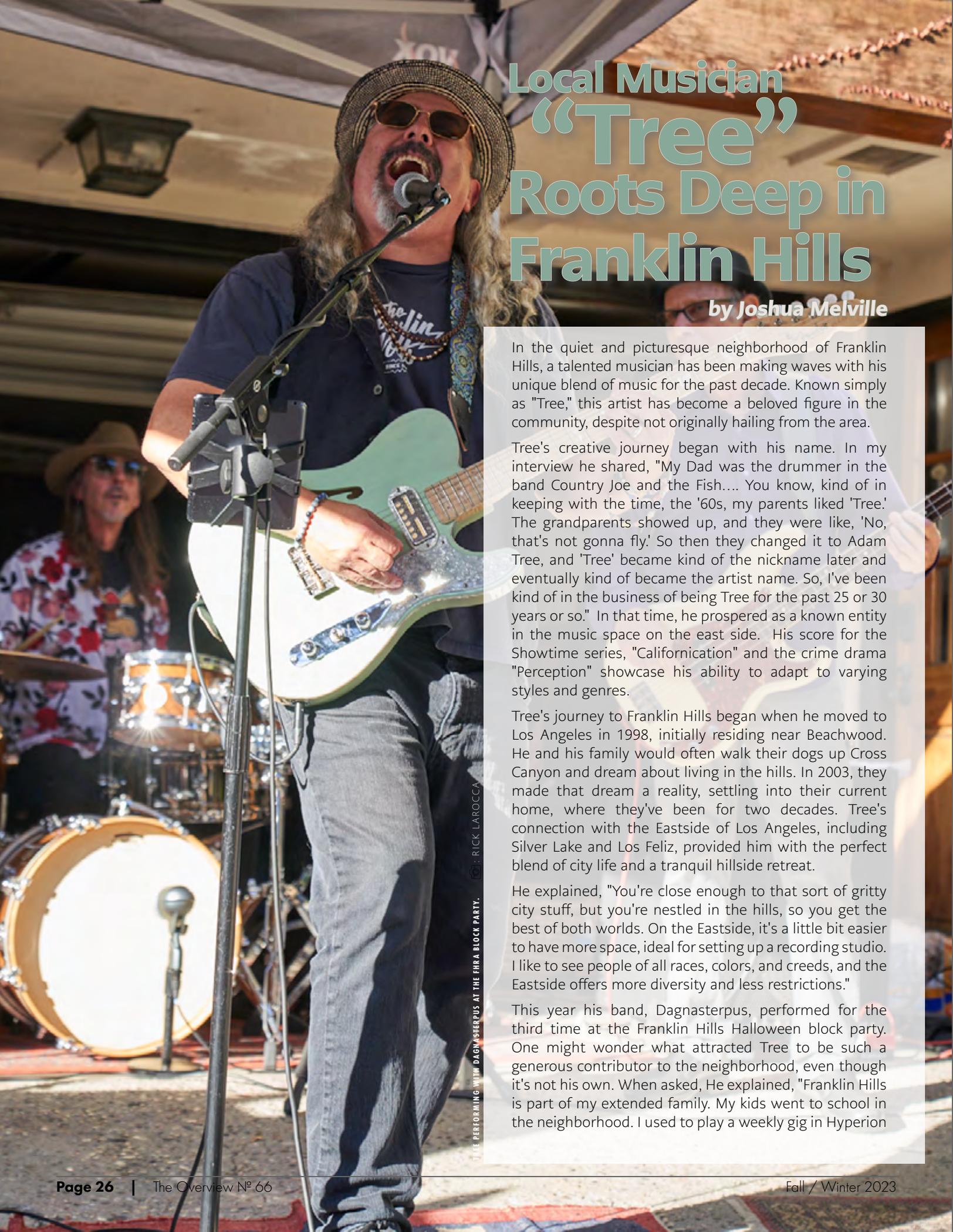


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Local Musician “Tree” Roots Deep in Franklin Hills

by Joshua Melville

In the quiet and picturesque neighborhood of Franklin Hills, a talented musician has been making waves with his unique blend of music for the past decade. Known simply as “Tree,” this artist has become a beloved figure in the community, despite not originally hailing from the area.

Tree’s creative journey began with his name. In my interview he shared, “My Dad was the drummer in the band Country Joe and the Fish.... You know, kind of in keeping with the time, the ‘60s, my parents liked ‘Tree.’ The grandparents showed up, and they were like, ‘No, that’s not gonna fly.’ So then they changed it to Adam Tree, and ‘Tree’ became kind of the nickname later and eventually kind of became the artist name. So, I’ve been kind of in the business of being Tree for the past 25 or 30 years or so.” In that time, he prospered as a known entity in the music space on the east side. His score for the Showtime series, “Californication” and the crime drama “Perception” showcase his ability to adapt to varying styles and genres.

Tree’s journey to Franklin Hills began when he moved to Los Angeles in 1998, initially residing near Beachwood. He and his family would often walk their dogs up Cross Canyon and dream about living in the hills. In 2003, they made that dream a reality, settling into their current home, where they’ve been for two decades. Tree’s connection with the Eastside of Los Angeles, including Silver Lake and Los Feliz, provided him with the perfect blend of city life and a tranquil hillside retreat.

He explained, “You’re close enough to that sort of gritty city stuff, but you’re nestled in the hills, so you get the best of both worlds. On the Eastside, it’s a little bit easier to have more space, ideal for setting up a recording studio. I like to see people of all races, colors, and creeds, and the Eastside offers more diversity and less restrictions.”

This year his band, Dagnasterpus, performed for the third time at the Franklin Hills Halloween block party. One might wonder what attracted Tree to be such a generous contributor to the neighborhood, even though it’s not his own. When asked, He explained, “Franklin Hills is part of my extended family. My kids went to school in the neighborhood. I used to play a weekly gig in Hyperion

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICK LAROCCA
TREE PERFORMING WITH DAGNASTERPUS AT THE EHRA BLOCK PARTY.

Public House right down the block. So, yeah, it feels to me sort of like an extended family and part of my neighborhood. I love coming to the Block Party and seeing all the friends and all the kids. It's just a source of joy for me, and there's no other agenda—just enjoying it and making new friends."

When it comes to finding inspiration in the Silver Lake, Franklin Hills, and Los Feliz triad, Tree highlighted the daytime serenity of the parks that offer breathtaking views of the cityscape and the surrounding mountains. He also raved about the vibrant street food culture, featuring taco stands, night markets, and pop-ups, which reflects the area's rich ethnic diversity.

However, he expressed a desire for more informal music venues, where music can be enjoyed without the pressure to attract huge crowds. He values the intimate, spontaneous moments that often arise when a local artist shares their talent in a small, unassuming setting.

In a world where urban life and artistic expression intersect, Tree's presence in Franklin Hills reminds us of the beauty in embracing and contributing to a community, even if it wasn't where you originally put down roots. His music, generosity, and passion for the Eastside continue to inspire and bring people together, proving that sometimes, it's not where you're from but how you connect with the neighborhood that truly matters.



About the Author



AUTHOR JOSH MELVILLE

 MELVILLE COLLECTION

Author Josh Melville is a music business expert. Having spent over 30 years in the industry, he has seen the ups and downs and focused his efforts on helping artists protect their rights. Josh wrote numerous top-selling music industry references and a tell-all guide to help recording artists at each stage of their music career. His website, www.MosesAvalon.com, contains a wealth of information, resources, and tools for artists. His Mission Statement: To help create a safer music business where artists, labels and music service providers can work together, so that the world's most powerful art-form can grow and prosper.

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CREATIVE COUPLES

Franklin Hills Draws those with a Love for Local

by Dina Biblarz

Creatives' pent up imagination, curiosity, and wit render them more porous to their environments; they exist in deep connection to their surroundings. Creative couples of Franklin Hills are no exception. What drives them to do what they do? Is Franklin Hills just a beautiful bridge surrounded by little boxes on the hillside, or a catalyst for expression? On one end of the creative environment continuum is the isolation of Walden Pond and on the other is Gertrude Stein's Paris and maybe, just maybe, Franklin Hills represents the best of what L.A. has to offer—the opportunity to dial up or down your engagement with the cosmopolitan or the quiet.

I had the distinct pleasure of sitting down with three local couples to explore all this and more, right in our collective backyard.

MIKE + DEAN

Mike and Dean are a delightful couple whom I've always admired for having "figured out" how to live in LA. Dean is the Director of the Estate for artist Robert Therrien (if you've ever been to *The Broad* museum downtown and walked under a giant table and chairs, that's the artist). Mike is a screenwriter and faculty member at the *American Film Institute*.

Tell us a little about you as a creative couple.

Mike - "We both were driven by an early love of the visual arts which segued naturally into our current careers. And in terms of creative overlap, we run things by each other - I get to peek at upcoming shows Dean is working on and Dean reads my scripts. Although Dean is relentlessly enthusiastic and laughs way too hard at my jokes, I know I can't count on him to be objective."

Talk to us about any rituals/habits/crutches that you rely on to help you define your day.

Mike - "Dean is not ritualistic, but I am. Lately I've been starting my day at 4:30AM because I discovered it's a great way to avoid humanity. Plus, if your bedtime is 7:30PM, pesky dinner parties are a thing of the past! If it works for Jamie Lee Curtis, it works for me."

For creatives trying to figure it all out, give them some advice.

Mike - "Los Angeles is only as social as you want, because it involves driving and what seemed like a good idea on Monday will suddenly lose its appeal on Friday. This, in theory, frees you up. And I am a big believer that your work speaks for itself. You can be the best networker ever, but if your work is terrible, it won't matter."

What about Franklin Hills do you love, and what do you wish for more of?

Dean - "Franklin Hills is our dream neighborhood. After living in LA for decades, there is nowhere else we'd rather be. For things I'd want more of, I would advocate for more



MIKE AND DEAN WELCOMED MY ENTIRE FAMILY INTO THEIR HOME ON A RAINY SATURDAY AND SHOWED OFF THEIR TURTLES AND THEIR NEW GARDEN.

protected green space and for a yummy bakery/breakfast place to replace the "suspiciously underused" storefronts on the west side of Hyperion."

Lastly: If you were to write the chapter in the book of your life that you are in right now, what would it be titled?

Mike - "Dean's chapter would be called, "A Thousand Shades of Taupe" and would be all about the two-year odyssey he went on to find the perfect color for our interior walls. My chapter would be called, "Have you Tried Turning it Off and On Again?" because, whereas Dean excels at aesthetics, I am tech support."

(Continued on page 30)

Be Prepared Seismic Retrofitting

by Shawn Sites



THE HOUSE ON THE LEFT WAS NOT RETROFITTED AND SLID OFF ITS FOUNDATION AFTER THE 2014 NAPA EARTHQUAKE. THE HOUSE ON THE RIGHT, WHICH HAD COMPLETED A SEISMIC RETROFIT, WITHSTOOD THE SHAKING.

📷: JANIELE MAFFEI, CALIFORNIA EARTHQUAKE AUTHORITY

In addition to the creative neighbors profiled in this issue, many Franklin Hills residents also live and work at home. Catastrophic damage from an earthquake would affect not only our lives, but our livelihoods.

Seismic retrofitting is one proven way to reduce your risk of earthquake injury and damage, protect your economic investment, help minimize repairs and ensure you have a place to live. Retrofitting involves adjustments to make homes more resistant to earthquake activity, ground motion, or soil failure.

Many local homes are particularly vulnerable to earthquake damage because of hillside locations, having living space above a garage, and for being built before 2000, before current building codes were in place.

Large open space and wall openings on the lowest floor mean that there are fewer solid walls, and walls are structural elements that resist earthquake forces. The frames of older houses are often not bolted to their foundations, and cripple walls may lack bracing. Without adequate bolting and bracing, homes can slide or topple off their foundation during an earthquake.



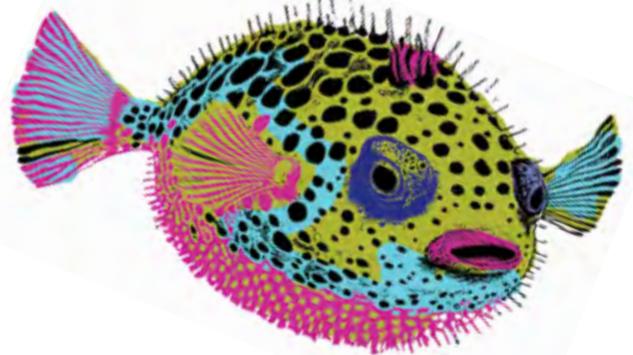
Want to know more?

The **California Residential Mitigation Program** has a comprehensive website with instructions on how to determine if a home retrofit may be beneficial.

Its FAQs address the basics of retrofitting; costs, grants and tax assistance; identifying engineers and contractors; and the permit process for your retrofit.

[californiaresidentialmitigationprogram.com/
Strengthen-Your-House](http://californiaresidentialmitigationprogram.com/Strengthen-Your-House)

Knowing your neighbors is one of the best ways to effectively respond during an emergency. Contact Shawn Sites (shawnlsites@gmail.com) if you'd like to learn more about how you can help your Franklin Hills neighbors Be Prepared.



How long will you hold your breath?

Right now could be a better time to sell than you think. Why wait to see what an uncertain future holds? Most Los Feliz market indicators are trending flat, indicating a market that is not going anywhere fast. Prices remain higher than in 2021 or 2020, though buyers are fewer. In real estate, however, nothing stays the same for very long.

Value matters, too. In real estate, “value” means market recognition, longstanding experience and results—right here in Los Feliz. There’s no need to hire an out-of-area agent or one seeking on-the-job training. I’ve worked and lived in Los Feliz for 35 years. In that time, I’ve been my office’s top agent most years. Plus, I love questions and answers—and the opportunity to chat with you anytime about any real estate matter. Just ask me!



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DIANA AND RAGS'S HOME INCLUDES A LOFT-SPACE THAT RAGS USES FOR ALL HIS MUSIC NEEDS

RAGS + DIANA

Rags and Diana are the kind of couple that represent the best parts of what this slice of LA stands for. They are international, cultured, creative, and community builders. Diana is an editorial director for *All Recipes* and Rags is a co-founder of the record label *Filip Nikolic* that rediscovers South Asian disco, Bollywood, and new wave music from the 70s and 80s.

Tell us a little about you as a creative couple.

Diana - "We met at a friend's party and talked till 5am about all the music we both loved, mostly Britpop bands like Pulp, Stone Roses, and Blur. Fast forward to today and we are trying to balance it all, like any parents are nowadays."

Talk to us about any rituals/habits/crutches that you rely on to help you define your day.

Diana - "As someone who has worked remotely for 12 years, the small rituals of one's day become really important. After I drop off my kids in the morning I return home and start my day with a breakfast that I prepare just for myself. It's not necessarily extravagant but it's my moment of tranquility."

AUSTEN + PALMER



AUSTEN AND PALMER SHOWED ME AROUND THEIR HILLSIDE HOME WITH THEIR OUTDOOR OFFICE SPACE AND GRACIOUSLY HAD THEIR KIDS TAKE CARE OF MINE.

While I don't personally know Austen and Palmer, they are warm, funny, and graciously humbled by being featured, which immediately put me in their favor. Austen writes TV and feature comedies and Palmer (a New York transplant) is a painter.

Tell us a little about you as a creative couple.

Palmer - "We met at a party in New York and then eight years later we ran into each other again in LA (*Austen*: 'she didn't remember me'). Both Austen and I work from home and trade off responsibilities for the children. (*Austen*: 'She loved our two kids a lot quicker than she did me or LA'). Austen has a good eye and can tell me when something looks off in my painting (*Austen*: 'She has never once used one of my ideas')."

Talk to us about any rituals/habits/crutches that you rely on to help you define your day.

Austen - "I have a theory that the first thing I do on any given day will be the best thing I do all day. For my work, the earlier I get started, the better the work will be. Basically, I have to do everything in my power not to start with a Time Waster's Triathlon of Wordle, Spelling Bee, and Connections."

For creatives trying to figure it all out, give them some advice.

Diana - "Find out about events, concerts, pop ups, etc. LA is so car-centric and we are so often driving from one bubble to the next, it's not as easy as other cities might be in terms of just happening upon different things to do."

Now, what about Franklin Hills?

Diana - "We moved to Franklin Hills from Silver Lake one month before the pandemic started and it was such a blessing. We have never felt more at home in LA than we do here – it really is the people that make our neighborhood so special. That said, every day that I drive or walk my kids to school, going through the hills and over the bridge, I honestly marvel at my surroundings."

Lastly: If you were to write the chapter in the book of your life that you are in right now, what would it be titled?

Diana - "\$6 tickets to the Hollywood Bowl on a Tuesday night are a ticket to freedom."



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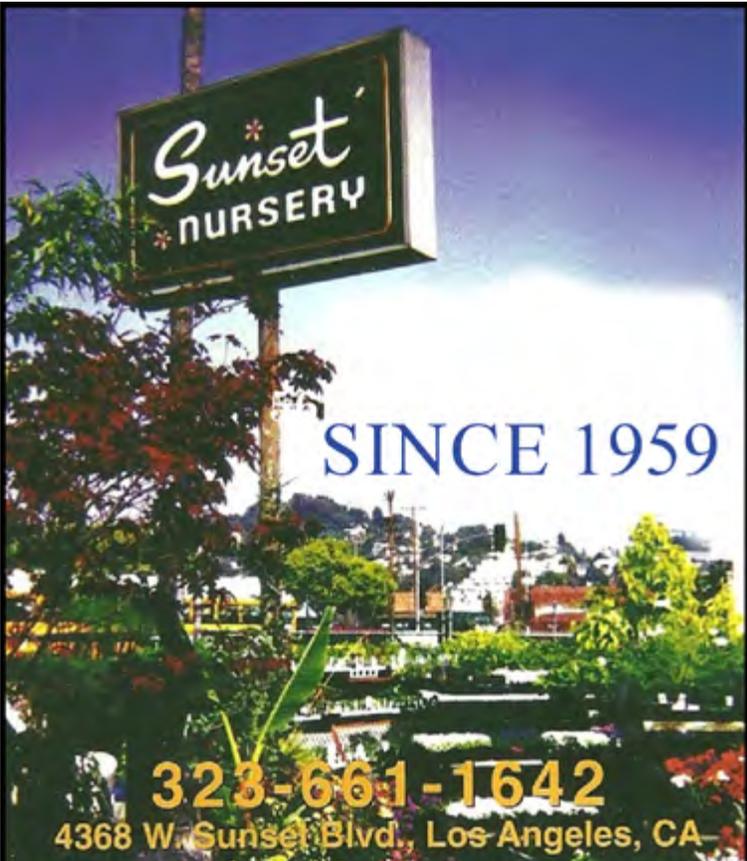
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For creatives trying to figure it all out, give them some advice.

Austen - "Don't be so focused on the exact creative job you see for yourself, as sometimes other opportunities will give you the idea you were born to do. But first, throw your current smartphone in the Silverlake Reservoir."

Now, what about Franklin Hills?

Palmer - "We got a good deal on our house and feel so unbelievably fortunate to live in this incredible neighborhood. I especially love Baller Hardware and Baller Art Ware and buy all my supplies there."

Lastly: If you were to write the chapter in the book of your life that you are in right now, what would it be titled?

Palmer - "I'll let the writer take this one."
Austen - "Can we please talk about your idea tomorrow? I JUST fell asleep."



📷: DINA BIBLARZ

Volunteer Today!

We're always looking for new volunteers and interested board members.

Let us know at FHRA@franklinhills.org

The Magic of Lyrical Streets

by Carol Nese

Franklin Hills is not just a neighborhood; it is a community of talented musicians. Walking down the 2500 block of Lyric Avenue with a spring in your step, you might start whistling to the tunes you hear drifting out of the houses on the appropriately named street. These talented musicians often leave their windows and doors opened to share their music with the neighborhood audience. Songs fill the air as the notes float up, up and away.

Jay is a film and tv composer and pianist who performs every Sunday night at El Prado on Sunset in Echo Park.

Ramona, indie pop singer turned musicologist, is a music professor at Occidental College and a PhD musicologist candidate at UCLA.

Across the street Zara Vaughan, professional jazz singer, is often heard accompanied by her pianist.

A few doors down is Carole, who went back to playing classical piano music during the pandemic. She now studies with another Franklin Hills resident and college music professor, Joseph Klice.

Up the hill on St. George, Jenny is a Doctor of Music who teaches at Claremont College.

Back on Lyric, other keyboard composers work at home in their studios, and children like Walter study piano with retired LAUSD music teacher DeeAnn Bowater. DeeAnn gives back to her community by providing lessons on a variety of instruments to many local school kids for a nominal fee.

The magic continues and wafts up Myra, Holly Knoll and beyond. The Guide Trio is a rootsy acoustic folk-jazz band with Jake Leckie on upright bass, Nadav Peled on guitar, and Elizabeth Goodfellow on drums. Throughout the pandemic, the trio, known as the Quarantunes, played a weekly outdoor jam session in Leckie's front yard. These sessions became an anchor not only for the trio, but for the community of neighbors who would bring out their families each week to enjoy the music.

There are many more musicians, singers, composers, song writers and aspiring musical youth hidden

among the Franklin Hills. Our lyrical community helped us overcome fear and isolation during the quarantine by soothing souls, and we are extremely grateful for this community of creatives who continue to bring joy and happiness through music.



DEEANN BOWATER WITH HER STUDENT WALTER

📷: CAROLE NESE



THE QUARANTUNES

📷: PROVIDED BY THE QUARANTUNES



JAY PLAYS AT EL PRADO EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT

📷: CAROLE NESE

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COMPASS

Garden Art

Restoring Beauty to the Median Garden

by Karen Altus

Nearly 30 years ago, the Franklin Hills Residents Association established the Shakespeare Bridge Median Garden. The positive glow of this initiative welcomes visitors and residents to our neighborhood on a daily basis, and the FHRA continues to fund the water and expert gardeners that maintain its beauty.

You may have noticed some city construction work going on over the last few months, which killed off a section of the garden on the south side. Rest assured, our fabulous gardener will be re-planting this portion soon, so it will be bright and beautiful again in the spring. The FHRA board voted to pay for the new plants, and we want to thank YOU, our supporters and donors, for helping to fund this project.

Not a donor yet? Please consider joining the FHRA or contributing to the Median Garden Fund to maintain a beautiful western entrance to our beloved Franklin Hills.

www.franklinhills.org/join



SECTION OF THE SHAKESPEARE BRIDGE MEDIAN GARDEN IN NEED OF REPAIR.

📷: KAREN ALTUS



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📷: RICK LARocca

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TAINA'S FIRST TREE SCARF IN FRONT OF HER RONDA VISTA HOME



Creative Crocheting

Taina's Tree Wraps

by Michael Wilson

Perhaps you've seen the 20-foot scarves adorning trees and utility poles in the Franklin Hills? It's the creative art of Ronda Vista resident Taina Munoz, who has been crocheting and placing beautiful art statements around the neighborhood in the form of tree wraps. Starting in her front yard, she stitched and looped brightly colored bands of yarn in a rainbow effect, then wrapped her palm tree trunk. The sight is striking, whimsical and joy-inducing. People stop, stare, smile and photograph.

Taina's son Marco goes to Franklin Elementary, and she recently spread her joyful expression across the campus. It's truly art for art's sake, but she loves hearing comments like, "every time I drive by it brings a smile to my face."

 Taina Munoz

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Truth & Wisdom Seeker

by Lesley Kyle

Have you ever met anyone with “the cool, clear eyes of a seeker of wisdom and truth?” I did. She’s our neighbor and a DAMN good writer. I’m speaking of award-winning, New York Times best-selling author and journalist: Lesley M. M. Blume.

Lesley graciously agreed to be the honored guest at our book club earlier this year when we chose her excellent, non-fiction book: *Everybody Behaves Badly: The True Story behind Hemingway’s Masterpiece: The Sun Also Rises*. Lesley brought her passions, sharp intelligence and wry humor to that discussion. The book is riveting and terrific as was hearing about her creative process.

Her subsequent book, *Fallout: The Hiroshima Cover-up and the Reporter Who Revealed It to the World*, was selected as one of the New York Times’s top 100 books of 2020, and is currently in development as a series. She writes frequently on historical nuclear and war topics, and the intersection of war and the arts.

Besides her many non-fiction books, Lesley has also published in other genres. There are children’s books, artfully told by Ms. Blume and deliciously illustrated by Mr. David Foote. There is a delightful series of mini-encyclopedias called: *Let’s Bring Back* which delve into our shared cultural history, describing many forgotten phrases, traditions, fashions and even cocktails. “Ants in the Pants” libation, anyone? (Suitable, as Franklin Hills is a veritable anthill.)

New York born, Lesley earned a B.A. in History from Williams College and a Masters in Philosophy in Historical Studies at Cambridge University. Lesley began her professional career in television news – working for Ted Koppel at *ABC News Nightline*. She moved into print journalism, and she contributes regularly to *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *National Geographic*, *Town & Country*, and *Vanity Fair*, just to name a few. Lesley is currently working on articles on a variety of subjects, and is developing several documentary projects.

You may want to visit www.LesleyMMBlume.com to get the full picture of this talented and prolific, artist-neighbor of ours. Or follow her on IG and Twitter: [@lesleymmblume](https://www.instagram.com/lesleymmblume)

BUT FIRST... Lesley, after working as a contributor and columnist at *Vanity Fair*, developed a special fondness for a monthly Q & A feature called the “Proust Questionnaire,” which has appeared on the back page of that magazine for years.



Here are a few responses to her Proust Questionnaire:

FAVORITE VIRTUE: Integrity.

FAVORITE QUALITIES IN A MAN: Decency.

FAVORITE QUALITIES IN A WOMAN: Ambition.

FAVORITE OCCUPATION: Researching in hallowed archives.

YOUR CHIEF CHARACTERISTIC: Tenacity.

YOUR IDEA OF HAPPINESS: Going horseback riding in the Hollywood Hills at sunset, then going to Musso & Frank for a steak and vodka dirty martini.

YOUR IDEA OF MISERY: Lack of opportunity. And rampant stupidity as a dominant force in culture.

FAVORITE FOOD: An extremely tomato-y pomodoro or pizza (shout out to the Grandma pizza at Tomato Pie!) or a really murky gumbo from Galatoire's in New Orleans.

WHERE WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO LIVE: Franklin Hills, Los Angeles.



BLUME WITH HER DAUGHTER AND HUSBAND, BIG SUR, SUMMER 2023

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A Snapshot of Photographer Peter Yang

by Jessica Luebke

Peter Yang is a contributor to GQ, Rolling Stone, Esquire, and The New York Times Magazine, and has shot campaigns for Coca-Cola, Comedy Central, and Bank of America. His work has been recognized by American Photography and Communication Arts, but he would never tell you; because he is too modest. Luckily for me, he is also my neighbor and friend.

I first met Peter Yang at a neighbor's dinner party. Peter's wife, Jenni, was pregnant, and because our son was very young our neighbor thought it would be great for us to meet. We all exchanged pleasantries over a delicious meal and talked about careers and kids. Peter mentioned that he was a photographer but didn't go into detail about his projects. After dinner we looked him up and discovered that he has shot some of the most famous names in entertainment and politics!

Over the years Peter and Jenni have become close friends, as have our children. I recently sat down with him to discuss Franklin Hills living, what inspires him, and how he became a photographer.

When did you move to Franklin Hills?

Peter – We purchased the house in 2016, but didn't move in until 2017. The home was designed by architect Dick Lowry as his private residence in the early 1970s. The house contains a studio which was actually built a number of years before the home. I originally used the studio as an office as I'm used to shooting in rental studios and shoots of bigger scale in spaces that are much larger. During the pandemic I started shooting in the home studio and I still use it for my personal projects.

Do you find inspiration for your work in the neighborhood?

I spend my days here and I find it very inspirational. From the views outside my window, to the vibe here, and the quietness. I find a lot of peace here.



SELF PORTRAIT | PETER YANG

Do you primarily shoot portraits, and who are some of your favorite subjects?

Yes. I've photographed [President Barack] Obama a few times over the years, but that first time for *Rolling Stone* was very memorable. From a career standpoint it was a really big deal for me at the time. I'm a big fan of comedy, so Nick Kroll and Amy Poehler have been really good. I love the Rock, he's always very kind. I always connect to my subjects from a shooting standpoint, but during the pandemic I went to a few homes and set up some studios outside. I think that was the only time that most of us were experiencing the closest thing to a shared experience. I remember going to George Clooney's house and Dwayne Johnson's house and we'd just be chatting about "what's it been like for you?". There was definitely a level of human connection back in a time that we didn't connect with people at all.

How did you first get involved in photography?

I always liked to do art. I used to draw a lot as a child but I didn't even know that art was a career option. My idea of a job was a lawyer, doctor, engineer or maybe marketing. When I went to college I was a business major, and then somehow I stumbled upon the journalism department and photography. I didn't even own a real camera, but I went there and I tried it out. In some mix between my obsessive personality, a little bit of art, and the thought that this could really be something, I found it there.

IG [@yopeteryang](#)



**CLOCKWISE
(TOP LEFT):**

- KRISTEN STEWART
- PEDRO PASCAL
- JULIA GARNER
- BILL HADER
- JACKIE CHUNG
- MAYA RUDOLPH & FRED ARMISEN
- STEVEN YEUN
- DWAYNE JOHNSON

📷: PETER YANG

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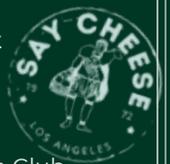


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