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**WINTER 2017 / ISSUE #59** 

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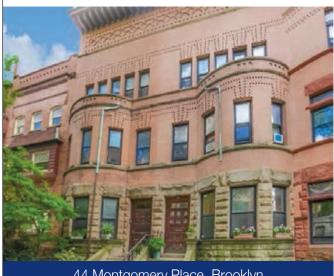
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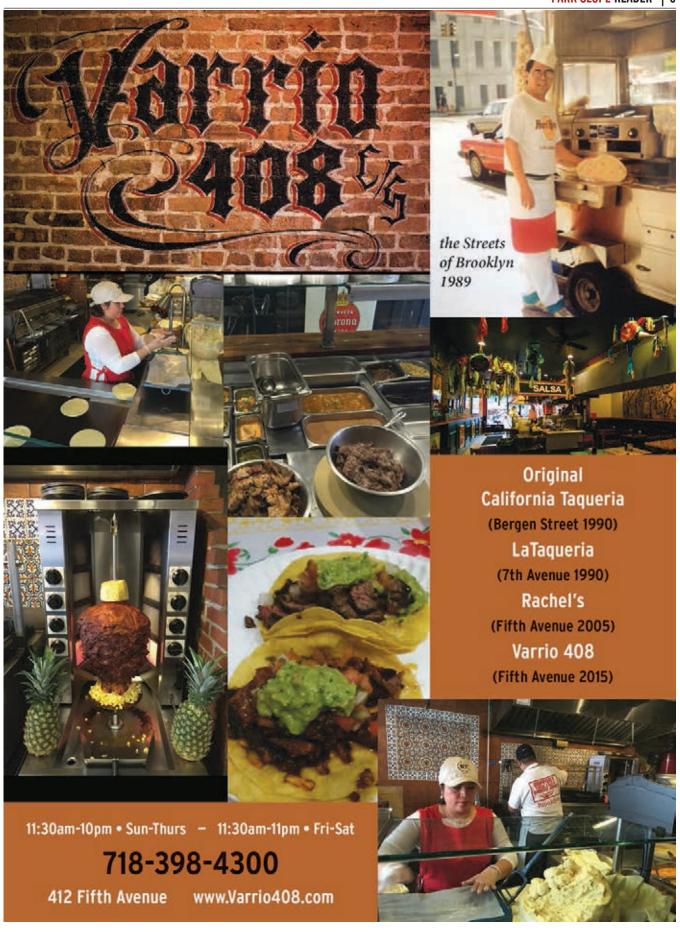
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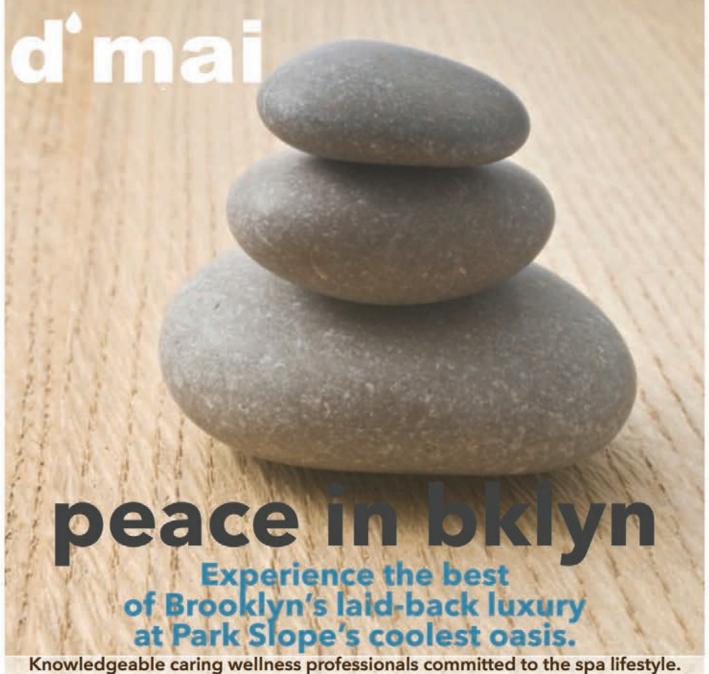
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## **READER GALLERY Miska Draskoczy**



Photographer Miska Draskoczy lives and works on the border of Gowanus and Park Slope and recently published a book, Gowanus Wild (gowanuswildbook.com), exploring nature and wilderness in the neighborhood. Has has exhibited the series as a solo show at The Brooklyn Public Library, Davis Orton Gallery, the Vermont Center for Photography and Ground Floor Gallery in Brooklyn, NY and his work has been featured in the press by The New York Times, The New Yorker, The Atlantic, NY1, Time Out, Brooklyn Magazine, and many others as well as collected by institutions such as Tufts University, Brooklyn Public Library, and Fitchburg Art Museum.

> 'WINTER TUG', FROM THE BOOK GOWANUS WILD (GOWANUSWILDBOOK.COM)





(Front Cover Photograph) **RAE OLMI** is a full-time mom (and wife, and sister and daughter and friend) and a part-time photographer and designer. She studied photography at Parsons and design at Pratt institute. She lives happily in Brooklyn with her two daughters and her husband.

**OLIVIA WILLIAMSON** I graduated from the French Culinary Institute while still in my teens and have been working in some aspect of the food service industry ever since. After moving to Park Slope 12 years ago and starting a family I formed my meal delivery business, Olivia Cooks For You. Since that time the business has grown into also an event catering service for everything from small dinner parties, to weddings and large corporate events. Despite food being my business, it's still my passion and joy and I jump at any opportunity to cook for my friends and family.

**MIRIELLE CLIFFORD** once heard a poet say that "Brooklyn is the home of every new creation," and she just might agree. Her writing has appeared in One Green Planet and Philanthropy News Digest. She has studied poetry with Cynthia Cruz and Jean Valentine, and she is a co-founder of Sweet Action, a monthly poetry workshop.

**NICOLE CACCAVO KEAR'S** memoir, Now I See You, debuted June '14 by St. Martin's Press, and she contributes regularly to Parents and American Baby, as well as Salon and Babble in between her dispatches at the Reader. You can keep up with her misadventures in Mommydom on her blog, A Mom Amok (amomamok.com). A native of Brooklyn, she lives in the Slope with her three firecracker kids, one very patient husband, and an apparently immortal hermit crab.

ANNIKA ANDERSSON is a New York-based writer with a

background in film, social media marketing, sponsorship sales and management. For more information, please visit www.cinespons. com

**NANCY LIPPINCOTT** is a writer living in Brooklyn, though she makes frequent trips to Queens just for the pho. She has strong opinions about tacos, sandwiches, and negronis.

British-born **ROBERT AYERS** is an artist and writer who first came to this country in 1979. He has seen many changes in the Slope since then and is now delighted to find himself living here.

**BETH KAISERMAN** is a writer and restaurant worker in Brooklyn. Her work has appeared in Highbrow Magazine, Paste Magazine, Examiner.com and The Gotham Palate, a local food blog. She likes to cook and tap dance. Her biggest fear is losing her ticket at Katz's because it was scary enough the first time, and she still has flashes of pastrami and prison cells.

**TATIANA FORERO PUERTA** is a writer, yogi, and teacher. Tatiana has studied Religion and Philosophy at University of the Pacific, Stanford University and New York University. Tatiana works with yoga teachers and private clients teaching yoga, philosophy and nutrition. As a writer, Tatiana's work deals issues in philosophy, yoga, nutrition and their relevance in our daily

lives. Her writing has appeared in Assisi Literary Journal, Religion and Psychology Research, and JOY: The Journal of Yoga. She can be contacted through her website:www.tatianayoga.com



















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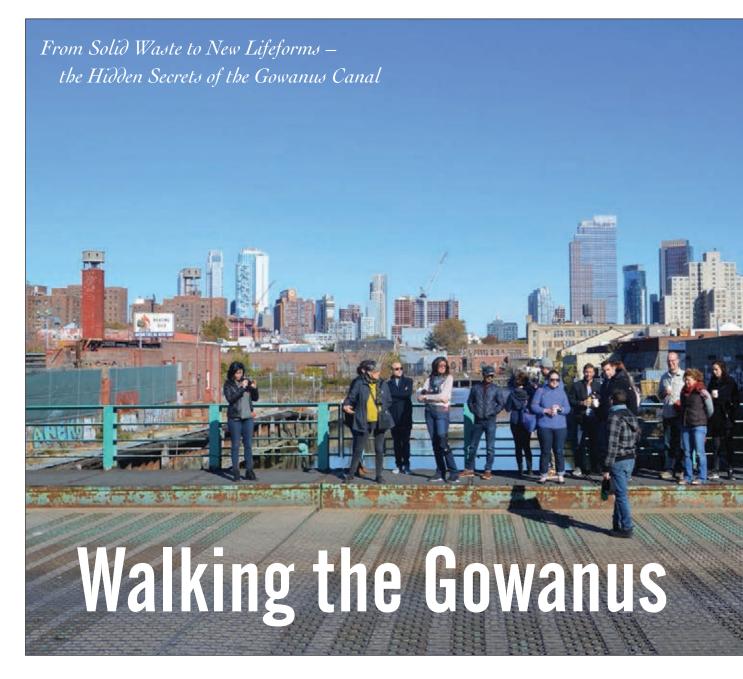
THE SLOPE'S FAVORITE BARISTAS...

Jessa Grimke and Jared Edison, to give them their full names, are the Park Slope Reader's newest regulars. They are store manager and head barista at Cafe Perspectivo which has been one of the recurrent locales for the long-running cartoon strip Lulu 'n' Hershey (twoextraordinarydogs.com) since March 2015 - and which not everyone realized was actually here in the Slope all along. They have had many adventures along the way: Jessa has had a long career as a performance artist and most notably Jared was actually written out of the strip when he fell victim to random gun violence in January 2016. Fortunately theirs is a cartoon reality where anything can happen and everything has a happy ending. They will be here in every issue doing their best to achieve a similar happy ending to the country's current political circumstances.

Want to know more about Jared 'n' Jessa? Go to: bit.ly/2hznM5U



# THE NATURAL SLOPE





I'VE NEVER BEEN TO THE GOWANUS. UNTIL RE-CENTLY, THE AREA HAS BEEN STUCK WITH A VERY BAD REPUTATION. A DANGEROUS, DESERTED PLACE, **CENTERED AROUND A STINKY CANAL FILLED WITH** TOXIC INDUSTRIAL WASTE, ALSO RUMORED TO BE THE DUMPING GROUND FOR DEAD BODIES BY THE ITALIAN MAFIA. BULLETS OVER BROADWAY, ANYONE? BY ANNIKA ANDERSSON



Armed with cups of freshly brewed coffee, courtesy of the souvenir shop, we started the tour by heading down to the Union Street Bridge overlooking the Gowanus Canal.

# So I've stayed away. Until I heard about Brooklyn

Brainery's "Walk the Gowanus with a Local Author," and I decided the time was ripe to pay a visit and see for myself. Surely I would be safe in broad daylight, with a well-reputed local guide and 20 witnesses?

For \$20, licensed New York City tour guide and self-proclaimed history nerd Joseph Alexiou will tell you everything you've ever wanted to know about the Gowanus. And if you are left with an appetite for more, Alexiou just happens to be the author of the book Gowanus: Brooklyn's Curious Canal, conveniently for sale at the Gowanus Souvenir Shop where we met up for the tour on the beautiful Saturday morning in late Fall. Souvenir shop? Yes, the area is now a thriving neighborhood with arts and craft shops, coffee shops, delis and a recently opened Wholefoods. Armed with cups of freshly brewed coffee, courtesy of the souvenir shop, we started the tour by heading down to the Union Street Bridge overlooking the Gowanus Canal.

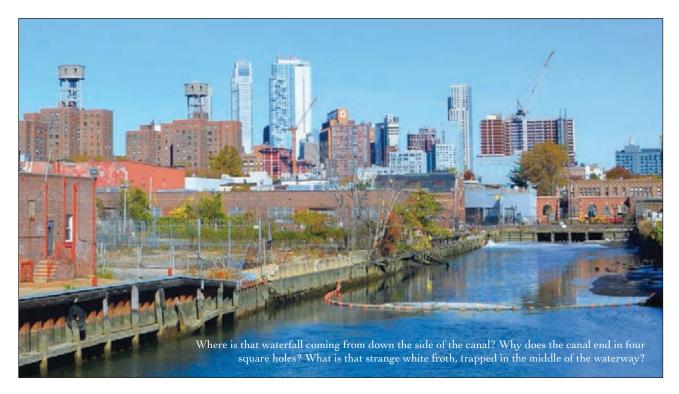
It's hard to visualize that the stinky puddle below us was once a riverbed embraced by luscious, green banks, but 400 years ago we would have overlooked a tidal inlet of navigable creeks in original saltwater marshland and meadows with plenty of fish and wildlife. Early European settlers are said to have named the waterway "Gowane's Creek" after Gouwane, the tribal chief of a local Lenape tribe called the Canarsee, who lived and farmed on the shorelines.

Gradually "Gowane's Creek" became scattered with tide-water mills, as more settlers moved in. In fact, the first tide-water gristmill ever patented in New York, in 1665, just a year after New Amsterdam got re-named, was built and operated in the Gowanus, in the small town of Breukelen. Dutch farmers also engaged in the clamming of large oysters, which became Breukelen's first export to Europe. Six-foot tides forced salt water up into the creek's winding course, creating a brackish mix ideal for oysters. The Gowanus oysters were notable for their large sizes, much bigger than the ones found in the

surrounding East Coast area today, and some were even said to have reached the size of dinner plates.

Wildlife is starting to return to the canal, as a result of the cleaning efforts. Oysters, white perch, herring, striped bass, anchovies, jellyfish, crabs, herons, egrets, bats, and Canada geese, have all been found in the area.

When the 19th-century industrial revolution reached the city of Brooklyn, it was the third most populous city in America, as well as the fastest growing. The Gowanus Creek and the farmland had been incorporated the into a greater urban area, and industrial sites had been established among the mills, along with prospering urban villages. The riverbed had already been dredged to get more water to the gristmills, but a canal would serve the inland industries better, and drained surrounding marshes would allow land reclamation to give room for the up to 700 new buildings being constructed annually from this time and into the next century. In 1849, the New York Legislature authorized the construction of the Gowanus Canal. Once completed 20 years later, the new canal allowed for a large number of factories, warehouses, tanneries, coal stores, and oil and gas refineries to spring up as a result. Brownstone quarried in New Jersey and Upstate New York was transported on barges to build the neighborhoods of Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill, and Park Slope. After World War I, six million tons of cargo was produced and trafficked though the waterway annually. The Gowanus Canal, despite it's modest size, became the nation's busiest commercial canal.



Standing on the Union Street Bridge and looking down at the docks on either side, we can only imagine the busy hub that must have surrounded us if we had stood there during Brooklyn's flourishing industrial era. But looking closer at what's left today, we turn to our guide to find out about a few peculiarities—where is that waterfall coming from down the side of the canal? Why does the canal end in four square holes? What is that strange white froth, trapped in the middle of the waterway? But most importunate, as we are trying to breath through our mouths - why does the water stink so much?

When the canal was planned, the city opted for the cheapest construction, which ended up having several flaws. The canal is open at one end only, because the tide itself was thought to be enough to oxidate the water sufficiently, as well as cleanse the canal from waste. However, the canal's wooden and concrete embankments barred the tide from flowing all the way into the narrow channel. The concentration of oxygen ended up being just 1.5 parts per million, well below the minimum 4 parts per million needed to sustain life. As a result, boats entering the canal were instantly cleansed of all marine parasites attached to their

hulls, but the canal had become an odor-reeking sewer. It was not only because the chemical plants and factories for paint, ink, and soap and sulfur producers by the canal let out their raw sewage straight into the water, but in order to manage Brooklyn's rapid growth, new sewer connections added to the problem by discharging sewage from the surrounding neighborhoods further away into the Gowanus. The four large square openings in front of us

The Superfund is a trust fund to cover the cost of cleanups, before being reimbursed by the parties responsible for the pollution by referring to the U.S. Department of Justice.

was the outlet of the combined rain water drainage and sewage system known as the "Big Sewer." It started from Prospect Park and went through an area known as "The Flooded District" with the double purpose of draining the flooded water, and move the still water of the upper Gowanus Canal. Unfortunately, it only brought more dirt into the canal, and even made headlines in the Brooklyn Daily

Eagle newspaper shortly after, being described as an engineering blunder. Locals sarcastically nicknamed the canal "Lavender Lake."

The canal got so polluted with toxins and sludge that regular dredging was required to even keep the waters navigable, and by 1910, the water of the canal was said to have become almost solid waste, which prompted another attempt to bring water into the upper part of the canal. This time a tunnel was constructed to pump clean water from Buttermilk Channel between the Brooklyn shore and Governors Island. However, the Flushing tunnel, as it was named, never functioned properly. The canal and it's water returned to a neglected, stagnant stage from the 1960s until 1999, when the pump was repaired and re-activated. The waterfall on our left is the result of the new design, pumping an average rate of 200,000,000 US gallons of water into the canal every day, during it's 11 hours of operation between tides.

A number of cleansing efforts began in the new millennium, and in 2010 the Gowanus Canal was declared a Superfund cleanup site. The Superfund is a trust fund to cover the cost of cleanups, before being reimbursed by the parties responsible for the pollution by referring to the U.S. Department of Justice. Many of the Gowanus polluters have ceased to exist, merged, changed names, or moved away. The successor companies and the current property owners will assume the liability of those sold or merged. Two major polluters identified by the Superfund to be held responsible are New York City and National Grid.

The froth trapped between the bridge and the end of the canal is toxins brought up to the surface and regularly removed from the canal as part of the cleansing effort. But amazingly, new life has also been discovered on the bottom of the canal. A mix of bacteria, protozoa, chemicals, and other substances called "white stuff," or "bio-film," appears to collaborate to find food. Even more astonishingly, the biological components exchange genes and expel substance which acts as an antibiotic to keep it protected from toxins in the water. The substance could find use in new antibiotic drugs, and time will tell what more secrets the canal may reveal as the cleanup continues. But for now, the rising gas bubbles from the decomposition of sewage sludge on the bottom still stink up the area on warm and sunny days, like this lovely day we chose for our guided tour.

There are seven bridges over the canal, and as we are crossing the next bridge down, the old, retractile Carroll Street bridge built in 1889, we get a glimpse of how the Gowanus may look in the not-so-distant future. Looking up at a shiny new 700-rental luxury complex from the landmark bridge over the muddy canal, it is as we are seeing two different worlds placed next to each other, which have failed to morph in to one. The building is flanked by photographs advertising a lifestyle of picturesque canoeing in the canal for prospective renters. However, from our perspective on the bridge, the canal looks nothing like it does in the photographs. But there is in fact a canoe club called The Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club, run by dedicated volunteers, that has logged over 2,000 trips on the Gowanus Canal and report a rise in popularity. And wildlife is starting to return to the canal, as a result of the cleaning efforts. Oysters, white perch, herring, striped bass, anchovies, jellyfish, crabs, herons, egrets, bats, and Canada geese, have all been found in the area. The only wildlife we're seeing though is a lonely cat, and canoeists should be warned that the water is heavily contaminated by E. coli and gonorrhea. Needless to say, nothing caught in the canal is safe to eat. But as the cleanup continues, the real world may soon enough look like the idealized world in the photographs.

After the tour is over, we are left with an abundance of information to process. The neighborhood around us has more dimensions now, with our extended knowledge about its past. For anyone curious about the Gowanus, the tour gives a fun, upbeat experience, and offers numerous insights into the area's rich history along the way. And as it is rapidly changing, it may be wise to do the tour soon, while the gritty parts are still there. Also, a winter tour may lessen your chances of having to endure one prominent part of the canal's history that nobody will be sad to see disappear – the stink!







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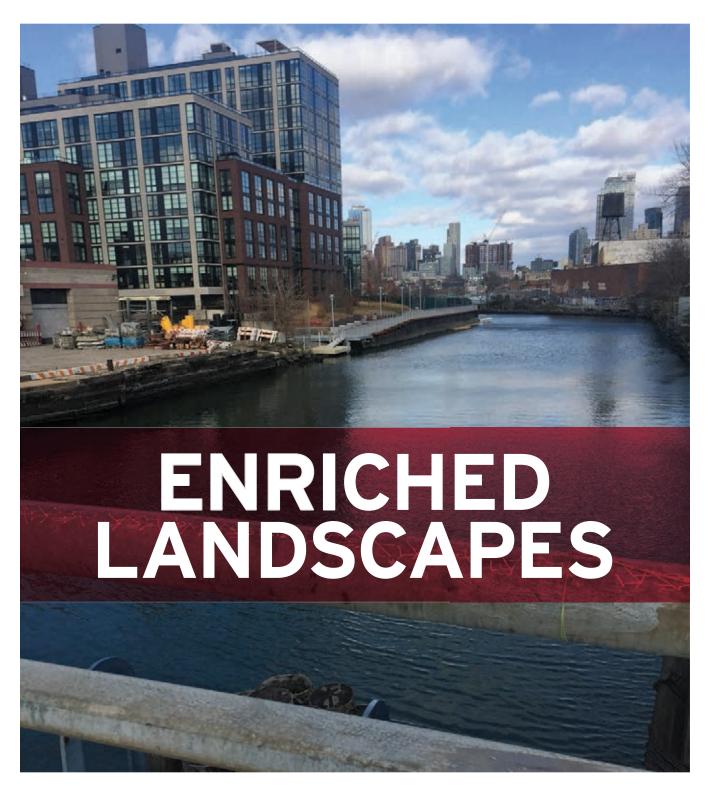
The founder of Smooth Endings, Ltd. and Indelible Ink-New York, Donna Trimboli is a certified Master Laser Specialist, Micropigmentation Practitioner and Esthetician. She has been serving clients at 510 2nd Street for more than 20 years.

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# THE READER INTERVIEW —



THE READER INTERVIEW WITH SUSANNAH C . DRAKE ON CLEANING UP THE GOWANUS CANAL

THE GOWANUS CANAL SPONGE PARK<sup>TM</sup> OPENED IN THE FALL OF 2016. Facing the Canal at the end of 2nd street, the park was designed by DLANDstudio Architecture + Landscape Architecture to clean up the Canal's notoriously polluted waters. I spoke with Susannah C. Drake, DLANDstudio's founding principal, who—as a registered architect, landscape architect, and an adjunct professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design—offers a unique perspective on the topic of green infrastructure and the design challenges that are unique to New York City. By Mirielle Clifford



# HOW DOES THE GOWANUS CANAL SPONGE PARK™ WORK?

When we came up with the idea, I didn't want to go into a neighborhood and say, I'm putting a wetland in your backyard. That wasn't going to fly, nor do you want to have a true swamp in your backyard. But we do want a landscape that can absorb more surface water runoff, to prevent it from

going into your cellar, creating puddles on the street, taking all of the detritus from the street and putting it into our water bodies, and killing wildlife. We wanted to create a landscape to absorb that water. So the term "Sponge Park™" refers to an absorbent landscape. We designed it as a park space, a garden with very absorbent soils that will take all of that water and help make it available to the plants, which will evapotranspirate the moisture and keep it out of the waterway and your cellar.

# IT SEEMS LIKE THIS DESIGN COULD BE REPLICATED IN A LOT OF DIFFERENT STREET-ENDS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

Right. When we did the original master plan, working with the Gowanus Canal Conservancy, we designed a system for all of the areas around the Gowanus. We got a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) to do this initial planning work, and we tried to find every available absorbent surface. We discovered there was this setback that city planning was putting into law where you would have a 40-foot setback from the waterfront plus a 10-foot supplemental walkway. Initially, we thought, this is great. We have all of that landscape available to make Sponge Park™'s. But one thing that differentiates the Gowanus Canal and other industrial canals from a waterfront like Battery Park City is that they're industrial landscapes which tend to have buildings abutting the waterfront, so you can't have that continuous walkway or open space. We saw that as a potential opportunity to thread the green infrastructure, or thread the enriched landscape, back into the community.

One of the first places we saw an opportunity to do this was at the street-ends, where the land was available and there were no buildings. And so we created this prototypical Sponge Park™ street-end that could be replicated. We've done some GIS (Geographic Information System) analysis of other street-ends around the city and found there were a couple of hundred places where this same design could be implemented. The Department

of Transportation is really excited about that and they were looking at how much it'd cost to implement it on a broader scale. We've been calculating how much water it will actually manage and it manages millions of gallons of water per year. So it could have a very meaningful impact.

# DLANDSTUDIO'S FUNDRAISING PROCESS STRUCK ME AS UNIQUE. IS IT UNUSUAL FOR AN ARCHITECTURE STUDIO TO BE WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND NON-PROFITS?

We created a completely different paradigm of practice, where we basically look for things that are broken in the city. Sometimes those discoveries happen because of discussions with non-profits who tell us, Hey, there's an issue in our community and we want to figure out some solutions. Sometimes it's just from running or biking around the city and seeing something that seems like a design opportunity. But we look for those opportunities and relationships. Then we find sources of funding to first develop some of the planning work and then ultimately fund some of the design development and construction drawings, and then we've raised money for for the construction.

It's completely different than a normal procurement process. It's been fruitful and it was particularly fruitful for my firm because I had been practicing for about 15 years before I started my practice, but my practice was seen as that of a young womanowned business. The work I do is in the infrastructure space, which tends to be controlled by massive engineering firms, and architecture firms started to find landscape architecture and infrastructure interesting as well. So the competition is quite fierce from huge firms that have been around for a long time and have a lot of built work. But I felt I had a different, important voice to communicate, and that I had the experience to do the work. It wasn't like I was naive to what it takes to do public work.

11

ONE THING THAT WAS SO MAGICAL ABOUT WORKING IN GOWANUS, THAT I REALLY APPRECIATED OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS, WAS THAT THERE WERE SO MANY DIFFERENT VOICES AND PEOPLE WHO REALLY CARED ABOUT THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD.

"

So I came up with this method of applying for grants from environmental organizations and getting significant amounts of money to build these prototypical green infrastructure systems. So we did the Sponge Park™ and we also did one that

we call HOLDS in Flushing Meadows Park. These are ideas, they're experiments, prototypes that will need to be adjusted as we move forward and think about broader implementation. The point is to use the grant money to enable innovation that can't happen through a normal procurement process. But it's completely different. It's a wacky paradigm.

Nobody does this. Nobody did this. Now it's so funny because the big architecture firms who would get the jobs anyway are all starting little non-profit arms, which is frustrating.



An inside joke with former Mayor Bloomberg

#### IS THIS PROCUREMENT PROCESS TRICKIER, OR MORE BUREAUCRATIC, THAN THE CONVENTIONAL METHOD?

Every public project is filled with bureaucracy. I have to say the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) was very patient with me although we drove each other crazy for a while. But they were patient. What was really exciting was that there was an overall vision for creating green infrastructure supported by the Bloomberg administration and the DEP during that administration, that has carried forward into the de Blasio administration. There's a recognition of the need for these kinds of new strategies that enabled a willingness to experiment. So that was good, but it was tricky because these government entities aren't set up to receive

big grants of money from a random private firm and then give it back to that firm. That's a tricky thing. It's hard to figure out how to make that work through a public process. But meanwhile I did all the work to get the grants. I wrote the grant proposals and did all of that on my own dime. So in a way I'm providing great benefit to the city by doing this. It's not like we've made any money doing the project. It's been all about the research and development of an idea.

DO YOU THINK THAT PROCUREMENT PROCESS ENCOURAGES MORE INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS. THE INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ACTUALLY AFFECTED BY THESE DESIGNS?

Yes. I did some work up in the Bronx with the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality, and it was pretty great in terms of engaging kids and the community in the development of one of these innovative structures. I think the kids really learned a lot. City agencies can do a lot of really good work. We shouldn't necessarily try to subvert everything they do because there is a very beneficial public process that can make great parks and playgrounds and make things happen. But to the degree that you can use these kinds of systems to augment initiatives that are

happening, like the vision of the city, I think it's really great. Or if a community group has a vision, as a designer if I can help them realize that vision, it's really rewarding for me, and for a lot of other designers who care about the communities in which they live. It's a pretty great method for giving grassroots communities power to implement something, but we do have to remember we also have city council operating on behalf of the public to make things happen. But if you can combine the work of that community group with the work of city council, then you can get something really exciting going because you have more power. So using it as leverage is really the most valuable situation.

## I LOVE THE IDEA OF THE BQ GREEN PROJECT, WHICH HOPES TO UNITE THE NEIGHBORHOODS THAT WERE DIVIDED BY THE BROOKLYN QUEENS EXPRESSWAY (BQE). WAS THERE A SIMILAR PROCESS FOR THAT IDEA?

I have to give a lot of credit to the New York State Council on the Arts. When I started my firm I applied for a grant from NYSCA to look at capping the BQE over in Cobble Hill and Carroll Gardens, which is pretty close to my office. I developed this vision for making a new park space there, which attracted the attention of city councilwoman Diana Reyna. She invited me to participate in an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for looking at her neighbourhood and potentially doing something over there. Her neighborhood, Southside Williamsburg, is where BQ GREEN ended up getting developed.

We won a competitive bid against some really talented architects and developed that idea. It was really the result of a very involved community process, with a lot of meetings with different stakeholders and groups that didn't necessarily always want to show up at the same meetings, so we had to have separate meetings for different constituents. We also just went out to the playground and talked to people because we weren't getting enough voices. So we started talking to people on the street, at church, and at school drop off and pick up.

11

I'D LIKE TO SEE MORE WOMEN LEADING FIRMS. THERE ARE SOME VERY TALENTED WOMEN OUT THERE LEADING ARCHITECTURE FIRMS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE FIRMS.

11

We got a lot of input and found that the community really wanted active recreation space. They had playgrounds for little kids, but they didn't have space that would keep middle school age kids active and occupied. That was important because the neighborhood has a lot of gang violence. Diana Reyna told a very poignant story about being in the playground as a little kid and hiding behind a water fountain just to avoid being caught in the crossfire between two competing gangs who were having a shootout. So that stuck in the back of our mind. We thought, let's get the kids out on a sports field instead, really unite the neighborhood, and eliminate, or start to blur the territorial boundaries between two competing neighborhoods, or two different constituencies.



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THE KEYS TO THAT.



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I feel like that project has a lot of great potential benefits. Along with Diana Reyna, El Puente, Los Sures, St. Nick's Alliance, and the Open Space Alliance, we've all been trying to make it happen, without necessarily selling out the neighborhood to real estate development interests. So we're trying to get the city to do it just because it's the right thing to do. And that's a really hard lift. But the Borough President has put I think two million dollars into the potential development of it and Diana Reyna has been working tirelessly to try to make it happen, and so has the Open Space Alliance of North Brooklyn. So they're really pushing to try to make it happen now as well. It's funny because it's getting out there and it's becoming something that feels real. That's an exciting thing to have something that started as this planning study and vision really driven by the community start to become something that people feel is inevitable.

#### YOUR STUDIO REALLY EMPHASIZES INTERDISCIPLINARY DESIGN. WHY DO YOU THINK INTERDISCIPLINARY DESIGN IS SOMETHING TO ADVOCATE FOR?

I studied architecture and landscape architecture at Harvard and I got registered in both, and I've always wanted to have an interdisciplinary practice. I hire people that have really varied expertise because I feel that it makes a rich environment for the development of design work. You know you can have just smart people coming together and bringing their expertise if you have people who have experience in, say biology or engineering, or we had one woman who was an astronomer, another woman with a background in religion. I had a sculptor bringing their expertise to the design. These people make it so much richer, more interesting. And so I've always really focused on maintaining that interdisciplinary atmosphere in the office and trying to do projects that really bridge the disciplines. And that's a challenge. It's not something that is really fully understood. There's always a desire to have these these teams that represent a lot of different disciplines, but having an all-in-one office is very fluid and valuable.

#### ARE SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN BECOMING MORE COMMON, EITHER IN NEW YORK CITY OR GENERALLY?

Definitely. It's much more prevalent. A lot of the ideas that I'm able to make happen are things that people were talking about in the early '70s, when I was a little girl. It comes out of the environmental movement. But I think part of the reason those environmental initiatives didn't take hold in a meaningful way in cities up until now is that there wasn't an integration of the natural system and the urban system in a way that really could work.

So I think there's a greater understanding of the need for the integration of a greater level of formality—and by that I mean formmaking—with the the function of an ecological system, a greater hybridity between the engineering and the ecological and the architectural to make something really beautiful. When I say "beautiful," I know that wetlands are beautiful in a particular context. But I think it's important to understand the civic nature of cities and to have an expression that is a bit stronger or more formal.

#### WHAT CAN A READER OR AVERAGE PERSON DO TO ENCOURAGE THAT SUSTAINABILITY, AND THAT INTEGRATION?

A great book just came out called Nature and Cities: The Ecological

Imperative in Urban Design and Planning, published by the Lincoln Land Institute. It has all the top landscape architects represented talking about their approaches to nature and cities. So I would say that's a perfect primer. The chapter I wrote is excerpted in the magazine Land Lines. It's a good read. Not to put in a shameless plug for the book, but it'd be a really good primer.

11

I'M A LITTLE BIT CONCERNED THAT AS THE DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES PUSH INTO GOWANUS, THE AMOUNT OF OPEN SPACE WON'T NECESSARILY BE MAINTAINED AND THERE MIGHT BE A LOSS OF THAT (INDIVIDUAL) EXPRESSION.

11

#### HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN YOUR INDUSTRY? DO YOU THINK THINGS ARE CHANGING RIGHT NOW?

I'd like to see more women leading firms. There are some very talented women out there leading architecture firms and landscape architecture firms, in particular. Andrea Cochran is an amazing role model as well as Gustafson Guthrie Nichol, though at GGN, they don't like to describe themselves as being a womanowned business. They just say, we are designers who happen to be women.

It's kind of a macho profession. I think the only way we're going to advance is if more of us decide to take the initiative and start our practices and really take on these leadership positions. Part of that is how you create your own identity. You have to choose to be a leader. If you choose to be a leader you have to really follow up on that, and it's a lot of work.

There's a lot of nuance. I have a number of friends who are partners in large firms. They have an interesting perspective because they've said they never really felt any issue about being a woman, until they made partner. Then they felt like they were treated differently, like they were only able to get to a certain level within the upper partnership ranks.

I try not to dwell on it too much, but I am aware of the issues. I'm always aware when I get interrupted more than my male colleagues. I'm aware when I hire somebody who has less experience than I do who is male, and people think they're the boss. It's frustrating, but I just deal with it.

#### HAS TEACHING INFLUENCED YOUR WORK, OR DO YOU THINK OF THEM AS SEPARATE SPHERES?

It definitely influences the work. I love teaching and influencing the next generation, and I like bringing people from my academic world into the practice. I've had a number of my students come and work with me. It's been great to watch them grow and develop the ideas that started to germinate within the academy, and then came to fruition through our practice.

A number of those people have actually gone on to become teachers themselves, which is is both great and challenging because you don't want to lose good people. At the same time I want to see people grow. So I've really enjoyed it, and I feel I get a lot of ideas from teaching and also, frankly, from traveling to

different cities, because I've been an adjunct in a lot of different places. I've seen a lot of different things which has been helpful.

# ARE THERE THINGS YOU'VE SEEN IN OTHER CITIES THAT YOU'D BRING TO NEW YORK IF YOU COULD?

I don't know. New York is so big that it's really hard to think about implementing some things that work in smaller cities here. I find it remarkable when planners look to a city of 200,000 people and start to apply a system, that would work there, to New York City. To a certain degree, some of those systems work, but sometimes they just can't because of the scale and population density. It's a tough environment for plants, and for bicyclists. There's a need for design here that really understands the scale of operations and that the systems in the city need to keep moving in order to make this place vital. It's tricky because there are a lot of beautiful things that I see in smaller cities that just wouldn't work here.

# YOU SAID IN AN INTERVIEW THAT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IS ALWAYS SHIFTING WHEREAS WITH ARCHITECTURE, YOU FINISH A BUILDING AND IT'S FINALIZED, AND THAT YOU LIKE MOVING BETWEEN THOSE DIFFERENT MODES.

It's satisfying to build something and then have it be complete when you've finished building it. Whereas with landscape architecture, you're seeding change. It's like if you're having a baby and you need to raise it to be an adult. That's what being a landscape architect is like. There are a lot of things that can go wrong with that baby along the way unless it's taken care of and nurtured, and educated or tended to.

So it's nice to work in both and be able to to have the satisfaction

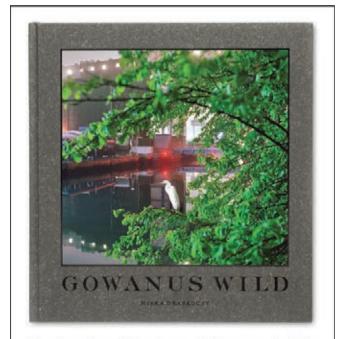


The Gowanus Canal Sponge Park™ was designed as a public park space

of creating something where you can achieve a certain level of perfection immediately and recognize that, and then other cases where you're actually making something for the next generation.

# URBAN DESIGN SEEMS SIMILAR TO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN THAT IT HAS TO SHIFT AND RESPOND TO CHANGE.

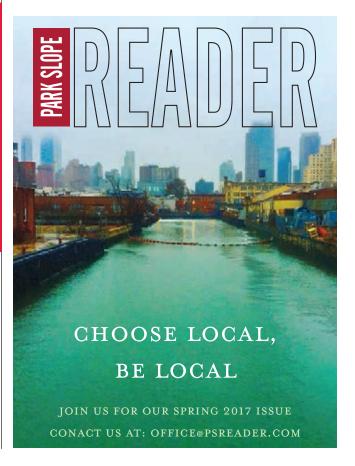
The profession of urban design actually grew out of the profession of landscape architecture. Landscape architecture happened first. There was a profession of architecture. Then in the United States, in the late 19th century, the profession of landscape architecture was born with the creation of all of our great parks. There were clearly

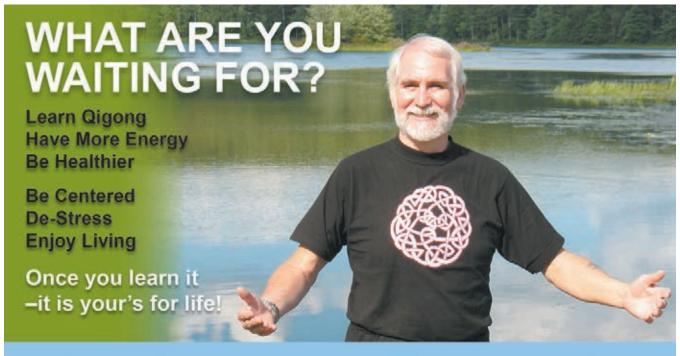


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beautiful landscapes created in Europe and Asia and all over the world, but landscape architecture involves landscapes that were specifically designed for public use. That's an American idea and an American profession that was established by, among others, Olmsted and Beatrix Farrand, who was the only female founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Landscape architecture as a degree program started at Harvard around the turn of the century. And then urban design as a degree program started of a couple of decades later, maybe even three decades later, at Harvard. So it's a newer profession, but urban design co-opted a lot of the work that landscape architects do. So they're related. And there is a program in urban design at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard that is an MAUD program, and you can come into your MAUD program or MLAUD program with either a degree in architecture or a degree in landscape architecture and you get that urban design degree that has a bit of a qualifier of whether it's landscape or architecture. But all the students are working together.

#### IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D ADD FOR PEOPLE IN PARK SLOPE OR **GOWANUS?**

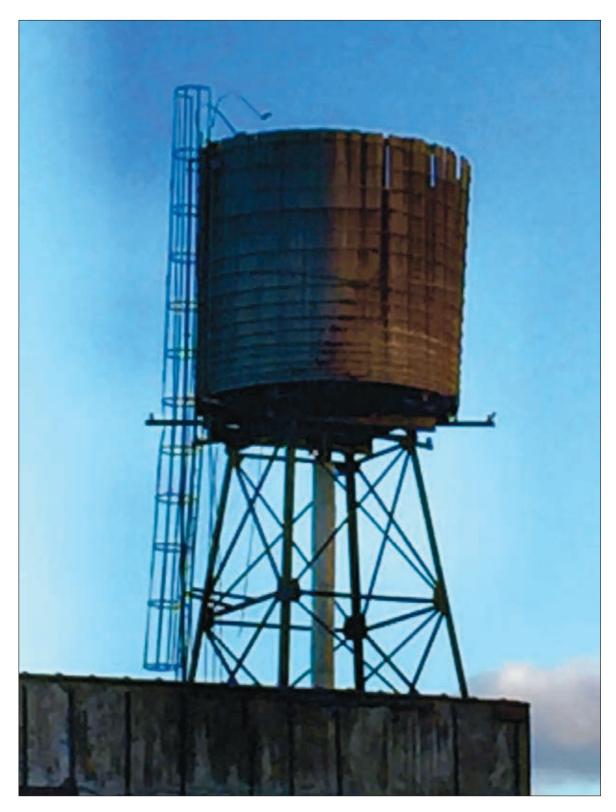
One thing that was so magical about working in Gowanus, that I really appreciated over the last 10 years, was that there were so many different voices and people who really cared about their neighborhood. They saw a great opportunity to make open space with a character that reflected the neighborhood and to actually affect the design. So our master planning work was really intended to be very flexible, so that it could provide a framework for individual expression for its ultimate implementation.

I'm a little bit concerned that as the development pressures push into Gowanus, the amount of open space won't necessarily be maintained and there might be a loss of that expression. Part of the expression had to do with craft and people who were making things, and the fact that it was this industrial neighborhood. Maybe that's a bit of a romantic vision, but it's an exciting vision. And it's something that makes you feel like you're part of that place. And I know cities have to transform and are very organic. I mean my ancestors actually had a farm in Gowanus. There's a creek that was named after my family that now all goes into a CSO. So there has to be an ability to embrace change. But I just hope with that change, the Gowanus area will be able to maintain its wonderful diversity.

In Drake's mind, the Gowanus Canal Sponge Park™ and many of the studio's designs are an "opportunity to thread the green infrastructure, or thread the enriched landscape, back into the community." One can hope that this kind of thinking takes hold on a broader scale.

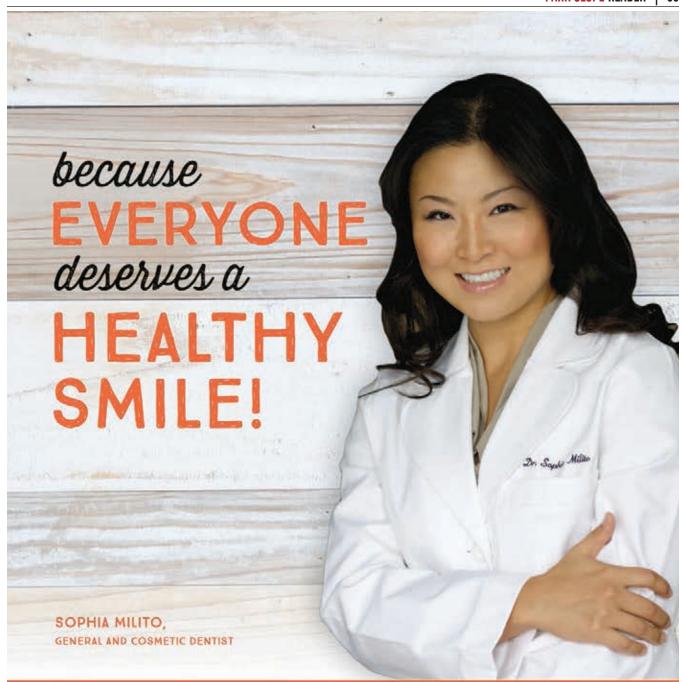
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# Our Town —



GOWANUS WATER TOWER





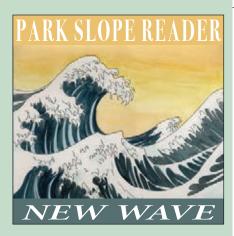


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# THE NEW REGULAR

There were a lot of crappy things that went down in 2016 that made us all too eager for the fresh start of a new year. Last year especially was marked by a lot of loss — artists, thinkers, political optimism, faith in humanity. . . The small business world in Park Slope was not an exception, as many stores and restaurants on Fifth and Seventh Avenues — some having been neighborhood fixtures for more than a decade — shuttered permanently.

It's sad when a much-loved business unexpectedly announces that it will close, especially if it was your regular joint (RIP Gorilla Coffee). After all, it's not just the coffee or the sandwich or the convenience that goes away; it's also the familiar faces behind the counters and bars.

The upside — there's always an upside — is that vacancies always end up getting filled. Just as we all notice when a storefront goes dark, we also feel that excited curiosity when the windows are subsequently lined in butcher paper, permits go up, and rumors start to buzz about who is next up to bat. And who knows? There's always the possibility that whatever steps in next may become your new regular spot.

Check out our list of promising new businesses, and then decide for yourself if any of them might be your new go-to in 2017.

By Nancy Lippincott



## Coffee Shops:

BLUE BOTTLE COFFEE 203 7th Avenue bluebottlecoffee.com

Blue Bottle Coffee has expanded their famous pour-over empire to a new lovely tree-lined corner on Seventh Avenue just a couple blocks away from the park. This will be their third Brooklyn location, which they thoughtfully tailored to Park Slope's youngest generation by designating outdoor stroller parking and offering high chairs. Patrons will be able to enjoy a full breakfast and lunch menu in addition to their regular menu of coffee and espresso drinks.

UPTOWN ROASTERS 355 7th Avenue uptownroasters.com

A neighborhood favorite in Harlem, Uptown Roasters will open their second location further down Seventh Avenue between 10th and 11th Streets. Dan Hildebrand and his wife have used their coffee sales to facilitate better wages for Peruvian farmers from whom they source their beans. The new 1500-square-foot space will provide even more opportunity for community building, as they have big plans to use it for local events, tastings, and talks.

Also check out: Everyman Espresso 162 5th Avenue

#### Retail:

LUCKY RUBBER DUCKY 194-196 7th Avenue tarzianwest.com

With Good Footing having migrated to a new location, Judy Kow, owner of Tarzian West, seized the opportunity — and the adjacent space — to expand her specialty kitchenware store. The new landlord loved Tarzian West so much that she approached Kow about taking over the storefront. The extra room has now enabled the business to respond to increasing demand from their loyal customer base for more merchandise. Their product line has now expanded beyond the kitchen to the rest of the home to include linens, lighting, throws, and more in a spacious and well curated shop.

# FATHER FIGURE fatherfigure.com

This crowd-funded fashion line was born and grown here in Park Slope by former Google employee Andrew Bentley. After becoming a new dad, Bently identified a need from millennial fathers for fashionable and functional clothing and parenting accessories. The collection is designed to "keep babies comfortable and dads looking good." Customers can shop the locally owned, made-in-the-USA apparel online.

Also check out: Libra 1304 8th Avenue



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#### Food & Drink:

### **GNARLEY EATS** 447 7th Avenue gnarleyeats.com

Does a burger, fries, and drink for under \$15 exist in our neighborhood? Now it does. Not only can you score a sloppy cheeseburger, buttermilk-fried chicken burger, wings, tater tots and a slew of other savory delights here, but you can top off the meal with what is already becoming their signature dessert dish: rolled ice cream.

#### SALZY 505 5th Avenue salzybar.com

Looking for some laid-back, grown-up fun? This new cocktail bar and live music venue is already a hit with the late-night crowd. Salzy serves quality craft cocktails but leaves out pretention. The warm service, inviting vibes, and solid tunes make this newcomer feel like an old neighborhood standby already. Owned and operated by comedian Jennifer Salzman, the bar also features live comedy and musical acts, placing it a notch above a regular old watering hole, but with the same comfort and approachability.

#### LOS NOPALES 191 5th Avenue

There's never been a lack of Tex-Mex in the Slope. Unfortunately, if you wanted a taste of real-deal Mexican tacos or quesadillas, you were better off heading much further south to Sunset Park. Hopefully that will all change with Los Nopales opening in the old Bierkraft space on Fifth Avenue, which promises to feature "authentic Mexican spices and condiments" on their menu.



#### ATLANTIC SOCIAL 673 Atlantic Avenue

Having closed both Pork Slope and Thistle Hill Tavern, the Three Kings Restaurant Group is already onto their next venture: an "old style New York tayern" occupying the 7,000-square-foot space. Their largest endeavor yet, the restaurant will seat up to 250 and feature and an eclectic menu by Chef Dale Talde, a cozy fireplace, and a game room.

#### Also check out.

Mis Grill 370 5th Avenue Pig Beach Burger 480 Union Street Momo Ramen 78 5th Avenue Nargis Café 155 5th Avenue

#### **Entertainment:**

## **VR BAR** 808b Union Street vrbar.nyc

Introducing Brooklyn's first — and only virtual reality arcade! This insanely cool new addition to the neighborhood offers a range of "experiences" for guests including climbing Everest and painting in 3-D. Gamers can immerse themselves in this new technology at a rate of \$10 per 10 minutes. Considering that VR technology is incredibly expensive and therefore pretty inaccessible, it's a great deal and a perfect opportunity to try something new and cutting edge this winter. As of now, Vr bar's lease will last until March, so be sure to check it out before spring.



#### Also Check Out:

Nitehawk Cinema (see page XX for more!) 188 Prospect Park West

#### Community:

## **FemGYN** 175 7th Avenue femgynwellness.com

This women's walk-in clinic opened back in May and is making female-focused healthcare affordable and accessible. Services offered include contraceptives, breast cancer screening, annual exams, specialist referrals, and more. Given the uncertain fate of the Affordable Care Act and threats to defund family planning organizations, FemGYN couldn't have come at a better time.

## PARK SLOPE READING CIRCLE & STORYTELLING **GARDEN**

431 6th Avenue bklynlibrary.org/locations/parkslope

Thanks to funding from Brad Lander's Participatory Budget, construction of this public reading circle adjacent to the Park Slope branch of the Brooklyn Public Library is underway. The addition will provide a safe and beautiful space to encourage outdoor reading and play and will feature an amphitheater, pathways, gardening spaces, a water fountain, and a statue of Knuffle Bunny. Who's excited for spring?

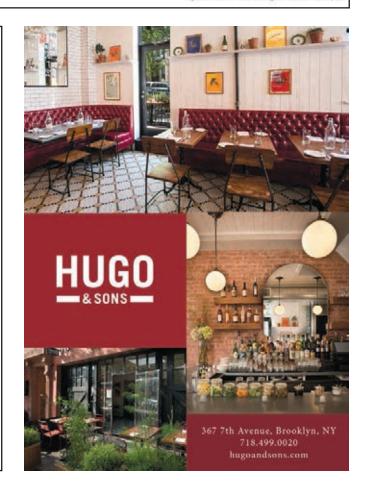


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#### **፠ EAT LOCAL** %

# BEST IN BURGERS

#### TRANSCENDENT DINING IN PARK SLOPE



Korzo's burger is served inside langos, a deep-fried Hungarian flatbread, to protect your burger and satisfy your stomach.

BURGERS SEEM TO BE ON MENUS EVERYWHERE, FROM FAST FOOD TO SUSHI RESTAURANTS. A GOOD ONE CAN BE TRANSCENDENT, AND EVERYONE HAS SPECIFICS THAT MAKE THEIR OWN PERFECT BURGER EXPERIENCE. WHILE SHAKE SHACK REIGNS SUPREME FOR LOYAL FANS, THERE ARE PLENTY OF DELICIOUS, UNIQUE LOCAL BURGERS THAT DESERVE YOUR ATTENTION.

Luckily, we did some hearty research for you. These burgers brighten up Brooklyn with fresh, exciting combinations - beyond the sloppy orange sauce and soggy bun.

ometimes a bun can be so squishy it just soaks into the burger and disappears. That's not the case at **Korzo**, an Eastern European gastropub known for its deep-fried burger.

It's easy to get excited about anything deepfried. But the deep-fried flatbread, or langos, wrapped around this burger basically serves as a handy pocket that catches every last drop of goodness from the burger inside. The burger is grilled to order and toppings are added before it's wrapped in dough and deep-fried for a few minutes until the outside is crispy. Co-owner Maria Zizak prepares the dough every morning for the langos, which is usually eaten as street food in Slovakia and Hungary. (You can also order the bread grilled for your burger.)

They may be best known for the B'klyn Beet Veggie Burger: a roasted beet, walnut and black-eyed pea patty topped with baby gouda, caramelized onions, and market greens. A side of pickled seasonal veggies and fries (or salad), and you're set for a special burger experience. Order a Korzo organic ale (a collaboration with Peak Organic Brewing Company) to wash it all down.

Zizak and her husband, Otto, met in 2nd grade in Slovakia and reunited as adults in New York City. Zizak said their goal is to convince people that Eastern European food isn't bland just because it isn't spicy. Their other restaurant, Brooklyn Beet Company in Bay Ridge, is more farm-to-table focused, Zizak said. Both restaurants are known for the beet burger and delicious, all-natural beet ketchup, with no added sugars, made from slowroasted NY State beets. Their mustard is made in house, too, with mustard seeds soaked in beet juice.

Down the street at Prospect Bar and Grill, there's a new burger on the menu every week. Served on potato buns from Baked in Brooklyn (also down the street), choose between beef, bison or veggie burgers. Chef Anthony Lanci doesn't like how sweet brioche buns are, so these buns are hearty and round, topped with sesame seeds. A recent visit included 'The Return of El Pato Borracho,' a burger topped with crispy duck confit and Bitburger beer cheese sauce.

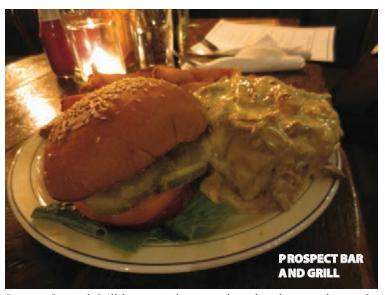
A burger special Monday-Wednesday includes a free pint for \$14. You can also substitute any sides instead of fries, including sauteed kale or brussel sprouts. But when it's burger night,



Enjoying a burger and stout on a beautiful tree-lined street at James in Prospect Heights.



Lavender Lake's burger changes the game for bar burgers.



Prospect Bar and Grill has a new burger each week to keep you hungry for

you may as well do it right with some crispy French fries. Beer options include a list of seasonal selections and a few German beers like Reissdorf Kolsch and Kostrizer Schwarzbier, a smooth black lager that's great with a burger.

The lively but laid-back pub sells about 150 beef burgers per week, Lanci said. It's been open since 2012 and serves brunch on weekends. Aside from the burger, there's also a rotating taco special, and a happy hour that includes \$4 drafts.

On a quiet corner in Prospect Heights is **James**, a beloved neighborhood spot. Monday night is burger night with three options: classic beef with Vermont cheddar, cumin-dusted lamb with goat cheese, and the Chef Burger, which changes weekly based on seasonal ingredients. Recent variations included one with avocado and fried leeks and another with artichokes and mushrooms, co-owner and general manager Deborah Williamson said. The burger uses grass-fed, hormone-free, antibiotic-free

Black Angus beef. It was featured in Departures Magazine last year on its list of 'Top Burgers Around the World.'

The half pound beef burger is \$15, and the others are \$16 during daily happy hour from 5:30-6:30 and all night on Mondays.

The vegetable sides are always changing too, Williamson said, so there's something for everyone.

At Lavender Lake in Gowanus, just beyond the canal, there's a burger that redefines the standard "bar burger."

This Gowanus gem has it all: excellent cocktails, a menu of East Coast draft beers, a spacious backyard, friendly bartenders and a burger with, well, everything.

The burger patty is embedded with bacon for a fully packed flavor experience. On top is a beer-battered onion ring, seasonal sauteed greens, white cheddar and house aioli on a brioche bun. It is heavenly; the greens melt in with the bacon flavor, and the crunch of the onion is a nice little treat on top. Any of the toppings

(and the bacon) can be omitted at the customer's request, general manager Analisa Baduria said. Tuesday nights are "neighborhood nights," featuring the \$15 burger and beer. It's served with homemade chips and a nice spicy pickle.

None of these burgers will disappear from their respective menus anytime soon. A delicious patty and bun combo will always have a loyal following. So cozy up at one of these local haunts and enjoy a stellar burger. It just might make your day a little bit warmer.

#### The spots:

Korzo, 667 5th Ave.

korzorestaurant.com

Prospect Bar and Grill, 545 5th Ave. prospectbarandgrill.com

James, 605 Carlton Ave. jamesrestaurantny.com

Lavender Lake, 383 Carroll St. lavenderlake.com



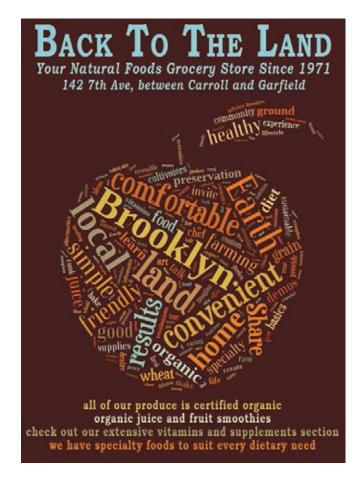


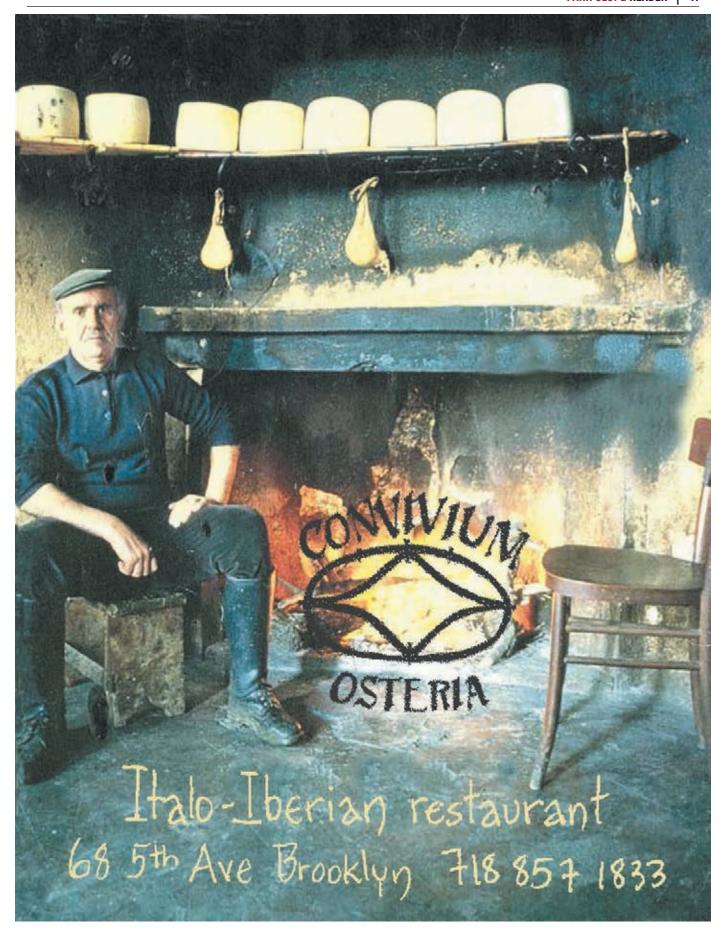
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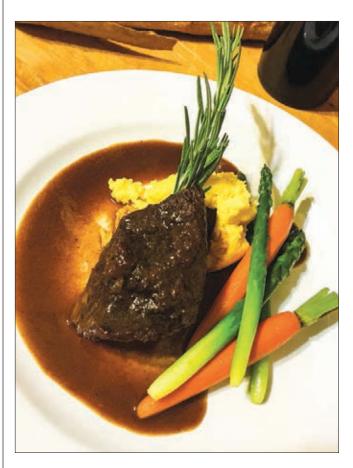








## Olivia's Kitchen



#### Red Wine Braised Beef Short Ribs

When I think about the cold winter months ahead I immediately think of rich, hearty, slow cooked meals. This recipe is really very simple. It's mainly a matter of time and patience for it to really reach its potential. I strongly recommend a Le Creuset Dutch oven. They are a pricey investment but literally last a lifetime and the results are worth every penny. Plus, they're super easy to clean! Any Dutch oven will do, though.

I'm going to give you two ways to finish this recipe. One presentation is a simple, down home style for a weeknight family meal. The other method will end up with a more intense and refined style that will wow you guests at a dinner party or for date night.

**By Olivia Williamson** 

#### Recipe

5-6lbs of good meat beef short ribs Olive Oil 2 medium onions, sliced

6 cloves of garlic, smashed

6 oz can of tomato paste

2 cups red wine

2 cups chicken or beef stock

2 tablespoons of fresh rosemary

1 tablespoon of fresh thyme

Salt and pepper

1 lb of carrots

Mashed Potatoes or Creamy Polenta

#### Preheat oven to 300 degrees

Coat the bottom of a Dutch oven with a couple tablespoons of olive oil. Over high heat bring your pan up to where the olive oil is almost beginning to smoke. Liberally salt and pepper your short ribs and brown them in the hot Dutch oven by placing them carefully, meat side down, and them leave them sitting still for several minutes. Do not crowd the pan. Instead, do this step in batches. Do not push them around the pan, or disturb them. This is the way to get a good crust and caramelization. Continue browning them on all sides and then set aside. Lower the heat on the pan and add in the onions, garlic, rosemary and thyme and sauté until the onions are soft. Add in the can of tomato sauce and red wine and stir together and cook for a few more minutes. Now add back in the short ribs and pour in enough of the stock to not quite cover the ribs. You want a bit of them still sticking out of the surface. Cover your dutch oven and put in the 300 degree oven for an hour and a half. Take the pan out of the oven and turn the ribs over. Add in the pound of carrots, peeled and cut into large chunks. Place the dutch oven back into the oven for another hour.

Remove the pot from the oven and let it sit for another half hour. Serve over mashed potatoes.

Now, for the fancy version-

Remove the ribs, carrots, etc from the liquid and put the liquid plus one more cup of red wine back on the stove top over medium heat to start reducing. Let it reduce until it becomes somewhat syrupy.

Steam some vegetables, such as baby carrots, asparagus, etc. and plunge into ice water to preserve color and texture. Make polenta according to directions on the package, but substitute one part heavy cream to 2 parts stock for the liquid. By now the ribs will most likely be falling away from their bones on their own. On the back is a thick membrane that used to hold the rib, slice that off and this will leave you with a solid square

To present, re-warm the vegetables in a sauté pan with a lump of butter, a few tablespoons of stock and a sprinkle of sugar. Place a large spoonful of polenta in the middle of the plate, pulling the spoon up straight in order to create height. Put one of the pieces of cleaned rib propped up against the polenta. Pour the sauce over the rib letting it pool onto the plate. Arrange the warm, glazed vegetables on the plate. Garnish with a large sprig of rosemary.

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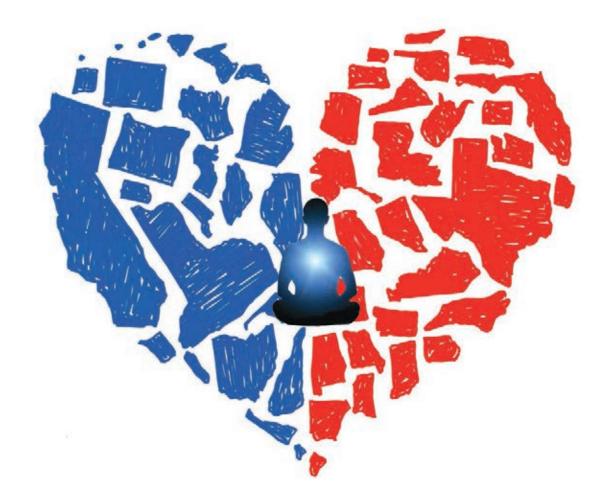
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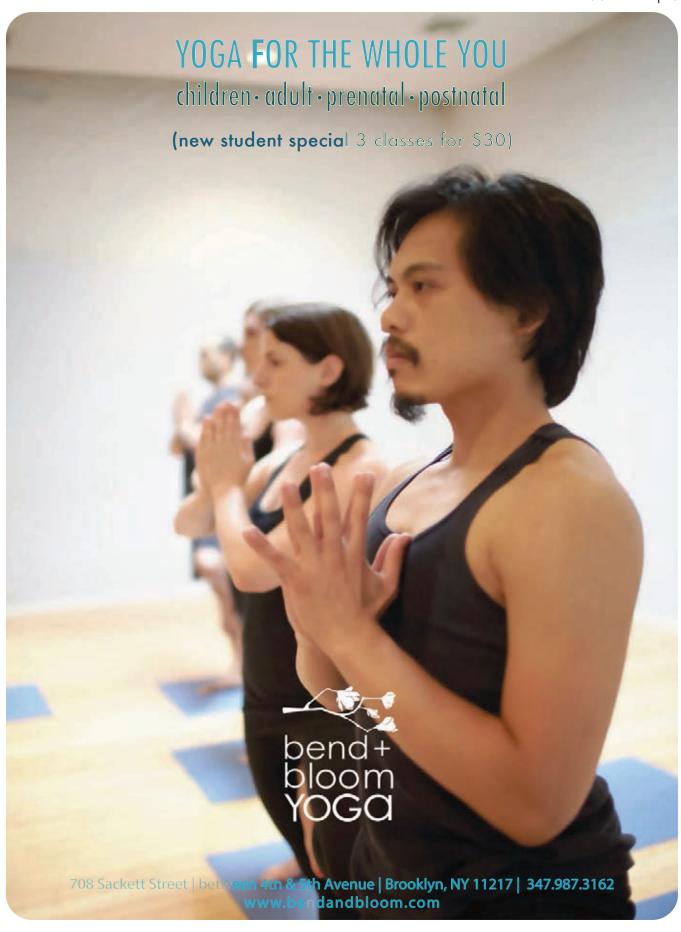
# LIFF AS



## YOGA AND RESPONDING TO THE ELECTION: GRIEF, DIVISION, AND THE NECESSITY OF WAKING UP

#### BY TATIANA FORERO PUERTA / ILLUSTRATION BY YEVGENIA NAYBERG

n the aftermath of what for many of us has been a devastating month after the Presidential election, it's hard to know where to begin. As I connect with my peers and my community, one thing is clear: everyone is in a different place in their process of coming to terms with the election results. Some people are in a space of subdued resignation;, others rage with fierceness, and still others are overwhelmed by anxiety. When I look around, I recognize much of what I see as grief: the shock, the bargaining, the depression, the anger and blaming, and ultimately, the acceptance.



Grief and its process are real. The shock, disembodiment, and isolation that many people are experiencing are also very real—and they come from the place where, according to the ancient wisdom, all suffering stems from: ignorance and misperception. In this particular case, those of us who are now grieving (myself included) were ignorant to the degree of division, fear, and discrimination that is still rampant in the consciousness of the country, communities, and even the families we love. We are shocked because we were just hit with a heavy realization: things aren't as we thought they were. And then we woke up.

Full disclosure: as an immigrant woman of color; I have been deeply invested in, affected by, and shaken by the results of the election. I too have found myself in deep emotion, struggling to keep my composure; I have felt utterly lost, and have run the gamut from fury to sadness and back, without knowing how to respond. I have feared for my family and the future of my child. This election was personal for me, as it was for many of us.

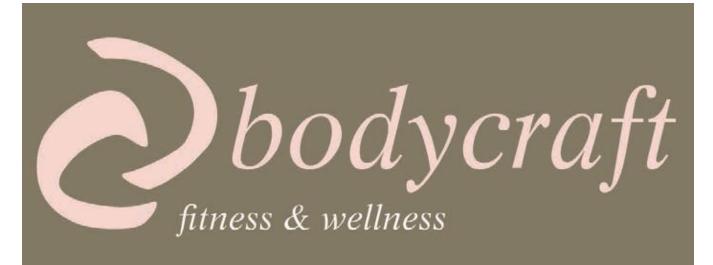
It's especially when our personal fears are triggered and we find ourselves in the throes of lost-ness that our practice can be

The shock, disembodiment, and isolation that many people are experiencing are also very real—and they come from the place where, according to the ancient wisdom, all suffering stems from: ignorance and misperception.

a source of guidance, like breadcrumbs left on the trail to lead us home. This is the heart of our practice, and this is when yoga is most essential: when it becomes fully embodied—when it teaches us how to respond in times of deep wounding.

In order to return home, we need to take stock of where we are now. The heated election results (as well as the campaign leading up to it) prompted a sort of national reactivity. The divisive rhetoric that started well before the election results came in has succeeded in awakening within us, collectively, a very mythological, caricature-

like "us" vs. "them" mentality; and hence, we find ourselves in that exact reality. Through the process of othering (which both parties took part in), we have brought to the forefront one of our most damaging human tendencies and easiest default modes. By creating such stark oppositions—not just about our political



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attitudes and philosophies on financial policy or immigration, but about who we are as human beings—we have drawn a thick line in the sand and have chosen to embody the epitome of duality. The problem is that while this situation is real, and its consequences are certainly very palpable, it isn't actually true.

The divisions are based primarily on falsehoods and misperceptions.

Xenophobia, for example, is rooted on the false premise that a person originating from outside of one's own country is by default a threat. On the other side of the coin, the assumption that a person with xenophobic attitudes wholeheartedly rotten human being, is also dangerous. For stark, extreme divisions like this to take hold (as they have)

So what now? **According to** the Yogic Sutras, before anything at all, we need to learn to check ourselves: in what ways are we contributing to division?

requires that we throw the baby out with the bathwater (as we have); it requires that we willingly blind ourselves to the nuances of situations that always, necessarily, demonstrate the paradoxical aspects of any argument, no matter how corrupt. In other words, even in the most "evil" of places, there is good—you just have to know where to look; you just have to ask the right questions.

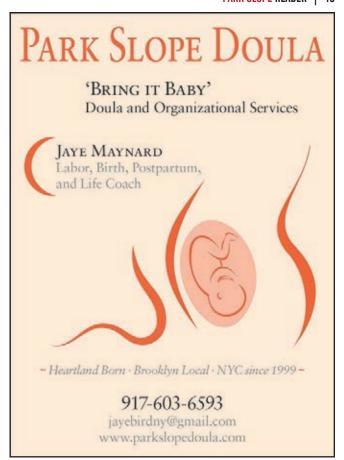
The result of adhering to a false division is that when we live in a state of opposition to the truth, we suffer. The current state of division has our (collective and individual) nervous system in an absolute fritz, firing like a pinball machine. When the nervous system is on alarm, we can't act; we can only react, and reactions tend to snowball and deplete us. In talking to people, one phrase I hear often is, "I'm so tired." Yes—we are depleted. In such a state of over-activation, we are unable to drop into the place within ourselves that can actually access truth, the place of inner knowledge known in our tradition as Vijnamaya kosha, or our wisdom body. This is the element within us that aids in our process of discernment. In order to access the Vijnamaya kosha, in order to tap into the inherent wisdom that allows us to respond with grace rather than reactivity, we must work through the sheaths of the body, and if the body is playing the fear game, the door to wisdom just won't open; we get stuck in the cycle of duality—the dangerous game of fear mongering.

So what now? According to the Yogic Sutras, before anything at all, we need to learn to check ourselves: in what ways are we contributing to division? Instead of spending our energy proliferating divisive rhetoric and attitudes (a task much easier said than done), the sage advice is to rise above it. Does this mean that we ignore injustice and hide in a cave? No. Does it mean that we discard our responsibility to speak truth to power? Absolutely not. It means that we learn to do the work that's necessary to come to understand others' intentions, even if we

disagree wholeheartedly with their conclusions. When we can understand the root of another's experience, we gain insight into their paradigm and worldview. From here, it usually becomes clear what instincts drive their decisions (self-preservation, perhaps—it's a powerful one). Then, we can pinpoint the root of emotions (like misplaced fear), and work to ameliorate these fears with reason (i.e. data), kindness, and education—tools much more powerful than a match of heated vitriol, which simply acts like kerosene on fire and keeps the wounds alive. In the process, we work our muscles of compassion.

Yet, the work is also within ourselves: we must check in with our own assumptions and fears. We must work to educate ourselves and others to enlighten, and to align with truth. This is perhaps what K. Pattabhi Jois meant when he said, "Practice, practice, practice" because it will take plenty of practice to accomplish such a task—to find the truth within ourselves, the rootedness into our wisdom, the compassion that allows us to recognize misconception, and the strength to enlighten it with the glow of fiercest gentleness we can muster.

The silver lining is that we now know what lies ahead. Prior to the election, we were asleep. No wound can heal if we don't know it exists. Today, the wound and the work ahead, while deep and formidable, are clear. Now we have no excuse—we have woken up, and it's time to practice.





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# HOLIDAY POST-MORTEM



Now that the holidays are behind us, and I have the benefit of hindsight, I find it an ideal time to conduct A POSTMORTEM, IN ORDER TO ASSESS THE MAIN CAUSES CONTRIBUTING TO THE ONE-OF-A-KIND STRESS THAT ROLLS AROUND EVERY DECEMBER. BY NICOLE CACCAVO KEAR, ART BY HEATHER HECKEL

I wish I could pen an article about how to reduce holiday stress, because I think that would be a very useful piece that might improve your quality of life in some small but important way.

Regrettably, I'm unqualified to write such an article. If this last Christmas has taught me anything, it's that I am terrible at stress reduction. I am, however, excellent at stress amplification. And, also, sarcasm. And so I offer you . . . There are many things I have no idea how to do – use the timer on my oven, for instance, or change the security settings on my Iphone. But if there is one thing I'm excellent at, it is maximizing stress. Choosing the most ambitious, complicated and anxiety-orovoking way to do things. When it comes to Holiday Stress, I'm the nonpareil.

#### **Anatomy of Holiday Stress**

#### 1. THE MAKING OF HOLIDAY CARDS

The way so many of us kick off our season of stress! It's unnecessary, vaguely eco-hostile, budget-sucking and, let's face it, kind of an imposition on the people you send to, who have to find a festive way to deal with the card onslaught.

Stress is maximized when and if you use the cheapest photo card company, with the least user-friendly design platform. This will ensure it takes at least three hours to make a crappy card with lousy fonts you don't even like.

For extra agida, don't get around to making the card until mid-December, matters are exacerbated, as you will stress every day the package fails to arrive in the mail. This will also necessitate that you rush like a deranged person to address the envelopes as soon as they arrive.

Pro tip: Lowball your order so you end up with too few cards and have to agonize over who will get a card and who will not. This will cause long-term stress, too, as you'll wonder for weeks, months, or even years if one of the people who didn't make the cut is bearing a grudge against you.

#### 2. A Trip to Santaland

Nothing kicks holiday stress into high gear like a trip to Santaland at Macy's. Maximum unpleasantness can be achieved if you go without your spouse, and take all your kids, even the middle schooler who hasn't believed in Santa in half a decade. In fact, that child will lay the foundation for Santaland stress by constant referencing Santaland's "blatant consumerism." The middle child elevates who has zero tolerance for standing still or waiting in line. And whatever you do, take your four year-old because not only is she the one most likely to be terrified of Santa and beg to leave just as you've gotten to the front of the line but nothing says Stressed Out at Christmas as much as your preschooler disappearing into massive mobs at Macy's.

Pro tip: Use your time-tested, fail-proof, secret Santaland shortcut- it won't work and your stress will be exacerbated by the fact that it takes you by surprise.

#### 3. Buying a Christmas Tree

A real one, naturally. This will require you to re-invent the wheel every year, and also feel guilt at the small part you played in de-forestation. Then, too, there's the trouble of cleaning up

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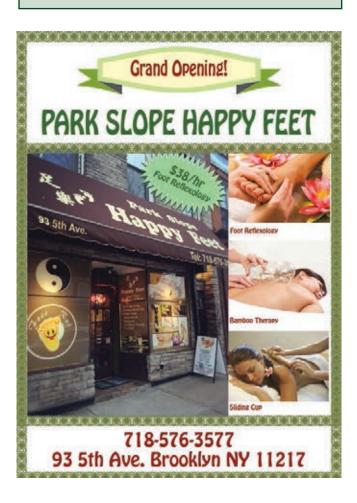


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hundreds of little needles, watering the tree and constantly worrying about it catching your apartment on fire. Let your children trim the tree, ideally with precious and fragile heirlooms.

**Pro tip:** Make a big deal about the great honor of placing the star atop the tree. That way, your three kids can argue about who gets to do it, and two thirds of them will be disgruntled.

#### 4. THE MAKING OF CHRISTMAS COOKIES WITH YOUR KIDS

You may be tempted to pick a simple cookie, but if you really want to burn out, choose the Industry Standard for Stressful Baking With Children – the sugar cookie. This baking process has four different phases-mixing dough, cutting shapes, baking, and decorating – but appears deceptively simple, thus robbing you of the recognition for your great labor.

**Pro Tip:** Make icing by sifting confectioner's sugar into boiling water. This variety of icing gives you a window of approximately three minutes to apply before it hardens, and is rendered useless. If there's one thing more stressful than baking with small children, it's baking with small children, fast!

#### 5. TRAVEL

Here is where maximizing stress gets tricky. Different modes of transportation offer different kinds of stress, and it's hard to tell which is worse. On the one hand, driving all day in the close quarters of a clown car, with the near-guarantee of traffic, and the high probability of hazardous winter weather – that's classic holiday stress. On the other hand, there are stressors that only air travel can offer: the total lack of control, huge delays and lastminute cancellations, turbulence, dealing with overworked and irritable airport staff, and, of course, the other passengers on the plane, who might, at any moment, freak out for any number of reasons and derail your whole holiday.

**Pro tip:** Don't bring a change of clothes for your little one who is one hundred percent guaranteed to spill the complimentary beverage all over herself and probably you, too.

#### 6. Believing in Santa

Santa means stress for the whole family. The kids can worry about ending up on the naughty list, to say nothing of having a fat old guy watching them while they sleep. Your stress as parents is both practical and emotional. Perpetuating the myth of Santa requires you to wait until as late as possible before stuffing the stockings and putting the gifts under the tree, and you will worry all the while that one of the kids will stumble in, Cindy-Lou-Who-style, and catch you red-handed. But that's not all! You also get to worry, every Christmas, that this is the year they'll ask whether Santa is real and you will have to break their hopeful little hearts by telling them the truth. It doesn't get more stressful than that.

Nicole C. Kear is the author of the forthcoming chapter books for children, **Have No Fear! and Sticks and Stones,** the first two books in a series entitled **The Fix-It Friends** (Imprint, May 2017).



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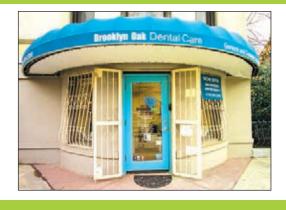
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## THE NEW PICTURE SHOW

The cinema, in its experiential glory can be a magical event. It provides a means to communicate in a rich contextual way with others. One should remember that the movies can be a communal experience. The release of a new film in some cases can be a real social and historical event, and it would be a shame to lose that in a world of Netflix and Amazon Prime. By Ryder W. Miller

till casting lights over Bartel-Prichard Square, the Pavilion Theater closed for renovation in late October 2016. It will not be converted into an apartment complex as originally proposed back in 2015. The sale of the theater closed on Aug. 26 to 188 Prospect Park West LLC via Hidrock Realty.

#### IN 2017 PARK SLOPE AND THE SUR-ROUNDING COMMUNITY WILL ENJOY ITS OWN NITEHAWK CINEMA OUTPOST.

Current plans for the \$10 million renovation will include a bar and restaurant inside, a balcony view of Prospect Park, and an elevator to the top floor.

Battle won, the neighborhood will still have a movie theater with a wide variety of films showing on its seven screens later this year. It is a victory for the cinema which has faced dire times in recent times and a constantly changing entertainment landscape. It is also a victory for the neighborhood and movie fans for whom seeing films on the big screen are memorable and impressionable experiences. Going to the movies can still be enjoyed locally by Park Slope families.

The theater has come a long way since its beginnings as the Sanders and will reopen just short of its 90th birthday. Back in 1928 it had only one screen and showed only silent films. Some of the famous titles of that time, some still popular, included The General, Metropolis, and City Lights. The Pavilion Theater was even there for the historic ushering in of "the Talkies" where audiences could experience sync sound for the first time.

Despite its historical significance, the Pavilion had obviously become run down throughout the decades. There was vandalism and dwindling maintenance given to spills, litter, and wear and tear. Occasionally the seats were damaged. The theaters did not always have lights, and it was unpredictable whether there would be coming attractions or not. Faithful regulars, though, appreciated occasional bargains and the added convenience of not taking a train out of the neighborhood to watch a new movie.

Nitehawk founder and owner Matthew Viragh was happy to step in and expand his Williamsburg success to Park Slope and said the timing was right to acquire the property. The theater was bought for \$28 million, and renovations contracted to Brooklyn-based Think Architecture, who plans on preserving the iconic, historic





#### PICTURE SHOW, continued

exterior while adding some much-needed updates. The new theater's appearance will still harken the grand old days of movie-going, but with the renovation underway it should also have the new movie technology modern patrons expect.

The new Nitehawk will offer a dine-in experience and also serve alcohol, just like the Williamsburg location, as the theater successfully led the push to overturn a liquor ban in theaters and became the first dine-in theater to open in New York State in 2011.

"The size of the venue will also allow for quality hollywood blockbuster firstrun films as well as independent films. As always, we'll be very judicious in what we choose," said Viragh.

The big question is whether Nitehawk will be able to fill enough of its new 650seat venue despite the current downward trend of ticket sales nationwide. At the now-closed Pavilion one could catch a matinee for \$9 compared to the \$15 one has to pay in the afternoon in Manhattan. Other Brooklyn theaters — like the Kent Theater on Coney Island Avenue — also offer bargain shows and bargain days and could serve as alternatives for the Pavillion's former following.

Afterall, to its faithful regulars, the Pavilion was a boon even if the experience at the theater could be described as a little "divey". Although it was a little nerve racking to watch an action adventure film with only a few other people — the emptiness of the theater making one feel isolated - some of the new chairs could be very relaxing. Personal experiences there have even been described as "peculiar, but magnificent."

Strange to say, but the last days of the Pavilion might be missed, especially by the low-budget crowd. A fancy new theater might be safer and neater, but not everybody will be able to afford it. Given the theater's history and location, there is likely to be some pushback from families who must shell out a fair bit of cash now for the new 3D and IMAX action features. Still, while taking someone to see a film there definitely won't be "five bucking it" for the night — but it won't be a terribly expensive date either, considering pricier date-night options in the city. The new addition of alcohol might also be a draw for some.

In the end, The Flick by Annie Baker could be an entertaining commentary on the fate of the Pavillion, as it tells the daily drama of the staff in a fictional Massachusetts movie theater challenged by the new entertainment landscape. The staff in the play was up to some of the same things that people see in the films on the big screen. (Incidentally, the play won The Pulitzer for Drama in 2014 with its characters dealing with the change to digital filmmaking.)

An upscale new theater in the neighborhood might provide a more sanitized and safer experience, but, will it attract new people? With inflation and the cheap availability of streaming services, some might not opt to make it to the big screen anymore. In 1928 a film cost only a quarter which adjusted for inflation was about \$4,

Film is something that is shared among people; it is something that people can have in common. It is also a way to see things through the eyes of others. Those who don't take in a story from the "eyes" or in the "shoes" of others can miss the opportunity to expand their awareness and understanding of the world they live in. One will soon be able to do this again first without leaving the neighborhood.



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## Amy Quinn Suplina



Who better to help us close out a challenging year than Amy Quinn Suplina? She is the founder of Bend + Bloom Yoga, which offers classes for students of all backgrounds and supports charitable organizations ranging from the Prospect Park Alliance to the Afri-

So take a deep breath, and enjoy this latest Slope Survey.

ca Yoga Project.

What brought you to Park Slope? My husband is a fourth generation New Yorker so it was in the cards to eventually move from DC where we met. We made an agreement -- as long as we could find a place we could afford within 4 blocks of Prospect Park I was on board. What is your most memorable Park Slope moment? One eve at sunset, at one of our classes in Prospect Park, a couple hundred Brooklynites were laying in Savasana, there was a warm breeze, there were drums playing nearby, there was a toy helicopter buzzing, kids were running around us. There was a lot of normal park commotion yet it was totally sublime. Just as the class finished an older man jumped up and yelled "we are in this together" in a thick Eastern European accent and sprinted down Long Meadow and everyone burst out laughing. It was a great Brooklyn moment. **A good day for you is...** Getting my kids out the door in the morning without loosing my cool. **Describe your community superpower.** Helping people transition from anxious to content through the duration of a yoga class. If you could change one thing about the neighborhood, what would it be? Rents. Residential and commercial rent is homogenizing the neighborhood and making it very difficult for lower income people to stay and for small businesses to thrive. What do you think Park Slope will look like in 10 years? in 20 years? If things stay on the same trajectory I imagine there will be even more banks, real estate agencies, and chain stores. But I am hopeful that people can organize to change the tide and re-energize the local flavor of the neighborhood. What were your childhood nicknames? Amy actually. My real name is Anne Marie, but I've always been called Amy. Other nicknames were Qweppa and Quinny. What is your greatest extravagance? Two weeks in Fire Island with my family and friends every summer. That little island is my ultimate happy place. If you couldn't live in Park Slope or in **Brooklyn, where would you go?** Somewhere warm with delicious avocados. Who is your hero, real or **fictional?** My mama. She is the most giving, generous person I know. Though I doubt she would say so, I think she was a feminist long before it was cool to be a feminist.





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