

Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE JANUARY 28, 2019

BIX RESTAURANT

Application No.: LBR-2018-19-021
Business Name: BIX Restaurant
Business Address: 56 Gold Street
District: District 3
Applicant: Douglas Biederbeck, Owner
Nomination Date: December 18, 2018
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

BIX Restaurant ("BIX") was founded in June 1988 by Doug "Bix" Biederbeck and partners in the Jackson Square neighborhood. BIX offers modern American cuisine, live jazz, and a full bar. Doug Biederbeck still actively manages the restaurant on a daily basis. He greets the thousands of patrons who choose BIX for family celebrations, business meetings and various other social pursuits. Biederbeck was 35 years of age when he opened BIX. He is now 65 and is a resident of San Francisco for the last 38 years.

Bruce Hill is the Chef/Partner at BIX Restaurant. A native of Washington, D.C., Bruce has been cooking in San Francisco since 1984. A self-trained chef, Bruce made his mark in legendary San Francisco restaurants like Stars and Aqua before joining BIX as executive chef and co-owner in 2002. Under his supervision, BIX has gained 3-star status from SF Chronicle food critic Michael Bauer, yearly placement in the Chronicle's Top 100 Restaurants and a Top 40 ranking in the Zagat guide.

BIX is now the oldest restaurant in the immediate Jackson Square district. Because of its continuing media presence, it has brought and continues to bring much needed attention to Jackson Square. This includes foot traffic from the Financial District and also both leisure and business travelers that might otherwise miss Jackson Square. BIX has a large local following as well as substantial national and international customers, and it is known as a "special occasion venue" that hosts many private events.

The business is located between Montgomery and Sansome streets in the Jackson Square neighborhood..

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

Yes, the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

56 Gold Street from 1988 to Present (31 years)





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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Jackson Square neighborhood's history and identity.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- BIX Restaurant is associated with jazz music.
BIX Restaurant has contributed to the history and identity of Jackson Square and San Francisco.
The business is located in a contributing building within the Jackson Square Landmark District.
BIX Restaurant has been listed, reviewed and included in numerous articles and summaries.

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes, BIX Restaurant is committed to maintaining the physical features, craft, art form and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that BIX Restaurant qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Restaurant interior dating from the '50s, '60s, and '80s.
Collection of original paintings.
Mahogany bar.
Neon sign.
Devotion to local products and suppliers.
Classic cocktails.
Live jazz music.

CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS

Following is the core physical feature or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Restaurant and bar.





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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include BIX Restaurant currently located at 56 Gold Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Program Manager
Legacy Business Program



Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE JANUARY 28, 2019

BIX RESTAURANT

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

Application No.: LBR-2018-19-021
Business Name: BIX Restaurant
Business Address: 56 Gold Street
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Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR BIX RESTAURANT, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 56 GOLD STREET.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on January 28, 2019, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore





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LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes BIX Restaurant in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at BIX Restaurant:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Restaurant interior dating from the '50s, '60s, and '80s.
• Collection of original paintings.
• Mahogany bar.
• Neon sign.
• Devotion to local products and suppliers.
• Classic cocktails.
• Live jazz music.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain BIX Restaurant on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Restaurant and bar.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on January 28, 2019.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes -
Nays -
Abstained -
Absent -





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OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

**Legacy
Business
Registry**

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2018-19-021
Business Name: BIX Restaurant
Business Address: 56 Gold Street
District: District 3
Applicant: Douglas Biederbeck, Owner
Nomination Date: December 18, 2018
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years? Yes No

56 Gold Street from 1988 to Present (31 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community? Yes No

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms? Yes No

NOTES: The year 2019 versus 2018 is being used to calculate the number of years in Criterion 1.

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: December 19, 2018

Richard Kurylo
Program Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 3



City and County of San Francisco

AARON PESKIN
佩斯金 市參事

December 18, 2018

Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi
San Francisco Office of Small Business
City Hall, Room 110
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Director Dick-Endrizzi:

It is my honor and privilege to nominate BIX Restaurant for inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry.

Located in San Francisco's historic Jackson Square neighborhood, BIX Restaurant was founded by Doug Biederbeck and partners in 1988, and has operated continuously since. Most often described as an elegant supper club, BIX exemplifies a rich appreciation for jazz, art, and hospitality.

A now 38 year resident of San Francisco owner, Doug Biederbeck still manages the restaurant on a daily basis and emphasizes the business' commitment to its community, as demonstrated by the culinary team's deep commitment to local products and suppliers.

Known to many as a special occasion venue, BIX is beloved by the local community while still boasting substantial national and international critical acclaim, which has brought - and continues to bring - much needed attention to Jackson Square.

I hope for its continued success and hereby recommend it for inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Aaron P. Peskin".

Aaron Peskin

Section One:

Business / Applicant Information. Provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address, and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title, and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

NAME OF BUSINESS:			Legal Entity		
BIX RESTAURANT			(Alley Associates Inc dba Bix)		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)					
Douglas P. BIEDERBECK					
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:			TELEPHONE:		
56 Gold Street			(415) 433-6300		
SAN FRANCISCO, CA			[REDACTED]		
EMAIL:					
info @ bixrestaurant.com					
WEBSITE:		FACEBOOK PAGE:		YELP PAGE:	
bixrestaurant.com		@bixsf		bixrestaurant	

APPLICANT'S NAME		APPLICANT'S TITLE	
Douglas BIEDERBECK/Bix Rest.		OWNER	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:	
SAME		() SAME	
		EMAIL:	
		SAME	

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
0171578	C1596017

OFFICIAL USE: Completed by OSB Staff	
NAME OF NOMINATOR:	DATE OF NOMINATION:

Section Two:

Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
56 Gold St. S.F.	94133	
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	June 1988 to Present	
OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:
OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:
OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:
OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:
OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

Section Three:

Disclosure Statement.

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified and a business deemed not current in with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for the Business Assistance Grant.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Douglas P. Biederbeck 9/25/2018 Douglas P. Biederbeck
Name (Print): Date: Signature:

BIX RESTAURANT

Section 4: Written Historical Narrative

CRITERION 1

a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.

BIX Restaurant (“BIX”) was founded in June 1988 by Doug Biederbeck and partners. It is located at 56 Gold Street in San Francisco's historic Jackson Square neighborhood. Jackson Square survived the 1906 earthquake, so many buildings in the area predate the earthquake.

Jackson Square encompasses the northeastern part of the former Barbary Coast. Built largely during the mid-late 1800s, its unique collection of Gold Rush-era architecture and quaint tree-lined streets make it one of San Francisco's oldest established historic districts. The district contains the sole surviving buildings of the early central business district of San Francisco. They are the only physical reminders of the city's beginnings as a great port and mercantile center. During the 1850s, this newly filled area which directly adjoined the piers to the east was populated by merchants, banks, places of entertainment, professional and government offices, and assembly halls.¹

On an enticing alley in San Francisco's historic Jackson Square, a lone neon sign for BIX Restaurant leads into a soaring room of fluted columns, mahogany paneling, plush banquettes and distinguished artwork. White jacketed bartenders hold forth behind a gently curved bar, mixing what many have called the city’s best classic cocktails. Variously described as a civilized speakeasy, a supper club and an elegant saloon, BIX offers modern American cuisine served in a soaring two-story dining room to the strains of live jazz nightly.

Douglas “Bix” Biederbeck is the Owner/Proprietor of BIX, which he founded in 1988. His passion for jazz, appreciation of art and commitment to hospitality make BIX a decidedly personal restaurant. Doug recently published *Bixology: Cocktails, Culture and a Guide to the Good Life*, a vest-sized handbook offering advice on food, drinks, music and art, as seen through the eyes of a restaurateur. He is also the owner of Florio, a Mediterranean Bistro in Pacific Heights as well as MarketBar in San Francisco's landmark Ferry Building.

Doug Biederbeck still actively manages the restaurant on a daily basis. He is present to greet the thousands of loyal patrons who choose BIX for family celebrations, business meetings and various other social pursuits. Biederbeck was 35 years of age when he opened BIX. He is now 65 and is a resident of San Francisco for the last 38 years. He goes by the nickname "Bix." It is often

¹ Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jackson_Square,_San_Francisco

incorrectly assumed that Biederbeck is a relative of the jazz great Leon "Bix" Beiderbecke who was one of the earliest white jazz musicians who died in 1931 at age 28. Beiderbecke was a prodigy known for not only his coronet playing but also his composing. The relationship of Doug Biederbeck to Bix Beiderbecke is tenuous at best, although both are natives of the Midwest and descendants of German immigrants.

Bruce Hill is the Chef/Partner at BIX Restaurant. A native of Washington, D.C., Bruce has been cooking in San Francisco since 1984. A self-trained chef, Bruce made his mark in legendary San Francisco restaurants like Stars and Aqua before joining BIX as executive chef and co-owner in 2002. Under his supervision, BIX has gained 3-star status from SF Chronicle food critic Michael Bauer, yearly placement in the Chronicle's Top 100 Restaurants and a Top 40 ranking in the Zagat guide.

b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?

The restaurant has been in continuous operation since it opened in June 1988.

c. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.

BIX Restaurant is not a family-owned business, defined here as any business in which two or more family members are involved and the majority of ownership or control lies within a family.

d. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.

Douglas Biederbeck is the original owner of BIX Restaurant. Bruce Hill has been a co-owner of the restaurant since 2002.

e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

The ownership history of BIX Restaurant is as follows:

1988 to 2002: Douglas Biederbeck
2002 to Present: Douglas Biederbeck and Bruce Hill

f. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

Many of the records regarding the building which houses the restaurant have either been lost or are otherwise unobtainable. The building, which is located on an alley (Gold Street), was built right after the 1906 earthquake as a warehouse to serve the businesses on Jackson Street. It has been sometimes identified as an Assay Office where gold was brought during the Gold Rush for testing, but there are no records indicating this was the case. The building is owned by a French family that has owned it since approximately 1906. The Wapler Trust is the current landlord. They also own a building on Jackson Square that has been in their possession since the 1860s.

The historic resource status of the building has been classified by the Planning Department as Category A – Historic Resource Present – with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. The building is listed in the California Register and is of contextual importance to the Jackson Square Historic District.

CRITERION 2

a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.

BIX is now the oldest restaurant in the immediate Jackson Square district. Because of its continuing media presence, it has brought and continues to bring much needed attention to Jackson Square. This includes foot traffic from the Financial District and also both leisure and business travelers that might otherwise miss Jackson Square.

b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?

One of the restaurant's most memorable events was on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire. That evening, BIX hosted a dinner for the San Francisco Rising Centennial Phoenix Circle. Many of the city's luminaries were in attendance including then-Mayor Gavin Newsom, who signed a menu as a memento for the restaurant.

As far as industry events, BIX always participates in the Cuesa Sunda Supper event at the Ferry Building and the citywide Meals on Wheels event. BIX often contributes to food charities. The restaurant distributes as many as 50 gift certificate donations annually, mostly to school fundraisers. BIX also contributes to the annual tree lighting on Jackson Street.

c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?

BIX Restaurant has been listed, reviewed and included in numerous articles and summaries. For many years, BIX was a perennial member of the San Francisco Chronicle's Top 100 Bay Area Restaurants, and BIX was on that Hall of Fame listing as well. BIX was just included in the Chronicle's San Francisco's 28 Most Beautiful Restaurants on September 23, 2018.

Several newspaper and magazine articles regarding BIX Restaurant are included in the Legacy Business Registry application.

d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?

BIX Restaurant has figured in numerous books, paintings and films over the last 30 years. Several Hollywood films have included scenes at BIX including Class Action starring Gene Hackman and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio and Final Analysis starring Richard Gere and Kim Basinger. Prominent authors such as Barnaby Conrad III, James Patterson and the late Jim Harrison have all frequented and mentioned BIX in their writings.

As a longstanding business in the city, BIX Restaurant has hosted as dining guests a number of San Francisco mayors, San Francisco supervisors, California Governors, United States Senators and Representatives and other politicians. During his lifetime, San Francisco Chronicle columnist Herb Caen was a regular diner with his own booth and namesake cocktail.

e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?

Owner Doug Biederbeck is involved in various philanthropic organizations including the San Francisco Film Society and numerous organizations serving the charitable food community including Meals on Wheels and CUESA. Doug is an ardent conservationist and makes frequent contributions through the restaurant to local and national organizations such as CalTrout and Trout Unlimited.

BIX has been a long standing member of the Jackson Square Association. However, the association has only been active intermittently. BIX Restaurant is also a member of SPUR.

BIX participates in CleanScapes SF, a program through Recology to augment regular City street cleaning. Recology provides San Francisco businesses with 24/7 maintenance services and is equipped to wash, scrub, sweep and/or haul away any unexpected things.

BIX participates in the Cuesa Sunda Supper event at the Ferry Building and the citywide Meals on Wheels event, and often contributes to food charities, school fundraisers and the annual Jackson Street holiday tree lighting.

f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.

Because of the restaurant's long history, BIX has a huge local following as well as substantial national and international customers. Locally, BIX serves many immediate clients who can easily walk to the restaurant. BIX is known as a "special occasion venue," so it hosts many of those types of gatherings. Some customers come from as far as Los Angeles (and elsewhere) on an annual basis and never miss a chance to dine with us. BIX also hosts many private events including at least 200 weddings and receptions over the 30 last years. Additionally, BIX rents the

restaurant out for corporate parties, especially during the holidays. The dramatic decor of the restaurant lends itself well to high profile events.

g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?

The restaurant's interior references the era of supper clubs without sticking to any particular timeframe. It appears to be two buildings co-joined into one larger space. No original plans have ever been found. The visible interior consists of a main floor and a mezzanine which looks down upon it. There is a great deal of elaborate molding which, though vintage in look, was added sometime in the 50s or 60s by previous tenants. The current interior has what we call a "moderne" look and style and was installed when BIX was built in 1987/1988. The actual bar was also installed at that time.

BIX is one of the few restaurants with a legitimate collection of original paintings. The marquee painting is The Butler's in Love painted by the late Oakland artist Mark Stock.

h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

It is hard to quantify how much it means to the city to have a unique restaurant like BIX in such a beautiful setting like Jackson Square. BIX Restaurant is a "special occasion" place in many customers' lives where people meet, get engaged and later bring their children. It's a place where customers try their first proper martini. If BIX were to close, it would be a major loss to San Francisco.

CRITERION 3

a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.

BIX is known for a deep devotion to local products and suppliers. Much of the food comes directly to the restaurant from local farms. The culinary team can be found every Saturday at the storied Farmer's Market at the San Francisco Ferry Building sourcing the finest ingredients.

Since sparking the resurgence of the martini boom in 1988, the mahogany curving bar at BIX has offered what many call the best classic cocktails in San Francisco. There is always a bowl of crushed ice with BIX's custom stemware waiting to be filled. Likewise, wine expert A.J. Anderson has crafted a list of new and old world wines. BIX counts many of the winemakers on the list as customers.

Since its inception in 1988, BIX has been recognized for offering the Bay Area's best jazz musicians. Every evening, the live jazz ranges from solo piano to vocals and spirited trios. The intimate nature of the dining room offers all patrons (including bar guests) a ringside seat.

b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)

BIX Restaurant is committed to remaining a restaurant and bar.

c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).

Most of the decor was added to the building when BIX began remodeling prior to opening in 1988. The mural behind the bar (painted by Mindy Lehrman) and the iconic painting *The Butler's in Love* (painted by Mark Stock) are two of the restaurant's most identifiable works of art. The mahogany bar was built for BIX and is irreplaceable at this point. And the simple moody neon sign is critical to the restaurant's outside presence. It adds atmosphere to Gold Street's louche setting.

d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

Not applicable. The current co-owner, Douglas Biederbeck, is the original owner of the business.







B
X
HERE

Small plaque on the brick wall to the right of the archway.

Outdoor seating area with tables and chairs on the left side of the sidewalk.

Outdoor seating area with tables and chairs on the right side of the sidewalk.

46

56 GOLD STREET
JACKSON SQUARE
HISTORIC DISTRICT
HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE
NATIONAL REGISTER
OF HISTORIC PLACES
BY THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
1971

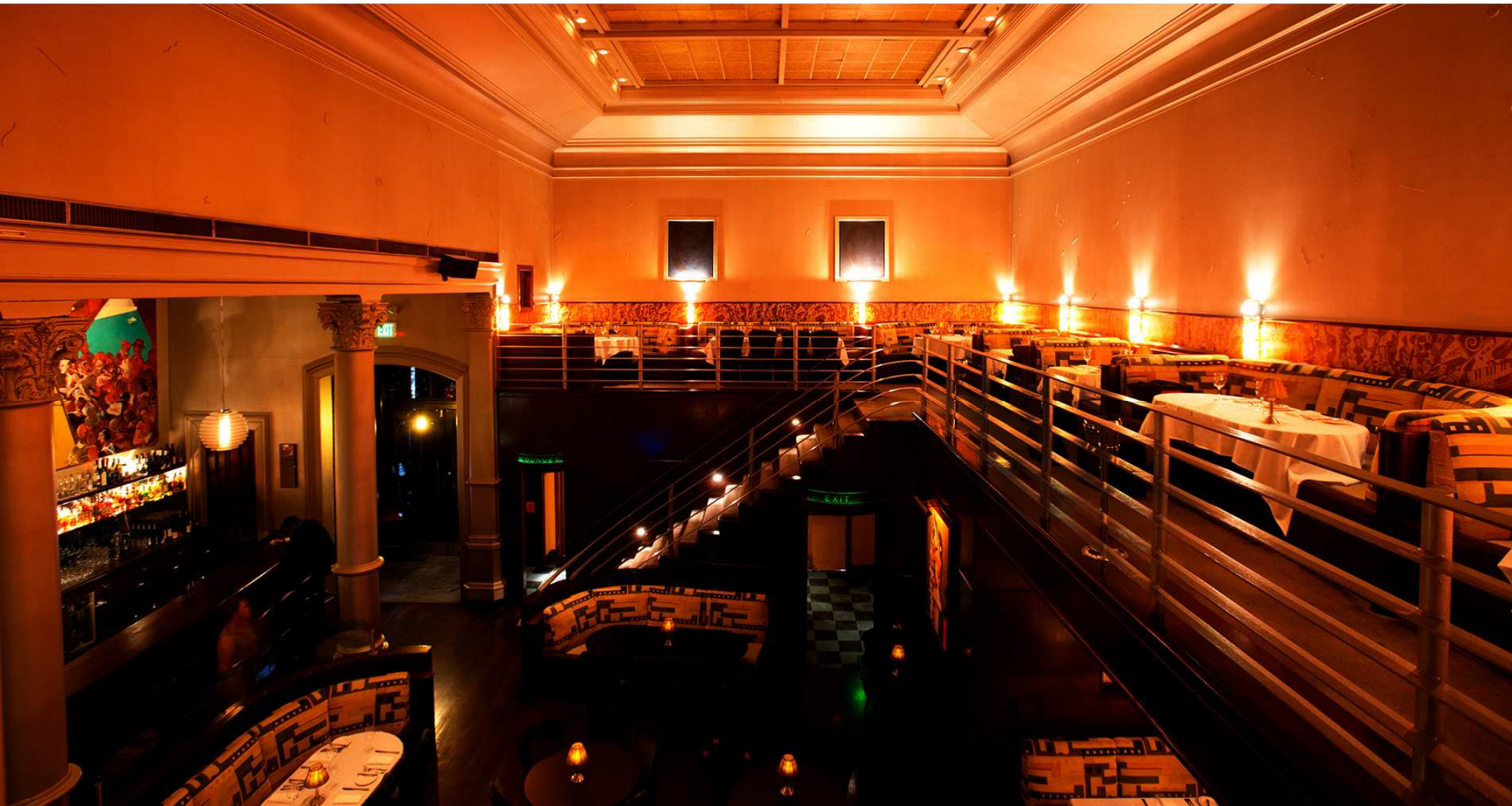














Cheers!

Esquire's seventh annual selection

The BEST NEW RESTAURANTS

of 1988



BIX
56 Gold Street
415-433-6300

If anyone may be said to have truly sublimated traditional American fare like chicken hash, roast chicken with dressing, crab cakes, and the kinds of dishes we nostalgically associate with the diners, luncheonettes, cafes, and bars & grills of our youth, it is Doug Pawlcyn, whose previous efforts at the Bix and Fog City Diner (Cheers! 1985) have convinced everyone just how good such food can be. And if anyone may be credited with bringing back to San Francisco some real swing and swing after successive eras of disco, yuppies, and foodies, it is Doug Pawlcyn, who has taken a dreary old bar on a quaint old Gold Rush street and turned it into a reverie of a post-Prohibi-



BY JOHN MARIANI

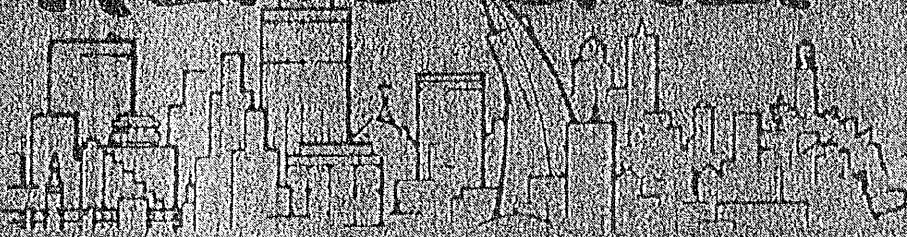
Cheers!

tion supper club. Put Cindy and Bix together and you've got the most sought-out new restaurant in town.

The two-story dining room is done with the kind of art-moderne good looks you associate with the old Cunard and French Line ships of the 1930s. There is a long bar where people are rediscovering (discovering?) the joy of cocktails, and the crowd here seems thrilled to have somewhere to go in their new Wilkes Bashford duds. This is the kind of place where you order a sidecar or a whiskey sour, listen to some good jazz, and dine on Pawlcyn's sensible blend of classic American dishes and modern new ones—soft-shell crabs in garlic butter, sweet-corn custard, Waldorf salad, lamb chops with minted onions, foie gras with artichokes, swordfish with a vegetable ragout, and hefty desserts like bananas Foster and crème brûlée. Prices are quite moderate for food and atmosphere of this caliber. Believe me: if you're in San Francisco, you really don't want to miss Bix.

Wednesday, July 27, 1988

HERB CAEN



The Daily Minimum

★ ★ ★
POSTCARD from Bechtel's Larry Miller in Moscow: "My Intourist guide here wears a San Francisco State sweatshirt, but when he told us in Red Square that 'Lenin is engraved here,' I became suspicious." Sounds like a Stater to me (only kidding!) ... John F. Kennedy Jr., who introduced his "Uncle Teddy" at the Demo convention, spent the past wkend in S.F. with his Brown University chum, Jeff Gradinger, a Bear Stearns stockbroker here, making the rounds from Julie's to Bix's to the Southside and being mobbed everywhere; he cooled off with a spot of waterskiing in the Delta ... Since the convention, I've had varying reports on Atlanta, the funniest coming from S.F.'s Lyn Venable, who used to live there. She calls it "Outer Magnolia"

★ ★ ★

Guests Get Gifts At Writer's Party

But the third Barnaby got some, too

MONDAY WAS A day of many happy returns and Martin Muller took over Bix to give a birthday dinner for Barnaby Conrad III — and to celebrate Barnaby's celebrated book "Absinthe." It was a fun and elegant occasion with toasts made after dinner by Martin, Bar-

PAT STEGER

THE SOCIAL SCENE

naby and his father, Barnaby Conrad of Santa Barbara. Barney III also saluted his stepfather, John Crichton, who was with daughter Lili, in his remarks.

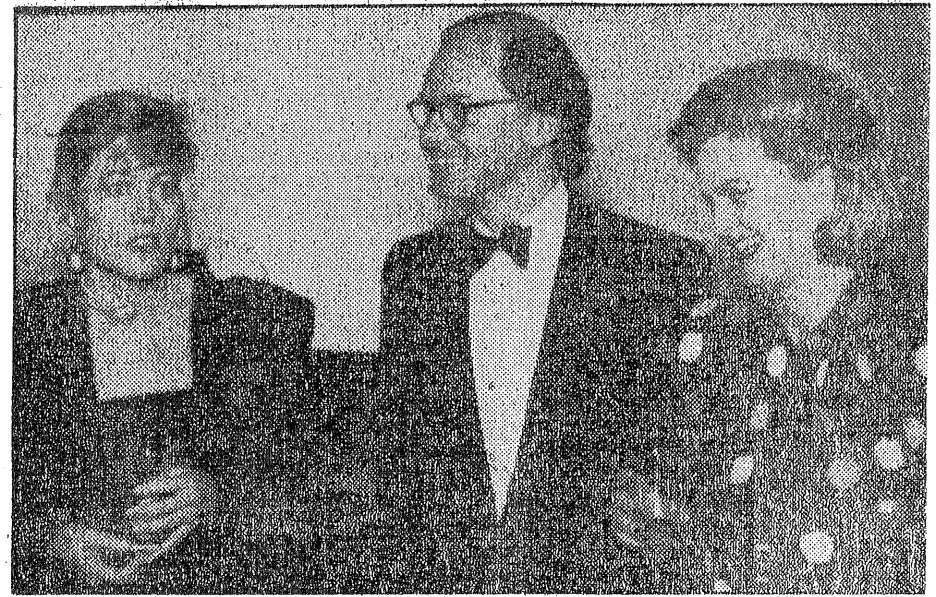
Some guests brought III presents, such as a hand grenade from Gardner and Lani Mein — with a note, "May this be the only bomb you'll ever have." The guests also got gifts: Martin, who owns the art gallery Modernism, commissioned artist Mark Stock of Los Angeles to do a painting for the occasion and everyone received a signed, limited-edition lithograph of it. The name is "The Butler's in Love"; in this town everyone probably wondered, "Is it anyone we know?"

Guests included Emy Callaghan, Fine Arts Museums director Harry Parker with wife Ellen, Nion McEvoy with mother Nan McEvoy, Ann and Bob Seymour, artist John Register and wife Cathy, Cliff Abbey and wife Clare Luce, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art director Jack Lane and wife Jane,

SFMMMA's photography curator Sandra Phillips, Wendy Costello, Alex and Bob Phillips, Walter Sullivan III, Frank Wheeler, David Hill with Lucy Lewis, Peter Thieriot with Kate Kelly, and Pat-sy Pope, who broke three ribs yesterday at exercise class and will be out of action for a bit. Also at the dinner: writers Henry and Olga Carlisle. She has just received a visa to make her first trip to Moscow in 20 years. She beamed, "Glasnost works."

Same day: Clarissa Dyer gave a luncheon at Trader Vic's for fellow Aries people like Joan Quigley, Judy Edwards, Pat Foster, Joan Tayler and Rosemary Wagner, who had her birthday April 11 with family at the Sonoma Mission Inn. Missing: Twin sister, Olive Burt, about to make her annual migration from Palm Beach to London. Rosemary's husband, Barry, said drolly, "It wasn't Olive's birthday; she doesn't have 'em." Since Barry is also an Aries, he and Rosemary were honored yesterday at a lunch given by Matthew Kelly.

WAY TO GO: As you know, Pat Montandon has dubbed her penthouse (sold to Mel and Charlotte Swig) farewell party tomorrow "Gone With the Wind, Part II . . ." For those not familiar with the saga: Her first GWTW party was about 10 years ago, when she was married to Al Wilsey, at their Napa Valley home just months before they parted and he married Dede Traina and got the Napa home (where he keeps a photo in

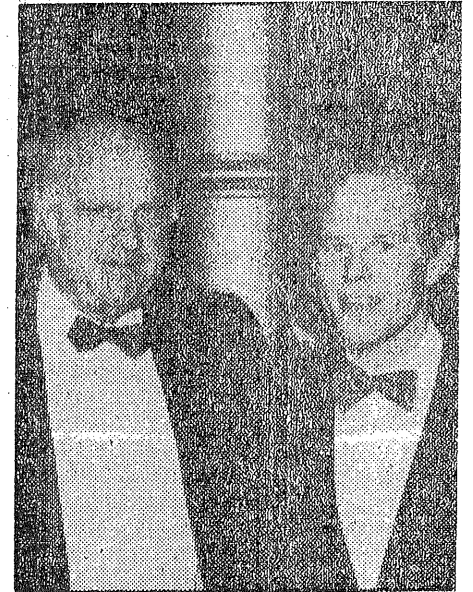


Lucy Lewis, Martin Muller and Adrianna Pope at the party he gave at Bix.

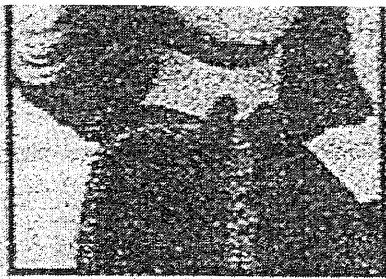
his bathroom of Dede as Scarlett); Pat got the penthouse, and Dede's ex, John Traina, got novelist Danielle Steel.

Pat, who will stay temporarily with longtime pal Anne Thomson, will go to New York in May to see her literary agent, Sterling Lord, who called — "like a sign from the universe," said Pat — to say someone wanted to make a movie out of her 25-year-old book, "How To Be a Party Girl." She said, "I hate to even say that title now. I said I would be only interested in a film if I had creative control . . . I don't want it to reflect adversely on my work now," referring to her Children of Peace programs.

Meanwhile, she's working on a book about the changes in her life — and has had quite a time moving out the giant Michael Taylor designed tables, such as a 5,000-pound travertine coffee table which had arrived by crane from the roof but had to be cut in half for the move. Everything goes into storage for a possible peaceful fund-raising auction.



Barnaby Conrad with honoree Barnaby III at his birthday party.



Paloma Picasso

Mercedes convertible.”

— Paloma Picasso



Robin Leach

“I’d stay in the Presidential Suite of The Fairmont Hotel with Eartha Kitt singing in the Venetian Room. I’d eat at Stars with super chef Jeremiah Tower and then smoke cigars and drink champagne in his new bistro. Then also dine at Rubicon and dream that owners Robin Williams, Robert DeNiro and Francis Ford Coppola were at my same table! Then I’d have Sunday brunch with Wolfgang Puck at his Postrio restaurant for a Rich and Famous pizza of smoked salmon and caviar!”

— Robin Leach



Dick Clark

“There’s only one ‘must stop’ when I go to San Francisco... Bix.. It’s a special place with not only a terrific atmosphere, but also wonderful food and service!”

— Dick Clark

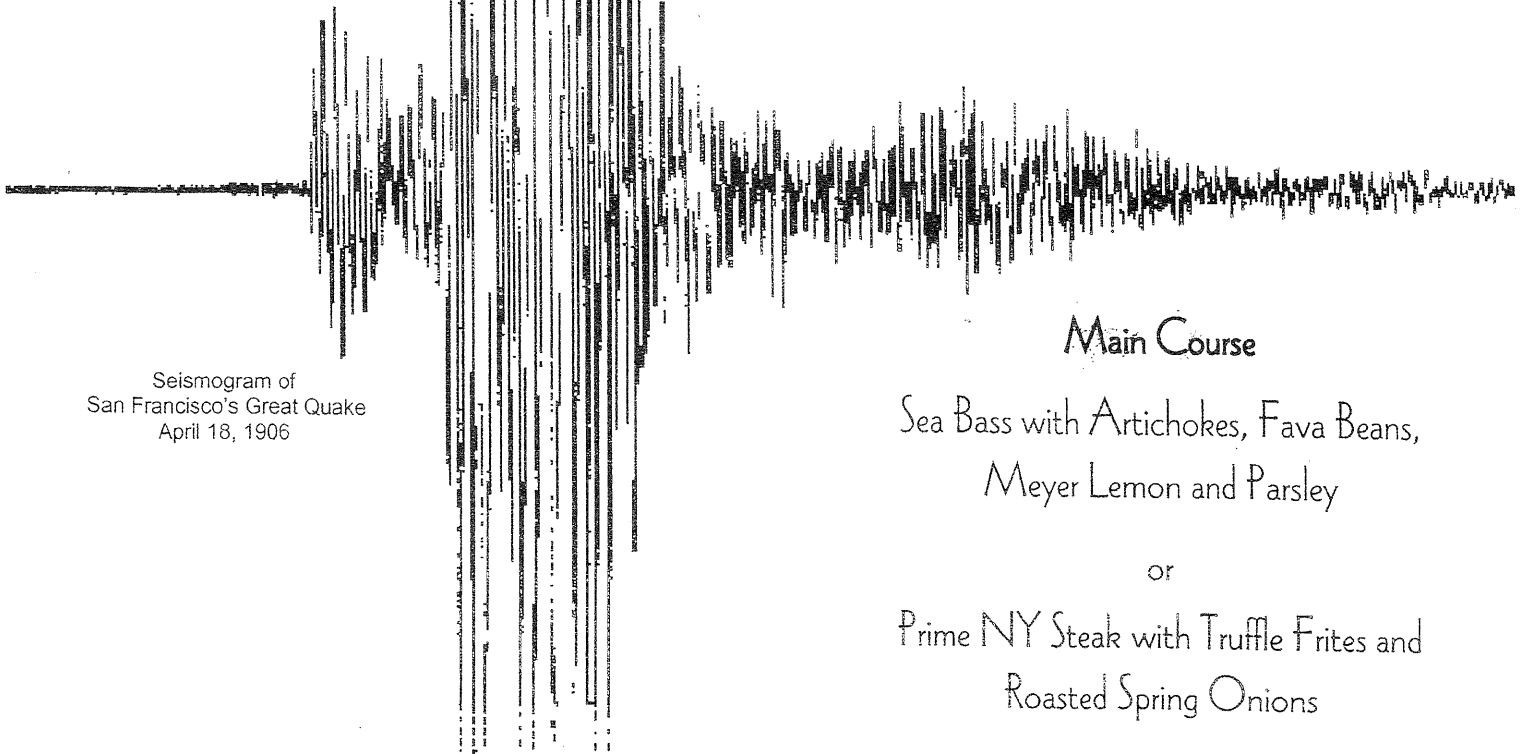
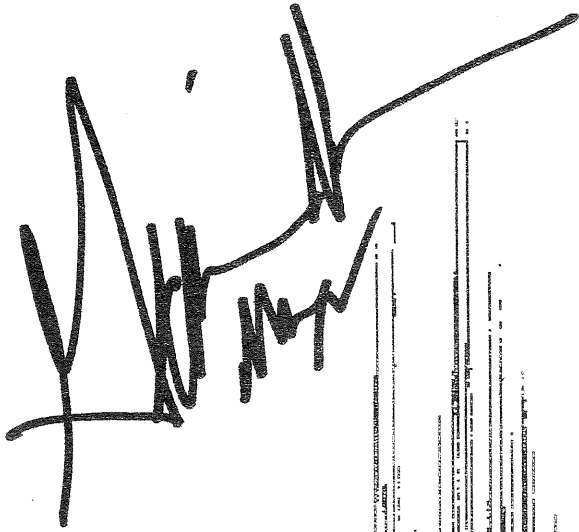


“I don’t have to imagine a fantasy weekend because I had a fantasy weekend at the Huntington Hotel on Nob Hill. It was divine but I can’t tell you much about the food...we just ordered room service.”

— Diane Von Furstenberg



Dinner on the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary
of the 1906 Earthquake and Fire
and
In Honor of the San Francisco Rising Centennial Phoenix Circle



Seismogram of
San Francisco's Great Quake
April 18, 1906

First Course

Asparagus and Dungeness Crab Leg Salad



Second Course

English Pea and Mint Soup, Crème Fraiche and
Local Olive Oil

or

Potato Pillows with California Caviar

Main Course

Sea Bass with Artichokes, Fava Beans,
Meyer Lemon and Parsley

or

Prime NY Steak with Truffle Frites and
Roasted Spring Onions

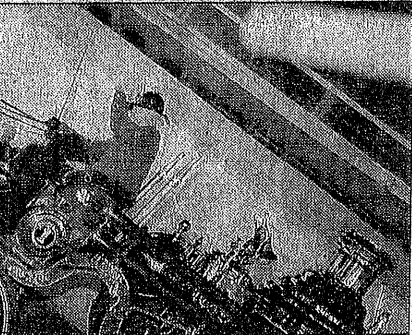
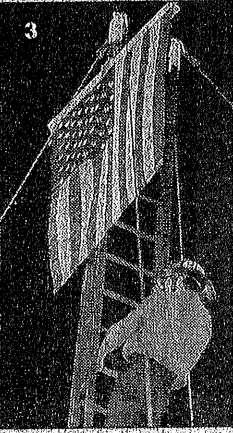


Dessert

WELLS

CATHERINE BIGELOW

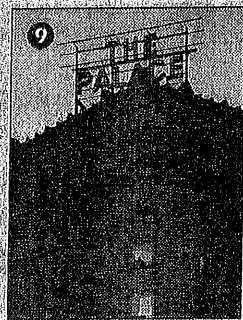
1906 Earthquake Centennial wrap-up



Phoenix Circle: ❶ Bix restaurateur **Doug Biederbeck** (right) with former Mayor **Willie Brown** and **Sonya Molodetskaya**, hosted this Centennial supper at his swank supper club. ❷ Mayor **Gavin Newsom**. ❸ Dinner co-hosts **Ralph and Cheryl Baxter** (left) with Firefighters Union President **John Hanley** and Coldwell Banker's **Betty Taisch**. ❹ "Team Charlotte": Protocol Chief **Charlotte Mailliard Shultz** with Protocol Director **Matthew Goudeau** (left) and PR pro **P.J. Johnston**. ❺ The Gap's **Jen Kurrie** (left) and Charles Schwab's **Pam Brewster**.



Onstage at the 1906 Earthquake and Fire Centennial commemoration. ❶ SFPD Officer **Val Kirwan** escorts survivor told colorful tales. ❷ Firefighter **Larry McDonnell** scrambled up a 65-foot wooden ladder to unfurl the flag. ❸ At 7, horse-drawn steamers rumbled through the ceremony. ❹ SFPD Chief **Joanne Hayes-White**. ❺ Survivors (from left), **Herb Hamrol** (103) and **Chrissie Martenstein** (109). ❻ Dressed as newsboys, young girls deliver programs. ❼ **Lechtaler** received a medal in honor of their great-grandfather **Max Fenner**, the only police officer who died in duty in 1906. ❽ Early dawn over the Palace Hotel. ❾ Post Lotta's, a stroll along Market Street.



Photos by GENE X. HWANG / Orange Photography / Special to The Chronicle

Photos by GENE X. HWANG / Orange Photography / Special to The Chronicle

at the finale ed over the wide-open blacktop of cold right now there is no way I'm day we honored the hundredth ginger and cucumber juice, so of "The Century," the hotcake

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/entertainment/article/Classic-Bix-refined-inspired-flirty-6399639.php>

San Francisco Chronicle

Arts & Entertainment // Entertainment

Classic Bix — refined, inspired, flirty

Michael Bauer

July 22, 2015

Updated: Nov. 3, 2015 8:23 p.m.



Cocktails at the popular Bix restaurant on Gold Street in S.F., which is as popular and timely as when it opened in 1988.

Photo: John Storey, Special to the Chronicle

In one corner of the Deco-inspired dining room at Bix, a couple sitting on the banquette looked as if they were connected at the hip as they flirted, listened to the music playing a few feet away, and then uncoupled to order five dishes to be shared.

Upstairs, the mezzanine overlooking the always-packed bar and dining room is lined with booths that give diners an added sense of privacy. Both areas weave a tale of nostalgia and romance.

Bix, which opened in 1988, is one of the rare restaurants that's been able to walk the line between tradition and innovation. The feel is akin to a supper club — the low lighting is keyed to romance, and the location in an alley makes it feel like a speakeasy.

Bix is a restaurant that's for all seasons, and all reasons. It's always been one of my favorite places, and the food has been consistently good under Bruce Hill, who is also involved in Picco in Larkspur and Zero Zero and Fog City in San Francisco.

Hill is an excellent chef, but with so many restaurants to watch over, it's tough to consistently produce three-star food. However, with the help of chef de cuisine Emmanuel Eng, best known for his work at Maverick, the menu at Bix is taking on a new polish.

Eng most recently was the chef at Bartlett Hall. He never found his footing there, but at Bix he combines casual and more buttoned-down genres.

He's created a version of General Tso fried chicken (\$10) with just the right amount of sweetness in the sauce coating the crisp nuggets, making the dish well tailored to one of the always well-crafted classic cocktails.

His more refined side shows on such dishes as *a la minute* ceviche (\$16). Here five slices of hamachi are draped over chunks of just-ripe avocado scattered with chiles, ginger and toasted corn nuts.

Service continues to remain on point — adult servers for an adult restaurant. Somehow I screwed up on OpenTable; I thought I had booked for 6:30 p.m., but my name (fake, of course) was nowhere to be found on the reservation list. The host was able to give us a table, with the proviso that another party would need it at 8 p.m. Given the circumstances, that felt right.

Once we were seated, service was as smooth and professional as it's always been. With their vests and ties, servers are the antithesis of the jeans-and-T-shirt-clad staff that seems to populate most new restaurants.

Yet Bix attracts a wide-ranging crowd, and Eng is able to produce classics such as the chicken hash (\$8) and the lobster spaghetti (\$37) while adding his stamp to items such

as the California white sea bass (\$35) perched on a pile of sauteed spinach with green olives and chunks of firm, acidic tomatoes.

He's also carrying on the tradition of the tomato cart (\$17), where several types of tomatoes, burrata and a confetti of basil are arranged on the plate and dressed with a simple vinaigrette table side. The waiter is happy to split the order — and it's a perfect celebration of the season.

Now the kitchen needs to turn attention to dessert. The chocolate brioche bread pudding (\$10) had good flavor, but the sandy grains of undissolved sugar were distracting, and when I tasted the financier (\$10), I heard Richard Harris singing, "Someone left the cake out in the rain." Both deflate the high of the savory courses.

But then the live music washes over the dining room, with its impressive columns and soaring ceiling. I see people standing three deep at the bar and hear the melodic tinkle of cocktails being shaken, and it's obvious why Bix has endured.

Michael Bauer is The San Francisco Chronicle's restaurant critic and editor at large. Find his blog at <http://insidescoopsf.sfgate.com> and his reviews on www.sfchronicle.com. E-mail: mbauer@sfchronicle.com Twitter: @michaelbauer1

★★★

Bix

Food: ★ ★ 1/2

Service: ★ ★ ★

Atmosphere: ★ ★ ★ 1/2

Prices: \$\$\$\$

Noise: Four Bells

56 Gold St. (off Montgomery, between Pacific and Jackson), San Francisco; (415) 433-6300. www.bixrestaurant.com

Lunch 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Friday; dinner 5:30-10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday, until 11 p.m. Friday-Saturday. Full bar. 4% S.F. surcharge. Reservations and credit cards accepted. Valet \$10.

<https://projects.sfchronicle.com/2016/top-100-restaurants/>

San Francisco Chronicle



TOP 100 RESTAURANTS

100. That seems like a lot of restaurants, but in San Francisco that number barely covers the creme de la creme. No other area of the country has a more dynamic scene, and it keeps getting better. The proof is in this 21st edition of the Top 100 Restaurants.

Are you trying to find the perfect pizza with that crisp blistered crust? Check out the list. Need a special-occasion meal that you will remember for the rest of your life? I have several to consider. Or are you just looking for a beautifully executed dining experience? You'll find 100 here, and all of them have been visited a minimum of three times.

Whether you go to 1, 10 or 100, I'm interested to learn about your experiences. You can reach me at mbauer@sfchronicle.com. Let's hope you have 100 or more great experiences this year. I know I did.

Michael Bauer

Written by Michael Bauer

Edited by Kitty Morgan & Paolo Lucchesi

Images by John Storey, Randi Lynn Beach, Liz Hafalia, Eric Risberg, Brant Ward, Craig Lee, Carlos Avila Gonzalez, Amy Osborne, Michael Short, Kirsten Aguilar, Alex Washburn, Jason Henry, Russell Yip, John Lee, Laura Morton, Preston Gannaway, Mike Kepka, Brian A. Pounds, Noah Berger, Bloomberg, Paul Chinn & Mike Kepka

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Bar Agricole



Boulevard



Camino



Acquerello



Belga



Bravas Bar de Tapas



The Cavalier



Ad Hoc



Benu



Bull Valley Roadhouse



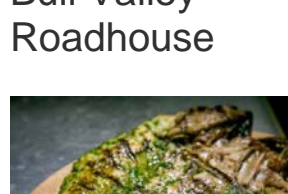
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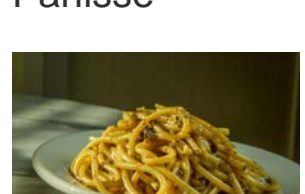
Akiko's



Bistro Don Giovanni



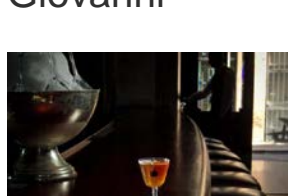
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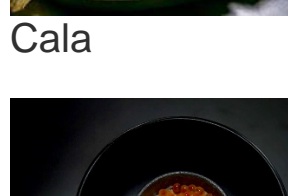
Ciccio



Al's Place



Bix



Californios



Coi



Atelier Crenn



Bottega



Comal



Commis



Del Popolo



Gary Danko



Ippuku



The Commissary



Flour + Water



Hawker Fare



Iyasare



Commonwealth



Foreign Cinema



Hong Kong Lounge II



Kokkari Estiatorio



Coqueta



Frances



House of Prime Rib



Kusakabe



Cotogna



French Laundry



Ichi Sushi + Ni Bar



La Ciccia



Delfina



La Folie



Lazy Bear



Manresa



Nopalito



Pabu



Liholiho
Yacht Club



Marlowe



Octavia



Park Tavern



Little Gem



Mourad



Oenotri



Perbacco



Lord Stanley



Nico



Old Bus
Tavern



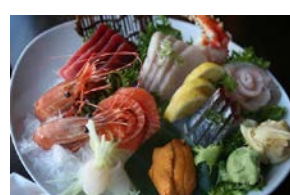
Petit Crenn



Madrona
Manor



Ninebark



Omakase



Piperade



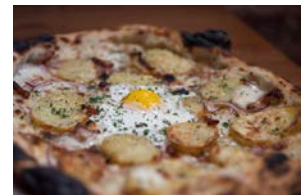
Mamacita



Nopa



Oso



Pizzaiolo



Poggio



Range



Rich Table



State Bird Provisions



Press



Rasa



Saison



Sushi Ran



The Progress



Redd



Shed Cafe



Swan Oyster Depot



Prospect



Redd Wood



Sir & Star



Terra



Quince



The Restaurant at Meadowood



Slanted Door



Tosca Cafe



Ramen Shop



SPQR



Trestle



Trou
Normand



Volta



Yank Sing



Zarzuela



Village Sake



Wayfare
Tavern



Z & Y



Zuni Cafe



Bix





<http://www.bixrestaurant.com>

415-433-6300

Noise Level: 4

\$24-\$48 (plus 4% surcharge)

Lunch Friday; dinner nightly

[Full Review](#)

Few restaurants have such a sexy vibe, bringing the atmosphere of the 1930s supper club into the 21st century. Its location in an alley in the shadow of the Transamerica Pyramid makes it feel like a speakeasy, a sensation that carries through to its classic bar. There, the bartenders in white jackets and black bow ties stir and shake perfect martinis and other classic cocktails. The soaring columns and grand staircase lead to a mezzanine where diners can look down at the live jazz combo below. Early or late, it always feels like a party. The food masterminded by Bruce Hill has taken a huge leap forward with the addition of Emmanuel Eng, who understands how to straddle centuries on his menu: potato pillows with creme fraiche and caviar; braised cocktail meatballs; steak tartare dressed table side; lobster spaghetti; and General Tso-style fried chicken.

Specialties: Deviled eggs with truffles; potato pillows with caviar; steak tartare; chicken hash; truffle burger; bananas Foster; chocolate brioche bread pudding

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/style/article/Bix-toasts-30-years-with-tomatoes-jazz-13082255.php>

San Francisco Chronicle

Bix toasts 30 years with tomatoes & jazz

Catherine Bigelow

July 17, 2018

Updated: July 22, 2018 7:59 a.m.

Summer in EssEff ain't as sleepy as you'd imagine. The big news, of course, is that **London Breed** was inaugurated as mayor. Aside from that, our less-frantic schedules allow us to savor a lot of things we don't always have time for.

For starters — a late-inning Giants game with **Pablo Sandoval** at the plate and a baseball-related drinking game (that I just made up) called “What Position Will Panda Play Next?”

Next up: On brick-lined Gold Alley there's the return of the Killer Tomato Cart (Marquita Farm heirloom tomatoes served tableside with burrata or house-pulled mozzarella, basil and olive oil) at Bix restaurant (www.bixrestaurant.com).

That beloved Art Deco-inspired beauty in Jackson Square recently celebrated its 30th anniversary; amid the rough-and-tumble restaurant industry, that milestone should be counted in dog years.

Founded in 1988 by restaurateur **Doug Biederbeck** (who also owns Florio and Market Bar), this swanky hideaway remains a favorite among writers, artists and creative minds. They not only appreciate great food and skilled service but also revel in inspired artwork (the late **Mark Stock**'s painting, “The Butler's in Love,” hangs pride of place above the piano) and swinging jazz music.

Crossing the threshold feels like you've wandered into a 1920s film set rife with chic bohemians, chilled martinis and clever bon mots.

“Bix is all about the mix of people. Now we've got generations who dine here, too. We don't deal with just Millennials or tourists or supper club aficionados,” says Biederbeck. “This vision of a jazz and supper club, minus tickets, really just came to me one night.”

But let the record be corrected: Biederbeck is not related to '20s-era jazz drummer **Bix Beiderbecke**. They both hail from the Midwest, where Doug and his father earned the “Bix” nickname due to the similarity (although different spelling) of their last names, and a love of jazz. Biederbeck carries on that music every night at Bix where, since the day he opened the doors, jazz artist Mary Stallings often performs.

“Mary is extraordinary, probably the greatest jazz singer of her era still performing,” enthuses Biederbeck. “We can’t reward her what she’s worth, we’re a little restaurant down an alley. It’s not like playing in New York or SFJazz Center, where she always sells out. But Mary likes it here; it feels like home. As long as we’ve got a barstool and a piano, Mary is always welcome at Bix.”



The glow of Bix Restaurant’s neon sign beckons diners along Gold Alley on June 24, 2018.
Photo: Catherine Bigelow / Special to The Chronicle



Restaurateur Douglas Biederbeck (left) and gallerist Martin Muller celebrate the 30th anniversary of Bix Restaurant on June 24, 2018.
Photo: Catherine Bigelow / Special to The Chronicle



The famous mural by Mindy Lehman Cameron hanging over the bar in Bix Restaurant on June 24, 2018.

Photo: Catherine Bigelow / Special to The Chronicle



Jazz artist Mary Stallings in her usual spot at Bix Restaurant on June 24, 2018.
Photo: Catherine Bigelow / Special to The Chronicle

Catherine Bigelow is The San Francisco Chronicle's society correspondent. Email: missbigelow@sfgate.com Instagram: @missbigelow

NOB HILL GAZETTE

Bix Keeps the Supper Club Vibe Alive

By Michelle Konstantinovksy

November 10, 2018

On the afternoon I paid a visit to Bix — the iconic San Francisco restaurant ringing in 30 years of business — the most modern kind of chaos was ensuing outside. Car horns blared, helicopter blades chopped noisily overhead, and distracted pedestrians narrowly avoided iPhone-related collisions every few minutes. So to say it was a relief to step inside the dimly-lit, classically-styled pseudo supper club would be a major understatement.

Tucked away in a single block alleyway in San Francisco’s tony Jackson Square, Bix has been serving up cocktails, cuisine and jazz for three decades — a rare and impressive feat, considering the tumultuous nature of the restaurant industry, coupled with the unrelenting real estate market. The brainchild of Doug Biederbeck, Bix offers locals and out-of-towners an incomparable experience that’s at once purely fantastical and totally San Franciscan.

“We found this abandoned restaurant and everything was turned upside down,” Biederbeck says of the small but sweeping space that would eventually become Bix. “There were piles of debris, and everything was ripped out, but it was this really dramatic space with two stories and really voluminous ceilings. I had this idea for an updated supper club, and this just absolutely fit the bill.”

Biederbeck hired architect Michael Guthrie to create an interior aesthetic that paid homage to nightlife venues of the 1930s, ’40s and ’50s. “We weren’t trying to duplicate any one era, but trying to suggest what that era might have been like in many different ways. We opened in June 1988 and never looked back — it’s basically a party every night.”

One important element of that celebratory vibe is the live music gracing the dining room every night. “I’m just a huge fan of jazz,” Biederbeck says (the restaurant’s name is a tribute to legendary cornet player Bix Beiderbecke — no relation to the restaurateur, but the inspiration for his nickname, Bix). “I knew music had to be a part of whatever we did, but I didn’t know to what level.”



Doug Biederbeck has made Bix a bastion of jazz, cocktails and fun that pays homage to eras past while keeping the experience lively and fresh. Photo by Derek Yarra.

On the hunt for in-house talent, Biederbeck crossed paths with well-known pianist **Merrill Hoover**. Along with bassist **Wyatt Ruther** and saxophonist **Benny Miller**, Hoover filled the room with classics for over a decade until his death in 2000. While the original Bix trio no longer provides nightly entertainment, vocalist **Mary Stallings** still belts out standards on a regular basis. (In his book, *Bixology*, Biederbeck admits he “turned down Harry Connick Jr.” after deeming his audition tape a bit too amateurish — seems like things worked out for that guy, though.)

While music is undoubtedly one of Bix’s main staples, the food and beverage program is of course the main attraction. Options include appetizers and entrees Biederbeck hesitates to categorize as “comfort foods,” but which do boast a certain cozy, nostalgic essence; dishes like steak tartare, chicken hash and shellfish are regularly featured on the ever-changing menu. As for libations, Bix has the distinction of being a West Coast pioneer of current nationwide cocktail trends. “I firmly believe we helped spark the martini boom,” Biederbeck says.

“All those years ago, white wine spritzers were popular and the Cosmopolitan had just been invented. Then we came along and started doing Manhattans with shakers at the tables. We didn’t call them ‘craft cocktails,’ but that’s what they were; we started doing these classic cocktails and over the years have added to those.”

As for what’s sustained Bix through all these years, Biederbeck credits the restaurant’s inclusive vibe and unwavering commitment to good old-fashioned fun. “What I’ve learned is it’s important to realize that the mix of customers is key,” he says. “High, low, rich, poor — whether people can only afford a cocktail or they spend \$400 on champagne. That keeps the whole thing relevant and exciting — not just focusing on a certain crowd. I’ve had so much time to reflect on who we are and how we got here. Bix is a fun experience; not a precious experience.”



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Legacy Business Registry Case Report

HEARING DATE: JANUARY 16, 2019

****This report provides recommendations for three (3) Legacy Business applications.****

Filing Date: December 19, 2018
Case No.: 2019-000267LBR
Business Name: BIX Restaurant
Business Address: 56 Gold Street
Zoning: C-2 (Community Business) Zoning District
65-A Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0175/015
Applicant: Douglas Biederbeck, Owner
56 Gold Street
San Francisco, CA 94133
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin, District 3
Staff Contact: Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

BIX Restaurant ("BIX") was founded in June 1988 by Doug "Bix" Biederbeck and partners in the Jackson Square neighborhood. BIX offers modern American cuisine, live jazz, and a full bar. Doug Biederbeck still actively manages the restaurant on a daily basis. He greets the thousands of patrons who choose BIX for family celebrations, business meetings and various other social pursuits. Biederbeck was 35 years of age when he opened BIX. He is now 65 and is a resident of San Francisco for the last 38 years.

Bruce Hill is the Chef/Partner at BIX Restaurant. A native of Washington, D.C., Bruce has been cooking in San Francisco since 1984. A self-trained chef, Bruce made his mark in legendary San Francisco restaurants like Stars and Aqua before joining BIX as executive chef and co-owner in 2002. Under his supervision, BIX has gained 3-star status from SF Chronicle food critic Michael Bauer, yearly placement in the Chronicle's Top 100 Restaurants and a Top 40 ranking in the Zagat guide.

BIX is now the oldest restaurant in the immediate Jackson Square district. Because of its continuing media presence, it has brought and continues to bring much needed attention to Jackson Square. This includes foot traffic from the Financial District and also both leisure and business travelers that might otherwise miss Jackson Square. BIX has a large local following as well as substantial national and international customers, and it is known as a "special occasion venue" that hosts many private events.

The business is located between Montgomery and Sansome streets in the Jackson Square neighborhood. It is within a C-2 (Community Business) Zoning District and within a 65-A Height and Bulk District.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1988.

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes. BIX Restaurant qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. BIX Restaurant has operated continuously in San Francisco for 31 years.
- ii. BIX Restaurant has contributed to the history and identity of Jackson Square and San Francisco.
- iii. BIX Restaurant is committed to maintaining the physical features, craft, art form and traditions that define the business.

3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

Yes. The business is associated with jazz music.

4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

Yes, the business is located in a contributing building within the Jackson Square Landmark District. Many of the records regarding the building which houses the restaurant have either been lost or are otherwise unobtainable. The building, which is located on an alley (Gold Street), was built right after the 1906 earthquake as a warehouse to serve the businesses on Jackson Street. It has been sometimes identified as an Assay Office where gold was brought during the Gold Rush for testing, but there are no records indicating this was the case. The building is owned by a French family that has owned it since approximately 1906. The Wapler Trust is the current landlord. They also own a building on Jackson Square that has been in their possession since the 1860s.

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

Yes. The business is located in a contributing building within the Jackson Square Landmark District.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. BIX Restaurant has been listed, reviewed and included in numerous articles and summaries. For many years, BIX was a perennial member of the San Francisco Chronicle's Top 100 Bay Area Restaurants, and BIX was on that Hall of Fame listing as well. BIX was just included in the Chronicle's San Francisco's 28 Most Beautiful Restaurants on September 23, 2018.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 56 Gold Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Restaurant interior dating from the '50s, '60s, and '80s
- Collection of original paintings
- Mahogany bar
- Neon sign
- Devotion to local products and suppliers
- Classic cocktails
- Live jazz music

Additional Recommended by Staff

- None



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution No.

HEARING DATE: JANUARY 16, 2019

Case No.: 2019-000267LBR
Business Name: BIX Restaurant
Business Address: 56 Gold Street
Zoning: C-2 (Community Business) Zoning District
65-A Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0175/015
Applicant: Douglas Biederbeck, Owner
56 Gold Street
San Francisco, CA 94133
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin, District 3
Staff Contact: Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
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ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR BIX RESTAURANT CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 56 GOLD STREET, (BLOCK/LOT 0175/015).

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the City's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on January 16, 2019, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** that BIX Restaurant qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for BIX Restaurant.

Location(s):

- *56 Gold Street*

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- *Restaurant interior dating from the '50s, '60s, and '80s*
- *Collection of original paintings*
- *Mahogany bar*
- *Neon sign*
- *Devotion to local products and suppliers*
- *Classic cocktails*
- *Live jazz music*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission's findings and recommendations** are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs** its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2019-000267LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on January 16, 2019.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: