



## SOUTH OF MARKET PROJECT AREA COMMITTEE

# SOMPAC

*Advisory body to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency*

## SOMA ALLEYWAYS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

By Mike Grisso/SFRA Senior Project Manager

On February 2, 2010, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (“SFRA”) approved construction funding for the first phase of the South of Market Alleyway Improvement Project (“Project”). The initial set of alleyways was determined after consultations with the South of Market Project Area Committee (“SOMPAC”) and the community and includes Minna, Natoma, Russ, Moss and Harriet Streets between Sixth, Seventh, Mission, and Folsom Streets. After several public workshops in 2008, a concept plan was completed and approved by SOMPAC. The concept plan called for a wide range of improvements to the alleyways, including raised crosswalks at intersections, special roadway paving, new trees, new lighting, art enrichment, chicanes (i.e., alternating parking on either side of a one-way street), and a pedestrian plaza and speed table at the intersection of Minna and Russ Streets.

Construction is scheduled to begin in early April 2010 and should last approximately six months. The construction will be managed by the San Francisco Department of Public Works (“DPW”), under a letter agreement with SFRA. Most of the improvements will be installed by a private contractor, Hardy Pipelines, Inc., which submitted the lowest responsive bid during the bidding process in December 2009. The new streetlights will be installed by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”) concurrently with the other improvements.

The designs for the Project were developed through public workshops and a charette sponsored by the American Institute of Architects (“AIA”). The scope of the improvements includes:

- **Raised crosswalks at each intersection of the alleyways and major streets (Sixth, Seventh, Mission, Howard, and Folsom Streets).** By raising the crosswalks to sidewalk level, raised crosswalks achieve both a continuous sidewalk for pedestrians and also create a “driveway” effect that

slows down cars as they enter the alleyways.

- **Special roadway paving.** By adding texture to the roadways, special roadway paving enhances the aesthetic quality of the alleyways, promotes the roadway as a shared pedestrian space, and slows down cars. The special paving will have the appearance of bricks, but in actuality it will be as smooth as a normal sidewalk, thus allowing for disabled or elderly pedestrians to cross it easily.
- **New street trees and street lights.** Street trees and street lights improve safety and aesthetics and help create a pedestrian scale along the alleyways.
- **Art enrichment.** In the pedestrian plaza described below, art will improve aesthetics and help the alleyways to feel more like a shared community space. Agency staff is working with SFAC under a separate agreement with a total budget not-to-exceed \$48,000 to select an artist and design the artwork for the pedestrian plaza, which will be completed concurrently with the rest of the Project.
- **Chicanes (i.e., alternating parking on either side of a one-way street).** On the one-way streets, which include Minna, Natoma, and Moss Streets, there is an opportunity to create alternate side of the street parking, or chicanes. The result is a winding travel lane, which shifts each time the parking is moved to the other side of the street. Chicanes slow down traffic on one-way streets by creating a jog in the traffic lane and breaking the line of sight of cars, which tend to travel at very high speed under the current configuration in which all the parking is on one side of the alleyway. Chicanes also create an opportunity for landscaping.
- **Pedestrian plaza and speed table on Minna and Russ Streets.** At the intersection of Minna and Russ Streets, there is an opportunity to close off a portion of Russ Street to cars. This will create a public space for neighborhood events and other pedestrian-oriented activities.

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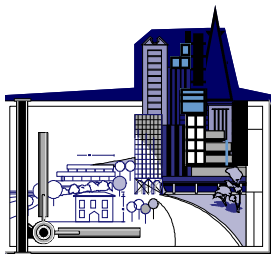
**SOUTH OF MARKET COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE**

**SOUTHERN POLICE STATION**

850 Bryant Street at 7th San Francisco, CA 94103  
 553-1373 Fax 553-1073 Anonymous tip line: 552-4901  
 Station Captain: McDonagh

<b>911 Emergency Dispatch</b>	<b>911</b>	Call for immediate threat to life or property, violence, murder, robbery in progress, use of weapons, fire or medical emergency in progress.
<b>SFPD Non-Emergency number</b>	<b>553-0123</b>	Quality of life calls-no immediate threat to life or property. Non-violent crimes, crack smoking, drug dealing on street, drinking alcohol on street, etc...
<b>Mobile Assistance Program MAP Homeless Outreach Van</b>	<b>431-7400 (any day 24 hours)</b>	Drunks on the street who are non-violent or passed out or seem to need help, but who don't seem to need medical attention. Homeless sleeping on sidewalk, driveways or porches.
<b>The San Francisco Tool Lending Center</b>	<b>1:00-6:00 pm Wed-Fri Sat 9:00-5:00 701-8665 (Tool)</b>	Lends hand tools and offers educational workshops. Provides residents and property owners access to tools free of charge, to promote neighborhood beautification.
<b>DPW MJM Management DPT</b>	<b>311 820-3550 311</b>	Graffiti removal, excessive litter or illegal dumping. Street Cleaning Abandoned Cars Cars parked on sidewalk, blocking driveway.

For the month ending January 2010, burglaries increased by 13% over the same time last year. Auto burglaries increased by 11%, other thefts decreased by 19% and auto theft decreased by 121% from last year. Robberies decreased by 45%, aggravated assault decreased by 19%, arson decreased by 100% and rape increased by 100%.



**Southern District Preliminary Crime Report for  
 South of Market Project Area Month Ending: January 2010**

Part I Crimes for SOM Project Area	January 2009	January 2010
Homicide	0	0
Rape	2	4
Robbery	58	40
Aggravated Assault	37	30
Burglary	40	45
Auto Burglary	164	182
Other Thefts	272	221
Auto Theft	62	28
Arson	3	0

**SOMPAC NEWSLETTER**

1035 Folsom Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94103

**Newsletter Advisory Board**

PAC Executive Committee  
 PAC Members  
 SFRA Staff

SOMPAC Newsletter is published quarterly. Send inquires, address changes, and all other correspondence to Marcia Ban  
 1035 Folsom Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94103

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## SOMA ALLEYWAYS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

By Mike Grisso/SFRA Senior Project Manager

Just north of this plaza, there is an opportunity to create a speed table, a raised section of the roadway, in order to slow down cars and create a unified paving surface with the plaza. The speed table will include a crosswalk.

The total work to be completed includes roadway resurfacing and sewer main repairs along the affected alleyways, the cost of which is being paid entirely by DPW and the PUC, respectively. Harty Pipelines, Inc. submitted a bid of \$1,658,372 for the work, not including the cost of streetlight installation. The PUC has entered into a letter agreement with SFRA to install the streetlights at a cost of \$202,139.

For general information about the project, please contact Kevin Masuda, SFRA Senior Civil Engineer, at (415) 749-2508 or [Kevin.Masuda@sfgov.org](mailto:Kevin.Masuda@sfgov.org). For questions about construction, please contact Dadisi Najib, DPW, at (415) 437-7018 or [Dadisi.Najib@sfdpw.org](mailto:Dadisi.Najib@sfdpw.org), For street lighting issues, please contact Ranjit Parhar, PUC at (415) 227-8518 or [RParhar@swater.org](mailto:RParhar@swater.org).



## NEW COMMUNITY POLICE SUBSTATION COMING TO SIXTH STREET

By Mike Grisso/SFRA Senior Project Manager

The San Francisco Redevelopment Agency ("SFRA") has been working with the San Francisco Police Department ("SFPD") to install a police substation on Sixth Street. The installation of a police substation on Sixth Street has been a goal of the South of Market Redevelopment Plan since it was adopted in 2005 and has been a community concern for many years. A police substation would enable the police to have a stronger presence on Sixth Street and help to reduce crime for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.

The City of San Francisco has signed a Letter of Intent ("LOI") to lease the space located at 72 Sixth Street in the Baldwin Hotel. SFRA staff is recommending using redevelopment funding for the architectural design work and the construction of the tenant improvements, subject to approval by the South of Market Project Area Committee and the Redevelopment Commission. SFPD will pay full market rent to the owner of the Baldwin Hotel. The substation has not been designed yet, but consistent with the goals of the Sixth Street Economic Revitalization Program, the space will have an attractive façade and a public lobby area. The new substation will serve approximately 40 officers with locker rooms, meeting rooms and work areas. The facility should be open in 2011. **For further information, contact Mike Grisso, SFRA Senior Project Manager, at (415) 749-2510 or [Mike.Grisso@sfgov.org](mailto:Mike.Grisso@sfgov.org)**

**Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Bindlestiff Studio (but were too tired to ask!):  
Origins of a black box theater**  
By A.S. Manalo

*In 1989, right before the City experienced the infamous ‘World Series’ earthquake, inside a street-level store front of the two-story Plaza Hotel SRO on Sixth & Howard, a group of performing artists opened the doors to a tiny black box theater they decided to name “Bindlestiff Studio.” Ten years later and after several changes in management, I took over the theater along with my Filipino American experimental sketch comedy troupe, ‘tongue in A mood’ where we developed Bindlestiff into one of the premier epicenters for Filipino American performing artists in the United States.*

*By 2004, the Plaza Hotel was purchased by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency who tore down the dilapidated SRO and erected a new building, giving Bindlestiff Studio a space in its original location. Coming this Fall, twenty-one years after it was established, Bindlestiff Studio (now a non-profit arts organization) will once again open its doors, not only as a true epicenter for Filipino American performing artists, but also as an essential center of creativity to inspire community involvement through the arts for San Francisco’s diverse SOMA neighborhood.*

*Below is an excerpt from the book STAGE PRESENCE (edited by Dr. Theodore S. Gonzalves, Meritage Press 2007) where I wrote an account of the first time I stepped into the original Bindlestiff Studio to watch a one-woman show entitled BABAE by Lorna Aquino Chui, a young Filipina stage artist who grew up in the alleys of SOMA.*

One evening after rehearsals for an upcoming theater production, I had borrowed a friend’s car and made the mistake of parking on Howard Street to briefly meet some theater folks at Aurora’s karaoke restaurant. After my tearful rendition of “Three Times A Lady,” I returned to the car to find a broken passenger window, an old spark plug on the floor and my black leather bag gone. Was this karmic retribution for inflicting karaoke pain on my friends? I then realized that my missing bag contained the script for a play I was directing about a Filipino family who discovers their son is gay as well as the printed tickets for the entire run. I drove through the alleys off of Sixth Street to find information about my stolen bag.



I circled the block several times to see if I could catch someone pitching the script, perhaps a bearded dude named Rodney selling tickets to a back-lot production of a play about an Irish family who discovers their son doesn’t like beer. I kept driving past a storefront with a circus pink door, a dark marquee protected by black ornate iron bars, and a colorful sign that stretched above it all. I didn’t really read the sign. I didn’t feel I had to because the pink door told me exactly what this place obviously was – a sex club. I was in San Francisco. I had read the classified ads in the back sections of the SF Bay Guardian weekly. These places existed and the pink door storefront was one of them. So when my wife and I walked down Sixth Street to attend the closing night of “Babae” I was in for a shock. My fantasies of what was beyond the pink door, fantasies I have yet to share with my wife, dissipated into the colorful stretched out sign that read “Bindlestiff Studio.”

I would have never guessed that within this obstacle course of panhandlers, broken glass, and questionable liquids on asphalt stood a funky black box theatre. The door was propped open with its “sex club” pink tones exploding onto the walls of the tiny lobby. As we entered to the right, the box office window greeted us without the pretension and anxiety you generally experienced when shelling out the cover charge at nightclubs. Leaning against a black wall opposite the box office window, an old upright piano guarded a doorway framed by a dark velvet curtain. We handed the door person our red raffle tickets and proceeded down a short corridor not knowing what to expect.

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## Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Bindlestiff Studio (but were too tired to ask!): Origins of a black box theater

By A.S. Manalo

With each step, the theater graciously revealed itself.

The black-washed wooden stage was at floor level and spanned about 15 to 18 feet in width. As you turned, you can see five rows of white-back seats with reddish-orange cushions rising on black platforms. Every seat had an unobstructed view of the entire play space. Every wall was muted in black creating an intimacy that contained the power of each presentation and thrust it towards the audience. I immediately fell in love with the space. After watching Lorna's compelling performance, I knew we had found the place we had been looking for, a possible home for tongue in A mood.

Bindlestiff was run by a consortium of artists who were into presenting theatre that was experimental. This was the exact direction tongue In A mood was heading, although we really didn't know it at the time.

Chrystene Ells, a Canadian puppeteer, artists, animator, and director (just to name a few of her many amazing talents) founded Bindlestiff Studio when she was only 18 years old along with her then boyfriend, theatre artist, Chris Brophy back in 1989. She would tell us amazing stories about the space and it's many lives: from former barber college to a junkie's hangout littered with discarded hypodermic needles before she and Chris cleaned it up and opened it's doors to present dark circus-like theatre. For five years Chrystene called Bindlestiff home. Literally. She had a bed next to a make-shift office slash kitchen slash backstage area.

She said the name Bindlestiff was a depression-era term referring to working "stiffs" (also called hobos or tramps) who traveled from place to place looking for work. These wanderers would carry all their worldly belongings including a bedroll and cooking gear in a bundle tied to a stick. I remember these guys



depicted in old cartoon series like Bugs Bunny and Popeye. The bindlestiffs would carve two interlocking oval-shapes on fence post and trees. The symbol stood for "Never Give Up," an unspoken mantra among the brotherhood of stiffs. Chrystene adopted the symbol and mantra as the theater's logo and motto.

From the opening of Bindlestiff in 1989 up through 1997, this little black box had gone through several reorganizations, finding itself on it's last breath then somehow staving off financial and emotional crisis to keep it's barred pink doors from closing. During one of these periods, Chrystene noticed the Sixth Street neighborhood changing around her. Hidden in the mix of litter lots, shattered glass, urine-soaked asphalt, and desperate broken people were kids playing in the alleys. These were children of immigrants making a hard living away from a home they missed with yearning, a motherland they called "Pilipinas" or the Philippines.

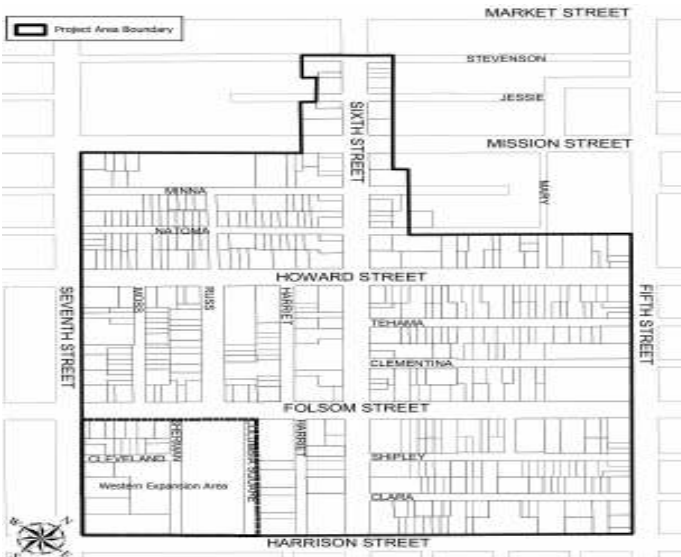
In time, Bindlestiff Studio became the place to find the most experimental, original, irreverent theater and music produced by Filipino Americans in the entire country. By June 1998, the Chrystene and Bindlestiff's consortium decided to hand over the keys of the theater because only the Filipino productions were experiencing box office success. For yours truly, this was the beginning of my crash course in running a black box theater and an opportunity to build an institution.



# SOMPAC

1035 Folsom Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94103  
 Phone: (415) 487.2166  
 Fax: (415) 487.2169

SOMPAC Minutes & Agendas  
 are available online via  
[www.sompac.com](http://www.sompac.com)



## SOMPAC MEMBERS

<p>Non-SRO Residential Tenant/            Ingrid Aquino            (415) 255-9130            Member Since 2006</p>	<p>CBO: Bessie Carmichael Parent/            Jasen Idlefonzo            (415) 251-3825            Member Since 2009</p>	<p>SRO Hotel Owner/            Dipak Patel            (415) 672-1203            Member Since 1999/2006</p>
<p>Residential Property Owner/Occupant            Stephen Best            (415) 254-7041            Member Since 2007</p>	<p>SRO Residential Tenant/            Elaine Jones            (415) 558-1787            Member Since 2009</p>	<p>SRO Hotel Owner/            Nasir Patel            (415) 260-3905            Member Since 2005/2007</p>
<p>SRO Residential Tenant            Maureen Burns            (415) 495-7381            Member Since 2007</p>	<p>Business Owner Service/            Henry Karnilowicz/Parliamentarian            (415) 621-7533            Member Since 2000/2007</p>	<p>CBO: SF Medical Outreach Program/            Charles Range/Vice Chair            (415) 436-0111            Member Since 1997/2006</p>
<p>Residential Owner/Non-Occupant/            William Curry, III            (415) 648-4254            Member Since 2006</p>	<p>CBO: Bindlestiff Studio/            Allan Manalo            (415) 255-0440            Member Since 2006</p>	<p>6th Street Retail/Commercial/            Marie Romero            (415) 879-0438            Member Since 2006</p>
<p>CBO: SF Clean City Coalition/            Artena Dickerson            (415) 552-9201            Member Since 2009</p>	<p>CBO: SOMA Employment Center/            Don Marcos            (415) 865-2105            Member Since 1997/2006</p>	<p>CBO: Senior Action Network/            Raymon Smith            (415) 240-6449            Member Since 2006</p>
<p>CBO: TODCO/            John Elberling            (415) 896-1880            Member Since 2004/2008</p>	<p>Non-SRO Residential Tenant            Lisa Matthews            (415) 573-6628            Member Since 2009</p>	<p>SRO Residential Tenant/            Antoinetta Stadlman/Chair            (415) 552-4803            Member Since 1997/2007</p>
<p>Non-SRO Residential Tenant/            Christine Ericksen            (415) 571-0234            Member Since 2009</p>	<p>Residential Property Owner/Occupant/            Paul Mobbs            (415) 308-4795            Member Since 2009</p>	<p>Non-SRO Residential Tenant/            Mark Swenson            (415)-543-6833            Member Since 2001/2007</p>

**Monthly SOMPAC meetings are held  
 the third Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m.  
 All meetings are open to the public-please join us.  
 Meetings are held at 1035 Folsom Street  
 (between 6th & 7th) San Francisco, CA 94103**