



SUMMER OF LOVIN'

NUMU mounts two visions of the sixties, while local restaurants prepare for the season

Like a lot of museums in and around the Bay Area, New Museum Los Gatos is opening a show to celebrate the summer of love, 1967, and the birth of the hippie revolution.

Rather than walk in everyone else's footsteps and pay tribute to the events that took place in San Francisco that year, NUMU is being creative. The show "After the Lovin'" consists of two sixties-related exhibits. One, in the downstairs gallery, pays tribute to a local historic landmark that was a favorite hangout for hippies from Big Sur to the city.

Château Liberte, located off old Santa Cruz Highway six miles from downtown Los Gatos, was a music venue that lived up to its name. Featuring



Bay Area acts including the Jerry Garcia Band, Hot Tuna, Kingfish (a project fronted by Grateful Dead guitarist Bob Weir), the Tubes, and a local band, the Doobie Brothers, who grew up in the area.

“They played the Chateau Liberte a lot,” says Amy Long, NUMU’s history curator. “They were basically a house band. The photo on the front of their first album was shot on the Chateau Liberte’s porch.” There is also a “legend” that Janis Joplin once dropped by to jam, but Long can find no evidence of that.

The show consists of old posters, photographs, tickets and other ephemera from the fabled roadhouse. Many of the most fascinating items (including an old-fashioned glass bottle of some unidentified pills) were found on the property by George Raab, who bought the place and has since restored it, working to maintain its historic character.

Before becoming a temple to psychedelic rock ‘n’ roll, dating back to the late 19th century, the 75-acre property had been a resort. In a prior incarnation it was known as Chateau Busee, and featured a French restaurant and a couple of swimming pools. Raab has restored one of those pools, going so far as to hand-restore a painting on the bottom of “the Zig-Zag Man,” a then-famous icon taken from the logo for a brand of rolling papers.

Putting together the story of the place, Long interviewed people who were there back in the day. She is clearly still charmed about a conversation on Skype with Jack Cassady, the brilliant bassist and founding member of both the Jefferson Airplane and Hot Tuna. When they spoke, Cassady was on tour in London.

“It was so much fun,” Long recalls. “He really is the sweetest man in the world. He said that Chateau Liberte was really special. It was a place he and everyone who played there could

focus on a series of events that took place less than 50 miles up the road, and in a whole ‘nother world. In NUMU’s upstairs gallery, Long is mounting a show by the Bolinas-based photographer Ilka Hartmann, depicting the social movements and civil unrest that engulfed the Bay Area during the era.

Hartmann is an important figure in California photography who has spent five decades documenting historic events from the civil rights and free-speech movements of the early ‘60s, and including the anti-war movement and the American Indian Movement. Dozens of black-and-white photographs taken at rallies, direct actions, news conferences and day-today events at Black Panther Party headquarters.

This is photojournalism to be sure, but these do not call to mind newspaper photographs from the time. Hartmann, who self-identified as an activist/artist, clearly knew these people. Long has borrowed some of Hartmann’s memorabilia from the era, including an arresting copy of *Life* magazine, which she has elected to include in the exhibit. On its cover, a young black boy lies face down in the street, blood streaming from his head and body. The boy, who survived, had been shot by a police officer in Newark, NJ. It’s an inspired choice, revealing that the circumstances that inspired a mass movement 50 years ago are still, sadly, with us. —Eric Johnson

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FROM THE FABLED
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AT NUMU LOS GATOS
BEGINNING THIS MONTH.

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be free as musicians to do whatever they wanted. “They could try out new songs, play whole albums, play for five hours, whatever they wanted. They liked that the place was off the beaten path. And that the police never went there.”

The second part of the “After the Lovin’” exhibit