

LOCAL

Editor Frank Girardot

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Live performances are bringing the POP back to Old Pasadena

CHAIN store after chain restaurant after Disneyland Main Street vibe, so family-friendly you almost miss walking by the peep shows and the Oaks Theater's girly flicks, so many opportunities to purchase so many brands of ... cell phones, Old Pasadena sometimes might as well be Old Santa Clarita.

That's at least what you'll hear from the cranks among us, we band of brothers who darkened the truly dark doors of Poo Bah Records and Chromo's Bar and the Free Press book store at Fair Oaks and Colorado, who bought used clothes across the street where now J. Crew sells new, who ate coffee-can baked hippie bread at the Spaghetti Works



LARRY WILSON

on a first date, who danced real bad holding a longneck Bud to a Snotty Scotty and the Hankies tune at Hazel's Bar, downstairs from a genuine flophouse.

Lots of reasons to not lament the disappearance of old Old Pas. The sidewalks were dirty, the alleys were smelly, the bums were bunnier than today's.

But the almost total disappear-

ance of live music and performance has been a pox on the town. As I bemoaned in a recent Cheers column, other than some kids with Gibsons playing Zep covers at the hidden-away Old Towne Pub and a smooth-jazz combo that was playing its last tune around 10 at Red White and Bluezz, a pub crawl of all Old Pas turned up nothing but Muzak.

As I posted on my blog the other day, with fan photos as proof, entrepreneur and poetry slam champion **Monica Lee Copeland** and her gang are out to change all that, big time.

Last Tuesdays of each month but December, their Indelible Ink collaborative hosts a performance series at the swank POP champagne (and

sliders, and really good deviled eggs) bar on Union Street between Fair Oaks and Raymond.

It's music — Tuesday, in the form of mostly comic singer-songwriter **Eric Schwartz**. It was highly stylized performance poetry by **Gill S.O.T.U.** It was belly dancing like you've never seen it by Indonesian multitalent **Jennifer Tehani Sarreal**, who mashed her art with hula. It was slam poetry by Monica herself, who helped create the pop-art verse form that actually goes down well in front of a hard-to-please audience in a bar. It's more classical poets as well, this Tuesday including writers **Siril Kaidim** and **Taffy Wallace**.

Being there with a beer this week, front and center, being entertained

left and right by the artists on the most eclectic bill to ever hit Pasadena, it was almost enough of an oasis to make up for the decades of performance desert in Old Pas.

It's also merely whetted the appetite for more of the same. Fourth Tuesdays can't come soon enough for me. There are half-empty restaurants all over the town. City Hall, drop your absurd red tape hamstringing entertainment. What is this — "Footloose"? In a better world, there would be no such thing as the need to take out a license to dance. Let the POP gig be the beginning of a thousand such venues. Meanwhile, see you at the bar Oct. 26. Tix: www.indelibleink.net.

Public Editor Larry Wilson's blog is www.indelibleink.com/outlooks.