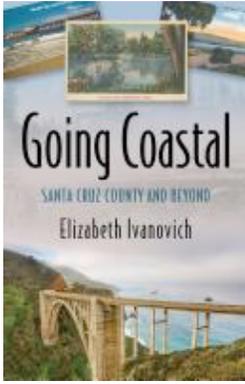


Going Coastal

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY AND BEYOND

Elizabeth Ivanovich





*California's Central Coast can be confusing. Electric guitars are made from car parts, bronze sculptures fill nursery gardens, and people actually want to watch a guy play the accordion! Elizabeth Ivanovich has deciphered these and other mysteries in **GOING COASTAL**. Meet local icons, discover the best of everything, and explore cultural life throughout the Bay Area. Equal parts character study, travel guide, and cultural analysis, **GOING COASTAL** reveals the California most visitors haven't seen*

Going Coastal

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GOING COASTAL:
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY AND
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Elizabeth Ivanovich

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First Edition

ALEX EYLAR: CONQUERING TINSEL TOWN BRICK BY BRICK

[From the Winter 2012 Student Guide]

After Alex Eylar graduated from UCSC's Film and Digital Media department, he moved to Southern California to make a name for himself in the film industry. In his rising career, the young auteur has paid homage to all the greats: Akira Kurosawa, Alfred Hitchcock, Ole Kirk Christiansen. If that last name is unfamiliar to you, it's because it does not come from the world of cinema at all. Christiansen is the Danish carpenter who invented Lego building blocks in the 1930s. Eylar is best known for his startlingly detailed depictions of films as diverse as **The Shining** and **The King's Speech**, as well as his own elaborate scenarios, constructed through the medium of Legos.

Some might surmise that complex scenes rendered through children's toys is a madcap, Santa Cruz sort of idea. Actually, the Oakland native began his cinematic Lego experimentations even before he attended UCSC, pulling out his childhood collection of bricks in high school to create his first projects. Even so, Eylar acknowledged that UCSC provided subtle but pervasive influences on his cinematic evolution. "UCSC's approach to cinema is unique in that it's so specific and broad at the same time; it covers all the bases," he stated. "You can take something as general as World Cinema, or a course whose focus is as narrow as the films of Wong Kar-Wai or sexuality in cinema. It opens you up to areas of cinema you couldn't access before, and when you're trying to write movies—like I am—the more movies you know, the better."

Eylar's Lego scenes have drawn raves from the likes of **The New York Times** and London's **Daily Telegraph**, as well as notoriety throughout the Internet. Does he worry that all this attention will eventually overshadow his more traditional,

"serious" projects? "I don't think the Lego scenes will detract from my credibility too much," he replied. "It's Lego; it's as innocent as they come. I haven't yet met someone who didn't think fondly of the stuff, or enjoy the scenes I build. Some people question my devotion to what they call a children's toy, but it's like any hobby: there are bound to be those that don't click with it."

During his UCSC career, Eylar found another creative outlet, one that was something of a happy accident. "I'd usually arrive 30 minutes early for class due to parking issues, and would basically kill time in the computer lab of the film building," he revealed. "I'd seen all sorts of minimalist movie posters online, and figured I'd try my hand. That's the origin story: they came out of boredom." With their stark and clever imagery, the artist's fifty-one posters (at the time of this writing) have earned kudos from the likes of the online trendspotting newsletter **Thrillist**, and are available for sale via the Imagekind webstore.

While the finished products may seem deceptively straightforward at first glance, the execution is often challenging. Eylar is particularly proud of his Lego version of **Inception**: "It required a full hallway, able to be turned-upside down for the appropriate shot. Not an easy build, but the final product is instantly recognizable, and that's the best you can hope for with these projects."

Likewise, Eylar's posters are not simple rehashes of familiar images, as he explained when discussing his favorite, depicting Kurosawa's **Rashomon**. "The challenge in making those posters is incorporating an idea; not just including one object and putting the title beneath it," he explained. "I think—I hope—the **Rashomon** poster pulled off a concise illustration of that movie's theme; that's why I like it."

Eylar currently pursues a Master of Fine Arts in screenwriting at Chapman University in Orange County. At the time of the interview, his short script, **Thunderboned**, had just been shot as a student film. Somehow, he still finds time to devise new posters and Lego scenes, which he continues to post online to the delight of fans everywhere. Even he can't predict what he'll do next, but one thing is certain: Alex Eylar may often work in miniature, but the scope of his imagination is large indeed.

To view or purchase Eylar's art prints and movie posters, visit aeylar.imagekind.com. His Lego scenes appear on his Flickr page, www.flickr.com/photos/hoyvinmayvin/.

REBIRTH OF THE COOL: AN ICE CREAM RENAISSANCE

[Adapted from the Fall 2013 Student Guide]

Within three years, Santa Cruz has become the unofficial ice cream capital of northern California. Legendary local firms continue to thrive, while upstart artisanal ventures have captured the city's imagination. How did this happen, given our relatively small population? Even the ice-cream makers themselves have no consensus. Some, such as Marianne's co-owner Kelly Dillon and Kelly Sanchez of Kelly's French Bakery, mention the year-round warm weather and tourist traffic. Others, such as Mission Hill's Dave Kumec and Polar Bear's Mary Young, feel it has more to do with the availability of high-quality local ingredients. Kendra Baker of The Penny Ice Creamery points to longtime support for food businesses, and Dillon's partner Charlie Wilcox credits educated Santa Cruz palates. At any rate, the following directory should help those willing to do some delicious research on the subject.

KELLY'S FRENCH BAKERY

402 Ingalls Street, Santa Cruz

(831) 423-9059

www.kellysfrenchbakery.com

While Kelly's has existed since 1981, it has only produced ice cream since 2010. Even so, ice cream is co-founder Kelly Sanchez's birthright. Her great-grandparents ran an ice cream shop in Los Angeles for decades, and her great-uncle attended Penn State's renowned Ice Cream Short Course in the 1920s. Sanchez had always experimented with ice cream at home, and in 2009, the renowned local baker attended the Short Course herself.

Sanchez's pastry expertise strongly influences her approach to ice cream. "I think that ice cream is perfect medium for sweets," she asserted. "I have always loved to make candy, so toffee crunch, caramel almond, and coffee brownie are common flavors that we make. I also make jam, so ollallieberry and strawberry ice cream are also on the list." Kelly's makes all its own inclusions (commonly nicknamed "mix-ins"), which is unusual in the industry.

When devising flavors, Sanchez is driven by her own palate. "We don't make any of the new savory / sweet flavors," she revealed. "I am a traditionalist this way. I like the classics, maybe with a little twist, but ice cream is a sweet treat to me. I never want to be challenged by the taste." Sanchez is particularly fond of the bakery's caramel almond flavor, which features her caramel almond brittle folded into caramel ice cream.

MARIANNE'S

1020 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz

218 State Park Drive, Aptos

(831) 458-1447

www.lovemariannes.com

Marianne's was established in 1958, quickly becoming a beloved fixture. While the company has had just one scoop shop for most of its history, it supplies ice cream to more than 300 restaurants, stores, and special events such as the Gilroy Garlic Festival.

Original owners Sam and Dorothy Lieberman, now in their eighties, sold Marianne's to Kelly Dillon and Charlie Wilcox in January 2013. "It's not [about] incorporating our vision into Marianne's," Wilcox asserted. "It's that Marianne's is the perfect vehicle for people who have a caring vision and want to have fun. That's the way Sam has always run it, and it suited us very well."

With all its commercial success, it is easy to forget Marianne's culinary influence. Marianne's has experimented with flavors for years, serving macapuno (young coconut) and black licorice long before unusual ice creams became trendy. The shop serves 75 flavors daily, and many are suggested by the store's 30 employees. One such flavor, a vanilla-based peanut butter and chocolate swirl called Heaven, has become a new standard, and a few more employee suggestions are being developed for introduction next summer.

MISSION HILL CREAMERY

1101B Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz
(831) 216-6421

www.missionhillcreamery.com

Before opening Mission Hill Creamery in 2010, Dave Kumec spent years in the tech industry, managing content and marketing for such companies as LightSurf and VeriSign. Prior to that, the France-trained chef had managed restaurant crews for EuroDisney Resort (now Disneyland Paris). It's no wonder that Kumec was drawn to ice cream, since it's the perfect melding of creativity and science. Mission Hill's original scoop shop was located on Front Street, and reopened on Pacific Avenue in September 2012. While the retail location was closed, Mission Hill developed a loyal, still-expanding wholesale clientele, including several natural-foods chains and the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Kumec's approach is influenced by nearby farmer's markets and their exceptional produce. "I learn what is at peak ripeness...My culinary training helps me to treat these products properly, and to preserve the fresh, wonderful flavors in the form of ice cream and sorbet." Customers clamor for Mission Hill's salted caramel, inspired by the classic version at Berthillon in

Paris. Ever the purist, Kumec prefers vanilla bean, "the perfect flavor for all occasions."

THE PENNY ICE CREAMERY

913 Cedar Street, Santa Cruz

820 41st Avenue, Santa Cruz

(831) 204-2523

www.thepennyicecreamery.com

Co-founder Kendra Baker first gained acclaim as a pastry chef for restaurants such as Michelin-starred Manresa in Los Gatos. There, she became intrigued with ingredients sourced from local farming and foraging communities. Cherished memories of secret ice-cream parlor trips with her dad inspired her to take on the challenge of making ice cream that incorporates these ingredients.

The combination of nostalgia and novelty leads to powerful experiences on both sides of the counter. Baker loves the moment when a customer first steps away from chocolate and vanilla (which, she hastened to add, are always available) to try something new: "Seeing their face light up as they enter a whole new world of flavor exploration is a real treat." To Baker, strawberry pink peppercorn best embodies Penny's approach. Featuring locally-sourced Dirty Girl strawberries, "it's a party in your mouth."

POLAR BEAR

389 Coral Street, Santa Cruz

(831) 425-1108

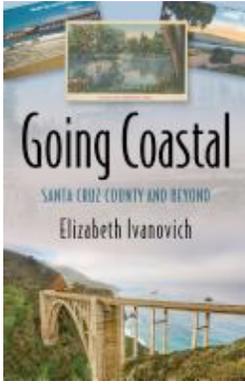
www.santacruzpolarbear.com

Polar Bear opened in 1975, delighting local fans ever since. Former Cafe Cruz manager Mary Young made the ultimate show of devotion, buying the business once original owner Carolyn Gray retired. "I always wanted to own my own

business, and we served Polar Bear at the restaurant," Young recalled. "Here I am over seven years later." She oversees the small-batch production of more than 100 flavors, as well as custom-made ice cream cakes, mud pies, and novelties. A successful boutique line of flavors, exclusive to legendary Santa Cruz candy store Marini's, was developed in 2008. Polar Bear is most renowned for its Mexican chocolate flavor, Young noted: "People love it, and come from all over to get it."

POSTSCRIPT: Original Marianne's co-owner Sam Lieberman passed away in November 2013 at the age of 84. In happier news for the company, Marianne's Aptos location opened in June 2014. Kendra Baker and Zachary Davis added a full-service sit-down restaurant, Assembly, to the Penny's growing empire; it opened in March 2014.

Regular **Student Guide** readers may recall that this article first appeared under the title "The Rebirth of Cool." At the time I was very upset that the Miles Davis reference **Rebirth of the Cool** was inexplicably changed, and no one gave me a convincing reason why it happened. So, I have restored my original jazzy title here. Revisionist history for the win!



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