



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE DECEMBER 12, 2016

BRITEX FABRICS

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-025
Business Name: Britex Fabrics
Business Address: 146 Geary Street
District: District 3
Applicant: Sharman Spector, Owner
Nomination Date: September 30, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Britex Fabrics is a European-style fabric store located in San Francisco's Union Square that has offered a large selection of fabrics, ribbons, buttons and trims for 62 years. The family-owned business was founded by Polish immigrant Martin Spector who had worked as a fabric merchant in Poland and New York before moving to San Francisco. Spector ran a Britex Fabrics in New York from 1939 to 1952 before relocating to San Francisco and reopening the store in its second city. Britex Fabrics opened on 178 Geary Street in 1952 and in 1964 moved to its current location at 146 Geary Street. The store features floor-to-ceiling wall of woollens spanning the 120-foot wall stretching from Geary Street to Maiden Lane, and its large selection of textiles include designs from all over the world with a special emphasis on European fabrics. The business serves a variety of customers, including local and visiting couturiers, professional tailors, dressmakers, home sewers, crafters, and students. As a popular choice for local designers and famous performers, Britex Fabrics has been featured at countless San Francisco galas, events, and theatrical performances. The business also offers free monthly tours and regular educational workshops, hosts fieldtrips for schoolchildren, and donates materials to local schools. In 1966, Martin passed away, leaving the business to his Austrian-born wife, Lucy, who carried on and expanded the success of the business until 1976 when their daughter, Sharman Spector, took over the business which she continues to operate to this day. Arguably the most comprehensive high-end fabric store in the city, Britex Fabrics is also one of the last small, family-owned businesses in the Union Square area.

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:

178 Geary Street from 1952-1964 (12 years)
146 Geary Street from 1964-Present (52 years)

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



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Union 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:

- Britex Fabrics is associated with the art and tradition of managing a European-style fabric shop, offering a wide variety of textiles and fabrics for a variety of clientele ranging from professional designers to students and home sewers.
- Britex Fabrics has contributed to the identity of Union Square and to the history of the local fashion community by serving as an iconic European-style fabric shop and offering a wide selection of textiles and high-end fabrics for purchase.
- The property has been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The property is considered a "Category A Property" that is eligible for listing in the California Register and National Register. It is a contributing building to the Article 11 Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District. The property has also been identified in the LGBTQ Historic Context Statement for its association with LGBTQ history as a popular gay cruising area from the 1940s to the 1980s.
- On March 25, 2002, the Board of Supervisors issued a Certificate of Honor to Lucy Spector for her "incredible work over the past five decades at Britex Fabrics" and in recognition of the contributions the small business has made to Union Square. Also in 2002, the Board of Supervisors issues a proclamation declaring April 15th as "Lucy Spector Day" in San Francisco, noting Britex Fabrics as the "Tiffany's of fabric stores."
- The business has been cited in the following publications:
 - San Francisco Chronicle, 7/9/2012, "Britex at 60: The fabric of our lives in S.F.," by Julian Guthrie.
 - San Francisco Chronicle, 10/6/2016, "Britex move to rip hole in Union Square's fabric," by J.K. Dineen.
 - SF Gate, 10/11/2016, "Britex landlord wants retailer to stay in its longtime home," by J.K. Dineen.

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

Yes, Britex Fabrics is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define its tradition of selling high-end textiles and fabrics in its Union Square location.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Britex Fabrics 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:

- Large and diverse inventory of quality fabrics.
- European-style fabric store with a 120-foot wall of wool, arranged in a spectrum of color that spans the length of the store.
- Two featured entrances: one on Geary Street and one on Maiden Lane.
- Window displays on Geary Street and Maiden Lane.
- Historic neon red sign.
- Quality, personalized style of customer service.



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER / SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION
1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE, ROOM 110, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102-4681
Small Business Assistance Center (415) 554-6134 / Small Business Commission (415) 554-6481

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- Store front signage, including both iconic red projecting sign and gold lettering on storefront.
- Union Square location.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Britex Fabrics currently located at 146 Geary Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager
Legacy Business Program



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Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE DECEMBER 12, 2016

BRITEX FABRICS

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-025
Business Name: Britex Fabrics
Business Address: 146 Geary Street
District: District 3
Applicant: Sharman Spector, Owner
Nomination Date: September 30, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR BRITEX FABRICS, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 146 GEARY 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 December 12, 2016, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Britex Fabrics 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 Britex Fabrics:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Large and diverse inventory of quality fabrics.
- European-style fabric store with a 120-foot wall of wool, arranged in a spectrum of color that spans the length of the store.
- Two featured entrances: one on Geary Street and one on Maiden Lane.
- Window displays on Geary Street and Maiden Lane.
- Historic neon red sign.
- Quality, personalized style of customer service.
- Store front signage, including both iconic red projecting sign and gold lettering on storefront.
- Union Square location.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on December 12, 2016.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –



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Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-025
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Nomination Date: September 30, 2016
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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? X Yes No

178 Geary Street from 1952-1964 (12 years)
146 Geary Street from 1964-Present (52 years)

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

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: October 17, 2016

Richard Kurylo
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 3



City and County of San Francisco

AARON PESKIN

佩斯金 市參事

September 30, 2016

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

Dear Director Dick-Endrizzi:

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

Britex Fabrics is a family-owned and operated business, which opened in San Francisco's Union Square in 1952 by Polish immigrant Martin Spector. For over six decades, Britex Fabrics has served the greater San Francisco community as a purveyor of a staggering variety of fabrics, ribbons, buttons and trims. From wedding receptions and banquets to Halloween costumes and Renaissance Fairs, Britex fabrics fills an important niche within the District 3 community. With the ever so kind staff always helping, it's no wonder why Britex Fabrics is such an iconic establishment to the Union Square business district.

I hope for the continued success of Britex Fabrics and trust that it will benefit greatly from inclusion on our Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aaron 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:		
Britex Fabrics		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Sharman Spector		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS: #	TELEPHONE:	
146 Geary St. SF CA. 94108	415 392 2910	
	EMAIL:	
	sharman@britexfabrics.com	
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
www.britexfabrics.com	facebook.com/britexfabrics	✓

APPLICANT'S NAME	
Sharman Spector	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE	
Owner	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
146 Geary St. SF CA. 94108	415 392 2910
	EMAIL:
	sharman@britexfabrics.com

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
003835	

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
178 Geary Street	94108	1952
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	1952-1964	

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
146 Geary Street	94108	Start: 1964
		End: 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.

Sharman Spector 10-4-16 SSgustv
Name (Print): Date: Signature:

Britex Fabrics Legacy Business Registry Application

Section 4: Written Historical Narrative¹

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.**

Britex Fabrics began as the brainchild of Martin Spector, who was a fabric merchant in Poland. He came to the United States in 1939 and established the first Britex Fabrics in the heart of New York City's garment district, and then decided to relocate when he and his wife Lucy fell in love with San Francisco. The store officially opened its doors in San Francisco's Union Square in 1952. Originally located at 178 Geary, the business moved to its current location at 146 Geary/152 Maiden Lane in 1964.

In the early years, the husband and wife team ran the San Francisco store together. Martin had an eye for retail and envisioned the floor-to-ceiling wall of woolens which still spans the 120-foot wall running from Geary Street to Maiden Lane, while Lucy had a flair for quality and style: she knew what to buy and how to promote it. She worked tirelessly to build the business by making frequent trips to New York, sourcing the designers who would make Britex the most innovative of fabric stores.

Since 1952, Britex Fabrics has been continually owned and run by the Spector family. From 1966 (after Martin's passing) to 2006, Lucy Spector ran the business on her own, within a culture that predicted—as a woman-owned, woman-run store, with three daughters at home—she would fail. Instead of failing, she created a San Francisco legacy. From 1976 onward Lucy was joined in the business by her daughter Sharman Spector and subsequently by her daughter Beverly Spector; since 2007 Britex Fabrics has been run by Sharman Spector alone.

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

1952 – 1966:	Martin and Lucy Spector (founders)
1960 – 2006:	Lucy Spector
1976 – present:	Sharman Spector (daughter)

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

See above.

¹ Application submitted on October 4, 2016. Narrative written by Sharman Spector and Dina Fayer (Britex Fabrics), with contributions from Mike Buhler (San Francisco Heritage).

- d. 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.**

Since 1952, Britex Fabrics has been on the same block of Geary in Union Square. We were previously at 178 Geary. In 1964 we moved to the current location at 146 Geary with an entrance at 152 Maiden Lane; the iconic red neon sign went up that year. The sign can be seen from the foot of Market Street and from a distance of several miles and has been featured in movies, paintings, and photographs.

Completed in 1907, 146 Geary/152 Maiden Lane was designed by Hemenway & Miller and originally occupied by furrier Robert Wallace, "one of the best known and most popular fur and fashion stores in the city prior to the fire." (*SF Chronicle*, 1907) The brick building is a four-story "vertical box" with decorated spandrels, egg-and-dart molding enframing the upper levels, and a projecting cornice (the ground floor has been totally remodeled). It is complementary to two buildings of similar scale to the left, 152 Geary and 156 Geary, and has a survey rating of 3S (appears eligible for individual listing in the National Register). It is also rated by the city as a Category A Historic Resource and listed as an Article 11 Contributory Building within the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District.

CRITERION 2

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

Britex Fabrics has been providing the active ingredients for style in San Francisco since 1952, featuring the latest textile designs from all over the globe (including a curated collection of European designers, along with one-of-a-kind pieces that have always set creative wheels in motion)—so San Francisco has literally been wearing Britex Fabrics for over 60 years. Britex also has a long history of supporting San Francisco's fashion/design education community: students from the Academy of Art, SF Art Institute, FIDM, CCA, and many other schools come to Britex to find fabrics for their collections and for general inspiration. Britex often showcases their work in window displays and on social media, even fully sponsoring the Academy of Art's *Britex Fabrics Project* collection in 2009 (which previewed at Mercedes-Benz NY Fashion Week). In addition, Britex Fabrics has been an integral part of the culture and attraction of Union Square, welcoming legions of tourists to this vibrant downtown hub. Although Union Square has been much dismantled and disheveled by construction of the Central Subway (begun in 2009), Britex is still a destination for intrepid 'fabricolics'.

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

The textiles and notions of Britex Fabrics have been represented at the Black and White Ball, the Gala openings of the San Francisco Ballet, San Francisco Symphony, and San Francisco Opera, ACT, Berkeley Rep, and theatrical productions nationwide.

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

Britex Fabrics has been regularly reviewed, referenced, and revered by the *San Francisco Chronicle* (Chronicle pieces attached)—including many mentions by Herb Caen—along with other newspapers and media outlets. We advertised weekly in the *Chronicle* from 1972-1982 and regularly from 1983-

present, and possess a complete archive of every weekly ad—some of which we have reprinted and displayed on our Main Floor. On March 25, 2002, the City and County of San Francisco bestowed a Certificate of Honor on Lucy Spector, noting “Lucy Spector has seamlessly stitched Britex into the fabric of Union Square and San Francisco.”

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

Britex Fabrics has been a favorite shop for significant performers and personalities since 1952, providing both costume and couture material for stars as diverse as Charlotte Mailliard Shultz, Cher, Sharon Stone, Joe Namath, Dionne Warwick, Cheech Marin, Janice Joplin, Chris Isaak, Carrot Top, Hugh Laurie, Rita Moreno, Chaka Khan, Brian Boitano, Kristi Yamaguchi, Bobby McFerrin, Danny Glover, and many, many more, along with Oscar- and Emmy-winning costume designers Colleen Atwood and Terry Dresbach.

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

Britex Fabrics hosts well-attended monthly free tours and holds educational workshops on a regular basis. To quote Mayor Gavin Newsom, “Since 1952, Lucy Spector has played an invaluable role in building and maintaining a monument to small business and style, serving generations of hobbyists and seamstresses alike.”

To celebrate our 60th Anniversary in 2012, Britex held four successful Designer Spotlight evening events, which were conceived to connect local designers with potential clients. Britex also collaborates with local designers to create sponsored shows both in-house and off-site, including the Boo-Boo Boulevard *Dog Day Afternoon* dog costume show—which featured well-trained canine models dressed in costumes based on famous Broadway musicals, trotting through all four floors of Britex and down a red velvet runway on our Main Floor.

Most recently, *Britex Fabrics Presents: PROJKT Maiden Lane* (held on Sept. 23, 2016) featured runway looks from three *Project Runway* designers (including Britex alumnus Emily Payne), one *Under the Gunn* designer, various contributing local artists and sponsors, and the sensational hand-crafted masks of Britex staffer Lance Victor Moore.

Britex Fabrics also donates regularly to local non-profits and charities, and supports local schools by donating materials and giving free tours to middle-school and high school class field trips, along with 4-H and youth craft clubs.

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

Britex Fabrics serves many different communities—from couturiers and professional tailors and dressmakers to home sewers and DIY crafters; from advanced pattern-makers to new students. We are a destination shop for tourists from around the world, who often cite Britex Fabrics as one of their favorite places to visit in San Francisco. And we frequently host several generations of Britex customers in the same family: many brides-to-be come in to shop with their mothers, who often tell us that they purchased their own wedding dress fabric here, several decades ago.

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

Britex is distinctive in that it features two entrances: one on Geary and one on Maiden Lane. The historic neon red sign, which spans three stories, is a highly visible neighborhood landmark.

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

San Francisco would lose a cultural jewel. There are very few family-owned retail businesses left—particularly in Union Square—that can trace their roots back to a time when customers wore hats and gloves to shop. The City and the country would lose the best, most comprehensive high-end fabric store, known worldwide for its selection.

CRITERION 3

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

Britex Fabrics is modeled on a European-style fabric store with a 120-foot wall of wool, arranged in a spectrum of color that spans the length of the store and delights the eye. What we hear most often from first-time shoppers is that Britex Fabrics is a candy store (without the calories). The upper floors are equally colorful, organized, and abundant. We are known for our old-fashioned, personalized style of customer service. Many of our staff members have worked with us for decades, speaking many languages and representing many diverse communities. Amongst our staff are designers and creative artists in their own right, who bring their talents and perspectives to the sales floor.

- 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)**

We maintain our 60-year tradition of honoring both our employees and the excellence of our stock. While our inventory is constantly changing in response to changing trends, our passion and dedication to quality of service remains unwavering. The stories of creative success that we hear every day from our customers provide the rewards and pleasures of running a business that has fulfilled so many generations of sewers and creative people.

- 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.).**

Since Britex Fabrics is a family business and has been passed in its second generation to someone who truly loves what she is doing—along with her dedicated staff—the attention to operational detail is a daily process. In addition to maintaining our famous sign, our window displays on Geary and Maiden Lane are changed regularly, designed and executed by various artists on our staff. Passersby frequently stop and stare to admire the windows, whether or not they are interested in fabric. Britex is without a doubt one of the most beautiful and legendary stores in the country.

- d. 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 that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms.**

Not applicable.

Britex Fabrics Legacy Business Registry Application

Section 5 – Supplemental Historical Documents



1972

Page 24—S.F. Examiner • Tues., July 11, 1972

A New Face for Lace From Calais



LIFE-SIZED DAISIES form pattern of cotton lace paho dress with overall bib, by Paris' Paco Rabanne.



SILVER LACE DRESS fabric combines wide-mesh netting run through with ribbons forming scallop pattern.



LACE'S trendiest look. Tulle embroidered all-over in purple geometric design; border is on left side.



TRADITIONAL black lace turns trendy, re-embroidered in fuzzy mohair. Lace fabrics all from Britex.



PINK SILK FLOWERS in large and small sizes cover ruffle-trimmed lace dress by New York's Mollie Parnis.

There are 30 million home seamstresses in America. And most of them are wrong about one sewing item — lace.

Lace, they say, either is narrow trimmings for linings only, or by-the-yard material in understated colors meant mainly for mothers of the bride. Seldom, if ever, do they choose lace for a costume copy cocktail dress, much less a trendy party gown.

The world's most talented lace-makers, in Calais, France, have news for them. Lace has a new face. Today it can be tulle embroidered all over with a shades-of-purple geometric design. Mohair, very big this season in the regular seven version, is used for big stylized figures on black lace. Crinkled ribbon runs through silver lace. A heavy cream re-embroidered lace is casual as cotton.

All of these come in bolts from 35 to 72 inches wide — and double borders eliminate need for a hem.

With a variety of other

Paco Rabanne of Paris, specialist in bizarre metal clothing, took lace with a line-sized daisy pattern, and came up with a gown as arresting as his chunky metallic creations.

Can the women now on a nationwide sewing binge steal the lace look as deftly as they copy silks, cottons and woolsens? Well, Lucy Spector of Britex has just returned from France so excited about the new laces, she personally carried in her luggage part of the bolts she ordered.

The sudden emergence of livelier lace looks is the result, she was told, of new machines employing punch cards, a la IBM. And of all things for a region celebrated for centuries for its hand-made lace, Calais workers think machine-made laces as exquisite as their former products. Of course, being French, they are speaking practically: the hand-done lace was becoming so costly, factories were threatened with closure — until technology saved the day.

The machine can turn

about \$25 up to \$50 and for a yard. In many instances, though, a couple of yards can be converted by a clever seamstress into a copy of a \$1000 original.

1973 Radio Spot

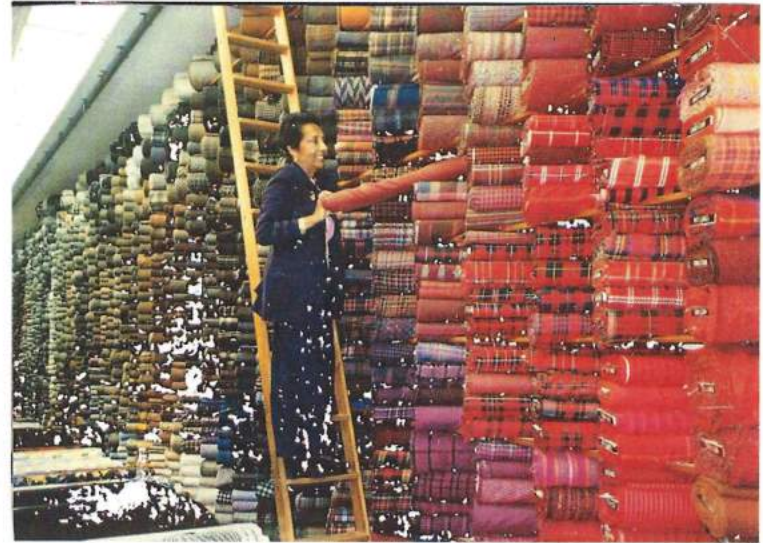
BRITEX FABRICS OPENING NIGHT AT THE OPERA

ANNOUNCER: OPEN; And now, as part of KKHI's live broadcast of the Opera's opening night, we take you to the grand foyer of the War Memorial Opera House for a special look at the opening night festivities, brought to you by Britex Fabrics. At Britex, 146 Geary Street, you can see how easy it is to create new fashion for yourself and have fun doing it. Britex Fabrics have all the fabulous imported and domestic designer fabrics, plus a complete notions, pattern and trim department. — And now to Scott Beach live at the Opera House.

ANNOUNCER: CLOSE; Britex Fabrics has brought you this special look at the Opera's opening night. Britex Fabrics, 146 Geary Street, between Stockton and Grant, is open daily from 9 to 6, Monday and Thursday 'till 9. — Britex Fabrics, where imagination is at work every day of the week.

W. Scott Beach
Sept 7

1980s



1974

Wed., May 8, 1974 ★ San Francisco Chronicle 35

HERB CAEN



This Column Rated X
★ ★ ★

JOHN PRIEST, the S.F. Opera's technical director, having made a large purchase at Britex on Geary for the opening night production, was mildly amused to receive a bill this week that specified "Scenery fabric for 'Manon Let's Go'" . . . Which, of course, is the sequel to "Manon First" . . . And I would suspect that if Maestro Ozawa's celebrated pain in the neck was caused by a "spasm," it occurred after he read Critic Heuwell Tircuit's scathing review of last week's concert, which may have been responsible for a postponement of the S.F. Symphony's recording of Dvorak's "New World" . . . Zoom service: No sooner had Maria Callas checked into her hotel Mon. night than her accompanist, Robert Sutherland, dining at T'Vic's with the Herbert Hoovers, excused himself, ordered chicken soup, coconut ice cream and a box of gardenias to go, and hustled them up to the diva's suite. At the Mark, not the Sheraton-Callas.

★ ★ ★

1977



SF Heritage Archive

1993

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

January 15, 1993

Lucy Spector
Britex Fabrics
146 Geary St.
San Francisco, CA 94108

Dear Lucy:

The cashmere is absolutely beautiful, and I am grateful for such a special gift to commemorate an extraordinary experience for our family. Your gift will be a lovely reminder of your friendship and your enthusiasm about the Inauguration.

I hope the coming year is a successful and happy one for you and for Britex.

Sincerely yours,

Hillary
Hillary Rodham Clinton

HRC/ekp

1997



SF Heritage Archive

2002

Certificate of Honor

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS City and County of San Francisco

The Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco hereby issues, and authorizes the execution of, this Certificate of Honor in appreciative public recognition of distinction and merit for outstanding service to a significant portion of the people of the City and County of San Francisco by:

LUCY SPECTOR Owner, Britex Fabrics

The Board of Supervisors would like bestow its highest recognition and honor to Lucy Spector for her incredible work over the past five decades at Britex Fabrics. With notches and notions, with backings and bolts, Lucy Spector has seamlessly stitched Britex into the fabric of Union Square and San Francisco. Since 1952, Lucy Spector has played an invaluable role in building and maintaining a monument to small business and style, serving generations of hobbyists and seamstresses alike.

Supervisor Gavin Nelson
Member, San Francisco Board of Supervisors
March 25th, 2002

PROCLAMATION BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Commending Lucy Spector on her service as a San Francisco business owner for over fifty years and dedicating April 15th, 2002 as "Lucy Spector Day" for the City and County of San Francisco.

WHEREAS, Lucy Spector and Martin Spector first opened Britex Fabrics in 1952, with Lucy Spector assuming all responsibilities by the time of her husband's death in 1966; and,

WHEREAS, A San Francisco institution, Britex Fabrics has served over five generations of visitors from all corners of the globe, local residents, grandparents and grandchildren alike; and,

WHEREAS, Under Lucy Spector's leadership and vision, Britex Fabrics has continued its success as the interfacing of Union Square, with Britex Fabrics being recognized as the Tiffany's of fabric stores; and,

WHEREAS, Lucy Spector's innate sense of style and vision has served Britex Fabrics quite well, developing a vast and exclusive selection of fabric, notions, trims for fashion sewing and home décor; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco does hereby thank and congratulate Lucy Spector for serving as owner of Britex Fabrics for over 50 years; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors does hereby dedicate Monday, April 15th, 2002 as "Lucy Spector Day" in the City and County of San Francisco.

Approved by the full Board of Supervisors on April 15th, 2002.

2002



Lucy Spector

co-founder and owner, Britex Fabrics—a 50-year-old, female-run business that's one of the oldest and largest fabric stores in the country.

My first visit to San Francisco was in 1949, after I had left my hometown in Austria. I remember strolling through Union Square in my dainty kid gloves and hat, gazing through store windows at the linens, brocades and silks. In those days, all the fine stores had fabric departments. The city's dignity and beauty enchanted me, and in 1952 my husband and I started our business.

Britex Fabrics, on Geary Street.

My role at that time was a housewife. My husband and I had an understanding about the business—he said you can help me, but you really don't know much about anything. I was a saleswoman, nothing more. But then my husband died in 1966, leaving me with more than a million dollars in debt. We lost our manager, who opened up another fabric store not far away. I had three small children and my mother to support, and I was determined to make a go of it. It wasn't a question of following my dreams; it was a question of necessity.

I worked Monday to Saturday, and was there from the time the store opened till the time the store closed. It was hard work, very hard work—constant concentration on the business—but I loved what I was doing. I became loved by my employees and my customers because I put everything into it honestly and as best as I could. It came the hard way, not the easy way. My clients have confidence in me, and I am proud of that. You can't imagine the pleasure of overhearing customers say among themselves: "What a place, what a fabulous place."

Photographed at Britex Fabrics in Union Square.
Interview by Katy Neusteter.

2008



Britex's Sharman Spector leans on one of the shop's sliding ladders, which are used to reach fabrics stacked in the wall of wool on the first floor.

STYLE COUNSEL

Dream weaver

Britex co-owner Sharman Spector explains how she assists the throngs of stylish DIYers who punch up clothes with a bit of trim and a few new buttons.

BY JOANNE FURIO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JULIA GALDO

Shows such as *The Rachel Zoe Project* and *Project Runway* inundate viewers with talk of draping, folding, and stitching—not to mention fierceness—in fashion. But how do we apply our newfound knowledge at fabric stores? They can be such dingy places: bolts of fabric thrown on tables, no labels or prices anywhere, a gruff owner who determines yardage by using his arms. Enter Sharman Spector of Britex Fabrics, the stalwart shop on Geary Street with a plaque immortalizing the names of its numerous celebrity customers. (Was that David Bowie inspecting the silver lamé?) Spector searches the world for the most unusual textiles and trimmings, keeping San Francisco's diverse and iconoclastic customers in mind. Here, she tells us how to take an idea from a sudden brainstorm to a finished design, whether you've mastered buttonholes or never touched a needle and thread. BRITEX FABRICS, 146 GEARY ST., SF, 415-392-9910, BRITEXFABRICS.COM

Your father, the late Martin Spector, first established Britex in Manhattan before opening his S.F. store in 1952. Were they a reaction to typical American fabric shops? The U.S. model was more for the trade, so most people who shopped there knew what they were looking for. Britex is really based on a European model. My father was from Poland, and my mother, Lucy, is Viennese. If you go to Europe, you will still find some beautiful smaller stores where the focus is on presentation. ▶

2010

Britex Fabrics

Union Square
Opened 1952
Sharon Spector and Lucy Spector

It all started with my mother and father, who came from the Garment District in New York. Originally, they were both from Europe. They were very passionate about fabric. It was very much the European aesthetic—the excitement of choosing the colors and feeling the textures. It was a slower way of doing things. In 1952, they came to San Francisco for a fresh start. My father just had vision: He literally walked down the street and said, “This is where I want Britex to be.” He was daring. And he made it happen.

I’ve been actively involved since 1970, but really, it started when I was a girl. Britex used to sell buttons on the first floor, so I sold buttons. Back then, my mother still spent so much of her time building the business. She worked alongside my father up until his death in 1966. Then she took over. She was such a hard-working woman. She really loved what she did. She would tell you today—if she didn’t have to retire, she wouldn’t have.

We never thought of Union Square as a neighborhood—it’s downtown, then and now. It’s the cornerstone of this city. It’s so varied and bustling. Downtown has remained quite consistent, when I think about it. We’ve always been anchored by big department stores—City of Paris, I. Magnin and J. Magnin, going back even further. And now, of course, Barneys, Neiman Marcus and Macy’s. I remember when we had Blum’s across the street and we’d have coffee crunch cake in the mornings. And we had this wonderful pet store, Robinson’s, on Maiden Lane. Back then, the women would shop and send the men away. We’d say, “You can go to Robinson’s across the street.”

Twelve years ago, we were fortunate enough to purchase the building, so we’re here for the long run. I don’t see Britex working in another neighborhood. We’ve been here so long—people know where to find us. [Designer] Helga Howie used to be behind us in the Frank Lloyd Wright



Center: Sharon Spector

building. She was such an icon for fashion. Now we’re one of the few. Even [legendary tailor] Walter Fong is retired.

What hasn’t changed is that we’re always doing fun, quirky things—Halloween has always been huge. We even sell stuff for Burning Man. There are the DIYers, the home sewers, the designers, the fashion students, the theater people, the interior decorators, the ballet, the opera, the special-occasion people. There’s a resurgence. People are dissatisfied with disposable clothing. They want to make

“There isn’t a day that goes by that we don’t hear, ‘I’m so glad you’re still here.’ I cannot think of a better place to be than the heart of SF.”

their own or reinvent what’s already in their closets—adding a layer of tulle, a lovely flower, or using some vintage trim to accentuate. You can always create such beautiful things.

There isn’t a day that goes by that we don’t hear, “I’m so glad you’re still here.” I know that we’re doing the right thing. I cannot think of a better place to be than the heart of San Francisco.

—Sharon Spector, as told to Jillian Kurver

145 Geary St., 415-392-2993, britexfabrics.com

2013

Fashion

SIX-COURSE COLLECTION

The Factory’s new line, with Britex Fabrics, customizes evening wear to your taste

By Tony Bravo

When Jennifer Evans decided to launch The Factory into the world of custom evening wear in June, instead of holding a fashion show at the Factory’s Fourth Street boutique and workshop, she hosted an intimate dinner at her Beaux Arts penthouse overlooking downtown San Francisco. Evans’ friend chef Keith Hughes (Chef Papa, Supper Club) paired six courses with the six gowns upon which the collection is built.

“I wanted that salon feeling,” Evans said. “I love the idea that you’re seeing the collection against the kind of backdrop you would have for a private showing in a great couture house or store in the era when custom departments were a regular feature.”

As models entered with each new course, the story of the collection began to unfold: classic silhouettes—column, cocktail, A-line, trumpet, fish-tail, ball gown—that serve as a template for a client to shape to her individual vision with the Factory team’s expertise.

Evans already had an appreciation for the process of creating gowns for the individual woman based on years of working with tailors and couture designers before starting the Evans Group, the Factory’s parent company. She realized that the Factory was in an ideal position to explore custom evening wear, given the skills of her team, who spend much of the year working with designers on individual collections and creating the Factory’s in-house line.

“San Francisco has a very ‘experience-based’ fashion scene that the collection is an exciting addition to,” she said, noting the city’s revival in bespoke business over the past few years. “As much as a piece of couture is about the finished gown, it’s also about what the client and the designer go through together in the creation. For women just discovering custom, it can be very empowering.”

Clients begin with a consultation to determine which of the six gown shapes best suits

the woman and the occasion. Then the Factory works with the client to customize it with specific design elements and embellishments, including reveals to the gown’s initial shape.

The next step is where a client’s vision can truly begin to manifest itself: fabric selection. When it came time for Evans to find a partner for the collection, she looked toward her friends at Britex Fabrics in Union Square.

“Britex was the only choice,” Evans said. “With their history in San Francisco—Britex has been a Union Square fixture since 1952—and the expertise of the staff, we knew they shared our same values.”

For Britex owner Sharmen Spector, the partnership was a natural fit. “In collaboration with the Evans Group,

we simply rolled out one beautiful fabric after another to showcase what was possible with each silhouette. And knowing that the fabric would be placed in capable hands, the whole process was a delight.”

In a fashion climate that can frequently emphasize trends and haste, Spector sees long-term advantages to reviving traditional custom production values. “If we can convince people to slow things down a bit, there would be a lot more satisfaction, not to mention elegance.”

After Britex, the team at the Factory takes over with figure measurements and creates a traditional muslin fitting sample. Every client also gets her own file, which the Factory can reference for future orders. When the gown is complete, clients are presented with a design sketch of their final gown, a touch that recalls the glory days of made-to-order.

For Evans, each gown is the beginning of a relationship. “Once you feel the fit and see the results of a couture collaboration, it’s hard not to want that experience for every piece of formal wear you add to your wardrobe,” she said. With prices starting around \$2,500, Evans points out that women can easily spend twice



The Factory photo

that amount on an evening purchase off the rack “without the benefit of a custom fit and at the risk you might run into a duplicate at an event.”

“San Francisco, far more than Los Angeles, has a defined social season, with events like the Opera, Symphony and Ballet openings. Women who attend these regular formal occasions are ready to be part of the haute couture process.”

Tony Bravo is a San Francisco freelance writer. E-mail: style@sfchronicle.com

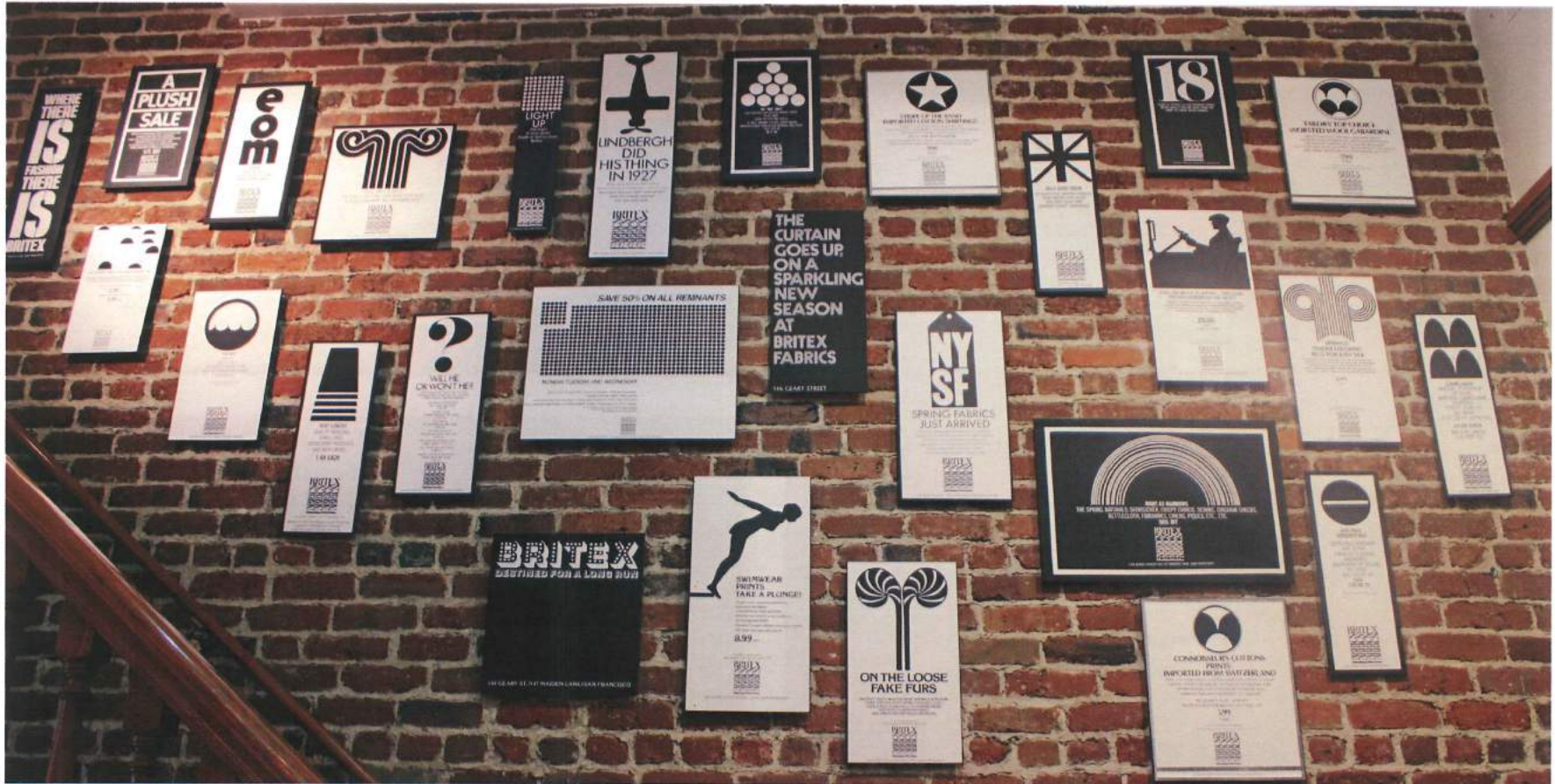


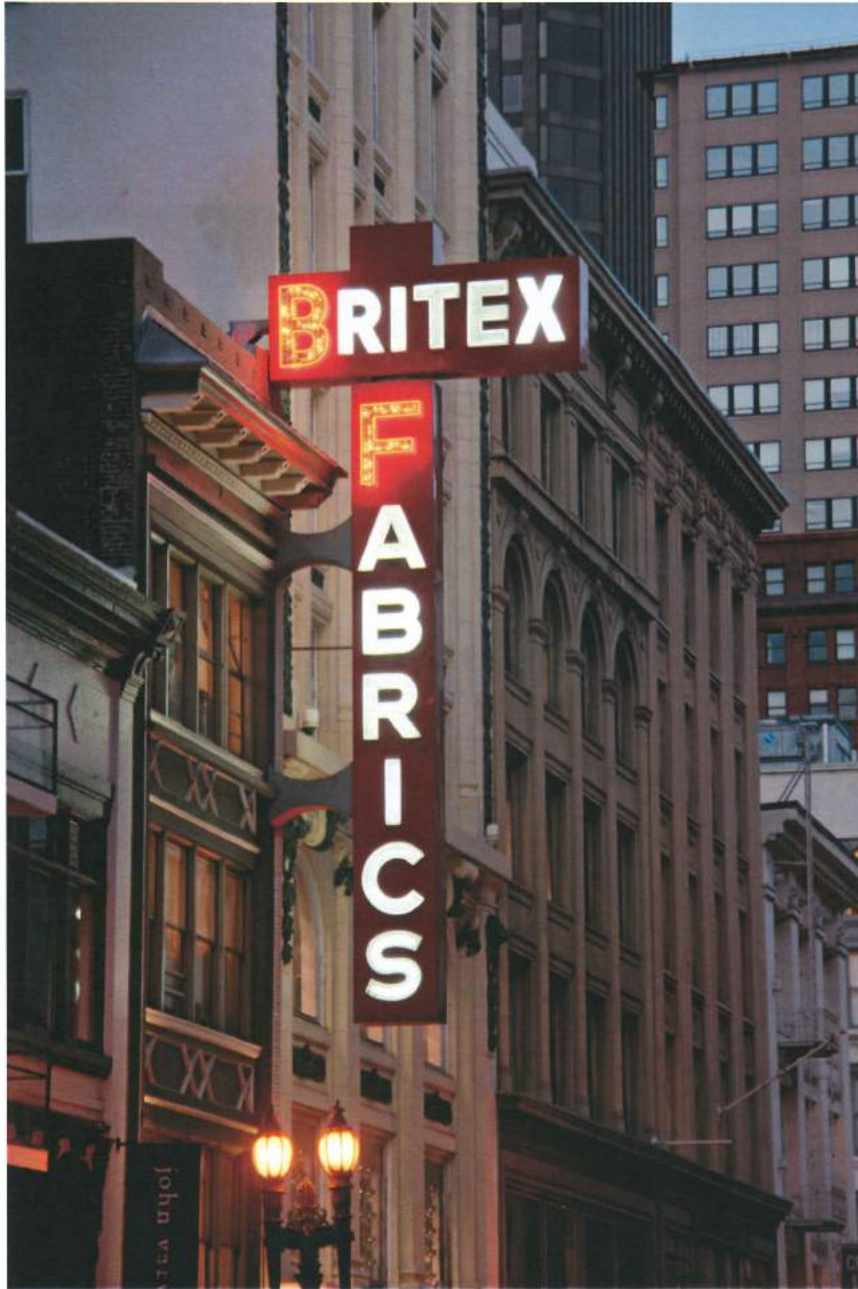
“San Francisco has a very ‘experience-based’ fashion scene that the collection is an exciting addition to.”

Jennifer Evans, founder

The Factory debuted its new evening-wear collaboration with Britex, shown on models, top, with an intimate dinner at the Beaux Arts penthouse overlooking downtown San Francisco of Factory founder Jennifer Evans, above.

BRITEK AD DISPLAY

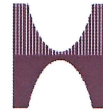




Meg Lauber via Flickr



HERITAGE



news

FOR MEMBERS OF SAN FRANCISCO HERITAGE

Britex Fabrics (since 1952)
145 Geary Street



PHOTO: BRET WILSON/HERITAGE

VOLUME XLIII | NO. 3

FALL 2013

YES ON J: San Francisco's Legacy Business Historic Preservation Fund

In March, the Board of Supervisors unanimously passed legislation to establish the country's first official Legacy Business Registry. This November, voters will decide if the city should provide financial assistance to help stabilize San Francisco's long-standing businesses. [STORY ON PAGE 6](#)

IN THIS ISSUE 2. PRESIDENT'S COLUMN 3. HERITAGE NOTES 4. MINT DERELICTION 5. LEGACY BUSINESS FUND 6. EVENTS 7. PEOPLE 10. SUPPORTERS 11. ANNUAL FUND APPEAL 12. CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Britex at 60: The fabric of our lives in S.F.

LIFE STUDIES Britex at 60 - tailor-made for S.F.'s creative set

By **Julian Guthrie**

Updated 12:03 pm, Monday, July 9, 2012

Over near the bolts of cotton quilting fabric on the third floor stands **Melody Chan Doss**, who started at **Britex** in 1979 as a cashier and learned "from the ground up." She takes pride in the fabric, describing a cheerful new line of organic cottons as "happy family members that all get along."

Not far away is Maya Gorokhovskaya, who was hired at Britex 23 years ago speaking only a few words of English and is now known as the "Button Lady," and loves any button that sparkles.

On the first floor, near the "wall of wool," stands Ina Zholudova, whose eyes well with emotion as she talks about Britex as a place where imagination meets possibility, where the color and richness of America contrasted to the bleakness of all she had known in Ukraine.

Britex, the sewing and fabric emporium opened on Union Square in 1952 by Polish immigrant Martin Spector and his Austrian wife, Lucy, is celebrating 60 years in San Francisco. It has managed to thrive through changing times, from the era of home-economics classes to a time when customers tap their smart phones or tablets to explain fabric and design ideas.

And through it all, the shop has stayed in the family. It is now run by daughter **Sharman Spector**.

"We are still about good old-fashioned service and old-fashioned charm," Sharman Spector said. "But we are also very modern. We get a lot of do-it-yourselfers and, seasonally, the **Burning Man** crowd. We are constantly evolving."

Taking a tour of the four floors, starting at the top, Spector showed off the discounted remnants, faux fur, pillow forms, netting and athletic fabric.

"This floor is where you find a lot of the costume makers and the Burning Man people," she said. "Our faux fur is especially popular."

On the third floor, she rhapsodized about the ribbons, from classic grosgrain to the hand-dyed silks and velvets, and the embellishments, including tassels, lace, silk flowers and hairpieces. She showed off the purse handles and the iron-on patches for everyone from military to kids. And, she stopped at the button counter, with 75,000 styles of buttons.

"I started in the ribbons department, then I moved to trim, and now I'm the queen of buttons," laughed Gorokhovskaya. "I walk down the street and people say, 'That's the button lady!' I love all the buttons, though I particularly love anything with rhinestones. The sparklier, the better."

She added, "When I first came to apply for this job, I was afraid to even walk in. But I met Sharman's mom, Lucy, and she was from Austria and she gave me a chance. She really gave me a new life."

Heading to the second floor, Spector passed by the perfectly rolled bolts of cotton and linen, and fabric for upholstery and drapes.

"I love the creativity here, and the way we try to help customers," said Doss. "We do have a lot of people come in with their iPads, and we work with them. But we also tell them this is a human process. We are not barcoded. There is creativity and imagination that goes into this. I love working with customers, whether they are here for a quarter of a yard of fabric, or for thousands of yards of fabric."

Back on the first floor, Spector stood just inside the front door.

"My parents came out to San Francisco on vacation and saw this place and my father said, 'We are taking that store.' One of the first things my dad did was to create a 'wall of wool,' which we have today."

When Martin Spector died in 1966, Lucy Spector set about enlarging the business.

"My mother really introduced the magic of European fabrics," Spector said.

Standing nearby was Zholudova, who landed her first job in America at Britex.

"Twenty-two years here," she said, nodding her head. "It has changed a lot, but it is still a family business. It is a mecca. I look at all of the colors and fabric and feel happy. To me, it is a place where art happens."

Britex

10 a.m.-6 p.m. Mon.-Sat. 146 Geary St., S.F. (415) 392-2910. www.britexfabrics.com.



Photo: Siana Hristova, The Chronicle

Sharman Spector poses for a picture at the 60 years old store Britex Fabrics she owns in San Francisco, CA on May 4, 2012. The family shop opened in 1952 by her parents Polish immigrants Martin and Lucy Spector. Many of the store employees had worked for the company for many years including Melody Doss, who has been with Britex for 33 years, "Button Lady," Maya Gorokhovskaya and Douglas Davis has been here for 23 years.



Photo: Siana Hristova, The Chronicle
Sharman Spector shows a colorful fabric.





Photo: Siana Hristova, The Chronicle

Basket with scarves by the register at Britex Fabrics on May 4, 2012.



Photo: Siana Hristova, The Chronicle

Sharman Spector owns the 60th years old store Britex Fabrics in San Francisco, CA.



Photo: Siana Hristova, The Chronicle

Sharman Spector shows a lace fabric sold at Britex Fabrics



Photo: Siana Hristova, The Chronicle

"Button Lady," Maya Gorokhovskaya take a brief moment to pose for a picture by the button's wall at Britex Fabrics store she works for 23 years on May 4, 2012.



Photo: Siana Hristova, The Chronicle

Sixty years old San Francisco, CA store Britex Fabrics on May 4, 2012.



Photo: Siana Hristova, The Chronicle

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Photo: Siana Hristova, The Chronicle

"Button Lady," Maya Gorokhovskaya take a brief moment to pose for a picture by the button's wall at Britex Fabrics store she works for 23 years on May 4, 2012.

Julian Guthrie is a **San Francisco Chronicle** staff writer. E-mail: jguthrie@sfchronicle.com

**Legacy Business Registry
November 16, 2016 Hearing**

2016-014209LBR; 2016-013529LBR; 2016-013530LBR; 2016-013557LBR;
2016-014320LBR; 2016-013558LBR; 2016-013561LBR; 2016-013587LBR;
2016-013588LBR; 2016-014214LBR; 2016-013591LBR; 2016-013782LBR;
2016-013785LBR; 2016-013788LBR; 2016-013922LBR

Filing Date: October 17, 2016
Case No.: 2016-013529LBR
Business Name: Britex Fabrics
Business Address: 146 Geary Street
Zoning: C-3-R (Downtown Retail)
80-130-F Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0309/007
Applicant: Sharman Spector
146 Geary Street
San Francisco, CA 94108
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin, District 3
Staff Contact: Desiree Smith - (415) 575-9093
desiree.smith@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Britex Fabrics is a European-style fabric store located in San Francisco's Union Square that has offered a large selection of fabrics, ribbons, buttons and trims for 62 years. The family-owned business was founded by Polish immigrant, Martin Spector, who had worked as a fabric merchant in Poland and New York before moving to San Francisco. Spector ran a Britex Fabrics in New York from 1939 to 1952 before relocating to San Francisco and reopening the store in its second city. Britex Fabrics opened on 178 Geary Street in 1952 and in 1964, moved to its current location at 146 Geary Street. Located in a historic 1907 four-story commercial building designed by Hemenway & Miller, the store features floor-to-ceiling wall of woollens spanning the 120-foot wall stretching from Geary Street to Maiden Lane, and its large selection of textiles include designs from all over the world with a special emphasis on European fabrics. The business serves a variety of customers, including local and visiting couturiers, professional tailors, dressmakers, home sewers, crafters, and students. As a popular choice for local designers and famous performers, Britex Fabrics has been featured at countless San Francisco galas, events, and theatrical performances. The business also offers free monthly tours and regular educational workshops, hosts fieldtrips for schoolchildren, and donates materials to local schools. In 1966, Martin passed away, leaving the business to his Austrian-born wife, Lucy, who carried on and expanded the success of the business until 1976 when their daughter, Sharman Spector, took over the business which she continues to operate to this day. Arguably the most comprehensive high-end fabric store in the city, Britex Fabrics is also one of the last small, family-owned businesses in the Union Square area.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

1952

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

Yes, Britex Fabrics qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the

eligibility Criteria:

- i. Britex Fabrics has operated for 62 years.
- ii. Britex Fabrics has contributed to the identity of Union Square and to the history of the local fashion community by serving as an iconic European-style fabric shop and offering a wide selection of textiles and high-end fabrics for purchase.
- iii. Britex Fabrics is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define its tradition of selling high-end textiles and fabrics in its Union Square location.

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

The business is associated with the art and tradition of managing a European-style fabric shop, offering a wide variety of textiles and fabrics for a variety of clientele ranging from professional designers to students and home sewers.

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

Yes. The property has been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The property is considered a "Category A Property" that is eligible for listing in the California Register and National Register. It is a contributing building to the Article 11 Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District. The property has also been identified in the LGBTQ Historic Context Statement for its association with LGBTQ history as a popular gay cruising area from the 1940s to the 1980s.

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

Yes. The property is a contributing building to the Article 11 Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District.

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

Yes. The property at 146 Geary Street was mentioned on page 96 of the LGBTQ Historic Context Statement for its association with LGBTQ history as a popular gay cruising area from the 1940s to the 1980s.

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

Yes. Britex Fabrics has been featured in several media outlets including but not limited to: San Francisco Chronicle, 7/9/2012, "Britex at 60: The fabric of our lives in S.F.," by Julian Guthrie; San Francisco Chronicle, 10/6/2016, "Britex move to rip hole in Union Square's fabric," by J.K. Dineen; SF Gate, 10/11/2016, "Britex landlord wants retailer to stay in its longtime home," by J.K. Dineen.

On March 25, 2002, the Board of Supervisors issued a Certificate of Honor to Lucy Spector for her "incredible work over the past five decades at Britex Fabric" and in recognition of the contributions the small business has made to Union Square. Also in 2002, the Board of Supervisors issues a proclamation declaring April 15th as "Lucy Spector Day" in San Francisco, noting Britex Fabrics as the "Tiffany's of fabric stores."

Legacy Business Registry
November 16, 2016 Hearing

2016-014209LBR; 2016-013529LBR; 2016-013530LBR; 2016-013557LBR;
2016-014320LBR; 2016-013558LBR; 2016-013561LBR; 2016-013587LBR;
2016-013588LBR; 2016-014214LBR; 2016-013591LBR; 2016-013782LBR;
2016-013785LBR; 2016-013788LBR; 2016-013922LBR

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 146 Geary Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Large and diverse inventory of quality fabrics
- European-style fabric store with a 120-foot wall of wool, arranged in a spectrum of color that spans the length of the store
- Features two entrances: one on Geary and one on Maiden Lane
- Window displays on Geary and Maiden Lane
- Historic neon red sign
- Quality, personalized style of customer service

Additional Recommended by Staff

- Store front signage, including both iconic red projecting sign and gold lettering on storefront
- Union Square location



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE NOVEMBER 16, 2016

Case No.: 2016-013529LBR
Business Name: Britex Fabrics
Business Address: 146 Geary Street
Zoning: C-3-R (Downtown Retail)
80-130-F Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0309/007
Applicant: Sharman Spector
146 Geary Street
San Francisco, CA 94108
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin, District 3
Staff Contact: Desiree Smith - (415) 575-9093
desiree.smith@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

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CA 94103-2479

Reception:
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Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR BRITEX FABRIC, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 146 GEARY STREET (BLOCK/LOT 0309/007).

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 Union Square neighborhood and San Francisco'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 November 16, 2016, 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 Britex Fabrics 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 Britex Fabrics.

Location (if applicable)

- 146 Geary Street

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- Large and diverse inventory of quality fabrics
- European-style fabric store with a 120-foot wall of wool, arranged in a spectrum of color that spans the length of the store
- Features two entrances: one on Geary and one on Maiden Lane
- Window displays on Geary and Maiden Lane
- Historic neon red sign
- Quality, personalized style of customer service
- Store front signage, including both iconic red projecting sign and gold lettering on storefront
- Union Square location

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 2016-013529LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on November 16, 2016.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: