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# JEREMIAH'S VANISHING NEW YORK

A.K.A. THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS:  
A BITTERLY NOSTALGIC LOOK AT A CITY IN THE PROCESS OF GOING EXTINCT

MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2017

## Greek Corner Coffee Shop Diner

### VANISHED

Late last week, I headed to [the Greek Corner Coffee Shop Diner](#), as I often do, looking forward to a cup of coffee at the pistachio green counter. Instead, I found it gone. I was heartbroken.



A goodbye sign in the window said they'd closed on December 31—"After exactly 36 years, 5 months, and 15 days." They'd been on the corner of 7th Avenue and 28th Street since 1980.

HELP US #SAVENYC



Looking for solutions? [Click here.](#)

**JEREMIAH MOSS**

"Jeremiah's Vanishing New York has become the go-to hub for those who lament New York's loss of character."  
--Crain's

"Jeremiah Moss does an excellent job of cataloging all that's constantly being sacrificed to the god of rising rents."  
--Hugo Lindgren, *New York Times Magazine*

"No one takes stock of New York's changes with the same mixture of snark, sorrow, poeticism, and lyric wit as Jeremiah Moss... Even as the changes he's cataloging break our hearts a little, it's that kind of lovely, precise writing that makes Moss's blog essential reading."  
--Village Voice, *Best of NY*

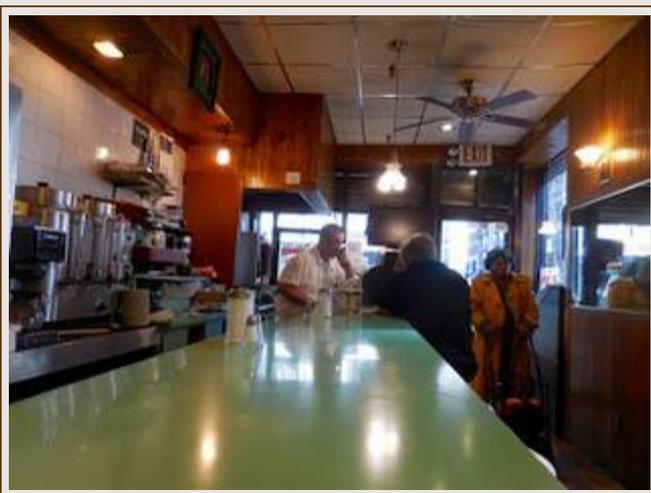
"Jeremiah Moss... is the defender of all the undistinguished hunks of masonry that lend the streets their rhythm."  
--Justin Davidson, *New*



Back in March, I shared the rumor that the place was going to close, but I could not confirm it. I was told: The building has been sold. The building *might* be sold. There are holdouts who won't budge. The building won't be sold. Everything will be okay. Who knows?

There's no notice of a recent sale in the online building records, but it could be imminent. Was the coffee shop pushed out or did they just decide it's time to go? In their goodbye sign they say they're opening a new place in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, called [Blue Door Souvlakia](#). It looks nice, but nothing like the coffee shop.

I'm going to miss the Greek Corner. It was one of my oases. And [another authentic New York coffee shop](#) that has gone.



March 2016

## York Magazine

"One of the most thorough and pugnacious chroniclers of New York's blandification." --[The Atlantic](#), [Citylab](#)

"Hyperbolic and combative, tireless and passionate." --[Salon](#)

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[James Ewing](#) commented on [2016 Vanishings](#): "XES Lounge at 24th between 6th and 7th... they had the best happy hour in Chelsea."

[Jeremiah Moss](#) commented on [Evergreen Coffee Shop](#): "It's been explained to me, and I still don't fully understand it. But maybe someone here..."

[Michael Penn](#) commented on [Greek Corner Coffee Shop Diner](#): "Taken a few weeks..."

[Unknown](#) commented on [Evergreen Coffee Shop](#): "Could you go into a bit more detail about this: "An empty storefront is a bigger tax write-off..."

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POSTED BY JEREMIAH MOSS AT 7:54 AM 1 COMMENTS 

LABELS: [CHELSEA](#), [GARMENT DISTRICT](#)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2017

## Evergreen Coffee Shop

### VANISHED

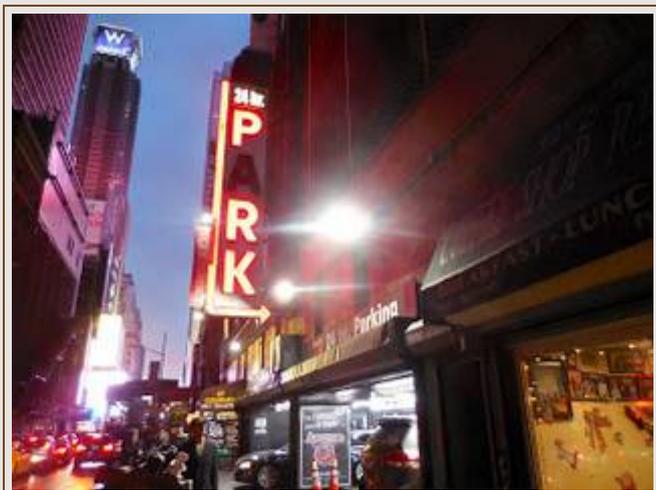
Last week we lost another authentic New York coffee shop, that [rapidly vanishing](#) part of the city's local fabric. The Evergreen on West 47th, a block east of Times Square, had been in business for 25 years. They'd just celebrated their anniversary. A sign in the window read: "we will go dark" on New Year's Eve.

The building owner would not renew their lease.



"We're being forced out," Evergreen's owner Ilias Argenas told [DNAInfo](#). "They want the property vacant. Why? I have no clue."

To the [Post](#), he said, "We were pleading, we were arguing." But no lease. Not even for one more year.



Donnie Moder commented on [Carnegie Deli Goodbye](#): "NY Daily News story that the closing of this booming business may be a ploy to get rid of the union..."

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### VILLAGE VOICE BEST OF NYC 2014



Best Chronicle of New York's Ever-Changing Face

The building that holds the Evergreen was sold.

When I went in for a farewell meal, **a waiter told me it will be demolished for a new hotel. A little deli in the building will also close. Two small local businesses destroyed for yet another tourist hotel?** We need that like we need a hole in the head.

According to news outlets and public records, the building [sold for just over \\$101 million](#) to Clarity 47 Parking LLC, which seems to be Icon Parking, the company that currently occupies most of the building. Will they keep it a garage or make it a hotel? An attorney for Clarity 47 told the [Wall Street Journal](#) that "the overall parcel is slated for redevelopment."

Hotels are killing our streets. They are currently annihilating the Flower District and the Garment District. Meanwhile, mass tourism has made it nearly impossible for New Yorkers to enjoy the city's cultural sites. When was the last time you tried getting into a museum? It's a nightmare.

**City Hall could do something--like placing a moratorium on new hotel construction--but it won't.**



And while the new owners get the permits together for their demolition and construction plans? The Evergreen will sit empty for at least a year, and probably longer, creating more miserable [high-rent blight](#).

An empty storefront is a bigger tax write-off for building owners. Of course, **the city and state could fix that by imposing a vacancy tax or taking away the write-off, but they do nothing** and the problem continues.

So we continue to watch the city die before our eyes.

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## SOME QUESTIONS

[WHAT CAN WE DO TO SAVE NEW YORK?](#)

[What's left to preserve?](#)

[How did this blog begin?](#)

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[What's a YUNNIE?](#)

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▶ [2007](#) (172)

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The Evergreen was a favorite among Fox News employees, whose building is right around the block, and the walls were decorated with autographed headshots of hosts like Megyn Kelley and Bill O'Reilly.

They also had Conan O'Brien and the cast of *The Sopranos*, along with the "First Ladies of Football." And, of course, many loyal customers who did not have headshots.

Thinking of losing his customers, Ilias Argenas told the *Journal*, "It's going to kill me." It actually could. Too often, senior citizens die soon after they're evicted from their businesses and homes. I've seen it happen many times, a literal casualty of hyper-gentrification.



A regular old coffee shop, the Evergreen was one of those easy and quiet places, full of New Yorkers, with just a smattering of tourists, stopping in for an affordable meal, a hot cup of coffee, a place to get warm and be comfortable.

It's that atmosphere that matters so much. It helps us to breathe. And we're losing it fast.

## Urban Etiquette Signs

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POSTED BY JEREMIAH MOSS AT 7:59 AM 6 COMMENTS 

LABELS: [TIMES SQUARE](#)

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**TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2017**

## Vanishing Sign

If you've recently walked by [Cake Shop](#), which played its [last song on New Year's Eve](#), you may have noticed a flickering neon sign in the window. It says one word: VANISHING.



The sign is the brainchild of artists Troy Kreiner and Brian Broker of [Shameless Enterprise](#), in collaboration with "Vanishing New York" and built by neon artist [Patrick Nash](#). The 20-something offspring of native New Yorkers, raised nearby in Nassau County, Troy and Brian created the sign to bring attention to the plight of vanishing small businesses in

the city they love.

"Neon is poetic," says Troy. "The singular word, VANISHING, echoes the OPEN signs you see in store windows." Only this sign communicates the opposite, announcing closure and finality with its irregular rhythm, like a heartbeat fading out. "The light was engineered to flicker," Troy explains, "like it's on its last legs. And neon is a fragile material, hand-crafted, ingrained in the cultural history of the city."

**The sign commemorates what's being lost. Its creators also hope to inspire resistance.**

"Hearing about the closures on social media is one thing," says Brian, "but seeing it in the context of the neighborhood is another."

The sign is a physical representation of loss, and the artists want the people walking by to have an emotional experience when they see it. "There's a lot of hopelessness and defeatism about this issue," says Troy, "but this could be a small gesture to inspire people to fight for change. It's hopeful, even in its sadness."

What future plans are in store for the sign? Brian says, "Hopefully, businesses will stop closing so we can throw the sign out." Since that's unlikely to happen anytime soon, the guys and I would love to see the sign displayed in more windows, to bring more attention to what has become an epidemic of vanishing.

**If you manage a small business on the verge of vanishing, or you know someone who does, and you'd like to host the sign in your window, please get in touch with Brian and Troy at:**

nothing000matters@gmail.com. You can also contact them through [their site](#) -- and follow them on [Instagram](#).

For the next couple of weeks, at least, you can see the sign at Cake Shop, located at 152 Ludlow Street. Watch it in action right here:

P.S. As for Cake Shop, the owners plan to return with a new name and no music. So, maybe only sort of partially vanishing.

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POSTED BY JEREMIAH MOSS AT 7:31 AM 4 COMMENTS 

LABELS: [LOWER EAST SIDE](#)

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2016

## Carnegie Deli Goodbye

As you probably know by now, New York's famed [Carnegie Deli](#) is [closing tonight](#). They just sent out this official goodbye press release.



New York, NY – (December 30, 2016) – Marian Harper-Levine, President of Carnegie Deli and second-generation owner, issued the following statement this morning regarding the closure of the original location of the Carnegie Deli at 854 Seventh Avenue:

“Along with my daughter Sarri and in honor of my late father Milton, I would like to sincerely thank all of our loyal patrons, – tourists, dignitaries, and New Yorkers alike- who have visited Carnegie Deli over the past 80 years. Since my father took over the Deli in 1976, this has been a second home to me and it has been a true privilege and an honor to serve you. Although this has been an incredibly difficult decision to **officially close Carnegie Deli New York (854 7th Avenue) tonight at midnight**, we thank you for your letters, notes, visits and sharing your stories.

The Carnegie Deli looks forward to expanding wholesale and retail operations and welcoming you to the other licensed locations at Madison Square Garden, The Mirage in Las Vegas, NV, Sands Casino Resort in Bethlehem, PA and during the US Open Tennis

Championships in Flushing, Queens.

Our family-owned and operated meat processing facility and bakery in New Jersey will continue Carnegie Deli's celebrated legacy, by supplying the other locations and selling select products and merchandise directly to the public online at [www.carnegiedeli.com](http://www.carnegiedeli.com).

Thank you again and we wish you all a very Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year!"

**In a follow-up release, spokesperson Christyne Nicholas adds:**

**"Carnegie Deli is not for sale and the family is certainly not considering any publicity-inspired offers to buy the 7th Avenue location."**

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POSTED BY JEREMIAH MOSS AT [9:37 AM](#) [6 COMMENTS](#) 

LABELS: [MIDTOWN](#)

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**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2016**

## 2016 Vanishings

At the end of each year, since 2007, I offer a list of places that vanished during the year. These are the ones I covered on the blog, but there were many more (and I've been blogging less lately). Please add those not included here in the comments. Click the highlighted name to go to the post for more info. And for previous years' vanishings, just scroll down to the bottom.



### [Ziegfeld Cinema](#)

Forced to close after 46 years. I still want to know what happened to the artifacts from the Ziegfeld Museum.

### [St. Mark's Bookshop](#)

Finally shuttered after a long fight to save it. 39 years old. I miss it every day.

### [Left Bank Books](#)

The cost of doing business was too high. 24 years old.

### [69 Bayard](#)

The landlord hiked the rent on this 80-something-year-old Chinatown classic.

### [Gene's Coffee Shop](#)

Just a regular little place that had been around for decades. Evicted.

### [The Stage Restaurant](#)

After being forced to close after the Second Avenue explosion, after fighting eviction from their landlord, Icon Realty, and crowdfunding for support, The Stage officially shuttered. 35 years old. Still heartbreaking.



### [Surma the Ukrainian Shop](#)

Nearly 100 years old. The owner decided to sell the building.

### [Maria's Mont Blanc](#)

After 34 years, shuttered in the midst of fighting the landlord.

### [Rebel Rebel Records](#)

Forced out by the landlord so the boutique chain Scotch & Soda could

expand. 28 years old.

#### [Mimi's Pizza](#)

A little place, but much beloved. 59 years old. The reason for closing is unclear.

#### [Troll Museum](#)

Evicted from the Lower East Side along with its proprietress, Reverend Jen.

#### [Tekserve](#)

29 years old. The rent was too damn high.

#### [Rocco's Calamari](#)

Suddenly shuttered after 39 years.



#### [Bleecker Street Records](#)

Over 20 years old, shuttered after a massive rent hike forced a move.

#### [Lanza's](#)

This beauty is 112 years old. It was seized by the marshal and remains closed "until further notice," but it does not look good.

#### [Bookcourt](#)

After 35 years, the owners have decided to retire.

#### [Carnegie Deli](#)

At 79 years old, this New York classic will be gone by the new year.

The owner has decided to sell the building.



### Previous Years' Vanishings:

[2007](#)

[2008](#)

2009: Parts [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)

[2010](#)

2011: Parts [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)

[2012](#)

[2013](#)

[2014](#)

[2015](#)

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POSTED BY JEREMIAH MOSS AT [8:34 AM](#) [19 COMMENTS](#) 

LABELS: [MISCELLANY](#)

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**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2016**

## Winter Solstice

Years ago, the morning of the Winter Solstice would bring a strange parade of clowns moving through the East Village. It happened every year. And yet it seems, looking back, like a hallucination. Did it really happen?

I put out the call on social media to see if anyone else remembered. Nothing much turned up. And then these photos.

Thanks to Michael H. for sharing:



In this colorful and strange parade from the 1990s, a blue-haired queen rides a white horse pushed by clowns. One clown bangs a drum.





Bringing up the rear, another pair of clowns pushes a rolling rack of white gowns. They seem to have angel wings.

Who were these people? What was this all about? And why did it end?



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POSTED BY JEREMIAH MOSS AT [7:51 AM](#) [4 COMMENTS](#) 

LABELS: [EAST VILLAGE](#)

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**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2016**

## [Lanza's Languishing](#)

As EV Grieve first reported, the great and gorgeous Lanza's restaurant in the East Village was [forced to close this past summer](#)--seized by the marshal for non-payment of taxes--and it remains closed.



*this summer*

We'd hoped it would reopen by now, but the place is looking grim.

A peek through the window shows a place in the process of being packed up. Bottles of alcohol stand on tables. Framed art has been taken down from the walls and placed atop cardboard boxes.

The white tablecloths, set for a meal that never came, are gathering dust. It seems that Lanza's is leaving us, slowly but surely.

This is breaking my heart.



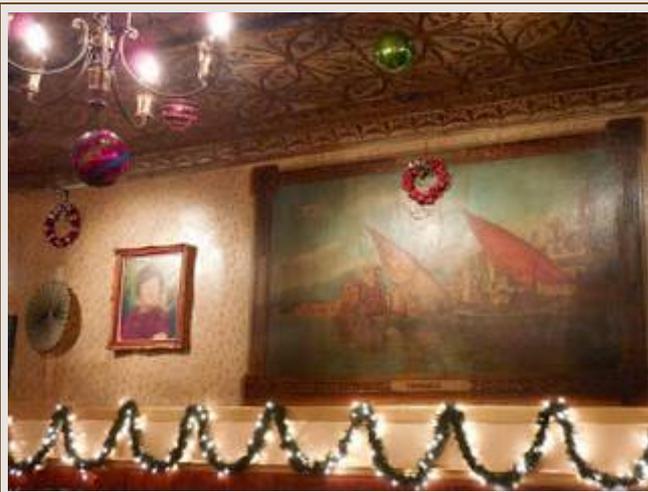
*today*

Opened in 1904, Lanza's was started by the same family that started DeRobertis Pasticceria. As Annie DeRobertis [once told me](#), her father's father started DeRobertis and her mother's father started Lanza's. It has a [history](#). The cafe [left us two years ago](#) and now this.

Here's what the place looked like last year at this time:



Dear Lanza's, what can we do to help you stay? We don't need another hipster foodie joint moving into the shell of an Italian classic. We need you.



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POSTED BY [JEREMIAH MOSS](#) AT [7:52 AM](#) [10 COMMENTS](#) 

LABELS: [EAST VILLAGE](#)

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