

conNECKtedTOO—>TINYisPOWERFUL is launching an other Art and Culture, in/ with community experiment in defense of TINY BUSINESS as a sustainable form of commerce. After 'the Charleston Cut', dedicated to barbering, we are launching **TinyCulinary**, to support the cause of very small restaurants and/or food-related enterprises unable to comply with the covid19 distancing rules, without expanding beyond their walls. Our breed of art indeed has intent. Its physicality though, remains in flux, a dream, lest we kill the dream. **TinyCulinary** starts as a tale:

A TALE OF CHARLESTON

Yes, this title suggests an entry point into DREAMS and IMAGINARIES, which in turn, feed a NARRATIVE core and bring about a CAUTIONARY ENDING. This development is typical of tales. It is simple. But it is simple only in that everyone interprets it differently. It is a puzzle. The more you practice it, the more ways you fathom to put it together. But it is simple.

The **conNECKtedTOO** visual arts team is about to sweep you into a FARANDOLE through the Peninsula. We will dance, glean treasures, sprinkle art on **Broad street**, downtown,

on **Chicora-Cherokee**, at the foot of Rivers avenue, in North Charleston and

around **Hampstead Park**, on the East side of Charleston. We will then empty our basketful of encounters and experiences on a common table of hopes for change and divide it evenly into three. This way, three very different neighborhoods will, for the first time, have a chance to make a similar mark on the map of a city historically tainted by race, class and income discrimination.

CHAPTER 1 - A DREAM

The FARANDOLE starts on **Broad street**, post-covid19 - first wave. A very small restaurant which has been here for 36 years, an anchor in its neighborhood, has to close down. Like many other TINY Businesses, if it is to survive, it must expand outside: *sidewalks, streets, gardens, any common spaces available*. A support group succeeds in getting permits. Other businesses join in. **TINY is POWERFUL!**

Tralala, Tralala - Tralala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala!

King street is closed to traffic, Charleston County is delighted to be asked and transforms its Court Building's green spaces into an urban garden. The **Four Corners of Law** have become an example of *futuristic cityscape!* Charleston is conceding to change, climate change. A blossoming of citizenship?

Tralala, Tralala - Tralala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala!

Meeting street closed to cars? Perfect for Public Transit? Or is the Low Line a better fit? Heavy traffic, air pollution will not come back anyway. Let's rapid-link **Reynolds avenue** to the **Battery**. Let going to work be a breeze, not a suffocating supplice. Imagine ... a steel and glass transport sliding past hotels, shops, of-their-time architectures.

Next stop **Robert Smalls avenue** (formerly Calhoun street) ... next stop ... **Wentworth**
- **Broad and Tradd - Battery** ... and back ...

Tralala, Tralala - Tralala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala!

Back! All the way back, to **Reynolds avenue/Chicora Cherokee**. Its bustling commerce district. Its gardens, its farm, its market place. Its festivals. Its farm-to-table restaurants. Here, urban

revival has *not* meant gentrification. It has meant *the anchoring of the local population and its home-grown prosperity and culture*, here to stay. A national example of equity and economic justice?

Tralala, Tralala - Tralala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala!

Is it evolution? Is it mutation? Or is it our elected officials listening to and honoring 'others' for what they are: unique, whole, undeniable?

It is all that. It is a dream in the form of a TALE.

CHAPTER 2 - THE DREAM GROWS ON

A swelling parade of artisans, shopkeepers, preachers, dentists, florists, artists - all artists at this moment - catches a ride down to **Columbus Street**, farandoles to **Hampstead Park**. A stage, a table, a meeting of the minds, long prepared, long postponed ... The Council Woman speaks - the people listen:

<<Today ... today, nothing is impossible. The New Police Corps works for peace on our streets. We have secured a stable neighborhood of shop owners and city dwellers for our grassroots population. Storefronts, sidewalks, the Park: they have become a hub of local growth, for Charlestonians and visitors. A miracle? No. This is what Change looks like. >>

Tralala, Tralala - Tralala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala!

The Council Woman goes on: <<For me, **Tralala**, there was never A dream, **Tralala**, there was simple justice. **La la**. But, since dream there still is, **La la la**, it hangs only on this question: when will it turn into more reality? >>

Halala. It would not be the first time, **alas**, that in America, **alas**, we are given hope, **alas**, only to be sold lies. Will the Powers-that-be let Change be?

Privilege? It is a hard thing to let go of! Isn't privilege shared privilege lost? **Haha**, isn't the American Dream a privilege for some, a nightmare for most? **Alas** ... Let's resist. **Haha**. Organize.

Keep **Hampstead** resilient. It is our neighborhood, we will keep it this way. **Haha**, where we belong. **Ah!** We belong. Thank the Lord, now, we belong.

Tralala, Tralala - Tralala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala!

CHAPTER 3 - WHO CAN SAY (S)HE DIDN'T KNOW?

It is 2030. The waters are rising. The seawall has been built. The pumps are primed. Charleston is a cushy cocoon. Again, real estate is being squeezed. If anyone must go, who will go?

"This time though, remember, things have changed! I won't let no one tell

*me different. I own my place on Hampstead with my shop in it. This here restaurant is here to stay. Now, the neighborhood is protected by laws we the people have drawn, way back when. I am here to prove that **TINY BUSINESS** is more about belonging than about profiteering. Of course, mainstream banks would still love to sink us; yes, we still are prime targets for loansharks and insurance peddlers. But, I know better. I have learned a thing or two about macro-politics too! The manipulation of public and private debt, unequal access to ownership, to health care, education, employment. Those instruments of oppression are in check ... I know. And I am a better citizen for it; less fearful, prouder - proud. And the neighborhood is better for it too. Hampstead has its sidewalk cafés, its grocery stores,*

*barbershops, laundromats, vibrant storefronts, its medical clinic, **all owner-operated**. And its colorful signs ... If that's what it takes to be vindicated, not appeased.*

Why not celebrate our pride with art, public benches, a kiosk for music, a performance stage, and why not, street performances? America street and Broad are cousins now, and we are TOO.

IS THIS WHAT REPARATION LOOKS LIKE ... to start?

*Today, social peace is enforced, not by brutal policing but by fair justice. Thank the Lord - As for privilege? **Haha!** I know it's not the natural consequence of natural dispositions. I know. I've got it. For sure. I voted supremacy out.*

And I keep my militancy up. Nobody will rob my children of their dreams."

Tralala, Tralala - Tralala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala, Lala!

CHAPTER 4 - MAKING ART - MAKING PLACE

This TALE is a piece of common art. It is a common dream.

What would Art be without its share of dream?

Beware though, art is also a Pioneer,
a Visionary, a Prophet.
an Imagination Whipper. and it has staying power.
No ephemeral proselyte!

Making Art, for TinyCulinary,

We, **conNECKtedTOO—>TINYisPOWERFUL** artists, activists, educators and youth, believe that a marker of our individual worth is the integrity, the quality, the thoroughness, the genuineness of our attention to others and of our output.

The collective integrity of our collective work is informed by our intent to listen, to share, to respect, to collaborate.

Hardly to "help" however. Who needs help, when one reciprocates?

As for Making Place, isn't it the purpose of Art and Culture; to build safe common grounds, prosperous for being equitable, smart and sustainable, accessible to all.

BUT ...

THERE IS NO BUT ...

NEW FOUND HOPE WILL NOT REVERT TO DESPAIR.

THERE IS NO GOING BACK.

A TALE OF CHARLESTON is a tale no more.