

Life's still a cabaret for near-90 FilAm entertainer, author

Novel examines life in Manila until WWII through a performer's loves

Photos courtesy of <http://neileadamsmcqueen.com/> website



Neile Adams McQueen performs in a Broadway musical.

By Louinn Lota
Contributor

HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA — When the pandemic hit, most of our seniors panicked, with good reason. Not Neile Adams McQueen. She used the lockdowns to give her ideas life to produce *Miyami-san (A Love Story)* about Manila until WWII, through a performer's eyes.

"The characters had been milling about in my mind for a long time, influenced by people and circumstances I've encountered in my own life," the near-90-year-old FilAm said. "When the pandemic began in December 2019, I came to the conclusion it was time to write this book."

Miyami-san (A Love Story) is based on a mestiza-looking dancer growing up in a strict Catholic household who goes on to gain

international fame through the vaudeville stage shows popular until the 1930s when the talkies movies took over entertainment. Neile's (pronounced neel's) main character is Maria Milagros Alvarez and we follow her through the ups and downs of her careers and relationships with those whom she loves amid Manila's high- and low-society.

In a nod to mothers everywhere and to upcoming Mother's Day, *Miyami-san (A Love Story)* opens with a prologue of a grandmother and her toddler granddaughter, Madison, playing and relaxing in her home in Palm Desert, Calif. No longer famous in the Philippines, no longer *Mila* Alvarez, no longer at war with herself, but now a serene senior named Miyami Sato.

Born July 10, 1932, in Manila of Eurasian ancestry, Neile Ad-

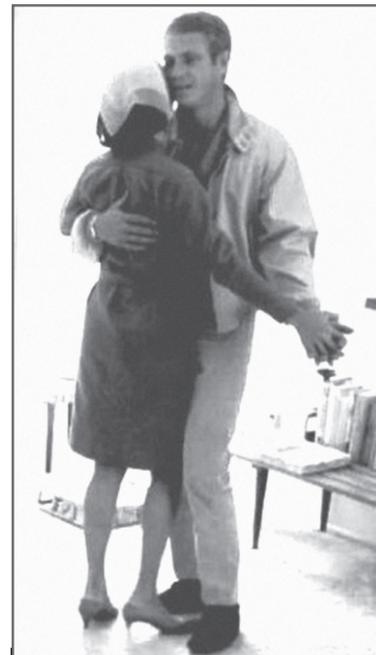
ams McQueen spent World War II in Japanese-occupied Manila, emigrating to America with her mother in 1948. And in case you were wondering, yes, Neile was married to Hollywood icon Steve McQueen (March 24, 1930-Nov. 7, 1980) for 15½ years, had a son and a daughter and four grandchildren.

Oh, and Neile wrote *My Husband, My Friend: A Memoir* (originally published in 1986, with an illustrated version published for its 20th anniversary available in bookstores) which currently is under consideration to be made into a feature film. Not just her marriage is movie material, a documentary on Neile herself is also on its way to being made.

Neile used the stage name Adams (her father's middle name) in order not to be typecast as



Neile Adams McQueen dances in a recent cabaret show.



Neile Adams McQueen dancing at home with former husband, Steve McQueen.

señorita, due to her Spanish birth name María Ruby Neilam Arrastia y Salvador, when she auditioned to dance, sing and act. Her big break on Broadway where famous choreographer Bob Fosse caught a nightclub show and cast her in the 1954-1956 musical *The Pajama*

Game.

Her entertainment career included Broadway musical touring companies and regional theater, Vegas shows and appearances in movies including: *Here Come the Fuzz (1972)*, and *This Could be the Night (1957)*.

She appeared on television variety shows with Bob Hope, Jak Benny, Perry Como, Eddie Fisher, Pat Boone; and TV series including: *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.: The Yellow Scarf Affair (1965)*; *Alfred Hitchcock Presents: Man from the South (1960)* and *Five Fingers: A Shot in the Dark (1960)*; *The Alfred Hitchcock Hour: Ten Minutes from Now (1964)*.

Her most recent shows have been cabarets of her own making. She's performed in jazz clubs in Los Angeles, New York, London, Paris, Palm Springs, Calif., and Chicago.

Councilmember O'Farrell, Metro and Little Tokyo Service Center Break Ground on Nearly 200 Units of Homeless and Low-Income Housing

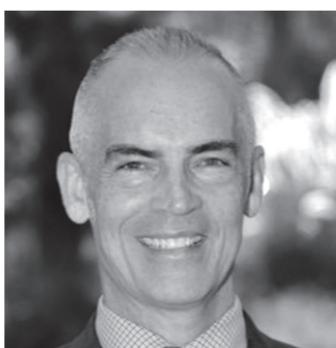
The Santa Monica Vermont Apartments will help address Los Angeles' affordability crisis, while putting people experiencing homelessness on a pathway to wellness and stability

EAST HOLLYWOOD — Los Angeles City Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell today joined the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) and Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC) to celebrate the groundbreaking of the Santa Monica Vermont Apartments, a new transit-oriented development that will provide 187 units of housing for people experiencing homelessness and low wage workers.

"Every Angeleno deserves a safe, affordable and comfortable place to live," said Los Angeles City Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell, who helped secure funding and entitlements for the project's completion. "Projects like these will make a real difference for working families in East

Hollywood, while also putting people experiencing homelessness on a pathway to wellness, stability and a purposeful life. I'm proud to have worked with LTSC and Metro to make this project a reality and look forward to welcoming its first residents as soon as it opens."

Since taking office, O'Farrell has been a leader in affordable housing production, with the 13th District outpacing nearly every area in the City in the production of affordable housing. The HHH-funded Santa Monica Vermont Apartments, a project championed by O'Farrell, will also include community-serving retail space with plans for a health center and a food court, prioritizing local and legacy small businesses as tenants.



Los Angeles City Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell

Transit improvements will also be made to the Metro Station and plaza, in addition to a new bike/mobility hub and transit shelters.

Councilmember O'Farrell was joined at this morning's press conference by County and City leaders, as well as representa-

tives from Little Tokyo Service Center.

"Today is an exciting day for Metro and East Hollywood," said Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board Chair Hilda Solis. "This new transit-oriented development will be an example of how innovative thinking and strategic partnerships can make sustainable, equitable development a reality. Developing housing on Metro-owned land is making a difference in the lives of Angelenos throughout the city and we will continue to work to deliver on our promise of developing 5,000 affordable housing units by 2031."

"We are proud to be collaborating with Metro on this development that will help address the acute affordability challeng-

es families face throughout Los Angeles," said LTSC Executive Director Erich Nakano. "This project is a prime example of how we can place Los Angeles on a path toward a more sustainable, affordable and livable future. We hope it will inspire future sustainable housing developments in cities and communities across the county."

"Many transit riders in our County have an average annual income of just \$18,000 a year," said Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins. "These are the residents that need affordable housing the most. How we use our land can help make the difference between a thriving community for all versus one that doesn't work for low- and moderate-income families."