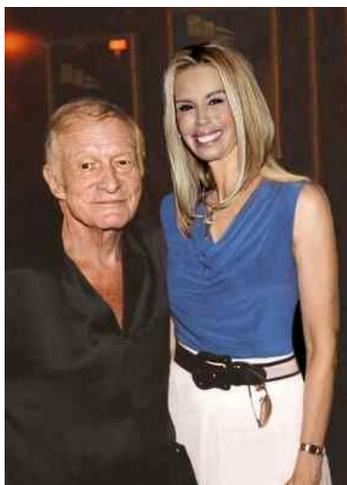


## Playboy, Hugh Hefner subject of Montclair woman's book

By Imani Tate , Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

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Pioneering Playboy Enterprises creator Hugh Hefner, 89, with former businesswoman Patty Farmer, author of "Playboy Swings: How Hugh Hefner and Playboy Changed The Face of Music." Farmer will sign book copies at 7 p.m. Tuesday at Barnes and Noble in Montclair. (Courtesy Art)



Hugh Hefner is shown here with legendary jazz trumpeter, ambassador and cultural icon Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong. Armstrong is among artists featured in Patty Farmer's "Playboy Swings: How Hugh Hefner and Playboy Changed The Face of Music." (Courtesy Art)

ethnically diverse environments, Patty Farmer's childhood was filled with culturally enriching experiences.

Those experiences later gave her the confidence for adult conversations with celebrated entertainers, writers, cartoonists and cultural icons. And ultimately led to Farmer's intense research for and development of "Playboy Swings: How Hugh Hefner and Playboy Changed The Face of Music," the first comprehensive and sanctioned book on the significant impact Hefner and Playboy Enterprises had on jazz music, racial equity, human rights and social reform.

Farmer, a former businesswoman, didn't consider a writing career until 10 years ago when cultural curiosity about a historic jazz club prompted her to research and write. She will be at the Montclair Plaza's Barnes and Noble at 7 p.m. Tuesday to sign copies of "Playboy Swings" as part of a national tour for the book that's topped Amazon's jazz music category for eight weeks.

Published by Beauford Books, the book features contributions by renowned jazz critic and authority Will Friedwald, foreword by Playboy promotions director Victor Lowmes, introduction by Newport Jazz Festival founder and Playboy Jazz Festival producer George Wein and hundreds of interviews and facts from legendary and master musicians, singers and comedians who performed Playboy clubs, resorts, tv shows and festivals.

Farmer was born in Pennsylvania, the oldest of accountant Bernard Teevan and homemaker Patricia Teevan's five children. She moved to New York City to study business and fashion and earn a bachelor's in merchandising at the Laboratory Institute of Merchandising. She now serves on the LIM Board of Trustees.

"My mother was a smart woman," Farmer recalled. "She gave me the arts and an appreciation for the arts. My first record, at age 5, was Tchaikovsky's 'Dance of the Flowers.' Most kids thought of going to a museum as something boring. It was quite the opposite for me."

Their parents also took Patty and her siblings to the theater and concerts.

She laughed when she remembered brother Michael “complaining ‘Why do I have to wear a suit on a Saturday?’ Dad said ‘if I have to wear a suit, you have to wear a suit.’ My dad acquiesced to my mother’s artistic desires. They gave us things that were culturally enduring and diverse. It all touched my soul.”

Visual and performance arts became pleasurable pastimes after Farmer finished college and focused on business. She moved to California in 1987 and opened Baby Makes Three, a maternity clothing store. Her interest in writing surfaced in 2006 when she moved into a NYC historical landmark that had once housed the famous Persian Room.

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“I’m curious by nature, so I asked the manager if I could look in the building archives for its history. He said there was no written history,” she lamented.

Farmer went directly to the sources, interviewed entertainers who’d performed there and compiled the history of the jazz club that opened in 1934 and closed in 1975. From those conversations — with Lesley Gore, Andy Williams, Patti Paige, Polly Bergen, Jack Jones, Lainie Kazan, Connie Stevens and others’ recollections of Duke Ellington, Miles Davis and other notables — she satisfied her curiosity, documented the club’s history and put it all in a book, “The Persian Room Presents.” She began the Playboy project four years ago.

“Will Friedwald introduced me to a lot of people,” she said.

Nina Gordon, former Playboy Jazz Festival publicist, said Farmer’s personality puts people at ease. Artists, employees, executives and friends — including tenor titan Sonny Rollins, comedian Joan Rivers, dancer Maurice Hines and singers Tony Bennett, Jon Hendricks, Marlena Shaw and Al Jarreau — shared personal stories about the enterprise that had been America’s largest employer of entertainers for 20 years and the man who led and won fights against segregation, made jazz music for the masses and pioneered social reforms.

A year into the project, Hefner instructed his personal archivist Steve Martinez to open his archives to her. For her first Playboy Mansion visit, she enjoyed a fried chicken and mashed potatoes dinner and watched the classic Kim Novak-William Holden movie “Picnic” with Hef, bandleader Ray Anthony and actor Fred Dryer. Hef gave her peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches for munchies on her drive home.



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