



Juliette Williamson's body washed up on Yerba Buena Island.

Blues artist standing trial in partner's slaying

Street musician admitted killing her, testimony reveals

BY MARK HEDIN

IN early May, San Francisco blues musician Juliette "Valentine" Williamson uttered her last words: "Bruce, I'm sorry." As half of Chicago Brother and Sister, Williamson had performed on the streets of the city since 1989, leading a rowdy, ragtag band in spirited versions of Chicago blues standards.

Bruce Brooks, 52, her musical and life partner throughout that time, now stands accused of killing her in a drunken rage. After two weeks in the Bay, Williamson's body washed up on Yerba Buena Island May 22. The medical examiner said she had died of hammer blows to the head.

Brooks was arrested on May 28, and has pleaded not guilty. He returns to Superior Court at the Hall of Justice on Feb. 5. At Brooks' hearing in September, witnesses testified that Brooks had described how he brutally killed his Chicago Sister.

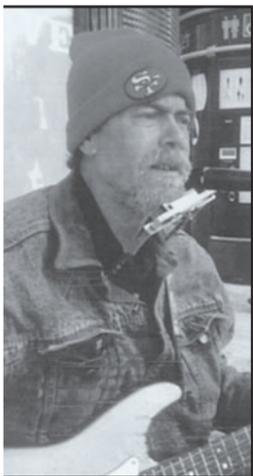
The couple had a stormy relationship, according to friends and fellow musicians. But they worked well together and made memorable music.

They came West from the Chicago area, and became a fixture at Fisherman's Wharf, Pier 39, by the Embarcadero, along Market and Mission streets downtown and at street fairs and festivals.

By the dozens, passers-by would stop to watch and listen as Williamson sang and played electric bass alongside Brooks, who complemented her with electric guitar, harmonica and vocals.

"She's so talented," said former Muddy Waters band drummer

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Bruce Brooks is accused of hitting Williamson with a hammer many times.

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Looks like no-go for go-go girls

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Glide gets it off the ground

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comes to City Hall

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CENTRAL CITY

EXTRA!

SAN FRANCISCO

BLASTING OUT THE GRIME



Yoeung Chhith attacks a wad of gum with new steam cleaner.

All gummed up

Even state-of-art rig faces daunting job

BY TOM CARTER

THE beautification war being waged on grimy Tenderloin sidewalks recently got stuck in a battle with careless gum chewers.

Indeed, chews that once promised to double everyone's pleasure years ago are now a gnawing headache for the Tenderloin Sidewalk Improvement Program (TSIP). Gum left on a concrete surface over time, experts say, gets ground down, hardens like

epoxy in the fine porosity, and turns an unsightly black. Gray sidewalks look like they've been pelted with tar, and indeed some of the splotching may be tar.

In 2001, TSIP bought two sidewalk sweepers to combat dirty sidewalks in the Tenderloin and South of Market, but they couldn't faze neglected dirt in hard-to-get places and the old gum.

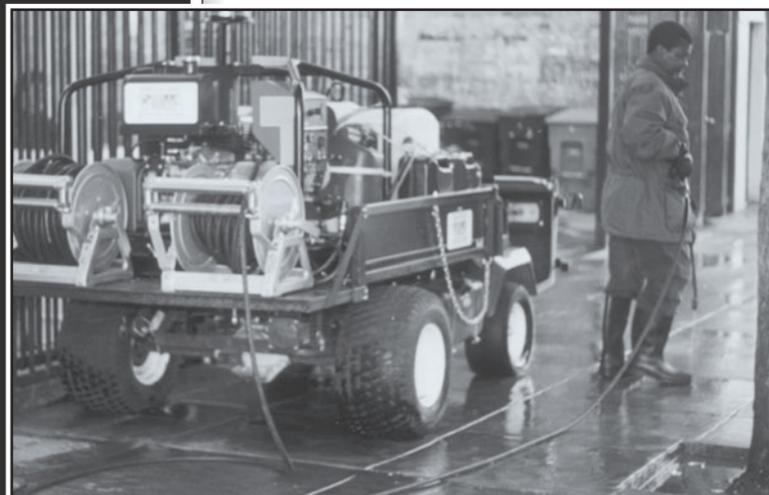
Now TSIP's mighty sidewalk cleaner, the Kew Contractor Steamer, purchased last November and rolled out in January, is challenged, too.

"We got the steam cleaner to improve the level of cleaning that we couldn't do with other machines," TSIP's Executive Director Shawn Collins said. "It allows us to do things that we can't do with other machines. It gets right up to building edges and between light and meter poles, and — the most important thing — it gets up gum."

"But it was disappointing to learn how labor-intensive it is. At first we started with every inch, but it was useless."

Every inch meant a snail's pace. Because vanquishing a single gum spot takes a continuous six-second blast of steam at 3,200 psi, it takes one employee all two full days to thoroughly steam clean the sidewalks on three sides of a

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A new steam machine is deep-cleaning Tenderloin streets.

PHOTOS BY ADRIAN VARNEDOE