

Episode 12:

Welcome to Gilded Garbage Can, the podcast dedicated to defogging the image that is San Francisco.

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I came across a couple of interesting news stories recently and thought it might be fun to share them here and, obviously, comment. So, without further ado, here we go.

From SF Gate, December 12th, “150-foot observation wheel coming to Golden Gate Park.” It begins, “Visitors and residents alike will be able to experience a new view of San Francisco starting on April 4, 2020.” The article goes on with details about the 150th anniversary of Golden Gate Park, placement of this giant wheel and, naturally, the cost to take a ride.

“Rides will be free during the April 4th park-wide celebration, which is exactly 150 years after the California Legislature created Golden Gate Park.” Free for one day...one, undoubtedly overcrowded, miserable day, where everyone will flock to the park so they can save their money for avocado toast and overpriced cocktails. The scene will be complete with homeless and human waste and should just be a sight to behold. Oh, after that free day, it’ll cost \$18 to take a 12-minute ride. Now that’s more like it San Francisco – make it expensive to go up 150 feet and overlook dying trees, crumbling concrete, litter and all the usual stuff we normally only get to see at ground level.

The mayor said, “We want to celebrate the Park and give people a new way to appreciate the beauty of our City during the 150th celebration.” It’ll be new all right. High above the plight and the vacant storefronts and the smell, people will find a new appreciation of the city – they’ll appreciate being above all the mess.

In other news and also from SF Gate, December 20th, “Someone’s trying to get Lego to build a BART-themed set. And it’s actually pretty cool.” This story begins as follows: “In Sergio Aldana’s eyes, too many people in the Bay Area are afraid of using public transportation.” Let’s pause there for a moment and ponder that premise. Wait, ponder some more. Just a few seconds longer. Ok. I think we all agree that people in the Bay Area are afraid of using public transportation.

That aside, it’s pretty nice that a 19-year old built a BART train using Legos for his younger brother. Looking at the photo, the model is quite realistic though it’s way too clean to be a BART train. But props to Mr. Aldana for doing something creative.

What I want to talk about is how realistic Lego will be when they package, market and sell it, assuming of course that they decide to manufacture it. And I think others probably wonder the

same thing because when I shared the article on one of my social feeds, I got some really pithy comments that I'd like to share here.

I covered the share by asking: "Does it come in a pee-scented box with hypodermic needles?" and received the following comments (I'm only mentioning people by first initial to protect their anonymity):

D commented, "Ouch." Maybe D envisioned opening a Lego box and getting pricked by a needle. I don't know.

J wrote, "So strong you can taste it," clearly referring back to the pee-scented box comment. Now I know for a fact, J has had to deal with that very scent when making trips to the city, so J speaks with authority in my mind.

C said, "Just wear gloves when playing. Eww." Sound advice, really and I trust C on many topics, so you should as well.

R stated, "If you play the fare-jumper, I'll be the homeless guy." I see so much opportunity here – we could do a mime thing in the Montgomery Station for tips and donuts. We could coordinate Halloween costumes. There are just so many possibilities.

Finally, M commented, "The box says it's \$20 but when you get to the cash register, they tell you it comes with another \$1.9 billion in outstanding long-term debt that you and other residents will have to cover via sales tax revenue and bonds. Oh, and the whole thing will be rendered obsolete by autonomous vehicles in the next five years, 10 tops. Fun!"

I really need to invite M on this podcast as a regular guest...

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