

December 14, 2021

NYC & Company  
810 Seventh Avenue  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
NY, NY 10019  
Attn: Suzana Mayer

Re: Senior Copy Director Position

Dear Ms. Mayer:

I would like to be your Senior Copy Director.

I'm from New Jersey. Millburn, New Jersey, to be precise, where my parents bought a house in 1973, when I was five (now you know how old I am). Millburn is about 15 miles from the city (in my youth, were it possible, given sundry tunnels and bridges, I could have run the distance). It was always a glittering prize to the east, and those of us who grew up in the hills of Essex County, particularly the undersigned, often felt like rubes and bumpkins whenever we crossed the psychic border between the Garden State and the Big – perhaps the biggest – Apple. I think I've always been in love with it but, as we often find in Greek mythology, the further I ran from my destiny (San Francisco; Nicosia, Cyprus), the stronger the city's pull and, by 2016, I found myself, finally, in her arms and home for good. I don't want to be anywhere else.

For a few years I was writing for *W42st*, a Hell's Kitchen magazine, and for one article, which lovingly profiled the magazine's writers, I was asked to list three of my favorite places in New York. Here's what I wrote about Penn Station:

Penn Station, because it needs love. My reasons for this love are utilitarian, rather than aesthetic (because there is nothing aesthetic about Penn Station): if there's anything you need, be it a bicycle helmet, a bouquet of roses, a sweetened hazelnut coffee with cream, a donut covered with strawberry icing and rainbow sprinkles, a refill of your Lexapro prescription, adult diapers...it's all here. Also, as a native of New Jersey, Penn Station has long been my embarkation point. The city, even after all these years, is still a waking dream for me, and Penn Station is still where I step onto the escalator to ascend into that dream.

The city is, after all these years, still a waking dream for me. I feel part of it now, as if it's a giant room and I'm a battered La-Z-Boy recliner, maybe situated between the Dorilton and Verdi Square? I love it here so much. This city is a magic trick, more fireworks than sky. And, even after a year and nine months of COVID, I still love it as much as I always have. Yes, these days the city is dirtier and a bit more threatening than it's been in years, but expecting it to be the New York Pavilion at Epcot Center is a sucker's game, right? There are rats here, lots of them. A few months back, walking to Planet Fitness on 35<sup>th</sup> between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, I saw a guy shooting something up on one of those Siamese hydrants in front of an Irish bar. Unseemly? Yes. Sad? Of course? Reason to love New York any less? Hell, no. And I have a kid! It's still the same place it's always been, and you're either addicted to it or repelled by it – I don't think it's possible to be indifferent to or

ambivalent about New York and, if you're visiting for the first time, or for the fiftieth time, it does the same thing every time: it gives itself to you, fully and completely. It becomes yours, no matter your provenance. Everyone belongs here. Can you say this about London or Paris or Los Angeles? I think not.

As you'll see from my resume/[LinkedIn profile](#), I'm a gifted writer and editor with a successful history of producing my own work and editing that of other authors. My expertise includes branding, brochures, by-lined articles, press releases, newsletters, website text, social media posts and blogs, long-form and short-form. I have an MFA in Creative Writing and an MA in English with a Creative Writing concentration – I also published a literary annual, *20 Pounds of Headlights*, in 2004, as a co-founder and the managing editor.

As you'll see from [my portfolio](#), I've written just about everything except pharma. I have more than 20 years' comms experience, both with agencies and as a freelancer/sole proprietor. This includes almost a decade in the Republic of Cyprus (my wife is Greek-Cypriot), where I wrote all the English-language copy for [Celestyal Cruises](#).

I am currently working part-time, approximately 25 hours per week, as the VP of communications at Vodia Networks, Inc., an IT company in Massachusetts. I am responsible for all content, including press releases, blog posts and social media (@vodia\_networks), and content strategy, which close collaboration with our partners in Europe, LATAM, North America and South Africa, to create and disseminate co-branded content.

Until the outset of the Covid-19 crisis I was a Content Coordinator at the MTA for an LIRR website, [www.amodernli.com](#). My work involved generating and disseminating consumer-facing content to keep LIRR customers and other residents of and visitors to the New York Metropolitan Area up to date with Railroad construction activities. To this end I came up with copy, video concepts and maps, all of which I disseminated via our social media channels. I also managed my department's internal comms.

I'm a team player, always willing to help my colleagues do their best, and I'm also quite confident and motivated when working on my own. I can handle multiple projects at once, with ease, and my goal is to always produce portfolio-quality work. I write with enthusiasm and care. I've had short stories and poems published Pushcart Award-winning literary magazines. Finally, I taught Creative Writing for a year at San Francisco State while earning my MFA, so I'm quite adept at working with other writers on their own work (which I still do quite often).

These are just some of my qualifications (I believe they line up perfectly with those listed in your job description on LinkedIn):

- 20 years+ of promotional copywriting experience, B2B and B2C, in-house or as part of an agency, with an emphasis on travel and hospitality, tech and luxury real estate.
- Portfolio containing outstanding and varied samples and exemplifying best practices across mediums (e.g., web, print, social)

- Exceptional presentation and organization skills, thanks to ten years in investor relations and more than ten years in freelance
- Exacting grammatical standards (*The Associated Press Stylebook* and *The Elements of Style*, though I do own a copy of the Chicago Manual of Style and am unafraid of it); I still use “whom,” correctly, in my writing and in everyday conversation.
- I love research and love coming at a concept or story from a new, odd or personal angle.
- Six years in travel and hospitality, much of it with Celestyal Cruises (2013-2018), where I learned all about the passenger side of the business and the business side of the business.
- Happy to take on multiple projects – I love nothing more than slashing my way down a to-do list.
- I’m enthusiastic under pressure, but I don’t panic.
- I’m energetic and a true team player – I always want to help my colleagues do their best work, and I depend on them to help me do my best work.
- BA in English, Rutgers University; MA in English, San Francisco State University; MFA in Creative Writing, San Francisco State University.
- I love New York so much – truly, madly, deeply, as the boys in Savage Garden once sang. The five boroughs? Manhattan first and foremost, particularly the Upper West Side, where I live, but all of it; Queens, for Astoria, Flushing and Rockaway Beach (yes, I’m a surfer, maybe you’ve seen me on the 2-3 with an 8’ hot pink surfboard?); Brooklyn, for Brooklyn Heights and Coney Island and Dyker Heights at Christmas and Brighton Beach; the Bronx, for the Zoo and, as soon as I can do it, Arthur Avenue and the Grand Concourse (I haven’t been yet, but these are just two of the places of hundreds I haven’t seen in New York and can’t wait to get to). Now, let’s talk about Staten Island – I can’t say I know anything about it, haven’t done much exploration, but I’m always willing. And of course, whenever friends visit from out of town, I always throw in a ferry ride...

I’ve included a few articles I’ve written, for W42st and Industry, I believe are relevant to my application to NYC & Company, but there are plenty more available in my portfolio.

Thanks very much for your consideration of my application, and happy holidays.

David A. Porter

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## W42ST

### Families Issue

#### Of Cygnets and Subways

It's been a solid year since my wife and son and I moved in together on 95<sup>th</sup> at Central Park West, after almost a decade abroad, and my son, Leo, is as New York as a MetroCard or a dirty-water dog. During a stroll one evening, I told him, "I think you're a real New Yorker." To which he replied, "But you're not." "What am I?" I asked. "You're a New Jerseyan." I was born and raised in the green hills and red brick towns of Essex County, NJ, and I couldn't disagree with his assessment. A real New Yorker can tell.

In my youth, when I met kids from New York at Jewish summer camps and on a YM-YWHA bike tour of Cape Cod, they had weird shoes and wore black clothes and went to private schools and read books I'd never heard of and liked music I didn't know (and my collection of vinyl, even by the time I reached my senior year of high school, was dense with singular treasures). I always imagined them as kind of European: truly urban, more likely to drink coffee in Village cafes after school than to play pick-up soccer. I wondered if they were starved for lawns and the kind of parties someone from my class would throw whenever his or her parents were away for the weekend. How did they live without houses?

We all have friends who were devoted to their parcel of Manhattan or Brooklyn or Queens, young marrieds who loved the West Village or Park Slope or Astoria but then, with one or two kids in tow, fled to the suburbs, to a house, to a powerhouse public school...a driveway. And the migration is always explained with a few simple and unassailable facts: the city is crazy expensive, our place is too small, we can't afford private school, you can get an entire house in Long Island or New Jersey or up the Hudson for what you'll pay for a two-bedroom condo in our neighborhood...

My wife loves the Upper West Side and refuses to live anywhere else so, rather than depart the city with our heir, we've dug in. We lucked into a great public school, one Leo loves, and we are going to stay put and raise him here. Do we need a lawn? We have Central Park. Do we need a house? I like how our one-bedroom (with a loft) makes it impossible for us to draw away from each other. When we're home, even if Leo is watching *Lemony Snicket* on Netflix or a documentary about the Concorde on YouTube, and I'm cooking dinner, we're in the same room.

Beyond our little fortress of pulchritude, what I realized early on last year is how incredible it is to no longer own a car. Living abroad, all our domestic travel was accomplished by car, with Leo buckled into his car seat. I could talk to him and play him music, but I couldn't touch him or hear him very well, separated from him like a cabbie. Now, all our travel is by subway or NJ Transit or LIRR or MetroNorth, which means we're together, side by side, whenever we go anywhere. We talk. We eat Auntie Anne's pretzel dogs. I hold him in my arms. I read to him, a lot. I take books with us wherever we go, even if it's just a few subway stops.

A few weeks ago we took the train out to Long Beach. We were reading E.B. White's *The Trumpet of the Swan*, and we read it on our way out to Long Beach, under an umbrella on the beach, and on the train back to Penn Station, Leo seated on my lap. We got home late, waterlogged and roasted, but we still managed to finish the chapter we'd been reading on the train before we both dropped off in Leo's bed.

Any parent with a school-age kid, either here or in some forested suburb, will tell you the same thing: the time goes by so fast. Is there a city moving faster than New York? Not in this galaxy. But what I've learned as a parent here is as obvious as it is counterintuitive: in a city where it seems there's absolutely no time, now that I've been pedestrianized, I've got extra time to read to Leo, to walk him to school, to take him food-shopping with me...we get to spend more time together. And I need him with me on all our jaunts – he knows how to get around by subway better than I do.

## **W42ST**

### **Food Issue**

#### **Come On-a-My House**

The first time we lived in New York was back in 2005. My wife and I rented a two-room apartment on 71<sup>st</sup> east of West End. The kitchen was a sink and a stove, and we had to buy a butcher block table on wheels at Bed, Bath & Beyond to do any prep or serve a meal. One night we invited a few friends over for dinner. My wife is Greek-Cypriot, and we made hummus and a village salad. The meal was a success, but I don't remember cooking anything else in that apartment. Like most New Yorkers, we usually ate out or ordered in, and we met our friends out. We rarely invited anyone over, and we were rarely invited over: it was easier to meet at that Turkish place, at that Starbucks, at the Met...going home is something you do in New York when the night is over. It's rarely the setting for the night itself.

In 2008 we left for Cyprus, where my in-laws had purchased a two-bedroom apartment within a half-mile of my wife's childhood home. It had a huge kitchen, with enough counter space to perform an autopsy, and a dishwasher. It was like I died and went to Cyprus. I began cooking.

The food in Cyprus is inexpensive and everything is local. Your milk is bottled half an hour away from the bakery or supermarket where you shop, the pork and chicken and eggs are from nearby farms...even more exotic produce, like spicy peppers and bananas, doesn't travel more than an hour to the farmers market. I soon became a beloved purveyor of classic American meals like tuna melts and macaroni and cheese to our friends and, like any American dad worth his Bisquick, on weekend mornings I whipped up banana pancakes for my son.

I started cooking chicken tikka masala and chana masala, burritos and huevos rancheros, potato latkes and scallion pancakes...cooking soon became a superpower and, on special occasions, like my brother-in-law's birthday, I would spend a half-day making eggplant parmesan. I cooked Christmas dinners, New Year's brunches, creamy broccoli soups and homemade Bolognese sauces, even Pork Florentine, and I served everything with homemade garlic bread. My crowning

glory was my first-ever cherry pie with a crust I made myself. My father-in-law is from a mountain village, Pedoulas, which is famed for its cherries, burgundy red and dense as super balls. One summer I had a huge bag of them and decided to bake a pie. When it turned out our supermarket, AlphaMega, didn't have a readymade pie crust, I found a recipe online and had at it. The feeling of adaptability and self-sufficiency was a thrill, and the pie was a dulcet duet of buttery crust and sugary cherry compote. I called my mom and shouted into the phone, "I just baked a cherry pie!"

Our apartment became a café and commissary for our friends and their kids. We hosted at least one dinner each week, parents on our patio, hidden from the street by the deep green leaves of the two eucalyptus trees in front of our building, children amok everywhere else, either destroying the bedrooms with magic markers or destroying the bathroom with liquid soap and toothpaste. I fed the kids homemade chicken fingers or pan-fried hot dogs at a Kermit-the-Frog-green IKEA kids' table in the living room, *Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom* or *Frozen*, in Greek, on my wife's computer; out on the patio it was red Cypriot table wine and roast pork and mashed potatoes. The cats disappeared, the dog suffered myriad indignities, and I had to stay up until the wee small hours of the morning loading the dishwasher and discarding broken toys and half-finished collages, *Nice 'n'Easy* on my iPod in the living room. I didn't mind.

We returned to NY in 2016, flushed from our island home by the country's faltering economy. Neither my wife nor I could make a decent living and, cruising into middle age, it seemed making it in New York was something to be assayed sooner than later. We once again crossed the Atlantic, this time with our heir in tow and the hope in our hearts that the streets would still be paved with gold, or that we'd at least find decent jobs and a good public school. We're on the West Side again, in an apartment with a loft and some counter space, though the sink and the stove are smack against each other.

I've decided not to give up the domesticity I honed in Cyprus. It's de rigueur to meet everyone out here, regardless of the expense, which is often astonishing. I love restaurants and, if I could afford it, I'd eat even more meals out. But inviting friends in – even if it's a bit cramped, even if they have to schlep all the way uptown – isn't just about the food. It's about comfort and intimacy, about the joy I feel if even one of our guests asks for seconds, when someone declares, "I'm stuffed!" I put out piles of hot food, I tell everyone, 'take off your shoes, put up your feet...'

For less than \$20 I can make an elephantine stir-fry with brown rice and fresh broccoli and carrots, some extra-firm tofu, everything sautéed in garlic and onions and ginger and top-shelf olive oil and soy sauce, everything bought from the guy with the produce cart in front of Whole Foods and from Associated, and after dinner I can make you a hot cup of coffee or a lemon green tea or just a plain old black tea with milk and sugar, and I've got a turntable now, and piles of records, so we can listen to *Aja* and *Swing Easy* and *The Magical Golden Hits of the Platters*, and you can take your shoes off and put your feet up and stay as late as you want. You can even sleep over. I'll make breakfast.

**Industry Magazine**  
**Come Fly with Me**

You Can Keep Your Head *and* Your Feet in the Clouds in this Stunning Midtown Penthouse

How do you get away from it all smack in the heart of it all? You can always live in the sky, or as close as one can get to living in the sky, in Penthouse 1 at 135 West 52nd Street, a 48-story tower equidistant from Carnegie Hall and Rockefeller Center. Penthouse 1 is a 5,153 square-foot glass palace, with more than 1,000 square feet of exterior space, spread across three terraces; it comprises five bedrooms, four full baths and two half-baths. It's a nest set apart, indeed, a triplex replete with 18' ceilings. Zing will go the strings of your heart – with night and day views that might stop it.

Interior Designer David Attias of The StaginGroup let the amount of light the space receives dazzle and inspire him when he set about designing Penthouse 1. "The space receives so much light from its southern and western exposure, both daytime and nighttime," he says, "and our team put tremendous effort into creating the perfect design, one that serves the space and its epic daytime and nighttime high-rise views."

On the main level, a custom windowed kitchen features a broad center island, Miele appliances and the kind of finishes that would make any serious cook salivate, including Calacatta Vision marble countertops and Dada Italian Walnut and custom glass cabinets. Beyond the kitchen awaits a 24'-long formal dining area for grand meals served beneath stratocumulus clouds. "The ceiling heights create real drama in the space," says Attias, "and we did everything possible to contribute to, and amplify, this drama."

The upper level of Penthouse 1 is accessible by a private elevator from the 46<sup>th</sup> floor or via a triple-height glass staircase; the staircase also dramatizes the double-height living room from which it rises, while a double-sided stone fireplace divides the level's east and west wings. The east wing includes a 32'-wide living room with a wet bar and powder room and the master bedroom, an almost impossibly luxurious suite with a private, east-facing terrace, an expansive dressing room and a sprawling bath with a pass-through shower, free-standing tub and two toilets.

The west wing is home to three smaller bedrooms, one with an en suite bathroom; the other two bedrooms share a Jack-and-Jill bathroom – all the west wing bedrooms enjoy northern exposure. "I love the key-operated elevator on the 46th Floor, which gives you direct access to the penthouse," says Attias. "It's especially lovely after traveling or returning from a late dinner – you can go straight to your bedroom!"

Penthouse 1's sky-high skyline lounge is enclosed entirely in glass and bookended by two large terraces, one east and one west, with views that will leave you starry-eyed – and a wet bar. The east terrace is an entertainer's dream, with an outdoor kitchen, replete with a gas grill – and the entire world spread beneath you.

“A penthouse is always synonymous with luxury and uniqueness,” says Attias, “and this informed our design and the decisions we made about furnishings and finishes. For a home like Penthouse 1, we always select distinctive, unique pieces from our inventory. We will even make custom pieces, such as window treatments, depending on our clients’ needs and predilections.” The building’s amenities match the space, with a 75-ft lap pool, a fitness center, a luxurious spa, a golf simulator and a kids’ playroom. Fit for the Chairman of the Board, you might say.

“I was actually thinking about ‘New York, New York’ while I was working on Penthouse 1,” says Attias, “and ‘Empire State of Mind’ by Jay-Z and Alicia Keys. Both songs convey the same message – if you can make it here, you can make it anywhere. Also, as a New Yorker and as a true lover of New York, I was also thinking about that line, and I don’t think this is exact, but: ‘New York, New York: It’s so nice, they named it twice!’”

Up here in Penthouse 1 the air is rarefied, come rain or shine. And the stardust, in the wee small hours, is all yours.

### ***New York Lifestyles Magazine*** **“Brooklyn Bowl: Strike It Rich”**

Imagine you’re a skinny, music-besotted high schooler, somewhere in the wilds of suburban New Jersey, circa 1985. You keep your records in plastic sleeves. You’ve got Springsteen and U2 pins on the lapel of your jean jacket. You’ve got Elvis Costello, Dire Straits and X lyrics written all over the inside covers of your three-ring binder and on the outside of each of your Trapper Keepers. You are serious. And let’s say you’re somewhere on the Jersey Shore, walking in the sand, and you stumble upon a lamp, gold, crusted with rubies and sapphires, half buried, August sun reflected in its gemstones. You of course pick up the lamp and rub it, and a genie appears – it could be Barbara Eden, Jimi Hendrix, doesn’t matter, you’ve got three wishes. Your first wish is for a \$10,000 line of credit at the Tower Records on 4<sup>th</sup> and Broadway; your second is for a massive upper body, and your third is for your basement to become the coolest nightclub on earth, with an amazing sound system, incredible food, psychedelic lights, fantastic bands playing for hours every night...and a bowling alley.

Your third wish has come true. Welcome to Brooklyn Bowl on Wythe Avenue in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, a mere two blocks from the banks of the mighty East River and a short seven-block scurry from the Bedford Avenue L station. For many of us, music is a religion, and Brooklyn Bowl is a church, temple and oracle rolled into one – and that roll is a strike! What makes this a holy site for music lovers? Let me count the ways. The sound is fantastic, loud and clear, and the stage, which always looks as if it’s been decorated for a big top birthday party, is low, about three feet off the floor, so for most of the audience the show takes place just above waist-high (and beneath a sparkling disco ball). If you get up close, you’re almost onstage. I was at the front row for a Hold Steady concert last year, and I could have reached out and touched guitarist Tad Kubler’s effects boxes, or his knee. I was also lucky enough to see a knockout performance by late soul sensation



Charles Bradley, who stepped into the audience toward the end of his show to give people flowers and hugs.

Charley Ryan and Pete Shapiro founded Brooklyn Bowl in Williamsburg in 2009 just about the time the neighborhood was becoming an epicenter of New York – and global – cool. Ryan and Shapiro built the 23,000 square-foot club in the historic Hecia Iron Works building, which was completed in 1897. Today Brooklyn Bowl hosts performances and events seven nights every week, sometimes even two the same night, 11 performances weekly and more than 4000 since it opened.

What kind of music do you like? Brooklyn Bowl books everything from blues to classic rock to jazz to punk to rap to reggae to soul, and DJ sets, mixing legendary performers with up-and-comers, local acts and DJs. Since 2009 Adele, Elvis Costello, D'Angelo, Lauryn Hill, Dr. John, Phil Lesh, Bruno Mars, John Mayer, John McLaughlin, The Neville Brothers, Stevie Nicks, Robert Plant, Questlove, The Roots, Paul Simon, Toots and the Maytals, Taj Mahal, Vieux Farka Touré, Bob Weir and Kanye West have all dazzled crowds at Brooklyn Bowl.

“We book national and international artists as well local acts,” says Brooklyn Bowl Talent Buyer Lucas Sacks, “and we try to keep the ticket prices as low as possible. We try to get big name talent as often as possible, but we also add local acts for support slots and midweek shows. We often book multi-night residencies because the shows are unique night to night and they allow bands to really stretch out and feel comfortable: they can cover some of their favorite songs, play extended versions of songs, or host unique opening acts or special guests. Our goal is to create a ‘do-not-miss’ scenario for music lovers every night.”

Show up early, and hungry, as Brooklyn Bowl is also an outpost of Blue Ribbon, the legendary Lower East Side purveyor of fried chicken and other delights. Try the egg shooters with pickled peppers and olive oil mayonnaise, the buffalo cauliflower, a spicy kale and quinoa salad or some of New York’s best wings, smoked in-house, but leave room for Blue Ribbon’s signature fried chicken platters. They will rock you, as will Blue Ribbon’s mouthwatering burgers and ribs. You’ll certainly need to fuel up, as you’ll be dancing until the wee hours of the morning.

One of the venue’s two bars is inside the restaurant area, across from the entrance, and the other is across from the stage where, if bowling and delicious food and incredible live music aren’t enough, you can watch the game, or games, on a television above the bar. In addition to Blue Ribbon, and as part of its commitment to local products, Brooklyn Bowl serves beers from nearby Brooklyn Brewery, as well as Kelso and Sixpoint, alongside handcrafted cocktails.

Love bowling? Brooklyn Bowl is home to the world’s first LEED-certified bowling alley, 16 immaculate lanes with Chesterfield sofas and tables. Bowling shoes are available for rent, and you can even purchase socks if you need to. You can bowl before, after or even during a performance, and there’s table service if you want to dine while you bowl. On Sunday nights definitely mention "Sunday Night Special" at the shoe desk for half-off any lane, beginning at 8:00 PM.

If you're going, hop an L train and leave yourself enough time to stroll through one of Brooklyn's most happening neighborhoods and, after the show, take a gander at the bejeweled Manhattan skyline as you're leaving the club. Make sure you bring identification with you, either a driver's license or a passport, as no one is admitted without ID. You can take photos with your phone and with a small point-and-shoot camera, but GoPros, professional cameras and selfie sticks are prohibited.

As for the line of credit at Tower and the pectorals and biceps, Brooklyn Bowl probably can't help you, but it will make at least a few of your other wishes come true.