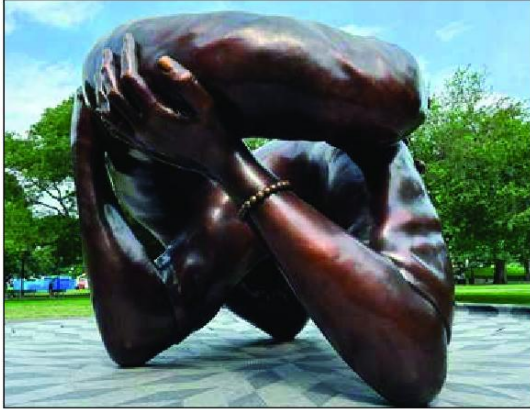


EDITORIAL

The strength and endurance of Black love



The Embrace sculpture in the Boston Common honoring Dr. Martin Luther King and his wife Coretta Scott King. Photo via Adobe Stock.

REV. IRENE MONROE
Contributing Writer

This Valentine's Day my focus is on black love.

African American life in the U.S. is primarily depicted as a struggle devoid of romantic love rather than a radical act of living, liberation, and loving families. Under the tyranny of

colonization, slavery, Jim Crow, and simple everyday life, how do we have time for love?

As a people who are fixated on freedom, I've been asked whether we have the capacity for love. Also, bombarded by the iconography of negative images and racial tropes

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Three Benefit Performances February 28, March 1, and March 2 at the BCA Plaza Theatre

All Proceeds Go To Corporate Accountability, Brew & Forge, and Neighborhood Birth Center.

SUBMITTED BY BCA

Beastly: An Autobiographical Feminist Folk Tale returns to the BCA Plaza Theatre, 539 Tremont Street, South End Boston, for three

benefit performances on Friday, February 28 (7:30 PM), Saturday, March 1 (7:30 PM), and Sunday, March 2, 2025 (2 PM).

Created and performed by Melissa Hale Woodman, Beastly blends standup comedy, poetic reverie, and a strategic call to action. In Woodman's own words, "Imagine if The Vagina Monologues and Roald Dahl's Revolting Rhymes had a baby with Bernie Sanders—that's

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'The Piano Lesson' Strikes Perfect Notes in Wilson's Family Discord

BY JULES BECKER
Contributing Writer

Actors Shakespeare Project has been artfully orchestrating the masterful music and stagecraft of August Wilson in recent inspired revivals of "Seven Guitars" and "King Hedley II" at Hibernian Hall. Now the auspicious partnership of company and venue continues with a superbly conducted staging—under the sharp direction of Christopher V. Edwards—of the 1987 (1990 Pulitzer Prize) play "The Piano Lesson." Arguably Wilson's most disarming yet powerful work, "The Piano Lesson" proves even timelier in an age when revisionism and intensified hatred threaten both the legacy and dreams of many African-Americans.

Continued on page 4

The Piano Lesson, Actors' Shakespeare Project, performed in partnership with Hibernian Hall, through February 23. 617-241-2200 or ActorsShakespeareProject.org



From left: Jade Guerra, "I'annay," Jonathan Kitt and Omar Robinson in Actors' Shakespeare Project's production of August Wilson's "The Piano Lesson." Photo courtesy of Nile Scott Studios.

'SPACE' Soars as a Powerful Tribute to Women Astronauts and Their Earthbound Battles

SPACE, a Brit d'Arbeloff Women in Science and The Catalyst Collaborative at MIT production. Central Square Theater, Cambridge, through February 23. 617-576-9278.

BY JULES BECKER
Contributing Writer

John Lennon imagined a world with no borders. The very diverse women in L M Feldman and Larissa Lury's both informative and pioneering play "SPACE"—now in an exuberant world premiere at Central Square Theater—imagine a future "different world" in which there are no human barriers for female scientists and would-be astronauts as well as women themselves. Co-creator Lury is attentively directing a talented ensemble as diverse as the actual women they portray. The result—presented by Brit d'Arbeloff and celebrating the 20th anniversary of Catalyst Col-

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Hui Ying Wen, Valenda Proctor, and Monica Risi in "SPACE" at Central Square Theater. Photo courtesy of Nile Scott Studios.

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Monroe

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on multimedia platforms as emasculating females, mummies, and welfare mothers as black women and “super-predators,” pimps, and roving phalluses as black males, the perception is Black people don’t engage in romance or love - we simply have sex. We make babies.

The 22-foot-tall sculpture, *The Embrace* in the Boston Common, symbolizes the strength of black love. It symbolizes the love of a power couple and the hug Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King shared after Dr. King won the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize.

For decades, Winnie and Mandella Nelson were a loving power couple. Winnie Mandela’s book, “Part of My Soul Went with Him” (1985), was an example. She endured an 18-year forced separation from her husband, Nelson, while he was in jail during South Africa’s apartheid. The love letters between the two were poetic.

Two activities converged for me during COVID-19: when not officiating funerals, I read romance novels and took long walks along the Charles River, thinking about W. E. B. Du Bois as a romantic.

During my morning constitutional, I intentionally passed 20 Flagg Street, where sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois, the first African American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University, resided from 1890 to 1893 while a doctoral student because of the university’s segregation housing policy prohibiting blacks in the dorms. Since 1994, thanks to then Mayor Reeves (the first gay and black mayor of Cambridge), the house is part of the Cambridge African American Heritage Trail, and the Cambridge Historical Commission placed a marker on the front yard to commemorate Du Bois’s life.

During COVID, I happened upon a romantic novel by Dubois titled “Dark Princess, A Romance Novel.” I was in disbelief. Du Bois said that of his body of works, “Dark Princess, A Romance Novel” was his favorite. Because the book was on sale on Amazon as a Kindle ebook for \$2.99, I thought to myself, what did I have to lose? Moreover, the thought of Dubois having written a romance novel didn’t fit the image of the man I learned about in college. He’s the man who gives us the concept of “double consciousness” in his 1903 seminal and autoethnographic text, “Souls of Black Folks.”

“Dark Princess” was written in 1924 during the Harlem Renaissance. The novel was

Dubois’s effort to showcase black love while illustrating his concept of the “problem of the color line” at home and abroad and the need for solidarity across races. While the book shows that Black and Brown lives are globally and constantly challenged, it also highlights that we must find time for joy, love, and celebration as radical acts of liberation.

African Americans have always had a tenuous relationship with the institution of marriage, a symbol of our love. Therefore, one can argue that the topic of marriage equality in the U.S. has always been a black issue. But Black love has always existed despite obstacles to prevent it.

For example, marriages of enslaved African Americans were prohibited by both church and state in this country until the end of the Civil War in 1865, because they were viewed as property and not human beings. But we created our own rituals to signify and honor their nuptials - Jumping over the broom.

Mildred Loving (*Loving v. Virginia*, 1967), who’s often overlooked in the pantheon of African American trailblazers celebrated in February during Black History Month, gained notoriety when the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decided in her favor that anti-miscegenation laws are unconstitutional. Her crime was this country’s racial and gender obsession - interracial marriage. Married to a white man, Loving and her husband were indicted by a Virginia grand jury in October 1958 for violating the state’s ‘Racial Integrity Act of 1924, which was the same year Dubois’s novel appeared.

Also, Loving understood the interconnection of struggles and supported the same-sex marriage fight. Today, we are free to love and marry whom we want. Black LGBTQ+ couples carry on the tradition of the tenacity of black love.

Since the beheading of St. Valentine in Rome in the year 270 A.D., marriage has been controlled by heads of the church and the state - and not by the hearts of lovers. When Emperor Claudius II issued an edict abolishing marriage because married men hated to leave their families for battle, Valentine, known then as the “friend to lovers,” secretly joined them in holy matrimony. While awaiting his execution, Valentine fell in love with the jailer’s daughter, and in his farewell message to his lover, he wrote, “From your Valentine.”

Happy Valentine’s Day!

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International Singer Nydia Caro Captivates MFA Boston Audience with Valentine's Day Performance



Photo by JuanCarlos González.

Hundreds gather at IBA's annual Valentine's Day concert to celebrate love and community

Boston (February 18, 2024) – On Valentine's Day, internationally acclaimed Puerto Rican singer Nydia Caro took the stage for an enchanting Valentine's Day concert enveloped with soulful melodies at the Harry and Mildred Remis Auditorium at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA). The event, hosted by Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA) in partnership with the MFA, captivated an audience eager to experience the passion, love, and community the Valentine's Day holiday brings.

Nydia Caro, renowned for her melodic voice and rich repertoire, delivered a mesmerizing performance that delved deeply into the themes of passion and romance. Her songs, steeped in Spanish melodies, were a resounding testament to the strength of music as both a universal language and a vehicle for cultural expression. Set against the stunning backdrop of the MFA, Caro's performance provided an unforgettable experience for couples, friends, and music lovers alike.

In the charming atmosphere, guests enjoyed a delightful selection of wine, sparkling drinks, and appetizers, turning the auditorium into a warm and inviting space perfect for celebration and making connections. The event underscored the significant role of IBA in fostering community pride and cultural awareness through Latino arts, as attendees embraced the opportunity to immerse themselves in a unique blend of love and music.

"Nydia Caro's performance was truly magical, engaging us all in the beauty of her soulful melodies and the spirit of togetherness," said Juan Carlos González, IBA's Arts Program Director. "This enchanting night at the MFA reminded us of the incredible power music has to unite hearts, celebrate culture, and inspire change. We are grateful to our friends at the MFA for hosting such a beautiful event, and thrilled to have shared this unforgettable

experience with Greater Boston and our community as we look forward to many more moments of connection and joy."

"The MFA was thrilled welcoming Nydia Caro for what was a beautiful evening of music," said Kristen Hoskins, MFA's Director of Public Programs. "Her remarkable talent and powerful presence were delightful and captivating for audiences. The auditorium was buzzing with energy throughout the evening. We are incredibly grateful to our partners at IBA for collaborating and bringing Nydia to the MFA."

The concert was yet another milestone in IBA's mission to leverage cultural programming as a means of building stronger, more empowered communities. Since its founding in 1968, IBA has committed to increasing access to affordable housing and supporting community development efforts through the arts, financial empowerment, early education, and youth development.

IBA's Arts Program plays a vital role in enhancing Boston's cultural landscape by providing a platform for Latino artists and celebrating the diversity of Latino arts through music, visual arts, and dance. By doing so, the program promotes cultural connections and celebrates heritage, echoing IBA's belief in the power of the arts as a tool for social change.

About Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción: Established in 1968, Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA) is a nonprofit, community development corporation that started in Boston's South End to address displacement of low-income families due to urban development. Today, IBA is a national model of community development that offers affordable housing and supportive programming to increase social and economic mobility, including early education, youth development, financial empowerment, resident services, and arts programs. IBA's programs serve more than 5,000 individuals from Greater Boston's diverse and vibrant communities every year. More information is available at www.ibaboston.org or Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter or YouTube.



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The Piano Lesson

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Set as with all of Wilson's 20th century play cycle in Pittsburgh, "The Piano Lesson" plays out its dramatic sibling point-counterpoint in the kitchen and parlor of the house—kudos to Jon Savage for a well-detailed design—where uncle Doaker Charles (a railroad cook) lives with his widowed niece Berniece and her 11-year-old daughter Maretha. Right from the start, a kind of human storm erupts as Berniece's talkative and impulsive brother Boy Willie enters determined to sell watermelons he has brought from Mississippi with his relatively taciturn partner Lymon. Boy Willie also means to sell the family's strikingly ornate antique piano—carved by an enslaved ancestor—and use the money to buy the land where the family's ancestors were enslaved. Doaker—who often seems to act as a mediator—reminds Boy Willie constantly that half of the piano belongs to Berniece. For her part, Berniece refuses to

sell the piano and sees the unique carvings as a priceless connection to the family's past.

Throughout the play, the sister-brother stand-off not only represents a kind of familial civil war but also a focal battle between past and future. Wilson artfully weaves the sibling conflict into a rich tapestry of vivid personal stories—some overlapping in their spirit and some very different in their dreams and perceptions. Will the past and future find a meaningful middle ground? Will Maretha discover a true lesson in her own connection with the family piano? Wilson brings the play's conflicting points of view to an arresting resolution that respects both the lessons of the past and the promise of the future.

In the production playbill, director Edwards asks theatergoers to "let Wilson's words wash over you like a song you didn't know you needed to hear," and the superb ASP ensemble richly renders the play's compelling dramatic and comic music. Omar Robinson has all of Boy Willie's unrelenting determination and fire, while Jade Guerra

smartly captures Berniece's understated but adamant demeanor in defending ancestry and memory. Jonathan Kitt makes the most of Doaker's curious impartiality and the telling train-centered philosophy that Wilson gives him. As fellow sage Wining Boy, "ranney" is a standout in both moments of wisdom and musical rendition. Anthony T. Goss catches Lymon's adventurousness and his sweet attraction to Berniece. The sequence in which Wining Boy sells Lymon a silk suit and two-tone if tightly fitting shoes is an individual highlight. Daniel Rios Jr. has all of Avery's expansive feeling for Berniece and his serious if sometimes amusing intensity as a preacher. Ariel Phillips catches Maretha's innocence, and Britani J. McBride is properly spirited as impatient date Grace.

Near the end of the play, Avery is called on to do a lot of blessing for the rival siblings. One thing is certain at Hibernian Hall. The fully absorbing ASP staging of "The Piano Lesson" is a blessed rendition of Wilson's music-rich insights.

SPACE

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laborative@MIT— is a vital examination of the struggle of 14 gifted women—some still living—against stereotypes and sexism in the pursuit of inclusion in America's exploration of space.

In a play that "moves across time and space," Feldman has set Movement One (Act One) mostly in the early 1960s—when President John Fitzgerald Kennedy spoke of Americans reaching the moon—and Movement Two (Act Two) mostly in the early 2020s. Scenic Designer Qingan Zhang has cleverly turned the Central Square Theater stage floor into a veritable surreal space where the women in question effectively explore with their minds and movement as they seek to transcend the obstacles presented by testing officials, institutional directors, Congressional committees and NASA itself. Stretching from pioneering pilots like Amelia Earhart to celebrated astronauts like Sally Ride, "SPACE" stretches from 1920 to 2020. At the same time, Feldman's stirring effort speaks of a Movement Three—set in 2112—that invites future women explorers

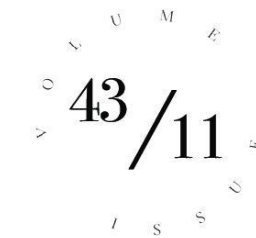
to find total parity with their male counterparts in the full investigation of the terra nova and terra incognita that is space itself.

Make no mistake. No didactic exercise, Feldman's play contains not only convincing evidence about the struggles of women scientists and explorers but also real drama—sometimes combined with irony and even unexpected humor. Aside from vivid information about all of the women, there is a strikingly detailed depiction of the astronaut screening tests undergone by women in the program known as Mercury 13—participants inexcusably denied access to the NASA space program in 1962. Here special credit goes to movement director Lindsay Torrey, who effectively configured various actresses to evoke the screening tests unreasonably demanded of the women in question. Going forward, there is a telling reference to budget cuts and layoffs.

Along the way, a strong and dramatically compelling conflict involves tenacious record breaker (for speed and distance, among others) Jackie Cochran (who would provide some financial support) and less self-assured but no less expert Gealdyn Cobb (vulnerable as a lesbian in very intolerant times). Catharine K.

Slusar captures Cochran's authority as well as her self-serving statements that would alienate fellow explorers. MK Tuomanen brings touching nuance to Cobb and exhilaration to Ride. Kaili Y. Turner brings captivating wonder and enthusiasm to the role of Jane Hart, a savvy senator's wife. Hui Ying Wen is touching as Cobb's journalist lover Ivy Rieker and spirited as first Chinese-American pilot Hazel Ying Lee—never given a military funeral despite her World War II service. Valencia Proctor catches pioneering Bessie Coleman's feistiness and Irene Levertov's passion. Monica Risi and Mitra Sharif are equally persuasive as are all of the seven actresses in moving between two roles. Barlow Adamson ranges smartly between the male roles—particularly JFK and very demanding administrator Randolph Lovelace.

A theater side room features photographs and informative bios of the actual women. "SPACE" is much more than a validation of these female pioneers. The Brit d'Arbeloff production should serve as an artful encouragement to aspiring women and a timely challenge to all theatergoers at a time when science and technology are threatened by purveyors of ignorance.



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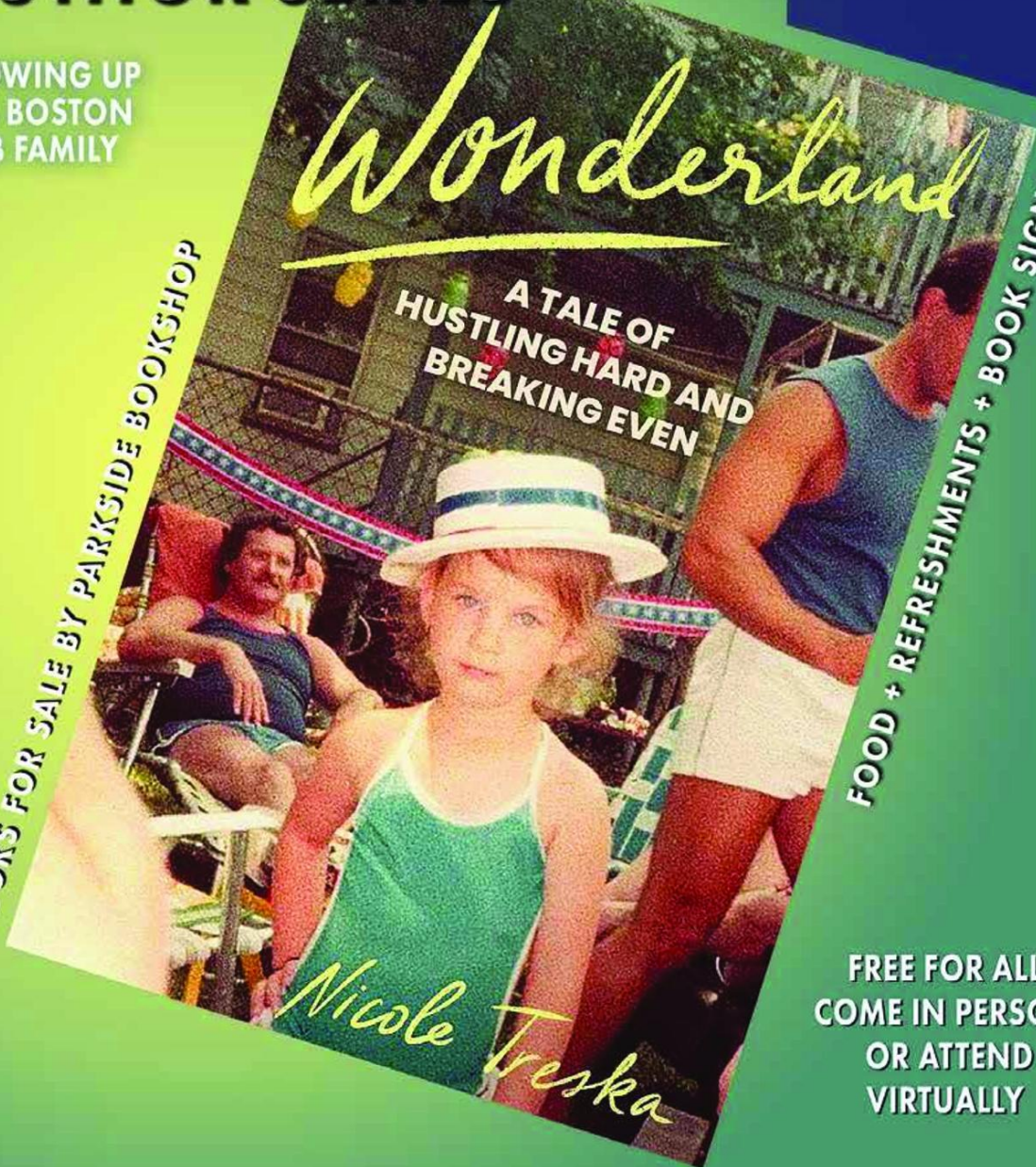
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CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304		Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Docket No. SU25P0246GD
In the matter of: Sandra Ibanez Of: Chelsea, MA		RESPONDENT Alleged Incapacitated Person
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Mass. Dept. of Mental Health of Westborough, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that Sandra Ibanez is in need of a Guardian and requesting that (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve on the bond.		Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114
The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.		
You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 02/27/2025. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.		
IMPORTANT NOTICE: The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.		
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: February 05, 2025 <i>Stephanie L. Everett, Esq, Register of Probate</i>		

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION		Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Docket No. SU23P0538EA
Estate of: John C. McDonald Also known as: John Carroll McDonald		Date of Death: 12/17/2022
A Petition for S/A Formal Adjudication of Intestacy has been filed by Colleen West of Merrimack, NH requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.		Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617)788-8300
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/13/2025.		
This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.		
UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC) A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.		
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: February 07, 2025 <i>Stephanie L. Everett, Esq, Register of Probate</i>		

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME		Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court
In the matter of: Kelsey Mira Peterson Of: Boston, MA		
A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Kelsey Mira Peterson of Boston, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to Kelsey Mira Peterson Jackman		Docket No. SU25C0077CA Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617) 788-8300
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Suffolk Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/12/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.		
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: February 05, 2025 <i>Stephanie L. Everett, Esq, Register of Probate</i>		

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION		Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Docket No. SU25P0275EA
Estate of: Fernando Rosa Pizarro Date of Death: 04/02/2024		
A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Cristobal Pizarro of Taunton, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that Cristobal Pizarro of Taunton, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve With Personal Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration		Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617)788-8300
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/19/2025.		
This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.		
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WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: February 10, 2025 <i>Stephanie L. Everett, Esq, Register of Probate</i>		

BCA

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Beastly.”

Beastly begins in the not-too-distant future, as tech bros and the oil tycoons tally their loot from hidden bunkers while the world burns outside. Our heroine travels back in time, mining experiences from her rebellious teenage years, spit-up-spattered motherhood, and an unexpected pivot to social justice organizing as she races to turn back the clock and set us on a better path—before it's too late.

Anchored by these whimsical poems, Woodman takes audiences on an increasingly dark journey—imploping them/us? To commit to the vision of a future that they/we all deserve—invoking humor to shatter paralysis and guide audiences beyond helplessness to action. “We need humor right now to counter the despair and the overwhelm engendered/driven by the power-hungry corporate and political elites,” says Woodman. “The stakes are too high to stand idly by. That’s why Beastly exists—to light a fire under us with joy, laughter, and raunch...”

Woodman performed the show in October, as the 2024 Presidential campaign ended, to a sold-out house and a standing ovation. The show raised \$6,000 for three NGO partners: Corporate Accountability, Reproductive Equity Now, and Movement Voter Project. However, updated to reflect the current political situation, its fundamental message remains unchanged. Perhaps the most accurate reflection of the show's impact is a review on Slowmuse.com, in which an audience member observed, “We came in as strangers, and we left as a tribe.”

All performances are fundraisers! Ticket proceeds from this run will again benefit Corporate Accountability, Brew & Forge, and Neighborhood Birth Center. The performance runs for one (1) hour with no intermission. For more performance and ticket information, visit BostonTheatreScene.com or call 617-933-8600.

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