

MWMI

MAINE WOMEN MAGAZINE

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WOMEN IN THE ARTS

AT THE HELM
Amanda O'Brien of
eighteen twenty
wines

KARMO
SANDERS
is finding her
funny again

Kat Finck
Aerialist, juggler and
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Performing arts all around

I'm just back from a few days in Nashville—you know, "Music City"—where I watched hours and hours of live music. The thing about Nashville is, you really can't get away from the music or the performers, which is exactly what I love about it. From street corner busking to Honky Tonk Row, (featuring seasoned bands) and in-the-round singer/songwriter performances everywhere you go, music envelops this city.

Local performer Pia Louise Capaldi explains the unique experience of live performance this way: "There is something authentic, personal and connective when we create in the moment, where you and the audience are experiencing it together for the first time." Capaldi is an improvisational dance artist and performer and is passionate about connecting with her audience and pushing her creative limits through dance. Read more from her in this month's This Thing I Love feature on page 46.

Britney Elaine Ruotolo, known to many by her stage name Bri Lane, is a self-taught guitarist and keyboard player from South Portland. She started by playing the drums and saxophone in the 5th grade and later took voice lessons. In college, studying both music and medicine, she found her confidence and has been devoted to performing music since. In January, the indie pop rock music video for her song "Interstellar Lady" was voted Best Overall Achievement at the first annual Music Video Portland (MVP) awards against 26 other videos with Maine connections. Read about what inspires her to create on page 30.

Many of us will remember Karmo Sanders from her funny-lady TV ads for Marden's where she portrayed the colorful and ever-lovable bargain-hunting Birdie Googins. She was a riot in her crazy outfits adorned with sand-shovels,

fake lobsters and just about anything else that screams Maine. Soon after her husband died, Sanders was understandably grieving and "lost her funny" for a while. She spent the last five years or so on hiatus from comedy. Read more about Sanders and how she might just be getting ready to return to the stage on page 34.

Whatever your favorite form of performing arts is, we've got it covered here in this issue of Maine Women Magazine, along with our usual features and columns. Circus Maine/Maine Circus Academy has come together at Thompson's Point, offering circus arts classes and performance. "There are several aspects of circus life that are kind of miraculous," says Kat Finck, co-founder and producing/casting director at Circus Maine and talent director and instructor at Maine Circus Academy in Portland. "It is deeply cooperative, to the level that you have no choice. You need to rely on the people around you. As students, you cannot accomplish the movement without someone literally holding you up." Read more about the adventure of the circus on page 24.

The closest I ever got to being a performer was during our high school talent shows. I took the stage in my mother's girdle mimicking the ad for the 18-Hour Playtex Girdle as one of "commercials" in between the real performers. I'm glad my acting career was short-lived. I much prefer to be an audience member.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Maine Women Magazine. Check out the information for our upcoming Girls issue (page 65), and I hope you will visit us at our Maine Women's Expo in Kennebunkport at the beautiful Nonantum Resort on April 21. For more info, go to www.mainewomenexpo.com. Happy spring!

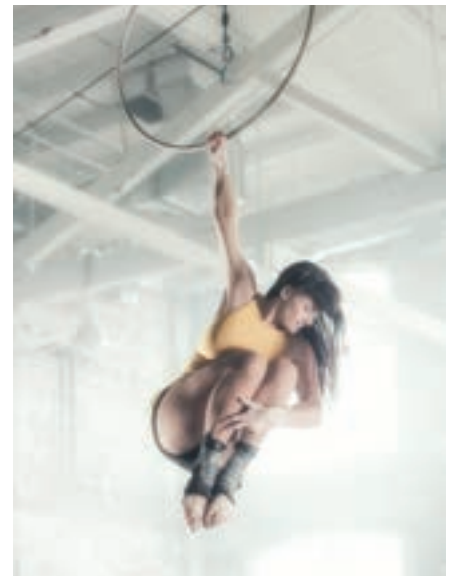


Lee Hews

ON THE COVER

Aerialist, juggler and co-founder of Circus Maine and the Maine Circus Academy Kat Finck performs on the lyra inside Circus Maine's big room at Thompson's Point in Portland. Read her story of the circus on page 24.

Photo courtesy of Eric Obery, West Side Graphics



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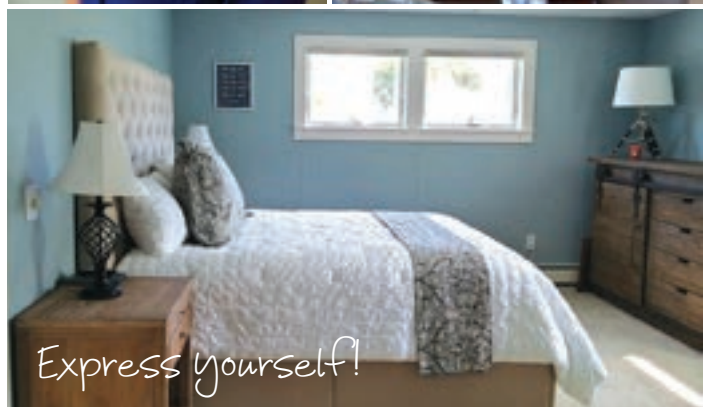
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The eighteen twenty wines offerings include Rha, their flagship Maine rhubarb wine; Wintus, a rhubarb wine aged in oak barrels; Honeoye, a rhubarb strawberry wine; Ohm, a hard cider made from Maine apples; and Ohm's Law, a barrel-aged hard cider.



Wine time

Amanda O'Brien and her partner help sustain local agriculture—and eager tastebuds—with their delectable rhubarb wine and hard cider.

Written by Chelsea Terris | Photographed by Molly Haley

AT THE HELM



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"It was the right thing, the right product, the right time," says Amanda O'Brien of her decision to plunge head first into the rhubarb wine business, despite a full professional and personal plate. Co-founder and marketing director of eighteen twenty wines, as well as director of business development at flyte new media, organizer of Social Media Breakfast Maine and a mother, O'Brien knows a little something about instinct.

She and her business partner, winemaker Pete Dubuc, have been friends since collaborating in radio 13 years back. Both continue to have full-time jobs (Dubuc works for Planet Dog), even while immersing themselves in what has skyrocketed from an experimental business venture to agricultural game-changer. While O'Brien trusted that "rhubarb is super cool and grows like a weed," she and Dubuc had no idea how high the demand for their delectable product would be, and so quickly. While participating in the business accelerator program Top Gun in 2017 through the Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development (MCED), O'Brien took part in a challenge to simulate a pitch for her product to a real grocery store—Rosemont Market and Bakery—in class. While the staged pitch went well, O'Brien and Dubuc were shocked when the same store called them just days later, requesting stock of their Rha wine. That summer, with the help of a feature in the Portland Press Herald, their wine was featured in 25 local stores and quickly sold out.

Exciting as this was, it also felt "uncomfortable," says O'Brien. "Because we don't have any more of it. Rhubarb comes up in spring, and it takes eight weeks to make the wine." Holding off eager stores is just one of many trials that O'Brien views as grist for the mill. Their biggest challenge? "Time. We do everything the hard way. We're trying to bootstrap so we can invest back in ourselves."

Eighteen twenty wines was established with a mission to help farmers. Rhubarb, a crop that you can just "put over there [in your field] and don't have to take care of," was an easy sell to two Maine apple orchards, Doles Orchard in Limington and Spiller Farm in Wells, which agreed to house a row of rhubarb on their properties. "They thought we were nuts until we showed up and bought thousands of pounds of rhubarb from them the next spring," says O'Brien. The fact that rhubarb is harvested in spring provides much-needed funds to farmers, O'Brien says, and "helps them operate in a

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diversified way.” In a stroke of fate—which has since become eighteen twenty wines legend—Doles used the proceeds earned from this rhubarb crop to invest in an irrigation system, which they claim saved their u-pick strawberry fields from last year’s summer drought.

With their Doles and Spiller partnerships in full swing, the natural next step for O’Brien and Dubuc was cider. Ohm’s Law, a dry, still cider, aged in cinnamon whiskey barrels, mirrors Rha’s subtle, placid tanginess and rounds out their offerings while popularizing a more European style of alcoholic beverage. O’Brien soon hopes to arrange a group trip to Spain for wine lovers in Maine who are interested to learn the origins of this cider-making style.

O’Brien is quick to focus the spotlight on the village of people around her who nourish eighteen twenty wines: those mentors and tinkerers of various kinds who help shape and sustain the brand. Her business partner, Dubuc, is the winemaker, handling every step of the process, from harvest through processing, freezing, aging and beyond. River Drive Cooperage provides used barrels for aging each vintage. Josh Fisher, a friend of O’Brien’s and an accomplished artist, creates feature art for the labels. “I tell him, let’s say, I want a winter label, but not Santa Claus, and he comes up with this,” says O’Brien, turning a bottle to reveal the undeniably wintry yet fresh image of a mysterious green man on a cool blue background, with a swath of rhubarb leaves for a beard.

Within her wide professional network, O’Brien seeks business advice from mentor Don Gooding of MCED and vino counsel from Erica Archer of the wine education startup Wine Wise. “I can go to Erica and say, ‘Tell me if this is garbage. Thinking of risking life and limb for it.’” For support, O’Brien’s personal network is as sustainable as her wine. “I am the lucky winner of the best friend in the world. She pushes me, for sure. And my parents are amazing. They help with my kid, my house—all my things.”

With so much hanging in the balance, O’Brien recognizes the Portland community as central to her success as an entrepreneur—and her sanity. “This town is great for people wanting to help. You feel crazy—this is super hard—but you realize that others are doing it, too.”

Chelsea Terris writes plays, short stories, and freelance journalism. She lives with her family in Portland, Maine.



Top: The tasting room, located at 219 Anderson Street in Portland, is open 4–7 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 12–7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Right: Amanda O’Brien, co-founder of eighteen twenty wines.

Above: Try the selection of rhubarb wines or hard ciders, like Ohm’s Law, which is barrel-aged.

eighteen twenty wines
eighteentwentywines.com

Visit the tasting room at 219 Anderson St., Portland (open Thursday through Sunday) and look out this spring for a fresh batch of eighteen twenty wines. The wines are also sold at a couple dozen shops around the state. For a complete list, go to www.eighteentwentywines.com/where-to-buy



In a recent issue of Maine Women Magazine, you published a recipe for chili. Since my husband and I are fans of chili, I decided to try the recipe, and I want to tell you, my husband and I agree—it's the BEST chili recipe ever! I was a little leery of the spinach and butternut squash, but it really worked! So we could enjoy the mix of flavors, I reduced the amount of red pepper flakes, and it was perfect.

Please congratulate the person who found the recipe and decided to include it in the magazine.

Just so you know, I really enjoy all the content of the magazine. Keep up the good work.

—Fran Holly, Kittery Point

Bravo on the March issue! I LOVE the cover design and the Richer Communities title page layouts! Gorgeous, love the angled design style. Proud to be an advertiser!

—Karen St. Clair, TouchPoint Studio, Cumberland Foreside

I want to take a moment to thank you for sharing Maine Women Magazine with the readership of the Maine Sunday Telegram. It is such a pleasure to read your publication. Please continue to tell the stories of some of the incredible women who live and work here in Maine. Well done!

—Cynthia Dubea, Wells

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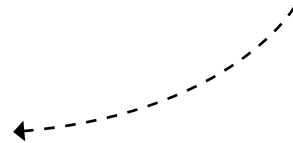
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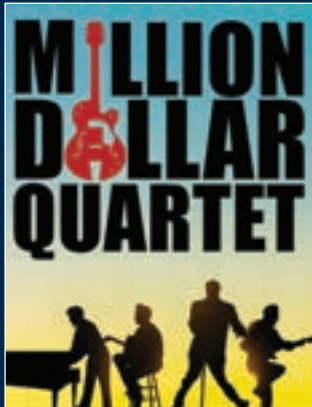


Last month we had some fun with a photo contest and asked readers to submit their photos. We got a number of really lovely shots, but our favorite was this warm-weather capture by Caseylin Darcy of Portland as her daughter, Lux, runs on the beach. Follow Caseylin Darcy on Instagram: @goodluxcharm

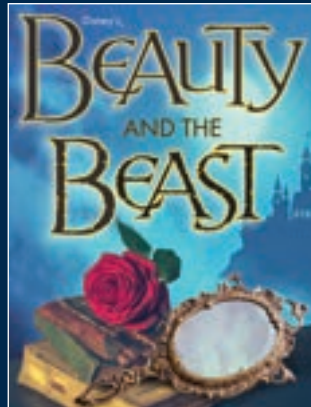


If you missed the contest or have a great photo you'd like to share, we're always accepting submissions for our Verse & View page, which is featured near the back of the magazine (page 66 this month). Send high-resolution images to verse_view@mainewomenmagazine.com

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It's a month to stand for science, celebrate spring and support Maine's young storytellers

Written by Amy Paradysz



Courtesy of Sunday River Resort

1 Spring Festival

Friday–Sunday, April 6–8
Sunday River, Newry

Celebrate the (relatively) warmer weather with spring skiing and riding as well as live bands, Maine Brew Fest Spring Session (April 6; ticketed event) and the epic Slip 'n' Flip (April 7). The Slip 'n' Flip is a relay-style competition where 16 teams of five slip-and-slide down the course to a table at the bottom where they “flip” non-alcoholic punch. (Maine Brew Fest tickets are \$55 at the door; \$15 for designated drivers; sundayriver.com)

2 Chocolate Lovers' Fling

Sunday, April 8, 1–4 p.m. (silent auction begins at noon)

Marriott at Sable Oaks, 200 Sable Oaks Drive, South Portland

This four-course banquet of all things chocolate is an indulgent afternoon you can feel good about as it raises money for Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM). (\$55 in advance, \$60 at the door; chocolateloversfling.com)

3 The Telling Room Presents Show & Tell: A Literary Spectacular

Tuesday, April 10, 7:30 p.m.

The State Theatre, 609 Congress St., Portland

This new performance fundraiser showcases a variety of storytellers, including New York Times best-selling novelist Paula McLain (“The Paris Wife”), writer Andre Dubus III (“Dirty Love”), singer-songwriter Josh Ritter, comedian John Hodgman, hip-hop artist Jean Grae and poet Zainab Almatwari. Proceeds will support The Telling Room’s free in-school and afterschool writing initiatives for Maine youth. (\$25–\$75; tellingroom.org/events)



Photo by Michael Schrameyer

4 Portland March for Science

Saturday, April 14, 1–4 p.m.

Starting at City Hall, 389 Congress St., Portland

Take a stand for evidence-based policy-making, marching from City Hall in Portland, up Congress Street to Lincoln Park. (facebook.com/marchforscienceportlandmaine)

5 Jessica Lang Dance

Saturday, April 14, 8 p.m.

Merrill Auditorium, 20 Myrtle St., Portland

This artful contemporary dance company, founded by choreographer Jessica Lang, is best known for a piece called *Thousand Yard Stare*, which evokes soldiers in formation and at war. (\$33-\$44, student deal \$15; portlandovations.org)

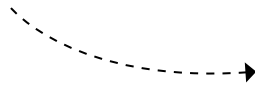


6 Stars on Ice Tour

Sunday, April 15, 4-6:30 p.m.

Cross Insurance Arena, 1 Civic Center Square, Portland

If you're missing all the Olympic figure skating coverage, you don't want to miss this show featuring Maia and Alex Shibutani, Bradie Tennell, Mirai Nagasu, Nathan Chen, Adam Rippon and Meryl Davis and Charlie White. (\$25-\$135; crossarenaportland.com/events)



7 Vintage Bazaar New England

Friday-Sunday, April 20-22

Brick South (indoors), Thompson's Point, Portland

Think antiques, plus upcycled salvage styles, unique handmade items and vintage treasures. More than 80 indoor vendors, plus music, food trucks and libations. (\$10-\$20; mybazaarlife.com)

8 Maine Women's Expo

Saturday, April 21, noon to 4 p.m. (Happy Hour 4-6 p.m.)

The Nonantum Resort, 95 Ocean Ave., Kennebunkport

Where else can you shop for Maine-made products, do some DIY projects, get a workout, get pampered and sip a signature cocktail? Ticket proceeds from the Expo, which is put on by Maine Women Magazine, will go to Caring Unlimited, a non-profit providing support and safe haven to those whose lives are affected by domestic abuse in York County. (\$8 in advance, \$15 at the door; mainewomenexpo.com)

9 One in Five 5K

Sunday, April 29, 9-11 a.m.

Thomas College, 180 West River Road, Waterville

One in five Mainers will experience sexual violence in their lifetime. In recognition of this terrible statistic, run or walk as an individual or team in support of the hundreds of Kennebec and Somerset county survivors served by the Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Center in Winthrop. (Register in advance; silentnomore.org/one-in-five-5k-2018.html)



Photo courtesy Portland Ovations/
Rosalie O'Connor



Photo courtesy of Getty Images



Photo courtesy of Mark &
Deanna Photography

Meet four Maine women who are making space for performers, artists, storytellers and filmmakers.

Tammy Ackerman

ENGINE

Written by Emma Bouthillette | Photographed by Lauryn Hottinger

"The arts are critically important in a cultural context. The arts are life enhancing, entertaining and defining. The artists are important in building stronger community connections." —Tammy Ackerman

Ackerman's first taste of Biddeford was in 2004 when she shopped at Reny's on Main Street during a quick stop on a circuitous cross-country camping trip. The abandoned mills and empty storefronts were weighing down the city, but Ackerman saw potential. By 2006, she relocated after purchasing the former Textile Mill Workers Union hall around the corner from Palace Diner, Doc's Tavern and George's Sandwich Shop.

As part of the renovations, Ackerman painted the exterior a vibrant orange, which became the signature of Franklin Street Artspace. Ackerman says, "It was an interesting time as a new contemporary gallery space adjacent to some really local establishments."

Ackerman dove in to Biddeford's revitalization efforts by joining the then-newly formed Heart of Biddeford. She watched as various efforts were made to foster the creative community, but realized in 2008 she had to make it happen.

Ackerman co-founded Engine in 2009 with Josh Bodwell, executive director of Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance. The new organization absorbed the Biddeford ArtWalk planning duties, of which Ackerman was already in charge, and facilitated Maine artist Amy Stacey Curtis' TIME exhibition in the North Dam Mill.

Early financial support came from the Quimby Family Foundation and a \$50,000 grant from the Maine Arts Commission Creative Economy. The once-small art gallery has grown into a larger space with regular exhibits, a retail corner and an active offering of enrichment classes for youth and adults. The creation of a FabLab in Engine's space introduced 3D printers to the community, which now serves as a design incubator for digital fabrication. In addition, Engine hosts concerts, storytelling nights and panel discussions addressing issues of social justice.

"We have created a space where there is a sense of community, and conversations among



Tammy Ackerman, co-founder of Biddeford's arts nonprofit Engine, strives to create a gender, age, race and socio-economically diverse organization that will be an integral community partner for years to come.



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groups can occur for greater understanding,” says Ackerman, who looks forward to the completion of renovations to the historic Marble Block Building, the building where Ackerman shopped during her first visit to Biddeford, and the building that will ultimately house Engine.

In the meantime, Ackerman continues to work with her board of directors to create a gender, age, race and socio-economically diverse organization. She says, “I am striving to set Engine up to be an even more integral community partner for years to come.”

Engine: Propelling the Creative Community is located at 128 Main Street in Biddeford and open 1 to 6 p.m. Wednesday through Friday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday with extended hours for special events. For more information, visit feedtheengine.org.



Photo courtesy of Reggie Burrows Hodges

Kate Kaminski

BLUESTOCKING FILM SERIES

Written by Emma Bouthillette

"If film is the universal language, it is currently missing 50 percent of its alphabet. [Women] can't be what we don't see." —Kate Kaminski

"If film is the universal language, it is currently missing 50 percent of its alphabet," says Kate Kaminski. "[Women] can't be what we don't see."

Kaminski began her career as a screenwriter in the late 1980s, but her graduate studies in filmmaking at Boston University turned her on to directing and producing. She and her partner, Betsy Carson, founded Gitgo Productions in the mid 1990s. They have produced four indie features in addition to fiction and nonfiction short works, which have been screened internationally.

However, being a female filmmaker and a consumer of filmography, Kaminski could not overlook the gender inequality in the industry. She founded the Bluestocking Film Series in 2011 to create space for women in film. In fact, the curated short film festival is Maine's only film event honoring both female creators and films with strong female representation.

"As a filmmaker, I had primarily received recognition through women's film festivals," says Kaminski. "Makers like me, who happen to be women, still struggle to have their work seen at film festivals, [in Maine] and elsewhere. So it seemed like I had to fill that void, step in and create a space for those under-represented

voices and stories."

The annual festival accepts submissions from filmmakers of any gender because the focus of the event is on the variety of ways women and girls can be represented in cinematic stories. Kaminski emphasizes this is not just about having a "kick ass" woman character in the film, but really the development of a complex female protagonist. "[The female character] should be given the narrative drive to be as heroic or craven, complicated or flawed as male protagonists are allowed to be," she says.

"The bottom line is that the commercial film industry needs to depict more complex characterizations across the board," Kaminski says. "To be exposed to a single point of view, one that is predominantly white and male, is to lose something vital to the evolution of culture, in cinema, literature and all art making."

"Bluestocking's raison d'être is to show global audiences a vision of a world where women's voices and stories are celebrated and amplified, and we also exist to champion change in the film industry from the outside in."

Catch the Bluestocking Film Series August 3-4, 2018, in the Talbot Auditorium, University of Southern Maine's Portland Campus. For more information, visit bluestockingfilms.com.

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Kathleen Juten

THE CORNER

Written by Bailey O'Brien | Photographed by Lauryn Hottinger

"Human beings are just a collection of stories that we are trying to sort out." —Kathleen Juten

Kathleen Juten is the current force behind The Corner, Lewiston and Auburn's premiere storytelling event, and has been since 2017. "We spend so much of our lives (in therapy, over coffee with friends or trapped in our own heads) trying to figure out our own stories—who we are, how we fit into the world around us and how the stories of others shape our own," says Juten. "In short, stories and storytelling are tied to identity—our identity as people, as a community and as a nation."

Each month, Juten provides a space for local and visiting storytellers to share their experiences. These true, first-person stories are all guided by a theme to be interpreted by the teller and in the past have included topics like "fool's errand," "it's complicated" and "welcome to the neighborhood." Similar in style to NPR's popular storytelling podcast The Moth, The Corner was created to be "an event that would foster a space for community and connection," says Juten. "With [founder Michael Sargent's] attention to

detail and drive to bring in great storytellers from all over Maine and beyond, he grew The Corner over the course of the next four years into the institution it is today."

Formerly a resident of "the cultural and art explosion that is Los Angeles, California," Juten has long been drawn to diversity of culture, language and thought. "Storytelling events like The Corner are so important because they allow us to hear the stories of others in our community and combat some of the prejudice and othering that occurs in these narratives," says Juten. "Because of The Corner, I feel like I belong to a community in a way that I have never felt before."

The Corner is held one Thursday each month at She Doesn't Like Guthries, a restaurant and performance space in Lewiston. Event dates, times and themes are updated each month on The Corner's website (cometothecorner.com). You're invited to listen, connect and add your name to the fishbowl for a chance to tell your own story.



René Goddess Johnson

THEATER ENSEMBLE OF COLOR

Written by Bailey O'Brien

"It is impossible to know something you haven't been taught." —René Goddess Johnson

René Goddess Johnson isn't trying to make her audience comfortable. As the executive and artistic director and choreographer of Portland's Theater Ensemble of Color (TEoC), Johnson and her performers work hard to expose the complex—and often ugly—truths about racism as it exists in Maine. "A person of color is uncomfortable literally all of the time," says Johnson, "and white people refuse to be uncomfortable." Her performances are an invitation to join an uncomfortable but immeasurably valuable discussion about race. "We live in a mechanism that has done a lot to destroy us as people. How do you change it without talking about it? That's the hard part," she says.

Johnson launched TEoC in 2015 "to provide artistic, professional and leadership development for people of color." Motivated largely by racism embroiled in current events, Johnson's work allows people of color to tell their stories and be represented on stage. "It is impossible to know something you haven't been taught," she says. TEoC works to "provide a space for people of color to see their stories, to see themselves matter. Over and over [as a person of color], you're told you don't matter, that you don't have

worth. TEoC helps people understand their power."

The first step toward this understanding is to perform plays written by people of color about their authentic experiences in America. TEoC's last show, "Rachel," pushed the performers and Johnson herself to process "all of the emotional baggage that comes from people seeing your life on stage," she says. "I'm most proud of the performers' ability to take on these roles knowing how close to home they're going to hit, asking the deep questions and pushing themselves even further to help white people see these roles more clearly."

TEoC's summer mainstage performance of "A Meal for Malaga" will tell a horrifically true story about Maine's own racist past. The island Malaga, tucked away in midcoast Maine, "was one of the largest mixed-race communities in the early 1900s until white people evicted an entire POC community to make the island more appealing for tourism," says Johnson. Audiences should expect to be uncomfortable.

More information about Theater Ensemble of Color, including upcoming performance dates, can be found at teoc-maine.weebly.com.



Kat Finck performs a lyra aerial routine with partner, Joshua Oliver.
Photo by Casey Jacques

Always Circus

Written by Anna E. Jordan

Aerialist, juggler and circus arts teacher Kat Finck

It's mid-February, and the big room at Circus Maine at Thompson's Point in Portland is filled with onlookers. The annual Cupid's Cabaret features an array of circus artists, whose performances are a blend of strength, flexibility and panache. There are blindfolded aerialists, comic magicians and a hand balancer who contorts her body into various shapes while performing an extended handstand. But it all begins with Kat Finck, playing the role of Cupid. She doesn't look the part. She has no arrow, no wings. She's wearing brown Carhartt overalls. She sits down on a folding chair with a can of peas and a fork. "I love tinned peas," she says, revealing her Montreal roots with the word "tinned." She devours the peas. The audience is amused and a little grossed out. As the emcee for the evening, Finck returns to the stage between acts to reveal her other "loves." She loves knitting. She knits while throwing the audience glances of satisfaction bordering on the orgasmic. The audience titters at her intimacy.

Later in the evening, when she comes out with a snow shovel, the audience laughs. It's winter in Maine, after all, and a shovel is hard to love this time of year. But Finck doesn't shovel. She dances. The partners, Finck and the shovel, are graceful and surprising. They spin and dip. When she brings the handle to her chin and elevates the scoop in the air you can hear the audience's collective inhale. It sways. She adjusts. It is still. She balances the clunky everyday object on her chin and turns it into a beautiful extension of herself.

A juggler, aerialist and circus arts teacher, Finck, now 34, first found circus in her early 20s and assumed that she was already too old for the job. "When I was 21, I thought I was painfully late and horribly old for what it was I wanted to do. I was convinced that 30 was the cut

off—that at 30, the dust poured from your joints and you crackled when you walked," she says. European circus families pass their art to new generations early on. But Finck didn't benefit from the tradition of starting circus young. What she had was grit and determination.

Perhaps it's kismet that Finck's path to the circus started with a child. In 2002, at 18, she moved from her hometown of Montreal to Germany to be a nanny and learned to juggle there. But loneliness consumed her, and she left that job. She hitchhiked through Europe to Spain, and her homelessness pushed her to begin performing as a juggler on the street. "I slept in squats and churchyards, and in the forest below the castle walls in Malaga. I lived on very bad wine and baked potatoes. Not exactly wholesome, but I suppose I learned."

She returned in 2004 to Canada to live and work in Newfoundland, where she would meet her best friend, Cory Tabino. The move back to Canada saw her making \$75 a week to perform regularly, and she had lodging and health care. She spent over seven seasons in Newfoundland, then Tabino urged her to move to Montreal to audition for the National Circus School. There, Tabino introduced her to Josh Oliver, who was enrolled at the school, and who Finck would later marry. Tabino would be the best man at their wedding.

While she trained at the National Circus School, she modeled for art classes at McGill University and at the Montreal Museum of Art to pay the bills. Circus was all-encompassing. "There's no hours where you are a circus artist and hours that you aren't a circus artist. You just always are circus," says Finck. She was performing exclusively when she found herself on the cusp of 30.

She began considering options for her future and decided to take a step away from circus life to pursue



Circus artist Elsa Hall performs on the aerial straps during a Circus Maine media event this winter.
Photos by Lauryn Hottinger

midwifery. That choice led her to Bridgton, Maine. It was 2013. “It was really great for me to do something that I thought was really fascinating and engrossing and feel that I was learning something new.”

Josh Oliver was still in Montreal. Cory Tabino was in Florida. Both were performing. When they moved to Portland in 2014 to join the Circus Conservatory of America, which had opened a year earlier, Finck felt the pull of the circus, and her friendships, once again. She joined them at the Conservatory.

Inside the Brick North building at Thompson’s Point, a high-ceilinged space that was once a train repair and storage facility in the second half of the 19th century, Circus Conservatory of America offered recreational classes in aerial and circus arts. The owners hoped to create a degree-granting program for professional circus artists. But plans for the school shifted, and the Circus Conservatory of America closed its doors after two years.

Maine Circus Academy Thompson’s Point, Portland

www.mainecircusacademy.org

Maine Circus Academy offers adult and youth classes in tumbling, juggling, Chinese pole, aerials, trampoline and more.

Circus Maine performances

Catch the monthly Cabaret:

Circus on the Point on

April 20–22 and May 18–20

A Spring Showcase the last week of May will feature both the youth performance troupe and professional-level performers.

When the closure was announced in 2015, the school’s performers and coaches were left with gigs on the books and a large empty room inside the Brick North building. Rather than cancel the upcoming performances, Finck, Oliver (now her husband), Tabino and other performers cobbled together equipment—including Chinese poles they made from pipe and hose—and went on with the show.

That collaborative effort became official shortly after, when Finck, Oliver and Tabino co-founded Circus Maine, which offered classes in circus arts as well as performances by experienced performers. (Last year, the organi-



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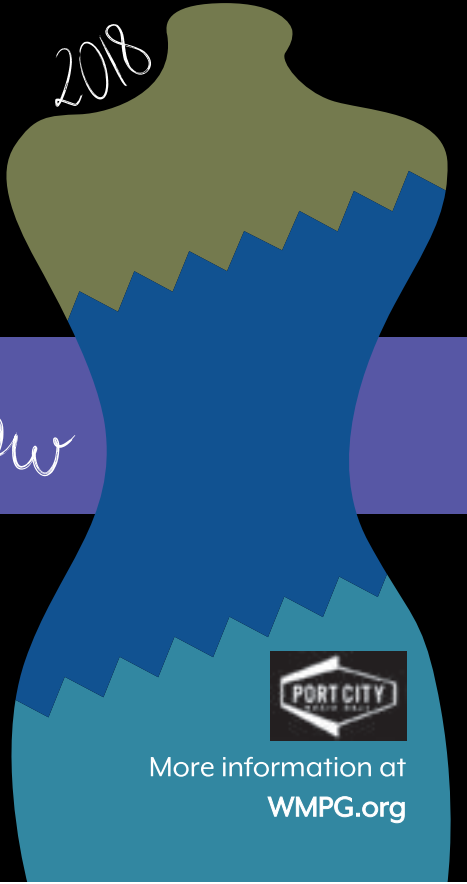
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zation divided those efforts under two names: Maine Circus Academy, the teaching arm, and Circus Maine, the performing arm under the MCA umbrella.) “We were performing, we were coaching the classes, choreographing, digging the pit for the trampoline, creating that room,” says Finck.

And the space is beautiful. Sunlight leaps through variously shaped windows throwing swaths of light across exposed brick walls, thick mats and an in-ground trampoline. The light plays on tall poles; it shines through colorful silks hung from the palatial ceiling and bounces off of twirling trapeze bars and suspended hoops. And on all the apparatus, coaches are teaching circus arts to adult and youth students. Finck and her cohorts built the room from the ground up. “I love our room,” she says.

Amid the mats and apparatus, coaches adjust bodies into proper positions, they touch a shoulder as a technique cue or press gently on a back to deepen a student’s stretch. “There are several aspects of circus life that are kind of miraculous,” says Finck, who carries a multitude of titles between Circus Maine—co-founder and producing/casting director—and at Maine Circus Academy—talent director and instructor. “It is deeply cooperative, to the level that you have no choice. You need to rely on the people around you. As students, you cannot accomplish the movement without someone literally holding you up.”

But carrying so many titles means carrying a lot of responsibilities. One day might include 16 hours of carpentry or sewing costumes into the wee hours of Christmas. Another day might be consumed by emails and administrative duties. For Circus Maine, Finck meets with new artists and books them for upcoming cabarets or galas. For the Maine Circus Academy, she coaches young people and adults who want to learn circus arts like tumbling, hand balancing and aerials. “Every day is an adventure,” says Finck. And sometimes, every once in a while, Finck gets to perform.

But between her coaching role and the administrative responsibilities, finding time to create a performance is a struggle for Finck—a struggle that might find her balancing a shovel on her chin at midnight to be ready for an upcoming performance. “When you are so busy, sometimes it’s easy to forget that art is more important than air. So you prioritize everything before the thing that’s more important than air,” she says. “Creation looks like rolling around on the floor. Creation looks like staring at the wall. Creation looks like absolutely bullshit. It looks nothing. It looks like garbage. It looks like a waste of time. So if there are other things that



Kat Finck coaches an advanced aerial student on the straps. *Photo by Anna E. Jordan*

need to get done...”

But she admits that, as she gets older, some things get easier. On stage she’s not as concerned with her costuming or hairstyles as she used to be. Her rapport with the audience is less inhibited. Her experience as a midwife comforting laboring mothers helps her better understand facial and body language. These are lessons that show up in both performance and teaching.

All of her hours of carpentry and collaboration have not only transformed the physical space at Brick North, they have transformed lives. “What we do inherently teaches people how to be respectful and how to be humble and how to be proud at the same time,” she says.

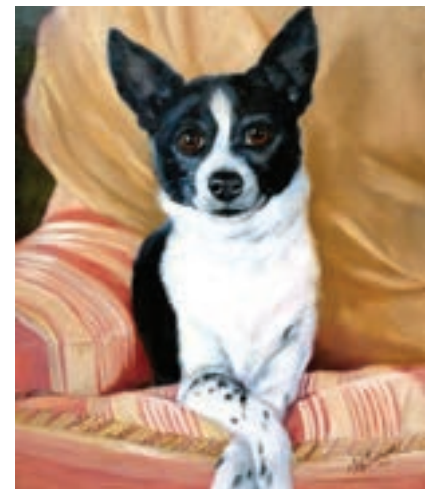
Finck and her collaborators have a lot to be proud of. Their older students are auditioning into companies that require talented and well-trained performers. Children and young adults are in the Performance Troupe and the Professional Program under the Maine Circus Academy. MCA has qualified for nonprof-

it status and Circus Maine’s application is in progress. The organizations are growing and building their boards of directors.

Finck sees the new board as a positive path to a future when she can share the responsibility and the vision of, as their website states, an “international group of circus professionals expanding the limits of circus arts in North America.” Spreading the obligation for the management of the fundraising and facilities will allow Maine Circus Academy coaches to work on their own artistic projects. It will allow Circus Maine to create more consistent theater with longer performance runs.

It will allow Finck to rededicate herself to something she loves more than tinned peas, knitting and shoveling snow—following a creative path that allows her to express ideas, further the art form and create shows she’s yet to manifest.

Anna E. Jordan (annaejordan.com) can’t juggle or do the splits but she loves writing, drawing, and yoga.



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Singer-songwriter Bri Lane sits on the end of her bed in a room of her home in South Portland, practicing an original song.



Interstellar Lady

Written by Amy Paradysz
Photographed by Lauryn Hottinger

Singer-songwriter Bri Lane writes songs about strong female independence—and she makes music because she must.

Don't be fooled when 23-year-old Britney Elaine Ruotolo sings about living on Planet Maybe. The singer-songwriter from South Portland, who performs as Bri Lane, really is all in.

In January, the indie pop rock music video for her song "Interstellar Lady" was voted Best Overall Achievement at the first annual Music Video Portland (MVP) awards, having competed against 26 other videos with Maine connections.

"(The song is) about being a woman and being unapologetic about it," says Lane, who is backed up by drummer Mike Vail, bassist Jordan Bicki and guitarist Nolan Paul. "At first, when I said I was an interstellar lady, I didn't even believe it. But it means that I'm a cool chick. I'm making music to bring people together, and I do it because I need to. I've found my refuge in music ever since I was a little girl."

One of Lane's earliest memories is listening to Celtic Woman and getting goosebumps. She picked up the saxophone in fifth grade, biding her time until she was in middle school and could play drums in the marching band. "There were three boys, so I thought maybe drums was a boy thing," Lane says. "But I did it, and drumming was the first thing I did that just came naturally to me."

Lane taught herself to play guitar and keyboard and took some voice lessons. As she participated in a range of musical groups throughout high school, including Portland Youth Wind Ensemble and Portland Youth Symphony Orchestra, drums were her passion—a love she wasn't ready to give up, not even to be a doctor.

"Interstellar Lady is definitely based on my life," Lane says. "I was sitting in my room with my guitar writing that first riff. With this one, I knew wanted to be more in your face as a singer-songwriter. I did want to be a doctor. When I was in kindergarten they asked me what I wanted to be, and I said a cardiologist."

Lane's interest in medicine—in saving people's lives—stayed with her through her teens. She enrolled in the University of Southern Maine, hoping to double major in music and pre-med but found that she really needed choose. "There was too much to lose," she explains, using a lyric from "Interstellar Lady." She spent one semester as a percussion major and one semester as a voice major, then threw herself into Bri Lane Music.

"I didn't find my voice and confidence until college," Lane says, adding that, in the high school musical, she was just in the chorus. "It was so much more vulnerable to sing than to hit a drum, even though drums are louder. But I love writing about strong female independence. I like talking about being a woman pursuing a man—or a woman. If a man can be that way, why not women? There's something compelling about being transparent about how you feel."

Lane is working 50 hours a week—days at a bakery and nights at a bar—in addition to songwriting, rehearsing, performing and doing her own marketing for her recently released single "Around Again" on iTunes and Spotify.

She writes the parts for the various instruments and on some of her professional recordings plays multiple instruments herself. But, since she can't play drums while being the lead singer, she recruited session drummer Mike Vail, who she met at The Guitar Center.

"I'm really picky about who I session drum for, but she has the best voice of any musician I play for," Vail says. "And we connect because she plays drums as well."

"It's taken me so long to find a group of people who are serious about what they do and also

I love writing about strong female independence...There's something compelling about being transparent about how you feel."





Bri Lane stands in the middle of the road outside of her South Portland home in a snowstorm, holding her electric guitar.

respect my style of music,” says Lane, whose current band formed in 2017 and meets weekly to rehearse in a spare bedroom in her parents’ house. “We all fit in there,” she laughs. “I don’t know how.”

Lane’s mother, Tracie Ruotolo, always knew her daughter Bri wouldn’t settle for a desk job. But a rock star?

“I was obviously nervous for her, because it’s such a competitive industry,” Ruotolo says. “But I can see it brings her a ton of joy, and she really comes alive. Her music is relatable, like you can imagine hearing it on the radio. But her music comes from deep down inside of herself.”

Ruotolo says there have been moments of recognition, such as when Lane won a Battle of the Bands in Biddeford last summer, that have reinforced that Lane is on the right path.

“When we watch her—her dad and I—we’re extremely proud,” Ruotolo says. “We have no musical talent. None.”

Lane has professionally recorded four songs, has five more ready to record and several more in the works. She plans to release an album before the end of 2018.

“She’s got a killer voice,” says Karl Anderson, an owner and producer at Anchour Studios in Windham, where Lane recorded “Wild Side” and “Around Again.” “She’s got a really strong drive. She knows in her head what she wants a song to sound like before anything is recorded, and she doesn’t give up on fighting for that sound. Vocally she has the ability to do whatever she wants.”

Amy Paradysz is a freelance writer from Scarborough who likes to sing along to Bri Lane’s songs.

SEE BRI LANE PERFORM

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For more about Bri Lane and to hear her music:
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Sanders sits with a wooden carving she displays at the top of her stairs. "Everyone should have art in their home, right?"

Finding Funny Again

Written by Patricia McCarthy
Photographed by Lauryn Hottinger

Grieving the loss of her husband, comedienne and playwright Karmo Sanders is rediscovering her sense of humor—and she's ready to get back out there.

A month or so after her husband died, Karmo Sanders—known to many Mainers as the goof-ball “Marden’s Lady” from her longtime role as Birdie Googins in the retailer’s ads—tried going back to work.

A stand-up comedy gig had been scheduled for months, and she wanted to honor the commitment and earn some money. It was for a convention of dentists in Rockland. “I just bombed. I mean bombed, so much that I couldn’t even make a joke about it,” she says. “I walked off that stage and really, hardly anyone noticed. It was that bad!”

Funny is what the Maine actress, playwright, singer and comedienne is known for. So what happens when life interrupts the funny and you don’t have enough in you to make yourself laugh, let alone others? For someone like Karmo Sanders, it means you’re out of work—at least the work you love—for starters.

It’s been almost five years since her husband Jerry Sanders’ death, and it’s been a slow slog back to good humor and the ability to perform, Sanders admits.

“With those dentists, it hadn’t been long enough, and it was too painful, really. I then also bombed at a Halloween party. It, too, was crash and burn. Grief is a weird animal.” So she stopped performing and plugged along, seeing friends and family, getting joy from her two daughters and four grandchildren, who live nearby, and intentionally trying to find the humor

in life, as we all do.

A rich source, just up the road in Scarborough, has always been Sanders’ mother, who is now 96 and still lives on her own.

“I went there the other day and she was sitting there with a cup of tea, eating a doughnut that she’d cut into wedges. She was eating it with a knife! I said, ‘All right, Mom, here we are. You could put that through the roof of your mouth. You could put your eye out. Put the knife down or I’m leaving.’ And she just went off on this whole bit, laughing and laughing, about what would happen if she actually were found that way. So yeah, all I have to do is talk to her.”

Only in the past year or so has Sanders, 67, felt a familiar yearning to get “back out there” on stage. She says the absurdity of all that’s happening since President Trump was elected has given her plenty of fodder for stand-up and improv—her forte.

“I’m overwhelmed by the insanity we’re living in, and we can be angry. And you can laugh. And when you’re laughing about it, you’re thinking, and you’re OK.”

The state of the world also prompted her to announce her intentions to run for governor of Maine—sort of. “I have the common sense and ability to do the job, seriously. Or maybe I’ll pursue a career in fashion,” she says, laughing. “What I’ve said is that I’ll be like Oprah. If the people demand it, I’ll run.”

While waiting for that to happen, she continues

*I just bombed. I mean bombed, so much
that I couldn't even make a joke about it...
Grief is a weird animal.*

working the 4 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift two nights a week at Kaler-Vaill, a retirement home for women in Scarborough. And she started teaching in the University of Southern Maine's theater department last fall, enjoying her playwriting course enough last semester to take on an Acting for Non-Theater Majors class this winter.

That has been rewarding and restoring, she says. "I'm grateful to be pulled into that department. I'm loving it and having a really good time teaching these students. They're awesome."

The feeling is apparently mutual. After one recent class, during which freshman Henry Field performed a monologue about his experience as a combat medic, he talked about Sanders' influence.

"It's a great balance between patience and pushiness, and I mean that in a good way," says Field, a 24-year-old nursing student, who explained that he's taking the class to get better and more comfortable talking with patients, especially about difficult subjects.

"I had a really hard time getting up and doing that monologue. It wasn't so much for people to enjoy—it was cathartic for me, and I think it's important to tell those stories about combat. But I was so nervous, and I didn't want to do it. But she has a way of making people feel comfortable, and that allowed me to do it. It's been the most fantastic class. There's another student in here who told us he was worried because he has a stutter, but honestly, none of us have heard him stutter because we feel comfortable here."

Jordan Buckley, a first-year communications and media major from Presque Isle, echoed Field's sentiments. "I walked in feeling uptight about what people would think. College students can be pretty judgmental. But she's made us all feel so comfortable that I don't have to worry about what anyone thinks," says Buckley, 21. "And I learn better by doing, and that's how she's teaching us."

Sanders can teach at the college level because she has a master's degree in creative writing from Boston University. Getting the degree was quite an accomplishment, given that she and Jerry dropped out of college after her first semester when they fell in love and decided to hitchhike around the country instead of going to school in Oklahoma.

Boston University rejected her application, and Karmo lamented this with her

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Karmo Sanders shows off a multi-purpose hand-knit headband, which her granddaughter made, at her home in Scarborough.

then-employer, the late Dodge Morgan, who gained fame as the first American to sail solo nonstop around the world.

“He said, ‘They deserve you. You’re going to take no for an answer? Write a letter!’”

So she did, detailing her extensive experience in theater and life. And BU accepted her. “He was a really good friend for doing that,” says Sanders. “It was empowering. It made me step up to the plate.”

She’s stepping up to the plate again, getting her nerve back, feeling her funny returning without her husband, who was her best friend and artistic collaborator, by her side. She’s working to have their full-length musical “Gold Rush Girls”—which took 12 years to write and represents

their life’s work together—staged again.

It opened to rave reviews and sellout crowds every night for six weeks in summer 2012 in Anchorage, Alaska, but was never performed again because Jerry fell ill when they returned to Maine. She’s gotten some positive bites and is actively pitching it.

“Listen to this if you have a chance,” Sanders said handing over a CD of the show’s music. “I’m not just a pretty face.”

Patricia McCarthy is a long-time writer and editor. She has three daughters, lives in Cape Elizabeth, and also has a photography business (patriciamccarthy.com).



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SHOWCASING MAINE'S INFLUENCE ON AMERICAN ART

Gallery Director Elizabeth Moss

Written by Amy Paradysz



Elizabeth Moss



"Buoyancy" by Lea Peterson
(30" x 30" oil on canvas)



"Queensland" by Lindsay Hancock
(10" x 10" oil on panel)

Elizabeth Moss came to Maine on a summer vacation and devised a way to make Vacationland her home. Trained in museum studies and with experience working with the Smithsonian, Moss visited Monhegan island, which has been a summer artist colony and destination since Robert Henri first visited in the 1890s.

"Artists will tell you the light in Maine is just so incredible—sunsets, sunrises, the light on the water, the light on the land, those intense pinks and purples," Moss says. "If you closely observe the sky, it's really exciting, and that's not the case everywhere."

On that Monhegan vacation, Moss met her first husband, who happened to be the son of the late Monhegan artist Henry Kallem, an esteemed abstract expressionist. When Moss first established Elizabeth Moss Galleries in Falmouth 14 years ago this month, she specialized in representing Monhegan artists, including Kallem and his contemporaries. Many of them were Jewish men from New York City who painted on the small fishing and lobstering island all summer, every summer, for decades.

"Maine is pivotal in the story of American art," Moss says. "You can't tell the story of American art without including a lot of Maine in it—there's Robert Henri, Edward Hopper, Winslow Homer, N.C., Andrew, and Jamie Wyeth, Robert Indiana, Will Barnet, Rockwell Kent. There's just so many. And everybody who has come before has impacted the artists who I represent now."

As fewer works by those late greats become available, Moss has widened her geographic scope to the Northeast and turned to younger generations—including more female artists—who paint the same seas and the same skies in revolutionary ways and are breaking into the international art scene.

"I'm trying to show the most important contemporary art being made in Maine or with ties to Maine," Moss says. "It tends toward landscapes and seascapes and can be realistic as well as abstract, but with an awareness of Maine's influence on American art." Rising Maine-based artists include Emilie Stark-Menneg, Lea Peterson and Lindsay Hancock.

"When I choose contemporary artists, I hope they are continuing in that established legacy but also pushing the boundaries of that aesthetic. What do people want to live with now? What do people find exciting today? But, what will also stand the test of time?"

Upcoming exhibits feature abstract painters Richard Brown Letham of Bath and Stephen Walsh of Portland, April 12 through May 15, and landscape painters Lea Peterson of Georgetown and Lindsay Hancock of Portland, May 10 through June 9.

Elizabeth Moss Galleries is located at 251 US Route 1 in Falmouth and is open Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information: elizabethmoss galleries.com

7 things

7 PODCASTS THAT MIGHT BECOME YOUR NEW FAVORITES

Ologies | 1

Ologies is a cool science-scentric podcast. Host Alie Ward talks to a range of scientists about what they're studying—from squid to sports, laughter, birds, sex, the cosmos, volcanoes and more. It's fun and light and will give you some serious science knowledge. (alieward.com/ologies)

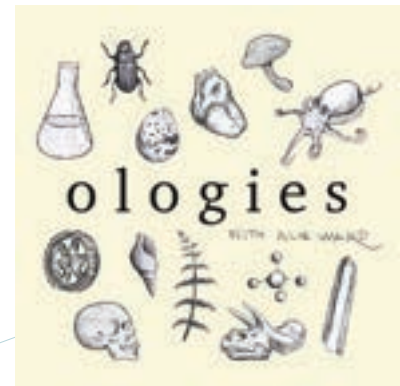


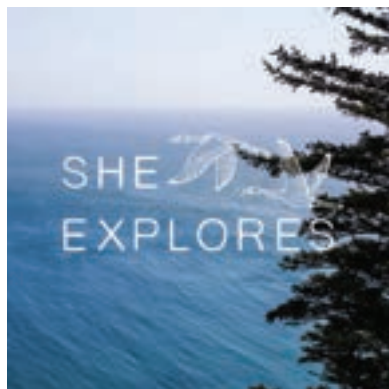
Photo by Lizzy Johnston



2 | Unladylike

Co-founders Cristen Conger and Caroline Ervin explore what happens when women break the rules. Episodes cover topics like responding to catcallers, how to be a boss witch and the joys of having solid galpals. Also included, advice from resident grandma Rosalyn Koo and “a solid dose of delightful feminist rage.” (unladylike.co)

Gale Straub is host of the She Explores podcast, which is created for and about women who are inspired by time outside. An avid adventurer herself, she's pictured above in Patagonia. Photo courtesy of Gale Straub



3

She-Explores

All about adventurous women and exploring the outdoors, She-Explores host Gale Straub introduces us to women from around the globe who revel in being outside, whether it's a mountain peak in a faraway place or in their own backyard. (she-explores.com/podcast)

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CORRECTION

We want to recognize Catherine as part of our MWM Advisory Board—she was inadvertently left out of our spread in the last issue.



Catherine Wygant Fossett

Catherine is the executive director of the Institute for Family-Owned Business. She currently serves on the board of the Amputee Association of Maine, Boothbay Treasures and the Boothbay Sea & Science Center and is a graduate of the Maine Association of Nonprofits' Executive Leadership Institute. She lives with her husband in midcoast Maine and is an avid boater and outdoor enthusiast.



4 | Pantsuit Politics

Conversations about news and politics, but with no shouting or insults. Hosts Sarah Stewart Holland (a progressive) and Beth Silvers (a conservative), tackle current events and what's happening in Washington—from the gun debate and DACA to the latest political news. (pantsuitpoliticsshow.com)

Two Dope Queens

5

Seriously engaging, energetic and hilarious, Phoebe Robinson and Jessica Williams host this live show out of Brooklyn. It's realltalk about the real stuff women talk about—uncensored, flush with f-words and funny the whole way. (wnycstudios.org/shows/dopequeens)

2 DOPE QUEENS



6 | Spiritualish

Hosted by Meadow DeVor and Laura McKowen, Spiritualish is like so many of the conversations we have with our girlfriends, where we talk about asking for help (and how we kind of stink at it), how we handle it when the crap hits the fan and other such topics. It's "sometimes spiritual, sometimes not." (spiritualishpodcast.com)

My Favorite Murder

7

A true crime comedy podcast hosted by Karen Kilgariff and Georgia Hardstark, My Favorite Murder shares stories of murder, which sounds dark, but it's a pretty darn funny show, if that makes sense. It's an excellent blend of dark tales and lots of laughter. (myfavoritemurder.com)





CHECK OUT THESE MAINE-BASED PODCASTS

WOMEN TAKING THE LEAD

Local Jodi Flynn talks with successful women about entrepreneurship and self-development. (womentakingthelead.com)

GREAT BEER ADVENTURE

Host Amanda Doughty shines a light on the passions, the creativity, the camaraderie and the community of everyone in the beer industry. (greatbeeradventure.com)

MAINE SHOW PODCAST

Stories of ordinary Mainers doing extraordinary things, hosted by Ben Sprague out of Bangor. (maineshowpodcast.com)

THIS DAY IN MAINE

A daily podcast about what's happening in Maine, from Maine Public. (mainepublic.org/programs/day-maine)

MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PODCAST

The experiences of Maine people and the connections between local, state and national history, from the Maine Historical Society. (mainehistory.org/programs_podcasts.shtml)

STRONG—THE IRON WILL WAY

Scott Baumann, owner of Iron Will Strength in Westbrook, talks about strength, muscle gain, nutrition and more. (ironwillstrength.podbean.com)

THE GARDENIA PROJECT

Local photographer Jen Dean shares moving and powerful stories of women with the belief that those stories bond us together. (jendeanphoto.com/the-gardenia-project)

BACH TO BOCK

Kevin and Matty Oates talk music and beer—specifically orchestral music, but they throw the stuffiness out the window. (bachtobock.com)

THE LITTLE DEATH

A brand-new podcast about death and dying hosted by “death-obsessed weirdos” Mackenzie O'Connor and JJ Peeler of Portland. (facebook.com/littledeathpodcast)

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John Tanguay



Pia Louise Capaldi: *Creation*

Written by Pia Louise Capaldi
Photographed by Lauryn Hottinger



I am a raw and passionate human. I love being inspired in the moment—harnessing that deeply visceral feeling that rises through the body and eventually manifests as some sort of potent physical expression, be it a dance, painting or writing. As a seasoned improvisational dance artist and performer, I have always been delighted by the spontaneously wild nature of improv and the act of creation that's based on feeling. I truly began to appreciate this way of creating when I let go of the idea of my art being a product, and I've learned to value the process rather than focus too much on preparing what it should be or should look like. There is something authentic, personal and connective when we create in the moment, where you and the audience are experiencing it together for the first time.

I believe that the ability to be truly vulnerable with our fellow humans is where growth, empowerment and connection come from. It creates trust in a way that many of us can fear—there is no security blanket in being vulnerable. We don't like things to be unpredictable, so we attempt to predict and choreograph them. I love being excited by how scary the unknown is because, in essence, what in-

spires and excites me is unknown and unpredictable. Being unafraid to just experience yourself in the moment, whatever comes out and whatever it looks like, and also be in love with it...that is possibly the deepest trust and most profound love that you could possibly have for yourself.

That love and trust inspires me.

Pia Louise Capaldi is a spiritual mentor, workshop facilitator and sacred dance artist from Portland. Her goal is to help guide others towards a better understanding and awareness of who they are inside and help them to listen to it. Pia offers private intuitive guidance sessions and group workshops both locally and nationally. (pialouiseacapaldi.com)

NOTE ABOUT THIS THING I LOVE

We want to know what makes you feel fantastic, powerful, on top of the world. And we'll highlight you in these pages. Email MWM editor Shannon at sbryan@mainewomenmagazine.com.

AMATEUR HOUR

Hardshore Gin Tasting

Written by Jessie Lacey
Photographed by Tristan Walden

The Sour

(see recipe on page 51)



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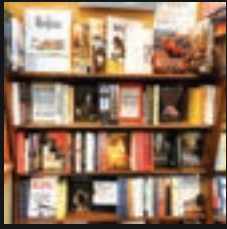
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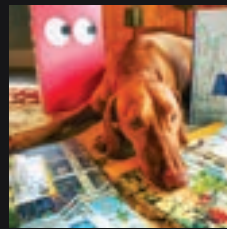
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THE OLD FASHIONED

- 1 3/4 ounce Hardshore Gin
- 1/2 ounce Bénédictine
- 1 ounce fresh-squeezed blood orange juice
- 1 Demerara sugar cube, muddled
- 4 dashes Angostura bitters
- 1/4 ounce water
- Rosemary

Combine ingredients into a shaker, stir and pour into an ice-filled glass.

I had the pleasurable opportunity to have a private tasting (my life sucks) at the Hardshore Distilling Company tasting room, located on Washington Avenue in Portland. It isn't often that a representative from a company actually approaches me (I am incredibly unapproachable), but when they do, I pretty much jump at it. Right now, they make Hardshore Gin. I asked about branching out, but Jordan Milne, owner of Hardshore Distilling, said they really want to focus on the gin and coaxing new tastes and textures and perfecting the technique. I've used their gin in previous drinks—they are clearly doing something right.



FOR MORE
COCKTAILS,
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on Instagram.

Milne partnered with Crystal Pomerleau, bar manager at Central Provisions, to basically give me a really great night out. Pomerleau crafted three amazing cocktails, which I got to drink while Tristan Walden of Hardshore Distilling photographed me drinking them. Fortunately, he photographed the cocktails as well. Cocktails make better models than I do.

Now, for your drinking pleasure, I present to you the recipes of two of those cocktails, so you can make them at home. While technically you can use any gin you like, I cannot vouch for those other brands or what might happen. Be safe and use Hardshore Gin. Maybe go buy several bottles just in case.

Jessie Lacey resides at the heart of downtown Portland with her border collie puppy Josie, making cocktails and trouble.

THE SOUR

1 1/2 ounces Hardshore Gin
1/2 ounce Cocchi Rosa
3/4 ounce hay-smoked pear syrup
(or any pear simple syrup)
3/4 ounce lemon juice
Egg white
Anise

Combine ingredients into a shaker, shake and strain into a glass.

Sauce Gribiche

(see recipe on page 54)



The Eggs Files

*The tasty truth
is out there*

Written & photographed by Candace Karu


I have conflicted feelings about the month of April. Technically, April is sitting solidly in full-on springtime territory. Realistically, if you live in Maine, April can feel like Mother Nature’s favorite “gotcha” month. Just as you’re getting used to lots of early morning sunshine with birds singing and crocuses popping their delicate little heads above ground—BAM!—a spring snow storm reminds you that if you wanted to enjoy a long, lovely spring season, you should probably be living anywhere but here.

Still, it’s fun to embrace the hope of warmth and renewal that springtime in New England provides. And what better representation of revitalization and rebirth than an egg? From ancient cultures to the present, eggs have symbolized birth, growth, creation and transformation.


The humble egg offers sustenance and so much more. It is dense with nutrition, flavor and possibility. There are few foods as versatile as an egg. Hard-boiled it is a meal-on-the-go. Whipped into a epicurean frenzy and you have a sophisticated soufflé.

In my multi-culti family, eggs have become a central player in our annual Eastover celebration, where we combine all kinds of culinary traditions—Easter! Passover! Even the pagan celebration of the spring equinox, Ostara! All traditions are welcome at our table.

Here are two of my favorite egg dishes—perfect for springtime or any time you gather family and friends to celebrate life.



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Sauce Gribiche

I first tasted sauce gribiche in the south of France, where it accompanied a meal of cold roast chicken and asparagus fresh from the garden. Nothing says spring to me quite like this exquisite sauce. It is light, but with a bold and distinctive taste. It transforms and elevates every food it touches.

While there are literally hundreds of recipes for gribiche, I spent years trying to duplicate the taste that first captured my fancy in a tiny restaurant in Èze, France, which will always be my favorite way to enjoy it. But gribiche is a delightful accompaniment to most vegetables and meats. It's also wonderful spread on a hunk of fresh baguette.

INGREDIENTS

4 hard boiled eggs, 3 finely chopped, 1 quartered for garnish
 4–6 cornichons, drained and chopped
 1 tablespoon capers, drained and chopped
 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard (*grainy mustard also works*)
 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil (*the very best you can afford*)
 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
 2 tablespoons chopped parsley (*or other fresh herbs like dill or tarragon*)
 Salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

Whisk chopped cornichons, capers, oil, mustard and vinegar to make a dressing, seasoning to taste with salt and pepper.
 Mix chopped eggs and herbs into the dressing.
 Serve over vegetables like asparagus, roasted potatoes or cauliflower.
 Sauce gribiche is also delicious over cold or grilled meats like chicken, lamb or beef.
 Sauce can be made ahead of time and refrigerated for up to two days.

Dessert Kugel

Kugel is comfort food, pure and simple. It's not quite a pudding, not quite a custard, but definitely a tasty, easy-to-make casserole, loaded with wholesome dairy products.

I was well into adulthood before I tasted this Jewish Shabbat and holiday staple. Since then, I've learned that kugels are like snowflakes; no two are exactly alike. Some are made with wide egg noodles, some with skinny. Use Kosher for Passover noodles (noodles made without leavening) if you make this for Passover. Some kugels are savory, others are perfect for dessert. The sweet version can be made with raisins or with chocolate chips, pumpkin pie spice or pecans and cranberries. There are so many ways to make, and love, a kugel.

This is a traditional preparation, save for the addition of chocolate chips. My late (and former) mother-in-law might not have approved, but my family loves it. If you're a fan of raisins, substitute them for the chocolate chips in this recipe and trade the vanilla for an equal amount of cinnamon.

INGREDIENTS

12-ounce package egg noodles, cooked according to package directions, drained
 8 eggs
 3/4 cup of sugar
 4 tablespoons butter, melted
 1 pint cottage cheese
 1 cup sour cream
 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1/2 to 3/4 cup chocolate chips

Pour mixture into buttered pan.
 Bake for 45–60 minutes, until egg mixture is set and top is golden brown.

KUGEL PRO TIPS

Be sure to butter your pan generously, both bottom and sides. It's no fun wrestling kugel squares out of a poorly greased pan.
 Don't let the top of the kugel get too brown. Burnt egg noodles are no darned fun.
 You can use two cups of sour cream or two cups of plain Greek yogurt—or any combination of the two. Greek yogurt imparts a nice tang to your kugel.

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°.
 Butter sides and bottom of 9 x 13 pan.
 Beat eggs and sugar together. Add cottage cheese, sour cream, melted butter and vanilla.
 Gently fold in noodles and chocolate chips.

Candace Karu makes her living writing about food, fitness and travel. She lives near the ocean in an old farmhouse with two ill-behaved dogs and two hard-working barn cats. Follow her on Instagram: @candacekaru or at candacekaru.com.



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Comfort & color

at Bohemian Rose in Bath

Written & photographed by Katie Bingham-Smith

The first time I walked into Bohemian Rose, located on Front Street in Bath, it was over 16 years ago. Owner Michelle Tibbetts greeted me at the door, and before I knew it I was trying on dresses for my bridal shower—an occasion I'd already had an outfit for. The feeling I got trying on dresses in Bohemian Rose wasn't like anything I've ever felt while shopping before. I wasn't just in some store; there was a strong sense of community, much like the buzz you get when walking into your favorite coffee shop on a busy Friday afternoon.

I left that afternoon with the dress, but I brought something else home with me: an unforgettable experience.

And that's what's been keeping this hip little boutique in business for almost 20 years. Tibbetts caters to teens with her racks of prom dresses, but she also carries something for women in their 20s, 40s and beyond. She's had women who have purchased dresses from her in their younger years come back and shop with their daughters—and they both leave with something they will wear for years. (The dress I purchased from her so long ago? I still have it, and I still wear it. My daughter has even borrowed it a few times.)

Tibbetts hosts festive wine nights with local designers and her shop is a place you must visit, even if you don't buy a thing, because you will leave feeling happier than you did when you walked through the door. Here's a peek at what this eclectic shop has to offer:



LEATHER SNEAKERS

We all love our favorite sneakers, but elevate your favorite casual outfit with a floral leather pair and you can't go wrong. These baby blues are \$98 from Bussola—definitely a must-have for spring.



FLORAL SKIRT

We all need a floral skirt in our wardrobe, and this one, also from Petit Pois, is perfection. It's \$74 and, when paired with a T-shirt and long necklace, creates a very pulled-together look that will leave you feeling as comfortable as your favorite pajamas.

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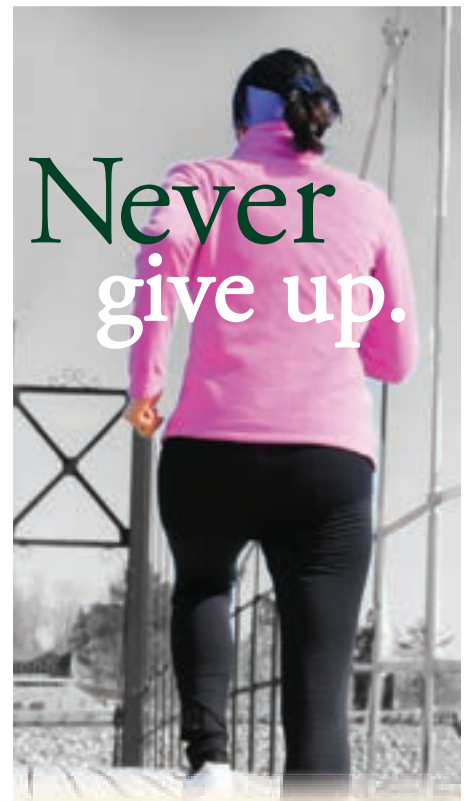
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FLORAL SHIRT

This floral shirt from Petit Pois by Viviana G sells for \$98. It's sexy, fun and is comfortable enough to layer over your yoga clothes, but can be dressed up with a great pair of black pants or pencil skirt. Her designs have been seen on celebrities like Shakira and Gloria Estefan.



BANDI POCKET BELT

This is a hip take on the old fanny pack, but functions the same way. If you want a hands free afternoon of shopping, meandering or strolling about town, this cute belt doubles as a pocket and can carry all your cash, phone, keys and lip balms. These pocket belts retail for around \$30 and come in funky prints and colors.



LEATHER SLIP-ONS

Laceless sneakers are always in fashion, and who doesn't need a leather pair? These cute shoes from Bussola are \$98 and can be worn with your favorite little dress or jeans. They can even give your cozy sweatpants a lift (not to mention the high comfort factor).

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MOMSENSE

Screen Less

*Things to do with your
kids that don't involve a
smart phone, TV or iPad*

Written by Maggie Knowles

If I've seen it once, I've seen it a thousand times: my son's face bent over an iPad or smartphone or computer. If you're a parent, you've likely seen your kid's face staring into a screen more often than you'd care to admit.

Screen-addiction is not worthy of a news flash. But over the past few years, researchers have been able to gather conclusive data on how excessive screen time affects children's mental and emotional health.

A 2018 study conducted on eighth, 10th and 12th graders and published in the journal *Emotion* states, "After rising since the early 1990s, adolescent self-esteem, life satisfaction and happiness plunged after 2012, the year smartphone ownership reached the 50 percent mark in the United States."

It also found that "...adolescents' psychological well-being decreased the more hours a week they spent on screens, including with the Internet, social media, texting, gaming and video chats."

Though the study focuses on teens, I've witnessed attitude changes in my own 9-year-old after too much screen time. Especially when I try to pry the iPad from his strong monster grips.

Don't get me wrong. I love me some phone. Twitter is basically my lullaby every night and my hand makes "holding phone" pose even when I'm not holding it.

Screens are easy babysitters. They make car rides quiet. They make quick reference



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and learning tools. They are cameras. And sometimes, it feels easier to hand my son a flashy device than to—GASP!—deal with him.

I didn't become a parent because it is easy. And I certainly didn't become a parent because I am more interested in what strangers on Facebook have to say versus what's on the mind of my own offspring. Sometimes we just need a reminder of simple non-screen alternatives. I asked Maine moms what non-screen activities their families enjoy and what really engages their kids. Here's what they said:

"We do a scavenger hunt around the house for random stuff," says Kate Litton. "I make lists—words for the 8-year-old, pictures for the 5-year-old—and then they get to stay up 15 minutes later than usual if they find everything."

Allyson Olson says her kids play a game called "Add On." "They each get a notebook and then start telling a story sentence by sentence... 'There was a guy'...and then they each draw it privately in a notebook. Next kid says, 'Who was under a tree,' and they each draw that. They take turns telling the story and adding on, and both keep drawing and then, at the end, it is a reveal to see if their imaginations lined up."

"Dance Party" was a popular answer; few kids can resist loud music and permission to bounce on the couch.

Other responses: Reading aloud, particularly classic books, Maine writers or imagination-sparking reads like Harry Potter. Even better if you get to read in a giant living room fort.

Anything with walkie-talkies; gardening and foraging; cooking; knitting; jewelry making.

Podcasts, audiobooks and Mad Libs are favorite car trip distractions. I mean, any excuse to teach that "fart" is a verb and a noun, right?

For the slime lovers: Totally Gross, a science game that teaches the chemistry of boogers and why dad's breath smells.

And one of the most important activities in our quest for less screen time, is to show your kids their baby pictures. Photo books are treasures you can use to tell them hilarious stories from their toddler years or tell them about their first day of school.

And on the most basic level: Get outside. Let the sun hit you in the face, not the back of your head.

Maggie Knowles writes about all things kid. She and her family live in Yarmouth, where she gardens, keeps bees and refuses to get rid of her stilettos.



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Financial advisor Robin Lin Hodgskin talking with attorneys Sara Moppin and Melissa Murphy. Photo courtesy of Brian Fitzgerald



Women Standing Together

Accelerating women's success as entrepreneurs and leaders

Written by Amy Paradysz

Sometimes there's nothing more helpful than the undivided attention and thoughtful recommendations of a roomful of professional women considering your most pressing business-related concern. Sound like a big ask? Not for the members of Women Standing Together (WST), a Portland-based community that comes together to accelerate women's success as entrepreneurs and leaders.

"I go to other networking events, but sometimes I'd rather put a stick in my eye," admits life coach Marsha Greenberg, a founding member from when WST broke off from the Maine Women's Fund nearly a decade ago. "This is down to business. We're there to focus on the woman who is presenting."

The core of WST's programming is the quarterly Roundtable Luncheon at The Cumberland Club. At each luncheon, one present-

er—usually a member and often an entrepreneur—talks about her organization's challenges and poses a question that, if she had the answer, would dramatically change her business. Each table then has 20 minutes to discuss suggestions before the group as a whole—typically about 35 women—comes back with feedback, ideas and resources for the presenter, which she receives orally and in writing.

Pamela Laskey, owner of Maine Foodie Tours, was invited to present a few years ago and appreciated the feedback so much that she joined immediately.

"I had already expanded my business from Portland to Kennebunk and Bar Harbor and was considering the Midcoast," Laskey says. "Most challenges with entrepreneurs fall into the general category of 'there's so much to do and not enough time to do it all.' I was trying to grow and be



Leadership Coffee Chats are times of candid conversation, moving stories and provocative thinking. Left, Barbara Babkirk, a founding member of Women Standing Together, at a Leadership Coffee Chat. *Photos courtesy of Brian Fitzgerald*

in several places at once. A lot of the advice was really good common sense, but I walked away feeling like I had a network of women who I could call upon. It makes you feel connected. Everybody brings a specialty, credibility and experience to the table. There are no slackers.”

The presenter benefits from working with two mentors before and after the luncheon—first to laser-focus her presentation and question and then to apply some of the recommendations.

The month following each quarterly luncheon, the same presenter opens a Leadership Coffee Chat at Pierce Atwood, giving an update on her business and posing a more introspective topic for the group—for example, how to negotiate your worth, how to get out of your comfort zone or how to brand your business. These are times of candid conversation, moving stories and provocative thinking.

WST also has a couple of mixers each year, sometimes with a speaker,

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MIX & MINGLE

and occasional mini roundtables that are helpful when a member needs feedback on a business question faster than the luncheon schedule may accommodate. In February, WST had its first speed coaching event with 10 entrepreneurs pitching their question to multiple small groups.

“Women know how to form relationships and make things happen together,” says founding member Barbara Babkirk, founder of Heart At Work Associates, a career counseling and placement firm. “It’s a gift we have, and Women Standing Together taps into that. Every meeting I go to is full. Everyone who attends is a busy woman, but the format allows us to get a lot done in a short amount of time. It’s a winning combination for me to be able to get out, contribute something and get back to work.”

Babkirk recently presented her business challenges as she implements a new initiative called The Boomer Institute (theboomerinstitute.com), a website and program that matches experienced Baby Boomers with Maine employers who need to fill a gap with talented people who can hit the ground running.

“People had great ideas, a couple of which I’ve already implemented,” she says. “The process is quick and effective.”

WST members include not only entrepreneurs and business owners but lawyers, business and personal coaches, marketing and development specialists, nonprofit executives, real estate brokers and bankers. An individual membership is \$250 a year and includes all WST events.

“It’s a very nice mix of women,” says WST Chair Mandy Schumaker, owner of coaching firm Higher Performing People. Under her leadership, membership has expanded to 54 women—a list that reads like a who’s who in Southern Maine business.

“I’m never disappointed when I sit at the table and have a conversation with these ladies,” Laskey says. “And, when you’re an entrepreneur, it can get lonely. There’s so much to do that you never stop thinking about it. And it’s our instinct to be supportive. A lot of the women really enjoy helping each other succeed. While it may be women to women, it seems like business leader to business leader.”

One of the things Greenberg appreciates about WST is that there’s age diversity—younger women, middle-aged women and older women. “This organization allows me to be who I am,” Greenberg says. “The fact that I’m 68 and starting a new business doesn’t faze anyone.”

On the other hand, Greenberg says that women of color and immigrants are currently underrepresented, something that WST would like to see change.

“Given what’s going on right now in our country,” Greenberg says, “we need to be coming together and believing in each other.”

Amy Paradysz, a freelance writer and editor from Scarborough, writes about women’s opportunities for mixing and mingling.

WOMEN STANDING TOGETHER

For more information on the organization and how you can get involved, go to womenstandingtogether.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

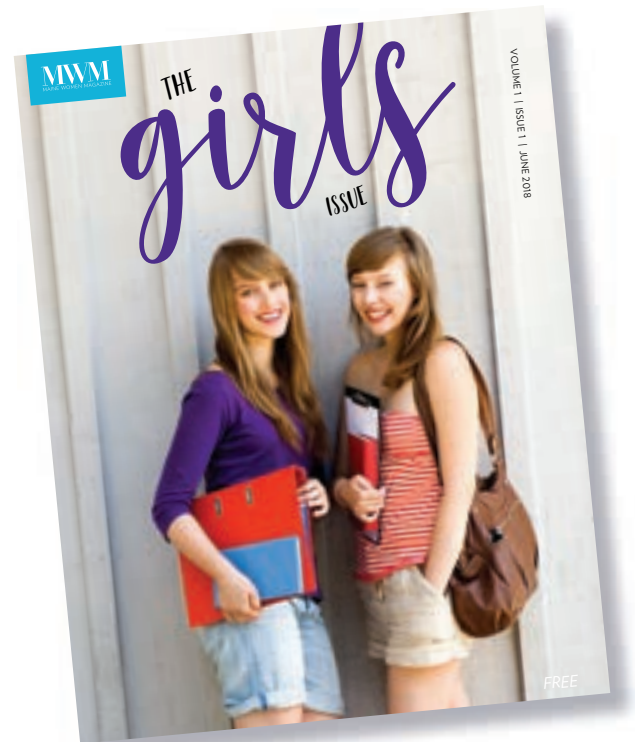
Leadership Coffee Chat

April 25, 7:30–9 p.m., at Pierce Atwood (\$10 for non-members)

Roundtable Luncheon

May 16, noon, Cumberland Club (\$35 for non-members)

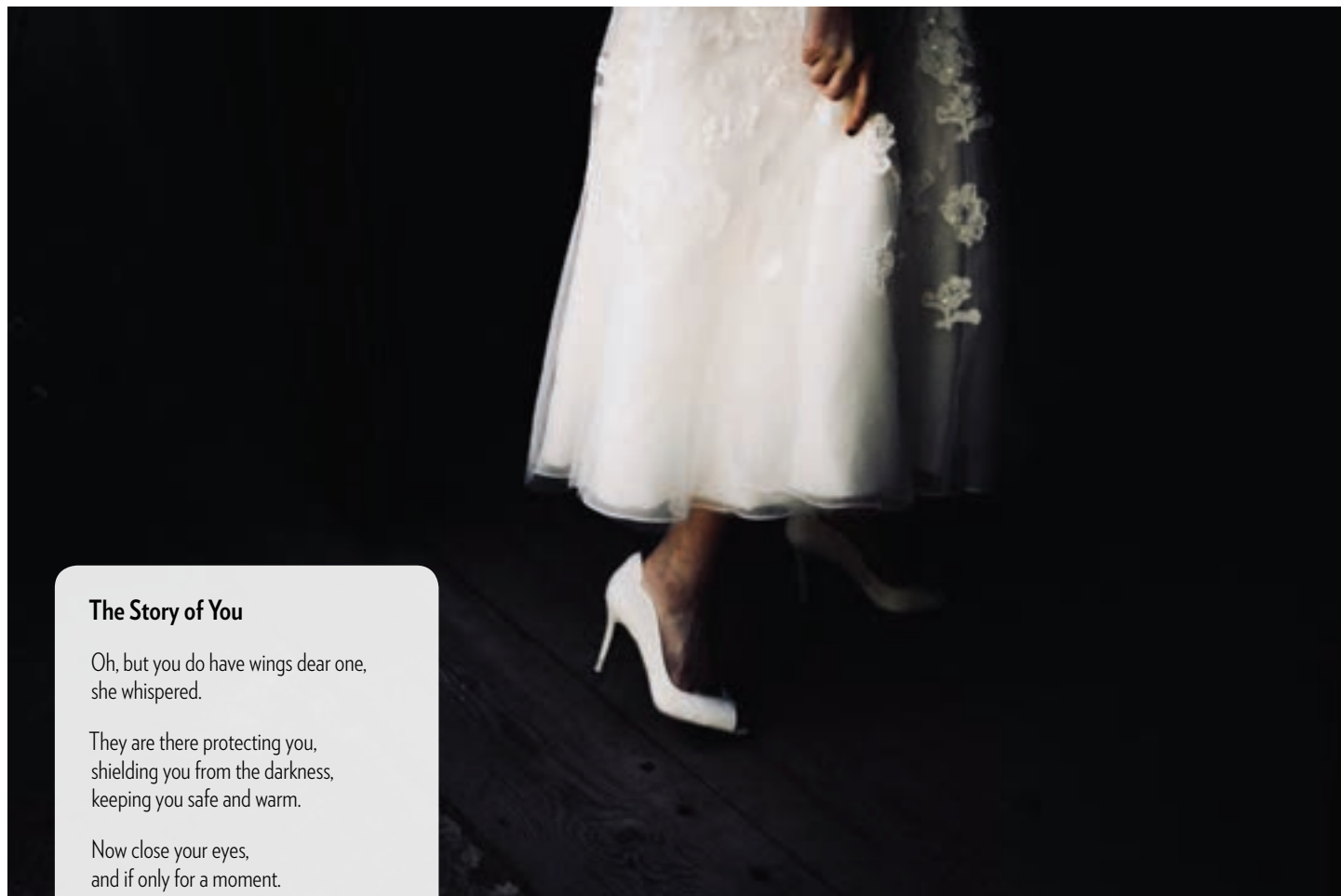
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A special publication all about Maine girls, brought to you by the team behind Maine Women Magazine. We know that Maine girls are the future, and this unique and upbeat magazine will showcase our girls and all the inventive, creative, impactful and fun things they do. From cover to cover, it will be for and about Maine girls—what matters to them and what inspires them. We’re working behind-the-scenes with local girls’ clubs, organizations and schools to present the same relatable and empowering stories and features that we bring you in Maine Women Magazine, with Maine girls.

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Wordsmiths and photographers, send us your goods! MWM is soliciting local poets and picture-takers for inclusion in Verse and View, our reader-submitted, word-and-image series. Send your entries to: verse_view@mainewomenmagazine.com.



The Story of You

Oh, but you do have wings dear one,
she whispered.

They are there protecting you,
shielding you from the darkness,
keeping you safe and warm.

Now close your eyes,
and if only for a moment.

Can you feel the weight of your wings,
gently pressing against your back?

Can you hear the familiar sounds they make?

There is no reason to rush,
you will find them and you will learn to fly.

You will fly to your place little bird,
over that rainbow.

A place where the light, shines on your soul.

A place where you find comfort in your sorrow,
a pathway to peace.

A place of knowing in your heart,
that grief is now part of your story.

A story that is uniquely yours.

A story that began with your mother,
the story of you.

Photo by Celia Durgin

By Annie Gregori, Portland



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