Shelter in Place Attractions: February 21 through March 9 — What Will Light Your Home Fires

February 21, 2021 | Leave a Comment

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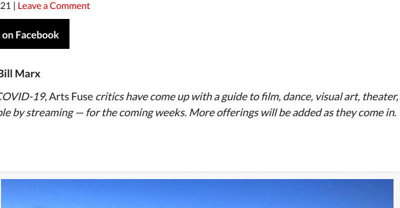
Compiled by Bill Marx

In the age of COVID-19, Arts Fuse *critics have come up with a guide to film, dance, visual art, theater, and music — mostly available by streaming — for the coming weeks. More offerings will be added as they come in.*

Film

The Docyard



A scene from *Downstream to Kinshasa.*

Downstream to Kinshasa
February 26 – March 4

The foremost verité chronicler of the modern Congo, Dieudo Hamadi follows a group of survivors of Kisangani 's Six-Day War, which in 2000 killed and wounded thousands of civilians. Thousands of civilians were killed and wounded. After decades of agitating for promised monetary reparations that never come, a group of survivors — many suffering from limb loss — decide to go to the capitol and demand restitution in person. Between scenes of the barge trip downstream to Kinshasa, Hamadi presents black-box monologues, plays-within-the film, that examine what an acknowledgment of brutality and and true healing might look like. The result is an uncompromising but generous vision of what the survivors are confronting. Link for Tickets

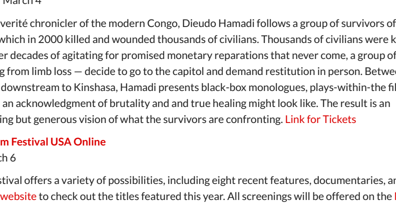
The Italian Film Festival USA Online
Through March 6

The virtual festival offers a variety of possibilities, including eight recent features, documentaries, and short films.Visit the website to check out the titles featured this year. All screenings will be offered on the MyMovies platform. Films are free to view. Donations of any amount are certainly welcome. Link to the films.

COOLIDGE CORNER VIRTUAL

Test Pattern

Shatara Michelle Ford wrote produced, and directed this debut feature about the aftermath of a rape. The cast of Brittany S. Hall and Will Brill as her boyfriend feels wonderfully natural, though the tone of the film is emotionally ambiguous. Both are easy, charming performers who, without revealing any of the specifics, keeps viewers on edge from the very start. A brave and important film. Livestreamed Q&A with director Shatara Michelle Ford and stars Brittany S. Hall & Will Brill — moderated by Ira Madison III — on February 22 at 8 p.m. EST. Link for Q&A
Arts Fuse review



A scene from *Days of the Bagnold Summer*

Days of the Bagnold Summer

Days of the Bagnold Summer, adapted from Joff Winterhart's graphic novel, revolves around the British Bagnold family. Sue (Monica Dolan) is a shy, middle-aged single mother; her son, Daniel (Earl Cave), is a teen of zombie-like pallor and limp hair. Daniel has a trip to Florida looming; there, he plans to spend time with his father, who has ditched him and mom. After the trip is canceled, the chip on Daniel's shoulder triples in size. "Amiably anecdotal, the movie gets wry results from Dolan and other players, including Rob Brydon as a would-be ladies man and Tamsin Greig as a "hipper" mom than Sue." (*NY Times*) Music from Bell and Sebastian.

BRATTLE THEATER

Truth To Power

With exclusive interviews, adventures, and original footage personally filmed by Serj Tankian, the Grammy-winning lead singer of System Of A Down, the film gives audiences backstage access to an international rock star whose faith in music not only revolutionized heavy metal, but world events as well. Throughout his life, Tankian has pursued social justice, harnessing the power of his songs and celebrity to fight for political change. In his music he is as likely to take on American corporate greed as lambast the corrupt regime of his homeland, Turkey. His decades-long campaign for formal U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide was finally approved by Congress in 2019.

FUSE REVIEWS — LOCAL THEATERS

Psycho Goreman
Brattleite

Arts Fuse critic Nicole Veneto writes "What elevates *Psycho Goreman* beyond being merely another kitschy send-up to VHS-era nostalgia is the sheer level of craft on display: stop-motion claymation, full-body prosthetics and creature suits, giant animatronic puppets, buckets and buckets of stage blood … practically done head explosions or the presence of a giant animatronic brain with fully articulated tentacles." (Fuse review)

A Glitch in the Matrix
Coolidge Virtual

From the director of *Room 237*, this is a lively (yet superficial) exploration of the theory that our reality is actually a computer simulation. The documentary's jumping off point is a lecture delivered by the writer Philip K. Dick in France in the '70s. Dick was a genuine artist, and also lived with mental illness; his pained "revelations" about his perceptions of the world around him are moving to hear. (Fuse review)

Fuse Critics' Recommendations

Supernova (VOD)

Colin Firth and Stanley Tucci star in a critically praised modern love story. Sam and Tusker, partners for 20 years, are traveling across England in their old RV, visiting friends, family members, and places from their past. Tusker was diagnosed with early-onset dementia two years before, so their time together has become the most important thing they share. *Arts Fuse* review

The Village Cheerleaders in a scene from Lance Oppenheim's documentary *Some Kind of Heaven*. Photo: David Bolen.

Some Kind of Heaven
January 15 on Video-On-Demand and TBA at Theaters.

A documentary that looks at four residents of the palm tree-lined fantasyland of America's largest retirement community, The Villages, Florida. As they say "You come here to live, you don't come here to pass away." You may be appalled at the idea or you may find the place inspiring and endearing, but you won't be bored. Our critic had never heard of this Disney-style elder oasis — this documentary was a real eye opener. *Arts Fuse* review

Identifying Features
Brattle Theater

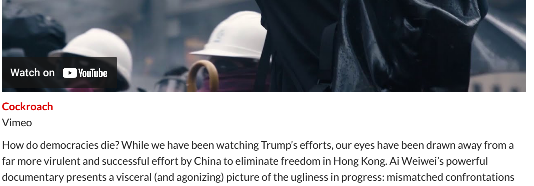
First time director Fernanda Valadez takes on the story of a mother who loses contact with her son after he leaves Guanajuato, crossing over the border into the US in search of work. Desperate to find out what happened to him — to know whether or not he's even alive — she goes on a harrowing journey to discover his whereabouts. *Arts Fuse* review

The White Tiger (Netflix)

Based on Aravind Adiga's 2008 novel and directed by Ramin Bahrani, this film is a wicked and entertaining satire on the class conflicts roiling Indian society, a neo-Marxist story of masters and servants, money and corruption. It is a Horatio Alger tale with a devilish twist. Adiga and Bahrani were friends at Columbia University, and their relationship is no doubt key to how successfully the movie captures the novel's dark comic tone. *Arts Fuse* review

Censor

Enjoying its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival this month, Prano Bailey-Bond's *Censor* is just the sort of film that both filmmakers and critics love to discuss: it's a movie about making and watching movies, giving us all an opportunity to reflect on this magical — and problematic — art form. (Or is it *art* at all — maybe it's just a business…?). It's also cast in a popular, but misunderstood, genre — horror, and of the particularly questionable, gory, and outright misogynistic "slasher" variety. But in this case the "psychological" qualifier should be included as well. To top it off, it's the debut film from an emerging director who brings with her a deep knowledge of and appreciation for the history of film and some strong directorial chops put to excellent use. These elements are stirred together in a tight 84-minute package to explore thought-provoking questions about the strange relationships between films, society, fantasy, and reality — and individual identity — in an increasingly mediated and violent world.*Arts Fuse* review

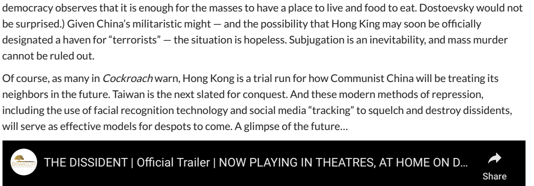


Cockroach
Vimeo

How do democracies die? While we have been watching Trump's efforts, our eyes have been drawn away from a far more virulent and successful effort by China to eliminate freedom in Hong Kong. Ai Weiwei's powerful documentary presents a visceral (and agonizing) picture of the ugliness in progress: mismatched confrontations between police and rioters are growing increasingly lethal as the city's independence is slowly snuffed out. The authorities accept beatings and murders as legitimate exercises in law and order. Young people are forced to choose between quietly accepting authoritarianism (living a life that is not worth living) or risk speaking up, acting out, and being tossed into prison. It should not be surprising that their responses range from the courageous and the pragmatic to the despairing and self-destructive.

Not much analysis or historical background is provided. Instead, we are given gut-wrenching, up-close footage of what is going on: a "pop-up" mass demonstration that demolishes a shopping mall, students tossing molotov cocktails at tanks, bludgeonings in the streets, suicides, systematic police intimidation (to keep the populace in line), and calculated brutality on both sides. Weiwei's point is clear: a free society is being murdered as the world (including many of Hong Kong's workers) stands by in resolute indifference. (One flummoxed advocate for democracy observes that it is enough for the masses to have a place to live and food to eat. Dostoevsky would not be surprised.) Given China's militaristic might — and the possibility that Hong King may soon be officially designated a haven for "terrorists" — the situation is hopeless. Subjugation is an inevitability, and mass murder cannot be ruled out.

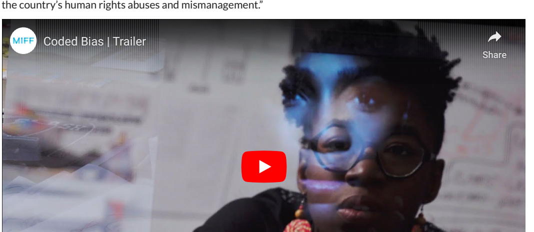
Of course, as many in *Cockroach* warn, Hong Kong is a trial run for how Communist China will be treating its neighbors in the future. Taiwan is the next slated for conquest. And these modern methods of repression, including the use of facial recognition technology and social media "tracking" to squelch and destroy dissidents, will serve as effective models for despots to come. A glimpse of the future…



The Dissident, directed Bryan Fogel. On-demand.

A lacerating expose of the whys and hows behind the 2018 gruesome murder of *Washington Post* journalist and activist Jamal Khashoggi by the forces of authoritarian repression in Saudi Arabia. Director Fogel says he picked the subject because he "was looking for a story regarding human rights, regarding freedom of speech, freedom of press, journalism. I also wanted a story that had real world implications that could create real world change through social action or political action." He has succeeded splendidly, though he overestimated his ability to initiate discussion and action. The major streaming companies, fearful the documentary would impact on their bottom lines in the Middle East, turned their backs on distributing *The Dissident.* Do you need any more evidence of the film's genuine sting — and its importance?

According to *Variety*, why did Netflix and other major companies ignore the film? "Fogel thinks the subject matter was too explosive for bigger companies, which have financial ties to Saudi Arabia or are looking to access the country's massive population of well-to-do consumers. Using interviews with Khashoggi's fiancee Hatice Cengiz, as well as friends and fellow activists, Fogel creates a damning portrait of Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's apparent involvement in brutally silencing the writer and thinker and the country's crackdown on free speech. Thanks to previously unreleased audio recordings, *The Dissident* draws a direct line between Khashoggi's assassination at the Saudi embassy in Turkey and the Saudi government's anger over his outspoken criticism of the country's human rights abuses and mismanagement."



Coded Bias, directed by Shalini Kantayya.
February 24 -25
Presented by Bright Lights film Series, Arts Emerson

"Modern society sits at the intersection of two crucial questions: What does it mean when artificial intelligence increasingly governs our liberties? And what are the consequences for the people AI is biased against? When MIT Media Lab researcher Joy Buolamwini discovers that most facial-recognition software does not accurately identify darker-skinned faces and the faces of women, she delves into an investigation of widespread bias in algorithms. As it turns out, artificial intelligence is not neutral, and women are leading the charge to ensure our civil rights are protected."

On February 25 at 8 p.m. EST, join a live 45-minute moderated discussion with director Kantayya. Conversations will stream within the film viewing platform. Audience members are also welcome to join directly on Zoom to participate and submit questions.

— Bill Marx

ONLINE PLATFORMS

VIDEO FILM ESSAYS

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BLACK CINEMA

— Tim Jackson

Jazz

Joe Chambers Virtual CD Release Celebration via Zoom and Facebook Live
February 25 at 7 p.m. EST

It is not clear what this event will be: An interview with Joe Chambers? Some live performances? The excitement is warranted. This venerated multi-instrumentalist and composer is making a notable Blue Note Records return with his new album, *Samba de Maracatu.* He is a significant figure in the label's history. The album's Brazilian flavored title track was composed by Chambers and features him performing drums, vibraphone, and percussion with Brad Merritt on keyboards and Steve Haines on bass. The album is a nine-song set of original compositions, standards, and pieces by Wayne Shorter, Bobby Hutcherson, and Horace Silver.

Clear Audience Live-Stream @ The Parlour Providence, RI. On Facebook Live, March 6 with a 6 p.m. start time.

A Boston favorite celebrates the release of their new record, *Front Row Seat.*

— Bill Marx

Michael Mayo / Ike Sturm, livestream, Soapbox Gallery, Brooklyn, February 23, 8-9 p.m.

The stunning vocalist/composer Michael Mayo joins forces with bassist/composer/bandleader Ike Sturm for a show from Brooklyn's Soapbox Gallery. Mayo, a New England Conservatory grad, went on to study at the Thelonious Monk Institute with the likes of Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock and Luciana Souza. A scat master on jazz standards, he also shines on R&B-inflected originals. His pairing with Sturm, music director for the Jazz Ministry at Saint Peter's Church in Manhattan and a composer of jazz sacred works, is an intriguing one.

Hélio Alves / Paul Socolow–Projeto do Momento, livestream, Soapbox Gallery, Brooklyn, February 25, 8-9 p.m., and available for 3 or 4 days afterward.

On February 25, two excellent musicians, Brazilian-New York pianist Hélio Alves and bassist Paul Socolow (both of whom have some Boston in their backgrounds) will bring their tasty take on Brazilian jazz to the digital stage at the Soapbox Gallery. The two were part of one of the last pre-pandemic shows I saw in late February 2020, when they came to Scullers with Brazilian singer/songwriter/guitarist Vinicius Cantuária (my review). In their new project, they're aiming to reflect "this moment of the mutual respect between the two musicians, with the modest intent of continuing to explore the common musical ground between a 'Paulista' and a New York 'Gringo'… and hopefully putting a bit of joy out onto the airwaves." For this performance they will be joined by drummer Dennis Bulhões. The Soapbox Gallery streams are free, but donations for the musicians are strongly encouraged.

Allan Harris – CD Release for *Kate's Soulfood*, livestream, February 27, 2 p.m., and on-demand for 24 hrs. after.

Singer/guitarist/composer Allan Harris celebrates his latest release with a livestream concert via his website. *Kate's Soulfood* and its title tune pay homage to his aunt's Harlem restaurant, located down the street from the Apollo Theater. A magnet for musicians, the spot formed a big part of his New York childhood (see my 2017 preview article). Joining him in this program of soulful originals will be band members Arcoiris Sandoval, piano; Marty Kenney, bass; Shirazette Tinnin, drums; Gregoire Maret, harmonica; and Joseff McKenneth and Carolyn Leonart, background vocals.

New Bedford Winter JazzFest, online, March 5, 7:30 p.m.; March 6, 7:30 p.m.; March 7, 11 a.m.

This three-day event presents three acts from Massachusetts' South Coast, Boston, and New York. On March 5, South Coast native and alto saxophonist Marcus Monteiro leads his quartet, featuring guitarist Chris Bryant, bassist Dominic Davis, and drummer Erick B. Cifuentes. March 6 gathers the Boston-area jazz power trio of bassist Dave Zinno, tenor master George Garzone, and drummer Rafael Barata, who has worked with just about every great act in his native Brazil. Their set will take listeners on a journey through jazz improvisation of the highest order. And filling the Sunday brunch slot on March 7 will be Svetlana & The New York Collective, led by vocalist Svetlana Shmulyian, who calls herself "Russian-by-birth/American-by-music." Along with Willerm Delisfort, piano; Curtis Nowosad, drums; Adi Meyerson, bass; Charlie Caranicas, trumpet; and Christopher McBride, sax, Svetlana will feature recent material, as well as songs from her captivating 2019 release, *Night at the Movies.* That album of songs from films stole my heart with her gorgeous version of the bossa nova "Moonlight," a John Williams composition sung by Sting in the 1995 version of *Sabrina.* Here's hoping she does that one at the JazzFest.

— Evelyn Rosenthal

Classical Music

Conductor Andris Nelsons, pianist Mitsuko Uchida and the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Symphony Hall in 2019. Photo: Winslow Townson.

The Spirit of Beethoven
Presented by the Boston Symphony Orchestra
February 24, 12 p.m.

Andris Nelsons leads Beethoven's Fifth and Seventh Symphonies, as well as Carlos Simon's *Fate Now Conquers*, while violinist Haldan Martinson and pianist Max Levinson present Arnold Schoenberg's *Phantasy* for violin and piano.

Emerson String Quartet
Presented by Celebrity Series
February 26 at 7:30 p.m.
Streaming online

The Emersons return to the Celebrity Series with a pair of 20th-century masterpieces – George Walker's *Lyric for Strings* and Dmitri Shostakovich's String Quartet no. 14 – framing Mozart's D-major String Quartet (K. 575).

— Jonathan Blumhofer

Forbidden Fruit
Presented by Ballets Russes Arts Initiative and The Ancient and Honorable.
Streaming Premiere: February 28 at 6 p.m. (followed by 7 p.m. Zoom with performers) Available On-Demand: February 28 through March 7. Tickets and details

"Forbidden fruit tastes the sweetest is an adage that refers in part to love and in part to the attractions of things that are proscribed. This program explores both aspects. Cellist Mickey Katz (who plays with the Boston Symphony Orchestra) and pianist Jane Hua interpret music by Franck, Rachmaninoff, Ligeti, Weinberg, and Shostakovich at Faneuil Hall."

— Bill Marx

Theater

A screen shot from *Solitaire Suite.* Photo: HTC.

Solitaire Suite by Trent England. Directed by Daniel Bourque. Livestreamed by Hub Theatre Company of Boston through February 27.

The world premiere of a "*Twilight Zone* meet Zoom" thriller." Driving through the suburban countryside in the middle of the night, Celeste, Pete, and their son Tiger encounter a mysterious object on the side of the road that will transform their lives forever. Told from the point of view of Celeste, the events of the evening take on an otherworldly implication as the night grows increasingly eerie and unsettling — until it is too late. Fuse review.

The Pink Unicorn by Elise Forier Edie. Directed by M. Bevin O'Gara. Streamed 24/7 by SpeakEasy Stage Company from March 5 through 18.

"A solo piece (featuring Stacy Fischer) that traces one mother's journey from apprehension to tolerance to acceptance. Trisha Lee considers herself to be open-minded and accepting, that is, at least compared to the other mothers in her conservative hometown of Sparkton, Texas. But Trisha's values are called into question when her teenager Jo comes out as genderqueer and attempts to start a Gay Straight Alliance. Faced with opposition from her family, church, and the local high school, Trisha embarks on a journey to meet her child with love."

CONTENT ADVISORY: *The Pink Unicorn* follows one mother's journey to accept her genderqueer teenager. In telling this story, this play contains multiple instances of transphobia and misgendering as well as ableist and fatphobic language

The Legion Tapes, a new sci-fi theater podcast written by Erin Lerch and directed by Josh Glenn-Kayden.

Makes sense to me, given that our own meltdown has become routine. We need to spice it up with "radio broadcasts from an alien apocalypse." The podcast features "a cast of 14 actors with Boston ties." The project launched last week and just dropped episodes 4-6. The dystopian setup: "Selections from an archive chronicling the world after the end. The alien Legion takes over worlds and absorbs the sentients of those worlds. They've assimilated eleven species so far, and humanity is next on their list. But even after the nations of the world fall, and even after being reduced to communicating solely by radio, humanity's fighting back. "

The Boston Project Podcast

"The Boston Project is SpeakEasy Stage Company's new works initiative, which supports the creation of new plays set in the Greater Boston area. In an effort to reach a wider audience and engage with new work even while in quarantine, the company has launched a new wing of this program – the Boston Project Podcast!" A new episode each Friday. We are up to episode 4 (I believe) of MJ Halberstadt's *The Usual Unusual,* directed by Megan Sandberg-Zakian.

The action centers on a "scrappy and quaint bookstore where Boston's LGBTQ+ community has gathered to shop, organize, and flirt since the '70s. When the store's charismatic founder Penn announces his retirement, neurotic staff-member Charlie persuades him to pass leadership on, rather than close the store. The staff's efforts to unite a fractured community under one banner – or simply coordinate a weekly reading night — stoke generational disputes about identity, community, and trauma, and lead to fraught and hilarious results."

Dream Boston Plays, a new series of short audio plays produced by the Huntington Theatre Company: *By the Rude Bridge* by Melinda Lopez; *Overture* by Kate Snodgrass; *McKim* by Brenda Withers; and *The 54th in '22* by Kirsten Greenidge. Seven additional titles have been added to this series of short audio plays, entitled ***Dream Boston.*** Four plays were posted in July; the next seven are now being released. They are available on the Huntington's website, as well as on Apple, Spotify, Google Podcasts, and Stitcher.

"Conceived and commissioned by the Huntington artistic department, the company asked Huntington Playwriting Fellow alumni Kirsten Greenidge, Kate Snodgrass, and Brenda Withers, and Huntington Artist-in-Residence Melinda Lopez, to imagine their favorite locations, landmarks, and friends in a future Boston, when people can once again meet and thrive in the city – a vision of a future Boston that is somewhere between dream and reality. *Arts Fuse* review of Episodes 1 through 5.

"This next set of 7 plays includes works by local artists John Oluwole ADEkoje, Miranda ADEkoje, J. Sebastián Alberdi, Rosanna Yamagiwa Alfaro, Elle Borders, Patrick Gabridge, and John Kuntz. Each play is set at a specific local landmark with 1-3 characters, and is about 6 minutes in length. The local landmarks that serve as settings for this round of audio plays include Franklin Park, Harvard's Memorial Church, the Harvard Art Museums, the Old State House, the Fenway nightclub Machine, Harrison Avenue, and Malcolm X Boulevard."

Extra! Extra! A glimpse of the Royal Court Theatre's *Living Newspaper.*

Living Newspaper Online produced by the Royal Court Theatre, Edition One

I suggested this as a project for Boston theaters in a column two months ago. Alas, none of our companies dared take their cue from America's Federal Theater Project. But the Royal Court Theatre in London is taking up the challenge. Its online "living newspaper" — presented via weekly installments — will be "urgent, responsive and fast – with writers filing their pieces by Tuesday and actors performing from Thursday, script-in-hand, hot off the press."

Williamstown Theatre Festival on Audible

"In an innovative collaboration devised to meet the challenges posed by the global health pandemic, the 2020 season will be the first-ever complete theatre season released by Audible, the leading creator and provider of premium audio storytelling. The WTF Season on Audible is being produced in an audio-only format safe to elevate, entertain, and transform audiences from the comfort of their homes." Here is what is currently up and ready for earplay.

A Streetcar Named Desire: "Following his 2019 production of *A Raisin in the Sun*, Tony Award nominee Robert O'Hara returns to WTF to direct this Tennessee Williams masterpiece. With Emmy, Grammy, and six-time Tony Award winner Audra McDonald as Blanche DuBois alongside Carla Gugino as Stella. Haunted by her past, Blanche seeks refuge with Stella and Stanley (Ariel Shafir) in New Orleans, where she wrestles with the nature of her sister's husband, her sister's denial, and her own unraveling mind."

Photograph 51: "In 1951, chemist Rosalind Franklin (Anna Chlumsky) works relentlessly in her King's College London lab, closing in on a major discovery that could unlock the mysteries of the DNA molecule. Undermined by her colleague Maurice Wilkins (Omar Metwally), she struggles to compete with rival team Watson and Crick (David Corenswet and Aasif Mandvi) as pressure intensifies to produce results. The script is by Anna Ziegler; Susan Stroman directs."

Animals by Stacy Osei-Kuffour. Directed by Obie Award winner Whitney White, premiering on December 17 at 3 a.m. ET: "Lydia (Aja Naomi King) and Henry (Jason Butler Harner)'s dinner guests (Madeline Brewer and William Jackson Harper) are about to arrive when Henry's spontaneous marriage proposal threatens to burn the evening to a crisp. Wine bottles and years of unspoken tensions are uncorked, and, before the evening is through, Lydia must confront her long-held fears and feelings if she's going to commit to a future with Henry. World premiere of a comedy that marches into the muddy intersection of romantic entanglement, identity, pride, and survival."

Chonburi International Hotel & Butterfly Club by Shakina Nayfack. Directed by Laura Savia. The world premiere of a play that centers on a vibrant, international group of transgender women who band together at a hotel in Thailand to confront the challenges and joys of gender confirmation surgery. Despite the group's warm welcome, Kina (Nayfack) prepares for her life-altering operation all alone. But a caring nurse (Ivory Aquino), a wise couple (Kate Bornstein and Annie Golden), and a karaoke-loving bellhop (Telly Leung) may be exactly who she needs to ignite her truest sense of self."

Etta and Ella on the Upper West Side by Adrienne Kennedy. Directed by Timothy Douglas, Staged by Round House Theatre. The video will stream on demand and you may watch it (and all other festival plays) at your convenience at any time through February 28.

A world premiere of a play by the venerable dramatist, the final production of Round House Theatre's virtual play festival *The Work of Adrienne Kennedy: Inspiration & Influence.*

"Etta and Ella Harrison are astoundingly gifted scholars, deeply connected sisters, and dangerously bitter rivals. They frequently write and teach together, and even their separate works are unnervingly similar, often sourced from their own family history. Now, after a lifetime of competition, they are on the verge of destroying each other. Adrienne Kennedy intricately blends monologue, dialogue, voiceover, and prose to create an experience that is part experimental play, part narrative thriller, and wholly unforgettable. Set against the gothic backdrop of their academic New York world, *Etta and Ella on the Upper West Side* is a taut, kaleidoscopic tale of ambition and madness—brought to theatrical life for the very first time."

The Cherry Orchard: A New Media Workshop Arlekin Players Theatre and Arlekin's Zero Gravity (zero-G) Lab present a livestreamed special event produced by the Baryshnikov Arts Center & Cherry Orchard Festival on February 26 at 8 p.m.. Free — Registration required.

"Adapted from Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* and drawing from recordings of the playwright's letters and dreams, this experiment fuses film and video game technology to create an interactive online theater experience. Viewers are invited to access Chekhov's desktop computer, where six of his classic characters are found living in a virtual space searching for happiness."

"Part of the Baryshnikov Arts Center's 2021 season, this presentation is based in a new medium "that allows viewers to interact with the performers, in this case an ensemble of celebrated stage, television, and film actors led by Tony Award nominee Jessica Hecht and special guest Mikhail Baryshnikov."

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Agreed!

A scene from GROUP DOT BR's *Inside the Wild Heart*

Inside the Wild Heart, adapted for the stage by Andressa Furletti and Debora Balardim. Directed by Linda Wise. A streamed film version of a production staged by GROUP DOT BR, New York's only Brazilian theatre company. Starting from February 12, the show will be available on Wednesdays and Fridays at 7 p.m. EST and on Sundays at 5 p.m. through March 28. Tickets: $15-$50.

"An immersive theatrical experience based on the works of Clarice Lispector. Brazil's most acclaimed female writer, presented in New York in 2016 and 2018. The show transported the audience directly inside Lispector's heart creating an experience that encourages them to engage with literature on a sensory level. Now the 2018's filmed performance is available for viewers around the world through the gather.town platform, allowing the audience to navigate through the three rooms of Ach Studio, a preserved 19th century space in the heart of Gramercy Park. Similar to the live show, the audience will be able to access 11 different journeys and choose when to follow, where to go, and how much time to spend in each room. In doubt of what to do just ask "If you were you, how would you be and what would you do?"

"The show integrates visual arts, film, music & performance art, which embodies the writer's deepest feelings, serving as an entry point to Clarice's incredible work, still mostly unknown in the US. The performers embody the writer's biggest themes such as identity, solitude, madness, faith, time, violence, maternity, childhood and freedom accompanied by the awarded violinist Mario Forte."

A glimpse of A Brimful of Asha, Photo: Why Not Theatre.

A Brimful of Asha, written and performed by Ravi Jain and Asha Jain. Directed by Ravi Jain. The Why Not Theatre staging streamed by Arts Emerson, on-demand from March 9 at 7:30 p.m. EST through March 22 at 10 p.m. EST.

"Real life mother and son, Asha and Ravi Jain, share the stage and tell the true (and very Canadian) story of generational and cultural clash. When Ravi takes a trip to India, his parents decide it's the perfect time to introduce him to potential brides. Ravi isn't sold on the idea of getting married—at least not yet—but Asha panics that time is running out."

– Bill Hare

Walking Plays, an audio play series, Lyric Stage Company of Boston

According to Lyric Stage's artistic director Courtney O'Connor, this new audio series was created as a way to bring "a form of live theatre" to a public that hasn't been able to experience it since theaters closed because of the Covid pandemic.

"The Walking Plays provide a way for audiences to explore both the hidden gems and iconic landmarks of Boston and the joy of theatre beyond the Lyric Stage doors. This series will commission six 10- to 15-minute plays exploring private moments we experience in public. Listeners will be able to see maps provided by the Lyric Stage to walk along with the plays or to listen to them from their own homes. Together, the plays will form a loop beginning in Copley Square, winding through the city, and ending at a special location in the Back Bay. The plays will be available for free on the Lyric Stage's website.

"The Walking Plays will include 'Easter eggs' throughout the walk, which will add another level of enjoyment for listeners. Executive director Matt Chapman said, 'It's a great chance for people who are unfamiliar with the city of Boston to learn more about what makes it so special. Or a chance to fall in love with the city all over again.'

"The series premiered with the release of *On Paying Attention* by David Valdes, a Cuban-American playwright interested in stories of personal identity, especially global majority and LGBTQ experiences. He teaches playwriting at Boston Conservatory at Berklee, as well as English at Tufts University.

Next to premiere is *Monster in the Sky* by Ginger Lazarus. "Lazarus is an award-winning playwright and screenwriter whose work has been featured in her native Boston area, around the country, and across the pond in London. She holds a master's degree in playwriting from Boston University and currently teaches at the University of Massachusetts Boston."

"The remaining four plays will be released in two batches later in the winter and spring."

– Evelyn Rosenthal

Dance

Postcards From the Front
Now through March 19, every Tuesday & Thursday at noon.
Online viewing

Public Displays of Motion (PDM) has created a series of deeply moving tributes in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Self-described as "an exercise in storytelling, memory-keeping, embodied empathy and understanding," PDM's *Postcards From the Front* features collaborations between movement artists and community members working on the frontline of the current health crisis. Videos are released every Tuesday and Friday at noon on PDM's Facebook and Instagram platforms, and the complete collection will be viewable on PDM's website in late March.

Celebrating Jorma Elo
February 25-March 7
Online viewing

Boston Ballet's first-ever all-virtual season kicks off 2021 with a production dedicated to the choreographic splendor of Jorma Elo. This engaging evening of works spans Elo's 15 years as Boston Ballet's Resident Choreographer, including a restaging of his popular work "Plan to B" and "Story of a Memory", a new piece created for two dancers. Viewers can take a peek behind the scenes here in advance of the concert.

Emergence
February 27 at 7:30 p.m.
Live-streamed event

Join the Orchestra on the Hill for a special online performance highlighting the creative process. *Emergence* brings together musicians, composers, dancers, and visual artists to explore global themes through a series of freshly created works. In addition to new music by Thomas Palacea, Chris Florio, and G. Paul Naeger, dance viewers will enjoy new choreography from Janet Craft's Ipswich Moving Company and Annalisa Ledson.

Island Moving Company presents new work live-streamed from Rhode Island.

Together in this Dream
March 5 & 6 at 7:30 p.m.
Live-streamed event

Island Moving Company (IMC) presents an evening of contemporary ballet live-streamed from Newport Congregational Church in Rhode Island. Titled *Together in this Dream - Dancing Through the Digital Divide*, the production features the world premieres of Associate Artistic Director Danielle Gerard's "Skeleton Crew" and guest choreographer Mark Haraoka's "Steady Grip." Focusing on shared human experience, the performance additionally includes Gerard's "Venus and a Crescent Moon," set on IMC for the first time, and re-staged works from Colin Conor, Rodney Rivera, and Miki Ohkawa.

– Merli V. Guerra

Roots and World Music

Folk Unlocked
Through February 26

Even ardent roots music fans may be unfamiliar with the Folk Alliance International unless they actively work in the music business. The industry convention usually connects artists with the likes of radio hosts, venue programmers, and record labels. The upshot to this year's virtual conference (Folk Unlocked) is that anyone can check out the 800+ hours of showcases (one of which will be offered in conjunction with Club Passim). A modest suggested donation is requested for the Village Fund, which will benefit the many musicians and music workers who have lost income over the past year.

– Noah Schaffer

Visual Art

"Vision Maker #7 (1932), woodcut, crown wove paper, Mount Ararat Publishers, Photo: MFA Facebook.

The Museum of Fine Arts is still open (when last we checked) but it is also hosting a rich selection of on-line exhibitions that can be viewed regardless of public health precautions. One of the most interesting of these is "Radical Geometries: Bauhaus Works on Paper from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston," presented via Google Arts & Culture and on MFA.org.

The Bauhaus, the much-celebrated school of modern design, was founded by architect Walter Gropius in 1919, in the eastern German city of Weimar, long renowned as a center of German culture. In the '20s, Gropius defined the school's mission along with his famous Dessau campus and had a particular genius for assembling a first-rate faculty. The Bauhaus's roster of artists included Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Oskar Schlemmer, Lyonel Feininger, Wassily Kandinsky, Marcel Breuer, Josef Albers, Herbert Bayer, Paul Klee, and a host of others. Gropius became the head of the Harvard Graduate School of Design in 1937 and had an even longer career as a teacher and architect in the Boston area that lasted until his death in 1969.

The MFA Google show explores the particular kind of advanced, meticulous, sophisticated abstraction that became that became the core of the Bauhaus radical aesthetic. It traces the work of key Bauhaus figures through the brief existence as a German school and follows them as they scatter to other cities in Europe and the United States, spreading the Bauhaus aesthetic around the world.

Opening in the **MFA**'s real-life galleries on February 27's "Paper Stories, Layered Dreams: The Art of Ekua Holmes," Holmes, a life-long resident of Roxbury, is a community activist, artist, and an award-winning children's book illustrator. Her brilliantly colored paper collages explore themes of childhood, family, memory, and Black resilience. This exhibition of more than 30 works includes the original illustrations for three books, including the recently published *Black is a Rainbow Color*, a preview of two forthcoming books: *Saving American Beauty* by Heidi Tyline King, and *Dream Street*, co-authored by Holmes and her cousin, Tricia Elam Walker, along with portrait installation pieces and other independent work.

Can an art museum, even a contemporary art museum, move fast enough to respond to a year packed with turmoil and history? That's the question "Twenty Twenty," on view at the **Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art** in Ridgefield, CT, asked. Conceived in 2019 as an election year event, the project asked seven artists who work with photographic imagery to participate, with their contemporaneously created works on paper rotating as events unfolded. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the museum's schedule and the exhibition's focus were scrambled. The pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement, and election year upheavals figured into the presentations. The museum recently installed the final selection of the show, which is intended to "reflect the preceding year's political and social experiences through the lens of the artist's lived experience." The artists, all local to New York City and Connecticut, include Marti Cormand, Dasa Dylkerney, and Judith Eisler.

Henry Moore, "Stone Reclining Figure" (1979-80 casting, aquatint, and spatter. Photo courtesy of Childs Gallery.

The British modernist sculptor Henry Moore was well-known for his famously streamlined, featureless human forms, especially of women and mothers with children, that often featured enigmatic gaps and holes. Moore produced many of the same images as prints. Opening February 25 at Boston's venerable **Childs Gallery**, "Henry Moore Prints" features *Stone Reclining Figure* and a variety of familiar and less familiar images, including animals and interior views.

– Peter Walsh

Author Events

Emily St. John Mandel with Isaac Fitzgerald: The Glass Hotel | brookline booksmith
Emily St. John Mandel
The Glass House: A Novel
February 23 at 7 p.m.
Tickets are $25 with book or $3 suggested donation

"From the award-winning author of *Station Eleven*, an exhilarating novel set at the glittering intersection of two seemingly disparate events—a Ponzi scheme and the mysterious disappearance of a woman from a ship at sea."

Patricia Lockwood with Jenny Offill | brookline booksmith

Patricia Lockwood & Jenny Offill
No One Is Talking About This & *Weather*
February 24 at 7 p.m.
Tickets are $44 with both books, $34 for one, or free

"Fragmentary and omniscient, incisive and sincere, Lockwood's novel is a love letter to the endless scroll and a profound, modern meditation on love, language, and human communication. Offill's long-awaited new novel promises a tour through a librarian who becomes a doomsday prepper." *Arts Fuse* reviews of No One Is Talking About This and Weather.

Virtual Event: **Jonathan Cohn** — Harvard Book Store
The Ten Year War: Obamacare and the Unfinished Crusade for Universal Coverage
February 23 at 7 p.m.
Free with $3 suggested donation

"In *The Ten Year War*, veteran journalist Jonathan Cohn offers the compelling, authoritative history of how the law came to be, who it helps and who it does, and what it's meant for average Americans. Drawn from hundreds of hours of interviews, diaries, emails, and memos, the book takes readers to Capitol Hill and town meetings, inside the West Wing and eventually into Trump Tower, as the nation's most powerful leaders try to reconcile pragmatism and idealism, self-interest and the public good, and ultimately two very different visions for what the nation's health care policy should look like."

Virtual Event: **Ali Benjamin with Neil Freudenberger** — Porter Square Books
The Dream Up
February 24 at 7 p.m.
Free with suggested donation of $5

"Inspired by a classic Edith Wharton novella about a strained marriage in a small town, *The Dream Up* is at once an intimate, moving portrait of a family in distress, a vivid examination of our rolling national cancer, and a powerful exploration of how the things we fail to notice can shatter a family, a community, and a nation."

Virtual Event: Boston – The Most Innovative City, with **Robert M. Krim & Alan R. Earls**
– brookline booksmith
Boston Made
February 26 at 7 p.m.
Tickets are free or $13 with copy of book

"Since the 1600s, Boston has been at the forefront of world-changing innovation, from starting the country's first public school to becoming the first state to end slavery and giving birth to the telephone. Boston was the site of the first organ transplant and more recent medical and biotech breakthroughs. Boston-area inventors have contributed more than four hundred social, scientific, and commercial innovations. Boston Made tells the stories of 50 of these and why they are no accident."

Virtual Event: **Kazuo Ishiguro** — Harvard Book Store
Klara and the Sun: A Novel
March 3 at 6 p.m.
Tickets are $35 including copy of book with signed bookplate

"Ishiguro's new novel tells the story of Klara, an Artificial Friend with outstanding observational qualities, who from her place in the store, watches carefully the behavior of those who come in to browse, and of those who pass on the street outside. She remains hopeful that a customer will soon choose her. The story asks the perennial question—what does it mean to love?"

Virtual Event: **Tod Ali Boston: Silence, Madness, & Secrets: Sorry About All That!** — Porter Square Books
March 4 at 7 p.m.
Free

"Tod stories read live. We are Boston's only live-on-stage literary reading series dedicated to the art and craft of memoir. Award-winning writers, best-selling authors, and emerging stars share first-person stories that make meaning from lived experience. Our goal is to foster a community of honesty and discovery through the power of memoir. Tod Ali Boston is brought to you by Grub&Street and curated by alumni of Grub&Street's Memoir Incubator and Essay Incubator."

– Matt Hanson

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