

Proposal Offers Kenmore's 'Forgotten Block' Some Love

BY ALISON PULTINAS

Landscape architect Gene Bolinger, calls the Kenmore Mall—on Comm. Ave. between Charlesgate and Kenmore Street—the “forgotten block.” Bolinger, who works for the firm Weston and Sampson and is also preparing a master plan for the Boston Common, recently presented plans for a redesign of the mall to a small group gathered at Boston University’s Kenmore Classroom Building.

In the Dec. 17 meeting, hosted by the Friends of the Public Garden, he emphasized that the ways the block differs from the mall’s Back Bay blocks creates an opportunity for a plan that supports the needs of the immediate neighborhood. Ideas include a more usable “front yard” for the seniors who live at Kenmore Abbey. But as District 8 Councilor-elect Kenzie Bok pointed out, those residents weren’t at the meeting (Cornwall’s owner Pam Beale said they had been notified).

Historically, the Commonwealth Mall, designed by Arthur Gilman, ended at the

portal where Green Line trolleys emerged from underground. Construction of the train tunnels and an underpass for traffic beneath Mass. Ave. decidedly altered the landscape.

A tree inventory completed by consultant Normand Helie found that the existing park has 25 trees, including a large canopy American hybrid elms at its Charlesgate end. The new plan would add more trees and seating. It would also remove yew shrubs that block views into the green space.

A significant plan theme is access to the park. Improved crosswalks would make it possible to cross Comm. Ave. safely and conveniently, and in the future, with cooperation from the City and State, they would connect to the a Charlesgate park rejuvenated by new investment.

The City’s Parks Department hasn’t budgeted yet for the mall renovation; the Friends of the Public Garden funded the design process. Next steps would be to have it included in the 2020 parks capital budget.



IMAGE: WESTON AND SAMPSON

A rendering shows changes proposed for improving access, function, and quality on the “lost block” of the Commonwealth Avenue Mall east of Kenmore Square.

However, the Parks Department juggles many projects, and Liz Vizza of the Friends said budget planning for the next fiscal year has already begun. Although other park and

playground renovations could take precedence, she feels positive about support for the plan from Parks Department staff.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

Top Local Stories in 2019

In the first issue of 2020, The Fenway News takes time to remember the most significant stories of the past year. From large development projects to new elected officials, it's been an eventful year in the Fenway and Mission Hill.

401 Park Redevelopment Picked Up Steam

In 2019, Samuels & Associates continued transforming the Landmark Center into 401 Park. First, they completed replacement of the former parking lot with a green space. Then, Time Out Market opened at the corner facing Park Drive and Brookline Avenue. The Fenway News’s Ruth Khowais reviewed the newly opened food hall in August and had some reservations about the space and the prices. However, she said, “most of the restaurants are local and well-known [and] it was fun to try great foods from famous chefs and local restaurants.”

While Time Out Market offers cocktails, wine, and beer, Samuels added craft brewer Trillium’s first beer garden in a year-round glass pavilion just outside the food hall. And in December, an ice rink opened right next to the beer garden.



Elections Continued Remake of the City Council

A wide-open election to replace District 8 City Councilor Josh Zakim attracted five candidates. Candidates eliminated in the September preliminary election included Fenway resident Kristen Mobilia, Montez Haywood, and Hélène Vincent. In the November general election, Beacon Hill resident Kenzie Bok (left) received approximately 70 percent of the vote, easily defeating the Back Bay’s Jennifer Nassour. Bok’s term begins this month.

For the at-large seats, community activists Julia Mejia and Alejandra St. Guillen ran neck and neck for fourth place, requiring a recount. Ultimately, Mejia won by a single vote.



Death Claimed Pillars of the Community

Barbara Brooks Simons, a longtime resident, died in late January at her home on Symphony Road. An author and book editor, she was a voracious consumer of the arts, from simulcasts of the Metropolitan Opera to First Monday concerts at NEC, the Huntington Theatre, and Handel & Haydn Society concerts.

Barbara was active in Symphony United Neighbors, the Peterborough Seniors Book Club, and the Northeastern University Task Force, she served on several impact advisory groups for development proposals in the area. She was also dedicated to *The Fenway News*. She served as our board president for more than five years, but her work went well beyond that—she wrote articles, managed subscriptions, served on the fundraising committee, proofread every issue, and restocked the paper at Whole Foods. Barbara instituted a Fenway News tradition of featuring the winners of Kaji Aso Studio’s annual haiku contest.

Lori A. Frankian, a 30-year resident, died Jan. 28 after a lifetime battle with spinal muscular atrophy. Lori was known throughout the neighborhood for her bright smile and glowing personality, as well as for neighborhood advocacy and an inspirational insistence on living life to the fullest.

Stephen Sorkin died in February. A driving force behind the Neighborhood Improvement Committee in the East Fens, an active member of First Fenway Co-op, he worked tirelessly to make this corner of the city better.

The neighborhood also lost Barbara Boger, Fred Taylor, Richard Parker, Audubon Circle activist Barbara McKinley, and Brother Robert Paul Donovan, Jr.



Robert Burns Statue Came Back to the Fens



PHOTO: JOSEPH BROOKS

After nearly 45 years, a statue of Scottish poet Robert Burns returned to the Back Bay Fens. Sculptor Henry Hudson Kitson completed it in 1910; it was installed in 1920. It originally stood near Daniel Chester French’s monument to Irish-American poet and journalist John Boyle O’Reilly near the Boylston Street Bridge.

The statue was moved downtown to Winthrop Square in 1975. Developer Millennium Partners coordinated with Fenway Civic Association in the process of getting the statue to a conservator’s workshop and then back to the Fenway. Rigging-and-moving specialists Shaughnessy & Ahern transported and re-installed it on Oct. 25, and a welcome ceremony took place on Oct. 30.

New Arts Academy Finally Got Under Way

The Boston Arts Academy building on Ipswich Street underwent demolition in



PHOTO: STEVE WOLF

February after the school temporarily relocated to Dorchester. In April the Boston Arts Academy Foundation announced two gifts totaling \$1 million—\$500,000 from philanthropist Donna Harris-Lewis and her family, and another \$500,000 from an anonymous donor. Pile-driving for the new structure took place in the fall (left), and the City announced plans to create two public works of arts for the new building—one inside and one outside the new building. Funding will come from the City’s One Percent for Art program.

Gentrification Heated Up in Mission Hill

New development in Mission Hill favored short-term renters and students.



RENDERING COURTESY OF PRIMARY

Data from the Boston Department of Neighborhood Development’s annual report, *Student Housing Trends*, confirmed Mission Hill and Fenway/Kenmore as the neighborhoods housing the most students living off campus. The report found only 10 percent housing owner-occupied, a very low figure.

To maximize returns, developers converting properties to accommodate students typically try adding a floor, converting dining rooms and front parlors to bedrooms, or building an addition that doubles or triples building size. The City of Boston’s inclusionary development requirement only applies to market-rate developments with ten or more housing units that need a zoning change, which has driven a focus on nine-unit redevelopment proposals in Mission Hill.

The City Tested Mechanical Cutting of the Reeds

Margaret Dyson of the Parks Department told the Fenway Civic Association’s



annual meeting that the City would propose an ecological restoration plan for the Back Bay Fens that would include cutting of the phragmites (wetlands-protection laws require state approval of a plan). Residents had voiced concern since at least 2018 about activities taking place in the reeds. Because mowing requires repeating rounds, previous attempts with just a single cutting had proved unsuccessful. In May, the department received approval for a three-year pilot program of mechanical-cutting. City staff promised that test areas would undergo mowing three to four times each growing season and use of a wetlands seed mix to establish native ground cover. At least two mowings took place in 2019.

Trying to Find the Right Stance on Emotional Support Animals

BY ANNA KRACKLAUER AND MISKA SALEMANN

Passersby might notice the sign outside the small Italian grocery store on Newbury Street. The sign indicates service animals are allowed into the store, but emotional-support animals are not.

Judy Terranova, who works at the register, explained why the business enforces that rule.

"I read the fine print," said Terranova, 29. "The service animal act covers the specially trained service dogs. It doesn't cover comfort animals. Most people don't know that. There's some arguments that it should cover comfort animals, and those arguments are sympathetic, but at the same time, a lot of them aren't very well trained."

It's increasingly common to see animals accompany people into public spaces. Some—guide dogs and physical-support animals—are allowed by law to go anywhere their owner does. The rules for so-called emotional-support animals, however, are more vague. This puts local business owners in a tough spot. Owners must consider the many implications of allowing those animals into their stores; whether they may be a health concern to other clients, potential sanitary issues, and behavioral issues that could arise because emotional-support animals are not required to go through intensive training.

The Massachusetts Service Animal Law defines a service animal as a "dog that accompanies an individual with a sensory and or physical disability." Dogs that support people with psychiatric disabilities, like PTSD, also fall under this category. This law requires public spaces to allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities.

However, the rules are different for emotional-support animals, which don't have to be specifically trained as a service animal does. In Massachusetts, an owner may have to provide a letter from a licensed health professional to prove that their ESA is not just a pet. Local businesses do not have to allow emotional-support animals to enter.

A therapy animal takes part in a type of animal-assisted intervention in which the animal serves as a part of the treatment process. Hence, therapy

dogs can be found in a range of settings: hospitals, assisted living facilities, and even colleges. Rather than serving one person, they serve many. They do not have the right to enter all public spaces.

Terranova recalled a couple of incidents where she has seen a service dog behaving improperly in the store. "I've seen a woman drag her dog across the floor because he didn't want to stand up and didn't want to leave the store multiple times." Terranova also mentioned an occasion where a woman brought in what appeared to be a legitimate service animal. However, she remembers that the dog was aggressive if she made eye contact with it.

When asked if any service dogs have caused damage in the store, she responded "I mean, they like to shove their face in the Reese's for some reason, but I don't think they've ever actually caused any damage."

Due to these experiences, the store does not make accommodations for dogs that have not gone through intense service training.

While in college, Terranova had a friend who trained service animals for a living. "She would get really mad about the bad name that people bringing pets and comfort animals into places where they don't belong were giving to specially trained service dogs, because they're really expensive to train," Terranova explained.

Catherine Hyden, a student at Northeastern University, owns an emotional-support dog and has to deal with the rules around taking her companion in businesses. She has had her Lhasa Apso, Daisy, for eight years. She decided to register Daisy as an emotional-support animal because she struggles with anxiety and depression.

Because Hyden isn't allowed to bring Daisy with her to many grocery stores, shopping has become more complicated. "I have to make a whole separate trip to go to a grocery store because I just can't take her with me," said Hyden.

Hyden has encountered a few business owners who questioned her need for a support animal. She recalls one time she went grocery shopping and was confronted by women reminding her that they don't allow pets. "I said, 'No, she's a support animal.' And she goes, 'do you need her to shop?'" said Hyden.

Hyden believes that there is an apparent double standard around mental illnesses, because she is fighting a less visible struggle. "What I'm battling is more of a mental thing than a physical thing. It's just annoying because I really do struggle with something," said Hyden.

Not all businesses choose to restrict entry to sensory or physical service animals. Some even welcome regular pets. Cory Carrier, 39, is the assistant manager at Newbury Comics.

Carrier is especially enthusiastic about Newbury Comics pet-friendly policy, "We love all animals. We let service dogs in, and we let the regular pups in. If someone wants to walk a cat in our store, I think we would be cool with it."

Carrier couldn't recall any particularly hazardous situations with animals coming into the store.

"As long as the dogs go to the bathroom outside before they come in, but yeah, we have treats behind the registers. We love dogs, bring them by," he added.

Lila Galanoudis, 20, works at Fern Exotic Flowers on Massachusetts Avenue. Fern allows all types of assistance animals and pets to come into the shop. Galanoudis has had almost only positive experiences.

She does recall a dog misbehaving on one occasion. "I've seen some little dog like knock over some plants. That was just a rowdy little dog." Usually, she doesn't ask customers whether their animal is an assistance animal.

"We're pretty relaxed with that. I've never really asked anybody [whether their animal is an assistance animal] and I don't think anyone else really discerns. As long as they trust their pet in the store, then we trust their pet. Yeah, service animals are totally welcome." The shop even elects to move plants that are toxic to animals to higher shelves.

Although many people and businesses feel differently about the rights different dogs should have, there is one thing many tend to agree on. Owners of assistance animals and regular pets cite an undeniable bond between them and their animals.

Ken Brady spent many years in a battle with mental health problems. In 2011, his marriage dissolved in an unhappy divorce. In 2013, he stood at the finish line of the Boston Marathon, cheering on

his daughter. Moments later, he found himself grabbing his kids and running from the scene as the bombs went off. Brady worked in law enforcement for nearly 20 years and explained that he was consumed by "survivor's guilt," regretting not jumping into the chaos and helping. In 2015, after feeling light-headed during a basketball game, he went to the doctor. After a blood test, he was told that he had liver cancer and would need liver-resection surgery.

His life changed when he saw a friend's Facebook post about a rescue dog from Puerto Rico that she was trying to "re-home." "Duke" had been found suffering, wandering the streets with a wire collar embedded in his neck and had to undergo surgery to have it removed. Brady saw something in Duke, a reminiscence of the trauma that he too, had fought through.

With a nudge from his girlfriend, Brady decided to adopt Duke. He chose to train and register him as a therapy dog.

Brady believes a dog's ability to share an emotional connection with humans is extremely valuable. Duke also has the ability to sense when a person is in need of comfort, "The funny thing with him is when I'm upset, he knows it. And that's not necessarily something that's ever been taught to him. If I'm having a bad day or if I'm frustrated or sad, he all of a sudden appears at my feet."

When things get hard, Brady feels as if Duke and he have an understanding. As both are survivors of traumatic experiences, they are now there for each other to face other hardships together. "I feel like we sort of have an agreement, you know, he was this close to death and he fought his way through it."

Brady acknowledges that emotional support dogs serve a purpose but is concerned that they aren't held to the same standards of training as service or therapy dogs. "I do feel like therapy dogs go through significant amounts of training to get to the level where Duke is, whereas emotional-support animals require no training at all. And so, my argument is always, who would you rather have in a public place like this? Duke, or a dog that's had no training at all?"

Anna Kracklauer and Miska Salemman are journalism students at Northeastern University.

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Development Demand Stayed Strong in the Fenway...



RENDERING COURTESY OF SSA P-12 PROPERTY LLC

The Parcel 12 Air Rights project (left)—a 20-story office building along Boylston Street, and a 12-story Citizen M hotel next to Newbury Street Extension—received state environmental approval. The state's historical commission, however, required ongoing consultation on to "eliminate, minimize, or mitigate" adverse impacts on historic resources. Late in the year the developer announced a lead tenant, CarGurus, now located in Cambridge, for the office building.

The Red Sox, in a venture with Live Nation and the House of Blues, won approval to build a concert hall with room for 5,400 patrons at the corner of Lansdowne and Ipswich

streets. Residents argued against the project, citing existing traffic levels, blocked emergency vehicles, and increased crowds, noise, and misbehavior.

In September, the Zoning Board of Appeal approved Cabot, Cabot & Forbes's plan to build 440 apartments and condos in three eight-story buildings on the former Boston Cab site in the West Fens. The plan included 37 affordable units and sent a \$6 million payment to a City affordable-housing fund that will maintain affordability of the Newcastle/Saranac complex in the South End. One of the CC&F buildings will house the K Street Clubhouse, which hosts LGBT-focused recovery meetings.

Scape North America, which had proposed student housing at 1252-1270 Boylston St., revised its plans in the face of neighborhood pushback, proposing instead 477 rental apartments, ground-floor retail space, and an LGBTQ-focused black box theater inspired by the existing Machine nightclub.

...And in Mission Hill, Kenmore Square, and the LMA

Big new proposals included a hotel in Kenmore Square, a new dorm at Northeastern, and a campus-consolidation plan for Simmons University with a high-rise dorm.

One Kenmore would create a 29-story, 391-room hotel on a new half-acre public plaza. The project proposes changing the square's traffic pattern significantly by creating new access lanes between the hotel and the Kenmore Tower apartments.

Northeastern unveiled plans for a 26-story tower on a surface parking lot at Tremont Street and Melnea Cass Boulevard, near Ruggles Station. It would house Northeastern students, but they would sign leases with an independent operator.

Simmons proposed leasing its residential campus between Pilgrim Road and Brookline Avenue to another institution or a private developer. The resulting revenue would finance construction of a 16- to 19-story dorm on the main campus, where all the displaced facilities would relocate. Leasing out the six-acre site would create the potential for the biggest development in the Longwood area in decades.



City Rebuilt Johnson Gates Area

A relatively quick renovation brought new landscaping, lighting, pathways, and accessibility upgrades to the Johnson Gates (and conservation of the gates themselves). The project triggered an uproar among residents after the City cut several mature shade trees on both sides of the space to prepare for the work.

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One Kenmore Hotel Proposal Clears More Hurdles

BY ALISON PULTINAS

At the Dec. 12 Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) public hearing for the Kenmore Hotel, supporters lined up first, followed by union representatives, Impact Advisory Group members Parker James and Pam Beale, Esplanade Association



Diagram of the proposed traffic plan

representatives, and staff and board members from the organization Livable Streets.

Scott Englander of Brookline and Larry Field of the Smart Growth Alliance praised consultant Jeff Speck's plan, a rerouted traffic pattern that creates an island for the new hotel and half-acre plaza.

Alexandra Gross, representing the Kenmore Tower Corporation's board of directors, announced that group's their support for the project after several months of negotiations. Kenmore Tower, at 566 Comm. Ave., abuts the project site on the west. Past controversies—the size of the hotel and its impacts on co-op residents, such as emissions from new traffic passing closer to their building, and loss of views and light for residents of east-facing apartments—apparently were no longer a concern for Gross and the co-op.

BPDA Commissioner Ted Landsmark asked why the architects for the 29-story hotel weren't presenting the project but had designated Speck, a nationally known urban designer, as the primary speaker. Wes Walker from Studio Gang, the Chicago-based architecture firm, then stood up to answer Landsmark's questions about wind and shadows.

In his memo to the BPDA board, project manager Tim Czerwienski described the land exchange—approximately 7,551 square feet would be transferred to the City for use in public ways, including a portion of the new road and a portion of the new public plaza. In return, the City would transfer its fee interest in approximately 5,605 square feet of land to Mark Development, the proponent. According to his memo, fair market values will be calculated for all land transactions. The vote on the land exchange will take place at a future BPDA hearing.

A community benefit listed in the memo is a \$10,000 contribution to the Esplanade Association, due on expiration of the 30-day appeal period after the Dec. 12 vote, provided that no appeal has been filed.

Earlier in the month, the Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC) voted to approve the hotel, but only after considerable back and forth. The commission chair, Andrea Leers, asked for a second motion when the project was voted down the first time.

BCDC commissioners expressed strong concern about the building's placement, and

said it pushed too far out into Commonwealth Avenue, disrupting the alignment of the street wall. They wanted the width of new road reduced to no more than three lanes wide, and preferably two. The current proposal calls for three 12-foot lanes instead of the original four 10-foot lanes.

The Public Improvement Commission chaired by Chris Osgood, Chief of Streets, has final say on the road design and drop-off parking plan. That hearing has yet to be scheduled.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

Ice as Nice: Skating Rink Opens at 401 Park



On Dec. 16, a highly anticipated skating rink opened at 401 Park, formerly the Landmark Center. The rink, built by Samuels & Associates, covers 6,000 square feet and will be open seven days a week. Skaters can bring their own skates or rent them on site. Samuels said the rink will offer ice skating lessons every Saturday at 10am.

Dr. Marc Lamont Hill

Gateway Speaker 2020

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Dr. Marc Lamont Hill is an award-winning author, and a political commentator. He hosts Huffpost Live, BET News, and VH1 Live, and was a political contributor to CNN.



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FENSVIEWS

How to Keep Your Recycling From Going to Waste

BY BROOKE NASH

While recent news stories about recycling might have you believe otherwise, the answer is an emphatic no, recycling is not a wasted effort. The cans, bottles, and paper you put in your recycling bin are part of an important supply chain that returns used materials to the manufacturing sector to make new products and packaging in the U.S. and overseas.

But what you put in your recycling bin does matter, now more than ever. In 2018, the Chinese government imposed a ban on the import of most recycled paper and unsorted plastics from the U.S. and Europe. Known as “National Sword”, the ban was a wake-up call to the recycling industry. For the previous two decades, almost half the recyclables collected in the U.S. were sold to mills in China, where they were converted into packaging for the myriad consumer goods that China exports to the U.S. each year. The Chinese recycling mills accepted low quality material and using cheap labor, sorted out the good from the bad. Until they decided they’d had enough.

National Sword caused a global disruption in the secondary materials market. The oversupply of scrap paper and plastic caused their value to plummet. Markets in Southeast Asia stepped in to buy at low prices, while demanding higher quality, cleaner material.

And that’s where each of us comes in. Over the years, many of us became “wishful recyclers,” putting items in the recycling bin that we hoped would be recycled. Our recycling habits became a little sloppy. And quite frankly, most of us simply didn’t know there was a problem.

The most common mistakes

We asked the operators of Massachusetts’ Material Recovery Facilities (MRF)—where household recyclables are sorted into separate streams before they’re sold to end-markets—what the biggest problem materials are. Top of the list is plastic grocery bags. That’s right—even though most display a recycling symbol, they do NOT belong in your household recycling bin. Why not? Plastic bags wreak havoc at MRFs

where they wrap around sorting equipment and shut down the sorting line. Workers have to manually cut the bags off the equipment—a dangerous and time-consuming job. This happens multiple times a day at the recycling facility in Charlestown, where Boston’s recyclables go for sorting. (But you can still recycle those bags. See the box below.)

The other worst offenders? Recyclables in plastic bags (these are pulled from the sorting line and thrown away), food and liquids, clothing, and “tangles” such as wire, garden hoses, rope, and string lights. None of these items belong in your recycling bin.

Simple guidelines for becoming a smarter recycler

- Empty and rinse all food and beverage containers.
- Remove all plastic and styrofoam packing from cardboard boxes before recycling.
- Ignore the recycling symbol that’s on most plastic items—it does NOT mean it’s recyclable.
- For plastic items, shape is the best rule: If it’s a bottle, jar, jug, or tub, recycle it! Otherwise, put it in the trash.
- Consult the online “Recyclopedia” for recycling advice on over 500 items. Find it at RecycleSmartMA.org (and follow RecycleSmartMA on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to learn more about recycling).
- Spread the word to friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers about good recycling practices.

Keeping the bad stuff out of our recycling bins means the good stuff gets recycled. It also ensures we’re supporting a supply chain of recycled materials for the manufacturing economy, while conserving resources and protecting our environment. The silver lining to National Sword is that for the first time in decades, major investments in U.S. recycling mills are being made to fill the void that China left. That means jobs and economic growth right here at home. All the more reason to feel good about recycling.

Brooke Nash is Branch Chief for Municipal Waste Reduction at the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and leads the Recycle Smart MA statewide recycling education initiative.

GUEST OPINION

WHAT TO DO WITH THOSE PLASTIC BAGS

While Boston’s plastic bag ban means fewer plastic bags in our homes, there’s still a lot of “flexible film plastic” that can be recycled at most supermarkets, as well as Target and Whole Foods.

This includes bread bags, produce bags, plastic wrap from toilet paper and paper towels, Ziploc bags, bubble wrap,

and plastic “pillows” from shipping boxes. (Again, to prevent problems at the sorting facility, don’t put them in your recycle bin.) Remove paper receipts and make sure bags are clean and dry. For drop-off locations and a list of all the plastic film that you can recycle, visit plasticfilmrecycling.org.

The plastic bags and wrap that you return to stores will be bundled with

the shrink and pallet wrap from the “back of house” and sent to a recycling company. Trex, one of the largest plastic bag recyclers in the U.S., makes composite decking and lumber out of plastic bags and reclaimed wood. Their average 500-square-foot deck contains 140,000 recycled plastic bags!

—BROOKE NASH

Could Somerville’s Example Solve Mission Hill’s Problem?

BY ALISON PULTINAS

Another development saga: zoning attorney Patrick Mahoney addressed a December meeting of the Mission Hill Community Alliance. His clients, real estate investors Janice and Michael Ye, are seeking to pave the back yard of a former two-family, now a three-family property, at 17-19 Sunset St. They want to create five parking spaces, but need variances from the City’s Zoning Board, hence the presentation. Mahoney said that properties next door and further down the street had already paved their yards, so the Ye’s application conforms with the neighborhood.

The side yard is too narrow for a legal driveway; the back lot slopes down towards shade trees in the yard of 48 Parker Hill Ave.; and almost no green space would remain for the tenants at 17-19 Sunset after the proposed paving. The plans examiner at

the City’s Inspectional Services Department also cited the lack of maneuverability as a zoning violation. Attorney Mahoney thought that was a reach, however, and called it “subjective zoning.”

Mahoney complained about having to make presentations at too many community meetings for such a small project. He had previously presented at an official abutters’ sidewalk gathering organized by the Mayor’s Office, then to a committee from Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services, and will return to the Alliance when they vote next month. A lot of meetings, but creating a parking lot from what was lawn and trees has consequences for neighborhoods with small yards.

Somerville passed zoning restrictions that require residential properties with one- to three-family family homes to have at least 35 percent of their lot covered by pervious surfaces, not concrete or asphalt.

Could this be a precedent for Boston?
Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

GUEST OPINION

Former Gulf Station’s Neglect Makes Neighborhood Look Bad

TO THE EDITOR:

Following the purchase by Star Market of the Gulf station at the intersection of Boylston Street and Park Drive, the remaining building has been left to become a neighborhood eyesore. The former Gulf/Dunkin Donuts is decaying, to the detriment

of other establishments in the area. (See our November issue for a photo of illegal dumping on the site.—Editor)

Since this is an entryway to the Fenway, Star should be held to a higher level of accountability in maintaining this property. Our public officials should take an active role in resolving this problem and not allow this to continue for an indefinite amount of time.

CHARLES MARTEL
WEST FENS

A Toast in the New Year

The Fenway News will hold a wine-buying class and wine-tasting in March at Huntington Wine & Spirits on Huntington Avenue. (A tip of our hat to owner Steve Rubin for his generous offer to host.) We’ll have more details in our next issue, but don’t plan anything for the second week of March until you hear from us!

COMMUNITY meetings

WED, JAN. 8 & 22 Fenway Fair Foods, 3-5pm, Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral, 165 Park Dr. Get a bag of fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables for \$2. Everyone welcome! To learn more, contact Helen Murphy, h Murphy@fenwaycdc.org, (617) 267-4637 x21.

TUE, JAN. 21 Fenway Center Citizens Advisory Committee meeting. Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) members work

with BPDA staff to identify project impacts and recommend offsetting community benefits. The proposal for Phase 2 of this project would replace housing with 692,000 square feet of lab space and associated office and support spaces; includes 48,400 SF of ground-floor retail; and reduces parking spaces from 1,290 to 790. 6pm, Fenway Community Center, 1282 Boylston St.

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“Comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable.”

The founders of The Fenway News adopted this motto to express their mission of exposing and opposing the dangers the neighborhood faced in the early 1970s—rampant arson, predatory landlords, and a destructive urban renewal plan. If the original motto no longer fits today’s Fenway, we remain committed to its spirit of identifying problems and making our neighborhood a better and safer place to live.

> FREQUENCY <

The Fenway News reaches distribution sites on the Friday closest to the first of each month. Our next issue will appear

Friday, January 31.

> DEADLINE <

The deadline for letters, news items, and ads for our next issue is **Friday, January 24.**

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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

A LOT HAPPENED IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SINCE THE LAST ISSUE, INCLUDING...

The *Globe* reports that CarGurus, an online market for used cars, will consolidate three existing Cambridge offices at the office tower that will rise on Air Rights Parcel 12 at Mass. Ave. and Boylston. Previously, Dutch hotel chain Citizen M had announced that it would occupy the parcel's smaller building at Mass.Ave./Newbury St. ➔ **The BPDA board gave its blessing to the controversial sale of Harriet Tubman House at Mass. Ave. and Columbus Ave. for redevelopment into market-rate condos. United South End Settlements (USES) will use proceeds from the sale to stabilize its finances after running multiyear operating deficits. USES plans move its operations to a site it owns on nearby Rutland Street. Community activists had fought the sale, arguing that the City sold the land to USES at a below-market price in the 1970s to make it possible for the group to establish a social services center. They said that low-income families in the neighborhood needed easy access to those services because the area has experienced significant gentrification over the last two decades.** ➔ The Mass Housing Partnership released a report on development density around every MBTA rail, trolley, and subway station, and the Green Line's Symphony stop in the East Fens led the pack with 80 units per acre within a quarter mile. Hynes Station clocked in at just under 50 units per acre, and Kenmore logged 39.3. Lansdowne Station led commuter-rail stops with 23.7 units per acre, a number that will likely rise with completion of several proposed and approved development projects nearby, including the Kenmore Center. To see the report and use the related interactive map, visit www.mhp.net/news and click on the "Dec. 17" link. ➔ **Longtime Fenway News contributor Alison Barnet has published a new book of South End history, *Once Upon a Neighborhood*.** ➔ *Globe* theater critic Don Aucoin praised a new crop of talented performers coming out of Boston colleges in 2019. Among his name-checks: Quentin Nguyen-Duy, a senior at BU, and Katrina Z Pavao, a Boston Conservatory MFA who "stole the show" as Audrey in Lyric Stage's *Little Shop of Horrors*. ➔



Neighborhood Newslines

Accident Led to Spring Fire in Phragmites

On March 28, a brushfire in the phragmites injured and hospitalized one man. Concerns from residents led to an investigation by the Boston Fire Department. According to Andrew Bettinelli from Sen. Will Brownsberger's office, who followed up on residents' concerns, the victim was interviewed at the hospital and stated that he started the fire to stay warm. He awoke to find his legs burning. No foul play was involved and no accelerants were found; the fire was an accident.

Submit Comments on Two Major Area Developments

- The BPDA has extended through until Jan. 10 the public comment period for Northeastern University's proposed 29-story dorm and academic building at **840 Columbus Ave.**, next to Renaissance Park. Send comments to Gerald Autler at Gerald.Autler@boston.gov.
- Public comments on the State's environmental review of the change in plans for **Fenway Center Phase 2** (Parcel 7 Air Rights project west of Kenmore Square) are due Jan. 13 at the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office. Send comments to Anne Canaday at Anne.Canaday@mass.gov. In summary, instead of housing, Meredith Management, the developer, proposes to build a life sciences R&D building. The project falls under state regulations that require review of any development that generates 3,000 or more daily trips or creates 300 or more parking spaces. The proposed change would decrease garage capacity from 1,290 to 790 spaces. Also, the proposed change would exceed a new threshold for wastewater. Project Phases 1 and 2 first won approval in December 2009.

Renovation and Expansion Affect Agencies in Mission Hill

Cambridge's Possible Project, Mark and Becky Levin's teenage entrepreneur program, held an open house on Dec. 12 at its new home at 31 Heath St., once a 19th-century brewery on the back of Mission Hill. Architects from Utile are at work converting the Family Services of Greater Boston offices into an Innovation Center to house the group's expansion. Meanwhile, Sociedad Latina will temporarily relocate staff and programs across various facilities in the neighborhood when it begins the major renovation at its 1530 Tremont St. base in January.

\$IOM Renovation Begins at Countway Medical Library

Harvard's Countway Medical Library, designed by Hugh Stubbins, is getting an interior and exterior redo. Plans include adding an entrance on Huntington Avenue, bridging the plaza-level moat. This will mark a new beginning for the institution, as the medical area cautiously connects with its immediate neighborhood. Permits were issued in November to construction firm Lee Kennedy for work valued at \$10 million. Shepley Bulfinch is the architect of record, and plans include a Harvard COOP retail shop and small cafe.

Fenway Beer Shop Wins Spot on National Top-Ten List

Website hopculture.com named Fenway Beer Shop, at 98 Van Ness St., to its 2019 list of ten best bottle shops. "[N]ot long ago, this was the local Craft Beer Cellar, before the chain lost traction in Boston after closing up shop in Fort Point and Roslindale; the new moniker makes it instantly recognizable even to folks from out of town. That's good luck for them. The name has changed, but the selection and staffing knowledge hasn't. Best of all, it's a cost savings. Even a single beer at a Sox game costs a fortune. Spend your cash here instead for more beer, and better beer, than you'll get at the MLB's oldest ballpark."

Simmons Campus Consolidation Plan Advances

The One Simmons project advances. On Dec. 4, the project was presented to the Boston Civic Design Commission for the first time. The Commissioners praised the efficiency of the campus-consolidation plan, but questioned its impact on the central quad. Simmons plans to build a 16- to 19-story dorm with dining and athletic facilities, including a pool.

CORRECTION

A photo caption accompanying John Engstrom's piece last month on *Odyssey Opera's Maria, regina d'Inghilterra* referred to a different opera. We regret the error.

DASHBOARD

➔ TRASH & RECYCLING PICK-UP

- **BACK BAY:** Trash and recycling on Monday and Thursday
- **FENWAY:** Trash and recycling on Tuesday and Friday
- **MISSION HILL:** Trash and recycling on Tuesday and Friday

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# OF UNITS	UNIT SIZE	RENT	% AMI
2	Studio	\$1,125	70%
3	1-Bedroom*	\$1,318	70%
1	2-Bedroom*	\$1,492	70%

*Includes one unit built out for persons with mobility impairments.

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# OF BEDROOMS	MINIMUM YEARLY INCOME	HOUSEHOLD SIZE	70% AMI
Studio	\$32,750	1	\$55,550
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2-bedroom	\$44,760	3	\$71,400
ASSET LIMIT***		4	\$79,300
\$75,000		5	\$85,650
		6	\$92,000

** Minimum limits do not apply to households that receive housing assistance (e.g., Section 8, VASH, MRVP).

***Asset limit does not include retirement savings but does include real estate.

Households may request an application be sent by email or mail from **Monday, January 6, 2020, to Wednesday, January 15, 2020,** through the following methods:

- To complete the application online, please visit <http://bit.ly/839beacon>.
- To have a hard copy of the application sent to your mailing address, please call 781-992-5303.
- Applications can also be picked up in person on the following dates and times:

Monday, January 6, 2020	10am-2pm
Tuesday, January 7, 2020	10am-2pm
Thursday, January 9, 2020	7am-3pm
Friday, January 10, 2020	10am-2pm
Saturday, January 11, 2020	10am-2pm

Application Pick-up Location:
Lobby-839 Beacon Street, Fenway, MA 02215

Applications can be submitted online by **January 22, 2020.**

Completed, printed, and signed paper applications can also be mailed to Maloney Properties.

Postmarked no later than **January 22, 2020.**
Maloney Properties, Inc.
Attention: 839 Beacon Lottery
27 Mica Lane, Wellesley MA 02481

Selection by lottery. Asset, use and occupancy restrictions apply.
Preference for disabled households for ADA units. Preference for Boston residents.
Preference for households with at least one person per bedroom.

For more info, language assistance, or to make a request for reasonable accommodations, please call Maloney Properties at 781-992-5303 (U.S. Relay 711) or e-mail 839Beacon@MaloneyProperties.com



Getting Off the Couch to Exercise Can Help Prevent Dementia

BY KATHERINE LE

Dementia is commonly associated with memory loss and decreased ability in decision making. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), dementia is not part of the normal aging process; however, age is known to be the primary risk factor for dementia. Among the causes of dementia, Alzheimer's disease is known as a common one, affecting one in every 10 adults 65 and older. According to the CDC, five million new diagnoses of Alzheimer's are identified each year.

"It is sad to see so many elderly patients are being affected by Alzheimer's," said Michael Truong, a Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences student who volunteers with the Alzheimer's Association. "It is a disease with no cure and these patients suffer very low

quality of life, unfortunately."

While Alzheimer's has no cure, scientists are actively looking for ways to slow its progression. For example, researchers from the Framingham Heart Study looked at the correlation between physical activity, brain volume, and the risk of developing dementia. The results of their analysis appeared in the *Journal of Gerontology Medical Sciences*.

Out of 236 elderly adults who developed dementia after a ten-year follow up, 188, or 80 percent, had Alzheimer's. The researchers found that patients who were less physically active faced greater risk of developing dementia later in life.

"It is true, and it seems that regular exercise may help to slow the cognitive decline of Alzheimer's," said Truong.

The authors of this study suggest that older adults may only need a small amount of daily physical activity to help

protect them from developing dementia. Furthermore, a balance of multiple moderate physical activities might be more efficient in preventing dementia.

"This is exciting news," said John, a resident of Mission Hill who preferred to omit his last name. "I'm glad to learn that today, and it encourages me to exercise myself."

Physical activity is already known to play a role in preventing cardiovascular diseases. Now, studies have shown it can help prevent other conditions like dementia and Alzheimer's in older adults. Each individual, especially in the older population, can benefit immensely from adopting an active lifestyle and lessening sedentary activities.

Katherine Le is a pre-med student at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

The Arts

(RE)INTRODUCING KAY NIELSEN, LOST 20TH-CENTURY ARTIST

BY STEVE WOLF

The moment you step into "Kay Nielsen's Enchanted Vision" at the Museum of Fine Arts you see that the Danish illustrator and stage designer knew his art history. Active in the first half of the 20th century, Nielsen developed a refined style that seamlessly mixed visual traditions from around the world. The compact show, which runs through Jan. 20, focuses on the original art Nielsen created to illustrate fairy tales and a smattering of work intended for other formats.

At the end of the 19th century, technological advances gave printers unprecedented control over the quality of color images on paper. Magazines, posters, and illustrated books proliferated, driving a demand for talented illustrators. Spotting Nielsen's work in a London gallery in 1912—he'd just finished studying art in Paris—an English publisher hired Nielsen to illustrate a book of fairy tales. Lavish volumes, ostensibly for children, enjoyed broad popularity among cultivated adults in Europe and the US during the period.

Despite its focus on fairy tales, the MFA show starts with *The Book of Death*—about as far from happily-ever-after as you can get. In art school, Nielsen had created a suite of dramatic black-and-white drawings. The show includes ten, following the tragic French clown Pierrot as he grapples with his lover's death. He struggles through drinking, depression, and despair, mourning the dying woman as the figure of Death itself smirks through a nearby window.

The suite displays the clear influence of Aubrey Beardsley, an immensely talented illustrator whose well-known drawings came to symbolize the English Aesthetic movement of the 1890s and—thanks to his collaboration with Oscar Wilde—carried a strong whiff of eroticism and tragedy (Beardsley's own death at 25 added to their tragic appeal). But Nielsen looked well beyond popular stylists for inspiration. His work

suggests sources as far-ranging as medieval manuscripts, Scandinavian folk art, Persian miniatures, Japanese prints, Gustav Klimt, and the meticulous geometric patterning of Islamic art.

The show includes several works

that leaves them looking androgynous and world-weary. Explanatory text leaves no woke stone unturned: for an illustration for "The Twelve Dancing Princesses," it cites a prince's gender fluidity and notes that the only character of color in the image plays the villain.

East of the Sun and West of the Moon—Old Norse Folk Tales followed in 1914. Its illustrations show a fully formed, decidedly modern graphic sensibility: large fields of white or black frame small areas of almost obsessive surface patterning. The large unworked areas guide your eye to the subject, whose intricate patterning pulls you into the image. "Young Woman Embracing a Hawthorne Bush" spreads a snow-covered ground beneath a stippled sky and pale pink sun. A woman at the center, wrapped in a sinuous black cloak, cradles a branch of the hawthorn, bare except for lavish white blossoms delicately delineated against the black of her clothes. With little

color in the image, her gold-tinted hair takes on added visual heft.

In all, Nielsen illustrated five books between 1913 and 1930. World War I disrupted the market for illustrated luxury books—and every other market—sending Nielsen back to Copenhagen, where he supported himself by designing theater sets and costumes, a natural turn for the child of an actress and a director.

He returned to books in 1923 with *Fairy Tales* by Hans Anderson. A restrained palette and elaborate floral borders hint strongly at Chinese and Japanese prints. A fourth book, *Hansel & Gretel and other stories by the Brothers Grimm* (1925) saw him return to stronger colors and illustrations composed almost as stage sets. The show includes designs he made for both books.

Red Magic: A Collection of the World's Best Fairy Tales from All Countries (1930), gave Nielsen encouraged more references to wide-ranging artistic traditions. In an illustration for "The Six Swans," a villainous queen wears a spiky crown and robe patterned with thorny vines, all the points telegraphing her cold, unfeeling nature. Having transformed

her six stepsons into swans, she watches them take flight into an inky sky.

In 1936, Nielsen moved to California to design sets for a production directed by a friend from the Danish theater. He stayed on in Los Angeles, landing a job with Disney Studios, where he developed the concept for the "Night On Bald Mountain/Ave Maria" sequence in *Fantasia*. The exhibit includes his sketch of the winged demon Chernabog, who calls up an army of ghouls and demons for the frenzied midnight conclave that opens the sequence. Even at this small scale—like almost all images in the show, it measures less than 24x18 inches—the demon can give you the creeps.

Disney ultimately fired Nielsen, likely because he rebelled against the studio's famously regimented work culture. Remaining in California, he turned to mural painting and teaching, but died in poverty in 1957. Yet his work lived on to reach millions around the world: Conceptual drawings he created for a Hans Christian Andersen story served as the basis for Ariel in the 1989 Disney movie *The Little Mermaid*.

Steve Wolf lives in the West Fens.



Nielsen's illustration for "The Six Swans," includes many of his trademark design moves: dramatic composition, stylization that recalls medieval art, and areas of near-obsessive surface patterning.

from this first commission, both full-color and monotone, that appeared in the 1913 collection *In Powder & Crinoline: Old Fairy Tales Retold* by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Nielsen sizes his characters heroically and twists them into baroque poses to increase their visual drama. Men sport powdered wigs and thigh-high boots; women strut in sumptuous gowns; cherubs flit about, wearing not only their own pint-sized wigs but also elaborate eye makeup

New BAA Building Will Get Public Art

BY ALISON PULTINAS

New public art will sit at the corner of Ipswich and Van Ness streets, a surprise bonus from the Boston Arts Academy reconstruction. A percent-for-art program administered by the Mayor's Office of Arts & Culture issued a request for proposals last fall for two sites, one inside the new building (\$300,000 budget), and one for the sidewalk site (\$200,000 budget).

The RFP mentions the existing public art outside Fenway Park: "Teammates" by Antonio Tobias Mendez and bronze tributes to Carl Yastrzemski, by Antonio Tobias Mendez, and Ted Williams, by Franc Talarico, visible from the school's front door. The future artwork may create a dialogue with the sculpture across the street.

The artist-selection committee includes school personnel, students, City staff, local art professionals, and a member of the Boston Art Commission. Project Manager Sarah Rodrigo said the review process has just begun, although committee meetings aren't public; she said the interior site drew 15 applications and the outdoor site, 8.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

BOSTON SEEKS ARTISTS TO HELP UPGRADE POLICIES, PROCESSES

The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture invites artists in any discipline to submit qualifications for joining a year-long cohort of artists-in-residence. "[They will] implement projects that imagine and test new approaches to City of Boston policies, processes, and procedures with the help of various City of Boston departments. This, in turn, helps to create a stronger and more equitable city," said Mayor Marty Walsh in a press release.

The City will present a webinar on the submittal process on Jan. 8 at 6pm. Written responses to questions are due Jan. 10 at 5pm. Applications are due Jan. 22 at 5pm.

Artists chosen will receive a stipend of \$30,000 and up to \$10,000 for materials. The City wants experienced artists, cultural practitioners, and/or cultural workers working in any medium to apply. The program excludes full-time City employees, artists who have already led a project funded by the program, and recipients of the Artist Fellowship Award.

You can find more details at boston.gov/arts-and-culture/boston-artists-residence-air.

The Arts

At MFA, Nubia Steps Out of Ancient Egypt's Shadow

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

Between 1913 and 1932, the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) and Harvard University conducted numerous archaeological excavations at sites in southern Egypt and northern Sudan, when both countries were under British colonial control.

In 1913, George Reisner, a curator of

pottery, sculpture, and metalwork—represent thousands of years of Nubian history. The jewelry features glazed quartz pendants, gold necklaces with lapis lazuli or carnelian, earrings, bracelets, and amulets found in tombs in Nuri. One notable item is an elaborate collar of electrum, an alloy of gold and silver, that contains hinges, removable pins, and a carved scarab.

exhibit is to confront past misinterpretations of Nubian civilization and to consider why Nubia is less understood than neighboring Egypt. The MFA notes that Reisner, who oversaw the excavations, used cutting-edge techniques and kept meticulous records, but like a number of Egyptologists in the early 20th century, he believed that Africans south of Egypt were incapable of developing highly advanced civilizations.

At Kerma, according to notes at the exhibit, this prejudice led him to misinterpret his finds. When he began to uncover Egyptian

sculptures and inscriptions, he concluded that Kerma was an Egyptian outpost in Nubia, ruled by an Egyptian governor. He attributed fine-quality artifacts to Egyptian influence but identified mundane objects as Nubian. We now know that Reisner had it almost entirely backward. Contemporary archaeologists have shown that an army from Kerma attacked Egypt, looted sanctuaries and brought back objects, including the dramatic statue of Lady Sennuwy, for souvenirs and status symbols.

Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens. "Ancient Nubia Now" runs through Jan. 20.

PHOTO: RUTH KHOWAIS



Artifacts in the "Ancient Nubia Now" exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts.

Egyptian art at the MFA, won permission from the Sudanese government to undertake excavations in Northern Sudan on behalf of a Harvard/MFA expedition.

At Kerma, the first site excavated, the team uncovered (although they did not realize it at the time) a Nubian culture previously unknown in the West. In 1916, the expedition moved to Napata, in the heart of the ancient kingdom of Kush. Across the river at Nuri, a pyramid field contained the pyramids of 12 kings and numerous queens of Nubia.

Nubia, south of Egypt in what is now Sudan, was a flourishing and magnificent kingdom filled with riches and art. The Nubians built major cities, temples, palaces, and more pyramids than the Egyptians. Nubian kings and queens controlled vast empires and trade networks, rivalling, and even for a brief time conquering, their more famous neighbors to the north. Yet for many people today, according to exhibit notes, this powerful history is little known.

In an exhibition that runs through Jan. 20, the MFA attempts to correct the impression that Nubian culture was in any way inferior to that of pharaonic Egypt.

More than 400 works from the museum's collection—including jewelry,

The sculptures are quite dramatic—a well-preserved full-length statue of Lady Sennuwy, carved in granodiorite, dates from 1971 to 1926 BCE. A stele bears the longest known inscription in the still untranslated Meroitic language. Numerous busts depict Egyptian and Nubian royal figures. Funeral beds are elaborate, decorated with inlaid ivory, real and mythical creatures, and placed on legs carved to resemble birds. Pottery ranges from alabaster vessels to canopic jars, used to house the internal organs of those buried in the tombs.

One of the most intriguing sections of the exhibit is a room filled with *shawabties*, funeral figures that depict their owners as mummies carrying hoes and wearing bags for produce on their backs. The miniature mummies, carved out of faience, travertine, or serpentine, were carefully placed standing against the walls of the burial chamber, surrounding the coffin and possibly serving as sentinels.

To enrich the exhibit, the MFA has added video interviews with a biological anthropologist, an Egyptologist, a young Sudanese American, a photographer, and a professor.

It should be noted that a focus of this

Kate Costello: The Tip of the Tongue

PHOTO COURTESY OF TUFTS UNIVERSITY



The exhibit "Tip of the Tongue" highlights Kate Costello's ongoing interest in the abstraction of visual and spoken languages. With a practice rooted in drawing and encompassing sculpture and photography, Costello charges her imagery to perform its own grammar, orchestrating a poetic narrative that is deeply legible yet completely allusive—much like a phrase at the tip of one's tongue. The *Tip of the Tongue* features drawing, sculpture, and photography from the past 15 years alongside a new, site-specific wall drawing for the SMFA. An opening reception and artist talk takes place on Jan. 16, 6-8pm. The exhibit will continue at the Barbara and Steve Grossman Gallery and Anderson Auditorium, 230 The Fenway, through April 16.

LAST CALL

Don't just sit there—catch these exhibits in the Fenway before they close this month:

• ENDING 1/10

ABIGAIL ADAMS: LIFE & LEGACY

The Massachusetts Historical Society has staged a series of pop-up exhibits about Abigail Adams over the past few months. The series title, "Remember Abigail," comes from Adams's famous admonition to her husband to "Remember the Ladies" while helping adopt the Declaration of Independence. This final display of the series explores Adams's legacy and explore how she herself viewed it.

• ENDING 1/20

ANCIENT NUBIA NOW

This exhibition of jewelry, pottery, sculpture, metalwork, and more from the MFA's collection challenges the cultural assumptions made in the 20th century (see this page). The rich display of art and objects dispels the idea that Nubia was a backwater conquered by Egypt, offering a new and more accurate understanding of Nubia's history and influence.

KAY NIELSEN'S ENCHANTED VISION

Nielsen's interpretations of classic fairy tales rank among the most celebrated book illustrations of the 20th century (see page 6). The MFA showcases more than 45 dramatic watercolors, drawings, and illustrated books from a long-overlooked 20th-century master.

MAKE BELIEVE

This exhibition at the MFA brings together five artists who stage fantastical scenes for the camera to address social and cultural issues, including the role of women in the Middle East, climate change, and existential fears of loneliness and loss.

IN THE COMPANY OF ARTISTS

The Gardner Museum surveys 25 years of its artist-in-residence program, which brings contemporary artists to the museum for the better part of year and encourages them to use the Gardner collection as a source of re-interpretation and inspiration for creating new art.

A DOUBLE THREAT IN THE ARTS

PHOTO: RUTH KHOWAIS



Fenway News readers may know John Engstrom as a perceptive guide to the performing arts, but the neighborhood resident doesn't limit himself to cultural criticism—he paints, too. Here Engstrom stands with one of his paintings at the opening of his "Deep Space" art exhibition, featuring both paintings and photographs, on view at the Fenway Community Center through Jan. 31.

January

CALENDAR

+ THIS SYMBOL INDICATES A FREE EVENT.

arts+ ENTERTAINMENT

Through Mon, 1/20

The terms of Isabella Stewart Gardner's will famously dictated that no piece of art could be moved and no room rearranged when her home became a museum. But if a museum can't change its displays, how do you keep it fresh and relevant? One strategy the Gardner Museum has adopted a program that brings in contemporary artists for extended residencies at the museum to interpret the holdings and draw inspiration for new works from it. **IN THE COMPANY OF ARTISTS** surveys 25 years of the program, featuring seven artists who've held residencies at the Gardner, as well as participatory artwork, performances, storytelling, and live portrait drawing. Open Wed-Mon, 11am-5pm; Thu, 11am-9pm. 25 Evans Way. For further information, visit gardnermuseum.org.

Sat, 1/4

Looking to clear shelves at home, or turn gift-giving misfires into something you'll love? Bring unwanted books in very good condition to a **GIANT POST-HOLIDAY BOOK SWAP** at the main branch of the Boston Public Library in Copley Square. Bring as many books as you want, and take away up to three. The City-Wide Friends of the BPL will claim any surplus books for their bimonthly sale. 11am-3pm.

Wed, 1/8

CUNY professor Miriam Liebman presents **'THUS MUCH FOR POLITICKS': AMERICAN WOMEN, DIPLOMACY, AND THE AFTERMATH OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**. Her Brown Bag lecture focuses on Abigail Adams's efforts to win foreign support for the newly minted United States while posted abroad with her husband in England and France. Mass. Historical Society, 1154 Boylston St., 12-1pm. Details at www.masshist.org/calendar. FREE

Wed, 1/8, 1/15, 1/22, & 1/29

CLIMATE CHANGE: A COURSE FOR EVERYONE. The first part of the spring 2020 Myra Kraft Open Classroom series explores "Understanding Our Changing World," a course intended to promote climate change education, resilience, and action. 6pm **+** Northeastern University West Village F, Room 20. FREE

Thu, 1/9

The Gardner Museum hosts **FOUR WOMEN STORYTELLERS** as part of the "In the Company of Artists" exhibit. Of the four, the most famous is Gcina Mhlophe, a South African poet, actor, freedom fighter, director, and author, as well as a salon luminary at the museum. 7-9pm, \$15. gardnermuseum.org.

Fri, 1/10

Run by its members, conductor-free, and based in Boston, the adventurous classical ensemble **A FAR CRY** has won international acclaim since its founding in 2007. Tonight's

program, on the theme of death, features Shostakovich's dark 14th Symphony and Mahler's "Adagietto," inspired by a near-death experience. Sonja Tengblad, soprano, and Dashon Burton, baritone, are featured soloists. 8pm, NEC's Jordan Hall. Tickets \$25-75. Details and tickets at <https://afarcry.org/all>.

Sat, 1/11

- Boston Philharmonic conductor Benjamin Zander conducts regular classes at the Boston Public Library for young musicians, **INTERPRETATIONS OF MUSIC: LESSONS FOR LIFE**. But you don't have to be a musician to sit in and learn about expressiveness, emotions, and what to listen for in music. Central Branch, Copley Square, 10am-12pm. Details at **+** bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/search/index. FREE
- Juan de Marcos, one of the founders of the Buena Vista Social Club, brings the **AFRO-CUBAN ALL STARS** to the Berklee Performance Center for a rousing concert of new works in the classical Cuban tradition. 8pm, Berklee Performance Center; tickets \$28/38/48/58. Buy at the box office, 136 Mass. Ave., or at www.berklee.edu/BPC/calendar.

Sun, 1/12

Trident Bookstore Café redefines the term "culture wars" with a March Madness-style tournament involving 32 contender. The twist? In **WHO WON 2019?**, the battles involve events, characters, or trends that captured cultural attention last year (think Lizzo, Baby Yoda, the women's World Cup team). The audience debates and votes on each bracket, winnowing candidates down to a final champ. 338 Newbury St., second floor, 6-8:30pm. Details and tickets (\$9) at the store or tridentbookscafe.com/event/2020-01.

Fri, 1/17

The **BOSTON CYCLISTS UNION** celebrates its move to 1419 Tremont St. in Mission Hill with an **OFFICE-WARMING PARTY** from 5 to 7pm. They'll provide dessert and drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic), though you're welcome to bring your own snacks and libations. For more substantive fare, BCU encourages ordering takeout from an area restaurant to show the new neighbors **+** that bikes mean business. FREE

Sat, 1/18

- Anne Boyd Rioux joins Pulitzer Prize-winning author Megan Marshall in a conversation about the long reach of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, based on Rioux's recent book **MEG, JO, BETH, AMY: THE STORY OF LITTLE WOMEN AND WHY IT STILL MATTERS**. WBUR CitySpace, 890 Comm. Ave. \$20 reserved/\$10 general. 2pm. Details and tickets at wbur.org.
- University of Notre Dame professor Ingrid Rowland explores the life of Tomasso Inghirami—Vatican librarian, public speaker, renowned actor—in **RAPHAEL AND INGHIRAMI: CELEBRITIES OF RENAISSANCE ROME**. It expands on a small exhibit that runs through January 30 and focuses on the Gardner Museum's portrait of Inghirami by Raphael. 3:30pm at the Gardner. Tickets at \$15/12/10 include museum admission. Details and tickets at gardnermuseum.org
- **JAZZ TRUMPETER TERENCE BLANCHARD** performs at Berklee Performance Center. 136 Mass. Ave. 8 pm. For tickets, visit berkleeperformancecenterboston.boxoffice-tickets.com or visit the box office.

Sun, 1/19 & Wed, 1/22

It's easy to see why **AN AMERICAN IN PARIS** took home the 1952 Oscar for best picture (and five others), with music by the Gershwins, a script by Alan Jay Lerner, and one of the most famous dance sequences in Hollywood history—choreographed by star Gene Kelly. Experience it on the big screen



Discuss 'The Bluest Eye'

With the death last year of Nobel laureate Toni Morrison last year, American letters lost a giant known both for her craft and her wisdom. Defying barriers she faced as a woman of color, she rose to prominence as a New York book editor in the 1960s and 70s, only to turn to writing herself, beginning with *The Bluest Eye*. On Monday, Jan. 6, join the Dudley Reads book club to discuss the book. Organized by BPL librarians, the club meets monthly at the Frugal Bookstore in Dudley (soon to be Nubian) Square. 57 Warren St. FREE

PICK OF THE MONTH

at the Fenway Regal 13. Sun, 1pm and 4pm; Wed, 7pm. Tickets \$16 at the box office or at fathomevents.com.

Sun, 1/19

The BSO brings its short-form **COMMUNITY CONCERTS** to WBUR's CitySpace with a program of Beethoven and Colgrass. Talk to the performers at a post-concert coffee/dessert reception. Tickets \$20 reserved/\$10 general. 2pm at 890 Comm. Ave. Details and tickets at wbur.org.

1/20—Martin Luther King Day

Three area institutions host programs celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- **GARDNER MUSEUM**: Day of service, with performances by artists committed to social justice, a hands-on service project, and a family-friendly workshop. 11am-4pm. FREE
- **MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS**: A day of celebratory music and art-making events. 10am-5pm. FREE
- **BOSTON CHILDREN'S CHORUS**: "Still I Rise" concert at Symphony Hall honors King with music ranging from Duke Ellington to Stephen Sondheim. 7pm; tickets \$15-25-35-50. Details at bostonchildrenschorus.org.

Tue, 1/21

- **SHAMARR ALLEN** "epitomizes New Orleans music, showcasing influences in jazz, hip-hop, rock, funk, blues, and country." That broad palette explains why artists like Willie Nelson, Lennie Kravitz, and Galactic (among others) have sought Allen out as a collaborator. Red Room at Café 939 at 939 Boylston Street. Tickets \$12 advance/\$15 day off. Find more info at www.berklee.edu/cafe939.

- The **GRAND OPENING OF BU'S HOWARD THURMAN CENTER FOR COMMON GROUND** will include tours and a public reception. For decades known as the "Peter Fuller building," the former car showroom most recently served as an art gallery. Thurman, former dean of Marsh Chapel, was Martin Luther King's mentor in Boston but also an influential proponent of non-violence in his own right. In 1944 Thurman co-founded the Church for the Fellowship of all Peoples, an interdenominational and interracial congregation. Although BU has hosted the HTC since 1986, the new site gives it **+** significant new visibility. 3-5pm, 808 Commonwealth Ave. FREE

Fri, 1/24 & Sun, 1/26

HANDEL + HAYDN SOCIETY launches 2020 with a concert of Mozart and Haydn, including the latter's "Military" Symphony and the Lord Nelson Mass. Fri. at 7:30pm; Sun at 3pm, with both concerts in Symphony Hall. Tickets \$24-100. Details and tickets at www.handelandhaydn.org.

Sun, 1/26

Prize-winning young cellist Thomas Mesa specializes in chamber music. For **BOSTON CONSERVATORY'S STRING MASTERS SERIES**, he'll play Tchaikovsky's Variations on a Rocco Theme (op. 33) and three newly-commissioned works. Pianist Jung-A Bang joins Mesa for this intimate recital. 7pm

in Scully Hall, 8 The Fenway (4th floor). Tickets \$10-15, with discounts available. Visit bostonconservatory.berklee.edu/events for details or to buy tickets.

Mon, 1/27

Boston **REGIONAL FINALS FOR THE 2020 AUGUST WILSON MONOLOGUE COMPETITION**. Watch and celebrate local high schoolers on stage performing selections from ten August Wilson dramas. Regional winners move on to nationals in New York in the spring. The Huntington—which undertook a pioneering production of Wilson's entire "Pittsburgh Cycle" plays—has been a competition sponsor for more than a decade, along with other regional theaters across **+** the country. 6pm at the Calderwood Pavilion, 527 Tremont St. FREE

Thu, 1/30

The **SOUNDSCAPE OF SPAIN: FROM FLAMENCO ROOTS TO FUSION** features famed flamenco artists Sonja Olla and Ismael Fernández and pianist Olivia Pérez Collellmir. The program explores how folk traditions, flamenco, jazz, and classical influences braid together into a distinctive musical sound. 8pm, Berklee Performance Center; tickets \$10 advance/\$15 day off. Buy at the box office, 136 Mass. Ave., or at www.berklee.edu/BPC/calendar.

Fri, 1/31

In the **LATIN AMERICAN SONG PROJECT**, students of Latin American descent at Boston Conservatory perform vocal works **+** honoring their heritage. At Scully Hall, 8 The Fenway. 8 pm. FREE.

Fri, 1/31 & Sat, 2/1

In **RESPECT: A BOSTON ARTS ACADEMY TRIBUTE TO ARETHA FRANKLIN**, academy musicians, dancers, actors, filmmakers, fashion designers, and visual artists celebrate Aretha Franklin's impact on R&B and gospel music as well as her work related to social activism. Tickets \$15 adults/\$10 students and seniors. Visit bostonartsacademy.org/respect to purchase tickets. Roxbury Community College, Media Arts Center, 1234 Columbus Ave. 7:30pm both days; 2pm on 2/1.

@ THE CENTER

These highlights from the Fenway Community Center's calendar are free unless otherwise noted. Visit the Center at 1282 Boylston or check out the full calendar at www.fenwaycommunitycenter.org/calendar

- **Wed, 1/15 at 11am: COMMUNITY LUNCHEON**. In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Fenway Community Center hosts a performance of "The Struggle for Freedom," followed by a free hot meal.
- **Mon, 1/20 at 10am: HELPING HANDS WORKSHOP**. Families are invited to celebrate MLK Day with a selection of service activities and crafts, as well as a storytime and refreshments.

SENIOR EVENTS

Events take place at the Peterborough Senior Center or Fenway Community Center. Find the Senior Center entrance by walking into the alley between 100 and 108 Jersey St. and looking left. For more information, call 617-536-7154.

- **Thu, 1/9 at 11:30am: Matti Kniva Spencer's Native American Breakfast.**
- **Tue, 1/14 at 1pm: Boston 311 & Winter Safety Presentation.**
- **Tue, 1/21 at 1pm: FenwayUpdates with Fenway CDC's Rich Giordano and Community Organizer Jaya Savita.**