

MEDUSA ~ Myth, Memory, (Anti)Monument

Media Release and Call to Dethrone Columbus Day

Today, as many states across the country observe Columbus Day, non-binary, Italian American artists Maria Molteni, Laura Campagna, Ash Capachione, and Vin Caponigro, collaborators on the [Gateway to Infinity: \(An Anti-Monument\)](#) public artwork, release new project film and publication in response to their site's proximity to Boston's own Christopher Columbus Park. We express our dissidence regarding the holiday, our support of the [2023-2024 MA Indigenous Legislative Agenda](#) and offer alternatives for celebration, reflection, and growth.



BACKGROUND

A public ritual was performed in downtown Boston on the Summer Solstice for the unveiling of interdisciplinary artist Maria Molteni's large-scale painted groundwork [Gateway to Infinity \(an Anti-monument\)](#), curated by Dr. Audrey Lopez and commissioned by The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy in 2023. Exploring site-specific histories and collective rebirth, this piece was created in response to the legacy of violence of Christopher Columbus whose practices of rape, enslavement, and brutality make him unsuitable for celebration. The public artwork, bolstered by the collaborative ritual, short film and printed publication, demonstrate new models for engaging with history, memory and veneration.

Triskele & The Monster's Tools: A Solstice Invocation of Medusa Consciousness, developed collaboratively by the four named artists, centered the myth and legacy of Medusa as a symbol of survival and transformation in the face of patriarchal violence and domination. The ritual invited guests to enter the artwork and participate via printed paper talismans, collective movement, and personal family heirlooms. On the longest day of the year, artists and attendees walked the triple spiral labyrinth together to process the heavy history and energy of the space. Together, they called upon the beaming sun, salty ocean, and three conjunct planetary bodies – the Moon, Venus, and Mars – to aid in a regenerative alchemical process, connecting the head to the heart.

NEW PROJECT MEDIA



Short Film:

[*Triskele & The Monster's Tools: A Solstice Invocation of Medusa Consciousness*](#)

Features the collaborative ritual performed on the Summer Solstice when the groundwork was revealed to the public. Ash Capachione has composed a 6 minute experimental video artwork complete with original sound and animation they created for the piece.



Publication:

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Transforming Histories. Beheading Binaries. Waking the Monster's Tools.

A fifty-six page, risograph zine- designed and printed by Snake Hair including writings that contextualize the work and collaborative ritual on mythological, historical, political and poetic terms. Essays by art historian Liz Andres, artist Maria Molteni, astrologer Laura Campagna, and artist Vin Caponigro.

CALL TO ACTION

As members of the Italian-American community working in Boston, we commend Mayor Janey's executive order in 2021, declaring the second Monday of October to be Indigenous Peoples Day in the City of Boston. We ask that Mayor Woo rename Christopher Columbus Park via community processes. We demand that our government work towards the swift and immediate passage of the 2023-2024 MA Indigenous Legislative Agenda.

We stand in solidarity with the efforts of the [United American Indians of New England \(UAINE\)](#) and [the North American Indian Center of Boston \(NAICOB\)](#) in recognizing the history of colonial violence in Massachusetts and improving the quality of life of Indigenous peoples. We [support the statement](#) put forth by [Italian Americans for Indigenous Peoples Day](#) and the indigenous led movement to rename Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples Day in the Commonwealth.

The presence of Medusa is interwoven into the history of Boston. Her frozen face sits at the center of the mosaic at the heart of the [Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum](#). [Triskele & The Monster's Tools](#) questions the figures who have historically been labeled as horrible or heroic. The mythical Medusa, a survivor of sexual violence, was murdered but never defeated. Her legacy, locked in pain and betrayal, continues to haunt our collective imagination. Her myth has reemerged in popular consciousness as a vehicle for healing, especially for Othered beings and survivors of assault. The myth attests that one drop of Medusa's blood could resurrect the dead. We believe it is powerful enough to transform our relationship to history and imagine a better future.

Signed by project collaborators, contributors, performers and painters on October 8, 2023:

Maria Molteni, Vin Caponigro, Ash Capachione, Laura Campagna, Liz Andres, Laura Ganci, Alicenne Reid, Nicole Hogarty