

## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

## Downtown Window Art Walk brings domestic abuse to light

BY CHRISTINE DUNKLE

ROCKLAND — Throughout October, Rockland is breaking the silence of domestic abuse in a bold and beautiful way with a downtown-wide Window Art Exhibit in Solidarity with Survivors of Domestic Abuse. Forty-five artists and 50 businesses are participating.

The Finding Our Voices event is an expansion of photojournalist Patrisha McLean's "Let's Talk About It" banner campaign that has been touring downtown business windows around the state since it launched in the Midcoast this spring, with banners in the Dover-Foxcroft area, the Blue Hill Peninsula, and back in Knox County.

"The Art Walk is another way to open everyone's eyes to the domestic abuse all around them, and also a way to get ahead of the winter when increased COVID-19 isolation is going to make it a lot more dangerous for the women and children trapped with angry and controlling family members," McLean said.

The Farnsworth Art Museum is one of the mostly-Main Street businesses displaying the work of area artists. The museum has participated for many years in October's National Domestic Violence Awareness Month by highlighting artworks or purple lights in its Main Street windows.

"It is an issue of utmost concern in any year. This year, with so many needing to remain in close quarters, statistics have shown that cases have unfortunately grown throughout the country," said Farnsworth Communications and Marketing Manager David Troup. "We hope our participation will help to increase awareness."

Poets Dave Morrison and Kristin Lindquist are contributing poetry, and Amy Rollins is collaborating with



"Shattered" by Amy Lowry.

Morrison to render his poem in calligraphy.

"I was honored when Patrisha invited me to take part — the work that she and other similar organizations do is so important," Morrison said. "She asked if I might have something that would be a good fit, and invited me to think about it — I was able to get back to her in about two minutes, with 'Patricia, Alone After 14 Years' (from *Sweet* 2006), a poem that had been waiting for such an opportunity!"

Among the art in Rockland's business windows will be the full set of McLean's 29 "Let's Talk About It" banners, each featuring the portrait of a Maine survivor of domestic abuse (aged 18 to 80 and about a third from the Midcoast) and the 24/7 helpline number of New Hope for Women (1-800-522-3304).

Viewers can follow hearts on an Art Walk map to see Survivor/Solidarity Art in such diverse makeshift gallery windows as Doug's Barber Shop, Camden National Bank and Atlantic Baking Company — plus the more traditional exhibit spaces as Caldbeck Gallery, Dowling Walsh, CMCA and the Steel House.

A "play" arrow symbol next to some of the banners indicates when there is audio of the survivor telling her story accessible by cell phone.

Windows are a fitting venue for this domestic abuse-awareness art exhibit, McLean said, because it is important to bring the issue into the light. "Everyone needs to know how pervasive, and insidious and dangerous this is," she said. "Victims need to know they are not alone, and that the community stands beside them and help is available."

A month-long online silent auction of the window art will benefit Finding Our Voices, and can be found at [findingourvoices.net/auction](http://findingourvoices.net/auction).

Finding Our Voices began as a multimedia exhibit, combining McLean's portrait photography of survivors along with audio recordings of them telling their stories. The show kicked off Valentine's Day 2019 at the Camden Public Library.

The project gained momentum with a New York Times article and four-month-long stint at the Holocaust and Human

Rights Center of Maine in Augusta. In April, Finding Our Voices became a non-profit organization marshaling survivor voices and community creativity to break the silence of domestic abuse town by town and conversation by conversation. Sarah Gilbert Esq. of Camden Law is a board member.

The art exhibit is one of the many ways Finding Our Voices is helping people to recognize and avoid dangerous relationships, safely leave and heal, and reach out for the help that is there.

"There are so many women carrying a toxic load from living with abuse as a child growing up, or enduring months or decades of it in an intimate partner-relationship. The abuse can be physical, but also emotional, sexual and financial," McLean said. "When you open up about it, the toxicity diffuses, and it also is out in the public arena. The shame is not ours: It is the perpetrator's and society's."

She said this principle is perfectly illustrated by Robin Horty's contribution to the Art Walk — a collaboration with Michelle Bird from Iceland called, "It's not my secret, it is yours."

Business sponsors for the art exhibit are Reny's, Camden Hospital for Animals, Rockport Automotive, Pen Bay Glass, Camden Real Estate and McLean Hospital.

For more information about the Art Walk and to hear the stories of more than 40 survivors, including on McLean's new "Let's Talk About It" radio show, visit [findingourvoices.net](http://findingourvoices.net). Both Finding Our Voices and New Hope for Women will be available to "talk about it" outside on Winter Street Thursday, Oct. 22, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. New Hope also offers support and resources 24/7 at its helpline at 1-800-522-3304.



From left are Monique Deschamps, Melora Norman and Erica Rubin-Irish in rehearsal for "A Voice From The Cold." PHOTO BY: ERIK PERKINS

## Maskers perform horror shorts 'Tales From the Muck'

BELFAST — Fresh off the heels of its sold-out production of "Five Socially-Distanced Comedies," Belfast Maskers is taking a darker turn with "Tales From the Muck," an anthology of short horror plays. Presented on the last two weekends of October, the shows will be performed outside of the theater at 17 Court St. with socially-distanced seating in the street.

Local director and actor Erik Perkins decided to organize the production with Maskers artistic director Meg Nickerson after performing in the last show with his wife, Katie Glessner. "We were impressed at how well that event came together. Theater-starved audiences loved it, so I stole the idea and applied it to one of my favorite genres. I always like to do or see something dark or creepy in the fall, so what we're putting together here is an homage to the old anthology shows like 'Tales of Tomorrow,' 'Twilight Zone,' or 'Stephen King and

George Romero's film 'Creepshow.'"

"Tales From the Muck" will include five short plays, introduced by the legendary Muck Witch, and featuring a cast of Maskers favorites that will take theatergoers on a journey through the haunted past, the frozen arctic, outer space, and beyond the grave.

All recommended social-distancing and sanitation recommendations will be followed and, as a result, just 45 seats will be available for each evening's performance and can only be purchased online at [BelfastMaskers.com](http://BelfastMaskers.com). Tickets are \$10 per person. Audience members should bring their own chairs and dress warmly!

Performances will be Oct. 23, 24, 29 and 30 at 7 p.m., with two shows on Halloween, Oct. 31 — a 5 p.m. show that will be toned down a bit for younger audiences, though parental discretion is still advised — and a final show at 7 p.m.

The Arts & Entertainment deadline is Thursdays at 5 p.m. for events dated on/between the following two Thursdays. Please email [press\\_releases/photos\\_to\\_arts@villagesoup.com](mailto:press_releases/photos_to_arts@villagesoup.com).

## VIRTUAL EVENTS



"Winged Victory" by Benjamin Spalding.

## CMCA Biennial 2020 opens Oct. 3

ROCKLAND — The CMCA Biennial 2020 features the work of 34 artists from 17 Maine communities. The exhibition opens to the public Saturday, Oct. 3, with a virtual reception live streamed to CMCA's Facebook page from 5 to 7 p.m.

The virtual event will include a live video tour of the exhibition with Biennial artists speaking about their work, as well as comments from the jurors and CMCA staff. The exhibition will remain on view at CMCA, 21 Winter St., through April 2021, and is sponsored by The Via Agency.

The selected artists were chosen from a pool of more than 500 individual submissions by jurors Nina Johnson-Milewski, owner, founder, and director of Nina Johnson Gallery, Miami, Fla., and Kate McNamara, an independent curator and educator based in Providence, R.I.

This year marks the 22nd edition of the CMCA Biennial, which typically takes place in the fall of even numbered years. Dating back to 1978, it is the longest running open juried exhibition in the state.

For more information, visit [cmcanow.org](http://cmcanow.org).

## Penobscot Marine Museum's October Speaker Series

SEARSPORT — Every Thursday in October at 6 p.m. Penobscot Marine Museum's staff will present on a variety of topics. The presentations will be held on Zoom, and are free.

Oct. 1, Exploring the Picture Postcard; Oct. 8, Glimpse of a Lost Enterprise: Maine Log Drives; Oct. 15, Quintessential Maine Boats; Oct. 22, Marine Art by the Bittersworth Family; Oct. 29, "Spirit" Stories of Tragedy and Adventure (family friendly, but may be scary for young viewers).

Registration is required for each of these presentations. For more information and to register, visit [penobscotmarinemuseum.org](http://penobscotmarinemuseum.org) or email [jganskop@pmm-maine.org](mailto:jganskop@pmm-maine.org).

## Remembering the war through memoir writing

CAMDEN — On Tuesday, Oct. 6, at 6 p.m., the Camden Public Library welcomes photographer and journalist David H. Lyman for an online program that will describe how he came to write a memoir about his time in Vietnam, and provide strategies to help people unwrap their own stories. The program will be hosted on Zoom. Email [jpierce@librarycamden.org](mailto:jpierce@librarycamden.org) to request a link to attend.

Many war veterans and non-vets have tales from their lives that go untold. Lyman's book, "Seabee71 in Chu Lai: Memoir of a Navy Journalist with a Mobile Construction Battalion," was published in 2019 and discusses the 14 months

he spent with Military Construction Battalion 71 as the editor of the unit's monthly newspaper. The stories and photographs in Lyman's book are from the battalion's newspaper, from memory, and from recent conversations with shipmates.

Lyman has a long career as an entrepreneur, sailor, storyteller, and memoir writer. In 1973, he founded Maine Photographic Workshops (now Maine Media Workshops and College) and was the school's director for 34 years.

Visit [librarycamden.org](http://librarycamden.org) for more information.

## Virtual author talk with Susan Conley

ROCKLAND — Rockland Public Library welcomes author Susan Conley for a virtual reading and conversation on Thursday, Oct. 8, at 6:30 p.m. Conley is the author of four critically acclaimed books, including "The Foremost Good Fortune," which won the Maine Literary Award for Memoir, and the novel "Paris Was the Place," which was an Indie Next Pick. Her most recent novel, "Elsie Come Home," was published in 2019 and was a Most Anticipated/Best Book at Oprah Magazine and numerous others.

Conley grew up in Maine and currently resides in Portland, where she is on the faculty of the Stonecoast Writing Program at the University of Southern Maine. She is the co-founder of the Telling Room, a creative writing lab for kids.

The program will take place via the Zoom platform. To request the link to attend, please email [sbillings@rocklandmaine.gov](mailto:sbillings@rocklandmaine.gov) by 4 p.m. on the day of the event.



Susan Conley



David Lyman

## BOB AT THE MOVIES

by Bob Garver



## 'ANTEBELLUM'

Wannabe theatrical releases that go straight to On Demand in this era fall into one of three categories. There are movies that try to make a lateral move — they would have made good money in theaters, and hopefully they'll make good money at home, too. "Trolls World Tour" and "Scoob!" are like this. Then there are movies that try to become minor hits with strategic On Demand releasing. "The High Note" and "The Tax Collector" probably wouldn't have been able to cut it in theaters, but they were able to take advantage of a reshuffling of the deck. Then there are movies that go straight to On Demand because the studios realize that they had straight-to-On-Demand-quality movies all along. Examples of these include "Capone" and today's selection, "Antebellum." Had this film's release not relegated it to home viewing, it might have garnered a reputation as one of the worst theatrical releases of the year.

The first 39 minutes of this movie are just slaves being mistreated at a plantation. An escapee is shot, and Eden (Janelle Monae) is violently branded for her role in the escape attempt. Everyone else is forced to work long hours picking cotton in a field, only for the cotton to be thrown on a fire. The one-dimensional villains revel in abusing the slaves, and so does the movie. But there has to be more to the movie than that, right?

The advertising promised a horror movie, and while much of the imagery thus far can certainly be described as "horrific," it doesn't really fit into the horror genre.

Following a traumatic experience, Eden goes to sleep, and when she wakes up, she's living an idyllic life in a version of the world we recognize. Her name is Veronica, she has a loving husband and daughter, and she's a bestselling author with a lucrative speaking tour. Although the "best life" business isn't as painful to watch as the slavery scenes (an embarrassingly rude best friend played by Gabourey Sidibe notwithstanding), this too gets old quickly as we wait for something to connect the two worlds. Is it reincarnation? Parallel universes? Dreams? Actually, it's something I guessed pretty early. Something about a tent seemed "off," and a certain mild slur seemed out of place.

The appeal of the entire movie lies in a twist, as if the writers thought of it and wrote the movie around it. Actually, I'm sure that's what happened. In short, the problem with the twist is that it is supposed to be believable and it isn't. These characters could never pull it off even if they were smarter, and as it is, they're morons. There's maybe a kernel of an interesting idea here, but the movie bungles it in many ways at once, including taking itself too seriously and focusing on predictable white-on-black



violence rather than the black characters coming to terms with their lives as slaves.

Perhaps I'm being too hard on "Antebellum" when I say it would have made one of the worst theatrical releases of the year. There are a few positives about it. The camera work is unexpectedly competent (especially in a long tracking shot at the beginning), the costumes are beautiful (though suspiciously clean given the setting), and Monae can cry real tears. But people are going to come away from the film talking about the twist, and it is one of the worst I've ever seen. It's not like the two acts that preceded it were particularly compelling, but the film takes a turn for the ridiculous with a disappointing shortage of appropriate ridiculousness. Ignore this movie from the comfort of your home.

## Grade: D

"Antebellum" is available On Demand with online streaming services, and likely through your local cable provider. The film is rated R for disturbing violent content, language, and sexual references. Its running time is 105 minutes.

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