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## Theater Night

*A curated preview of theater in the DMV*

by Matthew McClure

**H**uman connection, touch, intimacy. Everyone craves it. The primal urge to forge bonds with those around us is encoded from birth. This election month column is all about theater that acknowledges the power of physical, human attachment and connection. As we head to the polls, shake your neighbor's hand, give your mom a hug or have lunch with an old friend. There's so much more that we have in common than what separates us. Read on for our curated selection.

### On Right Now

***The Art of Care*, Mosaic Theater Company**

**Showing Oct 31 – Nov 24**

**[www.mosaictheater.org](http://www.mosaictheater.org)**

There's a popular anecdote often attributed to anthropologist Margaret Mead about the mark of a civilized society being its ability to care for its most vulnerable members. *The Art of Care*, a new play conceptualized and directed by Dr. Derek Goldman (*Remember This: The Lesson of Jan Kariski*) spotlights not only the mutually transformative effects of the act of care but also the importance of dissolving boundaries between the arts and medicine.

Dr. Goldman is artistic, executive director and co-founder of the Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics (The Lab) at Georgetown University. He's also Professor of Theater and Performance Studies in the Department of Performing Arts and Professor of Global Performance, Culture and Politics at the Walsh School of Foreign Service. He returns to Mosaic to direct *The Art of Care* having directed Mosaic's *Unexplored Interior* in 2015, so it's a homecoming of sorts. "At core, the piece is an intimate ethnography of the care experiences of seven artists," Goldman explains. "They're sharing their own stories and at times performing each other's stories. We're creating a simple, elemental ritual of story sharing around this topic. There's no person that could come to this

performance and not have something to connect to." An award-winning cast of seven DC actors offer up deeply personal stories of care that are interspersed with similar narratives from those whose job it is to care for others. It's a deeply moving and personal project that Dr. Goldman says he feels a particular affinity for. "A theme of my work and The Lab's work is trying to slow down the process of forgetting or attuning ourselves to what we're living through in the present. The (Covid-19) pandemic only deepened and amplified the intersections of performance and politics, global health and medical humanities. This work has grown organically from living through that time."

*The Art of Care* has been created in collaboration with The Global Health Institute, the School of Health, School of Nursing, Medstar Health and the Medical Humanities Initiative at Georgetown University. Music is by DC's own Jabari Exum, a Hip-Hop Theater artist and percussionist whose work you might recognize from

the *Black Panther* 1 and 2 soundtracks. Dr. Goldman hopes that *The Art of Care* will facilitate even more discussion about what care means beyond not only this performance but also beyond institutions of healing in DC. Come and prepare to be moved.

### In the Spotlight

***Summer 1976*, Studio Theatre**

**Showing from Nov 13**

**[www.studiotheatre.org](http://www.studiotheatre.org)**

The Vietnam War has just ended. The Free Love movement is a rosy memory, and America is celebrating 200 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. At a kid's playgroup where children frolic under the watchful eye of their parents, Diana and Alice size each other up from across the room. *Summer 1976* – by Pulitzer Prize winning playwright David Auburn – is the story of how an unlikely friendship blossoms between these two women in July of 1976. It's a deceptively simple tale with a timeless message



The cast of *The Art of Care*. Left to right: Tuyét Thị Phạm, Tom Story, Billie Krishawn, Susan Rome, Jabari Exum, Raghad Makhoulouf and William T. Newman, Jr. Photo: Chris Banks.



about the power of companionship that's never been more relevant.

Auburn's play is being directed by Vivienne Benesch, artistic director at North Carolina's Play-Maker's Repertory Company. She explains that the action takes place in 2003 (25 years after Diana and Alice first meet), thus the seven chapters of *Summer 1976* are what Benesch calls a "retrospective" of their complex relationship after it has come to an end. "The roles that women fell into in the mid 70s were particular and this play looks at two of those types. Both stopped their educations to become mothers. What I love about this play is that these two women get deeper than that to help each other know that they are more than that." Set design by Lee Savage and sound by Kate Marvin form unintrusive mnemonic cues that are the perfect backdrop to this story of how friendships can be a guiding light through life.

*Summer 1976* isn't just for the Boomers ei-

ther, Benesch says. "I think the play speaks beautifully to a younger audience as well. The struggles are no different. Who we are, what we are allowed to do. Where we are with Roe vs. Wade. All these things are on a precipice again." The message she'd like you to go home with at the end of the evening? "Be kind to yourself. Forgive yourself and keep changing."

### Catch Before Closing

*Romeo and Juliet*, Folger Theater

Showing Oct 1 – Nov 10

[www.folger.edu](http://www.folger.edu)

Strap yourself in and prepare for a wild ride in director Raymond O. Caldwell's radical reinterpretation of one of the bard's most beloved plays. This is *Romeo and Juliet* on amphetamines. The rival houses of Capulet and Montague – differentiated by shades of red and blue in an overt nod to our own feuding Republicans and Democrats – launch political campaigns via live stream. Romeo swigs heavily on an intoxicating blue liquid and Juliet takes frequent hits from a crucifix around her neck. It's heady stuff and well worth a visit to see at the newly revamped Folger Shakespeare Library.

At the core of his production, states Caldwell, is the power of human connection in a digitized world. What is it about that most basic desire for skin-to-skin contact that can drive impetuous

young lovers to (spoiler alert!) murder and suicide? Cole Taylor and Caro Reyes Rivera more than adequately impart a 21st century Gen Z flavor to the pair of star-crossed lovers destined for heartbreak; their earnest, dewy youthfulness contrasted against multimedia designer Kelly Colburn's dazzling bombardment of animated phone screens and Jonathan Dahm Robertson's brutalist sets. The actors come at you from all four sides of the theater in a deliberate attempt to shatter the fourth wall and implicate the audience in this narrative of the love of power, of excess and of the messy fleshiness that is personhood. There's a lot crammed into Caldwell's story. Real-life dialogue from current presidential candidates rendered into iambic pentameter using AI, a reference to a very Trumpian border policing dispute and political innuendos galore. Is it too much? See for yourself to decide.

**Scene Stealer:** Giovanna Alcântara Drummond and John Floyd revel exuberantly in their roles as Mercutio and Benvolio, the confidants to Romeo and Juliet. Drummond's deliciously hedonistic tale of the journey of Queen Mab through the dreams of sleepers was a delight to behold and Floyd's Benvolio (adorned with pearls and wearing an enviable pair of heels) imparted both a sensitivity and contemporaneity to this oft-undervalued character. ♦

LEFT: Fran Tapia as Lady Capulet, Caro Reyes Rivera as Juliet and Luz Nicolas as Nurse in William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Photo: Erika Nizborski.

RIGHT: John Floyd as Benvolio and Giovanna Alcantara Drummond as Mercutio in William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Photo: Erika Nizborski.





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# Art and the City

by Phil Hutinet

## DC Risoprint Fair

Saturday & Sunday, November 23 & 24  
Eastern Market's North Hall  
[risoprintfair.eastcityart.com](http://risoprintfair.eastcityart.com)

The inaugural DC Risoprint Fair is a must-attend event in DC's arts calendar. Presented by East City Art, the region's go-to source for visual art news, the fair will take place at Eastern Market's North Hall on Saturday, Nov. 23 and Sunday, Nov. 24. The print fair celebrates the vibrant world of Risography, a quirky printing technique that blends the convenience of digital duplication with the wonderfully unexpected results that come from screen printing.

More than two dozen artists, graphic designers, presses and printers from DC, Baltimore, Brooklyn, Richmond, and Philadelphia will display hundreds of original prints, books, and cards, with many works priced affordably. Attendees will explore the charm of RISO prints, known for their vibrant colors, subtle misregistrations, and textured, retro aesthetic, qualities that make every piece truly one of a kind.

Whether you're a long-time print lover or new to the medium, the DC Risoprint Fair offers an exciting oppor-



DC Risoprint Fair. Image courtesy Blurred Circle

tunity to connect with artists, discover emerging talent, and explore how this eco-friendly, soy-based ink process is reshaping contemporary art. 225 7th Street SE, Washington, DC. The fair is open Saturday, November 23 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. & Sunday, November 24 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## Brentwood Arts Exchange

"The Sound of DC: A Visual History of Punk DIY"  
November 4, 2024– January 4, 2025

Opening Reception: November 9, 5:00–8:00 PM  
[pgparks.com](http://pgparks.com)

Curated by photographer Pete Duvall, "The Sound of DC: A Visual History" is an ambitious four-part exhibition series that dives into the DC region's influential musical past. The first installment focuses on the emergence of DC's punk rock scene in the 1970s, which Duvall argues evolved from the area's well-established and world-famous jazz traditions. Drawing from the University of Maryland's extensive digital archives, the exhibition seeks to illustrate how a group of teenagers, armed with passion and creativity, built a grassroots music cul-



Brentwood Arts Exchange; Archival Punk DIY collection. Photo: Pete Duvall, 2024.



National Portrait Gallery and the Archives of American Art; "Untitled"(America)(1994), Twelve parts, each: 42 light bulbs, waterproof rubber light sockets, and waterproof electrical cord. Overall dimensions vary with installation. Courtesy Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation. Photo: Roberto Ruiz, Image courtesy of Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona(MACBA).

ture that sparked a global DIY movement.

Beyond the music, this exhibition highlights the art and visual elements that grew alongside the scene, reflecting punk's ethos of independence, original self-expression and resistance to mainstream corporate influences. Visitors can explore the movement's raw energy through a blend of archival material and immersive storytelling.

An Artist Talk on Dec. 7 from 2:00–4:00 p.m. offers further insight into the exhibit. Whether you're a punk enthusiast or a newcomer to the scene, this show promises to connect visitors with the rebellious spirit that helped shape the cultural landscape of the nation's capital in the later years of the 20th century. 3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD. Gallery hours: Monday–Friday:

10:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m., Saturday:  
10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Closed Sunday. 301-277-2863.

**National Portrait Gallery and the Archives of American Art**  
**"Felix Gonzalez-Torres: Always to Return"**  
**Through July 6, 2025**  
**npg.si.edu**

The Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery and the Archives of American Art have partnered to present "Felix Gonzalez-Torres: Always to Return," the most comprehensive exhibition of the artist's work in Washington, DC in three decades. Co-curated by Josh T. Franco and Charlotte Ickes, the exhibition offers a fresh perspective on Gonzalez-Torres' innovative approach to portraiture and identity through multiple installations across key sites, including the National Portrait Gallery, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, and outdoor spaces on Eighth Street NW.

Gonzalez-Torres' work redefines portraiture by emphasizing change, memory, and participation. Visitors can engage with interactive pieces like his iconic candy installations, where the act of taking and consuming sweets reshapes the artwork. The exhibition also features "Untitled (America)" (1994), a light installation displayed across three locations, reflecting the fluidity of identity in public and private spaces.

A highlight of the show is the full set of 55 editioned puzzles, exhibited for only the second time worldwide. These pieces are accompanied by personal correspondence and snapshots, offering a glimpse into the artist's relationships and inspirations. With loans from major museums and contributions from the Latino Initiatives Pool, this exhibition celebrates Gonzalez-Torres' legacy and his profound influence on contemporary art. Eighth and G streets NW, Washington, DC.

**"Memory is a Funny Thing"**

An Exhibit by Sheila Blake



"Fascinated" – Sheila Blake, Oil on Linen – 20" x 26"

**NOVEMBER 1st – DECEMBER 1st , 2024**

**OPENING RECEPTION: November 2nd, 5:00pm–8:00pm**

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- Everyone Home DC** (202) 544-3150  
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1338 G Street  
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# Inez Thomas Lester

1939 to 2024



INEZ THOMAS LESTER (Age 85) of El Cajon, CA passed away on August 14th, 2024. Inez was born in Athens, Alabama and spent much of her life in Washington, DC. She is survived by her older son, Cameron Lester and daughter-in-law Hillary Lester, her grandchildren, Christopher Lester, Charlotte Lester and William Lester and three of her siblings, Marie Rich, James Thomas and Juanita Turpin. She is preceded by her husband, Bob Lester, and her younger son Brian Lester.

Inez was musical, frequently singing and playing the piano. She was independent and demonstrated her own point of view early on. As a teenager in high school, her classmates named her most social classmate in her graduating class. She attended college at Birmingham Southern College in Birmingham, Alabama, which is where she met her husband Bob Lester.

Inez was beautiful, talented and outgoing. In those days, beauty pageants represented an opportunity for travel and prizes like scholarships. She competed for and became a contestant for Miss Alabama, and she was a runner-up, enabling her to travel to New York City. This was transformational for her, as she fell in love with the city and became passionate about drama and acting.

After graduating from college, Inez went to work as a teacher in New York. She and Bob dated long distance for a while, as he attended graduate school at the University of Virginia. Later, after they married, she joined him in Charlottesville, Virginia and was accepted into the Masters program in drama there. She was awarded "best actor" in that program two years in a row as she performed in productions there.

They later moved to Washington, DC in the mid-60's and started their family. And other than a brief stint in New York City in the late-60s, they settled in the Capitol Hill district of Washington for the balance of their 48-year marriage, setting an example to their boys of a loving and devoted partnership between two best friends.

Later in 1978, Inez decided to complete her Masters Degree in Drama at UVA, writing her thesis on the famous author and playwright Walter Kerr. She was incredibly proud of that personal accomplishment and felt very connected to the University. Both her son Cameron and grandson Will later graduated from UVA.

Speaking of grandchildren, Inez was fiercely passionate about Charlotte, Christopher and Will, as well as her family in Alabama. She was the same about her sons. No one messed with mom's babies and grand babies, and she celebrating each of them. Family to her was life and love. And together with her strong faith in God, her greatest purpose.

Inez was eclectic and could do outrageous things, but she was incredibly loving and caring to strangers and friends alike. There's a small army of people from Washington, DC, Alabama and California that are grieving her passing. She was also a powerful woman. Inez told you what she thought, had strong opinions and went after the things in life that were important to her. All traits that those close to her admired.

When her husband Bob became sick and suffered through 14 years with terminal leukemia, Inez was his advocate and companion throughout. Doctors and nurses either loved her or disliked her, but they knew that she was going to make sure that her husband Bob had the best care. His passing diminished her physically - she suffered emotionally for years and was never the same. By the time she moved to San Diego, she was in a wheelchair and needed some assistance. However, she built her connections with family and friends there and became a source of love and kindness for her west coast crew. It wasn't always easy while she grappled with the frailty of her condition, but she was a force of goodness for many and a key part of her family's lives there.

Her younger son Brian's unexpected passing from a heart attack early this year was too much for Inez. The last several months of her life were very difficult for her. She is truly in a better place now with Bob, Brian, her parents, her sister Janie and other loved ones.

When you remember Inez, show a stranger kindness, laugh, celebrate difference, read a book or watch a play, be joyful amongst the flowers, make sure to tell someone happy birthday or happy anniversary, and most of all, call your family members and friends and tell them how much you love them.

Open seven days a week,  
11:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m.  
Closed Dec. 25. 202-  
633-1000.

## Smithsonian American Art Museum

### "The Shape of Power: Stories of Race and American Sculpture"

November 8, 2024 -  
September 14, 2025  
[americanart.si.edu](http://americanart.si.edu)

The Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) presents "The Shape of Power: Stories of Race and American Sculpture," a groundbreaking exhibition examining how sculpture has contributed to the construction and perception of race in the United States over the past 300 years. Featuring 82 works by 70 artists, the exhibit showcases the medium's ability to shape ideas about power, resistance, and identity using intimate coins to monumental statues.

The exhibition juxtaposes historical works by 19th- and 20th-century artists like Edmonia Lewis and Daniel Chester French with contemporary creations by Simone Leigh, Luis Jiménez, and Roberto Lugo. Highlights include interactive pieces, such as Lugo's "DNA Study Revisited" (2022), and the newly installed "Bridge" (2013-2014) by Glenn Kaino, which honors Olympian Tommie Smith's 1968 protest.

Organized by curators Karen Lemmey, Tobias Wofford, and Grace Yasumura, this exhibit blends historical and modern per-



Smithsonian American Art Museum; Roberto Lugo, "DNA Study Revisited", 2022, urethane resin life cast, foam, wire, and acrylic paint, 66 × 27 × 17 in. (167.6 × 68.6 × 43.2 cm), Smithsonian American Art Museum, Museum purchase through the Catherine Walden Myer Fund, 2024.19

spectives on race and identity. Collaborative efforts with scholars, artists, and the Smithsonian Institution further deepen the exploration of American sculpture.

Opening day events on Nov. 8 include gallery talks with curators and participating artists from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. SAAM will host additional public programs throughout the exhibit's run, enriching this reflection on race, art, and history. 8th and G Streets, NW, Washington, DC. Open seven days a week, 11:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Closed Dec. 25. 202-633-7970.

Phil Hutinet is the founding publisher of East City Art, DC's visual art journal of record. For more information visit [www.eastcityart.com](http://www.eastcityart.com) ♦

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**Pottery on the Hill 2024**  
 Friday, November 15, 6:30pm - Sunday, November 17, 4:00pm

**CONCERTS**

**Global Sounds on the Hill Featuring Acclaimed Greek Multi-Instrumentalist and Vocalist Spyros Koliavasilis: The Rebetiko Project**  
 Friday, November 1, 7:00pm

**From China to Appalachia Featuring GRAMMY Award-winning artists Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer and Chinese classical hammered dulcimer player Chao Tian**  
 Sunday, November 3, 4:30pm

**Stone Room Concerts @ Hill Center Featuring Classic Folk/Rock/Americana Duo Moors & McCumber**  
 Friday, November 8, 7:00pm

**COOKING CLASSES & TASTINGS**

**Easy Vegetarian Indian Cooking: Diwali Dinner Party**  
 Friday, November 1, 6:00pm

**A Trip to Belgium: Moules Frites (Mussels & Fries)**  
 Thursday, November 7, 6:00pm

**Chef's Table - Fall in Burgundy with Chef Wendi James**

Friday, November 8, 6:00pm

**Kitchen 101: Knife Skills with Chef Wendi James**  
 Tuesday, November 12, 6:00pm

**Cooking for One: Pantry Smarts Featuring Veteran Food Writer Bonnie Benwick**  
 Wednesday, November 13, 11:00am

**Bruno's Duck Class with Chef Mark Haskell**  
 Thursday, November 14, 6:00pm

**Mofongo Time! with Marianne Tshihamba**  
 Wednesday, November 20, 6:00pm

**Making and Breaking Bread with Chef Mark Haskell**  
 Friday, November 22, 11:00am

**Autumn In Provence - Bouillabaisse Edition**  
 Saturday, November 30, 11:00am


**LECTURES & CONVERSATIONS**

**Writing DC: Writing about Place and Space**  
 Saturday, November 2, 1:00pm - 4:00pm


**Writing Your Life**  
 Saturday, November 23, 1:00pm - 4:00pm

**Writer's Flex: Cut, Expand, Repeat, Punctuate, Re-Mix**  
 Saturday, December 7, 1:00pm - 4:00pm

*Programmatic support provided by the Capitol Hill Community Foundation and the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities.*



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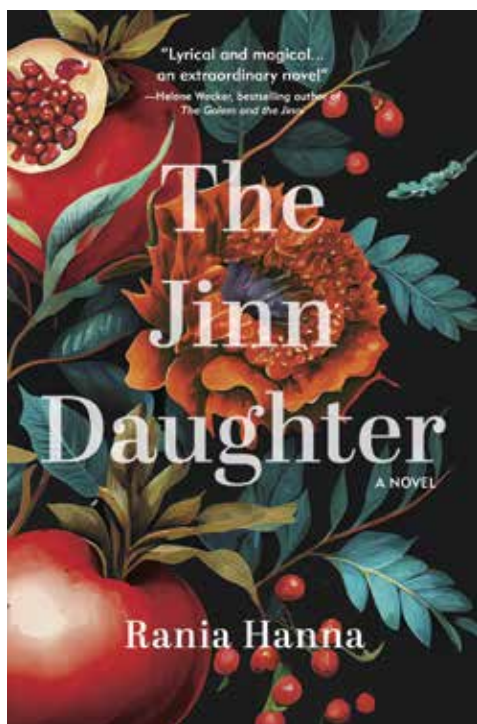


## the LITERARY HILL

Women Writers Explore Folklore, History, and Mystery

by Michelle LaFrance

For readers who just aren't ready to let go of the spooky season, this month's column highlights three local women writers whose stories take up dark mythologies, history, women's relationships, and open graves.



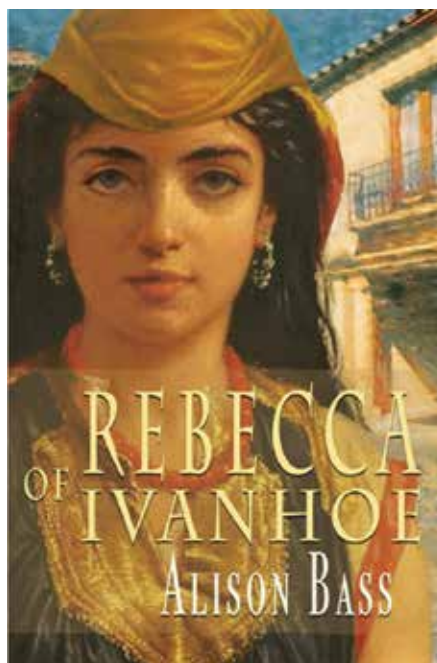
The Jinn Daughter. Author Rania Hanna



### The Jinn Daughter

A richly woven mother-daughter story, spiced with delicious Middle Eastern mythology, magic, and folklore, Rania Hanna's debut novel is the story of Nadine, a Hakawati (a storyteller in Arab traditions) and Jinn, who "tells the stories of the dead" so that their souls can peacefully transition into death. Shortly after the pomegranate seeds that carry souls and their stories stop appearing, Death herself arrives to claim Nadine's daughter, Layala, as her successor. Layala willingly takes on her new role in the underworld, but Nadine refuses this turn of events and desperately quests to bring her daughter back to life, even sacrificing loved ones and challenging Mother Earth herself. A tale of a mother's love and her desire to save her child. Featuring fierce female characters, exquisite worldbuilding, and the complexities of women's familial relationships, this novel will appeal to fans of dark, folklore-inspired fantasy.

To purchase *The Jinn*



Rebecca of Ivanhoe. Author Alison Bass



writer for *The Boston Globe*, at: <https://alison-bass.com>

### Graveyard Shift: A Novella

If the only place to smoke in a college town is an abandoned graveyard, what is the ragged bunch of midnight smokers who often congregate there—call-

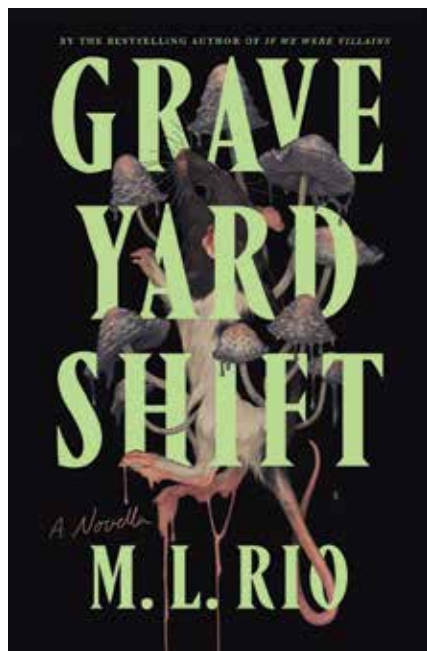
Daughter see: <https://aucpress.com/author/rania-hanna>

### Rebecca of Ivanhoe

For anyone who has wondered what became of the woman saved from the witch-pyre in Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Alison Bass provides an answer in her newest release. Bass reimagines Rebecca and 12th century Europe, as Rebecca's family flees England for the vibrant Jewish quarter of Toledo, Spain. There, under the intellectually and religiously tolerant, Alfonso the VIII, King of Castille and Leon, Rebecca's abilities as a healer capture the attentions of La Fermosa, the king's exquisite Jewish mistress, Rachel of Esra. As Rebecca treats Rachel's infertility, the two women become friends. Doors to a new world fling open for Rebecca—as the story unfolds Rebecca entertains a dashing suitor, builds a thriving business, and finds recognition for her family. Meanwhile, conflict between the Moors and the Christians keep tensions high and pages turning. For readers craving a slice of medieval history, Bink Books releases *Rebecca of Ivanhoe* on November 19th—just in time for holiday gifting.

More about Alison Bass, a long-time medical and science

ing themselves the “Anchorites,” no less—to do when they stumble upon a mysterious, open grave? This atmospheric novella stars a cadre of sharp-witted characters who dance with each other’s idiosyncrasies through a series of plot twists as an engrossing story unfolds. Fans of Rio’s bestselling *If We Were Villains* will enjoy this eerie page-turner, for the incisive



Graveyard Shift. Author M.L. Rio.  
photo: Cait Brady



characterizations, stylized dialog, and mystery.

*More about M.L. Rio: <https://mlrio.com>*

### November Events for Book Lovers

#### MidnightRose: A Reading Series of Poetry & Prose

**Saturday, November 9, 2024, 2pm to 4pm  
Tenley Library, 4450 Wisconsin Ave NW**

An evening of poetry and prose, with writers Kenneth Carroll, Sasa Aakil, and Elizabeth Bruce. Midnight Rose showcases award winning DC-Area poets and writers, highlighting the richness of DC’s multigenerational, multicultural literary community. To pre-register, please visit: [www.esther-productionsinc.com](http://www.esther-productionsinc.com)

#### Queer Indie Author & Vendor Market

**Saturday, November 16th, 2pm to 6pm**

**Atlas Brew Works Ivy City Brewery & Taproom, 2052 West Virginia Ave NE**

Support LGBTQ+ authors, artists, and vendors at this showcase, promising Queer stories, art, literature, crafts, artists, healers, vendors, creativity, diversity, and inclusivity.

Hosted by Healing Stories, Animal Party Kiki Books, LLC & ThirdEye Editing, LLC

#### The Inner Loop November Reading

**Tuesday, November 19th, 7:30pm**

**Sonny’s Pizza, 3120 Georgia Ave NW**

This month’s reading features A. B. Spellman and nine local writers, including Luke Sutherland. Inner Loop seeks to “create an inclusive writing community in DC.” Readings are open to bookworms, new writers, and all fans of story. For more about Inner Loop’s creative writing community: [theinnerlooplit.org](http://theinnerlooplit.org)

*Michelle LaFrance is Associate Professor of English at George Mason University. Writers of all experience levels are invited to join her at the Hill Center in November for two writing classes, Writing DC and Writing Your Life. Classes provide a supportive, fun afternoon of writing practice and neighborhood connection. See the programming calendar at [hillcenterdc.org](http://hillcenterdc.org) for more details or check out Michelle’s site: [writinglostriver.org](http://writinglostriver.org). ♦*



## Poetic Hill

### Natalie E. Illum

by Sandra Beasley

Natalie E. Illum has lived in Washington, DC, since 1999, mainly in the Mount Pleasant neighborhood. She moved here to study poetry at American University and produce poetry events at the Black Cat, The Fridge DC, and other local venues.

Natalie’s work slants toward autobiography and focuses on disability, activism, and trauma. She has been published in over 25 literary journals and several anthologies (two of which are DMV- focused) and is a frequent DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities individual artist fellow.

I have done nothing all summer

*after Georgia O’Keeffe*

*I have done nothing all summer but  
wait for myself to be myself again.*

Grief is not the python’s belly.  
It is the woman swallowed whole.  
The unhinged jaw and gapping  
scream into everything  
that is lush and deadly.

I used to love the allure  
of a desert horizon.  
Anything that raced  
to disappear into the shade.

But waiting to turn you into dust  
is excruciating; the venom’s spread  
everywhere and I can’t even find  
a snake charmer to beg.

I keep waiting for your death to pass over me  
like a storm and leave in its wake  
something worthy of an O’Keeffe.

The snake is full of my love for you.  
A whole human vessel of it, dissolving.

*Sandra Beasley is the curator of “Poetic Hill,” a resident of Southwest, and the author of four poetry collections. If you live in D.C. and you’re interested in being featured, you can reach her at [sandrabeasley@earthlink.net](mailto:sandrabeasley@earthlink.net) for questions and submissions (1-5 poems). ♦*